The people don’t want war.

Maoists maul the police while Congress fiddles, and the economy gets its first knocks.

"We have initiated a People’s War and that is the only alternative left for the people...

Comrade Prachanda"

The Maoists are apparently instituting the War that is being fought in the name of the Nepali people! The police, indeed in a vulnerable position, is in limbo, in the absence of clear orders from its political masters. Not only the government, but the entire opposition and the intelligentsia are bewildered about what to do. The police are forced to made do. But this could change with the government’s decision to set up a well-equipped paramilitary force trained by the army in using armoured rills and counter-insurgency tactics, including landmine detection.

The paramilitary Armed Police Force is going to cost about Rs 2 billion and is likely to be ready for action by late autumn. The budget allocation for the police for the coming fiscal year has shot up to Rs 5.3 billion from about Rs 3.3 billion the year before.

Both sides, it seems, want to use a caret and stick approach. So both are resizing their forces to be able to negotiate from a position of strength.

The latest humiliation for Nepal Police occurred on the night of 7 June. The siege and destruction of the Panchthar police post in Jhajjar was proof that the Maoists are escalating their offensives, while maintaining that they are open to talks.

The Maoists are using classic storming tactics on the ground, and taking full advantage of the government’s lack of both motivation and equipment to fight the insurgency. There is the incredible scandal of police power within the ruling Nepali Congress, which the Maoists are using to full advantage.

The Panchthar attack was a replay of the classic tactics used by the Maoists against police. A group of about 1,000 probably also including villagers allegedly used as human shields,, smashed the outpost from the settlement side.

Police said their 51-morning force was unloading to fire at the attackers for fear of hitting locals. Using flame-throwers, the Maoists lit up the target and pelleted them with homemade explosives. The police were sitting ducks, unable to return fire into the darkness with any accuracy.

"Our men did the best they could. When you are pinned down like that, it is difficult to lift your head to take aim," said Ram Kaji Rautaha, Assistant Inspector General of Police in charge of operations.

Another police man who has fought on the frontline: "They attack in waves. If one falls, he is immediately dragged away and replaced by another."

ELUSIVE PEACE

C.K. Lal

PRACHANDA: Interview

page 7

The latest phase in the Maoist offensive seems to be a planned attempt to undermine the Nepal economy as well. Robberies of trekking groups and attacks on a Pokhara tourist resort in April may well the autumn 2004 monsoon season hard. In the past week, key Indian tourist states in Nepal, Sauraha, Talband and Chitwan-Palanchowk were flooded by suspected Maoists in Serua and Herada.

It is becoming clear that the police is fighting this war with one hand tied behind its back. Previous operations such as the one code-named "Kilo Seven Two" last year cost them local support, and even party politicians in Kathmandu are unrolling to stick their noses out in support.

The mainstay of the police attack is the First World War Field"three-knot-three"ingle-lead rifle. They have up to 15miles. and have proven to be no

Continued on page 15
TALKING ABOUT TALKS

As a matter what anyone says, it is a fact that the Nepali Congress fought and won the last general elections on the promise of keeping the nation from the mindless violence being perpetrated in the name of Maoism. Voters were so disillusioned that they rejected outright the fellow travelers of Comrade Bangdev Gautam because he had spoken in support of Maoists. However, when Krishna Prasad Bhattarai last year became the Prime Minister of a majority government he soon got too engrossed in the factional politics of his party than to try and find a solution to the violence. Girija Prasad Koirala, who put him in that chair, soon pulled the rug from under Bhattarai, and that was that. Girija, as champion of the Nepali Congress had to fight for the leadership of his own parliamentary committee in order to become the Prime Minister, which he did. Now, three months later, it is Girija who has to deliver on the election promise of restoring peace. The electorate is waiting to see if he can.

In the country's war zones, the situation has gone from bad to worse. The Panchariya massacre of June 8 and the escalation of violence in different parts of the country last week has shown that the thresholds of violence has increased to unprecedented levels.

Nothing left to lose.

And what are the leaders doing? They are hemming and hawing, talking about talks.

Experience of the last four years has clearly shown that the insurgency has roots in genuine grievances of the neglected masses who have nothing left to lose. A military solution is therefore not the answer. The talks will need an armed response to an armed uprising, but negotiations to find a long-term solution is vital. It was perhaps for this very purpose that the government of K P Bhattarai had

formed a negotiating committee under the chairmanship of former Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba.

Sadly, except vague references in the media to the composition of the negotiating team and some exchange of letters, nothing of note has come out of this committee. Almost every senior member of the government seems to agree on the importance of talks to resolve the issue. Koirala's Barahakha, senior Nepali Congress politician and Khagendra Prasad Dhungel of the UML, for example, have publicly spoken in favour of talks.

From the other side of the fence, the Maoist leadership has been playing a two-track strategy, keeping up the military pressure on the police while at the same time posturing about being ready to talk. They have even forward some demands, which do not seem unreasonable: cessation of offensive fire, release of prisoners, etc.

The priority is for Nepalis together to fight poverty and injustice, not to have Nepalis fighting Nepalis. Instead of spending more and more on buying arms in a futile attempt to crush the rebels militarily, the Nepali Congress must fulfill its election promise and urgently prepare the ground for talks to resolve the crisis within an agreed time frame. The rebels must now take the initiative and rally the support of the government to get the dialogue process going.

Deuba succeeds in solving this problem through talks, his political future is assured. And there is no reason why he cannot. All it needs is hard work and sincere effort on both sides to talk to each other, other than at each other. No conflict is beyond the power of negotiation.

The violence is spiraling out of control. It is already late to begin the process, but it is better late than never.

Keeping the peace is not a negotiable issue. It's a country where half the people live below the poverty line. Rs 6 billion will be spent this fiscal year in policing the population. The Maoists, too, must be spending quite a bit on waging their so-called Peopless War. One has to add up the two totals to grasp the magnitude of madness affecting the nation.

And there are some things cannot be measured in rupees: nearly 2,000 Nepalis have been killed fighting each other in the past five years. The loss in human resources, the loss of productivity, the internally displaced, and the loss that will be felt if our tourism is hurt.

The dictatorial nature of the regime is all but a dream as ever, and the government has not been able to develop any kind of a peace strategy. Meanwhile, the country continues to suffer, and nobody in Kathmandu seems to be too bothered.

This is strange, because the price of making peace is often a lot less than the cost of keeping it. Perhaps there are influential interests who make short-term benefit from the conflict, and don't want to wait for the long-term possibility of a peace dividend.

Comrade Prachanda apparently does not want the conflict to end, either, for it will imply an end of his dictatorial days. A general is always interested in war. Peace is for politicians, and Dr Baburam Bhattarai is more at home in that atmosphere. Unfortunately, for common Nepalis, the veneered architecture planner appears to have lost a ray in the decision-making processes within the Maoist fold than is commonly believed.

The possibility that the Maoists are serious about peace appear bleak. Comrade Prachanda will not come to the negotiating table with any sincerity unless he is convinced—poorly because he himself does not seem to know what it is exactly worth.

The onus for taking an initiative for telling him on former prime minister and Nepali Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba. But Deuba too is distrusted: he needs numbers to face the impending organizational elections of Nepali Congress where he is likely to be a presidential candidate. So you can see he is not going to make any

Elusive Peace

Serious peace efforts are unlikely to emerge until and unless the crisis of leadership in Nepali Congress is over.

A government that lacks the self-confidence of enforcing its laws is less likely to cope for the aggravating table. Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala may chum the manta of talks, but look at where he put the money: in an expensive para-military force trained by the army and equipped with automatic weapons. If home-made bombs and stingers 303 rifles cause mayhem already, the casually rates from AK-47s are sure to go up.

Making peace is easier when

earthshaking breakthroughs at home.

A government that lacks the self-confidence of enforcing its laws is less likely to cope for the aggravating table. Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala may chum the manta of talks, but look at where he put the money: in an expensive para-military force trained by the army and equipped with automatic weapons. If home-made bombs and stingers 303 rifles cause mayhem already, the casually rates from AK-47s are sure to go up.

Making peace is easier when

occupations. But peace still has a chance, for the simple reason that nothing else works. Comrade Prachanda must realize that he has a duty to the people and the oppressed classes who are ready to accept all this because they hardly have anything to lose. And it is clear to Stop Bhabha Deuba that his political future hinges on the outcome of his talks with the Maoists. If he succeeds, he will hail as a success. If he fails to disappoint his democrats inside the party—they seem to be taking that outcome as a forgone conclusion.

Making peace is no less important for Prime Minister Koirala. There can hardly be a worse time for him to be an in a party that has spent nearly a decade fighting for democracy and in active politics. Dewswa Prime Minister Kamal Thapa has earned his state's respect by acquitting successfully with moderation, opposition parties. If he wants to remain where he believes he is destined to
INTERVIEW

Bhok Bahadur Thapa

On the hijacking crisis.

In the two and a half years that I have been in Delhi, perhaps this was the most difficult period. At Nepal we had to catch up with the reality of the information age. Even when we were projecting what eventually turned out to be the corner version, because of the time lag, the Indian public could see the impression that Nepal was a willing partner in the hijacking.

As the India end was there the long-sought resolution of the suspension of the flight itself. This was followed by the systematic and coordinated information that appeared in the Indian media.

When I came to Kathmandu at that time the impression here in Nepal was that they would rather not make matters any worse, that it was not India meddlesome. That is not to say that we were in a position to move in any direction.

Every dimension of the India-Nepal relations, cordial as it is, got a little bit of a hijack-overload, hijack-centric.

On the "secret intelligence report".

The foreign ministry has consistently said that it is a myth. It is a distortion, a smear, the damage it has done. When I talk about the India-Nepal relations, it is good in relation between the two countries, but it is also evident that both countries can be it or is as we all wish it to be.

We all know too well that distance can be a barrier, that the perception and the setting of the foreign policy may not be as we wish it to be.

We have not had any direct talks between the two countries since the time of the coup in Nepal. We are still striving to improve our relations and to progress into the new era.

On the Nepal-India relationship.

I don’t think there is any trick that works. India is not only a very large country. Our relations with India are an important factor of our foreign policy. For India we are not one of the neighbours, important as that may be.

We were not as India-centric in our thinking. It might also provide some degree of balance. Secondly, there are also issues between India and Nepal regarding the Mahakali River and the Madhupur Treaty. That has probably helped make the political community here more aware of the fact that India is a country.

I have had the dubious distinction of being ambassador here with something like 15 or 10 governments, but we were good enough to maintain a certain continuity with the government as well as the opposition.

On Mahakali, Phulchowki and trade.

The fact that Nepal and India could come up with a treaty that has been under discussion for more than 40 years, and that on the basis of equal partnership, is one of the most significant achievements of multi-party democracy in Nepal.

On the Indian people.

I am sure that the bulk of the Indian people want to see a peaceful, democratic and prosperous Nepal.

On Nepal-India interaction.

I don’t think there is any trick that works. India is not only a very large country. Our relations with India are an important factor of our foreign policy. For India we are not one of the neighbours, important as that may be.

Achievements of his tenure.

When I arrived here, there were anxieties about the India-Nepal relationship. There were doubts in Nepal about India’s intentions. India was sincere in wanting to deal with it in a multi-party democracy.

With different coalition governments, India tried hard to show in sensitivity to Nepal’s aspirations and sentiments, such as in the conceptions regarding the Mahakali river and the Madhupur Treaty. That has probably helped make the political community here more aware of the fact that India is a country.

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On the Gurkha Doctrines.

The essence of the Gurkha Doctrines, that India does not have a higher agenda in Nepal and other neighbours. The challenge was that Mr. Gurkha gave a strikingly explicit articulation to this as a basis for our foreign policy. However, it was an essential qualification to assume that the goodwill inherent in the document would be the cost of India’s national interests.

The hijacking of IC 814.

Of course, it would have been a great tragedy if the hijacking had not happened. Here the overriding sentiment was to protect the country’s reputation, and it is true that there was a circumventing of Nepal in some sections of the media. But perhaps people here have not really understood the sense of anguish in India when the hijacking took place.

India Today’s intelligence report.

I would urge our friends in Nepal to consider that there has been a sinister intention, namely the timing was wrong. You do not feel a need to report this to the newspaper on the eve of your visit to Nepal of your principal secretary to the prime minister and national security advisor (Boojit Malhotra). It makes no sense. There are lots of pieces of paper in systems like that which are flotating around all the time and they are not always based on verification.

On India and Nepal.

It has been proved beyond reasonable doubt that there are activities taking place not just in Nepal, but in India, and in other neighboring countries, aimed against India. The Government of India is quite clear in recognizing that the enemy of Nepal is serious about not allowing its soil to be used against any friendly nation.

It would be totally unfair to

K.V. Rajan

the Muslim community and to Nepal as a country to even think on those lines. India, all countries, does not have any reservations about religious institutions, madrassas, mosques, etc., as long as they are performing their religious duties. The problem arises when religious movements point to activities that are more political in nature.

Open border.

Both sides should understand that, in this day and age, an open border has also got to be a friendly and well managed border. A well managed border will not create harassment for people engaged in bona fide activities, and will prevent criminal or terrorist misgivings from misusing it. Today, both countries are engaged in a constructive discussion on ensuring a well-managed open border that can be used for genuine communications, infrastructure and development projects.

Smuggling.

I think both jurisdictions in India has always been there that the Indian common sense, which sometimes the smuggling mafia begins to operate on a very large scale, then it is not a few cameras or batteries, or computer, parts.

The Maniple insurgency.

India and Nepal are willing to cooperate on all issues which are of common concern, and if there is any kind of terrorist activity which is, or can at some point be, planned from Indian soil, then it will obviously be the duty and responsibility of the Government of India to cooperate with the concerned government, the Government of Nepal.

The Thalassues refugee problem.

It is all very well for Nepal to enter into any dialogue with the Thalassues who should be involved to help resolve the problem, but India’s judgement should also matter as to whether it can help or not.

(For the full text of this interview, check our website at www.nepaltimes.com)
The number of days in January with visibility better than 8 km at noon had decreased from 25 days in the 1970 to only five days in 1993. By 2000 there were only two days when the pollution haze cleared by midday.

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In Kathmandu rain, disillusionment reigns

The general despair and apathy that permeates the Valley as the monsoon retreats is accompanied by a resurgence of questions about the past ten years. What went wrong? What went right?

The Kathmandu Nepal quotes Narayan Man Bijalik as saying that the main reason for the emergence of Maoist activities is the failure to carry out recommendations of the Math Commission Report. "After the nationalisation of multi-party system, people had great expectations that all the common people would be satisfied," Bijalik is reported to have said. The tragedy for Nepal is that these who have worked to ensure that the common people would not be satisfied themselves.

Ten years on, more and more of the men and women who worked to convince the Jana Andolan to disband and restructure would agree with Bijalik. Odious who were also in the political scene in that period have not yet gone public with their views, but they privately lament the failure to bring about fundamental changes during the period of the transition government.

Even during those early days of democracy, disheartened young Congress Party workers were already complaining that their leaders had failed to bring about changes for which they had fought. Their leaders were consuming with the same corrupt businessmen who were consumed during the Panchayat regime.

They were most interested in attending seminars and opening beer factories than in pursuing the needs of the poor. The disillusionment deepened across to other parties and political ideas. The tradition of chauvinism and chauvinism still worked, and people got themselves humiliating jobs. One particular gentleman, whose name is known in the press for a lusty, wangled job with extracurricular potential and is now a very rich man. The question seems to be once you surrender a popular movement and lose the confidence of the people who made it happen, how do you regain momentum and start again? Sadly, the answer is: "You don't." Especially the truce of the idealistic young who have collected their lost dreams and deposited them with the Maoist. Every intelligent citizen of Nepal has realised that if it ever ran a time for "crushing", the Maoist movement, it has long passed. The more any movement for change is suppressed the more it grows. For every attempt killed by the state, several revolutionaries will take their place.

We are doing it all wrong by failing to win the hearts and minds of Nepalese future generations, by failing to accord to the needs of the poor and marginalised who are joining the Maoist fold. Despite the Ramshackle pronouncements of certain government officials, we must have some realisation that time is running out for meaningful dialogue with the Maoist.

Take the budget. Does it address the problems? It is so blatantly client and donor-driven that it has been widely criticised even from within the government that produced it. Or take the composition of the new Human Rights Commission, it shown that the corruption of police has not meant any harm to the civil society in the country. Even human rights is now policed.

Oddly those who are criticising the appointment of the new Human Rights Commission criticise the "regional and political balance" shown in the appointment of the commission. As far as I can only praise the appointments of Justice Rastriya and Rastriya, the reinvented figures with the best credentials that are not in it.

Barbara Adams is a Kathmandu-based writer and commentator.
Depending on the size, dust affects human respiration in three ways:

- The largest particles are inhaled into the upper respiratory tract and most are immediately exhaled.
- Slightly smaller particles penetrate the larynx to enter the tracheobronchial region and trigger infections.
- The smallest ones go deep into the lungs and can lead to asthma, lung disorders and even cancers.

### Brick kilns

- Brick kilns
- Himal Cement
- Vehicular traffic site
- Residential area
- Industrial site

China to help Nepal Television

Nepal Television has signed a Rs 500 million deal with China to build a television transmission facility in Kathmandu that will also broadcast a new Metro Channel. Government officials said the agreement has been initiated and the facility is expected to be operational within two years.

Minister of Information and Communication Jaya Prakash Giri said last week that NTV would soon have a nationwide signal footprint via satellite. Though talk about having free television in Nepal.

India's bond market takes a hit

India's bond market has seen a drop in recent weeks, with yields rising and prices falling. The central bank has been raising interest rates to combat inflation, and this has led to a decline in the demand for coupon bonds.

### Fly Free the 20th time

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IN OTHER NEWS

A lot more rhinos

Nepal's rhino population has increased by 544 rhinos, up from 456 in January 2000. Some rhinos were found in the Chitwan region, bringing the total to 1,068. The increase is due to better conservation efforts.

The more the merrier

China has signed a deal with Nepal to build a television transmission facility in Kathmandu that will also broadcast a new Metro Channel.

Indian bonds have dropped

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INFEANTS FLY FREE

Infants (children below 2 yrs) can now fly FREE to any destination on Mountain Air, which operates daily flights from Kathmandu to Pokhara, Biratnagar, Bhairahawa and Nepalgunj, except for the Kathmandu to Pokhara route.
Slaughter in Panchkatiya

HAUMAN SINGH RATHOR  OF LANCET IN AFGHANISTAN

Dhateena was having her meal with her three-year-old son Kamal and her eight-year-old daughter Meera. She had just served rice to her husband Ram Bahadur Singh. As usual policemen were lounging in the verandah of her house. Then the shooting started.

By the end of the battle, the attack of Muslim guerrillas on the Army Police Post of Panchkatiya located on the border of Khislanga and Dinde VDCs at least 25 people were dead, including Dhateena, Meera and Kamal.

Police stared to fire, we could not get out of our house," said Rana Bahadur, still in shock three days after the tragedy. "As soon as the police ordered to close the door, our world collapsed around us. I lost everything. I do not know how I survived."

Panchkatiya Army Police Post was considered to be around most secure one after the District Police Office itself. By morning 12 policemen including 1 inspector were dead, as guerrillas were killed and then there were seven civilians who included five young children.

The battle had also engulffed Pan Bahadur Hotel where the family Chhabildar Crip and a tea-shop owner, was wiped out.

Thirty-five-year-old Keshav Dhale, along with his youngest son Dalu aged 6, another son Jit Bahadur aged 10 and daughter Daulat aged 10 died in the attack.

Around nine o'clock on Friday evening, a group of Muslim guerrillas came again for an attack to the corpses of the seven innocent victims on a common funeral pyre put made in front of the desolate buildings.

Rana Bahadur weeps uncontrollably: "I could not even conduct the final rites of my children." When the walk of the house collapsed, his wife was crushed with the children still in her lap.

Incident rains on the night of the attack hampered the police relief and rescue operations. According to policemen Radhak Bahadur Bajgain, who was in the attack, Muslim guerrillas stationed along the way to stop police reinforcement from reaching the scene, ambushed him, dismembered his hand and killed him. "He fought with Muslims until his last breath," said Deputy Superintendent Dalja Rama Rizvi, who had gone looking for Poondel.

It is believed that Muslims intercepted a radio message sent by Poondel, and knew exactly where he would be.

Bombed out shell of the Panchkatiya Police Station. (Picture: Harshin Singh Rathor, Kantipur)

Army plane

The Hindustan Times/Nepal Samacharpatro, 14 June 2000

A recent meeting of the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) ordered, citing the irregularities in the deal, not to proceed with the purchase of the two A-50s jet aircraft for the Royal Nepal Army. The coalition government, in 1999 prior to the general elections, had decided to buy the aircraft for the Army. The purchase was opposed on the grounds of the exorbitant price and also the suitability of the plane for the Army had, however, forced the government to temporarily put aside the deal. The present government after one year has decided to go ahead with it. Defending the decision, the Defence Secretary, Keshav Rajbhandari, said the plane was suitable for use by state and government bodies, relief activities and also for commercial purposes. He also said that the deal had met the final stage, and only the formalities relating to the opening of the Guarantee Letter remained. The PAC members criticized the Defence Secretary for going forward with the purchase without any detailed study and bidding process. They also questioned the apparent rush from the decision to buy the agreement, which took only fifteen days. Pointing to the fact that only the British Aerospace had been allowed to compete in the tender, the members demanded whether the army did not have to follow the rules and regulations of the country. The members also alleged that one of the reasons, namely that of commercial use, was only an excuse to obtain loans from the banks. Since nowhe in the world had the army conducted commercial flights, there was no any reason for the army in Nepal to do so as if it did not have any other work, the members said.

Professor Emeritus

Chhayalal Weekly, 13 June 2000

The veteran professor in a convinced man. Prof. Tarup Chaudhary says he achieved a lot. I got satisfaction, I received honor and respect. The post of Professor Emeritus was conferred on me. I am very satisfied. Now I do not owe any honor or post. But I do get honor when things promised do not take place.

Dhrendra on democracy

Abducted from an interview of Dhrendra Shah published in Ramo-Vani National Weekly, 14 June 2000

A year ago

Dhrendra Shah, brother of King Birendra who was killed in the attack at the end of the Panchkatiya period, said love and concern for the country had forced him to return at the earliest. While constitutional and multi-party democracy were first ideals and in accordance with the present, he said: "The time has come to return to the Nepali concept. Shah also said that the ultimate goal and vision of his late father, King Mahendra, had been a democratic system, and there was need for reconsidering the way it was to be brought about. Dhrendra think the monarchy and democracy can go hand in hand, and he stressed on the need for unity among Nepalis to develop the country and protect national interests. Referring to the Maoist, he said that, despite the wish of a republic state, were Nepali and nationalism. An end should be brought to the violence through talks, he added.

Talking about his own future, Shah said that although he was not interested in joining politics, he was willing to do anything for the country if the necessity arose. He also said that he did not find any change in his status before and after he was the prince. Shah also disclosed during the course of the interview that he was settling down permanently in the country.

Tiger parts

Hindustan Times, June 14, 2000

A joint inspection team of Royal Bardia National Park and Shiv Dal Banjary of Royal Nepal Army held an inspection of poachers with wild animals remains near Budhi Khola inside the park Thulchhi. Monday (June 12)

According to the park office, about 13 kg tiger bones, bones of 3 Leopard with their skins, and skin of 2 pythons were found in the possession of the poachers. Poachers have refused to divulge their names and addresses as far. It is said that they were taking the conservation of wild animals as a yell of Janam VDC to sell. Park Raman Singh Kumar Thapa said further investigations about the incident was in.

Modern slavery

Daiji Weekly, 13 June 2000

The case of 500 bonded laborers of Bardia district who had started from Katihar District demanding minimum wages as fixed by the government has now spread in Bardia. Nearly 500 bonded laborers of Bardia district filed a joint complaint in the District Administration Office against their "owners." According to Dinash Shobha, coordinator of Bonded Labor Liberation Movement Committee, bonded laborers have demanded that they be freed from the control of their masters and their outstanding dues be paid.

The complaint further requests for the payment of their due wages from their owners at the rate of Rs. 70 per day according to the provisions of Constitution of Kingdom of Nepal (Clause 2011). Clause 2 of the Fish Trade provisions of the Ministry of Industry and the decision of Ministry of Labor of Nepal 29, 8. S. B. 1996.

Modern slavery in India is a tragic reality. The road to freedom is long and hard. The task is immense, and the battle is uphill. But with the support of people like you, we can make a difference. Please consider making a donation today to support our efforts in ending modern slavery.
FROM THE NEPALI PRESS

“Have we made a leap in revolution...”

Excerpts from answers by Prachanda and Dahal (nepali: Prachanda Dahal) in an interview to the Journal Revolutionary Worker #0143 earlier this year.

Nepal is a semi-feudal and semi-colonial country, and in this condition (state of semi-feudalism and semi-colonialism) a revolutionary action will emerge. In general, a revolutionary objective situation occurs. Industrial development is very poor, and the kind of industry only exists in the hands of a comprador bourgeoisie class-trialy the Indian exploitative bourgeoisie...there are sharp class distinctions

Nepalese people fought bitterly against British rule in the 1950s. This was the war against British, and people participated in this war in their own way, in different ways, under the leadership of great comrade Mao. Mao is directly involved in the revolution to Nepal. There were so many materials from the Chinese Communist Revolution that came to Nepal. This Cultural Revolution is an important generation of communists and the masses. And the at that time young people in the communist movement were influenced by the ideas of Mao.

In 1956, we found Maoist-Leninist-Maoist as our ideology. At the time, only the Communist Party of Peru had this idea, and we had some documents from the PCR. But on that question, already for four or five years, there had been some discussions in the PCI (Communist Party Italy). Thought Why not Maoist? We had a debate for one year to change this terminology and then the whole party decided that we are all in Mao's ideology...this is our ideology, ideological, political, subjective basis.

At the time of initiation, we tried to figure out the whole picture of Nepal. And at that time we found that there are two sides to the Indian initiative in Nepal...the monsoon region is very favorable for guerrilla warfare,...for People's War, for national revolution.

In this sense, the people are surrounded on three sides by the big Indian empire. The West of Nepal is historically, geographically, and basically the route of the terrain. The Maoist theory of the revolution...the people here are more oppressed by the ruling class, the government in Kathmandu is very far from them.

At one point in our party, for every council, on every council, on every question of the question of leap, leap...we have to make a leap. We made this question of making a leap. In the leap that is necessary for us to make the leap. The revisionist parties and revisionist leaders always try to make the question of reform, reform, reform...if reform is reform, it is revisionism. But the question of making a leap is a revolutionary revolution.

In making the plan for initiation there was great debate over how to go the armed struggle because many people were influenced by "powerful" struggle, work in the parliament, rights and petty bourgeois feelings, and a long tradition of the reformist movement. Then we said that the only possible must be a big push, big leap. Non gradual change.

Our view was, we should declare freely and frankly that we have initiated the People's War and that this is the only alternative for the people, for their emancipation, for their independence from the British imperialists.

And in the plan for initiation we had a military plan to attack police force, the launching of the Maoist movement. But we did not have a big plan for sabotage in the capital city because, at that time, we did not want to enter into a situation where under one leader the intellectuals would go away from us. We wanted to warn their support.

And after one year, we saw further big transformation in the rural areas, thousands and thousands of peasant organizations were born in new areas that the party's influence spread and new organizations developed. Some petty bourgeois revolutionaries...due to war, to aid in South India, to tribal areas and other places. We had to fight against the reactions of the Reactionary右倾 forces.

Just one year after the initiation, for one year, I was in Rolpa, Rukia, Jajarkot, Salikot and I saw...the people were not only fighting with the police or reactionary, feudal agents, but they were breaking the feudal chains of exploitation and oppression and a whole cultural revolution was going among the people. Questions of marriage, questions of love, questions of family, questions of relations between people. All of those things were being turned upside down and changed in the rural areas...

We have to understand Mao's views that the backward rural areas will be the basis of revolution...the real base of the revolution. We live in a guerrilla struggle, a guerrilla struggle. We should understand the seeds of the new society, the examples to people.

The "indefeasible" intrinsic tendency is that we have to learn all these things, we should read everything, we have to do all these things, and then we can make war. These kinds of tendencies were there from the beginning. But we said, the non-Marxist, this is not Marxist. This is not Marxist. This is not Marxian...It is according to the scientific theory of knowledge. The question is learning and war through.

To establish base areas a particular national situation, a particular international situation is also necessary. This means there are big contradictions among the people...who are fighting against who...and there is also an intolerable situation in Nepal. Because for us, ultimately, we will have to reach the stage of the "people's war." And the people's war is not for a few...and only a few will be...it will be a national war. It will be a very big thing. They will have to fight for a long war. It will be a big thing. They will have to fight for a long war. They will not be able to win...for them. But if they rapidly die...they will die, that is the people's war.

We have to prepare for that. And for that reason we are saying we will also need a particular national situation. The non-Marxist, non-Maoist,...the situation in Nepal, the situation with India, the Maoist situation, the conditions, the conditions of the situation, the conditions of the situation.

When we declare that we have made a big step, then formally we will make a national government...We are thinking that when Rolpa, Rukia, Jajarkot, Salikot, etc. the movement begins...then we will declare the People's Republic of Nepal—the governance of the People's Republic of Nepal.

Prachanda and we, as Prachanda, as the leader of the revolution...as the leader of the Maoist movement...as the leader of the revolution...we, as Prachanda, as the leader of the movement, as the leader of the Maoist movement...we are the people's leaders...we are the leaders of the people...we are the leaders of the masses...we are the leaders of the masses...

Our main thing is that as late revisionism, I seriously have revisionism. And I never compromise with the question of leap, leap, and I fought and fought again with revisionism.

And from the economic cultural and political background, we know that a new wave of world revolution is beginning. This is Era of Mao. We started to grasp this question because just like Mao said, there will be 50 to 100 years of great turmoil and great transformation...and great transformation...
A concrete column

There I was conversing last week’s International Herald Tribune and comparing it to the Kathmandu English dailies. OK, size costs Rs 160 and the other costs Rs 6, but the other glaring difference is that while the Tibet is strong on economic coverage on page one, our local newspapers are busy in rehashing the inside pages. Even compared to other English papers it is the subcontinent our dailies are far behind. We have neglected economy in the inside pages and find our view of the business is not about. Why are we constantly avoiding economic issues?

There could be two possibilities: either there is too little importance to our economy to talk about, or we have too little interest in economic issues. There is a stronghold of coverage in the budget, just like there is an overdose on the environment vs. World Environment Day. But for the rest of the year, no serious coverage of vital issues that should affect every citizen’s life—whether it’s the budget or the consumer policies—get to us. The main economic issues don’t seem to be of importance in the business section.

Nepal has been democratic for 10 years, and our lawmakers seem to be satisfied to enlighten the less knowledgeable masses on economic issues. But they seem to prefer the uneducated era in the Soviet Union. But even that is not even in the discussions on the economy. Even the look at the poor attendance in parliament during the budget speeches. This lack of interest in business issues among the honourable peoples’ representatives has resulted in Nepal having laws with many flaws. The education system does not give the important role in teaching business and economy at secondary levels.

Politicians and businessmen alike see economic issues through ideological prism. Even in the business community, economics is reduced to profit-making. Business and economy is anonymous to money in the bank, or locked up in non-performing assets. In actual fact, the economy is not figures and numbers. No it is the arenas that are delivered on trade meetings. Parliament or the conferences and seminars. The economy is the summary of relationships and wellbeing of a nation via in people and services.

The many individual elements need to be integrated to understand the whole. Economics lies between the language and identity of a country and the economic framework, the means by which refined this is. How can we afford to distort it so callowly?

The Nepali economy is an analogy that because the international economy is much larger than the national one. While Nepal per capita is one of the lowest in the world, the private real estate prices are on a par with Manhattan.

Expensive alcohol including French wine is not overly expensive when mix, business, like health and education are the more programs. This is an economy where reform means having the largest number of airlines in the region, and the latest $10 billion of dollars over the past three decades, and the problems are much worse. I am not saying that the economy is not one of the most important to understand how the world out of affects our daily lives.

In forthcoming columns I will examine common economic issues from an uncommon perspective. Artha Bada. I will use to start the process of turning the economic agenda after the political one. In forthcoming columns I will examine common economic issues from an uncommon perspective.

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Powerless to export

Nepal will not be able to export hydropower to India unless a Power Trading Agreement is in place. But Nepali politicians seem too politicking to table the treaty.

Shahari Subash

A $1 billion joint venture with an Australian company to build a dam that would generate 750 megawatts of power to export India is in limbo because Nepal’s Parliament has not yet ratified a bilateral Power Trading Agreement drawn up four years ago.

The ratification is necessary before construction can begin on the mammoth 195-metre-high dam on the West Seti River. But several weeks into the parliament’s ongoing 16th session, there is no word if the document is going to be ratified or rejected. The fate of this and other power export projects hang in the balance.

The Power Trading Agreement (PTA) was initiated by junior water resources minister from India and Nepal in Kathmandu on June 5, 1997. Politicians of all hues from bothobar Dr Bhakta Bhai Aryal, Nepal Congress and the Nepalese Communist Party (Unified Marxist-Leninist), have refrained from taking any positive steps towards implementation of PTA.

The PTA was signed by the representatives of the two countries in Kathmandu in the presence of the Nepali Minister for Water Resources and Energy Gyanavati Tamang and the Indian Minister for Power K. C. Pathak.

Baba Aryal, Director General of the Electricity Development Centre, the government’s licensing window, said it was Nepal itself that had invited India to agree on the PTA because it could be useful to attract foreign investors.

Aryal, who was involved in the PTA preparatory process, thinks concern among Article 3 are misplaced. He says: “A day after signing the treaty opposition meetings (Madhav Kumar Nepal, Bimal Bhandari) about the treaty and the eventuality of the PTA.”

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Few Visitors to Costly World Fair

Expo 2000, the much-vaunted first world fair to be held in Germany, is turning into a headache for organisers.

HANOVER—Poor attendance figures, high entrance fees and embarrassing ticket sale glitches have taken the shine off the extravaganza that opened June 8 and laments until October 31. Expo organizers had predicted as many as 220,000 visitors a day to the ambitious show, which offers a stimulating glimpse of the future under the theme of “Humanscale: Nature + Technology”.

The Expo had a promising start, but just a week after the tunnels started running, the figures had dropped to just 50,000 a day. Some reports even said there was a day when only 25,000 people came to the fair. Pictures from the Expocenter nightly on German television news also showed a noticeable lack of large crowds of people.

Expo 2000 manager, Reinhard Voigt, has dashed any hope of exact figures, while a fair spokesman said it was too early to jump to conclusions. He added that the “Expo is a marathon, and we are in the first miles.”

By mid-June, around 300,000 people had visited the fair. If ticket sales continue at current levels, that would mean only 10 million Expo visitors instead of the projected 40 million on which all the calculations regarding the event were based.

Just to break even, the fair must still attract more visitors than it is doing currently—and not the gloom and doom commentators carried so far leading German newspapers. “Dramatic lack of visitors at Expo,” read the headline in the Süddeutsche Zeitung, whose reader writers said, “A loss of prestige is looming, and worse than that, a financial disaster.”

“Expo gets off to a painfully slow start,” said the Frankfurter Allgemeine, adding in a leader: “Expo 2000 is beginning to look like a limp balloon in the sky of major international events.”

But at least the newspaper also said the Expo organizers were trying to put a brave face on things and sound their call for patience now that a computer booking system is running smoothly.

The fair’s officials have staunchly resisted suggestions to go downmarket by cutting every feature from a current 60 marks (some US$35) per person and slashing weekend supplements.

The problem is that the German taxpayer will have to pick up the financial tab and politicians in Lower Saxony state, of which Hannover is the capital, are already making noises about the heavy losses they may incur if things do not pick up.

The location is another bugbear since Hanover is a quiet northern city with an undistinguished history, unlike previous fairs in Lisbon, Seville and New York. Hanover does not usually attract many tourists. Nearly 180 countries are taking part in the fair, which features some spectacular architecture, folklore displays and demonstrations of cutting edge technology.

Notably missing though is the United States, which failed to find the right sponsor and some critics are asking whether there is a place in the modern world for a fair in the tradition of the first exhibition, which was held in London 150 years ago.

Britain’s Guardian newspaper was among the sceptics: “The signs, in other words, are that this is a conceit on the run, at risk of being followed in an age when people no longer need to go to a specific place to learn of the latest technological advances.” (dpa)
Music therapy for chaotic Kathmandu

Sometimes it’s a tradition for Radio Nepal’s morning music programme since it begins its daily broadcast with an "Oni Shami" mantra. But then follows a steady stream of music for the soul, which could only mean you’ve stumbled upon one of the best kept secrets of Kathmandu’s aires: Himalayan Broadcasting Corporation 94FM, Shahi Radio.

HBC 94FM is Nepal’s latest FM radio station in Kathmandu Valley to take advantage of the liberalised policy towards private radio broadcasters. While Radio Nepal rakes in the waves nationwide on the AM bands, there are now six private FM stations in Kathmandu. Most of them sound alike, but 94FM stands out with its unique voice, lack of clutter and its superb music selection.

This is one radio station where you will not be annoyed with idle talk about meaningless issues, panel discussions involving some of the most vociferous of people in the valley, or a cacophony of pop. It is so mellifluous, so soothing that it should be prescribed for people with hyperactivity. To two hours of Shahi Radio in the morning before meals.

From its studios in Ananta in Boudha, where the all-staring eyes of the Buddha look down, Fred Cagan gets the day’s music mix ready: classical Indian and Western, spiritual, meaningful contemporary, world music, indigenous flutes and guitars and more.

Says Cagan: "Our daily broadcast is like the flow of a river. But that isn’t true when we play small bands, different programmes to take you for a ride to a different world. We don’t want to jampack the river and that is why we call it 'Running river' which runs like a river before lunch. 94FM started broadcasting on New Year’s Day this year, but now has a growing cult. Focusing among Nepali music-lovers and the Valley’s expatriate community. The station has already had its share of drama.

One morning, the studio suddenly sounded like a chronicled investigation. Later showed a short circuit on the blade, but the explosion could also have been from all the shahi noise.

In broadcast the station’s aim is to convey the tenets of the rich culture, spirit, medicine, knowledge, geography and sacred arts of the Himalaya. Sound in prayer and chanting, music and dance, evoke cosmic expansion and understanding! Sounds slightly quick, but then HBC is the brainchild of Indian music and amateur musicologist, Cesar Cox, who came to Kathmandu and found it too peaceful to decide to locate his peace radio here. Roxchi has been deeply influenced by the subsequent spirituality and among other things set up the Radio Krishna Centre, and FM network for the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

So far, HBC has been broadcasting 20 hours a day: 4 AM to midnight, with a slight change in the mood of the music for the morning, day and evening hours. The HBC philosophy regards sound broadcast as an instant connection to the fifth and must subtle, healing, alchemical element: shakti, the others.

Spiritually oriented music, prayers and meditation music, start its day. The bhajans, chants and soft rhythms are esoteric-religious, pure, but pure consciousness. Lastly, a few spiritual weekly spiritual talk programs are being aired with the program called 'Soul talk', which is in the hands of Swami Chodhri and Pushpu Bhat.

Cagan says: "We hope the programmes will help the people of Kathmandu open their inner eyes and make them aware of their responsibilities to the society." As the sun climbs higher in the day, 94FM fades into a mix of eastern, western and Nepali melodies. "Very soon," says producer Sunil Chhetri, "we will be inviting young Nepali musicians and up-and-coming artists to share their view through our station."

By afternoons, the station has put on Dylan Dui and his Rambo and Min’s Billy. There are a variety of times for the young and the old alike — whether you are hunkered down studying for an upcoming exam, tidying in a travel agency or chewing, in a general pool of classical notes, sometimes just, music in ear in a white into the aboriginal scale of the Dolcherra and African drums.

The HBC producers also put a lot of effort into their signature tunes and station jingles. "We spend more time in creating these jingles than selecting the music. Because they are our soul," says station manager Santosh Ghimire.

Some jingles sound like nites of Flexi Street circa 1990: "Sometimes you think you can spread love and peace to the entire human race... we believe you can." And Yakshraj Rajkumar, editor of the youth magazine 'View', comments: "There is good music, but I wish that in the future they become more Nepal and behave like outsiders."

Well, Rajkumar may be glad to know that Roxchi seems to be doing just that — as at least something that will "integrate" the station into the Valley a bit more. Roxchi is working towards a once a week "common time" where all FM stations in Kathmandu get together to broadcast a selection of their best programmes simultaneously on all stations.

This will be expanded into a "peace network", a creative exchange with other radio stations, musicians and artists worldwide. Roxchi says: "It will be the bridging of sound across time and space to promote international friendship and respect."
Wap whipped by i-mode

There is a new walk on the streets of Tokyo these days. It is no slower than a stroll and it is purposeful. It is "i-mode." In crowds, it often results in the odd stumble, bump and marred apology. But it is no disdain snigger either. The hip know when they have to go, but the eyes are too preoccupied to chat a clear course. Suddenly it is not i-mode's turn to look where you are going in Japan. Why? Because you are engrossed in the latest way to surf the "wireless web" - a mobile phone and internet service called i-mode.

3-mode (the "2" is for information) is the first system to put cyberspace in subscribers' pockets 24 hours a day with cheap and continuous access to a range of information services. Technically sophisticated, but simple to use, it is tipped as the next big thing to come out of the land of the Walkman, the Game Boy and the PlayStation.

"What's the big deal? Beisons can already use their cell phones to get online and exchange small messages using the wireless application protocol (Wap) system. Like i-mode, Wap phones do not access the internet as we know it - it's rather a cut down version designed to work on small screens.

But, while Wap and i-mode are rivals, their current in danger of turning into a mismatch between a waste bin and a bodybuilding giant. In terms of cost, popularity, ease of use and commercial success, Wap is being whipped. It may have been adopted last summer as the European standard, but it has been slow to take off, whereas i-mode is here, now and changing millions of lives.

Since its launch in February 1999, the system has transformed Japan from an online laggard into one of the fastest growing online markets in the world. With 7 million subscribers, i-mode is the country's most popular online portal. At current rates of growth it will make Japan the first country in the world where mobiles are more popular than PCs.

Millennium Brit in Stone Age Shape

LONDON - Half of all British men wear their trousers too tight in a desperate bid to deny they are losing their battle with their ever-expanding girths, according to a new study done by a British academic.

The men are also in danger of regressing to the shapes of their Neanderthal ancestors, said the fresh research, as long hours spent slumped in front of computer and television screens are causing them to become round-shouldered and short-statured.

"Millions of years of men became upright, Millennium man is sloping lower and lower," said the study's author, Stephen Gray of Nottingham Trent University.

Gray surveyed more than 2,000 men in Britain and found that half were squeezing into trousers that were a size too small. Only one in 10, however, admitted to always wearing their trousers too tight and fewer are really aware of how their bodies really look.

Gray also scanned 3D images of 10 male volunteers to show how they really looked. Only four correctly identified their own image, and only two women picked out their partner's scanned image.

"When the men were shown their 3D images, some were aghast because they really didn't know how they looked like," Gray said. "Men are not as good as women at looking after their bodies, and knowing how to eat sensibly and diet properly."

New Harry Potter already best seller.

The "MUGGLEs" have fallen for it again. The least surprising publishing news of the summer is that the fourth Harry Potter story is a bestseller. The surprising news is that copies are being bought by the thousands, eight times, the usual sell-out, three weeks before publication.

The book is the number one bestseller on Amazon.com, the online bookshop, with hundreds of advance orders arriving daily from readers desperate to have the copies for copies. It has been in the top five since December, when orders were starting coming in from all over the world.

The three earlier books are still on Amazon's top 10 list; at 9, 12 and 18, and all sales worldwide, in 30 languages, are estimated at 313 million copies.

Paranoid security surrounds the launch of the next episode in the life of British author JK Rowling's beswizard, the book that forces Harry to confront the twin demons of scariness and puberty.

At Bloomsbury, the U.K. publisher, a spokesman said only a handful of top executives had read it. Everyone involved, from cover designer to printers, had signed a secrecy agreement.

Amazon has organised security at its distribution centre north of London worthy of a gold vault, a Harry Potter area has been cordoned off, and staff are forbidden to discuss the book with outsiders.

In the U.S., where the books have sold 16m copies, interest is being turned to fever pitch by the planned Hollywood film version, up applications from 40,000 young hopefuls to audition for the part of Harry.

Bloomsbury is planning an elaborate launch for the new book on July 6, with part of Paddington station in west London transformed into the mysterious platform nine-and-three-quarters, where pupils, owls and brooms in hand, join their train for Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry.

At the Tiny Kew Bookshop in west London the initial order for Harry IV is 100 copies, 10 times its normal maximum order. It is also planning a Harry Potter day on July 8, opening the shop hours early.

It's only fear that the advance orders will sell out all its copies, leaving it with no hope of restocking until the second edition, "We've had to give in to pleas from regular customers," said the owner, Caroline Blofeldt. "I read all the (earlier books) myself, I adore them, I can hardly wait. It is a genuine phenomenon."

The next dodo

LONDON - The bird Gurney's Pilla is about to go the way of the Dodo, and may become the first major species to become extinct in this millennium.

Despite conservation efforts, the ultra-rare blue and black bird, which is found in Thailand, has been lumped to one of three breeding numbers of 1998 - from 30 pairs to just 10.

The bird was named after English banker and naturalist John H? Gurney. Gurney's Pilla was once numerous in South-east Asian forests. But that is no longer true. Said naturalist Marco Collier said: 'It is the only likely candidate for early extinction. Forest in which the bird lives aging 10 years ago has disappeared and it is reduced to a remnant.'

Collier said the place where he saw the birds nesting in 1969 is now a housing estate and a car park. At this rate, said, the bird will be gone by 2003. "If they keep whistling away the forest they are whistling away the attraction," Collier said. "Soon there will be nothing left."
Huddled masses yearning to be rich

The discovery of 35 corpses of illegal immigrants in Bangkok this week is bound to heat up the debate on economic migrants.

BANGKOK (BLOOMBERG) —

The term "economic migrant" has pejorative overtones: would-be workers are vilified as parasites or social benefit freeloaders.

But while public opinion is justifiably concerned about the incentives for coming to the UK, the British Department for Education and Employment is devising economic incentives to lure highly-skilled workers - presumably also economic migrants - to fill acute skills shortages.

In the US there are moves to lift the cap on foreign high-earning professionals and skilled workers, and trade unions is pushing for a total amnesty for up to 6 million illegal immigrant workers. Even Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve, has given such an approach a miss.

But make no mistake, this is not a bountiful harvest. National self-esteem is the driving force. Immigrants, legal and illegal, have played a vital role in the US in building the so-called "Goldilocks Market" among technology-driven growth sectors.

Western European demographers also point to the need for immigration. The economic migrant will be essential, it seems, to preserve your state pension.

An analysis of migration has been traditionally couched in negative terms. Mass movement has been closely associated with slavery, bonded labour and expatriates.

Waves of migrants

More generally, a lingering understanding of economics leads to negative sentiment towards immigrant labour which is seen as displacing native workers from their jobs. This is based on the fallacy that there is a fixed number of jobs available.

But economic development depends on waves of migration. The oldest stages of development theories emphasise that rural-urban migration is a key engine of economic growth. Applied globally, this means that growth is capital-rich, enabling labour mobility via a superior production of means.

Economic theory suggests that free movement of labour from one region is a necessary component to greater capital movement. A common denominator is that net migrant movement creates the economic basis for the existence of the European Union.

Immigrant workers increase the size of the pie being prepared before slices can be taken from it. In purely demographic terms, this is because immigrants tend to be concentrated in age groups where they contribute most to the public coffers.

Immigrant workers increase the size of the pie being prepared before slices can be taken from it. In purely demographic terms, this is because immigrants tend to be concentrated in age groups where people contribute most to the public coffers.

The EU population is declining and ageing rapidly. Overall population is expected to decline by five million in 25 years and by 40 million by 2050. It is also ageing at an unprecedented rate. A recent United Nations report said the EU will need 19 million immigrants to maintain the current ratio of people of working age to the retired population.

Net migration to the UK was 660,000 people between 1990 and 1998, an average of 7,500 a year. The UK population would remain constant if these numbers were the same. But net skilled migration would have to double to maintain the current numbers of working people. Without it, the retirement age would have to rise to about 72 to maintain the "support ratio" at 4.1 in 50 years.

In theory, one might dispute the claim that the "support ratio" should simply decline. If there are wild jumps in productivity, perhaps aided by technology, then the required ratio of working to non-working people would drop, obviating the need for immigration.

But the more keeps in productivity associated with technology are sound in immigrant labour, and these foreigners are more definitely "economic migrants".

In the US, corporate boardrooms and influential venture capital firms like the US League business schools and support runs, it is workers from India who are making their mark on Silicon Valley and the internet economy, driving growth.

Immigrants made up 22 per cent of Silicon Valley's scientific and engineering workforce in 1990, and that number will have increased thanks to a lowering of immigration restrictions. According to a report by Anna Lee Saxenian, a University of California professor at Berkeley. It showed that Chinese and Indian engineers were senior executives in businesses that together accounted for more than 16 billion in sales and 56,382 jobs.

There is concern, however, that developed nations might shirk off the strain of developing countries' refugees, setting back their economic development further - although the increasing trend for Asian expats to invest heavily in their country of origin would mitigate this.

The success of the highly skilled has not been lost on EU governments. Germany and the UK have announced schemes to attract high-skilled workers along the lines of the American H-1B programmes, which allows skilled foreigners to work in the US. The US scheme is set to expand from 115,000 visas to 200,000.

From October 1998 to March 1999, 46 per cent of the visas went to Indians.

The German government's plan is to issue 20,000 special visas is under threat because conservative politicians want the money that would be spent on Indian workers to go into education. Schooling is clearly a good long-term aim, but the skills shortage is here and now.

According to research by the International Data Corporation and McKinsey, by 2005 Europe will lack 1.7 million technology workers. The cost of that would be is $348bn.

The UK will be among the hardest hit: 14 per cent share of the high-tech workers it requires.

There are already 50,000 IT vacancies here, but only around 18,000 graduates coming out of university. Industry bodies said that training unskilled workers would take a minimum of five years. An Arthur Andersen report forecasts 80,000 unfilled vacancies in the internet economy by 2002.

Inflationary pressures will build up if these are not filled - in practical terms, highly-skilled foreign workers will remain that British technical staff will not be able to charge such a high premium for their services, and might lose out.

The 6 million illegal immigrants in the US - many from poorer neighbours - mainly work in low-skilled, poorly-paid jobs and are often open to exploitation.

Rarely are they considered the object of union sympathy. But it is their role in tempering simmering inflationary pressures that is leading call for an amnesty.

In practice, this means that some poor immigrants receive real wages that are lower than those who paid the same jobs 20 years ago.

It explains why the immigration enforcement agencies have been relaxed about illegal employment.

But this runs a long way off when Scandinavian immigration such as Linux Source, inventor of the Linux operating system - considered a challenger to Microsoft Windows - is still waiting for his Green Card.

Foreign Policy

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**About Town**

**Art**

- **People of Nepal**
  - Drawings by Australian Artist Rebecca Ashcroft at Helping Hands International Contemporary Gallery. Mon - Fri, 10am to 9pm. June: 22-23; July: 26-28. Opposite Ying Yang Restaurant, Thamel. (Open Arts space)

- **Figures and Compositions**
  - An exhibition of figurative paintings and abstract compositions of Chiring Birajda at Radisson Gallery, Radisson Hotel. Open 24 hours.

**Music**

- **The Harvard Dir 'n Dice**
  - Internationally recognized jazz a capella group from Harvard University performing for the first time in Nepal. Venue: Fish & Yell Hotel on 12 July.

- **Music Festival**
  - Ministry of Culture celebrates the International Music Day with Nepali music: from classical to pop. 27 June: Venus: Royal Nepal Academy. 4-7pm. Aflakira Francaisie celebrates world music day on June 24 at Tundikhel from 12 noon to 8pm. Children between the ages of 11 to 15 are also participating at Alliance Francaise hall, 7pm, entrance free.

- **Wild and Wild Summer**
  - Central Gokarneshwor offers a package every Saturday that includes swimming with buffet lunch and a bottle of beer/soft drink. Tel: 580875

- **Swimming Camp for Kids**
  - At Hotel De' Annapurna. Coach available between 10am - 11am and 4pm - 5pm.

- **Inter Cultural Film Society**
  - "Throw into doing aye!" Longing for the Country. A film by Song shit movie. Vietnam 1960 will be screened on July 22, 6pm at Russian Cultural Centre, Kathmandu.

For inclusion in the listing contact us at: marketing@nepaltimes.com
Burma must try dialogue

RANGOON - While it is clear that the international community sympathizes with the democracy movement in Burma, there still is a need for common vigilance and continued action to ensure that the human rights situation does not deteriorate further. In Burma, where we have been crushed under the military regime for many years, war and fear are two of the greatest threats that we must contend with from day to day.

The military regime came to power in 1962, and except for a brief interlude between 1980-1982, we have lived under an extremely repressive dictatorship ever since. In May 1989, elections were held which our political party, the National League for Democracy (NLD), won by an overwhelming majority. However, the military regime, which held the elections, ignored the results and has clung to power.

War and fear go hand in hand, where there is no human rights and where there is no justice. In Burma, people wake up in the morning wondering which of their friends have been taken into detention by the authorities, where the next meal is going to come from, and what the future of their children will be.

In Asia, where so many of us believe in such high ideals as is still so great a need for understanding the basic human factors that make human life acceptable. I sometimes think that we Asians are too hard on ourselves as human beings. There is a lack of compassion, which is a great pity — and a great surprise since it means that we are Buddhists, which is the great religion of compassion, was born.

Resentment of Burma’s military regime is growing for economic and human rights reasons. Prices have risen as the result of high living in the cities, and the common people are having difficulty making ends meet. Their children cannot complete their education because the universities have been closed for about three years. Meanwhile, the stink that are close to or part of the regime have become very wealthy from whatever openings they have been in the past decade. And their children can truly afford.

There is a possibility that this resentment will explode into violence. It would be a bad precedent. The NLD has chosen the non-violent path because we want to show that the Burmese spirit can prevail over the forces of atavism through the strength of our convictions and our perseverance. We are absolutely confident that democracy will come to Burma, and that it will come through non-violence means. We are confident as well that we will be able to persuade those who are now using violence to open Burma to see our point of view and to understand that they, and the rest of the country, would be far better off if they were just to resign rather than violence.

The military regime is a frightful force. Its members are frightened of the emergence of a democratic government because they don’t understand what a democratic government really is. They don’t understand that we’re not out for revenge, or to throw or crush them or the army. Our goal is simply to establish a sturdy society where there can be a balance between justice, security and prosperity for all our people.

To stem the potent force for violence in Burma, the government should adopt peaceful methods. It should think of the exchanges of views and dialogue as a honorable and dignified way of bringing about change. Indeed it seems to think that by accepting a dialogue with the opposition they would lose face. This is not true. What the military regime doesn’t understand is that we would greatly enhance its standing with the world wide, not just in Burma, by doing so.

During the Burmese Students’ National League conference in May 1987, Dr. Than Shwe, Chief of the State Peace and Development Council, said: “The peace movement is a plan devised by the enemy to promote our country’s rebels. The movement is a stratagem, a plot to overthrow the government. The national unity conference is the only plan to end the confrontation.”

Women drivers in Dubai

Dubai – The first woman driver in the conservative Arabian Peninsula have taken to the road in Dubai after overcoming prejudices in society that until now has considered this type of job suitable only for men.

Seven Arab women – four Syrian, a Jordanian, a Sudanese and one national of the United Arab Emirates - have started working as taxi drivers for the Dubai Transport Corporation, a government company.

Despite the new “tradition” introduced in the United Arab Emirates, the promoters of the idea did not want to break all social molds and the seven women will only take other women and their families as passengers.

Dubai, one of the three sheikhdoms that make up the UAE, and the other countries in the Arabian Peninsula – Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain and Yemen - have a social system which segregates the sexes.

“We have decided to launch this new service of women taxi drivers because of regressions from our customers who need to use taxis for their wives and children,” said Khalid Alshaikh, Head of Taxing Centre in the Dubai Transport Corporation.

“Islamic society in the United Arab Emirates does not consider it good for a Muslim woman to be alone in the company of a man who is not a member of her family, as happens when one calls a taxi in the street,” it added. Alshaikh.

The seven women will be working mainly during daylight hours from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. and are available to provide people, mainly the women by phone and not for flagging them down in the street day.

More massacres in Bihar

New Delhi - The Indian state of Bihar confirmed its reputation as the most lawless place in India last week when gunmen from a private army massacred at least 34 villagers in a bloody cattle feud.

The black-clad gunmen descended on the village of Morar early on 11 July. They dragged villagers from their beds, lashed them up and moved them down with characteristic ferocity. The villagers were then executed in the oldest of the lancers’ Yodhas. They included six children aged between five and nine. Twenty-two people died immediately and the rest later.

Draughtsman’s note: The attack was carried out by the Raxar Gika, a banned upper-castesommunity armed with murderous six-yard-long with left-wing groups representing the lower-class Yodhas into a killing field. This latest massacre was the eighth major cattle-related attack in the past six months. So far this month, 44 people have died.

Though no group claimed responsibility for the Bihar massacre, it is believed to be by the Raxar Gika, a revenge attack following the murder of 11 upper-caste villagers last Sunday. Morar, a remote off-road settlement, is only six miles away from Saran, where the Mandal Committee Central (MCC) party slaughtered 34 of the upper Shatrughnath caste in March last year (Observer News Service).

Pakistan cuts military budget

Islamabad Pakistan’s military regime announced a 13.47 billion dollar national budget for the financial year 2000-2001, allocating less money for the military than last year.

But the new year’s allocation of 2.97 billion dollars is in reality lower than last year’s as the military’s portion has been redefined. It is now considered the civilian side of the new financial year, beginning on 1 July.

There was no game plan (involving the transfer), it is purely an accounting procedure practiced by other countries also,” Finance Minister Shaukat Aziz told reporters, explaining the “10 percent increase” in the allocation.

“We do not want an arms race in the region, but it is necessary to maintain credible defense,” he said.

Nuclear elements in Pakistan were hoping the regime would increase the military budget since India had raised its military budget by 1.2 billion dollars last March.

India announced its 13.5 billion dollar military budget in the wake of the war against the kashmiri outfit that fed in the disputed state of Kashmir in the summer of 1999 (AFP).

Tigers held at gates of Jaffna

Colombo - Sri Lankan across the religious and ethnic divide –Tamils included – said Wednesday that the government of Sri Lanka appeared to have beaten back the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which were on the brink of recapturing Jaffna.

The army has, once again, taken the upper hand, through a naval advance from Trincomalee last week killed a Cabinet minister and at least 15 others.

Most Tamils live in the north and east of the country and the LTTE has been waging a 17-year civil war in pursuit of a separate side.

Sri Lanka’s Tamils, Sinhalese and Muslims alike—they would prefer to continue living side by side, as they have done so peacefully for years, than be controlled by the much feared LTTE.

A Tamil cultivator from the northern Vavunia district said: “There is no purpose in what the Tigers are doing. They will call me a broker for saying this. But we can live as friends with the Sinhalese farmers as we have done for so long.”

Dayawathey Sarasinghe, from Kodikawatta in the northern western province, said his son joined the army “because they had no jobs. If they had jobs they may not have gone. The last letter I had from one of my sons was one month ago. I don’t want this war to go on. I want my sons alive.”

10/07/2000 - Tamil Tigers who were once a member of a Tamil militant group, said: “The fact is that the LTTE is the biggest enemy of the Tamils. It believes in fascism, terrorism and bloodshed.”

The Tamils in Jaffna experienced this for nearly six years under the LTTE. They are now living under government and Tamil Tigers’ agendas to profit by prolonging the war (Observer News Service)
The Police and the People's War

March to the galitea charges levelled by Maoists. The Maoists are taking a leaf out of their mentors Mao Zedong, using psychological warfare tactics so maximum advantage. Typically, a surprise attack begins with explosions and detaining clients of revolutionary slogans. Escape routes are sealed with trip wires and sharpened, locally obtained rakes and pipes are set off. The Maoist arsenal includes knives, club, miracle-laden monkeys and other artifacts taken from the police. What they lack in sophistication, they make up with guerilla tactics and firepower—though the former might be made from the trash of town at galitea which was looted from a construction project in Chittran four years ago.

"Their strategy now is hit-and-run guerrilla war," said Ayub Krishna Khad, chief of the Nepal Police. "We are very visible targets. Police posts are accessible to all. Anyone can walk in and sexual our deterrents and the revolvers. We cannot withdraw because our job is to maintain law and order." During the beginning of the People's War there have been concern over police atrocities. Now, both sides have been accused of human rights abuses. Perhaps because of its earlier role in Buli Siva there is little sympathy evident for the Police vivo when the war started gaining momentum. Nearly 200 police have been killed since the insurgency began in 1996, with a sharp rise in deaths since March 1999. Most have been killed in raids on camps or blown up by improvised mines along village roads. As many as 15 policemen were killed in one single attack, at Ghamganga in Rup. The casualty has cost over 3,600 lives, many of the civilians caught in the crossfire.

Says one senior politician: "When 56 Lalta is a strike, it is the army which is made to fight. But when there is a similar war brewing in Nepal, the political parties field a police force with its hands tied. Either the police has to be empowered to fight like an army, or the army has to be kept out of the hands of the militias." After making initial noise of using the fabric, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has now restrained the police from using tear gas alone. They had placed fully loaded round on the fabric. The first hope that there may be a resolution came when Constable Prachanda (Bishnu Kamal Dahi) was saying to talk to the government. That offer may have been made from a position of strength or weakness, or it may have been a ploy to gain time, but it was an opportunity to see what the Maoists' minimum demands were.

Unfortunately this opportunity has been lost but there is room for party leadership between Girija Prasad Koirala and Shar Palhade Desha. He was under the same pressure on the ground. Between Girija Prasad Koirala and Shar Palhade Desha. Over the past week, Koirala and Desha have been personally calling political football with the possibility of talks.

"The talks have now begun, who argue about insurgents," Dahi said on June 18. He was responding to remarks made by Koirala about the need for the talks. "Everyone knows about the Maoists agenda. It has appeared in newspapers," Desha added. Home Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who is supposed to be commanding the counter-insurgency, knows less. He told parliament on June 6 that "HMGN has no knowledge of what the Maoists' demands are." A day after the Pacthanka killings, Prachanda repeated his demand for the creation of a "minimum atmosphere" for talks. Desha responded by saying he was open to talks about anything within the framework of the constitution. Koirala had stressed all saying that the Government headed by Desha had "full authority" to talk. Clearly, the Nepal Congress leadership is playing with the country's future by not considering the insurgency an urgent matter. The other political parties, including the main opposition ULML, seem to be content to see the government squirm. This lack of seriousness means that the body camps continue to pile up, and a war that the people want may erupt on.

THE MAOST ARSENAL

From top: Pipe bombs with galitea sac, grenade clusters in a hooby trap, pressure cooker bombs filled with explosives and detonator. All photos: Nepal Police.
No match for gamblers

NEPAL: IN SLAUGHTER

Pakistanis Wazir Akbar's very first ball is noisier and wider. It goes over the skipper's head. With a mere six runs on the scoreboard, India declare. Pakistan, now in the lead, Indian all-rounder Kapil Dev books an understated fill in to Pakistan batting sensation Salim Malik. Even a schoolboy would have walked in to the boundary - Malik promptly misses the ball. He is bowled.

Check all around, except among the bookies and match-finders. Fortunately, this isn't a real-life match. It was dreamed up by the London Observer newspaper as a prank.

The light-hearted pun on the rising controversy over sportsmen throwing away matches in return for money, made for a good laugh. But by mentioning only India and Pakistan, it also made out that match-fixing and corruption in cricket is a particularly South Asian problem, if not the region's monopoly.

Of course, big money has corrupted not only cricket but many other sports. The question is why some people insist on thinking that honesty among cricketers players began slipping in the subcontinent, and only in

To be sure, that was when widespread reports about match-fixing involving one players from South Asia led to warnings from the International Cricket Council (ICC).

But what about the 1980s, when many players accepted without demur huge sums of money to undermine teams in what is now South Africa? This violated the Gages Agreement that banned all open betting countries with the white minority-run country. Many of the so-called rebel players were English. Not one was South Asian.

Then Australian Kenny Baker not only put big money into cricket but changed the complexion of the game by breaking with tradition.

Even when there was evidence that dubious dealings were cropping up in cricket, the game's administrators adopted to ignore it. In 1981, at Headingley, Australian spinner Dennis Lillee and his wicket keeper colleague Rodney Marsh laid 500-1 bets on England defaulting their team.

But cricket's mañana took no action.

South African skipper Hanse Cronje and his team twice discussed throwing a match during the 1997-98 tour of India. Australian Shane Warne and Mark Waugh are alleged to have taken money from bookmakers and to have provided information about playing conditions and other matters.

Again, cricket administrators in Australia and the ICC failed to highlight the fines imposed on Warne and Waugh or take tougher action against them. Cronje now says, "In the interest of stupidity and weakness I allowed Aasif and the world to discuss terms with me." (Gemini News)

Tyson carry
HEATHROW airport ferry's control post 24 is normally reserved for bottles of alcohol food, forced to a captive audience. On Friday, an otherwise oil-rich nation was packed at the second time.

Just other an hour earlier the broke's Concord jet from New York had dropped out of a clear blue sky into an airport in Chile, after an air traffic controller computer glitch which had left many thousands of travelers stranded.

Tyson, 33, has been advised by police to assist waiting in Terminal 4 after being involved in last week's Fan violence near
Spa, Belgium - English football authorities are seeking urgent talks with the French and the Americans in London about sex and sport.

The Pigus Atlas of Human Sexual Behaviour - a serious academic study denoted as soft porn - catalogues each nation by its most intimate details, painting a fascinating but often bizarre insight into different cultures.

The American be unflattering: 46 per cent of American women think a good night's sleep is better than sex. In fact, it is not. The woman sex is made by: a intercourse, sex, food and drink, love and the woman sex.

Daily 120 million acts of sexual intercourse take place around the world, involving 9,000,000 couples. On average, it lasts 21 minutes in the UK, compared with 17 in Germany, 14 in Italy and 16 in Thailand (where they do it quickly). The Brussels, who average 30 minutes, are the world's sexual gold medalists (although 44 per cent of Brussel women confess to being vaguely unsatisfied).

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Patan’s Grand Temple Golden

Nepali Times brings readers the vivid sketches and passionate writings of Desmond Dog, excerpted every week from his book, In the Kingdom of the Gods (HarperCollins India 1999).

I’ve been flunking this English for ages, not even turned my attention to the lovely city of Patan. I’ve been visiting the Golden Temple once a week, smiling at possible angles. Examining its mystical details. Striving from sides of succession even as I sit on the most ancient steps of the ghat. Making excess of too little too much light, focusing temperatures and smoky breathes. There is a gentle, enigmatic essence, more intense than common NW, more golden than the temple itself. Under its face, and facing the maze, the temple of thousands of royal images kings and queen in ancient state and golden metal who in search of immortality, left their likeness behind. Two of them, thought old to be guessed at, are the legendary Marwar queens, Frangini, and her husband. Instead, who are believed to have built the temple. By way of legend no one knows when, but temple records reach back to 1499 when the golden idol was installed in the temple. So levels a display of devotion must have had special reason, which has one wondering why this spot is so hallowed, why such large steps were placed upon it. The other great temple of Kathmandu valley commemorates minimal, the appearance of Shiva in an incertifying time, the setting of a divine light like when the lake on which a gold was directly a stream of a deity’s visit, a stream of the royal image. Ancient Patan was largely a Buddhist city, it is believed that Gautam Buddha visited it and stayed a while. Close to the Golden Temple, a small courtyard where the Buddha appeared a king and lego to a car of midwestern his today’s state. It could be possible that this glorious temple was built upon mystical foundations, perhaps upon the very spot where the Buddha was supposed to have dwelt. But even legend has its meritory.

West architecture a narrow row of small flats that leads to a courtyard and the golden temple, a majestic, more architectural than that equivalent, no wall making a historical structure. One glance at the golden temple is enough to take you to a historical structure, a building that once sheltered the revered image of the Buddha. It’s the place where the Buddha is supposed to have dwelt, and the site where he is believed to have preached the first sermon. The temple is a place of historical and cultural significance, and is visited by thousands of devotees every year. The compound is surrounded by ancient walls, and is a place of peace and tranquility.

The Golden temple is under construction this month for repairs. There is a Rs. 200 entry tax for foreigners entering Patan, and a Rs. 25 fee to enter the temple.

Literature in a Hostile Terrain

With a literacy rate near 50 percent, Nepal seems unlikely ground indeed for those who work to create imaginary worlds in language. Yet there are hundreds of writers and poets all over the country, vowing number of whom are concentrated in Kathmandu Valley who persist in writing despite the fact that no one asks them to write, and no one champions them to do so. Writers and poets meet society and offer new visions that enrich the lives of their readers. In return for the efforts, however, Nepal’s creative writers are rarely even paid royalties by publishers, and most must find their own way, producing, printing, designing, writing, and promoting their own works.

The exhilarated literary magazines of Nepal pay about Rs. 50 per page, with 1000 pages being near the top. Most writers are paid a paltry amount for their efforts, and few receive any support from the government. Most publications are self-funded, and few have the means to sustain themselves.

Yet Nepal’s writers and poets keep writing, thanks mainly to a zeal that is unrelenting in its faith in the worth of their own work. Large-scale publishing is sometimes a blessing, but it is also a curse. In Nepal, the publishing industry is small, and publishing is a difficult and risky business. Most writers are forced to self-publish their work, and many are unable to make a living from their writing.

The lack of support and funding for literature in Nepal has left writers with few options. Many writers turn to other forms of expression, such as music, film, and visual arts, to express their ideas and reach a wider audience. However, this has not been easy, as many writers have faced discrimination and prejudice.

In addition to the lack of support, the censorship and restrictions on speech in Nepal have also made it difficult for writers to express their ideas. The government has imposed strict controls on the media and on free speech, and many writers have been arrested and detained for expressing their views.

Despite these challenges, Nepal’s writers and poets continue to write, and their work is a testament to their dedication and commitment to the craft. They are a shining example of the resilience and strength of the human spirit, and their work is a powerful reminder of the importance of free expression and the right to speak truth to power.
Flower power in Kathmandu

Private companies are vying to adopt traffic islands in Kathmandu.

KATHMANDU may be fast becoming renowned for its splendour, but the city's residents and visitors are now getting visual pick-me-ups in pocket gardens that are sprucing up all over the city.

A new initiative called the Public-Private Partnership Programme — 47 for short - has brought in and set designs jostling for space in traffic islands, and has even given King Tribhuvan's statue in Tegnawara a much-needed face-lift.

The 47 is a joint city beautification project of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) and the private businesses, so far it has transformed seven ugly traffic islands in Kathmandu into small but lush urban public gardens.

Built at a total cost of Rs 1,613,000, the seven traffic islands need Rs 722,000 to maintain every year. Under the 47 programme, the cost of garden development and maintenance while the KMC provides design, supervision and water.

Surya Thapa has adopted King Tribhuvan's statue and the traffic island around it. Hotel Association of Nepal and Nepal Association of Tourist Agents are maintaining the Multi (District) Chautari, which has been handed over to the Tri-Chautari Guide Association, and Aqua Water is doing Mahakali Bazaar.

Agreements are pending with Nepal Tourism Board, Israel Embassy, Royal City and Mini Tiki.

Our involvement in the beautification activity is a combination of attempts to contribute something good to society and boost the hand industry in the long run," says Namrata Bajracharya of Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), a pioneer in the partnership.

The KMC expects to complete 13 such projects in 11 Kathmandu localities by October as an estimated cost of Rs 3,175,000, and private parties have already agreed to be involved. However, the eyes were at Tri Kuna on the airport road in the beautification for since the land has been under litigation for over 10 years.

"I took it as a personal challenge," says Rakesh Yuvan of the KMC, who designed the 47 project and is implementing it. At first, the 47 was met with a pinch of sarcasm. After all, Kathmandu has had a string of ambitious urban development plans since the 1990s — most of these have ended up in the archives of government offices, where they have been gathering dust.

This is even as the government spends nearly 30 percent of its total development budget within the 600 sq km area of the Kathmandu Valley. There are also as many as 160 government bodies whose express purpose is to work on Kathmandu's urban development.

Yet in the past, the municipality’s idea of making Kathmandu “clean and green” was usually to merely paint pedestrian--or green--or even--flowerpots on public traffic poles.

Other similar projects have also attracted big business eager for the publicity, but not for the long-term arrangement such matters require.

KMC itself is still mulling from the country shopped up by its attempt to beautify the Dharahara and Sandhara area. He move deep felt after a private company was asked to manage the 25,000 sq ft area and operate a cafe.

The local Sadhan Rehabilitation Committee, sought the manner to the Supreme Court, arguing against the “commercialisation” of a historical area and alleging that Mayor Keshab Shapka had personal issues in the arrangement. The Court has yet to decide on the case.

Meanwhile, a part of the Dharahara garden that was designed and built before the deal order has gone to ruins.

The traffic island gardens are a modern edge forward from previous efforts, but at least everyone agrees that they add colour and neat to an otherwise rapidly growing city. More importantly, private companies are vying to maintain them.

“Community support and strict supervision make the traffic island gardens possible," says Yuvan, who can be seen most days personally supervising the upkeep of the traffic island gardens in Bhadaditya. Local banks have even been inspired enough to contribute and maintain their own traffic island garden without the involvement of the KMC.

Unfortunately, not all the 47 traffic island gardens are in bloom. The rock garden in Naya Bazar has become verdant, the mayor blames lack of supervision by Ward 10 functionaries, and a fast food chain for breaking an agreement with the KMC.

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SILENCE OF THE PALACE

By MANISH SINGH

Film Review

It is not a Tamil film, Silence of the Palace (1996), winner of several international awards including a mention for the Camera d’Or, would have been a perfect Nepal production. The film was screened by Kathmandu’s Inter-Cultural Film Society on 17 June.

The movie is about Aliya, a 25-year-old daughter of a commanding officer who becomes a nightrider singer. She could have easily been cast as the story of a Nepali Ruta dahlater in the 1940s. While watching the film, you can’t help wondering why Nepal film makers haven’t used similar narratives to make cinematic moorship like Silence of the Palace.

Aliya’s life has been a “series of absences”. On the morning of yet another absence she receives news of the death of Prime Sef Ali, in whose palace her mother had been a concubine. She returns to the palace which she left 10 years earlier. The empty rooms and the corridors bring back memories of her lonely and complex life when she was approaching womanhood and trying to find her identity. Aliya does not know who her father is and no one tells her. In the palace the one side everything karmo is silent. The pregnant silence and understatement are the films powerful elements. It was a tumultuous time for Tashischi which was trying to win its independence from France.

Tashischi’s fight for independence is also Aliya’s own fight — who does not want to keep the life of her mother. But she is at helplessness as her mother was.

The Inter-Cultural Film Society aims to "bring future films from different cultures around the globe — for the promotion inter-cultural understanding in Kathmandu."

"The response we have been getting is far for our efforts is very encouraging," says Soni Ghimire, a 24-year-old, whose branchchial Inter-Cultural Film Society is.

Since March it has screened films from India, Argentina and China. The next two films are from Vietnam and Switzerland.

"I only wish more Nepali came to see the film."

(For information or screening and membership contact Parv Bhattarai at: x676@kathmandu.net)
OFF THE BEATEN TREK

Great bread awaits you in Manang

The bakery at the edge of the galaxy

If you are looking for some of the best bakeries in Nepal, you probably won’t find them in Kathmandu. You have to trek to the Manang Valley behind the Annapurnas.

As you may end up breathing all day, you’ll be glad to know that the best bakeries are within a walking distance from the bakery.

**JAHUNI RAJANISHAY**

**Women to woman**

Women are almost always victimised by men, right? Wrong.

Many women have beenisation of a woman’s beauty. It is only after I mentioned that my Dai was with me, that she jumped up and down and said something comforting.

I would dare to say that almost every woman in Nepal at some time or another has felt unsafe, insecure or uncomfortable in her surroundings. In these situations, it is not only the men who are provoking these feelings. The days are over, where men dominate and women are seen as weak. Of course, we’ve heard the stories of the abusive mothers and sisters-who. But with more women becoming figures of authority, the cases of women exploiting women are bound to rise.

At the end, for instance, policy makers - presumably men - determined that women need their privacy while they are being “body-checked” in the intensified security following the December hijacking. Hence the need for curfew. I am in comparison, get checked right in the open. This attempt at giving women privacy may have failed, but just made them more vulnerable to extortion. The official thinking may be that a police woman would do no wrong because she is a woman.

If you were to ask me, I would prefer an “in-depth” check in an open public space instead of behind curtains. I would still hesitate to say yes. But after being victimised by fellow women, I am not so sure anymore.

When everybody is talking about going international

we already have a head start.

The importance of going international cannot be underestimated. After all, there’s a whole world waiting out there. But the essential difference lies in Nepal’s talking about it and actually doing it. We are the first and only private airline to operate international routes. We are the process of connecting you to Varnasi as well.

And we’re not just talking about it!

NECON AIR

Nepali Weather

After a false start, the monsoon is making healthy progress through the subcontinent. The main pulse reached Kathmandu on June 15, even before monsoonal rains had arrived earlier. Western Nepal, which saw above-average pre-monsoon downpours is now getting the first showers of the real monsoon. The week June 23-30 will see a further consolidation of the monsoon rains, with snow at altitudes higher than 5,000 metres. The trans-Himalayan belt in Mustang, Dolpo and Manang will also be hit, with occasional afternoon showers.

Kathmandu temperatures will be 25-30°C maximum and 19-21°C minimum.

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Funny Side Up
by Kunde Dixit

There are people right here in Kathmandu who are refusing to admit that Indian intelligence left out their names from the list of Pakistani agents in Nepal. They are hurt, their credibility has been shattered. Not being on this list means the Indians don’t take you seriously. And if the Indians don’t take you seriously in this country, you ain’t nobody.

People take extreme care of their reputations around here. And there is nothing that boosts a person’s standing more than having it whispered in the Kathmandu cocktail circuit that you are a spy.

Welcome to the Kingdom of the Paranoid, where the national game is I Spy. We still have a dipping of a headline in an imaginative Kathmandu tabloid that once alleged that the then Indian Ambassador was a Pakistani double agent.

I really can’t understand why, when ambassadors have diplomatic immunity and spies work so well together at the people-to-people level, their governments are at each other’s throats. Embassies on both sides read the same text books: how to cause mayhem in trains, how to demolish places of worship, they even exchange notes on surgical methods of extracting truths. But for some reason our officials just don’t see eyeball to eyeball.

All this close-and-deeper-in-the-back is nothing new to Nepal politics either, as poor Birnash Thapa found out to his grief. The extreme intrigue of the Nepal durbar in the 19th Century is probably what kept the East India Company away, and spared us from being turned into a hill-station connected to the plains by a low train.

The Company took one look at the conspiracy theorists in Kathmandu, and said let us get the hell out of here, these guys are pros. Same with the Tibetan Army, they rode in so close as Nuwakot and then suddenly turned right around and galloped back to their high plateau. No point, they must have reasoned, trying to conquer a country that is so spooked.

But Calcutta did win the right to place a regiment in Kathmandu, the express purpose of which was to meddle, interfere, divide and rule. The present occupants of a partitioned Lalitpur carry on this grand tradition. And that was fine with everybody until the other Guys wanted a piece of the action as well. Nepal sort of got caught in the middle.

So that as it may, and notwithstanding how we ourselves thrive on intrigue, it is a great honour to play host to such skullduggery. What demeaning recognition of our ancestral conspirators that Nepal today can proudly call itself a hub for every intelligence agency worth its salt.

But I must say this, I have serious doubts about the IQ of foreign spooks who are reading these words over my shoulder even as we speak. (They also can’t hold their drinks, and have bad breath.)

If the intelligence agents of one particular friendly country of one billion people located south of the border whose capital city is made up of two words beginning with the initials ‘E’ and ‘O’ were not on our contacts, they would have realised, by now that their so-called secret report has actually united Nepal like nothing else.

Not to mention that Mr Tamang was a hijacker have Nepalis bond for so well. Where are you, Binya? Haven’t seen you around lately.

Nepali Society

Model pilot

Niku Shrestha is used to sky-highing down the ramp, but these days, she is more often found on an airport runway.

Most passengers flying Buddha Air’s Raytheon-Beech 1900D aircraft are surprised to see a woman at the controls, but they would be even more surprised if they knew their pilot was a former Miss Nepal.

Shrestha won the title in 1998, while she was still in flying school. She is now probably the only ex-beauty queen in the world who is also a commercial airline pilot.

The 21-year-old has just clocked 800 commercial flying hours at the controls, and will be captain once she reaches 1,000.

Shrestha used to model as well. But she has not had much time for that lately. Almost every day, she is on the right seat in a Buddha Air cockpit. One of her favourite trips is the early morning sightseeing flight from Kathmandu to Mount Everest.

Says Nibi: “Passengers come up to me often, both Nepalis and foreigners, and say they feel proud to see a woman flying them. I also like what I am doing.”

But despite a job that takes her up to the skies, Shrestha keeps her feet on the ground. One of her many interests is in social service and she has been actively helping the home for the elderly in Pashupati.

Nepals on top

The Prime Minister’s daughter Sujita Khadka and her organization, Sujita Khadka Memorial Trust had backed the all-woman expedition. The “first daughter” posed for a picture (centre) with all the successful Nepali climbers at a knapsack ceremony. Lhakpa Sherpa of the All-Woman Nepal Expedition to Everest reached the summit on 22 May, and a few hours later Pemba Dhimbu got to the top from the Tibetan Chimlingma side of the mountain. Also this season, Bhoj Sherpa, practically ran all the way to the top, doing the entire climb in a record 16 hr 56 min. Anga Sherpa set another record by getting to the top of the world for the 11th time.

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