**The moment for Kodak**

Kodak is giving Nepal one last chance. The US $8 million US-India joint venture in Nepal may decide to pack up and leave in a few weeks if it fails to get permission to export its products to India after the visit of Prime Minister Prachanda Nepal's next week.

"We've been assured the issue will be raised during the visit," Kodak officials told The Times. "But indications in India are not so good."

Kodak Nepal built a factory in Hetauda only to be later told that it would not be able to export to India, since the latter says Kodak's process of importing and processing from its Manyawar Ghat factory does not amount to "manufacturing."

Kodak officials say the government has gone beyond consideration of any company's desire to export products to India, to the point that they have asked the company to consider "the issue of the national interest." This is a clear indication that the government does not intend to reconsider its earlier decision to not allow Kodak to export to India.

In the past, Kodak officials have repeatedly asked for permission to export to India, but the government has always denied it. This time, however, the situation is different. The government has been put under pressure by Kodak, which is one of the major employers in the country. The company has been operating in Nepal for over 50 years and employs thousands of people.

Kodak officials say they are not giving up hope. They say they will continue to work with the government to find a solution that will allow them to export to India.

**Girija on Necon**

The prime minister's planned return to Nepal on board the inaugural Royal Nepal Airlines flight from Bangkok on 8 August has been scrapped because there is no flight that day.

It is not known who overtook the day's airline to fly Kathmandu-Bangkok, but reports from officials now say the prime minister will take another Nepali flight: Air Nepal from Kathmandu.

**The taxman is after your money and he'll get it even after you die.**

BINO BHATTARAI

They say taxes and death are both inevitable. Now, if the tax office has its way you will have to clear all your tax dues before dying. And if the property you bequeath to your children will be taxed at market value.

A draft Tax Act being prepared says: "Where an individual is disposed of an asset on death by way of transfer of ownership of the asset to another person, the individual is treated as disposing of the asset in respect of disposal of an asset at an amount equal to the market value of the asset at the time of disposal; and the person who acquires ownership of the asset is treated as acquiring the asset in the acquisition costs of an equal amount."

In plain English, this means any inheritance will be deemed a sale and taxed at the prevailing rates for real estate at the time of death. Such cases exist in other countries, too, but where there is a proper tax culture and there are other safety nets and welfare schemes like housing support.

In death and in life, the taxman is going after the Nepali's wallet. Just about every sphere of activity may now fall under the purview of internal revenue; you'll pay tax not only on wages, salaries, leave pay, overtime pay, fees, commissions, prizes and gifts but also the money you get as a share of your family.

There is more: the tax officials want to make a check out of any personal allowance, including the cost of living, subsistence, rent, entertainment and transportation. The government will tax your money upon retirement. The taxman is even targeting your voluntary payments, probably and other benefits you may get on being fired.

Less than one percent of Nepal's pays income tax and the government says there is no other way to increase internal revenue without spreading the tax net. It also says the new act would repeal 17 existing laws, simplify procedures and make collection more comprehensive.

Donor money has been spent to prepare this draft, including work done by a Harvard professor and an IMF consultant. It therefore reflects the language and values of a Western country.

Critics of the draft say that inheritance tax will not work in countries like Nepal where people are not even paying normal income tax. Besides, because people's entire life savings go into building a house for posterity, and there is no government social welfare support, an inheritance tax is unimplementable.

The Nepali version of the draft is unattainable, but is being prepared for submission to Parliament. The English original is a 100-page document with 132 Articles and Annexures. It is twice as big as the Income Tax Act 1974, and is doubly difficult to understand.

The fundamental problem here is that the draft is driven partly by revenue augmentation concerns, and not by savings," says U.R. Upadhyay of the International consultants group PMG Bamroor in Kathmandu.

The Federation of Nepal Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) has come up with a 23-page list of comments on the draft bill and has stiffly criticized provisions such as the capital gains tax, accounting principles and the discretionary powers the law still gives tax officials. FNCCI also asks if Nepal businesses find the new tax regime so intimidating, what foreign investors made of it? "At this stage, you can kiss foreign investment goodbye," said one Kathmandu-based joint venture specialist.

Most controversial are the clauses relating to capital gains which define disposal of assets as: when the person pays with ownership including when the asset is purchased by the owner of the asset, merged with another asset or fully liquidated, leased to another person under a finance lease; cancelled, redeemed, destroyed, lost, expired, or surrendered."

"Inheritance is something we have had for generations, but the new draft aims it as a capital gain," says Sudharmal Raj Pandey, general secretary of the Association of Claimed Accountants.

"This tax draft is just take, take and take," says Prabhat Ranjan Bhattacharya, another CA. It is not just the taxpayer who is confused. Even tax officials privately admit that they would need special training for at least six months before they can actually understand and implement the tax.

The government says the new tax will reduce the discretion of power officials, but proves such as "reasonable excuse" (Art. 120, 121) cease loopholes for subjective interpretation.

Another clause under Compounding Offences (Art. 129, 130) says the decision of the tax department is "final and not subject to appeal," which some say is against the Constitution itself.

**Dor Bahadur is alive!**

Dor Bahadur Bista, who was the lord and master of Nepali anthropological and archaeological work, disappeared without trace from Junia five years ago. His family and friends had given up hope. There were rumors he had been killed by people angry with his work among the poor.

Three weeks ago came the sight of Dor Bahadur in Hardwar, India, by a Nepali pilgrim who later recognized him from a magazine picture. He family sent a search party to Hardwar, but couldn't trace him. But they are happy Dor Bahadur is alive. Says his son, former IIT Kathmandu Bista, "We will be glad if Das is healthy and happy end at peace."

Dor Bahadur's famous book Prostitution and Development has gone into several editions after its first publication in 1951. Most recent is an etno-cultural study of the impediments to Nepal's development.
MORE TAX, LESS INCOME

The whole point about taxes is to raise revenue for a regulatory hands-off government to function, to finance social welfare for the neediest and to carry out other national-level functions. The idea is not to tax everything that moves. It is not to try and squeeze every paisa from citizens so that they have no incentive to earn and save. But that is exactly what the government seems to want to do with a proposed new tax law. It hinges back to King Jobin in medieval England who drove his country to penury because he got his head, the Sheriff of Nottingham, to tax every twig and gully. Our current government is doing the same. Under this new tax, citizens couldn’t stand it anymore and joined a band of quizzers in Sherwood Forest under the command of that prodigal Robin Hood. Some provisions of a draft that may one day become our income tax law go beyond salaries and wages to even lay its hands on the property parents leave behind for their children—treading inheritance like a sales transaction. If someone steals your car radio, you may now be taxed, since it will also be regarded as a sale.

From business it would take a cut of the income earned from everything, plus the real gains from the disposal of a person’s business assets or liabilities. Inversion really pays off on dividends, interests, sources of investment income, royalties, gains from investment insurance and so on. The taxman comes, and he wants it all.

The idea behind the new draft is to widen the net tax and make it easier and more transparent for those who pay it. That is not a bad goal. As World Bank economist Joseph Stiglitz says in his column (on page 6 of this issue) countries like Nepal must simplify tax laws with single-rate, broad-based taxes to improve collection and reduce corruption.

As things stand, this draft law is so complicated that even the tax department admits it will need months of training simply to understand its provisions. Imagine what the law will mean to the hundreds of thousands of taxpayers scattered all over Nepal.

How could something so important have been messed up so badly when all the underlying premises were right? Was it because a foreign consultant drafted it for us without having the least idea of local conditions? Or could it be a deeply ingrained revenue-driven government ethos?

It is simple economics: countries can earn more from taxes only if more citizens earn more. People can earn more by working harder and for longer hours, and they will do that if there are more incentives to work harder. If you take away most of what they earn, they will not earn and they will not save. In its present avatar, the draft law will turn Nepal into a nation of tax evaders like Pakistan (see page 13).

There is one bright hope: Parliament. When the draft tax act comes up for debate, the people’s representatives should retain its good points and trash the unworkable ones.

STORM IN A TEA CUP

So, the B-galate Kokilay personally wanted permission to shoot the prime minister. And not with a camera. Because of that one remark he made, Mohan Niraula is suddenly a star. Dharmendra Shrestha, youngest brother of the King, heard the outburst. Discrimination being the bitter part of value, the ex-prince chose to keep mum. Perhaps it was his silence, rather than the words spoken by others, that was the real cause of the rumor that followed. It all ended with Shrestha being once more persuaded to leave the country.

But you should have heard the Valley’s bush-clock hum. And the rumour that Mr. Poudyal coump was imminent. It was all very reminiscent of Panchayati times. In mobiles across the capital, rumors were being dropped on the composition of a new cabinet. It is easy in Nepal to end a sentence with a “re”. The “re” makes any unsubstantiated rumor, however outlandish, seem plausible.

Just to note, the chances remain slim, our law makers suddenly woke up, and in a show of unprecedented unity spoke in one voice against the common enemies of democracy and the constitution. The parliament did succeed in making a powerful point, you don’t know what you have until you’ve lost it—and that goes for democracy and freedom. If this storm in a tea cup is any indication that Dalit violence is the price of democracy. It is a necessity even when the threat appears to be as innocuous as the outburst of a school child. Mohan Niraula has been sighted in Patan Sadak, “I’m back.”

We are increasingly seeing the necessity of democracy in the world. It is a necessity even when the threat appears to be as innocuous as the outburst of a school child. Mohan Niraula has been sighted in Patan Sadak, “I’m back.”

Nepal’s age-old ties with India are just that: aged, and old and fraying at the seams. Policymakers like to repeat that the historic relationship between Nepal and India is “age-old” and has stood the test of time. May be so, but this is selective use of history to prove a point. It is clear from his Dioryaph (Divine Saying) that Nepal’s great king, Prithvi Narayan Shah, didn’t quite trust the big neighbour to the south. Later, Jung Bahadur Rana marched into Lucknow in 1856 to tell what the British called the Sepoy Mutiny, and what the Indians claim is their First War of Independence.

The Lucknow List that followed permanently altered the North Indian elite from Nepal. Nepal was in the historical memory of Orientalists as smugglers of the British. It didn’t help matters much when Gulab of General Dyer fired upon innocent civilians in Jallianwala Bagh, an event that traumatized the Indian psyche. Whenever the much-venerated people in our democracy, restive Nepali students turned to Nepal in 1970 to tell us that plainsmen consider themselves too civilized to treat people from the hilly areas with respect, Nepal, for its part, looked down upon Indians with the characteristic disdain that hill Nepalis have for the people of the plains. At the level of the nation state, Nepal has a history of invasion and has suffered from high-handed Indians. Nepali think they got a raw deal in the treaty of 1950 when an oligarchy under pressure was tricked into surrendering before a bigger, smarter and more peaceful neighbour.

Sir C.N. Singh was the Indian Ambassador in Kathmandu during the transition from Rana rule to that by the King. A sadist from Bihar, he all but punished Nepal as an extension of his jagir and ended up anguishing a whole generation of Nepali politicians.

There is a strong impression in Nepal that the state has grown talk of the state as a new river to move the Chautara to the Ganges. When Indians try to come some of these rivers, the result is

“They are aged, old and fraying at the seams. It’s always difficult for neighbours of unequal size to be close friends. The best that they can hope for is to remain friendly. At least Koirala is realistic, admitting that he has no high hopes from his Indian “pilgrimage.”

Nepal and India share the same challenge of development. They need to work more closely together than ever before. But they must learn how to back the baggage of the past towards the future. Emission trends led us in the brick of an abyss in the past. Perhaps it is time to be rational and pragmatic towards a change.

It’s never too late to move a new leaf with India. We should try to create history, not let it repeat itself.
Dor Bahadur Bista, Nepal's best-known anthropologist, social scientist and activist, disappeared suddenly and with- out trace a little over five years ago while working on a development project in the remote Khotang district in Jumla. The mystery of Dor Bahadur's disappearance impressed upon many that he had been lured by high-profile villains who opposed his radical solutions raising among the poor. Even his family had given up hope.

Then, three weeks ago, word came that a Nepali police officer, Jomde Bahadur Karki, had come across a body similar to Dor Bahadur Bista. He asked me about my background, about where I lived and other general questions. Then Karki left. He told me he was from Gorkha and had been staying in Jumla for some time. He told me he had no name or go by.

It was not until three weeks later that Karki discovered that Dor Bahadur's family didn't even know whether he was alive or not. When told he had seen Dor Bahadur in Jumla, he said, "They looked exactly the same." "Now that there has been a probable sighting, the family is suddenly hopeful again," says one family member. "Though we haven't seen him, by Karki's account there are chances that Bahadur is among the hundreds of jads in Jumla." Karki's visit was a much-needed boost to his family, but also raised the hope that Dor Bahadur was still alive.

The case of Dor Bahadur Bista is a reminder of how the civil war has affected ordinary people. The family, like many others, is still awaiting closure and justice. The mystery of Dor Bahadur's disappearance continues to haunt the family and the nation.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

You have purported that Mr. Nirish Shrestha was Mr. Nepal in 1997 in the article titled "The Man Who Changed the World" (Dhurba Shrestha, 03/11/97). You have misstated his facts.

Nirish Shrestha is a well-known Nepali writer and journalist. He has contributed significantly to the field of literature and journalism in Nepal. His works have been widely recognized and celebrated.

Shrestha was not Mr. Nepal in 1997. The title of Mr. Nepal was awarded to a different individual that year.

Nirish Shrestha

Nepal

I read your praise of a recent movie about the life of Dor Bahadur Bista. It is a wonderful tribute to his work and dedication to social justice.

Ludwig Dallach

Kathmandu

I have just gone through your number one issue. It is an impressive read. The only issue is that it was only available online. I hope you will consider having a print version available soon.

Narayan Rimal

Kathmandu

In Nepal, people know that there is work to be done, but they also know that it means low status. Anyone who does not have work to do or can ask others to work for them is higher in status than those who work. When asked by people at higher levels, anyone who is educated and thereby in a position to identify with the traditional role of the high caste, would never want to work. A great majority of the educated people do not work themselves but expect that others will do what needs to be done by them. When the bulk of the educated share this perspective, little work actually gets done...

- p. 81, Fears and Development - Oriam Longman (1991)

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... Everybody ends up being critical of everybody else, but does not necessarily feel guilty for not fulfilling his own formal duties. Lack of personal responsibility for work is expressed by the belief that it is the supreme god that finishes all incompletable work in any case.

- p. 81, Fears and Development - Oriam Longman (1991)
PM does not meet me: Deuba

HM Singh, Times, 23 July 2000

Former prime minister Shri Bhuwan Deuba has not met any opposition leader or official lately despite being given the mandate to form a government. He has been busy as the Mamata faction to his party, the Nepali Congress. Deuba has not met any opposition leader or official lately despite being given the mandate to form a government. He has been busy as the Mamata faction to his party, the Nepali Congress.

Deuba said that he had been more than a month since he had handed over the party leadership to the chief minister of the state.

"I have not received a letter from the opposition leaders," he said. "I have not met any opposition leader or official lately despite being given the mandate to form a government."
The 17 July government announcement prohibiting the system of servitude known as kamay was a sudden surprise. No one expected the announcement to free the bonded laborers that began on 1 May, the International Labour Day, coming as a demoralisation to the sect.

Certainly not the powerful bonded class from the western Nepal terai where the plantation owners are entrenched. The rich farmers (known to many innocuously as keeja or kalmi) who relied on their poor of bonded laborers badly feared themselves with... workers in the middle of the farming season. But the demand of bonded kamay who are living and earning their way through the Kathmandu area last week that was the seed of their concern.

This movement affects thousands of kamay concerned in the western districts of Dang, Bahadur, Banke, Kailali and Kanchipur. A 1999 government study estimated that the kamay population in these districts is 25,700, more than 16,600 families. These numbered fewer than those landed by perennial debts. Under this system, the burden of debt repayment shifts automatically to the older son after the death of the head of the family. Non-governmental organisations, however, estimate the number to be close to 200,000. According to the Backward Society Education Initiative (BASE), a grass-root organisation which has been in the forefront in the campaign to free kamay, 98 percent of them are the indulge Tharu people.

Soon after the celebrations, however, the harsh reality of its uncertain future loomed large. Tharu Chaudhary of Kharthepur was evident that his 35-year-old as a kamay was finally over, but before leaving the capital he said, “Now we appeal to the government to provide us education, arrangement for our housing.”

Rehabilitation of kamay is seen as a major challenge. While the Task force for Rehabilitation has been set up, it is not yet clear how the government will act with the same urgency in rehabilitating them.

The lack of rehabilitation of kamay is sure to pose challenges for the government. Nepal’s NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay.

The government has so far not taken any action to rehabilitate the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay. The NGOs say that the government has failed to provide rehabilitation to the kamay.

Emergency relief for free kamayas

Following the government’s announcement declaring the end of the Kamay system (of which bonded labour is a part), the power elite of Kathmandu have made two lists of beneficiaries. The first, from prominent politicians (and certain big NGOs) consists of at least 15,000 people. The second, from the United Marxist Leninist (UML), are those involved in the administration and implementation of the program. The two lists do not overlap. The UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent politicians, while the UML list includes some prominent 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Think globally, act accordingly

The issue isn’t whether Nepal should be a part of the global world; it is how to respond to it.

The risks and benefits which Washington and its Western allies have brought home to many people in developed countries that globalization alone does not benefit everybody. There are some far deeper idiosyncrasies of the global political order that sometimes take us into account, and decisions that governments are making through globalization are less than transparent, and there is a fundamental shift in the political discourse.

There is strong evidence that the free flow of goods and services and ideas has resulted in faster economic growth in developing countries that promotionism has in most places had adverse consequences. Countries like Singapore have based whole development strategies on foreign direct investment which has increased into a global market economy.

Another aspect of globalization, which is far more ambiguous, is the global flow of short-term capital. A significant increase of short-term capital has taken place in East Asia that led to the sever economic crisis in Asia. There is also the globalisation of labour, and the fact that the globalisation of capital has occurred. Wall Street and financial centres have been very strong advocates of opening up the world to capital flows, they have been much less open to a free flow of labour.

While one hopes that it is not a global trend, it is certain that the negative effects of globalization are felt much more strongly in the global south, especially in poor countries.

The issues that have been highlighted by the concerns of many people are not new. There has been much discussion about the implications for Nepal where, basically, the political process is still quite healthy.

It is not possible for Nepal to have a higher standard of living just by exporting its labour, its population increases at a pace much faster than it is being augmented by the country.

Many of the key ingredients of the policy we will understand. For instance, if it is not possible for Nepal to have a higher standard of living just by exporting its labour, its population increases at a pace much faster than it is being augmented by the country. This is a very strong development issue.

How can a Nepal generate the resources for development? Raising taxes is difficult. Raising taxes on small businesses is especially difficult. How can this be done in a way that is consistent with the expectations of the international community and the Nepali public?

There is a strong case for providing a mix of taxes in order to achieve accountability, and people pay to get benefits.

There are some taxation reforms and the government in power has to be sensitive.

The power to privatise

The price of power is in the hands of political leaders. In the case of post-Army II power soothing's, the government can always privatise energy in the country, and a consumer that is financially unstable.

Public companies and private companies are not the same thing. There are many cases where we have been quite successful in privatising.

The question everyone asks is why should power tariffs be increased by 20 percent when losses from leakage and theft contribute to around 50 percent? Can't we just fix the losses? The answer that the overwhelming public demand does not have to pay the cost of the delivered energy. The government should be asked to pay higher rates.

The aim of privatisation is to make the business decide the price.

Private power in any sector in any country is a way of making sure that the people who are responsible for the energy sector are accountable. The idea is fair because they are the ones who pay for it. There are two main reasons for this. It is not the case that the people who are responsible for the energy sector are accountable.

The government can use this as an opportunity to set a precedent for future governments.

We have a Water and Energy Commission, a Ministry of Water Resources, a Department of Electricity Development and Nepal Electricity Authority. We have a need to ensure that the government processes that are responsible for the energy sector are accountable.

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Maybe you can drive my car

If there is one time of the year when thoughts turn to buying a car, it is during the rains. Nepal Times offers a beginner’s guide to buying your first car.

A NEPAL TIMES SURVEY

Suddenly, in Kathmandu’s car market, summer is beautiful. Consumers have discovered the compact car that comes in a bewildering variety of models, price tags and financing options to choose from.

The city’s narrow streets are getting crowded every day. An average ride from Lezimarg to Puton now takes at least 45 minutes at rush hour, but motor cars are selling like hot buns.

Not so long ago dealers of popular brands would have blossoming lines, with new car buyers waiting up to three months for delivery of the model or colour. That is changing, there is a large inventory of stock, and customers are lining cars right off the showroom.

Until recently car buyers would have to wait up to three months for the car of their choice. No longer.

"From September there will be no waiting time for Maruti," says Annu K. Chandhary, Managing Director of the Chaudhary Group, company dealer for Maruti.

Maruti has the highest passenger car sales in the country, with 68 percent of the market share. This is because it pushed the harder, says Chaudhary, "We introduced consumer financing, and we have good after-sales service, even traded-in cars."

The smart cars, some even smaller than the Safa tempo, can weave through Kathmandu’s right traffic, and the narrow alleys without much effort. And, with the capital’s roads in a state of permanent disrepair, their maneuverability is also a plus point for those planning a car.

Dealers not only offer cars but also financing. Otherwise, they can pass you to "least concerns waiting with the cash. Banks are also in the

financing business and offer lower interest rates than finance companies depending on your ability to convince them to pay back the loan.

The list of companies to choose from is getting longer. This is mainly due to the rise in India, and also because of deciding on a car is to know exactly what you are looking for. For example, if you plan to make your first car to be your last, a new model would be one in the higher price category.

Doing without various options can save you a pile. A Zen without AC sells for Rs. 76,000 less than one with AC. Similarly, a standard version of Suzuki comes to Rs. 80,000 more while the same car with optional added cost can sum as much as Rs. 1,032,000.

No car in the market can match the price of a standard Maruti 800 at Rs. 656,000. Maruti’s Omni, which can double both as delivery van and family transport, comes at Rs. 662,000. At those prices the Maruti 800s and the Omnis have almost no competitor to worry about.

The market beyond the Maruti 800 and Omni care is a bit crowded. This is where the Suzuki, the Marit, the Fiat, the Kancil and the Zen are fighting for a share of the pie. The list of options they offer is endless—rear window wiper, power window, music system, matching body and bumper colours, vanity mirrors, grab locks, central locking, power steering, and so on.

Two new brands are entering this segment soon—Daihatsu’s 100cc Cuore and Tata’s Indica 140cc. Cuore is expected in the market within a few months, and the Indica will arrive by the end of the year.

There is a higher level in the small car business. This is where the competition is among Toyota Echo, Nisan’s March and Daihatsu’s Sirion, all Japanese makes.

Grown the size of the market, sales in this category are on the rise. Toyota sells about eight Echoes each month. This car comes in 100ccs and 130ccs models, and costs between Rs. 1.6-1.8 million and Rs. 3.2-3.2 million, depending on the options you choose. Much, which was selling at about Rs. 1.4 million, is now planning to get an "improved" version that could cost slightly higher.

"It is difficult to compete with cheaper Indian cars," says Kailash Rupabhander, Senior Deputy Director at United Traders Syndicate, the Toyota dealer. "But what also counts is after-sales service and road safety."

About 2,000 vehicles are sold every year in the country. That is still a small market to play in, but it is one that is definitely growing. Maruti has already expanded operations with showrooms in Pokhara and Bharatpur. With more brands entering the competition it is only good news to the customers.

COP controversy

Small car imports into Nepal ground to a halt as soon as the government’s new emission standards were announced last year. The Nepali standard is the same as Euro-5. This resulted from the confusion over Type Approval and the Conformity of Production (COP) that importers need to comply with.

COP tests are used to ascertain if the emission levels of cars on the road are within permissible limits. In India the tests are done after 2000 cars are produced or six months after a model is sold in the market. But the COP requirement poses a problem to manufacturers coming out with new models or that produce a smaller number of cars of any particular model.

"We are working hard to get a letter certificate before the body is sold," says Sempampa Kanakari, General Manager, British Asia Pvt. Ltd, the sellers of Fiat Uno. "It is impossible to predict for new models, you cannot discriminate against some in a free market?"

Kanakari’s reference was to a larger government decision to waive COP requirement for Japanese and Korean made cars and allow imports on the basis of manufacturer certification only. When asked to explain the rationale behind this move, Government Spokesman, Secretary at the Ministry of Physical and Environment, said, "The reason for Japanese cars was made after we were assured by the Japanese government that its manufacturers did their own testing and certification. But we’re already working to make the requirement uniform.

Other car sellers are equally angered by the government’s inability to control the quality of petrol. "Euro-5 is good for the country. It will help keep the environment clean," says Lehnnerathe Gouthe, Vice-President of Gouthe Organisation, the Daihatsu dealer. "But if you don’t control what goes into car, it is like asking someone to grow healthy by eating rotten food."

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Fowl play on screen

Chicken Run is a rare hand-crafted plasticine gem, a feat of clay.

Nick Park, the creator of Wallace and Gromit and winner of Oscars for Creature Comforts, The Wrong Trousers and A Close Shave, which opened nearly five years ago and was loosely inspired by Brief Encounter, Chicken Run is a very close par- 

colly of the prison-of-war camp genre, especially The Great Escape. In this case, however, the Pows are Plasblime chicks and the camp is a farm in 

Yorkshire surrounded by barbed wire, policed by vicious guard dogs and run by the ferocious Mrs Tweedy whose jack-booted 

resemblance to Linus Grimes in Bevel Mania is slightly mitigated by her dim husband who looks like Wallace’s black sheep brother. In contrast to the not dissimilar Babe, there are no 

decent humans here. The farm’s escape officer is Ginger and the movie begins with a lively montage of ingenious escape attempts. Between 

each of them Ginger is thrown into the coal-tin cooler where, like Steve McQueen in The Great Escape, she becomes a baseball. The movie takes on a 

darker shade when a horn is exe- 

cuted by Mrs Tweedy for failing to lay eggs (we see the shadow of the falling egg) and it threat- 

ens to become positively black when the Tweedles decide to 

switch from producing eggs to manufacturing chicken pies. Thus turning the farm into an extermination camp.

But Park and his associates know that white owls can be tragic, here only by comic. So they endeavour to make us care about their poultry, but avoid easy patons and seek to 

keep sentimentality at bay.

This isn’t an allegory in the tradi- 

tion of The Parliament of Owls or Animal Farm, and there are no spitting, heart-rending songs in the Disney manner. The only 

musical interlude is a jive ses- 

sion the farm hero with Rocky, a flying 

Rhode Island rooster from the States (Met Gibson) who has 

escaped from a circus and hand- 

ed in the camp. Rocky provides a ball for Fozzie, the upar 

cock-of-the-walk nostalgia obsessed with his days in the 

RAF, and some love interest for 

Ginger.

More important, Ginger gets his 

run to start a flying school for a 

mass escape by air. This hilar- 

iously disastrous enterprise is 

observed by a pair of black-mar 

keter rats who mock the hand- 

antics with lines such as ‘Birds of a feather fly together’ and ‘Poultry in motion. In fact, 

except for relieving from refer- 

cences to getting laid, there is not a single chicken joke or pun that 
goes unused, and I now even 

feel bad about writing ‘e.g.’. 

Flying the coop using your own 

vengers would have been the 

inspirational way out, but the 

Tweedle people wisely reject it. Instead they opt for a flying 

machine of the sort built in 

Caldle and run up by the strand- 

eds survivors in Flight of the 

Phoenix. This gives Park the 

d chance to create another acros- 

tic combination of a Heath- 

Robinson or Roland Emmett 

sort. Stately Luf Luf would have 

had trouble containing primitives who could transform a string of 

sky lights into a frippery and 

use the ratchets of a deck-chair 

to create a take-off ramp. 

Naturelly Mac, the farm’s resi- 

dent engineer, is, like Star Trek’s 

Scotty, from north of the border. 

The film flaps slightly from time to time, but for most of the way it is 

prodigally and prodigiously inventive, both visually and vir- 

tually. We know that every sec- 

ond of the film involves hours of painstaking physical work mov- 

ing and adjusting the figures and 

sets. But even if you didn’t know about the tedious process of 

clay animation, you would recog- 

nize the virtuosity and sense 

of something lively hand-crafted 

in Chicken Run. 

The Sur Sudeha team (l to r), Bijay, Surendra and Prey 

Mermaid of Copenhagen. 

The best way to 

travel
be-trotting musical ambassadors

Nepal’s best-known musical group has popularised Nepali folk and semi-classical music among international audiences. But within Nepal, the band is coming in for criticism.

SAILI SUREDI

The Nepali music band Sur Sudha recently returned home after completing a 40-day tour of the UK, France and Germany during which they performed a total of 25 charity and professional concerts.

The three-man group kicked off their last tour at London’s Millennium Dome in early June. “It was splendid. We enjoyed being among the few Nepalis spreading news about Nepal throughout the world,” said Suwarna Shrestha, a member of the band. After London, they moved on to France, where the 240 CD albums they were carrying got sold out. They waited for over two CDs from back home, but explained Sudhakar, who also doubles as the manager. “Nepal’s music department had some weird traces not to allow that.”

Sur Sudha is perhaps the only Nepali band whose albums can be found in the world’s music section of music stores in Hong Kong, Singapore and Europe. Their specialty is their unique blending of classical notes with traditional Nepali folk tunes.

The group’s frequent international tours have popularised Nepali folk and semi-classical music among international audiences. But back home, the band is coming in for the kind of flak directed at anyone who becomes too popular too fast.

Purin says Sur Sudha plays weak classical compositions and improvised folk music, are not original and that lining the tour is an insult to both classical music and folk. The band has also been accused of selling out by performing at media events for big companies.

Sur Sudha’s Prym Rama Aunuri doesn’t seem all that worried by such criticism. “This is exactly where they are wrong. We are careful hands. We combine classical and folk but that doesn’t mean we are exploiting the genuineness of classical music,” says the musician who is undoubtedly Nepal’s most famous flautist.

Asked about their most memorable experience since they came together in 1983, the shy and ever-smiling singer Biju Yadav says it is the appreciation of international audiences. “Every music attracts everyone. It reaches out to everyone.”

The trio make a formidable combination. The most senior of them is Pram, whose sounds have been heard over Radio Nepal for decades. He has had experience working with orchestral ensembles in Bombay, and has also been through a 10-year stint under Indira flute legend Pandit Hari Prasad Chaurasia.

With nine years in Radio Nepal and ten years at the Regional Nepal Academy, he is a professional known for his breath-defying solos. “There was always an urge to be on my own. After we formed this band and started playing, we were like fine birds. Appreciation from many different people from many parts of the world has inspired me most,” says Pram.

Ritesh has been playing the sitar since he was 16. He trained under Nepali sitar maestro Manmohan Pradhan and Mara Bir Singh Tuladhar. “I’m in love with the sitar,” he says, a fact that anyone can see when he is in concert. He feels the whole atmosphere with his hands and is at home with the rhythmic build up of the music, the audience can’t help but sway along. Suwarna is the percussionist. On the tabla stage, right, he heaved under Reju Agrawal and Jom Stark Uphadhyayo in his early days. He finally turned professional after training under Pandit Chhathra of India. “Music is my soul. It has been my best companion, my enlightenment and happiness,” he says. “While playing the tabla I can actually experience the building up of energy in my fingers. This instrument is the pulse of our soul.”

Sur Sudha was the first Nepali group to record a CD album in Nepal. Since their debut with “Images of Nepal”, they have been 11 more CDs. By now they have played in every continent (except Antarctica), but it is in Germany and France where they have travelled the most.

They have also raised a fair bit of money for charity from their concerns. For instance, the proceeds of the European tour will go for the welfare of Nepali children. What that amount is, however, will be known only after the European organiser sends the money over.

The group has recently begun a music school called the Sur Sudha Music Academy to train the younger generation. Their dream, as they put it, is that everyone in this country understand and feel the richness of our culture and heritage through music.”

It is perhaps in keeping with their ideals that Sur Sudha has been bringing well known foreign artists to an increasingly appreciative Kathmandu audience. The Hari Prasad Chaurasia-Zaheer Hussain performance a couple of years ago (the which Sur Sudha was the opening act) was a huge success. Now they are working to organise a concert by famed Pakistan qawwal singer Ghulam Ali in late August.
Nepal goes online

Anything with a total international value approaching US$ 400 billion in a global economy is bound to have an impact even in the remotest corners of the world.

In the last few years, the distribution, marketing, sale and delivery of goods and services by electronic means have grown exponentially with far-reaching impact on the economy.

And even now, e-markets have jumped into the print media. Even in India's full-page newspaper ads by Internet start-ups have become a regular feature and there have grown 15 million dollars in the first four months of this year alone.

The growth in the IT sector shows no signs of abating; it is estimated that the value of e-commerce will go to US$ 35 billion by 2002. By the year 2005, US$ 50 percent of the world economy will be traded online.

The Nepali economy may not be able to take full advantage of this growth for some time, but a beginning has already been made in the tourism and information service industries. Holidays and ticket booking through e-mail exchanges are already quite common, although the industry has not yet graduated to online booking, confirmation and full payment.

The information service companies deliver their "virtual" goods and services, as Internet. Translations, software development, and electronic distribution are Nepalese companies active in.

Despite the international e-currency is being used by Nepali companies to have an Internet presence. Many brick-and-mortar Nepali companies now have a home page although must have begun to trade online.

Among those that do, Pad.com and Bhaktipal.com are now online two months ago and specials in gifts that the Nepali diaspora can send to people back home. They are already averaging one order a day, and small page views are up to 30,000.

"We've had to change many times that we used to sell traditionally. For example, we have added flowers and paintings. And we plan to go into jewelry," says Lani Talauli who took the Internet part of the family business.

NepaliOnline.com is another web site that calls you back to confirm an online booking. Cyberspace.com is also getting operational soon. For the payment mechanism is still traditional with sites: you pay when you receive the goods in hard cash.

Vertical portals are also few. The handcrafts web site (www.nepalhandicraft.com) set up its web site, providing links to its members. Nepal Tourism Board (www.nepaltourism.com) has also tried to create a tourist portal, but have so far been more service-oriented than electronic distribution of their print-based brochures.

The Trade Promotion Centre (www.pcr.gov.np) has tried to bring many by integrating database in its web site. "There are possibilities," says Ladan Lal Amiya, president of Chambers of Nepal (CANN). "The Nepali information technology sector is at par with its counterparts in developed countries, and thus we have a level playing field."

"Information services sector is now also in a position to facilitate electronic commerce, as the infrastructure is already present. But, there are still many problems. Government regulations for both the Business to Consumer (B2C) and B2B e-commerce are not uniform. Electronic transactions are not recognised, banks do not accept credit cards, and the average Nepali does not have a credit card or go to the corner shop to find the price."

In the B2B arena, it is the Nepali IT companies that are farther ahead. But they have their own set of problems. Export regulations that require proof of export is currently handled. Banks' thoughts of introducing Internet banking in Nepal, as an export-oriented IT company, says: "We have traditional payment systems, we use traditional banking channels, but we only use the Internet for export of goods, which is not currently how they should handle it."

Contest2win

Contest2win Nepal (nepal.c2w.com) defines itself as a "one stop contest shop which offers online contests to its registered members." What this means is that anyone with Internet access and the time to spare can visit this site, register to acquire a user ID, and then take part in any contest available on the site.

It is called one stop because all contests can be played from one site and it contains all the necessary information. Contest2win India, the parent venture of C2W Nepal, claims to be the first to offer this service in the world. Nepal is one of the first to plan to go global. The site offers a platform to advertisers to promote their products or services by linking them with a contest. In return they are guaranteed a response to the ads from the players participating in them.

"Earlier concepts of promotional contests in traditional media like newspapers, television and radio had certain in-built limitations. One could not be certain about a response from the audience after filling out forms and mailing them. Moreover, since the actual event required a participant's physical presence the opportunities were narrowed for a potential contestant."

On C2W, the contests are available for periods ranging from a week to a month or more. This allows a longer shelf life, making it convenient for players and more effective for promoters.

The ketchup the world loves. Now in Nepal.

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GENERAL BEATS TAX EVADERS

With a vast parallel economy and ramshackle taxation system, tax evasion in Pakistan has begun to resemble a national pastime. Now the government is getting tough.

YOUSEF RASOF

I have always been a great admirer of the late P. M. Z. Iftikhar, the former Finance Minister, who had a great passion for tax evasion. He used to say that tax evasion is a way of life in Pakistan and that it is not something to be ashamed of. His motto was “If you can’t beat them, join them.”

As the Finance Advisor to the government, I believe that tax evasion is a serious problem that needs to be addressed. The government has launched a campaign to crackdown on tax evasion and has made some significant progress. The tax revenue has increased by 10% in the last fiscal year and the number of tax evaders has decreased by 7%.

However, there is still a long way to go. The tax evasion problem in Pakistan is deep-rooted and it will take time to root it out. The government needs to be steadfast in its efforts and not allow any room for complacency.

Leadership

The government is taking steps to address the issue of tax evasion. It has introduced new measures such as the introduction of a tax Amnesty Scheme and the electronic filing of tax returns. These steps are a step in the right direction. However, more needs to be done.

We need to educate the public about the importance of paying taxes and the benefits of a strong and stable economy. The government needs to make it easier for people to pay their taxes and make the tax system more transparent.

We need to ensure that the tax system is fair and that everyone is treated equally. The government needs to ensure that the tax laws are enforced and that those who evade taxes are held accountable.

Leadership plays a crucial role in this process. We need leaders who are committed to a strong and stable economy and who are willing to do what it takes to achieve this goal.

The government has made a good start, but there is still much work to be done. We must continue to work together to ensure that our country has a strong and vibrant economy for the benefit of all its citizens.

Technology

By Mike Savio

The Bridgestone Technology that drives the world

With the rapid increase in population and economic growth, there is a need for better infrastructure and transportation systems. The government has introduced the Metro Rail project to address this need.

The Metro Rail project is a 200-km rapid transit system that will connect the major cities of the country. The project is expected to be completed in 2024 and it will provide a faster and more efficient means of transportation to the people of the country.

The project is being financed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank. The project is expected to create 20,000 jobs during its construction phase and 50,000 jobs during its operation phase.

The project is important for the development of the country and it will help to reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality, and provide economic benefits to the region.

In conclusion, the government is making efforts to address the issue of tax evasion and to improve the country’s economic situation. We need to continue to work together to ensure that our country has a strong and vibrant economy for the benefit of all its citizens.
Human genome, inhuman society

Genetic engineering is very close to being able to clone human beings. This raises numerous philosophical, moral, theological, judicious and, political questions.

QUITO - The announcement by Dr. J. Craig Venter, head of the Human Genome Project, that the human genetic code had been cracked shows that genetic engineering and biotechnology are very close to being able to clone human beings.

This raises numerous philosophical, moral, theological, judicious and political questions regarding the sanctity of human life at the margin of what was considered the normal reproductive process. Once the possibility of cloning mammals was proved a few years ago, the Royal Society in Edinburgh, Scotland, successfully cloned a sheep named Dolly, and testified with numerous subsequent experiments, man, human was confronted with the new scientific reality of holding the instruction manual for building a human being, as Dr. Collins said in December 1998.

This logically opened up discussion of the right of such human beings to be unique and myriad other issues regarding human uniqueness. Western cultural values individually particular and highly individualized rights to rights to maintain. This is the domain of bioethics, a notoriety ranging the moral concern tied by technological advances of modern genetic engineering, which have come to a long way.

On 9 December 1998, the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights, which among other things sought to reproduce the sanctity of human beings.

However, it couldn’t prevent South Korean scientists directed by Dr. Lee Boyan from cloning a human embryo by inserting the genetic material of a cell into the egg of a donor, a process that under the laws of the United States would be considered illegal.

There is no doubt that the medicine of the 21st century will be biomolecular. Human disease and death will be preventable through genetic means because it is the genes that define and characterize each individual of the species. They contain all the information about the operation of the body and mind and "drive" individuals with given activities and deficits that multiplicatively theorized in genetics, diseases, and breakdowns of physical and mental health as a result of the gene for the code. But the social makes reference to the activities in genetic engineering are great because they could lead to some that are forbidden and divided by society, notably cloning, and so on.

As the case today and has been, but the result of a qualitative change in the relatively near future there will be two classes of human genetic, advanced, and normal.

Enhanced genes will give people enormous physical and mental advantages, similar to men with artificial limb and sight than others. But, economic forces will lead those enhanced genes on the market, because they have to be produced in a laboratory at considerable cost.

The result will be a polarized society in which governments, the economy, finance, business management, communications of the military and all the other positions of social domination will be controlled by those of the genetically enhanced individuals whose genetic defects, unscientifically inherited will work at low productivity, low-wage jobs. It is the future.

(0.50) (Kalyani Majumdar has been at the Academy from 1999-1999.)

Endangered vultures

There are no advertising campaigns in the international press, and no attractive pictures with donation forms on websites. Yet Britain’s Endangered Wildlife Trust demanded that all “one of the most precious and genetically endangered groups of animals” be saved. They are vultures. In particular, the Cape Vulture of southern Africa, which is fed poisoned carcasses, entangled in electric pylons and shot for sport.

Peter Bancroft, the author of Jeans, knows very well what it’s like to be on behalf of his animals. No one feels really. Earlier this year, he launched a campaign to save the shark. To raise support for this threatened species, he had to revive it. Overnight, the peculiar shark changed from an aggressive predator to a nuisance. If you dare to bite, it’s the hope that someone will care. We don’t care much about vultures for one simple reason. We can’t make them seem to be like us. They don’t talk like it’s claimed dolphins do. You cannot adopt one, like you can a white. Where the shark, we are only interested in saving animals of two cranial groups become homo sapiens. If an animal is merely an animal, we are not interested in it at all.

After Elan, monkey cubby battle

Like Elan, the six-year-old Cuban baby finally sent home from the United States after two years with Elan in her home, Cookie’s lawn, adoptive family want to hang on to their baby. Like Elan, Cookie, also six, eats ice cream, watches television and sees her parents as a matter of affection.

But Elan is a Cappadocian donkey, or rara diana monkey. “So what if Cookie is a monkey,” said Fernandetti, of Manhattan Beach, New York. “She is part of our family. They want to take the baby from the mother. But she will be without us, and we will die when she leaves.”

The state’s department of environmental conservation says that Cookie is a member of an endangered species, and must go to the zoo.

The couple bought the monkey from a pet shop for $4,500 - neither they nor the dealer was aware of Cookie’s rarity. By Sydney McDiarmid, chairman of the International Primatological Protection Society, “The state is trying to find Cookie a home, but they love the animal, but they are misguided. If I were that monkey, I would want to join the other monkeys in Delaware.”

Skilled visas for Britain

BRITISH Home Office ministers are studying a Canadian scheme which would enable more economic migrants with professional and specialist skills to work in Britain as part of a possible state-run immigration programme.

The immigration minister, Barbara Roche, said the government believed it was time to start a debate on finding ways to "negotiate deals to migrate to Britain and cap departmental intake".

It is thought that ministers are more inclined to an extension of the current overseas workers scheme which enables some skilled workers in key occupations in Britain to bring in a major relaxation of the 1971 Immigration Act which effectively bars primary immigration.

The Home Office is believed to be looking at a limited version of the Canadian scheme under which 200,000 migrants will enter Canada this year.

The Canadian scheme enables professionals and skilled workers to get a permanent resident visa in Canada. If they do not have a job offer from a prospective employer, a skilled or professional migrant has to have a minimum of 70 points based on occupation, education and training, language, knowledge of English and French. For example, those who are between 21 and 44 get 25 points, but under 18 or over 44 get 0 points. The minimum degree or diploma is 16 points, a validated job offer 10 points, personal suitability based on an interview up to 30 points, for a relative in Canada and so on. (Observer)

Fiji may pay price for coup

Ever since George Speight, a failed businessman turned populist demagogue, launched an armed coup against the elected, Indian-led government in May, racial violence has swept Fiji. Fiji’s weak and negotiated on the basis of the existing hostage stage, the appointment of a new president, and the recent death of the relatively inexperience cabinet has done little to reduce tensions.

With the country split politically by 56 per cent between Indian Fijians and Indians, close cooperation between the two groups would seem to be necessary and unattainable. Fiji’s hard-won 1997 multiracial constitution did introduce some form of proportional representation.

But that document, along with credible democratic debate, rule and goodwill, has been willfully destroyed by Speight’s and his supporters’ rampant and allegations of racial dominance and the unification, unwise complicity of the tribal chiefs and the military.

Ratu Jeerat Ratubou, Fiji’s new president, describes himself as dedicated to promoting national unity and ensuring moderation, Indian identity, consultation and compassion for all in our country. Fiji’s new president has requested the Cabinet to broaden, he has urged the position jointly held by the deployed Indian Commander, Games, the loss to such ambitions.

Fiji is rich in resources, aid and resources, the economic big green dollars. Australia and New Zealand, are appalled that Speight’s constitutional development has been officially regarded, have finally fulfilled their threats to impose trade, aid, sporting and diplomatic sanctions. The Commonwealth, and other aid donors like the EU, may have no option but to follow suit.

(The Guardian)
The greatest building of them all

Vijaysi and Kithianas are inevitably told that the great Rana palaces that rise like huge wedding cakes above the lower confections of the city, were designed by French or British architects. Certainly they emulate the grand classical styles of Europe and are completely unlike the traditional Newari architecture of the Kathmandu valley. What comes as a surprise is to discover that the French and British architects were Nepalese, foremost among them the amazing brothers Ramkumars and Kirtimohan. Nothing, who was responsible for almost every palace of consequence in the valley. How they could have turned to industry so successfully in the foreign style in the relatively primitive and modestly executed palace they raised, is a testament to their artisanal and artistic skills, which have been passed down through the generations.

It is the 1930s, and the time of the first Rana prime minister, Jung Bahadur Rana, who proclaimed himself king of Nepal in 1896. The Rana dynasty was in the process of building Rana Palaces in Kathmandu. The most significant was the Rana Bhawan, which was built in the 1930s and was the residence of Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana.

The Rana dynasty was put in power in the late 19th century by King Pratap Shah, who was overthrown by Jung Bahadur Rana in 1846. Jung Bahadur Rana was the first to establish a royal dynasty in Nepal, which lasted until the 1951 coup d'état.

The Rana dynasty was known for its opulent lifestyle and for building grand palaces. The most famous of these palaces was the Rana Bhawan, which was built in the 1930s and was the residence of Prime Minister Jung Bahadur Rana. The palace was designed by the French architect Charles Waterton, who was also responsible for the Rana Bhawan in Kathmandu.

Understanding the Kiratans

Politics of Culture: A Study of Three Kirata Communities in the Eastern Himalayas

Prunty Bhati

Orient Longman, Hyderabad,
1999
950 256

Precisely which groups represent the Kirat is still open to debate. Kirat refers to the Kirata, a people who are known for their prowess in war and for their culture, which is a blend of both traditional and modern elements. Kirats have been known to have a strong sense of identity and are proud of their cultural heritage.

The Kiratas are a study of a number of Kirata communities in the Eastern Himalayas, which include the Kirata, the Luti, and the Tirtha. The communities are divided into two groups: the Kirata tribal community and the Kirata non-tribal community. The Kirata tribal community includes the Kirata, Luti, and Tirtha groups, while the Kirata non-tribal community includes the Kirata, Luti, and Tirtha groups.

In the 19th century, the Kirata was one of the largest communities in the Eastern Himalayas, and their numbers were estimated to be around 50,000. Today, the Kiratas are mainly found in the districts of Pithoragarh, Bageshwar, and Nainital in the northern part of Uttar Pradesh, India.

The Kirata are known for their agricultural practices and traditional knowledge of the Himalayan ecosystem. They are also known for their unique cultural traditions, such as the Kirata festival, which is celebrated annually in the month of Bhaishajya. The festival is a significant event for the Kirata community and is celebrated with great enthusiasm and joy.

The Kirata language is a Dravidian language spoken by the Kirata community. It is closely related to the Tamil language and is written in the Tamil script.

The Kiratas are an ancient community and their history dates back to the prehistoric period. They are known to have lived in the Himalayan region for thousands of years and have adapted to the harsh and challenging environment of the region.

The Kirata community has a rich cultural heritage, which includes music, dance, and traditional arts and crafts. They are known for their traditional dances, such as the Kirata dance, which is performed on special occasions. They also have a strong tradition of storytelling, which is passed down from generation to generation.

The Kirata community is known for their strong sense of community and their commitment to preserving their cultural heritage. They have a strong community structure and are known for their hospitality and warm welcome to visitors.

The Kiratas also have a strong commitment to environmental conservation and are known for their sustainable agricultural practices. They have adapted to the harsh environment of the Himalayas and have developed unique agricultural practices that are well suited to the region.

In recent years, the Kirata community has been facing challenges due to the rapid pace of modernization and urbanization. They are facing threats to their traditional way of life, which is linked to their cultural heritage and identity.

The Kirata community is facing challenges related to their identity and cultural heritage, which are also threatened by the rapid pace of modernization and urbanization. The Kirata community is working to preserve their identity and cultural heritage, which are important for their sense of community and their well-being.
Nepal U-17 bowled out

Alok Tumbahangpae

Nepal under-17 cricket team has been bowled out of the ICC Under-17 Asia Cup that was held in Pakistan last week.

In the first game played between Kuwait and Nepal in Kuwait, Nepal lost by 7 wickets, Nepal went in to lose after winning the toss. But they were all out in 28.3 overs, having scored a total of 79 runs, which Kuwait easily bowled in 28.3 overs, losing only three wickets. The second game proved harder for the depleted Nepal team. Winning the toss again, the Nepal team wisely decided to field first. The opposing team from Bahrain instantly lost 7 wickets for 32 runs in 19 overs. No team ever does. However, one Adil Ali Khattak was able to score more than 5 runs.

Ghouri was run out after scoring a much-needed 15 runs. Bahrain lost all wickets for a meager 22 runs in 24.4 overs. Mustafizul and Rohinakumar Sharma held off the Bahrain bowling until Pakistan was bowled out. Then Peer Chaudhry joined Sharma and carried the team to an easy victory of 44 for 1 in 10.1 overs.

The third game with Bangladesh proved to be a humiliation for the depleted Nepal. Bangladesh Mohammad Ashraf poured too much to be bowled out and continued pushing ahead although the Nepalis used everything in their power. Ashraf was finally run out after scoring an incredible 192 runs in 131 balls. Bangladesh ended the game with almost unanswerable total of 225 runs with only four wickets lost. Nepal bowled out 226 but Nepal didn’t make a good run. They lost both openers Munir Shohada and Shaimak Younis within the 126th run. At the last 20 overs Nepal had already lost 4 wickets with only 44 runs to their credit. At the end the Nepal team was on 82 runs.

In the second game between Kuwait and Nepal, Nepal won by 7 wickets. Nepal got 49 runs in 10.1 overs.

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No to weapons at Olympics

Sydney - Security guards flexing foreign athletes at the Sydney Olympics will not be allowed to carry guns, Australian officials insisted Thursday.

"At a matter of policy we won’t allow foreign security forces to bring arms into Australia, we have in this country very sophisticated law enforcement agencies. We can handle this ourselves," Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said.

The policy statement followed claims by the Israeli news agency that in May the Australian authorities had agreed to turn a blind eye to arms carried by Israeli security agents guarding the Jewish state’s Olympic team.

There are believed to be 12 countries that have asked for a waiver so that they can bring guns along to protect their athletes.

The ban was announced by New South Wales Police Commissioner Peter Ryan, the officer directly responsible for security at the event, now just two months away.

"The responsibility for the protection of high-profile Olympic visitors and teams rests with the New South Wales Police Service," Ryan said, noting that anti-terrorist week with representatives from 32 nations, security protocols would be bedded out. (rpa)

Afghan footballers play in long pants

Football has become complicated under the Taliban: While they are known to be fierce adversaries in many fields, the football field Afghans tend to play very cautiously—they could almost stay safely.

Afghan football is still in its infancy. During the last 20 years of jihad against the Soviet Army, youngsters were shown how to use Kalashnikovs rather than the official trap. However, a football match is an annoyance, fans in Kandahar—only male fans—winked to the football field.

Crying, whistling and singing are considered music and are therefore forbidden to all players who are encouraged to longtime heights with cafés of "Alah-alaah"—loud is expected by Islamic law. Shirts are also required players to be polite guards against local people protesting about recent isn’t increases, as landlooms cash in on the anticipated $200,000 outlooks and the daily for the Games, plans to use the internet to help organise an unofficial demonstration during the opening ceremony on 13 September.

Four days before that, ambiguous "B-17" demonstrations against a World Economic Forum meeting in Melbourne will provide a test for many anti-capitalist activists—and for the Australian police.

Meanwhile, activist sites are urging protesters to target many of the Olympic sponsors, including Coca-Cola, McDonald’s, Unilever and IBM. And it was reported last week that hackers also plan to sabotage the official Olympic website, which has three servers in the US and one in Australia.

"The International Olympic Committee is the first stage of corporate evolution," said an activist. "They don’t produce anything. They exploit local resources to further their own ends. They ignore the needs of the global citizen and they use the corporate media to distort their ends. (rpa)

Four records broken

Four national athletics records were broken in the two-day National Open Athletic Tournament held 15-16 July in the Dasharath Rangathal in Kathmandu. There were 413 participants from all over the country in a total of 24 events organized by the Nepal Athletic Association. The main objective was to select the best athletes for the upcoming Asian Athletics Championships to be held in Jakarta and more importantly for the Sydney Olympics due to start in September.

Mark Situn’s 10-year-old national record of 4 min 7.70 sec in the men’s junior 1500 m race was broken by Roshan Shrestha who showed 1.32 sec off the previous timing. Santosh, Ram Krishna Chaulagain of Mahendra Police Club (MPC) set a new national record of 10.55 sec in the men’s 100 m dash. A new record was also established in the men’s 400 m run by Bishnu Chaudhry with a lap of 15.20 m. Meanwhile, in the women’s events, Samji Devi Shrestha narrowly beat the national women’s junior 100 m race record of 12.83 sec by 0.01 sec.

Cyber-protests target Olympics

Sydney - A diverse series of protests co-ordinated over the Internet to disrupt the opening of the Olympics in Sydney this September is saying the games are an embodiment of the excesses of global capitalism. Internet activists are planning on the tactics of the technique developed during the protests against the World Trade Organisation in Seattle last year and against the World Bank in Washington in April.

The Sydney Alternative Media Centre, which is being launched this week, is the latest radical Australian website modelled on those used to plan and publicise the protests in Seattle and Washington.

The parliament of New South Wales has passed a bill of temporary laws to attempt to keep tight control of this Olympic stadiums. But the control of cyberspace may prove more difficult.

Groups including aboriginals, anarchists and local people protesting about recent isn’t increases, as landlooms cash in on the anticipated $200,000 outlooks and the daily for the Games, plans to use the internet to help organise an unofficial demonstration during the opening ceremony on 13 September.

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Four districts in Maoist hands

SUDHIR SHARMA

As the police withdrew from vulnerable forward bases, the Maoists are moving in to fill the vacuum in four western districts - Rolpa, Rukum, Jajarkot and Salyan.

The police strategy now is to concentrate their forces in these areas, police formalities, Rukum, for instance, used to have 36 police stations, now the number is down to six. Jajarkot has been reduced to six from the earlier 15, and in Rolpa the number is down to eight from 30. It is said to be the police who in the district are now run by the police.

The Maoists move through villages in broad daylight. They say to the police force to go into the village only when a village has asked for help. During such visits they go by helicopter and come back as soon as their work is over,” says Parunam Aryal, the chief district officer (CDO) of Rolpa.

Electoral representatives who were provided security by the police have been killed. The local elections have begun and some of the elections have here, in the district of Jajarkot, have been held. The police have been provided security for the elections in the district of Rolpa and the Maoists have been providing security for the elections in the district of Salyan. The police have been killed in the district of Jajarkot.

The acronym VPC is now widely used as VDC in the district of Rolpa. The VPCs are implementing the Maoist agenda such as the introduction of a revolutionized agrarian system, setting up cooperatives, improving health and the production of alcohol, formalizing new marriage acts, and mobilizing the community in agriculture, and in building roads, bridges and water supply systems.

General Secretary of CPN (Maoist) Comrade Prachanda says the four districts will be the “base areas” of the group’s activities. According to the Maoists, in a base area, the government withdraws, and a new people-oriented authority takes its place.

Talking to local villagers, it becomes clear that police executives are responsible for pushing people into the Maoist fold. “The government has forced us to become Maoists,” said Bidish Subba of Khira, a Maoist in Rolpa, whose house was burned down by the police.

Even the police now admit that last year’s offensive against the Maoists, codenamed “Kila Suru Rato”, could only hold back the Maoists. Ultimately, the brutality of the operation backfired on the police since it antagonized the people’s empathy for the Maoists.

Today, the police are on the defensive. They have been more than 800 ambushes on police patrols, and one deputy superintendent of police, six inspectors, and more than 200 policemen have been killed. Some 400 guns have also been lost to the Maoists.

Deputy Inspector General of Police Rajendra Bahadur Singh, the police commander for the mid-western development region, complains that the police lack both weapons and numbers. The police have had to make do with only 300 303 rifles, and it is only recently that the army has begun providing them with automatic weapons.

The police are not trained in guerrilla warfare and commando tactics. The existing special force of 250 police person is too small to fight the Maoists effectively. Since 17 July, the army has been conducting a 45-day training for 100 policemen in counter-insurgency and jungle warfare. But police officials concede that this is too little too late.

(Adapted from a longer article that appeared in the Nepali Khaskhabar.)

Police chief

Interview with DIG Rajaendra Bahadur Singh

Q. It is a sign of weakness that many police posts have been removed from Maoist-affected areas?

A. It is not true. The situation is different. Earlier, we could afford only ten policemen to a post, but now police posts have been set up in places where they are likely to be more effective. It is like playing chess. If tomorrow the need arise, the post will be moved to another place.

Q. Nowaday Maoists have become very aggressive. Does this mean they have become stronger?

A. There are reports that they have become powerful in areas where the police posts have been removed. But their attacking old-fashioned tactics do not mean they have become stronger.

Q. It is said that the Maoists are now ready to announce their cease-fire?

A. I don’t know what ‘base area’ means. Does establishing a base area mean frightening and threatening unarmed, innocent villagers, and pronouncing death sentences on them?

Moabadi Sena

SUDHIR SHARMA and SHAHAD K.C.

We went looking for the Nepali People’s Army in the forests, a five-hour walk from Khalinga, and we met up with them, the Commander agreed to talk to us informally and as long as he was not named.

“We do not attack anyone unnecessarily just because that person is a police officer. Action is taken against keeping in mind his performance in the past,” he said. The Commander said his group had now decided to scale down the killings and concentrate on development work.

There are three types of Maoist fighters: the People’s Army soldiers, the security forces and the militia. The soldiers wear army-type camouflage uniforms, while the security forces wear the Maoist police uniform in olive green.

The Maoist fighting force has grown in strength from 200 Ästafet to 1,500 today. They are allowed a month’s leave every year. That is why they meet up with families and friends. Some of them even take the overnight bus to spend time in Kathmandu.

The Maoists seem to make the most of everything. They ended up interviewing us, the interviewers. They wanted to know what we thought of the People’s War. If we viewed it as politics or terrorism. While taking leave, the commander shadowed friends and family and said in the soft voice “I don’t know when I will die. So maybe we will not meet again. But don’t worry, our party will now meet with journalists regularly.”

Army road

The army has now moved into areas known as Maoist-affected. At first villagers would run away from them, but now they view the army as their friend. The soldiers roam the villages, unarmed and unarmed. Sometimes the army says its mission is not to fight Maoists but to build a road. The army has been building the Salyan-Maski road for the last 14 months and the Maoists have not hindered their work.

The army is using incentives to win the hearts of local people. Rather than branched weapons, it has provided medicines, water pipes, and roofs for schools. That is why the people trust them more than the police.

The army says it is because of police action that villagers sympathize with the Maoists. Villages with army camps are less affected by police brutality.

“We were three kilometres away when the Khira incident happened. The police would probably not have dared to carry out the attack if we had been nearer,” said Lieutenant Colonel Jig Bahadur Gurung, the commanding officer.
After the Rato Machhandranath toppled over in Patan, a round of recriminations begins over whether it was an accident or faulty construction.

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Chariot of Fire

SUJATA TULADHAR

T h e last day of its two-month journey around Patan, the Rato Machhandranath chariot had only another 20 metres to go. Unfortunately, one of the gale ropes caught itself on an overhead transformer near to Nepal General Bank at Jawaharlal and toppled the chariot over.

No one was hurt, but the accident led to the speculation of malignancy for the country, and the(preguizations to look for ways to put the chariot right again.

Rato Machhandranath, or Basantapur, is worshiped as the god of harvest and it is believed that the crop can lead to rains like droughts or destruction of crops. A Rato Machhandranath priest, or patuji, Raju Rajancharya, is firmly in the perpetrator camp. He says: "It is only when a well-built chariot collapses that the consequences are terrible. This time everybody knows that the chariot was not strong enough." Rajancharya blames the Guhri Samahara for low-quality timber. "The wood was not good enough and the creak (which makes a sound as ropes for binding) was not holding the frames tightly. Inside the chariot, it was so congested that it felt like I was in a jail."

An investigation team has concluded that it was indeed an accident. Lalitpur District Branch Office, Tan Baha, says a knot on one of the ropes called 'jungle' attached to the pinnacle of the chariot got entangled on a transformer pole. Since this rope was attached to the back of the chariot, the people pulling the chariot from the front felt it and noticed, and juked the chariot off its movements.

Yagya Ratna Shrestha, another para of the Rato Machhandranath said: "This is not the first time the Rato Machhandranath chariot has collapsed. But previously, the journey used to be safe and sound at least up to Sandhabhak. This time, the chariot started tilting from the very initial stage of the journey, from Pakchowk itself. This problem was taken care of with minor repairs when the chariot rested at Thadi Tol for two months before continuing the journey to Jawaharlal Chowk. Pandit K.C., the head of Lalitpur District Branch Office says: "I am more satisfied with the material we provided this year than ever before. The collapse could be due to some technical problem but definitely not because of the material."

Laxmi Maya Maharjan, member of Ward No. 3, added: "People are making a mountain out of nothing. It was an unfortunate accident. We are getting into a bigger mess. More damage is being done to the chariot so that it can be completed as soon as possible."

The Guthi Samahara spent an estimated Rs 1.5-2 million this year to build the 25-tonne chariot. Myths apart, the collapse of the chariot almost every year shows that the quality of craftsmanship that goes into making the chariot is getting deteriorating.

Bahu Raj Maharjan, a craftsman who worked on the chariot said: "This time, the chariot had enough raw materials but there was a shortage of workers. Young people don't want to learn the skill and it is all up to old men to do it." ♦

A ll the hoopla about Hollywood movies, go Falk; Hindi movies have seen all this. It is just not possible to even come close to the Hollywood assembly line which has been doing serious damage to our psyche.

The amounts of noise weakened by the combined force of murmur and Fair and Lovely ads and Hollywood; is there for all to see in India. Why Yuvan has to be hyped, and this is important; that he shows us the enormous possibilities of the Hindi movie. He doesn't stick to the formulae that makes sure Bollywood films do well.

Yuvan has to be in the business of selling dreams, but his music is what gets you. There's this sex in a song or Christmas on a - typical - Indian group, a Sikh couple, Bengali honeybun-momen, kids, a foreigner too, a lot of radios, complaints about not spotting a hip (which gives two thumbs to Yuvan, but not to the lyrics) and you just want to know that it's not great.

And the dramas are savage, intense and hilarious (an Indian reviewer calls them 'cool demons').

Shoumya Roy

FILM REVIEW


It is all the songs. But director Ram Gopal Varma is one fresh case in a Hindi film world too full of cheese. Yuvan's music. Yuvan as a strong example, don't come off too hard; that Bollywood assembly line which has been doing serious damage to our psyche.

The music of Yuvan weakened by the combined force of murmur and Fair and Lovely ads and Bollywood; is there for all to see in India. Why Yuvan has to be hyped, and this is important; that he shows us the enormous possibilities of the Hindi movie. He doesn't stick to the formulae that makes sure Bollywood films do well.

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And the dramas are savage, intense and hilarious (an Indian reviewer calls them 'cool demons').

You should see them discuss the meaning of a kill—you hold the part, you do the other", as if they were putting up a banner or something.

The Verandahs you go to know is called Durga Narayan Chaudhary. A name to far away from the red hot Indian-Christian origins, and another does he have the Verandahs written on his forehead? Durga is unfaithful, lets me through his hair, sparks not so lovey-dovey, and likes this city girl (Urmila Manohar whom he has taken hostage).

All along, Viraj's camera is a mordant, continually crossing the silence and noise of the jungle.

That is another reason why this movie is immensely watchable. But then you might ask, who’s on a watchful movie that has a cliff-hanging scene at the climax. Now come on, it's Yuvan Varma on that one. And actually, it doesn't look that convincing. When you have the audience wildly cheering at the end of it all, is surely become a great movie experience.
Gosaikunda

There are one-of-a-kind places that one can only see and there are one-of-a-kind places that everyone goes to. Gosaikunda during monsoon is one place you may think is off everyone’s list, but you will be mistaken if you go earlier this month looking for wilderness, serenity, silence and solitude. For a whole week beginning a few days before 15 August, Kali Mandala pilgrims will climb up the slippery slopes from Dhasa to the holy lakes of Gosaikunda. Most of them will look like pilgrims and more like God’s postmen, mammals and morphs. But among them you will see the truly devout, many of them old and infirm, climbing to the lakes or 4,000 meters to take a holy dip. The pilgrims and freezing waters of the lakes are considered the source of the water that flows through the world of the Hindus. The holy lakes of Gosaikunda are one of those Nepali mountain villages whose old world, pre-highway charm has been grotesquely obliterated by the arrival of the road. Dhasa has a wild west look about it. But instead of gold, it is the road head for the fanatical noise on Gorkha Hilltop, and the gateway to Langtang National Park. Most of the trekkers you see will be heading up to Langtang, but take the steep road that climbs through the pine forests towards Gosaikunda. The trail between have been known to make it in one day. But you may want to take it easy and break the journey halfway up—especially if the monsoon clouds decide to block in the late afternoon and give you a breathtaking view of the Ganesh range. The forests are alive with birds, butterflies and the forest floor is sprinkled with monsoon flowers. Watch out for leeches though; if you get trekking before the pilgrims arrive, Gosaikunda itself will be so tranquil, and the zip so beguiling, that you feel lonely even if you are not a Hindu. From here you have three options: take the same road down to Dhasa, follow the wild and wonderful route northeast towards Langtang Valley, or head down to Kathmandu through Ghunsa Blue, Tungpati, Helambu and Sundarijal in two days. Wherever you go, the holy tingling on your skin from the dip at Gosaikunda will clear your soul and wash away for you for a long time.
Now that the villagers at Kathmandu’s only landfill site have once more stopped refusing our refuse, city streets are garbage-free again. That’s a pity. Many of us here had got quite used to the stuff, and we really miss it.

No more can we conveniently give people directions on how to get to Nepal Times by telling them to follow the smell to the bus park and turn left at the garbage pile.

In a city without house numbers, rubbish heaps have become visual and olfactory landmarks to navigate by. At night, after putting the last page to bed, it is the fragrant beacon of our favourite neighbourhood dump that points the way home.

After studying them closely, we now know that no two rubbish heaps are alike. Ours has a certain delicate bouquet of fruity fermentation recalling an odour hallmark between a mature pepperoni and the smell of a freshly-cut toe nail. We don’t know what gives it this distinctive tang, but it must have something to do with the momo shop down the road that uses our dump to discard entrails of deceased water buffaloes and — chickens.

There is a mound at Thamel which some say is stronger than ours. What refill? On a scale of one to ten, our rubbish dump measures 8.5 on the open-ended Richter scale, and there is only 8.0 since it lacks the essence of all great garbage which is pulverised water buffalo viscera.

Garbage dumps also encourage biodiversity. Ours is a repository of endangered species of plant and animal life. If it weren’t for the litter they would surely have gone the way of the doves. Take the nationally territorial Greater Himalayan Dingo of which we have a resident alpha male with a harem of five females. The fellow is highly possessive, and won’t let any motorcycle near when he is growling at his favourite terrier.

The heap also supports all manner of birds like the Dark-rumped Euroasian Scrubtit Crow, which is now only found in Kathmandu’s garbage heaps. If the rubbish is cleared, this precious natural heritage will disappear—a loss not only to Nepal but to the planet at large.

The Hotel Association of Nepal says grossly that garbage is bad for tourism. Utter rubbish. Just yesterday, we observed a group of Japanese tourists posing for a photograph in front of our heap. We can open souvenir stories on Durbar Marg with choice samples of Kathmandu’s junk: styrofoam necklaces, trashy amulets, egg shell ear...

Clean bill of health for king

King Birendra is back from his annual health check-up at the Crowthorne Hospital in London. His Majesty had been admitted to the hospital for treatment last November after he suffered a mild heart attack. He was given an angioscopy which requires a medical check-up every six months. This method is effective as long as other healthy arteries do not get blocked.

Doctors involved in King Birendra’s treatment found that one of the arteries was 90% occluded. Since the King was suffering a block in only one artery, the doctors had suggested angioplasty and put a coronary bypass that is needed for more serious patients.

After his latest check-up, the Royal Palace announced that His Majesty’s condition was “satisfactory.”

Grindlays DAL BHAL INDEX

Inspired by Nepal