

TIL

already taking place.

way. We don't have to wait for compatible

the border where some power-exchange is

dam, a Nepali joint venture with Australia's

Snowy Mountain Engineering Corporation

since 1997 because a power purchase agree-

ment with India got caught up in domestic

EXCLUSIVE

Disastrous monsoon A day after 41 villagers were buried in a landslide in northern Ramechap, a Twin Otter on a flight from Jomsom crashed near Pokhara, killing 15 tourists and three Nepali crew. Four hours later, 45 people were feared dead when a bus from Kathmandu to Baglung fell into the Trisuli River near Mugling. It has been a season of disasters, as the country lurches from one accident to the next. Landslides and floods have ravaged central and eastern Nepal, killing at least 500 and affecting more than 300,000 people in the past month.



Thursday's Shangri-la accident (file photo above) was the fourth air crash in three months. A helicopter carrying 10 trekking guides from Makalu Base Camp to Lukla that disappeared on 29 May has still not been located. Meanwhile, the insurgency rages on, and aside from the daily toll, 30 Maoists were killed in a fierce firefight in Rolpa Tuesday.

HODILON/AR DIS O. Are conditions right for elections to be held in Res 17-25

Neekly Internet Poll # 48. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com 0.1s it now time for the government to agree to the Masiete' offer of taller?

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BINOD BHATTARAI he cities of north India are now a their summer peak demand for power. Nepal's monsoon-gorged rivers are at peak supply. Common sense would see a possibility of trade there. Yet, Nepal-India power exchange agreements remain mired in mis-management, bureaucracy, and geo-politics. When all three turbines of Neral's largest

and newest hydropower plan at Kali Gandaki-A (see picture) went on stream last week, they added 144 megawatts, taking Nepal's total installed capacity to 585 megawatts. This gave the national grid an unprecedented summer surplus of 140 megawatts.

But here is the paradox: although the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) has surplus wer some of this has to be bought at such a high tariff that one third of its revenue is used p paying just two private power producers for lood energy: Bhote Kosi and Khimti. Some of this loss could be recouped by

expanding the domestic market and exporting to India. But there are many hurdles like transmission bottlenecks, the lack of an agreement with India's inefficient and cash-starved state electricity boards, and New Delhi's unspoken desire to use hydropower as part of wider bilateral bargaining with Kathmandu

We have to trade the surplus that has Nepali politics, and has been stalled in India's started to accrue in the system, admits NEA Ministry of External Affairs. chief, Janak Lal Karmacharya. That would be mutually beneficial to India and Nepal, and even at seven cents per unit, buying Nepal's surplus flood energy would be cheaper for and trade disputes, and security issues. Meanwhile, Nepal loses potential export India than the long-term cost of thermal generation. Selling power to India is Nepal's best chance of reducing its whopping Rs 19 billion trade deficit with India If there is political will, there would be a flood mitigation effect on the Karnali River.

are carrying out regular puja at the Ethnographic Museum in Vienna in front

The Buddha was confiscated in April

the museum. The gilded copper mask is

being displayed at the entrance hall of

the museum while the Austrian authori-

ties wait for the Nepal government to

of a 17^m century Dipankar stolen from Patan in January.

It is clear where the main obstacle to grids, but sell to contiguous tarai towns across Indo-Nepal hydro trade lies: in the lack of political trust. Says hydropower expert Ratna Sansar Shrestha: "India's security Clues about why Nepal and India are stuck concerns seem to override all economic lie in Nepal's only project designed specifically for export to India—the 750MWWest Seti annuments. How can you talk business without that changing?"

Northern India is starved for energy. Nepal now has surplus supply. And yet the two can't agree. Why not?

Brown of the other of the other

TRUCKS-

Trading power

The Australians are not waiting for the India-Nepal power trade agreement to go (SMEC). The \$1 billion project has been stuck into force, and appear to be giving th project one last chance. SMEC and India's PTC have even discussed tariff and are haspling in the 5 cents per unit range. But both know that in the end it will depend on a nod from South Block.

Analysts told us New Delhi seems to want hydropower to be part of wider bilateral give-Nepali experts see an anomaly if West and-take with Nepal that would include border Seti sells cheaper power to India than the price at which NEA has to buy it from private enerators here. "Why should we even think revenue and royalties, Indian consumers suffer of selling cheap when Nepalis are paying one power outs, and the villagers of Uttar Pradesh of the highest electricity tariffs in the world?" do not benefit from West Seti's irrigation and asks Dipak Gyawali of the Nepal Water Conservation Foundation "It is cheaperfor

NEA to buy west Seti Power which is high quality peaking energy when it is already paying six cents for low quality flood energy. But officialdom has not lost hope. At the National Planning Commission Minendra Rijal says it is an issue of demand and supply and could be easily resolved. "Logically they

stand to win by buying from us." But what if economic logic is not the only factor at work here? Much of that hope hinges on recent private sector initiatives which may help overcome political and bureaucratic hurdles.

During King Gyanendra's India visit in June, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) agreed with its Indian counterpart, FICCI, to explore joint hydro-ventures in Nepal.

Kali Gandaki A

"We're trying to see if the Indian private sector can help untangle the knots," says FNCCI's Rajendra Khetan. And a large Indian business house is said to be shopping for a project in west Nepal.

Total votes: F In Vienna museum, Nepalis worship stolen Buddha is keeping up with VAT a nightmare? When will Nepal officially request the Austrian government to return a stolen Buddha? ERWIN MELCHART in VIENNA Nepali and Tibetan Buddhists in Austria



works.com.np to receive

make an official request for the return of the

image Among the devotees worshipping the Buddha recently was Nono Bista, the niece of the Raja of Mustang seen here laying a khata at the altar. "It is sad. This Buddha is of such

great religious significance to us," she said. " after a German art dealer tried to sell it to am grateful for the museum's intervention, and pray that the image can be returned to Nepal soon." Butter lamps and offerings adorn the base of the stand on which the Buddha is kept in the museum's foyer .. see ⊏> p16



2 EDITORIAL

el away the layers of skin from Nepali politics, the folds of endless infighting, and you come to the bare hones of what this is all about. It is about where sovereignty should lie. Should it be with the people, or with the powers-that-be? Or, rather, with the powersthat-were The Deuba-Koirala confrontation looks like a cock-fight. But don't

det distracted by the roosters: find out who is betting on them, look at who is cheering for whom in the stands, waving fistfuls of money, and why Perhans Girlia Prasad Koirala is right that Prime Minister Sher Rahadur Deuba is taking the country back to pre-1990. Perhaps Deuba's mentors are really pulling the strings. Even so, we may have taken Koirala's insinuation more seriously if it

was any one else making it. Coming from a person who during two tenures as prime minister couldn't show the ability to rise above the selfish concerns of his cronies and relatives, it rings quite hollow. And it sounds even more hollow when the kangresis argue that they are the defenders of democracy, when all they have done is misuse our mandate and run the system to the ground.

The November elections, as we argued here last week, were not called by Prime Minister Deuba because he was keen to give sovereign

STATE OF THE STATE

SADAU, THAILAND-MALAYSIABORDER

Given the fact that what is left of Neral's

None of the above

Nepalis a say in getting the country out of the rut. No, he called elections out of desperation to save his own political skin. And now with less than three months to go for elections, no one really believes it can be a representative exercise in free choice. What kind of moral mandate will a party that gets 20 percent of the

votes have when the turnout is less than 40 percent? Isn't no election at all better than a flawed election? Or are we having an election just for the sake of elections: to have a fig-leaf democracy that is not really representative or accountable? If we do have elections, let there be a new category in the list of

candidates and parties on the ballots: None of the above". This will encourage Nepalis to say: "I vote because I believe in democracy, but I don't like any of these blokes." And we must bring in a new style of campaigning. Candidates will no longer get up on a podium to give speeches: they will take part in public hearings to answer questions from voters. There is a strong temptation at this

time to wish for a benevolent autocrat to set things right. And to let things drift into a constitutional crisis, so that a knight in shining armour can rescue us from the brink. There is a nostalgia for strongman rule to end this messing around by neo-oligarchs who used democracy to percetuate

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NATION

their powe Just a word of caution here. We tried it hefore, and it didn't work. remember? What to do when neither democracy nor autocracy seems to guarantee accountability? Only representative governments, periodically legitimised by a sovereign people, can be accountable. We can't turn the clock back on that one. "None of the above" can be a plebiscite for



Disadvantaged abroad

The outside world judges us by the economic state of our country.

conomy is being propped up by our migrat workers, you would expect them to be treated better. Remittances from Nepali workers in India. the Gulf. Malaysia and east Asia have abroad the son, brother or cousin or, now overtaken the country's foreign currency earnings from exports and tourism combined. And yet, look at the way we treat Nepalis

Despite the humiliation involved in going or returning from abroad. The ordeal getting out of the country, thousands of gins right here in the process for acquiring : erate Nepalis do so every year, and the Nepali passport. They begin by filling up numbers are growing. For the poor who have ineligible forms in quadruplicate, and then ru no way of getting a passport—let alone a visa, around government offices to get some gazetted all roads lead down south, to the bustling officer's to endorse that he knows you personcities of India.

ally. Since HANSAs (Hindu, Aryan, Nepali Speaking Administrators) dominate Nepal's bureaucracy almost totally, this step in itself deters all other ethnicities. Those who end up with the little green book in their hands after endless munds at the district administration office consider themselves lucky to have been thus blessed by the state

For a Nepali Muslim from Mahottari it's easier perhaps to reach the minister from his district, Sharat Singh Bhandari, than to find a section officer in Jaleswor to sign his application form. Since there are no local government units these days, middlemen have a field day. Fouts will make things a little simpler for those who can afford their fees

If you can get over that first hurdle, you then meet the sharks at manpower agencies that prey on the vulnerable and the desperate

UNFRIENDLY FIRE

redress the misery and loss of The powerful article by Mohan Mainali ("I Infriendly fire" #106) moved many of us. Whoever was responsible for the original massacre-whether it was the Maoists for provoking the army attack, or the army for not making an effort to distinguish querrillas from civilians-it is clear that even six months later, there has been no effort by the state to



Usually, the family of the worker has to sell rion sites in 50 degree heat. But while non-residents get to meet land or take on a huge loan to be able to send e prime minister when they return to increasingly in some parts of the country, the voung woman of the family. Nepal on summer vacation, migrant Nepali workers returning with their

meagre savings are harassed, ill-treated, and often extorted the moment they set foot on Nepali soil at the airport. In Qatar, Thailand or Saudi Arabia, the Royal Nepal Embassies consider it beneath their dignity to help fellow-Nepali workers. The welfare of migrant workers doesn't figure

Middle-class Nepalis travelling to India on pilgrimage tend to look down upon these to an economic migrants from back home who do the dishes at road-side eateries, without realising that it's the remittances from kanchhas like these that have newented the collapse of the Nepali economy.

The irony is that the ones who are most proud of their Nepali identity are also the ones most willing to give it up. Perhaps they w that they can always "buy" it later whenever they need it, in the name of "nonresident" facilities But that's a different story. Doctor and engineers migrating to Australia or America do little for our remittance economy. Our true heroes are the villagers from Myagdi toiling in the ysian palm plantations, or the farmer from Kavre working on Kuwaiti construc-

The reason for such gross negligence is largely cultural: the diplomatic service tends to be HANSA-dominated while a sizeable section of Nepali migrant workers come from humble minority backgrounds. Denied just opportuni ties back home, they are again deprived of attention when they are exploited or have problems in a foreign land. Could this be the reason that the Nepali Embassy in Bangkok continues to ignore the nearly thre

on their to-do list

dozen Nepali inmates of Bangkwang, Klong Prem and Lard Yao prisons? Nearly all of them are janajatis. XXX The interest of diplomatic missions alone

uldn't be enough to reduce the sufferings o our brothers (there are still very few sisters) abroad. A diaspora commands respect only when the home country is prosperous and strong. We need to better train our workers who go overseas in search of job opportunities And as the experiences of other npower-exporting" nations like the Philippines and Sri Lanka show. host countries treat guest workers differently when

hey realise that their unfair actions can have ndesirable diplomatic repercussions. The diaspora of Nepali professionals car ilso be effective in lessening the sufferings of their disadvantaged brethren. The Nepali ommunity at the Asian Institute of Technol

ogy (AIT) already visits Klong Prem once in a while, but if they were to increase th uency, Mangal Bahadur Gurung would definitely feel less miserable about his time there. If privileged Nepalis were to campaign for the release of fellow Nepalis framed for crimes, perhaps the authorities of the host country will become more careful in the future. The Nepali elite need not be apologetic

about the first-time fliers at the back of the plane on the flight to Bangkok. International migration, caused by the push factor of misery at home and the pull factor of better ospects overseas, has a long history in

lepal and in other parts of the world. Migrants through the ages have shared a similar motivation—the determination of taking a risk in the belief that they can build their future by relocating.

southern tip of Thailand, immigration officers are instructed to look carefully a the passports of all Nepalis. The Malaysian authorities often dump illegal Nepali immigrants here. Even better-placed Nepalis aren't exempt from the torturou procedure of careful scrutiny. You may be an elite back home, but the outside world judges you by the

At the Sadau border post on the economic state of your country



and Nepal. A short drive from Bandoora citizens of Kathmandu for encroachment. into Nepal is the small airfield at We know very well who has been Bhadrapur. The link would destroy the encroaching into this public space over potential of Bhadrapur airport and affect the past three decades: just look at who thousands of Nepalis who depend on it took the whole southern half. for their livelihood in Jhapa and Ilan Nenali tour operators should start thinking

of alternatives Pravesh Saria, Chicago USA

I wonder if any of your other readers felt, like I did, that Hemlata Rai shied away from calling a spade a spade in "Shrinking Tundikhel" (#108). Yes, as she points out and the map amply demonstrates, the Tundikhel is a shadow of its former self. It



really regret to read your editorial "Article 127" (#107). Rather than giving an

CIAA

HL Amatva, Tripureswo

The CIAA deserves our gratitude for

taking an unprecedented and bold step. I

sure hope this is a beginning of things to

come and not the end. I hope the CIAA

now goes on further to nab those, who

insane amounts of wealth at the expense

of the people and left the country to the

and to restore some semblance of hone

for a better future in our minds. The civil

dogs. Give us more reason to cheer about

have plundered. looted and amassed

Give and take

We face the dilemma of high expectations and low. almost non-existent. delivery.

n Friday night, the Commisnomic leadership suited to changing sion for the Investigation of patterns of socialisation, and we cannot Abuse of Authority (CIAA) afford to keep anchoring ourselves to took in about two dozen officials from the revenue administration. While we all wait to see how the commission follows through on this campaign, it is clear that the crackdown finally addresses the rot within

It is a jungle out there, and only the strongest survive. But civilised societies are governed by values and morality that are presumed to be rational Every society also has the types that don't bother about the law, and even less about its

directly or indirectly facilitating the

creation of wealth and its equitable

distribution will be fostered Good

through efficient, independent.

institutions.

accountable and transparent public

our social background. To get a sense of just how directionless we are, ask the following questions of those that lead us today, their answers will tell us all we need to know: How well versed are you about

strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats? · Have we set our goals and object

 Are we involving real stakeholders in planning and execution of decisions. or are we merely using them as uninvolved witnesses?

In 1990, when we started rebuilding democracy, we put rules into place to elect governments in the manner most democracies do. But democratic governance-a fully transparent and accountable system-proved elusive. The system has provided more space for external players to influence decisions and decision-making. There has also been a realisation of rights. "our" rights but not that of others.

is personal gain, then there are only akers and givers" but no give and take. We have begun to develop specialisation for last-minute crisis management and damage control. We know there are mismatches between demand and supply, but do not pay attention to aligning the two or reducing wastage. We rely on conventional management practices. Decisions are made at the top and

passed down to those down the ladder who are expected to obey orders, even if they are not what the rules say. Even where the rules say something there is much left to the discretion of the official. And officials have excelled at using discretion, where there are personal benefits. Because everybody is made responsible for a particular job, a

> credibility and moral superiority. And this "disgust" with politics seems to

Bipin Adhikari, Bangkok

I do agree with the sentiments expressed in your editorial "Article 127 that chances of any improvement in the current situation remain dim should the same politicians be elected back in. But frankly, do people have other options? Where is the new generation of politicians that our people can choose from instead? Where are the alternative parties that show notential to be different? If there are none, why aren't we creating them? I understand that the last twelve years of status quo and the prototype of politicians that we have seen so far (including the Panchayati era for that matter) have been instrumental in putting the entire population off politics. The intellectual elite of Nepal are striving towards total detachment from the mainstream politics, perhaps to prove their

extend even further among our younger generation. So, who will we give the reins to? We face a huge challenge to rid our country of the deen-rooted corruption and inentness to govern, and I have no doubt this ituation will continue for some time But perhaps it is time for us, the new generation, who might be more capable of politicking differently, to ask ourselves some serious questions. Questions such as why aren't we there creating these alternatives for our people? Why aren't we giving them the power to make a difference? Where are our new leaders? Will they only be born once the present politication dinosaurs become extinct? Will they only start to write the future of Nepal once the slate is clean? Alas, that might be just a bit too late for us. Neeta Pokhrel, Australia

director of the photonovellas is Kirti Keshar Joshi

monarch cannot spell out rules and conditions by exercising his powers under Article 127 on the advice of the prime minister. There is no "dilemma" here at all.

CORRECTION

In "Catmando" (#106), the artistic



for doing what few Nepali journalists have done to investi-

the families of the dead. When will those in power in Kathmandu ever understand that it is exactly of the bereaved villagers this heartlessness and indifference to the suffering of citizens. that gave birth to the Maoist insurgency in the first place? G Lamsal, Kathmandu Thank you, Mohan Mainali.

aries oone berserk, and an unfeeling government. Bhim B Thapa, Hong Kong A few days ago the body of ung man was brought in to the Teaching Hospital. He had been beaten to death. History was he was arrested and ther umped or fell from a vehicle Sorry, he did not get those

injuries that way. The security prces requested that we not write about the injuries". You can imagine how far that went. They would also not provide information about identificationapparently wanting to dispose of the body without the family ever being aware of what had

there is little hone for anythin

à

the other, both guilty of torture and atrocities. Several victims have been brought into the Emergency Room at the hospital as punishment for whatever perceived infractions. · The open letter to Nepali and

FEE OF COST As your story "Unfriendly fire" shows, poor people in the villages are caught squarely between the Manists and the security forceseach one as bad and ruthless as that visa fees, tourism/heritage fees and similar are "too high" and that to reduce or abolish them would somehow "promote tourism in Nepal". Basically, Nepal remains with legs crushed by heavy rocks one of the lowest-cost tourist Name withheld,

destinations in the world and most western visitors benefit from the low prices and cost of living. The Teaching Hospital fact that access to historic arters in Europe may be free of charge disguises the heavy

British Prime Ministers by the group, Nepal Unity (#106) was pertinent. But I don't see any eople around who would think in this way. If they stop selling and buving weapons and start promoting human rights instead,

how can they get commissions

nersonal interest category of tourist brings little to Kiran Nakarmi, by email the country. I take issue with yet a reader's letter ("Remove fees", #106) from a western tourist suggesting again

and personal benefit? I don't know

a single Nepali leader who has no

mate "looting by tax". I hardly think its citizens can complain when modest, legitimate official fees for visas, heritage sites are collected ernment subsidies and the from wealthy tourists in Nepal. John Maxwell, Kathmandu incredibly high cost for any tourist to holiday there. Since Nepal is

among the poorest 10 percent of FLY EAST countries, I think the vast majority The proposed flights between Kathmandu and Bagdogra will of tourists accept paying a token fee to see some heritage sites is benefit thousands of tourists, reasonable (though perhaps the students and pilgrims from India

TUNDIKHEI

is like Kathmandu has had one of its lungs amputated. But please don't blame the

ciety in Nepal has been lying dormant and apathetic for too long-resurrect it in all its vibrancy, so we can have a better Nepal to leave behind for our children.

Manish Pandey, Kathmandu ARTICLE 127

and the Walt opinion, you seem to have already

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decision could begin with a section

officer and end up with the minister's

approval. This way, no one is account-

where they do they are not defined or

In such a situation, hiding and

cheating becomes the norm. Businesses

rules end up being victimised by officials

businessmen (even ordinary law abiding citizens such as those going to the tax

and individuals that try to stick to the

with discretionary authority. Most

office to clear their motorbike and

officials just to let them pay

their tax

punished.

vehicle taxes) are compelled to bribe

preferred method of lubricating the

machinery of the bureaucracy. Ironi-

that make public employment attrac-

tive. And in the absence of clear laws

and prompt implementation, graft has

allowed many businesses to lower the

high cost of doing business in Nepal.

The bribery network stretches right up

to politicians who also need extra cash

to bribe fellow politicians in the race to

Bribery contributes to the increase

because it is eventually their money that

where a culture of impunity prevails and

there is little fear of wrongdoers getting

Controlling corruption and improv

ing governance in the public sphere

ould entail ending discretionary

authority of officials, simplifying rules

and implementing them. Businesses can

(Rajendra Khetan is President of

help in the process by being open and

insisting on upholding rules despite

transparent, professional and by

Nepal Britain Chamber of

Commerce and Industry

short-term losses.

remain at the top of the briberv chain.

in the costs that society has to pay.

is being used to grease palms. The

situation begins to get out of hand

cally, it is the under-the-table exchanges

In business, bribes have become the

are just too vague.

able. Job responsibilities don't exist and

by RAJENDRA K KHETA

tives? implementation We in Nepal are now at a stage where we all want to set up to a GIVERS AND TAKERS system of governance that promotes sustainable human development through a rule of law. Sound economic policies presume that decisions

administrative governance is a system of policy implementation carried out When we are efficient only if there

It is often said that Nepal is at the crossroads. It is at the junction of a paternalistic and isolated past where tradition took precedence, and a modern globalised world of the rule of law. We used to be almost immune to external influences. We are now headed full-throttle into a wider. donor-driven world. Across society. we have begun growing past the notions of "we" and "our" which used

to be inherent to our traditional family structures and have graduated into the "me" and "my' compartmentalisation typical to western societies. The dilemma today is high

expectations and low, almost nonexistent, delivery. Our leadership has no agenda for providing us an eco-

pronounced your verdict that we cannot have elections. Avoid doing that What makes you think that elections cannot be held? Nobody is asking the Election Commission to stop flash floods or these recurrent landslides. In the same vein, nobody is saving that the prime minister should restore the life of all 5,000 Nepalis who were killed during the last six years, or eradicate poverty by a single stroke of his spade It is just elections in the normal course of our democratic development. We are not doing elections for the first time

Additionally, the Maoists never said that they are going to disrupt elections. Even if there are challenges, we have enough power and patience to go ahead. Why are you overreacting? Your comment on Article 127 is really disheartening. I don't think that the prime minister should advise the king to take any move under Article 127 in the name of removing obstructions. That will just bring the constitutional monarch into controversy. Let us not push the natior to another catastrophe. There is precedence in the Supreme Court's

1993 ruling that the constitutional

I was especially amused to find a Swiss tourist lodging such a complaint. My organisation is a Swiss-based NGO. Four years ago, the Swiss national and local oovernment arbitrarily levied a

Rs 700 for Bhaktapur is a little

steep)-if not, then maybe that

high tax retrospectively on the isions of all our 100 interna tional staff worldwide (who do not live or work in Switzerland, but the fund is held there). If one of the richest countries in the world engages in official illegiti

In the Kingdom of Anaemia

Two in three Nepali women are anaemic. That means very unhealthy children, and lower GDP.

metabolism, if you don't have

crisis," says MR Maharian of The

More than most other illnesses, the

economic impact Iron Deficiency

Anaemia is significant, as it causes a

sharp reduction in physical activity

Micronutrient Initiative (MI).

they should be.

HEMLATA RAI

oxygen utilisation and energy cording to the World Health Organisation, anaemia chould be considered a "signif cant public health problem" if one-fifth of the population suffers from it. The rate of iron deficiency in blood among Nepali women and children is four times higher than that. Two out of three Nepali women are anaemic. This number goes up among pregnant women to three in four. And anaemia in Nepal is no

and work output in adultsbetween 20 and 40 percent. An MI study claims that Bangladesh longer only shout women An alarming 90 percent of infants and India lose 1.9 and 1.3 percent under the age of one are anaemic, of their GDP respectively to according to the Nepal Micronuanaemia every year. There haven't trient Status Survey 1998, Kyoko been any studies in Nepal, but Okamura of UNICEF public health experts and Kathmandu's Nutrition Section is emphatic about the consequences: "We are producing a whole generation of Nepalis who are less competent mentally ' Iron deficiency anaemia can cause adverse health consequences including impaired growth, slowed learning and cognitive development, and decreased physical activity in children below 12 months of age. could be prevented. Simply put, most anaemia

"Our food habits are results from an iron deficiency. problematic—anaemia is more Iron, a micronutrient required in visible among high-caste Hindus small, but critical, quantities, is who eat ritually prescribed essential for the production of vegetarian food and less among haemoglobin, which form the allmeat-eating janajati communities like Gurungs and Newars," said important red blood cells. Since haemoglobin is essential for the Sharada Pandey, chief of Nutridelivery of oxygen from the lungs to tion Section at the Health body tissues and the synthesis of Ministry's Child Health Division iron enzymes that are required for Only 15 percent of the Nepali

population eats enough meatbased food rich in naturally enough red blood cells, you breathe available iron. The remaining 85 less efficiently, which means you're percent depend on vegetarian diet constantly short of breath and your for cultural and religious reasons energy levels are nowhere near what or because they simply can't afford meat. Women, whose iron "This is a serious public health needs are more significant anyway,

suffer doubly because of their lower social and nutritional status Not getting enough food already accounts for chronic energy deficiency in one in four women in Nepal. According to WHO standards more than 20 percent of women with chronic energy deficiency indicates a serious public health problem. Eating right is only one part of the story. The scale of anaemia in this country is an indicator of many more problems than just food habits: it points to the low poor, sometimes non-existent anitation that spreads and exacerbates the prevalence of parasitic diseases, and the inadequate decentralisation of

regroant women

enidemiologists estimate that the figures would be just as dramatic socio-economic status of women, here. As importantly, anaemia increases the risk of maternal. preparal and perinatal mortality Nepal has the fourth highest maternal mortality rate in the health services. world-539 in each 100,000 pregnant women-and UNICEF In 1999/2001, some 45 says if it can be reduced signifimillion iron tablets were procured cantly, 20 percent of these deaths for free distribution for across the country. Less than half, about 20 million, were given out. "The iron tablet supplies are more than

sufficient, but the system to distribute them doesn't work. savs Okamura of UNICEE"s Nutrition Section, which provides commodity support to the ernment for its universal iron tablet distribution programme for

The sub-health posts are the

HERE AND THERE

orth America is the land of large, the land of largest, in fact, Every thing here is huge—especially the people and their appetites for rything that is bad for them. The physical evidence is overwhelming. A friend from New Zealand, flying from home to Europe via the Pacific Ocean and Canada, got off the plane to stretch his legs in the wealthy oil city of Calgary, near the Rocky Mountains, Lasked him for his impressions hoping to hear comparisons between the Rockies and the Alps of his native and, perhaps a comment or two on the friendliness of local folk, or their penchant for cowboy culture. "Everyone's fat," he said.

My Kiwi friend is right. There is countless evidence for his observation beyond the visual. A story in this week's Toronto newspapers says doctors are alarmed at the growing incidence of Alzheimer's disease—a grim condition that robs people of their memory and ability to think. It used to be something that hit in the twilight of life, a sad but almost accepted decline of the mental facilities to match the physical aging of the body. Now, according to the newspapers, Alzheimer's is appearing in younger and younger people across Canada and the United States. And the reason is obesity. That causes diabetes, which in turn-apparently-damages brain tissue and mental decline sets in. I urge my North American friends to reflect on that next time they stuff a hamburger or a donut in their mouths.

Hey, I'm not making any claims to be svelte here. I carry a few extra kilos around my middle-aged middle, so I too am on the risk list for various far-related diseases. But there's no escaping the conclusions that North Americans-the most prosperous people in the long history of mankindare digging their way into early graves with their jaws. The other sad fact is that fat is a class issue here. People from lower economic strata don't go to fitness centres or take up mountain-biking. They eat junk food, not health food.

But the culture of consumption that stuff mouths and bellies with

Fatland

vears of environmental gains in

North America are being rapidly

reversed by the burgeoning

Notes from North America, the land of excess,

empty carbohydrates, fats and vast quantities if sugar knows no boundaries. The well-off have their own form of obesity-a mindless, status-driven spending habit that keeps them busy, stressed, tired and disengaged while further laying waste to the planet's natural resources. Sound a little extreme? Perhaps, but I don't think so. The United Nations has just released a dire report warning that 30

JUST DON'T USE

IT ON ANYTHING

consumer spending habits of the continent's people. In short, we are driving our cars more often, burning far more petrol, living in sprawling, energyinefficient houses, and taking long-holidays on passenger jets that spread air pollutants more effectively than any of Saddam Hussein's putative weapons of mass destruction.

North America, with less than five percent of the world's population, consumes 25 per cent of its energy-most of that generated from nonrenewable sources. Family size here has fallen-the best natural form of birth control being affluence-by 18 per cent in the past three decades. The size of our homes has grown by nearly fifty per cent. The notion of the New Left parties, such as Tony Blair's Labour and Bill Clinton's Democrats, that we can have it all-social justice and prosperity, redistibutive policies and wealth-is being sorely challenged. That's one reason I welcome a rightwinger in the White House. George W Bush and Co are nakedly probusiness, anti-labour, pro-consumption, anti-environment, and they make no secret of that. It restores political goalposts that get lost in the muddle of the middle of the road.

But even our politics seem an irrelevance in the face of mounting evidence that our consumption habits are killing us. More criminally, they are damaging everyone else's chances at development. W dig our graves with our appetites, and drag you into them. We have it. We spend it. We onsume it. You sniff our exhaust as we speed on by. Oh yes, we may throw a few pennies out of the window. Use them wisely. Don't be corrupt of greedy now. Do as we say. Not as we do. ♦

and Mahottari districts by the end of this year But distribution of iron tablets, while it has uses, is hardly a foolproof way of tackling anaemia For one, community health workers are uncertain about when they should give out the tablets, because anaemia rarely has stark symptoms. Ever trained health workers sometime mistakenly believe that as long as women eat fruits and vegetables regularly, they don't need supplementary iron, even if they are pregnant. Women with severe anaemia account for 2.2 percent of the female population of Nepal, but among pregnant women as many as 5.7 percent of

women are severely anaemic Pregnant women need two to three times as much iron as normal as the body's requirement increases with the increase in blood volume and the growth of foetal and placental tissue. In Nepal, the policy is that all pregnant women should get 60 mg iron per day from the start of the fourth month of pregnancy and continue through 45 days after birth. But coverage is very low and adherence to the full supplementation protocol is extremely poor

The Nepal Demographic Health Survey 2001 shows that 77 percent of women did not take iron tablets in their last presnancy because they just didn't know about them, or thought that their regular diet was nutritious enough. Still others who do take the tablets often discontinue them too early because they feel like they have regained their strength or because the side-effects-stomach cramps and dark stools-worry them. Iron deficiency in mothers

means severe anaemia among children. WHO reports say that one in seven Nepali women is programmes that target at correcting anaemia among the adolescent girls of childbearing . Studies show that two-thirds

anaamic which means that they enter a pregnancy with already-

around 10 paisa per kg, even lower than the cost of iodising

depleted stores of iron. The Nepal that takes place.

based intervention against iron deficiency is difficult in Nepal because most families are too poor to diversify their diet, and even those that have a varied diet don't use the best cooling methods, with less water and a shorter cooking time. It is possible to fortify some food items, and the MI hopes to begin fortification of wheat with five mincronutrients, including iron as soon as the Finance Ministry agrees to it. The cost of fortification will be passed on to consumers, but the MI's Maharian says that it is almost unnoticeably low-

MI studies show that 30 percent of Nepali household consume flour-based food everyday, and that the figure goes up to 50 percent in urban areas. Monitoring the 20 large-scale flourmills that produce more than 40 metric tonnes per day would be relatively easy, but addressing the small-scale, locally-operated the MI says it will be ready to take up by the end of 2002.

E-mail: recedula@wlick.co Web-site: www.marakits.co

Micronutrient Status Survey 1998 shows that 90 percent of Nepali babies between six and 11 months old are anaemic, about three percent of them severely so. This age group is particularly vulnerable is breastmilk does not fulfil an infant's iron needs after six months, and the iron stores that the infant is born with start to get depleted. After that age, the complementary diet is often too low in bioavailable iron to fuel the rapid tissue growth Despite the shortcomings of the supplementary iron regimen, food-

Don't worry 5

mark is an essential tool in his campaign to transform Nepali thought. He says visualising the symbol as a third eve every morning and evening while meditating creates in a person a powerful kind of energy. He tells us that classical (Hindu) knowledge says that the symbol means "There's no need for questions, accept life as it is." Residents of the capital will certainly sleep better at night for knowing what that twirly red thing is





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making them available to commu nity health workers. A pilot phase which allows women community health volunteers to distribute iron tablets, was launched last results. In wards of Bhaktapur Banke, Sunsari and Santari when the program was implemented, the use of iron tablets went up to







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DOMESTIC BRIEFS Editor killed by Maoists

Navarai Sharma, the editor of Karnali Sandesh, the first weekly newspa ner to be published from Nenal's far west Karnali Zone, has been killed by suspected Maoist rebels. Sharma was abducted two months ago and his mutilated body was found by the banks of a river near Kalikot this week. Reports said he had been tortured, mutilated, and his eyes aquaed before being shot

Disabled Nepalis

In developed countries, the number of people with disabilities is 5 percent of the population or higher. In Nepal, it is 1.63. Good news? Not really. The reason the figure is so low is because in Nepal, disabled people tend to just die. This tragic bit of data is just one revealing piece of information contained in A Situation Analysis of Disability in Nepal. prepared by the New Era research group and brought out jointly by UNICEF and the National Planning Commission Tuesday. The report timates that nearly 400,000 people are living with disability in Nepal, with the prevalence highest in the west and in the mountains. Nearly one-third of these people live with multiple disabilities.

Fourteen percent of Nepal's disabled are evesight handicapped, two percent are hard of hearing. 0.6 percent cannot speak. 32 percent are not mobile (due to spinal injury, etc), 20 percent have problems with 'manipulation', and 19 percent suffer from epilepsy. The survey also shows how far the country lags behind in providing basic support to those who are handicapped, either since birth, or through disease and injury.

For those wondering whose hand is behind the increasing number of For those wonueing number of behind the increasing number of upside-down, curly, red question marks increasing on city walls, electricity Yogi Bikasanande. The youthful chilosopher saw the symbol in a dream six months ago, and the question









lowest level health care institutablets with the accompanying tions that are allowed to distribtalk on the benefits and side ute iron tablets, had an average of effects of supplementary iron. 8,000 tablets at any given tin It shouldn't have taken so But most of the time sub-health long to realise it, but at last the posts are out of reach of the Health Ministry decided that the people who need supplementary only way to improve women's iron the most. It takes an average access to iron tablets was by of two to three hours for most women to reach the sub-health post nearest to their homes of what is called the "iron intensification programme", When so many women don't have the power to make decisions or control even their own earnings, let alone the family income, taking time out from an already year with very encouraging packed day to even get adequate prenatal care, let alone iron tablets, is a tough proposition. Women who manage to

receive antenatal care are five

times more likely to take supple

Nepali women ever receive

antenatal care from a medical

professional in the first place.

the health care workers at sub-

health posts say they are simply

too overburdened to dispense the

Complicating this, two-thirds of

mentary iron, but less than half of

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and Algeria would defy the imagina

tion of the most creative police artist

The security forces in the southern

Philippines become more amorphou

if you take away their camouflage and

jackboots. Then there's the thing that

should miff Deuba the most. More

attacked or threatened in Bangladesh

sinceOctober 2001 But the country

gets away with Home Minister Alta

there's no state of emergency in force

there The RSE doesn't mention this

but the Maoists' most conspicuous

transpression was the three-day

abduction of a few journalists for

trespass in their western Nepal

nghold last September.

sain Chowdhury on the list And

When Deuba complains that the

people don't appreciate how he's the

and war with the Maoists, he has a

point. But the people who are

only person who has tried both peace

supposed to explain that to the rest of

the country are anory with him. And

he's not doing anything about that

press. Here's a tip: We deal with

etractions all the time but rarely

tory mood, let's face it. The RSF

list is not as repulsive as it looks.

Consider some of the other people

on it: Fidel Castro, Ariel Sharon,

Mahathir Mohammad and Vladimi

Putin. Have these iron-fisted leaders

It depends on how, as we like to say,

been that corrosive for their countries?

While we're still in a concilia-

It's not too late to befriend the

apologies, corrections and

are the recipients

than 150 journalists have been



Contrary to expectations, when the Nepali and Indian secretaries of commerce met over the weekend in New Delhi, they could not reach an agreement on one of the most pressing problems addressed during the renewal of the trade treaty. The Inland Container Depot at Birganj will continue to remain unused, as it has for the past year, until the rail link can be made operational. There was some movement on other Nepali concerns. Finally a deadline was agreed on to set up quarantine posts at Sunauli, Jogbani and Banbasa by 1 November, and the Indians have also agreed to lower the quarantine fees. India also agreed to raise the guotas for copper exports from the 7.500 MT agreed on in March to 10.000 MT. Nepali officials at the meeting said that the Indians agreed to waive the Special Additional Duty (SAD) an-nounced in its budget early this year and also remove the luxury tax West Bengal state had slapped on Nepali ghiu and tea. There were also assurances that anti-dumping duties on acrylic yarn and zinc oxide would be lifted.

But it will take time before India actually stops levving the duties, given the complex procedures involved. The Inter-Governmental Committee has agreed, however, to meet again next month to discuss in more detail two matters: the modalities for trans-border movement of motor vehicles, and the rail agreement. Rail transport to the ICD is expected to lower transport cost of goods to and from the Calcutta port by as much as 40 percent.

Expos

The 12th Himalayan Expo which opened Wednesday showcases products and services offered by 125-150 companies from Nepal, the USA, the UK, Germany, France, China, India, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Japan and Singapore. The Shree Distillery, Radisson Hotel, Mount Everest Brewery, Kwality Ice-creams. Qatar Airways, Bitarak.com, Transavia Airlines, Indian Airlines and the Standard Nursery are major snonsors of the expo

About the same time next month—18-22 September there will be another exposition, the Agro-Expo 2002 (September 18-22), organised by the Agriculture Enterprise Centre, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry and the Floricultural Association of Nepal

A feather for Fulbari

The Fulbari Resort & Spa has been nominated to

Ace profits

Ace Finance Company Limited says it had an operating profit of Rs 20 million last year, a continuation of the trend a year before. The company with an authorised capital of Rs 90 million says it has deposits in

efforts to curtail it

Nepali Times: How has Nepali advertising changed in the past ten years?

countries in the region, and the economic and business situation isn't what it is in India, Bangladesh, Pakistan or Sri Lanka. But communications and media have changed. Education has changed: now we have a crosssection of Nepalis out of school and college aware of what is going on outside.

What is the role of advertising given this growing, aware educated class?

I won't say the educated look at advertising to get information. Advertising is just one, guite different. communication vehicle. Advertising is more about brand building. To that extent, even local companies have changed the way they look at their brands.

How fast has Nepalis advertising pie grown? It didn't grow very fast until about 1996/97. After 1997/ 98 to about 2000 it grew at about 20-25 percent. It has slackened of late owing to local and global factors. When your GDP growth plummets to less than one percent, you can imagine what happens to advertising. hich is related to the business and economic situation The overall situation today is not very good.

How is it doing business in Nepal?

When Thompson was set up in 1998, advertising was

You say advertising has flattened, but at least three new TV companies plan to begin broadcasting in the next six months. How will that change the market? It would sort of increase. If you look at the spread of the market. Kathmandu contributes 60-70 percent of the

help local colleges and universities for conducting communication programmes, and I have been associ

There are no official listings here as no one wants to disclose the size of their operations. We know that, as far as the advertising industry is concerned, we are the largest taxpayer in this country. The amount of tax we pay is more than the revenues of most agencies in Nepal. Another basis would be the annual billings of organised media, which agencies disclose. If you add them up, Thompson is number one. There are other fees and incomes that agencies can earn through as events, promotions, etc, but in terms of, say billings or taxes, we are the largest.

reach to enable them to do serious brand building? Radio. It has the widest reach, followed by TV and print. companies with small budgets build their brands. Manpower is a very, very serious issue. You don't get art Radio is the most cost-effective medium. We have data that indicates that it has been growing, especially after FM. Television will hopefully grow with the new stations that are coming. NTV will grow with its satellite. especially if it expands its low power transmitters. This must go together with electrification.

years ago. The newspapers and magazines survive, which means people read them. Kathmandu has the highest reach across media, so this is the only place people are consolidating. If the media were to consoli date in the 15 other urban areas, the advertising situation would change. We've advised media houses to increase distribution. The moment they do that, their readership will increase. There's a limit on how much

ECONOMIC SENSE In praise of watchdogs 🍣

Sometimes it is better not to give.

efore departing for a long sabbatical-from one's day job not this space-the Beed on Sunday only had time to hurriedly skim the headlines. And they were good. The boundaries of one of the many unattainables in this country seem to have been breached-the Commission for the Investigation of the Abuse of Authority has belled the cat. Sure, the exact size of the cat may not vet be known, but good lord, at least something is happening, and for that hats off and thank you. This is just one sign of just how much the government is scrambling to

regain some of its credibility. Their extensive press campaigns asking the people to declare their income or face consequences were fruitless. The deadlines passed, no one noticed, the headlines faded away, and no action was taken. Honest taxpayers as well as the not-so-honest ones who actually declared their wealth, later regretted having given up their cash to pay for Paieros, the adulterated fuel they run on, and completely pointless junkets. White-collar crime and graft are under close scrutiny world over. And what is gaining increasing emphasis is the notion that in such transactions the giver is as guilty as the taker. In the days to come it will be interesting to see, from the standpoint of a Nepali how events unfold in the US corpo rate—and political—world The thing about graft is, that it remains in all odes of economy-capitalist, socialist, and all those in-between What matters is how far it spreads, and whether there are constant-and admittedly somewhat Sisyphian-

wernment, politics and even business. The democratisation of the process has meant that more people id for coveted posts in the revenu department and other departments that have the potential to earn revenue. The price of the positions went up, and the politicians were happy to keep the market expanding, eventually resulting in little ceremonies that bore an uncanny resemblance to auctions. Of course, none of our watchdog. agencies-and they are amusingly numerous given the ever-expanding nature of our graft-could take all of this on, as it would mean that the people on the agencies would have to fight their own political masters. The CIAA and its current boss have been

and politicians, and business.

probably safe to assume that most of our ministers wouldn't have read anything in that space anyway.) What this internationalisation of Nepal's struggle to preserve press freedom culminates in remains in the domain of news analysts. In two content sentences, the RSE bas traced Deuba's transformation over the last 12 years. "An unrelenting opponent of the absolute monarchy prior to the start of the 1990s, Deuba has thrown in his lot with those who have opted for all-out war against the Maoists." the RSF says. "To this end, he has decided to renounce all his democratic convictions and has turned

called a "press predator", but he

isn't in completely bad company.

Press counse

Prime Minister Deuba may be discontent emerged as private-sector

scribes discovered how the emergency

turned out to grant their counterparts

moments of their professional lives.

those blank editorial columns in the

tabloids, carried in protest against

state-imposed restrictions, you're

minister and his men consider the

media Public Enemy No. 2 in the

anti-Maoist campaign. (Although, it's

Nepal into the world's biggest prisor

for journalists." The watchdog could

have been howling about most of the

We can't quibble with the RSF's

assertion that press predators come in

all shapes and that we must recognise

people in power today

forced to wonder whether the prime

From the official smugness to all

in the official media the freest

ime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba entered the Reporters Without Borders (RSF) hall of press predators the day after we found out Interpol had issued red-corner notices against eight senior Maoist leaders. Our prime minister and premier rebels have become international baddies duly certified by organisations headquartered in

comrades face arrest, at least theoretically, in the 179 member states of the mational criminal police organisation. Deuba is in deeper trouble. The updated RSF roster comes at a time when he's facing the intensifying fury of Nepal's fourth estate Reporters and editors are outraged not just because a colleague happened to vanish from state custody. Or because

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from our pool-side. So watch out, you just might be on aid

A fun time anality you this ourmore at Godaware Resort. Beat the heat and splant into the cool blue pool. Then, onjoy the fascinating natural setting of the Resort while servoring a sumptious Buller Lunch. Godd clean fur to the entire territy - coultany the Godawari Village Resort.

ment on Selundays, Kantpur FM will constact an on air "LIVE" program straight

Dustriet, Gooswan, Laispur, Nopel, Ter, Sel2175, 580775, Fair 977-1 (193, 522199, 527819, Fair, 977-1-20895), F-mail, scillward (see

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Prachanda and his seven squarely behind the prime minister.

many of the more than 100 journalists arrested since the emergency was mposed last November are still behind bars. Their wrath has more to do with what amounts to breach of contract. When the government imposed the emergency, insisting that the restrictions were aimed only at those who encourage and support the rebels, the press believed it and stood

That was no small risk, considering the prevailing perception that the mainstream press had become the agent of government and elite opaganda. Self-censorship became a prized editorial skill in deference to the

artsberg

their faces to better denounce them. suspension of the people's fundament But two of the other three new tal rights. To keep the national morale carnivores hardly have countenances high, questions of immorality were that can be identified. The Islamic largely ignored. The first stirrings of militants on the rampage in Pakistan

you put together your story. Call: 560675 or 560775 -----Wet & Wild Summer the second shad bread after any local after after a Tax in from the set down an and off some formula. For prove set (marks (m. pr. + (p.m. p. eq. and) Now every Saturday & Sunday and shard and but they eper an answer days go for the day as all all and the states that an of heart black and are done as Godavari @



Now on the news stands

No rail pact

FCONOMY

B

an exclusive club of the world's great hotels placing it alongside international names such as The Ritz Carlton. The Grand Hyatt. The Oberoi Bali and the Banyan Tree and The Royal Meridian Yacht Club in Phuket, Thailand. A company press release says that selection was based on a number of criteria including architectural design. natural setting, interiors, ambience and quest satisfaction. The exclusive collection of the world's select hotel properties is operated by the

Great Hotels of the World organisation, which is based in London.

the tune of Rs 675 million and investments totalling to 546 million.

"Very few people understand the value of brand building." largest commercial accounts, and a major chunk of government advertising.

building. We've been very lucky and had clients who

directors, visualisers and writers, People who go out to

study and come back like to set up their own little

shops. They are happy doing letterheads, visiting

I can speak for Thompson. We have regular training

How have multinationals helped build Nepal

cards brochures a few ads sometimes.

know what marketing is all about. We've helped

We talked to Managing Director Jovdeb Chakravarty about his take on the

Joydeb Chakravarty: Things have changed drastically. Obviously, the change has not kept pace with other state of the industry in Nepal. business. Look at what FM did to Kathmandu. After the FMs came, you had a host of new advertisers and that was when retail advertising came in. That may be the

same for metro TV stations. As far as national TV is concerned, they would have to compete with Nenal TV and they can be in business with better programming. To a certain extent TV would expand the pie, bu

not as much as some say, and not overnight. It will be tough for the new channels, radios, newspapers and magazines unless the market expands, and with that the purchasing capacity. Unless people can buy, there is a limit about how much advertising can do.

How has the arrival of other multinationals been? The Advertising Agencies Association of Nepal has been saying that we have a huge market. Obviously many multinational companies see this as a country where you can set up a presence and take a chunk of that business. But this is a very difficult place to survive. Advertising is not seen as an investment, but as a cost. Very few people understand the value of brand

not listed as an industry where you needed a licence to invest. We made a presentation at the Ministry of Industry saying foreign investors will be looking at the infrastructure-insurance, solicitors, auditors and advertising companies of international quality. They took the point, and we became the first advertising joint venture. As far as dealing with the government is concerned, it is one of our largest clients.

> programmes and have sent many people for training seminars and advertising award functions in India as well as South East Asia. We also have regular in-house training. J Walter Thomson has always been called the university of advertising. Working here is a very big learning experience for people. When they leave, they

capacity?

take that knowledge and experience and spread it. We ated with Kathmandu University for three years now. You handle some of the largest commercial ac

counts, and say that the government is one of your largest clients. Are you number one?

How would you say firms can have the maximum

Today newspapers offer colour, which wasn't there 10 Kathmandu can absorb, media has to go out.

lily-livered oversight appointees to get out and do something. The business community should not be spared in this discussion of corruption After delicensing and pseudo reforms, many businesspeople found it easier to do business b corrupting officials and politicians. If members of the business communit did not encourage this kind of giving. and compete with each other to giv more, things would have been significantly different. That said, when the government itself cannot enqui proper statutory compliances like audits and taxes in enterprises that it owns, how can it hope to have any

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courageous. Maybe this will be a

sson to other well-intentioned but

control over the actions of private companies? Simply put, the govern ment's reluctance to enforce prope In Nepal, unfortunately the extension of democracy has made ficeal and other controls in State graft rampant, it is more and more

Owned Enterprises gave private blatant, and cuts across all segments of businesses plenty of latitude to first complain, and then outdo the SOEs in malfeasance. Your columnist promises to keep keen, beady eye on the CIAA's efforts and the reaction of the business. community, and report back to you.

And just think: if the names of taker are out in the press, maybe the names of all those givers of not just cash, but computers, furniture and appliances are not so deeply buried either. The only worry that one has is

that this might well be a one-off exercise, bringing about a pleasant sense of euphoria in the public-right before those worrisome elections. The regulators need to put the fear of the people in themselves, and governme



he monsoon-heavy nourish its culture and religion brown waters of the And it is the main element of

HERITAGE

Bagmati will Friday Kathmandu's environmental host a unique flotilla of regeneration. But it is now kayaks and rafts. The choking with waste, and has Second Bagmati River Festival become a symbol of our negliwill bring together environmengence of the environment. The Bagmati River Festival is jointly organised by the Nepal talists, school children, the tourism industry, and concerned citizens in a day-long celebration River Conservation Trust along the river from its headwa-(NRCT) and the Friends of the ters in Sundarijal to Sankhamul. Bagmati. Says veteran river guide The Bagmati River is the source of the Kathmandu Valley and NRCT founder, Megh Ale: "We can clean this river, but to do that we have to look at the civilisation, the waters that



he Bagmati raging belov ring last onth's flood (left); the Bagn ridge built by Chandra jumshere in 1903 and a Ran elephant procession crossing over o Patan (above); the Bagmati a ashupati is now much cleaner

problems from the Bagmati's perspective. That is why we want to raft down the river." Twenty professional river guides will kick off the festival at 8AM on Friday, 23 August, with a kayak race from Sundarijal to Tilganaga. Next, ten rafts holding VIPs, school children and representatives of local communities will leave Tilganga for Sankhamul. There, starting noon will be music and an exhibition with the Bagmati as backdrop. Popular actors Niruta Singh and Dilip Ravamaihi will be guest stars, and Himalayan Feelings will be belting out music. Also atending will be Om Bikram Bista, Yogeshwor Amatya, Nalina Chitrakar, Tantric and others And, since Friday is also Gai

the network of Druk Air increased to rk Para with New Delhi, Bangkak and

nes a week to Bangkok and Calcutto twice to Karlimondu and Delhi

and once a month to Dhaka.

tom two destinctions in 19 day Druk Air operates from Para four



23-29 AUGUST 2002



Jatra, present will be famous Nepali a pressure group that aims to comedian duo Madan Krishna and restore the Bagmati to its traditional glory, says that the river festival is a unique partnership Haribansa, and infamous Nepali satire poet, Chatyang Master. Several Kathmandu Valley between like-minded conservation schools will put on an exhibition of groups. Dr Suresh Raj Sharma, photographs, Bagmati debris and chairman of Friends of the Bagmati water sample analyses. Also on display will be a container showing says: "The Bagmati River is in a terrible state, ecologically and the residue from a distillation of culturally. It is the responsibility of Bagmati water. Other shools will each and every one of us to help have poster exhibitions and clay restore the river to its original models of Kathmandu Valley, and will stage plays and skits. pristine state, and conserve the cultural, religious and architectural Friends of the Bagmati, which is heritage of Kathmandu Valley."

The Bagmati is presently gorged with monsoon water, the annual natural cleansing of the river. This year, the river also burst its banks: could it be a divine warning to treat the river with more respect? \$

For further information: Friends of the Bagmati friendsofthebagmatinepal@yahoo.com Nepal River Conservation Trust nrct@wlink.com.np

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Norway needs to start planning soon for its post-oil economy.

eling sympathy for Norwav is hard. Thanks to its its its its North Sea oil reserves, the hard Thanks to its massive country has achieved a level of wealth unimaginable only a generation ago. which has allowed it to cold-shoulder the EU since 1994. But Norway's problems, while hardly on a par with Sub-Saharan Africa or Afghanistan, are serious enough to elicit concern.

When a country's newlydiscovered natural resource abundance leads to windfall wealth, investment in the rest of its economy shifts away from tradeables (mainly manufactured exports) and into nontradeables mainly consumer goods and services). The diagnosis is a familia one called "Dutch disease." If and when the natural resource generating the windfall wealth (in this case, oil and gas) disappears, the economy is left with too few competitive industries

and too many empty bookstore-cafes.

ANALYSIS

Painful restructuring is sure to follow. So far Norway has avoided the worst pitfalls of Dutch disease by using its massive oil revenues to establish a national savings scheme. the Petroleum Fund, which is tted to invest only in foreigr assets. This curbs inflationary demand pressure while preventing elected officials from squandering the ployment is rising. ountry's riches on politically rewarding but economically wasteful sector. Government spending is projects. But Norway has recently increasing by 4 percent annually ered its guard on both count Wages have soared, with the average increase likely to hit a

because of a new "action rule" that whopping 6 percent this year. To sate, firms have raised prices. fueling inflation. But with the central bank committed to holding annual jacking up public expenses. So inflation at 2.5 percent, Norway's government must spend more to interest rates are currently among the maintain public services and keep highest in Europe. This has helped cause the unemployment down. The cycle t

exchange rate to strengthen by nearly significant investments in human capital: education, training, and basic 10 percent over the last year against the currencies of Norway's main scientific research, rather than trading partners, making tradeables "innovative" projects. With just 10-15 years of even less competitive. Domestic industries that face foreign competistimated oil reserves remaining tion are beginning to close down or the UAE last year dropped visa relocate abroad. Thus, in one of the equirements for most westerners world's richest countries, unemin an effort to accelerate the velopment of a viable tourist But the real problem is the public trade With the recent discovery of its huge Caspian Sea reserves. Kazakhstan stands at the start of this process. These countries, like allows revenue from the Petroleum Norway, were winners in the Fund to be phased into the domestic natural resource lottery. But that is economy. But the additional budget 10 guarantee that they will remain revenue has merely offset lower taxes rich after the payments stop. while high wages and interest rates are (Project Syndicate)

(Gunnar Bårdsen is associate professor of economics at the Norwegian University of Science takes another vicious turn: higher and Technology.)

by GUNNAR BARDSEN

unemployment

interest rates, continuing currency

the importance of tradeables

appreciation, further decimation of

the tradeables sector, the risk of more

windling, the nontradeables sector

output. Excess demand in the public

must increase its productivity and

sector must be shifted elsewhere—it

won't just disappear Waiting list

for medical and nursing services in

Norway already seem endless, and

school buildings are deteriorating-

have to be privatised. This will be

politically contentious, but also

provide a chance to realise the

country's potential through a strates

of sensible investment_the origina

numose of the Petroleum Fund

his strategy should include

the public health authorities

some have even been closed down ha

A range of public services will

There is only one solution. With

.

by JIM LOBE Like father, unlike son

WASHINGTON - The second-most frustrated man in Washing policy establishment these days, next to Secretary of State Colin Powell, must be Brent Scowcroft, the courtly and self-effacing retired army general who served as George Bush Sr's national security adviser. Like Powell, Scowcroft has consistently -and sometimes publicly-counselled George W to pursue a cautious, multilateral approach in his "war on terrorism", especially with regard to Iraq and the Middle East in general.

But his advice has been almost entirely ignored as the unilateralist, pro-Likud hawks in the Pentagon's civilian leadership and Vice President Dick Cheney's office have consolidated their control of policy since last December's military success against the Taleban in Afghanistan.

Scowcroft serves as chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board (PFIAB), a post that guarantees him access to top-secret intelligence and to Bush Jr's top foreign-policy advisers. Normally, PFIAB chairmen are discreet and hesitant to weigh in on policy issues publicly. He has mentored two of the administration's top foreign-policy officials: Powell, with whom he served in the Nixon White House 30 years ago, and Bush Jr's national security adviser, Condoleezza Rice. Scowcroft remains very close and very, very loyal to Bush Sr with whom he co-authored A World Transformed, a 1998 book about their foreign policy from 1989 to 1993. One of the book's main themes is the rtance of broad coalitions, both domestically and overseas, for difficult policy initiatives such as the Gulf War.

Scowcroft's loyalty to Bush Sr-and the fact that he is widely seen as the former president's alter ego-makes his speaking out publicly about these issues remarkable. "For Scowcroft to say anything critical anazing," said a former senior official who worked with Scowcroft in the Bush administration. "I can't imagine him doing so without talking with Bush's dad."

Apart from some offhand comments early in the Afghan campaign, when he said he hoped Washington would intensify consultations with US allies. Bush Sr wed substantive public comment about the war on terrorism, bolstering has esche speculation that he shares Scowcroft's concerns. Scowcroft has expressed himself publicly on three issues since 9/11: coalitions, Israel-Palestine, and the administration's obsession with ousting Saddam Hussein.

Early in the war, when Rumsfeld and neo-conservatives were arguing that a multilateral coalition could hamper a successful campaign, Scowcroft wrote in the Washington Post: "Success means a coalition. The liberation of Kuwait would have bee n impossible without a strong coalition of countries that provided military bases, staging areas, intelligence, isolation of Iraq and strong moral and political support



In May, as violence between Israel and Palestine intensified. Scowcroft wrot in the Post's on-ed page again to bokter Powell's frustrated efforts to persuade Bush to rein in Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and launch a new, multila eral peace process based on Saudi Crown Prince Abdullah's peace offer and culminating in a viable and independent Palestinian state.

Recently, Scowcroft spoke out on national TV urging restraint in Iraq. Echoing the views of State Department and the CIA and drawing on his experience under Bush Sr, he warned that an invasion of Iraq "could turn the whole region into a cauldron, and destroy the war on terrorism". Echoing European and Arab allies, Scowcroft said Washington should work with the UN to get arms inspectors into Iraq, because Saddam's refusal to comply would give the US a "casus belli that we don't really have right now". And, in what amounts to heresy to the neo-cons dominating US policy, Scowcroft says the success of efforts against Saddam depends on progress in Israel.

Scowcroff's advice has not been taken, and he has been attacked, sometimes ha enior administration officials, including Cheney and Rumsfeld, and more often neo-conservative columnists and media, such as the Wall Street Journal and the Weekly Standard Many of these actors were among Bush Sr's most violent critics 10 years ago when he halted the Gulf War at the Kuwaiti border and refused to carry it on to Baghdad. They were even more scathing when he withheld aid to Israel until it co-operated in the search for an international solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. (IPS)

23-29 AUGUST 2002 NEPALI TIMES

Make markets, not war

DEPTH - The Australian government has toned down its rhetoric on the possibility of a US-led war with Iraq, pledging a full parliamentary debate about any planned action with the United States as domestic pressures from wheat farmers and former prime ministers rose about its position. Grain farmers are threatening to push for compensation if Australia's \$449 million wheat sales to Iraq were jeopardised by Canberra's joining-or threatening to join the war on Iraq. Australian Grains Council President Keith Perrett told reporters he had issued the ultimatum to Prime Minister John Howard, over the wheat sales, in a face-to-face meeting Tuesday. Iraq, Australia's largest market for wheat through a UN food-for-oil programme, has said it will stop all Australian wheat imports if Canberra does not tone down its "hostile rhetoric". In a marked change from his previous statements, Prime Minister Howard said the government would commit troops to an American-led first strike on Irag only if it was "completely satisfied that it was in the national interest to do so". The prime minister told the House of Representatives, "I would want as far as humanly possible to achieve hipartisanship (with the Labor opposition) in relation to any decision to commit military forces," (IPS

Compensation for unfair trade

BUENOS AIRES - The Latin American delegations to the upcoming World Summit on Sustainable Development, which opens this month in South Africa, will insist that the industrialised North eliminate barriers to exports from the developing South, or compensate for those obstacles with development aid Raúl Estrada Ovuela, director of environmental affairs at

Argentina's Foreign Ministry, told IPS: "We need financial support for sustainable development, because the distortions in trade deprive us of the resources that we should be assigning to that purpose," said the official. According to statistics of the Argentine Foreign Ministry, the funds that the EU assigns to official development aid are equivalent to one-fifth of what that bloc, the US and Japan spend annually on farm subsidies. (IPS)

Green power in Johannesburg

JOHANNESBURG - In keeping with the theme, some of the main venues hosting the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) will use environment-friendly "green" electricity during the summit. Green electricity is produced in an environment-friendly way from renewable energy sources like the sun, the wind and waves. Electricity generated conventionally-in coal or nuclear power stations-either releases large amounts of carbon into the atmosphere or produces pollutants, like radioactive waste. While South African produces some of the cheapest electricity in the world, its nower stations are fired by "dirty" coal, which emits large amounts of carbon. South Africa produces 42 percent of Africa's carbon emissions. Yet, the emissions for all of Africa are still substantially less than that of a single developed country (JPS)

Fighting an unjust fight

NATIONS - A US proposal to cut off military aid to countries refusing to shield its peacekeepers from war crimes prosecutions is under fire from human rights groups and legal scholars. "It is blackmail-pure and simple." Brigitte Suhr of the New York-based Human Rights Watch, told IPS. She said the threat comes from a new US law, the American Servicemembers Protection Act (ASPA), which prohibits military assistance to countries that have ratified the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, which came into force 1 July. The law, also called the Hague Invasion Act, authorise the use of military force to free US and allied suspects from detention by the ICC. Last month, the LIN Security Council agreed to give US peacekeepers a year's exemption from ICC prosecution but rejected a proposal for an automatic renewal of that exemption In its continuing pursuit of immunity from the ICC, the US has signed bilateral agreements with Israel and Romania, barring the extradition of Americans for trial on future war crime charges if US troops serve as peacekeepers in those two nations. A state that has ratified the ICC would be violating its statutes if it signed a bilateral agreement with the US, said Marjorie Cohn, associate professor at the Thomas Jefferson School of Law in San Diego. Suhr said the threat to cut off aid is selective. US allies such as the EU. Japan. Israel and Egypt are excluded, while "struggling democracies like Colombia, Bolivia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo-all of which have ratified the ICC-are now under threat." she said. (JPS)

Not paying for excesses

TIONS - A new UN study urges the United States and Canada to take more responsibility for the damage they have done to the world's natural resources and climate in the past 30 years. Their success in improving local environments-where their people live with clean water and air and enjoy green spaces-has come at the expense of global resources and climate, says North America's Environment: A 30-Year State of the Environment and Policy Retrospective, released last week. The report says that one Canadian or American consumes nine times more gasoline than any other person in the world. With 5 percent of the world's population the countries generate over 25 per cent of global emissions of heatcausing CO2. The study, carried out by the UNEP in collaboration with environmental think-tanks, says that both countries must make "substantial and concrete changes" in the way they use automobiles. relying on more fuel-efficient technologies. Urban development ies need to be revamped to stem the overgrowth of cities, they add. UNEP researchers estimate the US transportation sector accounts for over a third of the energy consumed by the world, upsi



ISLAMABAD - AUSattack on Iraq administration in Kabul, which wants to would have an impact on Iran-high exercise centralised authority and on US President Bush's 'axis of evil control And the American-led 'war on list-and Afghanistan. And Afghaniterror' has failed to stamp out al Qaeda stan, where this campaign began, and Taleban remnants, or Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar In early August, US troops came Three kinds of conflicts can be

under sniper attacks and were engaged isaged in Afghanistan. First, the lurking conflict between the so-called in firefights by Taleban and al Oaeda Taiik troika and President Karzai This remnants There have been accidents and explosions resulting in the deaths troika, representing the ethnic Persian of American soldiers and Afghan speaking Tajiks, manages to control the civilians. On 7 August, in the oreign and security policies since deadliest clash since the Taleban's General Oasim Fahim is defence ouster in November, al Qaeda fighters minister while Dr Abdullah Abdullah attacked an Afehan army outpost near is foreign minister. The third member Kabul, resulting in 15 casualties, A of the troika, Younis Oanooni, has been day earlier, an American soldier was relegated from his previously powerful killed in an incident involving US slot as interior minister to the politically troops and Afehans close to the less influential education minister's Pakistan border. post. The majority of Afghanistan's

population is Pashto-speaking Pashtun. The expectations of a new order of stability emerging in the post-Taleban phase, particularly after the June Loya Tajiks make up 25 percent of the population, with an ethnic affinity with lirga, have not been met. The Loya ajikistan and a linguistic linkage with Jirga was caught between the conflict-ing demands of the warlords who Reports of tensions between Karzai

assert their own suzerainty in their and Fahim have surfaced, and last respective domains versus an month's assessingtion of Vice President

Power games in the Philippines

remains unstable

S oncehody was telling me the other day that India was happily off the hook, at least for the time being, so far as Enron goes. While there are billions of dollars in dissume over the body and 10 cm minimum of the billions of dollars in dispute over the bankrupt US company's Dabhol Power Co project south of Mumbai, there's no one to negotiate with-and no one in India must pay.

India may enjoy a lengthy respite from the messy, long-running wars fought over the \$3 billion Dahlod plant, but the rest of the developing world can't count on such escape hatches. In Southesst Asia alone, Indonesia has similar problems, and now we have the details of just how deep in the Philippines is.

The Philippines power sector was haphazardly liberalised in 1987, and by the early 1990s the country was faced with an acute shortage of electricity. Then president Fidel Ramos got emergency powers to negotiate "fast track" contracts with independent power producers. There are now 48 such contracts, and they are something to behold.

Tax holidays, duty exemptions, "take-or-pay" provisions covering generated power, freely repatriated profits for foreign investors, government loan guarantees, exchange-rate protection—it's all there. By the mid-1990s, the power shortage was a surplus and the Ramos government was signing contracts for projects on which it hadn't even solicited bids. Fixed fuel costs and guaranteed purchases turned the law of supply and demand on its head: The more power produced, the more expensive it got. So far, Manila deals with independent power producers have cost the government roughly \$14 billion—not including the \$0.7 billion the National Power Corp. or Napocor, the former monopoly, pays annually for fuel to run the plants.

Napocor now pays independent power producers about \$75 million a month in fixed energy charges, whether power is generated and consumed or not. That is tacked onto the ordinary Filipino's electricity bill as a "purchased power adjustment". This usually adds 30 percent to 50 percent to the monthly charge. Terrific isn't it? Another monument to the senselessness of the 1990s, when Third World countries such as India and the Philippines were sold not merely lousy power deals, but also the ideology of privatisation.

The mess in the Philippines comes to us via the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, an enterprising outfit of dogged determination. Luz Rimban and Sheila Samonte-Pesawo, two journalists, spent three months investi gating the power sector, interviewing everyone from former president Ramos down. They have published a four-part report; read it at http://www.pcij.org.

Among their coups was obtaining a copy of a report submitted to President Gloria Arroyo last month by a committee of officials from the justice and finance ministries and members of the National Economic and Development Authority.

Haji Qadeer, a Pashtun like Karzai, has emanate from the Iran factor pset the delicate balance of power in especially after the 12 July remarks Kabul His assassing have not been of Bush, when he virtually incited found and remain unidentified. Karzai the Iranian people to 'rise against has replaced his security detail provided the oppressor regime', making by General Fahim's defence ministry regime change" in Tehran as with the US Special Forces, a move that much of a goal as is regime change shows concerns over his own personal in Baghdad, American media security I ast week's demonstrations in reports quoted US government Kabul extolling Ahmad Shah Masood, officials as saving that they have the Tajik commander called the Lion of given up on Khatami. Iran is Panjsher', who was assassinated on 9 September, 2001, have been viewed as egime change", although an attempt by the Taiik Troika to assert Washington is probably oblivious control by building a personality cult around their slain leader. of Iranian capacity to influence avestero Afebanistan through Second, until an Afghan National warlord Ismail Khan, although Army is constituted, warlordism will during his 13 August visit to remain a key factor in Afghan politics. Afehanistan sometimes manifests itself

ented as next in line for

Kabul, Khatami did pledge \$560 million in humanitarian and as a multi-ethnic, de facto confederation economic aid to Afghanistan of tribes and linguistic groups led by through Karzai's government and a warlords who often have camaraderie day before Kharami's visit the and rapport with neighbours who share Iranian Foreign Ministry conan ethnic linguistic or ethnic affinity firmed that 16 al Oaeda fuoitive from Afghanistan, who managed to cross into Iran, had been handed with them For instance, there is Pakistan with the Pashtuns, Iran with the Shi'ite Hazara and Farsi-speaking over to Saudi Arabia, their country Taiiks and Uzbekistan with the Uzbeks of origin. (IPS)

say that an Indonesian court has imposed a lenient sentence on a former East Timor governor charged with war crimes. "The Aggravating the problem is American reliance on the warlords accused (Governor Abilio Soares) was found guilty of crimes and their forces to track down the a

against humanity and sentenced to three years' imprisonment which is below the statutory minimum of 10 years," UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, said last week The sentence was imposed by a Jakarta war crimes court called the Ad Hoc Human Rights Tribunal, whose creation last year was endorsed by the UN Security Council. Soares faced the death penalty for failing to halt the "large-scale, organised and coordinated violence" after the Indonesian-held territory voted for independence in late 1999. Reports say that over 1.000 civilians died in the rioting. The Tribunal also found the former regional police commander and five other military, police and government officials not quilty. John Miller of the New York-based Fast Timor. Action Network said the verdict shows that the UN should have set up an international war crimes tribunal for East Timor similar to those created for Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia. (IPS)

Al Jazeera in trouble

I - It is the "CNN of the Arab world" for many people in the Middle East, but governments in the region are beginning to feel that the Qatar-based Al Jazeera television channel is a chronic headache. With at least 35 million viewers in the Arab world and elsewhere, Jazeera has gained prominence for its exclusives or Ocama bin Laden as well as onen debates on taboo subjects in contrast to the region's mostly censored media. However, it has also contributed to tension between countries by airing liberal and critical programmes on Arab politics and its regimes. The latest row involves Jordan Oatar and Saudi Arabia. The government of Jordan closed the Qatar-based satellite news channel's office there last Thursday and recalled its ambassador, saying Jazeera was provoking "sedition" through a broadcast that portraved the kingdom's rulers as "puppets of the United States and Israel". (IPS)

Shorter, better TB cure

ave come un with a short regi W DELHL - Indian eci against tuberculosis that halves the six months needed under the directly observed treatment short course or DOTS, approved by the WHO. Because it is shorter, the new regimen developed at the Tuberculosis Research Centre (TRC) in Chennai city reduces the morbidity and poor compliance associated with DOTS, which relies on the closely supervised administration of a cocktail of four cheap but powerful drugs. "Shorter TB treatment regimens would ease drug administration for both patients and providers," said Shaheed Jawahar, a member of the team that developed the new regimen. To shorten the treatment regimen, the TRC team replaced one of the four drugs in the cocktail, ethambutol, with a more powerful drug oflaxacin, which kills, rather than just weakens. TB bacteria ultra-short regimen cured 99 percent patients in a test run with an 8 percent relapse rate. "This is highly acceptable as the usual rate is 20 percent," said TRC scientist M Shaheed Jawahar. (IPS)

Recycled refugees

WAR - An Afghan refugee tried to set himself ablaze at a refugee repatriation centre in Islamabad earlier this month, supposedly after his anneal for assistance to return home was rejected as fraudulent since he had already been given aid. The success of the UNHCR voluntary repatriation process has only complicated it. Repatriation peaked April - June in what officials say was the fastest voluntary refugee influx in history. By August, over a million refugees had returned from neighbouring countries, mostly Pakistan. But this exodus brought other problems as well. As of 25 July repatriation staff had rejected 53 592 families they suspected of making bogus claims. Official sources estimate that some 230,000 'recycled refugees'—who benefited from UN repatriation packages and went to Afghanistan—have returned to Pakistan llegally, to disappear in rural and urban areas of the country. But beyond just a bureaucratic problem, this trend highlights the difficulty of life in Afghanistan, which prompts returnees to head back again to neighbouring Pakistan, (IPS)

Neither a lender nor a borrower be

- Thai environmentalists are deeply suspicious of a World Bank offer to give \$8 million to a private company planning a biomass project, calling it a way for developed countries to dodge binding commitments to cut greenhouse gas emissions. The activists were reacting to revelations Sunday of the offer from a special World Bank fund, backed by money from six developed nations, to a Thai company planning a biomass project to generate renewable energy. Through the World Bank Prototype Fund's financial support of this biomass project, the developed nations behind the fund would earn carbon credits allowing them to show good performance in meeting their targets in addressing climate change. Thai activists say it would be risky to enter into this carbon credit offer-the first that the country has received so far They say that by using the Kyoto Protocol's carbon credit scheme to fund environment-friendly technology-transfer projects in the developing world, industrialised countries are taking short cuts to reducing greenhouse gas emissions back home. Thailand has yet to ratify the 1997 Kyoto Protocol that sets targets for cutting greenhouse gases, and to create a mechanism for dealing with such offers. (IPS)

Big projects are irresistible magnets for corrupt officials.

doesn't work." (Bloomberg)



The committee reviewed 35 independent power contracts, PCIJ tells us, and

found six to be free of legal or financial defects. Plenty of famous names from the

Filipino oligarchy turn up in the PCIJ report, and plenty of foreign investors,

too, though none of these companies is specifically implicated in any wrongdoing

The deal that takes the cake, in PCIJ's estimation, is one struck by Argenti-

na's Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona SA. IMPSA contracted a few years ago to

Napocor has so far paid IMPSA \$50 million for 18 months of operation, though

week that the plant was not in urgent need of repair in the first place, as Napocor

officials had argued from the beginning. The PCIJ report is more than an indictment of privatisation as applied in

companies can invest in infrastructure projects in regions they don't sufficiently understand. For one thing, big projects are powerful, usually irresistible magnets

for corrupt officials. For another, unfamiliarity produces an investment model

that fails. The Philippings, Dabhol, an Edison International project called PT

much up front as they find the projects risky," a southeast Asian executive

Paiton Energy in Indonesia, all are cases in point. "Western investors hedge too

power game told me. "That's what produces the imbalances. You can't load up

your cost recovery at the beginning. These investors are selling a format that

wholly inappropriate circumstances. The issue is how effectively foreign

ompany has invested only \$9 million. Independent auditors concluded last

rehabilitate and run something called the Kalayaan Pumped Storage Plant.

No iustice in Indonesia ONS - Human rights activists and senior UN officials

Atomic to call of

23 - 29 AUGUST 2002 NEPALI TIMES

Which top politician has been killed?

Deshanter, 18 August Excernts of an interview with General (Rtd) Bharat Keshar Simha



terrorist activities, kill security personnel and ordinary people and destroy public infrastructure, and still be brought to join the mainstream during elections? I would not agree to that if I were in the army. Which too politician has been killed? What, does this country only belong to the politicians and not to the people also? The people are dying to save this political system, security forces are being killed, but our society does not seem to recognise that, and wants to bring those who want to destroy this political system into electoral politics. You're worried more about

Now weive reached a situation where weire either with the

It was fine to think about elections, with Maoists participating, as

the army after them. Now the situation is different. They have to

that could lead to a solution. But who says they can continue

long as the government had not declared them "terrorists" and sent

Manists or anainst Which ontion looks more feasible?

those who want to destroy the system, rather than about those who are fighting to save it? The day we agree to bring them into the election process, we have to free all the murderers and dacoits from the prisons. How can the state function when all criminals are freed? At one time they [the Maoists] were given the benefit of doubt.

So you don't see a peaceful resolution of the Maoist problem? They need to be crushed?

Absolutely. I think justice needs to be done. There must be rule of law in the country. Today if you give them a little space and pardon them, then tomorrow new Maoists will be born. If the government keeps yielding to a force that continues to murder and spread violence, the present problem may be resolved, but what stops another group from doing the same thing tomorrow? They will again force the government to yield. For the sake of stability, we must not create a situation where the government would be forced to vield Ito such tactics] repeatedly...

One way to neutralise the Maoists is by assimilating them into the political mainstream, yet you are talking about eliminationÖ

You don't eliminate them or make them ineffective through the use of weapons only. Once you remove its teeth and claws, a tiger becomes harmless, as do snakes whose venom is extracted. [How can] you talk about bringing into the political mainstream those that want to change what has been said to be unchangeable in the constitution, those who want a secular state, those who want an end to the monarchy those who want a constituent assembly, those who do not want multiparty democracy? Let them fightforever-that is what happens in wars. Otherwise we would not have world wars; this is a small conflict. The army has not used half of its arsenal. In all those world wars, peace agreements were signed only after defeat or victory. What is the need to give up the rule of law and bring them into the mainstream? That cannot be. No government must do that. Why should we allow in a snake that could eat us in future?

So the state of emergency and military operations must continue. For how long?

We cannot say how long it will take. An internal rebellion is one of the most difficult operations for an army, because the enemy cannot be identified. External enemies can be identified easily. Much has been brought under control after the Royal Nepal Army went out onto the field. Now we don't have to hear of attacks like those in Dang and Mangalsen. The army has spoken about being in control and having broken into the intelligence networks of the Maoists. At this rate, if the Maoists don't get the support of foreign countries, the problem will be resolved soon.

Have we reached a situation that demands direct rule of the king for a certain period? Yes, we need direct rule now. Not only me, even people living in the US say that the constitution should be handed over to the king—let him rule. The constitution provides that space, only it has to be ratified by parliament within six months. If parliament adds that timeframe, it could continue for as long as five years. If that is done and the right things happen, it is impossible that the king's rule will not be ratified. Many intellectuals have also been thinking along these lines...

QUOTE OF THE WEEK





Newspaper Headline: 22 Bureaucrats Arrested for Corruption

"Oh hello... Mr Dhungana, Mr Thapa, Mr Regmi, Mr Pant, Mr Tiwari... But how come Mr Nepal, Mr Pokharel, Mr Koirala, Mr Khadka, Mr Wagle, Mr Anand and Mr Gachhedar are missing?

- August Jana Aastha, 21 August

Neparios. 17 August It is commonly accepted that once the election date is announced, it is illegal to appoint, retire. nromote or transfer either surrender or surrender their weapons and ask for the people's people. I was aware pardon. That would make legal sense and, if they come to elections. that the Election Commission had made an inquiry, but whether permitted the act Sharma's dismissal from NTVI, only the ninister knows. Until today, I have done nothing illegal At

Durga Nath Sharma in Raidhani, 18 August

this point in my life. I don't want to do anything illegal. I didn't feel it was ethical to play with NTV's future by employing incapable people because they had connections. I refuse to kowtow to

those who feel that the

Communications Ministry belongs to them. Today, it important to make corporations independent. No one trusts the government media. What little trust is there will be lost if we start employing people on the basis of connections they have. No one should fall prev to government pressure



Nepalis in India

twindled

of Prime Minister Sher Bahadur

by a large number of people from

Deuba, Hirachan's lodge, patronised

Nepal Samacharpatra, 17 August drue parentes

ver since the state of emergency was declared in Nepal, the number of Maoists in India has increased rapidly, especially in the bordering states of Uttar Pradesh. Bihar, and West Bengal. According to Nepalis resident in India, the Nepal Ekata Samai xanned by the Indian government continues to function. Residents complain that they are harassed by both Maoist activists and Indian ecurity forces. More prone to harassment are Nepali migrant workers. Bhakta Lal Hirachan who runs a lodge in Gorakhpur district India, says, "Previously, thousands of Nepali migrant workers would come seeking jobs. Today, the numbers have

are seeking refuge in bordering Indian Immediately after the visit to India **Troubled Maoists** Ghatna Ra Bichar, 21 August

Nepal, was raided twice in the middle of the night. Many Nepali residents Maoists in hideouts in India are like Hirachan told Samacharpatra that having a tough time after 19 mean thema security was beefed up in New Delhi. the Maoists had created an environ-Uttaranchal, Bihar, West Bengal and ment in which normal people trying to make a living were constantly under Sikkim, And they have been alienated the suspicion of Indian security forces. from their supporters in India. Among the high Maoist While Nepalis living in India for a long period have experienced relatively mands Rit Bahadur Khadka, Ajab fewer problems, Nepalis entering India Lal Yaday, Yan Prasad Gautam and Krishna Sen Ichhuk have been killed, recently in order to escape the murder and violence in Nepal, are getting while Krishna Dhoj Khadka, woman aught between the security forces and leader Rekha Sharma, and youth the Maoists. Many have been leaving leaders Shiva Dangi, Tara Bhandari the bordering Indian states and going and Shashi Shrestha, etc have been inland. As the Maoists wreak havoc in arrested. The Maoist information Nepal and then seek refuge in India, network has also been assaulted the Indian public is beginning to On the other hand, the Maoist uspect any Nepali of being a Maoist. entral command is vertically split. Children of resident Nepalis being Our sources say that powerful central enrolled in schools in India are often committee and politburo members

Two years after I was made responsible for running Nepal Television, I have been inceremoniously kicked out, instead of being ewarded for my work because I did not carry out the orders of Minister lof Information and Communication Java Prakash Gunta

Durga Nath Sharma, former general manager, Nepal Television in Nepal Samacharpatra.

Television drama

I tried to ensure that NTV was broadcast to all 75 districts before being transmitted in the west loverseas]. Minister Gupta was pressuring me to take a loan of Rs 100 nillion to transmit Nepal TV abroad. I was called to the ministry Thursday.

knew there was going to be a scene and that they were trying to remove me. They sked me about the future plans and progress report of NTV, and said my policy was impractical, and asked why I hadn't sought any loans. My report, based on research by experts, said that Rs 40-50 million was required to set up an earth station. [Tapanath] Shukla said that he could get one for Rs 15 million. I said, go ahead. It

was all a drama to try to remove me. A while ago, Minister Gupta pressured me to get people he was backing into NTV. They'd done hadly even in the written test. I didn't want to add points to ensure that incapable people got jobs, and so I lost my job.



residents who suffered any injustice Nepali residents stress that the



HISTORY

Back at Sundarijal >17

6th February

Sundarijal: I discussed with GM the line of defence in our case. I read out a portion of the defence arguments that I have prepared—it is not a defence of our case against the specific charges brought by the government against us-it is a formal statement of our line of action in pursuance of our political ideology and conviction. I am not satisfied with what I've already written, because I am not vet clear what line we have to adopt-whether it should be such a one which shouldn't totally kill the chances of possible dialogue with the King or we should go in for a categorical statement of our policy, line, and proposals regardless of the consequence of such a stand. GM doesn't seem to see the difference. He thinks that if the King is himself in need of a dialogue he will open it whatever we may say in the court and if he is not interested then any opening that we may leave in our statement for negotiation wouldn't be taken advantage of by him. I am not so convinced of his argument. After all a statement purporting to expres an attitude of reconciliation or compromise or even at the minimum level hint towards a dialogue would definitely be differently worded than one that has no such intention. In any event the King is not going to open a dialogue with us, whatever we state before the court, then it is better that we should also state our political [ideology] as clearlyaddressing it not to the King, but to the people in general. A soft statement in the present context is fruitful only when a corresponding response is expected from the other side. If that is not forthcoming, then a soft statement is worse than useless. It will definitely not be politic or in accordance with the revolutionary ethics. The palace is ominously silent and we are totally cut off from the outside world. W don't know what developments are taking place outside. Hence my dilemma as to the nature of the statement we have to make. Perhaps

BP's mind is on his trial and he, with Ganesh Man Singh, plan their defence. BP says that regardless of the outcome of the trial, he wants the document to be a testament for wants the document to be a testament for posterity of what he and his colleagues have been fighting for. But this energetic frame of mind soon disappears when BP acknowledges that he isn't doing too well physically, and that the prison authorities are doing their best to keep them totally cut off from the world— own a request for writing account of the world even a request for writing paper must go to the headquarters.

"We are totally cut off from the outside world."

the government is very shrewdly acting in keeping us in total darkness about the developments that must be taking place subsequent to our arrival at Kathmandu.

7th February 1977

Sundarijal: Did some washing-bathed. It continues to be cold. Water continues to freeze. A barber was sent and GM had his hair cut. I cut my hair myself, hence I did not make use of his presence. There was some quessing as why the barber was sent to us without our asking for him. Why are they interested in our looking trim. Will somebody see us from home? Then GM remembers that his shoes have not been delivered to him. or his jacket, even his watch. Hence we dismiss the guess. Got three days newspapers together-yesterday and day before

ing holidays they hadn't come. Yesterday was bida [holiday] some guruji had died day before. Chyanta Guruji perhaps. I knew him in 1ª is one of the judges who tried me during Mohan S's time. [Mohan Sumshere, Rana prime minister at the time of the Nepal-India Friendship Treaty, during whose reign King Tribhuvan went into exile, and who first enthroned King Gyanendra. During this time, the Nepali Congress had stepped up its activities to overthrow the Rana oligarchy.1 He was particularly nasty with me. Thereafter the revolution of 1950-51 he became friendly with me and wanted me to take his sons under my wing. Spent the afternoon reading the papers; took a nap of 20 minutes. Since vesterday I am perhaps just enough relaxed to get a midday sleep of 20 minutes. It used to be my practice, but since my detention this time I couldn't get a wink of sleep during the day time-because of high tension. The gradual resumption of

this habit of siesta is a healthy indication of my mind

Since I had some bleeding form the nose-yesterday and today, I didn't do my usual pranayam of both the Sandyaa. I did usual exercise in the morning, but gave it up in the evening. The bleeding is perhaps due to cold weather and dry wind-or it may be due to some serious trouble. Although I have asked for a doctor, they don't send him. This time the medical facilities are not adequate and the service is not at all prompt. Considering the feudal treatment given to us, the noncompliance of our request for doctors appears to be in keeping with their policy of keeping us in total isolation. Since we arrived here the doctors visited only twice-one a general physician and the other a dentist. I get constant headache. It may also be due to cold: but it may be due to something else also. Combined with the bleeding of the nose, the headache may be a symptom of some real trouble

8th February 1977

A very sinister tendency on the part of the jail authority-whoever they are-was evident today when I was told that we couldn't get writing materials without specific authorisation from the HQ. I had asked for some plain sheets of paper; they brought 6 sheets. I said I need 6 Quires [reams of 6 x 24 sheets] whereupon the captain gave me the whole information that the matter has been referred to the higher authorities. I am aghast at this attitude. If I don't get writing paper, my life here will be extremely unbearable. GM suggests that we should make use of the newspapers to write on. We should cut them to exercise book size and write our notes or our ideas on the blank spaces available on the printed pages. Now we will have to do that most likely. It passes my comprehension as to the motive of this restriction. I have been asking for a doctor to examine my nose which has been bleeding for some time. The doctor too is not sent. Is it a design to victimise us or is it a precaution against out possible effort to contact people outside though the doctor or to smuggle our notes and messages through pipes or the cook or the sweeper. Anyway I am greatly disturbed. I have been homesick the whole day and was essed and a little ill also: on top of this the captain informs us in the evening that we won't get writing paper without specific sanction from the HQ. It is very awful. We are in such a helpless condition. Sometimes the thought to go on hunger strike occurs to me, but such action would be nothing short of suicide and would be absurd, in view of our total segregation from the outside world. The King would be happy to let me die without the world knowing that I died

Sometimes-mostly immediately after lunch-I feel extremely helpless. My intellect, my analysis says that we are on the right path and that we will ultimately win. But my psychology- my emotional reaction- is unaffected by my reasoning. I remain psychologically disturbed. How to get over this psychological weakness? If only I could still this psychological agitation!





Bahadur Thapa Magar, Nanda Kishor Pun (Pasang), Barsha Ram

But like other Indian security officials. he said, "Where are the Maoists in India? The Maoists are in Nepal. If they come here, we can only send them back." Despite this assurance, Maoists, including leaders and cadres,

who want to use the upcoming elections, Jana Morcha-style: Dinesh Sharma Dina Nath Gautam Basanta Shrestha, Bimala Subedi Devendra Paudel, Dev Nath Yadav who support talks with the

Ishwor Chandra Gyawaqli, Jai Krishan Goit, Kumar Dhakal, Kumar Shah, Ramesh Chaulagai Surya Yadav, Surya Thapa, Thamas Pariyar and Hemanta Prakash Oli, We have not been able to learn the names of seven other leaders government, but our sources tell us that Shakti Bahadur Basnet, Tilak Pariya, Uma Kanta Khanal and Jaya Puri Gharti could be among their

looked on with suspicion by the Mohan Baidhya (Kiran) Ram school administration According to resident Nepali earlier, members of the Nepali Ekata Samai, an organisation closely affiliated with the Maoists and currently banned, would trouble people for donations Recently their activities have decreased. Tilak Kaku, a high-ranking Indian security official om Uttar Pradesh, told Samachamatra that Indian securit

officials were prepared to help Nepali

against talks with the government is visible within the party. Prachanda supporters like CP Gaiurel, Haribol Gaiurel, Pampha Bhushal, Hisila Yami, Prakash Dahal, Agni Sapkota, Dr Baburan Bhattarai, Suresh Ale Magar, Shakti Lamsal want to use peace talks as a tool to distract the government from its operation against the Maoists. A third fraction, led by Goral

Khambu and other leaders Jhakku Prasad Subedi, Dipak Dahal, Chatur Man Rajbanshi, is trying to distance itself from both the Prachanda Path and the Badal Path. There are still other Maoist leaders

numbers.

Pun, Poshta Bahadur Bogati, Top Bahadur Rayamajhi, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, Dev Gurung,

Matrika Yadav, Santosh Buda (Rolm) Bam Dev Chhetri and Buddhi Yonian are firmly agains any talks with the government. A vertical split between those for and

as a result of hunger strike. I therefore rule out hunger strike. What else can I do here in this stark isolation?



14 cuty

FILM

Austin Powers in Gold Member at GAA Hall. Thamel. 23 August. 5PM. Rs 50 per head.

EXMIRITION

Colorgraph prints by Ragini Upadhayay-Grela. 17 Auguat-15 September, Siddhartha Art Gallery, 11AM-6PM, except Saturdays. 218048

EVENTS

- The Second Bagmati River Festival Kavak and raft flotilla starting from Sundariial and ending at Thapathali, 23 August, friendsofthebagmatinepal@yahoo.com **Rain dance** DJ Ozzie at th poolside lawn. Hotel de l'Annaourna. Rs 300. 2PM-7PM. 24 August
- SAAN St Augustine's Alumni of Nepal School Day dinner, get-together. 28 August, Wednesday, 6PM, Hotel Nirvana Garden, Thamel, dinner Rs 350 per head. saan_sasonians@hotmail.com or Razzu Tuladhar 9810-26357. Tickets also at venue.
- Teei & Food festival Celebrating the colour of Negali women at the Shangri-la Kathmandu, 24 August 9AM-7PM Free entrance. 412999
- Eather Watrin 3 on 3 Street Basketball Championship followed by dance party and concert featuring Albatross, X - marica, Nastic and more. GAA Hall, Thamel, 24 August, 1PM on, Rs 200. Cosmic Party 2002 Bowling party with DJ, lights, food, drink at Bowling Boulevard. 24 August, 3PM on. Tickets Rs 400 at Bowling Boulevard, Kantipath. mg@mail.com.np.

CEMINAR

ELD seminars 3 September: Conflict Management, 4 September: Negotiation, 5 September: Team Building, 2 - 6 September: Developing Project Proposals. Per workshop Rs 1,500, Rs 1,200 (NGO), Rs 900 (student). Details at www.eld orouxik.early registration at eld@wilnk.com.nb. 541 fe13 First aid and rescue at high altitude Free week-long training workshops by Jacques Beaume. 22 September onwards, Alliance Francaise, 241163

- The Jazz Commission at Fusion with Vidhea singing jazz, blues and more. Fridays, Fusion Bar, Dwarika's Hotel, 7PM on, 479488 New music at the Nanglo Bakery Cafés Thursdays The Thunders at The
- Bakery Café, Teku, Fridays Strings at the Nanglo Café & Pub, Darbar Marg, Sundays The Thunders at the Bakery Café, Baneswor. Shangri-La Re-Unites Prism Friday nights live at the Jazz Bar, starting 8 PM.
- www.hotelshangrila.com. 412999

- 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, Kilrov's of Kathmandu.
- Thamel 250440 Happy Hour at Splash Bar & Grill Buy one, get one free. Live music Wednesdays and Fridays with Barbeque, Radisson Hotel 5 30 PM-7 30 PM, 411818

- Buy one get one free Cuisine Du Jour, Shangri-la Kathmandu, Rs 700. 412999 Vegetarian specialties with membership discount for Nepalis and expats at the Stupa View
- Restaurant & Terrace Roudha 480262 Weekend lunch by the pool Includes swimming, Rs 700 nett per person, students get 50 nercent off with ID Dwarika's Hotel 479488

CETAWAYS

- Secret Garden weekend Local residents buy one night for \$99 plus tax and get the second at 50 percent, single or double with special discounted add-ons. Dwarika's Hotel. 479488
- * Monsoon mists Horseshoe Resort, Mude two-and-half hours from Kathmandu. Nature walks, birdwatching, drizzle walks, Finnish sauna. resort@horshoe.wlink.com.np
- Monsoon Madness Buy a two-night three-day package for Rs 5000 at Shangri-la Village, Pokhara, get Rs 5000 in coupons for the Shngri-La in Pokhara or Kathmandu. 412999
 The Great Godavari Getaway Special weekend packages including room with breakfast and
- dinner, 25 percent discount on health club facilities. Godavari Village Resort. 560675

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



by midweek next week we may begin to see more of the sun. KATHMANDU VALLEY





23 - 29 AUGUST 2002 NEPALI TIMES

Theories of Development: Concepts and Applications William Grain Prentice-Hall, New Jersey, 1980/1992 R: 900

rom Locke and Rousseau to Piaget, Freud and Skinner, scholars have advanced our undertanding of psychological development. In addition, Grain discusses the idea of conditioning as advanced by Pavlov, Erikson's eight stages of life, Jung's theory of adulthood and Chomsky's theory of language development. Grain ends with an exploration of the relationship between umanistic psychology and developmental theory.



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A love triangle with a twist. What would you do i Muihse Dosti Karoge? the one you loved was not actually the one you pved? What would you do if your best friend was in ove with the one you love? What would you do if ou knew your best friends are sacrificing their love or you? Raj (Hrithik Roshan), Pooja (Rani Mukherji) and Tina (Kareena Kapoor) are three best friends thrown into situations that time, letters



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SOM BALE e day hundreds of years ago, it is said, that a tribal hunter called Keragomba Dorje was hunting in an alpine meadow in the Himalaya The hunter, chasing a wild blue sheep, came upon Milerapa deep in meditation. Before the hunter could kill his prev, the thoughtful Lama different persuaded him not to do so. That day

NATURE

a hunter turned conservationist. Today leopard encountering livestock, rather in Manang's Nyeshang valley is a caw than its natural prey, blue sheep, are known after Milarepa's disciple. The lessons of Milarepa have stayed in far higher. Manang Valley supports urge populations of blue sheep-up to Manang valley, where nature is still eight per sq km-but the number of considered the abode of the spirit livestock is equally high, and the biomass of yaks is almost three times world and where all animals are as high as that of blue sheep. In This, at least, is what I figured out addition because of the influence of tourism and changing lifestyle after working in the rain-shadow valley for four years with the King Mahendra patterns, the number of sheep and

Trust for Nature Conservation's goats being bred has increased; these (KMTNC) Appapurps Conservation animals are far more vulnerable to Area Project (ACAP) in the early snow leopard attack than yaks. nineties. But I also learnt about how There are currently 300-500 occasionally, snow leopards are killed enow learning-about one-tenth of the by hired shepherds mostly from world's snow leopard population—in adjacent districts, in retribution for the the 2,200 km sq Nepal's eight animals having attacked the villagers national parks, conservation areas and hunting reserves cover. And since sheep, goats and expensive horses. In conservation ecology this is called 1973, snow leopards have been "culling", and it stopped being allowed protected internationally by the

Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and in Nepal under the National Park and Wildlife Conservation (NPWC) Act

> Manang depend on animal herding for their livelihood, they've been petitioning ACAP for close to a decade now to allow the culling of problematic snow leopards to continue. Now for ACAP, or rather, the King Mahendra Trust, to allow this, it must first get approval from the government, but none of Nepal's conservation laws address the possibility of culling endangered species, no matter how much damage they cause. And thus the stalemate continues and instead of conservation professionals understand ing more about the snow leopard, Manang and figuring out possible alternatives to this practice, they seem o know even less than they did before Just a couple of months ago, a collesque of mine rushed into my office to break the 'news' that some 20-22 snow leopards had been killed in Manang. The rumour, he told me, was all over our small conservation

community. I was perplexed and shocked by the news, not because so

ntion on International Trade in

killing these animals means having schools to create widespread awareness that it is illegal to kill snow leonards. One of the reasons such a baseless

work once we look beyond just the big cat. many snow leopards met their maker

> their fellow workers and agencies are doing. This is in evidence even in His Maiesty's Government, which does not recognise that the Annapurna

Conservation Area has the same value for concernation as a national park Annapurna, Nepal's largest protected area, is missing from the list, even though the project was one of the first that linked ecology and the economy in what has since become an internationally recognised conservation model. Also since 2000 the King Mahendra Trust has initiated a \$2.1 million biodiversity project in Upper Mus with support from major donors. This is the most expensive undertaking in

is essential for the long-term management of the country's resources. In the absence of coordination and cooperation, any measures against enviror mental degradation tend to be shortterm, because there simply isn't





around. As for mistakes, it just becomes easier to hide them and longer to find out.

There's another hot rumour now the Nepal Country Action Plan, that i being drafted for the snow leopard. It is typically ironic that I did not hear about it formally in Nepal but at the recent Snow Leopard Survival Summit in Seattle in May, where I represented Nepal on behalf of the King Mahendra Trust So we have a management organised.

in Chicago.)





hard to find, and that to protect the snow leopard means its habitat and neighbours all need to be protected too, the story in Manang Valley is a bit In Manang, the chances of a snov

their sins transferred to your own life Another folktale describes the snow leopard as a 'fence' for crops, meaning that in the absence of snow leopards livestock would be free ranging and invade crop fields. So, folk wisdom,





rumour takes root is that conservation agencies in this country tend to be somewhat oblivious to the work that

tion by the endangered cats, almost non-existent in Manang. Moreover, in places like Manang, strong religious sentiments are agains such mass killing particularly onen the snow leopard's legendary place in local folklore. Mananges believe that snow leopards (and domestic cars) an born to remove the sins of past lives:

the history of conservation in Nepal devoted to the cause of the snow leopard. The effort to conserve the snow leopard simultaneously in Mustang and adjoining Manang With all these efforts, the truth about something like this snow

leopard rumour would be easy to find out, and the whole process of conservation, and reducing the conflic ween humans and animals would be significantly better informed, if not easier, if there were a well-coordinated central database for biodiversity, which











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Our efforts to protect the snow leopard will

but because of the naiveté of Nepali conservationists and managers. A quarter of a century after snow leopards n Nepal were first radio-tagged and efforts were started to know more about this secretive cat, they still did not know something very basic: that such massacre needed either a massive poisoning campaign or shooting fron the air, the tools and techniques for neither of which could conceivabl

work in a place like Manang. For another, less than 15 snow leopards may roam in the entire Upper Manang valley. After all, it is just about 600 km sq. and only a third of it is suited

ecologically speaking. The effort required to intentionally

hunt a snow leopard in such a wild, desolate land is enormous, even for the local hunters who are now anyway

But, since the inhabitants of

here is one day in the year when Nepali guys can make even bigger asses of themselves than they do the other days in the year, and that day is today. (And gals, I've just been informed, can make ienny asses of themselves)

Guy

But the question troubling all able-bodied Nepali males of reproductive age is this: are we really prepared for this year's Guy Jatra? Can we in our heart of hearts. say with full self-assurance that our level of idiocy meets international standards? Unfortunately, the answer to both questions is: What's that question again?

It is only now becoming clear that we have been seriously by on the irreverence from

in the last fiscal year and to make up for this deficit the government has formed a 127-member All-Nepal Guy Jatra Celebration Standing Committee led by the Primeval Minister to mark this year's Cowdung Day with wilder abandon than ever before. All government orifices will be required to eliminate with colourful lights their buildings for three nights, national flags will be sent to the dry cleaners, and Nepali missions abroad will be using this opportunity to apprise the leaders of their host nations of the rapid strides taken by Nepal in the field of farce and buffoonerv after the restoration of democracy. Back home, all of us in the press are

required to mark Guy Jatra by mandatorily publishing the following recent news items from the national press:

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Politics No Laughing Matter: Minister

KATHMANDU (RSS) - The Minister of Parody and Satire has said that he fails to see the joke in the ongoing political crisis in the country, and has cautioned all citizens to refrain from laughing out loud in public since it would hurt the morale of the armed forces. The minister made the remark after inaugurating a

three-day interaction programme on the theme "Are Our Politicians Clowns?" in Sat Dobato Thursday during which participants could barely suppress their laughter and fell into the aisles clutching their bellies. Answering questions from journos in a post-

interaction ambush, the minister warned: "How can they expect politicians to be serious about their jobs when they keep poking funny things at us? Don't they know it tickles

CIA sues CIAA

LANGLEY, VA. (Reuters) - The Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) has decided to take Nepal's Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) to the International Court of Justice in The Hague for infringement of copyright by adopting an acronym that could "create confusion among customers".

atra

"We've been around for a lot longer, and the Nepali watchdog should have known better than to have a brand name so similar to ours," spokesman Stan Spooksky told a press conference at CIA headquarters at Langley Thursday.

Under My Hat

bv Kunda Dixit

Spooksky said that the CIA switchboards had "lit up like a fourth of July sky" after the CIAA watchdog announced a sweep of corrupt tax officials in Nepal. "A

Schicklgurber suspected lot of neonle thought we that the image may have were involved in the heen stolen raids, and of course w "The art dealer called m are nowhere near that and offered to sell me a theatre of operations, golden Buddha head from we have our hands full Nepal," recalls Schicklgruber. "On 29 April, here at home." In Kathmandu he came to Vienna and CIAA officials said they showed us his object. We had received the court were quite surprised. Never summons, but were before had I seen anything not backing down. "If quite so beautiful." they don't like our The Buddha's head turned out to be a rare, and acronym, tough.'

larger-than-life size Dipankar said a CIAA opera-Buddha mask from the 17th tive, but conceded century which is venerated in "We wouldn't mind the annual Samvak procesdropping the last sion in Patan. The head is 'A', and negotiating about one meter high made a merger. of copper and bronze, firegilded and painted. It is Nepal Has World's Largest Ass

KATHMANDU (Animal Planet) - The Guinness Book of World Records has added new entries from Nepal in its coming edition which includes a young Nepali scientist who has designed the world's fastest clock.

"It's a marvel of engineering, you just wind it up, and it will race against time to be ahead of clocks in any other part of the world," said Dr Baidyanath Upadhyayay of the Royal Nepal Academy of Scientific Technology. "This is another feather in Nepal's cap, since we already have the world's tallest dwarf." In a separate development, a recent survey of wild asses in the trans-Himalaya have proved beyond doubt that Nepali asses are on average the biggest asses in the

hind quarters we measured had stature, and they made perfect asses of themselves," said veteran zoologist, Dr Roger Schnell. Meanwhile, the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) has been declared Nepal's most rightwing party, while the present government has been found to be the most-partisan partyless system in

the world at the present time



prosecutor began investigation, and lawyers in Vienna. Germany, and the Royal Nepal Embassy in Berlin have been looking at the mined how the Buddha came legal implications. The to be in Europe, and whether Buddha consists of five it was stolen. Schicklgruber components (head, crown necklace and ear pendants contacted a Nenal expert at the Department of Tibetology and all five bear the seal of and Buddhism at Vienna Nepal's Department of University who in turn

Archaeology, which could be emailed a photo and descripgenuine or fake. The seal is tion of the Buddha to a required to take any religious

The answer came

The Austrian state



department was reportedly promptly the next day: yes, informed about the theft only this was the very Dipankar on 15 March. Buddha stolen from Nag Did the five parts get their Bahal A Nenal nolice report export-approval seals from of the theft was also sent. the department before that Austrian police and Interpol day? And there are other were then notified, and the questions: who were the Buddha was confiscated by thieves, was bribery incourt order to be stored at volved, who were the middlemen, can the German the museum until it could be dealer prove that he was legally repatriated to Nepal. acting in "good faith"? But these questions don't trouble Schicklaruber He only wants to find out the fastest way to get the Buddha back to Nepal. He says, "This image plays an important role in the living. religious culture of Nepal in particular the Buddhists of Patan." 🔶

Erwin Melchart is a journalist with the Vienna paper, Kronen Zeitung.



CDO Regd No. 194/056/57 Lalitpur, Central Region Postal Regd. No. 04/058/59

rom 🖒 🖬 The Dipankar Buddha was stolen from a family custodian in Nag Bahal in Patan on the night of 17 January this year (see "Lost and Found Buddha", Nepal

Times #94). It resurfaced

when the German dealer

tried to sell it to the Vienna

Ethnographic Museum in April. But the Museum's

South Asia, Dr Christian

"Never before had

hing quite so bea