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The National Newsmagazine

SPOTLIGHT

May 04-10, 2007



Tourism : Tackling Poverty

Interview :
Dr. Andrew Hall



National Reconciliation : Now And Then
Politics : Dangerous Deflection

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LOTUS

बचत खाता



नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंकले तपाईंहरूको विश्वास र चाहनालाई ध्यानमा राखि फेरि ल्यायो जीवनमरको लागि मात्र रु. १,०००/- मा लोटस बचत खाता । यो योजना नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंकका सबै शाखाहरूमा लागू हुनेछ ।

विस्तृत जानकारीको लागि नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंकको शाखाहरूमा सम्पर्क गर्नुहोला ।



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Experiences of TRPAP has shown how tourism can be used to direct benefits directly to the poor people in remote region

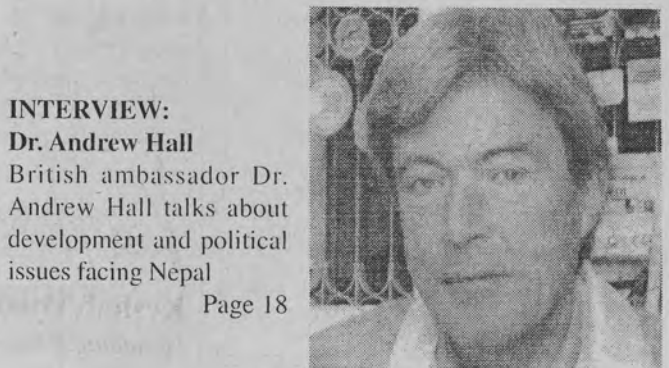
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POLITICS: Dangerous Deflection

Tussle between NC and Maoists has thrown CA elections out of priority

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Dr. Andrew Hall

British ambassador Dr. Andrew Hall talks about development and political issues facing Nepal

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SPOTLIGHT

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Chief Editor And Publisher
Madhav Kumar Rimal

Editor
Sarita Rimal

Managing Editor
Keshab Poudel

Senior Reporter
Sanjaya Dhakal

Reporter
Thakur Amgai

Design and Layout
Jyoti Dangol (Singh)

Photographer
Sandesh Manandhar

Legal Advisor
Advocate Lok Bhakta Rana

Marketing
Navin Kumar Maharjan
Madan Raj Poudel

Editorial Office
GPO Box 7256, Maitidevi, Kathmandu
Tel (977-1) 4423127 Fax: (977-1)
4417845
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E-mail : spot@mail.com.np
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E-mail : degiscan@wlink.com.np

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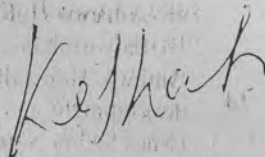
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The country has been put into flames all the time and for every kind of protest. The country is paying a heavy price for that at the cost of development. People are made mere helpless spectators without any opportunity to exercise their fancies since 1998. Almost eight years have passed without having any power to elect representatives to make law and run the governance. They are being provided, one after another, the political program of agitations and violent confrontations. All are competing among themselves to supersede the other. Maoists have their share in the loss of 15,000 lives. Others who had joined the election politics under parliamentary democracy too have engaged in similar destabilization tactics. There is no political party and no political leader who stands against the current wave of agitations and violence as a pacifist inclusive to all. In such a situation, sensible persons are reminded the role played by B.P. Koirala in the last leg of political reconciliation. B.P. Koirala had led revolutionary actions in 1951 as well as in 1969. He had led agitations also to insist for certain political reform. But realizing a precarious geo-political situation of the country, he ultimately broadened his political base in which different views and interests could get just and proper role to play.

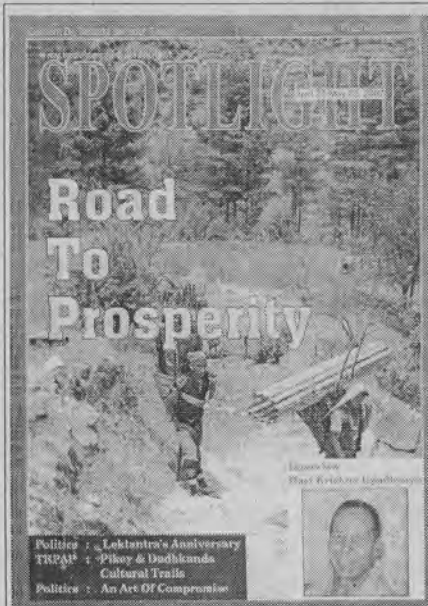
Now the Herculean task before the country is to restore the real power within the national forces which is the people as well as the King combined together. This is crying need for the survival of this country. Unfortunately, people do not have the leadership they deserve.

Nepal as a nation has been put into a melting pot again by the follies of party leaders and, to a great extent, by an unseen force which is at the last bound do be counterproductive before it is too late. It requires a great soul searching which needs a soul like Gandhi of India or B.P. Koirala of Nepal. Continuity of institutions and values is a very significant contributing factor for the stability. And monarchy has maintained the continuity for the cause of stability. If it resorts to its extremism and rigidity, it loses its relevancy but if it is properly adjusted into the political set up and maintains its resilience, it would be a most useful institution representing the continuity in the contribution of stability.

Death of industrialist Mohan Gopal Khetan is a great loss to the country. At a time when the country has been facing many challenges, industrialist Khetan had shown courage to speak against current populist trend. In his recent interview to this magazine, industrialist late Khetan spoke the bitter truth urging for the unity among all the people living in all three geographical regions. The death of industrialist Khetan has shocked the family of Spotlight.



Keshab Poudel
Managing Editor



Prosperous Path

It is heartening to note that a road link has been finally established to bring the whole of Karnali region into the national mainstream ("Road To Prosperity" SPOTLIGHT April 27). It was high time that the backward north western zone was linked with transport infrastructure. The road has come as a very special gift to the people of Karnali this new year. Lets hope the hard working people of Karnali will be able to reap benefits from this latest development.

*Seema Gurung
Naxal*

Karnali's Dream Come True

The cover story "Road To Prosperity" (SPOTLIGHT April 27) was a rare positive article one got to read in these turbulent times. Thanks to hard efforts by Nepali Army, Surkhet-Jumla road is finally complete. All the people of Nepal share the happiness felt by Karnali residents. The backward region is now integrated with the country's transport network. It will not be long before other development efforts travel to Karnali via that road. The road is one of the fundamental development infrastructure, which must precede all other kinds of development. People of Karnali are now waiting for regular transport movement in the road so that they, too, can now travel to other parts of the country in a cheap and convenient manner and without having to dole out huge amount of hard-earned money to travel by air.

*Jeebesh Thakuri
Kalanki*

Relishing Jumla's Apple

For long, people living in other parts of Nepal had relished continuous supply of much-famed Jumla apples

in economical price. With the completion of Surkhet-Jumla road, one hopes that the Jumla apples will now finally be available in Kathmandu's markets at reasonable rates ("Road To Prosperity" SPOTLIGHT April 27). Farmers of Jumla must seize the opportunity and start producing apples targeting urban population within the country. Given a little help in technical aspects and marketing knowledge, I am sure Jumla people will be able to benefit from the road development.

*Susant Bista
Balkhu*

What Next?

The planners and policymakers now must quickly move to extract advantages and benefits from the construction of Surkhet-Jumla road ("Road To Prosperity" SPOTLIGHT April 27) in favor of the people of Karnali region. Known as one of the most backward regions in the country, Karnali must now be developed to its full potential. Policies on agriculture, education, health and other socio-economic aspects need to be integrated to unleash a cohesive pattern of development. The uplifting of the

people of the region will send a very positive message and also help to consolidate Loktantra.

*Somu Tamang
Tinkune*

Tourism And Poverty

The article "Tourism for Poverty Alleviation" (SPOTLIGHT April 27) has only stressed the obvious. In the past, Nepalese entrepreneurs and policymakers could not use the tourism potentials in an optimum manner to alleviate poverty. But now they can do so by targeting tourism products and reforming the manner in which resources are allocated, spent and distributed. The old trickle-down system should be reformed so that people will feel direct benefit from tourism. This will go a long way in achieving sustainable tourism in the country.

*Deepak Gadtaula
New Baneshwore*

No Option, Indeed

The article "No Alternative To Middle Way" (SPOTLIGHT April 27) provided an interesting analysis. No country – Nepal being no exception – can exist amid extremism. Sooner or later, all states have to forego all kinds of extremism – if they want to continue existing in a peaceful and durable manner. Extremism breeds hatred and human beings cannot survive amid perpetual cycles of hatred. It just doesn't fit with the nature of human beings. The article suggests that the political leaders have no alternative to the middle path. While this may be true in the long term, in short term leadership without foresight can take rash decision of embracing and emboldening the extremists. That is what is happening in present day Nepal.

*Krishna Regmi
Dhapasi*

Chure Bandh Called Off

Following the meeting on April 30 with the government talks team, the leaders of Chure Bhawar Ekata Samaj have called off their indefinite bandh in the region, which had disrupted the transport movement in sections of East West highway in Rautahat, Bara, Sarlahi and Dhanusha districts for the past one week. At the meeting held with government team led by Peace and Reconstruction Minister Ram Chandra Poudel, the Samaj was assured of fulfillment of its demands like investigating atrocities during Madhes bandh and releasing activists of Samaj who are found innocent. On other issues, both sides have agreed to continue talks. President of the Samaj, Keshav Mainali, said, "We have decided to call off the agitation for the time being. If the government does not implement its commitments, we will re-launch the agitation." The Samaj has been engaged in agitation demanding separate autonomous Chure Bhawar region.

Leading dailies report

PM Appoints VCs

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in his capacity as chancellor of the universities, has appointed vice chancellors at three universities as per the report submitted by recommendation committee headed by Education Minister Pradeep Nepal. As per the decision, Prof Dr. Madhav Sharma has been appointed VC of Tribhuvan University (TU); Bidur Poudel has been appointed as VC of Nepal Sanskrit University (NSU) and Ram Avatar Yadav has been appointed as VC of Purbanchal. Dr. Sharma was appointed under UML's quota while Poudel and Yadav were appointed under NC-Democratic and NC's quota. Maoists have been given the quota to name their nominee for Pokhara University. Since last one year, the universities were without VCs. *Leading dailies report*

Govt Reshuffles Secretaries

The cabinet meeting, on Sunday, had reshuffled, promoted and transferred

some secretaries. As per the decision, secretary at the Ministry of Works and Physical Planning Narayan Prasad Silwal has been transferred to the Prime Minister's Office and the Office of Council of Ministers. Likewise, acting secretary at the Local Development Ministry Bhagwati Kafle has been transferred as acting secretary at Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA). The joint secretary at the Ministry of Works and Physical Planning Purna Prasad Kadariya has been promoted to acting secretary at the same ministry. Joint secretary at Ministry of Finance Ram Kumar Shrestha has been promoted as acting secretary at Local Development Ministry. Both Ministry of Local Development and Ministry of Works and Physical Planning are led by Maoist ministers. Likewise, Deependra Kumar Chhetri has been named as a member of National Planning Commission (NPC). The chairman of Nepal Television Dr. Benju Sharma has been replaced by Dr. Rishiram Baral.

Leading dailies report

Thapa Says People Should Decide Basic Issues

In reference to growing demands by communists to declare republic by the parliament, former prime minister and president of Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP) Surya Bahadur Thapa has said that fundamental issues should be left for the people of Nepal to decide. On a day he returned from India (April 28) where he had crucial meetings with Indian leadership, Thapa told reporters, "Fundamental issues should be decided by Nepali people, not by eight leaders." He added that any other way of declaring republic would not be durable. Likewise, Thapa said that if leftists come together, democratic forces, too, will unite. He said such unity would have to be led by Prime Minister and Nepali Congress president Girija Prasad Koirala. He also refused to blame the PM for delay in CA polls.

He said the 'time and situation' did not allow timely CA polls. "If one has to find someone to blame, then that must be the eight party leaders who have framed the timetable in the first place," he said.

Compiled from reports

Mukherjee Suggests Announcing CA Polls Date

Indian ambassador to Nepal Shiv Shankar Mukherjee, on Saturday (April 28), met with Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala at the latter's official residence in Baluwatar. They held discussions on the situation in eastern Terai and Constituent Assembly (CA) elections. Mukherjee also took up the latest political development surrounding eight-party alliance. "If you cannot give the feeling of change by addressing the sentiments of the people, then it will give a wrong message," source close to PM attributed Mukherjee as telling Koirala, adding that the ambassador suggested that the government strongly think of announcing a date for elections to constituent assembly. *Leading dailies report*

62 Parties Register At EC

As the deadline for their registration ended on Friday (April 27), sixty-two different political parties have registered at the Election Commission (EC) as per the new provisions enshrined in the interim constitution. For the purpose of Constituent Assembly (CA) elections, 62 parties have registered as per the interim constitution whereby those parties that are not represented in the current parliament have produced over 10,000 signatures. "Now the Commission will determine working procedures and immediately start the process of verification of the signatures as well as other aspects," Laxman Bhattarai, spokesperson of the EC told Nepalnews. Bhattarai informed that the EC would probably use sampling method to verify tens of thousands of signatures that the parties have produced. Those parties whose applications are not deemed adequately appropriate will be given a week to correct. Because of the constitutional provision making it mandatory for the parties to produce

10,000 signatures, the number of parties registered at the EC this time is comparatively less. In the previous election, there were 150 parties registered at the EC. *nepalnews.com reports*

RID Issues Arrest Warrant Against Dhakal

The Revenue Investigation Department (RID) has issued arrest warrant against Chandi Raj Dhakal, president of Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI). The RID has written a letter to the police to arrest Dhakal for not presenting himself for interrogations regarding case of revenue evasion through forged documentation. Dhakal's Memento Apparels – the largest garment manufacturing company in the country – has come under the investigation for evasion of revenue amounting to Rs 8.6 million by forging bank guarantee documents. "Arrest warrant has come. I have written concerned agency to arrest," said Dhak Bahadur Karki, metropolitan police chief of Kathmandu. The RID had asked Dhakal to come for interrogation a month ago but he declined to do so saying his health was unwell. He had been saying that he has not done anything wrong intentionally. He has said that his employees might have committed some mistake which he doesn't know about. Last week, the department once again called him for interrogation. Dhakal was then in informal talks with officials of Finance Ministry. The RID has quasi-judicial authority of recording statements for investigations and imposing fines. The Memento has been asked to deposit fine of Rs 25.5 million. On Monday, the RID had pasted another letter at Memento's office in Baneshwore asking Dhakal to produce himself by 3 pm – failing which it issued arrest warrant. It has also issued similar warrant against another director of the garment company Tika Raj Dhakal. *Compiled from reports*

MJF Registers At EC

The Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) has also applied for registration as a political party at the Election Commission on Thursday (April 26). Workers of MJF reached EC office along with over 10,000 signatures. Upendra Yadav is its president. The MJF had been engaged in agitation in Madhes region for the past four months demanding

autonomous region and proportional representation. Likewise, other parties named Nepal Cooperative Party, Hindu Democratic Party and Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist) also applied for the registration. Till now 29 parties have applied for registration at EC for CA elections. Friday is the last date for party registration. *Leading dailies report*

US To Open Office For Refugees In July

The US government will open its Overseas Processing Entity in Kathmandu by July in order to begin the process of resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in the US. The only criteria for the refugees' resettlement will be their interest. "we are pleased to say that the government of Nepal has agreed to proceed with third country resettlement of the Bhutanese refugees. The United States is committed to considering for resettlement of the willing Bhutanese refugees," said Larry Bartlett, deputy director for Asia and the Near East and Jan Belz, deputy director for Admission in US Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration. They said the US government along with other donor governments will also continue to advocate the refugees' right of return to their homeland during resettlement process. Persons are approved for refugee admission to the US based on their refugee claims and need for resettlement, not on qualities such as job skills, age or education. "The refugees may apply for permanent residence after one year in the US, and US citizenship after five years. Resettled refugees will be able to travel internationally when conditions permit," the officials added. *The Himalayan Times daily reports*

Parliament Stalled Again, Speaker Calls Next Meeting On May 9

As the Madhesi MPs and Maoists MPs said they would not allow the parliament to proceed before their demands are addressed, the legislature parliament was stalled once again on Wednesday (April 25). The MPs gheraoed the Speaker's rostrum as soon as the session began prompting Speaker

Subas Nemwang to adjourn the House until May 9. Maoist lawmakers gheraoed the Speaker's rostrum and started chanting slogans soon after the sitting started. They reiterated their demand that the recommendations of the Electoral Constituency Delimitation Commission (ECDC) be scrapped as it was formed. Lawmakers from Terai region also joined the Maoists to protest the recommendation of the ECDC. Earlier too, the Maoists and the Terai MPs had stalled the House proceedings earlier with the same demand. The Terai MPs have also demanded an independent inquiry into the loss of lives in the agitations in Terai. *Compiled from reports*

Govt Approves ADB's Proposal On West Seti

The cabinet meeting, on Wednesday (April 25), has approved the investment proposal by Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the 750 MW strong West Seti hydropower project. As per the proposal, the ADB will provide loan worth \$45 million to the government to invest in the project. The Australian Snowy Mountaineering Engineering Corporation (SMEC) has negotiated Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with India's Power Trading Limited (PTC) for the project. The SMEC is also negotiating with China's Financial Institution and Exim Bank and Bank of China as well as Indian partners for financing the project. The SMEC has also agreed to provide 75 MW power free to Nepal. The total project of West Seti is around \$1.2 billion. SMEC is the largest investor. The project is located in Doti district – some 865 km west of Kathmandu. According to Minister of State for Water Resources Gyanendra Bahadur Karki, this decision will encourage foreign investment. Anup Kumar Upadhyaya, joint secretary at the Ministry, said that the government will provide SMEC with generation license as soon as it reaches financial closure. He said SMEC has already submitted Detailed Project Report (DPR) to the government. He informed that road has already been constructed in the area and transmission line, too, will be constructed soon for which environment impact is going to be assessed. *Nepal Samacharpatra daily reports* ■



PM Koirala administers oath of office to Health Minister Giriraj Mani Pokharel
Gorkhapatra

PRIME MINISTER GIRIJA PRASAD KOIRALA inaugurated the country's first neurological specialty hospital in Bansbari, Kathmandu on Wednesday (April 25). The National Institute of Neurological and Allied Sciences had been in operation since past one year at the private investment. Dr. Upendra Devkota is the chief of the hospital. Opening the hospital, PM Koirala said that people will no longer have to go abroad for treatment of neurological ailments. He advised the operators to add facilities to produce more neurologists and run rehab centers. At the program, Dr. Devkota said that the hospital will provide world class service at minimum cost. He said the hospital will treat all kinds of brain and spinal disorders. The hospital has 80-beds, three fully equipped operation theatres and 12 ICUs.

MAOIST MP JANARDAN SHARMA 'Prabhakar' has demanded prime minister Koirala's clarification on what the army did on Tuesday (April 24) when King Gyanendra visited Dakshinkali temple. "It is obvious that it was well planned and the security provided to the King was excessive," he said. The army had played the scrapped national anthem and gave King a 21-gun salute, even though the King is no more the head of state or supreme commander of the army. He said PM, in his capacity as Defense Minister, must clarify. Likewise, civil society leaders Kanak Mani Dixit and Sushil Pyakurel, too, issued a statement asking the Defense Ministry to explain the incident.

US PRESIDENT GEORGE W. Bush intends to nominate Nancy J. Powell, of Iowa, to be Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to Nepal. Powell, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, currently serves as the National Intelligence Officer for South Asia at the National Intelligence Council. Prior to this, she served as the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs at the Department of State. Earlier in her career, she served as the Ambassador to the countries of Pakistan, Ghana and Uganda. Powell received her bachelor's degree from the University of

Northern Iowa. She will succeed James Moriarty whose tenure will complete by the end of June this year.

UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY GENERAL Ban Ki Moon has said Nepal's peace process has made great achievements in the last one year's time. He also stated that questions still remained about the registration and verification of the Maoist arms and armies. "The peace process in Nepal has made remarkable progress since the start of last year, but complex questions remain about how to monitor the management of arms and armed personnel," Moon stated in his Nepal report presented to the Security Council. The SG stressed the need to hold the constituent assembly elections in a manner that reflects the genuine will of the Nepalis, including the marginalized communities. "Few could have imagined at the beginning of 2006 that an end to the armed conflict would have been declared, the UN would have started implementing an agreement on managing arms and armed personnel, and that the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) would have entered an interim legislature with the Government," the report said. "These are historic achievements," he noted. The Secretary General also lauded the willingness shown by the political parties to seek consensus on many contentious issues though some of the underlying causes of the conflict were yet to be addressed. He also expressed concern over the living conditions of the Maoist armies and poor infrastructure in the cantonments.

GREEN NEPAL PARTY has applied for its registration at the Election Commission (EC) for the purpose of Constituent Assembly elections. It has produced 57,221 voters' signatures. The party has also omitted the reference to constitutional monarchy from its statute. "To be in line with the spirit of the interim constitution 2063, the party has amended the party constitution 2054. In the amendment the party has removed the provision of constitutional monarchy," states a press release issued by Pusp Prasad Luitel, president of GNP. "The party will go to the people in accordance with the mandate derived from Jana Andolan II with the issues like multiparty democracy, proportional inclusive representation and decentralized and federally structured states. "The party will give special attention to clean politics, clean environment and poverty alleviation," it states.

NEPALI ARMY HAS ISSUED a statement refuting reports of meeting between the King and the Chief of Army Staff (CoAS). In its statement, the NA has said that it has embraced the norms of rule of law as per the democratic governance. Referring to news published in a newspaper on Sunday reporting about the meeting, the NA has said, "There is no process whereby the Chief of Army Staff can meet with anyone - whenever approval is necessary - without government approval." The statement dismisses the news report as 'untrue, fabricated and malicious.' The NA has said that the report smacked of conspiracies to create rift between the army and the people and the democratic forces and the army. The report of the meeting between the King and army chief was also taken up at the cabinet meeting on Sunday where the government had decided to investigate it. ■

“Disrupting NC mass meeting will obstruct the unity of eight parties.”

Ram Chandra Poudel, Minister for Peace and Reconstruction and general secretary of Nepali Congress (NC), hitting at the Maoists for imposing Narayani zone transport bandh on the day of NC’s mass meeting in Birgunj.

“People of Nepal will reject the politics of threat and intimidation.”

Sushil Koirala, vice president of NC, addressing the mass meeting in Birgunj, accusing the Maoists of continuing to exercise politics of violence.

“If the eight parties do not agree, we will forge unity among leftist and republican forces and declare the country republic by the parliament.”

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior Maoist leader warns of agitation from third week of May to press for republic declaration, at a program organized by Gorkha-Kathmandu Republican Forum.

“Fundamental issues should be decided by Nepali people, not by eight leaders.”

Surya Bahadur Thapa, former prime minister and president of



Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP), when asked to comment on demands for republic declaration by the parliament.

“I have reservations against declaration of republic by the parliament- which itself is not an elected body.”

Pradeep Gyawali, former minister and senior UML leader, at a radio program.

“It is obvious that it was well planned and the security provided to the King was excessive.”

Janardan Sharma ‘Prabhakar’, a Maoist MP, asking the government

to clarify why the army provided salute to the King during his visit to Dakshinkali temple.

“Few could have imagined at the beginning of 2006 that an end to the armed conflict would have been declared, the UN would have started implementing an agreement on managing arms and armed personnel, and that the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) would have entered an interim legislature with the Government. These are historic achievements.”

Ban Ki Moon, UN Secretary General, notes in his recent Nepal report presented to the Security Council.

TRANSITION

LEFT: Subas Nemwang, Speaker of the parliament legislature, leading a Nepali delegation, for Jakarta, Indonesia, to take part in the Inter Parliamentary Union’s conference.

RETURNED: Surya Bahadur Thapa, former prime minister and president of Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP), from a weeklong visit to India.

PASSED AWAY: Mohan Gopal Khetan, a prominent industrialist,

at a hospital in Kathmandu. Khetan, 61, died of heart attack at Norvic Hospital.

Narsingh Bahadur Shrestha, reputed businessman, at the age of 78.

FORMED: Four member talks team by the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) to hold talks with the government. The team is led by its chairman Upendra Yadav. Other members of the talk team are Sitanandan Raya, Kishor Kumar Bishwas Tharu and Mohammad

Nasir Siddiqui.

Four recommendation committees headed by Education Minister to suggest names for vice chancellors of four universities, by the Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in his capacity as chancellor of the universities.

INVITED: Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NFIN), by the government, for talks on May 5.

NEPAL WAS AVANT-GARDE

•By Laxmi Thapa

At a time when almost the whole South Asian region was being swiftly converted into the colony of the European countries, Nepal was able to rise from a scratch to be a formidable Himalayan power within a very short time. Nepal had gathered enough strength to move forward to protect the peoples dwelling in this vast region from external threats. However, the build up of Nepalese strength brought her on a collision course with the colonial power of that time. Colonial power Great Britain had good reason to fear that if the Nepalese build up continued for some time, the colonial rule of Britain could soon come to an end in South Asia much the same way as in the North America a short time before.

Unification Stood the Severest Test

The process of unification of the Himalayan region started by Prithivinarayan Shah had spread like wild fire across the Himalayan region. In 1792 a war broke between China and Nepal. It was the most unfortunate event for the newly emerged Great Nepal. Most of the troops stationed in the western part of the country had to be pulled back to defend the capital Kathmandu. The Chinese offensive was directed straight towards the capital. China has remained a major superpower all along and thus the Chinese attack might have at that time badly shaken the people living across the entire Himalayan region. There could not be other better opportunity for those opposed to the unification campaign to break away and again form independent states. But even during this period of great threat to the Himalayan unity except for few minor incidences nothing untoward happened that could seriously undermine the integrity of the Great Nepal. Thus the Himalayan unity stood the severest test and encouraged those fighting for the cause of such unity not to be complacent about the achievements; there was still a lot to be done.

Expansion of British Rule

The way new territories in South Asia were brought under British control and ruled in those days had provoked even the British public. British Parliament had gone completely against it.

The Marquis Wellesley became in 1798 the next British Governor-General of India. In 1798 the French fleet was defeated by the British admiral Horatio Nelson significantly weakening its strength. After the 1798 naval victory British rulers in India must have felt that France would not anymore

be able to pose a serious threat to further expansion of the *British Empire in South Asia*. Britain started the task of further expansion of its territory.

Governor General Wellesley played decisive role in the expansion of the British Empire in India. Colonel Wellesley, the younger brother of the Marquis Wellesley, had also come to India. Colonel Wellesley had fought under General Harris in the battles to defeat Tipu Sultan.

Colonel Wellesley defeated Marathas at Assaye in 1803. He again defeated them at Argaum the same year.

Colonel Wellesley afterwards became Sir Arthur Wellesley, and then Duke of Wellington who defeated Napoleon in Waterloo Battle. Later on he became the Prime Minister of the Great Britain.

Oude Nawab Cedes Do-ab to Britain

Governor General Wellesley used every possible means to expand British Empire in South Asia. Wellesley asked the Nawab of Oude to agree, like the Nizam, to cede to Britain some of his territories in exchange for British protection. At first the Nawab would not agree, but at length, when he saw there was no use of trying to resist, he gave in. British army was sent to Oude, and to pay for it the Nawab gave up the Do-ab or the country between the Jamuna and the Ganges. Meanwhile Wellesley turned his attention to Delhi. In 1803, General Gerard Lake captured Delhi and Agra.

It was very clear that British rulers in India did not want Nepal to become a strong power. They must have realized that sooner or later they would have to wage a war against Nepal. British and Nepalese forces were virtually standing eyeball to eyeball in the west after the Wellesley's conquest of the North India. However, British rulers must not have liked to risk getting caught in battles against Nepal in unknown high mountain terrains without penetrating into Nepal's defense system in advance.

Nepal Boldly Defended Her Freedom

It was early 1810s. Great Britain was the most powerful country in the whole world. Its vast empire had already stretched across all five continents. Britain finally decided to implement its plan to make Nepal also one of its colonies. Nepal was attacked without formally declaring war. Britain hoped that Nepal could be quickly subdued in a blitzkrieg invasion.

Needless to say that those were the worst days in the history

of our country. The war stretched over a period of three calendar years in sharp contrast to the expectation of the British Government. Nepal bravely defended its independence. Many patriotic Nepali laid down their life in the battles fought against the British. Our enemy was forced to abandon its grand design to enslave Nepal though we lost some of our territories.

Our forefathers were able to protect the honor of our country while almost all other countries in Asia and Africa failed. Nepal was able to defend its independence because of our forefathers' great sacrifice. They must have visualized that their great sacrifice would be paid off. They might have been hoping that their descendants would not have to be humiliated by colonial rulers of those days if they bravely defended their country. Let us look at India. Jawaharlal Nehru has clearly written in his famous book "The Discovery of India" how India fared while that country was a colony of the Great Britain.

Nehru Writes Indians Were Treated as Slaves

Jawaharlal. Nehru has expressed in an extremely touching way the pitiable condition of Indians under the British rule in this famous book "The Discovery of India" first published in 1946. He has written that the Indians were living in enslaved condition in their own country until 1947 when India became a free country. The text from his book is presented hereinafter.

"In Bombay there is a well-known club which did not allow and so far as I know, does not allow, an Indian (except as a servant) even in its visitors' room, even though he might be a ruling prince or a captain of industry."

"Racialism in India is not so much English versus Indian; it is European as opposed to Asiatic. In India every European, be he German, or Pole, or Rumanian, he is automatically a member of the ruling race. Railway carriages, station retiring-rooms, benches in parks, etc., marked "Europeans Only". This is bad enough in South Africa or elsewhere, but to have to put up with it in one's own country is a humiliating and exasperating reminder of one's enslaved condition."

"Bengal had the first full experience of British rule in India. That rule began with outright plunder and a land revenue system which extracted the uttermost farthing not only from the living but also from the dead cultivators."

"A gold lust unequalled since the hysteria that took hold of the Spaniards of Cortes' and Pizarro's age filled the English mind. Bengal in particular was not to know peace again until she has been bled white. It was pure loot. This process was called trade later on but that made little difference. And it must be remembered that this lasted, under various names and under different forms, not for a few years but for generations."

Why Nepal was Avant-Garde?

Nepal was in the avant-garde among the countries succeeding to defend themselves from the threat of being enslaved by colonial powers. At that time there was no other country to help us. Our country alone had to face the intruder many times superior to us in strength. In this struggle a large number of patriotic Nepali had to sacrifice their life. But those of us living now should be ashamed that we could not live up to the expectation of our forefathers to transform Nepal into a reasonably developed country, despite the fact that at present the world situation is quite conducive for it. ■

(Thapa writes on history)

Indian Assistance in Art

India has provided assistance of Rs 5.23 million to construct Art Galley at the second floor of the Nepal Art Council (NAC) at Babar Mahal. Shiv Shankar Mukherjee, Indian ambassador inaugurated the new Gallery on April 27. The project, undertaken as part of the India-Nepal Economic Cooperation Program, has been implemented by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City Office. "The request for construction of the art gallery was made by the NAC to the Embassy of India in view of frequent space constraint being faced by it for holding exhibitions and other cultural activities. Additional infrastructure constructed with the assistance of the Government of India will help NAC overcome this constraint and expand its capacity for promotion of art and cultural activities," states a press release by India. This is one of the nine infrastructural development projects undertaken by the Government of India in Kathmandu as part of the India-Nepal Economic Cooperation Program, apart from gifting of books, equipment, ambulances and school buses to various institutions. "Currently, under the ongoing bilateral economic cooperation program between India and Nepal, more than 190 projects are being realized in the sectors of education, health, community development and infrastructure covering almost all the districts of Nepal with an outlay of over NRs.2000 crores." ■

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION

Now and Then

Every one is talking about national reconciliation including prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala but one can see sea change in the concept

By KESHAB POUDEL

National context of Nepal has not changed yet but slogan of national reconciliation has changed greatly. More than two decades ago Nepali Congress leader B.P. Koirala championed the national reconciliation stressing for the inclusion of all political forces including the monarch but his brother and prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala is interpreting the term in exclusion of traditional force, monarchy.

"The international context then at the time of B.P. Koirala was very complicated. He was worried about the survival of the nation at that time. Therefore, he appealed to all political forces to unite under a democratic process to safeguard the national independence. Supreme priority of that time was nation. Now his followers have ignored the regional complications and made the democratic process the main cause to rely on. Their emphasis at this moment is to safeguard democracy. For that traditional institution of monarchy became the main target by ignoring the commonalities of national interest between democratic forces and monarchy. B.P. always emphasized twin pillars for nation's survival—nationalism and democracy," said a political analyst.

Now the emphasis is different. "My effort is also a part of national reconciliation. I want to solve the present political crisis through national reconciliation," said prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala.

Koirala, who is leading eight party's alliance, very well knows ethos of national reconciliation of B.P but he is propounding his own model. But, GP's communist critics likes Modnath Prashrit still see him toeing his line. CPN-UML leader Prashrit, who is a bitter critic of B.P.'s national reconciliation, condemned prime minister Koirala for

walking BP's way.

"Now his followers at present emphasize mainly on democratic process in which they compromise a lot with opposite ideological forces subscribing to totalitarian ideology. Thus, these people have ignored not only commonality of national interest but they have compromised on basic democratic values to maintain unity against institution of monarchy. This contrast between then and now is quite visible," said the political analyst. "B.P. Koirala's concept of national reconciliation was inclusive of all the forces under a democratic process. He was against the absolute monarchy as well as against communist dictatorship."

But, realizing precarious geo-political situation of this country, he ultimately broadened his political base in which different views and interest could get just and proper role to play. According to analyst, as he was consistent adherent of the constitutional monarchy that is a limited monarchy, the King was a necessary party to play a role under his concept of national reconciliation.

People see the portraits of B.P. Koirala in all important functions held by his followers, many institutes and highways are named after him and his statues are erected but the essence of his message has been diluted into populist jargon.

After a long gap, G.P. Koirala had to face the moral pressure for the legacy of national reconciliation left by his brother. He too delivered same message one after

another using the same term of national reconciliation

But the question is how much serious he is about this concept. All his actions indicate the continuation of confrontation between internal forces in which the King is at present the main target. "It is not for the person Gyanendra, his son Paras or his son Hridayendra but monarchy is necessary to the people. It is not the endowment from the people to the King but it is the requirement of the people to live in peace and order. For that continuity is essential for a political stability. After the political change of 1990, King Birendra too imbibed amazing change in his political dealings that made him so popular and respectable that the world forgot all his performance of the past. Time was very cruel to King Gyanendra not to permit him much room to commit any mistake. Before he was



Koirala: Has reconciliation lost its true meaning?

tempered to perform a role of restrained and constitutional monarch, he was outspoken by the forces of destabilization and ulterior interest in Nepal. He tried to centralize all powers with him, as a result both the King as well as people of this country have lost the real decisive political powers at present turmoil," said the analyst.

The confrontation does not have its ethical boundary. Now, there are symptoms of conflict of same nature between the communist and democratic forces as well as between regional groups of the country. If this trend continues, anybody of any political party in a position of leadership would be condemned by the posterity as the liquidator of noble legacy of national reconciliation. ■

NC-MAOIST ROW

Dangerous Deflection

As two crucial parties of coalition indulge in blame game, the issue of elections seems nobody's priority

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

In the aftermath of the announcement by the Elections Commission (EC) regarding its inability to hold Constituent Assembly (CA) elections by June, the political blame game has continued.

Of late, the game is increasingly turning into Nepali Congress (NC)-Maoists row with leaders of both the parties engaged in verbal duel.

As the leaders of two parties trade charges, the issue of elections seem to have been conveniently overshadowed.

Nobody now seems intent at following the issue of elections. The Maoist leaders have raised the issue of immediate republic announcement as the most pressing agenda for the time being.

Dr. Baburam Bhattarai, senior Maoist leader, has warned that his party would start indefinite peaceful agitation if republic is not announced by the first week of Jestha (third week of May).

Addressing a program organized by Gorkha-Kathmandu Republican Forum on Saturday (April 28), Dr. Bhattarai said the Maoists were preparing for indefinite agitation if the parliament does not announce republic by then. He said the Maoist will make efforts to generate a consensus on this issue among eight parties first. "If that does not materialize, we will forge unity among leftist and republican forces and declare the country republic by simple majority of the parliament," he said.

Coinciding with his remarks, another senior Maoist leader Ram Bahadur Thapa 'Badal' said his party was preparing to declare republic through street, parliament and government.

Mohan Baidya 'Kiran', another top rung Maoist leader, even revealed that Maoists and UML were preparing to introduce a commitment motion at the

parliament regarding republic declaration.

His statement came at a time when there have been increasing talk about forging larger communist unity.

In what appears as a counter to the Maoist statements, senior Congress



Dr. Bhattarai: "New agitation in the offing"

leaders have also hit back warning that the country could fall into another civil war. NC vice president Sushil Koirala warned that continued lack of discipline by the Maoists could trigger civil war in the country.

Referring to the reports of Maoists carrying weapons and their combatants coming out of camps to stage political demonstration, Koirala wondered what would happen if the Nepali Army (NA), too, lost its discipline. "There will be civil war," he added.

The two general secretaries of NC, Ram Chandra Poudel and KB Gurung have already ruled out immediate republic announcement through the parliament.

Poudel, who is the Minister for Peace and Reconstruction, has said that the parliament does not have the authority to declare republic as it is bound by the interim constitution which expressly states that the issue of monarchy will be decided by the first meeting of the elected CA.

Gurung similarly trashed Maoists' demand for immediate republic announcement saying republic cannot be declared based on whims.

The bitterness between NC and Maoists increased after the NC leaders felt that the Maoists were intentionally trying to disrupt their mass meeting in Birgunj on April 28 by imposing snap transport strike in Narayani zone on that

day. At that mass meeting, Minister Ram Chandra Poudel said that the obstructions posed by the Maoists aimed at disrupting NC mass meeting will 'obstruct the unity of eight parties.'

Even as NC and Maoists are drifting apart, the Maoists and the UML seem to be getting cozier. Maoist chairman Prachanda went to Balkhu headquarters of UML on Wednesday (April 25) to hold serious discussions with general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal on issues ranging from declaration of republic to forging larger left unity. At the meeting, the two agreed that republic should be declared if the elections of Constituent Assembly (CA) cannot be held on time. ■

TRPAP

Tackling

Poverty

Though rural Nepal is poor, its immense natural beauty and diversity can lure large number of tourists. This is what Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP) has successfully shown - that Nepal 's nature can be exploited to uplift the life of rural people. The program -which is in the final year of completion - is one of the programs that is widely popular in Nepal because of its reach to the grass root level. Launched at the peak of violent insurgency and when local bodies were without elected representatives, TRPAP, which has brought tangible changes in the poverty prone northern districts of Rasuwa, has won the hearts of Maoists at its last leg. Despite frequent disruptions by violent conflict, TRPAP touched the heart and minds of Nepalese people showing that the tourism can be used to alleviate poverty

By **KESHAB POUDEL**
Goljung (Rasuwa)

Yog Tamang, 36, a resident of Goljung Village Development Committee of Rasuwa district, 100 miles north of capital Kathmandu, had never realized that one day he will host tourists in his home and make money.

This became true in his life as Yog has already made some money from the tourists. After building basic infrastructures like drinking water, stone-paved road and improvement of their home and hygienic conditions, villagers of Goljung like Yog Tamang are now in a position to provide shelter to a couple of tourists under a home stay program.

In the last one year, Tamang has already hosted a dozen of tourists in his home generating cash income of about

Rs.8000 (US\$ 125). "Along with shelter, I offered tourists Dal bhat (rice and pulse) and vegetable in lunch and soybean and corn and milk for breakfast," said Tamang who charges up to Rs.400 (less than \$6) a day for all meals and shelter.

With per capita income below one US dollar a day, the residents of northern remote parts of Rasuwa like Yog Tamang have little option for improvement of their livelihood. As the terrain is steep and weather is unfavorable for agriculture, tourism is an easy way to generate income. Although annually a large number of tourists visit Langtang areas for trekking, the villages like Goljung, Getlang and Chillime, which have many important sites to see hardly get any tourist. According to Tourist Information Center, 4000 tourists visited the area last year.

"Our program is highly successful in Rasuwa district. I am very happy that all eight political parties' leaders hailed our program. This indicates success of program which brings many changes in the area. We have developed Tamang Heritage Trail as a new product where tourism will benefit the poor communities of the district," said Rabijung Pandey, National Program Manager of TRPAP. "The program helped to build the rural infrastructures, institutions mobilizing local communities for the benefits of poor," said Pandey.

Although Trishuli Soddang highway linked these villages more than two decades ago and tourists started to come to Langtang on trekking, residents of northern parts of Rasuwa had not seen any change in their livelihood. Surviving on a subsistence-based farming and

living in most unhygienic place, their per capita is among the lowest in the region. According to District Development Committee Rasuwa, four northern remote villages Getlang, Goljung, Chillime, Briddim and Thuman are most underdeveloped parts of the district.

"Though being the nearest Himalayan district from the capital city Kathmandu and linked by the national highway, the living standard of the people of the district is very miserable witnessing Nepalese Rs. 7,111 (US\$ 130) per-capita," said Binod Kumar Singh, district development officer. "Despite the present poor human development index, the future prospect of the district seems very bright and optimistic." According to recent study, Nepal 's per capita income is over US\$ 270.

When the people of these northern villages were searching a way out to fight against poverty, the implementation of Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program in (TRPAP) August, 2002 came as a boon to the local residents.

"The goal of the program is to contribute to the poverty alleviation objective of the government through review and formulation of policy and strategic planning for sustainable tourism development that are pro-poor, pro-environment and pro rural communities and pro-women," said Pandey, National Program Manager TRPAP.

From dissolution of local elected bodies to the dissolution of House of Representatives and intensification of Maoist insurgency, TRPAP implemented

its program in politically volatile and unstable period in Nepalese history.

Because of Maoist insurgency, the project faced many difficulties in the initial period of implementation. Now even the Maoists are demanding the extension of the program. Based on the community based approach, TRPAP is one of the popular programs in Rasuwa and other five districts.

"We want the extension of this program because this is a transparent and pro-poor program," said Rasuwa district CPN-Maoist leader Sameer. "We would like to request concerned parties to extend support to the program as this is a transparent and effective program."

Despite their differences over the political and many other issues, district leaders of eight political parties have common voice on the program. "We will go to center to press the government to extend it," said CPN-UML leader.

TRPAP's proves as one of the popular programs not only in Rasuwa district but all 48 villages of 6 districts where it has been implemented. In the last six years, the project has covered 28,000 people and total beneficiaries of the project are 160,000.

For the district of Rasuwa, the project has brought not only infrastructures but the project also contributed to develop Tamang Cultural Heritage Trail as a new tourism product which has all components to attract tourists.

"With the technical and financial support granted from DFID, UNDP, SNV-Nepal through TRPAP, DDC Rasuwa has been able



TRPAP officials talk to people: Sharing information

to efficiently implement the rural tourism program in the northern part of the district. A new tourism product called Tamang Heritage Trail has been developed and promoted comprising the settlement of the poor people in Getlang, Chillime and Goljung area," said LDO Binod Kumar Singh. "The implementation of TRPAP program passed through the very critical period. Some positive impact of the program has been seen in the area and full impact of the program will be seen in coming days."

Adventure Sports Tourism

Northern parts of Rasuwa have also immense potential to start adventure sports tourism. Small valleys and high mountains, all these are enough to attract adventure tourism. When two dozen mountain-bikers started their competition in Syaphrubesi covering three villages Getlang, Chillime and Goljung and Syaphrubesi, Rasuwa also showed that it has a potential for adventure sports tourism. With beautiful mountain range of Himalayas including Gosainkunda and Langtang, Ganesh and other peaks, Rasuwa's northern part has many products for tourism.

Promoted by Nepal Tourism Board and Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program and organized by Himalaya Expeditions a leading private Nepalese agency for adventure sports tourism, the first Mountain Bike Race on the Tamang Heritage Trail opened the potential of these areas to promote adventure tourism.



Prize distribution: Best of biking

"There are immense potential to promote Rasuwa for adventure tourism but we are unable to exploit them because of lack of promotional marketing. Our collaboration with TRPAP will definitely help us develop this area for adventure sports tourism," said Bikram Pandey, managing director of Himalaya Expeditions.

Participated by 26 professional bikers including a foreigner, the bikers crossed 25 kilometer of Tamang Trail. Suresh Kumar Dulal secured the first place completing the race in 2 hrs 11 minutes. Surendra Rai finished at second place followed by Padma Sambahan.

"These areas can be sold out as a

new product in international tourism market." said Lila Baniya, chief of sustainable tourism unit of Nepal Tourism Board. "There will be more tourists in the area in the future."

TRPAP's message is that tourism can be best way to fight against poverty in the country's like Nepal.

"TRPAP Has Proved That The Concept Of Rural Tourism Can Bring Prosperity"

-Madhav Prasad Ghimire

Secretary at the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation MADHAV PRASAD GHIMIRE, is one of the energetic secretaries. Having a long experience of working with various ministries including as a head of Foreign Aid Division of Ministry of Finance, Ghimire who is well acquainted with Nepal's development process, spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on future of Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program. Young and energetic Ghimire also attended mountain bike competition in Syaphrubesi. Excerpts:

Known as a successful programs fighting against poverty, TRPAP is now on the verge of being phased out. Does the government have any program to continue it?

There is no doubt that TRPAP is one of the successful programs. The last mid-term evaluation also showed that TRPAP has made enormous progress achieving its objectives. The report revealed that of all the UNDP's programs, TRPAP is a very successful one.

How do you see your meeting with local communities?

After discussions with various stakeholders in Rasuwa including Goljung VDC, we came to realize its popularity among the community. As it receives massive support in grass root community and all eight political parties have demanded extending this program, the ministry is considering giving continuity to this program.

Have you consulted with Nepal's development partners?

We are taking this issue with UNDP, the World Bank and other concerned donor agencies. Though no donors have

given firm commitments to it, they indicated certain positive indication to extend the program. After completing its six years, TRPAP has shown how tourism can be used to alleviate the poverty. Along with contributing to poverty alleviation, the program also helped to generate awareness among the rural community in various issues including health and hygiene.

Do you have any plan to replicate it in other areas also?

When it has shown so many positive results, the government is also considering replicating the program in other areas. The government is considering continuing this program on its own resources. We are also discussing extending this program in modest way.

Which are the major agencies the government is approaching now?

We have been discussing the issue with the World Bank, UNDP, Asian Development Bank and other development partners. ADB has shown interest to contribute something in Lumbini. We are in the process of formalizing it. We have also approached the World Bank. We also held discussions with British Ambassador. All Nepal's donor partners have shown positive response towards it. If the government allocates certain resources to replicate the program, Nepal's donor partners will definitely come to support us. To show our own commitment to the project, Nepal government should take initiative allocating certain resources.

What are the major achievements of TRPAP?

One of the major achievements of



TRPAP is that it has changed the concept that tourism is not only for high income people. If one can develop basic infrastructure through participation of community, tourism can also benefit poor people. Introducing some innovative concepts like Home Stay programs in traditionally non-tourists areas like northern parts of Rasuwa and southern parts of Solukhumbu, TRPAP has proved that the concept of rural tourism can bring prosperity in rural remote areas.

What changes did you find in the villages?

It has raised awareness among the people on why tourism is important and what is the benefit of tourism and what kind of hospitality we can provide to tourists. Along with developing new products, TRPAP also has shown the way to sell the product to the outside world. For instance, the mountain bike competition showed that the district has also place for adventure tourism. Other achievements of the TRPAP are that it switched our urban-based tourism to rural areas. It tied up the product with the people. The ministry is seriously considering continuing this project. If it is necessary, we will allocate certain amount of our own resources.

JAPANESE AID

Sustained Support

Japan approves the utilization of the counterpart fund to help in one dozen various development projects

By A CORRESPONDENT

Japanese government has announced that Nepal could utilize the counterpart fund of Rs 537.5 million for several projects.

"Based on the request made by the Government of Nepal, (Japan) recently approved the utilization of Rs.537.5 million under the Counterpart Fund of Non-Project Grant Aid (NPGA); NPGA – 2002, NPGA – 2003 and NPGA – 2004, for implementing the twelve projects in Nepal's Fiscal Year 2063/64 (2006/07)," states a press release issued by Japanese Embassy in Kathmandu.

Name of the projects being approved for implementation with their respective sectors include: Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Development of Rural Areas including Rural Infrastructure, Road Transport and Electrification (Rs.253.48 million); Suspension Bridge Division Project (Rs.35 million); Pilot Community Based Rural Bridge Program (Rs. 48.48 million); Sindhuli Road (Section - I) Upgrading Project (Rs. 50 million);

Various Roads Repair and Maintenance Projects under the Department of Road (Rs. 50 million); Ilam Rural Electrification (Rs.70 million).

Likewise, other projects include Drinking Water and Sanitation (Rs.40 million); Improvement and Rehabilitation of the Existing Water Supply System in Rural Parts (Rs.40 million); Disaster Management (Rs.145.22 million); Mugling – Narayanghat Water Induced Disaster Prevention Project (Rs. 96.29 million); and Sindhuli Road (Section – I) Water Induced Disaster Prevention Project (Rs.48.93 million);

Furthermore, the assistance will cover Dalit Scholarship for Primary Schools in Disadvantaged Districts (Rs.50 million); Agriculture (Rs.48.8 million);

Strengthening of Food Quality Control Management System (Rs.30 million); Increase the Role of Potato in Poverty Alleviation (Rs.3 million); and Strengthening of Artificial Insemination and National Livestock Breeding Centre (Rs.15.8 million).

Under the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Development of Rural Areas, Rural Infrastructure Sub-sector (i) wooden planks of 71 suspension/suspended bridges will be replaced with steel decks and 23 suspension bridges will be rehabilitated on trails located in 30 districts, contributing to improving accessibility in rural areas, and (ii) 8 bridges will be constructed for improving vehicular access in eight districts, states the press release.

In the Road Transport Sub-sector, two projects will be implemented by the Department of Roads in order to upgrade and maintain the strategic road network in Nepal including Sindhuli Road (Section I; Sindhuli Bazar – Bardibas Section).

In the Rural Electrification Sub-Sector, the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) will implement one project in order to distribute electricity to 11 Village Development Committees (VDCs) of Ilam District for the purpose of promoting rural economy such as through tourism and local industries, as well as achieving an increased access to electricity.

In the Drinking Water and Sanitation

Sector, five water supply projects will be implemented in five districts (Sarlahi, Rautahat, Parsa, Dang and Kailali Districts) providing access to safe drinking water for a population of approximately 97,000.

In the Disaster Management Sector, the Department of Water Induced Disaster Prevention (DWIDP) will implement rehabilitation work on the Mugling-Narayanghat Highway and Sindhuli Road (Section I) which has been affected by landslides, debris flows and floods.

In the Education Sector, the 'Dalit Scholarship for Primary Schools in Disadvantaged Districts', will be implemented by the District Education Offices under the Department of Education to provide scholarships to around 142,857 Dalit children.

Under the Agriculture Sector, a total of three projects will be implemented. The Department of Food Technology and Quality Control will construct a central laboratory building. It is expected that such facilities will help facilitate quality control of domestic products and promote the agro-based production of the country. The National Potato Development Program will implement a project focusing on transferring 'True Potato Seed' (TPS) technology, which will help extend potato seeds of low disease pressures, low cost planting, and low volume for transportation, storage and distribution, to small-scale farmers. Finally, Semen Production Laboratory, Pokhara, under the Department of Livestock, will implement a project in order to (i) increase the quantity of livestock frozen semen produced at the laboratory, (ii) increase the quality of frozen semen, and (iii) support artificial insemination.

"As of JFY 2006, during a period of four (4) fiscal years, the Government of Japan has extended a total amount of 4.4 billion Japanese Yen to the Government of Nepal under the Non-Project Grant Aid Assistance. This has been given as foreign currency support to mitigate economic difficulties, including the indebtedness of Nepal," states the release. ■

“One Point Agenda For The Transitional Government Is To Bring About The Good Elections”

- Dr. Andrew Hall

British Ambassador Dr. ANDREW HALL is not a new name to people of Rasuwa District as he along with his wife had stayed at Thulo Syaphru for two years in 1970 to complete his Ph.d. Unlike previous time, Dr. Hall went to Rasuwa as an ambassador and as a chief guest of mountain bike competition by Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP) this week. He spoke to KESHAB POUDEL in Dhunche on various issues. Excerpts:

I was very interested

in Anthro-

and I was very

interested in Nepal.

I thought that I put

these two things

together and came

to Nepal

What is your first impression of Rasuwa after visiting here as a British ambassador after 14 years?

I have come back to Dhunche after nearly 14 years. We had a wonderful welcome. It is really nice to be welcomed by Tamang ladies singing their traditional songs and to be welcomed by local people in their custom. Looking around Dhunche, I feel most of the places are developed and grown. There are hotels, telephones, internet and modern facilities, which were not there 14 years ago.

How do you compare Rasuwa in those days as a researcher and now?

It is completely different from those days. During those days, there were no roads and you had to walk at least four days from Trishuli to come here. There were very few tourists and very few foreigners who came to visit this region before. Those days it was a major event to see a foreign face in the village. Dhunche was a very small place those days.

How do you see the potential for Rasuwa to promote as a tourist destination to alleviate its poverty?

Well, I was learning a little bit about the work done by Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program (TRPAP) which has been supported by UK and also by UNDP. It really seems to me that it has already made a big difference developing not only Dhunche but the villages around the district by training them and giving them some ideas on how to look after tourists and helping them to improve the facilities for tourists. I think there are already results as more people are coming to this

direction. Of course, it is not enough as we have to pursue more people to learn about Langtang to realize that this is just beautiful as Solukhumbu and Annapurna. And tourists should come to Langtang.

As a person having first hand knowledge about this part of the region, what kind of program do you think is necessary to bring changes?

Of course, there is a lot of work to do on development. I think improving the road will be one key thing - which you come by is quite difficult journey taking eight to nine hours to come from Kathmandu. Good quality black-topped roads would make the journey that much simpler and people would have better access to markets, to services and to opportunities in Kathmandu. I am sure we have to keep working in agriculture, forestry, education and health because all those are important parts of development. And it is very difficult to reach services and facilities in this quite remote area.

How do you see the social and cultural transformation?

I think every thing is similar. It is absolutely familiar to me. They have still kept their traditional culture alive which is very good to see.

Is this the same pattern in which people welcomed you previous time?

It is just as it used to be. It is always a very welcoming place. It is very nice to see that it has not changed. Every tourist should get such welcome as I got.

Could you share something about your project back here in those days?

I came from London University's School of Oriental and African Studies where I was doing my Ph.d. I was very interested in Anthropology and I was very interested in Nepal. I thought that I put these two things together and came to Nepal and studied anthropology and tried and found some groups which had not been studied before. When I did some readings, I found that some already had done studies on Sherpas, Gurungs and Limbus but

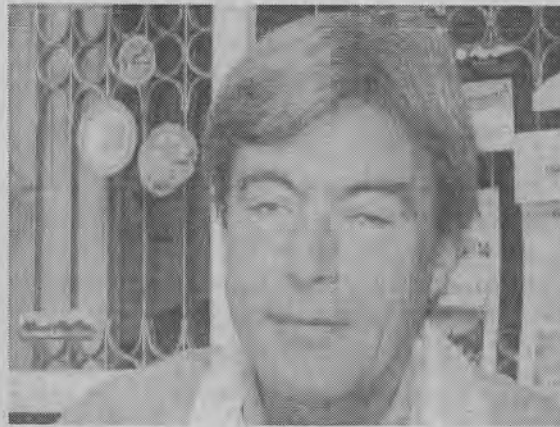
I could not find anybody who had really made any study on Tamang. So when I thought I would study on Tamang. I started looking around where Tamang people lived. We wanted to be not too far from Kathmandu because we had our baby daughter with us and my wife and I were searching the place which was not more than one week of traveling time from Kathmandu. So we set off to this area to Dhunche, so we walked different valleys, to different villages meeting people and talking with them. Finally, we found Thulo Syaphru. It is a very nice and big village and there were many interesting things for me to study. We rented a house there and started to live with the nice people there. I spent a year doing my study on Tamang culture and particularly Tamang religion. When we arrived in Dhunche, I saw bamboo during the dance and I was very interested in the study of bamboos - their belief system, their trading, how they operate. This is also a Buddhist area so there are a lot of Lamas and Gumbas. I was also interested in Buddhism in the region as well. That was the main focus of my study but it was a traditional study.

How do you see differences of the people living in Himalayas like Sherpa, Tamang, Thakalis and others?

Yes it is interesting but you find many similarities across all these different mountain groups. You can find something they have in common. But, you can also find quite a big variation. Even among Tamang, you can find a quite a big variation in different parts. Tamang are a very large group in Janjatis. They speak different dialects in different areas. They have different customs in different areas. Those like who live close to border area, they are more influenced by Buddhism and those who live close to Kathmandu and cities are more influenced by Hinduism. So even in single Janjati you can find different variations. If you compare the Sherpas and Rais living in east and west, you get more variations.

As an ambassador living in Kathmandu and coming to see the real life of people in village, how do you feel about it?

One of the important things UK does in Nepal is to assist your development. I think that is major role here. We are probably the large bilateral



donor in Nepal and our program is now about 35 million pounds or 70 million dollars. It is going to be increased this year. It will be about 43 million pounds or 85 million dollars. This is a very big development program operating in many different districts and in many different fields including rural roads, livelihood forestry, the system of education and the system of health and HIV/AIDS. This is something we are deeply engaged in all over the country. It is very good for me as an ambassador to be able to come and experience myself what we are achieving. The project we are looking at today, the TRPAP, has British assistance. Again, it is appropriate to come and see impact.

You also recently visited Sankhuwasabha, what was your impression?

We did have a political discussion when we were in Sankhuwasabha. All the eight political parties and their representatives met our minister and we had interesting discussions about the elections, about the law and order situation and about whether the situation was good enough to hold free and fair elections and how people would go. In Sankhuwasabha, people seemed quite positive. We heard a lot of stories of abuse and intimidation in Kathmandu. This is going on in some areas but people in Sankhuwasabha seemed reasonably quiet, reasonably relaxed and confident that they will be able to hold the good elections.

How do you see the situation in Rasuwa?

About Rasuwa and this project, it is wonderful for me and my wife to come back to Rasuwa. We were here thirty years ago living in Thulo Syaphru village. At that time there were no development in Rasuwa and it was very hard indeed for its people and the opportunities were very few. You could say that experience finally brought me as a British ambassador thirty years later in Nepal. This was

You could say that experience finally brought me as a British ambassador thirty years later in Nepal.

from learning from Nepal and my knowledge about the region, ultimately my career developed and my government decided to bring me back as an ambassador with the knowledge and experience of the region. So Rasuwa has helped to make my life what it is.

There is need to have elections where people are confident and people can go out for vote without anybody intimidating - the elections where parties go and campaign freely so that they can put their points of views.

How do you see TRPAP?

I am grateful for this. I am delighted to hear how successful TRPAP has been. I am delighted to say that there is substantial funding contribution there. That funding is directly coming from British people and their taxes coming into Rasuwa district. I am glad that their taxes are spent effectively here to promote development here. I hear that everybody wants to say their desirability to extending this project for further period which brings me into the point of UK's development strategy. Whether to extend the project or not is open to the government of Nepal and United Nations, as they look for the funding from donors in order to continue. I don't know whether British government or DFID will be partner or not but I certainly will feed back the messages you gave me.

What about the country's development priority?

Peace and development need to go together. There is a short term development issue and a long term development issue. Short term development issue is to support the peace process. So it is really most important to make it sure that parties will agree on new date and agree to proper time table for action like restoring law and order, voter education, making all the proper technical preparations for the elections. So it is a good process. I think it is in everybody's interest. Somebody is saying we don't need to have elections so we can postpone it. You need to take peace process forward. This is in the Maoists' interest so it is important for them and it is important for all the political parties if they really go to the people. People need to know that their voices are being heard in the assembly so they can draw new contract for Nepal's future. So, we support all those things - law and order, elections, reforming the police and helping the police in their task to restore law and order building up the whole public security and justice. We need to look at the cantonment issue to make sure that they are properly handled. It needs to be ensured that they are demobilized. Some are not



18 years and some were never in PLA and were recruited after peace agreement. These kinds of people need to be taken out from cantonment. The government has also works to do on internally displaced population. They need to support their resettlement.

How hopeful are you about the future?

It is very important that the government and parties maintain their focus very clearly where they are. For the moment, one can see distractions and they are arguing about different issues. We have one duty now, the duty is to create the conditions for good elections and make sure that the elections will be held and the whole process can be forged ahead. That is what I urge the political parties to do - just to focus and concentrate on the matters of elections.

What should be the role of transitional government?

One point agenda for the transitional government is to bring about the good elections. There is need to have elections where people are confident and people can go out for vote without anybody intimidating - the elections where parties go and campaign freely so that they can put their points of views. The most important think my government this moment supports is your peace process. Development is obviously there. You cannot have long term development program if you have conflict. Not only for tourism but for the development of Nepal, you need peace and stability. So most important thing my government wants to support is the current peace process and help the government of Nepal to succeed in that. Successful development comes when you hold constituent assembly elections where all the opinions of marginalized groups, Janjatis, Madhesis and other excluded groups, every sort of people in Nepal (are respected). Only after that you can have election and then you can have a long term development.

Political Inclusiveness- The Path to Stability

-Siddhartha Sharma

Nepal has been amidst political violence for over a decade, which now has subsided in some proportion. Political ideologies have been at the heart of it, but are ideologies such as Maoism, Capitalism or Liberalism the only causes for it? Deeper issues might be out there that make various groups take up arms and participate in this seemingly perpetual violence. The boundaries that determine friends and enemies need to be investigated.

The ideologies of the Maoists (communism) and the Madhesis (proportional representation) are not altogether the same yet they fought together in the same alliance till a few months back, and now they have declared each other enemies. What have changed in political dimensions within 10 months of People's movement that the equations changed so drastically? The Malthusian theory on population and resources relationship was what came to my mind. The Malthusian theory states that population expands in geometrical progression while food resources increase in arithmetic progression and the two are bound to be disproportionate in relation to each other. Taking this onto a larger scenario, any resource (monetary /food) is limited whereas demand for it can be unlimited, which can ultimately create social, economic and political paradigm shifts. Till a century back countries invaded other countries to get access to more resources. But now, countries have a fixed geographical boundary and to try to extend it might prove to be disastrous as was the case of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Now, countries have to make do with whatever resources that they have inside the boundary of the country. But even within a fixed boundary certain political power centers have access to more resources than the rest of the populace. Those who are close to the power centers derive some benefits from the centers and hence they have little or no grievances, but the same cannot be said about the rest of the populace. When these marginalised segments increase in number and start making their demands,

changes in the political spectrum are bound to take place. This is what happened in Nepal also.

Nepal's history is ripe with examples of politically marginalised segments revolting against the state authority. The revolutions against the Rana oligarchy, the Monarchy and even against the institution of elected Legislatives and Executives, by the Maoists are few of the examples that come to the mind. Now that the Maoists have been accepted in the political mainstream, other marginalised communities have claimed that their issues have been sidelined, amongst whom the Madhesis and residents of the Bhaber/ Chure range have started revolting. Till they had revolted, Nepal had only seen revolutions for causes such as democracy or for Maoist communism, which can be categorized as political uprisings. The Terai conflict can be seen as a blatant example of rebellion which has socio-economic issues at the heart of it. Albeit their demand of federalism is political in nature it has nothing to do with either Communism or Liberalism. Its core issue is socio-economic marginalisation and political exclusion. Madhesis talked about proportionate representation, and state autonomy which till now had been unheard of concept in Kathmandu. There are some who fear federal state system probably means Nepal's disintegration into many smaller countries as was the case before the unification of Nepal and some who argue that federalism could be disastrous taking the sensitive geo-political dimension of Nepal which is situated between countries with histories of annexations.

In a country like Nepal which comprise of more than 100 linguistic groups, at-least 61 castes, sub-castes, ethnic and sub-ethnic groups, federal division of Nepal in terms of the above mentioned lines could prove to be disastrous. The Maoists opened the proverbial Pandora's Box, and had formed 9 autonomous republics on the basis of ethnicity, geo-political and linguistics dimensions, on the basis of which the Madhesis have started their rebellion. There is no doubt that

marginalisation and political exclusion needs to be addressed but a detailed analysis of a probable federal model needs to be carried out before jumping into action and taking Nepal into a new form of political turmoil.

The general belief is that the exclusion of political and social groupings other than the Seven Parties Alliance (SPA) and CPN (Maoist) in the interim constitution-making process led to the Madhesi revolt in the Terai. It will not be a surprise if other marginalised communities or regions start taking up arms to make their demands heard. Marginalisation and Political exclusion must be addressed urgently by equipping marginalised people with necessary knowledge, incentives and tools to navigate within a democracy and to create the necessary space for them to participate within the established framework. At this point of time, it is imperative to ensure that enough actions are taken by political actors and policy-makers to provide due space and opportunity for marginalised groups for their pro-active participation in the political processes.

Talking about concrete actions, the policy makers need to intervene in the geographically marginalised parts of the country and conduct awareness campaigns regarding their political rights, accountability and responsibility of their elected representatives, and the power of their votes with regards to determining their better future. The policy makers also need to keep their ears open regarding what the traditionally marginalised communities such as women, dalits, and janajatis have to say, and make their policies as politically inclusive as possible for the upcoming democratization and constitution-making processes. After all, true leaders are the ones who can understand what the masses have to say and make everyone feel that they achieved their goals collectively.

(Sharma is Democratic and Governance Specialist, MIREST/ Nepal)

“Migrant Workers Are Most Vulnerable Population”

-Dr. Ram Prasad Shrestha

Former director of National AIDS and STD Center, Dr. RAM PRASAD SHRESTHA, is a well known surgeon. Having spent a long time in medical sector, Dr. Shrestha, who retired from the government service few years ago, is now watching health related problems closely. Dr. Shrestha, who introduced some noble ideas in prevention of HIV/AIDS, spoke to KESHAB POUDEL on various issues regarding the present state of HIV/AIDS. Excerpts:

You served as a director of National AIDS Center and worked in medical sector for a long time. How do you see the overall status of HIV/AIDS in Nepal?

There were all together 8888 persons detected positive till the end of February, 2007. However, there are 72,000 estimated infected population. Despite increase in distinct quantity, the positive detection has comparatively declined. According government data, among 2179 total tested cases, 714 or 32.2 percent were detected positive in 2003. Similarly, among 6230 tested, 20.5 percent were positive in 2004. Likewise, among 7654 tested, 16.13 percent were detected positive in 2005. In 2006, among 16890 tested, 15.8 percent were detected positive. Our status is that of concentrated epidemic.

How alarming is the situation?

More you test, more people you will detect. The trends show that HIV/AIDS prevalence is going alarmingly high as the number of population infected by HIV is increasing drastically.

How about status of female?

The positive case among female is further alarming. Among total infected, 27.1 percent, 30.4 percent, 26.1 percent and 86.6 in 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006 respectively were female. Out of female infectivity, housewife infectivity is alarmingly high. Out of female infectivity, 66, 64, 66 and 86.6 percent were housewives respectively during 2003, 04, 05 and 06 respectively. One of the most alarming trends is that the infections among housewives have gone up. It is around sixty percent. The data of 2006 showed the infectivity among housewives has gone up with 80 percent.

Does reduction in detection mean the number of HIV infection has declined?

Proportionately, the detection rate has declined. I assume there is some positive impact. It is very interesting picture. The male female infection remains similar as it is around 30 percent in recent months. This is based on my four years of consecutive data analysis.

How do you see the gap between detected population and estimated population?

There is a huge gap as only 12 percent of estimated infection of 72,000 know their real status and total 88 percent

of infected people do not know their status. Hence they are potential threat for spreading infection to general population.

What is the threat to general population?

Around 99.5 percent of adult population between ages of 15 to 49 years are non-infected - as our prevalence rate is 0.52 percent. Hence, the program should be focused to safeguard this population.

What is the rural-urban status?

Out of 72000 infected HIV positive, almost 64 percent come from rural areas of Nepal, which accounts for labor migrants and rural housewives. We know very little about them and there is a research gap which needs to be seriously addressed.

How do you find the commitment of the government?

Government has made adequate commitments international forum but it is not serious to implement them. Apart from political agenda, political parties and government should focus on the agenda of HIV/AIDS, which now has become a development agenda. No

political force including Maoists have yet shown any interest to this burning social and developmental issue. Our program should be seriously focused to address this alarming trend revealed by these data.

From where are they infected?

This may be overlapping issue as number of sex workers categorized themselves as housewives are spreading the infection. When we ask question to sex workers what do they do, many of them reply that they categorize themselves as housewives. Most of the housewives were infected from their own spouse.

Are housewives protected?

They are not. As you know, the housewives do not have capacity in sex negotiation. Our studies have shown that women cannot compel husbands to use condom even in the case of infection. This is why women living in rural areas with high labor migration like in the districts of mid-west and far west are very vulnerable from infection. It is unfortunate to say that the HIV's prevalence is high in rural areas but the programs are urban-focused.

Who are the vulnerable groups?

IDUs, sex workers and clients of sex workers are vulnerable population. Migrant workers are most vulnerable population now. Most of the migrant populations are from rural areas and overwhelming majority of migrant workers go to India from far west and mid-west. In Mumbai, the infectivity among female sex workers is around 50 percent.

What is the status of children infected with HIV?

There have been increasing cases of infections of children

up to five years of age in the past four years. This also increased because of increasing number of infection among housewives. Children are infected because of infection in their mothers.

What is the prevalence rate?

According to our estimate, our prevalence rate is about 0.5 percent of population that means 99.5 percent adult population are non-infected. If we target only infected persons, we cannot protect our community.

What should be done to prevent spread of HIV?

Our target must focus on how to protect 99.5 percent from the infected population of 0.5 percent. Is it not a challenge? I have not seen any policy maker and planner raising this issue. We estimate that 72,000 people are infected by HIV/AIDS. But only around 10 percent of the population can be detected to have infection. Ninety percent populations are infected but they don't know what their status is.

What do we need to do to encourage people to disclose their infections?

We don't have aggressive agenda to compel people to reveal their infection status. We have been launching just orthodox programs. We have not done anything to reveal, extract and explore. One of the states in India has declared to provide discount coupons to those female sex workers who will agree for voluntary testing. This is a kind of incentive that will encourage people. They are given 10 to 20 percent discount in shops. We need to replicate those kinds of program in Nepal so vulnerable groups of women can be detected.

Where is the HIV infection concentrated now?

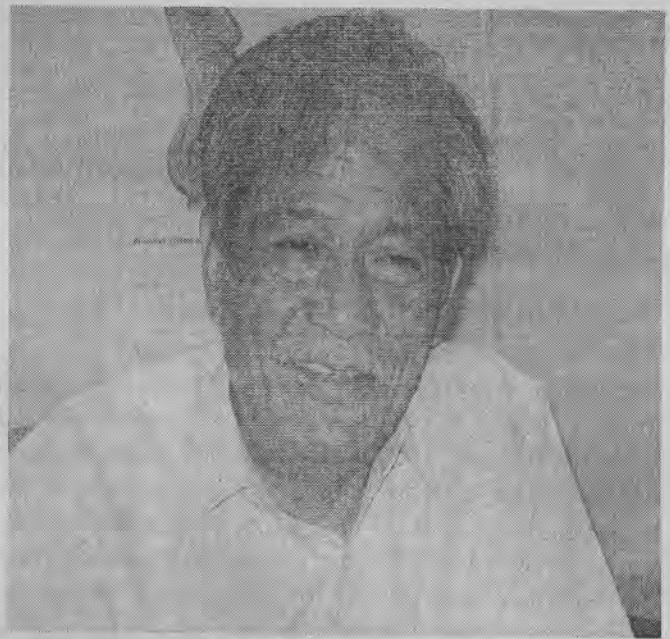
Most of the housewives infected by HIV are from mid-western and far western region. Around 70 percent of infected persons come from rural population. However, we don't have any program in rural areas. Our present programs are urban-focused. In rural areas, NGOs have been working in limited manner as NGOs have their own focused group and focused area. For the housewives, there is no awareness generating programs. Besides, in our rural society, it is very difficult to approach women.

Don't you think the possibility of using Female Community Health Volunteers?

I think Female Community Health Volunteers (FCHV), whose number is around 45,000, should be given role to generate awareness in rural areas. I also proposed that to be incorporated in HIV/AIDS awareness generating program. After giving training to FCHVs, they must be sent from house to house for health programs. When she visits the households, she can be encouraged to speak on HIV also. By successfully launching Vitamin A programs and anti-polio programs, FCHVs have already shown that they are capable to launch nationwide programs provided the training. After giving them training, they should be given role of counseling to those families whose males have gone to India for employment. FCHVs have easy access in rural households.

Why are FCHVs effective?

FCHVs are distributing condoms and generating awareness



on family planning. They don't see discussing sexual relations as taboo. They can discuss risk behavior, sexually transmitted diseases and everything with women. This group can show the way to prevent mother-child transmission and infection of HIV.

How to mobilize the donor communities?

The time has come to discuss these issues with Nepal's development partners. For this our national program managers must understand where we stand now. We have formulated National AIDS Policy in 2002. The policy envisages many positive things such as formulation of National AIDS Council at central level under the chairmanship of prime minister, National AIDS Coordination Committee under the chairmanship of Health Minister and District AIDS Coordination Committee at district level.

How are the district level AIDS Coordination Committees (DACC) functioning?

It is unfortunate to say that there is no status report regarding District Committees. During my tenure I had tried hard to know the status. If we are considering decentralizing HIV/AIDS issues up to district level, DACCs need to be activated and strengthened. Right now only four or five districts have DACC - whose primary responsibility is to build networks and coordinate the programs. In many vulnerable districts, DACC has no existence. When there is no institution, how can HIV/AIDS prevention programs be implemented.

How do you see the role of NGOs?

Some NGOs have been doing wonderful job but I don't think mobilization of donors' fund through NGOs vertical program can effectively prevent spread of HIV/AIDS. Non-governmental organizations should be given role but there must be institutions to coordinate them. This is what DACC can do. Under provisions of Global Fund, eight districts have been identified to run the programs. Even if you want to run this program we need to have district level plan.

BOOK

Legal History

Advocate Prakash Wasti's book highlights century long legal history of Nepal

By A CORRESPONDENT

Every country has its own history. Being an oldest nation in South Asia, Nepal has gone through various stages of dynastic rules and seen many ups and downs. From early Kirat to Licchivi's and from Thakuri to Malla and Shaha, all dynasties have made some contribution to enrich the history of Nepal.

In the course of its long history, the rulers developed a number of directives, orders and rituals to govern the state under certain norms. These include the decree, religious decrees and all those kinds of system, which guided the function of the state.

Nepal's history as an independent and sovereign state is long. According to written available documents, one can trace back up to two centuries. In the past when the state was in the process of evolution, the relations between the citizen and state used to be guided by religious guidelines, orders and other such things.

One can read those kinds of documents in stone sculptures and metal sculptures and some of them are even collected in a written form. Thanks to the hard work of advocate Prakash Wasti, one can read many legal documents in this book.

Based on his long research, advocate Wasti has compiled many interesting documents related to the evolution of legal process in Nepal. Although many books have already been published regarding the

historical evolution of Nepal, this is the first book where one can read Nepal's legal system from Kirat dynasty to the present one.

In the first chapter, Wasti discusses the initial period of Nepalese legal history. One can read some initial development during the Kirat dynasty. In second chapter, the author compiles some interesting documents which showed that Nepal's legal system was much better in early times than any western country.

One of the important parts of this book is that the author translated the observation made by Brian Hodgson on Nepalese legal system. For the students of law, this may help to understand law of modern Nepal.

**Hamro Kanooni Itihaska
Kehi Jhankiharu
(Some Important Aspects of
our Legal History)
Written by: Prakash Wasti
Published by: Pairavi Book
House, Putalisadak,
Kathmandu, April, 2007
Price: Rs. 250.00
Pages: 260**

Hodgson wrote a whole book highlighting the importance of Nepalese legal system in chronological way. Despite its own long legal history, Nepal has hardly attempted to collect all of them in a book so that common Nepalese could have access to their long indigenous legal history.

In other chapter, he also discusses

legal system evolved during the Rana regime. Wasti also highlights the evolution of legal process from first Rana prime minister Jung Bahadur to the last prime minister Mohan Sumsher. Along with the court system, he also analyzes the court system in Rana period.

He also collects the list of legal journals published in the country. Not only the ancient and medieval period, Wasti also discusses the legal history following the political change of 1951 up till now. The documents compiled by advocate Wasti are very interesting.

This book is useful for teachers, scholars, students as well as legal practitioners. The introduction of senior advocate and eminent constitution lawyer Kusum Shrestha is another additional feature of this book.

Book List

- Fateful Interview, Madhav Kumar Rimal,Rs. 400.00
- Beyond The frontiers Women's stories from Nepal Padmavati Singh/2006.....Rs 200.00
- Bonded Labour Kamaiya in Nepal. Padma Raj Lamichhane/ 2005...Rs. 350.00
- Dhoop "The Juniper" A Long Poem. Toya Gurung 2006.....Rs. 185.00
- Distribution of goods and Services in Nepal's Conflict Ananda P. Shrestha \Hari Uprety\2006.....Rs. 200.00
- Ecotourism in Nepal with theoretical concepts and principles Damodar Prasad Bhatt\2006.....Rs.675.00
- Development planning in the Era of Globalization. Govind Nepal\2006..... Rs. 110.00

Source: Himalayan Books

MOHAN GOPAL KHETAN PASSES AWAY

In a tragic loss for the business community as well as entire country, the renowned industrialist Mohan Gopal Khetan passed away on Thursday night (April 26) at a hospital in Kathmandu.

Khetan died of heart attack at Norvic Hospital at midnight on Thursday. He was 61 years old. His health was not keeping well in recent days.

Chairman of Khetan Group of industries, which include around two dozen business entities such as Himalayan Snacks and Noodles, Gurkha Brewery, and Laxmi Bank, Khetan was a renowned industrialist.

Thousands of people gathered at Pashupati Aryaghat where his last rites were performed on April 27.

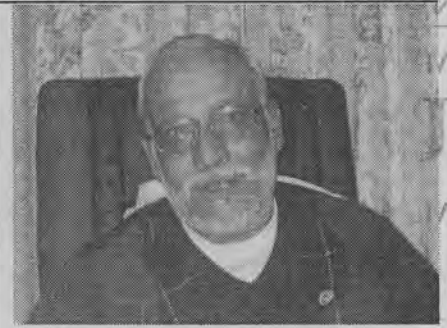
He is survived by two sons – Rajendra Khetan and Chandra Prakash Khetan –

and two daughters.

Born in 1947 in Kathmandu, industrialist Khetan was a law graduate of Tribhuvan University. He had completed his school education from Judhodaya High School of Kathmandu.

Khetan Group of industries has interests in the field of mining, fast moving consumer goods like beverages, food stuff and service industries like insurance, banking/financial services, telecommunications, IT, real estate, investments, energy etc.

Having started business career at very young age, Khetan started from sugar trading and later on moved to diverse fields ranging from transport to petroleum business, to telecommunication and finance, among others..



He was also involved in various social, financial, religious, health, education and charity organizations. Khetan was also Honorary Consul General of Turkey for Nepal.

Khetan was one of the rare patriot personalities with foresight and clear convictions regarding national unity and integration. A little more than a month ago he had given an interview to SPOTLIGHT where he stressed on the need to consolidate national integration, by bringing the people of hill, mountain and Terai together in the spirit of patriotism.

One Year of Loktantra: HR Perspective

A year after the restoration of Loktantra, OHCHR-Nepal office has assessed the achievements and challenges from human rights perspective.

“Last April, tens of thousands of people took to the streets to demand a return to democracy and respect for human rights. The subsequent ending of hostilities, the signing of the peace agreement, drafting of an interim constitution and the formation of the Interim Government are all major political achievements which have had an impact on human rights,” it said.

It, however, noted that there were still many challenges remaining. “One of the most pressing needs is to address accountability and the right to justice of the many who have suffered violations or abuses at the hands of the State or the CPN-M, both during and after hostilities. Probe commission reports such as that of the Rayamajhi Commission have never been made public or their recommendations implemented. No meaningful steps have yet been taken to

determine the whereabouts and fate of the “disappeared”; and the perpetrators of serious human rights violations continue to enjoy total impunity.”

“Establishing the rule of law is essential to ending impunity, as well as to ensuring respect for a broader range of human rights. By starting a process of change, the Government and political leaders have demonstrated courage and a willingness to address certain critical human rights issues. Bringing about deep and meaningful change to strengthen human rights protection in the long term takes time and requires the collaborative efforts of all sectors of Nepalese society. With political will, there is much that can be done in the short term to satisfy the human rights aspirations of the Nepalese people. Creating an environment for the elections with adequate security, and without fear, intimidation or violence must be a priority. This is the responsibility of all political leaders, but

especially the Government. Law enforcement agencies have a special role in ensuring these conditions.”

“OHCHR-Nepal would like to pay tribute to the role played by human rights defenders both during and after the *Jana Andolan*. They continue to be vital partners for the Office in its daily work. The National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) remains one of the most important human rights bodies in Nepal. OHCHR-Nepal again urges the Government to act quickly to appoint new Commissioners so that the NHRC can fully play the key role that it should in promoting and protecting human rights throughout the peace and electoral process.”

“The progress that has been made in human rights must not be taken for granted. There is much more which needs to be done, with many challenges lying ahead. OHCHR-Nepal reiterates its commitment to do all it can to assist in strengthening the protection of human rights in support of the peace and electoral process,” said Lena Sundh, Representative of the OHCHR-Nepal.

MAOISTS

Un-kept Promises

Maoists come under criticism for not allowing safe return of IDPs

BY CORRESPONDENT

Not only other parties like the Nepali Congress (NC) and Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), but also the UN human rights body has criticized the Maoists for failing to keep promises regarding allowing the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to return to their homes safely.

In recent NC meetings, central leaders including its vice president Sushil Koirala has asked the Maoists to return all the seized properties and allow safe return of displaced persons.

The UML leaders including general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal have also asked the Maoists to end their violent politics for good.

However, the Maoists have not abandoned the politics of intimidation as it was clear when they refused to hand over vehicle with illegal number plate in Kathmandu to the police.

On Monday (April 30), the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR-Nepal) issued a statement criticizing them for failing to meet commitments to allow safe return of IDPs.

"OHCHR-Nepal has concluded that in many parts of Nepal, CPN-M local cadres are not complying with the Party's formal commitments to allow displaced

persons to return in safety and to give back all their property and land," it said.

"Since OHCHR was established in Nepal in May 2005, the Office has advocated with the Government and the CPN-M to respect IDPs' rights to voluntarily and safely return or to fully reintegrate where they are currently living. Both parties have repeatedly made that commitment. However, OHCHR's regular monitoring activities in rural areas in recent months indicate a failure to implement such central-level commitments, due to the attitude and activities of village-level CPN-M cadres as well as the failure of district level CPN-M leaders to hold cadres accountable for not allowing or facilitating safe and sustainable return of IDPs," the OHCHR has said.

"While welcoming the CPN-M's recent commitment to return land and property, OHCHR underlines that the safe and sustainable return of all IDPs will not be achieved only by the return of property, particularly in mountain and hill districts. On recent field missions to hill districts, OHCHR has noted that many IDPs have not returned home due to fear of CPN-M local cadres. The Office has also received reports of persons trying to return but being chased

away, and in some cases, beaten up by local CPN-M cadres.

OHCHR has also observed in many areas an absence of neutral and independent law enforcement, *de facto* CPN-M control of government and society and limited freedom to associate with and campaign for political parties other than the CPN-M. This is not a conducive environment for the return of IDPs."

OHCHR is also concerned that some local CPN-M cadres expect returning IDPs to "account for past wrong-doing" once back in their village, for example by appearing before "people's courts". Such conditions are not part of the November 2006 Comprehensive Peace Agreement and constitute an obvious deterrent to return.

"In conversations with CPN-M leaders at different levels, OHCHR has noted a common CPN-M claim that displaced persons are "feudals" and "criminals". When exploring such claims further, OHCHR has often found that such individuals are land owners or political leaders from other parties. However, if there are any individuals who are believed to have committed crimes, they should be dealt with by the justice system," the statement adds.

"CPN-M leaders have long pledged to permit displaced people to return to their homes and to also return all of their property to them. Now that they are part of the Interim Government it is time for them to prove that they have the will to ensure that those promises are transformed into action at the local level," said Lena Sundh, Representative of the OHCHR-Nepal. ■

FNJ, IFJ support agitating journalists

The journalists of Nepal One television who have launched agitation against the management demanding appointment letters, fixed working hours, regular payment of salaries and so on have received support and solidarity from the Federation of Nepalese Journalists (FNJ) as well as International Federation of Journalists (IFJ).

The FNJ, on Thursday (April 26), urged the management of Nepal One channel to address the legitimate

demands and concerns raised by the journalists working there.

FNJ president Bishnu Nishthuri said the federation was fully behind the agitating journalists. FNJ general secretary Mahendra Bista urged the government to become serious about journalists' demand and warned that FNJ will take stringent measures if the management did not choose to find way out through talks. The journalists have put forth 20-point demands.

Earlier, the IFJ president Christopher Warren wrote a letter to the channel's chief Nalini Singh at its head office in New Delhi drawing attention to the demands including 'appointment letters' raised by the journalists working in the channel.

In his letter, Warren has said that guarantee of fundamental rights like giving appointment letters, fixing working hours, payment of regular salaries would help to achieve sustainable journalism. ■

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