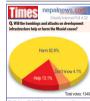


#### PRESS FREEDOM DAY

Today, 3 May, is World Press Freedom Day, Democracy and a free press are two sides of the same coin, and yet Nepal is now the country with the largest number of journalists behind bars. Rulers can't afford to squande the credibility of their nation's media. As we saw in the past 12 months in Nepal, a government needs citizens to trust it, but that can only happen when the independence of the media is safeguarded. It could well be that democracy is not working properly because the media is not functioning as it should. But that is no reason to put away the messenger. The challenge for democracies is to protect press freedom during a conflict, not curb it. Freedom is our only defence against destruction and hatred. We are witnessing the political evolution of our nation, and it is the media that has, in large part, helped steer it towards progress. The media doesn't just hold a mirror to society, it is the mirror. Democracy and free press must safeguard each other. You can't have one by undermining



Q. Should the government have announced the capture of the Maoist leadership?

Hari Prasad Pandev just too honest for Nepa

KEDAR SHARMA IN POKHARA assigned himself a fine of Rs 15 million,

hen Hari Prasad Pandey came clean last week to declare that he was corrupt and should face legal prosecution, many people thought the former UML hydropower minister and industrialist had finally gone mad. At a four-hour press conference in

Pokhara 23 April, Pandey admitted to bribing officials to enrich himself, evading income tax, and covering up his misdeeds to project a clean image. "Now, I am

willing to subject myself to whatever punishment the state deems fit," Pandey said. At a dramatic press conference in Kathmandu Wednesday, he blindfolded himself and said he was ready to go to prison. But 55-year-old Hari Prasad says he isn't trying to dare the government to come after him, or aiming for cheap publicity. "I am doing it to ease my own consicence," he said.

Pandey has even done the legal homework for the government, and

which he said he had already set aside to be handed over if the government could convince him it would be used productively. He added for good measure: "However, if the government should decide that it will confiscate the said amount from

me at any point. I will abide by the decision." It was inevitable that such a

dramatic confession would hit the headlines the next day. And so Pandey became the butt of jokes, the subject of cartoons, and derisive public reaction came thick and fast. Some said the UML ex-minister had finally "gone off his rocker". Others

himself. Some were certain he was a religious fanatic of some sort But when we met him in Pokhara, we found a simple man who friends call a "Gandhian communist".



n a fresh bid to resolve a continued deadlock over the future of the 100,000 Rhutanese refugees in camps in eastern Nepal. Thimpu is on a charm offensive argeted at Nepali politicians.

Latest to get red carpet treatment were Chakra Prasad Bastola, former foreign ster and one of the architects of the verification

agreement for refugees last year, and opposition leader Madhav Kumar Nepal of the UML.

"The Bhutanese leadership probably reckons that both Bastola and Nepal are prime ministers-in-waiting, and they want to cover both bases," explained one senic Nepali academic. The two met Bhutanese king Jigme Singye Wangchuk, chit-chatted with other officials, including Foreign Minister Jigme Thinley, the point man including Poteign Manister Jagine Intelligence, and packed in some sight-seeing of the dzongs. The two also stopped by at Bhutan's Chuka hydroelectric project to get a few tips or selling power to India. Madhaw Nepal, for his part, brainstormed with the Bhutanese on drafting their new constitution, which could benefit from Nenal's experience of the past 12 years.

"It was my first real opportunity to meet the Bhutanese informally," Bastola told us. "I sense there is willingness in Bhutan to get the refug problem resolved." Bastola asked the king why Bhutan was insisting on going back to the 1994 agreement to classify refugees into four groups; Bhutanese who have been evicted, those who voluntarily emigrated, those who have criminal records, and non

Bhutanese. The king's reply: "Sometimes you have to." Bastola said the king appeared concerned that Nepalis residing in India may have infiltrated the refugee camps at the peak of the influx in the early 1990s. It is this attempt to categorise them that is holding up repatriation of an initial batch of refugees

Nepali officials have been trying to fix a date for the next round of ministerial talks to decide on repatriating those who have been verified.

But Bhutan is sticking to its four-group category, which goes by the buzzword "harmonisation". Nepal maintains that there are only two categories of refugees: Bhutanese or non-Bhutanese.

Nepal and Bhutan completed the joint verification of about 12,000 refugees living in the Khudunabari camp in December, a process that took a year. At this rate it will take at least five years to screen the remaining 88,000 refugees.

"On our side we're ready to meet given a week's notice. We are ready," Foreign Ministry spokesman Gyan Chandra Acharya told us. The eady; Foreign Ministry spokesman cyan Chandra Acharya tolo us. The problem seems to be that there is no timeframe for either talks, or epatriation. Journalist Surya Thapa asked Foreign Minister Thinley in Thimpu why Bhutan was dragging its feet. Thinley replied: "We are also sick of this problem, but it is a complicated issue. Separating real Bhutanese from illegal migrants is no easy task. The reason for the

delay is that it is being needlessly politicised."

For Bhutanese human rights activist Ratan Gazmere, the Bhutan government is just trying to buy time. He concludes: "The Nepal government by itself is not capable of resolving this deadlock, it needs to get the international community to pressure Bhutan the way it did to get it to agree on verification."

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who brings an end to the conflict.

HE PEACE PRIZE

## STATE OF THE STATE What next?

We will quietly go on doing whatever we are doing at the moment. hoping that the danger will somehow disappear.

Everyone is talking about the rewards on the heads of the Maoists. But there is a greater sw many forced closures are necessar o prove the utter futility of all bandhs? any case, what difference does it make stopping vehicles from plying the Sher Bahadur Deuba for flatly refusing to negotiate with the Maoists. Being a plain-speaking, straight forward guy, he takes betrayals personally. And he is not likely to forget national highways, when the normal life of the entire population—save the Maoists and the security forces—is, for all intents

and purposes, shut down anyway? Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba is no less tactless than the Maobadi leadership. The declaration "Wanted, dead or alive", with a price on the head of the fugitives, is a sign of desperation not confidence. Perhaps taking his cue from Sheriff Bush in the unfolding

saga against terror in the Afghan desert, Prime

Minister Deuba has committed the cardinal

sin of democratic politics-adopting patently

the new equipment, the army is confident it can squeeze the Maoists tighter so that when talks do finally happen, the government can negotiate from a position of strength.

Unfortunately, that is also the Maoists' game plan: to improve their bargaining powe by destroying, intimidating and spreading panic. They have been forced to go after soft targets: burning down Deuba's house in Dadeldhura, destroying hydropower plants, wrecking airport towers, and blowing up telecom stations one after another. These are sitting duck targets, but they give the psychological

reward no one talks about: the reward of peace. The Nepali peoples' prize for anyone

But is it going to be the deathly peace of a ruined land, or a neace that salvanes

what is still left? Yes, talks. But talk about what? You can't really blame Prime Minister

machinery and set up a "Peoples' Liberation Army" to take on the Royal Nepal Army.

And even if only half of the people the security forces say they have killed are actual

hardonre Manists (as onnosed to mercenaries, or those forcibly enlisted into the militia)

then the comrades must be feeling the heat. The army did not need the Americans to

tell them that they need a larger force, much better logistics and much more reliable intelligence to fight a guerrilla war in this terrain. But since the Americans are footing

the hill for much of the new hardware, our generals dutifully godded their heads. With

how the Maoists used the three months of the last truce to upgrade their fightin

impression of a tightening noose.

In the short term, these tactics are aimed at forcing the government to agree to talks, thus buying time once more to regroup. The Maoists' military wing needs time to rearm, restore discipline to the fold, and weed out informers. If they get a six month respite, the senior comrades seem confident that they can laun another series of spectacular raids over military parrisons, and unleash the final stage of their urban guerrilla warfare to propel themselves into Kathmandu.

Our fractious parliamentary parties have finally agreed on an all-party campaign to counter the Maoists with a rally on 2 June. About time. But the myopic infighting within the Congress still threatens to ruin all. If they can't unite when the country is in this state, then they really don't deserve to be in office.

All this bickering is, of course, useful to the Maoists who depend on the chaos and disunity to create the right conditions for revolution. It is even more helpful for the rebels that the parliamentary parties can't even agree on negotiations or the reward on the Maoist heads.

Those favouring talks are right about one thing, though. There is no point insisting that the Maoists disarm before talks: that is like asking them to surrender Why should they? They thrive on this disaray. However, it is also true that if both sides are truly serious about peace, there can be secret talks even without a ceasefire. It is much more important for all political forces to be united and single-minded. The talks can't be the public circus we had the last time, they have to be serious, secret and sincere. This impasse needs to be broken with a dramatic new initiative that allows the government to look strong, and under a visionary leadership.

That's a tall order. We don't see any signs of a visionary leadership in the ranks of any of the parliamentary parties. But it is now readily apparent that the Nepali people are fed up with the deaths and devastation. They are ready to reward anyone who can restore peace.

..... unconstitutional means to achieve what could be justifiable ends

There is little doubt that Comrade Prachanda and his cohorts can be charged with breaking almost every law of this land, but that can't possibly justify the government donning the judge's mantle. Even if the government were to be prosecutor, judge and executioner all rolled into one, capital punishment is not a provision of the constitution that Deuba is oath-bound to protect. There could be a somewhat more charitable interpretation, that it is all a part of the psy-war against the insurgents. If that is the case, perhaps an announcement that the bounty could be claimed from Royal Nepal Embassies abroad might be an added inducement

Either way, this running around in circles s ruining Nepali society and the country. Sometimes it is the Maobadi doing the chasing, at other times the government forces, spreading their security net. But the territory remains the same, no matter who is on the run-it is us ordinary Nepalis being run over. Most of us in Kathmandu would probably respond in the negative if asked whether there is a way out of s quagmire. And then we'd quietly go on doing whatever we are doing at that moment. safe in the belief that the danger will disappear all by itself. Fatalism is a facile explanation for this collective sense of worthlessness but it will have to do for the lack of a more appropriate term.

But there are some Nepalis abroad who think otherwise. Writing in Nepal, Rabindra Mishra of the BBC Nepali Service outlines four otions for Nepali society:

1) Apply pressure on our leadership to mend (2) Submit to the direct rule of the king: (3) Continue with the current anathy and lack

of commitment; or (4) Abjectly surrender to the demonic forces of

Prachanda Like a good democrat, Mishra insists that his preference would be the first one. Sure, distance gives perspective, but it also makes it harder to notice details. Creating public pressure in the fond hope that the present

the photo shows that some tourists

don't pay much attention to the

posture might provoke some men to

just a little bit more than trying to

Nenali women are finally

suffer harassment at the workplace

Antoinette Schule

Dr Arati Thapa Hamal

Dhobigha

cultural values of this country

sitting along the road in this

sell a flute...

political leadership of the country will mend its ways looks increasingly like chasing a mirage. The possibility of direct rule by the king under it circumstances—so soon after 1 June and the incendiary rumours that spread in its aftermath—is fraught with grave dangers. Allowing the current apathy to continue is like quietly awaiting your turn at the gallows. Sooner or later, every one who does not oppos tyranny is sure to end up there.

3 - 9 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

by CK LAL

Mishra's last option is no option either Ir implies the end of common Nepalis' quest for an independent identity, democratic rule and social justice. None of these suggestions are choices we can make of our own accord. They are the eventualities that we have to prepare for if the "fight\_to\_the\_finish" between the security forces and the insurgents does not end in a wordsahla compres

Sadly, the possibility of a compromise has been further reduced after the American ommise of \$20 million worth of military indware on the one hand, and a clear division in the ranks of Maoists on the other. Even if th Neml Communist Party (Maoist) was to si down for talks with the government, it's far from clear whether the more militant Nepal Maoist Centre would also agree to lay down arms and play fair. It's not a comfortable thought, but the fact is, there is simply no easy way out of the present impasse. Our political leaders of all hues and the Maobadi both know that. Nepal is trapped in a Mahabharata-type no-win internecine wa

There might, however, be one political experiment left to be tried—the formation of a high-level Royal Commission by the king upon the recommendation of the council of ministers, with nominees from political parties as well as "intellectuals" sympathetic to the Maoist cause as members. May be such a high-level political instrument will be able to convince the insurgents to lay down arms and settle for something a little less than what they desire, but a lot more acceptable than what is presently

## 3-9 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES 3 NATION A Gandhian communist

The cynicism was to be expected, and Pandey soon discovered that the media had got his story all wrong. But he loesn't seem to mind. In fact, he isn't in any particular hurry to correct the story, and he agreed to speak to us reluctantly with a oh-no-not-another-reporter tone to his voice. And when we did meet him in his Kathmandu home. he had the serene demeanour of an idealist at peace with himself.

from 🖒 n1

One thing the papers got wrong, he says, is that he took bribes as a minister. "I never misused my position in the hydropower ministry in any way in fact I am not even a member of the UML or any party," Pandey told us. He was made minister by the party for his honesty, and it was during his tenure in 1993 that the \$400 million Arun III project was cancelled by the World Bank.

UML leaders haven't yet commented on Pandey's disclosures and say they are still studying his report. The party brass is in a bind. After all, its central committee "disciplined senior UML members of the parliamentary Public Accounts Committee for investigating of the leasing of a China Southwest Airlines jet for Royal Nepal

Airlines three years ago. Pandey has a long list of his own transgressions: "As a minister I was distracted and didn't pay enough attention to the country's industrial development, as a member of parliament I didn't contribute as much as I should have, I negligently allowed the Arun III project to be cancelled without lining up any alternatives. and I was made a peoples' representative and minister ever

· Patricia Lustig sounds like vet

another westerner who likes to

being no exception. Sexual

generalise. I am not defending

the harassers, but this sort of thing

happens all over the world, Nepal

manages his instant noodle factory From accounts of his friends and relatives. Pandey started showing signs of a spiritual transformation in

ading this confession would think that this was a rash act of an 1988. Those were the days of the unstable person. But meeting Hari Indian trade blockade and it opened Hari Prasad's eyes to just Prasad Pandey a visitor gets the how much Nepal is dependent on impression of someone who is genuinely troubled by his past, the outside world for basic necessi and not a person given to ties. After that he wanted to show impulsive self-publicity.

though I had given bribes, sinned

against the motherland and tried

It is not surprising that anyone

to course up my misdeads

Hari lives with his wife Tulasa, five daughters and a son in Pokhara. Tulasa was 14 when she got married to Hari Prasad and says her husband always had this intense love for his motherland. "I don't think anyone else has a husband like him. He never does things on his own we discuss everything in the family first," she told us. In fact Hari Prasad read all 42 pages of his confession to his family before going public, and family members reviewed it for six hours. Says Tulasa: "I had one objection: I didn't want him to call himself a criminal " But Hari Prasad tried to convince them that any wilful wrongdoing while in office was a crime.

Four of the Pandeys' five daughters are studying medicine in Pokhara, Tulasa (below) looks



be self-reliant by living frugally and reducing consumption

He was also inspired after a chance meeting on the street with a desperately poor woman in tattered clothes who taught him the meaning of responsibility and the importance of the mother land. Writes Pandey: "Your life, body, knowledge, history, future

After this, not only did Har Prasad turn vegetarian, but he even reduced his intake of salt sugar and rice. He carried his own food (roasted corn, radish and tsampa) when he travelled aborad. Earlier, he overdid this frugality and he fell sick because of under-nourishment. He was prescribed fruits, but told himself that rather than eat imported oranges and bananas, he would consume domestically produced meat, and give up

obliquely: "Gandhi puts god at

the centre of things, but I think

and dependence here on earth.

they don't have even the

minimum qualification to

He first approached the

Commission on Investigation of

back as 1995 after confessing to

mismanagement, negligence and

incompetence that led to losses

during the sale of stock options in

Abuse of Authority (CIAA) as far

is not an atheist

unless human beings struggle

parcel of your motherland. You

cannot achieve fulfilment until

misconduct and indebtedness.

woman in tattered clothes for

Pandev is Mother Nepal herself

It is not hard to imagine that the

vou overcome subservience.

But isn't all this a bit 2. Neither of Nepal's giant extreme, we ask, "No, it's being neighbours agrees with your pragmatic," answers Pandey. policies. Even if you grab power. Expelled from the Butwal what makes you think you can Technical Instutute for being: hold on to it? "bad student" he idolises Mars 3 After decades the Chinese and Lenin. But those who know have admitted that Mao's ecohim well call Hari Prasad more of a "Gandhian communist" Does that make him an atheist? Pandey answers the question

nomic polices were counterproduc tive and have abandoned them. Why should it work with you? 4. Why should it be a crime

the Biratnager Jute Mills, and

week's self disclosure is just an

extension of Pandev's 1995

confession. But both times.

which corruption is endemic

doesn't seem to have the legal

bribes

nothing happened. A country in

mechanism to deal with someone

who voluntarily confesses to giving

As a businessman in Pokhara

Hari Prasad has had visits from

Maoists demanding "donations"

Sick of threats and intimidation.

\*Take My Donation, But Answer

My Ouestions First". He has set

aside Rs 100,000 for the Maoists if

World opinion and the

Nepali public are against your war

they can answer these questions:

So why should it succeed?

he wrote an open letter titled

asked that he be prosecuted. Last

even to ask you these questions? Pandey denies that he is trying o gain prestige and fame, and absolve himself from future blame against all forms of injustice, vice He denies trying to preach or tell anyone to follow in his footsteps I am saving my soul. To do that I approach god." So that means he have to give back to society what I took from it. And I am willing to undergo any physical incarceration pay any fine, and sacrifice what is left of my personal integrity," he told us, adding: "And if the

government does not come

ment on myself." ♦

orward, I will inflict the punish-

STATE OF THE NATION The situation in our country wi continue as long as clever politicians keep on luring a disillusioned and frustrate generation of people with false nises. It is no wonder that these people are venting their anger, and what better way that inining the so-called Manist revolution. People are being manipulated to fight not for principles, but just because it gives some kind of purpose to life. Where is all this leading us? Since when did we become so bitter that we take pride in killing our fellow citizens for political reasons? We need revolution in our country but not the kind Maoists want: we need a revolu tion in the calibre of leaders, a

#### revolution in natriotism Ashok Srivasta

North Platte Nehraska Why do poor Nepalis have to die because big people disagree? The Maoists are taking us back 1.000 years. While other countries are moving forward, we are destroying our own property and killing our own people

New York Raghu Mainali's blow-by-blow account ("Another post-mortem", #90) was good, but I missed a real ost-mortem of why 112 paramili tary forces were stationed in Satbaria to guard the Home Minister's farmhouse, and only nine civil police were at the

estaurant?

plamed on the World Bank, which ustifiably insists that losses ncurred due to non-payment of pills and leakage must be recouped. (Why do we need outside tell us we are being cheated?) o as a conscientious consumer ush to pay my bills on time. The nonest consumer gets shafted and arries the burden of those who

 I am one of those staunch owers of the estai ho (go with the flow) path of ennui and nonchalance. But even that is not helping me maintain my sanity Evolain this

Kabindra Pradhai

Rutus

strategic Lamahi post. In attack

after attack, our security forces hav

seen the modus operandi of the

Maoists, and yet there doesn't see

to be any real attempt to reinforce

the safety of the police under fire

It is almost as if the Home Ministe

feels the rest of the country can eal

cake. The IGP as head of the

notice force is directly responsible

or the security of his force. After

Satharia even if it means breaking

protocol, he must tell us the truth

about why the police hase was

located in such a vulnerable

1 An ex-state minister confessed to his corrupt ways and admitted that he had embezzled heavily from the exchequer, he wanted to make amends, he fined and sent to iail. He even offered to pay for his upkeep in jail. But the Iministration refused to register is confession, as there was no provision for such bursts of honest

 Why is there an additional ervice charge on public utilities like water, electricity and phones? Aren't they providing a service th were set up to provide? And a "value added" tax? And why do I. a a Nepali, have to pay a tourist

service charge when I eat at a

3 The hike in electricity tariff i has it gone?

4. The NTC is going to increase local phone rates and lower ISD rates. Why? Because people are using the Internet to if they came to power the Maoists would not be different from the call long distance from cybercafes Vould it not be more practical to other political parties, and the evy a monthly per-computer per people of Nepal would continue to be victims of exploitation and revenue? Ah-hal Rut that's the If last week was a "general

LETTERS

point I have probably missed all along: being practical? In Nepal? iGoru Budhimani

Even if democracy is not what he Maoists accept as a system for ocial change and development, i s absurd to hope to achieve change by arson, killing, extortion destruction of water supply, bridges etc. Do the Maoists hope to come o power by destroying the little velopment that has improved the life of some of the poorest in rural areas? Do they hope to get rid of he establishment in this way? Wha does the fear and paralysis of the people during the five-day bandh

prove to the Maoists? Are bandhs

called to convince people that their future would be better in the Maoist's hands? Does their political work, their concern about the people start only when they have stroyed everything? If there eve was a sensible Maoist policy, where

The impression prevails that what might have been a necessary breaking out of the confines of the revolutionary movement has now turned into an uncontrolled mob, four walls of their homes, only to members of which have no clear I hope women start speaking out orders, no objective anymore other more. Keeping quiet will only than to kill, plunder, and destroy encourage the criminals. One has to draw the conclusion that

strike"-a clear demonstration of

the people demanding speedy and

effective improvement of educa-

disposal, and a fight against

With, or without the Manists

This letter refers to the article

"Teasing tourists" (#90) written by

Patricia Lustin, Lam not sure that

all the examples of sexual harass-

really belong to that category. But

ment mentioned in your article

TEASING TOURISTS

corruption and sleaze-then the

government would have to react.

C Grote

Kathmandu

tion, health, water supply, garbage

 A good look at the photo accompanying the article "Teasing tourists" can explain a lot about the

1 Unheeded warning Read any good guidebook of Nepal and the female tourist is cautioned against travelling alone or without a male

2. Dress code. Again travellers are advised to ism (soft to hard) has come to Nepal. News of

bserve a decent dress code 3. Adverse image—sex western men and women exploiting even minors are not rare. For the soft side, just read any message board in Thamel or the Internet and you will be aware of the demands (both implicit and explicit) for trekking guides of the opposite sex 4. Opposites attract. The attraction for the opposite images is eternal. A Neoali man is trusting. simple and helping, attributes now rare in the west. A western girl is independent and "fair" game Besides, in these 20 years of tourism, we have deepened our mutual acquaintance. Negali men are normally shy but some refuse to take a "no" for an answer from a western girl. Surely, as Ms Lustig suggests, the media should start an overall awareness campaign. At the same time, tourists should be more aware of Nepali culture, tradition, psychology, travelling manners and

above all, trekking norms Kumar R Shrestha



harassment at the workplace is an everyday phenomenon in the western world. Tailhook is not the name of a Nepali town. It is the name of a place where "civilised American sailors fondled a hunch of young women. Most female tourists who complain about harassment don't seem to give a hoot about our distants. Take a walk in Thamel. The bra-less young female tourist in ultra small shorts and transparent top, walking around, jiggling her mammaries, is most likely the one who is getting the cat calls. The same thing would hannen if she was walking on the streets of Boston. quess it would be more "accentable" to Lustig if a white guy was

I wonder if Nepal really wants visitors ? If tourism is, in fact, a driving force of the Nepali economy, may I suggest that the visa process be changed so that at least a six month-double entry visa can be obtained at a reasonable price. Also the "fee" to walk through Darbar Square, for

harassing these female tourists.

How dare these dark skinned

natives?

those of us who. like myself, bring numanitarian aid, or are just ordinary tourists, should be eliminated. If tourism is to be revived, and integrated into the everyday fabric of Nepali life. make it easier, not harder, to co to Nepal and move around.

#### STATE OF THE STATE

CK Lal blaming the "US insistence on market liberalisation" ("Do our banners yet wave?") for all evils of Nepali politics and our society may be a bit far-fetched. But fact remains that disadvantages may outweigh benefits of our market driven economic concepts. The obvious question is who drives market in countries like Nenal where vast majority of the popula tion remain in the poorest of the poor category. A good example of evil side effect of market liberalisation is in the telecom sector. Our mously passed a bill liberalising telecom (probably brain-washed b the "the mantra of macroeconomi eform" and constantly educated by two famous M's of the Negali Congress: Mahat & Mahesh), not realising that direct implication of the new Telecom Act is that the cost of calling Humla from Hetauda will now equal that calling Kansas from Kathmandu. I happened to talk with a few MPs about this and they confessed that

analysed the new act before passing it. CK Lal writes well, like a poet.

they had not studied and

informed. But isn't there a limit to

retching this license to passing

everything? Mr Lal thinks that

nost-1947 the LIS retracted its traditional warmth to Nepal. Tha

this retreat is due to the growth of

judgement on absolutely

SR Kansaka

Kamaladi

D Michael Van De Veer Kauai, Hawaii

free market ideology and privatisation" have not only 'devastated" the political economy of poor countries, but also allowed a Madam Chang to meddle in Nepal's corridors of power. That "precise" empiricism was needed to establish certain "correspondences" but these clearly existed among "structural adjustment" "nrivatisation of national economies" and "the rise

of insurgency" among other unfortunate consequences. That the "fortress in Paninokhari" has now re-fashioned itself from a beacon of hope for Nepal that helped "modernise Nepali society to being a patron that "insists on market liberalisation" which ncidentally has "failed" to "purify Nepali politics, but "succeeded

exceedingly" in "ruining our

Malinowski is probably a nice quy

people of the world, let's unite to throw away the "unholy triumvirate

society". And oh, Michael

by the way. So, to all literate

numbers around, and pretended that he knew what he was talking iPaschim.

of ... get ready for the wisdom of the

ever have I yawned so

ainfully. How reckless can one be

n one's choice of words? You can'

uantify qualitative variables to

draw causal inferences because t

degree of association is scientifi-

cally indeterminate. There is no

such thing as "correspondence"

between two ambiguous variables And most importantly, correlation

not causality. As a person who is

do hetter than this. The least he

could have done is thrown a few

paid to write. Mr Lal owes it to us to

on dlobalisation.

FAIR AND SOUARE

This is in resonnee to Sunita Single (Letters, #89), itself a response to Journe Sliverstein's (Letters #87) critique of the fairness cream ad nublished next to the Under My H column in previous issues. Since "Joyce Silverstein" is an Anglo-Saxon name. Ms Singh automat

races, numbering in the billions

cally assumes her to be of white-Caucasian race stock, But for all Ms Singh knows, Ms Silverstein could be...an Afro-American? A West Indian? An Australian Aborigine You name it In her myonia Ms Singh makes a stand for the "virtues" of fairer skin, therefore denying parity of value to those

(Black Africans, Melanesians, Dravidians, and more) who will never possibly have, and hopefully never wish for fairer skins on themselves. The issue is ultimately about accepting people for what they are, and not through the bias of their external appearance.

#### Elisabetta Piomarta Kathmandu

#### MR FSTARI ISHMENT applaud the initiatives taken by

Mayor Sthapith ("Mr Establishmen #90) and various civil society organisations and donors to renovate and preserve key parts of Kathmandu, but their efforts. encouraging as they may be, are not enough to stem the cultural losses occurring daily. While Indra Chowk's Aakaash Bhairab temple i heing renovated the homes and shops surrounding it are being los I took advantage of the handh last week to ride my bicycle through Asan and Indra Chowk something I adn't done since the 1980s. Absent the usual crowd the changes in the old bazaar were startling. One by one, traditional Newar houses and shops have bee transformed from brick and wood to

drab concrete. The heart of

Kathmandu—a cultural icon and

in busy commercial and residentia

areas. Over time, property values i

important tourist attraction-is There are successful example Nepal and other countries of how to preserve traditional architecture



actually increase. I'm afraid that if action is not taken immediately a unique part of Kathmandu's heritage will disappear forever. causing cultural and economic damage that Nepal can ill afford

Nick Langto Kathmandi

The Kathmandu Metropolita Council under Mayor Sthanith has done a lot, but it has lots more to do. I think the KMC should begin to issue a community tax system to finance its infrastructure and

EDITOR'S NOTE

Nepali Times reserves the right to edit letters for length, clarity and language. All letters to the editor must be accompanied by a full name, which can be withheld on request.

N Malaka

bv emai

# Reaping the whirlwind in

This is a "peoples' war" in which ordinary people like Purna Bahadur Khatri, Amrit Bahadur BK, Tilak Nepali and Bishnu Prasad KC and Seti Buda are being killed.



#### PRAKASH JWALA in LIBANG

ere are winds of change blowing in Rolpa. For the first time in four years. political workers under the protection of security forces have returned to parts of Rolpa that were under Maoist control

Reading about this in the faraway capital, it may not seem like much. But it is an indication of the changing circumstances of the insurgency that the Maolands of the mid-west aren't as impregnable as

To be sure, this does not mean that the Manists are on the run But it is the first sign that the tide may be turning, and it is also an opening for the government and all parliamentary parties to restore hope to the villages that they have

the future holds even worse in store.

fringe or the heavily armed

they care for their welfare, and to get them to participate with their elected leaders to rebuild ruined villages. Around the time that political parties in Kathmandu were sitting down three weeks ago in joint efforts to take their activism to

important to show the people that

abandoned. Their presence is

rural areas, political workers here were already doing just that. They moved into areas of Rolpa that the security forces have managed to liberate: the villages of Thabang, Gam, Mase, Satdobato and Madichaur. The presence of the army has brought new hope to the neonle who have only one wish: that peace is restored that they can start rebuilding their shattered lives.

Two weeks ago, some 1,000 neonle had gathered in Gam for a

pal is not alone. There is a gloom and doom settling over weste

traumatic stress syndrome, a sense of burnout, frustration with violence and the

failure of the political elite to deliver the goods. Whether it's the American-lead

coalition being unable—so far—to really track down anyone directly involved in

the destruction of the World Trade Centre, or the fact that the certainties of the

1990s were mistaken and arrogant, people are becoming genuinely worried that

lurk close to power. Le Pen's men polish their jackboots as a restive population

prepares for confrontation. The rallying around by mainstream politicians against

the fascists is window-dressing. The French will be fighting this fight for years to come. Next door, a German high school is awash with blood. A humanitarian and

just society forged in the aftermath of the 20th century's worst racist outrages is

questioning its underpinnings. There has been also the relentless drip-drip of pessimism and maybem from the Middle East. A region considered sacred by

three of the world's main religions is now a no-go area for all but the ideological

Not all the bad news is about bloodshed. Look at economic collapse in

Argentina, Turkey and possibly even Japan. A globalised economy links us in

failure as well as success and wealthy westerners may soon share the pain of the Argentines. Certainly they will suffer if Japan implodes financially. Not that I

think it will do so spectacularly but the loss of Japanese financial exuberance

is troubling everywhere. The media has never seemed more disconnected

from reality, even as it touts "reality programs" as the Next New Thing that

we cannot do without. An institution of society that's supposed to inform,

Consider the events that have been in the news lately. In France, neo-Nazis

countries that is every bit as pervasive and challenging as the fog of fear over in the Himalayan kingdom. It's a kind of post-11 September

public meeting. Local political leaders, the Chief District Officer from Libang, and local elders all spoke about the effort to bring life back to normal. Some days before that, a local voluntary group organised a seminar in Libang to discuss what the people of Rolpa could do in the current political

environment

Representatives of different political parties made commitments to form an alliance against Maoist violence, and agreed to spread the word on the Maoists' double standards and hypocrisy. Especially the fact that after destroying the education system. Manist leaders had their children in private schools in Kathmandu, India and London.

What was surprising was not what was said at the meetings, but where the meetings were held: in the heartland of Maoist activity. This isn't the first time that politicians have tried to re-start political activity. Last year, the UML organised a Rapti Peace March that passed through Dang, Sallvan Rukum and Puuthan before visiting several villages in Rolpa

At that time, this was seen as a direct challenge to the Maoists, who had begun to fill the political vacuum they'd created in the villages by killing or chasing away local political workers. Even so. thousands of people from the five districts gathered for the public rally in Rolps This time it is not just the UML, but all political parties holding joint public meetings. Rolpa plunges into darkness

the Maoists destroyed the Jhimruk power station last month. The people of Rolpa, who had got used to electricity, are now back to burning pine resin dhuni, as kerosene is too expensive. Most ordinary people cannot understand what the Maoists have gained by

destroying Jhimruk, and pushing Rolpa's development back by decades. Rolpa has many problems, but the most pressing is the lack of health care. The district hospital was built many years ago, but because of government ineptitude. never treated a single patient. A brand new building is in ruins. Every time they see the hospital the people of Rolpa curse the ernment. And this is the district headquarters. We can only guess how much worse the situation must



be in the villages. To add to the feeling of hopelessness and isolation. Rolpa has been cut off from the rest of Nepal since the Manists destroyed the telephone repeater

The only link to the outside world is the Bhaluwang-Libang road, which is actually a dirt track. The road has been repeatedly attacked by Maoists, who stop buses, block roads and also blow up parts of it every once in a while These days, passengers have to endure frisking by security forces. "It's just not worth the risk anymore " says a transport opera tor "We face too many bassles sometimes we are extorted, atened, and our buses are set or fire." It would not be an exaggera-

tion to say that the buses here can

HERE AND THERE

# Global *Kaliyug*

after dusk. There is no power, since

If you are depressed about Nepal, just look at the rest of the world.



enlighten and entertain seems capable only of the latter, and only then once standards have been so gravely lowered that any old dreck will do. So long as e can close our minds and escape into the dreary oblivion of junk cultur Even the BBC has to defend itself against accusations of "dumbing down" its

I wonder if what's happened—in Nepal and around the world—isn't just a

general collapse of certainties. In the 1990s, we believed in perpetual good times with all the fervour of the self-deceiving convert to a religion that we now feel exists only to take our money. We build up our hopes and aspirations, begin to see them as certainties and then lapse into gloom and doom when they aren't met.

Self evidently, that's been the case in Nepal.

The democracy that came from so much sacrifice hasn't lived up to expectations, Similarly, the vision of Clinton and Blair in the last decade of the 20th century, that you could have a humane society and unbridled free market capital. ow seems unrealistic. Throw in the horrors of 11 September and you have a heady mixture that's beginning to resemble the foaming hemlock in Socrates' cup. Kaliyug is upon us and the convulsive unpredictability of events has banished our once beloved certainties. Woe is us. Sell up, move out, get away, escape, get

drunk, depressed and give up. Is that all there is?

Well, no, if I may be so bold. I truly believe that the gloom which shadows our every move is misplaced and more harmful than the deadly events that inspire it. It may be a truism, but the vast majority of us, within Nepal's borders and beyond, are people of goodwill who only want things to work properly so our children can prosper. Losing our grip right at the time when our kids need us is a crime against the future of far more impact than any terrorist act. It's time we learned to stop worrying and love the bomb as they used to say in the 60s when a US-USSR nuclear war was everyone's favourite fear.

It's time to connect with reality and take up our responsibilities to simply get on with it, and learn to laugh. Black humour sustained the people of Eastern Europe through the soul-destroying Communist era. Bring on the comedians to point the way out of our current crisis. One step at a time, we can tear up the calendar of Kaliyug if we use our goodwill—rather than our fear—to bind us. I have seen the enemy, and he looks a lot like me. And you.

operate only with the blessings of the Maoists. There has been talk of operating a helicopter service to Libang, but that is just talk.

Rolpa has always been a food deficit district. Rolpalis migrate for work when the food runs out, or depend on grain flown in. Now even that is difficult, since the army is enforcing a food embargo to starve out the Maoists. And the Maoists have plundered whatever food there is left. No one is planting any grain for fear that the harvest will be looted. This has put the price of grain out of reach—rice costs Rs 150 per pathi. Those who suffer the most are the children who fall sick because there isn't enough to eat And when they fall sick, there is no health care. The people of Rolpa just try to survive from day to day.

Thousands have fled the Maoist violence in the hinterland to the relative safety of Libang. Many more have already left to work in India. The better-off are living in Kathmandu. Dang and other parts of Nepal But even if they are away, it doesn't mean they are safe. The Maoists attack their houses and their relatives A teacher from Korchebang,

Mahendra Pun, fled his village two years ago and had been living at the Ghartigaon police outpost. He came to the district headquarters after that police station was razed by the Maoists. Some weeks ago, the Maoists ransacked his home and now his mother wife and five children have all moved down to Libang, Pun's wife Purna Kumari said 250 armed Maoists came to their house on 2 April, and forced them out "They told us your husband lives in the district headquarters so you cannot continue living

here," she recalls tearfully. Tham Bahadur Sunuwar of Ghartigaon had been forced to flee because the Maoists accused him of peing an informant. After he had fled they ransacked his house and belongings and chased the 11 remaining members of his family out of the village. Tham Bahadur has no idea of how he is going to make ends meet, and joins hundreds of other refugees in Libang who have no home, no farm, no food, and no work.

Despite Maoist warnings not to go ahead, Rolpa was able to organise its DDC meeting, and attendance was more than 90 percent. There are indications that

Mandala House

APARTMENT HOTEL



Aesthetic Living Dining Conference & Workshop



many are fed up with Maoist

In Libang large numbers of

people crowd around the CDO

office every day. Most have come

for citizenship papers and passports

Since November, more than 6,000

made, mostly for young men fleeing

Others are in Libang to pay land

citizenship certificates have been

the Maoists. Many intend to

taxes to the VDC secretaries, now

camping here because the Maoists

don't allow the collection of land

taxes in the villages. In late March

they killed Amrit Bahadur Khatri a

neon of Bhahang VDC. His crime

reminding people in the village to pay

their land taxes. Khatri had a physical

disability. He also came from a family

Libang has now been fenced off

entering and leaving the town. It looks

like a garrison town, but residents and

government employees say they feel

secretary of the UML in Rolpa says,

emergency for six months. Here in

There is an unofficial curfew every

evening, and there are reports of

people being killed every day

Libang we've had a crisis for six years."

"The country has had a state of

more secure, Kumar Dasaudi,

with barbed wire. The villagers must

pass through security checks before

that did not have enough to eat for

more than three months of a year

Maoists had already killed the

chairman and vice-chairman of

Rhahang VTOC

migrate to work.

from Libang. He had joined the polic excesses. Everyone at the meeting to earn money to support his family. agreed that the violence had to stop He leaves behind his widow, child an father, Mohan Lal, a sweeper in so the district could get back to improving the lives of the Rolpalis

There are thousands of Purna Bahadurs all over Nepal. It's a people's war all right—ordinary people like Purna Bahadur and Amrii Bahadur die. It is the 12 people who were burned to death in Hariang It i Tilak Nepali and Bishnu Prasad KC. two teachers killed recently, or the retired policeman in Pakhapani who was hacked to death.

Then there are the killings by the other side. Shibe KC, a teacher was killed because the security forces were misinformed that he was a Manist Farlier this month five innocent locals were gunned down after a Maoist booby trap went off in Seuri. The real Maoists who planted the explosives fled, bu Dil Bahadur Buda a Nepali Congress supporter, his daughter in-laws Seti and Sahali and two others were killed in the shootout

Rolpa is now synonymous with violence Murder, terror and mayben happen every day. Many innocent people are dying. The survivors struggle to survive from day to day. Thousands are homeless There is a severe shortage of food

But there are also signs that the people are fed up with the violence and they are no longer afraid of saving so. If the unity of the political parties can be maintained the brave resistance of the people of Rolpa may yet inspire the rest of the nation •

After the battle at Lamahi and (Prakash Jwala is the UML MP from Satbaria a helicopter delivering dead Sallyan, and policemen stopped in Rolpa and sulled out a body. It was Purna visited Rolp 9-15 April) vicited Polos Bahadur BK, a 25-year-old constable



#### Nenal's food crisis

Nepal is emerging as the country with one of the most serious food crises in Asia, according to the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). According to FAO's latest global food insecurity survey, South Asia, with 303 million of the 497.1 million bungry people in Asia and the Pacific, is the main bunger hotspot. And Nepal is the hottest spot in South Asia.

It is the only country in South Asia where the number of hungry people increased in the past decade--up from 3.5 million to 5 million and the proportion of Nepalis who are chronically hungry has increased from 19 to 23 percent. An average Nepali had a per capita intake of 2,390 kcal/day in 1990, and by 1999 it had gone down to 2,290 kcal. "Poverty and slow growth in food productivity, which is currently lagging behind the national population growth rate, are the main reasons for the increase in hunger in Nepal," says the FAO report

#### Women and drugs

A qualifative study on women substance users in and around Kathmandu has revealed some alarming findings. The research, conducted among 200 respondents by The Richmond Fellowship Nepal, Women Research Project, indicated that the majority of women substance users were between the ages of 20-29. They started using substances as young as 12-19 years old, and many use multiple substances. What's more, 74 percent have never been treated for substance abuse, 59 percent are involved in commercial sex work, and 38.68 percent said they had tested HIV-positive. As women and drug users, they face greater discrimination and social exclusion, the study points out. Many have been abandoned by their families, as a result of which their children have been neglected, they are ill-treated by health care providers, and they face harassment and

#### Peaceful citizens

Peace for all, Peace forever—that's the motto of Hami Nepali Nagarik (We Nepali Citizens), a group of concerned, proactive professionals seeking a respite amidst all the violence, terror and killings that the country has seen in recent times. The pressure group's agenda includes creating awareness and developing promotional materials stressing the need for peace, and the right of every citizen to live freely and peacefully. Their list of do's includes creating an environment to encourage peace talks and activating volunteers to establish a peace coordination centre.



#### Human rights watch

A week after the government put a price on the heads of the Maoist top brass, reactions and sharp criticism continue to pour in. The National Human Rights Commission is the latest to join the chorus of voices denouncing the government's announcement that it would give out cash prizes for the Maoists, dead or alive. The commission says that this increases the possibility of violating the basic right citizens have to life, and undermines the principles of a lawful state. Left leaders have also been vocal in their disagreement with the government. Leaders of Masal and Ekata Kendra issued a press release Tuesday saving that the government's move doesn't seek to solve the Maoist problem through political means, but by force.



#### German Technical Cooperation Health Sector Support Programme



Within the framework of the Health Sector Support Programme (HSSP), GTZ provides technical assistance to the MoH / Department of Health Services in four areas: Primary Health Care, Reproductive Health, Physical Assets Management and Community Based Drug Management. For HSSP's Office in Kathmandu, qualified applicants are invited for the following immediate openings:

#### (1) Deputy Team Leader, Reproductive Health Component

Major responsibilities of the post:

- Assist the team in conceptual planning, implementation and follow up of programme
- Support the Team Leader in day to day management of the project Represent HSSP at stakeholders meetings and working groups
- Required qualification and experience: · Medical/Nursing or Social Science degree with a Masters Degree in Public
- Understanding of Nepal's health care system, especially reproductive health.
- Experience with project planning and management
- · Relevant research experience
- Clinical teaching / training experience

Applicants must be at least 30 years of age and have a minimum of five years working experience in a similar position, preferably with an international organisation. They must be fluent in English and possess good analytical and problem solving skills

- In addition, they must have the following:

  Ability to lead teams and act on individual initiative
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Documentation skills
- Willingness to frequently travel to the districts

#### (2) Reproductive Health Advisor Major responsibilities of the post:

Provide technical advice to the HSSP team in the field of reproductive health,

particularly adolescent health, Safe Motherhood, HIV/AIDS Support the technical team in preparing and editing technical reports

Required qualification and experience:

Have a degree in nursing/midwifery medicine or public health Have an understanding of Nepal's health care system Experience in reproductive health/ women's health Be a native English speaker with excellent writing skills Have a working knowledge of Nepali

Position (1) is open to Nepalese citizens, position (2) to local expatriates. The vacancy is a contract position for initially 12 months offering salary and other benefits as per GTZ regulations. Interested candidates should apply with a detailed CV, references, passport size photograph and contact telephone number to:

#### The Programme Manager, Health Sector Support Programme c/o GTZ Office, P.O. Box 1457 Kathmandu.

The closing date for applications is 15th May, 2002. Only short-listed candidates will be invited for an interview. No telephone calls, written or personal enquiries will be entertained in this regard.

Women are particularly encouraged to apply

BIZ

**Budget militarisation** 

combined increase of Rs 9.85 billion

will be felt in the future

Wooing FDI

RA & Y&Y

enues will remain low and development expenditure will shrink

Government has come out and announced its worst fears. Defence spending is expected to almost double, government may have to borrow to pay for salaries and other recurrent expenses, rev-

the State Affairs Committee he is worried about being able to manage the treasury in the coming

years. The security agencies' wish list is long—14 helicopters (nine for the military), three for the police and two for the armed police, in addition to new armaments, recruitment drives and other

logistics. Last year the government allotted Rs 10.28 billion for the army, police and armed police

ber. The military has already spent Rs 2.1 billion and has a request for Rs 700 million awaiting

combined. It has spent roughly Rs 3 billion over that to meet the security spending after 26 Novem-

approval at the Finance Ministry. The Home Ministry, for its part, has spent Rs 908 million over its

budgetary allocation. For the next fiscal year (2002/03), the defence and home ministries want a

These figures are especially worrying in light of the massive slowdown in revenue collection.

which is growing by about 4.5 percent, compared with the 19 percent target that had been set for

government had hoped to collect this year. The numbers include the collection after the imposition of

collection mean that government will need to begin borrowing heavily to meet spending, even if it

The Ministry of Industries, Commerce and Supplies has decided to allow the Department of Industries to

recent meeting of the Industrial Promotion Board. Prior to this, the department was authorised to approve

nvestments only up to Rs 900 million. In a separate decision last week, the government also announced it

approve foreign investment worth over a billion rupees in fixed assets. The decision was taken at a

would begin issuing 90-day multiple entry business visas valid for five years. The visa fee for busi-

Hotel Yak & Yeti has come up with a unique scheme to help prop up the

30 percent off their lodging and food bills at the hotel, and tourism sector

how to rescue the ailing national carrier, but a decision on the recommer

national airline. Anyone flying Royal Nepal Airlines to Kathmandu will get

entrepreneurs who get more tourists to fly RA will get free casino coupons. The government two months ago commissioned a study on

dations is pending. The government has two choices—inject a huge amount of cash into the corporation and run it directly, or look for a

partner to run it under joint ownership and privatisation

nesses and people coming to research possible investments will be lower than that for ordinary visas.

Business associations welcomed the decisions, but say they are waiting to see if and how they will be

were to remain at last year's level. The slowdown in development spending due to the security problem has temporarily eased pressures on the treasury, but the impact of lower spending now

this year. In terms of rupees, this translates into Rs 7 billion less than the roughly Rs 60 billion the

war taxes and duties announced earlier this year. The increased expenses and low revenue

Finance Minister Ram Sharan Mahat, who has been keeping a pretty tight hold on the purse told

What better, more providential, escape from our worldly woes than star-gazing.



endured the most spine ling 12 months in Nepali istory, our 23 million souls to enter 2059 Bikram Samba with some heart-warming thoughts But before we could sketch ou resolutions for the new year, astrologers belonging to almost every school of thought concluded that planetary positions would take a turn for the worse Seismic unheavals, freak the ascendancy of political sidekicks are some of the more benien recasts for the year. The times and effects may vary, but the soothsaving consensus is that the country is neck-deep in trouble and may sink another couple of centimetres before it can hope to get a lifeline. The main culprits are Mars and Saturn which are sitting eerily close to each other. Going by some accounts, we are already in the worst phase of the

June 17, 2002

submission and bid opening

the bid documents.

considered under any circumstances.

and Delivery of Equipment/Instruments".

delivery period shown in the bid documents

year, which will last until May 20 If you consider the first two weeks of the year, 2059 has hardly had a oredictable start. A state of emergency hasn't stopped the ruling party president from censuring the prime minister on Star TV. The leader of the opposition returns from Bhutan with suggestions on resolving the refugee mss before Nepalic realised he's subcontracted that part of Nepal's foreign policy. And our idoldesecrating Maoists have provided a preponderance of evidence that they an ers of the Ram Mandir construction project in Ayodhya. If you can't understand what all this means for a country that may already have become the next front of the global war on terrorism while the rest of world is looking at Saddam Hussein blame the stars.

Or start believing in them.

1. The Ministry of Health with support of GTZ and Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau

2. Sealed bids are invited from eligible manufacturers or their authorized agents

(KfW) is processing the supply of medical equipment and instruments

to selected health institutions in the Mid- and Far-West regions of Kingdom

for the supply and delivery of equipment/instruments within 12:00 hours on

Bid documents comprising instructions to bidders, bid forms, schedule of

requirements with detailed specifications and terms and conditions are

available from GTZ Office, Neer Bhawan, Sanepa on submission of a request

representatives at 15:00 hours on June 17, 2002 at GTZ Office Sanena. If

the date for bid submission and/or opening happen to fall on an HMG official

holiday, the next working day(s) shall be considered as the date(s) for bid

5. Bids or modifications to bids received after the closing date will not be

6. Bids must be enclosed in a sealed envelope marked "Offer for Supply

7. Bids should comply in all respects with the instructions to bidders included in

8. The successful bidder must deliver the total ordered consignment within the

9. Local representative companies or firms should include bid forms with letter

of authorizations from their principals and an attested copy of registration of

VAT and copy of renewal of income tax certificates. All foreign bidders are

4. Bids shall be opened publicly, in the presence of bidders and/or their

letter from the prospective suppliers from May 08, 2002 onwards

INVITATION FOR QUOTATION / TENDER

There are about 15,000 astrologers in Nepal that follow the Indian and Chinese-Tibetan traditions, we are told. Now that's a deep pool of talent—one-seventh of the bureauc racy-that we're wasting. Instead of grappling with the national debt hrough arcane Keynesian theories. why don't we convene a weekly round table of crystal-gazers under the auspices of the finance ministry and the central bank. We might succeed in maintaining high employ ment and low inflation by varying interest and tax rates and public expenditure in keeping with interplan etary motions. If we set our rahu and ketu right, we might be able to appreciate the mercurial disposition of some our leaders and understand why olutocracy is an inalienable part of ou destiny. After that, we can move on to the specifics of our cyber laws.

This admixture of ancient

# by PUSKAR BHUSAL

wisdom with artificial intelligence

could provide us a providential

escape from our worldly woes. Mo

conform to official policy as enunciated by Minister for Indus-

try, Commerce and Supplies Purna

Bahadur Khadka in his World

Intellectual Property Day message

last week. "Our traditional knowl

edge and folk culture, too, are the

products of the creativity of our

for future generations," Khadka

intellectual property protection

membership of the World Trade

responsibilities that come with it.

elobalisation we should strive to

the wider world. Let's invite the

gypsy clairvoyants, hieroglyphists

and TV psychics to offer purposeful

thoughts on ways of expanding our

Turkey who said all those wonderful

things about our prime minister a

help us recruit fortune-tellers from

for the plunge in tourist arrivals, we should start road shows specifically

promoting Nepal as the prime

and their fellow travellers. To

the possible depredations of

confidence tricksters, a strict

licensing procedure should be

Metrology to work out a rating

prediction hits and misses.

imposed. We should then ask the

system based on annual audits of

Since almost everything in

Nepal revolves around politics, we

might stand to benefit the most if w

sed the stars more extensively in

should ensure mandatory screening

election tickets. Those who clear that

nominees. That way, losers won't be

start scheming against party colleagues. Winners, for their part,

rould be humbled by the knowl

celestial forces and might learn to be

edge that their success rests or

a little patient with signature

ampaigns regardless of the side

they're on Once our leaders acquire

occult following, they would be able

to onide us to national salvation in

nspired by Churchillian commer

aries will realise that never in the

field of Nepali civilisation would so

much be owed by so many to so few

blood, toil, tears and sweat would no

Make no mistake, we will have

other onerous responsibilities, such

perspiration that grips the deity in

as watching for the next spell of

Dolakha. If you want to rate your

The precise moment we accept that

longer determine our common

future could prove to be our

all its splendour. Those of us

this firmament. Political parties

of birth charts before granting

hurdle should be tested for any

possible mismatches with other

desrination for all futuristic voyage

protect Nepalis and foreigners from

Instead of blaming one another

few weeks ago could be asked to

world's best tarot card readers,

revenue base. The savant from

rness the accumulated wisdom o

the honourable minister added

In the true spirit of

Organisation but also bear the

would help us not only gain

exhorted us. Nepal's successes in

ancestors [and] it is indispensable

continually encourage the creativity

importantly, though, it would

"We burnt them the day he died." Chandra was a Kami. His mother died when he was just five, at ten he ursed his father on his deathbed. One of his sisters took care of him. Raiendra was his childhood friend from school, and recalls: "Chandra didn't even have money for slippers, he always went barefoot. He couldn't afford a school uniform, so he stitched it himself." Chandra and Raiendra were always at the top of their class. After fifth grade, Chandra moved away to work his way to secondary school. He sold newspapers, and took up the job of his metalsmith ancestors. He paid his way through college and graduated in

"In the twenty five years I've known Chandra I never saw him angry," but would always convey his thoughts in a gentle way." Chandra said he wanted to be a teacher, or a singer. But the odds were against him

the Gulf for work and tried to put together some money, but couldn't raise enough. The next thing Raiendra heard was that Chandra then 23 had for this country." inined the Manists.

village now. Time for the chaite huri storms that lash the hill-towns, swaying es, rattling doors and blowing roofs away. These days, with the storms come armed men. At night, the knock on the door means they are Magists some strangers, some relatives. Dressed in fatigues, carrying guns, they demand food and shelter. At times they cover the walls of the school with revolutionary slogans. Few people have the courage to refuse the rebels demands since they have heard enough rumours about cruel retaliation

But the security forces are never far behind. It does not take long before soldiers, wearing similar fatigues, arrive on patrol. All young men are suspect, they are interrogated and sometimes beaten up. "Here we are caught between the Manhadi and sena," says one of Laxmi's neighbours "Anytime, anything can happen to us." The headmaster tries to get to the school early to whitewash slogans on the walls.

folks at the Bureau of Standards and week they came and said we were helping the Machadi to make gagri we can carry them down to the bazaar anymore."

The women face different problems. With the young men gone, their fields by hand. After some encounters with the security forces, the women don't dare go into the forest anymore. Says Nila: "We try to tell them we're

 "He had always been a strange child, always running off here and there", his mother, Saraswati recalls. "I always had to drag him back after able to complain of conspiracies and love for him died when he joined the Machadi. My big fear is that he will come and take his voungest brother to the jungle."

Night falls fast in the village these days. Rajendra talks quietly, and tries to articulate his anger, "Our leaders still don't know what drove people like Chandra to become Maoists." Rajendra hates the Maoists, but says he loved his friend. He is quiet for a moment, then says: "People change all the time, Chandra may have changed his political views, he could have been a leader and one day done something great for this country. On the day they

Chandra was 27 when he was shot by undercover security forces annar ently posing as Maoists. They met him a day earlier in a distant town and houses along the ridge. He may have seen the flowering fruit trees, and

noticed the freshly ploughed fields, rich golden brown, waiting for new life. At the chautara below the village Saraswati had sat down, a doko on her back. That was when she saw Chandra walking up the trail, looking handsome in grey pants and a colourful shirt. Four men suddenly sprang up on him, kicking him, Chandra tried to stand up, but could not. The men drew their guns, and pulled the trigger. •

identity of the villagers )



# Chandra's story

LUCIA DE VRIES IN CENTRAL NEPAL

t was a picture-perfect day. The snow mountains to the north were shining and the Kali Gandaki flowed placidly at the bottom of the steep valley. Children, some in neat uniforms and others in tattered blue tunics were a doko on her hack and was on her way to her field. Then, three gunshots

Two weeks after Chandra's death, villagers look away when his name is mentioned. His sister I aymi and sister-in-law Nila hury their heads and cannot speak. Nila hasn't been able to inform her husband, who works overseas, about his brother's death. "He's got many problems of his own, the news would only make him worry." The security forces come by often. nterrogating and sometimes beating family members of Magists, and going through their things, "We can't even show you Chandra's pictures," says Nila

English and sociology.

recalls Rajendra, still using the present tense. "He had a passionate nature, Raiendra, a bahun, oot a job as an English teacher at a local school. Chandra decided to migrate to

"He could have been a leader and one day, and done something great

It is late spring in the

The local Kamis make gagri brass pots, but since the Maoists started using them for their improvised explosives, the security forces are strict. Hari is an 18-year-old who failed his SLC and has joined his uncle's smithy to learn the ancestral craft. His face is blackened with smoke and dust. "Last bombs," says Hari, "but this is our only livelihood. Now we don't know whether

workload is overwhelming: tending the fields, taking care of the children and elders. They have to fetch water, forage for fodder and fuel, and tend the just women and want to live in peace. But because our boys have joined the Manhadi, for them we are the enemy."

The son of one of Chandra's neighbours joined the Maoists when he was school." The security forces interrogate her from time to time, but Saraswati doesn't care anymore. Her face hardens when she talks about her son: "My

brought him to his home village. Walking the trail that he remembered from his boyhood, Chandra must have looked up at the familiar row of mud

(Names and some of details have been changed to protect the



# **Food for thought**

### Who's thinking about consumer rights?

grocery stores, as is this Beed's ont there are many things that ng smiles to the face. For instance, a st glance it appears that two leading ndian brands of vegetable oil\_Dhara and Sweekar—are also made in Nepal. But appearances are misleading, and this is simply an instance of a Nepal anufacturer "borrowing" a success il brandname.

It's a lesson any would-be sinessperson learns fast in Nepal. s easy to ride on the successful narketing strategies of good brands Bluntly put, steal their name, steal their logo, whatever it is that makes them nstantly recognisable. So if someone idds a 'Smile' to 'Aqua', don't cry fou They're simply following a basic rule of ade in this country

Nepal is a haven for imported ods, if only because there are no rules or disclosure—you don't have to tell wone where your import was anufactured, and no one even seem o care to know what's in it. Think of ll those tins of Belgian ghiu that come here via the Middle East. You can bet that if we had customs officials who ould read the Arabic on the packaging naterials, we'd be consuming a lot less hiu past its Best Before date. You v those Malaysian crackers you like o much? Everwonder what the Bahasa rapper notes say? We perhaps believe nat less comprehensible the names, the etter the products.

I realised with a cold thrill this ming that none of us really knows about our rights as consumers, about

happens if one falls ill after consuming a product that has been imported without any declaration? I, personally, and most people I know have no idea what legal recourse we have and with whom—the retailer, the importer or the manufacturer? We don't even



know who determines whethe imported perishables are safe for numan consumption and how. We mality of these products

It must be obvious by now that the Beed believes it is important to ensure an open economy. But that does not mean we ignore indiscriminate importing or smuggling We need to create non-tariff barrier and we need to have mechanisms to onitor our market. For instance, a multinational that has Nepal as its authorised territory spends millions on advertising and marketing. But an importer operating out of the tax

immediate, direct benefits by simply importing the same product from

It's time we thought of how w can make the Consumer Protection Ac (yes, it does exist) more effective, in words and in deed. It should allow for serious punishment to manufacturers who lift brandnames or importers who don't disclose all the details of their products. In the case of food items, the name of the manufacturer and their address should be clearly visible, alon with the expiration details. The retail price should be clearly spelt out. As for imports, the system should only allow for authorised dealers, so if there is a problem, there is an indentifiable point of responsibility from which action is initiated

Legislation should be followed by action and here it isn't just the government. The business commualso needs to get its act together All our chambers and other business associations should actively ask the government to draft and implement better consumer protection laws. And then there are the consumer forums-

they need to get moving. Plenty of other issues relate to patents, trademarks and disclosure in Nepal. But you can tell we have a long way to go when the Finance Minister appears on national TV sporting a shirt that proclaims loudly Compag. ♦

Readers can post their views at arthabeed@vahoo.com

# "We need to talk directly with potential tourists."

Has your agency had any cancellations following the recent cases of

is so weak, it is now reduced to flying in the regional sector. When it flew

year. If we want long-lasting tourism, we need another international airlin

run by Nepalis. As long as there's no competition. I don't think RA will be

Negal had a box outside its marketing office, where we had to drop our

they would check the box. Even when we called by phone, they never

us out. Monopoly never improved anything. RNAC needs a strong

What about other international airlines?

Is anything happening in that direction?

competitor

reservation requests. We didn't have direct access. If the staff felt like it,

responded, marketing heads never gave appointments. Today, they seek

We can't just depend on those. Quite a few came, such as Lufthansa and

Dragon Air, But they withdrew after seeing no profit, Even Aeroflot, which

have the airlines disappeared, travel agencies have stopped promoting

Nepal. Can we afford to sell Nepal on the basis of international airlines

venture or solely with Nepali resources, they'll be obliged to make it run.

The realisation is dawning on the travel trade sector. There are about 400

and got guests, it could earn that amount in five days. If a trekking agency

trekking agencies in Nepal, about 450 travel agencies, and numerous

hotels-many empty. If a big hotel like the Hvatt invested Rs 50 million

put in Rs 500,000, and brought in tourists, it could get that amount back

as profit from five groups. But whether it is local investment or a joint

Would people invest, given the history of the domestic airline indus-

There has to be a trustworthy, honest team. In Nepal, we've seen numerous

venture, the management should be handed over to outsiders

that might null out any time? If an airline is run by Negalis as a joint

has been looking to more profitable sectors, has withdrawn flights. Not only

competent. I remember, when there were no other domestic airlines, Royal

Europe, it brought in about 2,500 tourists a month—roughly 30,000 a

In cases of extortion, the money should be returned to the tourists

You've often highlighted the need for more airline seatsÖ



entrepreneur for close to 30 years, and in the airline business since 1993. He is chairman of Asian Airlines Helicopter, Skyline Airways and Asian Trekking. Ang Tshering spoke to Nepali Times about marketing Nepal directly to overseas clients and the domestic aviation industry.

NT: How has business been since the emergency?

And Tshering Sherpa: The emergency has had a negative impact—tourists are down by 60 percent. There many factors—the palace incident, 11 September, the security situation and the emergency, Of course, those tourists who have come know it's quite safe here. But those who haven't think the situation must be extraordinary for an emergency to be declared.

How have you been coping?

From time to time, we go abroad and meet our clients directly and brief

n the airlines, not the other way round. Otherwise, you might have to fly There have been inquiries. International agencies are concerned, mainly empty once you reduce the commissions. Most of Skyline's promoters are those in the English-speaking countries, who tend to react quickly to news. from the travel trade, so there is enough business to sustain it

What do you think of the government is recent move to hike the fees payable by private airlines? A country's tourism depends a lot on its national carrier. Ours isn't strong, which makes the long-term development of tourism difficult. Royal Nepal

The aviation industry is in dire straits. The government expresses sympathy, but adopts stringent measures, doubling and tripling its fees. In the current situation, parking, landing and navigation fees should be reduced, but they've been increased. This makes it difficult for us to function. All airlines have requested that fees be reduced in this critical situation and have asked the Nepal Oil Corporation to be a bit lenient

you don't the commission agents will kill you. The agents should depend

#### What about the proposed subsidies for flights to remote airfields? (See Riz briefs #91)

It is a good idea, but hasn't been implemented yet. The rural areas will have the facility. Since there's no subsidy now we suffer losses. We can't even raise money for the cost of fuel, and so airlines don't want to fly

#### How is your heliconter division doing?

We were the first to bring in heavy helicopters in the early 90s. The MI-17 revolutionised the rural economy, enabling equipment for developmen projects and goods to be transported. We carry out rescue flights and transport expedition equipment. They've stopped flying in food supplies and there aren't many places to fly to owing to the security situation. Our iob is providing relief to the people, but we can't just land anywhere Insurance companies get littery. It's difficult to fly even if we want to

You have a chain of hotels in Khumbu. How is the situation there? It's the safest place now, so most tourists coming to Nepal are going there. Hotel occupancy is good compared to other places, though of course not is good as in previous seasons. Prior to the slump in tourism, industrialists felt they were running the country, businessmen said the economy was based on them. Now everyone's sitting up and taking note that tourism is also an important sector. The government is feeling it, industry is feeling it, commerce is feeling it. The impact is being felt everywhere

### You actually studied to be a doctor, what made you change your

I did for three years, and was all set to be a doctor. But the climate didn't agree with me. I grew up at 4,000 m, my college was at sea level. I was llways falling sick. The doctor suggested I go to a medical school in the hills. I didn't want to be a doctor who was always sick. I thought I'd rather do business and joined the travel industry. For some time I worked as an assistant to Mike Cheney, a pioneer of Nepal's travel industry. Then I set

required to indicate, if applicable, the names and addresses of their local chances of making an eternal examples where people have raised money, invested, but pulled a fast agents together with a copy of the agreement for providing service in contribution to this astrological them on the current situation. That helps lessen their fears. We tell them one. We need an efficient, honest management team. I'm ready to invest connection with this bid. endeavour, set up an appointment that though there is a problem, no tourists have been attacked so far. with the gentleman in Bhaktapur to vhatever resources I have 10. GTZ reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids received and/or Some are convinced, they come. We have to send out a strong message get an egg smashed on your through the government, the travel trade. The government should try How come Skyline hasnit had to implement cost-cutting measures as accept any bid or part of a bid without assigning any reason whatsoever. forehead. If you get it on your fac harder with the embassies—many embassies don't update their websites, so other airlines haveono staff lay-offs, no salary cuts? they have six-month-old news up. Tourists look at this and hesitate to come. well, tough luck. ♦ When you run a business, you have to have a certain market in hand. If

# Feats of da Kathmandu Valley's famous pottery has to change with the times.

don't participate in. The men turn these improvised wheels

with a pole at a frenzied pace

until the tyre is spinning fast

ALEXANDRA ALTER or three pots in about five ryday since he was a minutes. "It's incredible that the int-sized 12-year-old nots are so symmetrical. They're Tulici Babadur thrown so quickly and the tyre is Prajapati has collected so unstable and unpredictable," clay and kneaded it says Ani Kastan, an American with his feet. It's tiring potter who studied potting but nothing compared methods in Thimi I arger nots with what follows. Thimi's such as the deodas used to store Prajapati potter community chhang, are first built up out of doesn't use the elegant little clay coils and then beaten wheels most of us picture smooth with a paddle. potters working with. They use old tyres filled with concrete they are dried in the sun, then that weigh more than 300 kg. fired in communal, makeshift Starting the wheels is so kilns, that are built and delaborious, it is the only aspect of stroved every four days. Pots pot-making that Thimi's women

streets. Not surprisingly many

After the pots are completed emembers. Today some potters have resorted to vehicles, but from each workshop are taken to many still sell their wares by the town square, where they are travelling on foot. stacked up, covered with straw and ash, and then burned in a kind of smoke firing. Smoke and

Thimi residents have chronic lung problems. When the fire subsides and the ash is swent away, the pots are left to cool It's common for over fifty percent of the pots to be destroyed during the firing process. Those that survive the iring are carried around to different villages in vokes and are sold door-to-door. "My father used to walk all the way from Thimi to Swoyambhu selling his pots," Santo Kumar Prajapati

Tulisi Bahadur, now in his seventies, may have entered the family trade at the age of 12, but claims he learnt the art of

pottery at a much younger age. Like many of Thimi's children, he began making pots as a toddler, playing with clay and imitating his father. Today, he and his wife Chinimaya maintain his father's pottery workshop on the first floor of their house where they spend long hours throwing pots.
But of their four children,

only their daughter has chosen to follow the family trade. Their three sons have moved to Kathmandu to work as tailors and in knitting factories. Even their daughter now works in her husband's workshop, leaving the couple with no one to bequeath their studio to. "I had hoped that all my children would become potters, but I didn't want to interfere with their wishes," says Tulisi Bahadur.

Nearly all of Thimi's nhabitants, who belong to the lewar Prajapati caste of potters, ny their trade extends far back in their bloodlines. But of the estimated 8,000 Prajapatis who live in the area surrounding Γhimi, only 2,000 claim that profession today. The others, like Bahadur Prajapati's sons, have sought more lucrative work n Kathmandu as bus drivers, aiters, or factory workers, leaving many family pottery workshops without an heir

The high rate of defection rom the potter trade is discon erting, but by no means surprising. Potters all over Nepal work extremely hard for little economic compensation. Most of the potters in Thimi adhere to the arduous traditional methods in which every aspect

of pottery production is completed manually—from mixing and drying the clay to powering the wheel. Of the roughly 1,000 workshops in Thimi, only four or five use modern potting technol-ogy such as electrically powered wheels and kerosene-fuelled kilns Since they don't have enough land to grow their own food, many potters walk to farms when rice and wheat are being har-

vested, trading storage pots for grain. They make just enough rofit to survive on. "I go to Kathmandu to sell pots when I run out of money," explains Tulisi Bahadur. But even that is a challenge today. Few Nepalis are interested in earthenware pots when they can buy cheaper. onger-lasting mass-produced kitchenware made of steel

With such impediments to their livelihood, it's no wonder that so many of Thimi's potters have forsaken their ancestral vocation. "Pottery is a very

difficult profession now Ir's hard work for little money says Santo Kumar Prajapati. who owns Thimi Ceramics. Santo Kumar and his brother Laxmi Kumar realised early on that the obstacles facing the Valley's potters in producing and marketing their wares would only increase, and so in 1985 founded Thimi Ceramics one of the town's first modern workshops. Moving with the times has allowed Santo Kumar and Laxmi Kumar to be innovative—and remarkably productive. In addition to electric wheels and pugging machines to mix clay, the brothers own one of few kerosene-fuelled kilns in the area, which can fire up to 3,000 pieces of glazed ceramics at a time. Unlike the unpredictable straw kilns used by most of Thimi's potters, the tempera ture in the brick kiln is adjust able, allowing the ceramics to first be fired at a low tempera-









In 1984, Danish founded the

ture and then refired at 1.000 legrees after they have been glazed. The double-firing technique melts the glaze and ensures that the ceramics are

pay for handmade pots that reak easily. Potters need to find new methods " believes Santo Kumar Retaining traditional rocedures isn't always a bad

potters have a lot more incen-





Ceramics Production Project 2

German-sponsored organisation

materials at a reasonable cost In addition to providing the chemicals and minerals necessary for glaze, the collective offers workshops for potters who want to learn new techniques. Three months ago, a Swiss expert came to teach a new glaze method at the collective. Though Nepal's ceramics are still fathoms behind the rest of the world in most respects, the glazed pottery produced here is technically superior to ceramics in Europe, China India and America-it is lead-free and non-toxic

everyone in the collective." says

Santo Kumar. The ingredients

prohibitively expensive, as well

is difficult for most potters to

obtain, but through the collec-

tive they can procure these

necessary for glazing would be

Even today, Nepal's ceramic work has been eclipsed by products from India and China, both of which can mass-produce more durable stoneware Kathmandu Valley potters hav until now been limited to the brittle red terracotta clay locally available and found under the topsoil of rice fields. But members of the collective are developing ways to introduce stoneware clay to pottery workshops here. The research is expensive and requires imported kerosene kiÎn operated by Santo



Kumar and Laymi Kumar is unsuitable for stoneware firing, which requires a minimum temperature of 1,280 degrees. At such a high temperature, the brick kiln would melt, resulting in a huge gas explosion. At the collective, however, a small high fire kiln has been constructed and is being used to experiment with stoneware clay and new glazes. If the research at the collec-

tive is successful, there is hope

that domestically produced pottery will one day supplant oreign merchandise in the ceramic market. But Nepal's potters have a long way to go efore they'll be equipped to compete with Indian imports. "To rival India, we need to be able to produce longer lasting stoneware ceramics. We'll have t replace all our equipment, and that's expensive," says Santo Kumar. Such an undertaking wil require substantial capital investment and time, but for the moment, the technical advances being made in workshops in Thimi and Bhaktapur signal that a movement to reinvigorate Nepal's ceramic work is underway If nothing else, the Nepal Ceramics Cooperative society is working to ensure that Kathmandu Valley's pottery tradition won't decline



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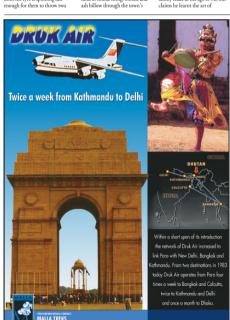
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# **Wanted: change of heart**

Bosnian conflict. On 16 April the

resignation after a report of the July

1995 massacre in the Bosnian town

of Srebrenica, where 7,500 Muslim

the Serbs under the watchful eyes of

Dutch UN peacekeepers who failed

to protect them, despite Stebrenica

This is what is generally regarded as

the worst atrocity in Europe since

Asian countries are sensitive to

these changes in the political complex-

instance, has called for the EU to play

a more active role in the Middle Fast

while enlisting Russian support as

well after a visit to Moscow last week

Saud al Faisal. On 20 April, during a

by Saudi Foreign Minister Prince

visit to Iran by Chinese President

Jiang Zemin Reijing and Tehran

in the region", a reference to the

jointly rejected efforts for "hegemony

ion of the region. Saudi Arabia, for

World War II.

being declared a UN 'safe haven'.

men and hows were massacred by

Dutch government of Prime Minister Wim Kok tendered its

Pakistan must stop putting all its eggs in the American basket.

European Union-Mediterranear Conference in Spain, this week marks the second major initiative by the EU in 2002 to move closer to a more broad based less ITS centric foreign policy. The tion of Islamic Conference foreign ministers meeting in Istanbul in February.

For the first time in three decades, a distinct European foreign policy outlook is emerging perhaps driven by the unilateral direction of the US 'war on terrorism'. It suggests an independent approach on relations with issues concerning Muslims and the Islamic world. European sensitivity to Muslim concerns is evident from three key developments in the last week.

First, the decision of EU foreign ministers, meeting in Luxembourg last week, to send their highest foreign policy official, Javier Solana, next month to "ease Pakistan-India tensions over Kashmir". Like Palestine, this is an unresolved dispute that affects Muslims in the disputed state of Kashmir, in what is the first ever European diplomatic initiative of its kind toward South Asia.

Second, in a major public opinion poll released on 17 April by the International Herald Tribune, there was a wide gap in European and American perceptions regarding the Palestine-Israeli onflict. The overwhelming majority of French, British, German and Italian public opinion support the Palestinians against Israel, unlike the US where support for Israel runs two times more than empathy for Palestinians.

Third, history is also catching up with Europe over crimes committed against Muslims in the

OPINION

But Pakistan prefers, as in the past, to put all its eggs in the American basket. From 1980, for the greater part of two decades, Pakistan had an Afghan-centric policy highlighted by the 'joint ihad' with the Americans until 1989, when Washington ditched Pakistan after the Red Army's defeat and exit from Afehanistan From 1989 to 2001 Pakistan tried to fashion its own Afghan policy, cutting off friends and replacing avourites, until it was stuck with the Taleban. The consequences for the Pakistani state, isolated from its

Cold War adversary Russia's relations with former enemies like China and Iran have grown after the break-up of the Soviet Union Instead of making foreign policy an appendage of American interests and objectives in the

friends in the region, were

disastrous Pakistan's relations with

Russia illustrate of this mindset.

ground realities have changed but

islamabad still treats Russia like a

with Pakistan's own terests—Islamabad needs to join the growing consensus among Furone ans and Arahs on key issues These include Palestine, the Israeli government's atrocities, and President George W Bush's 'axis of evil'. And despite wha UN Special Envoy Terje Roed-Larsen on 17 April denounced as

"morally repugnant ... horrific" spectacle after the Israeli operatio in Ienin. Bush the next day called Sharon "a man of peace". No surprise then, perhaps, that Egypt' President Mubarak, a close US ally. declined to meet visiting US Secretary of State Colin Powell during his Cairo visit earlier this month. The yawning chasm between American policy toward the Muslim world and perceptions among Europeans and Muslims is likely to widen as the US seeks to expand the 'war on terrorism' in e coming months, this time with possible action against Iraq.

Pakistan needs to take cogni sance of these developments and focus its diplomacy in Europe and the Arab world, to be in sync with its own interests, as well as Muslim opinion. The emergence of a European foreign policy, togethe with the increasingly activist role of China and an assertive Arah world point to probable challenges to the world view and policies of the 'sole superpower', the United States, as i seeks to dictate a direction in the war on terrorism'. ♦ (IPS)

(Mushahid Hussain was Minister for Information in Nawaz Sharif's government.)

New Delhi - The Indian government is reviewing a five-decade ban on foreign investment in print media, having deferred a decision to allow selective foreign direct investment (FDI) in non-news journals. Information and broadcasting ministry officials said the cabinet did not take up Wednesday the scheduled agenda of allowing 74 percent FDI in Indian editions of non-news scientific and technical journals, as it wanted to take a fresh look at the comprehensive policy. Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pramod Mahajan told reporters that the government felt the issue needed to be discussed in a "comprehensive manner." The government reportedly wants to review a 1955 cabinet resolution banning any foreign investment in Indian print media. At the time, it was felt that allowing foreign participation in the sector would be inimical to India's interests. India's print media policy was primarily this cabinet decision, disallowing foreign investment or any role of foreign players in this segment. Though a parliamentary standing committee recently upheld the resolution stating foreign participation in print media could

#### Finally, aid for Taleban prisoners

SHEBERGAN - Two hours west of Mazar-I-Sharif, is the second larges prison for Taleban fighters. Last week, the Red Cross workers put up five giant white tents, designed to hold 128 men each, in the prison court yard. Right away, they started emergency feeding of almost 100 prisoners who were chronically malnourished. Shebergan is the headquarters for General Abdul Rashid Dostum, an Uzbek warlord who controls much of northern Afghanistan. The local prison, which is run by his soldiers, houses more than 3,000 Taleban fighters who were captured in the first phase of the war when the city of Kunduz fell to the joint Northern Alliance-United States alliance last year. Some 800 are from the American base in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba in January after interrogation by the US military, while 350 were released on the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Adha in February. Those who remained have been hadly underfed and cells are overcrowded, with 50 men or more crammed into a room. Dozens have died while in detention. The humanitarian operation follows months of pleas for help by the local
Afghan military doctors who work in the tiny three-room infirmary here,

## More weapons in South Asia

NEW DELHI - India's acquisition last month of sophisticated US-made

Foreign cash in Indian media

compromise national security and sovereignty, a senior minister told IANS it was not binding on the government. (IANS)

the neighbouring country of Pakistan. A few alleged leaders were flown to designed to hold about eight patients. (IPS

military equipment symbolises the rapidly growing defence and security ties between New Delhi and Washington in the changed political climate after 11 September. The purchases include eight US-made fire-finder counter battery radars, capable of detecting enemy artillery guns and batteries and returning fire to neutralise them. New Delhi, reversing its anti-US stance under the right-wing, Bharatiya Janata Party governmer was among the first to offer military support for the Afghan war. Though Washington preferred to look to its trusted ally, Pakistan, instead, the US was grateful for India's support and Indo-US relations have changed from periodic policy reviews to an inflow of American military hardware. Whe officials from India's newly constituted Defence Procurement Board signed the deal for the AN/TPQ-37 radar system built by Thales Raytheon Systems Corporation of California in Washington on 17 April, it was the first major Indo-US defence deal in over 40 years. It also reversed a policy that saw U.S. sanctions imposed following New Delhi's 1998 nuclear tests. Negotiations for the artillery-fire finding radar—the absence of which was felt desperately by the army during the 1999 border war with Pakistan in disputed Kashmir—were called off after India's

nuclear tests, which were matched by tests by Pakistan within days. (IPS)



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sised exports, none orossly violated riesy about the fundamentals property rights. Their strategies bear only passing similarity to today's at govern the theory and practice of development has taken roo ensus. South Korea and Taiwan that growth requires foreign technol-ogy and good institutions. Failure to retained high levels of protection for a long time, and made active use of grow can be attributed to either (or both) of these, the "protection" industrial policies China's reforms are marked by partial liberalisation pathology, in which governments two-track pricing, limited deregulatymie progress by reducing access to tion, financial restraint, an unorthodox legal regime, and the absence of clear foreign investment and technology. and the other "corruption" pathology, private property rights. India barely where political leaders fail to respect reformed its cumbersome trade and property rights and the rule of law. The natural remedies are claimed to be industrial regime before its economy took off in the 1980s. These growth economic openness and improved governance, which became the strategies combine orthodoxy with unconventional institutional innovations that relax constraints on growth cornerstones of development strateg in virtually every country during the at least cost to the social and political fabric. Of course, heterodoxy doesn't last fifteen years. Experience presents an awkward always pay off. Most countries with fit with this conception. Consider protected economies and lax protection Latin America, where there has been of property rights languish. But some

greater enthusiasm for the so-called "Washington Consensus" than of the world's most successful nomies have prospered while doing things not in the rulebook. anywhere else. Policymaking there was better than ever in the 1990s, but few To grasp the deficiencies of the countries in the region grew faster than in the period before 1980. Or nal view, begin with the problem of technology adoption. consider more successful countries-Learning what a country is (or can be) South Korea and Taiwan since the good at producing is a key challenge. early 1960s, China since the late leither economic nor management 1970s, India since the early 1980s. theory helps entrepreneurs (or the They have done extremely well under state) choose appropriate investment heterodox arrangements. All emphaamong the range of modern-sector

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activities. Yet making the right investment decisions is essential to growth, because they determine the ttern of specialisation. Today's intellectual property regime protects innovators in advanced countries by issuing temporary monopolies, ie, patents. But investors in developing countries who figure out that an existing good can be produced profitably at home and set up a model for others to emulate don't get such

protection, though the social returns

can be high.

Laissez-faire is not the optimal solution here, just as it isn't in the case of research and development of new products. Desirable governmen policy consists of encouraging investment and entrepreneurship in the modern sector ex ante, but, equally mportant, rationalising production and driving out poor performers ex post. Institutional arrangements also have large elements of specificity. Discovering which institutions are suitable to local conditions requires xperimentation Two-track reform worked well in Deng's China but not in Gorbachev's Soviet Union. Import substitution fostered competitive industries in Brazil, but not in

Argentina. Gradualism may be

appropriate to India, not Chile

specificity helps explain why

For growth, the world needs less consensus, more experimentation.

........... successful countries—such as China. South Korea, Taiwan, and Chileusually combine unorthodox elements with orthodox policies. It may also account for why important institutional differences persist among advanced countries in areas such as the role of the public sector, the nature of financial markets, labour markets, and social insurance mechanisms.

The difference between

economic principles and their

institutional embodiment is that most key economic principles are institution-free Incentives competition, hard-budget constraints, sound money, fiscal sustainability, property rights are central to how economists think abou policy and its reform, but they don't demand specific institutional solutions. Property rights can be implemented through common law, civil law, or Chinese-style socialism Competition can be maintained by a combination of free entry and laissez-faire, or by a well-function ing regulatory authority. Because policymakers operate in second-best environments, optimal reform trajectories—even in apparently straightforward cases such as price reform—cannot be designed withou due regard to prevailing condition: and weighing the consequences for multiple distorted margins. All adaptations require a pro-active rol for the state and civil society, and collaborative strategies that foster entrepreneurship and institution building. The world needs less consensus now, and more experi-

mentation. 

(Project Syndicate) (Dani Rodrik is professor of political economy at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.)

## Fleeing from trouble, to trouble

dragging an unconscious asylum seeker across a concrete floor have sparked calls for a commission of inquiry into conditions in Australia's refugee detention centres. At a rally outside the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) head office in Canberra last Wednesday, the Refugee Action Collective said that there had been a protest last Friday pight and this was just the culmination of a series of incidents over the past months. The day before, a 12-year old Iranian child attempted to commit suicide, an Afghani man jumped off a roof into razor wire and two men cut their stomachs and wrists. The protests at the Curtin detention centre in western Australia are believed to have erupted when asylum seekers grew frustrated at their inability to get phone access to external supporters. (IPS)

## The new crusaders

WASHINGTON - Conservationists and campaigners from Guyana, Poland, Puerto Rico, Somalia, Thailand, and the Gwich'in indig-enous tribe of North America were honoured Monday by the US-based Goldman Environmental Foundation with the \$125,000 Goldman Environmental Prize Many including Fatima librell this year's winner from Africa, have had their lives threatened in their fight to protect the environment against powerful corporate interests

Jibrell worked across clan boundaries and through a civil war to establish Horn Relief, an organisation that conducts awareness campaigns about the ecological damage caused by unrestricted charcoal production. In Guyana, Jean La Rose, an Arawak woman, has also been harassed for working to stop mining on land claimed by indigenous communities and helping indigenous communities file
Guyana's first land rights lawsuit in 1998. The Gwich'in tribe have been fighting for years against drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Pisit Charnsooh, the Asian winner, is an ecologist from Thailand's southern province of Trang, on the Malay Peninsula. who works to protect coastal fisheries and mangrove swamps from logging, charcoal harvesting, and shrimp farming. The winner from Europe, Jadwiga Lopata, works to preserve and promote Poland's

BERLIN - With the German economy just rising out of the doldrums and unemployment showing signs of slowing, the decision by the powerful metalworkers' union IG Metall to ballot for a strike action over a 6.5 percent pay rise seems questionable to many economists, politicians and employers' groups. A strike by the 2.6 million metalworkers, crucial to the automobile industry, which accounts for just over a fifth of total world production and one-sixth of Germany's own total industrial turnover-could bring prospects for an economic recovery in the EU's largest economy to a grinding halt. A strike could begin as early as 6 May, if members vote in favour. Employers are willing to offer a two per cent wage rise to metalworkers this year.

The dispute is a problem for Germany and Chancellor Gerhard

Schroeder who faces elections in September, but also for the 15nation European Union, which is looking to Germany, its largest economy, to attack sluggish growth. The European Central Bank says wane pressures are a risk to growth and likely to fuel inflation. Such bargaining in Germany affects the Euro zone, comprising Belgium, Austria, France, Finland, Luxembourg, Italy, Netherlands, Germany, Portugal, Ireland, Greece and Spain. High pay deals in Germany will force the ECB to cancel thoughts of interest rate cuts to push demand, an official said. IG Metall insists a substantial pay hike will stimulate domestic demand in the economy. (IPS)

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cut, in an attempt to achieve full isolation. It is difficult to see how good faith nevotiations can proceed under such conditions. The situation inside the Nativity is getting worse by the hour. There are over 200 Palestinians and 44 nuns, friars and priests from three religious orders inside. Some of the Palestinians are armed. Most are civilians. Sufficient food and medicine have been blocked. There are children who have been surviving on

BETHI FHFM - I am Hanna Nasser, the mayor of Bethlehem, My home is

several hundred meters from the Church of the Nativity, which is currently

under siege. From my window you can see the smoke rising in Manger Square

Twice there have been fires at the Greek Orthodox Church. Burnt and crushed cars line the block. When the curfew is lifted, people leave their homes to find

Life here has become impossible. We do not sleep because the soldiers blare grinding noises from loudspeakers while also broadcasting messages informing

the Palestinians in the church that their families will face harm if they don't give

contact with those inside the church. Unfortunately, all the phone lines are now

up. Two weeks ago I was asked to join the negotiating team which is attempting to find a fair and peaceful resolution to the standoff. Until last night, I kept in steady

food, always watching for snipers, but there is nothing to buy.

Starving in Bethlehem An eyewitness account of the siege of the Church of the Nativity.

nothing more than one piece of bread per day. Starvation has become a very real possibility. The Red Cross has repeatedly and unsuccessfully pleaded to

deliver basic necessities. I have never suffered like these people, but I know what it means to seek refuge. I am a Christian, and in 1967 my family and I fled to the Church of the Nativity as the Israeli army invaded Bethlehem. We stayed there for three days and probably would have lost our lives had we not been given sanctuary. Many did the same during World War II. On one matter, the clergy still in the church have been quite clear in conversations with me. They are the furthest thing from hostages. Their decision to remain is based not simply on a concern for people in need, but also on the desire to protect the sanctity of the holy site. As the birthplace of Jesus Christ, the 1,400-

year-old Nativity is truly the mother of all churches

Viable solutions to the stand-off exist. The innocent civilians in the church should be permitted to depart without detention by the military. Those for whom there is evidence of wrongdoing must stand trial in their home territory. Neither international law nor the Oslo accords permit arbitrary extradition, so it is not an option to transfer the accused Palestin-ians to a military tribunal in Israel. Bethlehem can not wait. I entered municipal government in 1976 and I have been mayor for 5 years. This is the worst condition in which I've ever seen the city. The tanks have damaged buildings and mosaics that are over 10 centuries old. For 18 months. tourism, the lifeblood of the city, has stagnated at the checkpoints. The municipal economy has lost \$220 million in the last year and a half.

Unemployment is now over 70 percent. None of this even begins to measure the toll in human lives lost. The siege of Bethlehem must end. Those inside the Church of the

Nativity are not the only ones at risk of starvation. 

(IPS) (Hanna Nasser, mayor of Bethlehem, wrote this comment with Ian Urbina, associate editor of the Washington DC-based magazine Middle East Report.)



# **Peace prescription**

Interview with Madhay Kumar Nepal, CPN-UML.

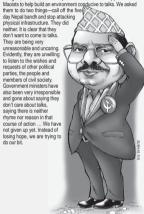
#### What do the government and the Maoists need to do, to bail the country out of this crisis?

Firet of all the Maniete have to and their violence and murder particularly the madness and their attacks on electricity and telecom systems, drinking water, radio and postal infrastructures. Stop hitting basic infrastructures like health posts, bridges, ambulances, VDC buildings and stop looting food being taken to the people. These acts are anti-people and anti-nation. Such activities don't increase popular support for the Maoists. Instead, people will begin to hate them more. Everyone has been appealing for an end to such acts, and we also repeatedly add our voice to the request.

The government also needs to make efforts to find a political solution to the problem. It should be careful not to make anti-constitutional moves that violate human rights. It has to end bad governance, corruption and irresponsibility, and try to win support from all sides to find a resolution. It must be capable of punishing those against whom corruption is alleged, or those who are already tainted. It must be open to take any path that could end the problems facing the country. It needs to be flexible and alert, and willing to make the changes needed, including amending the constituti

#### Youive even said that you are ready to mediate. What has been the reaction to that?

We said that if the circumstances were right, and if we could help by doing so, we were even ready to mediate. We also appealed to the





## ELD WORKSHOPS

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## More questions

Kantipur, 27 April

pental inc

THIS DAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NEDALL RESE

..Don't we need appropriate neans to achieve something? Doesn't cruelty lead to mor ruelty? Can a demonic mindset and mass destruction lead to the formation of a sound human inilization? But the Manists don't have

ars to listen to the questions They cannot listen to anything he requests, suggestions and advice of the political parties, itizens and the general public. I s as if they can only smell the smoke of ammunition. As if the perience beauty in death and nusic in screams. As if destruction utomatically means creation to hem. As if in their view, chaos tself leads to organisation. As if the screaming is, in their view, melodious

There are some questions for the Maoists—haven't we now eached the limit to the gruesome acts than can be carried out in the name of Mao? Even if this peak of destruction means victory for the Maoists, what sort of reward will they be getting...they will have to nitch their tents on the ashes of this destruction and rule from here. Is this the goal of the rument mass destruction and

One part of our society is what we know as government, which largely comprises people keen to take whatever they can while they are there. It has turned out to be a capable partner in the Maoist campaign of destruction and violence. The citizens seem to be trapped in the no man's land netween the insurgency and counter insurgency. On one side there are the Maoists, and on the other the government. The country has been abducted to a place of violence and counterviolence. And the citizens have become stateless, ... The prime minister, the leader of the ruling party and the main opposition an riving their Pajeros and Prados lance averted as US troops with nins have begun to roam across he country. They went to Accham, Rolpa and Gorkha.

What, we worry?

Kishor Nepal in Gorkhanatra

..The initiative taken by the

leaders of industry and commerce

Rabi Bhakta Shrestha and Rajesh

Kaji Shrestha was commendable.

commerce gathered at New Road

to oppose the general strike. Still,

the stores there did not open...It

and commerce sectors, which have

been repeatedly subject to Maoist

ions, have begun to stand up to

efforts, the large stores in the city

storekeepers kept their shutters

xartially open. The well-known

Bakery Café in Basantanur, the

Tara Gaon restaurant on New

Road and the Kumari Restau-

rant on Putali Sadak were

nner city and bylane

among those that were open

Besides these, many small stores

and tea-stalls were open in the

Nanglo on Darbar Marg, the

threats and demands for dona-

terrorism. But despite these

did not open, while smaller

is a good sign that the industry

t was the first time groups

representing industry and

26 April

The Manists have severed nmunication with many districts. Even newspapers canno reach districts that do not have air transport. All types of newspapers, big and small, were affected by the last general strike. Although the transport entrepreneurs said they would operate their vehicles, buses did not ply on long and short routes. The security forces had said that huses should be run in groups of 10, but that was not done. ...Government efforts alone

begun collective and individual are not adequate to make society arations to do so. "Kathmandu's public has always stood up for truth, justice and fearless and capable of standing up to bandhs. Every citizen has to stand up for the cause. Our development. We want to tell them society is getting more individualthat the rights won through the istic and narrow-minded, we are successful People's Movement of starting to be concerned only 1990 are being targeted and that about our family interests. Civil Nepal's sovereignty is being threatsociety and professionals issue ened. It is important to convince the ress statements from cushy people that the political parties which offices Whose interests are most headed the 1990 movement are again likely to be hurt if the terrorists united to oppose the attack on democracy," said Krishna Gopal who advocate dictatorial politics ome into power? No one seems Shrestha of the CPN-UML after the to be thinking about this. Why is meeting. Shrestha further added that t that the same neonle who talk the consortium of parties expects an ad nauseum about the skeletons overwhelming response, with left behind by Pol Pot are still not conscious and justice-loving member oncerned about what is happer of the public participating to oppose ing in our own country? Ordo the conspiracy against the people's rights and democracy. they believe that the Maoist

#### The next all-party meeting is terrorists are like the CPN scheduled for 4 May. A four-point (UML)-vegetarian communists? agenda backeen fixed for the all-part public meeting on 10 May Peace meet

 Protect the achievements made through the 1990 People's Move-

of the Rastriya Iana Morcha and

People's Front Fortsun days befo

the public meeting, the leaders of

participate on 10 May. The all-

the central office of the Nepali

initiate activities to urge the

party meeting held on 30 April at

Congress directed their workers to

general public to participate in the

meeting, and all seven parties have

Amik Serchan of the United

- protect the country from all forms of extremism; protest the violence, murder and
- move ahead for progress and change.

## Talking heads

on Radio Sagarmatha, 26 April.

Last week all Nepalis were shown, or television, the most recent pictures of Maoist leaders, and were told that they were crooks. The security forces told us: take a good look at these guys, because we have been looking all over for them, but we can't find



them. Have you seen any of them We all dutifully took a long look at them. Baburam comes across like he is leaner and meaner without his heard Comrade Prachanda has developed quite a midriff. It was interesting to see how the annearance of our revolutionaries has changed wer the years.

Anyway, on Tuesday we are

told that Chakra Prasad Bastola has taken a letter from Girija Prasad Koirala and delivered it personally to De Babusam in Noida outride New Delhi, Huh? Then on Wednesday the government announces a Rs 50 lakh reward for the capture of Dr Baburam and Compade Prachanda dead or alive There is also half that amount for anyone that gives information leading to the arrest of the two. So, that basically makes Chakraii eligible for Rs 25 lakhs since he

ows where Dr Baburam is hiding. Riddle: If you are asking for their heads, then why talk? If you are talking, then why not deliver their heads?

That's not all. The army is also offering a reward of Rs 25,000 for "factory-made revolvers and pistols" Trouble is, factory-made pistols are available in Darbhanga (in Bihar) for about Rs 5-10,000. I expect there is now going to be a big boom in the sale of factory-made pistols across the border. And why not, if you can make a cool Rs 10,000 profit on

## Bijukchhe of the Nepal Majdoor Kisan Party, Chitra Bahadur KC QUOTE OF THE WEEK

Budhabar, 1 May

A consortium of seven major

political parties plans to organise

an all-party public meeting on 10

May in Kathmandu. The meeting

is a symbolic move to protect the

schievements made in the 1990

People's Movement, and to

protest the violence, murder

The gathering will be

the Manists

and destruction carried out by

addressed by Girija Prasad Koirala

of the Nepali Congress, Madhav

Kumar Nepal of the CPN-UML

Badri Prasad Mandal of Nepal

Surva Bahadur Thapa of the RPP

iadbhavana Party, Narayan Man

"Maoist leader Badal misused the education he received in Russia."

 Russian Ambassador Valery Vartanovich Nazarov in Raidhani on 30 April (Maoist military commander Ram Bahadur Thapa, alias Badal, obtained a bachelor's degree from Russia.)





Above: Valuable heads Below: Worthless heads

EHIM Himal Khabarpatrika, 29 April-14 May

Back at Sundariial >10

# "Revealing myself to myself."

Into his third week at Sundarijal Jail, BP Koirala writes lovingly about his wife Sushila (left). He misses her and worries about her. He also analyses the prison world and the predictability of its rituals. He is introspective, asking why he writes this diary, and decides it is a discovery of the self. Every fortnight, Nepali Times brings you transcripts of BP's diary entries handwritten in English.

#### 16 January

There is no day when I don't remember Sushila. I make sentimental journey to her in Varanasi when we would be taking tea in the morning or in the afternoon. In vacant hours, which are many in a day, she is recalled to my mind. I have left her unprotected. She is a weak girl, needs constant attention and care and love otherwise she will wilt like a rare orchid in an unpropitious weather. She has at the same time a very high sense of honour. This combination-state of defencelessness combined with a sense of honouris a most tranic situation in which she finds herself in my absence. She will now rely upon her God more desperately and cling to her dancing with greater tenacity. I pray, that her God and dancing will save her till I am with her again. I will look after her properly after I am released. She used to tell me that I don't love her enough, that I only take care of her. I being a

iail. You are wrong dear Sushila. I may not love you enough enough to satisfy you wholly but I love you all right. I am not merely performing my duty. I derive happiness from caring for you, from being with you, from just holding your hand. I will not say that my decision to return to Nepal is my way of loving you, my politics is not a reinforcement of my love, a reaffirmation of it. I admit it is some kind of a rival to it. My dear, my political commitments have got to be met. It is a question of the whole lot of Nepalis and my personal honour. Please understand me.

I hope everybody will look after her. The new residence is in a convenient locality. She can go to her friends and relations. Nanu with her children will enliven her. Gradually she will start facing the situation normally. After all, time makes one get used to everything. Her health is what is worrying me. Let her survive till I get out.

#### 17 January

Jail is a private world within the public world. The surrounding walls not only cuts off physically the small area which is then made a jail from the wide world, they also create a tiny world out of the land they enclose—a world with its own rhythm, style and natterns. The most important physical senect of the pattern of this world is its regularity, or almost punctuality of its events. All important events happened at the appointed hours. Prisoners' hodies get attuned to this rhythm—regularity . If you don't see crows in the tree at 12:15 PM or the rat (we have a shaggy rat here) at 6PM or the dhobini bird early in the morning at the corner of the slanting roof or in the evening gambolling on the ground, or don't

violently disturbed. And we start commenting, if our food is not brought at the three appointed hours punctually—if it is delayed by a few minutes. GM immediately gets into rhythm and you can set your watch by the successive activities he does at successive hours punctu ally to the second

I can't do it—I am always out of step with its rhythm, hence is my jail life harder to bear. Apart from the physical world that the houndary walls create, they create a psychological world also—a world inside the mind of the prisoner. Here I am taken over by this world. The moment I sten inside the boundary walls, became moody, introspective. melancholy, sentimental, emotional, remorseful, etc etc etc. That is why in jail I am regular in writing diaries. Since iail's isolation doesn't permit a prisoner to record in his diary the events happening to him in the physical world, his jail diaries are records of his mental states—mostly they are discovery of the self through introspective analyses of his actions. By reminiscing, by reliving the past events of his life and analysing his reactions to them, he reveals himself to himself. Mostly, jail introspection and reminiscents [sic] are reminders of his shortcomings, of where he faulted or fell short of his own vaulted estimation. You start paying in remorse for your thoughtless actions, for your lack of understanding of other people's ease, for your haughtiness and arrogance. Perhaps this catharsis will do good ultimately to the man in prison.

# Can't wait for Cannes

Sushila Koirala

estival from 15-26 May. He follows in the footsteps of Liv Ullmann, Francis Ford Coppola, Clint Eastwood and Martin Scorsese, whose Gangs of New York has been tipped to open this year's event. Lynch is a Cannes favourite—Wild At Heart won the Palme D'Or in 1990, and last year Mulholland Drive won him best director. Sharon Stone and Michelle Yeoh, of Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon fame, will sit on the jury with Indo

actor Christine Hakim and directors Claude Miller, Regis Warenier, Raoul Ruiz, Walter Salles and Bille August.

American films are the most interesting competition selections this year. Alexander Payne, whos Election catapulted him to the front rank of US film-making, ha a new film. About Schmidt, in competition. This is a novel adaptation, and provides lack Nicholson with a powerhouse role as a widower in his 60s. There's a Cannes debut for another bright hone of American cinema. Paul homas Anderson, whose follow up to Magnolia is Punch-Drunk Love, a romantic comedy with Adam Sandler and Emily Watson. The festival also features Michael

Moore and his anti-gun lobby documentary Bowling for After last year's total shut-out of British directors from

the main competition, this year the selectors have fitted in three British productions (a total not seen since the four that made it in 1995)—Mike Leigh's All or Nothing. Ken Loach's Sweet Sixteen, Michael Winterbottom, a previous competitor with Wonderland and Welcome to Sarajevo, takes his 24 Hour Party People.

Returnees from 2001 include Russian cinema's

standard bearer Aleksandr Sokurov, who follows his Lenin biopic Taurus with a 90-minute, single-shot tribute to Leningrad's Hermitage museum. Israeli director Amos Gitai's Kedma examines Jewish immigration into Israel on the eye of the 1948 War of Independence, David Cronenberg's Spider adapts Patrick McGrath's London-set novel about a schizophrenic, with Ralph Fiennes in the lead. Other international cinema standbus include Iranian Abbas Kiarostami (10), Belgian brothers Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardennes (The Son), South Korean Im Kwon Tack (Stroke of Fire) and Portuguese nonagerian Mangel de Oliveira

is Roman Polanski, whose Warsaw Ghetto epic The Pianist looks an early favourite for the Palme d'Or

The out-of-competition screenings look promising: Woody Allen's Hollywood Ending makes the opening, a 20-minute segment of Gangs of New York will be aired and Robert Evans' documentary. The Kid Stays in the Picture gets a European premiere Punch-Drunk Love

Paul Thomas Anderson, US

Bowling for Columbine,

About Schmidt, Alexander

Irreversible, Gaspar Noe,

L'adversaire, Nicole Garcia.

amours, Robert Guediguian,

L'Ora di Religione, Marco

Spider, David Cronenbers

Marie-Io et ses deux

Demonlover Olivier Assure

Michael Moore US

00 0 图 图 1 Hallywood Ending

Kedma, Amos Gitai, Israel 10, Abbas Kiarostami, Iran All or Nothing, Mike Leigh, Britain

Murder by Numbers, Barbet Schroeder, France

Dardenne, Belgium Chihwaseon, Im Kwon-taek, South Korea Unknown Pleasures, Iia Zhang Ke, China The Man Without a Past, Aki Kaurismaki, Finland Sweet Sixteen, Ken Loach, Britain 24-Hour Party People, Michael Winterbottom, Britain O Principio da Incerteza, Manoel de Oliveira, Portugal The Pianist, Roman Polanski, France Russian Ark, Alexandre Sokurov, Russi Intervention Divine, Elia Suleiman, Palestinian Films showing out of competition: Hollywood Ending, Woody Allen, US (opening film) And now, Ladies and Gentlemen, Claude Lelouch, France (closing film)

Spirit, Kelly Asbury and Lorna Cook, United State Develag Saniay Leela Rhancali India Ararat, Atom Egovan, Canada Cidado de Deus, Fernando Meirelles, Brazil

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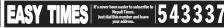
An application form and full job description may be obtained from the Human Resources Department, School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG (Tel: 020 7898 4132; Fax: 020 7898 4129; E-mail address: humanresources@soas.ac.uk). CVs will only be accepted when accompanied with an application form. No agencies.

Closing date: Friday 7 June 2002

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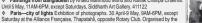


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EXHIBITION

Paintings from Bangladesh by Khalid Mahmood Mithu and Kanak Chanpa Chakma.



French Embassy and Alliance Française. Synthesis of tarai art by SC Suman, 8AM-6PM, until 5 May, Indigo Gallery, Naxal, 413580.

- Mahendra Narayan Memorial Day Rastriya Sabha Griha, 3 May, 1 PM Workshop on Presentation Skills and Public Speaking at ELD, 9-10 May. Details at www.eld.org.uk. eld@wlink.com.np. 524202
- World Press Freedom Day forum on Right to Information: Constitutional Provisions and Practices. The Everest hotel, all day, 3 May, registration starts 9AM. Organised by the Nepal Press Institute, Press
- Council/ Nepal, Federation of Nepalese Journalists and UNESCO.

  Endodontic Workshop by Dr Richard Mounce, USA, Hotel Yak & Yeti, 4 May, 8AM-6PM. for more information contact Dr Neil Pande, CDE-Nepal, National Dental Hospital, www.smilenepal.com
- New dates Festival of War based on episodes of the Mahabharata. Annual drama production of Studio 7. 3/4/5/10/11/12 May at the Naga Theatre, Hotel Vajra, duration 1hr 15 min. tea and show Rs 700, reduced student tickets available. vajra@mos.com.np. 271545
- Sixties and seventies night Buffet dinner and dance party. 4 May. 7PM. Rs 699. La'soon Restaurant and Vinotheque, Pulchowk.
- Nepal Education and Book Fair 2002 Discount on academic and general books, study abroad. information, on-the-spot admission to foreign universities and colleges, career guidance, contests and more. 3-11 May, Bhrikuti Mandap exhibition hall.
- Planete Enfants World Peace Cup Football tournamen for street children in Kathmandu to promote child rights Jawalakhel Grounds, 4 May, qualifiers kick-off 8AM, semi-finals 1PM, finals 4PM. Planete Enfants and Saathi. 524217, 411078



- Club Rumba Latin band, salsa food until midnight. Early bird discounts between 8-9.30PM, buy one, get one free. Hotel Shangri-La. 412999
- Dinesh & Pemba Live every Friday 7PM-9PM. Himalatte Cafe. Thamel. 262526
- Down Memory Lane Teesta plays tunes from the 50s to the 90s, Wednesday nights, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, 491234
- Live music by Catch 22. Friday nights at the 40,000 ½ ft Bar, Rum Doodle Restaurant, Thamel.

#### DRINK

- Beer Mug Club Talk beer, drink beer. Monday nights, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234 Metre of Malt Single malt Scotch exhibition. Shot on the rocks, or 12 single malts economically packaged for Rs 999. Piano Bar, Hotel Yak & Yeti. 248999
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- Friday Night Sekuwa with live music by Himalayan Feelings, Rs 555 net per person, Rs 1.010 nett per couple, Dwarika's Hotel. 479488
- The new Roadhouse Café Completely redesigned with separate bar seating and coffee bar. Original Mediterranean specialities, and wood-fired pizzas coming soon. The Roadhouse Café, Thamel. Krishnarpan Restaurant Six-16 courses of ceremonial Nepali cuisine in authentic setting. Dwarika's
- Hotel 479488 Weekend Brunch Rs 350 per head, special package available with bowling. Oriental and continental
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- Radisson Hotel, 11.30AM-2.30PM, Saturdays. 411818
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- Chiso Chiso Hawama Summer package with two days, one night with breakfast, dinner, transportation and activities. Rs 1,500 per person with twin-sharing. For Nepalis and expats only, Club Himalaya
- Nagarkot. 414432, 680083 Overnight packages including TGIF from \$99 per couple at Dwarika's Hotel. 479488.
- Taste the difference Cosy Nepali-style house on an organic farm in Gamcha, south of Thimi. Up to Rs 1,200 per person per night including meals. aaa@wlink.com.np.
- Shivapuri Heights Cottage 30 minutes from Kathmandu, staff guides to monastery, peak and

Rs 1850 per person with dinner and breakfast, Rs 925 per child 5-14 years, children under five free. info@escapetonenal.com

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Secrets of the Blue Cliff Record: Zen Comments by Hakuin and Tenkei Thomas Cleary, trans. Shambhala Publications, Boston, 2000 Rs 2.465

The commentaries of Hakuin and Tenkei in this volume are important not only because of the renown and historical importance of the two masters, not only because of the rare scholarship they bring to the task, but because of their penetrating Zen perspectives. The question of Zen meaning, rather than literary criticism or academic analysis, is the crux of their tasks as expositors.



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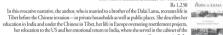
Changing Minds: Contributions to the Study of Buddhism and Tibet: In Honour of Jeffrey Hopkins Guy Newland, ed

Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 2001

Hopkins' contributions as a scholar and teacher make him an 'opener of the way' in the academic study of Tibetan Buddhism. The essays in this tribute volume deal with, among others, notions of ethics, the meaning of "foundational consciousness", prose and poetry on the path, authorship and literary production in classical Buddhist Tibet and perspectives on Buddhism from psychoanalytic object relations theory

## Born in Lhasa: The Autobiography of Namgyal Lhamo Takiha Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 2001

In this evocative narrative, the author, who is married to a brother of the Dalai Lama, recreates life in Tiber before the Chinese invasion—in private households as well as public places. She describes her



Government-in-Exile. Courtesy: Mandala Book Point, Kantipath, 227711, mandala@ccsl.com.np

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# The curious reader Books to buy NT predicts the bestsellers at this year's book fair

Take time out this week to see what's happening



#### ALOK TUMBAHANGPHEY

ou there in the corner with the plasses. Yes, you with your head stuck in a book. It's time to venture out. Starting today. ookworms and aspiring students of all hue will be found prowling around the annual Nepal Education and Book Fair at the Bhrikuti Mandap Exhibition Hall. The fair, which last year attracted 50,000 visitors, displayed close to one million titles and generated some Rs 1 billion in revenue, is one of the biggest crowdpullers in this city where bibliophiles have few chances to includge their guilty pleasure on such a large scale.

When the fair was first held in 1997, there were only 47 participants from Nepal. India and the UK. mainly from the education sector. The organisers, Global Exposition and Management Service (GEMS). were in for a bit of a surprise—the tumout wasn't quite what they'd expected. In 1999, GEMS teamed up with the National Booksellers and Publishers Association of Nepal (NBPAN) and together they managed to entice major booksellers from Nepal and India to put their goods on display. There were 40,000 visitors in 1998, compared with the 30,000 who came the previous year, and the participants were pleased to be associated with what was turning out

to be a solid annual event. Ask any regular at the fair, and they'll tell you the reason it works is the combination of things on offer There's an enormous diversity of textbooks, academic treatises, art books children's literature and plain old fiction. Add to that the burgeoning number of stalls that dispense advice and application forms to feed the hunger of young Kathmanduites to get an education, and you have a winning combination

This year there will be 142 participants-59 in the book section and 83 in the education and caree section. The book section will include international names such as the Cambridge University Press, Orient Longman, Addison-Wesley Longman. the Krishnamurti Foundation and Macmillan India, Nepali standbys like Parna Dueral: Bhandar Himal Books Ekta Books and Mandala Book Point. and even INGO's like WWF Nepal, WHO, IUCN and the King imports and exports tedious. Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation. As with most events this year. the spotlight will be on mountain issues. The pavilion of the International Centre for Integrated

sectors from around the world. Colleges, universities, and other educational institutions from India, USA, Malaysia, Australia, Switzerland, UK and Canada, and career counselling organisations from Nepal will be looking to lure young students to study abroad. There will also be plenty of IT institutions, such as ngaproe's ATS Information Technology Institute, Aptech,

Mountain Development will include

participants from various related

Pentasoft, and Manipal IT Education. The fair will be held from 3-11 May, but the education and career section will only run until 6 May Tickets for the exhibition are Rs 10 per head and students get 50 percent off if they are in school

The fair is not without problems In most parts of the world, merchandise meant for exhibitions and fairs get tax and duty breaks. But there's no such incentive in Nepal. The economics of book fairs, exports and imports simply haven't been sorted out There isn't a dearly defined policy, so publishers from overseas have to go through a time-consur procedure at customs where each hill is verified and the part of the consignment being returned is

NOTICE

The Symposium on Nepalese Industry & the Environment: "Challenges & Opportunities

for Sustainable Development in Nepal" to be held on May 4 and 5 has now been postponed

due technical reasons. A new date for the symposium will be announced within a week. The organizers regret the inconvenience caused due to this postponement.

any facilities to make their job easier. Under existing laws, books and hardware are in the same category. The Nepali diaspora in north-east and north-west India is a rich potential market, but because books do not come under the Open General Licence (OGL) regulations, the foreign currency restrictions make

the basic point is that this fair is not iust a profit-making venture, "Visitors may not necessarily buy books or enrol in the colleges, but at least they have access to an array of information." Says Madhay Dangol of Mandala Book Point, which has been involved with the fair since 1998, "An increase in visitors need not necessar ily mean monetary profit for us. There is hardly any profit in oppanising these events. Our concern is that we hope

this will help develop a reading habit minds to a whole new world."

uniform or have valid ID. some. The first SAARC book fair will take place in September this counted slowly, one by one. Nepali year in Dhaka.

Santosh Chettri of GEMS says

Bennett, a development anthropologist, examines the social construction of gender among Bahun and Chhetri Hindus in rural Nenal Through a detailed examination of the social, mythic and ritual structures that shape the interaction between men and women, this study reveals the symbolic roots of women's nower and the complex social institutions among Nepalis, that it will open their norms and beliefs that seek to contain that power and direct it to perpetuate the patrilineal group The NBPAN is already working

on that with six associations from the SAARC region. The idea, which they developed last year, was to organise an annual book fair with support from the SAARC Book Development Council in New Delhi The plan is that each SAARC country will host the book fair on a rotation basis, and the other six countries will participate with a good selection. All publishers will be requested to donate a display copy to the SAARC library. The NBPAN also envisions promoting co-production, joint authorship. and the sale of subsidiary rights. It all goes according to plan, they anticipate that the regulations rning cross-border trade of books will be made less cumber

#### Spy on the Roof of the World Sydney Wignall Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 2002 Rs 472 The author's 1950s climbing expedition to the Himalaya turned out to be

a life-threatening adventure that

involved the Chinese and Indian governments at the

onerating on Nenal's horder with Tihet, his group was

subsequent escape over the Himalaya in mid-winter.

to Sri Lanka, Bangladesh's Chittagong Hill Tracts to

tribal conflicts in Assam and Nagaland, and Nepal's

as representing alternative and non-violent ways of

negotiating the construction of conflicting identities

Press on Women

from English-language newspapers
and translated from the Nepali-language press

focuses on how society sanctions inequality and

cultural control, and how this affects women's health

of women empowering themselves, and first-nerson

accounts and opinion pieces on gender issues.

Lynn Rennett

1983/2002

Rs 800

discrimination and violence. It also showcases stories

Dangerous Wives and Sacred

of High-Caste Women in Nepal

University Press, Kathmandu,

Sisters: Social and Symbolic Roles

Mandala Book Point and Columbia

2002

Rs 325

of a "just" peace.

and on women's conceptions that privilege the notion

Mother Sister Daughter: Nepal's

Sancharika Samuha, Kathmandu

This collection of newspaper articles

Maoist insurgency. It focuses on women's experiences

Women War and Peace in South Asia

This volume challenges the centrality

of conflict in South Asia from Kashmir

of men's experiences and theorisations

highest level. Betrayed by one of the many spies

captured by the People's Liberation Army. Their

is one of mountaineering's great epics.

Rita Manchanda Sage Publications, New Delhi 2001



I owe captures in photographs and first-person testimonies the development of the Kamaiya Ereadom Mouament, which american around the tenth anniversary of democracy. In three sustained months of campaigning-marches, sit-ins, cases and petitions, demonstrations, press conferences—the movement forced the Negali government to cancel the kamaiyas' generation-deep debts.



Why Men Don't Listen and Women Cant Read Maps Allan and Barbara Pearse

Manjul Publishing House, Bhopal, 2001 Rs 312

The controversial book that suggests that though of the same species, men and women live in different worlds, in part because their brains nerceive things in different ways and their chemical make-up is radically different. The authors say they focus on different things, talk and listen differently and have very varied abilities with understanding space-all of which has an impact on love, sexuality and relationships.



"Kay Gardeko?": The Royal Massacre in Nepal Prakash A Raj Rupa & Co New Delhi 2001,

My Quest for the Yeti: Confronting the Himalayas Deepest Mystery



Staving Alive: Memories of Womer in Prison Durga Ghimire

Jagdish Ghimire Kathmandu 2000.

The Dreadful Night: Carnage at Nepalese Royal Palace Aditya Man Shrestha Kathmandu 2000, Rs 500

## The shaming of India

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3 - 9 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES



bv Kunda Dixit

# **Idiot-proof idioms**

out there who think this country has come to a grinding halt, but having just attended a three-day national level comings cum workshop at the Himalayan Hotel on the theme "Participator Approaches to Figures of Speech in Post-Industrial Journalism: Retrospect and Prospect", we now know that there is still hope for some of our old and tired clichés.

Many intrepid editors are rescuing some of these hackneyed phrases and idioms from their dusthins of history, restoring them to daily headlines and thereby giving them a clean chit so that we, the readers, can take up the gauntlet and carry coals to Newcastle. In other words, the point I am trying to make here is that we are talking in terms of eating humble pie (or. god forbid, robbing Peter to pay Paul), even if we have to pass the hat around while trying to tie the Gordian knot betwixt Scylla and Charybdis.

For those of you who in high school never had to memorise the textbook. The Student's Companion by Wilfred D Best, I take the liberty of presenting below a sample of my favourite figurative expression (with examples of usage). I know that it may be like looking for a needle in a haystack after casting pearls to swine, but this brief guide is essential to make head and/or tail of today's newspaper headlines and I hope my valued clients will take it in the spirit that a stitch in time will save nine. Yes, you may take notes:

"A rolling stone gathers no moss." Never quite been able to figure that one out, but I think it has something to do with keeping the balls rolling in your court. Eg: Decades after leaving the Rolling Stones, it

suddenly occurred to Mick Jagger that he hadn't yet gathered Kate Moss. "A bad beginning makes a good ending."

but I think it means that a ework well begun is half-done g: After he jumped the gun in the 100 m dash. Phanindra was overheard muttering to himself that ad beginnings made good endings. "If wishes were horses eggars would ride." This is my all-time favourite

and I use it every chance I get. Eg: After receiving a request for 19 helicopters, Minister Mahat said off the record: 'How the hell am I going to pay for them? "Zeal without knowledge is a

runaway horse." As you can see, horses are a recurring theme in English proverbs Eg: A beggar would put his or her cart before a

runaway horse with zeal if he or she had his or "A bird in hand is worth two in the bush."

Love this one. It means the little one possesses is worth more than what one is likely to obtain. Eg: As night fell, the poacher realised that the rhino horn in his rucksack was worth two that were still attached to their owners

"Too many cooks spoil the broth." From personal experience I know that this is not true. If it were, I would be able to rustle up a mean sweet and sour apricot duck all by myself. But I can't. I need a roomful of helpers. Eg: Fifteen heads in the kitchen are better than one

"At wit's end." This one exactly describes my feeling at this very

Eg: As he got ready to hang his hat, this columnist was at his wit's end as to how to stir a hornet's nest with a bee in his bonnet, as well as cock his snook at a blot on the escutcheon

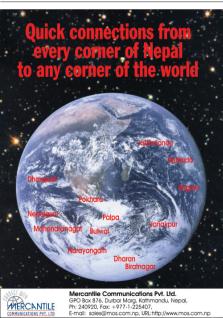
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