

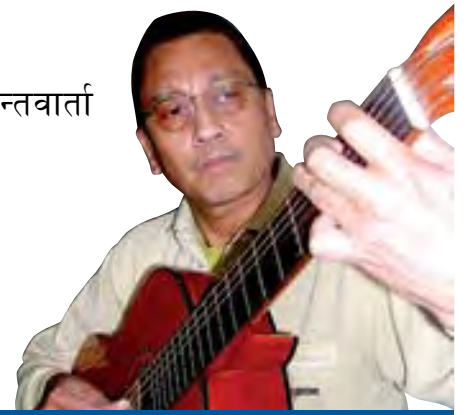
Workers at Martyr's Road

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struggle for
Democracy

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FREE

Nepal Aawaz
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नेपाली आवाज



“How can they say democracy failed?”

Deuba relaxing in a hotel in New York. Photo: Kashish Das Shrestha

Kashish Das Shrestha

Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba arrived in New York on 21 March, on an invitation from Columbia University to deliver the key note presentation during their conference on Nepal scheduled for the following day. He represented Nepal's last elected government in 2002 before being fired by King Gyanendra for being "incompetent." The King made him the Prime Minister again in 2004, before arresting him on charges of corruption

on 1 Feb. 05 through a corruption commission court the King had setup. After a year of being arrested by the court, he was freed this February when the Supreme Court invalidated RCCC.

On the morning of 22 March, while Mrs. Arzu Rana-Deuba, who was also one of the panelists at the event, revised her husband's presentation for later that evening in their Pennsylvania Hotel room, the former Prime Minister took time off to speak to Nepali Aawaz Editor Kashish.

The 7-party alliance (SPA) has been

talking about a decisive movement in the first two weeks of April. What exactly do you mean by a 'decisive andolan'?

By decisive we mean peaceful and en mass. We are planning for a high participation of people to restore their democracy.

How do you plan to get the people to participate?

We've already started campaigning in different places, asking them to join us for their own benefit. We are hoping they will understand the importance of their participation.

What lacked in the 12-point agreement between the SPA and the Maoists?

The agreement lacked a lot of things but I won't get started on that for now, it's something I will talk about with my colleagues in the alliance. However, many things already in the agreement are also still not being followed by the Maoists and it is imperative that this does not continue. I find it [2nd agreement] all still more or less the same.

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Diaspora

Rallies in Belgium, Paris, Tokyo



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Law

“No human being is illegal”

On March 7th, the National Immigration Coalition, a coalition of 40 faith, labor, business and community based organizations from Virginia, Maryland and Washington D.C., organized a demonstration outside the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. to protest anti-immigration legislation.

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Nation

Palace monopolizes wildlife



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Sports

6-a-side cricket

The second DHL BDM Cup Invitational Six-a-side Cricket tournament is scheduled for April 7-10 at the Tribhuvan University Ground. According to the organisers, about 240 cricketers from various banks, corporate houses, insurance companies and embassies will participate in the fun sporting event.

21 »



॥ श्री गणेशाय नमः ॥

हिन्दूहरूको महान चाड रामनवमी तथा कामादा एकादशीको पावन अवसरमा
न्यूयोर्कमा पहिलोपटक नेपाली मन्दिर स्थापना गरी भगवानको प्रतिमा
प्रतिस्थापन पूजा समारोह तथा सार्वजनिक पूजा समारोह
आयोजना गरिने भएको हुँदा उक्त दुबै धार्मिक अनुष्ठान एवं समारोहमा
यहाँको समुपस्थिति एवं सक्रिय सहभागिताका लागि सादर अनुरोध गर्दछौं ।

कार्यक्रम :

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सार्वजनिक पूजा :

आइतवार, २७ चैत्र, २०६२/(अप्रिल ०९, २००६- कामादा एकादशीको दिन, दिउँसो २:१६ बजे

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Days in Nepali History

22 March, 1981

Nepal's election commission announces that the first elections in 22 years would be held on May 9. The opposition parties declare that they would boycott it. The elections were for 112 seats in the National Assembly, an advisory body whose members were previously appointed by regional councils. King Birendra would then choose his Cabinet members from the members of the National Assembly. (See page for a full time line titled Nepal's Monarchy's struggle for autocracy and Nepal's struggle for Democracy)

20 March, 1984

President Li Xiannian of China arrives in Nepal. This was the first visit time a Chinese head of state had visited the country. The trip, during which Mr. Li would be holding talks with then King Birendra, was part of a tour in which the President had also visited Pakistan, Jordan and Turkey.

28 March 1984

Nepal's Ministry of Tourism announced that an avalanche on Mount Everest has killed one Sherpa and injured four others, all of whom were part of an advance party for an Indian expedition. The Sherpa was the 61st person to die on Mount Everest since it was opened for climbing in the early 1950's.

29 March, 2002

Nepalnews says, "The ruling Nepali Congress along with the main opposition CPN (UML) Friday said that both the parties were seriously concerned about the 'objectionable' statement of the Army Chief made on Wednesday and would not remain silent until the Prime Minister gives clarifications on the issue.

"Chief of the Army Staff Prajwalla Shumsher Rana had said that the political parties should be accountable for the deplorable state of the nation and it was quite unreasonable for them to blame the RNA for whatever went wrong in the past twelve years.

"Ranawasaddressingthegraduation ceremony of the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) officials at the RNA command and staff college at Shivapuri.

"The major political parties have agreed to seek clarification from Prime Minister Deuba on the issue. They also seem to be in the mood to disrupt the House of Representatives meeting if the Prime Minister fails to furnish a convincing clarification as to why the Army Chief had criticized the political parties.

"The political parties claim that Deuba who also holds the post of Defence Minister should be responsible for such 'objectionable' criticism coming from the Army Chief."

In Quotes

" Like King Gyanendra of Nepal."
- A clue for the word "Nepali" in **The New York Times Magazine's** crossword puzzle, 19 March '06.

" Democracy had never failed but the moment the King took over, all of Nepal has begun to fail."

- **Former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba**, during an exclusive interview with *Nepali Aawaz*, on what he thought of the King's accusations about the "failure" of democracy in Nepal.

" Should it concern me? Is that public sentiment?... My government has advised me that these protests might be only pressure tactics [by political opponents]... Does the law allow them to say things like this?"

- **King Gyanendra** in an interview with *Time magazine* (26 Jan. 2004), when asked what he thinks of the student protests demanding a "republic". The movement for a Republic has since transformed into a full fledged call for "Ganatanrik Loktantra" (Republican democracy). It is currently one of the key demands being made not just by student unions but also by the Maoists, the civil society and several parties and leaders involved in the movement to restore democracy in Nepal. A "Republican democracy," implies a multi-party democracy in the absences of/ with no role for a Monarchy.

" The nation would face more trouble in the absence of the King,"

- **Taranath Ranabhat**, Speaker of the dissolved House of Representatives, while discussing the constitution of Nepal at a national consultation on 'Draft Law to end Untouchability' organised by Lawyers' National Campaign Against Untouchability.

" What has been publicized as the second understanding is nothing but the Maoist agenda. The parliamentary parties committed a blunder... the government will never reach an agreement with terrorist groups."

- **Home Minister Kamal Thapa**, expressing the government's stand on the Maoists and the 12-point agreement between the communist rebel group and the 7-party alliance. The government had most recently refused to

reciprocate the extended 4-month unilateral ceasefire (Sept. 05- Jan 06) declared by the Maoists.

" It is not just the content of the constitution that matters but with what process it was made. That is what gives it legitimacy...it should belong to the people."

- **Advocate Dinesh Tripathi**, on the need to draft a new constitution through a public referendum, at the Nepal Conference held at Columbia University, New York, 22 March.

" Unfortunately America still believes there is a military solution."

- **Murari Raj Sharma**, Former Ambassador to the Permanent mission to the UN, casually talking about America's recent history of military aid to Nepal, at the Nepal Conference held at Columbia University, New York, 22 March.

" We're lucky that Nepal doesn't have oil."

- **Sam Zarifi**, Research Director Human Rights Watch (Asia dept.), joking about the America's interest, or the lack of it, in Nepal's crisis, at the Nepal Conference held at Columbia University, New York, 22 March.

" It is unconstitutional, illegal and autocratic on the part of the government to put Nepal under preventive detention on fictitious charges."

- A press statement issued by the **Communist Party of Nepal (UML)** on 25 March, for putting party general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal under preventive detention for three months on "fictitious charges" on Thursday. Nepal had been under house arrest since 20 Jan this year and on 22 March the Armed Poilice Force had raided his house and seized all communication equipments, namely phone and fax machines.

"The two will be answerable to 12,000 martyrs who have died for the reason. Their families will curse them. History will not forgive them."

- **Comrade Athak**, Maoist incharge for Banke and Bardiya districts, talking to *Samudaya.org* about Maoists Rabintra and Anukul's recent public statements about their disagreement with the party leadership and threats to begin a counter-revolution within the communist rebel group.

March 24.2006

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Looking for lost Nepali Passport

Name: Pas Dawa Sherpa
Nepali Passport no: 129 8891
Issued at: Kathmandu Nepal
Issued on: 2 Jan. 2001 / Expired on: 1 Jan. 2006

Passport lost on 18 Feb. in the 7 Train, going to Manhattan from Queens. If anyone has received please call: 612 598 3804.

Diaspora

Nepalis in Belgium protest against American imperialism



On 19 March, Nepalese People's Progressive Forum, a Belgium based Nepali organisation, staged a protest rally against American imperialism. The event was organised to mark the 3rd year anniversary of America's controversial and misguided attack on Iraq. The group called for the Americans

to "go back home" immediately. Only last week the Americans launched one of their largest air-strike missions in Iraq. Such missions in the past have led to heavy civilian casualties. Many Nepalis also took the opportunity to protest against the "dictatorship" in Nepal under King Gyanendra.

The Pagoda temple of the West



A high priest's "vision" brings Houston's Nepali and Indian community together to build the pagoda styled Pashupatinath temple in Texas.

Nepal's Pashupatinath temple is one of the most important Hindu sites in the world. Its significance is made clear every year during the annual Shiva Ratri festival when tens of thousands of Hindus from different countries flock to the site that houses the famous "Shiva linga." But this year the Pashupatinath temple in Kathmandu wasn't the only Pashupati temple where devotees were flocking to. The recently constructed replica of the Pashupatinath temple in Richmond, Texas, inaugurated on Shiva

Ratri this year, drew large crowds of Hindus from across the US, and even from Canada and the UK. It is said to be the "first Pashupatinath temple in the Western hemisphere."

Last year while most people were busy celebrating Dasain and Tihar in October, perhaps the biggest annual Hindu festivals, H.H Acharya Shri 108 Tahal Kishorji Maharaj, a native of Nepal who received his education and high priesthood in India, was busy planning out his dream of a temple. But it would not be just any temple, he already has many temples and followers devoted to him across the globe. His "vision" was of the Pashupatinath temple built in the pagoda style architecture. It was in 2003, after completion of the construction of Shri Krishna Pranami Mandir, that he started on planning the construction of Shri Pashupatinath Mandir.

By late 2005, the plans had already begun to pick up momentum, with a construction committee made up of Nepali and Indian volunteers holding regular meetings. The site for the construction was the 8 acres of land in Richmond, TX, that belongs to the

Protest planned in Japan

On 6 April, Nepalis residing in Japan will hold a protest program in front of the Royal Nepalese Embassy, National Diet Building and the Foreign Ministry, Tokyo.

"King Gyanendra, your government does not represent us," "restore peace and democracy," "immediately release prisoner of conscience," and "stop muzzling press freedom," amongst others, are only a few of the opinions the organizers and participants hope to express during the event.

6 April is a significant day because the people's movement was reaching its climax as then Late King Birendra appointed a new Prime Minister to negotiate with leaders of the pro-democracy movement after overwhelming masses of people relentlessly protested on the streets of Kathmandu. (See page for more

details)

"He [King Gyanendra] talks a lot about democracy and peace but does not do a bit to actually achieve it, rather he does the opposite. Now we all have understood that he wants this war to drag on so that he can consolidate his power and continue his autocratic rule in the name of "fighting with terror," the organizers declare on their website hosted on geocities (/loktantriknepal/index.htm). "For us who are staying in Japan and enjoying a free and democratic society have a special obligation towards fulfilling the desires of our compatriots back home. We must not forget that if we fail to act right now, our future generation will never forgive us for our inaction that may push them to live under tyranny for years if not decades to come," it goes on to read.

Details about the upcoming protest:

Meeting place: JR Meguro Station (In front of Kaisatsu Guchi ticket gate)
Program:

10:00 hrs - Gather at Meguro Station

11:00 hrs - Demonstrate in front of Royal Nepalese Embassy

13:00 hrs - Demonstrate in front of the National Diet Building

15:00 hrs - Demonstrate in front of Foreign Ministry



Maharji's Radha Krishna Organization, also where the Shri Krishna Pranami Temple is also located.

The construction of the temple had picked up full steam by February this year, with volunteers such as Satish Bhakta who even gave up his responsibilities of work and family during the time. The Shiva Linga, also a replica of the one in Nepal's

Pashupatinath temple, was made in Bhaktapur, Nepal. The \$18k required for construction was largely collected from donations.

Volunteers agree that the temple isn't quite centrally located, it is in the outskirts of Houston. But for religious faith, that probably won't make much of a difference.

Diaspora

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Nepalis open Sushi and noodles bar in NY



Photos: Kashish Das Shrestha

While most Nepalis who open up a restaurant often serve Nepali (including Tibetan) and Indian food, the “Yamakaze: Japanese Sushi and Noodles Bar” in Sunnyside, Queens, must be the first such restaurant to be run and operated by Nepalis here in the US. For a change, there is nothing about the Yamakaze, not its woody Japanese styled decor or the world music playing in the speakers, that shouts “Nepali” to you, unlike most other restaurants run by Nepalis in New York. The small carved wood peacock window on the wall is perhaps the only hint. But once you’ve settled down on your table and

pick up the menu, the newly introduced Tibetan food section will perhaps be a give away.

While Chinese, Thai and even Vietnamese cuisines have been largely popular amongst Nepalis here in New York, Japanese food, an even more so Sushi, is not apart from a few exceptions. That could also be, however, because it has never been as accessible as it is now to the large population of Nepalis that work and live in Queens: sushi, momos, Japanese noodles and thukpa all served under the same roof.

“The chefs, my partners in the restaurant, have been working in

Japanese restaurants for 10 year in New York,” Tsepak Dorjee the owner and manager of Yamakaze tells us. So does it make a difference for his clients to know that the Japanese chef is a Nepali? “There is a certain initial psychological thing I suppose, but the quality of food we serve here is no different from any Japanese restaurant in the city. Plus, we have a lot of returning customers,” he explains smiling. While one chef runs the Sushi and noodles bar, two other chefs work the Tibetan kitchen inside.

Opened only in June last year, the restaurant has already received some good reviews, including being listed in the “Best of NY” edition of New York’s alternate weekly The Village Voice. But why have the owners chosen Sunnyside, Queens, as opposed to perhaps Jackson Heights? “Sunnyside is growing, there

are a lot of youngsters in the area,” Dorjee explained. “This [venue] seemed perfect too, the size as well as the price.”

Nepali Aawaz was invited for a quick food-taste-test at the Yamakaze and it can be safely said that the chef’s nationality is no compromise to the taste of the Sushi he serves. Our suggestion: Kothey’s from the Tibetan kitchen (Veg. option available) and sushi from the bar. And if its your first time trying out the Japanese delicatessen, go easy on the wasabi (the green stuff). The owners suggest Nepalis trying Sushi for the first time to taste the Sunnyside Sushi, which looks and tastes more like a pagoda than anything else. Our suggestion: try the Philadelphia sushi, the more familiar cheese fillings could help you adjust to the less familiar raw fish it is wrapped with.



Diaspora

Protest against Prince Paras in Paris

Photos: Anushil Shrestha



Prince Paras, currently on a European tour, heads the King Mahendra Trust for Conservation of Nature, Nepal's largest conservation agency. After giving away a Rhinoceros to a zoo in Vienna, the Prince will be arriving in Paris, France on 26 March. The move has already drawn heavy criticism from the civil society (see page 11 for full story). The Nepali diaspora in France isn't happy either. Accusing the Prince of exchanging Rhino for weapons to continue supporting the Royal dictatorship in Nepal, the Nepali Loktanrik Manch, France, writes in their press statement: "The world knows that citizens of the 21st century cannot be ruled by one autocratic family." The organizers also declared that Dictators should not be allowed into the democratic countries of Europe.

The organization has called for Nepalis in France to come together for the protest against this tour and the Royal coup of 1 Feb. 05. Details about the protest program are as follows:

Throkadero, facing the Eifel tower

26 March / 3PM

Metro: Throkadero, line No. 6

Contact info:

Harihar Aryal, 0160251472 or Kiran Pradhan, 0145814675.

HB Bhandari Prabhat: interested in diasporic literatures

Rich in love for the art of literary arguments, theoretical discussions and the formulation of new ideas, 29-year old Hir Bahadur Bhandari is already known as one of the few acclaimed literary scholars of the new Nepali generation. HR Bhandari has served as principle of colleges and was also elected Joint Secretary of SEED (School Education Efficiency Development) in 2004 in Nepal. Bhandari's literary works include articles and poems that have been published in various national and international magazines and newspapers. Some of his writings have also been presented with national awards such as the prestigious Madan Purashkar in Nepal and several others including the Best Book International Nepali Literary Award in Washington DC.

The main concern of Bhandari's study lie in the areas of Nepali and English literatures. He has a special interest in diasporic literatures, which is what he has been working seriously on over the last couple of years. Bhandari is currently in USA to present literary paper in George Mason University at the invitation of International Nepali Literary Society Washington D.C.

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Survey: Nepal Day Parade in the US

If a Nepali parade was to be held in the US, which day or month do you think is the most appropriate? Please keep in mind that your suggestion is as neutral as possible, so that it is not a particular religious, political event etc.

Our Suggestion:

1) Official establishment of Nepal-America diplomatic relationship in late April. Reason: Since this is a parade of Nepali culture in the US, the date seems appropriate. The weather is also usually good since its not winter and its just before summer begins. Since this is an outdoor event, the weather is very important.

Why not Nepali New Year?

Because within the Nepali community itself, there are many ethnic communities that celebrate the New Year's Day according to their own calendars.

Why not Dasain or Tihar (October-November)?

Because that is a Hindu festival and would seem exclusive.

Why not Falgun 7 (Mid Feb.)?

Because that was the day when the Shah dynasty was brought back to the throne by people who wanted the Rana regime to end. Celebrating on that day will not be appropriate anymore because the international community as well as many within Nepal and the Nepali diaspora are condemning King Gyanendra's coup on 1 Feb. 05 after which he has over seen and made some of the most undemocratic moves in Nepal's history, including violation of human rights, right to information, press rights amongst others. The importance of Falgun 7 is already far too controversial within the Nepali diaspora.

Send us your suggested date to info@nepaliaawaz.com

Practicing Nepali culture in Baltimore



Photo: Rajendra Shrestha

The importance of one's culture and heritage can never be forgotten or ignored just because you might no longer be in your native country.

Adhering to these sentiments, Mr. Deepak Ghimire and Mrs. Kabita Ghimire, who moved from Tanahu jilla, Nepal to Baltimore, USA, four years ago, performed their 13-year-old son Aditya Ghimire's traditional "Bratabandha" ritual on 26 February. A large bhoj followed the event for which the Ghimires had invited members of the Nepali community not only from the D.C, Virginia area but also New York. It is in fact quite rare that these traditional rituals are performed in such accuracy here in the US.

Former Prime Minister of Nepal Sher Bahadur Deuba delivered the key note presentation at "Nepal- The Himalayan Hospot, From Shangri-la to...?", an event organised by School of International and Public Affairs, Columbia University, New York, on 22 March. Other speakers at the event included journalist and author Deepak Thapa, who is also currently affiliated with the Center for International Affairs at the University, Advocate Dinesh Tripathi, Alok K. Bohara, professor at the Department of Economics, University of New Mexico, Surendra Devkota, Professor at the School for International Training and World Learning, Brattleboro, Vermont, and Mrs. Arzu Rana- Deuba, amongst others. Photo: Kashish Das Shrestha



Law

“No human is illegal”: The fight against anti-immigration legislation

Rajani / Samudaya.org

On December 2005, the House of Representatives passed the Border Protection, Antiterrorism and Illegal Immigration Act (H.R. 4437), sponsored by Rep. F. James Sensenbrenner Jr. (R-Wis.) and Peter T. King (R-N.Y.). Supported by Republicans, this bill is opposed by many who consider it one of the most anti-immigrant bills in recent memory, with provisions that would criminalize approximately 11 million undocumented workers. In addition, it would also criminalize those who assist or work with undocumented workers including social workers, teachers, medical personnel, union workers, clergy and family members. The bill also calls for the construction of 700 miles of fencing along the Mexican border. Opponents point out that the bill focuses on enforcement, providing no path to legalization. Since local and state police would be deputized to arrest anyone they think may be without documents, opponents of the bill worry about increased racial profiling.

On March 7th, the National Immigration Coalition, a coalition of 40 faith, labor, business and community based organizations from Virginia, Maryland and Washington D.C., organized a demonstration outside the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. to protest anti-immigration legislation. The rally coincided with the Senate Judiciary Committee's session to consider the “compromise bill” proposed by Senator Arlen Specter (R-PA) which, while providing for “earned legalization”, still includes provisions from H.R. 4437 for criminalizing 11 million undocumented immigrants as well as those who assist them by classifying them as human traffickers. Moreover, the bill also proposes a temporary “guestworker” program. This would temporarily legalize the status of undocumented workers for three years; after this period, workers would be able to apply for a further three year extension after which they would be required to return to their home countries. This program has drawn criticism from both sides. Those advocating tighter immigration controls consider it wrong to award legal status to those who have entered the country illegally. Pro-immigration groups do not think this program provides an adequate path to gaining permanent citizenship. Other issues also come up—for example, this type

of program would give all the power to employers, creating more opportunities for abuse of workers.

Proponents of this kind of harsh legislation believe that it works in the interest of protecting the United States from terrorists by strengthening the country's borders, over which an estimated 1 million immigrants illegally pass. Another concern of anti-immigration groups is the job security of American citizens. It is claimed that the American worker is losing out because companies prefer to use cheap immigrant labour; this “insourcing” exacerbates the economic plight of workers already affected by other practices such as outsourcing. The anti-immigrant sentiments of some of these groups are unambiguous. The Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR), for example, encourages citizens to report suspicions of “illegal immigration” and lists the phone numbers of local immigration offices across the country on their website. Others like The Minuteman Project—the so-called neighbourhood watchdog group that voluntarily patrols the borders for “suspicious” crossings—refer to undocumented immigrants as “mobs of ILLEGAL aliens who endlessly stream across U.S. border”, among other colourful characterizations. Some of these groups, together with radio talk show hosts are launching a lobbying effort “Save the American Worker Week” on March 20th to try and influence the Senate vote on these issues.

Luna Ranjit from Adhikaar, a Nepali group working for immigration rights among other issues, attended the rally in Washington D.C. She answered some of our questions regarding the immigration issue and its significance for Nepalis living in the United States.

How many Nepali immigrants are there in the United States and what is the distribution throughout the country? Is there some place where this information can be found?

LR: Unfortunately, there is no reliable data about the numbers or distribution. I've asked the consulate here, but the person I spoke with there did not know. The last census conducted in 2000 lists 11,715 people of Nepali origin. But, the unofficial estimate is around 100,000 Nepalis living in the United States, with around 30,000 in the greater New York area.

How many Nepalis would be affected by these types of anti-immigration

legislation and what demographics?

LR: Again, no reliable data exists. In some parts, the numbers are higher. In the New York area, more than 50 percent are estimated to be undocumented—people who have overstayed their visas, mostly tourist visas, but some students as well. Also, in terms of socio-economic status, there are more working class, newer immigrants in the New York area. But the proposed legislation is going to affect us all in one way or another.

What groups other than Adhikaar are working for immigration rights? Also, please tell us something about Adhikaar.

LR: I do not know of any other Nepali groups working on immigration rights issues. There are some Nepali individuals. One person I know is Rajani Adhikary, who works at the Restaurants Opportunities Center of New York. I have heard that there is another organization in the LA area, but I do not yet have the contact information.

Adhikaar was started last year to address the needs of Nepali communities everywhere, but our focus is in the United States right now. It is a women-led organization—all board members are women. We made a conscious decision to make it so, because almost all the Nepali organizations we know are male-dominated, and have male leaders. Most are almost exclusively male. Programmatically, we focus on immigration, health, and women's rights. But right now, most of our work is on immigration rights. As I mentioned before, there is very little reliable information about who's here, what's their status, and what they are doing. So, right now Adhikaar is also conducting a survey of Nepalis in the NY/NJ area. It's a slow process because we are not known yet, and people are reluctant to give out information.

Tell us about the rally in D.C. Did a lot of Nepalis attend? I am not finding that much information about immigration issues pertaining to Nepalis specifically; are there any important issues that might not be immediately obvious?

There were 40,000 people at the D.C. rally. As far as I know, only two Nepalis attended—me and Rajani Adhikary. But I didn't go around looking for Nepalis, so I can't say for sure. Also the rally was organized by mostly Hispanic groups, and there were few Asians of any descent. Both of us went as a part of the Immigrant Communities in Action, a multi-ethnic coalition of immigrant

organizations in New York.

The current proposed legislations make things tougher for all immigrants, documented or not. For Nepalis, it is probably of importance that even those who are on F-1 and cannot take a full load (of coursework) or those who are on H1B who lose their jobs but cannot find another immediately can also be deported. The senate judiciary committee is still debating—they're in recess the week of March 20th, so none of this is official law yet. But the way things are going, it is very likely that many anti-immigrant provisions will pass.

Why don't we hear talk about immigration issues among Nepalis? How much of a taboo is it to talk about one's “illegal” status?

My take on why we don't talk about immigration issues is that most of us are first generation immigrants, and still think that we are here temporarily. Most of us talk about going back to Nepal soon/in the near future/some day, even though many of us are starting families here and will probably never go back to live in Nepal. The political and economic situation in Nepal also makes it tougher for people to go back. Since we feel that we are here temporarily, we are less willing to get involved with local issues. I've had this conversation with many Nepalis... even those who have green cards or citizenships—their reaction is “why bother” or “it's not our country” or “I'm not a citizen, so I don't have any right to speak”—I also think it's a matter of time. Once we have a critical mass and/or once we have second generation of Nepalis in large enough number, we too will get involved. We work here and pay taxes, we spend our most productive years here. We should also be talking about our rights here. As for people talking about their status, most people I have spoken to have freely talked about their immigration status.

Further information:

Immigrant Communities in Action is organizing “An Urgent Immigrant Community Dialogue with Elected Officials” on Saturday, March 25th, from 1pm to 4pm at P.S. 212 at 34-25 82nd Street, Jackson Heights,

Queens. Call DRUM at (718) 205-3036 or email monami@drumnation.org for details.

Adhikaar's website is www.adhikaar.org/
Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York www.rocny.org/
Source: samudaya.org

Nation

Nepali Monarchy's struggle for autocracy and Nepal's struggle for Democracy

Kashish Das Shrestha

The struggle between Nepal's Palace and people over how and by whom Nepal is ruled is not limited to the political events post- 1 Feb. 05 coup by King Gyanendra, or even post- October 2002 when the last elected Prime Minister was in office. While his grandfather and father systematically dismantled what forms of "democracy" existed in their time, King Gyanendra has violated perhaps every possible aspect of democratic norms since he seized absolute power a little over a year ago.

In April 1990, the People's Movement of Nepal successfully reached its climax and installed a full fledged multi-party democracy in the country. In 1995 the Maoist movement began to spread its wings. In 2002, the last of the democratically elected government was dismantled when King Gyanendra fired then Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba for not being able to hold elections. Nepal has not had an elected government since, one would not be possible without first resolving the Maoist issue politically, which is what the 7-party alliance is currently trying to do.

As we near April 2006, having lost in 12 short years the democracy hundreds of thousands of Nepalis had struggled to earn for generations of Nepalis, the country is bracing itself for a showdown between the palace and the opposition parties again. The 7-party alliance, after reviewing and renewing their 12 point understanding with the Maoists only last weekend, has vowed for a decisive movement in weeks to come. Has the recurring struggle for democracy reached its climax now, only time will tell. But as long as we - parties, palace, security forces and the people of Nepal- don't learn from the mistakes made in the past, and if the parties, the Maoists and the people don't rise to the occasion, it could greatly jeopardize Nepal's democratic future, again.



Left: People gather at Patan Durbar Square for a mock Parliament Session held in 2005; Photo: Kashish Das Shrestha. Right: King Gyanendra as a prince during the ceremony of his Brataman. Photo: Dwarika Das Shrestha



Timeline: Palace vs. People

Source: BBC

1950	Anti-Rana forces based in India form alliance with monarch.
1951	End of Rana rule. Sovereignty of crown restored and anti-Rana rebels in Nepalese Congress Party form government.
1955	King Tribhuvan dies, King Mahendra ascends throne.
1959	Multi-party constitution adopted.
1960	King Mahendra seizes control and suspends parliament, constitution and party politics after Nepali Congress Party (NCP) wins elections with B. P. Koirala as premier.
1962	New constitution provides for non-party system of councils known as "panchayat" under which king exercises sole power. First elections to Rastrya Panchayat held in 1963.
1972	King Mahendra dies, succeeded by Birendra.
1980	Constitutional referendum follows agitation for reform. Small majority favours keeping existing panchayat system. King agrees to allow direct elections to national assembly - but on a non-party basis.
1985	NCP begins civil disobedience campaign for restoration of multi-party system.
1986	New elections boycotted by NCP.

Nation

1990 Pro-democracy agitation coordinated by NCP and leftist groups. Street protests suppressed by security forces resulting in deaths and mass arrests. King Birendra eventually bows to pressure and agrees to new democratic constitution. (Details under People's Movement for Democracy, Spring 1990)

1991 Nepali Congress Party wins first democratic elections. Girija Prasad Koirala becomes prime minister.

1994 Koirala's government defeated in no-confidence motion. New elections lead to formation of Communist government.

1995 Communist government dissolved. Radical leftist group, the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist) begins insurrection in rural areas aimed at abolishing monarch and establishing people's republic.

2001 (July) Deuba announces peace with rebels, truce begins. (November) Maoists say peace talks have failed, truce is no longer justified. Launch coordinated attacks on army and police posts. State of emergency declared after more than 100 people are killed in four days of violence. King Gyanendra orders army to crush the Maoist rebels.

2002 (May) Parliament dissolved, fresh elections called amid political confrontation over extending the state of emergency. Deuba expelled by his Nepali Congress party, heads interim government, renews emergency. (October) Deuba asks king to put off elections by a year because of Maoist violence. King Gyanendra dismisses Deuba and indefinitely puts off elections set for November. Lokendra Bahadur Chand appointed to head government.

2003 May/June: Lokendra Bahadur Chand resigns as prime minister. King appoints his own nominee Surya Bahadur Thapa as new premier. Political stalemate between parties and palace grows, clashes between students/activists and police begin regularly as the "Movement against regression" by the 5-party alliance gains momentum.

2004 (March/April) Thousands of protesters converge in Kathmandu for weeks, police use stern force to crack down on protests and protesters. (May) Royalist Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa resigns following weeks of street protests by opposition groups. (June) King Gyanendra reappoints Sher Bahadur Deuba as prime minister.

2005 1 February 2005: King Gyanendra dismisses Prime Minister Deuba and his government, declares a state of emergency and assumes direct power, citing the need to defeat Maoist rebels. Armed security forces base themselves in media houses and try to censor the press. New ordinances curtailing independence of NGOs, INGOs, Media introduced. Citizens, members of civil society, political and human rights activists arrested indiscriminately for no legal reason. Unchecked authority handed to the security forces, which inevitably leads to massive human rights violations including rape and murder.

November 2005: Maoist rebels and main opposition parties agree on a programme intended to restore democracy.

1 February 2006: Political stalemate between the King and the 7-party alliance continues. King continues to consolidate power while being increasingly alienated by the international community, holds make-shift municipal elections on 8 February with only 20% voter turnout and celebrates "Democracy Day" on 19 February. The same day the 7-party alliance also vows to intensify their fight to restore democracy.



Top: King Mahendra's funeral. Middle: King Birendra's coronation. Photos: Dwarika Das Shrestha; Right: A man stands up and stretches out on April 6, 1990 during the peak of the 1990 democracy movement; Photo: Min Bajracharya

Nation

People's Movement for Democracy: 1990

Source: NY Times

- Apr 06** As demonstrators began a general strike, King Birendra dissolved his five-day-old Council of Ministers early today and appointed Lokendra Bahadur Chand the new Prime Minister to negotiate with leaders of the pro-democracy movement that is challenging his Government.
- Apr 07** The Nepalese Army and police opened fire Friday on a procession of 200,000 pro-democracy demonstrators. Hospital officials said that at least nine people were killed and several hundred wounded as crowds tried to surge past police cordons toward the royal palace.
- Apr 08** The opposition rebuffed an offer by Prime Minister Lokendra Bahadur Chand to start a political dialogue today as troop carriers trundled through the capital a day after security forces opened fire on pro-democracy demonstrators.
- Apr 09** Bowing to unrelenting pressure from a pro-democracy movement, King Birendra of Nepal announced tonight that he was lifting a 29-year ban on political activity, opening the possibility of multiparty rule in this Himalayan land.
- Apr 10** Hundreds of thousands of Nepalese, their faces smeared with vermilion powder, waved the red flags of the Nepalese Congress Party and the Communist Party today as they flooded the streets of this city and others in an explosion of joy at the end of a nearly three-decade ban on political activity.
- Apr 11** Leaders of the opposition movement denounced representatives of the non-party system today for seeking to remain in power as "an interim government."
- Apr 13** In an effort to end a four-day political stalemate, King Birendra invited the leader of Nepal's opposition to join him in direct talks today, apparently on the formation of a new transitional government.
- Apr 14** King Birendra met today with the principal Nepalese opposition leader and reportedly approved the formation of a new government that could be led by the opposition.
- Apr 16** King Birendra dissolved Nepal's national assembly today and accepted the resignation of his Prime Minister after a weekend of increasingly angry protests here over the pace of democratic change.
- Apr 17** King Birendra of Nepal today invited the national opposition, including the country's Communist leaders, to form the first multiparty government in 30 years as this Hindu kingdom continued its passionate rush toward democracy.
- Apr 18** The World Bank and several nations that give aid to Nepal warned aides to King Birendra last month that financial help for this impoverished kingdom could be jeopardized if the King failed to respond to the democracy movement that has since started to take power, officials here say.
- Apr 20** Nepal's experiment with multiparty democratic government formally began today on an enthusiastic and emotional note.
- May 08** The King of Nepal has been warned by the country's leading political party that if he does not turn over substantial powers to the interim Government, the party will call crowds back into the streets to force the issue.
- May 12** In a move that caught the newly installed Government by surprise, the King of Nepal named a panel today to rewrite the country's Constitution without consulting his Prime Minister.
- Jun 13** Acting on the recommendation of Nepal's new Prime Minister Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and his center-left Cabinet, King Birendra decreed a blanket amnesty today for all people who have been jailed or are awaiting trial on charges of encouraging the religious conversion of Nepalese.
- Sep 11** King Birendra was officially presented today with the draft of a new national constitution that would preserve his status as chief of state but establish a multiparty democracy, separation of powers and human rights as fundamental elements of Nepal's political system.
- Nov 11** Seven months after pro-democracy forces toppled Nepal's absolute monarchy and began a difficult process of change, King Birendra has put his official seal on a new Constitution that enshrines multiparty democracy and human rights as hallmarks of the political system. It took effect Friday morning after a five-minute ceremony at the palace attended by the King and senior officials of the interim Government.



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Nation

संरक्षण क्षेत्रमा निजी व्यवस्थापनको निर्णय प्रकृति संरक्षणमा दरबारको एकाधिकार

« Continued from Page 1

Locals at the Koshi Tapu Wildlife Reserve; Photo: Rabin Giri



Rabin Giri

सरकारले २०६२ पुस १७ गते अध्यादेशमार्फत राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज तथा वन्यजन्तु संरक्षण ऐन- २०२८ संशोधन गर्‍यो। संशोधित ऐनको 'निकुञ्ज, आरक्ष वा संरक्षण क्षेत्रको व्यवस्थापन गर्न सो सम्बन्धी क्षमता भएको ऐनद्वारा स्थापित संस्थाले मात्र प्रस्ताव आह्वान गर्न सक्ने' वाक्यले त सरकारको यो नियतलाई छर्लङ्गे पारिदिएको छ। किनकि संशोधित अध्यादेशको दफा १६ (ख) मा भनिएको जस्तो संरक्षण क्षेत्र व्यवस्थापनको क्षमता भएको ऐनद्वारा स्थापित संस्था भन्नाले संघ संस्था ऐनद्वारा स्थापित संस्थाहरू पर्दैनन्। संशोधित दफाले भनेजस्तो ऐनद्वारा स्थापित संस्थामा लुम्बिनी विकास कोष, पशुपति

क्षेत्र विकास कोष र महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषजस्ता अत्यन्त थोरै संस्थाहरू मात्र पर्दछन्। तर, संरक्षण क्षेत्रको व्यवस्थापनको क्षमता भएको ऐनद्वारा स्थापित संस्था भने महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोष मात्र पर्दछ। जबकि ऐन संशोधन हुनुअघिको दफा १६ (ख) ले 'प्रकृति तथा प्राकृतिक सम्पदाको संरक्षण गर्ने उद्देश्य लिई स्थापना भएको संस्थालाई सुम्पन सक्ने' व्यवस्था गरेको थियो। विभागका एक वरिष्ठ अधिकारी 'व्यवस्थापन क्षमता भएको र ऐनद्वारा स्थापित भन्ने वाक्य थपेर सरकारले महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषको एकाधिकारलाई संस्थागत रूप दिन चाहेको आरोप लगाउँछन्। 'संरक्षण क्षेत्रको सामान्य व्यवस्थापनका लागि त यसअघि पनि कहाँ रोकिएको थियो र?' उनी भन्छन्।

संशोधित ऐनलाई प्रभाव पार्ने गरी यसविचमा

कुनै परिवर्तन नहुने हो भने राज्यका अमूल्य प्राकृतिक सम्पदा दरबारको पोल्टामा जाने निश्चित छ। श्री ५ ज्ञानेन्द्र संरक्षक र युवराज पारस अध्यक्ष रहेको महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषले मुलुकका महत्वपूर्ण संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूलाई आफ्नो मातहतमा सञ्चालन गर्न देख्दै आएको सपना अब भने पूरा हुने भएको छ।

सरकारले यो नीति लागू गर्दा हुने फाइदाका अनेक बूँदा प्रस्तुत गरे पनि विभागका पूर्व महानिर्देशक विश्वनाथ उप्रेती भने यो अवधारण नै गलत रहेको बताउँछन्। उनका अनुसार राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जको शुरुवात गर्ने र निजीकरणको कडा बकालत गर्ने मुलुकहरूमा समेत यस्तो नीति ल्याइएको छैन। 'अहिले कुन त्यस्तो नयाँ परिस्थिति सिर्जना भयो जसले प्राकृतिक सम्पदा गैरसरकारी निकायलाई सुम्पन हतार पाऱ्यो? सरकारले प्रष्ट पार्नुपर्छ।'

उप्रेती भन्छन्।

विभागका महानिर्देशक डा. नारायण पौडेल भने सरकारले कसैको प्रभाव र आदेशको आधारमा नभई संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूको दीर्घकालीन हितका लागि नै यस्तो नीति लागू गरेको बताउँछन्। 'जैविक विविधतामा कुनै हानी नपुऱ्याइ संरक्षण क्षेत्रको व्यवस्थापनमा हुने सरकारी खर्च घटाई बचेको रकम अन्य क्षेत्रमा लगाउनु गर्नु नै सरकारको मुख्य उद्देश्य हो, अरु नियत हुने त प्रश्नै उठदैन, पौडेलको दावी छ।

सरकारको नियत सफा भए यो विषयलाई सार्वजनिक छलफलका लागि ल्याईहाल्थ्यो नी, भन्छन्, वातावरणविद् डा.तीर्थमान श्रेष्ठ। सरकारको सनकले संरक्षण क्षेत्रले ओगटेका अठार प्रतिशत भूभाग र जैविक विविधताकावारे अब चिन्ता गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था आएको उनी बताउँछन्। 'मेरो विचारमा यो सरकारी नीति

Nation



Chitwan National Park; Photo: Bhushan Shilpakar

आउनुमा संरक्षण र पैसाले भन्दा पनि राजनीतिले ठूलो काम गरेको छ,' डा. श्रेष्ठ भन्छन्।

ऐन संशोधन कसका लागि ? विभागका ती वरिष्ठ अधिकारी बनाइ प्रष्ट देखिन्छ। ति अधिकारी कोषकै दबावकै कारण सरकार यस्तो नीति घोषणा गर्न बाध्य भएको बताउँछन्। सरकारले ल्याएको नीति समेत कोषले नै डाफ्ट गरिदिएको दावी समेत ती अधिकारीको छ। 'सरकारले कस्का लागि यो नीति ल्याएको भन्नेमा तपाईं पत्रकार जस्ता मान्छे पनि अझै अलमलमा पर्ने ?' उनी भन्छन्।

सरकारको यो नीति कोषकै निमित्त भएको आरोप लगाउनेहरूको तर्कलाई सरकारले ०६२ पुस १७ गते जारी गरेको अध्यादेशले ठूलो बल दिएको छ। तत्कालीन अर्थमन्त्री डा.लोहनीले प्रस्तुत गरेको संरक्षण क्षेत्र निजी क्षेत्रलाई दिने योजना अनुरूप कञ्चनजंघा व्यवस्थापनको लागि आवेदन दिएको कञ्चनजंघा संरक्षित क्षेत्र व्यवस्थापन समिति र मकालु वरुण राष्ट्रिय व्यवस्थापन गर्न आवेदन दिएको द माउण्टेन इन्स्टिच्युटले संशोधित ऐनसँगै तुहिएको छ। विभाग सम्बद्धस्रोतका अनुसार संशोधित ऐनले ऐनद्वारा स्थापित र व्यवस्थापनमा क्षमता भएको संस्थालाई मात्र मान्यता दिएका कारण अहिले दुबै संस्थाले हात भिकेका छन्।

उल्टो भार सरकारलाई

सरकारले संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूलाई निजीकरण गर्ने यो घोषणाले पर्यावरणीय पर्यटन प्रवर्द्धन हुने, गरिबी घटाउने, संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूमा हाल भइरहेको खर्चमा कमी ल्याउने र राजस्वमा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पार्ने जस्ता चार महत्वपूर्ण र उत्तिकै महत्वाकांक्षी लक्ष्यहरू हासिल गर्ने दावी गरेको छ। तर, यी लक्ष्यहरू प्राप्त

गर्न सरकारको अगाडि चुनौतिको पहाड नै छ भने हुन्छ। व्यवस्थापन निजी क्षेत्रले लिने वित्तिकै सर कारले 'भार' को रूपमा हेरेको संरक्षण क्षेत्रको खर्च नघटने बरु उल्टो सरकार नै मारमा पर्ने जानकार हरू बताउँछन्।

सरकारले संरक्षण क्षेत्रमा वर्षेनी भण्डै अस्सी करोड रुपैयाँ खर्च गर्ने गरेको छ। जसमध्ये अस्सी प्रतिशत संरक्षण क्षेत्रको सुरक्षाका लागि बसेका शाही नेपाली सेनाको व्यवस्थापनमै खर्च हुने गरेको छ भने बाँकी २० प्रतिशत चाहिँ कर्मचारी र अन्य प्रशासनिक कार्यमा। विभागका अनुसार मुलुकमा रहेका नौ राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज, तीन बन्धनजन्तु आरक्ष, तीन संरक्षण क्षेत्र र एक शिकार आरक्षमा भण्डै पाँच हजार सैनिकहरू राखिएका छन्। संरक्षण क्षेत्रमा कुल सरकारी कर्मचारीको संख्या चाहीं नौ सय ८८ छ।

घोषित नीतिको ठूलो आश्चर्य चाहिँ निजी क्षेत्रले संरक्षण क्षेत्रको जिम्मा लिएपछि पनि सैनिकको सारा खर्च सरकार आफैले व्यहोर्न तयार हुनुमा रहेको छ। विभाग सम्बद्ध ती अधिकारी कोषले शिवपुरी, रारा र शे फोक्सुण्डो निकुञ्ज व्यवस्थापनका लागि विभागमा दर्ता गराएको प्रस्तावमा समेत सैनिक खर्च सरकारले नै व्यहोर्नपर्ने आशय पाइएको बताउँछन्। यसले खर्च घटाउने सरकारको योजनालाई कसरी सहयोग पुऱ्याउछ ? यो रहस्यको विषय भएको छ। सैनिक खर्चसँगै कार्यरत सरकारी कर्मचारीको खर्च समेत कसले व्यहोर्ने भन्ने बारेमा समेत सरकार अस्पष्ट देखिनुले अझ अन्याय बढाएको छ।

सरकारको नियत सफा भए यो विषयलाई सार्वजनिक छलफलका लागि ल्याईहाल्थ्यो नी, भन्छन्, वातावरणविद् डा. तीर्थमान श्रेष्ठ। सरकारको सनकले संरक्षण क्षेत्रले

ओगटेका अठार प्रतिशत भूभाग र जैविक विविधताकाबारे अब चिन्ता गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था आएको उनी बताउँछन्। 'मेरो विचारमा यो सरकारी नीति आउनुमा संरक्षण र पैसाले भन्दा पनि राजनीतिले ठूलो काम गरेको छ,' डा. श्रेष्ठ भन्छन्।

निजी क्षेत्रलाई व्यवस्थापन दिँदा सरकारी राजस्वमा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पर्ने सरकारको सोचाई पनि वास्तविकताभन्दा टाढा देखिन्छ। बन्धनजन्तु कानूनविद् डा. रवि शर्मा अर्याल व्यवस्थापन सुम्पेर सरकारी खर्च कम हुने सरकारी तर्क निराधार भएको बताउँछन्। निजी क्षेत्रले कुशल व्यवस्थापन गर्न सक्नेमा कुनै शंका नभएपनि मुलुकमा हिंसात्मक द्वन्द्व चलिरहेको अवस्थामा यो काम अत्यन्त कठिन हुने उहाँको भनाइ छ।

यो नीतिले पर्यावरणीय पर्यटन प्रवर्द्धन गर्ने र गरिबी घटाउने सरकारी योजनामा ठूलो विरोधाभाष देख्नु, वातावरणविद् डा. श्रेष्ठ। व्यवस्थापन जिम्मा लिने संस्थाले पैसालाई नै महत्व दिने भएकोले राष्ट्रिय सम्पदा क्षय हुने खतरा बढ्नेमा उनी चिन्ता व्यक्त गर्छन्। नाफामुखी निजी संस्थाले जनतासँग पनि नाफा घाटाकै सम्बन्ध राख्ने र यसले संस्था र संरक्षण क्षेत्र वरपरका वासिन्दाविच ठूलो आन्तरिक द्वन्द्व निम्त्याउन सक्ने श्रेष्ठ बताउँछन्। आज पो राष्ट्रिय सम्पति भनेर जनता चुप लागेर बसेका छन्, भोलि कुनै एनजीओ व्यवस्थापनमा संलग्न हुने वित्तिकै जनता चुप लाग्छन् भन्न कहाँ सकिन्छ र ? श्रेष्ठ भन्छन्। डा. अर्याल पनि ऐनले संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूमा जनताको सहभागीतामा निर्माण भएको मध्यवर्ती क्षेत्रलाई सहयोग सम्बन्धमा मौन बस्नुले स्थानीयस्तरमा अझ समस्या उत्पन्न हुनसक्ने सम्भावना देख्छन्।

आजै हेरौं भोलिको हविगत

संरक्षण क्षेत्रहरूलाई निजी क्षेत्रलाई व्यवस्थापन गर्न दिएर खर्च घटाउने कुरा गर्ने सरकार आफै नै यहि कामकै लागि अनुदान बाडिरहेको तथ्य सामुन्ने आएको छ। अधिल्लो ऐनकै आधारमा अन्नपूर्ण संरक्षण क्षेत्रको व्यवस्थापन गर्दै आएको महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषलाई सरकारले चालु आर्थिक वर्षमा सरकारले १ करोड अनुदान दिएको छ। कोषका प्रवक्ता डा. शान्तराम ज्ञवालीले सरकारबाट अनुदान लिएको स्वीकार गरेका छन्। 'सरकारसँगै मिलेर काम गरिरहेकोले अनुदान स्वभाविक हो,' ज्ञवालीले हालै प्रकाशित एक पत्रिकामा अन्तर्वार्ताका क्रममा भनेका छन्। यो घटनाबाट संरक्षणका निमित्त जिम्मा लिएको संस्थाले आफूले भनेजस्तो नाफा हासिल नगरेमा अन्त्यमा सरकारकै ढोका ढक्ढक्याउन आइपुग्छ भन्ने पुष्टि गरेको छ। विभागका ती अधिकारीको भनाईमा कोषले यसअघि पनि आफ्नो 'शाही सम्बन्ध' कै कारण वर्दिया र शुक्लाफाँटामा पनि विभिन्न समयमा अनुदान लिएर कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको छ। अन्नपूर्ण क्षेत्र अनुदानमा भरथेग गरिरहेता पनि कोषलेनै व्यवस्थापन सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको मनास्लुको स्थिति भने कहालीलाग्दो भएको विभाग स्रोत बताउँछ। कोषका कार्यक्रम प्रवक्ता डा. सिद्धार्जबज्र बज्राचार्य कोष राजपरिवार सम्बद्ध संस्था भएको भन्दै माओवादीले सो क्षेत्रका कार्यक्रमहरू सञ्चालन गर्न बाधा पुऱ्याएकोले यस्तो स्थिति आएको बताउँछन्। र जाको सक्रिय शासन र हिंसात्मक द्वन्द्व कायमै रहेको अवस्थामा सरकारले कोषलाई दिने भनिएको व्यवस्थापनको जिम्मेवारी कोषले कसरी सञ्चालन गर्ने हो ? यसै भन्न सकिने स्थिति छैन।

निजीकरण कि व्यवस्थापन हस्तान्तरण ?

सरकारले घोषणा गरेको यस्तो नीति 'निजीकरण' हो या 'व्यवस्थापन हस्तान्तरण' यसबारेमा समेत विवाद देखिएको छ। जानकारहरूले भने सर कारको निर्णयलाई सोझै निजीकरणसँगै जोडेर व्याख्या गर्दै आएका छन्। वातावरणविद् डा. श्रेष्ठ वास्तविक कुरा भनेको सारा प्राकृतिक सम्पदा निजी क्षेत्रलाई बुझाउने भन्ने नै हो भन्ने आफूले बुझेको बताउँछन्। 'शब्दलाई अन्धाएर हुँदैन, कुरा निजीकरण नै हो' - श्रेष्ठ भन्छन्। अधिवक्ता डा. कार्कीका अनुसार प्रचलित निजीकरण ऐन, २०५० को दफा ८ अन्तर्गतले समेत प्रतिष्ठानको व्यवस्थापनमा निजी क्षेत्रलाई सहभागिता गराउनु पनि निजीकरण नै मानि एको बताउनुहुन्छ। 'त्यसैले सरकारले घोषणा गरेको नीति निजीकरण उन्मुख नै हो मान्नु पर्दछ।' - अधिवक्ता डा. भरतबहादुर कार्की तर्क गर्नुहुन्छ।

तर, सरकार भने आफ्नो नीतिलाई 'निजीकरण' भन्न पटककै रुचाएको छैन। तत्कालीन अर्थमन्त्री डा. लोहनीद्वारा २०६० साउन १ गते प्रस्तुत बजेट वक्तव्यमा पहिलोपटक सर कारको यस्तो नीति सान्दर्भिक भएपछि चौतर्फी यसको विरोध हुन थालेपछि वन तथा भू-संरक्षण मन्त्रालयले एक प्रेस विज्ञप्ति प्रकाशित गर्दै यसलाई निजीकरण नभई व्यवस्थापन हस्तान्तरण मात्र भएको भनी प्रष्ट पार्ने प्रयास गरेको थियो। सरकारको यस्तो नीतिप्रति चिन्ता

Continued on Page 21 »

Nation

Workers at the Martyr's Road

Subel Rai

The 93 km stretch of road being built in Rolpa, Nepal's Maoist heartland, might be a Maoist undertaking but the workers are all general citizens. Thousands of villagers from different villages have been arriving here regularly to work on the "Martyr's road." The road, which starts in Rolpa's Nuwagaun, has almost

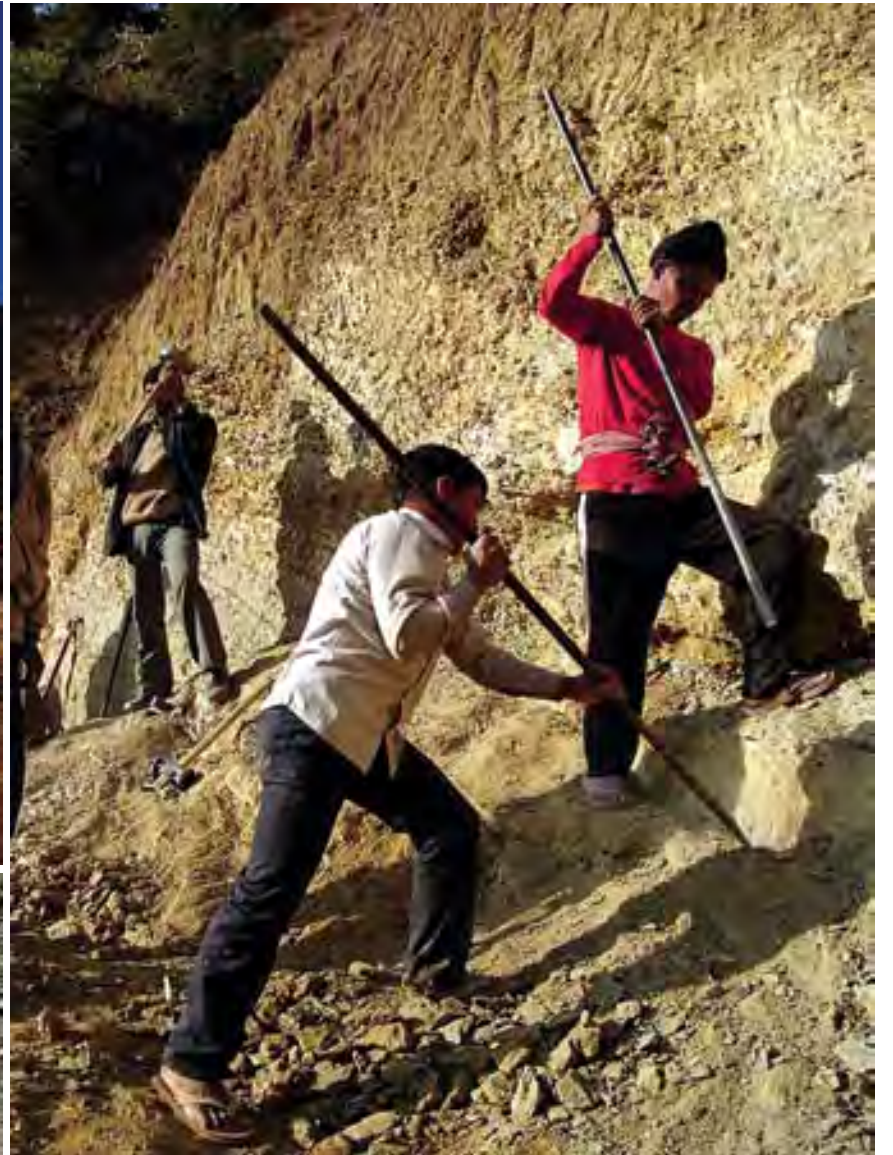
reached Ghartigaun. Last year, amidst a grand ceremony, the first 11 km of the road from Nuwagaun to Tilla had been inaugurated. The road, which the Maoists plan to make ready in 3 years, has been completed about 49% since work on it started a year ago.

Although the Maoists declare that those working on the road are volunteers, they have repeatedly forced people to work in the past. The method

is such that every village has to pledge one person per household to work on the road. Should a family or household defy the order, they are subject to a fine of Rs. 9,000 to the People's Government. On an average, during one such session children as young as 10- years old through men and women as senior as 70-years old in numbers of 900- 1,600. They work for 8 hours per day with 5 minute breaks per hour. Although the

general feeling about this obligation is unhappiness, most workers try to make the most of it by joking and doing what it takes to get through the day. The Maoist cadres present at the site are usually dressed neatly in their casuals or uniforms while the villagers build the "Martyr's Road."

Clockwise, L to R: Holleri village, where the Martyr's Road begins; Young men break hills without the use of any machinery; Women as well as children can be seen working on the road; Workers travel from their villages on foot to reach the road where they contribute labor for free. Photos: Subel Rai.



Entertainment

“मैले ३० वर्ष अघि गाएका गीत पनि अभै स्रोताले रुचाईरहेकाछन्”

Photo: Anushil Shrestha



Anushil Shrestha

“म पथरको देवता हैन...., बितेका कुराले....., भन्थिन मेरी उनी....., मेरो आखामा...., फिरेमा उनीनु त्यो एउटा कुरा...., हर रात सपनीमा ऐठन हुन्छ.....” यस्ता दर्जनौ कालजयी गीतका गायकक, संगीत सर्जक दिप श्रेष्ठ नेपाली संगीत क्षेत्रका चम्कीला ताराको रूपमा रहेकाछन्। नेपाली आधुनिक संगीतका एक अग्रज सर्जकका रूपमा रहेका दिप श्रेष्ठका ३ सय जती गीत रेकर्ड भईसकेकाछन्। दृष्टि र श्रृङ्खला नामक २ वटा एकल अल्बम आफैले निकाले पनि रत्न रेकर्डिङले नारायणगोपालको गीत संग केही अल्बम र धेरै कलेक्सन अल्बमहरूमा उहाका गीतहरू निस्किएकाछन्। हाल सम्म ६ वटा म्युजिक भिडीयोहरू बनेकाछन्। विगत २४ वर्षदेखि नेपाल राजकिय प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानका जागीरे दिप श्रेष्ठ दुई महिना अघि राजधानीमा आफ्ना गीतहरू लिए श्रीमती सोफियाका साथ सांगीतिक कार्यक्रममा प्रस्तुत हुनुभएको थियो। प्रस्तुत छ अहिले एकै साथ तीन एलबमको तयारीमा व्यस्त श्रेष्ठसंग नेपाली आवाजका लागि पत्रकार अनुशीलले गरेको कुराकानी।

तीनै वटा एलबम कसरी तयारी गर्दै हुनुहुन्छ ?

युगल गीतहरू र भजन केही पुराना नै छन् र केही नया गीतहरू गर्दैछु। श्री पुरुष ढकाल, र राजेन्द्र थापा, विप्लव प्रतिकहरूको कम्पोज गरिसकेको छु, अरुको गीतहरू पनि धमाधम संगीत गर्दैछु, सबै संगीत पनि आफ्नै हो। एलबमको नामहरू सोचिसकेको छैन।

संगीत बाहेक तपाईं प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानमा हुनुहुन्छ, त्यहा के कस्ता काम गरिरहनु भएको छ ?

भने जस्तो काम गर्न पाईएको छैन। यहा प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठानले गर्ने कार्यक्रमहरूमा कहिले “व्याक राउण्ड” संगीत तथार गर्ने गर्छु। कहिले यहीको लागि १/२ वटा गीत कम्पोज गर्छु। त्यस्तो ठोस काम गरिएको छैन तर यसपाली क्षेत्रिय संगीत महोत्सव गर्न म धरान गए। यस्तै केही १/२ राम्रा काम गर्ने मौका पाएको छु।

अहिले सम्म आफुले गाएका गीत, संगीत सृजनामा सबैभन्दा बढी कुनसंग बढी सन्तुष्ट हुनुहुन्छ ?

धेरै छन् एउटा मात्र यही हो भनेर भन्नु सकिन्छ। हरेक पटक धेरै तरिकाले अलग अलग सृजनाहरू गरिरहेको छु। जस्तो अहिले म नौलो एउटा काम गरिरहेको छु। ६ वटा पक्तिको एउटा पुरा कवितालाई कम्पोज गर्दैछु। विप्लव प्रतिकको यो कविताको संगीत बनाई सके अब हेरौ यसको प्रभाव के पर्छ। त्यसैले यही मनपर्छ, यो नै राम्रो भनीहाल सकिन्छ।

विजय श्रेष्ठ, शिवशंकर थापा, विप्लव प्रतिकले लेखेका गीतहरू म पथरको देवता हैन...., भन्थिन मेरी उनी....., हररात सपनीमा....जस्ता गीत मान्छेले रुचाएकाछन्, तर अहिलेको नया पुस्तालाई तपाईंको संगीतले कति तान्न सकेको जस्तो लाग्छ ?

यो कुरामा अली जटिल भईरहेको छ हामीलाई। हाम्रो गाउने तरिका, शैली पुरानै छ, अझ माफिएर कठिन हुदै गर्दैरहेको छ। तर आम स्रोताहरू धेरै सरल संगीत र सरल शब्दको प्रयोजन भएका गीत सुन्न रुचाईरहेकाछन् भन्ने महशुस भएको छ। तर हाम्रै मात्र गीत सुन्ने एउटा जमात पनि छ। दुःख लाग्दो कुरा के छ भने ति जमात चाही अली लोशे छन्। फलनाले कस्तो गीत गरेछ भनेर एलबम किनेर सुन्ने चाही कमै गरेकाछन् जस्तो लाग्छ।

अहिलेको नेपाली संगीत क्षेत्र कसरी अघि बढीरहेको छ जस्तो लाग्छ ?

पुराना संगीतकर्मीहरूले जे जस्तो गर्नु पर्ने हो आ-आफ्नो ढंगले गरिनै रहेकाछन्। कसैले नया पुर तामा एक किसिमको सांगीतिक क्रान्ति नै ल्याईरहेकाछन्। त्यस्तै अर्को हाईली मोर्डन सोशार्डटीको म्युजिक, मोर्डन कम्पोजिसन मन पराउने एक जमात पनिछन्। तर हामी के दावी गर्न सक्छौ भने पछि गएर उनीहरूले पनि हामीले गाउने गरेका गीत, संगीतहरू गुन्नुनाउछन् होला भन्ने विश्वास छ।

तीस वर्ष अघि यस क्षेत्रमा लाग्दा कतिको संघर्ष गर्नु परेको थियो ?

संघर्ष भन्दा, कहि गीत गाउदा पैसा पाईने, रेकर्ड भएर बजारमा विक्रन अवस्था थिएन्। नितान्त एकलो प्रकारले हिडनु पर्थ्यो त्यो बेलामा। रत्न रेकर्डको भरमा सानो बजारमा पुग्यो। अहिलेको जस्तो आधुनिक टेक्नोलोजी आएको थिएन। जहि तही स्टुडियोहरू थिएनन्, रेडियोमा गएर गीत गाउनु पर्थ्यो। धरान बाटै म काठमाण्डौ धाउनु पर्ने भएको हुनाले उतावाट आयो गीत रेकर्ड गर्न समय लाग्ने भएकाले समस्या भेल्लु पर्थ्यो।

त्यो बेलामा विजय श्रेष्ठ। तपाईंको जोडी खुबै जमेको थियो, त्यसले किन निरन्तरता पाएन ?

त्यो बेलामा म धरान बस्थे विजय ईनरुवाबाट आउथ्यो र उसले गीत रचना गर्थ्यो म गाउथे। उसले रचेका गीत मैले संगीत गरेर काठमाण्डौ आउदा रेकर्ड गरे। मैले पहिलो गाएको गीत नै “म पथरको देवता हैन....” उसकै थियो र त्यही गीत नै हिट भयो। त्यसैले म भन्छु विजयले गीत नै लेखेर नदिएको भए मैले दुनियाभरको के के बटुलेर कम्पोज गरेर हिडनु पर्थ्यो होला। हाम्रो जोडी एकदम मीलेकोले होला गीतहरू हिटभए। पधेरै वर्ष सम्म त हामी संगै नै भयो तर पछि उसको विवाह भएपछि हाम्रो भेट कम हुनथाल्यो। मैले शिवशंकर थापा, बसन्त थापाका गीत गाउन थाले र

काठमाण्डौ तिर आएर बस्न थालेपछि यताका श्रीपुरुष ढकाल, रतन शम्शेर थापा, राजेन्द्र थापाका गीतकार पाउन थाले, विजय र.गको सम्पर्क कम हुदैगयो।

तपाईं पटक पटक अमेरिका जानु भएको छ त्यहाको नजैपाली संगीत सुन्ने माहौल कस्तो लाग्यो ?

म चार पटक अमेरिका गए र पटक पटकनै फरक टेप्टका स्रोताहरू मैले पाए। पहिलो पटक जादा म र मेरो श्रीमती मात्र गएका थियौ त्यो बेला हामीले एकदमै सोलो गीत गायौ, मेरो उकदमै चलेका गीतहरू सोलो नै छन्। त्यस्ता गीतहरू गा(उदा पनि राम्रो संगले रेस्पोन्स गर्नुभयो। २००२ मा अमेरिकाको नेपाली एशोसिएशन (एनए) को सम्मेलन भएको बेला वासीङ्टन डीसी गएको थिए जहा म संगै १९७४ एडी पनि गएको थियो। त्यो बेलाको क्राउड पहिलेको भन्दा धेरै गुना बढी थियो। जमात हेर्दा सबै मर्डन संगीत मात्र सुन्न रुचाउने जस्तो लागेको थियो। मेरो भागमा ५/६ वटा गीतहरू गाउनु पर्ने थियो। तर मैले आफ्ना गीतहरू गाउदा मान्छेहरू १९७४ एडीका गीतहरूकै जस्तो उत्तिकै नै रमाए। त्यो बेला स्रोता, दर्शकले मोर्डन गेटअपमा आएको जस्तै गीतलाई पनि रुचाउने रहेछ भन्ने लाग्यो।

अमेरिकाका नेपालीहरूसंगको अरु अलि फरक अनुभव केही छन कि ?

त्यहाको अलि फरक अनुभव भन्दा, एउटा इन्टेस्टिड पार्ट न्युयोर्कमा भयो। त्यह एकजना मान्छेले फोनबाट कार्यक्रमको लागी सम्पर्क गरेर मीति समय पनि फिक्स गर्‍यो। तर, कार्यक्रम गर्न तोकेको मीति सम्म मलाई केही नै भन्नु भएन, पछि उहाले अर्को मान्छे मार्फत माफी माग्दै खबर पठाएर भन्नुभयो कि “तपाईंको नाम नै न्युयोर्कमा सुनेकै रहेनछन्।” मैले “सायद तपाईं तिब्बतियन कम्युनिटीमा जानुभयो होला” भने त्यस्तै भएको रहेछ। न्यु कारालाईनमा पनि त्यस्तै भयो। उता जन्मेकाहरूले मेरो गीतहरू सुन्न नै पाएका हुदैनन त्यसैले मलाई नचिन्नु स्वभाविकनै हो नि। कहि चाही मैले गीत गाउने वित्तिकै “यो त सुनेको गीत हो यो गीत उहाले नै गाउनु भएको होर?” भन्नेहरू पनि भेटिए।

नेपालकै नया पुस्ताले चाही तपाईंको गीत कतिको सुन्छन जस्तो लाग्छ ?

अब त मलाई यहाको नया जेनेरेशनले पनि मेरो नाम भन्नासाथ चिन्छन जस्तो लाग्दैन। किन भने मेरो गीत चाही चिन्छन् जस्तो “बितेका कुरा ले....” गीत अभै पनि मनपराउछन्। ३० वर्ष अघि गाएको “मेरो आखामा....” गीत अहिले पपुलर भईरहेको छ। नाम भन्दा पनि गीतले चाही चिन्लान जस्तो लाग्छ।

नया पुस्तालाई पनि तान्ने नया गीतहरू गर्ने योजना छ कि ?

नया पुस्ताका युवा गायकहरूको नया सोंचले संगीत क्षेत्रमा मानिसको आकर्षण बढेको नै छ। केही राम्रा गायकहरू पनि आएकाछन् तर अहिले आएका शैलीका जस्तै भनेर बनाउदा साह्रै तल भरेर कम्पोज गर्नुपर्छ र धेरै सस्ता शब्दहरू पनि प्रयोग गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। अब म त्यस्तो चाही गर्दिन होला तर मोर्डन म्युजिकमा बेश गरेर कस्ता कस्ता गीत गर्न सकिन्छ र त्यसलाई कुन स्तरमा राख्न सकिन्छ भनेर केही १/२ कम्पोज चाही गर्छु जस्तो लाग्छ।

Entertainment

Pop Express

Pop star Nirnaya da' Naughty Soul Kid in a movie

Guess what Nirnaya da' Naughty Soul Kid is busy doing these days? He is composing an original score for a Nepali big budget movie in Studio 2000. Nep-Hop popularizer NSK will be doing the title track for the movie which will be directed by Kollywood actor Dilip Rayamajhi. The movie, "Breakfail", will be actor Rayamajhi's directorial debut and feature him alongside Nikhil Upreti, one of the busiest actors in the industry. And if you are wondering whether NSK will make an appearance or not on the silver screen, then the answer might be yes. NSK is said to have a cameo appearance in the movie (maybe he'll drive up in his golden-yellow car and wave that trademark "peace out" sign?). NSK was one of the several pop artists in the recently finished 5-stop Shikhar Pop Express group tour in Kathmandu and he is now set to *bring da'house down* at the Mero Mobile Concert in Pokhara this weekend. Last year, his debut solo album "Ma Nepali" became one of the most successful pop albums of 2004/5. NSK got married in Summer 2005 but the only baby we know he is making at the moment is in the studio for "Breakfail."

Harish Mathema in studio

Pop icon Harish Mathema, who recently finished a US tour alongside Sanjeep Pradhan, Sarisma Amatya and a few other pop singers last year, is back in Nepal and busy in the studios. The singer is currently working on his as yet untitled album. It will be his 6th full length album in a career that spans 22 years. A solo concert in Kathmandu is also scheduled to coincide with the album launch. And soon after, the singer has planned to go on an international tour.

Andazification's debut in Nepal

SAV music label will be distributing the debut album "JPT" by Andazification, a pop-rock Nepali trio based in San Francisco, California. Amongst others in SAV's catalog of upcoming albums that are waiting to hit the store shelves, SAV is banking on "JPT" to bring in the goods. The album and music video were both produced in America. Nepali Aawaz was the first to introduce them in the Nepali media (see Issue #1, Oct.05). For those who did not know, JPT stands for "Je Payo Tehi".

SAV also recently released pop star Sudip Giri's second album "Frenz". They

are also preparing to release their annual compilation album Budget 2006, which was discontinued last year.

Catch-22's new plans

City rockers Catch-22 is returning with a full length album "Plan B". And this time, Taal Music is producing it. According to frontman Prallen, Plan A always failed on them. So, they had to come up with a Plan B. The band lineup is new, except for bassist Shyam Maharjan and Prallen of course. The band had released a demo and an album earlier. At one time, they were also quite popular in the city and regularly played at the Rum Doodle for almost 2 years. They quit when the equipment caught fire one evening.

"Plan B" will feature eight songs and probably an English number too. The band has been known for their distinct sound and Prallen's inimitable voice. Three singles have already been released from the album. Music video for Chiplo Baato is underway, directed by Taal's founder and the band's producer Aslam Khan. The video is scheduled to hit the Nepali airwaves in the first week of April.

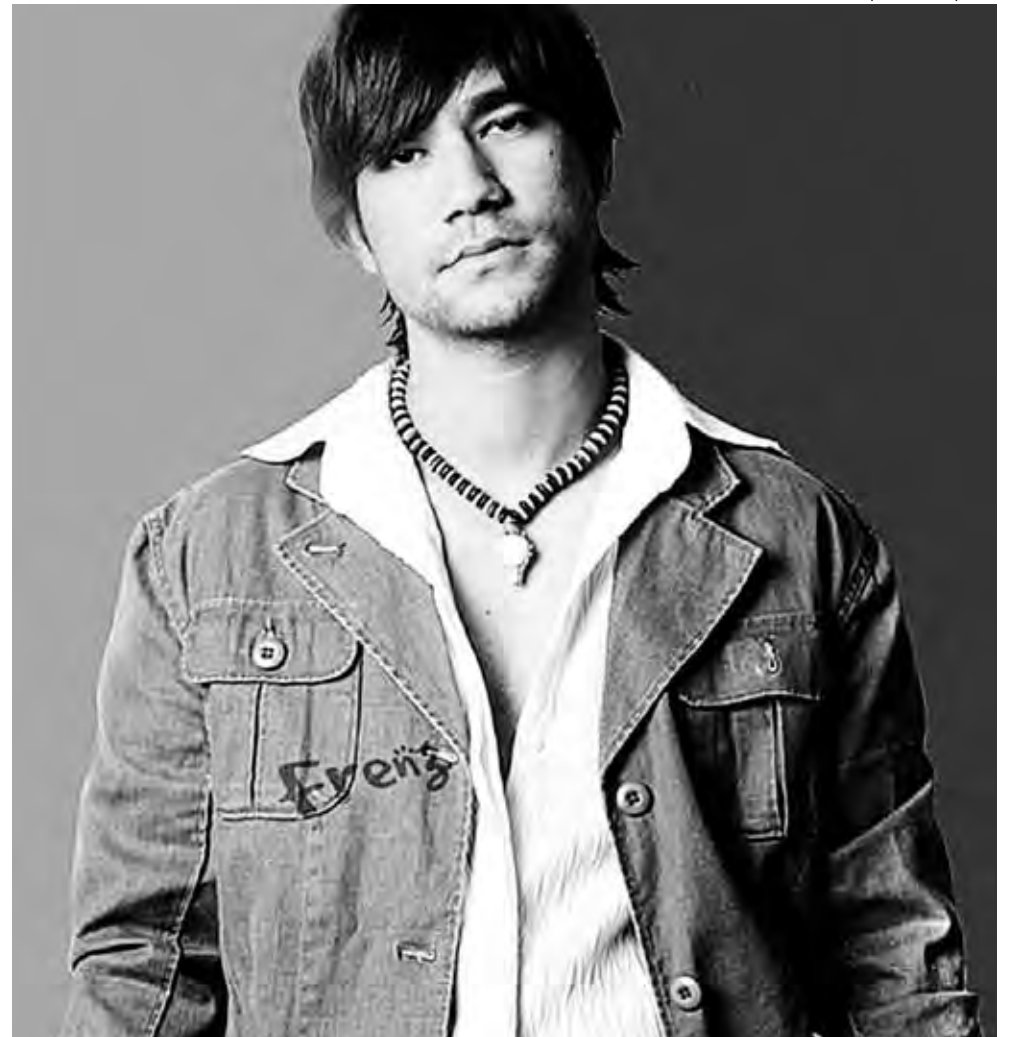
Two music videos on the line

Asif Shah is currently working on pop sensation Sugam Pokharel's upcoming music video for the single "Saathi". This will be the third music video for Sugam's latest and third album "Sutra" released in 2005. Music video for its first single "Mannko Dailo" was directed by Pooja Gurung and had become a hit. The upcoming video will star Asif alongside his childhood friend Suraj Singh Thakuri of Kantipur Television.

Suraj Singh Thakuri, who himself is a music video director, on the other hand is directing Sudip Giri's single "Sannani" from his latest album "Frenz," released earlier this year. "Sannani" features guitar licks from Nepathya's Hari and has received good reviews by Kathmandu's FM stations.

Raju Lama's birthday bash

Mangolian Heart's frontman and pop heart throb Raju Lama celebrated his 28th Birthday with his family, friends and colleagues at Dalima Restaurant in Thamel on 17 March. Pop stars Nima Rumba, Kranti Ale, music video director Suraj Shah and Prashan Syangden, Prabhat Rimal and Sumit of Kantipur FM and Cybernepal's Kasaju brothers were present amongst others. The cake was cut at 10:05 PM, the time of his



birth.

Fans of Mongolian Hearts should also be happy to know that the band is all set to release Mongolian Hearts Vol 4. Everything, including cover designs, has already been finished and the album is set to hit the stores within a month. Raju Lama fans should also look for his solo performances at Germany and Australia tentatively scheduled for this May.

Aananda Karki's latest

Adhunik legend Anand Karki has started archiving his music personally. His 10th and most recent album "Aananda" was done, however, find him in a more pop music arena. Ananda Karki has also performed a jingle for Indian cell-phone giants Air-Tel.

Politics

दल र माओवादीबीच दोस्रो सहमति - सात दलले आम हडताल गर्ने

काठमाडौं। सात राजनीतिक दल र माओवादीबीच पुन अर्को सहमति भएको छ। सहमतिका लागि भारतको नयाँ दिल्लीमा सात राजनीतिक दलका प्रतिनिधिहरू र माओवादी प्रतिनिधिहरूबीच दुई सातादेखि वार्ता जारी रहेको थियो। परिणाम स्वरूप सोमबार सात राजनीतिक दलका शिर्ष नेताहरूका तर्फबाट र माओवादी अध्यक्ष प्रचण्डद्वारा एउटै भाषाको छुट्टाछुट्टै विज्ञप्तीमा हस्ताक्षर गरिएको विज्ञप्ती सोमबार सार्वजनिक गरियो।

दल र माओवादीबीचको दोस्रो सहमति पछि माओवादीले एक सातादेखि जारी गरेको नाकाबन्दी र जक्काजाम सहितको सम्पूर्ण संघर्षका कार्यक्रमहरू फिर्ता लिएको छ भने सात दलले चैत २४ गतेदेखि चार दिनसम्म आमहडताल गर्ने घोषणा गरेका छन्। शान्तिपूर्ण रूपमा गरिने उक्त आमहडताललाई माओवादीले पनि आवश्यक सहयोग पुऱ्याउने वचन दिएको।

दल र माओवादीबीचको दोस्रो सहमतिले दुई पक्षबीच भएको अधिल्लो बाह्र बूँदे

सहमतिलाई मजबूत बनाउँदै त्यसको कार्यान्वयनका लागि दृढतासमेत व्यक्त गरिएको छ। बाह्र बूँदे सहमतिका कार्यान्वयनमा जोड दिँदै निरंकुश राजतन्त्रको विरोधमा सोमबार जारी संयुक्त विज्ञप्तीमा भनिएको छ, “बाह्र बूँदे समझदारीप्रति दृढ प्रतिवद्धता व्यक्त गर्दै त्यसलाई अझ ठोस र विकसित गर्दै लैजान तथा सामन्ती राजतन्त्रविरोधी संयुक्त आन्दोलनलाई तिब्रता दिन आइतबार जारी दोस्रो समझदारीको विशिष्ट राजनीतिक महत्व रहेको छ।”

दोस्रो समझदारीमा पनि दल र माओवादीबीच संविधान सभामा पुग्ने प्रक्रियावारेमा भने समझदारी हुन सकेको छैन। विज्ञप्ती अनुसार प्रक्रियागत असहमतिलाई निरन्तर वार्ताका माध्यमबाट सहमतिमा बदल्ने समझदारी भने भएको छ। समझदारीमा आन्दोलनको शक्तिबाट संसदको पुनस्थापनामा भने जोड दिइएको छ। सोहि निर्णयबाट अधिकारसम्पन्न सर्वदलिय सरकार, माओवादीसित वार्ता र सहमतिका आधारमा संविधान सभाको निर्वाचन गरी लोकतन्त्र

स्थापना लगायतका अधिल्लो सहमतिमा जस्तै पुराना प्रतिवद्धता दोहोरिएका छन्।

दुवैले संविधान सभाको औचित्यमाथि स्पष्ट पाउँदै संविधान सभाको निर्वाचन गरी पूर्ण लोकतन्त्र स्थापना गरी देशका विद्यमान द्वन्द्वको समाधान गर्न सकिने र सार्वभौमसत्ता र राजकीय सत्ता पूर्ण रूपले जनतामा स्थापित गर्न सकिनेमा पनि सात दलले प्रतिवद्धता जाहेर गरेका छन्।

यता माओवादीले भने दुवै समझदारीबाट अघि बढ्दै देशमा निरंकुश राजतन्त्रविरोधी नारा, साभा मोर्चा र साभा कार्यक्रम तय गरेर देशव्यापी लोकतान्त्रिक आन्दोलनको आँधिबेहरी ल्याउने चेतावनी दिएको छ। “निशर्त संविधान सभाको निर्वाचन मार्फत लोकतान्त्रिक गणतन्त्रलाई संस्थागत गर्ने कार्यभार पुरा गर्न हामी सबै लोकतान्त्रिक राजनीतिक शक्तिहरूलाई पुन जोडदार आह्वान गर्दछौं,” माओवादी अध्यक्ष प्रचण्ड र अर्का शिर्षस्थ नेता डा बाबुराम भट्टराईद्वारा जारी विज्ञप्तीमा भनिएको छ।

अर्कातिर नागरिक समाजका प्रतिनिधिहरूले भने लोकतन्त्र र शान्तिका लागि माओवादीसित भएको बाह्र बूँदे सहमतिलाई कार्यान्वयन गर्न हिचकिचाउन नहुने बताउँदै सो कार्यान्वयनका लागि दवाव दिएका छन्। सात राजनीतिक दलका नेताहरू महाराजगञ्जस्थित नेपाली काँग्रेसका सभापति गिरिजाप्रसाद कोइरालाको निवासमा भेला भई बैठक गर्न लाग्दा नागरिक समाजका प्रतिनिधिहरू त्यहाँ पुगी आइतबार यस्तो दवाव दिएका हुन्। नागरिक समाजका प्रतिनिधिहरूलाई भने नेताहरूले आफूहरू बाह्र बूँदे सहमति कार्यान्वयनका लागि प्रतिवद्ध रहेको बताउँदै आफूहरूमाथि कुनै प्रकारको शंका नलिन आग्रह समेत गरेका थिए। नेपाली काँग्रेसका सभापति गिरिजाप्रसाद कोइरालाले नागरिक समाजका प्रतिनिधिहरूले भनेका छन्, “म बाह्र बूँदे सहमति कार्यान्वयनका लागि दृढ छु। म अरुको जिम्मा लिन सकिदैन, तर मलाई आफ्नो प्रतिवद्धतामा कुनै शंका नगर्नुहोला।”

शाही सेनाद्वारा एफएमको तयारी

देश चरम सैनिकीकरणको विन्दुतर्फ उन्मुख भइरहेको बेला शाही नेपाली सेनाले घुम्ती सेवाको रूपमा एमएम सेवा सञ्चालन गर्ने गृहकार्य गरिरहेको छ। सञ्चार साधनको प्रयोग र व्यवस्थापनमा माओवादीभन्दा कमजोर रहेको नेपाली सेनाले माओवादीले गर्न गरेको प्रोपोगण्डाको प्रतिकार गर्नका लागि एफएम चलाउन लागेको भए पनि त्यसले सैनिकहरूमा थप उन्मुक्तता बढ्ने अनुमान सहज रूपमा गर्न सकिन्छ। हतियारद्वारा पछिल्लो छ महिनामा तीन दर्जन सर्वसाधारणको ज्यान लिइसकेको अवस्थामा सेनाले एफएमको प्रयोगबाट यस्तै गल्ती दोह्याउलान् भन्ने चिन्ता बढ्न थालेको छ।

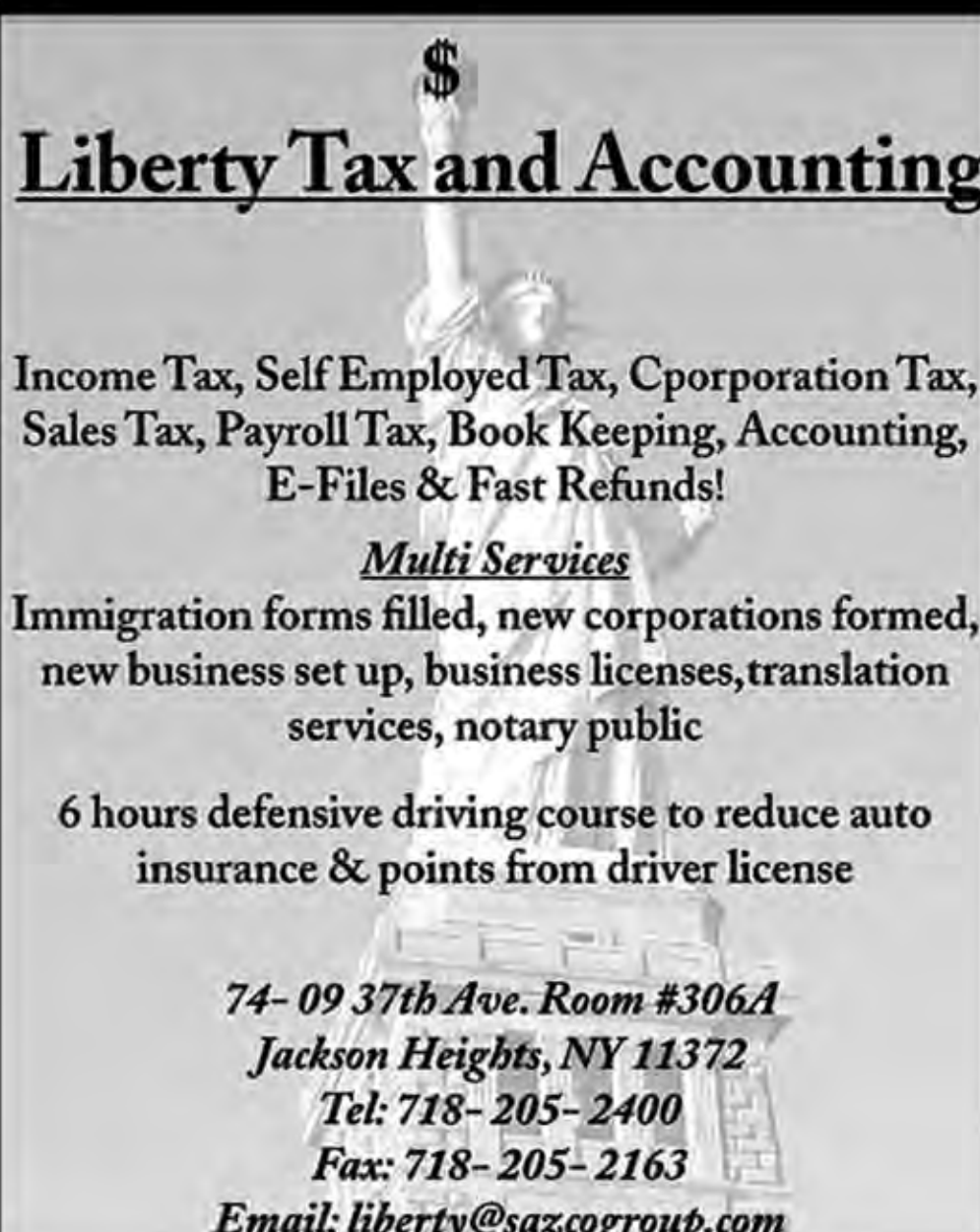
सरकारलाई बुझाउनुपर्ने इजाजत दस्तुर तिरेर नेपालमा ५६ वटा एफएम स्टेशनहरूले नेपाली स्रोतालाई सूचनामुलक, सन्देशमूलक र मनोरञ्जनात्मक कार्यक्रम पस्किरहेका छन्। तर सञ्चार मन्त्रालयले सेनालाई उक्त दस्तुर मिनाहा गरेको छ। जसले देशको राजश्वमा समेत नकारात्मक असर गर्छ। २५० वाट क्षमताको एफएम सञ्चालन गर्न एक लाख रुपैयाँ र ५०० भन्दा बढि क्षमताको एफएम सञ्चालन गर्न पाँच लाख रुपैया दस्तुर लाग्ने व्यवस्था छ।

सेनाले २५० वाटको छ र एक किलोवाटको चा गरी कूल १० एफएम स्टेशन सञ्चालनको इजाजत पाएको छ। त्यति मात्र होइन, एमएमका लागि आवश्यक उपकरण किन्न समेत अर्थमन्त्रालयबाट समेत दुई करोड भन्सार छुट दिने निर्णय भएको छ।

सेनाले माओवादीसितको युद्धमा आपेक्षा गरे अनुसारको सफलता पाउन सकेको छैन। असफलताको पछाडी सेनाको कमजोर सैनिक संरचना दोषी रहेको छ। सेनाले भने सञ्चारमाध्यम कमजोर भएको निष्कर्ष निकाल्दै एफएम स्टेशन खोल्न जोडतोडले तयारी गरिरहेको छ यता माओवादीले भने घुम्ती एफएम सञ्चालन गरेर आफ्नो क्रियाकलापलाई जनसमक्ष पुऱ्याउन उसले सफलता पनि हासिल गर्दै आइरहेको छ। यही कारण पनि सेनाले आफ्नै एफएम स्टेशन सञ्चालन गर्न जोडतोडले तयारी गरिरहेको हो। सरकार नियन्त्रित रेडियो नेपाल र नेपाल टेलिभिजनले सेनाकै पक्षमा सामग्रीहरू प्रसारण गर्दै आइरहेका छन्।

सेनाले रेडियो नेपालबाट साताको दुई पटक “शाही नेपाली सैनिक कार्यक्रम” र नेपाल टेलिभिजनबाट “माटोले माग्दैन आफै दिनुपर्छ” नामक कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको छ। रेडियो नेपाल र नेपाल टेलिभिजन दुवै स्याटेलाइट प्रविधिमा प्रवेश गरिसकेका छन्।

यति ठूलो सञ्चारमाध्यम हुदा हुँदै पनि सेनाले एफएम सञ्चालन गर्ने तयारी गर्नुमा सेनाले प्रोपोगण्डाको माध्यमबाट ग्रामीण क्षेत्रका बासिन्दाको मन जिउँदै सेनाको मनोविज्ञानलाई उच्च राख्नु एउटा मुख्य कारण हुनसक्ने अनुमान गरिएको छ।



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Politics

नागरिक समाजका चार नेता अर्कै थुनबामा



Photo: Anushil Shrestha

Anushil Shrestha

नागरिक समाजका चार नेताहरू डा. देवेन्द्रराज कडेल, कृष्ण पहाडी, डा. मथुरा श्रेष्ठ र श्याम श्रेष्ठलाई सरकारले गैह्र कानुनी थुनामा राखेर निर्लज्ज जंगली व्यावहार प्रदर्शन गरेको कानूनविद् तथा मानवअधिकारवादीहरूले बताएका छन्।

नागरिक समाजका चार जना अगुवालाई ६ माघ देखि थुनामा राखेको बारे शुक्रवार दिउसो पाटनको यालमाया केन्द्रमा आयोजित कार्यक्रममा निलाम्बर आचार्यले उहाँहरूलाई थुनेर सरकारले निर्लज्जता प्रकट गरेको बताउनुभयो। उहाँले भन्नुभयो “सरकार अराजक भएको छ, यसले संविधान, कानून, प्रचलन, नागरिक र देशको सम्मान गर्दैन।” सर्वोच्च अदालतले यसरी थुनेर राख्नु गैर कानुनी भएको बताउँदै लगातार बन्दीहरूलाई रिहाई गरिरहेको अवस्थामा समेत उहाँहरूलाई थुनेर राखिनुले शान्तिपूर्ण आवाज उठाउनेलाई पनि नछाडने नियत स्पष्ट भएको उल्लेख गर्नुभयो। भन्नुभयो “यो सरकारले माओवादीलाई समेत हिंशामा जाऊ, वार्तामा नआउ भन्ने सन्देश दिईरहेको छ।”

मानवअधिकारवादी पद्मरत्न तुलाधरले राजाको असंवैधानिक तरिकाले राज्यलाई आफ्नो नियन्त्रणमा राख्ने राजाको १९ माघको नियत यथावत रहेको बताउनुभयो। चार बन्दीहरू आफुहरू चार महिना, चार वर्ष थुनामै रहे पनि बाहिर बस्नेहरूले आन्दोलन तुहाउन हुँदैन भन्ने पक्षमा रहेको पाएको जानकारी दिनुभयो। भन्नुभयो “रिट दिएर सबै नेता छुटे पनि उहाँहरू निरंकुश राजाको सामु नक्कुने

अडानमा रहनुभएको छ।” अर्का संविधानविद् लक्ष्मण अर्यालले जनताले भन्दा बढी शासकले कानूनको सिमा भीत्र बस्नुपर्ने बताउँदै भन्नुभयो “कानून, संविधान विपरित जबरजस्ती हत्याएको राज्य राज्य हुँदैन, आफैले बनाएको कानूनमा शासक बस्दैन भने त्यो के को राज्य?”

अर्का कानूनविद् सुवास नेम्बाङले प्रजातन्त्र र दिगो शान्तिको पक्षमा उभिएर वापत, जन अधिकारको पक्षमा बोले वापत नागरिक समाजका चार जना दुई महिना देखि थुनामा रहनुले देश निरंकुशता र हुकुम प्रमाङ्गीमा चलेको स्पष्ट भएको बताउनुभयो। उहाँले थुनामा परेका सबैको पक्राउ पुर्जीमा भ्रामककुरा गरि जनतामा शान्ति खलल गरेको आरोप भएकाले गैरकानुन ठहर भएर अरु छुट्टा उहाँहरू नछाडिनुले कानूनकै खिल्ली उडाएको उल्लेख गर्नुभयो। नेम्बाङले भन्नुभयो “अब निरंकुशताको समाप्ती मुल कुरा हो नत्र उहाँहरू थुना मुक्त भएपनि निरंकुशता रहिरहेमा फेरी भीत्रै जानुपर्छ।” २६ चैत्र देखि हुने काठमाण्डौं केन्द्रित विरोधमामा सहभागी हुन सम्पूर्णलाई उहाँले अनुरोध गर्नुभयो।

कार्यक्रममा आयोजनका बारेमा आयोजकद्वय कनकमणी दिक्षित र नविन्द्रराज जोशीले बोल्नु भएको थियो। सो अवसरमा “किन थुनेको? तुरुन्त छाडिदेउ।” लेखिएको थुनामा रहेका चार जनाको तस्वीर सहितको ब्यानर प्रदर्शन गरिएको थियो। भने ७ चैत्रमा रत्नपार्कमा ४ देखि ६ बजे सम्म नागरिक समाजको विरोध कार्यक्रम हुने जानकारी दिईएको थियो। थुनामा रहेका चारजनालाई रानीवारी, टंगाल र तालीमकेन्द्रमा राखिएको छ भने उहाँहरूकै अनुरोधमा रिहाईका लागि सर्वोच्चमा रिट भने हालिएको छैन।

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Politics

“How can they say democracy failed?”

« Continued from Page 1



Left to Right: Mrs. and Mr. Deuba at a hotel in New York. Photo: Kashish Das Shrestha

Kashish Das Shrestha

The propositions to dissolve the parliament came at a time when you were Prime Minister, during an elected government's rule.

The King did not let me hold elections at that time. The parties also postponed the elections saying that the time was not right, they believed it would be better to hold talks with the Maoists first. So the elections were postponed in good faith, really. But the King ousted me in an unconstitutional manner. There were also internal problems between the parties and myself because I was agreeing to extended the state of emergency while the parties were against doing so. So yes, that was creating difficulties within the government too, at the time. But coming back to your question, the proposition was made because an election would soon naturally constitute another parliament. It's just that the King never gave me time to hold the planned elections.

Soon after you were released from the invalidated RCCC court there were talks that Nepali Congress and Nepali Congress (Democratic), which you head, might unite.

Let's just say that nobody has taken any further step towards it yet. And it's not an easy thing to do either.

What will happen if King Gyanendra now asks the SPA leaders to form a coalition government?

I really don't believe the King is ever going to say that, or mean it. I think that he wants to continue having absolute power over the nation—an autocratic rule with no kind of democracy whatsoever!

The thing is, this is about democracy, it's about reinstating the parliament. The younger generation is calling for a Republican state, and that's fine too. But as far as I know, most of my colleagues from my generation are not really stone hard about removing the King entirely, we are alright as long as he remains strictly ceremonial. But he is not ready, the King himself does not want to give up power.

Why should the King and party compromise?

The reason the King and the parties should compromise is because there is a raging crisis in Nepal, the political deadlock, the Maoist violence. So if the king agrees to remain ceremonial and give back democracy, the SPA would form a government and formally establish a dialogue with the Maoists in a way that would ensure lasting peace. And a lasting peace is a good thing, you know. This would also ensure no bloodshed. With peace, there is room for development in so many aspects of the country's economy and society, even develop the politics of Nepal.

Why shouldn't the King and party compromise?

SAF is trying to reestablish democracy in Nepal. If the King wants to go along with this, that's fine. If

he doesn't, then we will force him to. Then we will hold negotiations with the Maoists and bring stability back to Nepal.

So you are saying the party and the Maoists have a larger role in what happens in Nepal, since the only role that the King has is to either give back the power to the people or hold on to it.

Well the King has a large role too but the parties and the Maoists have to come to a clear understanding about stopping the violence. Why continue the killing? How many more people need die?

What kind of role do you see fit for the Monarchy in Nepal's democratic future?

Like I mentioned earlier, I don't mind a ceremonial king with no political power. If he is smart enough to make this choice now he may still have a chance. But there is a strong call coming from the younger generation and many factions for an end of this monarchy, and if they chose to do so, that is fine by me too.

What are your thoughts towards the constitutional assembly and democratic republic?

There really is no other solution that a Constituent Assembly because the Monarchy has repeatedly cheated the people about democracy. We have to walk that line now. As for Ganatantra, the SAF has not yet moved towards that direction. But yes, Loktantra is definitely what we want.

What do you think must be done in order to ensure the SPA does not fall apart?

This SPA alliance will not break in any case. If anything, it will grow stronger.

The current government has declared that democracy has failed.

Democracy had never failed but the moment the King took over, all of Nepal has begun to fail. Yes, there have just been changes in the government, but a frequent change in the government does not mean failure of democracy, it happens in other countries, too such as, India and Europe.

How can one say democracy failed? Citizens have so much awareness about their rights now, there is such a massive realization of the need for social equality; women, Dalits, janjatis are all now fighting for equality. These realizations have been made because or and during democracy. But the thing is, we cannot perform miracles and it shouldn't be expected either. So democracy never failed, but now that the king has taken over all of Nepal has almost failed.

Do you think people actively helped nurture democracy during its 12 years?

The people run the system by voting, that is their most important role. But in Nepal there have always been a huge number of people under poverty, and many that are unemployed, there was discrimination against the untouchables and so on. You cannot expect such conditions to end easily so there was a lot of frustration too on the people's side. But the people did do their part.

What role do you see for today's youth in the political movement?

They have a big role. The youth should be more involved and more dedicated towards achieving democracy because the responsibility of rebuilding the country is going to fall on their shoulders.

What is your concept of a new Nepal?

A beautiful Nepal; one that offers ample employment opportunities and a well designed health care plan for its citizens. A new Nepal would offer education and equal opportunity to everyone in the country, there would be no discrimination, only works of development.

Sports

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बुढासुब्बा गोल्डकप

Ananda Koirala

इतिहास रच्यै आठौं बुढासुब्बा गोल्डकप उपाधी विदेशी नाइजेरियन खेलाडी सम्मिलित अफ्रिकन युनाइटेडले जितेको छ । फागुन २८ गने आइतवार धरान रङ्गशालामा सम्पन्न फाइनल खेलमा नाइजेरियन खेलाडी सम्मिलित अफ्रिकन युनाइटेड क्लवले आयोजक धरान फुटबल क्लवलाई ३-१ गोल अन्तरले पराजित गर्दै उपाधी हात पारेको हो । यो प्रतियोगिताको आठौं संस्करण सम्म विदेशी टोलीले तीन पटक उपाधी हात पारेका छन् । यस अघि बंगलादेशको धनमुन्त्री र वेल्गोरिया स्पॉटिङ्ग क्लव कोलकोत्ता पहिलो र चौथो संस्करण विजेता बनेका थिए ।

पोखरामा आहा गोल्डकप जितेको आठ दिन नवित्तै बन्धु भि धरानमा बुढासुब्बा कप चुमेको छ । अत्यन्त प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक रोमाञ्चकारी अन्तिम फाइनल खेलमा विजयलक्ष लिएर तेश्रो पटक उपाधिसामू पुगेको आयोजक धरान फुटबल क्लव पुनः निराश भएको छ । धरानले यसअघि पहिलो संस्करणमा बंगलादेश संग र दोश्रोमा पुलिस टिम संग पराजित हुँदै उपविजेतामा चित्त बुझाएको थियो । यस पटक पुलिसलाई सेमीफाइनलमा रोक्दै धरानले फाइनल यात्रा तय गरेको हो । खचाखच दर्शकसामू अफ्रिकन माइकल एडिमोले पूर्वाद्धको २९ औं मिनेटमा पहिलो गोल गरी अग्रता दिलाएका थिए । खेल शुरु लगत्तै धरानका शेखर लिम्बुको पासलाई ऋषि राइले डिबक्स भित्र मिलाएको हेडलाई कप्तान मिलन श्रेष्ठले प्रहार गर्दा गोल अवसर गुमेको थियो । सो अवसर संगै थप गोल गर्न नसक्दा पहिलो हाफमा अफ्रिकन टोली १-० गोलले अग्रता लिएको थियो ।

उपाधी हत्याउन आक्रमक देखिएको धरानले फुर्तिलो र शारीरिक रुपमा सक्षम अफ्रिकन टोलीलाई दोश्रो हाफमा दबाव सिर्जना गर्न सकेन । मध्यान्तर पछिको तेश्रो मिनेटमा अफ्रिकनका नुरुद्दिन सलाउले दोश्रो गोल गरेका थिए । लगत्तै धरानले ५४ औं मिनेटमा पाएको पेनाल्टीलाई ऋषि राइले धरानकालागि बलले जाली चुमाई नतिजा २-१ मा पुऱ्याएका थिए । कप्तान मिलन श्रेष्ठलाई डिबक्स एरियामा लडाएपछि प्राप्त पेनाल्टीमा ऋषिले सहज गोल गर्दै उपाधि जित्ने धरानको आशा व्युताएका थिए । सेमीफाइनलमा महेन्द्र पुलिस संगको सेमीफाइनल खेलमा राम्रो प्रदर्शन गरेका डिफेन्डर प्रदीप आचार्य, सुमन श्रेष्ठ, राजेन्द्र तामाङ्ग र सागर घिमिरे सहित एडिभिजन खेलाडी सम्मिलित धरानले गोलरक्षक दिलिप घिमिरेको गल्तीका कारण थप एक गोल खप्नु पर्यो । निर्धारित ८० मिनेटको खेलमा २ मिनेट बाँकी छदा इकोङ्ग डेनियलले सहज गोल गरी खेल ३-१ नतिजामा पुगेको थियो ।

प्रतियोगिताको उपाधि विजेता अफ्रिकन युनाइटेडले ट्रफी र प्रमाणपत्र सहित ७५ हजार नगद पुरस्कार हात पारेको छ । त्यस्तै उपविजेता धरानले ३५ हजार र ट्रफी जितेको छ । प्रतियोगितामा विजेताहरूलाई प्रमुख अतिथि राष्ट्रिय खेलकुद परिषदका कोषाध्यक्ष जी.एन.

शर्मा दाई(गोवर्द्धन नाथ शर्मा)ले पुरस्कार वितरण गर्नु भयो । एन्फा उपाध्यक्ष तथा धरान फुटबल क्लवका अध्यक्ष किसोर राईको सभापतित्वमा सञ्चालित कार्यक्रममा फाइनल खेलको म्यान अफ द म्याच अफ्रिकन युनाइटेडका नुरुद्दिन सलाउ घोषित भए । त्यस्तै प्रतियोगिताको एकमात्र ह्याट्रिक सहित ४ गोल गर्ने मिलन श्रेष्ठ सर्वोत्कृष्ट गोलकर्ता घोषित भए । प्रतियोगिताकै उत्कृष्ट खेलाडी धरानका सुदीप लिम्बुले नगद २५ हजार र ट्रफी हात पारेका थिए । फागुन १६ गते प्रारम्भ भएको गोल्डकपमा नेपालका ८, भारतका ३ र अफ्रिकन क्लवको सहयाभिता थियो । वाई पाएको अफ्रिकन युनाइटेडले पहिलो खेलमा संघर्षपूर्ण रुपमा नेपालको यू १७ राष्ट्रिय टिमलाई २-१ गोलले पराजित गरेको थियो । त्यस्तै सेमीफाइनलमा नाइटेचेस क्लव, भापालाई ३-० ले सहजै पन्छाएको थियो ।

धरानले पहिलो खेलमा मोरङ्ग फुटबल संघलाई २-० ले पराजित गरेको थियो । क्वार्टर फाइनलमा गोल्डकपकै सर्वाधिक ठूलो अन्तरमा थर्मल स्पोर्ट्स क्लव आसामलाई ८-० गोलले पराजित गर्‍यो । सेमीफाइनलमा धरानले एतिहासीक विजय हासिल गर्दै महेन्द्र पुलिस क्लवलाई १-०ले पराजित गर्‍यो । महेन्द्र पुलिसक्लव विरुद्ध धरानको यो पहिलो जित हो । धरान एकाडेमी, मोरङ्ग फुटबल संघ, सहारा क्लव पोखरा तथा नाम्ची स्पोर्ट्स एकेडेमी सिक्किम गोल्डकपको पहिलो चरणबाटै बाहिरिए । यू-१७, इष्टर्न रेल्वे कोलकोत्ता, थर्मल स्पोर्ट्स क्लव तथा जावलाखेल युथ क्लव क्वार्टरफाइनलमै रोकिए । नाइटेचेस क्लव तथा तीन पटकको विजेता महेन्द्र पुलिस क्लव सेमीफाइनलमा चुके । 'नेपाली आवाज' अफिसियल मिडिया रहेकोमा आयोजक तथा सम्मिलित खेलाडीले त्यसको खुली प्रसंसा गरेका थिए ।

आहा गोल्डकप पोखरा

राम्रा स्वदेशी राष्ट्रिय खेलाडीहरु बंगलादेशमा हुन गईरहेको एसियन च्याम्पीयन फुटबल प्रतियोगिताको तयारी प्रशिक्षणमा रहँदाको फाइदा विदेशी खेलाडीहरुको अफ्रिकन युनाइटेड क्लव ले उठाएको छ । २० फागुनमा सम्पन्न चौथो आहा गोल्डकप फुटबल प्रतियोगिताको उपाधी जितेपछि यो टिमले अहिले बवैको ध्यान तानेको छ । हरि खड्का, रमेश बुढाथोकी, राकेश श्रेष्ठ, जुमनु राई, रितेश थापा, राजु कटवालर सुमन सुवेदी सहित ७ राष्ट्रिय खेलाडी विना मैदानमा उत्रिएको महेन्द्र पुलिस क्लव बुढासुब्बा गोल्डकपमा धरान फुटबल क्लवसंग सेमीफाइनलमै पराजित भएको थियो । एन्ड्र जस्तै विगत दुई वर्षका आहा गोल्डकप विजेता मनाङ्ग मस्याङ्दी ८:०० आफ्ना ६ कुशल खेलाडीको अनुपस्थितीका कारण सेमीफाइनलमै बाहिरिएको थियो । ऋ का सागर थापा, कुमार थापा, टासी छिरिङ्ग नवीन न्यौपाने, विकास मल्ल एनसी च्याम्पीयनसिपको तयारीमा क्याम्पमा नै रहेका छन् । आहा गोल्डकपमा भने महेन्द्र पुलिस विरुद्ध उपाधीका लागि अफ्रिकन युनाइटेडका तर्फबाट अन्दुल घामिले मात्रै २ गोल गरेका थिए । ३ गोल गरेर प्रतियोगिताको हाईस्कोरर घामी नै बने भने एन्ड्र का अनन्त थापा उत्कृष्ट खेलाडी रहे । आहा गोल्डकपमा १२ टिम मैदानमा उत्रिएका थिए ।

Sports

Sports Update

NAA releases calender

Nepal Athletics Association (NAA) Monday unveiled the calendar for the upcoming 2006/7. In all, 15 events will be held in various part of the country including the participation in the Asian Games being held in Qatar and SA Games being held in Sri Lanka. The 36th edition of the National Athletics Championship has been scheduled for the first week of March, 2007 in Pokhara. The statement released by the NAA said that if anyone wants to hold tournament other than the ones in the calender, they have to inform NAA in due time. "NAA is ready to assist in such events provided they are informed timely," the release added.

Crawling introduced as a sport

L G Khambache Sherpa, a cab driver in New York city, has introduced a new sports, Crawling, in Nepal. Rather than a sport, it is more of a physical fitness game, said Sherpa at a press meet. The game requires a person to crawl like an animal using palms, knees and feet with various styles — crawling, stalking, galloping and leaping. "As it is in primary stage, it could take time to develop into a game," the founder of the game, Sherpa said. He successfully demonstrated the 'new game' in New York for charity by covering a distance of 13 miles in a week from Broadway Bridge to Ground Zero to help raise fund for the victims of Tsunami and to honor the police officials and firefighters who dies on September 11 at World Trade Center. A special outfit for the crawlers is already being designed. "Once there is a dress for it, it would be easier to promote the game as it would add more flavor to the sports."

U-19 cricketers, Olympians felicitated

Nagarjun Rotary Club (NRC) awarded U-19 cricketers, two Olympians and an athletics coach at a felicitation programme here. Crown Prince Paras, who is also the patron of National Sports Council, presented the awards. Skipper Kanishka Chaugain, Basanta Regmi and Mahesh Chhetri — members of the Nepali U-19 cricket team that won the Plate Championship in the ICC Under-19 World Cup in Sri Lanka last month — were awarded with a Pulsar motorcycles each while other 11 members got Rs 10,000 each. Coach Roy Luke Dias and assistant coach Shankar Rana were also felicitated on the occasion. The three cricketers were outstanding with their performances getting places in the ICC's top 10 rankings. Skipper

Chaugain was seventh in the most run-getters' list with 234 runs including two half centuries, while Regmi was eighth in the highest wicket-takers' list with 12 scalps at an average of 16.25 and Chhetri was fourth in wicket-keeping with 12 dismissals — nine stumpings and three catches.

The NRC also presented Rs 25,000 each to the two Olympians — Tribhuvan Army Club athlete Rajendra Bhandari and swimmer Alice Shrestha — who broke national records in the Athens Olympics last year. Bhandari had set the new record of 14:04.89 in 5,000m race, while Shrestha had broken the 100m breast stroke record. Athletics coach Puspa Raj Ojha also received a cash prize of Rs 5,000. NSC general secretary Kishor B Singh was also present on the occasion.

Pakistani Ambassador's Cup golf tournament

Gautam Sayami won the Pakistani Ambassador's Cup golf tournament on count back after he was tied at 33 points with Lt Gen Chitra Bahadur Gurung. Crown Prince Paras, who also played over the 18 holes, gave away prizes to the winners. Played at 7/8 handicap format at Royal Nepal Golf Course, CB Bhandari won the best gross award. Other winners were Maj NK Rai (above-60), Maj P Limbu (above-70), Kalpana Limbu (ladies), Niraj Rana (longest drive), Deep Bahadur Basnet (most birdies). Sapkota wins Himalayan Bank Cup Sabin Sapkota registered an one-stroke victory over Deepak Neupane at the Himalayan Bank Cup Open Golf Tournament with a total of seven-over 295 here at Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa. Sapkota, who had a three-stroke lead over Deepak Acharya after the third round, carded five-over 77 and earned Rs 51,000. Deepak Neupane had even-par 72 but was not enough to catch Sapkota, who went to top with a round of three-under 69 on Wednesday. Neupane finished with a total of eight-over 296 and received Rs 27,500, while Acharya and Deepak Thapa Magar came joint third at 11-over 299 and bagged Rs 15,500 each. Chuda Bahadur Bhandari, who was second after the first round with 70, came overall fifth and was the best among amateurs at 13-over 301, followed by Surya Prasad Sharma at 18-over 306. Ramesh Nagarkoti, who carded four-over 76, came fifth with 306, while Mani Rai finished sixth with 310 followed by Rajan Thapa at 312. Sachin Bhattarai and R S Thapa were joint eighth at 313, whereas Toran Shahi came 10th with a total of 315. Pashupati Sharma was 11th at 321, Bhimsen Karki and

Ram Thapa joint 12th at 323. Among amateurs, Ravi Khadka came third with 20-over 308, followed by Ram Krishna Shrestha (323) and Rajendra Phuyal (325). In all, 27 golfers took part in the 72-hole tournament. Only 13 pros and five amateurs made the cut

OCB Singh lifts Himalayan Bank Cup amateur trophy

OCB Singh won the amateur section title of the Himalayan Bank Open Golf Tournament at Gokarna Forest Golf Resort. Played at stableford 3/4 handicap format, Singh accumulated 38 points, while Maj Bejoy Moktan was runner-up with 35 stableford points. Chuda Bahadur Bhandari won the best gross award with 32 gross points.

Mrs Ryu came first in the ladies section with 33 points ahead of K Moktan. K B Shah was the winner in the senior section, followed by M B Raut. Naresh Upadhyaya came first in the super senior section Lobsang Tashi earned 32 points to win the Himalayan Bank Limited Customer category title, followed by Swastika Ignam with 33 points. Other winners included Thomas Fisler (most birdies), M D Mool (longest drive), Tashi Ghale (closest to the pin) and Sandeep Upadhyaya (booby). Bijay Nath Bhattarai, Governor, NRB, and Manoj Bahadur Shrestha, Chairman, Himalayan Bank Limited, gave away prizes to the winners. CEO Ashok Rana, directors Prachanda Bahadur Shrestha and Bijay Bahadur Shrestha were also present on the occasion. In all, 109 golfers, including 44 in HBL Customer, three in super senior, 10 in senior and 12 in ladies sections, took part in the one-day event.

The winners of the four-day pro tournament held from March 13-16 were also awarded. Sabin Sapkota was winner with seven-over 295 and earned Rs 51,000. Deepak Neupane, at 296, was second and received Rs 27,500, whereas Deepak Acharya and Deepak Thapa Magar were joint third with 299. They got Rs 15,500 each. Among amateurs, CB Bhandari had finished first with 301, followed by Surya Prasad Sharma (306).

Cricketers leave for Namibia

National Sports Council (NSC) member secretary Kishor Bahadur Singh bade farewell to the 15-member cricket team, which will play the ICC Inter-Continental Cup play-off match against Namibia. Nepal needs to win the four-day match to qualify as the eighth team while a draw would ensure Namibia's berth. Nepal is slated to play on March 23-26. Coach Roy Luke Dias and Manager Sri Niwas Rana also

accompanied the team. Dias expressed less trust over his senior members of the squad. "I am more hopeful with the younger breeds".

Squad: Binod Das (captain), Shakti Gauchan (vice captain), Paresch Lohani, Dharendra Chand, Kanishka Chaugain, Raj Kumar Pradhan, Sharad Vesawkar, Gyanendra Malla, Amir Akhtar, Manoj Katuwal, Raju Basnyat, Mehboob Alam, Basanta Regmi.

Adidas ties with United Youth Club

ROOTS Fashion Pvt Ltd, the distributor of Adidas products in Nepal, handed over football gears worth Rs 175,000 to United Youth Club, which is playing in the ongoing Martyrs' Memorial 'B' Division League. Rajiv Shrestha, director of ROOTS, gave away the kits to Krishna Bhakta Manandhar, president of UYC, and skipper Prem Kumar Subba. The club, which was established in 1971, entered the 'A' division in 1989 and stayed in the premier division for nine years, before falling for relegation.

Yamaha G5 for best five

All Nepal Football Association (ANFA) awarded five personalities with a G-5 motorcycle and a cash prize of Rs 100,000 each after the charity match between Nepali national squad and African United Club here at Dasharath Stadium.

Yamaha India Limited, in association with ANFA, had also awarded five best individuals in the 'A' Division League Football this year with a G-5 motorcycle each. Last year, too, six best persons in the League were presented with Yamaha Libero each. This time, it was off-the-field heroes for their selfless contribution towards the development of football in the country. Home Minister Kamal Thapa gave away the awards to Dilip Rai, president of Sunsari Football Association, former national players and coaches Ashok KC and Raju Shakya, Rakesh Shrestha of MPC and former FIFA referee Sri Ram Ranjitkar.

Sunsari FA president Dilip Rai is regarded as a role model in the Eastern Region football in his decade-long contribution. Ashok KC and Raju Shakya served the national team first as national player and then as wellknown coaches at the present. Former national team skipper and FIFA referee Sri Ram Ranjitkar is best known for the theoretical and practical knowledge in refereeing. Rakesh Shrestha is known for his strong defence and is currently playing from Mahendra Police Club. ANFA had announced the names at a press meet at its secretariat in

Satdobato a week earlier

Meanwhile, the national team and the African United played a 1-1 draw in the charity match. Surendra Tamang put Nepali side ahead in the 22nd minute with a superb 25-yard strike leaving goalkeeper Uche Onyegbule stranded. African United levelled the scores in the 41st through Nurudeen Olawale Salau's header off a perfect free kick from Obagbemiro Junior

ANFA names AFC Challenge Cup squad

All Nepal Football Association announced the 20-member national squad for the AFC Challenge Cup Football Tournament to be held in Bangladesh from April 1-16. The team includes seven players from Nabil Three Star Club (Lok Bandhu Gurung, Bijay Gurung, Anjan KC, Rajesh Shahi, Surendra Bahadur Tamang, Pradip Maharjan and Vishan Gauchan), five each from Mahendra Police Club (Hari Khadka, Ritesh Thapa, Ramesh Budhathoki, Suman Subedi and Jumanu Rai) and league champions

Manang Marsyangdi Club (Bikash Malla, Nabin Neupane, Basanta Thapa, Sagar Thapa and Tashi Tsering), two from Tribhuvan Army Club (Ram Kumar Biswas and Raju Tamang) and one from New Road Team (goalkeeper Surendra Shrestha). Yugal Kishore Rai, Sanjeev Budhathoki and Mansajan Rajbhandari — who were in the camp — were the three players ousted. Pralay Rajbhandari, Janak Singh and Rakesh Shrestha left the training earlier due to injuries. Suman Subedi, Ram Kumar Biswas and Surendra Shrestha have made it the national squad for the first time.

ANFA vice-president Lalit Krishna Shrestha will lead the team with Dharendra Pradhan been given the responsibility of manager. Shyam Thapa is the chief coach while Maheshwor Mulmi and Dhurba KC are the assistant coaches. The team will leave for Kolkota on Wednesday where it will play practice matches with local clubs before flying for Bangladesh on March 31. Nepal will take on Bhutan in its opening match on April 1.

« Continued from Page 12

व्यक्त गर्ने वातावरणविद् र स्वयं सरकारी कर्मचारीहरूलाई मन्त्रालयले जारी गरेको सो विज्ञप्ति तमा 'केही स्वनामधन्य र गैरजिम्मेवार निजामति कर्मचारीले आफैले कल्पना गरी स्वार्थ र कृष्णग्रस्त मानसिकताबाट निर्देशित भएको आरोप लगाएको थियो ।

तर, सरकारको यस्तो नीति कार्यान्वयनमा प्रमुख साभेदारका रूपमा सामुन्नेमा देखिएको महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषका सरकारी कार्यक्रम प्रबन्धक डा. सिदार्थबज्र बज्राचार्य आफूले समेत घोषणा लगत्तैको सरकारी नीति निजीकरण नै हो भन्ने बुझेको बताउनुहुन्छ । 'बजेटमा त निजीकरण नै भनेको हो, तर पछि व्यवस्थापन हस्तान्तरण भनिएको हो' उहाँ भन्नुहुन्छ ।

पहिलो शिकार शिवपुरी

गएको पुस १७ गते सरकारले अध्यादेश मार्फत राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज तथा वन्यजन्तु ऐन २०२५ संशोधन गरे लगत्तै महेन्द्र प्रकृति संरक्षण कोषले शिवपुरी राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज व्यवस्थापनका लागि सरकारसमक्ष प्रस्तावपत्र बुझाएको छ ।

त्यसो त कोषले तत्कालिन अर्थमन्त्री डा.लोहनीले बजेट बक्तव्यमार्फत यस्तो नीति ल्याएको बर्षदिन भित्रै २०६१ असार २४ गते नै शिवपुरी, रास, शे-फोक्सुण्डो र पर्सा र राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्जका लागि विभागमा प्रस्ताव हालेको थियो । तर, राष्ट्रिय निकुञ्ज तथा वन्यजन्तु ऐन २०२५मा संरक्षण क्षेत्रलाई निजी क्षेत्रको व्यवस्थापनमा दिने कुरा उल्लेख नभएकाले यो कार्य अधि बढ्न सकेको थिएन । हालै संशोधित ऐनले भने कानूनी बाटो खुला गरेको छ ।

कोषले शिवपुरीका लागि प्रस्ताव दिए लगत्तै विभागले छलफलका लागि अधि बढाएको

विभागका संरक्षण अधिकृत सुर्यबहादुर पाण्डे बत (उद्धृत) ।

काठमाडौं १२ किमी उत्तरमा र हेको १ सय ४४ वर्ग किमी क्षेत्रफल रहेको शिवपुरी उपत्यकाको खानेपानीको मुख्य स्रोत मानिन्छ । प्रसिद्ध धार्मिकस्थलको रूपमा समेत यसको महत्व छ । सहरसँग टाँसिएर रहेको शिवपुरी निकुञ्ज विभिन्न लोपोन्मुख जीवजन्तु, वनस्पतिसँगै पदयात्राका लागि समेत विशेष मानिन्छ । कोषले शिवपुरीको व्यवस्थापनको जिम्मा लिएपछि त्यहाँ रहेको पानीको स्रोत र जैविक विविधता कस्तो अवस्थामा रहने हो चिन्ताको विषय भएको वातावरणविद् डा.तीर्थबहादुर श्रेष्ठ बताउनुहुन्छ । यस्तो महत्वको क्षेत्रमा हुलका हुल मानिस भित्र्याउँदा आम्दानी त हुन्छ नै तर वातावरणीय विनाश पनि सँगै आउँछ,' उहाँ भन्नुहुन्छ ।

विभाग सम्बद्ध ती अधिकारी शिवपुरीमा रहेका करिब ४५ हजार स्थानीय वासिन्दाले सरकारको यस्तो निर्णयलाई कसरी हेर्ने हुन् त्यसतर्फ अहिलेसम्म सोचिएकै छैन । शिवपुरी हस्तान्तरणसँग पूरै राजधानीवासीको भविष्य गाँसिएको भएता पनि सबै 'तै चुप मै चुप' को स्थितिमा रहनु दुखद् भएको बताउँदै उनी भन्छन् 'राजधानी नजागेसम्म यस्ता निर्णयहरू कति हुन्छन् कति ?'

कोषका कार्यक्रम प्रबन्धक डा.बज्राचार्य शिवपुरीको व्यवस्थापनको लागि कोषले पर्यटनलाई केन्द्रमा राखेको बताउनुहुन्छ । 'पर्यटनलाई फोकस गरेर मात्र व्यवस्थापनको कल्पना गर्न सकिन्छ, आम्दानी गर्ने ठाउँ त हुनु पर्‍यो नि ?' बज्राचार्य भन्नुहुन्छ । राजधानीबाट शिवपुरी नजिकै रहेका कारण राजधानीवासी र पर्यटकहरूलाई पुग्ने पने ठाउँका रूपमा शिवपुरीलाई विकसित गर्ने कोषको लक्ष्य रहेको दाबी गर्नुहुँदै बज्राचार्य थप्नुहुन्छ 'यसले त्यहाँका जनताको जीवनस्तरमा सकारात्मक प्रभाव पार्छ ।



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Events

25 March / Langhali (Magar) Association U.S.A. is celebrating first annual gathering in the New York City. Every one is invited. All Magar friends are requested to participate in this event since this is our first event in the U.S.A in order to conserve our Magar heritage.

Venue: Dhaka Club, New York City. Tickets: \$30.00. Contact: Rajesh Thapa; 917-750 6908/rajinthapa@yahoo.com or Dal Bdr. Budhathoki; 347-806 2272.

6 April / Nepali Mandir Inc. New York, US, cordially invites you for your kind presence and requests you to take part in "The Pratisthapan Puja". Thursday. 4:00PM. "The Sarvajanic Puja Samaroha" is on Sunday, April 09, 2006. 2:16PM. Venue: Nepali Mandir, 3411- 62 Streets, 2nd Floor, Woodside, NY-11377. For more info log on to: www.nepalimandir.org

10 April / GBNC presents Samday Sherpa and company, Boston, Mass. US. Join us as we ring in the 2063 New Year with a night of performances by Nepali celebrities. Line up for the night includes performances by Bijaya Lama, Raja Ram Poudel, Dendi Sherpa amongst others. 7 p.m. Venue: Good Time Emporium, 30 Assembly Square Dr., Somerville, MA 02145. Ticket: \$25 per individual (diiner included- \$5 will got towards the ANA Boston Sports team)

15 April / Nepali New Year Celebration in Sydney, Australia. A traditional nepali dinner will be provided with soft drinks, beer and wine will be sold at the bar. 6:00pm-12:00am. Venue: Cottage Street (Off Victoria & William Streets), Werrington. Tickets: Singles \$20, Couples \$30 and Families \$40. Tickets will be sold in advance for catering purposes please contact (02)47338963 or 0412163317.

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