



Attack of the killer geckos

UNDER MY HAT



EXCLUSIVE WHO'S WHO



Khum Bahadur Khadka
Had first pick, and ran off with the powerful Home Ministry.



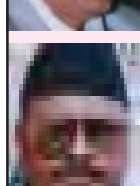
Mahesh Acharya
Demoted from Defence to Agriculture. Token Koirala loyalist?



Dr Ram Sharan Mahat
The man in the middle stayed in the middle. The fence-sitter kept Finance.



Chiranjibi Wagle
Staunch anti-Koirala and a Deuba sidekick. Rewarded with Melamchi.



Bijaya Kumar Gachhedar
Former Koirala supporter, now Deuba crony. Got Hydro-power.



Jaya Prakash Prasad Gupta
Left Koirala six months ago. Gets the plum Information & Communication.



Prem Lal (PL) Singh
Mr Clean & Green got the Environment portfolio.

Deuba's to do list

When the going gets tough, will Deuba get going?

BINOD BHATTARAI

Getting elected prime minister by his parliamentary party was the easy part for Sher Bahadur Deuba. Now comes the hard part.

It was an indication of just how difficult even simple things could be that it took him four days to cobble together a 13-member cabinet. He had to satisfy dissatisfied dissidents, appease recent defectors, oblige those who had supported him in Pokhara—all the while trying to keep the party united and get a relatively honest, efficient and accountable team. It was a thankless and near-impossible task.

Deuba wasn't taking any chances even with the stars. Astrologers had told him Monday and Tuesday were inauspicious, so he decided to wait until Thursday to get on with the job. Let's hope the wait was worth it. So far, the signs are good. Deuba immediately activated his links with the underground Maoists and announced what almost appeared like a joint suspension of offensives. For the first time in the six-year war, state-run radio and television broadcast a statement by Maoist Chairman Prachanda. He "requested" his militia to stop all "pre-planned armed attacks and go into active defence" mode. The attack Sunday night in Bajura could have been previously ordered, and the Prachanda statement over Radio Nepal seems to have been aimed at getting the message quickly to his cells to thwart further raids.

The ceasefire announcement was greeted with cautious optimism by the long-suffering Nepali public, war-weary police and civilians caught in the crossfire. With the immediate problem postponed, Deuba has bought some time to address other pressing issues. But no one will envy his long to-do list:

- Make the truce hold while considering Prachanda's demands of confidence building measures: making public the whereabouts of missing rebels, exchanging prisoners and annulling the previous government's moves to fight the insurgency, including the paramilitary and the hearts-and-minds ISDP.
- Deliver on promises left unfulfilled by his predecessor: maintain law and order, improve governance and control corruption.
- Deal with an impatient parliamentary opposition led by the UML as things hot up ahead of local elections next year.
- Boost investor confidence, business and tourism. All three are related to political stability and resolving the insurgency.

These would be formidable challenges at the best of times, and Deuba can expect adversity and pitfalls on all four items on his list. The Maoist stance on a conference of all political forces to discuss replacing the constitution seems as non-negotiable as the preamble to the present constitution is about parliamentary democracy and constitutional monarchy.

See p. 7 ➡



MIN. BAIRACHARYA



After Kali Gandaki

KUNDA DIXIT IN MIRMI

After cutting the world's deepest gorge between Annapurna and Dhaulagiri, the Kali Gandaki tumbles southwards with a roar of turbid froth. But here at Mirmir, the mighty river suddenly loops off to the west, makes a dramatic U-turn and comes right back to within six km of this spot before taking a 100 km journey due east to join the Narayani in Chitwan.

The mighty Gandaki Bend is not just geologically interesting. It is also an ideal hydropower site, and this is where Nepal's largest-ever infrastructure project is nearing completion. Started in 1997, the Kali Gandaki "A" project has an installed capacity of 144 megawatts (MW) and will generate 842 gigawatt-hours (GWh) of power annually. The \$450 million project is a Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) investment backed by two loans from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Japan's Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund.

The project consists of a dam, desanding and intake structures at

Nepal's largest-ever hydro-power project is nearing completion, promising surplus power for the next three years. Then what?

Mirmir from where the water is sent down an eight metre-wide, six km-long tunnel to a six-storey semi-underground power house in Beltari. The drop in elevation between the two points is 124m, and it is this water pressure that will turn the turbines. The dam has a pondage behind it that will store enough water to operate the turbines at peak capacity six hours a day even during the dry season.

"The project is now 90 percent done, and we are trying to finish it by the peak period of winter demand, but it may take till January," says the NEA's head of project, Dr Nirajan Kapali. The main delays have been caused by the need to cut and stabilise an entire hill above the desanding basin. There have also been cost over-runs caused by geological problems in the tunnel and the 60m deep surge tank at Beltari. Project administration also has its hands full placating the local village officials in Syangja District who have often blocked roads and stopped construction to press their demands for local development.



KUNDA DIXIT

Local opposition near Pokhara to the northern transmission line has delayed the erection of 13 pylons. Kapali was engaged in a heated discussion with locals in Beltari recently, and used all his persuasive powers to tell them: "You have to see this as a national project, not just as a Syangja project."

With Kali Gandaki there will be surplus power, but it is going to be more expensive. This week the government increased electricity tariffs by an average of 10 percent. Expect more increases.

See p. 9 ➡

one world...



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STATE OF THE STATE

by CK LAL

The lion roars again



By demanding the impossible from Deuba we are simply being realistic.

No HONEYMOON FOR DEUBA

This being his second time in Baluwatar, Sher Bahadur Deuba does not need a political honeymoon period. Nor should he expect one. But he could take a pointer or two from the fate of other second-time prime ministers in our region: how they came to grief because they never learnt from the mistakes of their first term in office.

We know from his last 18-month stint that Deuba sways with the wind and he has elastic morals when it comes to political survival. But what he has shown is plenty of down-to-earth common sense. He speaks from the heart, and he has always been sincere about his commitment to resolve the country's number one crisis: the present problem of the Prachanda Path. With Deuba, unlike his aloof and crafty predecessor, what you see is what you get.

But will these qualities be enough for The Lion of the Far-west to tackle the formidable hurdles in coming to grips with the Maoist Tiger? As soon as he assumed office, Deuba said his priority was going to be resolving the insurgency. The Maoists immediately rewarded him by slaughtering 17 policemen in Bajura on Monday night.

But there is now a glimmer of hope. The temporary truce announced almost simultaneously by Deuba and Prachanda appears to be the result of behind-the-scene contacts. Even the fact that the channels of communications are open is a good sign in these dismal times. The question now is: are both sides sincere or is this a tactic to buy time and regroup? Certainly, the Maoists need to re-think their strategy after the army went into Rolpa, the renewal of their palace links, and they need time to gauge how Deuba behaves. They also need to access better firepower to take on the army at a future date. The government, for its part, needs time to settle down to figure out how to handle the army and to build a political consensus.

It is becoming increasingly clear that the final straw that led to Koirala's resignation last week was his difference of opinion with King Gyanendra over the army deployment in Rolpa. After the palace massacre the army chief came out and said palace security was not the army's job, in Rolpa the army has refused to engage. Nepal's civilian leaders, however discredited and divided they may be, therefore have reason to ask why the exchequer should pay for the upkeep of a military that doesn't do its bidding. Our officer corps is second to none in the world, our soldiers have excellent rapport and reputation with the people, but sooner or later someone is going to ask the army brass and the King as supreme commander: why is the army keeping the peace in Sierra Leone when it should be keeping the peace in Sallyan?

It would be logical for the sharp strategists of the Maobadis to now target the army's morale and reputation. The government is compromised by its own incompetence, the opposition of Madhav Kumar Nepal wallows in opportunism, the image of the monarchy is tarnished with the royal massacre, and the police stopped mattering long ago. It is the army that is the only national institution that will ultimately block Prachanda's path. In Rolpa, the army came very close to exposing its vulnerability and the reason was the same old duality of command that haunted Koirala during his tenure: does the army take its orders from the king or from the prime minister? The country can no more afford a situation where if the army is successful the palace gets the credit, and if it fails the government gets the blame. The military cannot be made a pawn in this power struggle between the durbars.

Prime Minister Deuba has to come to terms with this question as he tries to lure the Maoists to the table. He will also realise that the insurgency has grown phenomenally and spread nationwide since it started while he was last in power. His advantage is that last year he headed a high-power committee set up to find ways to resolve the crisis. He must immediately announce confidence-building measures to show the people that his government means business in delivering development. And he must give those in the Maoist movement who seek a safe landing the opportunity to opt out of the spiral of violence that is engulfing the country.

Sher Bahadur Deuba's triumphant comeback to Baluwatar proves ones again an old adage: everything comes to him who hustles while he waits. It has taken him more than a year to reach where he desperately wanted to be. Better late than never, he may think. But it's never too late to appreciate the strength of another popular cliché: "There are only two tragedies in life. One is not to get what one wants. The other is to get it."

Nepal is passing through the agonies of "interesting times". History is rushing madly off course. To steer it back on track the country doesn't just need a premier, it needs a magician. The state of the state can be gauged from the disdainful metaphor Girija Prasad Koirala used to describe the office of the prime minister: "a torn *chappal*". So why was Deuba so desperate to wear them?

Let's give him the benefit of doubt

Deuba himself has been instrumental in lowering the prestige of the post that he has now come to occupy. In his relentless pursuit to oust Koirala, Deuba kept questioning every decision of a duly elected prime minister. Politics does this to politicians: it makes them swallow their own poison.

At this moment in history, Nepal needs a prime minister who can hold on his own with the constitutional monarch. The head of the government must have an unquestioned command over all its executive arms, including its armed forces. Deuba also needs to persuade the parliamentary opposition that he is their leader too, by virtue of being the leader of parliament.

Without a consensus of all constitutional political players behind him, Deuba can't deal with the malignant Maoism afflicting the nation. Forging an ideological unity between forces as opposed as Pari Thapa and Prakash Chandra Lohani may sound impossible, but

policemen in Bajura.

Now for His Majesty's loyal opposition. The UML must realise that saying the right thing is no substitute for doing the right thing. Koirala was their bugbear, so the UML single-mindedly went after him. Former panchas in the RPP considered Deuba more malleable, hence they pitched for him. Now that they got what they wanted, will the opposition rally behind the successor?

Deuba has always been the darling of Kathmandu's drawing room revolutionaries. This rent-seeking section of the elite displays its conspicuous compassion up on its chest, and wants to be recognised as 'civil society'. You can hear them salivating everytime Comrade Prachanda issues one of his threats thinly disguised in an offer of talks. Deuba must ask these high priests of human rights to prove their worth, or get out of the way.

In the propaganda war, Maoists are way ahead of the government. Media tycoons calling themselves the Fourth Estate have capitulated to the insurgents. Publicity being the oxygen of terrorists, the media is an important battleground in a guerrilla war. By publishing "weeping mother" stories, the media can make the government powerless, and by magnifying the exploits of insurgents, it can question the very existence of central authority. Koirala failed miserably to mobilise the media in his fight against Maoist terror, and lost half the war. Deuba's challenge is to establish the credibility of the government with the private sector press and the international media.

The self-professed advocate of high dams should have an easier time with the Indians. The Mahakali Treaty was passed by parliament when he was the premier, and our neighbours down south may be under the impression that this is their man. That should also come in handy during trade negotiations with South Block. As an LSE alumni, dealing with the IMF will be a breeze for Deuba. He'll speak their free market and privatisation lingo. And when the US Assistant Secretary of State comes visiting next week, there will be no communication gap.

But Deuba's political mettle will be tested by the way he handles the affairs within his own party. When Koirala jumped out of the coffin, the process of lowering it in the grave dug for the Nepali Congress by all forces opposed to it had already started. Even though Koirala is still the party president, the fate of the ruling party is as much in the hands of the prime minister. If Deuba continues his intra-party politics of groupism, the foreign minister's reported quip that he is the prime minister-in-waiting may put a question mark over his longevity.

Then there is Girija Prasad Koirala himself—the cantankerous septuagenarian still very much in command of the ruling party's nationwide apparatus. It's too early to write his political epitaph.

Deuba has made an auspicious start by declaring himself to be a Koirala acolyte and by pledging to uphold his predecessor's 14 Point proposal of political consensus. However, given Deuba's proclivity to Koirala's die-hard critics in the ruling party, it remains to be seen how he walks the tight rope between his own hangers-on and the faithful followers of his party president.

In the end, Deuba's biggest challenge lies in keeping his party firmly behind him. It is for this that he needs Koirala. Free of the worries of intra-party wrangling, Deuba can concentrate on ferreting out and de-fanging our underground comrades.

Becoming the prime minister was relatively easy. Sher Bahadur Deuba now walks on a political arena littered with pressure cooker bombs and booby traps. On the far side is the Nepali public's hopes for peace and prosperity. ♦

and say he wanted to make Nepal a better place. (It could do with improvement.) Let's say he wanted to restore dignity to the office of prime minister. Without that, no meaningful negotiation can be held either with opposition parties or with the Maoists. Talks with insurgents will remain just talk if the prime minister is not able to say that he is the final legitimate authority in the country. The functioning of government is jeopardised to such an extent that the country can't afford to have a premier who is not respected.

It's one of those paradoxes of politics that

there just isn't any other option. By demanding the impossible from Deuba we are simply being realistic.

The Maoist insurgency started during Deuba's first watch. Yet, the insurgents have been rooting for him in the leadership contest of the ruling party. The offer of a temporary ceasefire and the prospect of talks does give Deuba an opening, but this euphoria may be short-lived if he cannot get the backing of his own party and the opposition for a consensus approach. That needs not just leadership, but statesmanship. Otherwise the revolution will grind on, and the Maoists' sent a gift to Deuba a few hours after he was appointed prime minister by the king: the slaughter of 17 more

“The focus must be on a political consensus”

- Gauri Pradhan



Human rights activist GAURI PRADHAN was a part of the team that went to Rolpa last week to mediate between the army and the Maoists and seek the release of 69 policemen captured from Holeri. When the team got to Nuwagaon, they found there was nothing to mediate. The Maoists and army were not bothering each other, and the captured policemen were nowhere to be seen. Pradhan spoke to Nepali Times about his group’s mission, and gave an account markedly different from the official version of the siege of Nuwagaon.

Nepali Times: What was the situation like when you got to Nuwagaon?
Gauri Pradhan: It was quite normal, but it seems to have been tense on the first day. After the Holeri attack when the Maoists reached Ghyanggaon they were in a victory mood. They were among their people. They had cooked 200 kgs of rice and were preparing a feast for the

1,500 or so militia, about 70 captured policemen and 300-400 villagers. They were eating when the helicopters began circling, one of which swooped in low and it was shot at and hit in the cockpit and the belly. After that the helicopter landed, the Maoists began making announcements on loud speakers, exhorting the soldiers to join them in the battle to liberate Kalapani. The Maoists were watching from the nearby hills. There was a small bazaar nearby, where the Army patrolled and the people were not unduly worried. This is obviously a one-sided account, and the army commander in Surkhet couldn’t tell us anything for security reasons. But I am convinced that the official account of a siege was wrong. But even when we were there Radio Nepal was broadcasting news that the army was closing the ring around Nuwagaon and could strike at any time. That was a lie.

How was Rolpa different from the previous times you had been there?
The situation was more tense in the past. The policemen were in the villages and people were scared to talk. This time, after crossing Holeri you won’t see any sign of government anywhere. The people come out and speak to you freely, and they are not scared to say they are Maoists. We also met people from other parties, but they all agreed the Maoists were doing a good job. They had a public meeting in our honour, the Rolpa commander in a speech said the Maoists believed that human rights were class-based. But he admitted he was ashamed having to speak with human rights activists while carrying a weapon. At the mass meeting two of us spoke, and I said everyone is entitled to his or her belief, and those with differing beliefs should also be allowed to live in their village. That is human rights as I understand it. What struck me were the large numbers of women everywhere, half the militia units were made up of gun-carrying women. Gender roles have changed among the cadre, but in the villages you see women still working in the fields and homes.

So they told you they could not free the policemen.
No, the media reports on that are wrong. On the first day they said they would have to ask their senior leaders. I said we should be told what their crimes were. If they had not done any wrong, then they should be released immediately. The commander said they would positively consider our demand. After the meeting he told me informally, that some policemen would be released within 24 hours of our reaching Kathmandu. And they did

subsequently release some of them. They may have divided the 72 police into 5-6 groups. I suspect some groups were not more than 3-4 hours away.

Do you believe the government and Maoists are actually getting ready to talk about talks?
I am hopeful about talks. Whether it will be successful or not will depend on how much each side is willing to compromise. Going by the Maoist demands, this is going to be a long-drawn process. They demand a multi-sectoral conference, an interim government and changing the constitution. I don’t know how the political discussions can take place on those terms. The multi-sectoral conference could mean having an all-party meeting and another one involving indigenous groups and human rights activists. I cannot predict an outcome, but it would be safe to say that this first round will not resolve everything.

The new Maoist conditions also include reversing some government decisions to counter the insurgency like the ISDP, APF. Are the Maoists feeling cornered?
I got that impression in Nuwagaon. For some hours the situation there was tense. Then the army and Maoists communicated, first through loudspeakers, then through letters then one-on-one. From what they (field level Maoists) told us the army is said to have told them dialogue was taking place at the central level also, and that they would communicate the outcome once they established contact. That is an interesting revelation.

Some say the truce could be a ploy by both sides to regroup and sooner or later it is going to be back to square one?
As a human rights activist, I have to take the offer of ceasefire positively. But taking everything into account, even your hypothesis could be true. If the Maoists statement is only tactical and they are still in a fighting mood, then it would be our misfortune. But even to talk, the government needs to agree on what it wants out of it, what the agenda will be. The Maoists are clearer on this than the government.

But do you think the Maoist agenda is negotiable?
I see possibilities up to the interim government stage. Beyond that there could be differences between those who want constitutional amendments, and those who want to scrap the constitution. The talks could stall there.

What role have human rights groups like yours played in the process so far?
Our role has been to try and build an atmosphere conducive for talks, and facilitate the process. In the case of Nuwagaon, we went a step forward and suggested that we would even mediate. But when we got there, there really was no confrontation. There were no human shields of women children and captured policemen. Nothing of the sort. We are working to create the atmosphere for talks, and the political issues that come after have to be taken up and resolved by political parties. Our job is only to bring the two sides together. The Peoples’ Committee for Peace Talks, of which I am a member, was set up not to mediate but to facilitate talks. The focus must be on political consensus, not mediation by human rights groups.

What is the message from your group to the Maoists and the government?
The ceasefire has to continue and violence has to stop. The next step will be to release prisoners by both sides. We also need to be told about the whereabouts of those that are missing on both sides. We have also raised the issue of atrocities against police. We have asked them what crimes the police have been charged with, and if there aren’t any, they should be released immediately. If they have been charged, we need to be told what they are.

A day before they announced the truce, the Maoists killed 17 policemen. Is there a message there?
The attack may have been a part of their ongoing plan and there may have been a communication gap after the new developments. Reading Prachanda’s statement where he says “previously-planned armed attacks should be stopped”, you get a sense of that. The Maoists have also been changing their position vis-à-vis the king—I see some inconsistencies in their tactical moves.

Isn’t there a danger of overlap and duplication if too many human rights groups are involved in mediation?
That has been a concern from the beginning. I have always advocated making the work process oriented, taking lessons from other countries like the Philippines and Latin America. We had tried to prepare a concept paper. Instead of a systematic process, our work has been influenced by the fast-changing situation. I would like the process to be systematic because even if we fail, we will have documents to draw lessons from. We have not been able to work in that manner, instead some well-known personalities have driven the process.

LETTERS

NO BANDHS
Now that Madhav Kumar Nepal has attained his cherished dream of ousting a largely inept and corrupt Prime Minister, let him prove that he has the guts to do good for the country by apologising to the Nepali public for closing down their country for three consecutive days in May. Let him also add that his party will not, henceforth, call for bandhs or disrupt life in these already painful times.

A Pokharel
by email

GOOD INSIGHT
I am quite lazy when it comes to giving feedback, but I must congratulate Binod Bhattarai’s “Still quiet on the western front” (#52). The piece had good insight, was objective, had smooth writing, and most of all, it strived to present the total picture rather than just news crumbs we are used to from other media.

Si Kaky
by email

SHRIVASTAVA
I usually like CK Lal’s critiques. They make sense and he does a very good job in getting his message across. However, I found it difficult to buy his arguments in “Borderline hope” (#51). Having been a development worker in the tarai for several years and having seen Birgunj through its transition, I agree, Birgunj ‘looks’ much better

today. But it may not be appropriate to blindly promote Mayor Shrivastava as a role model. Has Mr Lal visited one of the public schools in town? Has he tried to find out how the municipality works? Has he gone to the local hospital? A vast majority of women and children still remain illiterate. Dalits are not only exploited, but tortured. I may be cynical here, but it doesn’t suit a sincere columnist like Mr Lal to promote politicians just because they have beautified a city. By the way, not everybody has access to the Musical Fountain.

Deepak Khanal
Chicago, USA

CLOSET MAOISTS
Through your paper, I want to ask some questions of the self-proclaimed intellectuals of Kathmandu (Letters, #51) how many columns have you written criticising terrorists? How many police-martyrs’ families have you visited? How many times have you protested the killing of innocents by ruthless murderers? How many journalists have reported the bravery of Nepalis fighting terrorists in different parts of the country? How many times lawyers have asked terrorists to respect the law? Who has asked terrorists to make public the way they have spent their loot? Tell you what, all you self-proclaimed intellectuals of Kathmandu are all closet Maoists. CK Lal is against the Royal family, the Army, the national

language and the unity of Nepali people. But come on, grant the devil his due. Lal is the only person I get to read from back home who is unequivocally against terrorists. At a time when the only true test of intellectual integrity is opposing terrorism anywhere in the world in whatever form, CK Lal does us proud by his consistent opposition to the terror tactics of those who call themselves Maoists.

Bir Bahadur Chhetri
*St John’s Medical College
Bangalore*

UN-INTELLIGENTSIA
It is difficult to understand why Nepali intellectuals detest your columnist CK Lal so much (Letters, #51). He is the sole sane voice in the English press of Nepal. Why is Umesh so upset with inconsistency in Lal’s views on village tourism? We should be happy that Lal has finally realised his folly and accepted the role of tourism in the nation’s economy. Better late than never. Just reading your Letters is enough to expose the idleness of Kathmandu intelligentsia. It does nothing except follow the fad of the day nationalism, Maoism, and running down elected leaders of the country. Kathmandu intelligentsia does criticise Maoist excesses once in a while, but only as an afterthought. They spend most of their time eulogising terrorists. I have only one advice for Lal—stop defending Girija

and attacking Comrade Madhav Nepal. The only political party that can save the country is the UML. So please come join us and raise the banner of *Bahudaliya Janabad* with the poor masses of Nepal.

Angad Gharti
Nepalgunj

STONE AGE
The only news from Nepal on the Internet seems to be about Maoists and their activities. What do they really want? Terrorism is not going to bring peace. It is hard to imagine that there is so much violence in the birthplace of the Buddha, whereas the birthplace of Mao himself has renounced his doctrine. I want to tell Baburam Bhattarai: killing Nepali *daju, bhai, didi* and *baini* is not going to bring any revolution. It will just drag us back to the stone age.

“Jyapudai and family”
Japan

FAÇADES
Nepali Times has knocked architecture off its pedestal and brought it down to the realm of public debate (“The Valley’s new façade fad”, #52). Ramyata Limbu is repelled by Doric columns in the mansions of Maharajganj, and I am appalled by the indiscriminate use of decorative bricks regardless of subject or context. The tree guards in Durbar Marg are a case in point. Will we now see public toilets designed similarly?

By allowing the craftsmen to run amok with their wares, architects can sometimes betray ignorance of subject and a total lack of control over the whole exercise.

Bibhuti Man Singh
Kathmandu

UNDER MY HATS
I write not only to defend ‘Under My Hat’, but to praise it. (Letters, #51) It alone makes Nepali Times worth buying. It’s brilliant! It pokes fun so cleverly at everything in Nepali life that needs to have fun poked at. Mr Kaffie in Manchester, you don’t need to read it, but for those of us who are fans, may Mr Dixit’s supply of hats never run out—and thank you for one of the best reads you can get.

C Stone
Thapathali



CLARIFICATION
In the story “The Valley’s new façade fad” (#52), Chandra Lekha Kayastha is presumed to be working on Narayani Hotel’s new façade. The firm is not connected with the project.

-Ed

I have never written a fan letter to a writer before, but I must tell you that I’ve been reading ‘Under My Hat’ from the beginning, both hard copy and online, for about a year. Kunda Dixit is as funny and incisive as Jane Austen, my favourite author. “Visit Nepal: You Have It All To Yourself” has firmed my resolution to visit Nepal in October.

Hilary Dirlam
by email

Suresh Kaffie’s letter from Manchester objecting to Under My Hat (“Silly” #51) tends to confirm the view of Scousers (denizens of the port of Liverpool sinking into the Irish Sea, and we don’t have space here to explain the derivation of “scouser”) that the worthy citizens of Manchester, 30 miles to the east along the Manchester Ship Canal, are a miserable humorously lot wallowing solely in muck and brass. Maybe the climate, which is even wetter and greyer than Liverpool, has something to do with it. Of course, this gross stereotype will draw howls of outrage from the image consultants who are busy rebranding Manchester as the trendiest spot of yuppie high life north of Islington, but pay no attention. Under My Hat is desperately needed in these lowering times. As a scouser would say: yer gorra laf.

J Harrison
Liverpool and Kupondol

Women and men wonder: how will the Bill change their lives?



Rama Gauli, second from left, with son Sagar, daughters Rita and Rekha, and a granddaughter.

RAMYATA LIMBU
At 60, Rama Gauli is almost content. Four of her five children are married and settled, and now she's on the lookout for a suitable girl for her only son, Sagar. "Then my responsibilities are over. I can sit back and not worry for the rest of my life," says Gauli.
On weekends, Gauli's home is a hub of activity, alive with the sound of visiting daughters, accompanying sons-in-law, and

grandchildren. Gauli can't imagine her family ever being affected by something as preposterous as the Property Rights Bill, better known as the Women's Bill.
"It's nonsense," says Gauli bristling. Mention of the bill is the only thing that can upset her equilibrium. "It really makes me angry when I see people on television going on about equal inheritance rights for sons and daughters. It's never been that way. I never got a share of

parental property. And neither will my daughters. They know better. Once girls get married, they have their own families to look after."
Brought up in compliance with the patrilineal principles of Hindu social organisation, Gauli believes that on marriage, women break their link with their natal family and go to join their husbands' family, but regain all the rights they lost in making the break in the husband's family. "I know my daughters will never ask

for an equal share, nor seek legal recourse if the Bill becomes a law," says Gauli. "I've made sure they've well settled and have got a good education."
Gauli's daughters share the same value system. Says 28-year-old Renu, "What kind of women demand equal property. Don't they realise it will upset the social balance and create discord in families? And what about in the tarai? Problems of dowry and bride abuse are bound to increase."

The "women's bill" is one step closer to being made into law. And people on all sides of the debate want to know how it will be implemented.

From his corner of the family living room, Rama's son Sagar says quietly, "In terms of gender equality, I think it's a justifiable demand. But even if the Bill is passed, enforcing it may be a problem." Rama shoots him an admonishing look.
Even as people like Gauli question the necessity of the Property Rights Bill, a law that challenges what are accepted as Hindu social values, feminist activists and Property Rights lobbyists can't help feeling a twinge of optimism. They've been lobbying for this, the 11th Amendment to the Muluki Ain (Country Code) for almost a decade. And now the Amendment Bill is being given final shape by Parliament's Law and Justice Committee before it is sent to the Lower House for voting, a major step in the movement.
Says lawyer Meera Dhungel, "Once the parliamentary committee submits the final Bill before the House, lawmakers are morally bound to pass it. That's the usual practice." Dhungel is especially pleased about the

approval of one of the most controversial clauses in the Bill—the Committee recently decided that women could get an equal share of parental property as their brothers and will not be required to return it on marriage.
In 1993, Dhungel filed a writ petition at the Supreme Court challenging existing inheritance laws and initiating the movement towards such a bill. Her petition asked that the term 'son' in clause 16 of the Muluki Ain's inheritance law be repealed as it discriminates against daughters. Current inheritance laws allow a woman to inherit paternal property only if she is over 35 and unmarried. If she gets married after this, she must return the property to her father or his male heirs. In contrast, men above the age of 18 enjoy the right to inherit paternal property in Nepal's prevailing system of *angsha*, or birthright inheritance.
"This is a big step, though not the end of the battle for social change and equality," says Sapana Pradhan Malla of the

HERE AND THERE

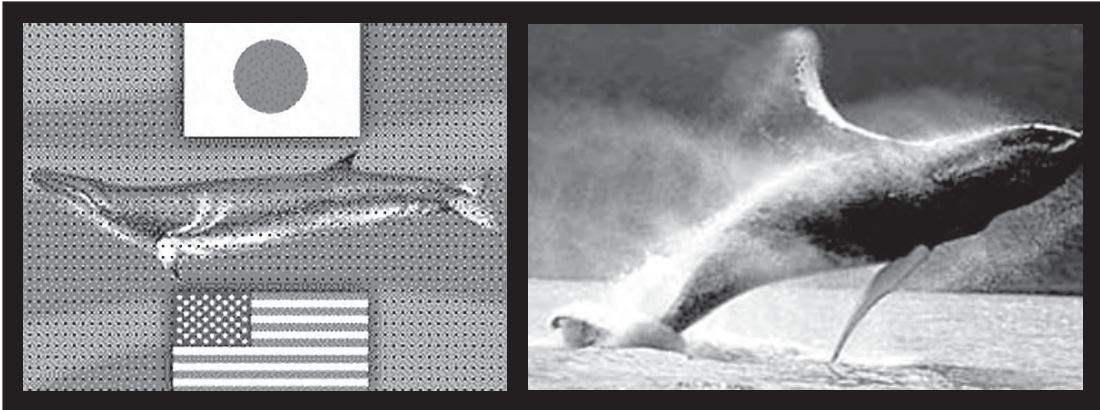
by DANIEL LAK



A whale of a tale

Did it take an extensive grilling in a seedy police station? Was a confession obtained by force? Were loved ones threatened? Or perhaps was someone honest, newly arrived in the job or politically partisan dishing up the goods on a predecessor? All of these questions spring to mind with the past week's revelation that Japan had been using its foreign aid budget to bribe small Caribbean countries in exchange for their staunch opposition to a ban on commercial whaling.
Whale meat is a delicacy in Japan, these days a somewhat defiant one. Japanese whale consumers are becoming rather good at savouring the flesh of endangered marine mammals while the camera crews of the sanctimonious West cluster around, arc lights aglare, aggressive reporters hurling nasty questions. But the fact is inescapable; the Japanese eat whales. They also eat fugu fish, a species so poisonous that it can only be cooked by specially trained chefs. Even then, you reportedly get a certain numbness in your mouth that leaves you unable to taste the fugu anyway which does rather throw the whole exercise into question.
So, Tokyo spends its development budget on seeking nefarious support for a damaging habit. Or it practises Realpolitik to swim against the tide, and rewards those who paddle alongside. It depends on your point of view. My point is not to denigrate the great nation of Japan or its culinary tastes. I merely wish to underline the many uses of an overseas development Budget. The Americans once used theirs for funding anti-Communist rebel groups in troubled lands or their neighbours. No

There are many geo-political uses for an overseas development aid budget.



need here to regurgitate the debacle over the Khampas and their fight with China. European nations too, in the past, have been pretty creative with the aid spending. Saddam Hussein of Iraq got himself some interesting and deadly toys from France, Germany, Switzerland a few decades back, all funded from aid-generated export credits and business development grants. There were pharmaceutical and agrochemical plants that morphed into production lines for biological and nerve gas nasties at the push of button, and each with a little sign at the front gate "a gift from the people of...etc." I've heard it directly from members of the UN monitoring team that European diplomats in Baghdad had explicit instructions to carry screwdrivers and remove

those plaques at the first available opportunity.
One of my favourites in this category is something far less harmful. In the gorgeous Swat Valley in north-western Pakistan sits an example of Austrian largesse that has to be seen to be believed. It's a ski resort that arrived in its entirety in a series of shipping containers from Europe: an Alpine chalet, chair lifts, machines to groom the snow, racks of equipment for the rental kiosk, espresso makers, everything but tall, blonde instructors named Hans to tempt the local ladies into an off-piste adventure. All courtesy of the people of Austria. Sadly, the place has never operated, the mountains of Swat have never reverberated with the barking of St Bernards dashing to save avalanche victims. The chalet sits forlorn, the ski lift sags and only a few local kids have taken advantage of the dusty bundles of Austrian skies to ply the occasionally snowy slopes.
For that was the problem. Snow is an infrequent visitor to the mountainsides of Swat and this made the challenge of learning to ski even more acute. There are, I know, countless examples of this sort of thing in Nepal. The point is not to ridicule, point fingers of horror or condemn out of hand. It's to realize that the efforts of the rich countries to help the poor—however well intentioned—are often ineffective or motivated by their own political, economic or culinary imperatives, as in Japan and its Caribbean aid partners. Mind you, if I were Nepal's UN ambassador and a polite gentleman from Tokyo came calling with a bag of money and an International Whaling Council membership, I'd be sorely tempted. After all, there are a few dolphins left in the Karnali and Naryanai rivers. ♦

Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD). “The provisions of the Bill mean that women’s rights will no longer be defined based on their marital status, their welfare will not depend on father, brother or husband.”

Rights activists still see weaknesses in the Bill, because it distinguishes between married and unmarried daughters, and discriminates against widows who have to return their share of their deceased first husband’s property should they remarry.

“Property rights are still based on the sexuality and chastity of women, which is an archaic concept in the current social context,” says Malla. “But we can’t undermine the importance of recent developments. This is a big step.” The FWLD cites 118 legal provisions and 67 schedules in 57 different laws that discriminate against women.

Prior to discussions on the bill, the committee solicited public opinion in 14 districts of the country. Teams were despatched to the grassroots level. 92 percent of the people surveyed demanded amendments to the present system of division of ancestral property. And yet there are families like the Gaulis where many members, even women, are opposed to the Bill. What they will do when it comes into effect will be worth

observing.

The 11th Amendment to the Muluki Ain was submitted by the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs in 1997, in compliance with a 1995 Supreme Court ruling which directed parliament to address gender differences in the civil code. The bill addresses a mix of women’s issues, in large part concentrating on property and inheritance laws.

Says Prem Bahadur Budathoki, member of the Parliamentary Law and Justice Committee, “It’s not as easy as people think and I don’t think it is time to celebrate, yet. We have to be cautious and balanced. The bill is bound to get through. But more homework needs to be done. Despite the political commitment expressed by the various parties, I think there are still hurdles to cross. There is still a need to lobby.” Women activists are doing just that. They have resorted to international instruments like the CEDAW (the UN convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women), to which Nepal is a signatory, to maintain pressure on the government to bring about judicial changes.

The Bill has been debated, it has been found flawed by many, including women’s rights activists and lawyers, but now that it is slowly moving forward,



MINI BALRACHANDRA

"Property rights are still based on the sexuality and chastity of women"
-Sapana Malla

attention is shifting to the problems that will arise if it comes into effect. Tribhuvan University sociologist Dr Krishna Bhattachan cautions, “The Bill has remained frozen for so long, it is not going to be easy getting it through. And even if it does go through, the major problem will be in implementing it. The Bill can’t be implemented in a homogenous manner.” He feels the movement, largely initiated by Hindu women—Bahuns, Chettris and Hinduised Newars—encompasses few women from Tibeto-Burmese communities, where women already enjoy a certain amount of economic independence, especially in matrilineal communities, and often . In such groups, worries Bhattachan, “the Bill may encourage individualism and affect the collective lifestyle these communities enjoy.”

A few families we spoke to in Kathmandu who were ambivalent about the Bill suggested that the Will system might be an alternative, at least in the cosmopolitan, multi-ethnic Valley region. Bhattachan recently assisted in pilot research on public perception of the Will system as an alternative to equal rights to parental property. The study also looks at the implications of cross-border marriages on property in the tarai. Bhattachan concludes from the data collected that in the present context the disadvantages of the Will system outweigh its advantages. And in the case of cross-border marriages, particularly, the study shows that public perception is tilted in favour of equal rights to parental property.

Other difficulties that analysts see in implementing the Bill effectively are the continuing tradition of parents’ preference for sons to inherit parental property and the lack of role models for women in economic activities. They say that until it becomes relatively common for women to handle family financial affairs, even if they inherit parental property, the decisions regarding the management of this property will tend to be taken by male relatives. Families, for their part, worry about the possible rise of conflict among family members competing to gain favour with property owners, increase in fraud and the rise of what Dr Bhattachan describes as individualism.

In surveys and on the streets, in all parts of our diverse country, reactions to the possibility of this new law are varied and opinions are passionately held. And as the layperson learns more about the changes, there will be other, different reactions, and unforeseen problems in their implementation. For now, we can only speculate. ♦

(For a more detailed reading of the Bill itself, as well as the 1995 Supreme Court ruling that eventually resulted in the 11th Muluki Ain Amendment, see “Women, rights, and the Bill”, #24.)

Crowds in the city

The numbers just keep growing. Preliminary results of the National Census 2001 say the district of Kathmandu has a population of close to 1.1 million—which means the population has grown by 6.24 percent in the last decade. The Central Bureau of Statistics tells us that 53 percent (584,000) of the district’s residents are men and the remaining 47 percent (512,000) are women. Over 700,000 people live inside Kathmandu Metropolitan City, and some 40,000 live in Kirtipur Municipality.

The number of families living in the district has increased by 92 percent in the last ten years. A decade ago, around 127,000 families lived in Kathmandu. Today, there are almost 245,000. Seventy percent of these families live inside the city area.

There’s some good news, though. The survey indicates that nuclear family size has decreased from an average of 5.3 members in 1991 to 4.5 today.

Civil servants on drive

From lokta to magnetised diskettes. The Nepal government’s *Nijamati Kitabkhana* (record office) has finally entered the cyber age. The country’s only organisation that keeps records of Nepal’s civil servants, the *Kitabkhana* currently has data on more than 70,000 civil servants on computer, and it is working on digitalising information on more. The process of transferring the data, formerly recorded in cumbersome files wrapped in cloth bundles stacked high on dusty shelves, took seven months, says Tulsī Gautam, director of the *Kitabkhana*. Officials say the computerisation of data ought to discourage civil servants from falsifying their age to serve a few years more. Recently, about 20 bureaucrats found guilty of changing their ages on paper, were forced to retire.

Taxing the old

If you have a vehicle over 15 years old, prepare to pay up. In addition to the regular transport tax that vehicle owners are required to pay, the government has decided to apply an additional 10 percent transport tax on private, government, and public vehicles over 15. The tax, which will increase by 10 percent annually, is part of government efforts to check the increasing air pollution in the Valley.

Environmentalists have welcomed the move. Studies indicate that vehicles account for 60 percent of the air pollution in the Valley, and are a major cause of respiratory diseases. In Kathmandu, over 51 vehicles ply one km of road at any given time. An estimated 20,000 vehicles in the Valley are over 15 years old and another 15,000 are 20 years old.

In an earlier decision, Nepal’s Ministry of Population and Environment announced that 20-year-old vehicles, and gas and petrol run three-wheelers operated by two-stroke engines will not be allowed to ply the Valley’s roads from 16 November this year.

Japanese judge detained

Yasuhiro Muraki, one of the three Tokyo High Court judges who decided on the continued detention of Govinda Mainali on 19 May, 2000 is behind bars. Muraki, 43, who detained Govinda in the highly publicised and controversial “office lady murder” of Yasuko Watanabe, is presently in the same Tokyo Detention Centre as Mainali. His crime: paedophilia. Even as Govinda’s attorneys submitted the statement of grounds for the final criminal appeal on 5 July, the disgraced High Court judge faces the possibility of impeachment for seeking stimulation with teenage prostitutes and for having paid sex with a 14-year-old in January. Muraki told judges that he was weak-minded by nature and was struggling to cope with the high pressure world of criminal courts, and so sought stimulation with under-age girls.



Govinda Mainali

Blockbuster royale

Sixties matinee idol Dev Anand wants to shoot another blockbuster in Nepal. But this time the *Hare Ram Hare Krishna* hero doesn’t have hippies in mind. Instead, he’s set his sights on Narayanhiiti. In a recent interview with the *Hindustan Times*, Anand, 78, says he has completed the script on the royal regicide and now wants to shoot the dramatic account of the run-up to the 1 June massacre. The evergreen hero of Hindi cinema says the medium budget film will stick to the official version of Prince Dipendra gunning down his entire family, and will also explore the Devyani angle. The film, scheduled for completion at year-end, will feature a crop of newcomers. “The film will please everybody. It will not rub anybody the wrong way,” says Anand. Tall order that, knowing our conspiracy theorists.



A generation of failure



Students outside the Gorkhapatra office, waiting for a copy of the newspaper with their SLC results

Nepal's school system has received an ominous wake-up call—this year's SLC results.

HEMLATA RAI

Sadiksha failed to get through the educational “iron gate”, the tenth standard School Leaving Certificate (SLC) examination this year. Her hours of dedicated study at work and countless hours of private tuition together with coaching classes her school provided—all in addition to the school's regular classes—could not get her through a routine exam she ought, by sheer dint of hard work, to have passed.

Like thousands of her peers, Sadiksha is now faced with a dilemma: should she wait for another year to take the exam again or abandon her studies altogether. With only ten years of schooling, she has few choices. Higher education is out for now, and Nepal offers few useful vocational training opportunities for people who opt, or are forced, out of the formal educational system and want more practical skills. “It seems my parents' ten year investment on my education has gone to waste,” says a disheartened Sadiksha.

The trauma of individual children and their parents' fruitless attempts to give them a decent education is one depressing part of a larger, very worrying story. The government's annual budget allocation for schools is about Rs 14 billion, many say too little, and ill-spent. And, when it comes to testing students' educational abilities at the end of ten years of schooling, only a handful prove fit for a high school diploma that is not terribly challenging anyway.

This year some 213,000 appeared for the SLC exam. 41,800, or 31.6 percent passed. The drop in the pass rate from the previous year: a staggering 14 percent. Even in 2000, that rate, just 45.7 percent, was down from 49 percent the previous year.

And, in absence of an academic support system for students who failed the exam, there is little chance they will pass it when they reappear the next time either. “This will seriously damage the country—out of sheer frustration because of their failure, young people might develop a negative attitude towards society as a whole, or they might use illegal methods to establish themselves in society or make themselves heard,” says educationist Dr Man Prasad Wagle, who was a

member of the government's high level committee formed to recommend policies and a working plan for improvement in the school system.

His claims are not far off the mark—one only needs to look at the country's higher education institutions, and our bureaucracy and administration. Nepali administration and bureaucracy are mediocre and inefficient because of many reasons, but surely one factor is the fact that most government employees there are simply not qualified and lack a strong foundation in the basics. A recent government probe into forged paperwork in the bureaucratic structure found that a troublingly large number of lower-level government employees have falsified their qualifications, and turned in fake certificates bought from India or from brokers within Nepal.

In recent years the government has experimented with a number of changes in textbooks and examination modules. But few of these have improved the quality of education or even the performance of students on standardised examinations.

“Concentrating on students only will not produce desired results, the whole education system needs to be revised and revamped,” says Dr Wagle. The committee he worked with submitted its report to the Minister for Education last month, recommending that a mechanism to monitor and assess the performance of teachers be set up, and that the burden of accountability in maintaining the level of instruction be shifted to various government education offices and school administrations. The committee also recommended that 17 percent of the total government expenditure be allocated to the education sector. (See “School reforms”, #50.)

Many of these changes will take time, but this last recommendation, one that is close to the heart of the many educationists and students groups that campaign for better education, was not taken through in last month's budget, which came some two weeks after the committee presented its report. Education will be only 14 percent of government spending this fiscal year, up just one percent from fiscal

2000/2001.

Decentralisation of education is another long-standing demand of Nepali educationists. Since the SLC examination is controlled from the centre, students from far-flung districts are forced to take tests set by the Office of the Controller of Exams in Kathmandu. The Controller's office, say activists, does not take into account the conditions of education and ground realities outside the Valley and other urban areas. And often, the exam modules are simply too ambitious for a country like Nepal. This year, for example, a new component was introduced to test students' English language skills—a listening comprehension test. Now doing such exercises requires some practice, and students outside Kathmandu Valley were not familiar with the technique of listening to a mechanical voice over a cassette player and answering questions simultaneously. As a result, many failed their English exams. The fact is, when new text and exam modules are introduced, orientation is not a priority for students or teachers.

The evaluation methods in place to assess students' educational abilities are still very conservative. “Our system puts too much emphasis on end-of-the-session exams, which is not scientific at all,” says another educationist Dr Hridaya Ratna Bajracharya, Executive Director of the Research Centre for Educational Innovation and Development (CERID).

The Ministry for education is trying to change this, and this year has introduced a more realistic and liberal promotion policy through the continuous assessment system (CAS) in five districts in Ilam, Chitwan, Syangja, Surkhet and Kanchanpur. This is Nepal's second experiment with such practices, and educationists and child psychologists want to be enthusiastic, but can't help wondering how it will be implemented. (“Teaching teacher”, #32)

It is an indication of how ineffective and downright scary the school system has become that despite their scepticism, teachers and parents alike are now demanding that the CAS be introduced up to standard 10, with school-leaving exams only in standard 12. Anything, they seem to think, is better than what we have now. ♦

TILL WE MEET AGAIN

by USHA RAMASWAMY

LEAVING KATHMANDU

Not the spring, with its kindly breezes and the mauve tracery of jacaranda, the pink-and-white froth of peach and plum trees... Not the summer, with lime blossom spiking the afternoon heat, jasmine and honeysuckle spicing the long twilights... Not the monsoon, with its lowering clouds and rain greening the Valley, ipomoea and crepe myrtle enlivening grey afternoons... Not the autumn, chrysanthemums blazing in the gardens, mist hiding the hills, the first of the shivery dawns... Not, definitely not the winter, with snow peaks glittering in crystal skies, winter jasmine starring garden walls, exhilarating morning walks, silvery breaths wreathing heads like nimbus... There's no time when it's not wrenching to leave this city.

Leaving is inevitable for those of us who here on a time-bound sojourn. For me the rituals of leave-taking have a whiff of last rites about them. (Farewell dinners as viaticum?) Because, although some of us do return for a visit, despite resolutions and promises, many never do. So collecting souvenirs and photographs, hoping our memories serve us well, we board the plane that takes us into yet another unknown.

What is it about Kathmandu that touches the life of so many? What, despite the obvious negatives, makes us wax sentimental about it? Is it the mystique of the mountains? The sobriquet of spiritual capital of the kingdom of the gods? The nostalgia for a lost horizon, a Shangri La? Is it because the country appears to be a last bastion of innocence, and the city a fitting memorial to it? Perhaps all this, and more. To discover the magic of Kathmandu, of the Valley and Nepal, one must live here. And take to the hills as often as possible.

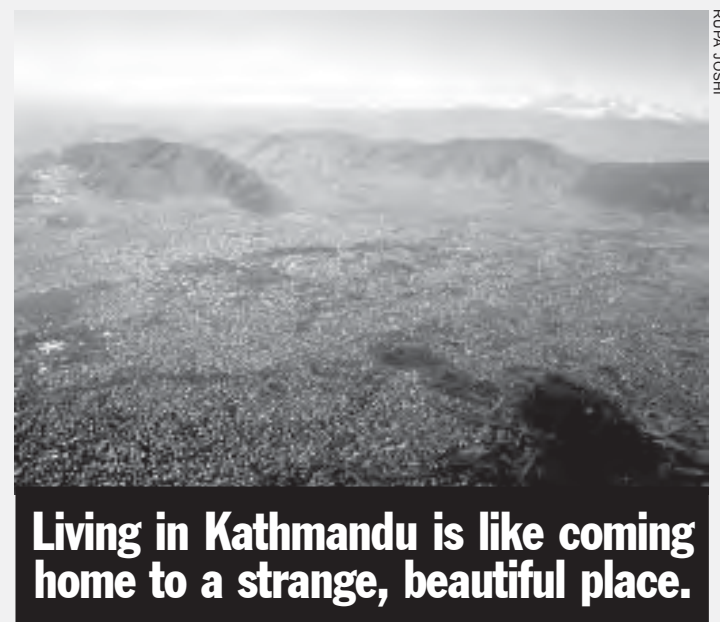
Cities march to a distinct and individual beat. Kathmandu exudes friendliness and easy living. Its rhythm has not entirely been affected by the vicissitudes of time or the distorting, truncating effects of tourism. The old ways, the grace is very much part of its culture. After a while you find your feet in any city; in a few fortunate ones like Kathmandu, you find yourself. One reason is the city's relaxed pace, its attitude of acceptance and contentment. You don't *have* to anything here, as you *have to* in other cities, and that is heady freedom.

Kathmandu is nurturing. It offers succour and solace—just a glimpse of the hills or a drive up to gaze upon vale and peaks is uplifting. At other times it makes gentle overtures of goodwill and friendliness, rather like the open-handed temple offerings its people are always

making. It is intimate and private, like an ideal home, providing refuge from the elements but also a door that can be closed. Living in Kathmandu gives you a permanent sense of coming home, of arrival in an apocryphal sense. This is perhaps why there are so many stories of expatriates coming here for a week and staying for 25 years.

Cities wear distinct colours—the history, the traditions and spirit of a place all colour it. I see Kathmandu as blue-green-gold. The colours of romance, equanimity and spiritual wealth. Residents and visitors often say there is an indefinable spiritual quality here. There's hardly a morning I don't pass a woman bearing covered trays of puja offerings, or lighting a lamp on her doorstep or decorating her gate with flowers. Every street corner has a temple or idol, every day is a feast or festival or thanksgiving. Incense hangs in the air, the sound of temple bells pierces it, and auspicious red colours it. It must be the rarefied atmosphere too, the emptiness of the mountains, and the thought-clarifying cold that has drawn saints through the ages to seek spiritual attainment here.

Everyone has a few precious memories.



Living in Kathmandu is like coming home to a strange, beautiful place.

Nabakov wrote (in another context) “...a pilot light is steadily burning somewhere in the basement and a mere touch applied to one's private thermostat instantly results in a quiet little explosion of familiar warmth.” We all know those little bursts. I take with me several from Nepal. A clear favourite is our first trek in Solu-Khumbu when the guide suddenly turned round to us at a corner on a steep incline. Jerking a thumb behind him, he said laconically: “Everest.” And there it was, nature's biggest box-office draw. I hold lots of other memories, less dramatic perhaps, but just as dearly enduring—of all the good times around dozens of fires, the countless toasts raised, and the laughter that goes on. ♦

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from p. 1 ➡

Miles to go

How is such a fundamental chasm going to be bridged, and does Deuba need a consensus from all parliamentary parties on what he is going to talk about?

Prachanda wants the ISDP, the paramilitary Armed Police Force and the Public Security Regulations scrapped before any talks. It is hard to imagine Deuba letting go of these, because that will defang the government. The new prime minister also has to clear up the issue of army deployment in Rolpa and elsewhere. Koirala's resignation, according to senior Nepali Congress sources, came immediately after a disagreement with King Gyanendra last Wednesday over the Rolpa deployment.

Koirala felt the army was not moving in to rescue captured policemen despite a clear objective and mandate from the National Security Council. The army's chain of command is going to be a touchy issue. How will Deuba deal with the king?

Streamlining governance and curbing corruption, highly desirable though these issues may be, will be difficult with some of the powerful, tainted and ambitious figures in Deuba's cabinet lineup. We have seen before that long-term, non-partisan national interest is pretty low down on their list of priorities. And behind the curtains there is a vindictive Koirala licking his wounds, and waiting to give Deuba a taste of his own medicine. Can Deuba rein in his cabinet?

The UML is feeling the squeeze from the Maoists and wants dialogue with the rebels to be all-party and not government-Maoists only. It is pleased it is facing local elections next year with Deuba at the helm and not the organisationally stronger Koirala. Still, they will be waiting to pounce on any issue like the recent hike in electricity tariffs. What will the UML's next Lauda be?

Nepal has seen no major foreign direct investment in the past five years and business confidence has sunk to an all-time low. The royal massacre has already hit the tourism industry and news-bites on the insurgency will continue to scare away tourists. Nothing will work without peace, which Deuba has

recognised is the number one priority. But can he deliver, and how soon?

"I don't think this is the time to be totally hopeful, says Dr Pitamber Sharma, a leftist analyst. "There have been good moves by both Deuba and Prachanda, but we don't know what they have up their sleeve." For now, both sides need breathing space. The Maoists need to consolidate their position and rethink their strategy after the tactical confusion about how to cash in on the royal massacre. Deuba needs time to settle down, but he won't get much.

The Maoists see the 1 June

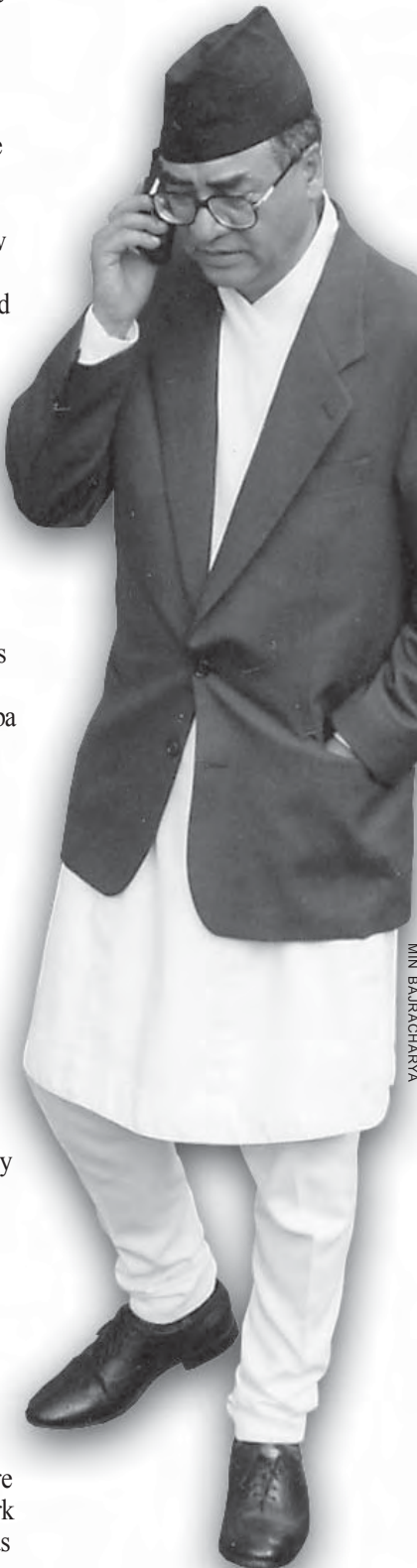
royal massacre as a historical opportunity to move towards setting up a "people's republic". Political parties that accept the present constitution oppose this. The Maoists will try to bank on the poor public image of the king's son Paras, likely to be the next monarch, to sell their idea to the masses. They will also try to demoralise the army and build on rifts between Singha Durbar and Narayanhiti over the army.

"Legally there is no doubt that government can use the army whenever it considers it necessary, but based on the experience of his predecessor, Deuba has an uphill task ahead, taking the army and the king into confidence," says Ganesh Raj Sharma, a constitutional lawyer and political analyst. Unlike his predecessor, who had a full-time defence minister to oversee the ISDP implementation and have one-more vote in the National Security Council, Deuba has kept the crucial defence ministry and seven others (including foreign) with himself.

The most immediate question is what to do with the army already deployed in Nuwagaon in Rolpa. The military cannot back out until there is a face-saving release of the remaining policemen taken from Holeri. Maoist central committee member Rabindra Shrestha in a *Jana Aadesh* article warns the army to keep out. He says the Maoist demand is for Deuba to immediately cancel the army's deployment under the ISDP in 11 districts, especially its "base areas".

In a statement soon after being elected on Monday, Deuba recognised that the economy and tourism wouldn't stand a chance without first resolving the Maoist threat. Luckily for him, Nepal's macro-economic indicators are sound. Last year's healthy monsoon and foreign remittance kept the annual growth rate at a decent six percent. But foreign investments have dried up, and income from exports like garments, pashmina and carpets are down. And the big dollar earner, tourism, has suffered a serious setback.

"There is still hope, all we need for a rebound is peace and consistent efforts at developing tourist infrastructure," says Pradeep Raj Pandey of the Nepal Tourism Board. "If we have that, I'm confident tourism can take care of itself." ♦



MIN BAIRAGHARVA

FEEDBACK

by SAMRAT RANA

Rolpa's lessons

Military force is only a means, and not an end by itself. It has to be deployed judiciously, decisively and in conjunction with other elements of state power.

The use of the military to rescue 69 policemen kidnapped by Maoists from Holeri post in Rolpa, was the first instance in which the Maoist and the Army have come eyeball-to-eyeball during the current insurgency eyeball ("Still quiet on the western front", #52). The use of the terminology "security forces" by the government spokesmen in their following press statements was also a significant first.

"Security forces", is a generic term describing a government organisation consisting of civil administrators, police, intelligence and military elements, geared towards waging joint or combined operations against an insurgent movement. You could be a pessimist and say the government is only generating spin, and does not understand the implications of this terminology and the approach it signifies. On the other, it could also point to the welcome arrival of a fresh and distinctive change in the government's attitudes and decision-making process vis-à-vis the insurgency.

In order to govern a nation according to the laws of the land and international norms, a government has an array of powers in hand of which force is one. The use of force is also regarded as a government's last resort and has two aspects to it: one internal and the other external. Usually, any force which has to be applied to sort out internal law and order crises is carried out by a police organisation, and application of force against external threats is taken care of by the military.

However, modern nation states face a multiplicity of security problems and challenges. A totally new and comprehensive dimension of security has emerged because of factors such as easy accessibility to destructive weapons and technology, organised crime and other such non-military threats. The use of military force to shore up government response against such multi-dimensional threats has now become a matter of common practice around the world. Nevertheless, one must always remember that military force is only a means, and not an end by itself. It has to be deployed judiciously, decisively and in conjunction with the other elements of power at the disposal of governments, so as to achieve the desired results.

The recent deployment of the Royal Nepal Army in Rolpa created ripple of effects throughout civil society and the military. The belief that a quick and decisive resolution of the problem is at hand is premature. The Maoist movement was not born because of military reasons, the root cause of the problem lies in the political, social and economical domain. The singular use of military force to cure an essentially socio-political and socio-economic problem would address only the symptoms and not the cause of this crisis.

Once deployed will the government be able to sustain the military gains, and the favourable press coverage for any substantial period of time? These are some questions that policy makers must reflect upon deeply in the course of formulating, evolving and articulating a comprehensive counter-insurgency strategy involving the use of military force.

The new prime minister and his government will need to come to terms with the reality that the police force is in shambles and the administration is in dire straits. There is not much doubt in any one's mind that military assistance is required to support a collapsing administrative edifice. If it is true that Girija Prasad Koirala deployed the army in Rolpa with the aim of releasing the 69 police hostages so as to resign in a blaze of glory, then it was a stupendous folly.

It is also clear that Koirala struggled to establish clear civilian control over the army. But was this issue ever in doubt? The real question is: should the army be used to pursue party and individual interests or should

this force be applied to pursue national interests and national objectives? We must rationalise the government's habitual acts of illogical behavior, loss of focus and its misplaced priorities. As the role of the army assumes a higher profile, it is essential that the army shouldn't be perceived as a threat to Nepal's nascent democracy and good governance. All effort must be made to tap and exploit its unquestioned nationalist credentials and professional abilities.

Civilian politicians need to be aware of the procedures for and implications of the application of military force to achieve political objectives. Military force applied senselessly is more of a liability than an asset. The government's Integrated Security and Development Package (ISDP) to counter Maoist activities is by all standards a sound one. It has rightfully recognised the center of gravity of the problem as resting on two pillars: one the general population and the other the comprehensive organisation of the Maoist. The key to success therefore, lies in being able to articulate the concept very clearly to a wide audience by putting forward in very lucid terms the prioritised objectives of the ISDP strategy. This then has to be backed up by a firm will and strong resolution. Protracted warfare is the essence of the Maoist strategy. Therefore, looking for quick fix results is essentially against the very nature of the problem. In this sort of a conflict, patience is not only a virtue but also a necessity.

The recent face off between the army and Maoists in Rolpa confirms that "any action has an equal and opposite reaction". An objective analysis of the event clearly showed the effect of applying military force directly and abrasively. The subsequent critical press coverage generated also revealed much ignorance about the variety of military applications and options available to the government. It is therefore, crucial for civilians to understand that as professionals the military must be given an explicit objective by the civilian leadership, and the military can then come up with an array of logical options and matching capabilities to be applied.

The civilian leadership must also understand that interference and politicisation of the affairs of the military is detrimental. The singular and myopic approach of using military means only to counter the Maoists is a lame strategy, and a prescription for failure. ♦

Samrat Rana is the pseudonym of a senior military officer.



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Virus alert

A worm virus called Sircam discovered on 17 July wreaked havoc on computers around the world last week. The virus, which Symantec, makers of Norton Anti-Virus software, says causes "medium-damage", spreads through the Internet and networks. It can do either of the following: send out large numbers of emails to the infected PC itself and also randomly select addresses from the address book; select documents at random from your hard drive and email those often confidential files around the world, delete files on the C drive, and degrade performance (by adding text at each startup and filling the hard drive). The worm is distributed through email, coming with messages with a first line like "Hi! How are you," and ending note saying "See you later. Thanks." The attachments are named at random. The best way to prevent your computer from being infected is to have your computer protected by the latest update from Norton Anti-virus—which finally, three days later, had a remedy for the virus.

Export watch

Nepal's overseas exports were slow all through the past fiscal year, with sales in India and abroad slower than previous years. Ten-month statistics of the central bank show that despite overall exports being up by about 18 percent, there has been a marked decline in some major individual products. Carpet exports were down by almost 13 percent to Rs 7.14 billion in mid-May 2000/01 compared to the Rs 8.17 billion in the same year-earlier period. Likewise, those of readymade garments dropped by about four percent to Rs 11.31 billion compared to the 13.94 billion they earned in the same period in 1999/00. The central bank has reported continued increase in pashmina exports: sales overseas was up by 102 percent to Rs 3.88 billion but those to India was down by 10 percent to Rs 2.55 billion. Among the major exports to India, those faring well were vegetable ghiu whose sales rose by 24 percent to Rs 2.68 billion and copper wires/rods, sales of which shot up by 322 percent to Rs 1.64 billion. Toothpaste and soap exports have both slowed down, toothpaste sales by about eight percent to Rs 1.77 billion and soaps by about one percent to Rs 819 million—both decreases are said to be in part due to India's new countervailing duty on manufacturer's retail price that began to be levied in March.

Economist speaks

After almost 20 years at the Nepal Rastra Bank, Yubaraj Khatiwoda, executive director of the Nepal Rastra Bank's research division, says he finally feels he has done a good job. That was when the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce (FNCCI) recognised his work at the bank last week. A PhD in monetary economics, Khatiwoda has spent his years at the bank generating vital economic data for the government, to which NRB is an advisor. His division is the main authority on Balance of Payments, consumer prices and data on trade with India.



"We seem alright for the short-run," says Khatiwoda of the country's macroeconomic health. "But because investment is down, things may not be as good in the medium or long term." The improved short-term picture has resulted at the cost of investment. The fixed capital formation was just 10 percent in the last fiscal year, which he says is not enough to maintain a steady overall growth, especially in a country where the capital input-output ratio in Nepal is about 4:1—getting one rupee back

in a year after putting in four. "We're at a low level economic equilibrium now but would have to pump in investment to get on the fast lane," he adds.

Khatiwoda is one of the few Nepali professionals who hasn't always spoken the official line. In the early years of privatisation, when he had cautioned for more transparency and equity, he was even labelled a "Leftist advisor to a centrist government." "Now every one thinks that was where we went wrong," he says. Says the economist: "As an individual, I have my vote, but at work I do my best to be totally professional."

NDBL oversubscribed

A press release of the Nepal Development Bank Limited says over 83,000 people applied to buy the 480,000 shares (par value Rs 100) it had offered, oversubscribing the issue 27 times. This is not the first time a public issue has been oversubscribed, which economists say is a reflection of the lack of adequate investment opportunities elsewhere and the low interest rate offered by banks on time deposits.

NEA-Butwal Power PPA

The Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has signed a long-overdue power purchase agreement with the Butwal Power Company, which is now being processed for privatisation. Under the two-year agreement, the NEA will buy power at Rs 2.36 per kilowatt from BPC's Andhikhola project and at Rs 3.26 from its Jhimruk project in fiscal year 2001/02. The purchase price will be Rs 2.50 and Rs 3.46 in fiscal 2002/03. The agreement also allows the BPC to continue selling power directly to consumers directly in parts of Syanjga, Palpa, Pyuthan and Arghakanchi districts.

Fancy mugshots

Tired of drab old passport photographs? Try the Kodak Picture Maker, a digital instant photo kiosk. The machine is said to print photographs instantly—with users able to customise the backgrounds, colours, shape and size of their mugshots. The kiosk prints the usual passport and autograph size photo and memory pictures, and also postcards, stickers, business and invitation cards—cropped, zoomed, and red-eye reduced. And if that weren't enough, you can store all this on floppy diskettes. The kiosk will be up and running at the Kodak Express Store in early August.

Photo Concern, the sole distributor of Kodak products in Nepal, told us the machine will set buyers back a cool Rs 350,000. Saikul Azam, Kodak's South Asia coordinator, says it's a low investment on high technology with great returns.



Whither education?



The problem with education is more than the private/ public debate.

Thirty two percent passed. This was what the nation heard earlier this month, when the SLC results were announced. This is worrying. But what is more so is the pass percentages in public schools compared with their private counterparts. There are districts in which numerous public schools had zero pass rates. Even in a district like Kabhre, that is high in the Human Development Index, the overall pass rate was 25 percent—85 percent of these students were from private schools, the remaining 15 percent, from public schools. Education is already such a fraught issue. And given these statistics, how can the Nepali public be blamed for losing faith entirely in public schools?

We need to take this debate to a higher level than hand-wringing and name-calling. What is at stake here is nothing less than future employment, social welfare and the national economy. The government spends just over Rs 2,000 per student per year, hardly a sign of committed engagement. Private education is too expensive to be available to many Nepalis. And we can't just blame the government for not pumping in enough cash. In many places, the public school teachers are paid more than those in private schools, but the quality of education is as poor as in other places. Things like motivation



and dedication are hard to set standards for and even harder to put price tags on. But there are other, more quantifiable features of the education system, especially at the secondary level, like its methods of examination.

The SLC exam creates two kinds of problems. One, although the pass rate appears dismal to us, the fact is that every year, it rises slightly. Those who pass cannot all be accommodated in our better institutions of higher instruction, so they continue to receive a mediocre education. As for the ones who fail, they tend to add to the count of the unemployed. Take it from the Beed, every student who goes through the SLC system aspires to a coloured collar, whether blue or white. The educational system does not respect vocations—a continuation of rote learning and mechanical thought are seen as the end all study aspires to—and so children of farmers or carpenters go looking for desk jobs. In rural Nepal, once a person appears for the SLC exam, it is demeaning for

that person to go and work in the fields or even stay in the village. They migrate to urban areas, increasing the claims on already scarce resources. The notion that a job, whether government or private sector, is basically subsidised living has permeated the consciousness of this nation. Everyone wants to earn more by working less and believes a job is the way there.

India has lessons for us—quality education can be made affordable. The states lagging behind in India are the ones where the educational system is comparable to ours. It is now very important that we look at the education sector in totality, in the context of what this country needs and has. We need to examine the utility of national level examinations at so many levels, as well as the system of exams themselves in place. And we need to bring back respect to traditional professions and vocations and realise that while having a formal education is an important aspect of life in modern times, it need not determine what we do, how we make our living. What it does do is enhance our ability to do those things, especially if we return to traditional professions. ♦

Readers can post their views at arthabeed@yahoo.com

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Next 10 years

from p. 1 ➡

THE NEA IS ALSO IN A DILEMMA BECAUSE OF A DISPUTE WITH CONTRACTORS ON VARIATION FROM THE ORIGINAL ESTIMATE, AND THEIR DEMAND FOR MORE PAYMENT IN ORDER TO ACCELERATE THE WORK BEFORE WINTER. IT NOW LOOKS UNLIKELY THAT EVEN THE FIRST OF THREE TURBINES GENERATING 48MW EACH WILL BE COMPLETED BEFORE FEBRUARY 2002. WHICH COULD MEAN POWER CUTS THIS WINTER.

FOR SOMEONE STRUGGLING WITH DEADLINES AND STRAINING TO MEET THE CONFLICTING DEMANDS OF CONTRACTORS, LOCAL PEOPLE AND MINISTRY BUREAUCRATS IN KATHMANDU, KAPALI LOOKS SURPRISINGLY SANGUINE. HE TOLD US: "THIS IS NEPAL, YOU EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED. AND BY OUR STANDARDS, THINGS HAVE SO FAR GONE PRETTY SMOOTHLY." NEA OFFICIALS CLAIM THAT DESPITE THE COST OVERRUNS, AND THE VARIATIONS ON ORIGINAL ESTIMATES THEY HAVE MANAGED TO SCRIMP AND SAVE UP TO \$30 MILLION ON THE PROJECT BUDGET.

BUT INDEPENDENT WATER EXPERTS SAY THE NEA HAS SUFFERED CHRONICALLY FROM WEAK LEGAL CONTRACTS WITH PRIVATE POWER PRODUCERS AND WITH FOREIGN CONTRACTORS FOR PROJECTS LIKE KALI GANDAKI. SOME OF THESE CONTRACTS HAVE BEEN PUSHED THROUGH WITH POLITICAL PRESSURE TO ATTRACT SHOWCASE FOREIGN INVESTORS. THE NEA IS THEREFORE SADDLED WITH HIGH DOLLAR-DENOMINATED PRICES FOR POWER WHICH IT HAS NO OPTION BUT TO PASS ON TO THE CONSUMER.

"THERE IS NO REASON WHY NEA CAN'T MAKE WATER-TIGHT CONTRACTS," SAYS BIKASH PANDEY OF WINROCK INTERNATIONAL, NEPAL. "THE REASON IS EITHER POLITICAL INTERFERENCE, OR INCOMPETENCE, OR BOTH." PANDEY SAYS THE NEA SHOULD HAVE THE CONFIDENCE TO SAY IT IS ONLY GOING TO WORK ON RESERVOIR PROJECTS AND LET THE FOREIGN JOINT VENTURES COME IN ON RUN-OF-RIVER SCHEMES, OR VICE VERSA. "NEA AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR SHOULD DECIDE WHAT EACH SHOULD BUILD AND DIVIDE IT UP," HE ADDS.

FAULTY POLICY HAS RESULTED IN A POWER GLUT DURING THE MONSOON BECAUSE ALL HYDROPOWER PLANTS IN NEPAL (EXCEPT KULEKHAN) ARE RUN-OF-RIVER SCHEMES WITH ALMOST NO SEASONAL

STORAGE CAPACITY. AS A RESULT THERE IS A POWER SURPLUS DURING LOW DEMAND PERIODS LIKE THE MONSOON, AND A POWER SHORTAGE DURING HIGH-DEMAND WINTER AND LEAN PRE-MONSOON MONTHS. IDEALLY, THE NEA SHOULD BE ABLE TO SAY IT WILL ONLY BUY DRY SEASON POWER AT PREMIUM PRICE, AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD RESPOND TO THAT. UNDER PRESENT CONTRACTS, THE AUTHORITY IS FORCED TO BUY ALL POWER CHURNED OUT BY RUN-OF-RIVER PRIVATE GENERATORS LIKE KHIMTI AND BHOTE KOSI, INCLUDING "FLOOD" ENERGY RESULTING IN UP TO 1,000 GWH GOING WASTE. THIS IS NEARLY 40 PERCENT OF NEA'S TOTAL PRESENT ENERGY PRODUCTION.

THIS ANOMALY IS NOT GOING TO BE RESOLVED BY KALI GANDAKI, SINCE IT ONLY HAS SIX HOURS OF DAILY PONDAGE. PRE-MONSOONS WITH LOW SNOW MELT AND LITTLE RAIN COULD RESULT IN THE SAME CRIPPLING POWER SHORTFALLS WE SAW THIS YEAR IN MAY. BUT THE NEXT PLANNED HYDROPOWER PROJECT IN NEPAL IS THE 70MW MIDDLE MARSYANGDI, WHICH IS ALSO A RUN-OF-RIVER, AS ARE MANY OF THE OTHER SMALLER PROJECTS THE NEPALI PRIVATE SECTOR IS INVESTING IN.

A MEDIUM-SIZE RESERVOIR PROJECT WOULD SOLVE THIS SEASONALITY PROBLEM, BUT THE NEXT PLANNED STORAGE DAM IS THE AUSTRALIAN JOINT VENTURE 750MW WEST SETI PROJECT. SADLY, THIS IS ONLY MEANT FOR EXPORT TO INDIA AND EVEN THEN IT WON'T BE READY FOR ANOTHER TEN YEARS. WATER ECONOMIST DIPAK GYAWALI SEES A WAY OUT: "WEST SETI SHOULD HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED AS A 350 MW STORAGE PROJECT FOR THE NEPALI NATIONAL GRID, AND THIS COULD BE THE NEXT MAJOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT FOR THE NEA TO UNDERTAKE."

SO WHAT DO WE DO TILL THEN? DEMAND-SIDE INTERVENTIONS LIKE TIME-OF-DAY METERING ARE URGENTLY NEEDED, AND EXPERTS SAY NEPAL NEEDS TO SERIOUSLY CONSIDER EXPORTING SURPLUS MONSOON POWER TO ENERGY-STARVED NORTH INDIA. THIS COULD AMOUNT TO 150MW BY THE TIME KALI GANDAKI COMES ON STREAM NEXT YEAR. THE OTHER THING TO DO IS TO STRENGTHEN THE NEA'S HAND IN FUTURE PROJECTS. "CONTRACTORS HAVE ALWAYS HELD THE UTILITY HOSTAGE, AND UNLESS THE NEA CAN FIX THE PRICE WITH AN INCENTIVE ON THE CONTRACTOR TO

KEEP COSTS DOWN, COST OVER-RUNS ARE GOING TO BE REPEATED WITH MIDDLE MARSYANGDI AS WELL," SAYS ONE GOVERNMENT ENGINEER. MIDDLE MARSYANGDI IS BEING BUILT WITH A GERMAN GRANT EARMARKED FOR ARUN III, THE CANCELLATION OF WHICH IN 1993 PAVED THE WAY FOR THE SLEW OF PROJECTS IN THE PAST EIGHT YEARS.

BUT THE NEA IS TRAPPED BY A MIXTURE OF DONOR POLITICS, TIED AID, HIGH-LEVEL CORRUPTION LEADING TO POLITICAL INTERFERENCE, LACK OF COMPETITIVE BIDDING AND POLICY CONFUSION. PART OF THIS CONFUSION IS SEEN IN CONTRADICTIONARY DONOR POLICIES WITH SOME PUSHING PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT, WHILE OTHERS WANT TO WORK WITH THE NEA. AS A RESULT, THE NEA NOW IS IN CONFLICTING ROLES AS A PRODUCER, REGULATOR, AND DISTRIBUTOR. AND IRONICALLY, IT IS FORCED TO BUY POWER FROM FOREIGN JOINT VENTURES FOR A PRICE NEARLY DOUBLE OF WHAT IT CAN GENERATE WITH ITS OWN PROJECTS LIKE THE 20MW CHILIME. SMALL NEPALI INVESTORS, MEANWHILE, HAVE TO COMPETE WITH THE NEA. SAYS GYAWALI: "WE NEED TO STREAMLINE THE NEA'S ROLE BY UNBUNDLING. THIS WOULD LEAVE MEDIUM-SIZE RUN-OF-RIVER PROJECTS FOR PRIVATE NEPALI CAPITAL TO DEVELOP, MUNICIPALITIES CAN HANDLE DISTRIBUTION IN URBAN AREAS AND CUT THEFT, AND THE NEA WOULD REMAIN A NATIONAL ELECTRICITY HIGHWAY FOR POWER EXPORT TO INDIA."

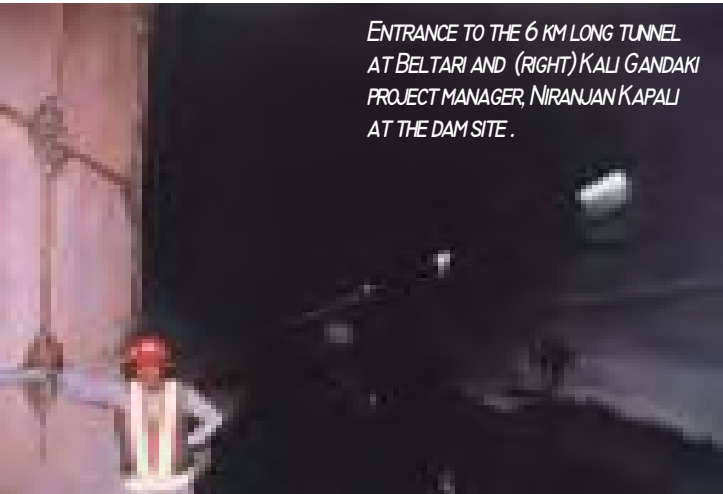
THE SILVER LINING IN ALL THIS IS THAT THINGS WOULD HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE IF NEPAL HAD DECIDED TO GO FOR ARUN III BACK IN 1993 AS THE WORLD BANK DESPERATELY WANTED US TO. IT WAS THE FORESIGHT THEN OF SOME PLANNERS IN THE WATER BUREAUCRACY, UNDP'S RESIDENT COORDINATOR GEROLD BERKE AND ACTIVISTS WHO PUSHED FOR MORE COST-EFFECTIVE, MEDIUM-SIZE PROJECTS LIKE KALI GANDAKI. GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS STILL RECALL THE EPIC BATTLES DURING MEETINGS BETWEEN THE WORLD BANK AND THE UNDP IN 1992 OVER ARUN III AND KALI GANDAKI. TODAY, FOR LESS THAN THE COST OF ARUN III, NEPAL NOW HAS NEARLY AS MUCH POWER FROM FIVE MEDIUM-SIZE PROJECTS, AND THEY WERE ALL COMPLETED IN LESS THAN THE TIME IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN FOR ARUN III

TO BE FINISHED. NEED ANYONE SAY MORE?

BUT THIS SUCCESS HAS CREATED A SKEWED SUPPLY SITUATION. EXPECT POWER CUTS THIS WINTER, IN APRIL-MAY 2001, BUT THEN NO SHORTFALLS UNTIL 2004. AFTER THAT, THERE WILL BE A BIG POWER SURPLUS DURING THE MONSOONS, BUT LOAD SHEDDING WILL RETURN DURING THE DRY SEASON AND IN WINTER, UNLESS SOME MEDIUM-SIZE STORAGE PROJECTS ARE LAUNCHED QUICKLY. ♦



pepsi



ENTRANCE TO THE 6 KM LONG TUNNEL AT BELTARI AND (RIGHT) KALI GANDAKI PROJECT MANAGER, NIRANJAN KAPALI AT THE DAM SITE.



ALL PHOTOS KUNDA DIXIT



HIMALAYAN WATERS

Tso Rolpa glacial lake with its fragile moraine dam

Liquid assets

Two recent books on Himalayan water demystify and demythify this precious resource.

MADHUKAR UPADHYA

The Himalayan region, of which Nepal is a part, stores one-fifth of the world's fresh water. It is therefore fitting that two landmark books this year on water management and regional cooperation to harness water resources should both be published in Nepal.

The first is *Himalayan Waters* by the Bhutanese water expert Bhim Subba and published by the communication and media training agency, Panos South Asia. The other is *Water in Nepal*, a collection of articles and monographs by Nepali resource economist, Dipak Gyawali and published by Himal Books. Between them, the two books have the potential to turn anyone into an arm-chair water expert. The lay reader, journalist, academic, policy makers and donors get a tour de horizon of the enormous hurdles and stupendous potential for better water management in the region and in Nepal.

The Himalaya is the fountainhead of water that sustains some 1.5 billion people.

Water from the roof of the world flows down the Indus to the Arabian Sea, it flows north from the Karakoram to the Aral and the Caspian, from eastern Tibet it gurgles down the Yangtse to the Chinese heartland, it tracks down the Mekong and Irrawady to south-east Asia, and through the Ganga-Brahmaputra system it flows to the Bay of Bengal.

But despite this enormous water storage capacity, as Subba points out, the South Asian region suffers from the curse of too little or too much water. For four months during the monsoon season, there is too much water. For the rest of the eight months, there is too little. That is why Cherrapunji in Meghalya, which gets about 9,000 mm of precipitation a year is described as the "wettest desert in the world". During the non-monsoon months, there is actually a water shortage in this eastern Indian town. "The region is water rich but yet water stressed," writes Subba.

The Himalaya provide a valuable source of water for drinking, irrigation, energy, industry and transportation. But

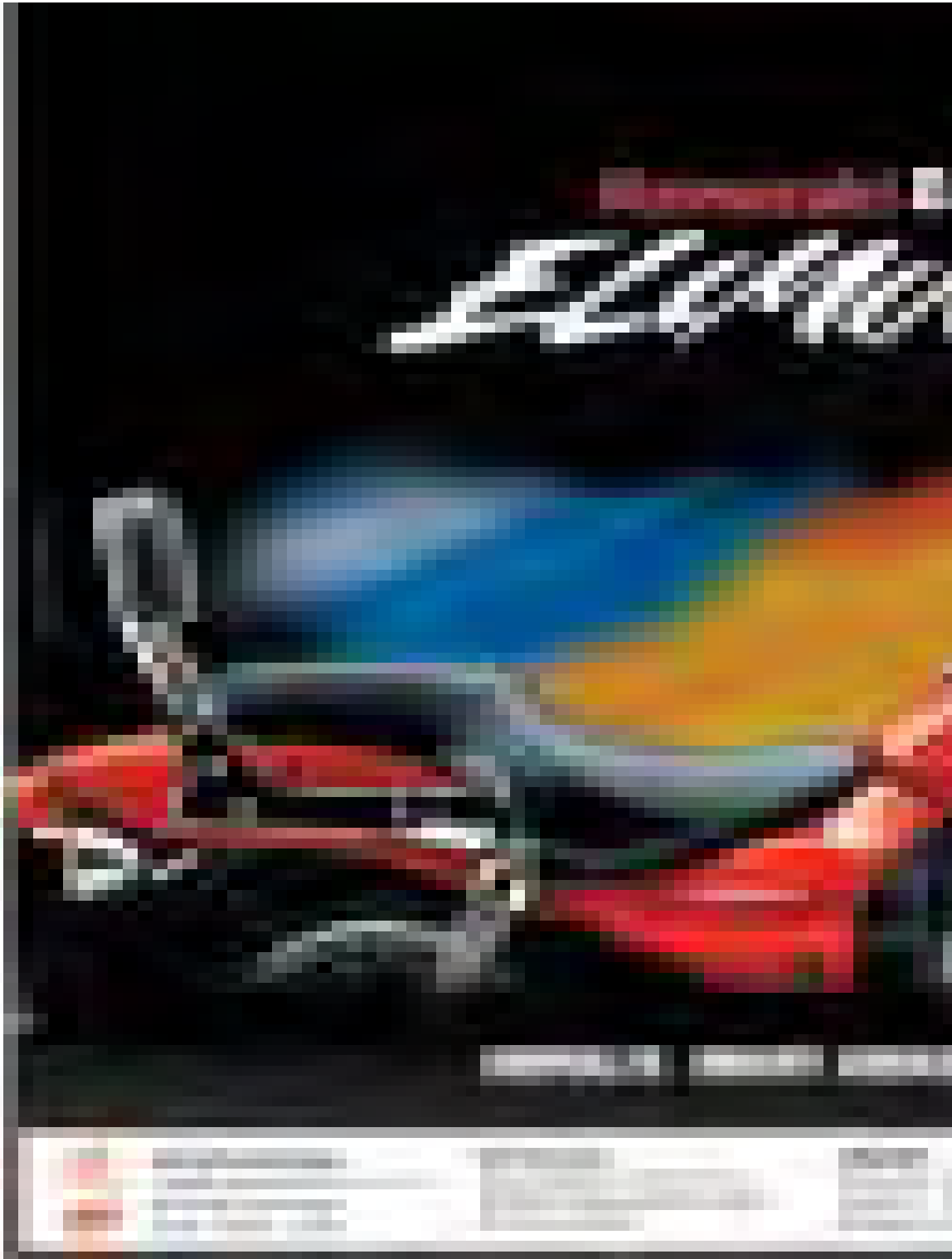
when they burst their banks Himalayan rivers can make millions destitute. One fifth of Bangladesh is submerged every year, and during bad years like 1986 nearly 70 percent of the country goes underwater. The same floods that destroy also bring valuable silt, replenishing nutrients in the soil. Water makes life possible, but it also takes away lives.

In the mountains, rains bring the annual curse of landslides and erosion which add sediments to already choked rivers. Roads, bridges, and railway tracks are washed away. Numerous glacial lakes located at the head of these rivers can bring destructive flashfloods when they burst. Global warming is gorging many Himalayan glacial lakes with snow-melt which could push through their loose moraine dams at any time with cataclysmic floods downstream.

Managing these rivers and water sources holds promise for the future, but only if they are properly managed for the common good. Appropriate projects, carefully chosen and affordably built, cooperation between countries in the region alone can sustain the healthy agriculture and robust industry to ensure better quality of life for one of the poorest and most-densely populated regions of the world.

South Asia's river systems are the cradle of the civilisations that evolved here over millennia. Today, rivers have come under the jurisdiction of different governments, some of them on not very good terms with each other. Still, the rivers make a mockery of artificial lines on the

Shangrila





Colour-enhanced satellite image of Bangladesh showing the Jamuna (Brahmaputra)

map. Ideally, transnational water resources planning must respect a river's will and let it flow according to the parameters of a watershed and not national boundaries. Our inability to do this has resulted in half the population of the Indus-Ganga-Brahmaputra belt living below the poverty line even as precious fresh water flows wasted to the sea. Worse, sharing the water of common rivers has now become an issue for conflict between and within nations.

In *Himalayan Waters*, Bhim Subba brings the total picture of this complex subject to the English-reading public in the region. The easy-to-read and precisely written text is refreshing, the illustrations by Subhas Rai are clear and colourful, and the

photographs are well-chosen and illustrative. It is hard to pull off something like this: a text book that looks like a coffee table book, but Subba has done it.

Dipak Gyawali's *Water in Nepal*, on the other hand, is a seminal and exhaustive collection of past articles that gives in historical perspective the reasons why falling water has not translated into hydro-dollars for Nepal. Gyawali demystifies and de-mythifies water in Nepal. How governments, bureaucrats and politicians over the years made wild promises about how exporting water to India is the panacea that will lift Nepal out of poverty. *Water in Nepal* lays out the prerequisite questions that need to be asked before that can happen: Who benefits and who

holds the key to this vast treasure? Who pays the cost and who reaps the harvest? Gyawali urges a paradigm shift in the way Nepal looks at water, and in doing so turns many long-cherished dreams on their heads. For example, although electricity is a finished product for us, it is only a raw material for the buyer (India), and no country can get rich by exporting just raw materials.

Water Nepal and *Himalayan Waters* both dissect the Kosi project in India's Bihar district, and how instead of controlling floods the embankments have pauperised the already-poor state, sustained corruption and made that part of India what it is now. Why is this relevant to Nepal? Because every time the embankments are unable to stop floods, the Bihar government and New Delhi bring up the subject of the Kosi High Dam in Nepal.

Gyawali gives another example of what he means by paradigm shift: after spending billions and several decades on canal construction for irrigation Nepal and India have both found that private tube-wells sprang up adjacent to the canals and helped boost agricultural production. Farmers, it seems needed water, but kickback-driven politicians and bureaucrats pushed lucrative construction work.

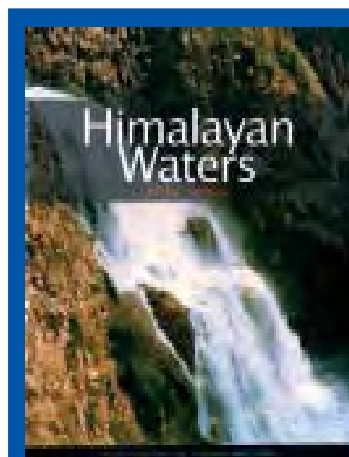
Water is a subject that touches everyone, but it is little understood. Everyone has an opinion on water, and when water is concerned it seems emotion and passion sideline rational and scientific thinking. The simplistic answers and solutions have powerful logic: Nepal can only develop by

building large dams and exporting electricity to India, the best way to control floods is to build embankments, widespread irrigation will boost food-production, building storage reservoirs in Nepal is the answer to Bangladesh's flood woes, deforestation in the Himalaya is the reason floods are getting worse in the plains. Both Subba and Gyawali in their books tell us, alas, that the truth is much more complicated than that. What makes it murkier is that politics, populism and geopolitics get mixed up with the science.

This is a pity, because Himalayan rivers play a vital role in the people's battle against hunger, providing water to hundreds of millions of farmers in Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, India and Pakistan. But these countries have yet to develop ways to use this gift for the general good of their people. Mixing water with politics is a disservice to the people who this precious fluid is supposed to benefit.

On the one hand water is getting scarcer, but on the other more and more valuable farmland in the plains is turning flood-prone, or water-logged. Today, there is a better understanding of the behaviour and nature of Himalayan rivers than in the past. New perceptions about floods and water scarcity are emerging. Farmers who were blamed in the past for clearing forests in the hills and making floods worse in the plains have been exonerated. The limited role that forests and watershed management play in regulating floods is better understood.

Embankments, which were initially designed to reduce floods



Himalayan Waters:
Promise and Potentials, Problems
and Politics
by Bhim Subba
Panos South Asia, Kathmandu. 2001
Price: Rs 2,500 hardcover, Rs 2,000 soft cover
Pages: 286



Water in Nepal
by Dipak Gyawali
Himal Books,
Panos South Asia,
Nepal Water Conservation
Foundation 2001
Price: Rs 550 hardcover
Pages: 280

made things worse. India has constructed more than 15,000 km of expensive levees after independence, with Bihar alone having more than 3,400 km. But floods are worse than ever before. Even so, governments in the region still spend millions on conventional and discredited methods of flood and erosion control.

As with the embankments, proponents of the big dams still view them as long-term solutions to meet power, irrigation and flood control requirements of the future. However, big dams are being increasingly challenged by both ecologists and economists who see them as unsustainable due to high environmental, economic, and social costs. Subba avoids polemics and lays out the pros and cons for both schools of thought. But what is clear is that given the political sensitivity of crossborder river sharing, the

exorbitant economic cost of large dams, and the growing reluctance of international credit institutions to support these grandiose schemes, their days are numbered.

In his book, Gyawali lays out the famous example of Arun III in Nepal: chronicling the World Bank's hard-nosed policy to force Nepal to agree to an expensive mistake, the politics within Nepal that drove the project, the international alliance of anti-Arun activists that brought it down in 1993. Ten years later, the vindication: because Arun was scrapped, Nepal finds itself in the relatively comfortable hydro-power situation it is in at present. Despite all the mistakes and the politicisation, something in Nepal worked. But neither Subba and Gyawali are knee-jerk anti-dam wallahs, just anti-bad dams.

See p. 12 ➡



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Subba looks at examples in South Asia where crossborder cooperation in water has worked—

Although Subba has taken a middle of the road approach, there is no doubt where his heart lies: in appropriate, affordable and relevant technologies, not with mammoth mega-projects that crowd out other development in South Asia's cash-starved countries. Himalayan Waters devotes a lot of space to traditional water-harvesting techniques which have been abandoned for the sake of modernity, small-is-beautiful turbines that allow remote villages to generate their own power. Subba

Subba explains the different ways in which South Asian countries have looked at water resources. For Nepal and Bhutan it is an export item to India and a source of foreign exchange. India looks at it as a source of cheap electricity for its energy-starved heartland. Bangladesh looks at the rivers mainly as an annual monsoonal curse. Regional cooperation stands little chance when national interests are so divergent. How do Nepal and India, Bhutan and India, India and Bangladesh, and the three countries together even begin to work together? The answer is give-and-take, that is what cooperation means. Subba, who in his previous job as the head of the Bhutan Power Corporation negotiated with India on hydropower, offers insight on where these compromises could happen. He warns that in the final analysis it all boils down to how honest and accountable the leaders of these countries are to their people. Subba suggests attitudinal, behavioral, technological, and societal changes through policies, laws, regulation, incentives and perhaps penalties. He is strongly opposed to subsidies that encourage wasteful practices. Subba concludes on a very optimistic note that the potential of Himalayan Waters is so vast and the benefits so obvious that the people will compel their governments to rise above narrow self-interests to protect watersheds and rejuvenate the rivers. ♦

Madhukar Upadhyaya is a watershed management expert.



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“Killers in Blue”

British police is angry about a controversial new film that takes on death in police custody.

DANIEL NELSON IN LONDON

The audience was getting angrier by the minute. “Show the film! Show the film!” they shouted. Someone called out: “This is the only chance for our dead to speak.” The organisers appealed for calm, but they, too, were angry at what they saw as a last-minute attempt to censor seven years’ work. Minutes earlier, faxes had begun arriving from lawyers acting on behalf of two police officers named in the film threatening legal action if the screening went ahead.

Organisers, the audience and filmmakers were furious—but not entirely surprised. After all, the film—about deaths in police custody in Britain—was called *Injustice*, and they regarded the attempt to suppress the film as yet another injustice. A member of the United Families and Friends Campaign, formed to secure impartial investigations into the deaths, said bitterly, “Now you can see what we have been up against all these years.” Eventually, members of the audience occupied the hall.

What they saw on screen was a passionate account of six of the roughly 1,000 people who have died in police custody in England and Wales since 1970. A disproportionate number of the most contentious deaths, in which excessive use of police force is alleged, involve Britons of African, Caribbean and South Asian origin. Not one police officer has gone to jail as a result, even in the few cases

where deaths were classified as unlawful by inquest juries. “It is an outrage that these killers in blue are not treated like any other section of society,” says co-director Tariq Mehmood in an article in the current issue of the socialist magazine *Red Pepper*.

Deaths in custody are always investigated, but Mehmood and other campaigners claim the system is loaded in favour of the police. They say the government departments responsible for criminal prosecutions demand higher standards of evidence in cases against police officers. They also argue that the rules covering inquests put victims’ families at a disadvantage and that police investigation of alleged crimes by other police cannot guarantee impartiality. And, they say, the independent Police Complaints Authority has proved toothless. Says Deborah Coles, co-director of *Inquest*, which campaigns against deaths in custody: “The current British system sends out a message that police can act with virtual impunity.” For black prisoners, the problem is compounded by racism. “The silence of the custodial system is compounded by the silences of racism,” charges A Sivanandan of the Institute of Race Relations. The United Families and Friends Campaign agrees: “We have lost confidence in the ability of the system to deliver real justice. These institutionalised racist killings are an

affront to a society that seeks to be a civilised democracy.”

At the heart of the controversy is an issue that applies to the police force of every country: the question the Roman poet and satirist Juvenal asked 2,000 years ago, *Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?* Who polices the police? Some improvements have been made, in the wake of incessant criticism. Many British forces, for example, have installed video cameras in cells.

In the meantime, controversy continues over *Injustice* and whether it should be shown. The film is not “balanced,” admits Mehmood and co-director Ken Fero—its aim is to give a voice to families and friends who feel they have been denied justice. Fero says he would have interviewed police if they had come forward. But the Police Federation, which at the time of writing had not seen the film, is hostile and wants to block screenings, arguing that the film is unfair to the officers involved. A Federation spokesperson told us “no injunction has been taken out to stop screening; solicitors acting on behalf of a number of officers pointed out to the cinemas that they may be liable to action should the film

be found to be defamatory. Proprietors were told that it was a matter for them to decide” whether to show the film.

Sending last-minute warning faxes leaves the cinema no time for negotiation. Management has to make an instant decision, and inevitably will be cautious rather than risk legal action and potentially heavy damages. Families who have struggled for years to obtain what they see as a fair hearing see such actions as part of police resistance to a genuine inquiry into the deaths, as an attempt to censor their side of the story. ♦ (GEMINI)



ANALYSIS

by CHARLES TAYLOR

The alchemy of violence



Violence arising from the categories we live by is a hallmark of modernity.

As Slobodan Milosevic undergoes trial for war crimes in The Hague, it is worth asking why categorical violence—genocide or ethnic cleansing of the type seen in Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo—recurs so often in our “civilised” century? Seeking explanations in biology or sociobiology makes “meaning” irrelevant—metaphysical meaning appears axiomatic to categorical violence.

Because we see ourselves as imperfect, below what god wants, we sacrifice the bad in us, or sacrifice things we treasure. Or, we see destruction as divine and renounce what is destroyed. We also invoke violence in ways that induce a sense of control, as with the warrior ethic, where the possibility of violent death is embraced. These can be combined—we submit to the god to whom blood is offered, but the sacrificers are also agents of violence. A sacred massacre is most satiating.

Ren Girard, who wrote about the intersection of religion and violence, sees sacred violence occurring when people seek to renew unity: attacking a victim heals internal rivalries threatening to destroy a community. This may or may not be scapegoating, which spawns catharsis and strengthens unity, but against the sense that the binding social order is corrupted, breaking down. Scapegoats and outsiders are created when we define ourselves in terms of our beliefs and ideal way of life. So we place evil outside ourselves, project it onto agents of “pollution”, historically, “barbarians,” “savages,” distant peoples. This was relatively harmless, but licensed cruelty when contact occurred, like the

Conquest of Mexico and the slave trades.

The most terrible violence arises when Outsiders are seen as polluting from within, needing urgently to be purged. We see this in the terrible history of European anti-Semitism. Modernity has often exacerbated this kind of feeling—enemies can be eliminated as a democratic duty. A people can forge its democratic identity in Revolution, purging internal enemies—aristocrats, kulaks—and making war against aggressive external “reaction”. Many democratic states have avoided this, but the very allegiance to a national identity, a cornerstone of most democratic polities, is a source of violence. “Others” threaten this identity—if you include a minority within our “people,” they may vote to change our identity; exclude them and they are denied citizenship, a key right of modernity. Either way, they could dismember our territory. So: assimilate or be cleansed! Thus the 20th century, the age of democracy, became the heyday of ethnic cleansing. Whoever violates our moral order deserves what they get. Take India’s Muslims. The ruling BJP believes mosques can be levelled because their construction hundreds of years ago was a fruit of aggression. Among less sophisticated members of the Party the discourse is crudely blunt: Muslims don’t belong here, send them to Pakistan. Note the terrible alchemy. Merely by existing a minority threatens identity. Add believable atrocity stories and mass violence is never far off. Elites manipulate these dark forces, as in Bosnia in the 1990s and in Punjab in 1947. Recent history in Punjab, where killing between Sikhs and Hindus has subsided, shows that this dialectic is not irresistible.

There is one more source of categorical violence—the way we rescue victims and punish perpetrators and victimisers. Concern for victims is, says Girard, the modern world’s religion. It battles injustice, but also draws lines and denounces enemies. I am a victim, someone must be the victimiser. Claiming victimhood asserts purity. Our cause is good, so we can inflict righteous violence.

Does knowing all this tell us how to lessen or eliminate categorical violence? Kant argued that ordered, democratic societies achieve this goal because they are by nature less violent. There is truth here, yet when the crusading spirit appears in democratic dress, no chivalry exists toward enemies. Yet efforts can be made to renounce the rights conferred by suffering, and stop violence before it seeks righteous retribution. Nelson Mandela did it, renouncing vengeance in favour of a conditional amnesty. The deeds exposed in public confessions were not only those of the former rulers. Here was true co-responsibility. No one knows if this will ultimately work. Mandela’s stance ignores the hunger for revenge and self-righteousness. Poland also comes to mind, with Adam Michnik’s advice to forego retribution to build a new society. The Dalai Lama offers another example. Their power lies not in suppressing the madness of violent categorisation, but in transfiguring it in the name of a new common world. ♦ (Project Syndicate)

Charles Taylor is professor of philosophy at McGill University, Montreal.

Fraud at the Bank?

WASHINGTON - The World Bank’s Development Gateway Internet initiative is the subject of charges submitted recently to the lending agency’s fraud unit. The complaint alleges “misuse of Bank funds and positions, gross waste of Bank funds, cost mischarging or defective pricing and perhaps even fraud and misleading of public opinion.” It singles out James Wolfensohn, the Bank’s president, and Richard Stern, a former vice president, for having “used their positions at the Bank to create a new organisation in which they will hold positions.” The Development Gateway is intended to be the leading portal for people interested in poverty and sustainable development. The Gateway is run by the Development Gateway Foundation, where Stern is acting CEO and Wolfensohn is lined up for director. “If it is true that this ‘independent Foundation’ is contracting back to the Bank, staffed by the Bank, situated in the Bank, entirely designed by the Bank and largely capitalised by it, eventual donors and perhaps even the American authorities that granted it legal status as a non-profit, may have been deceived to accept a non-existing independence,” the complaint reads.

Two Uruguayan civil society leaders, Roberto Bissio and Carlos Abin, wrote the complaint. The two established the Internet portal uruguaytotal.com, which they say delivers one million page views per month after two years in operation and less than \$500,000 in expenditure. By contrast, the Development Gateway’s business plan projects over \$100 million in spending over the next five years, in hopes of attracting only five times more visitors. This, they say, is a recipe for years of losses—that will have to be offset with subsidies by the Bank. “The Gateway’s other backers include wealthy nations’ governments and corporations. The Development Gateway has attracted controversy since its inception. Its attempts to reach out to civil society groups have had mixed results. (IPS)

Against the Americans

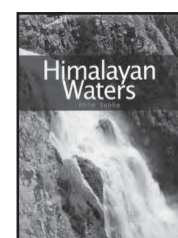
MOSCOW - China and Russia’s signing last week of their first post-Soviet friendship accord gives a key push to their efforts at building a “strategic partnership” over the last decade. The Treaty of Good Neighbourly Relations, Friendship and Cooperation, signed by visiting Chinese President Jiang Zemin and Russian President Vladimir Putin, will be valid until 2021. In a joint statement Putin and Jiang expressed hope for a “multi-polar” world, a concept that reflects Russia’s and China’s shared concern over what they view as US dominance in the world. Jiang and Putin reiterated their opposition to the US national missile defence plan. But the two nations are not forming a military alliance, saying that bilateral “military-technical cooperation is not directed against third countries.” The treaty is the first such since a 1949 pact between China and the Soviet Union, when Stalin and Mao announced a Soviet-Chinese alliance. Within a decade this had turned into enmity, bordering on an outright war in the late 1960s. But while China-Russia cooperation on matters like “military-technical cooperation” and arms sales have boomed, other economic ties have developed sluggishly. The overall bilateral trade volume was \$8 billion last year and \$4.6 billion in January-June 2001. Putin and Jiang agreed to expand cooperation in the sphere of oil and gas, energy, aircraft building, communications and new technologies. Putin said the energy sector as “one of the most promising areas of bilateral cooperation.” He thanked Jiang for allowing Russia’s natural gas giant Gazprom to take part in the tender to construct the East-West pipeline across China. The gas giant is already opening a representative office in China. (IPS)

Available in bookstores

Water in Nepal

by **Dipak Gyawali**
Himal Books, 2001
Rs 550 (hardback)

Using the analogy provided by Nepal’s efforts at exploiting its water resources, one of the country’s foremost hydropower engineers and socio-political analysts provides an account of the Nepali state’s development efforts over the last two decades. The book describes the problems that arise when ambition outpaces innate capacity in a poor country without the wherewithal to develop its natural endowment.



Himalayan Waters

by **Bhim Subba**
Panos South Asia, 2001
Rs 2500 (hardback)

Himalayan Waters explores the Himalayan watershed from Pakistan to Northeast India, from the Tibetan Plateau to the Bangladesh delta. This beautifully illustrated book by the former head of Bhutan’s hydro-based power department is for the lay person wanting to learn more about the Himalaya and its water environment as well as the politics of water in the region.

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Multiple casualties

Last week’s LTTE attacks have derailed peace talks and tourism, and further threatened President Kumaratunga’s position.

FEIZAL SAMATH IN COLOMBO

Tamil rebels delivered a crushing blow to the Sri Lankan government last week, attacking a military airbase and the country’s international airport. However, President Chandrika Kumaratunga’s worst enemy still remains the main opposition party. “For Kumaratunga, political survival is much greater than anything else at the moment,” one analyst said, referring to Kumaratunga’s struggle to stay in power after a key ally moved across to the opposition last month. “Her biggest nemesis is opposition leader Ranil Wickremasinghe and his United National Party (UNP), not LTTE leader Prabhakaran,” added the analyst, who requested anonymity. Damage from the airport attacks was devastating, with tourism the first casualty. No tourists were injured, but analysts say the industry will take

longer to recover than in the past. “Tourism has not been harmed directly in the past, unlike today when the rebels attacked the national carrier Sri Lankan Airlines,” said Dushanth Wijesinghe, research director at stockbroker Asia Securities Ltd. The tourism sector, which has seen many ups and downs in the past but has been a resilient sector, was set to see up to 450,000 arrivals this year, against 400,000 in 2000. That now would be a difficult target to achieve, he said. It is likely some foreign airlines will pull out and tourists scheduled to visit Sri Lanka will be diverted to other destinations in the coming months. The rebel attack would not have come at a worst time for President Kumaratunga. She has been fighting for her government’s political survival after a key ruling People’s Alliance (PA) ally crossed over to opposition ranks last month, swelling the ranks of

the opposition. For the first time in seven years—since the PA came to power in 1994—the ruling party became a minority in parliament. In response, Kumaratunga suspended parliament for two months and called a referendum on 21 August, asking people whether they want a new constitution. The twin moves were condemned by opposition parties, which are now a formidable force against the ruling party. The suspension of parliament was aimed at avoiding an opposition-initiated no-faith vote in the legislature, which the PA fears it could lose. Last week, two people were killed when police opened fire at protestors at UNP-led anti-government rallies across Colombo. UNP leader Wickremasinghe accused police of trying to kill him after he was badly tear-gassed and shot at. Analysts say Kumaratunga

would now use the LTTE attacks to her advantage even though her government has been badly weakened, politically and economically. Government ministers have been saying the UNP is partly responsible for the rebel strikes. Urban Development Minister Mangala Samaraweera, a close aide to Kumaratunga, said the Tiger rebels had sneaked into the city under the guise of taking part in last week’s protest marches. UNP’s Wickremasinghe angrily denied the allegation, saying the government should be blamed for the security lapse that led to the airport attack, one of the most serious civilian and security disasters. But as in the past, it is unlikely that ministers or security officials will resign.

Keethish Loganathan, an analyst at the local think tank Centre for Policy Alternatives, said the rebel attack was a military response to the recent wave of air force bombings on rebel targets in the northern Jaffna peninsula. “The rebels’ response to those attacks was more than symbolic. It was also unconnected to the 18th anniversary of the 1983 July ethnic riots which flared up across the country,” he said. He was referring to the widespread rioting against minority Tamils by majority Sinhalese on 23 July, 1983, which led to an escalation of the conflict.

Dr Jehan Perera, a political commentator and media director of the Colombo-based National Peace Council (NPC), a local NGO working toward a peaceful end to the internal conflict, said the attack would put the war back on the agenda, but would further distance the rebels and the government from prospective peace talks which the Norwegian government has been trying to broker. ♦ (IPS)

Cult in crisis

SUJOR DHAR IN KOLKATA

Sex scandals and embezzlement charges that have knocked the image of the Hare Krishna cult are now being compounded by street battles and court arbitration between its rival groups. Last month, internal dissensions became public when rival factions fought over who would lead the annual ‘Rathayatra’ (chariot-pulling festival) through the streets of Kolkata and New York. In April, the shaven-headed, saffron-robed cult members abandoned their drums and dancing to pelt each other with stones outside the temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) on Kolkata’s Albert Road, forcing police to intervene and arrest several feuding devotees.

ISKCON, widely called the “Hare Krishna” cult because its adherents are best known for chanting it ritually, now has two main rival groups—the ISKCON Revival Movement (IRM) group led by its expelled Kolkata chapter president Adridharan Das, and the ISKCON Governing Body (IGB) controlled from the US.

Founded in New York by one-time professor of philosophy Srila Prabhupada, ISKCON rapidly grew into a world movement. It attracted celebrities like the Beatle George Harrison who incorporated the trademark Hare Krishna chants in his music. When Prabhupada died in 1977, he left behind a worldwide empire with more than 100 temples, centres and schools run by 3,000 full-time members—and over which an intense struggle for control has grown.

By the nineties, a string of sex and money scandals had overtaken the movement, and a large number of its devotees left the fold in disgust. The biggest blow came in 1988 when Nori J. Mustar, ISKCON’s PR secretary and editor of the organisation’s newspaper, left and went on to write *Betrayal of The Spirit*, a book which detailed sordid stories of drug dealing, weapons stockpiling, deceptive fundraising, child abuse and murder within ISKCON—and the schisms that forced 95 percent of the group’s original members to leave.

“The root of the present problems with ISKCON is the proliferation in the number of gurus,” alleged its expelled president Aridharan Das. “Srila Prabhupada, set up a system within ISKCON which allowed him to remain the *diksha* (initiating) guru for new disciples for as long as the society exists,”



Hare Krishnas’ unspiritual activities now include infighting, flying fists and all.

Fissures within the cult reached a flashpoint recently, with the world famous annual *Calcutta Rathayatra* (chariot pulling festival) procession on 23 June. Armed with a court order, a rival group of the Kolkata chapter, which owes allegiance to gurus mostly based abroad and wield local clout through the global headquarters at Mayapur, hijacked the procession. Said Adridharan Das: “I have performed this festival without a break for the past 20 years. It has grown to be the largest *Rathayatra* festival in the world, with some 1.5 million people participating annually.”

Das had appealed to the Kolkata High Court to stop his rivals from taking out the procession, but the Court ruled against him. The Court observed that he has been expelled as the president of the Kolkata unit. “We are armed with the court order. We will now ask the court to evict Adridharan Das from the Albert Road temple of Kolkata,” they said.

The sex scandals involving its gurus have prompted long-time devotee Vineet Narain to set up the ISKCON Reform Group (IRG) which has branches in Australia, France, Germany, the UK and Canada. Narain stated that disciples have been leaving, especially after one of the gurus, Loknath Swami, was involved in the molestation of a teenage girl in the United States. Several other self-proclaimed gurus fell from grace following serious charges of child abuse. Several of the religious leaders are in US prisons serving terms on various charges. A group of former ISKCON *gurukul* (boarding house) inmates also filed a lawsuit in 1999, alleging sexual abuse when they were staying in them as students. ♦ (IPS)

History and celluloid

BANGKOK – A film about a heroine believed to have led local folk in staving off a Lao invasion of Thailand in 1827 has annoyed Laos. There was talk of the Laotian government boycotting Thai goods if the project continues—reports Laotian officials denied. The row reached the Senate, where director Phisarn Akraseranee said the concern was “overreaction,” because the film is not about politics. “I do not see the need to bring up the Thao Suranaree story,” said Khammy Bouasengthong, first secretary at the Laotian embassy. “Thailand and Lao are closely related through blood, tradition, and language.” Thailand’s and Laos have had uneasy relations over the years.

The eponymous protagonist of *Thao Suranaree*, wife of the governor of Nakhon Ratchasima province, 260 km east of Bangkok, is the first Thai commoner honoured with a national monument. She is seen as a guardian spirit for the province and is the subject of an annual ten-day festival. Laotians consider King Anuwong, her opponent, a great leader who tried to liberate Laos from Siam. “King Anuwong is revered by Laos and comparable to King Naresuan (the Thai monarch who helped Thailand gain independence from Burma),” history professor Charnvit Kasetsiri told the Senates. Some academics say Thailand should be sensitive, like it is to issues relating to the monarchy. The story confuses even Thais—Saipin Kaewngamprasert’s thesis, *Politics of the Thao Suranaree Monument*, which says the story was about meeting political and societal needs, did not go down well in the province. “Siam in 1932 was passing from an absolute to a constitutional monarchy. A modern face showing women’s rights and people power was needed,” said Saipin. The film is scheduled for release early next year. (IPS)

Don’t get too excited

WASHINGTON - Human rights groups and independent analysts are warning the US administration against rapidly embracing the new president of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri, who assumed power after the impeachment last week of Abdurahim Wahid. They are particularly concerned about Megawati’s close ties to the Indonesian military (TNI) and her strong nationalist views, which appear



unsympathetic to a more decentralised system that would offer substantial autonomy to restive provinces, particularly Aceh and West Papua (Irian Jaya), where recent violence has claimed hundreds of lives. “The military is very close to her and has basically adopted her as a sort of mascot,” says Sidney Jones, Asia director of Human Rights Watch and an Indonesia specialist. US officials, who in recent months have become increasingly concerned about the future of the world’s fourth most populous nation, are stressing the bright side of the transition. President George W. Bush lauded the country last week for its “commitment to the rule of law and democracy.” Privately, US officials are cautiously optimistic that Megawati will make economic reform, along lines long urged by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), a top priority. (IPS)

Whaling away

CANBERRA – Last week’s rejection by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) of a proposed South Pacific whale sanctuary has led to renewed accusations by activists that Japan ‘bought’ votes through granting aid to small Caribbean nations with no interest in whaling. The proposal, put forward by Australia and New Zealand with support from many South Pacific nations, got only 20 of the 28 votes it needed from the 37 member nations. Apart from Japan and the six East Caribbean states, the other countries that voted against the proposal, leading to its defeat for the second year in a row, included Norway, China, Denmark and South Korea. Last week, a senior official of the Fisheries Agency of Japan, Maseyuku Komatsu, admitted Tokyo used overseas aid as leverage to gain support for its campaign to have the international ban on commercial whaling lifted. “Japan does not have military power, unlike the US and Australia. You may dispatch military power to East Timor, but our means is diplomatic communication and Overseas Development Assistance,” Komatsu told Australian ABC TV. Since 1987, Japan has conducted an annual whale hunt in the Antarctic under ‘scientific’ and ‘research’ terms, though activists say this is but a cover for commercial hunting. (IPS)



Queen as ruler

Excerpts from an interview with Raghuji Pant, UML MP, *Budhabar Saptahik*, 18 July

Why do you think it is necessary that daughters also be eligible to be heirs to the throne?
This has already happened in many countries. You look at the various European monarchies, you will see it happening there. Look at the Queen of England. Imagine if the present king of our country has only grand daughters and no sons. Then which Johnny-come-lately will you make king? Why should a daughter not be made the heir to the throne? The first-born, son or daughter, should be the heir to the throne. We say that sons and daughters are equal. We even say daughters and sons have an equal right to ancestral property. We put out messages of equality on the radio. So why not actually treat them equally? How can we talk of equality and discriminate on this issue?

Documents prepared by women themselves do not mention this issue, and neither does the social justice committee of the Upper House. How come?
Everyone feels that there is discrimination. I do not know for sure whether they have mentioned it or not. I feel the laws made by us parliamentarians and the king should not discriminate against anyone. Do you still want to follow the rules, regulations and systems prevalent 100 or 150 years ago? I read an article written by a nominated member of the Upper House some time ago. He put forward arguments raised by the Muluki Ain of 100 or so years ago in trying to explain why a female should not be heir apparent. Many legal experts and reporters wrote similar things. Didn't Indira Gandhi become prime minister of the largest democracy in the world? In Sri Lanka, Chandrika Kumaratunga is head of state, and so was her mother. Women have often proved better rulers than men. Prince Charles may be highly controversial in Britain, but his mother Queen Elizabeth is one of the most beloved people there. The reign of Queen Victoria is considered the golden age of British history. Given a chance, a woman will be as good a ruler as a man, if not better. If you say that only in Nepal women are incapable of ruling, that is different, but if you are discriminating just on the basis of sex, that is wrong. Making a female heir to the throne will boost the morale of women. This is nothing new—this has been the norm in many parts of the world. We need this change for equality.

Won't a daughter as heir to the throne finish off the Shah dynasty?
Royal tradition is not something unchangeable. No tradition is static. There is a major problem of citizenship in our country, and many other related problems may arise too, but I repeat dynasties can be run by the daughters of a particular house. The decision on surnames can be best left to the children. Why should a child always carry his father's surname? There are many children who do not want to carry their father's last names, but are forced to do so because of social and other compulsions. If a father deserts his children, why should children be saddled with the name of such a shameless parent? Why can't they carry the name of the mother who brings them up? A father is all about trust, but mothers are the truth of parenthood. A mother is the person who introduces her children to their father. Only a mother knows the actual father of the children. There can be no doubts about a mother, a father is identified just by his relation to the mother. Dynasties are not always sired by the ruler. Even in Japan they are seriously considering the issue of a female heir to the throne. A day will definitely come when we will have to make a daughter the heir to the throne. ♦

Moving in, and on

Jana Aastha National Weekly, 18 July

The 45th day ceremony for the deceased royal family members was held recently. Her Majesty's health is also improving. It is expected that His Majesty will soon shift into Narayanhiti Darbar. Some major changes which were required in there are being hurriedly carried out. Annapurna Sadan, Prince Nirajan's study, has been locked since 1 June, Trisul Sadan is being cleaned and all objects that remind one of the incident are being removed. It is expected that the king will shift in two weeks from now. Six or seven people, including Dipendra's governess, are staying in a big hall in Tribhuvan Sadan. There are also changes in the office timings of the royal



secretariat, previously office hours were 10am-6pm, the office now works from 9am-5pm. There are about a dozen people in this office, including the chief principal secretary, the chief private secretary and the chief military secretary.

Make it public

Ghatana Ra Bichar, 18 July

It seems that the new king is ready to work according to the wishes of the people. Sources say the king has decided to make public a list of all royal property as soon as possible. We are told that even the leaders of all political parties request the king to make this information public whenever they meet him. The people are curious to know about the property of the late King Birendra also, but no one knows what is being done about this.

National government

Excerpts from an interview with Bam Dev Gautam, CPN (ML) Jana Aastha, 18 July

Until 1 June, the Maoists supported your idea of a national government. After the incident they demanded an interim government. What should be done?
It is wrong to assume that the activities of the Maoists will be the end of all political activity in this country. The issue of a national government is very important to them too. It is estimated that the peoples' army is 15,000-strong. They might have one-and-a-half million supporters in this country. The Royal Nepal Army has 50,000 people under its command and 24 million people supporting it. In such a situation how can the Maoists say only they will prevail? Do you think that once the Maoists announce the formation of a peoples' government, the army, the police and the armed police will wither away?

By the time a national government is formed, the constitution will have collapsed. Won't this be a fertile breeding ground for the Maoists?
After 1 June, the Maoists changed direction from what was decided at their second national convention. They proclaim that the monarchy has ended, a republic has been born and that this should be institutionalised. And they are pushing for an interim government. The Maoists cannot wipe out the Nepali Congress, and a republic has not been born. All political parties are still active. All our constitutional bodies are functioning. The Maoists, who are outside the constitution, are also functioning. How can the Maoists alone run this country? How can anyone else run it without the help of the Maoists? This is why a national government is essential.



How correct do you think the Maoist analysis of the late and present kings is?
Their analysis of King Birendra is correct. They have not really analysed Gyanendra's role, but have only been criticising him from the day he took over. Without analysing a situation, how can you pass judgement? If he does not play the part of a constitutional monarch correctly, then you should protest. At least give him a chance.

What now, Prachanda?

Budhabar Saptahik, 18 July

Comrade Prachanda is doing all he can to save the reputation of his party and comrades. His comrades have been trapped by the army in Nuwagaon, and to raise their spirits, he is giving a lot of high-sounding speeches. Why is he requesting the people of this country to find a peaceful way out of the mess the nation is in? He is in a fix. On the one hand, the deployment of the army has trapped his fighters, and he knows it will not be easy to get them out. On the other hand, he announces that his fighters have defeated the army. He has fallen from the frying pan into the fire. Time is running out for him. Now, when the two sides are facing each other, the Maoists have not moved, while the army has taken a step forward. Another rumour doing the rounds of the capital is that the Maoists are tired of planting bombs in public places and are prepared to reach a compromise with the new king. The Maoists said immediately after the 1 June incident that they were in touch with the late king. People in the Congress say the Maoists and the new king are trying to talk. Prachanda's real name is Puspa Kamal Dahal, and he was born in Kaski in 1954. His parents later moved to Shivanagar in Chitwan and this became his home. He studied at the Patan Campus for some years, and then joined the Rampur Campus in Chitwan and graduated from there. He was the leader of the student union at Rampur for some time. His political life took a leap forward in 1985. He was an alternative member of what was then the Nepal Communist Party (Fourth Convention). In 1987 and 1989 he was elected general secretary of the Ekata Kendra. Seven years ago he broke away and formed the Nepal Communist Party (Maoist), becoming the general secretary of the party. During the second convention of his party held in February this year, he was made "Chairman Prachanda" like Chairman Mao. Prachanda has three daughters, two of whom are married and living in India. He entered politics in 1970 as a member of the NCP. He is reputed to be a good organiser, although some people in the party do not appreciate his new manifesto, the Prachanda Path.

Whose fault?

Saptahik Bimarsa, 19 July

The SLC results were published last Monday. 69 percent failed. People are shocked. Who is responsible for this mess? Will any action be taken against the people who did not carry out their responsibilities properly, or against schools which charge a lot but do not provide quality education? Are those who disrupt education by calling for random bandhs going to take responsibility? What about those who set question papers without going through

the syllabus? Many students are without books even midway through the academic year. Who is going to take responsibility for this? Will action be taken against schools where not a single student passed? Educational experts say that the courses were revised last year, but instructors did not do their homework after these changes. If this weren't bad enough, there were all the bandhs, hartals and lockouts. Earlier schools used to teach 220 days a year. This fell to 180 in the last few years and this past academic year did not even cross 100 days.

"Small things we do"

PR Pradhan in *The People's Review*

The People's Review weekly just completed a decade of publication. BN Dahal of the weekly suggested we host a reception. I could not fulfil his desire. But I have no regrets because although we are strong to voice, however we are not rich to spend money in any other headings except publishing the newspaper regularly. Yes, there are two ways in keeping alive in journalism in this country. First, compromise with your interests and earn money. Second, don't compromise with your interests and struggle for your existence. Knowingly or unknowingly, we have taken the second path. Our readers tell us that we are highly critical of every establishment. This is our strength, as we cannot call any wrong a right. This tiny team doesn't compromise against national interests and wishes to struggle forever. The satisfaction we have gained is that we get encouraging response from our readers. To recall, a journalist comparing our publication with another English weekly, said: "You can find many advertisements in that weekly, but you cannot find strong opinions like in yours." "They have money thus they have no freedom to write," the reader further remarked. Yes, his analysis is true. As we write strongly, we get less advertisement; therefore, we are compelled to use newsprint and black and white printing technology.

Toyota Company, internationally reputed automobile manufacturer, has placed banners with the slogan "Small things that we do" in different places of the city. I never claim like some others that we are "the best and above mediocre journalism" and then fill up large sections of the newspaper with reproduced items, I prefer to follow the very slogan that we do small things for this nation honestly and sincerely. We follow the famous saying: "Don't expect anything from the country, but think what contribution you can make for the motherland." As we have no ambition or aspirations, we are happy in just continuing our publication without any hurdles. As per Nepali capacity, we have neither the plan to increase the price nor the wish to bring-out our publication in a glazed paper because we want our readership to be larger.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The people expect this government to solve the Maoist problem. If Deuba can fulfil the people's expectations, he'll be a hero. If he fails, he will be a political joker like Girija.

- Dr Mathura Prasad Shrestha, human rights activist in *Jana Aastha* Weekly, 25 July



"Now sit! and enjoy..."

देशान्तर साप्ताहिक *Deshantar Saptahik*, 22 July

Sporting alchemy

Australian sensation



Career Record

- 1996 Russian Olympic Trials: 6th (400m Hurdles)
- 1998 Australian Championships: 2nd (Pole Vault) 1st (4x400m)
- 1998 Goodwill Games: 2nd (PV)
- 1999 World Championships: 3rd (PV)
- 2000 Olympic Games: 2nd (PV)
- 2001 Australian Champion (PV)

Born 8 October 1975, St Petersburg, Russia
Resides Adelaide, Australia
Best Performance Pole Vault - 4.53m

Tatiana Grigorieva vaulted into the limelight when she won silver at the Sydney Olympics—she now wants to turn this into gold.

SANJIVA WIJESINHA
IN BALWYN, AUSTRALIA

Before last year's Sydney Olympics, few people in Australia—and even fewer abroad—had heard of pole vaulter Tatiana Grigorieva. The Russian-born athlete had her own Internet website and the few who cared to access it would have found it split into three sections—about herself, her sporting interests and her desire to be a model.

These days however, the website presents a new Grigorieva—Olympic medallist, corporate speaker, clothing designer, travel guide, culinary expert, fitness instructor and celebrity motor racer. Her self-promotion offers outsiders a peek into the life of a once-unknown athlete now poised to take on the world record holder in women's pole-vaulting in upcoming international competitions.

Grigorieva grew up in Leningrad (now St Petersburg) where, she candidly admits, "Life was hard." Her parents wanted her to become an accountant, but even as a little girl her ambition was to do well in sports or become a glamorous model. She poured her energy into sports (managing to maintain good grades in school "to keep my parents happy") and from 1992 to 1996 attended the St Petersburg Sports Academy. She spent her time there developing both as a student of coaching and as an athlete—and became an accomplished hurdler, eventually ranking sixth at the Russian Olympic trials in 1996. She was still, however, hoping to make the grade as a model.

It was while she was struggling to get modelling jobs in Moscow that her fiancé, Viktor Chistiakov, the 1994 world junior pole vault champion and son of two former Soviet Olympians, was offered a chance to train at the South Australian Institute of Sport. Deciding subsequently to settle down in Australia, Chistiakov called her from Adelaide. Grigorieva recalls him ringing her in Russia with his proposal: "Let's get married, you can live here too. It's warm, it's friendly, it's safe."

So, a little reluctantly, she came—and enrolled at an Adelaide modelling school as well as in English classes. She and Chistiakov shared a house with his coach Alex Parnov, another Russian pole vaulter, Dmitry Markov and his wife Valentina. "I didn't know much English, I only knew them—so, since Alex was the best pole vaulting coach in the world, I thought I would have a go at this event," she told us. "It was just a hobby." Parnov initially refused to coach Grigorieva because he believed she did not have the mental discipline needed for this demanding event. So Grigorieva trained alone, quietly gaining the respect of the pole vaulting fraternity at the South Australian Institute of Sport, until Parnov finally took her on. Within six months she was ranked within the top six in the world.

What started as a hobby has since taken her to great heights, culminating in her silver medal win in the 2000 Sydney Olympics. Virtually unknown outside track and field before this, the attractive Grigorieva became the new pin-up girl of athletics with her 4.45m silver medal leap—vaulting into Australia's sporting subconscious and onto a shelf-full of magazine covers. She has modelled bikinis for Inside Sport, been in a glamour feature for Ralph and a fashion spread in Harper's Bazaar. Fashion, women's and even horse-racing magazines have featured her on the front cover.

Soon after the Olympics she was contracted to be the face of Melbourne's biggest tourist event, the annual Spring Racing Carnival, where she and her husband modelled in the Versace Classic Fashion Parade. She has also recently clinched a joint venture with a major clothing manufacturer—as yet unnamed—and will launch her own fashion line in September.

Grigorieva has demonstrated a shrewd business mind to go with her undoubted athletic ability and beauty.

"She is highly marketable because, unlike probably any other athlete in Australia, she has the near perfect combination of

good looks, she is very talented at what she does and is a very good competitor," her agent Rick Carter says. "She's the complete package whichever way you look at it. I honestly believe that if you combine her competition, endorsements and modelling work, she could soon be earning up to Aus\$ 1 million a year."

Recently she launched a non-profit charity organisation, The Gift for Dreams Foundation, to help young people get involved in sport in order to help reduce crime and drug-use in Australia. At the moment, though, Grigorieva's main focus remains athletics. "Modelling has allowed me to promote pole vaulting as a sport and the importance of sport in developing a fit and healthy body," she said. "I enjoy doing modelling in my spare time but athletics is my main priority."

Grigorieva is currently with her husband in her European base in Formia, Italy, where they will continue preparations for the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) world championships in Edmonton, Canada (3-12 August) and the Goodwill Games in Brisbane, Australia (29 August to 9 September). She has cleared 4.47 m in competition this year at the IAAF Grand Prix meet in Athens, Greece in June, and is currently ranked third in IAAF world rankings for women's pole vault. She faces stiff competition. Her American rival Stacey Dragila raised the bar when she vaulted 4.81 m recently, a new world record in women's pole vaulting. But Grigorieva shrugs off the challenge, saying she will "jump as high as it will take to get a medal in the world champs."

Her confidence, combined with her good standings and self-promotion, has helped boost the popularity of this Russian-born athlete—both on and off the field. Says Carl Hammerschmidt, editor of Ralph magazine, which profiled Grigorieva in its September 2000 issue: "In this day and age, if you don't take advantage of sporting talents and what everyone else sees as good looks, then you're probably not doing business properly. I think the sky is the limit for her." ♦ (GEMINI)

Fit, for Nepal

Who says Nepalis are little?

ALOK TUMBAHANGPHEY

Lopsang Tsering has made it big in the USA. A fitness guru, nutrition expert, and champion body builder, Lopsang is prized as a top trainer at B Fit, a top-notch chain of health clubs. It hasn't been an easy journey, says Lopsang, but it has been worth it.

Lopsang was in the US in the mid-1980s, making his way through university. He needed to support himself while he studied, and found a rather unusual way to do so—by working as a bodyguard to a wealthy—and somewhat paranoid—American. Lopsang, who always kept fit as best as he could, was delighted by the state-of-the-art gym he now had access to.

His body building career started at this time. In 1986 when he was watching a local body building show and was inspired to participate, when a fellow Nepali's response jolted him back to earth. "Forget about Nepalis, even other Asians can't compete here ever," said his friend. Instead of resenting the stereotype of the mild, small Asian that was so pervasive, Lopsang took it as a challenge.

He worked out regularly, began acting—he is a member of the Screen Actors Guild and can be seen in a number of action films—as well as working his way up the competitive world of fitness and nutrition counselling to advise the likes of tennis star Michael Chang and supermodel Kristi Dornington. And through all this, he was working on himself. By 1998, had won several championships, among them, Mr New York City, the Eastern Classic, the National USA Championship, and the NPC Eastern Classic. In 1999 he won the coveted Mister Team USA Universe (Middleweight).

You might think this is as good as it gets. But Lopsang didn't. Although he lives abroad, Lopsang is first and foremost a Nepali, he says. And so he recently took a break from his busy



schedule to represent Nepal in the third South Asian Bodybuilding Championship held in Maldives in June. He's been in contests all over the US, but this was his first time in an international meet—and he was the only hope of an otherwise ill-prepared Nepali team. Lopsang won second place in the welterweight category. Not grabbing gold hasn't disheartened him. "I'd rather fight in a tough competition and not win rather than win a no-contest," says the sporting bodybuilder. "I have worked hard to get to this point, but this is not the end," he adds. Next stop, Asian Games 2002.

And, contrary to what some of us might expect, bodybuilder Lopsang has both brain and brawn. He plans to share his knowledge and experience with others through a regime he calls the "Lopsang Quality Fit Way of Life". Lopsang, who has international certification in fitness and nutrition training, says that when it comes to having the body of a Greek sculpture, numbers are for the birds.

"Measurements are only for the ego, the most important thing is knowledge," he says. He believes in a holistic combination of fitness, health and body-image.

Lopsang wants to put his weight behind keeping young Nepalis fit, so they, in turn, can contribute to the life of the country as best as they can—mind and body are two sides of the same coin, he believes. He sees the major problem facing Nepali sportspersons as less an issue of finances and facilities and more a question of the right attitude and education.

"Fancy gyms do help, but you can stay fit using simple things as well."

Lopsang's aim is now to raise awareness among Nepali youth about fitter, healthier lives. "I want to educate our youth about doing positive things. And taking care of one's health is the best gift one could give oneself," says the super fit and successful Nepali. ♦

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FLASHBACK

by JUG SURAIYA

Doig's kind of Kathmandu

If Kathmandu had not existed Desmond Doig might well have had to invent it. And the reverse holds equally true. For in Desmond—writer, artist, photographer, indefatigable knight-errant and raconteur nonpareil—Kathmandu found its ideal biographer. And in Kathmandu Valley Desmond discovered a made-to-order Xanadu in which to unfurl the quixotic banners of his imagination, to give to aery fables a local habitation and a name in a landscape peopled by thunderbolt divinities and Ruritanian adventurers, warrior kings and living goddesses, many-splendoured palaces and cloud-veiled mountain peaks as inscrutable as the turquoise gaze of the perfect prince of peace, Gautama, who became the Buddha.

The love story of Desmond and Kathmandu, for that is what it really was, can be traced to the aftermath of a global cataclysm. Demobbed from the army at the end of World War II, Desmond, who had been born of Anglo-Irish parentage in India, found himself a job with *The Statesman*, Calcutta, first as an artist and later as a roving reporter. When King Tribhuvan of Nepal died in 1954, Desmond got himself the assignment of covering the royal cremation and was soon in an ancient Dakota aircraft winging his way to Kathmandu on a whim and a prayer, armed with little more than a smattering of Nepali picked up during his service with a Gurkha regiment. It was romance at first sight, almost.

Desmond describes how, after a literally bumpy start, Kathmandu and he got to know each other, initial mutual apprehensions soon succumbing to reciprocal fascination as he prowled the nocturnal, curfew-bound streets, muttering the password “*kanchi*” to keep at bay overzealous guardians of the law and the more feverish of his own imaginings.

“I no longer touched the earth. I was among the gods and kings that crowd the square, their gilded bodies reflected in the starlight. I surprised couples petrified in the act of love carved in wood on the eaves of temples—my ecstasy changed to terror as the great Black Bhairab, his necklace of severed heads bloodied with vermillion, loomed



As we close the serialised reprint of Desmond Doig's writings and sketches of Kathmandu in the column *Saving Faith*, here is an appreciation of the artist by his friend, Jug Suraiya, excerpted from the foreword to Doig's book, *My Kind of Kathmandu*.

from the dark. Then, I knew him as the protector guardian of all Kathmandu. And indeed they followed me back through the city. Names familiar and half-remembered. Beings and incidents that were a country's history. Wondrous happenings. Miracles and myths. Saints and devils. People holy and profane, all of whom I had come to know and love in successive reincarnations of myself. For it was given to me to return year after year, and to find in the Valley of Kathmandu my personal Shangri-la.”

Over the years, Desmond's despatches from the Himalayan kingdom, and its two smaller neighbours, Bhutan and Sikkim, helped to put on the international map a part of the world that had been little known before, except to a handful of scholars and the most intrepid of travellers. Sages and shamans, lost legends and indomitable Sherpas, yaks and yetis, like a conjurer who can summon up the far away and long ago with magical ease, Desmond introduced all this and more to an increasingly wider audience. Perhaps the visions he evoked helped indirectly to inspire the first sizeable influx of foreign visitors into the Valley—the hippies of the 1960s, who navigating their way through the psychedelic miasma of

Kathmandu's Freak Street must have seemed to the local populace to be apparitions as phantasmagoric as any prescribed by Dr Timothy Leary, sometime of California.

The flower children soon faded away, to be replaced by that even stranger breed, that of the 'straight' tourist, of whom I was one. I was at the time working as a rookie reporter for JS, the youth magazine that Desmond had started in Calcutta, and whose untold story deserves a book of its own. Go to Kathmandu, la—you'll love it, said Desmond. So I did—and hated it. Accustomed to

conventional hill resorts, with their mandatory appurtenances of Mall, club and pony rides, I was quite bewildered by Kathmandu's convoluted lanes and its enchanted groves of intricately carved stone shot through with the florid efflorescence of baroque palaces.

Let's go home, I grumbled to Bunny. Fortunately better sense, in the form of Bunny's veto, prevailed, as it so often does still, 25 years after we got married. So we stayed, and came under Kathmandu's spell, as we have done over and over these many years since.

The fortunes of the JS family were soon to be more closely linked to those of Kathmandu. For when the magazine was summarily shut down in 1977, Desmond sought solace in his beloved Shangri-la. Three JS ex-staffers accompanied him: photographer Kalyan Singh, sub-editor Utpal Sengupta who is with the Hotel Shangri-la, whose prizewinning garden was designed by Desmond, and Dubby Bhagat.

Were Desmond here today he might well have wanted to rename his book *Our Kind of Kathmandu*. For in many ways this is almost as much Dubby's book as it is Desmond's. Chivvying flagging enthusiasm, fending off streetside kibitzers while Desmond sketched, researching the history of monuments and mythologies, and eventually writing down the text in longhand as Desmond dictated, Dubby proved himself to be a more than merely competent literary midwife for Desmond's and Kathmandu's often wayward Muse. *My Kind of Kathmandu* is a joint labour of love.

By wooing Kathmandu with words and images was not enough for Desmond. He set an indelible imprint on the city, designing gardens and interiors, and, most importantly, contributing from his generous fund of knowledge of local history and folklore to the international project to preserve the medieval town of Bhaktapur,

Kathmandu's sister city.

The hectic pace took its toll. Returning from Pokhara, Desmond suffered a fatal heart attack in October 1983. Coincidentally, Bunny and I reached Kathmandu on a holiday visit a few hours after Desmond died. One look at Utpal's tear-streaked face at the airport made us intuit the worst.

As Desmond would have wanted, the funeral was simple, with a minimum of the fuss and clutter of ceremony. A Buddhist lama chanted a hymn, his voice fluttering in the breeze like a fading prayer flag whose silent words are heard by the sentinel snow peaks.

A lot has changed in the Valley since Desmond last saw it, but a lot has remained the same. In tortuous backlanes, Toyota taxis manoeuvre around lounging bulls that look like a temple doorway's stone guardians come to life. Roadside stalls display cut-piece polyester suiting draped alongside glowing *thankas*. Under the serene arc of a stupa, yellow-robed lamas stoically face a firing squad of camera-clicking tourists. An old man coaxes a scratchy tune from an ancient *sarangi* outside an emporium stacked with sleek hi-fi equipment. Sightseers of a dozen nationalities, hill porters bent double under teetering loads, darting cyclists and temple bells chiming counterpoint to Hindi pop music compose an off-beat medley. Round a corner and the vista of Darbar Square... ♦

Nepali Times has reprinted sections of:

My Kind of Kathmandu
An Artist's Impression of An Emerald Valley
Desmond Doig
Indus, 1994

In the Kingdom of the Gods
Desmond Doig
HarperCollins, 1999

BOOK REVIEW

by PRATYOUSHT ONTA

Learning to read

Modern Literary Nepali is a book published under the SOAS South Asian Texts Series by Michael Hutt. Hutt has previously made the world of Nepali literature accessible to English readers through his writings and translations. Three of his previous books are particularly pertinent here: *Nepali, A National Language and its Literature* (1988), *Himalayan Voices: An Introduction to Modern Nepali Literature* (1991) and *Devkota's Muna Madan: Translation and Analysis* (1996). He has also written many article-length analyses of different aspects of modern Nepali literature and translations of specific literary pieces for various journals.

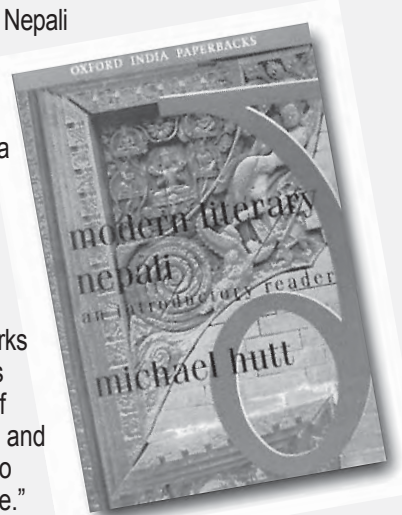
In the preface, Hutt states that this book “seeks to introduce a selection of published 20th-century Nepali texts to a readership consisting both of students who have a basic grasp of Nepali grammar and vocabulary...and of teachers and students of other NIA [New Indo-Aryan] languages who wish to gain an impression of Nepali and its literature without first studying its grammar in depth.” In other words, unlike the three books mentioned above, this book is not meant for the general reader. Instead, it is to be primarily used as a learning and teaching resource for those who intend to acquire a level of competence in Nepali that will eventually allow them to read and use literary and other sources in that language. Hutt, who has taught Nepali at School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) for many years, must have been prompted to put together this book because no similar effort has been made in the past.

The book contains four parts. The first is a brief general introduction to modern Nepali history and literature. It also contains short contextual introductions to the eight pieces of prose given in part two of the book. Hutt also provides short notes on the nine poets—Lekhanath Paudyal, Balkrishna Sama, Laxmiprasad Devkota, Siddhicharan Shrestha, Kedar Man Vyathit, Gopal Prasad Rimal, Mohan Koirala, Bhupi Serchan, Banira Giri—whose verses are given in the third part of the book. He concludes the introduction with a note on the orthography, grammar and lexicon of modern literary Nepali. In part two, five short stories, two essays and an extract from an autobiography are given in their Nepali original with copious footnotes in English. In part three 21 poems (twenty complete poems and extracts from Laxmiprasad Devkota's classic *Muna Madan*) are given in their Nepali original with literal English translations supported by plenty of notes. Part four contains a glossary of Nepali words that appear in the texts along with their English translations.

As Hutt says in the preface, the choice of works included in this book was done to “provide a taste of modern Nepali literature” and the book does not claim to represent its “entire scope.” Hence there is no point in arguing what he should have left out or included in this book. A dedicated reader of this book will definitely become familiar with some of the major Nepali writers of the 20th century and with some of their most famous works. As a native speaker of Nepali who has read most of the materials included here in their original, it is hard for me to assess just how useful the many features (especially the footnotes and glossary) included in this book are to a non-native student trying to enhance his or her ability in the language. Nevertheless, I think it serves its primary audience well.

One final point. Hutt says he began the project on which this book is based in 1988. Since then it has become much easier to provide students in London (or wherever Nepali is being taught to non-native speakers) packages of multi-media Nepali language source materials for learning and teaching. For instance, the corpus of Nepali language audio-visual reportage and documentaries with English sub-titles has increased quite a bit in the last decade. So have the number of Nepali language feature films available in video. In the last four years, independent radio programmers have produced excellent feature reportage that could, without much effort, be introduced in intermediate and advanced level Nepali language classes. With the help of the Internet, an increasingly large audio-visual Nepali language archive can be accessed with very little effort. In other words, it is no longer difficult to find useful teaching materials in the Nepali language. The real challenge is to find students who want to learn Nepali very seriously in adequate numbers. Since the economy of being fluent in Nepali is not all that favorable to non-native speakers, I am afraid that Hutt's book and the materials indicated above will not be used by a large body of non-Nepali students. ♦

***Modern Literary Nepali: An Introductory Reader* by Michael Hutt. New Delhi: Oxford University Press. 1999. 285 pp.**



ABOUT TOWN

MOVIES

- ❖ **Nepali and Hindi movies** online ticket booking at www.nepalshop.com
- ❖ **Kagaz Ke Phool** Embassy of India is screening an old classic movie of Guru Dutta (with English subtitles) Sunday 29 July, 10.30am-1.00pm. Audio Visual Hall, Indian Embassy. Limited seats, first 100 requests only. Tel: 413174, fax:420129

EATING OUT

- ❖ **Peking Duck** And other Chinese delicacies by Chef Tiyyong Fan from China. Tien Shan Chinese Restaurant. Hotel Shangri La. 412999.
- ❖ **Breakfast with birds** Lunch with butterflies, dinner with fireflies. Traditional Nepali, Indian and Chinese cuisine. Farm House Café in the Park Village Hotel, Buddhailkantha. 373935
- ❖ **Barbecue at the Ropes** Barbecue for lunch and dinner. Over 20 dishes to choose from, view of the Himalayas. The Sky Terrace, Hotel Everest. Reservations recommended. 488100
- ❖ **Friday night Sekuwa (BBQ)** Appetisers, momos, salads, main courses and desserts, one complimentary beer. Rs 699 per head. Throughout the monsoon at Dwarika's Hotel. 479488
- ❖ **LaSoon Restaurant and Vinotheque** Lunch, tea and dinner with European and American food, fine wines. Pulchowk. 535290
- ❖ **Wet and Wild Summer** Swimming in a cool pool and a buffet lunch. Saturdays at Godavari Village Resort. Adults Rs 600, children Rs 350. Taxes extra. 560675, 560775
- ❖ **Weekend swim & lunch** Saturdays and Sundays. Rs 900 for a family of four. Aroma Sports Centre, Sanepa 521516, 981030859
- ❖ **Saturday Attraction at the Malla** Swimmin and barbecue lunch prepared by our French chef. 11am-5pm. The Malla Hotel. 418385, 410966.
- ❖ **Irresistible Irregularities** Throwing regularity out from the menu to the prices, everything's changed! With every two snacks or drinks you order, you get the third one free. 20 July onwards. The Coffee Shop and the Juneli Bar, Hotel De L' Annapurna 3:30pm-10pm. 221711
- ❖ **Vegetarian Delights** Every Saturday and Sunday. Rs 300 for adults, Rs 175 for children. Vajrayanta Garden Restaurant. Godavari Village Resort. 560675



MUSIC

- ❖ **Romantic Rendezvous at the Jazz Bar** Happy hour 6pm-8pm. Thursdays with the Jaz Commission, other days with An Faine Hotel Shangri La. 412999
- ❖ **Himalatte Café** Live acoustic music by Dinesh Rai and Deependra every Friday, 7.30pm-10pm. Free. Thamel. 262526
- ❖ **DJ Neil/Live Bands** on weekends. Happy hour everyday. Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency. 6pm-9pm.491234
- ❖ **The Upstairs Jazz Bar** Cadenza plays every Saturday night. 7.30pm-10pm. Rs 200
- ❖ **Contemporary Jazz Dance** Classes at the Alliance Française by Meghana Thapa. Thrice weekly. Alliance Française. 241163, 242 832.



EVENTS

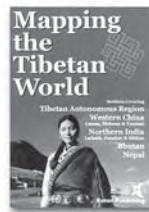
- ❖ **Art & Culture Programme** Promoting contemporary Nepali art and culture—featured artists include Royal Nepal Academy member and nationally renowned poet Bairagi Kaila, artist Param Meyangbo from Spiny Babbler, and folk musician Sunil Thapa. The Tea Lounge Hotel De L' Annapurna 30 July 5pm-6pm. Hotel De L' Annapurna & Spiny Babbler Museum.
- ❖ **Dwarika's Anytime Escape** Overnight accommodation with afternoon tea, cocktail, six-course dinner, breakfast, massage and yoga. \$130 per couple. Dwarika's Hotel. 479488.
- ❖ **Weekly cocktail, monthly beer** Buy one get one free. The Radisson Corner Bar. 411818
- ❖ **Club Oasis** Tennis on Astroturf courts, a spa treat or a workout in the city's best gym. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu
- ❖ **August Affair in Pokhara** Two-night weekend package includes meals, live music, extra bed for children under 12 years, meals, airport transfers. Mango festival. Hotel Shangri La, Pokhara. 412999
- ❖ **Nagarkot Escape** Weekends in cottages, views of valleys and forests. Special rates for Nepalis and resident expats. Hotel Keyman Chautari. keyman@wlink.com.np. 436850, 423128

MEETING

- ❖ **Second Free Medical Camp** organised by St. Xavier's School as part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations. 28 July 9am-5pm, St. Xavier's Godavari.

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors@nepalitimes.com

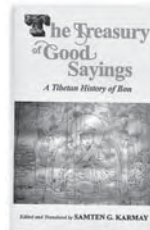
BOOKWORM



Mapping the Tibetan World Yukiyasu Osada, Gavin Allwright, Atsushi Kanamaru
Kotan publishing, Tokyo, 2000
Rs 1,560

Much more than a guidebook, this volume contains detailed maps, travel, accommodation, food and cultural information for regions in the Tibetan Autonomous Region, Western China (Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan), Northern India (Ladakh, Zaskar and Sikkim), Bhutan and Nepal.

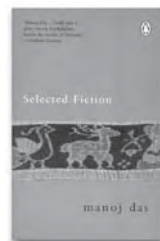
The Treasury of Good Sayings: A Tibetan History of Bon Samten G Karmay, ed. and trans.
Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 2001



Rs 640

The first English translation of the Legs bshad mdzod, a history of the Tibetan religion Bon.

It gives a full account of the ancient religion, its origins, development, struggles against the later imported Buddhism, and its fight for survival despite persecution and even its abolition twice. The editor's essay assesses its historical value and factual accuracy.



Selected Fiction Manoj Das
Penguin Books India, Delhi, 2001
Rs 400

A collection of 28 short stories and a novella by one of India's most mature and rewarding authors. The stories range from the light-hearted to the sombre, the ironic to the fabulous. The novella *The Tiger at Twilight*, about a raja, his daughter and a man-eater, depicts rural charm in an era of changes.

The Book of Shadows Namita Gokhale
Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 2001
Rs 320



Part ghost story, part erotic romance, *The Book of Shadows* explores the nature of reality, love and faith. It is a startlingly original chronicle of displacement, strangeness and exile, of forbidden passions and family histories by one of India's most daring and talented writers.

Courtesy Mandala Book Point, Kantipath, 227711, mandala@ccsl.com.np

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Mountain Biking HMB

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Alfa UV Water Purifier

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For insertions ring NT Marketing at 543333-36.

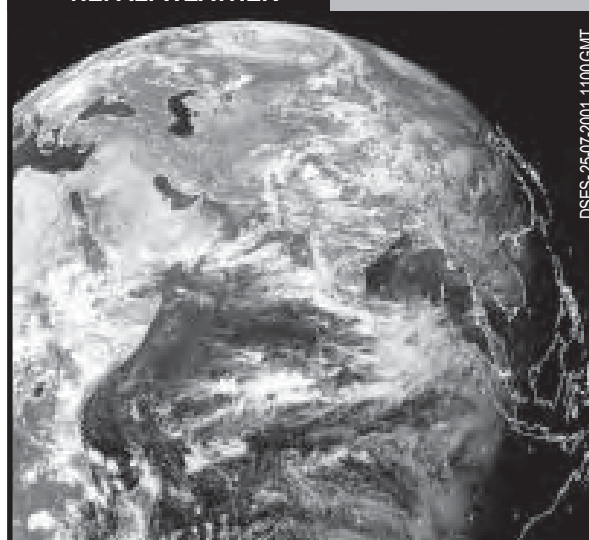
YAK YETI YAK

by MIKU



NEPALI WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL



DSIS-25-07-2001 1100GMT

Monsoon rains have been deficient in the eastern tarai and western hills, but Nepali farmers may get some respite soon if this circulation over the Bay of Bengal gets here. This season, though clouds have massed along the Indian coast, they have lost moisture before they got to the hills. The uneven distribution of rains has affected a dozen tarai districts, where paddy cultivation could not be completed in time. Some parts of foothills and river valleys received above normal rainfall. Satellite pictures indicate that there will be no dramatic changes in existing rainfall pattern this week. The farmers need a strong monsoon pulse, but there is no sign of one. So the frog weddings in Jhapa may continue. Less cloud cover means higher maximum temperatures this week, with the usual humidity which will make it feel hotter.

KATHMANDU

Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
29-20	30-20	31-21	31-21	29-20

BBC on FM 102.4

Mon-Fri	0615-0645	BBC World Today
Sat	0615-0645	BBC Science in Action
Sun	0615-0645	BBC Agenda
Daily	2045-2115	BBC नेपाली सेवा
Daily	2245-2300	BBC नेपाली सेवा



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E-mail: radio@radiosagarmatha.org
www.radiosagarmatha.org



Chief editor Kunda Dixit says "two words".

Nepali Times 52 Week Bash

Nepali Times marked the completion of its first year with a reception at the Shangri La Hotel on 20 July. Selected images:



Himalmedia Marketing Manager Sunaina Shah and Chairperson Ambica Shrestha cut the cake.



Ronald Nash, Rajib Rajbhandari, Ambica Shrestha, Sanjib Rajbhandari.



Liz Hawley, Larry Dinger, Manindra Shrestha, Song Dejun, Harka Gurung.



Prithvi Pande, Yogi Shukya, Shyam Bahadur Pande, Renchin Yonjan.



Stan Armington and Martin.



Nihal Rodrigo



Chakra Bastola and Kanak Dixit.



Binod Bhattarai, Rajib Upadhyaya, Bandana Rana, Raghujit Pant, Haribansha Acharya.



Bharat Basnet, Crispin Conroy, Dubby Bhagat.



Cadenza's Pravin, Nabin, Chi and Jigme.



Mira Choi and Martin Van Kan.



Narayan Wagle, Ram Sharan Mahat and Suman Pradhan



Ingrid Ofstad and Sanjib Rajbhandari.



Deb and Purabi Mukharji.

ALL PHOTOS MIN BAIRACHARYA

Aakriti International



GARLANDS: Sher Bahadur Deuba bedecked in garlands faces the press as he emerges victorious after his election on 22 July.



BEEB-IN-WAITING: The BBC's South Asia Correspondent, Adam Mynott and Gita Pandey outside Singha Darbar preparing to report on live radio via satellite the election of the new prime minister for the World Service.



NAGAD PAANCH LAKH: Popular comedian Madan Krishna Shrestha doing an impersonation of Amitabh Bachchan at the launch episode of a new quiz show which will be broadcast on Nepal Television from 4 August.

Sulux Centre



Under My Hat

by Kunda Dixit

Imagine no secrets

I have just been given a potentially catastrophic piece of breaking news that a female gecko has slipped into my CPU through its A-drive slit and is busy raising a litter of six little gecko chicks on top of the 660 Mhz motherboard. The head of our Infromatics and Internet Security Department who discovered this reptilian intruder during a routine patrol says that although the mother of six has gnawed off a bit of my SDRAM chip and disabled the graphic accelerator card, the integrity of the data contained in the hard disk has not been compromised. Whew. That was a close call. Remind me to put a little sticker on my computer saying “Gecko Inside”.

While not underestimating the danger of household fauna going in and out of our state-of-the-art personal computers with impunity, this is warning to all of us about just how vulnerable we are in the Infromation Age to any cyber-saboteur who wants to destroy our demographic way of life by moving into our RAM Caches and raising a family next to the cooling fan. Anarchy is a basic human right, and it is the essence of the freedoms we fought so hard to attain. No one can take that away from us, especially not a gecko. Y’hear that in there?

Luckily we have in our midst visionary crusaders like the young Argentinian



who last week developed an altruistically-minded worm called Sircam and imbued it with the power to spread across the world taking with it the message of harmony, brotherhood and unity of all mankind in the present universe. The Sircam worm is an ingenious little creature no bigger than Rhode Island which burrows its way into your computer through the phone line and once it is inside sends out a payload trigger with a random file from your hard disk to everyone in your Microsoft Outlook address book. Real fun.


In this fashion, it makes it possible for everyone in the world to ultimately peer into everyone else’s computer, thus erasing man-made boundaries and making everything transparent and open. Imagine, no secrets. (It isn’t hard to do.) Which means everyone will be friends with everyone else, and there will be no more wars.

This weekend, the Sircam worm (Credo: “The Early Worm gets the Attachment”) has been sighted in Nepal, and private emails are being sent from all and sundry to all and sundry even as we speak. It is a tribute to the tireless work of our worm-builder from Buenos Aires that these highly confidential files can now see the light of day. I found this:

To: pmo@hmg.gov
From: Lee Kuan Yew
Subject: Application for post of sub-contractor
Sir, Desirous of filling in the vacancy you have advertised in the classified section of Nepal’s top newspaper I am hereby applying for the post of Chief Subcontractor to run Nepal. My cv is attached, and you will see from it that I have an autocratic streak. If you need strongman rule, a strong man you will get.
Your humble servant.
LKY

And another one:
To: Right Honourbale Share Bahadur
From: Astrologer-at-large Dhruva Man Joshi
Subject: Cabinet Swearing In
As requested please find attached a detailed diagram of interplanetary alignments this week which could have a bearing on the appointment and functioning of your new government. As you will see, the moon is in the seventh house, Jupiter is aligned with Mars and both are moving with the Space Shuttle Endeavor which is stranded in space due to bad weather in Nevada. Don’t swear in your cabinet until Jupiter moves into Aquarius which will be sometime in late-2007. However, if you are in a hurry, then arrangements can be made and I will speak to the concerned higher-up authorities.
Keep me posted.
Dhruva Man

And this just came in:
To: Mr John Ogoni, Occidental Bank of Nigeria
From: Nagad Ram Nepal
Subject: Where are you?
This is my seventh email to you to kindly request if you have received the \$100,000 (one hundred thousand US dollars) that I have sent as bank draft to you. My secret bank account still hasn’t been credited with the 30 percent share of the \$25 million that you promised me. Please take your time, and let me know when the transfer is made.
Yours very patiently
Nagad Ram



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NEPALI SOCIETY

Poonam’s dream-come-true

Poonam Singh is probably Nepal’s youngest and most popular female rock star. She’s been touring small towns of Nepal, singing for her fans in concerts and spreading her message of rebellion and change, inspiring the new generation to look ahead.

“I have always got a warm welcome and real appreciation from my Nepali listeners,” says Poonam flashing her characteristic smile. In real life Poonam is modest and soft spoken, unlike her cutting edge, in-your-face songs. She inspires liberal attitudes in society more than any politicians could do. As one of her earliest fans puts it, Poonam radiates new hope of the next generation of the Nepalis.

20-something Poonam got on the road to fame in 1999 when she released her first musical album ‘Faithless’. Inspired by rock stars

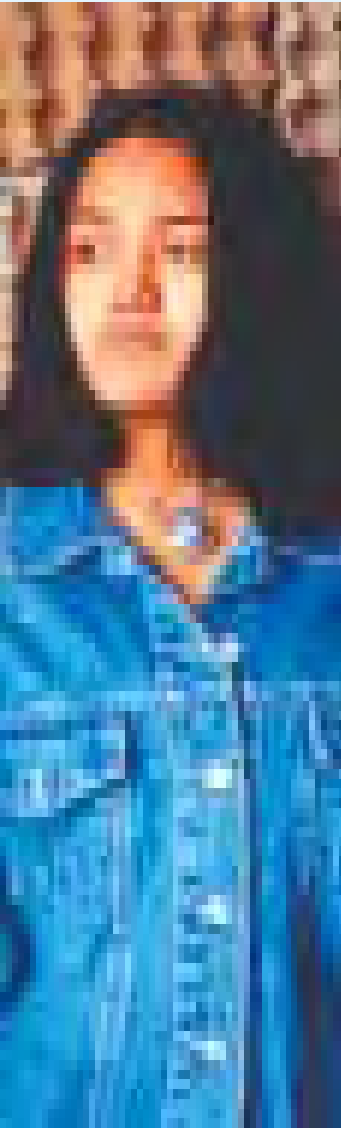
like Sheryl Crow, Pink Floyd, Iron Maiden, and Dire Straits, Poonam doesn’t miss out her singer friends: Sabina Pakhrin and Axata Singh from college. Then there is Robin n’ Looza and Flower Generation which she “really” likes. “My association with Cobweb has been one of the most inspiring elements in my musical career,” she says.

Evenings at home are a magical time for Poonam. She contemplates the monsoon clouds and the lights in the sky as she gazes down at the Valley from her home overlooking Chobhar. She will grab a guitar and sing along with her younger sister and brother who are equally talented and versatile when it comes to music. “My home and family have always been very supportive of my interest in music. This is why I could keep trying new and better things,” says Poonam, who is now learning guitar.

Poonam gets a lot of fan

mail. Some simply write to praise, some want to become her adopted *bhai* and some ask for tips on how to become a successful singer. We asked her that question too and she replied: “Stick on to your dreams. Meet the right people. And then make it happen.”

Poonam is proof that this works. First, there was this dream to become a good singer. At Little Angel’s School where she studied, she was the most requested singer during most school programs. At college life was much more intense. And once, while humming alone, she was spotted by the band Cobweb which soon found Poonam’s vocals such a good match with their style that they even helped her out with her next album, due to be released next month. Then she may be off to China to study medicine. A singing Nepali doctor who speaks Mandarin? “Well, not too sure...but so far it looks like it.” ♦



NICHHE MAN SINCH

Thompson