



VIEWPOINT:
Dr. Tilak Rawal



FACE TO FACE:
Shreejana Rana



ENCOUNTER:
Sadhu Ram Sapkota

New SPOTLIGHT

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From The Editor

Despite the hectic preparations being made by the Election Commission, nobody is sure whether the elections will be held on November 19 or not. Given the current political deadlock, it is too early to say anything definitive. As the uncertainty prevails, the visit of Indian external affairs minister Salman Khurshid to Nepal will assume greater significance. The election process depends on so many variables. So, instead, we have decided to look at the implementation of Early Warning System to curb the damage by floods in our cover story. Nepal has been facing a huge damage from floods and disasters every year. Like in the past, the onset of monsoon has already devastated the far west and mid-west of Nepal, killing scores of people and damaging property worth millions of rupees. However, the damage in the flood prone areas, like Bardiya and Banke, is gradually changing thanks to the warning system. Although there is a huge damage of houses and crops of farmers, successful implementation of the community based early warning system has prevented human casualties. The recent incidents have shown that the time has come for the government of Nepal to think about implementing community based preventive methods rather than focusing on the traditional rescue and rehabilitation.

Keshab Poudel
Keshab Poudel
 Editor

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AIN GENERAL ASSEMBLY New Board Takes Helm

At a time when the government is working to streamline the role of International and National Non-Governmental Organizations, the Association of International NGOs in Nepal held its general assembly and elected an 11-member new steering committee on board.



The Association of International NGOs (AIN), formed by INGOs working in Nepal in September 1996, is an important network in the development sector of Nepal as members have been implementing various people-centered development programs throughout the hills, mountains and Terai areas. AIN has come together to promote mutual understanding, exchange information and share experiences and learning of our work in Nepal for more effective collaboration.

Indian Assistance For Bara School

During a visit to Bara District, Ambassador of India, Jayant Prasad, inaugurated the newly constructed school building for Shree Nepal Rashtriya Higher Secondary School under Nepal- India Economic Cooperation Program. The function was attended by the local political leaders, senior administrative officials, general public and media.

According to a press release of the Indian Embassy, established in 1951 as a Lower Secondary School and subsequently upgraded as Higher Secondary level in 2007, Shree Nepal Rashtriya Higher Secondary School, situated at Piparapati Pachrauta VDC

At present the AIN comprises with 113 INGOs, working on a wide-range of issues and sectors to contribute to development efforts in Nepal. With Ashutosh Tiwari (Country Director, Water Aid Nepal) chairperson, Lex Kassenberg (Country Director CARE-NEPAL) vice chairperson, Ravindra Shakya (Country Director Restless Development), treasurer and the

members include Michael Frank (Country Director, WVI), Sanjana Shrestha (Country Director READ-Nepal), Simon Lewis (Country Director ADRA-Nepal), Julie Brethfeld (Country Director, Saferworld), David Wright (Country Director, Save the Children), Sangita Nirola (Country Director, Helpage International Nepal) and Deepak Raj Sapkota (Country Director, Karuna Foundation Nepal) and Shobhana Gurung Pradhan (Director, Britain-Nepal Medical Trust)

"On diverse teams like this, it is always important to get interpersonal chemistry and the collective vision right," said Chairman Ashutosh Tiwari.

-8, is one of the oldest Government-recognized schools in Bara District. The school provides educational facilities to about 1300 students, about half of them are girls. The new school building, built with Indian assistance of NRs. 24.80 million, will provide improved learning environment to the student community and significantly contribute towards the further development of education in the District.

Child Friendly Cities Meet Concludes

A draft declaration with 4 key principles on Child Friendly Governance was the outcome of the 3rd International Child Friendly Cities (27-29 June) at the Hotel Park

Village, in Kathmandu.

Organised by the Ministry of Federal Affairs & Local Development (MoFALD), UNICEF, and Child Friendly Asia Pacific Network, the three-day conference brought together international scholars, researchers, development workers, policy makers, local body representatives, council officials, children and agencies working for children from 19 countries.

Fourth Cinemandu Edition

The Embassy of India in Kathmandu and B.P. Koirala Nepal-India Foundation organized the fourth edition of Cinemandu, at B.P. Koirala India-Nepal Foundation. On its fourth edition, Cinemandu screened a critically acclaimed Nepali film released a few months ago - Saanghuro.

Rs 1.39B Swiss Grant For Labor, Governance

The government of Switzerland has agreed to provide a grant assistance of CHF 14 million or, approximately Rs 1.39 billion, to Nepal to support projects in two different areas.

According to a press statement issued by Embassy of Switzerland, while over CHF 8.95 million will be spent on programs in the area of safer labor migration, remaining CHF 4.9 million will be spent on the implementation of Strengthening the Accountability of Local Governments (SALG) project.

An agreement was signed between Thomas Gass, Switzerland's ambassador to Nepal, and Madhu K Marasini, joint secretary, International Economic Cooperation Coordination Division, Ministry of Finance, on behalf of their respective governments amidst a function.

"Based on the successful past collaborations with the Government of Nepal and civil society organizations, the second phase of Safer Migration Project will support the efforts to address the needs of Nepali labor migrants leaving for Middle East and Southeast Asian countries," said the statement. ■

Business Confidence Better: FNCCI Report

Despite the prolonged political instability, the Nepali private sector felt more confidence over six months, a business confidence study conducted by the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) showed.

The Second Business Confidence Survey Report released by FNCCI — the apex organization of the Nepali private sector — placed the Business Confidence Index (BCI) — which measures the confidence of business people, at 49.5 percent, up from 39.7 percent indicated by an earlier report.

Increased foreign trade, more convenience in securing loan, and declining cost of production are the factors boosting the confidence of business people, the report said. Making public the report, Hemanta Dawadi, the director general of FNCCI, said business people expressed more optimism this time compared to the situation before the first six months of the current fiscal year. "Business people are not only more confident but more optimistic about the business environment in next six months," Dawadi said. The report has found that the agriculture sector is most confident among the sectors of economy.



Clean Energy Eco-Campaign

Clean Energy Development Bank has launched Eco-campaign Pogram. Under this program, the bank will visit various schools to generate awareness among children about environment protection. The bank already held the programs in Rupy's International, N.K. Singh Memorial School, EPS, St. Mary, Kanya Sanskritik High School, Durbar High School, St. Xavier and Mount Glory School generating awareness among more than 2,000 students.

Honda Award Winners

Syakar Trading Co. announced the winners of its Nepali New Year scheme. Under this scheme, customers were entitled to scratch cards where they could find numbers from 2-25. Multiplying the obtained number with the year 2070 customers could win cash prizes of up to Rs 51,750. Furthermore, seven lucky customers could win cash prize of Rs 70,000.

Winners for Rs 70,000 are Ram Prasad Gyawali from Lumbini (coupon no 114), Surya Thapa Magar of Dharan (coupon no 1833), Bisha Gautam of Lalitpur (coupon no 6397), Mann Bahadur Thapa of Butwal (coupon no 1776), Barun Trade Concern of Kritipur (coupon no 296), Milan Kumari Shah from Kathmandu (coupon no 2856) and Indra kumar Pun from Pokhara (coupon no 5147).

Ncell Revises Bonus Rates

Ncell, one of the leading mobile service providers in the country, has simplified and adjusted bonuses being extended to customers. The new bonus structure categorizes customers into two groups—customers who have subscribed to Ncell service for more than a year and those who have subscribed to Ncell service for less than a year, says an Ncell statement.

"The adjustment ensures customers get bonus every time

they top up their accounts with Rs 100 or more."

Under the new structure, customers who are using Ncell service for more than a year will get a bonus of Rs 10 every time they top up their accounts by Rs 100 to Rs 199, Rs 20 when they top up their accounts by Rs 200 to Rs 299, and Rs 35 when they top up their accounts by Rs 300 to Rs 499.

Regional training of economic journalists

A two-day regional training program of economic journalists from South Asian countries, jointly organized by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Kathmandu, and Institute of Policy Studies of Sri Lanka (IPS), Colombo. The broad theme of the training program is "Trade, Climate Change and Food Security".

Highlighting the objectives of the program, Dr Posh Raj Pandey, Executive Chairman, SAWTEE, hoped that the two-day training program would enable the journalists conduct proper analysis of the interlinkages between trade, climate change and food security issues and explain that to the masses in simple terms. He was of the view that most economic reporting tend to reflect pre-judgment of journalists in their analysis, and therefore, this training program would help the journalists get rid of that baggage of pre-judgment.

ADB Grant To Help Close Labor Skill Gaps

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is providing a \$20 million grant to the Government of Nepal to give market-oriented skills training to thousands of aspiring young men and women who are unemployed or underemployed.

"Nepal critically needs higher and employment-centric economic growth, and the lack of skilled labor is a key constraint," said Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of ADB's Nepal resident mission. "The project will focus on improving the training for young people in the construction, manufacturing, and services sectors where there are large skill gaps."

According to Asian Development Bank, the grant, just approved by ADB's Board of Directors, will help the Government of Nepal implement key aspects of its Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Policy, 2012 by improving the quality, relevance, and efficiency of the country's Technical and Vocational Education and Training institutes.

With the grant, the Skills Development Project will provide basic level training and employment services to 45,000 people, at least 40% of whom will be women and 30% from excluded groups. Private sector training and employment service providers will be engaged through performance-based contracting to deliver the services.

Himalayan Bank distributed cloths and food

Under its corporate responsibility, the Himalayan Bank Ltd distributed food and other daily used commodities including food and clothes to old people taking shelter in Jyoti Asharam Thankot Kathmandu. The donations include rice, lintel, edible oil, sugar, tea and clothes blanket and utensils.

According to a press release of the Bank, General Manager Sushil Joshi distributed these materials to nine old people sheltering there. The old are abandoned by their family member. ■

Regmi And November Polls

By DR. TILAK RAWAL



After lots of criticism from every corner for not being able to announce a poll date even three months after the formation of the election government, the Regmi-led government, also tired of inter and intra party squabbles on election issues, finally made a declaration on June 13 that CA polls will be held on November 19. Issues related to threshold and declaration of property details by a candidate were conveniently dropped in the ordinance. Expectedly, big four political forces welcomed the announcement but CPN (Maoist) led alliance of fringe parties opposed it, alleging that the decision was taken without their consensus. These parties have been launching agitation programmes of varying nature and

disrupt November polls. Responding to the decision of the High Level Committee to hold a round table conference as demanded by CPN Maoist, the party has constituted a five-member team headed by Kiran, keeping intact its stance on poll deferral, government change and agitation against November polls. It would be unwise to be optimistic about the outcome of the talk because they have not deviated much from the party's central committee decision in Pokhara that approved Kiran's proposal of boycotting the polls. Other political parties that have not completely shivered their working relationship with Kiran, have differed with him on the question of participation in the polls but have

differences, there are intra-party differences, the most notable one being in case of UCPN (Maoist) where Baburam Bhattari has resigned following differences over the appointment of party office bearers and central committee members. Failing to persuade Bhattari to withdraw his resignation, the party has decided to call the extended meeting of the party on July 19. Things are not very smooth even in UML despite the fact that influential leader Oli and his followers have backtracked a bit on their demand for a special general convention of the party, which had convulsed the party a while ago. Intra party wrangling has remained an integral part of Nepali Congress since long and will continue

to remain so in future. These disturbing activities have confused people and inclined to believe that polls will not be held in November. Polls have not taken place on the pronounced time in the past and those failures did not shake then governments but the situation now is different

We cannot also copy their recent welfare scheme to provide 800 million poor Indians with highly subsidized food grains, at Rs 3, 2 and 1 for a kg of rice wheat and millet, respectively, but a humble beginning can be made, be it on the water management front or providing subsidy to the poor and underprivileged areas such as mid and far-west Nepal where dozens of death, related to starvation and cholera are reported every year.

scale since then. This announcement was something to rejoice over and celebrate by the government, which highlighted the announcement of the date for holding new CA polls as its major achievement in the past hundred days. UCPN Maoist and UML were little bit critical of the way state affairs were handled by the government in the past hundred days, accusing it also of failing to create a conducive environment for holding polls, despite the date announcement. These parties, however, should not expect much of this government created by them mainly for holding polls. Moreover, their perennial differences have never been very helpful, grumbles Regmi occasionally, in discharge of responsibilities by this dispensation. Happiness emanating from announcement of polls date is slowly fading away as the Maoist Party led by Kiran is adamant to boycott and

their own concerns to be addressed if their effective participation is to be achieved on November 19. Baidya's threat cannot be lightly brushed aside because he has the solid backing of his party, which has the capability to politically face its opponents and also muscularly foil events organized without taking his party into confidence. Disturbing are also the reservations of political parties on the code of conduct proposed by the Election Commission for the coming CA polls and their sharp division on the basis for constituency delineations for the polls. While some leaders maintain that number of electoral constituencies should be increased in proportion to the increase in population in a region, others want geography, population and administrative access to be the basis of constituency delineation. In addition to these inter-party

because tremendous moral pressure will pile on the election government if it fails to organize polls this time. This government has also the task of bringing out the annual budget at a very difficult time of low growth, double digit inflation, unprecedented trade deficit running at 26 percent of GDP and export/import ratio at 13 percent. Regmi is not expected to cure the ailment that our economy is suffering since long and does not have to worry much about it because none of his predecessors and finance ministers succeeded in doing so in the past. Moreover, he can derive some solace from the troublesome economies of Portugal and Greece that are still in a mess despite tremendous efforts of the respective governments and international bodies to solve the problem. Economic ailment has spread very fast across Europe and appears incurable in the once very prosperous

continent. International Monetary Fund has also made downward adjustments in its earlier estimates of global growth for this year and the next. Regmi can also conveniently brush aside Transparency International's very recent accusation that political parties in Nepal are the most corrupt institutions as he does not belong to any party and what can he do to check accelerating corruption in this poor country when it is on the rise globally.

The election government also dealt with the exigencies of flood, despite initial hiccups, in Far- West and some parts of Mid- West Nepal that suffered much in the form of loss to lives, property and infrastructure. Since this misfortune befalls here every year, let us seriously think about managing the abundant water of this country so that drinking water can be provided to thirsty Nepalis, water can be given to crops that mostly depend on rains from the sky, power can be generated to cut excessive hours of outage and damage done by flood to crops, lives and property can be checked. Confronting natural calamities in the same manner and fashion that India did in Uttarakhand, launching the biggest ever operation to battle the calamity also known as the Himalayan Tsunami that has claimed more than 5,500 lives, is not possible nor required here. We cannot also copy their recent welfare scheme to provide 800 million poor Indians with highly subsidized food grains, at Rs 3, 2 and 1 for a kg of rice wheat and millet, respectively, but a humble beginning can be made, be it on the water management front or providing subsidy to the poor and underprivileged areas such as mid and far-west Nepal where dozens of death related to starvation and cholera are reported every year. Regmi looks serious about his main job, election, and has been dealing with groups wanting to freely sell impure drinking water, contaminated milk and tempered with gas cylinders with varying degree of success. He should also be happy that people like him are being picked to assume specific responsibilities elsewhere also. A very recent example has been the move of Egyptian armed force that ousted Morsi, elected president, and appointed chief justice of constitutional court there as the interim president, following days of uprising against the president. Egyptian army dashed Justice Mansour into the chaotic situation to handle the deteriorating political situation, which shows no signs of recovery as battles are on between opponents and supporters of Morsi and scores of agitating Islamists have been killed and hundreds injured when the army opened fire. Nobody can speak with certainty whether he will be able to take graceful exit in the highly unstable Egypt where his plans for holding polls have been rejected. In Nepal, Regmi was persuaded into accepting the new job by big parties, probably on the advice of external forces, but nobody knows how our leaders will help a docile Regmi take a dignified exit if he fails to hold polls in November. Regmi and Mansour of Egypt need blessings of our much revered Lord Pashupatinath and Allah, respectively.

Dr. Rawal is a former governor NRB

INTERIM GOVERNMENT

The 3-Year Plan

By bringing the three years' interim plan, the government has saved Nepal from going to a plan holiday

By A CORRESPONDENT

After two long days of meeting among experts, the National Development Council (NDC), the highest policy-level body in the country, has endorsed the much-awaited approach paper prepared for the development plan for the next three years, incorporating the inputs from different stakeholders.

Since the political change of 2006, this is the third 3-year interim plan passed by the NDC. Unlike previous two governments, the interim government led by Khil Raj Regmi took a great risk by presenting the development document.

Secretary at the National Planning Commission Yubaraj Bhushal took the initiative to prepare the document and newly appointed vice chairman of National Planning Commission Dr. Rabindra Kumar Shakya backed the efforts.

Prepared by the National Planning Commission (NPC), the approach paper for the 13th development plan, among others, envisages pushing Nepal to the status of developing country from the existing Least Developed Country (LDC) by 2022 — achieving an annual growth of six percent.

"This government's job is just to hold the free and fair elections. Its mandate does not include passing the three years' interim plan," said a former vice chairman of National Planning Commission. "It should have been better to leave the country on a plan holiday."



However, experts say Nepal has to attain at least 7 percent annual growth to achieve the target. This year, the government expects only 3.6 percent growth owing to low capital spending and the poor performance of agriculture sector. To attain a six percent growth rate, the plan has focused on agricultural growth rate of 4.5 percent per annum till 2015/16. It has also set a target of attaining 6.7 percent growth rate per annum in non-agricultural sector till 2015/16.

Similarly, development of hydropower and energy sectors, commercialization and diversification of agricultural sector, enhancement of farm productivity and increased access to basic education and health services, drinking water and sanitation, are also among the programs incorporated the approach paper. Plans to spend a total Rs 1.62 trillion till 2015/16 are formulated in the paper. Of this, Rs 960.69 billion rupees will be spent to cover recurrent expenses, while Rs 277.94 billion will be allocated for capital spending.

The expenses, according to the plan, would be met through estimated revenue collection of Rs 1.13 trillion in the three-year period, while the rest would be raised through domestic debt, and grants and loans from development partners. ■



POLITICS

Uncertain Course

Although CPN-Maoist leaders have agreed to negotiate on the elections, it is premature to say the election will be held on November 19

By KESHAB POUDEL

Every day, some new obstruction against the proposed November 19 election is cropping up. The dispute over the constituency delineation is the latest one with enough strength to disrupt the forthcoming polls.

"We will not accept the constituencies, if they are not fixed on the basis of population," said Madheshi leader Upendra Yadav. Former speaker of House of Representative Daman Nath Dhungana supports Yadav's argument. "If necessary, the constitution needs to be amended to address the genuine demands."

After formally announcing the willingness to start negotiations on the issues of CA elections with political parties, CPN-Maoist, which had taken a decision to boycott the elections, has shown some flexibility. Just a few hours before leaving to pay an official visit to China with his vice chairman C.P. Gajurel, CPN-Maoist Chairman Mohan Baidya announced formation of a team to negotiate with four major parties on elections

The duo left for Beijing on a five-day visit on the invitation of the Communist Party of China (CPC). "It's a party-level visit. Chairman Baidya will hold talks with senior leaders of the Chinese communist party," said CPN-M Secretary Netra Bikram Chand.

Leaders of four major political

parties are able to pursue the Maoist line in the negotiating table. However, they don't know how to settle the differences over the constituency delineation issue, which is more sentimental than ideological.

"We have decided to start negotiations on the ground that leaders of HLPC agreed to amend the 11-point agreement and 25 point presidential decree," said CPN-Maoist leader Ram Bahadur Thapa Badal.

As per the Commission's decision to use EVM in 119 constituencies of 23 districts, the EC wants 20,000 EVMs for the CA election. Chief Election Commissioner Nil Kanth Uprety told that this subscribe that it may create the problems. The commission has been holding dialogues with various stakeholders on the issue of Election Code of Conduct and fixing the election symbols, looking at 361 parties registered with the Commission.

International Factor

Although the United States and western democracies have already agreed to provide necessary support to the CA elections, they are not liked to be deciding on Nepal's internal politics. Whether one liked it or not, ultimately Nepal's two neighbors India and China, which are more influential in Nepal's internal politics, will be decisive in the last minute.

The Visiting Chinese vice counselor

recently expressed support to Nepal's elections process by providing Rs.150 million dollars for the Election Commission. Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi expressed that China wishes a smooth operation for the Constituent Assembly election in Nepal, an early date to complete the constitutional process and long-term stability, prosperity and development of the country.

India's external affairs minister Shalman Khurshid also reiterated India's support to coming elections. India even agreed to provide 746 vehicles to Nepal Police and ballot boxes to elections commission. "We want to see the elections in Nepal."

However, diplomacy is not a straight forward game. One has to wait to see how their action will materialize in reality.

Security Assessment

At a time when the Election Commission and government have been making efforts to hold the elections on November 19, the high-level security committee meeting presented a report to the government saying that CPN-Maoist party is unlikely to obstruct the elections as it claimed. A senior official at the Ministry told that the assessment made by Nepal Police all over the country indicated that CPN-Maoist does not have such a nationwide capability to disrupt the elections given the commitment of major political parties to contest the elections. The committee also recommended holding the election in single phase to weaken the Maoist strength.

Internal Dynamics of Parties

Along with other factors, the internal dynamics of major political parties will also make differences. As the elections are coming closer, about two dozen armed groups in terai have already started to unify. The unification of armed groups can make a lot of difference.

As top leaders of four major political parties are harping on the election agenda, privately nobody prefers elections in November given their internal dissensions. ■



Surveillance At The Monastery

By YUBARAJ GHIMIRE

China has long been wary of the growing number of Buddhist monasteries, especially centres of Tibetan Buddhism, in Nepal. Apart from the 20,000 Tibetan exiles in Nepal, there is a substantial number of Nepalese who are adherents of Mahayana Buddhism. The monasteries, numbering about 50 in and around Kathmandu and almost all headed by Tibetan lamas, are revered as centres of learning and spiritual practice.

So far, China has perceived these as possible centres of conspiracy against Beijing and has routinely drawn the Nepal government's attention to keeping a watch on their activities "directed against China". Three years ago, President Ram Baran Yadav even cancelled his scheduled visit to Shechen Monastery to attend the enthronement ceremony of a much revered "lama reincarnate" at the insistence of the Chinese embassy. The Boudha area in the

late, China has begun printing and distributing the Asia Weekly supplement of the China Daily, in partnership with a local media house.

But Chinese Ambassador Wu Chuntai surprised many by doing something his predecessors didn't. On May 25, he paid an unexpected visit to a monastery and quietly invited abbot Ayang Rinpoche to the embassy, sending out the message that China is keen to build bridges with monasteries and Tibetans in exile. The occasion of the ambassador's visit was the enthronement of a revered lama incarnate — the one the Chinese embassy had forced President Yadav to abstain from three years ago. Promoting Buddhism and developing Buddhist shrines in Nepal is part of Beijing's diplomacy as well as an aid mission. China has shown keen interest in developing Lumbini, the Buddha's birthplace, into a world-class city and building a railway

link to connect it with Tibet, thereby encouraging Chinese tourists. Government officials also say China has built strong ties with people in Nepal's border districts and stepped up relief supply.

Seeking more freedom to operate in Nepal, China has asked the government to give it the same privilege as availed by India in identifying the "projects in need" and in "channelling funds through district bodies" without going through the government. Chinese authorities hold routine meetings with political parties and local leaders of border districts. Allowing cattle from Nepal to graze in Chinese land and promoting bilateral trade using the surface route is something China



Chinese State Councillor Yang Jiechi with Nepalese Foreign Minister Madhav Prasad Ghimire

capital, a pilgrimage spot for Buddhists from around the world, is under the highest surveillance with around 49 CCTV cameras around the main Boudhanath monastery — all this at China's request. Surveillance is on the rise after a 25-year-old Tibetan lama self-immolated two months ago. The Chinese embassy has asked the government to keep vigil for the Dalai Lama's 78th birthday celebrations.

Nepal's political instability, especially in the past six years, weak government and the resultant high-handedness of the international community that Beijing perceives as hostile, seem to have forced China to not only enlarge its presence in Nepal but also project itself as a nation tolerant of religion, mainly Buddhism. It has stepped up the distribution of relief and essential food items in Nepal. Of

seems to be keen on.

Chinese State Councillor Yang Jiechi, who paid a brief visit recently, not only promised logistical support for the scheduled elections in November but also pledged three billion rupees for building a training academy for the armed police force. India's External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid is due to visit Nepal for 48 hours on Wednesday, almost endorsing the concern the Chinese have been raising more aggressively. It's still not known how India will review its active presence in Nepal. But China has spoken in every manner it can that it wants order and stability. However, as long as the state remains weak, Beijing will adopt a carrot and stick policy on the monasteries.

Courtesy: Indian Express



India-Nepal Signing Agreement

KHURSHID'S VISIT

Open Gesture

Although he stayed just 9 hours in Nepal, Indian Minister of External Affairs Salman Khurshid has made it clear that India is concerned about its core interests in Nepal

By A CORRESPONDENT

Indian external affairs minister Salman Khurshid came to and left Kathmandu just after hectic nine hours of sojourn for taking stock of Nepal's overall political scenario and meeting government officials and political party leaders.

The hasty visit of Indian external affairs minister Khurshid has sent diplomatic messages as he paid his visit just two weeks after the visit of Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi. Khurshid is the first highest Indian official to visit Nepal since April 2011 when then Indian external affairs minister SM Krishnan had visited.

From Tribhuvan International Airport, Indian External Affairs Minister Khurshid headed to Singhadurbar to meet Chairman of Council of Ministers Khil Raj Regmi and foreign minister Madhav Ghimire.

After his meeting with chairman Regmi, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed to provide 764 vehicles for the upcoming Constituent Assembly election. Finance Secretary Shantaraj Subedi and Indian envoy Jayanta Prasad signed the MoU at Singhadurbar. Of the total 764 vehicles, 716 will be provided to security bodies while the

remaining 48 for the Election Commission. India had also donated 500 vehicles to Nepal in the 2008 CA polls.

Along with meeting president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, Indian external affairs minister also held discussions with leaders of various political parties, including UCPN-Maoist leader Prachanda who returned from Singapore cutting short his visit.

Before wrapping up his one day-visit, External Affairs Minister Salman Khurshid said, "There is determination among all political parties in Nepal that election must be held in time and any difficulties that comes on the way must be removed through consensus." "We are happy to provide any assistance we have been asked on the basis of need of the people and the consensus among the political parties," Khurshid said.

"India remains strongly committed to the success of Nepal's peace process and institutionalization of democracy in Nepal in a constitutional and multiparty framework," he said. "India was totally committed to supporting the forthcoming election and was ready to provide all kinds of assistance for the purpose for consolidating democracy," Singh said after his meeting with Khurshid.

"The visit shows that there is strong international support, particularly from our neighbors, towards Nepal's election process," said Arjun Bahadur Thapa, spokesperson and joint secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Since the signing of the 12-point agreement, India has continued to play a key role in Nepal. Despite India's heavy presence, China's influence in Nepal also remains there. Even Maoists, who earlier projected themselves as a force to contain Chinese influence in Nepal, failed to undo Nepal's reality.

Known for his close links with Indian officialdom, Ram Karki, who is now the foreign department chief of Nepal's UCPN (Maoist) party, expressed displeasure for Khurshid's visit to Nepal justifying his strong criticism against the recent visit of Chinese State Councilor Yang Jiechi.

"We must welcome the guest, but at a time when we are in a deep political stalemate, it would be good if the close neighbors keep away from our internal affairs," Karki said.

At a time when India's external affairs minister Khurshid was visiting Nepal, CPN-Maoist Chairman Mohan Baidya and Vice-chairman CP Gajurel left for China. A party source said that the duo left for Beijing on a five-day visit on the invitation of the Communist Party of China (CPC). During their stay in China, the leaders are expected to meet prominent leaders of Chinese Communist Party. Although the visit was made at a crucial time, China, which always pursues peace and stability, will persuade Maoist leaders to join the elections. "It's a party-level visit. Chairman Baidya will hold talks with senior leaders of the Chinese communist party," said CPN-M Secretary Netra Bikram Chand.

Although India's veteran journalist Girilala Jain wrote in his book in 1959, India meets China in Nepal, his description presenting Nepal's reality has not changed. The Indian journalist recounts events in Nepal where Democratic India competes with Communist China in political and economic influence. ■



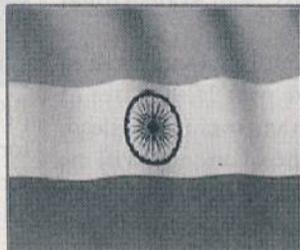
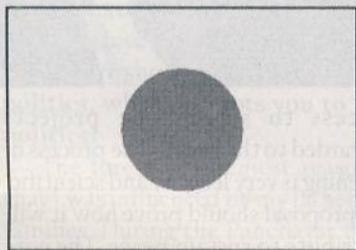
The JIN Initiative

By ABIJIT SHARMA

One of the common sights on the streets of Delhi is the Maruti-Suzuki four-wheelers. Another common sight in the Indian capital in recent years has been the crowd of travellers in the ever-bustling city rail – the Metro. The Maruti-Suzuki blazed the trail for a number of similar ventures in the world's second most populous country. The Metro revolutionized the public transport in one of Asia's most important capitals.

India-Japan

Both have one thing in common – the Japanese connection.



Does Indo-Japan cooperation mean anything for Nepal? Does the initiative to promote the partnership between the two key Asian countries carry any relevance for their small, poor South Asian counter part?

India-Japan cooperation has come a long way since Japan gave support and assistance to Subhash Chandra Bose's Indian national army that gave a boost to India's fight for independence against the colonial British forces; and since the first Prime Minister of India after independence Jawaharlal Nehru gifted 'Indira', an Indian elephant named after his daughter, to a Tokyo zoo, that brought a ray of light into the lives of the Japanese children suffering from the aftermath of World War II.

Today, as global focus increasingly center on Asia the scope and the potential of cooperation between two important Asian countries has garnered even more attention. An upcoming mega event does underscore the importance of the partnership between them. Leaders from a cross section of society from the two countries are due to take up all gamut of partnership at a summit conference to take the bilateral cooperation to a new height. Initiated by India Centre Foundation, a Delhi-based non-profit NGO, the India Japan Global Partnership Summit (IJGPS) is expected to draw in experts including prominent policy makers, decision makers, top government authorities and businessmen aims at creating a micro roadmap for a macro vision in order to promote cooperation in diverse sectors such as infrastructure, agro-economy, healthcare, tourism, banking and finance, energy security, education. Among the major focus will be areas like healthcare, agro economy, information and communication technology, tourism. The goal: all-inclusive uplift of the people. Based on a Public Private Partnership (PPP) model, the initiative seems to incorporate the combined strengths of India and Japan and uphold the vision of India and Japan as global partners.

Nepal

Does Indo-Japan cooperation mean anything for Nepal? Does the initiative to promote the partnership between the two key Asian countries carry any relevance for their small, poor South Asian counter part? They do. For two reasons. India is Nepal's closest neighbor with open borders and a donor as well. Despite being a distant friend Japan has long been Nepal's major donor. Nepal can therefore benefit a lot from the partnership between the two.

The Japan-India-Nepal (JIN) initiative under the IJGPS could be a very useful platform to explore the potential benefits especially in the development of such areas as hydropower, infrastructure, tourism and agro-economy. A prosperous Nepal, sandwiched as it is between the two rival Asian giants – India and China – can become a bridge for cooperation in the region. This could contribute to the cause of peace and stability in the whole of Asia.

Sharma is research associate at India Centre Foundation, Delhi

Mobile SMS बाट श्रम स्वीकृतिको जानकारी पाउने सूचना

वैदेशिक रोजगार विभागबाट प्रदान भएको श्रम स्वीकृतिको जानकारी बच बाट समेत प्राप्त गर्न सकिने व्यवस्था मिलाइएको छ । सोबाट वैदेशिक रोजगारबाट जाने वा गएका व्यक्तिले नेपाल सरकारबाट श्रम स्वीकृति लिए नलिएको, जान लागेको देश, काम, कम्पनीको बारेमा तत्काल जानकारी लिन सकिनेछ ।

१. आफ्नो मोबाइलको SMS बाट पठाउने ठाउँमा PP टाइप गरी एक Space दिइ आफ्नो पासपोर्ट नम्बर टाइप गरी ४००१ मा SMS पठाउने ।
२. SMS पठाएको केही समयमा अभिलेखमा भएका व्यक्तिको देहाय बमोजिमको जानकारी सहितको SMS तपाईंको मोबाइलमा आउनेछ ।

पासपोर्ट नं. ०६३२९७४६ को नमूना

पाउन सकिने जानकारी

नाम: Man Bahadur Shrestha

पद: Blacksmith

पाउने तलब सुविधा:

काम गर्न जाने कम्पनीको नाम:

लाग्ने शुल्क:

काम गर्न जाने देश: Qatar

स्टीकर नं. : 002120642

निर्णय मिति : 2070-01-02

पठाउने कम्पनीको नाम:



नेपाल सरकार

श्रम तथा रोजगार मन्त्रालय

वैदेशिक रोजगार विभाग

तीनकूने, काठमाडौं

वैदेशिक रोजगार प्रवर्द्धन बोर्डको सचिवालय

अनामनगर, काठमाडौं

'Peace Trust Fund Follows Rigorous Screening'

SADHU RAM SAPKOTA

At a time when Nepal has been at the last leg of the peace process, SADHU RAM SAPKOTA, joint secretary at the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction, and director of Peace Fund Secretariat, spoke to NEW SPOTLIGHT on various issues. Excerpts:

As Nepal is going to hold the next elections for Constituent Assembly (CA) in November 19, how will Nepal Peace Trust Fund (NPTF) support this work?

NPTF is ready to fund the forthcoming CA elections. The Election Commission has already submitted the tentative budget of Rs. 5 billion for various projects. Nepal government has already committed Rs. 3 billion and British government has already expressed its commitment of Rs. 2 billion and Swiss government 930 million rupees to the Fund. Similarly, EU committed 5 million Euro and we are also getting commitment from other donors. We have adequate funds to support the Election Commission.

What are the areas of support?

NPTF will support voter education project, management of ballot center, ballot box and election monitoring. Except administrative cost of the elections, the NPTF has received request for all election activities. Donors are very generous to fund the election activities. Donors have been saying that they want to support election through NPTF instead of going through bilateral mechanism.

How do you view the issue related to TRC and Disappearance?

Looking at its importance, the government has already brought TRC and Disappearance commissions through ordinance. Since both the commissions are dealing with the same issue, the government proposed one ordinance instead of making two separate ones. At a time when Nepal government is in the final stage to proceed with the ordinance, civil

society and human rights groups and international communities have shown their reservation. As the government is in the process of considering the constructive suggestions, a petition was filed in the court and it is under consideration of the court. Since it is now subjudice, the government cannot move on it.

What role will NPTF have in the context of TRC and transitional justice system?

A lot of technical issues are involved in it. There are over 1,700 cases of disappearances and over 17,000 dead, a huge amount of money will be required for reparation. It will be more than a billion rupees. Since Nepal government alone will not be enough and we may need to request the government, then NPTF mechanism will be important.

How much money has it committed?

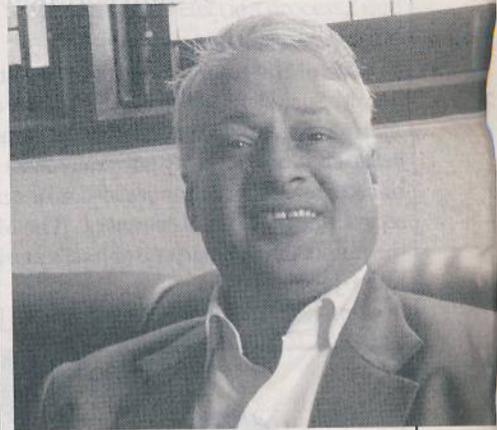
Nepal Peace Trust Fund has already committed 14 billion rupees. Out of this, projects worth of 12 billion rupees has already been approved. Nine billion rupees has already been spent. The fund has already launched 56 projects. Out of this, 28 projects have already completed and remaining 28 projects are ongoing.

How is the mechanism to prepare projects and screen them, what is the working procedure?

The fund has its own governing board and under the chairmanship of Secretary at the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction. There is a technical committee which includes the chief of foreign aid coordination division of the Ministry of Finance, joint secretary of National Planning Commission and director of Peace Trust Fund. Only after the recommendation of the technical committee, the proposals are sent to the board for approval.

What are the stages of the planning process?

There are eight steps of the planning



process to screen the projects forwarded to the board. The process of screening is very lengthy and scientific. The proposal should prove how it will contribute to sustain peace. The core cluster under the chairmanship of director examines the proposal. Only after finding it viable, the cluster approves the proposal and requests sending the draft proposal. After the technical backup, we have also the technical cluster. This is one of the tough and best processes.

How does the funding come and who are the funders?

Nepal government is one of the major funding institutions. Besides that, other donors include DFID, European Union, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, Norway, Finland and USAID. This is a joint mechanism of eight donor agencies and the government. All the funding agencies are generously supporting the fund. They are also taking part in all the activities of the fund. The fund has its own secretariat and European Union is providing technical support to the fund since this year. Earlier, it was GIZ which supported the secretariat. It is in the process of phasing out. One of the beauties of the fund is that we need to report to all the donors. The funding use through this mechanism should be based on Nepal government's rule and regulations. ■

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com

'Young Contestants Will Win Polls'

UDAYA S. RANA

UDAYA.S. RANA, president of Nepal Tarun Dal, is one of the dynamic members of Nepali Congress, who contested the elections from constituency No. 1 of Lalitpur. At a time when there is a lot of criticism against politics, Cornell University Graduate Rana, 40, has been establishing himself as a crusader of change. Excerpt:

Nepalese youths who studied abroad are showing apathy towards politics, what prompts you to join politics?

The fore and foremost reason is that I was influenced by my father and families. During the Panchayat time, my father used to tell me the stories about Nepali Congress and Gorkha Parishad, which was that time led by my uncle Bharat Sumsher. Because of that I was always fascinated and in my heart I always had a feeling for politics. Over the period of time because of various factors I was given an opportunity to join politics. My father contested the elections from Lalitpur Constituency No 1 and during his elections campaign; I helped him while I was still a student. At that time I realized that it was very natural and easy for me to mix with local people. It came to me naturally.

When did you come to politics?

I completed my education and returned after getting a Master's degree from Cornell University of USA at the age of 25. At that time Nepal was completely new for me specially the rural Nepal. However, over the period of time I have been able to adjust and I have done fairly well for myself in politics.

How do you see your party leaders?

My party leaders have been very good to me as I have been given enormous opportunity whenever there has been an opening. The first big opportunity was given to me by our leader late Kishunji who sent me in

Italy to take part in the International Union of Socialist Youth. I took part in the convention in Italy. I was elected to the executive committee. After two years, Tarun Dal was formed and I wanted to get involved in politics and I wanted to be president of the district. It did seem to be impossible for me because I could not speak Nepali well. Then, Tarun Dal President Bal Krishna Khand who is my mentor made me the president. Despite so many people saying that I should not be made Tarun Dal president in my district, he made me the president. That gave me an opportunity to directly work at grass root level in the organizational platform.

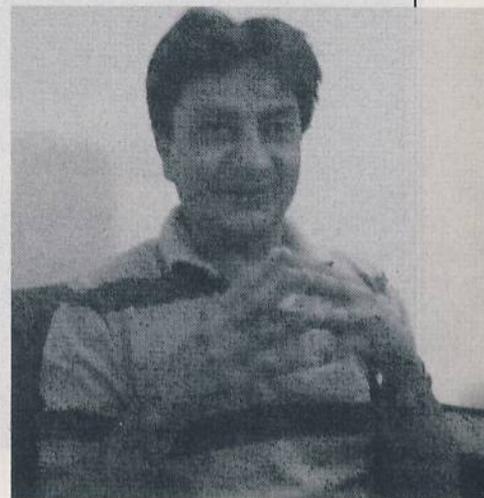
How do you see the future of your party?

If you look at it, there is future for younger people. You cannot get opportunity just saying that you are young. You have to prove that you are better than the person above you. This is not hereditary system where older person finishes and younger joins.

Your take on the future of your party?

I think in the last elections, our party performed badly. I call the last election was a fluke election and unexpected results came out. The situation has changed now. Maoists were unable to fulfill their words and CPN-UML does not know where they stand ideologically. The situation is that the relevancy of CPN-UML has completely gone. In the coming elections, the elections will be contested between two fronts. One is democratic front and the other is leftist front. In leftist front, Maoists will take the lead and Nepali Congress will lead the democratic front. This was the honeymoon phase for leftists and terai based parties and their support base is waning.

How do you encourage younger generation people to get involved in politics?



Younger generation people need to do more. Not only the leaders give us more opportunity, we also do more as well. It is both ways. You cannot wait for somebody to give you seat. You have to fight for your seat and you have to work hard for your seat. No political leaders are going to give you gift or any such thing. You have to strive for it. As long as youth keep say the thing that we have not given opportunities, we are not going to succeed. Opportunity is something that is there. Opportunity is there and you need to get it. Nobody is going to give you in platter. If you want to eat the apple, you need to pluck it from the tree.

What do you suggest for economic development?

We should not mix economics and politics. They have to be put in different compartments. Political instability has created economic fluidity. Instability impacts economic development. If you look at Bangladesh, they have had a lot of problems for a longer period of time than Nepal. Policies are even worse. However, economy did not suffer there because economics was kept separate from politics. ■

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com



NEPAL AIRLINES

Flying High

With nearly a decade of controversy and scandal, Nepal Airlines, the country's only national flag carrier, is finally set to fly high

By A CORRESPONDENT

Just a day before celebrating its 55 years of service, Nepal Airlines signed two agreements. The first agreement was with the Employees Provident Fund for a loan to purchase two aircraft from Airbus. Nepal Airlines management signed another agreement the next day with Airbus for supply two narrow body aircraft to Nepal Airlines.

Struggling for almost two decades without the new aircraft, Nepal Airlines, which used to share tourist market of over 50 percent, has made enormous contributions to increase the number of tourists in Nepal as well as serving the people living in remote parts of Nepal.

Unlike in previous years, this 56th anniversary of Nepal Airlines was celebrated in a more jubilant mood and there was enthusiasm among the employees and management. Following the signing of the agreements to purchase two narrow body Airbus 320-200, Nepal Airlines has got a new lease of life.

Due to frequent technical problems

in its two ageing Boeing 757 Aircraft, Nepal Airlines' international route was seeing regular disturbances. Although Nepal Airlines has already suspended its flight to Shanghai, New Delhi and Mumbai, it is currently struggling to keep its flight to Bangkok, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Dubai.

"After signing the agreements, there is enthusiasm among the airlines staff. Employees have been very supportive to the management to improve our services. The employees are also supportive to the reforms initiated by management," said Madan Kharel, General Manager of the NAC. "Given the present situation, Nepal Airlines will definitely make a difference in Nepal's tourism sector."

Others too agreed. "Two wide body aircraft will return the Nepal Airlines to profitable stage," said Sushil Ghimire, secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation. "Signing of the purchase agreement recently for two narrow body aircraft with Airbus will further enhance its national flights. But it also needs to add

few more aircraft for long haul flights."

Employee also stressed the need to have wide body aircraft to make NAC profitable. "Along with the purchase agreement with Airbus, NAC should also look forward to starting its operation to the US and Australia and restart its flight to Shanghai and Frankfurt," said Krishna Bikram Chetri, president of NAC Pilot Association.

NAC is now planning to bring two aircraft on lease by the end of 2013 and to add two MA-60 and four Y-12 aircraft from China. If the plan goes as scheduled, Nepal once again will see the rise of national air carrier in all sectors.

On July 3, Nepal Airlines Corporation requested to Nepal Rastra Bank to release six percent of the catalogue price as the first installment of price on July 4.

"Once we receive permission from the central bank to issue foreign currency for the permit, we will send the money to Airbus," said Ganesh Bahadur Chand

In 1990, Nepal Airlines had two Boeing 757 Aircraft, two Boeing 727 aircraft, 10 twin otters and three HS-748 Avro and three Pilatus Porters. Established fifty six years ago with DC 3, Nepal Airlines has seen many ups and downs in its history. The message of the 56th anniversary was clear. The airlines management and employees have expressed solidarity that they will return the NA to its glorious days as in the past serving more Nepalese as well as bringing more tourists in the country. ■

NEW SPOTLIGHT

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'Women Are Coming Up'

- SHREEJANA RANA

SHREEJANA RANA is not a new name in Nepal's industrial and social sector. Currently the Director of Corporate Social Responsibility, of Hotel Annapurna, Rana is now executive member of Hotel Association Nepal. As a board of trustee and vice chairperson of Jayanti Memorial Trust (JMT), Rana has been working to provide much necessary service to needy people. Excerpts of her written interview:

Despite several years of effort, the numbers of women entrepreneurs are yet to increase. How do you look at this?

This is not quite true. First of all, changing the mindset of people takes time. Culture, custom and government policies and legislations, if not improved and implemented properly, can hinder progress. Traditionally, due to the patrilineal nature of our society, women have suffered severely from unequal property rights, lack of access to finance and collaterals, resulting in unwarranted dominance of their male relatives. In spite of all these challenges, I see that women have taken up responsibilities and are playing important roles in all kinds of sectors. I only see progress, and I know that there will be substantially more in the future.

As vice chairperson of SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneur Council Nepal, what role are you playing to promote women in business?

One of SCWEC's main aims is to work towards facilitating co-operation and networking among the women of the SAARC region for the socio economic empowerment. Realizing the importance of consolidated effort for synergy and effective advocacy through networking, SAARC Chamber Women Entrepreneurs Council (SCWEC) has been organizing events in Kathmandu, on the occasion International Women's Day since the year 2009.

What initiatives are you taking?

We are initiating "Made in SAARC" campaign, largely for handicrafts, which will facilitate marketing under one banner throughout the SAARC region. Taking inspiration from the surrounding region and beyond, we are advocating the replication of best business/entrepreneur practices. For example, establishment of ECO Industrial Parks run by women throughout the region.

At a time when business sector is overwhelmingly dominated by males, how do you see yourself as a woman entrepreneur?

Our male counterparts have had a head start. But I assure you that women are now challenging their supremacy. In many ways, women are more suited as entrepreneurs as they have, traditionally, played multiple roles within the society as caretaker, home-maker and, in many cases, the behind-the-scene leader.

When numbers of NGOs and trusts have been working in Nepal, what makes Jayanti Memorial Trust (JMT) different than others?

All JMT activities have been possible through generous financial support from Fishtail Lodge Pokhara, which was endowed to JMT from the very beginning by Her Royal Highness the late Princess Helen Shah in the memory of her daughter, Her Royal Highness the late Princess Jayanti Shah.

What are the areas JMT is currently working in and in which parts of the country?

In order to facilitate exchange of knowledge and information in the latest developments in heart related treatments, JMT has been bringing international specialists, enabling our local doctors and experts to interact with them to update technical knowledge and skills in government hospitals. Starting from Kathmandu, and using Pokhara as a base, we hold regular heart camps where patients in the hundreds have the opportunity to consult local and international heart specialists.

As late Jayanti Shaha immensely contributed in various social



sectors, what are the priority areas of JMT?

Since the establishment of the trust, we have focused our efforts and resources in achieving four goals:

- To study the specific causes of heart disease in Nepal.
- To research and develop remedies to address the symptoms and complications of heart disease.
- To provide medical facilities for cardiac patients throughout the country by sponsoring the treatment.
- To raise public awareness regarding heart disease.

How do you see the impacts of the projects?

Working closely with Gangal Heart Centre, Bir Hospital and the Manmohan Cardio-Vascular and Thoracic Centre, JMT has helped over 3,000 patients from extreme low earning bracket across Nepal. Most patients were children. Our awareness campaigns include raising the issue of hypertension and blood pressure as well, especially in the cities and bigger towns of the nation. These, we believe, have had a significant impact as heart diseases strike both the rich and the poor. After all, the health of the country is dependent on the health of its citizens.

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com

AIR ASIA

More Flights

Looking at the success of its yearlong operation, Air Asia, a budget airlines, has decided to add more flights from Kathmandu linking other cities

By A CORRESPONDENT

At a time when several airlines are competing in Kuala Lumpur sector, Air Asia, a budget carrier, was able to serve more than one hundred thousand passengers over its one year operation in Nepal. With Incentive Tours and Travels Pvt. Ltd as a GSA in Nepal, Air Asia is able to lure more passengers in Nepal. Thanks to its reliable and efficient services, Air Asia has already established its strong presence in Nepal.

According to Chief Executive

Officer of Air Asia, his airlines carried more than one hundred thousand passengers in the last one year. "We are very happy to celebrate our one year of operation by carrying more than one lakh passengers," said the CEO in his statement. In response to the growing popularity in Nepal, the airline will be operating five flights from Kathmandu to Kuala Lumpur a week on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday from July 17.

"It has been witnessing a record



number of seat bookings for flights from Japan and Australia to Kathmandu due to its connecting flights service," said a press release. The airline has launched a special discount offer for connecting flights from Kathmandu to Japan, Korea and Australia.

"The popularity of Air Asia is going high in Nepal. We are receiving good response and the booking is quite good in Kathmandu," said Hari Man Lama, Managing director of Incentive Travel and Tours Pvt. Ltd, GSA of Air Asia.

HOTEL SHANGRI-LA

Over The 35 Years

By serving for 35 years, Hotel Shangri-la shows that leadership always matters in the progress of any industry

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although Nepal's Tourism industry has seen many ups and downs in the last three decades, Hotel Shangri-la has established itself as a hotel of quality and provided efficient services in the hospitality industry of Nepal. The lead role played by Nepali Shyam Bahadur Pandey is the secret behind the success of the hotel. Backed by his son former president of Hotel Association Nepal and Managing director of the Hotel Prassidha Bahadur Pandey, Hotel Shangri-la has made a remarkable progress in the last 35 years.

Recently, the hotel organized various programs to mark its anniversary. Over eighty of the hotel's employees cleaned up the hotel premises and its surroundings on the occasion. Under the Corporate Social Responsibility of the hotel, the employees in the executive positions contributed their one day's salary for

the flood victims of Darchula. They handed over the money to Nepal Red Cross Society on July 1. Along with cash, the hotel also donated items like clothes, instant food, et cetera.

"We marked the anniversary by doing something different—cleaning the surroundings and helping the needy ones," said senior General Manager Raju Bikram Shah. On July 1, the hotel offered 15 percent discount on food and beverages for the guests.

The hotel management is also planning to improve the condition of the hotel by renovating it.

"The traditional building, along with beautiful gardens, makes our hotel unique. Here we have recently launched Garden Pavilion and in the process of improving, we have placed 32-inch LED TV in every suite room and room of the hotel," said Shah.

At a time when a large number of people



in far west are living in severe conditions, Hotel Shangri-la staff also showed their generosity to the affected people.

"Doing something good for the society has given a feeling of content. And it is the best way to celebrate the anniversary where we could make a difference in other's life with one day of our salary and items that we don't use," said Babita Pandey, Sales Executives of the hotel.

As tourism is the backbone of the Nepalese economy, generating huge foreign currency, and providing employment opportunity, the service tenders of Hotel Shangri-la in the last 35 years have made significant contribution in the country's tourism and, thereby, overall development. ■

“SWC Will Streamline INGOs”

RABINDRA KUMAR

RABINDRA KUMAR, member secretary of the Social Welfare Council, is an engineer by vocation. Having worked for a long period at the Nepal Electricity Authority, Rabindra was appointed member secretary of the council last year. Kumar spoke to New Spotlight on various issues. Excerpts:

What is the present state of the Social Welfare Council?

The present state of the council is terrible as it is working as it was 35 years ago. There is still the same system, almost same employees and same mentality. What I have been doing in the last one year is to change the system and to make it into an institution based on the rule of law. There is still a lot of backlog.

How many NGOs are there?

There are 37,400 NGOs and 175 INGOs affiliated to SWC. Out of this, there may be ten percent NGOs actively working. If we look at the whole NGOs, all over Nepal, there may be over 45,000 NGOs. It is very challenging to manage the NGOs.

What about the NGOs and INGOs registered with SWC?

All the INGOs, which are registered with SWC, submit their annual programs to us. Of course, NGOs are violating this. I have already issued warnings to those NGOs which do not submit their programs. I will take action if they do not abide by the orders of SWC. We are developing a data system integrating NGOs and INGOs, projects and programs.

It is often said that there is no coordination among various institutions. What do you say?

It is true that there is no coordination among various agencies. There is no coordination between the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare and Social Welfare Council and there is even lack of coordination among various divisions in the Council. Our coordinating part is very weak. The situation is now that we approve every project presented by

the INGOs without coordination with others.

It is reported that INGOs and NGOs are not transparent regarding their programs and projects. What do you say?

Our system is very transparent. We have placed all the information regarding the INGOs and status of their programs as well as progress in a system. They annually submit their progress reports to us. However, some media cover news without visiting our website. All INGOs have to submit their financial reports yearly and hold the meetings twice a year with us. Along with presenting their annual reports and annual expenditure,

How much money do INGOs spend in Nepal?

Last year, we approved the annual programs and projects worth about Rs. 6.5 billion of INGOs and over Rs.8 billion projects of NGOs. Along funds from INGOs, NGOs also receive direct budget from third countries. My last one year's experience shows that more cash flow is made through NGOs than INGOs. There is the need of transparency not only for INGOs but also for NGOs. SWC has already directed NGOs to bring the programs making balance on soft ware and hard ware. Some NGOs have shown interest in our programs.

How do you justify the present trend to evaluate the projects of INGOs through their budget?

Nobody can justify this. This is the reason we are demanding additional budget from the government for the evaluation team. Of course, as a regulatory authority, the Council has to monitor the projects and programs run by INGOs. Due to lack of budget in the council, we are now evaluating the programs of INGOs through their budget.

What are your three immediate priorities?

My first priority is to restructure the SWC. Second priority is to formulate guidelines, directives other such mechanisms to regulate INGOs



and NGOs. Although we are not in a position to amend the act, we can make our system more efficient through directives and regulations. I have already started OM study. I am making all our work on certain database.

What do you mean by standardization?

Standardization means to set certain level for foreigners coming to work in Nepal as a country representative. We will make certain arrangements for standardization. We will allow foreigner as a country representative if concerned INGOs do not find Nepalese citizen with required standard. The council will encourage more Nepalese as country representatives in INGOs.

What about your one window policy?

Many INGOs and NGOs are working in Nepal with various international agencies signing the agreement with Council and some are even working by signing the agreement with government agencies. This has created a lot of confusion. Instead of present multiple windows, we are stressing one window policy. Various government institutions have been working haphazardly. We need to have one door policy to keep tab of the contribution.

For detail logon www.spotlightnepal.com



NIC ASIA BANK

Successful Merger

NIC-ASIA Bank becomes the first bank to operate after a successful merger

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although various commercial and development banks are in the process of merger, NIC-ASIA Bank has emerged as the first bank to commence its operation after completing its merger as per the schedule proposed by both the banks.

The message of the bank is clear — if there is a will, there is a way. Although there are several individuals who worked hard to make the merger process possible, including board member Rajendra Aryal, NIC bank's Chief Executive Officer Sashin Johi has played a key role in settling the issues during the course of the merger.

Amidst a function, Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank Dr. Yuba Raj Khatriwada inaugurated the NIC ASIA Bank's new corporate office at Trade Tower. After the completion of the merger of NIC Bank and Bank of Asian Nepal (BOAN), NIC ASIA Bank commenced its operation on June 30, 2013. With the merger, NIC-Asia Bank turns into one of the largest commercial banks of Nepal.

According to a press release issued by the Bank, this merger was initiated with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on 28th June 2012 followed by an in-principle approval given by NRB on 23rd July, 2012 and a Merger Agreement on 31st Jan 2013; with the final approval given by NRB on 26th April 2013. This merger has created a history in the Nepalese banking sector as the first merger of two "A" class commercial banks. With this merger, NIC ASIA Bank is now amongst the largest private sector commercial banks in the country in terms of capital base, balance-sheet size, branch/ATM

network, customer base and employees.

Before the merger, NIC Bank had 36 branches and BOAN 29 branches. With the consolidation of 13 branches and

addition of a Corporate Branch, NIC Asia Bank now have 53 branches and 57 ATMs which will be expanded to a total of 66 branches within 1 year with the re-location of the 13 branches. The Bank has a customer base of 270,000 and a strong capital base of close to NPR 5 billion, including retained earnings for the current year.

The bank's consolidated Operating Profit for the first 11 months of the current year to mid-June 2013 is NPR 1.43 billion. On a consolidated basis, the bank's deposit base now is NPR 38 billion with loans & advances of Rs 33 billion.

"The process of merger was very difficult. The merger was possible because of support given by all concerned stake holders," said Rajendra Aryal, member of the bank.

The Management will continue to be headed by Sashin Joshi as Chief Executive Officer supported by senior executives of both banks. "Nepal Rastra Bank has been very supportive to us from the very beginning. The merger was impossible without support of NRB," said Chief Executive officer Sashin Joshi.

संसारको कुनै पनि मुलुकमा
हुने अत्याचारको विरोध
गर्नु मानवीय धर्म हो ।



नेपाल सरकार

सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय
सूचना विभाग



The First Modern Nepali-English Dictionary

By BIPIN ADHIKARI

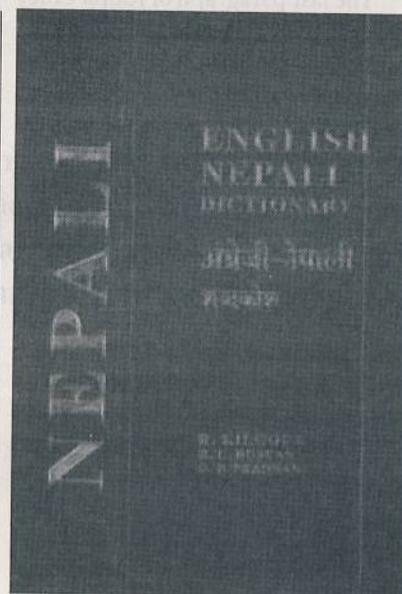
Professor Ralph Lilley Turner's *A Comparative and Etymological Dictionary of the Nepali Language* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench and Trubner Co Ltd. 1931) was a colossal exertion in Nepali lexicography. It was the first Nepali-English dictionary.

The identity that Turner's dictionary gave to Nepal and the Nepali language was a remarkable event in the history of nation-building in Nepal. The readers of the Nepali language, or what has often been described as the Khas-kura, Parbate, or the Gorkhali language, had received not only etymological notes, but its vocabulary, orthography, and the note in the form of conjunct letters were also explained. Attempts were made to explain its relation with other Indo-Aryan languages. The dictionary also indisputably stated that the nearest relative of Nepali is a group of dialects known as Kumaoni spoken in the British Indian District of Kumaon.

Turner was not the first person who worked on Nepali grammars, dictionaries, and vocabularies. There were many others. J. A. Ayton's *Grammar of the Nepalese Language* (1820), A. Turnbull's *Nepali Grammer and Vocabulary* (1887), Hemraj Guru's undated *Gorkha-bhasa-vyakaran-Candrika*, Somraj Sarma's *Maddhya Candrika* (1920), and R. Kilgour, H.C. Duncan and G. P. Pradhan's *English Nepali Dictionary* (1923) provided strong background to Turner. He also noted Gangadhar Sastri Dravid, M. E. Dopping-Heppenstal, Subadar Kushalsing Burathoki, G.W.P. Money and F. Dewar's works. There is also an anonymous writer's *Short Khaskura Phrases* published by Thacker Spink and Co. Colonel Kirkpatrick compiled many Nepali vocabularies in his book of 1811. Like him, many other writers who wrote introductory books on Nepal also worked on Nepali words and phrases. Apart from them, Turner was also able to read many important

Nepali texts that were available, like Prime Minister Chandra Shamsher's speech on the liberation of slaves in 1925, Bhanu Bhakta's *Badhu-Siksa*, or the famous but undated folk story *Sunkesri Rani ko Katha*. Turner left no stone unturned in his research to compile the dictionary as he wanted. His voluminous work which consists of 26,000 words is still considered the first real dictionary worth its name in Nepali. No doubt, it has remained a lasting source of information and knowledge for Nepali lexicographers.

The quality work that Turner produced was unmatched by any other lexicographers. His background as an English-Indian languages philologist was very helpful in his job. He was not only conversant in the Romani language, but also had deep knowledge of the Indo-Aryan languages. He also had the experience of working with the second and third Queen Alexandra's own Gurkha Rifles. He learnt quite a lot during the period from 1920 to 1922 as the professor of Indian Linguistics at Benares Hindu University. He also had the background as the Professor of Sanskrit at the School of Oriental Studies at the University of London. He counts his friend Pandit Dharanidhar Koirala of Darjeeling as his constant counsellor and collaborator. Koirala has been credited for examining every one of the 26,000 entries in the dictionary. Bodh Bikram Adhikari of Kathmandu has been acknowledged equally, as it was him "through whose hands also almost every slip passed, and who added a very considerable number of words and meanings on his own account." He owes to Dr H. Jorgensen for the identifications in Newari and Professor F. W. Thomas and Dr L. D. Bennett for Tibetan. It is Ms Turner who has been credited for preparing the indexes which enable "the book to be used in some measure as a



comparative etymological vocabulary of all the main Indo-Aryan languages." These indexes contain about 48,000 entries.

The Dictionary is rich in the identification of the words in use among common Nepalese folk. Words like *kachmach* (odds and ends), *kandara* (cavern) and *kapakap* (the noise made while swallowing) and, for that matter, *rajkhani* (a goat's testicles), *loso* (anything eaten with something else, especially food eaten when drinking *raksi*), and *haise-hoste* (exclamations used by men engaged together on a task of lifting or pulling something heavy) are just a few examples. Many words from the other indigenous dialects in Nepal that are used in Nepali are also meticulously included in the dictionary.

According to William Brook Northey, who wrote a book on Nepal about six year after the publication of this dictionary, "with the exception of certain tribes, nearly all Gurkhas are bilingual, speaking both their tribal language which belong to the Tibeto-Burman group, and the lingua franca of the country, Nepali, though their proficiency in the latter varies greatly. Certain tribes for instance like the

Gurungs, who inhabit the more inaccessible parts of the country, have a very imperfect knowledge of it.”

The last paragraph of Ralph Lilley Turner's 1930 preface to the Dictionary reads: "As I write these last words, my thoughts return to you who were my comrades, the stubborn and indomitable peasants of Nepal. Once more I hear the laughter with which you greeted every hardship. Once more I see you in your bivouacs or about your fires, on forced march or in the trenches, now shivering with wet and cold, now scorched by a pitiless and burning sun. Uncomplaining you endure hunger and thirst and wounds; and at the last your unwavering lines disappear into the smoke and wrath of battle. Bravest of the brave, most generous of the generous, never had country of more faithful friends than you." This is the paragraph which was recounted at the British memorial to the Gurkhas which was unveiled by Queen Elizabeth II on December 3, 1997, in London.

The person who produced this great dictionary of Nepali language never had any opportunity to set his foot in the Kingdom of Nepal. He was familiar with the territory both East and West of Nepal, but not Nepal itself. But that did not prevent him to work on this dictionary.

Ralph L. Turner (1888 - 1983) remains an unsung hero of Nepal and the Nepali language. His dictionary is still a living testament of the uncontaminated Nepali language that developed in the hills and mountains of Nepal in association with other indigenous Nepalese dialects. At a time when Nepali is under aggression of foreign languages in its own land and is fast dispensing with its local contents, contexts, and flavours, the contribution that Turner, a foreign national, made by compiling this Dictionary some 82 years ago can make anybody sonorous. This Dictionary still reminds the readers the extent to which the Nepali language has been diluted and is under pressure of extinction of its inherent features.



ADENAUER FORUM

Sub-regional Trade Talks

At a program organized by the Center for South Asian Studies (CSAS) in cooperation with the Regional-Program –SAARC, experts discussed the issue of sub-regional cooperation and trade facilitation in Nepal-India-Bangladesh axis.

Despite several efforts to increase sub-regional trade, the trade between Nepal-India-Bangladesh is still nominal. Due to lack of connectivity, the bilateral trade between sub-regional countries is yet to take off as desired.

“Sub-regional cooperation and trade will be a win-win for all the countries. Today’s discussion may help policymakers to pursue the agenda of sub-regional connectivity as well,” said Dr. Nishchal N. Pandey, director of the Centre for South Asian Studies.

Addressing the Adenauer Forum, Maj. Gen. (Retd) ANM Muniruzzaman, president of Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies, said that there is a high potential for sub-regional trade among Nepal, Bangladesh, India and Bhutan.

“As Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh do not share their

borders, it depends upon India to help the sub-regional trade to materialize.”

Professor. Nisha Taneja, fellow, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, New Delhi, said the situation is gradually improving along with the change in the mindset of the high level officials.

Former secretary of Ministry of Commerce Purushottam Ojha said that there are many bottlenecks to move the sub-regional trade among Nepal-Bhutan and Bangladesh forward. Although Nepal has signed an agreement to use Phulbari road to trade with Bangladesh, it is economically unviable due to the many bureaucratic hassles involved,” said Ojha.

Attended by high-level academicians, former foreign secretaries, ministers and experts, the half-day forum discussed various issues related to trade.

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DISASTER

Practical Answer

Practical Action's experiences have shown that developing early warning system can reduce the damage and save huge resources used in rescue and rehabilitation. Nepal has been spending a huge amount of money on traditional approaches of rescue and rehabilitation. The time has come now to prepare the community by using their skills to prevent disasters from wreaking havoc

By KESHAB POUDEL

Helicopters hovered around the far west flood affected districts carrying ministers, senior government officials, army chief and local security personnel. They visited the districts to take stock of the situation and distribute cash, clothes and foodstuff to victims as per the government guidelines.

The drama of rescue and rehabilitation has continued for the last many years. However, this method has neither prevented any disaster nor saved many lives and much property. People who survived from disasters and floods, suffered huge financial losses and were coping with trauma and trouble in their whole life.

As Nepal's disaster management is still geared towards rescue and rehabilitation, Nepal Army, Armed Police and Nepal Police are in the frontline, backed by district administration units. In the process of rehabilitation, the role of community is nominal.

Complete disaster prevention is not possible. However, there are means and ways to reduce human casualties and loss of movable property. Practical Action, an INGO working in Nepal with partnership with Department of Hydrology, local level administrative bodies and community for a long period of time, has shown that given a well-equipped and well-managed early warning system, the country can preempt the human losses and damage of movable property.

This is what one could see

happening in Bardiya district this year. Even the level of damage, it appeared, could be reduced drastically through the community participation in preventive exercises. Although the flood in Karnali river was at the highest level in 35 years, the preventive measures saved the lives of dozens of people and property worth millions of rupees. Although the flood damaged 326 houses completely and 816 partially, displacing 2,417 families, there was no human casualty and people were able to take away their movable property.

The alert issued by Flood Forecasting Division of Hydrology and Meteorology gave enough time for the local people to move away from the site of possible disaster. Program Coordinator for DRR and Climate Change in Practical Action Dina Nath Bhanadari holds the view that early warning system needs to be developed and expanded in Nepal to prevent human casualties. "This is the only way to prepare for disasters."

According to the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology Flood Forecasting Project, the level of water is normal now but there is a possibility of its increase any time, depending on the rainfall. Flood forecasting project websites issued alerts about the level of water and flood situation every day for the district level officials and the local community, depending on the risk.

Had similar flood forecasting systems been in place, the flood caused

by heavy rain on June 16 would not have devastated far-west and mid-west.

However, Nepal is yet to practice the system in various parts. Instead, the government's focus is on traditional approaches like rescue and rehabilitation.

"We have already distributed Rs. 915,000 for families of 30 dead and 2.5 million to the 400 displaced people. The relief package has already been sent to the affected districts," said Pralhad Pokharel, joint spokesperson of the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Fifty people died following the first disaster, according to the Ministry of Home website, which reports 18 missing, 300 injured, 15,871 houses destroyed completely, 1,496 damaged partially. According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, a total 797 households, with 4,118 people, were displaced. The flood affected 11,393 people all over Nepal. The government has already distributed Rs. 17.5 million as relief.

"The Ministry is distributing relief materials in flood-hit districts in close coordination with the district-based security personnel and government authorities," said spokesperson at the Home Ministry, Shankar Prasad Koirala.

"We are reaching to flood affected areas with needed relief materials," said Lakshmi Prasad Dhakal, chief of National Emergency Operation Centre, which monitors natural disasters in Nepal.

A total of 7,000 people have also

been displaced, while 800 houses have been completely destroyed and 1,500 partly damaged, after heavy monsoon rains began in mid-June and eased two weeks later, he said. "Over 1,000 livestock have also been killed and we are still assessing the damage in monetary terms."

Community Early Warning Systems

At a time when the story of devastation is affecting the life of poor people, the community early Warning System in Nepal is saving human lives.

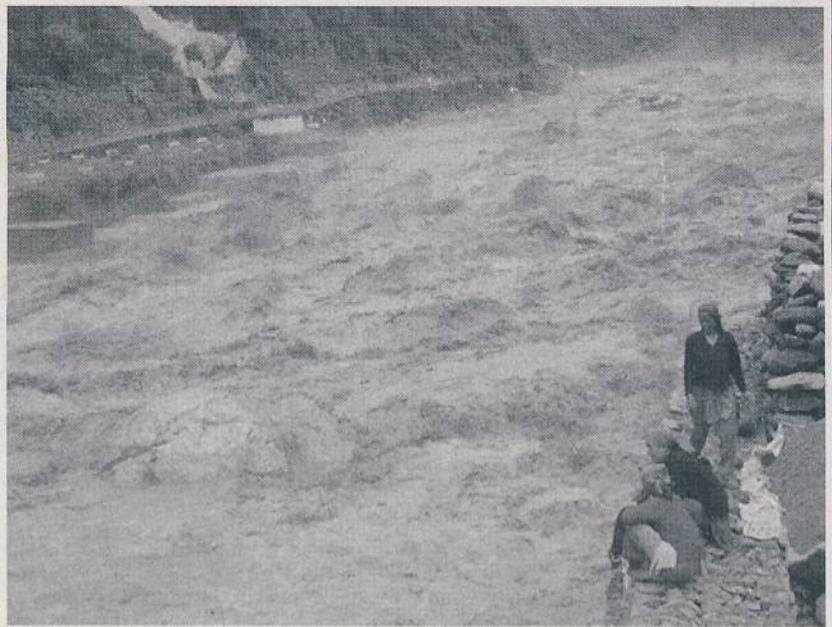
"On a recent trip to Nepal, I was introduced to Practical Action's work on flood preparedness and, in particular, the development of Early Warning System to provide poor communities with advance warning of devastating floods," writes Colin McQuistan of Practical Action in the blog.

Recognizing this threat, Practical Action started engaging vulnerable local communities in flood prevention planning from 2002 and it was quickly realized that the major problem was a lack of prior warning. Hence regardless of when the flood struck, the losses were considerable, particularly for the poor and marginalized families that lived in the most vulnerable locations.

So Practical Action approached the Department of Hydrology and Meteorology of the Government of Nepal, with a proposal to link their river monitoring stations, using mobile communications to communities downstream to extend advance warning from a few minutes to at least a couple of hours.

Following the agreement of the department, Practical Action worked with local communications specialists, Real Time Solutions Pvt. Ltd, to link this information to SMS services and also connecting the data to the internet, allowing real time flood warning information to be disseminated to many different users.

This system is now operational in 5 river systems in Nepal, the West Rapti, Narayani, East Rapti, Babai and



Flood in Mahakali

Karnali Rivers, providing between 1.5 to 5 hours advance warning depending on the river system. This has reduced the flood vulnerability of poor communities living along these rivers and has enabled local authorities to deliver more responsive flood relief.

Community participation is key to successful implementation of projects. "Participation is the key to success in any community based program. Participation can only be guaranteed if communities are fully aware of what is taking place and are involved in the decision making processes. As such, Practical Action carried out extensive consultative processes both before and during the program," said Upendra Shrestha, head of program funding and communication, Practical Action.

Communities were left alone to decide their committee make-up, though the inclusion on the "VDC Secretary", the lowest level government representative, on the committee, where this post existed, was felt to be appropriate, so as to include the government from day one. Committees had very few female members in most cases, though over the course of the program as members have left or dropped out and been replaced, the number has increased significantly. It is not by chance that the community with the highest

number of female committee members is also the community with the highest levels of participation and community contribution.

"Practical Action in Nepal is demonstrating various approaches to strengthen community's coping capacities with impacts of climate change. The community based adaptation approach implemented by Practical Action along with the local authorities is mainly focusing interventions in - a) natural resource management for reducing climate change effects; b) adaptation to changing farming systems and practices; c) strengthening coping strategies of the communities and enhancing complementary livelihood options; and d) establishing the monitoring systems of climate change at the community level considering the social, economic and natural resource parameters," said Shrestha.

However, the government officials see this alone is not enough. Early warning system is good to prevent loss and casualty.

"Nepal government is also implementing the Early Warning System nation-wide," said Koirala. "Till the expansion and development of such system, there is no way other than to go for reconstruction and rehabilitation. ■"

Approach To Agriculture & Forestry Education

By DR. TEJ BAHADUR K.C.

In the early 1970s, a member of the National Planning Commission (NPC) visited the Agricultural Research complex at Khumaltar, Lalitpur (created by the then Department of Agricultural Education and Research and now owned by Nepal Agricultural Research Council, NARC). At the end of the visit, the NPC member called the Khumaltar Agricultural Research complex A White Elephant. This type of thinking still exists among the planners and decision makers of Nepal. This is due mainly to their educational backgrounds. The graduates of multi-faculty university education system may not realize the importance of research, because research is not an integral part of the multi-faculty university teachings.

The Tribhuvan University (TU) is a multi-faculty university. In TU, research is done in four research centers, located at Kritipur TU complex, whereas teaching is done in various campuses spread throughout the country. Professors in TU may or may not be required to do research. It is not an integral part of their teaching. An appointment of a member of NPC has always been a tradition in Nepal to pick-up My Man by the political party in the government. Major political parties also have competitions to appoint My Man/Your Man in the key university appointments. This practice has always kept the Right Man away from the sight. So we often hear comments as mentioned above. The dominance of such persons who never understood the requirements of agriculture and forestry education created a blunder while suggesting opening of the University of Agriculture and Forestry (UAF). Had there been a person who understood the requirements of agriculture and forestry education, the UAF would have never appeared as it is now.

The present UAF is a combination of TU campuses at Rampur (Agriculture) and Hetauda (Forestry). This was a big mistake, a faulty decision. The TU does not appear willing to hand over its property at Rampur and Hetauda to the new university. Neither has it stopped its programs at these campuses. Programs of the two universities are operating at Rampur campus and there is a problem of sharing the facilities. There have been disturbances and confusions. The TU appointed Dean has not been able to function at Rampur. This is a very unfortunate situation. There has been a mistake and it needs correction. Nepal government must intervene and work to transfer



all the programs and facilities, including willing man-power of the two campuses of TU at Rampur and Hetauda to the UAF. This will ease the situation. The ultimate objective of the government should be to bring agriculture and forestry education on the Right Track. This might be done by a complete stop of agriculture and forestry teachings at TU campuses.

The programs and facilities, including willing man-power of the Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS) and Institute of forestry (IOF), TU, should automatically be handed over to UAF. The expanded UAF might be renamed as National University of Agriculture and Forestry. The TU should understand that doing this is a national need and it is for the national

benefit. It should co-operate with the process.

The TU is a nation-supported university. So it is virtually a National University of Nepal. The UAF must also be nation-supported varsity. Only the announcement of the opening and the appointments of the university authorities of the UAF might not be sufficient. University education in agriculture and forestry is very expensive. It requires a very high spending. So the success of the university lies in the government as to how it nourishes the baby university for its growth and development. For this an adequate support and funding from the government is essential and required. The UAF must be strong in

its programs and execute them effectively. Teaching at UAF is done under Land Grant Pattern of education, first developed by the US universities and adopted by most of the agricultural universities of the world. In that, stakeholders' problems are solved through research and the findings of research are integrated in teaching. The teaching, research and development work with the participation of stakeholders (extension) are considered the Three Pillars of Agriculture and Forestry Development. These pillars must be equally strong and must support for and co-operate with each other's activities as and when needed. These three must go together. A professor in the UAF needs to know the problems of the stakeholders, try to solve them by research and the finding of research needs to be integrated in teaching. In the same way a student at UAF needs a frequent visit to stakeholders' problem area and get acquainted with them. Frequent student and stakeholder interactions are necessary to help produce efficient and competent man-power. So the

India has at least one Agriculture University in each state. India has achieved Green Revolution. Nepal, on the other hand, a food exporting country in the 1960s has become a food importing country.

teaching, research and extension must be the integral part of the UAF teaching. The man-power developed under this system of education have proven to be efficient and competent in agricultural and forestry development work. In Nepal, these three functions of agriculture and forestry development are done by separate institutions such as Teaching by TU and UAF, Research by NARC and Forestry Research Division and development work by Extension Departments. There exists no desired level of collaboration, co-operation and co-ordination in solving problems of the stakeholders.

The UAF may need Research Farms and Stations in different parts of the country representing a diverse agro-climatic and ecological zone so that the UAF professors and students might get exposure and opportunity to do research on area specific problems and tackle them on site. Instead of creating such facilities of its own, UAF, it may be wiser, should work with the Government to make the already existing Research Farms and Stations of NARC accessible and those of the departments of relevant ministries for the use of professors and students of UAF. These facilities of NARC and department are widespread, and represent diverse agro-climatic and ecological zones of Nepal. These facilities are national properties and must be best utilized for the national benefits. Ownership should not be important. This article proposes UAF should have a place to work on an area specific problem and get solutions through research. The UAF graduate students need to do a Thesis Research. The Thesis Research could be worked out on problems of those areas. Scientists of NARC and

Extension Scientists of departments might be appointed as co-supervisors of the student's Thesis Research. This arrangement certainly will be mutually beneficial and also in the national benefit. This way, the UAF products would have a wider practical exposure and understanding. This will ultimately yield a more competent and efficient man-power to work under various programs of NARC and other related departments of Government, NGOs/INGOs, and many more places.

If Nepal is an agricultural country, it must prosper through agriculture and forestry. This is possible and must be achieved. The development thus achieved will be sustainable and this will help keep young boys and girls in the country. The development brought by remittance money is temporary and uncertain. A copy of this pattern of education introduced in India in the early 1960s changed India from a food deficit country to food surplus one at present. India has at least one Agriculture University in each state. India has achieved Green Revolution. Nepal, on the other hand, a food exporting country in the 1960s has become a food importing country. Among many factors to blame for contributing to this situation is the faulty agriculture and forestry education system followed by the country. Now the UAF must concentrate its teaching under Land Grant Pattern and develop UAF as a Centre of Excellence in Mountain Agriculture and Forestry Education. Nepal has many challenges and many opportunities as the comparative advantage. So we must concentrate on area specific development with greater participation of stakeholders to solve their problem and find solutions through proper research and the integration of the findings in teaching. We must work hard and harness these advantages and develop Nepal into A Paradise. This is possible only through a proper agriculture and forestry education which is the undertakings of the UAF.

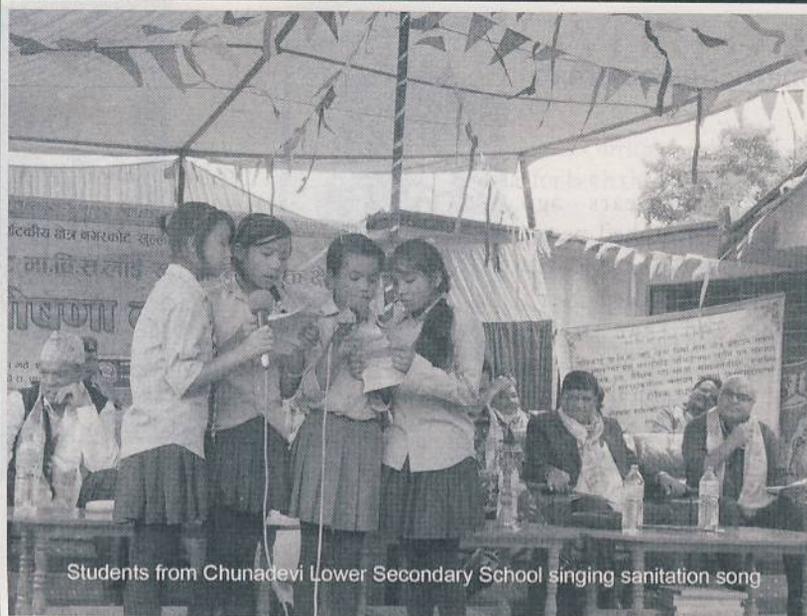
So far the products of IAAS and

IOF, TU have been good theoretically and practically weak to work under Nepal's diverse conditions. They have shown a good performance in many foreign countries where there are systems already developed. Our students work a little hard and fit in the new environment and demonstrate their competency in those countries. So it is apparent that the man-power developed under TU at IAAS and IOF have been the man-power for other countries. This way we have been helping Brain-Drain as well. The IAAS and IOF used to have professors trained from famous universities of the world (USA, Philippines, India and many other countries). Most of these professors are now working in foreign countries. The replacements have been done mostly by graduates of IAAS and IOF in the recent years. This has created an In-breeding Problem which results in the degradation of educational quality.

Now it is the responsibility of UAF to work out a system in Nepal in collaboration with NPC, University Grant Commission (UGC), Ministry of Finance (MOF), Ministry of Agriculture Development (MOAD) and University of Forestry and Soil Conservation (MOFS) and their related departments and NARC such that the system brings researchers, stakeholders and extension personnel, university professors and students together to discuss and co-operate, co-ordinate and help produce effective, efficient and competent man-power to work under diverse agro-climatic and eco-zones of Nepal.

It is, therefore, important for the UAF authorities to educate the planners and decision makers on the nature of the requirements of the UAF teaching and get support from them. Without a wider support from the Government, stakeholders and the concerned others, any efforts made by the UAF may remain as A Cry in the Wilderness. Also it is very important to appoint the Right Man in the key positions of university administration and support them. Then only the man-power development will be achieved as expected.

Retired Professor and Former Dean of IOF and IAAS, TU



Students from Chunadevi Lower Secondary School singing sanitation song

NO OPEN DEFECTION

Nagarkot Now

Nagarkot is the latest village to declare it as an open defecation free zone in Bhaktapur

By ARYAARAJOURIA

"Initially, I always think for myself what is open defecation, the open defecation. I feel, don't we Nepalis do it? After learning, reading and understanding, I come to know that this is like a big university," writes Ashutosh Tiwari, country representative of WaterAid-Nepal in his Facebook wall. "In Nepal it is interesting to discuss on big development issues. Now-a-day, I come to realize that only after completing the small scale development, we can go for big development."

Tiwari's comments seem simple but they have a lot of meaning. Known as touristic heaven, even the villages like Nagarkot have problems related to open defecation. What might the other rural villages have in store?

Tiwari's reaction appeared just a day before declaring Nagarkot village development committee, 20

kilometers east of capital, as an Open Defecation Free Zone in Bhaktapur. Out of total 16 village development committees, Nagarkot is the sixth village in Bhaktapur to declare this.

As other people think, making certain areas open defecation free zones is not easy as it involves many things.

"It includes economics, finance, public policy, sociology, engineering, public health, marketing, anthropology, philosophy, development studies, political science, statistics, journalism, public administration. After meeting with Kathmandu University Mechanical Engineering students, I come to know that there is also computer coding for sanitation apps," said Tiwari.

In a country like Nepal, that is constantly trying to boost its tourist population, the environment must be appealing. From dust to the litter to open defecation, the environment seems uninviting.

Organizations, like the Village Development Committees (VDCs) are taking the initiative to create a change. The most recent effort in developing a cleaner environment was taken by the Nagarkot VDC on the 5th of July 2013, when they declared Nagarkot to be an open defecation free zone.

In March of 2013, 249 households out of 825 households did not have any toilets. All of the 249 households that did not have toilets excreted on the streets.

Fast-forward four months, there are 249 toilets and 3 public latrines in the area. The latrines are located in the Home stay area, the tourism development board, and the health post. Students also have access to these latrines. There is an additional latrine being planned at the bus park. The streets are cleaner, and the environment is safer.

Wateraid-HSBC Water Program helped create an awareness of the harm caused by emitting outdoors. The Village Water and the Sanitation Coordination Committee executed the testimony. The NGO, Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO) assisted.

Open defecation leads to a polluted, at times, hazardous environment. The nature degrades, and creates public health threats. By the 21st of October 2013, 10 VDCs are to be declared so.

The total number of VDC members is 4429, of which 2254 are women and 2275 are men. 842 out of 3915, which is 11%, have already been declared free of external excretion.

Rajeshwori Sharma Lamsal, District Public Health Office and Health Post in charge said, "We used [to have] a lot of cases of water borne diseases: Amoebic Dysentery, Diarrhea, Typhoid, Jaundice, and Cholera being the major ones. However, since the past few months these cases have decreased." By setting up toilets in rural areas, open defecation will decrease, and in time, won't exist. This will cause a reduction in illnesses and sanitary health ailments." ■

BINOD CHAUDHARY

Meet Nepal's First Dollar-billionaire Businessman

By ULLEKH NP

Forty years ago, when he was 18, Binod Chaudhary had to discontinue his studies and take over the reins of his family business. His father had been incapacitated by a heart attack, and he had no brothers to look after the "modest" business that involved selling fabric imported from Japan and India, and running a department store, amongst other activities.

Chaudhary, who recently became Nepal's first dollar-billionaire (as per Forbes' 2013 list), also inherited from his ailing father a biscuit business. "In those days, cardiac problems were a much bigger issue than they are today. Doctors asked my father to stay away from the business. As the oldest of his three children, I had to take the plunge," says the chairman and managing director of the Kathmandu-headquartered conglomerate Chaudhary Group (CG), which has in its fold as many as 80 companies and offices in 19 countries across the world. (Chaudhary did not disclose the group's annual revenues.)

"Yes, we can do business in Nepal and still succeed. That is what I proved," he says proudly, seated in his MG Road office in Delhi. It may be sheer coincidence but Chaudhary's grandfather, Bhuramal, too, was 18 when he left his village in Rajasthan in the late 19th century to do business in Nepal, which is still one of the world's poorest countries.

"When I was 18 and when I entered my family business, I soon realised that it wasn't as easy as I thought. I had to deal with people of my father's generation. Building trust was key to doing business. I somehow managed to do that," recalls Chaudhary, whose group is currently present in diverse sectors, from food parks and food processing to real estate, hospitality and power, banking and telecom.

Why Noodles? Wai Not?

Some 35 years ago, Chaudhary watched people returning from Thailand with packets of noodles. Nepal Airlines and Thai Airways International had just started flying to the capital cities of the two countries. Soon, it was clear that there was a craze for Thai noodles in Nepal. It was then that the idea of setting up his own noodles brand struck him.

Wai Wai, the iconic noodles brand from CG, was soon born. A ready-to-eat meal unlike many other cup noodles which have to be heated, it became an instant hit not only in Nepal but also in India's northeast before it spread to other parts of India and the world. "Now, thanks to Wai Wai, we have 2% share of the world's noodles market," says Chaudhary whose group has a tie-up with the Taj group of hotels in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Maldives. CG runs hotels as well, from 4-star brands to luxury and boutique categories. It runs the Hilton DoubleTree in New York.

Soon, the businessman of Rajasthan origin began to spread his footprint, venturing into food parks, banking and insurance, healthcare, telecom, real estate and power. In India, CG has acquired land for setting up a food park near Ajmer in Rajasthan. It is also building a corporate park in Gujarat. It also has several production facilities of Wai Wai noodles in India, including at Chittoor (Andhra Pradesh), Gangtok (Sikkim) Silchar (Assam), and Ahmedabad (Gujarat). The company is also in the process of taking the Zinc brand of hotels to Kochi by constructing one there.

Marxist Lawmaker, Political Role

The self-effacing Chaudhary, who is also a former member of parliament



representing the Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist) party or the CPN-UML in the House, doesn't want to project himself as the creator of a company that has become a burnished showpiece of Nepalese enterprise.

But he acknowledges the role he has played in the country's politics during the transition from monarchy to democracy. While he was a member in the erstwhile parliament, which, in fact, discussed the Constitution of the country, he was instrumental in putting the spotlight on the economy part of the Constitution, he says. "They [CPN-UML] wanted me to come and contribute in the making of the Constitution as a person who is known within and outside the country."

"My contribution to my country was to engage with different political parties 80% of the elected members came one way or the other from a Leftist background. The house that we elected [last time] was so inclusive that 90% of the faces were new," he notes. These MPs came from the villages and mountains. They may not have been educated, but they knew what was happening in Nepal, explains Chaudhary. He saw them as the true representatives of their people. "To engage with these people and develop a kind of consensus on economic issues was a huge challenge, but we did it," he recalls.

Courtesy: The Economic Times



NEPALIS IN WORLD SETTING

By HEMANG DIXIT

Nepalis have been going to different parts of the world. Our Princess Bhrikuti went to Tibet as a bride and propagated the Buddhist religion there. Arniko, then went to Tibet and then China as a builder and introduced the pagoda style of architecture in Beijing. Later our people joined as mercenary fighters to the army of Maharaja Ranjit Singh at Lahore and so were referred to as *lahures*. They also fought the British and drove them back to finally end up signing the Treaty of Sugauli in 1816. Jang Bahadur's troops marched to Lucknow in aid of the British at the time of the Indian Mutiny of 1857.

The British, although they praised the valour of the Gurkhas and recruited them into their Colonial Army in India never really considered taking over Nepal. Nepal being landlocked and mountainous, it would have meant great expenditure without reasonable returns. Their attention was attracted to the recruitment of trust-worthy hardy men to the hills to fight for them. The Gurkha soldier of Nepal went to the Middle East and South-East Asia fighting for British causes. In the course of these wars for the British the Gurkhas won many Victoria Crosses, the top medals for valour. After the wars, some *Nepalis* stayed on and settled in lands where they had gone as soldiers to fight or to maintain peace. Some *Nepalis*, hiding their identity went to Fiji and elsewhere as labourers and their descendants are there today.

Following the independence of India the Gurkha Battalions were also divided. Some went to UK to guard the Tower of London with its antiquities like the Kohinoor diamond and others were deputed to guard the Queen's Buckingham Palace. Those, whose playing fields was India, went to oversee the line of control between India and Pakistan or even to fight at Kargil. The recruitment of our

nationals as Gurkha soldiers goes on as usual for both the British and Indian armies.

Besides the Gurkhas the other *Nepalis* to gain name and fame in the world setting are the Sherpas who have got their names in the Guinness's Book of Records for various 'firsts' in the field of mountaineering.

Nepalis, because of the Hindu culture and lifestyle feel quite at home in India. Their concentrations in the East is at Darjeeling and at Dehra Dun in the West. The latest 'grapevine' news circulating in Kathmandu is that the *Nepali* speaking population of Sikkim is ecstatic to be in the Union of Indian States! After all it is the only state in India where *Nepali* is the official language.

Nepalis too are now following in the footsteps of our neighbours in the North and South. They are going all over and the largest number of *Nepalis* outside of India and countries of the Middle East is probably USA. Here however their number has increased because of the Bhutanese of *Nepali* origins who have been driven out of Bhutan to be resettled in the States. Though many, who are elderly have felt out of place, the majority are likely to join the *Nepali* diaspora as a result of circumstance rather than by choice. Migration of people to different cultural areas if they stay aloof too long, tends to create ghettos of varied cultures in different lands. However because we speak similar language and are of similar culture it is not surprising that *Nepalis* also congregate where the Indians are as at Jackson Heights in Washington. As *Nepalis* visit, work and live in different lands many have started documenting their experiences and thoughts on paper or even the Internet. This trend is increasing and will thus help tremendously to disseminate and fortify our *Nepali* culture for future generations. This is something that will

lead to greater things in the future.

As I started using a social networking programme such as Facebook, Google and Yahoo I came across various groups of people who are very conscientiously putting forward their views on various topics for improving conditions and trying to motivate people in Nepal to come out on to the streets in support of various causes. We have seen the results and the upheavals that have occurred in many countries of the Middle East. This is all good if it results in benefit at large to the people. As I surfed the Internet and read what has been written by various groups of *Nepalis* I sometimes had the feeling that many had their individual axes to grind and ideas to disperse – some political, some religious etc. . Perhaps some were doing this because of boredom and a yearning to be back in familiar surroundings. A recent development is that some children of *Nepali* origin who have been educated in the States, UK, Australia and Canada are being sent back to the country of their parents to do their graduate studies. This is a good trend which needs to increase further for it will benefit both parties.

Political uncertainty prevails all over Nepal. One hears leaders tell us that what is happening in Nepal is as per the wish of what certain external powers. There is no doubt that our leaders have disappointed many and so this may be a 'red herring' let loose by them, to divert attention from their incompetence. No direct charges are made but the innuendoes are there. The other rumour doing the rounds is that foreign funded NGOs or INGOs, with unlimited funds are literally in the process of creating discord amongst the different communities. Has that process occurred already and are we being controlled as puppets on a string? If it has, are we headed towards Domsday as the world watches? ■

Why Yunus is a Great Man?

By **BIDUSHI ADHIKARI**



In 1953, Mohammad Yunus, an economist, banker, and a Noble Peace Prize recipient, established the *Grameen* Bank. The bank is solely based on the concept of "microlending," which provides for small loans to the impoverished which they return back to the Bank little by little and whenever they can.

These poor people can take the money to buy the necessary materials needed for products of their individualized skills, like basket-weaving. Today, the *Grameen* Bank is spread out over 44 developing countries and has borrowers amounting to over 8.29 million, 65% of whom have managed to lift themselves out of poverty and 95% of whom are women. What is more about the Bank is that, unlike other, multibillionaire companies, 92% of the Bank is owned by the poor who borrow money, with shares as small as just \$3. The name *Grameen* itself implies to a "village bank," one of the core purposes of Yunus' intentions to establish the Bank at a local level.

With this revolutionizing idea and a simple degree in economics, Yunus managed to change and shape the lives of millions of people, a humanitarian desire that most of us possess. Firstly, what makes Yunus a great man is that he started with something small, a small realization that hit him when he visited a woman in a Bengali village and found out that she needed just 15 paisa to buy the necessary materials for her stools and even make a tad bit of profit. He started as just an economics professor, with banks and other institutions clearly opposing his idea of microlending, but emerged as a new leader of this modern world. Most of us forget that we can always work with what we have. There is no other way than to start small, with very little resources, and work our way up from there.

Using his profession, Yunus showed us that all of us don't have to end up like stock brokers or corporate lawyers if we pursue any kind of a professional life. There are still ways, like the one Yunus has shown, to pursue something incredible while still maintaining the level of our studies. We can all be service to our nation using our first-rate degrees. What's more is that when we get the privilege of getting educated in a higher degree, it becomes our responsibility to come up with creative, more mature ideas that will help the world we live in. There is not one set direction we have to walk along when we choose to get a degree in economics or English or psychology. There are multiple ways to implement the knowledge from the degrees in the world around us.

Lastly, I think Yunus' decision to start at a local level to make the difference is probably of more worth than any other. Making a difference in one's own community is the first step towards doing something of satisfaction. Since we get to be the ones who get a strong education, it comes as responsibility for us to take care of those who cannot do without the help of others from their own community. ■

All For Education

By **RITISHA KHANAL**



A few years ago, when I used to be a 8th and 9th grade student, the only problem I had in studies was that I could not internalize the importance of the texts. The assignments given by the teachers used to be an obligation, not interest. Assignments were often a headache to me. Classroom was interesting because of exploration, discussion and presentation. But when it came to solving mathematics and science numerical problems, usually I walked a step back. Many friends could easily solve those problems, for which, I took more effort to understand. The teachers' favorite ones used sit quietly without talking the whole period. I used to think they were more intelligent, more talented and more active. But the fact was that when their turn for conversation with the teachers came, participating in the class, contests and other extra curricular activities, however, I used to be a bit more active than they were. Then I realized that, we all have the same mind but the thing is that how much effort you put to make its use. I was miles away from the reality that how much my friends did self practice. Today I am not that much active in participating in extra-curricular activities but, 'yes' I have become a little more studious than I was in grade 8 and 9. Maybe the syllabus of A-level course requires more study work for practice. To go in the class without some information related to the topic affects me badly when the teachers cross me questions and ask me to present some things related to the particular chapter.

Correspondingly, spending one year in grade 10 was not much easy. The SLC examination included questions from all the chapters from each book that have to be solved in a limited time period of 3 hours. The capability of students was approved by this examination only maybe that is why we call the SLC examination as the Iron Gate to success. This is not an obstacle for the private schools around the valley. But all the difficulty is for the students in the isolated areas without proper education facility. The student guided by tuition classes and facilitated by all the necessary materials also appear and get the same result as the one in the inaccessible place where there is no regular classes. There is also the scarcity of teachers, sometimes a teacher has to teach many subjects. It is a shameful matter that an English boarding school in the heart of the city has none of the students passing the SLC examination.

Every private school, these days, tries to provide the best learning environment for their students. They appoint gold medalists and toppers as teachers. There, 30-50 students are present in the same class and one teacher guides them. The teachers apply the same way to teach the huge number of students. Some can follow the teacher at once but some students are badly hindered. Some of the students need more time and effort to understand the same topic. Some understand the lesson visually while some do orally. Instead of polishing the needy student, parents and teachers start to yell at the student. Expecting more from the weak one is the imprudence of both teachers and parents. ■

MOVIE REVIEW

Lootera



Did you ever anticipate Vikramaditya Motwane to put together a period film with mainstream actors, after attempting the brilliant slice-of-life drama UDAAN? Nope, not me at least... But maverick film-makers, by and large, tend to drop a bombshell by opting for a contrasting theme in their ensuing movie. The question is, will Motwane ship yet another dazzling nugget in his subsequent outing? Let's find out...

LOOTERA is inspired by American author O. Henry's short story 'The Last Leaf'. Let's set the record straight by stating that Motwane hasn't adapted the story in its entirety. He has made modifications, of course... the most vital one being injecting the protagonist's character [Ranveer Singh] in the plot, which did not exist in the story. For those not acquainted with the story, it's about this dying girl who watches the leaves fall from a plant outside the windowpane and believes that the day the last leaf falls, she too would pass away.

LOOTERA is a captivating tale that reverberates with emotions and passion and encapsulates the highs and lows of a stormy relationship magnificently. Penned with utmost sensitivity and crafted delicately and thoughtfully, the film is akin to a beautiful painting on celluloid!

1953. West Bengal. Varun [Ranveer Singh] arrives in Manikpur. He impresses the zamindar and his family, especially his daughter Pakhi [Sonakshi Sinha], who finds herself drawn towards him.

Soon, Varun and Pakhi are involved in a passionate relationship, but Varun does a volte face and disappears. When truth dawns upon Pakhi's father, he suffers a stroke and passes away. Pakhi decides to move on, determined to forget Varun. She arrives in Dalhousie, but as destiny would have it, Varun walks into her life again...

The premise of LOOTERA may bring back memories of several films. But it's the mood, the ambience, the treatment that lures you into the world of Varun and Pakhi. The old world charm of Bengal and Dalhousie only enhances the impact, while the varied twists in the tale catch you absolutely unaware, especially when one is guessing about what course the storyline would take after a major twist during the interval point.

LOOTERA bears the look of a classic. The visuals, the shade palette, the objet d'art, the milieu, the apparel... even the way the characters communicate at an unhurried, easygoing pace and share emotions takes you back to the bygone era.



MOVIE PREVIEW

The Wolverine

Genres: Action, Adventure, Fantasy, Science Fiction

Director: James Mangold

Cast : Hugh Jackman, Will Yun Lee, Tao Okamoto

In modern day Japan, Wolverine is out of his depth in an unknown world as he faces his ultimate nemesis in a life-or-death battle that will leave him forever changed. Vulnerable for the first time and pushed to his physical and emotional limits, he confronts not only lethal samurai steel but also his inner struggle against his own immortality, emerging more powerful than we have ever seen him before.



The Last Monarch

Genres: Documentary

Producer: Manju Sharma

Director: Ramesh Khadka

The Last Monarch is a documentary that traces the rise and fall of the 240-year long rule of the Shahs. This non-fiction movie starts with Prithvi Narayan Shah, his quest of unifying Nepal and draws opinion and narratives from experts, historians and those who were close to the palace. It moves to analyze the reign of the last King - Gyanendra Shah who became the King after the most crucial time in Nepal's Royal history and provides an insight into the end of a dynasty and the reasons behind it.



Despicable Me 2

Genres: Animation, Comedy, Crime, Family

Director: Pierre Coffin, Chris Renaud

Cast : Steve Carell, Kristen Wiig, Miranda Cosgrove, Russell Brand

Gru, the girls, the unpredictably hilarious minions and a host of new characters return. This time, he is recruited by the Anti-Villain League to help deal with a powerful new super criminal.



(Courtesy: QFXCinemas)

Gastroenteritis



By **BUDDHA BASNYAT, MD**

Gastroenteritis is a glorified term for good old diarrhea which is the bane of our summer existence in Nepal. Unlike tourists we need a bigger dose of the bacteria to have the symptoms. The lining of our intestines can usually withstand the 'riffraff' bacteria that cause problems in tourists, but when you get a Genghis Khan horde invasion even the Nepali intestinal lining will succumb to the onslaught and profuse watery diarrhea will ensue.

One way of ensuring you suffer from this kind of gastroenteritis is to go to one of the many marriage parties this summer and stuff yourself with raw onions and salad

profuse diarrhea. A banana or two will also help replenish the electrolyte (like potassium) you lose with diarrhea. Of course antibiotics may be necessary if the watery diarrhea does not stop in a day soon. And usually as with all things medical, the old and the young are the vulnerable groups.

Prevention is key. Avoiding salads and uncooked vegetables is important. Always drink boiled water. Just filtering with a regular filter may not be good enough. Avoid ice made from unboiled water. Food is safe if it is steamy and burns the tongue as this guarantees death to the bacteria, the main cause of the diarrheaproblem. Runner up organisms are giardia, amebas, and viruses.

Washing your hand with soap and water always helps. But food hygiene is not completely in your hands. The role of food handlers is very important in hotel and restaurants. In affluent countries

food inspectors check the hygiene quality even in five star hotels. With no food inspectors around, it is even more important to take personal preventive measures when you eat out. Unfortunately this may detract from the enjoyment of your meal of chwela and chiura in your neighbourhood restaurant.

CORRECTION: We regret for mistake appeared in last issue in this page. Instead of printing the article written by Dr. Basnyat, something else has published by errors. -Editor

Washing your hand with soap and water always helps. But food hygiene is not completely in your hands. The role of food handlers is very important in hotel and restaurants. In affluent countries food inspectors check the hygiene quality even in five star hotels.

or eat the unforgettable creamy dessert. Enjoy the meal while the going is great because there is a good chance you will be made to pay dearly when at 2 AM in the morning you may wake up with a feverish feeling, joint aches, and a Ganges churning in your belly. No wonder they call this Delhi belly!!

The important thing when diarrhea hits you like this is to make sure to continue to drink fluids even if you are nauseated. Nothing is worse than dehydration coupled with

ARMY INTEGRATION

Security Concern

Despite the completion of the army integration process, it is yet to see how indoctrinated former Maoist combatants will adjust in Nepal Army. The challenge before Nepal's professional army is to discipline the combatants.

After the induction of Maoist combatants in Nepal Army, the 6-years long integration process came to an end. Altogether 1,352 former rebel combatants, who had opted to join the Nepal Army as per the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by the then rebel Maoists and the government in 2006 to pave the way for the former to join peaceful politics, have completed a nine-month basic army training recently, formally becoming part of the national army.

As per the Secretariat of the Army Integration Special Committee, 71 combatants for officer level and 1,373 for other ranks were finally selected for training. However, 21 combatants could not complete the training due to various reasons. Other than the former combatants inducted at



officer level, 1,352 combatants integrated into the lower ranks in the army have completed basic training and received formal permission to join the army.

After a year-long training, indoctrinated Maoist combatants might have learned so many things. How, will they adjust in an organized and professional force remains to be seen.

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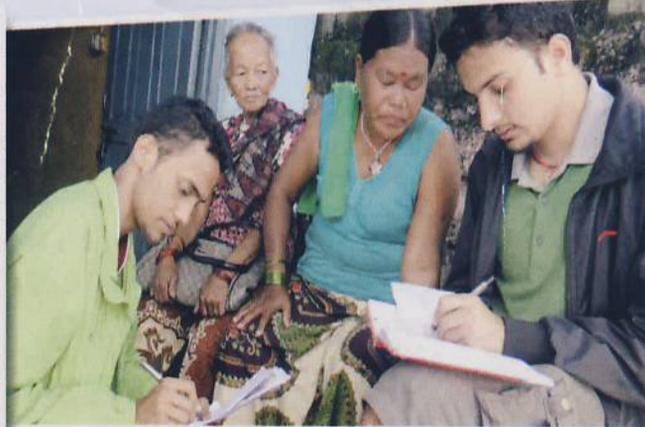


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