



OPINION:
Dipak Gyawali



INTERVIEW:
Bandana Rana



FORUM:
Narendra Kumar Basnyat

New SPOTLIGHT

Oct.04-24, 2013

FORTNIGHTLY



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Happy Dashain!

Dear readers, many of you may be traveling to be with the family and to enjoy the Dashain break. For the leisurely reading you are going to need, we have looked into Nepal's tourism prospects as our cover story for this issue.

The World Tourism Day 2013 has provided the main context for the article. Despite making enormous progress, Nepal's tourism is facing a decline in tourist arrivals once again. We know Nepal has all kinds of natural and cultural products to lure the foreign tourists and relatively better infrastructure these days to host them. Prolonged political instability and a number of bandhas have hit our tourism prospects badly. Then there is climate change, affecting Nepal's overall environment. Our ecology is under threat. Political leaders and policy makers have yet to do their bit to promote the sector. The cover story looks into these various aspects of tourism, a major employment provider.

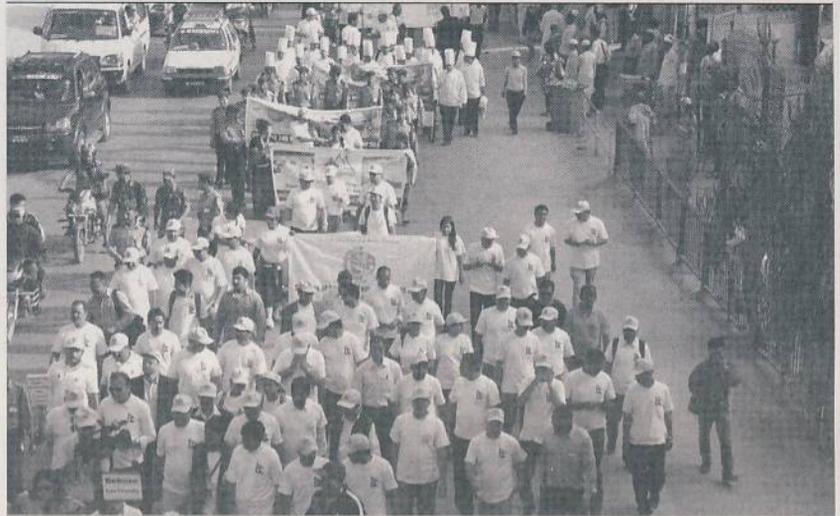
Along with discussing tourism, we have included our regular columns and political commentaries, as well as development agenda of the country, as other topics. Hope you will enjoy the issue during your festival vacation.

We wish all of you, our readers, patrons and well wishers, a Happy Dashain.

Keshab

Keshab Poudel

Editor



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Chinese Embassy hosted reception

The Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu hosted a reception to celebrate the 64th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Chinese ambassador Wu Chuntai and Mme Jiang Chunyan hosted the reception in the capital Kathmandu on September 27.

Vice president Paramanand Jha attended the function as the chief guest. During the reception ministers, leaders of various political parties, high level government officials, security personnel, Kathmandu based foreign



Vice President Jha (left) Chinese ambassador Wu Chuntai (right) with other guests at the reception. Diplomats, business communities and Chinese nationals working and living in Nepal were present.

Media Misquoted German Ambassador

The attention of German Embassy is drawn towards recent news items which quoted German Ambassador to Nepal Frank Meyke as saying at a function in Tanahun district that people should not vote for a political party that enforces ban-das. This is not correct, according to a press release of Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany. Ambassador Meyke did not make such a statement.



The press release said the position of Germany and the whole European Union on bandas is expressed in the EU-statement of 12 September 2013, according to which "Bandas also undermine our joint development efforts and Nepal's investment perspectives". This has been our consistent position.

EU To Observe CA Polls

The European Union (EU) will mobilize 100 election observers during the upcoming Constituent Assembly (CA) scheduled for November 19.

"The Election Commission (EC) and the EU today (Sunday) signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deploy 100 EU election observers during the forthcoming CA polls," said Election Commissioner Ram Bhakta PB Thakur, who also heads the election observation committee at the EC.

EC Secretary Narendra Dahal and EU Ambassador Alexander Spachis

signed the MoU at the commission's head office in the capital.

Asked about polling locations where the EU observers would be deployed, Joint Secretary at the EC Maheshwar Neupane said, "The EU will take decision regarding the issue in coordination with the constitutional body later."

UNICEF & NHRC Against Misuse Of Children

National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and UNICEF Nepal issued a joint statement on potential misuse of children before, during and after elections.

The National Human Rights Commission of Nepal and United Nations' Children Fund (UNICEF) are increasingly concerned about potential misuse, manipulation and engagement of children by political parties in pre and post-election campaigns in the country as there are alarming reports about plans of different parties to engage children and schools in political activities.

SAARC : Fighting Poverty

Chairman of Council of Ministers Khil Raj Regmi inaugurated symposium on the best practices in poverty Alleviation in SAARC member states. Regmi also released the SAARC Regional Poverty Profile 2009-10: Food Security Challenges for the Poor and Social Inclusion.

Organized by the SAARC-UNDP partnership program, the two day symposium discussed the overall state of poverty in the region. "South Asian

countries need to work together to eradicate poverty," said chairman of Council of minister Regmi.

Caitin Wiesen, manager, UNDP/Asia Pacific Regional Center, Bangkok, said the efforts made by South Asian Countries are exemplary in the area of poverty reduction. Vice Chairman of National Planning Commission Dr. Rabindra Kumar Shakya said Nepal has drastically reduced level of poverty in the last one decade from 42 percent in 1996 to 23.8 percent in 2012.

Secretary General of SAARC Ahamed Saleem said the poverty alleviation in the region is impossible without making joint efforts. "South Asian countries have made tremendous progress in reducing the poverty," said Ahamad.

Saumitara Chaudhuri, member Planning Commission of India, said India has good experiences to share in poverty alleviation.

Pandey met Chinese Vice-President

Former foreign minister Ramesh Nath Pandey met Chinese Vice President Li Yuan Chao in Kunming



Former Foreign Minister Ramesh Nath Pandey met Chinese Vice President Li Yuan Chao in Kunming last week. Former foreign minister Pandey was there to take part in High-level plenary session of the China South Asia Peace and Development Forum in Kunming, China.

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नेपाल टेलिकम
परिवार

Minister Koirala Meets European Commissioner

Andris Piebalgs, European Commissioner for Development, met with the Minister of Finance of Nepal, Shankar Prasad Koirala in Brussels.

Commissioner Piebalgs reaffirmed the continuous EU support to Nepal's democratic process, including through the EU Election Observation Mission, which will be deployed for the forthcoming elections. Commissioner Piebalgs announced plans to increase EU's development assistance to Nepal significantly for the period 2014-2020 with a view to bringing added value in three major sectors: integrated rural development, education and governance.



HBL Unveils Festive Rates

Himalayan Bank Limited (HBL), as part of its festive offer, has introduced special interest rates on home and auto loans.

According to the scheme, customers will get Fixed Rate Home Loan at 9 percent interest and Fixed Rate Hire Purchase Loan at 9.5 percent interest. The offer is valid from September 22 until two months, the company said in a statement. The bank is also offering 50 percent discount on service charge while processing the aforesaid loans.

Yeti Airlines Completes 15 years

Yeti Airlines, Nepal's largest private airlines, completed its 15th year in service. Along with providing regular service, Yeti Airlines also served in various sectors of Nepal. During its one and half decades in operation, the airlines has contributed in various socio and economic sectors of Nepal. During this period, Yeti Airlines offered various programs like Yeti for Elderly, Yeti to need, Yeti in Pollution Control, Yeti in Plantation, Yeti for Community, Yeti for Education, Yeti for Orphans and Yeti for Sports.

Dhamala Elected TAAN President

Ramesh Dhamala of Ecological Treks has been elected as the new president of Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal (TAAN). The panel led by Dhamala had swept all 17 seats in the election for a new executive committee held during the 35th Annual General Meeting (AGM) of TAAN. Dhamala, who garnered 321 votes, defeated his competitor Jangbu Sherpa by 60 votes.

Ncell Mela In Seven Cities

To celebrate reaching 10 million subscribers, Ncell organized Ncell Mela in seven cities around the country. Ncell Mela kicked off from Dharan followed by events in Birtamod, and Birgunj, said the private telecom company.

The Mela features game stalls, food stalls,

kids' zone and street activities, along with musical concerts. In the game stalls, visitors can lay 'live games like Pick-your-pack, My5 Feast, Fruit Slice and Score, and My5 Photo Booth.

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नेपाल सरकार

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Freudian Glimpses Of Raw Wounds

By DIPAK GYAWALI



What a doleful irony! The only plausible political reason – and at that level of governance, things that matter are only political – Nepal’s CEO Khil Raj Regmi went to New York (when he should have been managing the messy transition crises here) was to get the ukase and blessings of Man Mohan Singh directly. Not that it had not already been delivered by his underlings, spook-in-chief Alok Joshi and foreign secretary Sujatha Singh just weeks earlier in Kathmandu; but given the predicament he is facing – growing meaninglessness of a second CA-II poll boycotted by not just the Baidya-led 33-party alliance but sure to be disrupted by a growing army of disgruntled factions within each major party – faithfully implementing the ukase is getting to be problematic. From newspaper reports, he seems to have got the ukase anew: hold elections on November 19! The irony is, it came from an Indian prime minister whose own authority in Delhi was torn to shreds by his upstart Congress-I crown prince, with signs that harbinger regime change in Delhi itself. Will it add to Regmi’s gravitas or will the

current instability. The powerful board’s members include another former ambassador K. V. Rajan (architect of the disastrous Mahakali Treaty), Hormis Tharakan (spook chief in Nepal in the tumultuous 1990s, subsequently head of RAW in Delhi) and a bevy of academics from the Congress-I bandwagon that have provided rationalizations for regime change in Nepal. They have, it is said, insisted to Gol that elections in Nepal be held at any cost on the stipulated date. The reason seems to be to present the same faithful Nepali oligarchy with a semi-legitimate façade as a *fait accompli*, and thus partly whitewash their own misadventures before a new regime in Delhi after Indian elections in early 2014.

Kantipur’s Sudhir Sharma’s new exposé *Prayogshala*, despite its selective documenting of how India’s neighbourhood policy and diplomacy is NOT fed by its spooks but LED by them, only confirms this new adventurism and the less than savory motives that lie behind it. It makes the Euro-Americans, who outsourced their Nepal policy to Delhi, look so naïve as

too following some mysterious ukase?

The less said about Nepal’s failed ruling political parties, the better. At the book’s launch attended by Kathmandu’s cognoscenti, many tantalizing glimpses of Freudian slips among the establishment oligarchy were provided which show how Kathmandu politics operated and continue to operate. Given what the contents of the book were, Prachanda should not even have shown his face there in shame; but he did and had the temerity to berate the Indians for “micro-managing” Nepal’s politics and its administration. It follows logically that he is okay with Delhi’s macro-management of Nepal provided it left micro-management to him and his politburo-*bhardars* Jung Bahadur style!

Youth leader Gagan Thapa said he was shocked to discover how he and his Kangress parties were but ignorant pawns in a larger game they were totally oblivious of. Kangress theoretician Pradeep Giri had to express surprise at Thapa’s remarks and wonder how a young leadership so ignorant of international intrigues could lead tomorrow’s Nepal. Like Prachanda, he too only complained that the Mughlanis should, like other super powers, conduct their management of Nepal’s politics covertly and not overtly. The UML, *Aloo Party* as it is often referred to for being fit to mix in every type of political vegetable curry, is conspicuous by its deafening silence even though the book begins with a description of how its senior most oligarch took direct instructions from Mughlani spooks in Everest hotel before heading for CA meetings.

The resistance within Nepal to the election ukase comes from an unusual configuration of forces. The most overt are the breakaway Dash Maoists and their motley 33-party coalition, and they seem to have won the battle for the moral high ground. They were willing to participate in the elections by significantly compromising their original stance; but after the visits of

Kantipur’s Sudhir Sharma’s new exposé *Prayogshala*, despite its selective documenting of how India’s neighbourhood policy and diplomacy is NOT fed by its spooks but LED by them, only confirms this new adventurism and the less than savory motives that lie behind it.

to lose any serious diplomatic credibility in South Asia, and shows Nepal’s civil society of

“blessings” turn into a curse?

The Mughlani pressure on the failed oligarchs of CA-I to hold elections on that date “at all costs” (instead of “properly and meaningfully”) is said to come from India’s National Security Advisory Board which is packed with the architects of its failed political adventurism in Nepal. Its chair, former foreign secretary Shyam Sharan, was ambassador to Nepal who double-crossed not only the King of Nepal but also schemed to disrupt the agreement worked out by India’s special envoy Karan Singh, which has led directly to

2005/2006 and the peace industry they ran with Western funding as complicit in the Leninist “useful idiots” sense. Reading the book, readers are forced to ask the writer and the publishing houses he is/was associated with: if you knew all these things even as early as you did, how come you misled your faithful readers by not indicating or hinting anything about it as you went full-steam on your mission journalism of demonizing Gyanendra and lionizing both Girija and Baburam, the two most treasonous figures of New Nepal? Were you or your publishing houses

Mughlani spook Joshi and foreign secretary Singh mentioned above, the main parties backtracked from any compromise and, faithful to the ukase, agreed to keep the Dash Maoists out at all costs. Even commentators beholden to the establishment parties have had to evoke the highly symbolic episode from the Mahabharat where Krishna tries to avert a war by pleading with the Kauravs (establishment oligarchs) to give their poor Pandav cousins (Dash plus 33) just five villages, an offer the arrogant Kauravs refused leading to the epic conflict.

The covert undercurrents, seen through Freudian glimpses, are even more fascinating for what they indicate about the real nature of Nepal's transitional politics. As these lines are being written, second rank politicians in the four-party syndicate are giving indications of talking to the Dash Maoists about postponing elections, and serious pro-election cognoscenti have been calling me to say why think elections will not be held, which range from the comical and workup to the sublime. It seems, declaring candidates now means they have to provide them and their district and village machines party funds for campaigns. Given how politics of ideals and volunteerism is practically dead within their ranks with the rise of "money and muscle" politics, all major party treasurers are afraid much of the money will be spent on Dussain feasts and Tihar gambling instead of party campaigns. On this count alone, November 19 is a highly inauspicious date!

The bigger reason is that all of the oligarchs are unable to manage dissent within their ranks, partly and ironically because of their refusal to hold local elections in last ten years and refusing to participate in the municipal elections held by the King's government in February 2005. Had they done so, they would have groomed a wide cadre of political workers with experience in holding office whom they could judge without much bias as to their being fit for higher offices such as MPs. A successful ward chief could be promoted to a mayor and a capable district chair elevated to an MP, a process which they stunted by opting, especially after 2006, not for elections but for their neo-feudal patronage dispensing selection of city council and district party offices. The result is – and I have met such disgruntled aspirants – people who are unfit to be ward chairmen are fighting for their inborn rights to become MPs! And Nepal's bulging youth demographics – with people who were too young to participate in the last full-fledged local elections in 1998 are today 32 years old – means those aspirations have to be met.

The irony and undercurrents of Nepali politics will continue to roil the country well past November 19 with or without elections, and the chance of any new and acceptable constitution being written evaporates like the coming winter fogs.



DIG Nawaraj Silwal

NEPAL POLICE

A Crisis Period

As Nepal Police is celebrating its anniversary, it is facing one of the very difficult times when almost all top icons are likely to retire before the elections

By A CORESPONDENT

In its history of 58 years, this is for the first time Nepal Police is facing such a difficulty in its organizational history. If the previous amendment of Nepal Police Regulation is retained, a dozen of senior police officers, including the chief, are likely to be retired just a week before the elections.

Looking at the vulnerable period, Ministry of Home Affairs has already proceeded with a legal proposal to extend the tenure of all the senior police officials for two months or till holding the elections for the Constituent Assembly on November 19.

After the amendment of Regulations in 2006, several police officers were already retired after completion of 30 years in service. According to Nepal Police regulations, police officers have to retire either after completion of 30 years or after the age of 58.

With the force of over 58,000, Nepal Police has been facing a similar problem and it is related to the tenure. By manipulating the regulations, politicians often exploit the

police organisation. This is not an exception. Under this provision, many senior and capable police officers have already retired from their job.

However, there is going to be a major challenge and crisis. No one is ready to swallow any bitter pills to save the organizations. Although Nepal Police sacrificed over 2000 of its cadets in various insurgencies, it has survived as a professional organization.

Although it is not easy to amend the regulation, it will bring drastic turn and frustration among the junior officers. Although Nepal Police has been facing all tough jobs in providing law and order in the country, it has itself been passing through a nasty disorder.

"As a professional and service oriented organization, its history is full of sacrifice. Despite facing all kinds of difficulties, we have been able to provide security to the citizen," said DIG and spokesperson of Nepal Police Nawaraj Silwal. ■

ELECTION POLITICS

Heading For Confrontations?

After failure to reach consensus on elections, Nepal's major political parties are heading for confrontations

By A CORRESPONDENT

Backed by international community and supported by overwhelming Nepali, Nepal's four major political parties are finally preparing for Constituent Assembly elections for November 19. Despite the hurdles created by CPN-Maoist cadres, candidates of major political parties filed their nominations for first past post system.

All the senior leaders of major political parties submitted their nominations. CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal submitted his nomination from Kathmandu No 2 constituency with a large number of his party supporters.

As parties are sending their nominees to the elections, CPN-Maoist led alliances have declared that they will take all necessary actions- violent or peaceful - to disrupt the elections. "The phase of negotiation is over. The street will decide the fate of politics," thundered Mohan Vaidya Kiran addressing press conference on October 2.

At a time when political parties are in the process of registration for the candidate list October 3, the general strike called by Federal Limbuwan State Council, one of the key allies of CPN-Maoist, crippled the normal life in nine eastern districts. The bandh is enforced in Jhapa, Ilam, Panchthar, Taplejung, Morang, Sunsari, Dhankuta, Sankhuwasabha and Tehrathum districts paralyzing the normal life. Although the bandh called to disturb filing nominations, it failed stop the candidates of major political parties from submitting their nominations.

At a meeting of the party politburo held at the party's head office at Buddhanagar, the Maoists appealed to people to boycott the poll actively and effectively, arguing that the talks option was now over. CPN-Maoist led alliance has issued letters to the party candidates contesting from various parts of Nepal asking them to withdraw nominations or face consequences.

Along with this, the Maoists also announced 10-day general strike which is scheduled for November 9 to 19 to obstruct the CA poll. "We urged the candidates to revoke their candidacies. We will obstruct the elections and announce a people's constitution from the streets whatever the sacrifice we have to make," said Vaidya

Although pro-elections political parties have already nominated their candidates for the elections, they have yet to announce program against the strike. Despite claiming to provide complete security, Nepal's security institutions are yet to come against the CPN-Maoist and its alliances.

"We will wind up Maoist cadres after looking their strength." Those who break land of the land will be punished in accordance to the law. Obstructing the election is against the law," told Home minister Madhav Prasad Ghimire to New Spotlight.

Thos political parties which are contesting the elections are yet to announce the programs."Our workers will retaliate against CPN-Maoist. We will not allow anybody to hijack the elections agenda," said UCPN-Maoist leader Prachanda.

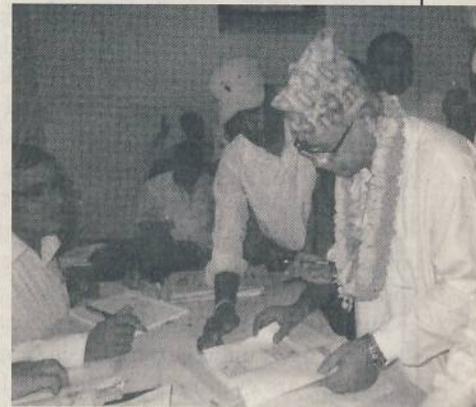
Failed Negotiations

On September 28-29 CPN-Maoist leaders Mohan Vaidya and Dev Gurung met UCPN-Maoist leaders Prachanda, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai and Narayan Kazi Shrestha. According to Maoist leader Dev Gurung, it was the four party leaders responsible for breaking the negotiations.

"Every political parties and politics have limits. If they cannot contest the election, it is their rights. However, they should not obstruct the elections. We have already requested the government to ensure safety and security to our workers."

Security Challenges

As the government is preparing the integrated security plan, various



CPN-UML Leader: Madhav Kumar Nepal Filing Nomination

underground armed outfits operating in the Tarai and hill, along with Maoist led 33 parties alliance, remain a major security challenge in the upcoming Constitution Assembly election. Eastern and central regions are more vulnerable from underground outfits. According to Home Ministry Officials, there are three dozen underground outfits in terai and hill regions. Two outfits operating in the eastern Tarai have warned of disrupting the election. Akhil Tarai Mukti Morcha led by Jaya Krishna Goit and Prajatantrik Tarai Mukti Morcha led by Jwala Singh have already announced a series of activities. CPN-Maoist led 33 parties are organizing former Maoist combatants to foil the security arrangements.

As per the integrated security plan prepared by the government, around 62,000 Nepal Army personnel will be deployed as a backup force during the CA polls. Similarly, 54,000 personnel from Nepal Police, 22,000 from APF and over 44,000 temporary personnel will be used for election security.

Possible scenario

Given the current political scenario, the Election Commission is likely to hold the elections on November 19. At a time when Maoist led 33 parties have already ordered mobilization of their cadres and underground outfits in terai, issuing similar kinds of statement against the elections and the government announcement of new integrated security plan, the level of violence will intensify during and before the elections. If parties fail to discipline their party leaders in line with the party's decision to go for polls, this is likely to boost Maoists to make the elections uncertain. ■

INFLATION

Down, Not Out

Even as the prices of all commodities have gone up, Nepal Rastra Bank's recent reports show that Nepal's current inflation is down to 7.9 percent

By DEBESH ADHIKARI

Although it was unexpected, the report released by Nepal Rastra Bank, the central bank of the country, showed that Nepal's inflation was drastically lower from nearly 12 percent to 7.9 percent. At a time when prices of essential commodities have been increasing due to weakening Nepali rupee against US dollars and Nepal's economic performance is yet to show any sign of progress, Nepal Rastra Bank's (NRB) recent report of mid-August has surprised many.

According to the Macro Economic Situation of Nepal, a monthly economic update released by NRB, the prices of commodities under food and beverage group, and non-food and services group rose by 8.9 percent and 7 percent, respectively, during the review period. Last year, prices of food and beverages,

and non-food and services had increased by 12.2 percent and 11.6 percent in the same period.

Average inflation was recorded at 9.9 percent in the last fiscal year, despite the government's target to limit it within 7 percent. In the budget for fiscal year 2013/14, the government has set the target of containing inflation at 8 percent. Economists, however, have termed the target an ambitious one given the rising prices of fuel and other commodities owing to strong greenback.

Despite all these, export performance has continued to be sluggish. Merchandise exports (fob) registered a decline of 2.9% in FY2013 in US dollar terms, down from a growth of 6% in FY2012.[1] Exports in FY2013 totaled \$981 million, down from \$1

billion in FY2012, reflecting weak export demand as well as the continued decline in competitiveness arising from the rising costs of production, power shortages, and political uncertainties. Overall, merchandise exports declined to 5.1% of GDP in FY2013 from 5.3% of GDP in FY2012.

Economic prospects

Despite making certain progress in the first two months, Nepal's economy will depend upon how political settlement is found and remittance flow maintained. Although the present caretaker government was able to bring a full budget for the first time in the last two years, it is not alone sufficient to build the economic confidence.

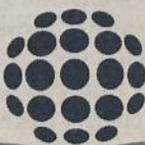
Among the commodities falling under the food and beverage group, price index of meat and fish sub-group saw the highest increment of 17.4 percent during the review month. The inflation in the sub-group was recorded at 11.5 percent last year.

Although the last months economic data indicated that economy is heading towards the right direction, it is too early now to predict the trend given Nepal's fragile political situation. ■



*On the auspicious occasion of BADA DASAIN & SUBHA
DIPAWALI-2070, I would like to express my heartfelt
best wishes & greetings to all the students, parents,
employees, teachers and well-wishers and pray
for their peace and prosperity.*

Dr. TILAK RAWAL
CHAIRMAN



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'Women Not Just Poll Agenda'

BANDANA RANA

With her long experience as a crusader on gender issues and domestic violence, rights activist BANDANA RANA spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues. Excerpts:

Seven years have already passed since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace agreement, how do you assess the post-conflict situation in Nepal?

It has been seven years since the signing of the comprehensive peace accord. Significant changes have occurred in the post-conflict transition period. While recently, security sector restructuring—a critical element of the peace process—has been completed. However, an overview of the past seven years reveals that the hopes and aspirations of Nepali people remain largely unfulfilled. The Constituent Assembly (CA) failed to draft the Constitution for the “New Nepal” despite four extensions of the deadline during a four-year term. A “New Nepal,” a just, peaceful, prosperous Nepal that Nepali people had envisioned of with the signing of the CPA remains a deferred dream.

As women are the main victims of conflict, how do you see the situation for them now?

The post-conflict transition period has not put an end to inequality. Except the 33 percent representation of women in the constituent assembly 2008, women continue to be under-represented in positions of power and in decision making roles. Women's participation in the peace negotiations, political talks has remained insignificant. The issues of inclusion, equality, full, equal, meaningful representation of women are promoted as election-time agenda rather than as essential elements and pre-requisites for sustainable peace. Women continue to suffer from SGBV and the after-effects of mental and physical torture, internal

displacement, and social and economic exploitation. Further, the prevalent culture of impunity, lack of adequate and effective support mechanisms for victims of conflict to acquire justice or heal the wounds of conflict continues to increase their vulnerabilities to SGBV, discrimination and exploitation.

Nepal is celebrating the peace day. How do you look at this?

Not just Nepal the whole world celebrates the peace day on 21 September. However peace day is of particular significance more to countries in conflict or countries in transition to peace like Nepal. Celebration of peace day should not be limited to official programs with high level dignitaries propagating what is peace and what they have done amongst audience who have heard that repeatedly...but review and analyze what has been done, what have been the progress and most importantly what the gaps are for attaining sustainable peace. It is important to hear and address diverse voices and concerns and renew political commitment for an effective and inclusive way forward.

If not, what are there to complete?

Hundreds of families of the disappeared have yet to know of the whereabouts of their near and dear ones; thousands of women and girls survivors of SGBV are still denied justice, they are not even covered by the interim relief program the government has been implementing since 2007; hope for justice is further diminished in the absence of TRC and given the prevalence of culture of impunity. A viable peace is not possible without healing of past wounds, pains and sufferings, redress to past atrocities and guarantee of non-repetition in the future. For this, it is essential that the truth is revealed, access to justice is ensured, gender justice and just peace is achieved, rule



of law prevails, a conducive environment is created, where there is no fear, threat, and violence, women and girls are able to lead a dignified and violence free life, and moreover, they are fully, equally and meaningfully represented in all the peace processes. Peace process is not complete in true sense without a viable peace.

As a civil society leader working on women rights issue, what do you suggest for long lasting peace?

In order to achieve sustainable peace, it is essential to ensure gender justice and gender-just peace. Gender justice and gender-just peace are not possible without equal, active and meaningful participation of women in all the peace-building processes and taking into account their needs, concerns and rights. Towards this end Nepal has a five year National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 & 1820 since 2011 which has been recognized by the international community as one of the best plans. The plan clearly outlines what needs to be done under the five pillars – (i) participation, (ii) prevention and protection, (iii) promotion, (iv) relief and recovery and (v) resource mobilization and monitoring and evaluation. This is a good roadmap to follow for addressing the women peace and security concerns of the country with greater accountability from the government, external development partners and the civil society.

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com

AMBASSADOR ROW

Unfair Delay

Even as dozens of Nepali missions abroad remain vacant, the government has nominated secretary of foreign affairs Arjun Thapa as Nepal's candidate for SAARC General Secretary

By A CORESSPONDENT

After a long inaction in appointing the ambassadors in the Nepalese missions abroad, the cabinet, headed by Khil Raj Regmi, nominated foreign secretary Arjun Bahadur Thapa as the SAARC Secretary General. This is the second time in a row when Nepal got the position of the secretary general.



Arjun Thapa

The government has now to pick up one of the senior joint secretaries for the position of secretary. It is reported that Shanker Bairagi, the

head of the Nepalese Mission in Geneva, is likely to be recalled to take the charge of acting secretary on the basis of seniority.

Although there are vacancies of ambassadors in over a dozen of Nepalese missions abroad, political wrangling has stalled the process of appointment. Since Nepal is yet to have a clear criteria for selection of ambassadors, from political appointees and career diplomats, the appointments of ambassadors are getting delayed.

In accordance with the international practices and in South Asian countries, the ratio for career to political appointments is 75 to 25. However, it is not mentioned in Nepal and that has been creating problems. The recent incident of Qatar and other ambassadors showed that diplomats appointed on political quota are unable to contribute to promote national interest.

Under the recent amendments in the interim constitution, the provision of parliamentary hearing has been temporarily suspended and Durga Prasad Bhattarai and Dr. Narendra Basnyat have already been appointed

as ambassadors to United Nations and Malaysia.

There are vacancies in New Delhi, Egypt, Thailand, Germany and Qatar. The position in United States will vacate next month.

The Ministry is yet to take any decision about filling the vacant diplomatic posts. In the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a number of senior joint secretaries, who are natural competitor for the post, are waiting for the ambassadorial berth.

The process of appointment usually follows the seniority basis. Six senior joint secretaries will be appointed as ambassadors in various countries under the present sharing agreement between political parties and career diplomats.

Among the career side, there are disputes between those who started their career with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and those who made a late entry. Those who spent their entire their career under the ministry are demanding preference due to their experiences and skills over those who came there through open competition. **Women in Waiting**

In the last five years, two women were sent to foreign countries to lead Nepal's foreign missions under a political quota and the performance of both the political appointees brought controversies.

However, the first career-based woman envoy proved her sufficient talent and completed her tenure with good performance.

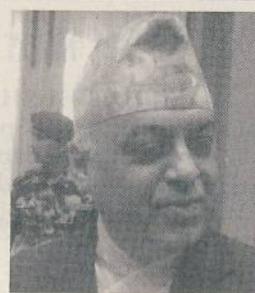


Shankar Bairagi



Ambika Luitel

After the appointment of Bindeshwari Shah, who was later sent to India as Nepal's ambassador in 1989-90, no women career



Madhav Ghimire

diplomats were chosen from the Ministry to head the foreign missions.

As the number of women in Foreign Service has increased, two women are now holding the post of joint secretaries. Joint secretaries Ambika Luitel is now heading northeast and China division, and Sewa Adhikary is now holding deputy chief of the Mission in the United Nations. Joining in 1986 as a section officer, Ambika Devi Luitel claimed that she was the longest serving official in the Ministry now. Along with male joint secretary counterparts in the Ministry, she is also aspiring to be appointed as an ambassador in the coming round.

As per the established diplomatic practice, the government needs to name ambassadors well before the completion of term of serving envoys to ensure that these posts do not lie vacant. Last time Nepal appointed 50 percent of ambassadors from among career diplomats and the rest under the political quota. Leaders participating in meetings of the High Level Political Committee (HLPC) said the appointment process for ambassadors has faltered as the major parties differed over nominations to key countries.

Due to delay in the appointment, there is now frustration among ambassadorial hopefuls among career diplomats. "We spent our whole career in the ministry hoping that our service would be recognized. Along with affecting the career prospects of seniors, the delay has already affected successors' plans," said an official at the Ministry.

"The government and political parties must start their process of appointments under the agreed principle: half the envoys from among career diplomats." ■

We Will Not Allow To Hold Election



PAMPHA BHUSHAL, spokesperson of the CPN-Maoist spoke to New Spotlight on the election agenda.

What will your party do in case the big four decide to go ahead with the election on November 19, 2013?

That will invite more bloodshed. If the four parties don't listen to us, they will have to prepare to face the consequences. We have already announced an indefinite general strike for almost a week to prevent the election work from happening.

It is said that the CPN-Maoist would not contest the elections even if the four parties and the government accepted all your demands. How do you look at this comment?

This is a design for propaganda against our party. We are committed to elections. We are not in favor of boycotting elections. If the parties have the guts, they must fulfill our demands.

How can the chief justice resign when there is a provision in the constitution that only the CJ is eligible to lead the government?

What constitution are you talking about? If they can amend the constitution to mobilize Nepal Army, what is wrong to change such a clause for political consensus?

The four political parties have been saying that they will accept some of the demands if your party publicly expresses its commitment to elections?

We have been saying day and night that we are not against elections. What we want is a meaningful election. We must settle the issue of constitutional disputes before taking any decision on forms of government, restructuring of the state, Supreme Court and so on. Along with this, there is the need to have a political government to hold the election and roundtable meeting. ■

If Not Now, CA Poll Never



RAJENDRA MAHATO, Chairman of the Sadbhabana Party, holds the view that there is no way but to hold the November 19 CA elections.

At a time when the CPN-Maoist has been saying that it will obstruct the polls on November 19, how do you see the possibility of holding the polls?

There is no way out other than to hold the polls. If the government cannot cope with the dissenting Maoists, they can never hold the elections. Every party has the right to take part and boycott the elections. Since the CPN-Maoist does not have big following, the party cannot disrupt the polls.

It is reported in the media that some political parties are making efforts to postpone the elections. What do you say?

This will change the whole political course. Changing the election date is unacceptable for us. We want elections on November 19 at any cost.

If the political parties decide to change the date giving some space to Maoists, how will you react?

We will launch a nationwide agitation against this kind of conspiracy. I have told you that some forces who don't want to empower the Madheshi, Janjatis and other minorities are hatching conspiracies against the forthcoming CA elections.

How do you see the general environment in Madhesh?

People are waiting to cast votes for CA elections. I have found that people are very much enthusiastic about the polls. From east to west, I have found the same kind of enthusiasm among the people regarding the elections. ■

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शुभ-दिपावली-२०७०
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मङ्गलमय शुभकामना
व्यक्त गर्दछौं ।



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Strengths Of A Gandhian Revolution

By SHYAM PRASAD ADHIKARI

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, born on October 2, 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat of India, and educated in law at University College, London, was a proponent of the non-violent revolution and practiced it to free India from the British rule. He is known the world over as Mahatma Gandhi, and widely recognized as an apostle of peace and non-violence. The word 'revolution' meant to him, a change, a turning of upside down and a great reversal of conditions. It addressed the fundamental reconstruction, especially forcible substitution by subjects of new ruler or policy for the old.

Gandhi was aware of the historic significance of revolution. 'Nations have progressed both by evolution and revolution,' he said and added that, 'history is more a record of wonderful revolutions than the so-called ordered progresses.'

It was his firm conviction that revolution should be brought about by non-violent means. Referring to the French and Russian revolutions, he observed that these failed to realize the democratic ideas because these were 'fought with the weapons of violence.'

Those, who, with an entirely honest motive, ousted the greedy and the corrupt by using brutal force against them, become in their turn, 'a prey to the disease of the conquered.'

The world, Gandhi held, was sick of armed rebellions. He was of the view that a bloody revolution would not succeed in India for the reason that the masses have no active part and can do no good to them. A successful bloody revolution can only mean further misery for the masses.

A violent revolution eventually ends in the gravitation of power into the hands of the few instead of the many. It invariably gets personalized and deviates to becoming a mere clash of egos, in the process sidelining the main agenda, the concern of the masses. History of violent revolutions has clearly shown that it always has done more harm than good. In Gandhi's own words, 'an eye for an eye ends up making the whole world blind.' History also shows that violence tends towards the concentration of power and ultimately leads to dictatorship.

In an active non-violent revolution, even the weakest can participate without becoming weaker. A non-violent struggle necessarily involves constructive and continuous struggle on a mass. It cannot therefore lead to *tamas* or darkness or inertia. It means a quickening of the national life. The method of non-violent revolution is not a slow process, but is the swiftest method the world has seen. And

it is the surest on achieving the goal, according to Gandhi. To crown it all, it is the noblest way, for it prevents the brutalization of human nature and teaches the people to side voluntarily in favor of truth and justice.

The doctrine of non-violent revolution espoused by Gandhi is not a programme of seizure of power but a programme of transformation of society by resisting the evil.

The Gandhian theory of revolution is based on historical experiences. A study of the French and the Russian revolution proves to the hilt the futility of violent

revolutions in achieving the desired objectives. The latest of all revolutions in our nation reiterated the fact that a collective, voluntary and non-violent mass movement of less than 10 days could achieve what a violent revolution of more than 10 years could not muster.

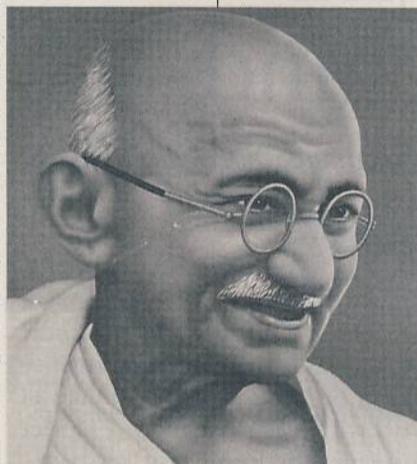
Commenting on the French revolution, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru once said, 'they achieve wonders, those people of France, until after several years of terrible strain and conflict and as the revolution exhausted its energy it turned on itself and began to eat up its own children. And came the counter-

revolution. It not only swallowed up the revolution but also sent common people, who had dared and suffered, back to be ruled by the superior classes. Out of the counter revolution emerged Napoleon, a dictator and an emperor.

Reflecting on the Russian revolution, H. G. Wells observes, 'it proved again the soundness of the principle that a revolution can create nothing that has not been fully discussed, planned, thought-out and explained beforehand. Otherwise, a revolution merely destroys a government, a dynasty, an organization as the case may be. A revolution is an excretory operation not creative one.'

Speaking about violent revolutions to overthrow tyrannical regimes, Richard H. Tawney says, 'Revolutions, as long and bitter experience reveals, are apt to take their colour from the regime they overthrow.'

The Gandhian pattern of non-violent revolution is a positive and creative one. It has fair prospects of realizing its ideas and aims. It devours neither its own children nor itself. It does not wind up in a new tyranny or dictatorship. It, in fact, paved way for one of the world's largest democracy. It was a solo initiative; an act of perseverance, patience and participation. Gandhi has become a phenomenon for all to appreciate and take heed from. ■





DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Lagging Behind

Nepal needs to improve its performance portfolio in Asian Development Bank funded projects

By A CORRESPONDENT

At a time when Nepal government lacks adequate resources to fund its development projects, the country can easily acquire additional 90 million US dollars from the Asian Development Bank's funds. However, there are criteria Nepal will need to fulfill.

The country needs to enhance its performance and efficiency to meet the criteria set for the funds.

Prolonged political instability, change in the government, and frequent transfers of employees have directly affected the implementation of Nepal's projects. Problems are also there in auditing and project award contracts.

Against this backdrop, the government and ADB officials discussed the ways as to how to accelerate progress and achieve the targets set for the projects.

"It is possible for us. What we need to is put all our efforts to enhance project performance and increase the efficiency," finance secretary Shanta Raj Subedi told New Spotlight. "Going through the last two months' performance, I am pretty sure that we will qualify for additional 90 million dollars."

Addressing the two-day Asian Development Bank's Country Portfolio Review Meeting, finance secretary Subedi pledged to take all necessary actions to improve project portfolios, addressing the key issues. "We have made certain progress in the last few months in this regard."

Attended by the staff of ADB and the Government of Nepal, the Country Portfolio Review Meeting, reviewed the status of implementation of all ADB-assisted projects/programs. The meeting also examined and discussed country-specific common project implementation challenges and prepared a time-bound action plan with quantifiable monitoring targets to improve portfolio performance and delivery of results on the ground.

Explaining that the forthcoming five-year Country Partnership Strategy will place significant emphasis on improved portfolio performance and associated institutional development, Asian Development Bank's country director Kenichi Yokoyama emphasized on the need for (i) selectivity and focus on ADB operations to take up smaller

number of larger projects forcing on critical bottlenecks such as infrastructure and human capital, (ii) enhancing project readiness with advancing detailed designs before project approval; (iii) strengthening project management systems with effective monitoring and troubleshooting, and (iv) pursuing genetic reforms for timely budget planning, approval and release, public procurement, public financial management, and other accountability mechanisms. He also underscored the need for substantially increasing the quality and quantity of capital investments in order for the country to go into a much higher growth trajectory of 7-8% per annum.

"If Nepal can improve its portfolio performance and meet the rating Nepal can be still awarded 90 million US dollars," said Yokoyama. "As of 31 August 2013, ADB's active portfolio amounts to about \$1.5 billion with 35 investment projects, of which \$0.9 (60%) is still to be awarded, and \$1.2 Billion (80%) is still to be disbursed, of which \$0.9 billion (60%) is still to be awarded and \$1.2 billion (80%) is still to be disbursed, which are very high (and should ideally about 30% and 60% respectively). In 2012, contract and disbursement was only 16% and 9% of uncommitted and undisbursed funds, which should ideally be over 20 Percent," said Yokoyama.

Nepal's performance suffered in the last few years due to frequent transfers of project chiefs, lack of regular budgets and delay in the contract agreements. Political transition has badly affected the decision making process.

The two day meeting held on 26-27 September widely discussed various issues related to the projects and recommended the ways to improve the performance portfolio in various projects.

Although there are challenges ahead, there are ways to improve the performance and the progress of the projects. If that happens, Nepal may eligible for further assistance. ■



On Nepal, Czech Trade Opportunities

By NARENDRA KUMAR BASNYAT

It is a great pleasure to be here in this Nepalese-Czech Business Seminar. Our interaction with members of Czech businesses will play a crucial role to exchange our ideas in order to strengthen the economic relations and cooperation between Nepal and the Czech Republic in general and the industrial communities of both the countries in particular.

Nepal—'The land of Mount Everest' is a historical country and going through the political transition at present. However, there is consensus among the leading political parties on economic liberalization, industrialization of the country, investment promotion, and growth and development issues. There are vast potential areas of opportunities, waiting for exploitation primarily in the field of agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, hydro-electricity, mine and minerals etc.

The government of Nepal is also committed to improve the "doing business" environment by reforming various investment policies and implementing them to attract foreign direct investment (FDI). As the governments as well as political parties have been concentrating in conducting the election of Constituent Assembly (CA), which will promulgate the new constitution, it is expected to accelerate the growth of the country in the coming years. Hence, I encourage the Czech investors to also take this opportunity through the investment in their areas of interest.

Confederation of Nepalese Industries (CNI), a professionally led apex body of large and medium scale industries of manufacturing as well as service sector of Nepal, was established by the leader of Nepal's industrial and corporate sector on April 17, 2000 with the theme of "Talking Business, Talking Change". CNI, as a non-government, non-political and non-profit organization, actively lobbies with the government on the issues related to investment promotion and industrial development of Nepal. It

also works in providing solutions in these issues. As a harbinger of changes taking place in the global economy, CNI is working with several business organizations of developing as well as developed countries in Asia, Africa, Europe and America and opening the opportunities in expanding business linkages.

The volume of trade between Czech Republic and Nepal has been increasing gradually and it reached \$ 2.6 million in 2012. But it is in the favor of the Czech Republic and Nepal has faced deficit of \$ 1.4 million. Nepal exports mainly readymade garments, handicrafts, hand-knotted woolen carpets, tea and medicinal herbs to the Czech Republic. Imports from the Czech Republic mainly constitute medicine and medical equipment, electrical goods, machinery and parts, glass beads, motor cars, heavy equipments and parts.

Both Nepal and the Czech Republic have cordial relation not only at the government level but also at the level of the private sectors. The exchange of business delegation between these two countries is an example of the bilateral relations. In their visits, Czech investors had shown keen interest to invest in joint ventures in Nepal in the areas of water resources, alternative/renewable energy technologies and equipments, infrastructures, manufacturing and processing etc. I think hydroelectricity development and tourism are some of the immediate opportunities for the Czech investors – where they have experience since long and Nepal offers good opportunities.

I would like to recall and acknowledge the visit of the Deputy Minister of Environment of Czech Republic to Nepal in November 2011. I also acknowledge the visits of HE Ambassador of Czech Republic to

Nepal Mr. Miloslav Stašek in regular basis. On various occasions, CNI had organized B2B interactions on which investors from both the countries proposed to establish the formal relation with the Confederation of Industry of the Czech Republic (CICR) to enhance the economic cooperation. We will also be signing the MOU on this occasion.

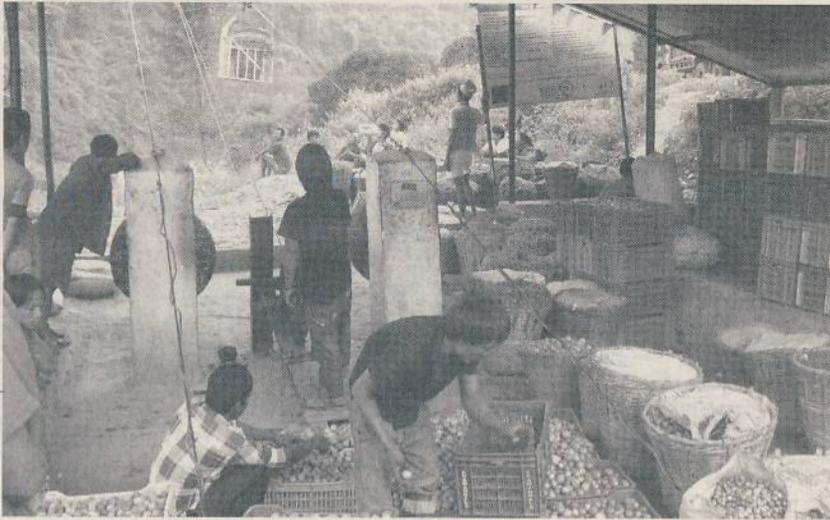
I would like to request the Czech Government to initiate to form a 'Joint Economic Committee', which will be a formal platform for constructive dialogue to promote bilateral trade, and investment mechanism such as Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection



Agreement (BIPPA) etc. At the end, I would like to thank the government of Czech Republic, department of foreign economic policies and CICR for their kind cooperation and support extended to our team. Similarly, my thank goes to Vishnu Agrawal, Honorary consul of the Czech Republic to Nepal for his continuous efforts in building the constructive relation between the private sectors of both the countries.

(This is the excerpt of Basnyat's statement delivered during the visit to Czech Republic by a delegation of Confederation of Nepalese Industries who attended Czech Business Seminar, Prague. Basnyat is the President of Confederation of Nepalese Industries.)

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com



PRACTICAL ACTION

Gravity Rope Solution

Government officials and policymakers have come to realize that gravity ropeways can be a good transport solution to lift the people out of poverty

By A CORESSPONDENT

At a time when rampant construction of the rural roads in various parts of Nepal is wasting resources and increasing the dangers of landslides, the government officials have come to realize that the gravity ropeways are likely to be good transport alternatives.

After learning from the positive impacts generated by gravity ropeways in various parts of Nepal, the policymakers are pursuing the alternative that the Practical Action had been promoting and implementing.

"Given Nepal's fragile mountain ecosystem and high cost involved in the construction of roads, the National Planning Commission is pursuing the construction of ropeways as an alternative to the rural roads. Although I have yet to visit any gravity ropeway site, I was told by officials from the Practical Action about their successful model of gravity ropeways and that they helped the communities to transport their goods," said Gopi Mainali, joint secretary at the National Planning Commission and head of the infrastructure division. "While travelling to Pokhara, I noticed ropeways were carrying vegetables and goods to the road sides. Given its cheap cost and environmental friendly feature, the National Planning Commission has proposed these kinds of ropeways in its

current interim plan."

Although Nepal started the ropeways almost over a century ago to carry goods, this mode of transport has rarely got any priority in the government programs. Given Nepal's topography and nature, the rope is regarded as the best option for transporting goods in terms of environmental sustainability and construction cost.

However, it took almost decades to revive the ropeways as important mode of goods transport in the minds of the people. The credit of reminding the importance of ropeways and its importance goes to the Practical Action, an UK based INGO. Under the Access for Opportunities project, 2007 to 2012, Practical Action installed 15 Gravity Goods Ropeways in 4 districts of Nepal.

"Gravity Goods Ropeway (GGR) is one of the flagship technologies of the Practical Action, Nepal office. It fits well with the rugged topography and agrarian economy of Nepal. It taps the undulation of ground to overcome the inaccessibility posed by it. It helps farmers to get their products to market in less time, cost and drudgery. It was introduced in Nepal in 2000 for the first time. Now, the technology is heading towards achieving the impact at scale," said Rabintra Bahadur Singh, project manager of Practical Action. "We are

making concerted efforts for the wider replication of the technology by influencing and building the capacity of other organizations."

There are realizations in policy making level that gravity ropeways can be used in the rural poverty alleviation programs given its success to raise the income in poor Chepang communities in Dhading and Gorkha districts.

"I have not visited any site and got the first appraisal of the development and change brought by gravity ropeways. I came to know how successful use of gravity ropeways helped eradicate poverty from the rural parts of Nepal when I was in the National Planning Commission. Now I am working in the Ministry of Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation and we are considering using gravity ropeways to eradicate the poverty."

The Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agriculture Road (DoLIDAR), which oversees all the infrastructure development works at the local level, has started to replicate the technology in Nepal. Last year, it carried out feasibility study for GGRs on 21 sites in 9 districts. "Practical Action provided technical training to its engineers, consultants and verified the feasibility reports. It has also started installation of GGR at 2 sites. Practical Action and the department have agreed to work together to explore the leverage fund for the replication of the technology in Nepal," said Singh.

"Gravity ropeways has proven its worth. We are working to install ropeways in some parts of Nepal taking the expertise from and sharing the knowledge with the Practical Action," said Bhim Prasad Upadhyaya, acting director general of the Department of Local Infrastructure Development and Agriculture Roads (DoLIDAR).

"To support and sustain wider replication of the technology, human resource development is really important. Realizing the fact, Practical Action has been closely working with Pulchowk Engineering Campus, the largest and most reputed Engineering College in Nepal. The college has included the GGR technology in their curriculum and started to run elective classes on it for its Bachelor of Civil Engineering final year students. Practical Action supported the college to develop curriculum and has been providing resource persons to facilitate the classes," said Singh. ■

LEGAL EDUCATION

Searching Best Practices

"There cannot be democracy without the rule of law" – Professor Suresh Raj Sharma

By A CORRESPONDENT

In alliance with Kathmandu University (KU) and Alliance for Social Dialogue (ASD), Nepal Constitution Foundation (NCF) organized a review discussion on establishing a new School of Law at Kathmandu University. The main focus of the discussion was the "prospect and challenges" facing the Kathmandu University School of Law Steering Committee and others involved in the project.

The discussion was attended by members of the School of Law Steering Committee, senior officials from Kathmandu University, former KU Vice Chancellor, former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Nepal, law advocates and staff members from NCF as well as ASD. The chief speaker of the program was Professor Dr. M.P. Singh, a leading constitutional expert of India and the former Dean of Law Faculty at Delhi University.

Following a welcome note by Dr Bipin Adhikari, the Coordinator of KU School of Law Steering Committee, the program was initiated through Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma's brief introduction about the formation and evolution of Kathmandu University from the day of its inception, till its current status, and the establishment of the School of Law. It was followed by Dr. M.P. Singh's presentation on the "prospects and challenges" of forming a Law School at Kathmandu University. Subsequently, a discussion was held with the members involved raising concerns and seeking Dr Singh's expertise.

In his introduction, Dr. Sharma began with concept of Law and Democracy as intrinsically linked entities. He remarked; "there cannot be democracy without the rule of law." Similarly, he followed highlighting the importance of law in other spheres of societal design such as politics, economics, environment, geography

etc. According to him, the prospect of law as a discipline has not gained adequate advancement citing various reasons such as social stigma associated with lawyers, misconception regarding the role of law in creating and sustaining society etc. Despite its popularity as a profession, law schools are still not up to the mark in Nepal. As a result, law as an academic discipline couldn't prosper here.

Following Dr. Singh's presentation, a discussion was held where the members participating in the program discussed some of the issues raised in the presentation. Mr Hari Sharma of ASD raised concerns on the issue of interdisciplinary approach in law school. He started by stating the relatively recent origin of social sciences school at KU and the need for greater dialogue to include social science and law school to create an interdisciplinary approach. In addition, he highlighted the need for an interdisciplinary approach between law and other disciplines including social sciences as a driving factor in garnering a larger population of prospective students.

Affirming H. Sharma's views, Dr. Singh promoted interdisciplinary approach and argued that such a system would provide impetus for interacting faculties to develop and prosper. Subsequently, issue of acquiring qualified faculty members was raised by Professor Sanjay Nath Khanal, who heads Accreditation Office of KU citing the prevalent problem of people preferring professions over academics. Similarly, on the issue of providing electives, he highlighted that it would not be possible to start providing with a diverse array of electives from the start. Rather, a gradually growing approach was mooted with a view to incorporate



Professor (Dr) M. P. Singh, Dandapani Upadhyay, Dr Bipin Adhikari, Dr Surya Dhungel and Anup Kumar Acharya after a meeting at Kathmandu University VC Office in Dhulikhel.

an interdisciplinary approach. Similarly, the difficulties involved with scouting a diverse population were discussed.

Sitaram Adhikary, the former registrar of KU, highlighted the difficulties inherent in implementing an all inclusive system drawing from past experiences in KU medical school. Lastly, the issue of self-sustainability was raised. Adhikary also advocated the idea of research as one of the answers to combating financial compatibility in order to achieve self sustainability.

Also, Dr Surya Dhungel brought forward the challenges in maintaining the standards of the institution in light of losing quality faculty members.

In conclusion, Dr. Singh suggested higher fees and providing research as a way to combat financial issues. Drawing on Indian context, he highlighted the provisions of banks providing loans for students to pursue education on the basis of recommendation by universities. In terms of student inclusiveness, Dr. Singh highlighted the constitutional support as one of the main reasons in its success. Lastly, Dr. Singh suggested a need for a system that would help attract and retain quality faculty through steps such as higher salary, incentive packages, providing certain freedoms to teachers etc.

The programme was concluded by Dr Bipin Adhikari thanking Dr Singh and other participants for taking time to take part in the discussion. ■

WATER AND SANITATION

Call For Action

With the initiative of WaterAid-Nepal, thirteen different organizations handed over petitions to chairman of the council calling for universal access to water and sanitation

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although Nepal is holding an international meet, the Fifth South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN), in October with a slogan seeking access to sanitation for all in South Asia, Nepal's own state in the coverage of sanitation is bleak. At the initiative of 13 different organizations, along with WaterAid-Nepal, a petition was handed over to the chairman of council of ministers calling for universal access to water and sanitation.

The organizations, WaterAid Nepal together with FEDWASUN, CIUD, ENPHO, FAN, FEDO, Guthi, KIRDARC, Kathmandu School of Law, Lumanti, Maitri, NEWAH, Standard Chartered Bank, and UEMS went to chairman Regmi and handed in more than 19,000 signatures in a petition calling on decision-makers to keep their promises on water and sanitation.

The petition, part of an international campaign with global CSO coalition End Water Poverty, will now be taken to the United Nations General Assembly Millennium Development Goal Review Summit, in New York, where it will be submitted as part of one million-strong global petition.

Though data indicate Nepal has met MDG target on water and sanitation, only 50% of the water supply schemes are functional and sustainability of the sanitation practices and behaviour are still questionable. The current 62% coverage on sanitation and 82% coverage on drinking water at the constraint of functionability and sustainability cannot ensure the commitment of Nepal Government for the universal coverage of water and sanitation for all by 2017.

The MDG target on sanitation in many countries will not be met and is currently the most off-track MDG target. Some 40% of the world lacks

access to sanitation – more people have a mobile phone than have a toilet. The MDG target on water has been achieved at a global level, but at current rates of progress it will take 200 years to reach it in sub-Saharan Africa, while almost 800 million people across the world remain without access to an improved water source.

WaterAid Nepal Country Representative, Ashutosh Tiwari said: "The signatures collected for this petition show the strong demand from people in our country and across the world for decision makers to achieve universal access to safe water and sanitation, both here in Nepal and globally.

WaterAid is an active member of the international Keep Your Promises campaign. Over the past year, it has joined civil society organisations across the world in collecting the astonishing 1 million signatures which call on decision makers to: set up efforts towards reaching the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) on sanitation; to ensure there is a commitment to universal access to water and sanitation in the post-2015 framework, and; to work towards achieving safe sanitation and drinking water for all.

Access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) is crucial to ending poverty. WASH has impact on improving economic growth, health, gender equality and education. The studies have shown that improvement in the coverage in water and sanitation can have impact on infant mortality and health.

The benefits of investing in water and sanitation have been demonstrated to far outweigh the costs. It is estimated that to reach the sanitation MDG target by 2015 it will require \$32.2 billion per year investment from 2010 to 2015.



However, the total losses due to inadequate water supply/sanitation services are \$260 billion per year, while there is a \$4 return on every \$1 invested in water and sanitation.

Although Nepal government has been expressing commitment to increase investment in water and sanitation, the budget in sanitation is still negligible and most of the budget is spent to increase access to drinking water. "We are committed, in fact doing more to fulfill the promises made. Nepal Government welcomes your support towards reaching WASH goals and acknowledge your effort in WASH," said Regmi.

SACOSAN V

At a time when the date for fifth South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) is coming closer, there is an urgency for Nepal to take certain actions. As per the government statistics, Nepal has 50 percent population within reach to sanitation and the target is to reach cent percent by 2017.

"Nepal is well-prepared to host the South Asian Conference on Sanitation (SACOSAN) scheduled to be held from October 22 to 24," said Kishore Thapa, secretary at the Ministry of Urban Development. "Discussions would cover eight themes such as sanitation and health, community-wide sanitation and sustainability, school sanitation, sanitation technology and marketing."

"Though data indicates Nepal has met Millennium Development Goal target on water and sanitation, only 50 percent of the water supply schemes are functional and sustainability of the sanitation practices and behavior are still not satisfactory to ensure public health. In such a situation, the regional conference would be a milestone for the entire WASH sector, said Awadh Kishor Mishra, joint secretary of the MoUD. ■



Modi's Eastern Compulsions

By ABIJIT SHARMA

Gujrat chief minister Narendra Modi's mega rally in Delhi was the talk of the town earlier this week. All roads led to the *Japanese Park* where Modi was to deliver his speech — the first in the national capital after being anointed the Prime Ministerial candidate from Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in the Lok Sabha elections scheduled next year. As he launched scathing attack on the Congress, the Gandhi family and even the Pakistani Prime Minister, lakhs of attentive supporters gathered at the venue cheered the Gujarat chief minister. Modi cheers were heard all around throughout the program. Although criticisms continue to flow regarding his anointment, the rally in the capital hinted one thing for sure: the people may be ready to forget the past and look to the future.

His election campaign is believed to have been closed watched by international community as well.

Hailed as a superstar in the home state for the governance and development, the chief minister is hugely credited for bringing in foreign investment to the State. Many countries have commended Modi's tenure in the state although some including US have not forgotten his "tainted" past. It is in this backdrop that many wonder as a Prime Ministerial candidate, what will be his foreign policy.

For all criticism he has reserved for the UPA's "failures" at home and external relations front, Modi is very likely to actively pursue at least one policy of the incumbent Congress-led government. It is 'Look East' policy. It is not difficult to say why. The East Asian countries in general and Japan, in particular, have played a vital role in Gujarat's impressive growth in recent years. Japan has been one of the biggest investors in Gujarat since 2009. It was a partner in the 'Vibrant Gujarat' Summit held in 2009 and again in 2013 which was the first State Summit to have international partnership. More than 30 Japanese Companies were operating in the state in 2010 and the Japanese Government has aimed to set up 100 more Japanese Companies by 2016. Gujarat is also one of the six states where Delhi Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC), partly financed by Japan Bank of International Co-operation (JIBC), will pass through. Not only Japan, but Thailand and South Korea too have initiated some projects and have shown interests to further their involvement in the state.

Economic Research Institute for ASEAN & East Asia (ERIA), a leading international research organization operating with a special focus on ASEAN has planned to forge partnership between Gujarat and ERIA for human resource development and skill development among the technical professionals. So, it is not difficult to predict that, if elected to the top executive office of the world's second most populous nation, Modi will place special focus on the East Asia region.

Modi's not-so-good relationship with the Western countries should also come into consideration when he seeks to promote closer cooperation with the East. The US and UK have openly snubbed the Gujarat chief minister for his alleged involvement in the 2002 Gujarat communal riots. In 2005, the US refused a visa to Modi. The UK followed the suit.

Some US companies have their manufacturing units in Gujarat but they number just a few. Things have not changed much even after the main opposition BJP formally declared him the party's prime ministerial candidate in the upcoming parliamentary elections. Although the UK has reconsidered its decision to deny visa, the US stated soon after his anointment that it would not follow until and unless some 'questions were answered'. So, even if elected Modi is hardly expected to look forward to a quick change of his image in the West. This would make the close and enhanced collaboration with the East not only an automatic choice but compulsion as well to expedite the economic growth.

Given the economic woes the West has been facing in recent times, it would also be worthwhile for Modi as PM to explore opportunities in the emerging East rather than look to the struggling West.

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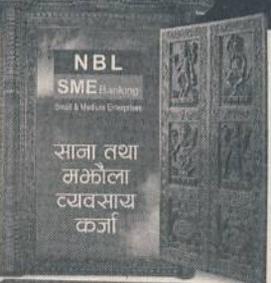


Modi



लगानी हाम्रो, उन्नति तपाईंको

सस्तो ब्याजदर
सरल प्रक्रिया
आवश्यकता अनुसारको कर्जा सुविधा

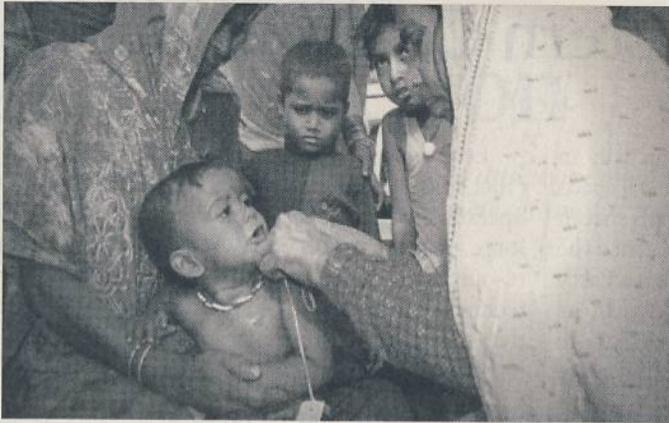


साना तथा मझौला व्यवसाय कर्जा



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ACF Fighting Hunger

As a number of children are deprived of proper diets in the Terai, Action Contre La Faim (ACF) has launched programs to end acute malnutrition

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although Kanchanpur Village Development Committee of Saptari district is very close to the East-west highway, which links it with the rest of Nepal, the child malnutrition scenario remains bleak or similar as a number of children are suffering from Acute Malnutrition in the village.

Known as self-sufficient in food production, the district has places like Kanchanpur where the nutrition level of children is low. That is where the Action Contre La Faim (ACF) has stepped in with a program to support the Government of Nepal in addressing the acute malnutrition.

"The level of malnutrition is alarmingly high here, it is worse than for the children of the horn of Africa," said Dr. Ojaswi Acharya, Head of Nutrition and Health of ACF-Nepal. "We have been launching the program in all 13 area health centers and one center in municipality." Action Contre La Faim (ACF) is working through Community based Management of Acute Malnutrition program and saving lives of thousands of children."

At present, the district has about 16,000 under five children with Severe and Moderate Acute Malnutrition.

"Under-nutrition is a scandal, a particular outrageous one, because its solutions are known, tested and

feasible. Based on our research and experience, working in some 40 countries with vulnerable communities, ACF works to put the fight against hunger and under-nutrition high on the agenda," said Dr. Acharya. "Focusing the aid agenda on nutrition security is essential for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, which all countries have agreed to deliver."

"We are implementing the CMAM to reduce morbidity and mortality in most needy regions of Nepal addressing the underlying causes of acute malnutrition," said Sukh Dev Sharma, national representative of ACF-International. ACF has a solid participation in public health nutrition related working groups such as Nepal Nutrition Group (NNG), Nutrition Technical Committee (NUTEC) and Nepal Nutrition Cluster Group.

Acute malnutrition has remained stagnant over the last decade in Nepal; it was estimated at 11% in 2001, 13% in 2006, and 11% in 2011. With a current under five population of 3.5 million, 616,000 children under five years of age are suffering from severe and moderate acute malnutrition.

In Nepal, around 145,600 suffer from the most severe form of acute

malnutrition. According to the Lancet 2013, treating Severe Acute Malnutrition is the most cost-effective intervention.

ACF intends to reduce the under nutrition in order to save the lives of children aged 6-59 months. According to estimates, there are altogether 616,000 children under five years of age suffering from acute malnutrition in Nepal. The plight of most of these thousands of children is not recognized.

The government is committed towards reducing under nutrition in Nepal and will gradually increase resources for improving nutritional status of children in the country for which it has come up with the Multi Sectoral Nutrition plan (MSNP). Management of acute malnutrition is an integral part of this MSNP and the Scaling up Nutrition (SUN) initiative, which also focuses on saving lives of the future generation of the country.

Over the last thirteen months, ACF has saved the lives of 3281 severely Acute Malnourished Children in Saptari district. ACF maintains a technical advisory role in helping the government through Management of Acute Malnutrition, and initiates advocacy at local, national and international level along with key nutrition stakeholders. ACF has a solid participation in public health nutrition related working groups such as Nepal Nutrition Group (NNG), Nutrition Technical Committee (NUTEC) and Nepal Nutrition Cluster Group. In addition, ACF is positioned to respond to disasters, and to react to nutritional emergencies in the country.

"ACF is an international humanitarian organization which delivers programs in over 40 countries. The mission of ACF international is to save lives by eliminating hunger through the prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition, especially during and after emergency situations of conflict, war and natural disaster," said Roland Van Hauweiren, country director of the organization. ACF International is recognized worldwide as a leader in the fight against hunger.



Pondicherry, Kulturstudier & Peace

By SAMIRA PAUDEL

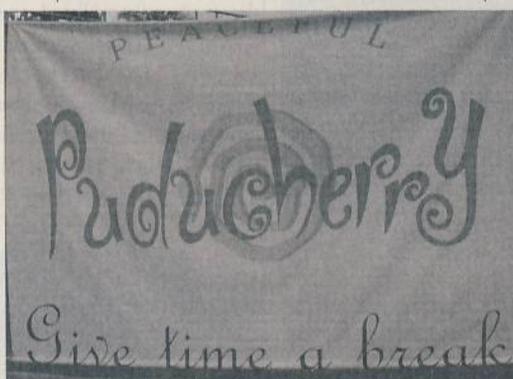
Pondicherry (named Puducherry in Tamil and Pondichéry in French) is a Union Territory located in the South of India. The town lies about 150 kilometers south of Chennai (Madras), India's fourth largest city. Puducherry means 'new village' in Tamil language. Recently named Puducherry, the place has people speaking either Tamil or French. A very few people speak English and hardly anyone speaks Hindi. Since it is a coastal town, it offers a lot of beautiful beaches nearby.

This re-established, fascinating city was the former French colony with its elegant streets and attractive colorful houses. Being a small and quiet community of Tamil Nadu, it has taken down the Tamil culture. The pleasant atmosphere, excellent French-Indian and western restaurants attract most travelers to Pondicherry. The Sri Aurobindo Ashram and its outcome called Auroville, 10 km outside town, is another major point of attraction. The ashram, founded by Sri Aurobindo in the year 1926, has brought international reputation to this coastal town. The ashram is popular within India and globally because of its spiritual belief which combines yoga and modern science with the motto of Auroville being "Land belonging to everyone" is very unique in itself.

My experience of staying in this charming city for two and half months not as a tourist but as a student was exciting. I was in Pondicherry from August until November 2012 to take a short course on Peace and Conflict offered by Kulturstudier, which offers an academic semester of programs in 5 different locations (Argentina, Ghana, India, Nicaragua and Vietnam). These courses are fully credited in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). Two courses "Religion and Power" and "Peace and Conflict" offered in Pondicherry are highly informative and useful for young students who want to do their Masters or further studies in development sector. These courses are

useful for professionals or mid-career professionals.

Peace and Conflict Studies is taught through an interdisciplinary social science and humanistic approach incorporating elements of sociology, political science, history, philosophy, psychology, social anthropology, geography, economy and religious studies. It combines a general introduction to peace and conflict studies with a specific focus on the South Asian region and theories and cases of conflict resolution and peace



building. The course contains lectures, discussions, seminars, excursions, assignments and examinations. The main objective of the program is to give students an interdisciplinary understanding of the fundamental issues of peace and conflict in general and in the South Asian region in particular. These two dimensions are integrated in a mutually reinforcing way. It should provide a basis for discussions, critical analysis and reflection on the causes and dynamics of violent conflicts as well as their prevention and resolution. The overall study is divided into three parts. The first part introduces the concept of peace, violence and conflict whereas the second part is focused on conflict resolution and peace building and the third part deals with peace and conflict in South Asia.

This well-tailored short academic program is very useful for professionals who have a job and family but are eager to develop a career with a totally new experience.

When we talk about Peace, we have to understand the various dynamics of conflict like individual, group, societal, international and global.

In South Asia, there are many things which need to be taken into account when one thinks of peace. To my understanding, religion and gender play a vital role in transforming conflict and building peace, among other factors in South Asia. A majority of South Asians have a strong belief in religion. Since conflict starts at the individual's level, there has to be a mechanism to deal with that. There are three ways to achieve individual peace which is path of knowledge, path of devotion and path of work. Such an approach can contribute towards broader peace. Likewise, in every conflict, women are the direct and indirect victims of it, so until and unless we do not opt for freedom, education and empowerment of women, peace is not possible at all. There is a growing belief that shifting roles of gender can also bring peace in the society. In every peace negotiations

majority are men and very few women whose voices are not heard at all due to the minority size.

We follow the western thoughts, ideas and sources, but we never think about our own root. A main source of peace that emanates in South Asia is from Buddha's philosophy and Gandhian thoughts. Buddha said that everyone in this world has sufferings, there is a reason for this sufferings but there is a remedy of the suffering too. Greed and hatred bring sufferings, therefore, if we are willing to sacrifice the unlimited desires and hatred towards others there will be peace. Buddha achieved the eternal peace by sacrificing the materialistic needs. It is also understood that Buddhism is the religion of peace. Buddhism also says that there is no future of violence and no alternative for peace, while Gandhi gives emphasis on 'Satyagraha' truth and 'Ahimsa' non-violence as a precursor to peace.

Paudel is the gender coordinator at FES-Nepal

WORLD VISION

Child Health Gap

World Vision's study finds there is a big gap in health rich and health poor children in Nepal

By A CORRESPONDENT

Despite making certain progress, a great gap still exists in child health, which has been costing the lives of hundreds of children. Nepal ranked 124 on the World Vision's global index. According to the aid agency, Nepali children fall through the cracks every year, despite progress. The report exposes the gap between the health rich and health poor.

"A 'devastating' gap exists between the health rich and health poor in every country, contributing to the deaths of thousands of children every day," according to the recent report released by the World Vision. The



Global Index of Health Inequality for Children assesses 176 countries around the world according to the size of the gap between those who have access to good health and those who don't. Nepal is ranked at a surprising 124 on the global index.

"It's sad that though Nepal is making progress in Millennium Development Goals, many children continue to pay the price for the great gap in health, with their lives," said Pushkar Khati, World Vision's Child Health Now Campaign Specialist.

"Over the past 10 years, Nepal has made a lot of progress – the number of children under the age of five dying every year has fallen dramatically. But it's still high – under-five mortality rates is 54 deaths per 1,000 live births. At this mortality level, one in every 19 does not survive to his or her fifth birthday," said Khati.

The report and Global Health Gap Index were released by the World Vision to mark the Close the Gap campaign, which this week saw hundreds of supporters in Far Western region of Nepal asking political leaders and decision makers to do everything possible to achieve Millennium Development Goal 4, tackling child health.

The campaign mobilised local community people during the week. Some 45 community events took place also marking the festival of Teej like song competitions, street dramas and rallies in Doti and Kailali districts where more than 5000 people took part.

The Global Health Gap Index, in World Vision's The Killer Gap report, ranks 176 countries based on four criteria measuring health outcomes. World Vision launched a week of mobilisation – "Close the Gap" – in the Far Western region of Nepal, with public events to call on leaders to help close the health gap. Close the Gap is part of World Vision's five-year Child Health Now campaign, aiming to end preventable child deaths.

Child Health Now is World Vision's global campaign to end preventable deaths of children under five. Globally, over 7 million children under the age of five die each year from preventable causes, like birth complications and infections, diarrhea and pneumonia. ■

Acharya Elected

The Global Alliance for Ministries and Infrastructures for Peace (GAMIP), the largest international organization on peace building in the world, based in Geneva, Switzerland has elected Suresh Prasad Acharya of Nepal in the position of Treasurer for the year 2013-2014.

During the sixth summit of the GAMIP held from September 16-20 at Geneva's Centre Conférences de Varembé and at Palaise de United Nations (UN), participated by 157 peace builders from more than 42 countries of world unanimously elected Acharya in treasurer.



Suresh Acharya

Karen Barenshé from South Africa and Birger Nurup from Denmark have been unanimously elected co-president of the organization. GAMIP, established a decade ago by an international conference held in the United Kingdom now has membership from more than 50 countries and supported by various governments amongst Nepal, Switzerland, Costa Rica, Papua New Guinea, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Congo, South Africa, Colombia as well as United Nations (UN) and other



multilateral, international, regional and national organizations.

Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, Sadhuram Sapkota participated in the world conference as a mandated representative of the Government of Nepal. He is also the coordinator of Nepal Peace Trust Fund Secretariat, which has key roles in peace building efforts and implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Accord in the country. Nepal's role in peace building was highlighted in the conference by various participants. Nepal, Costa Rica and Papua New Guinea are the only three countries of the world who have Ministry of Peace in the executive structure.

This was the first time in GAMIP any person from Asia has been elected to this highest position.

The GAMIP plans to organize its seventh global summit in October 2015 and the first APAMIP regional conference in October 2014 in Nepal. Acharya says, "Today, there are over 50 countries in the world which are being ravaged by internal conflicts, therefore peace building has become such crucially important key that can unlock the potentials of excellence, happiness and values of humankind. In this context, I am confident that the Government of Nepal (GON) would be eager to host or co-sponsor these events, so that it could get opportunities to share its knowledge on the successes of its peace building efforts to other countries for the benefit of humanity." ■

By A CORRESPONDENT

ALL AGAINST CHILD MARRIAGE

A Religious Call

Although Nepalese political leaders failed to agree on a roundtable conference to settle the political issues, the Nepalese religious leaders have made a politically impossible roundtable meeting possible on the agenda against child marriage.

They not only successfully conducted the roundtable meeting, but also drew the conclusion that religious leaders can play an important role to prevent child marriage in the country.

Organized by UNICEF, and UNFPA in collaboration with National Interreligious Network, the roundtable discussions were moderated by Rupa Dixit Joshi from UNICEF. Participated in by children from various parts of Nepal and religious leaders of various faiths replied to the queries of the children. Although children posed very difficult questions, the program went successfully thanks to a careful handling by Joshi.

According to a study, Nepal is one of the ten countries with a high prevalence of child marriage. Nepal holds the 8th position among the countries worldwide with a high prevalence of child marriage, as reported by The Status of the World's Children-2011, UNICEF.

Similarly, excerpting the findings from Nepal Health Demographic Survey (NDHS-2011), the event highlighted that 55 percent women aged 25-49 were married by the age of 18.



in 2011 making the country second highest after Bangladesh where it is 66 per cent.

"There are 27 child marriages happening in the world, every minute. In Nepal, 11 percent of the population below 14 and 29 percent of girls aged 15-19 are married. Some 7 percent of boys are married before they turn 18," said Hanaa Singer, representative, UNICEF-Nepal. "This goes against all the conventions of human rights and international treaties which directly or indirectly forbid the degrading and mistreatment of girls inherent in child marriage."

Said Singer: "I firmly believe that religious leaders like you all shape social values and promote responsible behaviors that respect the dignity and sanctity of all life."

At a time when child marriage is taking place at an alarmingly high rate, Nepalese religious leaders representing various faiths expressed their commitments to work jointly in society to eradicate child marriage. In a round table discussion on religion and child marriage, four religious leaders representing Hindu, Buddhists, Muslims and Christians denounced child marriage and expressed their support to make Nepal child marriage free country. ■

HELPAGE INTERNATIONAL

Helping Elderly

Despite distribution of certain amount as a monthly allowances to senior citizens, Nepal's aged people or above 60 which consists of estimated over 10 percent of Nepal total population live in desperate situation.

However, nothing has made. As there need an organization to raise the issue of aged population, HelpAge International Nepal (HAI Nepal), the first and only INGO working on social protection for senior citizens in Nepal, comes with a program.

In its recent media interaction, HAI Nepal gave a comprehensive overview of the global ageing situation, the



Madrid International Plan on Ageing highlights, social protection and economic empowerment of senior citizens in its working districts in Nepal, and a brief summary of its soon to be published 2013 Global Age Watch Index Insight Report (GAWI).

"We have already shared briefly about our policy advocacy work with the Ministry of Women, Children, and Social Welfare and the National Federation of Senior Citizens in Nepal, in which the highlights are its proposed recommendations to revising the 2006 Senior Citizens Act, the National Work Plan for Senior Citizens in Nepal, and its overall baseline survey findings and recommendations to maintaining and creating a standardization of old-age homes in Nepal in partnership with Sankalpa Nepal, a local NGO working on senior citizens' issues in Nepal," said Sangita Niroula, country director of HAI-Nepal.

"As people are yet to sensitize about the state of senior citizens, there need to launch sensitization program nationwide," said Niroula.

Clean-up Campaign

At a time when the waste workers from the formal sector have been unable to clean the wastes generated in the Kathmandu valley, hundreds of informal waste workers gathered at Teku Bridge to join in a campaign to clean the city. With broom in hand, and doko - a typical basket used to carry the waste - on the back, wearing gloves, masks and other safety gears, the informal waste workers were all set to conquer the war against waste for the day at the banks of the Bisnumati River.

"The Centre for Integrated Urban Development (CIUD) has been implementing the PRISM project (Poverty Reduction of Informal Workers in Solid Waste Management Sector) through the funding support of European Union and Practical Action since June 2011. The CIUD has been strengthening the IWWs and their organization through this project and supporting them to raise their income and let the public pay recognition as they do such a city cleaning job throughout the year," Says Nabin Bikash Maharjan, Project Coordinator.

TOURISM YEAR 2013

Good & Bad Signs

Nepal is celebrating the Tourism Year 2013 by organizing various programs aimed at luring more tourists. Once again, however, a major political transition, fraught with risks of political confrontations and chaos before the second Constituent Assembly election in November, is reigning over the prospects of tourism growth.

By DEBESH ADHIKARI

There are several exquisite tourism products in Nepal. The diversity in culture, nature and ethnicity makes it a destination par excellence. Within a short distance, one who is spellbound to find the highest points of the world will also see the lowest points. There is the tuna climate. There is the warm climate. Along with this, Nepal's advantage is that it has well established tourism destinations and human resources.

Conservation of water is essential for the survival of culture, life and ecology and natural beauty of the Himalayas. As trekking, mountaineering and rafting are the products, directly linked with the conservation of water, the slogan of WTD 2013 had a greater importance.

The government of Nepal has already expressed its commitment to preserve water. However, the current problem for Nepal is to increase air accessibility, end political uncertainty and explore new venues and destinations as well as infrastructure to replace the over-saturated tourist spots

"The strikes called by political parties is likely to damage tourism prospects. Such activities will discourage the travellers from visiting our country, which in turn will dent the country's image," said Sushil chimire, secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.

He added that many challenges lay ahead for the country's tourism.

"The government is serious about the issue such as the decline in the length of stay and spending of tourists," Ghimire said, adding that the private sector and other stakeholders should now market Nepal in a different way.

"There are ways to improve the situation. Given the current political situation, Nepal is likely to see a more unstable period in the coming days. However, we have to find out ways to maintain the momentum. I am optimistic that the political leadership will understand the situation," said Acting Chief Executive Officer of Nepal Tourism Board Subhas Niroula. "We are committed to move forward for the betterment of tourism industry. Nepal Tourism Board Management will put its focus on effective promotion of tourism and products and services in both domestic and international arena," said Niroula, speaking at a program to mark the world tourism day.

After nearly two years of ad-hoc system, Niroula has been recently promoted as an acting CEO with full authority to run the NTB. This in itself is a good indication for Nepal's tourism sector which needs to implement many drastic marketing exercises to lure Nepal bound tourists.

WTD 2013

As this year's slogan is "Tourism and Water – Protecting Our Common Future, it has great importance for Nepal. Since Nepal is gradually becoming a popular destination for rafting, protecting the water is of prime importance for Nepal.

"The government is doing internal homework to dedicate certain river segments for adventure tourism activities," said Mohan Krishna Sapkota, joint secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA) speaking at a program organized by Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) to mark 34th World Tourism Day.

Nepal marked the 34th International Tourism Day by organizing different programs throughout the country. The day is marked every year on September 27 at the call of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

A cultural procession was organised jointly by 40 tourism organisations to increase public awareness about the importance of tourism as part of the celebrations of WTD. The rally started from Thamel and concluded at Basantapur after going through Durbar Marg, Ratna Park and New Road.

Nepal tourism entrepreneurs are demanding certain section of the river be set aside purely for rafting. A few days ago, Nepal Association of Rafting

Agents (NARA) had proposed to the government to dedicate Baireni-Muglin section of Trishuli River for water activities.

"We are very happy that the government is formally making announcement to this effect very soon," Thapa said, adding that the government will dedicate some sections of Bhotekoshi, Sunkoshi and Karnali rivers for water activities like rafting.

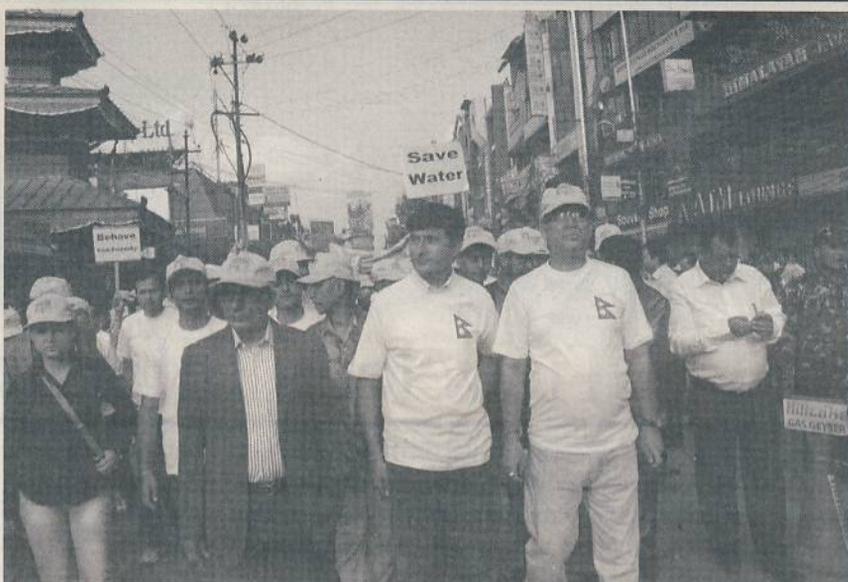
New Packages

Unlike in the past, the organizers announced certain actions. Minister for Agricultural Development Tek Bahadur Thapa, who is also looking after the tourism portfolio, and tourism secretary Sushil Ghimire inaugurated a Trekkers Information Management System (TIMS) Counter and newly structured Help Desk and Information Centre built in NTB premises.

Similarly, minister Thapa also launched the 'Great Buddhist Trail' identified by Buddhisticircuits.com. He also unveiled publications like 'Nepal Tourism Year 2011' and the souvenir 'Gorkha Tourism'. Similarly, NTB appointed Chimmi Sherpa, first Miss Sherpa 2012 and Min Bahadur Serchan - the eldest Nepali to climb Mt Everest - as the goodwill ambassadors of Nepali tourism industry. NTB also provided a certificate of appreciation and cash prize of Rs 10,000 to its security guard Tulsi Pokharel.

On the occasion, the Village Tourism Promotion Forum (VITOF) Nepal announced Chitlang village in Makwanpur district as 'Village Tourism Destination 2013/14'.

"Despite many ups and downs, Nepal has made a certain progress in the tourism sector. The time is now to focus on increasing the tourist spending by introducing innovative tourism products," said secretary Ghimire, speaking on the occasion. "Our national flag carrier is not being able to support tourism industry because of aircraft



World Tourism Day 2013

shortage," he said, adding, "But the good thing is that we have already placed orders to buy two aircraft from China." He also said the government aims to complete upgradation of Gautam Buddha Airport in Bhairahawa to a regional airport by June, 2017.

"Nepal needs to focus on agro tourism and eco tourism for the sustainable development of the tourism industry," Ramesh Dhamala, president of Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal (TAAN), said. He also asked the government to do the needful in controlling illegal operation in tourism business.

"Instead of expressing worries for the declining number of tourists, Nepal needs to take some drastic steps to improve the infrastructure," said Pabitra Kumar Karki, president of Nepal Association of Travel Agents (NATA).

However, nothing remarkable has been done in the last two years. After a successful tourism marketing in 2011, the government and private sector both failed to work together. The result is the declining tourists arrival in the last two months. As the elections approach and political instability intensifies, this is going to be a more difficult year for Nepal in terms of luring the tourists.

Nepal, in other words, is yet to create conducive environment for tourist to visit Nepal.

There is the need to improve the law and order situation, upgrade airport's facilities and add other infrastructure in new destinations. President of Trekking Agents Association Ramesh Dhamala argues that there is a lack of enough infrastructure. It is sad that the government's lackluster performance is responsible for the lack of infrastructure.

In 2012, tourism contributed 9.4% to Nepal's gross domestic product (GDP) in total, and direct earnings from foreign tourists have grown at an average of 12.4% over the past 10 years. It is estimated that the sector supported 1.2 million jobs, and has provided a steady and comparatively good income for a large number of Nepalis, including reasonable incomes for poorer people.

Although there are many challenges ahead including the immediate challenge of political instability, there is a way out to improve the situation. After a long gap, Nepal Tourism Board has got the acting CEO with functional role, Nepal Airlines is to buy new aircraft and the government decision is to open new destinations, there are better hopes for tourism promotion in Nepal. ■



Traveler's Information

Nepal is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of bio-diversity due to its unique geographical position and altitudinal variation. The elevation of the country ranges from 60 m above sea level to the highest point on earth, Mt. Everest at 8,848 m, all within a distance of 150 km resulting into climatic conditions from sub-tropical to Arctic.

Nepal occupying only 0.1% of the total landmass of the earth is home to:

- 2% of all the flowering plants in the world
- 8% of the world's population of birds (more than 848 species)
- 4% of mammals on earth
- 11 of the world's 15 families of butterflies (more than 500 species)
- 600 indigenous plant families
- 319 species of exotic orchids

Area	: 147,181 sq. km
Location	: Situated between China in the north and India in the south, east and west
Capital	: Kathmandu
Population	: 25.8 million
People	: Nepal has more than 101 ethnic groups and 92 spoken languages.
Language	: Nepali is the national language; travel-trade people understand and speak English as well.
Religion	: Nepal is a secular state with a pre-dominance of Hindu and Buddhist population.
Currency	: Nepali Rupee (approximately US\$ 1 equals Rs. 78.90 as of December 2008)
Political System	: Federal Democratic Republic
Climate	: Nepal has four major seasons (1) Winter: December-February, (2) Spring: March-May, (3) Summer: June-August, (4) Autumn:

September-November. Monsoons are from June till mid September. Nepal can be visited the whole year round.

What to Wear : Light weight clothing is recommended from May through October. Warm garments are required in October-March. An umbrella or raincoat is a must for the rainy season.

ENTRY PROCEDURES

a. Tourist Visa

Visa Facility	Duration	Fee
Multiple entry	15 days	US\$ 25 or equivalent convertible currency
Multiple entry	30 days	US\$ 40 or equivalent convertible currency
Multiple entry	90 days	US\$ 100 or equivalent convertible currency

b. Gratis (Free) Visa

- Gratis visa for 30 days available only for nationals of SAARC countries.
- Indian nationals do not require visa to enter into Nepal.

(For further information, please, contact Department of Immigration, Kalikasthan, Kathmandu, Tel: 00977-1-4429659, Web: www.immi.gov.np)



WORLD HERITAGE SITES

There are four UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Nepal. Two are in cultural category and two are in natural category. World Cultural Heritage Sites of Nepal are: Lumbini, the birth place of Lord Buddha, and



seven monuments of Kathmandu valley within a radius of 20 km (together counted as one Heritage Site). The World Natural Heritage Sites are Chitwan and Sagarmatha National Parks. Kathmandu valley World Heritage Site comprises of three historical palaces – Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur Durbar Squares; two Buddhist stupas – Swayambhunath and Baudhanath; and two Hindu temples – Pashupatinath and Changu Narayan. Nepal offers incomparable scope to connoisseurs of art and culture to see and study different aspects of fine arts in its paintings, sculpture, wood carving and architecture.

Nepal's Unique Treasures

- Mt. Everest – Highest Point on Earth
- Kumari – The Living Goddess
- Lumbini- Birth Place of Lord Buddha

Outdoor Attractions & Activities

Few destinations in the world can match Nepal in the variety of world-class experience - be it mountaineering, trekking, mountain biking, nature tours, culture tours, pilgrim tours, white-water-rafting, canyoning (cascading), kayaking, canoeing, mountain flights, pony trekking, jungle safaris, bird watching, fishing/angling, paragliding, ultra-light aircraft ride, bungee jumping; we have it all. Special interest tours like orchid tours, culture trek, honey hunting, village tours, fossil hunting, meditation courses, Shamanism-Panimism tour, cave tours, snow leopard and blue sheep trek and other kinds of tours are carried out for select groups throughout the year. For organizing your tours, please contact: Nepal Association of Travel and Tour Agents (Tel: 4418661, 4419409, Web site: www.natta.org.np) or Nepal Association of Tour Operators (Tel: 4418999, Web site: www.nepaltouoperators.org).

Trekking

Nepal is the ultimate destination for the trekking enthusiast – offering a myriad of possibilities from the short and easy to the demanding challenges of the snowy peaks. Easy, moderate or rigorous – there is something for every one. Nepal has aptly been called “A



Trekkers' Paradise” as her terrain – mountains, hills and the Terai – offer some of the most spectacular trekking routes in the world. The immense contrasts in altitudes and climates found here support an equally spectacular mix of lifestyles, vegetation and wildlife. Trekking in Nepal is as much a cultural experience as a Himalayan adventure. In the shadows and

foothills of the icy pinnacles of the Himalayas, one passes picturesque charming villages inhabited by diverse ethnic groups. Treks vary from expeditions, high altitude treks to simple easy paced walks. For more information about trekking; please contact Trekking Agencies' Association of Nepal (Tel: 4427473, 4440920, Web site: www.taan.org.np).

Mountaineering

With eight of the highest peaks in the world, including Mt. Everest, it is hardly surprising that Nepal has been the stage for some of the most outstanding achievements in the world of mountaineering. The dauntless icy peaks have since decades challenged the bodies and spirits of the daring ones. All inquiries and arrangements for expeditions have to be made well in advance at the Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation, Mountaineering Section, Bhrikutimandap (Tel: 4256231/2, Fax: 4227281, Web site: www.tourism.gov.np) where the guidelines have been laid down.



Rafting/Kayaking/Canyoning

Few rafting rivers in the world can match the thundering course of the rivers of Nepal originating from the snow meltdown of the Himalayan terrain. The rivers gush through the twisted canyons, winding through calm valleys where small settlements are perched on the banks, taming out only as they spill out into the Indian plains to merge with the Ganges. A river-trip is one of the best ways to explore the typical cross-section of the country's natural as well as the ethno-cultural heritage with massive doses of adrenaline buzz on our world-class white-water thrills. An extreme sport popular in Europe, canyoning is now available in Nepal. It involves abseiling, jumping, sliding, climbing along waterfalls and steep cliffs to deep pools, giving the canyoneer the freedom to explore beautiful under-water landscape.



Village Tours

Village tours allow visitors to experience a stay in a typical Nepali village. This gives visitors an opportunity to observe the rich Nepali cultural tradition from the closest quarter and intermingle with the locals. Besides, any expenses made at that level directly contribute to the welfare of the local community, hence giving the visitor a sense of satisfaction. Village tours are conducted in Sirubari, Briddim, Ghalegaun, Ilam and other places.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Nepal Tourism Board

Tourist Service Center

Post Box: 11018, Bhrikutimandap, Kathmandu, Nepal

Tel: +977-1-4256909 Fax: +977-1-4256910

E-mail: info@ntb.org.np, Web site: www.welcomenepal.com

A Human Rights Perspective On The Bill 2011 For Amending The Education Act

According to Article 26 under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, elementary education should be free and compulsory. The Declaration further demands that higher education be made equally accessible to all, on the basis of merit. More than half a century later, this vision has not materialised, creating the need for more focused efforts. In this context, it is important to set into motion a mechanism for improving our aspirations towards a satisfactory educational system, taking into account the international commitments and national development indicators put forth at the World Education Forum, Dakar.

Since education is a universal human right, exclusion is a grave violation. Creating accountability for violation of human rights can be a powerful force for social change. Because the private sector and charities are insufficient in tackling the problem of exclusion, it is the responsibility of the state to intervene and protect the educational rights of its citizens.

Consequently, this mechanism, mentioned above, presents the state with the primary responsibility of overseeing the provision of educational services, within the framework of accountability towards national and international human rights. As such, it is the state's responsibility to translate international commitments into national statutes. Without the appropriate legislation, the citizens have very few alternatives.

The dimensions of human rights and education

An educational policy based on a human-rights framework, and national legislations based on international law, would place the state as a guarantor of easy access to education for all. The state is given the responsibility for ensuring that high-quality education is delivered for free up till foundational and secondary standards. Additionally, the state should create the necessary mechanisms for providing the appropriate education for its citizens with disabilities.

Proposed Bill for amending the Education Act, 1971

(A) The main reasons for amending the Education Act, 1971:

* In order to abrogate the current categorisation of primary and lower-

secondary education, and to establish education from pre-primary level to 8th grade as foundational education, the following clause (B2) has been added after (B1), under article 2 of the main Act: "(B2) 'Foundational education' should be understood as the education from pre-primary level till 8th grade." "Education up to primary level" has been replaced with "foundational education" in clause (A) of sub-article (2), article 7 of the main Act.

* Articles have been added after article 2 of the main Act to establish foundational education as free education: "2A. The right to free and compulsory foundational education: (1) Every child shall have a right to free and compulsory foundational education. (2) Free and compulsory foundational education, as per sub-article (1), shall be provided through a community school in the area where the child resides."

2D. The responsibility of providing free and compulsory foundational education: (1) The state shall bear the responsibility of providing free and compulsory foundational education to each and every child through community schools. (2) To fulfil the responsibility outlined in sub-article (1), the Nepal government shall make the following provisions:

(A) Establishing the required number schools, where necessary, such that each child has access to free and compulsory education, (B) Enrolling each child of school-going age into a school, making provisions for their mandatory attendance, monitoring the situation, and making the necessary provisions to ensure that each child completes his/her foundational education, (C) Making provisions for the governmental and local bodies, as well as non-governmental organisations, needed to guarantee free and compulsory foundational education for every child, (D) As per the outlined framework, making a minimum number of teachers available, based on the number of students and subjects taught in the school, (E) Creating a free and timely supply of relevant textbooks needed for foundational education.

(2) The Nepal government shall gradually make provisions for free education for those studying at the secondary level in community schools.

* To increase inclusiveness in

commissions as well as district school-level committee for the Act, particularly as the articles 2E 3, 5, 7A, 11, 11K, 12

* To make provisions for and special education for the vision or hearing impaired from physical, mental disabilities:

"(D1) 'Special education' understood as the specific and skill-enhancing education separately to groups of children with vision or hearing impairment, physical and other disabilities the use of the appropriate methods."

The following clause (D1A) added after (D1): "(D1A) 'education' should be understood as the following: (A) Specifically-targeted skill-enhancing education, through the appropriate methods, for those with hearing impairment or the physical, mental and other disabilities. (B) Impartial education given to those who are in a socially, economically and geographically marginalised position."

(2) The Nepal government progressively create provisions regarding free education for those studying in secondary-level community schools. However, secondary schooling shall be free for those with disabilities. Article 6A has been added with the following: "6A. Provisions for special education, inclusive of informal education, open education, distance education: (1) Special inclusive education shall be provided in general education. However, the curricula, books and methodology can be provided for those with hearing or vision impairment disabilities.

Debated and incorrect provisions in the proposed Bill from the perspective of universal human rights principles, international conventions on education, and courtroom

* In the proposed Bill, the phrase 'where appropriate' should be added as a reference of developing special inclusive education through the provision of free education at the secondary level, as well as skill-enhancing education, for those with disabilities.

* The provision to amend 2(A) of the main act is tied to

of the Interim Constitution, in which it is mentioned that education up to secondary level should be free. But the proposed Bill only suggests that education up till 8th grade, as foundational education, should be free, and remains silent on the idea of free secondary education. This needs to be mentioned.

* The article 5F – proposed after article 5 under the main Act – considers educational fees collected from students as part of the board's fund. Under a provision for free education, the collection of fees from students goes against the constitution and international law. Proposed 5F (2) (B) must be removed.

* Under article 6A of the main Act, the provisions made for special, inclusive, informal, open and distance education are incomplete. Additionally, they contradict the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

* The provision – listed as point 24 in the proposed Bill – for replacing article 16 (3) under the main Act gives further rights to regulate institutional schools. From an angle of practicality, the provision goes against the right to free education. This should be removed.

* The provision for amending article 16(D), in sub-article (2) under point 25 of the proposed Bill, is against the constitutional provision for free education. Provision should be made consistent with the constitution.

* The amendment of article 16(K) under the main Act, mentioned in point 26 of the proposed Bill, is important. Under this provision, teachers removed from service during the conflict would be reinstated after investigation. However, the sub-article under the stated article does not allow for compensation to be given to those teachers for the time between the suspension and reinstatement. As such, the provision goes against popular legal practices in the court. Appropriate legal provision needs to be made.

* There is a lack of regulation over the definition of institutional schools (private schools) as well as their approval process. Consequently, even though the amended Act makes provisions for the right to free foundational education, this will become impractical to implement. For example, clauses (1), (2), (3), (4), and (5) under article 3 of the main Act have not been changed. The appropriate

amendments have also not been put forth by the proposed Bill.

Provisions to be added to monitor private schools, and to be consistent with the Supreme Court order of May 24

* Due to the lack of clarity, in article 3(8) under the main Act, on procedures for obtaining and regulating affiliations with foreign educational institutions, many schools are operated with supposed foreign affiliations. No proposal exists for making appropriate amendments. A regulatory mechanism, consistent with the Supreme Court decision, is needed.

* Article 7 under the main Act has not been able to include the provisions for the right to language. Article 7 (2) (A) in the main Act makes provision for education in the mother tongue up till primary level. Instead, the proposed amendment allows foundational education – till 8th grade – to be acquired through the mother tongue. However, the principles of linguistic rights argue for the administering of education in one's mother tongue up till the secondary level. Such a provision would be more appropriate.

* Article 1 of the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities makes provision for creating disability-friendly educational institutions and public places. In contrast, there is no provision for disability-friendly educational institutions either in the main Act or the proposed Bill. Such a provision should be made.

* The proposed Bill is silent on the materialisation of provisions made in Article 10 of the 1979 Convention to Eliminate of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. A suitable provision must be made.

* The proposed Bill makes no provision for child-friendly education, as per the directives laid out by article 28 under the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child.

* Provisions for giving additional rights to Dalits and marginalised communities is missing. This is against the Supreme Court order.

* All committees and commissions formed under the current Act mostly comprise of government employees. More teachers, intellectuals and others must be included, by reducing the number of government officials.

* Additional provisions need to be

made to regulate public schools and to make them more accountable.

Conclusion

The proposed Bill to amend the 1971 Education Act fails to capture the spirit of provisions made by international conventions on the rights to education, courtroom exercises, provisions made for the right to education in other countries, Nepal's Interim Constitution, as well as international treaties ratified by the Nepal government. Nevertheless, the proposed Bill seems somewhat positive and progressive, as compared to the amendments that have been made time and again on the 1971 Act. In the context of Nepal, it is observed that not many courtroom exercises have been initiated to strengthen educational rights. Acknowledging the positive aspects and putting them aside, this document tries to focus on the points that are critical but missing. The above-mentioned points cannot completely represent the entire spectrum of values pertaining to human rights and the rights to education. Upon reflecting on the essence of the proposed Bill, there is a sense that the state is trying to hand over the right to education in instalments. The right to education, however, should be a birth right of each individual, and not something one should receive in instalments. As such, the proposed Bill fails to fully encompass the spirit of the right to education.

* This study, conducted by human rights activist and speaker Mr. Shreekrishna Subedi for the Nepal Constitutional Foundation, has been finalised based on the inputs given by various pressure groups: women's, ethnic, Dalit, Madeshi, youth and others. The Foundation would like to thank: Kamala Bishwokarma, Bharat Gautam, Molikala Dewan, Binaya Kumar Kusait, Kamala Himchuri, Prakash Silwal, Rabin Subedi, Rishi Chapagain, Tanka Aryal, Rameshwor Upadhaya, Dr. Tirtha Raj Khania, Phurpa Tamang, Gopi Bishwokarma, Shyam Kumar Bishwokarma, Kapil Chandra Pokharel, Teku Nepali, Abhishek Adhikari, and Dr. Bipin Adhikari.

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The Rise of Indian-American

By BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD



This book clearly illustrates what a great melting pot America is. Indian Americans populate every aspect of this story. The crooks in this true story are of South Asian descent (Rajaratnam, king of kings, and Rajat Gupta, his apprentice), and so are the important players (Preetinder S. Bharara and Sanjay Wadhwa) from the US federal government who painstakingly brought both of them to justice. Anita Raghavan also of Indian origin, who used to work for the Wall Street Journal, has done a magnificent job of putting together this story, based on tapped phone transcripts that US courts allowed to be used for the first time in an insider trading scandal.

Rajaratnam, a mathematics wizard originally from Sri Lanka is a Wall Street hedge fund dealer, who founded Galleon, a hedge fund company. He has nurtured his talent well in the materialistic environment of Wall Street and has been duly rewarded. He is a billionaire. But he does not want to stop there because the heady, adrenaline rush for making more money is insatiable. Rajat Gupta is a handsome Indian businessman-philanthropist, who is clearly a millionaire but aspires to be a billionaire by making friends with Rajratnam.

Harvard-educated Rajat Gupta, one of the most accomplished Indian Americans, sat on the board of many important financial organizations such as McKinsey, Goldman Sachs, and American Airlines. After a board meeting, he would secretly phone his friend Rajratnam and illegally share some juicy financial nuggets which would prompt Rajratnam to sell or buy certain stocks and make thousands of dollars at one go. This happened with certain regularity as the tapped phone transcripts reveal.

The exquisite irony is that neither the king of kings, Rajratnam, nor the apprentice, Rajat Gupta needed to be cheats as they were already financially very well off and greatly respected by the American society from its President (Mr Gupta was a guest at the White House at least on one occasion) to ordinary Americans who marveled at these elite South Asians who had made good in the American system.

Rajratnam comes across as a smart Bollywood gangster type (appearance and actions) and provides some of the fun parts in the book. For example, he offered thousands of dollars to anyone who could drink 10 tequila shots in a row or eat an entire loaf of bread without a drink of water. The sharp difference between the gentle character of Rajat Gupta contrasts well with the gangster type and hugely sustains our interest in the book. The apparent Sadhu and the obvious crook Rajat Gupta by dint of intelligence and hard work right from his days in his native Calcutta rose up the ranks and distinguished himself. Clearly as the book makes amply clear these people and the generations of South Asians following them were "twice blessed". The first blessing was to be born after the Indian Independence of August 15, 1947. *The end of the Raj meant possible social advancement for all sections of society and foreign travel. The second blessing*

originated in America with the civil rights act in the US in 1965 which did away with limited annual immigration of only one hundred Indians to America. More were welcome based on their skills. For many Indians like Rajat Gupta who had attended the fiercely-competitive Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) and were ready to take on the world, America with its changed immigration policy clearly became a beacon of hope in the Indian darkness.

Unfortunately throughout his trial Rajat Gupta continues to deny any wrongdoing. It appears he has rationalized his actions. As you read the book you can envision how whiffs of pervasive corruption from South Asia have clearly been transported to greedy, welcoming Wall Street.

To a South Asian audience this book also feels like a cautionary tale from the Hindu Purans of prodigious talent, hard work and immense wealth all at the end turning into ashes. It could well be a Greek tragedy.

too. A case of truth being stranger than fiction. An excellent read. Highly recommended. ■

**The Billionaire's Apprentice:
The Rise of the Indian-American Elite and
the Fall of the Galleon Hedge Fund. By Anita
Raghavan. Hachette; 481 pages; \$ 29.**

On the Auspicious Occasion
of
Completion of 6th Year Operation



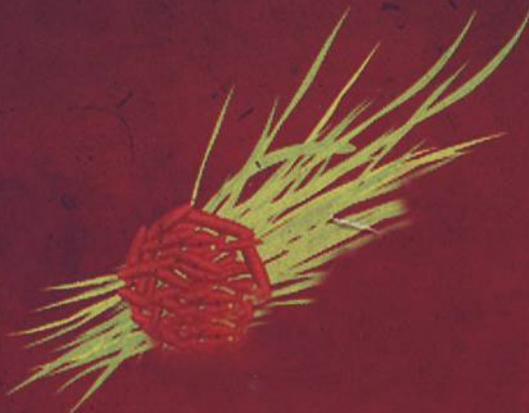
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Happy Vijaya Dashami & Deepawali

With Warm Wishes from

Ambica Shrestha

Sangita Shrestha

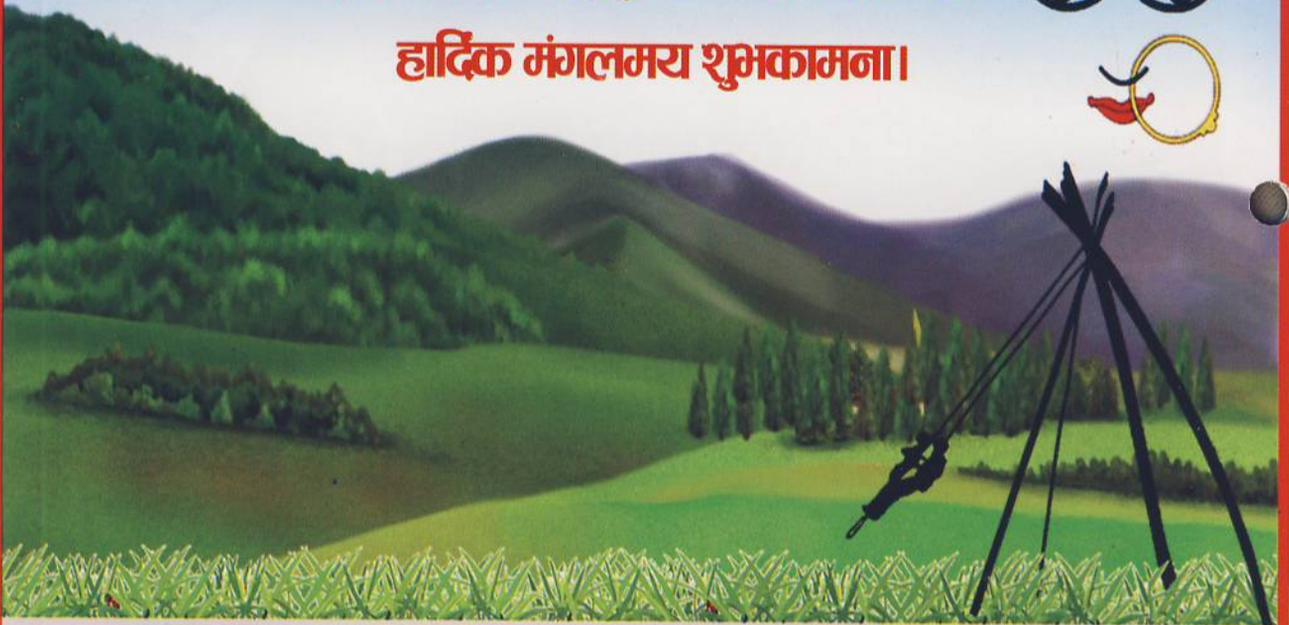
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बिजया दशमी, शुभ दिपावली
तथा छठ पर्व २०७० को पावन अवसरमा
सुख, शान्ति, समृद्धि र उत्तरोत्तर प्रगतिको
हादिक मंगलमय शुभकामना।



मनकामना डेभलपमेण्ट बैंक, यती फाइनान्स र भ्याली फाइनान्स गामिएर सबैभन्दा बढि
चुक्ता पुँजी भएको राष्ट्रियस्तरको बिकास बैंक यती डेभलपमेण्ट बैंक लिमिटेड भएको छ ।

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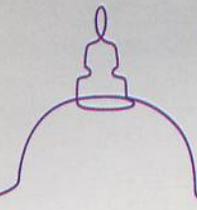
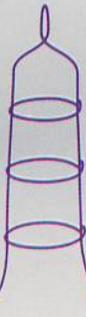
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PRACTICAL ACTION
Technology challenging poverty



प्रिजम् परियोजना युरोपेली संघको
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