



**OPINION:**  
Dipak Gyawali



**INTERVIEW:**  
Himalaya Shumsher Rana

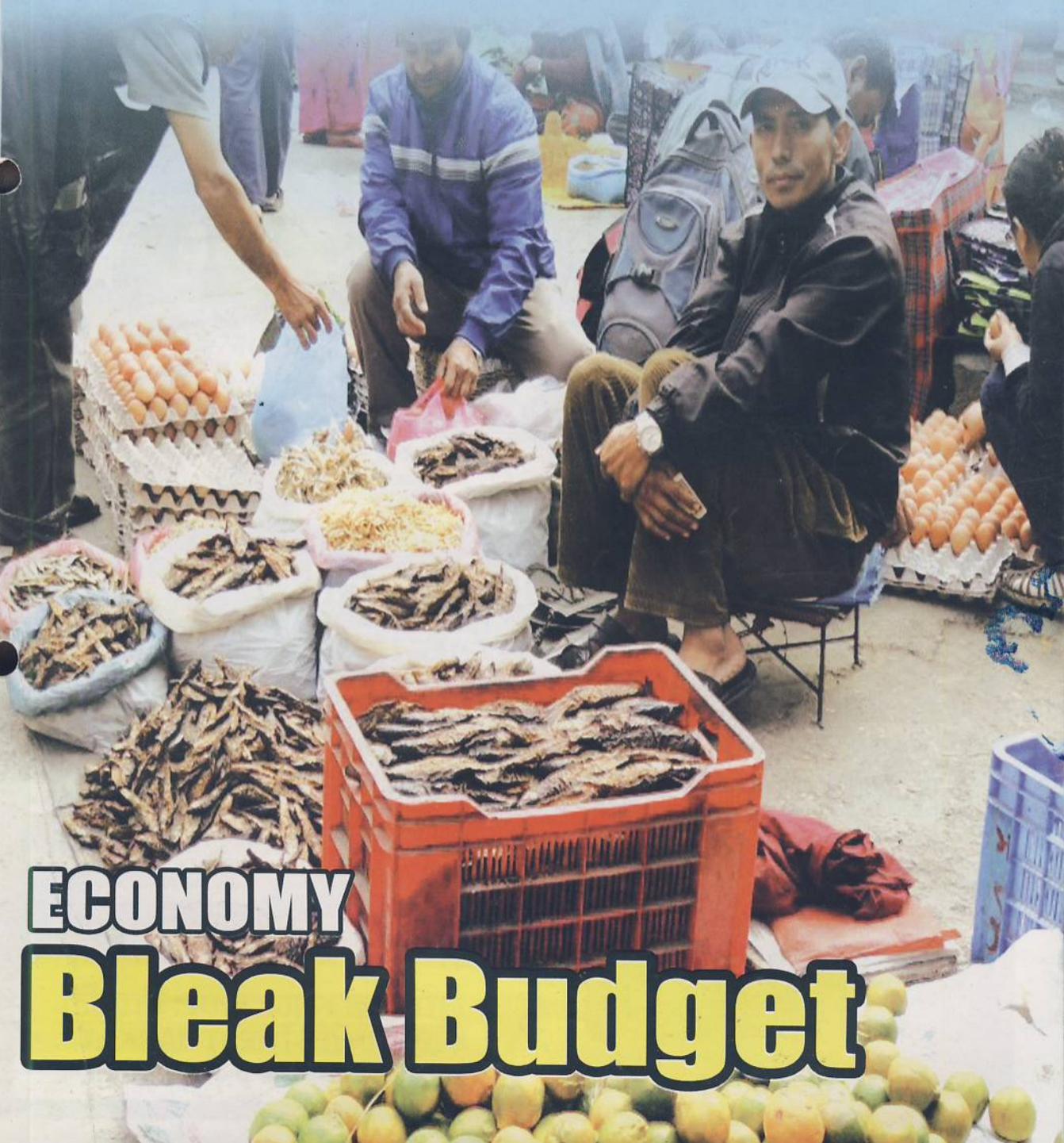


**FACE TO FACE:**  
Binayak Shah

# New SPOTLIGHT

July 26 Aug.-08, 2013

FORTNIGHTLY



## ECONOMY Bleak Budget

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Australia/New Zealand..... US\$ 2.00  
China/Korea/Hongkong..... US\$ 2.00  
Europe..... US\$ 2.00  
USA/Canada..... US\$ 2.00  
China/Korea/Hongkong..... US\$ 2.00  
Other SAARC Nations..... US\$ 1.00  
Asean Countries..... US\$ 1.00  
Japan..... US\$ 1.00  
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Mired in political instability, Nepal's economy has been passing through very difficult times. The recently released budget of 2013/014 and the New Monetary Policy-2013 indicate the weak performance of the economy. At a time when the country has been passing through a prolonged political instability, it is unlikely that we get to see major changes in the economic sector. One of the failures in the last four years was the government's inability to spend enough money for development sector. Along with other sectors, high imports and lower growth, depressed confidence, financial market fragmentation, weak balance sheets, and fiscal consolidations are leading Nepal's economy to still bleaker sides. There is also no sign of immediate solution in sight to make any drastic change in the economic sector. As Nepal economy is facing several challenges, we have decided to look into the overall economic performance as our cover story for this week. We also discuss the ongoing political stalemate and its consequences for the coming days other stories.

*Keshab*

**Keshab Poudel**  
Editor



Cover Photo Courtesy: Santosh Gyawali

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**ENTERTAINMENT**

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## KOICA, UNICEF To Help Improve Maternal Care

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) is partnering with United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) to support the Government of Nepal to implement programs to improve maternal and neonatal care for unreached populations.

The financial support from the Government of Korea will be used by UNICEF to assist the Nepal government to scale up and enhance maternal, newborn and child health interventions as envisaged in the National Health Sector Support Program II (NHSP II).

Even today, only 36 per cent of births in Nepal are handled by skilled birth attendants, and although infant



and child mortality rates have declined in the last decade, the stagnant neonatal mortality rates (33 per 1000 live births) is a major health concern.

"This is KOICA's first collaborative project with UNICEF that aims to improve the health scenario of women and children of Nepal," said KOICA Chief HaengLan Jo at the signing ceremony.

## JICA To Launch Three New Projects

The Government of Japan exchanged Note Verbales with the Government of Nepal to confirm Technical Cooperation Projects to be implemented by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the current Japanese Fiscal Year from April 2013 to March 2014. Under the Note Verbale, JICA is implementing 11 Technical Cooperation Projects, including 3 new projects; 8 Japanese Experts including 2 new; 16 Senior JICA Volunteers; 3 Technical Cooperation for Development Planning including 1 new project; 49 Group and Region Focused Training Programs to Nepali officials; 2 Country-Focused Training Program; 1 Long-Term Training Program; and 1 Training Program for Young Leaders as listed in the attachment.

According to the Embassy of Japan, another new project is "Project for Strengthening the Capacity of Court for Expeditious and Reliable Dispute Settlement". The Supreme Court of Nepal (SC) and JICA will jointly implement this project to improve court functions for promoting expeditious and reliable dispute settlement. According to the survey conducted by JICA in 2012, the delay in case management is one of the main

challenges faced by the judicial system. For instance, the percentage of case clearance is about 40%, and the percentage of cases which take over 3 years to conclude is also about 40%.

## Britain Gives Filtration Equipment To Nepal Army

British Ambassador Andy Sparkes formally presented the Nepal Army's Directorate of Disaster Reduction and Resilience with essential water filtration equipment worth £22,000 to boost Nepal's disaster management capacity. In a ceremony at Nepal Army Headquarters, Ambassador Sparkes praised the excellent relations between the British and Nepali armed forces and handed over 115 Lifesaver jerry cans and 99 Lifesaver water bottles to Brigadier General Tajman Singh Basnyat, Director General for Development and Security.

According to a press release of the British Embassy, each jerry can is capable of filtering up to 20,000 liters of water, while each bottle can filter up to 6,000 liters. The jerry cans alone can produce 2.3 million liters of clean water, enough for over 80,000 people for more than a week.

## Indian Assistance of NRs. 44.71 million

Indian Embassy, Kathmandu, District Development Committee,

Jhapa and Shree Schoolchaun Higher Secondary School signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for providing Indian grant assistance of NRs. 44.71 million for the construction of a double - storied school building under Nepal-India Economic Cooperation Program.

According to Indian Embassy, the project will be implemented by the District Development Committee, (DDC), Jhapa in accordance with the existing norms and regulations of the Government of Nepal. They will also be responsible for ensuring the quality of construction of the project and its timely completion.

## Egypt Celebrated National Day

Egypt celebrated its national day and the 61th anniversary of the 23rd of July 1952 revolution, which represents a milestone in the history of the Egyptian people's struggle to confirm the sovereignty, independence and national will, and supported the revolutionary movements for national independence in the third world countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America continents.

Egyptian ambassador to Nepal Dr. Moustafa Abdelhanid Mohamed Gndy, hosted a reception which is attended by minister, senior government officials; Kathmandu based foreign diplomats and people from different walk of life.

## U.S. Ambassador for Women's Participations in Elections

U.S. Ambassador to Nepal Peter W. Bodde joined Elect Commissioner Ila Sharma and other distinguished guests at the Radisson Hotel in Kathmandu today for a panel discussion on "Supporting Women's Representation in All Stages of the Electoral Process." Democracy and Elections Watch-Nepal and National Democratic Institute organized the event with support from the U.S. government. Speakers at the panel discussion focused on increasing the number of strong women candidates and ensuring women vote in the upcoming November 19 elections.

## “NADA Needs To Rewrite Its Constitution”

SHEKHAR GOLCHHA

President of National Automobile Dealers' Association (NADA)

As the new president of NADA, what are your immediate priorities?

NADA needs some changes both within the organization and in the market. Internally, NADA needs to rewrite its constitution in order to cope with the changing demands of time. Externally, NADA's first priority will be to highlight the problems faced by the automobile sector. Another area that we are going to focus on this year is road safety.



What are the major challenges confronting the automobile industry?

One of the major challenges the industry is witnessing is high excise and custom duties. I always felt that the automobile sector, which constitutes a major part of revenue collected by the government, needs some support.

Do you see any flexibility in the current budget?

Though we have been continuously urging the government to reduce the taxes on automobiles, the budget has again earmarked a new excise duty on the spare parts.

## Mega Bank turns four

Mega Bank marked its third anniversary on Monday. The bank has opened 28 branches and 45 branchless banking outlets across the country over the past three years.

To celebrate its third anniversary, the bank provided Rs 100,000 to Mahakali Jana Jyoti School located at Bhujela of Kanchanpur to repair school building. The building was damaged by the recent floods.

## China Continues Support To Nepal: Envoy Wu

The Thirteenth Annual General Meeting of Nepal-China Chamber of Commerce and Industries was held recently. Attended by foreign minister and home minister Madhav Prasad Ghimire and Chinese ambassador to Nepal Wu Chuntai, the event heard chamber chairman Rajesh Azzi Shrestha highlighting the importance of Nepal-China bilateral trade and the role of his organization.

According to the Chinese embassy website, Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Wu Chuntai attended the 13th Annual General Meeting. Addressing the program, Chinese Ambassador Wu said that the China-Nepal relationship is at a new stage.

“The bilateral trade, investment and tourism are continuously developed, and the cultural exchanges are more frequent. The Chinese government will continue to provide support to Nepal's social and economic development, and will go forward hand in hand with Nepali people for a brighter future.”



## FNCCI Welcomes Budget

The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI) has hailed programs for infrastructure development in the new budget, but said the budget lacks incentives for export-oriented industries and substantial programs to address existing energy crisis.

Speaking at a press meet, Gyanendra Lal Pradhan, executive committee member of FNCCI, said the budget has not addressed the concerns of the private power producers who can bail the country out of the energy crisis by completing the ongoing projects.

## IME - Global IME Bank Nepal Photo Contest

The exhibition of 151 selected photos from IME-Global IME Bank Nepal Photo Contest, organized by the Photo Journalists Club (PJ Club), an umbrella organization of the photo journalists of Nepal, was inaugurated by the Vice President of Nepal, Parmananda Jha, at Nepal Art Council, Babarmahal, in Kathmandu.

## Two New Honda Models For Dashain

Syakar Trading Company, the sole authorized distributor of Honda automobiles in Nepal, plans to roll out the Honda CB Trigger motorcycle and the Honda Activa-i scooter during the Dashain festive extravaganza.

“We are excited about the launch of the new Honda two-wheelers. The arrival of the CB Trigger will strengthen our 150 cc motorcycle segment,” said Rajan Raj Puri, manager - Honda, two-wheelers division, at Syakar.

## Package Tours For Nepalis, NTB Tells NATTA, HAN

The Acting CEO of NTB has requested the Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents (NATTA) and Hotel Association Nepal (HAN) to make tour packages, targeting domestic tourists.

Addressing the officials of travel trade associations, Subash Nirola, acting CEO of NTB, said it is necessary for Nepal's tourism industry to keep pace with the marketing shift with innovative plans and programs.

“There is the need of a long term strategy. That is why we have requested travel trade associations to come up with their annual marketing and promotional plans with strong reasons so that it would be easier for NTB to see the avenues where it can fit in,” said Nirola.

## Qatar Airways Holds Regional Meet

A two-day Regional Conference of Qatar Airways concluded recently in Kathmandu.

A press release issued by Qatar Airways said delegates from seven countries took part in the first ever conference of this kind organized by it in Nepal. Senior executives and country managers, and commercial and sales manager level officials of the airline attended the conference held with the theme of “Own the Business”, the statement added.



# It's All *Dhoos*, Kamreds!

By DIPAK GYAWALI



Nepal's failed Loktantrick politicians, their Mughlani handlers, the fawning corporate media, their civil society devotees and the blindly supportive EuroAmerican diplomatic community would do well to recall a word from the Nepali children's playground: *dhoos*. It means not only "game over" or "game collapses" but also that all the points you may have gathered till then become null and void, and the game has to start from scratch. It has still not dawned on most of the party oligarchs that the collapse of the elected CA on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 2010 without being able to frame a new order within its elected mandate has brought about a moral *dhoos*, and its final and ignominious

representative indicator of the discomfort felt by many in the party of the grave political misstep of 2005. Outside the small coterie around Girija Koirala, none in the party were too happy about being the political porters of Maoist republican ideology. When Girija forced this illiberal decision on the party, it was only Shashank among the immediate family of BP Koirala who backed his uncle, and now seems to regret doing so. His older brother Prakash as well as his niece the Bollywood actress Manisha had been openly against moving along this path. Stalwarts in the party such as Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, who charged the Kangress of having become "*nakkali ranirarthak*" (fake and

would do well to not just read Marx's *Der 18te Brumaire des Louis Napoleon* and remain intellectually fossilized at that, but to go beyond and read a more realistic assessment by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. The latter certainly helps in explaining the current Nepali doldrums far better than does Marx's inverted Hegelianism. Burke showed that the French Revolution would end disastrously, that it violated its own slogan of justice. He argued that the American Revolution would succeed because of it put pragmatism in the center state and abstract romanticization in the back burner. Despite being a Whig Protestant the repudiated any divine right of kings, he argued for a constitutional monarchy without many political and administrative rights as a means of avoiding the chaos that France had to go through.

In their constant parroting of "protecting the achievements of 2006", i.e. republicanism, secularism and federalism, the communist Left and their intellectually docile fellow travelers in the Girija Kangress fail to realize that republicanism, secularism and federalism were no "achievements", but rather that they were political disasters visited upon an unsuspecting country mostly by foreign interests using the Loktantrick leaders as willing tools. And the entire Left spectrum of Nepali politics (the numerically dominant dogma) too has been an ideological porter of a different kind. The half-baked notion of federalism led to the demise of the CA, and won't allow another one to be elected unless the silhouette of its broad political architecture is first spelled out, a task the current tribe of political bureaucrats can hardly be expected to successfully shoulder. The other two romantic but illegal and illegitimate back-door imports of 2006, i.e. republicanism and

**The recent statements by Dash Maoist's leaders Mohan Vaidya and Netra Bickram Chand that they can work with the King to protect Nepal's nationalism and national interests must be seen as a process of de-romanticization.**

death in 2012 exactly two years later despite self-perpetuating of its own life a double *dhoos*. That flop is a game-changer in Nepali history and politics. All that one can now wait for is for a triple *dhoos*— when the present dispensation admits its inability to hold a meaningful election by November. Although they may go through the sham motions of appearing to prepare for elections, this bunch of civil servants' government manipulated from behind the stage by four flunked oligarchs can hardly be expected to draw up a new political architecture or cobble together a new alliance with dissidents that is necessary for the task.

That realization seems to be dawning on a growing band of Kangressis: Shashank Koirala's recent interview in the BBC admitting that it was a mistake to sideline the monarchy is interesting only as a

meaningless) when it took this line, as well as Sailaja Acharya, PL Singh, Ram Babu Prasa and others had long warned against it. It requires courage to stand up against a comfortable current and admit mistakes, but unlike Shashank, the political apparatchiks who have an organizational grip over the party do not have the political integrity or required leadership traits to get the party out of its current doldrums.

Among the communist comrades, the trajectory has been different. They are romantically fixated on the idea of abstract republicanism irrespective of its historical impracticality in holding a diverse nation together. Worldwide, the Left has romanticized the French Revolution of 1789 as the epitome of *Liberté, égalité, fraternité*, despite the horrific evidence of blatant "war crimes" and human rights violations to the contrary. Nepali communists

secularism, are beginning to show early signs of their anti-body rejections in this current second stage of the unraveling of the 2005 political architecture. In recent times, multinational and multi-linguistic states such as the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires have been forced into republicanism and disintegration to serve the needs of the global market and other geo-strategic interests. And countries that have been the experimental laboratories – of fascism in Spain or totalitarian communism in Pol Pot's Cambodia – have had to fall back on tradition to save the nation by restoring a constitutional monarchy, unconsciously along the approach preached by Edmund Burke.

The recent statements by Dash Maoist's leaders Mohan Vaidya and Netra Bickram Chand that they can work with the King to protect Nepal's nationalism and national interests must be seen as a process of de-romanticization. If one discounts exceptions like Nirmal Lama (guru of current Maoists and one of the framers of the 1990 constitution) or Rooplal Bishwakarma (one of the few genuine, not token, Dalit political leaders) Nepali communists, right from their birth in Varanasi or Calcutta in the immediate post-World War II era, have never come from the social class of workers and peasants that they claim to represent. The early founders of the communist party of Nepal have been sons of landlords or petty bourgeois, and today's new generation of communist leaders in all the dozen or so parties bearing that name have middle class backgrounds. All their class political aspirations (but not their personal ambitions of aggrandizement) were actually met by the political changes of 1990. As in Europe where the Greens are derisively referred to as "watermelons", i.e. green on the outside but red in the inside, Nepali communists of the establishment variety (especially the Cash Maoists or the EMaLaise) are "apple communists", red on the outside, white on the inside capable of opportunistically absorbing any political colour demanded by their foreign political handlers.

It is the ideologically more committed Dash Maoists that are currently going through the torture of facing up to Nepal's social and geo-political realities, as are those in the Nepali Kangress with any sense of political integrity. They could easily end their anguish by going the whole recanting route, restoring the 1990 constitution and honestly allowing the Nepali voters to decide on contentious issues through a referendum. After all, the entire political game plan since the 12-point Delhi Deal of November 2005 has by now become *dhoos* after the collapse of the CA architecture and one has to begin the game anew from the point where one took the wrong turn earlier! For those in mortal fear of the return of the King – an institution above party politics that is increasingly proving to be necessary to keep the parties within disciplinary limits among other things – they can breathe easier since all monarchists are arguing not for an absolute but for a constitutional monarchy, much as Edmund Burke did over two centuries ago. And for the "republican romantics" among the communists, they too will benefit with the restoration of the 1990 constitution, since a monarchy would then allow them to shed their totalitarian, authoritarian Stalinist image as it has helped Hun Sen in Cambodia, and allow them to get on with pushing their "progressive agenda" among the people through a Madan Bhandari route instead of being stuck in today's impasse and taking all the historical blame for it.

## ELECTIONS

# Get Set, Go!

*As fewer than 120 days remain for the CA election, four major political parties are still shying of drastic steps to push their election agenda*

By KESHAB POUDEL

In an uncertain political climate, the code of conduct for the Constituent Assembly election has come into force from July 22. According to the election laws, any violation of the code of conduct is punishable. The code of conduct is reminder to the political parties that only fewer than 120 days are left for the vote to happen.

Despite certain hitches, four major political forces are slowly and steadily bracing for the November 19 elections. UCPN-Maoist, Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and factions involved in the Sanyukta Loktantrik Madheshi



Neelkantha Uprey

Morcha have kicked off their campaign. However, they are yet to mobilize their workers in a decisive way.

Contrary to the mood of the four major political parties, the CPN-Maoist and its 33 allied parties, Upendra Yadav-led Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum- Nepal and Federal Socialist Democratic Party of Ashok Rai are effectively mobilizing their workers to boycott the elections. Given the present scenario, the people are waiting to feel confident over the November 19 CA election.

Although the High Level Political Committee, led by four political parties, invited the disgruntled parties to the negotiation table, the CPN-Maoist coalition has rejected it the request flatly. Even Yadav and Rai have demanded the resignation of care taker government before holding a meaningful dialogue.

"We are not against the negotiations. We want such negotiations should be meaningful and resulted oriented. There is no sense in talking about holding the elections on November 19. I don't think it can be held," said Upendra Yadav, leader of Madheshi Janaadhikar Forum Nepal.

The four parties have agreed to talk on

demands of CPN-Maoist regarding organizing an all party roundtable to settle the political disputes, they have decline to discuss the postponement of election date beyond November 19. As leaders of the four major parties are pushing for elections and Maoist-led 33 parties are threatening to obstruct them, political confrontations are likely to increase in the coming days.

The CPN-Maoist gets bolstered in strength when Madhesh-based armed groups have also issued threat to disrupt the elections. Dozen of Madhesh based armed groups have already unified with an aim to oppose the elections. Given the present scenario, more violent confrontations and clashes cannot be ruled out. The Vaidya-led Maoist party has even asked the international community not to support the elections of CA without ensuring full participation of all political parties.

#### The Four Parties

Although uncertainties prevail, UCPN-Maoist, Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and Madhesh-based major political parties are busy drawing outlines of their election campaign. The Central Committee meeting of the CPN-UML endorsed its political report asking its leaders to prepare the election plan. The party decided to focus its energy on CA polls while keeping aside intra-party issues for a few months to come.

Accepting the proposal for single leadership in the party, the extended meeting of the UCPN-Maoist central committee (CC) handed all powers to party Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal. UCPN-Maoist chairman Dahal called on his party leaders and cadres to concentrate on the upcoming Constituent Assembly elections so that the party secures a two-thirds majority.

#### Election Preparations

The Election Commission has already made it clear that it is now moving to meet the November 19 deadline and making preparations on all fronts. Along with the completion of party registration and voters list preparation, the commission enforced the Election Code of Conduct 120 days before the election.

Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kantha Uprety said the commission is



Maoist Leaders

moving as per its own election calendar. Necessary acts have been promulgated through the ordinances while the EC has also passed the Election Regulations.

The Commission has already begun a study of the locations that would host the polling centers using the global position system (GPS) technology. The GPS technology will provide information about the centres' geographical situation, security system, roads, electricity etc.

#### New Criteria For Observers

The number of national and international election observer organizations is likely to be reduced for the Constituent Assembly (CA) election scheduled for November 19 as the Election Commission (EC) has added new criteria for poll observers in a bid to raise the quality of the observation.

The constitutional body held discussions with representatives of five international and 22 national election observer organizations in order to listen to their opinions on the proposed new policy. These organizations had sent from 400 to 12,000 observers for the last CA poll.

According to EC officials, only 29 out of 148 election observer organizations had submitted before the EC their periodic and final reports of observations in the 2008 polls. The chief election commissioner made it clear that the constitutional body would not allow those election observer organizations that did not submit their periodic and final reports in the last CA poll as sought by the EC. As per the proposed provision, the EC

will not allow national observer organizations that are not registered at the district administration office.

#### Security Arrangement

The government also proposed for mobilization of the Nepal Army in the elections. However, EC has not given any consent to the government. In the last elections, three tiers of security were deployed. Nepal Police was deployed inside the polling stations and the Armed Police Force (APF) formed the second layer while the third tier was manned by NA personnel. Nepal Police has informed the EC that it can deploy 43,552 personnel, while the APF has said it would deploy 24,000 personnel during the polls. Nepal Police wants 60,000 temporary personnel for the polls while APF wants 9,000.

#### Coming Scenario

The election is now a prestige issue for the political parties. To prove their legitimacy, the government and four political parties will push the election agenda and CPN-Maoist and other parties are likely to use all their strengths to disrupt the polls. In this scenario, more confrontations among the country's major political forces are likely.

If political polarization further widens with violent clashes, the intervention of president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav will also be likely. As CPN-Maoist is forging alliances with all kinds of forces, including the former King, to oppose the election, and the government and four political parties are pushing for the elections, the showdown is likely before November 19.



## Bhattarai In The Path Of Self Destruction

By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

Baburam Bhattarai has an enviable lungs power. That seems to be turning into a self-destroying power for him. On Tuesday, he spat venom on former King Gyanendra Shah for his ongoing tour of the country. In Bhattarai's inference, Shah's visit is out and out a political one aimed at disrupting the polls. And Bhattarai's prescription was 'put the former King in the jail'. Duplicity and dual standards sins in public life, though not forbidden in politics. But they are rarely admired. Bhattarai has now become a synonym of those sins.

There are any number of people opposing the poll, and saying publicly that they will oppose and disrupt it if that takes place under the existing government headed by Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi. Mohan Baidhya has said so. Netra Bikram Chand has reiterated. They have gone to the extent of saying that they may join hands with the former King in order to save nation's sovereignty, national interest and independence. Going by the record, former King said on July 7 that 'election should take place as planned, but a conducive atmosphere should be created so that all can participate'.

Left to himself, Bhattarai will not want an election where all can participate. His intolerance towards dissents and criticism make it easy to infer that he will not tolerate voters that may cast votes against him. The perfect condition of rigging that he created in his own constituency last time with Young Communist League cadres lashed with rods to prevent those not supporting speaks volume about the man's democratic credentials, and his love for fair polls. Yes, the team of European observers that witnessed all that chose not to report all these things, but that does not make Bhattarai a democrat.

He is being judged by the people by the promise he made, and failed to deliver even when he was Prime Minister. He is being judged by what he, in company of Maoist Chief Prachanda, gave in writing to Indian Prime Minister's office way back in June 2002, and not having enough courage to let the Nepalese people know its contents. Bhattarai, as Prime Minister, has remained the principal defender of crimes and criminals. His defense of Balkrishna Dhungel is just one case that will substantiate the allegation.

There are debates in the country whether the government can be headed by someone who continues to

hold the post of the Chief Justice. That happens in authoritarian system where fair and independent judiciary is a taboo. Hearing against Regmi is on in the supreme court, although there are fears that the apex court may have to be functioning under Regmi's shadow. Not only Baidhya or his party, any one has the right to question the formation of such a government, that was formed under external dictate.

A democracy cannot function when the role of the people is appropriated by leaders who are not accountable to anyone. Republic is not something that survives or flourishes under outside patronage. Bhattarai's Party brought the republic without involving the people directly,

simply by luring those in the Nepali Congress with the lust for power. If Sashank Koirala suggests a review of what his Party decided six years ago, that is perfectly democratic. Bhattarai may have dictated or allured G P Koirala to adopt 'republic agenda' on false promise that he would be made the first President of the country. That is the beginning of the rot of the current politics and subsequent loss of its credibility.

G P Koirala would do anything for power. Bhattarai just did that. He promoted corrupts and corruption to be in power. If his Party leaders including Narayankaji Shrestha or Prachanda are to be believed, he mortgaged national interest for power. Are they crimes big enough to lead you to jail Mr Bhattarai? He may be taking shelter behind 'offense is the best defense' dictum. but that will not always be effective.

Bhattarai is a party, as well as the main cause behind the UCPN-M going to the single leadership days, legitimizing Party Chief Prachanda as the Dictator. This is his real face. UCPN-M lobbied to destroy the independent judiciary by corrupting the chief justice with Executive power. Having all elected Party bodies dismissed and pushing Prachanda up to the pedestal was only a natural corollary to the earlier practice. Smashing opponents, moderate forces, national icons, judiciary and symbols of national unity as well as social harmony and those identified with the national interest and sovereignty are necessary towards establishing dictatorship. Bhattarai seems to be trying that once again. But he is already exposed, and discredited to the hilt, unfortunately for him, and fortunately for the nation and the society.



Baburam (Front) and Prachanda

# 'This Election Is Different'

HIMALAYA SUMSHER RANA

HIMALAYA SUMSHER RANA, 86, is a well-known name in the Nepali civil society. The first governor of Nepal's Central Bank, Rana made real contributions to improve Nepal's financial sector. Rana, who is now leading General Election Observation Committee (GEOC), a reputed national consortium of civil society organizations, spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues. Excerpts:

**As the Election Code of Conduct has come into effect, what role does the Election Observation Committee play now?**

Free and fair elections are a must. In many countries where democratic practices are well established, there is no need for external observers. Election Commission, government and people themselves know how to conduct free and fair elections. However, in countries like Nepal where democracy is still being established, internal as well as international observers are required in addition to government personnel, security personnel. The observers play an important role in saying that the code of conduct issued by the Election Commission be observed.

**As you have been leading GEOC for the last 10 years, how do you see the coming elections, given the complicating political deadlock?**

It is going to be very difficult. The last elections were for the Constituent Assembly and at that time a new political scenario was in effect as the elections were held after a Maoist revolution. Young Communist League was still there. Maoists had the armed people. They had resorted to violence to justify their ideology. They had arms, so people were afraid. During the first elections of CA, the last two or three days of election were dominated by fear psychosis. There was a feeling that voting against Maoists will invite the bloody violence. However, this

time the YCL has been dismantled and the people who voted for Maoists for the sake of political change can assess the words given by Maoists and what was the situation. The situation and environment for free and fair elections is better now.

**The Election Code of Conduct has come to effect just now. What is the role the election observers will need to play?**

We start observing the elections from today. Before the elections, we will observe whether the code of conduct has been observed by political parties or not.

**How many districts is GEOC going to cover this year?**

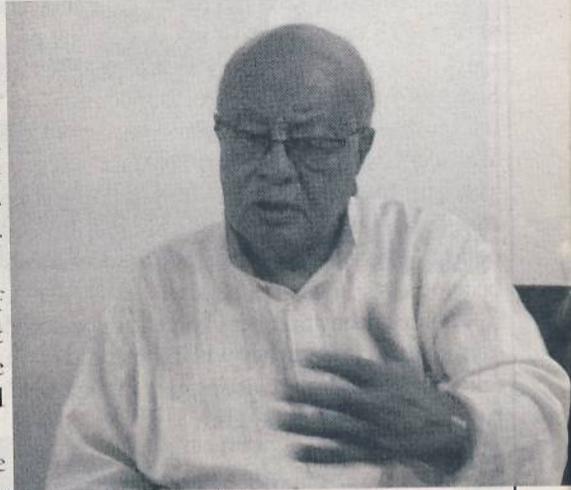
We were observing 35 districts in the past. This year, if we are able to get the required funding, we plan to observe 55 districts.

**Chief Election Commissioner Neel Kanth Uprety has said that he wants to put certain restrictions on national and international observers. How do you look at this?**

This is a fair position he has taken because we did not know how many groups observed the elections last time. Last time, 147 groups and organizations got the permission to observe the elections. Out of them, only 27 groups submitted their reports. When the EC asked for the reports, the groups went out of contact.

**There were charges in the past that there was bias in the observers' report. How do you make the observers impartial?**

Even the EC agreed that out of 147 observers permitted in the elections, many of them got access to polling booths as observers and helped voters to cast the vote in favor of a particular party. Even some observers took part in the election campaign. Some



observers even transported the voters to the polling booths through a vehicle given to observe the elections. In all the elections in the past, including two parliamentary elections and one CA elections, I did not stay in Kathmandu. I went to Butwal, Nawalparasi, Taulihawa and Chitwan. During my observation, I had not seen any rampant misuse by observers. Some observers indirectly were helping the political parties.

**How possible do you see are elections?**

Up to now, there is an overwhelming consensus in favor of elections on November 19. I am one of those who are in all my heart and mind advocating for the election in November. We must have elected government in the governance of the country. Since we started the journey for democracy in 1951, every now and then our efforts go astray. I cannot imagine a government governing the country without mandate from the people. But, at the same time, for the last couple of days, a sort of nagging doubt has entered into my mind because of the fact that now Mohan Vaidya groups and other opposition parties should join the elections. There is the need to bring Vaidya group and opposition in the elections. I think there is the need to start negotiations

with those who are opposing the elections. We need to listen to them and address their genuine demands. My query is that given the long process of negotiations and discussions, will we be able to hold the elections in November? Some leaders are still advocating for the election and urging voters that it should not be postponed but if the cycle of negotiation is extended, then it is uncertain.

**Given the present political scenario, are you taking certain initiatives for negotiations?**

We have issued a statement publicly calling all the parties to take part in the elections. Our view is that this CA election is not like elections of national assembly where the parties are divided in ruling and opposition benches. This is the election for the constitution. So, there is the need of participation from all the people. If all political parties take part in the elections, then we will have a constitution acceptable for all. The constitution will also last for long. Although the Constitution of 1990 was a good document, it was drafted by the three political forces. After failing to draft the constitution through 601 members, now parties seems to be considering to set up a committee to draft the constitution.

**How do you see the challenges before the coming elections to make it impartial?**

There are lots of challenges before us, but we don't have other alternatives than to hold the elections. The political process is still unclear. After the elections of the new constituent assembly, people will vote to give the nation a new direction. In the last elections, radical communists had more seats but they didn't have the majority either. This time the composition will be different and political parties will come out with clear agenda.

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## 'Doubts Even About Parties' Intent'

-UPENDRA YADAV  
Leader of MJF-N



**Are you against the elections?**

We are not against the elections. What we want is meaningful elections which will deliver the constitution and provide political stability in the country. At a time when the four-party syndicate has even declined to negotiate on the postponement of elections, how can we believe that they will hold free and fair elections?

**Do you think the four parties are sincere to holding the elections?**

I have even doubts about the intentions of the major four parties. They are also reluctant to contest the elections.

**Why are you opposing the elections?**

I don't think the coming elections will bring any outcome. If the elections do not bring results, what is their use?

**If government uses force to hold the elections, what would be the outcome?**

Political parties are still divided. If the elections are held, there will be a bloodbath in the country.

**Why are the four parties pursuing elections?**

The four-party syndicate wants the election, because they like it. Only through the elections, they can justify their unconstitutional work.

**Don't you think the new CA will write the constitution?**

I firmly believe that even the next CA cannot write the elections because those who are going to get elected are those who were in the previous CA.

**How do you see the role of foreign countries?**

I don't think Nepal's friendly countries will support the elections conducted by the four-party syndicate.



'No Doubt About Polls'  
- SUSHIL KOIRALA  
NC leader

**Why are you insisting on elections?**

We must hold the elections on November 19. If we fail to hold the elections, the country will have to face severe political challenges.

**What about your party?**

Nepali Congress is a democratic party and it is always in favor of elections. We cannot go for long without elected representatives.

**Will Maoists join in the elections?**

I think all the parties will join in the elections on November 19. Even CPN-Maoist leader Mohan Vaidya is positive towards it.

**If they ask for postponement of the elections, what will be the response of four parties?**

So far as the postponement of November 19 deadline is concerned, we cannot talk on this issue. This is our bottom line. We can negotiate on all issues except changing the deadline.

**How serious is your party about the coming elections?**

Our party is serious to go to elections. We have already mobilized our party organizations nationwide. I have been attending several mass meetings every day.

**Even if some parties boycott the elections, do you still prefer to go to the elections?**

If some parties boycott the elections, it is their fundamental right. What they cannot do is to obstruct the elections by means of violence.

**Do you think the elections can be held?**

I don't have any doubt about it. The elections for CA will be held on November 19. If the government and four parties can seriously work, I don't think anybody can disrupt the elections. People are with us and a large number of people want to vote.



## Recurring Constitutional Challenges: Mere Symptoms of A Lager Disease

By ANKIT DHAKAL

One could argue that the epitome of political/ constitutional crisis of Nepal has manifested itself through the presidential order dating March 13, 2013 appointing the sitting Chief Justice as the Chairperson of the Council of Ministers. Obvious questions were raised as to the sanctity of separation of powers and the flagrant violation of Article 106 (1) which precludes any judge or the Chief Justice to be engaged in, or to be deputed to any other assignment apart from that of a judge. The Special Bench of the Supreme Court is currently occupied with these questions in seeking to settle multiple petitions challenging the constitutionality of the incumbent government, which is slated for the near future.

The events from March 13, leading

**Parties are yet to clearly come to the people with politics of agenda and their stance on a variety of issues ranging from federalism, citizenship, form of governance, social inclusion and election process among other important topics left unsolved from the last drafting attempt.**

to multiple challenges of the mentioned presidential order can eventually and quite easily be traced to the lack of political agreement among the political parties in finding any other candidate as the Chairman of the Council of Ministers. Yet again, political disagreements have translated into constitutional nightmares which have challenged the integrity and independence of the judiciary.

However, these constitutional/legal complications are merely symptomatic in nature while the underlying political disagreement is the chronic disease that needs to be dealt with before anything meaningful can be achieved.

Nepal's road to peace was marked by the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord leading to the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. Despite numerous renewals of mandate given to the CA for writing

the Constitution, the said body was unable to produce the much awaited document leading the nation to the present situation of heightened crisis. At the heart of this disaster lies the inability of the political parties/ leaders in separating political issues from constitutional/ legal ones. The trade-off between political issues and constitutional issues as bargaining chips over one another was a salient feature of the last CA which eventually led to a situation of great confusion in the process of constitution drafting. Another outcome of this unholy trade-off was the birth of the culture of 'consensus seeking' among political parties/ leaders which made a hash of political/constitutional issues by seeking to wantonly trade one over the other in the name of forging agreements. These were further

justified as tools of negotiation in finding a way forward for the nation.

Although, upon the expiry of the people's mandate to

draft the Constitution, a fresh election is the only way out, it however does not automatically flow from this that the next one will be marked by success. For any tangible result in drafting the new document, key political/ constitutional issues should be separated, common grounds forged and most importantly the demarcation of the basic boundaries of the Constitution should be carved out. Furthermore, only if there is clarity as to the basic blue-print of the new Constitution, can one hope for a successful drafting process in the future.

Another important aspect related to this is the status of the preliminary reports drafted by the last CA. Although a draft of the Constitution was not possible there were negotiations and successful understandings on quite a host of issues as contained in the preliminary

reports of the various thematic committees. It must also be noted that some important aspects of the Constitution such as fundamental rights had been dealt with in quite an exhaustive manner in preliminary report of the said committee. These reports containing the draft provisions were achieved through huge national and international investments and it is therefore, all the more important to use this as a stepping stone for the drafting of the next Constitution. Time and resources could be saved by the upcoming CA and the prospects of the new Constitution would also be much higher.

However, the current political climate of the country is far from seeking to learn valuable lessons from a catastrophic disaster. This is a cause for great worry as it shows all the signs of another episode of failure in the drafting of the new Constitution. As far as level of political agreement is concerned, the very fate of the proposed CA election is being argued over by the political parties and desperate negotiations are underway in seeking to gather the agitating parties for the polls.

As leaders run from pillar to post flaunting international support from neighbours in a futile attempt to display their grasp over Nepali politics, there has been an absolute negligence in seeking to forge any common ground before the nation sees the next CA into being. Parties are yet to clearly come to the people with politics of agenda and their stance on a variety of issues ranging from federalism, citizenship, form of governance, social inclusion and election process among other important topics left unsolved from the last drafting attempt. Although Nepal faces an uncertain tomorrow regarding the formation of the next CA, what is certain is the fact that, without a minimum understanding among the political parties about the boundaries of the next Constitution and the declaration of party positions on constitutional issues, no success can be anticipated.

## NEW MONETARY POLICY

# The Rural Bent

*The new monetary policy released by Nepal Rastra Bank includes programs to encourage expansion of banking services to the rural areas*

By A CORRESPONDENT

For the first time, the Monetary Policy has tried to reach a majority of people and the largest sector of the country. Encouraging Banking and Financial Institutions (BFIs) to go to rural areas and invest money in agriculture sector, Nepal Rastra Bank has made it clear that Nepal's overall economic development is impossible without development of rural areas.

At a time when the rural sector is yet to get enough banking services, Nepal Rastra Bank's new monetary policy came up with an aim to formulate the first ever Financial Sector Development Strategy to encourage the financial institutions to go in rural areas.

As banks and financial Institutions (BFIs) are unable to extend their services to the rural areas, NRB gives priority to open micro-finance in rural areas, encourage BFIs to open branches in rural areas, extend loan against the collateral of projects for farming coffee, tea, dairy and livestock.

One of the major highlights of the monetary policy is that it also envisages bringing down the spread rate - the difference between interest rate in loans and deposits — to 5 percent in all BFIs. Despite slow progress in the merger, NRB continues the policy to encourage merger of BFIs.

NRB has also announced enforcing a guideline for acquisition among BFIs. Besides valuation of fixed and current assets of debtors, the monetary policy has also introduced a system to issue loan on the basis of cash flow and income of debtors.

The monetary policy has also provisions to reduce shares of institutional deposits to 60 percent of the total deposits mobilized by

commercial banks. At a time when a large number of cooperatives are facing financial crisis and depositor are losing the money, NRB's policy incorporated the provision to provide expert services to the Department of Cooperatives to support monitoring of saving and credit cooperatives with transactions of more than Rs 500 million.

"This is a flexible monetary policy aimed at achieving high economic growth by giving priority to agriculture, energy and industries for loan disbursement," said Governor of NRB Dr Yuba Raj Khatiwada. "We give equal priority to increase access of the people of rural and remote areas to banking services, besides giving priority to increasing financial literacy among the people," said Khatiwada.

As micro-finance institutions fail to extend their services in the rural parts of country due to lack of resources, the central bank will provide loans of up to Rs 2 million to micro finance Institutions (MFIs) at zero interest rate to open branches in districts with poor access to micro-finance service. Loan limit against collective collateral for good debtors under deprived sector credit has been increased to Rs 150,000 from Rs 100,000. NRB also increased the limit of micro-enterprises loan. They can now lend up to Rs 400,000 over the previous limit of Rs 300,000.

"NRB has reduced refinancing interest rates for BFIs from 6 percent to 5 percent allowing them to charge a maximum of 9 percent interest on loans issued for agriculture, hydropower, livestock, and fisheries as well as other designated productive sectors," Khatiwada added.



Governor Dr. Khatiwada

The policy also expresses its determination to contain the inflation rate at 8 percent. Given the current state of economy, it seems to be highly ambitious plan.

"The policy has targeted to achieve higher growth, making the task of containing inflation at 8 percent a big challenge. It will be very difficult to bring investment in agriculture and energy to 12 percent of total lending of commercial banks at a time when we have been facing problem in issuing 10 percent of our total loans to these sectors," said Uprendra Poudel, vice president of Nepal Bankers' Association.

Others see this differently. "The monetary policy alone cannot bring drastic changes. Of course, this is a flexible policy, but my concern is on the part of implementation. The policy may land in a difficult situation in case of failure to handle it properly," said Professor Dr. Bishombher Pyakuryal.

NRB has slashed the Capital Reserve Ratio (CRR) — an amount that the bank and financial institutions mandatorily have to hold in cash — by one percentage point to 5 percent for commercial banks, 4.5 percent for development banks and 4 percent for finance companies. NRB expects reduction on CRR to ease frequent liquidity problem in the banking system.

Monetary Policy tries to address all the problems faced by Nepal's economic sector but everything will depend upon how the policy will be implemented.

# 'We Need To Decide Private Sector Role'

RAJENDRA KUMAR KHETAN

**RAJENDRA KUMAR KHETAN**, Chairperson of Khetan Group of industries and Nepal-Britain Chamber of Commerce and Industries, does not need any introduction in Nepal's industrial sector. Khetan, a young entrepreneur, was also a former member of the Constituent Assembly. Khetan spoke to **NEW SPOTLIGHT** on various issues related to the state of present economy. Excerpts:

**How do you see the present state of economy after the announcement of the new budget and new monetary policy?**

After a gap of many years, Nepal has had a budget presented by the government of non-political people. Since politicians, who have been elected from the people, have to fulfill many promises and commitments in preparing the budget, naturally the present government did not have that kind of constraint. Politicians are compelled to bring populist budget to make their slogan popular. However, the current budget is realistic, based on the reality of the country. This is more a technical budget. There are fewer issues to criticize.

**What do you see in the budget?**

In our country, we have practices to make budget as a fairy tale. I have been saying this for a long time. It should not be made a fairy tale. The development expenditure allocated in the budget cannot be spent without making local level institutions like VDCs and DDCs effective. Since the elections of local bodies have not been held almost for 16 years, there is a political vacuum. As long as there are no elected representatives, it is impossible to utilize the budget for development sector. If political parties make consensus on political agenda, why they fail to have similar consensus to carry out development programs effectively at the grass root level?

**Do you think the budget addresses the current economic**

**challenges, including unemployment?**

No budget can address the unemployment or economic problems. Budget is just a document which shows how government allocates its annual expenditure in various sectors. The budget will show sources of money and detail out where such money goes. In other words, it explains the generation of revenues and foreign aid and way to spend them. It interprets how the budget money is spent and what the target areas are.

**As a leading private sector entrepreneur, what do you want from the government?**

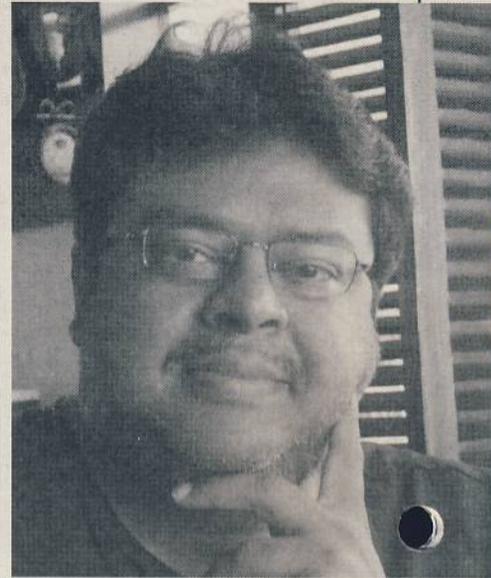
The government needs to work as a facilitator for private sector. If the government's programs and plans remain private sector friendly, one can hope for many changes. However, the government should not create hurdles. The government's job is to create a conducive environment as well as to create a secure situation. Only by shortening the political transition, Nepal can move ahead. Of course, this is the first time in three years that the finance minister presented the full budget. This is good but budget is not alone enough to achieve high economic growth.

**How do you see the capability of private sector?**

Private sector is capable in the country to generate employment. The role of private sector is yet to be effective. Even today, the revenue is coming from three main categories like agriculture, remittances and private sector.

**Don't you think the government composed of non-political leaders may have introduced some new policies to streamline the economy?**

We have to agree that the budget avoided populist slogans and it has presented realistic programs and plans. I have told you that the planning cannot be executed at local level



without the involvement of locally elected representatives. Till the local elections are held, the government has to constitute political mechanisms to decide on the local development projects. If money is spent properly, it will also help the national economy to grow.

**What is the cost of doing business in Nepal?**

The cost of doing business in Nepal is much higher. The cost is higher in infrastructure and service delivery. The interest rate of bank is relatively higher. Due to prolonged political instability, there is confusion in the minds of people. Due to frequent general strike and bands, the cost of production is going high. Similarly, disruption of power supply is another major reason pushing Nepal back. In the economic development, there is still confusion about the public, private and community roles. We can solve all economic problems by addressing all these problems. Since this is not a political government, the government can introduce private sector friendly programs and budget. If this government removed constraints and difficulties, we can jump in.

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## GOVT BUDGET

# The Debt Hole

Despite claims to progress in the economic sector, Nepal is heading towards a very difficult period. The economic indicators show a slow economic growth, minimum progress in poverty reduction and high rate of currency depreciation

By DEBESH ADHIKARI

Along with the bleak political scenario, the economic picture of the country is going far from being rosy. Even the recently presented budget failed to bring any substantial policy interventions to address it. The Economic Survey 2012-013 presents a dismal picture with total output expected to be lower in 2013 than originally expected in forecasts made last year.

The projected underperformance is mainly because of political instability and bad monsoon. The high imports and lower growth, depressed confidence, financial market fragmentation, weak balance sheets, and fiscal consolidation are leading Nepal's economy to bleaker days ahead.

The overall situation is rather grim for the economy and careful navigation is needed to come out of the situation. The economy has already slowed down substantially, investments are low and interest rates are high. In addition, the domestic currency has been depreciating rather rapidly for which many in the markets were not prepared.

Although the previous government predicted that the economic growth will be 5.5%, Nepal's economic growth in the fiscal year (2012-13) remained at 3.6%. For the past 10 years, the growth rate was recorded 3.7% in

average. Both these figures achieved were far below the expectation, according to experts. With the growing political instability, the economy seems to be heading towards a more difficult situation.

"The government led by retired bureaucrats failed to address the real economic problems. By bringing a populist budget, the present government showed that it is like an election government of political parties," said Tul Raj Basyal, former economic advisor to Finance Minister. Despite over ambition of the budget, the budget allocated low capital expenditure like in the past years given the present trends of less foreign aid and growing concurrent expenditure to pay salary.

Although Nepal targeted to bring down poverty to 21 from 25.2%, poverty got reduced marginally by 1.4 to settle at 23.8%. Nepalese currency depreciated by 8.2% against the target of keeping it below 7.5% mark. It impacted the exchange rate adversely as Nepalese rupee went up to as high as 97 for one US dollar. It was the highest exchange rate of Nepalese currency so far.

Nepal's trade deficit also widened excessively. Its total trade deficit was recorded \$4.57bn in the past one year as its imports rocketed by 21.2%. Nepal's only positively performing key

sector was revenue collection. A total of \$2.92bn revenue was collected across the country, but this achievement, too, was mainly due to the unsustainable customs duty levied on the imports into Nepal.

"The major challenge to our economy is to achieve a high level of economic growth. But there are many obstacles on its way," said Shankar Koirala, minister of finance.

Others argue that there is the need to improve the agriculture sector to achieve high economic growth. "Poor performance of agriculture sector was the main reason for last year's low growth rate," said Rewat Karki, an economist with Nepal Rastra Bank, the central bank of Nepal.

"The climate was unfavorable last year, while farmers did not get the fertilizers in time," said Karki. Only by arranging proper irrigation and facilities to farmers in time could we increase the growth rate next year. But I'm not that much hopeful, as there are plenty of problems including uncertainties in government policy, minimum role of private sector and the lack of a full-fledged budget," said Karki.

## New Budget, Old Practices

The new budget is also not much different from the old ones. Focusing on the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) elections and

hydropower sector, among others, the election government's full budget is Rs 517.24 billion for fiscal year 2013/14. Allocations for the Constituent Assembly (CA) elections and double-digit hike in the salary of civil servants have significantly jacked up recurrent expenditures.

"At a time when the recurrent expenditure rises, failure to generate revenues and foreign aid will have significant impacts on the capital expenditure. Low capital expenditure will adversely affect the investment in economy, production and productivity and employment indicators," said Bashyal.

The government expects to mobilize revenue of Rs 354.5 billion in fiscal year 2013/14, raising the collection target by 19.87 percent compared to what it has estimated to mobilize in the current fiscal year.

Highly ambitious with few spaces to increase the revenue, the government has allocated Rs 353.42 billion or 68 percent of the budget for recurrent expenditure, Rs 85.10 billion or 16.45 percent for capital expenditure and Rs 78.72 billion or 15.22 percent for financial management. Without adjustment of any tax rates, the budget plans to mobilize Rs 354.5 billion through revenues, Rs 69.54 billion through



Finance Minister Koirala

foreign assistance and the deficit through domestic borrowings.

The government has made some attempts to get 5.5 percent economic growth with high priority in agriculture, education, irrigation, infrastructure, energy and exports promotion in the coming fiscal year. Amid double digit inflation, the budget has also set target to contain the inflation at 8 percent.



Paddy planting

"We appreciate that government has come up with full-fledged budget with some incentives to boost confidence of private sector. The budget has also recognized the role of private sector in the economy," said Bhaskar Raj Karnikar, Senior Vice President of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI).

The bottom line in the budget profile is that deficits would increase to an unprecedented Rs 87.7 billion, more than three times the estimated level for 2012/13. Of course, the deficit would need to be financed, which means the need for a large-size borrowing. Financing targets call for Rs 30.3 billion to be borrowed from foreign sources and Rs 43.1 billion from domestic sources, of which Rs 22 billion is needed for principle repayments.

This means that if expenditure and revenue targets are met, domestic borrowing requirements will be much larger, in the range of Rs 50 billion to Rs 60 billion. This translates to lots of money and unsustainable debt.

Experts argue that it needs to be mentioned that the government's zeal to develop the economy has sunk the country deeper and deeper into the debt-hole. Annual debt servicing—interest and principal repayments—on accumulated government debt has reached Rs 40 billion, a sizeable part

in foreign debt, which represents a loss of national savings.

An even more disturbing aspect of the debt scenario is that there is scarcely any evidence that debt commitments—foreign and domestic—have helped improve growth and living conditions. Actually, the inflows of debt and grant money from overseas have nourished a corruption culture and driven the more productive parts of the economy underground.

"We may assume that actual spending cannot be as high as projected, from the simple logic that many of the mega-expenditure items, especially in the capital category, aren't 'shovel ready'. Major hydro power projects (Rs 4.66 billion); transmission lines (Rs 13.5 billion); Melamchi (Rs 5.2 billion); postal highway (Rs 2.2 billion); new airports (Rs 1.8 billion); railway (Rs 1.4 billion); road bridges (Rs 3.5 billion); and large irrigation projects (Rs 4 billion) won't be able to absorb such huge allocations in a single year," writes Sukhdev Shah, in his article in Republica.

This budget or that budget cannot bring any changes. Along with bringing political stability, Nepal needs to have strong economic performance to maintain high economic growth. For this, Nepal needs a political leader to address its economic agenda. ■

# 'Nepal Can Do More With Europe'

BINAYAK SHAH

BINAYAK SHAH is not a new name in Nepal's foreign trade sector. Shah has served in different bilateral trade chambers for more than two decades. Now president of the European Economic Chamber of Trade, Commerce and Industry (EEC)-Nepal, and managing director of Airport Hotel, Shah spoke to **NEW SPOTLIGHT** on various issues. Excerpts:

**What is the state of Nepal's trade with the European Union?**

Nepal's relationship with the European Union is old. There is a lot of potential to increase its trade with the EU. Despite the potential, we still have a lot of things to do on our part. Europe is a developed market in terms of economy and trade and we are trying to get more from Europe. For this, we will have to work more vigorously on our side. The overall relationship is fine, but there is a potential for big expansion and diversification.

**Your involvement in work to enhance the bilateral trade with the European countries has been long. How do you look at the role of bilateral trade institutions like yours to increase the trade?**

We can play a very important role. Different agencies have different priorities and their own programs. Institutions like ours have a more specific role. The role is to act as a focal point for the promotion of bilateral trade and technology transfer, among others. We have to work as a catalyst. Our objective is to strengthen the socio-economic ties between Nepal and the member states of the European Union. We initiate ideas and support private sector initiatives. The chamber strives to be a mediator between partners in the internal market and the member states of the European Union and other European countries to enhance Nepal's business and social interactions with them.

**In the recent days, the government of Nepal has been**

**talking about economic diplomacy. What role should bilateral organizations play?**

Economic diplomacy plays a very vital role in the promotion of bilateral relations, especially for a country like ours which has been facing resource constraints. If the private sector and public sector join hands, we can do a lot. Although we have been working to pursue the idea of economic diplomacy for quite a long time, I have not seen any visible effectiveness of the program. We have engaged more with rhetoric than with action.

**What is the present state of trade with countries of the European Union?**

Europe is still Nepal's largest trade block. For instance, Europe is a major market for Nepal's carpet. Although carpet industry was started in Nepal only in the 1960s by refugees, it has made a lot of progress in terms of production and export because of the generous support from the countries of the European Union. Because of the design, volume of production, pattern and quality, the demand for carpet continues to grow. Thanks to support given by the European Union in its promotion, carpet is now a full-fledged industry.

**As a president of EEC-Nepal, what are your priorities for the coming years?**

Our chamber is seven-eight years old. As it is a new chamber, the resources are very limited. We don't get involved in bigger projects ourselves, what we do is we initiate new ideas in terms of trade, tourism and technology transfer. We float the ideas to business communities of both the sides. If the ideas are workable and profitable, the business people join hands. We just support the businesses as a facilitator or coordinator. We develop business and relationship on the basis of needs.

**How do you view your organization?**



We are fortunate enough that most of our members are market leaders. In terms of volume of trade, they are market leaders in every aspect. They are doing business with Europe in tourism and trade. Whenever we initiate the programs, our members take a lead. In doing business with Europe, we have also been helping to enhance the relations with Europe.

**What is the total volume of trade between Nepal and the European Union?**

Nepal's total trade with EU in the fiscal year 2011/12 was about Rs. 8,129,079,887.00, accounting for just 13 per cent of the country's total foreign trade. It has been increasing day by day. Similarly, Nepal's import from European Union was Rs. 244161 million in 2011/012.

**What are the goods Nepal imports from the EU?**

Engineering goods, telecommunication equipment, chemicals and minerals, metals and steels and agricultural products are the major items Nepal has imported from the European Union.

**What are Nepal's top commodities?**

Nepal's top export commodities to the world in general are readymade garments, woolen carpets and pashmina, in that order.

For detail logon [www.spotlightnepal.com](http://www.spotlightnepal.com)

# Passage To Progress



By ABIJIT SHARMA

One of the highlights of Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh's May-end visit to Japan was the reiteration of bilateral cooperation in the large infrastructure projects.

Singh and his Japanese counterpart, Shinjo Abe, confirmed that the two countries would work together to undertake an industrial corridor project linking the Indian capital with the South Asian nation's financial hub, Mumbai.

The visit of Singh, his fifth as prime minister, served as an opportunity for the two countries "to confirm their commitment to strengthening political and security cooperation further and produced many concrete outcomes in the economic field, including the DMIC, a high-speed railway system in India, and yen loans for Mumbai Metro," said a Japanese foreign ministry statement.

The Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) is an ambitious project that is expected to help transform the economy.

The mega project is aimed at giving a major boost to the Indian economy. It has come at a time when the burgeoning economy has slowed somewhat after years of stupendous performance.

## Six States

Initiated seven years ago as an advanced industrial development concept, the DMIC envisages the development of industrial and infrastructure sectors in six states of India.

Linking Delhi with Mumbai, it will cover the national capital territory (NCR) of New Delhi, the most populous state Uttar Pradesh, fast emerging industrial and commercial states of Gujarat and Maharashtra, major agricultural power Haryana and the historic Rajasthan.

The idea of the 90 billion dollar project is to simultaneously develop large scale industries and infrastructure facilities in the six states. The planned infrastructure facilities along the 1500km corridor include airports, railways, sea ports and power projects.

Given the huge importance of the project, it was no surprise that it was top on prime minister Manmohan Singh's agenda during his last visit to Japan two months ago. Singh had another pressing concern at home waiting

to be addressed. There have been persistent concerns which have only grown by the day that the impressive economic growth in recent years has not been matched by equal distribution and social justice.

The authorities expect the DMIC to address this concern. They believe that once complete the DMIC will go a long in improving the socio-economic conditions of the millions in the region and beyond. How this concern is addressed will however be keenly watched in many quarters as questions mount on whether the much-touted Rising India has resonated across the vast impoverished regions across the country.

## Nepal 'Corridor'

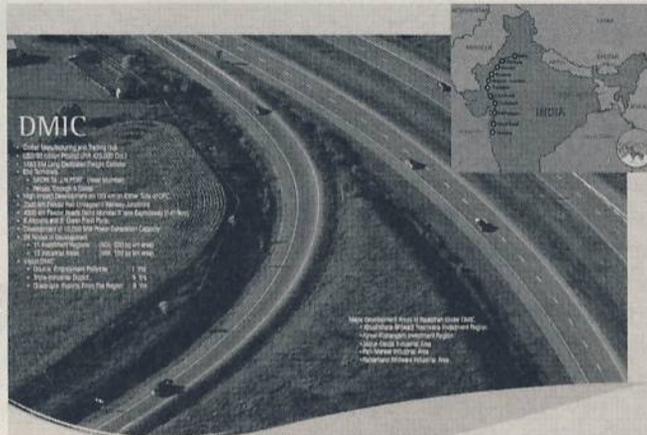
Nepal is miles behind its fast emerging neighbour. But that does not stop it from nursing a dream of such a corridor project. In fact, it has the advantage of learning from the experiences of the two countries which have been invaluable partners in its development.

Although multi-billion dollar mega project such as DMIC is a distant dream for a resource-poor country with an annual national budget of little over 4 billion dollars, it can benefit from the concept to give a new lease of life to the struggling industrial sector.

The idea is worth giving a serious consideration especially in the plains along the border with India. Once the DMIC is completed, the scope of the replication of the Japan-India cooperation however on a much smaller scale may well be worth giving a look. To start with, an industrial corridor along the DMIC model can be ideated between the major centres like Birgunj, Janakpur, Bhairahawa and Biratnagar south of the country and Kathmandu and Pokhara up north.

The Nepalese authorities would do well to keep their eyes open on the potential of such an initiative with the cooperation of two of its major donors. It could help transform the lot of the millions living in the impoverished villages across Nepal even as a strong foundation for the vital industrial development is built in the predominantly agricultural country.

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The Japan-assisted industrial corridor project linking the Indian capital with the South Asian nation's financial hub, Mumbai, is an ambitious project that is expected to help transform the economy.



# Language, Literature, And Religion Of Nepal

By BIPIN ADHIKARI

No other contemporary scholar than Brian Houghton Hodgson (1800-1894) established himself as a pioneer naturalist and ethnologist in relation to Nepal and the Himalayan studies. His scholarly taste and also his position in 1833 as the British Resident in Kathmandu helped him get involved with and research on the Nepalese people, producing a number of thematic papers. Hodgson's *Essays on the Language, Literature and Religion of Nepal and Tibet* (London: Trubner & Co., 57 & 58 Ludgat Hill, 1874) is an outstanding collection of some of these papers.

The book has two parts. Part I is the language, literature, and religion. Part II is on geography, ethnology, and commerce. The first part starts with the notes on 13 distinct and strongly marked dialects being spoken in Nepal. They are referred to as Khas or Parbatia, the Magar, the Gurung, the Sunuwar, the *Kachari*, the *Haiyu*, the Chepang, the Kasunda, the Murmi, the Newari, the Kiranti, the Limbuan, and the Lapchan. Except the Khas dialect, which is Indo-European, Hodgson declares that all the remaining are of Trans-Himalayan stock and closely interlinked. "They are all extremely rude, owing to the people who speak them having crossed the snows before learning had drowned upon Tibet, and to the physical features of their new home (huge mountain barriers on every hand) having tended to break up and enfeeble the common speech they brought with them." Hodgson points out that these dialects are not mutually intelligible to their speakers now. It is only the Newari and Lapchan language that Hodgson points out "can boast a single book, or even a system of letters, original and borrowed." About Khas language as well, Hodgson notes in 1828 that it has "no literature properly so called and very few and trivial books."

The book covers a surprising range of themes on Nepalese and Tibetan Buddhism. In the sketch of Buddhism,

derived from the *Buddha* scriptures of Nepal (1828), Hodgson briefly deals with Buddhist literatures of Nepal. There are answers to a set of questions that he posed to a Buddhist scholar in 1823: how and when was the world created? What was the origin of mankind? What is matter and what is spirit? Is matter an independent existence, or is it derived from God? What are the attributes of God? Is the pleasure of God derived from action or repose? Who is Buddha? Is he god or the creator or a prophet or saint; is he born of heaven or of woman? In the answer to the last question here, the Buddhist scholar who responded to all the questions given by Hodgson states: "Buddha means in Sanskrit, 'the wise;' also, 'that which is known by wisdom;' and it is one of the names which we give to God, whom we also call Adi-Buddha, because he was before all, and is not erected, but is the creator ... Sakya, and the rest of the seven human Buddhas are earth-born or human. These latter, by the worship of Buddha, arrived at the highest eminence, and attained Nirvana Pada (i.e. were absorbed into Adi-Buddha). We therefore call them all Buddhas."

Hodgson includes in this collection quotations from original Sanskrit authorities in proof and illustration of the proceeding article (1836), European speculation in *Buddhism* (1834), remarks on M. Remusat's Review of *Buddhism* (1834), notes on the inscription from Sarnath (1835), notes on Adi Buddha and of the Seven Mortal Buddha (1834), notes on the primary language of the Buddhist writings (1837), a disputation respecting caste by a Buddhist (1829), observations on the extreme resemblance that prevails between many of the symbols of Buddhism and Saivism (1828), and notes on the Pravrajya Vrats or Initiatory rites of the Buddhists (Illustration).

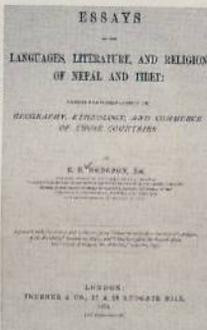
In Part II, Brian Houghton Hodgson includes his earlier research on the physical geography of the Himalaya (1849), the aborigines of the

Himalaya (1848), origin and classification of the military tribes of Nepal (1833), the Chepang and Kusunda Tribes (1857), cursory notice of *Nyakot*

and of the remarkable tribes inhabiting it (undated), the tribes of northern Tibet and *Sifan* (1853), the commerce of Nepal [selections], and the colonization of the Himalaya by Europeans [Selection]. Hodgson describes the Himalayas as generally very well-calculated for the settlement of Europeans, and thus a good region for colonization.

He is loud and clear in his opinion when he writes of the "duties of the [British] government" to colonialize the Himalayas "for the successful culture of various products suited to the wants of Europeans, for their own consumption or for profitable sale; and in this extra-ordinary gradation of heights, the high and the low are juxtaposed in a manner alike favourable to the labours of the healthful and to the relief of the ailing." This fitness for Europeans apart, he thinks the colonization of the Himalayas is wise commercially as well.

Hodgson maintains that there is peace in Nepal, and it is paying dividend to the merchants of British India. In the Nepal Valley, he calculates about "fifty-two native and thirty-four Indian merchants engaged in foreign commerce, both with the south and the north, and that the trading capital of the former is considered to be not less than 50,18,000 nor that of the latter less than 23,05,000. A third of such of these merchants as are natives of the plains have come up subsequently to the establishment of the Residency in 1816, since which period, as is thought by the oldest merchants of



Kathmandu, the trade has been tripled."

An 1857 note in the book mentions a costly road that has been constructed recently over the Western Himalayas. However, Hodgson advises that a brisk trade between the Cis- and Trans-Himalayan countries would inevitably seek the route of the central or eastern part of the chain than this road. His finding is that "the Western Tibet is very much the poorest, most rugged, and least populous part of that country. *Utsang*, *Kham*, *Sifan*, and the proximate parts of China furnish all the materials, save shawl-wool, for a trade with us, as well as all the effective demand for our commodities" These findings lead him to conclude that Kathmandu, Darjeeling or *Takyeul* as the most expedient line of transit of the Himalaya.

As far as Kathmandu is concerned, Hodgson is quick to add that the Newar people have been maintaining an extensive commercial intercourse between the plains of India on the one hand and those of Tibet on the other for many centuries. "Nepal is now subject to a wise and orderly Native Government; that owing to the firm peace and alliance between the Government and the Honourable Company's, the Indian merchants has full and free access to Nepal."

The contributions that Brian H. Hodgson made to Nepalese studies were the first significant effort by anybody of his stature, which still has significance today. Some of his opinions are incorrect, and some misleading as well, like his descriptions on the Khas community of Nepal or the story of the *Mussulman* conquest and bigotry sweeping multitudes of the Brahmans of the plains into the proximate hills. His colonial mindset may have influenced his analysis at times. It is clear that he also depended on the local pundits, who fed Hodgson with information that provided some immediate benefit to them in the local caste relations.

Hodgson's mind was many-sided, and his work extended into many fields. Apart from this book, they were also compiled and published later in the name of *Miscellaneous Essays relating to Indian Subjects* (London: Trubner and Co., 1880), *On the Koch, Bodo and Dhimal tribes* (Calcutta: Baptist Mission Press, 1847) and *Illustrations of the literature and religion of the Buddhists* (Serampore: Self-published, 1841). The 2004 book edited by David Waterhouse on the origins of Himalayan studies is the latest overview, which has been able to assess the Hodgson's contributions in the views of several modern scholars. This overview was done long before by W. W. Hunter in *Life of Brian Houghton Hodgson* published in London by John Murray and Co. in 1896.

## Nepal - World Bank : Review Portfolio

The Government of Nepal and the World Bank held a joint portfolio review to assess the performance of development projects assisted by the World Bank in Nepal. The meeting was co-chaired by Finance Secretary Shanta Raj Subedi and World Bank Country Manager for Nepal Ms Tahseen Sayed.

Today's first trimester review meeting took stock of the implementation and results of 13 projects in the current portfolio of 18 ongoing projects, representing US\$ 850 million in the total portfolio size of US\$ 1.5 billion. Issues affecting project implementation discussed today included the status of disbursements and implementation challenges arising from weak fiduciary and safeguards compliance, frequent and untimely staff transfers, and delays in decision-making.

In her opening remarks, Ms. Sayed congratulated the Government for presenting a full, regular budget for FY13-14 as well as for achieving a remarkable turnaround in portfolio performance during the last quarter of FY12-13, once the full budget was put in place.

According to press release issued by the World Bank, in his closing remarks, Subedi noted that spending authority was delegated to the line ministries on the same day the budget was approved. He said the line ministries have been instructed to approve annual work programs and budgets for Priority 1 (P1) projects within 15 days of the start of the new fiscal year and within 30 days for Priority 2 and 3 (P2, P3) projects. Subedi said plans are afoot to strengthen the monitoring of budget execution at the Ministry of Finance.

Madhu Kumar Marasini, Chief of International Economic Cooperation and Coordination Division of the Ministry of Finance said FY13-14 will be the "year of implementation".

## Japanese grants to CA Elections

The Government of Japan extended support to the Government of Nepal a grant up to one hundred and forty-nine million Japanese Yen (¥149,000,000), equivalent to one hundred and forty-two million, one hundred and forty-six thousand Nepalese rupees (NRs.142,146,000), for the Execution of the Project for Assistance to the Constituent Assembly Election upon the request made by the Government of Nepal.

This grant assistance will be used for the procurement of election related materials for the Constituent Assembly (CA) Election such as security seals, ballot-box stickers and others. Japanese ambassador to Nepal Kunio TAKAHASHI and Shanta Raj Subedi, Secretary, Ministry of Finance signed the agreement.

Investing in the peace initiative and democracy has always been one of the three pillars of the development cooperation of Japan to Nepal. In this context, Japan, as a development partner and a well wisher of Nepal, has always been strongly supportive of the establishment of democracy in Nepal.

After the more than a decade long conflict, the Constituent Assembly (CA) Election in Nepal, which was a national historic turning point, is going to take place for the second time on November 19, 2013 with the strong commitment of the Interim Election Government. It is expected that the Election Commission Nepal (ECN) will be fully supported by all the people of Nepal, as well as the political parties, for its success to fulfill Nepali people's aspirations for democracy, peace and stability in the country.

Kunio Takahashi, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, reiterated that Japan expects the successful CA Election to bring peace and political stability to Nepal. He concluded with the remarks that the support to ECN will be a milestone in strengthening the lasting bonds of friendship between the two countries in the days to come.

## ENERGY TO POOR

# Practical Approach

*Practical Action's Energy outlook has shown the way to the policy makers and planners as to how to provide access to energy for the poor*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Despite more than hundred years of starting hydropower, Nepal's electricity supplied by the central grid is yet to reach 25 percent of the population. Similarly, the energy supplied off-grid or through alternative sources has drastically changed the livelihood in rural Nepal. The reality has not changed much as over 80 percent of Nepalese population still relies on traditional energy sources and those who do not have energy access are poor and marginalized community.

For Renu Chaudhari, 15, a resident of Kawasoti of Nawalparashi, the connection of electricity to the central grid was a reason to rejoice. Her happiness did not last even a couple of days as Chaudhari's dream shattered when Nepal Electricity Authority announced power-cut for up to 16 hours during the winter.

As the price of electricity is over Rs.8 (10 cents) per unit, Chaudhari's family, whose monthly income is Rs.4000.00 (US\$45), cannot afford electricity for cooking, water pumping and other such household purposes. They still rely on traditional ways.

"Light is life. But, the regular interruption in power supply has created a lot of problems. It is also too expensive for poor people like us," said Chaudhari. "Until there is certainty over the supply and it is affordable, it cannot bring changes in the families."

According to Practical Action, from lighting the streets and homes, to using power for water pumping, cooking, and basic processing and communications, energy enables people to live better lives. It also transforms health-care provision – enabling vaccines to be refrigerated, implements to be sterilized and diagnostic equipment to be powered.

"Access to energy for the poor does

not mean just to light the lamp through various energy sources. Access to energy consists of uninterrupted and quality supply of energy which can bring tangible change in education, livelihood and health sector," said Vishwa Bhushan Amatya, head of Program –Energy of Practical Action. "We are still energy poor if we see the energy supply in the country."

Whether in urban or rural areas, Nepal's current scenario is that people are using low quality energy or inadequate energy to make differences. Even the alternative and clean energy sources supply small proportion of energy.

According to the Three Years Interim Plan, the number of LPG users, electricity users and alternative energy users has drastically gone up. The current Interim Plan is expecting to cover over 70% households. The question remains whether the energy supplied by the present state is adequate, clean or affordable?

"Our aim is to increase the access of energy, particularly the electricity, to all. We are yet to think about the quality," said Purushottam Ghimire, spokesperson of National Planning Commission. "Our target is to cover large areas."

According to Practical Action, Generating international attention and action on energy for community services is vital in order to address the fact that an estimated one billion people are served by health facilities and more than 50% of children in the developing world go to primary schools without any access to electricity.

The concept of Total Energy Access is central to the PPEO 2013. This is Practical Action's approach to achieving universal energy access and it requires an understanding of who has access to energy across households,



Learning under light

businesses and in the community, and how that energy is used.

"Our concept of total energy access is different. We want uninterrupted, clean and quality energy which is economically affordable to all the people particularly poor," said Min Bikram Malla, project manager, Practical Action.

The PPEO 2013 provides improved indicators that can be used to measure an individual country's progress. The third edition of the PPEO series focuses on energy for community services. This report builds on our evidence base and our call for Total Energy Access by focusing on vital community services. It places the spotlight on the contribution that improved energy access can make to health, education and infrastructure services such as water and street lighting.

Energy is fundamental to poverty reduction, sustainable development, and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It must be given careful consideration in the follow-up to the outcomes of Rio+20 and as the post-2015 global development agenda is defined.

Practical Action champions a Total Energy Access approach, defined as when: Households, enterprises and community services have sufficient access to the full range of energy supplies and services that are required to support human social and economic development.

Energy is an enabler. It improves the quality of existing services and paves the way for new services to be made accessible to poor people," said Practical Action's Energy Outlook.



# Facts About Trisuli 3A Hydropower Project

By DR. AB THAPA

Proposal to increase the capacity of the Trisuli 3A hydropower from 60 MW to 90 MW, which is at present already under construction, could not have been justified on technical as well as economic grounds as explained hereinafter. The proposed modification would have worsened the financial situation of the NEA, which is already in great difficulties. Very recently government has taken a very wise decision not to raise the capacity of the Trisuli 3A hydropower from 60 MW to 90 MW.

It is unfortunate that in recent years our policy makers and planners are turning a blind eye to various techno-economic aspects of our water resources

project of Canada now supplying exceptionally cheap electricity to aluminum smelter industries. Unfortunately, now it is too late to revise the entire Upper Trisuli planning.

## We Compromised on Techno-Economic Aspect

Demand for electricity in our country is the highest during the winter months when the flow of the river falls to a minimum. Contrary to it, during the wet season months when the run-of-river type hydropower plants can produce three times or even more electricity by comparison with the generation in winter season if the installed capacity is excessively increased, the demand for electricity is the lowest.

In the past implementation of projects, like the oversized Khimti, Bhote-Kosi etc, disregarding the

water storage reservoir to enable the hydropower to operate in full capacity even in the driest months when the river flow falls to a minimum. The hydropower of this type could be virtually shut down during off-peak hours to conserve water to run in full capacity during the hours when the demand for electricity is the highest. Almost all run-of-river type hydropower projects built under international donor agencies and also under bilateral aid like the Kali-Gandaki, Marshyangdi, Trishuli etc fall under this category. Peaking energy is usually priced two to three times higher than the energy supplied to meet the demand for base load. Unfortunately, almost all hydropower projects like Khimti, Bhote-Kosi etc built by private developers and also the proposed Upper Trisuli 3A project are not provided with daily water storage facilities. The latter type of hydropower projects are now producing enormously large seasonal energy which used to be wasted until recently.

## Why Peaking Energy Expensive

Peaking energy is priced two to three times higher than the energy produced during the off-peak hours. This aspect of electric energy economics serves as the basis of feasibility of pump storage power plants. Pump storage projects built at costs almost comparable to that of a normal hydropower consume about three units of energy drawn from the power grid during the off peak hours to produce only two units during the peak hours.

Let us take the case of Karnali Project. This project with a capacity of 10.8 GW would be producing 20.8 thousands GWh peaking energy. The same power station merely with an installed capacity of 2.5 GW could also produce the same amount of firm energy at almost 1/3 cost if it is to be operated like thermal or atomic power plants to supply electricity to meet exclusively the demand for base load.

Above mentioned aspects of power engineering economics have been carefully considered in all feasibility studies carried out under bilateral and multilateral agencies. Unfortunately, our government agencies seem to be quite unaware about it. As a result, we make no distinction in making comparison between the seasonal energy produced by Khimti type hydropower and the firm peaking energy produced by Kali-Gandaki like projects. ■

**Now we might have again been committing the same type of blunder if it would have been decided to increase the capacity of the Trisuli 3A from 60 MW to 90 MW to produce additional seasonal energy during the monsoon period.**

in general and the hydropower engineering in particular. As a result, we are ruining the potential of our hydropower projects to produce very cheap electricity in abundance. The Upper Trisuli hydropower project is one of the casualties of our wrong decision.

## Ruin of Upper Trisuli Potential

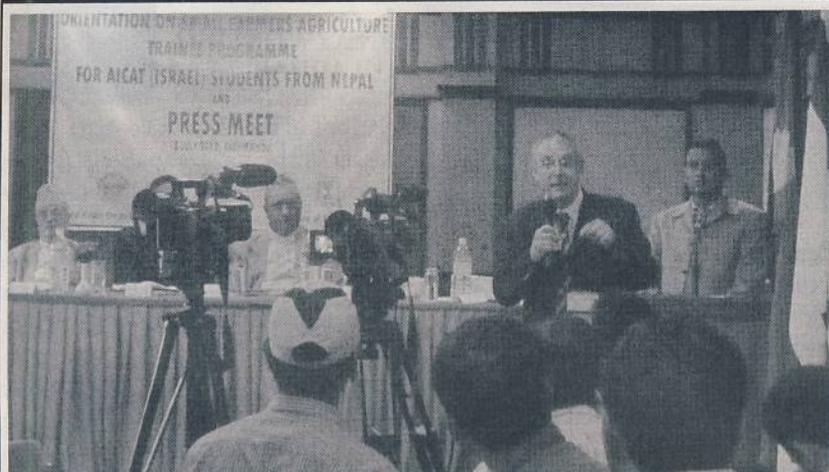
The upper reaches of the Trisuli have a steep slope and high dry-season runoff which make them attractive for development of run-of-river type scheme. The Gandak Basin study carried out in 1979 under the UNDP assistance had identified a single super high head (835m) Upper Trisuli project to use the potential of the Trisuli River on the stretch between Syabru Bensi and Betrawati.

In 1970s the demand for electricity in Nepal was not yet sufficiently enough to justify the implementation of a single large Upper Trisuli project. Thus an alternative study was also done to utilize the 835 m head in stages by building three projects in a series. The Upper Trisuli 3A project is one of them. At present our demand for electricity has sufficiently increased. So instead of Upper Trisuli 3A project, now the super high head mega Upper Trisuli project should have been preferred for implementation to produce abundant cheap firm power, like the Nechako Kemano high head (783 m)

mismatch between the seasonal variation of demand for electricity in our country and the extremely unfavorable fluctuation in availability of water in the river for generation of electricity has resulted in financial downfall of the NEA that precipitated our country into perpetual energy crisis. At that time the Water and Energy Commission had cautioned the ministry about the dire consequences. Unfortunately, the WECS suggestions were turned into deaf ears. Now we might have again been committing the same type of blunder if it would have been decided to increase the capacity of the Trisuli 3A from 60 MW to 90 MW to produce additional seasonal energy during the monsoon period. We should bear in mind that just few years from now when the construction of the much awaited giant Upper Tama-Kosi project would be completed, as assured by the government, the NEA would be laden with enormously large surplus seasonal energy because that project would be generating perhaps about three times more energy in each monsoon month by comparison with that of its monthly generation in winter.

## When Capacity Increase Justified

The increase in capacity of run-of-river type hydropower can be justified to a certain extent if the power station is provided with sufficiently large daily



Israel Ambassador Hanan Goder addressing press meet

## YOUNG NEPALI FARMERS

# Learning In Israel

*Two hundred students from the families of small farmers will receive advanced agriculture training in Israel*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Since his arrival in Nepal, Israel Ambassador Hanan Goder has embarked on a single mission and vision: to show that Nepal has the geographical diversity to produce a variety of agriculture products to economically transform the Nepali society.

Although the government of Israel has been supporting Nepal's small farmers for quite a long time through Agriculture Development Bank and now Small Farmers Development Bank, Hanan Goder has now implemented a new idea. The idea is to send 200 students from the families of small farmers to Israel for advanced agriculture training, which will have far reaching implications in Nepalese agriculture sector.

"This is a scheme of ambassador Hanan. We need to thank him for his efforts to give exposure to Nepalese youth in modern agriculture," said Rabindra Kumar Shakya, vice chairman of National Planning Commission, and president of Shalom Club-Nepal.

With the technical support from Israel government, farmers in Kathmandu started to grow high breed tomato. Similarly, the farmers in

Mahadev Beshi in Dhading learnt the way to grow high breed products to increase their production.

With the population overwhelmingly dominated by small farmers, Nepal's economic prosperity is possible only through the transformation in the agriculture sector. In that context, the effort to send 200 youths in Israel will have a long lasting impact in Nepal.

Although various training programs are organized for the farmers, this is for the first time youths will be taken to Israel. Among many youths, Arjun Aryal is one of them who are going to Israel. The 200 youths, including Aryal, from Dhading, Makwanpur and other districts, are going on a fully sponsored trip to Israel for agricultural training.

Fifty-five youths from Dhading and Makwanpur will go to Israel by mid-August in the first phase while other 145 youths including those from Chitwan, Nawalparasi, Jhapa, Ilam, Morang and Sunsari districts will reach Israel by mid-September.

"This program will be successful in raising involvement of youths in agriculture in Nepal," states SFDB Chief executive officer Jalan Kumar

Sharma. "We are sending 200 youths for trial and the number will be raised to 1,000 if the program succeeds," he adds.

The Nepali youths will be trained at the Arava International Center for Agricultural Training in Negev, Israel, according to the Israeli Embassy. They will be given theoretical classes for a day and will be involved in investigative practical classes for five days in a week. They will even get remunerations as per the Israeli standards for being involved in practical classes.

The hi-tech agriculture farming training program has received the cooperation from the Israeli embassy in Nepal and Small Farmers Development Bank. "The first batch of 55 youths will leave for Israel in the middle of August," said chief executive officer of the bank Jalan Kumar Sharma.

The students are being selected through lottery and interviews from among the family members of Small Farmers Agriculture Cooperatives associated with the Small Farmers Development Bank.

The youths selected from small farmers' families of Makawanpur and Dhading districts will get on-the-job training there. "The selected youths are dedicated to start hi-tech farming practices in their villages and change the traditional way of doing agriculture," said Sharma, adding there are hundreds of youths that have been using Israeli technique in agriculture.

"Hi-tech agriculture training given to Nepali youth will change traditional agriculture system in Nepal. Two-thirds population of the country has been adopting substantive agriculture. It is the real case of poverty," said Hanan Goder, adding training at Arava International Centre for Agriculture Training (AICAT) will turn them toward commercial agriculture.

At a time when large numbers Nepalese youths are heading for Gulf countries for labor work, Israeli Embassy's efforts to train Nepalese in agriculture and send back to Nepal may help to reverse the situation. ■



## A Search For New Dimension In Nepal Russia Relations

By BHAGAWAN RATNA TULADHAR

When Nepal entered into diplomatic relation with the then global power, the USSR in 1956, the political scenario in the Asian side of the world was basically different from today. It was a hot belt of cold war. The USSR wanted south Asia free from the hegemony of so called capitalist camp. And, Nepal had its own ambition of being an independent sovereign nation in real sense of the term, not a small brother of neighbouring India. Both the countries signed the treaty of friendship and cooperation in 20th July 1956. With the Russian generous financial aid and technical support Nepal exercised political independence and economic development during 1960's. That chapter had already closed after the end of the active cold-war period. Thus, the era of aid politics ended thereafter to enter into a new phase of relationship guided by the slogan of *not aid but trade*.

That popular axiom, *not aid but trade*, though very popular in the diplomatic circle by the name economic diplomacy, could not have been fully materialized. It has not been successful in delivering expected results, of course, due to the absence of required supporting instruments and initiative. We do not see, for example, economic advisors / counselors working in our Embassy in Moscow. How can one expect economic diplomacy actually working? From realistic approach there are little achievements one can see in the field of trade transaction and **tourism promotion**.

Nepal, if it has to develop fast, the next alternative would be to develop **science and technology** based relations with Russia. Bilateral cooperation with Russia in the field of science and technology education is possible and viable if our decision makers so desire. Science and technology is the only way to fast track development of the

nation like ours lagging far behind in economic development in comparison to our neighbours.

Nepalese students had already demonstrated their capabilities / expertise in the field of technologies like aviation, power-generation, medicine etc. with very little scientific education, laboratory facilities and financial support available for their research. If this factor, the capabilities of the young promising students, is considered seriously by the decision makers and give thought to establishing institutes for higher study in science and technology, that would



be the most important decision and valuable contributions for the development of Nepal. Nepal possesses precious natural resources, flora & fauna.

While exploring possible areas of collaboration and cooperation with the Russia for the development of higher level science education in our country, Nepal- Russia Friendship and Cultural Association (Association) has decided to exploit the very occasion of the visiting Russian friendship delegation that included Pilot astronaut, twice Hero of the Soviet Union Mr. Vladimir Dzanibekov, who is also the chairperson of Russia-Nepal Friendship & Cooperation Society in **April this year**. Mr. Vladimir Dzanibekov is one of the very influential personalities of Russia capable of influencing the decision makers. He commands high respect there. The Association, therefore, planned to convince the delegation that science and technology based relation could be one of the viable areas for further promoting our bilateral

relations in the present context. And, Russia is the most capable country which could offers valuable assistance in the field of promoting higher level science and technology education and research in Nepal. As it is the topics of national interest requiring government level decision, we have decided to organize one interaction programme with the participation of former ministers of science and technology, leaders of major political parties, intellectuals and former ambassador to Russia. The main objective of the programme was to pin point the specific areas or subjects where we actually wanted Russian cooperation and collaboration.

The participants had suggested, in particular, cooperation in the field of

- i. nuclear and space technology,
- ii. alternative energy,
- iii. food technology,
- iv. Hydro-power development

It was unanimously agreed that the aforesaid areas might help develop Nepal faster. And, Russia is the best partner for progress. The mode of cooperation shall not be *aid type* as in the past but it will be a joint venture model where non-governmental bodies could also be a partner. Nepalese scientists / students and technicians shall be trained in Nepal and provided with an opportunity to research, and have a share in production. Russian scientists and experts shall also contribute in the research and training. Interested persons / organizations from both countries shall be invited for sharing project money. This model will provide **three benefits to Nepal** like a. identifying the underlying potentialities of whatever natural resources are available, b. maximization of benefits of the products, and c. availability of job opportunities to the people.

Mr. Tuladhar is President of Nepal Russia Friendship & Cultural Association

For detail logon [www.spotlightnepal.com](http://www.spotlightnepal.com)



## Badi Women: Is There A Life Beyond Prostitution?

By BIBBI ABRUZZINI

In 2007 dozens of Badi women travelled from the Mid and Far Western regions of the country to Kathmandu. An army of partly undressed women received national attention as they sought government help to lower longstanding economic and social barriers. The 'Badi Andolan' resulted in a number of agreements with the interim Government promising to end the use of discriminatory terms, provide citizenship to all Badis, scholarships for their children, access to healthcare and employment opportunities.

For many Badi women, this is the first step coming up with alternatives to prostitution. But six years after the agreements, has the socio-economic status of their community improved? Babi Badi, 33, thought her days of prostitution were over. Despite government rhetoric about welfare schemes for the Badi community, she still awaits programmes that address

her issues. Single mother and partially blind, she reveals that she has barely received any support. "I started working as a prostitute when I was very young encouraged by my mother. Men were coming and going. I don't even know who my son's father is. Employment opportunities are scarce here and it is increasingly hard for us to make ends meet," Babi explains. Mothers play a major role in initiating their daughters into prostitution. In the beginning, they often offer the services of their own daughters to prospective clients, and personally handle the bargaining. The UN associates the increase in sex trade within the Badi community to the emergence of radio and television which drastically reduced the demand for their traditional forms

of entertainment. "To compensate for this sudden loss in livelihood a number of Badi women began to prostitute themselves to the wider public, encouraged by increasing demand from a rapidly growing population in the Tarai districts," UN affirms. Although prostitution is considered illegal in Nepal, the traditional lifestyle of the Badi community has not changed much. At night, as we walk through some of the so-called former prostitution hubs in Kailali, it becomes clear that few women have vowed to refrain the flesh trade. Currently



Bisnukantipur, Babi Badi behind fisher's net. Copyright Bibbi Abruzzini

almost forty thousand Badi live in Nepal, the majority in the Tarai districts, but prostitution seems particularly widespread in 'highway towns'. Every day as the sun goes down, transport workers in particular, come looking for commercial sex workers. Several Badi women interviewed in Muda Bazaar along the Mahendra Highway openly shared that they were involved in prostitution. Lack of alternative livelihoods combined to the hierarchy inherent in the Badi community itself, makes it difficult for most women to upgrade their socio-economic status. "We started working as prostitutes because we had to feed our families. Now that it is illegal most of our daughters go to India. The government is building houses for some members of the community but we are still waiting for our turn," Phulmati

Badi, 54, reveals. Phulmati, a former prostitute, has married twice and is often victim of domestic violence. She now takes care of her granddaughter as her daughter, Sapana, currently resides in Punjab, India. In Bisnukantipur, a Badi settlement devastated by recent flooding, lack of landownership means that most Badi men migrate in search of employment to India or to other parts of Nepal, while the women stay behind. Badi women are affected by discriminatory practices and social stigma due to their perceived association with prostitution, but what about who

is standing on the 'other side of the counter'? What about the customers? How can we stop the vicious cycle? Prostitution is all about supply and demand. Demand for illicit sex is so strong that it may be the only consumer product that thrives without really being

advertised. Prostitution pays well, consequently the government instead of simply building an agglomeration of houses should create sustainable alternatives by placing greater emphasis on creating employment opportunities.

*Bibbi Abruzzini is a journalist from Italy who writes for various European and South Asian newspapers. [bibbi32@hotmail.com](mailto:bibbi32@hotmail.com)*

### NEW SPOTLIGHT

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# Every Young Girl Has The Right To Fulfill Her Human Potential



By GIULIA VALLESE

There are more than 500 million adolescent girls in the developing world today. More than 3 million of them – aged 10 to 19 – live in Nepal. There are 3 million smiles and 3 million ways to look at the world. Imagine 3 million adolescent girls educated, healthy and happily enjoying their childhood in their homes, schools and public spaces. Adolescence is a crucial period of life and a vulnerable one: young girls and boys experience body changes, deepen their values, develop new relationships and start dreaming about their future.

**About 1 in 5 girls aged 15 to 19 in Nepal are mothers or pregnant. Yet the vast majority doesn't use contraceptives (86% of married adolescents aged 15-19) and have the highest unmet need for family planning (about 42%, highest in South Asia).**

Decisions they make or that they are forced to make will shape their life. This critical period demands continued safe spaces for adolescent girls to ask questions, learn from their mistakes, assume new responsibilities and take a step closer to achieving their dreams. UNFPA believes that is certainly not a time for a child to give birth to another child.

However, many harsh realities stand in the way of realizing the dreams of our adolescent girls such as poverty of opportunities, gender discrimination and inequality, multiple forms of violence, abuse and exploitation, child labor, child marriage, adolescent pregnancy, deep rooted patriarchal norms and values to name a few.

Adolescent pregnancy is a key developmental issue. It is a health issue. Adolescents girls under the age of 15 are up to five times more likely to die in childbirth than women in their 20s. Pregnant mothers, if too young are at a high risk of dying while giving birth or suffering from complications, including obstetric fistula and uterine prolapsed. This is in fact the number one cause of death among adolescent girls. When the first child is born to a mother aged 12-20, the child is at greater risk of dying before age 5, being stunted,

underweight and suffering from anemia than when born to a mother aged 24-26.

It is a socio-economic issue. The price of adolescent pregnancy is hindered potential, delayed education, stubborn poverty for the poorest and first-time young mothers and fathers. Whether married or unmarried, girls become pregnant for many complex reasons. Pregnancy could be unplanned resulting from experimentation without knowledge to prevent it. The overwhelming majority of adolescent girls who become pregnant in Nepal are married and pressured to have a child. There is also a direct correlation between lack of education and child marriage (72% of women 20-24 were married

before 18 whereas this figure drops to 23% for women with secondary education of higher). Furthermore, 37% of married adolescent girls aged 15-19 or nearly two in every five girls are not working.

It is a Right issue. Persistent gender inequalities, sexual violence, forced marriage, power imbalances between girls and their partners, lack of education, and the failure of systems and institutions that otherwise should be protecting their rights give rise to a number of human rights violations.

**How can we help preventing adolescent pregnancies in Nepal?**

About 1 in 5 girls aged 15 to 19 in Nepal are mothers or pregnant. Yet the vast majority doesn't use contraceptives (86% of married adolescents aged 15-19) and have the highest unmet need for family planning (about 42%, highest in South Asia). Hence the risks of a child giving birth to a child are very high. More programs are needed to help them delay the first pregnancy and space subsequent pregnancies. These programs should promote access to and utilization of modern contraceptives.

Given that adolescent pregnancies are of particular concern among rural and uneducated adolescent girls, more efforts are needed to increase access to

adolescent- and youth-friendly services. Such services need to be delivered in a sensitive, confidential, non-judgmental, and non-discriminatory way, regardless of marital status. They should include sexual and reproductive health and HIV information and services, including contraception, prevention and treatment of STIs and HIV and maternal health services, regardless of marital status.

Since the educational status of adolescents and youth influences many health indicators, collaboration between the health and education sectors is key, particularly in the provision of age-appropriate comprehensive Sexuality education.

Nepal has a lot of recent data on adolescents (including the 2011 Nepal Demographic and Health Survey, the Nepal Adolescent and Youth Survey and the National Population and Housing Census). Policies and strategies related to adolescent and young people Sexual and reproductive health should be updated and operationalized. This includes the national population policy that the Ministry of Health and Population is currently drafting.

Underlying all these issues and efforts is the understanding that the dignity and human rights of adolescent girls must be respected, protected and fulfilled. Girls' rights to health, education, skills building and a life free of coercion and fear deserve our full attention. We must invest in them to protect them and include them in post-2015 development agenda.

We call on the Government of Nepal, the international community and all stakeholders involved to take measures that will enable adolescent girls to make responsible life choices and to provide the necessary support when their rights are threatened. Every young girl, regardless of where she lives or her socio-economic circumstances, has the right to fulfill her human potential. Today, too many girls are denied that right. We can change that, and we must.

*(Ms. Vallese is UNFPA Representative to Nepal. Excerpts of her Speech delivered in World Population Day 2013.)*



# Our Street Animals

By ARYAA RAJOURIA

The streets of Kathmandu are overflowing with life, both figuratively and literally. With the air heavy with the scent of street food, motorcycles scurrying through a dangerous maze, and people dodging the bullet like cars, there is one thing that stands out. The street animals of Kathmandu vary from one another in many, many different ways. Yet, whether it's a cow, monkey, or dog, they all have similar problems. BJ Sharma, a vivid walker, says, "I think the number of animals on the streets has reduced through the years, but the animals look sick these

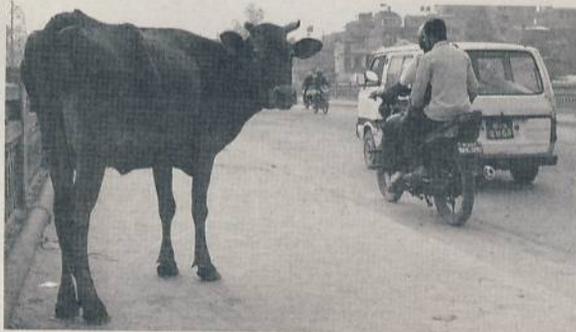
days. The dogs especially, all of their ribs show."

Street animals are just like other animals, except for the fact that they have a very hard time surviving. They face challenges that most animals, and even humans do not face today. Whether it be stoning from shop owners, or plain starvation, life is difficult. They are not protected from rabies, colds, or any other diseases. An unidentified fruit shop owner says, "If we don't hit the dogs, they touch the fruits and people won't buy them."

There are hundreds of donors and organizations to stand up for every other cause, yet there are only a few that stand up for these animals. The Kathmandu Animal Treatment Center (KAT Center) is one of the few. It is a non-profit organization created to serve and protect Nepal's street animals, especially dogs. Its main goal is to reduce the number of street dogs, and make sure the ones that are still on the streets are safe and healthy. As the KAT center says, "more than 20,000 dogs live on the streets of Kathmandu, Nepal, and many suffer from starvation, infected open sores,

mange and other injuries and illnesses." KAT aims to help these dogs through Animal Birth Control and rabies vaccinations, public education, and by rescuing and treating sick hounds. Over 200 people acquire rabies from dog bites every year.

Through questionnaires, the Animal Welfare Network Nepal discovered that much of the population is wrongly informed regarding street dogs. The results were astonishing. 99% of the people interviewed considered street dogs to be a problem, while 10% said that in



order to control the street dog population, these misplaced hounds should be killed. 12% of the people questioned confessed to throwing stones at dogs.

With thousands of street dogs looking for loving homes, it is peculiar that many Nepali locals purchase foreign hounds. Many outsiders, however, adopt street dogs as pets. Phurba Dolma has been a dog owner for 12 years. She has 3 dogs, of which two of them are Tibetan mastiffs and one is of mixed breed. As a native Nepali, she thinks that street dogs would make wonderful pets. "Adopting a street dog is a double win. You have the dog's

loyalty, and the dog has your love."

Dolma goes on to explain why most Nepalese people would rather own a foreign pup, "People buy foreign breeds to show off in the society. If you have a Japanese dog or something, it shows that you are rich enough to import an animal."

Most foreign dog breeds are available in kennel clubs, while street dogs are available in organizations such as the KAT Center. Mt. Everest Kennel Club is located in Baneshwore. It sells many foreign pups, ranging from the Labrador to the German shepherd. The most popular breeds seem to be the Lhasa Apso, the Labrador, the German Shepherd, and the Japanese Spitz.

While purchasing a dog from a kennel, the price shall range from Rs. 6000 (Japanese Spitz) to 17,000 (Labrador). When a person takes in a dog from the KAT Center, it is free. A street dog is already used to Nepal's polluted environment. It will thus live longer. Foreign dogs are not used to the climate, and adapting may be a problem.

With Kathmandu overflowing, with dogs and people alike, bringing in new breeds from outside may not be a good idea. Like Sharma says, "When we have so many dogs here, why should we bring in more? They disrespect the ones that are Nepali, and love the westerner's dogs. Dogs are loyal, and Nepal's street dogs need the love." ■

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# Reflections On Bp's *Atmabrittanta*



By **BIDUSHI ADHIKARI**

As a teenager, my first impression of B. P. Koirala arises from his framed photos that are spotted in many places of my house. His kind eyes, his knitted eyebrows, and a hand resting casually on his face is a picture that always has a looming presence in the back of my mind whenever his name comes up or I read about him. The cause is not only my father, who derives a lot of inspiration from this hero of the 1950-51 revolution, but also the fact that he is the first democratically-elected prime minister. For this, BP Koirala always came out to be a great influential character to me.

Consequently, as the BP Memorial Day arrived, I took the opportunity to read his *Atmabrittanta* translated by Kanak Mani Dixit and organize my thoughts and reflection. These words were recorded by Ganesh Raj Sharma, a renowned constitutional lawyer of Nepal, as BP lay on his deathbed following an incurable cancer.

Koirala's recollections shows the kind of fierce, determined moral character that he was in his struggle for democracy in Nepal and efforts towards nation-building and nationalism. It explains how he went through the chaos and various inexplicable cases of arrests and attacks all in the name of the nation. BP always knew what he was fighting for and went to all fronts to make his aspirations take shape. Under the oppressive Rana rule, BP fought for the people and the people alone, deriving his own inspiration from those around him. His logical outlook on the political situation and his ability relay his opinions allowed BP to rise in the eyes of all the people he knew and maintain connections that came to his aid later on.

One example of BP's collected attitude and logical thinking is when King Mahendra threw BP in solitary confinement for many years; instead of losing his cool, BP understood he should not fight for the injustice just yet, as he knew that the King could not handle the uprisings taking place and would have to seek him for aid. BP wanted to compromise in the interest of the country. Even after this, he always guided himself by what he described as the policy of national reconciliation. This again demonstrated the kind of focus BP had on his plans for the future and his ability to think ahead.

From a very young age, BP Koirala showed glimpses of the brave character he developed throughout his life. When

his parents couldn't afford the anesthetics for the operation on his bottom, Koirala willingly bore through the immense pain, knowing that it would save his parents a great sum of money. And later on, after the Rana rule had concluded, Koirala proposed various changes to laws on land ownership, ones which upset the aristocrats who had long profited from the leasehold system. Although a whole lot of people would go against what he was saying, BP always

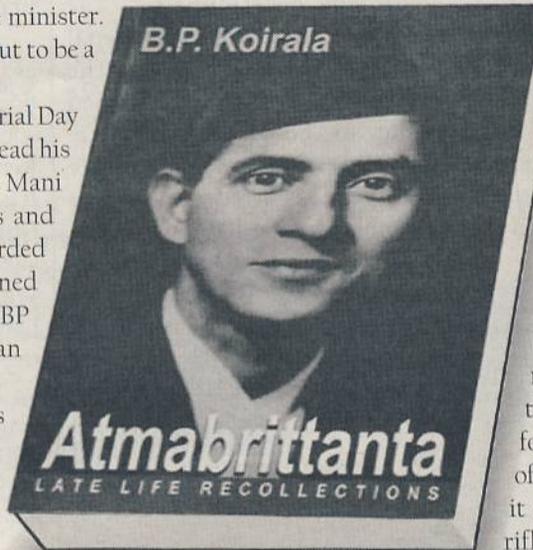
put what was right in front of anything that may have caused him personal harm.

And yet, amidst his bravery and determination, there were some aspects of his biography that shocked me. At home, I have always looked at the portrait of Mahatma Gandhi, Laxmi Prasad Devkota, and BP Koirala side by side. They are renowned people, known for all they excelled at. Therefore, when I found out that BP Koirala thought of armed rebellion and had promoted it at times, supplying grenades and rifles for the revolutionaries, I was astounded. How could someone, who

lived such a principled life and has been mentioned alongside Gandhi, promote violence? It really does not stay in harmony with his life and public commitments.

It took me some time to understand that such measures were necessary considering the situation then. The rebellions had to have something to fight with when they were confronted by the Nepali army. Without the arms, the success of the uprising and the displacement of the Rana regime would not have been possible. Koirala himself shot a man in the chest, and his own reflections aren't provided in the translation of his verbal autobiography. The cause may be the incoherence of his thoughts as he spoke these words from his deathbed.

What Koirala did all those years ago has still managed to change Nepal today. His influence, in politics and literature, are vivid and alive, influencing the young minds that study him. New ideas and drastic changes are not what people are used to. To be able to break through that and offer something more practical and better is something that takes courage and puts one in a lot of personal risk. For these very characteristics, BP Koirala must be remembered and honored. ■



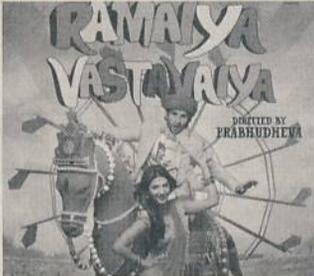
## MOVIE REVIEW

## Ramaiya Vastavaiya



Boy meets girl. Falls in love. But family doesn't endorse their relationship. Determined, the lovers resolve to win over the displeased relatives through hard slog, willpower and integrity... Aah, haven't we visited similar themes numerous times in the past? But storytellers the world over tend to replicate stories — with modifications and alterations, of course — interpreting the yarn in their individualistic way.

After regaling spectators with masala entertainers like WANTED and ROWDY RATHORE, Prabhu Dheva unleashes his new outing RAMAIYA VASTAVAIYA. Clearly, the promos give an inkling that Prabhu dwells on the age-old formula in his third Hindi outing, a genre that's oft-repeated post MAINE PYAR KIYA [1989]. Come to think of it, not only does RAMAIYA VASTAVAIYA bring back memories of MAINE PYAR KIYA, but also ANARI [1993; Venkatesh - Karisma Kapoor, with Suresh Oberoi playing the strict older brother], DILWALE DULHANIA LE JAYENGE [1995; SRK - Kajol, with Amrish Puri as the stern father] and PYAAR KIYA TO DARNA KYA [1998; Salman - Kajol, with Arbaaz enacting Kajol's authoritarian brother].



In reality, RAMAIYA VASTAVAIYA is the remake of Prabhu Dheva's directorial debut NUVVOSTANANTE NENODDANTANA [Telugu; 2005], which was subsequently remade in other languages. The query is, why tag on the oft-repeated premise for a present-day film? But let me also add that romance is eternal and if one looks at the success ratio of this genre, the results have been fantastic, with almost every top name today having commenced his career with a love saga.

(Courtesy: Bollywood Hungama)

## 'A MOON FOR THE MISBEGOTTEN' IN TOWN

One World Theatre presents the Nepal Premiere of A Moon for the Misbegotten, a masterwork by Eugene O'Neill, America's only Nobel Prize-winning playwright.

According to a press release, A Moon for the Misbegotten performs at the new Theatre Village, in front of The Attic Bar, Lazimpat, on July 26, 27, 28 and 30, 31 at 5:30 pm sharp, with a special Saturday Matinee July 28 at 12 noon. General Admission is Rs 500, Rs 200 and Students with ID Rs 100. No advance reservations, box office opens an hour before show time.

This famous American drama is filled with Irish-American humor and lyricism. The story tells of Phil Hogan, a wily tenant farmer, his outsized daughter Josie, and James (Jamie) Tyrone, Jr. (based on the playwright's alcoholic older brother), who comes for a fateful date in the moonlight. What begins as a rustic farce gradually connects the audience with the cleansing power of redemption.

NEW SPOTLIGHT

## MOVIE PREVIEW

## The Wolverine 3D

Release Date : 26 Jul 2013

Director : James Mangold

Cast : Hugh Jackman, Will Yun Lee, Tao Okamoto

In modern day Japan, Wolverine is out of his depth in an unknown world as he faces his ultimate nemesis in a life-or-death battle that will leave him forever changed. Vulnerable for the first time and pushed to his physical and emotional limits, he confronts not only lethal samurai steel but also his inner struggle against his own immortality, emerging more powerful than we have ever seen him before.



## Issaq

Release Date : 26 Jul 2013

Director : Manish Tiwary

Cast : Aaditya Budhathoki

In this original Indian adaptation of William Shakespeare's Romeo & Juliet directed by Manish Tiwary, we see the story transposed to Banaras and its neighbouring areas that are witness to violence unleashed by sand mafia controlled by urban elite and equally violent retaliation by Naxalite armies. The sand mafia is run by two influential Banarasi families, Kashyaps and Mishras, who are at brutal feud with each other. Kashyap has an 18-year old, pretty and innocent daughter Bachchi from his first wife, Bachchi's role is played by Amyra Dastur who marks her debut in this film. On the other hand, Mishra's son Rahul (Played by Prateik) is a good-looking teenager with predictable interests for a boy of his background - Girls & Guns! Things change when the battle-hardened and pleasure-seeking Rahul and romantic yet head strong Bachchi fall in love. Disregarding the consequences, the young lovers choose go ahead with the dictates of their hearts. What follows is a high octane action-filled drama.



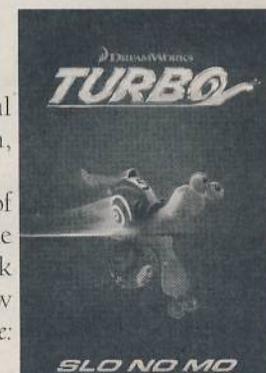
## Turbo - 3D

Release Date : 02 Aug 2013

Director : David Soren

Cast : Ryan Reynolds, Paul Giamatti, Maya Rudolph, Michelle Rodriguez

A garden snail with dreams of becoming the fastest snail in the world experiences a freak accident that might just allow him to realize his goal. (Source: QFXCinemas)



# Ageing

By **BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD**



The cause for ageing is the subject of a vigorous debate. Some people think it is just wear and tear while many think ageing is genetically determined. However, although a more modern concept, the genetic determination of ageing is not scientifically borne out. For example just because your parents lived to a ripe old age does not genetically give you an advantage. Only a measly six percent of how long you will live as compared to the average is explained by your parents' longevity. Even genetically identical twins on the average have a difference of about 15 years in their life span. (In sharp contrast to this longevity issue, almost ninety per

cent of how tall you are is determined by your parents' height.) So the older concept of just wear and tear does seem to hold sway to a large extent

orthopedic injuries like a hip fracture which may make them bed-ridden and cause complications. So preventing falls is vital in looking after the elderly. An important study in the elderly pointed to three primary risk factors for falls: poor balance, taking more than 4 medicines, and muscle weakness. In general elderly people even without any of these risk factors have a 12 per cent chance of falls in a year, but if they have all three risk factors then there is a 100 % chance of falls. So obviously proper vision and hearing check-ups will help. In addition some drugs like diuretics may cause dehydration and dizziness, and ensuring that

**Even genetically identical twins on the average have a difference of about 15 years in their life span. (In sharp contrast to this longevity issue, almost ninety per cent of how tall you are is determined by your parents' height.) So the older concept of just wear and tear does seem to hold sway to a large extent**

the elderly are drinking adequate amounts of fluid will be useful. Proper nutrition (in terms of calories, proteins, and vitamins) to avoid muscle weakness will go a long way. Even simple measures like proper foot wear and floors will prevent falls.

cent of how tall you are is determined by your parents' height.) So the older concept of just wear and tear does seem to hold sway to a large extent. Our bodies accumulate harmful products like lipofucin and DNA mutations and numerous other microcellular problems over time, and just like an old car, we tend to physically fall apart.

Regardless of the cause of ageing, one of the most important problems in the elderly are falls, leading to

Finally it is important to find a compassionate and caring doctor for the elderly. Unlike young patients, older patients will have 10 main complaints rather than just one or two, and the problems may have been around for 50 years. Young doctors who may have joined the medical profession for its celebrity image quickly learn that it is not glamorous taking care of older patients. In fact it is challenging. Only doctors with enormous patience need apply.

## Nepal Army Signs Deal To Procure Mobile Hospitals From China

Nepal Army signed an agreement with China to provide two mobile military hospitals for disaster relief to the Nepalese Army. The deal was signed between Nepal Army Chief General Gaurav Shumsher Rana and his Chinese counterpart General Fang Fenghui, during Rana's visit to Beijing.

According to Nepal Army headquarters the two Army chief signed a Memorandum of Understandings for providing two mobile hospitals to Nepal. It added that that China has pledged to provide military equipments worth 50 million RMB to Nepal during General Rana's visit to China. The mobile hospitals are to be used for disaster relief operations.

The NA headquarters added that China has already initiated the process of providing various medical equipments worth 49 million RMB to Nepal Army. Similarly, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gaurav Sumsher Rana called on top ranked Members of the Politburo of the CPC Central Committee and Vice Chairman of the Central Military Commission of People's Republic of China in Beijing.

According to Directorate of Public Relations Nepal



Army, Nepalese Army chief met Vice Chairman of Central Military Commission, Air Chief Marshal Xu Qiliang. During the meeting, they discussed historical relations existed between army of two countries and bilateral issues of mutual interest. Deputy Chief of General Staff Lt Gen Wang Guan Zhong, Chief of Medical Department of General Logistics Department Maj Gen Reh Guo Quan, Deputy Chief of Operation Department of General Staff HQ Maj Gen Guo Yu Lin / Deputy Chief of Foreign Affairs Office Maj Gen Ci Guo Wei was also present during the meeting. Chief of Nepal Army Rana also met Chief of General Staff, General Fang Fanghui. During the meeting between two army chief, they discussed bilateral military issue.

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