



**VIEWPOINT:**  
**Dr. Tilak Rawal**



**INTERVIEW:**  
**Phanindra Adhikary**



**FACE TO FACE:**  
**Dev Prasad Gurung/Rajendra Mahato**

# New SPOTLIGHT

June 14-27, 2013

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## From The Editor

Nepal's political turmoil and turbulence are yet to subside. Despite the efforts by political parties to keep things moving, politics is still at a standstill. It seems that nothing is going to materialize any time soon. At a time when the country is heading towards one political crisis after another, Nepal's economy and development agenda have badly suffered. As politics is unpredictable all the time, we have decided to look at the agenda of change brought through the Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund (RDIF) as our cover story this week. As there is a growing criticism over Nepal's development partners and their programs, four development partners – DFID, Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and Australia — funded RDIF, which has made major visible changes in the rural parts of the country. The voices of beneficiaries of the project show that a small intervention can bring a big change in the rural parts of the country. In its seven year long period of implementation, the project has immensely contributed in the areas of democracy, empowerment of people, inclusion and gender sector. Social and cultural change is a longer process. However, RDIF has dramatically changed the state of oppressed and marginalized communities. Along with this, there are regular columns by our columnists and other related issues.

*Keshab*

**Keshab Poudel**

Editor

# NEW SPOTLIGHT FORTNIGHTLY

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## Indian Army chief assures military aid to Nepal

India assured Nepal that it would provide necessary military equipment to the Nepalese army for securing the forthcoming Constituent Assembly polls.

Army chief Gen Bikram Singh, on an official visit to Nepal, gave this assurance to his Nepalese counterpart Gen Gaurav Shumsher Rana, during bilateral talks here today.

"Gen Singh on the occasion expressed commitment to providing necessary military equipment to the Nepal Army and to help Nepal Army by providing security equipment needed to conduct the forthcoming Constituent Assembly polls," according to a press release issued by the Nepal Army.

During the meeting they also stressed the need to further expand joint training and exercises being carried out by the two armies. Gen Singh also called on Chairman of the

## Japanese Aid For Maternal, Child Health

The Government of Japan has extended a financial assistance of 409,792 US Dollars; equivalent to approximately Rs. 36,139,556 to AMDA Multi-sectoral and Integrated Development Services (AMDA-MINDS) under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects Scheme of the Government of Japan in Japan's FY 2013. AMDA-MINDS will provide technical and financial support to a partner agency, AMDA-Nepal, to implement the Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health through Promoting Capacity Development at Four Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Rupandehi District (Phase II).

The Grant Contract relating to this project was signed and exchanged between Shuichi SAKAKIBARA, Chargés d'Affaires of Japan to Nepal, and Satoru KINOSHITA, Country Director, AMDA-MINDS Nepal Office.

AMDA-MINDS has many years of experience in conducting maternal



Interim Election Government of Nepal, Khil Raj Regmi.

The professionalism and standard of the Nepal Army is remarkable and worth learning in many ways, General Singh said, while pointing out the distinct relationship between the two armies"

The joint expedition team was organized to mark the diamond jubilee of the first ascent of the world's highest peak. The team which comprised 14 members from Nepal and 20 from the Indian Army, had also cleaned the routes and camp sites during their expedition. The joint team reached atop the peak on May 19.

and child health care projects in Nepal under various assistance schemes from the Government of Japan. Prior to the project, AMDA-MINDS provided technical and financial support to partner agency AMDA-Nepal to implement, since January 2012, the project named "the Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health through Promoting Capacity Development at Four Village Development Committees (VDCs) in Rupandehi District" under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects scheme of the Government of Japan.

## Rights & Access to Sidewalks

On June 5, the U.S. Embassy in Kathmandu hosted an interactive speaker program on disability rights. During the program government experts expressed a commitment to work toward improving Kathmandu's sidewalks to make them more accessible for people with disabilities (PWD), the elderly, people with injuries, and the general population. Among the 65 participants in the lively discussion were engineers, architects, government officials, students,

members of the civil society, people with disabilities, and the press.

## Nine New KOICA Volunteers In Nepal

Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) has dispatched nine new KOICA Volunteers to work in Nepal for two years. They arrived in Katmandu on May 31, 2013 and were welcomed by officials of KOICA Nepal Office at the Tribhuvan International Airport.

Among these nine new KOICA Volunteers, five are from nursing background and are assigned to work in School of Health Science; Bharatpur, Dhaulagiri Zonal Hospital; Baglung, Trisuli Hospital; Nuwakot



and Nepal Red Cross Society, Blood Transfusion Center; Kaski. Similarly, two of them are Korean language instructor who will be working in Biswo Bhasa Campus; Kathmandu, one at District Education Office; Bharatpur in early childhood development sector and one computer personnel is assigned in District Development Committee; Dhading. Therefore, seven will be stationed out of the valley and two will be stationed in the valley related to health, education and ICT sector.

Volunteer program is an important aspect of KOICA's cooperation program in Nepal which supports to transfer Korean knowledge and experiences directly in the grass root level. Currently 46 volunteers are actively working in various government sectors. Since 1991 KOICA has been dispatching about 25-30 volunteers annually to Nepal.

## 'Industries Or Etiquettes'

SURAJ VAIDYA

President of Federation of Nepalese Chamber, Commerce and Industry (FNCCI)

**How do you look at the recent strike by the Maoist affiliated trade union?**

They need to denounce their rampage in Nepalese industries. They destroyed goods, machineries and other materials in the industries worth millions of rupees. No one can bear such acts of vandalism made by All Nepal Trade Union (Revolutionary).

**How do you understand the nature of the attack?**

There acts are illegal, anarchic, objectionable. We see this as well calculated attack against Nepalese industries. We condemn the attack made in Chaudhary Group of Industries office and vice president Pradip Jung Pandey's Lomas Herbal Research Center. FNCCI also condemned attack against chairman of Radisson Hotel D.K. Shrestha, attack against CEO of Citizen Bank and attack on FNCCI's vice chairman Pashupati Muraka's car.



**What is the response of FNCCI?**

Instead of bowing down to them, we can shut down all the industries in the country. There is a limit for everything. Nobody can tolerate this kind of act anymore. Nepal is dependent upon import. If the situation cannot improve, there is no question to operate industries.

**Is not the minimum wage fixed under the recommendation of a committee represented by FNCCI?**

It is the sole responsibility of the government to fix the minimum salary for workers. Of course, FNCCI has also sent its representative to the committee but the decision is taken by the government. FNCCI have nothing to do with it.

**If that is so why they are vandalizing industries?**

Their intention is crystal clear as they want to shut down all national industries putting such demand. FNCCI has already called the government to take necessary legal actions against those who involved in destroying the property and manhandling the industrialists.

## NIBL Goes Branchless In Tanahun

Nepal Investment Bank Ltd (NIBL) has launched its third Branchless Banking Service from Bandipur-1 Dumre in Tanahun. "It aims to establish a well secured country wide Agent Network with presence in all 75 districts," the bank said, adding that Branchless Banking aids in encapsulating the local population into the financial mainstream by extending the banking outreach and by creating ease of access to the unbanked and under-banked population segment. Branchless Banking through Biometric

PoS and debit card is well equipped to provide most of the retail banking services including cash deposit (self and third party) and withdrawal, fund transfers, bill payments and purchase of recharge PINs. "NIBL Branchless Banking Services is secured as it incorporates two-factor authentication — debit card and finger print — mandatory as well as provides a very easy mechanism/process to conduct financial transaction and inquiries. NIBL is serving over 500,000 customers through its 42 branches, 68 ATMs and over 150+ VISA and NPN Member Bank ATMs. The bank has over 465,000 VISA Debit Card Holders who can also register for NIBL Branchless Banking.

## Kist CEO resigns over wife's bank fraud case

Bal Narsimha Gharti, deputy CEO of Bank, was appointed as deputy CEO by board's meeting. Kamal Gyawali, CEO and board director of Kist Bank resigned from both the posts at the bank after his wife was arrested by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) of Nepal Police for involvement in a bank fraud case.

Gharti has been in the banking sector for last 16 years and has served in different capacities at different banks. A board meeting of Kist Bank accepted Gyawali's resignation. Gyawali had resigned from the post on moral grounds.

## Turkish Airlines to start Kathmandu flights

Turkish Airlines — one of the leading European airlines — will start direct flights to Kathmandu from Istanbul from September. The airlines will be flying on Istanbul-Kathmandu route four times a week, starting from September 1, according to general manager of the airlines for Northern and Eastern India Adnan Aykac. The Airlines has already opened booking for its median flight to Kathmandu.

The airlines will operate on Mondays, Wednesdays, Friday and Saturdays every week. According to Aykac, the airline wants to be a partner airline of Nepal. "Nepal can utilise opportunity to attract more loyal tourists from west," he added. Turkish Airlines' Airbus 330 will fly to Kathmandu insuring high-quality service to passengers at reasonable fares, he said.

The direct flight will not only contribute to economic and tourism but also play a vital role in linking Kathmandu with other parts of world, MD of Zenith Travels — General Sales Agent for the airlines — Joy Dewan said. "Turkish Airlines will be the only airline that has a direct flight from Europe to Kathmandu," Dewan said. "The country can take benefit from the air connectivity through Turkish Airlines."



# Toughness Required

By DR. TILAK RAWAL



Even those who were against providing one more extension to then CA must have realized by now that letting it die an inauspicious death on 28 May was a mistake in that its demise opened a new basket of disputes, which would not arise had the body been kept alive to do some more work on the new constitution. Disputes related to threshold for slots in CA under the proportional representation system, number of CA members, barring people with criminal records from contesting election and declaring assets by a candidate prior to the poll are the issues taking too much time of our leaders. Unless these issues are

ridiculing KC's verdict that many thought had further encouraged CA members not to be serious in their work, which would lead to further waste of resources garnered by the state. However, people abound now, both within and outside of the apex court, to admire the momentous verdict. In fact, not only CA members but many others were in favour of keeping it alive resorting to different ways and means such as cutting perks and allowances of members, reducing the size of CA and whatever else was required to keep it breathing. Basically, Regmi's verdict from the apex court stood as the major impediment to time extension,

on contentious issues. His first ever ultimatum to leaders expired on 7 June without seeing progress and was renewed for two more days on 8 June more or less in line with numerous and meaningless deadlines that President Ram Baran had issued in the past. Interestingly, President Ram Baran has also started meeting party leaders urging them to forge consensus soon. The two deadline issuing authorities, however, should keep in mind that only one of them should do the issuing/renewing job to avoid duplication of efforts and also not to confuse people of this impoverished nation.

With double digit inflation, low growth and hopeless external sector, our economy seems to be heading towards further deterioration. Baring encouraging performance in revenue collection, which is continuing ever since Dr. Baburam Bhattari became finance minister under Prachanda, no other economic fundamentals have shown an encouraging trend. Continuing depreciation of our currency against American dollars is likely to further fuel the already pinching level of inflation. Further, a paradoxical situation of low capital expenditure and swelling government reserves with the central bank (currently standing at RS.58.30 billion) exists in the country today, clearly manifesting that it is the inability of the public sector to spend rather than inadequacy of resources that is hindering growth in recent years of one of the poorest nations in the world. There are problems all over the world: growth is slowing down both in China and India and sick EU is experiencing the highest level of unemployment ever. Recent floods have inflicted serious injury on the ailing economies of many Central European countries. Battle is on since long to correct the economic woes and repair the damage caused by the flood there. In our case, Prachanda did talk

**The four parties having more or less surrendered, Regmi now has to act tough and take appropriate decisions on election related matters without wasting much time. If he concludes that disruptive and conspiratorial forces would not allow his government to organize polls in November, he should gracefully take an exit well before it and also not commit the blunder of walking into his old office nearby. This way he can save his image from getting seriously tainted.**

resolved, the ordinance on election cannot be passed to hold the much-awaited polls. Even leader of the current dispensation Mr. Regmi must be feeling little uneasy that his verdict, which clearly favored new polls to time extension, greatly helped pave way for the sad demise of CA and pushed the nation into a mess that we all are experiencing today. Note worthy in this context would be the far-sighted verdict of Justice Balram KC, now retired, which attached paramount importance to constitution preparation and gave not much weight to the time taken to perform the task. Justice KC, it seems, had very well visualized the chaotic situation the nation would get into post CA dissolution. There was no dearth of people disagreeing with and even

according to those involved in negotiation prior to its dissolution. As far as new polls are concerned, the EC seems to be moving ahead satisfactorily leaving not much in its court to perform as it has sent the ordinance (election laws) to the government for necessary further work on it and also recommended November 14 as the date for holding new CA polls. Understanding people's desperation to take part in the fresh polls, EC has timely proposed this day of November beyond which, it says, polls in sixteen mountain districts would not be possible due to snowfall. Khil Raj seems to be getting increasingly skeptical about the possibility of holding polls even in November as he has started issuing deadlines to leaders to forge consensus

## SLC RESULTS

**Dismal Show***SLC results this year go to show the dismal performance of Nepal's education system*

By A CORRESPONDENT

At a time when Nepal has been investing a huge amount of money in the education sector, the performance of students in their SLC Results-2069 has once again presented a bleak scenario of Nepal's education system. While over 547000 students appeared in the exams, only 41.57 percent of the students passed and a whopping 59 percent failed.

This is the lowest percentage results in the last five years. Last year, over 50 percent students had passed the SLC, and three years ago, the pass rate was almost 60 percent. The sudden decline in the pass percentage is worrisome.

Nepal's annual investment per student is over Rs. 10,000 in public and over Rs. 30,000 in private schools. According to sources, students who were unable to secure pass marks are mostly from government schools.

Although Nepal's civil society members and government officials and political leaders often question the private schools regarding their fee structures and education quality, the results showed that government schools performed poorly.

The results also indicated that the higher the investment, the better the results. Private schools are proving efficient because they invest more on teachers and parents who send their children in private schools also invest more on their children.

According to the results, community schools have also performed well. Only the government schools made a dismal performance. The government spends over 30 billion rupees annually in the education sector and more than two thirds of the budget goes to pay the salaries of the school teachers. It has also raised a question mark about the quality of government teachers.

Providing facilities to the teachers alone is not enough to improve the quality of education. Despite getting all kinds of benefits and facilities, the teachers in government schools failed to perform accordingly.

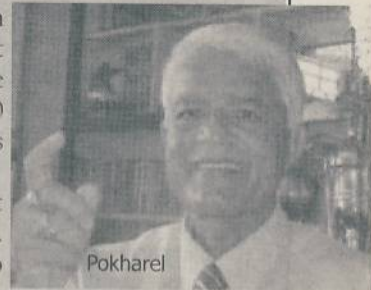
One of the reasons behind the poor performance in the government schools is over politicization of teachers. Although political parties and affiliated student unions are gradually entering the private schools, they are yet to damage the overall performance.

"Despite severe criticism from various sectors, private schools have proved that they have been imparting quality education to the people of Nepal. Although various organizations disturbed our schools from time to time, private schools have stayed focused on education," said Dr. Baburam Pokharel, chairman of PABSON and founder principle of VS Niketan College.

As the SLC results are now out, the time has come to think about how to improve the quality of education and pass percentage so that the huge investment made by the parents and state does not go waste.

about getting support from both China and India to harness the vast water resources of this country and let us hope NC senior leader Deuba, who has embarked upon a trip to India, does some more concrete work along this line. Unless our leaders learn to talk aid, trade and economic cooperation in the greater national interest and not channelize their efforts merely to fulfill their personal and party interest, the economy of this tiny Himalayan nation is not going to take a positive turn. Time has come for us to freely seek assistance from China and India that have increased economic cooperation between them very significantly as is adequately demonstrated by increasing bilateral trade that reached dollar 66 billion last year. It may be noted that Chinese Premier Li Keqiang chose India for his first official visit and observed that the two nations, accounting for 40 percent of the world population, could be a new engine of global growth if they could avoid fiction along the militarized border. Some breakthroughs on trade were also reported. Likewise, newly elected Chinese President Xi and US President Obama had their summit in California where the two spent several hours at a stretch to discuss North Korea's nuclear ambition, suspected Chinese cyber attacks, climate change and trade. Noting the serious US concern on cyber attack, President Xi demanded that US restrictions on high-tech export to China be loosened and Chinese investing in the US be given equal treatment. In a friendly environment, the two leaders raised global as well as issues of their national interest. Our leaders should waste not much time in initiating tripartite projects involving China, India and Nepal, be it in developing Lumbini or harnessing water resources of this country. Our two giant neighbours will have to be generous and magnanimous in dealing with us. Chairman Khil Raj, however, does not have to bother about economic matters because he is mandated just to hold polls, which may not be possible even in November, looking at the inconclusive talks of top leaders. The four parties having more or less surrendered, Regmi now has to act tough and take appropriate decisions on election related matters without wasting much time. If he concludes that disruptive and conspiratorial forces would not allow his government to organize polls in November, he should gracefully take an exit well before it and also not commit the blunder of walking into his old office nearby. This way he can save his image from getting seriously tainted.

*Dr. Rawal is a former governor NRB*



Pokharel

# Is India Sincere?

-By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE



As India was preparing to join hands with Nepali Maoists—in the terrorist list of both India and the United States then—against the Monarchy, Ambassador Moriarty seemed to have strong reservations. He unsuccessfully persuaded Indian authorities not to give legitimacy to 'terrorism'. His oft repeated arguments used to be: "an authoritarian can be transformed into a democrat, but a totalitarian can't be."

In the months that followed, the U.S shed its reservation on New Delhi's clearly specified lines that Monarchy is a past, and Maoists (May be Madhes parties as well) are the true representatives of the people and the international community should learn to trust them. Although the clarity in India's line came in 2005 November, publicly following the adoption of the 12-point agreement, India seemed to be quietly working with the Maoists at least three years prior to that. Prof S D Muni, a former member of the National Security Advisory Board vouched for it when he wrote that Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai's movement in India were relaxed, and they even oversaw some of the attacks in Nepal in lieu of their assuring (in writing) the government of India that Maoists will not go against India's interest.

Post 12-point and post 2006 politics have only invited chaos, uncertainty and bleak economic opportunity in Nepal. The first Constituent assembly failed to deliver the much promised people's constitution, and the current government led by Chief Justice Khil Raj Regmi—a product of India-led international initiative—does not look like it is going to be able to hold the much promised election for the second constituent assembly. India, in popular perception in Nepal, is seen as much bigger a failure as Nepalese actors, given its open involvement in major domestic affairs in the country.

Nepal's former Prime Minister and senior Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba, often branded by Delhi as 'pro-west' was literally given a red-carpet reception in Delhi when he embarked on a 6-day visit on June 9 at the invitation of the government of India. Deuba does not represent the country, but the treatment accorded to him there by the state was significant. He met Prime Minister Man Mohan Singh, Ruling United Progressive Alliance and Congress Party Chief Sonia Gandhi, National Security Advisor Shiv Shankar Menon and other prominent leaders from the Ruling front as well as the opposition.

He got more prominence than Maoist Chief Prachanda who undertook a similar visit to Delhi nine weeks earlier in the sense that Prachanda failed to meet Mrs Gandhi despite his strongly expressed desire. More significant was the fact that Deuba was not a signatory to the 12-point agreement that India mediated between seven political parties and the Maoists in November 2005. Deuba, all along was forced to adopt a low profile in the aftermath of the 12-point agreement as G P Koirala—with the likes of K P Sitaula in tow—and Maoists, both backed to the hilt by India carried the politics

forward decisively until May 28, 2008, the day monarchy was illegitimately ousted giving no space to the people to decide on the issue. The much promised politics of consensus fell flat in the post-monarchy days which has resulted in their failure to deliver the constitution (by the first CA) and agree on electoral law so vital for conducting the second CA. Despite Deuba having been sacked by King Gyanendra twice—first in October 2002 and then again February 2005 as the Prime Minister—Koirala faction and others branded him as Pro-monarchist, and India seemed to trust the other side all along.

The invitation extended to Deuba and the welcome accorded to him, therefore, is unusual and to a large degree unexpected. May be India also realizes sooner than later that the move to have CJ appointed as the Executive Head is something not appreciated by the people of Nepal and that it has already destroyed people's faith in the judiciary. Why is India taking a lead in Nepal in doing something that is shunned

in practice in any democracy including India? May be it is time that India's political leadership assesses the damage caused in its image in Nepal and fixes responsibility (on its part) for these aberrations in the name of consolidating democracy and stability in the neighbourhood. India has alienated Nepalese although it has pampered a few leaders who do not command people's support and respect, mainly in the Terai region,—not

to mention the likes of Sitaula—in the past six years.

It may have been a coincidence that former King Gyanendra Shah was accorded a warm welcome in Parsa and Saptari by the people of Nepal when Deuba was spread a red carpet by India. In display of intolerance and fear, four 'big parties' including Nepali Congress, UML, Madhesi Forum (Upendra Yadav) and Prachanda's Maoist Party gave a bandh call to obstruct Shah from going to Saptari on Monday, a day after they burnt down more than a dozen welcome arches made for the former King.

The fact that Shah braved the Bandh and got the people on his side—although a NC supporter is believed to have thrown a chappal (sandal) at his car—shows the parties that enjoyed monopoly over power and political process in the past seven years are at the receiving end, and ultimately it is for the Nepali people to decide the future course of politics and fate of the nation. Delhi's role has proved to be counter-productive although it can always review and take corrective measures and encourage Nepali people to decide their course on their own instead of trying to dictate like in the post 2006 phase. After all that has neither done good to India, nor to Nepal, nor to the bilateral relations. If people play their role, it will be easier for the two governments to get guided by legitimate mutual interest in an atmosphere of trust. That is the best way to guarantee that the people of Nepal will own any change automatically leading to peace and stability. ■



Indian PM Dr. Singh (Right) and Former Nepalese PM Deuba



## POLITICS

# Polls Apart

*After holding 12 rounds of meetings in a week, political parties gave the responsibility to the Interim Election Council to decide the election*

By KESHAB POUDEL

Finally, the High Level Political Committee reached a consensus to hand over the responsibilities, including announcement of election date and sending Constituent Assembly Election Ordinances to the President, to the Interim Election Council of Ministers, paving the way to hold the elections in November.

Be it just a coincidence or work worth the real effect, leaders of four parties agreed to hand over the responsibility to declare the election date to the government exactly when Nepali Congress leader Sher Bahadur Deuba reached India on a five-day tour. Indian prime minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh and Indian leaders suggested to Deuba to work in holding the elections.

"India wants to see the election of the Constituent Assembly in Nepal as soon as possible," said Indian prime minister Man Mohan Singh. "India will provide the much needed support to Nepal to hold the election."

Political party leaders held meetings with chairman of the Council of Ministers Khil Raj Regmi, president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav and among themselves several times before their latest accord. They had failed to reach a consensus on certain provisions of law. The parties took this surprising decision not only on the basis of their conscience. As Nepal's uncertainty looms large over the date of elections, Kathmandu based European Ambassadors and US ambassador to Nepal were pressing the parties to take the decision.

Under pressure, chairman Regmi, on June 8, had made it clear that the government would unilaterally announce the election date and send the ordinance to the president. In an all-party meeting, president Dr. Ram

Baran Yadav also pressed party leaders to take a decision.

Respecting the court's order, the government will announce the election date and the Election Commission will announce Constituency Delineation Commission simultaneously. However, announcing the date alone cannot guarantee the elections in November.

## Internal Political Dynamics

Although Nepali Congress leaders including its chief Sushil Koirala and



Khilraj Regmi

deputy Ram Chandra Paudel, are yet to open their mouth, the visit of Sher Bahadur Deuba to India has already created an unpleasant situation within NC as supporters of Koirala and Paudel have started to criticize Deuba's visit.

Whether one likes it or not, Sher Bahadur Deuba is the only leader in Nepali Congress now with a bigger mass appeal than Poudel and Koirala. A large number of party workers look up to Deuba to save Nepali Congress from the brink of collapse.

The situation with other parties is also not different. UCPN-Maoist and CPN-UML are yet to expand their central committee. The recent news of unity talks of UCPN-Maoist and

CPN-Maoist, which both parties termed nonsense, has created a panicky situation among their people.

Although two parties of former Panchas unified under the leadership of former prime minister Surya Bahadur Thapa, they are yet to show their formidable presence. The efforts of Madhesh based parties to form a single alliance are yet to materialize. Even the difference in Samyukta Madheshi Loktantrik Morcha is growing. Former minister and leader of Sadbhvana Party Rajendra Mahato has threatened to withdraw from SLMM.

Former King Gyanendra's religious trip to the heartland of Terai is also significant. The former monarch is trying to woo Madheshis of five districts of Madhesh. Former Minister Jay Prakash Gupta, who was recently released from prison after completing his one year tenure on corruption charges, started negotiations with armed groups waging war in Terai.

## Coming Scenario

Elections or no elections, the coming scenario is very unpredictable.

a) As the future of present government will be in limbo after November, the announcement of election will give a new life to the government. Since the government receives political backing from four parties, it has to face less challenge from other parties including CPN-Maoists, Madhesh based and ethnic parties.

b) The decision also preempted the efforts of former CA members under the leadership of former chairman of Constituent Assembly to demand revival of dissolved Constituent Assembly.

c) The decision also preempted president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav from dissolving four party high level political mechanism and the government led by Khil Raj Regmi to form the government under him or vice president. However, the political risk is yet to go away. Nepal will still have to go a long way to have a stable government. ■

## 'Elections Is Meaningless'



Leader of CPN-Maoist DEV GURUNG spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on election issues. Excerpts of the interaction with him:

**How do you view the present state of politics?**

The present political process is heavily influenced by external elements. Whether it is in formation of government, external forces are actively working. After the formation of this interim government, Nepal has already sold out many things to India including the Immigration of TIA. Indian Police directly came to Nepal to take away criminals. This is very hard time for nationalist.

**Do you think election is possible?**

I don't think elections are possible in the present context. As long as the present government continues in power, we will take necessary actions to prevent the elections.

**At a time when all international communities and large number of a number of political parties are supporting the elections, don't you think your party will be isolated in case of violent?**

When we launched People's War in 1996, all people thought it would not last. However, People's War has made a lot of change even uprooted centuries old monarchy. It is not foreigners to decide what people of Nepal want. But, it is the people of Nepal to decide what they like.

**What about four largest parties?**

Since elections are not held, no party is largest or smallest in the present context. So called large parties are stooges of foreign forces. We are also opposing the present government on the ground that it is anti-national government backed by external forces.

**When political parties have already launched elections campaign and there are large numbers of participating people. How do you look describe the situation?**

The majority of people know how foreign forces aborted previous Constituent Assembly when it was in the process of making people's constitution. Of course, political parties lured some thousand people in their meeting. Actually, an overwhelming majority of people don't want to see the elections.

**Election is the only way to activate the CA and institutionalize the federal, inclusive republic of Nepal. Don't you think your opposition will benefit regressive forces?**

It is only a myth. If political parties were really sincere, they would have framed the people's constitution a long time back. All political parties betrayed the aspirations of the people. We want to launch another people's war to establish the rights of the oppressed people. Political parties need to give answer to the people why they dissolved the CA. ■



## 'CA Polls Urgent'

Former minister and leader of Sadbhvana Party RAJENDRA MAHATO went on a weeklong fast unto death by demanding the election date for the new Constituent Assembly. Mahato Spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues related to elections. Excerpts:

**Despite their assurances, political parties are yet to agree on elections. How do you look at this?**

As word given to me, political parties will agree on the number of seats for CA, threshold and other related issues soon. There is the need of agreement. If there is no consensus among political parties, the elections should be held on the basis of last elections. Instead of waiting for the political parties, the government has to take unilateral decision on the basis of last election.

**Do you think the elections will be held in November?**

There must be elections on November. To ensure the elections for CA, we went fasting. After agreement of parties, I withdrew the fasting. The government and political party leaders, including Jhahnath Khanal, came to me and requested to withdraw fasting. I hope they will not betray the people.

**If they avoid elections, what would be the situation?**

If they don't agree on elections, people will lose their faith and patience. They may revolt to protect the achievement made by Tharuhat Agitation, Janadolan II and Madhesh Andolan. This is the time to go to institutionalize Federal, Secular Republic Nepal. There is the need to hold the elections for the CA.

**How will Sadbhvana Party react in case of failure to hold the elections in November?**

Sadbhvana party will launch a nation-wide agitation calling various likeminded parties. We will call for a third janaandolan. I hope the government and four parties will announce the elections shortly.

**How hopeful are you given the current situation?**

Elections can be held. If the government forms the constituency delineation commission and announces the CA Elections Ordinance, giving 120 days for the Election Commission, nothing is impossible. My only concern is that the time is running out. And political parties have to take a decision.

**What is your party doing now?**

Our party has already launched the election campaign. I am in a nationwide election campaign and I completed the campaign in Rupandehi, Siraha and Sarlahi. Our party will win more seats this time. There is a wave in favor of our party. Former minister and vice president of Madheshis Janaadhikar Forum Om Prakash Yadav Guljari has joined our party with his large number of supporters. ■



Vice President Jha meeting with Chinese Vice President

## DIPLOMACY

# Dragon Play

*Of the recent activities are any indication, Nepalese leaders are being pushed to play with the dragon*

By KESHAB POUDEL

Although Nepali Congress leader Sushil Koirala was invited to pay an official visit to Beijing about two months ago to meet with new Chinese leaders and discuss issues, Congress leader Koirala is yet to respond to the invitation.

CPN-UML leader Jhalanth Khanal and top leaders like Madhav Kumar Nepal, including second generation leaders, are busy bashing China, opposing the Upper Trishuli 3 A augmentation. Khanal has announced postponement of his visit to China for an indefinite period at the last minute.

UCPN-Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal is the only person to pay visit to China and who then went to India just a few days later. However, he faced severe media criticism from all quarters for his visit to China and India. His proposal for trilateral cooperation was put in the dustbin by India's foreign minister.

Nepali Congress leader Koirala and CPN-UML leader Khanal are not alone to postpone their visits to Nepal's northern neighbor. President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav also snubbed the formal invitation to visit Kunming on the ground he could not meet Chinese president, who was in his tour of United States and other Latin American countries.

Equally important is postponement of

high level Chinese state councilor's visit to Nepal. Even the Chinese prime minister, who spent a week in India and Pakistan, bypassed Nepal. All these indicate that Nepal-China relations are not going in the right directions at the moment.

In place of president, vice president Paramanand Jha paid a state visit to China. At a time when China is emerging as a super power to compete with America, its presence and influence in Nepal seems to be weakening in a period when communist parties have a strong hold in Nepali politics.

When three major communist parties, UCPN-Maoist, CPN-Maoist and CPN-UML, have greater influence in Nepalese politics, Chinese are facing the most difficult task to invest in Nepal.

At a time when every political leader is snubbing the invitation from the north, Nepali Congress leader and former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba landed in India for his official visit where he met Indian leaders and prime minister Dr. Man Mohan Singh, Congress leader Sonia Gandhi and senior officials of External Affairs Ministry including foreign secretary and national security advisor. Similarly, CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal is likely to visit India next month.

Despite facing turmoils in relations, Chinese ambassador to Nepal Wu Chuntai said that his country continues to provide support to Nepal. In his interview to Nepali Times, Chinese ambassador Chuntai said, "we are extending the Kathmandu ring-road and constructing dry port in Tatopani with assistance gratis, building Upper Trishuli-3A hydro power project with concessional loans, preparing the construction of Pokhara International Airport and discussing other potential projects with Nepal government."

Chinese leaders say that they will not let any power to maintain complete hegemony in Nepali politics. Chinese leaders in Beijing recently told a Nepali prominent entrepreneur having good friendly relations with both the neighbors to convey the message to Indians that they don't have any interest to compete with India in Nepal and what they want from India is to make Nepal stable, unified and prosperous and accommodation of their interest.

Even during the recent meeting of Nepalese vice president Parmanand Jha with Chinese Vice President Li Yuanchao in Beijing, Chinese leaders were straight forward in their words. "China and Nepal are friendly neighbors linked by mountains and rivers, and the bilateral relations between the two countries have remained healthy and steady since the establishment of diplomatic ties. China is willing to join hands with Nepal to deepen traditional friendship, enhance mutually beneficial cooperation, expand exchanges in various fields and push forward Comprehensive Partnership of Cooperation featuring everlasting friendship," said Li.

As Nepal lies in the south of the Himalayas, it is a fact that Nepal's geography, culture and religious closeness are much closer here than with any country of the world. However, Nepal cannot give up the interest of north entirely. Even Nepali Congress leader B.P. Koirala pointed the need to maintain good relations with India because geography binds us but he also suggested good relations with China. Those politicians who just rely on India cannot survive in Nepali Politics," writes Koirala in the Book Raja, Rastriyata and Rajniti. ■

## MEGA BANK'S IPO High Hope

*The overwhelming response by people to Mega Bank Nepal's Initial Public Offering (IPO) shows how a confident leadership can make a difference*

By A CORRESPONDENT

In the words of Mega Bank chief Anil Keshary Shah, the success of the bank's IPO is a mega achievement. At a time when the people have been talking about cash crunch, Mega Bank Nepal's Initial Public Offering (IPO) has been oversubscribed by 15 times the size of the offering.

The bank had offered ordinary shares worth Rs 699 million at a face value of Rs 100 per unit for the public from June 2. An investor was allowed to apply for a minimum of 50 units and a maximum of 200,000 units.

The shares will be allotted proportionately based on the total number of applications received. The bank had received 75,000 applications and collected Rs 6.33 billion by the third day of the IPO. "The success of the IPO is an indication that Mega Bank is in the right path in its belief of financial inclusion for economic uplift," said Shah, a young and dynamic Chief Executive Officer.

Mega Bank Nepal, which started operations in September 2010, has a paid up capital of Rs 1.63 billion, which will increase to Rs 2.33 billion after the shares are issued. The bank had earned Rs 130 million in the third quarter of the current fiscal year.

"At the end of the day we have more clarity on the figures of our Mega IPO, while these are not final we are getting there! In total we collected Rs.14.2 billion and received 158,000 applications, making our IPO 22 times

oversubscribed! While the billions of rupees collected in just four days is truly humbling, for me, personally, the fact that we were able to earn the confidence of over 1.58 lakh Nepali brothers & sisters is gratifying on a very deep level," writes Anil Kesary Shah in his face book wall.



Anil Shah

"And when you have the courage to stand alone and walk on the path less traveled by in due course others will most certainly join! Well the much awaited Mega IPO has concluded! In first 3 days we received 75,000 applications and collected Rs.6.33 billion rupees, making the IPO 10 times over subscribed in just 3 days. Estimates after today's collection are that we will be around 15 times oversubscribed with close to 125,000 applications & Rs.9.5 billion raised. However, final figures will only be known tomorrow. So far a truly Mega IPO, now we know we no longer stand alone & our vision of economic upliftment through financial inclusion is growing throughout the nation!"

So, there is a huge amount of money in the market. Given political stability, Nepal can achieve a high economic growth. Similarly, three months back Commerz and Trust Bank Nepal's IPO worth Rs 600 million was oversubscribed by 12 times the size. Likewise, Civil Bank's IPO worth Rs 800 million, held in December, was oversubscribed by almost seven times as investors had applied for shares worth Rs 5.4 billion.

## 'Budget Will Respond To Needs'

At a time when the government is preparing the budget for the fiscal year 2013-14, CHRANJIBI NEPAL, advisor to the Finance Minister, talked to the media about the coming budget. Excerpts:



**What will be the new budget like?**

The new budget will not be a populist one. We are not going to throw money here and there.

**What does that mean?**

The budget will not be distributive. We will allocate the budget in the needed areas. We will allocate enough budget for development of infrastructure like road, hydropower and agriculture. It will be a simple budget.

**Will it address the concerns raised by the private sector?**

The budget will be private sector friendly. In the last few years, the private sector was not given priority. Our experiences have shown that high growth is impossible without active participation of the private sector. Other challenges are the number of young people leaving the country for foreign employment. You cannot run the country relying on remittances, it is like a slow poison. We must use our youth for our own development. India and China have made economic progress because they guarantee private property.

**How do you view the challenges?**

Since there are just 300,000 tax payers, it is very difficult to prepare the budget from the tax received from this small group. We need to extend the tax net. We want to achieve high growth rate and it will focus on agriculture and infrastructure sector.

## BOOK

# Nation Building



Author Pro. Dr. Poudyal

By A CORRESPONDENT

In recent years, a good number of books in political studies have appeared in the market. The political change of 1990 ushered in a new era encouraging scholars to write various kind of books. A host of scholars started writing books on Nepali politics. A blizzard of writings appeared in Nepali and foreign languages. However, the donor agencies were influential to create the situation to encourage writings in the name of nurturing democracy in the country.

Meanwhile, a new book entitled, "Nation Building and Ethnicity In Nepal: Theory & Practice" written by Dr. Ananta Raj Poudyal has appeared in the market. The book is an outcome of teaching and research by the professor for almost forty years in prominent universities of the world. Treating politics as the science of state, designed to attain objectives like the constitutional order, security and welfare, the book shows its concern with the question: to what extent have the objectives met in the country? Are institutional value and stability achieved? Is human happiness provided? Based on the rigorous theory of political analysis, the book does not only deal with the superficial aspects of nation building, but also elaborates on the theory and practice. A study of centrifugal and centripetal forces of nation building are included to understand the comprehensive aspects of nation building. These forces are functional aspects of politics.

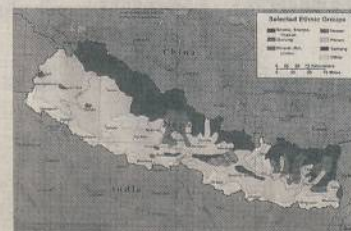
Comprising 352 pages, the book is divided into four chapters. The first chapter deals with the issues like nation state, state building, nation building, national integration, ethnicity, ethnic nation, characteristics of a nation state, concept of minority, indigenous people, ethnicity & linkages, ethnic conflict, nation destruction, meaning of political development and nationalism. The

second chapter deals with the characteristics of Nepali society, people of Nepal, social change, modernization, state building of Nepal, democracy, monarchy and nation building of Nepal. The third chapter is on the ethnicity in Nepal, different ethnic groups, the Maoist movement and ethnicity, discrimination, continuity and change, along with various tables reflecting the trends of ethnic participation. And, the fourth chapter consists of summary and recommendations. In essence, the book shows democracy and nationalism are inseparable. Professor Poudyal concludes that "the sense of nationalism is inconceivable without the idea of popular sovereignty" and weighs the outcome of the popular uprising of 2006.

The professor argues political parties are vehicles for democracy, but in Nepal, the political leadership is proven as inept and insipid. Explaining the entire political process in Nepal, including constitution building, he points out that the dissolution of the CA has created a political vacuum and democracy is under seize. After analyzing the political development of Nepal, the author argues that the situation of Nepal is like a failed state.

The author does not claim anything new in ideas, as there are a host of such books available in the Western world including in Nepalese market. Under the field of comparative politics, professor Poudyal has included the issues like the nation destruction, national integration, disintegration, ethnic conflict and etc. He argues that this area is advanced by the American political scientists in 1950s & 60s, taking into account the vulnerable situation of political development in the new nations. He draws the conclusion that Nepal is also a new nation despite her long history of independence. The situation of political instability and

## Nation Building and Ethnicity in Nepal: Theory and Practice



Prof. Dr. Ananta Raj Poudyal

**Nation Building And Ethnicity In Nepal:  
Theory & Practice**

By Prof. Dr. Ananta Raj Poudyal

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economic underdevelopment are perpetual phenomena of Nepal. It indicates that she has to travel a long way. The book is "sui generis" or of its own kind. The book tries to explore the inner dynamics of the Nepali politics over the centuries. The gap between the rulers and the ruled in Nepal is never ending, people are always in the receiving end. The author's non-conformist approach, with application of the functional aspect of politics, is the outcome of the book. "Yet the political parties are not sincere and behave like the predators. Majority of the people are poor. They do not have food to still the pangs of hunger, clothes to cover bones, and shelter to live in," said Professor Poudyal. "It is true that one cannot make a nation out of deprivation, the sense of deprivation is rampant in the country."

He holds the view that the objectives of politics like the constitutional order, security and welfare are seen as the wild goose chase. The dangerous trajectory of dissent is seen because the ethnic conflict is on rise making a volcanic eruption. "The concept of welfare state is not yet realized. Thus, the book refers to an analogy that 'Nepal is not yet a nation,' only notion to hope. ■

## नेपाल विद्युत प्राधिकरण

# माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ ए जलविद्युत आयोजनाको क्षमता बृद्धि सम्बन्धमा

विगत लामो समयदेखि नेपाल चरम विद्युत संकटबाट गुजिरहेको छ। वर्तमान अवस्थामा मुलुकले हिउँदयामामा ५०० मेगावाटभन्दा बढीको र वर्षातको समयमा समेत केही ऊर्जाको न्यूनता रहने हुँदा लोडसेडिङ अपरिहार्य रूपमा गर्नु परेको छ। यो संकटबाट छुटकारा पाउन अब द्रुत गतिमा विद्युत विकासको स्तरोन्नति र चुहावट न्यूनीकरण गर्न आवश्यक रहेको छ। यसै सन्दर्भमा माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ ए ज.वि.आ. लाई समेत उच्च प्राथमिकता राखेर विकास गरिँदैछ।

नेपाललाई पहिलो पटक चीनको एक्जिम बैंकबाट प्राप्त हुने १२० मिलियन अमेरिकी डलरको सहूलियतपूर्ण ऋण उपयोग गरी हाल ६० मे.वा. क्षमताको यो आयोजना अधि बढाइएको थियो।

प्रारम्भमा माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ ए जलविद्युत आयोजना आ.व. ०६२/६३ मा शुरू भई आ.व. ०७१/७२ मा सम्पन्न हुने लक्ष्य राखिएको थियो। आयोजनाको सिभिल/इलेक्ट्रोमेकानिकल/ हाइड्रोमेकानिकल निर्माण कार्य विभिन्न कार्यविधगत कारणबाट केवल जून १, २०११ मा मात्र शुरू गर्न सकियो। निर्माण कार्यसूचीको प्रारम्भिक अवस्थामा उक्त आयोजना मे ३१, २०१४ मा सम्पन्न हुनु पर्ने गरी **Project Appraisal** भएको थियो। तर हालसम्मको प्रगति करिब २१% मात्र रहेको सन्दर्भमा निर्माण कार्य ढिलो हुनुको विभिन्न कारणहरूमध्ये ठेकेदारको ढिलाईको कारण समेतले आयोजनाको प्रगति त्यति उत्साहप्रद हुन सकेन। ढिलाई हुनुको कारणमा मूलतः निर्माण कार्यमा उत्पन्न स्थानीय व्यवधान, इडइ स्वीकृतिमा ढिलाई, जग्गा प्राप्ति र पहुँचमार्ग निर्माणको जटिलता लगायत **Muck** फाल्ने स्थानाभाव, बन्द हडताल र स्थानीय नागरिकका माग तथा गुनासो आदि रहेका छन्। यिनै उल्लेखित कारणबाट ठेकेदारले जून २०१३ मा पेश गरेको निर्माण कार्य तालिकामा फेब्रुअरी २०१६ मा मात्र निर्माण सम्पन्न हुने उल्लेख गरेको र निजले फेब्रुअरी २०१६ मा मात्र आयोजना सम्पन्न हुने गरी **Construction Program** आयोजनामा पेश गरेको हालको यथार्थ अवस्था हो। प्रस्तुत पृष्ठभूमिमा परामर्शदाताबाट प्राप्त राय अनुसार समेत अहिलेको अवस्थामा ६० मेगावाटको निर्माण कार्य पुरा गर्न पनि थप २१ महिना लाग्ने अवस्था देखिएको छ। अर्थात् फेब्रुअरी २०१६ मा मात्र ६० मेगावाटको निर्माण कार्य सम्पन्न हुने देखिन्छ।

माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ ए को मौजुदा डिजाईन पानीको Q70 बहावको आधारमा भएको छ जुन उपलब्ध पानीको **Optimum** उपयोग होइन। चरम ऊर्जा संकट सम्बोधन गर्न नेपाल सरकारद्वारा घोषणा गरिएको "ऊर्जा संकटकाल"ले हाल सञ्चालनमा रहेका विभिन्न आयोजनाहरूलाई Q40 को डिजाईन बहावको आधारमा स्तरोन्नती गर्ने सरकारी नीति तत्काल कायम रहेको छ। त्रिशुली नदीमा उपलब्ध पानीको अधिकतम उपयोग गर्ने समेतको उद्देश्य लिई ठेकेदारले यस आयोजनाको उन्नत तथा उपयोगी डिजाईन गरी हाल निर्धारित ६० मे.वा. क्षमतालाई अभिवृद्धि गरी ९० मे.वा. पुऱ्याउने बारे सम्भाव्यता अध्ययन सम्पन्न गरी २३ मार्च २०११ मा ने.वि.प्रा. समक्ष एउटा प्रस्ताव प्रस्तुत गरेको थियो। प्राप्त क्षमता अभिवृद्धिको प्रस्ताव त्रिशुली नदीको पानीको अधिकतम उपयोग हुनेगरी Q52 को बहावमा डिजाईन गर्ने भनिएको छ।

माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ ए जलविद्युत आयोजनाको यो अभिवृद्धिले यसभन्दा तल निर्माण गरिने त्रिशुली ३बी को क्षमता समेत हाल निर्धारित ३७ मे.वा.बाट बृद्धि भई ५५ मे.वा. पुग्न सक्ने देखिन्छ। यसरी

क्षमता बृद्धि गरिँदा उपलब्ध जलस्रोतको अधिकतम उपयोग हुन गई चरम ऊर्जा संकट फेरिनेको अहिलेको अवस्थामा यसबाट केही मात्रामा भए पनि राहत हुने कुरामा शंका गर्नुपर्ने अवस्था होइन। त्रिशुली ३ ए को क्षमता उच्चतम हुने गरी अभिवृद्धि गर्नुपर्ने स्थानीय जनताको समेत माग रहिआएको छ। क्षमता अभिवृद्धि सम्बन्धी प्रस्ताव कार्यान्वयनमा जाँदा सहज परिस्थिति निर्माण हुन सक्ने देखिन्छ। स्थानीय जनताको माग सम्बोधन भएमा आयोजना निर्माण सहज हुन गई समयमै आयोजना सम्पन्न हुने देखिन्छ भने अर्कोतर्फ यसबाट चरम ऊर्जा संकटलाई न्यूनीकरण गर्ने एउटा सशक्त उपायको रूपमा समेत यस कार्यलाई मान्न सकिन्छ।

यस आयोजनाको क्षमता वृद्धिपश्चात् नेपालको विद्युत प्रणालीमा ३० मे.वा. थप विद्युत शक्ति उपलब्ध हुनेछ। यसबाट विद्युतको माग तथा आपूर्ति बीचको ठूलो असन्तुलनलाई केही मात्रामा भए पनि कम गर्न सकिनेछ। आयोजनास्थलबाट विद्युत माग केन्द्र (काठमाडौं उपत्यका) नजिक रहेकोले क्षमता अभिवृद्धि पश्चात् प्राप्त हुने विद्युत प्रसारण गर्दा प्राविधिक चुहावटसमेत कम हुनेछ भने काठमाडौं उपत्यकाबासीलाई यसबाट केही राहत अवश्य मिल्नेछ।

मौजुदा Q70 लाई Q52 मा रुपान्तरण गर्दा त्यसबाट आयोजनाको क्षमता अभिवृद्धि भई थप १४८ मेगावाटघण्टा ऊर्जा उत्पादन हुने देखिन्छ। यो उल्लेखनीय परिमाण हो भने यसले सुख्खायाममा समेत २४.५ मेगावाटघण्टा थप ऊर्जा उत्पादन गर्न सक्छ। हाल कतिपय आयोजनाहरू Q40 मा डिजाईन गरी कार्यान्वयनका लागि अगाडि आएका छन्। यस्तै माथिल्लो तामाकोशीको Q32 मा डिजाईन गरी आन्तरिक मागको आपूर्ति गर्ने सिलसिलामा निर्माणाधीन अवस्थामा छ। यस परिस्थितिमा प्रस्तुत आयोजनालाई केवल तट्टण मा मात्र सीमित गर्नु वास्तवमा उपलब्ध स्रोतको समयोचित उपयोग किमार्थ होइन।

हाल निर्धारित ६० मे.वा. क्षमताको लागि निर्माण गरिने हेडवर्क्स तथा प्रसारण लाईनहरूमा कुनै किसिमको स्तरोन्नती अथवा फेरवदल गर्नुपर्दैन। यस अर्थमा पनि क्षमता अभिवृद्धि थप आकर्षणको विषय बनेको हो। इनटेक, थिगेनी **Pond**, सुरङ, विद्युतगृह तथा इलेक्ट्रोमेकानिकल उपकरणहरूको डिजाईनमा मात्र मनासिव फेरवदल गर्नुपर्ने हुन्छ। निर्माण भइसकेका संरचनाहरू कुनै पनि भत्काउनु नपर्ने र सम्भाव्य जोखिम समेत नदेखिएको पृष्ठभूमिमा ९० मे.वा. क्षमतामा विकास गर्नु आफैमा एउटा अतुलनीय फाइदा हो।

नेपालको विद्यमान सामाजिक, आर्थिक, राजनैतिक जटिल अवस्था तथा हालसम्म आयोजना सञ्चालन गर्दा देखिएका मूलभूत समस्याहरूका आधारमा प्रस्तुत आयोजनालाई हेदा ९० मे.वा. मा क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गर्ने सम्भवता गर्दा सम्भवता सम्पन्न भएको मितिदेखि जम्मा ३५ महिनामा पुरा गर्ने प्रस्तावले केवल थप ३ महिनाको समयवाधिमा थप ३० मे.वा. को ऊर्जा प्राप्त गर्न सकिने देखिएको छ। सामान्यतया: ३० मेगावाट क्षमताको जलविद्युत आयोजना सम्पन्न गर्न न्यूनतम ४/५ वर्ष लाग्ने देखिएको नै छ। माथि उल्लेख भए अनुसार हेडवर्क्स तथा प्रसारण लाईनमा कुनै फेरवदल गर्नु नपर्ने भएकाले धेरै समय नलाग्ने भएको हो। अर्थात् ६० मे.वा.को लागि थप माग गरिएको समय २०१६ फेब्रुअरी भन्दा ३ महिना बढी अर्थात् २०१६ मे सम्म ९० मे.वा.को

काम पूरा गर्ने परामर्शदाताबाट समेत प्रस्ताव पेश भइसकेको छ।

हाल निर्धारित ६० मे.वा. को लागि अमेरिकी डलर ८९.१८ मिलियनमा ठेक्का सम्झौता भएको सन्दर्भमा क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गरी ९० मे.वा. कायम गर्न ठेकेदारबाट अमेरिकी डलर १३२ मिलियनको आर्थिक प्रस्ताव पेश भएको छ। यस थप ३० मे.वा. को लागत सोही क्षमताको नयाँ आयोजना निर्माण गर्ने लागत भन्दा आर्थिक रूपमा अत्यधिक न्यून र समय बचत समेत हुने देखिन्छ। ९० मे.वा. को लागत प्रति कि.वा. अमेरिकी डलर १४६६ एवं सो बाट उत्पादन हुने ऊर्जा करिब रु. २.७० प्रति यूनिट पर्ने देखिन्छ। जुन प्रचलित लागत मूल्यको तुलनामा हालसम्म नेपाल विद्युत प्राधिकरणबाट उत्पादन भइसकेको तथा भइरहेकोमा भन्दा अत्यन्तै न्यून हो।

ने.वि.प्रा. ले हाल विद्युत खरिद सम्झौता गरेका आयोजनाहरूको उत्पादित विद्युतको खरिद दरबाट पनि प्रस्तुत प्रसंग प्रमाणित हुन्छ। उदाहरणको लागि-

- माथिल्लो तामाकोशी (Q32): रु. ४.०६ प्रति यूनिट- (Escalation of 3% annually for 9 yrs जस अनुसार ने.वि.प्रा. ले Escalation पछि कूल रु. ५.१६ प्रति यूनिट भुक्तानी गर्नुपर्ने।)
- नीजिक्षेत्रका आयोजनाहरू (Q40) : रु. ४.८० प्रति यूनिट ( वर्षायाममा) र रु. ८.४० प्रति यूनिट (सुख्खायाममा) (Escalation of 3% annually for 9 yrs जस अनुसार ने.वि.प्रा. ले Escalation पछि कूल रु. ५.५२ प्रति यूनिट वर्षायाममा र रु. ९.६६ प्रति यूनिट सुख्खायाममा भुक्तानी गर्नु पर्ने।)
- भारतबाट खरिद दर, खिन्तीबाट खरिद दर र भोटेकोशीको खरिद दरहरू त्रिशुली ३ए ९० मे.वा.को प्रति यूनिट लागत रु. २.७० भन्दा धेरै रहेको छ।
- माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ए (९० मे.वा.) को ऊर्जा लागत : रु. २.७० प्रति यूनिट पर्ने र यो आयोजना ने.वि.प्रा. को आफ्नै भएकोले कुनै Escalation नहुने।

केही निर्माणाधीन आयोजना तथा सम्पन्न आयोजनाहरूको लागत यस प्रकारको रहेको छ :

क्र. सं.	आयोजना	क्षमता	अनुमानित लागत प्रति कि.वा. (अमेरिकी डलर)
१.	माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ए जलविद्युत आयोजना	९० मे.वा.	१४६६
२.	राहुँघाट जलविद्युत आयोजना	३० मे.वा.	१७००
३.	कुलेखानी तेश्रो जलविद्युत आयोजना	१४ मे.वा.	२०००
४.	कालीगण्डकी जलविद्युत आयोजना	१४४ मे.वा.	३४००
५.	चर्मेलिया जलविद्युत आयोजना	३० मे.वा.	२३००
६.	मध्यमसाईदी जलविद्युत आयोजना	७० मे.वा.	४४००

९० मे.वा. आयोजनाको B/C Ratio १.८९ र EIRR १९% र हेको छ। यसको Pay Back Period लगभग चार वर्षको हुने छ भने ३० मे.वा. थप गर्दा नेपाल विद्युत प्राधिकरणलाई ६० मे.वा.भन्दा थप वार्षिक आय करिब ९० करोड र नेपाल सरकारलाई थप वार्षिक र जश्व करिब २४ करोड प्राप्त हुनेछ। साथै ९० मे.वा.मा क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गर्दा ५० वर्षमा नेपाल सरकारलाई थप करिब १२ अर्बको र जश्व प्राप्त हुने देखिन्छ।

आयोजनाको क्षमता वृद्धि गरेको अवस्थामा पनि कार्यदिश पाएको भित्तिबाट ३५ महिनामा निर्माण कार्य सम्पन्न गर्ने ठेकेदारले आफ्नो प्रस्तावमा उल्लेख गरेको छ। यसरी क्षमता वृद्धि गरेको खण्डमा आयोजना तीन महिना मात्र ढिलो गरी सम्पन्न हुने हुँदा समयको तुलनात्मक

विश्लेषण गर्दा न्यूनतम समयमा ३० मे.वा. विद्युत प्राप्त हुनेलाई अवसरको रूपमा लिन सकिन्छ।

६० मेगावाटबाट वार्षिक रूपमा ४९० मेगावाट आवर युनिट र ९० मेगावाटबाट ६५१ मेगावाट आवर युनिट पावर खपत कट्टा गरी प्राप्त हुने छ। अहिलेको ८.१० रु. प्रति युनिटको हिसाबले ६० मेगावाटबाट वार्षिक रूपमा रु. ३ अर्ब ७३ करोड र ९० मेगावाट क्षमताबाट वार्षिक रूपमा रु. ४ अर्ब ९६ करोड आम्दानी हुन्छ। ३ महिनामात्र आयोजना ढिलो हुँदा ६० मेगावाटबाट करिब ९३ करोड Revenue Loss हुने देखिन्छ। उक्त Loss ९० मेगावाटबाट ९ महिनामा Recover हुन्छ। यसको प्रतिफल दर १९% भएकोले अत्य आयोजनाभन्दा आकर्षक छ।

ने.वि.प्रा. को प्रणालीलाई टेवा : यसरी प्राप्त हुने थप ३० मे.वा. को ऊर्जाले वर्षायाममा विद्यमान कुलेखानी जलाशययुक्त आयोजनामा भार कम गर्ने मद्दत पुऱ्याउँछ। फलतः कुलेखानीको जलाशयमा वर्षादमा जम्मा हुने पानीलाई सुख्खायाममा प्रयोग गर्न सकिन्छ। यसबाट सुख्खायाममा ने.वि.प्रा. को प्रणालीमा केही सुधार भै लोडसेडिङमा केही कमी आउनुका साथै सुख्खायाममा भारतबाट अत्यन्त महँगो मूल्यमा आयात गरिने ऊर्जा र डीजल प्लान्टबाट उत्पादिन ऊर्जामा कटौती भई देशको विदेशी मुद्रा संचित र आयातमा समेत अनुकूल प्रभाव पर्नेछ। खिन्ती ढल्केवर प्रसारण लाइन पूरा भएपछि माथिल्लो तामाकोशी, खिन्ती, भोटेकोशी लगायतका उत्पादन पूर्वमा प्रसार गर्न सकिने हुँदा त्रिशुली ३ए को क्षमता वृद्धि गर्दा जंगडा (Spill) विजुली रहँदैन।

९० मेगावाट क्षमतामा आयोजना अभिवृद्धि गर्दा ३०/३० मेगावाटका तीनवटा जेनेरेटर टरबाइन जडान हुन्छन्। संचालन सम्भारको दृष्टिकोणबाट हेर्दा दुईवटा युनिटहरू भन्दा तीनवटा युनिटहरू उपयुक्त हुन्छन्। हाल निर्धारित ६० मे.वा. मा ३०/३० का दुईवटा युनिटहरू जडान गरिन्छन्। सुख्खा याममा प्राप्त हुने पानीको न्यूनतम वहावको बेला करिब ४४ मे.वा. विद्युत उत्पादन हुँदा दुई वटा ३० मे.वा.को टरबाइनहरूको आवश्यकता हुन्छ र एउटा टरबाइन मर्मत गर्दा क्रिन्तमा १४ मे.वा. बराबरको पानी खेर जाने अवस्था छ। तीन वटा ३० मे.वा. को टरबाइन रहँदा एउटा टरबाइन मर्मतको लागि उपलब्ध हुँदा सुख्खायामको बहुमूल्य पानी खेर नगर्दा उपयोग गर्न सकिन्छ।

देशमा विद्यमान विकराल विद्युत ऊर्जा संकटलाई न्यूनीकरण गर्न राष्ट्रिय विद्युत प्रणालीको लागि थप हुने प्रत्येक मेगावाटको उत्पादनको ठूलो महत्त्व रहेको छ। यसर्थ, यथासक्न चाँडो र सक्दो परिमाणमा विद्युत शक्ति उत्पादन गरी प्रणालीमा जोडनु अहिलेको प्रमुख राष्ट्रिय आवश्यकता हो। नयाँ नयाँ आयोजनाहरू पहिचान गरी, वित्तीय व्यवस्था मिलाई निर्माण सम्पन्न गर्न अत्यन्त लामो समय लाग्ने पृष्ठभूमिमा निर्माण चरणमा गईसकेको माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ए जल विद्युत आयोजनाको डिजाइनमा केहि हेरफेर गरी केवल थप ३ महिनाभित्र र प्रचलित लागत भन्दा कम मूल्यमा थप ३० मे.वा. विद्युत शक्ति हासिल गर्नु राष्ट्रिय आवश्यकताको दृष्टिकोणमा युक्तिसंगत, औचित्यपूर्ण र न्यायोचित समेत छ। आन्तरिक खपत वा ऊर्जा निकासी समेतका लागि निर्माण हुने आयोजनाहरूले उपलब्ध जलस्रोतको अधिकतम सदुपयोग गर्नु पर्ने भएको सन्दर्भमा प्राविधिक, आर्थिक, समय र तुलनात्मक लाभको दृष्टिबाट समेत ९० मेगावाटमा क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गरी माथिल्लो त्रिशुली ३ए जलविद्युत आयोजनाको कार्य अधि बढाउनु आजको राष्ट्रिय आवश्यकता समेत हो। यसै पृष्ठभूमिमा रहेर नेपाल विद्युत प्राधिकरण सञ्चालक समितिले मिति २०७०/२/१७ गते ९० मेगावाट क्षमता अभिवृद्धि गरी आयोजना विकास गर्ने दृढ निश्चयका साथ निर्णय लिएको छ।

## RTI NEPAL

# Way To Go

*Despite guarantee of access to information given by the constitution, Nepal is yet to have the institutional capability to exercise it*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although the Interim Constitution **guarantees the right to information as a** fundamental right of Nepalese citizens and the Right to Information Act and Regulation has already been made to provide information to the citizens, a large number of people are yet to gain **access to information they require.**

At a time when there are growing incidents of impunity and corruption at various development ministries, a free flow of information is necessary to prevent them. Experts argue that Right to Information (RTI) is crucial for promoting overall human rights.

Established under a legal provision of Right to Information Act, National Information Commission is there to monitor and implement the Act. But it lacks the institutional mechanism as well as capability to fulfill its institutional role.

Citizens theoretically have the right to access information held by public authorities, including all government organizations at national and local level to non-governmental organizations, political parties and any other body of public importance.

All the information held by public bodies should be subject to disclosure unless there is an overriding public interest justification for non-disclosure. According to RTI Act 2007, the government needs to provide all necessary information sought by citizens. It was recognized in Article 27 of the 2007 Interim Constitution also.

Although the National Information Commission was established in 2008 as an independent body to oversee the implementation of RTI Act, it still lacks the institutional capability. The commission formulated RTI Regulations in 2009 to protect, promote and implement RTI law.

The Commission is empowered to hear and adjudicate cases under RTI law and has power to issue orders to public

agencies recommending and providing **suggestions in RTI to public bodies and** government. The commission can also impose fine, compensations, issue orders, prescribes timeframe to public bodies to provide information.

Although it is an all powerful body, **its institutional capability is virtually** non-existent. According to NIC, it is still under staffed and under resourced. It does not have the manpower to update its website with relevant information and to establish a proper record keeping system as NIC staff are not experts on RTI.

It will support to build broader coalition and ownership amongst all key stakeholders. The Project will aim to make public bodies more responsive, transparent and accountable towards the demand of citizens.

The pilot covers Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Physical Planning, Works and Transport Management and their line agencies in Dadelhdhura, Banke, Morang, Parsa and Kaski.

RTI project will also strengthen NIC staff and its institutional capacity, help Public Information Officers – improve their capacity, help Public Bodies – strengthen their institutional capacity and spread awareness through the Civil Society.

The information demand by citizens increased in six selected ministries and their local agencies: for Establishment of MIS system to manage information request, Familiarization training to PIOs on MIS system, and Public awareness on MIS and application request.

Integrated MIS system was established in six pilot ministries and their district line agencies in five districts to maintain record of information request and its status. ■

## RTI Pilot Underway

MADHAV PRASAD POKHAREL, Undersecretary and chief-Appeal Section and spokesperson at National Information Commission, spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT.

What is the state of Right to Information?

It is guaranteed by the Interim Constitution and backed by Right to Information Act. The commission is now making efforts to create institutions to provide the information the citizen needs.

Do you have centers all over Nepal?

We are yet to reach all over Nepal. Although the law has made a mandatory provision to provide the information sought by citizen, there are still a lot of hindrances on it. Even the Commission does not have all documents. People are unaware of their rights. Some NGOs have been working to disseminate the Right to Information. However, they are also confined to district headquarters.

What is the RTI project doing now?

One of the aims of this pilot project is to make effective arrangements to strengthen the Right to Information system. For this, we are now currently working to establish Management Information System (MIS) in five districts to provide relevant information of six development related ministries.

How will it work?

We will implement MIS system in all these districts linking the offices of six development related ministries. According to the act, there is the need to release all the information within three months. After installing the information in MIS, people will get the information they want.

Who is supporting the project?

DFID-ESP is funding our pilot project. It is going to be a five-year project. During the period, the commission will make several efforts. We have planned to reach up to the secretaries of Village Development Committees. We are now developing Outreach and Communication Strategies. ■





RDIF

# Transforming Society

Implemented under the support of Nepal's four donor partners, the Rights, Democracy, Inclusion Fund (RDIF) has helped transform a large spectrum of Nepalese society in its just over seven years.

By A CORRESPONDENT

Ram Kumari Das, a Dalit women activist from Dodhana VDC, Siraha, in southeast Nepal, had never imagined that a small project would bring drastic changes in the social structure of backward rural communities of terai.

"I cannot explain the transformation the project brought to our society. After this project came to operation, Dalits and women of the project areas have felt empowered and about 50 percent cases of caste and gender-based discrimination, violence against women and untouchability related problems have decreased," said Das.

Sixteen-year old Bhavana Pariyar of Dang saw more drastic transformation in her society. "My experience is that the program offered me an opportunity to acquire knowledge about human rights and develop critical thinking. We were informed about rights and responsibilities of children and existing social discriminations. It helped children to be more responsible for positive changes in the society," said Pariyar.

Dudhkala Bista, 25, Bhagshwor VDC-5, Achham, sees liberation in the village following making her Village as Chaupadi eradicated areas. "Our struggle against Chhaupadi paid when

the ward committee formed in our village and declared it as *chhaupadi-free* ward in November 2012. All nine wards of the VDC followed our path and the whole Bhageshwor VDC was declared as the first *chhaupadi-free* VDC of Far-western region in Jan 2013," said Bista, a widow attending the closing the project.

Although the social transformation process remains slow, people of three backward regions have seen this happen in just over seven years. The testimony given by three participants of three different regions spoke volumes about the changes.

The Rights, Democracy, Inclusion

Fund (RDIF) was designed in 2006 for supporting peace building and for a smooth transition to democracy in Nepal. Four bilateral donors supported the program that focused on enhancing rights, democracy and inclusion at the community level. RDIF was also an innovation in terms of funding mechanism as it involved a pool of funds contributed by four bilateral donors.

The first phase of RDIF ended in 2008; the second phase at the end of 2012. During this period RDIF worked with 88 civil society organizations. The program disbursed £6.8 million for grants in six years. RDIF-supported



Closing Ceremony

# 'Rdif Helped Deepen Democracy'

PHANINDRA ADHIKARY

The Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund (RDIF), a multi-donor program, has concluded after six years of project implementation. PHANINDRA ADHIKARY, Team Leader/GRM for Enabling State Program/DFID, spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues related to the program. Excerpts:

**What does Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund (RDIF) stand for?**

RDIF was a joint initiative of DFID, SDC, AusAID and Norwegian Embassy in the first phase. In the second phase, Norway withdrew from RDIF, whereas DanidaHUGOU joined it. Enabling State Program managed the Fund. The key thematic areas of support were democratization, social and political inclusion, human rights and capacity development of partner organizations.

RDIF contributed to deepening democracy in Nepal through rights and inclusion by partnering with national, regional and local civil society organizations.

**When did it start and how was it managed?**

The first phase of RDIF implementation started in February 2006 and concluded in December 2008. The second phase started in January 2009 and concluded in December 2012. RDIF was managed by the Enabling State Program, which is a good governance initiative of the UK Government's Department for International Development. RDIF established Regional Offices in Biratnagar, Pokhara, Nepalgunj and Dhangadhi in the second phase in order to launch and expand RDIF projects in remote rural areas and to provide technical oversight and capacity building support to its project implementing partner organizations. This greatly helped us fulfill our goal to 'reach the unreached' by developing partnership in 70 districts of Nepal.

**How many projects were managed and what was the financial commitment?**

In the first phase, it took us time to develop systems and procedures, implementation approaches, human resources management, grants and financial management procedures etc. As such, we were only able to support 22 projects. The total expenditure of the first phase was £2.2 million. However, during the second phase, we were able to support 76 projects. Our total expenditure was £4.7 million, out of £4.9 million committed by the four donors.

In the first phase, DFID committed £870,000; AusAID £1,002,000, SDC £252,000, and the Norwegian Embassy £90,000. Similarly, the second phase donor contribution was £2.31 million by DFID, £1.35 million by AusAID, £1.25 million by SDC and £577,000 by DanidaHUGOU.

**What were the focus areas of RDIF?**

As I said earlier, RDIF is about contributing to deepening democracy by promoting rights and inclusion. The second phase of RDIF focused on reaching the unreached communities and supported activities at the local level. This way, RDIF was able to reach a large number of people living

in rural Nepal, with specific activities designed in tune with local realities and contexts. Some of the RDIF-supported activities at the local level went on to amplify citizens' voices at the regional and national levels. RDIF also helped civil society organizations to enhance their knowledge of RDIF thematic areas and to advocate policy change at the central level.

**How do you view the overall coverage of the project?**

RDIF focused on geographical coverage as well as thematic. In the first phase, its project activities reached the country's 75 districts through a voter education project, and 70 districts in the second phase. There were altogether 18 civil society organizations that implemented 22 projects in the first phase. In the second phase, 76 partners completed projects, one by each. RDIF projects designed various activities targeting diverse communities, including the poor and vulnerable ones. The number of RDIF projects that focused on women, Dalits and youths was relatively higher. Some of the RDIF projects reached the most remote areas of Nepal, including Karnali.

**What have been the significant achievements of the project?**

Well, the total direct beneficiaries of the projects were 1.33 million with almost equal participation of men and women. The program reached over 900,000 people through awareness campaigns, saw the participation of people in 175,000 functional group/networks. Around 170,000 people participated in dialogue, workshop and interaction events, and approximately 75,000 people received training and orientation in RDIF's thematic areas. Above 500,000 people had better understanding of constitutional processes, human rights and inclusion issues. Our independent evaluation has shown an improvement from 37% baseline figure to 84% in terms of people's awareness about electoral processes. RDIF projects formed and mobilized advocacy groups and networks to strengthen the organized voice of the people and to raise concerns and influence policy and system change, including quality service delivery from state agencies at the local level. Community members and representatives of state institutions participated in dialogues, workshops and interactions. This was crucial for forging constructive engagement between citizens and state agencies at the local and national levels.

**So what are the changes and key results from RDIF projects?**

The project helped political decision makers, together with civil society at the local level, to resolve local issues peacefully. We have also observed increased public commitment by political parties to be transparent and inclusive. Similarly, more aware and organized people are engaged in bringing about changes in their communities by reducing discrimination. This is another important change. Our partner organizations have also been able to contribute to state institutions at the central level through policy

advocacy and constructive feedback. People at the local level have made increased efforts for democratic practices in social structures such as community users groups and management committees. In some districts, even government officials such as VDC secretaries were supported by our partner organizations to have more conducive environment and strengthened relationship between the secretaries and community people. It has also led to increased access to resources by women and poor people in project areas. These are a few highlights of the changes and results observed.

#### How did the project support political parties?

The projects helped over 3,000 political party cadres/leaders improve their understanding of democratic practices. The projects also facilitated training of nearly 1,500 youths affiliated to various political parties. They completed a short training on negotiation and conflict management. The training helped political parties make public commitments and become more transparent and inclusive at the local level. Political parties have initiated activities within their organizations for strengthening intra-party democracy, transparency and inclusion. For example, political parties have established inclusion desks in Nawalparasi. Within a short span of time, RDIF was able to create more awareness and organize citizens in their drive for changing formal and informal rules of the game, including increased citizen vigilance of resource allocation, mobilization and social security provisions.

#### How many people participated in the project?

More than 1.3 million people participated in various project activities such as trainings, orientation, dialogues and interactions. About 33,000 community people (70% female, 28% Dalit, 32% Janajati) were organized in local groups and networks through RDIF projects in Phase II for constant and constructive engagement, sensitization and policy changes. Some of the activities included Constituent Assembly [CA] process, social security allowance, political representation, access to public goods and services. Over 40,000 people participated in interaction with CA members and provided their feedback to CA thematic committee reports before the dissolution of CA.

#### What are the other contributions that the project made?

Policy reviews and advocacy at the centre, sensitizing state agencies on rights of senior citizens, gender and sexual minorities, women and children were important contributions. Apart from increased efforts by citizens for democratic practices in social structures such as users groups and management committees, over 1,500 local groups and networks established by RDIF projects acted as drivers of change through social mobilization, dialogues and influence.

#### How has the project contributed to economic empowerment?

Linking awareness with economic empowerment is an important step to a better and more sustainable participation of the poor and vulnerable people. Although changing the 'power relationship' overnight in local communities is an unrealistic desire, an inclusive targeting approach and engaging the 'not-excluded' groups to promote inclusion could

be useful. Integrating capacity development of partner organizations contributes to effective and efficient project delivery. Local structures of funding agencies provide opportunity to access resources by small and locally-rooted organizations, and helps mitigate risks.

#### What lesson donors have learnt?

The project showed that multi-donor approach worked even in unpredictable and fragile contexts. Local partners are more efficient in mobilizing communities, engaging constructively with others and being accountable towards their constituencies. Similarly, active involvement of target communities in the planning, implementation and monitoring processes makes projects more effective. Working with political parties is a sensitive issue requiring trust and confidence building, sound preparation, and neutral facilitation. Moreover, strengthened coordination and collaboration with government stakeholders can lead to quicker and sustainable results.

#### What were the challenges?

The project faced a number of challenges. Managing expectations of tangible and sustainable results from short-term interventions through a large number of partner organizations was a challenge in itself. The project partners were scattered across the country, which limited regular hands-on support. We had assumed that our partners would have a good understanding of thematic areas, but this was not the case with some of the partners. As such ESP/RDIF had to engage significantly than was expected to ensure effective implementation of some projects.

It seems RDIF has made notable contributions to deepening democracy at the local level, but will this be sustainable after the closure of RDIF?

RDIF has invested significantly in capacity building of the partner organizations. The partner organizations that RDIF worked with have now good capacity in terms policy formulation, implementation of strategies, project management, monitoring, evaluation and lesson learning tools, gender equality and social inclusion tools, financial management and control. Additionally, they have had a good opportunity to practice and experience the issues they are committed to. Some of the partners continue to pursue action towards addressing some of the social justice issues – such as addressing gender-based violence, untouchability and caste-based discrimination, access to services. Their mission is going on even after the closure of RDIF. If our partners are able to access resources from local government and continue their mission, then RDIF results would not only be sustained, they would also expand. ESP, which managed RDIF for six years, will continue its support for building the capacity of RDIF partner organizations. ■



## Dalit Women Enjoy Dignified Life

RAMKUMARIDAS

A Dalit women activist from Dodhana VDC, Siraha, Southern East Nepal

I am a member of "District Level Network to fight Violence against Women" formed by Dalit Janakalya Yuba Club (DJKYC) and "Rapid Response Team" formed by Woman and Children Office and DJKYC. As I am working on the issue of violence against women I have come closer to the DJKYC because it is primarily raising two major issues in the district. First: the issue of discrimination against Dalit and second: the issue of eradication of violence against women.

This has resulted in launching creative campaigns in public places like temples, party venues, and seminars among others. Consequently, past tradition to allow Dalits to take their meal only after non-Dalits and restriction from entering into temples is now changed. Both the Dalit and non-Dalit take meal simultaneously, together. In some case, priests of local temples are from Dalit community. Besides this, inter-cast marriage couples used to be displaced from the society in the past.



## "Children Are Messenger Of Awareness And Change In Society"

BHAVANA PARIYAR

Dang, A Dalit girl studying at 9th grade in a district of Mid-western Nepal.

I know that Rights, Democracy and Inclusion Fund (RDIF) was launched during conflict period and worked in many war-affected areas like Rapti Zone of Nepal. The education of children like us was largely affected because of frequent strikes. We had to live under the terror of abduction, rape, threat and fear created by criminal groups. Needless to say, traditional customs like child marriage, kamlari pratha (bonded labour system), discrimination between son and daughter, and social insecurity were practiced in the society.

Given the situation, Human Rights Protection and Legal Service Centre (HRLSC), a partner organization of RDIF, launched a program called "Local Capability Building Program" in five districts of Rapti Zone for three years with the aim of promoting human rights and peace at the local level. Human Rights and Peace Education was taught in 25 secondary schools of Rapti Zone.



## "Now, we don't shelter at cow-shed"

DUDHKALA BISTA

Bhagshwor-25, Achham, a widow and victim of Chhaupadi from a Far-western district of Nepal

Life was full of misery as financial status of our family was not so strong. Further I passed through a series of challenges as the society always perceives single women negatively. During menstruation period, I was also kept at chhau (cow-shed, a place arranged for women during menstruation) at my parental home. I faced so many problems because of chhaupadi (women having living to live in a cow-shed during menstruation). I was scared and couldn't fall asleep the whole nights. I was not allowed to attend public functions during menstruation period which deprived me from getting so many opportunities. Due to the lack of food, I often had to suffer hunger. I always thought about the cow-shed and suffering even before my menstruation period started. I often consumed medicine to delay my menstruation.



project activities were carried out in all districts across the country.

"The government of Nepal recognizes the contribution made by RDIF in deepening democracy, inclusion and gender issue at the grass root level," said Upendra Adhikary, joint secretary of Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare.

RDIF Phase I engaged with national networks and organizations for ensuring a speedy rollout, RDIF Phase II focused on consolidation of the initial efforts by shifting focus on district and regional CSOs.

An end-of-project evaluation in March-April 2013 found that RDIF had successfully

contributed to raising awareness about civil and political rights, particularly among marginalized groups. It added that the social inclusion focus contributed to

## "The Closure Of Project Will Have Set Back"

SHARMILA KARKI

President of Federation of Non-governmental Organization in Nepal.

**How do you look at the importance of the project?**

The project helped a lot in the process of political and social transformation in Nepal. However, the project is packing after just seven years of completion giving nothing for sustainability. I would like to call Nepal's all development partners to continue this project for few more years.

**As the project has already closed, how do you look at it?**

The closure of the project will have set back in the total programs. Nepal is yet to complete the constitutional writing process and peace process is yet to completely conclude. In this context the project like RDIF is highly essentials.

**What is your other impression of the project?**

One of the positive parts of the project was that it was a joint project of Nepal's all development partners. It also showed that a jointly funded project works successfully. Similarly, this is the project which backed Nepal's civil society and community level organization to deepen democracy, process of inclusion and gender issues at the grass root level.

**What will be the implication of the closure of the project?**

As the project has directly benefited to the community and transformed Nepal's social and political process, the wrap off of the project without giving another alternative is unfortunate.





# Rdif Helped Bring Democracy Closer To The People

By DOMINIC O'NEILL

The RDIF was set up in 2006, during a time when it was very difficult for civil society's voice to be heard and many excluded groups were struggling for representation. Over 1.3 million people have directly benefited from RDIF through training and orientation, awareness campaigns, workshops and community mobilisation.

For instance, in the run up to the 2008 CA elections, the RDIF helped bring democracy closer to the people by supporting massive civic and voter awareness campaigns in over 1,500 communities with high concentration of marginalised populations. A post-campaign study revealed that people's awareness of election processes in the areas targeted increased from 37 per cent to 84 per cent. The 2008 elections, as we know, resulted in the most representative CA in Nepal's history.

Another area of progress, with support from the RDIF, has been on tackling violence against women at the local level. For example in Nawalparasi district alone, 300 women received GBV services and 59 women victims cases were heard through the coordination efforts of CSOs with the police and the local women's development officer. In Achham, one VDC was declared as "Chaupadi-free" (women having to live in a cow-shed during menstruation) as a result of the work of one RDIF partner. RDIF partners across the country been able to raise awareness and address issues of harmful social practices, such as 'untouchability', child marriage, and bonded labour.

Similarly, as shown in the presentation, there is evidence of RDIF partners through their constructive

engagement with the VDCs and DDCs being able to better access services and resources on behalf of the target communities. One of the key features of RDIF has been in 'reaching the difficult to reach'. RDIF's partners have been located in nearly all of Nepal's districts - 90% (68 districts), reaching over 1000 VDCs including in very poor and remote areas.

But, whilst it is very important to raise the voice of the poor and vulnerable to demand their rights and access resources - which RDIF has done - it is also important to work to support Government to respond to those demands. Which is what DFID and other partners have been doing through a number of programmes. For instance, DFID has helped the Government to develop its National Strategy and Action Plan to combat Gender-based-violence. Other joint donor programmes, such as the LGCDP and sector programmes are working in closely with Government to help improve service delivery in in health, education and other sectors. This collaborative partnership is very important.

Whilst RDIF is coming to a natural close - after 7 successful years - I think I can speak for all the development partners in saying that we remain fully committed to continuing the type of work that RDIF has started, through other programmes and avenues. 3 of the four partners are currently working to develop a Joint Governance Facility, which will continue to support state and non-state actors. The RDIF exit strategy has also focused on helping partners to access other resources and programmes. We

will also continue to support the Government of Nepal through collaborative partnerships between state and non-state actors.

Before closing, I would like to acknowledge the very constructive engagement and coordination from our civil society partners, from local government officials and central government.

Hearing the testimony of these three women showed that this type of foreign aid was necessary but could never be described as 'evil'. Anyone who truly thinks this has not been outside of Kathmandu to see the real impact that aid programmes are having on the poorest people in Nepal, I invited to take the person to any of our projects to see the impact, whether it be the new Sabha Khola bridge, or a woman who no longer suffers domestic abuse, or a mother who can give birth in a functioning health centre. Anyone who would make such a remark is only showing how little they actually know about what is happening around Nepal and the fantastic work that is being done.

None of us want to see a country dependant on aid, but it is the Government of Nepal and its leaders who have the means at their disposal to prevent the country being aid dependant: provide political stability, pass a full budget, invest in hydropower and infrastructure, support agriculture, support job creation and within 5-10 years Nepal will no longer be dependent on aid.

*O'Neill is Head DFID. Excerpts of the statement delivered at RDIF Dissemination Event on behalf of RDIF donor partners.* ■

improvements in representation of marginalized communities in various social and political structures. RDIF first phase was supported by DFID, SDC, AusAID and Norwegian

Embassy. Second phase was supported by DFID, SDC, AusAID and DanidaHUGOU. Enabling State Program (ESP) managed RDIF.

The experiences of RDIF show

that transformation and change is possible only through the mobilization of local community. Nepal government will continue this program," said Adhikari.

# The Land of the Gurkhas

By BIPIN ADHIKARI



William Brook Northey's *The Land of the Gurkhas or The Himalayan Kingdom of Nepal* [Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1937] was published 14 years before the political changeover of 1950-51. The book begins with a general survey of Nepal by Brigadier General C. G. Bruce.

Like many other books which were published on Nepal before, Northey's book starts with the introduction of the Nepalese land, the early history of Nepal, the rise of the Gurkhas and Prime Minister Jung Bahadur, who emerged following Anglo-Nepal War, and the turbulent years that followed. With this background, Northey generalizes the Gurkhas as they are, their customs and characteristics, and sports and diversions. Kathmandu, the capital of the Gurkhas, has been described well along with the temples and shrines, followed by the town of Patan, *Bhatgaon* and *Nawakot*. The central part of Nepal finds special mention in the book. Both the eastern and western borders of the country are discussed along with Darjeeling, which was lost to Britain after the Treaty of Sugauli, and its surroundings.

Unlike many of his predecessors, William Brook Northey also writes about the Western border of Nepal and the society around there. He points it out very categorically that the Nepalese people inhabiting the extreme western districts of Nepal – Doti, Baitadi, Jumla, Bajhang, and so on "are often not classified as Gurkhas." There is a remarkable difference between the appearance of these people, he says, and those in the eastern part of Nepal. Be they from the *Chetri* tribe, the *Dotials* or *Bajhangis*, they "looked much rougher and more uncouth than any Gurkhas with whom I had ever been brought into contact before, giving the impression that existence in these extreme western districts was a good deal harder than that known elsewhere."

Northey notes that the communities in the far Western Nepal bear little resemblance to their sturdier neighbours in Central and Eastern Nepal. Rather they look similar to the *Kumaonis* people inhabiting the hills west of the Mahakali river. Their customs, appearance, and even language look similar. The striking difference that Northey finds is that "just as the farther

one goes eastwards in Nepal the races become more and more influenced by Mongolian ideas in the matter of customs and religion, so as one progresses in a westerly direction they become more and more disposed to Hinduism, until they eventually lose every trace of the Mongolian influence, and become as Hindu in culture as the Aryan speaking tribes that are found in the adjacent districts of British India."

Northey also tries to explain who the Gurkhas are. The communities he adds in this group are the Thakuri, Chetri or Khas, Newars, Gurung, Magar, Rai, Limbu, Sunwar and Tamang, and so on. He also includes Brahmins in the group. He thinks that Thakuris, even though they owe Rajput ancestry, sometime resemble *Chetris* in certain cases. A majority of them are, however, hardly distinguishable from the Mongolian-looking Magars or Gurungs. He does not explain what the reasons must be behind these similarities. "Nonetheless, speaking generally, the Gurkhas as a race are decidedly Mongolian in appearance, possessing the high cheekbones and almond-shaped eyes peculiar to that race."

There are several other interesting insights in Northey's about the Gurkha people. He writes about homespun Nepalese cap, *chaubandi-surubal*, and Khukuri that Gurkhas wear. He notes that "to be tall in Nepal brings no special admiration." Nepalese are of small height for sure. Strangely, however, he quips that there is one regiment in the Nepalese army, the rifle regiment, in which the men are all six feet and more. Similarly, he finds that "a well-bred Gurkha is almost invariably fair skinned." There are very few dark-complexioned Gurkhas, who will, in such case, be invariably nick-named as 'Blackie.' Adding further on the peculiarities, he refers to tribal regiments of the soldiers in Nepal. Examples given are that of the same tribe like Kali Bahadur Regiment composed solely of Gurung and the Purano Gorakh, of men of the Magar tribe.

Northey makes a point that the shoes that Nepalis wear are gradually being discarded in favour of European shoes in recent years. He also points out that Nepalese have started wearing a tweed coat of European pattern over the *chaubandi* that men wear with *surubal*. As

far as money is concerned, Gurkhas love to earn and spend and might therefore be described, according to Northey, as Anglo-Saxon in their orientation. A Gurkha regards money 'as something that should be spent. In this he differs greatly from the Indian of the plains, who loves to hoard his *pice* [paisa] as carefully as a Frenchman does his *sous*." The author also gives some space to Gurkha songs. He thinks many of them are very primitive. But there are certainly some songs full of emotions. The example given is –

"In the heavens above are more than nine lakhs of stars.

I cannot count them.

Thus the words of my heart surge up into my mouth.

But I cannot utter them."

Comparing the caste system in Nepal with that in the Darjeeling hills, Northey writes of its more liberal nature in Darjeeling. "Men of the highest caste are to be found in quite lowly occupations or doing work that they could never perform in their own country. Thus the *syce* (groom) of the pony that you hire on the Mall may as likely as not be a *Chetri* or even a Brahman, while the fact that a man of good caste marries a woman of low caste, or vice versa, seems no matter very little if at all here."

There is some reference about Nepal's urban centres as well. "Outside the valley there are but few towns in Nepal that can be called important centres. Some like Ilam, Dhankuta, Jumla and *Salyana*, enjoy a certain amount of local prestige as chief towns and civil headquarters of districts, as others, like *Silgarhi*, *Daelekh* and Baitadi, do in virtue of their being military stations, while the shrines at *Riri* and *Muktinath* attract large numbers of pilgrims from India and Tibet; but that is all that can be said. In fact, of the provincial towns, perhaps only Butwal, Palpa, *Tansing* and Pokhara can with any justice be called important."

Referring to Singh Durbar, or the home of the Prime Minister, Northey says 'there is nothing of Nepalese

THE LAND OF THE GURKHAS  
OR  
THE HIMALAYAN KINGDOM OF  
NEPAL  
BY  
WILLIAM BROOK NORTHEY, B.C.  
BRIGADIER GENERAL, R.E.  
WITH A CHAPTER BY  
WILLIAM GUNDEL, M.A., C. D., B.A., C.E., M.P.A.  
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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architecture in this imposing building." There is an interesting revelation that "of the roads in the hills, the greatest and most important is the one which traverses the entire length of the country from east to west leading from Darjeeling to Pithoragarh in Kumaon, a distance of more than five hundred miles." There must be many men of letters in Nepal even now who may not have ever read or heard of this road, which does not even exist in the form of a remnant.

Northey mentions that while much of Terai is still very unhealthy during certain times of the year, "the Nepalese government has in recent years made great efforts to make at any rate certain parts of it more habitable, particularly in the Morang, where large stretches have been cleared and made suitable for human habitation." In the town of *Batauli* [Butwal], which he visited in 1920, unlike *Kassauli*, the far side of the *Tindo Khola*, he also observes some dark-skinned Biharis and Marwaris.

The author had almost two decades of experience in a Gurkha regiment. He served Nepalese Escort in Kathmandu not only as a trainer, but also worked with the Nepalese contingent on the Indian frontier during the first World War, also serving thereafter as Gurkha recruitment officer for five years in Nepal. He was allowed by Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher to go around some parts of Nepal and have some first-hand experience in understanding this country. His insights on Nepal were also influenced by the authors who wrote of Nepal before him, like Sylvain Levy, Perceval Landon, and Percy Brown.

This is not William Brook Northey's sole book on Nepal. He also co-authored another book on the Gurkhas, their manners, customs, and their country. This 1928 book deals with the people and their language, religion and festivals, government and administration, and Nepal's war effort, to mention a few. There is also a chapter in the book on the slavery and the labour problem.

The present book contains a good bibliography and index. It also has many important illustrations attracting attention of any reader. The author points out in the preface to the book that the map of Nepal that appears here is drawn from the most recent survey of Nepal. This is an interesting old book giving new insights. As Samuel Butler, an iconoclastic Victorian-era English author, remarked, "the oldest books are still only just out to those who have not read them."

## LEPROSY

# Down, Not Out

*Even though there is a cure, a fear of oppression of the infected exists here in Nepal*

By ARYAA RAJOURIA

Leprosy is a dreadful disease, which, besides maiming and killing its victim, has long carried with it a social stigma and isolation. Leprosy causes immense and permanent damage to the nerves, scars the skin, and weakens the muscles. Decades ago, it was incurable and infected patients were treated horribly. Today, though it still exists, there is a cure.

Leprosy, also known as Hansen's disease, is a chronic illness caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*. Although not easily transferred, it is a frightening disease. One can get cured through the multi-drug therapy, which is easy and cheap. However, once a limb is lost through leprosy, it's gone forever.

Leprosy is often called the disease of poverty, and poverty is in abundance in Nepal. Today, many organizations help prevent and cure leprosy, before it gets out of hand. However, years ago, leprosy was thought of as an evil disease. They've slowly begun to reduce the stigma and avoid 'leper colonies'. Anandaban Hospital (Leprosy Mission Nepal) is one of them. Founded by the Leprosy Mission International in 1957, it serves as the main 'leprosy referral hospital' in Nepal. Located in Laltipur, it has already cured hundreds of people. According to Anandaban Hospital, in 2003, there were only 17 serious cases of leprosy and this number has since gone down. In 2003, 226 major and 217 minor leprosy related operations were done at the Anandaban hospital.

Some believe that an upsurge is taking place; others say that it is impossible. One thing is for sure, leprosy still exists today. In 2010, the Nepal Leprosy Trust found 225,000 new cases worldwide. A majority of the

225,000 were thought to be in the Indian/Nepali region and the 10% of the diagnosed were children.

The disease may be difficult, but the cure has become easy. However, there is a large amount of humiliation and isolation that the disease-ridden must face in Nepal and India. Ram Sharma, an 86-year-old resident of Chitwan now in Kathmandu,



remembers, "Leprosy is a horrible disease. As kids, we were forbidden to even go near an individual suffering from the disease. It used to be scary and it would eat up your body. However, it is curable now and the medicines are accessible to everyone."

Throughout history, there has been a stigma shadowing leprosy. People affected with the disease were secluded and placed in 'leper colonies'. These colonies were a place to quarantine the affected. These people were placed in colonies that were isolated and far away from the rest of the population. Thus, leprosy not only led to physical disability, but also mental and emotional trauma. In India, there were more than 1,000 leper colonies a little over a decade ago. ■

## UPPER TRISHULI 3 A AUGMENTAION

# Power Row

*Financial and technical sides of the Augmentation of Upper Trishuli 3 A are sidelined*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Four former ministers Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani (RPP), Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat and Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat and Surendra Pandey CPN-UML) submitted a memorandum to chairman of the election council of ministers Khil Raj Regmi asking him to cancel the decision taken to augment Upper Trishuli 3 A from 60 MW to 90 MW.

CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal asked the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority to investigate the deal on Upper Trishuli 3 A Augmentation. Former finance secretary Rameshwor Khanal even blamed the Chinese for ignoring Nepal's interests and promoting corruption in Nepal. In his interview to Kantipur daily, Khanal accused the



Rameshwor Yadav

Chinese as working against Nepal's interests in many areas, including augmenting of Upper Trishuli 3 A. Even politically affiliated trade

unions of NEA are against it.

However, studies made by various experts since its inception showed that augmentation of Upper Trishuli 3 A project is technically viable and economically profitable to NEA and Nepal. At a time when present construction rate per MW of electricity is over 200 million rupees, the cost of the project is 120 million per MW experts argue.

"We have taken the decision looking at the broader interest of the country and NEA as this will save millions of rupees equivalent in foreign

currency used to import energy and petroleum products. According to present forecast, there will be power cut even in summer. Generation of 30 MW in such a low cost will immensely benefit Nepal. I challenge those who are opposing the augmentation to prove it as financially and technically wrong," said Rameshwor Yadav, Managing Director of NEA. "The augmentation of the project is taken as per the provision of EPC agreement and Public Procurement Act and NEA Act and Regulations."

Whatever the logic NEA managing director gives, critics want to cancel the deal. "This is not a time to debate economic and technical justification of Augmentation of Upper Trishuli 3 A project. We are very much concerned on why NEA board suddenly took the decision to sign the augmentation with a Chinese construction company which failed to accomplish even 20 percent of the civil works. The augmentation of Upper Trishuli 3 A will delay the construction period and increased the price. There are rampant irregularities in the augmentation," said former finance minister and CPN-UML leader Surendra Pandey submitting the memorandum to the chairman of council of ministers.

After Arun III cancelation, this is another hydro power project in controversy, not for its technical and economic viability, but for unknown reasons. Opponents are attacking personally those who are involved in the deal rather than raising technical, legal and financial flaws creating confusion on the mind of the people.

"The power generated by Upper Trishuli 3 A is much cheaper than what we have been getting from private developers. There is the provision for

augmentation in EPC contract. NEA's previous boards also set up committees to take up study on augmentation of the project," said managing director Yadav.

"The proposal for augmentation was even discussed during my tenure as a minister for water resources. But, I rejected it," said former energy minister Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat.

Upper Trishuli-3 A Hydro-electric Project is under construction within a joint financial support by Nepal government, Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) and Concessional loan from China Exim Bank. The contract agreement was signed between NEA and the contractor China Gezhouba Group Company Ltd for the construction of Civil Works, Electro Mechanical and Hydro-mechanical Works of the 60 MW installed capacity in 2010. Although the project needs to complete by May 31, 2014, it was delayed due to various political obstructions, including bandhas. It has just made 21 percent progress in civil, electro mechanical and hydro mechanical side. So far as transmission line is concerned, the progress is just 2 percent.

Signed under the EPC model, the augmentation proposal was forwarded since the beginning of the work. "After augmentation of project to 90 MW, its power generation will be increased by 35 percent. All the six technical committees formed since 2010 recommended augmentation of the project."

This is not the only project that has landed in controversy. Other China financed projects, Purchasing of Aircraft, Construction of Regional Airport in Pokhara, and Ring Road are also facing snags. Similarly, the proposal to construct West Seti by Chinese Companies is also opposed by major political parties. Interestingly, Nepalese communist are in the fore front of opposing Chinese investment.



Surendra Pandey



## PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE For Rural Farmers

*Although the intervention by Practical Action is small in terms of investment, it has shown that access to information in the village can bring a drastic change in the livelihood of people*

By A CORRESPONDENT

Phool Kumari Mahato, a resident of Kalhuwa Village of Nawalparasi District, struggled for long to start a commercial vegetable farming because of her lack of knowledge about professional farming. After taking part in an interaction with experts and farmers under Technical Knowledge Service run by Practical Action, Mahato learnt the way.

After learning from interactions, video shows and other information materials, Mahato, a widow, started commercial farming. Mahato made Rs. 50,000.00 (US dollar 550) last year. She has already made over Rs. 7,000.00 (80 dollars) worth of vegetables.

"I am planting cauliflower, cucumber and cabbage. The knowledge I gained through Practical Action changed my perception. I can go to the center whenever I face problems. We have got land and water but what we lacked was knowledge," said Mahato.

Mahato is one of many people getting such benefits. Durga Adhikari, from Ageuli Village of Nawalparasi, holds similar views. "What I came to realize is that lack of knowledge and information about our agriculture methods pushed us behind," said Durga Adhikari. "If we can acquire knowledge on what kind of diseases affects our plants and what methods we need to apply, it makes a lot of difference."

The knowledge of potato farming has completely changed the pattern of agriculture in Deurali village of Nawalparasi. Till a few years ago, people living in the villages failed to get the benefits from vegetable farming. Practical Action's Practical Answer program showed that

empowering the community through technical knowledge is key to bring changes in rural parts of Nepal. Building infrastructure and providing facilities are not enough.

"We have been planting vegetables for long. We did not know that we can even produce potato in our land," said Dil Bahadur Bhujel, a farmer. "We learnt a lot in methods by watching videos and interacting with people."

With the partnership of READ-Nepal, Practical Action is disseminating various information to the rural people through their Practical Answer programs. Currently READ-Nepal is implementing the programs through six community libraries and they are planning to work with 20 other community libraries in different districts.

Under the Practical Answers, Nepal's rural people are learning about farming systems, crop patterns health and use of pesticides and other basic information required by poor and vulnerable groups in rural areas.

"Our experiences have shown that sharing information and knowledge is important to bring the change in rural parts of Nepal. Rural Nepalese need basic information and knowledge about agriculture which can bring the change in the community," said Upendra M. Shrestha, Head of Program Funding and Communication, Practical Action.

According to the website of Practical Action, Practical Action has been using appropriate technology to help people in the



developing world for more than four decades. "Within Practical Answers section of this site, you will find a knowledge bank of these technologies so that you can take them and replicate them. If you can't find what you are looking for, you can ask a question through our technical enquiries service."

Practical Answers is the Technical Information Service of Practical Action. It provides information on appropriate, small-scale technologies that improve the lives of people living in poverty. It allows people to access the wealth of technical knowledge within Practical Action as well as that of Practical Action partners and other people working on reducing poverty.

One of the aims of the Practical Answers program is to work across the globe helping to share and promote knowledge about appropriate technologies through its enquiry service and its extension activities.

At a time when Nepal's policymakers and government officials are looking for rural development methods to eradicate poverty, Practical Answers are a big help. Farmers like Mahato, Adhikary and Bhujel show the way that knowledge is power for transformation and upliftment. ■

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## Bill Made To Amend And Unite Laws Regarding Banks And Financial Institutions, 2066

The financial sector is the backbone of any country. This is also a very crucial sector. The most minor of mistakes can cause serious impacts. Deposits are collected from the common people and credit is provided by the banks and financial institutions to those individuals in need. The deposit in the banks are owned by the depositors. This is not a budget that the government can spend nor is it the property of bank founders and managers. The money earned through the blood and sweat of the common people are brought to these institutions that are recognized by the state, and is therefore the property of the people. It's a symbol of the peoples trust in the financial system. Banks cannot run without trust and without banks the financial system cannot function. Without proper functioning of the financial system the country cannot run. The concerned institutions and the state must be aware about maintaining this trust otherwise no individual will make deposits. The misuse of these amounts is more serious than the misuse of of the states income and corruption. It is the state and the concerned institutions responsibility to see to the safe and proper use of the deposit. It is therefore the responsibility of the state to see to it that the deposits scattered across banks and financial institutions be institutionalized and unified, the amounts be invested in productive sectors, trust in the financial institutions be established, and the money earned through the sweat of the common people be properly used. This is a concept accepted by banks the world over. The economic development of the country is dependent on this.

### States responsibility

It is the duty of the state and the regulatory agencies to see to the preservation of the state's financial system, protect the rights and well being of the depositors, and promote peoples and depositors trust in the financial system. Likewise it is also an important duty of the state to encourage healthy competition between financial institutions to strengthen and better the national economy, ensure reliable and quality banking and financial mediation service, reduce risk in the banking and financial sectors, and establish a proper

system to operate, manage, regulate, monitor and supervise the sector. This has also been mentioned in the current and proposed in the laws related to banking and financial institutions. Likewise the regulation of this sector, and laws related to the financial officers have also been mentioned as the objectives of the Nepal Rastra Bank (Central Bank) in the Nepal Rastra Bank Act in the following manner:

(a) Create and manage necessary currency and foreign exchange policy for the sustainable development of the economy through price and Balance of Payment stability

(b) Promote necessary stability and fluidity for the banking and financial sector

(c) Develop secure, healthy and capable payment systems

(d) Regulate, inspect, supervise and monitor the banking and financial system, and

(e) Promote the overall banking and financial system of Nepal and increase the trust of the common people towards it.

### 3. Development of Banking in Nepal

The modern development of the banking sector in Nepal began in 1994 with the Nepal Bank Law. Before that the *Tejarath Adda* est. in 1933, *Taksar* in 1989, and the *Sadar Muluki Khana* established in 1989 were some of the historic official agencies related to financial institutions. Not that there weren't any currency mechanisms during the time of ancient rulers such as Amshu Verma and Maandeb.

In the course of historical development of laws, the Nepal Bank Act 1994, the Nepal Rastra Bank Act 2012, the Nepal Industrial Development Corporation Act 2016, Banijya Bank Act 2020, Rastriya Banijya Bank Act 2012, the Agricultural Development Bank Act 2024, Banijya Bank Act 2031, Financial Company Act 2042, Development Bank Act 2052, Nepal Rastra Bank Act 2058 are some of the important ones.

Likewise five different acts of the same nature (Agricultural Bank Act 2024, Banijya Bank Act 2031, Financial Company Act 2042, Nepal Industrial Development Corporation Act 2046, and Development Bank Act 2052) were dissolved and the Bank and Financial Institutions Act

(through ordinance 2060), 2063 was brought about as an umbrella law and was another historic achievement.

The amendment made in the Banijya Bank Act (Commercial Bank Act) in the 40's decade with the intention to bring in foreign investment and technology and slowly make Nepalis capable of operating the banking sector proved to be a turning point in the financial history of Nepal. Although this allowed a couple of banks to be established through united investments, in the latter part, the astonishing interest and involvement of Nepalis to invest in the banking and financial sectors was largely due to the policies that allowed for such an environment to take place. This sector became the central business attraction. From just 4 banks and financial institutions, a total of 31 commercial banks, 87 development banks, 79 finance companies and 21 micro finance companies and even a few cooperatives and non government institutions have been established and are in operation within the last 20/25 years. This is perhaps exemplary in the world it self.

With the increase in the number of banks and financial institutions, there have also been developments in the policy level as well as laws. Legal documents such as the Foreign Investment and One Door Policy, Foreign Investment and Technology Transfer Act show that there have been some policy level preparations to attract foreign investment. To make the Nepal Rastra Bank, the central bank of the country and the main regulatory body self governing and capable, the Nepal Rastra Bank Act 2012 has been abolished and replaced with Nepal Rastra Bank Act 2058. There is already a First Amendment within this act to strengthen the banks regulatory and monitoring role. The Bank and Financial Institutions Credit Recovery Act 2058 and Credit Recovery Jury were established to bring a change in the Nepali mentality that banks are the medium of bad debtors. Campaigns by the state and the central bank to take action against misuse of banks and financial institutions for personal gains on the basis of post, access and money, creation of special benches in the courts to carry out hearings on banking and commerce have led to increased trust among the common

people and helped further develop the sector.

#### Challenges and future direction

Along with these mentioned achievements there are certain serious challenges related to the banking sector of Nepal that must be dealt with immediately. In the yesteryears there were not as many institutionalized banks in operation. This gave more priority and necessity to the opening of new banks rather than analyzing who were involved in the banks in operation. The laws, rules and regulations were developed accordingly. However the quantitative need has been met today. There is no longer the need for the state to invest partially or wholly to establish or encourage a new bank to operate. Nepali citizens are themselves seen to be attracted towards this.

Of the current and future challenges faced by the banking and financial sector are: overall quantitative increment in banks and financial sectors, lack of qualitative and easily accessible service, urban centric service, lack of stability in trust and establishment, transparent and secure operation, questions over management and good governance, personnel related credit facilities and establishment and operation of banks, direct involvement of individuals, institutions, capacity of regulatory bodies, effective monitoring and most importantly the trust of the common citizens on the financial system.

It is well understood that banks and financial sectors run on the basis of deposits by commoners and not on the investments made by a few. Their commercial success depends on their professional operation, their founders, shareholders, operators and managers.

Investors are not the owners of the banks, and neither is there any such tradition around the world to open banks and financial institutions for the well fare of the investors. Except for having a share on profits obtained from operating within the prevalent rules and limitations shareholders have no other claims on the institutions. No one can therefore say that they own the banks just because they have invested in it.

The permission and license issued by the state to banks and financial institutions to operate their organizations is the main basis for them to operate. Without state licenses and permits no one will come to deposit their savings in banks and financial institutions. No one should forget the fact that they were not made

founders, shareholders or operators of banks and financial institutions just because they invested in it but because they owe it to the state and country. We must all therefore accept the fact that banks and financial institutions operate because they have received recognition from the state, and have to operate remaining within the limitations of the law of the land.

One of the major challenges we face is to develop a long term vision about who can establish and operate banks and financial institutions. When individuals and institutions facing financial and commercial difficulties become involved or invest considerably in other banks and financial institutions such will definitely have a negative impact on the overall economy as has been proven from examples in Nepal as well as abroad.

Another challenge that we face is the current trend of individuals who have lost public trust or have a negative image among the public or who do not have enough experience in banking and finance being involved in the establishment and operation of new banks and financial institutions, and legally pressurizing to be a part of the management on the basis of their shares in the said banks. Although banks and financial institutions should be selling their trustworthiness and professionalism our big challenge is to topple the mentality that having adequate money and access should be enough credential to establish and operate banks.

#### Reasons to bring in a new bill

The banking and financial sector is growing rapidly the world over and challenges too are rising rapidly. The global financial crisis and its impact on Nepal is another grave challenge. The global financial crisis which has been increasing step by step is indeed a challenge that the world must deal with. This draft Bill related to Banks and Financial Institutions 2066 was brought about to study the national needs, significance of the financial sector, and make appropriate laws after analyzing such factors like the local consequences of the global financial crisis, national needs, worldwide values, commitments made to the World Trade Organization, establishment, regulation and monitoring of foreign banks and financial institutions in Nepal, organizational character of national banks and financial institutions, financial state, capacity for healthy competition, increment of national financial system through the unification

and merger of current banks and financial institutions, qualitative, trustworthy, and easily accessible banking and financial mediation service, easy abolition of incapable and bad institutions, increment of trustworthiness of banks and the financial systems, protection and promotion of the rights and well fare of depositors, effective supervision, accountability of regulatory bodies.

The proposed bill has twice the legal capacity of current laws and has the following structure. The proposed bill is expected to address the current needs, problems, and codes of the state. It is expected to encourage moral and professional individuals to enter the banking and financial sector, and prevent wrong individuals from being involved as well ease operation, promote good governance, transparency, competition and capacity, initiate and strengthen regulations and supervision locally as per international codes, allow only capable and competitive institutions to remain through mergers, abolish weak and unhealthy institutions, ease access to foreign banks opening branches in Nepal by raising local investments, allow Nepali banks to open branches abroad, and ensure that regulatory bodies are accountable to elected peoples representatives legally. This will help develop long term professionalism, healthy, well governing, disciplined, moral and capable banking and financial institutions and system and create a secure environment for them to grow. It will increase public trust in the financial system and promote and protect the rights and well fare of shareholders and depositors, and other concerned people. This will help create a strong legal basis for the economic and financial stability of Nepal.

\*This investigative recommendation was prepared by financial law expert Hari Nepal for the Nepal Constitution Foundation with inputs from women, Janajati, Dalit, Madhesi, youth and other related and concerned pressure groups. The Foundation is grateful to Niranjan Acharya, Meena Shrestha, Bharat Gautam, Sujan Lopchan, Bidyakanta Adhikary, Meena Gurung, Bholanath Dhungana, Bishnu Prasad Kandel, Shyam Kumar Biswakarma, Lalit Chaudhary, Jenny Gurung, Abhishek Adhikari, Phurpa Tamang, and Dr. Bipin Adhikari.

*The research has been supported by The Asia Foundation and opinion expressed in this report are of the authors and don't necessarily reflects of The Asia Foundation.*

## Live And See

By ADITI ARYAL



Paris Jackson, the 15-year-old daughter of deceased music legend Michael Jackson, tried to end her life by slashing her wrist some time ago. Strikingly another young actor in India, Jiah Khan, took away her life by hanging herself. Statistics reveal that for every suicide or attempt brought into notice, some four to five attempts happen simultaneously without coming to anybody's notice.

Suicide is committed alike by men and women, but our stereotypical thoughts take men to be stronger and hence braver to face tough situations or be able to at least refrain from getting sentimentally broken -- hence many women, the thinking goes, take their lives. Men take their lives too, but the reasons women end their own lives are different in many ways. And charts show men and women committing suicide to be at par with each other, however, women have varied reasons, mainly stress and pressure exerted by others they cannot handle.

In Afghanistan, women commit suicide to get out from marriages they do not like because they cannot escape the brutal domination of men who try and control every sphere of their lives. Also sometimes they do so to not marry the men they are compelled to marry. This is just one reference; women in every part of the world end up taking their own lives as a result of dominance by other people, especially members of the family. They are forced into decisions made by other people with little or no freedom to have their own say. When they reach a point of no return, with not even a possible narrow escape, as a result, they kill themselves.

Coming back to Paris Jackson, the teenager tried to end her life because she was stressed with her life and many tragedies and troubles that came flooding upon her when her father passed away. Women as we know are not too tough to endure too much psychological stress at once, be it emotional stress at workplace, school, college, and strenuous life schedule which when piled with bigger tragedies that happen like passing of a family member, victim of bullying or harassment, some kind of failure at work, school or college simply add to the burden which then becomes difficult for any person to tolerate. In this competitive world where one is supposed to prove herself to be better than the others every minute, stress builds in and adds on to other issues. Moreover, it has been concluded that when someone is going through so many untold woes, it gets suffocating and just a trigger moment is what is needed to come to this end point- suicide.

Suicide is not a new issue as it has been there always, both in literature and real world. Strong emotions that people cannot get rid of take their lives. Guilt, regret, distress, agony, pain, suffering, poverty, misery and extreme stage of sorrow engulf the good and happy and diffuse into an individual's mind, body and intellect and people see death as the only way out of the mess they are tolerating. However, suicide is under reported widely because people fear being blamed, held up in hassles or are too sad by the untimely death of loved ones that they cannot get themselves to complain. ■



## Why Do We Compromise?

By BIDUSHI ADHIKARI

As humans, we are always growing, whether it is physical maturation or mental or emotional. We are always on the path of progress, for ourselves and for society. Abraham Maslow, a 20<sup>th</sup> century psychologist, boldly stated in his hierarchy of needs that the ultimate maturation phase is the acquisition of self-actualization, a stage where we feel like we have achieved to our fullest potential and are in harmony with the world we live in. Psychologist Erik Erickson then stated that once we hit old age, we are in a mental conflict between despair and integrity, where we look back at our lives and decide whether those 60 or so years were worth it. Did we lead the life we wanted, or were we dictated by the words of others?

Society has laid out a discrete path for the seeds of future, one which it claims will ultimately lead us to be happy, successful, and in place with the world. There is a set sequence of event intact: elementary school, middle school, high school, Bachelor's degree, Master's degree, marriage, a professional degree, and the then a well-paying, permanent job in a wealthy company from which you occasionally excuse yourself to play golf and engage in other mind-numbing activities. You send your kids the same way, hit 65, retire, and spend the rest of your life reading books and traveling with your spouse. On the way, we may want to stray ourselves from this concrete path, whether it is in the urge to run away from home during our adolescent years or whether it is in the temptation to entertain a mistress in our 40s and 50s, something psychologists label the "midlife-crisis." Whatever the case, we decide for ourselves that we better stick to the original plan, as it is what society expects from us and something that is considered a "normal" life.

However, such a path may not be in harmony with what we want. While many have spend a "normal" life and managed to fulfill their deepest longings, like Mohammad Yunus, who founded the Grameen Bank for the poor with his knowledge about economics, others of us feel like life as it is is not what we want, that there are other things we would rather pursue. Instead of going to college, we may want to take a hike through Tibet and Southern China. Instead of a bachelor's degree in History, we may be interested in joining a theater group and initiating an acting career. Instead of a nuclear family, we may want an unmarried life. And instead of retiring at 65, we may want to work till the day we die. However, such things are not what society considers "appropriate" for a life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These are choices out of the ordinary and with a negative connotation. As a result, most of us keep away from making these "ridiculous" and "unacceptable" ways.

However, very clearly, pushing away the dreams that we would be happy stops us from achieving that sense of accomplishment Maslow talked about. Always having this hunch that maybe I should have made choices based on what I want instead of what others want to see will carry on to disturb us in our old age and push us to look back at

our lives with despair. When we reach the end of our lives, we feel regret and a sense of loss for a whole life that we could not control.

Then, if we are well-aware of the consequences of our choices, why do we still make them? Why do we choose to live by society, by others, and not by ourselves? Why do values like "follow your heart" and "chase after your dreams" meaning nothing after a certain point where we decide to do as society tells us? The answer lies in our everlasting search for stability and security.

Evolutionary psychology has led us to understand that there are certain characteristics women, especially, search for in men with whom they wish to share a long-term commitment: financial stability, high social status, and industrious characteristics. This in itself shows that women seek for assurance and solidness in life. Men, too, have certain demands, as explained by evolutionary psychology. They seek for healthy-looking women whom they can rely on to pass on their survival genes. This, too, indicates a search for guarantee that has helped our species survive and develop this long.

While this is the psychological explanation, even when we just simply think about leaving the lives society has assigned behind, we tend to get anxious and insecure. How will I earn a living if I don't get that degree? What will I do after my traveling is over? How will I survive my old age without a partner? These questions and their possible answers are what keep us in society's grip. They scare us. Instead of choosing this unsure, mysterious path along which we would have to improvise as we go, we feel more at ease in choosing a path that in its appearance seems solid and sure. And likewise, we compromise our dreamlike ambitions for something more solid and comforting. ■

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- SMS पठाएको केही बेरमा अभिलेखमा भएका व्यक्तिको जानकारी सहितको SMS तपाईंको मोबाइलमा नाम, थर काम गर्न जाने कम्पनीको नाम, काम गर्न जाने देश, निर्णय मिति, पठाउने कम्पनीको नाम, तलब र लागत खर्च समेत आउनेछ ।



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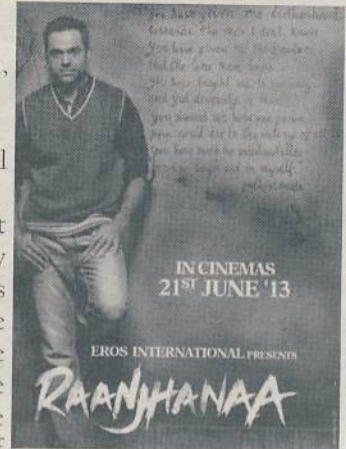
## MOVIE PREVIEW

### Man of Steel

Genres: Action, Adventure, Fantasy  
Director: Zack Snyder  
Cast: Henry Cavill, Russell Crowe, Amy Adams

A young boy learns that he has extraordinary powers and is not of this Earth. As a young man, he journeys to discover where he came from and what he was sent here to do but the hero in him must emerge if he is to save the world from annihilation and become the symbol of hope for all mankind.

Release Date: 14-Jun-2013



### Raanjhanaa

Genres: Romance  
Director: Anand L Rai  
Cast: Sonam Kapoor, Abhay Deol, Swara Bhaskar

Raanjhanaa is a Hindi romance film, directed by Anand L. Rai and written by Himanshu Sharma. The film is produced by Krishika Lulla under the banner Eros International. The film stars Tamil film actor Dhanush in his Bollywood debut and Sonam Kapoor in the lead roles.

Release Date: 21-Jun-2013

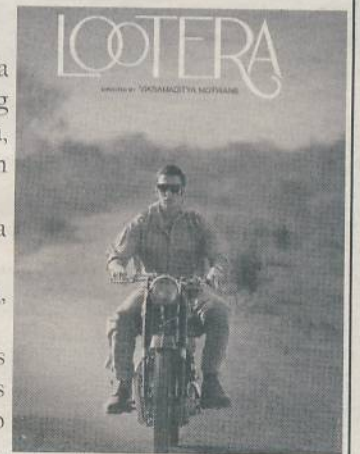


### Lootera

Genres: Romance  
Producer: Vikramditya Motwana, Anurag Kashyap, Madhu Mantena, Bikrant Shrestha, Vikash Bahl  
Director: Vikramditya Motwana  
Cast: Ranveer Singh, Sonakshi Sinha

inspired from O. Henry's 'The Last Leaf', Lootera is the uplifting story of two lovers, of heartbreak, betrayal and ultimate redemption.

Release Date: 05-Jul-2013 (Courtesy: QFX Cinemas)



# From Animals To Humans

By BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD



Zoonotic infections are those that pass from animals to humans. There are many examples of these diseases prevalent in Nepal. Japanese encephalitis, rabies, malaria, brucellosis, swine flu, leptospirosis, rickettsial illnesses (for example the different varieties of typhus infections) are just some of the common ones we know. Amazingly, typhoid, a common problem in Nepal has no connection with the animal kingdom in the spread of this disease, as the bacteria (*salmonella typhi* and *paratyphi*) causing this illness are restricted to humans beings. Lucky for the dogs. Otherwise all of our street dogs would be dead of typhoid fever in Kathmandu, which has the dubious distinction of being the typhoid capital of the world. But, back to zoonotic infections—

Zoonotic infections are so common that they actually make up nearly two-thirds of human infectious diseases. The three recent worldwide viral outbreaks, namely SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory syndromes), the bird flu (H5N1) and the swine flu (H1N1) are all examples of infections passed from animals to humans. Even the HIV virus transferred from chimpanzee to humans in the last century. Clearly in countries like Nepal there is great difficulty in making a proper diagnosis of these seemingly new illnesses. In fact in most instances we have problems making a diagnosis of even well-established, old bacterial diseases. For example if you talk to clinicians in town, they will

say that brucellosis, a bacterial disease which is transmitted by eating infected meat or unsterilized milk may be important to consider in patients with long-standing fever. But, guess what, we are hardly ever able to make a clear microbiological diagnosis which is what counts because clinical assessment alone is not enough to make a final diagnosis. So the diagnosis of brucellosis remains a hunch because we lack proper, specific testing with properly spaced blood collections. We then treat the disease "empirically" to the best of our ability. Our treatment approach of this nature is not restricted to brucellosis but is almost

standard practice. Indeed when there is a disease outbreak in Nepal, the laboratory set up is often deficient.

Clearly we need to have reliable microbiological laboratories which can make a definitive diagnosis of these zoonotic illnesses. Many new private and government medical laboratories have sprung up in Nepal in the last decade or so, but microbiological methodology requires a great deal of finesse and conscientious work. Without this kind of a back-up we will certainly be unprepared to handle zoonotic illnesses and deal effectively with a pandemic, if this situation should arise. ■

स्वस्थ पत्रकारिताको विकास स्वतन्त्र र हक-  
अधिकारको जगेर्ना, राष्ट्रिय सर्वमान्य प्रचलन  
र मान्यतालाई संयोजन गर्दै अगाडि  
बढ्नु आजको अपरिहार्य  
आवश्यकता हो ।



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