

Activities Undertaken at the Central Department of Geography: 2008-2010

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Introduction

The Central Department of Geography (CDG) at Kirtipur is one of the leading Departments of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tribhuvan University. The Department was established in 1958. Since then, it has been actively serving the country in higher education and research. CDG runs regular Master's and PhD programmes in Geography. It is a pioneer Department in running courses - Geographic Information System (GIS) and Remote Sensing (RS) in the country. Being a central department, it has to look after the academic programmes and activities of 22 Departments of Geography under the Tribhuvan University's constituent campuses spreading across different parts of the country, where there are proficiency certificate and bachelor level studies. Of these, the Department of Geography at Prithvi Narayan Campus, Pokhara also runs regular Master's degree, in addition to proficiency certificate and bachelor levels. This paper portrays the academic activities concerning with strengthening of geography subject being held at CDG from October 2008 onward.¹

Revision of Courses

In 2009, the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences (FHSS), Tribhuvan University (TU) revised the courses of Master's degrees of different subjects including Geography substantially. The Geography syllabus consists of two major types such as *compulsory or required* and *optional*. The students are required to take 10 courses for the Master's degree in Geography. All students must take compulsory courses, whereas optional courses are offered to the students as suggested by the Department. Each course carries 100 marks. Since the Master's degree is a two years course, there will be five courses in each year.

Students with successfully completed three years Bachelors' degree from a recognized university with Geography or any disciplines recognized by the Tribhuvan University shall be considered eligible to apply for admission to the Master's degree in Geography. However, admission of the students will be based strictly on the merit list, which will be based on the enrollment capacity of this department.

Compulsory Courses

There are three courses as compulsory. Usually the first two courses, Geog 531 and 532 as listed below are being offered in the first year and the last one, i.e. Geog 536 in the second year. The compulsory courses are as follows:

Geog 531	Modern Geographical Thought
Geog 532	Research Techniques and Quantitative Methods
Geog 536	Workshop on Geographic Problems of Nepal

Optional Courses

There are seven categories under the 'optional course.' Each category contains varying number of optional courses. Of these, seven courses are being offered to the students, usually one from each category. Though optional, three courses such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Remote Sensing (RS), and Thesis are used to be treated as compulsory. Because of speciality of the Department, students are advised to take GIS and RS in each year and thesis for research writing skill. The optional courses are:

Geog 533-1	Physical Geography
Geog 533-2	Mountain Landforms and Processes
Geog 534-1	Human Settlements and Ecology
Geog 534-2	Human Ecology
Geog 535-1	Geographic Information Systems
Geog 535-2	Rural Development Planning-I
Geog 535-3	Advanced Political Geography
Geog 535-4	Advanced Population Geography
Geog 535-5	Rural Land Use Planning (to be developed)
Geog 537-1	Regional Development Planning and Techniques
Geog 537-2	Geography of Tourism
Geog 537-3	Agricultural Transformation and Food Security
Geog 537-4	Geography of Transportation (to be developed)
Geog 537-5	Local Governance and Public Policy (to be developed)
Geog 538-1	Remote Sensing
Geog 538-2	Mountain Climate and Hydrology
Geog 538-3	Biogeography
Geog 538-4	Glacial and Periglacial Environment (to be developed)
Geog 538-5	Landscape Ecology (to be developed)
Geog 539-1	Natural Resources and Environmental Management
Geog 539-2	Urban Planning and Management
Geog 539-3	Climate Change and Human Adaptation
Geog 539-4	Rural Development Planning-II
Geog 539-5	Population, Environment and Development
Geog 540-1	Thesis
Geog 540-2	Gender and Development
Geog 540-3	Project Cycle Management (to be developed)

Publications

The Department publishes its journal annually. Other publications are either of an edited volume of the conference papers or a handbook of teaching materials. The publications are as follows:

- 2009. *Public Policy and Local Development: Constraints and Potentials*. Editors – Pushkar K Pradhan (Tribhuvan University, Nepal), Doris Wastl-Walter (Bern University, Switzerland), and Steven Folmar (Wake Forest University, USA), published by the International Geographical Union (IGU) Commission on Geography on Public Policy.
- 2009. *Geographical Research Method Handbook*. Editor – Pushkar K Pradhan, published by the Central Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University and National Centre of Competence in Research (NCCR) North-South, Switzerland.
- 2009. *Geographical Journal of Nepal*. Volume 7.

Research Works

In addition to teaching as a regular academic programme, CDG has completed the following research studies and projects successfully. CDG has obtained these studies through competition.

- 2009 May. *Preparation of Digital GIS Database of Nine Districts*, for the Local Governance and Community Development Programme (LGCDP) of the Ministry of Local Development (MLD), the Government of Nepal (GON) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).
- 2009 May-Sep. *Nepal Migrants' Baseline Survey*. This joint-project has been carried out with the Nepal Institute of Development Studies (NIDS) for the World Bank.
- 2009 Jun-Oct. *Analysis of Natural Resources Potentiality, Market Demand and Target Groups* of two districts of Jumla and Kapilbastu for the Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP) supported by the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supply (MOICS)/GON and UNDP.
- 2009. CDG's faculty members have been involved to provide services to the *Baseline Survey for Climate Change in the Mountain Districts of Nepal* for ICIMOD.

Training

CDG has conducted the following training on demand basis of the clientele. However, in case of GIS/RS, it has been conducting the training since 1994, with over 28 such training being completed.

- November 2008. *Research Methodology* to the Faculty Members of the Post-Graduate Programme on Population and Development of the Purbanchal University, Biratnagar for 15 days. There were also three faculty members of CDGTU (Central Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University) participated in that methodology training.
- January 2009. *Application of GIS to Municipal Development Planning* to the officials of the Partner Municipalities of PPPUE (Public Private Partnerships for Urban Environment)/MLD/ UNDP. Altogether 14 personnel including engineers, architects, and administrators of those 10 municipalities were participated in the training.
- January 2010. *Application of GIS to Planning and Management of Livestock Development Services*. This three-weeks-technical level training was attended by 15 officials of different divisions of the Department of Livestock Services, Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Seminars/Conferences

In order to enhance knowledge of the scholars on geographic contemporary issues and problems through sharing experiences, CDG has successfully accomplished a National Seminar on Environment, Livelihood and Micro Enterprises held at Kirtipur from December 14 – 16, 2009. Sponsored by the University Grants Commission (UGC), the seminar was attended by 36 geographers involved in various working fields, representing different parts of the country. Altogether 22 academic papers were presented. Discussions were made on each paper for which two rapporteurs had jotted down the comments. An edited volume will be published including those duly submitted papers accepted by the editorial committee of the volume. The seminar also comprised a number of dignitaries.¹

CDG is going to hold an International Geographic Union (IGU) Conference on '*Geography of Governance: Dynamics for Local Development*' in Kathmandu in October 2011. This conference is being held in collaboration with the IGU Commission of Geography of Governance.² Interested scholars, researchers, development specialists, government officials, etc can apply for participation.

Collaborations

CDG has signed on Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with four organizations, including government, UNDP supported programmes, and civil society for academic collaborations.

- 2009. Public Private Partnership for Urban Environment (PPPUE – NEP/04/001), Ministry of Local Development (MLD) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shall provide financial support to 5 Master's students for thesis writing on geographical analysis of public private partnerships and the course on public private partnership in urban development planning and management. Upon interest, few Master's degree completed students can work as an intern at the PPPUE office, as per the availability of working space.
- 2009. National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET) will provide financial support to a maximum of 5 Master's students for thesis writing on the analysis of earthquake related vulnerabilities in the selected municipalities of Nepal
- 2010. National Tourism Board (NTB) shall provide financial support to a maximum of 5 Master's students for thesis writing on geographic analysis of tourism development related issues and problems in Nepal

¹ The inauguration programme of the seminar were attended by the distinguished guests comprising Dr Kamal Krishna Joshi, Chairman-UGC (Chief Guest), Prof Dr Soorya Lal Amatya, Rector-Tribhuvan University, Prof Upendra Man Malla, President-Nepal Geographical Society, Heads of the Geography Departments of TU Campuses of Kathmandu Valley, the Head of the Central Department of Education, Kirtipur, and CDG's all Faculty Members and regular students.

² The IGU Commission on Geography of Governance (GOG) has Prof Ján Buček, Department of Human Geography and Demogeography, Comenius University, Bratislava, Slovakia its Chairperson and Prof Dr Pushkar K Pradhan, Central Department of Geography, Tribhuvan University as one of its 8 Steering Committee Full Members. IGU has created this Commission for the period 2009 – 2012. Information on detailed programme and participation can be obtained from IGU Bulletin, or its website, or Chairperson's email: bucek@fns.uniba.sk or CDG's cdg@wlink.com.np or Organizer's (Pushkar) email: pushkar@reachpuba.org

- 2010. Micro Enterprise Development Programme (MEDEP), Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supply (MOICS), and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) shall provide financial support to 3 Master's students and 1 PhD student for their thesis and dissertation completion, as well as for running course of micro enterprise in urban development planning and management.

Guest Lectures

To make the faculty members and students of geography aware with the contemporary geographic concepts, approaches, trend, or developments, two guest lectures by the international scholars were held at CDG, such as:

- *Factors Influencing the Evacuation Decision: the Case of Cyclone Sidr in Bangladesh* by Prof Dr Bimal Kanti Paul, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, USA – Nov 15, 2009. The talk programme was attended by the CDG family members (faculties + students), invitees from the Nepal Geographical Society (President and members) and others.
- *Use of GIS to Access Rates of Soil Erosion and Sediment Delivery to Streams: Application in a Watershed in Kentucky, USA* by Ms Narcisa Pricope, University of Florida, USA on Dec 7, 2009. The programme was attended by the faculty members and students of Geography, Botany, and Geology.

Miscellaneous

In addition to those activities mentioned above, CDG has achieved or performed the following activities:

- CDG has been selected for an award by the University Grants Commission (UGC) for establishing 'Research Management Cell' in its premise. Under this programme, CDG's academic activities shall further be strengthened. Accordingly, research activities by some faculty members and Master's students, publications, collection of documents related to the geographic research and network of computers and internet/email facility to all faculty members and students are major works to be performed. All PhD students are being encouraged to access to the facilities of the research cell. Under the Head, an advisory committee consisting of four senior faculty members has already been created. Of these, a coordinator has been nominated for regular running of the cell activities. A separate cell unit room is being allocated.
- Likewise an award for conducting research methodology workshop for the geography faculty members, particularly the PhD students has been awarded by UGC to CDG TU for this year 2010. The workshop is being held before June 2010.
- CDG has obtained 15 ArcGIS keys as gift from ESRI, USA in July 2009. These keys with updated GIS software will further enhance the capability and knowledge of CDG faculty members in teaching and research.
- A farewell programme was held to CDG's retired faculty members - Prof Dr Vidya BS Kansakar, Mr Indra N Manandhar, Prof Dr Binod P Shrestha, and Prof Dr Nanda G Ranjitkar and an administrative staff (Senior Office Helper) – Mr Chola Bahadur KC.³

³ Certificate of appreciation for contributing to the development of higher education in Nepal and symbol of memento as token was distributed to each retired faculty member and administrative staff by Prof Dr Soorya L Amatya, Rector of Tribhuvan University amidst a programme held at the Tribhuvan Park, Thankot, Kathmandu.

Human Resource of CDG – faculty members

CDG consists of a team of faculty members with specialized in different fields of studies, working for academic enhancement of geographic related subjects.

- Pushkar K PRADHAN. *Professor and Head*. PhD (Institute of Geography & Regional Science, Klagenfurt University, Austria, 1997), MSc (HSD, AIT Bangkok, 1989), MA (Geography, TU, 1979). Urban Studies, Urban-Rural Linkages, Regional Development Planning, Urban Informal Sector, Micro Enterprises and Livelihood, GIS/RS, Natural Resource Management, Monitoring and Evaluation and Public Policies and Development.
- Bhim Prasad SUBEDI. *Professor*. PhD (University of Hawaii, USA, 1993), MA Dist. (TU, 1980). Population, Sustainable Livelihoods, Field Methods, Migration and Development.
- Padma Chandra POUDEL. *Professor*. PhD (Banaras Hindu University, India, 1996), MA (TU, 1980). Tourism & Environment, Urban Development & Planning, Irrigation Management and Monitoring.
- Narendra Raj KHANAL. *Professor*. PhD (TU, 2003), MA (TU, 1981). Mountain Geography, Natural Resource Management, GIS, Quantitative Technique and Natural Hazards.
- Hriday Lal KOIRALA. *Reader*. PhD (University of Gauhati, India, 2007), MTech (Andhra University, India, 1999), MA (TU, 1987). RS/GIS, EIA and Urban Environment.
- Pashupati NEPAL. *Reader*. PhD on-going (TU, Nepal), MA (TU, 1989). Physical Geography, Local Organization, Urban Rural Studies, Settlement Studies, Field Studies.
- Moti Lal GHIMIRE. *Lecturer*. PhD on-going (Japan, 2008), MTech (Andhra University, India, 2003), MA (TU, 1990). Applied Geomorphology, Mountain Environment, GIS/RS.
- Dhyanendra RAI. *Lecturer*. MA (TU, 1990). Physical and Human Geography, Field Studies.
- Umesh Kumar MANDAL. *Reader*. MTech (Andhra University, India, 1999), MA (TU, 1992). Quantitative Technique, RS/GIS, Regional Planning, Agriculture Geography.
- Shobha SHRESTHA. *Lecturer*. MSc (ITC, The Netherlands, 1999), MA Dist. (TU, 1992). Geoinformatics, Development and Planning, Service Accessibility.
- Kanhaiya SAPKOTA. *Reader*. MPhil (University of Bergen, Norway, 2003), MA (TU, 1992). Human Ecology, Urban and Peri-urban Agriculture, Research Methodology and Sustainable Development.
- Puspa SHARMA. *Lecturer*. MA (TU, 1993). Natural Hazards, Geographical Thought, Natural Resources Management, GIS/RS.
- Prem Sagar CHAPAGAIN. *Reader*. PhD (TU, 2009), MPhil (University of Bergen, Norway, 2003), MA Dist. (TU, 1994). Human Ecology, Mountain Environment, Rural Development Planning and GIS.
- Chhabi Lal CHIDI. *Assistant Lecturer*. MA (TU 1995). Human Settlement, Field Survey Desktop Cartography, and EIA
- Sher Bahadur GURUNG. *Assistant Lecturer*. MA (TU 1998). Geomorphology, Research Methodology, Geographical Thought, Practical Geography, Field Survey and RS/GIS.

In addition, CDG has a set of supporting administrative staff members, comprising administrative officer, account officer, GIS technician, administrative assistant, lab boy, and office helpers.