Nepal Clearing House Taps ACI Worldwide to Pioneer Card Payment Central Infrastructure

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MIAMI--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 6, 2024-- ACI Worldwide (NASDAQ: ACIW), a global leader in mission-critical, real-time payments software, today announced that Nepal Clearing House (NCHL), a public limited company under the leadership and guidance of Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB, The Central Bank of Nepal), has chosen the award-winning ACI Enterprise Payments Platform for the establishment and operation of National Payment Switch (NPS) that includes interoperability of card-based transactions (NPS National Card Switch or NPS-NCS) and the rollout of a domestic card scheme for Nepal (NEPALPAY).

This press release features multimedia. View the full release here: https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20240205347886/en/

Currently, domestic card transactions are routed through international payment gateways. Once this card payment central infrastructure is established as a part of NPS-NCS, banks and financial institutions in Nepal will be able to provide domestic NEPALPAY cards to their customers which will help increase acceptance, implement data localization and reduce transaction charges.

"The establishment of National Payment Switch (NPS) infrastructure and rollout of NEPALPAY card is expected to become a significant stride in Nepal to reform and consolidate the entire payment ecosystem. Our partnership with ACI aligns with our mission to facilitate the development of secure and trusted new payment methods and technologies in Nepal," said Neelesh Man Singh Pradhan, Chief Executive Officer of NCHL. "ACI has a stellar track record in providing scalable and innovative solutions to build transformative payment capabilities, and we are excited to bring seamless and convenient card payment services in Nepal."

NPS-NCS and NEPALPAY are part of the National Payment Switch (NPS) initiative, the core infrastructure for routing and settlement of retail transactions to ensure interoperability of card and non-card-based payments within Nepal. The NPS initiative includes the Retail Payment Switch (RPS) for handling retail (non-card) transactions and retail instruments, which is already in place including interoperable domestic scheme of NEPALPAY QR. NPS-NCS and NEPALPAY is expected to be rolled out in the last quarter of 2024. NCHL may explore the feasibility of migrating RPS for interoperability of non-card-based transactions on the ACI technology stack.

"NCHL is at the forefront of transforming the digital payments landscape in Nepal, and ACI is proud to support NCHL with cutting-edge technologies to supercharge this transformation," said Thomas Warsop, President and CEO of ACI Worldwide. "With decades of experience and unrivaled expertise in digital payments, ACI is well-positioned as a trusted partner to help advance the interoperability of payments ecosystems in Nepal and across the world."

Nepal's transition from a cash-based economy to a burgeoning digital payment ecosystem has been a remarkable journey with positive impact on financial inclusion and economic development. According to the Nepal Financial Inclusion Report 2023, the percentage of adults using formal financial services has surged from 61% in 2014 to 90% in 2022. Of these, 81% utilize banking services, and 9% opt for other formal financial services. This signifies an increasing adoption of financial instruments and a notable shift towards digital payments.

"Nepal is going through phenomenal growth in digital payment and building the momentum towards a complete digital ecosystem required for a thriving and sustainable economy. We applaud NCHL for their forward-thinking decision to invest in innovative technologies, and we are confident that our proven and resilient solutions will contribute to the success of Nepal's digital payment strategy," said Santhosh Rao, Senior Vice President, Sales – MEASA, ACI Worldwide.

The ACI Enterprise Payments Platform is an end-to-end payments hub solution that can be deployed on-premises or in the cloud, enabling banks to future-proof their payments infrastructure. ACI currently powers 25 domestic and pan-regional real-time schemes across six continents - including nine central infrastructures - providing solutions to central banks, participant banks, fintech and other payment service providers. Globally, ACI covers approximately one-third of the countries that offer real-time payments services, reaching about 1.8 billion people.

About Nepal Clearing House

Nepal Clearing House Ltd. (NCHL) is a public limited company established on 23rd December 2008 under the leadership and guidance of Nepal Rastra Bank (The Central Bank of Nepal). It has equity participation from Nepal Rastra Bank, commercial banks, development banks, and finance companies of Nepal and has the objective to implement and operate multiple national payment systems. NCHL recognizes banking & financial technology-oriented services as one of the key ingredients for the BFIs to improve their efficiency, productivity and also provide innovative financial solutions to their customers. And NCHL intends to help them realize these by providing various technology-based payment related services without having to invest heavily into infrastructures by the BFIs.

About ACI Worldwide

ACI Worldwide is a global leader in mission-critical, real-time payments software. Our proven, secure and scalable software solutions enable leading corporations, fintech and financial disruptors to process and manage digital payments, power omni-commerce payments, present and process bill payments, and manage fraud and risk. We combine our global footprint with a local presence to drive the real-time digital transformation of payments and commerce.

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Media

Nick Karoglou | Head of Communications and Corporate Affairs | nick.karoglou@aciworldwide.com

Lyn Kwek | Communications and Corporate Affairs Director, APAC/South Asia | lyn.kwek@aciworldwide.com

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