



New chief

Lieutenant General Pyar Jung Thapa took over as acting chief of the Royal Nepal Army from Friday the day the outgoing Chief of Army Staff General Prajwalla SJB Rana began his traditional month-long leave of absence. King Gvanendra, who is Supreme Commander, appoints a new chief at the end of the month Lieutenant General Thana is a graduate of the Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst, and was also trained at the British Army Staff College in Camherlay LIK

Following the Supreme Court verdict quashing an appeal against the dissolution of parliament, political parties have gone into campaign mode. The Maoists, for their part, resumed violence with an explosion at a college in Kathmandu Thursday that injured six people. They have announced a month-long protest against extra-judicial killings building up to a bandh on 16 September. The threat

government to agree to talks in backchannel negotiations Between 9-26 August they plan to mobilise people through mass meetings and processions. From 27 August to 5 September a series of regional vehicle bans and blackouts have been an-

nounced. They plan violent attacks on individuals and institutions between 6-15 September. However, the Maoists seem to want to leave the door open for negotiations over their latest demands. for lifting the emergency and setting up an interim government ahead of polls.



November?

3

JYOTI

Creating pride and satisfaction in ownership of **My First Honda**

is a steep two-hour uphill from the proof of the senselessness Prithvi Highway to Jogimara in Dhading of the violence that has district. And even from a distance, we been unleashed on the Nepali people in the name o of officialdom.

Unfriendly fire

truce and attacked the army working on an airport runway at Kalikot in western Nepal. Their families don't have in Dang, Jogimara's poorest of the poor were getting ready to any tears left, but grief stillsears their hearts. go to Kalikot. They went Almost every family has lost a breadwinner, because they trusted the subbut no bodies were ever returned. There are 10 widows, 18 orphans and 14 bereaved Today, they are trapped between the

need to come to terms with the deaths of their loved ones, a future of destitution and despair, and a government that calls them who were under 21 years old. we were afraid of the Maoists," recalls Bel

On 24 Feburary, 800 km away from home, the young men found themselves in Bahadur BK from the original group. He the wrong place at the wrong time. Piecing returned home with two other villagers together information from survivors, it is after a heliconter fired at the workers on 3 clear that the killing was a tragic combina-January, "We didn't want to die out there." tion of mistaken identity and other errors. A month later, the Maoists attacked Mangalsen and Sanfebagar, killing 137 And half-a-year later, this Dhading village is

Maoism, and the callousness In late November, just when the Maoists broke the Svani and Kumle Praia are widows at 15

#106

contractor, Kumar Thapa. They knew him, he had never cheated soldiers and policemen. The security forces them, and he was even willing to pay an went on a three-pronged hot pursuit advance. And they needed the money. Of northwards. The fleeing Maoists infiltrated the 20 Jogimara men who left, only three returned alive. Among the dead were nine "More than the cold and the hardshins

the construction workers in Kalikot, and fired on an army helicopter flying overhead. Fearing army retaliation, the contractor told his men not to come to work and everyone had their identity papers ready in case the security forces came looking for

On 24 February, an army attack force stormed the quarters, thinking the workers were Maoists. According to eve-witness reports given to the National Human

Dhading seven from Sindhunalchok and 11 local villagers were killed. Among the villagers were the ward chairman from the Nepali Congress, two Sherpas from Solukhumbu who were working in Kalikot and two minors. Two workers from Sindhunalchok managed to survive All the Maoists had fled by the time the soldiers arrived. That week, the Defence Ministry statement said 67 Maoists had been killed in encounters in Kalikot.

Rights Commission, 17 workers from

see 🖒 n4-5

he situation is even more ala Peter Rhode is head of the German aid

agency, GTZ. Before leaving for his new

bodies, how the Maoist insurgency is

You were unhappy with the decision on local govern ments, what about the cabinet decision to hold local elections by April?

To start with the government's decision not to take a decision was a mistake. It created a lot of confusion and chaos in the villages and districts. It was a decision clearly against a lot of warnings from the inside and outside. We vere all shocked, and took it as a step in the wrong direction. The government has decided to hold local elections in this fiscal year, and is looking for alternatives to local bodies. Frankly, I don't like alternatives.

Democratically elected bodies should hardly have alternatives. There cannot be any alternatives to

fecting development, and GTZ's efforts to improve business and trade. Germany is Nepal's fourth largest donor.



25 districts, and the beauty is that it combines income and employment opportunities for rural populations, with food used as remuneration. The programme is very popular and signment in Uganda, he spoke to Nepali Times about the dissolution of local up to now it has been tolerated by both sides of the conflict, the Maoists and the security forces.

Is that changing?

There is disturbing news reaching me from the districts every week. The working conditions are getting more and more difficult. There are reports of human rights violations not only by the Maoists but also by the security forces, which is quite disappointing. There are serious cases of torture beating and barassment-not our staff but our NGO partners. There are also stories that both parties are using food and medicine as weapons, blocking food convoys even from the WFP.

The Maoists on the other hand are looting food depots that has led to interruptions. In two or three districts the WFP had zero tolerance, and we all agreed that there must be a signal to the Magists to stop the looting

Now, with the new situation of not having local bodies in place I hear that the situation has become even more alarming. There is no line of command, and in many places there is an unholy alliance between civil servants like LDOs, CDOs and line agency staff with security forces. This is leading to a situation where the people are even more frightened and have no courage to criticise or put forth their points of view and demands. Whole districts are in a state of fear and terror. see 🖒 p



can sense the stillness in the air. The village has only older people and children, they all wear a haunted look. They sit on their front porches, with shocked listlessness. It has been nearly six months since 17 ing men from Jogimara were killed while

IOHAN MAINALI IN DHADING

NEPAL

parents at Iogimara.

Talk or terrorise? relatives of terrorists

of violence is seen as a tactic to get the



elected bodies.

unilateral decision





Weekly Internet Poll #47. To yote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Total votes: 6 s to be held in

So, will GTZ's aid to local bodies will start flowing



EDITORIAL

Friter Kunda Divit Eriter Anasha Ne

he learned justices of the Sunrame Court showed this week that they are not only well-versed in legal niceties, but they also have a lot of common sense. They agreed, as we had exhorted in this space last week, that Nepal should be run through the neonle's mandate and not by settling political scores in the

The precedent has now been set, and past aberrations have been corrected. The Supreme Court unanimously told our political leaders: it's all very well for you to squabble over power, but keep us out of it. Don't ask us to arbitrate when you can't get along. You are directly answerable to the people who elected you

Unfortunately, it is of little comfort to the Nepali people that the justices ruled as they did. We are still stuck with the same politico: And we know it for a fact that Prime Minister Deuba did not on to the roval palace to dissolve parliament and call for general elections on the night of 22 May because of his deep commitment to democracy. but because he was pushed to the wall by his nemesis. Girija Prasad Koirala

The Deuba camp may be uncorking the bubbly, but they have no reason to. We don't see how the rump Nepali Congress that Deuba leads is going to have any kind of showing in the November elections—even if he has the government machinery under his command. In fact, it may be better for Deuba to listen to his mentor who broke his yow of silence on Wednesday to declare that there was still time for the Nepali Congress to reunite. Optimist.

All eyes now are on the Election Commission and what it decides to do with the tree. And will the Nepali Congress finally be able to see the forest for the trees? If we were either faction of the Nepali Congress (good thing we aren't) we'd have second thoughts

COMMENT

ording to tourist surveys, pollution is

one reason visitors say that they

will not return to Nepal, or recom-

shows that vehicular pollution is to blame.

allofAsia

revenues

Kathmandu's pollution remains the worst in

Despite this, the Ministry of Finance

lowered tourism or health issues" and wants to

fearing that they threaten the revenue-base of

netrol and diesel vehicles. The public suspects

Safa EVs were introduced to help Nepal

cope with rampant pollution. EVs capitalise

claims pollution has "nothing to do with

ston zero emission electric vehicles (FVs)

it is not the formal revenues MOE is con-

cerned about, but the lucrative informal

on Nepal's hydropower, saving foreign

currency, reducing fuel imports, improving

environmental and health conditions, and

creating thousands of jobs. Reduced tax

facilities were offered for EVs and locally

on on registration of three wheelers

Bus" (a comfortable 15-seater), and the

USAID supported Indian-American family

electric car called "REVA," have arrived.

Although more EVs would be a tremendous

disgraceful and none of these vehicles have

been allowed import into Nepal while the

benefit for Nepal the government's reaction is

existing Electro-Bus from the Himalayan Light

Foundation remains unregistered. Whatever

excuses are given, the government and the diesel lobby are afraid EVs will make a real

produced Safa tempos proliferated until the

The British and Swiss-supported "Flectro-

mend it as a destination Respiratory disease in

Nepal is critical, and a new Danish ESPS study

about retaining the name and symbol of such a discredited party Especially for an election where the only symbol that seems to matter is a socket bomb

The question now is not if elections will be held, but how. Who is going to come to vote if the booths are located behind three lavers of parbed wire inside the barracks of the district headquarters? Which political leader is going to be seen campaigning in the villages where the Magists are running agricultural communes and where (except for the Nepali currency) there is no other sign of the presence of His Majesty's Government? Will there be voter turnout when fear and terror stalks the land? Will the polls be an electoral version of

the SLC exams? So far our politicians seem to be in a time-warp. They are behaving as if the elections are happening in normal times. On the other hand we see some politicians jostling each other to be the ones

responsible for restoring peace before nolle. No one wante to give anyone else the chance to take the credit for

ending the war. This is the reason for all the back channel neace feelers to neonle who carry Rs 5 million ransoms on their heads-dead or alive

Fossil economy

The government and the diesel lobby are afraid EVs will transform the way Nepalis transport themselves.

5AM

capacity. Despite this "ban" hundreds of polluting vehicles and private cars are registered every month, including the recen Chinese diesel microbuses. Although 93 percent of battery waste comes from regular cars, trucks, and buses, EVs have been targeted as polluters.

mark in the way Nepalis transport themselves. This fear is encouraging. The Department of Transport claims that EVs cannot be registered due to lack of road

now enjoy, go unanswered



Letters issued from the United States, the

UK, Denmark, and Switzerland, all requesting the Ministry of Finance to assure the published 10 percent customs and 10 percent VAT rate and also offer the further reduced tax status for four-wheeled EVs that three-wheeled Safas Despite a published tax facility of 10 rcent customs and 10 percent VAT which spawned the private avestment, the former Finance

until next budget". The Indian Embassy also asked the MOF why it reneged on an internationally published facility for this Indian-American joint venture car, but the REVA cars are still blocked by the government at the border

MOPE & MOE Despite significant financial support from donors, and formal requests to the government for better facilities, no MOF or Ministry of Population and Environment (MOPE) responses have come. The final blow came in this year's budget in which the MOF suddenly declared no reduced tax facility would be offered and that HMG/N would not even offer the already published promise of 10 percent VAT and 10 percent customs for the linister impeded the REVA REVA. The result? REVA buyers will pay 140 nport process ordering percent tax making it unaffordable for Nepali oms to "take no actio people and REVAs may be sent back to India

leaving Nepal in black smoke. The government is selling the breathing rights of the Nepalis based on erroneous if not nepotistic alculations

SEEING THE FOREST FOR THE TREES

Additionally, two Electro-Buses have been stuck at the Nepal border for six months in MOPE "red tape" with no chance for import. The MOPE has squashed the Electro-Bus file, which asks: "Should we allow an EV chassis to

there is still air to preserve.

nicture 4

and the Himalavan Light Foundation and pa president of the Forum of International



NATION

"RAHUN RAD" After reading "Bahuns and the Nenali state (revisited #105. by Nuru Lama Sherna it came to me that the post-1990

clash of civilisations has a Nepali corrollary as well. The political antennae of Nepalis which used to be attuned to a single political centre were suddenly fragmented and the process of ethnic rivalry was fanned. "Bahunbad", as Nuru Lama Sherpa suggests became the focus because bahuns hold senior positions in governr But this can also be attributed to herself to be any less corrupt the "traditional babun commit-

ment to learning and knowlless inent less efficient or less edge", as cited by Sherpa. lazy than the habuns that I ama Salvation therefore lies in and his ilk love to vilify 1 Infortunately. I don't think bahuns hold learning and education. Ethni oroups in particular cannot the monopoly on incompetence arantee corruntion free and Do you? Keshab Raj Acharya, Balaju competent governance, as it

depends largely on the attitude CHARMING RAIRIRAL and competence of the bureau-

crats Such virtuous hureau As a member of the Raihirai crats are formed not out of community I feel compelled to ethnic cultures, but out of write after reading Prashant Jha's knowledge and learning. degrading article about our fine city ("Rajbiraj revisited", #103). Although the writer argues against caste prejudice, his Raibirai may be lacking some of entiments seem to contradic the characteristics of the binner this. Efforts should be to uplift cities in Nepal, but therein lies its haracter. The East-West not only particular minority castes, but all deprived ones Highway passing by Rajbiraj may (including bahuns at the bottom be the best thing that ever of the ladder). Affirmative action happened to us. The screaming without consideration to horns of Tata trucks and the competence will lead to greater industrial snrawl and pollution of problems. Nepal's diversity and larger cities are pleasantly absent. traditional ethnic harmony can The small community atmosphere easily he snarked into a messy coupled with the conveniences of explosion. The effort of every larger places give Raibirai its scholar and patriot should be to charm. The only thing lacking in conserve the diversity and the population is a sense of selftolerance that Nenali society is esteem and confidence due to the known for. Love it, admire it and

focus people in Nepal have on places like Kathmandu Valley. Anup Phayal, Kathmandu Needless to say Raihirai has the best page and the most beautiful Thank you Nepal Times for cows in the cou Ruby Lal Das, Rajbiraj the excellent article by Nuru

Lama Sherna, You have been courageous enough to push this NO GO

theme consistently through your After reading Ramyata Limbu's Nepali and English publications. "No go on green" (#104) I want to draw your readers' attention to The favouritisim extended by the dominant ethnic populace in the fact that the primary objective affairs of its control to its own of providing traffic signals in lot is inherently Nepali. Magars, "unsignalised" intersections is to reduce accidents by reducing Gurungs, Rais, Limbus dominate and look out for each other in the conflict among different vehicular British Gurkhas. Ditto the movements The last time I saw a properly Sherpas in mountaineering, etc. These practices are eerily similar signalised intersection in to the bahun domination in every Kathmandu was at Thanathali sphere of the Nepali state There was no power supply and However, the outpouring of ire a traffic personnel was directing towards habuns for the current the traffic I have since been state of Nepali state is justified reading reports of the recent as modern Nepali history is signalisation of intersections in littered with examples of inept Kathmandu and how most performance by bahuns in residents hate it because of running the country. The work slower traffic movement. about Nepal's future which has The effectiveness of traffic so far been missing from the bahun conscience, not the

signals in reducing traffic related accidents at intersections is in no hunger for power by other doubt However in downtow castes, should fuel muchlocations where traffic signals are needed change in the way closely spaced and in the tomorrow's Nepal is governed absence of synchronisation Raia Thana Magar signals can cause congestion

Hona Kona slow vehicular movement and increase mid block accidents Nuru Lama Sherpa's between intersections. But, they polemical scapegoating of will still reduce accidents at the bahuns at least has the veneer intersections. The agencies of objectivity, and is therefore a involved in implementation of

welcome change from the kneesignalisation must have taken into ierk bahun bashing we have consideration these facts and also come to expect from nonmust have weighed the pros and habuns I wonder however if there is any empirical evidence Limbu also points out that a that a non-bahun bureaucrat in Venal has shown himself or

simulation could have been performed before installing the



microscopic traffic simulation. But

computer simulation requires huge

describe existing traffic condition

sneed etc) in "microsconic" detail

I don't think any agency in Nepal

Most simulation software

produced in developed countries

s designed for entirely different

traffic conditions in terms of

composition of traffic volume

Even if such sophisticated

enflware is used to simulate

traffic conditions of roads in

nenerate statistically correct

of simulation or detailed studies

were done before designing the

Nepal, it will not be able to

traffic signal system for

been carried out

Kathmandu, but some kind of

pedestrian and driver behaviou

quantity of data that is able to

(volume, turning movements

has that kind of data.

actual hardware. This is what is **OPEN I ETTER** done in practice and is called

This is an open letter to the Prime Ministers of Nepal and the United Kingdom and to the President of the United States. We, a group of professionals working Nepal, would like to express our grave concern about the military assistance which several foreign countries are considering providing to Nepal. We greatly appreciate the widespread concern for Nepal's dire situation, but we strongly believe that at this point foreign governments, instead of providing military issistance, should orient aid towards dialogue, development and true security measures for the following reasons • The conflict cannot be solved without social and

political reforms. The Communist Party Nenal Maoist (CPN - Maoist) has flourished in areas of stark poverty. The midhills suffer from neglect, ecological degradation and social exclusion. Most recruits come from rural youth belonging to these marginalised areas. It is well known that rural poverty and urban corruption are the roots of the conflict results. We don't know what kind The international meeting of donors on Nepal held in London in June 2002 affirmed an urgent need to tackle poverty, discrimination, corruption, livelihoods and human rights, as well as security. It urged real reform in political leadership and governance and inclusive decision-making, targeting firstly the poores

simulation exercise must have areas of the country Having said this traffic The Maoists have now shifted their once proaccidents at intersections in neonle policies to the destruction of past develop. Kathmandu are certainly going to ment gains that the people rely upon. We believe decrease, and with synchronisa that intensive government commitment to radical tion traffic movement will also reform has great potential to win back the support of improve. But this will also depend the mass of people on the performance of the overall · Military aid will almost certainly result in system including the response of increased human rights violations. We recognise

and deplore the violence, destruction of infrastructure and negation of human rights that the CPN (Maoist) drivers to the system. Raiat Raibhandari New Jersev Institute of Technology party has sanctioned and now intensified. Nothing Interdisciplinary Program can excuse their brutal actions or their stance against individual freedoms. Yet, one also cannot ignore in Transportation that they started from idealist commitment to greater justice in Nepal and that this violence cannot be an MALARIA RESURGENCE

excuse for the State to be equally aggressive. We recognise the responsibility of the Royal Hemlata Rai's "The return of the parasites" (#105) is appreciated Nepalese Army to protect the Nepali people, their for its attempt to explain the state infrastructure, and the State itself against threat ation of malaria in Nenal A While we empathise with the inexperience of the few clarifications: the resurgence army in fighting this type of situation and their small of drug-resistant malaria is a force size, we can however not ignore that numerous global phenomenon rather than ar organisations, such as Amnesty International, have isolated event in Nepal, and its documented that the army is also quilty of gross incidence is higher than what is human rights violations. On both sides, Nepalis are reported by the government. This dving-Negali men and women who could be is mainly due to faulty surveillance committing their lives to national development.

mechanisms and poorly conand tabloids. Anecdotal reports of ducted laboratory procedures. The laboratory diagnosis of malaria in the Nepali highlands malaria is one of the simplest lab (possibly in people who have avelled to endemic areas) must procedures, which requires be distinguished from malaria neither state-of-the-art laborator equipment nor advanced skills. All resulting from indigenous transit needs is a light microscope, glass slides, Geimsa stain and tap nission. Any conclusions drawn in this regard without proper vater, with lots of motivation and time on the laboratory technician's nremature part. As this is tedious and not financially rewarding, laboratory

technicians are often dissuaded from conducting the procedure properly There have also been claims that malaria is increasingly being mistaken for Japanese encephal tis and so forth. In an era of evidence based medicine, it would be much wiser to bring these

claims to the debate and scrutiny

of appropriate scientific forums

before dispatching them as



Although a bitter war is being fought in Nepal. there is still scope for non-violent resolution Three months ago, the CPN (Maoist) offered to resume negotiations with the government the Prime Minister turned this down. This decision must be reconsidered. Preparing mechanisms for mediation and negotiation will not be an easy task, especially because the insurgents in the past betraved the government, but they are the only paths to long lasting peace. Ignoring the Maoists as a political force and resisting political reforms might seem an option now, but it will exclude a arge section of Nepali society and increase

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instability in the long run. Military aid that can be used for lethal actions is inappropriate for foreign donors. Foreign donors should speak out against the mentality of neasuring victory by body counts. We believe that a primarily military "solution" will only bleed Nepal of its people and its resources, for many years. This democratic nation needs help through conflict mitigation. Foreign donors can contribute through monitoring and raising awareness of human rights promoting security through protection, advocating tough campaigns against corruption, and possibly giving training in

· Pulling both sides together into strategic and transparent development is the immediate need. We are aware that the nath to neace in Nenal may not be smooth or quick. However, we invite concerned governments to support the Nepal government in the following measures to address the root causes of the conflict, thus enabling the

End the State of Emergency reinstate freedom of the press and improve the functioning of civil society Start mediation with the CPN (Maoist) eadership to bring them back to the democratic process Promote human rights through training of the

beginnings of true peace in Nepal-

security forces, and through radio or other campaigns aimed at the Maoists Coordinate strategic security with development aid to Manist affected communities

- Accelerate the implementation of decentrali sation programs Provide welfare for widows, orphans and those
- njured in the conflict Encourage changes in the Constitution to
- insure a just society "Nepal Unity", Kupondol

self-sufficient. Aid makes us

turns us into beggars. It also

enables those who give aid to

is a radical idea for you to

consider: if our hydropower

control those who receive it. Here

potential is so great why don't we

export it all to India and China and

make it free for Nenalis? Use it to

power cable cars. Stop building

roads. No imported fossil fuel, n

the only one. It's time to think

radical and to start caring for

Nenal and not just our pockets

Let me commend Binod Bhattarai

the air saftey standards in Nenal

wing and a prayer" (#105). As he

and an accurate listing of the

issues affecting safety "On a

correctly points out, the best

navigational aids and the most

sophisticated avionics in the world

will not prevent accidents if cockpit

crew display carelessness and

over-confidence. He also rightly

points out that most of the accidents

in Nepal over the past decade have

problems, but because of controlled

flight into terrain (CFIT). However,

not been due to maintenance

HUMAN ERROR

nollution. I'm a dreamer, but I'm not

corrupt, greedy, and most of all it

of crew coordination, and STOL training. Equipment can only take you so far in the end it comes down to training and profession m of the cockpit crew LL Shrestha, Kathmand

REMOVE FEES

I would like to draw the attention of Nepal's tourism planners through your paper to the worrying state of Nepal's tourist industry. One of the stumbling blocks to increasing tourism in Nepal are the fees to enter various places like Pashupatinath Udava Thapa, UK and the Darbar Squares of Patar Kathmandu and Bahktapur. In Europe you do not find such fee in places such as the old town o on a well-researched overview of Berne Rothenburg or the old quarters of Paris or London. What is more vexing for tourists is the lack of information on what is being done with the entrance fees that are collected. Saving that they have used for heritage conservation won't do Examples should be given of how much was used for what. Even so, the fees are too high, it has to be paid too often, and the policemen on duty treat tourists like criminals. At a time when tourism is low the fees should at least be lowered. Karin Indermuhle, Berne

CORRECTION

what was the main underlying cause for CFIT? Unfortunately, all signs point to human error: pilots disoriented because of unfamiliarity with en route terrain, not adhering to basic safety procedures on minimum altitude and heading, lack

In the editorial. "Tough nut to crack" (#105), the date for the bandh called by Maoists was erroneously cited as 16 August. It should have read 16 September

longitudinal studies would be but Achvut Bhattarai, Tangal TRADE, NOT AID We are regular readers of your paper and its coverage of foreign aid. We are currently in the UK even though we live in Kathmandu. When you are away from the place you live in, you get



with aid. Trade, and not aid, is the

way out. I have a business here

working with hemp. It could be the





ance as polluting vehicles. When 600 diesel Vikrams were banned previously, there was an wemight improvement in air quality. Today the government still pays us to pollute by subsidising diesel and taxing us for traveling clean by imposing VAT and customs duties on EVs. Cash from diesel goes to black market racketeers (for fuel adulteration) while the

financial liabilities of respiratory disease decreased tourism and lack of Nepali jobs are borne by the public

The public is rightfully wondering how the Investors of Nenal.)



MOPE and the Ministry of Finance in the nalm of its band? EVs can offer equal comfort and perform-



protect it

government can offer a published facility in the budget and then rescind it so casually as if the

by ADAM FRIEDENSOHN

9 - 15 ALIGUST 2002 NEPALI TIMES

The naradov here is that the party that doesn't believe in democ

racy is the one that will determine whether these elections can be

held. By holding a gun to our heads, the Maoists want to dictate the

proof_if proof is still needed_that there can be no compromise with

future. If they decide to disrupt this election, then that is the final

people who don't believe in compromises

government's documents do not affect westment in the country. The government seems completely unconcerned about its

investment destination.

and also give EV projects full cooperation while As a foreigner I feel deeply saddened when seeing HMG/N selfish opposition to a technology that is in the best interest of Nepalis. I feel even sadder that the citizens have to absorb the repercussions of these

shortsighted decisions made based on an accounting that leaves the public out of the

(Adam Friedenschn is founder of Lotus Enerov

be imported for a local technology test eventually for local production?" Although the The reversal of published incentives for the REVAs could well cause the collapse of the Eco-Visions (the REVA distributor in Nepal)



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NATION

Eyebrows have been raised in London over procedure in the UK's

a report in The Guardian newspaper of 5 August. Labour party

promise to Nepal of roughly £3 million worth of military aid. According to

ackbencher Tony Worthington has accused Prime Minister Tony Blair

of "sneaking" the proposal through parliament by bundling it with an aid

programme used to help restore peace in war-torn countries. The

report says that the aid "will comprise two Mi-17 support helicopters,

explosive ordinance disposal equipment, logistical equipment, communication equipment and equipment in support of the military intelligence

support group which the UK are assisting the Royal Nepalese Army in

The money comes from the "global conflict prevention pool", a fund backed by the UK's Foreign Office. Department for International

Development and Ministry of Defence. The Guardian report says that

the package was made part of Britain's contribution to the global "war against terrorism" even after British international development secretary

Britain promised to give £6.7 million as aid, of which roughly £3 million is

Clare Short opposed it. After the London donors meeting on Nepal,

DOMESTIC BRIEFS

British aid

ettina up.

to spent on military equipment.

No asylum for footballers

Collateral sorrow

from ⊏>p1

 4_{NATION}

A senior army source told us that the security forces had reliable reports that the Kalikot area was where many of the Maoists who took part in the Mangalsen attack were hiding. "The Maoists had infiltrated the workers," he said. But in hindsight, it is clear that the Maoists were provoking us to attack the workers and make it look like we were killing civilians." The survivors sav that the Maoists had been coming around regularly to threaten them to stop work on the airport. They would refuse, but the Maoists would demand a meal, after which they would leave The fact that the Maoists shot

at the helicopter using the workers as human shields bolsters the argument that the rebels were ng to trap the army into attacking civilians. But all this is of little consolation to the families and it is clear that the attack in

HERE AND THERE

Kalikot was a colossal blunder. For their sons being alive, and are the families of the dead in Dhading carrying out funerals on ritual pyres As the priest makes final and Sindhunalchok, the wounds haven't healed with time. This is preparations for Rai Kumar nainly because they never got the hrestha's funeral, his mother is bodies of their loved ones. No one weeping loudly inside the house ever came to apologise or tell them that it was a mistake. And to make Raj Kumar's wife Gita gave birth to a girl a month ago, but the baby died. His father Bel Bahadur matters even worse, as far as the government is concerned, their sons is assisting the priest. "Console yourself," the priest mutters in and fathers were all "terrorists". Dambar Bahadur Thapa lost his between chants. "The dead don't 17-year-old son. He says, "They come back no matter how much we want them to." That makes were quiet kids, they never got into any trouble, they were just working things worse, and the weeping is hard to make some money to send louder. Raj Kumar's five-year old son Amrit and his younger back to their families." Gyan Bahadur Biswokarma lost two sons ared 30 and 25 and bas only now friend nearby, oblivious of what is lecided to hold a funeral service for going on them. Shankha Bahadur Gurung Three weeks after the

lost two of his five sons, one 21 and the other 19. He had decided to go to Kalikot to see for himself after hearing the news, but the other villagers stopped him. Most other us their wages," recalls Bel villagers have by now given up on

-old Bhim Bahadur Thapa, who died in Kalikot. Gvan Bahadur and Buddhisara Biswokarma lost two sons. Indra Bahadur Thapa's son told him he would be back in a few month brother are playing marbles with a

> incident there were rumours that they had been killed, another three months later the contractor called us to Kathmandu and gave Bahadur. "It was then that we

finally believed our son was dead." The private contractor also gave them Rs 3,300 each for funeral expenses. The government sn't shown any such concern. Eight of the dead are Praja families, and they still don't accept the deaths of their loved ones. They refuse to carry out the funeral rites, and hope against hope that their sons will one day appear. "Kumle had promised to come back by the mid-April, in time to help with sowing corn." says his mother Ninna Praja, tears welling up in her eyes. "We will wait for him forever, there was no reason for him to die."

Fourteen-year-old Govinda Praja lost his 60-year-old father Chitra Bahadur. "I still hope my father escaped, maybe he could have been delayed because of the difficulties of coming back." Govinda told us. "We had tried to discourage him from going so far away "However, Chitra

Bahadur, decided to go because ment in March that Singha Darbar there was no work, his debt was took notice. Prime Minister Sher piling up and he had no more Bahadur Deuba told parliament on 6 March that the government was cattle, goats or crops to sell. Govinda's mother Sukmaya is so taking care to ensure that the torn by grief and worry that she innocent were not killed, and that if hasn't spoken to anyone for months. In addition to his four that happened, they would be adequately compensated. The Prime Minister's Office also set up little borthers and sisters. Govinda now also has to take a special committee headed by Rishikesh Gautam to hear and care of his mother. Two young teenage widows Kaman Maya Praja and Syani investigate complaints. When we contacted the committee for Praia, still have terrified looks. comment, its members were still They are living with their joint unaware of the men from Jogimara families, unsure of what lies ahead. who were killed in Kalikot. Shree Kanta Regmi, secretary o Indra Bahadur Thapa lost his 16the committee, told us that his year-old son, Gyan Bahadur in Kalikot, "Before leaving he had office had not received any application tion from the families of the asked us to take good care of the cattle and not to borrow too much deceased. The bureaucracy's wheels money," Indra Bahadur told us before looking away to wipe his

don't start turning until a formal application is received, and Regmi cases as soon as we receive com-

One village in Dhading lost almost its entire working population in Kalikot.



Killed in Kalikot

 Of the 17 killed in Jogimara, nine were under 21. The dead left 10 widows, 18 orphans, and 14 bereaved parents. · Of the nine workers from Sindhupalchok, two survived Fight villagers were killed including the Negali Congress ward. chairman and two Shernas from Solu Khumhu Three others, including the sub-contractor, also died

Names of the Jogimara dead, 17 from 15 families. Chitra Bahadur Praja, Budha Bahadur Praja, Kumle Praja, Sher Bahadur Praja, Dilli Praja, Ram Bahadur Praja, Bikas Praja, Kanchha Praia Gokarna Gurung, Tek Bahadur Gurung, Gokarna Thapa, Maniu Thapa, Bhim Bahadur Thapa, Gyan Bahadur Thapa, Jhakka Bahadur Balchhane, Rai Kumar Shrestha, Rai Kumar Biswokarma, Tek Rahadur Riswokarma, Sanu Riswokarma and Rel Rahadur Riswokarma



However, two former MPs.

Prem Bahadur Singh and Rajendra Pandey, said that they have handed

over the claims from the families of the dead to Gautam. The two also

say that they personally informed

incident. The contractor who him

the workers, Subha Karki Nirman

Sewa took the matter up with the

National Human Rights Commis-

ion and the Civil Aviation Author ity of Nepal But even the NHRC

was not able to get help for the

families, nor did it deem it neces-

sarv to conduct an independent

s even more appalling for the

As we prepared to leave, one villag

families in Jogimara is the govern-ment's indifference to their plight.

told us: "We've not just los our children, but the government

nvestigation into the issue. Shocking as the tragedy is, what

the prime minister about the

the curriculum as it is a "dead language", and janajati activists have singled it out as one more way of imposing a homogenising Hindu identity and culture upon all Nepali citizens. Ashoka fellows ndra Suwal and Mahahir Pun have been

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selected as Ashoka Fello from Nepal for 2002. Suwa a bird enthusiast has been working to protect Negal's wetlands by encouraging people to see them as vita important, productive ecosystems. Suwal created a vetland preserve in Lumbini

Raiendra Suwal

to demonstrate the relationship between the health of these system and the livelihood and well-being of the community. Pun has been getting community members involved in building

sustainable local schools. He encourages schools to introduce computers and take up projects that generate local jobs. Himanchal High School in Myagdi district has over 20 computers. Pun has also given computers to other schools and plans to link them to provide on-line education, especially in areas without qualified teachers

Ashoka is a global non-profit whose mission is to develop social ntrepreneurship. Ashoka Nepal has 27 fellows working in such diverse fields as education, environment, economic development human rights and civic participation.





tears. "He wanted earn enough to told us that newspaper reports were not enough. "We will look into the pay for his schooling. It was only after the news of the death of innocents rocked parliaplaints," he assured us.

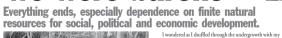
Once we were barons

ake Temagami, Canada: The forest around this deep, clear body of water is thick and alive with evil. At least, that is, if you regard voracious insects as enemies of the human species, as I do. From a cabin near the shore, I take a daily walk through stands of pine and poplar trees, some of them soaring skyward 60 metres or more, creaking in the chill winds off the lake. From time to time, I stumble upon the remnants of a bygone age-mysterious bits of iron and old wooden structures, sometimes with the appearance of being intact, but long since turned into shells or skeletons by weather or those insects

What I walk through is what used to be a logging camp, a veritable village in its day, about 100 years ago. Now abandoned and withered, a human settlement is being slowly reclaimed by nature. There's not much that's visible to the questing eve. If I hadn't stubbed my toe on a corroded but still sharp steel saw blade, this former abode of hard-working, hard-living loggers might have remained in sylvan obscurity until it rotted into its component parts; forest food for the trees its inhabitants used to rip from the soil and turn into profits for some faraway lumber baron.

For that's what the men who exploited the forests of northern Canada were-barons all, extremely rich, savvy, powerful people who oversaw the economy of half a continent. In the halcyon days when this region 400 km from the American border produced the fine woods needed to build cities and lifestyles across the hemisphere, the lumber barons called the shots in national politics. They grew wealthy and influential even as they ripped irreplaceable natural wealth from the thin soil over the Precambrian granite of an exposed earth's crust.

Aside from saw blades and old buildings, they and their workers left behind the trappings of a now-departed antique culture-horse harnesses, skies for sledges to slide heavy logs through winter snow,



metal candle holders and kerosene lamps, nails forged square instead of round. Don't let the roughness and crudity of the remaining hits deceive you. From what I see, and what I've read lumber was the oil of the 19th and early-20th centuries around here. When the last of the big 300-year-old trees had been cut down, the barons and the workers moved on to other places-warmer parts of Canada, Borneo, Brazil, They found other natural resources to unsustainably exploit too

throbbing toe whether or not this natural reclamation process wasn't a way of humbling over-arrogant humans. Each generation that enjoys a modicum of political and economic success seems to think itself the most significant, accomplished, and advanced ever. Yet time and tide wait for no one, and all things pass. The lumber boom means little now, at least here, and no one would compare the wealth of the forest to the gushing oil wells of the Gulf anymore. But I do. How can I avoid thinking about how much better off

things might be if the vast petroleum reserves under the region that Orientialists call the Middle East were exhausted, and the deserts of Saudi Arabia's empty quarter and Iran's coast were slowly overwhelming the rusting works of men that used to fill the world's thirsty petrol tanks. Not because I'm a Luddite who hates the progress that has been underwritten by oil's high prices, but because of the horrible skewing effects of dependency on finite natural resources on social, political and economic development. And in the case of oil, that ill-effect extends far beyond the comfortable corruptions of the Gulf kingdoms into Israel, Africa, Asia and other places

I know. I know. The columnist on holiday runs the risk of seeking profundity where he needs to find it-even in the foam on the top of a beer glass, or so I'm told. But that image of the howling desert wind and swirling dust burying the oil derricks is a powerful one. It bears more than a passing resemblance to insight. Just be careful you don't stub your toe on a piece of oil derrick sticking out of the sand

Katiko Dicture: Kothada airfield





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SOMEWHERE IN NEPAL by PUSKAR BHUSAL

elections aren't enough to to plot a

conclusive pattern, but the way the

But this ambiguity means that

defines the autonomy debate.

failure to hold elections within a

of ministers decides when to hold

things. If you're still wondering how a

government that concedes conditions

district elections can reiterate its

are not right for village, municipal and

resolve to hold the parliamentary polls

doable when the system is at stake.

of local leaders would be far too

intimidating-and distracting when

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there is no constitutional icopardy.

democracy's teething problems. Last

an auspicious re-birth in 1990.

prominence on the agenda of the

because of its Kathmandu Valley

Empowerment of village, town and :

district councils couldn't gain

movement to restore democracy partly

centric character. That's probably why

our constitution says little about the

These organisations were primarily seen

as tools of implementing the people's-

participation thrust of the constitution'

directive principles. The closest they got

to constitutional protection is Article

46 1(c) which mandates an electoral

college comprising key local leaders to

1997, those who considered grass-

roots politicians floating professionals

susceptible to enticements from all

occupational hazards. The Maoists

murdered and maimed scores of local

leaders and forced countless others to

resign. The mayors of Kathmandu,

Lalitpur, Bhaktapur, Dharan and

Birganj, among other local representa

tives, showed they could feel for the

people. But they were still identified

with the political parties responsible

quarters became familiar with the

House of parliament.

elect 15 of the 60 members of the Upper

After the second local elections in

structure and tenure of local bodies

week, their patience snapped. Local governance hardly had

for the capital's gridlock. Two

simultaneous polls could create.) The emment's case: If the country could ive without local bodies for two years Nepali Congress and the UML each after 1990, couldn't it do so again? reaped the benefits of incumbency still While yelling at each other, we forgot there was a third stakeholder Sure, it was a little jarring having to

9-15 AUGUST 2002 NEPALLTIMES

read about the first stirrings of donor specified period doesn't threaten a fatigue in the same newspaper that constitutional crisis. Since the council broke down the £3 million worth of defence equipment one western power grassroots polls, political calculations was granting us to fight the Maoist gain precedence over a lot of other insurgency.

Donor agencies, mostly answerable to taxpayers more at ease with aldermen, boroughs and caucuses, were waging the part of our battle that dealt with staggering economic inequalities

on time, here's what I've figured out. social discrimination, political Getting out the people to vote for one parliamentary candidate is difficult, but corruption and human-rights abuses How can they implement and evaluate development projects without their elected local partners around? What Asking them to elect an entire line-up about all those pledges of transparency and accountability the finance minister danced to during the Nepal Develop-(Don't even try imagining the chaos ment Forum?

ECONOMY

BIZ N

RBB on life support

The central bank last week took over the ailing Rastriya Bank (RBB), which had become leader-less following the resignation of its executive chairman on 30 July. The bank's new executive chiel is Basaudev Ram Joshi, who was until then the management coordinator the second of another troubled bank, the Nepal Bank Limited. The central bank appointed Bharat Bahadur Karki as Joshi's replacement at the NBL. The task of the new management would be to control the RBB's liabilities (deposits)-given that it has not made any major investment over the past year-and undertake loan recovery on a "war footing." Independent bankers estimate that the RBB's non-performing assets are anywhere between 40-60 percent of all loans

FDI flows

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Nepal last fiscal year (ending mid-July) was down by about 39 percent to Rs 1.2 billion from the Rs 3.1 billion in the same year-earlier period. The Department of Industry approved 77 FDI ventures in fiscal 2001/02, compared with the 97 ventures approved the previous year. The total project cost of the approved investments was Rs 3.31 billion, of which 21 were ventures with Indian partners and 12 had Chinese investors. The number of projects with foreign investment-mainly Indian-stood at 767 in 2001/02, and brought in Rs 20.8 billion runees

What we've lost

Government officials say that the losses caused by political instability and Maoist violence last year add up to about Rs 40 billion. This includes all the damaged or destroyed infrastructures, and the slowdown in industrial production, trade and tourism. That is about 10 percent of the GDP and means about 200.000 lost jobs. The direct loss resulting from damaged infrastructure is about Rs 16 billion. Another Rs 20 billion was attributed to lost business according to Dr Shanker Sharma, member of the National Planning Commission, "Other" losses cost the economy Rs 4 billion.

Flv to Banaras

Necon Air has resumed flights to Banaras from 1 August, and the company says its next expansions would be the Indian cities of Kolkata and Lucknow. Necon flies two ATR-42s-which are used for both its domestic and India routes-and one Beechcraft 1900C

Gold prices

Gold prices have come down to mid-April levels, after briefly rising during the wedding season, to stabilise at around Rs 8,000 per 10 grams. Worked gold was selling for Rs 7 915 early this week and traders did not see a turnaround in the near future. Deregulation of gold imports in India and the slowdown in the local economy are some reasons for the downturn, traders said.



How do you rate the effectiveness of GTZ-supported projects in Nepal?

We made quite drastic changes in our country portfolio, making local self-governance and civil society key areas. Because we believe in decentralisation we were quite irritated and shocked by the government

decision on dissolving local bodies. Renewable energy and health are the other two key areas. The main challenge, however, is how to reduce poverty in Nenal The second most important challenge is how to introduce good governance. Nepal has a long way to go, we are trying to help but definitely donors cannot solve the problems. It must be basically and primarily done by Nepalis, and we can do what we can to support the effort.

What is the progress in small hydropower development?

We had built a strategy based on the World Bank's Power Development Fund. We wanted to provide technical advice and consultancies to private investors. The money was to have come from the Bank, but it

ECONOMIC SENSE **Private initiatives**

To make government listen, business needs to be more pro-active.

desperate measures. Last fortnight there was a rather hectic pow-wow between industry captains and business organisations that gave the government one message: take business seriously or lse. There's plenty going on-the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ENCCI) and the Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI) have een having many chats with the overnment and political parties, nd bi-national chambers are actively seeking the support of diplomatic missions to make the government hear what they

esperate times need

the jobs of these officials. A quick recap of recent develop-Collecting more taxes from ents of significance to industry: you out, but the only real the way out of this mess lies in formulating conducive policies for business and industry. The business community for its

part needs to realise that unity and a common platform are the important things now. It isn't in the least bit important whose names go on reports or who goes to submit the drafts. What is important is action. Recommendations to the government need to be prescriptive, things that can be acted upon immediately. Reports need to be translated into specific legal words of amendments to legislation. For instance, the business community needs to work very hard to bring about specific structural and procedural changes

department can't be treated like a orivy purse for political loyalists. Also English-language reports may serve the donor community well, but for real change, the language of the law is Nepali. Bilateral and multilateral agencies for their part can make the implementation of certain changes covenants to the next set of grants Economies move in cycles, and even if we are approaching our lowest point, eventually we will come back to life. And in order to truly take advantage of that, we must prepare for it now. The budget that the next elected government presents will be vital. The government needs to sit up, take business seriously. And a good start, at least in the public eye,

would be if the prime minister while reading out a speech, got the name of the FNCCI president right. ♦

"Nepal has a long way to go..."

was stuck and is still stuck. We have heard from colleagues at the Bank that it will hopefully be arranged by the end of the year. In the meantime we found other ways and opened up new financial sources. What has been achieved is amazing. When I came five years ago I had discussed with private banks with

whom we are dealing and had tried to bring small hydro investors and the banks together. They had no idea of the hydropower sector and were full of negative sentiments. This situation has changed and

> now more than \$40 million worth of investment is in the pipeline, all financed by local banks. I think it is more valuable than opening up another World Bank loan, especially if Nepali banks can allocate the funds.

Your role has been to facilitate that investment? Yes. The role is to assist the private sector technically, help open doors at the banks and also in dealing with the Nenal Electricity Authority for getting power purchase agreements. The local banks have discovered small hydropower is an area where putting money is worthwhile.

How soon will the local investments you are talking about start flowing?

The first investments have already begun and two or three projects are under construction in the Arun valley. There are five to eight projects in the pipeline, which have reached very advanced stages. Things are moving and not everyone is waiting and watching how the government will decide

There is another huge German hydro project funded by KfW, how do the two approaches match up?

They are different types of hydro projects. One aims to contribute to the national grid in a different way to help the country cope with the growing demand. At least in the past there was growing demand and hope it remains in the future, which of course depends on the political and economic developments. Our small hydropower projects focus on rural development and remote areas where there is much potential that is hardly used. KfW, the German Development Bank, and GTZ are two sister organisations. They deal with financial cooperation and we provide technical cooperation, expertise and know how.

How has your support for the private sector fared? It tries to assist the promotion of items which are in demand in German markets to help bilateral trade: carpets, tea and tourism. It does not make a lot of sense to try to promote tourism in the present situation so we are concentrating more on carpets and tea. We are trying to make Nepali tea better known and to create demand not only in Germany but also in Europe. It is also trying to bring the carpet industry up from where it is now All in all the project is an attempt to make Nenali carnets the brand and label that they once represented and reverse the situation caused by inferior quality and undercutting of prices.

What is the potential for tea?

Although Germany is a coffee drinking nation more and more people are developing a liking for tea. But hardly anybody knows that Nepal is also a tea producing country. Darieeling, Assam and Sri Lanka are the more established labels. We think there is a niche for good quality orthodox and organic tea where Nepal can move in with good quality and the image that it is grown in the Himalayas.

How has the training of small businesses helped Nepal?

We had been doing the project for many years. We have changed the strategy of providing that free of charge and our focus now is to support the establishment of a local consulting industry and enable then to provide the services as a business. It is an attempt to promote a service industry because agriculture has its limits, and so does industrial production. Now, when tourism is also down, a service industry like consultancy and training and software development could be the way for the future. It has the potential to create new employment and good opportunities for educated people.

Looking ahead would you say you are cautiously optimistic of the future?

It is a difficult question. A lot, if not all, depends on if it is possible or not to end the conflict. If it escalates or continues then the prospects are rather dim and gruesome, and some of the donors might lose their patience. They may react to the present state of bad governance, corruption and other chronic diseases. If the conflict can be ended and the government is then really able to satisfy the demands of the peoplenot only make nice speeches on poverty alleviation but provide basic services-then donors would be very happy to continue support.



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like this programme coz once in every week for 30 minutes, our TV set turns into a mirror: reflecting the society and it's people. It's me and my eelings. I find my parents there, solutions to my problems and most of all, it makes our family come together within a boundary of understandin a teenage girl wrote in an email to the crew of Catmandu. Visit a Catmandu shoot and you'd be forgiven for thinking you'd ended up in a high school instead. The young people—actors, directors and the technicians—responsible for one of Nepal Television's most successful shows ever are an exuberant lot, a characteristic that carries over well into Catmandu Although on paper Catmandu could sound kind of, well, boring, and NTV is hardly what most teenagers watch, the UNICEF project targeted at developing life-skills among young people has managed to strike a chore among the capital's young TV watchers. Since September last year Catmandu, which airs at 7PM on Saturdays, is estimated to be watched

pick up some of these vital life-skills from them. by 50 percent of all people who tune The weekly series has been a into NTV. Targeted mostly at major break for director Nitesh Rai Pant. He learned his TV skills while Kathmandu's urban youth, it is above all real and definitely not preachy. The acting in and assisting the director of characters go to discos, hang out at the popular satirical NTV show Hijo fast-food restaurants, speak the Aja Ka Kura. Catmandu gave Pant cringe-inducing mix of Nepali and with a chance to direct a crew. English you hear on New Road. UNICEF wanted a young person to dream about studying abroad—in run the show, and that's what they short, mirror the aspirations of got. While most 20-something people urbanised Nepali youth. ike Pant might just be starting their "We aim to get young people to acting careers, the young director has think about the choices they have in worked with electronic media for ife, be aware of who they are, what about a decade. "My age helped. they want, what would make them Catmandu is a project produced by happy," says screenwriter Sushma and for youth," explains Pant. Amatya. Like all young people faced He's doing his job well. The with the choices that modernity show's reach has far expanded what UNICEF initially envisioned, and has throws up Catmandu's characters too often have to make tough decisions, even caught on in the towns and or get into messy situations. The villages. The producers gets hundreds difference is that they use such skills as of letters and emails every week-one self-awareness, communication, teenager from remote Udaipur writes that since his village has no electricity, interpersonal relationships, decision making and problem-solving to sort he watches the show on a battery-

nowered TV people in the process of maturing The other big winner in this dmirably. The idea is that if the whole exercise has been NTVaudience can identify with these finally, young people are tuning in. characters_and they do_they will "Catmandu is the first programme I've

things out. They come across as

really liked on NTV," says Vijay Singh, a college student. His dassmates Avinas Shrestha and Sumit Malakar nod in agreement and chime

Almost-reality TV comes to Nepal.

UNICEF's biggest challenge was couraging this leap in viewing loyalty, and they realised they could only do it if they made their messages seem like fun, not essons. When Amatva came or board, the only resource she had was a research report of a 2001 ioint UNAIDS and Unicef project A Survey of Teenagers in Nepal" Then she had her imagination-and the expertise of the staff of UNICEF's other hit, the radio show Sathi Sanga Manka Kura. (See "Someone I can talk to", #87.) She spoke to the producers and analysed the feedback sent by the listeners to understand how and what teenagers think these days. Feeling she was still missing something 'real', Amatva then conducted extensive meetings with young people from Kathmandu schools and colleges. The result is a script of nearethnographic precision. Pant and Amatya, who has a comments, even passes, "We try to

in that the serial is "cool" and "reflects

Apeksha Thapa, who plays Abha, are

creative writing degree from Australia and has previously scripted another UNICEF serial. Chetana, are the only professionals on this team. Evenuone else is an amateur, often a first-timer raksha Shah, who plays Neeva, and the young generation" perfectly.

> both higher secondary students. The girls say they're glad how much being sociated with Catmandu has taught them. "Nepali youth are very cynical about a lot of issues, and they don't welcome criticism," says Shah. Usma Lama who plays Binny, a ajor character, never thought she'd act, but now she is consider ing trying other acting ventures too. he's most concerned about two things: first, that she wants to maintain the respect that she has earned through Catmandu, and second, that she would keep up her grades as she entered her final year in a BBS program. One area in which she has had chances to put her new selfunderstanding into action is in dealing with the repercussions of being a public figure. Often in public people identify her with the character she plays and make

feel like a failure," says the articulate Lama. Santos Silwal-Giri, who plays a male lead, Bhanu, was already a household name as a radio jockey

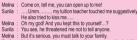
Sunila

Melina

Sunila

Melina

satisfying as making a difference in individuals' lives through Catmandu, Says Silwal-Giri, who is also chief assistant director of the



- I told my auntie, she says I should keep my mouth shut; it's Sunila an embarrassing issue. It isn't a thing to keep quiet about. Let's go to your mum and Melina
- tell her Sunila : Really? Should we really tell her?

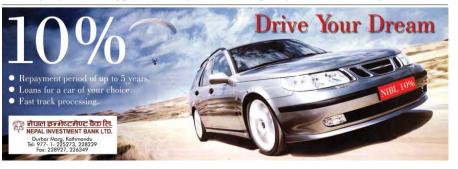
noto nov

A little publicised, but powerful and relatively cheap, medium LINICEE has been using to promote life skills is a series of photo-novellas it produced last year. Sumi Devkota, a consultant with UNICEF, came up with the idea. Sangeeta Lama wrote the script. Keshav Thapalia worked on the storyboard, Kirti Kiran was the artistic director, Laya Sangraula directed the cast, and Raju Bhandari photographed the stories. Most of the CATMANDU cast features in them, since the young actors were already in the public eye and it would be easier for people to immediately identify with the stories. The novellas are being received very well by Nepali youth as well as adults.

everyone can throw in their ideas

educate people about being show: "We practice what we sensitive towards others, so when preach. There are no pretences people recognise me and try to trespass on my individuality, I and they can be themselves on screen "That naturalness continues to draw more young

ople to Catmandu. But a number of viewers have one suggestion: Catmandu needs to with Hits FM, but that wasn't as get more interactive. College student Pooja Thapa says: "They should create a channel where we can ask questions and share our problems too "



8

10 WORLD



is clearly moving away from its focus on Asia during the 1980s and 1990s the United States. and is now headed for a more formal alliance with the United States.

reflecting the Howard government's more cautious-even anxiousapproach. In a media briefing last week a senior Australian Foreign Ministry official indicated that the Howard government's new White Paper on foreign affairs, to be published in two months' time, will formally announce that Australia's single most important relationship in foreign policy is its alliance with the United

This reflects Prime Minister John Howard's deep embrace of the United States immediately following the 11 September attacks, when he invoked the Australia-New Zeahad-US (ANZUS) defence treaty and committed Australian troops to the

US-led attack on Afghanistan last year The last White Paper, produced in 1997 ranked the United States equally with Japan, China and Indonesia as countries where Australia had

COMMENT

paper ranks no other country in order with Asia on the one hand and with of importance to Australia-other than the United States, on the other, "We went to great lengths to underline the Signs of Australia's shift under Howard were evident even earlier. In 1999, Howard made the nowinfamous comment that Australia could act as America's deputy sheriff in Asia, and Australia's role in East Timor's independence is nov increasingly seen as reflecting this strategy In recent months, the Howard government has demonstrated rs enthusinstic embrace of US President George W Bush's antierrorism campaign and its tendency to look at Asia with a military focus.

"The foreign policy White Paper eflects the growing influence of Prim Minister John Howard over Australia's international policy." argued Geoffrey Barker of the Australian Financial Review. When the Review ran his stors

titled 'PM dumps Asia for US Illiance', Australian foreign ministr officials immediately went on the offensive, arguing that Australia does

high priority accorded to Asia in current policy, including the new trade and economic agreements we are seeking with Japan and China, the Free Trade Agreements we are negotiating with Singapore and negotiating with singapore and Thailand, and close engagement with Indonesia including collaboration in combating people smuggling," said a foreign ministry statement. Australia's trade with the United States has increased in recent years, but Asia still accounts for 57 percent of Australia's total merchandise exports and remains Australia's biggest trading partner. The growing trend of trade with the US trend worries some in the Australian business community, who see this as a sign of a growing bias against Asia in Australia's foreign policy that may have repercussions for Australian

omes at a time when Asians in greater numbers are coming to Australia as fee-paying students, tourists and migrants, as well as asylum seekers, a ted out by Foreign Minister Alexander Downer in a recent speech. Then why the government's policy shift to move closer to the US? Professor David Walker, author of the ook Anxious Nation: Australia and the Rise of Asia, explains: "Australia has routinely oscillated between negative readings of what proximity to Asia might mean in terms of defence and security, the 'anxious nation syndrome', and more positive inderstandings of the benefits that might flow from proximity, including doser trade ties, collaborative defence arrangements and a richer and more erse pattern of cultural engagement It is hard to imagine that the policy change would not be interpreted as more Euro-centric and a realignment

of interests along civilisational lines." Walker argues that during the miership of Paul Keating in the early 1990s, Australia's strong preference for closer ties with Asia reflected "a more adventurous and innovative approach to Asia, a national self-belief." Paul Kelly, editor-at-large of The Australian newspaper, argues that the problem in Australia's foreign policy lies in the Howard-Keating cultural conflict of Australia's identity "Political assets in Washington and ÚS leverage will be helpful from time to time, as they were during the Timor crisis," noted Peter Drysdale, head of the Australia-Japan Research Centre at the Australia National University in Canberra. "But political assets in Tokyo, Beijing, Jakarta, Seoul, other south-east Asian capitals and New Delhi will be critical to dealing with a significant majority of our foreign policy problems over the coming wars And this has not changed since 1 September," he warned in Australian Financial Review this

siness in the region. Interestingly, Australia's focus away from Asia and toward the

week 🌢 (IPS) by IAN URBINA

Constantinople connection

WASHINGTON - The mantra of US foreign policy toward the Middle East these days is "regime change". Hamid Karzai is firmly installed in Afghanistan, the Palestinians have been given their ultimatum to replace Yasser Arafat, and now attention is turning to Saddam Hussein. But before it can proceed, the US faces an odd predicament. It may first have to involve itself with a messy regime change in allied Turkey.

Longtime friend and Turkish prime minister Bulent Ecevit is a lame duck, and as his government falls to shambles he has become a serious liability. But to invade Iraq, the US desperately needs Turkish help. The most militarily viable road to Baghdad runs through northern Iraq, and the air base that is best suited to provide the necessary launch-pad for entering from this direction is Incirlik in southwestern Turkey, currently hosting over 50 US fighter jets.

The air cover that Incirlik provided during the 1991 Gulf War would be even more essential now in the type of campaign that Washington is considering for Iraq. The Kurds in northern Iraq are the only available US proxy force and the process of arming and training them would require a green light from Ankara which keeps close tabs on this population. The only Muslim member of NATO, Turkey is also diplomatically important as the geographic and cultural gateway between the west and the Islamic world

Turkish willingness to cooperate with western interests in the region is not in question. The Turks have played an active role in the US "war on terrorism", and for the next six months 1,400 Turkish troops will take over command of the International Security Force in Afghanistan, Turkish and Israeli military ties have been close for some time, and over 12 percent of Israel's air and tank force is currently based in eastern Turkey, resources which would certainly be important in an Iraq invasion. The problem is that Turkey is facing pressure from all sides. The economy

ains in the worst economic shape since 1945, and as the IMF's single largest debtor, Turkey is teetering on the edge of default. Brussels has handed over a list of reforms that Turkey is unwilling to meet for inclusion in the EU. Worst of all, as Prime Minister Ecevit's health has recently fallen apart, so too has his coalition government. Defections have taken Ecevit's party from being the largest to the smallest component of the government, forcing him to acquiesce to early elections in November

The US was already having trouble getting a reluctant Turkey to sign on to the plan to invade Iran. The last way and its follout cost the Turks \$50 billion it lost trade. Turkey fears the possibility of an autonomous Kurdish state being

The US needs Turkey if it is too invade Iraq. And Turkey isn't doing too well right now.



created in post-Saddam Iraq, which might embolden the 20 million Kurds of southern Turkey to push for more basic rights. Furthermore, Ankara does not like the idea of Kirkuk, an oil rich area which previously produced upwards of 70 rcent of Iraq oil exports, ending up as the Kurdish capital.

But with Ecevit's demise, US plans face another more serious obstacle in Turkish elections since they could usher in right-wing nationalists and Islamists who would probably oppose an Iraq offensive. For the US, calculated and guided regime change" is always preferable to an unpredictable and democratic vote, th for allies and ener

With financial and strategic interests so much at stake, it is even more likely that the US will get involved. As the strongly pro-western and former foreign minister, Ismail Cem, quickly assembles a new party consisting of Ecevit defectors, it's only a matter of time before Washington throws its weight behind him. And with all the promises of debt assistance and arms disbursements that the US is capable of bringing to the table, odds are that Turkey will not stand in the way of an Iraqi invasion. \$ (IPS)

(Ian Urbina is associate editor of the Middle East Report in Washington, DC.)

Squandering Sri Lanka's peace

9 - 15 AUGUST 2002 NEPALI TIMES

ASIA

save America.

result is an entirely new

s corporation.

COMMENT

COLOMBO - Sri Lanka's peace process got a welcome respite last week when, for the first time in seven years, a Cabinet minister and a top Tamil rebel leader discussed the prospects for lasting peace. At the same time, international truce monitors praised the warring factions for a ceasefire that has held now for seven months. But the bad news is that the seven-month co-habitation arrangement between Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunna and Prime Minister Panil Wickremesinghe, both of which derive their political support from opposing political parties, is slowly turning sour. This is threatening a neace initiative that has for the first time in 10 years vielded this much success and hope in this war-rayaged nation. The president has the power to dissolve parliament after 6 December, a year into the existence of the current session of the legislature, and if she does this. "the peace process goes for a six." said D Sivaram, editor of TamilNet, a popular pro-rebel website. "Everything will go up in smoke if the two leaders continue fighting in this manner," an opposition MP from Kumaratunga's People's Alliance who is supportive of the government's peace initiative. (IPS)

Crazy weather

NFW DFI HI - India may be in the throes of its worst drought in a dozen years, but its snow-fed rivers and lakes are overflowing. The reason? Climate channe caused by global warming say environmental experts. "There are strong reasons to connect the current drought to larger climate change since what we are witnessing is a peculiar and sudden variation in climate as

predicted by experts studying global warming," savs RK Pachauri, recently elected chief of the Genevabased Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Across northern India, fiercely hot winds seemed to keen away the cooling moisture-laden monsoon rains on which agriculture on the subconti nent depends. They also melted the snow and ice in the high Himalayas that crowns the region, causing floods in the eastern region, which acts like a giant drain emptying out into the Bay of Bengal. Leading scientists across the world, including those attached to the United Nations, agree that global warming and climate change are the result of industrial and other activity that generates greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, which traps heat. (IPS)

Finally, some debt relief

WASHINGTON - A prominent economist is urging poor nations to redirect their debt payments away from rich creditors and spend the money on health and education. Columbia University's Jeffrey Sachs savs that the Highly-Indebted Poor Countries. known as HIPC nations. should re-channel their debt payments to more pressing domestic needs like health, elementary education and the fight against HIV/ AIDS. Sachs' idea has elated anti-debt campaigners, who have long called for a repudiation of the debt of poor nations, but was greeted with caution by some creditors. The debt-recycling plan is now being widely circulated among anti-debt campaigners and economists from developing countries, who say Sachs' weight gives the idea desperately needed new momentum.

Activists say the current debt-relief programme, known as HIPC, has stumbled over many problems and failed to solve the debt crisis. Those criticisms have been acknowledged by the World Bank and the IMF, who run HIPC. In his paper, to be published in the prestigious Brookings Papers on Economic Activity in mid-August, Sachs argues that there is no financial reason that impoverished countries should continue paving their debts, which amount to only a few billion dollars a year. Nor does anyone in the creditor world (including the White House) believe that those countries can service these debts without extreme human cost, Sachs adds. The money should instead be rerouted as grants to be spent on more demanding social needs at home. (IPS)

No diversity in rice

BANGKOK - While Asia's premier rice research body pushes ahead with plans to sow more hybrid rice seeds in paddy fields across the continent, critics accuse it of ruining the diversity of the Asian rice fields. At the heart of this dispute between the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) based in Los Banos, the Philippines, and its critics is the suggestion that the IRRI is breeding a monoculture across rice paddy fields in the region through its hybrid products. One critic, Jacques-Chai Chomthongdi, doesn't buy the argument IRRI extends to convince farmers to switch to hybrid rice-that its products are environmentally sound and friendly to farming communities. "IRRI fails to talk about the amount of pesticides, herbicides and fertilisers farmers have to use for a successful crop of hybrid rice " says Jacques-Chai, a research associate at Focus on the Global South, a Bangkok-based think tank. Witoon Lianchamroon, director of BioThai, a Rannkok-based biodiversity lobby bas another complaint: *IRRI is keen on producing and promoting few hybrid seeds, creating a monoculture on the fields. But farmers have always developed diverse seeds."

Yet IRRI experts are convinced that farmers stand to gain by switching to the hybrid rice seeds. "The seeds we are producing ensure high yields and thus enable farmers to use their land efficiently," says Mahabub Hossain, head of IRRI's social sciences division. For one, adds Hossain, the farmers will be able to reduce their land use for rice while getting a bigger harvest, and "be able to release land for other crops, helping agricultural diversification." Hossain also views IRRI's efforts as a case of science complementing the work of seed development by farming communities. (IPS)

Chung-hua, Inc 🚺 surrounding areas, generally with a China presents a new geopolitical

ver the coming decades China will become a population of 5-7 million people me of these—Shenzhen, Shanghai oroughly new form of political and economic entity Dalian, Tianjin, Shenyang, Xiamen Brutally competitive in both Qingdao and Suzhou-are now rowing economically at a rate of 15politics and world markets. innovative and resilient. China will 20 percent per year-faster than be more dominant than any nation Asian "tigers" such as Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, and Korea ever

The magnitude of this change is did. These smaller region-states are due, in part, to a radical and ranid propelling the growth of larger megashift in China's governance. The regions, with populations approach-ing 100 million each. The mega-People's Republic now embodies regions, which tend to share two systems: the centralised, autocratic communist administra common dialects, ethnic identities, and histories, are becoming ecotion, dominated by an outdated ideology and military interests, and nomic powerhouses. If they were the decentralised free-market separate nations, five of them-the economic regime. China is (angtze Delta, the Northeastern reorganising itself to balance Tristates area (formerly known as central authority and common Manchuria), the Pearl River Delta surpose with decentralised the Beijing-Tianjin corridor, and Shandong-would rank among Asia's freedom in the way nimble

companies balance home-office ten largest economies. and divisional control. The Regional governments have also been toughened up by the Chunggeopolitical model-the country hua Incethic Most officials are ppointed, not elected, but their Call the new China "Chungposts are not sinecures. Not only are hua, Inc." (Chunghua translates as they held to targets of 7 percent "China" and actually means "the annual economic growth or better, they must also improve environmen tal quality, build better infrastrucosperous centre of the universe.") Likemany corporations China is moving most decision-making to ture, and reduce local crime levels. Ir the "business unit" level-semi-October 2001, six bureaucrats were autonomous, self-governing expelled from one of China's major cities for not meeting their economic economic region-states that compete fiercely against each other for capital, technology, and human growth and security targets. In January 2001, Bo Xhi Lai, then resources (just as America's states mayor of Dalian, was promoted to do). This new, decentralised free overnor of Liaoning province. market regime currently encorr Thousands of women, many in tears, passes only a small part of China's spontaneously came to a park to bid

him farewell. During his nine-year vast territory, and many Chinese officials still refuse to acknowledge tenure. Dalian evolved from a its existence. Only seven years ago, ramshackle port into one of the the word federation was banned cleanest and most prosperous cities from the Chinese language; today, in Asia. It now has a street life China has the most federal more vibrant than Singapore, a lavout reminiscent of Paris before governance structure of any large nation except the US. the automobile, and a reputation Two broad categories of regionamong Japanese tourists for high states exist. The first are relatively

quality hotels, transportation, and small, composed of cities and their

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ol-side. So watch out, you just might be on air

Retrospective irony: "Completing the Zhi Bu Railway is a Great Victory for Mao Tise-tung Thought" says this poster from the Cultural Revolution. The technological progress is attributed in the slogans to Mao Tse-tung Thought tather than western-sofe kabour practices or tools

model: the country as corporation.

Still, communist ideology is strong and China remains a military dictatorship that threatens to conquer Taiwan by force and uses North Korea, Pakistan, and Libya as stalking horses for weapons development. Introduction of foreign companies, technologies, and unfettered mobility for corpora tions and people would all be viewed as a threat to the communist system if it were publicly acknowledged. But China's highest officials publicly insist that they run the world's most centrally controlled government. They're right, but they dare not overrun the open, commercial ethic of China's region-statesthe source of their country's Politically, China is comparable

to the US in 1800: an emerging nation with high ideals but wide spread poverty and many practices others find intolerable. A decade or

Wet & Wild Summer

Now every Saturday & Sunday

two of economic freedom and growth will give China's people appetite for self-determination tion and participation. Already some village leaders are elected; this may slowly spread to regional officials, and then ward to the central govern ment Recently China's head of state, Jiang Zemin, said that the Communist Party "represents every good aspect of China, including wealthy capitalists not just the poor, the exploited, and the proletariat We shouldn't be surprised if soonperhaps at the Party's 2002

doctrine to match its new

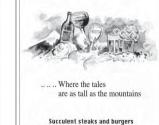
General Assembly—China's leaders formally call for a new

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model (Project Syndicate (Kenichi Ohmae is one of the world's leading business strategists.

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A globalising China's dark side

WASHINGTON - As China becomes more integrated into the global economy, its refusal to permit independent trade unions is fuelling worker unrest, especially in the country's northeastern "rust belt" says a report released here last Friday by Human Rights Watch (HRW). "The Chinese Communist Party is facing a serious dilemma " says Mike Jendrzeiczyk Washington director of HRW's Asia division. "It claims to protect workers, but those very same workers are protesting in the

streets. They want the right to form their own trade unions, and a voice in decisions affecting their work and their benefits.

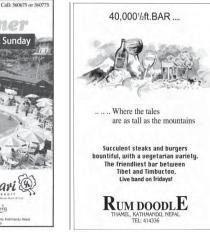
The 50-page report, Paying the Price: Worker Unrest in Northeast China, details three major worker protests in the region-home to large mines and refineries that fuelled China's rapid industrialisation over more than a half century-between March and May this year. The cities of Liaoyang Daging, and Fushun all experienced unprecedented and prolonged demonstrations by tens of thoueands of laid off and ratired workers, which in some cases froze industrial activity and transportation and sparked confrontations with police.

Unlike the recent repression of political dissidents and activists associated with the Falun Gong spiritual sect, the authorities reacted with caution and restraint in responding to the protests, reflect-ing concerns that a barsh clampdown could actually spark more widespread and violent opposition, the

report savs. Worker unrest has grown steadily since economic reforms launched in the late 1970s began to threaten a system known as the "iron rice bowl", which guaranteed lifelong employment with substantial benefits that ranged from free housing and healthcare to generous pensions and vacation allowances. But as the economy became increasingly market-oriented and state enterprises were required to cut costs or privatise by the late 1990s, the iron rice how effectively shattered particularly in the older industries that were unable to compete with foreign imports. Between 1996 and 2000, tens of millions of workers were laid off from state or privatised enterprises with joblessness in the "rust helt" estimated to be at least 20 percent in 2000 and probably significantly higher. In most cases laid-off workers receive few if any benefits

The government has also refused to let workers form independent labour unions that could press their grievances, despite China's ratification in 2001 of the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights, which guarant tees workers the right to organise unions. Only the government-controlled All China Federation of Trade Unions (ACFTU) is permitted. Adding fuel to the fire have been reports of widespread corruption, particularly concerning privatisation. In many cases, local Communist Party officials with senior posts in state or collective enterprises used their influence and connections to gain control of the operations after privatisation.

Most analysts predict unemployment in the northeast could rise much higher as China accelerates its integration into the global economy. Last December the country joined the WTO, a step that requires Beijing to cut tariffs that protect many of China's older industries from foreign competition. (IPS)



THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NEPAL PRESS

5 August

Army misdeeds

the state of the s

Kamal Panthi in Kantipur.

The war on minds

Badri Poudel in Himal Khabarpartika, 1-16 August



There has been a slowdown in the flow of natients after the state of emergency, caused largely by the transport problem, but the number of people with mental problems is on the rise. The number of patients coming to the outpatient department of the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital was 2,500 in 1990. In 1996-the year the Maoist insurgency began-the number grew to 3.500, and last year it was 4.800. The number of people in the first three months of the New Year 2059 (starting mid-April) has already crossed 1,500. At this rate the number of patients by year end could reach 6 000

Experts say this could be a sign of "mass depression", resulting from the deteriorating situation in the country, combined with the violence and instability that is all around. The violence since 1996 has already cost over 4.500 lives. There is no data on those who have been maimed or displaced. Experts told us that such a situation causes helplessness, fear, anxiety and worries about relocation. Not everyone who falls prev to depression needs to have been directly affected by the conflict. Mental problems can result even in those who have read about the incidents, or those who have relatives and neighbours who have been affected. Not all the 1.500 patients at the Teaching Hospital had problems related to the violence: there are also some with other "regular" mental problems. But more recent statistics show

that the number of those suffering from "other" mental problems is decreasing, while more people are tormented by stress, anxiety and depression is on the rise. Of the 117 patients who visited the Teaching Hospital from mid-April to mid-May this year, 85 were diagnosed as having an acute sense of helplessness, fear and anxiety about relocation. In 1996, the number of patients diagonsed with such problems was 37 out of 102. The greater part of the patients with depression came from districts where the Maoist insurgency has been the most intense.

The Teaching Hospital is not the only one that treats people with mental problems-there are at least six other government hospitals that do so, and most private hospitals also provide treatment for mental illness. But the statistics available with the Teaching Hospital give an idea of how far-reaching the problem of depression is becoming. The army and police personnel fighting the Maoists, and their families, generally visit their own hospitals. Ajit Kumar Gurung, who heads the department of mental illness at the Birendra Police Hospital, says that the incidence of acute anxiety and fear has been lower than officials had feared it would be among policemen on the frontlines.

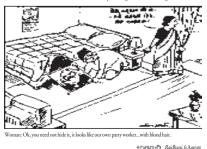
These are some typical cases that exemplify what the doctors at the Teaching Hospital see: · A 13-year-old from Chitwan began fainting frequently after he saw television footage of an incident in Rolpa. His doctor referred him to a mental health specialist. The child had witnessed a violent act five years ago and the Rolpa footage reminded him of the gory incident-some people had come to his house and dragged his father outside, chopped off both his hands. crushed the bones in his feet to a pulp, and then shot him in the head. The boy had some mental trauma then, but had been cured by treatment. The Rolpa footage reminded him of his father's death, and his symptoms of depression began to resurface. His studies were affected by the anxiety which often resulted up in ninhtmares and sleenlessness. When he simply could not cope any more, he began fainting. The child is not recovering.

· A well-to-do 38-year-old woman from Sallyan was forced to seek refuge with relatives in Dang after Maoists threatened her family. But the threats and acts of violence in Dang reminded her of what had happened in her own village. In three months, she had started to lose sleep and get irritated about petty things. She seemed fed up with working, and soon even daily chores such as washing and cleaning became a huge burden. Suddenly, a woman who used to be cheerful was weeping most of the time and trying to cut herself off from other people. Even though she had a caring family and children, she believed her life had become meaningless. She was brought to hospital after she attempted suicide, and has been treated for depression. But the problems that caused her depression in the first place remain. This woman can have a relapse anytime unless society is freed from the problems that cause her to be sick.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"If I get attacked for casting a vote, I won't give in and go back. I might be bleeding, but I will cast my

-Basanti Jha, recipient of this year's Prakash Kafle Human Rights Award in Nepal Samacharpatra, 1 August. Since 1971, Jha has campaigned for women's ballot rights in Mahottari where village men have en masse been preventing women from casting votes in elections



A traffic policeman stopped me हेमाल at Simal Chowk (Radhakrishna Chowk) on 3 August after I had arrived in Gularia on my way to collect information for a story I was writing on the Tarai Arc project. He objected to my license plate that said "Press instead of the number. I said that I had displayed this sign all along and would change it. He

raised the question of the legality of such an action. I said that security forces had been known to travel on the wrong was stopped by other plainclothes soldiers. After we went side of the street, and also to the district administration pointed out to him a motorcycle that had just passed with three office seeking action against the riders, and asked why they had soldier and wrote a report on not been stopped. He replied the incident in the papers, he that the passengers on the bike called my home and has started making threats. "I have only were from the army. I responded that nobody-the army, the mashed his eye, if he does not police or the press—was above take back the news, we'll kill the law. He then asked me my him " After he started to say name, and I told him "Where are "tell us where your husband is: tell me or we will kill you too" vou going?" he asked. I said my wife and other members of ahead", and he let me go. ny family have been spending



It was Friday, and past 3PM, o the forest office was already

Biswokarma

stand?"

losed. At around 5PM I went to the Bijaya Guest House to meet a researched evidence? source. A plainclothes soldier Meera Dhungana: After the came up to me and asked, "What court decision we visited is your name? Aren't you called Nawalparasi. There we came Kamal Panthi?" He was using across a teacher whose husband the least respectful tero form of had forced her to have sex a day address, not timi or tapai, "I after she had given birth to her have work with you, come child. She died due to excessive outside," he said. I asked him. bleeding. "Who are you? What work?" He

said only that he had 'work' The case you argued with me. Later I was able to get (marital rape) was controhis name—Karna Bahadur versial It was no surprise in our

About 100 m from there, patriarchal society. Maybe those when we reached Simal Chowk, who criticised it did not respect he said, "You were the one their wives? Otherwise, there asking about rules relating to was no reason for all the fuss people on security duty, weren't

Won't the decision distort you? Who are you? Are you looking for trouble? Who are our social norms? you to teach us? I was on an Why should it? If the husband army action on the motorcycle uses force and the couple cannot and you were worried about a live together, there is a proviviolation of traffic rules. Lalso sion for divorce, or the court would have to think of finding a live in Bardia, do vou underway to separate the couple. Will

The policeman at the chowk that bring about a skewing of tried to end the quarrel by society? Can I have a (sexual) pulling me aside, but the soldier relationship with my husband did not let that happen. The without his consent? traffic policeman with whom I had had a discussion was But this (the court deci-

watching quietly as two other policemen scolded me. for that The army official said "My family has been troubled by the Maoists: why are you not writing about that?" You think you are a journalist, don't you?" And then

he threw my notebook and all the papers I had in my pockets. He pushed me again. I told him: "Don't get violent. Forgive me if I have made any mistake." He named Krishna Sen and said "now you face it too". Then he struck

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What's wrong if the number of divorce cases increases? Why should a woman continue living where she is not respected and where her decisions have no sway? It would be better to

divorce (under such situations) Please try to think from a woman's point of view Are women still discrimi-

from the wound and put three stitches above the eye. He said nated against? he could not stitch under Our study shows that 54 laws and 118 clauses in them my eye because the wound discriminate directly against Iournalists organised a press women. Another 67 regulations conference on Saturday morning. The army official tried to come into the meeting, but he

me in the eve. I cannot say what

bleeding and fell into a shop. The

The bleeding did not stop

so they took me to the district

hospital in a rickshaw. The

doctor plucked pieces of glass

shopkeeper and locals tried to

hold my head and stop the

bleeding.

was deep

the night elsewhere

the matter.]

The Royal Nepal Army has

said that it will investigate

he hit me with, but I started

Koirala's choices

Ghatana Ra Bichar, 7 August Following the Supreme Court

> Following are his options; a) retire from politics and return to his hometown Biratnagar to live in peaceful retirement; (b) surrender to the Sher Bahdur Deuba faction and help kickstart party unity; (c)

tie up with Prachanda and go Meet the lawyer the elections; and (d) claim Excerpts from an interview with lawyer Meera Dhungana in the party leadership.



Maoists in India

्र हाटमा विद्यान The Maoists might be preparing for their last attempt to wreak havoc in the country before being crushed by the security forces. Security forces have learnt that the insurgents are preparing a "mischief in Kathmandu and depredation in the villages" strike in the wake of the Nepal bandh declared for 16 September. But no one has any idea how far they will go.

sion) has created a basis Since the security forces have



are also discriminatory. It that is the law, imagine what the situation is in society.

ं घटना विसार

upholding the prime minister's right to dissolve parliament. Girija Prasad Koirala is faced with four alternatives. Instead of looking for ways to destroy others, he now needs to be more defensive

ahead with a campaign to boycott serious sickness and resign from Of the four, the second

option is his best bet. But a stubborn Koirala might not entertain the idea of giving in to Deuba for the sake of party unity. If his character and disposition are analysed, he will most likely go for

the third option. If he chooses this, his political career will grind to a halt, along with the Maoist



Ghataa Ra Bichar, 7 August

In the meantime our sources in Kamlimpong tell us that the Maoists completed a six-day training programme there for their cadres from 21-26 July. Our sources also claim that 35 active Maoist cadres from the eastern districts of Nepal including Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari participated in the training sessions, which were facilitated by veterans of the movement such as Devendra Paudel, Prem Chapagain, and Rekha Sharma (from Chitwan).



intensified their activities, the Maoists feel insecure if they have to remain in the same location for more than a day, and move their cadres. So, they might have sought the safety of India to conduct their training programmes. It is presumed that since other Indian cities have also beefed up security and intensified searches for them, the Maoists might have chosen a

HISTORY



German Technical Cooperation gtz, Rural Development Programme

The objective of the Rural Development Programme (RDP), implemented by HMG/N and supported by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ), is to enable the rural population to improve its socio-economic situation. RDP's main areas of activities are the promotion of self-help-groups, rural transport infrastructure development strengthening NGOs and local government bodies as well as economic development and employment promotion

RDP invites applications from qualified professionals for the following posts

Rural Infrastructure Specialist Major responsibilities:

Co-ordinating the rural infrastructure and other development activities supported by GTZ in districts

Steering, supervision of performance and quality control of assigned projects through implementing partners and RDP field staff.

Technical support to rural infrastructure related activities in all programmes. Professional advisory role on rural infrastructure development (RID) to implementing partners Linkage with HMG, development agencies and local bodies at implementation level. Responsibility for the development of RID related concepts and innovative approaches Monitoring of plan of operation and yearly budgets in co-ordination with district field staff Management and supervision of subordinate staff.

Required qualification and experience:

Master of Engineering in Civil. Minimum 10 years experiences in relevant fields including 5 years of practical experience in planning and implementation of rural infrastructure and road projects.

Practical experience in procurement of services/ goods including contract negotiations. Proven ability to prepare technical and financial proposals agreements contract documents and promotion materials

Knowledge of Green Road concept and best practices Communication partnership and negotiation skills

Excellent in both written and spoken English

Good working skills in computer applications. Preferable

Sound overview and in-depth knowledge of the national and regional rural transport infrastructure and ongoing activities in Nenal

Basic knowledge in German language

The above-mentioned post will be based in Kathmandu with frequent field visits. Social and Institutional Development Professional Major responsibilities:

Support to implement social mobilization, self-help promotion and resource mobilization

activities in the district Steering the activities in the field of institutional development and social mobilization in the district Support social and economic development activities including income generation and

employment promotion Quality control supervision and monitoring of activities related to institutional development and social mobilization in districts

Establishing linkages and networks between self-help groups and external service providers and local bodies to access resource and technical know-how

Coordination with other development and HMG partners (line agencies) and the elected local bodies in the district.

Required qualification and experience:

Master degree in social science or equivalent degree in a related field. At least 5 years of field experience in institutional development and social mobilization. Experience in working with DDC, HMG line agencies, NGOs, and private sector service providers

Ability to interact with Communities. Users Groups and VDC

Excellent in both written and spoken English. Working knowledge in computer application (MS Word, Excel, etc.)

Proforable

Knowledge about social mobilization, participatory approaches including PRA/RRA methods.

social training in rural poverty alleviation programmes. Experience in the context of rural infrastructure development projects.

Working knowledge of software base data entries and processing in computer

Basic knowledge in German language.

The above-mentioned post will be based in Bhojpur.

al office and managing of appointments/ meetings incoming/ outgoing communication and redirecting of messages/ ecord keeping and handling of mail and fax services rience: and Nepali, both written and spoken ons (MS Word, Excel, etc) works including operating fax and photocopier machine, postal

communication skills

related field with a reputed organisation

based in Kathmandu

will follow to the GTZ rules applicable to the national staff. heir CV, two references and a passport size photograph in an for the post to the following address by 27 August 2002. Only for an interview. Telephone enquiries will not be entertained

Candidates from "dalits" and underprivileged ethnic groups and especially women from ava Kosh Building. those castes are highly encouraged to apply



[No entry 3rd February]

4th February 1977

Sundarijal: Marriage Day 1937. I know you don't

remember dates. If you remembered as I do, you

we were united exactly 40 years ago on this day-

would be transported to Shivalanbat at Varanasi where

Shivalaohat where we found each other and thereafter

than thin, in laughter and tears, happiness and misery,

remained united through thick and thin more thick

ecstasy and dullness love and bitterness-but always

united, drawing inspiration from each other, myself

perhaps more than you. I vividly remember the day.

of the all that happened on that day including the

clothes that you and I were wearing for the occasion.

This is very surprising. During my long life many memorable events have occurred to me on many

occasions and days. When I try to recollect then, I

whose outlines are not sharp. They are dated, not

fresh like the day of our wedding. Why? Dear 1

breast for you I am alone here

5th February

recollect them all right but they are as faded nictures

remember you. A silent cry, like a prayer runs from my

Sundarijal: There was sunshine after yesterday's long

rain. Yesterday I was in a reminiscent mood, remem

bering my marriage celebration and the developments of 40 years subsequent to and consequent

upon that event. I relived in memory my days with

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No other day is imprinted on my memory as sharply as

the 4ⁿ of February 1937. I recollect the faintest details

BP spends his 40th wedding anniversary in Sundarjal prison, reflecting on his love for his wife Sushila, His mind is also on his defence, which he must start preparing. Whatever the ruling might be, BP wants his defence to be a testament to his political struggles and ideals.

> Sushila-who grew from childhood to age under my protective care. Then I remembered her spirit of independence in her sensitiveness, her quiet and restive dignity, her almost obstinate adherence to her own truth and way of life—all these developments of her personality is some kind of assertion of her independence vis a vis my tutelage. I remembered her with passionate intensity and found myself falling in love with her afresh. Oh ood, let her be as she islet her not lose her dignity in her present state

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defenceless—let her be protected and happy and loving and be as she always has been. Let her health be good-at least let her not suffer the worst effects of high blood pressure. In my present aloomy mood, my imagination has become unhealthy and macabre. imagine the worst of everything. I read some pages of the science book most

reluctantly. Copied some Sanskrit poems-fragments nunted in Rasham's "Wonder that was India"-with a view to memorising them. Did daily duties as usual; and watched the day disappear ever so slowly

Since we are going to be put on trial on some serious charges, we have to prepare our defencewhich should be of political nature and reflective of our political credo. In case the worst happened, this defence may in time he our testament and a political document for the future of creation to derive guidance and inspiration to take up the threat of the democratic struggle. I have been ransacking my mind as to the ideological framework of such a defence. The difficulty is confounded because we are not sure it should be our testament-which one draws when one's part of the game is over. I don't know if our part of the struggle is over

Water

Communication

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Editoral Design design for individual identity and target reader ... INICEE Nenal NEFE News Child and A Situation Women's Environmont of Disability in Nepal Programme Tel DO 6.55 2.5 余余清 धुमपानले The Sit Group कसैलाई स्रोडदैन

EVENTS

- * Bodhicharyaavatara Lessons on Mahayana Buddhism, a guide to the Bodhisattava's way of life. In Nepali by Khenpo Vagindra Shila at the Akcheshore Mahavihar, Pulchowk. Saturdays 4PM-5PM Free onen to all
- Weekly dialogues on life and living and books and audiotapes at the Krishnamurti Study Center, Dhyankuti, Swoyambh. Saturdays1PM-6PM. 227704.

MUSIC

- The Legend Sings The Gayak Phatteman Show, 10 August, 5PM. Rs 1,000, Rs 500, Rs 200, Birendra International Convention Centre Tickets at Youth Vision 429192 home delivery Shangri-La Re-Unites Prism Friday nights live at the Jazz Bar.
- starting 8PM. www.hotelshangrila.com. 412999 Dinesh & Pemba Live every Friday 7PM-9PM, Himalatte Cafe,
- Thamel 262526 Live music by Catch 22. Friday nights at the 40 000 ½ ft Bar. Rum.
- Doodle Restaurant, Thamel, 414336

D PHNK

- * Happy hour at the Fusion Bar Now open from 4PM-midnight with a 30 percent discount on all beverages with buy-one-get-one-free happy hour from 5.30 PM-7.30 PM. Drop your card for lucky draw. Dwarika's Hotel, 479488
- Ladies night at The Rox Bar Wednesdays. Women get a drink on the house, and after 8PM Teesta band plays. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234 * Mountain Madness Special Two-for-one cocktails at Rs 250, and BBQ. Kilroy's of
- Kathmandu Thamel 250440

Happy Hour at Splash Bar & Grill Buy one, get one free. Live music Wednesdays and Fridays with barbecue. Radisson Hotel 5.30 PM-7.30 PM. 411818

- * Thomas Kilroy at the historical 1905, Kantipath Special August offer has any two courses with a glass of wine, beer or ced tea for Rs 500. 225272 All new Continental Poolside BBQ Fridays
- 7PM onwards at Rs 500 plus tax with a free heer or soft drink bread rolls and salad bar, Dwarika's Hotel, 479488 South Indian Food Festival at The Café 9-
- 24 August Authentic flavours such as rasam, idlis, dosas, appams, chettinad curry seafood. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 491234
- * Patan Museum Café Mixed menu, garden seating. Lunch only, 11AM-2PM. 25 percent off with Summit Card, 526271
- Pasta Mania Choose from a variety of pastas for Rs 111 plus tax at lunch and dinner, and 20 percent off bottled wines. La Dolce Vita, Thamel.
- * Paddy Foley's Irish Pub A wide range of drinks and food, live music on Wednesday Thursday and Sunday nights. 416096.
- Special Thai cuisine at Ban Thai Restaurant, Darbar Marg. 243271

GETAWAYS

- * Secret Garden weekend Local residents buy one night for \$99 plus tax and get the second at 50 percent, single or double with discounted add-ons, Dwarika's Hotel. 470488
- Monsoon mists at Horseshoe Resort Mude, two-and-half hours from Kathmandu, Nature walks, birdwatching, drizzle walks, Finnish sauna, resort@horshoe.wlink.com.np Trust your sixth sense Indulge the other five at The Old Inn, Bandipur, the ancient hilltop
- town near Dumre, Pokhara Highway. Contact Himalayan Encounters, Thamel, 417426.
- Monsoon in Shivapuri For birdwatching, short hikes, writing. Two acres at 6,000 feet on the edge of the Shivapuri National Park. Rs 1,850 per person with dinner and breakfast, Rs 925 per child 5-14 vears. Shivapuri Heights Cottage, info@escape2nepal.com
- * The Great Godavari Getaway Special weekend packages including room with breakfast and dinner, 25 percent discount on health club facilities. Godavari Village Resort. 560675 Writing Retreat Full board package. Aesthetic living, innovative thinking, creative writing and nature at Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha. 375280
 - For inclusion in the listing send information to editors@nepalitimes.com







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Methods for Community Particination: A Complete Guide for Practitioners Someh Kuma Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, 2002 Rs 608

There is considerable difference of opinion over the very concept of community participation in development work and ways of achieving it. Kumar provides inclusive, flexible methodologies for reaching people to suit the needs of worker in diverse development sectors. It contains tips on best practices, attitudes and behaviour, while also pointing out limitations and precautions

> lings in Indian Government and Politics: Social Movements and State Ghanshvam Shah. ed Sage Publications, New Delhi, 2002

Re 520 Covering the evolution and spread of various peasant, farmer, tribal, women, student, religious and environment movements in India over the last 50 years, the seminal essays in this volume provide theoretical, empirical and methodological insights into the relationship of social movements with the state by addressing three questions: why movements take place; what their main elements are; and how the state responds to different forms of collective action.

> Globalization and Development Studies: Challenges for the 21st Century Frans J Schuurman, ed Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, 2002

Rs 440

Mon-F

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Daily

Schuurman introduces the theoretical debates and issues surrounding globalisation, illustrates the often contentious nature of the concept and considers the implications for the future of development studies. He then reviews more specific theory and policy implications by assessing the impact of globalisation on areas of development studies such as environment, gender, human rights, multinaonals and urban development

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

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email: buddhasfeet@yahoo.com or ring 425931	 Visit Ground Zero Fine wines, designer candles cards, silver jewellery and more. Darbar Marg, 	
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House for rent in Thamel Four bedrooms each with attached bath, eat-in kitchen, living room, large terrace, Rs 15,000. 9810-21981, 9692-3272.	K-Too! Beer and Steakhouse not the "longest", "highest", "first" or any other superlative. Just a relaxed, easy-going bar and restaurant with the coldest beer and juiciest steaks this side of the	
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ed by Serleena (Lara Flynn Boyle), an evil monster that disguises itself as a sexy lingerie model. Meanwhile he also meets another woman Laura, and sparks fly between them. When leena takes the entire MiB building hostage, here is only one person left for Jay to turn to-his



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An innovative stage production of a novel by Sarubhakta successfully takes on the sensitive matter of Bhotiya polyandry.

frustrated at the lack of spaces for theatre in Nepal. The performances are natural and non-histrionic Veteran actor Prakash Ghimine accurately evokes Gyalpo, the hardworking family elder who can brook no waywardness in his siblings. Lobsang Dolma is carried off with flair by Pramila Tulachan, who acts out well the life of the young village matriarch, having to manage the entire household, but

also being required to respond to the emotional demands of kin. The Mustang landscape is rendered convincingly by was of props—two overlapping dry mountain ridges leading towards the horizon, a chorten on one side

and a Loba house-front on the other. The course of the production is regularly punctuated by the stiff breezes of the upper Kali Gandaki, when the protagonists have to turn their bodies against the wind and shield their eyes. This is used as a tool to emphasise effects both comic and tragic. The director's command of the medium is evident in the long silences he is able to inject into play, the confident mix of comedy with tragedy, the underthe-breath utterances of the actors the subtle use of a cap falling from the head as a motif throughout, and so on. And for once, the fog machine is applied to good effect. Director Baral writes in the playbill that he had to decide whether the cast would use chaste Nepali or speak Nepali with the heavy Bhotiya cadence of upper Mustang It would have been safe

to go with straight Nepali, but the cast pulls it off, and the result is an authentic flavour of life in Nepal's Tibetan rimland. Kathmandu's starved dramagoers needs productions like

ThangLa, to be entertained and brought closer in touch with the country's cultural specificities.







ARTS



hangl a was put up two weeks ago (27 July) as a one-off staging at the Royal Nepal Academy by Pokhara's Pratibimba theatre group, directed by Anup Baral. It was a powerful presentation of the script by well-known playright Sarubhakta, and the story on the subject of polyandry in Bhotiya society. The central character if ThangLa (The Himalayan Deity) is Lobsang Dolma, the woman of the house and enouse_theoretically_ofGyalpo

and his two brothers, Tashi and Pemba. Gyalpo departs for his annual trade trip to Lhasa, leaving instructions for Pemba to finally take' Lobsang for his wife. But Pemba has been reared by Lobsans and regards her as his mother, the maternal bond reciprocated by the older woman. Besides, Pemba has found his own love in Kelsang, the daughter of Gyalpo's meet [a non

not 'taken' Lobsang. A monk from

the gumba, is invited to get rid of

Sangey Lama completes his

rituals, but his mantrashave not done

the trick, and Pemba's and Kelsang's

love continues to burn strong. They try to make a dash for freedom, and

the story ends rather abruptly with a

Sarubhakta, whose most recetn

Romeo and Juliet denouement.

work is the dark novel Samava *Trasedi*, has said that he was always

intrigued by the Loba traders he met as a child in Pokhara. He did

some research in the upper Kali Gandaki for ThangLa, which makes

for a fair degree of authenticity in

setting, characters, and the run of the story. Some might have

principled differences with aspects

of the script, such as the vehemence

with which the polyandry tradition

is critiqued, which may be seen as a

patronising midhill position against

such an accusation will not stand, as far as this reviewer is concerned. In

Anun Baral is a canable stage

director and instructor who must be

a high Himal tradition But the

poduction is nuanced, and the characters have enough depth, that

any case, Sarubhakta has taken a

stand that is his to take.

diverting Pemba's mind.

the demons that have evidently been

ninalensis

bv Kunda Dixit Gods must be crazy doesn't have a PhD in ornithology from a fancy western university. He doesn't

e have just received a top-secret encrypted message from NATO Headquarters in Bhedasingh about its surprise inspection last week of the facilities at Tribhuyan Antinational Airport. After decoding the message, we have learnt that the

16

National Association of Tour Operators (NATO) found, and we quote, that "TIA meets all required facilities that are needed for an international airport. and its facilities are at par with other international airports of the region.

This is great news, and certain to warm our cockles and give tourism the big boost that it needs

as we approach the Destitution Nepal Year 2003. The NATO Inspection Team has now made official what we suspected all along: that the facilities at our airport are as good as, or better than, the facilities at Patna International Airport Speaking at an interaction

programme after the inspection the secretary of the Ministry of Horticulture, Sports, Gymnastics

and Tourism said: "Since tourists are regarded as God in Nepal, the airport has to be like Heaven. Every care has to be taken for the comfort and hospitality of visitors at the airport, which is the first place that they get the general impression about Nepal."

We couldn't have put it better ourselves. And this is not just idle talk. The ministry has taken steps to implement some of these procedures, and recently we have started seeing some dramatic improvements at the airport: 1. There is now a fast-track queue for Nepalis at

arrival immigration which has been extended so that the average time passengers spend at the airport has gone down to only three hours, giving them more time to eniov the facilities.



clocks in the entire airport premises. This is deliberate. It is to give visiting tourists the impression that time stands still in Shangrila. (Flight Attendant: "Ladies and Gentlemen, Gods and Goddesses, we have just landed in Kathmandu, where the local time does not exist.")

Under My Hat

beings who don't own cars. Arriving passengers have to trek down to the momo shop on Ringworm Road to be reunited with their near and dear ones. 5. Our divine visitors now have gender segregated pre-boarding security checks where they receive a free shiatsu of their kundalinis, and have their wallets mandatorily inspected for tips by uniformed

nasseurs 6. The carousel area now has extra trolleys which are equipped with NASAdesigned state-of-the-art oval wheels to give extra traction. Passengers also have a choice of extreme leftleaning and extreme right-leaning trolleys depending on

their political affiliation. The airport taxi contract has now been handed over to the Nepal Heritage Society which has deployed only cars 30 years and older to ferry passengers to the city. Besides being a tourist attraction, these vintage Datsuns show the world that we care about our culture and tradition

 Since the airport is the first impression people have of Nepal, NATO Headquarters is also thinking of preserving our customs so that any extra perambulators and binoculars tourists are trying to smuggle into the country can be nipped in the bud.



NEPALI SOCIETY

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work as an expert for a swanky which means they are indigenous conservation NGO, At 74 Hari only to Nenal Sharan Nepali is a self-made A truly homegrown bird walking encyclopaedia of Nepali specialist, Hari Sharan began his early lessons in birdwatching at And that is saying some-thing, since 834 species of birds 13 when he used to accompany his father on hunting trips. He made friends with his feathered

them, accurately imitating their chucks, tweets, cheeps. Of the

species found in Nepal, 15 have Latin names ending in "nipalensis"

friends, and they have never ceased to inspire him to do more for conservation. He donated about 600 specimen species to Tribhuvan University which then set up what today has grown into the Natural History Museum, Hari

Sharan is personally credited with discovering 13 new species including the Tibet owlet he spotted in Dolpa and three snow finch species (Rufus-necked, Brand's and Mandl's) which he spotted and recorded on a single day during a bird-

"I'm still fit to go out and track more birds," he told us, "it is the security situation that prevents watching trip in northeast me from venturing out " Still every opportunity he gets, Hari

Sharan dons his binoculars and is off to Shivapuri or Phulchoki the two areas on the Valley rim ternationally renowned as a haven for birds and birdwatchers

Mustang Others include the

Black-tailed Godwid and the

Booted Warbler, both of which

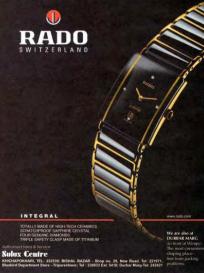
were thought to be extinct. Hari Sharan's greatest regret

these days is that he can't move

around as much as he used to.

Hari Sharan would still like to go birdwatching in areas of Nepal he hasn't yet been to. "As long as I am fit. I'd like to be out there. If only I could be as free as the birds and move around without fear."





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