



श्रमशक्तिको विकासमा पट्टिस वर्ष

gefint

years

in building workers' power

1989-2014



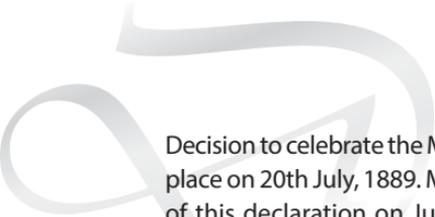


in building workers' power

1989-2014

1989





Decision to celebrate the May Day Internationally had taken place on 20th July, 1889. Marking the occasion of 100 years of this declaration on July 20, 1989, General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions (GEFONT) was established as the first Confederation of Nepal. The GEFONT decided to actively mobilise the workers in Peoples' Movement 1990 right after its establishment. The historical Peoples' Movement abolished the autocratic Panchayat System.

1990



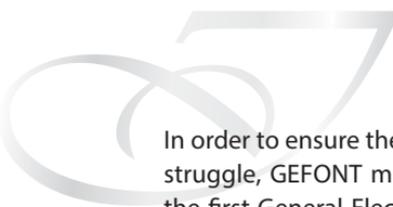
GEFONT organised the National Cadres' Gathering as the first 'open-air' programme in July 14. The conference, with the Peoples' Leader Madan Bhandari as the Chief Guest, declared the Interim Statute of GEFONT to make it compatible with the changed context and also reorganised the Central Committee. GEFONT continuously mobilised the workers against the conspiracy of Royalists, right after the formation of High Commission for Constitution Recommendation until the declaration of the Constitution in November 1990.

National Labour Advisory Committee as a tripartite mechanism was organised for the first time. The Committee with the involvement of GEFONT conducted a nationwide Campaign to solve the labour problems.

Different actions to develop the conceptual frames on labour were commenced. Among them, the first National Workshop on Women workers and Trade Union Movement and fixation of minimum wage after the establishment of multi party system are the major ones. GEFONT started publishing Sramik Khabar (Workers' News) as the first newspaper of the workers, to the workers, by the workers.

1991





In order to ensure the access of workers in parliamentary struggle, GEFONT mobilised the workers remarkably in the first General Election. During the first session of the parliament, GEFONT tabled the first three Non Government Bills in the parliament, which include Labour, Trade Union and Industrial Relation Bills through then then chairman Com. Mukunda Neupane who was elected Member of Parliament. It compelled the government to promulgate the New Bills.

The first National Congress of GEFONT was successfully held. The Congress documented the history of Nepali Trade Union Movement.

GEFONT started to publish 'Workers' News' as the first English newspaper of trade unions.

1992



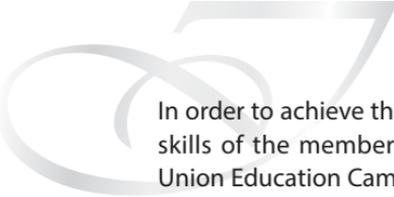


GEFONT established the Central Women Workers Department with the purpose of making the Trade Union movement sensitive on gender issues.

This year, various labour legislation such as- Labour Act-1992, Children's Act -1992, Trade Union Act- 1992 and Vehicles and Transport Management Act- 1992 were promulgated. Bonus Act- 1974 was amended for the fourth time.

1993



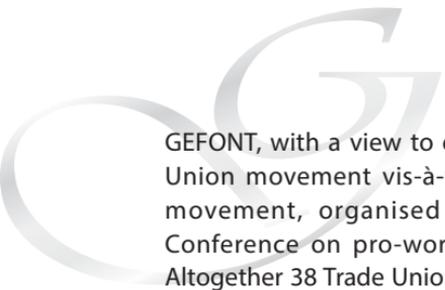


In order to achieve the desired results by developing the skills of the members, GEFONT commenced the Trade Union Education Campaign (True-Campaign). In order to strengthen the campaign and to relate directly labour and expertise as well, GEFONT Resources Centre was established.

The needed rules to execute the labour Legislations promulgated in the previous year - Labour Rule- 1994, Rule relating to Tea Plantation -1994 and Trade Union Rules -1994 emerged into effect from this year. Along with this, GEFONT played a crucial role to make the first amendment on Foreign Employment Act- 1986 and Vehicles and Transport Management Act- 1992.

1994





GEFONT, with a view to expand access of Nepali Trade Union movement vis-à-vis international trade union movement, organised International Trade Union Conference on pro-worker Trade Union Movement. Altogether 38 Trade Union organizations of 15 countries participated in this conference.

GEFONT also established an 'Emergency Fund' with the purpose of assisting its members deprived from income during Labour disputes and strikes.

With the continuous efforts of Nepali Trade Union movement, the Government declared the paid-leave for the working women in government offices and public enterprises on International Working Woman's Day (8 March) in the same year. ILO Convention No. 144 related to Tripartite Agreement was also ratified. The rules relating to Children Act -1992 and Working Journalists Act -1994 were promulgated.

As the First Confederation of the Country, GEFONT was registered in the Office of Registrar under Trade Union Act- 2049, with this registration, the trade union got legal recognition as 'one of the three social partners' instead of 'sister wing' of political parties. This year, GEFONT nominated workers' representative for the International Labour Conference of ILO for the first time in its history. 2nd National Congress of GEFONT was successfully held and the Congress, as well, adopted the concept of 'Labour Policy'. Before this, there was a illusion of "Labour Law itself considering as Labour Policy."

To develop the policies needed for Labour Movement as a form of 'ThinkTank Organisation' including experts and trade unionists, National Labour Academy, Nepal (NLA-Nepal) was established.

In addition to the works carried out by the Traditional Union Movements, GEFONT linked itself with the campaign to abolish the bonded labour system. Kamaiya (the bondage labourers in western Nepal) Liberation Forum was formed as GEFONT affiliate.

This is the year Labour Court Procedures Rules -1995 came in effect. The Labour Court was thus established and GEFONT resorted into legal struggle rapidly.

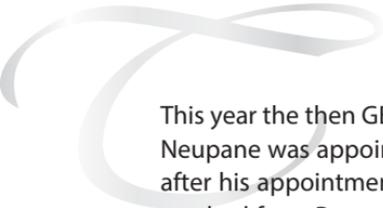


After a long struggle, ILO Convention No. 98 related to Freedom of Association and Collective Bargain was ratified along with another core Convention No. 138 related to Child Labour.

Central Labour Advisory Committee was formed as per Labour Act-1992. GEFONT officially represented itself in the CLAC. The rules relating to Working Journalists ACT -1996 as well, promulgated in this year.

1997

श्री ३ को सरकार, श्रम मंत्रालय र अन्तराष्ट्रिय श्रम संगठनको
संयुक्त तत्वावधानमा आयोजित
प्रथम राष्ट्रिय श्रम सम्मेलन, २०५४
स्थान: G-१०, २०५४४ (संक्रमण सं. ५३-२४, १०१०)
काठमाडौं

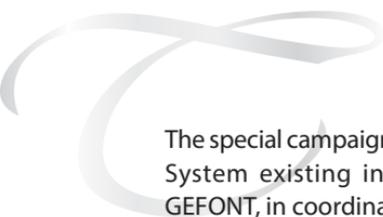


This year the then GEFONT Chairman Comrade Mukunda Neupane was appointed as the Minister of Labour. Right after his appointment as Minister, the access of GEFONT reached from Party to Parliament and up to the Cabinet. The government organised the National Labour Conference for the first time in order to create national forum on labour related issues.

To rectify the clauses against labourers, the first amendment in Labour Act -1992 was made. Similarly, the 2nd amendment of Foreign Employment Act-1986 and the first amendment of Trade Union Act-1992 were also carried out. The rules relating to Vehicles and Transport Management- 1997 was issued in order to effectively execute the Vehicles and Transport Management Act-1992.

1998





The special campaign was launched to abolish the Kamaiya System existing in some districts of Western Nepal. GEFONT, in coordination with International Agencies and NGOs working in Nepal including Kamaiya Concern Group, conducted 'Appeal Movement' for the liberation of Kamaiyas. The Movement under the slogan 'Let's make the slaves, poor' appealed the land-masters to voluntarily declare the freedom for Kamaiya with a proposal of 'publicising them as "ideal citizen". Those landlords who denied the proposal given a choice to face the result whatsoever generated after the Movement.

In this course, some of the landlords themselves declared the liberation for their Kamaiyas.

1999





This is the year GEFONT celebrated its 10th Founding Anniversary at City Hall, Kathmandu amongst the national and international guests. On the occasion, a high level panel discussion was also organised in the contemporary issues like- Globalization and Trade Union, Informal Labour Sector, Trade Union, Politics and Its relation with Political Parties and the concept related to "One" Union etc.

After this programme, GEFONT initiated steps to establish a Federation of agricultural workers. Due to the initiative & campaigns from village level to fix the minimum wages, the state was compelled to fix the minimum wages for Agricultural Workers.

In the same year, based on concept developed by the 2nd National Congress of GEFONT, the government formulated National Labour Policy.

Rules relating to Bonus (1st Amendment) Act- 1999 was issued and National Welfare Fund was established; where GEFONT is one of the members at its operation & management.

2000



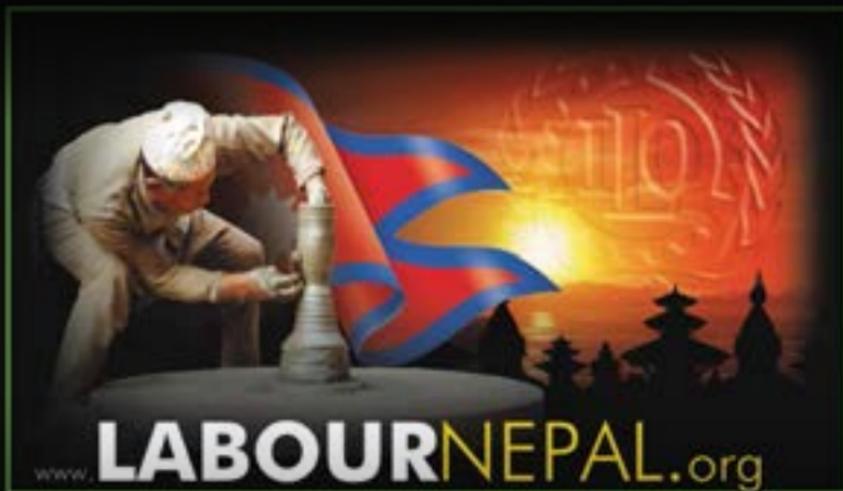


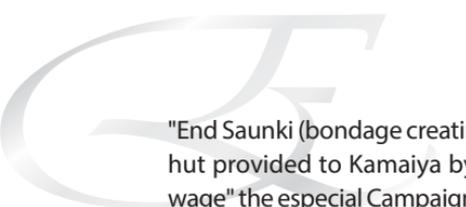
GEFONT successfully held the 3rd National Congress. Through this Congress, GEFONT adopted its official policy in different issues entitled 'A Glorious Ten Years'. On the occasion of the Congress, the Central Office of GEFONT, Man Mohan Labour Building-constructed with the collective contribution by one day salary of more than 50 thousand members of GEFONT, was inaugurated.

The Congress happened to be historical from each perspective. During this Convention, Health Clinic was launched with the establishment of GEFONT Health Cooperative. A high level Taskforce was established between GEFONT and NTUC aiming to form single Union in the country. For Gender Equity and Promotion, by the participation of all Trade Unions, Trade Union Committee for Gender Equality and Promotion (TUC-GEP) was launched.

The movement of GEFONT brought about a new wave and the government declared liberation for Kamaiya through the Parliament. GEFONT jointly launched a nationwide movement for 10% service charge to reach the year-long demand of the service charge for Hotel, Restaurant and Catering Services into decisive level.

2001



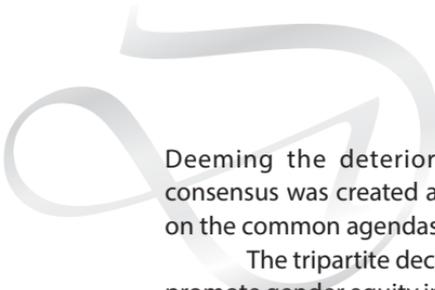


"End Saunki (bondage creating loan), provide Bukura (small hut provided to Kamaiya by land master), determine fair wage" the especial Campaign to organise the freed Kamaiya into Federation of Agriculture Workers, Nepal (FAWN) and to rehabilitate them in accordance with the spirit as mentioned in the slogans during the period of 'Liberation Campaign' was conducted. To enhance understanding in this regard, GEFONT organised 'South Asian Workshop on Bonded labour.'

Aiming to provide regular information of Nepali World of Work to the concerned, the web portal 'www.labornepal.org' launched.

2002





Deeming the deteriorating political situation, the consensus was created amongst the active trade unions on the common agendas of priority.

The tripartite declaration was declared in order to promote gender equity in the world of work. GEFONT had organised a South Asian Regional Conference of women trade unionists. On this occasion, Women Worker Social Assistance Fund was established.

2003





At a time when the Nepali society was seriously sandwiched by the violent insurgency and regression, the main task of the time was to agitate all the workers. GEFONT organised National Women Workers Conference in this year. To flow the message of the Movement, that was taking place in the country, across the world community, GEFONT along with more than 50 leaders and activists participated in World Social Forum organised in Mumbai, India.

2004





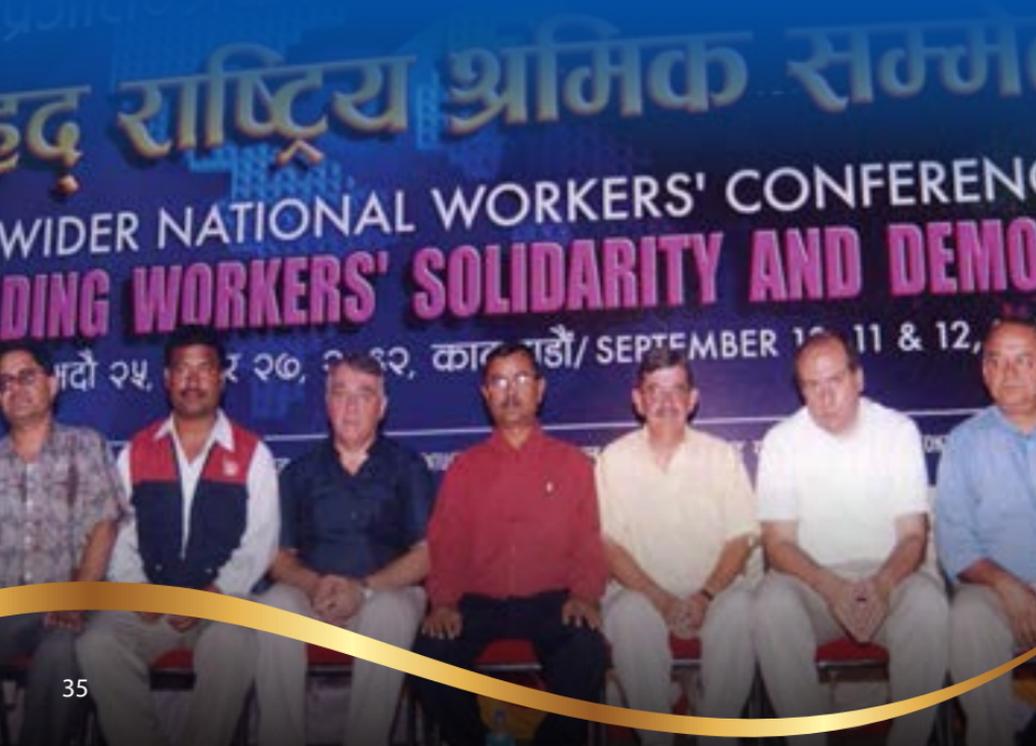
GEFONT organised the 4th National Congress. The Congress analysed the specific characteristics of Nepali Society and forecast the potential scenario of future politics.

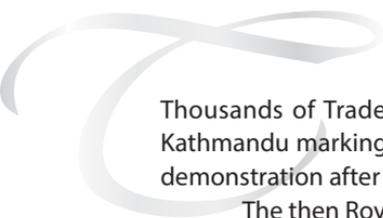
Last week of August emerged as a stigma in the history of Nepal. More than 300 manpower companies were blased into ashes in the pretext of the brutal murder of 12 Nepalis in Iraq. The trade union supported the decision of entrepreneurs to reject the Maoists' call with no cause to close more than 5 dozens of industries.

Focusing the labour market improvement programme, 2nd National Labour Conference was held. But after few days, the then King Gyanendra led regressive move through the 'coup' and declared autocratic regime under absolute monarchy. Immediately after that move, security forces raided the GEFONT Central office and padlocked. Many leaders and activists were arrested and issued warrant-order against various leaders.

Challenging the autocracy and repression, joint programme was organised on March 8.

2005





Thousands of Trade Unionists jointly demonstrated in Kathmandu marking the May Day. This was the first ever demonstration after the Royal take-over on February 1st.

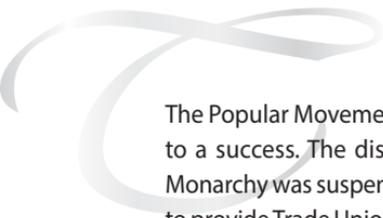
The then Royal Regime banned the Civil Servants' Organisation and created a fictitious "Union" to represent Nepali workers in International Labour Conference; however, the pungent protest of Unions along with GEFONT, their ill-intention had been failed. A Wider National Workers' Conference was organised jointly. From this day, GEFONT started to air the radio Program known as *Sram ra Sirjanaa* (Labour and Creation)'.

This year, for the first time, GEFONT was invited at ICFTU World Congress. GEFONT participated there in a capacity of 'guest' delegate.

The then Royal Regime promulgated the Anti-worker Labour Ordinance and GEFONT launched nationwide protest programmes. More than 50 thousand workers participated in the protest in a single day. A charter of demands was presented to the then Royal regime with an ultimatum of 35 days on behalf of National Trade Union Centres.

2006





The Popular Movement in the form of April Uprising reached to a success. The dissolved Parliament got reinstated. The Monarchy was suspended. The Parliament passed the agenda to provide Trade Union Rights for the Civil Servants. The policy of at least 1/3 women participation in all State Structures was adopted. The Comprehensive Peace Accord with CPN (Maoist) was signed.

GEFONT conducted Trade Union Campaign for the Democratic Republic. GEFONT organised Third National Women Workers' Conference this year.

The state recognised all political groupings existed under the name of Trade Union, which were affiliated to various political parties, as Trade Union.

November this year, in the joint effort of ICFTU and WCL affiliates along with other independent Trade Union Centres of the world including GEFONT, International Congress of Trade Union in Vienna, Austria was organised. The Congress established International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). GEFONT being elected the first substitute member of its International General Council.

2007





The Interim Constitution was promulgated by abolishing the then Constitution of Nepal. Along with this, the reinstated parliament was dissolved and Interim Legislature- Parliament was formed. The then GEFONT Vice Chairman Lalit Basnet and the then Regional Coordinator Chudamani Jungali were nominated as the Member of Legislature-Parliament. For the first time, Labour and Industrial Relation Committee was formed in the Parliament.

Throughout the year, GEFONT launched campaigns to increase the awareness among workers about Constituent Assembly. In the campaign, continued as the campaign of Trade Union for Democratic Republic, the books, leaflets and materials related to the Restructuring of State, Constituent Assembly and Election Systems were published and distributed in nine different languages in addition to Nepali.

Asia Pacific Regional Congress of ITUC was organised in Bangalore, India this year. The Convention elected GEFONT as a 'Titular Member' of its Regional General Council.

Dorje Khatri, member of UNITRAV-GEFONT waged the flag of GEFONT in Mt. Everest this year. The TV programme 'Labour and Creation' started from this year.

2008





The former Vice Chairman of GEFONT Bishnu Rimal, former Deputy - General Secretary Binda Pandey, the then NEC Member Jogilal Yadav and central member of NICWU-GEFONT Shanti Jirel were elected as the CA Member.

The National Trade Union Conference, organised jointly by eight Trade Unions including GEFONT, officially declared Joint Trade Union Coordination Centre (JTUCC) this year. The Conference adopted the Code of Conducts of JTUCC, the common proposal of Trade Union for the Labour Law reform and Common Labour Agendas to be included in the New Constitution.

Trade Union provided assistance to the victim workers' families by the Koshi-flood. The Government of Nepal declared Haliya Mukti (Freedom to those who were forced to plough).

GEFONT organised Fifth National Congress. The Congress adopted the future road-map of Nepali Trade Union Movement. The Congress elected new leadership with changes in its structures.

2009



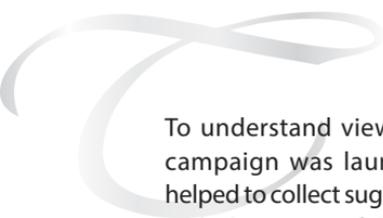
GEFONT organised 20th Founding Day under the theme of "20 Years in Transformation". During the ceremony, the first generation activists of the historic trade union movement of 1947 and founder activists of Nepal Independent Workers Union (NIWU) were felicitated. The NIWU was re-organisation of 1947 trade movement, which was banned by autocratic regime in 1960 s. On the occasion a new departure was initiated by inaugurating the campaign for ratification of ILO Convention No. 87. Memorandum for the ratification was handed over to the Rt. Honorable Subash Nembang, Chairperson of the Constituent Assembly, who was the guest of honour of the ceremony.

Focusing on Freedom of Association and Social Security System, GEFONT mobilised workers in mass-scale and distributed campaign materials all over the country symbolizing the particular day of February 1, the dark day of women conference with new approach to create higher level of awareness in favour of work-life balance.

For the first time in the history of Nepali trade union movement, National Conference of working Youth was organised.

2010





To understand views of working people, a Wage-card campaign was launched nation-wide. This campaign helped to collect suggestions of 71 thousand workers views with short span of time. This was a great achievement for the campaign of overall wage increases.

MoU signed between Korean Confederation of Trade Union (KCTU) and GEFONT marked the beginning of GEFONT's enhanced initiative to safeguard Nepali migrant workers' rights in destination countries.

In order to address long-time standing demand of establishing contributory social security fund, GEFONT along with other trade unions signed in an agreement with employers' organisations to contribute 10+1 percent from worker and 10+10 percent from employer.

2011





Late Dorje Khatri hoisted flag of International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) on Mt. Everest. GEFONT representative was elected in ILO Governing Body. Our initiatives to build Labour Inspection System was further strengthened by conducting national conference of presidents of Big Enterprises. Guideline and checklist was formulated to develop labour inspector from the workers side.

With the slogan of “You contribute union NRs 0.17 per day, and union will fight for your 17 rights every day!” GEFONT launched member focused dues campaign. From this year onwards GEFONT established system of paying membership dues by mid- April each year for all the members.

GEFONT played significant role to adopt ILO convention on Domestic Workers’ Rights in ILC 2011.

2012





GEFONT established Nooru Wanxu Sherpa memorial Award and Madhav Neupane memorial award in the memory of GEFONT founding members late Nooru Wanxu Sherpa and Late Madhav Neupane.

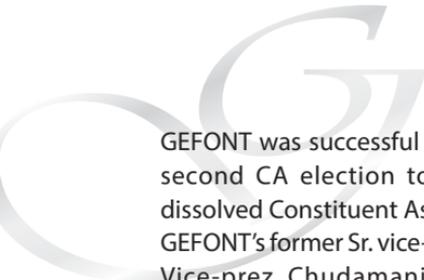
Third National Labour and Employment Conference was organised in our initiation. GEFONT launched wide campaign with the question “Where is Our Space?” among class inclusiveness to maintain atleast 10 percent workers’ representation in all the state representative bodies. This demand is now a common agenda of all the trade unions in Nepal.

A first-ever historic workers’ concert was organized to raise awareness among the workers in mass scale. Similarly we conducted a participatory gender audit to reinforce our commitment on gender equality.

We concluded fifth National Women Workers’ Conference with the slogan ‘It’s a Crime ! Do Not Commit or tolerate- Attack against on Voilence Against Woman! The conference adopted Code of Conduct on Violence Against Women.

2013





GEFONT was successful in mobilizing the workers in the second CA election to alter power-structure of the dissolved Constituent Assembly. After the election result, GEFONT's former Sr. vice-president Binod Shrestha, former Vice-prez Chudamani Jangali and former deputy Secretary-General Pemba Lama were elected new CA members.

With the slogan " Transformation: By Building Workers' Power" GEFONT's 6th National Congress was successfully concluded (March 28-31, 2014).

2014





This Year is the 25th Years of establishment of GEFONT. GEFONT is evaluating and reviewing its contribution for social transformation. During the period of past 2.5 decades and also stepping forward with innovative policy, new structure and vivid enthusiasm in the world of work through the new programme of “Transformation: By Building Workers’ Power.”



General Federation of Nepalese Trade Union (GEFONT)

P.O.Box 10652, Man Mohan Laboru Building

Gefont Plaza, Putalisadak

Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone: 4168000, Fax: 4168001

Email: dfa@gefont.org