

**REPORT OF INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON WATER  
INDUCED DISASTER PREVENTION (ISWIDP 2004) IN NEPAL**

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The “International Seminar on Water Induced Disaster Prevention 2004 (ISWIDP 2004)” took place in the Kingdom of Nepal for three days from July 26 to 28, under the sponsorship of Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention (DWIDP) of the Nepalese Government and in cooperation with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). It was held as the concluding seminar of the Disaster Mitigation Support Program Project, which had started as the second phase of technical cooperation between Nepal and Japan on the prevention of water induced disasters.

Six countries participated in the seminar, including China, the Philippines, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Japan. These are the countries that share common problems in the field of water induced disaster prevention.

At the opening ceremony on July 26, Thakur Prasad Sharuma, Minister of Water Resources of the Nepalese Government, was invited as the guest of honor. With about 200 attendants from Nepal and abroad, the ceremony proceeded with warmth and splendor.

The opening ceremony was started with a greeting from Director General Regmi of the DWIDP on behalf of Nepal as the host country, followed by an opening address by Minister Sharuma of Water Resources. In his speech, the Minister stressed that (1) sadly, a large number of lives and properties are being lost annually as a result of floods and sediment-related disasters; (2) his country is grateful for the technical transfer from the Japanese Government that has been extended since 1991 to enhance the nation’s disaster prevention capacity, specifically through Disaster Prevention Technical Center Project (DPTC) and Disaster Mitigation Support Program (DMSP); (3) the Mugling-Narayanghat Highway, the so-called Nepal’s lifeline road connecting the metropolitan Katmandu basin with the Terai Plain and India sustained devastating damage last year and the Nepalese Government is currently putting emphasis on the restoration of this highway as well as on the countermeasures against erosion, debris flows, and landslides; (4) the Nepalese Government recognizes that mitigation of water induced disasters is closely related to the alleviation of poverty which is the national development goal of Nepal, and that it is a

very important field to the promotion of the economic development of his country; and (5) support from Japan in the form of technical cooperation has been rated highly in Nepal for its contribution to the nation’s persistent, long-term disaster prevention objectives.

Following the minister’s speech, Yasuo TOMOMATSU, President of the non-profit organization Nepal-Japan Friendship Association for Water Induced Disaster Prevention, presented a message from Tadahiro MATSUSHITA, a member of the House of Representatives of the Japanese Diet who is also secretary general of the Nepal-Japan Friendship Association of Diet Members. In his message, he mentioned that (1) technical cooperation between Nepal and Japan in the field of water induced disaster mitigation began in 1977 when Matsushita himself, then a senior engineer at the Ministry of Construction, visited Nepal for a field survey on the natural disaster mitigation measures in this country; (2) as the person who has worked for the technical cooperation from the very early stage, he is moved to see that this concluding seminar is being held with an attendance of disaster prevention officials from many countries; and (3) he has an episode to tell, which is, when he visited Nepal this May, he had an opportunity to talk with His Majesty King Gyanendra on friendship history between the two countries, politics, and economy. And, when he offered his opinion that a major obstacle hampering the development of Nepal is natural disasters, and that mitigation of such disasters is a key to the nation’s development, His Majesty showed his consent cordially.

Opening addresses continued, firstly by Zenji KAMINAGA, Japanese Ambassador Plenipotentiary to Nepal; Resident Representative Yoshiura of JICA Nepal Office; N.P. Bhattarai, Acting Vice Minister of DWIDP and executive chairman of the international seminar; and finally Chief Advisor Moriyama of the long-term expert team from Japan. Representing the host side, Moriyama expressed gratitude for a grand attendance to the seminar, with which the opening ceremony was ended. The scene of the seminar was reported on TV and newspapers, indicating a high level of interest seen in Nepal.

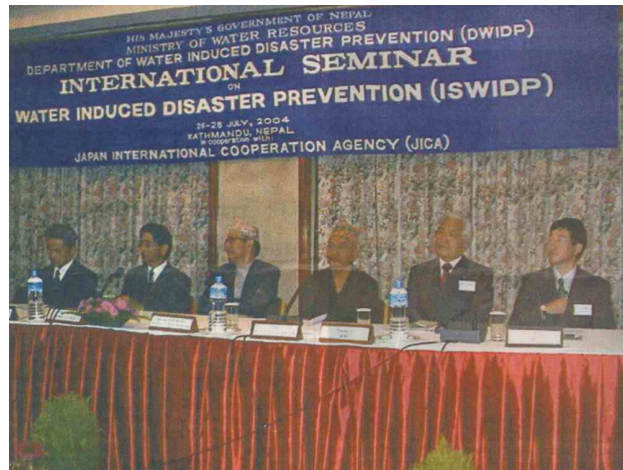
Presentation of papers began in the afternoon of July 26 and continued for two days. A total of 24 papers were presented in four divisions focusing on the four pillars of the project: (1) technology for water-induced disaster prevention, (2) awareness raising of people for disaster prevention, (3) human resources development at educational institutions, and (4) communalization of disaster prevention information. As the papers from abroad, 13 papers were presented: four papers from Japan, three papers from China,

three papers from the Philippines, two papers from Indonesia, and one paper from Bangladesh. From Nepal, eleven papers were presented. The total number of participants was well over 400 during the three-day session.

Papers presented by Japanese were seven in total. Some came from Japan, and other came from overseas. Those from Japan were: Nobuo SUGIURA, Director of the Research Center for Disaster Risk Management, National Institute for Land and Infrastructure Management, the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT), with the paper title “Sediment-Related Disaster Prevention Law in Japan and Hazard Maps”; Mikio KOBAYASHI, Deputy Director of Sabo Planning Division, Sabo (Erosion and Sediment) Department, River Bureau of the MLIT, with the paper title “Pilot Test of Communication System for Sediment-Related Disaster Information”; Nobuya KAWASHIMA, Senior Engineer at the Planning and Design Group, Engineering Department, Nishi-Osaka Flood Control Work Office of the Osaka Prefectural Government, with the paper title “Flood Control Function of the Green Belt”; Joji SHIMA, Deputy Section Chief, Sabo (Erosion and Sediment Control) Department, Sabo Technical Center (a foundation), with the paper title “Functions of a Slit-Type Dam and Dam Planning”. From China, Minoru KURIKI, currently working as chief adviser for Human Resources Development Project in China, with the paper title “Human Resources Development Project in China in the Field of Erosion and Sediment Control”. From the Philippines, Toshiyuki KANO, currently working as chief adviser for Sabo Technology Strengthening Project in the Philippines, with the paper title “Sabo Technology Strengthening Project in the Philippines”. From Indonesia, Fumito WATANABE, currently working as chief adviser for Volcanic Area Comprehensive Disaster Prevention Project in Indonesia, with the paper title “Linkage between Sabo Technical Center and Universities in Indonesia”.

On July 28, the last day of the three-day session, the executive summary of the seminar as well as the recommendations were presented to the audience.

Then, a closing ceremony went on, with a tribute paid by Hariyono Utomo, Director of the Sabo Technical Center in Indonesia, who represented participants from abroad. He draw applause when he emphasized that the seminar was extremely meaningful, with which the closing ceremony came to an end.



A scene of the opening ceremony at the international seminar



Thakur Prasad Sharuma, Minister of Water Resources of the Nepalese Government, made an opening address.



President Tomomatsu of the Nepal-Japan Friendship Association for Water Induced Disaster Prevention presented a message from Tadahiro MATSUSHITA.



Active presentations went on at each session.

## **The Second General Meeting of the Alumni Association of Former DPTC and DWIDP Staff Members**

Taking the occasion of the opening of the international seminar, the second general meeting of the alumni association of former staff members of the DPTC (Disaster Prevention Technical Center) and DWIDP (Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention) of Nepal was held on July 26. More than 50 people attended the meeting of the alumni association which was established two years ago.

The meeting was opened with a welcome speech from Director General Regmi of the DWIDP who serves as the president of the alumni association, followed by the presentation of a congratulatory message from Kohei TAMURA, a member of House of Councilors of the Japanese Diet who is also an adviser to the non-profit organization Nepal-Japan Friendship Association for Water Induced Disaster Prevention. His message was presented by Nobuo SUGIURA, Director of the Research Center for Disaster Risk Management. In his message, TAMURA stated that mitigation measures against natural disasters are essential to the economic development of Nepal, that he is determined to make efforts toward the stabilization of the political situation in Nepal as its natural disaster mitigation, and that he is planning to visit Nepal this fall again.

Then, Yasuo TOMOMATSU, President of the non-profit organization Nepal-Japan Friendship Association for Water Induced Disaster Prevention which has been supporting the activities of the alumni association, made a congratulatory speech. He also handed over a list of stationery goods and other articles to the alumni association in support of its continuous efforts.

Lastly, Chief Adviser Moriyama of the long-term expert team from Japan, reported on the activities of the DMSP (Disaster Mitigation Support Program), with which the general meeting was ended leaving an amiable atmosphere.



Director Sugiura of the Research Center for Disaster Risk Management presented a message from Kohei TAMURA.