

## Afghan team in town to learn from Nepali experiences

### REPUBLICA

**KATHMANDU, Jan 8:** South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) organized an interaction program on Sunday for an official delegation from Afghanistan to share Nepal's experiences on accession to the World Trade Organization (WTO).

According to a press release issued by SAWTEE, a 20-member delegation led by Deputy Minister for Commerce Mozammil Shinwari, comprising high-level government officials and representatives from the private sector, participated in the program.

The delegation, which is in Nepal for a weeklong visit, will learn from Nepal's experiences in WTO accession and utilize the knowledge during their ongoing accession negotiations at the WTO. "Since Afghanistan and Nepal share a number of similarities in terms of geographic location, development status, and political transition, we chose to visit Nepal to learn from its experiences in WTO accession," said Deputy Minister Shinwari.

Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, Executive Chairman of SAWTEE, said WTO membership is not an end in itself. It should be viewed as a means to help the country achieve its development objectives. Making a presentation titled Nepal's Accession to WTO: Nepal's Experiences, Pandey highlighted how Nepal achieved a balanced accession package by safeguarding Nepal's developmental interests.

Dr. Ratnakar Adhikari, General Secretary of SAWTEE, highlighted the role played by the civil society in Nepal during the process of WTO accession particularly in the area of maintaining policy space to protect the interest of consumers, farmers and small and medium enterprises.