

"Thank you Orbit...! for fulfilling my abroad study dreams"

TEST PREPARATION Foreign Language Classes

Abroad Study PROGRAM

Preeti Sitaula Miss Nepal 2003

Orbit Int'l Education

Kathmandu: Putalisadak, Tel: 4430742, 4430677, 4443504, e-mail: orbit@info.com.np
Pokhara: Mahendrapul, Tel: 061 531171, e-mail: branch.pokhara@orbitedu.com

DAUGHTER SLAUGHTER

More innocent victims as a senseless war enters its 11th year

NARESH NEWAR in NAWALPARASI

In the dusty village of Debda VDC, the death of young college student Asmita Chapagain has left villagers numb with shock.

On 9 February, Asmita was blown up by a roadside bomb planted by Maoists along the Mahendra Highway near Sunuwal. Asmita's friend Purnima Thapa watched her body fly 100m when the massive bomb hidden under a pile of rocks exploded.

"Everything looked so peaceful, there were rocks blocking the road and as we passed there was a huge explosion," recalls Purnima, surrounded by dozens of friends and family members at Asmita's house. The five girls were cycling home after shopping at the Indian border market, Thutibari.



There is still no official report on how the bomb was triggered but villagers believe that the Maoist set it off when they saw injured soldiers being transported in jeeps belonging to two national dailies that were marked 'Press'.

As rebel leaders Prachanda and Baburam were busy giving interviews to mark the 10th anniversary of their revolution, there

was scant attention to the hundreds of innocent Nepalis like Asmita who have been killed for no reason.

Asmita was dead, so Purnima tried to get help for her other three injured friends from soldiers who had started blocking the highway. "They told me to shut up and not utter another word," she recalls. Eventually, Asmita's body and the injured were carried 15km to the village on a rickshaw.

The army itself was demoralised after losing 16 of its men in the deadly ambush while they were trying to remove the booby-trapped barriers across Nepal's main highway.

Continued p4



MOURNING: Kul Kumari Chapagain mourns her daughter Asmita (left) killed by a Maoist bomb in Nawalparasi last week.

MARTY LOGAN

Editorial p2
My kingdom for a horse

Times nepalnews.com Weekly Internet Poll # 286

Q. The past 10 years of conflict has:

Total votes: 7,320

- Destroyed Nepal 86.3%
- No change 3%
- Improved Nepal 9.2%
- Don't know 1.5%

Weekly Internet Poll # 287. To vote go to: www.nepalintimes.com

Q. What is your impression of the interviews by Maoist leaders in the past week?

Wall & Floor Tiles

Home Furnishers

Tripathi, 254 Tripathi (way to Thapathali), Nepal. Ph: 4254601, 4282243, Fax: 977-1-4261918

absolute lounge bar

Fusion Friday with Anil Shahi

17th Feb 06 7:30pm onwards

Press Freedom for Peace and Democracy

Times SUBSCRIBERS

Did your paper arrive on time this morning? If not, call our Complaints Hotline 9851054729 and talk to Santosh Aryal.

The new Apple iPod 30GB / 60GB

- 15,000 songs
- 25,000 photos
- 150 hours of video.

iTrip, Car charger, Covers also available.

Authorized Reseller for Nepal

D&D International

Khichapokhari, Kathmandu
Tel: 4248895, 4244408
Fax: 4225479

ORDER BY PHONE
Mobile: 98510 36757

ONE YEAR Warranty



Published by Himalmedia Pvt Ltd, Chief Editor: Kunda Dixit
 Desk Editor: Mary Logan
 Design: Kiran Maharjan Web: Bhusan Shilpakar
 Vice-president Corporate Affairs: Sneha Sayami
 Advertising: Sambhu Guragain advertising@himalmedia.com
 Subscription: subscription@himalmedia.com
 Hatiban, Godavari Road, Lalitpur
 GPO Box 7251, Kathmandu Tel: 5543333-6, Fax: 5521013
 Printed at Jagadamba Press, Hatiban: 5547018

This way, please

His Majesty must immediately abandon his current roadmap

To mark the first anniversary of his direct rule, His Majesty King Gyanendra summed up the situation: terrorist activities have been largely controlled and are limited to stray incidents, the nation has been saved from becoming a failed state, the peoples' strongest desire is for peace, democracy and development, to strengthen meaningful democracy, the

GUEST COLUMN
Ajit N S Thapa



government would hold elections at all levels within 15 months, the crown's interest was only to uphold the glorious tradition of our history and to work in the interest of the people and finally

an appeal to all to forget the bitter past and to reconcile in the national interest.

If the king's analysis had been correct and if he was sincere in delivering on his promises, we would soon achieve peace and be on the road to democracy. Unfortunately, even as he addressed the nation and in these two weeks after, the Maoists have intensified their attacks on security forces extending the death and destruction. The regime feels that the Maoists must surrender their arms before it will begin to negotiate, which is a very wrong appreciation of the ground reality.

The king is trying to consolidate his hold by blaming and sidelining the parties, the parties are blaming the king for his unconstitutional and regressive acts and signing the 12 point agreement with the Maoists to fight against the king's authoritarian rule and for the establishment of total democracy, the Maoists are engaged in their hopeless quest for the forceful overthrow of the old order and replacing it with a 'democratic republic'.

Although the regime gave itself the task of controlling corruption, implementing good governance and de-politicisation of the civil service, its main agenda seems to be holding elections at any cost, even if the political parties do not agree to participate in them.

As the uncertainty and delays continue, there are some self-evident truths about the past 10 years of conflict:

- The nation and its people can

no longer sustain this conflict and thus the urgency of a peace process

- There is no military solution. (In recent interviews even Prachanda gives indications of the Maoists' willingness to resolve the conflict through dialogue if minimum demands are met).

- The international community and civil society are more than willing to help mediate or facilitate.

- There is a need to evolve a new paradigm to address state restructuring for the devolution of power.

- Also for inclusive political participation of all people through proportional representation in parliament on the basis of total electoral votes secured.

- All actors must seek a solution: the king gracefully accepting a genuine constitutional role as befits a monarch in the 21st century, the political parties atoning for past mistakes and committing themselves to internal democracy and the Maoists demonstrating a willingness to renounce violence and accept the verdict of constituent assembly polls.

It has now fallen upon His Majesty to make a bold and historic decision to accept the verdict of the people for peace, democracy and development. He should immediately abandon his current road map, restore press freedom and invite political parties, the Maoists and members of civil society to a national conference that would chart out the direction to peace and the return to constitutional rule. •

Ajit N S Thapa is a NC-D Central Committee member.

MY KINGDOM FOR A HORSE

The Maoists, like comrades everywhere, have always been big on anniversaries. In past Februaries they blockaded the capital, intensified their shutdowns and alienated the very people they professed to liberate.

This 10th year, Prachanda and Baburam have unleashed a blitzkrieg of interviews from across the southern border. The usually cynical Nepali intelligentsia has been so impressed with the hope of transformation in the strategy of the insurgents that there is a sense of cautious optimism that something somewhere is about to give.

Actually, there is nothing terribly new in the interviews: the comrades haven't renounced violence, they persist in their standard three-point demand and they want the army to be under command of the people. Even with his 'exile or execution' reply to Charles Haviland, Prachanda was just being specific about something his cadre have been saying all along in public meetings across the country.

The real question is: what is the strategy behind the interviews? Why now? What now?

Despite his bravado, Prachanda and his cohorts need to be a bit more self-critical. They are blaming everyone except themselves for the destruction of this country over the past 10 years. Foreign interference has intensified, democracy has been dismantled, development is set back decades, the monarchy is more powerful than ever and the comrades are nowhere near victory.

But given the regime's lack of reaction so far, it is obvious the rebels have once more stolen the public relations spotlight. The message has hit home: by putting a face to the revolution the comrades have indicated they want a face-saving way to enter the political mainstream.

It would be natural for the royal regime not to trust the Maoists. But they can be tested and a reciprocal gesture, even if it is just a gesture, would not be construed by anyone as a sign of weakness. By dismissing or ignoring it, the palace-army combine will be sending the message that it in fact wants the war to continue so it can be solely in charge.

The country has seen enough violence, death and destruction over the past decade to ignore even the slightest hint of peace. The bottom-line question for the Nepali people is this: is the need for one man to have more power worth the continued misery and torment of an entire nation?

It is too late for the palace to concede what it could have given two months ago to resolve this. In two months time, no concession may suffice to stay on the saddle. King Richard III had a similar predicament.



ROBIN SAYAMI

Coping with court jesters

There is competition among the royal ministers to say the most outlandish things

In the royal council of ministers chaired by the king, the competition to become the chief court jester is a keen one. Left to himself, vice-chairman Tulsi Giri has a good chance. As the most loyal of the royal propagandists he is famous for pronouncements like "we have broken the Maoists' spine".

Foreign Minister Ramesh Nath Pandey gives Giri strong competition. He thinks he has convinced the international community about the constitutionality of his chairman.

Home Minister Kamal Thapa is

an expert at inventing inventions to deride dissent. But none of the above can match the panache of our very own misinformation minister Shrish Shamsheer Rana.

Connoisseurs of artful harangue have an earful listening to all the king's men every night on television. Most of what they say is so tasteless and off-putting that only the state media runs the entire statements—the rest do them a favour a by running just excerpts. It seems minister Rana isn't

content to be just the arbitrator of good journalism. He also wants to be the monitor, regulator, prosecutor and the judge. He hinted that a 'professional body' is to be formed to keep independent media in check. Now that a more high-profile all-in-one royal commission created to fight 'corruption' has been silently cremated, Mr Rana may have to rethink his strategy.

In this age of doublespeak, words like objectivity, impartiality, neutrality and professionalism have become the hot favourites. Rana and his ilk are wont to deride the 'one-sided' view of journalists of the democratic persuasion. A caucus of journalists loyal to the regime has been created to counter the influence of media-persons committed to peace and democracy. We are told by the self-appointed moral police of the press that journalists should cease to be activists and maintain their neutrality. They say we are biased and should strive for professionalism.

Crusading against political bias in the independent media is usually the preoccupation of elitists. In a profession that deals with public issues such as

journalism, law and education, the line separating objectivity with activism is extremely thin. Should lawyers defend serial killers? It is a question that has vexed media for generations. No code of conduct can lay down the rules when subjectivity has to be the ultimate consideration.

Consider a hypothetical situation where a publicity-conscious terrorist informs a BBC reporter his intention to blow up Big Ben at a certain date and time. Should reporters keep the confidence of the source, watch the destruction and report the tragedy as an impartial observer or should they inform the police and protect the monument? When democracy is being dismantled, when its basic freedoms are in jeopardy do we continue with journalism-as-usual or is there a higher calling? Is it sufficient to be 'objective' about a threat that is determined to wrest away your freedom?

Journalistic ethics are to society what morals are to a person—a set of values that give meaning and purpose to human life. When the constitutionality of a regime is itself questionable, the

government has no moral authority to demand accountability from any professional, not even when they are on its own payroll.

A crisis of confidence has begun to afflict even the security ranks. During the civic polls a group of dedicated soldiers in plainclothes went to a polling booth in Kathmandu and demanded that their thumbnails be marked. They said that they weren't interested in casting their votes but needed proof of having voted to keep their commanding officer in good humour. Did they act according to the tenets of professionalism or did they violate their oath?

There is more to the profession of journalism than mere reporting. At the very least journalism is an act of interpretation and subjectivity can't be divorced from any activity that requires the use of personal judgement.

Messrs Giri, Pandey, Thapa and Rana come from a very long line of court jesters dating back to Shakuni, a wacky manipulator in Mahabharata. However outrageous their pronouncements, they serve a purpose. •

STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal



Home Minister Kamal Thapa is

LETTERS

THIS WAY

In 'Which way?' (#285) Kunda Dixit outlines in a sober and balanced way the sorry situation facing the country and the debacle of the 'years of democracy' followed by the present impasse. In the conclusion he quotes Harka Gurung saying, "a constituent assembly is the only antidote". I as well as many others fail to see the logical connection between getting rid of the king and eliminating corruption, incompetence and nepotism in the political parties and in all levels of governance in the nation. Please kindly illuminate us. The rhetoric of the political parties has been directed exclusively at the king, not a single word has been used by them to explain to us how they will solve those crucial problems of the country. They just say "put us back in power completely then we will see" and they have been good in exploiting to their advantage the mistakes made by the government, forgetting completely their own. Moreover, the recent interviews with the Maoist leadership clearly show their twisted and dangerous logic and they have clearly stated that they reserve the right to go back to violence whenever they would find it necessary. How the parties can trust them is anybody's guess. By the way thank you for the useful chronology 'Ten year timeline' in the same issue. You should have included though also some important points of the political scenario like the proposal the king made to the parties in 2001 to form a government of national unity, a proposal that was thrown back in his face by the parties.

S K Aryal, email

● Even with such grave threats of bodily harm and serious consequences, a turnout of 50,000 must be considered a massive number in municipal elections. Imagine what the figure would have been minus the violence and threats lingering behind the majority of the Nepali public. We must admit that our political leaders are not capable leaders. They are 100 percent Indian backed, with Indian mentality and are more Indian than Nepali, therefore dismissed as anti-nationals, until they stand up as Nepalis.

Paras Dewan, email

● The writing is on the wall for King Gyanendra if he wants to see it: the 21 percent turnout in last week's civic polls was a referendum and only one-fifth of the people voted for an interventionist king.

Gyan Subba, email

● Despite everything I am optimistic after reading 'Which way?'. Historically since 2007 BS there have been radical changes 10 years after they were first raised. So perhaps the 10th anniversary of Maoist activities signals a change. Our family is originally from Palpa and I am devastated at the destruction of the town. It is not a strategic town, and the public outcry against its destruction has perhaps made the rebels realise their mistake. The elections have been a total failure, and the king lost fair and square. I think he will look for a compromise or even a way out of the mess. Prachanda, the hard man,

seems to have softened a bit and I think the king will have to reciprocate. Both probably realise now that there is no military solution. No powerful country now supports the royal regime. Besides, the country is going bankrupt so there is no time to lose.

S Khanal, email

DOUBLE STANDARDS

Your photograph of a beaming Dr Baburam Bhattarai (#285) with his interview was shocking and betrays the double standards of all the players in Nepal's political war. How can this man grin and not take responsibility for the thousands dead. And shame on you *Nepali Times* for having the cheek to publish it. Have you forgotten your journalistic ethics or do you remember them only when criticising those you oppose?

Name withheld, UK

● In his interview with *Nepali Times*, Baburam Bhattarai advises 'enlightened persons' to not get 'swayed by sentimentalism or idealism' when it comes to loss of Nepali lives. I am sorry, Mr Bhattarai, it does NOT take an 'enlightened' person to feel the pang of loss of loved ones. Of course it comes as no surprise that having ensconced himself in a safe-haven in India, to him Nepali lives are easily dispensable. If he asks the thousands who have been coerced into the Maoist forces, those families who have lost their loved ones and those who have been displaced, whether the 'sacrifice' is worth it, they would most likely reply in the negative, unlike Mr Bhattarai's 'affirmative' reply. As for the royal army being 'principally responsible for the high rate of loss of life', it was the Maoists who brought the army into the war with their initial attack on army barracks in Ghorahi, in 2001. Bhattarai's assertion that there is 'an increasing Maoist popularity in Nepal' is also a lie—support garnered at gunpoint cannot in any fair sense be construed as 'popularity'.

C Thapa

HOPELESS

CK Lal's 'Helpless, hapless, hopeless' (#285) has just expressed in perfect words what I could only scream in my own head. Unless these major political parties come to their senses (which they have not so far even now) as CK Lal has nicely explained we as helpless Nepalis have nothing to hope for. Even if the Chairman came to terms with them (wishful thinking), without their own conscience awakening and perhaps within party cleansing, I really don't see any outlet to the current impasse.

M Nammu, email

TOILET TALK

Your translation from *Jana Aastha* of 'Royal bathroom' (#285) shows your lack of exposure and knowledge. Every country has special facilities for heads of states, including the US, where a friend of mine is an architect. And Rs 200,000 is quite a modest sum for a bathroom these days. So don't go after bathrooms, go after corrupt political leaders to save Nepal if you can...

K Rana, email

PEOPLE'S VOICE

Deepa Rai's *Nepali Pan* column 'Violence and vengeance' (#285) echoes the feelings of many

expatriate Nepalis who feel the same way once in a while in their daily life. Just before reading her article, I was reading the interview of Baburam Bhattarai and I was amazed by the contrast in the sentiments expressed in her article and those of Baburam and like politicians who run our country by coercion. While ordinary people deplore violence and desire peace, the politicians are just happy to use violence as a means to their ends (the ends basically seem to have their way). For the Maoists it is basically to get rid of monarchy and for the government, it is basically to save the monarchy. The perpetrators of violence seem to have lost the civilised way of sorting out differences through dialogue, discussion and debate. As Deepa Rai says, the violence associated with the Maoists seems to eclipse the real agenda they started with, their 42-point demand.

Suni Shree, email

**SIKKIM AGAIN**

Your editorial ('The Long War', #285) is really disgusting. In fact, the mortal history of Sikkim is being repeated in Nepal. In 1973, India organised riots in front of the palace of Chogyal the way it is doing in Nepal in front of Narayanhiti. Just as the Indian agents in Sikkim did then, the parties in Nepal are also moving a formal request for protection from India. As Chogyal was abused, the king of Nepal is also being abused. India had only one

Lendup Dorje in Sikkim. The pride of our nation, we have many: Prachanda is number one and Baburam number two. Matters came to a head in 1975 when the Kazi appealed to his masters in Delhi for representation and change of status to Indian statehood because he was served with the threat of assassination. Prachanda is doing the same. Election was not the choice of anybody. What was needed was the 1975 referendum and merger of Sikkim in India. People have fought for centuries in the name of the motherland. We will too. But Nepal is certainly not Sikkim.

Sriram Chaudhary, email

STIGMATISED

I would like to draw attention to the inappropriate use of the psychiatric term schizophrenia in the title of the article by Kuldip Nayar ('Schizophrenic Nepal policy', #285). Schizophrenia is commonly used in the media as a metaphor for something that is viewed as being 'split' or a 'split personality'. The term has Greek roots 'schizo' (split, schism, or divided) and 'phrenos' (mind) and was selected by the psychiatrist who coined it at the beginning of the 20th century as he conceived of the disease as a mismatch between mood and thought. This made it vulnerable to misrepresentation as a 'split personality'. Schizophrenia is a serious mental illness that is characterised by disturbances in a person's thoughts, perceptions, emotions and behaviour. It affects approximately one in every hundred people worldwide and its onset is usually in adolescence or early adulthood, although it can also occur later in life. At present, schizophrenia cannot be cured but it can be controlled by medication (and other treatments). Research in the UK and the US has shown that stigmatising references to schizophrenia play a role in discouraging people from seeking treatment and can have a negative impact on the effect of

treatment. Such references can invoke negative, disparaging associations and if uncritically and widely accepted can play a role in the social rejection and well-being of people suffering from that illness. In Nepal where mental health problems are highly stigmatised and psychiatric services extremely limited the careless use of the term schizophrenia is regrettable.

Dr Judy Pettigrew, University of Central Lancashire

INDIA

Pradip (Letters, #285) sounds so very authoritative when he says 'one could literally hand over the plate called Nepal to India just to realise how much of a burden that would actually be to the southern neighbour'. Should that be the current foreign policy stance of our southern neighbour, then we could for once heave a sigh of relief and expect an end to the following torments: 13-year-old Bhutani refugee crisis thrust upon us, safe haven to Nepali rebels, regular inundation of Nepal's villages by Indian dams on the border against all international norms, endless hassles in trade and transit facilities against established international conventions, using Nepali politicians as surrogates for regime change in Nepal (as in 1951 and 1990 and not in-between 1960 and 1990) including no peacetime embargo against the landlocked neighbour. Pradip should also look around in India's immediate neighbourhood such as Bhutan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, not to mention Pakistan and Kashmir, to gauge whether it is only Nepal that is complaining. We know that democracy will definitely flourish in Nepal and deliver its people from chronic and abject poverty as long as our own politicians behave more responsibly. India could do an immense turn to Nepal by not using the latter's corrupt, unscrupulous and unprincipled leaders for its own ulterior ends.

Bihari Krishna Shrestha, Lalitpur

Mayos HOT & SOUR

chilli nights. lime lights.

It takes two to tango with Mayos Hot & Sour noodles. Feel the red hot chilli paste give in to a light lemony taste. Served hot, it bids cold feet "bye bye"!

Other active ingredients - Shrimp, Lemongrass & Bergamot Leaf.

Fire your Desire

“People shouldn’t die like dogs”



NARESH NEWAR

from p1

The Sunuwal battle was short but fierce. Faced with a surprise attack by overwhelming numbers, the soldiers didn't stand a chance. Local journalists reported that the Maoists gunned down soldiers who had already surrendered after telling them to run. Although the battle was reported in the national media, human rights activists who visited the site have yet to cite this violation of the rules of war. No politician or human rights activist has yet visited Asmita's family. The Maoists haven't bothered to apologise.

“We are just ordinary people so why would they come?” asks Asmita's father Somnath, dressed in white with his head shaved.

“We cremated her on Friday and that is the last I saw of my little girl,” says Asmita's mother, Kul Kumari. She tries to smile as she holds the hand of her youngest daughter, 15-year-old Bhuma. Asmita was the oldest of three

Chapagain daughters.

Ganga Tripathi was cycling with Asmita and was nearly killed by a shrapnel. The 24-year-old was evacuated by the army and is being treated at the Chaunni hospital. Ganga's mother can't contain it anymore and tells us: “People shouldn't be dying like dogs, we are fed up with this war.”

Despite the conciliatory tone of their leader's anniversary interviews, the Maoists have in fact stepped up their attacks in urban areas and along highways in recent weeks. In a bid to isolate Butwal from its rural hinterland, the rebels have placed hundreds of roadblocks in the west and north trying to lure security forces into ambushes.

On Wednesday, soldiers in hot pursuit of Maoists were again ambushed near the Nawalparasi-Palpa border. Three soldiers died and 15 were injured.

Local officials say they are taking a 'go-slow' approach in removing the piles of stones and tree trunks blocking the roads because of the fear of landmines and

SICK OF IT: Ganga Tripathi at home with her family after being discharged from hospital.

ambushes. “We have to be careful about ambushes and the army has learnt from its mistake of going in without being prepared,” explains Rupandehi CDO Gangadutta Awasthi.

But until the clearing begins, more villagers will risk death or injury from the roadside bombs and booby-taps in the rock barriers. On Sunday another bomb went off killing Paru BK, 18, of Sorauli village near

Butwal (See box).

What also scares villages is the CDO's announcement through local FM stations on Monday that they should be prepared for intensive house-to-house searches as the army hunts down rebels responsible for the attacks.

“Many of us could be beaten up and even arrested without any reason. How long should we suffer like this?” asks a local teacher who requested anonymity.

Most locals are not yet planning to leave their villages but echo the teacher's fears: “Where else can we go?” ●

Deadly trip to school

When Paru BK promised her mother on 12 February that she would come home as soon as she paid her teacher his tuition fee, her family had no inkling it would be the last time they would see her.

Less than an hour later, the 18-year-old was killed when a booby-trap bomb exploded at Tulbuliya Bridge, 14km west of Butwal. A drunk man was playing with a Maoist flag stuck in a blockade of stones when the roadside bomb detonated killing him and Paru, who was cycling nearby.

“I saw a huge cloud of black smoke and then I saw her thrown quite a distance,” recalls Paru's close friend, Kali Thapa, 17 (pictured, right) who was riding just a few metres behind her. Kali was only slightly injured by flying rocks but she is still in complete shock and has not been able to sleep since that day. Kali's relatives and neighbours are worried about her health.

Paru's mother has not been able to speak or eat since the death of her daughter, one of her six children. Neighbours are devastated and aren't sending their children to school.

“The level of fear is really high among the parents here who are afraid that their children might not return from school,” says teacher Khusiram Chaudhary whose Parba Parmeswar School closed temporarily after students stayed home.

Despite their loss and anger, the villagers are still afraid to criticise the Maoists who were responsible for snuffing out a young life. ●

Narash Newar



NARESH NEWAR

HIGH ROLLERS: Rickshaws roll toward the blockade five km from Butwal on the highway to Palpa on Sunday.



MARTY LOGAN

Road to

The blockade maybe lifted but who is going to lift Butwal's booby-trapped barriers?

MARTY LOGAN
in BUTWAL

(see page 1)

Saturday afternoon we had to manoeuvre our car around at least two-dozen piles of boulders or fallen trees on the main highway linking Nawalparasi and Rupandehi. Buses and large trucks that made the same detours tilted dangerously to one side as they drove on the soft shoulder.

The highway had reopened just hours earlier after hundreds of Maoists swooped down on security forces along a one-km stretch of the road Thursday, killing 16 plus one young woman riding her bike with friends.

We drove to Butwal but couldn't go any further. A pile of boulders blocked the highway to Dang, leaving just enough room for bicycles, motorcycles and rickshaws to pass.

Sunday morning we tried to leave again, this time driving towards Palpa. About five kms along the winding road flanked by steep green hills we were again blocked by a metre-thick tree that had been felled across the highway.

A saw cut showed where locals had tried to remove a chunk of the tree to reopen the road—but they were warned off

Rights 'tragedy'

The UN's human rights office in Nepal observed some positive trends during its first year of work but "it is a tragedy for the people of Nepal that full-scale conflict has now resumed" after the Maoists' unilateral ceasefire ended in January, said the office's representative Ian Martin on Thursday. Martin was releasing the report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights situation in Nepal, which will be presented to the 62nd session of the Commission on Human Rights, in Geneva in March. The four-month ceasefire "saw a marked reduction in killings of all kinds, although other violations by the CPN (Maoist) continued," said Martin, also stressing "the continuing responsibility of the state to clarify the many outstanding cases of disappearances from previous years."

Both sides continued to put civilians at risk, he added. "Investigations into clashes in Kichnas, Tansen, Phaparbari and Panauti found that each of the clashes occurred in highly populated areas, placing the civilian population in grave danger and combatants made use of civilian buildings, including schools."

End travel warnings

Foreign governments' travel advisories hurt Nepal's poor the most and should be replaced by another less harmful mechanism, says the Nepal Association of Tour Operators (NATO). About 750,000 people in the country depend on the tourism industry and in most parts of Nepal it is the only source of income. "In large parts of this country this industry has served as the only source of income for the people who are more often than not the sole breadwinners in their family and at least three people in turn are dependent on them," it added in a news release on Wednesday. In that context, it is difficult to see how the global plan to end poverty by 2015 can be achieved when travel advisories continue to affect the most vulnerable, according to NATO.

Airfares soar

Airfares for domestic flights will increase an average 17 percent starting Friday, says the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. Fares to remote areas will rise 11.8 percent while those for other areas are hiked an average 17.6 percent. The ministry says the changes are due to rising costs in the management of air services and higher fuel prices in the international market. Disabled persons, certified by the Social Welfare Council, will be eligible for 50 percent discounts under the new scheme. This is the first time airfares have increased since 2003. Fares paid in dollars remain unchanged.

NEW PRODUCTS



SMALL BUSINESS LOAN: NIC Bank has started its Small Business Loan Program offering loans ranging from Rs 500,000 to 10,000,000 with an interest rate of 8.99 percent. It also includes monthly instalments of six years, an overdraft account with a simple withdrawal and deposit system and no hassle paperwork.

CHILD DEVELOPMENT: Admissions are being accepted at the Highland Park Montessori International Child Development Centre in Sanepa for children 2-6 years of age. The school runs from 9AM to 3PM Monday to Friday, is fully licensed, meets local laws and regulations and is a member of AMI Montessori, USA.

Crowd control

What if such a show of large crowds is actually a wrong indicator of one's democratic strength?

For almost four years now, private-sector Nepali newspapers have been headlining photos that show large groups of people attending anti-government rallies in Kathmandu and elsewhere. From the other side of the fence, state-funded media too have been displaying images of large crowds of people turning up to greet the king wherever he goes. In either case, the accompanying reports point to the same conclusion: so many people cannot be wrong. In today's uncertain times in Nepal, showing off the size of one's crowd has become a convenient indicator that's supposed to validate the public strength of one's political position.

STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari



But what if such a show of large crowds is actually a wrong indicator of one's democratic strength?

In his book *The Wisdom of Crowds*, James Surowiecki writes about four criteria that make a crowd's decisions accurate. First, such a crowd has to have a diversity of opinion. 'Each person should have some private information, even if it's just an eccentric interpretation of known facts,' Surowiecki adds that 'diversity contributes not just by adding different perspectives to the group but also by making it easier for individuals to say what they really think.'

The second criterion is independence. This means that 'people's opinions are not determined by the opinions of



KIRAN PANDAY

those around them.' Obviously, a crowd that lets in a variety of opinions, including dissenting ones, is more tolerant of independent voices than one where there's pressure to conform to a groupthink with everyone seeking tepid consensus that 'offends no one rather than excite everyone.'

The third criterion is decentralisation, which allows for individuals to bring in their specialisation and inject local knowledge into the crowd's deliberations. Aggregation is the fourth criterion. It's a process of adding up all the individual private judgments and then turning them into a collective decision. If a crowd includes these four criteria, Surowiecki says, its judgment is likely to be accurate.

But what do these criteria mean for our crowd-dependent political processes? It's arguable that of our two groups the one aligned with the political parties is more diverse in terms of opinion. On one level, it is more likely to represent disparate sections of our societies. But the difference ends there. Given that political parties remain rigidly hierarchical entities that do not

allow for any independence of thought, it's hard to see how they actually get to derive the benefits of diversity, independence and decentralisation in their ranks.

As a result, for the longest time their protests appeared to have been afternoon programs devised by a few *netas* to keep themselves busy, not something that really bubbled up to the surface because of the demands placed by diverse sections of the crowd. One danger about such narrow leadership is that by not adequately bringing dissenting views, independent opinions and local knowledge into its decision-making apparatus, it is more likely to reach an extreme but wrong conclusion about the strength of support it actually enjoys in public.

It's time for those who claim that their legitimacy—either on the street or in the corridors of power—comes from the crowd behind them to take another look at that crowd. That way, they'd see for themselves how limited their crowd's composition really is. Maybe then, they'd stop mouthing off the usual platitudes about democracy and start looking for ways to tap into the extant wisdom of the crowd. ●

nowhere

by Maoists. "It's the army's job," the rebels told them.

The Maoists appeared to be trying to isolate Butwal, which is located strategically at the junction of north-south and east-west highways.

"They are targeting the highways because they're the lifelines to the town and the areas beyond," explained Siddhicharan Bhattarai, chairman of the Rupandehi branch of the NGO Federation of Nepal. But so far the tactic has hit the sick hardest because ambulance services to the villages has stopped.

"With the sudden strikes and roadblocks on the highway these days, you never know how long you will be stuck," said Bhattarai.

The outlook was much rosier at district headquarters 35 km south in Bhairawa. "Most of the supplies here come through

India so Butwal doesn't really suffer, that road is always open," CDO Gangadutta Awasthi told us, adding, "it is the people in Dang and beyond who suffer."

The Maoists aren't trying to isolate Butwal, he said. "Their strategy is simply to attack the army."

Back in Butwal a group of local journalists suggest that the Maoists are targeting the town in the same way that they have attacked Nepalganj. Just then we hear a boom. Another bomb? "Probably," they say, shrugging.

Two days later we bypass the roadblocks to Dang by detouring through a dry riverbed. In the village of Saurali 14 kms from Butwal we ask a local family whose daughter was killed when a roadblock exploded the day before if they have thought of leaving for a safer place.

"Where would we go?" they



MARTY LOGAN

ask. Butwal is suggested. "But it's no safer than here," says one man to a chorus of agreement from his neighbours.

Whether that's true or not, it's a widespread opinion. "A few days ago most people in Butwal vacated their houses because they heard the Maoists were going to attack but it was all rumours," said Awasthi. "They use rumours to scare people." ●

'Pressed' into service

Two vehicles marked 'Press' but carrying injured soldiers, set off the landmine planted along the Mahendra Highway in Nawalparasi that killed Asmita Chapagain as she cycled home from shopping with friends, according to eyewitnesses and journalists who arrived first on the scene.

Soldiers have been hopping rides on media vehicles for a long time, one industry insider told us. "Newspaper delivery vans are not allowed to pass through areas controlled by security forces until they agree to carry soldiers," he added.

In general, the government has a policy that if it commandeers private vehicles it will pay the additional 20 percent insurance charge or 100 percent if the vehicle is not insured.

RCCC a mistake

Nisapakshya, 14 February

The Supreme Court has scrapped the Royal Commission for Corruption Control (RCCC) created after the king's takeover on 1 February 2005 ruling that the existing Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) is the constitutional body responsible for probing corruption charges. With the scrapping of the RCCC, NC-D leader Sher Bahadur Deuba and minister under his government, Prakash Man Singh, were automatically released. Now the CIAA has the authority and



KIRAN PANDAY

autonomy. The court's main reason for scrapping the royal commission was because it started getting involved in research, filing cases and deciding them, moves which violates principles of natural justice. While the decision elated the seven parties, Maoists and those who are plotting against

the monarchy, it has also taught the king and the government a very good lesson. It was with good intentions that King Gyanendra formed the RCCC. The country will not move forward unless corruption is curbed.

Now even the royalists are questioning if the RCCC should have been formed in the first place. The right way to deal with corruption would have been to make the CIAA stronger by reorganising it and reinforcing its leadership. Instead the royal commission was formed and it served no purpose, it was a mistake. But it's OK—no one lost anything in the process. In coming days there will be attacks against the government and the king but he should not let these rile him. Let it be known that the nincompoop incompetent advisers who have been giving the king wrong-headed suggestions should stay away from the palace from now on.

Friction necessary

Excerpts of interview with Harka Gurung in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 13-27 February

When the Maoists launched their 'people's war', the eighth five-year plan was nearing its completion and Nepal's economic growth was nearly six percent. The conflict has had a huge impact on the economy and development. On the positive side, there has been a massive change in the political sphere. The nation is now simmering with debate on social and political issues increasing awareness about the root causes of the revolt.

No change can take place without friction. The Maoists resorted to the insurgency after concluding that normal political efforts could not bring change because politics and the economy continued to be ruled by traditional power centres. Despite almost a decade of rule by democratic forces, no social change occurred and economic gains were not evenly distributed. It is hard to decide who is more responsible: the rulers or the rebels. I think the ruler should shoulder more of the responsibility because they weren't inclusive. Conflicts like these do not have military solutions and should be solved through dialogue. But that depends on how flexible and inclusive the ruling class is. Every second or third sentence of the king's speech on 1 February contained words like 'democracy' and 'people'. But if you look at the speech as a whole, it was neither for democracy nor the people. Some people who accept



NETRA KC

PRESENT ARMS: A Maoist show of force with captured guns.

elections as the foundation of democracy are balking at a constituent assembly, an idea that King Tribhuban was discussing way back in 1950. Today, the Maoists are also opting for it because they have realised that they cannot win only by means of arms and they want an alternative medium. In my opinion, a constituent assembly is the medicine to cure the problems surrounding the 10-year insurgency. Just like King Birendra left it to the people to decide in 1990, King Gyanendra must also hand power back to the people.

Anti-left front?

Jana Bhabana, 13 February

A section of the Nepali Congress leadership is trying to set up an alternative democratic front after Girija Prasad Koirala secretly suggested the need to create a non-communist alliance. His aides are now aiming to rope in Sher Bahadur Deuba's NC-D, the RPP led by Pashupati Shumshere Rana and former PM Surya Bahadur Thapa's RJP. It might appear strange that the party that has been heading the seven-party coalition against the royal takeover is spearheading the new front but there are many reasons why Koirala wants this. The majority of NC cadres do not want to back the republican agenda and many of them believe that the 12-point pact between the seven-party alliance and the Maoists is quite unnatural. The NC faction led by Shailaja Acharya has expressed its disagreement over the NC decision to remove the provision for constitutional monarchy from its statute. Many of Girija's colleagues believe the left is using the NC as a shield to fight the palace. Some of Koirala's friends in India have even suggested that he get rid of both the seven-party coalition and the 12-point pact. They argue that Nepal's Maoist movement has led to increasing numbers of Maoists in India but if the NC leaves the seven-party coalition, the agenda of solidifying the Maoist movement in India would be scuttled. Pressure from those Indian politicians is another reason why Koirala has embarked on forming a new democratic alliance.

the target date, according to an official at the Water Resources Ministry. After Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh last July issued a statement saying construction of the dam would be given top priority, his government has allocated Rs 470 million for the preparation of a detailed project report. A joint Nepal-India task force has hit the ground running to prepare the document. Its members include the former director general of the Department of Electricity Development and an official of India's Central Water Project. Workers have also started drilling and soil inspection as a prelude to construction of the 269 m tall dam on the Saptakosi River between Aahale VDC in Dhankuta district and Nainani village of Udaypur district. The project is primarily aimed at controlling floods in Kosi basin but will also generate power.

King failed

Former Ambassador Kedar Bhakta Mathema in *Deshantar*, 12 February

After I listened to the king's speech on 1 February last year, I believed that a special effort would be made to establish peace. But I have not seen any such move. Instead, state resources are being diverted to wage war. While the people kept demanding peace, the state ignored it. I am not a member of the political parties, I call myself an independent intellectual. But I feel the parties have been sidelined by the state. The king should have acted as a guardian and asked the parties to come on board and share their grievances. But the king's recent speech gave no indication that he will take that route. Why the king made such a speech is something I cannot understand. It appeared he was simply marking the anniversary of his move. An independent country earns its reputation either through its economic development or its democratic practices. In Nepal's case, we have failed in both. The situation has eroded so badly that the US, India and China have begun to voice a common opinion that the crisis should be resolved. The international community in general has a negative image of Nepal and have already begun to hint that we are headed towards becoming a failed state. The attitude shown by the monarchy does itself no good. This country will have to bear a huge loss if peace does not return. Outsiders have begun to suggest what we should do because we have been unable to manage things



Election result
Ballot box: Municipal election
Ballot paper: Republic

हिमाल Robin Sayami in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 13-27 February

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“It is a tragedy for the people of Nepal that full-scale conflict has now resumed”

- Ian Martin, representative of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, releasing the office's 2006 report on Thursday

Drilling for dam

Nepal Samacharpatra, 9 February

Field work has started at Barahchhetra for the preparation of a detailed report on the Kosi High Dam with the end of 2006

ourselves. Tomorrow if outsiders must work as mediators to settle our differences, perhaps denting our image as an independent country, who will take the blame? The only way left is for the king to bring together constitutional forces and take the initiative to start a peace process. The king is not the leader of a political party, he should be above it all.

RCCC paper trail

Kathmandu Today, 16 February

After the Supreme Court decommissioned the RCCC this week, no one is sure what to do with its documents. Former RCCC officials have suggested that the secretariat burn the papers. According to spokesman Premraj Karki, queries have already been sent to the Ministerial Council secretariat to find out how to handle them. "We will send the papers wherever the government directs us to," he said. Among the 6,117 complaints registered with the RCCC, only five have been dealt with. Eight cases have been filed while some are in the final stages of investigation. But with documents lying about, there is a danger that complainants' identities will be revealed. After the Supreme Court ruled that the king's order to create the commission violated the constitution, those found guilty by the commission have been freed and charges dropped. Now free former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and former minister Prakash Man Singh decided not to pay the Rs 90 million bail-bond but the bail bonds of at least a dozen others against whom the commission filed cases, including the contractor of the Melamchi Drinking Water Supply Project, Jeepchiring Lama, then hydropower secretary Tikadutta Niraula and the managing director of the Department of Forests Jamunakrishna Tamrakar, have not been returned. There is still confusion about whether they will be reinstated in their former posts.

Arming Maoists

Rajdhani, 14 February

The Indian police have detained two people, Upendra Singh and Ranjan Singh, and accused them of supplying arms to Nepali Maoists. Though working as cloth merchants in Bathana town close to the Nepal-India border, the men were captured with three pistols at Fabisganj on Sunday. The police say they were caught red-handed when officers went undercover as customers interested in buying arms. Jogbani, Raxaul, Supaul and Bhimnagar have been identified as places from where Maoists import their arms. Nepali security forces have denied any knowledge that weapons are imported from the Jogbani side but Indian police insist that during fair (haat) days—Sunday, Tuesday and Friday—Maoists have been known to smuggle arms from Bathana. According to sources, drugs and counterfeit money are also being smuggled.

CAREER OPPORTUNITY

Manager Administration

ServingMinds is an international BPO based in Kathmandu. We provide front and back office services from Nepal to our clients in USA. In our pursuit to strengthen our administration department, we are looking for a Manager who can competently co-ordinate various administrative and facility operations like –

Review and Settlement of bills submitted by vendors.
Managing Compliance and Regulatory Documentation.
Maintaining Government Relations.
Travel and Hotel arrangements for Staff as needed.
Procurement of consumable.

The applicant should at least be a Graduate, (Post Graduate preferred) fluent in English and should have knowledge of MS Office and other desktop tools. Prior Managerial experience is a requisite. Experience in Procurement will be an added advantage.

Apply with your full resume and provide 3 professional and 2 personal references with application.

Please drop your resume at:



ServingMinds Pvt. Ltd.

Tel: 4671184/4671185/4671189

Opposite Grand Hotel, Soaltee Mode

Or post at: GPO Box: 8974, EPC 459 - Kathmandu, Nepal



LINCOLN SCHOOL

Vacancy
2006-2007 School Year
Beginning August 2006

Early Childhood Teacher

Requirements:

- International teacher training and certification in early childhood education.
- Minimum of three years of early childhood teaching experience.
- Experience working with expatriate children and parents.
- Fluency in spoken and written English.
- Ability to work as part of a team.

Please forward a cover letter explaining interest in the position along with a resume and 2 references to:

Lincoln School

Attn: Pre-School Teacher, Rabi Bhawan
P.O. Box 2673, Kathmandu, Nepal

Important: Application deadline March 1, 2006
No telephone calls please. Please deliver at the gate, by mail only or email to: lsnepal@yahoo.com

For further information: www.lsnepal.com
Lincoln School is an Equal Opportunity Employer



THE FULBRIGHT & THE EAST-WEST CENTER 2006 SCHOLARSHIP COMPETITION

The Commission for Educational Exchange between the United States and Nepal (also known as USEF or the Fulbright Commission) announces the 2006 competition for the Fulbright and the East-West Center (EWC) Scholarships. Those selected would begin their US studies beginning August-September 2007. The Fulbright program provides all expenses (including travel) for a master's degree program of up to two years at selected U.S. universities, in any field except medicine, engineering or computer science. The EWC scholarships of the University of Hawaii (UH) are available for master's or doctoral-level study in any field offered at UH and cover all university tuition and fees, a partial monthly stipend, housing, health insurance, book allowance. However, candidates selected for the EWC scholarship will be responsible for partial monthly expenses of \$400, transportation to and from Honolulu, and any other costs not provided by the Center. Applicants for either program may be employees in any government or semi-government agency, private business, NGO or INGO.

Application Forms & Deadlines

Application forms and detailed information regarding the competition are available from: the USEF/Nepal office in Gyaneshwor (between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday - Friday); the Ministry of Education; the National Planning Commission; Tribhuvan University Rector's Office; Kathmandu University Rector's Office; Samudaik Sambandha Kendras in Bhairahawa (Siddharth Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Kalikasthan), Birgunj (Ward No. 14, near National Trading Company), Pokhara (Pokhara Public Library, Mahendrapul), Biratnagar (Chamber of Industries, Morang, Sahid Marg), and Nepalgunj (SAATHI, Bageshwori Road); and with Campus Chiefs at out of the Valley degree campuses. **Interested persons are encouraged to access and download the application and information from the Commission's website www.fulbrightnepal.org.np since the application form needs to be completed using a computer or a typewriter.** The application distribution deadline is 4 p.m. Friday, March 10, 2006. Duplicate, hardcopy, completed applications must reach the Fulbright Commission (USEF/Nepal) no later than 4:00 p.m. Friday, March 17, 2006. Incomplete applications or applications received after this deadline will not be considered.

General Requirements for Entering the Competition

All applicants must:

1. Possess Nepali citizenship.
2. Demonstrate in post-intermediate degrees a minimum aggregate mark of: 56% for students in non-technical fields (humanities and social sciences), and 60% for students in science and technical fields. (The minimum requirements for students under the semester system are: 65% in non-technical fields; 70% in technical fields; or a Cumulative GPA of 3.5/4.0 in either field.) If the grading systems for the bachelor's and master's level are different (percentage and GPA, etc.), the applicant needs to meet the minimum score requirements separately, not in the aggregate.
3. Have a high level of competence in speaking, reading and writing English. (Applicants who pass the first screening will be required to sit for an English test during the application process. The English language test requirement during the selection process may be waived for those who pass the initial screening and have either: a) a valid TOEFL score of 230 or higher; or b) have passed the English language test administered by USEF/Nepal in April or August 2005.)
4. Be under 40 years of age for those applying for the master's degree under the Fulbright or EWC program, or be under 45 years of age for those applying for the Ph.D. degree under the EWC program, as of the application filing deadline date (March 17, 2006).
5. (a) Applicants for the master's degree under Fulbright or EWC program: possess either a four years bachelor's degree; or, if the bachelor's degree was of fewer than four years duration, then a master's degree is also required, such that the total number of years of formal education equals at least 16. Students with a three-year bachelor's degree who have completed only the first year of a two-year master's degree program, master's degree students who have cleared all exams but still need to fulfill other university-mandated degree requirements, or students who have two or more bachelor's degree but no master's degree are ineligible to apply. (b) Applicants for the Ph.D. degree under EWC program: possess a master's degree that is equivalent to the US master's degree; that is, a master's degree that required at least 18 years of continuous study. A letter (or email) received from the relevant department at the University of Hawaii stating that the candidate is eligible to apply for admission to the PhD program, that the study objectives are compatible with the program and that faculty are available to advise should be attached with the application.
6. Applicants must have at least three years (for men) or one year (for women) of post-bachelor's degree, full-time, professional work experience in an area directly relevant to the applicant's chosen field of study as of the application filing deadline date (March 17, 2006). This experience must be documented by letters (or attested copies) from employer(s) that verify applicant's position(s) and years of employment. Even if you worked at several organizations, you are eligible to apply as long as your work experience at those organizations adds up to the minimum work-duration requirement;
7. Be in excellent health, as evidenced by a letter from a medical doctor; and
8. Be eligible for a non-immigrant J-1 U.S. visa, and not already in possession or in the process of obtaining a U.S. immigrant visa ("green card").

Note: Individuals holding master's degrees equivalent to a U.S. master's degree are ineligible to apply for the Fulbright scholarship competition, but are eligible to apply for the East-West Center competition Ph.D. program; and individuals who have previously resided in the United States for six months or more during the preceding five years prior to the application submission deadline are ineligible to apply for either competition. In addition, this competition is not open to: individuals with, or in the process of obtaining, U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent resident status; employees of USEF Nepal and local employees of U.S. Mission in Nepal who work for the US Department of State, and their spouses and dependent children (who are ineligible for grants during the period of their employment and for one year following the termination of employment).

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



Boris with Inger at the Kathmandu airport



State banquet given by King Mahendra and Queen Ratna for Indira Gandhi catered by Boris



Boris with Prince Juan Carlos of Spain and Princess Sophia when they stayed at the Hotel Royal during their honeymoon in 1959.



Boris and Inger on a tiger hunt with the Maharajah of Cooch Bihar in 1949

Boris

AARTI BASNYAT

Ballet dancer, master chef, hotelier, tiger hunter, fighter pilot and trapeze artist—the list that describes Boris Lissanevitch is endless. He was a man you would meet once and never forget. Everyone knows Boris as the founder of the Chimney restaurant and Calcutta’s Club 300 but what about as the father of Nepali tourism? Or even possibly King Tribhuban’s diplomatic emissary?

Boris Lissanevitch was a legend even before he ever set foot in Nepal. His reputation as a dancer for the Diaghilev’s Ballet Russe was indomitable. “I owe everything to the Russian Revolution” claims Boris in the Michel Peissel’s book *Tiger for Breakfast*. After being a part of the revolution at the age of 15 and even being hit on the thigh by a bullet, Boris at the age of 19 was ready to make his escape from Russia in 1924. After his escape, Boris toured the world for more than 10 years before he decided to make his base in Calcutta. This led to the break-up of his first marriage, as his wife Kira, who was also a dancer with the Ballet Russe, wanted to return to the US but Boris knew his future was in Asia.

Boris then proceeded to establish Calcutta’s famous Club 300. Based on London’s Club 400, which was known for its exclusive membership, Club 300 strived to outdo its western counterpart. During the British Raj it was the first club that allowed both Indians and British to be members and it attracted society’s crème de la crème, from Maharajas to fighter pilots.

During this period Boris also met his second wife, Inger. She was visiting Calcutta on her way to Europe and all Boris needed was one glimpse before he decided to follow her to Europe. His wooing paid off and despite the couple’s 23-year age difference they were married in 1950

As Club 300 grew more popular it was not unusual to find visiting dignitaries or royalty from neighbouring countries enjoying Boris’s famous hospitality. Among them was King Tribhuban, a frequent and popular guest. The monarch was so impressed with Boris that he invited him to his son Mahendra’s wedding. This visit proved momentous as Boris fell in love with Nepal and never again strayed far from it.

As his son Alexander remembers, “It wasn’t just with the hospitality of the Nepali people that he fell in love with, it was the innocence of the Nepali smile that captivated him”. Soon after, King Tribhuban asked Boris to open a hotel in Kathmandu and to teach him to dance.

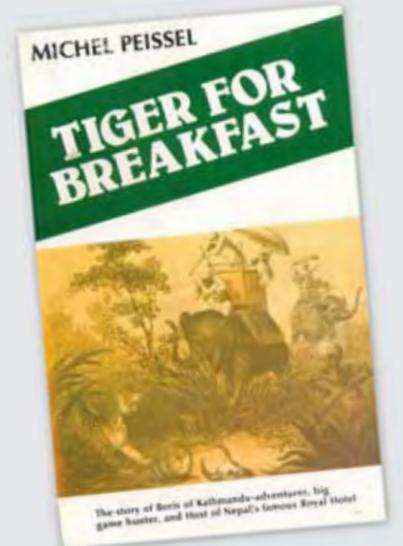
There is much speculation about why the monarch asked Boris to move to Nepal. Rajendra Adhikari, President of the Nepal-Russia Cultural Association says, “Rumours have it that Boris helped during the fall of the Ranas. King Tribhuban couldn’t have done it without Indian support and the best man (to assist)

A Tiger of a man

‘Go and see Boris. He alone can help you. There is nothing Boris cannot fix,’ says Mrs Perry in the opening pages of Michel Peissel’s book *Tiger for Breakfast*.

Based on the legend of Boris Lissanevitch, the book story follows the chance meeting of Peissel and Boris, which launched an incredible friendship. A simple read written in the first person, *Tiger for Breakfast* reveals Peissel’s obvious fascination with Boris and his lifestyle. It records in detail Boris’s life and achievements in Nepal, from being the first person to grow strawberries here to being the first to breed fine quality pigs for bacon.

At times the amazing events read larger than life then as Peissel writes, ‘Boris’s name could not be mentioned without someone recalling a new and even more incredible incident involving him.’



Tiger For Breakfast
Michel Peissel
Time Books International 1990
274 Pages

The Lissanevitchs

Though the legendary Boris must have been a difficult figure to live up to, many members of his family have developed their own reputations. His first wife, Kira Ivanovsky, runs a non-profit ballet company called Ballet Fantasque in the Monterey Peninsula California. Boris’s daughter with Kira, Xenia or Lala as she was affectionately called, lives in Oakland, California and works as a copy editor for a publishing house. Inger, Boris’s second wife, currently resides in Bhaktapur. His eldest son with Inger, Mischa, used to run a restaurant in Kathmandu called Sanga Mitra but it closed down. Today he has a restaurant in Goa. Alexander, Boris’s second son from Inger, used to help his father with catering but now owns his own art business and plans to open a resort in Tokha. The youngest son from Inger, Nicholas, lives in Denmark where he works in a hospital.



Alexander, Boris’s second son from Inger, poses with pictures of his father.

On his 100th birthday, Kathmandu pays tribute to Boris Lissanevitch, the legendary Russian who launched Nepal into the world

would've been Boris through his contacts in Delhi. Boris is said to have taken letters and other messages to Indian leaders from King Tribhuban via Club 300".

Whether Boris was a diplomatic emissary or played a hand in restoring the Shah dynasty is not certain but his role as the father of tourism in Nepal is undoubtedly deserved. Boris arrived in Nepal in 1951 and forever changed the way foreigners looked at this country.

As Adhikari says: "In the 1950s, people abroad knew only two things about Nepal—Mt Everest and Boris." Kathmandu's first international hotel, the Royal, which included the soon famous Chimney Restaurant were where Boris showed his legendary hospitality and culinary skills.

Still, despite the new establishment, few tourists were coming to Nepal. Visas were difficult to obtain and the government limited visits. Boris was determined to change this. He convinced a group of 20 tourists from Calcutta, mostly women, to come to Nepal in 1955 and then proceeded to have a hot discussion with King Mahendra about granting them a 15-day visa. Finally the king relented, the guests arrived and Boris held the country's first handicraft exhibition in his hotel.

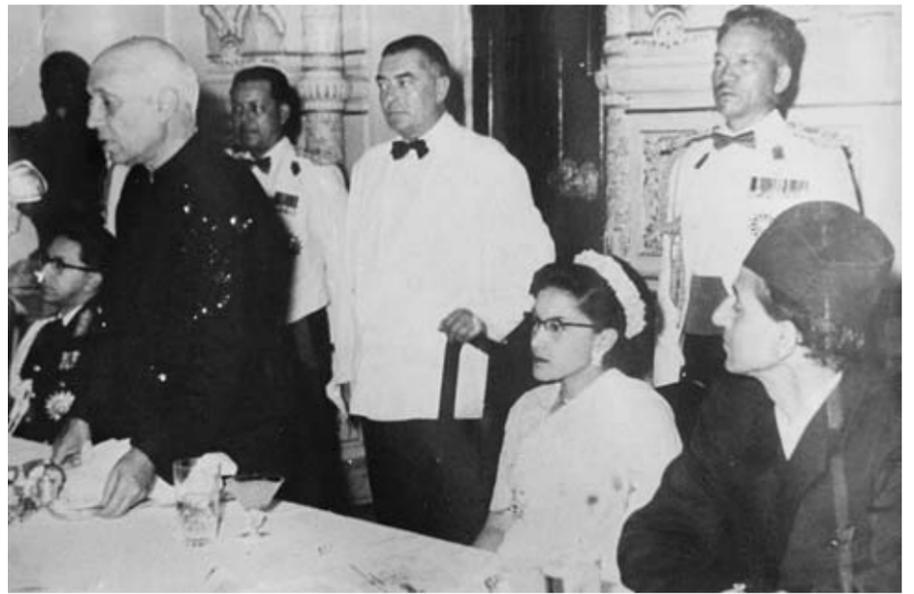
Boris was a familiar sight on the streets of Kathmandu—red faced and cheery in his

typical short-sleeved shirts, pants and cigar. Growing up with him was similar to leading a royal life. As Alexander fondly recalls, "We lived in a large European style palace, with ayahs and lots of animals, from tigers to deer. It was very grand—even when we went to school at St Xaviers in Jawalakhel, we used to go on horseback."

Despite the legends that his life was weaving, Boris was unable to sustain his businesses. Every great man has his frailty and Boris's was a lack of business acumen. "He was very giving, kind and tremendously generous. He never looked at business from a materialistic view—that was his greatest charm and his biggest drawback," says Alexander.

Everyone who came to him but couldn't afford the Royal Hotel's prices stayed as his personal guest. Mountaineering expeditions would camp out on his lawns. But Boris's ultimate fall came after the opening of the splendid Yak and Yeti Hotel in 1977. Though he opened a few restaurants and dabbled in other projects after that, he was never able to regain his earlier fame.

Boris died at 80 in Kathmandu and as per his wish was buried at the British cemetery. He had been all over but chose to make his home in Nepal. He was a legend any nation would've been proud of but he devoted himself to this country, giving as much as he took from it, if not more. ●



State banquet given by King Mahendra and Queen Ratna for Jawaharlal Nehru catered by Boris. BP Koirala can also be seen on the far right



Boris at the Royal hotel with strawberries which he was the first to cultivate in Nepal



The banquet hall in Singha Darbar where Boris catered all state banquets until 1965



SURYA NEPAL

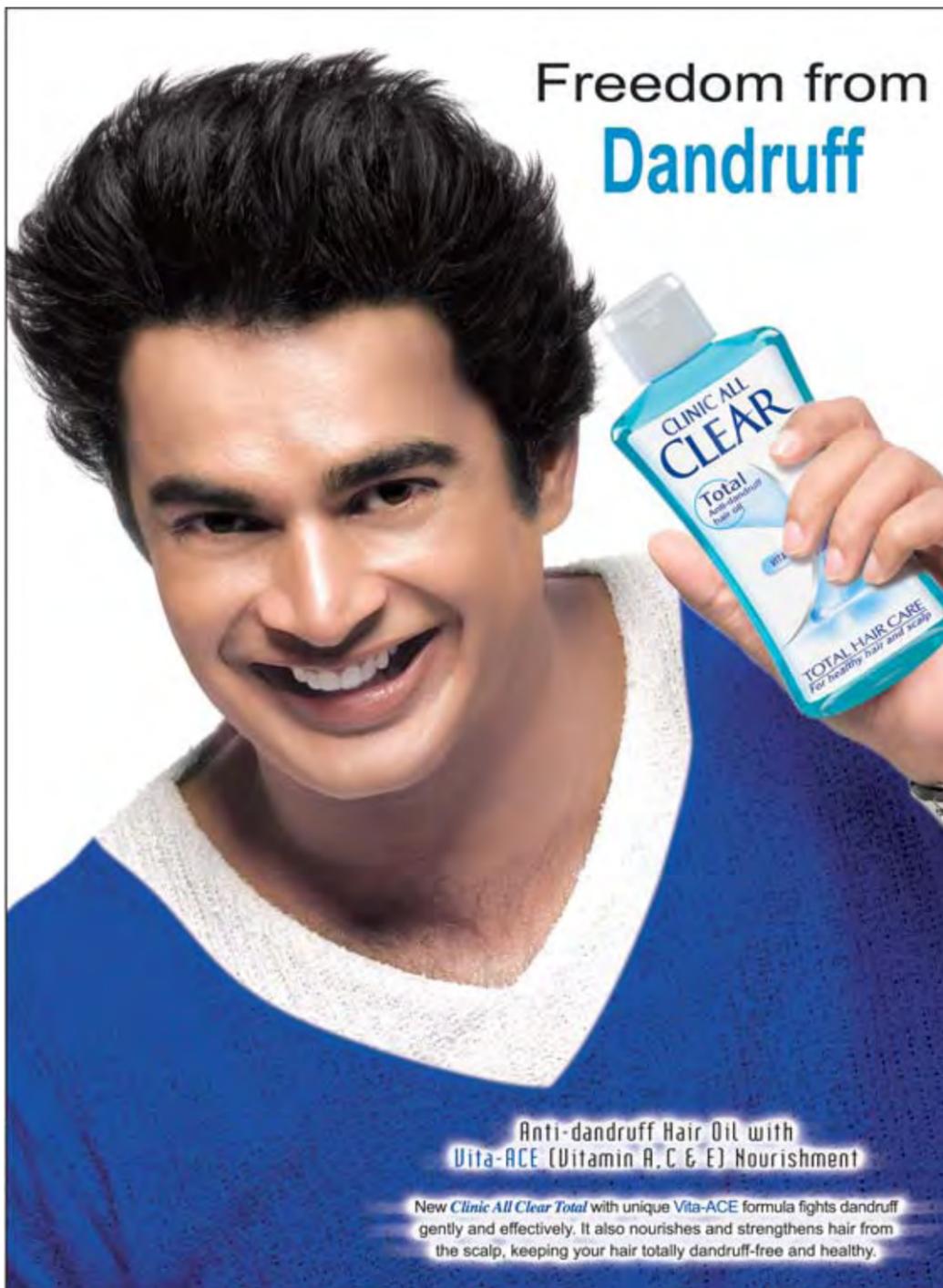


CRAFTED IN NEPAL. INSPIRATION FOR THE WORLD.

SNPL/80023505

Available in select outlets in Kathmandu valley only. For home delivery of outers call 2004030 between 10 AM and 5 PM. All days except Saturdays & public holidays.

STATUTORY DIRECTIVE: SMOKING IS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH



Freedom from
Dandruff

CLINIC ALL CLEAR
Total Anti-dandruff Hair Oil
TOTAL HAIR CARE
For healthy hair and scalp

Anti-dandruff Hair Oil with
Vita-ACE (Vitamin A, C & E) Nourishment

New Clinic All Clear Total with unique Vita-ACE formula fights dandruff gently and effectively. It also nourishes and strengthens hair from the scalp, keeping your hair totally dandruff-free and healthy.

Nepal Day in Holland High country in a low country

Nepal may be the highest place on earth and the Netherlands may be below sea level but the two countries always sit alphabetically side by side at international conferences. So there has been a certain closeness to relations.

And with Nepal marking a host of anniversaries in February: the various ways 1 February was marked, then Democracy Day on 18 February and the anniversary of the Maoist 'People's War' on 13 February. Well, February Fever has now struck the Queendom of the Netherlands as well. Sunday 12 February was marked by the International Council for Friends of Nepal (ICFON), a Dutch development aid organisation, celebrating its 14th successful 'Nepal Day' in south Amsterdam.

ICFON has been supporting Nepali NGOs since 1991 in activities to improve the livelihoods of Nepal's citizens. While focusing primarily on educational projects, ICFON also supports agricultural and health initiatives for Nepal's rural poor and organises a yearly Nepal Day in Holland, an event attended by hundreds of Dutch and Nepalis. Culture, history, development assistance and, of course, food, are discussed and shared. As the impact of Nepal's conflict has increased over the years, so too the content of the Nepal Day has changed.

Originally aimed more at the NGO and tourist sectors, the last few years have seen a steady increase in talks and films, some contributed by the Himalaya Film Festival based in the Netherlands, about the political quagmire and violence which have become undeniable features of Nepal. At this year's event, two films about the conflict were shown: *The Living of Jogimara*, an emotionally powerful documentary by Mohan Mainali, and a 20-minute promo of a fascinating new film which follows the lives of six very different women who are all affected by Nepal's civil war.

During a Q&A session which followed the films, many members of the audience expressed their profound concern about the recent actions of the royal government and the conduct of the Maoists.

Even though tourism to the embattled kingdom is down, at least 300 people attended ICFON's Nepal Day last weekend to share their experiences and learn more about the country. Alongside craft stalls and a handful of independent travellers, in attendance were fifteen of the Dutch NGOs who continue to work in Nepal even in this time of unrest, including *Madat Nepal* and *Stichting Vajra*, and one travel agency.

As much as informing Dutch citizens about the wonders and troubles of this Himalayan nation, ICFON's Nepal Day is a sign to Nepalis abroad that there is sincere interest in their country even far beyond its borders. ●



FROUWKJE BIJLSTRA

Mark Turin in Amsterdam

S E R I O U S L Y
BLACK



180 PULSAR
Pulsar DTS-i
DEFINITELY MALE

SERIOUS PERFORMANCE . SERIOUS LOOKS . | Introductory Price: Rs. 147,900/- | 5 Years Warranty | 5 Years Free Service

Dealers: Bhatbhateni Super Market Complex, Tel: 4438104; Dillibazar Exchange, 4441042; Kumaripati Exchange, 5533316; Bhaktapur, Tel: 6611777; Pokhara, Tel: 522315; Narayangadh, Tel: 523689; Rajbiraj, Tel: 520502; Birgunj, Tel: 523837; Hetauda, Tel: 522498; Lahan, Tel: 560987; Biratnagar, Tel: 524476; Janakpur, Tel: 521300; Dharan, Tel: 522682; Damak, Tel: 582096; Dang, Tel: 560743; Dhangadi, Tel: 522058; Birtamode, Tel: 540724; Butwal, Tel: 544549; Bhairawa, Tel: 522967; Palpa, Tel: 520946; Nepalgunj, Tel: 522751; Taulihawa, Tel: 560416; Malangwa, Tel: 520703.

Sole Authorised Dealer:
Hansraj Hulaschand & Co. Pvt. Ltd.
Teku Road, Kathmandu.
Ph. No: 4220094/4230001/4261200

BAJAJ
NEPAL'S LARGEST SELLING BIKES

PRISMA/021729/06



Soaring again

A new veterinary drug may allow vulture populations in India and Nepal to revive

MARTY LOGAN

A new veterinary drug that will replace one that is responsible for poisoning vultures in the subcontinent could spell hope for the endangered raptors.

Three years ago South Asian countries had committed at a conference in Kathmandu to ban the anti-inflammatory drug diclofenac that vultures ingested from carcasses of dead livestock and which ultimately killed them. But the ban was not being enforced with the urgency required.

The new drug, meloxicam has been found by researchers to be non-toxic for vultures. Conservationists hope it will be easier to replace diclofenac than to ban it altogether.

Last week's international conference on vulture conservation in New Delhi was told that meloxicam had been tested by Indian and international scientists and was a safe substitute. "It will solve about 50-60 percent of the problems the vultures are facing," said Hem Sagar Baral, chief executive of Bird Conservation Nepal (BCN) who attended the conference with four other Nepali specialists.

Diclofenac, an anti-inflammatory and painkiller fed to sick livestock is said to be responsible for the deaths of more than 90 percent of India's Oriental White-rumped, Long-billed and Slender-billed

vultures, which died after eating animal carcasses. The IUCN-World Conservation Union has listed the three vulture species as critically endangered, the category for animals closest to extinction. A decade ago India, Pakistan and Nepal together held more than 90 percent of the world's population of these vultures.

Chris Bowden, who heads the British-based Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' (RSPB) vulture conservation programme, told the New Delhi meeting: "I am convinced that diclofenac will be banned in India this year and possibly within the next six months. Without a ban, Asian vultures will become extinct."

Nepal's population of White-rumped and Slender billed vultures has dropped more than 95 percent in the last 10 years, leaving us with less than five percent of the world's White-rumped population and below one percent of its Slender-bills, says BCN. About 15 years ago, the White-rumped breeding population here was estimated at more than 50,000 pairs. Today fewer than 1,000 breeding pairs remain in the wild. "It's pretty much the same scenario as in India," said Baral.

Vultures play a vital role as scavengers and help halt the spread of disease. Fewer vultures means more food for stray dogs, allowing them to thrive and potentially leading to increased incidence of rabies. India's Parsi community also uses vultures to

dispose of their dead, a practice that could become unsustainable unless the vulture population rebounds.

Among the recommendations made at the New Delhi meeting:

- Step up regional cooperation between the vulture range states like Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Cambodia and Burma.
- Immediate steps to completely phase out diclofenac.
- Urgent censuses of vulture populations

According to Baral, Nepal's Ministry of Health has the authority to ban diclofenac but the request would have to come from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) in the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation. "The government should immediately ban the veterinary use of diclofenac and facilitate companies to produce the safe alternative drug meloxicam," said Baral, adding that authorities "should provide subsidies until meloxicam takes over the diclofenac affected areas."

Experts at the New Delhi meeting urged more breeding centres such as one at Pinjore, Haryana that houses 61 vultures, including 10 slender bills, the first captive population of this most endangered species. Nepal's DNPWC has been approached for a proposed breeding centre in Chitwan for which BCN will be the main technical partner. But, says Baral: "Progress has been rather slow." ●



Speaking truth to power

Our media elite are becoming dangerously predictable

No one knows how this will end. The king and the parties may settle their differences, Nepal may become a democratic republic or the Maoists may eventually prevail with a totalitarian regime. Some outcomes have greater probabilities than others but it is difficult to visualize the nature of the prospective political landscape of Nepal in the short term.

Regardless of who 'wins', principled historians are unlikely to look upon many in our media elite, liberals and those from whom they take their cue internationally with much sympathy. Many advocates of an unfettered free press and total democracy have participated in a concerted effort of misinformation, obfuscation and exaggeration. That some of these individuals were exposed to western ideals of intellectual inquiry may be baffling to some—but less so to others who are increasingly becoming aware of this group's ethos that shrouds rational debate with groupthink.

NEPALI PAN
Pravin Rana



As professed (self-appointed in many cases) champions of human rights, democracy and liberalism, Nepali intellectuals have taken the responsibility for the 'people' they represent. In general, the media and political leaders have spoken the truth to those in power, as they should. Yet when it comes to the Maoists they gently whisper truth. During the municipal elections one party activist was killed and another seriously injured by the RNA during a demonstration in Dang. The incident has now been labelled 'a crime against humanity' and pictures of grieving relatives at the cremation are played out in the media ostensibly to promote the image of brutal authoritarianism in Nepal. But the story of the taxi driver shot in Patan by the Maoists to enforce their five-day national shutdown wasn't worthy to rate as an egregious violation of human rights.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

The exaggeration has reached such proportions that incidents attributed to the royal government range from the garden variety 'crimes against humanity' to even 'genocide' as in the Nagarkot case. But when the Home Minister rationally outlined the brutal nature of the attack in Tansen and asked why the media and the parties failed to condemn it, he was rebutted by the seven party alliance with "we don't have to comment on every atrocity".

The UN's ridiculous query for 'clarification' of what the Maoists meant by 'disrupting elections' was answered quite unambiguously by later actions.

Why should anyone care? First, there is a distortion of the very principle of rights itself. Exercising one's right for unfettered protest rates higher than someone's right to earn a workingman's living. Second, the exaggerated spin around hundreds of years of monarchic rule as the 'root cause' ends up giving us false assurance that culture, geography and a host of other factors has nothing to do with our political and economic predicament.

It detracts from the fact that the Maoists have devastated Nepal further in 10 years than in all of the years of dynastic rule, even before the Shahs. Nepal was created by this dynasty not from the consolidation of thriving democratic republics but ones with their own baggage of feudalism, oppression and economic backwardness. This doesn't mean that the Rana oligarchy and Shah autocracy were enlightened periods of rule but we must see them in perspective in light of the Maoists.

Note that next door, we have a kingdom that has ethnically cleansed 20 percent of its population, a situation that the UN, despite all its bluster, has been unable to solve. Nepal's royal government isn't by a long shot Burma, North Korea, Syria, Chechnya or even Bhutan. Context, nuance and perspective count, especially if one is preaching concepts of civil society and the rule of law as key values.

But instead of seeing the choices as bad and simply unacceptable, this campaign to characterise the regime as the most odious of all time has somehow convinced those that should be in the middle ground to back the unacceptable choice.

A more sober assessment will eventually emerge in the future and it is likely that it will in many cases be damning. At that time, they might realise that speaking truth to power means speaking truth to all power. ●

Why India is a natural ally

The strategic partnership that the US and EU looks more desirable and plausible with democratic India

With a Muslim president, a Sikh prime minister, a Hindu foreign minister, and a foreign-born Christian president of its ruling Congress Party, India is as remarkable a success story as the 20-year boom that China's Communist Party has delivered.

COMMENT

Charles Tannock



Indeed, since 1991 India has been shedding its socialist legacies and posting 7.5 percent average annual GDP growth, only marginally slower than China. India has opened up its economy to world trade and started to privatise many of its state-owned industries (albeit often too slowly).

The EU is keen to link into India's boom. The first EU Galileo satellite—intended as an alternative to America's GPS system—was launched in late December with India as a full partner. Also in December, India became the latest nation to join the EU in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) team.

In a sense, India's democracy sometimes hinders immediate growth. Unlike in China, India's



AGE OLD TIES: A strategic partnership that Vasco de Gama got going.

government cannot simply ride roughshod over local interests by, say, leveling a village to build a roadway or a dam. But this is a sacrifice that India seems more than willing to make to safeguard its freedoms.

That sacrifice is particularly visible in today's Congress-led Indian government, which relies on support from the Left Front. India's communists (unlike China's) remain ideologically driven and the Left Front is resisting privatisation of state

assets, lifting caps on foreign direct investment and creating a more flexible labor market.

Yet the essential reforms remain on track. It is clearly in India's interests to join forces with the EU in negotiations within the WTO to lower protectionist barriers, particularly in services such as accounting, law and finance, as this will free up trade and generate greater investment flows. India already is being treated with growing respect in global economic

councils.

The main problem in pushing this strategic partnership ahead lies mostly within the EU, where there is a split between protectionists and advocates of free trade. In particular the EU must resist calls for higher tariffs from southern European textile manufacturers, as these businesses have failed to restructure, despite ample warnings over the last decade to do so.

Indeed, the EU should regard growth in India not as a competitive threat but as a golden opportunity that will benefit everyone. The global economy is not a zero-sum game and the challenge for European politicians will be to explain this to EU members, particularly countries like France that are resistant to globalisation and keen on building a Fortress Europe. French President Jacques Chirac's visit this week provided a perfect moment for India to make it clear that strategic partnerships and protectionism (as seems to be occurring in the French effort to block Mittal's bid for the Belgian-French steel group Arcelor) don't mix.

The second point of

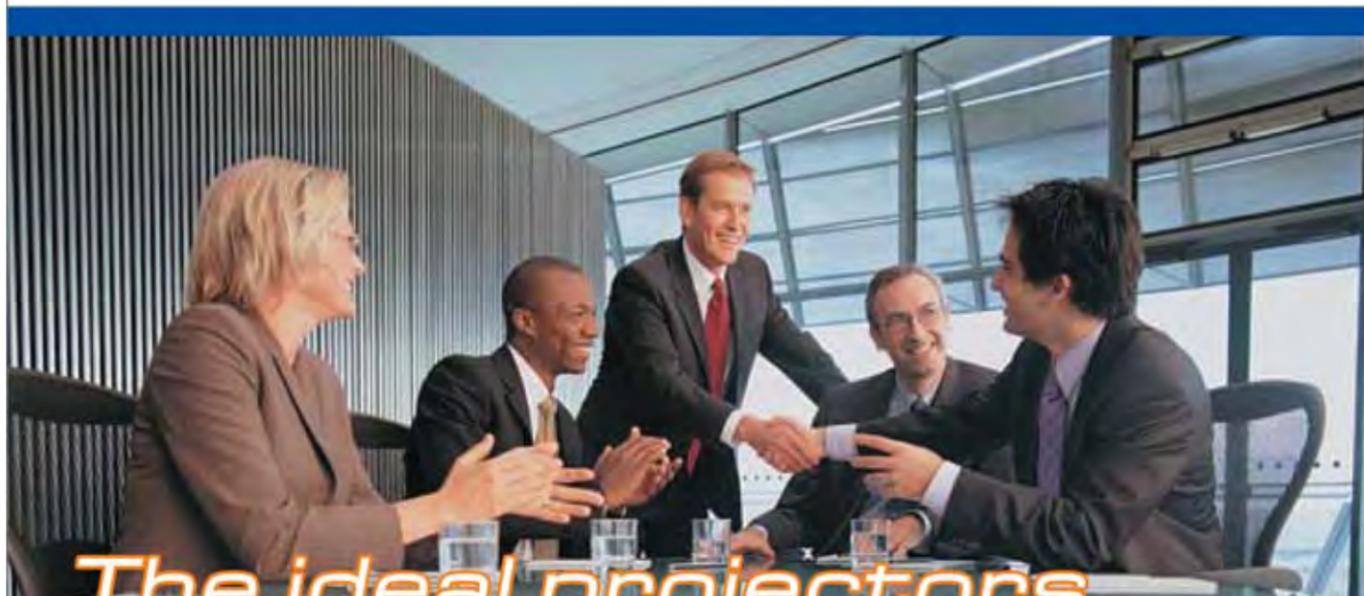
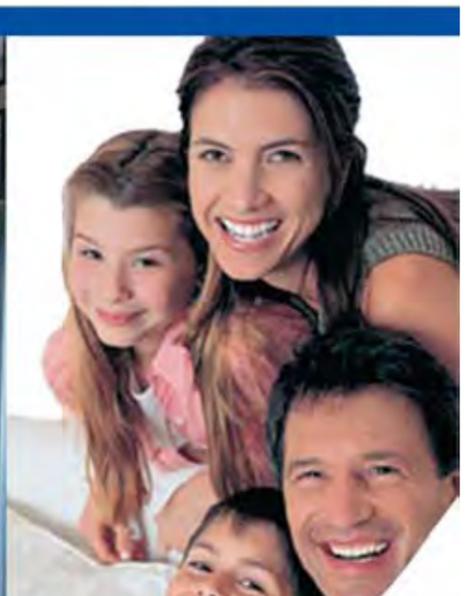
convergence between Indian and western interests is that India can perhaps serve as a counterweight to China. The world is beginning to notice that India has nearly the same number of people as China, plus a more benign system of government and no designs on its neighbors. China hawks in both India and the west dream that strategic partnership will link the world's great democracies.

That will not happen soon. To be sure, India is as wary of China as some in Europe and America are. After all, China supplied much of Pakistan's nuclear-weapons technology and beat India in the 1962 war, their borders remain disputed in places.

Yet neither India nor the EU wants their friendship to be part of an anti-China axis. Indeed, India has mostly succeeded in ending the chill that set in after 1998, when it declared China to be the main target of its nuclear weapons. Nonetheless, Europe, India and America are all aware that today's friendship could become tomorrow's alliance if China turns hostile. ●

Charles Tannock is UK Conservative Foreign Affairs Spokesman in the European Parliament and contributed this comment to Nepali Times.

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

The ideal projectors at work, classroom or at home



EMP-X3
2000 ANSI lm
XGA

Compact and Bright
- Epson's Innovative New E-TORL Lamp

(E-TORL: Epson-Twin Optimize Reflection Lamp)
Epson's recently developed small, high performance "E-TORL" lamps efficiently gather and project light to effectively eliminate light-leakage and minimize light diffraction. This system combines an ellipsoidal reflector with an aspherical lens and a hemispherical mirror to produce a lamp so small and highly efficient that it is ahead of its time.



Exceptional • Affordability
Brilliant • Performance

Soft, Bright, Beautiful... 3LCD Technology

3LCD technology achieves brighter, more natural images and smoother, sharper video playback. No color break-up makes images gentler on the eyes.





EMP-S3
1600 ANSI lm
SVGA

Multimedia projectors

MERCANTILE
OFFICE SYSTEMS

Mercantile Building, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu
Tel: 4220773, 4243566 Fax: 977-1-4225407
Email: market@mos.com.np

STAR OFFICE AUTOMATION
PUTAU SADAK, 4266820, 4244827

HIMALAYAN TRADING HOUSE
POKHARA, 061 521756

ISHAN INFOSYS
NEW ROAD, 4244440, 4247119

BIRAT INFOTECH ENT.
BIRATNAGAR, 021 525150

SAGAR INTERNATIONAL PVT. LTD.
PUTAUSADAK, 2002400

MEGHATECH COMPUTER & ELECTRONIC CONCERN
BIRATNAGAR, 021 552794

OM SAI COMPUTERS
PUTAUSADAK, 2003400

Tiger's biggest victory yet

Golf's #1 opens a centre for underprivileged kids

People choose a field, they work hard at it, a few attain glory but only a very few have both the foresight and vision to realise that they need to give something back to society.

I was thoroughly impressed and pleased when I read that the world's number one golfer, Tiger Woods, did something unprecedented last week off the golf course, opening a \$25-million golf learning centre for underprivileged kids.

TEE BREAK
Deepak Acharya



Woods, a winner of 57 tournaments worldwide and 10 major championships, feels that opening the centre is by far the greatest thing he has ever

done because it has the potential to shape many lives. It is estimated that 5,000 kids will pass through the Tiger Woods learning centre by the end of this year alone.

The 35,000-square-foot facility is located next to the HG 'Dad' Miller Golf Course, where Woods played when he was in high school. Kids who want to attend will have to apply by writing their own letters. Those accepted will attend interactive programs in science, math and technology along with golf.



This is no doubt a grand contribution by an individual sportsman or woman and similar to those made by other superstars with vision, such as football's David Beckham and tennis legend Andre Agassis. The US Golf Association has substantial development programs and has been a huge force for the development of golf but it cannot do it all alone.

In Nepal, we don't even have a basic program to mentor our youth players nor a golfing legend like Tiger Woods to give needed support. In fact, the sport's future looks gloomy with no support forthcoming from national authorities.

But instead of lamenting this state of affairs, it is time that we come together and plan how to build up this sport. Golf is growing rapidly worldwide so unless we start to seriously look into this issue we will be left further and further behind. ●

Deepak Acharya is a golf instructor and Golf Director at Gokarna Forest Golf Resort & Spa, Kathmandu.
prodeepak@hotmail.com

AIM COOL
create your climate

LABELS
DURBAR MARG | 4241802, 4226432

Slipping and sliding to gold

Action has begun at the cold countries' playground, the winter Olympics

ANOOP PANDEY

With 85 countries participating, the 2006 winter Olympic Games in Torino Italy is sure to be one of the year's most widely watched sporting extravaganzas. Below is a roundup of some of the most popular events:

Alpine Skiing

Men's events and the women's slalom and giant slalom will take place at Sestriere, 100 km from Torino while the Women's downhill, super G and combined events will be held at San Sicario Fraitve. Event finals are scheduled for 12-25 February.

It's no coincidence that Western European countries lying at the foot of the Alps have dominated this sport, particularly Austria, which has won 85 medals, including 26 gold.

Bobsleigh

The bobsled's Olympic debut was the four-man event at the 1924 Winter Games. The two-man event followed eight years later. The first women's bobsled event was held in 2002.

In bobsleigh a driver steers by pulling one rope with his right hand to turn right or a separate rope with his left hand to go left. The sleds rip down the icy track one at a time racing against the clock, reaching speeds of up to 90 mph. The team with the lowest aggregate time after two runs wins.

Figure skating

In the early 1860s, New York's Jackson Haines introduced a new combination of music, ballet, ice skating and dancing that wasn't well received in his country. So he took his revolutionary ideas to



Vienna, Austria, where they flourished. Figure skating debuted indoor at the 1908 Olympic Summer Games in London. Singles and pairs competitions have been part of every Winter Games since 1924.

The men's and women's singles and pairs competitions each consist of two parts: a short program in which skaters must complete required elements and a free skate, a longer program that has few restrictions and emphasises skaters' artistry.

The ice dancing competition was introduced in 1976.

Freestyle skiing

Freestyle skiing saw its first Olympic action as a demonstration sport at the 1988 Calgary Games. Its immense

popularity, particularly with the Gen-X crowd, made it an official medal sport at Albertville in 1992 and it has been a staple of the Winter Olympics ever since.

There are two disciplines in freestyle—aerials and moguls. Ballet is another discipline associated with freestyle but it has yet to be accepted as an Olympic event.

The aerial event is perhaps the most breathtaking freestyle event. Competitors begin at a spot of their choice and ski straight down the mountain toward a concave jump (which can be as high as 13 ft) that hurls them into the air. They perform a variety of twists and somersaults in mid-air, and then attempt to 'stick' the landing upright. ●

NEPAL PASHMINA INDUSTRY

Top Pashmina Export Award winner 1999/2001/2005

Blankets

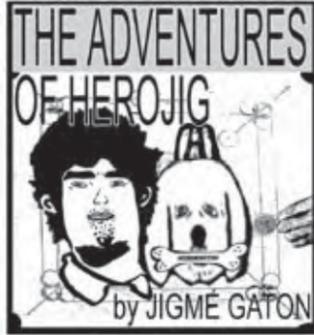
Ring shawl

NPI Nepal Pashmina Industry
Main Showroom: Sootree Mode (On the way of Hotel Sootree)
Thamel Showroom: Opposite Sanchaykosh Building Tel: 4273292, 4277023, 4283644 | Fax: 977 1 4270092
Email: npi@mos.com.np | Web: www.npi-nepal.com

Himal Graphics

All the Adventures can be seen here in the Times every Friday or read online at www.extreme-nepal.com

#110 2062 by jigme gaton - read. love. write.



Due to recent events in Texas, Herojig Recommends:

NEW RULES FOR HUNTING IN NEPAL

NEVER HUNT WITH HEADS OF STATE (IE. DICK CHENEY)
 WHEN HUNTING NEPALI CHICKENS, AIM LOW
 KEEP YOUR FRIENDS CLOSE BUT YOUR ENEMIES CLOSER
 WEAR ORANGE & PINK POLKA-DOTS (LATEST FASHION)
 CONSIDER TAKING UP CHESS AS A HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE
 ALWAYS GIVE YOUR NEPALI HOUND LOTS OF NIBBLES

KE GARNE? WHATEVER.
 But be a heroji and keep ur safety on.

"The fascination of shooting as a sport depends almost wholly on whether you are at the right or wrong end of a gun." -P.G. Wodehouse, author and creator of Jeeves and Wooster

(I WROTE THIS ONE!)

Next change: honestly, we just don't know.

"Lata ko desh ma gaando tanderi." (In a land of fools, even a man with a bad goatee can be a hero.) - as translated by UNACO STOTS, the UN's Association of Cartoonists - NEPAL

ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

❖ **Climate Change** exhibition at British Council. 13-25 February. 8.30 AM – 5.45 PM. 4410798

EVENTS

- ❖ **Abouna** A film by Mahamat-Saleh Haroun. 19 February. 5.30 PM Nepal Tourism Board
- ❖ **The Historicity of Limbu Ethnic Revival** by Dr. Ramesh Dhungel. 17 February. 4PM. Social Science Baha
- ❖ **Kathmandu Chorale** is beginning rehearsals for its Spring Concert. Rehearsals will be held at the British School hall, Sanepa, from 20 February. 7.10 PM.
- ❖ **Facilitation and Presentation Skills** a forum by AYON. 18 February. 1- 5PM. FNCCI, FNCCI complex, Teku. 2041674
- ❖ **Aerobics** at Hyatt Regency 18 – 24 February. 4491234
- ❖ **Why Meditate? On What? How** monthly lecture by Cultural Studies Group of Nepal. 21 February. 5.30 PM. Shankar Hotel
- ❖ **Nepathya for All** at Sanothimi. 18 February. 5552839
- ❖ **5th Pokhara International Marathon 2006**. 13 February 2.30 PM. Nepal Tourism Board. Pokhara.
- ❖ **Yuva Chalfal on 'A little bit'** by GL Chapagain based on his book. 17 February 3-5PM. Martin Chautari. 4107599

MUSIC

- ❖ **The Cloud Walkers** at Rox Bar. Request the music of your choice. Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 4491234
- ❖ **Heartbreakers** live every Friday at Rum Doodle Bar & Restaurant
- ❖ **The Rusty Nails** at MOKSH LIVE. 19 February 7.30 PM 5526212
- ❖ **Cadenza Collective** live every Wednesday (Jazz) and Saturday (Afro-funk and Latin) 8PM at Upstairs, Lajimpat.
- ❖ **Live Music** at New Orleans Café. 4700311
- ❖ **Best of jazz** JCS trio and Friends. Niek's Place. Every Tuesday and Saturday. Free entry. 4701324.
- ❖ **Jatra Friday** nights, live music by Siron. 4256622
- ❖ **Unplugged** sessions with Strings, Jatra Saturday nights. 4256622
- ❖ **Live Music** at Juneli Bar, Hotel de l'Annapurna. 4221711
- ❖ **Uncork the Good Times** Fusion- The bar at Dwarika's presents Ciney and Par-e-jat playing Popular Sounds of 70's with Fabulous Cocktails, Tantalising BBQs by the poolside every Friday from 7PM onwards. Rs. 750, includes a small bottle of Carlsberg beer or a soft drink. Dwarika's Hotel. 4479448



DINING

- ❖ **Madras Express** south Indian Food. 17 – 25 February. Garden Terrace Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **Stupa View** vegetarian creations, clay oven pizza, tasty desserts, espresso & latte. directly at the Boudha Stupa. 4480262
- ❖ **Maki Nawa Bhutu** for traditional Newari cuisine at Hotel Royal Singi. 4439784
- ❖ **Mexican and Italian** food at Fuzone Café, Lagankhel. 5542935
- ❖ **Great Dining** options at Al Fresco, Bukhara, China Garden and Garden Terrace restaurants, Soaltee Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **Barbeque** at Le Meridien, Kathmandu, every Saturday. 4451212.
- ❖ **The Shangri-La Express** Soups, make your own sandwiches and salads and choice of dessert only for Rs 399. Everyday from 11AM - 3PM. The Shambala Garden
- ❖ **Wonderful Wednesdays** at Fusion, Dwarika's, happy hour 5-9PM.
- ❖ **Breakfast** at 1905 Kantipath, New York style bagels whole wheat pancakes and real croissants baked in house daily. Omelettes made to your gourmet style.
- ❖ **BBQ Dinner** at Summit Hotel every Friday. 6.30 AM-9.30 PM. 5521810
- ❖ **Breakfast With Birds** lunch with butterflies and dinner by the fire place. Farm House Café. 4375279

GETAWAYS

- ❖ **Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge**, award winning relaxation in Pokhara Reservations. 436 1500
- ❖ **Junglewalks**, rafting, elephant rides all at Jungle Base Camp Lodge, Bardia. junglebasecamp@yahoo.com
- ❖ **Nature Retreat** at Park Village Resorts & Spa. 4375280
- ❖ **Star Cruises/Singapore** with Air Sahara bring you cruise packages from Rs.65,500.00 only. 2012345. starcruises_marco@polo.com.np
- ❖ **Escape Kathmandu** at Shivapuri Heights Cottage. 9851012245

Quest Entertainment

Peter, Susan, Edmund and Lucy are deported from London to the house of an eccentric professor during World War II. They find life there extremely dull until Lucy discovers a wardrobe that leads to a magical world called Narnia, where animals can talk and all are ruled over by the wise and benevolent lion Aslan. The others don't believe her at first but soon all of them go through the wardrobe and discover all is not well in Narnia. The land is being kept in a perpetual winter by the evil White Witch Jadis, who turns anyone who doesn't obey her into stone. The children join Aslan and the animals loyal to him in an attempt to vanquish Jadis.



Call 4442220 for show timings www.jainepal.com

FREE!

Subscription Rates

Rs. 1250 (1 year) **Rs. 2400** (2 year)

Cap & Nepali Pop Audio CD's

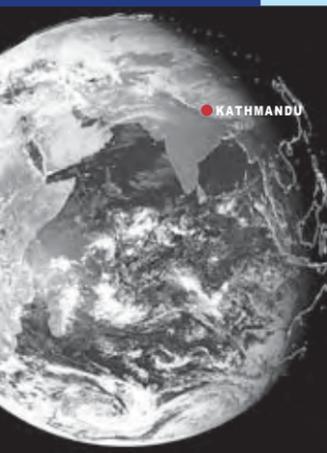
Nepali Times

Hatiban, Lalitpur, Nepal Ph: 5543333 / 5523845 subscription@himalmedia.com

अनुशासन र नैतिकताविहीन व्यक्ति र समाज अन्ततोगत्वा पतन भएर जान्छन् । त्यसैले राष्ट्रिय जीवनका हरेक आयामहरूमा उदाहरणीय अनुशासन र नैतिकता कायम गर्नुपर्छ । र त्यसको सुरुवात आफैबाट गरौं ।

श्री ५ को सरकार
 सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय
 सूचना विभाग

NEPALI WEATHER by MAUSAM BEED



Another one bites the dust. That frisky westerly front that was approaching us early this week suddenly veered off towards the Pamirs again dumping more snow on Kashmir. Which means another prolonged wait for rain to break this four-month drought. A significant weather feature of this winter is the uneven distribution of moisture—the western Himalaya is getting above normal rain and snow while the central and eastern parts got nothing. This satellite picture taken on Thursday evening shows northern India sky free of clouds but shrouded in smog. The Himalaya is blocking the infusion of moisture from the Tibetan plateau. Conclusion: Spring sunshine will take temperature up by a notch but, sorry, no rain on the horizon.

KATHMANDU VALLEY

Fri ☀️ 23-9	Sat ☀️ 23-9	Sun ☀️ 24-10	Mon ☀️ 25-10	Tue ☀️ 26-10
-------------------	-------------------	--------------------	--------------------	--------------------



फेरी सुचारु
BBC नेपाली
 Daily 2045-2115 on 102.4
Radio Sagarmatha
 P.O. Box 6958,
 Bakhundole, Lalitpur, Nepal
 Tel: ++977-1-545680, 545681,
 Fax: ++ 977-1- 530227
radio@radiosagarmatha.org,
www.radiosagarmatha.org

Vineyard lounge
 WINE AND COCKTAIL

Babarmahal Revisited.
 Tel: 4253337/4264920

THE NORTH FACE

AUTHORISED DEALER OF

NEVER STOP EXPLORING
CHECKOUT FOR

- WINTER WEARS ■ CASUAL WEARS
- FOOTWEARS ■ BACKPACKS
- MOUNTAINING ACCESSORIES
- EQUIPMENTS

SHERPA ADVENTURE OUTLET (P) LTD.
 Tri-Devi Marga, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal.
 (Opposite Himalayan Bank.)
 Tel: 977-1-4445101
 Email: sao@mail.com.np

UNITED BRANDS

Lhosar Sale
 Up to **50%**

15th Feb-28th Feb

Tridevi Marg, Thamel,
 Kathmandu Tel: 4416116
 E-mail: unitedbrands@mail.com.np



MARTY LOGAN

BATTLEFIELD: Villagers living along the Siddhartha Highway in Nawalparasi on Saturday describe last week's Maoist-army battle that took place literally on their doorsteps. A bombed out troop carrier still sits on the road.



KIRAN PANDAY

VICTORIOUS: Newly elected Kathmandu Mayor Raja Ram Shrestha waves to supporters after being sworn in Monday.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

HAPPY DAYS ARE HERE AGAIN: Ex-Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba jokes with the media at his house on Monday after being freed from prison following the Supreme Court decision to dissolve the RCC.



KIRAN PANDAY

GRIEVING: The wife of UML cadre Umesh Thapa breaks down at his cremation at Pashupatinath last Friday. Thapa was killed by a soldier as he demonstrated in Dang on Election Day.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

SOUTH INDIAN TASTE: Soaltee Crowne Plaza Executive Assistant Manager F & B Pralhad Raj Kunwar on Thursday introduces the chef team for the hotel's *Madras Express* South Indian Food Festival that runs until 25 February.

Hard work sprouts success

Sarada Darai loves challenges and succeeds at many of them. Growing up in Chitwan she won many awards for running track and today, a grassroots entrepreneur at 30, her days of running around continue.

Darai owns a vegetable shop in Tahachal near Soaltee Hotel. It's hard to miss the store that you pass on the left just before turning right towards the hotel. Mornings and evenings, carrots, radishes, cilantro, cauliflower and other goods are neatly lined up outside.

Darai's day starts at 5AM when she leaves for Kalimati vegetable market where she spends at least two hours daily shopping. "Everyday I come back with 300kg of vegetables from Kalimati. I get around 35-40 varieties of vegetables and herbs," she says.

What started as a small

vegetable stall has now grown into a medium-sized store. "I started the vegetable stall because I did not want to stay idle," adds Darai, whose husband drives a taxi. But when the number of customers started growing she decided to start saving and expand her business.

With that venture cruising along, she decided to embark on another and bought a few cars. In seven years, with the help of her husband, Darai was able to purchase five more cars and even convinced her husband to quit his job and team up with her. The duo hired a few drivers and ran a very lucrative taxi business until recently.

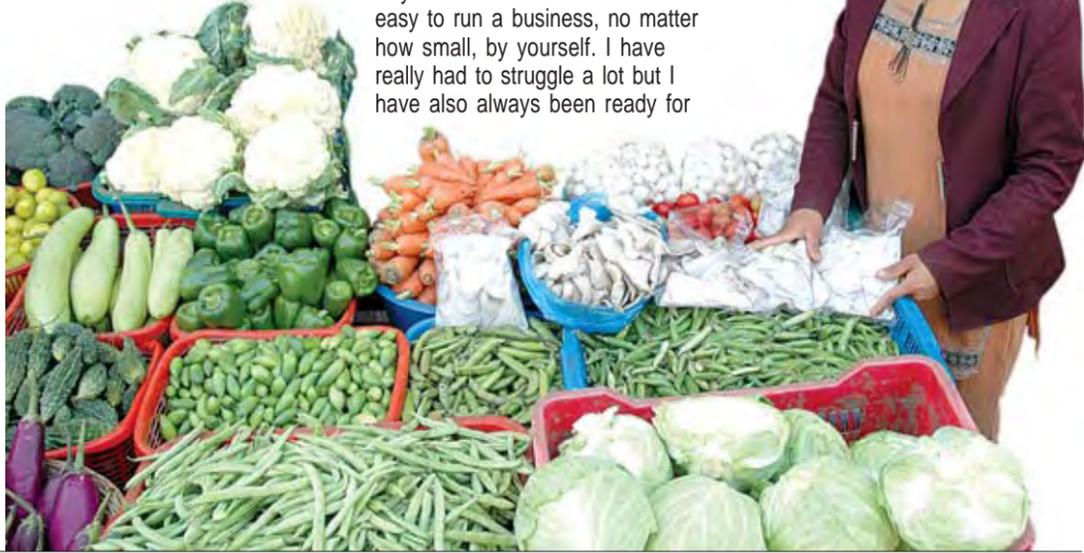
Darai was still a teenager when she and her husband left Chitwan to move to Kathmandu. She says her success is the fruit of years of hard labour. "It is not easy to run a business, no matter how small, by yourself. I have really had to struggle a lot but I have also always been ready for

hard work," she says with a smile.

The entrepreneur's philosophy is that each idle moment is a moment lost. "I don't care if what I am doing is not big, what is important is that I help my family and stay busy the rest of my life."

These days, Darai is saving every penny she earns from the store. "The business has to grow and I am looking forward to new challenges," she says, adding that she wants to expand into a bigger store where all household items will be available, a place where she won't have to turn away any prospective customers. ●

Mallika Aryal



KIRAN PANDAY

THE SHANGRI-LA EXPRESS

Invites you for an express take on the delightful culinary treasures where a unique destination menu awaits.




DESTINATIONS

- Wholesome Soups**
A perfect Warm-up.
- Sandwich Potpourri**
Experiment and come up with your own choice of sandwiches.
- Salad Bar**
Pick and choose the ingredients and be your own salad chef.
- Desserts**
Wonderland of succulent desserts. A wide selection to choose from.
- Tea/Coffee**
Fresh brew of regular drinks.

Pick up the Pace

at the Shambala Garden

Discover swift-new ways to soothe your palate.

Rs. 399 nett per person*
The Express runs daily at the Shambala Garden
From 12 noon to 3 pm.

*Conditions Apply

Armchair analysis for beginners

Over the years, we media watchdogs have watched with growing alarm the erosion of journalistic values in this country as the fourth estate abandons its hallowed principles and becomes obsessed with mammon and mammaries.

To make matters worse, certain lazy young reporters who have requested anonymity because they are ashamed to call themselves mediapersons still insist on just reporting the facts and leave out all their bigotry, prejudice and preconceived notions.

Whatever happened to good old-fashioned bias? Where is the editorialising? If journalists don't have the intestinal fortitude to stand up to what they believe in and back that up with views masquerading as news then I'm afraid I consider it a shame to any longer remain in this profession.

UNDER MY HAT
Kunda Dixit



After all, our readers do not need dialysis, they need analysis. They need it every day and the only people who can administer the suppository are our registered

armchair analysts who are officially certified to pontificate on any subject under the sun.

Today's young journalists think opinion is only for the opinion pages. What rubbish. Journalism schools should start teaching students that their job is not just to report facts but to bend them. In fact, facts should never be allowed to get in the way of a good argument, especially if that argument coincides with our own. But alas, standards are slipping and ultimately it is you, our valued clients, who end up being shortchanged.

So, to make up for letting you down we in the media are giving you a totally unobjective rundown of the week's events. (Editor's note: the opinions expressed in these snippets of news are the reporter's own and in no way reflect the prevailing situation in the country.)

Deuba released again

BY OUR JAIL BIRD

Ex-ex-ex-prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba was released from detention Monday and it is our considered opinion that he should be made prime minister once more. The man deserves it.

It is this correspondent's neutral and unbiased opinion that Deuba has more experience than most other politicians and would be the ideal candidate. "After all, he has made all the mistakes he can possibly make and it is likely he will make them again, so at least with him we know what we are getting," this correspondent said to himself aloud in the course of reporting this objective bit of news.

And if you don't agree with me, you can stuff it.

Prachanda grants yet another interview

BY AN UNDERGROUND ANALYST

Comrade Awesome has granted a record-breaking 157th interview this week to the *Kiribati Chronicle* thus making him the most interviewed public figure after Manisha Koirala.

The Maoist supremacist has now covered nearly all the countries and territories in the world with *Sao Principe and Tome Daily News* and the *Galapagos Gazette* among the latest papers to interview him. "Now we need to get into the backlog of interview requests from papers in sub-Saharan Africa," said a subterranean spokesperson speaking from an undisclosed hideout in India.

A request by Larry King for an interview, however, was turned down since his surname means he could have a royalist bias.

HP recommends Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional.

TAKES YOUR BUSINESS BEYOND THE OFFICE.

The new HP Compaq rx6120 Notebook PC, powered by Intel® Pentium® M Processor, keeps you just an email away from your office. It boasts the perfect balance of key features to help you meet and exceed business expectations. Intelligent antenna capabilities, enhanced by HP Wireless Assistant, the latest MiniPCI wireless solutions and optional integrated Bluetooth technology, ensure that you get optimised, secure connectivity wherever you need it. Furthermore, with a high-capacity hard drive, generous memory and large display, your notebook will effortlessly handle any task you throw at it. And of course, with an improved battery life, it'll last as long as you do. So get the new HP Compaq rx6120 Notebook PC today. Because whatever your destination, it'll enable you to work smarter.

HP COMPAQ rx6120 NOTEBOOK PC

- Intel® Pentium® M Processor (1.73GHz) and Higher
- Genuine Microsoft® Windows® XP Professional
- 512MB DDR RAM
- 40GB HDD
- 24X DVD/CDRW Combo drive
- 15" TFT XGA Display
- Integrated 10/100/1000 NIC
- High speed 56K modem
- Integrated Wireless LAN 802.11b/g
- 1, 1/2, 3 year limited warranty

HP is No. 1 in portable PCs.*

SMART ADVICE > SMART TECHNOLOGY > SMART SUPPORT

With certified service and genuine parts, HP Care Pack adds more value to your warranty. Insist on one today.

Click www.hp.com.sg/smartoffice

*Source: Best of Asia / Pacific PC shipments, IDC's Asia/Pacific Quarterly PC Tracker, 1Q 2005. *Star's numbering is not a measurement of higher performance.

Premium Business Partner & Authorised Service Provider

CAS CAS Trading House Pvt. Ltd.

P.O. Box: 2932, Computerland Building, New Plaza, Pulastiasak, Kathmandu, Nepal
Phone: 977-1-4440271-2, 4430858, 4430859 Fax: 977-1-4430641
E-mail: sales@cth.ccas.com.np
Web: www.castradinghouse.com

© 2005 Hewlett-Packard Development Company, L.P. Intel, Intel logo, Pentium, Intel Inside, and Intel Inside logo are trademarks or registered trademarks of Intel Corporation or its subsidiaries in the United States and other countries. Microsoft and Windows are U.S. registered trademarks of Microsoft Corporation.

A nature paradise TEN minutes away !!

Park Village
Hotel Resort & Spa

Whether you are celebrating anniversary or simply having intimate dinner with friends & family, Park Village offers absolute charm of a hill station to fire the romance of dining in nature unlimited.

Either enjoy lunch under the balmy sun or B B Q dinner by the fireplace, our Chef Bisnu is always eager to serve you the best of his exquisite cuisine.

Park Village, Budhanilkantha, Ph: 4375280,
Email: pvh@wlink.com.np

Soft Skin,
Your Identity

As beautiful as you want to be - POND'S

SKL/0001105

0 0 2 8 4

ISSN 1814-2613