Whether it came down due to Maoist anti-aircraft fire or an accident, the loss of one of the army’s three remaining airworthy Mi-17 helicopters on Wednesday night in Malangwa could lead to an escalation in the conflict.

Exposed to deadly Maoist ambushes along highways, the army has been relying increasingly on air support to subdue the Maoists, but strafing and bombings have led to higher civilian casualties. The army is using 81mm and 120mm mortar rounds called “Tora Bora” dropped from helicopters. After the Thukarpa raid last week, tail fin parts of the army’s new 200mm bombs were found. (see p 2)

The night-vision equipped helicopter with call sign RAN-37 (pictured, above, after the Pandaun battle two years ago) took off from Kathmandu at 10PM on Wednesday on a “tactical mission” to foil the Maoist attack on the border town of Malangwa. Eye-witnesses said the helicopter hovered for an hour, then returned after refuelling in Simra but exploded in midair at about 1.30 AM. It fell in many pieces and eight bodies were found.

The Maoists said they shot down the helicopter and claimed this “glorious victory” ushered in a new phase in the war. In February, Maoist leaders admitted being vulnerable to aerial attacks and had been firing at choppers using GPMGs. The army says it is investigating the crash but one military expert told us it could have been caused by ordnance exploding on board. However, the army could now be tempted to buy even more sophisticated helicopter gunships to counter Maoist capabilities.
T

here have been a lot of
discussions and demands from
different sides that have called for the 'constitutional forces' to come together for a solution of Nepal's crisis.

But who are these forces? The 1990 constitution mentions a number of such forces: a parliament, agovement elected by and responsible to this parliament, a constitutional king with no direct executive and legislative powers, an independent judiciary with the Supreme Court, political parties

as agents and converters of public will, etc. Hardy any of these institutions is functioning in the way as prescribed by the 1990 constitution.

Those who claim loudest to be 'constitutional forces' come from the camp around the institution of monarchy: King Gyanendra himself and his ministers, security chiefs as well as institutions and persons installed in office by the king after October 4, 2002. The second group who see themselves as constitutional forces are political parties.

But the misunderstanding is that these forces are not constitutional per se but that they are only constitutional forces as long as they follow the rules of the 1990 constitution.

Part of the compromise of 1990 has been that the absolute monarchy became a constitutional one that had to obey to the rules of the constitution which defined not only the state but also the duty of the king. The latter's executive and legislative powers became reduced to formal functions. The king has also the right to intervene in the affairs of the government or parliament, neither concerning their compositions nor their decisions. Article 27(i) gave the king the duty to protect and preserve the fundamental principles of the constitution.

The current position of King Gyanendra has nothing to do with this definition of constitutional monarchy. The constitution of 1990 gave the king nothing for a necessity for all steps undertaken since October 2002, also 5.2 that requires that new elections have to take place within six months after the dissolution of parliament. This means its dissolution in 2002 became automatically invalid when elections could not take place in time. There was no need nor right for any intervention of the king who especially was not allowed to dissolve the parliament and later install governments himself.

King Gyanendra's attitude towards the political parties and civil society, especially after February, 2002 further proves that the king has left his constitutional position and thus can no longer be called a constitutional force. Therefore, the persons and institutions nominated or installed by him are not constitutional forces either.

Political parties are generally groups of like-minded citizens who want to succeed in getting shared political ideas implemented. The constitution of 1990 requires that such political parties identify themselves from these constitutional forces either.

Constitutional forces either.

Political parties are generally groups of like-minded citizens who want to succeed in getting shared political ideas implemented. The constitution of 1990 requires that such political parties identify themselves from these constitutional forces either.

Constitutional forces either.

Political parties are generally groups of like-minded citizens who want to succeed in getting shared political ideas implemented. The constitution of 1990 requires that such political parties identify themselves from these constitutional forces either.

Constitutional forces either.

Political parties are generally groups of like-minded citizens who want to succeed in getting shared political ideas implemented. The constitution of 1990 requires that such political parties identify themselves from these constitutional forces either.
If the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for?

In the Himalmedia public opinion poll (#292) raises a few methodological concerns. How is it shared culture? #291 is already too little too late. It is necessary to share with the readers the hypothesis and be helpful in the deliberations. Extreme slogans and unsubstantiated claims have torn us apart and it is quite necessary to make sure that the answers being given are valid. How was this problem handled? How were the enumerators taught to stay away from the element of 'suggestion' when formulating the questions for uninfluenced respondents? In such statistically significant exercises, it is necessary to share with the readers the degree of standard deviation and margin of error both of which have gone unreported.

Given the fact that Himalmedia has been highly politically biased against the king and in favour of the corrupt politicians, the latter having been squarely responsible for Nepal's democratic debacle of the 1990s, it would be a fair question to ask how much of 'doctoring' the responses was involved to make the 'poll findings' consistent with its political prejudices?

Unlike in the west where people are mostly urban, educated, highly exposed to social context like that in Nepal. If the polling can give us a baseline for initiating a culture of public opinion research, this country is not an experiment for initiating a culture of public opinion research. Plus, not all poll findings are consistent with its political prejudices.

CORRECTIONS

In 'Listen to us' (#292) the bar chart depicting answers to the question in the Himalmedia public opinion poll if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? The bar chart should have stood for the 2006 Himalmedia Nationwide Poll instead of what inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The caption for the picture accompanying 'Not knowing if they are dead or alive' (#292) should have read 'Motimaya Rai was misidentified. The reason the caption inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The bar chart showing the answers to the question if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? would have read 'Motimaya Poudel and Tinam Rai as they relate their struggle to find a son and a brother'. Tinam Rai was misidentified.

NAME WITHDREW

Kathmandu, Nepal

CK LAL
Who is this 'name withheld' guy sticking a knife into CK Lal's prose labelling them 'suggestion' when formulating the questions for uninfluenced respondents? In such statistically significant exercises, it is necessary to share with the readers the degree of standard deviation and margin of error both of which have gone unreported.

Given the fact that Himalmedia has been highly politically biased against the king and in favour of the corrupt politicians, the latter having been squarely responsible for Nepal's democratic debacle of the 1990s, it would be a fair question to ask how much of 'doctoring' the responses was involved to make the 'poll findings' consistent with its political prejudices?

Unlike in the west where people are mostly urban, educated, highly exposed to social context like that in Nepal. If the polling can give us a baseline for initiating a culture of public opinion research, this country is not an experiment for initiating a culture of public opinion research. Plus, not all poll findings are consistent with its political prejudices.

CORRECTIONS

In 'Listen to us' (#292) the bar chart depicting answers to the question in the Himalmedia public opinion poll if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? The bar chart should have stood for the 2006 Himalmedia Nationwide Poll instead of what inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The caption for the picture accompanying 'Not knowing if they are dead or alive' (#292) should have read 'Motimaya Poudel and Tinam Rai as they relate their struggle to find a son and a brother'. Tinam Rai was misidentified.

NAME WITHDREW

Kathmandu, Nepal

CK LAL
Who is this 'name withheld' guy sticking a knife into CK Lal's prose labelling them 'suggestion' when formulating the questions for uninfluenced respondents? In such statistically significant exercises, it is necessary to share with the readers the degree of standard deviation and margin of error both of which have gone unreported.

Given the fact that Himalmedia has been highly politically biased against the king and in favour of the corrupt politicians, the latter having been squarely responsible for Nepal's democratic debacle of the 1990s, it would be a fair question to ask how much of 'doctoring' the responses was involved to make the 'poll findings' consistent with its political prejudices?

Unlike in the west where people are mostly urban, educated, highly exposed to social context like that in Nepal. If the polling can give us a baseline for initiating a culture of public opinion research, this country is not an experiment for initiating a culture of public opinion research. Plus, not all poll findings are consistent with its political prejudices.

CORRECTIONS

In 'Listen to us' (#292) the bar chart depicting answers to the question in the Himalmedia public opinion poll if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? The bar chart should have stood for the 2006 Himalmedia Nationwide Poll instead of what inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The caption for the picture accompanying 'Not knowing if they are dead or alive' (#292) should have read 'Motimaya Poudel and Tinam Rai as they relate their struggle to find a son and a brother'. Tinam Rai was misidentified.

NAME WITHDREW

Kathmandu, Nepal

CK LAL
Who is this 'name withheld' guy sticking a knife into CK Lal's prose labelling them 'suggestion' when formulating the questions for uninfluenced respondents? In such statistically significant exercises, it is necessary to share with the readers the degree of standard deviation and margin of error both of which have gone unreported.

Given the fact that Himalmedia has been highly politically biased against the king and in favour of the corrupt politicians, the latter having been squarely responsible for Nepal's democratic debacle of the 1990s, it would be a fair question to ask how much of 'doctoring' the responses was involved to make the 'poll findings' consistent with its political prejudices?

Unlike in the west where people are mostly urban, educated, highly exposed to social context like that in Nepal. If the polling can give us a baseline for initiating a culture of public opinion research, this country is not an experiment for initiating a culture of public opinion research. Plus, not all poll findings are consistent with its political prejudices.

CORRECTIONS

In 'Listen to us' (#292) the bar chart depicting answers to the question in the Himalmedia public opinion poll if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? The bar chart should have stood for the 2006 Himalmedia Nationwide Poll instead of what inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The caption for the picture accompanying 'Not knowing if they are dead or alive' (#292) should have read 'Motimaya Poudel and Tinam Rai as they relate their struggle to find a son and a brother'. Tinam Rai was misidentified.

NAME WITHDREW

Kathmandu, Nepal

CK LAL
Who is this 'name withheld' guy sticking a knife into CK Lal's prose labelling them 'suggestion' when formulating the questions for uninfluenced respondents? In such statistically significant exercises, it is necessary to share with the readers the degree of standard deviation and margin of error both of which have gone unreported.

Given the fact that Himalmedia has been highly politically biased against the king and in favour of the corrupt politicians, the latter having been squarely responsible for Nepal's democratic debacle of the 1990s, it would be a fair question to ask how much of 'doctoring' the responses was involved to make the 'poll findings' consistent with its political prejudices?

Unlike in the west where people are mostly urban, educated, highly exposed to social context like that in Nepal. If the polling can give us a baseline for initiating a culture of public opinion research, this country is not an experiment for initiating a culture of public opinion research. Plus, not all poll findings are consistent with its political prejudices.

CORRECTIONS

In 'Listen to us' (#292) the bar chart depicting answers to the question in the Himalmedia public opinion poll if the Maoists were to give up arms and elections were held, who would you vote for? The bar chart should have stood for the 2006 Himalmedia Nationwide Poll instead of what inadvertently appeared. The reason the results don't add up to 100 percent is because there are rounds and negative results were not included.

The caption for the picture accompanying 'Not knowing if they are dead or alive' (#292) should have read 'Motimaya Poudel and Tinam Rai as they relate their struggle to find a son and a brother'. Tinam Rai was misidentified.
The annual Jewish Passover or Pesach holiday, which begins after sunset on Thursday 12 April and lasts for a week, is one of the most important festivals in the Jewish calendar and draws Israeli tourists holidaying in Asia by the hundreds to Nepal. Their arrival is a reminder that Israelis, mostly backpackers, are venturing here at a time when tourist alerts and rumours of Maoists have scared away many other would-be visitors.

The Jewish community has been celebrating Pesach in Nepal for almost two decades, and it coincides with the Nepali new year. The first proper Passover meal was held in the Pampernickel Bakery in Thamel in 1989 after Israeli and Jewish travellers asked the Israeli Embassy here to help them organise a celebration. The number of people attending the festival since then has grown steadily, in part because Nepal’s peak trekking season is the time that backpackers in other parts of South Asia start drifting northward to escape scorching temperatures.

Last year, 2,000 attended Pesach here and this year the Beth Chabad, the community’s religious centre in Thamel, hopes to draw at least as many to the event at the Hotel Radisson. Two truckloads of kosher food arrived from Israel two weeks ago. “This is probably the largest gathering of Israelis to celebrate Passover anywhere outside Israel,” says Rabbi Mendel of the Beth Chabad. For many young Israelis who may not strictly follow their religion at home, taking part in the festival here becomes a way to reconnect with their community and culture.

Among industry wallahs, Israeli tourists don’t have a great reputation: they spend less than tourists from other countries and are known to be bargain hunters. Most of them arrive here straight out of compulsory army service in Israel seeking the freedom they have been denied for three long years (for men—women do one year of voluntary service).

But while they spend less per day than other tourists, Israelis stay longer. For many, the trip to Nepal is just one leg in an Asian voyage that easily stretches to six or seven months. First-timer Dana Ehrhal, 23, travelled overland from India after spending a few months in Kathmandu and then in Bangkok. “I had the option of staying longer in India but I decided to come here and I found people much friendlier and hospitable,” she says. According to Israeli Ambassador to Nepal Dan Stav, “The major treasure of Nepal is her people. You will never meet such friendly people anywhere else. Even with the conflict, tourists have never been targeted here and I see no reason not to come to Nepal.”

NTB’s monthly statistics ignore tourists who arrive overland, including many Israelis. For example, of the 9,342 tourists who entered through the Sunauli border in March—339 were Israelis, according to Naresh Pokhrel, sub-assistant at the NTB desk in Sunauli, but they don’t appear anywhere in the tourist tally.

Michael Draz first visited Nepal three years ago with her son who had already visited four times and couldn’t stop raving about Nepal. Now she spends three months a year in Kathmandu as the general supervisor at the Israeli-run ORKA restaurant in Thamel. “I feel very much at home here,” says Tova, but she has a quibble about foreigners being charged higher prices here: “it should be the same price for all.”

While the large number of Israeli tourists to Asia is explained in part by their inability to get tourist visas for Muslim countries, their ability to adapt and survive is an advantage. Because conflict is not new to them, and because Nepal was the first country in this part of the world to establish diplomatic relations with Israel, in 1966, you would think that officials here would be doing more to reach out to Israeli tourists.

In 2005, Himalayan Multiple Skills Training Institute (HIMSTI) started training workers who could meet the growing demand in Israel for caregivers for the aged and physically challenged. Its month-long course, during which students must live at HIMSTI, includes English and Hebrew language classes, training in hospitality and primary nursing care as well as a dip into Israeli culture.

Trainees pay Rs 430,000 for the program that includes air transport to and from Israel and visa processing. The basic salary a caregiver in Israel earns is $550 a month plus $70-120 as pocket money and with the fact that they live with the employer’s family and labour rights are very protected there it’s a very safe bet for them,” says HIMSTI’s Bhaskar Devkota. The institute has published a caregivers’ manual in Hebrew, English and Nepali called Shalom with Namaste.

In the past 15 months, 432 Nepalis, most of them women, have been trained and are working as caregivers in Israel. At present the 14th batch, 33 women and two men, are undergoing training (pic). They include Yasodha Siwakoti, 31, from Jhapa. “It will be easier for us to work if we learn something first and the institute is wonderful,” she says.
Nepali water filter award finalist

A development platform in Nepal received a development platform award for water filter innovation. The three finalists for the prestigious US$50,000 St Andrews Prize for the Environment, as reported in Nepali Times (February 14, 2006), are the Kanchar Anisic Filter, which uses everyday items, including sand, brick, clay gravel and iron nails to remove arsenic, pathogens, iron and other contaminants from water. The filter was developed by the Environment and Public Health Organization (EPAWASH), a Nepal NGO, working with researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and another local NGO. Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Support Program (PRESVA). More than three million Nepalis living in the tarai are drinking arsenic-tainted water. Long-term exposure to this poison can lead to malignant, vascular diseases, both defects and even lung cancer and kidney problems. The St Andrews Prize is awarded by the University of St Andrews in Scotland and the international energy company ConocoPhilips to celebrate practical solutions to environmental challenges. There are two other finalists for the 2006 award, a wind power hydrogen production plant in Scotland and a project to educate women in Mexico and Central America on the use of the Maya Nut. The winner will be announced 9 May.

Low growth in 2006: ADB

Low crop yields in both winter and summer will keep Nepal’s growth rate at just two percent in 2006, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Poor weather will hamper production, added the bank’s year-old Asian Development Outlook (ADO) release on Thursday. The report blamed lower yields, slow industrial growth and faltering tourism as major reasons why growth fell from 3.5 percent in 2004 to 2.3 percent in 2005. But it projected growth to rise to 3.4 percent in FY2007.

Good news skyscraper

Twenty-seven percent more visitors arrived by air in March compared to the same month last year, according to the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation. Both Indian and non-Indian visitors grew, led by a 77 percent hike in Indian air arrivals. Other Asian markets increased significantly (88.3 percent) during the month as well. In March, Indian tourists grew by 50 percent, while tourists from Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore and Taiwan increased by about 10 percent. In the first quarter of the year, tourists from India represented 72.2 percent of all tourists who visited Nepal. The figures, released in mid-April, show that the availability of flights as well as the increase in international tourism can help the country achieve its target of four million arriving visitors this year.

ECONOMIC SENSE

Artha Beed

were linked to the large advertisements appearing in local newspapers. Sure enough, two of the planes sitting on the tarmac: missing engines and wings were Fokker100s. In any case, Commis’s debacle it just the latest in a long list of contact does not go away. There are two other finalists for the 2006 award, a wind power hydrogen production plant in Scotland and a project to educate women in Mexico and Central America on the use of the Maya Nut. The winner will be announced 9 May.

Low growth in 2006: ADB

Low crop yields in both winter and summer will keep Nepal’s growth rate at just two percent in 2006, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Poor weather will hamper production, added the bank’s year-old Asian Development Outlook (ADO) release on Thursday. The report blamed lower yields, slow industrial growth and faltering tourism as major reasons why growth fell from 3.5 percent in 2004 to 2.3 percent in 2005. But it projected growth to rise to 3.4 percent in FY2007.

ECONOMIC SENSE

Artha Beed

were linked to the large advertisements appearing in local newspapers. Sure enough, two of the planes sitting on the tarmac: missing engines and wings were Fokker100s. In any case, Commis’s debacle it just the latest in a long list of contact does not go away. There are two other finalists for the 2006 award, a wind power hydrogen production plant in Scotland and a project to educate women in Mexico and Central America on the use of the Maya Nut. The winner will be announced 9 May.

Low growth in 2006: ADB

Low crop yields in both winter and summer will keep Nepal’s growth rate at just two percent in 2006, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Poor weather will hamper production, added the bank’s year-old Asian Development Outlook (ADO) release on Thursday. The report blamed lower yields, slow industrial growth and faltering tourism as major reasons why growth fell from 3.5 percent in 2004 to 2.3 percent in 2005. But it projected growth to rise to 3.4 percent in FY2007.

ECONOMIC SENSE

Artha Beed

were linked to the large advertisements appearing in local newspapers. Sure enough, two of the planes sitting on the tarmac: missing engines and wings were Fokker100s. In any case, Commis’s debacle it just the latest in a long list of contact does not go away. There are two other finalists for the 2006 award, a wind power hydrogen production plant in Scotland and a project to educate women in Mexico and Central America on the use of the Maya Nut. The winner will be announced 9 May.

Low growth in 2006: ADB

Low crop yields in both winter and summer will keep Nepal’s growth rate at just two percent in 2006, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Poor weather will hamper production, added the bank’s year-old Asian Development Outlook (ADO) release on Thursday. The report blamed lower yields, slow industrial growth and faltering tourism as major reasons why growth fell from 3.5 percent in 2004 to 2.3 percent in 2005. But it projected growth to rise to 3.4 percent in FY2007.

ECONOMIC SENSE

Artha Beed

were linked to the large advertisements appearing in local newspapers. Sure enough, two of the planes sitting on the tarmac: missing engines and wings were Fokker100s. In any case, Commis’s debacle it just the latest in a long list of contact does not go away. There are two other finalists for the 2006 award, a wind power hydrogen production plant in Scotland and a project to educate women in Mexico and Central America on the use of the Maya Nut. The winner will be announced 9 May.

Low growth in 2006: ADB

Low crop yields in both winter and summer will keep Nepal’s growth rate at just two percent in 2006, according to the Asian Development Bank (ADB). Poor weather will hamper production, added the bank’s year-old Asian Development Outlook (ADO) release on Thursday. The report blamed lower yields, slow industrial growth and faltering tourism as major reasons why growth fell from 3.5 percent in 2004 to 2.3 percent in 2005. But it projected growth to rise to 3.4 percent in FY2007.
that the two types of defaulters have to be
are not correct. What we have been saying is
defaulters but in those definitions a few points
The report defines the terms wilful and non-wilful
been implemented.
progressed. The report of a commission headed
We also made a courageous decision to
three months many steps have been taken after
Nepal chief said in a speech that reforms had
I wouldn't agree. Recently, the World Bank's
International organisations like the World Bank
have claimed that financial sector reforms have
slowed under the present government.
One of the major conditions of financial sector
reforms, bringing wilful defaulters to book, hasn’t
progressed. The report of a commission headed
by NPC Vice Chairman Shankar Sharma has not
been implemented. It’s not that the report has been blocked but there
are a few things in it that need to be corrected. The report defines the terms wilful and non-wilful
defaulters but in those definitions a few points
are not correct. What we have been saying is
that the two types of defaulters have to be
properly defined. In a bid to correct the mistakes,
we have formed a taskforce. Once its work is done, the action steps will also need to be corrected.
But there have been allegations that you did not implement the report because of your own vested
interests?
That is a completely false charge. Some media
have been harping that my father (the late
Manishka Jyoti) is also on the blacklist of wilful
defaulters. It has been 14 years since he died—
when he was alive he was unaware of this list. The
loan amount was Rs 500,000 but now they say the
sum is Rs 9.5 million. How could that be?
Moreover, that money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
You mean to say that the system of blacklisting
should be changed?
I am not saying that the entire system should be
abolished but if someone is to be put on the list, that
should be done based on proper principles.
The present system is such that if you owned 15
percent of shares in a company and it was unable
to repay its loan, then you would be put on the
blacklist. This will only discourage investors. That
is why I say that incorrect principles like these
need to be corrected right away.
The state’s income has declined while its
taxes have already been increased. The government will have to manage the
necessary movement. There is a possibility of
unnecessary movement. That money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
The state’s income has declined while its
expenses have been on the rise and foreign aid
has gone down. How will you balance your books?
The state’s income has decreased while its
taxes have already been increased. The government will have to manage the
necessary movement. That money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
It is the duty of one democratic
force to try and bring an
unnecessary movement. There is a possibility of
unnecessary movement. That money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
You mean to say that the system of blacklisting
should be changed?
I am not saying that the entire system should be
abolished but if someone is to be put on the list, that
should be done based on proper principles.
The present system is such that if you owned 15
percent of shares in a company and it was unable
to repay its loan, then you would be put on the
blacklist. This will only discourage investors. That
is why I say that incorrect principles like these
need to be corrected right away.
The state’s income has declined while its
taxes have already been increased. The government will have to manage the
necessary movement. There is a possibility of
unnecessary movement. That money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
You mean to say that the system of blacklisting
should be changed?
I am not saying that the entire system should be
abolished but if someone is to be put on the list, that
should be done based on proper principles.
The present system is such that if you owned 15
percent of shares in a company and it was unable
to repay its loan, then you would be put on the
blacklist. This will only discourage investors. That
is why I say that incorrect principles like these
need to be corrected right away.
The state’s income has declined while its
taxes have already been increased. The government will have to manage the
necessary movement. There is a possibility of
unnecessary movement. That money should have been repaid by
the company, which borrowed it when my father was
not in the company. But this is besides the
point. I believe in acting on the basis of correct principles. How reasonable is it to make someone repay a loan just because he was a member of a
firm’s board of directors? This is a procedural
problem that needs to be amended.
Editorial in Deshantar, 2 April

Home Minister Kamal Thapa has publicly announced that a ‘special task force’ of Maoists have entered the capital. He has labelled the 6-9 April nationwide banda organised by the seven parties as a “Maoist strike”. The Home Ministry has said it will do anything to stop the agitating parties including deploying the army and imposing curfew. Looking at the way the present government is trying to suppress the movement, it is evident that the moral ground on which it is based on is collapsing. By calling a peaceful strike a Maoist movement, it is easy for the government to suppress it by deploying the army. Whenever the seven parties talk about taking to the streets, the government thinks the Maoists are taking over. It is a disgrace that the government has to deal with parties that are agitating peacefully. This trend of government action only goes to prove that if the Maoists were to declare a ceasefire it would take the Helfin of this present government away. However, the seven agitating parties are not going to back out this time around because of the government’s threat. People have vowed to come out on the street to protest the autocratic rule. Peaceful movements will not just be limited to the seven parties. From cab drivers to housewives, journalists, engineers, farmers, lawyers and political activists all think the only way out is a people’s movement. As in 1990, history will repeat itself in the coming days when the parties defy the ban on rallies. Just like the Panchayat ended with the coming of the new year, this Chait we will see an end of another autocratic rule.

Desperate

Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The theme of the trip, organised by London-based leftist group World Peoples Resistance Movement, was ‘Revolution in Nepal: A new world is possible’. In his presentation, Verma said that while the US, UK and India were helping the royal government, the Nepali people widely support the Maoists. Verma who is also general secretary of the All-India Farm Workers Union, criticised the Indian government for helping to oppress the (Nepali) people for the past 30 years instead of working to transform the society. “The communist rebels have started conducting activities to correct the weaknesses in society, removed the tradition of untouchability and liberated women. Campaigns to provide education to all have been conducted along with the development of schools. The PLA has been helping villagers by providing medicines,” Verma claimed.

BHIM GHIMIRE, KANTIPUR DAILY

LIFE BEHIND BARS: Sandip Karki born in Morang prison stands with mother Sita Karki who was sentenced to life imprisonment for allegedly killing a neighbour five years ago.

Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden. The theme of the trip, organised by London-based leftist group World Peoples Resistance Movement, was ‘Revolution in Nepal: A new world is possible’. In his presentation, Verma said that while the US, UK and India were helping the royal government, the Nepali people widely support the Maoists. Verma who is also general secretary of the All-India Farm Workers Union, criticised the Indian government for helping to oppress the (Nepali) people for the past 30 years instead of working to transform the society. “The communist rebels have started conducting activities to correct the weaknesses in society, removed the tradition of untouchability and liberated women. Campaigns to provide education to all have been conducted along with the development of schools. The PLA has been helping villagers by providing medicines,” Verma claimed.
TECHNOLOGY

Virtual seduction. Mind boggling. That is how tech freaks describe the new wave of plasma and LCD monitors on display at showrooms in Kathmandu. If that’s what they’re saying now, imagine what they’ll say when the World Cup begins in June. With high-definition, crystal clear, pictures, hang-on-the-wall plasma and LCD (liquid crystal display) tvs make telly viewing a whole new experience.

Plasma technology was invented in the 1960s and uses fluorescent lights whose main element is a plasma gas, to form an image. But tv companies dismissed the new technology as an alternative to the bulky cathode ray tubes (CRT) which gave the tv its nickname ‘the tube’ because of the huge investment needed. It was only in 1999, after Japanese company Matsushita launched a joint venture with plasma inventor Larry Weber, that the plasma display panel got popular. Since then, millions of people worldwide have gone plasma and just as many have the slim tv on their shopping list.

In Nepal the passion for plasma is growing but ownership is still limited to a niche market due to the high prices. Even the most expensive CRT tv is less than Rs 20,000 but the starting price for LCDs and plasmas are in the six figures: rising to Rs 400,000 depending on screen size. Although distributors aren’t selling too many at the moment, they are confident it will not take long before more people opt for the flat, sleek tv. “The market is still too small for plasma and LCD tvs in Nepal but we are hoping that it will get better in another three years,” says LG’s SC Saboo.

Prices are expected to drop further in the coming year, after being halved in just a few years. “Rarely two years ago, you could buy a car for the price of a plasma tv but now they are quite affordable,” says Dinesh Shrestha from Trade Link International, the local distributor of ViewSonic, a US manufacturer.

Not long ago, huge flat projection tvs were being hyped but the technology wave has already swamped that fad and today they are dismissed as just ‘boxes’. And with reason: their picture quality pales in comparison to plasma and LCD displays.

To make it easier for you to take the plunge and order your own plasma or LCD tvs in Nepal but we are hoping that it will get better in another three years,” says LG’s SC Saboo. Prices are expected to drop

New generation tvs will deliver the World Cup to your living rooms in June

NARESH NEWAR

“Plasma sales are still negligible but we can expect a gradual shift in the near future,” says Samsung’s Shekhar Golcha. Tube sets still account for 95 percent of tv sales, 80,000-100,000 units every year, half of them in Kathmandu alone. Their prices have been slashed more than 100 percent in less than 10 years. But dealers add that even without large-scale marketing, plasma and LCDs will quickly replace tubes, just as the black and white tv now rests in the technology graveyard.

“The tv market trend has changed so much because there are just too many choices,” explains Amit Kansakar from Sony Television. Even tv distributors have got a break, with the government reducing import taxes from 60 percent six years ago to only 35 percent today, helping sellers to offer tv at prices reasonable enough for most urban families. "Our role is to introduce new technology, so that buyers have more choices," says Saumy Jyoti of Syakar, which introduced Philips plasma sets here nearly five years ago. Other leading companies include Sony, Samsung, LG and Viewsonic.

“The best thing about electronic technology is that quality improves and the price falls every year and it’s the same for televisions,” says Tarun Bajracharya from D&D International. All manufacturers are rushing to cash in on the Football World Cup in Germany in June when they expect a rush from people wishing to upgrade from CRTs to LCDs and even plasma.

KIRAN PANDAY

Indulge in the digital passion.

Phone: 4250832, 4250073. Email: digitalworld@gmail.com
http://www.samsungplasmaplady.com.np

DIGITAL WORLD

NEWSPAPER PHOTOGRAPHY

INDUSTRY PHOTOGRAPHY
The future is laser

Considering how fast we’ve moved from semi-flat, to flat, then Plasma and now LCD monitors it is hard to predict what is next. Maybe gigantic 120 inch screens, or how about theatre quality digital projectors?

“What’s next in monitors is left to your imagination,” says Saurav Jyoti from Syakar, Nepal’s representative for Philips. What is certain is that the future will be digital and laser tv’s. Like inventors say: make it and you’ll find the gadget addicts to buy it. This is so true of plasma and LCD sets, which the tv industry was initially sceptical about.

In just a few years, they have revolutionised the industry in the US, Europe and Asia. Even in India, production of tube tv’s has stopped as many consumers shell out huge dollars for the latest rage.

It is estimated that plasma and LCD sales will double in the next year, aided by diminishing prices, Asian tv makers have turned their attention to mass marketing LCDs, with Samsung alone predicting sale of 40 million next year, more than double its 18 million units in 2005. Plasma sales this year nearly doubled, to nine million from just five million last year.

But the real future will be digital and laser television, Mitsubishi, which will launch its laser tv in 2008, says that it will have far superior picture quality with bright, deep images thanks to the red, blue and green lasers that will generate images.
**Hacking off democracy's units**, they definitely have a class structure. Village biggies enjoy greater influence. Nepal is populated with thousands of voices. But citing the Maoist nomenclature of the Basic Operating Guidelines, Bhattarai added: “Our present policy is to permit all national and foreign projects which are not pawns of the monarchist reactionary government and are involved in genuine service of the community to work without hesitation.”

However, it may be the very democratic bent and growing resources that have made the user groups stronger in the conflict. The Maoists tax the groups and the government is trying to control them. “Those who believe in democracy support the community forestry process but the present government doesn’t believe in it,” says FECOFUN Secretary General, Bishwa Bhattarai.

Nevertheless, the government denies this, saying it is only trying to allow district officials to ‘coordinate’ local activities. “We don’t want to take power from FECOFUN,” says Damodar Panjali, joint secretary at the Ministry of Forests. “A few people in FECOFUN are trying to grab resources at the cost of other poor people in the districts.”

But other experts are convinced the government is

---

**Nepali Times**

**Since 1 February 2005, Nepal’s bilateral relations with key donors have deteriorated. Aid has either been delayed, suspended or cancelled, few projects agreements have been signed and the future of aid remains uncertain.**

Nepali Times talked to Jorg Frieden of the Swiss Development Cooperation (SDC) and Armin Hofmann from German Development Cooperation (GTZ) to study the impact of recent political events on aid.

---

**MIN BAJRACHARYA**

---

**MARTY LOGAN**

---

**7 - 13 APRIL 2006 #293**
Sorry we bombed your school

The Maoists apologise again, but some Dalit children have been scarred for life

SUBLEN BHANDARI in DAILEKH

I was not examination anxiety that made Naresh Kumar BC and his classmate Dammar Khadka tremble as they sat for their SLC test earlier this week.

Till last week they were happy and confident high school students. On Friday, 31 March when the exam started at 7AM at Shree Sunju English School in district headquarters Dailekh, they were groaning answers to the first question. The last question was not a part of the party's plan and that the incident would be 'investigated thoroughly'.

The Maoists have denied they were responsible for the blast, but Comrade Prakranda, Bheri-Kamal in charge, said his group would investigate. Interestingly, another press release by the Maoists in charge of Dailekh apologised for the bomb which it said was 'not a part of the party's plan' and that the incident would be 'investigated thoroughly'.

All this buck-passing has infuriated the students. Dammar says, "We certainly won't have good things to say about the Maoists now even if we should have done what they did. This is a stupid thing to do."

Naresh says: "Their war is against the state, why drag us into it? It's an act of cowardice."

Both Naresh and Dammar have already been forced twice to attend Maoist mass meetings in the past year to listen to speeches and look at drills. None of the students have joined the Maoists even though one of their teachers went over to listen to speeches and look at drills. None of the students have joined the Maoists even though one of their teachers went over to listen to speeches and look at drills. None of the students have joined the Maoists even though one of their teachers went over to listen to speeches and look at drills.

The children are also critical of the shameful behaviour of security personnel after the bomb went off. They don't have much faith in the police force and the police are suspected of being on the Maoists' payroll.

The Maoists have exploited the children. Dammar says, "They shouldn't have done what they did. It is a stupid thing to do."

Naresh says: "Their war is against the state, why drag us into it? It's an act of cowardice."

Both Naresh and Dammar have already been forced twice to attend Maoist mass meetings in the past year to listen to speeches and look at drills. None of the students have joined the Maoists even though one of their teachers went over to listen to speeches and look at drills. None of the students have joined the Maoists even though one of their teachers went over to listen to speeches and look at drills.

The children are also critical of the shameful behaviour of security personnel after the bomb went off. They don't have much faith in the police force and the police are suspected of being on the Maoists' payroll.
Across Asia, there are signs of democratic paralysis

The abrupt resignation of Thailand’s Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra this week is another sign of a disturbing paradox: the more vigorous Asian democracy becomes, the more dysfunctional it is.

There is no shortage of examples. The attempt by opposition parties last year to impeach South Korea’s President Roh Moo Hyun on the flimsiest of excuses. Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian’s inability to pass legislation through a parliament controlled by the opposition Kuomintang. Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo’s stalemated first term and the repeated rumours of looming coup against her: each bears testimony to a form of democratic paralysis in Asia.

If deadlock and confusion were the only results, such political impasses might be tolerable. But chronic stalemate has confronted many Asian democracies with the threat of being discredited, a potential for violence, and the prospect of economic decline.

Indeed, the precedents of democratic immobility in Asia are hardly encouraging. For example, since Pakistan’s creation in 1947, partisan divisions ensured that no elected president wants to act, but the assembly refuses to approve the necessary laws. Or vice versa.

The pattern begins in parliamentary deadlock. Incompetent leaders blame legislators for their failures, legislation blunders presidents from rival parties. Finger pointing replaces responsibility, fuelling popular demand for a strongman (or woman) who can override political divisions.

Divided government also plays into the hands of Asia’s separatists. At a critical moment for Sri Lanka’s peace process, President Kumaratunga was so incensed by the policies of her political rival, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe, that she sacked three of his ministers and called elections almost four years early. The only people who seem to have benefited from this democratic division are the murderous Tamil Tigers.

Similarly, in Nepal, a Maoist insurgency has taken advantage of divisions between the king and parliament to gain control of much of the countryside.

True, Asian democracies, however unstable, are preferable to autocracies, whether military, as in Pakistan and Burma, or communist, as in China and Vietnam. But the danger in a weakened democracy is not merely blocked legislation and ineffective government. Ambitious but thwarted presidents are easily tempted to take unconstitutional measures; after all, they reason, the people elected them directly. The same is true of some prime ministers. Indeed, one of the causes of the protests that led to the resignation of Thailand’s Thaksin was the accusation that he was weakening his country’s democracy. Indeed, when a government tries to enact radical economic or political reforms. The elected president wants to act, but the assembly refuses to approve the necessary laws. Or vice versa.

The challenge is clear: to find a system where electoral victory translates into real power. Of course, parliamentary political systems are far from perfect. Neither Singapore nor Malaysia, where ruling parties have dominated the parliaments, has a political culture as healthy as in Taiwan or South Korea.

But in parliamentary democracies such as Japan and India, an elected leader runs the country until the day his or her party or coalition loses a legislative majority. This means that governments are judged not by their ability to outmanoeuvre legislatures, but by the quality of their policies. In many Asian democracies, only institutional reconstruction will prevent collapse.

Satyabrata Rai Chowdhuri, Emeritus Professor at India’s University Grants Commission, is a former Professor of International Relations at Oxford University.
Sarah’s children
Welcome to the world of silence

A

ork of teenagers is practicing a dance routine in the laver, their movements fluid and sinuous, perfectly synchronized with the instrumental number ‘The Devil’ coming from a CD player. The dancer go through their ballet-like movements with flawless coordination.

But the dancers are all deaf. The music is only for the benefit of their instructor, Sarah Yonzon, who has dedicated her life to helping Nepal’s hearing impaired and is training this group for a charity performance soon. As a test, Sarah turns the music off. The dancers can’t tell the difference, and keep dancing.

As a part of her effort to allow Nepali deaf children to communicate and participate in creative activities, Sarah chose the medium of dance. First she taught them movements from popular Nepali folk tunes and hits like ‘The Score’ from the film ‘Godfather’ and painstakingly performed in front of the children. They memorized the hand and foot movements, and learned to ‘feel’ the music.

After months of practice in Sarah’s backyard, it is now possible for the children without even knowing that they do not hear.

Randini Amatya, Muna Gaurang, Yuli Bhattarchan, Jannita Dhalu and Anita Pradipali and others have by now mastered 10 dances, and can’t wait for their big day when they perform for the public. Being a group of deaf artists, the deaf are born for dance and Sarah’s children already seem to have more coördination to compete with most dancers who can hear.

Sarah doesn’t want to have a standard public performance with speech and an MC. Instead, there will be a video presentation with a voice-over for the benefit of those in the audience who can hear. And the theme? Says Sarah: “We’re going to call it ‘welcome to the world of silence’.”

SPORTS

Coping with losing

When the going gets tough, the tough go for the ground strokes

On the tennis court and in life, there is adversity. For the first time in 11 years of coaching at the collegiate level, my team is in the midst of a losing season. We have lost our last four matches. My players have fought hard and given their best effort but it hasn’t translated into victories. Injuries and close losses have chipped away the confidence of our team. It is easy to write about winning and winners. We love feel-good stories and happy endings. Today, I want to write about losing and how I am dealing with this challenge.

Focus on the positive.

When things are not going your way, it is easy to get negative and see what’s wrong instead of what’s right. I am constantly looking for anything positive to build on, such as effort, attitude, focus and the energy of my players. Even when my student athletes have lost a match, it is my job to highlight what they have done well.

Surround yourself with people who love and believe in you.

You will be surprised to know that there are people who want to see you fail for many reasons. Some of them are your opponents, some are just envious and some don’t even know why they root against you. These are the times I hold on to my family, friends and mentors. Their selfless love and support is a pillar of strength for me.

Set small goals, achieve them and build on it.

When things are not going your way, it is natural to press and try harder. Wanting to win becomes an obsession. This is the time you have to let go and have mini goals that lead to the main aspiration. This week, we have got our players to go back and hammer the basics, such as preparing properly for ground strokes, staying low to the ground to use the kinetic chain and keeping the head still for balance.

Think, talk, walk and act like a winner.

The natural reaction after a tough loss is to hang your head and drown your sorrows in a pity party. It is ok to be disappointed for a while but snap out of it real fast. And the best way to do this is to let everyone be aware of your posture and self talk. Walk with your shoulders up and keep reminding yourself that you are good. In other words, fake it till you make it.

Keep things in perspective.

Losing a tennis match does not define who I am. How I deal with losing will tell a lot more about my character. Last week, I planned a trip for my team to go and visit young kids in a hospital. I wanted them to know that their suffering was nothing compared to that of these children facing a life and death situation. It is not ok to equate winning with self worth. Striving to win is bigger than winning itself.

Just look around and you will derive inspiration from people from all walks of life who are dealing with losses and adversities. A couple of years ago an up and coming tennis player from Miami lost a record 21 first-round matches on the ATP tour. Vince Spadea was on the verge of being in the top-50 and just like that he was out of the rankings. It was his ability to laugh at himself that enabled him to relax, recharge and come back stronger than ever.

My team and I will too.

lama@ad.uiuc.edu
Jat kiya Adhikar – Shakti

NEPALI WEATHER

An experienced teacher is required to teach Spanish language. The candidate should be able to communicate with certificates/degrees from recognized school/university, preferably from abroad. Experienced candidates may submit their CVs to Shyam Dongol, UNFPA, UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Tel: 5523200, ext. 1205 by Friday, 15 April 2006.

INNOVATIVE BEAUTY PALACE & THAI TRADITIONAL MASSAGE CENTER + BARBER SHOP

All Services are provided by qualified technicians in a clean, relaxing and friendly environment.

Phone: 5549967

KATHMANDU VALLEY

There is not much good news for those hoping for heavy rains this week. An emerging high-pressure pattern over northern India and Nepal will result in dry conditions and an onslaught of the cold and hills. Rainfall will be erratic and accompanied with isolated thunderstorms.

GETAWAYS


Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge, award winning relaxation in Pokhara Reservations 4361500.

Junglewalks, rafting, elephant rides all at Jungle Base Camp Lodge, Bandipur. junglebasicsamp@yahoo.com

Conferences at Godawari special packages available. 5506006.

Nature Retreat at Palm Village Resort & Spa. 4375280.

Star Cruises in April, take compare at 50% discount. 2012345.

Escape Kathmandu at Shivpur Heights Cottage. 9851012245

Buddha Against Bullets

New Years Eve at Radisson Hotel Nepal Dhaku 17 April at 7PM.

Sunaulo Nav-Bihani: fund raiser for AmaGhar home. Children’s Fun Fashion Parade an inter college fest 22-23 April, BICC, music, theatre, dance. 22 April.

Bullets against Bullets

All activities at Shivapuri Heights Cottage. 9851012245.

Call 4442220 for show timings at Jai Nepal www.jainepal.com

NEPALI WEATHER

An experienced teacher is required to teach Spanish language. The candidate should be able to communicate with certificates/degrees from recognized school/university, preferably from abroad. Experienced candidates may submit their CVs to Shyam Dongol, UNFPA, UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Tel: 5523200, ext. 1205 by Friday, 15 April 2006.

INNOVATIVE BEAUTY PALACE & THAI TRADITIONAL MASSAGE CENTER + BARBER SHOP

All Services are provided by qualified technicians in a clean, relaxing and friendly environment.

Phone: 5549967

KATHMANDU VALLEY

There is not much good news for those hoping for heavy rains this week. An emerging high-pressure pattern over northern India and Nepal will result in dry conditions and an onslaught of the cold and hills. Rainfall will be erratic and accompanied with isolated thunderstorms.

GETAWAYS


Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge, award winning relaxation in Pokhara Reservations 4361500.

Junglewalks, rafting, elephant rides all at Jungle Base Camp Lodge, Bandipur. junglebasicsamp@yahoo.com

Conferences at Godawari special packages available. 5506006.

Nature Retreat at Palm Village Resort & Spa. 4375280.

Star Cruises in April, take compare at 50% discount. 2012345.

Escape Kathmandu at Shivpur Heights Cottage. 9851012245

Buddha Against Bullets

New Years Eve at Radisson Hotel Nepal Dhaku 17 April at 7PM.

Sunaulo Nav-Bihani: fund raiser for AmaGhar home. Children’s Fun Fashion Parade an inter college fest 22-23 April, BICC, music, theatre, dance. 22 April.
NO WOMAN IS AN ISLAND: Narayangarh women stand on a traffic island at Shahid Chowk on Tuesday to catch a better view of a pro-democracy street play being performed by CPN (Ekatakendra-Masal).

BIG GUNS: Maoist guerrillas stand guard at a mass meeting in Mainapokhari along the Nepalganj-Bardia highway on Wednesday. Hundreds of villagers were brought in to attend but dispersed when an army helicopter hovered overhead and fired warning shots.

GOING PUBLIC: The Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) has cleared Nepal for the 2010 Commonwealth Games on November 21 and 22.

HAPPENINGS

NO WOMAN IS AN ISLAND: Narayangarh women stand on a traffic island at Shahid Chowk on Tuesday to catch a better view of a pro-democracy street play being performed by CPN (Ekatakendra-Masal).

BIG GUNS: Maoist guerrillas stand guard at a mass meeting in Mainapokhari along the Nepalganj-Bardia highway on Wednesday. Hundreds of villagers were brought in to attend but dispersed when an army helicopter hovered overhead and fired warning shots.

NEW YEAR METEOR SHOWERS

STAR GAZING

Kedar S Badu

Binoculars will give you a good chance to find this planet despite it being two billion miles away. In the morning twilight of 18 April, Uranus will shine dimly just to the right of brilliant Venus. Another don’t-miss event is the Lyrids meteor shower at midnight on 22 April. Look towards the constellation of Lyra (Isera) which should be right overhead.

Comet hunters! Comet Schwassmann-Wachmann-3 may be visiting our celestial neighbourhood in May. That’s a long shot—keep your fingers crossed.

Other highlights in April’s sky:

The Moon’s First Quarter is on 5 April, the Full Moon on 13 April and the Last Quarter on 21 April. The next New Moon will glow on 28 April.

Mercury is at its furthest west of the Sun on 8 April, when it is in a good position for viewing as it rises about an hour before sunrise. Afterwards, the planet appears to change direction and head towards the sun.

Venus is a brilliant ‘morning star’, visible low in the east at dawn. It rises less than an hour before the Sun but it’s so bright that it can be seen even in full daylight.

Mars, in Taurus, is only 40 degrees above the western horizon at sunset and sets at midnight. For those with telescopes, look for Mars near the open star cluster M35 in Gemini on 17 April. It is a tiny featureless disk in most telescopes by mid-month.

Jupiter rises in the eastern sky about 10.30 PM. But it comes up a little earlier each night and by the end of the month, it’s rising at 8.30 PM. It looks like a very bright star, shining with a steady light.

Saturn is high in the western sky at dusk and sets in the west about 4 AM. It’s moving very slowly south-eastwards in Cancer, left of Gemini’s ‘twins’. Saturn looks brighter than almost any other star, except for Sirius far below it, and shines with a steady, creamy-white light.

Uranus is in the centre of Aquarius but at the limit of visibility with the naked eye (6.0 magnitude). Neptune is in the centre of Capricornus but its low magnitude (8.0) makes it impossible to see without optical aid and detailed maps. Pluto is well beyond the sight of all but the best telescopes.

Meteors the Lyrids meteor shower begins around 19 April, reaches its peak on the 22nd and is over by the 25th. This is not a particularly good shower, averaging only 10 meteors per hour but anything can happen. The meteors seem to radiate outwards from a point in the constellation Lyra, close to the bright star Vega (Albidjat).

The Nepali New Year 2063 falls on 14 April at 7.52 AM. I wish you all clear skies and Happy New Year 2003.

kedarbadu@yahoo.com
Now that under the one-window policy government ads are only given to newspapers that print news quoting reliable eyewitness reports that the emperor is fully clad what are the rest of us supposed to do, huh?

Luckily, the private sector has stepped in with important public service announcements. About time, because now I don't have to write this week's column and can fill the space up with these ads:

**URGENT NOTICE**

Regarding the advertisement published yesterday accusing us of not paying for jet leases. How dare they?

Our attention has been drawn to the defamatory, demeaning and misleading advertisements published by a leasing company regarding two jets they rented to us. The allegation that we have defaulted on payment for the aforementioned Fokkers for a period exceeding eight months is not accurate and bears no relation to fact. In actuality we haven't paid the lease for only six months. Besides, this is well within the norms stipulated by the Civil Aviation Authorities of Nepal which allows private airlines in the kingdom to get away with paying no lease at all and being millions of rupees in arrears on landing and parking fees provided the owners are well-heeled and have friends in high places. Besides, we have obtained a Stay Order from the Appellate Court granting us full Legal Authority to keep flying the planes in breach of contract and drag it on in the courts to buy us time. And we have it all in writing!

This is well within the parameters of the laws and practices of the Kingdom of Nepal and we are in conformity and in adherence to the Standard Operating Procedures for Airline Operation in Nepal. How on earth are we supposed to make a profit if we have to pay for leasing planes? You think money grows on trees in Nepal? You think you guys can just walk in here and start interfering in our internal affairs? Necon got away with it, so why can't we? Let's see whose father can do what, yaar. Meanwhile, may we remind our valued no-frills passengers from rows 25 to 36 that seats have been removed as a cost-cutting measure and Nepal's civil aviation regulations require them to hang on to the overhead straps during takeoffs and landings.

*Fly By Night Airlines (Pvt) Ltd*

**LAST NOTICE AND REMINDER**

Pursuant to the Foreign Exchange Act 2054 as well as the Registration of Businesses Decree 2061 and other laws of the Kingdom of Nepal we, on behalf of our client, hereby notify Mrs Abigail Abacha (niece of Mr Sonny Abacha of Lagos, Nigeria) to return the $750,000 (Seven Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars and No Cents) our client transferred to her bank account in the Cayman Islands in February 2000 as earnest money in lieu of the $25 million in cash of Mr Abacha's assets which, as per a verbal understanding with our client, was to have been handed over to him in person by a courier.

This notice has been published because Mrs Abigail Abacha has not responded to repeated emails and has evaded attempts to establish telephonic contact with her regarding the matter. Prompt reimbursement of the $750,000 would be much appreciated by our client and he would be eternally grateful if this matter could be discreetly and amicably settled.

*Bhattarai, Bhattarai & Bhattarai*

*Barristers-at-law*

*Anamnagar*

---

**New Year Celebration**

Join in for a dazzling fusion at

Performance by

Shyam Nepal of Trikala fame and his band with mouth watering BBQ

*Time: 6 pm onwards*
*Ticket Price Including BBQ Buffet Dinner Rs. 500/-*
*Contact: 5344492*

---

Cool off this summer with a splash of orange. The refreshing fragrance of Lilt orange leaves you fresh and cool.

*Fujitsu*

*Life Book S7021*
*CPU: Intel Celeron 1.16 GHz*
*RAM: 512MB DDR2*
*HDD: 80 GB*
*Drive: DVD Writer*
*56K Modem & Build-in Ethernet*
*Licensed Original License*
*MS Windows with Backup CD*

---

**Unclassified ads**

---

**The Possibilities are Infinite**

---

**Fly*