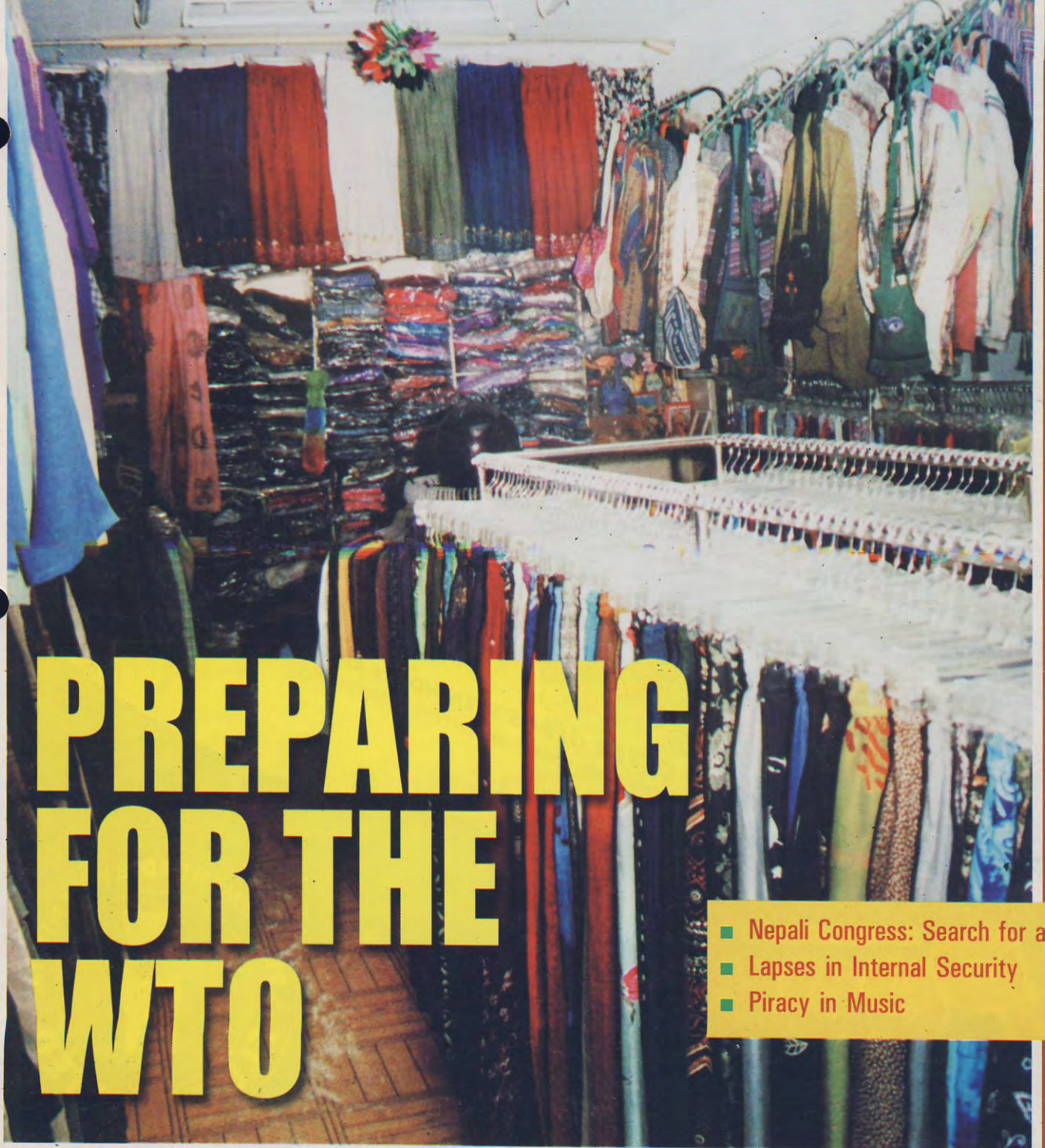


The National Newsmagazine

SPOTLIGHT

13-19 April, 2001



PREPARING FOR THE WTO

- Nepali Congress: Search for a Truce
- Lapses in Internal Security
- Piracy in Music

C.D.O. Regd. No. 151/039-20
Postal Regd. No. 42/057-058

Australia/New Zealand US\$ 1.00
Europe US\$ 1.00
USA/Canada US\$ 2.00

China/Korea US\$ 1.00
Middle East US\$ 1.00
Hong Kong/Taiwan US\$ 1.00

Other SAARC Nations US\$ 0.50
ASEAN Countries US\$ 0.50
Japan US\$ 1.00

Nepal NRs. 20.00
India INR. 20.00
Bhutan Nu. 25.00

STRONGER TEETH FOR YOUR FAMILY



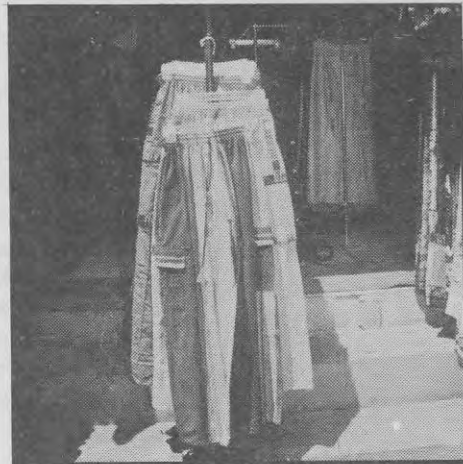
ADVANCED
Pepsodent
TOOTHPASTE

FIGHT GERMS LONGER. MAKES TEETH STRONGER



CONTENTS

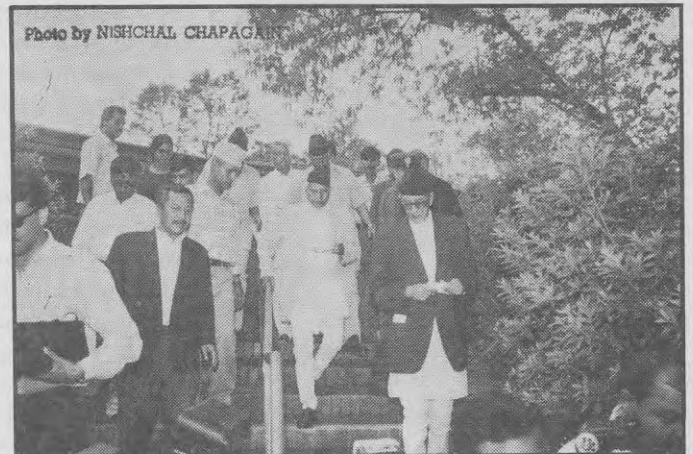
	Page
Letters	3
News Notes	4
Briefs	6
Quote Unquote	7
Off The Record	8
POLICE POST ATTACKS : Security Lapses	10
REMINISCENCES : Good Neighborliness	12
HUMAN RIGHTS : Violations Continue	14
LITERATURE : Reading Nepali	15
UMBINIGRAM : Peace Building	21
MUSIC PIRACY : Haunted By Thefts	24
BOOK REVIEW	26
THE BOTTOMLINE	27
VIEW POINT : A.P. Rajkumar Subedi	28
PASTIME	29
LEISURE	30
FORUM : Steven Crossely	32



COVER STORY : PREPARING FOR THE WTO

As Nepal is preparing to join the international trade body, it should focus more on enhancing its competitive strength and reap more benefits.

Page 16



CONGRESS POLITICS : Koirala Gains Strength

Although his resignation was demanded, Congress executive committee and the parliamentary party decide to back prime minister Koirala in the face of all-round opposition.



INTERVIEW : RAMESH NATH PANDEY

The Upper House MP Pandey, who recently grabbed headlines after meeting top Maoist leaders, talks about the current affairs of the country.

1

Page 22

SPOTLIGHT

THE NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

Vol. 20, No.39, April 13, 2001 (Chaitra 31, 2057)

Chief Editor And Publisher

Madhav Kumar Rimal

Editor

Sarita Rimal

Managing Editor

Keshab Poudel

Associate Editor

Bhagirath Yogi

Senior Reporter

Sanjaya Dhakal

Reporter

Akshay Sharma

Design and Layout

Jyoti Singh

Photographer

Nishchal Chapagain

Art

M.S. Khokna

Legal Advisor

Advocate Lok Bhakta Rana

Marketing/Advertisement

Sarit Rimal (USA)

Marketing

Madan Kaji Basnet

Navin Kumar Maharjan

Madan Raj Poudel

Editorial Office

GPO Box 7256, Baluwatar, Kathmandu,

Tel : (977-1) 423127, Fax : (977-1) 417845

Chief Editor's : 435594

E-mail : spot@mail.com.np

Internet Add: <http://www.nepalnews.com/spotlight>

Cover Design

Wordscape

Kamal Pokhari, Ph : 410772, Fax : 432872

Distribution

Bazaar International

228 Sanchaya Kosh Bldg, Kathmandu

G.P.O Box 2480, Ph: 222983 Fax : 229437

e-mail : bazaar@mos.com.np

Printers : Kishor offset Press (P.) Ltd.

P.O. Box 4665, Galkopakha, Thamel,

Kathmandu, Tel: 351044 (Off), 351172 (Res.),

Fax : 977-1-351172,

E-mail : kishor@groupktm.mos.com.np

C.D.O. Regd. No

151/039-40

Postal Regd. No

42/057/58

U.S. Library of Congress

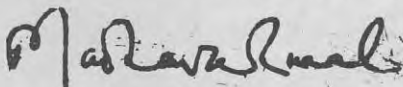
Catalogue No. 91-905060

EDITOR'S NOTE

O ur apprehension that the Koirala government is pushing the country towards a disastrous civil war is not far from coming true. The two recent massacres of the police officials have established beyond a ray of doubt that Koirala is not fit to rule the country. May be in bigger countries these kinds of incidents might not generate the panic that has gripped our small country.

What little faith a small portion of the populace was forced to repose in the leadership of Girija Prasad Koirala has totally evaporated into thin air by his immoral and inept behavior in the last one year. Except a few of his family members and a handful of his cronies nobody wants him to continue as prime minister. Neither do the Maoists want to negotiate with him or his government. As such, if this burning issue has to be settled in peace Koirala has to quit. Since he is a hard nut to crack, he is not going to oblige anybody. Moreover, he must be thanking he has enough easy money to buy his dissident colleagues. And he does not tire boasting that he has the mandate of the people. Indeed, this is correct. But how that mandate was acquired, all knowledgeable people in Nepal are well aware of. Be that as it may, the ruling Nepali Congress has canceled a public meeting and called for emergency meeting of its executive committee and parliamentary committee. If the NC legislators have any morality and wisdom, they must force Koirala to step down as he has become totally ineffective and NC will further lose its popularity under his leadership and unanimously opt for a non-controversial younger man to lead the country. They must not be swayed by the leadership that has already proved its inability. It is time that they started to think about the country and the people who undoubtedly deserve their priority. If the NC parliamentarians still fail to unite and persist to nourish personal and partisan interests, the only way open is for the King to intervene to save further bloodshed in the country.

It need not be emphasized that by the tragic killings of the police officials the Maoists have not only sent chilling waves of panic and fear in the hearts of all Nepalese people around the country but also exposed the incompetence of the government to maintain law and order and safeguard the lives and properties of the people. Neither the home minister nor the prime minister thought it necessary to resign. Instead, it is being reported that the prime minister is planning to deploy Royal Nepalese Army to subdue the Maoists. But many patriotic people believe that the deployment of the RNA might only aggravate the situation. Many have started asking why is Koirala so indispensable that to prop up his corrupt government the country be embroiled in a devastating civil war? At a time when the Maoist leaders have shown the proclivity for a peaceful dialogue it would be only suicidal not to avail of this opportunity. Since Koirala and his colleagues have become persona non grata to the Maoists, there are other more honorable and acceptable persons in Nepal whose loyalty towards the country is unchallenged and they must come forward and start the negotiation. And the King also must support such groups. This kind of volatile situation has to be ended at all costs. It would only offer god sent opportunities for forces to further destabilize the situation so that they can play up with anti-national elements. To avoid such a predicament, we do exhort the leaders of the Maoists not to indulge in further violence. After all, all patriotic Nepalese are brothers and sisters. And we all must join hands in safeguarding our country from anti-national and inimical forces. We do trust King Birendra has started realizing the urgency of the situation and will no more hesitate in taking appropriate steps. It would be the duty of all good friends of Nepal to advise the King to rise up to the occasion and save the country. ■



Madhav Kumar Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Crisis At The Top

The serious crisis at the political level has started seeping into all fronts of national life ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6). The stench of political rot is slowly beginning to affect common citizens. The times are really dangerous. Every sane citizen agrees that the time has come for a total revamp of the existing system. For starters, those at the helms of affairs should leave the scene to allow a fresh breath of air to come inside. Since there is a crisis at the top, the solution, too, should be searched from there.

*Niraj KC
Lazimpat*

thing to happen to our country. The en masse killing of police personnel and rampant terrorizing of civilians will take Nepal on the same deadly course. There is one-way traffic on the road to terrorism. Returning from that road is extremely difficult, if not impossible. All Nepalese need to seriously ponder the recent happenings in the country and prevent at any cost a civil war from occurring here.

*Jeevan Rai
Satdobato*

Dialogue Is The Best

The government and the Maoists must come to the negotiating table ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6). No more life should be put in jeopardy. There is no cure to this problem except for dialogue. Seriousness among both the government and the Maoists is a prerequisite for such dialogue to be fruitful. Many innocent lives have already perished in vain. The two parties must come to table if only to save innocent lives.

*Geeta Khadka
Thapathali*

Don't Turn Bloody

The incidents at Rukumkot and Mainapokhari have indicated that Maoists are turning violent by the day ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6). Their demand for changes in the political system may be right, but that does not justify the spilling of blood in the remote hills. By killing their own fellow citizens, Maoists cannot claim to be working in the interest of their motherland. How can they justify the killing of their own brothers and sisters? This is sheer terrorism. You cannot hide this truth by any ideological shroud.

*Dinesh Thapa
Kalimati*

Why The Small Fish?

The killing of innocent civilians and junior police officers

will not earn the Maoists a good name ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6). While the political masters whom the Maoists have their grievances against are staying in relative safety, petty officers and civilians are being forced to bear the brunt of their violence. And for what? Is the police constable stationed at the Rukumkot responsible for the ills against which Maoists supposedly claim to work? Or can that constable fulfill their demands? All this violence is absurd and beyond any logic.

*Krishna Hari Bista
Satdobato*

Bloody Projection

Last week saw the Maoists capture the headlines for all the wrong reasons ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6).

Although they claimed tremendous publicity, their projection was all in negative light. Any sane person will now have second thoughts over the real intention of the Maoists. If they are working to uplift the status of the poor Nepalese people, there are better and constructive ways to do that. Chopping off the head of a fellow citizen and riddling his body with bullets cannot be the way to go. How can such terror tactics be fruitful?

*Sudesh Shrestha
Patan*

We Don't Want A Kashmir

The bloody war in Kashmir has resulted in more and more deaths in the once-beautiful valley in northern India ("Koirala Under Attack", SPOTLIGHT, April 6). We do not want same

Bad Intention

The way the joint verification team is dragging its feet on the issue of verifying the Bhutanese refugees, it seems that there is an ill intention on the part of Bhutanese authorities ("Waiting For Results", SPOTLIGHT, March 30). If not, why are they taking so much time to establish the status of the refugees? The Bhutanese are using the same old tactic of dilly-dallying the issue. It could be possible that they are genuinely indifferent to solving this impasse. It was only due to tremendous international pressure that they agreed to verify refugees in the first place.

*Dayaram Karki
Sinamangal*

Death Toll Reaches 32 In Dailekh

The number of policemen killed in the Maoist attack at Naumule police post in the mid-western district of Dailekh has reached 32. According to Dailekh District Police Office, the bodies of three more policemen have been recovered from the debris of a house located near the ilaka police post. Initial reports said 29 policemen, including a police inspector, were killed during the devastating attack by hundreds of Maoist rebels at the police post Friday night. Nearly 70 police personnel lost their lives during Maoist attacks at different police posts in the country last week. *Compiled from reports April 9.*

Maoist Leaders Meet Mainali

After Pandey, it was the turn of Mainali. Leading daily newspapers reported Monday that top Maoist leaders, Comrade Prachanda and Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, recently met politburo member of CPN (Marxist-Leninist), C. P. Mainali.

Mainali confirmed the meeting but refused to disclose the venue and date of their meeting. Reports said, quoting unnamed Maoist sources, that during their meeting the communist leaders discussed the present political and contemporary issues in the country. Only last week, reports had said the two senior Maoist leaders had met royal nominee to the National Assembly, Ramesh Nath Pandey. Pandey, too, confirmed the meeting but refused to give details citing "safety of the Maoist leaders". The recent meetings are seen as part of the Maoist leadership's parleys to mobilize support for their party's demand for an interim government comprising all political forces in the country to draft a 'people's constitution.' *Compiled from reports April 9.*

1,600 People Killed In Maoist Insurgency

More than 1,600 people have lost their lives since the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched their 'people's war' in the country in February 1996 with a view to

turning Nepal — a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy — into a "people's republic". Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Ram Chandra Poudel told reporters Friday that a total of 1,627 people, including 1,027 rebels, 315 policemen and 282 citizens, have been killed over the last five years (till last Thursday). Three suspected rebels were killed during encounters with local people. According to the Home Ministry, 680 local people and 762 policemen have been injured during Maoist attacks. Of 464 people abducted

by the rebels during this period, 28 have been killed and 275 returned to their houses. 161 people are still missing. Property, both public and private, worth an estimated Rs 900 million has been destroyed due to Maoist attacks. Of 6,075 people arrested by the police (in connection with Maoist violence) over this period, 4,411 have been released after interrogation, whereas legal action is under way against 1,664. The police have also seized huge caches of arms and ammunition from the rebels, the minister said. *Compiled from reports April 7.*

Nepal Bandh Passes Off Peacefully

Despite fear of widespread violence, the daylong 'Nepal Bandh' (nationwide shutdown strike) passed off peacefully Friday (April 6), officials said. A spokesman at the Home Minister said that besides a couple of incidents of throwing petrol bombs at some vehicles in Chitwan and Kathmandu, no violent actions took place in the country. Police said they took into custody some half a dozen people trying to obstruct roads. Most of the shops remained closed in the capital and vehicles, both public and private, kept off the road. The strike was called by the underground Maoist party against, what they called, "murder of the people" being carried out by the Koirala government. *Compiled from reports April 7.*

Poudel Urges An End To Violence

Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Ram Chandra Poudel has made an appeal to end the ongoing violence in the country. Talking to reporters at the Home Ministry Friday, Poudel said the government would take all necessary measures to provide security to the people. When asked about the probability of mobilizing the army against the rebels, Poudel said it was a procedural matter and the government was considering all options. He did not provide details about the fate of the ordinance to set up an Armed Police Force and asked reporters to wait till Monday (the day it

*On The Auspicious
Occasion Of New Year*

B.S. 2058

We Extend Our Sincere

Wishes For Peace,

Prosperity And

Happiness

In The Year Ahead



Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.

expires). He said that there was no situation to declare an emergency in the country and argued that there was no need for a "national government" as demanded by some opposition parties. Accepting that the security situation in the country was quite sensitive, Poudel said it would be wrong to blame the monarchy for the escalation of Maoist violence in the country. He, however, termed the reports of meeting between a royal nominee, Ramesh Nath Pandey, with top Maoist leaders as "suspicious" and "conspiratorial". The home minister said the government was ready for peace talks with the rebels but alleged that the rebels themselves were not sincere about negotiations. *Compiled from reports April 7.*

Expedition Team To Clean Everest

A team comprising nearly 50 mountaineers from five countries is going to launch a Mt. Everest cleaning campaign later this month. Ken Noguchi, a celebrated mountaineer from Japan, will lead the expedition team known as the Noguchi Asian Group Everest Cleaning Expedition. "We will collect the garbage from the Everest and take it to Japan and Korea for exhibition," Noguchi told reporters here Thursday. The team will comprise 37 Nepali Sherpas including Chakpa Sherpa, the second Nepali woman to climb the highest peak of the world. The team will collect the garbage from the Tibetan side of the Everest at an estimated cost of US\$ 400,000. The same team had brought down 1.5 tonnes of trash from the Everest. *Compiled from reports April 7.*

Thapa Appeals For Collective Efforts

In what is seen as a significant political gesture, the president of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) and former prime minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa, has said the multifaceted problems facing the country today call for a collective effort and cooperation of all political parties and forces. In a statement issued Tuesday, the former Panchayat stalwart ac-

cused the government of failing to guarantee peace and security to the people and failing to resolve its internal squabble even during an hour of crisis. "Since the cooperation of the institution of the Crown is also crucial at this juncture, all political parties should immediately initiate meaningful measures to help propel the country, which has remained static for long," Thapa said. Interestingly, the former prime minister stopped short of demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Koirala in his statement. *Compiled from reports April 4.*

Development Works Come To A Standstill

Development works have come to a standstill in the mid-western district of Rolpa, a fortnightly newsmagazine reported after its reporter visited the Maoist stronghold. According to the report, majority of the development budget of Rs 80 million, including a basket fund of Rs 40 million, allocated for the district remains unused. Only five out of 51 village development committees have been taking their share of Rs 500,000 central development grants since the 'people's war' started five years ago. The newly constructed district hospital of Rolpa remains unused and is in a dilapidated condition. So far, the government has been able to mobilize some 250 workers to construct five km-long road linking the district headquarter of Liwang with Madi Chour. *Nepal newsmagazine reports.*

Nepal's Economic Performance Satisfactory

Despite widespread skepticism about the country's economy, a United Nations report has said the growth rate of the Nepalese economy was one of the highest last year in South Asia. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Nepal grew by 6 percent in 2000, up from less than 4 percent in 1999. According to the Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific-2001 released by the UN's Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP) released Tuesday, Indian economy grew by 5.9 percent, Sri Lankan economy by 5.7 percent, Bangladeshi economy by 5.5 percent and Pakistan's economy by 4.5 percent in 2000. The Bhutanese economy grew by 6 percent last year. The report said agricultural production in Nepal rose from 2.7 percent in 1999 to 5 percent in 2000 due to increase in the supply of fertilizers and favorable weather. The non-agriculture sector grew by 6.6 percent the same year. Inflation dropped sharply last year and exports were expected to grow by 45 percent in 2000 compared to a growth of 30 percent in 1999. The survey said the official development assistance increased by 15 percent last year, over 90 percent of which were concessional multilateral loans. Despite some improvement in economic performance lately, Nepal remains one of the seven least developed countries in the world. *Leading dailies report April 4.* ■



Hearty Greetings and Best Wishes on the Occasion of Happy New Year Bikram Sambat 2058

Tel: 230947
Fax: 977-1-229998
E-mail: chamber@wlink.com.np/chamber@unlimit.com
Website: <http://www.nepalchamber.com>

Rajesh Kazi Shrestha
President
Nepal Chamber of Commerce
Family



People pulling a chariot in the traditional cultural festival of Gahanapokhari in Kathmandu

KING BIRENDRA HAS PROROGUED THE 19TH SESSION of the parliament effective from last Thursday. Speaker Taranath Ranabhat read out the letters sent by the royal palace Thursday to this effect. Earlier, the opposition parties had boycotted the parliament proceedings demanding Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's resignation for his alleged involvement in Landa Air scam. Koirala has denied the allegations and said the opposition had been boycotting the house because they wanted to block the passage of the Armed Police Force ordinance from the parliament. Deputy Prime Minister Ram Chandra Poudel said the government would make some alternative arrangements to continue the provision of armed police. This is the first time in the decade-old parliamentary history of Nepal that a legislative session has been concluded without initiating formal business.

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY HAS pledged its continued support in Nepal's development endeavor. German assistance to Nepal is focused on such areas as health and family planning, promotion of local self-governance and civil society and renewable energy. According to the Finance Ministry, during the consultations Germany has agreed to contribute an additional DM two million for the integrated food security project in Nepal.

KUMARI BANK HAS STARTED ITS OPERATIONS IN the capital. The private-sector bank, set up with an authorized capital of Rs 1 billion and issued capital of Rs 500 million, started its operations from Wednesday. In a press statement, the bank said it had selected the world's No. 1 software 'Globus' for its operations. The bank offers services including electronic banking, home banking, automatic teller machine facilities and other services to its customers besides deposit, lending, foreign trade, remittances etc.

THE GOVERNMENT HAS EXTENDED THE DEADLINE for businessmen to declare their inventories by two months. According to the Nepal Chamber of Commerce, the existing procedures of granting VAT credit on the business inventories

have been extended till mid-May this year. This has ended uncertainty in the business community created by a decision of the Department of Value Added Tax to initiate necessary actions to bring VAT credit to zero by middle of the last month.

THE NUMBER OF TOURISTS VISITING NEPAL BY air has gone up by almost 16 percent between January-March, 2001 compared to the same period last year, Gorkhapatra daily reported Saturday. According to Nepal Tourism Board, a total of 95,550 tourists visited Nepal by air during the first three months of this year compared to 82,562 tourists who visited this Himalayan kingdom last year. The number of Indian tourists also rose slightly to 17,234 this year compared to 15,185 during the same period last year, the board said. Latest trend shows that the tourist arrival is improving in the country after the bad publicity in the aftermath of the hijacking of Indian Airlines plane on Christmas Eve in 1999 and occasional disturbances in the tourism sector. Nearly 500,000 tourists visit Nepal by air every year.

SHARE PRICES DIPPED BY 1.37 POINTS TO 374.58 AT the end of the transactions at the country's only stock market at Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) Ltd. According to reports, the indices of the commercial bank group and other groups tumbled while indices of manufacturing and processing group and finance and insurance group surged. A total of 35,329 units of share valued at Rs 31.5 million were transacted in 563 transactions last week. The Nepalese capital market is yet to recover from the dramatic crash last month. ■

Study Centre

The
British
Council

Summer classes start
from 23 April 2001

General English
Conversation Skills
IELTS Preparation
Office Communication Skills
Telephone Skills
Customer Care
English for Managers
Professional Writing
Report Writing
Project Proposal Writing
Negotiating Skills
Presentation Skills



Registration dates: 16 to 20 April 2001 Time: 7.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m.

For further information, please contact
The Registrar, Study Centre
Tel 410798 Fax 410545
Nandaram.Kharel@britishcouncil.org.np
www.britishcouncil.org/nepal

"In no way was the 19th session of the parliament less effective than previous ones. In fact, this session will have special significance in history."

Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, former prime minister, in Bimarsha.

* * *

"Nepali Congress is one and it will remain one. Just wait and see, the party will be more united in the near future."

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in Bimarsha.

* * *

"I am not surprised that he (Pandey) met Baburam and Prachanda. I regularly encounter the underground Maoist leaders of my district Gorkha during morning walks in Kathmandu."

Chiranjibi Wagle, former minister and Congress MP, when asked to comment on the recent meeting between King-nominated MP Ramesh Nath Pandey and Maoist leaders, in Jana Bhawana.

* * *

"Forget about people, the government has failed to provide security even to the police."

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist



and the leader of the main opposition, in Himalaya Times.

* * *

"Looking at Koirala (PM), you get the impression of a dictator with a signboard reading democracy."

Rajendra Pandey, UML MP, in

Nepalipatra.

* * *

"Because it wants to go to power with Congress by blackmailing the latter."

Hiranya Lal Shrestha, former MP and leader of Marxist Leninist, giving reasons for the UML's opposition to the call for national government, in Jana Aastha.

* * *

"I am interested in social service not politics."

Manisha Koirala, popular Bollywood actress, speaking at a program in Reporters' Club.

* * *

"I have used folk melody and local dialect."

Khem Raj Gurung, the singer of the "wari Jamuna..." song which is becoming a big hit in the country with over 70,000 albums already sold, revealing the reason behind the success, in Ghatana Ra Bichar.

* * *



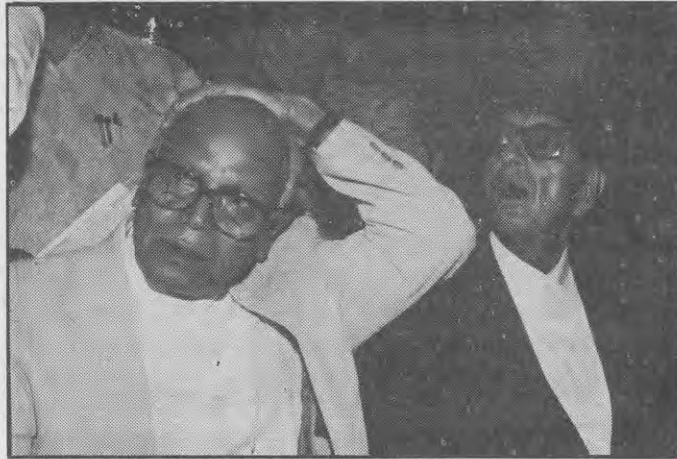
Nepali Patra

Anshu Raut

Koirala-Bhattarai Bhai Bhai

People have long lost interest in reading or hearing about meetings between the two septuagenarian leaders of the Nepali Congress, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala and his predecessor Krishna Prasad Bhattarai. They have

Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation. At a time when the main opposition CPN-UML is demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala over his alleged involvement in irregularities in the Lauda Air deal, ruling party MPs have brought out a skeleton from the opposition's closet: reported wrongdoing in



Bhattarai (left) and Koirala : Last minute compromise

set a record in fighting and compromising over the last 10 years. In keeping with that tradition, Koirala and Bhattarai agreed last week to set up a committee to settle their latest feud in front of some of the prominent second-generation leaders. Koirala and Bhattarai had reached a similar deal in Godavari three years ago, where they agreed to abide by certain conditions. Then came the compromise over who would be prime minister after the elections. Now the Bhainsepati agreement is making headlines. How long will this agreement last? Now, that is something many Nepalis would be following.

Tit For Tat

Nepalese political parties seem to be competing with one another to get higher commissions while leasing aircraft for

the process of leasing the China South-West aircraft. Is this a case of the pot calling the kettle black?

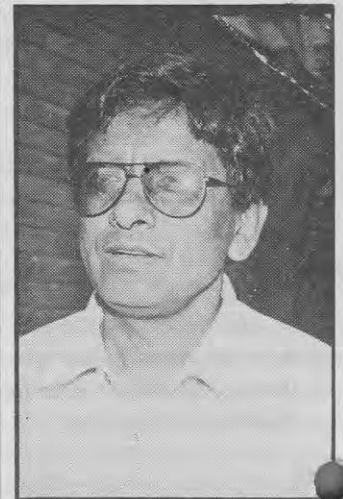
Chakka Jam

If you want to pressure the government, just declare a chakka jam for a couple of days. The recent government decision on granting students 30-35 percent concession in public transport has shown that bandhs are, after all, an effective way of pressuring the powerful. But take a closer look at what might happen if the government starts to yield on an issue just because someone is blocking the streets? Won't that be construed as an open invitation to obstructionists of all sizes and forms?

Kollywood Wives

Nepalese film actors seem to have set a record when it

comes to polygamy. Although it was a ceremony organized to distribute awards to artistes of 'Tan Ta Saraini Bigris Badri', Rajaram Poudel, a prominent actor, revealed the reality of the real life of some of the actors who have two wives. When Poudel started to name the actors, a question instantly sprung up: Is there a direct relationship between film-industry professionals and polygamy?



Ranabhat : Good House-keeping

Housekeeping Skills

Although they represent different political thoughts, House of Representatives Speaker Taranath Ranabhat and National Assembly Chairman Mohammed Mohsin share many characteristics. One was on display during

the recently prorogued 19th session of parliament. Both demonstrated their special skills in adjourning their respective chambers a few minutes after the sessions convened. Good housekeeping, as they might say. ■

**BEST WISHES
FOR
A PROSPEROUS
NEW YEAR
B.S. 2058**



Nepal Telecommunication Corporation

CONGRESS POLITICS

Koirala Gains Strength

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala again proves that he does not have a serious challenger in the party

By KESHAB POUDEL

Despite all-out attack within the party and outside, Congress president and Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala still seems to be going strong politically.

During emergency meetings of the Nepali Congress central working committee and parliamentary party, even the bitterest of Koirala's critics seemed to surrender in front of the prime minister. Interestingly, Koirala reinforced himself when the entire opposition stood united against him.

The main opposition party's street demonstrations, Maoist challenge and rebellion of his colleagues, former prime ministers Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and Sher Bahadur Deuba, have not coalesced into the force to unseat him. Koirala is nobody's choice, but no one sees an immediate alternative at this juncture. Koirala is known as a man who can take decisions without evaluating the repercussions.

In all of his stints as head of government, Koirala has taken many decisions which have left

many negative impacts in Nepalese society. His insistence on mobilizing the Royal Nepalese Army without identification of the real enemy may damage another strong national institution.

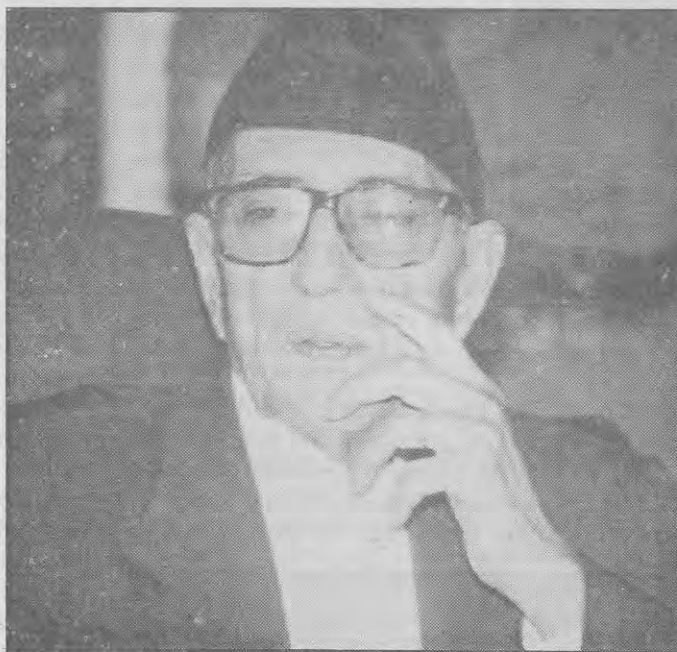
Almost all of Koirala's steps have been suicidal for the country. But one cannot ignore his stature as a leader who secured all positions through the people's mandate.

Even before the beginning of Congress Central Committee meeting on Monday (April 9) a mysterious rumor was circulating in the city that Prime Minister

Koirala was going to resign.

But it died down soon after the completion of the central committee meeting where his diehard opponents were said to have supported his move to mobilize the army to quell the Maoist.

Former prime minister Bhattarai on Sunday (April 8) was said to have told his



PM Koirala : Resolute Under Pressure

followers that Girijababu was considering resigning as a prime minister.

Following two major attacks by Maoist insurgents against the police posts in Dailekh and Rukumkot, Prime Minister Koirala was widely criticized by his colleagues on the ground of his failure to contain the Maoist. Interestingly, only a few members of parliament showed the courage to ask for his resignation in the parliamentary party meeting on Tuesday (April 10).

CPN-UML leaders were understandably frustrated when they saw the Con-

gress central committee meeting backing Koirala instead of putting pressure for his resignation.

"If Congress members do not ask for Koirala resignation, we will force them to replace him," CPN-UML leader K.P. Sharma Oli told SPOTLIGHT on Monday (April 9). "We will launch a nationwide boycott and will not allow Koirala to enter the prime minister's office."

The desperation in UML leaders, including Oli, is understandable as the rebels in the Congress did not pressure Koirala to resign as expected. Even arch rivals Bijaya Kumar Gachchedar, Khum Bahadur Khadka and Chiranjibi Wagle listened to Prime Minister Koirala quietly in the central committee meeting.

"We want the resignation of Girijababu as he is unable to improve the law-and-order situation in the country, but this is not the time to ask his resignation," said Gachchedar.

Other rebels did not raise the resignation issue, either. "The meeting was cordial and no one demanded the resignation of the prime minister in the meeting," said Narahari Acharya, central committee member and spokesman of the party. "The main issue of the Congress meeting was not resignation but the law-and-order situation."

"Koirala cannot take decisions benefiting Nepal but he is a legitimate leader with a democratic mandate. The UML's present acts will only expose the communist forces of Nepal as

anarchist and anti-democratic," said a political analyst. "Whether the opposition likes it or not, Prime Minister Koirala enjoys support in the party. Koirala may not be suitable for forces who want to implement their agenda."

Whatever the opposition and Congress rebels call Koirala, he has proved himself as a strong player of Nepalese politics. The recently concluded Congress central working committee meeting and parliamentary party meeting further strengthened his position in the party. ■

POLICE POST ATTACKS

Security Lapses

Last week's carnage in Dailekh and Rukum districts exposes major loopholes in Nepal's internal security system

By KESHAB POUDEL

Last week's deadly offensives by Maoist insurgents against police posts in Dailekh and Rukum districts have exposed the failure in the country's internal security apparatus. Six years after the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) launched its so-called "People's War", successive governments have failed to understand the nature and strength of the organisation and its strategy.

As the fighting escalates, the police are gradually losing morale and confidence because of, among other things, lack of proper intelligence back-up and reinforcements.

Police and army strategists say prompt intelligence support, well-planned training, proper strategy and a strong supply and redeployment system at the time of attack are some of the basic elements needed to fight the insurgents in the sparsely peopled hilly areas of Nepal.

Combating an insurgency is not an easy task, as it does not entail elements

characteristic of conventional warfare. Even countries like India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, which have well-trained security personnel, are facing difficulty in fighting insurgents. One can well imagine the situation Nepal's ill-trained policemen find themselves in on the front.

In most cases, the police have hardly been able to get proper reinforcements at the time of fierce fighting. The supply system is so weak that additional forces can never be fetched in accordance with the demand of the local striking base. It becomes virtually impossible to fight insurgents without a strong information network and reinforcement system.

On the other hand, the Maoist rebels have developed their own strong information network system through which they have been successful in penetrating police lines.

A Lonely Battle : Officers at the police posts in Dailekh and Rukumkot demanded additional personnel when they saw the concentration of a large number of Maoist rebels. But the response was so

atrociously inadequate that the reinforcements reached the area when there was no one left to rescue. This slow response also stems from the fact that the police do not have their own helicopters and equipment needed to deliver reinforcements during the night, when most Maoists assaults have occurred.

In the two incidents, Maoist insurgents killed more than 60 policemen in what were considered to be strategically safe police striking bases. In fact, the Rukumkot station was regarded as one of the best-organized posts of the Far Western region.

The Rukumkot and Dailekh posts had 78 police personnel each under the command of an inspector. After the deaths of such a large number of policemen, morale in the force is said to have reached its lowest ebb.

Policemen are fighting the Maoists without having received the level of training required to quell the insurgency. Furthermore, they lack proper weapons and a clear strategy.

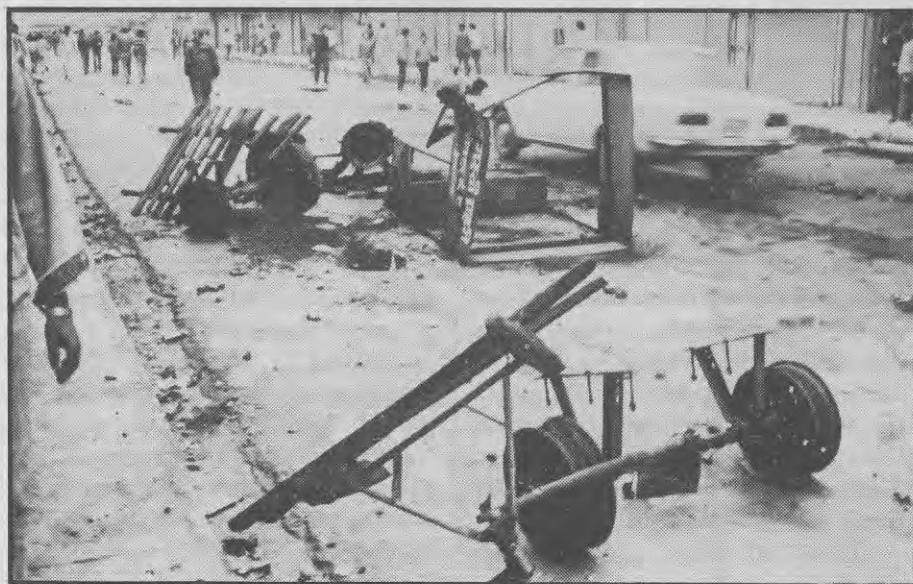
Although they dug trenches around the two bases and were equipped with hand grenades and other weapons, what the policemen seemed to lack was an efficient troop deployment strategy. They appeared to feel safe living together in a camp and failed to adopt a defensive strategy.

In the Rukumkot case, newspaper reports indicated the possibility of sabotage by the rebels. "Had police followed the general rule of warfare, such high casualties would not have occurred," said former chief of the Royal Nepalese Army Sachit Sumsher J.B. Rana.

More than 300 police personnel have been killed in the last five years fighting under misguided strategies against the spirited and well-trained Maoist insurgents.

"Nepal Police does not have enough training and equipment to quell the insurgency," said former police chief Dhruva Bahadur Pradhan. "How long can we continue sending policemen to the front without giving them adequate training and equipment?"

Whenever there is a major setback, the government, instead of evaluating the weaknesses and loopholes in the internal security apparatus, just talks about the need to deploy the army against the rebels. At a time when the country's intelligence network is totally defunct and the police system concentrates on a particular locations, deploy-



Overtaken carts: Violent aftermath

ing the army would not be the solution, security experts say.

The Maoist rebels are using home-made crude explosives and weapons that fall short of the quality of the weapons the police possess. In terms of firepower, the police are still in a superior position, although the Maoists have been building their arsenal by taking away large quantities of arms and ammunition from the police posts they so frequently devastate.

Be it in Jajarkot, Dunai, Bhorletar, Rukumkot or Dailekh, police personnel were killed in large numbers largely because they made the same kind of mistakes. It seems the police have often missed their targets whereas the Maoists have been adopting a well-defined strategy.

"Till now, every Maoist attack has had the same characteristics," said Nepal Police chief Pradeep Sumsher Rana, addressing five police personnel who escaped unhurt in the Rukumkot incident. (Kantipur, April 4).

The government, for its part, has not been able to implement its decision to set up an armed police force to fight the rebels because the ordinance setting up the unit failed to come up for consideration in the recent session of parliament that was prorogued after a nearly two-month opposition boycott.

"We are not weak in terms of weapons. What is lacking is strategy and motivation on the part of the police," said a police officer. "This is not unnatural when the political masters showed such a high degree of irresponsibility and ensured the death of ordinance on setting up an armed police force."

"The Maoists and police have been using similar types of firepower and weapons," said a former senior police officer on condition of anonymity.

The rebels are also said to be getting weapons from Maoist insurgents across the border. Published reports suggest they are developing and gaining access to more sophisticated weapons, including some self-loading rifles, sometimes with the help of militant groups in the region.

For their part, the police need to institute better training in warfare strategy and methods to contain the Maoist insurgency and to minimize casualties. Traditionally used to contain mobs and control crime, Nepal Police almost suddenly found themselves confronted with the well-trained and committed Maoist insurgents.

The government's decision to withdraw police forces from scattered police units to larger camps appears to have helped Maoists to take an aim at big targets and expand their influence in areas vacated.

In both incidents last week, casualties on the police side were unexpectedly higher compared to those on the Maoists side. This has almost become the norm in recent attacks. This could be in large part the result of a lack of coherent warfare strategy among police personnel, who are trained simply to

maintain law and order.

The Home Ministry is yet to institute an effective internal security management system despite regular and devastating attacks by the Maoists insurgents over the last two years.

In the first four years of the insurgency, the police were more efficient in containing the insurgency and sustained lower casualties. Then the Maoists began using landmines to increase police casualties. After the Jajarkot incident, the Maoists changed their strategy.

"We need to develop a long-term internal security strategy to maintain law and order in the country," said Brigadier-General Krishna Bahadur Mahara. "We haven't made any coordinated effort to contain the Maoist insurgency."

In Rukumkot, the police station was on the top of the mountain, a fact that should have given the force some advantage. But some policemen even failed to fire their weapons to defend themselves.

"Our officers committed the same mistakes they did in Dunai," police chief Rana told Kantipur. "We have to improve our training and intelligence networking."

The police had no information of the rebel build-up in the period preceding the attacks. Moreover, reports of police desertions may have helped the rebels to inflict heavier damage.

The Krishna Prasad Bhattarai government decided to close down local police stations and develop larger police posts with a view to reducing police casualties. However, the move turned out to help the Maoists expand their network. As the influence of the police declined at the local level, so did their intelligence network.



Policemen reading newspaper : Shaken morale

Although the Girija Prasad Koirala government reversed its predecessor's decision, it has not taken any initiative to establish police posts in the Maoist-affected districts. The decision to concentrate the police force in large posts was strategically wrong, but the critical question remains unanswered: How could the Home Ministry take such a vital decision without properly weighing its pros and cons. This lapse has given credence to the criticism that the government lacks a clear perception on security matters.

Following the restoration of democracy, the government virtually destroyed the well-developed intelligence back-up mechanism and the command and control system that was working through the zonal commissioners. The gap in the hierarchy created by the abolition of zonal commissioners also created serious problems of coordination and efficiency at the local level.

This series of tragic incidents has underscored the urgency with which Nepal needs to develop a well-planned internal security management system instead of playing the blame game and running around in circles. ■

REMINISCENCES

Good Neighborliness

Leadership skills are put to the test more rigorously on the foreign policy front

BY AKSHAY SHARMA

Nepal's relations with its big neighbors, China and India, are bound by separate Treaties of Peace and Friendship with each country. The problems that have arisen from time to time in Nepal's relations with India or China are complex and multi-dimensional and have required our diplomats and leaders to exercise great tact and sensitivity.

But happens when such people become rarer by the day? The feeling of having no power over people or events is unbearable. The people feel miserable and helpless when they are in constant search for true leaders. No one wants less power; everyone wants more. But, as an expert puts it, in the world today, however, it is dangerous to seem too power-hungry, to be overt of one's power moves. We have to seem fair and decent. So we need to be subtle — congenial yet cunning, democratic yet devious.

"Everyone knew that Juddha Shamsheer was a harsh and bull-headed leader incapable of understanding the changed situation. Padma Shamsheer, on the other hand, was a more flexible man. Earlier, his views had favored a benevolent policy," read excerpts from B.P. Koirala's "Atmabritanta".

B.P. Koirala, although regarded as the role model of a leader the nation needs today, was exiled from the country. He died without the fulfillment of his dream. The game of power is regarded as the game of constant duplicity. Throughout history, the court had always formed itself around the person in power — the king, queen, emperor, leader.

Today we face the same paradox our ancestors did in the game of power. Everything appear civilized, decent, democratic, and fair. But to play by the rules strictly, if the rules are taken too literally, we are crushed by those around us that are not so

foolish. The Machiavellian view is, "Any man who tries to be good all the time is bound to come to ruin among the great numbers who are not good."

"India was interested in every move we made. They even had the late King Tribhuvan as a puppet in their hands," Krishna Prasad Bhattarai reminisces in his biography "Karma Yogi". "India pressured us not to allow China to open an embassy in the country."

As an analyst observes, serious international problems are most likely to arise in the case of middle-sized countries like Nepal.

"Nara Pratap Shah told B.P. Koirala that the Indian Ambassador then had once told him: 'Haven't you seen the 1950 treaty? You should ask us, ask

for some advice, at least. I later came to know that the 1950 treaty between India and Nepal implied that if Nepal was to sign a treaty with another country, it should discuss with India first," Bhattarai recalls.

"B.P. advised Nara Pratap to ask India, which has signed treaty with more than 50 countries, whether it had fulfilled the treaty obligations" Bhattarai remembers. BP asked the same question to the Indian ambassador later."

Regarding the controversial Koshi and Gandak agreements with India, Bhattarai says, "If an engineer in our country was offered two

lakh rupees, he would rewrite whatever report the Indians wanted him to."

Indian Prime Minister Jawahar Lal Nehru, in the course of a speech to the lower house of the Indian parliament on November 20, 1959 on the security of India's borders, said, "May I just repeat what we had declared, that any aggression against Bhutan and Nepal will be considered by us as aggression against India."

"The concept of a buffer zone has become outmoded. Nepal is an independent country with independent relations with more than 50 countries around the world," King Birendra said in an interview with Newsweek on September 7, 1973. "Nepal not a part of the Indian sub-continent, it is really that part of Asia which touches both India and China. Our historic experiences is that we can maintain friendly relations with both of these countries. We felt that playing one against the other is a short-sighted policy."

After 50 years of the dawn of democracy in Nepal, we find that our foreign policy has presented its own set of challenges and demanded firm negotiating skills. ■

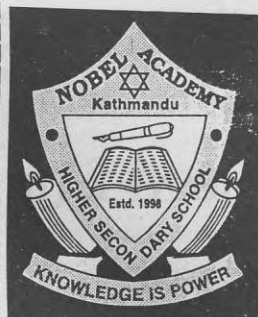
*On the auspicious
Occasion of
New Year B.S. 2058
We extend our sincere
wishes for peace,
prosperity and
happiness
in the year ahead*



Janak Education Materials Center

Sano Thimi, Bhaktapur

**WE EXTEND OUR
- SINCERE WISHES
FOR PEACE, PROGRESS,
PROSPERITY AND
HAPPINESS TO ALL OUR WELL
WISHERS IN THE YEAR AHEAD
ON THE AUSPICIOUS
OCCASION OF
NEW YEAR 2058 B.S.**



NOBEL ACADEMY H.S. SCHOOL & COLLEGE

P.O. Box : 12160, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu
Tel : 481401/497927/484515, E-mail : nobel@ntc.net.np

HUMAN RIGHTS Violations Continue

As the Maoist rebels step up violence and the government retaliates, citizens turn into innocent victims

By A CORRESPONDENT

Radha B.K., a student of class four at Mahendra Secondary School at Khalanga in mid-western district of Pyuthan, was on her way home, along with her colleagues, Monday. Little did they know that



Photo: Nepal Samacharmatra

Dead Maoist guerrillas: Victims of adventure

a deadly bomb was awaiting them on their way. Six students along with Radha and a local businessman fell victim to a trap, perhaps targeted at police. Police alleged the landmine was laid down by the Maoist rebels.

As the Maoist insurgency enters its sixth year, the number of innocent casualties as well deaths of both security personnel and the rebels has gone up.

According to the Human Rights Year Book 2001, compiled and published by the Informal Sector Services Center (INSEC), more than 3,700 incidents of human rights violations took place in the country last year. The INSEC has been publishing the

Human Rights Yearbook every year since 1992.

Interestingly, this year, according to the report, the Maoists have outdone police in violating human rights. The police have killed 179 Maoists in the name of controlling their activity while the Maoists have killed 218 people in different attacks.

"This year Maoists committed more violations in terms of killing, torture, abduction and disappearance than police," said Subodh Raj Pyakurel, general secretary of the INSEC.

The recent spate of massive attacks by Maoists at the police posts in Rukumkot, Mainapokhari, Palpa, Naumule-Dailekh left more than 70 policemen dead. Some of them have been killed in pointblank execution-style. Besides, rights activists also claim

that the rebels have begun to use grisly methods to kill and wound their "enemies".

Nevertheless, the rights activist say that the government should be more responsible to control such violations and abuses. "Both the governments and Maoists should stop their violent activities and respect the basic human rights of the citizens," said an activist.

The yearbook has recorded the formation of National Human Rights Commission, the ratification of two optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the announcement of kamaiya liberation and the fixing of the minimum wage for agriculture laborers as some of the positive achievements of the year 2000.

"But the whole range of human rights issues have been under shadow, because of dominating events of violence after the start of the Maoist people's war," said Pyakurel.

Unfortunately, every year the incidents of rights abuses in the country has been on the rise thanks to the bloody rebellion. As the use of force to quell the insurgency could result in even more incidents of rights violations, activists urge all the concerned parties to engage in table-talk to sort out the problem in a peaceful manner. ■

*On the Auspicious Occasion of
New Year B.S. 2058
We Extend Our Sincere
Wishes For Peace, Prosperity
And Happiness
In The Year Ahead*



CENTRAL FINANCE COMPANY LTD.

Kupondole, Lalitpur,

Ph : 977-1-522289, 536420, 544517

Fax : 977-1-523526

LITERATURE

Reading Nepali

Nepal has a vast ocean of literature. Let's not forget to recommend our Bhanubhaktas and Laxmi Prasads to the pillars of our future.

BY AKSHAY SHARMA

The youth in Kathmandu seem to be more attracted by foreign literature in their attempt to enhance their English skills. In that process, they have disregarded the vast richness of Nepali literature. "Most of the customers that visit my shop seem more attracted towards English literature compared to Nepali," says the owner of Himalayan Book Center.

"The trouble with the urban population in the country is that they have been influenced by the West to such an extent that they seem to have forgotten their own identity," says an analyst.

Tek Rai remembers an interesting conversation and he shared it with us:

"The other day I went to a wedding party. When dessert was served, Mrs. Shrestha (one of Tek's friends) said, "I've exciting news for all of you."

"So tell us," someone said.

"My son has read his first book." So we all raised our glasses to toast the occasion.

"How old is he," Arvind (one of Tek's friends) said.

"He'll be eighteen next month," Mrs. Shrestha told us.

"That's great," Mr. Sherpa said. "My son is 21 and hasn't read a book yet."

"Sanjay always has been a bright student," Mrs Shrestha bragged.

"What book did he read," Sherpa asked.

"Swet Bhairawi by B.P. Koirala," she answered. (B.P. Koirala's works are psychological and sometimes touch upon sexual contexts.)

There was an embarrassed silence at the table.

"What's wrong?" Mrs. Shrestha wanted to know.

"Swet Bhairawi is a dirty book," said Mr. Sherpa. "Where did he get hold of such filthy literature?"

"He found it at his friend's house,"

Mrs. Shrestha answered.

Padam (one of Tek's friends) was outraged, "You ought to tell him not to go out with those kinds of kids. It may not be his friend's fault, maybe he didn't even know it was there."

"But my son seemed to enjoy it," Mrs Shrestha said defensively.

"Sure he enjoyed," Padam said. "It is full of sex and bad words. It doesn't belong in the hands of a boy like your son. He should be reading JD Salinger's 'Catcher in the Rye', James Joyce's 'Flanigan's Wake'. And don't forget Somerset Maugham's 'Of Human Bondage'."

"If you don't watch your kid carefully, the next thing you know he'll be reading more stuff like that," warned Mr. Sherpa.

"There are books and there are books," Padam said. "My daughter came home with 'Chandra Bandhan' (also written by B.P. Koirala) in her hands. And I told her if she brought anything like that in the house I would burn it."

"But my son has already read it," Mrs. Shrestha lamented. "What should I do?"

"Watch him closely," Padam suggested. "Search his room. If you find a book by Laxmi Prasad Devkota, Bhimnidhi Tiwari under his bed, he is in big trouble. If

I were you, I would throw them away."

"I wish I had kept a closer eye on my son. I let him read 'Seto Bagh' when he was 15, and the next thing I know, he brought home 'Nepalko Rajnaitik Darpan' (The Political History of Nepal) by Grisma Bahadur Devkota," Arvind said.

"How do you find out what books are bad for your children?" Mrs. Shrestha wanted to know.

"What book is he reading now?" asked Arvind.

"Sumnima," Mrs. Shrestha replied.

"I hate to tell you, but you have a sick kid in your hands," Padam said.

"Let's leave them to these gossips. Let's stop and think. We Nepalis, too, have a vast ocean of literature. Let's not forget the Bhanubhaktas and Laxmi Prasads. Shouldn't these books be recommended for our future pillars?"

Tek's recollections make me wonder why I keep writing in English.

(The names of the characters have been changed to protect their identity.) ■

Best Wishes

For A

Prosperous

New Year

B.S. 2058



Principal
Lalitpur College

Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal, Phone : 524284

NEPAL AND WTO

Trading

Into the

Future

Opening up to the fierce global competition is going to be a painful exercise for a weak and under-developed economy like Nepal. As there are few options left, Nepal would do well by preparing adequately to join the world body

By BHAGIRATH YOGI

If things go its way, Nepal will have become the member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) — the successor of General Agreement on Trade and Tariff (GATT). Though Nepal holds the status of an observer and is in the process of accession (that is, acquiring membership) to the WTO, very little debate seems to be taking place on the issue both at the national as well as local level. Things seemed to be changing for the better last month. Though parliament was in a position of deadlock amid the opposition's demand for the resignation of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala for his alleged involvement in corruption,

nearly two-thirds of the parliamentarians turned up at Hotel Blue Star to discuss for two days on what would otherwise seem a dry topic: 'Nepal and WTO.'

Organized by the Human Rights and Foreign Affairs Committee (HRFAC) of parliament, the seminar gave a good opportunity to make lawmakers aware about the world trade body and Nepal's concerns. It was a good exercise. We need to look carefully about both the challenges and opportunities while preparing to join the WTO, said Som Prasad Pandey, chairman of the HRFAC.

The exercise came as a welcome change in the attitude of the officials who, until sometime back, seemed closed inside their own cocoon. Though Nepal answered nearly 1,000 questions asked by WTO members related to different aspects of the country's trade and economy,

nobody knew what the government's reply was.

'The openness and inclusiveness with which the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies has come out is definitely laudable. But due to the lack of inter-ministerial coordination, impact minimizing measures have not yet been put in place,' said Ratnakar Adhikari, general secretary of South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE).

For a least developed country like Nepal, joining the WTO could turn into a trap without any outlet, say critics. With the small scale of economy, lack of industrialization and almost all sectors of economy way behind the global competitive edge, the venture could be full of risks for Nepal. But as the wave of globalization is becoming more stronger by every pass-



Workers at a garment factory: Are they competitive?

ing day, Nepal could not afford to wait and watch. Here is why.

A total of 140 countries are members of the WTO and nearly 30 more, including China, are awaiting to join this powerful body that regulates trade matters internationally. The WTO members together account for over 90 percent of world trade. The attraction is such that more and more developing countries and former Soviet republics have opened up their economies thinking that trade will be an engine of growth.

Economic liberalization has coincided with a dramatic extension of the areas covered by trade rules. Until 1994, when the Uruguay Round (the latest round of trade negotiations) was signed, trade policy had mostly to do with lowering import tariffs on manufactured goods. Now it also covers agriculture, some services, intellectual property and standards for food safety, and may soon extend its reach to foreign investment, the environment and competition policy.

The WTO is also a powerful court of law that settles trade disputes and authorizes sanctions on offenders. According to UNDP, the global trade has grown 12 fold since the setting up of the first trade body in 1948. The trade liberalization negotiated in the Uruguay Round is ex-

pected to increase the value of world trade by at least US\$ 200 billion by 2005.

'However, 70 percent of this new wealth is set to go to the industrialized countries of the rich North,' says a PANOS briefing published in late 1999. 'And while a handful of powerful exporters in Asia and Latin America will share in the gains, the world's least developed countries stand to be worse off than before.'

The economies of the LDCs are increasingly marginalized by global trade, as their share of world exports is 0.4 percent. For Nepal, with few exportable items in its basket, poor infrastructure and comparatively higher cost of production due to unskilled labor and geographical conditions finding a place in the global market is going to be anything but comfortable.

Whatever be its costs, closer home five out of seven SAARC nations are already members of the WTO. Both Nepal and Bhutan, too, are preparing to join the world trading body. Why?

'The benefits for a country like Nepal that would accrue from joining the WTO are far higher than the costs we will have to pay,' said Dr. Posh Raj Pandey, National Program Coordinator of the UNDP-assisted Nepal's Accession to WTO Project. 'A WTO membership allows

countries to design development strategies and trade policies in a more predictable and stable trading environment.'

Agrees Padma Jyoti, a leading industrialist and former President of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), 'The competition of world trade is like a tiger that will eat everyone weaker or dumber. The only good news is that WTO puts this tiger inside a cage of rules and regulations. Now we have to get inside the cage because the alternative of not knowing where the tiger is lurking or when it will attack us is even more dangerous. Such workshops help at least remove all imaginary tigers and help us to prepare to face the real tiger.'

According to Jyoti, by delaying entry Nepal will not gain any additional grace time, the clock is already ticking with important milestones already laid down. For example, whether we join or not our garments quota will vanish by 2005. The best course for us is to negotiate the terms of our entry into WTO with sufficient preparation. We have to try to get the best deal under the Integrated framework created for LDCs like us,' he said.

The WTO offers an expansion of trading opportunities because of low tariffs and elimination of non-tariff barriers in member states. The WTO agreement, known as Differential and Special Treatment, recognizes that trade, financial and development needs of the LDCs. The provisions, also referred to as positive discrimination, recognize the economic and trade interests of LDCs, allow them to assume fewer obligations to be met and provide a longer time frame for the implementation of certain obligations.

Of late, the Nepalese private sector and civil society is also raising concerns about prospects of Nepal's joining the world body. The level of debate has gone one step further from 'Whether Nepal should join WTO?' to 'How should Nepal Prepare for Joining this world body?'

Moreover, officials argue that Nepal is moving closer to the integration with the world economy thanks to her policy of opening up her economy. 'Nepal has been pursuing the policy of economic liberalization and promote her economic and

trade interests together with other countries,' said Krishna Sitaula, Minister of State for Industry, Commerce and Supplies. 'We have attempted to join the WTO as the concept and principles of WTO are in line with the policy structure of economic and trade liberalization adopted by Nepal.' (See: Box)

Nepal has already witnessed the benefits of liberalization in both the manufacturing and the financial sectors. In the mid-eighties there were just two state-

owned banks in Nepal, the Rastriya Banijya Bank and Nepal Bank Limited. Now there are more than a dozen banks, most of them joint ventures with reputed foreign banks. The ratio of savings to GDP rose from 12.8 in 1976-86 to 19.6 in 1995-6. There has also been a marked increase in domestic savings and export figures have almost doubled from Rs 27 billion to 52 billion between 1997-99.

Experts say besides focusing on areas of competitive strength and enhancing

quality and productivity, Nepal will have to amend a number of laws before and after joining the WTO. 'As we are the member of World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Nepal should now try to become a party to Berne Convention and Paris Convention so as to protect her intellectual property even in foreign countries,' said Prof. Dr. Bharat Bahadur Karki, who teaches at Nepal Law Campus. 'In order to maintain standard of imported goods, Nepal needs to incorporate inter-

WTO: A Fact File

What is the World Trade Organization?

The WTO is the only international body dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, the legal ground-rules for international commerce and for trade policy. The agreements have three main objectives: to help trade flow as freely as possible, to achieve further liberalization gradually through negotiation, and to set up an impartial means of settling disputes.

Principles of the trading system

A number of simple, fundamental principles run throughout all the WTO agreements. They are the foundation of the multilateral trading system. They include: non-discrimination ("most-favoured-nation" treatment and "national" treatment), freer trade, predictable policies, encouraging competition, and extra provisions for less developed countries.

The case for open trade

The economic case for an open trading system based upon multilaterally agreed rules is simple enough and rests largely on commercial common sense. But it is also supported by evidence. Protectionism leads to bloated inefficient companies and can in the end lead to factory closures and job losses. One of the WTO's objectives is to reduce protectionism.

The WTO's roots: from Havana to Marrakesh

The WTO's creation in 1995 marked the biggest reform of international trade

since 1948. During those 47 years, international commerce had come under GATT which helped establish a prosperous multilateral trading system. But by the 1980s an overhaul was due.

The Uruguay Round

The Uruguay Round brought about that overhaul. It was the largest trade negotiation ever. At times the talks seemed doomed to fail, but in the end, the Uruguay Round was successful. The task was so immense that some people wondered whether there would ever be another negotiation like it or was it the round to end all rounds?

WTO and GATT: Are they the same?

No. The WTO is GATT plus a lot more. GATT (the institution) was small and provisional, and not even recognized in law as international organization. It has now been replaced by the World Trade Organization. GATT (the agreement) has been amended and incorporated into the new WTO Agreements. GATT deals only with trade in goods. The WTO Agreements now cover services and intellectual property as well.

Three main purposes

The system's overriding purpose is to help trade flow as freely as possible so long as there are no undesirable side-effects. That partly means removing obstacles. It also means ensuring that individuals, companies and governments know what the trade rules are around the world, and giving them the confidence that there will be no sudden changes of policy. In other words, the rules have to

be "transparent" and predictable.

Because the agreements are drafted and signed by the community of trading nations, often after considerable debate and controversy, one of the WTO's most important functions is to serve as a forum for trade negotiations.

A third important side to the WTO's work is dispute settlement. Trade relations often involve conflicting interests. Contracts and agreements, including those painstakingly negotiated in the WTO system, often need interpreting. The most harmonious way to settle these differences is through some neutral procedure based on an agreed legal foundation. That is the purpose behind the dispute settlement process written into the WTO agreements.

A few years old, but not so young

The WTO began life on 1 January 1995, but its trading system is half a century older. Since 1948, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) had provided the rules for the system. Before long it gave birth to an unofficial, de facto international organization, also known informally as GATT, and over the years GATT evolved through several rounds of negotiations. The latest and largest round, was the Uruguay Round which lasted from 1986 to 1994 and led to the WTO's creation. Whereas GATT had mainly dealt with trade in goods, the WTO and its agreements now cover trade in services and in traded inventions, creations and designs. ■

(Source: www.wto.org)

national standards in her laws and acquire full membership of International Standard Organization. Nepal also needs to formulate laws related to countervailing duties.



Carpets : Competing in the global marketplace

constraints," said Dr. Ghimire. "The government is working on to create an enabling environment. The crux is enhancing the competitive strength to which the

private sector should pay immediate attention."

The private sector, on its part, is worried to see that sectors like garment exports—that earned over 13 billion rupees last year—will be affected after the quota regime is re-

There is widespread concern that once Nepal becomes a member, multinationals will try to patent this vast biodiversity. However, the WTO's TRIPS Agreement prohibits basic life forms from being patented.

"Now we have got a functioning coordinating mechanism between different ministries and the civil society is also cooperative us very enthusiastically," said Dr. Pandey. "One of the main reasons of our underdevelopment of lack of adequate focus on agriculture sector. Now, we need to work simultaneously on promoting agriculture, trade, exports and patenting our bio-diversity."

Of course, this is a tall order. But Nepal may have little option left than to move in the direction of integrating into the world economy if she wants to survive in the fierce competition of goods and services at the global market place. ■

Although Nepal had applied for the membership of GATT more than a decade ago (in 1989) during the period of deadlock with India over the issue of renewal of bilateral trade and transit treaty, the government decided to re-initiate the membership process in 1995 only. Nepal submitted the Memorandum on Foreign Trade Regime in July 1998 and answered to the queries raised and clarification sought over the memorandum by WTO member countries in April 1999.

"Now, negotiations are going on with the working party in which we are required to bind our tariff and open at least three services sector for international competition," said Dr. Hiramani Ghimire, under secretary at the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies.

"At the same time, the Ministry is focusing on raising awareness among the general public and organizing interactions with different sections of society all over the country."

Officials say Nepal is considering to offer opening up of sub-sectors related to tourism, telecommunications, education and health. "After joining WTO we will have a vast market open to us. But we will have to raise the number of our export products and address supply-side

moved. "Till now, we don't know what would happen to labor laws, bilateral treaties and duty structure once the WTO comes into full force," said Uday Raj Pandey, general secretary of the Garment Association of Nepal (GAN). Officials say they, too, are studying the likely impact.

Experts say Nepal will have to focus on protecting and patenting her rich bio-diversity, getting more technical assistance from the WTO even before becoming the full member of WTO and doing adequate homework to be in a better position for bargaining.

Nepal houses over 6,800 species of plants and 700 species of medicinal herbs.

Best Wishes For A Prosperous New Year B.S. 2058



हिमालयन बैंक लिमिटेड
Himalayan Bank Limited
(A Joint Venture with Habib Bank Limited-Pakistan)

Karmachari Sanchaya Kosh Bldg, Tridevi Marg
Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal
P.O. Box 20590, TEL : 250201, 227749, Fax :
977-1-222800, TLX : 2789 HIBA NP
E-mail : hbl@hbl.com.np, SWIFT : KIMANPKA

Nepal and WTO: How Prepared We Are

Nepal is not yet fully prepared to obtain the membership of the WTO but we cannot afford to wait any longer

By RATNAKAR ADHIKARI

As Nepal inches closer towards acceding to the 140-member strong World Trade Organisation, the debate on assessing the level of our preparedness for joining the club has intensified. There was a time when WTO issues used to occupy the discussion fora within limited circles. Now even our members of parliament have taken a keen interest in knowing what these issues mean to their constituencies. The seminar organised by the International Relations and Human Rights Committee of the House of Representatives last month is a testimony to this.

A consensus is emerging among the different cross sections of the society over the issue that we should not hurriedly join the WTO if we should make full preparation before joining if not we should repent later. However, preparation does not only mean putting tick marks on the WTO checklist, i.e., feeling complacent at being able to fulfill threshold requirements for the becoming a member of the WTO. It is much more than that. It is about understanding and appreciating the concerns of each and every sector of the economy and society that is going to be affected by Nepal becoming a member of the WTO and putting in place mechanisms to ensure that the impacts, in whatever forms, are minimised.

With such a backdrop, we need to seriously evaluate our level of preparedness before we move further ahead on the accession trail. The most crucial aspects, which we should consider during the extremely turbulent phases of negotiations leading to eventual accession are summarised below:

The first and foremost condition for a free, liberal and open economy, as envisaged by the globalisation pundits, is the existence of a mechanism to protect competition and competitive processes. Since the *raison d'être* of the free trade is promoting competition, making efficient allocation of productive resources and providing greater choice to the consumers, it becomes the responsibility of the State to ensure that big companies do not abuse their market power and engage in monopoly or anti-competitive practices. What we need to see is how much are we geared towards facing this challenge in the post-accession era.

Secondly, it is an open secret that the inclusion of Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) Agreement in the WTO goes against the principle of trade liberalisation ushered in by WTO as it facilitates the use of 'limited monopolies'. Almost 70 members of WTO not being able to comply with the requirements of TRIPs within the prescribed deadline (December 31, 1999) explains that there is something terribly wrong with this Agreement which need to be rectified.

This agreement in its present form is extremely deleterious to the interests of the Nepalese farmers, indigenous communities, consumers, biodiversity and traditional skills, knowledge and technologies. Thus to prevent an open assault of the TRIPs Agreement on our livelihood, legislation aimed and protecting biodiversity, farmer rights and rights of the indigenous communities need to be enacted and effectively enforced. However, there is hardly any initiative from our government in this direction. Moreover, in order to prevent piracy of our genetic resources, which is indirectly perpetuated by this very Agreement, the government should initiate the process for their documentation and/or registration. But HMG/N has been moving at a snail pace in this direction.

Thirdly, complete liberalisation of agriculture sector will breed food insecurity for the net food importing least developed country (LDC) like Nepal due to increase in global food prices resulting from massive reduction in subsidies provided by the developed countries. However, this situation could be completely reversed if we could become a net food exporter and take advantage of whatever incremental market opening come our way. In order to ensure that it is indispensable to implement Agriculture Perspective Plan (APP) fully and faithfully. The lack of political and bureaucratic commitments to implement the APP is a matter of grave concern for all. This needs to be corrected as an issue deserving topmost priority.

Fourthly, WTO will trigger dislocation in some of vital nerves of economy. Ready-made garment sector, the number one foreign exchange earner for the country at the moment, is one of them. The vulnerability of this sector is evidently clear because of the heavy dependence of our export on quota items, which occupy 80% business of this sector. After 2004, due to eventual phase out of quota system granted to Nepal under the multi-fibre arrangements, this sector is likely to receive a shot on the arm. But the government does not seem to have any programme in hand at this stage to be prepared to tackle this inevitable crisis.

Fifthly, Nepal already has a very low tariff structure due to autonomous liberalisation measures initiated by various governments over a period of last one decade or so. At the time of entering the WTO, if we bind our tariff at a low level it would not be possible for us to raise them to a higher level at a later stage. Therefore, we should bind our tariff at a sufficiently higher level so as to ensure that tariff reduction does not lead to de-industrialisation or cause devastation to our agriculture sector. We should be allowed to bind our tariff at least at the level of other South Asian Member countries of the WTO.

It is learnt that during the accession negotiations developed member countries of WTO are asking Nepal to make WTO-plus commitments, i.e., to make more commitments than what WTO would normally ask an LDC to make. This is not at all justifiable. But we have to provide solid arguments to these members to prove that Nepal deserves to be treated properly.

Finally, Nepal neither has financial nor technical, nor human resources to implement the demanding provisions of the some of the WTO agreements. Therefore, it will not be out of place to already start demanding for technical assistance from the developed countries so that those provisions could be implemented in letter and spirit.

As is evident from the foregoing discussion, Nepal's is not yet fully prepared to obtain the membership of the WTO. However, the preparation from the side of the line ministry is to be considered much more satisfactory than what it was few months ago. The openness and inclusiveness with which the ministry has come out of late is definitely laudable. But due to the lack of inter-ministerial coordination, impact minimising measures have not yet been put in place. Since time is literally flying, we cannot afford to wait any longer. ■

(Adhikari is General Secretary, South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment —SAWTEE)

LUMBINIGRAM Peace Building

A group of Rotarians are set to construct residential houses in Lumbini

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

Stressed by the present rough and tumble of urban life, who would not like to retreat to a peaceful countryside. And what better place than the sacred birthplace of that epitome of peace, Lord Buddha?

Lumbini Private Limited (LPL), a group promoted by five Rotarians Bijaya Bajracharya, Gyanu Raj Shakya, Pushkar M. Shakya, Narayan Govinda Halwai and Nani Shobha Shakya, has decided to construct a residential and resort complex in Lumbini called Lumbinigram, at ten minutes' walking distance from the sacred birthplace.

A set of 58 two-bedroom homes — each with 300 sq m plot size — will be constructed within the next two years together with all the basic amenities in place.

"If we want to really develop the Lumbini area, we have to develop the communities around the sacred place," said Pushkar M. Shakya, Director of the LPL. Shakya, who is also the president of Rotary Club of Patan, says the private sector has to take the initiative to develop the otherwise barren areas in and around the Lumbini.

It is probably the first of its kind scheme about to be launched outside the Kathmandu Valley. "Besides, business is not our overriding concern. Our primary motive is to increase the commercial activities around the Lumbini by developing it as a center for religious pilgrimage and tourism. We hope our residential complex will build up necessary communities around the area that is pre-requisite to attract more tourists and make them stay there longer," said Shakya.

Although there is no exact data available, it is estimated that tens of thousands of tourists visit Lumbini every year. From Sri Lanka alone, 50,000 people come to Lumbini annually. Most of them come via India. "It is a pity that most tourists who

come here via India are told that consumer goods are not available in this part and hence, they even bring mineral water and lunch-boxes with them," said Shakya, who is a regular visitor to Lumbini.

Tourism entrepreneurs believe that concerted efforts are necessary to market the potential of Lumbini and make it financially attractive to them. While the Lumbini Development Trust is developing the area within the sacred region, there is little development going on in the fringe areas that are vital for tourism.

The LPL hopes that their residential complex will kick off similar ventures in the region. Being an internationally recognized center of peace, Lumbini has the tremendous potential to develop as a popular destination for not only pilgrims but also holiday-makers who want to engage in meditation and religious activities.

Already the LPL has received commitments (from clients) for 32 homes out of 58 in the complex. Even some hotels, who do not have their own building in Lumbini, have shown interest to buy homes in the complex.

"At the Lumbinigram, we have focused on close-knit communities. Inside the complex, there are clusters of 6 houses with no walls in between," said Sarosh Pradhan, the chief of SP & Associates, which is de-

signing the complex. Pradhan was also involved in the designing of Dwarikas Hotel, among others, as project in-charge.

"The Lumbinigram is traditional in the outlook but with all modern amenities. It is based on the Mandala theme and community spirit," said Pradhan.

Each house in the Lumbinigram complex costs from Rs 1,495,000 to Rs 1,695,000. The payment is linked with the construction — 20 percent of the amount has to be paid at the time of booking, 20 percent on the completion up to plinth level and so on.

Besides, the LPL also provides the facility of leasing back the houses at reasonable price if unoccupied (if clients wish).

The complex will be a self-contained one with infrastructures like roads, walkways, electricity, sanitation and treated water supply in place. There will also be facilities like servants' quarters, community maintenance and 24-hour security at nominal costs, swimming pool, gymnasium, basketball/badminton/tennis courts, nature park, restaurant, meditation/multi-purpose hall and shopping arcade. ■

*On the
Auspicious Occasion
Of the*

New Year 2058

**We would like to extend
our Heartiest Greetings to
All the
Nepalese People**



***Buddha Air
Family***

'True Leaders Emerge During Difficult Times'

—RAMESH NATH PANDEY

RAMESH NATH PANDEY, nominated twice by the King as a member of the upper house of parliament, came under sharp focus last week after he met Prachanda and Dr Baburam Bhattarai — the two top leaders of the CPN-Maoist. Former minister Pandey holds the unique record of having been nominated by the King for the fourth time to the country's parliament, including his two terms in the Panchayat days. Pandey spoke to KESHAB POUDEL and SANJAYA DHAKAL at his residence on Sunday about recent developments in Nepalese politics. Excerpts:

You recently met with top Maoist leaders Prachanda and Dr. Baburam Bhattarai. Who took the initiative for the meeting?

Is there anyone in this country who is not interested in meeting them? Is there anyone interested in politics and other affairs of the country and those in the ruling class not interested to meet with the Maoist leaders at this juncture? But can they meet them even if they are interested? I think this answers your question.

The fact that they chose to meet you is clear. But who took the initiative?

That is not important. The important thing is that I met them. The more important thing is that they leaked news of this meeting to the press.

How do you assess recent developments in the country's politics?

The last ten years have been wasted. When multiparty democracy was restored, the people's aspirations and expectations rose. At the end of the Cold War, the wave of multiparty democracy swept the whole world and we, too, established this system of governance. This led to the exhibition of extreme goodwill from the community of nations. On the one hand, there was enthusiasm among people and, on the other, there was extreme goodwill from world community. And there was this leadership who had been struggling for long. Had we cashed in on this unique opportunity, we could have changed the face of the country in the ten years that have passed. Unfortunately, we could not establish the democratic culture and the administrative norms that should have complemented this system. There was no clear definition of the roles of the ruling party and the opposition — of issues where they could differ and where they could agree. The same old individualistic culture prevailed. As a result, there was not a single sector in national life that was running normally. Parliament was not effective to arrest the frustration developing among the people. Parliament was used as a means to achieve and remain in power. It was not used to discuss issues of national importance. I have been in parliament for the last eight years during which there was not a single time when the body discussed serious national subjects. It became a mere ritualistic body. So national problems began to pile up. In addition to the problems of yesteryear, which had been swept under the carpet, new problems, both domestic as well as external, emerged. This led to the present situation when the nation is in a real crisis. And now people of all sections have begun to realize that we have to do something.

RPP President Surya Bahadur Thapa and leaders

from the Marxist-Leninist party have released statements expressing concern about the state of national affairs. The Maoists, too, have called for an all-party meeting initiated by the King to solve these problems. What do you say?

I see two aspects to this. Let's not talk about some leaders of RPP. I always remember the past of the RPP president, who has emerged as the greatest democrat today. But history has not forgotten that he was the chairman of advisory council (during Panchayat) which passed a resolution saying elections should not be held in Nepal. He was in the government that banned the multiparty system. He was the prime minister of the Panchayat government that amended then Constitution to incorporate "partyless system" in the preamble. He was the prime minister when the national referendum was held, whose outcome is questioned by a great many. He was the prime minister who, after making the partyless system victorious in the referendum, changed the constitution in a way that disregarded the minority's views. Again, he became the prime minister during the multiparty system when he tried to announce elections in controversial circumstances. So let's not talk about such people. There are certain elements in Nepalese politics that want crisis in the country so that they could gain personally. As far as the King is concerned, we have to be clear about some fundamental aspects. Here is a King who is totally committed to multiparty democracy. In the last ten years of the democratic exercise in the country, only the King's role has not been questioned. If you carefully study the various messages His Majesty has given on different occasions, you will find his concern is on three things. One, that multiparty democracy should be strengthened. Second, the nation's prestige and credibility should be increased. Third, there should be peace and stability in the country. There is a consistency of thought in all his messages regarding these three vital aspects. The King is the symbol of national unity. There are various competing political thoughts in the country but he is the meeting point. Therefore, it is natural that people look up to their monarch at times of difficulty.

When the country is on the brink of collapse, shouldn't the King do something to preserve the constitution and the people? Shouldn't he say or do something to solve the current problems?

I have heard similar complaints from many people. I think your magazine has also raised this issue time and again. So, let's say this issue has reached the concerned place. I have nothing more to add on this.

A constitution is made for the people and the country. A country is not made for the constitution. If the constitution is not functioning properly or if the political parties are not abiding by its principles, don't you think there is a need to either amend it or scrap it altogether?

I don't want to go into that. What we have to understand is we have a King who, by tradition, is the symbol of national unity. He is the meeting point of all different opinions. If we look at history, we find two things. One is, the monarchy does not have any vested interests. Second, its strength and weakness are the people. If it is the will of the people, any wall between the King and people will have to come down ulti-

Parliament was used as a means to achieve and remain in power. It was not used to discuss issues of national importance. I have been in parliament for the last eight years during which there was not a single time when the body discussed serious national subjects.

mately. This has been proven by the fall of Rana regime and by the fall of partyless Panchayat system. In the present context, we have to realize that the King is totally committed to multiparty democracy. Monarchy is the emergency light that will automatically turn on once the regular power supply breaks off. As soon as the regular supply resumes, the emergency light turns off itself and stays recharged.

There is a situation of anarchy in the country, with dozens of people getting killed, the ruling party fractured by dissension, opposition parties taking to the streets and everything turning topsy-turvy. What could be the solution?

If we analyze this, we must arrive at the conclusion that the differences between the ruling and opposition parties justify the cause of the nation and the people. I do not go into who is right and who is wrong. Therefore, a solution has to be found without making them lose their face. As far as the internal difference in the ruling party is concerned, I don't believe that is solely responsible for the present problem. Besides, there are certain issues in the country that cannot be solved by Nepali Congress alone. Nevertheless, we must still understand that the Nepali Congress has the mandate from the people to rule this nation. We must maintain the sanctity of democracy. The irony of the situation is that even members of the ruling party have questioned this government's stability. A month after he was elected with massive majority as the president of the Nepali Congress, the party chief had to seek fresh mandate from district party presidents. However, over-involvement in technicalities and arithmetic game could damage moral authority. The need of the hour is a leadership with the moral strength who can steer the country from the present crisis. This issue is something that has to be decided by Nepali Congress.

A section of civil society and the media has said the time has come to declare a state of emergency and mobilize the military to quell the Maoist insurgency. What do you think?

Successive governments in the last ten years have failed to come up with a national security policy. So at a time when there is no national security policy, it would not be mature to haphazardly talk about national security and the means to handle it. The debate over whether or not to mobilize the army is a sensitive one. It will be counter-productive to search for the answer to such a sensitive subject through discussions on the streets or by creating confusion through newspapers. I have not even seen those in the government display the seriousness required to handle such serious subjects.

After your recent talks with Maoist leaders, they have released a statement calling for an all-party meeting. Who should take the initiative for such talks?

The Maoist problem is the greatest concern of the country right now. The country is in an undeclared civil war. In this situation, resolving this problem must be the country's topmost priority. History has proven that use of force cannot quell the war of thoughts. The only way to solve this problem is through peaceful negotiations. This warrants strictly mature behavior. Maoists have said time and again that they are willing to talk. But the government has not been able to demonstrate matching behavior. Whenever the environment for dialogue is created, the state has taken childish and adventurist step. We must give chance to dialogue. Those in power should take the initiative. In fact, all Nepalese should



contribute in whatever way they can.

Do you think the present leaders, who have failed to carry out their responsibility in the last ten years, can solve the country's problems including the Maoist insurgency?

Indeed, they have failed. We do not want to see this country as a failed state. As far as leadership is concerned, we cannot import political leaders from the moon. We have to use those who are available to us. Now the time has come for the full use of talent, honesty and experience. It is at difficult periods that leadership emerges. Whether you look at the emergence of Mahatma

Gandhi or B.P. Koirala, they came to light at times of national crisis. So, we have to understand the momentum of history. I hope there is someone in the main political parties who will solve problems by understanding this moment.

You are also a foreign-relations expert. How do you assess the scheduled visit by Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji?

From the 1950s to the early 60s, the trend was such that the Chinese leaders were coming to India and also visiting Nepal. From the 60s to late 80s, they were coming only to Nepal. After that, they were coming to both India and Nepal. This reflects the change in the Chinese perception and attitude to this region. But recently Chinese leader Li Peng, who is the second most powerful leader in China, visited this part of the world. He came to India but did not visit Nepal. Li is an old friend of Nepal. He came only to Nepal in 1989. In the current rung of Chinese leadership, five of the six top leaders have visited Nepal. The only one who had not visited Nepal is Prime Minister Zhu Rongji, who is scheduled to come here in May. Interestingly, he is coming to Nepal only. There is a message there. What I have understood is that China would like to continue its policy of seeing Nepal through its own eyes. They are trying to assure us. The weakness on our part is that we have not succeeded to utilize such opportunities. His Majesty the King was recently invited to Boao conference as guest of honor. This was a special gesture, but we failed to capitalize on that. Take the case of India. India also invited His Majesty as the chief guest on its Republic Day. This was for the first time during the last 50 years that India had invited a leader of a neighboring country as chief guest. We should have capitalized this show of tremendous goodwill from our neighbors. Opportunities are there indeed. The visit by Chinese prime minister is once again opening such an opportunity to us. But are we capable of capitalizing on it? No, simply because our attention is not focused. I hope the concerned people wake up and make the most of this opportunity.

There is a feeling in some quarters here that some foreign hand is interested in destabilizing politics in Nepal. What do you say?

I don't see why we should be surprised at this. Every country plays up in other countries, especially where they have a vital interest. The important thing is that our house should be in order. The yardstick of the success of a country's foreign policy lies in its relationships with neighboring countries. The goodwill of countries is not a one-time game. You have to constantly and consistently nurse and build up your relations. But when we make a pleasure trip out of international relations, when we don't keep the promises we make to our friendly countries, then what is the use of complaining of such play up? ■

Whether you look at the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi or B.P. Koirala, they came to light at times of national crisis. I hope there is someone in the main political parties who will solve problems by understanding this moment.



Nepalese CDs : Getting popular

MUSIC PIRACY

Haunted By Thefts

The country's booming music industry is bogged down by the unchecked growth of piracy

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

Music is one of the very few industries in the country that is currently witnessing a phenomenal growth. From a market worth less than Rs 500,000 in 2040 BS (around 1984 AD), the Nepalese music industry is today worth Rs 300 million a year, forty percent of which is outside Nepal.

Even though the Nepalese music market is growing in length and breadth, the equally thriving piracy threatens to eat up its successes. According to estimates by Music Nepal, the leading music company in the country, as much as 40 to 50 percent of the Nepalese music market is captured by pirates.

The scene is even worse as far as English and Hindi music market is concerned. Hindi music, which commands

40 percent of the country's market, and English music are almost exclusively covered by the pirated cassettes and CDs, according to the estimates.

"Music piracy is sucking the blood out of creators and companies like us," said Santosh Sharma, Managing Director of Music Nepal Pvt. Ltd. Music Nepal shares 50 to 60 percent of the total Nepalese music market. Sharma is also the member-secretary of Copyright Protection Society of Nepal.

In the absence of legal provisions (see box), the piracy is growing by leaps and bounds. There are both organized as well as unorganized music pirates active in the country. "There are organized gangs, too, which pirate the cassettes and CDs using modern machines," Sharma said. The emergence of CDs and MP3s have made the jobs of pirates

even simpler.

"The piracy is bleeding creators like us. If we fail to get royalty or earn from our cassettes, it will be useless to continue making music or singing songs," said Kumar Basnet, senior singer and the President of Nepal Musical Group.

Basnet is also active in copyright protection campaign in the country. He laments the absence of copyright protection in the country. "Supposing if Lata Mangeshkar or Michael Jackson was to claim compensation for the piracy of their music here, what would happen?" he asked.

The musicians and music companies even accuse FM radio stations of engaging in a different kind of piracy. "When they play new songs full and repeat it continuously, that would definitely affect the sales of the cassettes and CDs," Sharma said.

A few years ago Kantipur FM started a praiseworthy scheme of giving a small amount of money as royalty to the artistes whose songs are played in its station. "Though, it is a commendable effort, the royalty they pay is very nominal. Getting Rs 200 as royalty after months is nothing more than a token gesture," Basnet said.

The entrepreneurs believe that the music industry should be looked as a productive sector of national economy. "Music Nepal alone pays Rs 3 million to Rs 3.5 million as tax every year to the government. The authorities should invest a section of such resources to help develop necessary environment and infrastructure for further blossoming of the industry," said Sharma.

At present, the country does not even have a music school or music training center. Whatever has been achieved in the music industry is the result of the private sector's involvement. "Look at the Royal Nepal Academy, they received more than Rs 16.8 million as budget this year. What about musicians like us?" asked Basnet. He complained of partial

Legal provisions:

Nepal has a Copyright Act formulated in 2022 BS. It is highly inadequate to cope with the piracy. The provisions of the act allowed pirates to go scot-free for their crime if caught for the first time, and a fine of mere Rs 500 was imposed the second time. The act was amended in 1997/98 where the fine was increased from Rs 5,000 to Rs 500,000. But in the absence of a clear definition regarding the implementing agency, the amendment, too, has failed to do the expected. "We did catch a pirate on our own initiative as a test case to this amendment. But even after four years of running from pillar to post, no legal action could be taken against the culprit till now," said Santosh Sharma, member-secretary of the Copyright Protection Society, Nepal.

The Society with the active cooperation of World Intellectual Property Rights Organization (WIPO), had submitted a draft of a new copyright bill to the concerned ministry. The bill had even been registered in parliament this year but as the session broke off without a single working day, the bill's future is in doubt, once again. Meanwhile, as the Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement and WTO are expected to come to force, Sharma believes things will be

brighter after 2005 AD.

But till then, the Nepalese government needs to introduce necessary legal provisions to curtail the piracy. As things stand, the Nepalese government does not have the responsibility to check infringements on the violation of intellectual property rights as it is not a party to the Berne Convention 1866, which deals with copyright matters. Its own acts are obstacles to joining the convention. According to Sharma, the Berne convention envisages that every creation should be protected free of formalities. "But our acts make it compulsory for creators to register their products. How can you expect poets and musicians to run around registering their each poems and music?"

The copyright protection is a very sensitive subject in the international arena. There is an agency called CISAC — Society of Authors and Composers — with a network in 130 countries around the world, which distributes US\$ 7 billion per annum to different creators around the world as royalty after generating it from the markets there or as penalty if piracy is detected. This agency even enjoys the observer status in the UN. Nepal's Copyright Protection Society is also an associate member of the CISAC. "We pay 228 dollar every year to the CISAC but we cannot enjoy its benefits as Nepalese government is yet to become a party to Berne Convention," Sharma rued.

treatment by the state to musicians.

As the Nepalee film industry is looking better and better, the music industry, too, has potentials to increase its market even more in the coming days. At present, music from the Nepalese film contribute less than 15 to 20 percent of the industry's revenue. There are less than one or two hit film albums in a year and only ten percent of them can recover their investment. In India, the film contributes 85 to 90 percent of the Indian Rs 10 billion worth of Indian music industry.

The folk songs and folk-based pop songs command the majority of the Nepalese music market. It costs from Rs 20,000 to Rs 100,000 to record an album in the country. Any album that sells above 20,000 pieces can expect to profit. Those selling more than 100,000 pieces are considered superhits. The success rate in the pop albums are 10 percent.

As the music industry in the country continues to boom, the unobstructed growth of piracy could bring it crashing down. ■

HAPPY NEW YEAR - 2058 V.S. NIKETAN COLLEGE

Minbhawan, Kathmandu

Phone : 255713/478379/482715, Fax : 977-01-495073

E-mail : vsn@ab.enet.com.np

Features :

- * Entire English Environment with quality and standard education.
- * Dedicated, devoted & professional Teaching Staff.
- * Healthy atmosphere with high degree of discipline.
- * A wide range of facilities and many more at school level education.
- * The best & biggest institution for 10+2 Science & Management Education, affiliated to HSEB.
- * A unique institution for BBA & IT programme affiliated to P.U.

Note : For more information, please contact to the school/college office.

BOOK

Plea For Peace

The volume deals with key aspects of insurgency-related problems in relation to good governance

By A CORRESPONDENT

Pace is an important prerequisite for development and good governance. That statement is no longer the platitude it used to be treated as until five years ago. The country's recent experience has shown that the absence of peace is a serious hindrance to implementing development activities successfully.

With the spread of the Maoist insurgency, the law-and-order machinery is virtually non-existent in many parts of the country. Because of insurgency-linked disturbances, many donor organizations and international non-governmental agencies have pulled out of programs in the affected districts.

In a poor country like Nepal, any rupture in development activities will have a

highly negative impact. The disruption of development activities in one part of the country harms overall economic development. As human rights organizations and peace advocates have come to realize, it is not easy to bring warring parties to the negotiating table.

At a time when everyone is searching for a way to end the Maoist insurgency through peaceful means, SAP-Nepal, a non-government organization involved in development activities, organized seminars that saw the participation of eminent personalities of society. This book is a product of the initiative.

"The publication of SAP-Nepal, The Quest For Peace aims to make both the leadership of the insurgency and the government aware of the effects of the movement on the social and economic livelihood of the people and the violation of the human rights that have occurred," said Dr. Rohit Kumar Nepali, executive director of the organization.

Since the beginning of the Maoist insurgency in 1995, nearly 2,000 people, including women and children, have lost their lives. Many people have become disabled. In most of the rural parts of the country, the law-and-order situation has deteriorated to such an extent that the common citizens are living in an environment of fear, insecurity and uncertainty. In this scenario, peace is the only hope for the country's development.

Over the past few years, many agencies have made efforts to understand and analyze the causes behind the Maoist insurgency. SAP-Nepal has taken a broader initiative by bringing all groups and factions together to analyze the problem.

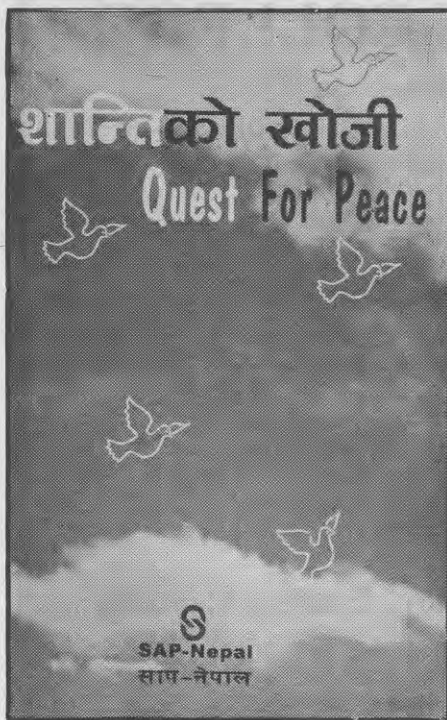
The book includes article by many prominent writers, human rights activists, NGO workers, professors, political scientists, political leaders, and intellectuals from the left and Congress sides, historians and others.

The authors deal with the Maoist insurgency through different perspectives and analyze the consequences of the crisis. In his article, "Crisis of Governance and the Search for Peace", Ananda P. Shrestha discusses, among other things, the lapses in the quest for peace.

Bihari Krishna Shrestha, in his article "Maoist Movement and Peace Building Process in Nepal: The Development Perspective", discusses the impact of the Maoist movement from a development perspective and highlights other key aspects.

Shyam Shrestha, a prominent left-leaning intellectual, attempts to build a path towards resolving the Maoist insurgency through negotiations, which he describes as the best way.

In his article "Good Governance and Community Participation for the Peace Building Process in Respect of insurgency management," Chuda Bahadur Shrestha forms a historical perspective of the insurgency. With its many dimensions, managing the insurgency is a very complicated process — a reality this book has so persuasively highlights. ■



Quest For Peace

Published by South Asia Partnership Nepal

Pages: 209

Price: Rs.300

MANAKAMANA CABLE CAR



20%

Elders & Students Discount


Since the 17 th Century, Manakamana temple has been widely venerated because of the belief that Manakamana Devi Fulfills all wishes.



25%

Disabled Discount

Today, instead of the 4 to 5 hour arduous trek, Manakamana is now accessible in just 10 minutes by Manakamana Cable Car.



50%

Children Under 3 & Half Feet Discount

Every Passenger Insured Upto 1,00,000



Manakamana Darshan (D) Ltd.
 Naxal, Nagpokhari, Kathmandu, Nepal. Phone: 434690, 434825, 434648.
 Fax: 977-1-434515. email: chitwan@cc.wlink.com.np. Station 064-80044

ID Compulsory



TRANSITION

AWARDED: Sumnima Singh, Preeti Acharya and Temba Chhiri Sherpa, with this year's Bir Ganeshman Singh Children Talent Award.

Swami Parmananda Saraswati, with this year's Bijaya Shree Award for Social Service.

ARRIVED: Kim Yong, director-general of World Scout Organization Asia Pacific region, for a three-day visit.

KILLED: Dilli Prasad Shrestha, principal of Triveni High School, Barhabise, Sankhuwasabha and central vice-president of RPP-affiliated National Teachers' Council, by suspected Maoists.

DISCHARGED: Koili

Devi, senior singer, from the Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital, where she underwent cardiac surgery.

GUTTED: Twelve houses in Laukahi and Chhitaha Village Development Committee of Sunsari district, by a sudden fire. ■

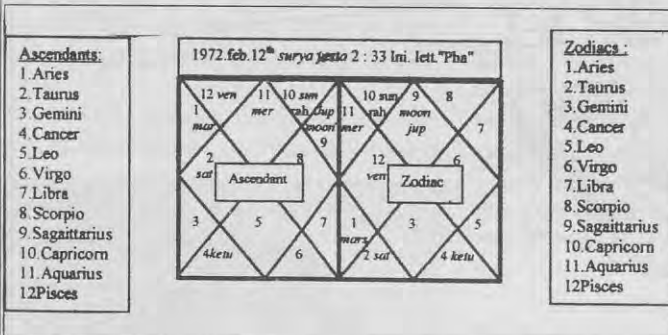
Astrology Is A Perfect Science

By A. P. RAJ KUMAR SUBEDI

The word "astrology" is derived from two Greek words, "astra" and "logos", logic or reason. It literally implies the doctrine and law as shown by the stars or planets. It is a science of influence of stars on human and terrestrial affairs. It is a science that defines the actions of celestial bodies upon animate and inanimate objects, and their reactions to such influences. Astrology may be considered as subjective, dealing with the influence on various forms of life and its effects upon surrounding bodies, the earth and its inhabitants in particular, and so may properly be termed the study of life's reactions to planetary vibrations.

Astrology is a noble science as old as the ages of Vedas. This was founded, investigated and developed by our ancient Maharishis. The pioneers mentioned are Aryabhata, Maharishi Parashar, Varahamira, Garga, Kalidas, Kalyan Verma and other sages who lived about 1500 B.C. and made a special study of astrology in relation to various aspects of human life, including health, disease, death.

It depends on the positions of planets ascertained. Astronomically, it is derived from the observation and study of the celestial bodies of which our earth is one. It is a "message of stars". It is a divine science of correspondence in that it applies cosmic principles to the minutiae of everyday life, system of interpretation of planetary action in human experiences. Our sages noted a close correspondence between the great world of universe and the microcosm or the little world of man well expressed in the hermetic axiom. Astrology has lived through the ages in countries like India, Egypt, Arabia, USA, China, Chalden, Rome, Babylon, Greece. If it is not true or scientific, how has it stood for such a long time against many and heavy odds?



Is Astrology Scientific? :In addition to the above discussion, we know from ancient times, that planets affect human beings and many scientists did not accept that. However, later, after experiments, observations and experience, they found that electronic radiations from the heavenly bodies produce molecular change in earth's atmosphere and produce cellular change in organic bodies of all dwellings therein, so says Rodney Collin. Now scientists agree a bit (why not fully?) of all knowledge bequeathed to us by our sages and ancients. Dr. Charles Nordmon has expressed, "X-rays coming from stars which abundantly emit those rays exercise influence on the life organisms of each of us."

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote, "Astronomy brought to earth and applied to the affairs of men. Of what use is astronomy to mankind, if not interpreted in terms of our daily life?" Great writers of the world such as Dante, Shakespeare, Longfellow, Goethe, Milton, Tennyson, Keats, Dryden and Chaucer used astrological dictums in their works. The distinguished Danish astronomer Tycho used his astronomical knowledge in his astrological studies. There are many more such personalities.

Today's scientists follow Newton, his laws and his inventions, but do not follow his astrological inventions. Why? This attitude is quite ridiculous and is not understood. The scientists who have not studied the subject have no right to be biased against it. Our ancient sages had studied astrology and have framed the rules to predict about personal matters, diseases, weather forecasting, disasters, calamities, coronations, wars, rains, earthquakes, personal and other orbit incidents which are correct even today and cannot be denied.

Critics and scientists are against astrology as if this science is their rival. It can be due to their ignorance of the subject. However, do they know that many times their experiments have failed, many satellites have failed to take off

causing loss of millions of rupees to the nation? In such cases, are we to blame science?

Astrology is regarded highly throughout the world. The great Swiss psychologist Dr. Carl G. Jung has testified to this science as being worthy. Hippocrates, hailed as the father of medicine, went so far as to assert that a doctor without astrological knowledge could not safely administer medicine. But look at the doctors today!

Another eye-catching example are politicians. They consult astrologers and benefit, but in public they hesitate — even feel embarrassed — to acknowledge it. Revelation of Nancy Reagan's obsession with astrology and President Ronald Reagan's acceptance of it shocked and fascinated people all over the world. However, Reagan is not the first head of the state to believe in astrology. President Francois Mitterand of France admitted that he was an avid reader of Nostradamus, the French seer, astrologer who lived 400 years ago. Indira Gandhi was known to have consulted astrologers before taking any major decision. A report on American TV in 1988 surprised many. According to a former CIA official, the American intelligence agency has also used astrology in its operations.

The idea of the above discussion indicates that probabilities exist in every science. The press and the people have a tendency to exaggerate wrong predictions and hold them against astrology, whereas the failure of scientists that cause loss of millions of rupees to the nation goes unnoticed.

Therefore, the government should not be hesitant in calling astrology a science. This science should be given due place in universities and in science laboratories. There is wider scope for astrological research and everyone wants to have something new.

Use of Astrology : Astrology is as important to male or female as is psychology. This branch of knowledge deals with the human soul deriving awareness of the mind from the careful examination of the facts of consciousness. Astrology complements everything in psychology because it examines the facts of planetary influences on the conscious and subconscious, providing a guideline towards all aspects of life, harmony of mind, body and spirit. This is the real use of astrology.

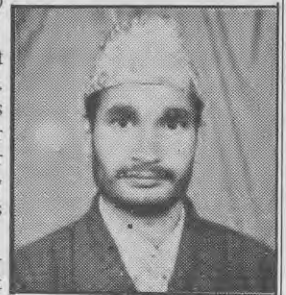
SUN SIGN — Sun sign in astrology has become the roaring chariot, with spokes of golden fire; the influence of the Sun has woven into the horoscopes of a new generation of people who has only a vague idea about astrology.

As interest in astrology escalated with the modern generation, so the Sun sign theme rose in popularity and become a piece of conversation at parties. Now a Virgo man complains that he is very different from another Virgo man and proves that astrology is nothing but a hoax. Actually, this is not so, only the sun sign will not help you. You have to check ascendant moon sign, placement of other planets in the horoscope, which affect the sun sign that changes the personality very radically. Due to a constant flow of the astrological columns in newspapers, people have become sun-sign-conscious. Such readings are too general and are not applicable to everybody. On the other hand, they misguide people and astrology is defamed. When one discovers that he or she is a Leo, one imagines him or her as a passionate lover, but this is not always correct.

So, do not depend on sun sign only. You must get your horoscope checked by a competent astrologer. Sun or solar horoscope cast from date of birth is not the real birth chart but a fiction because the real ascendant, mid-heaven, or other things cannot be cast correctly.

MOON SIGN — Our ancients have advocated the use of moon sign (Janam Rasi) which gives fairly more accurate results than the sun sign. This sign is very important in Hindu astrology for matching the horoscopes to see whether one might be happier with a boy or a girl, as the moon indicates many of one's basic reactions to both sexes.

There are other branches such as medical astrology, mundane or political astrology. So, astrology being a perfect science, can be usefully employed in the delineation of one's horoscope through a competent astrologer. ■



The writer is associated with the Shiva Astrology Service

Now In Town

BOOK

Annual Survey of Nepalese Law 2000 Kumar Regmi / 2000	Rs. 250.00
The Ancient Settlements of the Kathmandu Valley S.R. Tiwari / 2001	Rs. 300.00
Constitutional and Political Development in Nepal R.K. Dahal / 2001	Rs. 595.00
The Coinage of Nepal N.G. Rhodes / K. Gavrish / C. Valdetaro / 1989	Rs. 5500.00
Domestic Conflict and Crisis of Governability in Nepal Dhruba Kumar / 2000	Rs. 525.00
Land and Social Change in East Nepal Lionel Caplan / 2000	Rs. 325.00

Nepal's Foreign Policy During Nepali Congress Government Y.P. Adhikari / 2000	Rs. 200.00
The Newar Merchants in Lhaasa Kesar Lall / 2001	Rs. 150.00
Nepalese Postage Stamps : Different Themes Single Denomination D.P. Pandey / 2001	Rs. 150.00
Nepal Yearbook 2000 Events of the Year 1999 R.C. Arya / 2000	Rs. 300.00
Privatization : Expectation and Reality R. Adhikari / K. Adhikari	Rs. 150.00
Resource Allocation in the Agricultural Sector in Nepal : Analysis and Impact of Policies Milan Adhikari / 2000	Rs. 1330.00

(Source : Himalayan Book Center, Bagh Bazar, Kathmandu, Ph : 242085)

*Best Wishes
For A
Prosperous
New Year
B.S. 2058*



NEPAL BANK LIMITED
(ESTD. 1937)

*We would like
to extend our
heartiest greetings to
all the Nepalese
People on the
Auspicious Occasion
of the
New Year 2058 B.S.*



Rastriya Banijya Bank
Central Office
Singh Durbar, Kathmandu

MARY WORTH



JUDGE PARKER



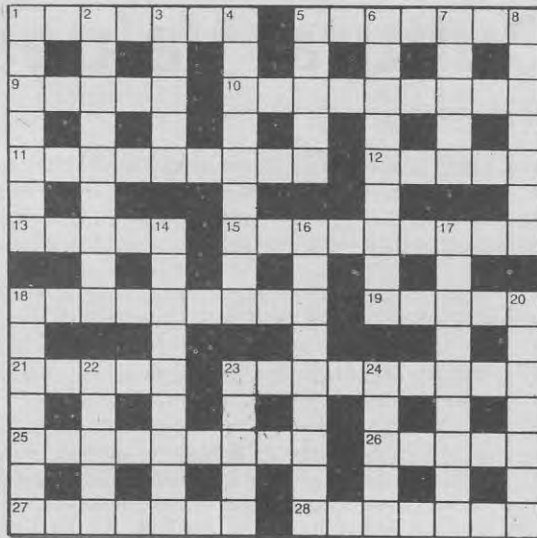
STITCHES



LUNN



CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Unexpectedly fresh version of the Great Pretender? (7)
5. Bath — what bus runs there?
9. A lake in an inaccessible place (5)
10. Diver's given answer during amalgamation of companies (9)
11. En route, stubborn general is ignored (2,7)
12. Where canoe can come to grief (5)
13. At the finish, the thorough bred trailing the field moved slowly (5)
15. One who took the lead, going for gold? (9)
18. Part of speech I am withdrawing ñ look around for the note (9)
19. Feature of church required reform, so they say (5)
21. Stop putting sulphur in a container (5)
23. Pampered, I become animated? Some hope! (4,5)
25. Boss has the best fruit (3,6)
26. U-turn made by couple nearing American city ñ not silently (5)
27. Young man in agony become champion (7)
28. 25 made family doctor popular (7)

DOWN

1. Incompatible girl left Issac (7)
2. Plan to up production of super pies (9)
3. Wolf seen in Lakeland (5)
4. Newspaper to run holiday home (4-5)
5. Best of the pits (5)
6. In this fashion a poet joins artist to produce TV program (4,5)
7. A way to replace middle of the sample (5)
8. Scholar raised voice ñ ñSir!f (7)
14. Misuse of this could result in bad credit (5,4)
16. Man bearing English flag of inferior quality (5-4)
17. Where noodles might be having problems (2,3,4)
18. Set in motion food and drink outside.
19. Customer's tip sure to be shared out (3-4)
22. Canary Island's fine at first (5)
23. Right is shortly to be announced to supply this garment (5)
25. Cut up about soldier coming over? Consider carefully (5)

Across : 1. Uplast 5. Washrub 9. Aerie 10. Merganser 11. In transit 12. Ocean 13. Edged 15. Alchemist 18. Semibreve 19. Altar 21. Avast 23. Pipe dream 25. Top banana 26. Aloud 27. Paladin 28. Kingpin

Down : 1. Unalike 2. Stratagem 3. Akela 4. Time share 5. Worst 6. Soap opera 7. Taste 8. Baronet 14. Debitcard 16. Cheapjack 17. In the soup 18. Startup 20. Ramadan 22. Appal 23. Plain 24. Drawn

NOITUON

BRIDGE

NORTH 3-24			
♠ J 9			
♥ A J 6 2			
♦ Q 10 8 4 3 2			
♣ 6			
WEST		EAST	
♠ Q 10 8 7 6 5 4		♠ K 3 2	
♥ K 7		♥ 9	
♦ A		♦ K J 9 7 6	
♣ J 8 7		♣ K Q 9 3	
SOUTH			
♠ A			
♥ Q 10 8 5 4 3			
♦ 5			
♣ A 10 5 4 2			
Vulnerable: North-South			
Dealer: South			
The bidding:			
South	West	North	East
1♥	3♠	4♥	4♠
5♥	Dbl.	All pass	
Opening lead: Spade seven			

'Do you wish people to believe good of you? Don't' speak.'

— Pascal

"Well bid and well played," effused an elated North. "They will make four spades unless I score a club ruff."

Not satisfied with North's compliment, South added a modest and misplaced self-reproach. "I could have won the trump finesse," he said. South won his spade ace and led a diamond toward dummy, preparing for a minor-suit crossruff. West won his ace and led another spade, ruffed by South. Leaving the trump king at large, South led a trump to dummy's ace, crossed to his club ace, and began his crossruff in clubs and diamonds. After South enjoyed three club ruffs in dummy, his fifth club was established, and he lost only a diamond and the trump king for a sensational result.

What about South's comment regarding the trump finesse? South would have retained more respect had he not spoken, accepting North's compliment in silence. Since South's main aim was to ruff three clubs, he could afford a trump loser when trumps were 2-1. Therefore a trump finesse would be an irrational move, losing the game if East held K-x. Had East held K-x, a trump return would have eliminated one vital club ruff for a disastrous result. With only two club ruffs available in dummy, South could have lost a diamond, a trump and a club for one down.

Police Training Must Be Sensitive To Country's Cultural Values

By STEVEN CROSSELY

Police training projects in one form or another are a common component of the aid portfolios of most developed countries. These projects take on many guises — ranging from interventions that teach crowd-control techniques to community policing initiatives. The range of projects are as diverse and as numerous as the countries that they have taken place in. Depending on the domestic government of the donor country, the answer to this varies. When the Conservative government was in office in the United Kingdom, the justification for police projects was based on 'good governance' — a stable society with rights and freedoms protected to provide an appropriate climate for investment and economic growth. Current foreign policy concentrates on the alleviation of poverty and access to justice for all — especially poor people. The latter approach recognises that in some societies there is an imbalance between the service the police give to one group — usually the rich and powerful — and another — predominantly the poor.

Whatever the political imperative, all people have a right to protection from criminals and to impartial treatment at the hands of the gatekeepers to the criminal justice system. In other words, people have a right to expect a 'democratic' police force. This is where the problem begins. One of the major stumbling blocks which donors are faced with in offering assistance to developing countries is actually understanding what is meant by the term 'democratic policing'. Indeed, this may not be considered very much at all.

Professor Bayley, Dean of the School of Criminal Justice in New York, focused on identifying elements common to democratic policing and identified two: responsiveness and accountability. There are others, of course, but many of these elements are common to 'undemocratic' police forces as well. Responsiveness, according to Bayley "requires that the police take their cue about what they do from the disaggregate public — not from the state and not from the government". He also points out that democratic police forces are accountable to what he calls 'oversight institutions', which are independent of the ruling regimes.

These oversight institutions will vary from country to country — typically, they will include courts, or police complaints authorities. The defining feature, in all cases, is that the police accept and submit to scrutiny from these bodies. In order to be successful, donors must ensure that interventions are designed that are sensitive to local policing traditions, and the host country's basic cultural values.

By now it ought to be obvious — training does not exist in a vacuum. Police performance problems owe more to organisational and systemic deficiencies than they do to deficient or absent training, and it is an inescapable fact that these factors that need addressing with a greater priority than training per se. Training is not a panacea for all the ills of an organisation. It is a supplement to sound policies, systems and practices! Training ensures that staff are able to do those things which are required to be done, to the standard which is demanded. It is essential, therefore, that there is clarity about what the particular police organisation is trying to do, who should do what, how they are expected to do it, and how they will know it is being achieved. Once this has been agreed, systems to facilitate the delivery of the service must be put in place and then personnel must be trained to do what is expected of them.

Experience in the United Kingdom, Pakistan and Africa has shown that a great deal of money has been spent on training police officers and that significant proportions of that training never gets transferred to the workplace. The question "Why?" most obviously springs to mind — unfortunately the answer might not be too attractive to well intentioned donors, keen to see 'problem police forces' subjected to 'modern', 'better' or 'more appropriate' training, integrating human rights, gender and poverty issues and so on.

The reasons why training frequently fails to result in improved

police performance are complex. The old chestnuts 'political will', 'corruption', and 'political interference' are the most obvious barriers. However, it may also be the case that the treatment being applied by donor agencies is adding to the ailments of the patient.

A recent visit to one African country revealed classroom sizes in excess of 300 for constables. The same sort of figures can be found in Pakistan and Bangladesh. There are frequently no classrooms — training taking place in the open air with students exposed to the elements. And yet, donor interventions in training have continued, and are still ongoing. Maslow would turn in his grave!

We also commonly find that training institutions are the dumping ground for the problem children of the host nation's police force. Recruits either buy their way into the police or get there through some other nefarious means. Either way, the most basic of recruitment criteria is circumvented in order to gain entry to the police and the relative powers and privileges that this opportunity brings.

One aspect of democratic policing is 'responsiveness'. To be responsive, the police must have information upon which to act. To obtain this information they must seek it, and when they seek it, it must be freely given and acted upon. This is not rocket science. Unfortunately, the situation in many developing countries is dire. Most people chose to suffer in silence, often intolerably, rather than speak to the police. The terms 'public consultation', 'police-public relations' and such like are as alien as the foreign cultures they emanate from. And yet, police projects steadfastly include 'guidance' on these subjects time and time again.

The point here is this. Police-public consultation is (probably) a concept that is easily understood by most societies — irrespective of where they are. It's just that it means more in practice to some than others. Therefore, are the training needs not different? The response is to introduce our hosts to those things that have been tried and tested within our own cultures. Often, these cultures are much less mature than our hosts, and yet we persist. Take Africa and the subcontinent, for example. Prior to colonialism, these areas were home to enormous diverse populations with well-entrenched cultures, and systems of justice — both formal and informal. At a relatively recent point in time, all of this was overturned. Conformity to colonial values was demanded and 'civilisation' in the form of formal, often punitive control mechanisms was introduced.

Legal topics are required to be learned by rote — they are frequently anachronistic and due to the nature of the roles which constables in particular will carry out in some countries after their training, will rarely be utilised in practice. Indeed, if a full TNA project was undertaken in some developing countries for the bulk of constables, their key performance area is likely to amount to one thing only - 'guard buildings' — do we really need the six months of training typically found to achieve this output?

For example, recent experience in both Pakistan and Nigeria shows that both countries — thousands of miles apart — have established identical processes for reviews of curricula as described above. In the case of Nigeria — the review process resulted in the inclusion of 'French' as a topic for recruit constables. Other topics such as 'human rights' and 'international law' were also included in the curriculum document examined. Unfortunately, no one could explain how these topics had emerged nor where the curriculum documents — lesson notes, training activities, etc. — could be found. The reality was, they did not exist.

Excerpts from a paper presented at the "Training the Police in Developing Countries" seminar organized by the British Council.

"THE PERFECT PLACE FOR THE EXOTIC EXPERIENCE YOU EVER HAD"



Newari Cuisine is not only popular for deliciousness but also richness. In a typical Newari feast, more than twenty varieties of dishes are served.

Newari Cuisine at its best

Now you can savour all these authentic and relishing dishes in addition to various types of unique Newari snacks at the 'Lajana' - the exclusive Newari restaurant. Enjoying the ambience you will never forget



Enjoy the Legendary
Newari delicacies
at
Restaurant Lajana
&
Every evening colourful
Nepali Cultural Show in
Traditional Fashion.

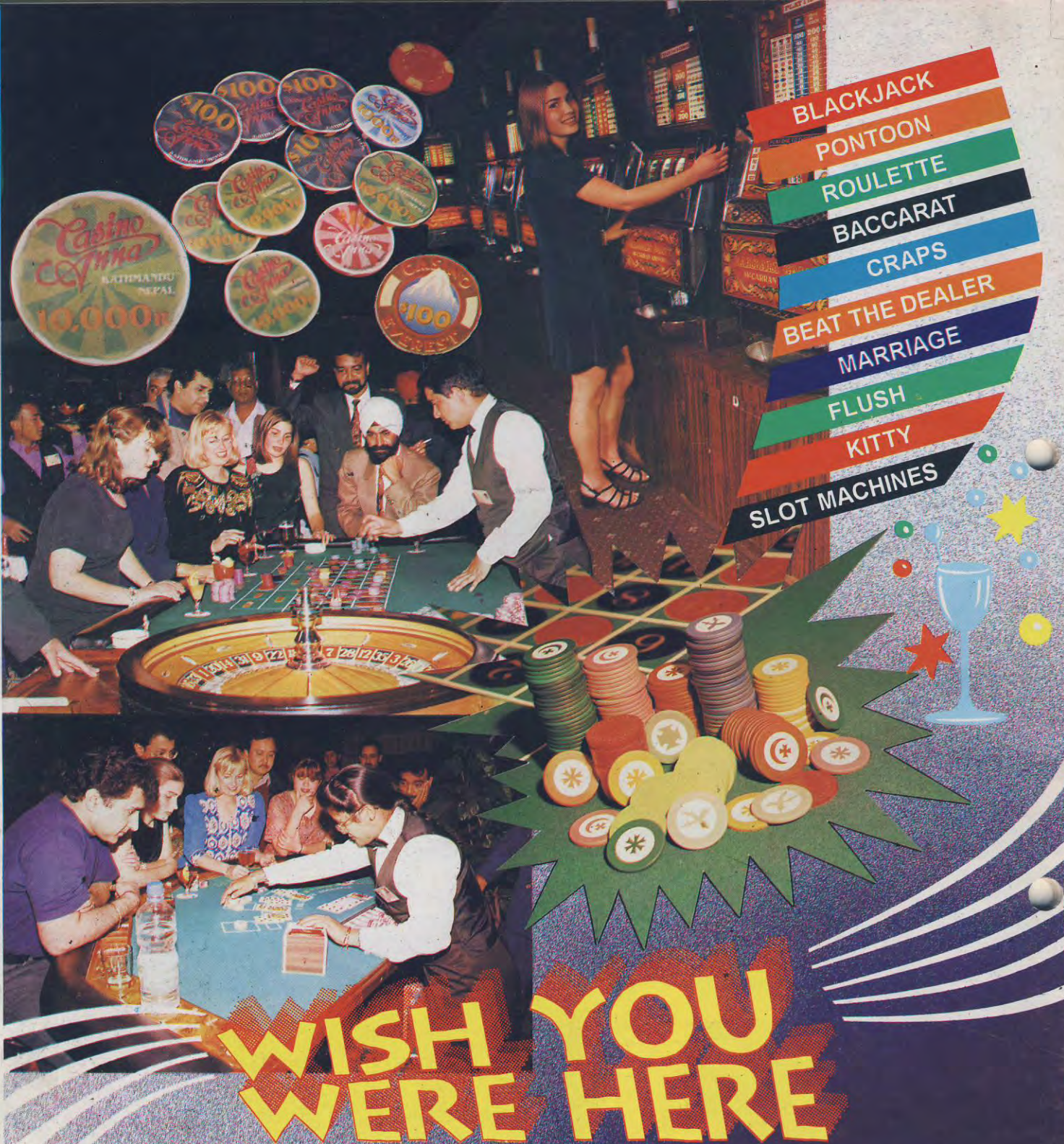


RESTAURANT
लजना Lajana

Near Radisson Hotel, Lazimpat
Kathmandu, Nepal
Ph: 413874

E-mail : caan@infoclub.com.np
Web Site: www.nepalifood.com/lajana

Parking facilities available



- BLACKJACK
- PONTOON
- ROULETTE
- BACCARAT
- CRAPS
- BEAT THE DEALER
- MARRIAGE
- FLUSH
- KITTY
- SLOT MACHINES

WISH YOU WERE HERE



Casino Nepal
 Soaltee Compound
 Tahachal, Kathmandu
 Tel: 270244, 271011
 Fax: 977-1-271244
 E-mail: rdt@mos.com.np



Casino Anna
 Hotel de L' Annapurna
 Durbar Marg, Kathmandu
 Tel: 223479
 Fax: 977-1-225228
 E-mail: casanna@mos.com.np



Casino Everest
 Hotel Everest
 New Baneshwor
 Tel: 488100
 Fax: 977-1-490284
 E-mail: everest@mos.com.np



Casino Royale
 Hotel Yak & Yeti
 Durbar Marg
 Tel: 228481
 Fax: 977-1-223933
 E-mail: royal@mos.com.np