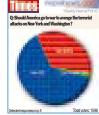


MINIERALI

At least they are just quarrelling and not killing each other.

he Maoist politburo is meeting this week near Naxalbari in India to decide on the underground party's agenda for the third round of peace talks. I Kathmandu, the Nepali Congress (NC) government is doing the same in party huddles and with the parliamentary

hardline rhetoric, neither side wants to



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discontinue the talks which is expected in the next few days. The next round has to go into the core issue of what the Maoists are finally willing to settle for after six years of war and 2,000 Nepalis killed. The top Maoist leadership is now hemmed in by domestic, regional and international factors: Public opinion against threats, intimidation and extortion This week US Secretary of State Colin

Powell labelled all groups using violence against legitimate governments terrorists Then Indian foreign minister Jaswant Singh made an unprecedented denouncement of Nepal's Maoists

The royal palace and army talk tough The Maoist leadership also faces pressure from local commanders beginning to disobey them. Many local cadre are acting on their own, in some cases giving the revolution a dangerous communal tint. Senior leaders now need an exit strategy which will be acceptable to the overnment, and also satisfy those lower lown the ladder. This is a critical compromise that will be the main challenge for Comrades Prachanda and Baburam Bhatarai.

The government can't put the Maoist eadership too much in a spot, otherwise a hardline faction will split off and head for the hills again. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, after bringing the negotiations this far is now also facing open dissatisfaction from within his own party and the palace. Both think he has given in too much to Maoist demands.

King Gyanendra expressed displeasure last week in a conversation with NC leader Ram Chandra Poudel about politicians not standing up against the Maoists' antimonarchy stance. Then, in an unprecedented move, the Defence Ministry warned Maoists last Friday against inciting the public against the monarchy. Senior ministers in the Deuba cabinet said they were "shocked" by the statement, which should normally have come from the Home Ministry. One minister told us: "The palace has now done a U-turn on the Maoists." An all-party meeting in Baluwatar on

Monday evening designed to prepare for the third round ended in disarray. There is increasing dissatisfaction with what is seen as the prime minister's secretive ways in dealing with the Maoists, and his perceived leniency towards them. Not everyone is

convinced the Maoists are negotiating in good faith. One minister admitted: "The prospect of coming out into parliamentary politics does not explain the Maoists' readiness for talks. They are arming and regrouping, and we'd better be prepared.

ETHNIC EDGE

As the political struggle of the Magist revolution recedes the government is getting sinister indications from some areas of a new communal edge After the truce went into effect, there have been incidents where local Maoists cadre have desecrated Hindu temples, slaughtered cows, and in the tarai triggered a dangerous polarisation with the madhesis The bahun-dominated Maoist leadership now faces a stark choice: sell a political solution to its own followers, or resume the armed struggle. If the Maoists go for a nolitical solution, discruptled Maoist militia can easily be assimilated into the police or

Prospects of reaching a viable agreement through the present negotiation process looks dim, but neither the rovernment nor the Maoists can afford to disavow talks. Even if the present talks fail and there is a return to fighting, both sides will soon have to return to meaningful negotiations. The present process has been stymied by dead-end demands from the Maoists for a republic and scrapping the constitution. Except for these two, most other issues on the Maoist agenda are negotiable and there is multi-partisan consensus on them.

If the Maoists come up with concrete and dramatic concessions during the third round, there is still a chance that the present process can be salvaged. Otherwise, it is back to war. And this time, it will be different the army will be in the fray, both sides will use heavier automatic weapons.

The Maoists need a soft landing, a cushion which they don't at present have. It's up to the parliamentary parties to provide them that. Their's is a political cause, not an ethnic or separatist war. The way out is public debate and negotiation.

Missing in action

Two names top the list of those missing since the start of the Maoist "people's war". Dev Raj Joshi, former Nepali Congress MP from Bajura may have already been killed after being abducted by Maoists in early July. Danda Pani Neupane is the most prominent missing Maoist. He disappeared in May 1999,

and the government says Neupane is not on its list of people detailed or killed.

As the third round of talks get underway, both sides are demanding the release of prisoners and information on the missing. The government wants the Maoists to release 189 people, including 69 policemen. The Maoists want to know where their own 69 missing comrades are as a precondition to further dialogue.

The human rights organisation INSEC says Maoists have abducted 547 people so far of which 107 are still missing and government has taken 227. The whereabouts of 130 are still unknown. There's someone else who is keeping count: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva. Spokesman Darcy Christen told us his numbers are similar, adding: "It is a complicated issue and has to be addressed immediately if you are to be in a position to

> So, either the possible killings have to be admitted (and regretted) by both sides, or the whereabouts of those still missing made public. "There are people we have not seen on our subsequent visits," Christen added, "It will be a political decision for Kathmandu to say what happened to them." Maoists have a greater responsibility since they have said they respect the Geneva Conventions.
> ICRC delegations have been visiting Nepali prisons since late

1998. Although they have no access to Maoist detention camps, the rebels have not disrupted their work. ICRC says its priority is to visit those under Maoist detention.

The ICRC has been trying to set up an office in Nepal since 1998 but does not have a Editorial p. 2

"headquarters agreement" with government Peace by Dasain vet. Sources in the foreign ministry admit there

have been delays and say that's because of "administrative problems." Unofficially, one reason for the delay was letting ICRC in would mean recognising the Maoist internal conflict. The official line until some months ago was that this was a "law and order problem".

"We have expertise in tracing people but are not into mediation," says

Jean Jacques Bovay, head delegate of ICRC in Nepal. The ICRC also offered to play the role of a neutral intermediary, but the government opted for Nepali uman rights "facilitators." ICRC's role in Nepal will become more important in the coming days, especially if the talks break down and the conflict escalates. It would then be providing medical help to the injured on both sides. And that can only happen if its official status is clarified, which could happen as

early as next week, a foreign ministry source told us.





Hinr Kunda Divit Edinr Ananha Neelakanta



TURN, TURN, TURN

History is an endless cycle. Countries suffer untold turmoil, and return to where they started to find that all the death and destruction was in vain. Look at Afghanistan. Thirty years after hounding out their king, dabbling in communism, being torn asunder by an ethnic fratricidal war, and now ruled by one of the most obscurantist regimes on earth, it may be King Zahir Shah who will have to rescue Afghan unity and nationalism. Moral of the story: you don't know what you have until you lose it.

Back at home, we are not quite sure what is driving the Maoists' anti-monarchy agenda. But suddenly, the comrades aren't that hot about a republic anymore. Their original desire to set up a Peoples' Republic of Nepal gave way to the demand for a "bourgeois republic" and then "an institutional development towards a republic". Fair enough. Every king, queen or sheikh is a tradeoff between the feudal hangover of hereditary rulers and with the need for a state icon that gives historical continuity to nationhood. Prevailing conditions at different times will determine public opinion about whether the trade-

Norway just went through one: the crown prince married a commoner who is an ex-drug addict and a single mother. The media said the monarchy had outlived its usefulness. The same week in Sweden, King Carl Gustaf had a strawberry tart thrown on his face by a teenager as he inaugurated a recreation centre. Danes are fonder of their royalty, but in Norway public support is down to below 60 percent. The monarchy vs republic debate will go on.

It will be the same here. The birth of our nation is inextricably linked to the ruling dynasty. Modern Nepal with its multi-ethnic, multilingual and multi-religious tapestry has few other symbols to cement itself into a nation state. Our kingdom and kingship were bruised and dented by the royal massacre, but the public's regard for the monarchy has withstood this test. Many Nepalis still don't believe the official version of the events of 1 June 2001, but they have decided to move on for now. They cope by disassociating the persona of the monarch from their predisposition for a monarchy.

Let's learn from Thailand. As long as we keep politics out of this national symbol and as long as the monarchy keeps itself above politics, it should be fine.

PEACE BY DASAIN

The bell has now rung for Round Three, Negotiators are being readied for talks again. The two sides used the previous rounds to size each other up, and to send the war-weary Nepali public a message that they were serious about talks. The public wants to believe them. All indications are that the Maoists are trapped between the internal consequences of what they have unleashed, and the need to press the eject button.

It is a lesson in how to unravel a revolution. From the Maoists' point of view, things were going very well till recently. The insurgency had grown phenomenally and spread to all parts of the country. Six years and 2,000 lives later, they had advanced facing no resistance from feckless and fractious parliamentary parties.

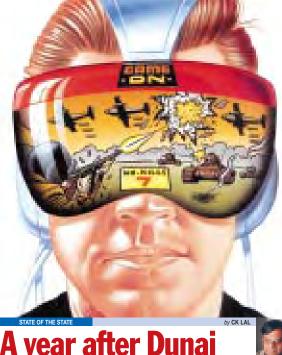
The manhadi became a household word spoken either in fear or awe. Then came the truce and talks in July. In a matter of weeks they had squandered most of the gains of the past six years. When the people discovered that the talks were an excuse for more aggressive extortion, threats, kidnappings, and the forced closures of businesses, their support waned. Ordinary shopkeepers, subsistence farmers and civil servants in the districts were now naving ransom. School buses were burnt, and aboveground leaders gave fiery speeches threatening to turn Narayanhiti into the Pentagon. Then, the desecration of temples, the forced feeding of beef, and the attacks on tarai farmers. There was now very little difference between the Maobadi and the Buddha-demolishing Taliban.

The Maoist leadership is distancing itself from this behaviour. even apologising, but the statements have been too little too late. The danger in all this is that once the revolution loses its political edge, grassroots warlords bored with the truce will unleash communally tinged attacks to light ethnic fires in the hills and the tarai.

It is vital for the third round to go into substantive discussions to



give the Magists a face-saving way to come out into the mainstream. The longer this drags on, the greater the chances that truce will be broken. Let's wrap it up by Dasain, and give the long-suffering people of Nepal something to finally rejoice about this



A year after Dunai

Nations need armies to go to war. But in peacetime, they need a strong and motivated police force.

assing into post-traumatic stress, the United States of America has fallen for the coping mechanism of waging war on an enemy whose threat it has massively magnified. Its military buildup in the Gulf and Central Asia portends the mother of all battles. But all this sabrerattling seems aimed more at a domestic audience than the Al Qaida fugitives of Osama bin Laden last seen in Afghanistan.

No nation, not even a superpower or a military alliance like NATO can guarantee peace in a world plagued by increasing inequality and a vicious cycle of poverty exploitation and injustice. The sole superpower of the globe may have reduced the United Nations to the level of a 'supra-national relief agency" as an American scholar put it disparagingly, but it still is the last hope of turning the world

into a community of nations. What is true of relationship between nations is equally valid for interdependence between different communities within a state. The moment a single community, or an alliance of dominant communities, decides to perpetuate the hold on power then the seeds of sedition are sown. In a functioning democracy, the state is expected to mediate in the conflict of interest between communities that have contradictory aspirations and differing grievances. The moment a state stops discharging that function of mediation, it

ceases to command respect, and ultimately starts to lose its relevance altogether. When the state becomes soft and ineffective, the powerful shut themselves inside fortresses. The weak on the other hand, grow increasingly desperate and stop

respecting life. Terrorism in such an asymmetrical struggle becomes inevitable Terror, as study after study everywhere has shown, is the weapon of last resort for those who feel that they have been denied justice. In every society, there always is a culturally deprived and inarticulate group of people who resort to violence to express

The only long-term antidote to terrorism is to ensure justice in society.

After all, the history of human civilisation is nothing but a chronicle of the search for justice. All wars between "the good and the evil" have been manifestations of the pursuit of a higher goal—establishment of a humane and just social order in the world

Pursuit of justice is not just moral, it is also practical. The way a society treats its weak is the only true measure of its civilisation, and nothing frightens away investment and trade as swiftly as a state that cannot deliver justice to the aggrieved. As much as the moral obligation fensuring social justice, nations need the

badge of the rule of law. The police is the social institution that helps implement laws to safeguard justice. Whether it is to get people off a burning skyscraper in Manhattan or to control anti-Maoist mobs in Biruwagadhi, Parsa, policemen are usually the first representatives of the state to arrive at a scene of carnage or conflict. Officers of the Royal Nepal Army love to pour scorn on their brethren in blue, but they fail to realise that if it were not for the Nepal Police, our men in green wouldn't have been able to devote themselves completely to

Unfortunately, the government doesn't seem to have learnt that primary lesson of carnage in Dunai exactly a year ago. Hundreds of guerrillas stormed the district headquarters of Dolpa on 25 September 2001. As soldiers watched from nearby barracks 14 policemen were killed, 41 others wounded, 12 abducted and Rs50 million looted from a bank For those who witnessed Dunai the later

That is why on Saturday when the Ministry of Defence suddenly warned that it would not sit idly by if the sanctity of constitutional monarchy is ridiculed publicly it sounded more sinister than sensible. That is supposed to be the job of assist it if needed. The army asserting itself in routine political affairs of the country

sent all the wrong signals.

One year after Dunai, the Maoists are now engaged in talks. Some of their leaders are above ground. But faced with throttled from the south, Maoists are in uncertain terrain. Increasingly on the defensive, they are now lashing out like carnage in Dunai, let us hope that the government realises the need of revitalising a force that has lost its will to fight terrorism. Restoring peace is what we owe the 2,000 Nepalis who have been killed in this senseless war And to keep that peace, we need a strong and motivated police force that takes its motto ("Truth, Service and Security") seriously.

peacekeeping duties abroad.

humiliation in Holeri came as no surprise. the police, and the army is expected to

growing public backlash, their supply-lines cornered cats. On the anniversary of the

clarifies that what he actually meant was

behind the six-year-old insurgency. UML

leader Madhav Kumar Nepal, who has

that he is mystified about who really is

NATION

Contrived confusi

Every political group seems bewildered right now, but there is an evolving consensus: democracy may have to be destroyed to be saved. he cloud of confusion settling on the top tier of our political class has thickened considerably in recent weeks. A day after pointedly accusing The Maoists, already confounded by Narayanhiry and New Delhi darbars o fomenting the Maoist rebellion, Nepali spontaneous outbreaks of popular resist-Congress president Girija Prasad Koirala

ance in some districts and rumbles of recalcitrance within their ranks, are in a quandary over whether to join mainstream politics before things get any worse or to continue their campaign of violence and

things, extortion, coercion and vandalismwhich everybody thought were eternal criminal offences-for a month, only to lift it three days later, ostensibly to save the faltering neace talks. The dozens of Maoist activists freed from prison as a gesture of government goodwill get a freer hand to raise funds to

evidently

nd us they have the Maoists as 7 and geography eptable rerging he United ing for some ace talks shoved nes, the surrogates st against armyn some college ov forcing vacation. Young inspired by the vision of the Helmsman torch pol vehicles to :apability of iery rhetoric, rthe dosure call ids' plans for iled at such in alienating a

Although they hate admitting it, every political group seems to be basking in this biosphere of bafflement. After his push to please and appease everybody in the landreform programme backfired, Deuba has reverted to his one-point agenda of concluding a peace deal with the Maoists, threatening to resign if he failed. But the prime minister's single-minded devotion to the cause of peace may no longer be enough to help him postpone the painful task of phase-wise cabinet expansions he had

privately pledged to keep his flock together After the Silguri conclave formalised the foreign connections of the Maoist leadership, the UML has stepped up its offensive on the rebels in public. Privately, however, UML leaders know they need to keep alive an emasculated Maoist movement outside the electoral process as a fallback position for the day they became tired of sitting on the fence. Meanwhile, remnants of the ancien regime in parliament and outside are happy to wear that we-told-you-so frown every time they see a surge of street fury against the sordid state of the nation. The people, fed on allegations that the monarchy is abetting a rebel movement which has publicly vowed to replace it with a communist republic, are braving this befuddlement with their familiar mix of fatalism, forbearance and frustration.

However, there is actually little reason to lose heart. Amid the mist, there are clea signs of an evolving national consensus on the need to destroy democracy in order to save it. The mainstream political parties

months of Koirala's first tenure a premier. After the hung parliament of 1994 kept everyone in suspended animation, the Maoists thought the demolition project could be completed faster through armed action. As late and ambivalent adherents of non-military methods of destruction, the rebels may seem to be a little raw and rough. However, they have demonstrated sufficient maturity in feeling the pulse of an infant democracy that has been in mortal danger since its rebirth in 1990 The surfeit of semantic stupefaction in the Maoists' speech is carefully scripted to facilitate a candid exchange of ideas.

When Maoist ideologue Baburam

Bhattarai castigates the current polity fo

abandoning the majority of the people to repeatedly "electing their own tormenton and exploiters to rule over them for a fixed period," he draws attention. When he asserts that his party would allow a multiparty political system that would include parties of the "most advanced proletarian class," he provides enough conceptual elasticity for cerebral experiments of all kinds. It's easy to mistake the insurgents' insistence on the need to institutionalise Nepal's embryonic republic for ideological incoherence. What the demand actually does is provid enough legroom for everybody to reach his or her own conclusions on the trek towards a new beginning. It's not difficul to understand why everyone, from fiercely nationalist royalists to disloyal rabblerousers who want to dissolve the kingdom into the republic down south, is frolicking in the fog of Maoist phraseology.



neighbour to die by the same

hands that have been slapping

them for years. Today Afghani-

Americans calling the attacks an

act of war. When adjectives in the

English vocabulary fail to describe

stan, that also without any

THE FAGIE IS WOUNDED C K Lal has it all wrong in "The

eagle is wounded" (#61). Saying that President George W Bush and his advisors have not understood the enormity of the shock and horror among the people in America and all over the world! That "nearly four-fifth of humanity" think that America stands for what is evil in this world! That the carnage of September 11 was not an act of terror! That 'warmongers" in Washington and London are trivialising the impact of this human catastrophe! That President Bush's "we are at war" declaration resounds with false bravado! Comparing this incident with a movie! Justifying such a horrendous act and glorifying those who were responsible for it! The respected and

theory of "clash of civilizations" racist. Followers of different religions or belonging to a civilization are not confined to a particular racial or ethnic group. Just goes to show Lal's utter ignothoughtful journalist that he is, rance and his habit of making it doesn't look as if Mr Lal sweeping generalisations wrote this piece himself. Does he have a ghostwriter, or does he have a grudge against the

policies, its people and what it stands for? Dr Roop Jvot MP. Upper

United States, its

agree with CK Lal's The Eagle is wounded" (#61). How meek our South Asian leaders have proved themselves to be by aligning themselves wrong time for all the

vrong reasons, while leaving our Gurkhas might be made to revisit their old battle theatre of Afghanistan as part of a British contingent. The presence of Gurkhas in Afghanistan might attract tangible proof, tomorrow who ..? unwanted attention towards Nepal. It is high time that both Ravi Tandukar by email Britain and India acknowledged and respected Nepal's geopoliti-CK Lal in "The eagle is wounded" cal compulsions vis-a-vis misunderstands the whole point of Gurkhas.

the horror of the crime what else can you call it? "Sajju"

Pennsylvania, USA CK Lal calls Samuel Huntington's Prakash A Rai Kathmandu am concerned that if/when the US launches a ground ault on the Taliban.

Ram Limbu Manly, Australia Part of the fun of reading CK Lal

each week is trying to guess. where his keen and unpredictable mind will land on any given issue But this week add me to the long and distinguished list of those who Honourable Lal has annered at least once. The world's relationship with America is complex, but the vast majority of people everywhere do not hate us arrogant cowbovs enough to commit or condone civilian terror attacks. Lal says " is impossible to take a moral high ground against those who willingly eliminate themselves fo their faith". I disagree. It may be impossible to stop violent acts by supremely motivated people. whether their motivation is faith or something else. But it is possible and indeed necessary t denounce mass murder whatever the motivation. There are many mistakes America needs to ponder. But forbearance to the point of leaving these criminals at leisure to strike again would be folly, not only for America but for

John Child by email



Drugs abuse



HEMLATA RAI

we things are likely to fapharmaccutical drugs in Negal over precipition and underconsumption. How and when this happens usually depends on more that the just the health of your body and wallet. The availability and markenability of drugs have a greater role to play in our lives than we could have imagined.

Hard statistic are difficult to come by when looking into the unwarranted prescription of pharmaceutical drugs, but public health workers six the practice. has reached almost epidemic proportions in Nepal. The main actors in the wellness game—doctors, manufacture and trades, and drug administrators—all are equally to blame for over-medicating unasu-pecting consumers. But because of

HERE AND THERE

inadequate laws, poor monitoring mechanisms and unconcern on the part of the Department of Drug Administration, no part of the drug-triangle is forced to watch where it's going. 'It is this lopsided power relation that puts consumers at disakarntaged position while going immense power to prescribes,' said Sharad Onta, a public health expert with the Public Health Concern

Nepali consumer rights protection laws are feeble and consumer rights campaigning is still in its infancy. Only a few cases are filed against medical practitioners for negligence. And even this only happens when the misake is of a very large magnitude and attracts the attention and support of earthiest. More offen than not, such lawsuits are most strongly opposed by the very agencies that are meant.

to ensure medical practitioners

TOO LITTLE

The problem begins with public ector health care institutions. which are basically victims of overnment ineptitude. Here, people suffer as a result of inaduate supplies, poor infrastructu and health workers who only half the law. Village-based health workers are a neglected lot—they re denied opportunities to upgrade heir skills and initiatives to mprove their service, which mean they have little incentive to put ven the skills they have to the best ossible use. But the ultimate ufferer in these places is the perso who is unwell—their ailments are not properly diagnosed, and they are often provided medication that is past its expiry date, was of poor

In Nepal, you either get too much medication or not enough. Prescribers may be far from qualified, and drug companies are cashing in.

quality in the first place or has actually lost much of its potency due to inaccurate storage and

transportation methods.

On there may simply not be enough medication to treat patients effectively, especially at health units in remote places. Study to use to such bealth poss often find that patients are prescribed does lower than that recommended because they are also under tremendous pressure to manage the inadequate druis applies with no help from government outles.

These recipitoral health workers.

are also not protected by laws against inevitable medical accidents." The international medical code protects health workers from the 'accidental' reaction to penicillin G and V group injection, which could cause death. Health workers in Nepal are not give legal protection against this and the rovernment does not provide a substitute for the antibiotic. Fearing adverse reactions to the drug, many health posts refuse to disperse penicillin, listed as an essential drug, even when they have it in stock. Wh they do not know is that the occurrence of death as a result of an alleres to penicillin is one in 500,000 and a nealth worker administrating the drug is not subjected to legal punishment unless wrong intention is proved. Just wo years ago, a health assistant from Charikor was imprisoned because he had administered penicillin to a oatient who suffered anaphylactic shock as a result and died.

TOO MUCH

The health service private sectors suffers from the opposite maduly over prescription of medicine and over-use of other health facilities. Medical professionals and parients alike don't understand the different roles of musing, diagnostic, medical and pharmaceutical services too well, and even relatively minor illnesses impose a heavy economic burden on patients and their families through unnecessary tests and medication. The Nepali market is flooded The Nepali market is flooded.

with approximately 11,000 brands of 35 national and 700 international pharmaceutical manufacturers which when compared with the population puts Nepal at the top of the heap when it comes to per capita brand consumption. For instance, almost all prescriptions handed out here include a multivitamin tonic, which developed countries advise against, saying such tonics do virtually nothing to enchance the health of people and so is an unnecessary economic burden to the patients. Over-prescription has more dangerou onsequences too—practitioners have found that antibiotics are ineffective to treat sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among Nepali adults due to unscientific use and over-use throughout the average urban Nepali life. The Ministry of Health has decided to fight fire with fire-every new STD patient is now prescribed a new, potent kind of antibiotic that assumes the patient has already taken at least one course of a similar medicine without consulting a specialist.

Developed countries like the

Jnited Kingdom have laws that prohibit manufacturers from investing more than 11 percent of their production costs in advertising. But in India, the main supplier of pharmaceutical drugs in Nepal, some manufacturers spend up to 36 percent to advertise their wares. This high investment in promotion has accelerated a drive to create "brand loyalty" among medical practitioners—just like you would with shampoo or noodles. This is certainly profitable for manufacturers and traders and even the prescribers sometimes has the effect of nudging medical practitioners to put selfinterest before the well-being of their patients.

Another factor which fuels misprescription is the ambiguity in who is allowed to prescribe drugs in the first place. On one hand the government seems to recognise health workers of all levels in all different types of health care units as eligible prescribers. The Nepal Medical Council (NMC) on the other hand only recognises people with the qualification of MBBS and higher as eligible prescribers. The recently registered Health Workers Council has been demanding that health assistants and auxiliary health workers also be given the status by the NMC. The National Drug Policy was enacted in 1995, but

by DANIEL LAV

The real enemy is exclusion

War is about destruction. The rhetoric that justifies war is usually about value systems, preserving them, defending them, often imposing them. But the real reason that nations, or groups of people go to war, is to destroy the other side. There are no "limited wars." Even if destruction is confined to military targets, there has been total destruction somewhere in the arean of battle. An innocent life is taken, a piece of property or a way of life belonging to a non-combatant destroyed utterly. This is the main reason that the world's committed pacifists, those with the bravery to stand up for their beliefs, whatever the cost, deplore war. It is uncontrollable, once it starts, no matter what the "Defence Correspondents" tell you on television, or the generals affirm with their

laser pointers in slick modal briefings. War is the abject failure of peaceful diplomacy, intelligence gathering, negotiation and compromise. It is often the last resort of the bungling politician, or the first choice of those who perceive themselves as too weak to meet an enemy halfway. Battles, even when backed by a righteous majority, destroy more than they achieve. War alone will never solve a problem. Offen it will exacerbate it not he long term. Anyone who thinks the coming blitzkine jon terror will put a stop to the vile tactics of killing and mainting the innocent had better think again.

What is about to happen is—I feat—likely to throw up an army of new recruits for the battalions of terror. There are vast feelings of alienation out there, in every society on earth, that go to heinous extremes under untold pressures. And it's not hard to fall outside the mainstream, not at all. The men whose caused a United Nations of innocent bloodhed on 11 September were, we're told, middle class, futhers, husbands, people "like us". How could they do live.

Anyone who thinks the coming blitzkrieg on terror will put a stop to terrorism had better think again.



If there's be a lesson, a result, a development that encourages and gives hope to our children, perhaps it should a real commitment to find the answer to that question. Is it too much to hope that the inevitable war will have another side to it? That war on the battlefield, in the skies or at sea, can be matched by soul searching among the citizens of the Fortunate Work.

We—and I am, of course, one of them—need to spend the next year or so agonising over everything we have, and whether by having it we depty others. We must accept that a wronged people—Americans and the rest of us from countries that support the coming war—need more than violence to purge the world of ferror. We need to address its causes, not as an empty, political debate about whose side we're on, but as an admission that the real enemy is exclusion, not evil existing in a vacuum. We need to marshal bartalions of sociologists, spechiatrists, anthropologists, even journalists. This needs to be part of a huge process of reaching out to the disposses dat ahome and aboud. The extremism bred by exclusion is a festering symptom of trouble to come, not an evil to be deabood it have the control of the control of

deplored in rhetoric, ignored in practise.

I still support the United States and all the others. While recognising that there are reasons for the evil acts in New York City, Washington and over Pennsylvania, I deplore to the depths of my soul what has happened. But as a card-carring member of the only species of animal that seems to believe in hope, I insist that we learn from all the mistakes we can. If some potential terrorist somewhere is deterred by high, efficient security, if good law enforcement prevents a higak or a bombing before innocent blood is shed, if the anti-terror warriors manage to arrest and apply justice and due process to those behind the attack on America, then right

has triumphed over wrong, good over evil.

But more importantly, there will only be real victory, genuine rakbeer if no baby is ever again born surrounded by institutionalised violence and fanaticism, in the Middle East, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Rwanda, Chechnya or even the Bronx. Or whatever local version of them you would care to name.

28 SEPTEM

that too was silent on who is allower to be a prescriber, allowing more unqualified people take advantage of the confusion. People with as limited education as a two-week training in pharmacy management are acting as prescribers in community drug stores. And since the dispensing of pills and injections is considered a sign of competence, doctors, pharmacists and unqualified quacks alike prescribe copious quantities of drugs. An urban legend has it that Nepalis, with their propensity for drug-taking, have the most expensive urine in the world. nacked as it is with antibiotics.

NATION

"As many as 90 percent of the people in charge of dispensing medication cannot read the labels attached to packets," says Balkinsham klakuler of the Department of Drug Administration (DDA) and president of the Nepal Pharmaceutical Association. The management of our drug regimens verges on the criminal sometimes—qualified people often "rent" their certificates for a monthly fee to pharmacies that want to woo patients.

ALL ABOUT CASH

In the absence of regulatory bodies that oversex prescription drugs, fly-yingifup planeaucine durins are coming up because the Nepali people will take, quite literally, anything, and every alment—no matter how minor—is deemed to require medication. Dug manufacturers and traders engage in cut-throat competition to make profits. The inefficiency of the DDA and the Royal Dug Labocatory in monitoring drug quality and their lack of trained manpower mean that manufacturers and trades can cut costs every which way. Pharmaceuticals are hot



trades can make a much as a Ob percent profit on some drugs. The profit mayin maintained by pharmaceutical outless regularly breaches the celling fixed by the DDA, which allows only 16 percent profit for retailers, 10 percent for importers. Trades themselves admit quite frankly that they have a 110 percent margin on the sale of substandard and fake medicine.

Up to 15 percent of the medicines on sale in Kathmandu are stimated to be substandard. Last year the government issued a notice to national drug producers to acquire a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) certificate within three years to be allowed to put their products on the market. However, no such requirement is

imposed on international manufacturers, who have 83 percent of the medicine market in Negal

Most of this is avoidable—we could take a cue from Banghadeh! Minimum Dng List which listed some 100 basic drugs. Until multinationals got into the game, these were produced in the count in optimum amounts, they were of good quality, generic and cheap. The result was a tremendous improvement in Banghadesh' shelph sostem.

Khakurel sums up the situation in Nepal: "We are victims of a systematic irrational ity in drugs use."

High flyers

The Royal Nepal Army has a new force to take on—the Public Accounts Committee (RCI), every time it wants to buy a plane. The PAC recently gave the armed forces the green signal to purchase two MI-17s, and is now perusing a proposal to buy a French Super Puma the army requires for head of state and VVIP flights.

But the committee isn't pleased. It recently pointed out that although the Ministry of Defence (MoD) was empowered by cabinet to decide on whether it needed the Super Puma or not, before placing the order the MoD had to ge

the approval of the Ministry of Finance, according to the 1999 Financial Administration Regulations. The PAC was called in because the defence ministry had not followed procedure. The brand new Super Puma AS 3221 the army plans to buy from the French Euro-copter Company Sofema costs Rs 870 million. The army's old Super Puma, also used to transport the head of state and

Sofema costs Rs 870 million. The army's old Super Puma, also used to transport the head of state and VVIPs, is more than 15 years old and considered technically unsafe to I/A, Army officials asy overhauling and upgrading the engine would costs a lot more—while still leaving the safety of the chopper in doubt.

The spirit of revolution

Nepal's Revolutionary women are running short on patience. Manu Humagai of the Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Women's Association (Revolutionary), warned that her group will "strike hard" if the government cannot efficiently implement measures to control the sale of alcohol as it promised last month.

On 25 August the government bowed to AWWA (R) demands to implement strictor controls on the trade by 1 October. The measures include allowing the sale of alcohol for only not hours in the affermon, a ban on the sale of alcohol for not provide allowing the sale of alcohol for sold to the order of the sold of a control for four days every month, and another on the retailing of alcohol near temples and schools. The government had also appead to allow only two alcohol culted sper Village Development Committee IVDC) area, one outlet in each municipality want, three outlets only per ward of a sub-metro-notilist zone.

Sad SAF

when the state of the state of

California Carrier (School)

The ninth SAF Games scheduled to be held between 6-15 Clobber in the Pakistani capital Islamabad have been postponed indefinitely due to fears of imminent strikes in neighbouring Altpanisator by the US and its alies. Nepali alineties had for the past month been making use of the Rs 14.12 million allocated by the Nepal Sports Council to participate in dosed

the tes million sed manhar carretary of the Council has asked the

training camps here and abroad. Binod Shanker Palikhe, member-secretary of the Council, has asked the disappointed athletes to keep training. The closed camps themselves started late, mainly because the NSC had been mi



ŞÇHEDULE AND TARRIFF						
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ı	KATHMANDU	CHITRASARI (CHITWAN)	DAILY	08:30	02:00	8:00\$
ı	KATHMANDU	SUNACHARI (CHITWAN)	DAILY	08:30	02:30	8:00\$
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OFFICE AND PERSONS

28 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER 2001 NEPALLTIMES

Knit your way to power



t first glance, Bongadovan village in Baglung is unremarkable. A typical Himalayan village perched on a ledge of flat land next to a boulder-strewn river. But a closer look reveals something different-on almost every roof is a small solar panel generating electricity for the household beneath. These panels are high tech devices, originally developed to power satellites in space. Twenty years later they are on grass roofs in remote Nepali valleys But they do not look inappropriate. The panels shining in the sun in this idvllic landscape is like a techno-environmentalist'

year and the Agricultural Develtaken innovative planning, armtwisting, subsidies, and a lot of opment Bank plans on giving walking. Most importantly, the loans for them, but neither panels are there because these scheme helps those with the nouses were lit terribly before. greatest need. Demand for the like most rural Nepali homes, subsidy far exceeds supply and th with kerosene lamps. But light bank loan requires collateral. rom a kerosene lamp is poor This creates a free-rider effectsmoky and expensive—bad for only richer villagers apply for the education, health and pocket loan and obtain the subsidy.

which perhaps they don't even Solar systems would be perfect in such situations, except need. The rural poor must go hey are expensive—at around \$300 apiece, few in Bongadovan What Bongadovan needed wa could afford to buy a system flexible credit, where repayments did not need to be in cash. This i outright or even subscribe to a ong-term repayment scheme. Th where the non-profit Himalayan Nepal government's Alternative ight Foundation came in with its "HELP" program. Through nergy Promotion Centre HELP, the women of Bongadovan pay for their solar

systems by knitting traditional bags. Twenty-four bags pay for their system and money from the sale of further bags goes back to the household. The AEPC still subsidises the systems, but now i goes to those who really need it.

In this way, the project organisers, HLF and the project unders-the Global Environment Facility Small Grants Programme of the UNDP—hope to get clean lighting into people's homes and also create a much-needed longerterm sustainable source of All this requires is what in

development-speak is called "local capacity building." Basically, committees, groups and financial arrangements need to be established so the community can take ownership of the project and its everyday management. This is quite a challenge in a place like Bongadovan with very low literacy rates and little experienc of such things. But even some 'capacity" opens the door to a ange of other development activities—savings and credit groups, literacy programs, or, as n Bongadovan, a new toilet in the health post compound and a smokeless cook stove. The community debates the best use of the small grants available to

hem in lively group meetings. But development theory is fren a little different from velopment practice. The problem in Bongadovan is that each bag takes around 70 hours to make-which would be fine if

devices and traditional crafts.

the women had nothing else to do. But on average a rural Nepali woman has a 15-hour day of hard work. Every day. How to fit the Suggesting that the men could

knitting in?

take on some of the household duties is an iffy matter. "But how will I get my dinner" laughed one knitter. "He will be drunk and beat me" said another. People also die, move home or get married. The bags must still be made. The eighty solar systems mean eighty bags a month, eighty sets of individual circumstances Samir Newa, the project officer, reckons managing such a project is five percent administration and 95 percent motivational

psychology.

The Maoist insurgents in the area also had to be placated. Seeing the panels, they came down from the surrounding hills and started asking questions. In Bongadovan the Maoists power i considerable—they have imposed bans on money lending and raksi. After talking to the locals and realising that no cash was changing hands, they allowed the project to continue.

ghting has transformed the village. "Where there is the big light there is the happiness" as ne grandmother told me. Children study in the dark mornings and at night. Women can in the evening do some of the detailed tasks they earlier had to finish in the day-sorting through rice and grain to pick out stones.

But the project works and

sewing, spinning thread. A women's group regularly meets under a solar light in the health oost compound learning to write Nepali. Ĝopal Pandey, the health post worker, says he see fewer people with bronchitis and pneumonia, and that the lighting has also discouraged the banned but still endemic drinking-now drinkers must find ever more dark corners to indulge.

But Gopal Pandey does see

quite a bit of "knitter's finger" people complaining of sore fingers as a result of all the knitting. Until there are many more Bongadovans there will be insufficient numbers in the manufacturing process to drag the panel price down, which will mean fewer bass to knit, HLF's chief advisor, Adam Friedensohn says, "HELP is the only program I know that intrinsically links renewable energy deployment with income generation. Many organisations are watching us closely and are excited about the possibilities for replication." If the project is a success and the model is replicated by other development agencies, system costs will surely come down. The knitters of Bongadovan are

Formerly an energy and environmental consultant with Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute, Dr Banks now travels and writes on environmental issues

Electricity in this village means high-tech solar

KC, shocked many when he told a Transparency and Development Aid seminar two weeks ago that the Office of the Auditor General of Nepal does not know the exact amount Nepal owes to multilateral lending agencies, and neither is it aware of an amortisation payment schedule. For a country that is overwhelmingly aid dependent with over 65 percent of the development expenditures coming in the form of grants and loan, this statement by the Auditor General is revealing indeed. This was not the first time a public figure, in this case of the stature of the Auditor General, came out publicly to admit that the government doesn't have much of an

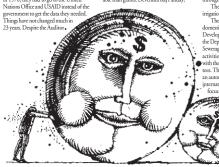
idea about the total grants and loans the

country receives.

he Auditor General, Bishnu Bahadur

ΝΔΤΙΩΝ

The little information that the Nepal government has of total grants and loans it has received, is a concern that others have raised as well. It was as early as 1979 that it came to public light that the administration had little information and control over foreign aid. In their book *Planning for* People Ludwig Stiller and Ram Prasad Yadav document how when a team of researchers tried to piece together a directory of development projects in Nepal in 1970, they had to go to the United Nations Office and USAID instead of the



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How indebted are we'

the connecting link between the nation-state and the international community.

General's frank admission of ignorance, the World Bank's World Development Report 2001/2002 reported that the total debt stock of Nepal stands at a whopping \$2,970

This is reminiscent of a public service announcement on female literacy broadcast on Nepal TV which shows a young girl accompanying her illiterate father to a moneylender. When the father asks for a loan, the moneylender discreetly adds an extra zero to the credited amount. The young girl picks out the error right away and the sly moneylender apologises. The government's situation is not much etter than the illiterate villager, since it does not even know how much it owes international sahus

According to the Auditor General while loan money comes into the audit net, most grant money does not.Loans are incorporated in the annual budget and the office of the auditor general carries out the audit.

But this does not seem to necessarily make loans more transparent and account able than grants. Devendra Raj Panday,

board member of the Transparency International and former finance minister says it is all about effective policymaking and accountable implementation, something multilateral lending agencies have not been able to accomplish.

An approach that seems to be gaining popularity among some donors is the sector strategy. Donors do not develop specific projects in association with government agencies and NGOs, but put their money in a specific sector for the government to decide how the money is to be spent. Such an approach should theoretically reduce duplication and consolidate efforts, but experience has shown it doesn't work either. Compare irrigation and domestic water: one has a sector approach and the other doesn't

In irrigation, the Department of Irrigation is the exclusive implementing agency. Multilateral lending agenciesboth the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank—along with some bilateral donors provide funds to the denartment which implements projects

through its district and regional offices. There are no other agencies involved

The dynamics are quite different in the A plural institutional environment and domestic water arena. While the Asian the existence of multiple actors has made Development Bank provides sector loans to the domestic water terrain more fuzzy, the Department of Water Supply and while simultaneously making the role of Sewerage, some bilateral donors fund intervening agencies more focused and activities through NGOs while others work service delivery more effective. This indicates that a pluralistic approach with with the District Development Committees. The World Bank, for its part, supports multiple actors is more effective than a an autonomous board. There are still other "sector" approach with a monolithic international NGOs for whom the overall implementation. focus is poverty alleviation and for whom Foreign aid in Nepal has grown from a trickle to a torrent. With the entry first in

the form of a grant from the Ford Founda tion for rural development activities in 1951 amounting to \$3,000, the grant and loans for the past consecutive years made up over \$400 million. Foreign aid has been the handmaiden of

water supply and sanitation is just an entry

change in the nature of discourse on water

Until the late 1980s, the Departmen

used to frame its objectives in terms of the

percentage of people receiving 'piped'

water, which implied that those who did

not receive piped water supplied by the

Department did not receive safe water.

With other donors entering the field, the

flow of bilateral grants and multilateral loans changed this. They envisioned their

role in expanding coverage and upgrading

the level of services of water supply and

sanitation by facilitating access to 'safe'

water or 'potable' water. Such 'safe' or

boreholes or spring water.

'notable' water could be from pipes and

taps, or it could also be from hand-pumps,

This led to a rethink on the role of the

department and the perception of its role as

level of services. It also sees itself as a

facilitator and not an implementor. In

oviding "reasonable access" to minimum

point rather than the focus of their

program. Since 1990, this has led to a

Nepal's development. The planning exercise is possible because of foreign assistance. The first five-year plan that

actually got underway in the country from 1956 to 1961 was hurriedly prepared for presentation to a panel of donors in the Colombo Plan meet. Though five-year planning is associated with Soviet style central planning, ironically, in Nepal it was initiated through the help of American

Foreign aid is for Nepal what colonialism or capitalism are for other countries. It is the connecting link between the nationstate and the international community. It is a way of breaking up with the isolationist past and of relating itself with the wider world

Foreign aid has indelibly shaped the contours of our nation-state and its peoples The burgeoning cities of Kathmandu Valley the expansion of district headquarters, the networks of roads, services and education have largely been the outcomes of foreign aid Vet for an enterprise that has indelible shaped our lives and our society, it is something that is little studied and discussed. For a phenomenon that has spanned several decades and has involved huge investments, there are but a handful of books accessible to the public that shed some light on the aid phenomenon.

addition, water and sanitation was available Though donors have invested millions at a cost much lower than the department's on specific projects and programmes, there is very little in the civic domain that inform the wider public whether these have accomplished what they set out to do and at what cost. Transparency has to be more than lip service, making specific documents available to those who are interested is undoubtedly a step in the right direction. Much more needs to be done to explain wha donors sought to do, how much it cost, and what the outcome and impact have been.

In order to ensure the transparence and accountability of loans, auditing these is not sufficient. The loans that Nepal receives from lending agencies are called sovereign loans. Which means the parliament representing the sovereign people should know about them. It is ssary for the Finance Minister to inform the parliament of the status of loan, including the amortisation schedule, cleared debts and outstanding dues



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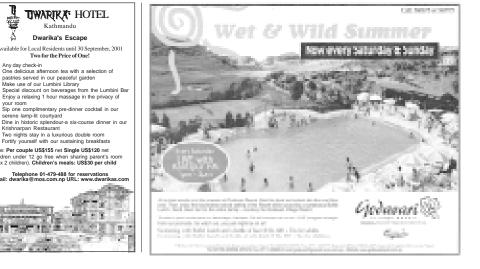
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Thai to fly B777s

Thai plans to fly Boeing 777 instead of its A303-600 aircraft for the daily flights between Kathmandu and Bangkok this winter. The Boeing 777 has 358 seats-55 and 303 in Business and Economy classes respectively, compared to the 261 in the A303-600 series. Thai says it will need the extra seats between 28 October and the end of March. "We have a very high demand for seats for the



season which is why a larger aircraft is being brought into service. says Martin Lama, District Sales Manager. "The season looks good, that is if nothing unexpected happens." Thai first flew its B777s to Kathmandu in November 1998 and remains an important tourist carrier for Nepal. The first Thai jet, a French-made Caravelle SE210, landed at Gauchar in 1968

RA seeks more debt

Royal Nepal is preparing to mortgage its only debt-free aircraft to raise about a billion rupees in working capital, corporation sources say. The flag-carrier, which says it needs at least Rs 3 billion ("Leave Royal Nepal alone", # 61) to get back on its feet after being bogged down by controversial jet leasing and corruption, has already borrowed against its other Boeing 757s. Most of the borrowed funds are to be used to pay old debts—overdue payments for leased aircraft (now cancelled) and payments for engine

Pre-paid phone cards

Phone cards have arrived in Nepal—finally. The Nepal Telecommunications Corporation (NTC) is installing card-operated telephone sets at various points around the city for getting its card-calling services started. Twenty such phones have already been placed at NTC's office buildings, the Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA) and the Bishal Bazaar Supermarket at New Road. The plan is to install over a hundred sets in public buildings and 20 more at other buildings in the Valley. Prepaid phone cards valued at Rs 200 are already in the market and NTC says those valued at Rs 500 will be offered soon. The cards can also be used for STD/ISD calls—all at normal NTC rates. For now the cards can be purchased only at NTC's regional office at Sundhara and at the TIA, pending tendering to get a private distributor as its board has decided or to find another way to get the cards in the market-which, we're told, would need another

Hotel on the lake

There's a new three-star hotel on the banks of Phewa Tal, Pokhara. The Trek-O-Tel opens this weekend and offers 42 beds. In addition, says a company release, the hotel will have its own system of potable water, central air-con and a full-capacity generator. The Trek-O-Tel on Lake Side is managed by Ace Hotels



Another Chinese motorbike JH150T (a product of Jialing) has arrived. Sugan Trading Company, authorised seller of the bikes in Nepal, says the new model comes with etter pick up and power than its earlier versions and llso more bells and whistles: a gear indicator, security system and a new chrome finish. The tab: Rs 140,000.

Sharing woes

For Nepal's shareholders, the future doesn't look so great.

September. The Dow ones dipped and so did all the major world markets. Markets in South Asia also followed suit. For Nepal this has been another blow to th ailing market. The Nepal Stock Exchange Index

naturally, complies.

The dismal response to the

public issue a company issued las

week clearly depicts the mood of

the public. It is going to be difficult

to raise funds. The country has

been witnessing economic and

political instability for quite some

time and unfortunately the way

events have unfolded, what little

Investments are judged on risk

and return. The returns are dwindling

and the risks are increasing, leaving

few options for the would-be investo

There are no ways of mitigating risks

and looking at the future, no sign of

the growing trend of asset disposal is

recovery is visible. This, together with

hope even optimists like your

columnist had are vanishing.

(NEPSE) on Monday closed at 280, year ago the index was at 422. Nepal to liquidate everything and convert to for investors was already an uncertain cash rather than wait for the future. market and the recent global backlash This selling pressure is pushing the has put Nepal back a couple of years. prices of shares lower. Investors are Some of our compatriots were scared that their share certificates may anxious enough to ask this Beed to turn out to be little other than paper examine the future of our market and gods in the near future. o see what is in store for people who The bleak scenario in tourism have invested in shares. The Beed,

and the other problems industry at large faces will slowly, but surely take their toll on the banking system. Banking company shares have in recent years dominated the Nepali share market and now neonle are scared—what if under the weight of all these worries, banks start going bust? The nonperforming assets of banks have no been disclosed to anyone's satisfaction and with the new regulations on this issue coming into force soon, some institutions could be shaken up. That, in turn, will greatly undermine investor confidence. Banking secto share prices will plummet, the

index will fall—who knows by how

much. We should be worried by

having placed so much confidence

exchange is changing-right now strated in other government within the framework defined by deserve a better deal

also suffered from the ambiguity of the capital gain tax that was imposed this year. The proposed income

tax legislation will add to this confusion, not reduce it. The legislation does not recognise vectment in the stock market as an incentive for personal and institutional

The market is being hit from all

sides. But there is one saving gracethough the movement in the global economy has some bearing on us, we are not really directly affected by globa markets, which means we can look at the NEPSE in isolation, pretty much and try and bring about legislative and institutional changes, so the market can withstand future calamities. Ideally this means that market operations move from the government to the private sector, with government just the regulator. Investors need to see that the management of the stock they expect the same laxity demon operations. The government should play the role of a strong regulator to ensure that the markets are operated law. Nepali investors have billions of rupees in the stock market. They

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Bailing out the ba



NEPALI TIMES INVESTIGATION

NEPALL ECONOMY

internal investigation of Nepal Bank Limited (NRL) and Rastriya Banijya Bank (RBB) carried out early this year confirms what most suspected all along: Nepal's two oldest, biggest banks are worse off today than they were two years ago.

When international auditors from KPMG looked at the banks in 1998, they found them insolvent with losses amounting to a whopping eight percent of the country's GDP. It suggested urgent measures to set things right. Those measures were never taken. Damage control efforts by the central bank, especially to protect hundreds of thousands of depositors is caught up in red tape and political anathy

On the surface both the banks have sound liquidity positions, thanks to their near monopoly on rural savings and public sector deposits This has helped make up for cash shortfalls, But, said one banking source: "In real terms, both are insolvent. Trouble is, we don't kno for sure how had it is because there are many ways to hide the real position. especially when you have a weak

only factor that has stopped a run on the banks by panicked depositors is the lack of information available to a largely uneducated public. And for those who know, there is the fatalistic attitude that if the two banks go bankrupt, the government will bail them out.

Supporters of Nepal Bank and Banijya Bank who are against World Bank-led reforms disagree: they say the banks are actually not doing badly especially if their total assets including land and buildings are taken into account. They say the scenario has been made to look bleak because nternational accounting standards have been used.

But the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) investigation points to bad nanagement, overstaffing, and gross interference by a powerful political-

ousiness nexus. Rastra Bank officials told us plans for reforming the fully governmentowned RBB had reached the "negotiaion stage". In the case of NBL, a committee has been formed by the central bank to re-evaluate the technical proposals of bidders (disqualified in

an earlier round) interested in a nagement contract to run the bank. The new evaluation criteria have been

prepared and sent to the World Bank and, most likely, a maximum of four bidders will be shortlisted, and one selected if all goes accordin g to plan. Realistically, NRB hopes to bring in consultants to manage the Baniiya Bank no later than 1 January, since there could be delays with the process

with the NBI. The process would have been much simpler had Nepal Bank's ownership been as straightforward as that of Banijya Bank. The governmen owns only 41 percent shares in NBL against the private shareholders who are not very keen about getting external managers looking into their books.

external management consultants," says Shambu Sharan Prasad Kayastha. chairman of Nepal Bank. Kayastha say the bank had has recovered loans of up to Rs 5 billion in the past month. "At this rate we will be able to pay dividends to shareholders within a vear " he told us Kavastha's claims are different from what the Rastra Bank's investigation found in January-losses

in the range of Rs 1.6 billion. The government and the central oank have a powerful ally in the World Bank which is dangling a hefty carrot of up to \$25 million in loans to get forms going. The World Bank is in no mood to process other loans for Nepal unless the two ailing banks are ut of danger. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has also listed financial sector reform as a condition the government must meet to be able to borrow from the Fund's Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF) vhich is taken as endorsement by bilateral donors of a country's

The only obstacles are: the esistance of the board of Nepal Bank to reforms, delays in finding the international consultants and a serious lack of political commitment. Rastra Bank's investigation reveals that neithe bank has done much to correct the shortcomings detailed in the KPMG report. The banks appear to be recapitalising interest on loans, lending to bank said it had no such list.

conomic health.

insiders, and failing to upgrade management. Other conclusions incriminating enough for it to invoke The core capital of both banks Section 29 (A) and take over both bank shows negative. But bad book-keeping any time it wants. The law says it can her run the banks—for which it doe not have the capacity—or get someone else to do it, which is what it is trying Both banks are over-exposed to a

w large (often the same) borrowers: vell-known names in Nepali busines with political connections

Non-performing loans in both

Nepal Bank, especially, has not sllowed central bank directives. Directors of Nepal Bank were

found to have deferred decision on on infamous bad loan for ten consecutive ooard meetings. NBL swapped a loan with a finance company in which a director had interests The report suspects the manage

nent is focusing on re-structuring bad old debts rather than on recovery and not respecting single-borrower limits. Investigators asked Nepal Bank to furnish details of insider lending. The

because they think it will make it easy to do so," says one director, Raiendra Khetan, who insinuated that the estigators were paid to present: bleak picture. But independent financial analysts ousness of the banking crisis, privat

o do with the management contract.

For their part, Nepal Bank

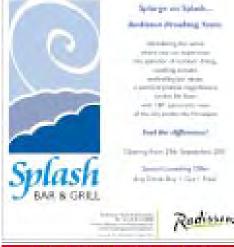
directors smell foul play. "I think the

report was leaked to the press by those

anting NRB to take over our bank

say the government underestimates the business interests do not care for the country or the depositors and the aucrats are happy to let things o along Hewarned: "If a bank's anagement cannot protect depositor ests, then the central bank that should step in."

Administration of Malach. Andrews Proubing Years White the same between the manufact of transport from a THE RESERVE AND ADDRESS OF THE PERSON NAMED IN AND RESIDENCE AND ADDRESS. A secretary bearing the bearing Landing Street, Square, and 190 harmony on of the life building the filteration test the Agreement Damy have 19th Separated 200 des Direct Back Clark Back The same of the sa Madister



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Should America go to war to avenge the terrorist attacks?

Roshan Kakshupati

Yes, the Taliban should hand over Osama bin Laden and help bring

peace back to the world. Rabin Regmi No. America should not go to war against Taliban or Afganistan. War is not the answer at all.

LB Tamang I don't think terrorism can be solved by war. Americans want Osama bin Laden, but they have no solid proof against him. War will unite all Mus-

lims against the US Shankar Uprety The American people should search for

an alternative to war. There is no legal proof bin Laden is the main brain behind the attack. Afghan people are thinking it is the war between Muslims and other religions, which is not good. If they are wise they should hand over bin

S Shrestha

I support any action of the United State to eliminate the mindless terrorism from this small planet. However, I request President Bush to be cautious so that not a single innocent human life will suffer in the retaliation. Nepal is also suffering from the acts of terrorism spread by so-called Maoists and the

Vidhu Prakash Kayatha

No. Use of force by a superpower nation is not the solution to the crisis. The US and NATO must respect international laws, nobody is above

Yam Gurung I am terribly shocked and saddened. The US and NATO should punish the senseless and selfish people. Dolma Tenzin

It's really sad and shocking what happened to America. But again innocent Afgans are going to lose their lives. Gandhi said an eye for an eye is going to make the whole world blind. It's time to reach out not lash

Shristi Shah

This is a tragic event, and the terrorists must be condemned. But an attack on Afganistan or any other country will be counterproductive Vengeance will bring more vengeance and a cycle of violence.

The United States should definitely retaliate against whoever carried out this crime. I believe in peace, but we cannot tolerate such attacks on our rights, freedom, and democracy, But think America shouldn't kill innocent people in retaliation

Susmita Go for it America. Show them no one messes around with a superpower. God bless America "American Nepali" No. If they do, Americans will be

Osama bin Laden and should be handed over to UN crime tribunal for the justice.

Rambilas Yaday No. America is the biggest terrorist

Raiendra Sharma

Which country is America going to fight against? Only a handful of extremists did this and they do not represent entire Afganisthán. Sooner or later bin Laden will have to face the international court of justice for his heinous crimes against humanity.

Hum Guruna I would not call it war or revenge, but the US should do something to teach these terrorists and those protecting them a great lesson. Everyone should face the consequence of their action in one way or other, one time or other.

Vengeance is not the issue. You pose the question wrong and show a malicious bias. Of course the US should not go to war to "avenge" the attack

Bill Cousins Of course not only America, but most other countries of the world should

make an intensive campaign to eliminate terrorism. This includes the Maoists. They don't have any ethics, political logic but do robberies, threats and strikes. Prachanda and Baburam against poverty and economic deterioworse terrorists. They must find clear should be treated like Osama bin

Bhuban Joshi

How many wars do we need? You kill one bin Laden and a thousand more will come out Amir Shrestha

We all should condemn the terrorism everywhere. Our motto is to establish peace harmony and humanity everywhere. But in the name of maintaining peace we should never accept vio-

lence and terrorism D Reami America should not go to war Raiesh Shrestha

We should eliminate terrorism from the face of the earth. The criminals should be severely punished. I fully support America and respect the decision of American people. But they must step carefully, innocent people might suffer

Tapankumar Gurung America is paying a heavy price for acting as a global policeman. Bombarding poverty stricken Afghanistan seems useless.

Naresh Poon Yes. This was an attack not just on Americans but on humanity. Terrorism should be wiped out from the world. There is no other way but to put it down with force Sudarshan Napi

We are fighting a more severe war

ration in Nepal. Wars in the name of

go to war. But the US should look at all other alternatives to diminish terrorism. War never does any good to Ashok Raj Pokhrel

possibly want, such wars never end.

There is no other way for the US than

to teach a lesson to terrorists than to

Don't ask "Should America.." but ask "Should all people take action to wipe out terrorism?" The answer is: Yes. Closing schools and taking the ties and helts of children as is hannening in Nepal is also terrorism. Such acts and their perpetrators should also be

Gvan Prasad

Nirai Ghimire

Why are you talking about America, and not about Nepal? Your country has a lot of problems, all school and universities have shut down, industries are forced to close. Tourism has vanished. There is a bloody student organisation ANNFSU (R) that your government cannot ban. Maobadi are like Taliban. Thomas

Why you guys are talking about USA? Look at our homeland first. Are we all prepared to fight with Maiosts who are running terrorist activities in Nepal? Why isn't it your question in this discussion forum? It is time to fight terrorists not only in the US "Anti-terrorist"

From 4-7 October Kathmandu Valley will host the third biannual Film South Asia, the only festival of documentaries of the region. This year there is a much wider variety of documentaries from the region, with subjects ranging from identity nodities to sexual.

The festival opens with the screen of the region of the region with subjects ranging from identity nodities to sexual.

This year there is a much wider variety of documentaries from the region, with subjects ranging from identity politics to sexual questioning, spiritual pursuits to diasporic angst. Fifty-one films short-listed from three times that many entries will be screened at the Russian Cultural Centre.

Says Manesh Shrestha, director of the festival: "This time, we have a big jump in the quality of films. The five films on Nepal will grab the audience, as will the other films from far and wide." A three member festival jury headed by internationally acclaimed director Shyam Benegal will select the best film. The

in Royal Bardiya National Park "Right in front

of me was an ideal subject for a documentary. I

In Kathmandu, after making money from

filming bungee jumps, Deokota went back to

Bardia, and spent two weeks filming Lachuman

with a DV camera.

there not being

enough money to

make films but I

think it's more of a

lack of ideas," says

Nepali directors

selected for the

Deokota, one of two

whose films have been

"People talk about

just couldn't not film him," he adds.

winner will receive the "Ram Bahadur Trophy" and a cash prize of \$2000. The festival opens with the screening of The Killing Terraces, a film by Nepali director Dhruba Basnet on the origins of Maoist Insurgency in Rukum, Rolpa and Jajarkot.

Fifteen of the best films will travel across South Asian cities and the world next year to be screened at select venues. Film South Asia is organised by the non-profit Himal Association and Himal South Asian magazine, and the festival will also witness the inauguration (by Shyam Benegal) of the Clearinghouse of South Asian Documentaries. "The Clearinghouse will support the propagation of documentaries by creating a database and marketing." Sirrestiha says the Traveling Festival, this year, will also go to the various towns of Nepal, including Biratnagar and Pokhara.

Two Nepali entries

Dinesh Deokota



which in Devkota's own words "has no pretensions to artistic quality". What the film lacks in technical finesse is made up by the character's raw energy.

Lachuman is a colourful character-a man who loves and appreciates women—he has been married five times, has fathered five children, has experienced the overwhelming stench of death in the Pakistan-Bangladesh war, wet his pants while making his first parachute jump, and currently works as a housekeeper in a hotel in Bardiya, west Nepal.

When he's not changing hotel linen, Lachuman is desperately trying to register a plot of government land he's tilled since 1975 in his name.

Still, Lachuman finds much to laugh about and takes life as it comes: "What's happened has happened." Lachuman is everyman," says Deokota: don't think his story is uncommon. It reflects our society. A simple man, no pretenses," The filmmake

was actually researching tiger conservation, fresh water dolphins, and ran into Magar at the hotel

again for the first time in 29 years, "What hetter platform than when people return to a celebration after years. It's a dynamic situation," says Kesang.

The school was founded in Kalimpong in 1900 by a visionary Scottish Presbyterian for destitute Anglo-Indian children, many abandoned and outcast from both their father's and mother's societies. The school later took in children from marginalised communities including Nepali, Tibetan, Sikkimese, Khasi, Naga and Tibetan.

competitive category of Film South Asia 2001. As a Tibetan refugee Kesang and his siblings Deokota knows it is difficult making a living ioined the school in 1962, the year the Sino-Indian war as a documentary filmmaker. Now he is working broke out. At school they struggle to find their on the ethnography of jhankris (faith-healers), a bearings. "It's about fractured backgrounds, about subject close to his heart. One of the protago attachment with an edge," says Kesang. "Even as the nists died, another works in Saudi Arabia film courses through a pabulum of sentiment, there is a gradual unfolding of real childhoods, testimony to the

powerful hold early experience has on us."

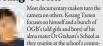
As a writer, Kesang has always tended to gravitate towards the personal, to delve into the heart. He begged and borrowed from friends and relatives to finance the film, extremely well-shot with a Vx2000 and edited on computer. Finding a market may prove more challenging. But he's not worried.

"When you make a film that's close to your



film that was screened last year at festivals in Tokyo, San Francisco and Kathmandu

Kesang Tseten



nial celebrations. Most are meeting

heart you don't calculate the costs. Marketing is



another dimension altogether," says Kesang. "I'll try to send it out. But even if nothing happens, I'll be poor but happy."

Kesang wrote the script for Mukundo, a feature



Film South Asia 2001 Schedule

HALLA

FESTIVAL



Sevualisation of massage (40 min)



Mela Basant Bahar Pakistan, 1999, dir - Samina Aslam Flying kites, soaring in Lahore



Saniay Pande and Subhash Kanoor Street theatre in Delhi (28 min)

Ray India, 1999, dir - Goutam Ghosh Great man's biopic (100 min) FRIDAY SOCTOBER

The Art of the Impossible: A Portrait of V. P. Singh India, 2000, dir - Juliet Reynolds The man and his Mandal (45 min)

Where RU in ICQ India, 2001, dir - Avinash Roy Chatting on the Internet (6 min)

Turf Wars: Conservation Claims in the Great Himalaya National Park dir - Sanjay Barnela and Vasant

It's park vs. people (41 min)



Life and times of an ancient ascetic (60 min)

She Wants to Talk to You Nepal/USA, 2001 dir - Anita Chang Nepal's women in A'mrika (28 min) Naheed's Story

Pakistan, 2001, dir - Beena Sarwa She wants to dance but... (22 min) Bengalis in the World of Fish India, 2001, dir - Nilanjan Bhattacharya

Culinary delight (29 min) Shere Punish



At the roadside dhaha (11 min

The Bee, The Bear and the Kuruba India, 2000, dir - Vinod Raja The tribal, the forest and the modern

SATURDAY, 6 OCTOBER Michael Jackson Comes to South Asia, 2001, dir - Nupur Basu Satellite television invades South Asia Performing in a troubled land (52 min)

The Killing Terraces

gency (55 min)

HALLB

(50 min)

The Loom

Nenal 2001 dir - Dhruha Rasnet

Face-to-face with the Maoist insur

India, 2001, dir - C. Saratchandran

School with a difference (35 min)

Now That's More Like a Man

Pakistan, 1999, dir - Fariad Nabi

A Rough Cut on the Life and

THURSDAY, 4 OCTOBER

The Great Indian Yatra

Times of Lachuman Magar Nepal, 2001, dir - Dinesh Deokota

Tourists in Agra, Goa and Dharamsala

Pakistani women talk about their mer



lenal, 2001, dir - Berit Madser

Abhimanyu's Face ndia, 2001, dir - Ranjan Palit A passion for Mahabharat's Abhimanyu (27 min)



(29 min)

Between the Devil and the Deep

River India, 1999, dir - Arvind Sinha Woe, the embanked river (65 min) Between the Lines



India, 2000, dir - Parvez Imar The stranded Rangladeshis of Delhi

King for a Day Bangladesh, 2001, dir - Alex Gabbay Clinton is coming ... so what? (33 min)

We Homes Chaps India/Nepal, 2001, dir - Kesang Tseten Old boys talk and talk about school

SUNDAY, 7 OCTOBER

The Quest for Peace in Nagaland Why the Naga problem and where to '

Pakistan and India under the Nuclear Shadow Pakistan/India, dir - Pervez Hoodbhoy Deadly footage of confrontation-in

making (32 min) Aamala



Nepal, 2000, dir - Elizabeth Snider Mustang mother's preoccupation (22 min)



Famous literary names speak (25 min) The Play Is On...

4800

India, 2001, dir - K. P. Jayasankar and A poet and a painter on Bombay (49 min)

Perception - The Other Canvas Bangladesh, 1999, Fauzia Khan Six Bangla artists paint, talk (54 min) FRIDAY, 5 OCTOBER

Let Me Also Come To School India, 2001, dir - Simantini Dhuru The state of school education (56 min)

Cricket Lives in Lahore Pakistan, 2000, dir - Farjad Nabi Bowled over (13 min)

My Migrant Soul Bangladesh, 2000, dir - Yasmine Kabir A Bangladeshi worker in Malaysia dies (35 min)

2:00 nm India, 2001, dir - Amar Kanwar Environment, Indian centre and periphery (60 min)

Jari Mari: Of Cloth and Other Stories India, 2001, dir - Surabhi Sharma Mill workers in Bombay are laid off

SATURDAY, 6 OCTOBER Amir: An Afghan Refugee Musician' Life in Peshawar, Pakistan Pakistan, 1985, dir - John Bail

Revisiting a past (60 min) Sunrise Radio India/UK, 2001 dir - Shai Herdia



London listens to South Asia (17 min) King of Dreams India, 2001, dir- Amar Kanwa

A Sun Sets In Pakistan, 2000, dir - Shahid Nadeem

Closed-door-and-stuff-inside-the

magazine India, 2001, dir - Altaf Mazid

Born At Home India, 2000, dir - Sameera Jain North Indian midwifery (60 min)

Paper Flowers

SUNDAY, 7 OCTOBER Our Boys Bangladesh, 1999, dir - Manzare What's on man's mind? (30 min) Boys talk about boys (42 min)

Colours Black



Anonymous Assamese writer speaks up India, 2001, dir - Mamta Murth

Child abuse in Bombay (30 min

Their War Bangladesh, 2001, dir- Afsan Chaudhary Women revisit the 1971 war (50 min)

Highway to Hell Venal/India, 2000, dir - Meera Dewar Nepali girls are trafficked to India

Tickets available at Mandala Book Point, Kantipath; Suwal Music 'n Movies, Lazimpat; Saraswati Bookstore, Pulchowk; and

Himal Association, Patar Dhoka. For enquiries ring Himal Association at 542544, 548142.



Libraries in the age of the Internet

Magier was an early advocate of using the Internet in high

Magier graduated from Cornell University with a Bachelor of Arts in linguistic He then went on to the University of California at Berkeley, where he earned a PhD about libraries, research, and preservation in the age of digitisation

What brings you to Kathmandu? Lam president of the Center for South Asian Libraries (CSAL), a collective oach to support libraries in South Asia. Through CSAL we are trying to make collective funding more accessible and promote standards in cataloguing and bibliographic formats

We work with South Asian libraries to presence manuscripts and holdings. We microfilm the original olumes, make copies of the original film and store the originals safely. We also scan the microfilm into high quality digital images and put them on the US is microfilmed and stored

Isn't microfilming archaic? You are mistaken, probably because you are from the digital age (laughs)

bring uniformity in electronic technology is sufficiently advanced and catalogues. This will ultimately help we know it can be safely stored for 200 o 400 years. And it can be viewed with just a magnifying glass. You can't Inter-library loans will then be do any such thing with digital echnology. And we are making copies Most digital technology is of the microfilm for distribution-

developed in the West, and which again entails lower costs for places like Nepal are deprived of the benefits because of the anes. As the dynamics of technology lack of technology in local change, distribution mediums and languages. How dos this impact formats may change—but electronic libraries cataloguing South access is not possible if materials are Asian volumes? not preserved. In the US, there is a Local adaptation is not necessarily a place called Iron Mountain, where nmblem_the major problem is verything that has been published in

reate a union list, which lists all

vailable holdings in all libraries.

andardising encoding for fonts and

scripts. Many non-Roman scripts have

been already standardised and are

widely used, but many South Asian

something called Unicode spreading.

ones haven't been. But, with the use o

underground—that's for preservation We are using information echnology to catalogue library holdings according to standards, and

like a breath of fresh air

ibrarians are finding it easier to store information in local languages that are compatible across fonts. But then again the coding often does not reflect the way languages here are used, so more work needs to be done in South Asia

Do you think donors could support this kind of work? Right now, digitisation seems to be in ogue. But donor agencies fail to understand that digitisation is only for distribution. If you want preservation, ou need to give libraries more money. Even we talk about digitisation to have asier access to funds. But libraries need to first preserve, then digitise. Donors and agencies need to put their money where it will make a real difference—like in preservation and standardisation of encoding.

How is your work different from that of Western scholars and libraries in the past? In the past Western scholars would come in and carry away value. It was ike a colonial plunder dream—you took away books because you could

including on CD-ROM and online So some libraries are changing their approach. How much are libraries themselves changing? When you asked someone 100 years

holdings. But no library can work in

come and take back everything of

value. And with information technol

ogy and Internet, geography matters

less and less. Libraries can promote the

ethic of co-operation, users can benefit.

Once items are preserved, they can be

ago: "What is a library?," they would ay something like a centre for knowledge, but I see library as a warehouse of materials. How they serv the society and their clients depends on what their mission is. Those are two different things, just like preservation and distribution are.

Libraries, if they are not co-operating. offer their clients less_which goes against their mission. So libraries are forming federations, facilitating interlibrary loans. In this case, the whole i more than the sum of the parts.

With the Internet being touted as the best resource centre-for anythine-where do libraries I can tell you that only about 1/100th

of all written documents are online Actual research can't be done without a library. Music, the arts, development research, history are things that are preserved only in libraries.

But aren't more people inclined these days to use electronic resources?

Yes, and it troubles me. People who grew up with technology don't want to go through shelves of books, they want everything on screen. But only those volumes that are in high demand have

rare works there is little chance you wil find them. I think that if this continues research will become shallow. It took me 15 years to assimilate the South Asia collection at Columbia, it would take much more time to make the hundreds of thousands collection available on the Internet.

28 SEPTEMBER - 4 OCTOBER 2001 NEPALLTIMES

You also run the WWW Virtual Library for South Asia, how did that start?

I started using the Internet in 1978—I was one of the first to use it at Columbia Since Lam the South Asian librarian, I started putting up gopher resources on the Internet. That was in early 1988. Gopher was the way information was shared and published electronically before web. The online library I started became very popular and organisations like the Library of Congress started contacting me asking if they could connect to it and contribute to it. It kept growing and became the authority on SA resources

When the W/W/W started in 1991 I was reluctant to migrate because it was not as effective as a gopher. But increasingly resources started to become available on the web, and even old resources migrated to it. Mine was the last functioning gopher service at Columbia, but eventually I migrated too and so the SARAI (South Asia Resource Access on the Internet) was born, Much later, the WWW Virtual Library guys from Switzerland contacted me, and I agreed to be the

South Asian portal for the library. Now I am also involved in the Digital South Asia Library (DSAL) which seeks to expand access to unique South Asian resources by providing full-text documents, electronic images and indices in South Asian

Quick connections from every corner of Nepal to any corner of the world Marcontile-communications by US.

Chin His Trans ting Elements have

personal day helpful alternati

"Pakistan was the condom the Americans needed to enter Afghanistan"

The old one is being fished out for use once again, but will it work?

slamist groups in the region. I asked him why these people, who had happily accepted funds and weapons from the United States throughout the cold war, had become violently anti-American overnight. He explained that they were not alone. Many Pakistani officers who had served the United States loyally from 1951 onward felt humiliated by Washington's indifference.

"Pakistan was the condom the Americans needed to enter Afghani stan," he said. "We've served our purpose and they think we can be just flushed down the toilet."

The old condom is being fished out for use once again, but will it work? The new "coalition against terrorism" needs the services of the Pakistani Army, but Gen Pervez Musharraf will have to be extremely

An overcommitment to Washington could lead to a civil war in Pakistan and split the armed forces. A great deal has changed over the past two decades, but the ironies of history itself, Islamism derived its strength

from state natronage rather than popular support. The ascendancy of eligious fundamentalism is the legacy of a previous military dictator. Gen. Mohammed Zia ul-Haq, who received solid backing from Washington and London throughout his eleven years as dictator. It was during his rule (1977-

(religious boarding schools), funded by the Saudi regime, were created. The children, who were later sent o fight as mujahideen in Afghanistan vere taught to banish all doubt. The only truth was divine truth. Anyone who rebelled against the imam

88) that a network of madrassahs

rebelled against Allah. The madrassal had only one aim: the production of deracinated fanatics in the name of a bleak Islamic cosmopolitanism. The primers taught that the Urdu letter eem stood for jihad, tay for tope cannon), kaaffor Kalashnikovand khayfor khoon (blood), 2500 madrassahs produced a crop of 225,000 fanatics ready to kill and die for their faith when asked to do so by their religious leaders. Dispatched across the border by the Pakistani Army, they were hurled into battle

against other Muslims they were told vere not true Muslims. The Taliban creed is an ultra sectarian strain, inspired by the

Wahhabi sect that rules Saudi Arabia The severity of the Afghan mullahs has been denounced by Sunni clerics at al-Azhar in Cairo and Shiite theologians in Qom as a disgrace to The Taliban could not, however.

nave captured Kabul on their own via an excess of religious zeal. They were armed and commanded by "volun teers" from the Pakistani Ármy. If Islamabad decided to pull the plug the Taliban could be dislodeed, but not without serious problems. The ictory in Kabul counts as the Pakistani Army's only triumph. To this day, former US Secretary of State Zbigniew Brzezinski remains recalcitrant. "What was more important in the world view of history?" he asks with more than a touch of irritation. "The Taliban or th fall of the Soviet Empire? A few stirred-up Muslims or the liberation of Central Europe and the end of the

If Hollywood rules necessitate a by Tony Blair's personal assistant for short, sharp war against the new foreign affairs, ex-diplomat Robert enemy, the American Caesar would be Cooper, who writes quite openly, "We need to get used to the idea of double hest advised not to insist on Pakistani egions. The consequences could be standards." The underlying maxim of fire: a brutal and vicious civil war this cynicism is: We will punish the creating more bitterness and encourag crimes of our enemies and reward the ing more acts of individual terrorism. rimes of our friends. Isn't that at least slamabad will do everything to preferable to universal impunity? revent a military expedition to To this the answer is simple Afghanistan, For one thing, there are "Punishment" along these lines does Pakistani soldiers, pilots and officers ot reduce criminality but breeds it, present in Kabul, Bagram and other y those who wield it. The Gulf and

Balkan Wars were copybook example

of the moral blank check of a selective

solutions with impunity, India ca

tvrannize Kashmir, Russia can destro

vigilantism. Israel can defy UN

live will be handed over to his forme Grozny, but it is Iraq that has to be employers in Washington. But will punished and it is the Palestinians that be enough? who continue to suffer. Cooper The only real solution is a continues: "Advice to postmodem political one. It requires removing th states: accept that intervention in the auses that create the discontent. It is remodern is going to be a fact of life. despair that feeds fanaticism, and that uch interventions may not solve a result of Washington's policies in problems, but they may salve the the Middle Fast and elsewhere. The onscience. And they are not necess: orthodox casuistry among loval ily the worse for that "Try explaining the Washington regime is symbolized Washington. The United States is

pases. What will be their orders this

time, and will they obey them? Much

nore likely is that Osama bin Laden

will be sacrificed in the interests of th

greater cause, and his body dead or

whipping itself into a frenzy. Its ideologues talk of this as an attack on civilization "but what kind of ivilization is it that thinks in terms fblood revenge? For the past sixty years and mon

the United States has toppled democratic leaders, bombed countries in three continents and used nuclear veapons against Japanese civilians, but it never knew what it felt like to nave its own cities under attack. Now they know. To the victims of the attack and their relatives one can offe our deep sympathy, as one does to people whom the US government ha victimized But to accent that somehow an American life is worth nore than that of a Rwandan, a Yugoslav, a Vietnamese, a Korean, a Japanese, a Palestinian...that is unacceptable. (The Nation)

Tario Ali is the author of Masters of the Universe? NATO's Balkan Crusade (Verso). The third novel of his Islam Quartet The Stone Woman, is due out it paperback from Verso in October (2001)

Theatre of good and evil It's always the people who end up dead.

MONTEVIDEO - The terrorists killed workers from fifty countries in New York and Washington in the name of Good against Evil. And in the name of Good against Evil, President Bush had vowed revenge: "We will eliminate

Fliminate Evil? What would Good be without Evil? Religious fanatics are not the only ones that need enemies to justify their madness. The arms industry and gigantic military apparatus need enemies to justify their existence. Heroes become monsters and monsters heroes: the actors switch

masks according to the script. There's nothing new here. German scientist Werner von Braun was evil when he invented the V-2 rocket, which Hitler used to pulverise London, but he became good the day he placed his skills in the service of the United

Stalin was good during World War Two and bad later, when he became ruler of the Evil Empire. During the years of the Cold War. John Steinbeck wrote, "Perhaps the entire world needs Russians. I bet even Russia does Maybe there they call them Americans," Afterwards the Russians turned good. Now Putin says, "Evil must be punished."

Saddam Hussein was good, and so were the chemical weapons he used against the Kurds and Iranians. Later he turned bad. He was called Satan sein when the US, which had just invaded Panama, invaded Iraq because Iran had invaded Kuwait. Bush Sr presided over this war of Good against Evil. With the humanitarian and compassionate spirit that characterises his family, he killed more than 100,000 Iraqis, the vast majority civilians.

Satan Hussein is the same as he always was, but now this enemy number one of humanity has slipped to second place. The scourge of the world is now called Osama bin Laden. The CIA taught him everything he knows about terrorism: bin Laden, loved and armed by the US government, was one of the principal "freedom-fighters" in the war against communism in Afghanistan. Bush Sr was vice president when President Reagan said that these heroes were "the moral equivalent of America's Founding Fathers." And Hollywood agreed with the White House: Rambo III was being shot at the time, and the Muslim Afghans were the good guys. Not any more: now they are evil incarnate a mere thirteen years later

Henry Kissinger was one of the first to react to the recent tragedy: "Those who provide support, financing, and inspiration to the terrorists are as quilty as they are," he stated, using words that President Bush repeated just hours later. If this is the case, the first step would be to bomb Kissinger He would be quilty of far more crimes than bin I aden and the rest of the world's terrorists combined. And in many more countries: acting in the service of various American administrations, he provided "support, financing, and inspiration" to state terrorism in Indonesia, Cambodia, Cyprus, the Philippines, South Africa, Iran, Bangladesh, and the countries of South America that suffered under the dirty war of Operation Condor.

On 11 September, 1973, exactly 28 years before the World Trade Towers collapsed in flames. Chile's presidential palace burned. Kissinger anticipated the epitaph of Salvador Allende and Chilean democracy when he commented on the election results: "We do not have to accept a country going Marxist because of the irresponsibility of its people." Disdain for the popular will is one of the many points in common between state terrorism

the Basque separatist movement in Spain, ETA, which kills in the name of an independent Basque state, proclaimed through a spokesman-"Rights have nothing to do with minorities or majorities.'

There are many similarities between home-made and high-tech terrorism, between that of religious fundamentalists and free-market zealots, between that of the dispossesser

and the all-powerful, between the solitary madmen and the professionals in uniform. All share the same lack of respect for human life; the murderers of the five thousand people killed in the demolition of the Twin Towers and the assassins of 200,000 Guatemalans, mostly Indians, exterminated without the slightest attention paid by the world media. These Guatemalans were killed not by Muslim fanatics but military terrorists who received the "support, financing, and inspiration" of one American administration

These terrorists also share an obsession with reducing social, cultural and national contradictions to military terms. In the name of Good against Evil. in the name of the Single Truth, they seek resolution by killing first and asking questions later. And in this way they end up galvanising the very enemy they are fighting. It was the atrocities of the Shining Path that incubated Peruvian President Fujimori, who with considerable public support initiated a reign of terror and sold Peru for the price of a banana. It was the atrocities of the US in the Middle East that largely fuelled the Holy War of Islamic terrorism

Even though the Leader of Civilisation is calling for a new Crusade. Allah is innocent of the crimes committed in his name. After all, God did not order the Nazi Holocaust of the followers of Jehovah. Nor did Jehovah order the massacres of Sahra and Shatila or the expulsion of the Palestin ians from their land. Might Jehovah, Allah, and God be three names for the same divinity?

A Tragedy of Errors: no one yet knows who is who. The smoke from the explosions is part of a far larger smoke screen that blocks our view. As vengeance breeds vengeance, each act of terrorism sends us stumbling per into darkness. In a recent photograph, someone had written on a wall in New York: "An eye for an eye has left the world blind."

The spiral of violence breeds violence and also confusion: pain, fear, intolerance, hatred, madness. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, former leader of Algeria Ahmed Ben Bella warned: "This system, which has driven cows mad, is making people mad too." And madmen, maddened by hatred, act just like the force that unhinged them.

A three-year-old boy named Luca commented a few days ago, "The world doesn't know where its home is." He was reading a map. He may as well have been watching the news. (IPS)

Eduardo Galeano, an Uruguayan journalist, is author of Memories of Fire and The Open Veins of Latin America.





..... Where the tales are as tall as the mountains

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Some say that this change requires a

government. But we feel that the

ernment is the main player in th resent political process, under the resent constitution. Before any

neeting of all parties and tries to put orward to us the conclusions reached

inderstanding. It must have the wil

what we want through dialogue)

Each of your demands are

not been presented as

ndependent demands..

ent. Our main demand is the

They are definitely interdepen

stablishment of an institutionalised

nd a new constitution be put in its

ace. The people must have the righ

new constitution. The new constitu

on is needed to establish a republic

o decide this. An interim gov

o all demands are related.

What do you mean hy an

institutionalised republic?

A republic has already been

armed informally in this country

The 1 June incident has proved that

he monarchy is totally irrelevant in

oday's context. It was something tha

was there in the past, today people

vant a republic. Therefore, to fulfil

eir aspirations, we have to work for

ew constitution. The new constitution

nust help in institutionalising the

If the constituent assembly

unfavourable to you, wha

We cannot give a definite

We still want to resolve the

vernment does not change its

to None of that will help the

dialogue, it will only hinder the

ave to rethink our position on

process. If they do that, we will also

makes a decision

will you do?

swer now.

ent constitution must be scrappe

epublic. For this to happen, the

these forces and come to some

force beyond the scope of the

CIA, ISI and the Taliban



sent, 3,000-4,000 acuate Pakistani military adviser Pakistani Islamic militants re fighting with the Talibar their offensive against the anti-Taliban alliance. Thousands of Pakistani and Kashmiri militants also train in Afghanistan for the war in Kashmir. Pakistan's knowledge of the Taliban's military machine to resist a US invasion. storage facilities, supply lines and leadership hierarchy is total. Musharraf will also have to crack Pakistan also has the most compr

of foreign militants, their bases and their numbers. The United States i now asking the ISI to turn over all this information to the CIA. fully to Washington, Musharraf will

hensive information about the role

have to do even more. He will have to

from Afghanistan, withdraw Pakistan' recognition of the Taliban regime as stan, condemn the Taliban and force them to expel thousands of Pakistani fighters, in addition to a cutoff of fuel and other supplies, at the very moment when they will be preparing

down hard on Pakistan's Islamic extremists, who provide bin Laden's Al Qaeda with logistics, communications and other support. He may also be obliged to ban those Pakistani groups, like Harakat ul-Ansar Volunteers Movement) and Jaish-Mohammed (Army of Mohammed)

that are listed by Washington as

FrontierProvince prevented UNICEF from carrying out a polio immunization campaign for children because they considered it un-Islamic. The same groups have smashed TV sets and forced women to stay at home, as the Taliban have done in Afghanistan. At the same time, Pakistan could

United States for its support—the lifting of US sanctions against Pakistan imposed in response to Islamabad's 1998 nuclear tests, a partial write-off of the country's \$38 billion international debt, more loan: from the IMF and the World Bank, greater US pressure on India to settle the Kashmir dispute on terms acceptable to Pakistan, and the reestaĥlishment of a close military and intelligence relationship with the United States to counter Washington's growing military and economic links with New Delhi. However, many Pakistanis fear that the United States may just use Pakistan, as it did in the 1980s against the Soviet Union, and then walk away once the S mission is over, establishing a closer military alliance with India and leaving Pakistan in chaos. That fear is not only expressed by Islamic

groups but also by Pakistani liberals.

What the military is most

concerned about is a backlash from

Islamicists within the officer corps

Islamic parties and conservative

who will accuse Musharraf of

about US intentions toward the Taliban, and the Pashtun ethnic group in particular, from whom the Taliban are drawn and who straddle the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and what the future state of Afghanistan will look like. The United States is likely to target the Taliban leadership and its militar formations and encourage an anti-Taliban uprising in the Pashtun belt in the south and east of Afghanistan, which is the Taliban heartland.

There is already growing US and international support for the Loya Jirga (tribal council) peace process in Afghanistan, headed by former King Zahir Shah, now in evile in Rome The LI process is almost certain to come the main political alternative for Afghanistan and will probably be backed in coming months by the United States and NATO. Pakistan does not support the LJ and would insist to the United States that Islamabad continue to have a major say in the formation of any future vernment in Kabul. If Pakistan is fully on board with Washington. Islamabad will be able to influence the outcome of the US attack and may retain influence in determining the future Afghan government. If it

Mushamaf is between a mck and hard place, and the way he goes ould determine the future viability of the Pakistani state. This is a moment of reckoning for Pakistan. I as to decide whether it wants to be part of the international community or go it alone, at the risk of turning nto a pariah nation and possibly

Gen Musharaff has no option but to crackdown on

Islamic radicals in his own country.

Musharraf that there will be a huge

public backlash if Pakistan bends to

Army will not allow this to happen,

and Musharraf will be mindful of the

sentiments of his under-command.

There will be a strong public backlash

also," Haq said on September 14.

Hag's provocative comments reflect

moves by Islamic fundamentalists to

increase pressure on Musharraf from

generals and former ISI chiefs known

been even more provocative, claiming

that the attacks in the United States

Israeli-Jewish conspiracy in league

with the CIA in order to give Israe

a free hand to crush the Palestinians

Musharraf is deeply concerned

were carried out as part of an

and defame Muslims.

or their hard-line Islamic views have

within the army. Several senior

US demands. "I am sure the Pakistan

kowtowing to the Americans. Maulana Samiul Haq, who heads a string of *madrassahs* that many Taliban leader: attended in the early 1990s and that are now attended by Central Asian mic militants, has warned

listen to Pakistani demands.

even state collapse. (The Nation)

(Ahmed Rashid is the author of Taliban: Militant Islam, Oil and Fundamentalism in Central Asia,

He, who dares to open a new hotel today,

threat to US forces. The largest

Pakistani party fighting in Kashmir, Lashkar-e-Taiba (Army of the Pure),

on the US terrorist watch list. All these

n the past; stopping their activities

ith US policy, he will receive

roups have received tacit state suppor

will be a major problem for Musharraf

videspread support from the majority

of Pakistanis—especially the urban.

educated middle class—who are tired

of the country's dire economic crisis

caused by Islamic extremists, and who

l'alibanization" of Pakistani society. I

early September neo-Taliban Pakistani

and the chronic lawlessness largely

are concerned about the rapid

groups in the Northwest

If Musharraf decides to fall in line

must really have something T/E/Y) SDECIAL to offer:

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Taliban, talks and political change

Editorial in Kantipur. 24 September

FROM THE NEPALL PRESS

The Manists have announced the start of a "Nava Kranti" or New Revolution. They have been extorting money from commor people and they advocate a dress code for women, they have even taken to tearing the clothes off women that do not comply The Maoist revolution's political philosophy revolves around bringing about fundamental changes in society. They realised that the other political parties just paid lip service to these issues but after seeing their ways now people have started challenging the Maoists and disobeying their directives. Terror, antinationalism and character assassination have become the hallmarks of their revolution. This all shows that the lower cadre of the Maoist organisation is out of the control of their leaders.



e underground comrades have set another record too. The cadre in Dailekh destroyed two statues of Rhanawati in a temple in Mehaltoli Village Development Committee (VDC), Many people used to worship these statues. This was another example of the Maoists taking on the character of the Taliban. Like the Talibans who destroyed the Buddha statues in Bamiyan they have attacked the icons in which thousands have faith. The Maoists have the right not to believe in god, but society and government cannot give them the right to destroy statues and temples which are icons of the people's faith.

Before destroying the statues, the Maoists had said that prayers were nothing but superstition and they would stop prayers at that temple. This happened on 19 September. The next day the Maoists disrupted Sanskrit classes at an ashram in Accham and forced the principal of the school to issue transfer certificates to 20 students so that they could attend another school nearby. They then closed down the ashram.

After this they manhandled the students and cut off their sacred threads and the tuni (tuft of hair on the heads of Bahuns). Everyone has the right to raise questions concerning religion and education, but no one has the right to impose their beliefs on some one else. Not even the Maoists.

After destroying the education sector, they have now turned their gaze on religion and temples. The people will definitely protest, and the administration must immediately take steps to halt them. If the Manists continue with such hehaviour, we can be sure this will be the beginning of their end. You can use hoodlums to spread terror in society but they cannot bring about political, social or economic changes.

Time to think

Nepal, 17 September-1 October - Vijay Kumar

have to understand one thing: there ar a lot of people who support them and are sympathetic to their struggle, but the people are also scared of them. The issues that the Maoists have raised have won support of the masses. People have contributed voluntarily to the Manist cause But the Manists have abused this trust, and now they are forcefully asking for donations. This is a big mistake. They will lose the trust of the people. Then they will be left with only their guns and their polic

If that happens, will they be able to bring about the fundamental socia changes they aim for? Unless the Maoists change their ways, the very masses who have been supporting them until now will revolt. If the Maoists are satisfied with that, then there is nothing more to say. But if they are really interested in bringing about changes in society, they will ha to come to the nevotiating table, and have to be very patient and under-

'The best thing about the presen parliamentary system is that the likes of Devendra Parajuli can shout and can say that the system gives them 'th right to hold a mass meeting on 21 September' (a quote from the student leader). It is a different matter that the Maoists want to enforce a system which gives them the right to forcefully arrest ewspaper reporters for no reason.. People who have met Prachanda

are full of praise for him. I too, have met Baburam one time or the other. I never had any doubts about his commitment towards the nation and the people. Since these two men are sincere, I request them to find a way out of this mess. I request them to help in the construction of a new Nepal, and to bring peace . If they do not want this, there is anothe way out-a civil war, a reign of terror and oppression, making way for foreign forces entering our country. Let us not fool ourselve into thinking that a foreign army will enter our country from one side only, they will enter from all directions. Lebanon is a prime example of this. Once it was a very peaceful and quiet country. Then the Israelis entered and ruled for some time. After them it was the turn of the Syrians. The losers were always the Lebanese. Do we want to be

another Lebanon? It is time we thought seriously

My name doesn't count in the country at present. It only counts in the national census, it doesn't count anywhere else

Former RPP leader Rajeswor Devkota in Jana Aastha Saptahik, 26 September 2001



Government Maoist Peace Talks

Budhabar Saptahik, 26 September.

If we do not, we are in for big trouble. There will be neither a republic nor a constitutional nonarchy. Because Nepal will ceas

THIS PAGE CONTAINS MATERIAL SELECTED FROM THE NEPALI PRESS

Comrade Prachanda and Dr Bhattarai Kolkata Maoists Jana Aastha, 19 September 31784

the Maoists were being supported militarily and financially by India. Now the Anti-Terrorist Cell (ATC of the police has presented the Home Ministry a secret report which clearly says that the allegations are true. According to the report, an ATC team went to Calcutta some time ago to arrest top Maoist leaders. The team let for Calcutta shortly after receiving reports that the senior leaders had ented two floors in a high rise in Calcutta. The team reported its information to the Indian police and asked them for help. The Indian police, far from helping them, refused to have anything to do with them. The ATC team returned empty-handed. You have to keep in mind that time and again the Indian police, withou even requesting the Nepali police, hav

On his return, the leader of the ATC team Superintendent of Police Surendra Shaĥ wrote clearly in his report to the Home Ministry that s group was unsuccessful becaus the Indian forces refused to help. I s surprising that the ATC team. which has been successful in nabbing some top Maoist leaders in the past, was unsuccessful this time... The report further states tha the recent clashes between the Maoists and villagers in Parsa, tool place on India's orders.

entered Nepal and arrested people.

Takes two to talk Santahik Bimarsa, 21 September 1978

Two rounds of talks are already over, what is your Excerpts from an interview with opinion about talking Krishna Bahadur Mahara Can your demands-an interim oblem through dialogue. The government, a new constituent assembly and an haviour, which means it should stop institutionalised republic—be resting our cadre, enforcing curfews,

achieved through dialogue? Many people doubt whether our aims can be reached through dialogu



Corrupt minister

Bal Bahadur KC is the minister for ivil Aviation. A couple of days ago e called all the high-ranking officials of the Royal Nepal Airline Comoration to his office and

The Benetton end of season

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o the table . I feel it is possible (to ge hreatened them: "All seven RNAC Twin Otters should start operating before Dasain. If this does not related to the other. They have ppen, I am going to take action against the concerned heads of the partment. This is a warning," he said. The engineers, pilots and other staff of the organisation thought that the minister was talking business. our small aircraft of RNAC are nearly always grounded because of technical reasons. But the RNAC partment chiefs were shocked b the minister's utterances. They had nust be formed in order to formulate eason to be scared. Five years ago when KC was just a member of parliament, he beat up an RNAC

> Minister KC's outbursts are no just limited to the RNAC Some days ago. KC and eight other MP howed up at the airport. He asked the authorities which aircraft was available. Someone told him the Skyline craft had not flights. He called a Skyline officials and asked that his team and he be flown immediately to Lukla. The official spoke to his director, the director could not refuse the minister and the plane flew to Lukla. The minister then asked the pilot to wai in Lukla for a few hours, after that the plane flew again with the minister and his entourage, this time for Phaplu. The pilot was then told to return to Kathmandu, but had to fly back to Phaplu the next day to pick up the

ninister and his cron

denartment chief for a minor reasor

The chiefs still remember that.

be cancelled for two days. According to a Skyline official, the company is already in the red and that particula day's activities certainly did not belo The minister is also known for Last week, he took a helicopter belonging to a private company and flew with 22 people to Mansarovar. He paid nothing for this trip. A ernment directive says that cargo arrying helicopters are not allowed to carry people—but who will tell the minister? On his way back from Mansarovar, KC stopped at Humla ugurated a tourist project there, e a speech concerning developmen and then flew to Pokhara. His father had accompanied him on the

That caused all Skyline flights to

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Weekends at The Jazz Bar The Jazz Commission on Thursdays, Chris Masand's Latin band on Fridays and on Saturdays An Fainne. 7pm onwards. Shangri-La Hotel

Live Acoustic Music Dinesh Rai and Deependra every Friday at the Himalatte Café. 9pm 491234 Cadenza Saturday evening live jazz at Upstairs, Lazimpat, 7,30pm-10pm, Rs 200

Renowned philosopher Richard Rorty speaks on "The American Left and its View of the World." Friday, 28 September, 5.30pm, Baggikhana, Patan Dhoka. Limited seating, for reservations ring Himal Association 542544

Classical music Every full moon at the Kirateswor temple, Gaurightat, Pashupati, Next on 7 October, 4pm. Organised by the Shree Kirateshwar Sangeetashram. Action Asia Himalayan Mountain Bike Races Biking event with categories for everyone with

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Exploration Revisited On Vasco da Gama's food trail. The Fun Café. Radisson Hotel. 7pm-10.30pm, 26 September to 3 October, 411818.

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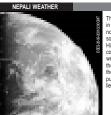


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There is an interesting pattern of post-monsoon circulation n the Himalaya. Three low pressure zones, one in northwest India, another in central India and a third in southeast Tibet drew a band of clouds into the central Himalaya from the Bay of Bengal. Although it brought cloud cover, the system failed to bring any of the expected rain we predicted last week. So, next week look for more of the same: low ground-hugging clouds on the valley floor in the mornings, hot and humid days and glorious evenings nunctuated by isolated brief showers with fresh westeres. Characteristic pre-Dasain weather.











BOOKWORM



End of the Line: The Story of the Killing of the Royals in Nepal Neelesh Mishra Penguin Books India, New Delhi, 2001

AP correspondent Mishra pieces together the sometimes conflicting reports of what happened on the night of 1 June through extensive interviews, and contemplates its larger national

> 'Kay Gardeko?': The Royal Massacre in Nepal Prakash A Raj Rupa and Co, New Delhi, 2001 Rs 200

Prakash Raj explores what is believed to have happened on 1 June and its repercussions. This volume, printed on art paper, is rich in photographs

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CUI TURE AND SOCIETY

Triumph of the documentary undoubtedly Leni Riefenstahl's Triumph of the Will Where else but in Nazi Germany could an entire city ave been mobilised just for the sake of documentary! Hundreds of cameras corded Hitler's descent through the clouds to boulevards lined with cheering devotees. The awesome

possible for celluloid to show motion for the first time artists started using the novel medium for expression. In the beginning there was the fascination with the fluid movement, but it was expensive business. The documentary inevitably became the poor cousin of the budding movie industry. In the 1920s, the documentary had to depend on the propaganda budgets of governments, opposition parties, charitable organisations.

One of the most striking early examples of government involvement in documentary film production is

were still private organisations that made films like the pre-war The River or The City but since television had not made a debut, the documentary had to wait. When cathode rays dawned in the early 1950s, the documentary once more had an ideal medium of delivery but it was once more side-stepped. Just like Hollywood, television stations did not seem to want to have anything to do with controversy. Documentary films were in fact all about controversial com-

The world was soon plunged into ments on prevailing reality. war. The documentary became a part of the war effort. The Office of War It was with the See it Nowshows Information in the United States on CBS that the documentary in drafted directors and cameramen to America finally got its chance. But eve here, documentary filmmakers found it difficult to reconcile themselves to churn out upbeat documentaries on what the boys were up to on the front. The Memphis Belle and frontline pressures from "above" to either tone footage from the Pacific brought the down their comment or to drop some sacrifice and bravery of the troops to subjects altogether. cinema houses throughout the country. After World War II Hollywood

ower of the audio-visual media in

ringing across a government-

sponsored viewpoint had been

liscovered.

Scaling down of the camera equipment to take 16mm film and the was into bigger things and the gradual miniaturisation of the sound documentary fell from favour. There equipment with the magnetic

audiotape brought changes. As the equipment out less obtrusive and more nortable, film producers could now venture into hitherto uncharted territory. As a direct legacy of the cinema verité movement in Europe the television documentary, too. became mobile. The advent of video and digital equipment advanced the genre of verité now visible in locumentaries, spot news footage, and ves, MTV.

Verité allowed documentary

makers like Bob Drew and Richard Leacock, and shows like ABC Closeup to present films that made viewers fee they were there. We're all used to it now, but when it first came out, there was nothing like it. But in the obsession with actuality, many filmmakers influenced by Drew forgot the true role of the documentary—to make a social comment and have a voice of its own. Cinema verité becan an end in itself.

Just because a documentary "is by MANJUSHREE THAPA

The history of the fascination for fluid film from Leni Riefenstahl (left) to Frank Capra (right). there" it does not mean it shows the truth. Editing can show opposite views using same visuals. Frank Capra used Riefenstahl's footage of Hitler in Why We Fight. While Hitler's fiery oratory was used powerfully by Riefenstahl to show his forceful personality, leadership and charisma. Capra used the same footage to expose Hitler as a ruthless demagogue. Both were making propaganda films.

Editing films never stopped being n issue. Critics of early television documentaries were against the powerful manner in which the extaposition of events could exagge e or warp facts. When the American Ed Murrow and Fred Friendly duo started to take sides on issues and use editing techniques to effectively drive nome their point, critics cried "foul". They felt it was fundamentally unfair that documentary film editors blot our truth with selected splicing. In their competitive zeal for prime-time news, the networks will focus in on a 20-



second scuffle during a two-hour demonstration that passed peacefully The blood-stricken face of a lone victim can fill a 16" screen in the living room. And now with the time allotted to documentaries becoming increasingly constricted, producers have been ced to edit out more and more. Truth is the first country

The documentary still remains a owerful medium for comment on cial issues, and intelligent editors can use it to expose injustice. Documentaries production costs have now plummeted, just about anyone can have a digital camera and edit film on computer.

NEPALITERATURE

THE EXPATRIATE POET: **Wayne Amtzis**

nglish literature from Nepal has lately been attracting some attention, with new publications abroad. Yet English literature is not as alien to Nepal as it sounds. Laxmi Prasad Devkota and Bal Krishna Sama made some early attempts, as far back as the 1940's, to write English poems-though their verses were sometimes marred by odd syntax and antiquated usage. The English language entered the formal education curriculum in 1959; and just over a decade later, Abhi Subedi, Peter J Karthak and Padma P Devkota were producing poems in this language. They were joined in the 1980's by diverse writers such as Mani Dixit, Greta Rana, Keshar Lall, Prakash A Raj, Kesang Tseten, Manju Kachuli, Shailendra K Singh, Yuyutsu RD Sharma, Tek B Karki, Pallay Ranian, Para Limbu, Laxmi Raibhandari and DB Gurung. With their native command over English and their extensive experience in Nepal, long time expatriates such as Henny Dossing Paudel, Joy Stephens and Joel Isaacson have also, today, contributed to the growing body of English literature of Nepal.

Poet Wayne Amtzis is one such expatriate, an American who has lived in Kathmandu for more than 20 years, teaching, translating and writing. He is the author of two chapbooks, Monsoon Song and The Journey East. He also translated Two Sisters, the poetry collection of Maniu Kachuli and Beniu Sharma: he edited and cotranslated Banira Giri's poetry collection From the Lake Love: and he is currently co-translating the poems of Purna Bahadur Vaidya. Had he not, on some vagary, given up his considerable command of the Nepali language, he would be the finest translator of Nepali poetry: any verse he touches, even as co-translator, shimmers

Amtzis's own work, too, is no less brilliant in its formal experiments and search for wisdom and insight. The poem below dates back to his 1980's oeuvre, focusing on the consecration and profanity of modern

Kali's Curse

A few roused at dawn,

summoned to bear some insistent landlord's load; the rest remain on stoops where they've slept.

On Kathmandu's corners crouched round burning trash coolies smoke or drink sweet tea Without gun or kukhri, through Asan & Durbar Square His Majesty's soldiers jog. How long will the stooped coolies stand

At Kastamandap, a bewildered cow stands her ground and pisses. On city roofs, stunted cactus stand guard, meat astir with captive flies hangs to dry Splattered by cement tossed from tray to tray, barechested workers swarm endless tiers of girder and sky

Beneath the winds borne down by brutal dreams of incarnation strings tangled and taut, kites swoon and crash In a city not yet emergent from feudal crimes, gods resurrected on cinema billboards, building eclipsed peaks mourned with a carefree procession of clouds streets darkened till daylight's reprieve. on all avenues of access and regress, police sport thin batons and heavy wicker shields

Where neddlers snrawl hetween niles of misshanen fruit and rickshaw wallahs snare riders laden with cameras. while her drunken man drones a harmonium, arms twisted, hands clutching air, bent fingers pointing, Kali curses and wails. Late in the day, the Himalayas wake With nothing to do, boys ride long thin poles pursuing a dog marked for the kill. Behind high compound walls, banana trees shade a sleeping dog

Moved by the growing disparity between rich and poor in contemporary Kathmandu, Amtzis began to write more ethically charged poems in the 1990's. (In doing this, he moved closer to the flanks of Nepal's progressive poets). The poem below is an example of his more political oeuvre. It offers readers a chance to look, with compassion, at the world around them, and also to examine their

NO END TO IT

Where buses spew forth fumes, on a curb, her hand round a cigarette With forceful gait he emerges from the five-o'clock-crowd

Recruited as protagonists for the play you'd have me perform, gaining in confidence

they speak their own words Their demands appear ludicrous They ask for a glass of water a few flat loaves.

a tablespoon of sugar, a match. Between echoing traffic and the stealth of dusk .a bottle of cheap rum.

a blanket, passersby slip away a glass of water, a few flat loaves There's no end to it a tablespoon of.

Though the darkening street manhandles all who remain a temple alcove's refuge

warms us. With them we sleepwalk past the angry. the pained, the vengeful There's no end to it!

A narrow lane, a woman bending to her sewing a sunken abattoir.

a face at a window Do we wake? Despite the blanket Do we shiver?

can be read in the upcoming issue of Studies in Nepali History and Society. Some of his work can also be accessed at the website www.photo-poems.com. Amtzis currently teaches chi gong and meditation in Kathmandu



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With warmest regards, U.S. Embassy Kathmandu and the American Community in Nepal



Slice of heaven

Words cannot adequately describe the joys of a Hermann's bakery product.



amplibately Nanyani is a small bakery But riyour nose is functioning you don't need discretions. Walledown that most anytime starting 7-m, and you will felled by the most delicious, entiring fingance—firsh baked bread, burst, cakes, pastries and coolkies For 25 years now this little bakery, Herman's to those in the know, has been serving then neighbourhood and is known as the finiset place for the perfect German bakery products.

German, we say. Yup: the sign says Hermann Helmers Bäckerei und Konditorei. But don't expect a haughty German baker. This has been, from the start, an all-Nepali family venture. Ashok KC was a baker doing the rounds of different horeds in



Kathmandu in the mid-70's until he opened up his own little outlet in the very sport that it stands today. In 1978 Ashok decided to enhance his skills and went to Germany to train in the art of baking. Impressed by the

the best, newer compromising on quality. He decided to mame his bakery after his boso in Barmen. And so a Kathmandu legned was bom: Hermann Helmens bakery and confectioners. After that, there was ne sopping Ashoi. In the old days it was all done by hand and baked in wood fire ovent. Today everything is modern. We have come a long way," says Nirmal, Ashols's oldest son, who is looking forward to eclebrating the family business 25 anniversary in 2003.

Hermann's isn't only about buttery cookies and scrumptiously chewy wholemeal bread. This is a small-enterprise with a conscience. In order to cut down on its use of plastic, Hermann's started giving its regular customer free cloth bags with the



bakery's logo. Unfortunately, says Kamal, another brother, often Nepali asked for a new bag every time they came, because they found it a hassle to carry the dol nor around. So now Hermann's sells the bag for Rs 45, and donates 460 percent of the sale price to a disabled children' fund. They also plan to introduce sturdy paper bags. Asbok retired saw vears areo, and

now his three sons Nirmal, Kamal, and Bimal run the show with a little help from their mother, Ram Maya, who is always on ahnd to greet customers in the moming. Besides earning from their father, the three prothers have also received training a the Hotel Management and Tourisn Training Centre. Each has his own task—Nirmal oversees a lot, but his true passion is white bread and the perfect little cupcakes younger Hermann's customer's love. Kama handles the pastry department, while Bimal, the youngest, make the puffs—including the chicken puff that has been the downfall o many who work out at the gym next door. And from time to tin the founder still pops in to check on quality. Nirmal and his brother are happy that more Nepalis are eating healthy, wholegrain bread, thing is the satisfaction you get Between the family and nine

Between the Immly and nine apprentices and helpes, this little shop mides a lot of people happy—and in the process, aske in more everyday than even a good restaurant. The belacy stars rolling at 7mn, and by mid-differencen most of the bread, rolls, burns and pies are gone. But it is only 4 o dock, "we overheard one customer lamenting because the brown bread shee mele fow was all gone. There's always tomorrow, as Hermann's devoted flans know.



REPUBLICANS ON DURBAR SQUARE: Lila Mani Pokhrel of the United Peoples' Front addressing a rally organised by Maoist-affiliated organisations on Patan Durbar Square on Sunday, 23 September



NOT REVOLUTIONARY: Students from Kathmandu colleges paintin over revolutionary republican slogans outside Tri Chandra Campus with messages like: "Give peace a chance" on Saturday, 22 September.



RADKAT IN 'MANDU: Radisson Hotel launches its discount card at: function on Wednesday, 19 September. Seen here are (I to r) Nirmalya Biswas, Prerana Rai, Kent Davidson, Abhinav Rana and Vinod Sharma.



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Under My Hat

by Kunda Dixit

Kissing assets of arsonists

he Baddies have been getting some bad press of late for allegedly—a config to some hishers or independently unconfirmed reports yet to be verified in some sections of the media—persuading fellow. Negalis so spontaneously part with their can but of their own fire will. Let me hasten to add that these are only very pediminery reports that have not, regree not, been crosschecked for their venarity, if any. These donations could be volumary (and we have no reason to believe they are not) and if so, they must be part of the instructions Mr Zedong left for his proteges in his last will and testament ("Go forth and kits their zesset,

forth and kis their assets, but give me my cut"). However, at this present point in time, what we want to ask is this: how is this any different than what our own government and the bureaucracy have been doing since time in memoriam?

There is actually nothing new in all the give-and-take that is going on in the name of rebellion in broad daylight and in full view of helb user of increment agencies all over Nepal, even as we speak. In fact, extortion has been a national revenue-generation technique in this country ever since Manijashner was told he could not slash Chobhar Hall in two unless he first paid an opaly of \$55,000 (are the prevalent Rastra Bank exchange rate) with a \$50 pocker money to unconcende authorities, and another \$300 Mountain-Slashing Permit from the Department of Dullars and Centra valid for the Auturnan Season and only on hills up to an elevation of 6,000 ft. Good thing Manijashre had brought along plenty of small dailar bills for just such a contingency, otherwise the Ministry of Intation and Physical Inactivity in Singha Durbar would stall be submerged under a picturaspee laber.

Squeezing fellow citizens dry is a quaint Nepali custom

that has been passed down from one generation of Nepalis to the next, right up to the present day female friskers at the Departure Lounge of the Tribulation International Airport. It works on the very simple socialist principle of using from everyone according to the stalking and poing to anyone according to the stalking and point and and catalogies, as a nation in the throne of development, to make rapid advances towards utopia. In this respect was ardeady way sheed of countries in

In this respect we are already way ahead of countries in the region, having slapped a fee on just about everything that a fee can be slapped

on. But there is no room for complacency. We have to ask ourselves: is there a Durbar Square still untaxed, a peak still permit-less, a tourist still ungouged? The long and short answer to these questions is: you bet.

Glaring revenue-generation opportunities lie untapped right under the noses of higher-up authorities, leading to colossal losses to the national exchequer. Here are some new fees and royalities we can start charging right away to increase our per capita GNP:

Sandlite overfly rights. It has come to our notice that an Indium communication satellite in low-earth orbit goes over Nepal every 30 minutes totally free of cost. Let's charge them for every pass over Nepal air space.
 Anon Feed Fish, 1000 (+ 109% AT) for every school bus allegedly set on fire, Rs-500 for every motorcycle reportedly aductioned, and Rs-250 for every motoler opportedly aductioned, and Rs-250 for every mobile osternishy idid paped. To be paid by purported perpeturests to the Dept of Taxonomy every quarter.
 Global tender for bids (in triplicate with carnest money in attached envelope) to dam Chobbar Gonges of Kathmandu Valley will be a picturespeal bale again.





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