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MULTIMEDIA: A salesman at a tv showroom watches as President Ram Baran Yadav delivers the ceremonial address to the parliament on the government's policies and programs. The budget is due on Monday.

KIRAN PANDAY

Times nepalnews.com
Weekly Internet Poll # 459

Q. What is the foremost reason for the spike in crime?

Total votes: 3,218

- Weak government 81.2%
- Weak economy 9.4%
- Weak public pressure 9.4%

Weekly Internet Poll # 460. To vote go to: www.nepaltimes.com
Q. What should the new budget's priority be?

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More insecure

Public lynchings, campus shootouts. What next?

- Two Indian tourists traveling from Kathmandu to Pokhara got stuck in a banda near Abu Khaireni two weeks ago. They walked to a nearby village. Villagers, thinking they were kidnappers, beat them up. The police, instead of rescuing the tourists, locked them up.
- Two groups of students had a fight in Thimi on Tuesday. Rumours flew that it was an abduction attempt. Hundreds of people poured out into the streets and lynched two of the students to death.
- Two student unions affiliated to the ruling NC and the UML, both wanted to bag a contract to extend the chemistry lab of Tri-Chandra College in the heart of the capital. One side brought in armed goons. Shots are

fired, injuring two students. The war ended three years ago, but its violent legacy continues in a national epidemic of crime, extortion and kidnappings. High profile murders like that of Khyati Shrestha got wide play in the national media, feeding the public perception of a society drifting to the edge of anarchy. The new government, preoccupied with its own formation, seems oblivious. The police is powerless to stop the rot, and the public gets daily reminders of this on the streets. The human rights watchdog, INSEC, says there were

38 murders nationwide between January-March: 10 by the police, nine by various Madhesi groups, two by the YCL and 27 by unknown criminal gangs. In June alone, 16 people villagers, suspected of being kidnappers, were lynched or burnt alive in the Tarai. Most were innocent.

There have been a slew of strong editorials in the national media in the past weeks calling on the government to act urgently. 'More worrying than the rise in crime is the citizen's falling trust in the state,' wrote the *Naya Patrika* on Thursday.

Kantipur wrote an equally apocalyptic editorial: 'The state is incapable of protecting its citizens. The security administration needs to find out why it can't control the

spreading lawlessness. Otherwise the flames of anarchy will spread.'

State security is paralysed because of the criminalisation of politics, say some analysts. When two journalists in Phidim were abducted and beaten last week by the YCL, the police refused to register their complaint, saying it was a "political matter". Police say they know the gunmen who

entered Tri-Chandra, but can't arrest them because they have political patronage.

Next week's budget will grab the headlines, but people throughout the country will be more concerned about the worsening security. ●

INTERESTING TIMES Mallika Aryal
Vanguards of vigilantism p4



See also: EAST-WEST with Kunda Dixit travel-blog on www.nepaltimes.com.np



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a swing at a time



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BUDGET ITEMS

It is just as well that the new government's budget will be delayed.

It will give Finance Minister Rajendra Pandey enough time to digest India's budget presented by Pranab Mukherjee in Delhi this week. Mukherjee showered goodies on India's poor, the farmers, the salaried class and small entrepreneurs.

Like it or not, India is Nepal's largest trading partner by far. It is the destination of last resort for most unemployed Nepalis. India's economic policies cast a long shadow over Nepal's agriculture, industry, trade, taxation and employment. Pandey may have got the country's best brains to advise him, but he has little room to manoeuvre.

In keeping with the tone of the Indian budget, Pandey has no option but to pay more attention to agriculture and jobs. India's heavily subsidised farmers have already made rice, wheat or sugarcane cultivation in Nepal uncompetitive. We can't afford to dole out incentives like the Indians do. So what do we do?

Pandey must follow through with improvements in irrigation and inputs to push higher-value cash crops so our farmers can benefit from the huge and increasingly-affluent market south of the border.

Nepal is reeling under double-digit inflation at a time when India actually recorded deflation this year. The reason this happened despite the open border were highway disruptions, cartelling and weak enforcement in Nepal.

With deficit financing proposed in India, prices there will shoot up and this will impact on Nepal. Since Nepal imports almost all consumer goods from India, pumping money into the market has little effect in boosting employment here.

The new government is so ridden with existential angst that it doesn't realise the gravity of our crisis. The macro-economy may be fine, but Nepalis can't eat the macro-economy. This year's food crisis is an emergency. Nothing has been done since the 18-hour power cuts last winter, so next winter is bound to be worse.

Pandey will be tempted to promise the sky. But the delivery capacity of state machinery is so weak that it's best not to be too ambitious. VDCs and DDCs which used to have more accountability have been corrupted by the criminalisation of politics, and there is full-scale loot of the district development budget going on. There is little point pouring money into that leaky budget. Alternative delivery mechanisms have to be found.

What is holding the country back is an absence of political will to lift ourselves up from this morass. We have heard enough speeches, the budget must succeed in giving the message that this government is determined to govern.



KIRAN PANDAY

Right shift

The army and president are over-stepping their bounds

A day after Gen Rukmangad Katawal issued circular to all regional headquarters to stay on high alert this week, he met President Ram Baran Yadav. The two reportedly discussed the security situation, the political turmoil, and the proposed promotion of certain army officers.

Why were the two meeting in the first place? Yadav may be the supreme commander of the forces but this is in theory a ceremonial position.



PLAIN SPEAKING
Prashant Jha

Occasional briefings, purely to fulfill formalities, may be necessary. But when there is an executive prime minister and defence ministry, what is the need for Yadav and Katawal to discuss the army's operational and administrative details?

But even raising such a concern is naïve in these 'extraordinary times'.

The incident is merely a

reflection of the reckless disregard for rules that has characterised politics of the past few months.

It is a wonder that General Katawal gets any time to run the army, given how busy he is politicking. He meets senior journalists, key business people, politicians, diplomats and other internationals. His message to them: this government is ineffective, the parties have no ideas, and the Maoists carry a destructive agenda. Hint: only me and my army can bring back order and stop the march of Maoist dictatorship.

This is not a surprise. The right-wing has fantasised about wrecking this process right since April 2006. The dogma and excessive ambition of the

Maoists helped create the favourable environment. What raises concern is the president's reaction.

Yadav's blatantly political role has been an open secret in Kathmandu ever since he lobbied hard to get his son a ticket for the by-elections. But respect for the institution has prevented people from speaking out.

Conversations with informed sources in Janakpur last week revealed how Yadav is still engaged in district-level NC politics. He is known to have called government administrators to move or block certain cases. He has called up officials to recommend names for appointments. And during his son's election, he campaigned through the telephone: urging supporters to use all means possible to ensure a win, requesting NC leaders to rally support. Activist Krishna Pahadi has now revealed how he was asked by the president to stir up an anti-Maoist government movement in March.

These details are relevant

because it shows Yadav has not been able to detach himself from party politics. He is not someone who sees his role as a passive guide. He remains a politician, not a statesman. And like with any politician, factional interest can easily overwhelm national interest.

And it is this ambition that the right-wing hopes to play on, in their desire to disrupt the process and engineer a 'Bangladesh model' (of army-backed civilian façade) with a bit of 'Sri Lanka' thrown in (escalating security offensives).

The opening of the parliament has opened up the space for the revival of consensus. Gen Katawal thrives when the parties fight each other. His utility diminishes when there is consensus. The decision of the Maoist politburo to stick with the process (even if it means making compromises in the short-term) has also slowed down the pace of polarisation.

The parties can't support the kind of alternatives the army has in mind because that will automatically shrink their space. Even if factions of NC and UML play ball, there will be opposition from key leaders and rank and file. UNMIN's continued presence means that any adventurism will cost the NA loss of international credibility. Civil society (if not together, then separately, will oppose a right shift). Most critically, Delhi recognises the need to deal with the Maoists. It is not in the mood to support such an arrangement (at least not yet) and are still betting on the parties.

That these ideas, however far-fetched, are actually being discussed by the right wing and military is not an indication it will happen. A swing to the right may be difficult to pull off. ●

LETTERS

GENDERING FAILURE

Seira Tamang is wrong to assume that the women can't confidently lead the defense and foreign ministries, even if they are dominated by men ('Gendering failure', #458). To be sure, women are discriminated, but they aren't alone. Dalits, Janjatis, the poor, young people (and so forth) all are to varying degrees. So, even though Bhandari and Koirala are women, they may have the advantage, however dubious ethically, of belonging to a higher caste or being richer or older than their underlings in these ministries. Plus, in a country, indeed, region, where so few are rich and so many poor, rich women are probably far better positioned than poor men.

Name withheld, email

GUERRILLA TREKS

It struck me after reading your article 'Guerrilla treks' (#458) that this would be a great way to generate employment in rural areas and uplift parts of Nepal that

have been ignored by the state for so long. We should just make sure that the exploitative trekking wallhas in Kathmandu don't pocket all the profits leaving little for the villages along the routes. The Rukum trek would be a great attraction because of its history, its untainted character and the great scenery. This may be the best area to test out a new model ACAP-like trekking where the benefits accrue directly to the people, with the emphasis more on development than conservation.

Frank Colinns, email

BACKSIDE

It brought tears to my eyes (laughter as well as shame) reading 'Pants without pockets' (#458) by your illustrious Ass. The donkey is right on the button: the only news about Nepal to appear in the *New York Times*

about Nepal for the past six months was the story about airport staff having their pockets removed. And the Ass is right as usual: the only way to tackle the extortion by policemen on security duty is to not just

remove their pockets, but remove their pants as well.

Rajan, USA

● Having been at the receiving end of corrupt immigration and security officials at TIA for many years, let me congratulate the Ass for 'exposing' the ugly truth about Nepal's premier airport gateway. There is daylight robbery going on at the airport with immigration staff extorting money from students with proper visas and harassing anyone who looks vulnerable. Besides having to nearly miss a flight myself because of my 'detention and interrogation' recently by officials looking

for a quick buck, I've noticed that these predators prey on the most vulnerable, for example women travelling alone, monks, first-time travellers going to the Gulf, Tibetans. At the security check it is the Japanese tourists who get hit the most, probably because the cops know they don't complain. Time to clean up this mess. And while we're at it, let's clean up the country too.

Tshering Tashi, Australia

● Your last issue (#458) was really depressing: disappearing owls, the incompetence of the government to get anything done, the constant yelling and shouting by the Maoists, child labour...And so I turned to Backside hoping for some comic relief only to find that the Ass made me even sadder when I read about the latest antics of Comrade Shock and Awe.

K Shrestha, Kathmandu



The middle of nowhere

In Hajar Bigha, ethnic tensions are just beneath the surface

SARLAHI—A dirt road juts into the jungle from Naya Road on East-West Highway. After a 14km bumpy ride past buffalo herds, through the remains of Charkoshe Jhadi on both sides, a sprawling settlement comes into view. Welcome to the middle of nowhere.



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

If Local Development Minister Purna Kumar Sherma has his way, this will be one among 41 new municipalities that will be added in the next 100 days. This certainly qualifies to be a town: it has a petrol pump, a direct night-bus service to Kathmandu, half-a-dozen private schools, a physician’s clinic with an attached drugstore, and at least two new temples under construction. But does that make it a municipality?

The news stall is actually a stationary shop-cum-ticket counter for ‘express’ buses to the capital. There are no ‘national’ newspapers. With a straight face, he explains that there is little point in selling newspapers which treat Sarlahi as if it were Somalia.

Unlike strained relationship between Pahadis and Madhesi in Lahan, the two communities appear to be at peace with each other here. In some educated Madhesi households, parents continue to talk to their children in Nepali. Pahadis can be seen tending to their bullocks in lungis tucked at the waist. But neighbours have

started harbouring suspicions about each other.

The distinction between ‘us’ and ‘them’ crops up repeatedly in casual conversations. A Yadav says that his friends across the fence have bought a house in Hetauda, but he has nowhere to go.

The acrimony between the ruling and ruled communities has a long history. In the early sixties when DDT made the Tarai safer for Pahadis by removing malaria, King Mahendra settled retired soldiers in a forest clearing that came to be called Hajar Bigha. In nearby Murtiya, loyalists of the royal family were granted large tracts of farms. Primarily, it was to raise the productivity of these new settlements that the Manusmara Irrigation Project was built.

Most Murtiya grantees of government largesse remained absentee landlords. Over the years, many moved north to the highway where they have turned Nawalpur into the national capital of Chure Bhawar Unity Society. Distant relatives, indigent cousins or trusted retainers look after their possessions for most of the year. Since the property market has shot through the roof after the remittance boom, some of the original landowners have sold their holdings. In normal circumstances, this would hardly have raised any eyebrows. But in these ethnically charged times, when even an accident on the highway acquires communal colour, land transactions are being interpreted as “ethnic cleansing” by one side and retreat



KIRAN PANDAY

of “exploiters” by others.

Media reports of Pahadis fleeing the Tarai are exaggerated. Only Pahadis that had acquired land for free, or built houses with bribes, are leaving as awareness levels rise. No Pahadi plough-holder, cowherd, teacher, shopkeeper or mechanic has left the Tarai under duress. But the runaways are giving entire Madhes a bad name. Perceptions, however, are ghosts impossible to banish. A Sah professional slyly admitted in private that he hasn’t built a new house in the hope of buying “escapee property” on the cheap.

Ethnic friction in today’s Tarai-Madhes

can still be resolved. But if the hatred is allowed to incubate there could be horrendous consequences because the grievances on the ground are genuine. The loss of privilege of the ruling class is raw. This is a chasm that only intense politicisation can bridge.

Clashes at Tri Chandra Campus in Kathmandu over a construction contract were extremely unfortunate. But it had Pahadis, Madhesi, Janajatis, Dalits and women on both sides of the barricade. It is when the polarisation becomes ethnic that things spin out of control. That has to be prevented at all costs. ●

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TBWA/BENCHMARK'09

Vanguards of vigilantism

Mob psychosis is taking over the country

Last week, two Indian tourists were beaten up by locals in Tanahu because they were taking pictures of children. The locals thought the tourists were kidnappers.

In Chapagaon, a 10-hour curfew had to be imposed to restore calm after police rescued two people being mercilessly beaten up after being falsely accused of trying to abduct children.

This week, Gongabu was closed off after locals descended on the streets accusing police of protecting two people they had beaten up on suspicion of being kidnappers. All week, reports came in of locals supposedly thwarting kidnapping attempts in Kirtipur, Maitighar and Bag Bajar.



INTERESTING TIMES
Mallika Aryal

But worst was yet to come. Two students were lynched to death by locals in Bhaktapur after a fight between two groups of students deteriorated into a mob frenzy

and locals suspected the attackers of being abductors.

Two others were beaten up but survived, and gave a statement to the police saying that they were not in Thimi area to kidnap children.

In all the above incidents, innocent people were lynched or killed on mere suspicion of being kidnappers. These violent incidents, coming after the abduction and murder of student Khyati Shrestha last month by her kidnapper, have left deep scars on the Nepali psyche, especially among parents and their children.

The fear is turning to paranoia and, fed by rumours, is leading to mob violence. The locals who beat two students to death on Tuesday were probably parents themselves who were so terrified and angry that they took the law into their own hands without thinking about the consequences.



SHRUTI SHRESTHA/KANTIPUR

Much has been said about a state that is too weak to control the spike in crime. But what about those who are resorting to crime themselves by being the law onto themselves?

True, it is fuelled by the inability of the state security apparatus to deliver prompt justice, but it is clear from the incidents in Kathmandu last week that more individuals with no authority or accountability are taking law into their own hands. Vigilantism can't be justified by the incapacity of the state to enforce the law.

Our society lost faith in the police after the politicisation of the force after 1990 and its involvement in the dirty Maoist war. The distrust is still so deep that individuals are willing to take be the law onto themselves than report incidents to the police.

People have seen the police being manhandled by teenagers blocking the road. The fear of punishment that acted as a deterrence is no longer there. The police is often seen to be politically motivated, corrupt and giving protection to the accused. Justice is much quicker with an enraged mob that can be motivated to terrorise, threaten and even murder.

Nepal Police in Kathmandu has enough manpower to reach anywhere in the Valley in a matter of minutes when an incident is reported. But that is not how the public sees them. They are known more for their apathy, for being mere bystanders.

There is no other way to explain what happened in Thimi on Tuesday. As a society, we have become divided, angry, bitter people. What started out in the Tarai has now spread to the capital. The desperation and frustration is so strong that it is manifesting itself into the kind of terrifying and unpredictable rage that led to the lynching of two innocent boys in Thimi this week.

And at the root of all this is the chronic political instability, the uncertainty, impunity and the lack of moral authority of our rulers. Unless that is addressed, just improving law enforcement is not going to reduce the crime wave and the vigilantism with which a disheartened public is responding to it. Otherwise we are going to turn into a society where anarchy is considered normal and the law of the jungle will hold sway. ●



PICS: RUPA JOSHI

Laxmi dreams of flying

RUPA JOSHI in SUNSARI

At 16, Laxmi Rai is a big girl for her class. Her classmates in the single room school in Gairi Gaun Sunsari are 8-14 years old. Like her friends for whom regular schools were too far to walk to, Laxmi is also in this non-formal school so that she can complete her accelerated primary level education in three years.

She squats at the back of the small classroom, chatting all the time with the teacher and her classmates. She sings rhymes along with them, chimes in the class work and draws pictures with equal finesse.

Seeing a camera pointed at her, Laxmi delicately pushes away the hair falling over her eyes with her right toe. Stricken with polio as a baby, Laxmi uses her feet to do the things her friends use their hands for. Writing, drawing, unwrapping candy and pushing it into her mouth, she does all that with her toes.

"I was born prematurely at seven months...a tiny, weak baby," Laxmi says in her halting speech, "then when I was less than a year old...they say I fell very ill...they said *jungle lageko*...but I think it was a bad case of...polio."

As her friends romp around the classroom singing and dancing, Laxmi sits in the corner swaying her body to the rhythm and singing with all her might.

"If my hands and feet...were ok, I'd have loved to...stand up and dance with them," she says, "in fact...I would probably have become a *heroni*."

Sunsari teenager doesn't let her handicap drag her down

Laxmi often dreams that her legs are ok. "I see myself moving about normally...I often dream...I am punching bullies and fighting them *rwamma rwamma* with knives."

Although she does not wield a knife in real life Laxmi says she is pretty tough with boys who tease and bully her friends.

Using her toes, Laxmi flips through the pages of her thick diary in which she has scribbled poems in her neat 'footwriting'. There are hundreds of poems: about friendship, life, the country, and love.

Laxmi has even written a story that runs like a script of a film, which she says she would like to hand to a film director to turn into a blockbuster movie. "It's a... love tragedy," she confides

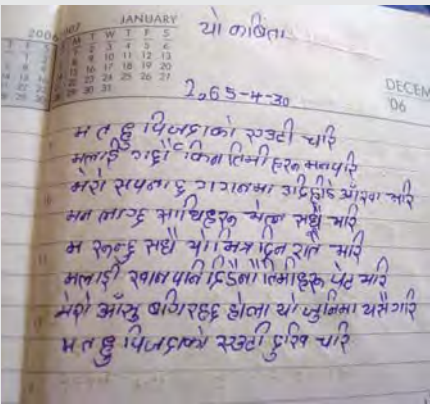


ON HER TOES: Laxmi does maths with her toes (above) and the foot-writing in her poem is better than most people's handwriting (below).

with a shy smile.

Laxmi lives with her 67-year old grandmother Dhnamaya Rai in the house next to the classroom. The land for the school was donated by her family. Her father, who is a cook at the BP Koirala Hospital in Dharan, wanted his daughter to stay with him. But Laxmi, who is very attached to her teacher and friends, wants to stay on in Gairi Gaun.

She says: "I will first...complete my education, that is most important for me... then when I grow up...I want to become a litterateur...a famous one." ●



caged bird
i am a caged bird
why do you do whatever you like with me?
i have dreams of soaring open skies
my heart wishes to be with friends
always, i cry inside day and night
you don't even feed me enough
perhaps my tears will keep flowing
throughout my life
i am just a sad caged bird

Laxmi Rai
14 August 2008

Pani Prasad

The Chaudhary Group in collaboration with WWF launched Nepali Childrens' book series, *Pani Prasad*, Volume I and II on 5 July supporting WWF's campaign to bring global attention to the impacts of Climate Change on the Himalayas.

Bridal winners

Providing a platform for Nepali beauticians, Lakme in association with Saundarya Kala Byawasayi Sangh organised Lakme Bridal Make up Competition 2009 last week. The winners were Rajesh Lama, Rina Maharjan and Meera Shrestha who gave bridal makeovers to ladies from various ethnic backgrounds.



Boon



Rotary Club of Patan and Rotary Club of Bellevue, United States have started 'Nepal apanga jagaran abhiyan,' from 29 June. The project intends to alleviate the appalling conditions of the disabled in Nepal through awareness programs.

Glamorous walls

Asian Paints has launched Royale Play, which is touted as being special effect paint. Along with painting walls, users can now give textures and patterns using their application tools like brush, roller, comb, spatula, colour wash and more.

asianpaints

Manipal



Chaudhary Group and Manipal K-12 in a joint venture has acquired a chain of schools and +2 colleges. This program will offer management services to existing and new schools under the brand name CG – Manipal and provide Information and communication technology (ICT) based tutorials.

Go to Rome

Purchase a bottle of Carlsberg and get a free entry pass for two, to tour popular bars in Rome.

Lower the hurdles

Whatever the new budget throws up, Pokhara businesses will face the same old problems

When Himalmedia and the Pokhara chapter of the Nepal Young Entrepreneurs Forum (NYEF) joined forces to organise an interaction recently, the issues that came up were one that will probably not be addressed in the



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

Finance Minister's budget speech next week. In Pokhara, as in Kathmandu and Biratnagar, most owners of businesses are the entrepreneurs and the managers who have to wear different hats on any given day inside their companies.

Trade unions: Most participants said that they were not against trade unions. Some even said that trade unions are here to stay in Nepali businesses for the foreseeable future, and smart businesses learn how to work with them. But entrepreneurs are worried about the rising militancy of trade unions that act in the interest of neither the owners nor the employees.

In fact, the people who benefit from militancy are often elsewhere. They are in party-politics. Their mandate is to infiltrate as many companies as



DURGA HUMAGAIN

possible for extortion and employment for party cadres. The Pokhara entrepreneurs said that to ward off problems, they have done their best to fulfill all the requirements demanded by labour laws. Still, reasoning and pleading with militant employees, who are backed by political motivations, and who insist on viewing the world as a divided between masters and slaves is unproductive and frustrating.

Growth: Most Pokhara entrepreneurs admitted that growing their companies during the boom times was easy. But that easiness had one downside. It made most of them unprepared to think about growth during down times, when they felt themselves getting sucked into arranging and re-arranging their companies' innards. When tense political situations, bandas, labour unrest and the migration of high-income residents out of Pokhara to other countries affected the companies' growth rates, the owners were at a loss as to how to deal with these problems.

One solution the meeting threw up was to think of a business in terms of getting systems, structure and stability right so that the management's time is not spent on fighting internal fires all the time but open to chase opportunities, even during bad times. It's important in a company to lay down routine systems of who reports to whom with what numbers and ideas, and how the decision-making processes work so that stability is likely to result. With organizational stability in place,

the owners can then look for new products to offer in old and new markets. But putting in systems, structure and stability is boring work that may not suit the temperament of owner-managers who are good at externally-focused work.

Human resources: One issue that came up with regard to human resources was how to make the trade-off between seniority and competence. In the old Nepal, seniority counted without a question for promotions and rewards. In the new competitive Nepal, anyone can see that senior employees are not necessarily the most competent or high-performing ones. Still, in most companies, owner-managers have no choice but to promote senior employees: not because they are performers, but because they've been around for a long time, and are often most resistant to learning about change. Compounding the problem is that most such senior employees are often the family members and relatives of the owner-managers. The Pokhara entrepreneurs' take was that as the working-age population gets smaller and smaller in Nepal, as is already happening, this problem is likely to sort itself out in the next few years.

These three issues that are in the minds of the Pokhara entrepreneurs provide action items for business-promoting bodies such as FNCCI, NYEF and others to come up with training and interaction programs in the future with an aim to further lower the hurdles faced by Nepali businesses. ●

VACANCY



- Job Title** : Sr. Community Development and Livelihoods Specialist
Job Location : Chengdu, China with frequent travel to other Tibetan areas
Company name : Winrock International

Recruiting Sr. CD/Livelihoods Specialist for upcoming USAID solicitation for a program to improve the socioeconomic status of rural Tibetans. Expected start Oct. 2009, based in Chengdu, China. Specialist will manage CD/livelihood project components (field team mobilization, workplans, budget). Contingent upon donor funding

Send resume/cover letter with: "Sr. CD and Livelihoods Specialist" as subject by July 22, 2009. Only final candidates will be contacted. Adv. degree in int'l community develop., development econ or related; min. 6 yrs experience community/rural development; prior work in Tibetan areas; fluency in Eng., Tibetan and/or Mandarin required.

- Job Title** : Sr. Enterprise Development Specialist
Job Location : Chengdu, China with frequent travel to other Tibetan areas
Company name : Winrock International

Recruiting Sr. Enterprise Development Specialist for upcoming USAID solicitation for a program to improve the socioeconomic status of rural Tibetans. Expected start Oct. 2009, based in Chengdu, China. Specialist will manage Enterprise project components & conduct value chain assessments. Contingent upon donor funding

Send resume/cover letter with: "Sr. Enterprise Specialist" as subject by July 22, 2009. Only final candidates will be contacted. Adv. degree in marketing, development econ, business admin or related; min. 8 yrs experience rural econ and SME development; 5 yrs. sr. management USAID projects; prior work in China; Eng., Tibetan and/or Mandarin fluency

- Job Title** : Finance/Admin Director
Job Location : Chengdu, China with frequent travel to other Tibetan areas
Company name : Winrock International

Recruiting Finance/Admin Director for upcoming USAID solicitation for a program to improve the socioeconomic status of rural Tibetans. Expected start Oct. 2009, based in Chengdu, China. Director will be responsible for all accounts, contracts and financial reporting for the project. Contingent upon donor funding.

Send resume/cover letter with: "Finance/Admin Director" as subject by July 22, 2009. Only final candidates will be contacted. Bachelors degree & 7 yrs experience in contracts, finance management, HR; familiarity with Federal & USAID Acquisition Regulations; experience managing field offices in Asia; Eng., Tibetan and/or Mandarin fluency required.

- Job Title** : Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist
Job Location : Chengdu, China with frequent travel to other Tibetan areas
Company name : Winrock International

Recruiting M & E Specialist for upcoming USAID solicitation for a program to improve the socioeconomic status of rural Tibetans. Expected start Oct. 2009, based in Chengdu, China. Specialist will be responsible for development of participatory outcome/impact M&E systems, training field staff. Contingent upon donor funding.

Send resume/cover letter with: "M&E Specialist" as subject by July 22, 2009. Only final candidates will be contacted. Bachelors in social sciences, development econ, masters preferred; min. 6 yrs. experience rural development/participatory M&E; 2 yrs field-based data collection; experience working in China; Eng., Tibetan and/or Mandarin fluency.

Contact Name : Katie Callaghan
Email : jobs@winrock.org
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New budget



Neelam Timsina in *Kantipur*, 7 July

कान्तिपुर

The government should modernise and commercialise agriculture by allotting it at least 10 per cent of the budget. It should consider establishing a fund for rural entrepreneurs.

The budget must focus on developing the industrial sector by guaranteeing security and the rule of law, encouraging private sector and public investment, developing clear economic policies, increasing capital expenditure, banning strikes, addressing the energy crisis and instituting an industrial security force.

A separate body should be formed to supervise infrastructure development and maintenance. The budget should fund alternative roads connecting Kathmandu with Tarai, a Mechi-Mahakali electric railway and rural roads.

Concrete plans to attract foreign investments in hydropower are imperative. Focus should also be on subsidising

alternative energy and the import of diesel plants to address the current power shortage.

The budget should continue past provisions that facilitated revenue collection and checked leakage. The government should reform the VAT scheme, which offers two rates, that only complicates things and reduces revenue collection.

The inflation rate is soaring in Nepal. An ineffective supply mechanism is to blame. Besides checking cartels and black markets, an automatic price adjustment mechanism to adjust the price of petroleum products in consonance with international market prices must be established.

If this is done, the GDP growth rate can be expected to be 5 per cent and the inflation can be restricted to 6 per cent with revenue flexibility ratio 1.15 next year.

A budget between Rs 275 and Rs 300 billion could achieve all this.

A way out

Khem Bhandari in *Nepal*, 5 July

नेपाल

The decisions taken at the recent Maoist Politburo meeting show that the party is still committed to the peace process, but that it is struggling to reconcile internal differences. The Politburo wisely chose to back the formation of a national government, and this shows maturity and a desire to transform into a mainstream party. They could have easily taken a step towards another 'people's revolution', but didn't.

The Maoist's proposal is a way out of the mess the UML-lead government has landed us in. The Maoists are not only the biggest party in the CA, they are also the key to the transformation of the country. The constitution will not be completed with the Maoists on the sidelines. The other parties should resign themselves to this fact and assist the Maoists.

By insisting on national consensus the Maoists have shown they can be flexible with their demands, which promises a way out of the present impasse. The NC and the UML would do well to end their selfish bickering and hand over responsibilities to the Maoists.

Although the Politburo meeting was promising, it revealed friction within the party. Chairman Prachanda has maintained that the party will struggle peacefully but he hasn't totally renounced a 'people's revolution,' which Kiran Baidya's faction of the party supports. These two policies can't possibly go hand in hand.

Intellectual deficiency

Nanda Kishor Pun (Pasang), PLA commander in *Janadesh*, 7 July

जनादेश

The political small-mindedness of the leaders in the government disgusts us. It is our duty to take the peace process to its logical end and form a national army. Although we are angry, we are committed to carrying out our responsibility to the country.

The Army Integration Special Committee, which will be reconstituted, will make an official decision about the integration of the PLA. We will forge a consensus, regarding the committee's shape, at the political level. We have not said anything yet and will speak only when needed. We are waiting to see the kind of special committee that will be formed. Until now, we have just been spectators as the new prime minister and defence minister have gone about their business.

We will only accept the decision of the special committee. The recent comments made by the prime minister and defence minister are irrelevant.



Student violence

Editorial in *Nagarik*, 7 July

नागरिक

The violent dispute between the NC-affiliated Nepal Student's Union and UML-affiliated All Nepal National Free Student Union over constructing a new building in Tri Chandra College, has highlighted the divisions between

the two governing parties. It's a sign of the country's political turmoil that the students are demanding roles in issues other than education.

Political parties often quarrel, but they are not justified in burning down offices and using weapons inside college premises. The police have not yet captured the guilty, raising doubts about their competence and increasing suspicions that the culprits enjoy political patronage. Student leaders must understand that the politicisation of student unions has now degenerated into criminal activity.



ALL PICS: KIRAN PANDAY

EXCHANGE OFFER: UML's Chairman, Jhal Nath Khanal, inducts a former Maoist into the party on Monday at the party office at Balkhu (*left*). Only a day earlier, Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal had inducted a former UML party worker into his party at a special program at the Academy hall (*right*). In total, 39 former Maoists defected to UML while 359 party workers from various parties switched to the Maoists.



INDRA SHRESTHA

Doti speaks

How do you view the constitution writing process?

Pradip Deuba (Nepali Congress): There should have been a national consensus on specific points regarding the constitution. But how can they be achieved when there are disputes, even within the parties, about what portfolio each party will get? It is uncertain whether the constitution will be written on time.

Beni Madhav Joshi (National Janamorchha): This is the result of ignoring opinions from small parties and letting the big parties do what they want.

Gopi Nepal (Rastriya Prajatantra Party Nepal): Perhaps the Maoists could have done something, but they weren't allowed to work. Unless the king is included in the process, Nepal's constitution is incomplete.

Keshab Pariyar (social worker): The pace at which the constitution writing process is progressing is encouraging ethnic and regional conflicts and pushing the country into utter chaos.

Raju Nepali (NGO worker): There is no need to lose hope. We can still expect that the constitution will be written on time. The question here is on the issue of federalism and what shape it will take.

What sort of federalism do the people of Doti support?

Padam Singh Bom (NC): The people of Doti should have the power to decide on issues regarding the development of their own region.

Mukunda Rana (NGO worker): Federalism hasn't yet been discussed with us. However, federal states should be made keeping in mind the needs for development,

Residents of Doti talked about what kind of constitution they would want and the kind of structure that would work best for them at a discussion program last month.

education, food and social transformation in the far west. The whole region should be a single state.

Sashi Shob (Dalit Women's Organisation): Just because Nepal becomes a federal republic doesn't mean all our problems will be solved. We should have the right to be a part of the process when our resources are being allocated. We should also be able to use them. The basis for federalism should be geographic.

Dil Bahadur Bom (NC): Seti and Mahakali should be a single state and Doti should be its headquarters.

Keshab Pariyar: No system will work unless we change our attitude.

Pradip Deuba: There is a need to address ethnicity and regional identity. If the sentiment of everyone is taken into consideration, there will be no danger of disintegration.

Sapana Bohara (Nepal Student Union): We need federalism so that Nepal's regions do not have to be dependent on Kathmandu for everything. Decisions regarding federalism should be made on the basis of population, geography and economic issues.

But Doti hasn't been able to utilise its natural resources or the budget received from the centre.

Mukunda Rana: The people of Doti do not have even the basic facilities. The government investment in health, education and employment is meagre. Why would anyone want to stay here? No one wants to invest here. The budget for the entire far west Nepal is equal to that of one district in the east. Those who have migrated to Kathmandu from Doti don't want to invest two per cent of their earnings in their district.

Shashi Shob: Leaders come here only to ask for votes. And the state has always neglected us because they only listen to what the politicians in Kathmandu say.

Keshab Pariyar: We always blame the centre and do nothing. There isn't a single hotel in this district because people fear that they will have to touch Dalits. Donor agencies are sent away if they come here. Everything is politicised. We have to change our attitude to bring development.

Beni Madhav Joshi: Once people are educated and no longer poor they will ask where all the development funds are going, which will make it hard for corrupt leaders to pocket them.

Bhes Raj Joshi (businessman): Doti is stricken with poverty. People do not have the resources to invest here and those who do don't want to. How will autonomy work in a place that has not had a local body for the last seven years?

New constitution 25% finished

Sonam Chejung Lama, UML, CA member, Mugu

What are you discussing in your committee?

I'm in the State Structure Committee. The UML wants a prime minister directly elected by the people. The Maoists say there should be an executive president. The NC wants a ceremonial presidency and a prime minister elected by the parliament.

Everyone thinks they're right, so it's hard to settle the issue. It doesn't look like they'll find common ground. Unless the leaders of the major parties give it a serious thought, the constitution will not be written on time, in which case there will be chaos. Sometimes I'm shocked at how protective members are of their petty party interests.

So how much of the constitution have you written?

Although we've discussed the constitution at length, we've only finished writing a quarter of it. We have been working. We meet at 8AM everyday and I never have a minute to do anything else.

Why is it behind schedule then?

We have been held up by political instability, the big egos of the major party leaders, attempts to keep yesterday's leaders out of power and their unwillingness to relinquish it.

The Constitutional Committee is without a leader. Won't this affect the constitution-writing process?

The committee hasn't had a leader since Madhav Kumar Nepal became the prime minister. The politicians should now quickly agree to appoint someone. If they do so, constitution-writing will remain on track.



Just the preliminary draft done



Navaraj Koirala, Nepal Majdur Kisan Party, CA member, Kalikot

How much of the constitution has your committee finished?

I'm in the Natural Resources, Economic Rights and Sharing of Revenues Committee and we are discussing the preliminary draft made by a subcommittee for discussion in the plenary.

Will the constitution be written on time?

Quarreling between the ruling and opposition parties has delayed the constitution's completion. In any case, I worry that it won't protect every Nepali's interests.

Why?

Instead of writing the constitution, politicians have quarreled and obstructed the house and cast the entire process into doubt.

How was your experience in the CA last year?

I loved Kathmandu when I first came here as a student. Now, I feel suffocated. Criminals abound while drinking water and land waste are mismanaged. To avoid all of this, I think we should move the capital to Dang.

Where the zebra



REVENUE EARNER: The overhead bridge at Rani Pokhari just earns money for the municipality from a billboard and pedestrians ignore a policeman trying in vain to get them to climb the stairs. The parapet of walkways are unnecessarily high to accommodate billboards.



RIGHT OF WAY: Vehicles seem to have right of way even in the city core of Basantapur which was once pedestrianised.



STATE OF DISREPAIR: Protective side rail at Bijuli Bajar, which was partially uprooted by protesters trying to enforce past bandas, has never been repaired.



GOOGLE EARTH

RAJJAN M

We see manifestations of Kathmandu's malignant urban growth all around us: buildings that flout zoning ordinances, unplanned housing, crumbling infrastructure and a city that has exceeded its limits to growth.

But the most glaring aspect is the daily clash of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on Kathmandu's streets. Automobiles are supposed to make life easier, but they vie for urban space with the majority who are on foot and the two are often in conflict in the streets they share.

The municipality and the road authorities are supposed to manage this conflict through zebra crossings, overhead bridges, footpaths, designated pedestrianised streets and an awareness campaign among road users about their rights and responsibilities.

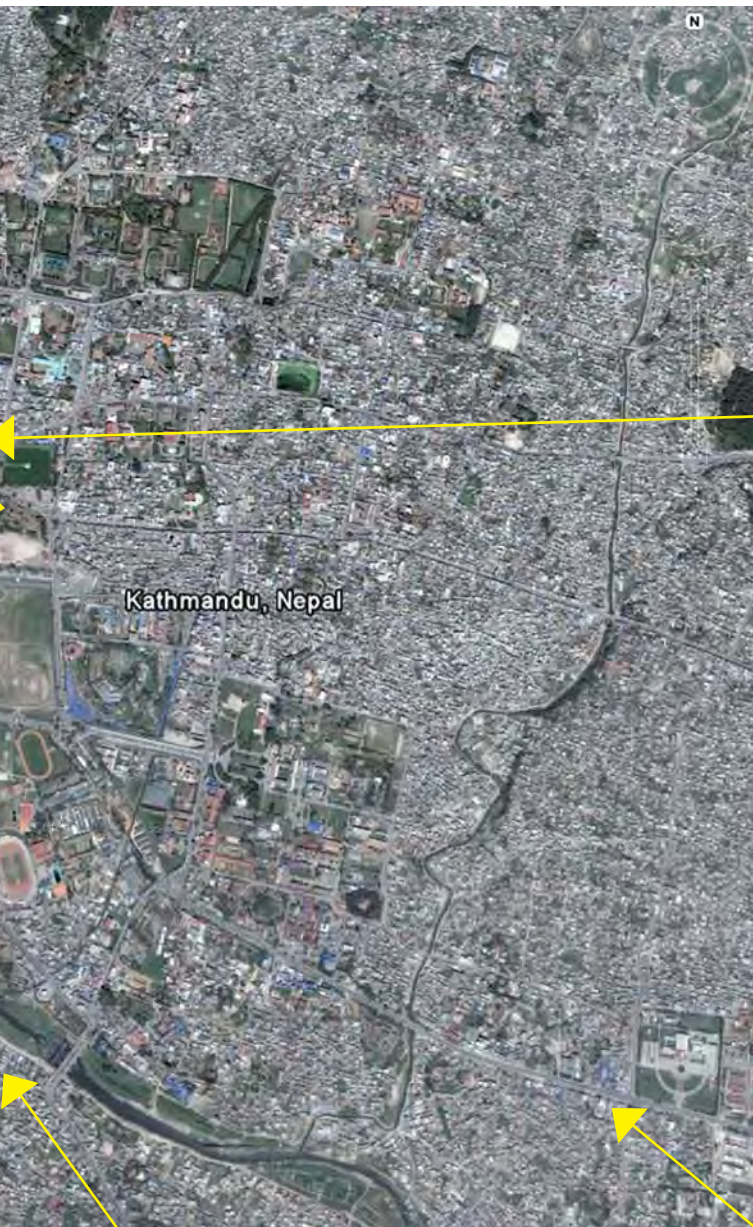
Zebra crossings are the simplest way to manage the conflict between walkers and riders. But zebras, even where they were painted, have now vanished from the streets. This has led to jay-walking, vehicles that don't give right of way to pedestrians, resulting in a rising number of traffic accidents. Kathmandu's city managers have neglected the fact that walking is the primary mode of travel after public transport. The result is that we have a city that is becoming more and more pedestrian-unfriendly.

A compact city where commuting to and from work on foot has always been the norm, fewer people walk because it is dangerous, polluted and inconvenient in the absence of proper footpaths. During frequent traffic jams motorcycles climb on to the sidewalks, adding to the pedestrian's woes.

Those streets with pedestrian walkways are poorly designed

The pedestrian lowest in chain of Ka urban

have all as gone?



CHITRAKAR

and badly maintained with protective railings and street furniture missing. Street lights stopped working long ago, making walking at night even more perilous.

Even the sidewalks that exist are too narrow because there are just too many people and because they are encroached upon by vendors and garbage dumps. Pedestrians therefore have no option but to spillover into the road, where they compete with the cars and motorcycles.

The pedestrian overheads and one subway in central Kathmandu were supposed to make it easier for walkers. But most people rarely use them. This happens when interventions designed for pedestrians

are inappropriate and difficult, and the safety and comfort of road users are not considered. Walking on the sidewalks is unpleasant and chaotic because they are unattractive, non-vibrant and have no active building edges.

Moves by the Traffic Police to improve flow and safety of the Valley's roads should not be confined

to vehicles but also to improve the ease and comfort of pedestrians. All it needs is for the municipality to re-paint the zebra crossings and improve awareness through a publicity campaign for both vehicles and people.

Easy movement of people or good pedestrian environment can only bring better accessibility and linkage between urban places. When push comes to shove (literally) and the question arises, who has the right of way, the answer should always be: the pedestrian. ●

Rajjan M Chitrakar is an architect and urban designer at the Pulchok Engineering College. razn77(at)hotmail.com



OVERHEAD SHOPPING: The overhead pedestrian crossing at Jamal has become a shopping centre. There are no signs showing the way, the legibility of the space is lost and it is prone to crime.



SOMETHING MISSING: A whole section of the sidewalk at the busy Baneswor intersection is missing.



CAR POOL: Pedestrians try crossing the road at Kopundole near Bagmati Bridge. Even when the zebra markings were clear, drivers rarely gave walkers priority.

The return of the Pilatus Porter

After 50 years, a legendary aircraft returns to the Nepali skies



KUNDA DIXIT



NEW ARRIVAL: The second of Yeti Airlines' brand new Pilatus Porter lands at Kathmandu airport (*below*) after a 40-hour ferry flight from Switzerland on Wednesday, with Capt Michael Alb at the controls (*top*). The first Pilatus to fly in Nepal was also nicknamed 'Yeti' and seen (*above*) at Pokhara airport in 1960, and later crashed on Dhaulagiri.

Fifty years after the first Pilatus Porter made the long journey from Switzerland to Nepal, the rugged single-engine aircraft is staging a come back in the Himalaya.

By a happy coincidence, that first aircraft was nicknamed 'Yeti', and it is Yeti Airlines that has just taken delivery of two brand new latest model Pilatus Porters to re-open roadless areas of the country.

The single-engine aircraft are ideal for Nepal's mountains because they can land and takeoff on dirt runways not more than 350m long.

"The Pilatus Porter has a proven record of performance for flying to remote areas of Nepal, it has shown it can do the job anytime and almost anywhere," says Yeti's Ang Tshiring Sherpa, "it fits nicely between a helicopter and a Twin Otter and we want to use it to open up the far west."

The first 'Yeti' set the world record for the highest-ever landing by a fixed wing aircraft at 5,700m when it was used by the Austrian-Swiss Dhaulagiri expedition in 1960 to ferry supplies from Pokhara to base camp. That record still stands, and the 'Yeti' is also still there because on its 17th flight it crashed while trying to takeoff in high wind.

Emil Wick, who was one of the pilots of the original 'Yeti' when it crashed on Dhaulagiri, stayed on in Nepal to train Pilatus pilots for Royal Nepal Airlines. He died in 2000, leaving a list of legendary flying feats like landing downhill in Lukla, flying at 16,000ft in the unpressurised PC-6 to climb over clouds, and landing transverse to the runway at Kathmandu airport in a 40 knot crosswind. (*See box p11*)

Hardy Fuerer, another Swiss pilot who flew the blue-tailed Pilatus for the UN in the 1970s and 80s, was involved in the construction of nearly 40 short-takeoff and landing (STOL) fields. Some, like Phaplu, Jomsom, Jumla, Rara and Jufal have been upgraded, while others like Langtang and Dhorpatan are not used anymore.

Indeed, it was impressive to see just how little of the runway Yeti's second Pilatus Porter used at the end of its 40-hour ferry flight to Kathmandu from Luzern on Wednesday. "The beauty of this plane is that Pilatus hasn't changed its basic design in 50 years," said Michael Alb at Kathmandu airport after a seven-hour last leg of the flight from Ahmedabad.

Yeti Airlines, which flies to more destinations than any other airline in Nepal, bought the two Pilatus Porter PC-6s to extend its reach to airfields which can't take Twin Otters.

"We are hoping to extend this service to tourists who don't have time for a long trek, and want to go up to Syangboche for brunch and be back by afternoon," says Yet Airlines' Pradeep Shah.

At \$950 per hour, the Pilatus is half the cost of renting an Ecuirel helicopter and will hiring it out at short notice as an air ambulance, specialised sight-seeing flights and cargo charters.

In the past 50 years, Pilatus Porters have been flown by the United Nations, the Swiss development agency and Royal Nepal Airlines. In those years, PC-6 have done just about everything: they have dropped live goats by parachute for mountaineering expeditions, carried text books and vaccines to remote villages in western Nepal, ferried grain to Humla during the 1982 food crisis, flown orange saplings for orchards in Jumla and taken international celebrities for new year parties at Syangboche.

For many, the familiar drone of the Pilatus Porter's turboprop engine has brought back memories of a past that is now a part of the future of Nepal's aviation. ●

See also: 'Emil Wick's adventures with the Pilatus Porter', Nepali Times, #9

'Looking for the Yeti', Nepali Times #9

'Expedition locates crash below Dhaulagiri', Nepali Times #13

'Flying into the past with Hardy Fuerer', Nepali Times #24



For video of Yeti Airlines Pilatus ferry flight:
<http://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/multimedia/video/detail.html?siteSect=15045&sid=10743652>



KUNDA DIXIT

Extreme mountain flight

Ron Faux of *The Times* of London flew with legendary Pilatus Porter pilot, Emil Wick, to right below Mt Everest in 1978, and writes about his experience:

During the 1978 Austrian expedition to Everest, on which Reinhold Messner and Peter Habeler planned an oxygen free attempt on the mountain, I flew with them in the Pilatus Porter with Emil Wick (*pictured*) from Syangboche airstrip.

Wick strapped us into the aircraft, gave everyone an oxygen mask and placed a cushion on his seat. He was of short stature and without elevation from a cushion, what lay beyond the instrument panel was a mystery to him. I remember his very positive, cheerful and enormously self-confident manner. He was the only pilot the Nepalis would allow to fly "into the hole" as he called the Western Cwm.

We first flew towards Nuptse and skirting the northern edge of the ridge, tracked the edge of the Cwm towards Lhotse, swinging left about level with the South Col. The air was completely still but Wick announced that we were unable to fly beyond the South Col for fear of a Chinese missile and that reaching summit level was not possible on that particular day because the pressure was too low and the air insufficiently dense.

The single turbo-prop engine did not have the grunt to go higher that day. Instead we flew to 400m of the south-west face of Everest and we had a close-up view of the route that Bonington and Co had climbed three years previously.

Wick then flew the aircraft above the Lhotse face and said: "OK, we dive the bastard" and yanked the controls into a spiral dive. He had to use maximum input on the controls to make the Porter do anything. We then swooped down the Lhotse face over the heads of two Austrians climbing towards the South Col. They could not have been pleased after spending two months manoeuvring themselves into a position of Biblical loneliness and danger when out of the

sky plunges an aircraft whose wheels almost took their hats off. If the noise and shock wave alone did not terrify them the subsequent risk of avalanche on a 50 degree snow and ice slope would.


Down the Cwm we plunged over the lip of the Khumbu Icefall and the startled upturned faces at base camp. Whilst Wick was clearly master of his element and enjoying every second, his passengers were too stunned to speak. We flew down the valley to Syangboche, renowned for its turbulence, but the air remained perfectly smooth.

Interesting to note that Reinhold Messner insisted that he make the flight without wearing an oxygen mask. He was well acclimatised and manifestly had lungs that reached his knees but even so he turned a curious shade of blue, his eyes crossed and lost some of their focus but, according to him, he remained fully conscious. As history records, he and Habeler did reach the top, unmasked.

Emil Wick retired from his job as a trainer for Royal Nepal Airlines in Nepal in 1986 aged 60. In 1989 he co-wrote a scientific meteorological paper entitled 'Air motions in the vicinity of Mount Everest as deduced from Pilatus Porter flights,' which gives a fascinating insight into his vast experience of flying in the Everest region. Emil Wick died on September 27, 2000 aged 74 in Geneva, Switzerland. ●




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Hillary in India

NEW DELHI—It is hard to say whether US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton will find herself being quizzed more on Washington's 'AfPak' strategy to contain global terror, or her appeasement of a financially muscular China, when she lands in India next week. Clinton's visit comes a full five months after she landed in Beijing where, to the consternation of international rights groups, she refused to allow human rights to "interfere" with talks on more pressing issues such as the financial crisis, climate change and security.

Abandoning the George W Bush policy of 'containing' China through building up strategic ties with India (as well as with Japan and Australia), Clinton has described U.S.-China relations as "the most important bilateral relationship of the 21st century". (IPS)

Ban on Burma

BANGKOK—UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon achieved a rare diplomatic feat during his recent visit to military-ruled Burma: he broke a taboo by delivering a public speech about the lack of democracy and human rights in the country. So far, the notoriously prickly regime, has accepted Ban's verbal thrust without an outburst, but Burma watchers wonder how long that silence will last. "Neither peace nor development can thrive without democracy and respect for human rights," Ban said over the weekend to an audience of diplomats, UN officials and staff from aid agencies in Rangoon. "Peace, development and human rights are closely inter-related." Ban's speech, on the last of his two-day stay in Burma, also touched on the plight of Aung San Suu Kyi, the pro-democracy leader who has spent over 14 years either under house arrest or in Rangoon's Insein Prison. He called for the release of the Nobel Peace laureate and the over 2,100 political prisoners languishing in Burmese jails. "Aung San Suu Kyi must be allowed to participate in the political process without further delay," Ban said after being denied a chance to meet the 64-year-old Suu Kyi, currently being held in the Insein Prison. More is required for the current UN engagement to achieve political reform in Burma, say human rights groups that have exposed abuse in a country that has been under the grip of successive military regimes since a 1962 coup. (IPS)

"Invest in women"

Experts tell G-8 leaders to allocate more money for gender issues

SABINA ZACCARO in ROME

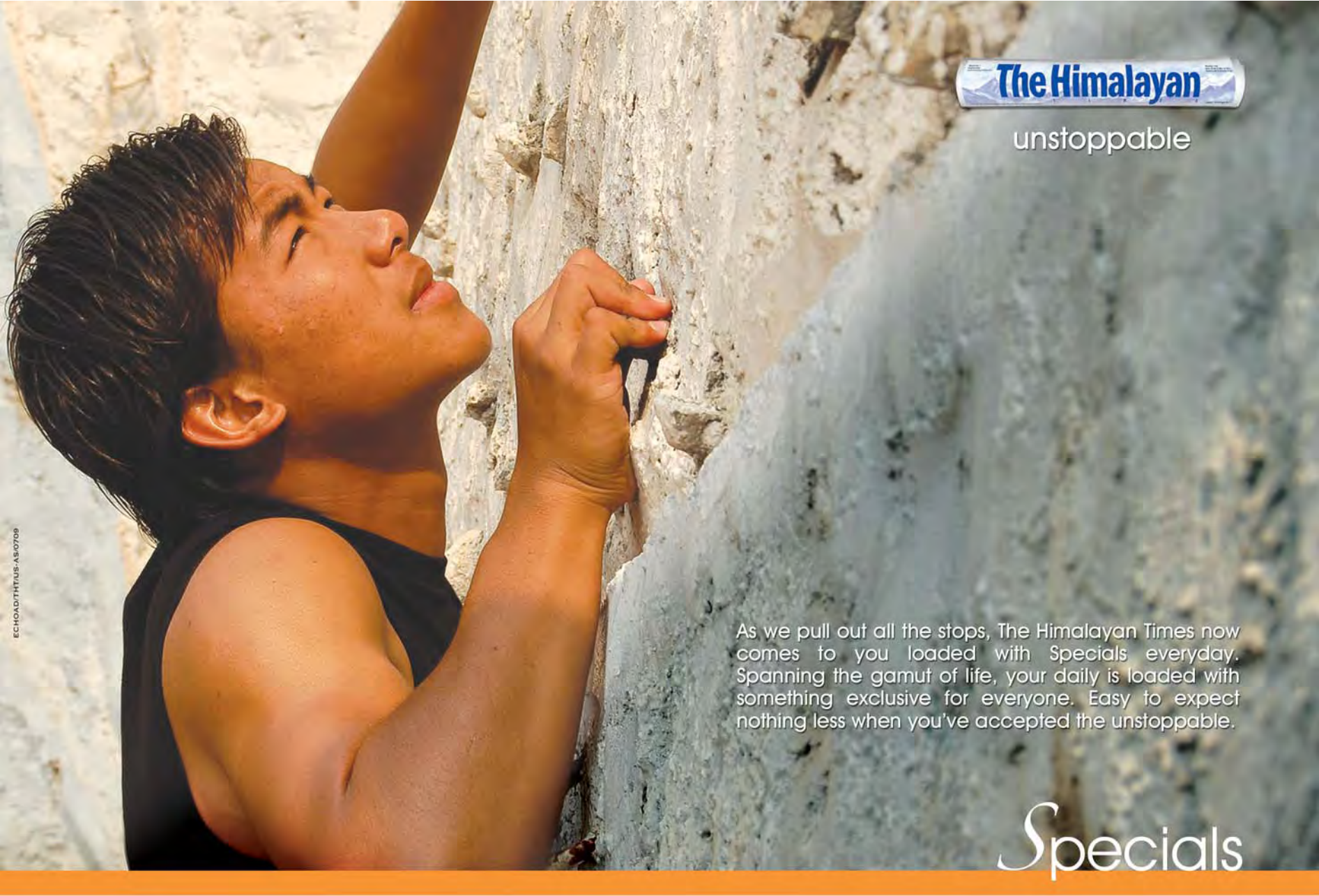
Investment in the health and the rights of girls and women can help economic recovery, civil society groups told G8 leaders who met in Italy this week. They said the big issues on the G8 agenda (food security, poverty, climate change and global health) are all connected to gender equality and added that investment in women is itself a solution. "If we invest in women, many problems will be solved, the economy can stand from the ground," said Sylvia Borren, co-chair of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP). "We know from microfinance and from many other examples that letting women suffer from the food crisis and the lack of health services means not building the fundamentals of a sustainable economy." The problem is funding. According to the World Bank, the economic crisis and the new rise in food prices could lead to 2.8 million more children dying by

2015 if no concrete action is taken, and \$60 billion dollars are needed over the next five years to fight infectious diseases and strengthen health systems in the developing world. Last year's G8 summit made comprehensive recommendations to strengthen health systems particularly, but without allocating funds to that end. Now, 56 women parliamentarians from Asia, Africa, Europe and G8 countries have said in a letter: "Investing in women's health as part of aid policies has to be considered a priority, as it will give to the poorer countries a better chance to solve their health crises and develop." Sexual and reproductive diseases clearly cause a huge economic loss to developing economies. They reduce female productivity by 20 per cent, the parliamentarians said. "Of course it's about money, and the money is there," said Borren. "Not even a third of the \$30 billion requested at the UN high level meeting on the food crisis one year ago has been forthcoming, when \$20 trillion

have gone to the corporate bailout and the banks...they have chosen to desperately bail out an economic system that we all agree is broken." ● (IPS)



KUNDA DIXIT



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- Wednesday - Campus Plus - collegiate life ; Appointments - careers and jobs
- Thursday - School Times - everything kids should know
- Friday - Green - environment matters
- Saturday - Property Plus - weekend two pager focusing on real estate



SAM KANG LI

Sam's Nepal



Sam Kang Li came to Kathmandu to work at Nepali Times as a photojournalism intern from Singapore's Nanyang University in December 2007. In the next six months, many of his photographs appeared in this paper. Last week, three of those pictures won awards in the photo-journalism category of the Prix de la Photographie, Paris (Px3). Excerpts of interview:

Nepali Times: Was there a lot of tension taking the pictures? You were often surrounded by riot police.

Kang Li Sam: The pictures of the Tibetan protests pictures were mostly taken outside the United Nations building in Kathmandu. Hundreds of Tibetan refugees had gathered outside to stage a peaceful protest, but tensions ran high. My photos show tension simply because the situation is one of tension. I was more excited than scared because as a

Singaporean who had been used to order on the streets, this was something very different.

What camera did you shoot the winning photographs with?

I was using a normal DSLR, like most news photographers. I usually shoot with very wide lenses because I prefer to get close and intimate. I am mostly self-taught. Exposing myself to the works of other people can be very inspiring. I think it is the thought process that is important, even though photography seems to be very technical.

What was it like working in Nepal during the time of its transition from monarchy to republic?

I felt incredibly lucky to be able to be a witness during such a critical period for Nepal. The political leaders were divided and often disagreed with one another, causing slow implementation of essential policies and frustrating the people. The people had a lot of hope for the new Maoist

WINNING STREAK: Sam Kang Li (left) and one of the photographs (above) for which he won the Px3 award in the photojournalism category in Paris last week.

government after the April 2008 polls, which I covered. I admired Nepalis who continued to smile and go about their daily lives despite the instability, daily 18-hour electricity cuts and diesel queues that snaked for kilometers. One year later, it seems that nothing much has changed.

Was not being able to speak Nepali a problem?

Actually sometimes it helped because Nepalis tend to be more hospitable to and forgiving of foreigners. The language barrier was easily circumvented because I received the help of many colleagues who have now become very dear friends. I also learned enough of the language to get by.

Any other themes or subjects which you plan to explore?

I feel that the still image can be a very powerful medium to communicate and connect with people. I don't hope a lot about what my pictures can do, other than to be able to connect with people and to move people in some ways. Photojournalism need not be confined to the realm of news pictures.

What next for you?

The nice way to put it is that I am a freelancer. The bad way to put it is that I am jobless. But I'm also not rushing into finding a job. Times are bad and so I am just keeping a look-out for options.

www.samkangli.com

In a new light

An elephant sleeps by a mid-night blue lake, an owl flutters on a blade of grass. A camel averts its gaze from the harsh uncanny light that illuminates it and a calf stops to listen in a deserted, red-hued street to the silence that engulfs it.

Zoe Childerley's 'In a Different Light' comprises a series of magical images that are at once familiar and delightfully strange. Carefully constructed to conceal the way they are made they remain, nevertheless, fabulous scenes that immediately engage the imagination. The dramatic light and dense foliage, the lonely spaces and quiet waters: these heightened realities are sensuous and thrilling.

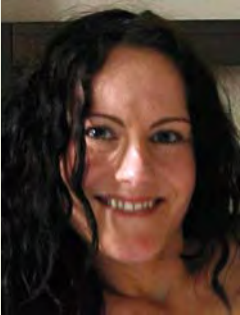
In a Different Light is inspired by fairy tales, folk tales, mythology and literature, narratives that both distinguish communities and unite humanity. She works with Hindu myths and African proverbs, a Nepali tale and the Old Testament.

Some of Childerley's images depict living animals in alien or artificial environments. Some are shot on location, at home or abroad, with minor details added or subtracted during post-production. Quite often, the animals she photographs are stuffed, though they are incorporated with such skill into the false landscapes she provides that they nevertheless appear uncannily alive



Childerley did some work in Nepal which formed part of a body of work that has been exhibited in the UK. The images are based on folktales, several of which come from Nepal. In her exhibition at the Siddhartha Art Gallery, Zoe will be showcasing 12 images from this captivating series of work. The menagerie of animals, originally preserved by taxidermy, had new life breathed into them by her photography. Childerly has been working with Philip Holmes, the director of the Esther Benjamin Trust, which has been working with Nepali girls who have been rescued from Indian circuses and with young deaf people. Proceeds from the sale of her photographs will go to the Trust.

The elephant in Childerley's image belongs to a Nepali tale about logic and intellect outwitting superstition. But such is the power of photography that it can carry the multiple narratives we attach to it. The strength of Childerley's skilled and mesmerising images is that they tap into a collective repertoire of archetypes while remaining seductively original and new. ●



Zoe Childerley is a photographic artist and senior lecturer at Derby University in the UK. 'In a Different Light' is being exhibited till 18 July at the Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited.

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ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **Our world your move**, a photo exhibition by Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement in Nepal, Nepat Art council, Baber Mahal 12 July at 2PM
- ❖ **Away from town**, a photo exhibition of the pictorial book 'A people War', Indian International Centre, New Delhi 14 July at 6 PM. 91-11-24616947
- ❖ **Inside is outside**, an exhibition of paintings by Saroj Bajracharya at The Art Shop gallery, durbarmarg til 17 July
- ❖ **In a Different Light** an exhibition of Photography by Zoe Childerley at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited, til 18 July at 5PM. 4267063
- ❖ **More than Ambassadors**, a photographic exhibition by the ambassadors of USA, India and Denmark at Indigo Gallery, Gairidhara til 19 July at 8AM-6PM. 4413580

EVENTS

- ❖ **The Story of the Weeping Camel**, movie screening set in Mongolia's Gobi region about the adventures of a family of herders, Lazimpat Gallery Café, 11 July at 5.30 PM. 4428549

MUSIC

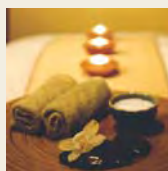
- ❖ **Yala maya classic**, a classical music series featuring Sitar Player Bina Shrestha and Tabla player Rabin Lal Shrestha, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka. 17 July at 5PM
- ❖ **Baja gaja**, every Tuesday at Moksh, 7.30 PM onwards, Pulchok. 5526212
- ❖ **Live band** every Friday and rooftop bbq everyday at Kausi Kitchen, Durbar Marg. 4227288
- ❖ **Sunday Jazz brunch** barbecue and live jazz music at the Terrace, Hyatt Regency from 12-3.30 PM. 4491234
- ❖ **Jazz evening** at Delices de France Restaurant every Wednesday, 11AM-2PM. 4260326
- ❖ **Some like it hot** every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, 7PM onwards, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel. 4479488
- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, 5-7PM, ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar.
- ❖ **Live Sensation**, performance by Yankey every Saturday, 9PM, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4491234
- ❖ **Live Band Sensation** performance by Aprilrush, every Saturday till late, Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 4489362
- ❖ **Sunday Jazz Brunch** by Inner Groove with barbeque, Sunday, 12PM-3.30 PM, The Terrace at Hyatt Regency Kathmandu. 4489362
- ❖ **Nepali Ghajals** and songs at D'Lounge Beijing Duck Restaurant, every Thursday 6.30 PM onwards. 4468589

DINING

- ❖ **A cafe's cafe** Dhokaima Cafe, Patan Dhoka. 5522113
- ❖ **Pan Pizza & Risotto** – for pizza cooked in pan with various toppings in wood-fired oven at the Rox Restaurant on Sunday, Monday & Tuesday. 4491234
- ❖ **The Corner Bar**, 3-11PM, 5-7PM, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu. 4411818
- ❖ **7th Annual Monsoon Wine Festival 2009**, from until 15 September, Kilroy, Thamel. 4250440
- ❖ **Mango Etagere** with hi-tea at The Lounge from 4.30- 6.30 PM. Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Weekend Brunch** by the Poolside every Saturday and Sunday, Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu, 11AM-3PM. 4273999
- ❖ **Pizza & Pasta** at the Rox Restaurant every Monday & Tuesday, Hyatt Regency. 4489362
- ❖ **Mediterranean cuisine** every Friday from Greece, Italy and the Middle-East at The Café, Hyatt Regency. 4491234
- ❖ **Teppanyaki** meat items and garlic rice right at Le Resturant, Gairidhara. 4436318
- ❖ **Plat Du Jour** at Hotel Shangri La, Kathmandu, Rs 600. 4412999
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser Café, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9AM-10PM. 4425341
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs 999, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999
- ❖ **Himalayan Rainbow Trout** at Hotel Yak and Yeti, Darbar Marg. 4248999

GETAWAYS

- ❖ **Relax Package** at Hyatt Regency Kathmandu for Rs 5555 plus taxes, for a night on double occupancy with breakfast, complimentary use of spa and, offer valid to Nepalis and local residents only. 4489800
- ❖ **Feel the Hyatt touch**, a 60-minute Ayurvedic massage and access to pool and spa with breakfast or lunch at The Café or hi-tea at The Lounge. 4491234/ 4489359



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

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In *Ice Age: Dawn of the Dinosaurs*, life begins to change for Manny (Ray Romano) and his friends. Scrut (Chris Wedge) is still on the hunt to hold onto his beloved acorn while Manny and his new mate Ellie (Queen Latifah) are expecting a baby. Diego (Denis Leary) is fed up with being treated like a house-cat and Sid (John Leguizamo) begins to wish for a family of his own, and so steals some dinosaur eggs. This leads him into the underground world where dinosaurs roam free and where his herd must rescue him.

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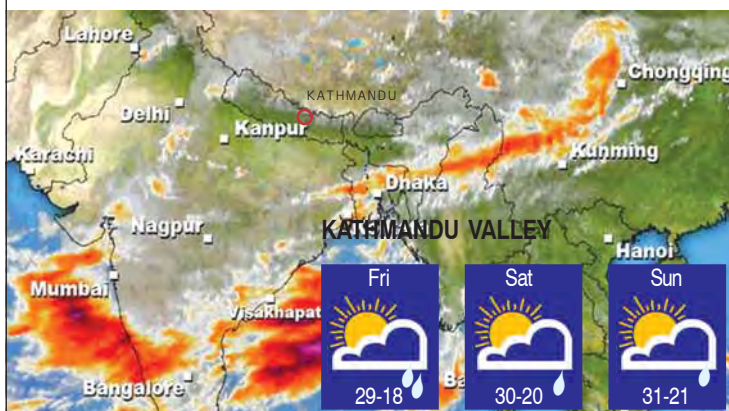
काम सानो ठूलो भन्ने हुँदैन । पसिनाको कुनै रङ र जात पनि हुँदैन । काम गरेर खान लजाउनु पनि हुँदैन । चोरेर, ढाँटेर, छलेर, लुटेर खान पो लजाउनुपर्छ । जो जहाँ रहेर जुन काम गर्छ ऊ त्यसैमा रमाउनुपर्छ गौरव गर्नुपर्छ र समर्पित भएर गर्नुपर्छ । काम नै शक्ति हो, भक्ति हो र मुक्ति हो । कामको इज्जत गरौं, पसिनाको सम्मान गरौं ।

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WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

Although the precipitation quota for the first two weeks of July have been within normal monsoon norms, we haven't made up the deficit because of the late onset. Kathmandu received 100 mm of rain till 8 July: out of the July quota of 360 mm. This satellite image taken on Thursday afternoon shows a clear squall line poised to enter Nepal from the southeast. A low pressure trough along the axis of the Himalaya and a parallel mid-tropospheric system called Inter Tropical Convergence Zone will egg the rain along. The monsoon took a breather midweek, but will re-invigorate itself over the weekend. The showers will be at times heavy at night, with sultry sunny spells during the day.



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SLEEPY HEAD: Maoist Chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal at a program to induct new party members on Sunday at the Academy Hall on Sunday.



WELL GROOMED: An aide wipes off a tika from the face of ex-king Gyanendra at his 63rd birthday celebration on Tuesday.



UNHOLY ASH: Firefighters inspect damages after a fire destroyed a building at Tri-Chandra Campus, following a clash between Nepal Student Union and All Nepal National Free Student Union on Monday.



PEDDLING MESSENGERS: A hand-bike team from the Netherlands, championing for the disabled, arrives in Kathmandu from Lhasa after a 15-day ride on Wednesday.

A photograph of a young girl holding a large scoop of ice cream. The ice cream is topped with chocolate chips and colorful sprinkles. The girl is smiling and looking at the camera.

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Party palaces

Two months after the Government of Nepal took over from the Baddies, the only country in the world which is named after its prime minister, is still running like a non-government organisation. Decisiveness has never been one of Makunay’s strong points, so when he promises an end to the peace process in three months, rehabilitating kids from cantonments in three weeks and uprooting crime by Dasain, few **Nepalis believe Nepal**. The reason is MKN has been busier laying foundation stones and addressing crowds in Kathmandu 2 constituency where he lost the elections than in Singha Darbar attending to matters of state. In fact, listening to him one gets the feeling he is still in campaigning mode. They still don’t get: the way to get re-elected is by doing something for the people not by delivering another speech. And now he’s getting ready to jet off for the Unaligned Summit in Egypt the day after the budget is presented in parliament. That means another week **down the tubes**.

But better late than never, MKN did manage to get a 4-point agreement to resolve a dispute over the 9-point agreement that nearly derailed the 12-point agreement. He got PKD to **jot on the dotted** line and manoevered GPK to **arm-twist** Lotus Flower. He (Makunay) also stuck to his guns, and refused Fearsome’s insistence that the Baddies vet his speech to parliament before he delivered it, especially the sentence on “the president’s unconstitutional move”, the issue that has been the reason for the two months of deadlock. Com Chhabilal used a charm offensive and told Com Nepal: “Why are you being so difficult? After all, I

read a speech the kangresis wrote for me when I addressed the nation on tv, remember?”

The way in which the E-malaise are installing party faithful to head key govt media and corporations, it looks like they are making up with vengeance for lost time. That’s why it does sound a bit like the **pot calling the kettle red** when one remembers how the You-ML moaned and groaned about the Baddies turning their ministries into employment centres for cadre in the last govt. So UML aparatchiks now head all govt media, although over at NTV staff refused to allow a political appointee entry.

Awesome looked rather **chuffed** inaugurating the new 3 karod Baddie HQ on Paris Hill put together by the Maoist trade union from extortion money. As well he might because this is the **swankiest** party palace in Kathmandu. The kangresis never seem to be able to complete their party office in Sanepa because they’re always diverting money somewhere else, and the UML’s Balkhu office looks like a cross between Pashupatinath and the **Lenin’s mausoleum**.

Now that an ex-royal brother-in-law has become a Maobuddy the Ass’ bet is that it is only a question of time before other royals also embrace Maoism. The only question is will ex-kingji also become **Comrade Gyanendra?**

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