

News Highlight

Regional Meeting of the District Chambers based in the Central Region on the Establishment and Capacity Building of their Employers' Units

The meeting was organized in Kathmandu on December 1, 2014 by the Employers' Council FNCCI with the support of the ILO. The meeting was attended by the representatives of 11 district chambers of the central region. The names of the chambers are as follows:

- 1 Bhaktapur Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 2 Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Chitwan
- 3 Dhulikhel Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 4 Dolakha Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 5 Kavre Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 6 Nuwakot Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 7 Makwanpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 8 Rautahat Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 9 Ratnanagar Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 10 Ramechhap Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 11 Sindhupalchowk Chamber of Commerce and Industry



The FNCCI Executive Committee member and Vice chairperson of the Employers' Council, Mr. Manish Agrawal welcomed the representatives of the district chamber of the central region attending the program. The representatives included the Presidents of Makwanpur, Ratnanagar, Nuwakot, Bhaktapur and Ramachhap CCIs. In the opening remark, Mr. Manish Agrawal, stressed on the need to extend the network of the Employers' Council with the district chambers through the formation of employer units. The provision in the proposed Draft Labour Act 2071 to bring the informal sector within its scope has created the need to form employer units in the district chambers in order to be prepared for the management of future labour problems at the local level. He

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About ILO and its collaboration with FNCCI

International Labour Organization

The International Labour Organization is the UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. At the end of world war I, a peace conference was convened which led to the creation of the International Labour Organization in 1919. It became the first specialized agency of the UN in 1946.

The ILO formulates international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations setting minimum standards of basic labour rights: freedom of association, the right to organize, collective bargaining, abolition of forced labour, equality of opportunity and treatment and other standards regulating conditions across the entire spectrum of work related issues.

Membership

The Constitution of ILO provides simple rules of procedure regarding admission of a state to the membership of ILO. The Constitution provides that its membership is open to the states which were its members on the 1st November 1945 and such other states which are either original members of the united nations or are admitted to the membership of the united nations by a decision of general assembly in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. Other states can also become members of the ILO by a vote concurred by 2/3 of the delegates attending the session including 2/3 of the government delegates present and voting.

Structure

The ILO accomplishes its work through three main bodies - International Labour Conference, the Governing Body and the International Labour Office. They encompass the unique feature of the Organization: its tripartite structure (government, employers and workers).

The Conference plays a very important role. It establishes and adopts international labour standards. It acts as a forum where social and labour questions of importance to the entire world are discussed. The Conference also adopts the budget of the Organizations and elects the Governing Body.

International Labour Standards

The ILO's standards take the form of international labour Conventions and Recommendations. The ILO's Conventions are international treaties, subject to ratification by ILO member States. Its Recommendations are non-binding instruments -- typically dealing with the same subjects as Conventions -- which set out guidelines which can orient national policy and action. Both forms are intended to have a concrete impact on working conditions and practices in every country of the world.

The annual International Labour Conference, as well as other ILO bodies, often agree upon documents less formal than Conventions and Recommendations. These take such forms as codes of conduct, resolutions and declarations. These documents are often intended to have a normative effect but are not referred to as part of the ILO's system of international labour standards.

Nepal became the member of ILO in 1966. Till date, Nepal has ratified the following Conventions:

1. Convention No. 14 "Weekly (Industry) Rest Convention, 1921 (No. 14)
2. Convention No. 29 Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)
3. Convention No. 98 The Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)
4. Convention No. 100 Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

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expressed that the establishment of employers' units will make it easy to handle specific issues relating to the labour and other industrial issues. As the new labour law will be applicable to both formal and informal sectors, new types of labour problems and issues are bound to come for which employers' units are relevant.

Mr. Yagyaman Shakya, Deputy Director of the FNCCI-EC spoke on the objective of the meeting. He briefed the participants about the workshop on the strengthening and capacity building of the employers units of the district chambers held in Kathmandu and the decisions made in that workshop. One of the decisions was to hold regional meetings in five regions of Nepal. He stressed on the need of the employers' units in the district chambers so that these units could be transformed into specialized units to handle industrial relations issues including labour. He expressed that there is great need to expand the service of the Employers' Council of FNCCI to more district chambers through these units. As the new draft Labour Act has provisions to bring formal and informal sectors within its scope of application, all the district chambers must be equipped to handle various types of labour issues which may arise in the informal sector. He also said that these units will make it easy for the Employers' Council to communicate, coordinate and collaborate with the district chambers effectively.

After his presentation, the Executive Secretary of Makwanpur CCI, Mr. Bibek Manandhar briefed the participants about the structure and functions of the Employers' Council in the Makwanpur CCI and the kinds of activities it has been looking into since its formation. It is one of the district chambers which

has a long experience in handling labour issues through its Council. Currently, one of the vice presidents of MCCI, Mr. Dhruva Prasad Parajuli has been entrusted with the responsibility of the employers' council activities.

In the floor discussion, the representatives from the district chambers were of the same view in regard to the importance of formation of the employer units in their chambers. They showed willingness to form the units and prepare themselves for the management of future labour issues. However, they were apprehensive about the financial sustainability of the units if not planned properly. Most of the chambers informed that due of absence of big industries in their districts, the number of labour problems is less. Also it is informed that most of the chambers have been handling the labour problems through adhoc mechanism as there is no proper structure like employer unit in their chambers. In the program, the guidelines prepared for the formation of employer units were also circulated. There was also a suggestion from the participant to make a flexible provision to assign responsibility of employer unit in the chamber to any one of one of the office bearers or any executive committee member of the concerned chamber.

The meeting was concluded with the closing remarks of Dr. Hemant Dabadi, Director General of the FNCCI. He thanked the representatives of the district chambers for taking part in the meeting and providing various suggestions regarding the formation of employer units in the district chambers of the central region. He opined that the formation of units in the chambers would encourage professionalism in handling labour issues and problems. He was also of the opinion that it would enhance the image of the chamber.

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5. Convention No. 105 Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)
6. Convention No. 111 Discrimination (Employment and occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)
7. Convention No. 131 Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131)
8. Convention No. 138 Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No 138)
9. Convention No. 144 Tripartite Consultation (Implementation of International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)
10. Convention No. 169 Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)
11. Convention No. 182 Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

Collaboration of ILO with the Employers Council, FNCCI

ILO Country Office in Nepal and the Bureau for Employers' Activities (ACT/

EMP) of the ILO, a specialized unit within the ILO secretariat have been working closely with the Employers' Council of FNCCI for the past two decades for the capacity building of the employers in Nepal through its Technical Cooperation Programme, which provides assistance to employers' organizations in developing and transition countries.

The Employers' Council in collaboration with the ILO Country Office and ACT/EMP has been conducting various trainings, workshops, research programs, surveys, interaction programs, seminars, long and short terms project activities and other capacity building programs on industrial relations topics like social dialogue, negotiation, collective bargaining, labour laws, gender issues, OSH, HRM and IRs, workplace cooperation, child labour, green job and other areas of common interest. Two decades long relationship between the FNCCI and ILO has been extremely fruitful in strengthening the tripartite mechanism promoted by the ILO. It has also helped improve the relationship with the trade unions and the government through various levels of social dialogue.

Launching of a joint initiative between the ILO and its constituents on Improving Labour Management Relations (ILMR) at enterprise level

The International Labour Organization (ILO) has launched a new initiative to enhance labour-management relations through a regular social dialogue at the enterprise level in Nepal. In the first phase of the programme, three prominent private enterprises are taking part with a firm commitment to enhance working environment and productivity through identification joint activities to be implemented in their respective enterprises through technical and financial support from the ILO.

A new child care facility to be used free of charge and a first aid clinic in case of emergencies -this is what Kiran Shoes Manufacturer, Kathmandu, will begin to offer its employees after representatives of management and workers sat down together and brainstormed on how to improve lives for both parties.

"To me it's essential that the workers and the management talk to each other in order to constantly improve ourselves. To get happy customers we need happy workers. This is just one more step in that direction," says Amir Pratap JB Rana, the young and energetic Managing Director of the company.

Kiran Shoes is one of the three companies that is taking part in a new initiative by the ILO and its partners, named "Improving labour management relations through social dialogue in the Nepalese enterprises". Launched in August 2014, the project is a 1-year pilot attempt to improve social dialogue at the enterprise level.

"We want to try a bottom-up approach and involve the private sector enterprises more. There is a huge potential for positive change here," says Saloman Rajbanshi from ILO Nepal who is taking charge of this initiative. "Historically, the relationship between employers and employees has been quite strained in Nepal. But we are seeing gradual improvements now, and this project is another small push in the right direction," he adds.

The initiative is based on the idea that good relations between management and workers will benefit both the business of the enterprise as well as the working conditions of the workers. Research shows that satisfied workers will perform better as they work harder, show up for work more often and don't go on strike as often. At the same time, when workers get a say in questions at the workplace, they have a chance to improve the conditions under which they work.

The initiative works like this: each participating enterprise will form a working group whose members include both management and workers. This group then develops a plan of action on how to improve the work place. The plan of action must describe concrete actions and have clear deadlines to ensure that actual improvements will be done rather than remain good intentions.

Three Nepalese enterprises namely Kiran Shoes Manufacturer Ltd., Probiotech Industries Pvt. Ltd. and Arihant Multi-Fibres Ltd. have voluntarily joined the initiative:

The initiative is a joint effort of the ILO constituents, including the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), and the ILO Nepal Office under its framework programme known as the Decent Work Country Programme for Nepal, 2013- 2017.

Participation in programs

The representatives of FNCCI-EC participated in the following programs :

Japan International Labour Foundation (JILAF) Meeting

The meeting was held in Kathmandu on November 6, 2014.

The Japan International Labour Foundation (JILAF) was established by RENGO (Japanese Trade Union Confederation) in May 1989 as an organization to promote international exchange and cooperation in the field of labour. JILAF collaborated with the FNCCI-EC in the implementation of its project titled "Supporting Grass Roots Activities through the International Employers' and Workers' Network". The partner trade union organization for the implementation of projects and programs for JILAF in Nepal is Nepal Trade Union Congress (NTUC).

"High Level SAFE Networking Meeting"

The meeting was held in Colombo, Srilanka on October 27-28, 2014. Mr. Manish Kumar Agrawal, FNCCI Executive Committee Member and Vice chairperson of the Employers' Council and Mr. Hansa Ram Pandey, Director, FNCCI participated in the meeting. The SAFE stands for South Asian Forum of Employers.

Interaction program

The program on "Promoting Inclusive Employment Aiming People with Disabilities" was organized by Homenet Nepal on November 18, 2014 in Kathmandu.

HomeNet Nepal is a not for profit, apolitical, social organization formed in 2001. HNN works with vision to improve the living of every form of working poor through

facilitating them to acquire better livelihood in the informal sector by bringing them and their contribution into the mainstream national economy and ultimately ending poverty of them.

Workshop on "Labour Migration Governance and Migrant Protection"

The workshop was organized in Kathmandu on December 1-2, 2014 by ILO and KNOMAD (The Global Knowledge Partnership on Migration and Development). The workshop aimed to explore trends and patterns of bilateral labour agreements and memoranda of understanding. It also aimed to discuss a set of criteria by which to identify good practices with regard to the scope, negotiation and implementation of Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLAs) and MoUs and identify gaps and opportunities for follow-up action.

EC programs in nutshell

Consultative meeting on Draft Labour Act :

The meeting of the Employers' Council members was held on October 19, 2014 at the FNCCI secretariat. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Shekhar Golchha, Vice president of the FNCCI and Chairperson of the Employers Council and was also attended by Mr. Pashupati Murarka, Senior Vice President. The Task Force members working on the Draft Labour Act briefed the EC members about the submission of the Draft Labour Act to the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

Training workshop on "Human Resources Management - in a Difference Perspective":

FNCCI-Employers' Council in cooperation with ILO Office Nepal organized a Advanced and Basic level training workshop on "Human Resources Management-In a Different Perspective" for human resource managers/officers in Biratnagar and Siddharthanagar respectively. The learning objectives of the training workshop were to understand the :

- fundamentals of Human Resources (HR) and HR Management (HRM).
- transformation of HRM
- functions / spectrum of HRM
- transactional HRM
- importance of HR planning
- employee relations and its implication

The trainers for the programs were Mr. Ishwar Karki, Mr. Amit Sharma and Mr. Bikash Acharya. The program was held in Biratnagar on November 2/3 and in Siddharthanagar on November 23/24. The programs were organized by the FNCCI in collaboration with the Chamber of Industries, Morang and Siddharthanagar Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Interaction program on Draft Labour Act :

An interaction program on Draft Labour Act was held in Biratnagar on November 23, 2014. The program was organized by the Chamber of Industries, Morang with an objective to share the important provisions of the Draft Labour Act and their implications on the enterprises with the employers and HR managers of the industries located in that region. Mr. Hansa Ram Pandey, Director of the FNCCI, who was also one of the members of Draft Labour Law Task Force, interacted with the participants and made presentation on the issues crucial to the effectiveness of the Draft Labour Act. The participants discussed both the positive and difficult aspects of the Draft Labour Act if enforced in future.

Training workshop on Occupational Safety and Health (OSH)

The FNCCI-Employers' Council in cooperation with the ILO Office Nepal organized five training workshops on "Occupational Safety and Health" in Biratnagar, Birgunj and Butwal on December 8-9, 8-11, 11-12 respectively.

The objectives of the training workshop were to

- make the participants capable of identifying and assessing the risks prevalent in the workplace.
- make the participants capable of improving the workplace through the application of suitable hazards prevention measures.
- develop the capability of participants to find out the OSH related problems in the workplaces of their respective organization and
- enable the participants to relate occupational safety and health with productivity

In the sessions, the training workshop covered important issues relating to industrial accidents, chemical hazards, physical hazards, hazard control principle, psychological hazards, ergonomics and emergency preparedness system. The participants also visited industries for "on the spot observation" of OSH conditions and measures adopted in those industries. The participants in Biratnagar visited United Spirit Pvt Ltd.

The trainers for the programs were Mr. Hansa Ram Pandey, Director, FNCCI, Mr. Youb Raj Bhatta, OSH expert, Radheshyam Jha, Factory Inspector, Dinesh Shah, OSH expert and Raj Kumar Gupta, Factory Inspector. The workshops were organized by the FNCCI-EC in collaboration with the Chamber of Industries, Morang, Birgunj Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Butwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry.



Workshop on Institute-Industry Partnership Building

The Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) in collaboration with the FNCCI (Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries) and CTEVT (Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training) organized a workshop on institute-industry partnership building on November 24, 2014 at the FNCCI, Teku in Kathmandu and on December 5, 2014 at KNIT, Butwal. The main objectives of the workshops were to develop a strong partnership between the Korean training institutes and industries in Nepal to produce competent workforces as per the market demand and promote their employment opportunities. The program was also attended by Mr. Shekhar Golchha, Vice president of the FNCCI.

The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, H.E. Choe Yong-Jin, was the chief guest in the workshop organized in Kathmandu. In his remarks, he congratulated the organizers and participants for their genuine effort for the employment promotion of training graduates in Nepal. There were presentations on the need of institute-industry partnership and skills of graduates by the experts of Korean training institutes like Kathmandu University Technical Training Institutes (KUTTC) and Korea Nepal Institute of Technology (KNIT).

The workshop aimed at sharing fruitful insights and suggestions among industrial associations and Korean training institutes on developing strong institute-industry partnership in Nepal. Various industrial associations working for the automobile, mechanical and electrical trades interacted with the managers and instructors of Korean training institutes on how they can build a suitable institute-industry partnership in Nepal.



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