

CLIMATE CHANGE TALK CAPTURED TAPLEJUNG

7 February, 2012

Funling Bazar, the headquarters of Nepal's remote mountainous district Taplejung observed a day-long activities on climate change and its impacts on Feb 7, attracting hundreds of enthusiastic high school students who were well dressed in their school uniform. Altogether 12 high schools actively participated in the program, some of whom walked over five hours on foot, as they knew it was important for them to understand about the much-talked topic but less told in their villages scattered in rugged topography close to the Mount Kanchanjungha in the Himalaya. The students were accompanied by their science teachers and also principals, who were worried that the snow white mountains are turning into black rocks for they are getting less snow in recent years.

A dozen of colorful posters with photos or graphics explaining about climate change and its impacts on human health, agriculture, forests, biodiversity and livelihood were displayed at the premises of Shree Bhanu Jan Higher Secondary School, the coordinator of the program. Thanks, the posters were all in Nepali, the language spoken by many in this multi-ethnic and multi-linguist country. The participants, specifically the teachers, liked the materials and asked if they could be made available for teaching. They were later provided with quiz books and science questions-answers.



In the Climate Quiz, Bhanu Jan HS School bagged first prize, while Change HS School and Janata HS School stood second and third. Each quiz had three members, at least one being a girl student. All 12 participating schools and their students got consolation prizes and certificates. The winner school got microscope as prize, while the other finalists got science educational materials. Professor Dr Prakash Chandra Adhikary, Secretary of Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Promotion Division Chief Ms Ramila Raut, headmasters and representatives of various educational organizations gave away the prizes.



In the interaction program, NAST Academician Dr Dinesh Raj Bhujju initiated the discussion. He explained the causes of climate change, especially the human generated factors and some of the adaptation measures. Mr Matrika Bhattarai, a School Principal said Funling is no more cold even during the winter season, and Kishore Rai, a science teacher recalled that they have not



seen snow for last 10 years in the area. The participating students raised why carbon dioxide and other green house gases would stop the heat to dissipate.

Two popular radio stations in the region, Tamor Community Radio and Radio Taplejung had live broadcast of the program, which covered nearby districts Panchthar and Terathum as well.

The program at Funling was a part of CDKN supported Strengthening NCCKMC Project. Chief District Officer Mr Dev Raj Dhakal inaugurated the program amidst a special gathering, also attended by chief and/or representatives of the districts such as education office, teachers' associations, school management committee, police and armed police.