

Finance

Solukhumbu village set to harness hydropower from river near Mt Everest



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Kathmandu: A mountainous village in Solukhumbu is poised to generate electricity from a perennial river following government approval of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Amadablam Mini Hydro Project. Sonam Gyalzen Sherpa, a National Assembly Member and Chairman of the Federalism and National Concerns Committee, announced that the Ministry of Forests and Environment has approved the EIA study, paving the way for this ambitious energy project.

Located at an altitude of over 4,400 meters, the Amadablam Mini Hydro Project will be the highest-altitude mini hydropower plant in the world. The project team has dedicated over two years to secure EIA approval, with Laxman Adhikari, Chairman of Khumbu Pasang Lhamu Rural Municipality-4, playing a key role in coordinating efforts with local authorities, UNESCO, and various ministries to highlight the urgent need for power in protected national park areas.

The project will be implemented in Pangboche, covering an elevation range from 3,951.18 meters to 4,422 meters. Utilizing water from Cholonche Khola, a tributary of Imja Khola, the run-of-river scheme will divert water at an elevation of 4,423 meters. The project plans to generate 485 kW of electrical power using two turbines and 650 kVA synchronous generators.

Once operational, the generated electricity will be transmitted via 11kV transmission lines and distributed through 1.1kV lines to 451 households across 19 settlements, including Chukung, Debucho, and Dingboche.

The total cost of the project is approximately 630 million rupees, with nearly 60% of funding sourced from a loan by the World Bank, alongside a 20.73% government subsidy through the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre.

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