The bus service from Dang to Holeri remains ispended. It has resumed from Bhalubang to Libang, and traffic has also returned on the Tulsipur-Salvan-Rukum road. Work on a 16 km stretch connecting Rukumkot being built by the army has come to a halt. In Nepalgunj, the stream of people heading out for work in India is visibly greater, as is the exodus of rural refugees into Kathmandu Valley.

Things aren't much better in the east. Crowds have thinned at the weekly markets, there are fewer buses on the roads. The number of night buses plying from Biratnagar has gone down by half. Newspaper sales are down, says Surendra Shrestha in Lahan-"People are buying less because they find the ame news in all the papers."

Tulasi Neupane, DDC chairman of ankhuwasabha says: "The Maoist are still active in the villages, and most Congress vorkers have already fled." In Khotang, Hari have all been affected. Villagers tend to sta away from meetings because they are afraid of 'It is not very good, or very bad. But it is very slow," a frustrated donor representative based in Kathmandu told us. "We would

definitely not like to work in a military environment because our projects depend on our ability to win the trust of the villagers."

Most development projects keep skeleton staff in the field, avoid taking unnecessary risks,

"Even non-Maoists who were active in the village have fled..." —Development worker

have phones. The Ratamate tower in Rolpa. blown up by Maoists a month ago, used to provide connections to headquarters of Rukum, Rolpa and Jajarkot, The tower south of Baglung which was destroyed last week has cut phone connections to Jomsom and 20 MARTS terminals. The NTC is planning to replace towers with satellite systems, but the purchase and installation process could take over a year.

The government's development appr has ground to a halt, and donor-funded projects are either in deep freeze, or have been curtailed. Most conscientised village leaders active in development work are left-leaning. and have fled to the cities or to India to escape the wrath of both the Maoists and the security forces. Bishnu Buda of Ghartigaon in Sallyan crossed over into India last week He did not want to talk much, but told us: "I had no choice. The bombs and bullets

and doing the little bit they can, rather than shut down. "It has become difficult to monitor on-going programs," says Hirakaji Ghale, of Namsaling in Ilam. "No one is in a state of mind to even discuss new activities. We have not been able to go into the villages."

Before the army deployment and the emergency, the government had launched the Integrated Security and Development Programme (ISDP) in seven insurgency-affected districts (with plans to expand to another 30). Today, there isn't even the ISDP, "In some settlements we don't have enough people to mobilise," a development worker told us. "After the emergency, even non-Maoists that were active in community organisations have fled fearing arrest." Indra Dahal, a grassroots activist in Butwal says: "Even the donors are telling us let us to wait until the emergency is over to begin new projects.

The sense of fear is fuelled by the lack of

Editorial p2 development worker

at night, next morning there is no way to find out what it was all about." Radio Nepal and the media only give out the government version of events, and the people know there is plenty else that is happening. Journalists are being picked up and interrogated. Sharad KC the BBC stringer in Nepalgunj was taken awa

the land revenue office are yet to begin business. Officials say it could take another six months just to compile the missing land records. Private helicopters have stopped ferrying vital salt and foodgrain to Kalikot and Musu ever since Maoists destroyed one of the helicopters at Surkhet airport in November. Bajhang airport is closed. Industries in Birgun have out down one shift—from three to two because travel at night has become impossible. Overnight curfews are still in effect in many parts of the country, in Jajarkot it is to end or 13 January. In Dang, Sallyan and Jumla the curfews will continue until further notice.

Bhandari in Biratnagar, Mohan Manandhar in Lahan, Chandra Kishor Jha in Birguni, Madha Nenal in Butwal Sudarshan Risal in Dano Sarari KC in Nepalgunj and Umid Bagchand in

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Prithvi Narayan Shah 4-5

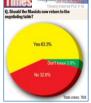
Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trus

20 pages

Re 20

23 February

The state of national emergency will come up for renewal in parliament by 23
February (counting by the Negali calendar). The main opposition UML, now close to reuniting with the ML, and which has the critical votes needed for ratification, won't say yet which way it'll go. The probable scenario is that the emergency will be lifted on the 23rd, but parliament will allow the government to keen its anti-terrorism enforcement under the Terrorist and Disruptive Activities Ordinance, Most politicians agree that the army should continue fighting the Maoists, but without absolute emergency powers. The casualties since 23 November has now crossed 500, with 350 of them Maoists, according to the Defence Ministry's tally. Several thou sands have been arrested, and 9,000 Maoists have reportedly surrendered.



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in Surkhet says: "There are gunshots

blindfolded from his office last week and asked about his Manist contacts. He was released after two hours. Basanta Pokhrel, another journalist in Butwal wasn't so lucky. He spen 16 days in detention, no one told him why he was arrested Suffering heavy casualties in the army's action, the Maoists have changed tactics. They hide in the villages and ambush convoys with booby-trap explosives along roads. The banks looted at Ghorahi on 23 November are still not fully functional. Both the district jail and

(Reported by Madhav Ghimere in Ilam, Mohan

DECION



THE MORNING AFTER

It does feel a lot like we are hosts cleaning up the plates after a new year's party. And what a party it was. Nepalis showed what we can do when we put our minds to it. We also exhibited our legendary canacity to legge things till the last minute. Our expat friends are being polite when they tell us that Nepalis work best under pressure. What they really mean is that we couldn't be bothered until it's too late

Nowhere is that more true than the way we have been dealing with our nation's development for the past 40 years. Sorry to keep on harning about it on this page, but we have really messed things up big time. Despite being the darling of the donors, despite commanding tremendous international goodwill, and despite having enormous potential to surge ahead with tourism and hydropower, we have failed in the only criteria that really matters—we have failed to raise living standards and ensure equity among Nepalis. These failures are all the more glaring because the success stories abound (see "Not all gloom and doom" in # 75). In all these cases, we see how easy it is to achieve results with a simple combination of integrity, commitment and good management.

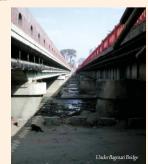
Blaming a heartless elite, finding scapegoats, bashing donors, is all very well and easy to do. Many of them desenue it. But that is not going to get us out of the rut we're in. This time we have to look forward, chart out a strategy, give ourselves realistic targets and work hard to achieve them. Nepali officialdom needs to show a singlemindedness we have not seen in the past. Our elected leaders need to demonstrate vision, honesty and efficiency. Nepal's problems are vast, and solutions are urgently needed. Before we start sounding like a minister's speech, here is one of our periodic checklists for urgently-required interventions:

- Resolve the Maoist crisis one way or the other, to
- Go hand-in-hand with a massive job-creation initiative, by
- Wooing domestic and foreign investors, and
- Concentrating on high-value, long-staving tourism, Launch a nationwide infrastructure drive that will create jobs and
- provide a backbone for future development,
- Concentrating in the midwest and other neglected areas Launch an effective anti-corruption drive to catch the big fish, and start with the most blatant and easy-to-stop graft; fuel adulteration
- 8. Rescue the garment, pashmina and carpet industries with export promotion, price stabilisation and quality control.
- Begin a result-oriented delivery of basic health and primary health
- 10. Show us some proof that we have a government.

We got a tiny glimpse of the kind of effort required during the past weeks of breakneck park-building, road-paving and zebra-painting in Kathmandu. We had invited SAARC dignitaries for a party, and we were ashamed about what they would think when they saw the slums at Tinkune, the shabby buildings and dusty roads. So we spruced them up. Somehow it doesn't seem to matter that the asphalt is already frayed, the zebras have faded, the sidewalks have crumbled. But at least it looked good for a while. We showed that when push comes to shove, we can get off our behinds. And with slightly more honesty and efficiency, we could

get much better results. If only we showed the same sense of shame about outsiders finding out about our female literacy, which is the lowest in South Asia. If we could be as embarrassed by our maternal mortality rate, which is one of the highest in the world. If we hung our heads in shame at the proportion of Nepali children who are stunted because of poor nutrition. That is what we should be ashamed about, not what visitors will think about the shanty town below Bagmati Bridge.

The party is over, and there have been enough speeches. Let's get to





The sun will come out tomorrow

A long, cold and foggy winter in the tarai shows no sign of ending.

Remittances from West Asia and

earnings from Gujarat and Punjab vie for

attention as the minarets of mosques rise

higher and murals in temples become more

garish. The stronger currency of West Asia

drafts. People raise the volume of their TV

talks louder than the Indian Rupee bank

pop bhajans non-stop. The market is

participant unaffected. Hawkers move

trendy black-hair wigs for chic

New Yorkers so they can feed

With most able-bodied

insidious. It does not leave even the non-

fistfuls of the cheap sonpapadi. Poor mothers

The collapse of community life is

most visible in the drains that flood the

narrow streets of the village, Earlier,

and used it judiciously. These days.

shallow pumps are installed in almost every house, but there are no public

drains to safely dispose the overflow and

the sewage. The result is cleaner private

houses surrounded by dirty public spaces

Had the state been a more effective

people fetched water from public wells

SUGA, MAHOTTARY-Winter in a tarai village is not charming anymore. Gone are the days when the fresh hay and balmy sun warmed your heart and body. For four years in a row, the tarai has been gripped by a mysterious winter fog. It is gloomy, blocking out the sun for days on end, and the air lacks the characteristic crispness of early morning mist. In some ways, the gloom symbolises the foggy state of our state.

It is easy to blame global warming or the hole in the ozone layer for everything that goes wrong with the weather. But more in-depth studies are needed to explain to us exactly why the refreshing, fog-dispelling winter drizzle has become so elusive Anecdotal reasons are aplenty, but no convincing explanations have been offered for the thick fog that grips much of the Indo-Gangetic plain, causing sheer misery for many and discomfort for most. The resulting cold-wave kills the poor and the children by the dozen, but the South Asian bureaucratic-scientific establishment remains preoccupied with what it considers more pressing issues—nuclear bombs, spy satellites, and cryogenic boosters. Not just Indians, our agricultural scientists at the grandly named Nepal Agricultural Research

men of working age abroad making a living, the villages here Centre (NARC) also couldn't be bothered. have become a refuge for The persistent fog may have something women, the unemployable, the to do with the intensive irrigation required old, the sick and the very young. for the hybrid wheat of India's Green An unintended benefit of this Revolution that has started to push has been that women are eastward. It might also be linked to the empowered Even so-called waterlogging that has become rampant in high-caste women have come the flood plains due to embankments built out of purdah perforce, as they along riverbanks, ostensibly to control have to run their household in flooding during the monsoon. It is possible the absence of men. They that the emissions from the coal-fired power must go to pay land-tax, buy plants of Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar fertiliser from the market or aggravate the situation. Then there is the sell agricultural produce to thinning forest cover in the region, which tide over an emergency in does little to help the worsening air-quality between collecting remit-In all probability, the fog that hangs like a tances from the local bank pall of gloom over the Ganga plains and our

tarai is a result of all these factors Even without the fog, life in villages here is changing. It is less laid-back, a lot more competitive. Despite the loud protests you hear in the capital over the politicisation, people are, if anything, not politicised enough. Perhaps people in the cities harp on about excessive political spirit because they fear the development of

might end up weakening their hold over the service provider, public water supply resources of the state. Clan, community, would not be so cheap, and waste water and caste still rule the roost in the village here, but even that is disappearing. It is being replaced by a frightening fragmentation. At the first glance, the rural landscape looks all calm and serene. But stay just a nity. Another symbolic instance of the few more days, and the harshness of Marx's tragedy of the commons" "rural idiocy" boils over.

Ouarrels in rural areas are vicious, bu the stakes are low and petty. People come to blows over an argument about a goat that straved into a neighbour's field of the issue of whose child relieved herself on the door of the local priest. Brothers and cousins spend their lives fighting it out in sets to drown out loudspeakers belching out court to settle the ownership of a few hand measures of fallow land

woes. Firewood is expensive, at Rs 3 per kg. around the village exchanging human hair for few can afford it. Dung-cakes—the poor the absence of sunshine, dung doesn't dry fast



enough to be used for fuel. The alternative is to go to bed early. Children who resist are frightened with this admonition: "If you don't sleep early, Maobaadis will come and get you At the community tap, "The army will crush them," is the overwhelming refrain. Another says: "What if they don't?"

turning out to be a rather long one for the

would be managed a lot better. The market went for volume, individual houses onted for convenience and there is nobody to look after the damage being done to the commu-

chickpeas. Lathis are brought out to resolve

Evening adds some more to the litany of man's source of energy-are in short supply.



The fog holds us prisoner. When will we feel the warmth of the sun again? This winter is If all the government thinks it should do is sit back and let the army fight the insurgents and the donors pay for development, then it is sadly mistaken.

Reform vs revolution

decay in its functioning Unless we reform these problems and set out to ovide development that focuses on the poor in he affected areas, we will not be addressing the The emergency and the

errorism ordinance have given great powers to the government There is a danger of the abuse of such sweeping authority cause the Nepali Congress has a history of abuse. The opposition must therefore remain vigilant, it must monitor and check the use of emergency powers to prevent their misuse. The Nepali Congress on the other hand needs to rise to this extraordinary occasion and set an example of restraint, fairness and Restoring law and order will merely treat the

cause of the disease. The emergency is an opportunity for political reform. This is a war not just igainst insurgents, but against corruption Political instability has cost the country dearly. Vast sums need to be spent to win the numbers game in arliament. The players in this game have come dependent on the only source of such large sums whenever needed: the smuggling mafia which has penetrated the political system. The criminalisation of electoral politics was a natural manifesta-

Tourism Board member

Many Americans like me

would love to retire or live part

of the year in Nepal. However

due to Nepal's present visa

policies, non-Nepali citizens

calendar year, and must trek

down to the visa office each

month and undergo a length

interrogation to be allowed

that privilege. And even

though I am married to a

receive residency status

Kathmandu, Lencourage

Nepali. I could not apply and

without my husband person-

ally making the application in

nembers of the Nepal Tourist

Board to lobby government

authorities to "think outside

the box" and extend the visa

potentially bring millions of

rupees into the country. More

will come to Nepal if the visa

Regarding the interview with

amazed you did not ask him

(nor did Mr Shakya mention)

Yogendra Shakva, I was

Donna Spoon Regmi

Chapel Hill, NC, USA

process is more open and

extended

allowance, which could

are allowed only 120 days per

tion of this decay. Politicisation and partisan interference have weakened most state institutions: the bureaucracy, the police, the intelligence services, public education, state corporations. Indeed, this is the reason why civil security organs of state failed in their attempts to

tackle the insurgency. It is now up to the opposition to be a watchdog to ensure that the decay hasn't eaten into the core of our value-system. If we are not careful, the emergency could actually engrain the malaise. The constitution provided that a two-third majority must endorse the emergency three months after its declaration. This clause is designed to arrest any misuse of the emergency provision by a majority party or its government.

A nation cannot remain just a geographical configuration. It is a ollective expression of all ethnic grou their cultures, religion and languages. A state must strike an ethnic balance and must not be the instrument of marginalising a caste or class. The Maoists, for instance, have opened 21 different ethnic fronts to capitalise on these sentiments. Twelve years of democracy have done precious little to resolve the grievances of the ethnic groups of the hills and the tarai. They are not just vote banks, and need nothing less than affirmative action or even "reservation" to address their just representation in politics, the services and all areas of public education. In addition, as cited in a RPP strategy paper, the government needs to use the opportunity of the emergency to push through new initiatives n development and the political process. As law and order is restored and the

ambit of the state expands in the areas

LETTERS

nation. The effects of our

thoughts, and perception have

our future than we convention

more serious impact in shaping

ally choose to accent. We must

create our own reality, our own

destiny by using our thoughts

materials. But we are afraid to

accept this because then we

cannot habitually blame anyone

and percentions as the raw

or anything for our failure.

where the insurgency had forced it to retreat into isolated pockets, there must be impartial development, incomegenerating activities, job-creating programmes. This is essential to win over the masses in the insurgency affected areas. And as the hold of insurgency is rolled back these security actions will create a political vaccum. All parties must move together in consensus to reoccupy the vaccum and restore the democratic process

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has made statements ruling out any possibility of reopening dialogue. This is an example of the government's blinkered policy: when it was in the negotiating mood it pursued negotia tions with single-minded vehemence, and closed its eyes to any other possibilities. Now that negotiations have broken down, it has done an about turn by pursuing a policy of "combat and confrontation" with the same single-mindedness.

The tragedy with this government is its readiness to swing from one extreme to the other without considering options. Politics is a game which thrives on alternatives, therefore it would be foolish to set aside the option of negotiation at any stage. The Maoists indulge in terrorist acts, but there is no gainsaying that the aims of their insurgency is political in character. The natural landing place of a politically motivated insurgency is a tiated settlement.

Mobilising the army against insurgency is an extremely expensive affair and this has prompted the Minister of Finance to announce diversion of funds from development to security. Yet security without development without reform, without a restoration of the political process will

How do we find the money for this. and find it now? There has been some attempt at engaging the donors and the response seems positive. However Nepal's extremely poor record in delivering the aid to the targetted poor and the tendency for leakage will be an impediment. The government will have to provide iron-clad guarantees that the aid will reach the poor in the affected areas. The negotiating process and the natural time law will also mean that aid will take considerable time to materialise Alternatives need to be examined.

One such alternative is debt-relief. The only reason that Nepal does not receive debt relief is that our foreign exchange reserves have made us capable of servicing debt and repaying installments in time. Nepal must put her case for debt relief in the new context of the worldwide war on terrorism. Indeed, our capacity to repay debt is very much in doubt in the new context. The time has also come to tap the patriotism of the financial system and of national capital-by issuing long-term "national emergency bonds". This could be an immediate means of raising funds for the development and reform programmes. If all the government is poing to do is to sit back and hone that the donors will fill the gap in financing, then it is sadly mistaken. It has to show i is at least trying to mobilise internal resources 4

Pashupati Shumsher JB Rana is the General-Secretary of the Rastriya Praiatantra Party

DON'T TALK

Statements by politicians that talks with Maoists are possible if they surrender weapons and say sorry, and by Nepali ntellectuals that such talks are the only way to resolve the "insurgency", are a sad confirmation of the inability of our elite to be either coherent or consistent in thought, word,

ilitary action alone cannot win

the hearts and minds of the

people, and the government must realise that the causes of the Maoist

insurgency must be addressed at its very

roots. The insurgency spread because the

state failed to deliver service and justice.

the shackles of poverty and backward-

there was deep-seated distortion and

because it could not free the people from

ness. The state was unable do so because

or deed Leaders of major political parties say repeatedly (when it suits them) that the Maoists are terrorists. When the emergency was declared the Government itself formally declared the Maoists to be terrorists. How can there he 'talks" with terrorists? The only alks can be about how to facilitate the surrender of any Maoists who wish to give up. and what pardon to give then after considering their terrorist crimes. The numerous victims of Maoist murder, rape, maiming, looting, arson, destruction, and desecration of religious sites and value must be addressed. There is no turning back.

Naval

enioved the interview with

Yogendra Shakva (Biz Chat. # 74). There is a huge potential the horrible behaviour of the in non-traditional markets Department of Immigration staf

toward visitors. They are unwelcoming and extort money when you try to extend your visa And why does the Home Ministry continue to overcharge for visas while at the same time discouraging foreigners from spending longer periods in Nepal? Is it xenophobia?

Danny Birch New York

It is very sad that the tourism ndustry in Nepal is suffering but think it is as much to do with the people operating the tourism industry in Nepal as with bad publicity. I visited Nepal a year ago and saw a notice at a Thamel hotel which said "Nepalis not allowed" How can tourism be revived if vou ignore domestic tourism? Jan D

Re: your poll question: "Do you think 2002 will be a better year for Nepal than 2001?" (#75) One response could be: we can only hope. But is just "hoping or wishing" enough to

nor our religious culture have ever been designed to allow make 2002 a better year for people to "strongly believe in Nepal? A change of numerical anything", even their own numbers in the dates will hardly judgement. bring any automatic positive changes in our lives and the

It was really refreshing to know how Nepal has progressed in the last decade amidst all the news of fighting, killing and failure to deliver. "Not all gloom and doom" (#75) rightly points out that we have not failed on all fronts. Though the most glaring failure is on the political front. the common Nepali is moving forward, slowly but continuously



hard to be an optimist but we have no choice. We have to look forward. Saiiu Khatiwada

Pennsylvania. There could be one more

addition to "Not all gloom and

doom" (#75). The preliminary findings of the Nepal Demographic Health Survey, 2001 shows the Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Child Mortality Rate (CMR) to have decreased substantially over the years to 64 2/1000 live hirths and 91/ 1000 live births respectively. For the first time the figures here are better than that of India-and India hoasts one doctor per 5,000 citizens, while the ratio in Nepal is just over one per 20,000. Thanks to some very successful public health interventions such as the Vitamin A programme, the distribution and consumption of iodised salt. the diarrhoeal disease control programme and the treatment of nneumonia at the community level by the Female Community Health Volunteers among others.

Raiendra Karki

The Great Unifier

Prithvi Narayan Shah is more than the founder of Nepal. Many of his policies

are as relevant today as they were when he set out to make Nepal one.

HEMLATA RAI

he aggrandising propaganda of the Panchayat years turned Prithvi Narayan Shah the Great into a surreal figure. Many of his visionary statements remain buried in exam answer sheets, or the subconscious self of most Nepalis. Surrounded by myths and legends, Prithyi Narayan Shah is one of those historical figures people find it hard to actually relate to. Even so, social analysts political scientists and historian all agree on two things: that he was a brilliant leader, and that he

HERE AND THERE

was on occasion only too human. Prithvi Narayan Shah's birthday, 27 Poush (11 January this year) is commemorated as Nepal's "National Unity Day" For the ordinary citizen, this ha turned into yet another national holiday, a forced annual ritual garlanding of his statue in front of Singa Durbar, speeches and photo-ops for political

nersonalities



However, the great king's ision and policies are as relevant today as they were when he set out 260 years ago rom his hilltop town of Gorkha o unify Nepal. Media commentator CK Lal says rereading Prithvi Narayan Shah is still useful. "The nation building project he initiated still remains incomplete."

Prithvi Narayan Shah inherited the rule of the hilly Gorkha kingdom in 1742, at the age of 20. But the young king wasn't content and he went on to fight_and win_the numerous battles that in 1769 resulted in the creation of territory we know as modern

Was it all part of a gameplan, a burning desire from the start to conquer different territories and forge a new country called Nepal? Historian Dinesh Raj Pant brushes aside the probability. He believes Prithyi Narayan Shah was nspired purely by an ambition o expand the borders of his ringdom initially and was determined to avoid the defeat nis father, Nar Bhupal Shah, nad to face. He was determined to keep his kingdom free and safe from the British who were acting belligerent to the south, and the restive Tibetans to the north

"He was an excellent ruler, trategist par excellence, and hampion of psychological warfare. Moreover, he was single-mindedly into the ousiness of ruling a kingdom,

in sharp contrast to successors. like Singh Pratap Shah and Ran Bahadur Shah, who spent more time pursuing the study of tantra rather than ruling

Pant prefers to call Prithyi Narayan the "re-unifier" of the Nepali state rather than "the unifier" school textbooks describe him as. According to him, stone inscriptions from the time of Samundra Gupta of Allahabad suggest that some 1,500 years ago, the borders of a proto-Nepal went as far as sam in the east and Kumaon in the west before it broke up nto smaller kingdoms

Whatever the case, says istorian KB Uday, "The expansion of the Nepali state from what it was in the 18th century) can be attributed to Prithvi Narayan Shah's ability to motivate and mobilise people." When he ascended to the Gorkha throne, the kingdom was weak economically and militarily. Gorkha faced constant threat of nvasion from the powerful eighbouring states of

Lamjung, Palpa and Tanahu. As first step in the camoaign, Prithvi Narayan Shah vanted to strengthen his army and so mobilised all the youth of his kingdom, regardless of aste. Maybe this was reason for his famous edict—though not politically correct in present day Nepal—that Nepal was a garden of "four castes and 36 ethnicities".

Going against tradition, he recruited Rana (Magars) to



the people in the nationbuilding process, rather than leave it to an elite class. In his Divyopadesh, Prithvi Narayan describes himself as king of 'Magarat" and talks about the need to involve "Pandes, Pant Ariyal Khanal Rana Bohora (representing the major castes of the Chhetris, Brahmins and Magar people in Gorkha) in strengthening of the kingdom. "As a king, he worked towards gaining total confidence of his subjects," says Uday.

Prithvi Narayan appears to have been a born leader. He was crowned in 1742, but historical documents show that he was involved in the affairs of state even as a teenager. One of his first decisions was to make peace with a stronger Lamjung after Gorkha was defeated. In fact his father Nar Bhupal Shah seemed to have begun losing interest in the matters of state after facing defeat against Nuwakot in 1737, which is when Prithvi Narayan Shah may have begun with the reins

of the state Narayan Shah recognised the Kathmandu, Patan and mportance of keeping subjects appy and unthreatened —and Bhaktapur were all part of a single kingdom, until Shiva Singh Malla divided the mified in their localties. After ne was enthroned in kingdom into three in 1457. All Kathmandu and Patan in 1768 three states prospered. But and in Bhaktapur (Bhadgaon) intra- and inter-state distrust in 1771 Prithvi Namuan Shah meant that Kathmandu Valley eemed to want to keen the polity was always weak. Prithy nfrastructure already devel Varayan Shah strategically ped in the kingdoms much befriended with the rulers of the he same. He respected the Valley and nurtured the ulture and values of the Valley relationship his ancestors had esidents, and joined them in stablished. He extended the heir worship of the Kumaris, phere of his influence to the he symbol of independent Malla rulers themselves, but was Malla kingdoms, and Taleju also quick to exploit their Shawani, the royal goddess of relative unpopularity and the lack of clear leadership in the the rulers before him What he did expel from the Valley was /alley. Kathmandu, for examwhat had not yet taken ole, had an overly whimsical oot—the Roman Catholic king and in Patan, between issionaries

It is clear that Prithvi

barbeque at Godavari

a typical BAN BHOJ

With a glass of wine or beer for adults and soft drink for children

Prithvi Narayan Shah's 1758 and 1768, the minister could replace a king if they nbiased appointment of able vished. Valley residents were ublic officials, regardless of also slowly drawing closer to the he claims of relation or Gorkhali raja, having heard personal equations is another trait that stands out. For about the reputation of his ingdom for justice and welfare nstance, although he greatly favoured Birai Bhakti, a

faithful, long-time aide, he evertheless appointed Kalu ande as Kaji (the equivalent of present-day prime minister). Kalu Pande had displayed plendid diplomatic skills in the igning of the agreement of endship with Lamjung, and later, in 1763, played a key role

n the defeat of that kingdom. Prithvi Narayan Shah's ability to unify such a diverse ariety of people in such different geographical locations had as much to do with his economic policy as with his ability to win the hearts and ninds of the people whose ulers he defeated. He exploited Nepal's landlocked location to great advantage. On annexing luwakot and Makwanpur in 1762, he imposed heavy taxes on both the Tibetans and the Indians who depended on routes through Nepal to trade with ach other

As documented in Divyopadesh, Prithvi Narayan trongly advocated self-sufficiency, self-reliance and believed n the concepts of sustainability He wanted settlements on ertile lands moved to make way for irrigation channels and agriculture. True to those rojectionist times, he encouraged export but discouraged import that would drain the ountry's wealth

He also discouraged travagance and the import of crystal, glass and other useless luxuries". He wanted to stablish trading houses in both of his kingdom's northern and southern borders to encourage hem to trade with the Nepalis ather than have Nepalis deal directly with traders beyond the onders. He was successful in most such endeavours—what he did not manage to do in his lifetime was convince the

Tibetans to accept his currency Prithvi Narayan Shah could e brutal and vindictive. One nstance is when he is said to nave ordered the ears and noses of the previous rulers of Kirtipur o be cut off as punishment for rheir resolute resistance against his forces in 1764. Another such incident concerns his killing of a oattle commander Javant Rana for mutiny.

Some historians like Uday think it was a strategic blunder for Prithvi Narayan Shah to shift his capital to Kathmandu. and name the country he had mified after it, rather than afte his own kingdom. Even today. the small hill district, from where the borders of modern Nepal were sketched remains alected And is known as the thplace of another more recent political figure, the Maoist leader Niwas to follow up. New tourism regulation

Nepal-India

This might bring a smile to the faces of mountaineering entrepreneurs and professionals. The government is amending the 20-year-old Tourism Regulation to make the process of obtaining permission to climb easier. The new amendment proposes allowing climbing throughout the year instead of present arrangement of four mountaineering seasons. The regulation also proposes that climbing permits be issued in one day, compared to the four months the process can take now. Also addressed are the issues of raising the remuneration, allowances and insurance ceilings for high altitude porters involved in mountaineering. Finally, the proposed amendment is concerned with keeping tourism income in the villages—it proposes offering discounts on royalties to climb mountains situated in economically disadvantaged areas.

Its final: India says it could extend the 1996 trade treaty with Nenal one more time. On the sidelines of the SAARC summit, Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee said, "The (trade) Treaty has already been extended for three months. If the need arises it can be

extended further." There is a catch though. Foreign ministe

controversial Nepali exports remains below a certain

Jaswant Singh said this would be done only if the volume of

Another issue Singh touched upon was the requirement of

specific travel documents by Indians wanting to visit Nepal, a major reason why fewer Indian tourists are coming here. India's "security

concerns" is the reason Indians are required to have passports of

voter IDs. Singh said these were only "temporary" measures. "The intention is not to harm Neoal's tourism industry," he added. "The

facility of free movement...was being misused by some elements.

temporary measure could be scrapped—maybe something for Shital

There was however no pronouncement on when and how the

Hotels hit hard

The SAARC summit was a brief respite for Kathmandu's hotels that have downturn in tourism. But with the South Asian delenates none

the rooms are



empty again. Now the industry says it wants an immediate bailout plan or else all hotels will shut down. The government has promised to help out by rescheduling loans and offering new soft-loans, but that has not been put into action. It is this delay that is threatening to blow the fuse on the industry, where the investment so far adds up to about Rs 70 billion. According to the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN), the industry has borrowed over Rs 15 billion from banks and unpaid interest already adds up to Rs 5 billion. Says HAN President Narendra Bajracharya: "We want a prompt decision, otherwise we won't be able to survive." The industry directly employs about

Human Development

After 16 years of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), South Asia remains the least integrated region compared with other similar regional groupings, and has the largest number of poor. That was the message of the Human Development in South Asia 2001 report, which looks at the region with globalisation as the overarching theme. Almost half-a-million people in this part of the world have become poorer after the process began taking effect. The report, produced annually by the Islamabad-based Mahbub ul Haq Development Centre, says this is because of the inability of the states to develop response mechanisms, incomplete reforms and inadequate pro-poor policies.

Beyond the rhetoric of cooperation we heard during the 11th summit last week, as a region South Asia has very little to show. Trade among them remains below five percent of their total exports, compared to 22 percent for ASEAN members and 55 percent for NAFTA members, and the region's average tariffs remain very high compared to other groupings of nations. Nepal's consolation. articulated by Shankar Sharma, National Planning Commission member, is that we are doing better than the rest of South Asia in human development indicators. In 1975 Nepal's Human Development Index (HDI) was 0.29. by last year, it had shot up to 0.48, the fastest gain compared to other South Asian states. We also spend the most on education-about 13 percent of all public spending.

Inhabitants of five mountain districts in far-western Nepal have been hit hard by a shortage of salt. The salt that is available costs Rs 40 a kn. The demand remains unmet desnite a six-month-old. agreement between local representatives of the Karnali Zone and the Salt Trading Corporation in Kathmandu. Locals of Humla, one of the most remote districts in the country, are further worried that winter snows will close down the airport and disrupt supply flights. Residents of southern Humla have been forced to travel to Baiura to buy salt, and their northern counterparts head to Taklakot on the

Blasphemy on the beach

There may be a South Asian version of Mutually Assured Destruction. But a little less madness would do us good.



finding reasons to hate each other. In mid-1998, they recklessly upped the ante hugely, endangering a region that I've come to love and live in. Now I'm not so sure. Call me shallow, or driven by events, but I wonder if the relatively small nuclear arsenals in both countries haven't helped avoid all out war, at least twice in the past two years. Whoa, I can hear the screams of outrage already, not least from my abolitionist wife who marched the 1980s away protesting against American and Soviet nuclear weapons.

and Nagasaki are a constant reminder of their effectiveness at dealing

death and destruction. No, I wonder about the nuclear arsenals of

Like many, I went ballistic at the Indian nuclear tests in May of 1998.

ous aid donations—into hideously dangerous weapons. They'd

Pakistan's follow-on was even more maddening. Here were two Titans of

fought three largely pointless wars and spent the better part of six decades

Poverty pouring funds—in Pakistan's case, largely money freed up by

India and Pakistan, and whether they haven't helped keep the peace

until now, largely ignored by the rest of the world.

But let's consider the evidence. The Karvil conflict in 1999 was widely described as South Asia on the brink of all out nuclear war. Pakistan had organised an incursion into Indian-controlled territory along the line of control. India fought back fiercely, and with a little help from Bill Clinton saw off the threat from across the line.

Hundreds of young Indian men died retaking ridges and mountain peaks that would defy the skills of mountaineers. We'll probably never know how many from the other side were killed, but my friends in Gilgit and Skardu told me that funerals went on for days after the killing stopped Yet it remained a largely local skirmish. Despite immense rhetorical

pressure from fire breathing desk generals of the Indian media and the bellicose middle classes of Delhi, Atal Behari Vajpayee kept his troops on his side of the LOC. An American diplomatic source told me afterward that there were credible threats from Islamabad that nuclear weapons might be used if the Indians crossed the line. That's denied in public by both. India and Pakistan yet it makes some sense. And if it's true, then we must acknowledge the role of the South Asian version of mutually assured destruction-the unwritten NATO-Moscow equation that kept the peace during the Cold War.

I wonder too about the current round of Delhi-Islamabad hostilities. The usual suspects in India (media, middle classes, pundits) bray for war Vaipavee makes all the right noises, General Musharaff regrets but talks equally tough. Meanwhile, he quietly rounds up militants while India's wily leader keeps the military preparations firmly within reversible limits. War fears fade as quickly as they flared and only the frighteningly callow commentariat in Delhi seems disappointed.

I am willing to bet both Musharaff and Vajpayee were well aware of the immense risks they were taking, and knew how far they could go before starting to tone things down. The problem lies in Pakistan's conventional inferiority to India. As a smaller, poorer country that has been subjected to an American arms embargo for more than a decade, Pakistan is simply not able to best India in conventional battle. The Pakistani armed forces are well trained, morale is high but they lack technology and numerical weight.

So asymmetrical strategies like nuclear weapons and support for cross border insurgencies are a natural part of Pakistan's arsenal. Islamabad might have little choice but to use its atomic bombs if invaded by Indian armour and infantry. But lest a flock of hawks gather round me, let me say I still hate nuclear weapons. Just because they deter war in times of rhetorical hostility doesn't mean that defusing tensions is not imperative.

And there are other, frightening issues like the absence of command and control, extremist forces in both countries, nuclear accidents and so on. It all underlines the need to move towards regional peace and the prosperity that will follow. Even Washington and Moscow eventually abandoned mutually assured destruction, known by its highly appropriate acronym, MAD. A little less madness in South Asia would do us all a world of good.

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SOMEWHERE IN NEPAL

ANJANA SHRESTHA

hauske on 17 July 2001 in Gorkha, which damaged 600 ouses, brought home yet again that earthquakes are an unavoidable part of Nepal's future, just as they have been a part of its past. And as one more Earthquake Safety Day approaches, it looks as if we are stil likely to be caught unprepared should a large trembler strike any time soon.

- Every year in Nepal there are more rhan 1.000 earthquakes ranging in magnitude from 2-5 on the Richter
- Records going as far back as 1255 CE show that Nepal has experienced nine major earthquakes over the last
- Recurring earthquakes in the 20th century claimed more than 23,000
- The Great Bibar earthquake of 1934—which could as well have been called The Great Kathmandu Farth ausko_mergued 8 3.8 4 on the Richter scale, claimed 8,500 lives and destroyed 20 percent of the Valley's buildings, including a large number of temples and monume
- In 1988, a magnitude 6.6 earthquake hit eastern Nepal, with the epicenter in Udayapur. More than 700 people were killed, 6,500 were injured and 22,000 houses collapsed.

"Kathmandu is the highest at-risk city in the world today," says Amod Dixit of National Society for Farthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET-Nepal). The Kathmandu Valley Farthquake Risk Management Project (KVERMP) estimates that an earthquake today similar in magnitude to the 1934 Mahabhukampa, centred in the densely populated Kathmandu Valley, would likely cause more deaths and casualties than last year's Gujarat earthquake in India. In hard number they count something like approximately 40,000 dead and 95,000 injured. More than 60 percent of the existing buildings would be

destroyed leaving 600,000 to 900.000 residents homeless

drilled into the mind of every citizen

of quake-prope countries is that

our north. (See also "Waiting for the big one," #25.) A seismic risk map of It is a disaster waiting to har n—with a population of 1.5 millio nd growing, the Valley is seeing a spurt of uncontrolled development. Construction techniques have deteriorated in recent decades as the demand for cheap, fast buildings grows. Even scarier, the Valley's nfrastructure barely holds up under day-to-day life, and is far from able to support rescue and response operahan the far-east. ons such as those carried out in Guizert One of the fundamentals The realisation that Nepal is as

lepal produced by the United tions Development Programme (LINDP) and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS) based on geological data, shows that the country's hills are more vulnerable to earthquakes than the mountains or the terri And western and central Nepal—where a large percentage of the population and vulnerable infrastrucum is concentrated-are more exposed

eismically active as Japan but much nore vulnerable because of poor

Seismic Risk in Nepal

The seismic zoning of the country is shown map, where z=1.1 and z=1.0 represent the highest earthauske risk zones

earthauakes alone do not kill as many people as the collapse of poor rastructure does. This means buildings, fire departments, medica facilities, and, if they exist, crisis

management cells.
Nersal's seismic record seems to uggest that earthquakes of the 1934 magnitude occur approximately every 75 years. That, combined with recent many experts to believe that a major arthquake is almost certain to hit in the near future. Nepal is in the seismically very active Himalayan nountain belt, with the Indian plate to the south moving burrowing against the Asian or Tibetan plate to

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

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7 years of experience with an FMCG company of repute. Computer skills will

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infrastructure planning came only after the 1988 earthquake. The ^Mahabhukampa, or nabbay saal ko bhuichalo, could have taught Nepal a lot, but public and institutional nemory has proven to be short. An earthouake memorial, now known as Bhugol Park, was erected in 1934 to emind people of the damage the disaster caused. Nepal was the first Asian country to build such a nonument. but it was not until 1988 hat attention was refocused on actual arthquake preparedness. One of the

products of this new concern was the reation of NSET-Nepal in 1994. NSET-Nepal believes that with concerted effort, Nepal can be quake

rganise their structures, and what orries. "Nepalis are very complacen and are not panicked easily " he cays not to create panic is actually a crime Divit cannot emphasise enough that

which means having long-term vision One of the ways to do that is to se to it that quakes are never too far from the public mind. Which is why. though NSET-Nepal, with the upport from the government declared Magh 2 (this year 15 January) every

tory has been the four-year-old School alitmur is the focus this year, and the arthquake Safety Project (SESP). week will kick off with the hand-over o Shocked to find that none of the earthquake resistant Kaversthali Kathmandu Valley's 643 public School to the community. This will be schools complied with even the nominal building code in place now. followed by programmes such as a mas casualty drill at Machhendra bahal, a NSET-Nepal decided to strengthen th seminar on improving building buildings by a process known as seismic retrofitting, by which even oorly-built structures can be stabilised to withstand quakes. Today SESP is so popular that it is being replicated in India, Indonesia and other countries Ram Hari Sharma rincipal of Bal Bikas Madhyamik Vidhyalaya, one of the schools that has en retrofitted says, "I agreed when they selected my school, and now ther requirement for any new construction, and already hands out a set of booklets

are four or five houses in the area that nave replicated what we did." Starting 12 January, when Nepal's fourth annual Earthquake Safety Week pegins, different organisations and experts will come together in public forums to raise awareness and discuss

on constructing for earthquake safety

UN Disaster Management Team (UNDMT), reactivated in 1999, has

come up with the first UN Disaster

world. Man Bahadur Thapa of the UN

Disaster Management Programme, says

the team has trained 47 government officials at the ministry level in disaste

management and over 100 members of

provides technical support to the three

groups that, should a quake hir, will

ork on food and agriculture, health

Kathmandu orandnarents, when

asked about the 1934 quake, often say,

because we insulted her by our sins. So

she took people's lives and destroyed

buildings and religious shrines." The

sins of Nepal may bring on quakes,

but the sin of under-preparation will

only magnify the damage on an

"Mother Earth shuddered with anger

the larger community. The team also

Response Preparedness Plan in the

The UN is also doing its bit. The

when it approves plans.

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Nepal is still inadequately prepared for the next big quake which, like it or not, will happen.





helps people learn what "preparedness' means, in terms of how they build and their immediate response should be in the event of a quake. Still, Dixit

"But to withhold the knowledge so as the only way to deal with such a disaster is to be always prepared,

vear as Earthquake Safety Day, they work around the year with institution and communities to make the Valley a safer place, should there be a quake. Probably their biggest success

the problems raised by quakes.

Preserving Gurkha history standards, a symposium in disaster risk management, messages over radio and a ussion of the role of media in earthauake dieaster managemen Lalitpur's mayor Buddhi Raj Bairacharva says he plans to conduct wareness programmes in every ward of inally the Gurkha Memorial Museum has visitors. It used to be hidden Lalitpur. "My aim is to bring down away in a dusty corner of Lainchaur, and hardly anyone knew of its existence. But when it moved to Pokhara last September, tickers began selling even before the museum was officially opened. As the Gurkha Memorial canalties when such a dieseter occurs." he says. The municipality plans to Trust, which runs the museum, had hoped, passing tourists and Nepalis saw the make the approval of two design plans a

ach time Nepali Congress

Kathmandu knows he has something

electrified the political atmosphere at

a time when many Nepalis expected

their leaders to be enjoying a forced

If anything, the extended

discussions prompted by Koirala's proposal for a broader democratic

alliance reaffirm the assertion that

three-month vacation.

up his sleeves. The product of his

latest retreat in his hometown ha

the political establishment in

president Girija Prasad Koirala

mes back from Biratnagar,

politics is no exact science.

is all about.

If key leaders within the ruling

aiority-rule principle, they are only

party think the idea goes against the

But many Nepalis are still

this particular government Congress

Those who argue that the nation has

talwarts are really worried about

reached a state where no party or

power centre can expect to manage

things alone are rooted in ground

signboard and walked right in. The four-year-old museum has suffered from a chronic lack of funds and inadequate space to showcase the entire collection of memorabilia that the trust has gathered together. Captain Yeknarain Gurung, chairman and curator of the museum told us last March that "as this is a national asset, the government helped set up the museum by providing Rs 1 million." Donations followed from the Indian Embassy, the Royal Nepal Army, the British Gurkhas Nepal. Grindlays Bank and Lt Col John Cross. These donations and the yearly government grants, ranging from Rs 100,000-Rs 400,000, barely covered the overheads and it didn't help that barely anyone visited.

Major Yambahadur Gurung says the trust realised that if this were ever to work, the museum had to move where land—preferably sovernment-donated was easy to find and tourists were aplenty. Pokhara was the obvious choice, and in August 2001, the entire collection was moved to Pokhara. The museum occupies an old Nepali house in the compound of Hotel Nature Land. It's a separate building from the actual hotel and stands nearest to the main road, within a minute's walk from the heart of Fewa Lake. Hotel owner WO2 Dilbahadu Gauchan offered the house to the Gurkha Memorial Trust free for the first year when he heard they were looking for a place to start up until they were allocated a permanent location for the museum. "It was an old tattered building that I used to store things in, but I just couldn't find a reason for pulling it down. It paid off in the long run I guess," he laughs. "We are asking for government land in Pokhara so a nermanent museum can be built. But these matters take time. explains Vice Chairman, Major Judbahadur Gurung.

In the meantime, things are moving ahead and with support from the 2nd Gurkha Rifles Association, the house was refurbished last summer, and the displays were set up. There are three galleries downstairs, devoted to medals infantry regiments that were dishanded in 1994 to form the Royal Gurkha Rifles. the Gurkha Contingent of the Singapore Police Force, and corps regiments such

realities. But, again, the people still have no way of knowing that this isn't just another ploy to rewrite the political equations under the onstraints of the state of emerger

Democratic dalliance

two eras are hard to miss. The

Nepali Congress was locked in an

internal dispute then, too Leaders

should continue their campaign for

the confines of panchayati prisons

or from the freedom of the world's

most populous democracy. A state

of emergency forced the Kangresis

When Indira Gandhi turned

India into a vast dungeon for all

those who dared to disagree with

her, our exiles concluded they

would have greater freedom of

manoeuvre from Sundarijal. The

the fight for democracy to include

Democratic forces and the

Nepal was to maintain its identity

palace had to work together if

id the subcontinental flux.

Many who believe history

GP's clarion call. But a lot of

Nepalis who agree with the

moves in circles are carried away by

message are not so confident about

the sanctity of his motives. Look at

the questions we're asking our selves Why does the Congress

patriarch want to return to

Baluwatar after all he's been

through? Or is he just playing

games to hold on to the party

minister while he still had a

sidency? On the other hand

didn't Koirala step down as prime

majority in the Congress parliamer

Deuba may have reneged on a secret

tary party? Is there a chance that

pledge to resign in case the peace

For anyone interested in Nepali history, there is now a place to explore a vital part of it in the flesh.

collection from the Indian Army and Royal Nepalese Army, but is mainly

amns from the Oueens Gurkha Signals

dedicated to Victoria Cross winners. There are also some new items on display, such as Cross belts, old photographs, badges of rank from the Singapore Police,

flags from different regiments, and old radios used for communications between

short-staffed. "Visitors have been walking through themselves. Of course later w

hope to provide a guide explaining about each item on show", says Major Yambahadur Gurung. Tickets are Rs 50 for tourists and Rs 10 for Nepalis with

discounts for school children. The museum runs every day but Monday, from

10AM-5PM, and visitors can browse through the museum library and use the

otel's facilities. There is even a souvenir shop that sells khukuris, bangles cufl

links, tie-pins and brooches. With donations from individuals and institutions

the museum now has a computer and printer, and has even printed a brochure

be a lot more in the peak tourist season. Finally, it appears as if Nepal's justly famous Gurkhas are in the repertoire of institutional history for good. ◆

Close to 300 people have already visited the museum, and there are bound to

The museum is complete, and managed by Lalbahadur Lama, but is a little

defence of nationalism

operational strategy was to broaden

to make a choice

were divided over whether they

Rostrivo Projotontro Porty (RPP) president Surva Bahadur Thana epitomises the nation's current political predicament. He can't conceal his outrage at the way his two-vear-old proposal has been expropriated, repackaged and sold by faction of the ruling party. But deep down he must feel sindicated

Koirala, desperate to articulate what has become an aspiration transcending party lines, finds himself engaged in episodes of linguistic legerdemain. After his proposition of a national

government drew criticism from onstitutional scholars, he accused the press of misquoting him. What he really meant, he said, was that the rime minister could include members of other parties on an individual basis to broaden his base. When someone reminded him that such a proposal ought to be coming from Sher Bahadur Deuba, Koirala checked the calendar and re-defined his appeal as an extension of the national reconciliation policy BP Koirala illustrating that they retain the probity enunciated 25 years ago while to tell us what parliamentary politics returning from exile in India. (See back to Sundarijal >1, #74, and >2 on p. 17 of this issue) Since we're wondering whether it is the future of still at reconciling our positions. what would BP have thought of this nterpretation, especially if he had actually used that "h" word to characterise his youngest brother's political acumen?

The similarities between the

talks with the Manists collapsed? (By the way, whose side is Khum Bahadur Khadka on this time?) Why this sudden flip-flop from man who built a 50-year political the restoration of civil liberties from career on an image of steely

A lot of people who agree with Girija Koirala's message are not convinced about the sanctity of his motive.

determination? Let's give Koirala the benefit of the doubt. Even then, can a broader democratic alliance be conceived without the Maoists?

Granted, they blew their chance to prove they weren't a bunch of terrorists operating under ideological cover. But the organisation's official name conveys a clear political orientation, even if it has strayed from the Great Helmsman's path.

Why don't we try to separate the political and armed wings of the

If the Marxist, Leninist, Workers and Peasants and all the other variants of the heavily splintered left can be part of the platform, can the Maoists be denied a place? substance of the Kangresi-in-chief's

Perhaps someone should try to

encourage the emergence of the Maoist equivalent of Sinn Fein that could be expected to prevail over its version of the IRA. After years of ambivalence, the Brits seem to have henefited by allowing the two wings to co-exist in Northern Ireland. Once the Maoist political commis

sars gain supremacy over their disarmed militia, the healing

process could begin. Thapa must have been devas tated by the discovery that his speech in Pokhara was late by 23 years. As a gesture of goodwill, perhaps he could be entrusted with broadening Koirala's consensus package. Given the RPP's success rate in ducking the Maoists' wrath in the past, they might consider him a more acceptable interlocutor than either of two bigger parties

There's no guarantee the Maoists would accept Thapa as prime minister. But he would have a good reason to amend the RPP charter and serve a third consecutive term as president of the third largest party in parliament.

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Fasten seat helts

The insurgency and emergency of the past months has slowed not just the government's spending, but has curbed spending in general. The Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) says the detedringation law and order situation kent government spending slow in the first four months of this fiscal year (until mid-October). Recurrent expenses grew by about seven percent and development spending by six percent, while there was a sharp growth in freeze expenditure-money that has to be spent during the fiscal year-up by 46 percent to

This growth partly reflects spending brought forward by the different ministries to pay for the preparations for the SAARC summit. Government spending may have got worse since, herause the central bank figures do not take into account the developments since the 23 November Manist attacks and the declaration of the state of emergency three days later

Resource mobilisation grew by just seven percent, compared to 31 percent growth in the same period last year. Revenue grew by a mere nine percent compared to 22 percent growth in the last fiscal year, hit by a slowdown in imports and sluggish industrial produc-tion. The budget deficit in mid-November was Rs 4.2 billion, which was plugged with foreign loans (Rs 1.5 billion) and over-drawing Rs 2.7 billion from the central bank. Inflation is still under three percent, despite a rise in food and beverage prices. The price rise of fruite vanatables sugar and oil offeet the reduction in the price of rice

The bank had no good news on the external front: exports are down by about eight percent compared with 42 percent growth in the same period last year. Exports to India grew much more slowly than last year, while there was a slide in Nepal's main overseas exports—carpets (down 15 percent), readymade garments (down by 34 percent) and pashmina (down by a whopping 78 percent), Imports also dropped by 3.5 percent, com-

pared to the 13 percent by which it grew in the same period last year.

As if this wasn't bad enough, a Rastra Bank researcher told us we can expect more bad news "Every sector seems to be going from had to worse" he said

Banking on reformists

The World Bank's deadline to the government for initiating financial reforms expires next month, and it is uncertain whether Nepal will get another extension. If it does, it will be the fifth extension.

Employee unions of the two banks have decided to team up to protest the proposed reforms, essentially the handing over of

Nepal Bank Ltd and Rastriva Baniiva Bank to external management teams. The unions say that hiring highly paid consultants using a World Bank loan was not the solution. They say the ills can be addressed if there is no political interference. Reformers argue that foreign managers will have the independence to sever links between politicians, business groups and bank employees-

Rajendra Khetan is executive director in the Khetan Group, which is involved in producing everything from instant nodeles to beer, from insurance to banking. He is also a vice president at the Federation of the Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries [FNCCI] and Honorary Consul of Portugal. We spoke to Khetan to find out what was happening to his mobile telephone project, and also about other issues affecting business in Nepal.

Nepali Times: People are waiting for your mobile service to be

dures in September. We applied to the Negal Telecommunication

Authority for frequency allocation and other such matters on which

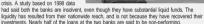
is very much ready, we only need to be given the go ahead.

Rajendra Khetan: We completed all the legal and joint venture proce-

approval is needed. We are waiting to hear back from the NTA. The project

launched, Whatis holding things up?





Atithi dollar bhava

ne is getting sick and tired of hearing the same regurgitated garbage from each and every industry, in particular from Nepali tourism "entrepreneurs". The 11 September attacks are only partially responsible for the present crisis in our industry.

Our "entrepreneurs" have brought this situation upon themselves by not devising creative solutions in marketting. And I don't blame them: they know not what they do, for they jumped blindly onto the tourism bandwagon.

The lack of operational aptitude and integrity towards tourism, and self-indulgence were their hallmark. They garnered ego-satisfying duty free four wheel drives with green plates, and the social respectability consequent of the construction of a star

They cared not that their valued god-like (atithi devo bhava) guests arrived in ramshackle cattle carts called taxis spewing smoke inside rather than outside. They cared not that hygiene in both the kitchen and guest toilets were essential, or that the bed sheets and table cloths were stained They wallowed in their own prescribed levels of mediocrity.

It was so easy to accept this chalta hai mentality because we thought: "We are a poor country and our revenues are just not enough to look after these trivial requirements of the guests." Few hotels are a planned even ise most evolved on the whims and fancies of the landlord who just made alterations to his home. Few worry about waste disposal, parking or other infrastructure. Hotels in Pokhara pump their sewage tanks into the lake on which they depend for their own water supply.

Much like the carpet, garment, pashmina, airline, banking, taxi, or the



entrepreneurs plunged in to rake in the tourist dollar like there was no tomorrow. The quality controllers and the government's licensing authorities moved with the flow. The

resulting degradation is evident There have been no creative idea and approach to marketing many of these hotels and destinations. The only marketing tool applied is rate axing. Even the "two percent" Nepal Tourism Board has not determined for itself the level of quality, or applied any effort to repackage the Nepal product. The opening of more peaks lacks creative inputs and is the knee-jerk reaction of file-pushing finger-pointing bureaucrats. Th

height of creativity was locking th Buddha in by erecting a brick wall around his birthplace in Lumbini. For a lesson in marketing, we

need to look at the Indian state of Harvana. It had nothing going for it but it taught other states rich in destinations, like Rajasthan and Orissa, how to make an impact. Why can't Nepal which is so rich in the diversity of its tourism product, do a similar repackaging? Just shedding tears, pumping out vague statistical reports and organising interaction programmes will no help. Stop crying and pointing fingers, take responsibility.

Sanjay Baneswo

"We need to agree on a minimum code of conduct."

This delay must be costing you and the exchequer. Does this say something about the governmentis attitude to privatisation of this sector? It is definitely costing us heavily. The money we have committed is lying. idle in the bank. We have also lined up many people to work on the project, all are waiting for the green signal. The losses on the government's side are

The privatisation of mobile telephony is a test for the government. This will show how serious it is about privatisation of the telecommunication sector. The initiative has opened a new avenue for Nepali business and I am hopeful the government will support the project and see it through. It makes sense in every way-we will generate employment and bring in competition, which is best for the customer, and there is extra revenue to be earned by the state in the form of royalties, taxes, etc. We all stand to gain

If you get your frequency sorted out, how much longer will it take? After we get all clearances from the Authority, it will take another 12 to 14 weeks for us to launch the mobile service.

What extra services will you provide and what company-specific

We'll provide all the essential components of mobile telephony, such as short messaging (SMS), email. Internet, and maybe new services such as news alerts, weather forecasts and the like. We are also looking at offering the other possibilities in telephony, such as roaming services, and the other data communication facilities possible under the GMS mobile technology. Mobile phones can also be used as a security tool, and we're exploring the possibilities of that too. We will be using the latest technology. We are currently negotiating with a few technology suppliers. Spice Cell has a wide knowledge of the business and their experts are already assessing the

Mobiles can leapfrog the expensive copper wire technology required for rural telephony and to connect the highways. Do you see a market

Our plan is to provide the service along the highway and all hubs and markets to make our coverage as wide as possible. Mobiles are definitely a better communication option than wire connections. Like in Bangladesh, we are also eveing rural markets

What about affordability?

We will price our product to make it competitive, because in any business volume and reach are crucial. The further we are able to reach, the higher our revenues. I cannot talk about specific priging at

How is your joint venture incorporated? How much money are you and your partner putting in?

We have tied up with Spice Cell owned by Modis from India. They have 60 percent stock and we have 40 percent equity. The project cost is around \$13 million. The debt-equity ratio is still being worked

Son a different note, what do you see as the basic problems of doing business in Nepal today? Government officials do not implement laws and policies in the spirit

that an investor would desire. But then, even the laws are very traditional. There are problems with the labour law, which favour labour unions. Revenue officials still have discretionary powers and because the new law has made them more powerful, business remains at their mercy. Businesses are also affected locally by the whims of local administrators. Of course, the major concern at this noint is industrial security. We have discussed these issues with the Minister for Commerce and Industry, Puma Bahadur Khadka, who has assured us he will do his best. The newly constituted Board of Investment should also help resolve some of these problems.

What exactly is the problem with the labour law?

We in business think wages should be linked with productivity to enhance competitiveness. People should not be paid simply because they are there. Industries, particularly those concerned with seasonal products and businesses, should be free to use contract labour, that would help us keep production in tune with demand. How can we ensure productivity and discipline when we can't hire and fire vorkers? We need to re-think the rights of employers and employees, where industrial disputes are concerned. Any disruption at a workplace affects everyone-owners, workers and labourers. Why can't we agree on a minimum code of conduct to ensure that production is ted, whatever the differ

Outdoor is in

Forget banner ads and TV slots, Old-fashioned billboards guarantee maximum impact for minimum spend



SIIH-KAIING AUUN IN HONG KONG

ECONOMY

or a hip hi-tech company Palm Corp's marketing strategy in Asia is as low-tech and Old Economy as you can get No digital blips and interactive clicks for its latest Palm Pilot launch. Just some good oldfashioned paint and paper in the form of billboards

It is in good company. Nokia's pitch for its sleek new phone is right next to Palm's board by the entrance of the Cross-Harbour Tunnel on Hong Kong Island. Opposite are ads for Cathay Pacific Airways, Citibank and Pacific Century CyberWorks.

Forget banner ads and short messaging service (SMS) marketing. The hottest things in advertising

these days are billboards, bus panels and flyers pasted on newsstands and benches Outdoor advertising is about the only thing advertisers are splurging on. According to marketesearch company ACNielsen, spending on outdoor media in Asi: rose by 20 percent during the first nine months of 2001—even while total ad expenditure was up less than 5 percent in the same period. "Everybody was talking about 'new iedia, new media' in 2000," says Philip Rich, ACNielsen's executive director for Hong Kong and China.

Old, but by no means dull. At least not these days in Asia. Creative directors have gone all out in the outdoor medium, coming up with innovative displays and evecatching visuals. Local companie specialising in transit and billboard ndvertising are getting stock market istings and winning venture iling into the region. As for the fact that Asia's crowded cities arantee more eyeballs than any vebsite or TV spot. What a tumaround. Outdoor

dvertising has been dying out in

the region over the past decade. In

1990, these media took up about "Well, the new media have turned 4 percent of total ad expenditure out to be outdoor, the oldest n Asia. But as economic developdvertising form around ' nent brought televisions and radi into almost every home and newspapers and magazines proliferated, outdoor lost its cachet. Why advertise on a plain old billboard

only 9 percent of their budgets on utdoorads apital, while multinationals are Then came the financial crisis is dvertisers, they're waking up to

1997. While the rest of the dvertising industry suffered, chear nd easy outdoor ads flourished. They've been on an upswing ever since, growing more than 10 percent throughout the region in 2000-2001—the largest increase ince 1990 China is growing fastest—no

when you can buy a flashy 30

econd television spot? By 1997,

advertisers in Asia were spending

urprise. Hong Kong-based market search company Zenith Media redicts that the China market manded 15 percent last year. vertisers there spend about 16 end of their budget on outdoor nedia, significantly more than in other countries. One reason for their popularity is the relative lack of regulation. "Unlike TV or the oress, outdoor is totally deregulate in China," says Adrian King director of media research and strategic planning in Hong Kong fo US-based media planner MediaCom. "The government's involvement is virtually negligible You can basically do anything you like in the outdoor medium.

That means it is also one of the few media avenues that is open to foreign investors. One company that is exploiting this is tom.com. Launched as a portal in 2000 at the height of Hong Kong's dotcom mania, its stock price jumped 335 percent on its stock market debut. But like other dotcoms, its on-line perations failed to make money. so now it's turning to Old Economy tricks to tap into the ooming Chinese advertising market and pad its bottom line Earlier this year, tom.com bought seven companies for \$97 million to create the largest outdoor-media.

network in the mainland. The hefty investment has almadu paid off tom com's revenues jumped from \$1.6 million in the third quarter of 2000 to \$20.4 million in 2001. Its outdoor madia naturali alona turnad ovar some \$45 million last year.

One tom.com acquisition, Tianming Advertising Company, which places ads on double-decker ouses and billboards in Henan province, in central China, has a ne profit margin of 40 percent. And the company is growing at more than 30 percent a year. "We're looking for high growth and strong cash flow, says Sing Wang, tom.com's chief executive. "The outdoor business in

China right now gives us both." That's true for the rest of the egion as well. Even in the most developed markets, like Hong Kong, Singapore and Korea, profit margins are in double digits. So the costs of building an outdoor network can be recouped in just three years, says Kam Ling, chief executive of Media Nation, a Hong Kong-based transit-advertising company. "Once you've invested in the infrastructure, you can start

reaping the results right away." Media Nation plans to list on Hong Kong's Growth Enterprise Market before the end of the year In June, the Kowloon Motor Bus Company listed its advertising subsidiary, Roadshow, for close to \$41 million on Hong Kong's GEM in an offering that was 16 times oversubscribed. But even well-funded local

players like these won't be able to corner the outdoor market. First, it is massive—worth over \$1 billion a year. But it is also extremely agmented. Tom.com's Wang says over 80 percent of outdoor assets in China are controlled by small players that each have less than a 1 percent market share. Most other outdoor ad markets in Asia are just as ripe for consolidation. Eveing an opportunity, savvy multinational edia companies like Clear Channe of the United States and APN News and Media of Australia are appresively expanding in the region.

That's the supply side. But is there sufficient demand for outdoo ad space? Depleting ad revenues have forced newspapers and magazines throughout the region to cut costs. But companies still need to advertise. And put bluntly, outdoor is cheap. An ad on the side of a bus in Hong Kong costs just \$385 a month while a full-page splash in a local newspaper can cost lose to \$13,000 a day. "There's no doubt that people are trying to fine ways to stretch their money these lays and outdoor provides good value during tough times like these," says John Smallwood, head of Singapore-based Asia Posters. APN's venture in the region.

Outdoor may be cheap, but don't discount its impact. Used properly, it can effectively raise and awareness. "Outdoor can't build a brand by itself," says Chris Walton, chief executive of mediabuyer Mindshare in China. "But it can be used to increase and maintain awareness levels for an extended period of time."

Forced to cut costs, many brands are rejigging their media budgets to throw more outdoor into the mix. US conglomerate Procter and Gamble, for one, has traditionally shunned the medium but is now testing the waters with its Hugo Boss perfume, which has been

Hong Kong. "We've been trying to open their eyes for the last 30 years to the potential of outdoor and nothing has worked," says MediaCom's King, "But they've finally cottoned on to the fact that outdoor is perfect for the kinds of products in their portfolio."

Shrewd entrepreneurs are imping in to make outdoor offerings more palatable to more high-profile advertisers. Throughout the region, they've consolidated accept into naturalise that are cold to advertisers in bulk.

Four years ago, when Nike

wanted to launch a Shanghai-wide outdoor campaign, it had to convince 20 different municipal bodies and talk to a handful of billboard owners to seal the deal. Farlier this year Walton arranged a 30-city outdoor marketing push with just one phone call to a Media Nation subsidiary. With 22,000 buses in China, another 3,000 in Hong Kong and 23,500 advertising displays in Beijing and Shanghai, Media Nation is fast becoming the Walmart of China's outdoor advertising industry. "A few years ago, if you wanted a country-wide campaign, there was no choice but TV," says Media Nation's Ling. "But today outdoor is a real alternative since China has one of the most developed outdoor networks in the world." Tom.com is building a network in China as well, providing one-stop shopping for hillboards, bus shelters and street furniture.

Vendors aren't just expanding their reach, they're diversifying their offerings as well. In Hong Kong, thousands of new bus shelters have een set up with more eye-catching displays and billboards and signs have been placed on everything from the cross-harbour Star Ferry o a driving-range net.

But the most cutting-edge nnovations are coming from the most unlikely sources—Hong Kong's listed public-transport ompanies. The Kowloon-Canton Railway Corp, the Mass Transit Railway Corp. and the city's three bus companies have all gone on an LCD binge, fitting their trains, buses and stations with flatscreen TVs

These screens are used by mnanies like Roadshow to broadcast ads to a literally captive audience. "With three million assengers a day, we have the largest audience in town," says the company's chief marketing officer. incy Pang. "And we know they're watching the screens-what else would they do on the buses?" The spin-off reported revenues of \$8.85 million for the first six months of this year.

The outdoor media work better n Asia than anywhere else in the world. "Most of the cities in the region have lots of people packed into a tiny territory." says Clara Liao, Palm's marketing manager. "That means a lot more people are oing to see outdoor ads here." Palm's hillboards by the Cross Harbour Tunnel in Hong Kong have certainly caught consumer eyes. "Everyone seems to have noticed them," she says. "We've al been stuck in traffic around the tunnel at one point or another."

As Asia Poster's Smallwood says, "It's the last true mass medium around. Not everyone watches TV, reads the papers or surfs the web. Outdoor gets to evervone who leaves their



Before and after in Kathmandu

While high profile monuments get all the attention, Kathmandu Valley's old-world architecture is equally in peril A conservation trust is racing against time to save these forgotten treasures.

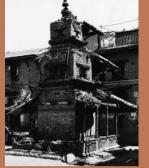














ALOK TUMBAHANGPHEY hey have called Patan the Florence of the East. Bhaktapur has been compared to Seville. While the tall temples and the elegant Darbar Squares of these towns stand out, what gives them their unique urban ambience is the architecture of the individual buildings, the sidewalk temple the rest houses and the harmony

Heritage conservation efforts in Kathmandu Valley over the past 30 years have focussed on but the march of modernisation

of space and colour.

has eroded the character of Kathmandu Valley towns, as concrete blocks replace old-world architecture. Many invaluable. but less highlighted, monuments built by our ancestors within the depths of the dark alleys and bahals are crumbling away. Thankfully, city planners and

rchaeologists and architects are now taking notice. The Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) is now working to renovate the pati, pauwa, matha and mandir of the inner city. "If it weren't for nonprofit groups like the KVPT, much of the Valley's architectural heritage would already have been lost. The Krishan Mandir in Patan Darbar

work it does is commendable, but it | Square, and restores it painstakhas received far less media attention and promotion than it deserves." says Keshay Rai Iha, former Nepali ambassador to France and long-time onsultant to the UNESCO World Heritage office Nepal. The KVPT has been around

or ten years, doing its work quietly, without too much fanfare. It has rescued over a dozen monuments of cultural value, mostly in Patan, but also in Kathmandu. It selects simple madside structures such as the Mani Gufa temple that lies hidden beside the temple of

ingly to its previous beauty. It has also rebuilt entire temples that have been rayaged by time and weather, like the 18th century Kulima Narayan near Bagalamukhi. "The KVPT has set a standard for building conservation in Neoal which is unrivalled," says Peter Laws, a cultural heritage expert with UNESCO.

But it has not been easy for the KVPT and its director, American architect Eric G Theophile. They have had to face all sorts of problems, from fundraising to even securing the right

falling structures is only one aspect of our work, we need to overcome a lot of challenges before we can even reach to that part," says KVPT's Imrana Rashid. For instance, the trust had to fight legal battles for nine years to renovate the Ayuguthi Satal in Patan. In 1992, the

to restore a site. "Renovating

KVPT obtained funds to renain the crumbling satal, initially a place where the faithful sang religious hymns and pilgrims spent their nights, now long overtaken by squatters unwilling to let the Trust in. But work is now underway and renovation

will be completed in March. Once the work is done the sata will be turned into a resource and educational centre for tourists and scholars," says Rashid.

Fund-raising may be a problem, but sometimes a bigger local community. Many communities have helped support the renovation by contributing labour, wood or even money. But these are exceptions. The apathy is puzzling, and is probably due to the fragmentation of clans, guthi and communities in the formerly closely-knit urban environment. Renovation of

Radha Krishna temple in Patan ended in 1993, but the locals showed little enthusiasm to look after the rebuilt temple The 13th century Sulima

Ratneswara is another temple in Patan that KVPT helped renovate. Manager Raju Roka partly blames the temple priests for the temples' disrepair. "There are more reasons for temples and old structures to fall apart than just old age," says Roka. He says buildings crumble because the traditional management systems designed for their upkeep have fallen apart. "The main problem with conservation here, as elsewhere," says Laws, "is of course the universal one, that of the lack of public awareness. People neglect their cultural heritage." Laws suggests that one way to ensure that building conservation is smoother is to give municipalities more power, so they can make the road easier for organisations such as the KVPT.

Where KVPT's work has been smoother is where local bodies such as guthi are intact. And the most heartening impact of the Trust's work is what some call the "demonstration effect"

evident all over Patan todavwhen residents of an area see one building being restored, and see that there are often tangible benefits that can accrue from it. they are more receptive to doing the same. As one reaches the Kulima Narayan temple, an old building on the right, in the same style, is being renovated. Until some time ago, the owners were planning to destroy the decades old building and have a concrete structure. With help and advice from KVPT, the owners are now turning the building into a bed and breakfast pension where tourists can enjoy living in an

There are positive signs that the awareness level among the local community concerning architectural heritage is also increasing. A walk around Patan reveals numerous houses being re-built in old-style architecture even though modern materials have been used. Says KVPT board member and director of development Gautam SJB Rana: "Compared to the past, the

old-style Newari house with

modern comforts.

situation has certainly improved a lot and people have begun to realise the importance of these structures " Rana was the first Nepali to be elected to the board of directors of KVPT. Rana has been a longtime supporter of the trust's work with his own Baber Mahal Revisited—an example of cultural heritage conservation.

In Kathmandu, the Trust is working to re-renovate the Jaganath Temple which had been destroyed by monsoon rains, and disturbed by shoddy reconstruction. There are also plans to renovate a falling Sherpa monas tery in Junbesi in Solu Khumbu, because of the counter-insurgency

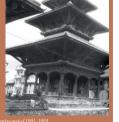
KVPT's real seriousness is reflected by its office. It is a rented old Newari house near Patan Durbar Square, re-vamped with a style and grace that symbolises its passion for conservation. With its traditional exterior and modern office space, it reflects a perfect and harmonious blend of old and new. They certainly practice what they preach.

















being drawn

all over the



ARIANA EUNJUNG CHA WASHINGTON - It is the modern-day equivalent of a border sentry. When visitors try to enter UKBetting.com, a computer program checks their identification to determine where they're dialing in from. Most people are waved on through. Those from the United States, China, Italy and other countries where gambling laws are muddy, however, are flashed a sign in red letters that says "ACCESS DENIED" and are

locked out of the website. For much of its life, the Internet has been seen as a great democratising force, a place where nobody needs know who or where you are. But that notion has begun to shift in recent months, as governments and private businesses increasogy that is becoming more ingly try to draw boundaries orecise every day. around what used to be a borderless Internet to deal with legal, commercial and terrorism

"It used to be that a person

sitting in one place could get or the world " said Iack Goldsmith, a professor of interna tional law at the University of Chicago, "But now the Interne is starting to act more like real space with all its limitations. These new barriers take

nany forms. One method is to simply restrict who has access to computers and gateways to the Internet. Another is to make all ommunications pass through filters that seek to weed out objectionable content, such as pornography or information deemed to endanger national security. Growing in popularity is software that attempts to match a computer's unique Internet address with a genera geographic location, a technol

The debate is no longer about if we can create these barriers-but whether or not we should. Even those who support the idea in theory disagree on

formerly**borderless** Internet.

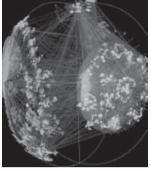
different from different parts of the world," said Lee Tien, a lawyer with the Electronic Frontier Foundation in San

Already legislatures and court systems around the world have been attempting to assert the World Wide Web. Hong Kong's government, for instance has been debating whether to pass a law that would make it a rime for any overseas gambling site to offer services to its residents. A court in Genoa. Italy, recently found the operator of a website in another ountry guilty of libel. A French judge has ordered Yahoo to stop ling Nazi paraphernalia because a law there bans such

Without an international reaty or mediation organisation, such rulings have so far been largely unenforceable on parties siding outside a country's borders. But that has not stopped countries from drafting rules for what is and is not permissible online.

At least 59 nations limit freedom of expression, according to Leonard R Sussman, author of "censor.gov". Singapore, for instance, works with Internet ccess providers to block any material that undermines public security, national defence, racial and religious harmony, and morals. That includes pornogra phy and hate speech.

Some analysts say the barriers could grow with the development of "geologation" technology, which attempts to match a person's location based on a computer's Internet



Silicon Valley's Ouova Inc. ne of the leading providers of this technology, claims it can prectly identify a computer user's home country 98 percent of the time and the city about 85 percent of the time, but only if it is a large city.

enormous fees for the rights to broadcast the games on a country-by-country basis NBC, for instance, shelled out \$3.5 billion for the United States-and they were worried that piracy or even legitimate online transmissions that were accessible to anyone, anywhere



Independent studies have pegged the accuracy rate of uch programs, which also are sold by companies such as InfoSplit, Digital Envoy, Netgeo and Akami, at 70 to 90 The technology also is

being embraced by web proadcasters, whose nascent industry had been growing slowly because of concern about copyright, JumpTV is technology. The Montrealbased venture retransmits television broadcasts from around the world and is trying to avoid being sued by broadcasters who claim it violates their broadcasting licenses. In early 2000, a US judge effectively shut down another Canadian company called iCraveTV by prohibiting it from broadcasting its signals into the United States for

The difficulty in recognising nation-state borders on the Internet became such a concern Juring the 2000 Sydney Games that the International Olympic Committee effectively banned most web video of the events. Television stations had paid

night devalue the worth of those contracts. The IOC and many of the owners of broadcast rights say the accuracy rate for geologation technology is still not good enough and they won't allow any webcasts for the Salt Lake City games this "The technology just

doesn't pass muster yet There's no way to guarantee that your broadcast would be confined to your territory and would not run in to someone else's," said Kevin Monaghan, a vice president for NBC Sports. Even if geolocation technology worked perfectly,

some legal experts said it would not be feasible because it would require website opera tors to know the applicable laws in every country from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe. "Geographical location

technology is a red herring, said Alan Davidson, a lawyer with the Centre for Technology and Democracy, a Washington think tank. "It would be incredibly burdensome to tailo content to meet all of the different laws in all of the different countries everywhen the world." ♦ (WP)

The American way of war MANILA - Europe is cool, there is apprehension throughout the South, and outright despondency blankets much of the Arab and Muslim world There are at least 4000 dead in Afghanistan, a large number civilians, four million refugees, a return to tribal chaos with the dismemberment of central authority. What bin Laden and his organisation did was horrific and inexcusable—but to do this to a It is again okay to intervene in the country in the name of justice?

Paul Johnson, author of Modern Times: "...the best medium-term solution will be to revive the old esque of Nations Mandate System rhich served well as a 'respectable form of colonislism between the wars... Countries that can't live at eace with their neighbours and w overt war against the international mmunity cannot expect total independence. With all the perman embers of the Security Council acking, in varying degrees, the American led initiative it should no ne difficult to devise a new UN andate that places terrorist states nder supervision. Afghanistan is now turning into

affairs of developing countries.

And yet this victory has a wider

significance for the Pentagon. Massive

precision-guided air power can win

US ground troops, and thus almost n

confidence in what historian Russell

Weigley called "the American Way of

-massive firepower, high

technology, total victory—Washington

tion in states that allegedly provide aid

and comfort to the terrorists such as

Yemen, Sudan, Somalia, and Iraq. The

events in Afghanistan have likely given a boost to plans for a strong US

military role in the drug war in

Colombia. Newsweek reports that

Colombian authorities seeking a more

and their own guerrilla movements...

There is also emerging a renewed

espectability in direct intervention in

the affairs of developing countries.

Respect for national sovereignty and

self-determination has been further

eroded in Washington and London

since September, with conservative intellectuals voicing opinions powerfu

influential formulation comes from

decisive US role are now "trying to

is now considering similar interven

casualties. With this renewed

show the parallels between the Taleban the latest experiment in the New Trusteeship or New Mandate System following the failure of the first majo nitiative owing to Somalian recalci trance in 1993. The EU is asked to rovide—under British leadership, ourse—a permanent occupation force. the UN is brought in to broker a ompeting tribal groups to fill the political vacuum. Washington is being unilateral in military action, multilateral in political engineering, thus getting others to take the blame if the political structure collapses. On the domestic front laws and executive orders restricting the rights to privacy and free movement have been nasse with astonishing speed and ease Not even the Cold War was presented in such totalistic terms a he War against Terror.

Writing in The Nation, David

orn observes that a mere nine week nto this war, legislation had been passed and executive orders signed in the US establishing secret military tribunals to try non-US citizens, impose guilt by association on immigrants, authorise the attorney eneral to indefinitely lock up aliens on mere suspicion, expand the use of viretaps and secret searches, allow secret evidence in immigration proceedings, destroy the secrecy of the client-lawyer relationship, and institutionalise racial and ethnic profiling, Many of the US's European allies have also tried to push through draft of legislation waiting in the wing before 11 September. In Europe, however, citizens and parliaments are ot going as gently into that good ht—including, surprisingly, the British parliament, which shot down "onv Blair's draconian proposal to allow the indefinite imprisonment o vieners suspected of terrorism The new US legislation institu-

nalises unilateralism: the latest lay and everytive decrees self-endow Washington with the power to do almost anything abroad. US forces lisplayed this recently, when, in an a distinguishable from piracy, they oanded without consent a ingaporean ship in the Arabian Sea, erpowered the crew, and launched a mitless search for terrorists. Had a uspect been discovered, the Pentagon uld have shipped him to a US basi n, say, Germany, tried him in a secre nilitary tribunal, and had he been ound guilty by a process significantly ess rigorous than civilian justice. ransported him to be shot or mprisoned in the US, possibly onymously. • (IPS)

Walden Bello is Executive Global South)

Can CNN be saved?



The left and the right alike hate CNN.

r those on the right, the trouble with CNN is its alleged liberal bias. "Clinton News Network" was the sneering tag conservatives slapped on it in the late '90s, helping to fuel the rise of the right-leaning Fox News Channel. This perception has been so damaging that Walter Isaacson, since becoming head of CNN last year, has gone so far as to have a chitchat with publican members of Congress, explore a talk show for right-wing icon Rush Limbaugh, and recently remind his troops that they shouldn't dwell on civilian casualties in the Afghan war without reminding viewers about 11 September. (Gee, Walter, do you think we've forgotten?)
On the left, CNN looks very different. Immediately after 9/11, a false repor

started zipping around the Net that a CNN tape of Palestinians celebrating the attacks was file footage from the Gulf War. This fit perfectly with the antiwar left's econceived notions. After the bombing started, some leftists started calling it "CMN," for "Cable Military Network," referring to its alleged unquestioning embrace of US efforts in Afghanistan.

That such a resolutely centrist news organisation could be the subject of these ideological passions says something interesting about CNN's place in American culture. But CNN today is in real danger-not from such critics, but from relentless corporate pressures to squeeze out higher and higher profits with fewe and fewer people. The last few years have not been kind to CNN. When it rocketed to prominence during the Gulf War in 1990 and '91, and when Larry King served as a virtual media consultant for Ross Perot in 1992, CNN had the

opportunity presented by this fortuitous lack of competition to build up his network to become one of the more respected international electronic news organisations—no BBC, but a lot better than the Big Three broadcast etworks, which spent the decade closing foreign bureaus and dumbing down their products

In the mid '90s, other players decided to grab a piece of the action. Microsoft and NBC formed MSNBC, a younger, hipper alternative. Rupert Murdoch started the Fox News Channel to neel off conservatives. With the tiny all-news udience split three ways, CNN's forte—on-the-ground reportingexpensive, especially compared to Fox's lineup of boneheaded talk shows, spitomised by the loathsome The O'Reilly Factor.

Things only got worse after the corporate owner to whom Turner sold out, Time Warner, merged with AOL last year. Time Warner head Gerald Levin may be calling the shots, but it's AOL that's holding the checkbook, and its approach suggests Visigoths pillaging Rome. Last summer, they shut down the fabled
Time. Inc library, a substantive symbolic blow for an organisation renowned for its institutional memory. And CNN started emulating its downscale competition

unveiling its own lame talk shows After 11 September, ratings for CNN, MSNBC and Fox all soared, and CNN, with its superior journalistic resources, led again. Isaacson said CNN had rediscovered its mission. That didn't last. With the terrorism crisis less acute now, ratings are down and the struggle with Fox has resumed. The Wall Street Journal recently wrote that CNN will blow through its annual news budget in six months, even as ad revenues continue to plummet. The only solution may b a merger of newsgathering operations with ABC or CBS. But those networks are

reportedly talking with each other.

Fast Company columnist John Ellis observed in the New York Press in mber 2000 that CNN's problems are deep-rooted. Ellis, a veteran of NBC and the Fox News Channel (being President Bush's cousin cost him his freelance gig at Fox during the Florida fiasco), argued that CNN's problem is ingrained. The CNN culture is sort of retro-Southern gothic," Ellis wrote. "Most people there have never worked anywhere else. They see themselves as Georgians doin battle with hostile Northern forces." That was true even after Turner sold out to Time Warner, Ellis added.

That culture apparently did in Isaacson's predecessor, Rick Kaplan, now in exile at Harvard's Kennedy School. Isaacson should presumably encounter less resistance from old CNN hands—there are fewer of them around anyway. But will his corporate masters let him use this chance to make CNN better, or to strip-mine it for lucre. Headline of the day. From a recent Boston Herald: "Budger Fight Could Hurt—or Help—Gov Hopefuls." Yes, that just about

Gross National Happiness in Russia

decline, but, say economists, a lot needs to be done. 2001 was a successful year for Russia and the average Russian would "be happy" by 2010, President Vladimir Putin said on national television 24 December, By end 2001, Russia's GDP growth reached 5.5 percent, says Finance Minister Alexey Kudrin, Tough reforms by the Kremlin include the introduction of a 13-percent flat income tax, new labour and land codes, and restructuring of the country's pension system, In 2001, Russia's foreign trade surplus exceeded \$40 billion. and its gold and hard currency reserves rose to \$35 billion, tripling the 1998 level, says the Central Bank of Russia

exports might eventually push Russia into a vicious circle of debt crises, and increasing dependence on international commodity prices. Russia's financial health has improved significantly since the 1998 crisis, largely due to high world market prices for its energy and commodity exports. Russia is a large oil producer, and the world's biggest natural gas producer and exporter. But many of Russia's oil and metal industries were sold chean to well-connected tycoons, who have been siphoning out as much as two-thirds of the profits from their cheaply acquired assets offshore instead of investing in production. There has also been nervousness recently. as Russian oil hovered below \$20 per barrel. Another potential challenge to sustaining such growth is Russia's \$150 billion foreign debt, which represents roughly four-fifths of the country's GDP, or \$1,000 per citizen. Russia's slowing economy could entail devaluation of the Ruble between 2003 and 2005, argues Mikhail Delyagin, head of the Institute of Globalisation Problems, a Moscow-based

Flier in the ointment

WASHINGTON - US Air Force fighter pilot Martha McSally was made lieutenant colonel four years before her peers. She had flown over 100 hours in her A-10, with its fast-firing Gatling gun. She was a champion triathlete with a master's degree in public policy from Harvard. She had patrolled the no-fly zone over Iraq and directed search-and-rescue missions inside Afghanistan. Then she landed at Prince Sultan Air Force Base in Saudi Arabia in November 2000. In a briefing, officers there laid down the rules for travel off base, even on official business: All female personnel would wear the customan head-to-toe gown, the abava and its matching head scarf. They could not drive. They would ride in the back seat and be escorted by males at all times. Officials said the policy was to keep from offending conservative Saudi leaders and protect US troops from terrorist attacks. But to McSally, the directive, with its different instructions for men and women "abandons American values" Last month, she sued Defence Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, contending that the policy is unconstitutional, discriminating against women and violating their religious freedom. The suit seeks no monetary damages. She has support from an unlikely coalition of Republicans, Democrats and liberal feminists. "This is hizarre." says Senator Rob Smith, one of five Republican senators pushing the Defence Department to junk the policy, "becuase we are waging a war in Afghanistan to remove those abayas." In a letter to Rumsfeld, Democratic Rep Louise Slaughter wrote, "It is unconscionable that our own government should uphold this institutionalised disrespect of women by requiring Americans conform to these standards." Says McSally, "The last thing I wanted to do was make a big deal about being a woman. As an officer, you need to shut up and follow when an order is lawful You need to step out when it's unlawful."

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to the vexing problem of how

olicies of the roughly 200

on matters such as gambling, commerce, copyright and

But critics fear that the

parriers will create an Internet

that is balkanised. And civil

eedom of speech will suffer.

that the technology will make

t easier for oppressive govern-

nents to stifle nonconformis

viewpoints, and that people's privacy will be eroded, espe-

cially because some technolo

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"It's likely that the Internet

of tomorrow will look radically

rights groups warn that

the electronic fences, whether

it should be done by nation-

states or by the website

perators.

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Coup in Manila?

MANILA - The Philippines opened the year inauspiciously, with rumours of a coup brewing against President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's one-year-old government as it marks in January the first year of its installation after a popular uprising against former president Joseph Estrada. The biggest report New Years' day was the murder of a self-styled ex-army captain and informant for the national security adviser Roilo Golez, who had persistently warned that a coup against the government was in the offing, A day earlier, a senior Navy lieutenant, Antonio Miraflor was arrested for possession of a cache of explosives large enough to blow up all military service installations and several tall buildings. The media was quick to speculate on these events. asking if a destabilisation plot might have been in the works. The military establishment was quick to quash reports of a coup in this country of 80 million, but that is not easy to do given the seven coup attempts in the 1980s-three of them bloody. Leftist leader Satur Oramno says Arroyo's government is hedevilled by an economic crisis and a fractious coalition all demanding a lion's share of the spoils of power. Adding to this is the fact that "everyone's interested in (the presidential elections in) 2004", he adds, "2002, is when people start building up resources for 2004 so we can at least expect some destabilisation attempts Ocampo predicts. Sociologist and political analyst Randolph David adds: "Coup rumors flourish especially in the afterglow of momentous political events." Ocampo and David say the rumours and reports of coups point to the reality that the military establishment, which had been politicised and made strong during the years of dictatorship under Marcos, still has the power to change the tide for a government. (IPS)

Recycling Tokyo

TOKYO - Desperate over its mounting garbage problem, Japan is about to embark on a 20-year programme to turn the world's second largest economy into a recycling society. Japan disposes of 51.2 million tonnes of garbage annually, and wants to be a more sustainable and recycling-intensive society. A government team has set as a national goal the reduction of waste production to 7.3 million tonnes by 2050, roughly a tenth of the 1996 levels. Waste reduction and recycling would ultimately boost domestic production by \$ 46 billion beyond business-as-usual projections to about \$ 4.9 trillion in 2010, "Japan's recycling has still a ways to go. Efforts are being made to change the current mass production and consumption lifestyle to a mass recycling one," says Kentaro Doi, of the environment ministry's recycling promotion office. Japan produces almost 460 million tonnes of waste annually, of which less than a tenth, some 45 million tonnes, is refuse. The rest is industrial waste. Tokyo alone produces almost four million tonnes a day, according to the government. If this waste output continues unchecked, the refill sites in the capital will be overflowing within the next 30 years. "The situation is crucial, which is why there is the need to control the hehaviour with new laws " says Doi. Starting this year the government has promised to include cars, computers and microwave ovens in that list. Furthermore, the new law also paves the way for arrests to be made for illegal dumping of home appliances, (IPS)





Should Japan amend its pacifist constitution?

reated to express them. The Cold

cessively idealistic to some. Japan

has seen a severe confrontation between

nstitutional revisionists and those

In 1997, Japan took a big step

toward dispatching military forces beyond its territory when it concluded

he "Guideline for Defense Coopera

tion" with the US, though that

restricted operations to the "area

urrounding Japan." The new law

virtually eliminates this, making it

ossible for Japan to send troops

Whether or not to revise the

divisive political issue, as pressure for

hange comes not only from within by

ommittee headed by the now Deput

Armitage, stirred up a hornet's nest

when it said that "Japan's prohibition

against collective defence is a constrain

on alliance cooperation" and that

conservative politicians, but from without. The so-called Armitage

Report of 2000, produced by a

US Secretary of State Richard L

stitution, especially Article 9, is a

nywhere, anytime

who want to protect the Peace

anniversary, I never imagined the phrase "Pearl Harbor" would be heard so often this year. It began renonically with the telesce of the Disney movie Pearl Harbor last Iun After 11 September, many Americans spoke of "the first attack against the US since Pearl Harbor." One person even told me the attacks gave Japan a golder opportunity to clear its name of the stigma of Pearl Harbor. The way, it seems, was for Japan to provide military support to the US.

Critics of Japan's defence pos over the wars have often been unforgiving. The Economistonce derided the Japanese as "kamikaze pacifists." The reality is that defence lebates within Japan are invariably traumatic, based on sharp memories of the war and the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Still, Japan responded to 9/11 by passing a new law allowing the country to support American forces. The Anti-Terrorism Special Law, passed by Japan's Diet in October, enabled Japan to send its Self-Defense Forces (SDF) overseas to support—through supply, transporta tion, repair, maintenance, medical vices and so on—American forces.

Though the SDF still cannot articipate in combat, the new law the first that allows Japan to dispatch rmed forces to join in military operations outside Japanese territory and territorial waters while a shooting war is on. Japan's alacrity reflects the auma of the Gulf War Alrhough Janan paid much of the costs of that war by raising domestic taxes, its supportive actions went largely unnoticed. It was nowhere to be seen i the ads the Kuwaiti government published after the war to thank the 30 nations of the international coalition

that expelled Iraq from Kuwait. These debates are also traumatic institutional reason. Japan's socalled "Peace Constitution," including Article 9 which prohibits the country rom possessing "war potential," was created after WWII under strong American pressure, and in an mosphere of deep self-reflection toward the Pacific War. Some of its oncepts were so alien to Japanese tradition that new ideograms had to be "lifting this prohibition would allow fo closer and more efficient security

But establishing a practical meaning for this remained difficult. Japan's new aw was one effort to impose clarity on the idea and Prime Minister Junichim Koizumi testified in the Diet that the unclear terms and that Japan must interpret them with common sense. In the end hossesser Koisumi avoided an formal commitment to act in "collective defence" or to revise the constitution.

The Upper and Lower Houses of the Diet created committees to investi gate constitutional revision, especially Article 9, but change remains hard for several reasons. A majority of Japanese do not want to change Article 9, as opinion polls consistently show. Japan was able to pass the Anti-Terrorist Law without revising the constitution, but the limits of expansive constitutional

interpretation may one day be reached. The reaction of other Asian antries, especially China and South Korea also limits revision When Koizumi explained Japan's new Jaw in China and Korea in October, leaders in both countries offered sharp cautions with Korea's President Kim Dae Jung telling him, "I hope the SDF beha within the limits of the Peace

The Japanese public needs to argue seriously, thoroughly about the country's future defence policy. Formulating a basic law governing national security that defines the role of the SDF and limits its actions is a mechanism we should seriously consider. • (Project Syndicate)

(Yoshibumi Wakamiya, senior political writer at Asahi Shimbun, is the author of The Boston Community Visual (Asia)

tenure of less than five years.

Second, Afghanistan today after 23 years of

internecine warfare is a de facto confederation of tribes

chieftains, ethnic groups and warlords, and most, if

not all, have found accommodation in the interim

administration cobbled in Bonn. Kabul is more a

symbolic seat of authority than the real source of

Afohanistan's neighbours, agree on: Afohanistan

should be a unified state whose sovereignty and

of revenge and retribution, to reconciliation and

territorial integrity must be respected. This is a good

starting point for Afghanistan's journey from decades

Third, Afghanistan's strategic location can be

conducive to dividends of peace in the form of aid

from donors, trade with neighbours and a stable

land-locked land. Afghanistan is Central Asia's

centre of gravity for the countries that surround this

gateway to the Gulf and Pakistan's gateway to Central

Asia. it is key to stability in China's neighbouring

Xinjiang province, where the Muslim Uighur population resides. It is in the vicinity of Russia's

near abroad', the former Central Asian republics.

economic influence through an affinity with Afghan

Jean and Turkey have a cultural political and

power, but there is one point everyone, including

Afghanistan's potential

Muhammad Iqhal wrote, "Afghanistan is the key to Asia" s stability. If there is strife in Afghanistan, there will be strife in Asia, and if there The verses of Jobal, now Pakistan's official poet

who first envisioned a free state for the Muslims of India in the form of Pakistan, appear to have prescience today.

There is a certain timelessness to Afghanistan's situation, the more things change, the more they remain the same. Take the former Afghan monarch Muhammad Zahir Shah, who has been living in exile in Rome since 1973 when he was ousted in a military coup. Zahir Shah, now 87, assumed Afghanistan's throne in 1933, the year Franklin Roosevelt was elected President of the US and Adolf Hitler, chancellor of Germany. These two figures seem part of distant history, but Zahir Shah remains relevant to Afrhanistan's future, and is arouably the single most popular public figure in strife-torn, war-ravaged Afghanistan.

There are reasons for optimism about Afghani-

stan's future: First, the chequered course of contemporary Afghan history-in the last 30 years. of which 23 were virtually at war, the Afeban nation nas experienced a royalist regime followed by a

republican one. a Marxist set-up followed by one claiming to be Muslim but Imost medieval in its outlook, then invasions and civil wars, interventions firs by the Russians and now the Americans. Nations destroyed by war often develop a resilience and rise, phoenix-like, to become prosperous and stable. Germany, Japan, Korea, Vietnam and even China and Malaysia, all witnessed revivals. Afghanistan's own history is testimony to the talents and skills of a strong people who can bounce back from adversity. Historically, Afghanistan produced the most skilled diplomats, known for pragmatism coupled with their pursuit of goals in a cool manner that facilitated compromise and agreement. It has also produced some of the most ferocious warriors in recent regional history, many of whom invaded and conquered India several times. And one of India's great builders, who laid the basis for a modern transport, revenue, mail and administrative system was the 16th century Afghan ruler Sher Shah Suri, remembered for



There is a sense of déià vu in Afghanistan.

> ethnic and linguistic groups. Likewise, Israel's biggest presence in the Muslim world is right next door in Central Asia, particularly Uzbekistan. The head of the Afghan interim administration, Hamid Karzai, underlined this unity in diversity through his inaugural address in Kabul on 22 Decemberwhich was bilingual with Pashto and Darri, a variant of Farsi, which is the official anguage of Iran and Tajikistan. His dress also reflected Afghanistan's mixed cultures-he wore an Uzbek flowing gown over the Pashtun long shirt and baggy trousers, adorned with a calfskin cap popular among Afghans of different nationalities. But the most hopeful was Karzai's message that "We should be first and foremost Afghans before belonging to any ethnic group."

(Mushahid Hussain was Pakistan's Minister of Information in Nawa)

Weakening democracy

Excerpts from an interview with Kapil Shrestha, member of the National

On the timing of the emergency and deployment of the army:

The deployment of troops was long overdue and no one has protested it. The government was late in doing this and had run out of options at one stage. The army was not mobilised even after 54 police posts had been destroyed and police were being killed like sacrificial lambs-even then the government just stood and watched

Yet, why declare an emergency just because troops needed to be deployed?

Was the emergency necessary to get the

army out? If we have a similar situation tomorrow, does that mean we continue with the emergency? It is said that one tends to be addicted to bad things, not good things. If that is true, then we cannot say that we will not have an emergency again at a later date. Should we continue with more emergencies if tomorrow we are unable to resolve the Maoist problem or if another insurgent group takes up arms? We need political efforts if we want to resolve both the problem, and also the emergency. What part of democracy remains if you do not give the people their basic freedoms and rights? That is why we should not give the army too much power... an emergency means (giving someone) absolute powers.

So the army should not be given as much power as it has Ö That (the army getting more power) happens the moment you have an emergency. But if the forces that are charged with repressing such novements are given absolute powers for long, that does no one any nond Absolute nowers are absolute

What is the response of the National Human Rights Commission? We have not been able to go outside (to the districts). We have been unable to go to where human rights are being violated. All sources of information have been controlled, we haven't been able to do/ find out anything about that either. People are being needlessly killed and human rights are being violated. We have been unable to get first-hand information. When civil rights have been usurped, what is the point of

The government says the emergency is aimed only at the MaoistsÖ No one can forward the cause of the Maoists after what they have done. Nepali Maoists resemble Pol Pot. I would like to challenge all Maoists here including Rahuram Rhattarai on this count. It is also mindless to think that you can achieve something through violence now. What I wan to say is that no one should try to achieve something by violating human rights. The problems we face today cannot be solved by the discredited ideology of Baburam or Prachanda. Yet they defy the constitution and are pressing ahead. They do not abide by this constitution, and so are unaffected by the emergency. Knowing this full well, this impotent government has wrested away from the people their rights. It has no right to do this. The government should have been more sensitive about this, it should have remembered what it and its supporters went through in the past

Does the emergency threaten democracy?

Yes, it does. Democratic forces become weak during an emergency; and people begin to lose hope. Because of this, there is the danger that anti-democratic forces will begin raising their heads. The emergency has taken away the right of citizens to protest against such forces. The newspapers have been controlled, and transparency suffers. When there is no one to expose the wrongs, it is only natural that the situation becomes more dangerous. All such developments weaken the system

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

In general, the king's role is as a constitutional monarch. I see it as an honourable role. But we cannot say that there aren't any weaknesses anywhere

-KP Oli , Rajdhani, 8 January



Now that SAARC is over why delay in starting our game? Come on ज्ञान भारतना Jan Bhawana, 7 anuary

Singing for its supper

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ode of conduct acceptable to

perations and also those of the

all that can guide its own

ecurity forces But it isn't

doing that yet. It talks about

illowing rebels to surrender,

but it is unclear where they can

surrender and how. The press

should also make efforts to fulfil

s responsibilities and should

continue fighting for the right

to do that the emergency does

not disallow that. The situation

we are seeing with the press is

that if rules are not enforced.

they please, but when there is

ne enforcement they begin to

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alanced. The volume of the

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Gatibidhi, 29 December

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printed at, but Janadesh says it

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Joshi editor of Nepali Patra

and the press itself says they

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mergency was imposed. The

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riticism. Pro-Maoist report

nergency and the Maoists

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could possibly help the rebel

cause. Without the press, the

Maoists are like fish out of

Year-long

emergency?

Asan Bazar, 5 January

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State entitle

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e press and the offices of the

published Janadesh

banned pro-Maoist

Info-war

leafening, it is turning the press

they write and say anything

sing hymns in praise of the

Budhabar, 2 January delicire

KP Oli, UML leader The press must not be excessively controlled... This is what the press has become when it was free, it was going werboard, and now it isn't brave enough to fulfil its basic responsibilities. The press is now overly concerned with saving its own skin. It is not even writing against the ontrols on itself. It is even scared to print what we have to say about controls on the press. The press must not be totally free, it has to function within a ode of conduct and within existing laws, and it must never shun responsibility. Even now it is said that the emergency was anosed with the acquiescence of the opposition parties. That not true, the emergency was ordered by the government, because it was unsure of what other measures it could take without needing to impose a state of crisis. They could have discussed it with us, or asked u

about other measures and we all

ould have discussed them and

agreed or disagreed. The overnment preferred not to do that and went for the mergency instead, under Article 115 (7) of the Constitution, and suspended civil rights under Article 12, which again was unnecessary Now the government needs to ook for ways to make the situation in the country more flexible and it needs to lift the restrictions slapped on the ress. It needs to formulate a

> deployed against the Maoists, and thousands more have been arrested. Over 2,000 rebels have surrendered and about two-dozen security forces have been killed. Even though the Maoists have been less influential during the day, they are continuing to loot and murder in the night in districts where they had influence. Because the rebels rely on ambushes and night attacks, the security forces are finding it difficult to take control of the situation. The strategy of the Maoists is now "strike, flee and hide" Unlike the past, the Maoists don't roam the villages during the day, they attack in large numbers at night. The army is on a campaign to disarm the Maoists, and says it will shoot to kill only if attacked. High level sources say that it may take about a year to fully disarm the Maoists But

different political parties, ncluding sections of the ruling Nepali Congress, want the emergency to end as soon as possible... The government for its part wants to extend the rgency to crush the Manists but the political parties are inclined to want to end the emergency, but continue the deployment of the army to fight the rebels. Even India uses the army to fight the terrorists, but it has not needed to impose an emergency. Even so, regardless of what other political parties want, it is likely that the emergency could stretch further

Deshantar, 30 December

Attended The government first decided to close down the Nepal Transportation Corporation व्यक्तिवर्धनार Orient Magnesite Limited and the Cottage and Handicraft Industries Sales Depot, And. recently it came up with the decision to shut down Saiba

These public enterprises have been in the red for quite a long time. The hundreds of employees working with these enterprises will be laid off, and the government will end up paying a large sum of money to former employees of these enterprises in the form of accumulated salaries and gratuities. The government has already spent about Rs 3 billion to pay one-year salaries to 295 employees of the Nepal Transportation Comporation According to the spokesman of the Ministry of Labour and Transportation Dhruba Kumar Sharma, the government needs to cough up Rs 20 billion to cover the gratuities and other facilities former NTC employ ees are entitled to. Similarly, the government needs Rs 11 billion to pay off the the 226 employees of Orient Magnesite and 137 employees at the Cottage and Handicraft Industries Sales Depot. And finally there are the 800 Saiba

Yatayat employees to deal with. The government is adopting the policy of privatisation as a ese enterprises, such as lack of able management, lack of opportunities to employees to apgrade their skills, corruption and poor performance. But the cess has taken some time to pick up speed. The Ninth Five-Year Plan envisaged the privatisation of 30 public terprises by 2002, but only the Nepal Tea Develonment Corporation was privatised in this period.

The government has called for technical and economic proposals from interested parties to privatise Hetauda Textile Industries. The bid call requires the interested parties to deposit Rs 1.5 million for Nepalis and \$20,000 for foreigners. The deposit will be expropriated if the successful bidder fails to sign an agreement within four months of the ernment's decision.

The government has also decided to lay off 50 percent of the employees from the Nepal Timber Corporation, The Finance Ministry says that the

overnment is spending Rs 21 billion on this, and people presume that the corporation will soon be privatised. It is also presumed that the government will soon announce its intention to privatise the Lumbini Sugar Factory, Birganj Sugar Factory, Himal Cement Factory and Bhaktapur Brick and Tile Factory

Baluwatar's neo-Ranas

Ghatana Ra Bichar, 2 January ं घटनाः विचार No need to turn the pages of

history books to understand the Rana aristocracy, it is very much alive at the Baluwatar Darbar these days. If you don know how to utter the aristocratic haksiyos and if you are not fluent in English, the salute of 'Jai Nepal' will not allow you entry here. The prime minister's official residence is seeing a revival of the aristocratic practices of the Ranas and the Mallas, as they are the family that Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deub has married into. His son, Iai Bir Singh Deuba, is enjoying aristocratic privileges, Mrs



on commandeering an Assistant Sub-Inspector of police as a hodyguard for her son when she went to the US on a "state visit" two months ago and this "prerogative" has been maintained until now. In the last two months, Jaibir's bodyguards have changed frequently and are required to accompany him everywhere-to the play ground and at school, and what's more they are required to report the child's activities to a Deputy Superintendent of Police three times a day When Arzon Deuba was on the tour to America. Jaibir's bodyguard was sent to his maternal grandparents' house at Jawalakhel. The bodyguards are not allowed to sleep until the prime minster's son has gone to bed, and they must wake up in the morning as soon as he does. We are told that the police personnel who have already experienced being bodyguard to the six-year-old old are exasperated as he is hyper active and demanding, only natural for a child of that age It must be noted that even the late princes Dipendra and Nirajan did not enjoy the facility of personal bodyguards when they were students at the Kanti-Iswori School and at Budanilakantha.



he United Cricket Board of South Africa (LICBSA) has rejected a neturn for disperced former captain Hansie Cronje. UCBSA president Percy Sonn bet week hinted that Cronie might be permitted to play a part in South African cricket despite a life ban imposed last year.

No way back for Cronje

everse this decision and the UCBSA third test between South Africa and now considers the matter closed. The ustralia in Sydney. "Cronje is a son eeting was not in any way a 'discipli-South Africa coiclese Llair antislad to ary hearing', nor was Sonn called in to the freedom and liberties of all South face the Executive Committee." Africans and there is a place for him is The UBCSA also backed Sonn our oridor " Sonn mid following a selection row that flared up

But his comments appeared at odds before the Sydney Test.

They announced that they will ask with the official line of the UBCSA. The novenor of selectors Rushdi Masiet suhi executive committee released a statement after a meeting with the Minister of Sport he original team sheet for the Sydney and Recreation Ngconde Balfour, to Test was publicly "leaked". The incident refute Sonn's remarks, but refused to led to a row between the selectors and criticise their president. "The UCBSA Sonn earlier this month. The selectors would like to reiterate its position that had originally picked white bateman former captain Hansie Cronje has been Rudolph but were ordered by Sonn to replace him in the team with coloured all-rounder Ontong. The selection banned for life by the General Council of the UCBSA. There is no intention to

body's General Council on 19 Ianua fter Magiet submits the report.
The UBCSA outlined their

selection policy, "Where there is an opportunity to do so, young black players who are on the fringes of the im must be given the chance to play for their country," the statement said. The process of selecting the national eam includes the endorsement of the toom but he Descident and no team selection is complete until it has been ndorsed by the President." The executive committee also voiced their continued support of under-fire antain Shaun Pollock and coaches Graham Ford and Corrie van Zyl.

Beckham book deal may be shelved

David Beckham has been advised by Football Association to scrap a £2milion World Cup book deal. The England captain was poised to sign a lucrative contract to write a diany of his evneriences during this summer's tournament in Japan and South Korea but the FA, mindful of the row over coach Glenn Hoddle's book on the 1998 World Cup. is worried about the publication of dressing room secrets. The FA cannot prevent Manchester United midfielder

Beckham from signing a commercial contract with a publisher but has recommended that he not proceed with any deal. Beckham's agent, Tony Stephens, has informed the FA about the plan for the book and says he has been approached by five publishers.

FIFA names World Cup referees

World Cup in Japan and South Korea, with orders for them to be tough on fake fouls as well as aggressive play and tackles from behind. The list of 36 referees - including 14 from Furone - and their 36 assistants was issued late Monday by world soccer's governing body. All of them have officiated at World Cup qualifiers. "Not only must they ensure that the laws of the game are enforced, but they must also demonstrate excellent interpersonal skills, coupled with tact and intuition, so that the teams can fulfil their potential and entertain those watching," said FIFA General Secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen All the referees will take nart in a seminar in Seoul 20-23 March. This will focus on directives relating to the excessive use of force, the outlawed tackle from behind and on how to recognise and penalise the feigning of fouls. FIFA said the chosen officials would also face a "comprehensive, co-ordinated fitness program" to ensure they are at their physical peak for the finals, which take place 31 May - 30

Anders Frisk, Sweden Terie Hauge, Norway Antonio Lopez Nieto, Spain Lubos Michel Slovakia Markus Merk, Germany Urs Meier, Switzerland Vitor Melo Pereira, Portugal Kim Milton Nielsen Denmark Graham Poll, England Kyros Vassaras, Greece Gilles Veissiere, France Jan Wegereef, Netherlands Mark Alexander Shield, Australia Ubaldo Aquino, Paraguay Jorge Larrionda, Uruguay Byron Moreno, Equador Oscar Julian Ruiz, Colombia Angel Sanchez, Argentina Carlos Eugenio Simon, Brazil Carlos Batres, Guatemala Brian Hall, United States William Mattus Vega, Costa Rica Peter Prendergast, Jamaica Feline Ramos Rizo, Mexico Coffi Codjia, Benin Mourad Daami, Tunisia Ndove Falla Senegal Gamal Ghandour, Foyot Mohamed Guezzaz, Morocco Ali Bujsaim, United Arab Emirates Toru Kamikawa, Japan Kim Young Joo. South Korea

POVERTY MONITORING UNIT



Doeirable

Knowledge of participatory and

self-monitoring techniques;

Basic knowledge of German

Desirable

An ability to translate from

An ability to translate from

Nenali to English

GTZ Nepal's Poverty Monitoring Unit (PMU) aims to promote systematic monitoring of the poverty impact of development projects and programs. Along with assessing the impact of GTZ's interventions, the Unit is also responsible for developing innovative tools for poverty impact monitoring and providing demand-based advisory and training services to NGOs. government agencies, and donors relating to poverty research, analysis and monitoring.

PMU invites applications from suitable candidates for the following positions:

Senior Poverty Specialist Duty Station: Kathmandu

Major responsibilities:

- Conceptualize and coordinate research studies in the area of poverty esp. on social mobilization, local self governance decentralization, and savings and credit programs:
- occontratization, and savings arruction programs.

 Undertake in-diopht analysis of current poverty interventions to develop innovative techniques for poverty monitoring (such as self-monitoring, participatory monitoring, use of case studies, etc.).

 Provide technical backstopping to GTZ's monitoring professionals for increased poverty focus;
- Design training modules/courses for the Unit's various training workshops:
- Contribute to the Unit's outreach program of workshops, discussion meetings, and seminars, and take the lead in preparing documents for publication:
- Strengthen institutional mechanisms for effective linkages between poverty monitoring and analysis inputs and propoor policy making:
- Facilitate establishment and strengthening of networks for improved information exchange and stakeholder dialogue within GTZ programs, among donors, and between HMG/N and donors:
- Liaise with HMG/N line ministries, donors, research institutes, and NGOs on poverty analysis, measurement and
- Advise and directly support the Head, Poverty Monitoring Unit,
- Any other assignments as agreed upon with the Head, Poverty Monitoring Unit.

Requisite Skills:

Essential
A Masters' degree in Economics or other social sciences from a recognized University.

- At least five years of professional experience in a relevant field. Strong record in applied research and ability to handle innovative research projects. Awareness of current and emerging issues related to poverty reduction, esp. in the
- Nenali context ■ Good knowledge of English with excellent writing and presentation skills. Willingness to travel

Impact Evaluation Specialist Duty Station: Kathmand

Major responsibilities:

- Design and lead impact evaluation studies to monitor and assess the progress of GTZ's diverse portfolio;
 Develop data collection/collation and analysis methodologies, including qualitative assessment methods, with due
- consideration of the need for gender-disaggregated data;

 Provide technical backstopping for a wide range of impact assessment and monitoring system requirements to requesting
- GTZ programs in a quality and timely manner;

 Identify/document/disseminate comparative experiences and 'Best Practices' in monitoring and impact evaluation to
- provide GTZ and other donors with alternative modalities and approaches that enable them to strengthen their own M&E capabilities:
- Act as the resource person on impact assessment for the Unit's various training workshops.
- Any other assignments as agreed upon with the Head, Poverty Monitoring Unit

Requisite Skills:

Essential	Desirable
A Masters' degree in Economics or other social sciences from a recognized Univ At least five years' relevant M&E experience.	
	self-monitoring techniques;
 Knowledge of statistical application techniques. 	 Basic knowledge of German;
Knowledge of IT, and familiarity with different software package.	ages. An ability to translate from

- Awareness of current impact evaluation techniques. Good knowledge of English with excellent writing and presentation skills.

Both positions carry a suitable compensation package commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Interested candidates are requested to send their CVs (including passport sized photograph and names and addresses of 3 referees) in an envelope marked "Application for the post of

Administrator Poverty Monitoring Unit/GTZ PO Box 1457, Kathmandu.

Closing date for applications Monday, 21 January 2002 Thursday, 31 January 2002.

Women are particularly encouraged to apply.

ZURICH: FIFA has named the referees for the forthcoming

List of referees named by FIFA for World Cup finals:

Pierluigi Collina, Italy. Hugh Dallas Scotland Lu Jun China

Saad Kamel Mane, Kuwait

ELD workshops

Presentation Shalls and State one Participators Meantoning and Issalianteen as as TOST 70 is distance. Stalket 54, 56, with index as

Conflict Management of 1710 and reserved to vice Appli Mernic and Letter Writing 2, 3, 20 helias. pag Parket Propositions of the north 1011 (Steel Death) 4 (\$100.00)

> cle a white coming 120, 575, 817

11 - 17 JANUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES HICTORY



the second inclalment of the unpublished diay of rals, which Nepal Times is serialising in this space bothing it. The diary covers the period immediately ing B²'s return to Nepal from eade in India with a "national reconciliation" between the monarrhy odenocracy forces. At that time, India was under Gandhi's emergency level. We let BP two weeks with his entry for 31 December 1976, "saad and sick" during his first full day in Sundariaj ajal. "I worart to 1977 with hope for both Nepal and our unity," he wrote. The diary, written in English, is be on microfflan at the Madap Pursskar Library in and at the Jawaharial Nehru Museum and Library in New Delli. It was donated in. It was in New Delli. It was donated in. It was in New Delli. It was donated in. It was in New Delli. It was donated in. It was in New Delli. It was donated in. It was donated in. in New Delhi. It was donated by

Back at Sundariial >2 Why this darkness?"

Yesterday I was conscious of the importance of today—first day of the year; but when I got up at five in the morning today I had clear forgotten about it. But after bed tea, which was late in coming as GM [Ganesh Man Singh], who prepared it, overslept, the realisation slowly dawned on me that today was New Year's Day. Why is everything so vague? The awareness of my prison state also very slowly emerges in my mind. The thought that Shailaia (BP's niece) is alone in the ianana jail almost prompted me to visit her there—that I am myself in prison is realised moments later.

On the first day of the year I am partially successful in organising my daily programme. This year I didn't make more resolutions for the ar. Didn't promise that I would organise my time so that my minutes of the day are profitably utilised etc. I start organising my daily duties without more fervour, or a resolve. I did half an hour's brisk walking and did skipping of 80 skips, some deep breathing and some stretching of limbs—all before breakfast. Breakfast consisting of two eggs, cheese, toast and butter and milk was brought at 8AM. I cut out one eqg. Tried reading after breakfast with no success. At about nine when the sun had been a little warm. I scrubbed my boots with a wet towel. Tidied the room. All the time being homesick and sad. Before lunch I did twenty minutes walking. Lunch at 1pm. The camp commander told us that loday being Ekadashi meat was not available, hence was not served at lunch. Then tried to clean which I could not do. GM prepared afternoon tea and some fruits. Evening shadows suddenly descend, and it equally suddenly becomes cold. Again walking for half an hour. Dinner it 7PM. To bed at 8:15PM. Before going to bed GM comes to my room-that is the practice. There is not much to talk about

I remember Nanu who is a misunderstood woman. Her ways are abrupt: and what we think is equistic in her character is only her attempt at the assertion of her personality in a family whose ethos being alien to her has given rise to a complex of inferiority in her. I am full of remorse today because I was not understanding and fair to her. Prakash and his children Shreeharsha and Ruchira were obviously bewildered by the sudden turn of events immediately after their marriage I remember all of them and suffer pance of homesickness don't know how Girija will manage. I hope he won't break under his present terrific responsibility

Yesterday was Saturday, hence that nothing happened was accepted as normal. But nothing happened even today. This is disappointing. No newspapers, no news from anywhere, we are kept in strict isolation. How long will this last? Till the King returns from Pokhara or he makes up his mind about us. I know the world hasn't forgotten us-even the King must be aware of us as a problem, but to be buried here in the isolation of a military camp and to know their one fate is in the absolute hand of the King is an experience which is both desperately lonesome and frightening
Here in my solitary exile I become poignantly aware of the enormity of our decision to return to Nepal.

Shailaia had asked me to search my heart in the crisis of my life which my return to Nepal would entail who was nearest to me to etc. I rer Sushila and am filled with eadness, but dear Shailaia, I miss you. Sadness has history and partakes of homesickness. But when you miss a person, it is the future that you miss-it is a loss of the nemetual present

Psychologically I am steadier today. If I could be certain that people at home would sit, suffer for sheer want of money, that Sudule would be properly looked after, that Shailaja is taking the hardship of the prison life in her stride-then I will have no worry in the world.

Our daily routine is fixed. We get our food from outside at fixed hours—like breakfast at 8am, lunch at 12 noon and dinner at 7pm. We take bed tea at 5:30am and afternoon at about 4pm. Since this evening they have started giving us milk. Perhaps the instruction is that we should be well fed. What we're starved of pertains to our mind and heart. No company, no books or writing materials. What I need most is company. GM can't provide that kind of company which I hunger for. Shailaja—I think of Shailaia herause in prison she would be my best company. She is political, intellectual, emotional—what more do I need in prison if she

were here. But what a fantastic wish! Would Sundariial he a prison then? I think it is cold wave—there is no respite from cold. In the morning it is frost, all one. The whole day, cold wind blows. Is it age that has affected me and hence I feel so uncomfortably cold. I can't think of taking a cold bath. When I was here last, i.e. 8 years and, I would take cold water bath at 5 am, when the world lay frozen. I haven't bathed for so many days. I scrubbed my body with a wet towel.

Desperately homesick, desperately hungry for some emotional company Why this darkness?

Repeating history

A new museum in Johannesburg physically recreates for visitors the experience of living under apartheid.

NAWAAL DEANE

INJOHANNESBURG outh Africa's Apartheid Museun opened last month at Gold Reef city in Johannesburg bringing with it memories and facts of those who lived through the struggle to freedom. Sitting on a bench branded with the word "Europeans only", the museum radiates a sense of immense power symbolising the oppressive regime, which collapsed in 1994.

The first building is a solid squ with virtually no windows. Built of raw concrete it stands in the harsh sunlight as a symbol of the uncompro mising apartheid state. Seven strong pillars, representing the seven corner of the country's constitution stand in front of the entrance. Each enhances the overall feeling of immense strength of the past against a backdrop of the mine dumps and Johannesburg City centre But it is more than just a museum—from the moment a visitor steps in front of the priso type solid building, it demands his or her participation.

The entrance brings with it the sperience of what it was like to live in ne apartheid era Fach visitor is handed a ticket with the words "white or "non-white" that dictates their ourney through the museum. Entering the wall of "Classification", visitor is bombarded with blown up ompasses [passes that people of African ethnicity required under apartheid to move about the country nd ID books that depict the people coording to race. The museum captures the separateness of the different races through the use of steel cases. The dompasses are hung in huse steel structures while the European apartheid. The top of the ramp opens ID's are merely housed in structures with coloureds (people of mixed races) skyline creating the sense of journeying Indians and Chinese thrown in the to the place of gold. middle. The cages with apartheid signs like "Taxi ranks for whites only

anging overhead is claustrophobic enhancing the feeling of oppression. There is a separate exit for white tors where they walk on a ramp above the non-whites coming out on a lower level. At this point, visitors

eparation. Walking up a ramp nclosed by a huge wall (made of enced cages filled with rocks) depicts the migration of people to the Witwatersrand area of Johannesburg Double mirrors placed randomly on this ramp with photographs of a variety of people create a feeling of a rowd. There are also alcoves in the rec brick building with paintings showing common origins, giving the impres-sion of life before the gold rush in South Africa. But as a visitor walks further, the path becomes narrower reinforcing the feeling of the reality of

The museum works as a maze with a spiral staircase leading to the main eception area, giving the impression novement and distance Most areas have an attendant who briefly takes isitors through their section explaining the relevance of the displays. Human experience is

t onto the majestic Johannesburg

ounted in steel cages. The multime lia annroach is further enhanced by h television feeding into a soun dome giving the viewer an intimate look into the lives of black people.

The sense of separateness ntinues with the Voortrekker (the frikaaner Great Trek) on one side, and the ruling African National Congress's birth and growth on the ther. Dramatically placed on a wall is all the apartheid laws implemented in South Africa. Looking at the names eate a sense of detachment to the motional and psychological damage hese laws had on non-white people. Another dramatic feature is a room with 131 nooses hanging from a roo resenting the names of those who lied in detention.

Bringing the experience of being detention to life is Dawn Elliot, a ormer prisoner of the state. She takes isitors through solitary confinement and what it was like to be a high school student fighting for freedom. She locks visitors in a replica of a prison cell.



slams the door, calling out: "See you omorrow!" The 1960 Sharpville student unrest is almost poetically shown on televisions in a semicircle mounted along a wall, where video footage of the massacre tells the truth showing the atrocities of that day. A ema screen with testimonies of people fighting in the eighties lesses people by the police during the state nergency

Having gone through the time since 1948 it is hard to take all the factual information in but a visitor walks out feeling free after going through the democratic elections with life-size queues made-up of photo

cylights work to create an image of valking into the light, and leaving th dark days behind. On one wall is a display of guns, AK-47s, but lying underneath is a pile of metal putting across the end of violence. Still a work in progress, the nuserum promises more truth

graphs of smiling people. Overhead

criticism and reconciliation for all thos who step through its doors. Mounted above a pool of water at the entrance of the Apartheid Museum are the words o former South African President Nelson Mandela: "To be free is not merely to cast off ones chains but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others." \((IPS)



Nepali and Hindi movies online ticket booking at www.nepalshop.com

EVMIDITION

Photography Mani Lama's People and Red series and Kim Hong Sung's Wind Horse series. 15-25 January, 11AM-6PM, Sunday through Friday. Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited. 411122 Phil Privett Paintings inspired by Hindu and Buddhist mythology. sculptures and three-dimensional Himalavan Chessboard, 13-24



Migratory Bird Festival at Koshi Tappu Wildlife Reserve

Birdwatching and ecotourism. Rs 1,500 for nights of 18, 19 January,

with food, local transfer, accommodation and jungle activities. 441226 Friends of the Bagmati Meeting of concerned people trying to clean up the Bagmati river. Dwarika's Hotel, 14 January, 2.30PM. All welcome. 479488

 Philips Bowling Tournament Each bowler rolls three games, highest average wins Philips stereo. Rs 500 per bowler, 12 January, 12PM, Bowling Boulevard. Kantipath. mg@mail.com.np

Gokarna Forest Golf Annual Tournament for members (Rs 800) and guests (Rs 1,800, and lunch for spouses Rs 500). 12 January, 7:30AMafter lunch 2//15/

Nepali classical dance and folk music at Hotel Vaira, Dances of Hindu and Buddhist gods Tuesdays and Fridays, 7PM onwards, the Great Pagoda Hall. Ticket and tea Rs 400. Nepali folk tunes Wednesdays and Saturdays, 6.30PM onwards, hotel restaurant. Hotel Vaira 2715/15

 Contemporary Jazz dance classes by Medhna Thapa. At Alliance Francaise Sundays and Tuesdays 4.30PM-6.30PM, 241163. At Banu's, Kamal Pokhari, Wednesdays 6.30PM-8PM, Saturdays 1.30PM. 434024, 434830

Beetle Mania, tribute to George Harrison: Poolside party with live band, DJ and contests. Come in a Beetle, pay only Rs 2,222 for as many as will fit in the car. Prize for most stuffed car. Rs 450 per person head with drink and snack. Hotel de l'Annapurna, 25 January, 3PM onwards. 221711

Coffee and live music with Dinesh and Tilak. Saturdays, 6.45PM- 9.15PM. Himalatte Cofé Thomal 262526

Live music Tuesday and Friday nights at the 40,000 ½ ft Bar. Rum Doodle Restaurant.

Daily live gazals by Saj Singh and party. Ghar-e-Kabab, Hotel de l'Annapurna. 221711

EATING OUT

Steam Away Winter Blues Hot appetisers, soups, noodles

and momos. Splash Bar & Grill, Radisson Hotel. Mamma Mia Pizzas with special toppings, special pasta menu and complimentary Coke with every order, 15 percent discount for Standard Chartered Bank credit card

holders. Complimentary shuttle from Pokhara lakeside four times daily. Shangri-La Village, Pokhara. 061-22122 Traditional Sekuwa with live music from Himalayan Feelings fusion band and bonfires. Friday nights at

Dwarika's Hotel. Rs555 per head. 479488

 Le Cafe des trekkers Crenes of Brittany, raclette, cheese and meat fondue, 15 percent. discount until 15 January 2002, Jyatha, opposite Blue Diamond Hotel, 225777 Winter specials French onion soup, hot mulled wine, eggnog, and steaks. K-too! Beer

& Steakhouse, Thamel. 433043

Rox Restaurant and Bar Traditional European cuisine from woodfired oven in show

kitchen. Live music, cocktails and snacks at the Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234 * Tukche Thakali Kitchen Buckwheat, barley, bean, and dried meat specialties. Also brunch with porridge and pancakes, all raw material from Tukche village. Darbar Marg.

 Fresh air and tranquility in Kathmandu Valley Stay at Triple A Organic Farm Guesthouse in Gamcha, south of Thimi. Rs. 1,500 per person per night, all-inclusive. Email aaa@wlink.com.np. 631766

Thank Goodness it's Friday! Dwarika's TGIF overnight package including Friday check in, sekuwa dinner, Saturday brunch, massage. \$125 net per couple. 479488

 Pokhara Retreat Through January 2002 stay two nights, get one night free. Package with or without airfare to Pokhara and return. Complimentary shuttle to Lakeside, free use of pool table and fitness centre. Shangri-La Village, Pokhara. 435741/42

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

This satellite picture taken on Wednesday afternoon



shows a fresh westerly heading our way. It is riding a strong et stream and will have moved into west and central Nepal by Friday. The front is fighting a high pressure system over eastern Tihet, but seems to be making its resence felt. Northwest India and Nepal may receive light rain Friday and Saturday. The central and eastern hills will get cloudy skies, but will remain largely dry. The current trend of higher maximum temperature will continue because of clear haze-free days. Minimum temperature will also come up a notch at the weekend pecause of night-time cloud cover.

KATHMANDU VALLEY













That Dreadful Night: Carnage at Nepalese Royal Palace Aditya Man Shrestha Ekra Books, Karhmandu, 2001 Rs 500

An absorbing narration of what happened on the night of 1 June, 2001 in the royal palace of Nepal, and its causes and consequences. The only undisputed fact of the night was the death of ten royal family members, including the Nepali sovereign. The rest is a mystery. Shrestha tries to probe into the tragedy and put it in its proper perspective.

> Patents: Myths and Reality Vandana Shiva Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2001

This volume examines the myths associated with the universalisation of the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Agreement (TRIPS) in the context of trade liberalisation, and the real consequences of implementing such a regime. Shiva highlights the ethical, ecological and economic impacts of globalised patent regimes.



My Girlhood: An Autobiography Taslima Nasrin Kali for Women, New Delhi, 2001

The first major work of Bangladeshi writer Nasrin in exile, My Girlhood is a sensitive retelling of her growing up in an extended family in erstwhile East Pakistan and Bangladesh. The author moves back and forth between her own life and that of a fledgling nation, with sharp observations on the class discrimination, bias, gender disparities and growing religious orthodoxy in Bangla-

Courtesy Mandala Book Point Kantinath 227711 mandala@ccsl.com.nn

CLASSIFIED

Vacancy UK Charity in Nepal seeks outgoing, motivated and self-directed individual, fluent in English and computer literate, to assist in romoting the charity's activities among partner organisations, Applications by e-mail (Word attachment) only to ukcharity@nepalimail.com.

Reflexology Technique of applying pressure to e feet, reduces stress, promotes relaxation and good health, buddhasfeet@yahoo.com.

Stupa View and Restaurant & Terrace at Baudhanath Stupa, Well-appointed restaurant and terraces with views of stupa and Himalayas International venetarian specialties, pizza from clay oven, ice cream, soft guitar tunes on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays from 5PM on Special events on full moon. Open daily 11AM-8.30PM, 480262.

Kodari Eco Resort Peace in natural surroundings, good views of Nepal/ Tibet border, junglecovered mountains. Ruddhist monasteries. ancient Shiva cave. Hike to villages with various ethnic groups, vantage points to Himalayas. Comfortable accommodation, attached bath, balcony or terraces, good food, friendly service

480262 kodari@mos.com.no.

The way to Mexico is too far. Botega Restaurant and Tequila Bar is near Thamel Chowk. 266433, 15 percent off-season discount.

The Borderlands Resort For canyoning rafting, trekking at Tibet borders, Professiona Development Program, Leadership Courses and many more. 425836/425894. info@horderlandresorts.com www.borderlandresorts.com.

K-Too! Beer and Steakhouse not the "longest", "highest", "first" or any other superlative. Just a relaxed, easy-going bar and restaurant with the coldest beer and juiciest steaks this side of the moon. By the Kathmandu Guest House.

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CULTURE AND SOCIETY

The man behind

it. or they love to hate it. And Jug Suraiva keeps churning out Dubvaman.

harm." His fears were comnounded after India and Pakistan began to compete to make offers to help the US to bring the war to the already volatile region. Suraiya then wrote a script and discussed it with staff artist Neelabh

The rest is history. Dubyaman was born on Sunday, 16 September as a black and white strip that appeared in the Times of India Vice-president Samir Iain loved it and wanted it continued, and so it has. Suraiya says he is using humour to spread common sense, and to cut

through the political rhetoric. Dubyaman is getting something of a cult following. There are those who like it and those who hate it," says Suraiva "Few are middle-of the-roaders." The haters and non-haters also tend to sway editorial decision-making at the

comic strip's co-creator, Indian journalist Jug Suraiya. But now that the Afohan campaign is winding down, isn't Dubyaman getting a bit stale? Suraiva shakes his head vigor ously. He was in Kathmandu this week holidaving, and he was staying at the Everest Hotel where all the journalists were. "Even at the Kathmandu summit we heard echoes of George Bush's rhetoric: you are with us or you are against us," says Suraiya. Just goes to show that Dubyaman has now become a role model for other world leaders who are fighting terror.

RINOD RHATTARAI

he world changed in a lot

of ways after 9/11. The

after-shocks of the suicide

bombers triggered tremors in

South Asia which are reverber-

ating still. And the other way

of the Dubyaman comic strip.

Texan pronunciation of the middle initial "W" of US

president George W Bush.

Superman, but the caped

Dubyaman is patterned after

crusader here is actually an anti-

not renowned the world over for

superhero. "The real Dubya is

his intellect, and this is a spoof

on his war on terror," said the

the world changed was the birth

Dubyaman comes from the

In fact it was this Bush line that inspired the 55-year-old associate editor of the Times of India to create the comic strip "A friend called me and asked me to switch on the tv," says Suraiya recounting the events of 11 September. "America is falling down." He is allergic to tv, but switched it on. A few minutes later he was dictating the TOI 10-11 editorial entitled 'Target Humanity'. No sooner was he done, and after watching more footage of the political reaction to the attacks. it struck him that leaders were beginning to make more and more belligerent noises, and the retribution was aimed at South Asia.

"Here we had the least legit leader who barely scraped through controversial elections threatening a conflagration that could happen in our backyard," he says. "I feared that the mental vacuity associated with the rhetoric could do more



TOI when many wrote in to say it was not relevant anymore. Besides Times of India. Dubyaman today is also syndicated in papers in Europe as well as Nepali Times.

Why is India's most influential paper against US democracy, many have asked. Suraiya tells them the paper is not against democracy but against terror in all its manifes tations. "It is my protest against war and what is happening around us." To him terror is a lifestyle disease, like cancer. It is only after the pathological conditions begin o appear, do people ask

themselves "why me?" Those who hate Dubyaman find the humour to be in bad



not," Suraiya says firmly. "It tries to show the different faces of terrorism, including bombing of schools and hospitals." Dubyaman is now getting help from cameoperformances by Indian

Then there are those who love it. One fan sent Suraiya a unique letter to the editor a t-shirt with "Uncle Osama Wants You" printed on the back.

leaders like Foreign Minister

Jaswant Singh, and prime

minister Atal Behari

(For an archive of Dubyaman see www.timesofindia.com)



ROYAL INSPECTION: King Granendra, Crown Prince Paras, Prime Mir ster Sher Bahadur Deuba and Finance Minister Ram Sharan Mahat pose at Club Himalaya at Nagarkot on 30 December. The SAARC retreat schedules



IN-LAW'S ISLAND: The traffic island at Maitighar with its record-breaking



HI. BYF: Outgoing SAARC Secretary-general gives a farewell speech while launching the "Human Development In South Asia" report on 8 Ianuary at



In addition to being a special issue on reconceptualising the region, this month's issue includes a special downside-up atlas-quality map of South Asia.





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Under My Hat

by Kunda Dixit

SAARCASM

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man and/or woman on the street. Every activity of personal hygiene was under strict sensing, even in the privacy of one; own home. It was rather disconcering to have your every move on the fastis under constant surveillance from an airborne ently warning and control system (AWACS), and the afformentioned common person on the street had to think twice and look over histher shoulder before exing in to the temptation of pressing one chumb to histher right notural and with a happer chalation from the langs, expertly many the control and with a happer chalation from the langs.



Now that we have survived a major shark attack, this is the perfect timeable for our nation and people to limp back to normaley. The all-clear has been sounded, the frenzy of deconstruction has abated, and Nepalis are slowly regaining the socio-economic rights that they had willingly scarificed for the duration of the summit of regional hammerheads.

Much to the self of the man on the street, for immen, the Tunkled has ais now que none more for people who want to take as un had not also the case fairs people who want to take as un had. And as is the case fairs a mice nomine rap, one can now also attend to call of nature in hoods smilght right there on the wall opposite the POO without Knight danger of being observed by a shatch head of state (or government) speculing past on a stand to the contract of th

It may be hard for those in the corridors of power to imagine what a relief the lifting of these restrictions is to the discharging a major glob of nasal obstruction (Warning to minors don't try this stunt at home) right there below a large hoarding at the Tripureswor intersection that says "Heart Felt Well Come to SAARC Heads". Lest our illustrious readers are labouring under the

Il aliano that we are complaining about the supersist of civil Berties, let rue dispet that notion (gill there as for civil Berties, let rue dispet that notion fight here as for civil Berties, let rue dispet that a particle Verlagia, we led now there is no galaxies gill, and a particle Verlagia, we led now We will some great in order to improve our drugs a bottom of the civil great to what the improve our drugs a bottom of the civil some great to wide the wide of the gill person of the gill person of the civil dispet and the civil personning we will not use that her on the dispet.—but only for a limited rine, and only if you can get parliament to

ratify the strictures with a two-thirds majority.

The question in everyone's mind right now is: when are thinos going to be translocated to the Royal Tinkune National Park? What are we going to do with all the bed sheets that draped the city's billboards for the past two weeks? The answer to both questions Maybe. •

NEPALI SOCIETY

Subhas' explorations

ubhas Rai's cartons have by now become a staple for many Nepali books, magazine and is familiar to the readers of this newspaper. But he does not like to be called a cartonoist, not even an artist. "I am an explorer," says the boyish-looking 34-year-old, and he has never stopped exploring.

Starting out in a Kathmandu ad agency, Subhas was a quicklearner and soon found the confines of a "job" restricted his need to seek new challenges. He ing agency in Kathmandu where he familiarised himself with computer graphics and design. But even here, claustrophobia set in. "It is a very commercial environment, there isn't much time to be creative," says Subhas. So he struck off on his own as a freelance designer.

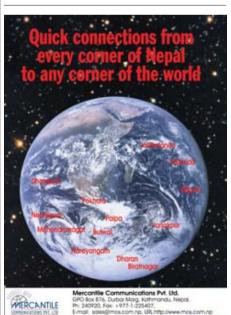
oesigner.
His most challenging task? To
illustrate Adventures of a Nepali
Frog. the best-selling children's te
book by Kanak Mani Dixit which has
now been translated into eight
languages. Subhas likes to do
unusual things, and his latest work
Keepe

is the cover for the SAARC issue of Himal South Asian which has an upside down map of the subcontinent with Sri Lanka on top. "I'm not a cartographer, but it was fun to spool National Geographic and make a map that forces people to take a whole new perspective."

Subhas is off to the US to learn new tricks, more computer aided design work and animation. "I'm not the kind that will stay abroad," says Subhas, I'want to widen my horizons, gain experience with new equipment and bring back world-class graphics design to Nepal." Keep on exploring, Subhas, and (like the poet said) return to the pales with started in see it for the pales with started in see it for the







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