नेपाली राजदूतावास

Embassy of Nepal

Brussels, Belgium

Press Release

Celebrating Mha: Pooja and Nepal Sambat 1147

The Embassy of Nepal in Brussels celebrated Mha: Puja and the beginning of Nepal Sambat 1147, the Newari New Year, at Nepal House today. The event was especially organised for the diplomatic community based in Belgium, giving them a first-hand experience of one of Nepal's significant cultural traditions in its authentic form. Ambassadors and diplomats from different countries based in Belgium and Head of Division AsiaPac, European External Action Services (EEAS) attended the event.

Welcoming the guests, H.E. Ms. Sewa Lamsal, Ambassador of Nepal to the BENELUX Countries and Head of Mission to the European Union, highlighted the cultural, historical and spiritual significance of Mha: Pooja and Nepal Sambat. In her remarks, she noted that Mha: Pooja, which refers to the worship of oneself, places the individual at the centre of the celebration by encouraging self-respect, well-being and prayers for longevity, prosperity and happiness for oneself. She also highlighted the historical significance of Nepal Sambat 1147, traditionally associated with Sankhadhar Sakhwa, who freed the people of the Kathmandu Valley from their debts symbolising an act of compassion, social solidarity and collective prosperity. She emphasised that the celebration of these two occasions together represent both personal renewal and a fresh beginning for society.

As part of the ceremony, the participating guests were seated before individually prepared, colourful mandalas, which traditionally represent the self and the universe. They took part in the ritual by offering prayers and worshipping the mandalas, together with traditional offerings of flowers, lights, incense and blessings. Each participant prayed for their own wellbeing and good health. The Puja was led by senior members of the Newar community in Belgium, who guided the participants through the rituals, prayers and offerings.

Following the completion of the Puja, the guests were presented with *Shagun*, consisting of egg, fish, *Choila*, *Bara* and traditional liquor among others, providing them an opportunity to taste authentic Newari delicacies further adding a culinary dimension to the cultural experience.

Ambassadors and diplomats thoroughly enjoyed the process and congratulated the Embassy for organising such a beautiful program. They also extended their best wishes on the occasion of the Newari New Year.

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The programme provided an opportunity to showcase Nepal's rich cultural heritage, traditional rituals and culinary traditions while fostering cultural exchange, mutual understanding and people-to-people exchanges among the diplomatic community in Belgium.

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