



नेपाल विकास अनुसन्धान प्रतिष्ठान
Nepal Development Research Institute

NDRI is an independent, non-partisan, and non-profit institution dedicated to addressing contemporary and emerging policy challenges and to influencing public policy through research.

HEADLINES FEATURED IN THIS EDITION

- Large Cardamom Value Chain across the Border.
- Guest of Honor address at Sikkim Skill University.
- Talk Program on Project and Proposal Development.
- 235th Episode of the Contemporary Policy Dialogue Series.

WEEKLY ECHOES OF



*LEARNING FROM THE PAST,
SUPPORTING EVIDENCE FOR
A BETTER FUTURE!*

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Large Cardamom Value Chain across the Border

Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI) completed a 5-day-long observational field visit to Siliguri and Gangtok between February 18 and 23 as part of its ongoing project titled “Empowering Farmers in Chainpur, Sankhuwasabha for Direct Export and Sustainable Production of Large Cardamom (Alainchi)” funded by the Australian Embassy, Nepal.

Project leader Dr. Shikha Thapa Magar and Project Coordinator Mr. Daya Shrestha, along with project policy advisor Prof. Dr. Punya Prasad Regmi, consulted with various governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved in the Large Cardamom value chain in Sikkim, India as part of the visit. Over 95% of Nepal's large cardamom exports go through India (via Siliguri, New Delhi, and Mumbai)

in order to reach end-markets in Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Middle East. The visit strengthened NDRI's understanding of how large cardamom is produced and processed through value-additive means to arrive at end-products viable for export in regions with strict agriculture commodity import standards and regulations.

In Gangtok, the team met with officials from the Agriculture Department and the Horticulture Department of the Government of Sikkim, Spices Board India, and toured a large cardamom processing factory. In Siliguri, the team explored the local wholesale markets to get a sense of how large cardamom is processed and marketed for both local consumption and exports through other major market hubs in India.. On the way back, the team also

visited the Cardamom Development Center in Fikkal, Ilam to share our learnings from Sikkim.

This was a follow-up to an earlier visit to Birtamode, Jhapa, which remains the processing, marketing, and export hub of Nepal's large cardamom. These visits, as part of the first phase of the project, are designed to provide a thorough understanding of how Nepal's large cardamom sector operates post-harvest. Learnings from them will complement ongoing desk research about how the global large cardamom market operates and how prices are determined. Further visits to New Delhi, the major export hub of South Asia's large cardamom value chain, and Kerala, home of the Indian Spices Board and the largest producing region in India, are planned in the coming months.





Visual highlights from the large cardamom field study and cross-border stakeholder discussions



NDRI team with Mr. T.T. Bhutia (center left), Secretary of the Department of Horticulture and B.L. Dahal (left), Principal Director of the Department of Horticulture.

NDRI team with Mr. Phurba Tshering Lepcha, Deputy Director of the Regional Office Gangtok of the Indian Spices Board.

NDRI team with staff from the government owned large-cardamom processing plant, operating under Sikkim IFFCO Organics Ltd., in Sikkim.



Guest of Honor address at Sikkim Skill University



Prof. Dr. Regmi delivering his Guest of Honor address

Former Vice Chancellor of Agriculture and Forestry University and NDRI's Senior Research Specialist, Prof. Dr. Punya Prasad Regmi, attended as the Guest of Honor at Sikkim Skill University's International Conference on "Artificial Intelligence as a Research Tool: Transforming Knowledge Creation" on Saturday, February 21, 2026. In his address, Prof. Dr. Regmi highlighted that the use of AI in research can be a

double-edged sword and that young researchers must understand the core components of research methodologies before relying on AI for more efficient knowledge generation. The conference brought together various experts in the field of computer science, scientific research, and academic practitioners from across the South Asia region for a collaborative dialogue targeted at the students of the University. As part of the

visit, Prof. Dr. Regmi also represented NDRI and discussed possibilities of potential collaboration with the University in the coming days.

Talk Program on Project and Proposal Development

On 9 February 2026, an insightful talk program on Project and Proposal Development was successfully conducted. The session was facilitated by Dr. Shyam Thapa, who brings extensive experience in research design, proposal development, and the evaluation of development programs. Dr. Thapa delivered a comprehensive presentation highlighting the fundamentals of developing strong and competitive project proposals. He emphasized the importance of clearly identifying problems, conducting thorough needs assessments, and aligning project objectives with evidence-based research.

Overall, the talk program proved to be highly informative and valuable for researchers, project officers, and development practitioners seeking to strengthen their project design and proposal writing skills.



NDRI participants getting insights from Dr. Thapa

235th Episode of the Contemporary Policy Dialogue Series

As part of its bi-weekly talk series, on 13 February 2026, Nepal Development Research Institute (NDRI), in collaboration with Resources Himalaya Foundation (RHF), successfully convened the 235th Episode of the Contemporary Policy Dialogue Series. The session centered on the theme “समावेशिताको परीक्षामा

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समावेशिताको परीक्षामा प्रतिनिधि निर्वाचन २०८२



Key Speaker
Ms. Sharu Joshi
Founding Member
Inter-Generational Feminist Forum (IGFF)

Ms. Saru Joshi is a distinguished Gender and Development expert holding a Master's degree in Women and Development, with over three decades of combined professional experience, including a decade of service with the Government of Nepal and more than sixteen years with UN Women. During her tenure as a Strategic Partnership Specialist at UN Women, she served in a key leadership role supporting strategic initiatives and partnerships. She currently serves as an Executive Board Member of the Nepal Policy Institute, a Founding Member of the Intergenerational Feminist Forum, an Expert Team Member on Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) at SaHsahai, an organization working on climate justice, and as an Executive Board Member at Phet-Nepal. Her areas of specialization include migration, gender and statistics, and gender and social inclusion.

प्रतिनिधि निर्वाचन २०८२”, critically examining the inclusiveness of Nepal's representative electoral system.

With the elections approaching, NDRI sought to create a timely and meaningful platform for dialogue on key questions surrounding the electoral process, particularly how elections can be made more inclusive, representative, and impactful. The discussion aimed to explore pressing issues related to participation, representation, and structural barriers within the electoral framework. By facilitating evidence-based dialogue, NDRI reaffirmed its commitment to contributing to informed public discourse and strengthening democratic practices in Nepal.

Click on the [link](#) to watch the full Episode

Headlines & Happenings



[Rs750 million released to continue health insurance programme](#)



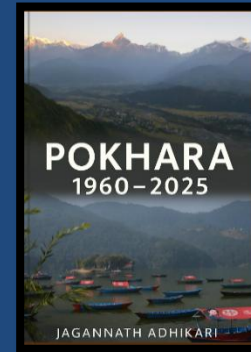
[State-run hospitals to launch child mental health clinics](#)

Thought of the Week

Too often, we enjoy the comfort of opinion without the discomfort of thought.

-John F. Kennedy

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