

नेपाली आवाज

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Photo: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

Photo Essay: Municipal elections 2006

The Nepali government, in a bid to legitimise itself, tried to hold municipal elections on 8 Feb. 06. Only 20% of the registered voters voted. The Maoists had vowed to disrupt polls and the agitating 7-party alliance had urged the people to boycott it. (page 13)

हडकडमा यलम्बर रनिङ शिल्ड भलिबल

किरात राई यायोखाले वर्षेनी आयोजना गर्दै आएको यलम्बर भलिबल रनिङ शिल्ड प्रतियोगिताको छैटौँ संस्करणमा पनि अन्ततः पुन क्लव हडकड विजयी हुँदै सर्वाधिक पुरस्कार राशि १८ हजार हडकड डलर सहित रनिङ शिल्ड सदाकालागि हत्याउन सफल भएको छ । यस अघि पुन क्लवले चौथो र पाँचौँ संस्करणमा लगातार विजयी प्राप्त गरेको थियो । उक्त प्रतियोगितामा वानचाई भलिबल क्लव र मोना भलिबल क्लव क्रमशः

दोश्रो तथा तेश्रो स्थानको हकदार बनेका थिए ।

गत २८ जनवरीका दिन चुनमुन बटर फ्लाई बीच भलिबल मैदानमा सम्पन्न भएको सो छैटौँ यलम्बर भलिबल रनिङ शिल्ड भलिबल प्रतियोगितामा हडकडमा रहेका ६ वटा भलिबल टिमहरूले सहभागिता जनाएकामा खोटाङ सेवा समितिले अन्तिम समयमा सहभागिताकानिम्ति असमर्थता जनाएको थियो । (page 19)

Photo Essay: 1 Feb. 06



(page 9)

On 13 Feb., Minister of Information and Communication Shrish Shumsher Rana told journalists in Kathmandu that there are "no Maoist- controlled territory" in Nepal. In Banke and Bardiya, it feels like there is very little government controlled territory apart from the barracks of security forces. (page 6)

Hits FM Music Awards 2006

(page 15)



Members of Nep-hop trio Nepsydaz pose with pop superstar Nima (center) backstage at the awards show.

Photo: BHUSHAN SHILPAKAR



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NEWS/ REPORT • 4

FEATURE

Barsaghat with the Maoists • 8

Photo Essay: 1 Feb. 06 • 9

Photo Essay: Municipal Elections 2006 • 13

ENTERTAINMENT

Hits FM Music Awards 2006 • 15

Nepali artists in Hong Kong • 16

SPORTS

Buddhasubba Goldcup Tournament • 18

Nepalis organise tournaments in Hong Kong and Seattle • 19

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Hi,

Kul Chandra Gautam ji is perhaps one of the most influential Nepalis alive today. And it was a relief to hear his stern warnings to all parties concerned in the on-going conflict in Nepal. I realised just how important those words were when the interview was converted into a full report on Nepalnews.com after a week or so. I only hope those who really needed to hear what he had to say hear them, be in behind tall palace walls or deep in the hills of western Nepal.

Gitanjali.

Dear Nepali Government,

How dare the you continue to lie to the Nepali people and with what logic do you imagine to continue ruling us like this? It was just ridiculous when the phone lines were tampered with again. It was even more interesting to see how you have tried to explain yourself to the world, but the international community is no fool and nor are the Nepali people, who are ever fast becoming 21st century global citizens. Do you really think we will accept your [Municipal] elections? You repeatedly talk about how the security situation in Nepal is increasing while Maoists block highways and host public functions [NepA #9]. Shame on the Information Minister and the Home Minister of Nepal, shame on Tulsi Giri and the Foreign Minister Ramesh Nath Pandey. And shame on the one who would hire these liars to run a country that desperately needs all the real help it can get and not just random press conferences and illogical statements. We see through you and soon enough people will rise to make bring about a change.

NP_Yuwa

Hello,

Your series of interviews was a much needed discussion. As a Nepali living abroad, it answered a lot of my questions regarding the situation in Nepal. I knew something was wrong, but just wasn't clear at the extent of the problems at home. I wish Dinesh Tripathi ji all the best in his path to make Nepal liable to the International Criminal Court. Let us hope

this will truly be one step closer to curbing human rights abuse in Nepal.

S.Shrestha, California.

Hello,

It was sad to find out about the death of music pioneer Tara Devi. Her music has always been very personal to me, many of them colored with vivid memories of my much younger days when they were constantly in our family music system. She was indeed a great Nepali artist and its even sadder to think about how in her later years she suffered so many loses. Her music will surely live on forever, and hopefully be rediscovered by generations of Nepali musicians and music lovers to follow

Keshav Pathak, EU

Hi,

It was good to read your last cover story (Little Buddha). I had heard a lot about it and read some news online but your in-depth feature was very useful. It's hard to imagine just what the boy is up to or those around him for that matter. I cannot help but be somewhat skeptic about the whole thing though.

Grishma Shrestha, Nepal

Hi Nepali Aawaz team,

Little Buddha definitely made for an interesting read. It's amazing how an entire merchandise market has developed around this boy and not at all surprising but somewhat unfortunate to find out about the problems with funds management and what not amongst those who are supposed to be looking after the site. It was also somewhat hilarious to read in a Nepali baed English daily about a week ago reports on a "Ram" re-incarnate. Even in this day and age, religion continues to defy logic and reason. And the economics surrounding it seem just too tough to fight off.

Sujata Pokharel, Kathmandu.

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Himalkhabar.com: Nepal's news in Nepali

Last year, when King Gyanendra seized absolute power of the country through a televised speech, all phone and internet services across the country was shut down and serious censors on Media imposed. This year, no sooner had King Gyanendra's televised speech marking the first year anniversary of his self-declared three-year take over ended at 9:20 AM, journalists and others from the media community gathered at the Baggikhana in Patan Dhoka for the official launch of the news portal Himalkhabar.com, an online venture of the nation's largest selling and perhaps most respected socio-political Nepali fortnightly Himal Khabarpatrika (pub: Himalmedia P Ltd.). The first content update on the site to mark the launch? A summary of the King's recent speech.



Kiran Nepal (left), who heads the new online service, and Himalkhabar Patrika's Editor Rajendra Dahal explain himalkhabar.com during its official launch on 1 Feb. 06.

The news portal, offering "news on Nepal in Nepali," is headed by

Kiran Nepal of the Himal KhabarPatrika team and designed using the Mambo software. The online news portal's closest kin is the popular website Nepalnews which offers news updates and reports in English. But Himalkhabar.com has already taken things up a notch by not just offering news and articles on political issues, but also special sections for entertainment and sports amongst other things. The website also boasts a search engine and a Photo Feature

and a link from where you can download Nepali fonts.

According to the website's database, also accessible to public, it has had the highest traffic on 2 Feb. 06 with 9912 page views that day alone and a total of 131318 pages viewed between 20 Jan. (the unofficial launch) and 15 Feb. During this time, the top three highest traffic have originated from the US with 29.1% of the total visitors, 14.6% from Nepal and 6.6% from Hong Kong.

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हडकडका नेपाली राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रको विपक्षमा

हडकडका नेपालीहरूले आज सम्पन्न विरोध कार्यक्रममा व्यापक सहभागिता जनाउँदै राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रको विपक्षमा रहेको अभिव्यक्ति जाहेर गरेका छन्। - DEVRAJ RAI



Photos: Matrajeip Rai

Nepalis in Hong Kong protest against King Gyanendra's "dictatorship" on 1 Feb. 06

नेपालका राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले शासन सत्ता आफ्नो हातमा लिएको एकवर्ष पुगेको अवसरमा यहाँ रहेका अन्तराष्ट्रिय मानव अधिकारवादी ट्रेड युनियनकर्मी, विभिन्न गैरसरकारी संघसंस्था एवं नेपाली संघसंस्थाहरूको संयुक्त अयोजनामा सम्पन्न विरोध कार्यक्रमको अन्त्यमा राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रका नाममा एक संयुक्त अपिल यहाँ स्थित शाही नेपाली महावाणिज्यदूतावास मार्फत पठाइएको छ।

निरंकुश राजतन्त्र मुर्दावाद, लोकतान्त्रिक प्रजातन्त्र जिन्दावाद, सम्पूर्ण राजबन्दी रिहा गर, डाउन द मोनाकी, रिक्टर डेमोक्रेसी इन नेपाल, लड लिभ इन्टरनेशनल सोलिडारिटी, टोटल डेमोक्रेसी इन नेपाल, शाही घोषण मुर्दावाद जस्ता नेपाली तथा अंग्रेजी अक्षरमा लेखिएका प्ले कार्ड, तुल बोकेर, विभिन्न नाराहरू अंकित टीसर्ट लगाएका करिब दुई सयको संख्यामा रहेका नेपाली तथा गैर नेपाली संघसंस्थाहरूका कार्यकर्ताहरू सहितको च्याली कडलुन पार्कको जोर्डन गेटबाट शुरु भई शाही नेपाली महावाणिज्यदूतावासको कार्यलय रहेको चिम सा चुईको कनकोर्डिया प्लाजाको प्रांगणमा पुगेर सभामा परिणत भएको थियो।

नेपाल प्रजातान्त्रिक जन आन्दोलन सहयोग समिति हडकड, एसियन माइग्राण्ट्स को अर्डिनेटिड बडी(एएमसीबी), एसियन स्टुडेण्ट्स एसोसिएसन(आसा), कोलिसिएसन फर माइग्राण्ट्स(सीएमआर), सुदुर पूर्वी प्रवासी नेपाली संघ(फियोना), प्रवासी नेपाली संघ हडकडको संयुक्त आयोजनामा सम्पन्न

उक्त विराध कार्यक्रममा हडकड युनिभर्सिटी फ्रि स्टुडेण्ट्स युनियन, हडकड कन्फेडरेशन ट्रेड युनियन, एसियन मनिटर रिसर्च सेन्टर, एसियन ह्युमन राइट्स कमिसन, इण्डोनेसियन माइग्राण्ट्स युनियन, एसोसिएसन अफ इण्डोनेसियन माइग्राण्ट्स वर्क्स हडकड जस्ता संघसंस्थाहरूले ऐक्यवद्धता जाहेर गर्दै विरोध कार्यक्रममा सहभागि भएका थिए।

नेपाली नागरिकहरूका सम्पूर्ण मौलिक अधिकारहरू सुनिश्चित तत्काल हुनु पर्ने, नेपालमा प्रजातन्त्र तुरुन्त स्थापना गर्न निरंकुश राजा ज्ञानेन्द्रले तत्काल अधिकार जनतालाई फिर्ता गर्न पर्ने, जनताको शान्ति सुरक्षा व्यवस्थित गर्नु पर्ने माग गर्दै कार्यक्रममा विभिन्न वक्ताहरूले राजनीतिकर्मी मानव अधिकारवादीहरू, पत्रकार एवं सर्वसाधारण नागरिकहरूलाई हदैसम्मको धरपकड गर्ने राजा २१ शताब्दीमा आवश्यक नभएको विचार व्यक्त गरेका थिए। यसरी मन्तव्य व्यक्त गर्ने व्यक्तिहरूमा एचकेसीटीयुका महासचिव एवं हडकड विधायीका परिषदका सदस्य माननिय लि चेक युन, फियोनाका अध्यक्ष रमेश गुरुड, हडकड नेपाली महासंघका अध्यक्ष गणेश इजम, एचआरसीका निर्देशक रामन, एएमसीबीका एनी, सीएमआरकी किंव या, प्रवासी संघका संतोश घले, हडकड युनिभर्सिटी फ्रि स्टुडेण्ट्स युनियन सदस्य लाउ फोड र एसियन स्टुडेण्ट्स एसोसिएसनका सचिव भक्त गुरुड हुनुहुन्थियो।

Nepali lawyer making case in America

Maryland public TV channel recently aired a half an hour interview of Nepali lawyer Dinesh Tripathi who has been strongly lobbying to bring international attention to Nepal's human rights and political crisis. He will also soon be delivering a talk on the present situation of Nepal during an event organised by Lawyers Without Borders, New York School of Law and ISA. "These are all positive steps towards internationalization of the Nepali human rights issue, its something

I can do on my part," he told Nepali Aawaz. "I am trying to build some kind of an international coalition for Nepal. More importantly I am working towards bringing the case of human rights violators in Nepal in front of the International Criminal Court."

Nepali Aawaz had interviewed the lawyer about the crisis in Nepal and his work in the US in our last issue, now available online in our web site's archive.

Nepali wins scholarship



Sachin Pradhan, an active member of Nepal Seattle Society, has been awarded the "CSE Award for Excellence Scholarship" by the University of Washington's Computer Science and Engineering Department. Sachin has also previously served the NSS' Treasurer for two years from April 2003 to April 2005.

(Source: NSS)

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Banke and Bardiya remains an explosive Maoist territory

On 13 Feb., Minister of Information and Communication Shrish Shumsher Rana told journalists in Kathmandu that there are “no Maoist- controlled territory” in Nepal. In Banke and Bardiya, it feels like there is very little government controlled territory apart from the barracks of security forces.

7:15PM on 3 Feb. 06. Not even three full days after King Gyanendra declared the security situation has increased drastically since he took over the country a year ago, two bombs explode near the Regional Police Headquarter and the Police Training Center, followed by an hour long gun fight. It doesn't matter what the state media reports or what the ministers say, locals in Nepalgunj know very well what the Maoist presence in and around Nepalgunj is at one of its highest now. Bombs in the main bazaar have been a regular affairs for years now, in any case.

“They only had three or four motorcycles two years ago. Now just in this region they have almost 10 jeeps and eight or 10 motorcycles,” explains a local human rights worker whose work requires him to regularly contact the Maoists. In the afternoon, the army had engaged the Maoists in a gun battle after they attacked a planned Maoist function from air while the People's Liberation Army returned fire from the jungle below. Only a few weeks before, the Maoists had held another public function while the People's Liberation Army blocked and guarded the highway in broad day light.

On 20 Jan., the Maoists had launched an attack at about 6PM, leaving three policemen dead. Then on 24 Jan., they launched a bigger attack, targeting the security posts on the main streets and several government buildings including the District Police office, the regional office for Nepal Rastra Bank and the District Prison.

Soon after the attacks, all the security sentries in chowks along the main bazaar were dismantled and relocated to the roofs of civilian houses and shops without the consent of its owners. In an apparent move to protect their barracks from the regular small Maoist attacks and an impending larger one, the security forces without much consideration have put civilians directly in the path of an impending crossfire.

A short drive away, at a military and an armed police force check point in Bardiya, two houses have been caught inside the barbed wire fence installed around the security forces' barrack. Should the Maoists attack it at any point, there is no doubt that the civilian residents of these houses will be at dire risk of being killed or injured by mortars and bullets aimed at the barrack.

A curfew, declared between 7PM to 4AM since 20 Jan., is still in effect but that seldom seems to stop the Maoist from doing most what they want to during the night. On 12 Feb., a bomb exploded in Nepalgunj and the following morning, day that marks the 10th anniversary of the Maoist movement, propaganda posters of the movement could be seen plastered all around Nepalgunj. Over night the security forces hadn't stopped the Maoists from putting up their posters, but they did act quickly enough in the morning to tear as many of them as possible.

It is no surprise that Maoists comfortably move around in the dark despite the curfew. It seems to be common knowledge that all security personnel retreat to the barrack soon after sun down, except for those assigned to guard the barracks itself. The last round of patrolling in and around Nepalgunj can generally be seen in the evenings, while by night fall sentries and check points are no manned unless they are near a barrack.

Villages across Banke and Bardiya have been Maoist strongholds for years and remain so till date. Regional Maoist commanders and commissars can be found within 15 minutes off the Guleriya highway and the party workers in most parts of the districts. “We have taken over 80% of the country in the last 10 years, now we are working towards



All photos: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

(Above) Maoist soldiers in Bardiya in September 2004. Maoists continue to freely operate in Banke and Bardiya districts. (Below) Security forces recently built sentries on civilian houses and shops in Nepalgunj, putting the civilians at direct risk of being caught in crossfire.



attacking and controlling the strategical areas,” declares comrade Athak, the new commander of these two districts. Nepalgunj would be one such target. “Nepalgunj is surrounded by militias and the people's liberation army right now,” says a local in Guleriya.

On 13 Feb., Minister of Information and Communication Shrish Shumsher Rana told journalists in Kathmandu that there are “no Maoist- controlled territory” in Nepal. In Banke and Bardiya, it feels like there is very little government controlled territory apart from the barracks of security forces. While Maoists walk about and work freely in

villages, security forces haven't been in these areas for months and when they do come, they come in truck loads. And sometimes the only government presence is the helicopter flying overhead.

The minister also said, “The government's success in controlling terrorist activities is increasing each passing day. Now the Maoists cannot overpower the army barracks and seize weapons.” With the new sentries for security forces and the visible centralization of security forces in barracks, he just might be right about the latter. For now.

10 years of the Maoist movement in Nepal

13 February 1996 Maoists attack a police post in Holeri, Rolpa signalling the launch of their 'people's war'. Earlier, Baburam Bhattarai presented a 40-point demand to Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba who ignored it and went to India on a state visit.

25 February 1996 Home Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka promotes a hardline approach and says the Maoists can be crushed 'within days'.

March 1996 Deuba convenes an all-party meeting to look into the Maoist issue but there is lack of seriousness.

Rest of 1996 Maoists make sporadic raids on police stations in mid-western Nepal and Sindhuli capturing weapons, ransack distilleries and multinational targets.

February 1997 Government launches a harsh police crackdown in the midwestern hills but many innocents suffer and this feeds the Maoist insurgency with fresh recruits.

March 1997 There is continued disarray in coalition politics in Kathmandu and disillusionment with the return of Panchayat-era apparatchik Lokendra Bahadur Chand as prime minister in a UML-RPP coalition.

May 1997 Maoists boycott local elections, eight people are killed in campaign violence. Government forms a task force to find a political solution to the Maoist problem.

July 1997 Home Minister Bamdeb Gautam tries to pass TADA but backtracks after protests.

October 1997 The RPP splits and Surya Bahadur Thapa replaces Chand to form a government with the NC and NSP. By now more than 50 VDCs in Rolpa alone under Maoist control.

March 1998 Public disenchantment with political parties grows as the UML also splits and Girija Koirala takes over and immediately launches Operation Kilo Sierra Two to nip the Maoists before it's too late. By the end of 1998 500 people

had been killed, most of them not Maoists.

October 1998 The Maoists spread out of the midwestern hills for the first time into central Nepal and the eastern hills.

May 1999 Parliamentary elections are held and the Maoists call for a boycott. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai becomes prime minister and he appoints Sher Bahadur Deuba into a committee to find a solution to the Maoist problem.

March 2000 Congress infighting intensifies and Koirala ousts Bhattarai. Maoists use the chaos in Kathmandu to continue attacks on police posts and government offices. Police start pulling out of rural areas in the midwest.

25 September 2000 Dunai attacked 14 policemen killed, first of many subsequent human wave attacks by Maoists on district capitals. Home Minister Govinda Raj Joshi resigns.

October 2000 Deputy PM Ram Chandra Poudel meets Maoist leader Rabindra Shrestha in Kathmandu to find a solution.

February 2001 Maoists use anniversary of war to announce the Prachanda Path doctrine

April 2001 In a wave of attacks in Rukum and Dailekh Maoists kill 70 policemen in a week and loot weapons. Police chief says he can't fight Maoists by himself the paramilitary Armed Police Force is set up.

1 June 2001 The royal massacre, three kings in four days. King Gyanendra is enthroned. The Maoists infiltrate street protests in Kathmandu.

July 2001 Maoists begin attacks against public schools and declare war on alcohol.

6-13 July 2001 Maoists attack Holeri, army refusal to rescue captured police creates political crisis and Koirala resigns as prime minister to be replaced by Deuba. Maoists kill 40 policemen in an attack in Lamjung, Nuwakot, Ramechhap, Gulmi Dailekh and agree to a ceasefire.

August 2001 Madhab Kumar Nepal and Bamdeb Gautam meet Prachanda in Silguri in India.

November 2001 After three rounds of talks Maoists escalate the war by attacking the army for the first time by overrunning the Ghorahi base and attacking Salleri, killing soldiers and looting a large amount of automatic weapons and mortars. King Gyanendra declares Emergency and deploys RNA to fight Maoists.

February 2002 Maoists storm Mangalsen, out of a garrison of 59 soldiers only two survive.

Spring 2002 Tourism collapses, investments plummet, industries are hit by Maoist extortion and threats.

May 2002 Deuba dissolves parliament, announces elections for November.

4 October 2002 Deuba proposes postponing elections because of security situation, King Gyanendra sacks him, assumes executive authority and sets up government of technocrats.

January 2003 IGP Krishna Mohan Shrestha and wife murdered in Kathmandu, ceasefire declared three days later.

May 2003 Chand replaced by Surya Bahadur Thapa

August 2003 Doramba massacre of 19 rebels and civilians by army leads to collapse of ceasefire, Maoists step up campaign of destroying infrastructure: mainly phones and bridges. Step up attacks and closure of schools, abducting children for indoctrination.

October 2003 Maoists kill 37 police in raid on police training base in Bhalubang.

December 2003 International community increasingly concerned about human rights violations, India arrests Matrika Yadav and Suresh Ale Magar and hands them over to Nepal.

February 2004 King Gyanendra addresses rallies in Nepalganj and Biratnagar.

April 2004 Political parties launch street agitation against 'regression', it is slow to gather momentum. Surya Bahadur Thapa replaced by Deuba again.

September 2004 After small explosive goes off at USIS, the Peace Corps is withdrawn from Nepal.

November 2004 Dailekh's mothers can't take it anymore and rise up against the Maoists.

December 2004 Raids in Argakhanchi, Dailekh heavy casualties on both sides. Maoists blockade Kathmandu for one week.

1 February 2005 King Gyanendra sacks Deuba again, dissolves parliament, cuts phones internet and sends army into newsrooms. Hundreds of politicians and civil society activists are jailed. International condemnation.

April 2005 After debate at the UN in Geneva, an office of the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights is set up in Kathmandu. Deuba arrested on corruption charges.

June 2005 Maoists blow up bus in Madi, killing 37 passengers and injuring 70. Worst-ever terrorist attack in Nepal.

September 2005 Maoists declare three-month unilateral ceasefire, government fails to respond. King Gyanendra continues his walkabouts in various parts of the country.

October 2005 Tourism bounces back with ceasefire.

November 2005 Government crackdown on media and prepares guidelines for NGOs.

December 2005 Maoists extend ceasefire by a month

3 January 2006 Back to war.

(This timeline was originally published in the weekly Nepali Times issue, #285. www.nepalitimes.com)

Barsaghat with the Maoists

- SARAHANA SHRESTHA

Today is Falgun 1, and the Maoists are celebrating their 10th anniversary with a cultural show at an undisclosed location. We drive out of Nepalgunj. Within 5 or 10 minutes of the last RNA soldier, small red Communist flags appear along both sides of the road. The number of flags increase as we get further deep into the outskirts of the city, flags in bunch adorning trees. Red banners congratulate you on the occasion of the anniversary and invite you to their celebration without mentioning specific details. Finally one big red gate constructed out of bamboos, newspaper and more red banners does the same.

The dynamics in the terai are quite different from that in the hills, especially in a region like Rolpa. The roads are scarce there, if not non-existent, and whatever exist of the trails are challenging. In the terai any such cultural show or Maoist gathering, especially so close to an urban center guarded by the army, is vulnerable to an open attack from the RNA. For one thing, the roads are smooth, wide, and open. The venue and the time, hence, are subject to change at any time.

We arrive, after a one-hour drive, at another, more concrete, welcome gate set up in a village. It's one big celebration here. Young folks are running around and laughing with bright magenta abhir all over their faces. It looks like holi. Older Maoists at the gate are shouting at others, hustling and bustling, to find some abhir so that the guests can be welcomed in. Quite a bit of red abhir is smeared on your forehead as an indication of respect and camaraderie. I find this intrusive, as much as I do when religious folks put tika on your forehead unasked. The ritual is the same here, only the meaning attached different.

A decent-sized stage has been setup. The venue, with its bright-colored pieces of fabric defining the open space, hanging above us as a ceiling, decorating the stage and so on, looks much like a

Nepali wedding party. We've been told the Maoists' national team of performers is here. Next to the stage are seated some high-ranking party workers, including the bearded Comrade Athak, who is the chief of the Banke and Bardiya districts. There are quite a few people in the audience, though I can't guess the number, but almost 50% of it are small children around the age of 5-10. They are here for the songs and the dance, I assume.

This venue is completely vulnerable to an attack. But our guide here tells us that an attack is unlikely because of the presence of so many civilians. In any case, several armed PLA soldiers dressed in civilian clothes guard the area here and further out onto the road. Around the stage are big open rice fields, and the soldiers on duty look out to them watchfully. The young man in charge of the soldiers here is soft-spoken and eager to show respect. The speeches, dances, and the songs begin.

At one point during the show, a wave of the audience rises in panic, mostly children and adults seated on the ground with them. They seem to have misheard that RNA soldiers had arrived. Panic spreads instantly. The volunteers settle them down, the MC announcing on the stage that there is no need to worry. The entire venue is secured by our

dear, trusty brothers of the PLA. Two more separate instances of

have changed.



(Above) Maoist soldiers in Bardiya in September 2004. Maoists continue to freely operate in Banke and Bardiya districts. (Below) Security forces recently built sentries on civilian houses and shops in Nepalgunj, putting the civilians at direct risk of being caught in crossfire.

tension occur when, much later in the show, we hear an aircraft humming, hovering somewhere above us. RNA helicopters have come and checked out Maoist shows before, but our guide assures us that no air-strike has occurred in these instances here (though strikes have occurred elsewhere during cultural shows).

The dancers are good and dressed colorfully in coordinated wardrobe. They dance to songs being performed live from next to the stage. The musicians and singers are not without talent either. Again, though, the culture here is the same, only the lyrics to the songs and meanings attached to these performances

The curfew in Nepalgunj begins at 7 PM, so some of us must be on our way at around 5. I pass on the opportunity to meet with Comrade Athak privately after the show for an interview with our foreign journalist friends. They decide to stay. The most basic food and lodging, and the most daunting trails of Rolpa had so far been bearable. However, at this point, the thought of sitting through the remaining however many hours of this show (it turns out to be three) is not. The performers put up a good show and the speakers have said whatever needs to be said at such events, but my spoiled sense of entertainment can hardly bare the much improved Nepali music videos, let alone this cultural show. I can't remember if

Communists have necessarily been notoriously bad in the department of Entertainment.

On our way back, a Comrade confirms the arrival of RNA soldiers on foot up to a certain point on the road earlier in the day. All the red flags have been removed, but the gate is still standing. She also confirms the arrival of two helicopters in the area where the show was taking place. Out the window of our jeep, there is a scene not to be missed. The sun is setting, the sky is orange, the rice fields are open, and in a long trail little silhouettes of RNA soldiers are trotting back home.

(Originally published in Samudaya.org)

Photo Essay: 1 Feb. 06

Beloved Countrymen,
It is now a year since the decision was taken to restore law and order and activate the multiparty democratic polity in the country in keeping with the nation's needs and the people's aspirations. Arresting a situation that was slipping into anarchy and reactivating a stalled democratic process has not been easy. Yet, given the commitment of our patriotic countrymen, all the Nepalese people have experienced the nation grow in confidence and the self-respect of the Nepalese people restored within a short span of one year, with the cloud of pessimism dissipating. We are confident that, remaining alert to the sensitivities of the self-respecting Nepalese people and our glorious ever independent history, we will be able to ensure for the nation peace, stability and prosperity within the next one year through mutual understanding and with patriotism as the focal point. We believe that a road-map to sustainable peace and reenergising a meaningful democracy are two sides of the same coin. We are confident that a road-map of consensus will forever end all possibilities of resurgence of violence and terrorism in our motherland, which will otherwise put at risk the universally acclaimed multiparty democracy and hurt the self-respect of Nepal and the Nepalese people. Guided by a national perspective that upholds our political, administrative and civic traditions, we are confident that by April 2007, all popularly elected bodies will be active in ensuring a bright future for the Nepalese people through a dedicated exercise in democracy so as to create a welfare society.

The nefarious designs to portray Nepal as a failed state a year back has now begun to unravel with acts of terrorism being limited to petty crimes. The elected government not only dissolved the popularly elected village, municipal and district bodies but also at the national level. The process of activating multiparty democracy and Constitutional Monarchy has now begun with the people exercising their franchise to reinstate these bodies for which the elected government had failed to conduct elections in spite of being given repeated opportunities. The people are determined to ensure the success of the municipal elections currently underway. In fact, the freedom to exercise one's vote through adult franchise forms the democratic basis for a honourable national consensus. Democracy flourishes only through the enfranchisement of the people and democrats are never losers when democracy is upheld. Therefore, the first and foremost preconditions for consolidating democracy are to gain the support of the people through the ballot and respect their mandate. In keeping with these universally accepted democratic principles, the process to reinstate all the elected bodies through free and

fair elections has been initiated. We are confident of the active participation of all democrats who have faith in the people's democratic rights. Democratic norm dictates that, while upholding the people's rights, their confidence can be won only through participation in the democratic process.

Beloved countrymen,
With efforts to initiate a meaningful exercise in democracy in keeping with the accepted norms, measures are also underway to improve public service utilities for the benefit of the people. As the bureaucracy has been freed of political pressures and discipline instilled among them, criminal activities under political patronage is now under control. The ongoing fiscal and admin-



istrative reforms will be implemented in a more effective manner. Rule of law alone will ensure good governance. As long as corruption, which has proved to be a parasite to our society, is allowed to spread its tentacles, a system of governance as aspired by the people cannot be ensured. More effective measures will be adopted to realise the commitment to maintain fiscal discipline. The concept of Land Bank will be effectively implemented to make available land to the landless, agricultural tenants and freed bonded labourers. Internal and external investments will be mobilised to accelerate the pace of economic development, increase employment opportunities, improve transport infrastructure and attain self-sufficiency in the energy sector through optimum utilisation of water resources. An effective integrated policy must be adopted to initiate development activities that have direct impact on the people. A conducive environment exists to utilise the opportunities created by information technology in the economic development of the country. Likewise, the role of the service sector is also increasing in importance. In this context, special programmes will be introduced to create opportunities of self-employment within the country for talented youths. Measures will also

be adopted to train those youths going abroad for employment so that their skills and abilities are duly recognised.

The Nepalese are well aware of the fact that character without any moral foundation, politics indifferent to national pride and a form of governance bereft of the people's confidence will neither benefit the nation nor the people. They also know that politics will not have the strength to inspire the people and overcome challenges if it is tainted. It is our belief that multiparty democracy cannot be made meaningful in the absence of significant popular participation in governance, effective decentralisation of authority in the village, municipal, district, zonal and regional levels and maximum autonomy to

elected local bodies in the formulation and implementation of development projects.

Democracy can be adopted into our way of life only if we are prepared to have faith in the people's abilities and the elected representatives. To achieve this, guidelines will be formulated in a transparent manner through collective wisdom and reflections based on experiences and aspirations. Appropriate measures will also be initiated to convincingly address, in the greater good of the nation, grievances regarding indigenous people as well as discrimination relating to regional and other issues. Contributing to efforts aimed at the general welfare of the people alone can ensure the collective well-being of the Nepalese. The nation can be freed from the clutches of poverty and made prosperous only through the collective participation of all. We are confident that all Nepalese, conscious of their national pride, will make significant contributions from their respective places towards the success of the pro-development strategies currently being implemented. While history will be the sole judge of an individual or a generation, it should be our endeavour to ensure that the present generation of Nepalese is given due credit.

Beloved Countrymen,
Nepal's foreign policy is now clear and stable. Our foreign policy and relations are solely guided by how best to serve and protect our national interest in a rapidly changing world. This has restored Nepal's prestige and credibility in the international arena. Nepal desires friendship with all and is always ready to cooperate for mutual benefit. Nepal has malice towards none and is ever alert in ensuring that her territory is not used against any friendly country. Nepal is ever ready to have mutually beneficial fruitful relations with both her neighbours. This policy remains unchanged. To act as a catalyst in enhancing economic ties between her two neighbours, Nepal is preparing to be the transit point between them. Nepal's role as a transit point will contribute to the welfare of Nepal, India, China and the region as a whole.

Nepal has unflinching faith in and is totally committed to the principles of human rights. It is in this spirit that our country has adopted the policy of institutionalising the promotion and protection of human rights and rectifying its shortcomings. It is not easy for a country combating terrorism to strike a balance between the compulsions of national security and upholding the rights of the citizens - this is a reality faced by all democratic countries afflicted with the scourge of terrorism. But it is our strong belief that the people must be allowed to exercise their democratic rights in a peaceful manner, with due consideration to national security.

The Nepalese people desire for sustainable peace. This was clearly spelt out to us when we had direct contacts with our beloved people during our recent visits to various parts of the Kingdom. The vigilant Nepalese have well understood the conspiracy to foment further acts of terrorism in the name of momentary cessation of violence. If those who have gone astray wish to rejoin the mainstream of peace and creativity, democracy and coordination, and if they wish to dedicate themselves in the service of the people through the ballot, abjuring their murderous acts against the nation and people, we make it clear that they will be given the security and opportunity necessary to shoulder the responsibilities of governance in their capacity as the people's representatives, having won the people's confidence through the universally accepted democratic exercise. The people can be won over only through peaceful political and constructive activities. Activities like disrupting peace, encouraging discord and creating hurdles on the road to rapprochement in the name of democracy will benefit none. Let us, therefore, unite, with patriotism as the focal point, in dedicating ourselves to the people's welfare and initiating a

FEATURE

new chapter in the exercise in meaningful democracy. We wish to emphasise that all differences can be resolved within the framework of the Nepalese patriotic tradition in keeping with the Nepalese psyche, which has never had to put up with subjugation throughout history.

Beloved Countrymen,

We have always, single-mindedly and with determination, strived to fulfil our beloved people's aspirations in the greater interest of the motherland. We have no desire other than the Nepalese people's welfare and the responsibility towards Nepal's glorious history. While utilising the indestructible synergy constantly spouting from the fountain head of patriotism, it will be in the interest of the nation to uphold, with utmost dedication, the glorious history of the Kingdom of Nepal. The success of this alone will keep the nation secure and ensure a meaningful democracy for the people.

A clear decision was made for the country last year. Today, let us, once again, pledge to achieve this national goal. The Nepalese are determined to see a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Nepal in tune with the 21st century. The essence of Nepal's glorious history is the fact that the Nepalese people themselves determine Nepal's national agenda in the interest of the country and their own.

Patriotism is the only means of creating a democratic society. We, therefore, call upon all Nepalese to consign mutual recrimination to the bitter past and build a secure and prosperous future for the nation and people, while upholding democratic norms.

May Lord Pashupatinath bless us all!

Jaya Nepal!

(Source: Royal Palace Secretariat)



All photos: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

(Left bottom) Protestors hurls stones at police officers who were preventing them from entering Basantapur for a peaceful rally. (Above) A protestor gets singled out when the police charge at them.



(Above) Human Rights activists try to stop the police officers from continuing to attack a protestor who was already injured and down on the ground. (Below) Protestors smash the windshield of a pick up truck in which the police had hoped to haul protestors while the outnumbered police officers in the back look on.



Death toll after King Gyanendra's take over on 1 February 05 - 30 November '05

861: Number of people killed by the State. **482:** Number of people killed by the CPN (Maoist).

Death toll related to the Maoist movement between 13 February '96 - 30 November '05

8,283: Number of people killed by the State. **4,582:** Number of people killed by the CPN (Maoist). **12,865:** Total number of people killed.
(Death toll source: INSEC)





(Above left) A peaceful rally breaks out in New Road. (Above right) Police officers try to block the rally despite the fact that the law permits people to peaceful assembly in the area.



(Above left) Police resort to using water cannon to disperse the crowd. A police officer dictates to the fire Marshall to aim not just at protestors but also directly at Journalists and HR activists. (Above right) Journalists in green vests, and Human Rights monitors in blue, including UN monitors (below left) are drenched by the cannon. Police officers charge at protestors once again (below right).





(Above) Undeterred by the water cannon, protestors continue their demonstration as police officers try to stop is yet again.



(Above) Police officers resort to indiscriminately using the water cannon again. (Below) In the mean time, journalists continue their protest in Ratna Park, where several journalists were arrested earlier in the day. Shiva Gaunle, Vice President of the Federation of Nepali Journalists, was the last speaker at the event.



Pro democracy rallies were organised by the Nepali diaspora in various cities across the world. While India saw the largest turn out, rallies were also organised in Hong Kong (below), Washington DC (Below center) and New York (Far below).



Photos: MATRADIPI RAI



Photos: GIRISH POKHAREL



Photo: PARMENDRA BHAGAT

Photo Essay: Municipal elections 2006

The Nepali government, in a bid to legitimise itself, tried to hold municipal elections on 8 Feb. 06. Only 20% of the registered voters voted. The Maoists had vowed to disrupt polls and the agitating 7-party alliance had urged the people to boycott it.



(Above left) A poster, part of the election campaign for Krishna Prasad Shahi's bid for Kathmandu's Mayoral race, hangs on streets in New Road while police keep a sharp eye for anti-election demonstrations. (Above right) A pick up truck is used for last minute campaigning days before the elections.



All photos: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA



While security forces were posted in high volume all around the Kathmandu valley, voter turn out remained extremely poor throughout the day, including Jawalakhel (above left) and Maha Bouddha (above right) where the police officer on duty managed to read a newspaper to kill time.



United States:

“The United States believes Nepal’s municipal elections called by the King today represented a hollow attempt to legitimize his power.... The government detained large numbers of political activists before the elections, restricted media and refused to allow independent outside monitors.”

India

“The fact is that the elections have been held against the backdrop of a boycott by the major recognized political parties, sharp curtailment of their legitimate activities, and continued arrest and detention in various forms of many of their leaders.... We are of the view that the grave challenges facing Nepal demand the initiation of a genuine process of national reconciliation, dialogue and participation which can facilitate a peaceful political settlement.”

Japan

“Japan regrets that many persons concerned with political parties were arrested... strongly condemns the acts of violence including the killing of civilians.... halt the acts of violence and achieve peace through dialogue.”

United Kingdom

“The UK does not believe that the municipal elections in Nepal on February 8 was a meaningful exercise in canvassing the political wishes of the people of Nepal.... The elections were tarnished by the efforts of the government to quash dissent by restricting civil liberties and the media. Those factors in no way justify the Maoists’ enforcement of a national strike with the threat of violence which also held some voters away and their intimidation and killing of candidates, which we condemn absolutely.”



An Armed Police Force soldier guards the poll station in Basantapur, New Road (above left) while police officers closely guard the ballot box (above right). (Below) At the end of the day, many ballot boxes remained empty across the country such as this one in Basantapur. The Election it self was declared "hollow" by the international community and many within the country.



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Hits FM Music Awards 2062

On 3 Feb. 06, Hits FM 91.2 hosted their Annual Close-up Hits FM Music Awards 2062. Here is a quick glance at some of this year's highlights. A full list of winners and photo gallery can be found at Hits FM's official website www.hitsfm.com.np



All photos: ANUP PRAKASH



Photo: BHUSHAN SHILPAKAR

(Above left) "Rock Goddess" fronted Abhaya and the Steam Injuns rock the show. (Above right) New comers pop-rock stars The Uglyz were nominated for 6 awards and won 1 for the Best New Artist category.



(Above left) Veteran artist Kumar Basnet was honored with the Life Time Achievement award. (Above right) Recent UN Goodwill Ambassador and a student of Ethnomusicology, Lochan Rizal, won up 4 awards for Album of The Year, Best Rock Composition, Best Pop Composition and Best Pop Vocal Performance (Male).
(Below) Folk instrumental group Kutumba and fusion guitarist Anil was a definite highlight of this year's awards.



हडकडको नयावर्षमा नेपाली कलाकारहरूको भीड

- DEVRAJ RAI



All photos: DEVRAJ RAI

Sarun (of The Uglyz fame) and Narad Khatiwada were just two of the many Nepali artists performing for Nepalis in Hong Kong.

लुनार (चिनियाँ) नयाँ वर्षको उपलक्षमा आयोजित कार्यक्रमहरूमा दुई साता अघि कलाकारहरूको एक टोलीले हडकड मनोरञ्जनात्मक कार्यक्रम प्रस्तुत गरे। हडकड आइपुगेका चर्चित हाँस्य जोडी मदकृष्ण श्रेष्ठ र हरिवंश आचार्य, हाँस्य गायक तथा कलाकार नारद खतिवडा सहित एक दर्जन कलाकारले दर्शकलाई भर पुर मनोरञ्जन दिए।

उनीहरूसंगै युवा पुस्ताका हुकडुकी बनेका सविन राई, अनिल सिंह, अग्लिज ब्याण्डका शरुन ताम्राकार, एक्सिस ब्याण्डका संदीप,

नायिका रेखा थापा, कलाकारहरू सावित्री शर्मा, नरेन्द्र कंसकार अहिले हडकडका विभिन्न प्रकृतिका कार्यक्रमहरू, स्टेज सो, डान्स पार्टी जस्ता कार्यक्रमहरूमा व्यस्त रहेका छन्। १६ माघमा एकै दिन दुई ठाउँमा सम्पन्न भएको थियो।

प्रिन्स एडवार्डको कम्युनिटी हलमा आशिष लिम्बूको आयोजनामा सम्पन्न भएको देउराली नाइट तेश्रोमा सविन राई र नारद खतिवडाले आफ्ना विभिन्न प्रस्तुतिहरू प्रस्तुत गरेका थिए। सविन राईले आफ्ना नयाँ

पुराना गीतहरूलाई फिलिपिनो लाइभ ब्याण्ड कलाकारहरूको सहयोगमा सुनाएका थिए। नारद खतिवडाले क्यारिकेचर एवं हास्यब्यांग्य प्रस्तुत गरेका थिए। कार्यक्रम साँझको ८ बजेदेखि अवेरसम्म संचालन भएको थियो।

उता सोही दिन विशाल गुरुङको आयोजनामा युनलड थिएटरको भव्य कार्यक्रम हलमा सम्पन्न भएको 'लाली गुराँस नाइट-दोश्रो' मा मह जोडीले अभिनन्दन नामक प्रहसन प्रस्तुत गर्दै दर्शक हसाएका थिए। उनीहरूलाई सावित्री शर्मा र नरेन्द्र कंसकारले साथ

दिएका थिए। युवा पुस्ताका अहिलेका चर्चित अग्लिज ब्याण्डका शरुन ताम्राकार, एक्सिस ब्याण्डका संदीप र अनिल सिंहले पनि आफ्ना चर्चित गीतहरूलाई ट्र्याक मार्फत सुनाएका थिए। उल्लेख्य दर्शकहरूको उपस्थिती र हेको उक्त कार्यक्रममा नायिका रेखा थापाले दुइवटा आइटम डान्सहरू प्रस्तुत गरेकी थिइन्। नारद खतिवडा र सविन राईले अफुहरूको कार्यक्रम सफल रहेको बताए।



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बुढासुव्वा गोल्डकप प्रतियोगिता

- ANAND KOIRALA



All photos: ANAND KOIRALA

Teams (above) and organisers gear up for the nation's biggest football tournament outside of Kathmandu. (Below) The organisers start building the arena.

पूर्वनेपालको बहुप्रतिष्ठीत फुटबल प्रतियोगिता बुढासुव्वा टुवोर्ग गोल्डकपको आठौं संस्करणको आवश्यक तयारी अन्तिम चरमा पुगेको छ । आउदो फागुन दोस्रो साता देखि धरान रङ्गशालामा सञ्चालन गरिने प्रतियोगिताका लागि ख्यातिप्राप्त क्लवलाई आमन्त्रण गर्ने काम भईसकेको छ । रङ्गशालाको दक्षिण पूर्वी क्षेत्रमा तीन हजार दर्शक क्षमताको चौबिस वटा प्याराफिट निर्माण गरिएको छ । अघिल्लो वर्ष दैनिक ८ हजार दर्शक क्षमता रहेको रङ्गशालाले यस वर्ष नवनिर्मित प्यार फिट पछि १२ हजारमा विस्तारित गरिएको आयोजक धरान फुटबल क्लवका अध्यक्ष किसोर राईले बताउनु भयो ।

प्रतियोगितामा बंगलादेशको राष्ट्रिय टिम, शाही एकेडेमी सिक्कीम, टाटा एकेडेमी कोलकोत्ता भारत, सहारा क्लव पोखरा, डिफेण्डेड लिग रनरअप जाउलाखेल युथ क्लव काठमाण्डौ, त्रिभुवन आर्मी क्लव, महेन्द्र पुलिस क्लव,

अण्डर-१७ राष्ट्रिय टिम, भापा ११, मोरङ्ग ११, धरान फुटबल एकेडेमी, धरान ११ र हङ्कङ्गको टिमलाई समावेश गरिने भएको छ ।

धरान फुटबल क्लवले विगत दुई वर्ष देखि विभिन्न क्षेत्रका २० जना वाल खेलाडीलाई समावेश गरी प्रशिक्षण दिइदै आएको धरान एकेडेमीलाई पहिलो पटक प्रतियोगितामा समावेश गर्न लागिएको हो ।

आठौं बुढासुव्वा गोल्डकप प्रतियोगितामा विजेता तथा उपविजेता क्लवलाई क्रमशः ७५ र ३५ हजार नगद तथा उत्कृष्ट खेलाडी र दर्शकलाई एक एक वटा मोटरसाइकल प्रदान गरिने भएको छ । आगामी फागुन १६ देखि २७ गते सम्म हुने गोल्डकप सञ्चालनकालागि विभिन्न ५ वटा समिति तथा उपसमिति गठन गरिएको छ । प्रतियोगिता सञ्चालन पछि आयोजक धरान फुटबल क्लवले लागूऔषध दुर्व्यसनिमा लागेका पूर्व खेलाडीहरूलाई पुनः

थापना गृह सञ्चालनका लागि कोष खडा गर्ने भएकोछ । वि.सं. २०५४ देखि धरान रंगशालामा नियमित सञ्चालन हुदै आएको बुढासुव्वा टुवोर्ग गोल्ड कप महेन्द्र पुलिस क्लवले सर्वाधिक ३ पटक, मनाङ्ग मस् र्याङ्ग्री, भारतको वेल्गरिया स्पोर्टीङ्ग क्लव तथा बंगलादेशको धनमुन्त्री क्लवले एक एक पटक उपाधी माथी कब्जा जमाएका छन भने गत वर्ष श्रीस्टार क्लव च्याम्पियनसिप बनेको थियो ।



पूर्वाञ्चलका अन्य गोल्डकप नहुने

गत वर्ष स्थगित भएको महेन्द्र गोल्डकप फुटबल प्रतियोगिता यस वर्ष पनि आयोजना हुने अनिश्चित भएको छ । गत भदौ महिनामा पूर्वाञ्चल क्षेत्रको राजारानीको अनौपचारिक भ्रमण क्रममा विराटनगर स्थित शहिद रंगशालालाई ढुङ्गा, गिट्टी र वलुवा सहितको हेलिप्याड निर्माण भएपछि त्यसलाई समयमा

नहटाइदा रंगशाला कुरूप बनेपछि आयोजना अनिश्चित भएको हो । महेन्द्र गोल्डकप आयोजक समितिका अनुसार हेलिप्याड निर्माण पश्चात पनि मंसिर पुषमा सञ्चालित विराट महोत्सव वाट पनि रंगशालाको मैदान विकसित भएको कारण जनाईएको छ । गोल्डकप सञ्चालन नहुने भएपछि यसै हप्ता देखि

रंगशालामा विरेन्द्रशिल्ड फुटबल प्रतियोगिता र फाल्गुण १८ देखि २४ सम्म सो स्थानमा मेला लाग्ने भएको छ । त्यसैगरी पूर्वाञ्चलका अन्य प्रतिष्ठित प्रतियोगिताहरू मध्ये भापाको त्रिभुवन मेमोरियल गोल्डकप, इटहरीको हृदयेन्द्र गोल्डकप र विर्तामोडमा

मूख्य प्रायोजक टुवोर्ग गोल्ड वियर तथा सह प्रायोजक कोकोकोला र मायोज चाउचाउले गर्ने भएको सो प्रतियोगिता सञ्चालनको लागि २० लाख खर्च हुने बताइएको छ । जसमध्ये टिकट विक्रवाट उठेको रकमले दर्शकलाई एउटा मोटरसाइकल प्रदान गरिने भएको हो ।

पूर्वी नेपालको चर्चित यस गोल्डकप आयोजनापूर्व धरानलाई ८ वटा गेट सहित सुन्दर रूपमा सजाइने भएको छ । प्रतियोगिताको अन्तराष्ट्रिय प्रचारप्रसारको लागि नेपाली आवाज पाक्षिकलाई अफिसियल मिडिया बनाएको छ ।

हङ्कङ्गमा बसोवास गर्ने नेपालीहरू विच यसैवर्ष धरान फुटबल क्लवले हङ्कङ्ग संस्करणका रूपमा बुढासुव्वा टुवोर्ग गोल्डकप सम्पन्न गरेको छ । अध्यक्ष राईका अनुसार हङ्कङ्गमा नेप्लिज युथ अर्गनाइजेशनले प्रतियोगिताको निरन्तरता दिने सम्झौता गरेको छ । त्यसैगरी धरान फुटबल क्लवले यस वर्ष डि.आई.जी. कप, अन्तरकलेज स्तरिय फुटबल प्रतियोगिता, गंगे युथकप र पूर्वाञ्चल मिडियाकप सञ्चालन गर्ने भएको छ । त्यस्तै बुढासुव्वा गोल्डकपको अवसर पारेर पूर्वाञ्चलका रेफ्रीहरूलाई जिल्ला खेलकुद संघको तर्फबाट ७ दिने प्रशिक्षण तालिम पनि सञ्चालन गरिने अध्यक्ष राईले बताउनुभयो ।

नेपाल रनिङ कप डायमण्डको पोल्टामा



Photos: MATRADIP RAI

लुनार (चिनियाँ) नयाँ वर्षको उपलक्ष्यमा हङकङका नेपाली समुदायमा चर्चित एभरेष्ट फुटबल क्लवको आयोजनामा गत जनवरी २८ र २९ तारिखका दुई दिन सम्पन्न भएको सेभेन ए साइड फुटबल प्रतियोगितामा चर्चित डायमण्ड फुटबल क्लवले हिमालयन फुटबल क्लवलाई १ गोलका विरुद्ध ४ गोलले पराजित गर्दै तेश्रो नेपाल रनिङ कप हात पार्न सफल भएको छ ।

लिग कम नकआउट प्रणालिका आधारमा खेलाइएको नेपाल कपमा नेपाली समुदायका ८ वटा टिमहरूले एक अर्कामा प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका थिए । दुई भागमा विभाजन गरि खेलाइएको सो खेलमा आयोजक एभरेष्ट फुटबल क्लव ए, जमघट फुटबल क्लव, धरान फुटबल क्लव, हेई हेई फुटबल क्लव र चौबिसो फुटबल क्लवले पोल 'ए' बाट प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका थिए । उता समुह 'बी' बाट हिमालयन फुटबल क्लव, एभरेष्ट फुटबल क्लव 'बी', चुमलुङ फुटबल क्लव र डायमण्ड फुटबल क्लवले प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका थिए ।

युनलड अन हिङ स्ट्रिटको सेभेन पिपुल फुटबल पिचमा सम्पन्न भएको उक्त नेपाल रनिङ कपको फाइनलमा प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका

टिमहरूमा डायमण्डको तर्फबाट नरेन्द्र लिम्बू, केम लिम्बूले एक-एक गोल गरेका थिए । विनोस लिम्बूले भने आफ्नो टिमकालागि २ गोल गर्दै विजय सुनिश्चित गरेका थिए । पराजित बनेको हिमालयन फुटबल क्लवको तर्फबाट एकमात्र गोल मिलन घलेले गरेका थिए ।

डायमण्ड फुटबल क्लवका नरेन्द्र लिम्बू उत्कृष्ट खेलाडी घोषित भएको सो प्रतियोगितामा गणेश पुन र केम लिम्बू हाइ स्कोररको पुरस्कार हकदार बनेका थिए । जमघट फुटबल क्लवका समिर गुरुडले गरेको गोलले उनलाई उत्कृष्ट गोल कर्ताको पुरस्कार दिलाएको थियो । प्रतियोगितामा चुमलुङ फुटबल क्लवलाई बेष्ट टिम घोषण गरिएको थियो । तेश्रो स्थानमा भने आयोजक एभरेष्ट फुटबल क्लवको ए टिमले आफ्नो दावेदारी प्रस्तुत गरेको थियो ।

विजयी खेलाडी तथा टिमलाई प्रमुख अतिथि र याडजा जन सेवा समितिका अध्यक्ष भक्तवहादुर गुरुडले पुरस्कार तथा प्रमाण पत्र वितरण गर्नु भएको थियो ।

हङकङमा यलम्बर रनिङ शिल्ड भलिबल



Photos: MATRADIP RAI

किरात राई यायोख्खाले वर्षेनी आयोजना गर्दै आएको यलम्बर भलिबल रनिङ शिल्ड प्रतियोगिताको छैटौँ संस्करणमा पनि अन्ततः पुन क्लव हङकङ विजयी हुँदै सर्वाधिक पुरस्कार राशि १८ हजार हङकङ डलर सहित रनिङ शिल्ड सदाकालागि हत्याउन सफल भएको छ । यस अघि पुन क्लवले चौथो र पाँचौँ संस्करणमा लगातार विजयी प्राप्त गरेको थियो । उक्त प्रतियोगितामा वानचाई भलिबल क्लव र मोना भलिबल क्लव क्रमशः दोश्रो तथा तेश्रो स्थानको हकदार बनेका थिए ।

गत २८ जनवरीका दिन चुनमुन बटर फ्लाई बीच भलिबल मैदानमा सम्पन्न भएको सो छैटौँ यलम्बर भलिबल रनिङ शिल्ड भलिबल प्रतियोगितामा हङकङमा र हेका ६ वटा भलिबल टिमहरूले सहभागिता जनाएकामा खोटाङ सेवा समितिले अन्तिम समयमा सहभागिताकानिम्त असमर्थता जनाएको थियो । वानचाई भलिबल टिमका विक्रम थापा बेष्ट प्लेयर घोषित भएको उक्त प्रतियोगितामा ५ वटा टिमले कडा प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका थिए । प्रतियोगितामा फाइनलमा प्रवेश गरेको वानाचाई भलिबल टिमले पहिलो चरणमा ए-पोलबाट बाग्लुङ परिवार भलिबल टिमलाई पराजित गर्दै सेमिफाइनलकालागि आफ्नो स्थान सुरक्षित गरेको थियो । सेमिफाइनलमा बाई पाएर सोभै आएको आयोजक संस्थाको किरात राई यायोख्खा भलिबल टिमलाई लगातारमा ३ सेट पराजित गरी फाइनलका सम्मको यात्रा तय गरेको थियो ।

उता बी-पोलमा खोटाङ सेवा समितिले हात उठाए पछि सेमी फाइनलमा सोभै प्रवेश गरेको म्यान्दी ओभरसिज

एसोसिएसनको मोना भलिबल टिमले बाई पाएर सोभै सेमीफाइनलमा प्रवेश गरेको पुन क्लवको सामना गरेको थियो । लगातार ३ सेट खेल आफ्नो पक्षमा पार्न सफल भई फाइनलमा पुगेको पुन क्लवले वानचाईले बलियो विपक्षी पाएको थियो । कडा र प्रतिस्पर्धात्मक खेलमा अन्तिम समयमा आएर पुन क्लवले ३-१ को विजयी हात पारेको थियो । तेश्रो स्थान बाहेकका खेललाई बेस्ट अफ फाइभको प्रणालिका आधारमा खेल सम्पन्न गरिएको थियो । मोना भलिबल टिम र किरात राई यायोख्खा भलिबल टिमले तेश्रो स्थानकालागि प्रतिस्पर्धा गरेका थिए । सफलता भने मोनको पक्षमा गएको थियो ।

प्रथम स्थान हासिल गरेको पुन क्लवले शिल्ड एवं १५ हजार डलरका साथै नियमित विजयी हासिल गरेको प्रथम स्थानको ४ हजार डलर सहित १८ हजार जितेको थियो । उता दोश्रो स्थान हासिल गर्ने वानचाईले ३ हजार डलर र तेश्रो स्थान प्राप्त गरेको मोनाले २ हजार डलर हात पारेको थियो ।

कार्यवाहक महावाणिज्यदूत हेमलाल भट्टराई प्रमुख अतिथि रहनु भएको उक्त प्रतियोगितामा नेपाली महासंघका अध्यक्ष गणेश इजम, तेजवहादुर राई अतिथिको रूपमा उपस्थित हुनुहुन्थियो । प्रतियोगिताको अन्तमा हेजेन राई, नरहाड राई, अम्पायर जयनारायण चौधरी, किराया खेलकुदा संयोजक शिवराज राई, सल्लाहाकार नरजीत राई लगायतका व्यक्तिहरूले पुरस्कार तथा प्रमाणपत्र, मेडल, शिल्ड एवं चेक पुरस्कार प्रदान गर्नु भएको थियो । अध्यक्ष हेजेन राईले धन्यवाद मन्तव्य व्यक्त गर्नु भएको थियो ।

Nepal Seattle Society hosts Table Tennis Championship 2006



On Jan. 28, 2006, Nepal Seattle Society hosted the first ever "NSS Open Table Tennis Championship Tournament 2006" at the University Heights Center. A total of 18 players for Men's Single and 3 players for Women's Single participated in the tournament, a first of its kind. Mr. Sunil Joshi and Ms. Hiroko Narimatsu were crowned the champions of this tournament for the Men's and Women's Single. And, Mr. Asim Rijal and Ms. Mon-Fang Mei took the second place. Although the organisers received an overwhelming response, many of the enthusiasts could not take part because the deadline for participating had already passed. However, NSS is planning to make this an annual event with the second such championship ischeduled for Jan. 07. (Source: NSS)

Photo: Nepal Seattle Society

Winners of the first NSS Table Tennis Championship Tournament held on 28 Jan. 06.

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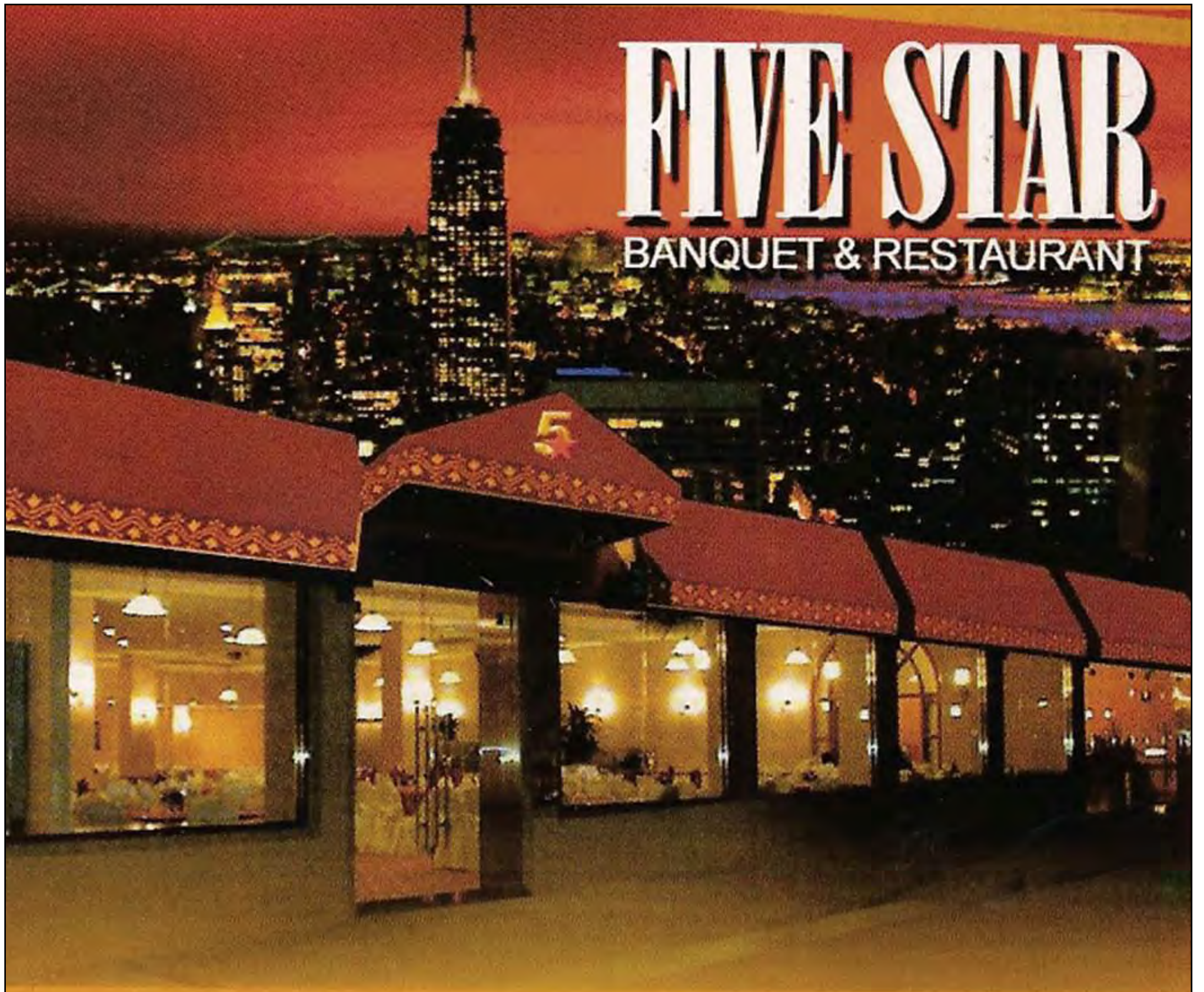
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