

What they had to say

Nepali Times interviewed participants at the Nepal Development Forum on the last day of the close-door aid meeting in Pokhara on Thursday. Selected soundbites:

Karen Turner Deputy Assistant Administrator Asia and the Near East Bureau USAID, Washington In this difficult situation, we need decisive steps to really attack the root of the problems of the country, which is "What we have is an important frame-work, but the government needs to poverty and insufficient governance." Pharang Roy demonstrate results now. Not three years from now, but within the next 12-18 months. There needs to be some With the ongoing conflict, the governconcrete visible evidence on the ground, ment needs to win back the trust of the particularly in the rural areas, where poorest people. For this we must most of the significant poverty is." Paul Eoper

demonstrate at least two or three simple things that work. Making VDCs in charge of schools is a major step. The poor people have to feel that they are "Peace is the foremost goal now. once again taken seriously, it is about

Without peace there is no development, building trust...using the army is not the answer. no scope of development co-operation.

Vice President The World Bank shington "What should the government do now" Ram Sharan Mahai Finance Ministe

Meiko Nishimiz

Act.

and government here are really impatient for evidence of basic "Everyone seems to want implementation services being delivered." .. this is a genuine demand. Implementation needs total political commitment. I am confident that we can make it happen." Tanja Kristine Hegge Assistant Director General for Asia

"The government has comprehensive economic reform plans, but implemen tation is slow. Agendas are well set but there are questions about how we bring the benefits to the grassroots level. People have to be able to feel

the changes brought about by reforms."

Ministry of Foreign Affairs The key test is to actually reduce poverty, expand options for poor, and a government that delivers development " Jochen Kenneweg

Head South Asia Division. Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation Germany Germany Given Nepal's limitations, it may be necessary to concentrate on implementa-

Editorial p2 tion in a few crucial areas for quick results FAQ about NDF

which can be seen by the people.

Martin Dinham lirector for Asia and the Pacific

e policies are good, but the key

issue here is proper implementation. The poor people of Nepal, the donors

South Asia Department Asian Development Ban Manila

Jin-Koo Lee

DIFID

Something is ie rated in Ireland. If the central bank ...with the state of commercial banking in Nepal

International Fund for Agriculture

and Development (IFAD)

BINOD BHATTARAI

So, Nepali taxpayers will be paying \$10 million to get Rastriya Banijya Bank and Nepal Bank Limited rescued by international consultants. But wait: if you thought these programs were not an end of the constraints of the second varastatals were rotten you should take a sniff at Nepal's commercial banking sector Non-performing assets, conflict of interest, murky offshore ownership, well-connected aulters, loan swapping, political obstruction. You name it, Nepal's private banking has it.

Even the governor of the Nepal Rastra Bank, Tilak Rawal, admitted recently that the state of our banking sector was "terrible". A donor representative involved in financial reform told us: "Nepal has the weakest central bank in the developing world." The reason is not difficult to see: political interference. Especially since 1990, bankers with patronage could get away with getting anything they wanted approved by the regula-

tor. Nepal Rastra Bank's first governor, Himalaya Shumsher Rana said in a recent interview. "Only three of 12 governors actually completed their five-year terms in its entire history because they were sacked for undefined exigencies." All this is now coming back to haunt the Nepal Rastra Bank, the national economy and

the Nepali public. Till now, we had all thought it was only the Big Two (Rastriya Banijya Bank and Nepal Bank Limited) that needed rescue. But it is becoming increas

ingly evident that private banks may not be in much better shape. Shovan Dev Panta, a 16-year banking veteran, and CEO of Nabil Bank, admitted as much at a recent meeting on financial sector reform. "The financial sector is in an appalling state," he said, disclosing that the non-performing assets of private banks may be even higher than the central bank's estimate of between 1.6 to 9 percent. This could grow if the economic downturn is not reversed. He added: "I am scared of what could be ahead." Nepal's financial sector is made up of 13 commercial banks, 12 development banks, 49 finance companies, 34 financial co-operatives and 16 NGO-run financial cooperatives. Among commercial banks all except one, and three or so not-so-bad ones, are said to be in trouble. All evidence gathered for this article point to the regulatory agency not doing it job properly. None of the bankers, regulators and auditors we interviewed for this investigation wanted to discuss the record of specific banks. But there are some indications of just how deep the malaise is.

For example, several years after the original promoters sold their stock in Nabil Bank, not even its shareholders officially know who actually owns the largest block of the company's shares. The National Bank of Bangladesh purchased the 1.9 million shares, but these were later transferred offshore to an entity called NB International Ltd incorpo-

knows about the ownership of this company it hasn't told anyone as is required for companies listed in the stock exchange. "There are few secrets in

Kathmandu," one senior banker told us. "And everyone pretends not to know what is happening. We have our heads in the sand.

Another example: almost every bank and financial institution here has reported profits from the first year of operation. Even after the economic slowdown that began in early 2001, many showed profits. Asks one perplexed uditor "How can banks be in profit when the industries they have invested in are all reporting losses?"

The central bank issued its ownership guidelines ("Directive 8") in mid-2001. Till then it was a free-for-all: anyone, even those with interests in the industrial sector are allowed to own banks. Many promoters have borrowed from their own banks and not paid back. "Here's how the scam worked," a Nepal Rastra bank official explained to us. "You put in Rs50 million to promote a bank and then borrow Rs500 million from it. They are not opening banks to do banking, but to siphon loans for themselves." In most cases the central bank is unable to nab promoters because they tend to be well-known "captains of industry" with connections that span the political specturm. In mid-January 2002, Nepal Rastra Bank in fact ordered one private bank to stop taking deposits precisely for this reason.

In the absence of ownership guidelines and less-than-transparent disclosures, some business families now have controlling interests in not one or two, but up to five banks and financial institutions. Owners can therefore use one bank to guarantee a loan from nother, and both end up losing because the loans are mostly overvalued and seldom paid back. Cross-ownership also makes it easy to swap bad loans. The losers in the end are trusting Nepali depositers, the economy and investor confidence.

Go to 🖒 pf



Lukla flights to resume Lukla flights are expected to resume over the weekend after Maoists attacked the town on 3 and 4 February, A group of about 100 laoists surrounded the town and looted Rs 2.2 million from the Rastriva Banijya Bank branch. "No one was hurt or harassed. Everything is quiet now " Lukla's VDC chairman Funuru Sherna told us by phone. The army is said to be quarding the town and also airlifted out some stranded trekkers. Trekking agencies in Kathmandu say tourists Head Asia Division Swiss Developmen Berne have not cancelled their plans, and are waiting for flights to resume, while others have started trekking from Jiri

From India, with love

and Phaplu.

Last year on 14 February, Valley residents spent over Rs1 million on flowers. As Valentine's Day approaches again, gift shops and florists are stocking up for the big rush. And because Nepali florists can't meet local demand, they import roses from as far away as Bangalore. Chameli in Pulchowk expects to surpass the 9,000 stems of red roses it sold last yearmost of it imported from India Elora Nepal has two flower farms in Kathmandu and one in Simara, but can barely supply 600 stems of Dutch roses a day. "Winter production is not enough to meet demand," says manager DK Srivastava. Next year, Flora Nepal plans to triple production, which still won't be enough to satisfy all the Valley's lonely hearts. But the Valentine in the Valley may be dampened a bit by the emer-

gency this year: rose sales aren't so rosy yet. Times nepalnews.com O Should Namel's

EDITORIAL



"Things don't move, why?" If there was a prize for the most frequently asked question during this week's Nepal Development Forum meeting, that one would get it. Donors were puzzled; there is awareness at the highest levels of Nepal's government and bureaucracy about the fundamental reasons for our persistent poverty and chronic deprivation. There is a proven formula for setting things right. There are signs that, despite past inefficiencies, bad governance and lack of transparency, some things have worked and Nepal's development parameters show steady improvement. Yet, things don't move. Why?

Looking for a single scapegoat for this national paralysis in statecraft is futile, but it is clear that a large part of this crisis is a result of constant, successive failures of leadership.

It did not take long for the euphoria of democracy to evaporate after 1990. Our elected leaders and the parties they represented let us down badly. Governance, to cite the current buzzword, is a gift they never possessed. Or maybe they thought it was a skill they didn't need, that being politicians automatically endowed them with the craft of governance.

Suffering and fighting for democracy, it seems, aren't credentials enough to turn freedom-fighters into visionary rulers. Decades of incarceration, torture and exile don't guarantee that leaders become better managers or more accountable politicians. We had in the past ten years begun to see a glimmer of the qualities we look for in the commitment and responsibility of elected leaders at the grassroots. But many of them are being systematically eliminated, or hounded out of their home villages by the Maoists.

At the national level, governance isn't just about the conduct of the state. Politics isn't just the operational strategy of



FAQ ABOUT NDF

the day-to-day survival of the powerful. Politics can't just be about clinging to the table under which deals are made. In any country with our level of human deprivation, politics must be more than that. Politics is the competitive process to choose the best and most honest managers so that they can improve peoples' lives.

If they wanted to govern well, our elected leaders would have made the people who elected them a part of the political process that could make their lives better. They would have tried harder to redress the skewed balance of social justice by giving a voice (beyond just lip service) to the voiceless. They would have done all this honestly and efficiently

But somewhere in the last 12 years, we lost it. Politics has become an end in itself, politics for politics' sake. And those of us outside politics have often chosen to remain outside the political process itself. We have forgotten the bond between development and democracy. Politics must force elected leaders at all levels to create the conditions necessary for citizens to live more decent lives. Or else, they do not get elected again This connection was the reason for hope in 1990. And it is because everybody forgot that missing link that we are in the mess we are in today. Even if you don't completely buy the theory of cultural determinish that makes Kathmandu Valley's elite a bunch of nampered fatalists, the reasons for this are as much socio-cultural as they are rooted in the history of feudalism and autocracy that saddled us with the political economy we have today.

Development failed because the people do not feel they are a part of it, and they don't feel they are a part of because they are hardly ever consulted. The United Nations' Nepal Human

Development Report 2001 which was released just before the NDF meeting last week put its finger right on the problem: poverty in Nepal, the report said, is first and foremost a crisis of governance. "The level of human development in Nepal remains among the lowest in the world ... and this stems basically from inequity and inequality in the distribution of resources and opportunities."

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NATION

COMMENTARY

The result: nine million Nepalis still live in hardcore poverty. The gap between rich and poor in Nepal is wide even by South Asia's inequitable standards. The figures for female literacy and maternal mortality are as shameful as ever-especially in the far and midwest. Millions of Nepali women continue to live in misery.

It's true, it's not all gloom and doom. Nationwide, the literacy rate is moving rapidly past the 65 percent mark, the life expectancy of Nepalis has gone up, per capita income is rising, access to health care has improved, decentralisation is starting to give people at the grassroots greater control over their own destiny. The efficiency of the delivery of basic services can be further improved by turning over the control of their management to local bodies.

So, why aren't things moving? Because Nepal is badly governed. What can we do about it? Ensure greater participation of the people in decision-making, and force politicians to be more accountable. Donors will only go so far, ultimately we have to do it ourselves. We cannot wait for the insurgency to be over before we launch an aggressive development drive, otherwise it will never be over.

> hen he sent Gorkhali soldiers to kataka gara." (Don't kill unless attacked, but kill if attacked.) The Royal Nepal Army is now out of the barracks and fighting the Maoists under similar orders. The surprise Maoist attack in late

(RNA) to take on the offensive. However, it is facing certain strategic difficulties in responding to the insurgents for several reasons: numerical inadequacy of troops deployed, our open border with

war, Prithivi Narayan Shah told Then there are logistical problems them: "Jai kataka nagara, jhiki

November forced the Royal Nepal Army

Red terror

Mao saw "red terror" as a way to counter the state's "white terror". Our comrades are doing it to sow fear, and pre-empt the army's intelligence gathering.

employees of the state.

There has to be an immediate

ind the civil government on delivering

The Royal Nepal Army in the past

factors working in favour of the Royal Nepal Army in this war: · All parliamentary parties support the deployment of troops against the rebels and so does the international community There are today many more access roads that reach deep into the hinterland • The lack of accessible forests where he insurgents can hide for long periods The Maoists now have less and

less room to play, and the army can take the strategy of tiring them into surrender or defeat. Although it would benefit from a bigger fighting force the RNA also has the advantage of numbers over the Maoists. However, the Maoists are battle-hardened

statements through the Defence Minisand have a commitment to the revolution try. The Nepali people have been used to The Maoists need to spend about press freedom for the past 12 years, and Rs10 million every month to keep the war they can tell when a news item sounds oing: for the upkeep of their own guerrilla credible and when it doesn't. The other force, logistics and hardware. The army disadvantage is that the government is would need at least five times that losing the battle for hearts and minds amount because it relies on air support, because development is at a standstill.

state-of-the-art weapons and other expensive equipment. Even though the cost may not be an immediate concern, over time it will be. Moreover, development to the grassroots. Having

security spending will divert money from correct ground-level information needs a development which needs to go hand-in-hand to address the rural neglect that fuels network of local informants: fire-power i useless unless you know where to shoot. the revolution. The rebels want to fight the battle in two months has gained experience and is the territory they know best, and are trying to lure the army to their lairs

concern for the army, it also has to seal off the guerrillas' entry and exit routes. Even though it is a long shot, the army seems to be trying to tighten the stranglehold on the Maoist heartland without actually entering the areas themselves.

because the Maoists are terrorising local people with brutal slayings of villagers. This strategy is known as "red terror in Maoist lore—a response to what is called the state's "white terror". This explains why the rebels have begun picking out innocent teachers, who they believe the army may try to use for its intelligence-gathering and infiltration. attack on a major military base on or Teachers live in the villages, they have a around 13 February is a possibility. intimate knowledge of the terrain and Mobility is critical to the guerrillas, and other villagers. They also happen to be they will try to break out of the army's cordon by ambushing convoys, hitting The army's psy-ops techniques now supply lines, and creating a rift between

the local population and troops. There is no doubt that the army's best chance of effectively defeating the Maoists in the short-term would be to get the leadership, as happened in Sri Lanka with an intelligence breakthrough that resulted in the arrest of the entire top brass of the IVP in 1989, as well as the capture of Abimael Guzman of the Sendero Luminoso in Peru in 1992. The rebels seem to have political understanding between the RNA anticipated this, and have taken refuge in India

A coordinated intelligence and under cover operation in collaboration with India is therefore needed not just for the leadership's whereabouts, but also to severe communication links between the top leaders and the cadre. Otherwise this crossborder element could complicate the insurgency, and join Nepali Maoists in a wider revolution with their comrades in Bihar, Jharkhand and Andhra Pradesh. ♦

(Pushkar Gautam is a former Maoist area commander for Okhaldhunga and left the movement three years ago due to internal conflict with the leadership.)

etter from the Silicon Plateau

Despite the market mantra, it is government that makes things happen. Even in Bangalore.

MYSORE - This city is serene. If it land. Lalit Mahal was once the roval were not for the wedding-cake palaces questhouse. The Indian governmen you wouldn't realise that this was the capital city of an eponymous state o British Rai The Maharaia of Mysore did have another palace in Bangalore. but he reigned and ruled from this quiet little town at the feet of the Chamundi Hills. Despite the building boom fuelled

STATE OF THE STATE

by the demands of a burgeoning bourgeoisie, Mysore still retains the old-world charm of a small town whe you stop and greet at least three people on your way to the neighbourhood grocer. There are caste-marks on the foreheads of men in suits and coconu trees sway in the gentle breeze. A sweet smell of incense near the butcher's block and the aroma of masala dosa being folded in the teashop waft across the visitors' nostrils. There is a string of white flowers in the hair of a little child with a runny nose on her way to school. It's all so familiar. And it is This is the setting of mythic Malgud atching up to do. made famous by the magical prose of the late RK Narayan. Built on the edge of the city, in the middle of a near-barren expanse of

has found an appropriate use for this piece of regal property-the palace has een turned into a five-star hotel run by the Indian Tourism Development Corporation. I couldn't have asked for a better backdron to ruminate over my whirlwind tour of the Deccan's Silicon Plateau. Cyberbabu Naidu has given yderabad an iconic status, but much fhis IT dream remains just that. No doubt, the glearning Cybercity complex is functional, the computer ation of government records is in rocess, and this week Naidu flew to

he United States to draw further vestment into his ambitiously nar knowledge corridor' around the Begumpet wilderness. But even the nowledge industry needs a critical mass of knowledgeable people villing to and capable of taking isks. In this, Hyderabad has a lot o Andhra Pradesh has a long way to before it can even begin to compete with Kamataka's other enviness It

the Peoples' War Group. It has to develop a pool of technicians to take are of the nuts and bolts matters whil he high-fliers pursue their ITantasies. It has to build dependable infrastructure-roads, water supply lectricity, banking, insurance, school nd hospitals. These are things that annot be delivered in an instant over the Internet. Even a determined overnment with strong political will eds some time to get things going. If Naidu fails in his dream of ansforming his state into a real IT per-power, it wouldn't be for lack of ying. The beginnings of his corridor of knowledge are there, with the University of Hyderabad doing what tanford is supposed to have done for

Silicon Valley, and what the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) did for neighbouring Kamataka. Hyderabad can boast of an Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIIT), which

s engaged in cutting edge research. The hype about the e-governance in Andhra Pradesh is hype: but no one doubts that Chandrababu Naidu neans business Karnataka is the reigning IT leader of Indian missile technology, APJ needs to resolve the insurgency led by

Abdul Kalam, on the pretext that his in India, a fact recognised by visitors such as Tony Blair and Zhu Rongji, as well as IT-superstar residents like NR doctorate was an honorary one, not earned. The University of Hyderabad eagerly welcomed Kalam into their fold Varayanamurthy, chairman of Infosys and Winto chief Azim Premii In Hyderabad, the air is full of anticipa poached from huse Bangalore-based ion; in Bangalore, exhaustion with IT te enterprises like Hindustan s more pronounced. The buzzword Aeronautics Limited Rharat Heavy here these days is biotechnology. And Electricals Limited, Hindustan they are not talking about just their Machine Tools, and Indian Telephone wn state-scientists from Bangalore' Industries helped the information biotech labs are scouring India's revolution take off. Even in the eighties ortheast for exotic enzymes they can Bangalore had more engineering olleges than any other city in India. atent. In Begumpet, the operative ord is software, in Whitefields, they and graduates of these institutions have started to talk about IT-enabled fuelled a supply-led growth of the industries and bio-informatics knowledge industry There are many reasons behind highly-regarded Indian Institute of

ie emergence of Bangalore as a centre of knowledge industries, but none of them has anything to do with market forces per se. Much of the credit for transforming Bangalore from a ensioners' paradise to a high-tech Mecca goes to the IISc-the institute that has India's own super-computer PARAM. The IISc is so obsessed with its premier image, that last month it refused full professorship to the father

Senior scientists and technocrats Prof Kalvani, Dean of Bangalore's

Management, puts the phenomenon ir perspective when she says that it is the ment that makes things happen, despite the mantra of market so popula these days. In recognition of the role that policy can play in economic growth, her institute is starting a cours n Policy Management patterned after the famed Kennedy School of Government IIM-Bangalore is renowned for accurately predicting management

trends, and if its emphasis on T-enabled industries? Nowhere, afternoon bhaians, and a significan Nepali. The Sai Super Specialty Hospital is now complete, and its and chrome of IT park for visitors

Nepal's cyber aspirations

governance is anything to go by, the challenge of the future is not finance, oduction or the market, but policy Where do we in Nepal figure in all this talk of IT, bio-informatics and which is why Nepali visitors to Silicon Plateau give the International Information Technology Park a miss and head straight for Sai Baba's Ashram nearby The Baba looks frail, but still sits on his throne blessing devotees during number of his followers continue to be golden dome competes with the glass

wever, have the blessings of Lord Pashupatinath. The largest statue of the Nandi bull in the world is in Andhra. The second largest is in Karnataka. The third largest, and perhaps the most beautiful, is in the Pashupati Temple Could this pattern portend that Nepal might be next in line for an IT breakthrough?

Koirala, are not ing when they sa purpose of the broad national is not to grab po cratic dalliance Bhusal #76). Th to go beyond cr terminology (mu alliance become democratic allia broad national of sophisticated po reasoning. One that their antece too convincing. If serious then ne could start off b (promising) that interested in ent ment, but that th concentrate on government from through response critical support v and critical but tion within parliar major test of the would be their s extension of the

gathering has improved it is still not adequate for infiltration The army is first concerned about its own security, thereafter it wants to secure the cities, and then the district headquarters. There is logic in the approach: because a cardinal rule of warfare is securing your own safety before India, and a cash-strapped national attacking the enemy. There are several POWER GRAR? The leaders of the UML, and the no faction of the Ne gress led by Gir

fighting a guerrilla war in this terrain, Maoists can easily flee into India as the pressure against them intensifies, and Getting there is not only a logistical

improving intelligence. Its strategy now will be to push the Maoists into higher terrain and keep them there. Dolakha. Udayapur and Dhankuta have now emerged important regions in this counter-insurgency thrust in the east. In the west, Gorkha, Palpa, Surkhet and Dang could be where this effort will be concentrated

POWER GRAE? The leaders of the RPP, CPI- UML, and the non-ministerial faction of the Nepali Con- gress led by Ginija Prasad Koirala, are not very convinc- ing when they say that the purpose of the so-called Drada national consensus? Is not to grab power ('Demo- cratic daliance' by Puskar Bhusai, #76). They will have therminology (multi-party alliance becomes broad democratic alliance becomes broad national consensus) or sophisticated political reasoning. One problem is that their antecedents are not that their antecedents are provide they saying (promising) that they all not interested in entering govern- ment, but that they all not therested in entering govern- ment, but that they all not therested in entering govern- ment, but that they all not therested in entering govern- ment, but that we will be poly- therested in entering govern- ment, but that we will be poly- therested in entering govern- ment, but that will the poly- government from the outside through responsible but child support within the NC,	government felt that this was essential, which it most prot- ably is. Mithun Jung Naxai KRUMEU SPRINC It is clear from Ramyata Limbu's article (Ykumbu hopes for spring, 478) that if the govern- ment does not send more security forces to the Khumbu, ecuater colosail losses. As a rather of the area, let me also add that BdB albadur KG in my experience is making a mistake with Synaptock aiprort—it is just too high for tourists for acclimatisation. <i>Phukodij Sherpa</i> <i>Comectionu</i> , USA Thank you for Ramyata Limbu's excellent reporting from Luka. I have many times here who want to go on the Evenss Trek, and it was a great help. <i>Lack Prasai</i> <i>Cape Town, South Africe</i>	what we think, see and feel, and even what we should do, could be be so kind as to use his demonstrated owniscience and send us (preferably without over- openeralisations, or literary name-forping) the winning number of the next Powerball Lottery? R Subba Tiss withing to say that I am struck by the vehemice and defensiveness of the reaction to Rajendra Khadka's perceptive, ancie on the diaspore. Ovi- ously, Khadka's atrice has forced hem to ask toogh events and themself weight of generalised and the set of the set of the set of the set of general kinetic of the set	Condescendingly challenges the intelligence and maturity of the Nepai diasports by limiting ther discussion of Nepai to 'outs: compution, decay'. Some may choose to live abond, some may return after learning skills, and some may just opt out. Virunos Nepail organisations such as ours makes an eartered tento th motion of the same rechanges. There is a new trend among Nepails, including returnees like Khadka, to engage in productive activities. This is a positive sign as long as is conductive activities. This is a positive sign as long as is conductive ogniveh. Its better for Nepails in Nepai and outside to work together instead of throwing labels at each orber. Sign Association of New State Some NMA mem-	utility and antefacts to be displayed. As you state, the project was the reation and dream of one mar. Dawa Mohu Shenga, the late presi- dent of the NMA. I am pained to see that Dawa's name and combuction to the project rarely surfaces these days. In the original master plan the uneuenu building is part of a compiler. Interconnected by open areas landscaped with gardens, fordpaths, strupas, mark wells and even a climb- ing cock. We had also taken into account buildings to the design and implementation of the project were surprised to discover through your follow- up that the NMA is asking another "architect" to provide a "faceliff" to the complex. We have not been informed of this	by our client, and are continu- ing to provide our consultancy, as well as free personal services for the interior display, to fulli Dewis dream. <i>Narendra</i> Pradhan Kathmandu NOT PERFECT FIVE It is indeed encouraging and very inspiring to read in Bind Bhattarata's Can Negal do ITT the on the CMM scale. Or dose it? Very few software houses in the whole work bace ber dose to achieve CMM level 5. So, if what M* Suresh Regmi says is true, PCS would be a major player in the work software market. <i>Amar Gurung by email</i> Mr Gurung is right. PCS does not have any CAM raing. The error is regretted. –Ed
through responsible but	Jack Prasai	Nepal. But we need to make			







The Maoists are therefore fighting In line with Mao Zedong's doctrine, the war with ambushes, booby trap mine and their superior knowledge of the terrain. The army is not finding it easy to ouild a network of local informants

Nepal's Maoists have always planned and carried out a major assault on a police or army base every two months or so. The comrades call it "Dhakka": thrust. This is to keep their cadre in battle-readiness maintain morale, and use the attacks for propaganda value to expose the government and military's vulnerability. They will pick soft targets that create the biggest news impact. Given the pressure the Maoists are under presently, and their affinity for anniversaries, such an

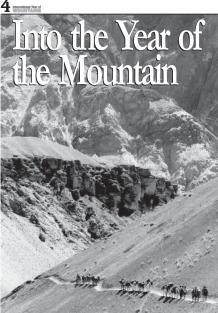
have to go beyond issuing sterile daily



San Minnel

BEER

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as an Oriented ambience Presidenting a Chronese village market shares or the Waterful Cardon angles with Chinese lawsma Organic Wagetables for sale. it materialway Tan Staff. Fruit country, Mast & Vegetable Countar salada phoa faccintos like Spring Rails, Chowman Back, chickers and Relt in Human appleas well as showing marries.

Reine the series treat for hast bles, \$78 note for Parson. (An all inclusive deal where you can sample the best of China from the various stalls)

An opportunity not to be missed 8th Fub-12 Feb (12:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.)



8-14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

nework for regional cooperation in

Exchange, another on securing farmers

egional planning meeting on improved

-saving options for mountair

Flood Forecasting and Information

ights to livelihoods in the Hindu

ush Himalaya. There will be a

women, still another on rural mad

aintenance in the Ĥimalavan repior

ountain agricultural systems for

ustainable agricultural planning and

ICIMOD will also work with the

nal seminar on mountains

Royal Nepal Academy of Science and

Kathmandu in March, and with other

rganisations to hold the GIS (Geo-

graphic Information Systems) Forum

Asia Pacific regional FAO Conference

on Mountain Agriculture in mid-May.

The celebrations have already kicked off

highest botanical garden in the countr

omise of at least fifteen others to be

et up around the country. But, says

only restricted to pictures in glossy

prochures, but reflected in the faces of

estha, "one hopes the IYM is not

ghland inhabitants. People have to be

lear about what IYM is and what it isn't. With the 2002 launch of the

ination Nepal Campaign and the

50th anniversary celebrations of the first

summit of Mt Everest next year-

onal events that cash on the

ternational Year of the Mountain-

there is concern that the accompanying

ation will deaw attention away

ighlight mountain issues and to serv

term, sustained, and concrete action that

is a springboard and catalyst for long

vill extend far beyond the year.

Says Shrestha: "Various other

ts can accompany the IYM to

but if by the end of the year there is no

sign of a long-term plan for mountain

development, for many people the year

2002 will have just come and gone." This is why the priorities set forth

wellbeing of mountain communities by

promoting conservation and sustainable

Increase awareness of and knowledge

riding importance in providing a

number of strategic goods and services essential to the well-being of both rural

and urban, highland and lowland

curity;

making in those regions

societies:

people, particularly water supply and

· Promote and defend the cultural

heritage of mountain communities

· Pay attention to frequent conflicts in

mountain areas and promote peace-

dynamics and functioning, and their

Ensure the present and future

development in mountain areas.

on mountain ecosystems, their

throughout the year:

the IYM will no doubt be repeated

ghlight Nepal's development efforts,

hype to promote Nepal as a tourism

rom the basic aims of the IYM: to

n Nepal with the opening of the

Daman on January 1, with the

Not only glossy brochures

uth Asia 2002 in November, and the

technology (RONAST) to hold an

frastructure development and

and finally, others on assessing

levelopment

If you thought it was the Year of the Horse, you're wrong. The time of the montain is here. Mountains are difficult to react; once you get there, they're difficult to live in, and if you stay, they're difficult to endure. But they cover more than a quarter of the arth, are home to a tenth of the world's five billion, and provide goods and services to over half the world's population.

from the misconception that deforesta-

gligent. Access to mountains is

RAMYATA I IMBU

hen some 50 scientists gathered in France in Ju 2000 to find an agreeab tion in the hills is the cause "They athered in France in June haven't understood or been explained 2000 to find an agreeable that soil erosion over the years has changed the courses of rivers like the definition for a mountain, they couldn't. But like their predecessors : Kosi, that all Asian countries are the World Environment Summit in affected by the connection between the Rio in 1992, they agreed that Indian Ocean, the Himalaya and the mountains were much more than a monsoons," says botanist Dr Tirtha physical mass, and integral to the Babadur Shrestha "Even then the world's environment. And so, ten public attitude towards mountains it ears after Rio, the UN has decided to difficult. They are difficult to reach; celebrate 2002 as the International Year of the Mountain to draw the once you get there it's difficult to live orld's attention to the mountains in, and if you stay, they're difficult to their importance and their problems, endure. That's why it's important for a and experts will gather in Johannesmountainous country like Nepal not to look at mountains from a distance, but urg, South Africa this September to to look at their practical problems in the face." Dr Shrestha is working with valuate the outcome of the 1992 meeting at the World Summit on ustainable Development. national committees that includes

"The most important mountain professionals from the non-governm policy issue for all mountain regions, tal sector and tourism as well as and particularly here, is about academics and researchers, who will all providing better environment and resources for people living downtrack the various special mountain-related programs in Nepal this year stream, and redressing the imbalance of resource flows from upstream. What's happening, where mountain areas." says Dr Gabriel ICIMOD, together with other donors such as the FAO, the Japanese Campbell, director general of the rnational Centre for Integrated government, the Swiss Development

Mountain Development (ICIMOD) Cooperation, the International Union the first international centre with a for the Conservation of Nature mandate to promote sustainable (IUCN) the Mountain Institute the mountain development. (See box for World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), and the German aid agency interview) Nepal with its Himalaya is Gesellschaft für Technische

certainly exceptional, but around 135 Zusammenarbiet (GTZ), is taking a ountries in the world have mountain lead role in sponsoring and organising IYM 2002 activities. The highlight of the Centre's bus and hills. Not just the home of snow fed rivers that are a vital source of drinking water and critical in alendar of events will be global hydropower projects, mountains also mountain women's meet from 28-31 May. "Celebrating Mountain Women" ontain a quarter of the world's forests rich hubs of biodiversity with some of will bring together indigenous women the world's rarest flora and fauna, an donor agencies, policy makers and astonishing diversity of cultures, and planners, entrepreneurs, and researchendless spots of recreation and renewa ers to share the problems and progress "But by their yery remoteness and of mountain women. Mountain women their fragile and dynamic nature, will have a forum to articulate their which makes transport, development concerns and share their experiences and infrastructure all cost five times and ideas in areas like natural resource ind environment, health, entrepreneu more, they face increasing marginalisation, economic decline ship, legal, political and human rights and environmental degradation ? and cultural and indigenous knowl-edge. The idea is that such a gathering says Campbell. ICIMOD has been

engaged in providing conceptual will not only enable mountain women networks to grow and strengthen as agents of change, but that it will also guidance and advice for preparation across the world for the Internationa Year of the Mountain, but will itself make a significant contribution to largely focus on observing IYM policies and practices that empower activities in the Hindu Kush ountain women and their communities Himalay

The other major event will be the Millions of people in this part of High Summit 2002 International the world still don't realise, under-Conference Around the World's stand, or have never been taught that Highest Mountains from 6-10 May, the water they drink comes from the that will take place with simultaneous Himalaya. In the Gangetic plains of epional conferences in Kathmandu. Milan, Mendoza and Nairobi to Bihar and Bangladesh-the result of thousands of years of silt eroded by identify critical mountain policies, with water and weather-people still suffer policymakers and planners videoonferencing every day for an hour.



neetings. There is one on developing a Luxury Apartments a Comfortable Rates

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Report Solution I' K as a nation for INCOM-

"Mountain people are isolated in plains contexts." Nepali Times: ICIMODis IYM calender is extremely busy. What, in

your opinion, is the most important issue here? Gabriel Campbell: We need to develop and operationalise a long-term vision. A world in which upstream areas are reimbursed for their services to the millions downstream, for their provision of renewable energy and water for irrigation, industry and households: their safeguarding of the biological diversity and places of spiritual pilgrimage and

tourism, and all the other benefits provided by mountains. This could lead to both environmental and financial sustainability where poor mountain people

and governments are no longer dependant on outside donors. Mountain people are resilient and adaptive. Given the real access to opportunities and supportive policies, they can take advantage of mountain resources to overcome the steep slopes and deep valleys which seem to be miring so many of them in poverty, conflict and hopelessness now,

How seriously do you think mountain concerns have been taken until now?

Some have been taken seriously, some haven't. For example, ICIMOD has volunteered to take on one issue at a global scale. One of the major activities is Celebrating Mountain Women (See article). In the Hindu Kush Himalaya, women are the major people involved in farming, agriculture, and livestock rearing; they are often the major caretakers of natural resources. Yet policies still tend to think of farmers in terms of men, small enterprise development in terms of men, and even mountain climbers in terms of men. Since women are so critical to mountains-and, subsequently, to the lowlands that depend on mountains-we'd like to set up regional and global networks and bring the profile of mountain women much higher, give women a space to discuss issues important to them and reorient programs to better support them

But most such programs this year are based in Kathmandu or in urban areas where these people donit live, how will they know? That's a valid point. We're trying to chalk out some programs that involve more grassroots people and can

communicate with them more effectively. There is one big grassroots program in Yuksom in Sikkim from 15-19 April. This Himalayan regional meeting of mountain populations has been initiated by the French, and Sikkim will host the Asia conference where concerned people will discuss economy, culture, politics and identify critical mountain policies. It's a build-up to the world encounter in Quito, Ecuador in September and will feed into the Bishkek Global Mountain Summit at the end of October in Kvrovzstan. We're also trving to disseminate information more in local languages and media to increase the effectiveness of our outreach with our 120 partner institutions in the region.

Are you sure the year wonit simply end up devoted to window-dressing celebrations?

tetimes you need such celebrations to make people feel that they are not alone. And isolated. Microcredit groups of women can take and pay back loans, that doesn't mean they're always successful in growing the economy. But they do feed a greater source of empowerment through the social mobilisation and empowerment process. Mountain people are isolated within larger plains contexts. They are part of a regional, marginalised group, and the more people who understand that their issues are different from those in the plains, and that they can find solutions and strengths with other mountain peoples, the more hope increases. Many donors who are not interested in the celebrations are interested in the outcome of these events, the follow-up programs identified by mountain people themselves



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It's happened. A retired British Gurkha, Lance Corporal Hari Thapa, has dragged the British Ministry of Defence to an employment tribunal for racial discrimination. Echoing the call of many retired Nepali members of the British armed forces, Thapa is demanding the same pension and other retirement facilities as his British counterpart. He also claims compensation of £43,000 pounds—a figure he says makes up for receiving an unfairly low salary for the 15 years he was in the service. Thapa is paid a monthly pension of £58, while a British soldier of the same rank and with the same years of service is entitled to £450. Thapa's claims are backed by the UK's Commission of Racial Equality, which claims that under the Racial Relations Act 1976, Thapa has the right to equal pension and retirement facilities as British nationals.

If the employment tribunal decides in favour of Thapa, there could be a slew of similar claims filed by over 30,000 ex-British Gurkhas and some 6,000 widows of British Gurkhas who live in Nepal, a move that could cost the British government something on the order of £2 billion. For six years now, retired British Gurkha soldiers have been campaigning for equality in pension and retirement facilities, as well as the right to reside in the UK after retirement. In September 2001, the Gurkha Army Ex-Servicemen's Organisation (GAESO) filed a writ petition with the Nepali Supreme Court demanding that it issue a directive to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to initiate diplomatic efforts to settle their dispute with British government.

British Gurkha pensions vary, depending on the years of service and rank, between £50- £90 pounds-one-fifth of what their British counterparts receive—and fluctuate with changes the currency exchange rate. The British government has claimed that since the cost of living in Nepal is much lower than that in the UK pension parity is not needed. The claims of the British Gurkhas came to international attention when a Gurkha widow was paid a death gratuity for her husband that was less than half the amount as awarded the wife of a British soldier killed in the same de-mining incident in Kosovo. Under intense public pressure, the UK government reviewed its policy and raised the death gratuity for Gurkhas killed in service and in December 2000, doubled the pension of retired Gurkhas.

Friends in high places

The Nepal Tourism Board has a tough task in promoting Nepal as a safe tourist destination, and it is only getting harder. But it is getting a little help from friends. The star attraction at the Nepal Stall at the recent Caravan Motor Tourism Fair in Stuttgart, Germany, was renowned Italian

climber Reinhold Messner, who reassured scores of visitors that Nepal is. indeed, safe. Some 1,370 exhibitors from 88 countries took part in the fair, and more than 200,000 people visited. If German spending in international travel increases by just 2-3 percent in 2002, as experts predict it will, we can only hope that some of it will come our way. After all, what better way of restoring some degree of confidence in Nepal-wary tourists than by roping in Messner, who is also a member of the European Parliament in Strasbourg and Brussels.



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THE FULBRIGHT & THE EAST-WEST CENTER 2002 SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

The Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal (USEF/Nepal) announces the 2002 competition for the Fulbright and the East-West Center (EWC) Scholarships. Those selected would begin their studies in the US beginning August-September, 2003. (a) The Fulbright program provides all expenses (including travel) for a Master's degree program of up to two years at selected U.S. universities, in any field except medicine, engineering or computer science. (b) the EWC scholarships of the University of Hawaii (UH) are available for Masters or doctoral-level study in any field offered at UH and cover all tuition and fees, but not travel expenses. Applicants for either program may be employees in any government or semi-government agency, private business, NGO or INGO.

General Requirements for Entering the Competition

All applicants must possess Nepali citizenship

- demonstrate in all post-intermediate degrees a minimum aggregate marks of: 56% for students in non-technical fields (humanities and social sciences), and 60% for students in science and technical fields. (The minimum requirements for students under the semester system are: 65% in non-technical fields: 70% in technical fields; or a Cumulative GPA of 3.5/4.0 in either field.)
- have a high level of competence in speaking, reading and writing English (Applicants who pass the first screening will be required to sit for an English test during the application process. The test requirement will be waived for those who have a valid TOEFL score of 213 or higher and have submitted copies of their score reports with their applications.)
- 4 be under 40 years of age as of the application filing deadline date (March 29, 2002);
- 5 possess either a four years bachelor's degree; or, if the bachelor's degree was of fewer than four years duration, then a masters degree is also required, such that the total number of years of formal education equals at least 16;
- 6 have at least three years (for men) or one year (for women) of post-bachelor's degree, full-time, professional work experience in an area directly relevant to the applicant's chosen field of study as of the application filing deadline date (March 29, 2002) and document this experience by letter(s) from employer(s) that verify applicant's position(s) and years of employment:
- be in excellent health, as evidenced by a letter from a medical doctor; and be eligible for a U.S. visa

Note: Individuals holding master's degrees equivalent to a U.S. master's degree should not apply, nor should individuals who have previously resided in the United States for six months or more during the preceding five years.

(Applicants must submit documentary evidence for items No. 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7.)

Application Forms & Deadlines

Application forms and detailed information regarding the competition are available from: the USEF/Nepal office at the American Center in Gyaneshwor; the Ministry of Education; the National Planning Commission; Tribhuvan University Rector's Office Kathmandu University Rector's Office; and with Campus Chiefs at out of the Valley degree campuses. Applications and information may also be accessed and downloaded from the Commission's website: www.fulbrightnepal.org.np. Application forms must be taken out from the USEE office or downloaded from the website by 4:00 p.m. Friday, March 15th, 2002. No applications will be given out after this date. Duplicate, hardcopy, completed applications must reach the Fulbright Commission (USEF) no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, March 29th, 2002. Incomplete applications or applications received after this deadline will not be considered.



P.O.Box: 12448, Amarabati (Toukhel), Godavari, Lalitpur, Nepal. Tel: 560675, 560775. Fax: 977-1-560777, E-mail: andavari/Bendavari wind come and the second second second second second second second

The war over pensions



n the weeks after the ban on political Chaksibari abode somewhat spoiled the show. In retrospect, HD Deve varties was lifted in 1990. Ganesh Gowda would have been a more Singh firmly positioned himself as the pre-eminent speaker or the national lecture circuit. In his without breaching either protocol or deological affinity. captivating albeit sometimes Legend has it that KP sent convoluted way, the newly christened "supreme leader" of Nepal Chandra Sumsher a box full of scruffs

charted out his vision for the newly emancipated nation. bly to show the Rana prime ministe As the months wore on, however, the sordid plight of his people. That act must have demanded great courage the audience's impatience over the use

of the by then watered-down on the part of a commoner, unless he 'sarbamanya neta" appellation started was preparing for permanent exile becoming apparent. Singh's across the border. Not to belittle KP's familiarity with the fickleness of the public mood must have played a big to talk to the descendants on the other part in nudging the state media to side of the dispute to grasp the full start qualifying his leadership icture. And they'll tell you that they attributes within the confines of the think the real source of friction etween the Ranas and KP was their Nepali Congress. This sequence of events came to failure to reconcile the Morang bajar

mind as the ruling party leadership converged on the cradle of Nepali adda accounts. In any case, you democracy last week to induct "Pitaji" Krishna Prasad Koirala (see picture above) into the Hall of Martyrdom. T be sure, many Nepalis feel orphaned amid today's relentless tumult. If you

revail over the assemblage of ristocrats in full regalia. That KP fathered three sons who nt on to become prime ministerand don't forget that granddaughter

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Admission is also open for the A Loval peopramme of Ine University of Cambridge, Selected candidates will first go through a so-month programme onleothe Bridge Course, at the one of which they we set to the IGOSEO Level Another administered by UCLES Conversity of Cambridge Local Extensioners Syndicate)

The Bridge Course will start in May 2002 and lead to liar two year & Level programme which (wyins a February 2003, after the IGCSE examination is Novimber 2002 All students who have completed SLC are eligible to ALC's

Distribution of Application Forms: February 13-27, 2002

Please on the office for details about the application (wa issure and for an appointment to wait the School

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really think about it, the country | who served as deputy prime minisprobably has never been at such a great ter—is no mean achievement. By isk of going astray. But Nepalis producing a daughter who served, in ertainly weren't expecting a long gon er own graceful way, the cause of Pakistan's foreign policy and a great granddaughter who held the Indian Daddy to appear from out of nowhere A former Indian prime minister aid moving tributes to KP Koirala's ilm industry in rapture for a decade contributions to the Indian independ KP proved to be a pioneer of regional cooperation. But I would have though ence movement and Nepal's prodemocracy struggle. (In fact, a ognition of these multiple feats surprisingly large number of Nepali belonged to the record books, not on reedom fighters came of age during he swaraj movement). However, th fact that Chandrashekhar is a close Koirala family friend and the man wh spired Nepalis to shed their partyless character from the hallowed

mises of Ganesh Man Singh's

avery, but, in all fairness, you have

ouldn't expect the commoner to

the family tree of every Nepali. In a political organisation where family connection is a near guarantee of fifth paragraph of the newspaper story the following morning, it winning public office, terms of endearment do matter. But let Pitaji and the array of aamas and dajus stay selflessness consisted of hurling an within the party's organisational chart We don't want a Bangladesh-like predicament where the official statue wasn't this man executed for a f dead leaders depends on which capital crime? What message are we partial choice to deliver the eulogy Begum is in power. The nice part though, is that Kangresis, who are by a bloody insurgency by sensing democratic aspirations in every ious every time someone mentions Matrika Prasad in a political context, still consider him lothes and tattered footwear, ostensipart of the clan.

In a country torn by a bloody insurgency, what is the message in

think that was just dark humour

ninth decade on the planet.

urna Narayan Pradhan of

coming from a man enjoying his

Personally, I looked forward to

learning more about Navah Subha

Nhaykantala, who ranked fifth on

luddha Sumsher's Magh 7, 1997

secution list, unless he went on

Janakpur recalled the 38th Day

of Sacrifice of a native son. From the

erged that this man's act of

ncendiary device at the monarch's

ing to send across a country torn

What was missing from the

angresi side of the week of

eep. Pardon my ignorance, but

ome kind of witness protection

omeramme)

lastardly act?

sensing democratic aspirations in every dastardly act?

A radio interviewer asked the embrance, though, was any daughter of Dharma Bhakta, one of illuminating recollection of the parts ayed by people like Tej Bahadur the first four martyrs, how she felt about herself. She didn't like how Amatya, Yogendra Man Serchan, Diwan Singh Rai and Saroi Prasad easy it had become to qualify as a Koirala. The deaths of these mennartyr these days. Her concern was that a cheapening of martyrdom the real second-generation would have a corrosive effect on the Kangresis-have slipped into the ational consciousness. realm of mystery. In a recent newspaper intervie As for the Morang conclave, it

the man reputed to have pulled the was interesting to see representatives of all influential lobbies of the rigger on Ganga Lal and Dasarath Chand when his subordinate was ractious ruling party in attendance too scared and inebriated to carry couldn't help wondering, though out his orders was asked to recount hether Ganesh Man Singh would the event. After providing a graphic ave consented to preside over the account of the day, he said his only eremony had Pitaji been beatified regret was that the four men might right after the restoration of e turned out to be better leader altiparty democracy. than the ones Nepalis got. I didn't



from ⊏>p1 Head in the sand Bad loan swapping has now become a favourite trick private banks are using

to show profits where none exist, one auditor told us. Banks already in business for some years agree to swap bad loans with new comers, with the understanding that they will be taken back after the accou period or several years (the more banks you own the easier it is to do this). Then the old bank can report higher profits because the bad loan is no longer in the books, and does not need provisioning. The new bank also benefits because it will have investments to show its shareholders and depositors What was a bad loan to one bank therefore becomes a good loan that won't

go bad for several years. An even deeper problem is the influence-peddling by central bank staffers who have relatives in private banks. The conflict of interest affects enforcement of regulatory regimes. One Rastra Bank source told us that senior executives even double as dummy investors in some private banks. And as long as banks thought they could get away with anything, they continued to

try and stretch the limits. Most agree that the problems are created because the Rastra Bank doesn't have the clout to enforce rules. Till recently, the central bank used to be an appendage of the Minisry of Finance which brought it directly under the olitical ambit

The new Central Bank Act that became law last week will finally make the Nepal Rastra Bank more independent, and hopefully more accountable. The new law requires the Rastra Bank's inspection department to report to the board of directors and not just the governor and there will be

more scrutiny of the balance sheets of private banks. With this, the current practice of seeking provisioning waivers from the governor or arge bad loans may end. It was a loophole influential private bankers regularly used to





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NEPALI ECONOMY



How is it to do business in an recent VDIS (Voluntary Tax economic downturn? The overall business scenario in all sectors is very depressing-trade is low, tourism is not doing well, exports are had, and we can't hope to be out of it in a year, given the global downturn. What can business do to ensure the impact of the recession is minimised? It is difficult to see how one can avoid being affected by what is happening in the country. The impact of external factors can be ninimised by consolidating, identifying niche markets, and focused and vigorous marketing help business? and sales.

has sanned the confidence of How have you been affected? business at a time when people Automobiles are one of my main should have been taking more areas of business. My business risks, making more investments, I was first hit after the tragic don't want to get into whether the incident at the palace (1 June). The scheme is good or bad, it was





Declaration Scheme) has added to the problem, as people are shying from buying any capital goods. Our sales are at an all-time low Business has to go on, but how? We are encouraging people saying, 'you don't want to spend your money, we will offer you collateral-free financing at 10 percent interest on diminishing halance ' But the overall mood is depressed, and business is low. Vehicle prices have also gone up-by Rs 30-50,000 depending on the model-after the new tax. What could government do to The VDIS was wrongly timed. It

duties. The economic situation in India might be different now from when the treaty was signed. India is proposing a value addition clause in the treaty, saving that

wrongly timed and should be

We also need a rescue

package. One way would be to

get commercial banks to reduce

businesses lose money and the

afford to forego profits and help

Third, we need good PR. Our

banks make profits? They can

industries survive right now

emergency is not like those

unable to disseminate that

And nolitical stability?

thing I would like to see.

elsewhere, but we have been

message effectively, so people

abroad think we are in a crisis

That is understood, it is the first

What about the trade treaty.

due for renewal by 5 March

I would say there is no need to

worry, It will be renewed, but we

cannot say in what terms. Under

exported to India without customs

the treaty, anything with a

Certificate of Origin can be

interest rates. How can all

stopped for now.





Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and important of the Maruti cars, on the outlook for business, tax collection, the trade treaty and WTO.

Value addition is not had for the

country-the more value added.

logic, it needs to consider the WTO. We too must be sensitive

WTO comes into effect.

the better it is. I understand India's

about where we will be when the

Is Nepali officialdom thinking

seriously about these issues?

Right now we aren't talking about

nything but renewal. We're not

talking about the implications of the

Leave the treaty aside for a

moment. Can we isolate ourselves

from the changes in the world?

No. so instead of being bogged

down by the treaty, why can't we

what our core competence will be

once the WTO comes into effect?

How could we ideally adapt to

We should have begun accession

exercises a long time ago, and by

globalisation overnight. We need to

identify our core competence. We

now completed much of the

difficult to face the effects of

preparatory work. It will be

the coming changes?

try and define where we will be

NTO, we aren't doing our

homework.

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"Banks can afford to forego profits to help industry survive." IF YOU WANT IT TO BE BETTE

IT BETTER BI THE OWNER OF TAXABLE PARTY OF TAXABLE PA Nepali Times spoke with Arun Kumar Chaudhary, president of the Nepal-India

REPORT LASSICO OLIVE OIL

right in saving some products are doing a little too well? Let's not get into specifics. There are questions about data, its reliability and the contributions BERTOLLI some of the industries in question are making to our economy, the

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meeting the requirements. This

that help the national economy

Do you think the renewal is

being dealt with correctly?

I feel we are still bargaining over the

percentage of value addition. I don't

think we are seeing the big picture,

nutting everything on the table and

saying these are our plans, that over

the next five years, when the treaty

has to be renewed again, value-

Do you think the Indians are

investment that has been made

We first have to know what we

want to achieve. The government

should ask what contributions

employment generation and

whether they are contributing

towards building our industrial

industries are making to revenue

How can we move on?

addition won't be an issue

way we would only export things



Zen and the Art of **Mountain Motorcycling**

ALOK TUMBAHANGPHEY

here's one thing from the Age of the Hippie that still has a local fan following in Nepal. And no, it isn't a mind-altering sub-stance, but the cult of the motorcycle, specifically, the Enfield. This weekend, the Himalayan Enfielders, a group of Enfield enthusiasts, has brought together some 30 dedicated Enfielders for a weekend of mountain motorcycling, vrooming up to Pokhara and then back to the capital.

Enfielders are inspired by all sorts of things—Robert Persig's still-bestselling book, stories of Hell's Angels and their Harley-Davidsons or the seductiveness of just freewheeling in Easy Rider, and come in all shapes, sizes and persuasions-backpackers on a cheap tour of the subcontinent, writers longing for isolation, musicians, Rastafari, people who haven't discovered their calling yet, but just know they will on the open road, with the wind in their hair. And in this spirit of openness-and because they really, truly want biking to catch on as an adventure sport in Nepal, they are inviting anyone with a 350 cc bike. Enfield or otherwise, to join them for the Nepal Peace Ride 2002.

The South Asian love for the Enfield began back in 1954, when the Indian government ordered 800 Royal Enfields for its army, a factory in Chennai soon began producing them and since then, the region has been hooked. Enfields have been around in Nepal as long as anyone can remember, this is the first time that enthusiasts have actually organised themselves to form a group and travel out on organised rides. The Himalayan Enfielders was set up last September with 19 riders. "The idea was to bring together Enfield bikers so we could have a proper club and maybe promote motorbike rides as a form of adventure tourism in Nepal," says Binod Chettri, one of the founders.

The group today has a workshop in Lazimpat specially dedicated to Enfield and other heavy motorbikes-with affectionate and ironic names such as Thaal and Ramesh the Reliable, even their best friends will tell you that these hothouse flowers of the motorcycle world need constant care and attention. The workshop has also been serving as a clubhouse of sorts, where members toy with their toys, plan the next ride, or just sit there with that glazed, ecstatic expression incomprehensible to outsiders. Over the past few months, the group has already made several day rides, including to Kakani, Sunakoti, Phulchowki, Nagarjun, Bhakundabesi and a memorable one to The Last Resort in Barabise, on which they accompanied 22 Australian bikers and their 16 Enfields in the spirit of biking brotherhood.

This time around, entourage will also consist of support vehicles with trained mechanics and spares, and a bus for friends. family and well-wishers who can't bring themselves to sit on the back of one of these boneshakers. The group will stop for lunch at the Kurintar Riverside Spring Resort along the Tribhuvan Highway, 90 km from Kathmandu, and continue after that towards Pokhara, a further 110 km away. On Day Two, 10 February, the tour heads to Bandipur Mountain Resort, 80 km from Pokhara and later back towards Kathmandu. The registration fee for a 350cc or more bike is Rs 500, which buys the intrepid biker everything from food and lodging, to maintenance for the two-day trip. The weak-willed on the bus will pay Rs 1,500 for all the above.

So, if you're already a bike enthusiast, or even just wake up on Saturday, 9 February wanting to see what the big hype is all about, join the Enfielders and spread the message of peace, noise and motorcyles. And remember not to, at any point, call it a motorbike rally: the organisers were told by our guardians of peace that under the emergency "all rallies are banned." ♦



DEEPAK THAPA t took more than 15 years for me to consummate a love I first felt as a teenager studying in India. It in the 80s. took determination in the face of many nay-savers, but ultimately ir was worth the effort. I am talking about my infatuation with the Enfield motorcycle, that classic piece of beauty, the last word on lifestyle bikes The most common arguments

against the Enfield was the maintenance it would require, and its putation as a fuel guzzler. But then "Why ride a bike when you when. I was also aware that it

mechanism was dead-in a bike that was showroom-fresh. can ride a legend" as the Enfield It was while figuring out what slogan went to counter the entry of the 100 ccs into India (and Nepal) might have gone wrong with the bike that my friend passed on Canon No 1 of Enfield Ownership I took along a friend—an 'TI.C," he said enigmatically. Enfield fiend, and owner, for more "TIC" "Tender, loving care." than 20 years-to get my 500 cc Royal Enfield Bullet from the It was a rule I stuck by

showroom (yes, there used to be zealously. The bike was at the one such in Kathmandu). There was workshop every month. Since I had no way I was going to drive it out myself, for believe it or not, the carted over spares from India on a series of trips, any worn part was nearest I'd ever been to handling a immediately replaced. No one ever Bullet was when someone deigned got to ride my Enfield, apart for to let me kick-start theirs way back short spins when I just couldn't say

Why ride a bike 🗸 de å

Whenever I hear the thud-thud of a Bullet. seek out the sound and look wistfully at the beauty that is the Enfield.

is not just done to lend your Bullet, to burn the tyres, do the 'born to which also explains why the first one I rode happened to be my own. be wild' thing. But the 'breaking-in' of an Enfield takes a tedious 2.000 Anyway, so there I was with my km (compared to the usual 500 km dream bike, complete with its in most bikes), and one can only steady 22 bhp engine, and nowhere putter along at a measly 50 kmph to go other than the crowded Kathmandu streets. I was just raring intil then When I did manage to venture

out, it was with a lot of caution You certainly don't want to have a

dead 165-kg Enfield on your hands on the highway, which eventuality I was thankfully spared on all my ong-distance trips. That probabl had to do with being lucky, though the monthly check-ups my bike had to undergo could have been a factor as well. I did carry along all the necessary tools for emergencies, but with only the

given to the science of mechanics owner's manual to guide me, it he Enfield wouldn't be such a was more as a reassurance than any headache to own I don't know much about ability of mine to tinker with the that, but what I do know is that Steering around the twists and for all its power, the Enfield does turns of our mountain highways is not the safest thing to do on a not provide that extra burst of eed sometimes required in city Bullet. The narrow tyre width and driving. This was something I was the fact that the double stand is to learn from near-death incidents slung very low can be dicey when in the early days of Enfield taking the steep corners at high ownership when the bike simply speed. But the bike comes to life refused to generate the power needed to avoid head-on collision in the tarai. You can't help but as I tried to overtake, and show squeeze the accelerator. Zipping off to also I guess, slow pokes on the mad

at 115+ kmph (I couldn't dare look at the speedometer after that since the eyes had to be constantly peeled for any sign of animal or human life that might pop up on the road), watching slower vehicles diminish in the mirror as you urge the bike to go faster, and feeling smug that the bike can handle such speeds without a hin of a wobble, it was indeed an experience. Even though I was conscious all along that a crash would be, not to mince

The Enfield is stable. All you need to do is start the bike (a one kick-start Bullet is much admired), roll it out of its stand, begin moving and it seems to balance all on its own. Especially useful for those quick zig-zag manoeuvres in the city, and

emergency brakings. More than its performance nowever, the Enfield is better loved for two things. The classic old British bike look that has remained unchanged in style since it started being manufactured in India in 1955, and is now the only one in the world with such looks The second is its distinctive

sound, although for some reason it does not sound the same when you are riding it yourself. (The term used for motorcycles in eastern Nepal and Darjeeling, bhatbhatay, must have been coined because of onomatopoeic repre sentation of the Enfield sound.) But the Enfield does have its

kindly to uphill climbs. It seems all that power is good only as long as the road is flat. Start up a hill, and you begin to wish your Enfield had the pull of a BMW. quite unresponsive, and the neutral seems to appear at all places. The clutch is tough on the forearms, and in slow moving traffic where constant gear shifts words, fatal become necessary, one can only b thankful that those long afternoons at the gym doing wrist curls are finally coming in handy. And, it's a veritable bone-shaker-the suspension system probably also dates back to 1955. live up to my initial resolve to

become a bike freak like most long-time Enfield owners are i e do a little bit of pottering around on the bike on holidays. Work pressure, and perhaps a dash of natural disinclination meant eithe the bike had to visit the workshop with more frequency, or I had to

part with it. It was a cold morning that day as I watched this Dutch guy roar away into the dust, and I stood staring into the void that had bee my Enfield. The love is not yet dead I still feel it stirring deer within whenever I hear the thud thud of a Bullet, and I seek out the sound and look-wistfully at the beauty that is the Enfield.



8 - 14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES would take some time to get used to its heft and also to the awkwardness of the gear and brake levers

ng on the 'wrong' side Within half an hour, I was to get a taste of the famous Enfield temperament. Having shown off the beauty to another Enfield lover, I thought I'd take off on my own Only, the machine simply refused to start. There were two of us kicking away (one has to have done that to appreciate the effort that goes into it), but we couldn't ever

coax a sputter out of the monster. As it turned out, the ignition

no. And I was being generous, for it

ADVENTURE

8 - 14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

eed for regula

ine-ups. While talking

about the Enfield an

Australian once told me with th

disdain only those from Down

Under can feel for their mother

country: "The Brits don't have a

respect for mechanics." He was

engine (not the grease-smeared individuals in garages), implying

that had more attention been

referring to the design of the bike'

Neither does the bike take so

The gear shift is generally

In the end, I just could not

10 ADVENTURE

8 - 14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

cannot walk inside a wildlife

reserve, forget even getting down

from your vehicle, so this was an

experience to die for, not least

because of the possibility of

encountering the odd tiger or

rhino, which Sri Lanka does not

have But it takes nationce, for the

longest time the most exotic item

we saw was a herd of spotted deer

specimen a mere 100 m away from

palms, my guide seemed convinced

a rhino attack was imminent, and

launched into a litany of "What

not do if a rhino...". The poor

beast obviously couldn't care less

and simply, quite anticlimactically

growth. And yet, it was thrilling-

television I remember thinking in

wandered off into the under-

they always seem smaller on

Suddenly, around 5.30PM, my

guide hissed "Rhino!". Sure

enough, there was a majestic

us. Clutching me with sweaty

Four reasons to go nuclear

speculative money flowing out of

devastated economies. Other measure

profits to be diverted for poverty

liscussed at the seminar were a flat tas of up to 20 percent on multinational

lleviation, a tax as well as a minimu

lock-in period for foreign capital, and

While many of these, like the

lock-in period for foreign investmer

are already being implemented in countries such as Chile and Malaysia

onsiderable obstacles still in the way

economies they operate in. Among th

international financial institution

such as the IMF and World Bank

have pushed neo-liberal policies,

wouring free movement of capital

Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN). She believes

egulating global capital will remain

difficult because developing country

overnments are under tremendous

essure to keep the doors of their

conomies open And adds Ghosh

ultimately the biggest problem is not economic, but political, because

urrently global power relations are

skewed in favour of a few rich

ountries that push neo-liberal

the global financial system, she

and power.
(IP5)

policies worldwide. Tinkering with

ays, cannot be a substitute for a

real redistribution of global wealth

cience-based public

consultations and

facilitate capacity

building in developing

countries The Marra

kesh Forum paid special

attention to the needs of

chnological equipment

developing nations in

terms of training and

Ghosh pointed out that there are

of making speculative capital flows accountable to the individual

biggest problems is the way

onto the backs of numerous

developing countries, said Gigi Francisco, of the Development

tighter controls over bank credit to

companies and outflow of foreign

exchange from national economi

ISLAMABAD - Pakistan has laid down scenarios under which it may use nuclear weapons as a last resort-if its survival is threatened by India not only militarily but by strangling its economy or stopping access to shared water resources, says a new report by Italian nuclear physicists who visited the country recently. Quoting the top Lt Gen Khalid Kidwai of the nuclear Strategic Plan Division (SPD), the report outlined Pakistan's four nuclear thresholds, adding that "the nuclear weapons are aimed solely at India." It says nuclear weapons would be used if India crosses the "space threshold"-if New Delhi attacks Pakistan and conquers a large part of its territory-or the "military threshold", if India destroys a large part of its land or air forces. It also says Islamahad would resort to nuclear methods if India pursues the economic strangulation of Pakistan, or if it pushes Pakistan into "political destabilisation or creates a large scale internal subversion." The SPD acts as a secretariat for the National Com-



'no first use' policy, which its officials believe makes up for its smaller conventional forces. The authors of the report. Paolo Cotta-Ramusing and Maurizio Martellini of the Italian Landau Network, an arms control institution regularly consulted by Italy's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, were in Pakistan in early December. That was before the escalation of tensions between India and Pakistan following the 13 December attacks on the Indian parliament that India blames on Pakistan-based arouns. The study's aim was to assess the impact of the Afohan. war on the security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons and continued tensions with India

The report, released last month, comes at a time when India has severed road and air links with Pakistan and many hawks in India are demanding that New Delhi withdraw from the Indus Waters Treaty signed in 1960 by India Pakistan and World Bank, Six rivers-the Indus, Ravi, Jehlum, Beas, Sutlej and Chenab, flow into Pakistan from India. A dispute over water emerged between the two countries soon after independence in 1948, when India cut off the water. The row continued until the treaty was signed, giving rights of exclusive use of the waters of three rivers, the Indus, Jehlum and Chenab to Pakistan, and the remaining ones to India. (JPS)



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Succulent steaks and burgers bountiful, with a vegetarian variety. The friendliest bar around the most convivial fireplace between Tibet and Timbuctoo, Live band on Tuesdays and fridays!





Westward ho!

The bridge across the karnali

the result that every time I

braked or hit an unseen object

concealed under all that dust

and took over the handling from

the bike bucked dangerously

me. It was a dangerous battle-

all that lay between the loser

short, untimely swerve and the

Kali Gandaki 80 m below us.

this long and rough patch, but a

We managed to get through

blown tyre shortly thereafter

ould forget about exploring

the dining options in Butwal

in Palpa district in darkness,

aided by the headlights of my

friends' bike. Ignoring the wise

counsel of everyone around, 1

ritted my teeth through a

reezing bath. The reward was

worth it, my girth reduced by a

good five or six kilos of dust.

Intertainment in Tansen was

eclectic and family-style—we

restaurant owned by Maya's

parents, Mina's dress boutique

owned, curiously, by Mina's

mother, and a spare-parts outlet

owned by Sunil's father. I may

have laughed hollowly at this last

and with the Dutch duo, partied

cruel option, but soldiered on.

for hours-until a pair of

could hang around the humble

I crawled into Tansen town

that night

and very painful end was a

has spectacular, panoramic views of the surrounding countryside. I time, for leisurely ambles and As for the road after this, it is occasional bad patch, which is previous day. The highway winds ts way mostly downhill to Butwal through passes, roadside villages clinging dangerously close to precipicious cliffsides, and egetable and fruit fields. On a

rocky overhang blocks the out the sun causing the temperature to drop by more than a few degrees

Approach

ing bustling

Burwal and

entering the tarai feels

Very Careful Driving-

just vehicles, animals, pedestri-

ans and street hawkers all seem to

conduct their business smack in

the middle of the road. Neverthe

less, the scenery is stunning and

as far as the eye can see are fields

of rice and vegetables in varying

shades of green, enlivened by the

occasional splashes of yellow

mustard and sunflower crops

Driving by Lamahi and Amile

with time for a little break beside

the Rapti River, we arrived at

Koholpur for the night. There

was no amusement to be had

here, which was just as well-

we'd ridden 200 kms and could

of any stimulants at that point.

not have answered for the effects

Moving along, we decided to

like a crash course in

MARLON SALDIN choice of hike started to seem a epal = pilgrimage. For the average Sri Lankan, that is. little unwise. The front shocks were in a shocking state, with

But some of us look beyond Lumbini, with rather startling consequences, like making a 1,165 km motorcycle ourney through western Nepal from Pokhara to Bardiva Nationa Things seemed to start off

well-my guesthouse in Pokhara, on learning that I was looking forward to some biking around the country, produced a Kawasaki 4S Champion. Whether it was the sight of a much-coveted machine, made it amply clear that we apparently in decent shape, or the fact that the rental sounded reasonable. I was sold in an instant

Together with a couple of Dutch friends, I left on a gloomy Pokhara morning in November planning to reach Butwal in time for dinner. We breezed past Syangja, which showed little sigr of the Maoist action we later heard had rocked it the previous night. No matter, my own action was to start pretty soon. The road was getting worse with every passing kilometre, Suddenly around where the road move towards the dam on the Kali Gandaki, it came to us with a jolt that there was simply no road left. Not even a trace of it. All we saw was a wide, open landscape filled with dust, pebbles, stone and rock. And this, naturally, was precisely the point at which my

moustachioed policemen repri-

Tansen is a lovely little town Butwal highway, a four km uphill mountain-top vantage point that

bike, the fresh air and sunshine do wonders for the senses, until a

Ossence of

with a small roadside restaurant. Eat there. You will not find better food in the country, and Nirmala, the owner, will make sure you eat more than you ever thought possible.

exploring. Sure enough, as I rode On entering the Royal on a pathway by the park boundary Bardiya National Park, you will across a stream, and through a be stopped by the army corps paddy field amongst farmers and that guards it for a question and their livestock, I came upon a very er session. It is a dry sort of pleasant place called the Bardiya Village Wildlife Camp. This is the affair, with any hint of humour studiously and severly ignored. The perfect place to stay for the budget riding after that is blissful. The road veller. Removed from the hodge runs through the park's tall, lush podge of guesthouses that most jungle. The maximum speed limit is visitors will likely make their way 40 km, and the army allowed us to, this wonderful

ions picked a guidebook-recom

rended lodge that was, really, no

better or worse than the numerou

others around it, I decided there

had to be something else and went

Dance to the rhythm of our DJ "Raju Singh" a perfe Romantic candle light dinne IRRESISTIBLE ANNAPURNA! San Miguel

Momance

0 TAI el de l' Ann

cum dining room. After a few experiences, my friends trusted me blindly on the

we allow ourselves to be matter of food and accommodation sandwiched between a couple of and we decided to saddle up and ride off to our new hideaway. Of lorries. A tiger had killed a couple of motorcyclists, and the men in course, my bike wouldn't start. green were taking no chances Many a mechanic dismantled virtually the entire engine and refitted it, and then, with much Faking a bike problem and allowing the convoy-and my petrified Dutch friends-to coaxing, it came to life, but not proceed, I leisurely rode on in before further scarring my already scarred legs. It didn't matter, we anticipation of whatever came of of wherever. No tiger challenged were soon established in a place my bike's 60 km upper limit, but a that seemed custom-made for few monkeys eventually obliged, as an independent touring group e turned to the other entrance of such as ours. A walk inside Bardiva—

the park, with its numerous lodges preferably with a guide, we were old—is rife with opportunity. The 968 sq km park with the Karnali lapping along its western edge is home to tigers, leopards, elephants, rhinoceros, a variety of deer, marsh and gharial crocodiles, a variety of nakes, birds and insects. And, although none of us saw it, what is

in Asia

reputed to be the largest elephant Back home in Sri Lanka, one

a happy daze. Inspired, we decided the next morning to meet at the main gate of the park, to explore all the places likely to show us the big five-rhino, tiger, leopard, elephant and bear. Our hopes were dashed, though, perhaps because of the very noisy efforts of our guard to position himself on a tree "for a better view." Liar. He was just scared. The birds, for their part, did not disappoint. I integrated with the think for my knowledge of the surrounding paddy feathered world is limited and all I

little place is

vell designed

can say is there were many, and all fields, with no fences, no clutter of ugly e pretty. As we were revving up buildings, there are just 12 to leave the park, we were rooms with a central lounge presented with a guest book I wanted to hurl at our guideevery visitor but us seemed to hav had "tiger" and "rhino and baby"

sightings. Leaving Bardiva, we decided to take a little detour to the Karnali Bridge. Quite a masterpiece, but scary to cross on a bike in a strong breeze. We soldiered across, wondering how in heaven we were going to cross back, but the return passage was also uneventful. Some very risky riding brought us to Gorusinge, just in time to beat the curfew. The next morning, I said phooey to my national aspirations-my friends went to Lumbini, I returned to my beloved Tansen. And then it was back to Pokhara, with happy memories

of the freedom possible only on a motorbike-even one that breaks down regularly and presents you with four flat tyres. ♦

(Marlon Saldin runs an adventure sports company in Moratuwa, Sri Lanka,)

Activists are divided on whether taxing international financial transactions will prevent speculation, and another Argentina. SATYA SIVARAMAN Citizens (ATTAC), pointed to the PORTO ALEGRE, Brazil - The way the Tobin Tax has in just a few Fobin Tax is a novel instrument ears made strong inroads into the whose time may have finally come French and European political debate. He said the tax was "not a and one that many in the "antiglobalisation movement"-many o anacea", but that implementing i ould be a vital first step in whose advocates met last week at the alternative Dawos", the second World combating the problems created by Social Forum (WSF) in this southern eo-liberal economic policies. Brazilian city-swearby Yet, while The Tobin Tax is named after some believe the Tobin Tax, which Nobel Prize-winning economist lame would be levied in global financial Tobin, who in 1972 proposed that a transactions has the best chance of small global tariff of less than half of widespread approval and early implementation to help curb the ills ussociated with globalisation, other feel portraying the tax as a "magic bullet" neglects other measure needed to curb speculative capital.

101-0

one percent, he levied by all major ountries on foreign-exchange ransactions to "throw some sand ir the wheels" of speculative capital flows. westors play the bond and currency markets, profiting from the minute-to-minute, hourly or daily fluctuations in Dominique Plihon, a French economist and member of the prices around the world. Over \$1.5 Association for the Taxation of trillion is traded every day, 95 percen of which is bet on whether currency Financial Transactions for the Aid of

The new look of Japanese aid

TOKYO - As its mammoth aid budget heads for another cut. Japan is trying to find ways to sharpen the use of overseas development aid (ODA) as the country's most powerful diplomatic tool, since its constitution prevents it from assuming a large military role abroad. Officials and experts say the need to streamline aid policy and use has become greater because of the recession in the world's largest aid donor, whose budget is being cut by 10 percent down to \$7 billion in the fiscal year 2002 beginning April. This will be the third straight year Japan's ODA declines, and is the first time the amount has fallen below the \$7.7 billion since 1992. Yasuko Havase, a population expert at the quasi-governmental Institute of Developing Economies here says ODA will be increasingly divided on the basi of the needs of the recipient countries and on themes, such as environment or conflict resolution, that are Japan's priorities especially after 11 September, Experts point out that changes in approach are already clear-despite the drop in its next aid budget in January Japan pledged \$500 million for Afghanistan over the nex three years, and announced a \$92.3 million package for conflict prevention. Trying to show commitment to humanitarian aid. Tokyo also pledged \$1.8 million dollars in emergency aid to Tajikistan from next year, and \$120 million for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Last week's feud between former Foreign Minister Makiko Tanaka and a ruling-party politician, Muneo Suzuki, accused of barring NGOs from the Afghanistan reconstruction conference here in January, points to the uphill struggle civil society faces in trying to be a partner in Japanese aid. But, says Hayase, "the government must make the best of a smaller budget, which means relving more on NGOs." Analysts see no change in the tradition of Japanese aid leaning heavily toward Asia, which gets 60 percent of its aid pie. But China, until now the biggest recipient of Japanese soft loans, which dominate the \$200 million it receives from Tokyo annually, will be one of the 'losers'. Critics often fault Japanese aid for being more a tool to promote Japanese interests, such as lucrative contracts for its firms in developing countries, and Japanese firms, especially those in the vital construction sector which traditionally receive contracts related to the country's overseas aid projects, will also feel the pinch. (IPS)

troducing our new deluxe cottages and lagoon NG pool Safari Narayani Chitwar

home illnesses (Jps)



MARRAKESH - A clobal forum on food safety has called for a planetary strategy to avert food-borne hazards. Some 300 experts from 150 countries propose creating international bodies to follow issues pertaining to food safety, and encourage countries to devise a global strategy involving consumer associations for efficient food safety. Organised last week by the FAO and the WHO following a request by the 2000 Okinawa G-8 summit, and themed "Improving Efficiency and Transparency in Food Safety Systems-Sharing Experience," the Forum sought to promote information exchange on approaches acquired by safety regulators, advance the process of

calues and interest rates will rise or

fall. Traders make money either way

and thrive when markets are highly

and most recently in Argentina

instable, as in Southeast Asia in 199

The Tobin Tax is expected to

educe or eliminate the incentive to

speculate and help stabilise exchange

speculation. And it is set low so as no

to adversely affect the trade in goods

and services or long-term invest

ments. "The real challenge is to

explain the Tobin Tax to workers

the benefits to them of regulating

Ghosh, an Indian development

inancial Capital Controls.

and ordinary people and point out

inancial capital flows," said Javati

conomist at the WSF's seminar or

Tax should not be seen as the only.

possible or desirable measure to curb

However, says Ghosh, the Tobin

Is it safe to eat?

rates by reducing the volume of

to ensure better protection of their citizens and Jacques Diouf. Director General of the FAO, urged rich countries to extend the necessary assistance to developing ones to help them reinforce their ability to guarantee food safety. He also called for securing food to thousands of people suffering from malnutrition and food borne diseases. New challenges in food safety have arisen as a result of changes in microbiological and chemical hazards, shifts in production methods, modern technology and increases in international trade and travel. According to an FAO document, in the United States alone, about 76 million people got sick from foodborne illnesses in 1999 and 5,000 died. Worldwide, the incidence of food-borne diseases may be 300 to 350 times higher than the number of reported cases. WHO Director General, Gro Harlem Bruntland deplored that 2.1 million people die annually in developing nations because of diarrhoea and food-related diseases, and called for a global strategy to reduce microbial diseases and food-

and all aside, our mode of transport was swifter, if nothing else, than the horse buggies Nepalgunj prides itself on. One siece of advice to anyone going from this border town to Bardiya—just before the road enters the park is a little village

Maustard fields near Bardiya National Park

visit Nepalgunj. Why? Because it and guesthouses. This area is was there. A flying visit to this entirely rural, the coming and goi town convinced us that flat tyres of tourists seems to have had little impact on the lives of the villagers. As the road is gravel and difficult to and non-existent shock absorbers negotiate, there is ample time to take in your surroundings even

on only on

the condition that

when on the go. The funny thing about self-directed motorised travel, even if it is kind of slow, is it makes things eem easy. Like when my compar

12 FROM THE NEPALI PRESS

The road to Lo Manthang

Ramchandra Pokhrel in Himal Khabamatrika 14-28 January

is arid and surrounded by rudged mountains. This is also a place rich in history and culture, which have combined to make this a part of modern Nepal's diversity. The walled town of Lo Manthang is the capital of Mustang and houses the monastery and the king's palace. Five hundred years ago, the monastery was moved to the valley from a nearby hilltop to make it easier for citizens to travel. Today, a road from the Tibetan border

Here in the Himalavan rainshadow the land

to Lo Manthang will also make it easier for trade and commerce. But the road has

triggered a controversy. The Annapurna Conservation Area Project, the District Dev lopment Committee and the Village Development Committees are all looking for alternatives to the road. King Jigme Prabal Bista has also appealed for the conservation of his walled capital.

But locals are happy with the road because it makes daily necessities and food easier and cheaper. After democracy, candidates for elections have all promised a road. But it was only in the last two years that the DDC and the local people completed a 20 km road from the Chinese border at Korala Pass to Lo Chinese lorries now regularly ply back and forth. Each of the six VDCs in the area contrib Rs 352,000 each and the road has been gravelled. Local elected representatives and businessmen are all happy, and encouraged that there will now be a boom in trade between Nepal and China. They even want to extend the road down south to Thak Khola to meet the road coming from Beni up the Kali Gandaki.

Eveny week up to five hig Chinese trucks leave Tudum Bazar in Tibet, cross the Tsang Po (Brahmaputra) and enter Nepal with goods for sale here. The Chinese traders who bring the trucks camp outside Lo Manthang for a week and conduct up to Rs 6 million worth of business. What they bring is mostly cement, but also, sadly, Nepali timber is smuggled from Manang and Larkya into Tibet and re-exported into Nepal. This sudden availability of timber and cement means that there is now a construction boom outside the walled city. However, the trucks go back to China empty-there is nothing much to export from the Nenali side. Trade here is one-sided

All along the road from Lo Manthang to the border, there is no sign anywhere of the presence of His Majesty's Government of Nepal. There are two customs sheds in Nechung, but there is no one inside them. In a way you could say this is what "free trade" means-no interference at all from government. The only tax the trucks will pay is the road toll that the DDC may soon introduce with powers from the Local Self-Governance Act

There is also concern about what the road will do to Mustang's tourism industry. So far the ACAP has been using a model of "low volume, high spending" tourism for Mustang. The road could change all that: there could be large numbers of tourists driving up to Mustang from the Tibet side or from Jomsom, once the southern road is completed. Trekkers who presently need two weeks to walk through Mustang from Jomsom and back will be able to do it in a few days. Businessmen from lower Mustang would use the road and drive local traders in Lo Manthang out of business.

There is another proposal to build an airport at Charang to connect the road from the Chinese border. and connect the airport to Lo Manthang by cable car. This would minimise the negative environmental and cultural impact of the road.

Tourists interviewed in Lo Manthang all agreed that the road would destroy the fragile environment and culture of Mustang. They felt a sustainable long-term tourism strategy was what was needed, not a road. Most foreign visitors agree.

The future of the unique heritage of Lo Manthang, it seems, is a concern of not just the Mustangis, but of the rest of Nepal, as well as the world. If Kathmandu looks at Mustang as just another of the 75 districts in Nepal, then the cultural and natural heritage of this region could be destroyed by the overdevelopment that comes with the arrival of a highway. That is why before any decision is made on taking the Lo Manthang road southwards to join up with the road from Beni, a detailed masterplan needs to be mapped out. We need to do it right away before we lose more of Mustang's precious heritage.





army is also anery that the govern-Service Commission Generally, doctors ment has not taken any steps to seek assigned to district hospitals need to e worked for at least for a year in a the arrest of Bharat Yogi, now in Delhi, who made vehicles available to central or regional level hospital, but the Maoists for the attacks in Dang in the government has found a way around the rule. The idea is to hire November. The army feels that if You were arrested, he could be a valuable them as central employees and send them to the districts on deputation. source of information. There are also However, because the law says that no charges that the Chief District Officers in Sindhupalchowk, doctor can be deputed to any one pos for over a month, the government also Sankhuwasabha and Kavre have freed vants to amend that legislation. The Maoists after accepting bribes. The ermy also thinks that the Maoists may rule, which was made to ensure that fresh, inexperienced doctors were not be heading abroad through manpowe sent to the districts, is now haunting companies handling overseas employment. ... Until now the army the government, since it finds it is unable to staff district hospitals has arrested one politburo level leader otherwise. Biswanath Dhakal, Joint of the Maoists and seven or eight

THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NEPALL PRESS Docs for districts

Deshantar, 3 February

Interaction of the

eaders of central standing, but has Secretary at the health ministry says the not made public their names yet. It clause in the law has made it impractica is said that three rebel leaders staff the hospitals. In the districts, coordinate the Maoists' activities the hospitals have only administrative level staff and some health workers here and that the rest of the leadership is hiding in India. ause most permanent doctors ha fled particularly in districts affected

y the Maoist insurgency. Even those doctors posted to the districts have Melamchi remained in the capital for one reaso or another

Security concerns Deshantar, 3 February

exectablishi

Manufacture and Design of the local distance The Royal Nepal Army personnel deployed in different parts of the intry have sent complaints to the ntral administration to the effect that

the Home Administration is not ooperating with them completely. Th army, which has been fairly successful in its 'cordon and search' and 'search and destroy' operations, has not been able to hand over the secured areas to the local administrations in many places. The government has not begur ing the police stations that were closed after Maoist attacks, even though the army is now backing them up. Police had been taken to some of the areas secured by the army, but they could not stay there for long because of which is trying hard to get the their past image, according to security sources. Also, no political party worker or leader has been able to take political

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

The 41-member cabinet is not the cause of all ills. The state may have to spend an additional Rs 20-30 million annually for four or five members more. But the same cabinet can create billions of rupees by their activities

···· धरोधर्म··· मेले यहाँको सहयोगवाट अलिकवि पनि अवटाचार गन्मा देन-आध्र---! दाता " Iswear I haven't misused any of your aid f Drishti Weekly, 5 February

8-14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

rograms to areas that have been Irrigation Plan. Once the case of leaned up" by the army. Those corruption was established, the Public Nepali Congress workers not heeding Accounts Committee of the Lower the Maoists' warnings are still being House directed the Council of killed as they were in the past, and the Ministers on 13 July, 2000 to take workers of the UML and the Pastriva stern action against the company. It Prajantantra Party are taking note of is regretful that the government has the Maoists' threats. The army is also ignored the parliamentary commitunhappy because the police and local ee's directions and is preparing to idministration have freed many hand over such a big project to the terrorists" it had rounded up, same company. The status of the Japanese sometimes even accepting bribes for their release. Our sources tell that us

company, which is also going out of its way to get the contract, is even stranger. The company, which doesn't even has an office in Nepal, has already sold the technical equipment required to complete such a project to the Pashupati Construction Company for Rs 40 million. If such a company were to get the contract, it's not difficult to imagine what will happen to the project.

Singer's fake certificate

Rajdhani, 5 February

There's another addition to the long list of people who have lied about their educational qualifications to get a job. Popular singer Ram Krishna Dhakal, an assistant fourth class officer at Radic Nepal, had submitted a certificate ning that he had passed out from a Sandrit school in Bihar The singer resigned from Radio Nepal after he learnt that the Centre for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) was

The road to Drishti, 5 February

the Maoists have money and pay in

cash. There are also reports that the

local administration offices may have

released eight to ten Maoist district

commanders in this manner. The

वृष्ट्रि There is a controversy brewing at the Ministry of Finance over the onstruction of the 26 km access road to the Melamchi Drinking Water Project. Even as ministry officials emain divided over which compan

should be awarded the contract to build the road, it is doubtful whether the project itself will be completed on e with a CIAA directive Radio Nepal has not accepted Dhakal's schedule. Eleven companies had bid for the \$463 million contract. While resignation. Dhakal submitted a some finance ministry officials want to certificate from the Bihar-based Sharada award the contract to Koneko, a South Sadan Sanskrit Secondary School, but Korean company, others say it should according to a CIAA source, the Bihar go to Marusin Cita, a Japanese firm. Sanskrit Education Board has certified But technicians at the project say it that Dhakal's papers are false. Once the would be 'unfortunate' for Nepal if certificate was established as fake, the either of the companies got the CIAA directed Dhakal under the contract. "It is clear." they say. "fron the past working style of both ompunies "The Korean company

Corruption Control Act, to pay bail of Rs 60,000, the sum equivalent to a possible six-year imprisonment. Despite a CIAA summons last month contract, was involved in the big the singer has not presented himself at scandal related to the Mahakali the centre.



HISTORY



5th January, 1977 Singh] also talks about her. My mind is a little composed She is extremely temperamentoday, the turbulence in my tal and excitable, given to heart is subsiding. It perhaps either depression and moods. takes between three and five or worship activities. GM days for even the most agonisthinks she is lazy but she isn't ing crisis to level off. On the lazy. What appears to be first day the impact is too laziness is the moods of sudden and stunning for depression she has fallen experience. The second, third into. She is an adorable and fourth are the critical woman. I will have occasions nerinds. In 1949 when I was to write about her by and by as on a long hunger strike, the time passes and as she lashes into my vacant mind.

real agony began on the second day which continued for three more days. Thereafter, the crisis stabilised. It ceases like a physical pain, it became psychological and ultimately moral. Anyway I am today mentally more composed. After a few more days, I hope to be

sufficiently composed to be able to do serious studies and writing That may ultimately be my solace in the present crisis How do I characterise the

present disturbed and restless state of my mind this agitation this emotional softness, choking

lachrymation [sic]. Is it weakness of character, is it lack of courage? What is courage? Are tears foreign to a courageous man? Sentiments and emotions-are they incompat ible with courage? Such questions have occurred whenever I have been in a serious crisis. I haven't succumbed. I have not vielded to external challenges or

have always trembled with apprehension. What is this? Perhaps courage is moral, it is akin to stubbornness born out of either some conviction or sense of honour. If I suffer, weep, agonised, disturbed and distressed-these are emotional reactions to crisis. I is a matter of the heart. Courage arises when we can't escape. The present crisis is made by my decision. I adhere to my decision, come I remember Shailaia constantly. GM [Ganesh Man

In Back at Sundarijal >3, BP Koirala in his fourth day in Sundarijal Jail was trying to get over his depression, Ioneliness and his remorse at not saying proper farewell to his wife, Sushila. In this instalment, BP tries to come to grips with his loneliness, and ruminates on what defines courage in a person. Every forthight in this space, Nepali Times brings readers instalments from the unpublished diary of BP Koirala written in English that covers the period immediately following his return to Negative following his return to Nepal from exile in India in 1977. The diary is available on microfilm at the Madan le on microfilm at the l Puraskar Library in Patan and was donated by senior advoca Ganesh Raj Sharma,

> must also be conducive or at GM tells us that ours is a east unhindered. remarkable family-which has honed the art of living. Sushila rustrated and term yoga as a is a most gracious lady useless practice, at least it is "Where else can you find such redundant like god in actual gathering of people who know life. Like god, it is not available how to live?" GM savs. In order to one who needs it most and to compose my mind I want to is redundant to one who doesn't need it. A happy man do such work as would not require mental effort. I counted doesn't need god, and an the number of steps that unhappy man doesn't get it. completes the circle of my Yona is also like that. You can't week. It takes 200 steps to practice unless you have complete one circle of walk peace of mind, and if you have

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around the compound. In terms I peace of mind you don't so of time it takes one minute and need it. In the morning after 40 seconds to complete it. At the tea and exercise. I touch my rate of two steps per second. I forehead to the locket which also started study of the Chamcontains a lock of my mother's hair, look fondly at the bers dictionary. small photo of Sushila, eat 6th January, 1977

bits of prasad of Kali (Cal-Got up at 4:30AM. Wanted to cutta) and Golden Temple do some concentration as per (Amritsar) given to me by yoga. I found that even for Kamal and Nanu respectively, yogic practice, you have to and closed eyes try to visual train basic-modicum ofise Shailaja at the point in the peace of mind even as a forehead where both eves earner. It is not that you can meet the root of the nose. learn or practice it whatever be This is all superstition, spiritualism, sentimentalism the state of your mind. For an adept, perhaps, he can restore love and hope combined-no neace of mind at will. Yona is therefore not a matter of practice, not anybody can be a yogi. First of all he must be born with proper aptitude and

circumstances of your life

Sometimes I become

element in it is fake or forced, each genuine and intense At about 1PM, Mangalaji (Ganesh Man's wife) came at the nate. We heard her voice across the closed gate and saw her through a small chink in the gate. She wasn't permitted to see us. She had

and the bathroom. I have two rooms for myself and a bathroom. I got shaving materials and writing paper from the market which cost us Rs 30. I shall send laundry clothes home for washing

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dinner. I tried to discern the

expression on Mangalaii's

distance I could only see her

bland face which shone in

the sun, indicating that she

couldn't read any message

for us. GM said that her voice

was in good health, but I

didn't sound sad, or dis-

tressed or anxious. Then

verything was all right.

To be kept in strict isola-

tion without any communica-

tion with the outside world is

what is extremely oppressive

GM feels that it indicates that

face-from such a long

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the king would meet us hefore he makes up his mind We have converted the room adjacent to GM's bedroom into the dining room. GM has a cluster of three rooms at his disposal brought chicken tandoori and naan which were brought inside in the evening for our





MOVIES

 Chinese film festival 8 February, 4PM, Shadow Magic. 8 February, 5.30PM, The Birth of a Shooting Star. 9 February, 3PM, Postmen in the Mountains. 9 February, 5.30PM, Shower. All screenings at the Russian Cultural Centre, Kamal Pokhari, free passes at venue. Supported by the Chinese Embassy, sponsored by Nepal Himalaya Border Trans Trade Association. Organised by World Cultural Net and The Kathmandu Film Archives.

EXHIBITION

 Discover Japan through contemporary posters Nepal Art Council, 15-22 February, 10AM-4PM. Wind of the Spirit Korean contemporary artists on show at the Nepal Asso

ciation of Fine Arts Hall, Naxal. 15-21 February, 11AM-5PM. 270417 Spring collection 2002 Watercolour paintings of flowers and botanical art by Neera J.Pradhan, Until 25 February, Park Gallery, Pulchowk, 10AM-6PM, except Saturdays, 522307

 Mardi Gras Carnival celebration with parade, food, music, samba and salsa, 8 February, 7PM onwards. Rs 800 per head with drink and dinner. Hotel Yak & Yeti. 248999 Himalayan Enfielders Nepal Peace Rally Kathmandu-Kurintar-Pokhara-Bandipur-Kathmandu. 9 &10 February. Bikers Rs 500 per head, non-bikers Rs 1500 each, covers minor maintenance charge, consumable spares, meals and night stay in Pokhara. Bus available for family and friends. Himalayan Enfielders and Nepal Tourism Board. himalavanenfielders@hotmail.com, 440462

Live music by Catch 22, Tuesday and Friday nights at the 40,000 ½ ft Bar, Rum Doodle Restaurant Thamel 414336

EATING OUT

Tibetan Lhosar 13-15 February, Stupa View Restaurant, Baudhanath Stupa, 480262 Hawkers Centre Street food cooked right before you, including kathi rolls, fish armitsari, nasi goreng, pav bhaji, noodle soup, desserts. The Café at Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234 Chinese New Year and Valentine's Special Street market with organic vegetables, food, tea, 8-12 February, 11AM-3PM at the Waterfall Garden. Dinner, complimentary cocktail for two and heart-shaped strawherry sumrise at the Olive Garden, 14 February Radisson Hotel, 411818 * Valentine's dinner Special dinner menu and complimentary glass of wine. Rs 650 plus taxes per head, 15 percent discount for Standard Chartered credit card holders, privilege card holders and students and faculty of Manipal Teaching College and Hospital. 13, 14 February, Shangri-La

Village, Pokhara, 061-22122 Valentine's Eve and Mardi Gras Party with Kantipur FM. 13 February. 6PM onwards with dinner, disco, DJ, door prizes, Rs 600 each. Children's party with magic show, French pancakes, Valentine's night with 1974 AD and La Soon Music and buffet dinner. Rs 600 per head. Pulchowk, 535290

 Perfect Symphony Dark or white chocolate mousse with fresh coffee. The Piano Lounge, Hotel Yak & Yeti 248999

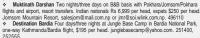
 Chef's luncheons For office-goers at special rates, noon-3PM daily. Dwarika's Hotel, 479488. Strawberries go bananas Strawberry desserts, Hotel de

l'Annapurna. 221711 Winter Specials Hot mulled wine, ratatouille-filled pancakes, Chicken hoisin. Kilroy's of Kathmandu, Thamel. 250440

Authentic Thai food Everyday at Yin Yang Restaurant. 425510 Tukche Thakali Kitchen Buckwheat, barley, bean, and dried meat

specialties. Also brunch with porridge and pancakes, all raw material from Tukche village. Darbar Marg. 225890

GETAWAYS



 Heritage Package Two-night package with six-course Nepali dinner, massage, breakfast \$155 per couple, Dwarika's Hotel. 479488

 Pokhara Packages with a difference Bows and Arrows, with archery contest. Or Pimms, Pathways and Picnics with easy guided trek to The Peace Pagoda. 15 percent discount on F & B. Shangri-La Village, Pokhara. 435741

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

<u>جم</u> 18-07





by NGAMINDRA DAHAL A powerful cyclone in the southern Arabian Sea is riggering a low pressure zone that is pulling in some more westerlies from over the Pamirs. Part of this front moved over central Nepal Thursday (seen in picture at left) and we will get some lingering effect of this over the weekend. Although most of the rain will have been spent, we can expect precipitation in the higher Himalayan belt into early next week. Expect clear mild sunshine between cloudy spells. Early prning fog will resume, and maximum temperature vill be down and the minimum hover above zero. KATHMANDUVALLEY



Reflexolog

pressure to

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K-Too! Beer and Steakhouse not the "longest", "highest", "first" or any other superlative. Just a



Daily Wisdom: 365 Buddhist Inspirations Josh Bartok, ed Wisdom Publications, Somerville, USA, 2001 Rs 1.365

Encouragement and quiet counsel from Buddhist sages and contemporary meditation masters, in the form of spacious poetry and lucid prose. Whether for morning inspiration or to help keep a difficult day in perspective, this volume offers observations on love and living wisely, on meditation and mindfulness, on the pitfalls of anger and the necessity of

The Buddha's book of Daily Meditations: A Year of Wisdom, Compassion and Happiness Christopher Titmuss Three Rivers Press, New York, 2001 Rs 1.135

This collection of the Buddha's essential teachings on wisdom, compassion and happiness has been compiled by world-renowned meditation master Christopher Titmuss. Reflection everyday on one of these quotations helps us open to fresh insight, leads us to freedom from the deep conditioning of our minds, and enables us to make revolutionary changes in our personal, social and spiritual lives

Celestial Gallery paintings by Romio Shrestha, text by Ian A Baker Callaway, New York, 2000 Re9 500

Twnety-six mandalas in the Newari style by Kathmandu artist Romio Shrestha, with explanatory text by Ian A Baker, foreword by Deepak Chopra and afterword y Robert Thurman. Plates include: The Cosmos of Enlightened Vision, Buddha Sakyamuni, Dakini Mandala, White Tara: The Divine Mother, Green Tara: The Protectress, Palden Lhamo: The Dark Goddess, The Cosmos of Compassion. Avalokiteshwara: The Vision of Selflessness, The Thousand Arms of Compassion, A Vision of Inseparability, Chakrasamvara: The Wheel of Bliss, The Wheel of Deluded Existence, The Chakras: Vortices of Energy, The Cosmos of Healing, Amitavus: The Buddha of Boundless Life, The Paradise of the Medicine Buddha The Healing Buddha, Cosmic Fire: The Vision of Rahula, Vajrayogini: Enlight-ened Female Energy, Chintamani: The Jewel of Abundance, Visions of VOUV nantaka, Yamantaka: Vanquisher of Death, Postmortem Visions: The Dreamtime of the Bardo, Vajrasattva: The Mandala of Spiritual Rebirth, Amitabha: The Buddha of Infinite Light

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II. THAT 🗸 A77 Where? Kathmandu and Pokhara. When? March.

were lining up to jam with them. And



the Valley," #64), Cadenza now need no introduction. Their Saturday night gigs at the Upstairs Jazz Bar are packed ind their sold-out concert with Hindustani classical musicians at the Patan Museum Square in October showcased their talent for melding different kinds of music and expand-

oon, there will be one more reason to come to Nepal. Not ing their-and our-horizons in a mountains or adventure sport not architecture or Buddhism. Music. vav few bands can do. The idea of the Kathmandu Jazz The Kathmandu Jazz Festival

estival 2002 was born in July 2000, Almost single-handedly responsible for this is Kathmandu's very own when Cadenza were in Australia for Cadenza. Who'd have thought a the Palmer Street Jazz Festival People quarter that began playing jazz just six were thronging their gigs and bands





Jamal, Rani Pokhari, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: 221454, 256574 Fax: 471823 Pokhara: Baidam, Lakeside Tel: 32149

The Nepal Terai as the economic and cultural

dynamo of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh?

Read all about the 'Ganga Rectangle'

in the February issue of Himal (South Asian)



Kathmandu manager, Chhedup Bomzan, has brought together musicians from Australia, the UK. Mumbai and Dubai for a week of gigs at venues large and small, formal and casual, in Kathmandu and Pokhara. The line-up-in addition to Cadenna of course_includes Afro Dizzi Act from Brisbane, Bernie's London Jazz Groove from London, Groove Suppa from Mumbai and The Perry Brothers from Dubai. Other local musicians include the classical musician Prastar Homnath Local Gandharva (See "Music of the gods,

things going. Sellers, whose day job is working as a travel agent specialising #79), and the orchestra from the Elite in South Asia and who was responsi Co-ed School where Cadenza ble for the band's Australian debut, founder and nercussionist Nabin was discussing with Cadenza the trouble they had actually making it to Chhetri teaches music. They're all great musicians, with devoted fan the festival. And then the little group followings and a real taste for live chatting wondered: what about erformances. But the biggest name giving Nepal its own festival, so of all is Don Burrows himself even if musicians from here cannot At 74, Burrows might have been go abroad, they can still be exposed excused if he had merely sent over his to and interact with their peers from best wishes Instead, the Don, who fondly remembers the social evening he spent with Cadenza, has just agreed

It helped things that Cadenza were so popular, everyone from the to perform here for little more than a grand old man of Australian jazz, Don token fee and a business class flight Burrows, to the popular fusion band over on Singapore Airlines. Burrows, Afro Dizzi Act, was asking about who has been conferred the MBE as having dinner with the band, and well as the Order of Australia, has arranging to play gigs together even been at the forefront of the jazz world outside the festival, in Brisbane They for close to half-a-century He's a all found the prospect of playing in household name in Australia, and highly respected internationally. A Kathmandu exciting and intriguing. Susan Sellers became a promoter for superb multi-instrumentalist who plays flute, clarinet and all the Cadenza and with the band's

then a casual conversation with

other countries

assistant coordinator Susan Sellars got

saxophones from alto to baritone Burrows is also a composer and arranger of great note. He has performed and recorded tracks with vervone from Oscar Peterson, Dizzy Gillespie, Nat King Cole, Mel Torme and Stephane Grappelli to Tony Bennett Frank Sinatea Kate Ceberano and the Sydney Symphony Orchestra. Burrows has cut almost forty albums. and toured in South and North America, Europe, the Middle East and

There's a pretty simple equation here—Burrows is playing here because of Cadenza. He was so impressed by the quality of their music and the fact that they'd hardly ever seen live jazz, learning to play off instructional videos and tanes, he even asked them to sit on the sidelines for his show with the All-Stars at the Palmer Stree Festival in 2000-to soak in some of their energy. Cadenza and Burows share more here than just touchy-feely good vibes. Like Burrows, who was the first chair of a Jazz Studies program in Australia, Nabin and other members of Cadenra are also music educators. Both Burrows and Cadenza are nothing if not versatile-in a single show Burrows can go from classic swing to bossa nova to experimental modern jazz: Cadenza have been known to switch in one evening from bop to funked-up jazz to Latin

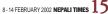


tinged original compositions to a



STATUTORY DIRECTIVE





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MUSIC

8 - 14 FEBRUARY 2002 NEPALI TIMES



t is indeed a matter of great exultation and jubilation for all peace-loving Nepalis that the government has constituted a 234member National Organisation Main Committee chained by nonother than the prime minister himself to mark the forthcoming Valentine's Day (known in some parts of the world as the United Nations' International Day of Sustainable Human Love) and celebrate it for three whole days in a grand nationwide manner next week. Till the moment of going to press, according to the Valentine's

Day Information System (VDIS) the

Sub-committee headed by the Minister of Slash and Burn;

and the Demographic Sub-committee headed by the Director General of the Department of Copulation and

According to the provisions of the VDIS Main Committee, the deadline for all Nepalis to disclose the

and/or girl friend and a Rs 1 million fine, or all three. Having been dragged kicking and screaming to

voluntarily disclose their secret Valentine partners and

celebrate the festival in a grand manner nationwide for three

days, lovers throughout Nepal are said to have either gone underground or fled to India for the duration of the

NEPALI SOCIETY

esides the world's highest bar, the Saturday market and the full-frontal view of Thamserku, there is now one more must-see in Namche Bazar: the Sherpa museum. And it's all thanks to Lhakpa Sonam Sherpa, the self-confessed mountain maniac. Lhakpa's quest for Sherpa memorabilia was triggered by a British photo-iouranlist who came inquiring about his father, noted climber Sonam Girmi

main committee had already

Family Planning.

constituted 15 sub-committees,

public his deep respect and affection for Karisma Manandhar in a ewspaper interview, Comrade ome now risks having her confiscated by the security forces in a

ordon and search operation mewhere in the mid-western sector Valentine's Day is a celebration ove and lust: depending on whether the person in question is a woman or a man There are some ndamental differences between gals and guys which may not be readily apparent to a casual observer with a aked eye. Us guys, for example, don't like mushy stuff, we don't like beating around the bush, we like to

Under My Hat

get straight to the point. (Guy on Valentine's Day: "Your place or mine?" Gal: "You go to your place. I go to mine.") See what I mean? Gals are programmed to play hard-toget. And it is up to us guys to show perseverance and, yes, resolve. One sure fire way to persevere is to buy your sweetheart flowers. What you are really saying when you

give her a red rose is: "I hereby bequeath to you this floral tribute, which is actually the castrated reproductive organ of identities of their boy and/or girl friends has been extended till midnight of 14 February, and failure to do so will result in the confiscation by the authorities of the said boy rose plant (Latin name: Rosa coronaria) as a symbol of my deep lust foryou. Am I making myself perfectly clear here?" The gal can respond in at least three ways: a) take the rose and run like hell b) tell the male perpetrator in question to wait and call the security forces

c) ask him if first if he has completed his VDIS forms and then go to his place.





HARMEN STREET

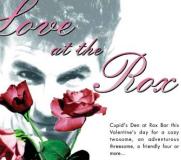


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Sherna Museum

Sherpa, who had taken part in 37 mountaineering expeditions. "I got really nterested and started collecting oral testimonies and artefacts and reading reference books," Lhakpa told us. The Sherwi Khangba Centre in Namche was inaugurated by Sir dmund Hillary in April 1994. It has a Sherpa Culture Museum, a Mt Everest ocumentation Centre, and an expanding library with over 118 valuable esearch books. The 40year-old spends hours in libraries while

travelling abroad. Lhakpa sees his father as part of the climbing generation that contrib uted to the growth of Khumbu, and he is proud to document the Sherpa community's role in

modern Nepal for scholars and, importantly, Khumbu's youth. "I suffer from not having a good education," says Lhakpa. "I want to invest in education. Children here have little access to such resources. As a student at Hillary's Khumjung school and later a

Hillary Trust Scholar, Lhakpa did well in his studies, but plans to become an engineer were shattered when he lost his hearing to a bout of meningitis. Lhakpa turned to his true passion, and though he did go on a few small climbs, his heart remained in the library. Then came the centre, the hotel and museum, which he designed and

runs with his wife Ang Kanchi. "Initially, locals thought I was mad," he recalls, Trekking companies have added the museum to their Khumbu itinerary, while groups of trekkers huddled up at Kalapathar tell everyone up and down the trail about the Sherwi Khangba Centre.