

5 to 11 May 2025

Weekly Echoes of NDRI



नेपाल विकास अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान
Nepal Development Research Institute

Welcome to the latest edition of NDRI Insights, your go-to source for important updates, valuable information, and the latest developments from the Nepal Development Research Institute.

HIGHLIGHTS FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

- A field training session for the MATSYA was conducted, equipping 11 field enumerators.
- A Tobacco Tax Advocacy strategic meeting for the TCP Project was held, bringing together key stakeholders.
- NDRI held a productive meeting with CPI, India, to explore collaborative opportunities in climate finance, infrastructure resilience, and inclusive development.
- NDRI's Senior Research Specialist served as a judge for the prestigious Hult Prize Nepal competition.



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VOLUME 197

MATSYA Project Launches Fieldwork Across 12 Districts in Nepal



Photo: Mr. Ram Prasad Devkota, NDRI leading the training session

A one-day field training session for the MATSYA project - Modernizing Aquaculture in Nepal, funded by the Lutheran World Federation (LWF), was held on March 5, 2025, at the National Cooperative Federation Hall, Pulchowk. The training was successfully conducted, equipping 11 field enumerators with the skills needed to implement the project across 12 districts in Nepal. Researchers from Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) led the training, including Research Associates, Mr. Ram Prasad Devkota, Daya Shrestha, and Research Assistant Anuj Dhakal. The enumerators, along with NDRI researchers, are now actively working in Morang, Sunsari, Siraha, Saptari, Parsa, Bara, Dhanusha, Mahottari, Rautahat, Chitwan, Nawalpur, and Rupandehi.

Tobacco Tax Advocacy: Mission 2025

On May 8, 2025, a one-day Tobacco Tax Advocacy strategic meeting for the Tobacco Control Program (TCP) was held at Indreni Complex, New Baneshwor, gathered key stakeholders, including former minister Mr. Ganesh Shah, Ministry of Finance representative Mr. Devi Prasad Sharma, and Mr. Kunj Prasad Joshi from NHEICC. NDRI

was represented by Lead of Health Education and Environment Program: Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung, Admin and Finance Officer: Ms. Deepa Luintel, and Research Associate Mr. Parashar Khadka. The meeting focused on advocating for a 35% tobacco tax increase in the 2025 national budget, linking the projected revenue to Nepal's NRs 15 Arba health insurance deficit. Mr. Joshi noted that current tobacco health taxes contribute to NRs. 1 Arba annually, highlighting the potential of increased taxation to reduce the funding gap. Participants raised concerns about the tobacco industry's manipulation of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to influence policy, proposing that CSR be regulated under the Tobacco Product Control Act, 2068. Mr. Sharma discussed obstacles faced during policy advocacy with the Inland Revenue Department (IRD), including industry pushback and internal skepticism. Mr. Shah outlined key strategies for progress: engaging major political parties, involving media such as Medical Patra and RSS, and working with Local leaders.



NDRI Team With Government Stakeholders

Institutional Visits: As part of the tobacco tax advocacy, NDRI conducted a series of institutional visits on May 9, 2025. Team Lead Dr. Jaya Kumar Gurung and Research Associate Mr. Parashar Khadka visited the Inland Revenue Department (IRD) in Lazimpat to submit tax policy briefs, where they met with senior officials who acknowledged the issue.

Likewise, at the Policy Research Institute (PRI), the team met with Senior Research Fellow, Dr. Deepak Khadka, who expressed full support and pledged to facilitate inter-ministerial coordination. Even at Nepal Health Research Council (NHRC), Dr. Pramod Joshi welcomed the evidence presented and committed to forwarding the materials with a formal recommendation to the Ministry of Health.

During a meeting with Health Minister Mr. Pradeep Poudel, Dr. Gurung presented NDRI's findings, where the Minister referred the matter to Dr. Anup Bastola, who emphasized the urgency of the proposal and recommended stronger social mobilization, enforcement, youth-targeted measures, and parental education in tobacco control policy.



Photi: Dr. Gurung with Hon. Health Minister Mr. Pradeep Poudel and Mr. Badri Basnet

NDRI and CPI Explore Collaboration on Climate Finance and Resilience

On 8th May 2025, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) and the Climate Policy Initiative (CPI) held a productive meeting to explore collaborative opportunities in climate finance, infrastructure resilience, and inclusive development.

The discussion focused on integrating hydropower and climate models with financial frameworks, promoting green finance, and leveraging Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). Both institutions agreed to jointly develop a concept note and align efforts on ongoing projects, with a shared commitment to building climate-resilient and inclusive solutions for Nepal and the region. In the meeting NDRI was represented by Dr. Krishna Pahari (President), Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar (Executive Director), Dr. Divas B. Basnyat (Lead, Water and Climate Program), Dr. Shankar Shrestha (Senior Research Specialist), Ms. Ashma Aryal (Outreach and Communication officer) and Mr. Prabin Shrestha (IT Officer). Similarly, CPI was represented by Mr. Debal Mitra (Senior Manager) and Ms. Manika Gupta (Fellow-Climate Finance).



Group photo taken after the meeting.

Dr. Nawa as Judge at Hult Prize Nepal 2025

Dr. Nawa Raj Khatiwada, Senior Research Specialist at Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), served as a judge for the prestigious Hult Prize Nepal competition held at AITM College, Khumaltar Height, Lalitpur. The event, held on May 8, 2025, featured innovative entrepreneurial ideas from young Nepali change makers competing in the global Hult Prize challenge.



Dr. Khatiwada and fellow members of the judging panel

Dr. Khatiwada evaluated participants during both the Preliminary Rounds and the Finals Round, assessing their business models based on sustainability, scalability, and social impact.

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK

Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response."

-Viktor Frankl

Thought Provoking News

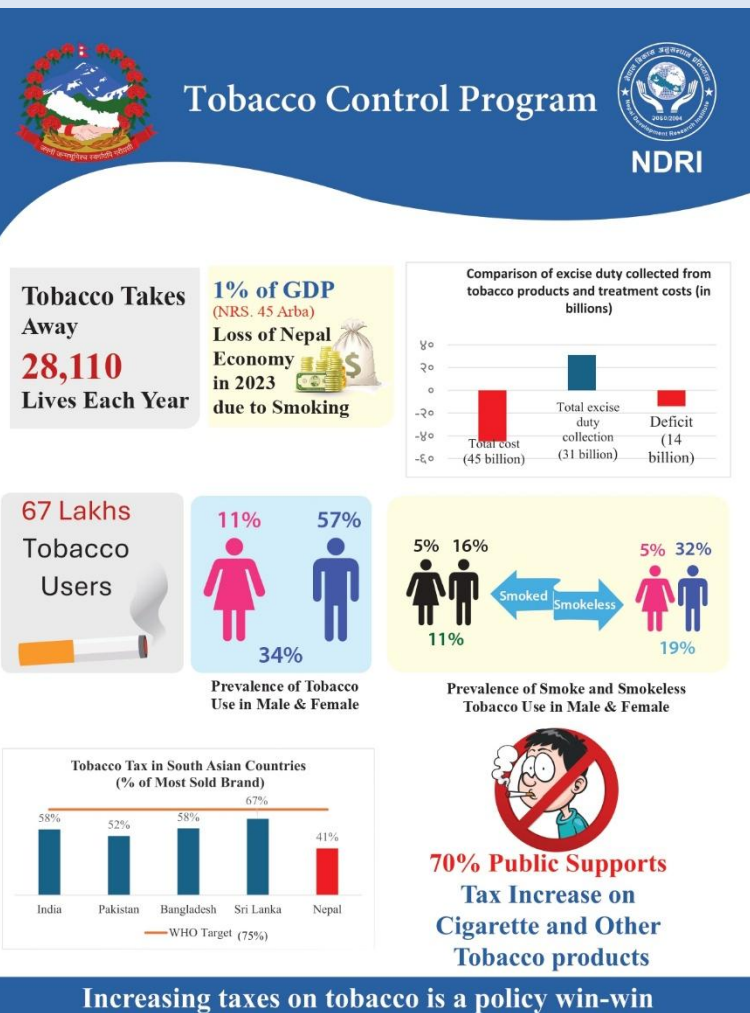
Lesbian couple went to register marriage. Law enforcement separated them

<https://kathmandupost.com/national/2025/05/12/lesbian-couple-went-to-register-marriage-law-enforcement-separated-them>

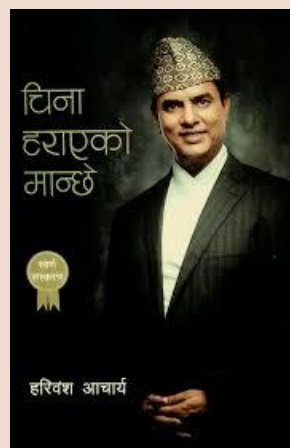
State and statelessness in South Asia

<https://kathmandupost.com/columns/2025/04/24/state-and-statelessness-in-south-asia>

NDRI's Findings on Tobacco Consumption in Nepal



BOOK RECOMMENDATION



Feel Free To Recommend Books To Our Readers So That We Can Collectively Enhance Knowledge Exploration.

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