

Talks on 'green economy' begin

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JUNE 23

A TWO-DAY South Asian regional consultation on "green economy" kicked off here on Sunday. The conference is scheduled to come up with a major research agenda to create a network of like-minded institutions to help the region make transition towards green economy.

More than 40 participants from Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Canada, India, Korea, the Maldives, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are participating in the event jointly organised by the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (Sawtee) and International Development Research Centre (IDRC).

Addressing the inaugural programme, Yuba Raj Bhusal, secretary of the National Planning Commission (NPC), said the NPC aims to upgrade Nepal from a least developed



country (LDC) to a developing country by 2022. He stressed on the need for understanding how a green economy can aid in this transition process.

Ratnakar Adhikari, chief executive director of Sawtee, highlighted the need for promoting green economy in the region amid its high level of poverty and high vulnerability to climate change.

Arjan De Haan, programme leader for IDRC's Supporting Inclusive Growth, Social and Economic Policy Unit, talked about how to minimise the tradeoffs between economic growth and environmental conservation. He emphasised on the need for consultations to

come up with policy prescriptions to balance the tradeoffs.

Presenting his keynote, Arbinda Mishra of The Energy Resources Institute, New Delhi, said there is a need for knowing what green economy means for South Asia. He pointed out three major challenges to sustainable development in the region — promoting social inclusiveness, managing urban transition and building resilience.

According to Mishra, the way forward for South Asia is to develop international and regional cooperation, policy innovations (risks, flood insurance etc) and promote inclusiveness.