

# NEPALI TIMES ANALYSIS

HEPALI I IMES ANALYSIS Maoist ceasefires proposed and retracted over the Internet last week. Despite their denial, however, it now looks like the original unilateral ceasefire offer was a Maoist trial balloon. Now, a confluence of dates and anniversaries may be a sign that things will be coming to a head in the weeks ahead: the state of emergency is up for a final six-month extension on 25 May

 the first anniversary of the royal tragedy on 1 June is the date when King Gyanendra comes out of official mourning
 the monsoon rains start in early-June and will make it difficult for the

army to provide air support, and
 King Gyanendra is planning a visit to India.

There are also telltale signs that the Maoists are now keen on a new truce and maybe another big attack to make thier point. They are under pressure from human rights groups and other mediators to show confidence-building gestures to win back the government's trust. They are still able to make deadly raids on military bases, but are also feeling the effect of the army's improved psy-ops and undercover operations. The Maoist heartland is suffering from a severe food shortage, and the rebels need to restock on weapons and find new recruits. The rebels also need to step up extortion, food drives and to pay for its militia.

By attacking infrastructure the Maoists have unravelled some of their mass support in rural areas. To be sure, outside the district headquarters large parts of the hinterland are still under the sway of the Macists. But even here, they have been forced to raid subsistence farmers for food.

Most young men have all fled, and the Magists' forced recruitm is now increasingly targetting young girls. Maoist leader Prachanda's statement on 10 May was unexpectedly conciliatory, and political analysts said it reflected these

pressures. For the first time, there were no derogatory remarks directly aimed at King Gyanendra, Crown Prince Paras, or Prime Minister Deuba. There was also a softening of his stance against parliamentary parties. "We put forward our demand for a constituent assembly to further the gains of the 1990 Peoples demand for a consultation Movement, and we are willing to further relax this demand in consultation with political parties and the people," Prachanda writes, and continues: "Even if there is a minimum positive sign, we are ready at any point to declare a ceasefire and start neoptiations "

In response, the government has repeated its Editorial in response, the government has repeated is demand that the Maoists must thirs surrender their, weapons and renounce violence before talks can begin. The army is strongly opposed to any caaselire, since it feels it has the Maoists on the run and suspects that the Battle of Gam truce will only be used to regroup and rearm. It is a stalemate, but as the debate for the renewal of the emergency

has a sate make, but as the debite for the relevant of the energency heats up next week, political pressure will grow on the government to give in to negotiations. •

WAR WEARY: A soldier with a gun rests by a helipad in Libang, Rolpa.





from Nag Bahal.

clear that it was one of ours," an Total untee: 1553 about idol thefts, we rarely hear of stolen religious artifacts being

who confirmed that it was the Buddha

happy day for us."

No.34.1%

Q. Is it OK for the government to get for

port for its or

"As soon as we got the Internet

attachment, I checked with three other stolen Patan Buddhas, and it was very ecstatic Shakya told us. "We only hear recovered. It is a big victory and a ver



## FDITORIAL

# WAR KI PAR

rime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba has returned from his fund-raising trip to the United States and Britain with promises of help in cash and kind to fight anti-government outfits back home. (I et's see if we can get through this editorial without using the word "Maoist", as proposed by Chinese amba ador Wu Congyong.)

Deuba's visits can be termed successful because he out what he set out to geteven bagging \$38 million for a Marshall Plan type job-creation and rehabilitation package, which is \$18 million more than originally requested. All this is well and good. But is it going to solve the problem? Nepal's international

supporters keep telling us that resources are not the issue; they will give us as much money as we need. The number flying around is \$100 million in budgetary support. They are more worried about our capacity to spend it properly, and whether we can make an immediate and dramatic difference in the lives of Nepalis. However, with the present sense of debilitating paralysis, there isn't much hope of the government getting its act together.

The off-repeated excuse for inaction is that there can be no development without peace. This is a cop out. In fact, there has never been a greater need for a dramatic result-oriented campaign to restore health, education and employment even if it is in a few token areas to begin with. The Nepali people desperately need some signs of awareness that there is still a government out there in Kathmandu. Deuba's interlocutors in Washington and London sympathised with his anger at

the rebels for having broken the truce and forced the country to go back to war. They opened their wallets. But they also chided him less than diplomatically about onvernance. We don't know whether the message hit home. Even if it did, it is unlikely that Deuba's bloated and smug government has the vision and statesmanship to announce a radical new political and development crusade to take the wind out of the insurgents' sails. In complacent and self-satisfied Kathmandu, there is little sign still that the seriousness of the country's crisis has sunk in.

Meanwhile on the western front the security forces soldier on. The sight last week of the weary survivors of Gam: bedraggled, unshaven and wearing flip-flops shows that the army and police desperately need better logistics, more reliable arms and equipment. The rebels are feeling the heat, and that could be one of the reasons they are putting all they've got into raiding soft targets and vulnerable garrisons. They desperately need another truce to be able to reconsolidate. They also need to re-evaluate the revolution in the light of growing international isolation, as well as internal dissension over strategy and tactics.

The rebel leaders must realise by now that if they need a soft landing, the or is on them to convince the government of their bonafide intentions. After their breach of trust in November, it is they who need to

make a gesture that reflects a genuine new determination for true dialogue. The favourite threat of the Manist cadre ("war ki par?") may now have a whole new meaning There isn't much time left: the revolution has begun to devour its own children.

LETTER TO BABURAN

Here is a letter to Dr Baburan

Bhattarai, who I had an opportunity to meet 20 years ago in India, Dear Dr Bhattarai, supporter of your respected your simplicity and still respect your desire to make attempt at reforms. I Nepal a better place. When entreat you: take the real during the Panchayat era the giant leap forward and stop the leftist parties were criticising each other, and you were a student, you co-ordinated and brought them together at a By constantly harping about conference in Ranchi, Later. after democracy, if it hadn't the betrayal by the Maoists in been for you the ruling parties his effort to reach a negotiated would not even have talked settlement and refusing to talk. Prime Minister Deuba seeks to about political reforms. Now they have realised that talk is project himself as the aggrieved not enough and they have to narty (Editorial "The neace implement reforms. When you prize", #92) . The fact is that joined the ceasefire and talks Deuba's so called peace initiative with the Maoists last last year. I thought there was finally hope that you would be year was done with the sole in a position to bring real intention of weakening and change to Nepal. But your party destabilising the then Koirala went back to violence and government. The peace talks escalated the war. Your bigges were initiated without any mistake is your conviction that homework. It gave the Magists violence and killings are the only time to regroup. He cannot way forward. Your destruction escape taking the blame for that Deuba heads a minority faction of the few schools, hospitals, roads and bridges in this within the Nepali Congress. His country are extreme example novernment is neither in a of destruction that will not help position to lead peace talks nor your revolution at all. Therefore lead a unified country against its as an old friend, as a fellow war on terrorism. Nepali, and above all as a



Budget blues at Bagh Darbar

he belief in "More" is at the heart of freemarket fundamentalism. It has the same significance as Aum in the Hindu cripture. The high priests of global capitalism keep assuring us heathens of the netherworld that deliverance lies in reciting this mantra of more'. Since ever-increasing consumption is

en Maoists give interviews

to the BBC from India as they did

why the Nepal government does

ot ask the Indian government to

st week, I don't understand

and them over Why are the

terrorists safe in India? Who is

upporting them? As long as

hey have shelter in India, they

errorism cannot be eradicated

young Negalis to join them. The

Nepal's democracy and peace, and they carry false promises of

The prime minister said in his

CNN interview that he wouldn't

on ahead to talk with the Manists

arms. Having got the US promise

of \$20 million worth "non-lethal"

Maoists if they don't come to the

negotiating table in the way he

he was deceived by the Maoists

wants them to. I understand that

arms, he considers himself

owerful enough to kill the

inless they surrender their

Rita KC, London

will not lay down arms, and

They will continue to force

errorists are a big threat to

revolution

. Hari Prasad Pokharel

Civil Engineer, Taiwan

Mike Sharma, by email

believed to spur economic growth, leading in turn to the creation of national wealth, we're told to keep demanding more and more. The zeitzeist of laissez-faire is artfully portraved in the jingle of an American soft-drink commercial on TV: Yo Dil Magchha More.

STATE OF THE STATE

The Royal Nepal Army wants mor machines, material, money and men, but not necessarily in that order. The Nepal Police says that it could do with its own flast of halicontar

The recently-formed Armed Police Force wants more money to build barracks. More resources are needed to restore and rebuild physical infrastructure—bridges, water supply, electric-ity, telephone, schools, universities, hospitals, nity centres, village committee offices

and the like-that have been blown up by the nsurgents. And as usual, more mo needed to meet the bloated bills of public servants' salaries and perks. Dr Ram Sharan Mahat has an unenviable task—he is expected to produce more from less To complicate his responsibilities, he must also on so-called 'soft-loans' from multilateral abide by the conditionalities posited by donors agencies are much worse. The strings attached and lenders alike, as well as appease the to projects financed with World Bank or Asian

Development Bank loans limit the manoeuvrarestive private sector Tourism is in the bility of government machinery. Lenders insist that the government employ foreign consultants and contractors without prejudice. Prime facie, there is nothing wrong in getting competi-

tive bids from all countries declared eligible by the lending institutions. However, it does impact local capacity-building, there is no tax bution to national treasury, and ndirect benefits of such projects turn t to be negligible.

In an extensive study on taxation, aid and racy in Namibia, Tanzania and Uganda, searchers from the Copenhagen-based Centre for Development Research have convincingly argued that the total effect of foreign aid is not vays desirable. Foreign aid, says the synopsi of the study published in March 2002, "may

# LETTERS

earlier and is afraid that they will "purii" by the CIAA to explain do it again. But I don't see any himself and his misdeeds. Har reason for Deuba to automatical Prasad's confessions are assume they will play foul again. qualitative, but we need to know Deuba got to power like all other where, when and how much he Nepali politicians by selling us paid as bribes. As you say, it dreams, but can be deliver? Let the Maoists come to the table with dignity and put forward to follow this path for easy their views openly. Deuba is not about to solve the problem by names of people he bribed? forcing the Maoists to squat in front him and beg for talks. Subindra Bogati, The evidence then his motive is Netherlands evidence either, then why are It's really disgusting. How you making him a hero? I was can the All Nepal Independent ashamed to read the article.

set ablaze a university? What happened to respect for knowledge and tradition? The destrucion of infrastructure may be significant, but I am infuriated and sad at the thought of ancient skrit books reduced to ashes Suiala Pant, LSE, London

Students' Union (Revolutionary)

HARI PRASAD SHARMA Kedar Sharma's profile of Hari Prasad Pandey ("Mea culpa". #92) was informative. But by portraving him positively, it looks ike he is in vour close coterie What is the objective of your article other than pure flattery? Hari Pandey was already given a

If you publish this letter. I hope you will edit it to suit your need to flatter Mr Pander Gvaneswor Pokharel Gifu, Japan

may be mere propaganda, or his political adivsers have asked him Reading about Hari Prasad Pandey made me sick. He is a new wine in the same old bottle publicity. Will he disclose all the What motivates the people in power to come out of the closet? Is he really coming clean? What Will he have the guts to do that? If he does not have such Nepal needs is honest politicians. honest enough not to be corrupt. suspect. If you don't have the And not confessing afterwards Time does not erase quilt. All politicians need to attend moral ecianca class

## Ashokrai Gurung Omar

 Your profile of Hari Prasad Pandey went behind the headlines and gave us an opportunity to find out what nakes this man tick. Nepalis ave become so negative tha they even doubt confessions They think this is a gimmick. After eading your article I personally think Mr Pandev is genuinely quilty and genuinely sorry. Some ay he is mad. If being honest and admitting to past bribery is nadness, then maybe he is. And I hope there are more mad annia in Nanal S Pandey Kathmandi

activist and life-long rebel with a cause. Durga comes from a well-off patriarchial Dhankuta clan and was the only daughter of her father's second wife. Her mother died when she was two, and it was only when she was in her early teens that she found out that her father got married a second time at age 34 to Durga's mother who was then only nine years old. All this because astrologers had told him that he would not have sons from his first wife.

sons and more daughters from his first wife. Much later, when Durga was born, her father disappeared and did not even return for the naming ceremony because she was a girl.

later determination to do something about the status of women, and the vehicle she chose was politics. She joined the then underground Nepali Congress party. She wanted to make a difference, and being a atural boat-rocker helped. "I was the unruly one in the family." Durga recalls "All my cousing were very docile they listened and did what the elders wanted." Pokhrel managed to resist her family's repeated

urgings to get married, and went on instead to complete a Master's in history and teach at Tribhuyan University, By 1974, she had become the first woman supervisor of the National Development Service (NDS), a program that required graduate students to live in villages and do development work and earn academic credits

**Rebel with a cause** 

Durga Pokhrel's career as a firebrand activist serves her well as the first head of

for their Master's level coursework. The turning point in Durga's career was her meeting with leader BP Koirala in Banaras in 1972. There were other women in the Nepali Congress, but most of them came from political families. Her growing affiliation with politics cost Durga her job in 1975. "After Llost my job my brother told me that I had to pick either family or politics, not both," she remembers. Pokhrel then made a choice that few women, especially unmarried babunis, would: she nicked her freedom. She began living with friends. and then by herself

She had no regular job but went around trying out the unconventional. She put together a shoe-shine hox and sat down under the New Road pipal tree. Next she tried out a shoe store at Bhrikuti Mandap, which in political circles became known as professor ko jutta pasal ("The professor's shoe store").

But such protests against the Panchayat system didn't last, and she ran out of ideas to make a living. Then in 1981 she was suddenly summoned to the police headquarters.

27 hours," she recalls. "On the eighth day of interrogation, the police tried to force a confession from me that I had conspired to kidnap the rown prince " After being detained and tortured for 18 days. Durga was shifted to the Mahakali ail in far-western Nepal. Her father and sister had filed a habeas corpus, and Durga was brought back a few months later to be presented to the Supreme Court. "No one else in the family cared where I was, and I realised how much my father loved me," Durga told us. She was released a year later, and at 32 left for the United States to attend Harvard university. There she met he

British husband, Anthony Willett and she has three children. While in the US she also authored a book. Shadow over Shangrila, a first-person account of a woman's experience in Nepal's democratic movement

At the National Women's Commission office at the Social Welfare Council in Lazimpat, the petitions are already piling up. For two months the commission has not received any money (Rs 2 million has been sanctioned though), and members are running it from their own funds. A team of eight commissioners is holding consultations on a new draft law. Besides legal reform, the Commission wants to position itself as an agency that coordinates and facilitates implementation of projects, including those already underway Durga also hopes to lobby to appoint women to

policymaking positions. The Commission has already managed to get in one appointee at the Public Service Commission, now they want someone at the National Planning and Election Commissions. The new women's commission also wants the clause requiring daughters to return property upon marriage to be scrapped. Durga is doubtful whether the new law on

martial rape alone will solve the problem in a country where discussing sex is taboo. The Commission is looking into a number of petitions from women, including one of a husband who wanted sex with his wife eight days after she'd given birth to their first baby. Finding her reluctant, he simply went off that same day and married another woma leaving his wife and child to fend for themselves. She also has another chronic problem to tackle that of women being jailed on abortion charges. She

had visited the central jail last year and discovered 40 of 61 women there were serving 20-year or longer terms. Others were in the process of being tried. Last month Commission petitioned government for general anmesty to all women in jail on abortion charges. She argues we don't have a proper abortion law and it is unfair to lump all of them as murderers. Despite all this, Durga says men do not need to

be demonised in order to get a better deal for

NO PROGRESS Kathmandu ENCOUNTERS



Also, what is the minimum lease agreement? Please kindly end us further details to our ummer home on Rara Lake ours sincerely. Red headed Himalayan

Rullwit (Name withheld on request





"Men do not need to

order to get a better

deal for women."

one-way street: men and women need to work

together. Over the long run she sees that equal

opportunities through compulsory education may be

the only way to build a stable social base a point

from where men and women could compete on equa

terms. But for the short-term, she says there is really

nothing more important than for "Nepalis from all

political affiliations to come together around one

BULLWIT

My wife and I read with

nterest Ludmilla Hungerhuber's

stating that following the recent

vacancy left by egrets, she will

letter ("Egret regret," #93)

be exhibiting rare Himalayan

birds in a brand new Keshar

Mahal aviary. My wife and I

may just be the kind of rare

birds you could be searching

for. While my wife is certainly

not the looker that I am. I car

vouch that she is deeply lova

and has accompanied me on migrations to Kosi Tappu five

times in our period of blissful

enjoyment of travel, we have

partnership. Despite our

agenda: restoring peace and justice." ♦

be demonised in

the newly-formed National Commission on Women.

should perhaps go to the men, because "the woman

asu Devi and her little daughter had come to

members of the commission stormed into the office business," Durga Pokhrel told the airline's boss. passionate campaigner for women's rights who heads the commission. It is a role that suits this firebrand

These tales from her childhood shaped Durga's

"I was arrested and kept sitting on a chair for

courts have not even heard any hassles. So much for conserva

evidence in the Hari Thana case tive attire. Third: Lam getting on It will probably take another five for forty-hardly young any nore. I don't give men the eye; I EJ Henworth RSM RAMC don't "jiggle my mammaries", and (retired) still get cat calls, unsolicited compliments spoken in lewd I'm a solider in the British tones, countless unimaginativ approaches for "finalised" Army, and I read your article about us ("Ayo Gorkhali," #93). versations and plain Next year I'm coming home for obscene proposals, in the five months and during that time middle of the street and in full will be paid only £42 a month. I daytime. And not just in Thamel. don't want such extended leave What does he say of the fact They say we'll give you long leave and pay you less. Well, that, less than ten days ago, I

advice to all ladies. Nenali and

Western: do not feel afraid to

almost had to flag a police van down to get rid of the unwanted yet unrelenting attentions of two boys, who couldn't have been more than 13 or 14 years old And, no, none of this would not be any more tolerable if it came from white men. This suggestio is completely gratuituous and highly offensive. If skin colour elongs to the issue, it is only hrough the obsession South Asians have for "fairness" We women have seen it all countess times before. Again the blame is being placed on us. again we are made feel shame. guilt, anger and disgust. It should be men to feel all that. For themselves, and for their ellows in gender. My strong

women. Building a co-operative society can't be a confront them. Make a scene raise your voices: point your ingers. You have a right to hake them off and a duty to shame them. They're nothing but cowards, and will disappear in

harassing these female

# We suffer badly from "progress" DL Smith, Australia

tourists". Any sexual harass-

ment is unacceptable in my book.

Patricia Lustig,

decided to retire early to spend the rest of our days in our avourite capital city. There fore, we would like to request further information on the kind of lodging and fooding you may be offering, as well as health insurance and other benefits. Abhilasha Gurung

# Would you also be so kind as to inform us of the qualificaons of your head caretake

# Rather, it should prompt us to guard more iealously our undiluted sovereignty and independent identity. If these values are tant to us, we must be willing to pay a little more for the force that is engaged in defending them. That kind of 'more' has to be the mantra of the moment at Bagh Darbar as Dr Mahat and his team get into finalising the budget proposals for next fiscal year.

### But Dr Mahat's hopes are perhaps a little by remittances that continue to flow in. all other misplaced. The promise of more bilateral conomic activities in the country are pretty grants and multilateral loans from western much at a standstill. But if we have to crush the countries is unlikely to take much pressure off insurgents militarily-and there is little doubt him. Bilateral aid requires counterpart fundsthat we need to do that, given the insurgents' usually 10 to 20 percent of the total outlay\_\_\_\_ reluctance to law down arms and initiate a peace process through meaningful dialogue-we must

Fortunately, there's another minor maxim offree-market fundamentalism, somewhat uncharitably described as "crony capitalism". It states: when in doubt, depend upon the advio of your family and friends. On that come Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat is very advantageously placed-his younger brother Dr Prakash Sharan Mahat is an advisor to the prime minister, as well as an honourable member of

the newly-reconstituted National Planning Commission Presumably Dr Mahat the Fider forces in times of conflict often entails raising is awaiting the fruits of Dr Mahat the Youngtaxes. Of course, generating more revenue at a er's foreign trips before starting to balance the time like this is easier said than done. Apart national budget from consumption and construction financed

cheaper loans to tide them over. The process of

opening up the market can't be rescinded, so

customs' duty must keep going down. The question then arises who will foot the ever-

ballooning bill of the government?

from the recipient government. An increase in grant money often implies that more internal resources must be mobilised. The conditions bear the cost of doing so ourselve The consumers of 'more' should be made

# itself should prevent the finance minister from allowing his country to become a dangerous arms dump for obsolete weapons from donor Paying for the increased activities of defence

The mantra is More. But who will pay for it? doldrums, so hoteliers want a tax holiday and have anti-democratic effects because it makes

rulers less dependent on citizens for revenues Extend the logic of aid and dependency a little further, and you can argue, using the example of Thailand and Pakistan, that a military fed on foreign aid is less answerable to popularlyelected political leaders than the ones paid for from taxnavers' contributions. If Dr Mahat is concerned about the future of democracy in Nepal, he has to raise more internal resources Political considerations apart, the national athis

to pay more to meet the cost of defending their

werty reduction employment creation or

welcome, but direct assistance for defence forces

A Pakistani scholar once expressed the

opinion that his country was a banana republi

country. But that is no reason to be complacent

without bananas. Fortunately, we have the

anchor of a constitutional monarchy in this

freedom, Perhaps Dr Mahat needs to think

about a defence surcharge on all consumer

other development works are more than

must be resisted at all costs

17.23 MAY 2002 NEPALL TIMES

by CK LAL

After marrying Durga's mother, he did have tw

goods in his new budget. Humanitarian aid for

AYO GORKHALI

It appears to me that an awful lot

of money is being taken from ex-

Gurkhas in Nepal to pay solicito

Matrix Chambers as stated you

piece "Avo Gorkhali" (#93), but

is a solicitor who works alone.

and to pay Cherie Blair when

there is no need to do so. Hari

Thapa is doing the same thing

and he also has two top

without any cost to ex-Gurkhas

barristers. The outcome of Hari

edence for all other ex-Gurkhas

abide by the ruling of the court. It

has taken five years for Thana

to get this far and the cost to the

Thapa's case will have prec-

and Cherie Blair will have to

British taxpayer has run into

hearing he has effectively won

the first hurdle, and the Ministry

of Defence is appealing. Why is GAESO taking the MoD to court

when it is already being done for

Rabinda Singh, a partner of Cherie Blair in Marix Chambers.

think this is all down to money.

and who can make the most

from ex-Gurkhas. I am sure

GAESO Geaso Phil Shiner and

Cherie Blair all have £ signs in

"airtight case". Phil Shiner should

think again. After five years the

their eyes. As for having an

them? The MoD's harrister is

millions. At this time in the

Phil Shiner, who is not from

vears just to do that

would rather be paid more, and

two prime ministers will be able

(Name withheld), UK

have shorter leave. I hope the

Anis Bania accuses Patricia

Lustig of generalisation, (Letters, #92) but he himself

does nothing else. First: of

course sexual harassment still

exists in the west, but it is the

incidence of cases that matter

it is a daily occurrence. And, I

am not exaggerating, and not

making it up. Second: I wear

than a "tolerable" share of

molested at home, in Kathmandu

unrevealing shalwar-kamij all the

time, nevertheless get way more

can go years without being

to sort out this issue

HARASSMENT

Kathmandu to file an insurance claim after her П usband and son were killed in the Royal Nepal Airlines Twin Otter crash near Dhangadi two years ago while on a flight from Bajhang. In Kathmandu, Hasu Devi discovered her fatherin-law and brother-in-law had already filed separate claims. Airline officials had decided the money was young and likely to elope". Here is when the newly-formed National Women's Commission swung into action. All eight

BINOD BHATTARAI

of the airline's executive chairman, and made their case on Hasu Devi behalf. "Whether she will elope or stay single is her choice, and none of your Hasu Devi will now soon get her husband's insur ance. That delegation was lead by Durga Pokhrel, a

HEMI ATA RAI

now this about Nepalis: we're young, mobile, and

we're young, moone, changing how politics

works. Our women are slowly

getting a better deal in health and

wealth. We're still poor, and the

environment is taking a beating.

HERE AND THERE

And slowly, we are learning to

population is close to 23.2

million and even a clear down

ward trend in the fertility rate

राष्ट्रिय पहिचानलाई खबल बनाउन

पहिचानको संरक्षण तथा संवर्द्धन गरी

aspora. It's a word of ever increasing significance as people flee

the word meant only the Jews who were scattered by force from

to scatter, usually used, I'm told, to describe the sowing of seeds

better. But we take comfort from the fact that we are among the

write the comedy, read the news, buy telecom companies and go

Today it means eviles from a homeland scattered around the globe

There are many diasporas here in Kathmandu and across Nepal. I'm

part of the Canadian version of global scattered seed from home. There

aren't all that many of us here. As ever, the Americans do it bigger and

successful diaspora in their homeland. We Walk Among Them. We

bankrupt. And they can't tell unless we say "aboot" instead of about

Other diasporas are far more visible. The Chinese are far and away

the most numerous and probably wealthy diaspora in Asia, and perhaps

even in North America. Chinese exiles in Hong Kong, the Philippines,

Indonesia, the United States and Canada developed the place that was

For this is the main basis of the modern diaspora. I exclude from

this the benighted Afghans and others who've fled utter devastation at

home. I'm talking about voluntary exiles, or at least people who can

afford the cost of an air ticket, or a people smuggler. Diasporas exist

because the field of opportunities isn't wide or deep enough at home.

once known as "Red China" into the budding capitalist powerhouse it is

today. Their faith in a homeland they fled was restored when Deng Xiao

Ping said in 1990 "it is glorious to get rich". You could hear the sign of

relief around the world. Aaaahhhhhh, now pass me that bag of cash.

rich and poor, influential and obscure-everywhere.

Babylon. Now there are diasporaa-small and large, quiet and loud,

The word diaspora has classical Greek roots. It's from diaspeirien,

will not slow the rate of increase

identify our language, religion and ethnicity more specifically

The counting is over. Nepal's

for another few more decades

dominated by children and youth

of reproductive age-more than

age, 41 percent are under 16.

Nepalis are on the move like at

changing the political face of

Nenal Increasingly in the last

lecade, entire families have

noved to the already densely-

opulated tarai districts and city

entres in search of economic and

ocial advancement and security.

ection constituencies will need

o be increased, while in 11 hill

listricts, the constituencies will

eneral election. Nepal's consti-

e reduced before the next

tution demands that new con-

tituencies be formulated for

populations of 116,000 people.

n ten inner tarai districts

time before. And this is

78 percent are under 40 years of

Then there's the mobility.

After all, our population is

NATION

# Get in touch

There's plenty of reason to celebrate World Telecommunications Day in Nenal this year. The Nenal Telecommunications Cornoration is offering a 50 percent discount on tariffs for international calls for 24 hours from when the clock strikes midnight on 17 May. Internet users in the Biratnagar area are even luckier-they will have free access for three days between 17-19 May. All they need to do is dial up to 15000 and enter "ntchrt" when asked for a password.

The inevitable will happen soon enough-tariffs will go up-but we have one extra month to enjoy the old rates. The increase was to come into force on 15 May, but that has now been postponed until 15 June, as the decision could not be endorsed by the cabinet in the absence of the prime minister.

# More damage assessment

On the heels of the banking sector assessing their losses due to the emergency, the Negal Civil Aviation Authority has done the same.

preliminary estimation calculates damage worth Rs 130 million due to attacks on different 13 airports around the country. Of the 13, only two-Phaplu and Bhojpur-have been restored after some renairs

affecting even airports that haven't been targeted-no private airlines are fiving in to Baitadi and Darchula airports because there are simply no passengers. The prospects are equally grim for six other airports around the country that have just heen constructed or are still under construction, as they have not been able to carry out their test flights, again, due to the security situation.





Creamy, spiked or simply juicy Single, double or triple scoops of choicest ice creams & sorbets Enjoy morello cherry, passion fruit, orange nougatine or discover house combos: carribean connection, tequila suprise, berry mania. and more, more, more!



(See also Biz Briefs, "Maoist loot".) The NCAA's The deteriorating security conditions are

Passion on ice the entire months of May & June



people marking Buddhist has gone up to 10.7 percent, from only half that reported in the previous census. The number of people calling themselves Kiranti more than doubled going up to 3.6 percent from the 1.7 percent recorded in 1991, and the Muslim populaers have reason to be pleased with tion stands at 4.2 percent. campaign last year to expand the Statistics related to languag

director of the CBS, claims that

far as the section on religion is

about their ethnic and religious

identity, and their right to be

counted correctly. The change

consciousness, as well as our

efforts to make the counting

more scientific." he explains Ten years ago, 49 percent of Limbus, 65 percent of Rais and

96.5 percent of Sunuwars said

they were Hindu. Similarly 57 percent of Thakalis said they

were Hindu. Magars and

Gurungs were all counted as

Hindu. As a result, the 1991

census reported that 50 to 75 percent of janajatis were Hindu

This time around, Thakalis,

and a consortium of Rais.

the janajati campaign was

religion. In this census, the

80 percent from almost 90

percent, and the number of

languages spoken in Nepal. ♦

percentage of Nepalis identify-

ng themselves as Hindu fell to

themselves Kirantis.

Gurungs, Tamangs and Magars decided to register as Buddhists

Limbus, Sunuwars and Yakhas

have collectively decided to call

The other major point of

in statistics is the result of their

concerned "After democracy.

people are more conscious

the recent census is more reliable than the previous one as

range of the census in which they have not been released "Then are doubts that we were tried to get indigenous neoples to answer questions more carefully counted fairly. We'd demanded a physical anthropological study than in the past. For the first time, the 1991 before the census, but that census released data pertaining to didn't happen," said Bal Krishna ethnicity and language in the Mabuhang, president of public domain. Armed with this Federation of Nepali Nationalities. new government authorised information janajati organisa. The CBS See also tions could finally analyse how is finding it No child's play

the effects of their awareness

they were being represented, and hard to slot the CBS came in for a good deal the reported ethnicity and of criticism for under-enumeralanguage sub-groups into tion and biased interpretation. anthropologically sound categories. In the 2001 census The census only counted 23 enumeration some 533 ethnic janajati groups, while the government officially recognises 61. The groups were reported, against first time a section on ethnicity only 61 janajati groups officially was included was in the second recognised. Over 1,200 different national census in 1920, and it anguages have been reported, was used until the 1950 count. against the recorded 151



Devicement Stickes and Environmental Science for their science races For and persons to the exploring of Reducidentia School

O & A Levels

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marriage and the conditional legislation on abortion could be plemented. But demographers and statisticians are cautious about celebrating this slowdownenumerators from the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) could not reach 83 Village Development Committees in districts affected by the Maoist insurgency and data-collecting was also

and human rights. The census report reveals that

# **Dialectics of diaspora**

than this

nonulation size. We have no

choice but to accelerate this fall,'

dent of Population Association of

Nepal. The survey clearly shows

city women have 2.3 children less

The recent Nepal Demo-

graphic and Health Survey shows

the vast difference between the

urban and rural fertility rate-

than women in rural areas.

says Dr Ram Hari Aryal, presi-

If we want to matter at home, we must go home.

We Canadians, Americans, Australians, New Zealanders, Brazilians etc wouldn't be where we are today if it weren't for economic migration. Along with a little help from British prison policy and the slave trade, entire continents were occupied and made prosperous in the modern,

The Indian and Pakistani diasporas both have huge influence at home. Pakistanis abroad furiously support various political leaders and

fight pitched battles on foreign soil for their version of the soul of izir, Nawaz or Musharraf. It all leads to naught.

should give our pens and brain cells a rest. Let the folks who staved behind sort things out, or come back, roll up your sleeves, and get

census, however, seem happy with the results, "Despite the inescapable circumstances, we are fully satisfied with the outcome," said a representative of the United Nations Population Fund

hampered by the 1 June royal

(UNEPA) in Kathmandu. The focus on gender-disaggregated data in this census was a first in Nepal, and this is expected to help planning health, education palace tragedy. Even with these

that the national fertility rate is a

Counting on Nepal

werty, violence and lack of development, heading west or east o the nearest place that's even slightly better than home. Once,



New World countries populated by the descendants of, er, immigrants of "economic migrants". They pronounce the phrase in parliaments and newspaper pages as if it tastes odd, or is hard to shape in their pristine, erfect, indigenous mouths. Hello! Stop lying to yourself and/or others

mercantile sense of the world The Nepali diaspora is tiny now and with luck, it will stay that way. The letters column of this newspaper seethes with diasporan wrath from time to time, as "Disgusted Dai" of Minneapolis, or "Bahadur" of Boston, write to object to someone's pontificating. Self exiles-myself included-left home for selfish reasons, good, selfish reasons perhaps, but we were looking out for number one and saying to hell with the home front. But that same hell hath no fury like the diasporan patriot whose recipe for improving things in the country left behind is challenged by some upstart who actually lives in the place. I

know the feeling well. I often cook up complex solutions to the (admittedly minor) problems faced by Canada. A recently returned member of the Canadian diaspora from Japan wrote a book called Why I Hate Canadians. It was self-indulgent trash, but it was a bestseller and that's all that matters

In India, the BJP was elevated to power in Delhi by whiz kids from America who thought "a little discipline among the minorities" would be good for the country they left behind. We see the result of that thinking in Guiarat

If we want to matter at home, we must go home. Otherwise, we

cracking. Luckily Canada doesn't need me anymore. ♦

although there is still plenty kind of housing units these to do. Nepali women are starting population reside in-the report to get a better deal. The sex ratio says that only 36 percent of the is growing to a healthy proportion families live in pakki or permaamong the younger age-groups, indicating that discrimination in nent housing with modern facilities. As much as 52 percent terms of health care and nutrition of households don't even have is declining. toilets. Despite the success of Things aren't so rosy in areas community forestry, more than such as decision-making and 65 percent of the households access to resources, however across the country rely on wood Census 2001 shows that only 5.5 for fuel use percent of women own houses. The politics of counting and only about 11 percent have land registered in their names. The census also has new data on Lower literacy-only about 49 polygamy, polyandry, separation, percent of women are literate, divorce and re-marriage. Approxicompared with 65 percent of mately 58 percent of the populamen\_could be one reason for the

**CENSUS HIGHLIGH**<sup>7</sup>

78 percent are under 40 years. 41 percent are under 16

Only three-fourths of households own agricultural land

their names

52 percent of households don't have toilets

Only 5.5 percent of women own houses, only 11 percent have land

Percentage of Negalis identifying themselves as Hindu has falle

The proportion of Buddhists in Nenal has increased to 10.7

percent ten years ago

from 90 to 80 percent.

percent from five percent.

tion above the age of 10 is married with single spouse. polygamy is still practised by more than 2 percent of the population, but widow remarr nains uncommon.



The outlook on social development and poverty reduc tion remains as bleak as ever. Almost 85 percent of the Nepali

https://phip

practices, are difficult to sift through and slot into easy

The real sticky questions in the census relate to ethnicity, religion and language which, given Nepal's diverse, interrelated communities and religious

low access of women to resources within the family. The census

and made public. women". Previous counts assumed that female family members do not migrate abroad. Still, other than stating that 10

asked questions about undocumented and generally uncounted economic activities of women. but that data is yet to be analysed Unlike previous censuses, last year's tried counting "absent



population is female, the report does not elaborate. Neither does it say anything about the women headed households.



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6 NATION SOMEWHERE IN NEPAI

17 - 23 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

# No child's play

Forty-one percent of Nepalis are under 16. That's a lot of people with no political voice.

t was bad enough that the substance of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba's address to the United Nations General Assembly special session on children got caught in the crossfire of commer taries on his Oval Office consultations. What is distressing is the lingering quibbling over whether the prime minister should have left the nation to attend the conference at a time when the state was bracing for some of its fiercest battles with the Maoists. Couldn't the minister for

women, children and social affairs have provided an equally forceful reaffirmation of Nepal's commitment to the welfare of its young at a conference heads of state of government of barely a third of he United Nations members bothered to attend? In deference to our emergency-driven cash crunch, couldn't our permanent representative to the world body have been asked to steer the Nepali delegation?

As a former schoolboy who took long to figure out why Nepal Children's Organisation was the only class body left out of the pre-adult-franchise Rastriva Panchayat, I believe today's young should have a more mature perspective of national affairs. Isn't there more than a trace of hypocrisy here when some of the same people who get so easily worked up about child labour turned out to be the fiercest

APPETIZERS

critics of Deuba's excursion? Did the prime minister really have to cross the seven seas to tell remain the same the world that Nepalis could no longer digest the raw deal their children were getting? Of course, he did. He represents a country where 41 percent of the popula tion is under the age of 16. That's a large cluster of people without a

likely to lay their hands on guns before their voter ID if things The use of child soldiers is far more than a humanitarian concern: its impact lasts far beyond the time of actual fighting; and the scope of the problem vastly exceeds the numbers of children directly involved. The roots of this practice political voice. To get a better reflect several tragic developidea of the stakes involved, start ments-from the brutal targeting pondering how many of them are of civilians in armed conflict to

..... Deuba's text

ur part of the deal. the breakdown of the family unit. often the strongest pillar of many South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. Try of the societies affected. The recruitment of wave after wave of recalling how many of the 56 untrained child soldiers allows points in the Kathmandu Declathe parties to keep conflicts going ration have something to do almost indefinitely-often directly with children. The two escalating them until they become conventions signed during the regional or international problems summit were on combating the trafficking in women and children and promoting child welfare in and threaten the neace in whole regions. These three sentences from UN Secretary-General Kofi the region. Annan's speech to a session on

from ∟>p1

the sidelines of the main conferone of the first few countries that ence could easily have fit into joined the UN Child Rights At a time when Nepalis are waging simultaneous wars on overty and terrorism, the prime minister was correct in underscor-Labour Organisation selected ing the severe strains our resource base is facing. But there was more to Deuba's participation than the number of minors in the Maoist infantry. For one thing, we have a worst forms of child labour. The eightened regional responsibility country was one of the vice-When the UN Children's Fund presidents of the special session regional office for South Asia decided to move from New Delhi's Lodhi Estate to Kathmandu's

Lekhnath Marg several years ago, we hailed it as a recognition of our commitment to the cause of children. The UN conference came as a test of our ability to honour ws: UN experts estimate that Moreover, let's not forget there is a seven-fold return for that Deuba is the chairman of the

society on every rupee invested in the development of children. If you still think Deuba should have staved home and ioined last week's all-party rally in railing against the omnipresen threats from the fascist right and ferocious left, consider this: How many prime ministers does the world have today who were well into their second stint in office while their first child was in the Nepal, like Deuba said, was first grade? ♦

# FCONOM

# BIZ

# Maoist loot

There are now numbers for the Maoist take from banks, and the damage inflicted on banking infrastruc-ture. By one count, the rebeis have taken Rs 330 million from three public sector banks, damaged 162 offices and seized over 100 guns. The damage to banking records is difficult to quantify. The Maoists have hit 132 offices of the Agricultural Development Bank, 17 of the Rastriya Baniya Bank and 13 branches of the Neoal Bank Limited. The increased Maoist attacks have forced the ADB-N to reduce their number of branches by about half of its 546, the RBB has merged 56 rural branches with those in safer areas, and now has 214 branches. The NBL, which had 212 branches before the insurgency began. now has 150

# Sugar scare

A committee formed to assess the demand and supply of sugar has come to the conclusion that the government will have to arrange for importing 60 metric tons of the commodity to avoid the impending shortage during the festive season later this year. At a per capital consumption of 7.5 kg, the annual demand stands at 160 metric tons, against domestic production that is this year anticipated to be below 100 tonnes.

Government was given the report about a month ago but has not yet decided what to do. Last year it sanctioned imports only when the sugar supply had already begun to fall, causing widespread shortages and black marketing.

Surya Luxury Kings, the leader in cigarette manufacturing in Nepal, has launched a new brand aimed at reaching smokers that want to do it in style and relative health. The company claims that its "micro laser ventilated" Surva Lights come with a unique taste signature, making it the most exclusive "light" cigarette in Nepal. A 20-pack will retail at Rs 49, the same as the regular Surya and Surya Mild. The company is also launching a special Surya Lights Treasure Hunt promo that will begin 15 June. Prizes include a holiday to Singapore and numerous trinkets. Surya's press release also comes with the statutory directive: Smoking is injurious to health.

20

# Laxmi Bank

operations from its Birganj office this week. It is the country's 16<sup>th</sup> commercial bank. The regional bank has issued capital of Rs लक्ष्मी' बैंक 'लिमिटेड

The bank has permission to enhance its equity to Rs 500 million Mohan Gonal

Khetan is the chairman of the bank, CPKhetan, RLShanghai, MS Agrawal and Suman Joshi are directors.

# fact that the largest segment for business to taking Nepal forward. The US has been one of Nepal's peration exists in the power secto There are other areas that Nepal

what always affects us most is government policy and inaction. For example, now we have the guarantine problem with India. It shouldn't even be applicable to us-we share the

same soil and climatic conditions. For a year-and-ahalf we've had this problem and government doesn't seem bothered. 80 percent of pulses mills are closed three-quarters of exports to India and Bangladesh have been affected. Over 80 percent of Nepalis are in agriculture. If govern

ment addresses their problems, they will have more purchasing power and can buy from other industries and help pull them out of this slump.

Take another example. Replacing electricity towers costs only Rs 2 million each. They lose Rs 10 million per month by not repairing the poles. We're ready to pay. Now, a month after some towers in western Nepal were damaged, the government has finally begun tendering for

## Whatis at the bottom of the quarantine stalemate?

Our government just isn't serious. When we talk with the embassy we're told the Nepali delegation had been called to India to finalise the issue. Somebody has to go. We kept getting sent back and forth between the agriculture ministry and the commerce ministry. Nobody seems bothered

## What exactly is the problem with guarantine?

We have a quarantine check post in Kakarvitta in the east. To export from Nepalgani to Lucknow. I have to drive goods 600 km to Kakarvitta and another 600 km back. That's impossible-margins in foodgrains are very small and affected by prices across the border. I Intil our requests for quarantine check posts at Birganj, Bhairahawa, Biratnagar, Nepalganj and Dhangadi, or Mahendranagar are fulfilled, we should be allowed to export under our own sanitary certification. India hasn't been able to set up border nosts and our novernment has not nursued that seriously. This problem is more serious than treaty renewal but few seem to understand that. Our herb exports are now zero because of that, still no one seems worried.

# You also produce vegetable ghiu. Were the Indian charges against Nepali ghiu exports justified?

When the treaty was signed in 1996, our import duties were zero, India's about 15 percent. We had additional freight costs from Calcutta and then to the markets. Our production was low and costs were high. Then, to protect its producers. India began raising import duties, first to 35 percent then to 55 percent. Meanwhile, Nepal also raised duties, from half-a-percent gradually to 10 percent, and there was a 4 percent Indian Special Addi-

tourism and manpower. Attention Nepal's agri-potential, in particular, is long overdue. A US airline with direct connections to Kathmandu would be a enormous boon to tourism, adding more seats and much-need visibilit ould start by luring back budg travellers, and then begin making inroads into the convention as well a holiday markets. As for manpower po 9/11, the world over, but especial in the US, there is realisation that security personnel are as important a the most sophisticated gadgets. Given Nepal's history of throwing up reliable

1.0

lecline now that the US quota system The United States appears to inderstand the geopolitical importance imminent advent of the WTO regime. of Nepal, but hasn't vet been able to leverage it as an economic hub to give China and India a run for their mo stumbling blocks-declining quality. That is largely due to not very much effort on our part. What Nepal needs in order to attract investment and showing a keen interest in encouragin increased trade, are strong proposi tions that focus on its strategic infrastructure, especially in the power

to widen its role and fine tune its ies in South Asia. The militar hub may lie somewhere else, but Nepa has a sporting chance of being an economic and business hub. On the next state visit of our prime ministe overseas, perhaps the agenda will be different .

security people, the US could potentially he one of our best markets

location. The US is trying, post-Afghanistan sector, and in facilitating such investment. But the Nepali government can't seem to make up its mind whether it even wants such investments. There USAID, to bring South Asian countries

together to work on a joint power sector.

Readers can post their views and discuss issues at

"The quarantine is more serious than the trade treaty."

tional Duty. Our costs were about 20 percent, compared to the duty. Producing and selling was still feasible. The border area markets were affected by our exports, but due to high import duties, not because we flooded the market

The renewed treaty fixed quotas for export. Now India has announced canalising, effective 15 May. You can only sell 100,000 metric tons of obju every year, and you have to sell that through a government company

# To what extent will the quotas affect ghiu exports?

Production is already down by 50 percent. To sell that to a government organisation, which will then sell it to other Indian parties is impossible. We were producing 175 tons a day. We've come down to 70, and in future it may be 25 tons, because the domestic market is very small. I India doesn't remove the canalising clause, only industries with local markets will survive.

Our industry employed 10,000-15,000 people and over Rs 5 billion was invested in it, excluding the Rs 2.5 billion put into expansion. Our government received about Rs 50 million as revenue from ghiu exports. every week, that's come down to Rs 5 million. Also, half of all our exports to India are done by four or five big multinationals. Others, Nepali entreprepeurs, are badly affected by the updated trade treaty.

# What three things can be done to improve the situation for business? Number one, resolve the quarantine issue. Then find a way to effectively end bandhs. Third, formulate a sound policy to enhance rice production

## What can government do to help rice?

We need to move from producing coarse to fine rice because of changing demand. Basmati rice is also very feasible here, but production is almost zero. Wheat is a success story, because of government policy a long time ago that encouraged the development of quality milling. If it could do the same for rice, the private sector is ready to invest in developing the basmati seed. The government has to show the way, the private sector will step into anything where they see profits.

Until four years ago, we exported rice to Bangladesh. Prices here wer up, farmers and millers were making more. Then, one evening, the government decided to stop exports effective the next day, because elections were approaching and politics were involved. Our exports dropped to zero. The figures are a little better this year. Agro-industry is our future, all policies should be geared towards that end. We need mproved access, we need fertiliser, we need to help farmers to improve produce and raise yield

FHA<sup>\*</sup> Culinary Challenge Recipes MAIN COURSES DESSERTS Our Chefs: Shuam Sarni and Dik by Chef Saroj Karki by Chef Shyam Tamang by Chef D. Shrestha are just back from Singapore where 17 - 23 May, 2002 24 - 30 May, 2002 31 May - 6 June 2002 they showcased their talents at the \*Food and Hotel Asia 2002 **Oulinary Challenge** Sample their acclaimed recipes from 17 May, 2002 at the Al Fresco. discover the new-age cuisine please call 273399 est 6123 What saved the Buddha was some very fast footwork between Schicklgruber at the Ethnographic Museum, the University and Shakya in Kathmandu. This evidence was sufficient to con-Al Fresco vince the Austrian public prosecutor to confiscate the image on suspicion of being stolen property. A case against the German gallery has been filed in Vienna. Currently Austrian police are working with their German colleagues and the Royal Nepalese Embassy in Berlin to develop the case. When told that he was peddling a stolen object the art dealer reportedly said: "I'd rather not take this matter to Kathmandu, it will stir a ornet's nest ' An ethnographic expert in Kathmandu told us it Tahachal, Kathmandu Tel.: 273999, 272555 Fascinule: 977-1-272205 E-mail: crowneplazalishira com na Water s rare for a museum curator to turn in stolen

Will the Buddha be back in time for his birthday? very unusual for the museum to call the cops said. But it may not be so easy to get the necessary court order to bring the Buddha back to Nepal sinc, according to Austrian law, pieces bought in good faith are regarded as private property-even if they

are stolen Even so. Shakva in Kathmandu and his colleagues in Vienna are working to quickly get the paperwork on the authenticity of the Buddha as well as proof of Nepali laws against the smuggling of eligious artifacts to Vienna, so the court has the sary documents to decide on the matter Shakya is the author of the book, Sacred Art of Nepal, and he feels the court's decision to return the Buddha to Nepal will set a precedent and deter future theft of Nepali religious artifacts. He thinks it will have great symbolism to have the Dipankar back in time for Buddha Jayanti on 26 May.

The gilded cast copper Dipankar Buddha is one of the 108 Buddhas that are paraded through Patan and exhibited at the annual Samvak festival. There are two other Samyak Buddha figures that have also een stolen in recent years from guthis in Patan.

Shakya says it is now important for the Nepali authorities to claim the return of the Buddha "The more voices are raised in Nepal, the more the moral pressure on the Austrian courts to return the mage," he says. Meanwhile the German galler which had printed this picture (left) of the Dipankar in its catalogue has removed all other Nepali images from its web site http://www.hardt.de. Other art historians say the fact that the Buddha ook only five months to surface after its theft shows how brazen art thieves have now become. Usually

they let stolen art objects "cool" for a few years before offering them for sale. "Art smugglers must feel very safe to try to sell it so quickly," said an expert in Buddhist sacred art in Kathmandu. ♦

For more information objects, and was full of praise for Schicklgruber. "It www.nagarjuna.con

The KL Dugar group is the largest player in the agro-industry sector, with interests ranging m salt and sugar to oils, rice and pulses, m salt and sugar to oils, rice and pulses, poil Times spoke with Kumud Dugar about ports to India, agriculture sector reform and impact of the insurgency on the industry.

### Nepali Times: How's your business managing these days?

Kumud Dugar: We deal with items for day-to-day consumption, obviously sales are affected. It's become very difficult to dispatch goods to mountain areas and collect payments. After 7PM western Nepal is effectively under curfew. Sales have come down by 15-20 percent. Our problems multiplied after they began destroying infrastructure-blowing up electricity, telecom

Staff don't want to be in remote areas because of security reasons.

# towers and bridges, all this brings business to a standstill. We can't produce You also supply to the World Food Program (WFP), operations of which have been disruntedÖ

Obviously. The WFP has time-bound activities and we have to supply within a certain period. We aren't able to meet deadlines—a five-day bandh, for example, sets you back 15 days. The trucks begin to unload five days before, and take five more days to come back into operation.

### Have security checks affected distribution? Supply to hill areas has been delayed by checking. Otherwise, we haven't

had major problems, especially in the tarai.

What about production?

## We've been producing only what we can sell, so that's under control. But

# Nepal as one of three countries for a time-bound program focusing on the elimination of the

and the Kathmandu Understand ing represented one of the five main regional processes held in preparation for the conference. Sure, the millions the prime minister's entourage used up could have been invested in child welfare programs. But here's the good

had our own teething troubles with the emerging new international political order, he might have added). The International

Convention (at a time when we

Surya Lights





17 - 23 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

# ECONOMIC SENSE **Amrika-return**

he Beed and most of our

For one, he took a smaller

entourage than usual, and those who went with him didn't give the

inket For another, our dear leader

anaged to not embarrass Nepalis b

atting up a bad show with CNN.

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba

attached \$20 million mission. Of

was a man with a mission. A no-string

urse, although the US government

nore or less agreed to this, we poor

ople Nepalis, disillusioned with

res of bilateral and multilateral

greements will only believe it when

reek. Now for the rest of the story.

Why didn't the prime minister slip in

inally had a chance to ask for not just

nore aid, but also trade and invest-

nent, and we didn't. Our delegation

gently needs this kind of economic

of their claims and their commitment

innort, and that such a request might

onceivably add to the credibilit

night have considered that Nepal

ome more discussion on business? We

That was the bright side of the past

e see the money. But it's still

mething.

Just think what US-Nepal business ties could be could work in with the US-agriculture

acquaintances have just got done heaving a little sigh of relief. The me minister has finished his trip to 00 he US and the UK, and it differed in ome important ways from the foreign trips of his predecessors. \*\*\*\*\*\*

pression that they were simply on a major partners in terms of trade as well as aid. The visibility of the latter has diminished over the years, but in ter This visit also differed from other visits of trade with and investment in Nepal. road by Nepali Heads of State past-

has been reviewed, and with the

Carpets and pashmina have been

moving along, but have hit other

poor market research and the like.

American companies to invest in

are efforts, notably on the part of

nitiative. It's time we woke up to the

The US government has been

the US is second only to India. Garments have been Nepal's key expo item, but the industry is already in

# 8 LIFESTYLE

# 17 - 23 MAY 2002 NEPALI TIMES

# enticed to join him, and the club

was revived. Sonny Shrestha and Manindra Shrestha were the forces behind changing the browns to greens at the RNGC, uplifting the level of golf in the early 1990's. The new clubhouse completed late last year transformed the ambience overnight into a venue more worthy of the causes it champions. Golf development in a country does not go far if facilities are all concentrated in one area. The Dharan Golf Club provided such a diversification of venue from the late sixties onwards. Then, indisputably the most stunningly unique course in Nenal, the Himalayan Golf Club in Pokhara, carried the torch from 1984 It was almost fifteen years later that the Fulbari Recort lounched their nine holer where astounding views of the Annapurna stretch from east to west, overwhelming your senses. About the time the Himalayan Golf Club opened. the Nepal Golf Association was formed. After some years of silence, it has plans for 2002. It will conduct, on behalf of the Mount Everest Golden Jubilee Celebration, a comprehensive six-day tournament starting 9 November, and involving four of Nepal's five golf courses. With a target participation of 300 golfers, of which 200 would be foreigners, it is by far the most ambitious golfing event ever envisioned in the country. Nepal's golf development would not have been possible without its corporate patrons.







## Rana prime minister's delegation returns from Scotland with some gold clubs. Started plaving at Gaucharan, where the present Tribhuvan vernational Airport runway is located. Golfers of those days were Rana enerals like General Babar Sumshere and General Lava Sumshere. It is believed that they had 18 holes at that time, with sand and oil/tar based greens (so called browns). Some golf tournaments were initiated around

## Mid 1020's The Lava cup was started.

1055 The golf course at Gaucharan was shortened once airplanes started landing in Kathmandu, as the runway occupied half its land. In those days even King Tribhuvan and members of the royal family played golf occasionally. Prince Basundhara was a keen colfer Late 50's

General Kiran Sumshere established the same golf course by naming it the Gauchar Golf Club.

# 5 September 1965

The Gauchar Golf Club received royal patronage from King Mahendra The Club was inaugurated, and since then it has been named the Royal Nenal Colf Club (PNCC) Prince Recundhara became precident and held the presidency until 1978. Golfers in those days were mostly expatriates, diplomate and from the Shah and Pana families Late 60's

The Dharan Country Club was established by British Gurkhas in Dharan. The course had nine holes and grass greens (not browns).

All the RNGC's land was occupied by the expanding airport. There were no golf courses in the Kathmandu Valley for over a year. The only golf course remaining in the country was the Dharan Country Club 1983

The RNGC was revived in Tilganga on Pashupati Development Trust land. It had only 6-par 3's holes and colfers played it thrice to complete the requisite 18 holes. 1984

The Gokarna Safari Golf Club was established at Rajnikunj Gokarna in Kathmandu. Nine holes with browns (not greens) were made. The RNGC expanded up to nine holes—8 par 3's and one par 4. The Nenal Golf Association was established

The RNGC received land from Civil Aviation and built 6 new holes and

Nepal one of the most anticipated and progressive events. This has been probably the biggest setback to corporate golf ponsorship in Nepal. Other orporate amateur tournaments include, at Gokarna, the Surva Master's Pro-Am, the Famous Grouse Shotgun Foursomes and the Shangri-La Open. The San Miguel Cup, Carlsberg Cup, and Soaltee Cup are held at the RNGC.

By most definitions, perfecting" your golf game through practice is pretty much impossible. But, exasperating though perfection might be, practice driving ranges contribute immensely to promoting golf at a national level. In December 2000. Rai Pradhan, one of Nepal's leading amateur players combined his passion with his livelihood, and opened the Bafal Driving Range. Following this, in April last year, a group of enthusiasts got together and started the Pokhara Golf School. This is all to the good, but

something was still lacking. Nepal with its 22 million was probably among the last medium-sized countries in the world to not have a full-length



1088 The first Bermuda greens were made at the RNGC. 1993 The first professional/ international tournament was held in Nepal. The

Surva Nepal Open began at the RNGC and was held verify thereafter. Crown Prince Dipendra gave his patronage to the RNGC The Gokarna Safari Golf Club ceased to exist. 1004

Golf in Nepal

The stunning nine-hole Himalayan Golf Course was established in Pokhara 1006

Work started on an international standard 18-hole Golf Course at Rainikuni Gokama 1997

The Green Canyon Country Club, a nine-hole par-3 course was established at the Fulbari Resort, Pokhara.

1998 Construction of the Army Golf Course started behind the airport in Kathmandu

The Nenal Professional Golfers Association was established. The NPGA currently has 18 professional colfer members 1000

The Gokarna Forest Golf Resort (GFGR) opened up with Nepal's first international standard 18-hole golf course. The Surya Nepal Masters professional tournament upped its prize money and moved the event to the GFGR. 2000

The nine-hole Army Golf Club was established in Kathmandu and soon became known to the less fit as The Commando Course. GFGR opens up its practice driving range in August.

Bafal Driving range opens in December near the Soaltee with lights for hight practice, facilities for video analysis, and a cafeteria 2001

The Dharan Golf Club was leased out and revived as Nirvana Country Club The 230 yard-long Pokhara Golf School driving range opened in April. 2002

The Fulbari Resort remodelled and lengthened its course and renamed it the Annanuma Golf Club The GFGR started expansion of its Clubhouse and recreational facilities to

cater to a growing membership. 2003

Tiger Woods plays golf in Kathmandu.



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"Golf is a game whose aim it is to hit a very small bal into an even smaller hole with weapons singularly ill-designed for the purpose." - Winston Churchill S SUMANT

F

DRUKAR Twice a week from Kathmandu to Delhi BHUTA Within a short soan of its introduction the network of Druk Air increased to ink Paro with New Delhi, Banakok and mandu. From two destinations in 198 today Druk Air operates from Paro four times a week to Bangkok and Calcutta, twice to Kathmandu and Delhi and once a month to Dhaka.



fulfilling, it would be for a econd 18-hole golf course in Kathmandu. That this would add a pleasurable new venue for diehard hackers is totally incidental. Reaching this objective is the most importan step for the development of golf. both at a national level, and in terms of the upmarket tourism activities Nepal sorely needs. Just one full-length golf course does not satiate visiting tourists, nor does it serve as an effective catalyst for the sport to grow. Without a doubt, the aleasure of this accomplishment nust be given with full support and enthusiasm, and fall to the

Royal Nepal Golf Club (RNGC), which has been instrumental in keeping golf alive and growing in countra

elegation returned from Scotland carrying golf clubs. From that time, for almost a n Nepal has been carried forward from the area of the former cattle-grazing fields at nternational airport is now located. In the late 1950's. hnath Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal 977-1-410089 419637, Fax: 977-1-423143 Email: drukair@mallatreks.com.np

In 1917 a prime minister's

hundred years, the spirit of golf Gaucharan, where Kathmandu's General Kiran Sumshere Rana used to pay all the staff from

his own pocket—just to keep

Surva Tobacco in 2001 offered the highest prize money ever for a professional tournament here. Known as the Gauchar Golf Rs 1.44 million. The Gorkha Club in the late fifties, and Brewery sponsored two profesformally established with royal sional tournaments in 1999 and patronage in 1965, the Royal 2001; Mount Everest Brewery has held amateur tournaments; Nepal Golf Club is moving onwards. Despite troybles over and Coke has backed tournathe years-losing land to the ments. Johnny Walker was big into promoting golf tournaments expanding airport, among thers-members persisted in for amateurs, and their plans their efforts and today have a included sending winning golfers to Macau, Indonesia, Korea, Taiwan and Delhi. Unfortu-Shambhu Acharva was in the process of reviving golf in

# **TOP NEPALI PROFESSIONALS**

Deepak Thapa Magar (34) Deepak Acharya (26) started playing golf when he was five and took it more seriously in 1983 (age 8). Father was a golfer at the RNGC Toran Shahi (25)

Ramesh Nagarkoti (early 30's) Pashupati Sharma (29) Radheshyam Thapa (27) Ghanashyam Thapa (mid 50's) RNGC professional since 1968. Left for Mumbai in 1984 for eight years. In 1992 returned to Nepal, left the next year to go to Germany as a teaching proreturned to Nepal in 1999

# **TOP AMATEURS**

CB Bhandari (mid 20's) handicap 1 Yelamber Adhikari (19) handicap 3 Deep B Basnet handicap 5

Raj Pradhan handicap 4 Tashi Ghale handican 4

# **UPCOMING TALENTS**

Sean Einhaus (12) handicap 3, Florida junior tournament 72/ 72/73/85. His mother Sangita Shrestha Einhaus (handicap 28) encourages him. Abhishek Amatya (17) handicap 12. Spandan Lama (20) handicap severely cut after winning two tournaments recently with incredible scores.

nately, the company withdrew its Tilganga by making a few holes, sponsorship of golf after 1999, taking off the golfing calendar in when old RNGC members were

# **Dalits, Gujarat and the BJP**

## PAN IIT DEVPA

NEW DELHI -- India's western Uttar Pradesh state, the heartland of conservative Hinduism, is ruled by a dalit woman. But while the state's chief minister Mayawati, who was sworn in last Monday, belongs to an "untouchable" caste, she is supported by her most bitter opponent-the right-wing, pro-Hindu and mostly upper-caste BJP, which leads the coalition government at the centre.

Until February, when elections to UP's provincial legislature were held, the BIP government in the state seemed to have one agenda-to build the Ram temple in Ayodhya. It didn't really work, and the vote was split between the BJP, the Samajwadi Party (SP) or Socialist Party, which represents the interests of people belonging mainly to the middle peasant castes and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), whose avowed aim is promoting the interests of the dalits. The SP and the BSP opposed the Ram temple campaign and Mayawati repeatedly criticised Ram as a symbol of the upper-caste social heremony bolstered by religious sanction, that her party is sworn to destroy.

After the elections, none of the three parties had the numbers to form a government on its own. After two months of vacillation, the BIP, though predominantly upper caste, decided that the only way it could hang on to powe use to chara it with Mannunti's BSD. The BSD and the BID both fast the Socialis Party, which emerged as the largest single party. Likewise, as on two previous occasions, in 1995 and in 1997 when hung assemblies were elected, castes at either end of the Hindu hierarchy made common cause in staving off the SP, which represents powerful intermediate groups like the Yadays

When the issue of the Gujarat state's complicity in the riots in late-February was nut to vote in Parliament, Prime Minister Vaipavee's minority BIP sovernment at the centre was desperate for the votes of 14 BSP members, and agreed to the installation of Mayawati as chief minister. Mayawati's first stint as chief minister lasted four months and the second six months. Each time, upper castes thwarted her continuance in office and the BSP and the BJP bitterly fought each other during campaigning for last February's elections.

"Our agenda is clear and that is to promote the interests of the dalits-we aren't too particular how we achieve that aim," said Mayawati soon after she was sworn in, leading an unlikely BSP-BJP combine for the third time. The alignment with the BJP angered many Muslim BSP legislators and also upper-caste grandees in the BJP. Mayawati is confident that this time, her government will survive long enough to go beyond symbolic stures toward dalits, such as setting up of statues of BR Ambedkar, the foremost champion of the dalit cause and drafter of the Indian constitution. Her own constituents have criticised such moves

But first she will have to win a vote of confidence as chief minister in the UP assembly. That is by no means certain given the fact that a large number of legislators are opposed to the alliance both within her party and in the BIP. • (IPS)

by DAVID WALL Prime minister or nationalist puppet?

ofKoizum

public act of worship at Yasukuni,

ime Minister Iunichiro Koizumi did go to pray at Yasukuni Shrine. We were told that he'd felt the need "to mourn those who gave their lives to the country

which has enshrined Class A war during the course of (Japan's) history since the (1868) Meiji Restoration" criminals. His visit to the shrine las August raised outrage in Asian and to "pray for those who lost their countries where these criminals carried lives." The chief Cabinet secretary was out atrocities during the years of Japanese occupation, especially in China and North and South Korea, careful to explain that it was a personal visit made on the basis of the prime minister's personal faith. That claim where the occupation lasted longest and was most brutal. In response,

If the motive was purely personal Koizumi requested permission to visi and the result of a need to mourn and South Korea and China to apologise He was not welcome by many people pray, why could he not have done this n the privacy of his own home? And if in those countries. South Korea's he needs an institutional setting for his National Parliament refused him praying, why did he not go to the entry, and 10 veterans cut off parts of tomb of the Unknown Soldier? If it their fingers in protest at his actions. was a personal and private gesture, Whatever good that visit did in why did he arrange extensive publicity rebuilding diplomatic links has now and sign the visitors' book as "prime been squandered, and Koizumi has

justifiably been branded a hypocrite. minister"? The simplistic explanations made He must have known a second in terms of private and personal visit to Yasukuni would produce a



# ASGHAR ALI ENGINEER

MUMBAI - More than two months after a pogrom was unleashed against the minority Muslim community in western Gujarat, the state where Mahatma Gandhi was born continues to burn. Between one and five thousand people hav died and more than 100,000 Muslims have been driven from their homes and sinesses and are now in makeshift camps. With some honourable exceptions, Gujarat today is an embodiment of brutality. Chief Minister Narendra Modi is a member of the BIP, but also the hard-

tore Hindu nationalist Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), an organisation dating back to the thirties and inspired by the Nazis. Many ministers of the Mod government are deeply involved in organising the genocide, according to independent groups like the National Human Rights Commission and the Minorities Commission The Guiarat carnage is a concerted assault on Indian democracy, its diversity and pluralism. For the Guiarat government, the Indian Constitution does not exist. The administration obeys all illegal and extraconstitutional orders of government of Gujarat. Anyone who insists on the rule of law is instantly transferred. The police force has also proved to be quite obliging.

But there is another factor which deserves onious reflections the large cost participation of dalits and lower castes in what has been called genocide. Many rights activists emphasise dalit-Muslim unity, but pro-Hindu activists have instilled a sense of Hinduness among dalits to turn them against Muslims. The huge crowds of ten to fifteen thousand that surrounded the Muslims from all sides consisted mostly of dalits and lower castes. They were no doubt

given liquor and money plus the incentive of loot. Still, this does not explain the fury with which they

attacked. The constant propaganda against Muslims that they are the enemies and anti-nationals and must be taught a less also had its effect. In the political strategy of pro-Hindu dalits, support is

> for Muslim carnage but also to win elections (IPS)(Asghar Ali at the Centre for Study of Society and a peace activist )

rtant not onl

Engineer is an Islamic scholar Secularism and

Why does Koizumi keep offending Japan's neighbours?

..... cultivating over the past year. I have Philippines, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Indonesia and other een monitoring Chinese, Taiwanes and South Korean newspapers and countries whose soldiers and citizen had suffered in World War II camps websites and press releases from yongyang. While the official reaction I can only come up with one explanation: fear. Japan is dependent has been strong but muted, popular reaction has been extreme; the chat on the United States for security. rooms are full of hate. In Seoul, a Politically it is also a dependency; it has no real independent foreign group of veterans publicly stabled to death a pig that served as an effigy policy. National pride has been

uisfied for the past three decades The political explanation offered through economic success. But such for the visit is inadequate-that as part pride is dissipating as the country's of the package Koizumi agreed to in nomy slips into decline. order to gain support for his appoint-ment as premier, he was to visit Japan has a palpable fear that it is coming an economic dependency of Yasukuni on the anniversary of the China. It feels China's ascendancy-

war's ending. We're told his decision to go a couple of days early last August economically as well as politically and militarily-threatens what it sees as its was regarded as breaking his promise, so he went again. Nationalists think his promise is still unfulfilled. As an rightful leadership position in East Asia. The leadership it feels it has bought is slipping away. A nation that thinks it is in decline can be desperate xcuse for the earlier timing of his visit this year, it's been suggested he thought, or was advised, that China Its politicians can get led by the nose by nationalists who can distract

ind South Korea would be muted in attention from the domestic corruptio their reaction so as to not upset soccer and moral decay that economic decline supporters in their own countries by exposes. They even begin to eulogise ening the success of the World the men who made their neighbours Cup. This is sad and pointless, and into enemies. (Japan Times) pegs the further question of why

Koizumi was asked to make the (David Wall teaches at the Centre of International Studies promise in the first place and why he eels he has to keep it in spirit, if not to at the University of Cambridge the letter and is chairman of the China Why did he knowingly insult and

Discussion Group at the Royal ipset the peoples of North and South Institute of International Korea, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, the Affaire

Un-neighbourly behaviour

TOKYO - Televised footage of North Korean asylum seekers being dragged away from a Japanese consulate by police in China's Shonyang utility is work dealers and the second Shenyang city this week deals a new blow to Sino-Japanese ties, the 30° year of whose normalisation is being marked this year. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, responding to a wave of public sympathy for the asylum seekers, including at least one toddler, has rapped the Chinese for forcibly taking away the North Koreans, which included women and a child, to prevent them seeking asylum in the Japanese consulate last Wednesday. "I believe it was a violation of the convention (the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations). Therefore I have protested," he told the Japanese press. But the Japanese oovernment has also been criticised about how its own consular staff stood watching as all this happened. In any case, last Friday Tokyo sent a team of diplomats to China to discuss the incident. Farlier Kawaguchi summoned the Chinese envoy to the foreign ministry and demanded that China apologise over the incident. (IPS

# Islamic separatists, oppressed minority

GENEVA - Delegates from the Indonesian government and the separatist Free Aceh Movement (GAM) have agreed to negotiate an end to hostilities and a process for electing democratic authorities for the northern Indonesian province of Aceh. The agreement, confirmed last Friday, also calls for a revision, reflecting the viewpoint of the Aceh people of the special statute for autonomy issued in 2001 by Jakarta, known as Islamic Nation of Aceh Law (NAD). GAM has beer engaged in armed and political action since 1976 seeking independence for the province, which is rich in natural gas and is home to 4.5 million people-two percent of the total Indonesian population. The egion holds 20 percent of Indonesia's natural gas reserves, but just 1.6 of the revenue the country earns from das exports are returned to Aceh. The Indonesian government's repressive actions, ostensibly against the rehals, have claimed more than 10,000 lives, mostly civilians, 400 of them this year. The country is facing simultaneous conflicts of separatist or ethnic nature in Irian Jaya (Western Papua) and Moluccas. Since 11 September, US diplomacy has expressed concern about the persistence in Asia of armed conflicts, as also occurring in the Philippines, involving extremist Islamic rebels. The US special envoy to the Middle Fast. Anthony Zinni, participated in the negotiations (IPS)

# Pakistan's French connection

PARIS - France has exported weapons worth more than \$1.9 billion to Pakistan over the last ten years, according to official figures. Those military exports make France the main supplier to the Pakistani military. French military ties with Pakistan came into focus following the bombing of a bus in Karachi Wednesdav in which 11 French naval workers were killed and 12 wounded. Three others died in the attack. The French personnel, a team from state-owned shipyard Direction de la Construction Navale (DCN), were in Karachi building an Agosta military submarine. The DCN is to withdraw all its personnel from Pakistan within the next few days. The submarine project which now faces disruption is a part of extensive military supplies from France to Pakistan. The annual report of the National Assembly on French military exports says that France has already delivered military supplies to Pakistan worth \$1.7 billion over the past ten years. Weapons worth about \$200 million are due to be delivered within a few months. French supplies represent 46 per cent of all Pakistani military imports since 1991, and 3.5 per cent of all French military exports. France is the world's second largest exporter of weapons after the US //PS

# Fortress Europe

BRUSSELS - The European Commission has proposed a multina-tional border force to secure the borders of the European Union. The proposal by the EC, the executive arm of the EU, seeks to balance demands for tighter border controls with a fair chance for asylum seekers. The EC said in a proposal this week that checks on EU borders must be tightened if a high level of security is to be guaranteed. especially after enlargement of the EU. Up to ten countries, mainly from the former Soviet bloc, are due to join the EU in January 2004. At present countries control their own borders. Calling the EU's external border the "weakest link in the chain". European Commis sioner for justice and home affairs Antonio Vitorino says the public wants to "pase the level of domestic security in the EU." But the measure is not intended to block out third countries. "If we improve border controls, we will also make procedures more clear and transpar ent for all concerned." he says. Rights groups are urging the EU not to deny the right to asylum in the name of border security. (IPS)

# **Plummeting into poverty**

BUENOS AIRES – Argentina's economic crisis has pushed 2.5 millior people into poverty in just four months, and today nearly half of the country's population of 36.2 million are poor, according to official figures. The 14.5 million poor in Argentina in December-the month the economic crisis erupted, leading to the social and political protests that ended the Fernando de la Rúa presidency-now number 17 million, according to the latest study by the governmental National Institute of Statistics and Censuses (INDEC). The country is on the verge of breaking its own record as far as the portion of the population living in poverty, which reached 52 percent in the late 1980s, an era of hyperinflation. But the causes of poverty today are considered more structural in nature, and thus more difficult to change, "We have never seen this confluence of negative factors: depreciation of the currency inflation, high unemployment, declining income, financial crisis and political crisis," stated Artemio López, director of the Equis consultancy, which is tracking poverty in Argentina. López says poverty will reach 57 percent by the end of the year, so long as prices rise by only 50 percent. Economists forecast inflation of 100 percent. (IPS)

# Back at Sundarijal >11 "A small chink in the prison wall"

At the start of his fourth week incarcerated in Sundarijal, BP finally gets news of the outside world in the form of two Nepali newspapers. He is happy to hear that elections are to be held in India, then in a state of emergency, and wonders about his politician friends' reactions. Every fortnight Nepali Times brings you extracts from BP's unpublished diaries which are handwritten in English.

# 18 January [No entry]

# **19 January**

Today we were informed that we can't send our laundry home for washing. The govt will arrange for a Dhobi to do the job. We were further told that tomorrow a doctor will come to see us, and that we are likely to get Gorkhapatra and Rising Nepal-government controlled dailies, and no other papers from India. These informations, except about the doctor, have upset me considerably. I myself did not want to send my clothes for washing. But the practice would keep a line of communication open between me and home-a line which could be developed later on. About newspapers also-the Kathmandu Daily and that too controlled by the government, are most unsatisfactory papers. We will not get the news of the world. The whole day I was upset. The day was cloudy which made my mood all the more despondent. How long will this isolation be maintained? On top of this I am suffering from dysentery. If only the isolation [of] us lifted. I wasn't [in] regular contact with my people. I started reading "The Wonder that Was [India]" by Basham, I just

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intervened [sic] my interest, and I suppose I will read the book with interest and care. If only I could concentrate on some serious studies. Perhaps this book will engage me for a fortnight, and if I make a serious study of this book, it may take over one month. There are only half a dozen books with us, and they are not engrossing enough. I cannot read superficial books particularly in jail condition. I need really substantial materials to study so that in making mutual effort I may continue to forget the present situation. My temperament is not attuned to performing mechanical work, whether mental or physical. I wanted to mug up an English dictionary-which I couldn't do. If I could perform daily duties eligiously most of my idle time would be thus occupied. This too I can't do. My mind is greatly agitated. Tried to read "Wonder that was India" fitfully. Didn't get sleep well

11pm, I am really disturbed.

# 20th January

out. In the evening there was a silent shower accompanied with strong wind. I confined myself within my cell. Feeling lonely and homesick. We discuss politics for some time in the morning on the verandah, anticipa ing the appearance of the sun. We cover the same ground over and over again-on new information adds to the political factors that we have already considered. So our political analyses continues to remain the same, because the elements of politics composing the situation as we understand it remain the same. There is no point therefore in reiterating the same known and thoroughly considered factors and come to the same old conclusion arrived four months ago in Varanasi with regards to national crisis which has impelled us to take this historical step at great personal risk to ourselves. We have already placed ourselves at the disposal (or mercy) of our erstwhile political enemy, the King. There is no going back now.

and [to] retrace our step, we see no political reason to do so. It now lies with the King whether he rises to the occasion, impelled by sense of patriotism, or reacts in an unimaginatively petty manner to our bold step It is one thing for me to feel homesick and remember dear ones at home with fondness—our folks who are put to great difficulties—but when I consider my duty as a political leader I see no reason to weaken in my

a on lands

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arlsberg

turned over the leaves of the book to see if it can interest me. It has present stand. After all at my ane, when people retire and adopt the

Wet & Wild Summer

Dr Bhattarai came. My BP is 140/88. The day remained cloudy through-

But even as the possibility existed for the reversal of our decision

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Vanaprastha life, or await the arrival of death in peace. I am performing some worthwhile duty, and if death comes I will have in harness. There is touch of pessimism in such contemplation-this pessimism is not really a feeling if despair: it is an expression of fondness for the people at home whom I have left unprotected. My political decision is firm-it is firm to the point of death. Read a few pages of Basham's book before I went to bed. At

the dinner there was fish curry-piece of fish drowned to the bottom of a pot of gravy.

# 21<sup>st</sup> January

Today at last we got two Nepali dailies. Rising Nepal and Gorkhapatra. I read them with great avidity. Gorkhapatra does not contain any item of interest to me. Rising Nepal gave us some international news. Since I was starved of national and interna-tional news for the last 22 days i.e. since our arrival in Kathmandu, the reading of the paper did give me some thrill.

What interests me most was the editorial of *Rising Nepal*. It appears through the editorial that there has been some criticism in the foreign press of our arrest on ground which is of course wrong, that we had been asked by the govt. to return and that the novernment has issued clarification station that we have returned Nepal on our own free will and that since we are a party to anti govt. activities involving violence etc, we are been kept under detention till investigation is completed and the case is referred to the iudiciary.

The other news which has interested me is the announcement by Indira Gandhi of the general election for Indian parliament in March. The situation in India will be a little relaxed now. There are statements of JP (Jaya Prakash Narayan) and Morarji Desai. A large number of political prisoners arrested during the Emergency have hontoo of pointed insolition and a state of an ing the Energiery have been released. A good sign. Today I remember Chandra Shekhar who had sent word from prison that we shouldn't make haste to return to Nepal since, according to him, situation would improve in India. The announcement of the election to be held in March is a very happy development. I was not expecting [it] of Indiraji; and was vehement in countering the optimism of some of my Indian friends that the election in India would take place soon.

With the supply of these papers, however, and equal as newspapers they are—our isolation is slightly lifted—a small chink on our prison wall has appeared through which we can now view, however limited, a section of the world. Now we can feel our imagination to make a total view of the world. There will be something to go by and build on. I hope Shailaja [Shailaja Acharya, niece] is not kept is strict darkness about the situation outside. We talked about her in the morning. GM [Ganesh Man Singh] feels that in view of Shailaja's solitary detention it would have been better if Nona too had come with us. In Varanasi he was opposed to her accompanying us. Now he has changed his mind, not for political reasons, but in consideration of





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News of the offer of a unilateral month-long cease fire by

Magist leader Prachanda raised hopes that the violence

between the security forces and the Maoists would end.

saving it did not trust the Maoists, and that it would not go

Rahadur Dauba who has refused the offer of peace talks

two days ano. Events took a dramatic turn when a person

called "Bikram" said via email that he had sent out the

emails and faxes with the ceasefire offer. In an exclusive

interview with the BBC's Hindi Service, in New Delhi a

Maoist politburo leader Dina Nath Sharma denied the

of Sharma's retraction of the ceasefire as told to Renu

government. One after another, the government is losing

weaken the morale of the people who support our war, and

Sher Bahadur Deuba, his rejection of the offer of ceasefire?

Please tell us what success you've achieved, what is happening?

confuse our cadres. Our party president will deny the news

Dina Nath Sharma: It is a conspiracy hatched by the

(in battles), and so it has created this conspiracy to

nate news left and right like this?

No, that's not so, that is definitely not so.

fighters are safe. We had eleven casualties.

after another. We are winning

on that?

statement and called it a government conspiracy. Excerpts

News of the ceasefire was published in Indian papers

But the Nepali government shattered people's hopes,

by an unsigned press release. Prime Minister Sher

is visiting the LIS in the hone of seeking international

support against the Maoists.

Akar of the BBC:

"The fake offer of a ceasefire

BBC Hindi Service: The news appeared in the Indian papers two days ago, and in the Nepali

press the following day. How can an individual without access to a large network dissemi-

We never said anything along those lines. We don't know what was published or not published

in the papers. We are not in favour of a ceasefire now, because we're winning the battle one

Is it possible that vouive changed your stance after hearing the reaction of Prime Minister

The government has said more than 500, more than 300 Maoists have been killed. Our people

Is it part of your policy to destroy people-friendly infrastructure, like such as water purifica-tion systems, as is happening nowÖ

It is not our policy. It is not our policy to destroy hydroelectricity projects. In the name of war, the

government is killing innocent people who are not involved in the war. The people have done

They say women are suffering atrocities at the hands of the Maoists. Could you comment

This has never happened. We've been fighting this war for seven years with the utmost moral

The war is being fought by the Nepali people on their own strength. It is an internal matter of

against feudalism, monarchy, and imperialism. We don't have the support of anyone.

Nepal. It is the people's concern, the concern of democracy. This is a war for democracy and

Whatever weapons we have, we looted from the army and the police. Our weapons are those

given by imperialists to the Nepali government. We take weapons from them and fight against

We have expressed our principle; we are for talks. We are ready for talks. But if the government

To give up arms is to surrender. That will resolve the problem automatically, there will be no need for talks.

तपाईले मेरो प्राने भाषण

यो पढन भ'६।

Prakash Jwala, CPN-UML MP, on 12 May in Gatibidhi

र्भज्ञान एण्डन्स The Himalaya Times, 12 May

this (attacks on infrastructure) in retaliation. Where there is oppression, there's reaction

strength, discipline, and maturity. That's why we're winning battle after battle

Where does the support for your struggle come from?

Will this continue to be your policy? Or will you return for talks?

Where did you get your weapons, your training?

continues to behave like this, how can we talk?

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

(Newspapers Headlines)

Government-Maoist peace-talk is impossible-Deuba

Government-Maoist peace-talk is a must-Koirala

"It seems like you have been reading my old speech!!

are safe. We are winning the war. More soldiers have been killed. Our friends are safe, the

# THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NERALL PRESS

A Nepali rally Mukesh Babu Karki in Punanjagaran 14 May

manalan

The much-publicised all-party general meeting on 10 May was reminiscent of the "Pancha rallies" that used to be organised against campaigners for the multiparty system before 1990

In those days, the Panchas used to organise such rallies and meeting in the safety of the capital city, surrounded by hundreds of security personnel. The all-party general meeting organised in Kathmandu's khulla manch [open forum at Ratna difficult moment Park] had security forces guarding the leaders. The all-party meeting might have had some meaning if it ad been organised in insurgency hit districts such as Rukum or Rolpa. The general public and ever the Maoists could have seen that the democratic forced were unified The general public might have got some reassurance that they are safe in their villages. The all-party

meeting failed to spread any such feelings among the people. None of the political parties Less than 24 hours after the have made public how much they ess release was issued, Dina Nath spent on this all-party meeting, bu Sharma, a politburo member of the

the ruling Nepali Congress had the most number of flags on display. Manist party, denied that the party had offered a ceasefire. In an The misuse of Nepali Congress flag terview with the BBC's Hindi was also very visible—the flags with Service, Sharma said it was a four stars were used at snack stalls conspiracy hatched by the Nepali to shoo away flies, members of the vernment and that the party airman would deny it. But until audience used them to cover their heads when it rained, and many of them spread the NC flags on the yesterday [11 May], nothing o the sort had happened. It is floor to sit down when the speeche intriguing that Sharma would re being delivered. sestion a release issued by The Rastriya Prajatantra Party Prachanda.

(RPP) and the Nepal Sadbhavana Sources say that the party has Party were the two parties with the egun doing intensive homework largest number of flags on display offering a ceasefire. The moves the Maoists wish to make have after the Congress. Surprisingly, the main opposition CPN-UML had en affected, since security forces put up and given out very few flags ave blocked their transport route Since the flags of the UML and the and upset their channels of other small communist parties are similar to that of the Maoists-red with hammer and sickle-they might have thought that opposing the Maoists with a display of flags might give the wrong impression and cause some confusion about whose symbol exactly they were opposing. But for that glitch, the expectation that red communis flags would be draped all over the them in this direction. might have come true The crowd booed and hooted a

the Nepal Sadbhavana Party president Badri Bahadur Mandal when he tried to address them from move by issuing a press release. It the podium in Hindi Twelve years ago when Girija Prasad Koirala addressed a crowd from the same podium when the multiparty syst was declared, the crowed heckled him too, and the late Ganesh Man Singh had to come forward to calm the crowd down. This time Koiral: did not make a similar move to quiet the crowd booing Mandal did so itself Perhaps he was scared that the gathering might turn on him if he asefire offer may be a Maoist rus o throw security forces off guard

The incident made it apparent while they regroup and get that the Hindi-film crazy crowd is reinforcements for their fighting unsympathetic to the Nepal force. It appears as if, in the days to Sadbhavana Party. It might well be

interrupted.



### a sign of the widening emotional are getting sucked into a whirlpool rift between the nahade and A ceasefire announced by the madhesi populations. People's War Group in India, to

which the Maoists have close ties. may have encouraged them to Maoist machinations declare a ceasefire, too. Deshantar, 12 May (terretural) Expensive censor The recent offer of a month-long WHO? in Himal Khabarpatrika, easefire [on 9 May] by the

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Maoists, and a denial of this by the 29March-13April Maoist leaders the following day, The Censor Board has prohibited learly signify that the Maoist party, which has been waging a Suresh Pokhrel's new feature film iolent insurgency for the past six Atangkabadi ("The Terrorist") from and-a-half years, has arrived at a screened [in theatres]. The Ministry of Information and Commu-An unsigned press release nication has raised the alarm over one offering a ceasefire was issued to cene in which the national flag is the Nepali press [last] Thursday, a shown flying on a minister's private car day after the Indian press received and another in which the minister is it. On Friday Maoist party disgraced in court. The Censor Board chairman Prachanda said the has directed that these scenes be elease was a fake, and refuted edited out, but Pokhrel says the film tells the story of a corrupt s message. Prior to this, the party has politician, which makes it impossi en sending out press releases via le to cut these scenes. fax and email. And even though the This is not the first film that has ent release expressing the n censored. Some part of most Maoists interest in talks was films are aved by the Censor Board but there is only talk about it when usigned, it was not refuted



too many scenes are given the snip.

is another example. Cinema balk

authority of the government. And

before permission is given the film:

have to be passed by the Censor Board

and cut scenes wherever demanded

The MoIC's Audio Visual Depart-

cannot show films without the

Hatiyar ra Aago ("Weapon and Fire)

One artist who did not want to mation. Pressure from the US, the UK, Europe and China have named alleges that none of the also affected the Maoists. As a nembers of the Censor Board are result. Maoists leaders who were really knowledgeable about cinema. ince ready to prolong the war with The Board is filled with bureaucrats

the security forces, appear to be he says. "There are only people working towards entering the nominated by the Secretary and sent democratic system Assistant Secretary of the Ministry of Pressure from other political Information and Communications. varties, the palace, has also steere and the Minister and Secretaries of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism." Some say that once human Censor boards in foreign countries ghts groups got an indication that know a lot about music, literature and ne Maoists were preparing to offer art. When they censor films, they give easfire, they pre-empted their detailed account of the frames and

shots they object to, and even the age was an attempt to gauge the reaction, the psychology of number of negatives. "But here if they don't like one shot they cut the whole overnment, civil society, political scene," says another film industry arties, and the international ersonnel. Ashok Pokhrel of the ommunity. But once they read the Film Development Board told us, egative reactions, the Maoists We have even suggested that the lecided to deny what was said in Film Development Board be ne release through Sharma, since represented, but they haven't yet the party would lose credibility if it pted our proposal." The censors have a special A high-ranking source says the view theatre that was built for

hem by the Film Association. The Association helps the Censor Board in technical matters. The process of screening films for the Censor Board must be paid for by the producer of the film and one screening can end up

costing about Rs 20,000, which includes rental for the theatre, allowances for members of the Censor Board, the fee to the Board, refreshments, and transport. And after all this, no one checks to see if the scene the censors' asked to be cut are actually edited out before the film goe to the theatres. No surprise then that some producers and directors who feel the censor board is an unnecessary expensive headache



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is a government conspiracy."

# 14 cm

# FILM

- Province Nepali Film Festival 2059 17 May: Panchi, Biswoivoti Hall, 8AM, 18 May: Darban Chhava, Hiraratna. Helpan Frim Festival 2009 Frinds, Falcula, Bawdyou Flair, okiw. To way. Darper Chinagy, maratima Hall, 8AM. 19 May: Muskan, Kalanki Hall, 8AM. 20 May: Basanti, Ashok Hall, 8AM, Sanyas, Kumari Hall, 8AM, Khaikhyai Ma, Royal Nepal Academy, 1PM. 21 May: Rako, Prihivi Hall, 8AM. Organised by the Film Journalists' Association
- Kathmandu Documentary Film Association presents People Like Us: Social Class in America, a funny and provocative look at class and race in the US, 23 May, 6PM, Rs 200, with 50 percent off for students Indian Gallery Mike's Breakfast Naval

# EXHIBITION

Football on show Posters, national team jerseys, equipment, football newspapers and magazines, stamps, memorabilia, photographs and lots more. Also surf websites of the Nepal Football Fan Club, the British Council, and World Cup sites. From 26 May, British Council, Lainchour,

# EVENTS

AWON's Tika Box Sale Gently-used clothing, shoes, books, kitchen items, games, toys and more. 9AM-12 noon, 18 May, Lincoln School, Rabi Bhawan. Entry Rs 25 per head. \* Phillips Saturday Bowling Tournament Each bowler rolls three games, the bowler with the highest average score wins Phillips CD players. 18 May, 12PM onwards. Rs 500, or ten percent less for entries before 13 May. Bowling Boulevard, Kantipath. Register at mg@mail.com.np

### misic

- 1974 AD Concert The band will be performing and releasing their new album in the solo concert at Birendra International Convention Center, 25 May 2.30PM. Tickets Rs 1000, 500, 300, 200. Contact Jatra - 433859, Bijaya - 525115, 536598, Bhanu - 525240
- Club Rumba Latin band, salsa food until midnight on Thursdays. 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 Wednesday nights with Teesta. The Rox Bar at the Hyatt regency Kathmandu.
- Live music by Catch 22, Friday nights at the 40,000 ½ ft Bar, Rum Doodle Restaurant, Thamel. /1/336

## DRINK

- Coming soon Fusion at Dwarika's
- 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 Beer Mug Club Talk beer, drink beer. Monday nights, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency.
- Kathmandu, 491234

- \* Kababs for lunch and dinner at The Fun Café and Corner Bar at the Radisson Hotel from 18 May, 411818 Ice creams & sorbets Single, double or triple scoops of ice creams and
- sorbets, some with alcohol. The Café, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu
- Wood fired pizzas at the new Roadhouse Café. Completely redesigned with separate bar seating. and coffee bar. The Roadhouse Café, Thamel.
- Weekend Brunch Rs 350 per head, special package available with bowling. Oriental and continental lunch or dinner by the pond. 1905 Boardwalk, Kantipath. 225272 Vegetarian Specialties and clay-oven pizzas at Stupa View Restaurant & Terrace, Boudha.
- 480262 Saturday Live Buffet with unlimited draught beer and live music by the Rusty Nails. The Fun Café. Radisson Hotel, 11.30AM-2.30PM, Saturdays. 411818
- Authentic Thai food Everyday at Yin Yang Restaurant. 425510
- Paddy Foley's Irish Pub A wide range of drinks and food. Live music on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday nights, 416096

# GETAWAYS

- \* The Great Godavari Getaway Special weekend packages including room with breakfast and dinner, 25 percent discount on health club facilities. Godavari Village Resort. 560675
   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
- New swimming pool open! Rs 500 per person, Rs 800 per couple, 50 percent off for children, monthly rates available. All day swimming plus discounts on
- food and beverage at Dwarika's Hotel, 479488 Bardiya's Best Four days, three nights, jungle activities, transfers and food from the menu at Royal Bardia National
- Park. \$120, all-inclusive. junglebasecamp@yahoo.com. 061-23402 Summer Splash Use of pool 15 May – 15 July, 10AM-6PM Over 18 Rs 4,000 plus tax, schoolchildren under 18, Rs 2,000
- plus tax. Hotel de l'Annapurna. 221711 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 reserve. Rs 1850 per person with dinner and breakfast, Rs 925 per child 5-14 years, children under five free, info@escapetonenal.com

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

# NEPALI WEATHER





20.46



Arresting God in Kathmandu Samrat Unadhya Rupa & Co New Delhi 2002

Rs 195 The long-awaited special-to-Nepal edition of award-winning author Samrat Upadhyay's collection of short stories. Upadhyay brilliantly explores the nature of desire and spirituality in a changing society. With assurance and unsentimental wisdom, Upadhyay records the echoes of modernisation throughout love and family. In a city where gods are omnipresent, privacy is elusive and family defines identity, Upadhyay's men and women find themselves at the mercy of their desire but at the will of their society.

A Nepalese Journey: On Foot Around the Annapurnas Andrew Stevenson Rupa & Co., New Delhi, 2002 Rs 1.425 Following the stages of three key routes-the classic Annapurna Circuit, the short but sensational Annapurna Sanctuary, and the epic trail north into Mustang, Stevenson's



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The Book of Chakra Healing Liz Simpson New Age Books, New Delhi, 2002 Rs 952 A comprehensive guide to the ancient Indian system of chakras, the centres of "spinning energy" in the body that help maintain one's physical, emotional and mental balance. This volume offers a practical way

work on your chakras and shows you how to unblock and rebalance your energy. Understanding chakra healing involves colour, knowledge of ancient myths, archetypes, bodywork, crystals, meditation visualisations, open questions and affirmations.

> Tantra in Practice David Gordon White, ed Motilal Banarsidass Publishers. Delhi, 2001 Rs792

This volume includes plays, transcribed interviews, poetry, parodies, inscriptions, instructional texts scriptures, philosophical conjectures, dreams and astronomical speculations, each illustrating one of the diverse practices and traditions of tantra. Each chapter reflects the wide geographical and temporal scope of tantra, including 36 texts from China, India, Japan, Nepal and Tiber, from the 7th century to the

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

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# NATION

MIN BAJRACHARYA in ASOJEY DANDA Behrati Gharti Magar's family cowered all night in the family's cattle shed as deafening sound of gunfire and explosions reverberated up and down the valley. At times, the explosions were interespersed with booming thunder as a storm lashed the hills.

A socket bomb landed on the roof, bounced off, and exploded nearby. At dawn, after the gunfire died down, Belmati peered out of the door to see Maoists carrying off their wounded and dead in dokos. Some of the dead were dragged to the edge of a cliff and tossed over, others were thrown into the fires raging in some of the houses. Across a deep valley from the



The map shows at least 17 pre-planned attack positions. Soldiers in an anti-ambush patrol on a ridge across the valley from the base told us about 800-1,000 rebels took part. The troops watched helplessly as the fighting raged, out they were four hours' walk away and so were unable to join the battle. The Maoists used typical storming tactics with frontal charges to try and get the security forces to exhaust their ammunition. They used improvised

explosives against sandbagged bunkers, and even shouted Maoist slogans and beat drums to sow confusion had been flown in for the government's "hearts and minds"



DEAD MAOISTS: Journalists who arrived at the battlefield a week after the attack saw 30-40 rebel bodies ered around the Gam base and could see more mutilated bodies at the bottom of a nearby cliff.



The commander. Major Nilakantha Khadka shouted orders to his men through his loudspeaker: "Keep firing, don't retreat, block their entry." Hukum Bahadur Bhandari, a forestry official, ran into an army bunker where Raj Kumar Khadka was manning a machine gun. Khadka had already been hit, and was trying to stanch the blood gushing out of his leg. Bhandari tore his trousers and

tried to make a tourniquet. About an hour into the battle. Major Khadka already seemed to realise that his unit was running low on ammunition. He was heard shouting: "Control fire, identify your targets before shooting. Don't throw way your weapons. The army had reoccupied Asojey Danda a month ago, and the fortifications were still under

construction. The trenches along the perimeter were only half-dug, and did not provide

Within three hours, it was all over. Seventeen of the 110 people in the base survived 70 were killed and 40 are still unaccounted for. The survivors either played dead or hid in the forest. The army lost 24 soldiers, including base commander Major Khadka and his deputy who was tortured before being killed. Forty-one civilian police and five armed police were also killed. Three civil servants who

Baburam Bhattarai, Hisila Yami (Dr Bhattarai's wife), Ram Bahadur Thapa alias Badal who is an expert of ilitary strategy and explosives; and Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda, the party chairman. ramme to provide drinking water

> died Two others are still missing A week later, the smell of death still lingers on the steep slopes around Asojey Danda. Half-buried Maoists are being dug up by security forces personnel wearing masks. The stench is overpowering. Over the edge of the cliff, there are dozens of crushed bodies visible. All in all, the Maoista lost about 150 fighters in this raid. Some policemen and civilians were taken prisoner, but managed to escape They told tales of rebels burying more

ind other development services also

dead along trails leading north along

their escape route. The attack had typical lessons. Security forces said the lack of air support and proper equipment was a major factor in the base being overrun. They also blamed the location and inadequate fortifications. 🔶



n Asojey Danda. On the right is a steep cliff, 100 meters or so deep here journalists could see mutilated bodies that were still to be d and indentified. Some of the trenches on the nerimeter we than a feet deep



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🐚 ontrary to popular belief, golf wasn't discovered Gin Scotland, but in Nepal. Legend has it that during the last Ice Age, the saint Manjushree travelled over the Himalaya to Kathmandu when the valley was still a glacial lake. While practicing his swings, he made a "whiff", i.e. Manjushree swung and completely missed the ball.

In so doing, he tore off a fat chunk of Chobhar Hill and (although it is considered proper etiquette to always replace the divot, and step the turf back into place, Manjushree totally forgot) and thereby he accidentally drained the valley, creating a Glacial Lake Outburst Flood-known downstream in the Bagmati Basin to this day by its acronym GLOF Over millen. nia, the spelling got corrupted, and the name of the game we know today as GOLF was born. Another theory is that the word

olf" is actually an anagram of the word "flog", which is what you do in this game: you flog the ball all over the countryside while trying to get it to go into a small hole. Thousands of years ago, a prehistoric plenipotentiary from Neanderthal wanted to invit his cave mates to a round of flog, and (being badly hungover from

a diplomatic reception the previous night) he uttered the word backward by mistake. There was great merriment, and his fellow-players had a good laugh. "He said golf, hahahahaha," they roared in a character istically prehistoric manner. But the word stuck, and that is how the game is still known to this day.

Whatever the origins of the name itself, it is now an established fact that from its humble beginnings in the Himalaya, the great game of golf has spread world wide. And the rules have not changed: it is the only game in the post-modern world where the player who has the

lowest score wins, and it is a game that is suited to the lazy pace of life in our neck of the woods. Take this running commentary to an exciting finish at a recent golf tournament which was televised live to 2 billion iewers around the world

Sportscaster (in a hushed tone): "There is pin drop silence as Tiger Woods walks up to the ball and examines its position from a grassroots level. There he i on all fours crawling like a tiger sniffing out his prey, lining up the ball with the pin at the far end of the green. He has a bad lie. But he is lying three, and still has the chance to par on the 17th. Oh, no. What is Tiger doing? He has taken off his cap and his scratching his head. That is a bad sign, I have never see him do that before. Tiger looks at this Mum in the stands, and

waves his putter. She waves back, and blows him a kiss. Tiger needs to concentrate, but this is a difficult shot from the rough with the ball even with the pin but off to one side. He has a better bet not using his full swing during his pitch shot, but it must be a longer swing

than a chip shot. Tiger is definitely in the horns of a conundrum. He's also thinkin about the alligators in the wate hazard, what if they snap at his legs while he is taking his shot? He has to

do this quickly, if he is to survive. Don't Go Away. We'll be right back after these messages. This pro-gramme is brought to you by Johnny Walker: The Drink that Goes With Your Drive and Polo Mints: You Have a Hole in One!"

See what I'm getting at? Watching a golf match on ty is not for the faint-hearted. But we're not complaining, it is a game after our own hearts and admirably suited to our languid pace of life. Care for a round of flog? ♦

"Conservation can't wait," says biodiversity expert Sushila Nepali who works with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) in the Royal Bardia National Park. Despite the counterinsurgency operations in the jungles, Sushila lingered on with her work in the national park. Her parents in Kathmandu are in a constant state of panic that she might get caught in the crossfire. "It's a scary situation but that doesn't unduly bother me. Local community support is the source of my courage " Sushila told us. And from the way she says it, vou know she's not just

NEPALI SOCIETY

t a time when projects are closing down, develop-

ment workers are quitting field work and heading back to

Kathmandu or even emigrating

there are some who just won't

aive up.

personal life, family commitments?

it for effect.

action" many times: teaming up with the park staff to hunt and work is actually to work with local villagers and convince the that conservation is beneficial in shoot a man-eater, saving sick the long-run. There was a time tiger cubs, rescuing gharials stuck in an irrigation canal. Not an when the Bardia community easy job for a woman, but for cared little about saving tigers, Sushila it's all in a day's work. wild elephants or the forests. The national park staff, on the "Real conservation happens in the field not in an airconditioned other hand, saw villagers as a office," she says. How about her threat because of heavy

with the army and park staff on biodiversity. Sushila has "seen

"All that can wait, I can't even think of getting married right now," she says. Her parents are worried that their eldest daughter is still single. For Suchila all that matters now is hat her work

work, and was able to form mor than 80 forest user committees and women's groups. There is now a real sense that the park is public property and the villagers need to jointly protect it.

Sushila's next big challenge is to work on Nepal's visionary trans-boundary Tarai Arc Landscape program, being jointly undertaken by national parks in India and Nepal with WWF. The project joins Nepal's Parsa-Chitwan National Park with Bardia and India's Rajaji-Corbett National Park Sushila's dedication has beer rewarded by WWF which recently named her International

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teep sense of personal accord

has to deal with. Much of her

during the early 1990s. Sushila

went house-to-house to motiva

locals to join in the conservation

And it's not just wildlife she

Jungle girl, Sushila

Conservation Woman of the Year which comes with \$5,000 in cash. For Sushila's narents the only problem with all this international recognition is that it will keep their daughter in the jungles of Bardia.



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