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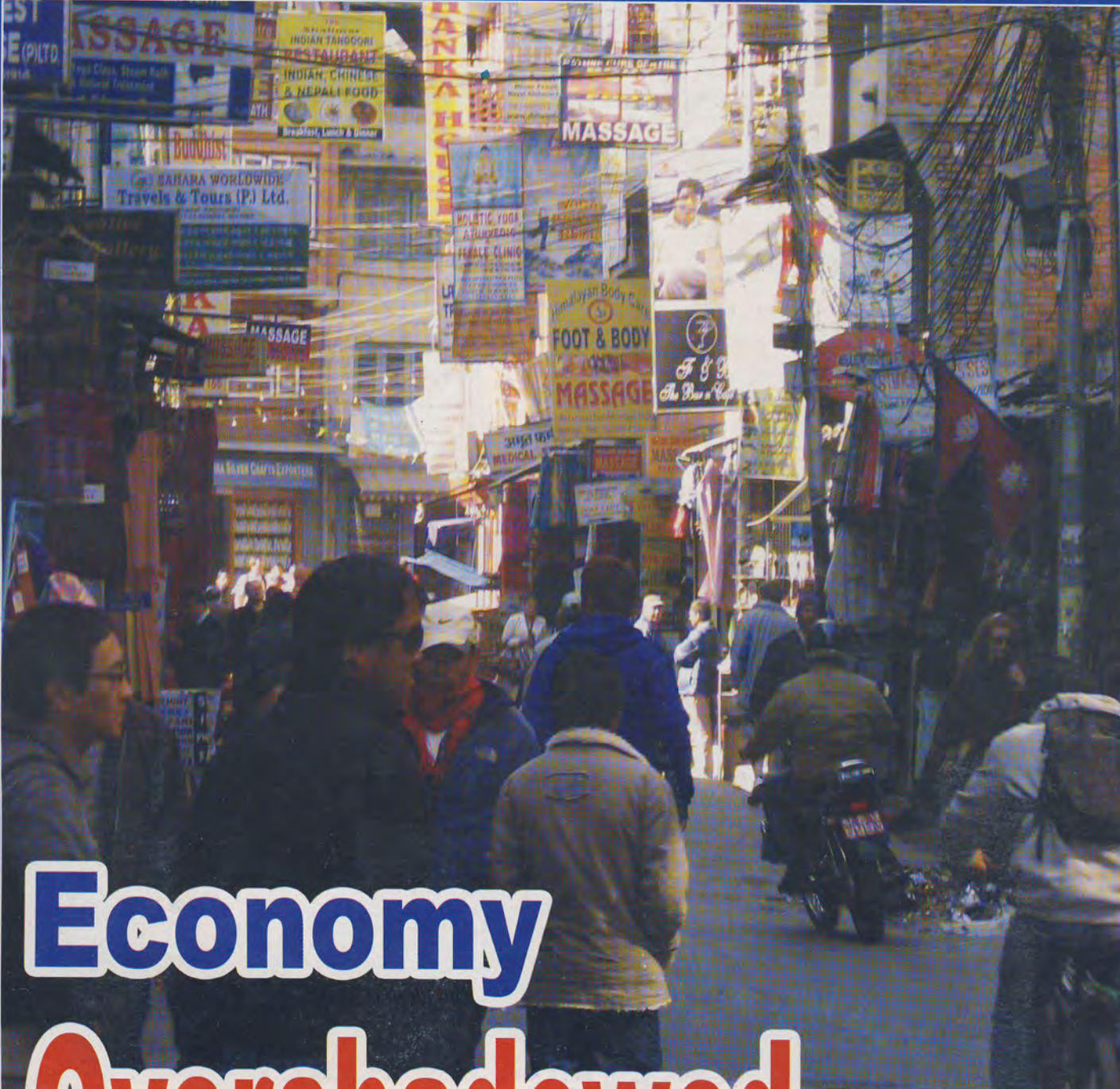
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Economy Overshadowed

INSIDE
Politics: Prolonging Stalemate
Sanitation: Way to Transformation
Guthi: On the Verge of Ruin



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- Suraj Singh Thakuri
TV Personality/Director

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COVER STORY: Overshadowed By Politics

The political instability threatens to pour cold water over their expectations.

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POLITICS: A Resigned Country?

The political crisis is threatening to spiral out of control of the domestic actors

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INTERVIEW: Chinese Professor Wang Hongwei spoke about Nepal's current political problems Page 16

SPOTLIGHT

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The wrangle between the political parties that does not seem to come to an end is clear pointer for seeing eyes that they are dancing to some hidden tunes. The absence of a strong effective government has made life not only miserable but almost unbearable for the people. The capital city has become a big garbage dump. Pedestrians choke while breathing. And politicians in power and opposition don't tire playing dirty politics with the health of the millions. Isn't it a great pity that the country has not been able to produce even one leader who has the charisma, integrity and capability to control the worsening situation? Do the millions of poor need any more concrete proof that the country desperately needs new leaders? If the CPN (Maoists), the largest party in the constituent assembly, who have a legitimate claim to form a coalition government, still refuse to see the big villainous hands pervading the political scene of Nepal, they would have failed even before being tested. With the abolition of monarchy, their utility to their one-time-benefactor has ended. It is a big misfortune not only for Nepal, but the whole South Asian sub-continent, that the biggest democratic country of the region has totally failed to generate a friendly and cooperative atmosphere that would have turned the region into an envy of the world. Her envoys to Nepal, strangely enough, leave no stone unturned to alienate the friendly Nepalis. The overwhelming Nepalis have been totally disillusioned with their vacant protestations as they know fully well that money cannot buy friendship. King Gyanendra could not see through their game and paid for it. If the poor Nepalis too fail to learn the lesson, they might also have to face very unpleasant situation. But as long as the brave Gurkhas who sacrifice their lives in the service of their alien masters too, are sure to throng to defend their country if the situation ever demanded, there is nothing to worry. As it is, the Nepali army should be able to rise to the occasion. Rukmangad Katuwal, the man leading the Nepali Army, is a strict disciplinarian. He must not permit political indoctrination in the army. The army must be an organization where only merit, loyalty and patriotism must prevail. The politicians too must understand that. If the army becomes demoralized or politicized, it will affect the overall defense of the country. The army must carry out the orders of the government in power. But if the government is headed by Lendhup Dorjis, the army has to use its wisdom and discrimination. The army chief, Katuwal, is heading Nepal's security at a very critical time. Not only the millions of Nepalis but even the world is looking up to him. We do trust he will not fail his dear motherland.

Madhav K. Rimal
Madhav K. Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Pathetic Indifference

Every country needs the young population to attain economic progress. It is very unfortunate to say that nobody in Nepal is concerned about the youth population. The political parties are recruiting them to destabilize the government. Instead of exploiting youths in destructive sectors, the political parties need to employ them in economic sector.

*Manju Jha
Janakpurdham via
email*

to the world's rich countries. For the oil producers, the price rise of oil brings economic boom. Although every human being has equal share to the world's natural resources, I don't see any reason for denying the poor population of the world of this birthright. If the world's community is really concerned about the plight of the poor, they must press oil producing countries to make special provisions to supply the oil to poor countries in the reasonable price.

*Shreekantha Lal
Via email*

Good Move

It was interesting to read the article on king Gyanendra's graceful exit (June 20-26). Whatever mistakes king Gyanendra committed in the past, he won the hearts of majority of silent Nepalis in recent times. Although a large number of so-called monarchists were out of the scene, a woman showed guts to say long live monarchy when he departed from the Narayanhity palace. Whether one likes it or not, I would like to salute the woman who stood out amongst the unruly crowd.

*Sangita Bomjon
Via-email*

Alarming Future

The cover story on Youth: High Expectations (June 20-26) was an eye opener. The article painted an alarming picture regarding the future of the country. At a time when the country continues to be embroiled in political turmoil, there is a very thin possibility of opening up the industries and other sectors to provide employment opportunity to youths who occupy over 50 percent of the total population. If we are unable to provide employment opportunities to them, the youths will emerge as the constant factor of political and social instability in Nepal. I hope the government makes decisions to find a way out for these young unemployed.

*Ramesh Shrestha
Via Email*

Permit The Private Sector

As the global oil price is rising very fast and the country is not in a position to provide huge subsidy in the oil import, private sector should be permitted in this trade. Like in all other sectors, the government needs to allow private sector to import oil in order to shift the burden. Your cover story rightly pointed out the need to raise the price of oil at par with international price (Soaring Oil Price: Worsening Woes June 27-July 03). Of course, any increase in the oil price is going to have a long term implication on the overall economic situation but the country does not have any other option. The time has come to hand over the oil trade to private sector so that the government does not need to pay subsidy.

*Ramila K.C.
Public Youth Campus,
Kathmandu*

Via E-mail

It is a matter of common fact that the government is spending huge amount of tax payers' money to subsidize the petroleum products, which are used by small segment of

middle class population. In a country where over 40 percent of the population is suffering from various water-borne diseases due to lack of basic facility like latrine, it is outrageous that the government subsidizes oil instead of investing in social infrastructure. If the government provides Rs 15000, a community can build a latrine on their own. However, the government is providing subsidy to the petroleum products which is widely used by the population who can spend millions of rupees to buy a new car. It is very unfortunate that even our political parties, student unions and other consumer organizations have been defending the rights of this small minority in the name of poor. Nobody can justify subsidies given to this fat population who consumes all resources in the name of poor. Since they enjoy political power, all the strong powerful groups lobby in their favor. Nobody talks about the poor who get nothing.

*Harka Subba
Via email*

Poor In Plight

The price increase in the global market does not make any difference



MJF Chief Warns Of Agitation If 'One Madhesh' Demand Not Met

Coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), Upendra Yadav, has warned of street movement if major parties rejected the demand for single Madhesh province. Speaking at a program organized by Madhesh Media Mission in Birgunj Saturday (June 28), Yadav said that all Madhesh-based parties would join the protest movement if the interim constitution is not amended on the basis of the agreement reached with the Madhesi parties in the past. Yadav also accused the three main parties - CPN (Maoist), Nepali Congress and CPN (UML) - of engaging in a bargain for power, and putting all big issues on the backburner. According to him, the MJF will not join the next government unless the 'one Madhesh' demand is met. Furthermore, the MJF coordinator said the Maoist People's Liberation Army (PLA) should not be integrated with Nepal Army, but the PLA men could be inducted in other security agencies.

Compiled from reports

PM Koirala Assures Madhesi Leaders Of Fulfilling Their Demands

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has assured Madhesi leaders of fulfilling their demands. According to Hridayesh Tripathy, leader of Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMLP), PM said he supports their demand to include the already agreed items in the constitution amendment. Madhesi leaders including Tripathy had met with PM Koirala in Baluwater, Friday (June 27) evening. He

added that PM also urged the Madhesi members to allow the CA to function smoothly. On March of 2008, the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF) had signed an eight-point deal with the seven parties' government on issues such as establishing Madhes autonomous province and collective and proportional recruitment of Madhesis in all organs of the state. Members of CA belonging to Madhesi parties, Thursday, obstructed the introduction of fifth amendment bill demanding that points of the 8-point agreement be included in it. The amendment bill had aimed at introducing provisions allowing simple majority to form a new government. *Compiled from reports*

NC Considers Issues Raised By Madhesi Parties Justifiable

Nepali Congress has concluded that the issues raised by the Madhes-based parties during Thursday's sitting of the parliament were justifiable. The meeting of the NC parliamentary party held Friday (June 27) also decided to support the cause of Madhesi people since the agreement with United Democratic Madhesi Front was reached when NC was leading the government. The party also decided to take lead in amendment of the constitution addressing the demands raised by Madhesi Janadhikar Forum, Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party and Sadbhawana Party. Addressing the meeting, senior leader of the party Sher Bahadur Deuba asked the NC CA members to be ready for playing effective role as the party has decided to stay in opposition. The party is scheduled to continue its meeting on Saturday as well. *Compiled from reports*

Tharus, Chure Bhawar Object To 'One Madhes'

Tharu Kalyankarini Sabha (TKS) and Chure Bhawar Ekata Party (CBEP) have raised objections against the demands by Madhes based parties for one province in the Terai belt. In a statement issued Saturday (June 28), CBEP chairman Keshav Prasad Mainali accused of 'national disintegration' in the name of one Madhes. Mainali further

said the residents of Chure Bhawar region would not remain silent if the Madhesi demands are met. Warning that his party is ready to pick up arms for national integrity, CBEP asked the bigger parties to be serious towards the issue. Similarly, the TKS has also protested the demand for one Madhes province. Stating that if the interim constitution forcefully made them Madhesi, TKS said the Tharu community would not remain under Madhesi rule. The organization has announced a series of protest programs beginning Saturday to alert the constituent assembly against agreeing on single Madhes province. The Tharu group has come up with protest programs at a time Madhesi parties, on the initiative of a Tharu CA member Bijay Kumar Gachhadar, are obstructing the regular session of the constituent assembly since Thursday. *Compiled from reports*

Girl Trapped Inside Seti Gorge Rescued

After a grueling 22 hours of hardship, a minor girl has finally been rescued alive from the deep crevasse of Seti River she had accidentally fallen into in Pokhara Wednesday (June 25). Two and a half years old Aradhana Pradhan, daughter of Arogya Pradhan, had fallen into the 60 feet deep gorge of Seti River in Pokhara Sub Metropolis after she attended a funeral with her parents on Tuesday. The girl is said to have suffered only minor injuries despite falling into such a deep pit and has been rushed to Eastern Regional Hospital of Pokhara for medical treatment. A rescue team sent from Kathmandu had resumed the rescue efforts from Wednesday morning after security personnel and locals failed in their attempt to bring out the hapless girl child since Tuesday afternoon. The family members were sure that the girl was still alive as they had heard her faint wailing, but as it was very dark inside the gorge they weren't able to see where exactly she had fallen. Earlier, the rescuers with CCTV cameras and other sophisticated rescue equipments had at first managed to make it to 20 meters dangling in the rope, but still weren't able to locate the girl. However, on the second attempt, the rescuers went further deep

and rightly guessed the location where the child had fallen and soon brought her out of what could have been her death pit. Family members as well as locals had camped near the site all night long praying and anxiously looking at the rescuers trying to bring out the child from the gorge. *Compiled from reports*

Maoists Willing To Ditch NC And Form Govt Through CA

The central secretariat meeting of the Maoist held Tuesday morning concluded that the party will go ahead and form government through the floor of Constituent Assembly (CA) if its last ditch efforts to keep alive the seven party alliance do not bear fruit. Maoist leaders told reporters after the meeting that they think it is necessary to keep the unity among the seven parties who had worked together for peace process. But it also decided to explore other options if the political deadlock is not broken soon. After the Maoists joined hands with the UML to back each other's candidate for prime minister and president, respectively, another influential SPA constituent, the Nepali Congress (NC), announced that it would stay in opposition. The NC, however, has been demanding that a member of opposition is included in the Security Council – a demand that has been flatly rejected by Maoists and UML. The NC has said that it is necessary to have wide-ranging voice in the Council at a time when the country will go through crucial army integration debates. The Maoists central secretariat meeting has decided to make another effort for consensus in the seven party meet to be held later today at parliament secretariat, for solution of the current political deadlock. Senior Maoist leader Mohan Baidya said that his party's flexibility will be based on the conditions other parties put forward during the meeting. Another Maoist leader Dr Baburam Bhattarai said the party would table the bill to amend the interim constitution during Wednesday's session of the constituent assembly if the government fails to bring one. Party spokesperson Krishna Bahadur Mahara said they would go to

people for final decision if Nepali Congress continues to obstruct the process for forming a new government under their leadership. The central secretariat meeting was called after the party reached understanding with second largest communist party UML in a bid to oust Nepali Congress and form new government possibly excluding that party. *Compiled from reports*

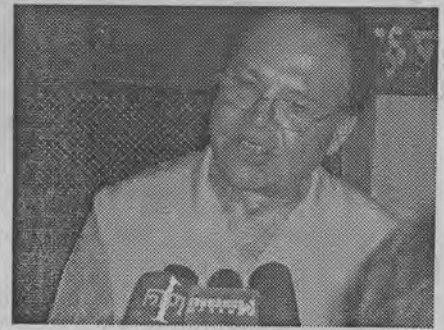
Parties Recommend Names For 26 CA Members

Nine parties have recommended names for 26 Constituent Assembly members. The parties had already agreed to allot quota among themselves for filling the 26 remaining vacant positions in CA. The nominations will have to be endorsed by the Council of Ministers. As per the quota, the Maoists have nominated nine members including Padam Jyoti, Hari Roka, Chandra Lal Meche, Indra Kumari Gurung, Kapil Lama, Harilal Thapa Magar, Dabal Bahadur Shah, Sher Bahadur Pahadi and Dhimi Baram. The Nepali Congress (NC) has picked five members including former chief justice and constitution expert Biswonath Upadhyaya, Radheshyam Adhikari, Nilambar Acharya, Jagat Tajpuriya and Man Bahadur Raute. Likewise, the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) also has picked five nominees including Pasang Sherpa, Mahesh Chaudhary, Sushil Chandra Amatya, Bhagwati Chaudhary and Shila Katila. The Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) has put forth two names, Bhupendra Chaudhary and Mohamad Ikbal. Other five parties have picked one name each. Jana Morcha has forwarded the name of Narayankaji Shrestha, Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party has put forth Mahantha Thakur's name, Nepal Workers and Peasants Party has selected Jagge Bahadur Shahi, CPN-Marxist Leninist has picked Rajendra Khetan and Sadbhavana-Anandidevi has forwarded the name of Shyam Sundar Gupta.

Kantipur daily reports

UML Gen Secy Says Demand For Single Terai Province Objectionable

CPN (UML) general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal on Friday (June 27) termed



the demand of Madhesh based parties for declaring whole Terai as a single province as very "feudalistic" and hence objectionable, and warned against imposing it upon the people of Madhesh. Talking at a program organized by All Nepal National Free Students Union (ANNFSU), the student wing of the party, in the capital city, general secretary Khanal said that there would be no agreement on the aforesaid demand since UML is for, as what he called, "multiple provinces". "Since the State Restructuring Commission that would be formed soon after the new government comes into power is entitled to decide on what kind of federalism would be appropriate for the country including the number of provinces that would be in it, I don't see any use of raising the demand for single Madhesh state right now," Khanal said. He further said the demand - for declaring whole of Terai as a single province - was no longer inapplicable since other groups have already started raising demands for a separate Tharuhat province and Mithila province within Madhesh. Earlier on Friday, the UML general secretary held meetings with the CPN (Maoist) chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal where they mainly discussed the formation of the new government. They are also learnt to have agreed to request Madhes-based parties not to obstruct the Constituent Assembly meeting. Members belonging to Madhesi parties had created uproar during Thursday's session of the Constituent Assembly, demanding that the points of agreement reached between the government and the United Democratic Madhesi Front (UMDF) in March this year be included in the amendment bill. Following the obstruction, the meeting was rescheduled for Saturday (June 28). *Compiled from reports* ■



Everest Insurance awarded Kamal Nepali for his bravery by saving the life of Aradhna Pradhan. Everest Insurance gave him a purse of 1 lac and also announced future carrier after his studies. Gagan Thapa Youth Leader, Devendra Pratap Shah Chairman of Insurance Board, Kush Kr Joshi President of Fncei, Rajendra Khetan Chairman of Everest Insurance felicitated Brave Kamal Nepali.

PRIME MINISTER GIRIJA PRASAD KOIRALA announced his resignation at the meeting of the Constituent Assembly (CA), Thursday (June 26) clearing the decks for the formation of new government. "Even though I am gone, I hope the politics of understanding and unity will continue," Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala said, addressing the CA. His resignation, however, will have to be officially submitted to president, who is yet to be elected. The CA meeting on Thursday is set to pass the fifth amendment of the constitution, which has provision for electing president, vice president, prime minister, CA chairman through simple majority. As such, PM Koirala's resignation will be officially approved once the new president is elected. The April 10 election of the CA has brought forth Maoists as the largest party followed by Nepali Congress (NC) and Unified Marxist Leninist (UML).

THE WESTERN COUNTRIES HAVE EXPRESSED strong concerns over the repeated arrests and detention of the Tibetan refugees who have been demonstrating in Kathmandu for the last few months. In a joint statement issued by diplomatic missions in Nepal of Australia, Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the United Kingdom, the United States and France, on behalf of the EU, acting as its local President, they said, "We would like to express our strong concern regarding the government of Nepal's recent detention without charge of three members of the Tibetan community in Nepal: Kalsang Chung, Ngawang Sangmo, and Tashi Dolma. "We note that none of the three participated in violent actions and that Kalsang Chung is not known to have participated in any protests at all," they said calling for their immediate release. They further said they were very concerned about the ongoing harsh treatment of peaceful protesters during arrest by the Nepali police. "We understand and respect Nepal's national security concerns and, certainly, the importance of protecting diplomatic premises. We urge you, however, to ensure the humane treatment of peaceful protesters," the statement reads. The use of preventive detention under the Public Security Act (PSA)

also raises concern in relation to Nepal's obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) not to engage in arbitrary detention. They have urged Nepal to adhere to international human rights standards as Nepal continues on its path as a democratic nation.

THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN KATHMANDU refuted a statement published by a Tibetan group in a leading English language daily, calling it "totally groundless and deceptive." "The embassy was aware that recently the so-called Nepal Tibetan Solidarity Forum issued a press statement on the Himalayan Times, accusing the Chinese government of killing 209 Tibetans, injuring more than 1,000 and arresting 5,972 others when handling the March 14 riot in Lhasa," the spokesman of the Chinese embassy in Nepal told Xinhua Monday, adding, "this is totally groundless and deceptive." "It is well-known that the Lhasa riot on March 14 was a criminal act of violence involving beating, smashing, looting and burning masterminded and implemented by a handful of 'Tibet independence' separatists aimed at disturbing and sabotaging the Beijing Olympic Games under the instigation of the Dalai clique's 'Tibetan government-in-exile,'" the embassy said, adding that it was by no means a "peaceful demonstration" as it resulted in the death of 18 innocent people, and injuries to more than 300 others. The spokesman also said the Nepal Tibetan Solidarity Forum is an organization seeking "Tibet independence" with attempts to undermine the China-Nepal friendly relations.

TRADE TALKS BETWEEN NEPAL AND INDIA scheduled to begin on June 29 have been postponed due to delay in government formation in Nepal. Officially known as inter-government committee meeting, the bi-annual talks would be held most probably after two months, according to Kedar Bhakta Adhikari, the economic minister at the Nepali embassy in New Delhi.

THE NATIONWIDE INDEFINITE STRIKE BY transport entrepreneurs ended from Wednesday (June 25) following the latest pact between the agitating entrepreneurs and the government. The protracted meeting between the representatives of National Federation of Transport Entrepreneurs and the Ministry of Labor and Transport Management ended late night on Tuesday after the government agreed to let them hike transport fare by 28 percent. The government had earlier agreed to let them hike the fare by 25 percent. However, the entrepreneurs resorted to strike demanding 35 percent hike. As per this agreement, the minimum fare for buses, minibuses and microbuses in the capital valley will be Rs 12. The initial fare for taxis will be Rs 10 with additional Rs 23-24 per every kilometer. Transport entrepreneurs say that this new fare structure will be in place for two months after which they aim to reach to another agreement through 'scientific review.' Meanwhile, the Nepal Petroleum Dealers Association (NPDA) is holding talks with Nepal Oil Corporation, Wednesday, to resolve its demands. The association has announced indefinite stoppage of sales and distribution of petroleum products. The NPDA has demanded smooth supply of fuel and equalization of price of diesel and petrol. ■

TENNESSEE VALLEY AUTHORITY (TVA)

•Dr. AB Thapa

The Tennessee River of the USA was subjected to severe periodic flooding, and navigation along the river's middle course was interrupted by a series of shoals at Muscle Shoals. In 1933 the U.S. Congress passed a bill establishing the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), thus consolidating all the activities of various government agencies in the area and placing them under the control of a single one. A massive program of building dams, hydroelectric generating stations, and flood-control projects ensued. The fusion of a broad range of specific powers with a sense of social responsibility to the region made the TVA significant as a prototype of natural-resource planning. Its jurisdiction is generally limited to the drainage basin of the Tennessee River, which covers parts of seven states: Alabama, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia. The TVA is a public corporation governed by a board of three directors appointed by the president with the advice and

consent of the Senate. The constitutionality of the TVA was immediately challenged upon the agency's establishment, but it was upheld by the Supreme Court

Indian Copy of TVA

Indian planners were very much impressed by the great success of the TVA. They launched a similar plan on a small scale in 1948 immediately after the independence of India. A series of four dams have been constructed on the Damodar and Barkar rivers for storage and for the moderation of floods in the Lower Damodar region and also for generation of power, irrigation and navigation. The four dams have been in operation since 1958.

Historical Background of the TVA

The TVA was created to improve the steadily worsening conditions in the Tennessee River Basin. In particular, the basin was suffering from frequent destructive floods, intermittent unnavigability of the river, deforestation, and severely eroded land. Beginning early in the 19th century, sporadic attempts were made to cope with one or more of these conditions, but the first major effort of the U.S. government to improve conditions in the valley was initiated during the World War I (1914-1918). Late in the war President Woodrow Wilson approved construction of a hydroelectric power dam and two nitrogen-fixing plants at Muscle Shoals. However, neither the dam nor the nitrogen plants were completed in time to aid the war effort. During the postwar years the Muscle Shoals facilities remained mostly inactive

New Deal Reforms

Franklin D. Roosevelt became the President of the USA after 1932 election. In 1936 Roosevelt won his greatest victory in his second term by receiving more than 60 percent of the popular vote and winning every state except Maine and Vermont. People had overwhelmingly voted for the Democratic Party to support his New Deal reforms.

One of the most sweeping and imaginative New Deal reforms was the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), an independent federal corporation set up to improve conditions in a depressed area of 103,600 sq km in



seven states. Chiefly responsible for this scheme was Senator George W. Norris of Nebraska, a progressive Republican who had almost single-handedly blocked the

sale of government-owned power sites on the Tennessee River during the 1920s and who was a firm believer in government ownership and operation of public utilities such as power and water companies. Roosevelt was an advocate of publicly owned power. He saw it as a yardstick with which to measure the real costs of privately owned power companies. Roosevelt was greatly attracted to the TVA because of its possibilities for the conservation of natural and human resources.

Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is a federal corporation. It was established in 1933 primarily to control floods, improve navigation, improve the living standards of farmers, and produce electrical power including distribution along the Tennessee River and its tributaries. Related TVA activities, based on the original TVA Act and subsequent enactments, include reforestation, industrial and community development, test-demonstration farming, the development of fertilizer, and the establishment of recreational facilities.

The TVA Dams

The 50 dams operated by the TVA serve many purposes. In flood season the TVA dams store potential floodwaters to lower substantially the flood crests. The dams, besides controlling the floods, supply water to generate electricity, increase the region's water availability, and provide lakes for recreational purposes. In addition, the nine major dams on the main stream of the Tennessee River create a series of narrow lakes that together form a continuous navigation channel from Knoxville, Tennessee, to Paducah, Kentucky. The

channel is 1045 km long and 2.7 m deep. Near Paducah, the channel is connected with the Ohio River and the 21-state inland-waterway system. Other TVA dams are on tributaries of the Tennessee River. In flood season they store potential floodwaters, lowering flood crests substantially on the Tennessee, Ohio, and Mississippi rivers.

TVA Electric Power

Twenty-nine of the dams operated by the TVA supply water to generate electricity. The TVA system also includes 11 large coal-burning steam plants, which generate most of the electricity produced by the TVA. The TVA currently operates nuclear-powered electric-generating plants at two sites in Alabama and Tennessee, and an additional plant is under construction in Tennessee. The TVA power system annually produces more than 125 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, which is almost 90 times as much electricity as was generated in the same region in 1933. Average annual domestic electric-

ity use in the area has grown from 600 kilowatt-hours in 1933 to nearly 15,000 kilowatt-hours.

Major Benefits

All dams in the system are managed as a unit, with primary emphasis on flood control, which proved to be extremely effective. The TVA has built navigation locks into each of its nine main dams. Improvement of the channel conditions encouraged the development of port facilities along the river. As a result, traffic on the river increased from 53,000,000 ton-kms in 1933 to several billion ton-kms by the late 20th century. The cheap electricity provided by the new dams spurred the industrial development of what had been a chronically depressed regional economy. The waters impounded by the dams created the "Great Lakes of the South," which the TVA helped to develop into a prime boating, fishing, and recreational area.

More than 60 million people per year visit the recreational TVA lakes. In the western parts of Kentucky and Tennessee, the TVA operates a demonstration project that offers outdoor recreation and wildlife education. The site, located between two artificial lakes, is a strip of woodland 64 km long.

The TVA carried out a vigorous mosquito eradication program on its reservoirs, thus eliminating the endemic malaria that had previously been traceable to the river. The agency also improved forestry and land conservation practices in the region.

During the World War II (1939-1945), TVA power and manufacturing facilities made significant contributions to the national defense effort. At Oak Ridge, Tennessee, a key atomic-energy installation was operated largely with TVA-produced electricity. The TVA plants also produced significant quantities of munitions materials and fertilizers.

The TVA & Privately Owned Power Companies

The TVA had built a series of hydropower stations and thermal power plants for generation of electricity. It distrib-

uted electricity generated by its power plants to many who never before had enjoyed the benefits of electricity. The TVA also produced cheap fertilizers. As a result, the standard of living of the people in its area steadily improved. The TVA was seen as a direct threat to the country's private-power companies. A TVA type plan was not imitated elsewhere, although the Roosevelt administration did build dams and power plants in the West.

Privately owned power companies opposed the decision of the TVA to take part in the production and sale of electric power. The TVA contracted with municipalities and cooperatives to supply wholesale power for distribution and it has joined with them in purchasing the facilities of privately owned electric-utility companies in the region. These purchases have established an integrated power service area in which the TVA is the sole supplier of power. The TVA power system, which includes more than 50 dams, as well as coal-

fired thermal plants and operable nuclear plants, possesses a huge generating capacity. Power is sold in bulk, about half to federal agencies and half to large industries and locally owned municipal and cooperative

distribution systems. Electricity tariffs in the Tennessee River valley are among the lowest in the nation. Because of critics' claims that the low rates are made possible by lack of obligation to show a profit on its operations, a schedule of payments was worked out by which the TVA would refund to the national treasury over a period of years all federal electric-power investment in the valley. The TVA nuclear power plant program was seriously curtailed in the 1980s because of the introduction of the new stringent safety regulations that seriously affected several plants already completed or under construction.

New Research & Development Works

In cooperation with state and other agencies, the TVA conducts research and development programs in forestry, fish and wildlife preservation, watershed protection, and air and water quality control. In addition, the TVA encourages the economic development of Tennessee Valley tributary areas through citizen associations. More than 100 valley communities with local flood problems have been helped by the TVA, which offered technical guidance and built improved channels and detention dams where feasible.

In the late 1970s the TVA, Commonwealth Edison of Chicago, and the Department of Energy, together with the nation's electric industry, entered into a venture to build the first large demonstration liquid-metal fast breeder reactor in the United States, to be operated as a part of the TVA power system. An estimated \$1.7 billion was spent preparing a site for the reactor on the Clinch River near Oak Ridge, Tennessee. In 1983, however, the U.S. Senate refused to provide additional funds for the demonstration project, which had the potential of producing more fissionable fuel than it consumed. ■

All dams in the system are managed as a unit, with primary emphasis on flood control, which proved to be extremely effective. The TVA has built navigation locks into each of its nine main dams. Improvement of the channel conditions encouraged the development of port facilities along the river.



PM Koirala : Resigned

POLITICS

A Resigned Country?

The political crisis is threatening to spiral out of control of the domestic actors

By SUSHIL SHARMA

Following the party's debacle in the elections two months ago, the UML ministers in the coalition government resigned.

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala rejected the resignation.

Last month, Maoist ministers quit the government to press for Koirala's ouster.

Koirala again rejected the resignation.

Last week, Koirala bowed to the Maoist pressure and announced resignation himself at the constituent assembly meeting.

His resignation has not been rejected. But there is no one to accept it, either. A head of state has not been

elected yet.

The bill providing for the election of a new president and a new prime minister has been pending in the CA for ten days.

The country is currently without a functioning head of state and head of government.

There is no head of state at all. There is a head of the government who has resigned. Leading a pack of ministers who had already resigned.

The deadlock over power sharing has held the world's youngest republic hostage.

As the political parties' common and favorite whipping institution – the monarchy – is no more, the parties

are engaged in mutual blame-game.

It has left the people in a mood of resignation. They appear to resign to their fate in the much-touted New Nepal.

Analysts say, the frustration is very dangerous. "It could be a recipe for a political disaster of unimaginable proportion," warned one.

The increasingly open rivalry between the two big neighbors over their respective security concerns in the strategically located land would add fuel to the fire, as Nepal veers into instability and anarchy.

The row over the Madhesi issue is threatening to polarize the country's politics. At a time when the country is badly in need of strong national unity.

The Madhesi parties are adamant on incorporating two key issues in the interim constitution: an autonomous region for the entire Madhesh and a proportional and group entry into the Nepali army.

The other parties, mainly the communist outfits, disagree. But they have been helpless against the outfits which command less than a sixth of the 601-member constituent assembly.

The result? The CA has remained disrupted for more than a week. A leading Madhesi leader said, "we would resign en masse and take to the streets if our demands are not addressed."

No doubt, such a move would have catastrophic implications.

"The country is in the desperate need of a savior," said an analyst. Will it come from within or imposed from outside? Answer to this question will be crucial for the course of events in times to come. ■



Inaugurating Guthi : Reviving for cause

GUTHIS

On The Verge Of Ruin

As the Guthis, traditional forms of trust, are on the verge of ruin, Nepal's many temples, and religious institutions face threat

By A CORRESPONDENT

The resources needed to perform about two months long chariot procession of Red Machhindra is gradually becoming insufficient. Similarly many other temples in the valley and outside, are being neglected.

The banks of Bagmati River, which were built as shelter for pilgrims, are rendered protection-less triggering encroachment. Many images of gods and goddess have been stolen and temples are on the ruin.

The traditional Kartik dance festival of Patan was recently revived following more than a decade of disruption. There are many other such festivals and dances of gods and goddess that are on the verge of collapse.

With the encroachment or abolition of Guthis – indigenous traditional trust system - most of the traditional festivals and rituals are facing threat due to lack of regular income to carry them out.

Described as a city of god by colonel Kirkpatrick, the first Britisher to visit Nepal, the tradition of Kathmandu is now in the process of decay and destruction. Along with the spurt of new concrete buildings in the green land of valley, valley's tradition and culture are

vanishing.

Guthi or trust was an inherent part of Nepal's traditions and rituals. From state to king and individual to group, every one set up Guthis to look after their culture. With the values of the land going sky-high, even trustees who are supposed to take care of such Guthis, themselves, started to sell the land.

The intervention of the government has made the situation worse. As large number of farmers hold Guthis's land, it became political issue.

For populism, all kinds of government whether communist, panchayat or others, transferred the Guthi's land to individuals.

Although the government has set up Guthi Sansthan to look after the Guthi's land, it is unable to check the decline. For the past many decades, people have not shown any interest to protect the lands owned by Guthis.

However, since last one year some awareness regarding the need to protect Guthis have been organized. Set up about a year ago under the chairmanship of former ambassador Kedar Bhakta Mathema, Nepal Guthi Sanrakchayan Pucha (Nepal Guthi Protection Group) has already started an awareness

campaign.

"Our country is full of culture and festivals which are tied up with our Guthi. Once our Guthi system collapses, our heritage and culture will also vanish," said Dr. Saphalya Amatya, a culture expert.

Centuries before the beginning of concept of new forms of trust, Nepalese rulers and society had practiced it. Thanks to such socially and religiously binding traditional organizations like Guthi, some of Nepal's temples, religious traditions and culture could be preserved even in this age of complete transformation.

Recently, the Group, an organization set up by some enthusiastic people from various walk of life, held a half-day interaction program where experts revealed the bleak state of Guthis and running of temples, festivals and religious practices.

Inaugurated by Punbir Maharajan, 96, senior member of Akash Bhairava Guthi, Nepal's two prominent personalities Dharma Prasad Gautam, who served in several positions in the areas of Guthi protection and preservation and Dr. Govinda Tandon, a renowned archaeologist and former treasurer and member secretary of Pashupati Area Development Trust, presented their paper discussing positions of Nepal's Guthis.

According to a paper presented by Dharma Prasad Gautam on Guthi Management, there are at least 2080 Guthis in Nepal. He stated that there could be many more such Guthis which were not registered in the government office.

"As long as people don't feel there is a need to protect the trust established by their forefathers, no one can stop the decline. We have fought the question of protection of Ram Mandir's (Ram Temple) property and land for years but we are unable to protect it," said Dr. Govinda Tandon.

As prices of land go up, the greed for profit has even affected people who are supposed to preserve such Guthis.

"We are encouraged by the overwhelming participation of the people from different walks of life to protect our Guthi system," said Mathema chairman of the group. "Our organization will organize more programs in future." ■



Hridayash Tripathi : Mantra of one Madhesh one Pradesh

POLITICS

Prolonged Stalemate

With the disruption of proceedings of CA by Madhesi parties, politics is embroiled in prolonged stalemate

By KESHAB POUDEL

“We are not in a position to incorporate the agenda raised by Madhesi parties in the amendment of interim constitution.

We will back their demand politically,” said CPN-Maoist Supremo Prachanda. “We don’t have any mandate to declare Terai as a single unit or incorporate their agenda of one Madhesh one Pradesh.”

“If three parties don’t include our demands of one Madhesh one Pradesh in the constitution, we will not allow proceedings of Constituent Assembly,” declared Rajendra Mahato, president of Nepal Sadbhavana Party. “We will even bring the issue in street.”

These two statements indicate that Nepal’s politics is heading towards a prolonged political stalemate even after the declaration of republic. For the last three weeks, the parliament was stalled because of differences among three major parties over power sharing and constitution amendment.

After an agreement was reached among the seven parties over the amendment of interim constitution and resignation of prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, Madhesi members emerged as another force to stall the CA session for another few more weeks. After Madhesis, other groups may take their turn to create trouble.

“This government has no mandate to declare one Madhesh one Pradesh. If this is

incorporated in the constitution, we will call indefinite strike,” said chairman of Limbuwan Mukti Morcha. “This is against the national integrity of Nepal.”

Against the expectation of the people that declaration of republic will restore stability, the country has seen more troubles in the last one month. It has already shown that basic forms of government - whether republican or monarchical - is not going to make any difference so far as restoring peace is concerned.

Stalling of parliamentary proceedings is nothing new in Nepal’s extremist-dominated process. After restoration of democracy in 1990, this became a well accepted practice.

The CPN-UML stalled the House of Representatives for 20 days in 1994. They resorted to similar disruptions in 1996. In 2001, CPN-UML, RPP and other left forces stalled the house for 64 days - which is the longest disruption of parliament - demanding the resignation of then prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala on the ground of his alleged involvement in corruption in an aircraft deal (known popularly as Lauda scam).

The practice continued even after the Janandolan II of 2006. After the restoration of house in 2006 and promulgation of interim constitution, Maoists stalled the Legislature Parliament several times last year. Madhesi members of Legislature Parliament stalled the house for 40 days last year till the

announcement of amendment in constituency amendment act.

Although CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist are now accusing Madhesi parties for violating the democratic norms, they are the mother of all kinds of extremist political methods in Nepal. “By stalling the CA meeting, Madhesis are violating the basic norms of Loktantra,” said CPN-UML general secretary Jhahnath Khanal. “We will not bow down to such pressure.”

Nobody knows for how long, the CA is going to be stalled this time. Those who watch Nepal’s political development closely can easily predict that this will go for uncertain period.

“Our aim is clear. We will not allow functioning the CA till our demands are incorporated in the interim constitution. If it is necessary, we will even go to street again, to put pressure on the seven party government,” said Upendra Yadav, MJF coordinator.

After a meeting with Madhesi leaders on Tuesday morning, the leaders of Nepali Congress, CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist agreed to address their issues by introducing the new supplementary amendment bill incorporating their demand and have set up a task force for the purpose.

But the initial meeting of the task force ran into rough waters as CPN-UML and CPN-Maoist leaders expressed their disagreement over the words.

“Nepal’s peace will depend upon the regional situation. In a regional context of rivalry between Nepal’s two big neighbors, it is unthinkable to have a completely peaceful and orderly political situation in Nepal. What is going on in present day Nepal has a long background. One after another, several facades have been in change since long. Earlier, leftist facade disturbed peace and now there are several regional facades both in the hills and terai,” said a political analyst.

The recent disruptions have shown that Nepal may still have to suffer for a long time to come. Even after resolving the current deadlock, it appears inevitable that a new one will crop up. It gives credence to the belief that Nepal’s problem has external roots.

Maoists - who were once reported to control 80 percent of Nepal’s interior areas - look just a helpless spectator and prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala, who was termed as an excellent negotiator and termed the hero of democratic movement of south Asia, is nowhere in the picture. They may solve this problem yet again but the indication is that the emergence of new force will prolong political stalemate one after another. ■

BUDGET PREPARATIONS

Overshadowed

By

Politics

People have huge expectations over the forthcoming budget as it is going to be the first one prepared by a 'republican regime.' The promise of New Nepal has been ringing loudly in the ears of the common people. They are looking forward to relief packages, economic prosperity, employment opportunities and so on. Unfortunately, the political instability threatens to pour cold water over their expectations. Even as less than two weeks remain for the closing of the current fiscal year, there is no sign of new government. The budget has to be prepared by mid-July and it appears that the lame-duck government whose prime minister has already announced his resignation will be tasked to prepare the budget that will affect the economic policies and day-to-day livelihood of the people for the next one year. As such, the budget could lose acceptability and ownership once the new government is installed

By SANJAYADHAKA

"Budget has to be prepared whether there is a government or not. In any case, this is not the first time in the history of Nepal that political uncertainty has affected budget process," said Brian Aitken, deputy division chief of the Asia Pacific Department of International Monetary Fund (IMF), who recently visited Nepal to study the budget preparations.

Aitken may have sounded diplomatic. But the underlying message and the sarcasm speak volumes about

the indifference that has marred economic agenda of the country.

Less than two weeks remain before this fiscal year ends up within which time the government needs to put in place its annual policies and programs and budget for the next fiscal year. But except for technical preparations by the bureaucrats, the political leadership appears unfazed.

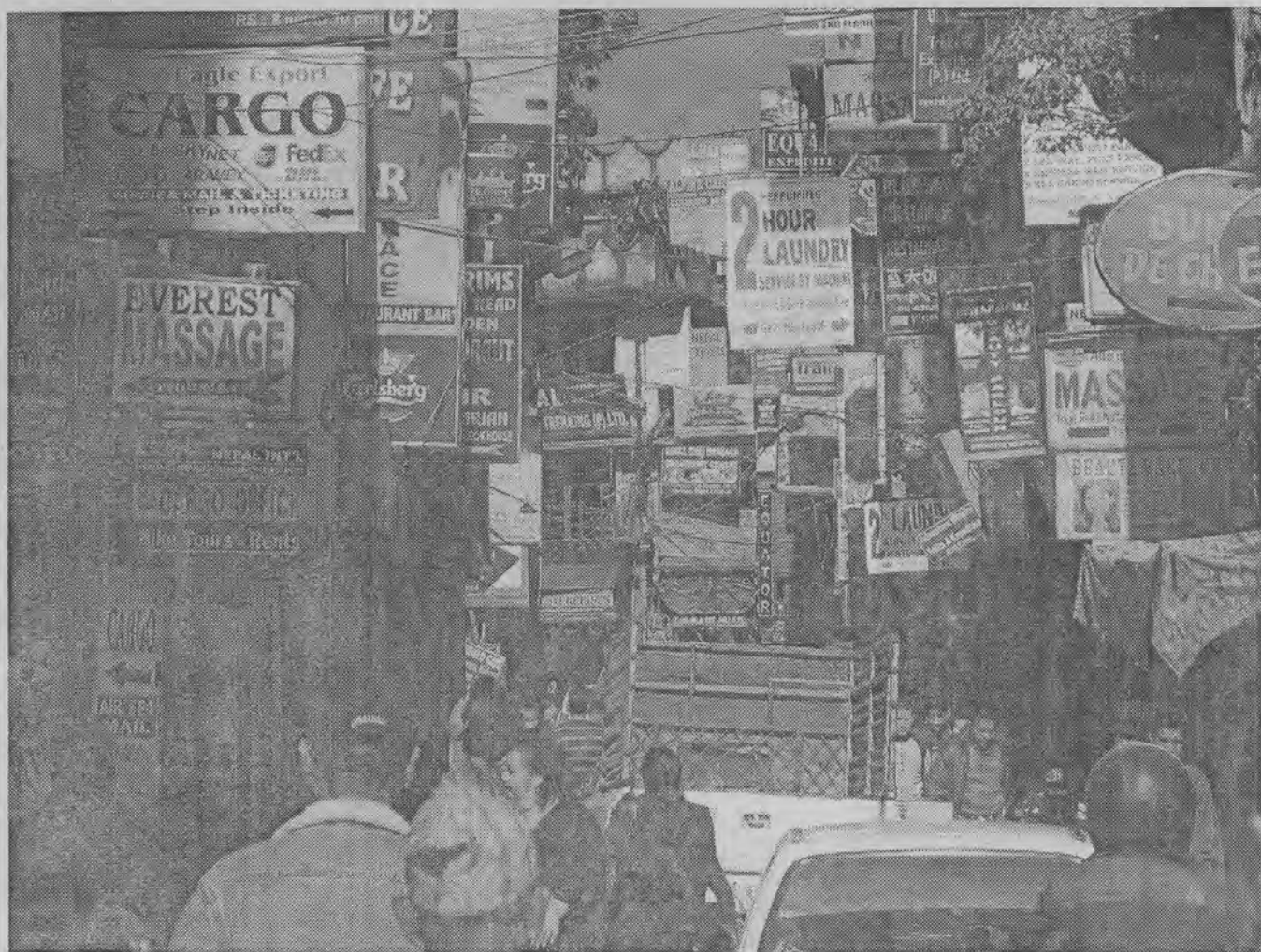
Bogged down in unending series of political crises, the political leaders are running from pillar to post trying to

cobble up a new government. And in the process, they have forgotten the economy.

The seven party discussions also have not yet taken up this crucial issue. "The seven parties are not bothered about the most important thing they ought to have concentrated at this point – the budget," said former finance minister Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani.

Lame Duck Government

The current government had turned into a caretaker immediately after the



Central Market In Kathmandu : Stagnant

election results poured in catapulting the Maoists to the number one spot. However, two and a half months after the election, the new government has not yet been formed.

Worse, even the Prime Minister has already announced his resignation – although his resignation could not be accepted due to absence of president who is yet to be elected by the Constituent Assembly.

The government, therefore, is effectively a lame duck one. However, it is burdened with the necessity of formulating annual policies and programs as well as the budget.

Krishna Hari Baskota, chief of the budget division at the Ministry of Finance, says the officials are working on schedule to prepare the budget. “We have received demands from ministries and departments. We are working as per the parameter fixed by the National

Planning Commission – which has asked us to prepare budget remaining within the minimum of Rs 184 billion to maximum of Rs 189 billion limit,” said Baskota. “However, how the budget preparation moves politically is something that only the political leadership will know,” he added.

The key concern is whether the incoming government – widely expected to be led by the Maoists – will own up the policies and budget formulated by the current lame duck government. Otherwise, the whole exercise will be futile.

Budgetary Situation

According to Aitken, the macroeconomic situation of the country at present is ‘good but fragile.’

The rapid loss of resources by the government owing to its huge subsidy on petroleum prices, and the climbing inflation are two major challenges of the

economy.

Aitken said that since Nepal’s policy of having fixed exchange regime with Indian currency is maintained, the inflation would be ‘transitory and remain under control.’

“This policy has been serving well for Nepal,” he said.

He, however, emphasized on the need to raise the fuel prices. “The introduction of an automatic pricing mechanism to allow adjustment of prices to world levels would help depoliticize the elimination of oil subsidies,” Aitken said.

He said that the adjustment of oil prices is also necessary to make the budget sustainable.

“Otherwise the resources which could be put to use for better purposes will have to be spent on oil subsidies,” he warned.

The IMF figures show that this year led by the service sector and agriculture,

the output growth could rise to 4.75 percent. "In the coming year, it could rise to 5.5 percent," Aitken said.

Meanwhile, the latest report by the central bank on budget situation shows that the government revenue increased by 26.3 percent to Rs 91.82 billion as of June 20, 2008. The government revenue had increased by 20.7 percent in the same period of the previous year.

Likewise, the government expenditure rose by 18.4 percent to Rs 121.29 billion during the period. Such expenditure had increased by 21.2 percent in the comparable period of the preceding year.

Worryingly, the budget deficit amounted to Rs 10.38 billion in the review period compared to the budget deficit of Rs 9.20 billion in the same period of the previous year.

The capital expenditure reached Rs 29.63 billion. In the corresponding period of previous year, capital expenditure had increased to 21.69 billion.

Unbalanced Trade

The huge disparity in exports and imports has hurt the economy increasingly in recent times.

The report by the Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) states that in the first ten months of 2007/08, total exports declined whereas total imports increased significantly. Total exports fell by 1.2 percent compared to a decline of 0.3 percent in the corresponding period of the previous year. Of the total exports, export to India declined by 7.5 percent in the review period compared to a decline of 1.0 percent in the same period of 2006/07. Exports to other countries, on the other hand, grew by 13.0 percent compared to a decline of 3.1 percent in the comparable period of the previous year.

"The decline in the exports to India was on account of the fall in the exports of vegetable ghee, textiles, chemicals, rosin and toothpaste. Likewise, exports to other countries went up largely due to the increase in the exports of pulses, Nepalese paper and paper products, herbs, wheat, packing materials of paper, cigarettes, electric wire and stationary," the report says.

On the import front, the same period saw total imports surge by 21.0 percent



Agriculture: High growth

compared to a rise of 10.5 percent in the corresponding period of the previous year. While imports from India soared by 25.4 percent in the review period compared to a growth of 11.4 percent in the corresponding period of 2006/07, imports from other countries rose by 13.8 percent compared to a rise of 9.0 percent in the previous year.

Consequently, the total trade deficit expanded by 31.6 percent in the review period compared to a growth of 16.5 percent a year earlier.

"A rise in the import of petroleum products, M.S. billet, vehicles and spare parts, cold rolled sheet in coil and hot rolled sheet in coil, among others, from India and an increase in the import of gold, telecommunication equipment & parts, other machinery & parts, transport equipment & parts and video television & parts from other countries were responsible for the surge in total imports in the review period."

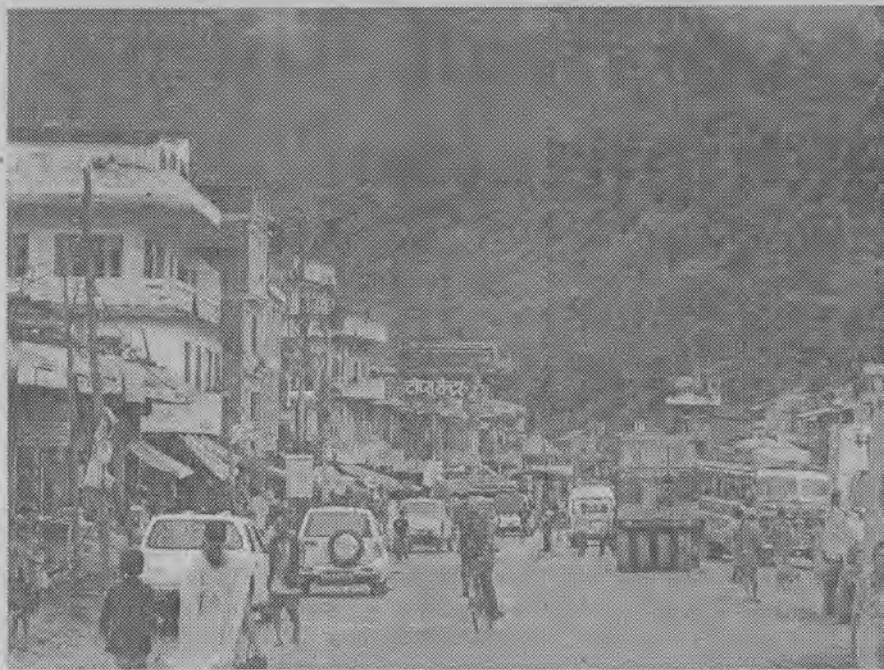
Rising Remittance

The remittance sent by Nepalese working overseas continue to be the saving grace of the economy.

In the first ten months of the current fiscal year, the remittances sent by the Nepalese working abroad increased by 35.3 percent to Rs. 108.64 billion compared to an increase of 3.1 percent in the previous year.

As such, the overall Balance of Payment (BOP) posted a surplus of Rs. 19.88 billion in the period compared to a surplus of Rs. 6.97 billion in the corresponding period of the previous year mainly because of the upsurge in travel receipts, remittances and capital transfer. The current account posted a surplus of Rs. 4.63 billion in the review period compared to a surplus of Rs. 5.04 billion in the corresponding period of the previous year.

It also had salutary effect on the foreign exchange reserve situation. "The



Highway Market : Scarcity of goods

gross foreign exchange reserves aggregated Rs. 197.03 billion in mid-May 2008, an increment by 19.3 percent from the level of Rs 165.13 billion in mid-July 2007. Such reserves had fallen by 0.3 percent in the corresponding period of the preceding year. On the basis of US dollar, gross foreign exchange reserves expanded by 15.5 percent to US\$ 2.94 billion in mid-May, 2008. Such reserves had risen by 12.5 percent in the same period of the previous year. On the basis

of the import figures for the first ten months of 2007/08, the current level of reserves is adequate for financing merchandise imports of 10.6 months and merchandise and service imports of 8.6 months."

Spiraling Inflation

The price of oil (Crude Oil Brent) in the international market surged by 86.2 percent to US\$ 123.83 per barrel in mid-May 2008 from US\$ 66.51 in mid-May 2007. In the same way, the price of gold



Essential Commodities : High price

soared by 29.4 percent to US\$ 865.00 per ounce in mid-May 2008 from US\$ 668.25 in the previous year.

The year-on-year consumer inflation rose to 9.2 percent in mid-May 2008 from 4.6 percent in the previous year. The inflation was mainly driven by the significant rise of 13.0 percent in prices of food and beverages in the review period. The price rise of food and beverages was 6.1 percent a year ago.

"Of the items showing price rise, price indices of oil and ghee sub-group increased by a whopping rate of 27.6 percent on a y-o-y basis in May 2008 compared to an increase of 9.9 percent a year ago. The sub-group of grains and cereal products witnessed a y-o-y price rise of 21.0 percent in mid-May 2008 compared to an increase of 6.4 percent in May 2007. Prices of rice and rice products of this sub-group increased by 25.2 percent (y-o-y) compared to an increase of 3.8 percent a year ago. The price rise of pulses, milk and milk products and meat, fish and eggs stood at 12.1 percent, 10.5 percent and 10.2 percent respectively on a y-o-y basis in mid-May 2008 compared to a rise of 11.2 percent, 6.3 percent and 5.9 percent respectively in mid-May 2007."

Likewise, the index of non-food and services group rose by 5.3 percent in mid-May 2008 compared to a rise of 3.0 percent last year. Region-wise, the price rise in Terai region was 10 percent followed by 8.6 percent in the hills and 8.5 percent in the Kathmandu Valley. Last year, the respective rates were 5.0 percent, 4.0 percent and 4.4 percent.

On the other hand, the y-o-y salary and wage rate index rose by only 7.0 percent in mid-May 2008 compared to a rise of 11.9 percent a year ago. Wages of agriculture, industrial and construction labour increased by 6.3 percent, 4.6 percent and 7.1 percent respectively in mid-May 2008. Last year, these wages had increased by 10.9 percent, 19.2 percent and 11.5 percent respectively.

As Aitken had said the macro economic indicators provide a basis from where the economy can be raised significantly to usher in the era of prosperity. But if the instability continues to haunt the economy, it will lose whatever steam it had gained after cessation of conflict, and, instead, move backwards. ■

Nepal May Head Toward Sikkimization”

PROF. WANG HONGWEI

For its own national security interest, China wants to have cordial and friendly relations with legitimate authority of each country. Under such a foreign policy, China had a kind of relation with Nepal's monarchy.

Professor WANG HONGWEI, a well known Chinese scholar, has specialized on Nepal. Seventy-two-years-old Chinese scholar, Professor Hongwei, who is currently affiliated with Beijing-based Institute of Asia Pacific Studies, spoke to Nepalese journalist SHARAD ADHIKARY in Beijing recently. Excerpts of professor Hongwei's interview published in Nepal National Magazine:

How do you see the ongoing political developments in Nepal?

Nepal has become a republic, which is a great achievement of Nepalese people. This will now lead to the prosperity and development. Feudal society now will be transformed into democratic ideals.

China has had a long and cordial relationship with Nepalese monarchy. With whom does China have such relation now?

For its own national security interest, China wants to have cordial and friendly relations with legitimate authority of each country. Under such a foreign policy, China had a kind of relation with Nepal's monarchy. Till two years ago, the king was the head of the state of Nepal and Nepalese people accepted him as their head of the state. It is a wrong perception that China had a special relationship with monarchy. Even in Republic Nepal, there will be a president as per the wish of people and our relations will be cordial and respectful with such head of the state. China will have equal relation with all political parties.

Don't you feel that China has lost a good friend when monarchy was abolished in Nepal?

Certainly, it is natural that there will be certain pain after losing a friend with whom we had worked for a long time. But, the abolition of monarchy was a natural incident.

What do you think are the reasons behind the abolition of monarchy in Nepal?

There are three reasons behind the abolition of monarchy in Nepal. First reason is the unpopularity of last Shah King Gyanendra. Common people believed that Gyanendra had a role in the Royal Palace massacre. There might or might not be his hand in the incident but suspicions among people regarding his role in the Royal massacre made him unpopular. Second reason is king Gyanendra snatched democracy and he did not initiate any work to pro-

vide relief to the people. Third reason was that he was a very greedy person as he increased his own budget several times. In such a situation, the anti-monarchy movement was intensified.

If that is so, why did China support the royal take over?

China always deals with the country rather than a particular individual. In the past, monarchy led Nepal and we dealt with that institution. After the fall of king's rule, our relations with government of Girija Prasad Koirala is also similar and even when Prachanda becomes prime minister, China shall deal with Nepal as a sovereign country.

If so, your government will support even the government formed after a possible military coup?

Will the people support it? To my understanding, Nepalese people will not support it. I don't see any possibility of military coup in Nepal and take over of power by military.

How possible is it to support Maoist authoritarian rule?

Do you think Nepali people want that kind of rule? I don't think Nepalese want that kind of rule. However, it is up to the people of Nepal to decide what kind of political system they want.

Have you played a role of a facilitator to establish relations between Maoist chairman Prachanda and China?

I have visited Nepal last time at an invitation of Maoist chairman Prachanda. I had discussion with him several times. I have been meeting Maoist leaders and chairman Prachanda as a professor. Before this no Chinese officials and intellectuals had made any contact with Maoists. However, I also met Maoists only after they joined the open politics.

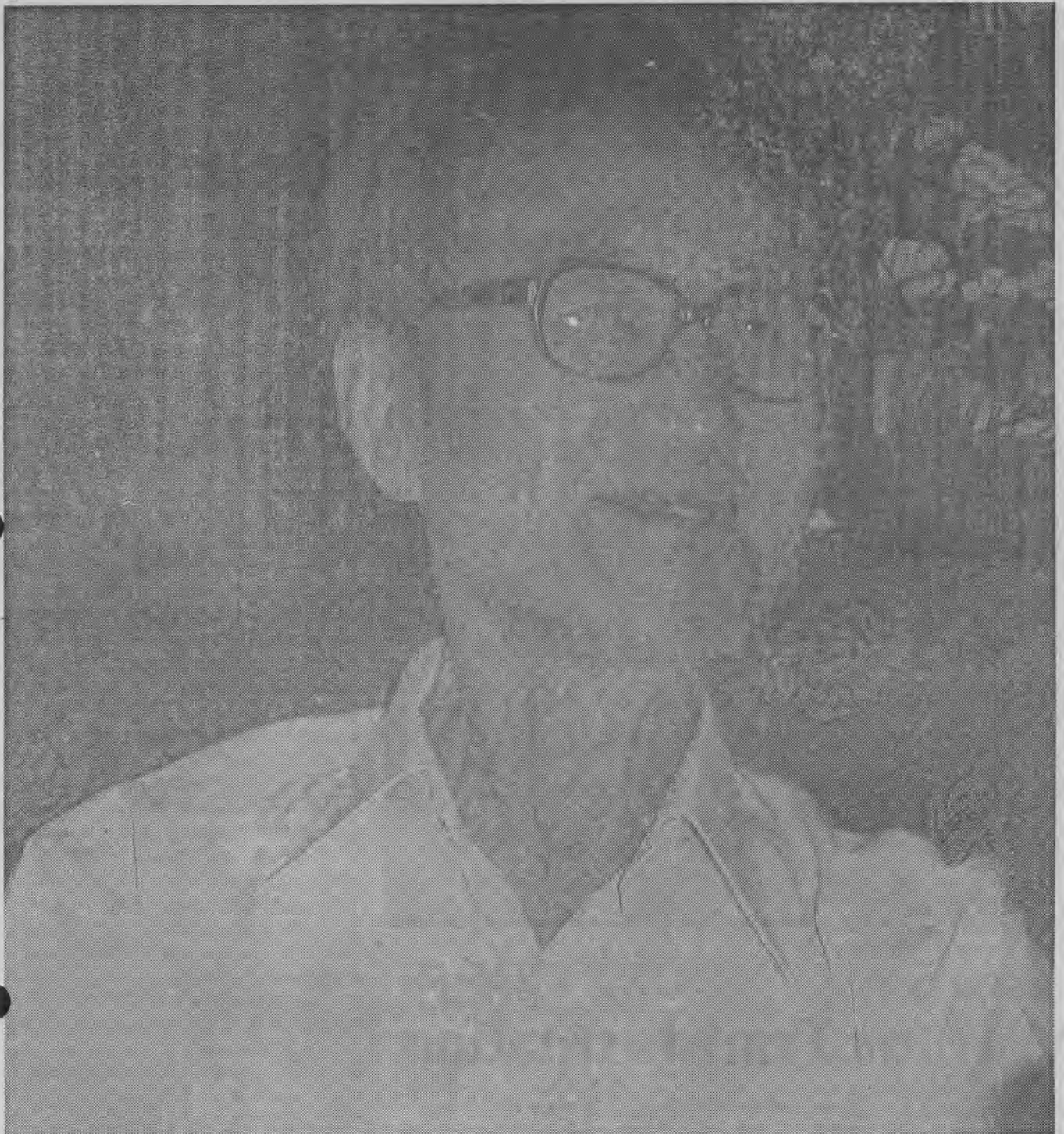
Do you know about any program of Maoist leader Prachanda to visit China?

Probably, he will visit China after assuming the role of prime minister. We are ready to welcome him at any time. After his appointment as prime minister, he will likely pay his first visit to India. Only after this visit, he may pay his visit to China.

What kind of support will China give to the Maoist government?

Like it gave to the past governments, China will give similar support to Maoist government.

Since Nepal's Constituent Assembly is draft-



ing a new constitution establishing a federal state, what kind of state do you suggest for Nepal?

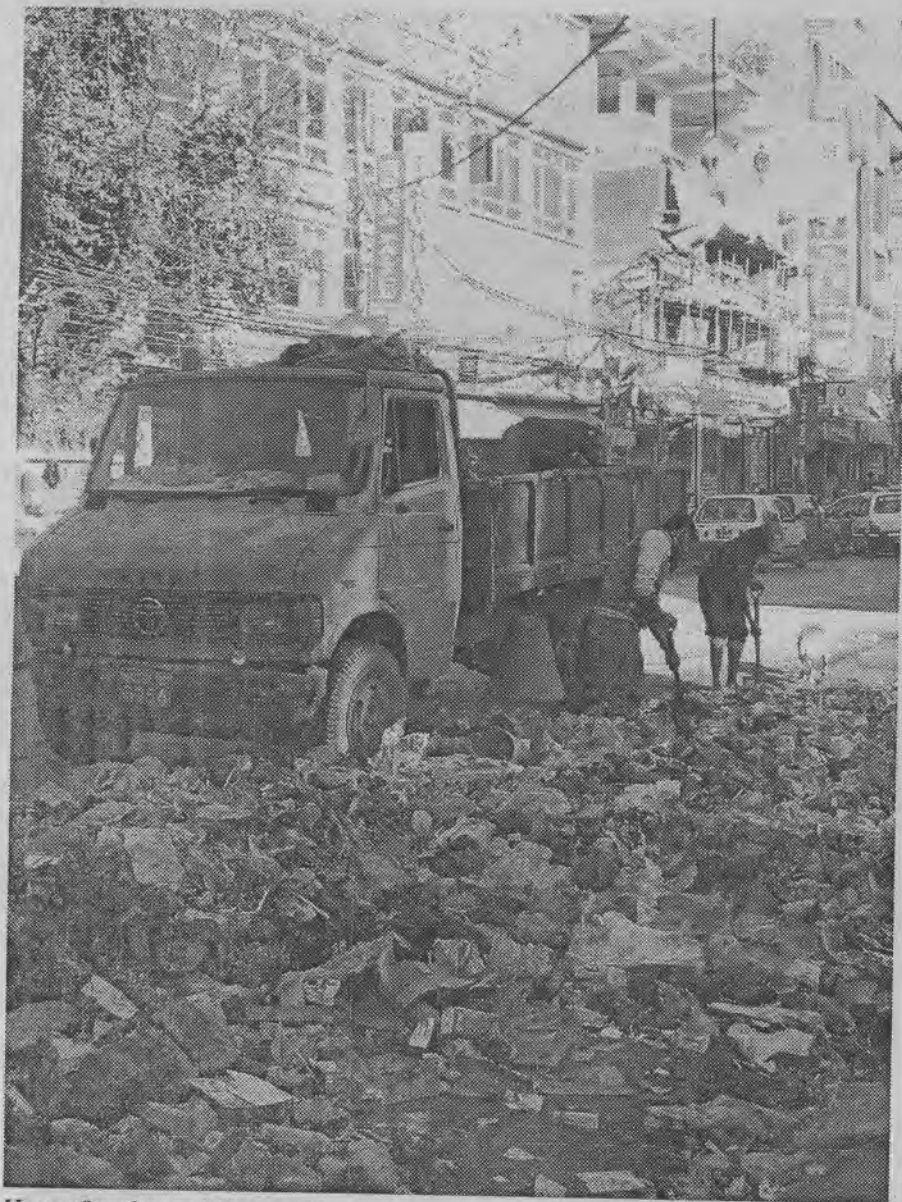
Although Nepal is geographically a small country, it is a country with diverse linguistic and ethnic groups. The state should be built by accommodating all of them. If Nepal is divided into several federal states under the basis of ethnicity, the country will be further weakened. Instead of ethnicity, Nepal should be divided under the basis of geography. Only this kind of federal state will make Nepal as a strong and modern nation.

How has China been looking at the growing Indian role in Nepali politics?

China is well aware that India wants to make Nepal as a second Bhutan or Sikkim. There is a possibility of Nepal heading towards Sikkimization. China should not allow such a situation to come to pass. China will always support Nepal remain a sovereign, independent and unified nation.

What kind of support?

China always supports Nepal's sovereign rights, unity among political parties as well as unity among patriots. In my opinion, the time has not come yet to play any role for interference because the feeling of patriotism has not died yet in Nepal. ■



Heap of garbage : Urban problem

SANITATION

Way for Transformation

Investing just a small amount of money in sanitation can bring substantial change in the life of rural population

By KESHAB POUDEL

“**F**or the last one year, I didn’t have to take my children to dispensary and health posts as in the past when I used to visit at least once a month for the treatment of stomach ailments,” said Radhe Dum, of Kaptangunj Village Development

Committee of Sunsari District.

“The construction of toilet not only saved my money that would have been spent on health treatment but also enhanced my dignity and pride in society as I am one of the persons in the village who owns a toilet like those high class

and rich people,” said Dum.

In most of rural Nepal, toilet is a facility only for the privileged and high class lots. It is beyond imagination for the underprivileged and marginalized population like Radhe Dum. Although it costs very nominal amount of money to construct, poor population of the village cannot afford it.

The contribution made by International Non-governmental Organization like WaterAid Nepal and partner NGOs like Nepal Water for Health (NEWAH) has helped change the life of persons like Radhe Dum. Along with the implementation of Community-led Total Sanitation (CLTS) by these organizations, other organizations like UNICEF, Oxfam-Nepal, ESCARDS-Nepal, IDS-Nepal have also been launching various projects in this sector.

Although experiences have shown that construction of latrine by spending a small amount of money can transform the life of marginalized people, the government—which is providing huge subsidy to import the oil—, is yet to increase the annual budget for sanitation. According to Ministry of Finance, the government has spent about Rs 5 billion as a subsidy to import oil which is mostly used by affluent community of the urban areas.

“If we continue to subsidize the oil price (current subsidy which is about Rs 1.5 billion a month), the government will be compelled to cut the budget in social sectors like health, water and sanitation and education,” said Krishna Hari Banskota, joint secretary of Ministry of Finance.

Despite its major contributions in making people healthy and transforming the society, the sanitation is yet to get the adequate budget from the government and most of the projects rely on the contribution of donor agencies.

“Sanitation is yet to get priority in the government budget. This is the reason 14.2 million out of 27 million total population of Nepal don’t have access to sanitation,” said Rabin Lal Shrestha, program officer of WaterAid Nepal. “The number of households with an individual family latrine stands at 36 percent and latrine sharing is more common in rural areas.”

At a recent program organised by WaterAid Nepal, politicians of various

political parties, experts and media persons stressed about the need to increase the annual budget in sanitation sector to provide basic facilities for people living in the remote parts of Nepal.

"Sanitation symbolises the sign of prosperity as well as happiness. As an elected member of Constituent Assembly from Kathmandu, I am ready to support any kind of program targeted at water and sanitation," said Member of Constituent Assembly Nabindra Raj Joshi. "I will press the government to increase the budget in this sector."

In the last five years, the government allocated about 3 to 4 percent budget annually to sanitation and drinking water. "The trend of budget allocation over the last five years indicate that local bodies (VDC, DDC, municipalities) have only a share of 12 percent," said Shrestha. "In 2004, Wateraid Nepal estimated the annual resources gap to meet water and sanitation target of MDGs at US\$23 million per annum. In 2005, the National Planning Commission/UNDP jointly produced a Second Progress Report on the MDGs, which estimated the annual resource gap to be at US\$ 43 million per annum – substantially higher than WAN's estimate."

A study conducted in eight districts (Dhading, Baglung, Makwanpur, Ilam, Nawalparasi, Kavre, Baitadi and Pyuthan) shows that the majority (more than 50 percent) of extremely poor people are excluded from acquiring sanitation services because they cannot afford the project conditions of cash or labour contribution.

The government allocated around Rs billion in the 2006/2007 fiscal year in the water and sanitation sector. However, it was reduced to Rs 5 billion in the year 2007/2008. Any reduction in the budget in water and sanitation sector will hamper development projects.

"If the trend of reducing budget allocation is not changed and budget employment efficiency is not improved, the Millennium Development target will be missed by considerable distance," said Shrestha.

With the investment of just a little over Rs 2,000 (US\$ 30) to build a toilet, one can see drastic change in the life of poor and marginalized people.

At a time when the government is in the final preparation for the budget for



Water Tap : Water for all

coming fiscal year, WaterAid Nepal, in coordination with UNICEF, WHO and others, have already delivered appeal letters to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Physical Planning and Works and the National Planning Commission demanding more money in the water and sanitation sector.

"The concerned officials are positive regarding the budget allocations. We can save lives of more than 13,000 children who die before reaching five years of age due to water-borne and poor sanitation-related disease," said Sanjya Adhikary, country representative of WaterAid Nepal.

Thanks to the public awareness activities launched by WaterAid Nepal, greater number of politicians now have fairly good knowledge about the problem of sanitation. "I cannot commit how much I can influence in the budget making process but I can definitely say that

I will lobby in the party to give priority to sanitation sector," said Parbati Thapa, CPN-Maoist member at the Constituent Assembly.

"Nepal is celebrating international sanitation year; there is a need to have a political commitment in the water and sanitation sector. CPN-UML's party manifesto talks about the need to provide drinking water to all and to provide basic sanitation to all," said CPN-UML leader Ananda Pokharel.

"As we have been celebrating the International Sanitation Year, this is the right time for all stakeholders to take strong action to provide sanitation for all the population, particularly the socially and economically marginalized population," said Sanjaya Adhikary, country representative of WaterAid Nepal. "These kinds of commitment expressed by political leaders will press the government to do more in this sector." ■



Susan Goldmark, the World Bank Country Director of Nepal, distributing award

NEPAL DEVELOPMENT MARKETPLACE 2008

Award With Cause

In the contest organized by the World Bank, Nepal's 25 grass root level organizations win the cash award

By A CORRESPONDENT

From Karnali Bachat Tatha Rin Sahakari Sanstha, a community based saving and credit cooperative working in remote parts of Nepal utilizing local resources for poverty alleviation, to Ekikrit Samudayik Bikas Aviyan, which promotes Yak through tourism for livelihood, various grass root level organizations have been making difference in the life of the people.

Various 25 organizations like Center for Renewal Energy (CRE) with a project Light for All, Intermediate Technology for Long-Term Solution and converge design consultancy, a low cost organic farming- have demonstrated innovative ways of changing the life of people for the better.

As it is said small is beautiful, these organizations taking part in Nepal Development Market Place 2008 also showed how small efforts can bear fruit. These 25 organizations, which received the award, have been actively promoting various small scale developmental projects as a model to fight against

poverty.

According to the World Bank news release, twenty-five civil society organizations from across Nepal won grants from a Rs. 37 million (US\$ 600,000) pool funded by a partnership between the World Bank and the Nepal Poverty Alleviation Fund. Supported by the Society of Economic Journalists, the winners received approximately Rs. 1.5 million (US\$ 20,000) each to implement innovative ideas aimed at delivering basic services and expanding livelihood opportunities in rural areas.

Although they are small development projects directed to uplift various strata of population, they have potential to make a change in the life of general population. At an exhibition organized in Nepal Academy, the participants demonstrated their innovative ideas and concept.

"The innovative, home-grown solutions to deliver basic services to rural communities that were presented have a huge potential to make a difference in the lives of poor people,"

said Susan Goldmark, the World Bank Country Director of Nepal. "Without peace, it will be very difficult to have development and conversely, without development, there will be no peace."

Sponsored by the World Bank and various partners that used a transparent process to identify and support grassroots initiatives with innovative approaches to solving challenging development issues on a global, regional and country basis. The program has awarded nearly US\$ 34 million to roughly 800 small-scale projects over the last seven years.

As the country has been passing through transitional period, this year's title security and the peace through development was quit apt. The theme was designed to generate fresh thinking about the delivery of basic services to the poor and expanding livelihood opportunities to rural populations to enhance the peace process through development.

According to organizers, after receiving a total of nearly 500 eligible proposals from all parts of the country, 50 finalists were chosen to participate in national competition in Kathmandu from where 25 winners were selected. An independent jury of distinguished guest judges, from various segments of society, was formed to examine the detailed proposals received from the finalists and to publicly interview them at the final completion event before selecting 25 winners.

The finalists range from grassroots service providers, including public sector development agencies, community-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations; to schools and universities; and private sector business. Their enterprising ideas and creative partnership focused on improvements in the delivery of basic services in areas of health, water and sanitation, agriculture, irrigation and food security, small business and micro enterprise support, energy, information and communication technologies, infrastructures and employment creation.

"I was pleased to see that there is participation of women in all of them," said Anuradha Koirala, chairperson of Maiti Nepal, social activist and a member of jury. ■

Amazing Nepal

- By Barun Roy

As Nepal embarks on its new journey, a lot depends on how its two neighbors, India and China, behave.

Nepal continues to amaze. The peaceful revolution that brought an end to the country's 240-year-old monarchy, with a minimum loss of lives, and now its equally-peaceful transformation as a secular democratic republic is unexpected, to say the least, in today's world of political, economic, religious, sectarian, and racial violence. As the world watched with admiration, the Nepalese let a hallowed, and one would have thought deeply revered, institution quietly pass into history. Revenge was not in the air. The victors didn't even flex their muscles in celebration, unlike the usual winner behavior in South Asia.

Neither did the vanquished strike back in retaliation. That's the other amazing thing. It couldn't be that the king and the institution of monarchy had no following left among the people, bureaucracy, and armed forces; and we know how unpopular rulers or leaders would do anything to foment trouble to retain their rein on power. But nothing of the sort has happened in Nepal. Whatever King Gyanendra's other faults may be — and they are many — he hasn't made any move to reverse the popular will. He has accepted his downfall with grace and his ouster from the Narayanhiti Palace with dignity. For this unaccustomed show of wisdom that saved Nepal from a bloody catastrophe, he deserves our praise.

Amazing also is the role of the Maoists, who have emerged as the largest single party in the recent Constituent Assembly elections and are set to form Nepal's next government. The world knew them as terrorists. For 12 years, they fought in the hills and jungles of Nepal and had practically liberated vast tracts of the country and established their own rule. But when the time came, led by Prachanda, the fierce, they came out of their hideouts, laid down their arms, disbanded their armies, and fought,

not to impose a junta dictatorship, but to win a democratic election in competition with other democratic parties.

There couldn't be a better lesson for all other terrorists in other countries of the world, fighting for rights, justice and a myriad other causes, on how to read the times and bring their wars to an end for the greater good of their people. It's also a lesson for the world's terrorism-busters — all terrorists aren't treasonous, criminals fit to be locked in jails or killed off in fake encounters. Nepal has had its share of bloodshed, but at the crucial moment, it didn't lack its political will and wisdom to commonly face the truth. For once, the political parties left their bickering and petty interests aside to bring the Nepalese nation to a new starting point. That itself is a great achievement.

Where they go from here is, of course, a different matter and the world will be keenly watching. A big hurdle was crossed when the Maoists dropped their

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changed enormously —
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resistance to the idea of a non-Maoist as Nepal's first president. One hopes the process of forming a government will run smoothly too. The duty to ensure that it does is as much Prachanda's as all others', because a failure would be disastrous for the country that has long remained little more than a curio nudged between two very powerful neighbors.

As Nepal embarks on its new journey, a lot depends on how these two neighbors, India and China, behave. Of course, both will be wooing the new republicans of Kathmandu — it would only be a natural thing to do — but any muscle flexing by one would prompt the other into action, leaving Nepal in a welter that won't be comfortable to either. We don't want to see Nepal become a cold war hotspot.

Of course, it would need help to succeed in its new republican role that we should be ready to provide. But it would be a grave mistake, for India especially, to assume that just because we have had strong historical ties between us, our position of privilege should continue automatically. Times have changed — changed enormously — and if Kathmandu wants a revision of its treaty with India, New Delhi shouldn't be peeved. From a kingdom to a popular republic, Nepal has traveled a long way and matured as a nation. We must respect that. We must accept its desire to eke out an independent existence, without favor or patronage, and provide all the help that it may need. A Maoist-dominated Nepal shouldn't scare us into taking rigid, defensive stands that might lead to unwanted consequences.

If we really want that our own Maoists should return to the folds of constitutional politics, the least we could do is to let the Nepalese experiment succeed, with our active support, and not allow skepticism to mar the friendliness of a well-wishing neighbor made closer by geography.

Courtesy: Business Standard

Book

Gurkha Recruitment

At a time when debate over the future of Gurkha recruitment is going on, historian Surendra KC's book highlights some aspects of the debate

By A CORRESPONDENT

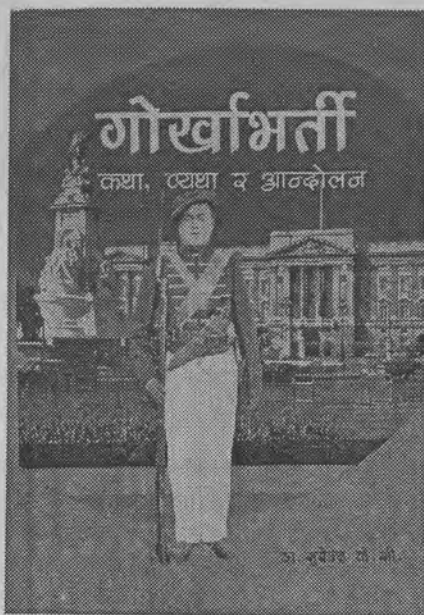
As the CPN-Maoist is in the process of forming the next government, Maoist leaders have already sparked the debate over the future of Gurkha recruitment in the country. As a nation wide debate over the recruitment has already been generated, a large number of pensioners of Indian and British Army have opposed the idea of closing down the recruitment.

For most of rural Nepal, Gurkha recruitment has not only brought the money but the technology as well as new environment in villages. In the hills, the Gurkha recruitment helped to transform the villages.

Although the Maoists secured less than 30 percent of the popular votes and need other parties' support to amend the constitution and bring about any new law that has long term implications, they have been saying that they will take all necessary measures to stop the Gurkha recruitment.

Whether one likes it or not, Gurkha recruitment has a more than two-century-old history since Nepal and British signed the agreement allowing Nepalese to join British army in India. This tradition was continued even after independence of India in 1947. The present status of Gurkha army recruitment is governed under a tripartite agreement among India, UK and Nepal in 1947.

After the handing over of Hong Kong to China, British government reduced the size of Gurkha in 1997.



Gurkha Recruitment Transition and Assertion

By: Surendra K.C.

professor of History

Published by: Sabita

Publication Taplejung

Price: Rs 1000.00, US\$

40 and UK sterling

pound 20

Pages: 741

This was the time when large number of laid off soldiers started to organize to launch a campaign demanding equal facilities to them at par with their British counterpart. In the process of agitation, many demands were met.

This book is all about the Gurkha

recruitment, tradition and assertion. Gurkhas fought legal battle as well as agitation highlighting their plight in the world.

Although the legal battle is still going on in England, most of the demands raised by ex-Gurkha army have already been met. As the demand of retired Gurkhas to get the permanent residency was met, a large number of pensioners and their families moved to England reducing Nepal's annual volume of remittances.

Supported by Gurkha Army Ex-Servicemen's Organization, which led the Gurkha agitation, the book, though it tells only one side of the story, is very interesting to read. Historian K.C. has made all out efforts to collect the materials and information related to Gurkha recruitment.

After the beginning of recruitment of Gurkhas in British, they have fought several wars to defend British Empire. Whether in the First World War or Second World War, Gurkhas were drawn to those war. Gurkhas even took part in the controlling of civil war in Malaysia.

Gurkhas also received several awards for fighting the war. Historian KC has divided the book into seven different chapters. Written in Nepali language, the first and second chapter is related to the history of recruitment and the third chapter is related to tripartite agreement.

Fifth chapter deals with Gurkha problems and GAESO agitation. This book helps to understand how GAESO movement begun and how the division was created within the former British Gurkhas after the formation of organization.

At a time when there is a debate over the process of recruitment, the book is interesting to read to understand various aspects related to Gurkha's recruitment. ■

“The media is confused. It has made the country confused and even the international community confused.”

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, addressing the Constituent Assembly (CA) and delivering his resignation, elaborating the complexities of the peace process.

“The same parties had signed the deal in March with the United Democratic Madhesi Front. Why can't they incorporate the already agreed items in the constitution amendment bill?”

Upendra Yadav, coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF).

“No one should try and raise issues that will delay the formation of government and writing of constitution.”

Mohan Baidya Kiran, senior Maoist leader, deploring the obstruction of the CA meeting by members of Madhesi parties.

“I don't see any use of raising the demand for single Madhesh state. How can we deny the right of other communities living within Terai region?”

Jhal Nath Khanal, general secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML).

“When my brother came and asked me if I would like to rescue a small girl who he said was like our sister, from the pit, I said yes and went there.”

Kamal Nepali, a young boy, who rescued Aradhana Pradhan with the



help of canyon experts, a two and a half year old girl, from a deep pit where she had fallen into in Pokhara.

“We have suffered from short supply since last 32 months. We want this to end once and for all.”

Shiva Prasad Ghimire, president of Nepal Petroleum Dealers Association (NPDA), which has stopped sales and distribution of petroleum products demanding smooth supply, among other things.

“The macroeconomic situation of Nepal is good but fragile.”

Brian Aitken, deputy chief of Asia

Pacific Department of International Monetary Fund (IMF), who recently visited Nepal to take stock of budget preparations.

“I urge all parties to work together to resolve this crisis so that the trucks and fuel needed to carry WFP humanitarian food assistance to drought and conflict-affected populations, and vulnerable women and children can be made available.”

Richard Ragan, World Food Programme (WFP) representative for Nepal, expressing concern at continued strikes and disruption in fuel supply.

TRANSITION

ANNOUNCED: Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, his resignation from the position, at the Constituent Assembly (CA) meeting.

OBSTRUCTED: The functioning of CA by members of Madhesi parties demanding incorporation of their demands in the fifth constitution amendment bill.

FELICITATED: Kamal Nepali, a 12-year-old boy, who rescued two and a half year old girl trapped in a deep pit in Pokhara, by several organizations with cash prizes and honors including Ganesh Man Singh Bal Pratibha Puraskar.

TABLED: The Fifth Amendment Bill to amend the interim constitution, by the government, at the Constituent Assembly secretariat.

SIGNED: A twenty-one point understanding by the seven parties, to end the political deadlock on implementation of peace pacts and constitution amendment.

ENDED: The indefinite transport strike, after the government allowed the transporters to hike the fare by 27 percent.

EXHIBITION

Heritage On Canvas

Two artists Gyanmani Ray and Joland Alcott capture valley's heritage in their canvas

By A CORRESPONDENT

Although different artists have their own way of painting, one of the common features among them is their ability to express their creativity. At a time when valley's heritage sites have been gradually overshadowed, the only way to conserve them for future generation is to help raise awareness through any means including art and painting.

In the course of modernization and urbanization in the last five decades, Kathmandu valley has already lost many important cultural and heritage sites. As new concrete buildings have mushroomed, the green land of valley turned into a concrete jungle.

Exhibited at the walls of Siddhartha Art Gallery, the arts works of the two artists remind the people about the old heritage of the valley. Along with the temples and heritage sites of valley, the life size paintings of various places of Kathmandu valley easily captures the attention of common art lovers.

The paintings of traditional lamps, trishuls and Vajra found in the temples are very interesting. The artists have also made the attempt to paint some of the important cultural and religious objects, which have already disappeared.

Inaugurated by Riddhi Pradhan, president of Nepal Heritage Society,

exhibition showcases paintings that have been created using special methods. The reversed glass paintings of Ray and Dutch artist Alcott's minutely capture the objects of their desire.

In this technology, the artist covers the front of the glass and paints in the back with acrylic. The artist has to wait till last minute about the result. Dutch artist Alcott also uses other media of silk along with colors to give extra effect to her paintings.

Ray's works are based on the spot observation as he paints the cultural and religious artifacts of various temples around the valley.

Although artist Ray uses bold colors in all his paintings, his actual preference seems to be light shade and tone of the objects. He is able grasp the objects in his canvas.

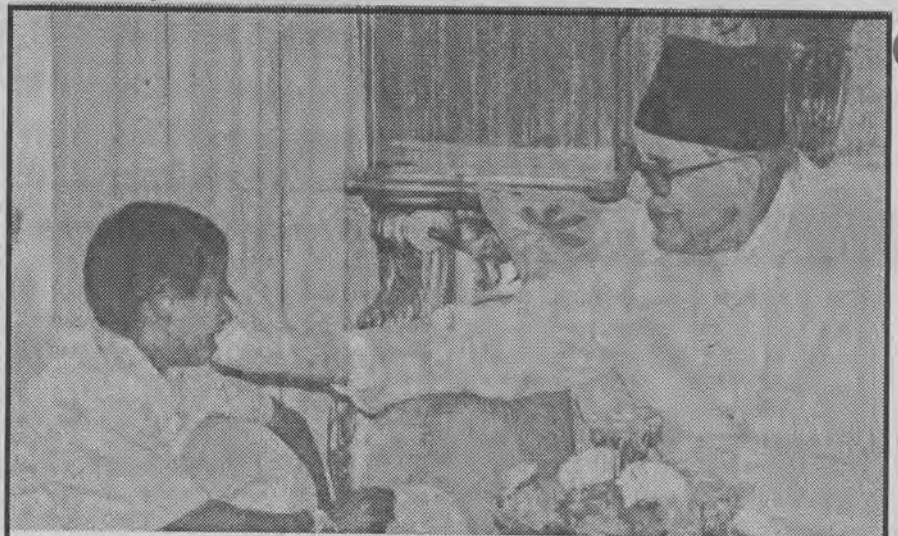
Like all foreign scholars and artists, Dutch Artist Alcott, too, finds the day to day life of Kathmandu valley as fascinating and colorful. And that is reflected in her paintings.

The reversed glass paintings by Alcott have unique character and importance. Having been here for just eight months, Alcott seems to have been inspired by the traditional artifacts of the valley.

According to artist Alcott, the landscape back home is grey and neutral in color. What she was surprised with here is the color of surrounding, which she finds brimming with vibrancy and full of life.

From gods to temples, her paintings capture various forms of day-to-day life of Nepal. She also paints the figures of Ganesh and other gods.

At a time when Kathmandu Valley's face is transforming rapidly, the paintings of this kind will help retain old glory and conserve them for future generation. The exhibition is on till July 9. ■



PM Koirala giving award to Kamal Nepali

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