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Times nepalnews.com
Weekly Internet Poll # 455

Q. How do you assess Nepal's one year as republic?

Total votes: 5,244

- Better than Monarchy: 13.9%
- Worse than Monarchy: 89%
- Same-Same: 17%

Weekly Internet Poll # 456. To vote go to: www.nepaltimes.com

Q. Which of these phrases best describe your current feeling about the delay in government formation?

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Close to the edge

Delhi wants the Maoists to make a "course correction"

PRASHANT JHA

Ever since they resigned from government, the Maoists have tried to play on anti-Indian nationalism. But senior leaders now admit there is no alternative but to renegotiate with India.

"We made mistakes in handling India," confessed one Maoist secretariat member, "but India also can't ignore that we are the most powerful party here."

Ahead of a politburo



BILASH RAI

meeting, starting Monday, the Maoists will have to make crucial decisions about relations with India. It's not going to be easy because New Delhi has drawn a line in the sand that it doesn't want the Maoists to cross.

Senior Indian officials, from both the foreign office and the security establishment, have told *Nepali Times* meaningful engagement is difficult until the Maoists engage in a "course correction" and they have made the following "suggestions":

The Maoists must make a clear and unconditional commitment to multiparty democracy, which India says was not visible during their nine-month stint in power. The party has to

shift from its radical dogmatic line to a moderate left-of-centre orientation. One official told us: "They have to give up dreams of capturing the state."

Delhi doesn't believe Pushpa Kamal Dahal anymore when he says he is under pressure from hardliners. Said the official: "No more excuses. If it is a tactic, we are not falling for it. If it is for real, then it is time for the leader to assert and either bring the hardliners in line or marginalise them." He added the onus lies on the Maoists to revive trust by steps like dismantling the YCL and behaving like a normal opposition.

An official said India is tired of "Maoist duplicity", adding: "They have to learn that they cannot keep chanting anti-India slogans here, and then privately come to us for help to bail them out." This is a clear reference to Maoist rhetoric on "foreign intervention" and the Dang border controversy, which is seen as being engineered by "Maoists and friendly media".

India says it still supports the peace process and wants a new constitution, but the Maoists can't 'bulldoze' their way through. "There has to be reasonable discussion on integration between all stakeholders, including the Nepal Army," he added. Token integration under strict parameters may be feasible, but unit level entry and space to PLA commanders in the NA is a strict 'no' for India.

What didn't go down too well in Delhi was that even as the Maoists were calling for a total overhaul of the "special relationship" with India, they were cosyng up to Beijing.

Indian officials, however, are at pains to emphasise that their role must not be overstated and politics emanates from within. But, warned one diplomat: "The present behaviour of ranting against everyone is not winning them friends. It will dig them into a hole." ●



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COP OUT

Indoctrinated in the theory that power comes out of barrels of guns, former guerillas in the former government were understandably obsessed with the military. They still are.

And if there is one major hurdle ahead of the new coalition it is the issue of integration and rehabilitation. But for that the prime minister will have to cross the first hurdle of actually forming a government. The political void in Kathmandu has enforced the perception of a weak state. This in turn has led to further erosion of the rule of law, institutionalised impunity and has fanned anarchy.

A traffic accident brings the northern half of the city to a standstill for two days. Kids deflate bicycle tyres to enforce bandas. Police look on as the YCL thrashes the YF in Banepa and vice versa. More worryingly, the three main parties are behaving as if they can do anything (*see p 10-11*). Development has ground to a halt as cadre plunder the district budgets for road contracts. There is now such criminalisation of politics and the politicisation of criminality that it is becoming difficult to tell the difference between a politician and a dacoit.

The security apparatus that is most in touch with the public, the Nepal Police, has had no chance to recover from its politicisation, a process that began after 1990. Police say they are powerless to stop gangsters because they have patronage from biggies. They can't even arrest hoodlums stoning a school bus without cabinet authorisation.

Improving the efficiency of the police force is essential to check this country's malignant lawlessness. The single most widespread demand among people across Nepal today is law and order. They are fed up with highway blockades, strikes, curfews and crime.

New retirement rules provide the government with an opportunity to boost the morale of the police and hence reassure the public that they are safe. A younger police leadership is welcome despite attendant risks of inexperience: immaturity is preferred over incompetence. However, changes at the top of the police force aren't enough. Intelligence-based community policing that prevents crime requires that the political class cooperate with the law and order machinery, and not be on the side of criminals.

The most important component of police reform has to do with the functional freedom of law enforcement agencies. They must be given the authority to apprehend on the spot any militant youth member of a political front organisation who engages in vandalism or threats.

These aren't things that need a complete and functioning cabinet. It's the duty of Prime Minister Nepal of Nepal to ensure that his citizens are safe.



KIRAN PANDAY

At the Forum

The MJF split makes politics even more unstable

The Forum saga has all the elements of a Bollywood potboiler: betrayal, anger, violence, money and revenge.

First things first. No one comes out looking clean following a messy party division. For all his self-righteousness and sudden discovery that this is an "anti federalism" alliance, Upendra Yadav has shown remarkable inconsistency.



PLAIN SPEAKING
Prashant Jha

He first sat out the entire army chief controversy by junketing around the globe. Returning a day after Prachanda's resignation, he immediately started aiming to become PM with Maoist support. When the numbers did not add up, he shifted allegiance to the UML-led coalition and signed the common minimum program. And though his heart was not in the arrangement, he wanted to lead the MJF in this set-up. When that did not happen, Yadav sacked Bijay Gachhedar & Co.

For his part, Gachhedar's aim throughout seemed to be to divide and weaken the party. He unilaterally decided to back the UML-NC combine and

bargained a plum portfolio for himself. He got the other parties to make an announcement saying they would invite him to lead the MJF in government. He threw money around to get MPs on his side. And then using old friends like Khum Bahadur, Gachhedar got the NC patriarch to put pressure on the PM to swear him in without an official party decision.

Beyond the clash of ambitions, this is a deeper story here of how opportunism in the absence of ideology has a short life-span. The Forum was never a proper party. Just look at Bijay's far right antecedents and desire to turn the clock back to the 1990s, Upendra's radical left background and commitment to federalism and the inscrutable JP Gupta's shift from social democracy to ethnic separatism inspired by a jail stint and study of Sri Lankan Tamils. On the ground, activists who build the organisation for the Madhesi movement had to co-exist with late entrants who had opposed Madhesi issues through this period.

The party had its use when a broader Madhesi identity was sharpest before elections and Yadavs, Tharus and Muslims needed each other. It could remain united when the national parties were working in a relatively consensual framework and there was no need to make difficult choices. But as the polity became fractured at the top, and the Madhesi identity started fragmenting on the ground, MJF leaders had to find their own paths.

Also, we tend to ignore the inter-personal element which played a crucial role in even former Upendra loyalists veering away to the other side. In the last year after his electoral success, Yadav had

become intolerably arrogant and felt invincible. He had little time for his MPs and rarely visited the Madhes. Gachhedar, on the other hand, closely wooed parliamentary party members.

It was in this internal vortex that external forces intervened. The NC wants to weaken the Madhesi groups to recover its Tarai base. Add to it GPK's personal grudge against Upendra for defeating his daughter in Sunsari and opposing his dream of presidency last year. India was also irritated with Yadav for his intransigence on multiple issues and felt that he needed a lesson.

With Gachhedar, NC, UML, India and the army ganged up against him, it is no surprise that Upendra Yadav and JP Gupta were reduced to a minority in the party.

This division will have two immediate implications. It makes national politics more unstable. There are now three key actors (Prachanda, Jhalanath Khanal, and Upendra Yadav) who want to see an end to this government.

It will also make Tarai politics more fragmented and radicalised. Yadav will try to engineer some kind of agitation in the plains to increase his bargaining power in the capital. He may also attempt to ratchet up the anti-India sentiment, but that could be self-destructive as India is not going to tolerate that rhetoric so close to the border. In case a political vacuum does develop, the Maoists or a new force is more likely to benefit from it than traditional parties.

When Upendra Yadav was asked last year why he was getting people like Bijay Gachhedar into the MJF even though they had no commitment to Madhes, he replied, "I need their experience of power politics." Looks like the experience has boomeranged. ●

LETTERS

ETHNIC CARD

"But there should be zero tolerance for incitement of ethnic intolerance and hatred for short-term political gain" ('The ethnic card,' # 454)—very well said indeed! This wise line left me wondering how different our lives may have been had they come a few years earlier when the Maoists were cracking open the 'genie-bottle'. Unfortunately, back then most of our intelligentsia, media, civil society were busy championing the Maoists as the Robin Hood of the poor and downtrodden. Has it taken all this while for the lights to finally go on, or had the Kathmandu intelligentsia simply 'papered over' their knowledge of Maoists' misuse of this 'combustible mixture' for some short-term gain of their own?

Satyajeet Nepali, email

- Your editorial ('The ethnic card', #454) is an early warning to this

country that if politicians can't resist the temptation to use ethnicity to forward their cause then all is lost. The former Yugoslavia had only four ethnic groups, we have 103. Imagine a multiple civil war over ethnicity. It will make the Jana Yuddha look like a picnic. We are already seeing signs of the fissures. The Limbus are beating up Rais because of overlapping territorial claims. The Banepa riots were between Newars and Tamang. The Tharus and Mahdesis are already in confrontation. Politicians should wake up and nip this in the bud.

Kiran Mainali, Pokhara

BHUWAN AND JUNA

Thank you for that heart-warming cover story on Bhuwan and Juna (#454). You have shown how at a fundamental level Nepalis are all brothers and sisters and reconciliation is possible. The Rai siblings have shown your political leaders the way, but unfortunately I don't think they're paying any attention. They are too busy quarrelling, and now even thrashing each other.

Lina Sorensen,
Dhankuta

YESTERDAY'S MEN

CK Lal has taken a potshot again at the political parties ('Yesterday's men...', #454). They are a soft target because they won't threaten him or beat him up

like the YCL would. There are two types of forces in this country, ones that believe in (and use) violence as a political tool and the others that don't. It should be pretty clear to *Nepali Times* which side it should be on since your editor was at the receiving end of physical assault recently.

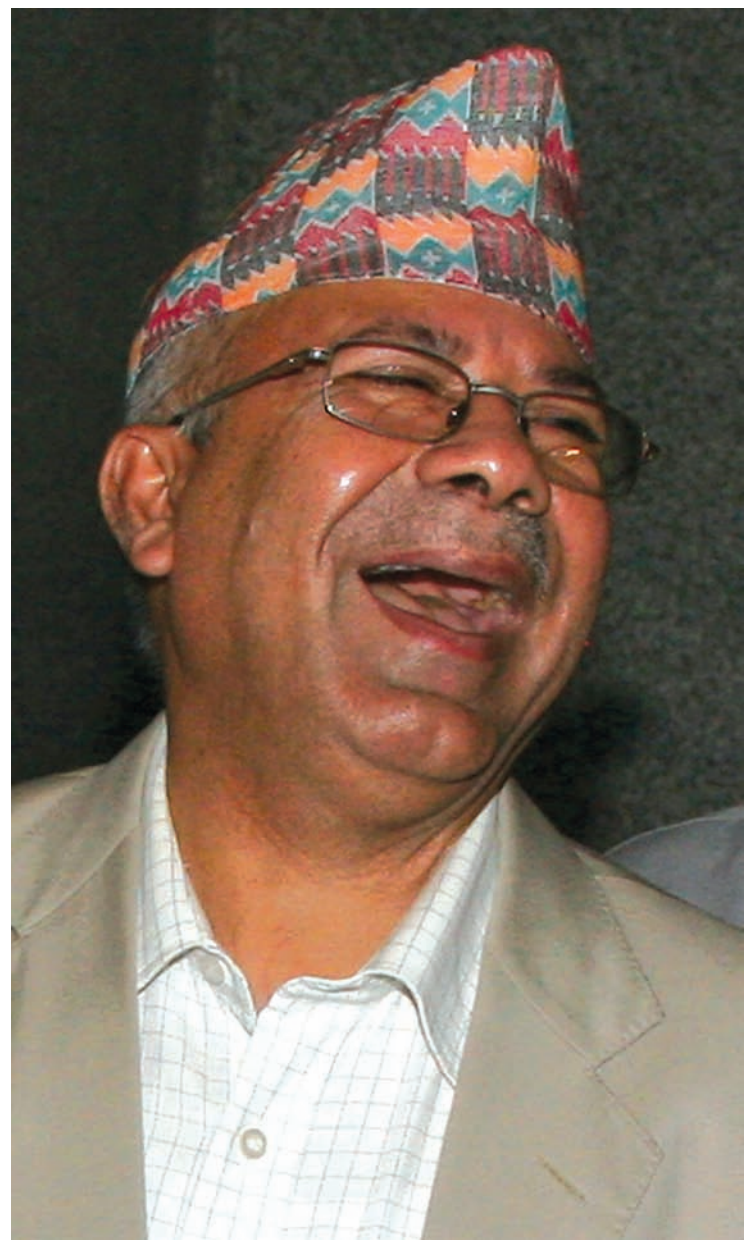
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LETTERS

Nepali Times welcomes feedback. Letters should be brief and may be edited for space. While pseudonyms can be accepted, writers who provide their real names and contact details will be given preference. Email letters should be in text format without attachments with 'letter to the editor' in the subject line.

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MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Prime Minister Madhav Nepal claims that he never lobbied to be made prime minister. He's partly right. Nepal did once petition the king to be appointed prime minister, but that was during the hybrid royal-military regime when the CEO of the country was also the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. This time,



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

in GPK's metaphor, the prize of premiership fell into Nepal's lap like a ripe mango. Nepal had once also aspired to be the president of the republic with the help of Maoists. But it didn't take long for him to realise the futility of that dream. Having spent the better part of his life in various communist parties, Comrade

Nepal knows that no apparatchik willingly accepts another even as a ceremonial superior. What actually led to Nepal's surprise selection remains unknown. Koirala may have thought that it would be imprudent to step into a chair just vacated by the leader of the largest party in the legislature. Chairman Jhulanath Khanal was probably considered too beholden to Pushpa Kamal Dahal to lead an anti-Maoist coalition. Mercurial Upendra Yadav was unlikely to receive the sanction of those who have the final say in the making and unmaking of governments these days. Meanwhile, the paper crown of premiership, pasted overnight with the joint effort of proactive diplomats and an assertive military had to be put upon Nepal's head precisely

The ripe mango

Now that Nepal is in the hot seat, he must use this historic opportunity

because he was the unlikely candidate to resist a rightist roadmap of the Kathmandu establishment. Even Nepal didn't expect to be at the head of an anti-Maoist coalition so soon after Dahal had bequeathed the chairmanship of Constitution Drafting Committee upon him. There is no other explanation for the complete absence of vision, mission or plan of the anti-Maoist formation at the helm of government. Other than an irresistible urge to have their hands at the till during a period of extreme volatility, Premier Nepal's existing and probable colleagues have no plausible reason to join a government that is fated to fail even before being formed. Fortunately, the Maoists have been kind towards the new government: their protests provide legitimacy to a ruling coalition that has done nothing to deserve such vigorous opposition. But now that Nepal is in hot seat, he has to make best use of this historic opportunity. The greatest challenge for Nepal is to prove his authenticity. The Maoists can't question his legitimacy because they were the ones to give cabinet berths to non-elected politicians in the previous government. The prime minister can prove his political antecedents by insisting that at least all his senior colleagues be directly elected CA members. His helplessness in accepting the nominations of Bidya Bhandari and Sujata Koirala is understandable, but exceptions should not be allowed to become the rule. Nepal needs to be prudent in choosing his

cabinet colleagues from his own party as well as from his coalition partners. He needn't hurry or worry, other than the Maoists no one can unseat him without losing credibility. Asserting his authority is a little trickier for a premier who owes his position not only to constituent assembly members but also to various extra constitutional players. The Bhadrakali Brass has thrown a challenge by insisting on the prosecution of an officer who just accepted the order of the government of the day. Premier Nepal has erred by extending the tenure of eight generals who had retired from their posts even as their combined

appeal remains sub-judice. The ripe mango in Premier Nepal's lap is too small to be shared by all anti-Maoist forces in the country and outside. No matter what he does, Nepal would have to take the blame for being a lame duck prime minister, appointed merely to keep the seat warm for a more suitable successor. Meanwhile, he has an unusual opportunity to prove the old hypothesis that accidents of history often produce extraordinary leaders. The mango tree grows from a seed. Being and nothingness are all about fundamental freedoms of human beings against determinists of all stripes. ●

**In support of the
Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre
(SIRC)**

Date: Saturday, June 13, 2009
Time: 8:00 am

The rally of electric vehicles will start from Maitighar Mandala and travel to SIRC, Saanga, near Banepa, covering a roundtrip distance of 50km.

All proceeds from the event will go towards supporting indigent patients receive free and discounted rehabilitation services at SIRC.

To register your electric vehicle contact:
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Crafted in Kathmandu

Making the Valley's unique artistic heritage pay for its own upkeep



The erosion of Kathmandu Valley's unique cultural heritage has prompted many to find ways to preserve it. There is a renaissance of Newari architecture in Bhaktapur and Patan, the tourism industry has pitched in with heritage hotels and cultural sight-seeing, and the handicraft business is doing its bit.

Now, there is a unique effort to support Kathmandu's artisans and craftsmen by helping sell their products in the local and

international market. 'Crafted in Kathmandu' is not just a handicraft business, its founder Rosha Chitrakar hastens to clarify.

"Our goal is to help preserve the Valley's heritage, the skills, knowledge and resourcefulness of our artisans in creating art and home décor objects that are good enough to be shared in the world market," says Chitrakar.

The challenge for Chitrakar's 'Crafted in Kathmandu' brand is to pay for the protection of the Valley's built, living and natural heritage by the products and services of its artisans.

Chitrakar calls this a "plus revenue" business and is focussing on selling products to three distinct markets.

The first is the local market where people need various pots, vessels, jewelry, musical

HERITAGE PIECES: Rosha Chitrakar points at an antique photograph of the Machendranath Jatra, among the items that her company markets in Nepal and abroad to raise money for heritage conservation.

instruments, chariot-building skills and monument restoration capacity. The trend is towards restoring homes to their original and operating them as bed and breakfast pensiones in the old city.

The second is the high end Nepali market such as hotels, homes of expatriates, corporate gifts, garden sculpture, home décor etc. This market has the highest growth potential because of the increasing tendency of identifying with one's heritage. Tourists and expatriates also



increasingly look for hotels and homes that reflect the unique history and heritage of the Kathmandu Valley.

The third is the market for exports of Kathmandu artifacts to North America, Europe and East Asia. 'Crafted in Kathmandu' has a gallery outlet in North America that tells the story of how the artisans and crafts persons of the Kathmandu valley are restoring the World Heritage City. It sells products that have been designed and crafted to meet local demands.

Chitrakar explains that an example of this three-tiered marketing strategy is a potter making clay pots for local local yogurt whose family is also making terracotta garden animal figures and also ceramic bases for table lamps for the North American market.

"This keeps artisan families fully employed all year round, increasing their quality of life and ensuring that the skills are passed down to a new generation," says Chitrakar. ●

Crafted in Kathmandu's exhibition runs till 15 June at Dwarika Hotel, 11AM-7PM.

www.craftedinkathmandu.com



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Charity electric car rally

A convoy of 30 battery-operated cars, scooters and three wheelers will travel in an electric vehicle rally between the Maitighar Mandala in Kathmandu to Banepa on Saturday to raise awareness about people disabled by spinal injuries as well as to promote renewable energy.

All the vehicles taking part will be sponsored and the money raised will go for the care and support of patients at the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre in Banepa. The rally will be flagged off at 8 am Saturday by entertainer Madan Krishna Shrestha and the cars will make the 60 km roundtrip to Banepa.

Altogether 30 vehicles will be participating, including more than 24 Reva cars, Nepal-made Safa tempos, and newly introduced battery-powered scooters. The participants will include individual owners of electric vehicles as well as organisations such as ICIMOD, GTZ, WFP, the Norwegian and US embassies. The umbrella organisation Electric Vehicles Association of Nepal (EVAN) will also be taking part.



Revenue shortfall

The government has raised Rs 115.9 billion in revenues in the first 10 months of the current tax year, Rs 15 billion less than its target.

One stop

Nepal Bankers' Association, Nepal Rastra Bank and other financial institutions are joining forces to introduce a clearing house to allow Nepalis to cash or pay in cheques anywhere in the country. The bidding process for setting up the hardware and software requirements for the clearing house has already begun.

Nepali Potter

Sunbird Publishers is releasing the first of J.K. Rowling's hit Harry Potter books *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in Nepali after a young reader from Gorkha requested for the books to be translated via a letter in *The Kathmandu Post*. Already translated in 67 languages, the series have sold more the 400 million copies worldwide.



'Morning after'



Nepal CRS Company has launched e-CON, an emergency contraceptive pill that prevents unwanted pregnancy. The pill is effective if taken within five days of unprotected sex. E-CON is available for Rs 50.

Free Fedora

Fedora 10, a free Linux-based computer operating system, is now available for people who want to avoid the Microsoft Windows system. Fedora 10, code-named Leonidas, is free and open source software (FOSS) which was developed by the Fedora Project, a community of people across the globe.



Flying higher

Yeti Airlines has launched its first Pilatus Porter, PC-6, a multi-purpose airplane best for short take off and landing. Yeti intends to add two more PC-6 aircrafts to its fleet.

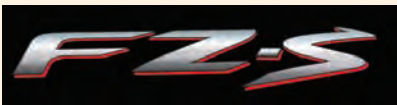
Drink in Rome



Lager brewer Carlsberg is attempting to up sales by giving away two tickets to visit Italian capital Rome and its bars. Under the 'Best Bar Tour' scheme consumers receive a coupon with every Carlsberg purchase.

Facelift

Yamaha has upgraded its FZ-16 bike and launched FZ-S. Yamaha's dealers in Nepal, Morang Auto Works will distribute the bikes.



Lip service, or tongue lashing?

Talking about how Nepal's political parties lack the seriousness to safeguard press freedom is both acutely depressing and mildly hopeful. It's depressing, because if one compiles a mere six-months worth of news, the catalogue of threats, physical abuses, mental torture and harassment against journalists, with details even of their murders, grows thicker and thicker.



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

Yet it's also hopeful, because, at least from the lip service that spokespeople of the political parties offer on television, it's clear that our politicians do understand the importance of press freedom. But that hope dissolves into cynicism when the politicians are then unable to explain to their militant cadres why something as intangible as press freedom matters for all Nepali citizens, including those who disagree with or are indifferent to any political ideology.

Just four days ago in Lamjung, YCL activists warned journalists that they would be hacked to pieces. The journalists' only 'crime' was to be on duty to cover a quarrel between the YCL activists and local people.

On Saturday morning, Maoist cadre halted a van belonging to Kantipur Publications on the East-West Highway. They took control of the vehicle, set it on fire, and burnt down not only the vehicle but also thousands of copies of *The Kathmandu Post* and *Kantipur*. The driver had dared to do his daily job of transporting the newspapers to subscribers and news stands in Eastern Nepal on the day of a forced shutdown.

On Monday 1 June, on the day of another forced shutdown in Kathmandu, cadres of the Newa Autonomous State routinely stopped vehicles that had press logos, smashed the windows, seized the keys, harassed the journalists, and stopped them from reporting and photographing the hardships faced by many ordinary people when the city was forced to a standstill.

Online visitors to this newspaper's website must have noticed a boxed item that's been there for the past few months. It says: Punish Uma Singh's Killers: End impunity. Uma Singh was a fearless radio journalist in Janakpur. Last January, she was hacked to death in her own apartment. A subsequent on-site investigation by the IFJ found that Singh was killed for her investigative journalism. Despite international condemnation, Singh's killers are yet to be brought to justice.

And then there was the attack

against this media house last December. Around thirty Maoist-affiliated muscled goons stormed into our corporate meeting, and beat me up along with 11 other colleagues. We were all left angry, frustrated and shaken to the core. The then Maoist government subsequently released the two ringleaders who had been apprehended shortly after the incident, and who have since melted into the shadows.

Indeed, these and countless other attacks against various Nepali media outlets and journalists have collectively helped Nepal rank eighth in the world, between Afghanistan and Russia on the CPJ's Impunity Index as a country 'where journalists are murdered on a recurring basis and governments are unable or unwilling to prosecute the killers'.

And that brings us to the part why politicians must re-educate their cadres about the importance of press freedom. They can start by offering three basic reasons.

First, press freedom helps aggregate information. In a country of 30 million people, most of

True, when different versions of the same event are reported, some who are accustomed to getting news from only one source, may fear that the 'truth' itself gets distorted, thereby confusing the public. But instead of forcing people to believe one thing over another, press freedom allows all to exercise judgment to choose news that they find persuasive. That is, once people have an easy access to multiple viewpoints on any issue, they can then decide for themselves what is right and what is not. Sure, not every citizen is equally enlightened to decide what is what. But since decision-making is a craft, press freedom allows all to practise making decisions about themselves at their own pace based on a variety of information they receive from the media.

Third, press freedom goes hand-in-hand with market-based competition. Of all the attributes on which Nepali newspapers compete, reputation is the only thing that matters for long-term business viability. Reputation in the media business

Press freedom needs to be defended by its maximum application

whom are illiterate and poor, no citizen or group can expect to be on top of all the information related to their well-being. Press freedom allows reporters of all stripes and media to widely disseminate reports and analyses about events and people that they believe are of public interest. These reports and analyses, in turn, add layers of nuanced information to help everyone from national policy-makers to village councils, to households and individuals to make decisions about their lives in ways they see fit for themselves. For those Maoist leaders who never tire of emphasising the importance of civilian supremacy, what could be the surest path to such supremacy but promoting press freedom by making it easier for journalists to work?

Second, press freedom allows an exchange of views in the public domain.

is built up by consistently reporting the verifiable truth, and openly correcting errors as soon as they become known. This fact should reduce the worries of those who say that mainstream newspapers print false news to serve the interests of 'the bourgeoisie'.

Rather, as we have seen again and again, it's the reputation of the perpetrators and their political parties that takes a blow globally when media houses and journalists are threatened, abused, attacked and killed.

Unless our political leaders, especially those of Maoists who make all the right noises about their commitment to build plural democratic societies, seriously educate and train their unruly cadres about the importance of press freedom for Nepal's democracy, their paying mere lip service is as good as their keeping lips sealed against the daily attacks on the press in Nepal.



Turn by turn

Editorial in *Janadisha*, 7 June

जिनिदिशा

Four days after being arrested during a protest at in Baidapataura, Rautahat, Lada Shah, 40, was still in police custody. He was severely beaten by UML cadres and had to be taken to Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu where he died while being treated for injury. This Rautahat native was demonstrating against newly elected prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, a candidate they had rejected during the elections.

Home Ministry, currently headed by Nepal, had ordered Shah's arrest and UML party workers were given a free rein to beat him up. PM Nepal should take responsibility for his death. Only two weeks have passed since the UML-led government was formed and incidents of violence are becoming common. Shah had never even shown a black flag. But even if he had, it was his right. There needs to be an inquiry into the killing of an ordinary citizen held in police custody.

Meanwhile, unlike in the past, the media has shown little interest in this tragedy. Neither have the Maoist leaders protested effectively against it. When a UML party worker was killed, the party went as far as to stop parliamentary sessions and call for strikes and the media gave it wide coverage as well. We are not saying that the Maoists should do the same but if this incident goes unnoticed then the UML will be on a suicidal path.



"He says he won the election and now wants be a minister!"

नेपाल Rabindra in *Nepal*, 14 June

What's in a name?

Manoj Gharti Magar in *Naya Patrika*, 8 June

नयाँ पत्रिका

The roundabouts in Pokhara, which were previously named after the kings, have now become the subjects of much wrangling among ethnic groups and political parties with all competing to rename them.

The Birauta roundabout, where a statue of king Birendra used to stand, was first claimed by UML and named Madan Bhandari Chok, after its Kaski leader. They had even put up a sign board with plans to build his statue. But last Sunday Tamu Dhi Nepal, a Pokhara based Gurung organisation removed the board and renamed it Tamu Hyula Chok to celebrate the group's silver jubilee. While the group claims it doesn't want to cause offence, UML is deeply concerned about the incident.

On the other side of town, Prithvi Chok has been renamed Lakhan Chok by the Nepal Magar Organisation. They have plans to build a statue of



MANOJ GHARTI MAGAR

Lakhan Thapa, the first martyr of Nepal. In Milan Chok the statue of Birendra has also been demolished, but no group has claimed it yet.

Meanwhile, Kaski's CDO, Madhab Prasad Ojha says he is unaware of the renamings: "When I don't know about any chok being renamed, how do I sanction or not sanction it?"

Horse trading

Bishnu Sharma in *Gorkhapatra*, 7 June

गोरखापत्र

BAGLUNG—Dhara Gurung used to own horses and mules, now he has a motorcycle, tractor and two jeeps.

After the road from Mustang to Korala was built, he traded his horses in for vehicles and there's now a parking lot in the place where there used to be stables. "We used to have 30 mountain ponies and 100 mules," he says adding that he now has just 20 horses and 40 mules, which he is planning to sell.

"Animals need to be fed and looked after when they fall sick," Gurung says, "Motorcycles are so much easier". But horses do have



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their benefits in terms of carrying tourists and generating manure. Tourists are willing to pay Rs 900 a day for pony trekking. "We had a very unique culture," he says, "Tourists would ride on horses and mules to take pictures, while yaks would carry their belongings."

Dhara is one of many in

Mustang, replacing horses and mules with vehicles. And, while inhabitants are happy about the development, they are also worried that old traditions are being lost forever. The biggest concern, however, is that the loss will have a negative impact on tourism.



Vacancy Announcement

The World Bank Office, Kathmandu

The South Asia Poverty Reduction, Economic Management, Finance and Private Sector Development Unit (SASPF) of the World Bank invites applications for the position of a **Senior Governance Specialist** which will be based in Kathmandu, Nepal. The position will initially be a local one year extended term consultant appointment with a possibility for renewal.

The Senior Governance Specialist will serve as a key member of the Nepal Country Team as well as a member of SASPF's regional team working on governance. Based out of the Kathmandu Office, she or he will be responsible for working as part of a multidisciplinary team focusing upon issues of transparency and accountability, service delivery and institutional development with government and other partners. Specific duties will include: (1) advising clients on governance and public management reforms, and monitoring progress with the same; (2) supporting the Country Management Team in analyzing information on emerging governance issues (3) providing operationally relevant governance and institutional support to and participating in cross-sectoral teams working on various development projects; The incumbent should be capable of working independently with minimum supervision.

The successful candidate will have the following qualifications:

- An advanced degree in public administration, business administration, public sector management, political science, economics, finance and/or comparative politics with a strong record of academic achievement;
- A minimum of eight years of relevant professional experience (or the equivalent combination of education and experience) in the field of public sector management, governance and anti – corruption reforms; Experience in managing or overseeing development projects desirable;
- Excellent people skills and the capacity to lead and participate effectively in multidisciplinary teams;
- Strong analytic skills, a willingness to work hard, the ability to gather and analyze significant quantities of data;
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain productive, professional relationships with government counterparts, donors and other stakeholders;
- Excellent writing abilities, persuasive oral communication skills and ability to foster long-term, productive client relationships;
- Both international and Nepali experience will be highly valued.

This is a country office position in Nepal subject to local recruitment under the Nepal compensation plan. The World Bank offers a locally competitive package and is committed to attract and maintain a diverse, highly qualified and dedicated workforce. Equally qualified women and members of disadvantaged groups are encouraged to apply.

The details of the post are available at www.worldbank.org/jobs. Qualified candidates should apply on-line referring to job # 090816 by 25 June 2009.

Learning mothers

Shiv Apriya in *Annapurna Post*, 8 June

अन्नपूर्ण पोस्ट

"Before our mothers used to teach us," says Sarishma Shrestha, a teacher from Arughat, Gorkha, "Now I am happy that we are teaching them." Shrestha has been teaching her 52 year old mother Mina in grade five.

At Nabchetana Women's School, there are a total of 66 students, aged from 17 to 73 in grade one to eight, taught by two women teachers. The school was established by women who were too old to attend regular schools, but wanted to study. Many community groups, such as Himali Sector Development Centre's Hope program, Aruchanaute VDC, Janpriya Mothers group, Janshramdan and Kopila Nepal, have given financial support and donated furniture.

Although a good initiative, attendance is still poor at the school because rural women still face the problem of getting to go to school only after finishing their housework. However, this is a start. "Not being able to read a word when going to cities has been the incentive to study," says Santa Kumari Baram, 43. Now, many men in the area are becoming inspired to study as well after seeing the women's progress.

Consensus, not confrontation

Editorial in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 30 May

After stepping down from the government, the Maoists launched protests against the new coalition and leadership. Although the language is strong ('foreign lackeys') the protests are relatively mellow in tone.

Despite tirades against political parties, the Maoists are stressing their commitment to the constitution and consensus politics. This means they don't want the current situation to head towards confrontation. Maoists chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal saying that "we will not be provoked and abandon the peace process" should be seen in a positive context.

Although the Maoists boycotted the election process of the prime minister in parliament, Krishna Bahadur Mahara from the Baidya bloc, Narayankaji Shrestha from the Dahal bloc and Dinanath Sharma from the Baburam Bhattarai bloc all attended the swearing-in ceremony of the new prime minister and congratulated him. This can be seen as proof that the Maoists do want to move towards consensus. Dahal's meetings with the new prime minister also indicates an effort towards consensus.

Dahal probably hadn't bargained for the Katawal episode to spiral so much out of control and lead to his government's resignation. He may not have also imagined that the 22 parties could garner the numbers to form a coalition. The withdrawal of the UML consent in the Katawal case was not actually a betrayal by Jhalanath Khanal, but the weakened position in the party which Dahal hadn't foreseen.

The Maoists even failed to take the MJF into confidence which could have kept them in power. Dahal boxed himself in with his rigid rhetoric so there was no way out but resignation.

The Maoists have been trying to put on a brave face by saying they left the government to establish civilian supremacy. They knew well that the slogan

of nationalism and civil supremacy would work to appease internal and external forces. Unfortunately for the Maoists, both slogans have the potential to backfire.

The Indian establishment, which the Maoists consider an enemy thinks the peace process and constitution writing can be completed without them in the government. Analysts close to the Maoists who understand Delhi well say India was unhelpful as the Maoists attempted to move forward ignoring the past agreements between the political parties and India, which could pose a threat to security. So, whatever the Maoists may be saying at their public rallies, they do not want to head for a ruinous confrontation with India and the other parties right now.

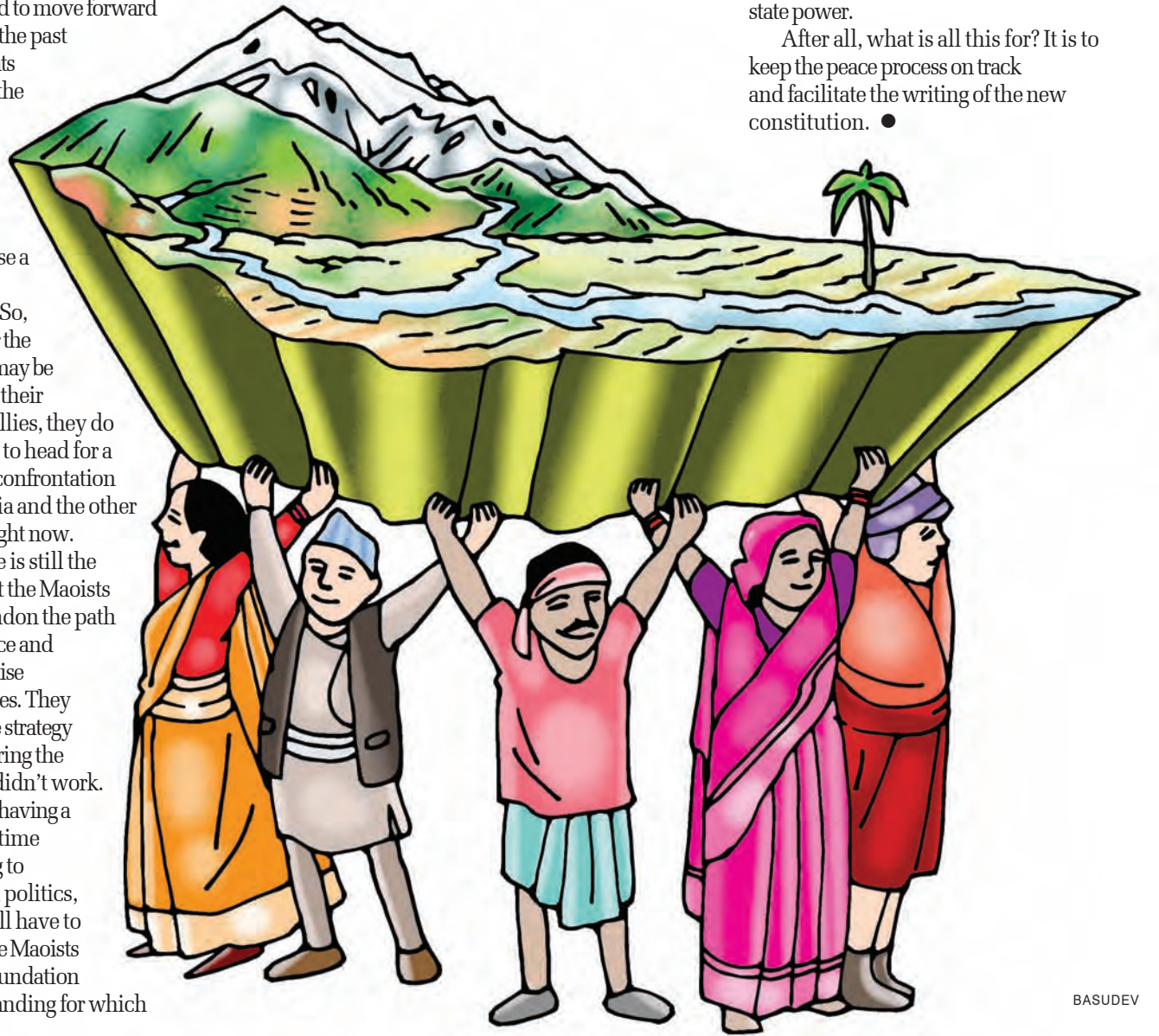
There is still the hope that the Maoists will abandon the path of violence and democratise themselves. They know the strategy taken during the conflict didn't work. They are having a difficult time adjusting to coalition politics, but they'll have to learn. The Maoists need a foundation for safe landing for which

the government and political parties should help them, in an issue, such as army integration for instance. The resolution of the army row with the retirement of both protagonists could be a face-saving way out for the Maoists and even pave the way for the Maoists to join a national government.

The Maoists, who are in politics for power cannot stay out of government for long. They know that confrontation is not

an option, consensus is. Although they have been threatening to chase away cadres of other parties from villages and run a parallel government, it is not as easy as during the insurgency. Hounding unarmed party cadre will be counterproductive, and they will have to fight the enemies they make in future. There is no alternative but to follow the past agreements and democratic path and avoid violence, anarchy and lawlessness to capture state power.

After all, what is all this for? It is to keep the peace process on track and facilitate the writing of the new constitution. ●



BASUDEV



KIRAN PANDAY

Class inclusive

She is not from a family of politicians. And unlike many grey-haired leaders, she hasn't spent a good part of her youth in prison. Yet, in the last three years, she has served as a member of the Nepali parliament, and now as a constituent assembly member. "That is perhaps because the party must think I have some potential," says Lila Nyaichai, 29, who is the CA member from Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party.

In the assembly, she asks smart questions, is willing to listen to what others have to say and if she doesn't know the answer to something, she is never afraid to say so. The chair of her party Naryan Man Bijukche says, "We were keen on bringing women and the youth into mainstream politics. We have very high hopes for Lila." In her short time in politics, this

economics and English literature graduate has already proven that she will be in Nepali politics for the long haul.

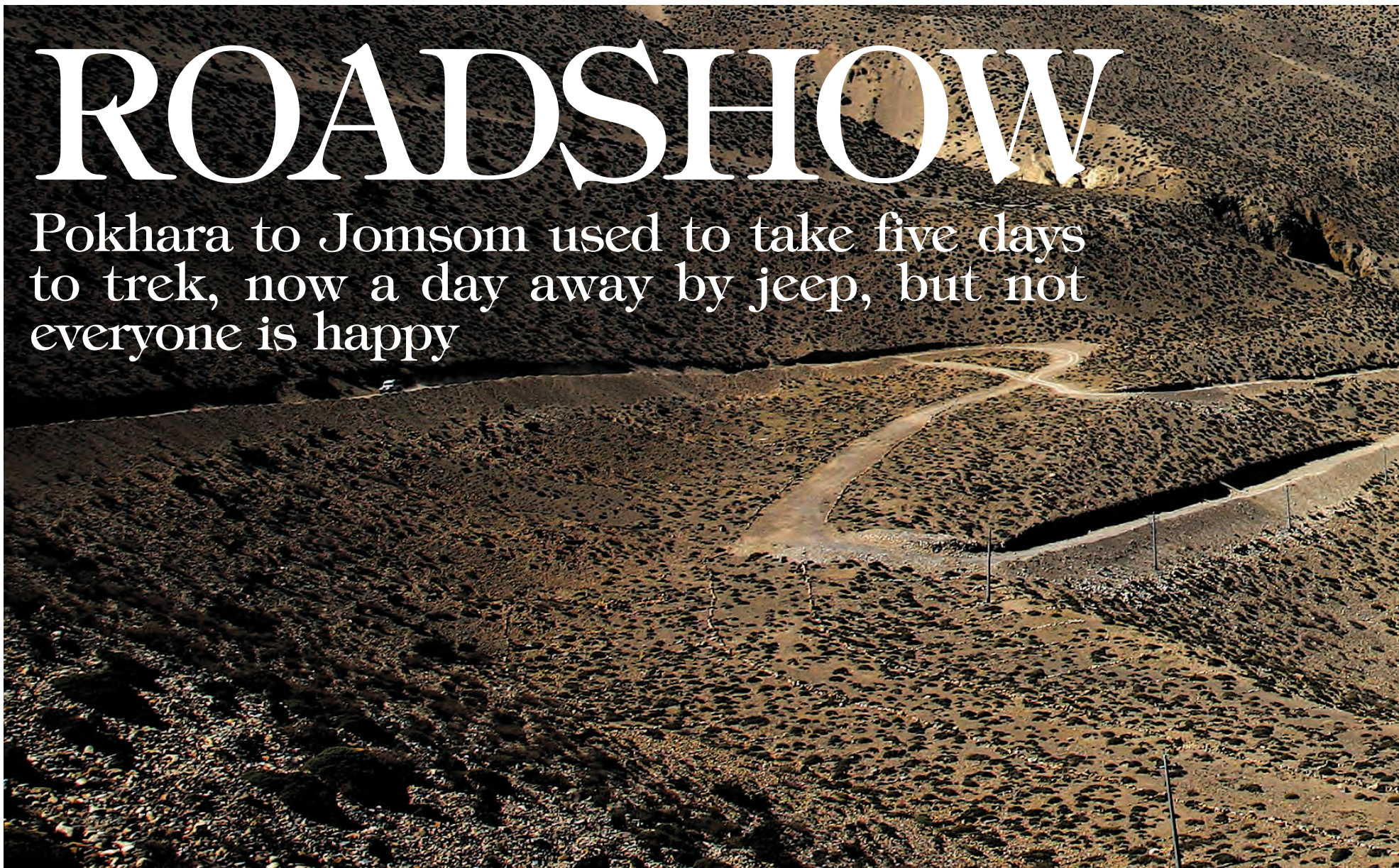
Three years ago when discussions over the writing of the interim constitution were taking place, Nyaichai was suddenly asked to come to a high-level party meeting. After a short meeting with the party chair she was told that she was going to be an MP. Her father had been an active member of the party since the early 60s. Lila herself was affiliated with student unions since she was in Grade Six. In 1997, she stood for her party affiliated All Nepal Revolutionary Student Union, was the central committee member for the union in 2000 and is now the secretary of the revolutionary women's organisation of Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party.

Lila has always believed that young people should be

more involved in politics. She also thinks that being a CA member is a big responsibility and political parties must not make just anyone a CA member to fill their quota or for other party interests. While her colleagues are pushing for inclusiveness based on gender, caste, ethnicity and religion, she has a different take. Nyaichai strongly believes that class should be the main agenda for inclusion.

In line with her party's beliefs, she maintains that Nepal should be a socialist republic of peasants and workers, but she does not think this particular argument will be the basis of the new constitution currently being written. "I cannot say that the new constitution will immediately favour the peasants and workers, but we hope that it will address the majority of the issues we are pushing for," says Nyaichai. ●

Subash Devkota



THE ROAD TO MUKTINATH WITH EKALBHATTI AND THE KALI GANDAKI



PRETEND MACS IN KAGBENI ARRIVE WITH THE ROAD

TEXT and PICS by **KIRAN PANDAY**

It is only after you reach Jomsom in half a day from Pokhara that you realize how distances (and time) have shrunk in Nepal. A journey that used to take five days of steep climbs and descents is now a question of a few hours. And it will be even shorter once Nepal's trans-Himalayan highway is black-topped. Tourists, pilgrims, even conference participants have started streaming to Jomsom and Muktinath. Upper Mustang and Lo Manthang have suddenly become much more accessible for Nepalis.

Not everyone here is happy with this change. Tourism entrepreneurs are worried the road will damage Mustang's fragile culture and ecology. Seeing the haphazardly parked passenger jeeps at Jomsom bus park, you can already see the same squalour you see in Beni or Baglung. Noise and diesel smoke are the new hazards of walking Jomsom's cobblestone streets.

Trekker numbers have dropped, complain local hoteliers and they blame the road. Lodge owners in Tatopani, Ghunsa, Marpha and Tukuche who used to depend on night stop hikers have lost their business.

However, most traders and ordinary people are happy with the road. It makes things cheaper and they don't have to pay the extortion-rate tariff on the Pokhara flight. There are now 50 buses that ply to Muktinath every day from Jomsom, and an equal number that leave for Beni.

Trekking groups now take the high road to Jomsom from Ghodepani, avoiding the road. The new highway has also made the side valleys of East Dhaulagiri Glacier and Meso Kanto Pass more accessible. ●



MULE TRAINS, BUT FOR HOW MUCH LONGER?



MARPHA FROM THE AIR



KAGBENI AND NILGIRI



SCHOOL CHILDREN ON THE MUKTINATH COMMUTE

A division of the spoils

Local politics today is all about cadre dividing up development contracts



KIRAN PANDAY

KUNDA DIXIT in DOLAKHA

Prolonged political wrangling in Kathmandu has paralysed development activity nationwide, and more worryingly, set off bitter competition between local politicians for budgets and contracts.

From the mountains of Dolakha to the central hills of Arghakhanchi and out in Kailali in the far-west, political uncertainty following the resignation of the Maoist-led government last month has created a power vacuum in which plundering budgets and corruption have become the norm.

Maoist cadre, aided and abetted by a menacing YCL, now monopolise all district and village-level contracts for everything from new roads to boulder and sand mining and even the trade in stolen cars and wildlife contraband from India. No private contractor anywhere can get away without handing over a 'PC' (per cent) to local Maoist party bosses.

"It's now standard operating procedure in the New Nepal," says a private contractor based in Surkhet wryly, "we factor the protection money into our budgets." In many places the construction, bridges, highways and hydropower

projects have been halted because of extortion.

Even in districts where local councils had been set up in the last elections, the Maoists backed out of agreements after their government fell. In districts like Lamjung, local councils have not been set up at all so development plans and budgets for the coming year have been languishing. Local civil society is trying to get the parties to work together, but so far unsuccessfully.

"The discussions are all about who gets what share of the development budget, and they can't agree on a formula," said one exasperated activist in Besisahar.

In the past, even if political parties quarreled in Kathmandu, local bodies somehow kept functioning. Many village elders elected to VDC councils from the last local elections in 1999 took charge of development activities. Now, even that mechanism is not working as political parties compete to steal from the development budget for personal gain or to replenish party war chests.

When the district council in Dailekh found it had Rs 10 million in unspent development funds, the three main political parties divided it among themselves. In Ramechhap, there is a frenzy of road-building as political parties award

themselves contracts. Rival parties sometimes build duplicate roads to the same village. The roads are built with no regard to engineering or the environment and most will not survive the coming monsoon (*see box*). The local NC committee has actually split in Dolakha over a Rs 3.5 million road contract because of rivalry between fellow kangresis.

CDOs and district police chiefs are demoralised, as Maoist cadre publicly abuse and threaten them. In Tanahu, a district administration official says he has given up trying to work with the political parties. He told *Nepali Times*: "What can I tell you? We have a three-party dictatorship. They decide on the budget and divide it up. There is no accountability, and no one dare ask questions. We are helpless and hopeless."

Even in districts like Gorkha where former finance minister Baburam Bhattarai lavished cash in his home district to build roads and upgrade colleges, there is little accountability. "I have seen one crore being given to a friendly contractor to build a highway culvert," recalled a local journalist, who added investigating such stories would be suicidal.

To be sure, pork-barrel politics was the norm also with the NC and UML. But

'Dozer development

A new landscape feature has appeared right across the mid hills of Nepal in the past two years: lush hillsides scarred by zig-zagging roads. The landslides they trigger tumble down gullies to the valley below.

The road-building spree is a response to local demand. Most villagers in Nepal when asked what their development priority is, immediately reply: "A road." But the frenzy of new construction is also a result of mass-scale corruption. Local political cadre are exploiting the instability and confusion of the past 10 months to misappropriate local development budgets and distribute cash to party faithful.

Most roads are built by overseers with scant regard for environmental norms, ravaging steep slopes and threatening settlements with landslides. Political parties prefer contractors with bulldozers so they can over-invoice or pocket kickbacks. But the machines are much more destructive to the mountains, and in addition take away jobs from villagers. Some donors have actually gifted bulldozers to DDCs in the name of 'development'.

In Dolakha alone, the district spent Rs 40 million on roads last year. Half of that money went to pay for bulldozer rentals. Although they cost Rs 1,700 per hour to rent, records show many were hired at up to Rs 2,400 per hour.

Activists in Charikot have calculated that at Rs 150 per day wage for villagers, the bulldozers cost 5,000 jobs last year. "Most of us are willing to work for free to get roads to our village, but there is too much money tied up in road contracts," lamented one ex-VDC chairman from northern Dolakha.

local officials interviewed in districts across Nepal in the past month confirmed that the Maoists are different because of their use of threats and violence. "They beat up rival contractors in front of the police station, and police can't do a thing," an NGO activist in Hetauda told us. Indeed, parties mobilise goons from Kathmandu when tenders for contracts are opened and beat up rivals if they don't get it.

"So this is why we fought a 10 year war in which 14,000 people were killed: for *thekka patta*," said a district development officer in Charikot this week, using the Nepali phrase for 'contracts'. "They have forgotten it was all supposed to be for the people." ●

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Law and disorder

A generation for which impunity is the norm

Incident One. Late last month a woman was stripped and severely beaten in the middle of Ratna Park at around 9PM. A mob of about 60 men dragged the woman towards the bus park to parade her around the city when the police finally showed up. An eyewitness with a camera took pictures and posted them on a popular Nepali blogsite. She was crying for help but the men called her “charitrahin” and stripped her.



INTERESTING TIMES
Mallika Aryal

The series of pictures on the site are high-resolution images. Each face in the picture, including that of a boy who looks 12 is identifiable. What is even more shocking is that the men seem to be enjoying what they are doing, and are not even trying to hide their faces.

Incident Two. This week Kathmandu’s Ring Road area was blocked off for two days due to demonstrations by relatives of the two men who were killed in an accident when their motorbike was hit by a public bus. On Monday, an unruly mob attacked a van trying to take children to school. When the van driver tried to reason with the mob by explaining he was transporting small children he got hit by a brick. Three other children and a teacher were hurt. (*see pic*).

These are two isolated incidents in the Valley, but across the country women accused of being “witches” are being tortured, and nine people suspected of being child traffickers have been lynched to death in the Tarai. Violence has become the norm. Police are mute spectators when the militant youth wings of various parties beat up innocent people on the streets.

Whether it is in the city or rural Nepal, domestic violence against women has become a way of life. Husbands beat up their wives, in-laws pour kerosene on newly-married brides and set them alight, women are scarred by acid or sexually abused in the family. Victims stay quiet, silently bearing the torture and pain because they can’t come out and say anything. And why would they? The security apparatus and the justice system is so weak and impunity so rampant that the perpetrators get away. Every time.

The Ratna Park incident was never filed at the police station. Apart from the blogsite and some international coverage, the local media stayed mum. It is still not known who the woman is, and the men who were involved went scot free again.

In the past decade, Nepalis have learnt to live with a lot of hardships. We thought that with the end of war there would be peace. The law and order situation is actually worse. The government

whose fundamental task is the safety of citizens, doesn’t seem to care. No child must get up in the morning with the fear that she and her friends may end up in hospital because the bus carrying her to school was smashed up by people not much older than her. No woman should fear walking around the city because she may be

stripped and beaten.

Even our anger is politically motivated: we come out to protest when a foreigner allegedly says the Buddha was born in India. We burn tyres when oaths are taken in Hindi because all this is an attack on sovereignty. What good is sovereignty when we are not safe in our own sovereign country? ●



KESHAV THOKER

VACANCY



GENERAL:

Winrock International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of underprivileged men, women, and youth around the world. Our experience includes training women and youth in job skills, granting educational scholarships, and building the capacity of local organizations and individuals to address issues such as poverty, unemployment, child labor, trafficking, and social/gender inequalities. By linking local individuals and communities with new ideas and technology, Winrock is increasing long-term productivity, equity, and responsible resource management to benefit the poor and disadvantaged of the world.

1.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Project Director

: Group Vice President, Empowerment & Civic Engagement and designated Program Officer

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Project Director is responsible for the overall management and implementation of a country project whose objective is to reduce or eliminate child labor and its worst forms through education alternatives both formal and non formal. The position will be responsible for overall project management, supervision, and implementation of the requirements of the project, and establish and maintain systems for project operations; ensure that all cooperative agreement deadlines are met and targets achieved. The Director ensures that the project works in full coordination with government stakeholders and international donors working in education or child labor prevention areas – particularly the International Labor Organization/International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC) and ministries of Labor and Education. The Director will supervise all project staff and ensures that all project and financial reports are met.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Overall project management and start up
- Sign contracts and legal documents (with prior approval of HQ)
- Lead development of program strategies and set priorities
- Ensure sustainable approaches and implementation
- Coordinate with the US Embassy and DOL as designated by the Home office
- Coordinate with other stakeholders
- Maintain regular interaction with the key ministries and the ILO/IPEC and other stakeholders and implementers
- Identify and nurture synergies with other US Government and UN-funded projects
- Oversee and provide technical direction
- Manage project staff
- Facilitate sound project implementation and reporting
- Maintain financial oversight over all activities in this project including those of subcontractors
- Maintain open and regular communication between the field office and the US home office team
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation systems are in place

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in a leadership role (Director, Country Representative or Chief of Party) in implementation of child labor and/or complex basic education programs in developing countries such as: Education policy; improving education al quality and access; education al assessment of disadvantaged students; development of community participation in the improvement of basic education for disadvantaged children; and monitoring and evaluation of basic education projects
- Experience working with officials of ministries of Labor and Education and working on child labor policies highly desired
- Experience fostering public-private partnerships and private sector resource mobilization highly desired
- Masters degree or higher in Education, International Development, Economics, Political Science; or related field; Programmatic experience highly desired in gender, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, child labor and/or public health issues
- Fluency in English required, and fluency in Nepali highly desired
- Willingness and ability to commit to being at post within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

2.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

: Project Director

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist will oversee the implementation of the project’s monitoring and evaluation strategies and requirements.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Design and implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system including baseline assessment and student monitoring and tracking
- Design data collection instruments, schedules, analysis methods and applied technologies
- Establish and train community monitoring committees and government officials as data collectors
- Liaise with external monitoring and evaluation teams for mid-term and final evaluations
- Lead project research and data collection in child labor

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Five years progressively responsible experience in the monitoring and evaluation of international development projects, preferably in education and training or a related field. Related experience can include designing monitoring systems, strategic planning and performance measurement, indicator selection, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methodologies, database management, and knowledge of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
- Experience training and building the monitoring and evaluation capacity of team members, partners, government stakeholders, school officials and community monitoring committees highly desired
- Masters degree in social sciences or specialized training/certification in monitoring and evaluation
- Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor highly desired
- Fluency in English and Nepali required
- Willingness and ability to commit to starting the position within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

3.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Education Specialist

: Project Director

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:

The Education Specialist will provide leadership in developing the technical aspects of education interventions for children withdrawn or at risk of participating in exploitative and hazardous child labor and awareness campaigns targeting their parents, communities, and government officials.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Assessment of existing education system for gaps
- Adaptation and development of formal and non-formal basic education curricula in collaboration with government officials
- Developing community-driven systems for identifying and enrolling child laborers or those at risk of child labor
- Designing and delivering teacher training on curricula as well as child labor awareness and special education needs of withdrawn and at-risk child laborers
- Designing and delivering a community child labor awareness and prevention campaign
- Designing interventions for increasing government action to prevent child labor and improve education alternatives
- Serve as Deputy Project Director, assisting the Project Director with administrative and personnel management

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in a technical role in implementation of child labor and/or complex basic education programs in developing countries such as: education policy; improving education al quality and access; education al assessment of disadvantaged students; development of community participation in the improvement of basic education for disadvantaged children; and monitoring and evaluation of basic education projects
- Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor
- Extensive experience in working successfully with ministries of education, networks of educators, employers’ organizations and trade union representatives or comparable entities
- Additional experience with education policy and monitoring and evaluation is an asset
- Masters degree or higher in Education or other social science
- Programmatic experience highly desired in gender, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, child labor and/or public health issues
- Fluency in English and Nepali required
- Willingness and ability to commit to starting the position within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

HOW TO APPLY:

Qualified and interested persons should submit a cover letter and resume by email only no later than June 20, 2009 to Cindy Martin at cmartin@winrock.org with a **mandatory Subject Line according to the position applied for: Nepal Project Director, Child Labor / Nepal M & E Specialist, Child Labor / Nepal Education Specialist, Child Labor.** Winrock would like to graciously thank all applicants for their interest and response but only those candidates who meet all requisite criteria and are short listed will be contacted.

Hypocrite whole-timers

Nepal's communists need to see the defeat of India's left as an early warning

If the pugnacious, arch-Tory British wartime leader were with us today, he'd be furious.

For despite what many believe, he never said the following words.

"Not to be a socialist at twenty is proof of want of heart, to be one at thirty is proof of want of head."



HERE AND THERE
Daniel Lak

No, that was George Clemenceau, a French Prime Minister and statesman from the early part of the 20th century, also renowned for combativeness, iron will and catchy phrases.

His most famous quote in English turns out to be one that most of us wrongly attribute. Such is life. But let's examine M Clemenceau's thinking and apply it to South Asia today, Nepal in particular.

Socialism as he knew it meant workers committees manning barricades and shutting down cities and industries. Basically it meant revolution as defined by Karl Marx in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848.

Today, we have a broader,

gentler definition of socialism and fondness for its methods, if not the nomenclature. To be a contemporary socialist is to be broadly in favour of an equitable, rights-based agenda that admits the existence and desirability of free well-regulated markets. Socialism, as we know it now, thrives in Sweden, Spain, Canada and many other well-off countries.

Defined as allowing governments to run, regulate and occasionally bail out the marketplace, socialist thinking informed both the George W Bush and Barack Obama administrations' approach to current economic turmoil. General Motors, once the mightiest of global capitalist behemoths, is now nearly three-quarters owned by taxpayers in America and Canada.

What global centrists can't afford is hard-line ideology of right or left. World conditions are too fragile, interconnected and uncertain at the best of times. Only the nimble survive.

What's pretty clear is that the world has rejected coercive Marxism (Communism) and anyone who believes otherwise is dangerously deceiving



KIRAN PANDAY

themselves.

Nepal and parts of India are among the last places where people who believe they find wisdom and solace in Stalin, Lenin and Mao still get a chance to serve as legislators, even Prime Ministers.

Hell, you can find people here who admire Kim Il Sung and Pol Pot. It helps that Nepal, and for that matter West Bengal and Kerala, are isolated, full of a self-righteous sense of carefully cultivated uniqueness, and largely at the fringes of the modern world.

Local Hindu caste patterns help too. The purity so beloved at the Brahminical heights sits comfortably alongside the doctrinaire Left's obsession with examining primary political texts in search of self-confirmatory analyses.

In fact, were Marx, Engels or even Lenin with us today, they'd have a hard time recognising their handiwork in the positions and political records of our South Asian Marxists-Leninists. Not that I'm arguing for a return to basics, far from it. But a little intellectual

honesty from all who bask in the prefix 'Comrade' would go a long way.

On the surface, they claim work for the rights of workers and peasants but the best they have ever achieved has been through compromise with a broad range of political ideas that they sniffily dismiss as bourgeois democracy. They conveniently forget that their own Marx was a middle class nightmare of a human being who loathed the idea of a day's work for a day's pay. Far easier to sponge off his wealthy friend, Engels, who inherited his wealth from a capitalist father.

There are no working men and women at the top of today's South Asian leftist movements, just bourgeois hypocrites and 'whole timers' who have lived off the toil of their own party cadres as they espouse respect, equity and revolution.

Even so, voters in India gave their Communists decades to deliver the goods but recently found them wanting. Nepal's leftists need to see this as an early warning, a signal that change, compromise and nimble politics will keep them relevant. Marx will not. ●

*"never say no to what you can do
never let defeat come over you
just keep going on and on... and on
make sure you keep the pace
don't let life command your space
just never forget the one you know you are... a star !"*

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Individual spirit

The European psyche laid bare in film festival

A full range of human emotions and psychological states - pride, ambition, courage, determination, guilt, revenge, insecurity – are explored in the ten films that make up the second European Film Festival in Kathmandu from 13-17 June at Nepal Army auditorium.

Two films from each member state of the EU represented in Nepal: Germany, France, the UK, Denmark and Finland are being screened.

Ferenc Weigl of the European Union, which is organising the festival, says, “Last year’s response from the audience proves that the Nepali audience is very interested in European movies. Our main aim is to introduce modern European cinematographic art to nations outside Europe.”

Le Couperet
This French film, directed by Constantin Costa-Gavras, is about Bruno Davert, a top executive at a paper factory who is fired. He is then determined to obtain almost any job with the same senior status, even if he has to kill for it.
1st show: 14 June, 5PM
2nd show: 16 June, 5PM

La France
It is autumn 1917 and World War I is taking place. Camille is a young woman who after receiving disconcerting news from her husband, disguises herself as a man and goes to find him at war.
1st show: 15 June, 3PM
2nd show: 16 June, 1PM

The Flying Scotsman
Based on a true story, UK-produced *The Flying Scotsman* follows the turbulent life of cyclist Graeme Obree, who broke the world one-hour record on a bike of his own revolutionary design.
1st show: 15 June, 1PM
2nd show: 17 June, 3PM

Blindsight
Blindsight is a gripping adventure of six blind Tibetan teenagers who go on a climbing expedition up the 7,000 metre Lhakpa Ri, the north side of Mount Everest.
1st show: 13 June, 11AM
2nd show: 15 June, 5PM

Wer früher stirbt, ist länger tot (Grave decisions)
This German children’s movie is about 11 year old Sebastian’s search for immortality. Believing

that he is responsible for the death of his mother, who died in childbirth, he tries to cleanse himself of his sins.
1st show: 13 June, 5PM
2nd show: 14 June, 11AM

Yella
Yella is the story of a young woman, Yella (Nina Hoss) who moves away from her glum Eastern neighborhood and her abusive husband Ben to the West, where a job offer might bring her the peace she has been searching for.
1st show: 16 June, 11AM
2nd show: 17 June, 1PM

Tyttö sinä olet tähti (Beauty and the Bastard)
This romantic comedy tells the story of Sune, a fanatic hiphop-DJ and Nelli, a snobbish over-achiever who fall in love while trying to take advantage of each other.
1st show: 14 June, 3PM
2nd show: 17 June, 5PM

Joulutarina (Christmas Story)
This Finnish Christmas film tells the touching story of how Santa Claus came to be Santa. The film portrays the life of Nikolas, a



young orphan boy who is looked after by the villagers in Lapland.
1st show: 13 June, 1PM
2nd show: 15 June, 11AM

Ekko (echo)
In this Danish drama, Simon, a police officer, loses custody of his six-year old son in a divorce and in desperation, abducts the boy. Soon his plan becomes a nightmare as old haunting memories resurface.
1st show: 13 June, 3PM

2nd show: 16 June, 3PM
Til døden os Skiller (With your Permission)
This film is about a painfully insecure ferryboat staffer, Jan, who’s regularly beaten by his stay-at-home wife. But when Jan’s boss finally sends him into group therapy an unlikely friendship emerges and everyone’s lives take unexpected turns.
1st show: 14 June, 1PM
2nd show: 17 June, 11AM

‘After the blood come the tears’

When nepa-laya’s picture book of the conflict, *A People War*, was released in 2007 it told in pictures the story of how the violence had affected civilians. The pictures were taken on a traveling photo exhibition throughout the country in 2008, and some 350,000 viewed them. They left heart-wrenching testimonies about their war experiences, and the yearning for peace.

Now, nepa-laya has selected some of the tens of thousands of testimonies in a new book, *Never Again*, which is being launched on Sunday. All the feedback, from the page-long ones to ‘Malai naramro lagyo’ written by a kindergarden student have the same message: ‘never again’.

The testimonies force us to remember the sorrows of war. Nepal’s went through a collective catharsis, and these words are the outpourings of our nation’s soul. The victims of war saw that there were many more like them, and the exhibition seems to have helped them share the pain. Looking at the pictures together, people, who did not suffer directly, cried with the ones who did.

During the war, we all prayed for peace, for fewer deaths, less destruction. But casualties became statistics, and we soon forgot about the families of the deceased, the disappeared, the injured, and the displaced. The photos in *A People War* told the stories behind the numbers, which is why they were so powerfully moving.

In the sequel, *Never Again*, we hear the voices of Nepal’s from Mechi to Mahakali, all ages, religious and ethnic groups and

through boundaries of literacy. (Illiterate and vision impaired visitors dictated their responses.) Everyone’s opinion is equally important: for once, this is history written by the people of what happened to them, not history written by the winners or so-called experts.

Most agree that we should learn lessons and be ‘inspired

to work towards social transformation and sustainable peace’. Some think violence is sometimes needed for social justice. Baburam Bhattarai writes a dialectic critique of political violence after seeing the exhibition in Gorkha. His comment shows how arrogantly ignorant leaders are about the war they unleashed on the people. Bhattarai’s comment will break the hearts of many who expected leaders to understand, but it seems the pictures somehow failed to do so: that we have cried together, and that no matter for what ends, violence is not justifiable.

‘What is the price of tears?’ writes one viewer. ‘History doesn’t die,’ writes another. The back cover of the book has a poignantly short sentence: ‘After the blood come the tears.’ Another viewer says ‘Show these pictures to Gyanendra, Girija, Prachanda why are you showing it to us?’

The war may be over, but there is no peace yet. For the families of the disappeared, the sorrows continue, the children of the dead suffer hardships. It will take time for people to forgive and start trusting each other. Perhaps because we have been through so much, we want to forget and move on. But we can’t forget until we have learnt our lessons.

Never Again helps us remember, and helps the process of reconciliation through justice. ●
Aditi Adhikari

Never Again will be launched on 14 June after which it will be available at all leading book stores. The documentary *Frames of War* based on the book will be screened at the Russian Cultural Centre 14-20 June. Admissions free, but bookings must be made in advance through nepa-laya at 9751083433.

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13 - 17 June 2009

Army Club Auditorium, Tundikhel

🇬🇧

Blindsight

Genre: documentary, adventure | Running time: 1hr 44mins
Saturday, 13 June, 11am & Monday, 15 June, 5pm

🇬🇧

The Flying Scotsman

Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 43mins
Monday, 15 June, 1pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 3pm

🇩🇰

Ekko (Echo)

Genre: Drama | Running Time: 1hr 20mins
Saturday, 13 June, 3pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 3pm

🇩🇰

Til Døden Os Skiller (With Your Permission)

Genre: Comedy | Running time: 1hr 35mins
Sunday, 14 June, 1pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 11am

🇫🇮

Tyttö sinä olet tähti (Beauty and the Bastard)

Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Sunday, 14 June, 3pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 5pm

🇫🇮

Joulutarina (Christmas Story)

Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 20mins
Saturday, 13 June, 1pm & Monday, 15 June, 11am

🇫🇷

La France

Genre: Drama, Music, War Movie | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Monday, 15 June, 3pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 1pm

🇫🇷

Le Couperet

Genre: Thriller | Running time: 2hrs 2mins
Sunday, 14 June, 5pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 5pm

🇩🇪

Wer früher stirbt, ist länger tot (Grave Decisions)

Genre: Children's movie | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Saturday, 13 June, 5pm & Sunday, 14 June, 11am

🇩🇪

Yella

Genre: Drama, Romance, Thriller | Running time: 1hr 28mins
Tuesday, 16 June, 11am & Wednesday, 17 June, 1pm

Free passes are available at

Alliance Française in Kathmandu, Tripureshwar, 4241163; British Council, Lainchaur, 4410798; Goethe Zentrum, Thapatali, 4250871 & Skoda Showroom, Thapathali, 4266105

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ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **In praise of the patterns**, a BFA solo exhibition by Gyanu Gurung till 14 June, Nepal Art Council, Babar Mahal.
- ❖ **Portraits from the Shadow - The plight of street children**, an exhibition by Sanjeev Maharjan, till 14 June at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited.
- ❖ **Transcendental Vibrations**, an exhibition by Kabi Raj Lama, till 17 June at Hotel de l'Annapurna, Durbar Marg.

EVENTS

- ❖ **E-Car rally** in support for Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Center starts at Maitighar Mandala, 13 June, 8AM. 9841900919
- ❖ **Nepa~laya's film tour**, 15-20 June, 3.30 and 5.30 PM, Russian Cultural Center. 4437893
- ❖ **Learn Esperanto Language** - free Introductory class on 13 June, 9-10AM at School of Creative Communications. 5546705
- ❖ **38th Yala Maya Classic**, a classical music series, 16 June, 5PM, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka. 5553767
- ❖ **Star Trek**, a sci-fi movie on 17 June, 6.30 PM. Lazimpat Gallery Café. 4428549
- ❖ **Tai Chi**, 13 June, 10-11.30AM. Yoga 9-10AM & Buddhist Meditation 5-6PM, 15-19 June. Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre, Keshar Mahal Marg. 4410402
- ❖ **Call for entries for Film South Asia** till 30 June, documentaries made in and after January 2007 qualified. 5552141

MUSIC

- ❖ **TGIF** at Jazzabella Café every Wednesday and Friday. 2110475
- ❖ **Baja gaja**, every Tuesday at Moksh, 7.30 pm onwards, Pulchowk. 5526212
- ❖ **Kathmandu express**, performance by International Acts, 7.30 PM onwards free entry at Moksh
- ❖ **Live band** every Friday and rooftop bbq everyday at Kausi Kitchen, Durbar Marg. 4227288
- ❖ **Sunday Jazz brunch** barbecue and live jazz music at the Terrace, Hyatt Regency from 12-3.30 PM. 4491234
- ❖ **Jazz evening** at Delices de France Restaurant every Wednesday, 11AM-2PM. 4260326
- ❖ **Epic**, at the Brunchilli- the Acoustic Lounge every Friday, Thamel. 9851035437
- ❖ **Strings Band** live every Tuesday at G's Terrace Restaurant and Bar, Thamel.
- ❖ **Wednesday Melody** at Jazzabell Café, Happy hour 6-8PM and TGIF party with live band Epic every Friday at 8PM. 2114075
- ❖ **Some like it hot** every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, 7PM onwards, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel. 4479488
- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, 5-7PM, ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar.
- ❖ **Live Sensation**, performance by Yankey every Saturday, 9PM, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4491234.
- ❖ **Fusion and Looza** Band every Friday night, Bhumii Resto Lounge, Lazimpat. 4412193

DINING

- ❖ **A cafe's cafe**, Dhokaima Cafe, Patan Dhoka. 5522113
- ❖ **The Corner Bar**, 3-11PM, 5-7PM, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu. 4411818
- ❖ 7th Annual Monsoon Wine Festival 2009, from 15 June-15 September, Kilroy, Thamel. 4250440
- ❖ **Mango Etagere** with hi-tea at The Lounge from 4.30- 6.30PM. Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Weekend Brunch** by the Poolside every Saturday and Sunday, Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu, 11AM-3PM. 4273999
- ❖ **Pizza & Pasta** at the Rox Restaurant every Monday & Tuesday, Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Pasta pesto passion** at La Dolce Vita, Thamel. 4700612
- ❖ **Home made pasta** at Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **Chez Caroline** for French and Mediterranean cuisine, Babar Mahal Revisited. 4263070
- ❖ **Mediterranean cuisine** every Friday from Greece, Italy and the Middle-East at The Café, Hyatt Regency. 4491234
- ❖ **Plat Du Jour** at Hotel Shangri La, Kathmandu, Rs 600. 4412999
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser Café, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9AM-10PM. 4425341
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs 999, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors(at)nepalitimes.com

Quest Entertainment



In Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons*, symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) returns again to decipher hidden sculptural symbols and secret architectural clues. When Langdon finds evidence of the resurgence of an ancient secret brotherhood known as the Illuminati—the most powerful underground organisation in history—he also faces a deadly threat to the existence of the Illuminati's most despised enemy: the Catholic Church. Upon learning that the clock is ticking on an unstoppable Illuminati time bomb, Langdon is recruited to travel to Rome, where he joins forces with Vittoria Vetra (Ayelet Zurer), a beautiful and enigmatic Italian scientist. Embarking on a nonstop, action-packed hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs, deserted cathedrals, and even to the heart of the most secretive vault on earth, Langdon and Vetra will follow the 400-year-old Path of Illumination that marks the Vatican's only hope for survival.

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WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

A high pressure system suddenly appeared over western Tibet this week, drawing in westerlies and chasing away all the pre-monsoon moisture. But it's a tug-o-war between these westerlies and the moisture-laden warm winds from the Bay which are being relentlessly pulled by the monsoon low over northern India. We expect this year's monsoon to be delayed, but it should arrive with a bang by 20 June in Kathmandu. This satellite picture taken on Thursday morning shows a monsoon system moving up into Bangladesh and northeast India. It is likely to be fighting to get through into eastern Nepal by next week. Let's hope it succeeds. Valley dwellers should expect sweltering and humid afternoons with some isolated night rain until the rains arrive.



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MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

MARCHING ORDERS: Upendra Yadav announces the dismissal of Bijay Gachhedar and seven other leaders from MJF last week. Two factions of the party clashed in Birganj on Wednesday.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

DEAD END: The road leading up to Banepa remained tense for hours on Friday when locals clashed with Maoist affiliated Tamsaling Mukti Morcha to protest the banda. A curfew was imposed to control the situation.



KIRAN PANDAY

DAILY ROUTINE: Maoist cadres block the road in Darbar Marg on Friday as part of their continued protest demanding civilian supremacy.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

SEEDS OF HOPE: Despite the delayed onset of monsoon and prolonged drought, farmers have started planting rice seedling in Hatiban on Tuesday



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

CATCHING UP WITH TIMES: Granddaughter of Sir Edmund Hillary, Emily Rose Hillary, reading *Nepali Times* in Namche after the Tenzing-Hillary Everest Marathon last week. German Ambassador Verena Graf von Roedern looks on.

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22 rajahs

Even the Ass had underestimated just how serious the lust for power was going to be on the part of **netas** who wanna be in the new coalition. The donkey had predicted here that it would take a week for Makunay to cobble together a cabinet. It's been nearly three weeks. What is holding things up in this Government Sans Portfolios?

Well, it boils down to arithmetics. There are 22 members in the coalition, so we need a minimum 36-member cabinet because the Big Boys (and Gals) want more than one ministry. This presents a bit of a problem because there ain't enuf ministries to go around. So Baluwatar has hit upon a wonderful idea: they're going to split up the double-barrelled mantralayas.

The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation can be bifurcated into the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Civil Aviation. And if even that won't do, they can go a step further and divide it up into the Ministry of Civil and the Ministry of Aviation. The Ministry of Works and Physical Planning can also be cut up into the Ministry of Works, Ministry of Physical and Ministry of Planning.



The PMO had just heaved a sigh of relief that it'd resolved the issue when the parties also

started splitting, thus necessitating chopping up the ministries into further pieces. The MJF is going through binary fission with full-scale **coota-coot** in Birganj, the kangresis are loggerheads over Soodata Koirala becoming Farang Minister, and even Chure Bhabar may split one of these days. How on earth are all these new parties and their new leaders going to be accommodated?

And true to the legendary inability of Nepal's to get along, the Brahmanical e-maleys (pronounced 'eh-malaise') have a serious rift between JN and his home ministry nominee Iswar P and the Oli faction. KPsir never really trusted the fellow-comrade and communist atheist named Iswar, and has opposed his candidacy for **Home Sweet Home Ministry**. JN and BidyaB are also on a collision course with their publicly divergent views on the eight jarsaps and the proposed court martial for Cool Budder. No surprises there, but Oli and Bidya are now in open confrontation against Comrade Makunay who is trying to appease the Baddies with a commitment to civilian supremacy. With me so far?



MKN is in the **horns of a dilemma**. Decisiveness is not one of the prime minster's strong points, which may be a good thing in a man supposed to keep

everyone happy. Trouble is, he isn't getting any guidance about what to do next from the guys who control the remote. So he has no idea whether he should be trying to appease the Maoists or twisting their tail.



Meanwhile, it looks like Comrade Awful is missing the Rs 100,000 bed he had rigged up at Baluwatar. PKD now finds the Pistachio Palace a tad too

claustrophobic, so he's moved to an orchid farm in Godavari to put finishing touches to his proposals over future strategy at the party's secretariat meeting next week. The strategy is reportedly to just wait it out patiently to allow the UML-led coalition to self-destruct by Dasain, and then make a move to stage an even stronger comeback.



It's four down 99 to go if the

Baddies get all the ethnic groups in Nepal to stage their own bunds. The Ass' solution to this is for Nepal (the country, not the premier) to dissolve parliament, dismantle the army, abolish the portfolioless cabinet, go back to the Baise and Chaubise Rajahs. the donkey'd rather have 22 rajahs than 22 unruly coalition members.

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Q. Which of these phrases best describe your current feeling about the delay in government formation?

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Close to the edge

Delhi wants the Maoists to make a "course correction"

PRASHANT JHA

Ever since they resigned from government, the Maoists have tried to play on anti-Indian nationalism. But senior leaders now admit there is no alternative but to renegotiate with India.

"We made mistakes in handling India," confessed one Maoist secretariat member, "but India also can't ignore that we are the most powerful party here."

Ahead of a politburo



BILASH RAI

meeting, starting Monday, the Maoists will have to make crucial decisions about relations with India. It's not going to be easy because New Delhi has drawn a line in the sand that it doesn't want the Maoists to cross.

Senior Indian officials, from both the foreign office and the security establishment, have told *Nepali Times* meaningful engagement is difficult until the Maoists engage in a "course correction" and they have made the following "suggestions":

The Maoists must make a clear and unconditional commitment to multiparty democracy, which India says was not visible during their nine-month stint in power. The party has to

shift from its radical dogmatic line to a moderate left-of-centre orientation. One official told us: "They have to give up dreams of capturing the state."

Delhi doesn't believe Pushpa Kamal Dahal anymore when he says he is under pressure from hardliners. Said the official: "No more excuses. If it is a tactic, we are not falling for it. If it is for real, then it is time for the leader to assert and either bring the hardliners in line or marginalise them." He added the onus lies on the Maoists to revive trust by steps like dismantling the YCL and behaving like a normal opposition.

An official said India is tired of "Maoist duplicity", adding: "They have to learn that they cannot keep chanting anti-India slogans here, and then privately come to us for help to bail them out." This is a clear reference to Maoist rhetoric on "foreign intervention" and the Dang border controversy, which is seen as being engineered by "Maoists and friendly media".

India says it still supports the peace process and wants a new constitution, but the Maoists can't 'bulldoze' their way through. "There has to be reasonable discussion on integration between all stakeholders, including the Nepal Army," he added. Token integration under strict parameters may be feasible, but unit level entry and space to PLA commanders in the NA is a strict 'no' for India.

What didn't go down too well in Delhi was that even as the Maoists were calling for a total overhaul of the "special relationship" with India, they were cosying up to Beijing.

Indian officials, however, are at pains to emphasise that their role must not be overstated and politics emanates from within. But, warned one diplomat: "The present behaviour of ranting against everyone is not winning them friends. It will dig them into a hole." ●



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COP OUT

Indoctrinated in the theory that power comes out of barrels of guns, former guerillas in the former government were understandably obsessed with the military. They still are.

And if there is one major hurdle ahead of the new coalition it is the issue of integration and rehabilitation. But for that the prime minister will have to cross the first hurdle of actually forming a government. The political void in Kathmandu has enforced the perception of a weak state. This in turn has led to further erosion of the rule of law, institutionalised impunity and has fanned anarchy.

A traffic accident brings the northern half of the city to a standstill for two days. Kids deflate bicycle tyres to enforce bandas. Police look on as the YCL thrashes the YF in Banepa and vice versa. More worryingly, the three main parties are behaving as if they can do anything (*see p 10-11*). Development has ground to a halt as cadre plunder the district budgets for road contracts. There is now such criminalisation of politics and the politicisation of criminality that it is becoming difficult to tell the difference between a politician and a dacoit.

The security apparatus that is most in touch with the public, the Nepal Police, has had no chance to recover from its politicisation, a process that began after 1990. Police say they are powerless to stop gangsters because they have patronage from biggies. They can't even arrest hoodlums stoning a school bus without cabinet authorisation.

Improving the efficiency of the police force is essential to check this country's malignant lawlessness. The single most widespread demand among people across Nepal today is law and order. They are fed up with highway blockades, strikes, curfews and crime.

New retirement rules provide the government with an opportunity to boost the morale of the police and hence reassure the public that they are safe. A younger police leadership is welcome despite attendant risks of inexperience: immaturity is preferred over incompetence. However, changes at the top of the police force aren't enough. Intelligence-based community policing that prevents crime requires that the political class cooperate with the law and order machinery, and not be on the side of criminals.

The most important component of police reform has to do with the functional freedom of law enforcement agencies. They must be given the authority to apprehend on the spot any militant youth member of a political front organisation who engages in vandalism or threats.

These aren't things that need a complete and functioning cabinet. It's the duty of Prime Minister Nepal of Nepal to ensure that his citizens are safe.



KIRAN PANDAY

At the Forum

The MJF split makes politics even more unstable

The Forum saga has all the elements of a Bollywood potboiler: betrayal, anger, violence, money and revenge.

First things first. No one comes out looking clean following a messy party division. For all his self-righteousness and sudden discovery that this is an "anti federalism" alliance, Upendra Yadav has shown remarkable inconsistency.



PLAIN SPEAKING
Prashant Jha

He first sat out the entire army chief controversy by junketing around the globe. Returning a day after Prachanda's resignation, he immediately started aiming to become PM with Maoist support. When the numbers did not add up, he shifted allegiance to the UML-led coalition and signed the common minimum program. And though his heart was not in the arrangement, he wanted to lead the MJF in this set-up. When that did not happen, Yadav sacked Bijay Gachhedar & Co.

For his part, Gachhedar's aim throughout seemed to be to divide and weaken the party. He unilaterally decided to back the UML-NC combine and

bargained a plum portfolio for himself. He got the other parties to make an announcement saying they would invite him to lead the MJF in government. He threw money around to get MPs on his side. And then using old friends like Khum Bahadur, Gachhedar got the NC patriarch to put pressure on the PM to swear him in without an official party decision.

Beyond the clash of ambitions, this is a deeper story here of how opportunism in the absence of ideology has a short life-span. The Forum was never a proper party. Just look at Bijay's far right antecedents and desire to turn the clock back to the 1990s, Upendra's radical left background and commitment to federalism and the inscrutable JP Gupta's shift from social democracy to ethnic separatism inspired by a jail stint and study of Sri Lankan Tamils. On the ground, activists who build the organisation for the Madhesi movement had to co-exist with late entrants who had opposed Madhesi issues through this period.

The party had its use when a broader Madhesi identity was sharpest before elections and Yadavs, Tharus and Muslims needed each other. It could remain united when the national parties were working in a relatively consensual framework and there was no need to make difficult choices. But as the polity became fractured at the top, and the Madhesi identity started fragmenting on the ground, MJF leaders had to find their own paths.

Also, we tend to ignore the inter-personal element which played a crucial role in even former Upendra loyalists veering away to the other side. In the last year after his electoral success, Yadav had

become intolerably arrogant and felt invincible. He had little time for his MPs and rarely visited the Madhes. Gachhedar, on the other hand, closely wooed parliamentary party members.

It was in this internal vortex that external forces intervened. The NC wants to weaken the Madhesi groups to recover its Tarai base. Add to it GPK's personal grudge against Upendra for defeating his daughter in Sunsari and opposing his dream of presidency last year. India was also irritated with Yadav for his intransigence on multiple issues and felt that he needed a lesson.

With Gachhedar, NC, UML, India and the army ganged up against him, it is no surprise that Upendra Yadav and JP Gupta were reduced to a minority in the party.

This division will have two immediate implications. It makes national politics more unstable. There are now three key actors (Prachanda, Jhalanath Khanal, and Upendra Yadav) who want to see an end to this government.

It will also make Tarai politics more fragmented and radicalised. Yadav will try to engineer some kind of agitation in the plains to increase his bargaining power in the capital. He may also attempt to ratchet up the anti-India sentiment, but that could be self-destructive as India is not going to tolerate that rhetoric so close to the border. In case a political vacuum does develop, the Maoists or a new force is more likely to benefit from it than traditional parties.

When Upendra Yadav was asked last year why he was getting people like Bijay Gachhedar into the MJF even though they had no commitment to Madhes, he replied, "I need their experience of power politics." Looks like the experience has boomeranged. ●

LETTERS

ETHNIC CARD

"But there should be zero tolerance for incitement of ethnic intolerance and hatred for short-term political gain" ('The ethnic card,' # 454)—very well said indeed! This wise line left me wondering how different our lives may have been had they come a few years earlier when the Maoists were cracking open the 'genie-bottle'. Unfortunately, back then most of our intelligentsia, media, civil society were busy championing the Maoists as the Robin Hood of the poor and downtrodden. Has it taken all this while for the lights to finally go on, or had the Kathmandu intelligentsia simply 'papered over' their knowledge of Maoists' misuse of this 'combustible mixture' for some short-term gain of their own?

Satyajeet Nepali, email

- Your editorial ('The ethnic card', #454) is an early warning to this

country that if politicians can't resist the temptation to use ethnicity to forward their cause then all is lost. The former Yugoslavia had only four ethnic groups, we have 103. Imagine a multiple civil war over ethnicity. It will make the Jana Yuddha look like a picnic. We are already seeing signs of the fissures. The Limbus are beating up Rais because of overlapping territorial claims. The Banepa riots were between Newars and Tamang. The Tharus and Mahdesis are already in confrontation. Politicians should wake up and nip this in the bud.

Kiran Mainali, Pokhara

BHUWAN AND JUNA

Thank you for that heart-warming cover story on Bhuwan and Juna (#454). You have shown how at a fundamental level Nepalis are all brothers and sisters and reconciliation is possible. The Rai siblings have shown your political leaders the way, but unfortunately I don't think they're paying any attention. They are too busy quarrelling, and now even thrashing each other.

Lina Sorensen,
Dhankuta

YESTERDAY'S MEN

CK Lal has taken a potshot again at the political parties ('Yesterday's men...', #454). They are a soft target because they won't threaten him or beat him up

like the YCL would. There are two types of forces in this country, ones that believe in (and use) violence as a political tool and the others that don't. It should be pretty clear to *Nepali Times* which side it should be on since your editor was at the receiving end of physical assault recently.

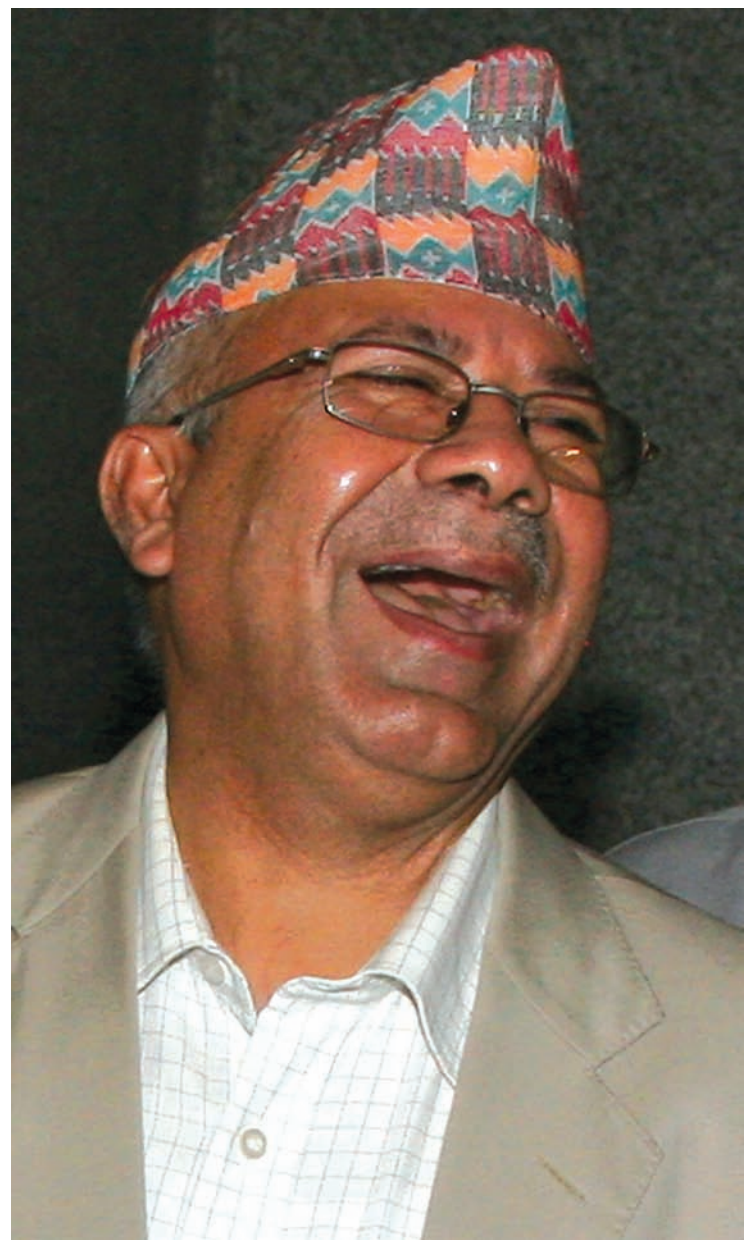
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LETTERS

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MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Prime Minister Madhav Nepal claims that he never lobbied to be made prime minister. He's partly right. Nepal did once petition the king to be appointed prime minister, but that was during the hybrid royal-military regime when the CEO of the country was also the Supreme Commander-in-Chief. This time,



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

in GPK's metaphor, the prize of premiership fell into Nepal's lap like a ripe mango. Nepal had once also aspired to be the president of the republic with the help of Maoists. But it didn't take long for him to realise the futility of that dream. Having spent the better part of his life in various communist parties, Comrade

Nepal knows that no apparatchik willingly accepts another even as a ceremonial superior. What actually led to Nepal's surprise selection remains unknown. Koirala may have thought that it would be imprudent to step into a chair just vacated by the leader of the largest party in the legislature. Chairman Jhulanath Khanal was probably considered too beholden to Pushpa Kamal Dahal to lead an anti-Maoist coalition. Mercurial Upendra Yadav was unlikely to receive the sanction of those who have the final say in the making and unmaking of governments these days. Meanwhile, the paper crown of premiership, pasted overnight with the joint effort of proactive diplomats and an assertive military had to be put upon Nepal's head precisely

The ripe mango

Now that Nepal is in the hot seat, he must use this historic opportunity

because he was the unlikely candidate to resist a rightist roadmap of the Kathmandu establishment. Even Nepal didn't expect to be at the head of an anti-Maoist coalition so soon after Dahal had bequeathed the chairmanship of Constitution Drafting Committee upon him. There is no other explanation for the complete absence of vision, mission or plan of the anti-Maoist formation at the helm of government. Other than an irresistible urge to have their hands at the till during a period of extreme volatility, Premier Nepal's existing and probable colleagues have no plausible reason to join a government that is fated to fail even before being formed. Fortunately, the Maoists have been kind towards the new government: their protests provide legitimacy to a ruling coalition that has done nothing to deserve such vigorous opposition. But now that Nepal is in hot seat, he has to make best use of this historic opportunity. The greatest challenge for Nepal is to prove his authenticity. The Maoists can't question his legitimacy because they were the ones to give cabinet berths to non-elected politicians in the previous government. The prime minister can prove his political antecedents by insisting that at least all his senior colleagues be directly elected CA members. His helplessness in accepting the nominations of Bidya Bhandari and Sujata Koirala is understandable, but exceptions should not be allowed to become the rule. Nepal needs to be prudent in choosing his

cabinet colleagues from his own party as well as from his coalition partners. He needn't hurry or worry, other than the Maoists no one can unseat him without losing credibility. Asserting his authority is a little trickier for a premier who owes his position not only to constituent assembly members but also to various extra constitutional players. The Bhadrakali Brass has thrown a challenge by insisting on the prosecution of an officer who just accepted the order of the government of the day. Premier Nepal has erred by extending the tenure of eight generals who had retired from their posts even as their combined

appeal remains sub-judice. The ripe mango in Premier Nepal's lap is too small to be shared by all anti-Maoist forces in the country and outside. No matter what he does, Nepal would have to take the blame for being a lame duck prime minister, appointed merely to keep the seat warm for a more suitable successor. Meanwhile, he has an unusual opportunity to prove the old hypothesis that accidents of history often produce extraordinary leaders. The mango tree grows from a seed. Being and nothingness are all about fundamental freedoms of human beings against determinists of all stripes. ●

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Crafted in Kathmandu

Making the Valley's unique artistic heritage pay for its own upkeep



The erosion of Kathmandu Valley's unique cultural heritage has prompted many to find ways to preserve it. There is a renaissance of Newari architecture in Bhaktapur and Patan, the tourism industry has pitched in with heritage hotels and cultural sight-seeing, and the handicraft business is doing its bit.

Now, there is a unique effort to support Kathmandu's artisans and craftsmen by helping sell their products in the local and

international market. 'Crafted in Kathmandu' is not just a handicraft business, its founder Rosha Chitrakar hastens to clarify.

"Our goal is to help preserve the Valley's heritage, the skills, knowledge and resourcefulness of our artisans in creating art and home décor objects that are good enough to be shared in the world market," says Chitrakar.

The challenge for Chitrakar's 'Crafted in Kathmandu' brand is to pay for the protection of the Valley's built, living and natural heritage by the products and services of its artisans.

Chitrakar calls this a "plus revenue" business and is focussing on selling products to three distinct markets.

The first is the local market where people need various pots, vessels, jewelry, musical

HERITAGE PIECES: Rosha Chitrakar points at an antique photograph of the Machendranath Jatra, among the items that her company markets in Nepal and abroad to raise money for heritage conservation.

instruments, chariot-building skills and monument restoration capacity. The trend is towards restoring homes to their original and operating them as bed and breakfast pensiones in the old city.

The second is the high end Nepali market such as hotels, homes of expatriates, corporate gifts, garden sculpture, home décor etc. This market has the highest growth potential because of the increasing tendency of identifying with one's heritage. Tourists and expatriates also



increasingly look for hotels and homes that reflect the unique history and heritage of the Kathmandu Valley.

The third is the market for exports of Kathmandu artifacts to North America, Europe and East Asia. 'Crafted in Kathmandu' has a gallery outlet in North America that tells the story of how the artisans and crafts persons of the Kathmandu valley are restoring the World Heritage City. It sells products that have been designed and crafted to meet local demands.

Chitrakar explains that an example of this three-tiered marketing strategy is a potter making clay pots for local local yogurt whose family is also making terracotta garden animal figures and also ceramic bases for table lamps for the North American market.

"This keeps artisan families fully employed all year round, increasing their quality of life and ensuring that the skills are passed down to a new generation," says Chitrakar. ●

Crafted in Kathmandu's exhibition runs till 15 June at Dwarika Hotel, 11AM-7PM.

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Program Date
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Charity electric car rally

A convoy of 30 battery-operated cars, scooters and three wheelers will travel in an electric vehicle rally between the Maitighar Mandala in Kathmandu to Banepa on Saturday to raise awareness about people disabled by spinal injuries as well as to promote renewable energy.

All the vehicles taking part will be sponsored and the money raised will go for the care and support of patients at the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre in Banepa. The rally will be flagged off at 8 am Saturday by entertainer Madan Krishna Shrestha and the cars will make the 60 km roundtrip to Banepa.

Altogether 30 vehicles will be participating, including more than 24 Reva cars, Nepal-made Safa tempos, and newly introduced battery-powered scooters. The participants will include individual owners of electric vehicles as well as organisations such as ICIMOD, GTZ, WFP, the Norwegian and US embassies. The umbrella organisation Electric Vehicles Association of Nepal (EVAN) will also be taking part.



Revenue shortfall

The government has raised Rs 115.9 billion in revenues in the first 10 months of the current tax year, Rs 15 billion less than its target.

One stop

Nepal Bankers' Association, Nepal Rastra Bank and other financial institutions are joining forces to introduce a clearing house to allow Nepalis to cash or pay in cheques anywhere in the country. The bidding process for setting up the hardware and software requirements for the clearing house has already begun.

Nepali Potter

Sunbird Publishers is releasing the first of J.K. Rowling's hit Harry Potter books *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* in Nepali after a young reader from Gorkha requested for the books to be translated via a letter in *The Kathmandu Post*. Already translated in 67 languages, the series have sold more the 400 million copies worldwide.



'Morning after'



Nepal CRS Company has launched e-CON, an emergency contraceptive pill that prevents unwanted pregnancy. The pill is effective if taken within five days of unprotected sex. E-CON is available for Rs 50.

Free Fedora

Fedora 10, a free Linux-based computer operating system, is now available for people who want to avoid the Microsoft Windows system. Fedora 10, code-named Leonidas, is free and open source software (FOSS) which was developed by the Fedora Project, a community of people across the globe.



Flying higher

Yeti Airlines has launched its first Pilatus Porter, PC-6, a multi-purpose airplane best for short take off and landing. Yeti intends to add two more PC-6 aircrafts to its fleet.

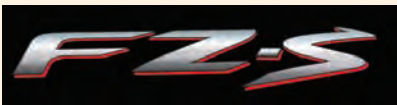
Drink in Rome



Lager brewer Carlsberg is attempting to up sales by giving away two tickets to visit Italian capital Rome and its bars. Under the 'Best Bar Tour' scheme consumers receive a coupon with every Carlsberg purchase.

Facelift

Yamaha has upgraded its FZ-16 bike and launched FZ-S. Yamaha's dealers in Nepal, Morang Auto Works will distribute the bikes.



Lip service, or tongue lashing?

Talking about how Nepal's political parties lack the seriousness to safeguard press freedom is both acutely depressing and mildly hopeful. It's depressing, because if one compiles a mere six-months worth of news, the catalogue of threats, physical abuses, mental torture and harassment against journalists, with details even of their murders, grows thicker and thicker.



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

Yet it's also hopeful, because, at least from the lip service that spokespeople of the political parties offer on television, it's clear that our politicians do understand the importance of press freedom. But that hope dissolves into cynicism when the politicians are then unable to explain to their militant cadres why something as intangible as press freedom matters for all Nepali citizens, including those who disagree with or are indifferent to any political ideology.

Just four days ago in Lamjung, YCL activists warned journalists that they would be hacked to pieces. The journalists' only 'crime' was to be on duty to cover a quarrel between the YCL activists and local people.

On Saturday morning, Maoist cadre halted a van belonging to Kantipur Publications on the East-West Highway. They took control of the vehicle, set it on fire, and burnt down not only the vehicle but also thousands of copies of *The Kathmandu Post* and *Kantipur*. The driver had dared to do his daily job of transporting the newspapers to subscribers and news stands in Eastern Nepal on the day of a forced shutdown.

On Monday 1 June, on the day of another forced shutdown in Kathmandu, cadres of the Newa Autonomous State routinely stopped vehicles that had press logos, smashed the windows, seized the keys, harassed the journalists, and stopped them from reporting and photographing the hardships faced by many ordinary people when the city was forced to a standstill.

Online visitors to this newspaper's website must have noticed a boxed item that's been there for the past few months. It says: Punish Uma Singh's Killers: End impunity. Uma Singh was a fearless radio journalist in Janakpur. Last January, she was hacked to death in her own apartment. A subsequent on-site investigation by the IFJ found that Singh was killed for her investigative journalism. Despite international condemnation, Singh's killers are yet to be brought to justice.

And then there was the attack

against this media house last December. Around thirty Maoist-affiliated muscled goons stormed into our corporate meeting, and beat me up along with 11 other colleagues. We were all left angry, frustrated and shaken to the core. The then Maoist government subsequently released the two ringleaders who had been apprehended shortly after the incident, and who have since melted into the shadows.

Indeed, these and countless other attacks against various Nepali media outlets and journalists have collectively helped Nepal rank eighth in the world, between Afghanistan and Russia on the CPJ's Impunity Index as a country 'where journalists are murdered on a recurring basis and governments are unable or unwilling to prosecute the killers'.

And that brings us to the part why politicians must re-educate their cadres about the importance of press freedom. They can start by offering three basic reasons.

First, press freedom helps aggregate information. In a country of 30 million people, most of

True, when different versions of the same event are reported, some who are accustomed to getting news from only one source, may fear that the 'truth' itself gets distorted, thereby confusing the public. But instead of forcing people to believe one thing over another, press freedom allows all to exercise judgment to choose news that they find persuasive. That is, once people have an easy access to multiple viewpoints on any issue, they can then decide for themselves what is right and what is not. Sure, not every citizen is equally enlightened to decide what is what. But since decision-making is a craft, press freedom allows all to practise making decisions about themselves at their own pace based on a variety of information they receive from the media.

Third, press freedom goes hand-in-hand with market-based competition. Of all the attributes on which Nepali newspapers compete, reputation is the only thing that matters for long-term business viability. Reputation in the media business

Press freedom needs to be defended by its maximum application

whom are illiterate and poor, no citizen or group can expect to be on top of all the information related to their well-being. Press freedom allows reporters of all stripes and media to widely disseminate reports and analyses about events and people that they believe are of public interest. These reports and analyses, in turn, add layers of nuanced information to help everyone from national policy-makers to village councils, to households and individuals to make decisions about their lives in ways they see fit for themselves. For those Maoist leaders who never tire of emphasising the importance of civilian supremacy, what could be the surest path to such supremacy but promoting press freedom by making it easier for journalists to work?

Second, press freedom allows an exchange of views in the public domain.

is built up by consistently reporting the verifiable truth, and openly correcting errors as soon as they become known. This fact should reduce the worries of those who say that mainstream newspapers print false news to serve the interests of 'the bourgeoisie'.

Rather, as we have seen again and again, it's the reputation of the perpetrators and their political parties that takes a blow globally when media houses and journalists are threatened, abused, attacked and killed.

Unless our political leaders, especially those of Maoists who make all the right noises about their commitment to build plural democratic societies, seriously educate and train their unruly cadres about the importance of press freedom for Nepal's democracy, their paying mere lip service is as good as their keeping lips sealed against the daily attacks on the press in Nepal.



Turn by turn

Editorial in *Janadisha*, 7 June

जिनिदिशा

Four days after being arrested during a protest at in Baidapataura, Rautahat, Lada Shah, 40, was still in police custody. He was severely beaten by UML cadres and had to be taken to Teaching Hospital in Kathmandu where he died while being treated for injury. This Rautahat native was demonstrating against newly elected prime minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, a candidate they had rejected during the elections.

Home Ministry, currently headed by Nepal, had ordered Shah's arrest and UML party workers were given a free rein to beat him up. PM Nepal should take responsibility for his death. Only two weeks have passed since the UML-led government was formed and incidents of violence are becoming common. Shah had never even shown a black flag. But even if he had, it was his right. There needs to be an inquiry into the killing of an ordinary citizen held in police custody.

Meanwhile, unlike in the past, the media has shown little interest in this tragedy. Neither have the Maoist leaders protested effectively against it. When a UML party worker was killed, the party went as far as to stop parliamentary sessions and call for strikes and the media gave it wide coverage as well. We are not saying that the Maoists should do the same but if this incident goes unnoticed then the UML will be on a suicidal path.



"He says he won the election and now wants be a minister!"

नेपाल Rabindra in *Nepal*, 14 June

What's in a name?

Manoj Gharti Magar in *Naya Patrika*, 8 June

नयाँ पत्रिका

The roundabouts in Pokhara, which were previously named after the kings, have now become the subjects of much wrangling among ethnic groups and political parties with all competing to rename them.

The Birauta roundabout, where a statue of king Birendra used to stand, was first claimed by UML and named Madan Bhandari Chok, after its Kaski leader. They had even put up a sign board with plans to build his statue. But last Sunday Tamu Dhi Nepal, a Pokhara based Gurung organisation removed the board and renamed it Tamu Hyula Chok to celebrate the group's silver jubilee. While the group claims it doesn't want to cause offence, UML is deeply concerned about the incident.

On the other side of town, Prithvi Chok has been renamed Lakhan Chok by the Nepal Magar Organisation. They have plans to build a statue of



MANOJ GHARTI MAGAR

Lakhan Thapa, the first martyr of Nepal. In Milan Chok the statue of Birendra has also been demolished, but no group has claimed it yet.

Meanwhile, Kaski's CDO, Madhab Prasad Ojha says he is unaware of the renamings: "When I don't know about any chok being renamed, how do I sanction or not sanction it?"

Horse trading

Bishnu Sharma in *Gorkhapatra*, 7 June

गोरखापत्र

BAGLUNG—Dhara Gurung used to own horses and mules, now he has a motorcycle, tractor and two jeeps.

After the road from Mustang to Korala was built, he traded his horses in for vehicles and there's now a parking lot in the place where there used to be stables. "We used to have 30 mountain ponies and 100 mules," he says adding that he now has just 20 horses and 40 mules, which he is planning to sell.

"Animals need to be fed and looked after when they fall sick " Gurung says, "Motorcycles are so much easier". But horses do have



KIRAN PANDAY

their benefits in terms of carrying tourists and generating manure. Tourists are willing to pay Rs 900 a day for pony trekking. "We had a very unique culture," he says, "Tourists would ride on horses and mules to take pictures, while yaks would carry their belongings."

Dhara is one of many in

Mustang, replacing horses and mules with vehicles. And, while inhabitants are happy about the development, they are also worried that old traditions are being lost forever. The biggest concern, however, is that the loss will have a negative impact on tourism.



Vacancy Announcement

The World Bank Office, Kathmandu

The South Asia Poverty Reduction, Economic Management, Finance and Private Sector Development Unit (SASPF) of the World Bank invites applications for the position of a **Senior Governance Specialist** which will be based in Kathmandu, Nepal. The position will initially be a local one year extended term consultant appointment with a possibility for renewal.

The Senior Governance Specialist will serve as a key member of the Nepal Country Team as well as a member of SASPF's regional team working on governance. Based out of the Kathmandu Office, she or he will be responsible for working as part of a multidisciplinary team focusing upon issues of transparency and accountability, service delivery and institutional development with government and other partners. Specific duties will include: (1) advising clients on governance and public management reforms, and monitoring progress with the same; (2) supporting the Country Management Team in analyzing information on emerging governance issues (3) providing operationally relevant governance and institutional support to and participating in cross-sectoral teams working on various development projects; The incumbent should be capable of working independently with minimum supervision.

The successful candidate will have the following qualifications:

- An advanced degree in public administration, business administration, public sector management, political science, economics, finance and/or comparative politics with a strong record of academic achievement;
- A minimum of eight years of relevant professional experience (or the equivalent combination of education and experience) in the field of public sector management, governance and anti – corruption reforms; Experience in managing or overseeing development projects desirable;
- Excellent people skills and the capacity to lead and participate effectively in multidisciplinary teams;
- Strong analytic skills, a willingness to work hard, the ability to gather and analyze significant quantities of data;
- Demonstrated ability to develop and maintain productive, professional relationships with government counterparts, donors and other stakeholders;
- Excellent writing abilities, persuasive oral communication skills and ability to foster long-term, productive client relationships;
- Both international and Nepali experience will be highly valued.

This is a country office position in Nepal subject to local recruitment under the Nepal compensation plan. The World Bank offers a locally competitive package and is committed to attract and maintain a diverse, highly qualified and dedicated workforce. Equally qualified women and members of disadvantaged groups are encouraged to apply.

The details of the post are available at www.worldbank.org/jobs. Qualified candidates should apply on-line referring to job # 090816 by 25 June 2009.

Learning mothers

Shiv Apriya in *Annapurna Post*, 8 June

अन्नपूर्ण पोस्ट

"Before our mothers used to teach us," says Sarishma Shrestha, a teacher from Arughat, Gorkha, "Now I am happy that we are teaching them." Shrestha has been teaching her 52 year old mother Mina in grade five.

At Nabchetana Women's School, there are a total of 66 students, aged from 17 to 73 in grade one to eight, taught by two women teachers. The school was established by women who were too old to attend regular schools, but wanted to study. Many community groups, such as Himali Sector Development Centre's Hope program, Aruchanaute VDC, Janpriya Mothers group, Janshramdan and Kopila Nepal, have given financial support and donated furniture.

Although a good initiative, attendance is still poor at the school because rural women still face the problem of getting to go to school only after finishing their housework. However, this is a start. "Not being able to read a word when going to cities has been the incentive to study," says Santa Kumari Baram, 43. Now, many men in the area are becoming inspired to study as well after seeing the women's progress.

Consensus, not confrontation

Editorial in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 30 May

After stepping down from the government, the Maoists launched protests against the new coalition and leadership. Although the language is strong ('foreign lackeys') the protests are relatively mellow in tone.

Despite tirades against political parties, the Maoists are stressing their commitment to the constitution and consensus politics. This means they don't want the current situation to head towards confrontation. Maoists chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal saying that "we will not be provoked and abandon the peace process" should be seen in a positive context.

Although the Maoists boycotted the election process of the prime minister in parliament, Krishna Bahadur Mahara from the Baidya bloc, Narayankaji Shrestha from the Dahal bloc and Dinanath Sharma from the Baburam Bhattarai bloc all attended the swearing-in ceremony of the new prime minister and congratulated him. This can be seen as proof that the Maoists do want to move towards consensus. Dahal's meetings with the new prime minister also indicates an effort towards consensus.

Dahal probably hadn't bargained for the Katawal episode to spiral so much out of control and lead to his government's resignation. He may not have also imagined that the 22 parties could garner the numbers to form a coalition. The withdrawal of the UML consent in the Katawal case was not actually a betrayal by Jhalanath Khanal, but the weakened position in the party which Dahal hadn't foreseen.

The Maoists even failed to take the MJF into confidence which could have kept them in power. Dahal boxed himself in with his rigid rhetoric so there was no way out but resignation.

The Maoists have been trying to put on a brave face by saying they left the government to establish civilian supremacy. They knew well that the slogan

of nationalism and civil supremacy would work to appease internal and external forces. Unfortunately for the Maoists, both slogans have the potential to backfire.

The Indian establishment, which the Maoists consider an enemy thinks the peace process and constitution writing can be completed without them in the government. Analysts close to the Maoists who understand Delhi well say India was unhelpful as the Maoists attempted to move forward ignoring the past agreements between the political parties and India, which could pose a threat to security. So, whatever the Maoists may be saying at their public rallies, they do not want to head for a ruinous confrontation with India and the other parties right now.

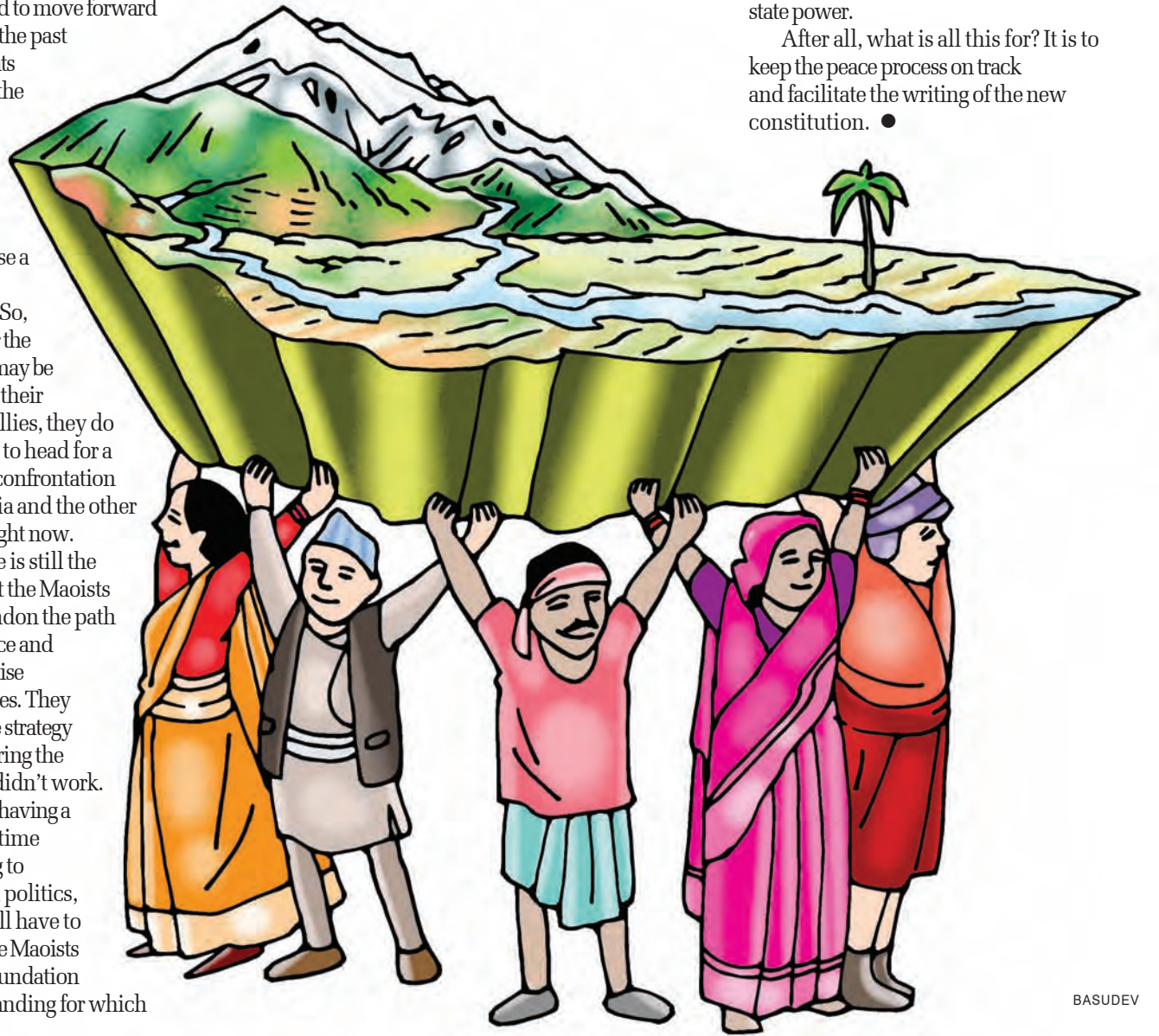
There is still the hope that the Maoists will abandon the path of violence and democratise themselves. They know the strategy taken during the conflict didn't work. They are having a difficult time adjusting to coalition politics, but they'll have to learn. The Maoists need a foundation for safe landing for which

the government and political parties should help them, in an issue, such as army integration for instance. The resolution of the army row with the retirement of both protagonists could be a face-saving way out for the Maoists and even pave the way for the Maoists to join a national government.

The Maoists, who are in politics for power cannot stay out of government for long. They know that confrontation is not

an option, consensus is. Although they have been threatening to chase away cadres of other parties from villages and run a parallel government, it is not as easy as during the insurgency. Hounding unarmed party cadre will be counterproductive, and they will have to fight the enemies they make in future. There is no alternative but to follow the past agreements and democratic path and avoid violence, anarchy and lawlessness to capture state power.

After all, what is all this for? It is to keep the peace process on track and facilitate the writing of the new constitution. ●



KIRAN PANDAY

Class inclusive

She is not from a family of politicians. And unlike many grey-haired leaders, she hasn't spent a good part of her youth in prison. Yet, in the last three years, she has served as a member of the Nepali parliament, and now as a constituent assembly member. "That is perhaps because the party must think I have some potential," says Lila Nyaichai, 29, who is the CA member from Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party.

In the assembly, she asks smart questions, is willing to listen to what others have to say and if she doesn't know the answer to something, she is never afraid to say so. The chair of her party Naryan Man Bijukche says, "We were keen on bringing women and the youth into mainstream politics. We have very high hopes for Lila." In her short time in politics, this

economics and English literature graduate has already proven that she will be in Nepali politics for the long haul.

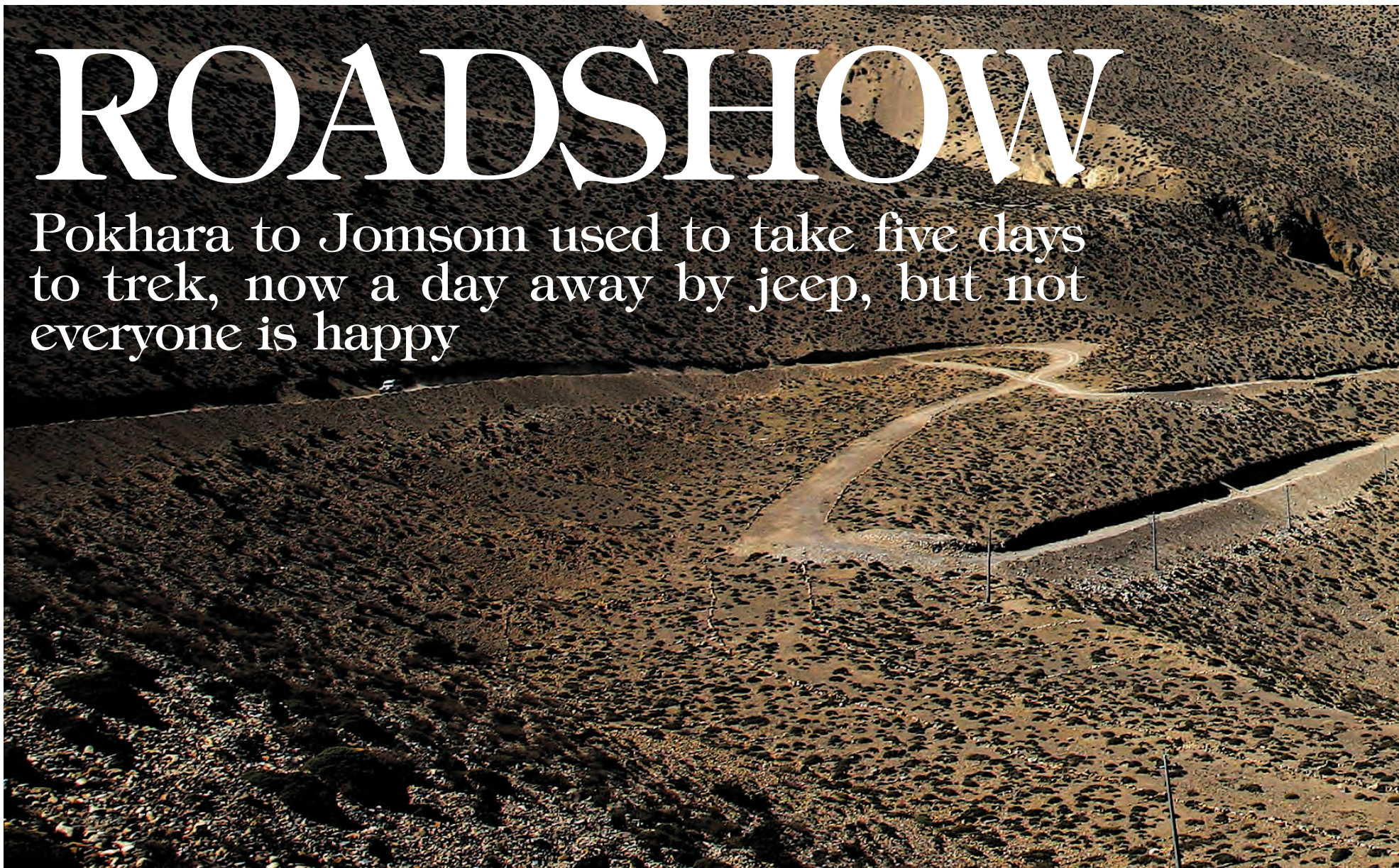
Three years ago when discussions over the writing of the interim constitution were taking place, Nyaichai was suddenly asked to come to a high-level party meeting. After a short meeting with the party chair she was told that she was going to be an MP. Her father had been an active member of the party since the early 60s. Lila herself was affiliated with student unions since she was in Grade Six. In 1997, she stood for her party affiliated All Nepal Revolutionary Student Union, was the central committee member for the union in 2000 and is now the secretary of the revolutionary women's organisation of Nepal Workers' and Peasants' Party.

Lila has always believed that young people should be

more involved in politics. She also thinks that being a CA member is a big responsibility and political parties must not make just anyone a CA member to fill their quota or for other party interests. While her colleagues are pushing for inclusiveness based on gender, caste, ethnicity and religion, she has a different take. Nyaichai strongly believes that class should be the main agenda for inclusion.

In line with her party's beliefs, she maintains that Nepal should be a socialist republic of peasants and workers, but she does not think this particular argument will be the basis of the new constitution currently being written. "I cannot say that the new constitution will immediately favour the peasants and workers, but we hope that it will address the majority of the issues we are pushing for," says Nyaichai. ●

Subash Devkota



ROADSHOW

Pokhara to Jomsom used to take five days to trek, now a day away by jeep, but not everyone is happy

THE ROAD TO MUKTINATH WITH EKALBHATTI AND THE KALI GANDAKI



PRETEND MACS IN KAGBENI ARRIVE WITH THE ROAD

TEXT and PICS by **KIRAN PANDAY**

It is only after you reach Jomsom in half a day from Pokhara that you realize how distances (and time) have shrunk in Nepal.

A journey that used to take five days of steep climbs and descents is now a question of a few hours. And it will be even shorter once Nepal's trans-Himalayan highway is black-topped. Tourists, pilgrims, even conference participants have started streaming to Jomsom and Muktinath. Upper Mustang and Lo Manthang have suddenly become much more accessible for Nepalis.

Not everyone here is happy with this change. Tourism entrepreneurs are worried the road will damage Mustang's fragile culture and ecology. Seeing the haphazardly parked passenger jeeps at Jomsom bus park, you can already see the same squalour you see in Beni or Baglung. Noise and diesel smoke are the new hazards of walking Jomsom's cobblestone streets.

Trekker numbers have dropped, complain local hoteliers and they blame the road. Lodge owners in Tatopani, Ghunsa, Marpha and Tukuche who used to depend on night stop hikers have lost their business.

However, most traders and ordinary people are happy with the road. It makes things cheaper and they don't have to pay the extortion-rate tariff on the Pokhara flight. There are now 50 buses that ply to Muktinath every day from Jomsom, and an equal number that leave for Beni.

Trekking groups now take the high road to Jomsom from Ghodepani, avoiding the road. The new highway has also made the side valleys of East Dhaulagiri Glacier and Meso Kanto Pass more accessible. ●



MULE TRAINS, BUT FOR HOW MUCH LONGER?



MARPHA FROM THE AIR



KAGBENI AND NILGIRI



SCHOOL CHILDREN ON THE MUKTINATH COMMUTE

A division of the spoils

Local politics today is all about cadre dividing up development contracts



KIRAN PANDAY

KUNDA DIXIT in DOLAKHA

Prolonged political wrangling in Kathmandu has paralysed development activity nationwide, and more worryingly, set off bitter competition between local politicians for budgets and contracts.

From the mountains of Dolakha to the central hills of Arghakhanchi and out in Kailali in the far-west, political uncertainty following the resignation of the Maoist-led government last month has created a power vacuum in which plundering budgets and corruption have become the norm.

Maoist cadre, aided and abetted by a menacing YCL, now monopolise all district and village-level contracts for everything from new roads to boulder and sand mining and even the trade in stolen cars and wildlife contraband from India. No private contractor anywhere can get away without handing over a 'PC' (per cent) to local Maoist party bosses.

"It's now standard operating procedure in the New Nepal," says a private contractor based in Surkhet wryly, "we factor the protection money into our budgets." In many places the construction, bridges, highways and hydropower

projects have been halted because of extortion.

Even in districts where local councils had been set up in the last elections, the Maoists backed out of agreements after their government fell. In districts like Lamjung, local councils have not been set up at all so development plans and budgets for the coming year have been languishing. Local civil society is trying to get the parties to work together, but so far unsuccessfully.

"The discussions are all about who gets what share of the development budget, and they can't agree on a formula," said one exasperated activist in Besisahar.

In the past, even if political parties quarreled in Kathmandu, local bodies somehow kept functioning. Many village elders elected to VDC councils from the last local elections in 1999 took charge of development activities. Now, even that mechanism is not working as political parties compete to steal from the development budget for personal gain or to replenish party war chests.

When the district council in Dailekh found it had Rs 10 million in unspent development funds, the three main political parties divided it among themselves. In Ramechhap, there is a frenzy of road-building as political parties award

themselves contracts. Rival parties sometimes build duplicate roads to the same village. The roads are built with no regard to engineering or the environment and most will not survive the coming monsoon (*see box*). The local NC committee has actually split in Dolakha over a Rs 3.5 million road contract because of rivalry between fellow kangresis.

CDOs and district police chiefs are demoralised, as Maoist cadre publicly abuse and threaten them. In Tanahu, a district administration official says he has given up trying to work with the political parties. He told *Nepali Times*: "What can I tell you? We have a three-party dictatorship. They decide on the budget and divide it up. There is no accountability, and no one dare ask questions. We are helpless and hopeless."

Even in districts like Gorkha where former finance minister Baburam Bhattarai lavished cash in his home district to build roads and upgrade colleges, there is little accountability. "I have seen one crore being given to a friendly contractor to build a highway culvert," recalled a local journalist, who added investigating such stories would be suicidal.

To be sure, pork-barrel politics was the norm also with the NC and UML. But

'Dozer development

A new landscape feature has appeared right across the mid hills of Nepal in the past two years: lush hillsides scarred by zig-zagging roads. The landslides they trigger tumble down gullies to the valley below.

The road-building spree is a response to local demand. Most villagers in Nepal when asked what their development priority is, immediately reply: "A road." But the frenzy of new construction is also a result of mass-scale corruption. Local political cadre are exploiting the instability and confusion of the past 10 months to misappropriate local development budgets and distribute cash to party faithful.

Most roads are built by overseers with scant regard for environmental norms, ravaging steep slopes and threatening settlements with landslides. Political parties prefer contractors with bulldozers so they can over-invoice or pocket kickbacks. But the machines are much more destructive to the mountains, and in addition take away jobs from villagers. Some donors have actually gifted bulldozers to DDCs in the name of 'development'.

In Dolakha alone, the district spent Rs 40 million on roads last year. Half of that money went to pay for bulldozer rentals. Although they cost Rs 1,700 per hour to rent, records show many were hired at up to Rs 2,400 per hour.

Activists in Charikot have calculated that at Rs 150 per day wage for villagers, the bulldozers cost 5,000 jobs last year. "Most of us are willing to work for free to get roads to our village, but there is too much money tied up in road contracts," lamented one ex-VDC chairman from northern Dolakha.

local officials interviewed in districts across Nepal in the past month confirmed that the Maoists are different because of their use of threats and violence. "They beat up rival contractors in front of the police station, and police can't do a thing," an NGO activist in Hetauda told us. Indeed, parties mobilise goons from Kathmandu when tenders for contracts are opened and beat up rivals if they don't get it.

"So this is why we fought a 10 year war in which 14,000 people were killed: for *thekka patta*," said a district development officer in Charikot this week, using the Nepali phrase for 'contracts'. "They have forgotten it was all supposed to be for the people." ●

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Law and disorder

A generation for which impunity is the norm

Incident One. Late last month a woman was stripped and severely beaten in the middle of Ratna Park at around 9PM. A mob of about 60 men dragged the woman towards the bus park to parade her around the city when the police finally showed up. An eyewitness with a camera took pictures and posted them on a popular Nepali blogsite. She was crying for help but the men called her “charitrahin” and stripped her.



INTERESTING TIMES
Mallika Aryal

The series of pictures on the site are high-resolution images. Each face in the picture, including that of a boy who looks 12 is identifiable. What is even more shocking is that the men seem to be enjoying what they are doing, and are not even trying to hide their faces.

Incident Two. This week Kathmandu’s Ring Road area was blocked off for two days due to demonstrations by relatives of the two men who were killed in an accident when their motorbike was hit by a public bus. On Monday, an unruly mob attacked a van trying to take children to school. When the van driver tried to reason with the mob by explaining he was transporting small children he got hit by a brick. Three other children and a teacher were hurt. (*see pic*).

These are two isolated incidents in the Valley, but across the country women accused of being “witches” are being tortured, and nine people suspected of being child traffickers have been lynched to death in the Tarai. Violence has become the norm. Police are mute spectators when the militant youth wings of various parties beat up innocent people on the streets.

Whether it is in the city or rural Nepal, domestic violence against women has become a way of life. Husbands beat up their wives, in-laws pour kerosene on newly-married brides and set them alight, women are scarred by acid or sexually abused in the family. Victims stay quiet, silently bearing the torture and pain because they can’t come out and say anything. And why would they? The security apparatus and the justice system is so weak and impunity so rampant that the perpetrators get away. Every time.

The Ratna Park incident was never filed at the police station. Apart from the blogsite and some international coverage, the local media stayed mum. It is still not known who the woman is, and the men who were involved went scot free again.

In the past decade, Nepalis have learnt to live with a lot of hardships. We thought that with the end of war there would be peace. The law and order situation is actually worse. The government

whose fundamental task is the safety of citizens, doesn’t seem to care. No child must get up in the morning with the fear that she and her friends may end up in hospital because the bus carrying her to school was smashed up by people not much older than her. No woman should fear walking around the city because she may be

stripped and beaten. Even our anger is politically motivated: we come out to protest when a foreigner allegedly says the Buddha was born in India. We burn tyres when oaths are taken in Hindi because all this is an attack on sovereignty. What good is sovereignty when we are not safe in our own sovereign country? ●



KESHAV THOKER

VACANCY



GENERAL:
Winrock International is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of underprivileged men, women, and youth around the world. Our experience includes training women and youth in job skills, granting educational scholarships, and building the capacity of local organizations and individuals to address issues such as poverty, unemployment, child labor, trafficking, and social/gender inequalities. By linking local individuals and communities with new ideas and technology, Winrock is increasing long-term productivity, equity, and responsible resource management to benefit the poor and disadvantaged of the world.

1.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Project Director

: Group Vice President, Empowerment & Civic Engagement and designated Program Officer

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:
The Project Director is responsible for the overall management and implementation of a country project whose objective is to reduce or eliminate child labor and its worst forms through education alternatives both formal and non formal. The position will be responsible for overall project management, supervision, and implementation of the requirements of the project, and establish and maintain systems for project operations; ensure that all cooperative agreement deadlines are met and targets achieved. The Director ensures that the project works in full coordination with government stakeholders and international donors working in education or child labor prevention areas – particularly the International Labor Organization/International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC) and ministries of Labor and Education. The Director will supervise all project staff and ensures that all project and financial reports are met.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Overall project management and start up
- Sign contracts and legal documents (with prior approval of HQ)
- Lead development of program strategies and set priorities
- Ensure sustainable approaches and implementation
- Coordinate with the US Embassy and DOL as designated by the Home office
- Coordinate with other stakeholders
- Maintain regular interaction with the key ministries and the ILO/IPEC and other stakeholders and implementers
- Identify and nurture synergies with other US Government and UN-funded projects
- Oversee and provide technical direction
- Manage project staff
- Facilitate sound project implementation and reporting
- Maintain financial oversight over all activities in this project including those of subcontractors
- Maintain open and regular communication between the field office and the US home office team
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation systems are in place

- QUALIFICATIONS:**
- Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor
 - Minimum 5 years of professional experience in a leadership role (Director, Country Representative or Chief of Party) in implementation of child labor and/or complex basic education programs in developing countries such as: Education policy; improving education al quality and access; education al assessment of disadvantaged students; development of community participation in the improvement of basic education for disadvantaged children; and monitoring and evaluation of basic education projects
 - Experience working with officials of ministries of Labor and Education and working on child labor policies highly desired
 - Experience fostering public-private partnerships and private sector resource mobilization highly desired
 - Masters degree or higher in Education, International Development, Economics, Political Science; or related field; Programmatic experience highly desired in gender, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, child labor and/or public health issues
 - Fluency in English required, and fluency in Nepali highly desired
 - Willingness and ability to commit to being at post within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

2.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist

: Project Director

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:
The Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist will oversee the implementation of the project’s monitoring and evaluation strategies and requirements.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Design and implement a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation system including baseline assessment and student monitoring and tracking
- Design data collection instruments, schedules, analysis methods and applied technologies
- Establish and train community monitoring committees and government officials as data collectors
- Liaise with external monitoring and evaluation teams for mid-term and final evaluations
- Lead project research and data collection in child labor

- QUALIFICATIONS:**
- Five years progressively responsible experience in the monitoring and evaluation of international development projects, preferably in education and training or a related field. Related experience can include designing monitoring systems, strategic planning and performance measurement, indicator selection, quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methodologies, database management, and knowledge of the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA)
 - Experience training and building the monitoring and evaluation capacity of team members, partners, government stakeholders, school officials and community monitoring committees highly desired
 - Masters degree in social sciences or specialized training/certification in monitoring and evaluation
 - Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor highly desired
 - Fluency in English and Nepali required
 - Willingness and ability to commit to starting the position within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

3.
- POSITION TITLE

REPORTS TO

LOCATION
- : Education Specialist

: Project Director

: Kathmandu, Nepal

POSITION SUMMARY:
The Education Specialist will provide leadership in developing the technical aspects of education interventions for children withdrawn or at risk of participating in exploitative and hazardous child labor and awareness campaigns targeting their parents, communities, and government officials.

Specific Responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Assessment of existing education system for gaps
- Adaptation and development of formal and non-formal basic education curricula in collaboration with government officials
- Developing community-driven systems for identifying and enrolling child laborers or those at risk of child labor
- Designing and delivering teacher training on curricula as well as child labor awareness and special education needs of withdrawn and at-risk child laborers
- Designing and delivering a community child labor awareness and prevention campaign
- Designing interventions for increasing government action to prevent child labor and improve education alternatives
- Serve as Deputy Project Director, assisting the Project Director with administrative and personnel management

- QUALIFICATIONS:**
- Minimum 5 years of professional experience in a technical role in implementation of child labor and/or complex basic education programs in developing countries such as: education policy; improving education al quality and access; education al assessment of disadvantaged students; development of community participation in the improvement of basic education for disadvantaged children; and monitoring and evaluation of basic education projects
 - Knowledge of exploitative child labor issues and experience in the development of formal, non-formal and vocational education and children removed from exploitative child labor and worst forms of child labor
 - Extensive experience in working successfully with ministries of education, networks of educators, employers’ organizations and trade union representatives or comparable entities
 - Additional experience with education policy and monitoring and evaluation is an asset
 - Masters degree or higher in Education or other social science
 - Programmatic experience highly desired in gender, human trafficking, HIV/AIDS, child labor and/or public health issues
 - Fluency in English and Nepali required
 - Willingness and ability to commit to starting the position within 30 days of award. Award is anticipated near September 30, 2009

HOW TO APPLY:
Qualified and interested persons should submit a cover letter and resume by email only no later than June 20, 2009 to Cindy Martin at cmartin@winrock.org with a **mandatory Subject Line according to the position applied for: Nepal Project Director, Child Labor / Nepal M & E Specialist, Child Labor / Nepal Education Specialist, Child Labor.** Winrock would like to graciously thank all applicants for their interest and response but only those candidates who meet all requisite criteria and are short listed will be contacted.

Hypocrite whole-timers

Nepal's communists need to see the defeat of India's left as an early warning

If the pugnacious, arch-Tory British wartime leader were with us today, he'd be furious.

For despite what many believe, he never said the following words.

"Not to be a socialist at twenty is proof of want of heart, to be one at thirty is proof of want of head."



HERE AND THERE
Daniel Lak

No, that was George Clemenceau, a French Prime Minister and statesman from the early part of the 20th century, also renowned for combativeness, iron will and catchy phrases.

His most famous quote in English turns out to be one that most of us wrongly attribute. Such is life. But let's examine M Clemenceau's thinking and apply it to South Asia today, Nepal in particular.

Socialism as he knew it meant workers committees manning barricades and shutting down cities and industries. Basically it meant revolution as defined by Karl Marx in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848.

Today, we have a broader,

gentler definition of socialism and fondness for its methods, if not the nomenclature. To be a contemporary socialist is to be broadly in favour of an equitable, rights-based agenda that admits the existence and desirability of free well-regulated markets. Socialism, as we know it now, thrives in Sweden, Spain, Canada and many other well-off countries.

Defined as allowing governments to run, regulate and occasionally bail out the marketplace, socialist thinking informed both the George W Bush and Barack Obama administrations' approach to current economic turmoil. General Motors, once the mightiest of global capitalist behemoths, is now nearly three-quarters owned by taxpayers in America and Canada.

What global centrists can't afford is hard-line ideology of right or left. World conditions are too fragile, interconnected and uncertain at the best of times. Only the nimble survive.

What's pretty clear is that the world has rejected coercive Marxism (Communism) and anyone who believes otherwise is dangerously deceiving



KIRAN PANDAY

themselves.

Nepal and parts of India are among the last places where people who believe they find wisdom and solace in Stalin, Lenin and Mao still get a chance to serve as legislators, even Prime Ministers.

Hell, you can find people here who admire Kim Il Sung and Pol Pot. It helps that Nepal, and for that matter West Bengal and Kerala, are isolated, full of a self-righteous sense of carefully cultivated uniqueness, and largely at the fringes of the modern world.

Local Hindu caste patterns help too. The purity so beloved at the Brahminical heights sits comfortably alongside the doctrinaire Left's obsession with examining primary political texts in search of self-confirmatory analyses.

In fact, were Marx, Engels or even Lenin with us today, they'd have a hard time recognising their handiwork in the positions and political records of our South Asian Marxists-Leninists. Not that I'm arguing for a return to basics, far from it. But a little intellectual

honesty from all who bask in the prefix 'Comrade' would go a long way.

On the surface, they claim work for the rights of workers and peasants but the best they have ever achieved has been through compromise with a broad range of political ideas that they sniffily dismiss as bourgeois democracy. They conveniently forget that their own Marx was a middle class nightmare of a human being who loathed the idea of a day's work for a day's pay. Far easier to sponge off his wealthy friend, Engels, who inherited his wealth from a capitalist father.

There are no working men and women at the top of today's South Asian leftist movements, just bourgeois hypocrites and 'whole timers' who have lived off the toil of their own party cadres as they espouse respect, equity and revolution.

Even so, voters in India gave their Communists decades to deliver the goods but recently found them wanting. Nepal's leftists need to see this as an early warning, a signal that change, compromise and nimble politics will keep them relevant. Marx will not. ●

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never let defeat come over you
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make sure you keep the pace
don't let life command your space
just never forget the one you know you are... a star!"*

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The European psyche laid bare in film festival

2nd show: 16 June, 5PM

2nd show: 16 June, 1PM

2nd show: 17 June, 3PM

2nd show: 15 June, 5PM

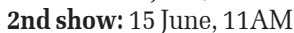
This German children's movie is about 11 year old Sebastian's search for immortality. Believing

2nd show: 14 June, 11AM

2nd show: 17 June, 1PM

2nd show: 17 June, 5PM

This Finnish Christmas film tells the touching story of how Santa Claus came to be Santa. The film portrays the life of Nikolaus, a



1st show: 13 June, 3PM

2nd show: 17 June, 11AM

Never Again will be launched on 14 June after which it will be available at all leading book stores. The documentary *Frames of War* based on the book will be screened at the Russian Cultural Centre 14-20 June. Admissions free, but bookings must be made in advance through nepa-laya at 9751083433.

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european
film festival
2009
[second edition]

13 - 17 June 2009

Army Club Auditorium, Tundikhel

 **Blindsight**
Genre: documentary, adventure | Running time: 1hr 44mins
Saturday, 13 June, 11am & Monday, 15 June, 5pm

 **The Flying Scotsman**
Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 43mins
Monday, 15 June, 1pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 3pm

 **Ekko (Echo)**
Genre: Drama | Running Time: 1hr 20mins
Saturday, 13 June, 3pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 3pm

 **Til Døden Os Skiller (With Your Permission)**
Genre: Comedy | Running time: 1hr 35mins
Sunday, 14 June, 1pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 11am

 **Tyttö sinä olet tähti (Beauty and the Bastard)**
Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Sunday, 14 June, 3pm & Wednesday, 17 June, 5pm

 **Joulutarina (Christmas Story)**
Genre: Drama | Running time: 1hr 20mins
Saturday, 13 June, 1pm & Monday, 15 June, 11am

 **La France**
Genre: Drama, Music, War Movie | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Monday, 15 June, 3pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 1pm

 **Le Couperet**
Genre: Thriller | Running time: 2hrs 2mins
Sunday, 14 June, 5pm & Tuesday, 16 June, 5pm

 **Wer früher stirbt, ist länger tot (Grave Decisions)**
Genre: Children's movie | Running time: 1hr 42mins
Saturday, 13 June, 5pm & Sunday, 14 June, 11am

 **Yella**
Genre: Drama, Romance, Thriller | Running time: 1hr 28mins
Tuesday, 16 June, 11am & Wednesday, 17 June, 1pm

Free passes are available at

Alliance Française in Kathmandu, Tripureshwar, 4241163; British Council, Lainchaur, 4410798;
Goethe Zentrum, Thapathali, 4250871 & Skoda Showroom, Thapathali, 4266105



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ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **In praise of the patterns**, a BFA solo exhibition by Gyanu Gurung till 14 June, Nepal Art Council, Babar Mahal.
- ❖ **Portraits from the Shadow - The plight of street children**, an exhibition by Sanjeev Maharjan, till 14 June at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited.
- ❖ **Transcendental Vibrations**, an exhibition by Kabi Raj Lama, till 17 June at Hotel de l'Annapurna, Durbar Marg.

EVENTS

- ❖ **E-Car rally** in support for Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Center starts at Maitighar Mandala, 13 June, 8AM. 9841900919
- ❖ **Nepa~laya's film tour**, 15-20 June, 3.30 and 5.30 PM, Russian Cultural Center. 4437893
- ❖ **Learn Esperanto Language** - free Introductory class on 13 June, 9-10AM at School of Creative Communications. 5546705
- ❖ **38th Yala Maya Classic**, a classical music series, 16 June, 5PM, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka. 5553767
- ❖ **Star Trek**, a sci-fi movie on 17 June, 6.30 PM. Lazimpat Gallery Café. 4428549
- ❖ **Tai Chi**, 13 June, 10-11.30AM. Yoga 9-10AM & Buddhist Meditation 5-6PM, 15-19 June. Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre, Keshar Mahal Marg. 4410402
- ❖ **Call for entries for Film South Asia** till 30 June, documentaries made in and after January 2007 qualified. 5552141

MUSIC

- ❖ **TGIF** at Jazzabella Café every Wednesday and Friday. 2110475
- ❖ **Baja gaja**, every Tuesday at Moksh, 7.30 pm onwards, Pulchowk. 5526212
- ❖ **Kathmandu express**, performance by International Acts, 7.30 PM onwards free entry at Moksh
- ❖ **Live band** every Friday and rooftop bbq everyday at Kausi Kitchen, Durbar Marg. 4227288
- ❖ **Sunday Jazz brunch** barbecue and live jazz music at the Terrace, Hyatt Regency from 12-3.30 PM. 4491234
- ❖ **Jazz evening** at Delices de France Restaurant every Wednesday, 11AM-2PM. 4260326
- ❖ **Epic**, at the Brunchilli- the Acoustic Lounge every Friday, Thamel. 9851035437
- ❖ **Strings Band** live every Tuesday at G's Terrace Restaurant and Bar, Thamel.
- ❖ **Wednesday Melody** at Jazzabell Café, Happy hour 6-8PM and TGIF party with live band Epic every Friday at 8PM. 2114075
- ❖ **Some like it hot** every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, 7PM onwards, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel. 4479488
- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, 5-7PM, ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar.
- ❖ **Live Sensation**, performance by Yankey every Saturday, 9PM, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4491234.
- ❖ **Fusion and Looza** Band every Friday night, Bhumii Resto Lounge, Lazimpat. 4412193

DINING

- ❖ **A cafe's cafe**, Dhokaima Cafe, Patan Dhoka. 5522113
- ❖ **The Corner Bar**, 3-11PM, 5-7PM, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu. 4411818
- ❖ 7th Annual Monsoon Wine Festival 2009, from 15 June-15 September, Kilroy, Thamel. 4250440
- ❖ **Mango Etagere** with hi-tea at The Lounge from 4.30- 6.30PM. Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Weekend Brunch** by the Poolside every Saturday and Sunday, Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu, 11AM-3PM. 4273999
- ❖ **Pizza & Pasta** at the Rox Restaurant every Monday & Tuesday, Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Pasta pesto passion** at La Dolce Vita, Thamel. 4700612
- ❖ **Home made pasta** at Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **Chez Caroline** for French and Mediterranean cuisine, Babar Mahal Revisited. 4263070
- ❖ **Mediterranean cuisine** every Friday from Greece, Italy and the Middle-East at The Café, Hyatt Regency. 4491234
- ❖ **Plat Du Jour** at Hotel Shangri La, Kathmandu, Rs 600. 4412999
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser Café, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9AM-10PM. 4425341
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs 999, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors(at)nepalitimes.com

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In Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons*, symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) returns again to decipher hidden sculptural symbols and secret architectural clues. When Langdon finds evidence of the resurgence of an ancient secret brotherhood known as the Illuminati—the most powerful underground organisation in history—he also faces a deadly threat to the existence of the Illuminati's most despised enemy: the Catholic Church. Upon learning that the clock is ticking on an unstoppable Illuminati time bomb, Langdon is recruited to travel to Rome, where he joins forces with Vittoria Vetra (Ayelet Zurer), a beautiful and enigmatic Italian scientist. Embarking on a nonstop, action-packed hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs, deserted cathedrals, and even to the heart of the most secretive vault on earth, Langdon and Vetra will follow the 400-year-old Path of Illumination that marks the Vatican's only hope for survival.

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

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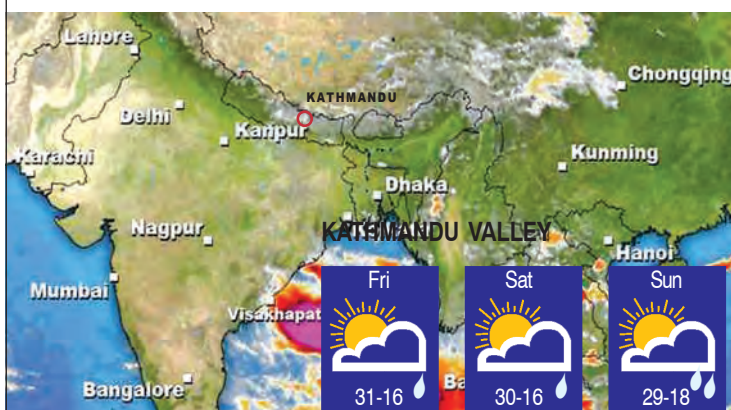
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WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

A high pressure system suddenly appeared over western Tibet this week, drawing in westerlies and chasing away all the pre-monsoon moisture. But it's a tug-o-war between these westerlies and the moisture-laden warm winds from the Bay which are being relentlessly pulled by the monsoon low over northern India. We expect this year's monsoon to be delayed, but it should arrive with a bang by 20 June in Kathmandu. This satellite picture taken on Thursday morning shows a monsoon system moving up into Bangladesh and northeast India. It is likely to be fighting to get through into eastern Nepal by next week. Let's hope it succeeds. Valley dwellers should expect sweltering and humid afternoons with some isolated night rain until the rains arrive.



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MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

MARCHING ORDERS: Upendra Yadav announces the dismissal of Bijay Gachhedar and seven other leaders from MJF last week. Two factions of the party clashed in Birganj on Wednesday.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

DEAD END: The road leading up to Banepa remained tense for hours on Friday when locals clashed with Maoist affiliated Tamsaling Mukti Morcha to protest the banda. A curfew was imposed to control the situation.



KIRAN PANDAY

DAILY ROUTINE: Maoist cadres block the road in Darbar Marg on Friday as part of their continued protest demanding civilian supremacy.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

SEEDS OF HOPE: Despite the delayed onset of monsoon and prolonged drought, farmers have started planting rice seedling in Hatiban on Tuesday



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

CATCHING UP WITH TIMES: Granddaughter of Sir Edmund Hillary, Emily Rose Hillary, reading *Nepali Times* in Namche after the Tenzing-Hillary Everest Marathon last week. German Ambassador Verena Graf von Roedern looks on.

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22 rajahs

Even the Ass had underestimated just how serious the lust for power was going to be on the part of **netas** who wanna be in the new coalition. The donkey had predicted here that it would take a week for Makunay to cobble together a cabinet. It's been nearly three weeks. What is holding things up in this Government Sans Portfolios?

Well, it boils down to arithmetics. There are 22 members in the coalition, so we need a minimum 36-member cabinet because the Big Boys (and Gals) want more than one ministry. This presents a bit of a problem because there ain't enuf ministries to go around. So Baluwatar has hit upon a wonderful idea: they're going to split up the double-barrelled mantralayas.

The Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation can be bifurcated into the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Civil Aviation. And if even that won't do, they can go a step further and divide it up into the Ministry of Civil and the Ministry of Aviation. The Ministry of Works and Physical Planning can also be cut up into the Ministry of Works, Ministry of Physical and Ministry of Planning.



The PMO had just heaved a sigh of relief that it'd resolved the issue when the parties also

started splitting, thus necessitating chopping up the ministries into further pieces. The MJF is going through binary fission with full-scale **coota-coot** in Birganj, the kangresis are loggerheads over Soodata Koirala becoming Farang Minister, and even Chure Bhabar may split one of these days. How on earth are all these new parties and their new leaders going to be accommodated?

And true to the legendary inability of Nepal's to get along, the Brahmanical e-maleys (pronounced 'eh-malaise') have a serious rift between JN and his home ministry nominee Iswar P and the Oli faction. KPsir never really trusted the fellow-comrade and communist atheist named Iswar, and has opposed his candidacy for **Home Sweet Home Ministry**. JN and BidyaB are also on a collision course with their publicly divergent views on the eight jarsaps and the proposed court martial for Cool Budder. No surprises there, but Oli and Bidya are now in open confrontation against Comrade Makunay who is trying to appease the Baddies with a commitment to civilian supremacy. With me so far?



MKN is in the **horns of a dilemma**. Decisiveness is not one of the prime minster's strong points, which may be a good thing in a man supposed to keep

everyone happy. Trouble is, he isn't getting any guidance about what to do next from the guys who control the remote. So he has no idea whether he should be trying to appease the Maoists or twisting their tail.



Meanwhile, it looks like Comrade Awful is missing the Rs 100,000 bed he had rigged up at Baluwatar. PKD now finds the Pistachio Palace a tad too

claustrophobic, so he's moved to an orchid farm in Godavari to put finishing touches to his proposals over future strategy at the party's secretariat meeting next week. The strategy is reportedly to just wait it out patiently to allow the UML-led coalition to self-destruct by Dasain, and then make a move to stage an even stronger comeback.



It's four down 99 to go if the

Baddies get all the ethnic groups in Nepal to stage their own bunds. The Ass' solution to this is for Nepal (the country, not the premier) to dissolve parliament, dismantle the army, abolish the portfolioless cabinet, go back to the Baise and Chaubise Rajahs. the donkey'd rather have 22 rajahs than 22 unruly coalition members.

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