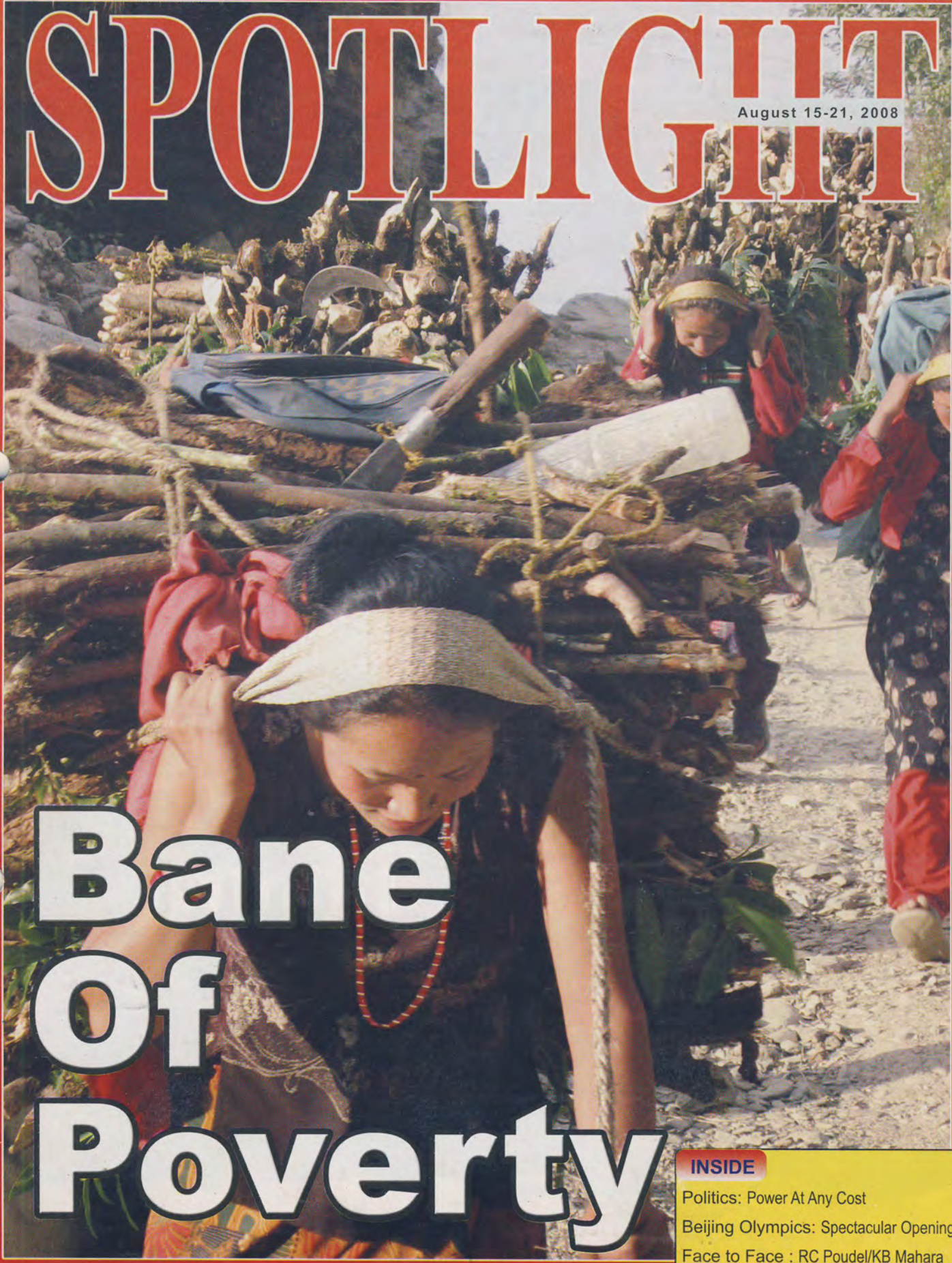


# SPOTLIGHT

August 15-21, 2008



# Bane Of Poverty

### INSIDE

Politics: Power At Any Cost  
Beijing Olympics: Spectacular Opening  
Face to Face : RC Poudel/KB Mahara

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# *Come together* with **San Miguel**

My journey into music and recently into acting, has been one that has been both exciting and fulfilling for me. I know that this journey has been as smooth as it has only because of the trust and support of my friends and listeners – and I am grateful for this.

In my personal as well as professional life I seek smoothness – like **San Miguel**, a drink that reminds me of friendship.

- **Nima Rumba**  
Singer/Actor



**San Miguel** BEER

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**Ram Chandra Poudel and Krishna Bahadur Mahara**  
 Senior Congress leader Poudel and Maoist leader Mahara talk about the lingering in the government formation



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**SPOTLIGHT**

THE WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

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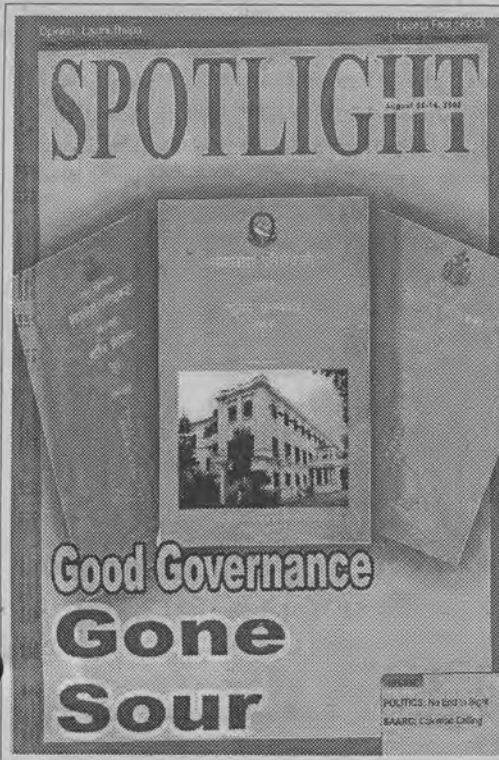
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The continued stalemate to come to a workable understanding between the three major political parties has pushed the country into prolong course of political instability. Although the Constituent Assembly has already published the elections programs for the post of prime minister which is scheduled on (Friday 15 August, 2008), it is still uncertain who is going to be prime minister of this country. Despite emerging as a largest political party in CA, Maoists leaders are unable to convince other political parties that they will adhere by the democratic principle. That is necessary to break the present deadlock. The claims by the Maoist leaders that they have climbed down from their rigid stance to break the deadlock plaguing the Nepali politics seems to be only a ploy to befool their rivals. Their periodic outbursts only manifest their inexperience, immaturity and lack of finesse so very essential in statesmen. Their insistence to stick to the laws of the jungle and not disciplining the Y.C.L despite the fact that they are number one contender to form the next government has only damaged their image and stature. Their quiet and carefree support to the anti-national policies of SPA government has disillusioned the overwhelming poor Nepalis. The Maoists like other big political parties, it seems, have become like skeletons - devoid of body and soul. They are like puppets that can be easily molded and moved to any shape or direction by a skilful artist or an influential benefactor. It is a great pity and misfortune that the millions of poor Nepalis have not yet been made wiser to this reality. The intelligentsia, the civil society and the media that should have taken this national responsibility on their broad shoulders have totally failed to perform their obligation. A fairly large number of these people have themselves been caught in the same dragnet and fallen victims to the temptations hurting the nation's interests. No wonder the country is floundering and impatiently waiting for all patriotic Nepalis to come together and save the poor country from going into total ruin. This is not a time for witch hunting. It is a time for us to forget our differences and join hands to defend the integrity of our dear motherland.

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



### Good Job

After reading umpteen number of boring political analysis, you have rightly brought the cover story on good governance (Good Governance: Gone Sour, Spotlight August 08-12, 2008). One must thank the Auditor General for taking such a courageous step by revealing how irregularities are going on in the institution like Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority, which is supposed to work to check the irregularities. This is a revealing story. It also exposed how funds were monopolized and misused in the agency.

**Gagan K. C**  
Via email

### Frustrating Matter

It was very frustrating to read about the lack of transparency in the funding of agencies like DANIDA and DFID. Although they are spending money of tax payers of Kingdom of Denmark and United Kingdom to make Nepalese government transparent, it is very strange to know that even they have not shown the final auditing report. Every Nepali citizen understands how western countries like Denmark and United Kingdom have been supporting Nepal's effort to fight against poverty but it is their obligation to make public how their money was spent in Nepal. There is allegation that in the name of good governance, there are big misuses of scarce funds given by donor

countries. As the AG report pointed out the time has come to introduce transparency in this area.

**Laxman Sharma**  
Via- email

### Corruption At All Level

There is no denying the fact that irregularities are rampant at all levels in Nepal but between 2001-2006, anti-corruption campaigns were directed against institutions like political parties and bureaucracy. From formation of high-level anti-corruption body by then king Gyanendra to property commission set up by elected government and anti-corruption moves made by Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority, there were waves of anti-corruption drives. After reading your cover story (Good Governance: Gone Sour Spotlight August 08-14), one must conclude that the CIAA must release its own audit report of such funding

so that common Nepali people will have knowledge about the results of such anti-corruption drives.

**Mita Lama**  
Via email

### Efforts To Divide

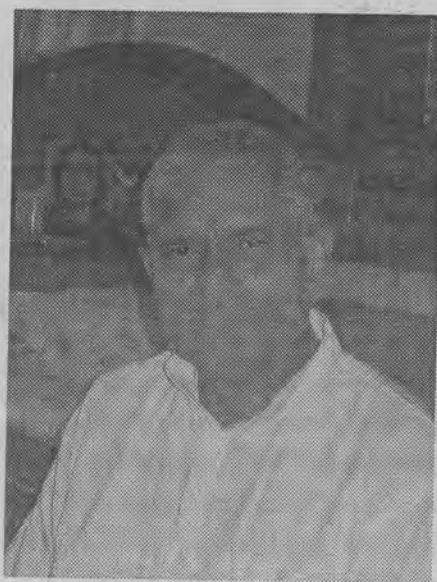
In the name of anti-Hindi move, some Nepalese have been making efforts to divide the country into Hindi and Nepali group. I don't think it will pay anyone by condemning vice president Permananda Jha's effort to take oath in Hindi. Of course, one needs to respect the national language but it does not mean that one should not have right to speak Hindi and other language. The violent demonstrations launched by students union had harmed more than it had done any good to this country. The cover story (Politics of Discord: Undesirable Trend (August 01-07), is very objective.

**Madan Shrestha**  
Via email

### Sour Sentiments

Once again the Pahadi communities living in Kathmandu valley have exposed their anti-terai and anti-Hindi sentiments. If Pahadis don't want to listen to Hindi, we too can make Madhes immune to Nepali language. If Hindi is foreign language in Madhes, Nepali too has similar status. Don't make language an issue in New Nepal. Those who signed all the unequal treaties were not the leaders from Madhes who spoke Hindi language. Don't question the loyalty of individuals like vice president Permananda who is more loyal to Nepal than any Pahadi..

**Agenda Sah**  
Chapkaiya Birgunj  
Via email



## President 'Directs' CA Secretariat To Elect PM

President Dr Ram Baran Yadav has directed the general secretary of the Constituent Assembly (CA) to make preparations for election of the Prime Minister as per the Article 38 (2) of the Interim Constitution. According to state-owned Radio Nepal, Dr Yadav gave the direction, through his secretary, to CA general secretary Manohar Prasad Bhattarai. It was an informal instruction as the President's office had been closed by the time the CPN (Maoist) leadership informed him about the failure to form the national unity government within the deadline, Bhattarai said. Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' had telephoned President Yadav, immediately after the talks between four major parties ended inconclusively last evening (Aug 8), informing that his party had failed to form national unity government. President Yadav's letter to the CA secretariat instructing it to conduct election of the Prime Minister is expected to come on Sunday, Radio Nepal quoted the CA general secretary as saying. *Compiled from reports*

## No Alternative To Consensus, Says Koirala

Even as he is said to be trying to make a comeback, caretaker Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has said he still sees possibility of consensus and collaboration among the parties.

Speaking at a function in Kathmandu on Saturday (Aug 9), Koirala said there is no alternative to political consensus and that he is hopeful that consensus would build up. His remarks came a day after a series of parleys between four major parties for a unity government ended on a disappointing note. Earlier, Koirala had meetings with leaders of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), Madhesi Janadhikar Forum and other Madhesi parties and a number of fringe parties and reportedly sought their help to form new government under his leadership. He is expected to further intensify discussions with leaders of different parties, minus CPN (Maoist), to explore the possibility of a majority government led by Nepali Congress. *Compiled from reports*

## Talks Fail, New Govt To Be Formed By CA, Say Leaders

The talks among the top leaders of four big parties broke down, Friday (Aug 8) evening, after they failed to reach an understanding to form the new government even as the extended deadline provided by the president to Maoists to forge such agreement expired. The top leaders of four big parties – Nepali Congress (NC), Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), Maoists and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) – had resumed their talks late in the afternoon at Ministry of Peace but they could not reach to any agreement. According to Maoist chairman Prachanda, the parties will continue efforts to forge understanding. "The talks are moving ahead. It will be held again on Saturday," Prachanda said. However, MJF coordinator Upendra Yadav told reporters that the issue of leadership of the government could now be decided by the Constituent Assembly (CA). Earlier, the president was also elected through the CA. "The talks could not succeed within the time prescribed by the president because of the three bigger parties. They have not yet finalized Common Minimum Program (CMP), code of conduct or even who should lead the government," Yadav claimed. The UML general secretary Jhal Nath Khanal said the parties will continue efforts to find understanding. "Such efforts can

also be made from within CA," he said. NC vice president Ram Chandra Poudel also sounded optimistic. "We could not reach to understanding due to lack of time. We are discussing on three fronts – creation of environment of trust, finalization of CMP and division of portfolio," he said. With the failure of the talks on Friday, the efforts to form a government of national consensus – as urged by the president – have also broken down. Analysts expect the president to make another call to the parties to show the majority in the CA and form the government. *Compiled from reports*

## Govt Under Our Leadership Almost Impossible: Baidya

Senior Maoist leader Mohan Baidya 'Kiran' has said that the possibility of his party forming the next consensus government was almost nil following the Nepali Congress's move to form the next government. Referring to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's consultations for forming the new government, he said the NC is hell-bent to stop the Maoists from forming the government. "That's why the NC is also blocking the process of making the Common Minimum Program (CMP) of consensus government in the name of the Maoists not taking measures towards confidence building among the parties," he said speaking at the Reporters' Club on Thursday. Baidya also made it clear that his party would not seek further extension of deadline from the president for forming government of national consensus under the Maoist leadership. "As the Nepali Congress has stepped up to form the next government by itself, it is unlikely that we would form the next government," Baidya added. He further warned that the nation would face 'serious crisis' without the Maoist led government. *Compiled from reports*

## Prachanda Directs Party Organization To End Para Military Activities Of YCL

Maoist chairman Prachanda has directed the party organization, fronts and departments to immediately control the para military structure and activities of the Young Communist League. In a

statement issued by him, Prachanda has also directed his party organization to return all the seized lands and properties of government and private individuals. Soon after the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction stated that it would use Rs 3.35 billion in the Peace Trust Fund made available by the World Bank in the payment of outstanding salaries of PLA combatants in cantonments and to provide relief to conflict victims, Prachanda issued the statement. "Recently, we have received positive information about initiative by Peace Ministry regarding the cantonments and relief. Along with the implementation of commitments by the state, we will also earnestly implement our side of the agreement. As such, we want to direct the party organisation, fronts, departments and YCL to implement the agreement to control the paramilitary activities of YCL and return the lands and properties seized from government and private individuals during the conflict period. I also urge for cooperation from general public in this regard," Prachanda states in the statement. The statement has come at a time when Maoist is forging alliance with Nepali Congress, UML and Madhesi Janadhikar Forum to form the new government under its leadership. *Compiled from reports*

### Four Years On, RBB Revives With Profit

Four-year-old Rastriya Banijya Bank (RBB) — that was in loss to the tune of Rs 5 billion — has recovered it in the second year of takeover by the present management and begun posting profits. Felicitating its best branch offices and best employees, RBB chief executive officer Janardan Acharya said the bank registered Rs 5.69 billion accumulated profit in these four years. "In fiscal 2007-08, RBB posted an unpredicted profit of Rs 1.77 billion (unaudited)," he added. Focusing on RBB's success, Acharya said, "RBB reduced non-performing loans (NPL) to 20 percent from 72 percent. To facilitate customers, its establish

### Gyawali Group Moves Out Of Kantipur Publications

Gyawali Group has moved out of Kantipur Publications and Kantipur FM

Private Limited by selling off their entire share to their partner. After their exit, the board of directors of the Publications and FM has been reorganized. Kailash Sirohiya has become the chair of the board as well as the company's managing director. Swastika Sirohiya and Rameshwore Thapa have become directors. The Publications is the largest private media house in the country.

*Leading dailies report*

### Prachanda Miffed By Koirala

Seemingly outshined in the race for government formation, CPN (Maoist) chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal



'Prachanda' Thursday (Aug 7) expressed severe reservations to the recent round of political meetings held by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala for the formation of "a national unity government". The Maoist strongman, who is widely believed to be the prime-minister in the waiting, said that the intensified political parleys by PM Koirala has created problem in reaching an agreement with other political parties, adding that it has totally disregarded the Presidents' call to his party to take the initiative to form the new government. Emerging from a meeting with UML general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal at the latter's residence, Dahal told media persons that PM Koirala is also doing a wrong thing from the constitutional point of view with his political activism when the president has already set a time frame for the Maoists to form the government which end in two days. He said that at a time when the Maoists are holding meetings with other political parties, PM Koirala is clearly not helping by engaging in parallel political meetings. "In fact he is creating

hindrance for us," Dahal said, adding that although there has been agreement between the big four parties to form a "national unity government", his party has given continuity to such political meetings to realize it. Senior Maoist leader Baburam Bhattarai and Ram Bahadur Thapa accompanied Dahal in the meeting with Khanal just few hours after the latter met Nepali Congress leader and staunch Maoist critic Ram Chandra Poudel. *Compiled from reports*

### 'GLOBAL NEPALI' MAGAZINE LAUNCHED

Global Nepali, a monthly English language magazine, was formally launched amidst a ceremony attended by dignitaries, leaders, businessmen and journalists at the Soaltee Hotel in Kathmandu Sunday (Aug 10). Mainly targeted for Nepalis and foreign friends of Nepal around the globe, the magazine aims to connect every reader with 'sensible' articles, viewpoints, news and reviews by exploring doable ideas based on the ground reality and future prospects, according to its publisher Lal Krishna KC. Addressing the gathering, KC, who is also the chairman of Total Media Solutions (TMS), said, "After conducting a market survey of UK and other countries where there is a significant presence of Non-Resident Nepali community and friends of Nepal and Nepalese, we decided to launch a professional magazine to help foster dialogue among the expatriate Nepali community themselves and between the NRNs, foreign friends and Nepali policy makers, business leaders and opinion makers back home." He further said that the magazine will focus on and try to promote trade, tourism, infrastructure, development and investment essential for Nepal's prosperity besides covering political development. "While being committed to ideals like democracy, human rights, equalities and press freedom and trying to promote Nepal's national interests, the magazine will also strive to strengthen peace, sustainable development and better understanding among the global citizens," he said, informing that "Think Globally, Act Locally" is the magazine's motto. *nepalnews.com*



Spectacular opening of Beijing Olympic

**VICE PRESIDENT PARMANANDA JHA** has failed to reply to the order by the Supreme Court (SC) asking him to explain why he took oath of office in Hindi language. The VP had been asked by the apex court to furnish a written explanation within a week in response to a writ petition challenging the constitutionality of his oath. The deadline for him to furnish the reply ended on Tuesday (Aug 5) evening. On the other hand, the Office of the Prime Minister has already furnished the written reply. The writ petitioner had defined Office of the Vice President and Office of the Prime Minister as defendants. Meanwhile, SC assistant spokesperson Hemanta Rawal informed that as per the regulation of the apex court, a person gets 35 days of extra time to give such reply. VP Jha's oath row had sparked protests across the country.

**THE ORGANIZERS OF THE NATIONAL BEAUTY PAGEANT**, who managed the event last year without hindrances from Maoist ministers, have said the Dabur Vatika Miss Nepal 2008 has been postponed temporarily due to pressure from Maoist parliamentarians. The final show of the event was planned for Thursday (Aug 7). The Hidden Treasure, which has been organizing the show since its inception 15 years ago, also said discussion with the Maoist leaders is underway to convince them that the pageant show was not meant for using women as advertising materials or objects of entertainment. The organizations affiliated to CPN (Maoist), front runner being All Nepal Women Organization (Revolutionary), have been objecting the event alleging it to be an anti-women event inspired by capitalists. New date has not been finalized for the event.

**EIGHT NEPALESE ATHLETES ARE TAKING PART** in the Beijing Olympics, which will be opened on Friday (Aug 8)

evening. In the 29th Olympics, taekwondo player Deepak Bista was selected through success in qualifying matches. Other seven players were selected through wild-card entries. The seven players include Debu Thapa (judo), Phulmaya Kapchhaki (shooting), Kamal Bahadur Adhikari

(weight lifting), Karishma Karki (swimming), Prasiddha Jung Shah (swimming), Chandra Kala Thapa (100 meter race) and Arjun Basnet (marathon).

**TWO BOMBS EXPLODED WITHIN AN HOUR** on Wednesday (Aug 6) evening in Pokhara city in western Nepal injuring six persons. The bombs exploded in Sabhagriha Chowk and Jalparoad area. Six persons injured were Bhim Bahadur Pariyar, Sija Pariyar, Mithu Timilsina, Sabina Subedi, Biswas Gurung and Prabin Gurung. Biswas and Prabin are critically injured and are undergoing treatment at the Western Regional Hospital in Pokhara. Police have strengthened security situation in the city after the twin blasts.

**NEPAL POLICE DETAINED NEARLY 600** Tibetan exiles participating in anti-China protests in Kathmandu on (Aug 8) the day the Beijing Olympic Games open. Small groups of Tibetans gathered near the consular section of the Chinese embassy, defying a government ban on protests in the area. The police stopped the protestors several hundred meters from the embassy office and bundled them into waiting trucks to be driven off to detention centers. "So far, we have detained nearly 600 Tibetans for violating government orders," police officer Ramesh Thapa said. "We expect more arrests during the day."

**THE FEDERATION OF NEPALESE** Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Kailali Chamber of Commerce have filed a writ petition at the Supreme Court (SC) demanding annulment of syndicate system in transport sector. The writ asks the apex court to issue order to annul all kinds of syndicate system. It has defined government agencies as well as tanker and transport associations as defendants. The FNCCI has said that due to monopoly under syndicate system, the cost of transportation has increased by up to thirty percent. ■



# NEPAL CAN LEARN FROM LESOTHO

▪ - AB Thapa

**T**he world's population grew enormously in the 20th century. According to UN estimates, 1.65 billion people lived on Earth in 1900. By 1999 the world's population had passed 6 billion people, and the UN estimates that it will reach 9 billion people by 2050. But the annual supply of renewable fresh water will remain constant. As the UN Commission on Sustainable Development noted, the amount of water available to each person decreases as the population grows, raising the possibility of water shortages.

It is said that water shortages could also lead to international conflict as countries compete for limited

have been assigned to users and thus further irrigation would be restricted.

India is showing a great deal of interest in development of Nepal's storage dam projects that would help to increase virtually by four times the sustainable flow of our major rivers. Nepal, like Lesotho, can greatly benefit from the export of water to India.



*Like in the USA, where agriculture accounts for 83% of the total water consumption, in India also the demand for agricultural water dominates the total demand for water. India has the second largest population in the world. There are plentiful rains over most of the country but they are concentrated in a few months. As a result, India is already experiencing water scarcity. Mr. Chaturbedi M.C. had claimed that by 2005 the total ground and surface water would have been assigned to users and thus further irrigation would be restricted.*

water resources. In 1995 Ismail Serageldin, a top official at the World Bank, declared, "the wars of the next century will be over water." Political tensions over water often result when different nations lay claim to the same river, lake, or aquifer. According to the UN, more than 300 river basins and aquifers worldwide cross national boundaries, creating the potential for conflict.

## **India's Growing Demand for Water**

Like in the USA, where agriculture accounts for 83% of the total water consumption, in India also the demand for agricultural water dominates the total demand for water. India has the second largest population in the world. There are plentiful rains over most of the country but they are concentrated in a few months. As a result, India is already experiencing water scarcity. Mr. Chaturbedi M.C. had claimed that by 2005 the total ground and surface water would

## **India Willing to Pay**

The net benefit to accrue to our country from the export of water would be exceeding the net benefit as royalty from hydropower generation. Recently the information provided in the Indian news media clearly suggests that the Government of India is now engaged in developing a policy to obtain the consent of Nepal and Bhutan through a revenue sharing agreements in respect of the regulated waters discharged from the storage reservoirs built inside our countries. Unfortunately, our country is not paying attention to this highly important development that would help to maximize the benefits accruing to our country from the large storage dam projects to be implemented inside our country.

## **Landlocked Lesotho**

Lesotho, formerly Basutoland, is bordered on all sides by South Africa. Lesotho is one of only three nations in

the world to be completely encircled by a single country (the others are San Marino and Vatican City). Its dependence on South Africa for access to the outside extends to economic reliance as well, and has deeply affected the development of the country since independence in 1966. The kingdom of Lesotho is mainly mountainous and has a total area of 30,355 sq km. The capital is Maseru, which is the largest city Lesotho was able to reach an agreement to recover a fair share of downstream benefit (water export) despite its complete dependence on South Africa.

**Lesotho Highlands Water Project**

The Lesotho Highlands Water Project (LHWP) is one of the largest and most intricate construction projects currently underway in the world. The LHWP has been

etc Lesotho will bear only the cost of the hydropower to be built for supply of electricity within its territory.

In first phase only 18 cum/sec water will be exported to South Africa by partially implementing the LHWP at a cost of US \$ 2.2 billion. Hydropower will be generating only 72 MW. South Africa will bear the entire cost of the first phase project with the exception of relatively small cost of the hydroelectricity station. South Africa agrees to pay each year to Lesotho for 18 cum/sec water a lump sum \$25 million (in 1991 prices) for the first 50 years of the Treaty, subject to various adjustments for inflation and other financial considerations.

**Export Royalty in Perpetuity**

The South Africa would be recovering in full the capital cost of building the scheme within 50 years. After

*Nepal must hold negotiations to reach an agreement with India to get a fair share of downstream benefit prior to taking the final decision to implement our storage projects. Else our country would be deprived of such downstream benefit for ever. We all would be failing to protect our legitimate national interest whereas even the most backward landlocked country in Africa like the Lesotho is able to recover a great proportion of such net downstream benefit to accrue to the South African Republic from the use of the regulated flow of rivers after hydroelectricity generation in Lesotho.*

conceived to export water to South Africa and also to generate electricity for use in Lesotho. A series of five high dams to store flood waters and more than 200 km of tunnels will be built at a cost of US \$ 5.2 billion in mid-1991 money terms excluding escalation and finance cost over a program of 30 years to supply 70 cum/sec water to South Africa. Thus, the total flow of the waters to be exported to South Africa will still be less than the additional supply from the West Seti after the completion of the proposed storage dam project which is estimated at 90 cum/sec. The LHWP requires more than 200 km long asphalt reads, many bridges including the 465.5m long x 85m high bridge over the Malibannato River.

**The Treaty**

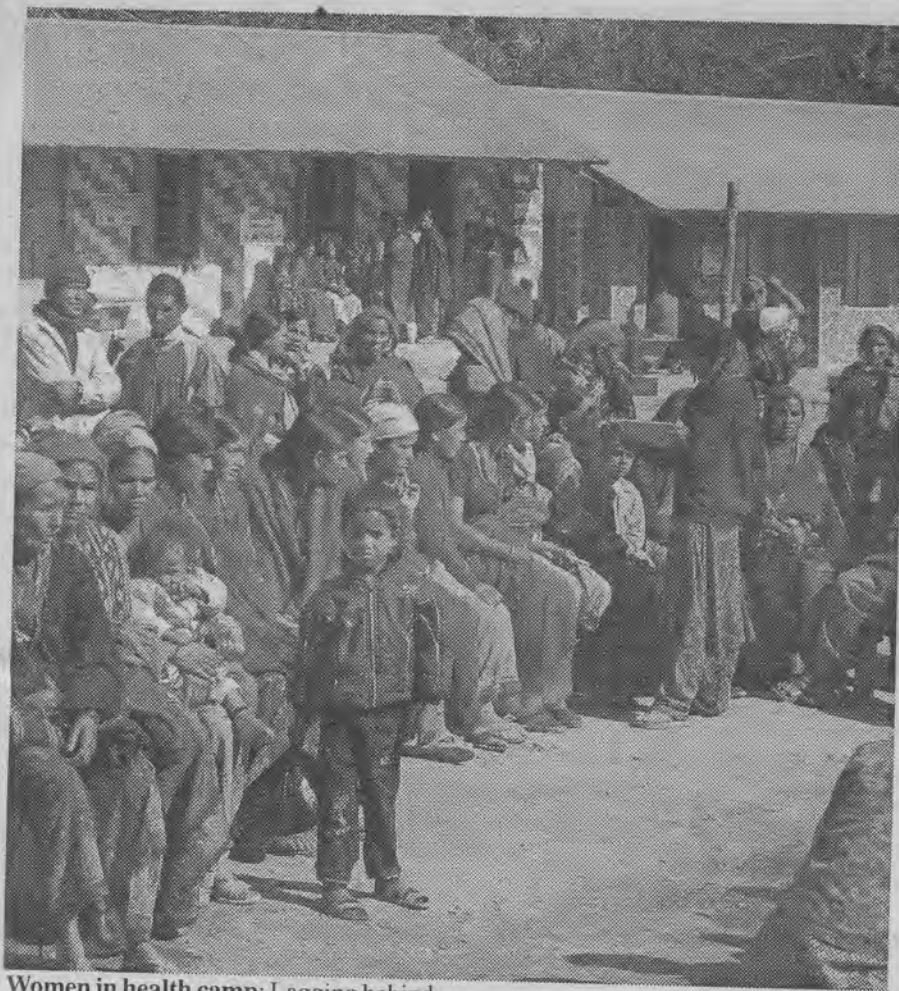
Realization of the scheme is made possible under a Treaty signed by the Republic of South Africa and Lesotho in 1986. Under the terms of the Treaty, South Africa agrees to pay a royalty for water delivered from Lesotho for the duration of the Treaty.

South Africa agrees to pay for the entire capital cost of structures required for water transfer, roads, bridges

that the royalty will be renegotiated for the period after 50 years. Thus, the Lesotho will be receiving in perpetuity the royalty for export of water.

**Lesson to Nepal**

Nepal must hold negotiations to reach an agreement with India to get a fair share of downstream benefit prior to taking the final decision to implement our storage projects. Else our country would be deprived of such downstream benefit for ever. We all would be failing to protect our legitimate national interest whereas even the most backward landlocked country in Africa like the Lesotho is able to recover a great proportion of such net downstream benefit to accrue to the South African Republic from the use of the regulated flow of rivers after hydroelectricity generation in Lesotho. Lesotho lagging far behind our country in human development index and completely thrown at the mercy of the powerful South Africa has recently demonstrated that it too has a good sense to take full advantage of the opportunity to exploit its water resources to accrue multifold benefits. ■



Women in health camp: Lagging behind

MDGs.

## Dragged By Giants

*A recent UNICEF report points that India and China hold the key to world meeting MDGs*

By SANJAYADHAKAL

**T**he promises made by the leaders of the world back in 2000 have to be kept within 2015. Known as Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) these promises are related with bread and butter issues, issues of sending children to schools and ensuring that people have two square meals a day.

These goals are pretty important for least developed countries like Nepal, which is just emerging out of the shadows of decade-long conflict where people have lofty aspirations.

However, a recent report has shown

that the global achievement of the health related Millennium Development Goals - the MDGs - depends largely on India's success and on China accelerating progress even further.

According to a new United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) report which examines the latest trends in child and maternal health, these two giants who are the two closest neighbors of Nepal, hold the key to the world achieving MDGs. Since Nepal is sandwiched between the two, their success will have direct bearing on how Nepal fares in these goals.

In this year's State of Asia-Pacific's Children 2008, UNICEF says it is a fundamental truth that unless India achieves major improvements in health, nutrition, water and sanitation, education, gender equality and child protection, global efforts to reach the MDGs will fail.

The report stresses that China too needs to make significant strides to regain early progress it made in child survival, citing that in 2006, 2.5 million child deaths occurred in these two countries accounting for nearly a third of all child deaths — India (2.1m) and China (415,000).

However, UNICEF acknowledged that the region's robust economic growth, the fastest in the world since 1990, has lifted millions out of poverty, thus considerably improving child survival, regarded by it as a key test of a nation's progress in human development and child rights.

"But gains have been overshadowed by deepening disparities, which means health care often fails to reach the poorest. This is a region with half of the world's children, spanning 37 countries and two hemispheres," the report said.

The report underscores a disturbing trend across the region: public health expenditure remains well below the world average on 5.1 percent, with South Asia spending only 1.1 percent of GDP and 1.9 percent being spent in the rest of Asia-Pacific.

In addition, as more services within countries are privatized and the government share of health budgets diminishes, public facilities become more run down and health workers leave for better paid jobs in the private sector or outside the country. "The divide between rich and poor is rising at a troubling rate within sub regions of Asia-Pacific, leaving vast numbers of mothers and children at risk of increasing relative poverty and continued exclusion from quality primary health-care services," the report said, adding that Pneumonia, diarrhea and malnutrition continue to be major causes of child death in the region.

The report further notes that unless discrimination against women and girls is addressed as part of overall strategies to improve child and maternal health, high rates of maternal and child mortality will remain stubbornly entrenched. ■



CPN-Maoist leaders: Power at any cost

## POWER

# At What Cost?

*Finally, politics in Nepal have come around the central point of power politics*

By KESHAB POUDEL

**T** "We will not join the Maoist-led government without defense portfolio. We need defense portfolio to take the peace process to its logical end," said Nepali Congress general secretary Bimalendra Nidhi.

Nepali Congress will seat in opposition if we are not given respective position in power sharing."

"We have to form the government at any cost. Except the defense portfolio, we are ready to negotiate on all other portfolios with Nepali Congress," said Maoist leader Prachanda, adding, "We want to keep defense portfolio for ourselves."

Although they spoke lavish and populist words like inclusive democracy, federalism and power to all during the election, now all the major political par-

ties are trying to form the government at any cost.

They have come around their main interest in power. Unlike during the period of political agitation and uprising, when one needs emotional slogans and rhetoric, now they need flexibility and skill of negotiations on power sharing.

This may be the reason why the political negotiations that started soon after the president's invitation to Maoist leader Prachanda to form the consensus government continued despite their failure to find consensus on political agenda.

"The politics of uprising and agitations needed various emotionally charged slogans and rhetoric. They were also needed at the time of election but those are not the real motivating factors

for the political parties in Nepal at present," said a political analyst.

"In each political party, there are persons competing to be in the leadership and use party instruments to run the government. Despite a dominating position of G.P. Koirala, there are several aspirants in the line of succession in Nepali Congress. Similarly, other parties too have the same kind of rivalry for leadership. Madhav K. Nepal, Jhalnath Khanal and K.P. Sharma Oli are jockeying for power within UML. Even a militant party like Maoists have leaders with same kind of known ambitions against each other.

"The Home Ministry is our bottom line. Our party will not support if they do not agree to give us home ministry portfolio," said K.P. Sharma Oli.

Within the Maoists there is a whispering propaganda on Prachanda Vs Dr. Baburam, Dr. Baburam Vs Ram Bahadur Badal and so on. Similarly, Madhesi suffer from personality factors in their leadership. Then only comes the real interest of Madhesi population.

"For the sake of power, one group of Madhesi leaders is prepared to join hands with anyone leaving behind their other Madhesi groups behind. So is the problem with ideological groupings. Compared to others, communists who are believed to be more rigid on ideological postures -are too entering into a politics of convenience rather than consolidating forces of common ideology," said the analyst.

Till the election, the popular public opinion was important. But soon after the election, they are into making and breaking of political alliances.

Soon after the election results, a broader communist alliance was in consideration for some time. In due course of time, that became irrelevant and parties entered into hard bargaining for power behind closed doors.

"This is not the time to form the communist alliance," said CPN-UML general secretary Jhalnath Khanal. "We need a

government of broader alliance of all political parties.”

In fact, Nepal has yet to step into a situation of organized competition of power against each other. They talk much about all party unity but that is with implied conditions that they should have a prominent share in the power.

Almost regularly, prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala has been issuing appeal for all party consensus in power sharing. But is he going to welcome a government without a share of Nepali Congress? Prachanda repeats almost the same line. The question: Will he accept a consensus government without any share to his party?

“Any layman knows in Nepal that they will not accept such a role in opposition lying down. This hard bargaining process for power is being unusually prolonged not for any ideals or ideological stake but for the aspirations of leaders in the parties,” said the political analyst.

For the past two years, all political parties harped the slogan of consensus government and national government without any opposition ignoring the natural way of democratic politics with responsible opposition and strong government. But now, Nepal has come back to the same competitive politics of ruling as well as opposition parties.” If we are not given respected position in power sharing, Nepali Congress will sit in opposition,” said senior Congress leader Ram Chandra Poudel.

The political analyst observed, “It would be a utopia or like the Panchayat system to have a consensus politics without strong opposition. Even in Panchayat, there were opposition elements although not validly recognized. Those interest groups in Panchayat were identified with some prominent contestants for power like Thapa group Bista, Giri and Chand group. Some were branded as hardliners, some were branded as liberals all the time. The power sharing was influenced by the roles of these groups. The failure of Panchayat



UML leader Jhahnath Khanal: Sharing power

was that this hard reality of ruling and opposition was not duly legitimized. Panchayat system suffered because of this inherent crisis. Surprisingly leaders of this new refined change called Loktantra too were harping the same terms of consensus politics.”

“However the inherent trend is coming out under different shades. One: to be in the government and another forced to be in the opposition. It will be miraculous if both the groups reach into a consensus program with their sincere understanding,” said analyst.

The consensus politics may come out, however, under leadership of manipulation by unseen external force. That was under the leadership of king during Panchayat system. That consensus will be imposed now, though the position has been shifted from palace to the external center.

One is alarmed of the consequences of this perversion of highly eulogized political change in Nepal. “If there ends the consensus politics, the country will face chaotic situation of dirty politics and leg pulling like in the past,” said professor Lok Raj Baral.

“Nepal needs a politics of consensus not politics of ruling and opposition at

this time.”

In fact, Nepal has already been introduced into a political system of competitiveness. The political analyst argues, “Whatever jargons and rhetoric are spread as mass euphoria, the reality is reflected in competitive politics having a strong government with a responsible opposition.”

“If there is no opposition, people will be left without any leadership and mouthpiece against the atrocities of the government.”

“After these few years trading into a dark fault of short sighted politics, a time has come for rethinking whole process. The constitution is yet to be drafted and the form of government is yet to be decided. This is high time to review the experiences of those few years and bring democratic process into an already tested root. There is yet time to save the country from vicious circle of instability and chaos,” said the analyst.

The process of political negotiations shows that political leaders want power at any cost. This could bring about a strong government and responsible opposition. ■

# TRAFFICKING Bane Of Poverty

With rampant poverty and lack of employment opportunities back home, every one is searching for a prosperous and easy life abroad. As there is no immediate sign of reduction in the level of poverty and increase in the employment opportunity, the rush to go abroad for employment is definite to increase creating unfavorable situation for trafficking. Prepared by National Human Rights Commission, the recent National Report on trafficking in persons especially on women and children reveals that as the vicious cycle of poverty press women and children to grab any employment opportunity abroad, they are prepare to take high level of risk resulting in alarming level of trafficking

By KESHAB POUDEL

*When Sumitra Limbu, 21, Hima Khatri, 21, and Sujata Sitaula, 20 came riding on a jeep and were about to cross the border into India at the Mechi bridge in Kakarvitta, 500 kilometer east of capital Kathmandu, Maiti Nepal's volunteers- who are assigned to intercept the trafficking - smelt something wrong.*

*When Maiti Nepal's volunteers*

*inquired about their journey, what they had suspected came true. As the girls - who were reportedly promised that they will be flown to Gulf countries via India - did not have any valid document, their journey could have inevitably led them to uncertain destination including the brothels in India's mega cities or even Gulf countries.*

*In an hour long enquiry, the girls*

*admitted that they had handed over their passport to Kumar Shrestha, main agent and resident of Jhapa who is at large. Although the three young girls were stopped with the support from Maiti Nepal and border police, hundreds of similar young girls cross the porous Nepal- India border every day without knowing their actual destination.*

*There are also growing incidents of*



**Rural women:** Lack of opportunities

involvement of middlemen/agents in luring innocent girls. Sita Pariyar, 48, a resident of Dharan-11 and Kalpana, 36, of Dibyapuri Village Development Committee of Nawalparasi district were arrested by local people and handed over to Area Police Post of Dharan recently. Local people reported that two women Sita and Kalpana were negotiating with young girls about sending them to Gulf countries via- India for employment. At the advice of Sita and Kalpana, some girls had even made passports to go to the Gulf.

These two cases reflect the complexity of the situation how young girls are lured by traffickers promising prosperous life and hefty income.

In the last few years, the mobility of Nepal's women increased by many folds. From internal migration from rural to urban and cross border migration, there

is a rush of young girls and children to leave the village for better future somewhere else. This is where is the higher risk of trafficking.

The National Human Rights Commission has come out with a report analyzing different aspects regarding girl trafficking. The report reveals alarming situation of trafficking despite the efforts of the government and non-governmental organizations to curbit.

"The studies reveal that among others, the perpetrators often take advantage of poverty, and ignorance among young and rural women to compel them to accept menace of trafficking. Available figures show that this menace has been increasing rapidly," said Bishal Khanal secretary at the National Human Rights Commission. "The report presents the overall situation of

trafficking of women and children in the country with special focus on foreign labor employment and trafficking."

Others, too, agree that the situation is very difficult now. "The availability of foreign labor market has also increased the possibility of trafficking due to nexus between trafficking and migration. This has led to a greater shift in types of victims, forms of exploitation/trafficking and countries of destination. Trafficking destinations are not only limited to the Indian brothels and other labor exploitative sectors in India but they have extended to the Gulf countries," said Padma Mathema, national rapporteur of the Office of National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Women and Children.

Illiterate and facing hardships and difficult life, majority of rural women seek panacea in the foreign jobs. They see

leaving the village itself is a respite. In this desperation, they are easy prey for traffickers.

Almost everyday the stories are published in newspapers regarding the arrest of agent and/or rescue of girls by police and volunteers like those from Maiti Nepal indicating the grave situation. According to report, there is no sign of reduction in their numbers.

"Our study has shown that the trafficking remains a major problem in Nepal. Despite some efforts, the cases of internal and external trafficking continues to rise," said Govinda Subedi, researcher of the report.

Along with the government, a number of NGOs are working against trafficking in Nepal. Several NGOs like Maiti Nepal, ABC Nepal, CWIN, Paurakhi, WOREC, Samanta, Saathi, Stri Shakti run various programs from rehabilitation to awareness generation.

However, it is yet to bring about any change. Maiti Nepal alone has intercepted and rehabilitated / reintegrated a total of 10,960 women and 8,755 children during the period of 1997-2007-8.

According to an estimate, 7,000 Nepalese women and girls are trafficked for prostitutions every year and among them 5,000 Nepalese women are trafficked into India. According to an estimate, more than 200,000 Nepalese girls are involved in the Indian sex trade.

As there is rampant poverty, even parents don't have any hesitation to send their daughters to employment. The wave of foreign employment, which has many positive side if managed properly, is attracting a large number of rural girls who want to bring economic prosperity in their family.

"The trade is fueled by ignorance and illiteracy and driven by poverty, gender discrimination, and greed," said Anuradha Koirala, founder of Maiti Nepal. "Parents sometimes willingly turn their daughters over to traffickers who promise city jobs that will allow the girls to send money home and return better off in a few years."

"There are three major destinations for the girls," Koirala said. Inside Nepal, girls are hired to work at hotels and restaurants and forced into the sex trade once they reach there. "The Middle East is the largest overseas destination,"



**A woman in the field:** Hard life

Koirala said, where girls supposedly hired as housemaids are forced to have sex with male members of the household. But the biggest problem is the sex trade in India. Maiti Nepal estimates that there are between 150,000 and 300,000 Nepali girls in Indian brothels. Till now less than 300 have been rescued."

Maiti Nepal's main preventive tool is education. They run workshops for police, lawmakers, and schoolteachers. In addition, Maiti Nepal has prevention homes in three districts with high-risks.

At Nepal's borders with India, Maiti Nepal has established nine transit homes. These homes are staffed with women who have themselves escaped from Indian brothel. They watch people crossing the border for likely traffickers

in hopes of intercepting them before they enter India.

"This is the best surveillance group because they know who is a trafficker," Koirala said.

Every year, five to seven thousand young Nepalese women are smuggled out of the country to India's cities, mainly to Bombay, Calcutta, and New Delhi. The conditions under which women are sold vary according to how widespread trafficking is in the particular locale, the age of the girl, and the economic status of her family.

Poverty is the most important factor contributing to trafficking in women and girls, particularly in remote parts of Nepal where daily life is difficult. With barely a crop in a year, the people do not have





**National Human Right Commissions Chairman Kedar Nath Upadhyaya releasing the report: Revelation of grim reality**

reliable livelihood. In recent years, some efforts have been made to transform the subsistence based agriculture; it is yet to make greater impacts in all parts of Nepal. There has been a remarkable growth in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and social pressure groups campaigning to stop trafficking in women and girls in recent years, what is lacking now are the economic incentives to retain the girls back home.

Activists and experts closely following the developments say that at least a dozen such organizations or groups are active nation-wide to stop girl trafficking, a social problem that has been staying around for centuries in remote and not-so-well-off parts of the country.

Such NGOs like the Maiti Nepal, WOREC, ABC-Nepal, and such INGOs like Planate Enfante, Save the Children US, UK and Norway have put considerable efforts in recent years to combat the problem.

NGOs suspect that one of the reasons for the steady number of trafficked girls is that mobility restrictions imposed by the recent armed conflict in Nepal now no longer exists.

According to Maiti Nepal, traffickers

have been luring girls into prostitution by offering them fake jobs in Gulf countries and Southeast Asia. The NGO says most of the vulnerable girls are younger than 16 years of age.

As foreign employment has made a major contribution to reduce the level of poverty in the country, the lure is natural. What is unnatural is the way government and non-governmental organizations interpret law and regulations. Although the new laws and regulations have enough protections for women and children, there are many contradictions and confusions in their interpretations. The new foreign employment act permits women to go abroad for employment but it puts so many restrictions that even well educated women may have to face many hurdles to get permission to go to the destination.

As Nepal's foreign employment act and regulation have prohibited informal process of securing employment in foreign country, many women like Limbu, Khatri and Sitaula have no option other than to choose this risky way. Likewise, brokers like Sita Pariyar and Kalpana, too, find their role to take girls through very risky route.

"Although the ban was lifted in January 2003, this formally applies only to the organized sector. Another way of recruitment of Nepali migrant laborers, especially that of women, to Gulf countries and Malaysia is via India (Mainly from Delhi and Mumbai). Although there is no authentic data on number of women migrant laborers recruited and transported through these transit points, it is believed that more than 50 percent of the Nepali women laborers in the Gulf countries have gone via these transit points," reveals the National Report.

The government of Nepal has given priority to women empowerment programs in its current three year interim plan (2006/2007-2009/2010). A total of Rs. 28 billion is allocated in women, development and empowerment and gender mainstreaming programs.

It is natural for human to rush after prosperity and happiness. As long as the government does not generate enough employment opportunities back home and allows women to choose their destiny giving full legal protections, women and girls will continue to be trapped in trafficking. ■

# "If Maoists Fail To Forge Consensus, We May Have To Go For Alternatives"

- Ram Chandra Poudel

*If Maoists follow our advice, there is a possibility for consensus government. If Maoists do not follow our advice, it is difficult for us to join consensus government.*

Vice president of Nepali Congress and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction, **Ram Chandra Poudel** is leading the party in the negotiation with Maoists for the consensus government. Poudel spoke to **SPOTLIGHT** on various issues regarding NC's position. Excerpts:

**Are you trying to form the national government without Maoists?**

We have not been talking about the need to form national government without Maoists. We have not held any meeting with any party for such government. In a process of forming a consensus government, we have certain differences over the issues of balance of power and power sharing. Nepali Congress firmly holds the view that there is a need for a consensus government with respectable power sharing. At a time when the peace process is yet to reach to its meaningful conclusion, Maoists should not be holding the defense ministry portfolio. It will make it easier for all.

**Is there any possibility to form national government without Maoists?**

Even till now, we have been saying that CPN-Maoists should form the government as they are the largest party in the parliament. We have not made any effort to form alternative government. We have been saying that the Maoists should lead the new government. If Maoists follow our advice, there is a possibility for consensus government. If Maoists do not follow our advice, it is difficult for us to join consensus government.

**PM Koirala is also meeting with leaders of 25 political parties, is that not an attempt of NC to lead the government?**



Prime minister Koirala is not meeting all parties as an effort to form the government. They are just a regular meeting and he is briefing all other parties regarding his participation in the SAARC summit. His concern is just to see the logical end of peace process.

**Will NC file its candidate for PM election in case you fail to find consensus?**

We will try our best till the last minute to forge consensus government. We have made it clear to CPN-Maoists. We have told them that you have the first choice to decide. If they fail to build consensus, NC will have to play the role of responsible opposition. In playing the role of responsible opposition, we may have to choose some way to express our dissensions.

**Is it true that NC offered UML to lead the government in case of failure to form the government under the leadership of Maoists?**

We have yet to consider such proposal. If Maoists fail to forge consensus, we may have to go for other alternatives. ■

## KEEP Promoting Tourism

*Kathmandu Environmental Education Project (KEEP) launches programs to promote tourism*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**s the new tourism season is approaching, different activities to attract more and more tourists have already begun. Amid various programs launched by different organizations, some have launched quite unique program.

KEEP, an organization helping tourism in Nepal, has launched a program to promote sustainable tourism. As an organization committed for both advocacy and stewardship of Nepal's incredible environment, KEEP continues to be a pioneer in the area of responsible

travel literature and training on responsible trekking practices.

After the signing of peace agreement and elections for the Constituent Assembly, Nepal has seen a changed situation. As there is relatively more political stability, the number of tourist arrival has drastically increased in the last year.

Despite the increase in the number of tourists, there still lacks enough manpower who can interact with the tourists in English language. Even many trekking guides do not have capability to speak in English. This hampers the tourism industry.

# “Whoever Leads The Government Must Hold The Defense Portfolio In Nepal”

-Krishna Bahadur Mahara

Minister for Information and Communication and spokesperson of CPN-Maoist, **KRISHNA BAHADUR MAHARA** spoke on various issues regarding the formation of government under Maoist leadership. Excerpts:

**Do you believe that Maoists will form the government next week?**

As all parties except NC have agreed to support our candidate, there is no doubt about forming the government next week.

**Why is your party not prepared to give defense portfolio to NC?**

We have made it clear that we will not give defense portfolio. It is against the practice of the government. Whoever leads the government must hold the defense portfolio in Nepal. Even NC has been holding it for a long time.

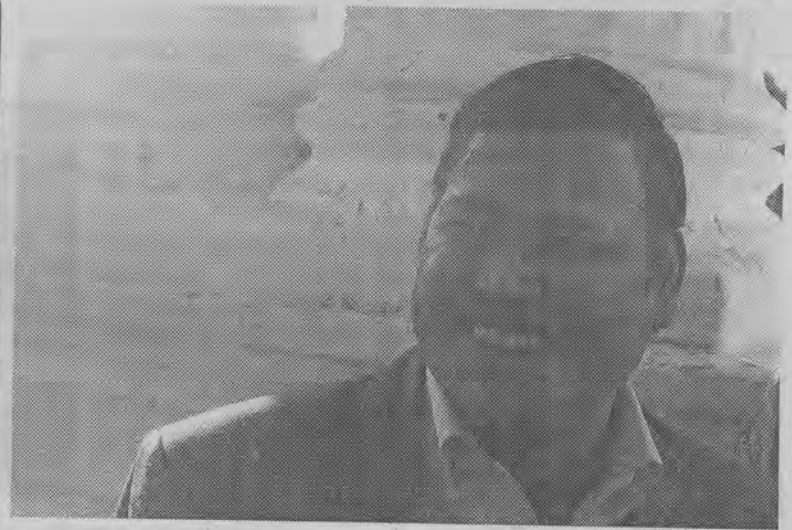
**What is the reason for making defense portfolio as a prestige issue?**

This is not a prestige issue at all. What we want now is to give continuity to tradition and practice of Nepal.

**Your party says you need to make new Nepal. What rationale you have to defend the traditions and practices?**

There are certain traditions which every one needs to protect.

**Even after 1996, NC had given defense portfolio to RPP ministers. Why cannot you do the same thing?**



We have made it clear that we will be fine to stay in opposition if we don't have main portfolios. We need at least two major portfolios among defense, home and finance.

**If NC decides to seat in opposition, don't you think it will create problems in peace process?**

We have been making every effort to urge NC to join the national consensus government under our leadership. If they stick to their demands, it is up to them to decide. It will not create any problem. Even after moving to form the government under article 38.2, our effort is still to form the consensus government. ■

*We have been making every effort to urge NC to join the national consensus government under our leadership.*



Keeping in mind the growing number of foreign visitors, KEEP has organized Monsoon Language Course for Trekking Professionals. More than three dozen people working as guides, trekking guide and others participated in the English language program.

“More than 242 tourism professionals were beneficiary of KEEP's language course in the past which were held in different parts of the country. Supported by George and Beatrice Jost,

Irish Himalayan Trust, Nepal Tourism Board and the Rhododendron Educational Trust and other local partners, the language course is one of the effective programs of our organization,” said D. B. Gurung Director KEEP. “Besides language course, we also conduct other various programs essential to the trekking and tourism industry.”

Established more than one and a half decade ago, KEEP has established itself as an organization dedicated to promotion of environment friendly tourism as well as supporting programs to enhance the tourism sector.

KEEP's Visitor Information Center (VIC) is one of the popular destinations for tourists. Along with providing

various literatures, the center also offers counseling service to the trekkers who want to go for trekking.

“Kathmandu VIC usually receives more than 30 trekkers per day during the peak season,” said director Gurung.

Although it closed its VIC in Salleri and Pokhara in late 2005 thanks to low number of tourist arrival, it maintains the center in Kathmandu.

One of the aims of KEEP is to reeducate travelers and the trekking industry professionals about the vulnerability of the natural environment and Nepalese cultural values in order to minimize the negative impact of tourism.

It also organizes programs to promote awareness of environment-friendly, eco-sustainable practices among agencies, porters and lodge owners in Nepal through tailor-made workshops and training courses. ■

# “China-Nepal relations are an example of friendly coexistence between countries of different size”

- By Zheng Xianglin

I'm very glad to be here today, meeting friends from different walks of life in Nepal and having interaction with you. A lot of feelings aroused during my more-than-one-year stay in Nepal. I feel that the Nepalese people are simple, hardworking, wise and kind, and Nepal has beautiful natural scenery and pleasant weather. In meantime, I happened to witness some historic moments when Nepal is undergoing major changes and transformation, and had deep impression on Nepalese people's efforts to promote the peace process. Today I want to make some introductions about China and talk about China-Nepal relations.

## Something about China

In the preparation for the Beijing Olympic Games, the Chinese Government and people have received strong support and cooperation from the Government and people of Nepal. On May 8, the Olympic flame historically reached the top of Mt. Qomolangma, which is the border peak of China and Nepal. It is a significant event for the friendly relationship of China and Nepal. Moreover, the Nepalese side has successfully held in Katmandu the 100-day countdown to the Olympic Games. I would like to, on behalf of the Chinese Government and the Chinese people, extend sincere gratitude and highest appreciation to the Nepalese Government, Nepal Olympic Committee and all friends who love peace, concern for the Olympics and commit themselves to China-Nepal friendship.

The Nepal Olympic delegation left for Beijing last week. Eight athletes from Nepal will participate in the competitions of five events namely shooting, swimming, judo, taekwondo and marathon. May the Nepalese athletes make great achievement in the Beijing Olympics!

The Government of Nepal and the Nepalese people expressed their

sympathy and assistance to Sichuan earthquake. Prime Minister Koirala sent a condolence message to his Chinese counterpart, and came to the Chinese Embassy to sign the condolence book. The Government of Nepal donated 100,000 US dollars for the rescue work. Meanwhile, many friends, societies and associations including Nepal-China Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Nepal Trans-Himalayan Trade Association, ICIMOD and Yulens School made donations for the affected area or gave us calls to express their sympathy and condolences. Nepalese mainstream media including TV, newspaper, magazines, and websites covered China's earthquake in many reports, and spoke highly of China's relief and rescue work. We were always moved by the donors' behavior. The true feelings can be revealed through disaster. The Chinese nation is such a nation that always knows to repay an obligation. The Chinese Government and people will remember the love and assistance forever, because it is not only a condolence letter, some sympathetic words and donation, but also symbolizes the friendship.

## About China-Nepal relationship History and Reality

After I started my work here, I got a better understanding about the China-Nepal relationship. China's historical scriptures have recorded lots of wonderful and detailed data about the contacts between China and Nepal. In 406 AD, Master Monk Fa Xian of Eastern Jin Dynasty recorded in *Account of the Buddhist Countries* his visit and detailed impression in Nepal. In the 7<sup>th</sup> century, well-known Master Monk Xuan Zang of



Tang Dynasty wrote in *The Traveling Notes of the Western Region in Great Tang Dynasty* about his visit to the birth place of Buddha. His Notes have now become valuable historical materials to study that period of history in Nepal. Since Tang Dynasty, there had been constant exchanges between China and Nepal and lots of historical events have become household stories for the people of both countries such as Princess Bhrikuti's marriage to King Songtsan Gambo and Arniko's guidance in constructing the White Pagoda.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations between new China and Nepal on August 1, 1955, the bilateral relations have ushered into a new era. In the past five decades, the two countries frequently exchanged visits of high-level leaders and expanded exchanges and cooperation in various areas.

Two countries enjoy mutual understanding and support in international and regional affairs. China-Nepal relations are an example of friendly coexistence between countries of different size. The two countries have signed 17 important documents such as the Friendship Treaty, Border Treaty, Trade and Commerce Treaty, Transportation Treaty and so on. China and Nepal treat each other equally and enjoy mutual understanding and support. The friendship between the two countries has rooted deeply into the

heart of both peoples. Although the size of trade and people-to-people exchanges remains limited, it grows fast with great potential. Nowadays, two Chinese mainland airlines have started air service respectively from Chengdu and Guangzhou to Kathmandu, and the direct bus service between Lhasa and Kathmandu is also resumed. There are no pending issues left over from the history between the two countries. China and Nepal live in peace with each other with a long border of 1414 km.

#### China's policy towards Nepal

China consistently upholds the Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence as the basic principles to guide the bilateral relations. China always maintains that all the countries, big or small, rich or poor, strong or weak, are all equal. China consistently pursues the principles of mutual respect of sovereignty, independence, territory integrity and non-interference to internal affairs and holds that it is up to the people to run the internal affairs of their country, and the major issues of the world should be solved through equal negotiation on the basis of mutual respect. On the basis of these principles, the bilateral relationship has grown rapidly and smoothly.

China and Nepal always understand and support the concerns and interests of each other. China-Nepal relations have withstood the test of changes in the world and grown smoothly, which are regarded as an example of countries of different sizes to coexist equally and friendly and to cooperate mutual-beneficially. The Chinese Government and people highly appreciate the valuable supports given by the Nepalese side on the issues of Tibet and Taiwan. We will continue to support the Government and people of Nepal in their efforts to uphold sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity, and to achieve peace stability and development.

Dear friends, 2008 is also an unusual year for Nepal. With the joint efforts of the concerned parties of Nepal, the election of the Constituent Assembly was successfully held on April 10, and the Federal Democratic Republic was founded. As a good neighbor, friend and partner of Nepal, China sincerely hopes that Nepal would continue its peace

process and realize political stability, economic development and national unity.

#### Future.

The Chinese side has provided economic assistance within its capacity to Nepal for many years, and will continue the support in the future, especially in road and bridge construction. While maintaining the current road connectivity between China and Nepal, we have started the construction of another road. We can mark out the road construction in the far west region of Nepal in the years ahead. A region of China's Tibet has planned to build more road links in China-Nepal border. With more channels and links and natural increase of personnel and goods exchanges, China-Nepal relations will be greatly enhanced. According to statistics, 60% tourists arriving in Nepal have visited Tibet. Last year, the tourists in Tibet both at home and abroad exceeded 4 million. If 10% of the tourists in Tibet could visit Nepal, it would benefit a lot. The stability and development of Tibet will promote the growth of China-Nepal relations and will also give a boost to Nepal's tourism.

Friends, China's policy towards neighbors is creating an amicable, secure and prosperous neighborhood. China's economic growth will boost its neighbors' development, and we would like to share with neighbors our development experience. Nepal is situated in a favorable geographical position in South Asia, and a passage linking China and South Asia. With the continuous growth of China-India economic relations, Nepal, which is between China and India will attract more attention. As the political situation in Nepal goes stable, I think there will be more and more Chinese enterprises invest in Nepal.

I'm deeply convinced that with the joint efforts of the governments and peoples of our two countries, China-Nepal good-neighborly friendship will continue to grow and write a new chapter. Therefore, I, together with all staff in Chinese Embassy in Nepal and Nepalese friends, will try our best.

*(Excerpts of the statement delivered by Chinese ambassador to Nepal Zheng Xianglin to the Council of World Affairs.)*

## RCPD

# At Last

*Finally, the UN's Regional Disarmament Center is being opened in Nepal*

By A CORRESPONDENT

The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament (RCPD) will come into operation in Kathmandu from August 18.

A senior representative of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will open the RCPD, which will function as the operational arm of UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) in Asia and the Pacific.

Established by General Assembly Resolution A/42/39D in 1987 and mandated to provide, on request, substantive support for initiatives and other activities mutually agreed upon by the member states, RCPD in Asia and the Pacific undertakes disarmament and security related projects and acts as a forum for dialogue and cooperation among States in Asia and the Pacific.

"Serving 43 states in Asia and the Pacific, RCPD is a useful instrument for fostering a climate of cooperation for peace and disarmament in this vast region," a UN statement said.

The statement said that RCPD's relocation to Kathmandu is in accordance with the Host Country Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding signed by the UN and the Government of Nepal on 20 July 2007, a development unanimously welcomed by the General Assembly at its 62nd session (A/62/52).

RCPD's assistance and capacity-building packages comprise of the convening of and substantive support to high-level regional conferences; round-tables of experts; technical workshops as well as trainings for government officials, parliamentarians and civil society, and also any other specific disarmament related activities which may be requested by a Member State, a group of States, and/or a regional arrangement, including review and drafting of legislation. ■



Nepali weight lifter Kamal Adhikari : Making record

## BEIJING OLYMPICS

# Spectacular Opening

*China puts in place a sparkling display of art and technique coupled with unprecedented extravaganza when opening the Olympics*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**s expected, China has displayed unparalleled inaugural ceremony of the Beijing Olympics 2008.

In holding the historic Olympics, China has announced that the dragon has risen and is ready to deal with the world in its own terms.

As China's moment of pride unfurled before billions of people in the world, there were a whopping 80 Heads of States and Governments including the US President George Bush, and Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin attending the ceremony.

The inaugural ceremony was a blend of history and technology. Directed by renowned Chinese film-maker Zhang Yimou, the ceremony was a major success, which ended with a torch bearer being hoisted aloft by invisible wires, who ran around the rim of the stadium's roof before igniting the vast Olympic cauldron.

Chinese President Hu Jintao opened the ceremony in front of a crowd of 91,000.

At the inaugural ceremony, Nepal's taekwondo player Deepak Bista, who has thrice won the gold medal in South Asian Games and twice won bronze medal at the Asian Games, carried the national flag. Bista is the only Nepali player to have been selected at the Beijing Olympics after having succeeded through qualifying matches.

The remaining seven players could participate in the Beijing Games after receiving wild card entries. They include Debu Thapa (judo), Phulmaya Kyapchhaki (shooting), Kamal Bahadur Adhikari (weight lifting), Arjun Kumar Basnet (marathon), Chandra Kala Thapa (100 m race), Karishma Karki (Swimming) and Prasiddha Jung Rana (swimming).

Nancy Lama and Rajen Ram Shrestha have been picked in the squad for the

Youth Olympic Camp. The coaches include Korean Kwon Hyouk Joung and Deep Raj Gurung (taekwondo), Puspa Raj Ojha (athletics), Pradeep Khatri (shooting), Birendra Ranjit (judo), and Partha Sarathi Sen Gupta (weightlifting). General Secretary of Nepal Swimming Association Ashok Bajracharya is the swimming coach. A total of 36 members - including players and coaches - are representing Nepal in the August 8-24 Olympics. A

The Nepali delegation is led by Pradeep Nepal, Minister for Education and Sports. Nepal could not send high-level delegation to Beijing owing to political instability.

The trip of president Dr. Ram Baran Yadav had to be cancelled after he was pressed with the job of selecting the new government back home.

### Nepali Performance

Till Monday, the performance by Nepali athletes could not bear any fruit.

In the shooting, Nepal's Phulmaya Kyapchhaki stood second from bottom. Likewise, in weight lifting, Kamal Bahadur Adhikari improved his personal record but failed to qualify for the final round.

Taekwondo player Deepak Bista is expected to make a mark while others are only expected to improve national record, at most.

The spirit of Nepali team had dampened even before they left for Beijing. The controversy surrounding the composition of the Nepali delegation followed them right up to the airport tarmac.

A number of agitators had reached the airport and chanted slogans against sports officials for including 'unrelated people' in the team.

Sports Minister Nepal himself landed into a controversy after his party Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) questioned his travel to Beijing despite his resignation from ministerial position a long ago. Minister Nepal went to Beijing accompanied by his wife. ■

# “This Is The Recognition Of Whole Nepali Cricket Fraternity”

-Jai Kumar Nath Shah

**JAIKUMAR NATH SHAH** is not a new name in Nepali cricket. Shah, who served as the president of Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) for more than four decades, has received several awards from international cricket bodies for his contribution toward upholding the spirit of cricket. Recently, Shah received honorary life membership of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) in Lords. Shah spoke to **SPOTLIGHT** following this prestigious recognition. Excerpts:

**How do you feel after getting the Honorary Life membership award of MCC?**

Naturally, I am very happy to receive this honorary life membership. As you know MCC is the owner of Lords cricket ground, which is considered as the Mecca of cricket world. I am thrilled.

**As a pioneer cricketer of Nepal who has worked hard to popularize cricket in Nepal, how will this honor contribute to promoting cricket in Nepal?**

This award is naturally very encouraging not only for me but also for the entire Nepalese cricket fraternity. This honor is not a personal one but is a recognition of all cricket lovers of Nepal especially cricket administrator and players.

**Can you describe about this award?**

Only test cricket players get this award - only a few of them. Like Sunil Gavaskar of India, Imran Khan of Pakistan and others have obtained this award. It is very prestigious. As soon as you enter into the ground, you can see a big portrait of Sir Don Bradman, W.G Grace and other great players of cricket. You can also see the history of cricket and its evolution. I am very lucky to have been going there since 1989. Previously, I went there not as an honorary life member but as a member. In the past, the headquarters of International Cricket Council was located there in the Lords.

**How about your personal feeling?**

I am sure that you do get reward at the end of day, if you continue to express your commitments towards particular game. I retired two years ago from CAN after serving as its president but my love for cricket continues. I keep myself up to date about the progress of Nepalese cricket. I am not interfering in the cricket board. I visited ICC headquarters in the past several



times to promote cricket in Nepal. Early in 1960s, Nepal was an associate member of ICC. Cricket Association of Nepal became its member in 1996.

**Don't you think the time has come to put cricket in Olympics?**

Cricket should be promoted in Olympics because that is the greatest sports tournament of the world. Unless cricket is there in Olympics, it won't be really a world game. Even though FIFA is an independent body, they are in Olympics also. We can do similar thing. We should find some way so that cricket is also included in Olympics.

**How will that be possible?**

When the one day cricket was introduced, initially it had 60 overs. Then, it came down to 50 overs and now there is a twenty over cricket. There is a murmur now that cricket will be in Olympics, if not in the next Olympics.

**How long have you been involved in cricket?**

I first played cricket in 1946 with Madhav Kumar Rimal, Kalyan Mani in Indian Embassy when then Indian ambassador was Surjit Singh Majethiya who was himself a great cricketer. Cricket Association of Nepal was established in 1965. I was the president of CAN since 1965 to 2006. I was the president of CAN for about 40 years. When I was the president, there were only a few cricket teams in Nepal. I am very proud to say that now there are several cricket teams - 45 teams in Kathmandu alone. There are cricket teams all over Nepal. Our national team is gradually improving its quality. I also donated a cricket cup as a Jai Trophy which started nationwide cricket tournament.

## BOOK

# Language Lessons

*The book highlights the contribution of Chandan Singh, founder of All India Gurkha League, in the recognition of Nepali language in India*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**L**ate Thakur Chandan Singh is a very popular name among Nepalese of Indian origin as he had made a significant contribution to recognize Nepali as an official language in India. As a founder of All India Gurkha League, Singh actively took part in Indian independence and also supported Nepalese move to overthrow Rana regime in Nepal.

Being a person full of political conviction, Singh joined India's independent movement as a member of Indian Congress. From Dehradun to Duars and Assam, Nepalese of Indian origin are scattered all over India, but they lacked a common leadership to raise their voices.

At a time when Nepalese of Indian origin were searching for a leader who could led the movement seeking constitutional reorganization of Nepalese language in India, Chandan Singh came as a crusader.

This is the book about his life and contributions to uphold the cultural, social and moral values of Nepalese of Indian origin. The book, which draws reference from many important historical documents, is the first of its kind, which shows the state of Nepalese of Indian origin.

From backing Nepali Congress to overthrowing Rana regime to raising the issues of Nepalese of Indian origin, Singh's contribution has been immense. Written by historian Professor Dr. Rajesh Gautam and Shivahar Singh Pradhan Pagal, the book is informative.

According to Dr. Gautam's research, All India Gurkha League was the first organization to struggle demanding recognition of Nepalese language in India and Thakur Chandan Singh was the pioneer of this struggle.

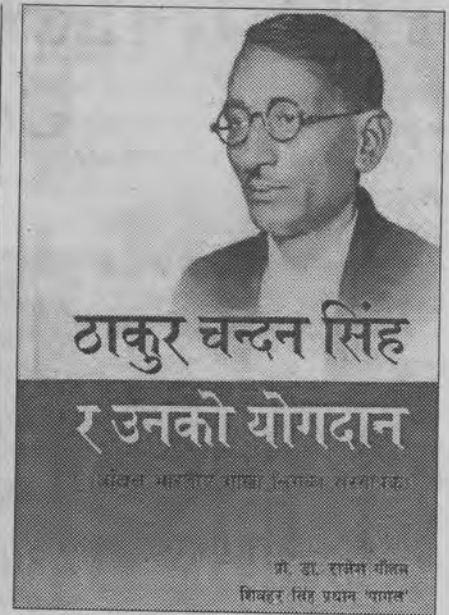
A man with rich political conviction, Thakur Chandan Singh also had interesting insights about Nepal. He is

said to be a politician who defended the constitutional monarchy in Nepal. One can see his views published in various news journals published in India. In his political write up, Singh wrote in 1957 that a monarchy is apt to fall by tyranny, an autocracy by ambition and a democracy by turmoil. His views proved correct in the Nepalese context.

Being a man of rebellious character, Thakur Chandan Singh joined Indian independence movement to liberate India from British. After liberating his motherland, Singh also actively backed Nepalese revolutionaries to overthrow Rana regime. Singh gave material as well as physical support to Nepalese revolutionaries during the period.

In this book, author duo have made every effort to highlight the role played by Singh and contribution made by him.

Singh was a person with multiple character. As a journalist, poet as well as a soldier, Singh wore different caps with equal zeal and success. Although he started his career as a bureaucrat, he



**Thakur Chandan Singh and His Contribution**

(Founder of All India Gurkha League)

By: Professor Dr. Rajesh Gautam and Shivahar Singh Pradhan Pagal

Published by: All India Nepali Bhasa Samiti, Deharadun, Uttaranchal, India

Price: Indian Rs. 200.00, Nepali Rs.

300.00, Pages: 205

proved to be a charismatic leader. From revolutionary leader B.P. Koirala to K.I. Singh, Singh maintained a very good relation with Nepalese leaders of the time. ■



On the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan we wish the government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan peace, progress and prosperity. May the friendly relations between Nepal and Pakistan grow further in the years to come.

**SPOTLIGHT News Magazine**



“There is no alternative to government of understanding.”

*Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, speaking at a program in the capital.*

“In fact, he (PM Koirala) is creating hindrance for us.”

*Pushpa Kamal Dahal ‘Prachanda’, Maoist chairman, accusing PM Koirala of foiling their efforts to form the new government.*

“Or else, the nation cannot remain without government. If the largest party cannot form the government, the second largest or third largest will come forward to form it.”

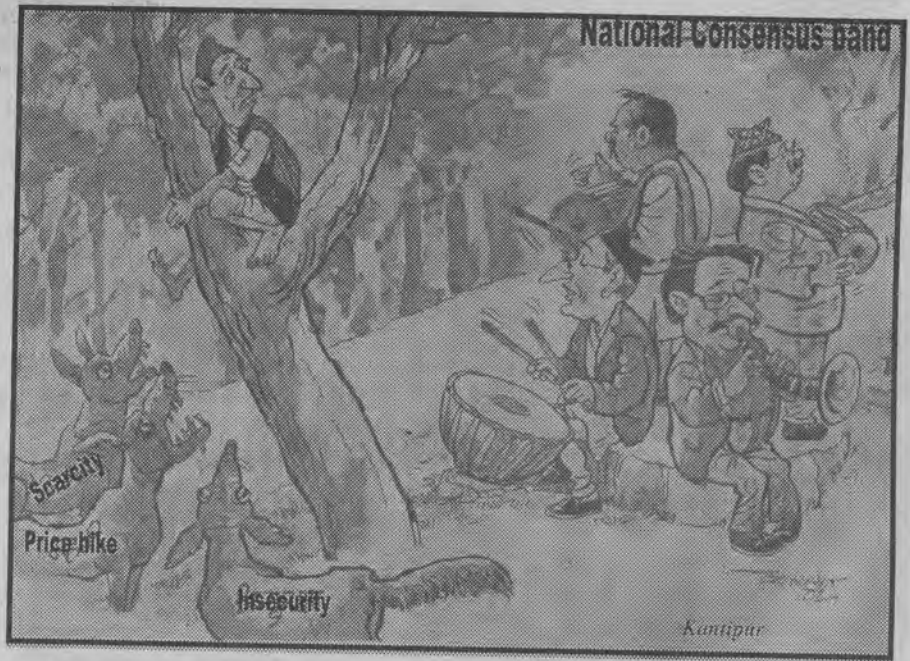
*Jhal Nath Khanal, the UML general secretary, warns the Maoists to form the government quickly.*

“The talks could not succeed within the time prescribed by the president because of the three bigger parties.”

*Uendra Yadav, coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), talking to reporters.*

“As the Nepali Congress has stepped up to form the next government by itself, it is unlikely that we would form the next government.”

*Mohan Baidya ‘Kiran,’ Maoist*



*leader, expressing doubt that his party can form the government.*

“They sometimes hit a kick to one party, strike blow to another and try to kneel down the other. How can we let such a party have a freehand in forming the government?”

*KP Oli, senior UML leader, expressing reservations about allowing Maoists to have their way in forming the new government.*

“There has been agreement to release Rs 3 to 3.5 billion to pay to PLA combatants in cantonments. The Maoists have also agreed to let the

displaced persons return and hand back the seized properties.”

*Arjun Narsingh KC, NC spokesperson, claiming that there has been an understanding to pay the outstanding salaries to the Maoist PLA combatants staying in cantonments.*

“It will be a black day in the history if instead of Maoists, Nepali Congress leads the new government.”

*Kamal Thapa, president of Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP-Nepal), asking that the Maoists be allowed to lead the government.*

## TRANSITION

**TAKING PART** Eight Nepalese Athletes are taking part in the Beijing Olympics. They include Deepak Bista (taekwondo), Debu Thapa (judo), Phulmaya Kapchhaki (shooting), Kamal Bahadur Adhikari (weight lifting), Karishma Karki (swimming), Prasiddha Jung Shah (swimming), Chandra Kala Thapa (100 meter race) and Arjun Basnet (marathon).

Pradeep Nepal, Minister for Education and Sports, is leading the Nepali

delegation at Beijing Olympics.

**EXTENDED:** President Dr Ram Baran Yadav has extended the government formation deadline by three days (till August 8) after a request from the four big parties.

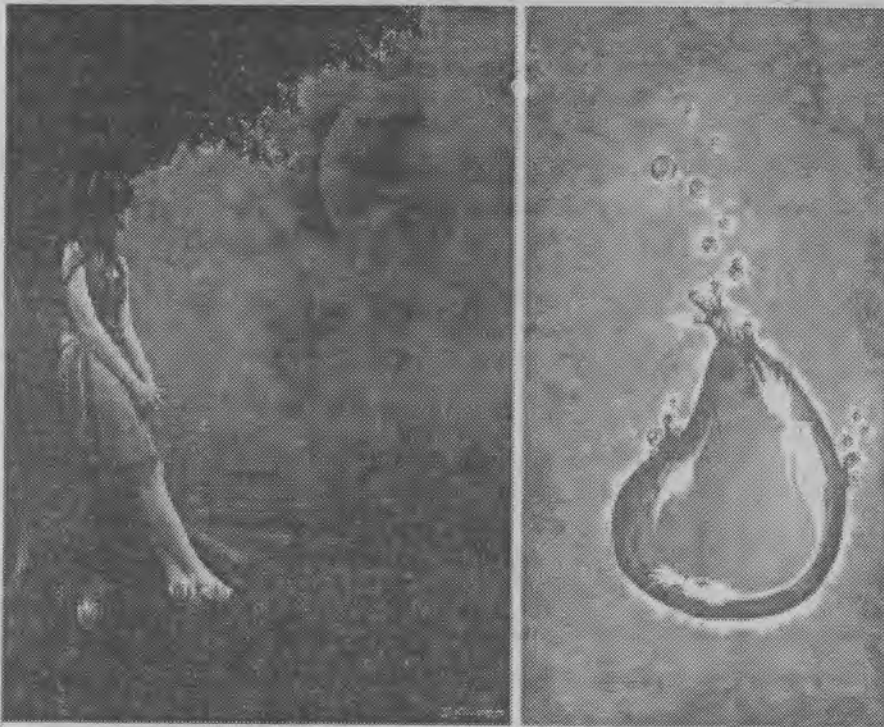
**EXITED:** Gyawali Group, out of Kantipur Publications and Kantipur FM Private Limited. They exited by selling off their entire share to their partner.

**REORGANIZED:** The board of directors of Kantipur Publications and FM, with Kailash Sirohiya as the chair

of the board as well as the company's managing director; and Swastika Sirohiya and Rameshwore Thapa as directors.

**FAILED:** Vice President Parmananda Jha, to reply to the Supreme Court within prescribed one week, regarding a writ petition filed against his taking of oath in Hindi language.

**POSTPONED:** Miss Nepal 2008 Beauty Pageant, for indefinite period, by the organizers, under pressure from Maoist-affiliated organizations.



## A Duet of *Fantasies*

# A Duet Fantasies

*Nepalese artist Promina Shrestha and Ranendra B.Mali express their views through digital art*

By A CORRESPONDENT

**A**lthough it is still a new form of art in Nepal, the digital art is gradually coming up. Thanks to the efforts of Gallery 32@Dent Inn, two artists Promina Shrestha and Ranendra B. Mali exhibited their digital arts.

Titled "A Duet of Fantasies", at the exhibition of Promina Shrestha and Ranendra B. Mali one can encounter with the new form of digital art where artists have to play with different media.

Promina currently runs her own design studio "Lights on Creations". Besides attending a short hobby course at the Srijana College of Fine Arts, she has had no other formal training in art.

Pursuing his career as a graphic designer, Ranendra has worked for magazines as well as design studios. He currently runs his own design studio, "Locust Studio" and is making efforts to introduce Digital Art in Nepal.

"Although new in Nepal, we hope that digital art will get to the same heights as other traditional forms of art," he said.

"We have compiled some of their works in their journey as an artist and put together this Exhibition. The exhibition takes you to the fantasy land and to the thoughts, emotions and dreams of the artists. We hope that self-taught hobbyist turned artists like Promina and Ranendra will get the recognition they deserve as an artist from this exhibition

and wish them the best for their future journeys too," the exhibitor states.

In this exhibition, the two new artists have come up with their first exhibition. Both of them are self taught artists and work on thoughts, expressions and fantasies. Promina expresses her emotions in her illustrations and collages, while Ranendra showcases his multimedia genius in digital art.

For Promina, a microbiologist by education and an illustrator/graphic designer by profession, this exhibition is a new beginning. Though her illustration has been published multiple times in leading magazines of Nepal like the Boss and Wave, this is her first step in getting known as an artist. In her works she has portrayed her thoughts and emotions, the other side of the mind and soul, apart from what is physically real. The collection is a work of sketches, water colors and collage representing the inner eye of the artist.

Ranendra had been surprising everyone with his artistic abilities from his childhood. A self taught artist with no formal training in art, he started his journey from traditional forms of painting. However, working as a graphic designer on computers, soon his media started to be different than other artists. Mouse was his brush, monitor a canvas and bytes his colors.

Together they were expressed in his collection of Digital Art. Still, they convey the same expressions or passions that an artist does in his traditional art, photography or in a film. His works are also based on fantasies, thoughts and expressions.

Inaugurated by Philippe Martin, Director, Alliance Francaise de Kathmandu, the exhibition will remain open from August 8, 2008 through September 7, 2008 at Gallery 32@Dent Inn.

Gallery 32 was started in 2006 as an effort of Dr. Prabigya Shiwakoti, a dentist and Shivendra Patrabanah, an architect who had immense interest in art and literature. Gallery 32 has been working with photographers, artists, poets and writers in bringing together different kinds of shows to its visitors. Housed inside a lounge of the dental clinic, the gallery offers a unique environment different than other galleries. ■

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