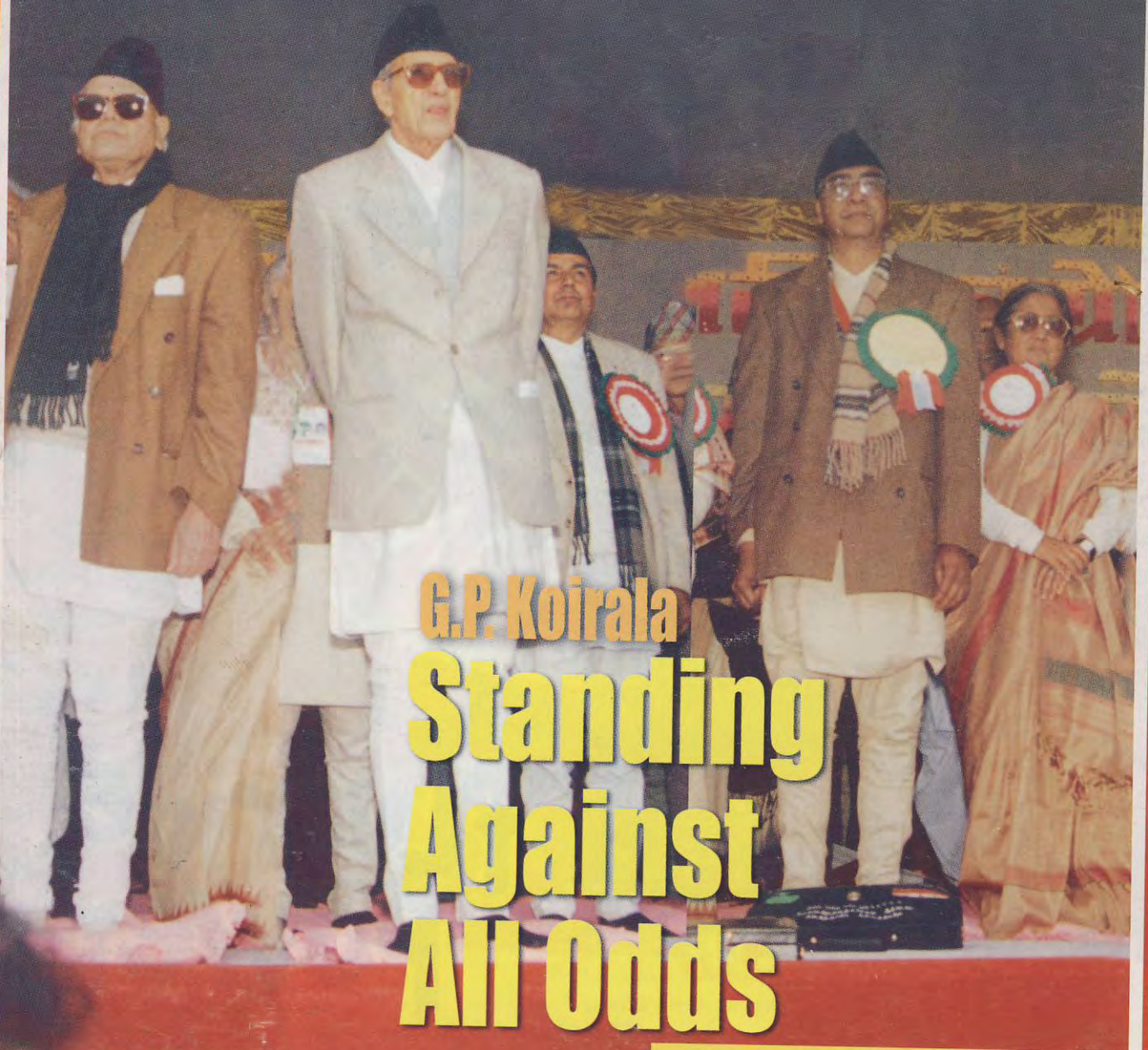


The National Newsmagazine

SPOTLIGHT

11-17 May, 2001



G.P. Koirala
**Standing
 Against
 All Odds**

- Special Report: Chinese PM's Visit
- Judiciary: Focussing on Performance
- Tea Industry: Brewing Success

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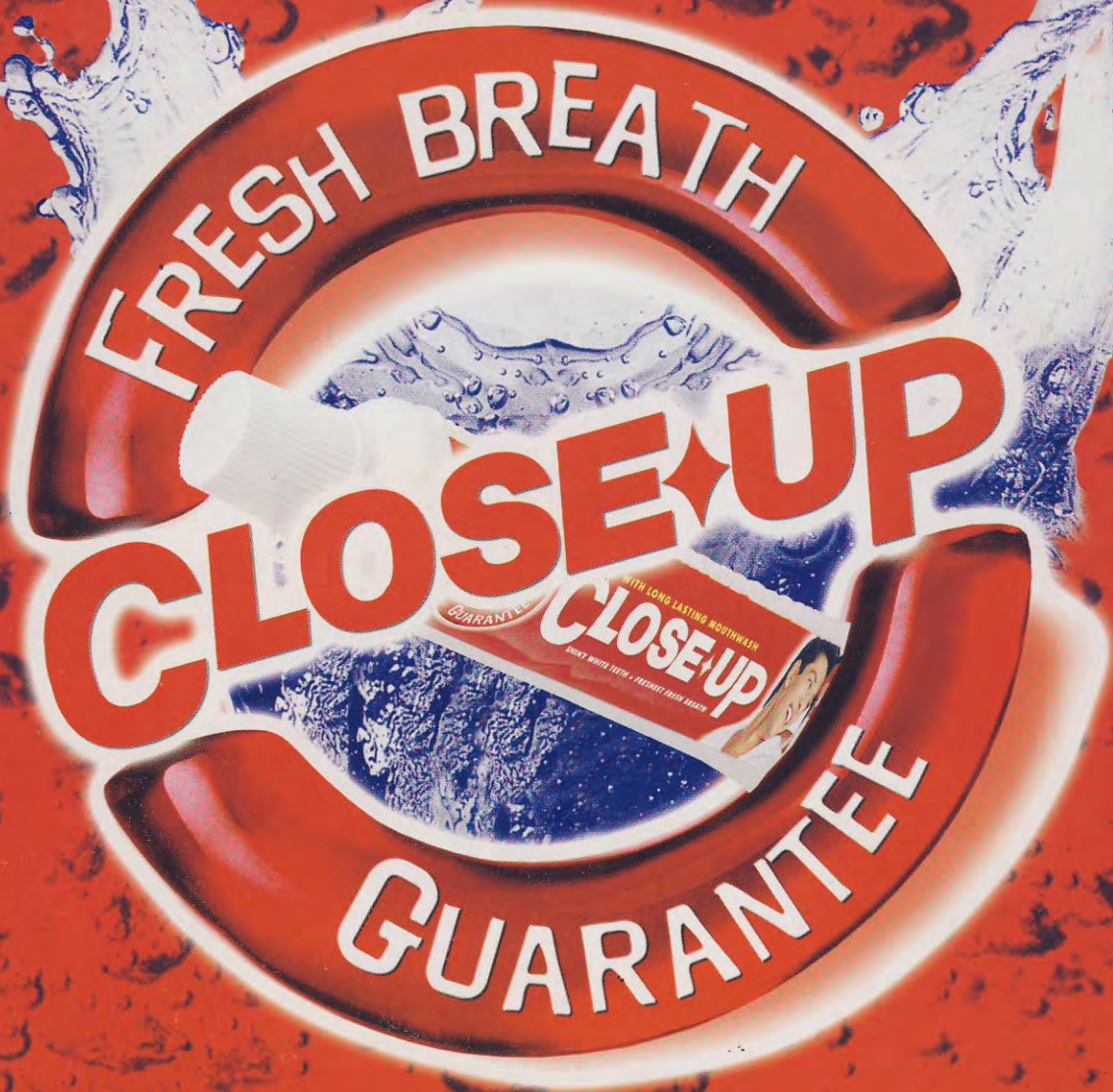
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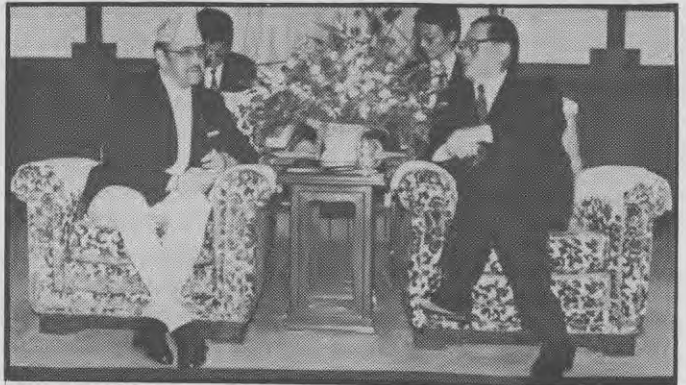
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COVER STORY : STANDING AGAINST ALL ODDS
In the face of all-round opposition, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala refuses to step down.

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ZHU RONGJI'S VISIT: Boosting Friendship
The visit by the Chinese Premier is expected to further cement the bilateral ties.

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JUDICIARY : Limitless Indjustice
In a situation when rights of a suspect is under threat the role of judiciary becomes vital.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

At the fag end of his long political career Girija Prasad Koirala has soiled his image so badly that he will go down in Nepal's history as one who has done immeasurable harm to the country. The manner he edged out his colleague from the government more than a year ago on grounds of non-performance and corruption has only contributed to expose him beyond repair. Never was the country plagued by political instability as was during his tenure. And that too when his ruling party had a clear majority in the parliament. Never in the history of parliamentary democracy was a whole session totally wasted like our last session. Never in our country's history was such a big chunk of territory under a rebel parallel government. And never had Nepal experienced such a corroding alien influence in our administration that has very sadly undermined our sovereignty. Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala must be well aware that he has lost all moral justification to rule the country. He has become so unpopular and credibility has sunk so low that he can hardly function effectively. Except a handful of his cronies nobody wants him to continue as Prime Minister. His obduracy not to resign is sure to endanger the very democratic process in the country to restore which the people have made immeasurable sacrifices. Prolonging such an uncertain situation is not only harming the country and the people but his own political party as well. He can still salvage some of his party's image if he quits without much ado and agrees to initiate steps that would bring the derailed situation into track. Since the Nepali Congress has forfeited the mandate (acquired through fraudulent means) only a government of patriotic forces that can withstand the destabilising alien influence must be formed if the integrity of the country is to be safeguarded.

IN the last eleven years after the restoration of democracy all the political parties that have been represented in the government have been totally discredited. They have not only exposed their weakness for corruption but also proved beyond a ray of doubt that they cannot resist unwarranted pressures from anti-national forces. Their wobbling kness have compromised the honor of the country and also sidelined the interests of the nation. As such, if we want to strengthen the integrity of the country, nurse the new found democracy and alleviate the rampant poverty, there is no alternative for a nationalist government that will work for the betterment of the people only. Consequently, the need of the hour is the government of honest and patriotic forces. This government, after making appropriate laws that will bar all corrupt politicians to contest the polls, will hold a free and fair general election that will pave the way for blossoming a full-fledged democracy in the country. If the Nepali Congress law makers fail to rise up to the occasion to rescue the country from the imminent civil war because of their majority in the parliament, they have to find some one from amongst themselves who is cleaner and noncontroversial and can lead them. Even though we are fully convinced that Nepali Congress, because of its inherent flaws, can never rule in the interest of the people of our poor country we will bear with this young, honest and dynamic Nepali Congress leader for a reasonable length of time. The sooner they do it, the better for the country.

* * *

We have always advocated peaceful dialogue for the solution of the Maoist problem. The deployment of Royal Nepal Army is sure to aggravate the problem and very likely embroil the country in a devastating civil war. We have instances galore, both near and far, where a long drawn out civil war is continuing. With our terrain, how can we be assured that Maoists rebels can be subdued by force. Once the army gets involved it would be very difficult to extricate. In the long run, it may even spell danger to the institution of monarchy. Since, it could be well planned strategy of some interested forces, we must use our wisdom not to fall in the trap. Will Nepal Army listen? ■



Madhav Kumar Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Sorry State

Apropos your cover story "Beset With Uncertainties" (SPOTLIGHT, May 4), it appears that the Nepalese government does not have specific plans and programs to sustain the export sector. The way the markets for carpets and pashmina are dwindling, it seems the authorities are least bothered. Leave alone research to introduce exportable items, our authorities cannot even sustain those already identified by the private sector.

Krishna Gautam
Lagankhel

tution they ran made huge losses. If this yardstick is applied universally, then all the bosses of the loss-making public enterprises ought to be in jail. Such public enterprises are not in short supply in Nepal. Such hard-to-believe logic may not find supporters when the CIAA finally takes it case to the court of law.

Ramesh Baidya
Samakhusi

Outrageous Obstruction

The government's mysterious decision to obstruct Spacetime Network's Channel Nepal from going on air through satellite at the eleventh hour is an outrageous one ("Off The Air", SPOTLIGHT, April 27). What would the Nepalese government have lost by allowing the private-sector TV channel to extend its footprints beyond the country? From every point of view, the channel should have been encouraged. Everybody is hoping that the authorities would end this controversy and allow the channel to operate soon.

Navin Gurung
Thamel

Wither Exports?

After nearly half a decade saw exports picking up, it seems the country is now facing a slump in the sector ("Beset With Uncertainties", SPOTLIGHT, May 4). Unfortunately, under this non-performing government, one cannot do anything but rue the impending disaster. Just imagine what would happen if exports suddenly began to plummet. It would destroy the whole national economy and put an additional burden on the people's shoulders.

Bikas Neupane
Gairidhara

Against The Spirit

The decision by the Indian government to impose the countervailing duty on the maximum retail price of goods exported from Nepal is against the

spirit of the 1996 trade treaty between the two countries ("Beset With Uncertainties", SPOTLIGHT, May 4). This provision will affect genuine manufacturing industries in Nepal. Against the provision of the treaty, this will mean that industries stationed in Nepal will be paying additional duties to Indian government compared to industries stationed in India. The sooner this provision is revoked, the better for bilateral trade.

Binaya Joshi
Tahachal

Bad Mentality

The largest portion of the blame for the sudden decline in the export of the pashmina products lies squarely on Nepalese exporters themselves, who in their race to earn quick money undermined the quality ("Beset With

Uncertainties" SPOTLIGHT, May 4). They are responsible not only for bringing down what was a promising industry but also for giving a bad name to Nepal abroad. The spurious pashmina makers must be singled out and penalized for their misdeeds.

Dipesh Shakya
Mangal Bazar

Misplaced Logic

The logic based on which the CIAA has taken action against two former RNAC bosses on allegations of corruption in the Lauda Air deal appears to be totally misplaced ("Endless Drama", SPOTLIGHT, May 4). While the credentials of those arrested are indeed questionable, how can the CIAA put them behind bars by arguing that they have embezzled funds because the insti-

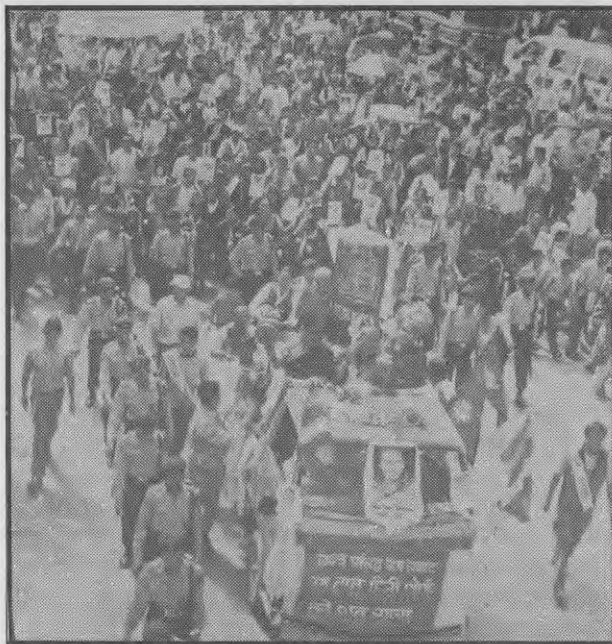
Power Problem

Every dry season, the citizens of world's second richest country in hydropower potential have to reel under load shedding ("Powerless Days Ahead", SPOTLIGHT, April 27). Misplaced policies, flawed programs and impractical projects have contributed to creating this chaotic situation. It is surprising that the capacities of most of the run-of-the-river type projects are diminished by such a huge margin during the dry season. Shouldn't the experts have warned the people of this fluctuation in power production well in advance? That could have saved precious resources, which, in turn, could have been put to better use.

Sandesh Bista
Satdobato

Babu Chhiri's Last Rites Performed

Last rites of noted Mt. Everest summiteer, Babu Chhiri Sherpa, were conducted according to Buddhist traditions at Swoyambhu Thursday morning. Thousands of people from all walks of life paid the 'son of the mountain' last tributes. The 35-year-old Babu had died after falling into a crevasse at a height of 6,500 meters on Mt. Everest. His body was brought to Kathmandu Tuesday and kept at the Sherpa Service Center for two days.



Procession before Chiri's last rites

The government also paid honors to the dead hero who had scaled Mt. Everest successfully ten times. In a message, King Birendra expressed condolence at the untimely demise of the noted mountaineer. *Compiled from reports May 2.*

Koirala Instructs Ministers

Amid calls for his resignation after the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority fired a 'letter bomb' at him over the Lauda Air deal, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has instructed junior ministers to visit districts all over the country to monitor development works, including the implementation of the proposed Integrated Security and Development Program. In a meeting

with more than a dozen ministers of state, assistant ministers and members of the National Planning Commission on Saturday, the prime minister asked them to visit the districts they have been assigned to immediately and start their job. RSS news agency reported that the high-level inspection visits would be made to all the 14 zones of the country. The government has worked out a plan of action to obtain objective information on whether or not development and construction works being carried out by the government are going on smoothly and whether or not the services being provided to the people are easily available, just and up to quality. *Compiled from reports May 6.*

Transport Operators Withdraw Strike

Transport operators agreed to withdraw their spontaneous strike Wednesday after government officials assured them that they would investigate the burning down of a minibus in the capital early this week. A group of students said to be close to CPN (ML) had burnt down the bus after its staff refused to grant them 33 percent discount in the fare.

A tripartite meeting among the officials, student leaders and transport operators



Transport agitation

had agreed on the discount a few weeks back but transporters are complaining that non-students are trying to take benefit. *Compiled from reports May 3.*

'Foreign Forces Behind Instability'

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has blamed 'foreign forces' for prolonged instability in the country. Addressing a meeting organized by Nepal Trade Union Congress here Wednesday to mark the International Workers' Day (May 1), Koirala said foreign forces were responsible for the ongoing instability, mismanagement and stalled development works, Kantipur daily reported. "I know, different foreign powers are active here," declared Koirala. He did not mention who those forces were. He also hinted that the Maoist people's war was also a handiwork of a foreign power. Koirala asked workers, peasants and people who believed in democracy to help make the Integrated Security and Development Program succeed in the region affected by the Maoist insurgency. "Let's not turn our country into a playground of foreigners," he urged. *Compiled from reports May 2.*

Ninth Plan Target Unlikely To Be Met

The growth target set by the Ninth Five Year plan (1998-2002) are unlikely to be met, said a mid-term review of the plan. The review prepared by the Fulbright

IDRS United for the National Planning Commission (NPC) said the average growth rate during this period is 1.19 percent less than the target of 6.0 percent set by the plan. The report prepared by a team headed by Prof. Parthibeswor P. Timilsina has recommended the government to reduce unnecessary expenditure and create an in-

vestment friendly atmosphere to increase gross domestic savings and investment in comparison to gross domestic product. The report has also stressed the need to reform revenue administration and mobilize internal resources effectively. *Compiled from reports May 2.*

Business Houses Vandalized

A group of workers said to be close to underground Maoists vandalized showrooms belonging to Dugar Brothers and Sons, a leading industrial and business house in the country, at Pokhara and Kathmandu Tuesday. As their colleagues were taking out processions in major cities to mark the International Workers Day, more than a dozen people carrying 'khukuris' vandalized a show room owned by Dugar Iron and Steel Trading Company in Pokhara on Tuesday morning. According to Nepal Samacharpatra daily, a group of eight or nine people threw petrol bombs at the four-storey building of Dugar Brothers and Sons at Putalisadak in the capital Tuesday evening. The company staff later put out the fire caused by the bombs. Company officials said property worth an estimated Rs 700,000 was destroyed in both incidents. Police failed to nab the culprits in both incidents. *Compiled from reports May 2.*

CAAN Asks Airlines To Stop Ads

Amid growing competition among private airlines in the country to grab a major share in the air services market, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has asked domestic airline companies not to publish advertisements and make publicity regarding flight safety of their aircraft with a view to promote their business. In a public notice issued on Monday, the government agency warned the concerned airlines of stringent action if they continued to publish, what it said, misleading advertisements. The CAAN made it clear that the safety of any airplane depended on its airworthiness, not on its age, and claimed that all aircraft operating in the country were safe to fly. The CAAN's response came after Buddha Air, a private airlines, put advertisements in

major newspapers saying that its new generation Beech Aircrafts were the safest in the country and that all other airlines were operating old-generation aircrafts. Other airlines refuted, also through public advertisements, Buddha Air's claims. *Compiled from reports May 1.*

Private Schools Closed

Amid growing pressure from the ANNFSU (Revolutionary), a pro-Maoist student organization, private and boarding schools in more than one and half dozen districts have been closed down, reports said. Nearly 150 private schools in



Education Ministry

districts including Lamjung, Pyuthan, Gorkha, Sindhupalchok, Kavre, Arghakhanchi, Salyan, Dolakha, Rukum, Rolpa districts have been closed down, PABSON — an organization of private schools in the country — said. The ANNFSU has already called for weeklong closure of private schools in the capital valley beginning mid-May in support of its demand for 50 percent waiver in the fees being charged by the private schools. ANNFSU (Revolutionary) general secretary Punya Poudel said his organization was running parallel education offices in the districts and were investigating cases of exorbitant fees charged by private schools. The student organization has also demanded boycott of Sanskrit education

and the national anthem in the schools. *Kantipur May 2.*

Sri Lanka Tries To Revive SAARC Process

Sri Lanka, the current chair of the seven-member regional body in South Asia, has initiated efforts to revive what is known as the SAARC process. AP news agency reported Monday that the Sri Lankan government has invited foreign secretaries of SAARC for a meeting in June. Since 1998, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) summit has been postponed indefinitely, mainly due to tensions between India and Pakistan. The summit, scheduled to take place in Kathmandu in November 1999, had been postponed at the request of the Indian government. Reports said India requested postponement of the summit as the Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee wanted to avoid a meeting with Pakistan's military ruler General Pervez Musharraf, whom India blamed for an incursion in Kashmir that resulted in an 11-week-long fighting in 1999. *Compiled from reports May 1.*

Nepalese Laborers Deprived Of Rights

Even after more than a decade of restoration of democracy in the country, Nepalese laborers are deprived of their minimum rights, activists said. Participating in an interaction program organized by the Amnesty International Nepal chapter on the eve of the 112th International Workers' Day here Monday, Umesh Upadhyay of the Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions said the workers in the unorganized sector were still deprived of their basic rights, including minimum wages and other trade union rights. General secretary of the Democratic Confederation of Nepalese Trade Unions (DECONT) Khila Nath Dahal said even in the organized sector, several establishments did not provide appointment letters to their workers and were not paying proper attention to avoid occupational hazard. *Compiled from reports May 1.*



King Birendra inaugurating Buddhist conference in Lalitpur on the occasion of 2545th Buddha Jayanti

CROWN PRINCE DIPENDRA RETURNED HOME LAST Thursday after completing an eight-day official visit to Japan. The Crown Prince had left for Japan on April 24 at the invitation of the government of Japan. Meanwhile, in a statement, Minister for Science and Technology Surendra Prasad Chaudhary said the visit by the Crown Prince provided an opportunity to renew friendly relations between the two countries. Chaudhary, who accompanied the Crown Prince during the visit, said the visit afforded Crown Prince Dipendra an opportunity to see for himself the pace of development taking place in Japan.

THE SWISS RED CROSS HAS AGREED TO IMPLEMENT various development programs in Nepal for a period of five years. An agreement has been signed between the Social Welfare Council and local representative of the Swiss Red Cross here this week. According to the agreement, the Swiss Red Cross will annually provide a minimum of US\$ 100,000 for implementation of the programs.

THE RECENT SLUMP IN CARPET EXPORTS HAS WOR-ried both entrepreneurs and officials. The total export volume of carpets in the first nine months of the current fiscal year has plunged by over 7 percent to 1.68 million square meters, down from 1.80 million square meters over the same period last year. Carpet entrepreneurs blamed what they called lack of long-term supportive policies to the sector as primarily responsible for the current slowdown. They said heavy dependence on a single market — Germany alone consumes over 70 percent of the total export — is also responsible for the current slump. President of the Central Carpet Industries Association (CCIA) A.G. Sherpa said there was a need to amend existing labor laws to ensure sustainable growth of the carpet sector.

NEPAL HAS BEEN ELECTED TO THE EXECUTIVE BOARD of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for a three-year term beginning 2002 by securing the largest number of votes. Similarly, Nepal has been elected to the Commission on Sustainable Development for a three-year term beginning 2002. Both the elections were held on May 3, 2001, the Foreign Ministry said.

SOME 70 PERCENT OF NEPALESE WOMEN HAVE BEEN found to be suffering from anemia due to iron deficiency, reports said. According to a study conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO), 83 percent of Nepal's population use iodized salt. The remaining 17 percent that doesn't use iodized salt were found to be suffering from goiter and mental retardation. The study revealed that 40 percent of the people in the terai were suffering from goiter because of iodine deficiency.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM HAS agreed to provide a grant assistance of 31.995 million pounds (approximately Rs 3399.1 million) to the Nepalese government for the implementation of a Rural Access Program (RAP) in the eastern, mid-, and far-western development regions and adjoining areas. The main purpose of the program is to improve poor people's access to goods, markets and services, said the Finance Ministry. The program will contribute to achieving more secure and sustainable rural livelihoods for the poor and disadvantaged in the hill areas of Nepal, officials said. In the selected districts, 1.2 million people are expected to benefit from improved access. The government is to bear 20 percent and local District Development Committees 10 percent of the costs for the feeder roads. Finance Secretary Dr. Bimal Koirala and British Ambassador to Nepal Ronald Nash signed and exchanged a letter to this effect last week.

NEPAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY (NLIC) BEGAN ITS operations last week. The company said it would entertain 181 life assurance proposals worth Rs 1.43 billion from the general public. The authorized capital of the first full-fledged life insurance company in the country is Rs 250 million. The company said its risks would be reinsured at Germany's Hanover Reinsurance Company. Initially, the company will offer endowment with profits plan, anticipated endowment with profit for term of 15 and 20 years and dual accident insurance schemes. The promoters said they would launch two more schemes within a month. They said they had a target of selling 10,000 policies during the first year of operation and promised for quick efficient service to the insurers. Chairman of the company, Purushottam Lal Shanghai, said the company wanted to pool scattered capital through insurance policies and invest it for development of the nation. Inaugurating the company, Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat said the Nepalese insurance market would witness a competitive environment with the establishment of the new company.

THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP) has agreed to assist the Nepalese government in launching a yearlong project on "expanded rights-based approach to the concentrated HIV/AIDS epidemic in Nepal." The US\$ 2.53 million project aims at addressing the urgent risk and harm reduction needs of female sex workers, their clients and injecting drug users in Nepal. The first phase will bridge the time needed to develop a broader, expanded response for these groups by supporting advocacy and research, increasing at the same time the coverage of services beginning in Kathmandu valley and other selected areas of the country. An agreement to this effect was signed between the government and UNDP late last month. ■

“His (Bhattarai’s) job is to ask for my resignation, mine is to refuse.”

Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, reacting to the demand (for his resignation) by senior Congress leader Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, in The Kathmandu Post.

* * *

“There is no alternative to the prime minister’s resignation.”

Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, former prime minister, demanding the resignation of Koirala in a press statement, in Kantipur.

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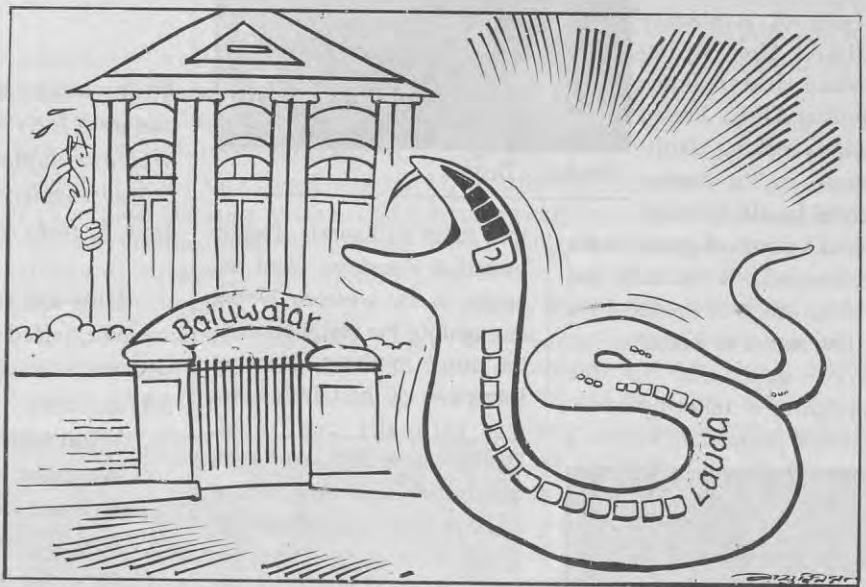
“I am surprised by (the tone of) his reply.”

Madhav Kumar Nepal, general secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist and the leader of the main opposition, saying Koirala’s reply to the CIAA’s letter was an attack against the constitutional body, in Chhalfal.

* * *

“Only those without brains talk such nonsense.”

Bamdev Gautam, general secretary of Marxist Leninist, when pointed out that UML leaders were accusing him of supporting Prime Minister



Girija Prasad Koirala, in Jana Aastha.

* * *

“In the immediate aftermath we could lose 10 billion rupees in revenue but we can gain many times more than that by getting the market of

billion-plus population of China and another billion population of India.”

Prof. Madan Kumar Dahal, economist, advocating the free-flow of goods with zero duty between Nepal and India/China, saying that the move would help Nepal exploit the burgeoning economy of its neighboring countries, in Gorkhapatra.

* * *

“As far as their academic demands are concerned, they are justified.”

Suprabhat Bhandari, president of Nepal Guardian’s Association, reacting to the demands put forth by the student wing of Maoists, in Jana Bhawana.

* * *

“Iwish all women stopped using the identity given by their husband.”

Sita Pandey, a feminist writer, in Jana Aastha.

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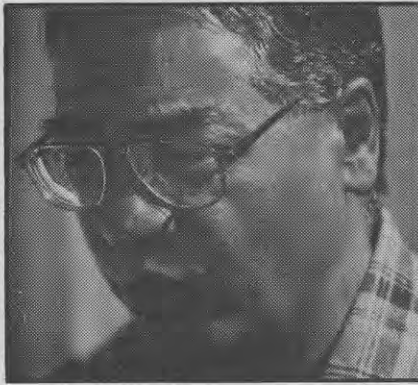


Mimalaya Times

Letter For Survival

CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal hailed the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) after it dispatched a letter to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala seeking clarifications on the controversial Lauda Air deal.

Nepal's words of gratitude are understandable because the CIAA, which is headed by a fellow native of Rautahat, has given new life to the opposition's faltering street agitation demanding Koirala's



Deuba : Gleeful

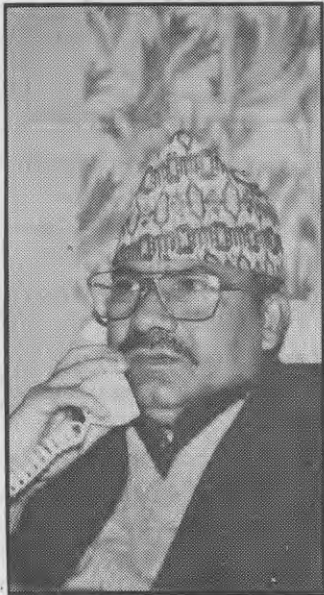
that letter to Koirala. Deuba issued a statement from his camp in far-western Nepal demanding the resignation of the prime minister. Even before news of the CIAA letter was officially confirmed, Deuba was telling supporters that the time had come for him to bear certain important responsibilities. Whether Deuba's dream of moving into the Baluwatar quarters materializes or not, his happiness seems to know no bounds at the moment.

Personal Concern

Former deputy prime minister Shailaja Acharya was the



Acharya : Smells conspiracy



Nepal : Good news

resignation. Whether this regional affinity or the political timing is a coincidence or not, the letter helped the politician of Rautahat by hurting the strongman of the Nepali Congress.

Happy Deuba

It seems that former prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba was among the happiest men when the CIAA formally wrote

REVELATION

'We Are Very Cautious About Misuse Of Keys'

— KRISHNA KOIRALA

If you want any kind of key duplicated, KRISHNA KOIRALA can do it for you. One of the owners of Key House, which prepares duplicate keys upon request, Koirala finds his business under threat because of cheap Chinese and Indian keys. Koirala reveals many aspects of his business.

How did you start your business?

We started in 1992 by making duplicate keys for people who were facing inconvenience because they had lost their original ones.

What type of keys do you prepare?

We make all kinds of duplicate keys for European, Japanese and Indian cars. We also make duplicate keys for cabinets, lockers and safes.

How do you check possible misuse of duplicate keys?

We will not make keys unless we are allowed to see the actual lock. For keys of motorbikes and small almaries, we just demand to see the identity card of the individual. We cannot prepare duplicate keys for cabinets and lockers in the absence of the owner.

Don't you think that there is a real possibility of misuse of your service?

I have already told you, we are very cautious on this matter. We will not accept any work unless we are convinced of the genuineness of the customer's identity.

What are the challenges in front of you right now?

It is very tough for us now to compete with cheap Indian and Chinese key which are available in the market. Since the new locks are so cheap, people break them whenever they lose the key.

Have you experienced any harassment from police?

As I said, our intention is fair and clear. So there is no question of any kind of harassment from police. ■

first politician who saw a conspiracy in the CIAA's letter. Her expressions of concern are understandable, because any danger to Koirala's position would undermine her own role, given her political and per-

sonal ties to the prime minister. In raising the slogan of "conspiracy against democracy", Acharya has at once professed loyalty to her party leader and worked to protect her own position. ■

CHILD LABOR

Abuse Of Innocence

Nepal is to launch a time-bound program to combat the worst forms of child labor in cooperation with ILO

By A CORRESPONDENT

Basu, a 11-year-old boy, could be seen washing dishes at a popular hotel at Butwal. He disappeared from the hotel after a few weeks as his employer allegedly tried to abuse him sexually. More than 1,100 children like Basu are living at risk in Butwal municipality, one of the major trading centers in western Nepal, a study said.

According to a study conducted by Bal Samparka Kendra, an NGO, of these children, 690 were involved in collecting scrap materials, 195 in hotels and restaurants and 93 worked as household servants. The number of street children and child workers is increasing due to the influence of poor friends, mistreatment of the stepmother, stern punishment given at school and home, among others, said the report.

The plight of young boys and girls is no better in other parts of the country. According to an ILO/IPEC study undertaken in 1996, of the 6.23 million children between the ages of 5-14 in Nepal, 2.6 million or 42 percent are at work. Of this 1.7 million are economically active. This does not take into account many more, particularly girls, who help out in domestic chores.

Child labor exists in various sectors: agriculture, trade and occupations such as basket making, sewing, iron smithy and weaving. Given the open border between Nepal and India, thousands of children are annually trafficked and pushed into prostitution. The sexual exploitation of children is on the rise in urban Nepal too. It is also estimated that a considerable number of children under the age of 16 are being used as commandos and human shield in the Maoist insurgency movement all over the country, which is now in its sixth year.

Following the adoption of convention 182 on the worst forms of child labor, IPEC (International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor) under ILO (International Labor

Organization) is making special efforts to address the worst forms of child labor as a matter of priority and an entry point to combat all forms of child labor worldwide. IPEC will launch in 2001 a time bound program (TBP) to combat the worst forms of child labor in three countries, Nepal, Tanzania and El Salvador, which have expressed a particularly strong commitment.

A national consultation meeting was organized in the capital this week (May 8-10) to formulate a time-bound program against



Child workers : Lack of opportunities

the worst forms of child labor in Nepal. The national time bound program will combine sectoral, thematic and geographically based approaches to prevent child labor and withdraw children from hazardous works and provide them with education and training opportunities, officials said.

The TBP aims at preventing and eliminating in each country all incidence of the worst forms of child labor within a defined period of time. The worst forms of child labor include slavery, trafficking, bondage of children, their use in prostitution and pornography, their use in drug trafficking, armed conflict etc. to eradicate these forms of child labor in a period of 5-10 years, depending on the prevalence of child labor and its complexity in each country.

Conservative estimates by the ILO put

the number of children currently working around the world at 250 million. As child laborers engaged in the worst forms of child labor are most at risk and predominantly come from the poorest and most vulnerable groups of society, there is a growing consensus that targeting the worst forms of child labor is not only morally right but also the most effective way to start tackling the problem of child labor as a whole in the long run. The program will be implemented in respective countries in June 2001.

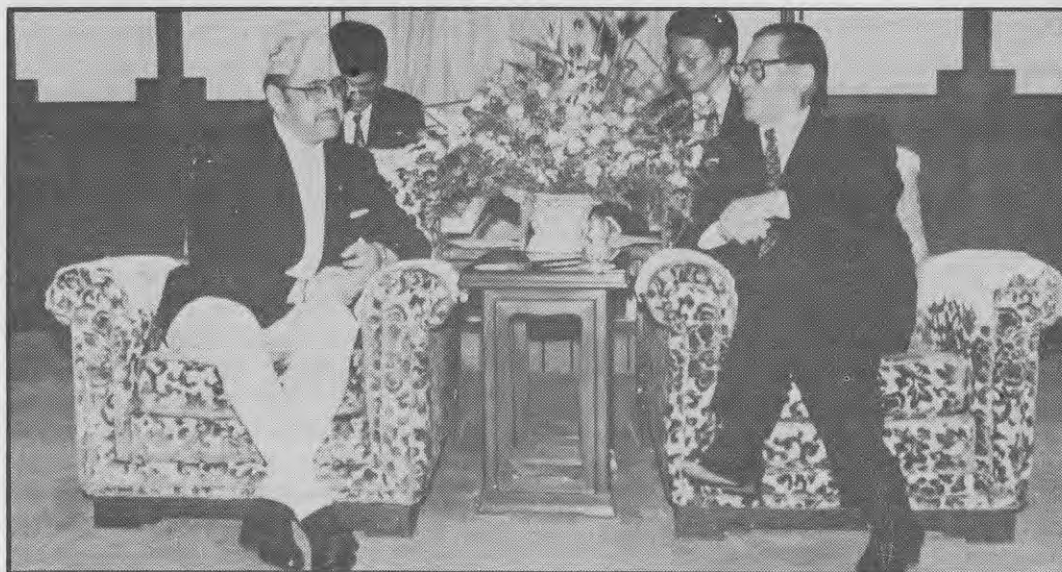
According to studies, the problem of child labor is severe in Nepal. The principal reason for that is acute poverty. Other factors contributing to child labor are: social customs, values and attitudes, lack of education of parents, lack of access to education for children, relationships within the agrarian structure, migration from rural to urban areas, disharmony within the family, trafficking of girls, and inadequate enforcement of

labor and criminal laws. During the past five years, there has been a tremendous increase in the commitment level of the Nepalese government. Also, the government took a landmark decision in July 2000 by outlawing the practice of kamaiyas.

Nepal has been selected from Asia (for the implementation of TBP) as a result of commitments made by the Government of Nepal at the "Best Practices Conference" held in Washington and at the International Labor Conference in 2000. This coincides with the efforts undertaken by the Ministry of Labor and Transport Management (HMG/Nepal) to develop a

10-year Master Plan of Action against Child Labor, the objective being to eliminate the worst forms of child labor by 2005 and all forms of child labor by 2010.

The TBP differs from earlier approaches as it considers macroeconomic factors and social trends, which were not adequately considered earlier. Child bonded labor; child trafficking and child domestic labor have been identified as priority areas of work in Nepal. The program will also focus on child porters and children in hazardous occupation. It will need support from all sectors, both the government and non-governmental organizations, to save children like Basu from exploitation and suffering. It's a long way to go to provide them education and other services to develop their capabilities and make them a responsible citizen of the nation ■



King Birendra with President Jiang : Neighborly talk

ZHU RONGJI'S VISIT Boosting Friendship

Despite political uncertainty in Nepal, Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji's visit reaffirms the consistency of Chinese policy towards the kingdom

By KESHAB POUDEL

At a time when South Asia in general and Nepal in particular has been passing through an unstable political period, Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji is visiting Nepal as part of a four-nation trip to the region. In Nepal, just two weeks before his scheduled arrival, the country was pushed into a new round of political uncertainty, hampering the preparation for the visit.

As Foreign Ministry officials were busy preparing the agenda for the Chinese leader's visit, a sense of instability gripped the government and political process after the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority dispatched a letter to Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala seeking clarifications on the Lauda Air deal controversy.

China does not want to make Nepal an ideological ally but it wants to promote an independent Nepal that is not dictated to by outside powers and does not become a

staging ground for anti-Chinese activities.

Although Prime Minister Koirala has expressed the need to strengthen relations between the two countries, he seems to be preoccupied with internal party politics. Almost to the point of ignoring the important visit, Koirala is busy trying to foil the political agitation launched by the communist opposition and Congress dissidents.

"Nepal has to be sensitive towards the interests of its two big neighbors. We need to have exploit the economic and other opportunities available from both of our neighbors," Koirala said in an address to a newly formed economic forum.

"The visit of the Chinese premier to the smaller states of South Asia affirms China's consistent thinking that any improvement in China's relations with India will not be at the cost of the smaller nations of South Asia," said Dev Raj Dahal, associate professor at Tribhuvan University.

Many remain doubtful whether Nepal would be able to gain much from the Zhu visit since nobody knows how political

events will unfold. "When the prime minister himself is facing internal political trouble, what one can expect from him?" asked a political analyst. "How can a weak prime minister talk confidently with his Chinese counterpart?"

The visit of the Chinese premier to Nepal is also of interest to India, which is busy conducting one of its biggest military exercises in desert of Rajasthan near the border with Pakistan. In shaping Nepal ties with India, relations between Kathmandu and Beijing have always played a key role, almost to the point of determining the nature of ties," said

S.C. Bhatt in his book *The Triangle India-Nepal-China, A Study of Treaty Relations*.

While Zhu's arrival nears, officials from both countries are now in the final stages of preparing the drafts for the agreements. Whatever the officials of both countries say, it is not easy to prepare a final agenda.

"How serious are India and China about their stakes is difficult to assess and impossible to predict. Indian dislikes of equidistance that characterized Nepal's foreign policy in the three decades of Panchayat rule (1960-1990) and the Chinese distaste for special relationship of Nepal with India (1950s) have virtually closed two of the conventional foreign policy options of Nepal," said Dahal.

The convergence of anti-Chinese activities increases Chinese sensitivities on the security of Tibet. The cold war in this part of the world will now begin. Many anti-Chinese organizations, including the Free Tibet movement, have been coming up in Nepal.

Other see the visit of Chinese premier as a positive sign. "The visit of Chinese prime minister is of great importance for the small Himalayan kingdom of Nepal since China always gives great importance to political stability and economic prosperity of Nepal," said a China expert.

If things remain unchanged, Nepal and China will have another alternative highway to link the two countries. Trade

between Nepal and China relies on the Kathmandu-Kodari highway which was built in 1962. The construction of Syaphrubeshi-Rasuwa road will provide another way to Tibet Autonomous Region of China and provide another boost to bilateral trade.

China has already built a road across the Himalayas close to the Nepal's northern remote districts, including Humla, Mustang and Dolpa. The proposed new road will also help to supply food stuff and other material to remote parts of Nepal through the Chinese road.

Nepal has already started limited supply of food stuff to the northern remote districts through the highway built in Tibet. The Zhu visit follows a series of high-level visits since the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries in 1955, but it has been kept in low profile.

Although the internal political situation is unstable and no political parties seem to pay any attention to the visit of the premier of Nepal's northern neighbor, Zhu Rongji's visit will have great significance in all aspects of relations between the two countries. The Chinese premier is arriving on May 14 on a three-day official visit.

In the last year, the frequency of high-level visit from both countries has increased. So has bilateral trade. In September last year, Nepalese Foreign Minister Chakra Basantola visited Beijing and two

months ago Chi Haotian became the first Chinese defense minister to pay a visit to Nepal. King Birendra paid a state visit to China earlier this month and now China's prime minister is coming to Nepal. The exchange of high-level visits between the two countries underscore the warmth and cordiality of bilateral relations. Importantly, the two countries do not have major obstacles and problems.

Nepali Congress dissidents have temporarily suspended their anti-Koirala activities till the end of the visit Chinese premier. Interestingly, the left parties have yet to show any good will gesture towards the visit. Ironically, the six communist party announced new rounds of agitation to press Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala to resign.

In the last 40 years, this is the first time when Chinese prime minister is visiting Nepal with so many proposals, including another alternative road to link Nepal with Tibet Autonomous Region of China.

As Prime Minister Koirala is facing all-round attack and even the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority holding the sword, no one is certain of the consequences of the visit by prime minister.

"Chinese prime minister will hold discussions on many issues with Nepalese leaders, including bilateral economic cooperation, trade, development, among oth-

ers," said Chinese ambassador to Nepal Zeng Xuyong. (See SPOTLIGHT May 4, 2001).

"During the visit, the two sides will sign agreements. We have been making preparation. What Nepal can improve trade relation with China. We are talking on how to increase the trade volume with China. We are also preparing for trade facilitation measures with China," said Gyan Chandra Acharya, spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

During the visit, the two sides will sign agreements on economic and technical cooperation, the construction of the Syaphrubeshi-Rasuwa road, setting up a hospital for civil servants of Nepal, and establishing a polytechnic institute at Banepa. "The Syaphrubeshi-Rasuwa road is going to be an important project for Nepal in terms of increasing bilateral relations," said Chinese Ambassador Zeng Xuyong.

At a time when trade between Nepal and China has increase many folds — from a mere \$70 million a few years ago to \$200 million — the new highway will boost traders further.

Nepal shares a 1,400-km common border with China on its northern frontier and there is a possibility to expand bilateral trade. Nepal's trade deficit with China has increased many fold over the years. During Zhu's visit, leaders of both countries will make efforts to reduce the deficit.

The importance given by China to its small neighbor is understandable as it wants to maintain the stability in the region. "Nepal has historically been considered by the Chinese strategists as a part of a chain of their nation's concentric inner Asian defensive system and even now bears no little importance for the security of its underbelly, Tibet, where a large number of anti-Chinese forces have converging interest," said Dahal.

"China's strategic influence will grow over the next decade in South Asia as its economic muscle offers it the means to become a powerful element in the overall Asian strategic equation."

As China is expanding its influence in South Asian countries through trade, the Chinese premier's visit to Nepal is set to have far-reaching importance for the future of Nepal. ■



A bus plying at the Rasuwa road : A new road-link

NEPALESE ABROAD

Serving The Motherland

An organization in the UK tries to mobilize Nepalese in the service of their countrymen

By A CORRESPONDENT

“Can Nepalese Abroad Help Nepal?” Of course, if they are really dedicated to their motherland. HELP NEPAL Network, UK, an organization dedicated to encourage Nepalese around the world to contribute to Nepal, organized an interaction program on the theme, in London last month (on April 30). Representatives of three of the major Nepali organizations in the UK, Yeti Nepali Association, Himalayan Yeti and Nepal Support Society expressed their views on the subject and gave details of how their respective organizations were helping Nepal in different ways.

The interaction also focused on how different Nepali organizations could co-ordinate with each other in helping Nepal to make the contribution substantial. Community leaders, professionals, students and the Nepalese Ambassador to, attended the program the UK, Dr Singh Bahadur Basnyat and Her Royal Highness Mrs Jotshana Basnyat. The Co-coordinator of the program and the vice chair of HELP NEPAL Network (HeNN), UK, Dr Pranab Gyawali, expressed hope that the discussion on a topic like this would help expatriate Nepalese to think more about the ways of helping Nepal.

Established in late 1999 HeNN has raised around £9,000 mainly

from Nepalese around the world and has undertaken several projects in different parts of Nepal. HeNN groups and representatives are functioning in nearly a dozen countries, including Nepal. “We feel that Nepal and Nepali non-governmental organizations have relied too much on foreign aid and it is time that Nepalese do as much as they can for Nepal,” said Rabindra Mishra, a producer with BBC Nepali service, who is also the chair of the HeNN. By launching the campaign of collecting one pound a month among expatriate Nepalese, the Network has initiated a noble program that needs to be replicated elsewhere. ■

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ADB'S MEET Fighting Poverty

Nepal will raise its concerns at the annual meeting of the Manila-based bank

By A CORRESPONDENT

The annual meeting of the board of directors of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) later this week will discuss, among other things, the new poverty reduction strategy at the scenic American town of Honolulu. The bank officials said they have given top priority to the reduction of poverty among people in the Asia and Pacific region.

As one of the least developed countries with half of its population living below the poverty line, Nepal is one of the priority countries for ADB's assistance. A major development partner of this Himalayan kingdom, ADB is recently drafting poverty reduction strategy for Nepal to assist the formulation of similar strategy by the Nepalese government.

On his way to Honolulu to take part in the ADB's meet Monday, Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat said Nepal would raise issues including subsidies in agriculture sector and releasing of the ADB loan for the rural electrification project. The government and ADB officials recently locked horns on the issue of whether the subsidies to shallow tube wells be re-introduced. Similarly, the ADB is reported to have held its loan back alleging the government is dillydallying in increasing the tariff of electricity — one of the highest in the world.

Critics say Nepali officials should raise the issue of involving local communities and beneficiaries in the development projects. ADB-aided projects have been criticized for their contractor-led approach with little say of the people at the grassroots level. ■

STRIKE IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Panic For Nothing

The strike called by the Maoist-affiliated student union may actually help end the 'Indianization' of private boarding schools

By A CORRESPONDENT

For the first time in the last ten years, a student union has finally raised a fundamental issue in the education sector: whether to continue private boarding school education based on Indian curriculum.

According to a book distributor, books worth more than IC Rs. 200 million are yet to be imported from India because of the Maoist threat in the rural areas. Books worth Rs 10 million are lying uncollected at Chaujhari airport because of the closedown of private schools in Jajarkot and Rukum districts.

With the restoration of democracy in 1990, a large number of private schools have opened up, which has left only government schools following the curriculum designed by Ministry of Education.

According to the Association of Public Boarding Schools, the private boarding schools are facilitating more than 1 million students or more than 30 percent of total school-going children throughout the country. A study has shown that only 10-20 percent of the students who are in the private schools can afford to send their children outside the country.

"Because of the current uncertainty, many parents have already decided to send their children to private schools in India," said Arjun Bahadur Adhikary, general secretary of PABSON.

If private schools are closed down, more and more student will study a curriculum based on Nepal. That means Nepal can save billions of rupees it currently spends on importing reading materials, instruments and other equipment from India. Even today most of the children of upper strata are studying in Indian schools. The closedown of private schools will not make any difference to the middle class

families.

"At a time when billions of rupees leave the country in the name of privatization and globalization, it will not be surprising for a million rupees to leave for foreign lands in the name of education," said Devendra Parajuli, president of All Nepal Free Students Union (Revolutionary).

Resources do not matter. More impor-



School students : Chaotic situation

tantly, the students who have been studying the course in private schools are mentally Indianized as most of the students even think of Indian martyrs like Subash Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh and others as Nepalese martyrs.

Closing the private schools may cause some damage in the short term, but Nepal will stand to gain in the long term. Others say the closure of private boarding schools will hamper the quality of education.

"All private schools are not bad and some private schools are doing quite good jobs in enhancing the quality of education," said Supravat Bhandary, president of Guard-

ian Association.

The process of Indianization in private boarding schools began following the restoration of democracy. Before 1990, even private schools had to teach the Nepalese curriculum with some extra English courses. But nowadays, in the primary and secondary level most of the boarding schools teach Indian books.

"For a small country like Nepal, the penetration of foreign domination through the education is always a threat to national identity," said an educationist. Before 1990, the quality of students who were taught in the government schools was as excellent as products of today's private schools.

From prime ministers to the most of the ministers, elites and intellectuals who are in positions of authority and influence have an academic background based on Nepalese curriculum. In the next two decades, almost all policy makers will be the students of private schools who do not have basic knowledge about Nepal.

From remote parts of the country to urban sectors, the private schools are now gradually replacing public schools, which are losing their credibility.

If the government builds more public schools, more Nepalese nationals will get opportunities in the teaching profession. Unlike in government schools, private schools do not require any permission to recruit foreigners, including Indian, teachers.

For the common Nepalese people the closing of private boarding schools would be a boon rather than a bane, as they will invest huge amount of money in other sectors of the economy. If private schools are closed down, the government schools will be compelled to raise the quality of education.

Whether the days of Padmodaya, Juddodaya, Durbar School, Bishwoniketen, Bijay Memorial and Paropakar would return after the closure of the private schools remains to be seen.

Thanks to the initiative of ANNFSU (Revolutionary), the process of Nepalization of the education system may be set in motion. The union's move may cause panic for the time being, but it will serve the interest of the country over the long run. ■

TEA INDUSTRY

Testing Times

Despite its export potentials, Nepal's tea industry is yet to take off

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

Nepal should take a leaf out of the success story of Sri Lanka's tea industry. Though a smaller (in size) country than Nepal, the island nation leads the list of global tea exporters with a staggering 29.3 percent share of total tea exports.

Nepal, meanwhile, is lagging be-

hind in this race with a mere 0.01 percent share in the total international tea exports. That, too, considering the "very appropriate" climate and terrain this hilly country possesses to grow quality tea.

Experts point to tremendous potentials for Nepal in the export of orthodox tea. The aromatic and herbal tea are in great demand in the overseas market. The country earned Rs 25 million through tea exports in the fiscal year 1999/2000, according to the Trade Promotion Center (TPC). But this amount is still meager as it occupied merely 0.03 percent of total export value in 1999/2000.

"It is high time we started giving more attention to the exports of non-conventional items like tea. Nepal has better prospects in exporting such items



A tea-farm : Green potentials

where we enjoy comparative advantages," said Kishor Khanal, chairman of the Export Promotion Committee at the Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI).

The first attempt to recognize the potentials of tea industry was made nearly two decade back when then government declared five districts — Jhapa, Ilam, Paanchthar, Terhathum and Dhankuta — as tea zones. The tea in-

dustry, which started off with 79 hectares of land, now occupies 10,000 hectares. The number of tea industries is also growing by the day. There are now 178 industries and enterprises associated with the production/distribution of tea.

Still, the country is struggling to become self-sufficient in the tea production. The present domestic production of 4 million kg of CTC tea is only enough to meet 60 percent of the internal demand.

Late last year, the government came up with a national tea policy, which among other things, aims to increase the tea plantation area to 40,000 hectares in the next five years, become self-sufficient in the tea production within next few years and start exporting orthodox tea. Some entrepreneurs have termed the government's targets ambitious. They, nevertheless, agree that the country does have that potential.

According to a report (published in Tea-A-Tea 2001 journal), the country's 20 million people consumed 8 million kg of tea in 1999/2000 — that is, each Nepali consumed 400 gm of tea in a year. If the consumption were to grow by 5 percent, after ten years, the internal consumption of tea in Nepal will be 12.416 million kg (468 gm per person per year).

The Nepal Tea and Coffee Development Board estimates that after ten years, the production of orthodox tea will reach 30.133 million kg and CTC will reach 15.968 million kg. Out of this production, 27.119 million kg of orthodox and 6.574 million kg of CTC tea will be available for export. This means that apart from replacing the tea imports totally, the country can expect to earn around 14.54 billion rupees from tea exports then. If, indeed, the 40,000 hectares of land would be put to use for tea production, an additional 101,900 new jobs will be created.

"We have to focus both on quantity as well as quality to make our presence felt in the world. At a time when our youths are getting attracted by carbon-

CTC and Orthodox Tea

CTC tea is commonly used by majority of consumers worldwide. It contributes to more than 95 percent of tea consumption in Nepal. For the fiscal year 2000/2001, the total demand of CTC in Nepal is estimated at 9.4 million kg. Out of which 4.2 million kg will be met by domestic production and the rest through imports, mainly from India. Nepal is expected to be self-sufficient in tea by 2003. And the total production is expected to reach 27.5 million kg by then, out of which 10.45 million kg will be sufficient for domestic demand and the rest will be available for export. While CTC tea is more for color, the orthodox tea is particularly popular for its aroma. Black tea, in the form of traditional leaf tea produced from hill-grown tea, particularly Chinese type of tea, is popularly known as orthodox tea. Orthodox tea fetches a relatively higher price compared to CTC tea. Some grades of this tea are also used for blending with CTC tea for improved aroma. This tea is normally produced from the leaves of tea bushes from the hills in the eastern Nepal. While orthodox tea has high export potentials, it seems to have limited domestic market.

Source : Shanker M. Singh, Agro Enterprise Center, Tea-A-Tea 2001

ated drinks, we have to work hard to win back their attention toward tea," said Mukti Raj Sharma, executive director of the board, which recently celebrated the fourth national tea day.

After the government introduced the tea policy, the entrepreneurs appear

upbeat about the future prospects. They are, however, apprehensive about the lack of research of markets as well as tea production on the part of the government.

"We still depend on the research done by our neighbors. There is an immediate need to engage in the research field as we are going to be the member of the World Trade Organization soon," said Sharma.

That apart, the absence of a regulated market has, at times, hit the industry as well as the small farmers dependent on it. "Last year, the decrease in the market price of tea affected all the industries," said Sharma. The government tea policy has proposed the development of an auction system to solve this problem.

As the soil composition, climate and terrain provide a uniquely favorable environment for tea production, appropriate government policies coupled with active entrepreneurial support could propel Nepal to the exclusive club of global tea exporters. And unlike the items like carpet or garment, whose raw materials are not produced internally, the growth of tea exports can be made much more sustainable. ■

Targets of National Tea Policy 2000

* To expand tea plantation coverage to 40,875 hectares in the next five years.

* To raise the gross tea production to 46.11 million kg in the next ten years

* To create employment opportunities for additional 79,310 Nepalese people in the first five years.

* To make orthodox tea production reach 65 percent of total tea production.

Source : Tea-A-Tea 2001

Jaya Trophy

The cricket team from Kapilbastu district lifted this year's 17th Jaya Trophy National Cricket Tournament. The annual national cricket tournament was organized by the Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN).

Last year's first runner-up Kapilbastu posted an easy win against Parsa district at a one-sided final match on Friday (April 27) held in the picturesque cricket ground located within the Tribhuvan University premises.

Morang defeated Bara district to clinch the third place in a closely contested match held in cricket ground of Pulchowk Engineering College.

The bowlers of the Kapilbastu team ripped through the Parsa batsmen to oust them in meagre total of 79 runs in less than 31 overs. They sailed through the game winning it by a comfortable 6 wickets.

Kapilbastu bowler Basanta Shahi was declared man of the match. He showed the door to the pavilion to the first four batsmen of Parsa.

Jaya Prakash Sharraf of Parsa was awarded the man of the series for his all-round performance. Kathmandu's Paresh Lohani was declared the best batsman. Raj Kumar Pradhan of the Morang became the best bowler.

Jaya Trophy national cricket tournament has been regularly held every year since 2037 BS by the National Sports Council and the CAN.

Meanwhile, the CAN felicitated Munik Shrestha, the first ever Nepalese cricketer to hit an international century. The 15-year-old Shrestha hit unbeaten 114 against Singapore in the Under 17 Asia Cup held in Dhaka, Bangladesh a few months ago. ■

GIRIJA PRASAD KOIRALA

In Office, Not In Power

A week before the arrival of Chinese Prime Minister Zhu Rongji on an official visit to Nepal, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has reversed course and declared his intention to continue in office despite the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority's (CIAA) letter seeking clarifications on the cabinet's decision to approve foreign exchange for the controversial Lauda Air deal. Whatever the motive behind the letter, the CIAA has, under constitutional cover, helped to destabilize politics at a critical juncture.

By KESHAB POUDEL

After four days of deep uncertainty and murky political maneuvering, Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala's announcement that he intended to continue in office has sent new political waves within the ruling Nepali Congress and outside.

Nobody knows how or why Koirala, who was even said to have asked his aides to prepare a statement for nation-

wide broadcast announcing his resignation, reversed course. If anything, Koirala's decision shows that it is not easy for the prime minister to resign even if he is determined to do so.

Despite his firm declaration on continuing as prime minister, the road ahead for Koirala is by no means easy. The Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) — which worked till 9:30pm to demand massive deposits from two former officials of Royal Nepal Airlines Corporation (RNAC) before hauling them behind bars — set a dead-

line of May 10 to decide on the prime minister's reply to its letter seeking clarifications on the controversial Lauda Air deal.

This means the swords of the unaccountable commissioners will hang over the head of an elected prime minister until then. At a time when one of its commissioners is hospitalized for medical treatment, however, there is no guarantee that the CIAA will be able to settle the case on that day.

The recent actions of the CIAA show that it can go to any extent and in any



Bhattarai (left) and Koirala : To resign or not to resign

direction to pressure Koirala and drag him into the case. When the institution is not following its own act and regulations, no one can predict what its next step might be.

Moreover, at a time when troubles within the ruling party have once again burst out in the open and the opposition is in no mood to compromise, the CIAA can take any step to destabilize the political process. Although Congress dissidents have put their anti-Koirala campaign on hold until the Chinese premier's departure, the threat of political instability continues. After all, the CIAA can summon the prime minister for ques-

tioning or dispatch another letter before the Chinese dignitary's arrival.

The prime minister of China is visiting Nepal after more than 15 years and is expected to sign a number of agreements with his Nepalese counterpart. Any political uncertainty during this time would obviously limit Nepal's opportunity to hold productive dialogue with its northern neighbor.

Although Koirala's decision to stay on has allowed members of his coterie and die-hard loyalists to heave a sigh of relief, the country's political situation has become more complicated. Nepalis may have to face more volatile days

ahead.

Although the CIAA's letter does not legally or morally compel the prime minister to resign, it definitely provided an opportunity to Koirala to readjust the turbulent political scene by making public his willingness to accept resignation as an option of breaking the deadlock that began with the disruption of the winter session of parliament.

The prime minister would have been able to acquire greater political mileage by resigning on moral grounds at this stage, using the move to refurbish the image of his party and boost his personal standing.



Nepal (left) and Bhattarai : One-point demand

Following Koirala's assertion that he would continue in office, opposition parties announced a new phase of street agitation programs. Dissidents in the Nepali Congress are said to be holding intensive consultations on tabling a vote of no confidence in the Congress parliamentary party. Congress dissidents said that they would register the vote of no confidence only after the May 14-16 visit of the Chinese prime minister.

"After the CIAA letter, Prime Minister Koirala must resign to preserve the dignity of his office and his own image. We will announce a new phase of agitation to press for Koirala's resignation," said CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal in an address to Bagmati zonal workers of the main opposition party.

Even two former prime ministers belonging to the ruling party, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and Sher Bahadur Deuba, have asked Koirala to resign, accusing him of involvement in the Lauda Air deal. The prime minister's mood was said to have changed when he saw the statement issued by Bhattarai, which at times appeared to be a stinging personal attack on the 78-year-old Koirala. "The CIAA letter proves Prime

Minister Koirala's involvement in the Lauda Air deal. It is high time he resigned and rescued the party from the current morass," said Bhattarai in his statement issued on May 4.

Following the CIAA's May 2 letter, Prime Minister Koirala was said to have asked his advisers to draft a statement he could address to the nation explaining his decision to step down. On May 3 and 4, Kathmandu's streets were full of rumors of Koirala's imminent resignation. Some reports said he had already gone to Narayanhity Palace with his resignation letter.

Although family members and close associates continued to press him not to resign, Koirala remained determined to quit. The prime minister's eventual decision to stay on is legally sound. However, it was a missed opportunity as far as its political implications are concerned.

The position of the

prime minister has become so enfeebled today that it is shaken by a letter sent by unaccountable officials of the CIAA. Prime Minister Koirala was said to have expressed shock when he saw the CIAA letter on May 3, although it was registered at the Prime Minister's Office after Chief Commissioner Suryanath Upadhyaya and Commissioner Basudev Lamichane met him on April 27 at Singh Durbar.

Koirala was said to have clearly informed the two commissioners that he would take a political step to challenge any letter the CIAA thought of dispatching. After the prime minister's assertion, the two commissioners left the meeting.

The stage for the CIAA's decision to tie Koirala to the Lauda Air deal was set when Hari Bhakta Shrestha, former executive chairman of RNAC, and Tirtha Lal Shrestha, former member of the corporation's board of directors, registered letters at the commission saying that they were merely carrying out orders of the council of ministers.

Speculation of political maneuvering from within the Nepali Congress was fuelled when Tirtha Lal Shrestha,

MANAKAMANA CABLE CAR



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

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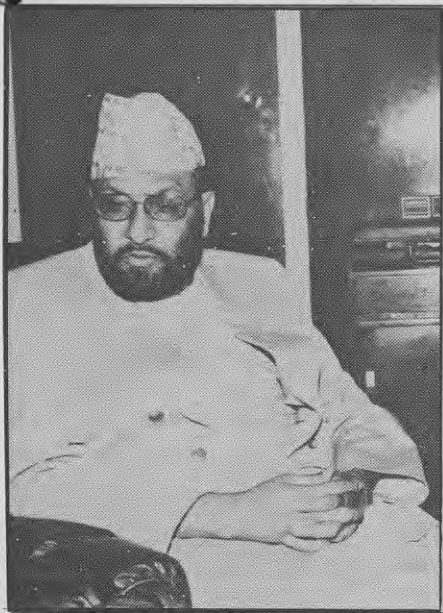
said to be close to the family of the late Ganesh Man Singh, made known his willingness to change his earlier statement recorded at the CIAA.

Although a series of maneuvering took place in the dark rooms of Kathmandu to drag Koirala into the deal, there was very little of substance to link him. Koirala's decision to continue in office has come as a respite to his political dependants, but he simply squandered a rare political opportunity.

Koirala may have calculated the pros and cons of any firm decision. If he thought resigning at this juncture would be too risky, he may have been right in some ways. Had Koirala resigned the moment he got the CIAA's letter, his political stature and popular support base would have grown considerably. Now if Koirala is eventually forced to resign under pressure, what would be his political fate?

At a time when all opposition parties leaders, and influential party colleagues like Bhattarai and Deuba, are demanding his resignation, Koirala does not have easy way out. The CIAA seems to be equally determined to undermine his position under constitutional cover.

Political leaders and parties are ambitious almost by definition. In the current context, however, their ambitions

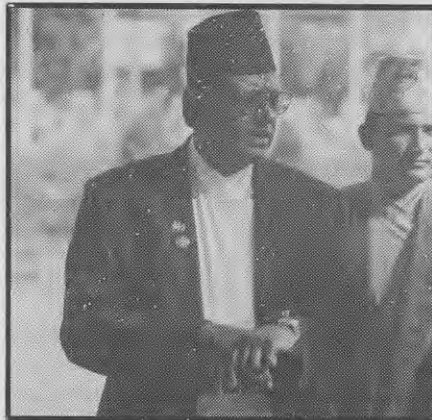


Dr. Mahat : Up and coming

are taking the form of the spirit of the despotic Panchayat days that was supposed to have been consigned to history.

Known as the strongman of Nepalese politics, Koirala does not exercise even five percent of executive authority. When his ministers, secretaries and other institutional heads are not under his control, what is the point in continuing in office? For a man of Koirala's stature, it would be better to exercise power from the backbench rather than to remain inside his office in Singh Durbar without being able to exercise any real authority.

Koirala has lost a good chance to end the current political deadlock by making a graceful exit. The three-month-long campaign to portray him as the



Speaker Ranabhat : Watching silently

chief villain of the controversial Lauda Air deal has tarnished Koirala's image. The opposition political parties have already pushed themselves to the extreme. The UML has even announced that it would boycott any function he attends. In such a situation, handing over his resignation would have best way to bring parliamentary politics back to its normal track.

The Nepali Congress does not have an alternative who could match Koirala in stature or influence. This fact works to his advantage. However, any further damage to Koirala's personal standing and the reputation of the ruling Congress party would provide fertile ground for the emergence of radical communist parties.



Joshi : Defending his PM

The statement by Congress MP P.L. Singh, a die-hard Koirala critic, reflected such worries within the ruling party. "A mad race to demand the prime minister's resignation will not solve the problem. A meeting of the Congress central committee should be convened to find a solution to the present crisis," Singh said in his statement.

As the Congress is facing local elections next year, the party cannot hope victory in the present scenario when opponents have portrayed it as a band of corrupt politicians. The resignation of Koirala would serve to counter the opposition's charges and increase the popularity base of the party.

By resigning, Koirala may lose the prime minister's chair, but he could win the popular support that is vital to the long-term interest of the ruling party. Why then did he decide to remain in power? Because of the personal interests of his coterie, who are too busy caring about themselves to think about Koirala or the party.

Koirala supporters are almost united in their view of the CIAA letter as a conspiracy against the prime minister. "Anti-democratic forces are trying to destabilize the political process. The recent action of the CIAA is just one ploy," said Shailaja Acharya, former

'There Is No Question Of Resigning'

—Prime Minister GIRIJA PRASAD KOIRALA



Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala spoke for the first time on the CIAA letter controversy on Sunday after a ceremony organized by an economic forum. For the first time in four days, Prime Minister Koirala spoke confidently with reporters. Excerpts from his brief encounter with the press:

Former prime ministers Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and Sher Bahadur Deuba have asked for your resignation. What is your response?

Their job is to ask for my resignation, but it is for me to decide whether to resign or not.

What do you think is the reason behind the demand for your resignation?

You should ask this question to those who have demanded my resignation.

How do you see the questions posed to you by the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority?

You should ask CIAA-related questions to CIAA officials.

Have you made up your mind on the resignation question?

I don't have any question about it and I don't have any reply.

deputy prime minister and member of Congress central committee. "Girijababu needs to remain in power to fight against the conspirator."

A politician who has been in the game for half a century, Koirala has to take a bold and decisive step because he has the sole responsibility for the well being of his party. Politically, Koirala may be aware of the gravity of the situation, but it seems he is finding it difficult to come out with the appropriate response. The statements of former Nepali Congress general secretary Sushil Koirala and Acharya indicate that there is strong pressure on the prime minister from within his family not to resign.

No one believes Koirala, who has struggled for democracy more than five decades, reeks of corruption and the CIAA's chief commissioner and other commissioners are paragons of virtue. Dishonesty and opportunism are reflected also in the statements of Bhattarai and Deuba, who have been making desperate moves to oust Koirala in recent months.

Bhattarai went to the extent of accusing Koirala of direct involvement in Lauda Air deal. "Bhattarai's and Deuba's statements show the type of democratic principles Nepali Congress leaders are practicing. The culture of the partyless system is being practiced in multiparty democracy," said a political analyst.

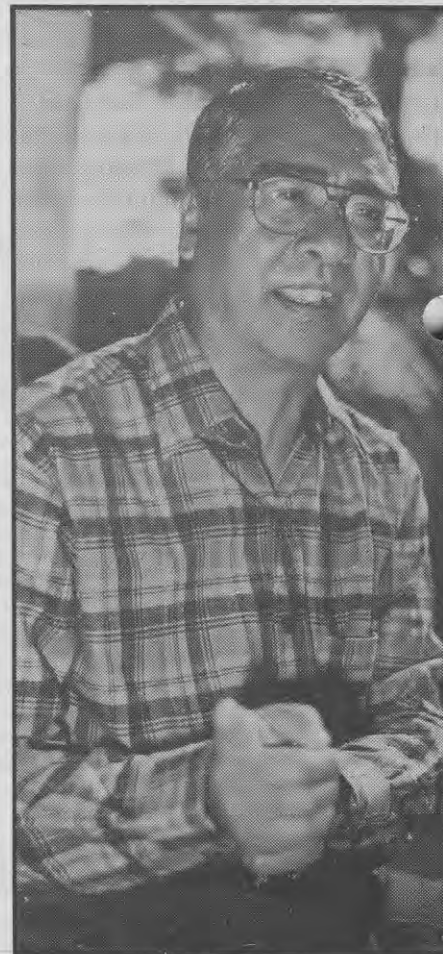
Members of Koirala's inner circle warn that he would have to face a tough time outside power. But experts dispute that argument. "A politician who fights for a certain cause will never die. We have many cases in the region that show that a politician who takes the right decision at the crucial time will always receive popular support. In the case of Prime Minister Koirala, this could be no less true," the analyst said.

With friends like Bhattarai and Deuba, Koirala does not need enemies. Their statements were harsher than that of the main opposition party leader, Madhav Kumar Nepal. On the other hand, Koirala is surviving because of the anchor his party provides. The CIAA ruined the career of a strong personality

like former prime minister Tulsi Giri during the Panchayat regime because he lacked organizational support.

"If Prime Minister Koirala is adamant against resigning, his position would be further weakened and he would have to face angry opposition in the parliament and the street. In the coming session, Koirala has to pass the budget along with the two ordinances on the armed police force and regional administrators," said another political analyst.

All this means that Koirala is in office but not in power. The greatest crisis he is facing is the crisis of mistrust of the opposition. This comes at a time when he has little public support and commands so little public respect. Allegations questioning the integrity of the prime minister are dangerous at all times. They are disastrous at critical times like these when the need for a strong leadership is greater than ever.



Deuba : Biding his time

In the last five decades, the standard of living has been rising but our standard of life has been falling. If Koirala is unable to deliver, his immediate alternatives would be radical communist leaders who would not be easy to tame. Nepal cannot survive without a functioning head of government that is credible.

The recent scenario also shows how the CIAA's actions could be used and abused for blatantly political ends at any time. Such a situation always results in political destabilization, a trend the country can ill afford to encourage.

Koirala's lawyers argue that there is no need for him to resign just because the CIAA has sought some clarifications, not filed a formal charge sheet. They are correct in insisting that the letter does not make legal and constitutional compulsions on the prime minister to step down. Politically, however,

Prime Minister Koirala could use the letter to the advantage of his party at a time when it is gripped by dissension and dissatisfaction.

The prime minister's delay in resigning may create more political trouble in the country and further erode the image and performance of the party. At a time when Koirala does not have support within the party or outside, what benefit can he expect by choosing to remain in power?



Bhattarai : Licking the wounds

'Koirala Should Resign To Preserve The Dignity Of The Premiership'

— MADHAV KUMAR NEPAL



CPN-UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal addressed a meeting of CPN-UML workers of Bagmati Zone. Nepal reiterated that Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala has no alternative to resigning. Excerpts:

On the letter dispatched by the CIAA to Koirala:

After receiving the letter, Prime Minister Girija Prasad has lost the moral right to remain in the power. He must tender his resignation to preserve the dignity of the prime ministership.

On corruption:

If the Nepali Congress is really sincere about rooting out corruption, it should begin by forcing Girija Prasad Koirala to

resign.

On Koirala's reply to the CIAA:

The threatening and arrogant reply of Prime Minister Koirala would weaken the constitutional body entrusted with the fight against corruption.

On Koirala's actions:

Prime Minister Koirala has presented himself as a modern-day Jung Bahadur, pushing the country toward greater anarchy.

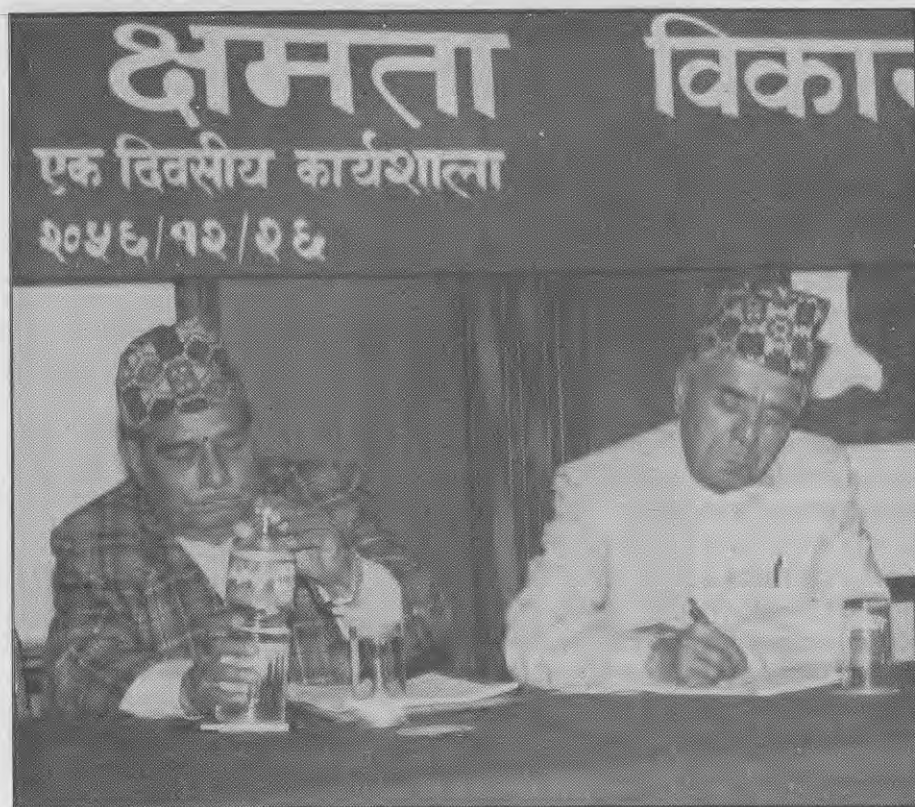
On the UML-led street agitation:

The present anti-corruption street agitation will continue as long as it takes to force Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala to resign.

For a person of Koirala's stature, it does not make any difference whether he is in power or not. Parliament cannot be run by clipping Koirala's wings. No prime minister from the Nepali Congress could afford to ignore Koirala, who will remain a full-time politician with an influential support base at his command.

In the Nepali Congress, there are many young politicians who Koirala can anoint to lead country. Any aspirant would have to seek Koirala's blessings. If Bhattarai and Deuba are not acceptable to Koirala, he can choose from an array of others: Sushil Koirala, Ram Chandra Poudel, Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat, Prakash Koirala, Khum Bahadur Khadka, Purna Bahadur Khadka, Mahesh Acharya, Chakra Prasad Banstola, to name a few. Whoever the new prime minister might be, Koirala's men will share most of the important cabinet positions.

Despite these advantages, what is stopping Koirala from resigning? As his political opponents and the CIAA turn up the heat, Koirala may eventually have to resign. But he may not get the kind of public support and sympathy he would have received had he chosen to step down immediately after receiving the CIAA letter. ■



CJ Updhayaya (left) and justice Aryal : Important role

JUDICIARY

Limitless Injustice

A decade after the promulgation of a democratic constitution, the judiciary is yet to live up to the expectations of persecuted people

By KESHAB POUDEL

Although the Supreme Court has decided many cases in favor of the common citizens in the last decade of democracy Nepalis have been living under, it seems to be failing in some. The Sunil Maskey case, where a suspect has been put behind bars without framing any charges, is one such instance.

The Maskey case represents a bizarre feature of the criminal investigation system in Nepal. Maskey was arrested on May 24, 1998 with IC Rs.500 banknotes by airport security guards and handed over to the director-general

of the Revenue Investigation Department.

Investigation was initiated against Maskey under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act of Nepal, and he was released on bail. The investigation and prosecution process took a few months and on September 4, 1998, Maskey was discharged when the attorney-general decided not to prosecute him because of non-legal tender status of the Indian banknotes in Nepal since July 1996.

Thus ended one phase of investigation and prosecution. From the beginning of September 1998, the Special Police Department initiated another round of investigation under the anti-

corruption law, with Deputy Inspector-General Byanju Shrestha as investigation officer.

After a year of investigation on August 31, 1999 Shrestha came out with a report that suggested the matter should be forwarded to the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) for further investigation.

Then CIAA, for its part, designated Mali, who also happened to be the Special Police Department's officer working with the CIAA under deputation, to conduct new investigation under the same anti-corruption law. He spent another year recording statements from Maskey and Tirtha Sharma; investigating officer under the foreign exchange law. Mali submitted his report to the CIAA on November 2, 2000

By that time, a new chief commissioner, Suryanath Upadhyaya, had taken office. Under his chairmanship, a meeting on December 15, 2000 considered the Mali report and passed an order.

But suddenly on December 18, the CIAA decided to designate a team of two investigators headed by acting chief of the Special Police Department K.P. Sharma and Byanju Shrestha to conduct a fourth round of investigation against Maskey under the same Anti-Corruption Act 1962.

On December 22, the new team took Maskey under custody after obtaining the permission of the Appellate Court of Patan. They secured the order by keeping the court in the dark about the three rounds of investigation already conducted by the CIAA and the Special Police Department.

On behalf of Maskey, a writ of habeas corpus was filed on December 22 in the Supreme Court, which issued a show-cause notice. Neither the CIAA nor the Special police Department's investigating team had submitted information regarding the three previous rounds of investigations they had conducted. Believing in the bona fides of the CIAA and its investigating team, the apex court did not find it fit to release Maskey and rejected his peti-

tion on January 9, 2001.

Since then, Maskey has been under the custody of the CIAA under the order of the appellate court. The new investigating officer Sharma issued a letter on February 15, 2001 to the attorney-general questioning the merit of his decision of September 4, 1998 to drop all charges against Maskey under the Foreign Exchange Regulation Act.

Attorney-General Badri Bahadur Karki filed a writ petition at the apex court challenging the authority and jurisdiction of the CIAA and its investigating officers in view of the attorney-general's constitutional mandate as a chief law officer and final prosecutor of Nepal. The case has been argued and, after postponing its judgment twice, the

court is scheduled to deliver its ruling on May 31.

The Maskey case has raised serious questions about the criminal justice system in Nepal. How many times can investigating agencies and officers initiate a probe against a person on the same allegation? How many times can the same investigating agency initiate action by changing officers? Moreover, how long can the investigation go on, jeopardizing the liberty of a suspect? Is there any law and sense of justice in this case? Who is there to protect individuals against such arbitrary actions from state institutions? Does this case not represent a total abuse of authority by investigating agencies like the CIAA?

For its part, the judiciary, even after studying the case, seems to be insensitive towards issues of individual freedom and rights. How many Maskeys are languishing in police lockup is anybody's guess. Where do the National Human Rights Commission and other watchdog bodies stand on this matter? Are they even aware of what is going on?

Are the authorities and courts only concerned with the letter of law or are they alert to the real spirit of fundamental freedom of the individual? One does not need to go to far corners of the country to experience the abuse of personal liberty. Where is the human face of justice in the heart of the capital? Who protects individual freedom?

When lesser mortals abuse power or authority, police, agencies like the CIAA and the apex court are supposed to intervene and accord justice. When high officials are themselves involved in assaults on personal liberty, justice becomes a dream for people like Maskey.

Following the promulgation of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990, the judiciary has made certain important legal, constitutional as well as political decisions. In some cases, the court has even interpreted key articles of the constitution. It has declared some acts null and void and provided justice to employees sacked during the first tenure of Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala

The court declared some clauses of the Labor Act and the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority Act null and void. The court restored the House of Representatives by declaring then-prime minister Man Mohan Adhikary's recommendation for dissolution unconstitutional.

Along with these positive parts, there are negative aspects of the activities of the court. Although it is one of the guardians in protecting citizens from the excesses of the state, some individuals are still spending more than 90 days in prison without being convicted of a crime.

Under the principles of criminal justice, any person cannot be subjected to a punishment greater than that prescribed by the law in force at the time of the commission in the offence. Sunil Maskey has been in detention for more than four months. Under Clause 16 (2) 1, the CIAA can detain a person for six months not exceeding more than two months at each period.

Citizens can tolerate the atrocities of the executive on the ground that there is a judiciary to seek remedy. But when the judiciary turns a blind eye to the abuse of executive power, the people have no option to rising up against the system. At a time when everybody is expressing firm commitments to the rule of law at every opportunity, who will protect individual freedom? ■



Appellate court : Justice delayed

EDUCATION FAIR

Quest For Knowledge

Longing for a bright future, an encouraging number of students throng the fair

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

It is an opportunity for students to get first-hand information on career options. And the message seems to have fallen on the right ears.

There was an overwhelming participation by young students at the education fair. From foreign universities to local colleges and institutes, around 100 organizations are represented at the 5th Nepal Education and Book Fair 2001, which is being organized at the Bhrikuti Mandap hall from May 4 to 12.

"I am excited by the response of young students," said Patrick Groves, marketing director of Pembrokeshire College in the United Kingdom. Groves is on his first visit to Nepal, to identify and recruit "genuine" Nepalese students for the British college.

According to Vijaya Chhetri, chief executive of Global Expositions, which has been organizing the fair every year

since 1997, there has been a marked rise in the number of visiting students this year. "We expect almost 75,000 people, most of which would be students, to visit the fair this year," said Chhetri. This figure is significant when compared to last year's 50,000 visitors.

This year's fair has been divided into three groups, the education and career section, the IT section and the book section. While the education and career section remained open only until May 7, others will continue until May 12.

Many educational institutions from India, the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, among others, have representatives at the fair.

"Our college encourages international students," said Groves, adding that international students comprised 10 percent of the student body. Recently, the British government has introduced a provision allowing overseas students to do jobs not exceeding 20 hours a week in a bid to attract

the students from developing countries.

On average, it costs between £4,500 and £6,500 per annum for students to study in Britain with additional £2,000 for food and accommodation.

"I find that the students who visit along with their parents are more serious," said Groves, adding that majority of Nepalese youngsters are not focused about their career goals. He cited an example of a young man who approached him asking if the college provided courses on pharmacy. When he said it did not, the student inquired about courses on science and then about business administration.

Groves believes that satellite television and the Internet are having a tremendous impact on the students of developing countries. "There is a marked rise in the demand for western education. I see this as a part of globalization."

There was a conspicuous crowd at the IT section of the fair, with scores of students thronging the stalls inquiring about the computer education. "Yes, the crowd at the IT section is bigger. I think this has a lot to do with the current scenario worldwide," said Chhetri.

But Groves thinks otherwise. "While the IT does have many applications, I think developing countries like Nepal needs to focus more on infrastructure. Though it may not be glamorous, civil engineering, medicine and similar other sectors could prove more useful to Nepal."

Apart from education and career section, the fair has a big presence of book stalls with volumes on history, geography, politics, sociology, fiction, among others, are on offer. Meanwhile, Kishore Kumar Sangraula, of Aath Raj Publications, says that fair had more foreign books than those useful for Nepalese students. "Such fairs are good for students but the books should also be useful for them" he said.

The sponsors of this year's fair are the British Council, Ekta, ITNTI.com, Lord Buddha Education Foundation, UPS Courier, Pentasoft and Aqua.

Events like inter-school quiz competition, on-the-spot painting competition and extempore speech competition were also held at the fair.

As Global Exposition vows to give continuity to the education fair, the size of the presence of students in such events indicates their growing interest in their academic future. ■



Visitors at the fair : Refreshing

CAREER CHOICE

Legal Eagles

The rigors of diligence and patience may sometimes be intimidating, but they are vital to achieving success in the profession

By AKSHAY SHARMA

Each year, the Law College in Kathmandu produces graduates well-versed in the rules of the law books and the procedures of the courtroom, but many find it hard to establish themselves in the profession.

What makes a newcomer make his mark on the profession? Veterans in the field insist that there is no single path that leads to a successful legal career. Indeed, a variety of backgrounds, a multiplicity of perspectives and differing conceptions on choosing the field of study can be found at the Law College at the capital. After graduation, these people find themselves competing with a pool of those schooled and trained in foreign countries.

But these challenges do not diminish the profession. "I never found the legal profession uninteresting," says Krishna Prasad Pant, 76, a prominent member of Nepal's legal community.

"I never found it hard to digest or was put off by the loss of a case. I never told my clients that the bench would be entirely understanding of our arguments. I always thought the legal system lacked clarity. For a lawyer, every case is exciting because the clients' interest reside there and we are the people that are supposed to help them achieve their interest."

Pant adds: "It's not only constitutional or high-profile cases that are exciting. Each and every case is interesting. I remember a case that concerned about a few yards of land, which got its way to a full bench. We used heavy arguments to persuade the full bench on the right to appeal. The client was a poor-looking fellow and he was there behind us with his hands tied. He didn't understand a word while we were speaking and were raising legal arguments."

For those who have chosen the legal

profession, finding a space in the vast field is often a mind-boggling task. "The first challenge new-comers face is that of creating their own identity. If one does not have the commitment and ability to hang in there, the road to becoming a successful lawyer is closed. Patience is the key," says a prominent and well-established lawyer on condition of anonymity. "These things might sound harsh to young lawyers and to younger people aspiring to join the profession, but they are true."



District court : Grooming ground

These words have their value because a person achieves success in this field, like in most professions, through his hard work and habits. When making submissions to a judge, seeking to hold the attention of the jury, or cross-examine a hostile witness, the advocate is required to entice, to flatter, to insult, all in order to advance the cause for which he is instructed, however unworthy his efforts or his clients may be.

"Young lawyers need the right motivation," says Kiran K.C. a graduate student at the Law College in Kathmandu. "It's hard to survive on the legal plank because even judges look at lawyers as the intelligentsia of the country. This is a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of newcomers."

The rigorous demands of law school

have sometimes heavily intimidated aspirants. Anil Shrestha of Thamel quit his law studies and is looking for something else to do. "There might be a great future for lawyers, but I justify my decision to drop out of law school with Shakespeare's words 'We should kill all the lawyers first'." His radical argument provides another reminder of how people get frustrated and drop out of law school.

A good legal system might provide new motivation to aspirants. "Court room law is what I think is the best answer," says Pant. "The machinery of the law in Nepal must be oiled to become more faster, available without any strings attached and convenient to all. If these components of the machinery are put together, a perfect recipe for a good legal system can emerge."

The task of an advocate is to be argumentative, inquisitive, indignant, and apologetic — as the occasion demands — and always persuasive on behalf of the person who hires him. He earns his living propounding views to which he does not necessarily subscribe — and which are sometimes anathema to him — on behalf of a client that may not interest him, and can occasionally outrage him.

In any career path, there are many factors that steer people toward a particular direction. Some, for example, from an early age know what they want to do when they grow up. Then there are those who move from one pursuit to another — for years after their

friends have found their particular niches — before they are willing or able to make a serious commitment to a vocation.

Once they have made that decision, they can look up to the previous generation in the profession for guidance. "The message veterans of the profession give to younger lawyers is not contained in words," says a successful lawyer on condition of anonymity.

"Future generations will judge us through the actions, principles and the pathways we have paved. The modernization of the legal system alone will not help up and coming lawyers. For long-lasting progress, people in the legal community must put together their minds and thoughts in a proper and healthy manner." ■

BOOK

Metal Mettle

An expatriate expert chronicles the importance of Nepal's traditional metal industry

By A CORRESPONDENT

With its geographical and ethnic diversity, Nepal is a land of extensive natural and cultural mystery. As a country of more than four dozen ethnic groups residing in the hills, mountains and terai, Nepal is a storehouse of diverse artifacts. As these ethnic groups have always lived together in harmony, they share religious and cultural festivals. Nepalese artifacts are a symbol of that tolerance and mutual respect.

The country's long tradition in metal work has its own importance in enriching its heritage.

Nepal's artisans have been making beautiful metal objects ranging from ornate religious statues and temple decorations to household vessels, pitchers, cups and bowls that have owners and admirers around the world. Metal products have many important functions in Nepal's religious and cultural life. Many metal objects form a vital part of the paraphernalia in the worship of gods and goddesses and in specific religious rituals. Metal products are also used as major household items.

The size of metal products differs with each function or occasion. That's why one can see hundreds of kinds of metals products in use. These unique characters of casted vessels plate decanters and bowls reflect Nepal's pride and culture.

"While countless volumes have been written focusing on Nepal's rich tradition of producing bronze statues depicting figures such as Buddha, Krishna, Tara and an innumerable assortment of other gods and goddesses, there has been comparatively little information documenting Nepal's production of simple domestic brass and bronze casted items used in everyday life," said author Matthew S. Friedman.

According to Friedman, the book, the first in a series, will explore some of the mysteries behind Nepal's renowned metal industry, focusing specifically on casted household vessels, pitchers and bowls created using the lost wax method. In addition

The country's long tradition in metal work has its own importance in enriching its heritage. Nepal's artisans have been making beautiful metal objects ranging from ornate religious statues and temple decorations to household vessels, pitchers, cups and bowls that have owners and admirers around the world.

to highlighting a selection of antique goods available in Nepal, the book will explore each item's cultural and religious significance in an effort to provide the reader with a sense of perspective.

With the arrival of inexpensive, machine products from India and other countries in the region, families that had once passed on these skills to their offspring are now switching to other, less work-intensive professions. Thus, the tradition of making these household products by hand is gradually fading.

Friedman, an international traveler, has been living in Nepal for the past eight years as a technical advisor. Based on his study and experiences, Friedman's book is first of its kind that deals with the importance of the metal industry.

At a time when Nepal's traditional heritage is in the process of disappearing, the book makes a positive contribution to raising awareness, especially among young Nepalese, on the need to keep this form of art and craft alive. ■

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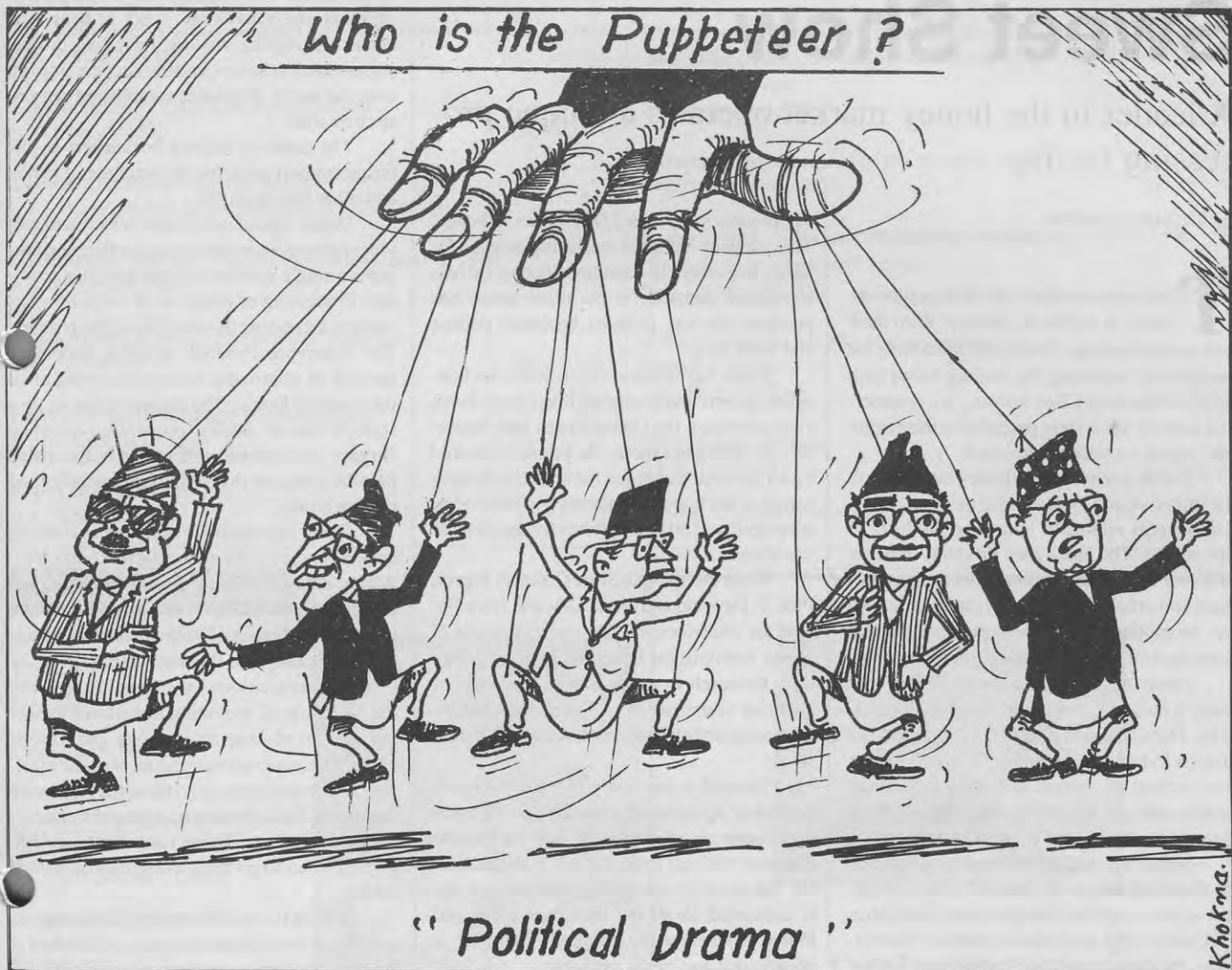
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By M.S.KHOKNA



TRANSITION

AWARDED: Poetess Goma, with the Yug Kavi Siddhicharan Award, for her contribution to Nepalese poetry.

Bharat Raj Pant, interpreter, with the Pundit Basudev Bhattarai Award and Lok Ram Pandey, a teacher, with Master Basudev

Bhattarai Award, by the Basudev Bhattarai Memorial Academy.

Prabhat Nath Yogi, with the Basudev Dhakal Gorakshanath Award, by the Mahendra Sanskrit University.

CONFERRED: Dr. Badri Prasad Shrestha, with the Distinguished Award in Economics, by the Nepal Acad-

emy of Economic Studies, for his outstanding contribution in the field of development economics.

ELECTED: Nepal, to the Executive Board of UNICEF, for a three-year term beginning 2002, and also to the Committee on Sustainable Development, for a three-year term beginning 2002, with a majority of votes.

APPOINTED: Raj Kumar Malla, as executive director of the Melamchi Drinking Water Development Committee, by the government.

Toran Bahadur Karki, reader at the Tribhuvan University, as vice-chancellor of the Purvanchal University, by Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala, in his capacity as the chancellor of the university. ■

HONEY

Sweet Show

A leader in the honey market operates a unique processing facility

By AKSHAY SHARMA

The honey market in the Indian subcontinent is still in its infancy. With their rich natural heritage, Nepal and India have the potential of becoming the leading honey producers in the world. Bee-keeping as a commercial activity has a large potential in this region but largely remains unexplored.

Dabur, a leader in the honey market, took the initiative and brought international expertise in areas related to honeybee products to this region. The Honeybee Products division of Dabur India Ltd is looking after the procurement and processing of honey, apiculture center, promoting bee-keepers associations and manufacturing bee-keeping equipment.

Dabur began operations in 1884 and is today a multi-locational, multi-product enterprise. Dabur has had its roots in Ayurveda, the ancient Indian science of life. This knowledge has resulted in a range of herbal, health and beauty care and Ayurvedic specialities, which generations have used in India and abroad.

Nepal, situated in the Himalayan range, is an abundant source of natural herbs products like spices and honeybee products. Dabur has specialized and assimilated extensive knowledge in these areas and established Dabur Nepal Pvt. Ltd, a joint venture company, in 1989.

In a recent survey in the hills, Chitwan and Nepalgunj, Dabur Nepal found keen interest in the local people in exploiting alternative systems to generate additional income.

Realizing the potentiality of the natural reservoir of Nepal, Dabur has set up an Apiculture Research Center at Jugedi, Bharatpur. Efforts are concentrated on breeding superior queens and developing appropriate technology. Dabur is producing lightweight, economical, thermally insulated beehives with state-of-the-art beehive frames. The complete set of beehives along with the superior queen is given to farmers. Farmers receive the necessary training and technical assistance and guarantees for buy-back of honey.

The company has developed a modern honey processing facility at Birgunj, which

can process more than 2,000 tonnes of honey. The company has great marketing demand for honey in Europe. In addition to honey, there is significant demand for the other honey-bee products like wax, propolis, beebread, pollens and royal jelly.

Dabur has received export orders for honeybee queens and honeybee hives from European countries, the United States and Australia. According to experts, the project is backed by an advance technique for artificial insemination of the honeybee queens and behavioral adaptability of different strains for the climatic conditions of Nepal.

At the Dabur Apiculture Center in Jugedi, Prof. J. Dewilde and Naria Dewilde from Poland are implementing the new techniques of queen breeding for increased honey production. Research is under way in the areas of artificial insemination of queens and behavioral adaptability and intermixing of different strains.

Situated in the valley of river Narayani, the Dabur Apiculture Center falls on the highway connecting Kathmandu with the famous Chitwan National Park, 125 km from the capital. The center is open throughout the year and is connected to all the important cities and tourist centers of the country. Transport is economical and easily available.

The apiculture center is an ideal place to break your journey and relax for a while. You can see thousands of busy bees buzzing around, involved in a hard day's labor.

The activities going on at the center include rearing better quality queen bees, developing bee colonies, providing training in bee-keeping management, procuring organic honey and other bee-products and providing bee-keeping equipment.

The apiculture center has a facility of producing quality young mated queen bees under strict supervision of experts. The center can produce 5,000 queen bees every month, which are exported to India, United Kingdom and Poland, among other places.

The apiculture center is also engaged in developing bee colonies and supplying beekeepers of Nepal and India. The center is using EPS beehives and plastic frames for develop-

ment of bee-colonies.

The center is involved in research and development activities on bee-keeping management and behavioral aspect of bees. The center has regular visitors, including professor, research scholars, and beekeepers from all over the world. It has also established demonstration sites.

The center is helping beekeepers by offering support price for the purchase of honey and other bee-products.

Dabur Apiculture Center, which also provides equipment manufactured at Birgunj, provides a single window for bee-keeping activities. Processing of honey is of crucial importance in increasing the shelf life of the product. The Honeybee Products division undertakes the task of improving honey processing at all the plants of Dabur. The company has set up a state-of-the-art honey processing plant at Birganj in Nepal and at Baddi in India, which help the company in offering consistently good quality honey.

Dabur has taken the initiative in forming beekeepers associations at different honey producing areas, including Jugedi in Nepal and Chandigarh in India. These associations are independent bodies of beekeepers. Dabur acts only as a catalyst to this movement.

The associations have been formed with the basic aim of providing a platform to beekeepers for sharing information and experiences. The associations conduct periodic meetings where problems specific to the region are discussed. The consultants, arranged by Dabur, provide solutions. These consultants also go for field visits to get direct responses on related issues.

A plant for manufacturing EPS beehives and plastic bee-frames has been established at Birganj. Modern technology using plastic instead of wood ensures that natural resources of Nepal are preserved. A capacity of over 100,000 beehives a year gives a good platform for fast development of the bee-keeping industry in Indian sub-continent. During the next five years, the company plans to build over 500,000 *Apis mellifera* bee colonies.

Dabur India Limited has an annual turnover exceeding Rs 9 billion and its products are available in more than 50 countries. The company has offices in Nepal, Egypt, Dubai, New York, Moscow and London besides 21 offices spread throughout India.

Dabur India Limited was established in 1884 by Dr. S.K Burman, a man guided by a vision to provide healthcare to Indian masses at affordable price. Started as a health care company, it has expanded its portfolio to include personal care, foods, pharmaceuticals, cosmetics and Ayurvedic veterinary products. ■

Now In Town

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Hindi

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Jodi No 1
Albela
One 2 Ka 4
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Rahul
Censor
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"Do not yearn for physical joy and, by so doing, discard the more permanent joy of inner calm and contentment."

- SATHYA SAI BABA



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HAGAR THE HORRIBLE



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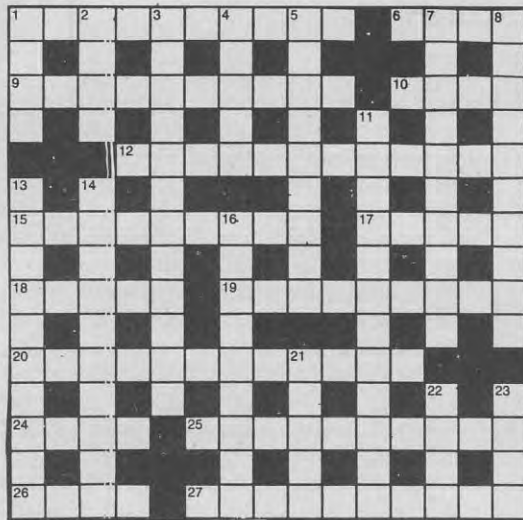
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MELL LAZARUS 3-8

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Occasionally 13 with 8? (3,3,4)
6. Stop eating sort of convenience food (4)
9. Give prisoner an excellent reference (10)
10. Left out of fashion, in a nasty spot (4)
12. It was said to explain shortage of clues with greater complexity (4,2,6)
15. Where customs may search, whatever happens (2,3,4)
17. Good place to hide, being white (5)
18. Tree by start of left-hand bend (5)
19. Confirm bill's settled for scotch? (3,4,2)
20. Original Dutch community finally settled on York (3,9)
24. Example of symbolism one has to study in Shakespeare (4)
25. Jokingly kissing your colt, as it's frisky (10)
26. Ditching half my theory ñ a false interpretation? (4)
27. It's one's basic skill that counts (10)

DOWN

1. Cheek by owl? (4)
2. Take turns in section of orchestra (4)
3. Cursory description of minor poet's work (6,6)
4. Bird about to be seen in farflung highland area (5)
5. Shortend run to prevent showing off, technically? (9)
7. What sister has to look for later (10)
8. Article ready for editing, up to date, one imagines (3,4,3)
11. People regarded as thick may ring this bell (7,5)
13. The end of a grand celebration? (10)
14. Barge in flailing baton, ducking missile (6,4)
16. Original stimulation offered for the consumer (9)
21. Root out American involved in corruption (5)
22. Pay for basic support (4)
23. Go down for an audition, in time to be in it (4)

Down: 1. Neck 2. Wind 3. Nurse's rhyme 4. Tibet 5. Extravert 7. Afterwards 8. The year dot 11. Burglar alarm 13. Millennium 14. Narrow boat 16. Appetiser 21. Roust 22. Foot 23. Sync

Across: 1. Now and then 6. Fast 9. Contribute 10. Style 12. C'est La guerre 15. Clair 17. Larch 18. Put paid to 19. New Amsterdam 20. Icon 24. Osculatory 26. Myth 27. Arithmetic

ANSWERS

BRIDGE

3-12

NORTH
 ♠ Q 9 8 5 2
 ♥ 8 4 3
 ♦ 5 3
 ♣ K Q 4

WEST
 ♠ 10 6 4
 ♥ Q 6
 ♦ Q 7 4 2
 ♣ 7 6 3 2

EAST
 ♠ K J 7 3
 ♥ A 5 2
 ♦ A 10 9 8
 ♣ 10 5

SOUTH
 ♠ A
 ♥ K J 10 9 7
 ♦ K J 6
 ♣ A J 9 8

Vulnerable: North-South
 Dealer: South

The bidding:
 South West North East
 1♥ Pass 2♥ Dbl.
 4♥ All pass

Opening lead: Spade four

“The chains of habit are too weak to be felt until they are too strong to be broken”

- Samsuel Johnson

Test your play at today's heart game. See if you can avoid the trap that will ensnare many. Hint: Review the bidding, and count your winners and losers before making your plans.

West leads his spade four to the eight and jack, and South wins his ace. A declarer who follows habitual practices assigns priority to his trump suit. Typically, he will lead a club to dummy's queen and run dummy's trump eight, losing to West's queen. Now, whether West exits in clubs or in diamonds, the game goes one down. As soon as East gains the lead, he will cash his trump ace and lead another trump. The leaves South with two diamond losers, which, coupled with two trump losers, send the game one down.

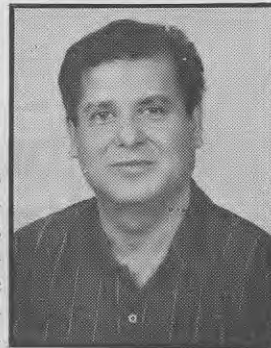
How does South avoid losing four tricks? Given East's double, South should be fairly sure where the diamond ace is. He can afford two trump losers as long as he loses only one diamond. How does this change his priorities?

At trick two, South leads a club to dummy to lead a diamond. If East plays low, South wins his king and leads another diamond. This allows him to ruff a diamond in dummy, and he loses only one diamond and two trumps.

Since South may lose two trump tricks with or without finessing, it is imperative that he take steps to limit his diamond losers to only one.

Stress: Part Of The Natural Fabric Of Life

By DR. NIRANJAN PRASAD UPADHYAYA



The term stress has been used variously to refer to (1) stimulus (external force acting in the organism), (2) response (changes in physiological functions), (3) interaction between an external force and the resistance opposed to it (as in biology), and (4) more comprehensive combinations of the above factors. In psychology, stress refers to a state of the organism resulting from some interaction with the environment. In psycho-physiology, stress is that stimulus which imposes detectable strain that cannot be easily accommodated by the body and results in impaired health or behaviour.

Stress is a necessary positive force leading to effective work and maintenance of good health. Insufficient stress might lead to "rustout" while over exposure to stressful conditions might lead to burnout.

Stress is understood with reference to characteristics of both the individual and his or her environment. The person-environment fit model (Harrison, 1978) states that if a person is not able to fit into his or her environment, then it leads to stress and strain. Stress is regarded as an external force that is perceived as threatening according to the stimulus-oriented approach.

Increasing complexities, competitive and the hard struggle for existence have compelled almost all sections of people to experience stress in everyday life. So stress is not a new phenomenon, but is a relatively new concept and field of study in psychology. Psychologists have focused that high level of stress may be accompanied by anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritation, tension and boredom. The modern age has been called the age of anxiety and life is not as simple as most of us think it is. Stress is common in day-to-day activities.

At a minimal level, stress may not be hazardous to individuals. However, when individuals experience extreme stress, it affects all aspects of their behaviour, including the work in they are actively involved in. The nature and type of stress vary from individual to individual. It is researched that individuals' official stress may be reflected in the family setting. Therefore, both types of stresses, i.e. home and office, are interrelated.

Stress is an integral part of the natural fabric of life. While stress may have positive as well as negative effects, the negative effects generally receive attention. There are various types of ups and downs, both environmental and internal, that interfere with the harmony of the individual's adjustment. Stress in turn, leads to both behavioural and physiological outcomes. The behavioural outcomes include factors such as job satisfaction, life satisfaction, performance and absenteeism.

Stress is usually thought of in negative terms. It is thought to be caused by something bad. This is a form of distress. But there is also a positive pleasant side of stress caused by good things. Psychologists have stated that in virtually every stressful encounter individuals tend to use both problem and emotion focused strategies. Studies have also confirmed that males tend to use high-risk behaviours as way of reducing emotional tension. Psychological researchers have also highlighted that a job can be a source of dissatisfaction and stress, too. Dissatisfaction at work may influence life pattern of the individual. Dissatisfied workers are reported to be unhappy in general.

The process of transfer of stress emerges from the three well-defined primary domains — the individual, the family and the work. Some personality factors such as "Type A" or "Type B" personality, hardy personality, obsessionality, over-identification, low-risk taking and low sensation-seeking play an important functional role in the experience and development of stress. Personal values, needs and spirituality also influence the development of stress. Stress is generated when an individual's values or needs are threatened.

Existence of stress as measured through stressful events. What is important is how a person appraises stress and copes with it. Psychologists have experienced how patterns of coping and defense, as well as

their effects influence wellbeing. Stress coping is generally observed through positive effects (such as satisfaction) whereas defense is primarily and positively correlated with somatic problems and negative effects. Negative effects follow five indices: anger, depression, anxiety, interpersonal sensitivity and negative self-esteem.

Uncomfortable physical environment such as high pollution level, heat, humidity, uncomfortable table/chair and heavy manual work may create stress in the workplace. Deadlines, shift work, long working hours, repetitive boring jobs, excessive travel and hazardous work are other job-related stress factors. Difficulties in interpersonal relations at work can cause stress. Especially, in government offices, unnecessary rituals and procedures, long hierarchy of decision-making, insufficient backup, poor prospects for promotion, disobedience and unclear role specifications are factors causing frustration and stress.

Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, a constraint, or a demand. This is related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress can create physiological, psychological, social and behavioral problems. When an individual is inspired to achieve a certain level of proficiency in the performance of task, failure or threat of failure to achieve certain goal produces stress. Working under pressure of time also creates stress. In Nepal's work context, high stress is caused by various factors such as deadline pressures, inadequate career development opportunities and lack of opportunities to travel abroad. Deuba, A. (1996) has studied the status and situation of women in management in Nepal and concluded that the predominantly patriarchal culture leads to discrimination of women in the workplace.

Findings further highlight that colleagues and superiors underestimate women co-workers and are biased while assigning work. The junior staff have no authority to make independent decisions. This leads to psychological stress in those at the receiving end. In the Nepalese environment, women's double roles — reproductive and productive — puts them at a disadvantage in meeting deadlines, which causes maximum stress. The science of coping allows one to understand stress from psychological perspective namely, the investigation of the relationship between coping strategies, stressful events, social supports, cognitive appraisal, and health status. Individuals may try to reduce stress through better management of time, nutrition, exercises, career planning, job changes, promotion of psychological health, relaxation, meditation and prayer. A psychologist uses a number of approaches for stress management such as relaxation training, meditation, visual-imagery techniques, bio-feedback, anxiety management procedures, self-regulation, stress inoculation.

Parker (1990) describes three styles of stress coping: task-oriented strategies that attempt to solve a problem, reconceptualizing and minimizing of the effects of problems, self-protection and fantasizing reactions and avoidance-oriented strategies that avoid stress by seeking out other people or by engaging in substitute tasks. On the whole, behavioral medicine is applied in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of the stressful persons. This kind of medicine provides a state of apt analysis of the role of social personality, and coping style in illness. Psychological and biological factors contributing to various physical disorders including cardiovascular and gastro-intestinal disorders and the efficacy of behavioral intervention at the individual and community levels. Stress in itself may not be bad, but unresolved stress proceeds to difficulties at the psychological and physiological level. ■

Dr. Upadhyaya is a senior psychologist at Public Service Commission

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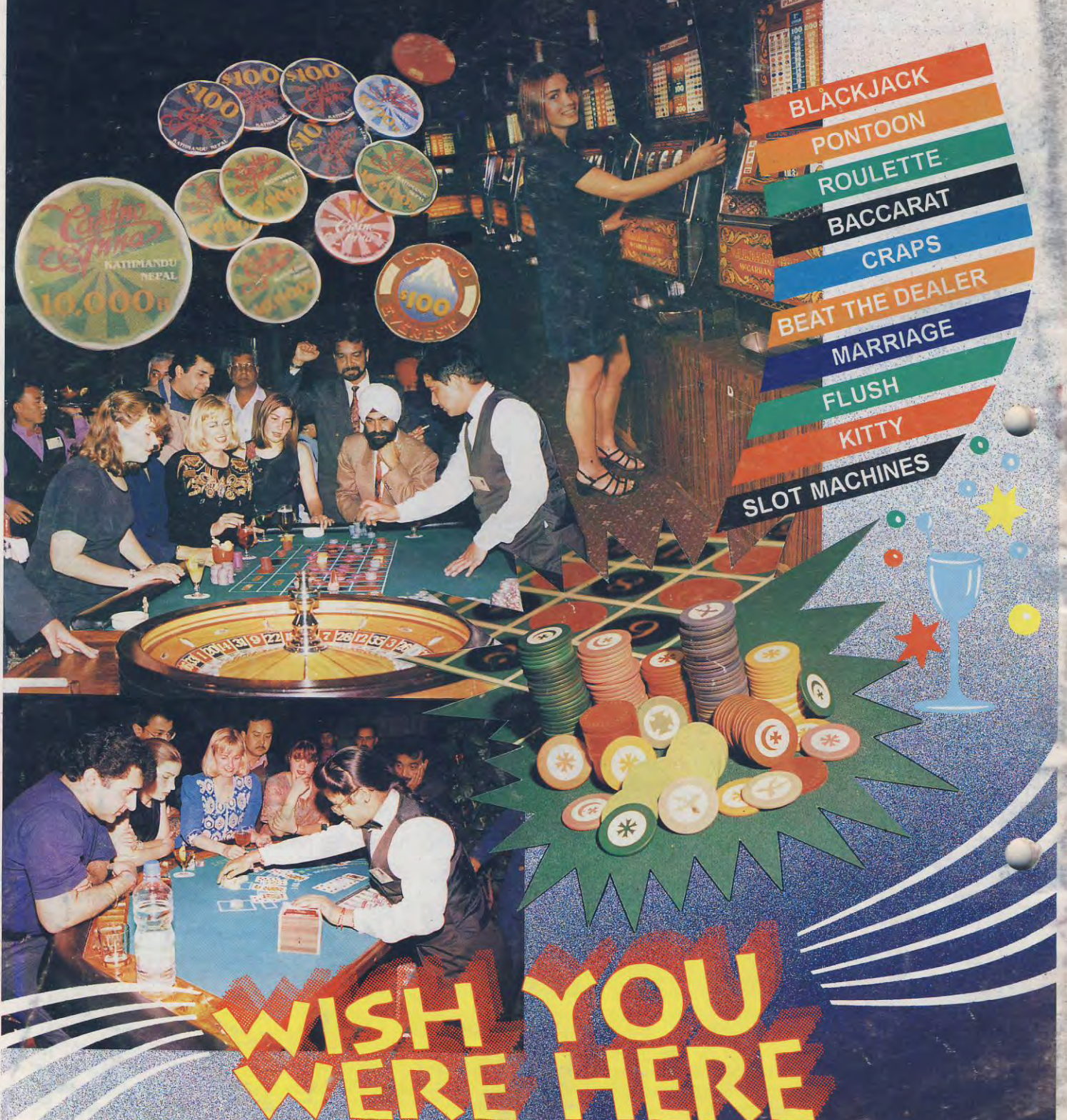
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