

As we all know, the whole world has been severely impacted by Covid-19 pandemic, seriously limiting our mobility and normal activities. The world has not seen a global crisis of this scale in recent history. As the pandemic continued to spread rapidly across the world, many countries went into lockdown. Nepal also went into a complete lock down in March 2020 for a period of three months and again in July 2020 for a month. Though the country has opened gradually to minimize the economic damage, the in-coming winter season poses a greater challenge in terms of the spread of the Covid-19 as we're still not sure whether the pandemic has peaked in the country.

In such a scenario, the regular activities of Nepal AOTS have been seriously curtailed, and it has strived to continue with some of its regular activities wherever possible, especially after March 2020. Because of the strict regulation to avoid in person contact, some of the activities after March 2020 has been limited to online mode only and it will continue to be so for a few more months until the pandemic subsides. In this regard, AGM of Nepal AOTS was also being conducted in blended mode (including zoom platform) for the first time.

1. Annual General Body Meetings

A. 30th Annual General Body Meeting and Election for New Executive Committee

Due to the Government Regulations during COVID-19 pandemic, 30th Annual General Body Meeting of Nepal AOTS was conducted in Blended Mode (Post Holders were physically present at Nepal AOTS Office and other members were present in Zoom Platform) on 4 December 2020. The General Secretary's Annual Activity Report and the Treasurer's Financial Report were presented on the occasion, and the reports were unanimously endorsed by the AGM after the floor discussion. Mr. Hisashi Kanda, General Manager, New Delhi Office, was present through Zoom Platform as chief guest for the occasion, and appreciated the activities of Nepal AOTS and offered valuable insights for further development of its activities.

During the AGM, new executive committee has been unanimously elected. A complete list of the newly elected Nepal AOTS leadership for the term 2020-22 is as below:

1. Prashant Lal Shrestha - President
2. Kishor Bhakta Mathema – First Vice President
3. Prajwal Shrestha - Second Vice President
4. Narayan Bahadur Thapa - General Secretary
5. Shiva Kumar Shrestha - Treasurer
6. Shiva Bhusan Lal - Joint Secretary
7. Aju Giri - Internal Auditor
8. Shanta Baskota Koirala - Executive Member
9. Nishma Bajarcharya - Executive Member
10. Mukunda Prasad Joshi - Executive Member
11. Mahesh Swar - Executive Member
12. Shanti Laxmi Shakya - Executive Member
13. Naveen Prakash Adhikari - Executive Member
14. Rajkumar Gupta - Executive Member
15. Manish Kumar Agrawal - Executive Member

B. 29thAnnual General Body Meeting

Nepal AOTS held its 29thAnnual General Body Meeting at Hotel Himalaya, Lalitpur on 26 July 2019. The General Secretary's Annual Activity Report and the Treasurer's Financial Report were presented on the occasion, and the reports were unanimously endorsed by the AGM after the floor discussion. Mr. Hisashi Kanda, General Manager, New Delhi Office, and the chief guest for the occasion, appreciated the activities of Nepal AOTS and offered valuable insights for further development of its activities.

The formal AGM program was followed by an evening session which was attended by various dignitaries and guests from the Government of Nepal, Embassy of Japan to Nepal, JICA Nepal Office, representatives from Nepal Japan Societies, and guests from private sector organizations.

2. Meetings and Other Business

The following are the formal meetings carried out to plan and execute the activities of Nepal AOTS on a regular basis from July 2019 to January 2021.

Monthly Meetings	10
Executive Committee Meetings	18
Special Executive Committee Meetings	3

Some of the monthly meetings were impacted by the pandemic and other public holidays. However, It has been made sure that every Executive Committee meeting is carried out on a monthly basis. Such meetings have been carried out using Zoom platform or in blended mode (physical and using Zoom platform) since April 2020 due to the lockdown and risks associated with the Covid-19 pandemic.

One such online meeting was carried out with Mr. Hisashi Kanda, General Manager, AOTS New Delhi Office, on 12 September 2020 to discuss matters related to training programs for Nepal AOTS.

Nepal AOTS activities are carried out through various committees and separate meetings are conducted by such committees. Nepal AOTS activities are carried out through committees such as Asset Management Committee, Digital Media and Publication Committee, Training Division and WNF Committee, Social Activities and Relief Committee etc.

3. TALIM Publication

29th edition of TALIM has been published this year on the occasion of the 30th AGM of Nepal AOTS. This annual publication of Nepal AOTS has been managed by the TALIM Publication Committee led by its Coordinator and Executive Committee Member Mr. Shiv Bhushan Lal. Nepal AOTS owes its gratitude to timely advice and support provided its advisors, and special thanks goes to the well-wishers of Nepal AOTS, and various other organizations which supported the publication of the magazine by providing articles and advertisements. Digital copy of the TALIM is available in the website (https://nepalaots.org.np/talim&my_id=298).

4. 10th World Convention of AOTS Alumni Societies

President of Nepal AOTS, Mr. Mahesh Kumar Nakarmi, as the representative of the alumni society, led the delegation of six Executive Members and an Advisor of Nepal AOTS as the Delegates along with the spouse of the Treasurer as an Accompanying person to participate in the 10th World Convention of AOTS Alumni Societies held at Tokyo Kenshu Center, Tokyo, Japan from 1 – 2 August 2019. The attendees were:

i. Mr. Mahesh Kumar Nakarmi	President/Representative
ii. Ms. Amira Dali	Advisor/Delegate
iii. Mr. Prashant Lal Shrestha	1 st Vice President/Delegate
iv. Mr. Prajwal Shrestha	General Secretary/Delegate
v. Mr. Shiva Kumar Shrestha	Treasurer/Delegate
vi. Mr. Narayan Bahadur Thapa	Joint Secretary/Delegate
vii. Ms. Nishma Bajracharya	Executive Member/Delegate
viii. Ms. Shanta Koirala Baskota	Executive Member/Delegate
ix. Ms. Sarita Shrestha	Accompanying Person

Besides participation in the convention, the eight days trip to Japan from 30 July – 6 August 2019 was filled with activities ranging from participating in training programs, factory visits and various other important meetings before and after the dates of 10th World Convention.as summarized below:

30 July	Meeting with the officials of Center of the International Cooperation for Computerization (CICC) to discuss the prospects of collaboration between Nepal AOTS and CICC in the areas of Information Technology Meeting with AOTS, Japan team led by AOTS Director of the Board, Mr. Takeshi Ichikawa, AOTS Senior Manager, New Global Cooperation Group, Mr. Akira Kuriyama and General Manager, AOTS New Delhi Office, Mr. Hisashi Kanda during the session titled Meetings with each Alumni Society by AOTS, Japan to discuss the planned activities of Nepal AOTS and future cooperation from AOTS, Japan
31 July	Visited Hitachi City, Ibaraki Prefecture to observe and learn Japanese manufacturing practice at Ibasei Ltd. and its factories; Department of Mechanical Systems Engineering, Ibaraki University, and HITACHI Ltd., one of the main clients of Ibasei Ltd. The one-day program was hosted by Dr. Norio Kikuchi, CEO, Ibasei Ltd., Japan The AOTS's 60 th Anniversary Symposium and The AOTS's 60 th Anniversary Ceremony Workshop on "Become a transformational Leader – Learning from 2030 SDGs Game" organized at Tokyo Kenshu Center The AOTS's 60 th Anniversary Reception" at Daiichi Hotel, Tokyo
1 August	The 10 th World Convention of AOTS Alumni Societies Opening Ceremony/General Assembly Group Discussions
2 August	SAFAAS Regional Convention

	Committee for Drafting Tokyo Resolution
	Exchange Event/Networking (Sub-event)
	Closing General Assembly
3 August	Meeting with the officials of The International Cooperation Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises in Asia (ICOSA), Japan
	Meeting with the officials at 3A Corporation, a Japanese Language publishing company
3 - 4 August	A two-day training program titled The Seminar on Accelerating 5 S Activities organized at Tokyo Kenshu Center
5 August	Factory Visit at Nissan Oppama Plant, Kanagawa
	Meeting with Dr. Balaram Shrestha, Honorary Representative of Tokyo Nepal Chamber of Commerce, Nepal; Vice President Japan Nepal Business Chamber of Commerce, Japan
6 August	Meeting with the executives of Japan Information Technology Service Industry Association (JISA)

Meeting with Mr. Yashumi Suzuki, General Manager, AOTS Japan was also held on the sidelines of the 10th World Convention to discuss about areas of future cooperation. Informal meetings were also carried out with representatives and delegates from other AOTS Alumni Societies from different parts of the world.

5. Training Programs

All forms of training programs, one of the core activities of Nepal AOTS, were severely impacted by Covid-19 pandemic, especially after February 2020. Many of the planned and/or confirmed training, whether they be overseas trainings programs in Japan, WNF funded training programs or domestic lecturing tours, all of them had to be cancelled owing to the risks due to the pandemic.

The training programs are now being envisaged to be conducted online until the risks due to Covid-19 are contained.

a. Training Programs at The Association for Overseas Technical Cooperation and Sustainable Partnerships (AOTS), Japan

The overseas training at AOTS, Japan were being carried out smoothly till February 2020 when the dispatch of the trainees to Japan were stopped due to the pandemic. Till that period only 13 participants could undergo the training in Japan while one NGC Training Program (Program on Toyota Way of Management for Company-wide Operational Improvement [X576-2], 16 –21 March 2020) for which a participant was already confirmed had to be cancelled due to Covid-19 outbreak.

S.No.	Program	Date	Number of Participants
1	The Executive Program for Corporate Management [EPCM]	10 -23 July 2019	1
2	The Program for Quality Management [PQM]	4 - 17 September 2019	1
3	The Program for Quality Problem Solving [PQPS]	16 – 27 September 2019	1
4	The Program on Eco Business Innovation [TEBI]	3 – 16 October 2019	2
5	The Leadership Development Training Program [LDTP]	3 – 14 September 2019	1
6	The Training Program on Program & Project Management [PPTP]	7 –20 November 2019	1
7	The Program on Information and Communication Technology in Manufacturing Industry [PICT]	27 November– 10 December 2019	1
8	The Training Course on Solving Human and Organizational Problems [SHOP]	4-17 December 2019	3
9	The Program on Business Innovation and Organization Development [BIOD]	15 - 28 January 2020	1
10	The Program for Japanese Corporate Management [PJCM]	18 February – 4 March 2020	1

All the participants of the overseas training program at AOTS, Japan were provided with formal orientation program before their departure to Japan.

b. Online Training Programs by AOTS, Japan

AOTS, Japan has started to conduct a series of AOTS Webinar programs subsidized by Japanese Government in absence of overseas training program conducted with in person participation in Japan due to global pandemic. Accordingly, the following AOTS Webinar programs have been finalized for the month of December 2020 and January 2021.

- i. Corporate Revitalization by Practical Actions [OROP04], for the South Asia Middle East Africa & Europe on 8 December 2020.
- ii. Organization development in VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex and Ambiguous) situations [ORBIOD1] for developing countries on 17 December 2020
- iii. Business Innovation Utilizing AI/IoT [OROP02] for South Asia Africa & Europe on 22 December 2020.
- iv. Program & Project Management in the New Normal on 20 January 2021
- v. ORBIOD2 SDGs oriented innovation on 12 & 22 January; and on 2 February 2021.

c. WNF Training Programs

- i. Two WNF (World Network of Friendship) Training programs were conducted during the period. Both training programs were conducted outside of Kathmandu valley with the concept of decentralizing the training programs for the larger benefit of the organizations and industries in those areas.

S.No.	Training Program	Date	Location	No. of Participants	Resource Person
1	Total Quality Management	28 – 30 November 2019	Bhairahawa (Lumbini)	30	Ms. Shakunthala Gunathilake (Sri Lanka)
2	5S & Kaizen	23-25 February 2020	Chitwan	27	Mr. C. K. Bulakh (India)

Nepal AOTS is planning to organize two online training programs, in February 2021 funded by WNF. The training programs are

- Developing COVID - 19 Resiliency among the Small and Medium Industries
 - Challenges and Opportunities brought by the Pandemic COVID – 19 (for ICT, Banking and Manufacturing sector)
- ii. 17 participants representing Nepal AOTS attended the WNF Training Program titled Online Training Program on “Monozukuri Wa Hitozukuri” organized by ABK – AOTS Dosokai, Tamilnadu

Center and approved by AOTS, Japan for AOTS Alumni Associations / Societies (AAS) in SAFAAS Region and their members. The training was conducted in two parts. Part I was executed from November 2 - 6 2020 and Part II was executed from November 9 - 13 2020.

d. Domestic Training Program

Nepal AOTS Alumni Society (Nepal AOTS) organized a Training cum Workshop Program on “Improving Productivity through 5 S and Kaizen” at Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology, Kathmandu, Nepal from February 22 - 23, 2020. The training program was jointly organized with Tilganga Institute of Ophthalmology and the Resource Person was Mr. Chandrashekhar Krishnaji Bulakh from Pune, India.

e. Other Training Programs

Two members from Nepal AOTS Executive Committee attended the web Seminar “TPS (Toyota Production System) Practice Dojo” organized by Consulting Division, Hirayama Co. Ltd., Japan on 14 September 2020.

6. ICOSA Web Seminar Series

International Cooperation Organization for Small and Medium Enterprises in Asia (ICOSA) has been conducting a series of web seminars related to presentation and discussion of pertinent issues in the region. Members of Nepal AOTS have been regularly attending those web seminars while members of Nepal AOTS members also made their presentations on two of those occasions.

Mr. Hari Bhakta Sharma, Executive Director, Deurali Janta Pharmaceuticals Pvt. Ltd. (DJPL) made a presentation titled “Our Experience in Nepal During Covid-19 Pandemics” in the 5th ICOSA web seminar organized on 12 September 2020.

Similarly, Ms. Amira Dali, MD, Nepal Biotech Nursery Pvt. Ltd., N. A. Three Business Services Pvt. Ltd. and Advisor to Nepal AOTS made a presentation on "Possibility of Collaboration between Nepalese Human Resources and SMEs " in the 7th ICOSA web seminar organized on 23 November 2020.

The presentations were very useful and informative with good participation and appreciation from the audience.

Nepal AOTS is looking forward to welcoming the officials of ICOSA in Nepal as soon as the situation becomes conducive for international travel. Their previous plan to visit Nepal in November/December of 2020 had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

7. Presentation by Mr. Toshiyuki Kato

The AOTS's New Global Cooperation Department, Japan organized an online seminar on “Overview of Nepal IT Industry” on 25 August 2020. Mr. Toshiyuki Kato, who was in Nepal from 2014-2015 as Sr. JICA Volunteer at Nepal AOTS, was the key speaker of the program which was attended by around 100

participants, mainly from Japan. Mr. Mahesh Nakarmi, President, Nepal AOTS, gave the opening remarks during the seminar.

8. Participation in various other online programs

Members of Nepal AOTS have been regularly participating in other learning platforms such as Learning and Sharing Program (LSP) conducted monthly by Network for Quality, Productivity and Competitiveness – Nepal (NQPCN).

9. Bonenkai Program

A. Bonenkai 2020 Program

Nepal AOTS Alumni Society (Nepal AOTS) organized Bonenkai Program on Saturday, December 26, 2020 at Hotel Crowne Imperial, Rabi Bhawan Heights, Kathmandu, Nepal.

Bōnenkai (忘年会, "Forget the Year Party") is a Japanese Drinking Party that takes place at the end of the year. The purpose of the party is to forget the woes and troubles of the past year, and hopefully look to the New Year.

Nepal AOTS has been organizing Bonenkai regularly inviting Japanese Embassy members, JICA Nepal Office Staffs, Japanese Related Organization's Japanese and Nepalese guests and Nepal AOTS members with their family. Nepal AOTS's Bonenkai is socializing gathering where drinks, snacks, distributing gifts and dinner served for the attendees.

Due to COVID – 19 crisis and with the government's protocol and regulations, Nepal AOTS decided to organized small event with Nepal AOTS Members and their families.

Nepal AOTS had collected gifts from its members and Bonenkai Attendees and these have been given as surprised gifts to all attendees of the Bonenkai programs. Group photos were taken and the program was concluded with the dinner.

B. Bonenkai 2019 Program

Year-end celebration program, Bonenkai, was organized by Nepal AOTS at Hotel Corwne Imperial, Ravi Bhawan on 20 December 2019. Guests from Embassy of Japan, JICA Nepal, Nepal Japan associations and various other guests besides Nepal AOTS members and their families attended the function.

10. Ben-Kyou-Kai meeting

Nepal AOTS Alumni Society had Ben-Kyou-Kai meeting on Monday, January 25, 2021 at Nepal AOTS Secretariat on the theme "Monozukuri at Genba" by Mr. Ranga Nath Dhakal. Mr Dhakal has successfully completed almost one year training at Ibasei under AOTS scheme. He Came back to Nepal and became Nepal AOTS Member. This meeting was organized in Blended mode as some of the Nepal AOTS Executives and Members attended physically and others attended online.

Nepal AOTS members visited Ibasei factory in Japan on July 31, 2019 during their participation for the AOTS Convention in Tokyo, Japan in July - August.

11. Membership Database update

Nepal AOTS has started to update its database about the contact information and professional engagements of the ex-trainees of AOTS training programs. In this connection, database of approximately five hundred and fifty Life members and General members have been updated along with the drive to renew their membership at the alumni society. Nepal AOTS is making further efforts to get in touch with many others who could not be contacted because of the changes in their contact information details.

Year 2020 has been a challenging year indeed, and so will be, at least, the first half of 2021. Though we missed our regular activities and in person socializing, the pandemic has also offered new opportunities, mainly in the form of online connectivity. Though things are bound to get back to normal, we believe we'll and we should continue to use the benefits of these online platforms.