



NEWSLETTER

Society of Transport Engineers Nepal
(SOTEN)

MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT



Er. Hare Ram Shrestha, PhD
President

Dear SOTEN Members and friends!

On behalf of SOTEN we extend our warm greetings to all our members and readers through the fourth edition of the Newsletter. This publication marks another milestone in our collective journey toward enhancing professionalism, innovation, and collaboration in the transport sector of Nepal.

At SOTEN, we have remained committed to fostering professional development. Noteworthy among our recent initiatives are technical seminars, policy consultations, and collaborative research efforts aimed at strengthening transport planning and sustainable mobility practices. Our engagement with academic institutions, government agencies, and international partners continues to grow, reflecting the increasing relevance of transport engineering in Nepal's development discourse.

This newsletter covers some of the remarkable efforts and insights from our members with various activities and updates, knowledge articles, and highlights of recent events. I encourage you all to read, reflect, and share your thoughts—because it is through open dialogue and shared learning that we continue to grow as a community.

SOTEN has established the tradition of organizing an international conference during the two-year tenure of the executive committee. The Third International Transport Conference on “Towards Safe, Sustainable and Resilient Mobility” was organized during this period on 11 – 13 April 2025 in Kathmandu.

Through this newsletter, we are reaching out to our members and readers. As a community of transport professionals, let us reaffirm our commitment to safe, inclusive, and climate-resilient and Nepal-centric transport systems. We continue to inspire the next generation of transport professionals who will carry our mission even further.

Thank you for your continued support, enthusiasm, and contribution. See you at the next SOTEN event!

Warm Regards

Hare Ram Shrestha
President
Society of Transport Engineers Nepal



About SOTEN

The Society of Transportation Engineers Nepal (SOTEN), established in 2009, is dedicated to advancing the transportation sector through knowledge sharing, professional development, and capacity-building initiatives. It promotes research, innovation, and expertise within the field, contributing to sustainable and efficient transportation systems in Nepal. SOTEN is also a member of prestigious international organizations such as the Eastern Asia Society of Transport Studies (EASTS), United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia (UNESCAP), TRAN, the International Road Federation (IRF), and the Pacific reflecting its commitment to global collaboration and excellence in transportation engineering.

SOTEN Executive Members

Fifth Executive Committee (2024-26)



Er. Hare Ram Shrestha, Ph.D.
President



Er. Anga Lal Rokaya
Vice-President



Er. Hemant Tiwari
General Secretary



Er. Shrawan Kumar Thapa
Secretary



Er. Bindu Adhikari
Treasurer



Er. Binod Bhattarai
Member



Er. Nal Bahadur Thapa
Member



Er. Pradeep K. Shrestha, Ph.D.
Member



Er. Ram K. Shrestha
Member



Er. Saujanya Nepal
Member



Er. Shiva Ram KC
Member



Er. Top Bahadur Baniya
Member

Past President



Er. Tulasi Sitaula
First Executive Committee
2009-14



Er. Lal Krishna KC
Second Executive Committee
2014-19



Er. Padam Badhadur Shahi, Ph.D.
Third and Fourth Executive Committee
2019-21; 2021-23



Er. Rajendra Raj Sharma
Fifth Executive Committee
2024-25



SOTEN Activities

Knowledge Sharing Series

SOTEN has continued its knowledge sharing series with the following episodes.

Episode 11 - Issues in Nepalese Road Signs Related to the 1968 United Nations Convention on Road Signs and Signals.

SOTEN, in collaboration with DOR, organized the 11th episode of the Knowledge Sharing Series on May 18, 2025, in celebration of the 8th UN Global Road Safety Week. Er. Arjun Jung Thapa (Former Secretary, Government of Nepal) delivered the special episode focusing on "Issues in Nepalese Road Signs Related to the 1968 UN Convention on Road Signs and Signals".



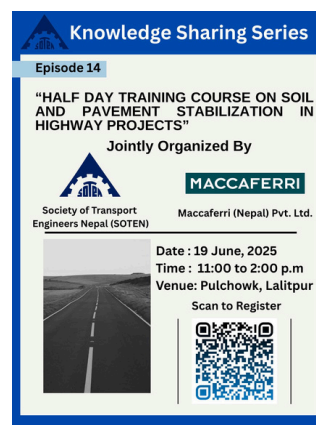
Episode 12 - Site Visit to Nagdhunga Tunnel: Enhancing Practical Insights into Nepal's First Major Road Tunnel Project

As an initiative of capacity building in the transport sector, SOTEN, in collaboration with DOR, created an opportunity for SOTEN members to visit the Nagdhunga tunnel construction site in its 12th episode of the Knowledge Sharing Series on June 2, 2025. The Nagdhunga Tunnel is Nepal's first major road tunnel, spanning 2.68 km, and aims to ease traffic congestion between Kathmandu and Naubise. The visit to the landmark project in Nepal's transport infrastructure sector was an exciting opportunity to gain firsthand knowledge and network with industry professionals.



Episode 13 - Half-Day Training Course on "Strengthening Nepal's Roads: Application of Reinforced Soil Structures"

SOTEN, in collaboration with Maccaferri (Nepal) Pvt. Ltd., organized a Half-Day Training Course on "Strengthening Nepal's Roads: Application of Reinforced Soil Structures" as a Knowledge Sharing Episode exclusively for its members.





Guest Lecture

Insights on Bridge Design and Construction

On 23rd January 2025, the President of our organization delivered an insightful guest lecture to the final-year BE Civil Engineering students at Everest Engineering College. His presentation focused on his extensive experience in bridge design and construction, offering students valuable industry insights. The session was followed by a lively discussion, where students actively engaged with the speaker, asking thought-provoking questions and deepening their understanding of the subject. The event proved to be an enriching experience, bridging the gap between academic learning and real-world application.



Future of Transportation Engineering in Nepal: Insights and Opportunities

Our General Secretary, Hemant Tiwari, conducted an insightful knowledge-sharing session on the topic "What's Next in Transportation Engineering: The Context of Nepal" for the MSc in Transportation Engineering and Management students at United Technical College. He provided a comprehensive discussion on various critical aspects of transportation infrastructure development in Nepal, including road safety, asset management, contract management, public transportation, Pavement Management Systems, and traffic management.

Hemant also emphasized the future scope and opportunities within the transportation engineering field, highlighting the evolving needs of the country. He discussed ongoing studies and the potential for growth in the sector, offering valuable insights into the next steps for advancing transportation infrastructure in Nepal.



Webinar and Workshops

SONEUK Webinar on Road Sector Challenges in the Context of Federalism in Nepal

On 29th March 2025, SONEUK, in collaboration with SOTEN, hosted a webinar titled "The Overall Scenario and Challenges of the Road Sector in the Changed Context of Federalism in Nepal," led by Dr. Hare Ram Shrestha, President of SOTEN. With over 38 years of experience in infrastructure planning and transportation, Dr. Shrestha discussed the evolving classification of Nepal's roads, the impact of federal restructuring, and key challenges in road development. The session, moderated by Er. Subodh Timilsina, Chairperson of SONEUK, included insights from Er. Manoj Pun, General Secretary of SONEUK, and closing remarks from Er. Hemant Tiwari, General Secretary of SOTEN, is providing a platform for engaging discussions on the future of Nepal's road infrastructure. The webinar also highlighted the need for collaborative efforts to overcome road sector challenges and ensure sustainable development in Nepal.



SONEUK Webinar Series 3

Society of Nepalese Engineers in UK

Webinar Title:
"The overall scenario and Challenges of the road sector in the changed context of federalism in Nepal"

In Collaboration With
Society of Transport Engineers Nepal (SOTEN)

Resource Person - Dr. Hare Ram Shrestha

- President of Society of Transport Engineers Nepal (SOTEN)
- Former President of Nepal Engineering Association and Society of Consulting Architectural and Engineering Firms (SCAEF)
- Director, SOTEN Consultants Pvt. Ltd.
- Visiting Faculty at Nepal Engineering College, Universal Science and Engineering College, and United Technical College
- 30+ years of experience in infrastructure planning, transportation policy, and environmental management
- Pioneer of the Green Roads concept in Nepal
- Worked with global organizations including World Bank, ADB, USAID, DFID, WFP/UN, GIZ, and UNCTAD
- Speaker at over 40 national and international conferences

Event Overview:
Join Us, for an insightful discussion on the background, current status, and evolving classification of Nepal's roads, exploring the impact of federal restructuring, key challenges, and constraints in road development and management.

Program Outline:

- Session start by moderator
- Welcome by Er. Manoj Pun, General Secretary, SONEUK
- Introduction of resource person
- Presentation by resource person
- Q & A Session
- Remark from Er. Hemant Tiwari, General Secretary, SOTEN
- Closing by Chairperson

Moderator - Er Subodh Timilsina, Chairperson

For more information email us at chairperson@sonenepal.org or visit our website www.sonenepal.org

"Uniting Engineers for Change"

Book using bar code before 29th Mar 2025, 10:00 AM GMT

Saturday 29th March, 2025
Online through Microsoft Teams
13:30-15:00 GMT
19:15 - 20:45 NST
9:30 - 11:00 EST

Webinar on Urban Transportation: International Case Studies and Potential Opportunities in the Context of Nepal

A webinar titled "Urban Transportation: International Case Studies and Potential Opportunities in the Context of Nepal" was conducted, featuring Er. Prem Lamsal as the speaker. Er. Lamsal, a seasoned Highways Engineer at AtkinsRéalis in Cambridge, UK, brought 15 years of international experience in highway and urban street design, traffic engineering, and road safety to the session. He highlighted global urban transportation case studies and discussed the growing challenges of road safety, traffic congestion, and health and environmental crises in Nepal.

SONEUK Webinar Series 4

Society of Nepalese Engineers in UK

Webinar Title:
"Urban transportation: International case studies and Potential Opportunities in the context of Nepal"

In Collaboration With
Society of Transport Engineers Nepal (SOTEN)

Resource Person - Er. Prem Lamsal

Er. Prem Lamsal is a seasoned Highways Engineer at AtkinsRéalis, based in Cambridge, UK, with over 15 years of international experience. He holds a Master's in Transportation Engineering from MIT and has led complex infrastructure design projects across multiple countries. His core expertise includes highway and urban street design, traffic engineering, and road safety. A Chartered Member of CEMT (UK) and a licensed engineer in Nepal and the Middle East, Prem is recognized for his strategic leadership, cross-cultural collaboration, and impactful contributions to transportation engineering.

Program Moderator - Dr. Birendra Shrestha

Dr. Birendra Shrestha is a Principal Transport Modeler at Transport for London (TfL). Prior to joining TfL, Birendra was a Senior Research Fellow with the Transportation Research Group at the University of Southampton, where he also received his Ph.D. in 2003. His primary research interest lies in analytical and simulation-based modelling of urban traffic management measures. Birendra has presented his work at national and international conferences and published in a number of academic journals.

Event Overview:
Join Us to discuss and explore Nepal's growing challenges of road safety, traffic congestion, and air pollution. With about 20 people riding daily on the roads and vehicle numbers rising sharply, cities like Kathmandu are facing serious health and environmental crises. Poor road conditions, unsafe speeds, rapidly increasing motorized vehicles and unheated emissions are putting lives and the economy at risk. Let us discuss how adopting the Safe System Approach and promoting sustainable transport systems like walking, cycling, and public transportation can create safe, healthier, and more vibrant cities for everyone.

Program Outline:

- Session start by Treasurer Suran Chalise
- Welcome by Er. Manoj Pun, General Secretary, SONEUK
- Treasurer Suran Chalise to introduce Moderator Dr. Birendra Shrestha
- Moderator Dr. Birendra Shrestha introduces Resource Person Er. Prem Lamsal
- Presentation by Resource Person
- Q & A Session
- Remark from Dr. Hare Ram Shrestha, President, SOTEN
- Closing by Er. Subodh Timilsina, Chairperson, SONEUK

Book using the code before 30th May 2025, 10:00 AM GMT

Saturday 3rd May, 2025
Online through Microsoft Teams
14:00-15:30 GMT
19:45 - 21:15 NST
10:00 - 11:30 EST

For more information email us at chairperson@sonenepal.org or visit our website www.sonenepal.org

"Uniting Engineers for Change"

The webinar, moderated by Dr. Birendra Shrestha, General Secretary of SONEUK, and with remarks from Dr. Hare Ram Shrestha, President of SOTEN, provided valuable insights into potential solutions and innovative approaches for addressing transportation issues in Nepal. The session fostered a collaborative discussion aimed at exploring future opportunities to improve Nepal's urban transportation systems.

Workshop on "Toward Climate-Resilient Urban Mobility in Nepal: Mapping Risks and Uncovering Opportunities"

SOTEN, in partnership with GD Labs and other organizations, hosted a workshop titled "Toward Climate-Resilient Urban Mobility in Nepal: Mapping Risks and Uncovering Opportunities" on June 8, 2025. The event brought together urban planners, engineers, and policymakers to discuss sustainable transport strategies for Nepal. It served as a crucial first step in developing practical, inclusive solutions tailored to Nepal's unique socioeconomic and environmental challenges. The workshop also set the stage for ongoing collaborations and initiatives that will drive the development of a more sustainable, adaptive, and climate-resilient transportation system in Nepal, ensuring long-term improvements. The discussions highlighted the urgent need for innovative, climate-resilient solutions to address the growing mobility challenges in Nepal's urban areas. Participants also explored potential policy frameworks and technological advancements to foster a sustainable future for urban transportation in the country. The workshop also highlighted the need for engaging local communities to ensure inclusive and equitable transportation solutions for Nepal.



Conference and Symposium

KEC Conference

Symposium on Traffic and Transportation Engineering was conducted as part of the KEC Conference 2025, organized in collaboration with Kantipur Engineering College (KEC) and Safe and Sustainable Travel Nepal (SSTN). The event, scheduled for 24th April 2025, was chaired by Shrawan Thapa, Secretary of SOTEN, and moderated by Surakshya Kafle from SSTN. It featured a special presentation by Guru Adhikari, along with five presentations from young researchers: Samridhi Singh, Ashu Pokhrel, Sandesh Acharya, Ayushma Sapkota, and Nita Kumary Ishar. This symposium provided an interactive platform for discussing contemporary challenges and innovative solutions in traffic and transportation engineering, addressing Nepal's mobility issues and exploring academic-industry partnerships. All students, researchers, and professionals were invited to join us at Kantipur Engineering College for this valuable event. A great opportunity for networking and collaboration in transportation engineering.



Memorandum of Understanding

MOU with Pulchowk Campus

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between SOTEN and the Institute of Engineering at Pulchowk Campus in January. The objective of this agreement is to enhance collaboration for research, innovation, capacity building, and to foster excellence in Nepal's transport sector. Both institutions agreed to organize seminars, workshops, and training sessions jointly. They also committed to sharing expertise and resources to advance sustainable transport solutions in Nepal. Additionally, provisions have been made to offer research grants to MSc students, supporting and encouraging advanced academic research in transportation engineering.



MOU with United Technical College (UTech)

A MOU was signed between SOTEN and United Technical College (UTech), Bharatpur, Chitwan, on May 4, 2025, to promote research and capacity building in transportation engineering, marking SOTEN's research expansion beyond Kathmandu Valley.





MOU with Society of Nepalese Engineers in UK (SONEUK)

An MOU was signed between SOTEN and SONEUK to foster collaboration in the transportation sector. The agreement emphasizes capacity building, mutual training, workshops, webinars, knowledge exchange, and mentorship. Both parties are committed to joint research and project development, aiming to deliver impactful transportation engineering projects. This partnership also aims to connect Nepalese engineers abroad with local initiatives for greater innovation and technical advancement.



Supporting in Bachelor Level Exhibition

समाधान Makerthon, Thapathali Campus

Hemant Tiwari, General Secretary, provided overview of problem on traffic congestion and mass transit system as a part of orientation for Samadhan Makerthon at Thapathali Campus. The event was organized by Yathartha and Civil Engineering Students Society - CESS-Thapathali on 12 January, 2025.



AADHAR, Pulchowk Campus

SOTEN supported and collaborated with CESS NEPAL Pulchowk Campus for AADHAR 2081 (January 17 to 19 – AADHAR 2081, Pulchowk Campus).



YATHARTHA, Thapathali Campus

SOTEN became a supporting partner for YATHARTHA on January 28, YATHARTHA, Thapathali Campus.



Representation of SOTEN

Representing Nepal at 3rd World Youth Assembly, Marrakech, Morocco

Our General Secretary represents Nepal at the 3rd World Youth Assembly from 15–16 Feb 2025, in Marrakech, Morocco. He advocated for road safety, representing Nepal in the 3rd World Youth Assembly 2025, and emphasized how youth can lead projects on capacity building, advocacy, and coordination with all stakeholders. It was a side event of the Fourth Ministerial Conference on Road Safety, Morocco. His participation highlighted Nepal's growing youth engagement in global transport and road safety dialogues.



8th UN Global Road Safety Week

SOTEN participated in the 8th UN Global Road Safety Week, engaging in various activities focused on awareness and knowledge dissemination. On May 18, 2025, SOTEN conducted a knowledge-sharing session to celebrate the event, discussing "Issues in Nepalese Road Signs Related to the 1968 UN Convention on Road Signs and Signals." Additionally, SOTEN representatives took part in a workshop on International Best Practices and Case Studies in Road Safety, organized by the National Road Safety Council (NRSC), UNDP, and UNESCAP. Our Vice President, Angalal Rokaya, also represented SOTEN during the UN Global Road Safety Week Sticker Launch Program, organized by the National Road Safety Council and UNDP. These activities highlight SOTEN's ongoing commitment to improving road safety in Nepal and globally. These efforts reflect SOTEN's dedication to promoting safer road environments and fostering international collaboration to address road safety challenges.



Call for SOTEN Research Grant 2025

SOTEN is pleased to announce the SOTEN Research Grant 2025, designed to promote research in the field of Transportation Engineering. The grant offers four research opportunities in the following categories: Independent Research Proposal, Academic Research Proposal (reserved specifically for M.Sc. students in Transportation Engineering), and Research Proposal (reserved for female candidates). Interested candidates are invited to submit research proposals that should include a detailed background, a problem statement, research objectives, the significance of the study, a detailed methodology, expected outcomes, a work schedule, a financial estimate, and a list of proposed team members. Priority will be given to proposals that are innovative and focus on solving key challenges in transportation. Each research grant will provide a funding ceiling of NRS 50,000. The deadline for submitting proposals is 24th June 2025. This is an excellent opportunity for individuals to contribute valuable research that can shape the future of transportation in Nepal. For further information and to apply, visit www.soten.org.np or contact soten.nepal@gmail.com. We encourage all eligible candidates to take advantage of this opportunity to advance the field of transportation engineering and contribute to the development of Nepal.



Pre-Event 3rd International Transport Conference

The Pre-Event of the 3rd International Transport Conference was successfully held on 9th April 2025 at the Universal Engineering and Science College, Chakupat, Lalitpur. Centered around the theme “National Context and Efforts on Safe & Sustainable Mobility”, the program brought together experts, practitioners, and enthusiasts committed to shaping the future of transportation in Nepal.

The session featured distinguished speakers, including Er. Vivek Gupta from Safe and Sustainable Travel Nepal, Dr. Satish Prasad Barnawal, Project Lead for Road Safety at Indra Ram Health, Ar. Rubin Singh Maharjan from the Nepal Cycle Society, Er. Pranita Rana from the Nepal Injury Research Centre, Er. Asmita Pokhrel from Traffic and Transport Unlimited Solutions, and Er. Samridhi Singh representing the Society of Transportation Engineers Nepal.

Throughout the program, speakers shared valuable insights on transport safety, sustainable mobility practices, and innovative solutions to address Nepal’s evolving mobility challenges. Attendees had the opportunity to engage in thought-provoking discussions, exchange ideas, and network with professionals driving change in the transportation sector.

The event served as an important platform to highlight both national efforts and collaborative opportunities for creating safer, greener, and more inclusive transportation systems.

With its engaging discussions and active participation, the pre-event set a strong momentum leading up to the main conference, reinforcing the shared vision for a safer and more sustainable transport future in Nepal.



Conference Special

Third International Transport Conference 2025



The Society of Transport Engineers Nepal (SOTEN) – in association with **Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport (MoPIT)**, Government of Nepal – and the **Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD)** organized the Third International Transport Conference from 11–13 April 2025 at Hotel Yak and Yeti, Kathmandu, and marked a significant milestone in advancing the national and regional dialogue on sustainable mobility. With the theme “Towards Safe, Sustainable, Efficient, and Resilient Mobility,” the event brought together over 320 participants from 13 countries, including policymakers, government officials, academics, researchers, and transport professionals. Over the course of three days, the conference provided a robust platform for international knowledge sharing and collaboration, featuring 15 technical sessions, 45 thought-provoking presentations, and 5 keynote speeches from leading voices in the field. A total of 75 distinguished speakers – 23 international and 52 national – shared insights on a wide range of critical topics, including road safety, sustainable urban transport, innovative mobility technologies, and the future of resilient transport infrastructure. The event also facilitated engaging panel discussions and networking opportunities that led to valuable partnerships and actionable resolutions aimed at enhancing





Nepal's transport systems.

Day 1: Inaugural Day

The inaugural day of the SOTEN Conference 2025 (April 11) began with keynote addresses from Er. Keshab Kumar Sharma (MoPIT, Nepal), Prof. Kiyoyuki Kaito (Osaka University), and Dr. Bindu Lohani (Clean Air Asia), setting the tone for discussions on transport safety, sustainability, and infrastructure management. The sessions delved into integrated transport solutions, featuring insights on Asian transport assessments (Er. Sudhir Gotha), pedestrian behavior modeling (Makoto Chikararaishi), and innovative road condition technologies (Er. Robin Workman). Global road safety practices took center stage, with experts like Er. Anusha Rajasooriya (TRL, England) discussing school zones, Ali Zayerzadeh highlighting pedestrian safety improvements, and Albin Tharakan presenting iRAP assessments in Nepal. The day concluded with discussions on transport planning, including accessibility in Nepal (Kevin McPherson), transit-oriented development in Thailand (Dr. Chaiwat Sangsrichan), and rural road challenges (Dr. Jagat Shrestha), blending national and international perspectives to advance sustainable transport solutions.

This comprehensive first day set the stage for robust discussions on transport infrastructure, safety, and sustainability, featuring a blend of national and international perspectives.



Day 2 (April 12)

The second day of the conference featured parallel sessions on research innovation, sustainable roads, civil aviation, road safety, and urban planning. The morning's Research & Innovation session (chaired by Dr. Surya Raj Acharya) highlighted studies on road crash costs (Er. Maheshwari Dhami), Kathmandu's walkability (Er. Divya Shahi), and eco-friendly road materials like plastic waste (Bimal Bastola) and lignin-based asphalt (Amar Kumar Deo).

Concurrently, the Sustainability of Roads session explored nature-based road resilience (Shuva Sharma), landslide mitigation (Er. Suresh Neupane), and slope stability (Er. Tunisha Gyawali), while the Civil Aviation track covered noise management (Dr. Patcharida Sungtrisearn), Tribhuvan Airport's status (Er. Dipendra Shrestha), and Nijgadh Airport's strategic role (Er. Sanjeev Singh Kathayat). The afternoon delved into Road Safety,

featuring cold plastic road markings (Amit Thatte), Nepal's crash database (Dr. Partha Parajuli), and insights from Australia's safety strategies (Alex Karki). Meanwhile, Urban Planning discussions included transport integration (Dr. Panos Prevedouros) and Kathmandu's public transport efficiency (Er. Shree Ram Dhakal), offering a comprehensive exploration of sustainable and innovative transport solutions.



Day 3 (April 13)

April 13, Sunday marked the final day of the conference with a strong focus on sustainable urban mobility and strategic planning. The morning began with the Sustainable Urban Mobility session (09:30–10:50), chaired by Padam Mainali and moderated by Kuber Nepali. Melvin Ahuja opened with a comparative analysis of urban transport systems across Asia, followed by Partha Bosu's examination of transport emissions in South Asia. Dr. Madan B. Regmi concluded the session with actionable strategies for developing sustainable public transport in Kathmandu.

The Panel Discussion on Federal Transport Prioritization (11:00–12:30), moderated by Dr. Chandra Bahadur Shrestha, brought together mayors from Lalitpur and other cities, along with CEOs of IBN and federal/provincial representatives. This high-level dialogue addressed critical challenges in infrastructure development under Nepal's federal structure, emphasizing coordinated planning and resource allocation.



The afternoon featured an International Knowledge Sharing session (13:30–15:05) chaired by Rajendra Raj Sharma, where global experts presented cutting-edge approaches: Dr. Kazuya Tomiyama on human-centered pavement management, Prof. Dr. Kazuya Aoki on road asset management strategies, Prof. Dr. Tanuj Chopra on sustainable asset management systems, and Dr. Ranjan Dahal on geotechnical solutions for Nepal's road infrastructure.

The conference concluded with a Closing Ceremony (17:00–18:30) featuring remarks from key dignitaries including the Secretaries of MoPIT and MOUD, Hon. Aman Maskey of MoPID Bagmati, and the Vice Chair of NPC. These closing addresses reinforced the conference's key themes and commitments to action.



Summary

The three-day conference on Safety, Sustainability, and Resiliency of Transport Infrastructure in Nepal brought together over 300 participants, including government officials, international experts, academics, and industry leaders. The event featured 12 sessions, 45 presentations, and 5 keynote speeches, 18 International Speeches covering topics such as road safety, sustainable urban mobility, and innovative technologies.



Transport Affairs

Budget 2082 (2025/26)

The budget for this year has been announced. A 131.59 billion budget for the Ministry of Physical Infrastructure and Transport has been allocated which has been reduced by Rs 30 billions. This year, one of the major strategic sought constructions which is connected to under construction fast track, Nijgadh International Airport has been prioritized in this year's budget. [source: sharesansar, 29 May 2025, <https://www.sharesansar.com/newsdetail/government-prioritizes-construction-of-nijgadh-international-airport-2025-05-29>]

Special provisions have been made for infrastructure development including mega projects such as Nijgadh-Kathmandu fast track, Butwal-Narayangarh road completion, Gwarko flyover completion, completion of Pokhara Muglin Highway and Karnali corridor. [<https://ica.edu.np/blogs/nepal-budget-2080>]. The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) is set to split into two autonomous entities for regulatory and infrastructure development purposes. [myrepublica]

The highlights of the budget and the transportation related projects are

- 3.56 billions for Postal highway
- With the completion date within fiscal year 2083/84 – Kathmandu Tarai Madhesh Expressway
- Completion of Aanbukhaireni-Pokhara Road sections – 4 lanes
- Rani-Itahari, Birgunj-Pathlaiya, Belahiya-Butwal, Mohanapul-Attarai connecting check points of the border to East West Highway to be completed in the next one year.
- 2.51 billion for the construction of the Madan Bhandari Highway – connects Bahudangi in Jhapa to Rupal in Dadeldhura
- Talcha and Rara road to be blacktopped
- Upgrading of Surkhet-Khulalu-Kalikot-Jumla Road and Surkhet-Mahabulek-Nagma-Gamgadhi under Karnali Highway
- Tamor corridor, Damak Chisapani Road, Bheri Corridor, Dumre-Besisahar-Chame Road, Kakrahawa-Saljhandi-Sandhikharka-Dhorpatan Road, Ratna Highway, Rapti Highway, Khuta-Dipayal Road
- 1.24 billion allocated for Kalanki-Basundhara-Dhobikhola Road section of Ring road
- Funds for disaster hit projects have been allocated for the projects BP Highway, Araniko Highway, Kanti Highway and Mechi Highway
- Opened the way for other Tunnel routes such as Dumkibar-Bardaghat, Khurkot-Chiyabari, Babi-Chhinchu, Majhimatar-Shaktikhor, Hemja-Nayapul, Kulekhani-Bhimphedi, Dharan-Leuti
- Feasibility study for Tokha Chhahare, Shivapur-Bhaluwang, Ranighat-Bhurigaun, Dolalghat-Charnawati and Hattisar-Babai tunnel
- Detailed Study for electric railway with the standard gauge standards based on the East West Highway
- Bardibas-Nijgadh section to be constructed with the standard of East-West Electric Railway



- Kathmandu-Kerung Railway detailed project report to be prepared
- Preparation of other south connecting railway – Newjalpaiguri-Kakadbhita, Nautanwa-Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj Road – Nepalgunj
- provisions for the Inland water transport development and their development through feasibility study along with the preparations for the operation in major rivers that includes Koshi and Gandaki to the Kolkata Port

Long awaited operation on Gwarko Overpass

The long-awaited Gwarko overpass, built to ease severe traffic congestion on the Koteswar–Gwarko–Kalanki road section, has finally opened to the public on 20 June 2025. It was inaugurated by Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli. Initiated in February 2022 under the EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) contract model, the project faced multiple delays due to design issues and construction halts, pushing completion beyond its original deadline. The contract faced a challenging situation where a joint gap was observed in the concrete panel due to ground subsidence beneath it. The flyover is four lane with 320 m and a 185 m ramps on Balkumari and B & B hospital sides with a 35 m bridge assuring 6 m vertical clearance. (Source: Kathmandu Post, 20 June)



Fig. Before and after Construction [source: Businessage & The Kathmandu Post]



Delays – the frequent construction problem

One of the major construction problem of the country is delay. The physical progress of the Narayangarh Butwal road expansion project is currently at 66.50% [20 May 2025, Khabarhub.com]. The 90.87 kms road blacktopped of 113.53 km on one side has been completed. Currently, the Daunne section is under construction. The first deadline for the completion was August of 2022 which faced extension multiple times. The most difficult section of all, the Daunne section is set to have 3 lanes along 14 kms. Closure during night hours and day hours were alternately implemented to complete works in these sections. The cost of the entire project is Rs 17 billion.



Daunne stretch under construction [nepalverifiednews.com, 6 April, 2025]

Koshi Investment Summit bringing new taste in transportations sectors

Koshi investment summit conducted between May 1-2 in Biratnagar, the provincial capital of Koshi, first of its kind to attract investment of Rs 175 billions in multiple designed projects. [The Annapurna Express, May 1, 2025]. The ictframe.com states about the infrastructure projects presented in the summit. Among which, Kanakai-Illam-Sandakpur Podway with highest budget of 25 billion budget, Halesi and Koshi Podway of Rs 12 billion and Rs 5 billion were projects that led the infrastructure projects in the summit. The investment project also included Electric Vehicle Factory in Morang worth Rs 3 billions. With the purpose of the urban and tourism development, a Rs 3 billion modern bus terminal in Kakarbhitta was showcased. [source: ictframe.com, May 2 <https://ictframe.com/koshi-province-investment-summit/>].

Of the planned Rs 175 bn, Koshi investment summit secured Rs 152 billion in project deals where 46 projects were signed of which 19 projects were set for private sectors while 27 were set to follow PPP models (A total of 71 projects were showcased during the summit). The project details could also be seen in the website.

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Ride Sharing Agenda

Public transport services halt their services since May 30 till June 3 with the 17 point demands which included the scrapping of the provision allowing private vehicles to transport passengers like public vehicles, the removal of the expiry limit of public vehicles and the annulment of the ride sharing policy. The nationwide strike started from June 2 for indefinite period. As the government decided to suspend the regulations of the Gandaki Province for a month, on June 3, the country was relieved with reinstating of the public transportation. [source: June 3, Nepal press]

Miscellaneous

A 3.3% rise in the fare by DoTM was announced for public transport operators with additional 0.81% increase for vehicles operating on hill districts and 0.05 percent increase in Terai for freight vehicle. This was last adjusted on August 16, 2023. [Republica, 6 January].

As soon as the monsoon's rainfall enters woe's continue the travel through roads in Nepal. This is covered by The Kathmandu Post on 4th May, 2025. Rainfall disrupted multiple sections in major highways in central and western part of the country that included Kantilok Path, Araniko Highway, The Butwal Narayangarh section and the Kaligandaki Corridor. Yet another failure due to overloading occurred in Chormara bridge resulting in blockage of the East – West Highway. This truss bridge was constructed in 2031 which collapsed at 10:00 AM on May 12 following damages to the steel sections of the bridge. The similar collapse was also observed 4 months before this incident to the Dumkibas section of the highway. This raises a wide concern to the implementation body and requirement of the control of the overloaded heavy vehicles plying in the most important highways of the country.



Damaged section of the truss bridge at Chormara of the East West Highway sections
[source: Kantipur 13 May, 2025]

Air flights that left passengers stranded at Tribhuvan International Airport due to cancellations of the flights to Gulf countries have reopened after the airspace of Qatar has been reopened. All the canceled flights have started departing from June 24. This shows the direct impact of instability in the regions in the flights schedule. The day ahead of reopening, a flight to Doha cancellation caused 269 passengers stranded. [Republica, June 24, 2025]



Society of Transport Engineers Nepal

ATO and SOTEN Renew Partnership

One of the key highlights of the event was the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between ATO and SOTEN. This MoU signifies the continued shared commitment of the ATO and SOTEN to strengthen knowledge exchange, collaborate on capacity-building initiatives, as well as collaborative research activities aimed at enriching the discourse on sustainable transport in Nepal, and beyond. This collaborative effort between ATO and SOTEN symbolizes the conference's broader goal: to drive substantial reforms in Nepal's transport sector, guiding the government towards building safer, more sustainable, and inclusive mobility solutions for the future.



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Call for Contribution



Hemant Tiwari
General Secretary
SOTEN

This Newsletter is the initiative of 5th Executive Committee of SOTEN where we bring the summary of SOTEN activities together with major national affairs on transport sector. Being the first issue, the newsletter may have some rooms for improvement, and we will keep enhancing the quality of newsletter in future. We planned to publish newsletter quarterly. In this regard, we would like to request all SOTEN members to share any of your individual or organizational achievement or blogs/articles. There is also a dedicated space on SOTEN website for our member's blogs/articles. Promoting research and publication is one of the major goals of SOTEN and we are moving on that track through these kinds of initiatives. Feel free to provide us feedback.

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