

Embassy of India

Thimphu

**Press Release : Brunel Medal Handed over to Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project
Authority**

Paul Scheffield, President, Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), through a video message congratulated the award winners and said that they have showcased exceptional dedication and commitment to the art and science of Civil Engineering.



Today, as part of India@75 celebrations, Ambassador of India to Bhutan, Smt. Ruchira Kamboj handed over the prestigious Brunel Medal to Lyonpo Loknath Sharma, Chairman, Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project Authority. The Brunel Medal is an award given by Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), London to recognize excellence in civil engineering and valuable service or achievement, which has been rendered to or within the civil engineering industry. Mr. Paul Scheffield, the president of ICE, through a video message congratulated the project for showcasing excellence in research and innovation. Named in

honour of famed engineer Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the prize is awarded to recognise excellence in civil engineering and is open to all teams, persons or organisations operating within the built environment. The Brunel Medal is historically won by projects and organisations from across the world and the 2020 edition of the prize went to the Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Project – a collaboration between the Government of India and the Royal Government of Bhutan, to accelerate hydropower development in the region.

During the State Visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to the Kingdom of Bhutan in August 2019, the Prime Ministers of Bhutan and India had formally inaugurated the 720 MW Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project. They had appreciated the timely completion of the Project, and had congratulated the Project Authority and Management for their dedication and competence. During the visit, both sides had noted that with the coming on stream of the Mangdechhu Project, the jointly created generation capacity in Bhutan had crossed 2000 MW. Both sides had also emphasized the importance of hydro-power development as one of the most important areas of mutually beneficial bilateral co-operation.

Its swift timeframe and low per megawatt (MW) cost led authorities to describe it as a “benchmark project” in the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation area, while the ICE awards panel were also impressed by its social and environmental credentials. From a strong field of entries, the green credentials of this mega project stood out. Conceived and delivered as a joint deal between India and Bhutan, this project will produce 720MW of clean electricity for millions and provide an additional 44% of electrical power generation on hydro generation capacity of Bhutan.

Since its commissioning till 30th June 2021, Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project has generated and billed 5047 million units of electricity, which has helped the project earn Nu./Rs. 21,932.2 million. The commissioning of Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project in 2019 took Bhutan’s electricity generation capacity to 2,326 MW. In 2020, Bhutan’s hydropower generation increased by 31%, which helped Bhutan offset the COVID - 19 induced slowdown. 500 new jobs were created as a result, primarily in Bhutan, and it facilitated improved commercial opportunities for local firms. In addition, schools and health facilities benefited from upgraded infrastructures such as drinking water facilities and irrigation channels.

“I think it has been received with a great deal of joy,” said Smt. Ruchira Kamboj, Ambassador of India to Bhutan. “It’s an engineering marvel as I see it and a wonderful example of a win-win partnership between any two countries, and certainly in this context

between India and Bhutan.”

Bhutan and India share a stellar hydropower cooperation which started from the construction of Chhukkha Hydroelectric Power Project and is now spread over seven hydropower projects completed and under construction. The clean and green development of hydro sector has become one of the key pillars of a unique relationship based on the bonds of trust and mutual understanding.

05 August 2021