

NEPAL'S YOUNG CRICKETERS | WAR WIDOWS | NEW NEPALI DREAM

MAY 9, 2004 VOL. 1, NO. 3

www.nation.com.np

nation

WEEKLY

RS. 30

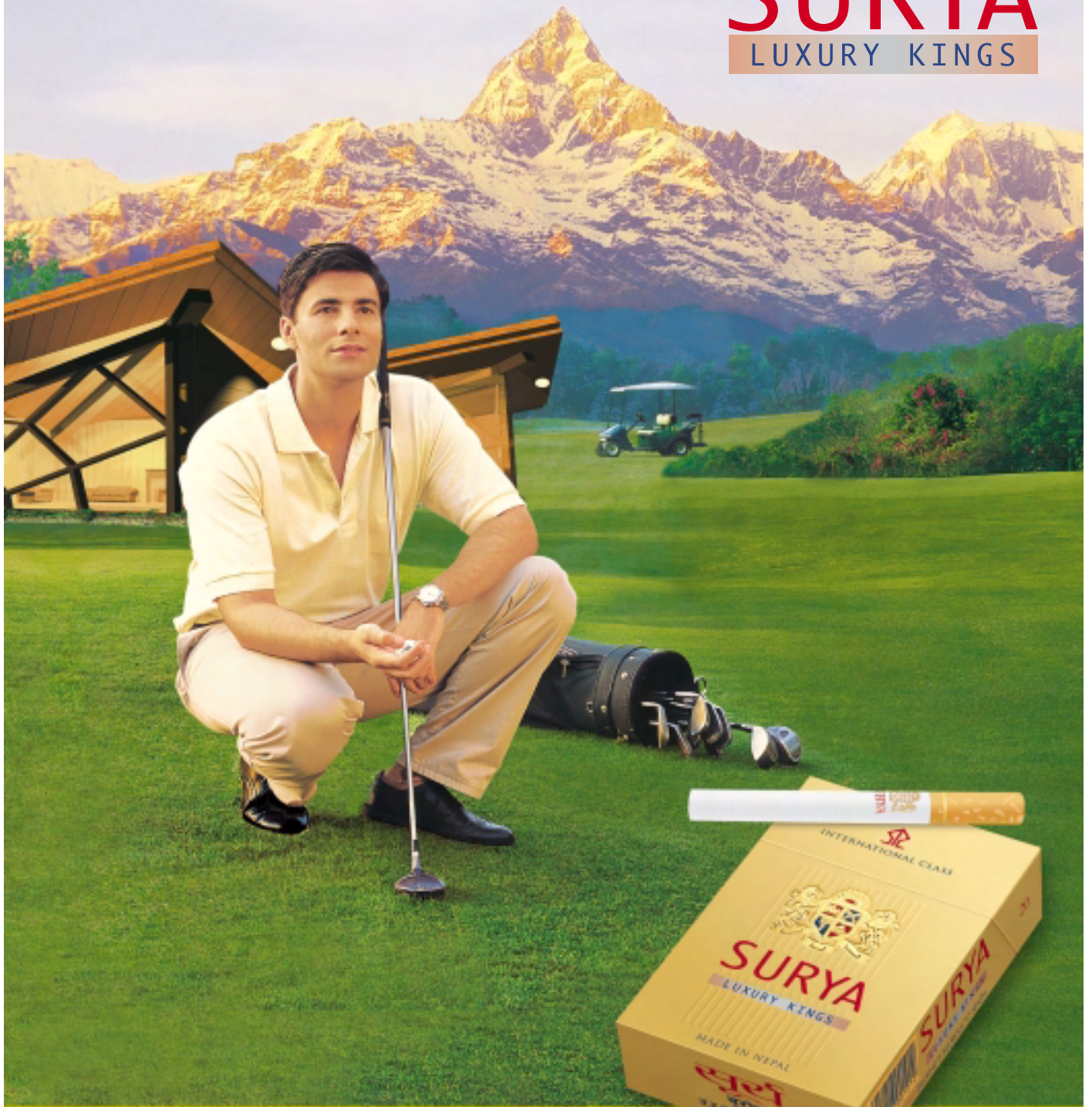


Nepal's Donors Fall Out

Donors Are Divided Over Their Priorities



SURYA
LUXURY KINGS



INSPIRED BY NEPAL

STATUTORY DIRECTIVE: SMOKING IS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH.

Celebrate

with a Three-course Meal

s o u p • m a i n c o u r s e • d e s s e r t



China Garden
CHINESE CUISINE WITH A TWIST!

Al Fresco
The Taste of Italy

Italian or Chinese? Pizza or Chicken Manchurian? Al Fresco or China Garden? Choices, choices... Come relish the true taste of Italy or the flavours of the Orient for just **Rs. 299/-*** per person with

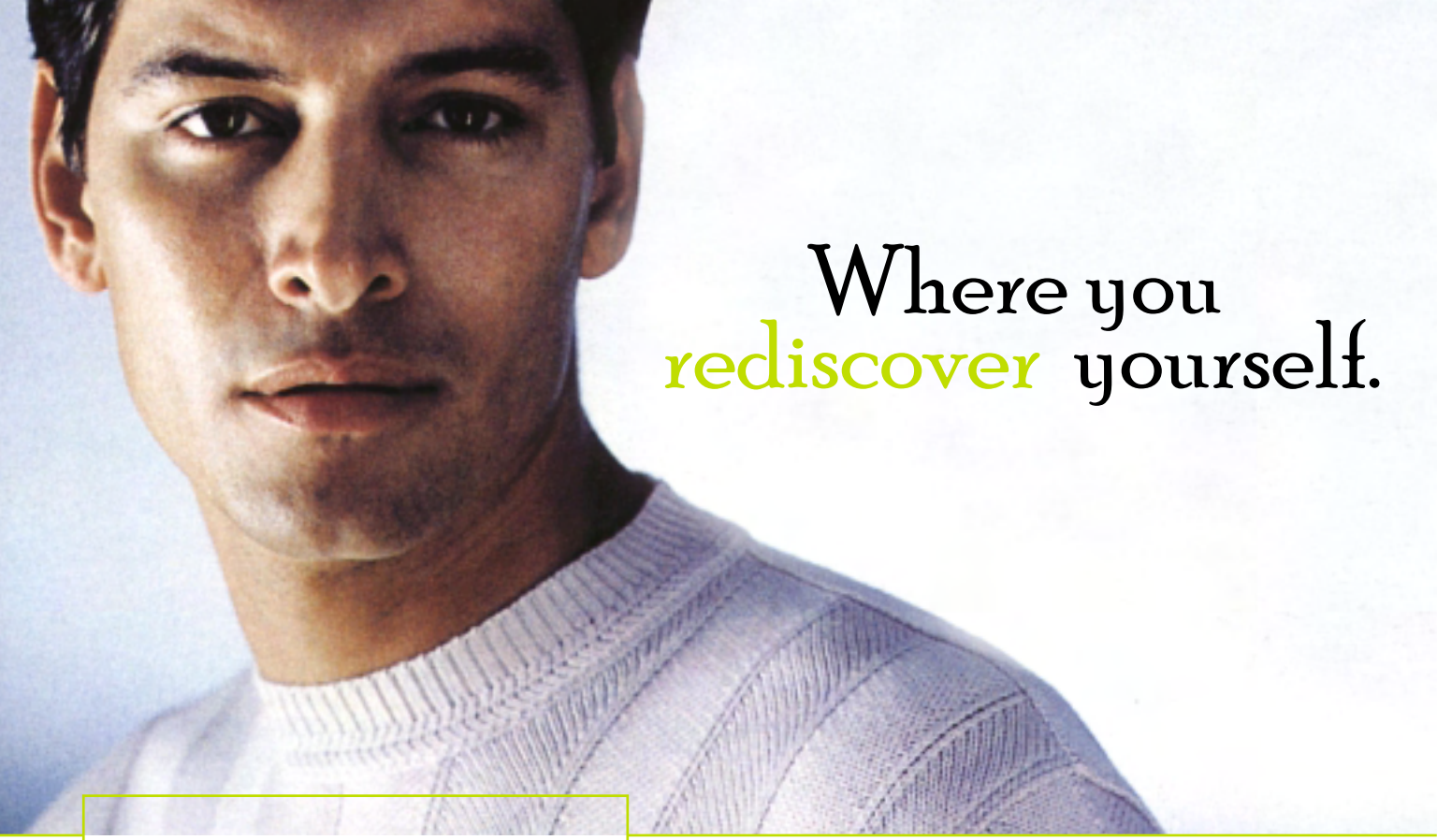


our **Great Value Lunches** (includes soup, main course and dessert.) The Al Fresco and China Garden are open for lunch between 1230 hrs to 1445 hrs. everyday.



SOALTEE
CROWNE PLAZA™
HOTELS · RESORTS
KATHMANDU

* Rs. 399 on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. Offer valid for a limited period only. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other discount scheme.



Where you
rediscover yourself.

Ace Institute of Management

provides an excellent learning environment, where you can:

- explore your abilities
- ignite your creativity
- nurture your leadership

Our ability to bring real world practice to the classroom makes our curriculum distinctive, inspiring and of international standards.



The following programs are currently offered by the institute: **MBA | EMBA | BBA | Higher Secondary**



COVER STORY

16 Nepal's Donors Fall Out

By Akhilesh Upadhyay

This week's NDF merely showcased the long-festering differences between Nepal's donors: Europe firmly stands for human rights; United States and India are not about to give up their national security concerns.

COLUMNS

9 18 Bones Of Contention

By Suman Pradhan

At this point in Nepal's conflict, the 18-point demand by the parties has emerged as the bone of contention between the monarch and the parties.

32 Women And Militarization

By Seira Tamang

The decision to recruit women did not come from a sudden realization by the military that women are equal citizens or that there should be more adequate representation of women in the forces. It emerged from the basic reality of needing more bodies in the fight against the Maoist insurgency.

34 New Nepali Dream

By Yubraj Acharya

Only after a sense of kinship is created will a Pahadi Bahun from Arghakhanchi empathize with a Magar from Baglung and vice versa. It is this feeling of Nepaliness that will attract youngsters abroad to head back home.

26 Five Ironies On Chinese Brassieres

By Swarnim Wagle

When Maoists say the United States intends to use Nepal to "encircle" China geo-politically, they seem unaware that the United States and China are already economically entangled in US\$ 170 billion of annual trade.

14 Return Of The Rana ?



By Satish Jung Shahi

RPP boss Pashupati SJB Rana once again hogs the center-stage, and in style.

22 Nepal Is Now Big Business

By Sushma Joshi

The buzz of excitement around Nepal's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), its 147th member, has been tempered by a school of thought that warns of the dangers.

24 Deflecting The Defectors

By Sushma Joshi

The government move to send former Maoists abroad kills three birds with one stone: It ensures the security of defecting members, it gets rid of people who might be tempted back to the rebel movement and, most importantly, it potentially lures Maoists away from the movement.

ARTS & SOCIETY

28 Not Coming Back Again

By Sanjeev Uprety

The Pheri yogis, original spies of the nation and wardens against evil spirits, may soon be out of work.

30 Great Expectations

By Sharan Marahatta



Nepal's young team is going from strength to strength. But the big test, says coach Roy Dias, comes in the ACC Trophy in June.

DEPARTMENTS

6 LETTERS

8 PICTURE OF THE WEEK

12 CAPSULES

33 CITY PAGE

35 BOOKS: HALF A LIFE

36 KHULA MANCH: ROY DIAS

38 LAST WORD

nation

Nation Weekly, The Media House, Tripureshor,
Kathmandu, Nepal (Regd. 113/059-060).
Tel: 2111102, 4229825, 4261831, 4263098

EDITOR: Akhilesh Upadhyay
editorial@nation.com.np

CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Suman Pradhan
COPY EDITOR: Tiku Gauchan

STAFF WRITERS: Sushma Joshi, Satish Jung Shahi
PHOTOGRAPHER: Sagar Shrestha
DESIGNER: Suresh Dhama

AD & CIRCULATION DIRECTOR: Krishna Shrestha
MARKETING EXECUTIVE: Rameshwar Ghimire
ad@nation.com.np

CREATIVE DIRECTOR: Nripendra Karmacharya

SUBSCRIPTION: Ashish Bhattarai
subscription@nation.com.np

PUBLISHER: The Mirror Media Pvt. Ltd

AD ENQUIRIES: Tel. 4229825, 4261831, 4263098
COLOR SEPARATION: ScanPro, Pulchowk, 5548861, 5552335
PRINTING: Variety Printing Press, 4278869
DISTRIBUTION: R.B. News Paper Traders, 4232784, 4244679

C O N T A C T
www.nation.com.np

nation

We prefer to receive letters via e-mail, without attachments. Writers should disclose any connection or relationship with the subject of their comments. All letters must include an address and daytime and evening phone numbers. We reserve the right to edit letters for clarity and space. E-mail: editorial@nation.com.np
Fax: 4216281
Mail: Nation Weekly
The Media House, GPO 8975, EPC 5620
Tripureshor, Kathmandu, Nepal.

SUBSCRIPTION

E-mail: subscription@nation.com.np
Nation Weekly, The Media House, GPO 8975
EPC 5620, Tripureshor, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 2111102, 4229825, 4261831, 4263098
Fax: 4216281

nation

subscription

subscription@nation.com.np

2111102

Congratulations

THE BUZZ WAS ALREADY THERE AND now after having seen your two issues, Nation seems to be on a roll. The layout is attractive, the articles and analyses are well written, and worth the money. A well timed debut. The high standards are evident, but can you keep it up? I'm optimistic.

GEETA PARAJULI
JARIBUTI, KOTESHWOR

CONGRATULATIONS FIRST OF ALL. IT is incredible. There should be a search section on your website (www.nation.com.np). Please add articles on movies, fashion (I know it's frivolous).

PRABAL GURUNG
NEW YORK, VIA E-MAIL

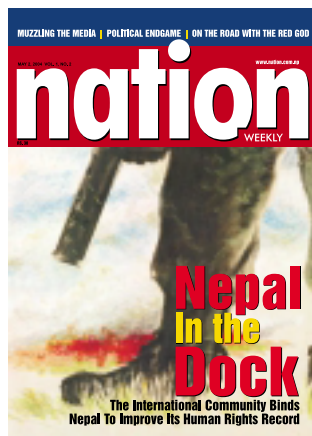
I PICKED UP THE NATION WEEKLY THE very first day it hit the newstands and was instantly bowled over — by the cover (though the masthead stretching from one end of the cover to the other seemed little off-putting to me), the layout and the general quality of writings. I had wanted to send in a congrats note. But I said, hold on, because you had been planning for the issue for months and it was bound to be good. So I had wanted to check if you could sustain the quality. Looking at the second issue, it seems, you could.

The article by Deepak Thapa was excellent. So was Suman Pradhan's ("Malinowski's Diplomacy," Meanwhile, May 2). Samuel Thomas's incriminating take on the documentary "Bhedako Oon Jasto" was interesting (and justified) ("As Long As You Film it," Viewpoint, May 2). But don't be complacent yet. There are areas that Nation Weekly could improve on, like cutting down the section for the snippets of news to one page and making the copy typos-free.

GOVINDA GHIMIRE
POKHARA, VIA E-MAIL

The Royal takeover

I AGREE WITH DEEPAK THAPA THAT our political parties needed "that jolt, (without which) our politicians would have continued in their business-as-usual mode, with consequences unknown for our country"—if not altogether with the view that the King was the right person, or means, to provide it ("The October 4 Windfall," A Little Word, May 2). Even if the King's October 4 move is vindicated on these grounds, I do not think the subsequent 19 months of active involvement can be justified. It has crippled democratic institutions in their very infancy. The post-October 4 anarchy illustrates the lack of vision on the King's part. A bold initiative is fine, when followed up with breadth of vision to take account of the aftermath. The King's sacking of Deuba government and whatever has happened thence reminds me of the situation in Iraq. President George W. Bush knew that Saddam posed a grave danger to American interests, and hence had to be disposed, but Bush's vision didn't extend beyond Saddam's removal. Whatever has happened since the toppling of the dictator is there for all to see.



BISWAS BARAL
RATOPUL, KATHMANDU

Good and bad about Nation

YOUR SECOND ISSUE WAS DEFINITELY better than your first—in terms of both the layout and content. Deepak Thapa's take on the ramifications of the King's October 4 move provided a new perspective on why the parties are taking to the streets. Similarly, Sushma Joshi's article on Everest was different from the run of the mill write-ups one usually comes across in most media journals ("A Laboratory Known As Everest," Everest, May 2). Caroline Rodal's piece, however, seemed no different from the typical newspaper articles with its covert pro-Girija tone ("Is This The Endgame?" Breaking News, May 2). I wonder if there really are thousands of non-partisan democrats in the country who "revere" Girija. Can any non-partisan democrat really "revere" today's politicians? But, overall, your magazine definitely does provide food for thought.

HARI JAISWAL
SUNDHARA

Your Heaven is Just a wish away



For a mere **Rs. 5999/-** you can now visit the heavenly atmosphere of the Village Resort where you will be treated as the Lords of the Village

- Two nights and three days for a couple.
- Daily breakfast.
- A buffet lunch at the Caravanserai
- Happy Hours every evening from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Trails End Bar, "buy one get one free" with a plate of complimentary canapes.
- Expatriates having Nepali Residency permits can avail this package.



AND 20% DISCOUNT ON BEAUTY PARLOR & HEALTH CENTRE WITH SAUNA, THERAPEUTIC & THAI MASSAGE


SHANGRI-LA
V I L L A G E
P O K H A R A

For further information and inquiries, please contact the Sales office. Phone 4412999 ext. 7512

Picture of the Week



**OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING
BUT IN RISING EVERY TIME WE FALL**



18 Bones Of Contention

BY SUMAN PRADHAN

King Gyanendra's recent summons to individual politicians for consultations to defuse the current crisis is eerily reminiscent of the past but with a key difference. Instead of trooping

to the Royal Palace, as they did three times before, the leaders of the five major parties, which are spearheading a pro-democracy agitation have refused to meet the King without first winning some concessions.

While some of those concessions have already been made—release of Jana Morcha Nepal leaders and activists, scaling down of the prohibitory orders in Kathmandu, etc.,—the key one has not: discussions with the King based on the parties' 18-point agenda. In case you have forgotten, the 18 points basically aim to reduce the monarch's active role, limit the royal title, re-establish control over the Royal purse, and somehow bring the Royal Nepal Army under parliamentary control. In essence, the demands go to the heart of the conflict between the Palace and the parties.

The Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) president, Pashupati Shumsher Rana, who is among the very few people to have the ear of the Palace, has said that the 18 points are a hindrance to a real dialogue between the monarch and the parties. The indication coming out of the Palace is: the parties should drop some of the most stringent demands and there could be reconciliation, perhaps even an all-party government led by someone who is the parties' choice.

Clearly, at this point in Nepal's conflict, the 18 points have emerged as the bone of contention between the monarch and the parties. The King sees his interest in retaining as much power and authority for himself as he can, and the parties see theirs as being just the opposite.

In this two-way tussle for supremacy, the Maoists—the third force in the conflict—are waiting in the sidelines, watching how the parties and the monarch play out their chess game. Their intention, no doubt, is to come in at some point and check-mate both sides. The rebels seem content at the moment to win some favorable press coverage, as with the release of the 41 policemen abducted from Pashupatinagar on April 8.

Just the fact that the Palace has made overtures is being seen by the parties as a victory of sorts. Some of the politicians and activists I have spoken to in recent days seem to believe that the street protests were crucial in forcing the monarch to seek a dialogue. While this seems to be true to some extent, it is not the whole truth.

Without the impending embarrassment of a potentially unsuccessful Nepal Development Forum meeting, and without pressure to reconcile from donors whether they be India, the United States, Britain or any number of other European countries, the government (and by implication the Palace) would probably not have sought a dialogue at this point.

After all, despite all the hullabaloo raised by the press, the sad fact of the protests is that it is still devoid of the masses. They may have spread out from Bagbazaar to New Road and Chabahil, but the protests are still largely attended by the same politicians, activists, students and partisan members of civil society groups.

But the King has thrown the ball in the parties' courts, and they have already sent a stinging rebuke. The danger now is two-fold.

The first is that, a chance at genuine dialogue could be missed. It sounds simple, but dialogue is always better than confrontation. The parties should ask for a collective meeting with the King, and lay out their position with a precise road-map of the future. The King should, in turn, hold the dialogue in good faith, not just aim to increase his powers which is at the source of the conflict with the parties.

And the road-map the parties propose should not confine itself to bits and pieces of the 18-point agenda but rather include the overarching issues of the political and social conflict embodied by the Maoist insurgency. This is where the second danger lies: in their attempt to limit the monarch's role, the parties may forget that there are real bread and butter issues out there which the people want them to deal with.



In short, the parties should listen to some of their own activists and supporters, people like CPN(UML) activist Bishnu Maden of Dhankuta, who know why there haven't been mass participation in the protests, and what needs to be done about it. Appearing dejected after a sparsely attended party protest in Dhankuta Bazaar on a recent day, Maden said: "This agitation has taken the character of a middle-class agitation, not an agitation of the masses. The reason is that the parties are not saying what the people want to hear. People are more concerned with livelihood issues. The parties have lost touch with the people's aspirations. Now the parties must reform if they are to survive. They must reform their philosophy, their structures, and the way they do things. They have to democratize from within and allow for more discussion from the grassroots up. The time to do this is now, not later after we win power back from the Palace." **N**



EXTERIOR INTERIOR

"The Designer & Coating Specialist"

We are one of the qualified paint Contractors and Importers-Distributors of Building Materials such as the various types of paints and texture coating from Kansai Paint Co. Ltd, Japan. Berry Floor (The Wooden Laminate Flooring with the new technology of loc system) from Belgium. And we are also specialized in the field of interior designing with several years of working experiences.



"The World's No.1 Paints and Texture Coating manufactured in Japan and Singapore Since 1918"



Mahendra Police Club



Vinyl Silk
A high quality silk finish paint available in a range of pastel colours, Vinyl Silk will give a high sheen effect to any interior.



Harmony
A high quality matt finish paint available in a range of brilliant colours, Harmony will give good opacity even in humid tropical climates.



Radiance
A high quality gloss finish paint for interiors and exteriors, Radiance will give a mirror-like finish effect to any surface, wooden or metal.



Weatherproof
A high quality finishing paint for exterior surfaces, Weatherproof will withstand extreme changes of weather.

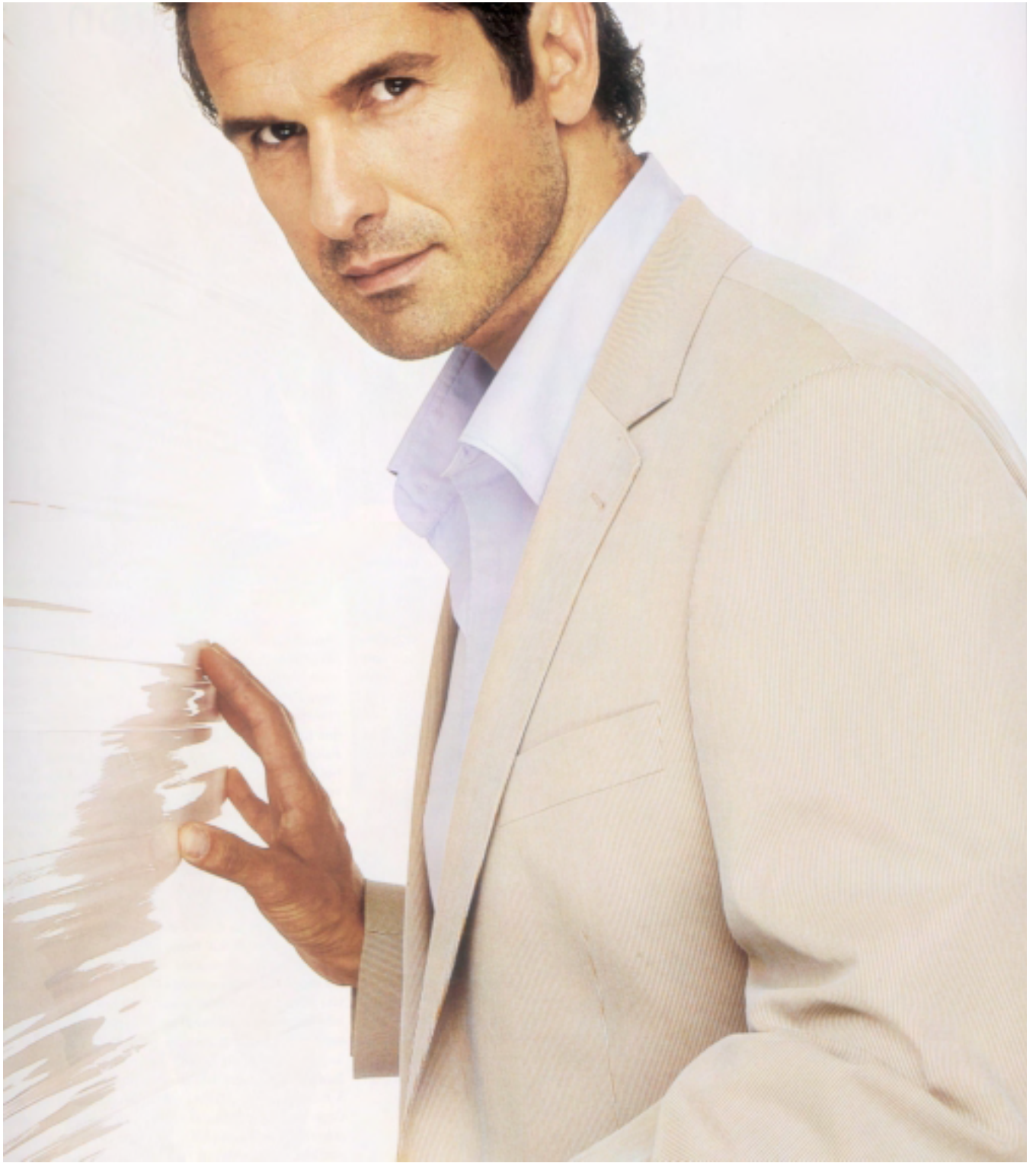


Zola-Coat is a sophisticated semi gloss multi color spray coating designed for interior uses, it is quite strong against water, stains, scrubbing and even against flame. Thus, the surface can be kept clean and glossy just by washing with soap and water for years and years. It has standard and premium colours. It can be applied on to various kinds of substrates such as Plaster, Plaster of Parish, Wood, Plywood and Aluminium etc.



KANPE TILE E is a sprayable tile coat for exterior use which provides walls with deluxe pattern of three-dimensional texture. This system consists of water type sealer, water type texture and water type topcoat which provide matt or glossy beautiful texture with easy application.





T H E W O R L D ' S B E S T C L O T H S



DORMEUIL

Putalisadak, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel. 4412017, Fax. 977-1-5539787

New envoy, old policy

James F Moriarty, the U.S. ambassador-designate, went through a Senate hearing last week. "I promise to work in close coordination with our international partners to assist the government of Nepal in countering the Maoist threat," Moriarty told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "The Maoists commit serious human rights abuses through their policies of systematic torture, murder, kidnapping and extortion." Each ambassadorial appointment has to be confirmed by the Senate. If history is any indication, it takes anywhere between several days to several weeks for an ambassadorial appointment to be confirmed, a U.S. Embassy official told *Nation Weekly*. Analysts say the U.S. policy on Nepal is unlikely to change with the departure of Michael E Malinowski, who was not particularly popular with the political parties.

It's the Times now

The *New York Times* last week had a loud headline. "Kathmandu Asks: Is Gyanendra Smoking as Nepal Burns?" "As an intensifying Maoist insurgency kills an average of nearly 10 of his subjects a day," said the *Times*, "King Gyanendra of Nepal has spent most of his time



sitting in his palace chain-smoking, writing vaguely worded speeches and, Nepalese leaders and foreign diplomats say, keeping nearly everyone in his anguished Himalayan kingdom guessing." The *Times* quoted an Indian diplomat as saying, the King has managed to create a two-front war for himself—one with the Maoists and another with parties. According to the newspaper of records, the King receives tips on what books to read from Henry Kissinger, former U.S. secretary of state.

Free at last

The government last week released Vice President of Janamorchha Nepal



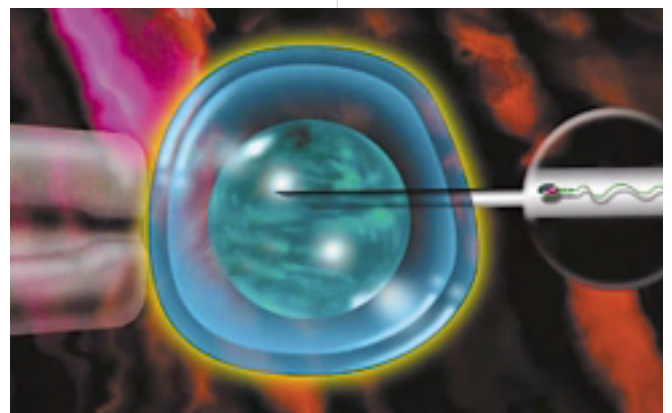
Lilamani Pokharel, and more than 20 others from his party after 17 days in custody. Many said the move was long overdue and quickly attributed it to the pressure on the Royalist government on two fronts—the support base of the five agitating parties (Janamorchha is one) is widening and the international community is increasingly disenchanted with the government giving the cold-shoulder to the parties. Others see this as a prelude to an all-party government and insist that the days of the Thapa government are numbered.

Obit to a reporter

Pushkar Thapa, 30, a reporter with *Space Time Dainik*, died on April 24, three days after he was hit by a minibus. Thapa was returning from a news assignment at the Federation of Nepalese Journalists premises in Sanchargram, Ring Road. *Kantipur* quoted an unnamed eyewitness as saying that Thapa was hit twice by the bus. Many believe that the country's Transport Law treats drivers who kill pedestrians less harshly than those who just knock them down short of death.

Test tube babies

Couples unable to conceive will get a helping hand from science soon. Om Hospital and Research Center in Chabahil will have an in-vitro fertilization (IVF) center up and running from July. Most infertile couples have been getting artificial insemination in Indian cities. IVF, the most common artificial reproductive technique used the world over, is the preferred method of choice for women with fallopian tube defects and men with sperm deficiencies. It's a four-stage process: a follicle-stimulating hormone is used to stimulate growth of eggs, which are removed from the ovary. The eggs are then transferred to a laboratory dish after which a sperm fertilizes the egg. In the final stage, the fertilized



egg is inserted back into the uterus where the egg develops into a fetus. Unlike popular misconception, test tube babies are not grown in test tubes. The IVF procedure will cost Rs. 200,000.

Oxygen in the Valley

Some months ago, newspapers ran stories of hospitals running low on oxygen for surgeries during the Maoist called banda in the Valley. This gave Shanker Lal Agrawal the incentive to start Shanker Oxygen Gas. Around 57 percent of some 700 liters of oxygen brought into the Valley everyday is consumed for medical purposes. It is also used by metal workers, high-altitude trekkers and the aviation sector.



Shooting the sheriff

Mayor of Butwal Punaram Pokhrel last week became the second city chief to have been shot by the Maoists. Maoists had shot to death Gopal Giri of Birgunj earlier this year for allegedly refusing to give in to their extortion demands. Like Giri, Pokhrel too belongs to the ruling RPP. Pokhrel, who was airlifted to the capital, was fighting for his life when we went to press.

New development

The 14th Nepal Development Forum slated for May 5 and 6 will take place on time after all. The European donors who had earlier almost given in to the main political parties' demands to postpone the forum have now decided to stick to the schedule. In an attempt to quell the parties' demands that the NDF not take place during the tenure of a non-representative government, the donors had asked the parties to nominate a common prime ministerial candidate. The bilaterals,



after holding an informal meeting amongst themselves, said that their taking part in the meet does not signify that they have given up on their support for a representative government. The first NDF took place in 1976 in Japan while the first NDF in Nepal took place in 2002.

Show it in India

Nepali entrepreneurs and senior government officials will be on a road show in major Indian cities later this year to attract Indian investments. They will travel to Bangalore, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkotta, Mumbai, and New Delhi in September. The Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) are the organizers.

Nepal banda

The five agitating parties, to protest the Palace's recent

“politicking,” have called a Nepal banda on May 11 and 12. They have called for a shutdown of educational institutions, government offices, business enterprises, public organizations and a nationwide chakka jam. The only vehicles which will be allowed to ply the roads during the two days are: ambulances, water tankers, fire brigades, vehicles belonging to the press, garbage carriers and diplomatic missions' vehicles.

Free abductees

Maoists freed 39 police they had abducted from Pashupatinagar early last month. They were set free in Guphapokhari, Sankhuwasabha in the presence of human rights groups and the International Committee of the Red Cross officials. The Maoists apparently gave the released policemen Rs.500 each as travel expenses. The ICRC had been in the forefront during negotiations with Maoists in

March too, to mediate the release of the security personnel abducted from Beni on March 20.

Nigerians return

Three Star Club became the first football team in Nepal to import international footballers when they recruited Ibrahim Babayaro Samuel and Adams Musa. Well, not quite. When we went to press, the news was that the Nigerian duo refused to take the field over their disenchantment at what they called poor quality of football played in Nepal. Three Star Club finished their game in style though, scoring 10 goals against Brigade Boys. Striker Surendra Tamang scored the first hat-trick of the Sahid Smarak league this season with five goals to his name. In India, football clubs-encouraged by the success of Chima Okerie in the domestic league in the 80s-started signing up African players, mostly from Nigeria, Ghana and Kenya.

Hyundai sells 2000 cars

Deep Lama became Nepal's 2000th Hyundai vehicle owner in Nepal and won himself a Cosmic Yingyang motorcycle from the vehicle's distributors AVCO International. W. S. Min, Hyundai Motor India's executive director



says that they exported 536 cars to Nepal and recorded a growth of 40 percent over the previous sales calendar year. AVCO sells over 600 cars a year.



MAY DAY, MAY DAY: Trade union workers at a May Day parade

RETURN OF THE RANA?

Rana once again hogs the center-stage, and in style. Not only did he come out on the streets to oppose his own party's government, there are now whispers that he is also the King's choice for the next prime minister.

BY SATISH JUNG SHAHI

The Kathmandu skies cleared on Thursday, a day after heavy down-pour. The barometer quickly soared to regular early-summer temperatures and hovered in the higher 20s.

On the eastern edge of the Valley in Baneshwore, away from the government's "riot-prone" area where the regular party protests were taking place, a man in his crisp white daura suruwal and a thick, green belt made his way on foot. Wearing black Nike sneakers, instead of his customary shiny leather shoes, he was constantly wiping perspiration from his forehead.

Rastriya Prajatantra Party President Pashupati SJB Rana paused for a while and drank from a tumbler that had been carried by his aide. Behind him were party cadres sloganeering for an all-party government. Unlike the protest in other parts of Kathmandu, no one uttered a word against the King or against his October 2002 move.

Suddenly scores of media persons surrounded Rana. Two photojournalists broke into a near-scuffle—one had got into the other's picture frame.

Rana once again hogs the center-stage, and in style. Not only did he come out on the streets to oppose his own party's government, there are now whispers that he is also the King's choice for the next prime minister.

"The sun ("Surya," the prime minister's first name) is setting and the

light ("Prakash," finance minister's first name) is dimming. Even the lotus ("Kamal," the Home Minister's first name) is withering," he told hundreds of party cadres from a makeshift stage erected outside Birendra International Convention Center in Naya Baneshwor. The underlying message he seemed to convey to the party cadres: he can now afford to take a potshot at powerful ministers.

The streets this past week were rife with rumors over who would be the future prime minister, ever since the possible fall of the Surya Bahadur Thapa government started doing the rounds. Since April 22, the King has started meeting leaders from mostly smaller parties. Rana and Nepali Congress (Democratic) President Sher Bahadur Deuba were among the first Royal invitees.

RPP hasn't clearly spelled out its prime ministerial candidate yet but Rana is making the right noise. If ever the elections take place, it seems he wants to oversee them.

"This government must go," Rana declared. "It is impossible to resolve the current crisis under the present circumstances and the government has been a major barrier between the King and the protesting parties."

One of the protesting parties, the Nepali Congress is set against Deuba's possible appointment as the new prime minister. "It is better to keep Surya Bahadur as prime minister rather than have Deuba," a Deuba aide quoted





Nepali Congress President Girija Prasad Koirala is saying in reference to the NC supremo's intense dislike for Deuba.

Koirala has gone on record to say that he wants the King to discuss the 18-point agenda put forward by the five agitating parties in limiting the Royal perks and privileges, and bringing the Army under the parliament. The government complied with the demand of the protesting parties to release their cadres arrested during the agitation and downsized its riot zone. But the protests have turned anti-King in recent days and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party wants to cash in on that.

"We want to take the mid-path between the socialists and the communists," says Jogmeher Shrestha, an old RPP hand. "We are against an active monarchy but we have to realize that the King is also a power to reckon with."

To be sure, the Rastriya Prajatantra Party is a party of former Panchas, and most of its senior leaders enjoy some sort of personal ties with the Palace. But it has always shown two strands—pro-Palace and liberal—though the ideological leanings are decided often by convenience. Prime Minister Thapa, once touted as a liberal, is a classic example.

When the party faced the first democratic elections in 1991, it had two factions—one led by Thapa and another by Lokendra Bahadur Chand. The two came together after humiliating results in the elections.

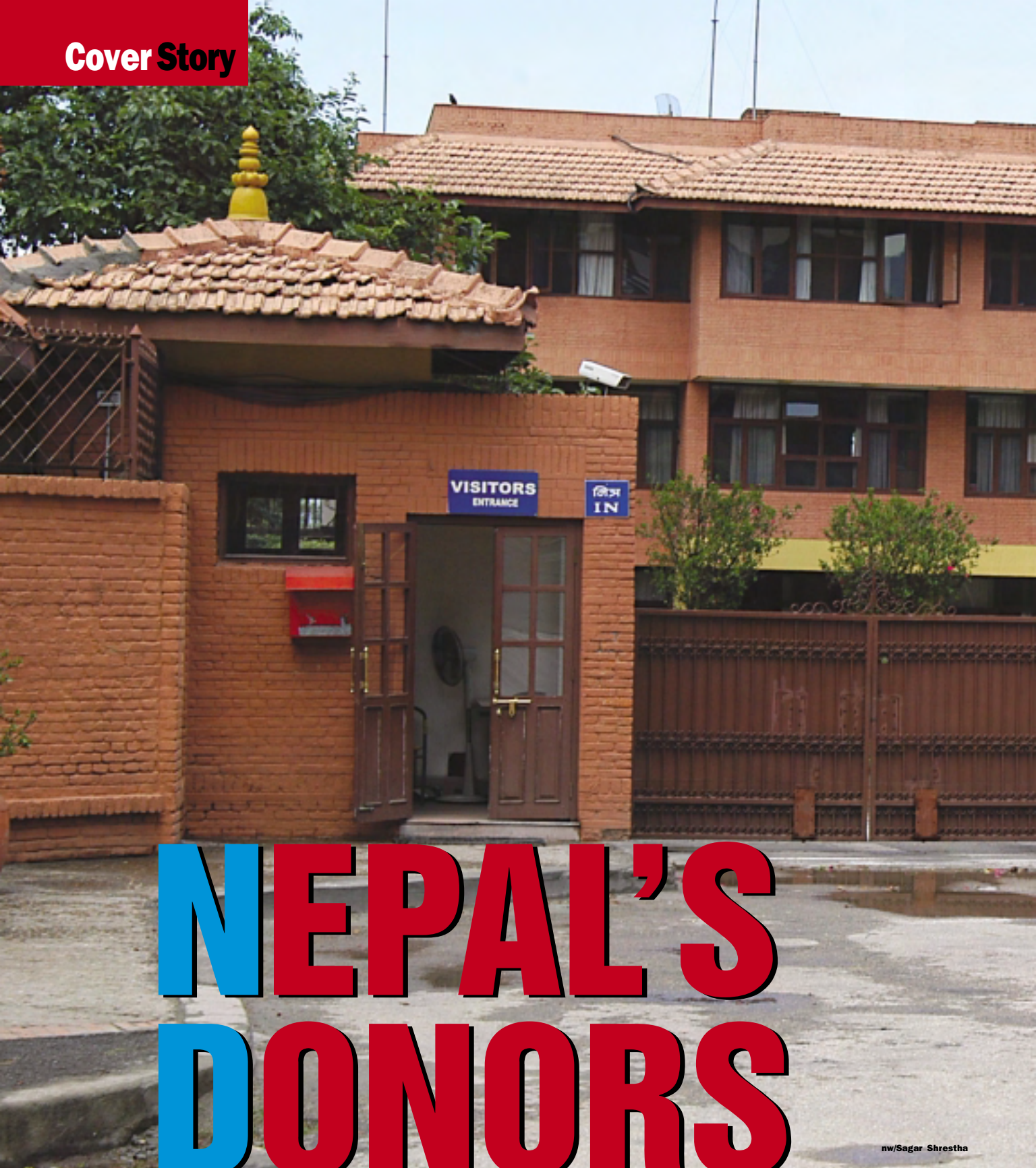
"We are not pulling the prime minister down as an act of vengeance," says Chand, who belongs to the same faction as Rana. Chand joined Rana last week in asking Thapa to step down. "We just want to create an environment for all constitutional forces to sit together and come to an agreement."

Only last year, Thapa was the prime engineer in pulling down the Chand government, the first one to be appointed by the King after he took executive powers in 2002 October.

Last Friday, at least 35 out of 45 RPP central committee members decided to call for a national council meet to renew its demand for Prime Minister Thapa's resignation. The Thapa faction responded by holding its own meeting a day later and decided not to abide by the party's call.

Thapa is a tenacious politician as history proves and he still controls a sizeable following. "RPP joining the street agitation isn't the party line at all," says central committee member Bhuvan Pathak, a Thapa ally. "It is just personal animosity spilling onto the streets but the government still controls the rural base of the party."

When the party asked him to resign early this year, Prime Minister Thapa had an easy answer: "I was never put into this chair by the party." He instead managed to collect 415 (out of 680) signatures to call a national council meeting and threatened to oust Rana from presidency. **N**



NEPAL'S DONORS FALL OUT

nw/Sagar Shrestha



This week's NDF merely showcased the long-festering differences between Nepal's donors: Europe firmly stands for human rights; United States and India are not about to give up their national security concerns

BY AKHILESH UPADHYAY

With the major political parties deciding to boycott the much-awaited Nepal Development Forum, the donor meet slated for this week hit a roadblock even before it got under way. While political parties do not, by practice, directly influence the outcome of NDF, the donors had solicited their active

participation in NDF's preparatory meets last month. The donors had even gone so far as to ask ministers in the Thapa cabinet to keep out of the NDF consultations so as not to antagonize the parties.

Their rationale: The parties have been pushed to the fringes, but they still

have an important role to play in Nepal's development and their participation would lend NDF a much needed legitimacy at a time of deep political polarization.

Donors do not make pledges for funds at NDF but they do discuss overarching development strategies with government officials at the forum—with civil society representatives and political parties on the sidelines.

The polarization of political forces has also cut a wedge in the donor community.

On one side are the Europeans, Canadians and United Nations, who are extremely unhappy with the government's poor human rights record and the attendant security situation, which they believe will significantly affect the development programs. "Human rights abuse inevitably impacts the poorest and most vulnerable," says Robert Smith, Deputy Chief of the British funding agency, DFID, "so you cannot separate development and protection of human rights."

Last week, 11 donors sided with the parties in demanding for the restoration

of a representative government. For a while, they even seemed willing to delay NDF to let that happen. Britain, despite its solidarity with the Europeans



NO THANKS: NC's Acharya says it's not the right time to discuss development

on human rights and a number of other issues, decided to stick to the scheduled date in line with the other two major donors—the United States and World Bank which co-chairs the forum with the government.

The 11 European donors, including delegates from Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands and the European Union, met at the Norwegian Embassy on Thursday to chalk up their plan of action. After a long day, they decided to move according to schedule but only after asserting that human rights and political reforms would feature high up in their agenda in the forum, though some analysts see this compromise as back-tracking on their earlier stance.

Japan and the Asian Development Bank, the largest bilateral and multilateral donors, have largely remained silent in the pre-NDF battle marked by loud statements.

For their part, political parties continue to stick to their guns: with a non-representative government in office, it makes little sense to discuss issues of good governance and forward-looking development strategies, they say.

"NDFs are meant to give impetus to Nepal's development," says Nepali Congress central committee member Narhari Acharya. "Why discuss sundry technical stuff on development at a time



Europeans are strong on human rights



Nepal's leading donor is happy to remain silent

when the whole nation is embroiled in a larger battle of defining its very polity? And that too under a government that doesn't have any legitimacy?"

While the core issue of the government's legitimacy has been around for sometime, the parties now sense that the King may even decide to give a fresh lease of life to the Thapa government, whose days looked numbered last week. The parties have a bagful of worries in the next few weeks, if the government does outlast the NDF: street protests against regression have remained largely confined to Kathmandu, and with the NDF gone, the government will face less direct pressure from the donor community.

Nepal's donors have been divided for quite a while. NDF only brought forth the inevitable public showdown in Kathmandu.

Last month, during the Human Rights Commission's annual session in Geneva, the United States and India lobbied against the Swiss-sponsored Item 19, which binds member-nations to ac-

cept international human rights monitoring. But the Europeans still managed to keep Nepal in the dock through the ruling from the Commission's chairman who issued a binding statement asking Nepal to accept international monitoring of its human rights situation.

It is understandable that the donors do not want to get caught up in the party-

The parties have a bagful of worries in the next few weeks, if the government does outlast the NDF

government polarization and yet their position can be traced in their veiled language.

"The government's recent Human Rights Commitment paper was a welcome development but it needs to be implemented and independently monitored as a matter of urgency," says DFID's Robert Smith. "Human rights abuse inevitably impact on the poorest and most vulnerable. So you cannot separate development

and protection of human rights. Human rights is very high on the UK agenda for NDF."

India, which is not a member of the NDF, has been invited to take part as an observer. No one questions either its role in influencing the state of affairs in Nepal or its concerns that poor security situation in Nepal will have a direct bearing on India. New Delhi is increasingly concerned that Nepal's Maoist insurgency is having a spillover effect in its territory.

Unlike the Europeans who see that improvement of human rights situation as fundamental to arrest Nepal's downward spiral, the Indian reading of the Nepal situation is informed more by its national security concerns, much like America's.

New Delhi, which has never appreciated international pronouncements on Kashmir, fears that the international monitoring of Nepal's human rights situation could be "an intrusive." Outgoing U.S. Ambassador Michael Malinowski, in his pre-departure, press meet, seemed to echo the Indian concern.

THIS IS THE REWARD FOR US



FOR THE PASSION OF PROFESSIONAL BANKING,
COMMITMENT TO CLIENTS AND MOMENT
OF DEDICATED SERVICES

It is what makes us one of the leading financial institutions in the country. That is why the most demanding clients in the country trust us to deliver.

Digging deeper, aiming higher, cutting-edge thinking, far-reaching insights, unique solutions. That's what we have been delivering to our customers.



नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक लि.
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.

For details, please contact our relationship at 422-8229 or visit your nearest branch office.

NIB/OutReach Nepal

nation

WEEKLY

CATCH THE BUZZ...

The Media House, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu
Tel: 4229825, 4261831, 4263098
subscription@nation.com.np
www.nation.com.np

- We believe reading should be fun. We want to give you the value for your money.
- We are the first all-color English newsmagazine in Nepal.
- We offer in-depth analyses of stories behind the news.
- We also cover other important areas as lifestyle, arts, books, and movies.
- We bring to you a range of interviews—that of riot police to young entrepreneurs who have made a difference in our lives.
- Our news snippets and City Page tell you the news and upcoming events in a nutshell.
- We want to make your reading wholesome.



Yes, I would like to subscribe to nationweekly for,

52 Issues (25% @ Rs. 1170) 26 Issues (10% @ Rs. 702) 12 Issues (5% @ Rs. 342)

NAME (Mr/Ms)

ORGANISATION

ADDRESS

PHONE

MOBILE

FAX

E-MAIL

FROM

TO

SIGNATURE

* Cheque should be made payable to **The Mirror Media PVT. Ltd**

12 Issues for
Rs. 342
(5% discount)

26 Issues for
Rs. 702
(10% discount)

52 Issues
for
Rs. 1170
(25% discount)

To subscribe, fax completed form to **4216281**
or call Mr. Ashish Bhattarai at **211102**
or email at **subscription@nation.com.np**

SUBSCRIBE AND ENJOY SUBSTANTIAL SAVINGS

“Since it is always easier to investigate and to castigate established governments rather than insurgencies,” says Indian Ambassador Shyam Sharan, “such an intrusive

approach can even, inadvertently, play into the hands of a violent and often brutal insurgency, by putting the legitimate State in the dock.” For the present, for all the dif-

ferences between the donors and the bleakness that surrounds the nation’s development, Nepal Development Forum looks all set to move on time. **N**

India believes that allowing international monitoring of human rights situation could be dangerous in that it is easier to investigate established governments than insurgencies. Britain, on the other hand, argues that international human rights monitoring would help improve Nepal’s ground situation which is vital in implementing development programs. **Indian Ambassador Shyam Sharan and Deputy Chief of the British funding agency, DFID, Robert Smith** spoke to Nation Weekly ahead of the National Development Forum.



What is your response to the resolution on Nepal in Geneva?

There was no resolution adopted at the UNHRC in Geneva. India did, however, join the international consensus reflected in the Chairman’s statement on the human rights situation in Nepal.

What is your position on NDF, now that the parties have called for its postponement?

India is not a member of the NDF, but has been invited to participate in its deliberations as a major economic partner. It is for the Nepal government to decide whether the meeting should be postponed, not the donors. In its current difficult situation, Nepal needs the sympathy and support of the international community in facing both the security and economic challenges confronting it.

Your thoughts on the human rights situation in Nepal

The armed forces must be convinced that adherence to human rights norms is one of their most effective weapons to fight insurgency successfully and not a constraint that weakens them. This would be far more effective than adopting an intrusive approach, insisting upon the right to investigate and to judge alleged cases, of such violations. Since it is always easier to investigate and to castigate established governments rather than insurgencies, such an intrusive approach can even, inadvertently, play into the hands of a violent and often brutal insurgency, by putting the legitimate State in the dock.

What is the solution to the present crisis?

India’s own experience in dealing with insurgency clearly indicates that a military solution is usually neither probable nor even possible. The armed forces can only help create a space within which political process can be activated for a negotiated solution. We believe the same applies to the current situation in Nepal.

How do you view the political parties?

It is clear that there can be no multiparty democracy without the leading role of political parties. India has taken a consistent position, that the two pillars required for Nepal’s political stability are the institutions of constitutional monarchy and multiparty democracy and that to successfully deal with the challenge of Maoist insurgency, the security offensive must be accompanied by coming together of all constitutional forces on the basis of a national consensus.



Parties are saying that this government is illegitimate and therefore a meet so important as NDF should be withheld until a representative government takes office?

It is for the government to decide the timing of NDF. The decision by the Parties not to participate represents a missed opportunity and will make the NDF less representative and inclusive. This is a pity.

The previous NDF meetings were marked with fair bit of optimism. What is the mood like before this NDF?

I think it fair to say that the mood is different and reflects the difficult situation in which Nepal finds itself. We are approaching NDF with some real concerns related to the operating environment in which development partners are working. The environment is becoming increasingly difficult and NDF represents an opportunity for open discussion between partners and government about those concerns and ways in which progress can be made towards developmental objectives in a conflict impacted environment.

Unless something is done to agree and define different approaches to service delivery in an environment where large parts of the country are inaccessible through traditional government delivery systems, there is a real risk that the development process will stall.

Britain has on more than one occasion said that political parties should have a bigger role in governance?

Democratic, accountable and open government is central to effective development. We continue to urge those concerned to find a way to bring about representative and multi-party government. The development and governance agendas are intertwined and will inevitably come together in the NDF discussions.

What is your position on the human rights situation and conflict in Nepal?

There is no military victory possible for either side (Maoist or the government). The move towards peace and a negotiated settlement must be accelerated by all those with the best interests of the Nepali people at heart. It has to start with a resolution of the current impasse involving the political parties.

The government’s recent Human Rights Commitment paper was a welcome development but it needs to be implemented and independently monitored as a matter of urgency.



TAKING ON THE WTO: Anti-WTO protestors in Cancun, Mexico, last September just before the WTO conference broke down

NEPAL IS NOW BIG BUSINESS

BY SUSHMA JOSHI

The buzz of excitement around Nepal's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), its 147th member, has been tempered by a school of thought that warns

of the dangers posed to Nepal's economy by the new international membership.

Will the WTO membership harm or benefit Nepal? This depends upon who is asking the question, and who is answering it.

"It's a question of interpretation," says Dr. Gopi Sedai, who is with Pro-Public, an organization that, among oth-

ers, lobbies for small farmers. "Not all countries are on the same playing field. Some are stronger than others." The basic problem, says Sedai, is that the WTO is a spin-off of the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs (GATT), an international organization whose rules were designed for industrialized countries. The least-developed countries were

only allowed entry much later. The rules and regulations, therefore, are geared to help countries with stronger economies and trading systems.

A huge chunk of Nepal's economy is based on subsistence agriculture, and is non-taxable and non-commercialized. Small farmers, who used to receive subsidies for pesticides and chemical fertilizers in the 1950s, were cut off from subsidies as the 80s brought a new era of liberalization and privatization.

The fertilizer story illustrates how liberalization might not work for countries where basic monitoring institutions are not yet in place. In the 1980s, Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani, the current finance minister, ushered in the Nepal Fertilizer Policy, which cut off public subsidies. Private companies took over the import of chemical fertilizers. The lack of controls soon led to sub-standard products being brought in. The government then nominated individuals with no training to be "fertilizer inspectors" to make sure the products were authentic, and not manufactured at unregistered factories. A small bribe, however, was enough to get the paperwork certifying quality. The farmers had no legal institutions to complain about the sub-standard fertilizers be-

ing pushed onto them by private companies.

Nepali farmers, who today fund their own fertilizers and pesticides, are at a tremendous disadvantage vis-à-vis multi-national corporations and even small farms from countries like the United States whose farms are heavily government-subsidized.

The industrialized nations are not averse to protecting their own domestic economies. "The WTO says its members cannot have trade barriers, but if you look at the actual practice of developed countries, they have many laws that restrict free trade," says Sedai. He points out that raw milk, which would be very expensive to airlift from other countries, has zero tax in the United States, but yak cheese, which would sell very well, has an approximate 400-500 percent tax slapped on it.

"I cannot answer whether the WTO membership would benefit or harm Nepal in general," says Anil Bhattarai, a community health researcher at Martin Chautari. "But I can tell you how it will affect specific groups." The WTO, he says, would significantly benefit trading classes and people who have

access to international funding. But small-scale farmers would lose. Bhattarai, who is researching the privatization of health care systems in Nepal, observes that even the rudimentary public health care system that is in place will be in danger of collapsing if the WTO's conditionalities are to be imposed.

Small farms and health-care are not the only institutions at risk. Basic services like water, electricity and telecommunications, which are currently state-run, may have to be privatized under WTO's arm-twisting policies. The Asian Development Bank, which is providing a \$40 million loan to Nepal, has asked that the Dairy Development Program in Pokhara be privatized.

"Three to four lakh litres of milk is consumed daily in Kathmandu," says Dr. Sedai. "Around two lakh families produce this milk. If that were to be commercialized, a multi-national could take over a village, pay a high salary to two managers, hire 30 laborers, and keep cows that are engineered to produce a lot of milk. The milk will become much more expensive. Thousands would lose their livelihood." Sedai's figures are not

derived from highly funded research projects, but his model of lost livelihood is concrete enough.

Small business-people who see larger corporate houses taking over their traditional turf are also concerned. In Khokana, the hub of Nepal's mustard oil industry, hundreds of small oil presses have gone out of business as industrial houses have taken over their market. "Business is not like it was before," says Suryabhadur Maharjan of the Khokana Oil Mill, shaking his head. "We used to sell a lot more before." Maharjan has seen the insidious work of globalization first hand, as the oil crop of Khokana has given way to those from France and Denmark.

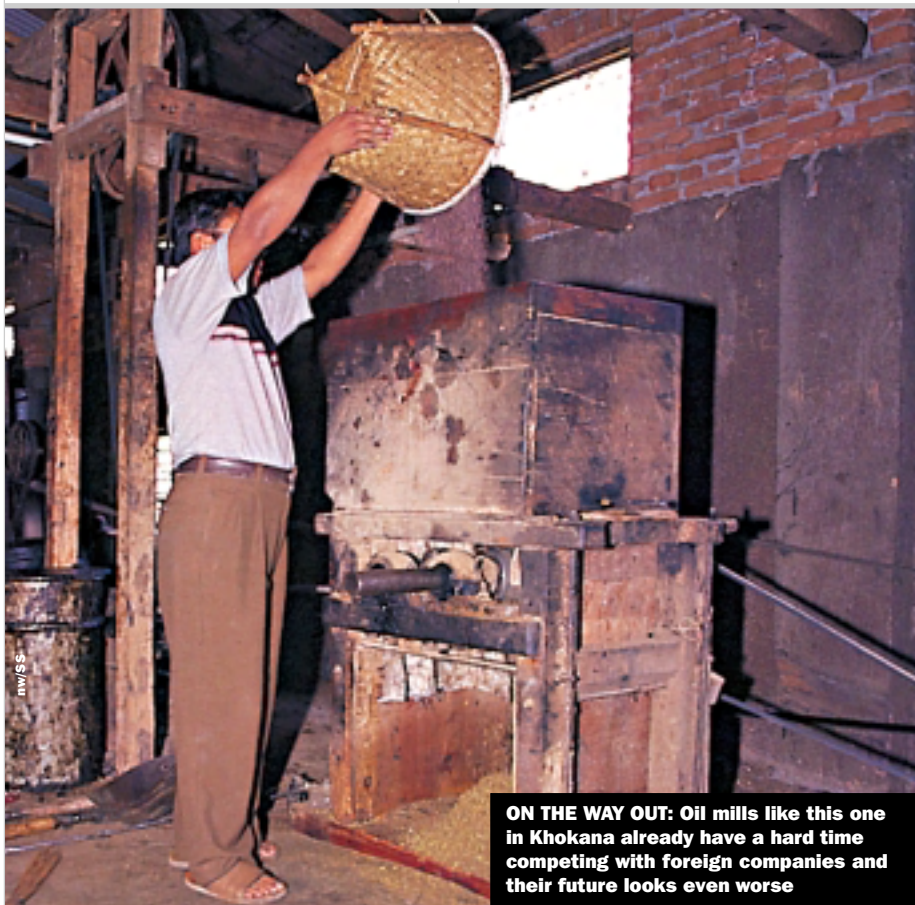
History proves that catering to big business is not always good for the poor. After the garment factories of Kathmandu lobbied the government to lower taxes on imported raw cloth, the market became flooded with cheap cotton from India. Small handloom farmers found their woven clothes were out of reach for even middle-class families. Today, even the cotton homespun dhoti worn by Padma Kanya students are imported from India.

The gap between rich and poor gets worse with liberalization, say its critics. In Nepal, where employment opportunities are not being created, people will lose their traditional livelihoods to multi-national corporations. Thousands will end up being displaced to industrialized countries as cheap labor.

Sources at international organizations are also concerned about the impact of WTO laws on intellectual property rights, on wildlife, herbs, and traditional and indigenous knowledge.

As with any other package, the WTO one is a mixed bag—richer countries can ask truant states to impose environmental and health standards on level with international ones, providing benefits to all people in the long run. But the harm far outweighs the benefits, observe its critics.

"The WTO is a group that protects the interests of big business. We are going to them and begging them to let us in, promising to conform to their rules and regulations," says Dr. Sedai. ■



ON THE WAY OUT: Oil mills like this one in Khokana already have a hard time competing with foreign companies and their future looks even worse

DEFLECTING THE DEFECTORS

The government move to send former Maoists abroad kills three birds with one stone. It ensures the security of defecting members, it gets rid of people who might be tempted back to the rebel movement and, most importantly, it potentially lures Maoists away from the movement

“The Army gave me Rs. 25,000 for cremation expenses,” she says in her soft voice. She declined to go back to the village to live with her mother-in-law, preferring to be close to her brother’s family in Kathmandu instead. She received Rs. 900,000 in compensa-

BY SUSHMA JOSHI

Rita Basnet lives alone in a rented room in Dhumbarahi with her three-month-old baby. Her teenage niece comes over at night to sleep with the 22-year-old and her infant so they won’t be alone. She had been married for six months, and pregnant for five, when her husband Dambar Bahadur Basnet was shot and killed by Maoists.

Rita is not alone. Hundreds of other young women, many of whom have often been married for less than a year, have been widowed by the civil conflict. The increasing number of widows include both the wives of security forces as well as the Maoists. The government, in an attempt to provide for the young widows of security forces, has initiated a new program which sends them to work abroad.

On January 25, the Armed Police Force (APF) and the SAARC Secretariat jointly organized a new initiative to give employment to wives of slain security personnel. Fifteen widows were flown to Maldives to start work at the Maldives Industrial Fisheries Company. Ten widows of the APF and five of the Nepal Police accepted the offer.

To work abroad is a common Nepali dream, which lures thousands out of the country every year to try their fortune from the Gulf to North America. Now the overburdened government has, in an ironic twist, harnessed this dream not only to provide for young widows, but also to rehabilitate former Maoists.

Nepal One, a television channel, recently showed a program in which the Royal Nepal Army sends off a defecting Maoist to the Gulf. The former guerrilla gave an extensive interview about his disillusionment with the Maoist movement and leaders. After being garlanded with marigolds, and given a warm hug by the security personnel to show there were no hard feelings, the lucky man was sent off towards a plane with Arabic letters. In the last scene, the triumphant man moves in slow motion towards the stairs that will fly him to his destination.

The move by the government to send former Maoists abroad kills three birds with one stone. It ensures the security of defecting members, and it gets rid of people who might potentially be tempted to join the rebel movement again if they are left without any options of employment. Most importantly, it potentially lures people away from the Maoist movement.

It was very likely a group of disaffected young men without employment opportunities who were recruited to shoot Rita Basnet’s husband to death. Dambar Bahadur, 25, an Army havaldar was returning from the post office on his bicycle in Tikapur, Kailali. Four Maoists, dressed in school uniforms and mixing with a crowd of students, shot him fatally. His body was brought over to his pregnant wife at 2 a.m. She was helicoptered, along with his body, to Kathmandu the next morning.



tion. About Rs. 150,000, she says, would have to be paid as “tax” to the Maoists if she were to live in the village.

“We advocate for labor migration of widows of not just Army personnel but also so-called Maoists,” says Lily Thapa, director of Women for Human Rights. Her organization has specifically advocated for women’s rights to get passports without their guardian’s signatures, a requirement which still exists in the law. Many widows have a difficult time getting their fathers-in-law to sign the papers required for them to get their travel documentation.

“But I am not in favor of sending women to work outside the country en masse,” Ms. Thapa adds, saying women widowed by conflict should

have opportunities within the country itself, by getting recruited in places like factories, police and the Nepal Agricultural Development Bank.

Activists who support women’s rights to work abroad say widows should have the right to go and work abroad without restrictions. These opportunities would give them financial stability, and a means to support their children at a time when the economy offers little employment to women.

The argument that sending women abroad to work would break up families and dislocate them is false, they say. Most families split by conflict are already facing dislocation and disruption in family

life, with children being sent to work as domestic workers in middle-class homes in the cities.

Not all widows, however, are jumping on the migrant bandwagon. Rita Basnet was offered the chance to work in Malaysia by the Army. Five months pregnant at that time, she declined. The Army, as part of its compensation package, must offer her a job that gives her Rs. 3,600 a month for seven years, after which she can retire and get a pension. “I would rather stay here and be with my son than go work in another country in difficult conditions,” she says.

(Names have been changed to protect identities.) **N**



WAR WIDOWS: Widows of slain personnel are given compensations by the government but that does not make a livelihood

FIVE IRONIES ON CHINESE BRASSIERES

BY SWARNIM WAGLÉ

In February, the influential U.S. Trade Representative, Robert Zoellick, went to Beijing to acknowledge “tremendous accomplishment” in Chinese reforms since 1980. As Russia tried to join the WTO, Zoellick wanted China and the United States to coordinate their

stances in Geneva, on terms for their former enemy’s entry into the club. On handling Russia, Mao and Nixon had a similar conversation 30 years ago in the thick of Cold War enmity. Nixon felt he needed to engage China as a great, progressing nation, and not as the “epicenter of world revolution.” Mao had agreed, saying Maoist anti-imperialist remarks were “empty cannons” anyway. Yet, in the jungles of the Nepali Mid-West, we have compatriots dying and killing in the name of Mao, likening their territorial “acquisitions” to Hunan and Hubei. “War is politics by other means,” the Chairman said. But this was 66 years

ago, long before he was to tease Nixon saying he preferred dealing with right-wing leaders for their predictability. This is Irony School One.

When Maoists say the United States intends to use Nepal to “encircle” China geo-politically, they seem unaware that the United States and China are already economically entangled in US\$ 170 billion of annual trade. That’s 30 times the GDP of Nepal, which shares a mere three percent of the long borders of China, a nation 90 times larger in size and 55 times in population. This is an age when sorties of American bombers begin in England or Louisiana—not Mustang—and return to England or Louisiana the same day. And on last count, China had 14 neighbors that surrounded it. Had Nepal not been Tibet and India-locked, we could so easily have been out of the Beijing radar. Who is going to ask our comrades to relearn their geography and history? Brian Hodgson, the British resident in

No nation proves as spectacularly as post-Maoist China how much the world has changed in the past three decades. It engaged in 15 years of negotiations to join the WTO. Its trade with the United States was less than US\$8 billion when the process began; it had increased by 20 times in 2003, when its growth rate itself crossed a phenomenal nine percent. A voracious market, it is now wedded to the United States to drive the global economy this century, the couple already creating 12 trillion dollars of annual output as a combined capitalist juggernaut. This unhappy, but durable, marriage is Irony Number Three.

Recently, George W Bush slapped restraints on import of Chinese bras, taking advantage of a safeguard clause that China accepted in order to join the global trading system. Restrict inflow of bras from China, but see if you can sell the Chinese as much soybean as possible: this is Bush trade policy. And, if you can have the Chinese pay for American fiscal and current account deficit by buying 100 billion dollars of U.S. securities, even sweeter. It is trade as the driver of globalization that binds nations today. Trade in bras and beans, Cognac and cars, ideas and patents, matter more than trade in tirades (empty cannons, as Mao called them). In contrast to the big example of Iraq, stuff about bras and beans is small, but they are better illustrations of the

Maoists say the United States intends to use Nepal to “encircle” China. They seem unaware that the United States and China are already economically entangled

ago, long before he was to tease Nixon saying he preferred dealing with right-wing leaders for their predictability. This is Irony School One.

When Maoists say the United States intends to use Nepal to “encircle” China geo-politically, they seem unaware that the United States and China are already economically entangled in US\$ 170 bil-

Kathmandu observed in 1842 that the latest news about Chinese actions vis-à-vis the British in Canton (and Afghan actions in Kandahar) would influence how polite Hanuman-Dhoka was to Lainchour. Did the crazy royal court of King Rajendra, then, assess world realities better than today’s Maoists? This is Irony School Two.



Then



Now

THE TIMES THEY ARE A CHANGING: Post-Mao China, in stark contrast to its Communist past, is a superpower whose exports like cheap bras have infiltrated global markets

nature of today's frontlines that limit or stretch other wars. This is Irony School Four.

Of course, the Chinese appear careful not to let rising economic freedoms reform what Amartya Sen clumsily calls political unfreedom. The New York Times reported on April 20 that the U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney negotiated to speak live and uncensored on Chinese TV during last month's visit, but his printed remarks were freely edited for troublesome words like freedom. Regardless, in 2008, by way of hosting the Olympics, China will make a splash on the world stage. Just like its giant ships paraded on the Indian Ocean 500 years ago (until bizarre imperial decrees, un-

der the Ming, reduced a fantastic navy of 3,500 vessels to zero). Some argue the economic decline of China began with this withdrawal in the 16th century, and the nation could only be revived after Mao's death 430 years later. But, what are we picking from our big neighbor's grand history? So archaic is our learning that the Chinese themselves are shy to call the Maoists of Nepal by name. I was told in Beijing that they are simply "rebels" on state TV. This Irony Number Five is cruel to our Maoists who have become a minor embarrassment in the land of their own namesake.

In the 1990 People's Movement, activists apparently adopted a gender-insensitive gesture of sending "bangles and

threads," Nepali feminine marks, to groups not supporting their cause. Call it an impolite wake-up call. For refusing to get it, for defying reason and humanity, for having stopped reading good books since the 1970s, I suggest Maoist ideologues deserve similar dispatches. The orator Pradip Giri, of the Nepali Congress(D) notes how being an underground leader is like being held "immobile in a spider web," distanced from reality. To show a glimpse of today's world to comrades in tropical spider holes, why not deflect to Lucknow and Siliguri the next cargo of Chinese bras that George W Bush no longer wants. This, alas, is the irony that shall never be. **N**

Not Coming Back Again

The Pheri jogis, original spies of the nation and wardens against evil spirits, may soon be out of service

BY SANJEEV UPRETY

Dilbar Nath Yogi, a professional performer of the dying Pheri ritual, is a permanent fixture in Taudaha. Every year for the past 28 years, Dilbar Nath, who hails from Morang, has visited the village on the south-western edge of Kathmandu Valley to conduct Pheri.

The 55-year-old Dilbar Nath wears a red cap, and carries a long iron trident wrapped in red cotton. He blows a wind instrument made of the horn of Krishnasagar and chants mantras to set up a mystical circle of divine protection around the houses in Taudaha. It is believed that such a ritual wards off illness and famine and prevents evil spirits and ghosts from entering the houses within the circle. “When the four *suras* or the tones of the house become disjointed its psychic defense is breached,” Dilbar Nath explains. “It is through such a breach that misfortunes, evil spirits, and ghosts enter into houses and cause mischief.” His task is to tie the four *suras*—a word that signifies for him both inaudible cosmic sounds as well as the four directions to which they are linked.

Dilbar Nath complains that his pouch—containing salt, turmeric powder and various herbs—was seized by the security officers during his bus trip from Morang to Kathmandu. Maoists had killed about a dozen policemen in an ambush the night before and the police wouldn’t take any chances while checking the luggage of those coming into the Valley. “But I need my pouch while chanting mantras,” laments Dilbar Nath. “They took away my pouch even after I explained to them that I was not some terrorist but a Pheri jogi and showed them my iron trident and my Krishnasagar horn. The government’s spies and security men are inefficient.

No wonder, there are so many untamed violent energies and spirits in Nepal.”

Dilbar Nath’s bitterness is then directed at contemporary political leaders. “Prime Minister Thapa, like Girija, or Nepal, or Deuba before him, is unable to tie the *suras* of the nation,” says Dilbar Nath. “The line of protection is broken. Evil spirits and ghosts are wandering around the Army camps and Maoist holdouts. Violence is spreading in all four directions.”

Dilbar Nath Yogi belongs to the Nath community. The guru of all the Naths is Gorakhnath who is also considered to be an emanation of Lord Shiva. It is popularly believed that Gorakhnath’s blessing enabled King Prithvi Narayan Shah to win over numerous kingdoms and unify Nepal in the

Pheri—which means “again”—gave the ritual its name.

Prithvi Narayan Shah also used such Pheri performing jogis as spies of the state. Since the jogis visited the houses during the night, and re-visited them early in the morning to collect ritual offerings, they were obviously in an excellent position to collect information and keep an eye on the criminals. The concepts of secular and religious protection were thus fused together during the 18th century. By performing their second role as spies working for the government, they played their part in protecting the people from thieves, swindlers and other criminals.

Today, however, these original spies of the nation have no place in the spy networks or systems of surveillance set up by both the government and the Maoists. Modern systems of surveillance are based on classification and interpretation of visible data rather than an evocation of invisible deities. Dilbar Nath says that he might not come back to perform Pheri at Taudaha from next year. “There is no incentive or encouragement for us Pheri jogis,” he says, “and



18th century. That is why Gorakhnath’s name is still engraved on Nepali coins. Dilbar Nath says Prithvi Narayan Shah first initiated the practice of the wandering Naths who went around the towns and villages performing the ritual of Pheri.

When the people saw that Pheri was protecting them from evil spirits and illnesses, they asked the Naths to “come back again” to perform the ritual. This demand for repeated performances of

with the younger generation seeking other opportunities, the tradition of Pheri is dying out gradually.” Since their work—as spies of the secular world and protectors of the spiritual one—no longer has any value, people like Dilbar Nath have become marginalized in the nation’s march of modernity. It seems likely that the call for the “again”—or future performances of Pheri—will gradually fade into oblivion. **N**

MAIN EVENT

May 5-6, 2004, Kathmandu

BIKAS BAZAAR EXHIBITION

May 4-6, 2004, Kathmandu



NEPAL
DEVELOPMENT
FORUM
2004



FOR FURTHER DETAILS
www.ndf2004.gov.np

semiT nayalamiH ehT gnidaer evol I

Most people read their newspaper from the back

to the front. If you are one of them then don't

worry because we are great from either

end - front or back.

The Himalayan
T I M E S

A GREAT NEWSPAPER

Great Expectations

Nepal's young team is going from strength to strength. But the big test comes in the ACC Trophy in June



BY SHARAN MARAHATTA

Seldom have Nepal's cricketers come under this kind of media glare. No sooner were critics done with their dissection of the disappointing Under-19 World Cup outing in Bangladesh early this year than it was time for the national side to brace up for a major encounter. In a three-nation contest, Nepal was pitted against Malaysia and UAE, both of whom looked better than Nepal, at least on paper.

It was also the first time the young team—it had several players from the U-19 team that had played in Bangladesh—was getting baptized in the longer version of the game. In the Intercontinental Cup, Nepal would play two three-day matches—an away-match against UAE in March, followed by one against Malaysia at home in April.

Nepal performed commendably in both the encounters. It managed a draw against UAE, though UAE pocketed 18 points, as against Nepal's 14, by the vir-

tue of its first innings lead. But the Malaysian team was roundly beaten at home. Now UAE travels to Malaysia to decide the final standing. UAE had beaten Nepal on all four previous encounters.

The 12 teams in the Intercontinental Cup have been pooled in four categories: Asia, Americas, Europe and Africa, with Nepal, UAE and Malaysia making up the Asian region; Canada, the United States and Bermuda the Americas; Holland, Scotland and Ireland the European pool; and Namibia, Uganda and Kenya, Africa. Two teams from each pool will advance to the second leg that will be played in UAE in November.

The competition has been widely regarded as a warm-up for bigger and better things: the first step to the elite Test club. Cricket's world governing body, ICC, conceptualized this tournament in view of Bangladesh's run of dismal performances since its elevation to the No. 10 Test playing nation in 2000.

Bangladesh, for all its early promise, has lost more than 20 Tests and won only

two one-day matches—the last one during its recent Zimbabwe tour. People expected wonders when it upset Pakistan in the 1999 World Cup.

Obviously, the failing fortunes of Bangladesh has a lot to do with the ICC's determination to put its associate members—those outside the Test club—to the rigors of the longer form of cricket before giving them the Test baptism. This exposure is expected to narrow the gap between the top Test playing nations and rest of the cricketing world.

Nepali cricket officials, who are reluctant to admit their shortcomings in Bangladesh, aren't at least complaining. The consensus seems to be that Nepali players, while skilful, are woefully inadequate in their tactical game-plan. Batsmen, for example, still don't know how to pace their innings and bowlers are good only for short bursts, not sustained spells. The domestic league introduced in 2002 has been limited to 50 overs-a-side.

President of the Cricket Association of Nepal Jay Kumar Nath Shah doesn't believe that Nepal's Bangladesh campaign was a letdown, but he admits, "We've strongly felt that it would be simply too difficult to achieve our goal (of gaining Test status) unless we rise above the conventional training regime." He adds, "We're planning to add services of a physiotherapist and psychologist to the team."

No wonder then, taking into consideration the high endurance level that these three-day games demand, the team coach Roy Dias had geared up the training regimen. A closed camp put players under long sessions of training each day. Dias is also trying to put up a well-drilled team plan where every single player knows what exactly is expected of him.

For the moment, he is all focused on the ACC Trophy, which starts on June 12 in Malaysia. "I'm really looking forward to the ACC Trophy," Dias told Nation. "And if we put in a good performance there, I will be very excited about the future of Nepali cricket."

Nepal is pitted against Bhutan and Iran in Group D. The top two teams in the 15-team event will qualify for the 2008 Asia Cup featuring India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and for the ICC Trophy to be held next year in Ireland. The ICC Trophy serves as the qualifier for the World Cup. **N**



In the breathtakingly serene
and tranquilly lush surroundings
of Gokarna's verdant forest.
lies the "Harmony Spa"

The Spa glorifies the six senses of:

- Aroma - using the finest herbs and aromatic oils
- Touch - with positive energy healing touch massages
- Vision - an aesthetically conceived decor and ambience
- Taste - with subtle teas, herbal potions & gourmet cuisine
- Sound - music attuned individually to every treatment

Come relax, rejuvenate and
"soothe ALL your senses"
with our Body Rubs, Body Wraps, Body Scrubs,
Body Massages, Ayurvedic Therapy,
Aromatherapy, Reflexology
Manicure, Pedicure & Facials.

A TOTALLY holistic experience !

Harmony

for appointments
Rajnikunj, Thali, Kathmandu
Ph: 4451212—216



8 a.m. to 9 p.m.
seven days a week



Women And Militarization

The decision to recruit women did not come from a sudden realization by the military that women are equal citizens or that there should be more adequate representation of women in the forces. It emerged from the basic reality of needing more bodies in the fight against the Maoist insurgency

BY SEIRA TAMANG

The induction of women in the Royal Nepal Army (RNA) in armed, non-technical positions including the military police has received wide approval. Feminists and others have seen this step as a major victory for the empowerment of women and an added challenge to the stereotypes of women only being fit for domestic work.

Strangely enough, the connection between the ongoing militarization of society and the abrupt decision to include women in armed positions in the military has not raised any questions. The decision to recruit women did not come from a sudden realization by the military that women are equal citizens or that there should be more adequate representation of women in the forces. It emerged from the basic reality of needing more bodies in the fight against the Maoist insurgency.

The history of other militaries in times of war and insurgencies has shown that women are recruited when recruitment of men do not match up to the required levels of labor power. Recruiting women for certain positions such as computer and signal operators enable militaries to “free men to fight.” RNA headquarters had asked for applications from women for various positions including computer/signal operators and drivers. Will they, as in other militaries, be mainly assigned to positions of clerk and secretary? Is this really a chance for Nepali women to show that they do not lag behind men in any sphere—as stated by one renowned feminist?

Women have historically joined the military for varied reasons. These include the need not just to demonstrate patriotism or learn military skills, but also to leave suffocating families and villages, and delay marriages. Free shelter and food, a steady paying job, medical care, etc., are also clear incentives for many. In Nepal, it is likely that basic economic benefits are the most powerful pull for the majority of potential female army recruits.

A closer attention to the dynamics of militarization and the influence of military values into society during this time of instability is necessary. The military is one of the most, if not the most, patriarchal of institutions. It is run by men, for men, according to masculine ideas. Military recruiters and trainers play on young men’s desires to prove their manliness. The link between ‘combat’ and the construction of ‘manhood’ exists throughout the world. Soldiers in basic training are told to run faster, to not run “like a girl,” to lift more weights because “their grandmother could lift more,” etc. To prove one’s manhood is to prove that one is not a woman. Military life is built on a foundation of belittling all that is female. Feminists point out that with the military built on such women-hating

ideology, it is no wonder that men rape during wars and that military wives as a population are more prone to being beaten by their husbands.

Military forces embody and legitimize violent attitudes and behaviors. That women now also have equal opportunity to kill and injure is a questionable “victory.” Yet prominent female activists have called for widows of the conflict to be recruited into the military in various roles. One has stated that this RNA initiative counterbalances claims by Maoists that 40 percent of their cadres are women.

Forgotten in the current congratulatory atmosphere of women being recruited into the Royal Nepal Army is the fact that women are now able to directly contribute to the country’s militarization process. Women are actively participating in legitimizing the state definition of “security” in which the purchase of new guns and ammunition is more important “for the well-being of people” than the supplying of staff and



medical supplies to health posts.

Militarization is an ideological process which legitimizes violence. Whether it be soldiers, or wives of soldiers who take care of the family so soldiers can be “free to fight,” or women within the military institution working “for security,” all are playing roles in the legitimization of violence, and in the military as a solution. **N**

BUDDHA GALLERY AND ZEN CAFE

There is a new art gallery in town where artists can showcase their work without having to pay for space, thanks to Korean photographer Cho Go Dam's Buddha Gallery and Zen Café in Thamel. Cho Go Dam says, "I want this gallery to be a meeting place for artists and art lovers, where we can share our ideas and promote art and culture in Nepal." Cho's love-relationship with Nepal goes a long way back. He first came to Nepal in 1984 during a trekking expedition. He was diagnosed with stomach cancer later that year and was given only six months to live. He came back to Nepal to visit Muktinath, one of the holiest sites in the country, and after the trip he emerged healthier



and with a renewed faith in Nepal's mystical powers. A thorough medical examination revealed no signs of cancer whatsoever. "I got a second chance at life which made me believe in miracles. I see my future in Nepal and I can think of no other place that I would call home," says Cho. At the Zen Café people can read, relax and eat; and at the Buddha Gallery artists can showcase their work for free. The gallery will formally open to the public on May 4. For information: 4422915(T), 981041182 (M)

ART GALLERIES

GALLERY NINE, LAZIMPAT

Sound of hope. An exhibition of paintings by Manish Lal Shrestha Till May 9

SIDDHARTHA ART GALLERY, BABARMAHAL REVISITED

An exhibition of photographs by Wayne Amtzis titled "Still Life/Street Life". Till May 3. For information: 4414607.

SRIJANA CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY, KAMALADI

Paintings and sculptures by prominent contemporary artists as New Year's gift exhibition. Till May 13. For information: 4247889

INDIGO GALLERY

Healing elements Acrylic paintings by Chungo Tsering and Reiki carpets by Rupert Smith

GALLERY MOKSH (inside Hardic Club compound), JHAMSIKHEL

Diary of portraits by Carolyn Boch spanning 1996-2004: Over 40 portraits of people met in Nepal. Till May 15. For information: 2113339

MOVIES

Lazimpat Gallery café: May 4--Green Mile, May 6--Gladiators

Martin Chautari

Let's talk men: 4 documentaries by directors from Nepal, India and Bangladesh on the burden of being a man

Main Hoon Na: Starring Shah Rukh Khan, Sunil Shetty, Sushmita Sen, Zayed Khan and Amrita Rao Showing at: Jai Nepal, Gun Cinema, Gopi Krishna, Barahi Movies



THEATRE

NAGA THEATRE, HOTEL VAJRA

"Fire Raisers" an English adaptation of the contemporary drama "Biederman und die Brandstifter" by Swiss playwright Max Frisch. May 7, 8, 9 at 7:15 p.m. For information: 4271545

RUSSIAN CULTURE CENTER

Students of Rato Bangala School will stage "Macbeth", May 7-9

SURYA LIGHTS GRIND

Freedom to do the Jive, Tango, Mambo & other moves that don't have a name yet. International DJs, dance acts, 40,000 watts of pulsating music & cool blue water.

Venue: Poolside, Hyatt Regency

Date: May 8

Time: 2 p.m. Price: Rs. 300



New Nepali Dream

Only after a sense of kinship is created will a Pahadi Bahun from Arghakhanchi empathize with a Magar from Baglung and vice versa. It is this feeling of Nepaliness that will attract youngsters abroad to head back home

BY YUBRAJ ACHARYA

Thanks to the Maoist war, an increasing number of youngsters seem interested in Nepali politics. But the number is still too small. To state that very few consider returning to Nepal in the future will not be so much of a generalization.

I am surrounded by graduates from some of the best schools in Kathmandu. Many say they *do* want to return, but there is always a lingering qualifier: “if things get better,” or “not in politics, though.” Sometimes online-forums get charged with political discussions, but our involvement in national affairs is limited to just that.

Every Nepali student in the United States need not be interested in politics and need not return to Nepal. After all, it is a question of personal interest. However, it goes beyond the general what-will-my-kids-think-later dilemma, political instability, and the lack of employ-

someone who attends the most elite school in Kathmandu have in common? Not much. Definitely not language, not ethnic group and in some cases not even religion. Now, what obliges me—a *Pahadi* male from a *Bahun* family—to think for a Magar from Baglung, my neighboring district? I do not see anything.

We never had a strong democracy to take pride in as a symbol of national identity. We do not have a homogenous society—with the same language, culture and religion. The attempt by our course books to force into us the concept of nationality—to the extent that there is a chapter on Prithvi Narayan Shah, in one subject or the other, from the fourth grade all the way to the tenth grade—has simply failed. Until recently, many believed the King to be the symbol of unity. But this construct has now come under a closer scrutiny.

While the street agitations get more intense by the day and the civil society and the political leadership discuss an outlet to the present crisis, the issue of nationality, national unity, or one of “the Nepali Dream” is too urgent to be ignored. No matter what system we have in the future—a republic or a multi-party democracy—the success of the system—our success—rests on the level of affinity we have towards each other. If a person from Kathmandu, for instance, cannot sympathize with the agonies of a person from Rolpa, the war like the one we have right now is bound to recur. That affinity can no longer emanate from our culture, language, ethnicity, a political institution, and the like. That affinity—the Nepaliness—can emerge only through a new Nepali ethos built on the foundations of decentralization, affirmative action, gender equality, educational reform and transparency.

Any solution to the present crisis will be fleeting if, after the present crisis is resolved, we continue in our old path. It is only after that sense of

kinship is created will a *Pahadi Bahun* from Arghakhanchi empathize with a *Magar* from Baglung and vice versa. It is that feeling of Nepaliness that will make youngsters abroad to head back home, to be involved in the decision-making process, to protect the country from malaise. The central role of the civil society and intellectuals now is to create this Nepaliness.

(Acharya is an undergraduate student at Swarthmore College, USA) **N**



WORLD APART: Nepalis in the United States at an annual gala in Denver last year

ment opportunities back home, to something missing from all of us. And that something, to borrow a phrase from a friend, is “the idea of Nepali Dream.”

If you speak against democracy in an American college, you will be surprised to see how many people get offended. What offends a Nepali? Someone calling him an Indian? Probably not. A significant number of our population lives in Terai. And many of us look similar to the Indians. What does a middle-class SLC graduate from Doti, who has a hard time understanding Nepali, and

sa/ha.com

New Nepali Dream

Only after a sense of kinship is created will a Pahadi Bahun from Arghakhanchi empathize with a Magar from Baglung and vice versa. It is this feeling of Nepaliness that will attract youngsters abroad to head back home

BY YUBRAJ ACHARYA

Thanks to the Maoist war, an increasing number of youngsters seem interested in Nepali politics. But the number is still too small. To state that very few consider returning to Nepal in the future will not be so much of a generalization.

I am surrounded by graduates from some of the best schools in Kathmandu. Many say they *do* want to return, but there is always a lingering qualifier: “if things get better,” or “not in politics, though.” Sometimes online-forums get charged with political discussions, but our involvement in national affairs is limited to just that.

Every Nepali student in the United States need not be interested in politics and need not return to Nepal. After all, it is a question of personal interest. However, it goes beyond the general what-will-my-kids-think-later dilemma, political instability, and the lack of employ-

someone who attends the most elite school in Kathmandu have in common? Not much. Definitely not language, not ethnic group and in some cases not even religion. Now, what obliges me—a *Pahadi* male from a *Bahun* family—to think for a Magar from Baglung, my neighboring district? I do not see anything.

We never had a strong democracy to take pride in as a symbol of national identity. We do not have a homogenous society—with the same language, culture and religion. The attempt by our course books to force into us the concept of nationality—to the extent that there is a chapter on Prithvi Narayan Shah, in one subject or the other, from the fourth grade all the way to the tenth grade—has simply failed. Until recently, many believed the King to be the symbol of unity. But this construct has now come under a closer scrutiny.

While the street agitations get more intense by the day and the civil society and the political leadership discuss an outlet to the present crisis, the issue of nationality, national unity, or one of “the Nepali Dream” is too urgent to be ignored. No matter what system we have in the future—a republic or a multi-party democracy—the success of the system—our success—rests on the level of affinity we have towards each other. If a person from Kathmandu, for instance, cannot sympathize with the agonies of a person from Rolpa, the war like the one we have right now is bound to recur. That affinity can no longer emanate from our culture, language, ethnicity, a political institution, and the like. That affinity—the Nepaliness—can emerge only through a new Nepali ethos built on the foundations of decentralization, affirmative action, gender equality, educational reform and transparency.

Any solution to the present crisis will be fleeting if, after the present crisis is resolved, we continue in our old path. It is only after that sense of

kinship is created will a *Pahadi Bahun* from Arghakhanchi empathize with a *Magar* from Baglung and vice versa. It is that feeling of Nepaliness that will make youngsters abroad to head back home, to be involved in the decision-making process, to protect the country from malaise. The central role of the civil society and intellectuals now is to create this Nepaliness.

(Acharya is an undergraduate student at Swarthmore College, USA) **N**



WORLD APART: Nepalis in the United States at an annual gala in Denver last year

ment opportunities back home, to something missing from all of us. And that something, to borrow a phrase from a friend, is “the idea of Nepali Dream.”

If you speak against democracy in an American college, you will be surprised to see how many people get offended. What offends a Nepali? Someone calling him an Indian? Probably not. A significant number of our population lives in Terai. And many of us look similar to the Indians. What does a middle-class SLC graduate from Doti, who has a hard time understanding Nepali, and

saaha.com

Baring It All

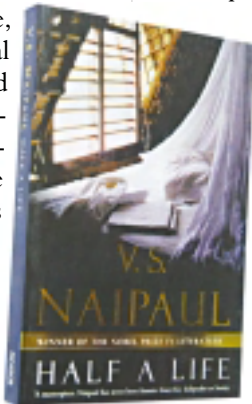
A Nobel Laureate's Fictionalized Life

REVIEWED BY SWARNIM WAGLÉ

Half A Life" is a work on studied non-chalance to conformity, to this need of self-respecting men across societies to pretend that life is going on fine when it is not, when to admit so is sacrilege, and a life of emptiness continues to be led. Naipaul deconstructs this through a talented character blessed and cursed in equal measure by circumstances beyond his design. He gives public confession of under-performance a new sort of respectability by saying that awkward things do happen to innocent people. And he whispers this in a tone of devastating fatalism.

Naipaul's protagonist, William Somerset Chandran, has an uncanny resemblance to the author himself. In 1956, Willie, son of a Brahmin and a sister of an untouchable radical from a princely protectorate in India, lands a scholarship at a London college, thanks to his father's comical fame as the man who attracted tourists by keeping a vow of silence. Willie finds the bohemian atmosphere of the immigrant's London in the 50s mildly liberating. He experiments with sex, scorns his closest relations, reads Hemingway, and gets published. He then falls in love with Ana, an heiress to an African estate, and follows her to a colony where they spend 18 uneventful years. The country is unnamed, but the overdone Portuguese pedigree and other clues give it away as Mozambique.

Willie's career in the book is not illustrious. Certainly nothing like the Naipaul we know today—an accomplished life adorned with a Booker and a Nobel, and a giant so tall that a reviewer in his country of adoption recently declared, "In the canon of contemporary British writing, he is without peer." Willie is the Naipaul who never became, but could easily have, given how he himself portrays fate dragging complete lives of promise to mediocrity. If the intention is to allow a convincing merger of honest reportage from a life that he knows best



with the invention of failure, the other life that he knows he partially avoided, Naipaul succeeds. "In Half A Life" we have three distinct voices narrating happenings in India, England, and Africa. It is the final section that is particularly joyous where, as the Nobel citation puts it, Naipaul "unites perceptive narrative and incorruptible scrutiny to compel us to see the presence of suppressed histories."

There's an awful lot of sex in the novel. Mostly, it is of the imprudent variety: Willie tactlessly seducing women who belong to his friends, or sleeping with insulting prostitutes in London and girls with tight breasts in Mozambique. Willie's early years with Ana mark some pleasant discoveries, but it is only through brazen infidelity at the age of 33 that he finds bliss. Willie spends 18 years with Ana, and yet

that predictable product of most marriages isn't even mentioned. A painful conversation occurs when a graceful Ana confronts an indifferent Willie about his indiscretions. Even she is not spared the humiliation at the end.

Sir Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul declared the novel form of narration dated five years ago, foretelling that his next creation would introduce a new style. "Half A Life" does this by ending without a climax, without a resolution, with Willie becoming incorrigibly unfaithful, divorcing Ana, and flying to Germany to meet his sister Sarojini.

Naipaul's books apparently don't sell well, not in big numbers. The marketplace for his readership is diverse, but it is a skeptical crowd without a huge, loyal core. It is easy to appreciate Naipaul because nobody writes like him. But to admire him, people need to see in him a partial reflection of themselves, almost connect with his origin in a humbled, ignored land, or his attempt to reconfigure his relation to his roots with the luxury of distance. **N**

PILGRIMS BOOK HOUSE
4700942

Book Mark



Raj Bhat Suwal

Twenty-three-year-old Preeti Sitaula, who was crowned Miss Nepal last year, is an unconventional reader. At a time when most people her age might be reading bestsellers and modern writers, here's a youngster who's into Shakespeare and medieval writer Geoffrey Chaucer. She is currently reading "Othello." The first book she ever read was "Romeo and Juliet," when she was in the ninth grade. For Preeti, "The Letter A" is a must, a book about a child who fights physical disability and manages to write the letter "A" with his toe. And why is it her favorite book? Because Preeti too is the kind who will not give up easily: she's a go-getter! Not surprisingly, her favorite literary character is the wife of Bath—that feisty feminist from Geoffrey Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales." The book that has had the most impact on her: "Shakespeare in Love."

BY PRATEEBHA TULADHAR

The Man Who Sees Tomorrow



Coach Roy Dias

Nepal's cricket team is gradually making its presence felt in the international arena. Cynics may argue that as a South Asian nation Nepal was bound to make a mark sooner or later. India and Pakistan have been there for a long time. Recently, Sri Lanka achieved the landmark, and Bangladesh followed. But that's like

saying Brian Lara's 400 against England in the recent series came in a flat wicket, well after the West Indies were pulverized by the opposition. The fact is that Lara still needed to score those runs.

A lot of credit for Nepal's recent success should go to coach Roy Dias, former Test player for Sri Lanka. Dias talked to Satish Jung Shahi of Nation Weekly about Nepal's standing in the international circuit, and how the young players are shaping up.

How do you rate Nepal among non-Test playing cricket nations?

Nepal is among the first three. UAE is a very strong side followed by Hong Kong because they have a lot of expatriates playing for them. Among these three, one will be promoted to play one-day cricket. Everything will depend on the ACC Trophy that will be played in Malaysia (in June).

Does Nepal have any advantage over UAE and Hong Kong?

Yes, because UAE will have a lot of Pakistanis playing for them and Hong Kong the expats. Nepal can only go up because we have our own young players unlike UAE and Hong Kong where the players might return to their country once they get older.

How far is Nepal from getting Test status?

Sri Lanka got its test status in 1979 and we played our first Test in 1982. Sri

Lanka has one of the best cricketing school structures to tap younger players. Nepal still has a long way to go.

Has your experience as a player in Sri Lanka helped in establishing a structure here?

When we were young, under 13, we had very fine coaches who had no certificates as such but introduced coaching the way they knew cricket. Maybe in a year or two, quite a few coaches will come up in Nepal.

A coach in Sri Lanka doesn't have to teach Sanath Jayasuriya how to bat or (Marvan) Attapattu how to bowl. In Nepal, it's different.

What is the role of a coach in cricket?

It's different in each country. A coach in Sri Lanka doesn't have to teach Sanath Jayasuriya how to bat or (Marvan) Attapattu how to bowl. In a country like Nepal, it's different.

Does Nepal have that critical mass of players to form a well-rounded national side?

What has happened to Nepal is that we have a maximum of 13 or 14 school kids with a certain aptitude and we

have had to work with them. But for the last one and half years, we have young players coming in and even the national side has two or three young guys because we have the under-15 and under-17 tournaments. The seniors are under pressure because of the youngsters.

What have been your major disappointments as a coach?

So far none. Many say it was the loss with Scotland in the Under-19 World Cup (early this year) but I say Scotland isn't a weak side as they already have professionals playing the county circuit for a long, long time. I asked a journalist to name his top three batsmen. He named Rahul Dravid. And where did Rahul Dravid play top class cricket? In Scotland. Scotland even played in the World Cup in 1999.

Who are the top players in Nepal?

The seniors are already there but if you compare up and coming youngsters, I think Sharad Veshwakar and Paras Khadka from the Under-15 and Under-17 will be future players that could do so much for the country. They have a long career ahead.

What are your future plans?

I am just taking it tournament by tournament and we need to keep improving. The ACC Trophy (in Malaysia in June) will be our litmus test. **N**



Himalayan Paper Crafts
Manufacturer & Exporter of
Nepali Hand Made Paper & Products
P.O. Box: 21176 Kathmandu, Nepal
E-mail: hpcraft@hotmail.com
Phone: 4-227529, 9851046080

Wonderfabs
The Enchanting World of Fabrics

FABRICS - SALWAR KAMEEZ SETS - SAREES - ACCESSORIES
The widest range of fabrics to simply change your wardrobe

Handloomed cottons and silks in amazing weaves & prints
Linen- The fabric of the millennium in various blends.
Salwar Kameez sets- The ultimate collection.
Exquisite Silks, Brocades, Chiffons, Satins & Crepes in a kaleidoscope of colors and prints
Embroidered, Hand painted and innovative fabrics with shawls, stoles and scarves thrown in.

Come and Create Your own Style

384, 3rd Floor, Super Market (Bishal Bazar), New Road, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel.: 4242250 Fax: 977-1-4258678 E-mail: wonderfabs@yahoo.com


Divine
COLLECTION



- ❖ Silks
- ❖ Chiffon
- ❖ Raw Silks
- ❖ Pure Cotton
- ❖ Linens
- ❖ Silk crepe
- ❖ Saris
- ❖ Pashmina
- ❖ Cashmere Knitwear
- ❖ Custom Tailoring
- ❖ Customized Service

Opening hours: 9:30 to 7:30
Showroom: Baber Mahal Re-visited
Tel: 4230369, Fax: 977-1-4495973
divine@mos.com.np

INTERWEAVE
CANE FURNITURE



INTERWEAVE CANE FURNITURE INDUSTRY
1/82 GA, KUPONDOLE, LALITPUR, NEPAL
SHOW ROOM: KALAMANDIR
Kupondole, Lalitpur
Phone No: 5523376

PRODUCTS:
SOFA SETS, BEDS, GARDEN SETS, DINING SETS AND ACCESSORIES.

VISIT OR CALL US FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE QUALITY AND RANGE OF OUR CANE FURNITURE.

VACANCY

DISTRIBUTION AND SUBSCRIPTION OFFICER
Manage outreach and subscription of in-house publications

SUBSCRIPTION REPRESENTATIVES
Get new subscribers for the publications

Proactive and energetic candidates with experience in similar field are preferred.

Interested candidates call **2111102** or
E-mail: jobsvacancies@yahoo.com
(Enclose CV and covering letter)

Fuji RDP 111




KISHOR KAYASTHA

PHOTO CLUB ☎9851052778

Belle Momo
ROYAL SAINO
RESTAURANTS & BAR KEYMAN
Dubar Marg, Tel: 4230890

More than 25 Varieties of momos.



KALINTA picture framing

East side of Royal Palace
Nag Pokhari, Kathmandu




new collection of frames by KALINTA
imported Italian matting & frames



HOT PRESS
mounting
canvas bonding
over lamination
with UV filter

Open
10am-6pm
Tel: 4442437

if you publish
PLEASE TRY WORDSCAPE



"You can't go wrong with WordScape."

WordScape
CREATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

The Media House, Tripureshwor, Kathmandu
GPO 8975, EPC 5620 tel: 4229825, 4261831, 4263098
fax: 4216281 info@wordscapeline.com
www.wordscapeline.com



Development Dilemma

At his pre-departure interaction with the press two Mondays ago, American Ambassador Michael Malinowski was conspicuously calm and composed, displaying a quality some people he has worked with don't always give him credit for. The previous week, a newspaper had claimed that he was being unceremoniously recalled by Washington, eight months before his scheduled departure. So the press conference (though Malinowski had initially insisted that everything was "off the record") at the U.S. Embassy spokesperson's residence at Chundevi came on the heels of a blazing controversy.

Still, when the question of his recall inevitably popped up, Malinowski seemed well prepared. He made a point to stress that his successor, James Moriarty, was named months ago and that his was only a routine departure. In the heat of the moment, it was easy to miss perhaps the more important message: that there was going to be no policy shift in the way Washington viewed Nepal's insurgency.

While we still have reasons to doubt Malinowski's claims about his recall (diplomats we have talked to since his departure continue to tell us conflicting stories), there is little ground to question him when he says that the U.S. policy on Nepal will remain unchanged.

And therein lies our concern. The United States continues to view Nepal's Maoist insurgency through the prism of its global "war on terrorism," as it once again did at the UN Human Rights Commission's annual meet in Geneva last month, when it almost scuttled the European attempt to bind Nepal to international human rights monitoring. We believe that America's fixation with terrorism has given cover to many governments, like ours, to justify their own crackdown on human rights.

The National Development Forum, which brings Nepal's donors together,

gives us a new opportunity to re-assess our development priorities and make a statement on how the differences between the political entities and the attendant poor human rights situation inevitably impacts development. And how best we can utilize aid in these desperate times.

We were much encouraged when diplomats based in Kathmandu told us that human rights will be their top agenda at NDF. The government, on the other hand, insists that issues of human rights and development cannot be boxed together and Nepal, at this point, needs foreign aid and not the politics that come with aid (the government spin is "D" stands for "Development"). But that's a rather limp argument.

The insurgency has killed more than 2,300 people since the ceasefire collapsed in August; human rights group, INSEC, puts the daily toll at 12. And we have every reason to believe that a lot of the dead were innocent. We are not singling out the security forces—Maoists have to take their fair share of the blame—but we do strongly believe that a representative government is more likely to feel

the public pressure to correct its wrong than the current one. Some donors, especially the Europeans and Canadians, supported the call for postponing NDF to make way for a representative government within a timeframe. But the more important ones, like the United States and the multilateral agencies, saw no need to postpone the development jamboree. The underlying argument is Nepal needs support in its development efforts no matter what the cost of the conflict. But it is worth reflecting how the development dollars can reach where it matters most—the grassroots—if large parts of the country remain inaccessible. Who says development and politics are not tied up?

Editor

Weaves & Blends
cashmere accessories • home • knitwear

gpo box: 12421, kathmandu, nepal.
showroom: tel 2121200
factory: tel/fax + 977 1 6611427.
email: weavesb@gmail.com.np
OPEN SUNDAY TO FRIDAY 10 AM - 7 PM

House on Rent

An ideal and new family house for rent at Shankhamul, New Baneshwor with all modern facilities including:

- West faced 2.5 storied fully furnished (optional) building in 1 ropani compound with basketball court.
- Ground floor with living (16x18), kitchen (10x10), dining (10x8), guest room (12x10), study room (12x12) and bathroom.
- 1st floor with 1 master bedroom (14x14) with attached bathroom and dressing room (10x10), 2 bedrooms (12x12 each), bathroom and terrace.
- 2nd floor with 2 rooms and big terrace.
- Sufficient water supply (underground), hot water facilities (Solar), and a toilet outside the building.

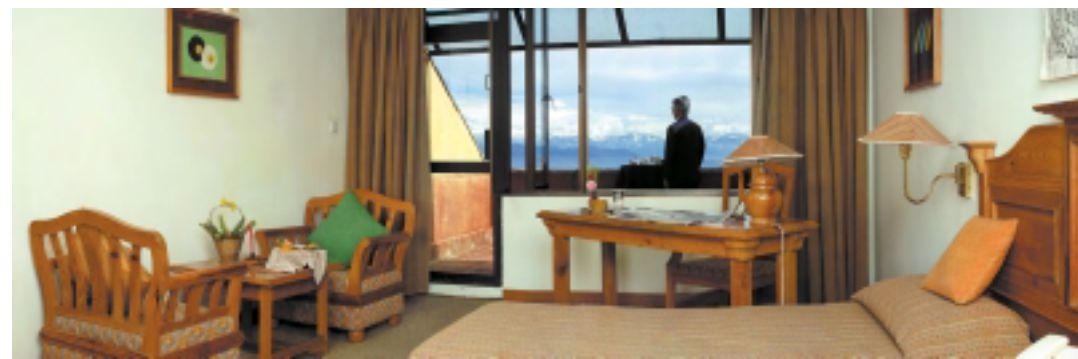
Rent negotiable, contact Shambu or Meena
Tel.: 4782543, Email: mjoshi@kmtnc.org.np

World Class Web Design

Service Provider of Web, Print & Multimedia
www.dreamsandideas.com
Call 98510-47447
Tel. 4-260989 Mobile: 98510-52708, 98510-47447
Email: info@dreamsandideas.com

Board Meeting & More

@ Club Himalaya



The Resort, Windy Hills, Nagarkot, Bhaktapur, Nepal
Tel: 6680045-47/80/83 | Fax: 6680068
E-mail: club@mos.com.np

Hotel Ambassador, Lazimpat, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 4414432, 4410432
E-mail: ambassador@ambassador.com.np

NEPAL'S YOUNG CRICKETERS | WAR WIDOWS | NEW NEPALI DREAM

MAY 9, 2004 VOL. 1, NO. 3

www.nation.com.np

nation

WEEKLY

RS. 30

Nepal's Donors Fall Out

Donors Are Divided Over Their Priorities



लक्ष्मी बैंक लिमिटेड
Laxmi Bank Limited

H I S E F

We have merged to become bigger, better, stronger

A decade of experience and goodwill accumulated by HISEF will now complement young dynamism and progressive outlook of Laxmi Bank to create synergies that will propel us to become a leading player in the industry. The winners of this merger : customers, investors and the Nepalese economy. We thank you for your patronage and look forward to serving you better. This merger is the first of its kind, truly driven by passion for excellence.



लक्ष्मी बैंक लिमिटेड
Laxmi Bank Limited

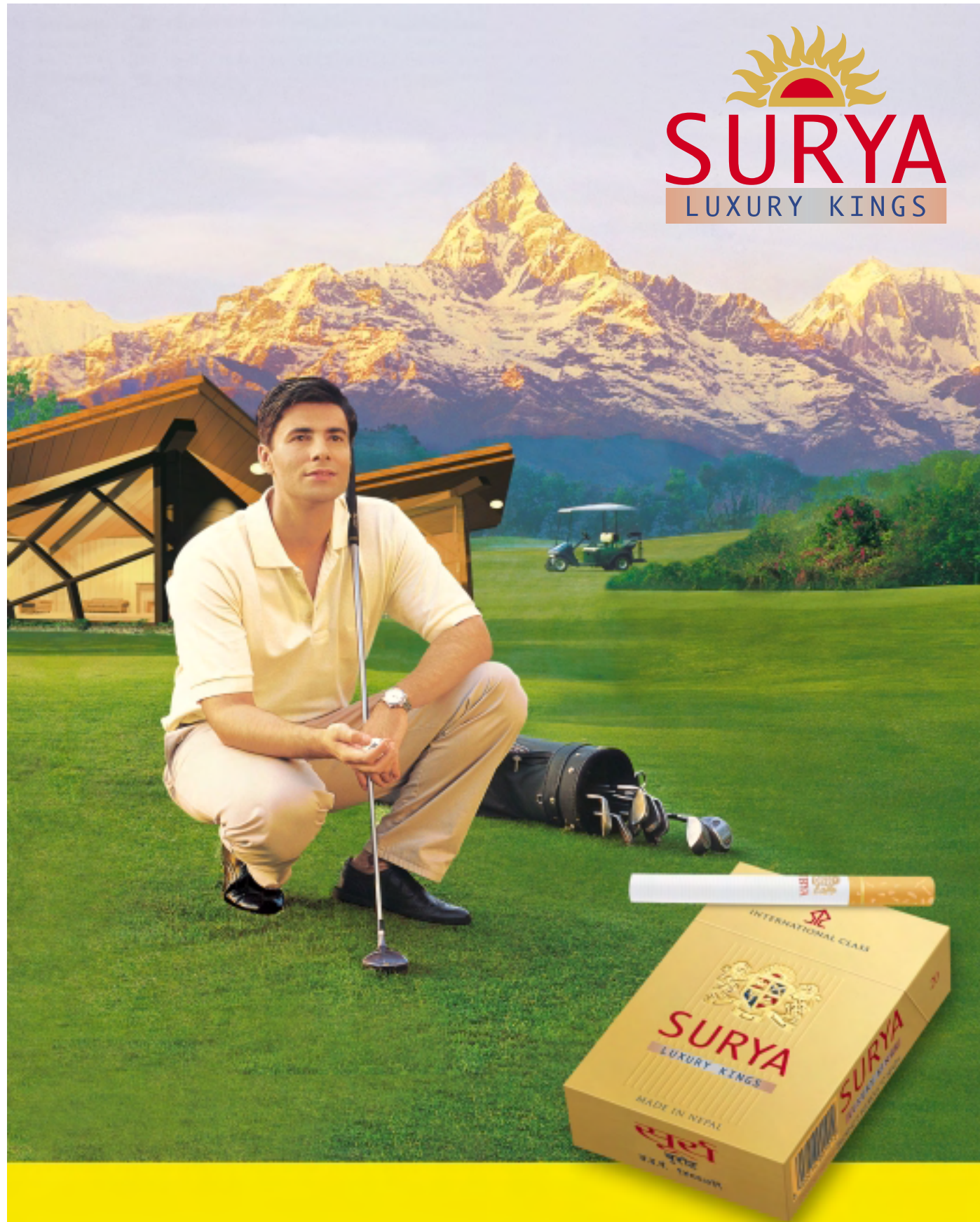
Passion for Excellence

Board Meeting & More @ Club Himalaya



The Resort, Windy Hills,
Nagarkot, Bhaktapur, Nepal
Tel: 6680045 - 47/80/83 | Fax: 6680068
E-mail: club@mos.com.np

Hotel Ambassador, Lazimpat,
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 4414432, 4410432
E-mail: ambassador@ambassador.com.np



INSPIRED BY NEPAL

STATUTORY DIRECTIVE: SMOKING IS INJURIOUS TO HEALTH.



H I S E F

We have merged to become bigger, better, stronger

A decade of experience and goodwill accumulated by HISEF will now complement young dynamism and progressive outlook of Laxmi Bank to create synergies that will propel us to become a leading player in the industry. The winners of this merger : customers, investors and the Nepalese economy. We thank you for your patronage and look forward to serving you better. This merger is the first of its kind, truly driven by passion for excellence.



Passion for Excellence