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ACTIVITIES

• Sixth Annual General Assembly

The sixth annual general assembly of SOHAM-Nepal was successfully held on Aswin 22, 2064 (Oct 9, 2007) in Kathmandu. Prof. Dr. Bidur Prasad Upadhyay, Chairman SOHAM-Nepal, chaired the Programme.

The assembly began with the warm welcome address by Dr. Keshav Prasad Sharma, Vice-Chairman SOHAM-Nepal. Mr. Jagat Kumar Bhusal, General Secretary SOHAM-Nepal presented the annual report 2006-2007 as well as proposed activities for 2007-2008. Mrs. Sarojani Pradhan, treasurer SOHAM-Nepal presented financial report 2006-2007.

Prof. Dr. Bidur Prasad Upadhyay, Chairman SOHAM-Nepal, delivered his speech stating all the obstacles passed by SOHAM-Nepal. Mr. Saraju Kumar Baidya, executive member SOHAM-Nepal delivered a vote of thanks. A dinner programme followed the general assembly.

• Talk Program

Mr. Rishi Ram Sharma, senior divisional meteorologist from DHM delivered a talk programme entitled "Quick Assessment of TRMM Data and Its Applicability to Predict Floods in the Bagmati River" on 06th July, 2007. He focused on the role of prediction techniques in the context of Nepalese river.

FEATURE – NEWS

• Monsoon 2007

This year, the onset of monsoon in Nepal was observed on 7th June, 3 days earlier than the normal onset date of 10th June. However, the onset phase was slightly weak. Heavy precipitation and the ensuing floods and landslides started from 10th of July. The total monsoon rainfall distribution is presented in Fig. 1. High rainfall amount was recorded in Kaski district as usual. Rainfall varied from below 500 mm in Jomsom and neighborhoods to above 4500 mm in Lumle. Normal to above normal rainfall was recorded in most parts of the country (Fig 2) except in the eastern region and the Kathmandu and the Dipayal valleys.

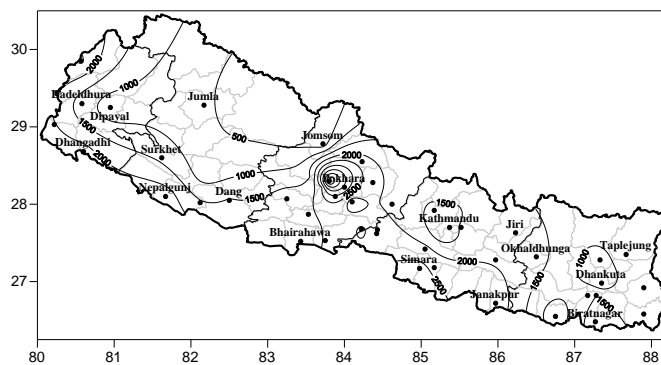


Fig. 1: Total Monsoon rainfall.

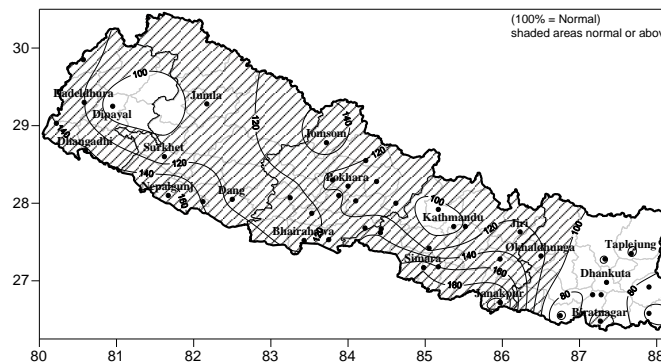


Fig. 2: Percentage of normal monsoon rainfall

This year's monsoon retreated from Nepal on 17th of October, 24 days later than the normal withdrawal day of 23rd September. The normal total number of monsoon days is 106. But, this year's

monsoon lasted for 133 days 27 days more than the normal days. So in overall, the monsoon this year was wet and active.

• Flood and landslides in 2007

This year floods and landslides triggered by the active monsoon in the month of last week of July created havoc in west Nepal. Several parts of western terai plains got extensive flood. Torrential rains caused floods and landslides in the 32 districts in this month. Dhanusa, Banke, Saptari, Mahottari, Bardiya,



Fig. 3: Nepalganj flood due to monsoon rain of July 26 to July 28

(Source: www.nepalganj.net)

Kailali, Parsa and Siraha districts were seriously affected. Among top 8

most affected districts by floods, the top 2 districts (Dhanusa and Banke) recorded more than 225% of the total normal rainfall of this month. The remaining 6 districts, except Saptari, received more than 150% of the total normal rainfall. The highest amount of precipitation measured in July was 258.5 mm within 24 hours in Sindhuligadhi on 27th. In addition, Mustang and Manang districts also recorded more than 200% of the normal total rainfall.

According to the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology, Bhairahawa in the western Tarai plains received very heavy downpour of 212.8 mm in just 24 hrs. As recorded on 1200 UTC of 29th July, 2007. Similarly Nepalganj recorded 185.3 mm of rainfall on 28th July, 2007. In total 84 people died and over 2, 68,136 people were affected. 18,535 houses were either damaged or destroyed and the number of displaced was estimated at 9,723. According to NRCS, landslide severely affected Western and Far Western regions especially in Baglung, Bajura and Jajarkot districts. 34 persons were found killed and 100 families displaced, 19 were injured, and 8 missing and 434 people were affected.

In the month of August also severe flood affected 17 districts of the country killing many people and destroying several houses bringing hardship to the people. The most effected districts are Dhanusa, Saptari, Mahaotari, Siraha, Sarlahi, Banke, Kailali, Rautahat, Bardiya, Parsa and Sunsari. In total 80 people died and over 3, 15,336 people were affected. 52,016 houses were either damaged or destroyed and the number of displaced families was estimated at 14,432.

• Tropical Cyclone “SIDR”

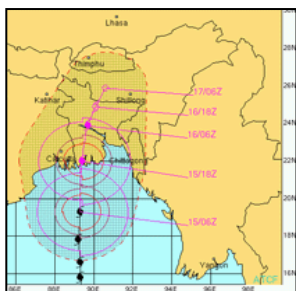


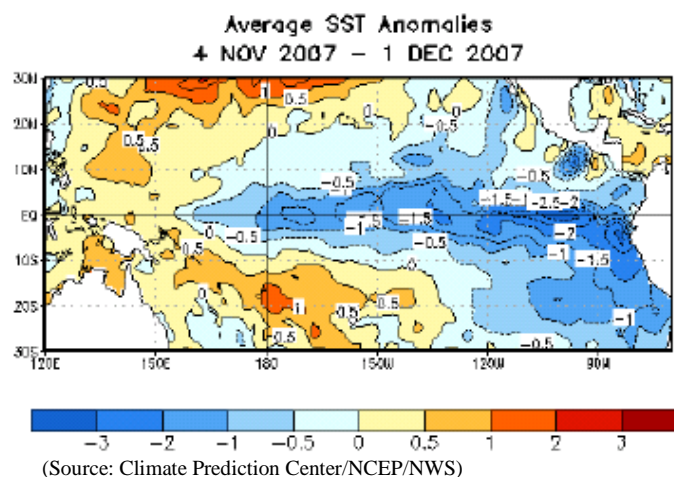
Figure 4: Track of Cyclone SIDR

(Source: nhc.noaa.gov)

Tropical Cyclone “SIDR” with winds of 241 km/h at 22:45 NST of 15th November hit Bangladesh. “SIDR” was the Category 4 storm and was the sixth storm of the north Indian Ocean cyclone season. The death toll exceeded ten thousands while millions of people were displaced. The border area of India and Bangladesh, where the deltas of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers meet, is one of the most flood-prone areas in the world and densely populated.

• La Niña Year

The cooling of the central and eastern Pacific started since the beginning of the year from 2007. It entered into La Nina phase and reached moderate strength during November 2007 with below-average sea surface temperatures (SSTs) extending from 160°E to the South American coast. All of the Niño region indices remained cooler than -1.0°C. The recent SST forecasts by dynamical and statistical models for the Niño 3.4 region indicate a continuation of La Niña into Northern Hemisphere spring 2008 (Source: Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS). Study has also shown that during La Nina year, Nepal generally receives excess precipitation in monsoon season. This year also the preliminary result indicates that monsoon rainfall was more than 110% of normal seasonal value.



(Source: Climate Prediction Center/NCEP/NWS)

RETIREMENT



Dr. Madan Lal Shrestha retired from the Director General of Department of Hydrology and Meteorology from Oct.17, 2007. He was appointed as Director General on May 29, 2003. He was also the permanent representative of Nepal with World meteorological Organization (WMO).

OBITUARY



Mr. Gokul Lal Amatya, life member of SOHAM-Nepal passed away on October 22, 2007 (Kartik 22, 2064) at the age of seventy-two. SOHAM-Nepal prays for eternal peace to the departed soul and expresses deep sorrow and extends heartfelt condolence to the bereaved families.

ANNOUNCEMENT

SOHAM-Nepal is going to organize an international conference on “Hydrology and Climate Change in the Mountainous Areas” to be held from November 15 -17, 2008 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Some Important Deadlines

Abstract submission	: Jan. 31, 2008
Notification of acceptance	: Feb. 28, 2008
Second announcement	: March 31, 2008
Submission of full paper	: June 30, 2008
Third announcement	: August 31, 2008

SOHAM-Nepal kindly requests for your active contribution of relevant news/information for SOHAM-Nepal Newsletter