

The National Newsmagazine

# SPOTLIGHT

Sept-28-Oct-4, 2001

## TERRORIST ATTACKS IN US

# LESSONS for Nepal

- WORLD TOURISM DAY
- GOVT-MAOIST ROW
- NEPALESE MUSLIMS ON US RETALIATION
- COURT IN LAND REFORMS

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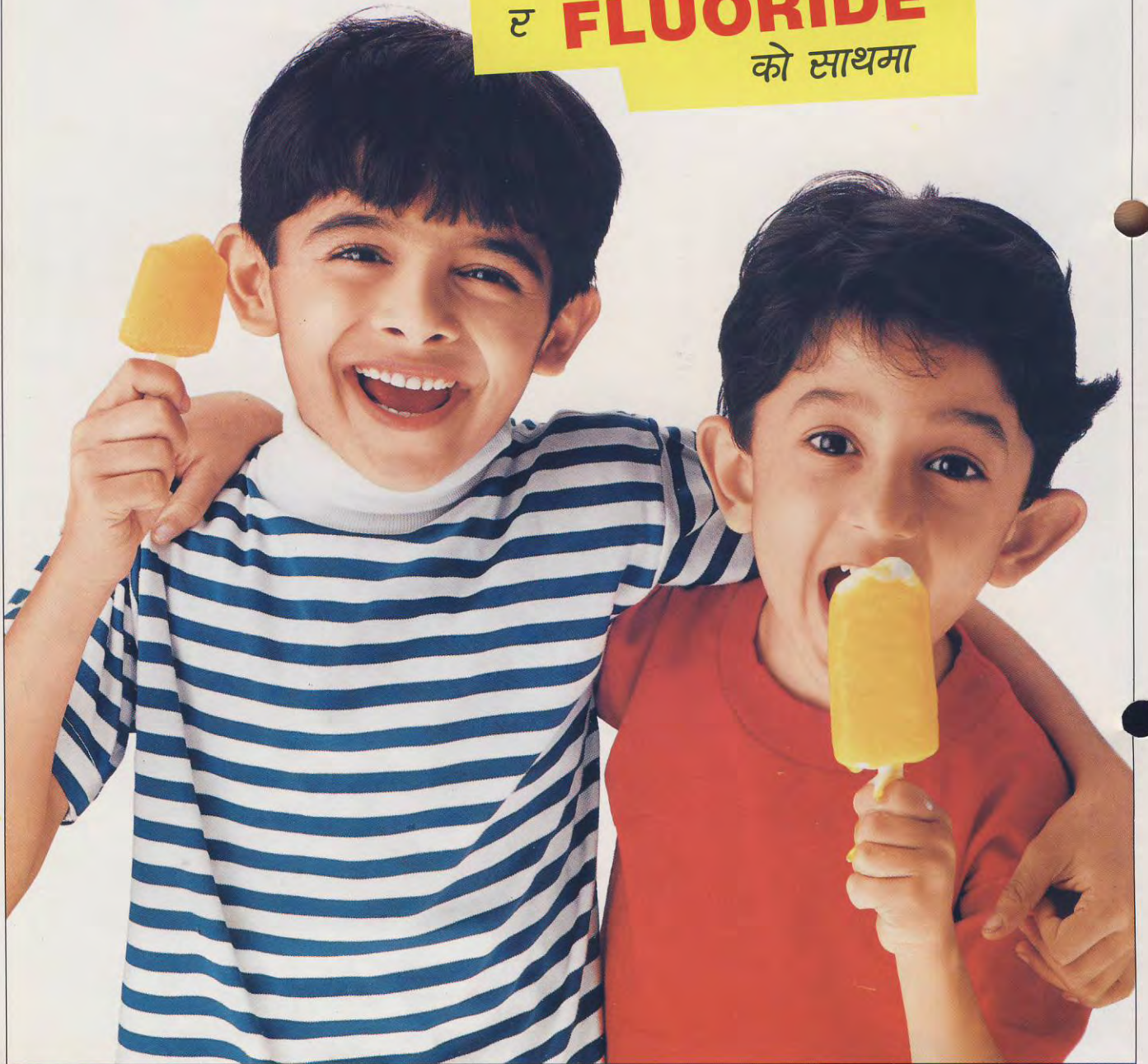
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## COVER STORY : Lessons For Nepal

Politicians of Nepal need to take lessons about managing the democratic set-up from their American counterparts, who have shown solidarity following the terrorist attacks there.

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## GOVT-MAOIST ROW : Hidden Agenda

As the two sides prepare to sit for the third round of talks, both trade accusations of violating the truce.

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## INTERVIEW : Dr. Tika Pokharel

Member-Secretary at the Social Welfare Council (SWC), Dr. Pokharel talks about issues concerning the management of NGOs and INGOs.

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# SPOTLIGHT

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## EDITOR'S NOTE

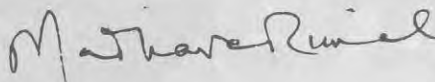
The fall out of the September 11 terrorist acts in New York and Washington D.C. have generated world wide aversion against terrorism. Such kind of total unity amongst all the nations of the world to fight terrorism can hardly be found. The Talibans have been totally isolated. How long will they be able to resist has become a matter of keen interest to all. Since followers of all religions have joined hands to eradicate terrorism, this war initiated by the United States must in no way be interpreted as a war on any country or any people or any religion. It is a war against evil — the evil of terrorism. As such, this is the most opportune time for countries who have been helping or abetting terrorism to resist from such heinous acts. They must not fail to understand that in the changed context they will never be able to achieve their objective by resorting to terrorism. The sooner they see reason and start cooperating with forces that are fighting the evil, the better their chances of avoiding unnecessary deaths and destruction and ultimate defeat. The world coalition against terrorism is getting stronger every passing day. Smaller countries like Nepal who have been victims of terrorism are getting optimistic that the hidden hands that have been protecting and helping the terrorists will have no alternative than to desist from their abominable behavior. The powers that be should not limit their focus on proclaimed terrorists only but also take appropriate action to protect the smaller nations from unnecessary harassment by bigger and stronger nations.

\* \* \*

The dialogue between the Sher Bahadur Deuba led Nepali Congress government and the Maoists seem to be heading towards a stalemate. In a situation where no time should have been lost to arrive at an understanding, the unqualified delay in thrashing out the differences does not bode well for either party. If the government party has not been able to negotiate with the firmness due to its official status, the Maoists have not been very flexible in their stance. They know well that their demands cannot be met at any cost. If their stance has been rigid to make stronger bargaining viewpoint, they can relent and become more reasonable. But, some activities still being resorted to by the Maoists are eroding their popularity with the masses. And moreover, the support and sanctuary that they have been receiving in the neighborhood may not be there for long. If the Deuba government has no guts to take up the issue with the neighboring government he will have to vacate the position he is occupying for somebody who has the guts. Despite the baseless propaganda Indian media continues to make against Nepal of encouraging ISI activities against India, they have been exposed, time and again, for their nefarious activities. On the contrary, the free sanctuary India has provided to the Maoists is nothing less than collaboration. Even though Indian defense and foreign minister Jaswant Singh has denied any support to the Maoists, situation prevailing tells different story. The world opinion against terrorism must impel India to refrain from giving any kind of help or support to the Maoists in the terrorist activities against Nepal. The day India stops helping the Maoists, the Maoists will be facing a difficult situation. Consequently, it is in their interest to stop taking alien help to carry on destabilizing activities against their own country. We do trust they will start seeing reason and come to a reasonable settlement without delay.

\* \* \*

Pakistan's revolutionary role in fighting world terrorism has brought in a marked change in the political equation in the region. Since, it has, once again, become an important front-line nation, its contribution in maintaining peace and stability in the region has assumed greater importance. If Pakistan's relations with the United States have strengthened tremendously her stable relations with China and her intimate relations with other Islamic countries of the world has given her a distinct edge in South Asian regional politics. President Gen. Pervez Musharraf of Pakistan, has stolen a big lead over his arch rival by his wise and courageous policies. Bigger India has to initiate sharp changes in her policies towards her smaller neighbors in South Asia, if she wants her influence in the region should not recede alarmingly. As it is, the smaller nations of South Asia nourish a lot of resentment against her. The changed context must cause greater anxiety for big India. ■



**Madhav Kumar Rimal**  
Chief Editor & Publisher



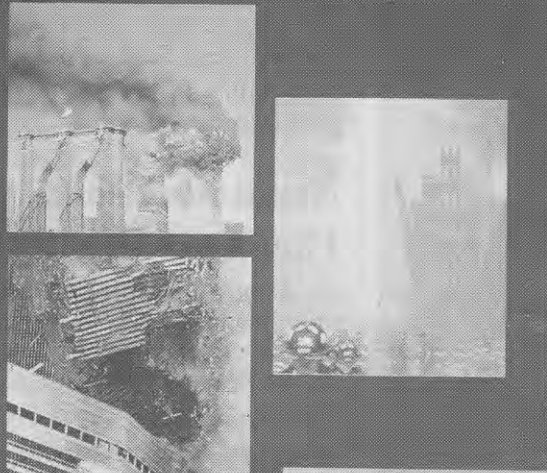
FORUM: R.K. Timalsena      INTERVIEW: Prof. Dhruva Kumar

The National News Magazine

# SPOTLIGHT

21-27 Sept. 2001

## Tremors of Terrorism



- JUDICIARY UNDER ATTACK
- GOVT - MAOIST TALK
- VASECTOMY STUDY

## No To Terrorism

The September 11 attacks in the United States have solidified world opinion against terrorism of any kind ("Tremors Of Terrorism", SPOTLIGHT, September 21). Whether these people operate under the cover of some political dogma or religious color, they are terrorists as long as they engage in violence and take the lives of innocent people. By this yardstick, our own Maoists, too, fall in the category. Should the Nepalese government attempt to crush the insurgency in the name of doing away with terrorism, the international community would support it. Therefore, it will be prudent for the Maoists to resolve their grievances through dialogue. Otherwise, they would have to face the wrath of whole world.

*Dinesh Karki*  
Thapathali

ing on the international community to declare one of its other neighbors Pakistan as a terrorist state, is involved in promoting terrorism in Nepal. Indian activities are giving ammunition to Pakistan to make similar demands against India. During the Cold War, India trained and financed the LTTE against the small island country of Sri Lanka. Today it is financing and supporting terrorists in almost all South Asian countries. When the world's only super power has declared war against terrorism, is not this the right time for Indian officialdom to stop sending terrorists to Nepal? If India continues to do so, is not it the duty of civilized nations to press the Indians to stop supporting terrorism in Nepal? Is there no value of lives in a small country?

*Anil Khadka*  
Paris, France  
Via email

## Ghastly Act

Those who helped carry out the attacks in New York City and Washington DC must be brought to justice quickly ("Tremors Of Terrorism", SPOTLIGHT, September 21). These people have not only committed a crime against America but against the whole of humanity. How can anybody condone the use of aircraft filled with innocent passengers as deadly missiles against buildings that house thousands of innocent people? It is simply too horrific an act to be forgotten easily. No one can justify the act in the name of so-called jihad.

*Sudarshan Sharma*  
Samakhushi

## Refrain From Retaliation

As the United States prepares to launch an attack

against Afghanistan, the American authorities need to apply maximum restraint so as to inflict no harm to the innocent Afghan civilians already reeling under Taliban rule and years of civil war ("Tremors Of Terrorism", SPOTLIGHT, September 21). While the Taliban reflect the barbaric rule reminiscent of medieval tyranny, the innocent people of Afghanistan do not deserve to be penalized any further. Any action on the part of United States must be based on the assessment of all these factors.

*Bibek Rana*  
Chabahil

## Time To Be Alert

The devastating attacks on the twin towers of World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington DC have exposed how even

the world's superpower is not immune to the threat of terrorism ("Tremors Of Terrorism", SPOTLIGHT, September 21). For a small and poor country like Nepal, which is suffering from a violent insurgency, such threats are clear and present. Therefore, the authorities must remain on high vigil to pre-empt similar attacks here.

*Suman Gurung*  
Gairidhara

## Exporting Terrorism?

After reading your editorial in the September 21 issue of SPOTLIGHT and accusations made by two senior Nepalese leaders, I have realized that India has been actively supporting the Maoists to launch terrorist activities in its small helpless northern neighbor. I don't understand why India, which has been call-

## Brotherly Bonds

The article "My Pilgrimage To Badri And Kedar" (SPOTLIGHT, September 21) was interesting. I found that many common people in India love Nepal and Nepalis, just like we love India and Indians. Despite continuous and deliberate efforts of Indian officials and media to term Nepal as anti-India, it seems that common Indians reject the propaganda of their own country. As citizens of the world's only Hindu kingdom, Nepalis cannot play in the hands of anti-Indian forces. Indian officials themselves have been promoting anti-Indian forces in Nepal to fulfil their vested interest. The time has come to forge an alliance between the peoples of India and Nepal to thwart the moves of Indian officialdom.

*Utsav Sharma*  
Baneshwor



## Home Minister Threatens To Resign

Home Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka has said he is against fulfilling all the demands put forward by the Maoists unilaterally. "I would resign if I am pressed to meet the Maoist demands by the prime minister or the ruling party," Khadka told reporters in Birgunj Sunday. Minister Khadka said two out of the three demands made by the Maoists could not be fulfilled ahead of the third round of talks. The Maoists have demanded the release of all their cadres, the dismantling of the Armed Police Force and the scrapping of Public Security Regulations. "They still hold 71 policemen and 37 political activists as hostage. Why should we release all of their cadres?" he asked. Minister Khadka warned that the country could head toward civil war if the Maoists continued their strategy of targeting and killing Nepali Congress workers. *Kantipur, Sep. 24.*

## 'Terrorism Crime Against Humanity'

Director of the American Center, Bob Kerr, has said the government of the United States sought support from all democratic governments of the world to eradicate terrorism. Addressing an interaction program organized here by Press Chautari last week, Mr Kerr said the recent terrorist attacks on the United States were assaults on humanity. Explaining that the United States was not going to take revenge on anybody on account of their religious faith, he said the Washington would eradicate with the support of the global community those forces that wanted to create instability in the world. Mr Kerr, however, declined to elaborate on how the US declaration on the eradication of global terrorism was going to address terrorist activities being launched in different countries, including Nepal. Meanwhile, nearly 200 people took part in a condolence meeting organized by the National Youth Council to mourn the victims of terrorist attacks in the US on the 13th day of the attack. *Compiled from reports.*

## Interim Govt. Is Not Possible: Bhattarai

Former prime minister and senior ruling Nepali Congress leader Krishna Prasad Bhattarai has brushed aside Maoist demands for forming an interim government to pave way for drafting a new constitution "to institutionalize the republic." Talking to reporters after the central



**Bhattarai**

working committee meeting of the ruling party Thursday, Bhattarai said with 113 members in the 205-member House of Representatives, the Nepali Congress enjoyed popular mandate to rule the country for the next three years. "Sher Bahadurji will remain the premier throughout this period," he announced. He also asked the Maoists to join the political mainstream by laying down their arms. *Compiled from reports Sep. 21.*

## Help Nepal Helps Development Works

Help Nepal Network (HeNN), an organization of Nepalis working abroad, has provided assistance worth nearly Rs 500,000 to different development programs in the country. They assistance include Rs 350,000 to carry out health-related works for the Chepang community in Chitwan district, Rs 150,000 for construction of Bhavani Primary School building in Dang

district and Rs 20,000 for purchasing furniture for the Saraswoti Primary School in Pyuthan district. With its network in 12 countries, the organization raises "One Pound a Month" donations from Nepalis working abroad and channelizes it toward education and health programs in rural Nepal. Addressing the function here Saturday, Minister for Works and Physical Planning Chiranjivi Wagle lauded the role played by the organization. Vice President of the Network, Dr. Pranab Gyawali and President Arun Singh Basnet spoke about the activities of the organization. *Compiled from reports Sep. 22.*

## Nepal May Not Face Fuel Crisis

Despite uncertainties related to petroleum products worldwide in the wake of possible retaliatory measures by the United States, Nepali officials said the country might not face a crisis in the immediate future. Deputy director general of Nepal Oil Corporation, the state-owned monopoly, R.B. Khadka said the downward trend of petroleum prices in the international market might not immediately lead to revision in their prices in domestic market. This is because of the arrangement of procuring petroleum products from the international market, delivering it to the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and procuring it again from the bordering depots of the IOC at fixed price. The fluctuation in the prices of POL products, hence, doesn't affect Nepal's domestic market immediately, he said. Mr. Khadka said there was no need to panic about any shortage of petroleum products in the country. *Space Time Sep. 20.*

## FNCCI, CII For Automatic Treaty Renewal

The two apex business chambers of Nepal and India have called for the automatic renewal of the bilateral trade treaty later this year. The joint recommendation prepared by the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) has called upon both governments to give priority to the continuation of



facilities being provided to the export of products belonging to small-scale industries. A delegation led by FNCCI President Ravi Bhakta Shrestha presented a copy of the recommendations prepared by the FNCCI-CII Joint Economic Council to Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba here Thursday. The business chambers of both countries have beefed up their activities as India has formally requested Nepal to review some of the provisions in the treaty related to 'surge' of some exports to India. Meanwhile, Kantipur daily reported that export of zinc oxide from Nepal to India has come virtually to a standstill after India imposed anti-dumping duty on the product beginning Tuesday. Nepal was exporting some 3,000 tonnes of zinc oxide to India annually. India has an annual consumption of 100,000 tonnes of zinc oxide, the report said. *Compiled from reports Sep. 21.*

## Maoists Intimidate Official Media

A group of Maoist activists set fire on a vehicle belonging to the state-owned Radio Nepal at Satdobato, Ring Road on Wednesday afternoon, police said. The vehicle was destroyed. Meanwhile, Gorkhapatra daily reported Wednesday that the underground party has demanded Rs 200,000 each from general manager of the state-owned Gorkhapatra Corporation Genu Prasai and deputy general manager Hum Bahadur Basyal, and Rs 150,000 from finance controller Yagya Raj Joshi of the corporation. The letters signed by one Prabhakaran, secretary of the CPN (Maoist)'s Kathmandu district committee also said that they would guarantee secrecy needed (while receiving the extortion.) *Compiled from reports Sep. 20.*

## EU Welcomes Govt-Maoist Talks

The European Union (EU), a leading partner in Nepal's development efforts, has welcomed the cease-fire between the Nepalese government and the CPN (Maoist), and the first round of negotiations between the two sides on August 30. According to a statement issued here by British Embassy, the EU said it encour-

aged both sides to work seriously and constructively toward the second round of negotiations. The EU has urged the two sides to seek a peaceful resolution of the conflict within the framework of the rule of law, respect for human rights, and multiparty democracy. "The EU notes with concern recent reports of widespread intimidation and extortion of various segments of Nepalese society, as well as demands addressed to various development projects and international agencies by the CPN (Maoist)," the statement said. The EU has also called on those responsible to cease such coercive activities immediately, in order to create a conducive and constructive atmosphere for the dialogue process. *Compiled from reports Sep. 18.*

## Maoists Should Lay Down Arms: Koirala

Former prime minister and president of the ruling Nepali Congress Girija Prasad Koirala has asked the Maoists to lay down arms if they are really serious toward finding a peaceful solution to the insurgency. Addressing a function in the eastern district of Sunsari Tuesday, the NC strongman said it is now known to all that the Maoists want to go to elections after forming an interim government. He wondered how an armed group and unarmed people could go to elections together. Talking to reporters at Biratnagar airport Wednesday, on his way back to the capital, Koirala criticized the government for releasing Maoist cadres involved in attacking police posts. "If you release them now, they will again start attacking the police posts again," he warned. *Compiled from reports Sep. 20.*

## Rights Activists Propose Code Of Conduct

A group of 15 human rights organizations have devised a 24-point code of conduct to be observed by the government and Maoist rebels during the cease-fire. The code of conduct says that the government should not take into custody anybody on the basis of his or her political faith, should annul the Public Security Act, should not ban peaceful mass meet-

## Indian Embassy Denies Report

The Indian Embassy in Kathmandu has denied the reports in Nepalese media alleging that India has deployed 70,000 armed forces personnel along the border of Nepal. The press release by the embassy says that 4 battalions of the Special Security Force (SSB) are being deployed along the border with Nepal in the states of Uttaranchal and Uttar Pradesh. Another 4 battalions are proposed to be deployed in phases in other states in the east. "The deployments would number less than ten thousand personnel," reads the press release. It further states that the deployment of SSB is as per the recommendation of a high level committee formed by the Indian government in the aftermath of development in Kargil in 1999, to look into all aspects relating to effective management of the country's international borders. "This Committee had noted that hitherto stretches of India's international borders were managed by respective State Governments of India and recommended that with a view to ensure better coordination and effective management, the international borders should be made the responsibility of an Agency of the Central Government. The decision to deploy a Central Police Force viz, the SSB, (Special Security Force), along the India - Nepal border emanates from the above recommendation," states the press release. "The deployment of the SSB along the India-Nepal border is being made to ensure effective management of the Indo-Nepal international border. The Government of India would continue its policy of extending cooperation to His Majesty's Government of Nepal and of having close cooperation between the authorities concerned on both sides to ensure peace and security along the border and to control activities of terrorists/criminals and other undesirable elements across the border." ■

ings and rallies and should not use the army under any pretext, among other things. Similarly, the code says the rebels should not indulge in raising forced donations, should not abduct people, should not close down schools and academic institutions and should not force popularly elected representatives of local bodies to resign, among other things. The human rights organizations have also urged both sides not to involve themselves in any activities that could spread terror among the people. *Naya Sadak Sep. 20.* ■





The Kathmandu Post

**Meena Day** was observed on Monday to celebrate Meena, the protagonist of a cartoon film, which represents South Asian girl

**THE JAPANESE GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE** a grant assistance of Rs 585.5 million to Nepal for the construction of primary schools under the third phase of the second Basic and Primary Education Program and for debt relief measures. According to the Japanese Embassy, two separate notes were signed and exchanged Wednesday between Japanese Ambassador Mitsuaki Kojima and Finance Secretary Dr. Bimal Koirala. Under the first note, the government of Japan will extend a grant worth Rs 510.5 million for the procurement of construction material for 794 new class rooms, 12 resource centers, 248 toilet blocks and 148 water supply facilities in Siraha, Dhanusha, Mahottari, Sarlahi, Rautahat and Banke districts. Under the second note, the Japanese government will provide a grant assistance worth Rs 75 million for debt relief measures. The grant will be used for the procurement of construction materials, fertilizer, petroleum products, medicine and transportation-related equipment.

**CHINESE OFFICIALS HAVE RELEASED NEARLY 150 NEPAL-**bound trucks from Wednesday after stopping them for 18 days at Wangju. According to Keshab Bahadur Rayamajhi, general secretary of Trans-Himalayan Trade Association, the trucks carrying Chinese goods were released only after the decision of the Bank of China to systematize Nepal-China trade through banking channel. According to the concerned businessmen, the Chinese authorities have agreed to open the customs office for 10 days only. They said the introduction of banking channel in the bilateral trade has affected small traders.

**LUMBINIBANK LTD., A PRIVATE-SECTOR COMMERCIAL** bank, has announced that it is going to issue public shares worth Rs 150 million soon. The bank that began operations as a regional commercial bank in Narayangarh with a paid up capital of Rs 50 million has increased its amount to Rs 500 million in accordance with the requirement set by the Nepal Rastra Bank. Executive Chairman Suresh Bahadur Malla said the bank decided to start operations in Kathmandu as no bank could prove its mettle unless it worked in the capital.

**NEPAL WOULD BE IN A POSITION TO MEET ITS DOMESTIC** demand for electricity by 2005, a senior official said. Minister for Water Resources Bijay Gachhadar told a meeting of House of Representatives Sunday that domestic demand for power by 2005

could be met through internal production. Saying that Nepal generates 393 MW of hydropower and 57 MW of thermal power at present, Minister Gachhadar said demand for electricity in 2002 has been estimated at 440 MW. He said the 144-MW Kali Gandaki A project, 20-MW Chilime project and other half a dozen projects with the capacity to generate nearly 100 MW of power were in the pipeline. Nepal has been able to exploit only a fraction of its hydropower potential of 42,000 MW, the minister said. Only 18 percent of the country's 23 million population has access to electricity.

**THE GOVERNMENT HOPES TO BRING DOWN THE FER-**tility rate to replacement level (that is, zero percent growth) in the next 16 years, a senior official said. Addressing the House of Representatives meeting Thursday, Minister for Population and Environment P. L. Singh said the end of the 12th five-year plan, effective demographic management would effectively reduce the fertility rate. He said efforts were under way to provide reproductive health and family planning services to encourage the small family concept.

**ANNUAL CONSUMPTION OF NOODLES IN NEPAL HAS** crossed Rs 1.25 billion, Space Time daily reported. From a humble investment of Rs 5,000 nearly three decades back, the noodles industry has drawn millions of rupee of investment over the years. Annual production of noodles in Nepal has been about 3.8 million cartons (one carton consists of 30 packets of readymade noodles). Over the last five years, annual growth rate of noodles industry has been up to 20 percent. Entrepreneurs say nearly 60 percent of the raw material and material for packaging has to be imported but the government hasn't given them any concessions. On the other hand, growing competition among noodles producers has compromised quality, reports said.

**THE KATHMANDU METROPOLITAN CORPORATION** (KMC) and Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH) have launched a project to construct and operate the Ganesh Man Singh Memorial Academy for ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat), Head and Neck studies. The four-storey building covering an area of 2242 square meters will be built in four phases an estimated cost of Rs 41.65 million. The KMC has agreed to construct the academy building to be housed within the TUTH premises, whereas the latter is to provide manpower and equipment. Nearly Rs 10 million has been collected in donations for the construction of the buildings. Impact Nepal, a non-government organization, has provided equipment worth Rs 25 million. The academy aims at producing high-, medium- and low-level manpower in ENT within the country and conduct community field-based programs through its products. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba laid the foundation stone of the academy building amid a function Tuesday.

**THE NEPALESE RUPEE DEPRECIATED BY 30 PAISA** against the US dollar for the third time in 10 days. The official exchange rate of one US dollar slipped to Rs 76.40 on Sep. 17 — the lowest ever recorded. The depreciation of Indian currency against the US dollar was mainly responsible for the slide in the Nepalese currency vis-à-vis the greenback, officials said. Nepal maintains a fixed exchange rate with the Indian currency. The possible US assault on Afghanistan in retaliation of the recent terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC has also resulted in a rise in demand for the US currency, reports said. ■



**“The government must not wobble its feet while talking with the Maoists.”**

*Girija Prasad Koirala, former prime minister and president of the ruling Nepali Congress party, addressing the general convention of Nepal Tarun Dal, the party's youth wing, in Hetauda.*

\* \* \*

**“There is no way the political demands of the Maoists could be fulfilled. The present constitution is very complete. It is regarded among the best in the world. I don't see the need to amend it, let alone scrap it.”**

*Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, former prime minister and senior leader of the ruling Nepali Congress, in Bimarsha.*

\* \* \*

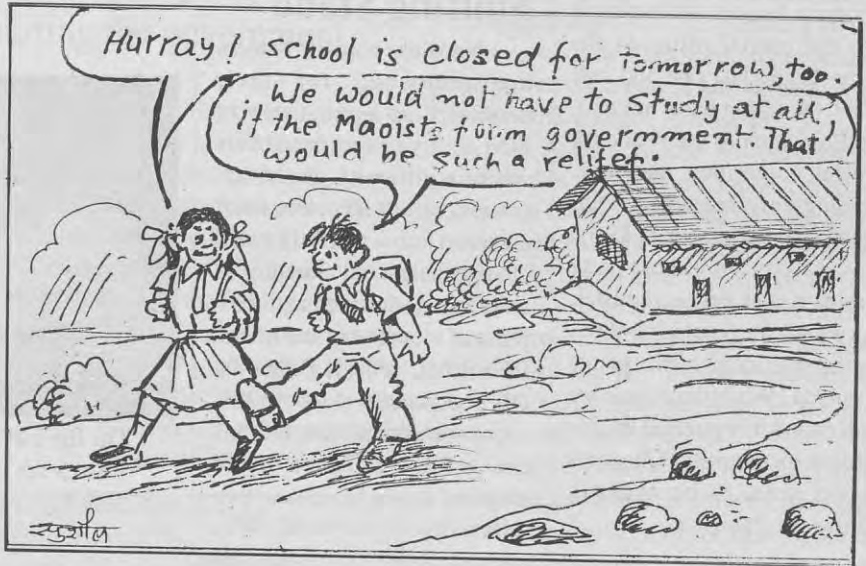
**“The UML is not against the dialogue between the government and the Maoists. But how can it succeed when they are putting up demands like republic that does not suit the soil of our country.”**

*Madhav Kumar Nepal, leader of the main opposition and general secretary of Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML), in Gorkhapatra.*

\* \* \*

**“If it happens, the damage will be greater than the Twin Tower and Pentagon devastation in the United States.”**

*Laxman Prasad Aryal, Supreme Court justice, on the proposed bill that would allow the Commission for Investiga-*



*tion of Abuse of Authority to probe members of the judiciary, in The Kathmandu Post.*

\* \* \*

**“Even if the prime minister and the party accepts the Maoists' demand of dismantling the Armed Police Force, I will not accept it. Rather I am prepared to resign from my post.”**

*Khum Bahadur Khadka, Home Min-*

*ister, in Himalaya Times.*

\* \* \*

**“If the government does not give a single concession or shows enough flexibility, it is not possible for the Maoists, who have come this far, to simply put down their arms.”**

*Khadga Prasad Oli, senior leader of UML, in Drishti.*

\* \* \*

**“Unless the government makes the whereabouts of our party leaders, including Danda Pani Neupane, the third round of the talks will not take place.”**

*Krishna Bahadur Mahara, the chief negotiator for the Maoists, in Spacetime Daily.*

\* \* \*

**“While they are reluctant to pay even Rs 2,000 per song to singers here, they happily cough up Indian Rs 10,000 to singers in Mumbai.”**

*Sharmila Bardeba, up and coming singer, showing displeasure at the discriminatory manner of Nepalese film producers when it comes to paying singers, in Gorkhapatra.*

\* \* \*



Deshamar

Dishi



## Party Office Or PM's Residence?

Although Baluwatar durbar is the official residence of the prime minister, Nepali Congress leaders are turning it into the central office of the party. In the last one and half years, the ruling party has chosen Baluwatar as the venue for central committee meetings. Holding party meetings at Baluwatar made sense when Girija Prasad Koirala was both party president and prime minister. But what's the point of continuing the practice after the change of guards? While the people are understandably puzzled by this evident incongruity, Congress leaders seem to be enjoying Baluwatar ambience.

## Foes Turn Friends

In politics, there are no permanent friends or enemies. Nepali Congress president Girija Prasad Koirala ran into CPN-UML general secretary Madhav Kumar Nepal at Biratnagar airport decided to



Nepal : Softening stance

hold a half-hour meeting. But when the once die-hard adversaries hugged each other before leaving the airport, they left many bystanders flummoxed. The change in Nepal's behavior was particularly strange, as he was the man who did every-

thing he could to force Koirala to resign as prime minister. What new mantra turned our Marxist guru to soften his stance on the Congress hard-liner?

## Shifting Stand

Nepalese political leaders are renowned for their doublespeak, particularly in their ability to use ifs and buts when in difficulty. In the left parties, almost all senior leaders don't know when they will change their stand. Sometimes communist leaders change their point of view every few hours. CPN-UML leader K.P. Sharma Oli is especially adept in this art of transformation. Oli has changed his stand on major political issues more than two dozen times in a week. Why are calculated confusion and contradiction so typical of our communist leaders?

## Futile Fatwa

The CPN-UML politburo meeting issued a fatwa to all its leaders to adhere to the party line. The party spokesman issued the fatwa after finding senior leaders violating official party policy in their public pronouncements. Even after the strict edict from UML spokesman Pradeep Nepal, senior leaders Madhav Kumar Nepal and K.P. Sharma Oli continue to depart from the party line in their race for comradely supremacy. Who cares about rigid party edicts when you draw sustained applause from your supporters?

## Gag Order

Prime Sher Bahadur Deuba knows how to tame his flock. If he sees some restive Congress worker criticizing him, Deuba has many tools to respond with. When Congress

## REVELATION

# 'Efforts Are Under Way To Undermine Independent Judiciary'

— LAXMAN PRASAD ARYAL



Senior justice of the Supreme Court **LAXMAN PRASAD ARYAL** spoke on the proposed Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) amendment bill tabled to allow the anti-corruption watchdog to investigate corruption in the court system. Justice Aryal opposed the bill at a program organized by SAARC-Law. Excerpts:

### On the bill

Efforts are under way to grab the crown of an independent judiciary. One cannot put an independent judiciary under the fear of the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority. If the court falls under such agency, the existence of the judiciary will lose its meaning.

### On checking corruption in the court system

The proposed bill will only hurt the independence of the judiciary, which was gained after a five-decade-long struggle. In the name of controlling corruption, this is a design to interfere in the matters of the judiciary.

### On weaknesses in the court

Justices and judges also have human weakness. How justifiable is it to put an independent judiciary under fear in the name of correcting human weaknesses? There are clear provisions in the judiciary in this regard and the constitution has laid down clear procedures on removing justice and judges.



Deuba : Keep quiet

MP Surendra Chaudhary fiercely opposed the rationale of the government's land-distribution package, the prime minister ordered the party's chief whip to punish Chaudhary by preventing him from speaking in parliament for the rest of the current session. For many, the Congress party undermined its democratic credentials by curtailing Chaudhary's freedom of expression. Maybe in a country where democracy means everything to everyone, gag orders are part of the game. ■



# SUPREME COURT

## Land Riddle

The apex court walks a tight rope in seeking to protect the interest of the citizens without hurting the government

By KESHAB POUDEL

Whenever the legislature or executive tries to impose certain restrictions on the Supreme Court, common citizens and professionals join hands to stop the government from interfering with the independence of the judiciary. Can the apex court have a reciprocal attitude when the executive and police authority moves to encroach upon the fundamental rights of the individual and the powers of other constitutional organs?

The apex court has made a number of landmark decisions on vital national issues like the Tanakpur accord, citizenship, Labor Act, among others. In some cases, the final authority on interpreting the constitution has been found to escape from delivering a clear judgment. In the debate over the right and jurisdiction of the attorney-general, for instance, the court delivered an ambiguous decision, giving the authorities plenty of opportunity to misinterpret the verdict. In the writ of land reform, lawyers argue, the court delivered a decision that has given dubious meaning and raised greater controversy in the phase of implementation.

The court dismissed the writ petition seeking to nullify the so-called bond. But it declared that the bond has no legal meaning and consequences whatever. If parliament is able to pass the proposed amendment bill, it will give retrospective powers from the date of declaration of August 16, 2001 regardless of who is the new owner of the land. Although a full bench of the apex court declared the government's decision to freeze the transaction of the land as unconstitutional and asked the government to continue the status quo until parliament passes the bill, it also accepted the arguments of the petitioners to declare the bond illegal.

The first batch of writs had become non-functional on account of its non-existence of the situation and no order was issued

by the court. All petitions were rejected on the ground that the government had reopened land transaction activities. As parliament can pass a law retrospectively, the court cannot say anything on that.

For the second writs, the court was required to consider the legality of the conditions imposed by the government. To this, the attorney-general's submission was that its purpose was for the well-being of both the buyers and sellers with respect to the new ceiling proposals.



**Supreme Court :** Meaningful verdict

On August 16, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba made a declaration through a special announcement in parliament indicating government's policy and the plans of radical land reform by reducing the existing land ceiling. In the same statement from the rostrum, he had declared that all land transaction would be frozen until the legislation amending the existing land ceiling laws were promulgated and enforced.

The Ministry of Land Reform and Management, on the basis of the prime minister's statement, issued an administrative circular and imposed a blanket freeze on all land transactions throughout the country without taking recourse to any valid law. After the prime minister's announcement,

six batches of writ petitions were filed in the Supreme Court seeking to declare it null and void. For 12 days, the land freeze was enforced without the authority of valid laws, simply relying on the illegality of the circular. But the government issued an order invoking the power conferred by Section 62 (1) of the Lands Act 2021 (power granting removal of difficulties in enforcing existing law) effecting a partial ban through a gazette notification on August 28.

On August 31, the government was finally able to submit a Land Act Amendment bill in parliament and on same day it issued a fresh order invoking the same law, thereby lifting the land freeze order. But one condition was still imposed: all parties to land transactions were required to furnish a bond indicating their consent to abide by the new land ceiling as provided in the proposed amendment bill.

It is interesting to note that the government announcement came on the same date fixed by the apex court for hearing the six petitions already filed against the land freeze order. As the hearing on the petitions was not completed, the case was postponed for hearing on September 6. On September 3, two of the petitioners had filed another writ petition challenging the order of August 31 which was heard by the court on September 4 and the same was disposed for hearing for hearing on September 20 by another bench of the court.

The special bench headed by Chief Justice Keshab Prasad Upadhyaya, Justices Laxman Prasad Aryal, Kedar Nath Upadhyaya, Krishna Jung Rayamjhi and Govinda Bahadur Shrestha dismissed the writs, but issued an order declaring the bond illegal.

Attorney-General Badri Bahadur Karki argued the case on behalf the government. He pleaded that the prime minister's announcement was merely a policy statement which no law prohibited him from making. More than half a dozen senior advocates and advocates pleaded the case on behalf of the petitioners.

Although the court's decision give certain relief to the citizens, the social and economic tension and trauma generated by Prime Minister Deuba's statement will remain in society. Can the executive, judiciary and legislature inject confidence among the people? ■



## GOVT.-MAOIST ROW

# Hidden Agenda?

In the midst of different priorities of the government and the Maoists, the third round of peace talks looks elusive

By BHGAIRATH YOGI

**A**t a time when international opinion was being mobilized against all kinds of terrorism, pro-Maoist activists in Kathmandu were engaged in vandalizing school property, burning government vehicles and terrorizing the people last week. To register their protest against raids by police and army in different campus hostels in the capital, ANNFSU (Revolutionary) — the student wing of the underground Maoist party — called a week-long closedown of academic institutions in the valley. However, they withdrew their program amid sporadic violent activities the very next day, honoring what they called “popular opinion.”

Although the Maoist activists withdrew their movement temporarily, ostensibly fearing a backlash, Maoist leaders were busy firing verbal missiles. Addressing a mass meeting in Chitwan Friday chief Maoist negotiator, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, warned that the incidents at the Pentagon and World Trade Center towers in the United States could also be repeated in Nepal. “If the government threatens the Maoists, citing the US power, the incident of Pentagon could be repeated at the Narayanhiti palace and Singha Durbar,” claimed the former member of parliament. Saying that the Maoists had not gone to the negotiating table in search of a safe landing (to their movement), Mahara warned the government not to threaten the use of the army against his party. “The ‘people’s militia’ can defeat the Royal Nepalese Army,” he boasted.

Now it was the turn of the Defense Ministry to react to the Maoists’ tirade. In a strongly worded statement issued the same evening, the Defense Ministry, headed by Prime Minister Sher Bahadur

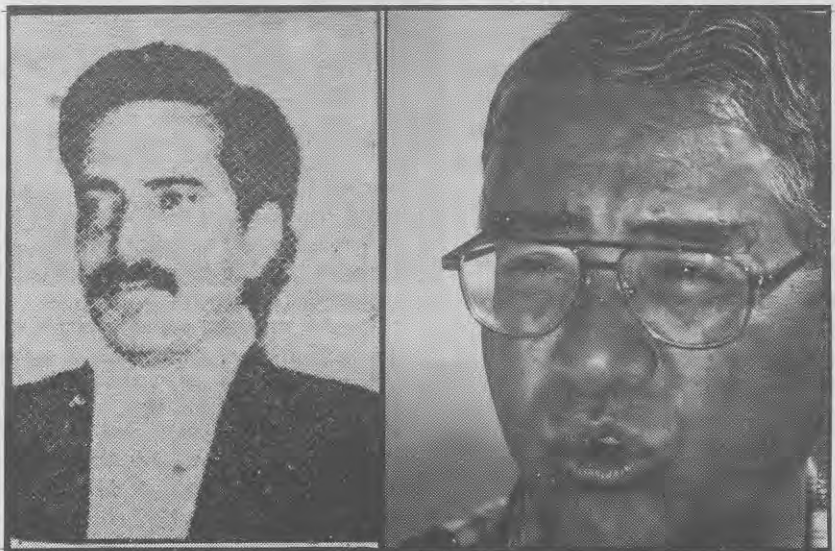
Deuba himself, warned that the security agencies will be forced to take action in accordance with the law if anyone is found indulged in undermining the dignified institution of monarchy or giving unwanted expressions with the idea of undermining the institution or demonstrating weapons at mass meetings or kidnapping people. “The constitutionally guaranteed right to freedom cannot be exercised in ways other than those determined by the existing laws,” the Ministry cautioned.

Premier Deuba, former prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala and senior Congress leaders came down heavily against

mands under pressure from the prime minister and the ruling party,” said Khadka, a powerful minister in the Deuba cabinet. Khadka said two out of the three demands made by the Maoists could not be fulfilled now.

Reports said the Maoists had demanded that the government release all of their cadres, dismantle the Armed Police Force and scrap the Public Security Regulations before the third round of talks take place. “They are still holding 71 policemen and 37 political activists as hostage. Why should we release all of their cadres?” asked Khadka. He also warned that the country could head towards civil war if the Maoists continued their strategy of targeting and killing Nepali Congress workers.

Even after the conclusion of two rounds of talks in less than a month, both sides seem to be sticking to their guns. In their agenda presented to the government in the Bardiya talks early this month, the Maoists called for setting up an interim government, formulating a new constitution and



Prachanda (left) and Deuba: Who is smarter?

the Maoist rebels while addressing the second annual general convention of Nepal Tarun Dal, the youth wing of the ruling party, in Hetauda Saturday. Talking to reporters in Birgunj Sunday, Home Minister Khum Bahadur Khadka said he was not in favor of fulfilling all the demands put forward by the Maoists unilaterally. “I would rather resign than fulfill the de-

institutionalizing the republic. The government negotiators, in their preliminary reaction, brushed aside the Maoist demand for a new constitution and declaring Nepal a republic.

“To say that a desire for a republican state has emerged in the hearts of the Nepali people is a vague idea,” said Narahari Acharya, Nepali Congress leader

and a member of the government's negotiation team. "We have seen a kind of monarchy in the veil of a republican state in countries like Cuba and North Korea. The Maoists should clearly state what their real motive is", said Acharya, addressing an interaction program organized by Press Chautari last week.

UML leader K.P. Sharma Oli was more forthright. "The Maoists are very much clear that they can't turn Nepal into a republic through talks. By agreeing to sit down for negotiations with the government, they have also accepted the constitutional monarchy," said Oli. "The Maoists should now give up their violent ways and join mainstream politics to win popular support."

By organizing huge mass meetings in different parts of the country, Maoists seem to be trying to do exactly that. The Maoist leadership may have understood well that international opinion is against all kind of terrorist activities. By offering all-out support to the US government in its anti-terrorist campaign (See box), the Deuba government may also have tried to send a message to the rebels, say analysts. At the same time, the Indian government's decision to deploy nearly 10,000 security personnel from its elite Secret Services Bureau along the Nepal-India border and its commitment to extend cooperation to the Nepalese government "to control activities of terrorists/criminals and other undesirable elements across the border" may not have gone unnoticed by the Maoist leadership, which has been enjoying a safe haven across the border.

Politically, too, the Maoist game plan to sell the 'republican agenda' to other communist parties has simply failed. Except a couple of ultra-left parties, major communist parties in the country have refused to join hands with the rebels in demanding elections for a constituent assembly and making Nepal a republic. "Such an adventure could force Nepal to lose its sovereignty and democracy," warned Madhav Kumar Nepal, leader of the main opposition UML.

Added Pradip Giri, a Nepali Congress ideologue, "The real agenda of the Maoists is something different that what they are professing. The government should try to

understand that and treat them accordingly."

Chief government negotiator, Chiranjivi Wagle, too, agreed that the Maoists were looking for a safe-landing. But he did not say how that would that happen. Some critics say the radical demands being pursued by the Maoists might end up serving the interests of those whom they say their movement is targeted against. The dismantling of the present constitution would invite unprecedented instability, benefiting only those elements that are adept in fishing in troubled waters, analysts say. "The present constitution is an outcome of the existing power balance and the special geo-political situation of our country," said Nilamber Acharya, a member of the K.P. Bhattarai-

led interim government that drafted the country's democratic constitution in 1990. "The main question today is whether we want to empower the people or weaken them. The Maoists should first of all make clear their attitude toward the historic people's movement of 1990. They should tell the people clearly whether they want to strengthen that constitution or to scrap it."

The feeling that the Maoist agenda has been clearly designed to scrap the present constitution is gaining greater acceptance in public discussions. There is little doubt that such an act might serve the interests of vested interests within and outside the country. It would be tragic if the Nepalese people, who are facing the brunt of the violence over the years, end up as the losers. ■

## FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

# Nepalese Support

### Premier Deuba's statement invites criticism from the united left

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba may not have made a different statement Saturday while talking with a Sri Lankan leader. But it was no less than a policy shift in the country's foreign policy for the left opposition parties. According to Kantipur daily, during his telephone conversation with Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, Laxman Kadirgamar, Deuba said Nepal was ready to provide air space to the United States in its proposed action (against Afghanistan) to curb terrorism. Nepal is also ready to provide 'refueling' facility to the US aircraft, said the premier.

A group of 10 left parties, including the main opposition Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML), flayed Deuba's statement, saying the decision was against Nepal's policy of non-alignment and panchasheel. "It is also against the spirit of the constitution," claimed Lilamani Pokhrel, a United People's Front lawmaker. The left parties insisted that Nepal should not be even indirectly involved in the conflict and demanded that the prime minister withdraw his statement.

Officials, however, insist that the prime minister's statement was only the explanation of the government's stand. "We have considered the recent terrorist attacks in the US as a crime against humanity. And the Nepalese government has already said that it would provide all necessary cooperation to the US government in its fight against terrorism," said Gyan Chandra Acharya, spokesman at the Foreign Ministry.

Addressing parliament Tuesday, Premier Deuba reiterated that Nepal was part of a global coalition against terrorism. "The government will provide all-out support to such initiatives led by the US," he said.

Though there are no reports of the US government seeking any specific assistance from the Nepalese government, the prime minister's statement may have far-reaching consequences both in the domestic front and abroad, say analysts. "While we can't remain aloof from the global campaign against terrorism, we must consider the sensitivities of our neighbors — India and China — before making any such announcement," said Kamal Thapa, a Rastriya Prajatantra Party leader and former foreign minister.

As South Asia has become the center of the global campaign against terrorism, analysts say, Premier Deuba should depute a full-time cabinet minister at Shital Niwas. At the same time, the government should try to develop a consensus among major political parties in the country on a sensitive issue like fighting terrorism. ■



## NEPALI MUSLIMS

# Partisans Of Peace

Muslims in Nepal add their voice to the international outcry against terrorism

By KESHAB POUDEL

**L**ike most of their co-religionists around the world, a large number of Nepali Muslims feel that their religion was hijacked by a group of terrorists to justify their act of killing innocent people and destroying buildings in New York City and Washington DC earlier this month. Their worry is that efforts to link Islam with acts of terrorism in the name of jihad would send the wrong message to the world.

After the devastating terrorist attacks in the two American cities by suspected supporters of Osama bin Ladin, a Saudi-born millionaire, Nepali Muslims were shocked by the efforts of a few individuals to misuse the name of a religion that preaches peace and harmony to kill innocent people.

To express their condolence to the victims of terrorism in the United States, Nepal Jame Masjid, Nepal's Sai Mosque, offered special prayers. Although Muslims represent fewer than six percent of the country's population, they have always maintained close relations with other religious groups.

Nepali Muslims have a long history of living in harmony and tolerance with other religious communities. Having first arrived 300 years ago, Muslims entered Nepal as a traders and traditional medical practitioners. From hills and valleys to the southern plains, a large number of Muslims have been living in Nepal. The mid-western districts of Banke and Kapilvastu, the central districts of Parsa, Bara and Rautahat and the eastern districts of Sunsari

and Saptari in the Terai have fairly high concentrations of Muslims.

"I condemn the terrorist attacks in the United States. Islam is a religion based on tolerance and peace. I don't think any genuine Muslim can kill innocent people in the name of religion. All Nepali Muslims are against terrorism," said Nepali Congress MP and former minister Mohammed Aftab Alam. "One cannot justify terrorism by invoking the name of God."

Others members of the community share Alam's outrage at the way terrorism

was being justified in the name of Islam. "We Muslims in Nepal were profoundly shocked by what we saw on television," said Niyaz Ahamed, Principal of Madarsa Islamiya School run under the management of Nepalese Jame Masjid. "No one can support terrorist acts committed by a handful of individuals in the name of religion."

The largest mosque organized special prayers for the victims of the World Trade Center twin towers and Pentagon bombings of September 11. With the restoration of multiparty democracy 12 years ago, there has been a surge in the number of mosques and madarsas (Islamic religious schools) in the country. Several Arab states, including Saudi Arabia, are supporting the mosques and madarsas. Although a large number of Muslim clerics have grown up in moderate school of thought, officials say they cannot rule out the possibility of penetration by militants.

In her article in the November-December 2000 issue of Foreign Affairs, Jessica Stern, a lecturer in public policy at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and Adjunct Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, says Pakistani militant groups are now exporting their version of Jihad all over the world. The Khudamudeen madarsa, according to its chancellor, is training students from Burma, Nepal, Chechnya, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Yemen, Mongolia and Kuwait. It also trains students from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russia and Turkey.

"Nepal does not have Shia Muslims. Almost all Muslims here represent the Sunni sect," said Ahamed. "Islam does not teach hatred against other religions or people of any particular country. The killing of innocent people is not Jihad."

Although the Muslim population in Nepal is very small, they are very anxious to see the nature and scope of the response of the United States, which has called on countries of the world to act against international terrorism. ■



Nepalese Muslims : Shocked by terrorism

## CHILDREN

# Yearnings Of The Young

A consortium of organizations working for children's welfare strives to give them a voice in the preparation of plans and policies

By AKSHAY SHARMA

The Save the Children's alliance with a consortium of organizations working with children clubs in Nepal organized National Children's Fair in Kathmandu last week to help the young have a say in the way programs meant for them are drawn up and implemented.

"The fair is aimed at bringing a large number of children representing all the regions of the country who are in difficult circumstances and at risk but involved in making their situation better. They will interact with Nepal's delegates to the UN

cancellation," UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a statement. "The issue is still very much with us. I think we should stay the course, and adopt a concrete agenda for action for this decade."

Save the Children alliance together with the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare as well as UNICEF, PLAN International and NGOs is actively involved in promoting the Global Movement for Children (GMC) and the UN special session.

Alliance members are supporting and actively involved in organizing activities with children in Nepal to promote the

government, non-government organizations and children's groups. There was an interaction between children and the Nepalese delegates during the fair.

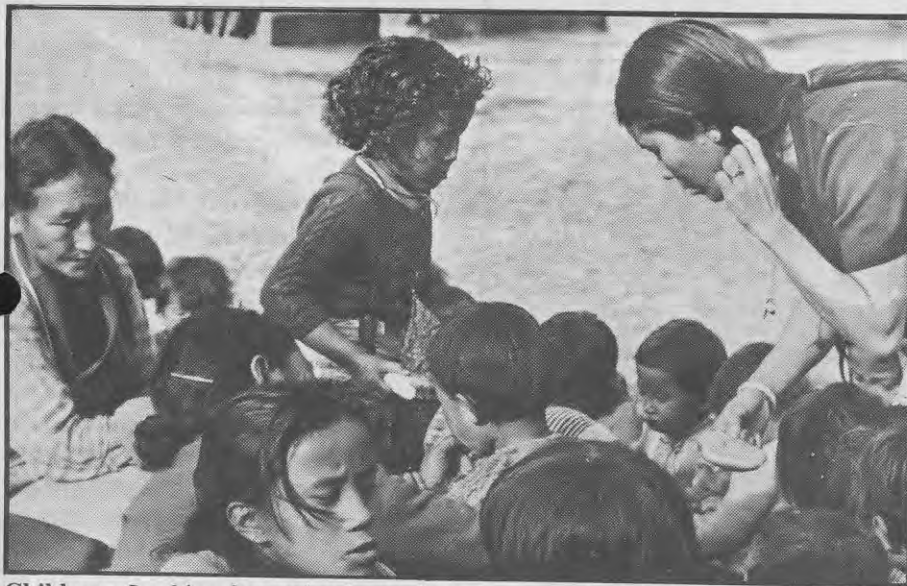
The program is expected to make the delegates, media and the people more aware about Nepalese children's issues and concerns. The fair is also specifically expected to help the delegates to present the perspectives of the Nepalese children at the UN special session.

It is also expected to help civil society to create direct and indirect pressure for the well-being of children. Although this fair may not have a direct impact on the outcome of the final UN document, it was aimed at providing children the opportunity to influence the 10th Plan of Nepal and the country's plan of action on children for the next decade. Another aim is to create a base for establishing and strengthening better accountability of government bodies to children.

There is a consortium of non-government organizations working directly with children's groups and clubs in Nepal. Each member is working directly with children groups on various issues. Save the Children alliance members have been working in partnership with children's groups for various specific purpose, such as the Bhutanese refugee children, slum children, protection from HIV/AIDS, children in conflict with the law and disabled children.

The post-fair activities in Kathmandu will include interaction with the delegates after the special session, where the children will be able to hear from the delegates what happened in New York, learn what commitment they made, find out what their next steps will be, as well as to question them on regard to the points of interest to the children. All the children's groups participating in the fair may not have chance to interact with delegates directly, but mechanisms should be developed to update and inform them.

The children's groups will go back to their respective districts and interact with the District Child Welfare Committees (DCWC) about their issues, concerns and agenda. A plan describing "what, how and when" will be made among the children and the DCWCs to influence the national action plan as well as programs of their respective districts. ■



**Children :** Looking forward to better future

General Assembly's Special Session on Children, government officials, private sector representatives, children, non-government organizations, UN agencies and the public," said Anil Raghuvanshi of Save The Children, UK.

The session, which was scheduled to be held in New York from September 19 to 21, was postponed after the recent terrorist attacks in New York and Washington. "This is only a postponement, not a

GMC before, during and after UN session. The aim is to create a strong impact on the national policies and making Nepalese children's voice heard in the international fora.

The children's fair is a foundation stone involving children's groups coming from the different parts of Nepal to especially to influence the Nepali delegates to the UN special session. The Nepalese delegation will include representatives of the



## IMF REPORT

# Stragglng Along

Although there are foreboding conditions, Nepal seems to be managing to walk the tight rope, the IMF report indicates

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

The recent meeting of the executive board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has expressed satisfaction over the macroeconomic performance of the Nepalese economy during the past two years, despite the country's difficult political circumstances.

"Growth was accelerating, inflation was declining, and international reserves remained at a comfortable level," observed the report, prepared after the conclusion of

below 4 percent during the following year, with abundant food supplies offsetting the effects of higher energy prices.

The report also expresses satisfaction over the reserves despite the declines in capital transfers and foreign direct investment. Aided by strong exports and increased remittances, gross official reserves reached \$US 946 million in 1999/2000 and \$1014 million in 2000/01, equivalent to five months of imports in both years.

It further noted that the fiscal performance was generally favorable, with the

Nepal's primary goal has been to achieve and sustain higher levels of growth. "However, growth has been impeded by weak infrastructure, low saving and investment rates, fiscal constraints and inefficient public resource management," observed the report.

The financial performance of public sector enterprises continued to be disappointing, with virtually no progress on their privatization, reads the assessment by the executive board.

The executive board urged the authorities to continue the process of streamlining the civil service and prioritizing public expenditures. It highlighted the urgency addressing the balance sheet problems of the two largest banks — Nepal Bank Limited and Rastriya Banijya Bank — noting that their recapitalization would need to be preceded by proper restructuring under the new management.

The board also noted the need to strengthen revenue mobilization and improve the targeting of budget allocations so as to allow for higher social spending. It recommended the authorities to take steps to improve the liquidity of official reserves, and to lower excess liquidity in the banking system and contain central bank financing of the budget.

The board also encouraged the Nepalese authorities to maintain an open trade and investment regime and access to world markets.

"Based on the report assessment we can say that Nepal is not in crisis right now nor is it at the edge of such crisis. But it has not been able to put together effective policies because of political instability, Maoist threat and so on," said Lawrence Demilner, Resident Representative of the IMF in Kathmandu.

The report is prepared after the visit by staff team of IMF, usually every year. The team collects economic and financial information, and holds discussions with officials. It submits the report for discussion by the Executive Board.

There are 184 member countries of the IMF. Presently, Nepal belongs to a constituency represented by Thailand in the Executive Board. The present assessment is based on the summary of the views of the Executive Board as expressed during the August 31, 2001 Executive Board discussion. ■



**Rastriya Banijya Bank : Acute need for reform**

the 2001 Article IV Consultation with Nepal.

Overall real GDP growth (at market prices) surged from 4.5 percent in 1998/99 (fiscal year ending July 15) to 6.5 percent in 1999/2000, led by improved agricultural performance and strong exports. Growth is expected to have eased to 5.5 percent in 2000/01, owing to the dampening effects of higher oil prices and a marked decline in tourism due to domestic disturbances. Consumer price inflation fell to under 1 percent in the 12 months to mid-2000 and remained

overall deficit declining to 4.75 percent of GDP in 1999/2000. However, the deficit rose to 6.75 percent of GDP in 2000/01, owing to a significant overrun in the current expenditure budget, even though domestic revenues remained close to the budget target.

Apart from the above rosy assessment, the report also noted some disappointing developments in the country's economic sector, particularly in the area of structural reforms. In order to alleviate poverty,

## WORLD TOURISM DAY

# Risky Ritualism

Nepal observes World Tourism Day by organizing ritual programs

By A CORRESPONDENT

Misery, as they say, does not come alone. Nepal's tourism sector has faced a series of miseries in the aftermath of the mysterious hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight 814 from Kathmandu in December 1999. The decline in tourist arrivals began after Indian Airlines abruptly suspended its flights for several months.

The tourism industry was yet to recover from that battering when a series of other incidents virtually devastated the sector. In the beginning of 2001, the tourism industry was on the road to recovery following the plunge in the number of arrivals the previous year. However, an upsurge in political disturbances, the growth and ferocity of the Maoist insurgency and the June 1 massacre in the royal palace brought more bad news.

June and July witnessed the lowest tourist arrivals in recent times, with August seeing some improvements. After the second week of August, when Nepalese hoteliers checked bookings for September, October and November, they heaved a collective sigh of relief.

That was premature. After the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC, Nepal's tourism industry is again on the precipice of disaster. More than 20 percent of US travelers have canceled their trips to Nepal. Tour operators expect more cancellations in the days ahead. According to Tourism Ministry figures,

more than 45,000 tourists visited Nepal last year. At a time when the sector desperately needs to see that figure go up, the prognosis is gloomy.

The fall in the number of American tourists in the coming season will drastically affect the recovery of the industry. As the number of US tourists coming through the Pacific region has been going down, the tension in the Afghanistan and military build-up in the Persian Gulf region against the Taliban in the aftermath

of the terror attacks will reduce arrivals coming through the European sector. At a time when the national flag carrier's withdrawal from the European sector has already created a chaotic situation, any action in Afghanistan may deal a decisive blow to the flow of tourists into Nepal.

"Everyone realizes how important a role the national flag carrier can play during times of crisis. We have made a blunder by suspending flights on the European sector," said Rabindra Man Singh, president of Nepal Freight Forwarders Association and managing director of Everest De Cargo.

Amid this grim scenario, what initiatives will policy makers take to increase the number of tourists from other parts of the world, including India. If Nepal steps up special programs to attract Indian tourists and signs a formal agreement with China on payment modalities for Chinese tourists, Nepal's situation could improve and the sector could expect to recover soon.

Nepal Tourism Board has launched special programs to attract Indian tourists and has organized local festivals to mobilize domestic tourism. These may have some positive impact. Despite the cancellation of flights on the European sector, Royal Nepal Airlines has increased the frequency of its services to India and other Asian cities.

Industry watchers believe more needs to be done. "The government needs to announce many packages to encourage foreign tourists, including the granting of free visas for visitors and open sky for airlines," says Prasadha Bahadur Pandey, managing director of Shangri-La Hotel.

Nepal has been celebrating World Tourism Day for the last many years as a ritual. A business-as-usual approach cannot help the country come up with concrete plans and programs to shore up such a vital sector. ■



Tourists at TIA : Welcoming the arrival



POLITICAL CRISIS

# Culture Of Instability At The Core

Nepal has experienced periodic bouts of political instability in its five-decade journey toward modernization and democratization. Political crises have deepened every time demands for amending the constitution have been raised. With Nepalis passing through an unprecedented phase of uncertainty in the midst of a six-year-old bloody Maoist insurgency, only sustained steps to ensure political stability can help restore confidence in the people. The solidarity shown by American politicians and people following the deadly terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC provides a valuable lesson in managing crisis in a democratic set-up. Are our leaders paying attention?

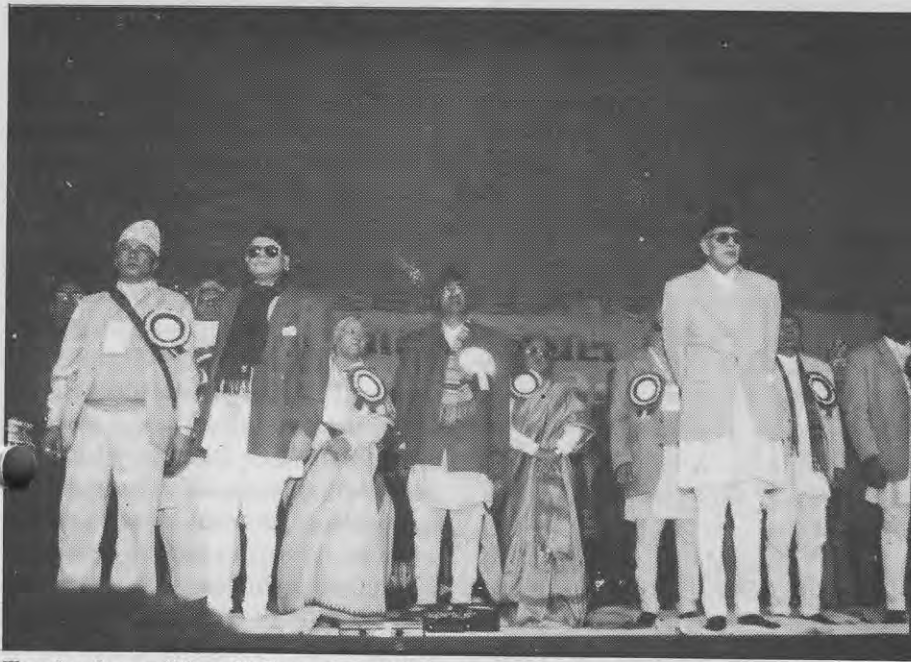
By KESHAB POUDEL

**A**s the United States, the world's sole surviving superpower, is gradually recovering from the trauma inflicted by the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington DC through the proper functioning of its institutions, Nepal's politicians are pushing the country into another round of turmoil by de-

manding amendments to the constitution. Although the pace of the discussions has slowed after the tragic events in the United States, it seems certain that institutions in Nepal will be shaken once the global situation stabilizes.

Experience has amply shown that events in a big country like the United States redirect the course of world history. The tragic events in New York City and Washington DC are bound to have lasting

implications in the world, particularly in a country like Nepal where instability does not loosen its grip even at moments of national crisis. Nepalese politicians have almost perfected the art of obstructing the consolidation of the democratic system. Instead, they relish pushing the country into further chaos by demanding the resignation of politicians and officials instead of strengthening their hands in dealing with crisis.



**Top leaders of Nepali Congress :** Visionary leadership required

Interestingly, no one in the US opposition, media or public has demanded the resignation of President George W. Bush or any other official in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks. Neither have Americans blamed defects in their constitution.

Instead, the American people have reaffirmed that democracy is the only system of government in which the administration can count on and get unstinting support for the protection and preservation of the country's interest during times of crisis. Do Nepalese politicians have the time to heed this lesson of unity and bring stability in the country by suspending petty political interests? All available evidence shows that few Nepalese politicians have the time or inclination.

#### **Unstable Mind and Unstable Politics**

Over the last 50 years, politicians and intellectuals have firmly held the view that amendments to or replacement of the existing constitution are the best ways to tackle the country's political, economic and social problems. Today's political establishment have upheld that tradition. From the ruling Nepali Congress to the main opposition CPN-UML and from intellectuals to professionals, no one is ready to acknowledge that frequent tampering with the constitution would prove costly to the nation. Why do politicians blame

the constitution when the fault actually lies with them and their parties? What Nepal is facing today is a direct result of political upheaval of the 1990. Had the constitution of the day been allowed to run with certain modifications, the institutions might have yielded better results and ensured relative stability in the country.

"If the government cannot deliver the goods to the people, it is only natural to see voices of discontent being raised," says Professor Dhruva Kumar, of Tribhuvan University's Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies. "The politicians have failed to perform their role and some changes are needed in the present process."

Recent statements of Nepalese political leaders and intellectuals shows that they seem to be more interested in pushing the country into another phase of instability without comprehending the social and political consequences. All political leaders seem to be prepared to amend the constitution, ignoring the wider ramifications that would rock political and social processes more violently than the six-year Maoist insurgency.

Consolidation of democracy depends on the roles of various political actors, the attitudes of the people, and successful economic development. However, one cannot overlook the fact that democracy

primarily rests on a concept of constitutional unity.

"Amending the constitution is the only way to preserve it," says former minister Nilamber Acharya. "There are some articles that need to be replaced," says Acharya, who was a minister in the interim government that approved the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990.

Strangely, politicians and intellectuals, who are neither constitutional experts nor regular political workers, are arguing in favor of amending the constitution with insufficient preparation and without a clear idea of which articles they want to change. The recent parliamentary debate on the bill concerning the Commission of Investigation of Abuse of Authority shows how ill advised Nepalese politicians are about the value of an independent judiciary and the freedom of the individual.

#### **Consolidation of the System**

Nepal's primary challenges today are the consolidation of the political process and the strengthening of institutions that have become non-functional because of influences exerted by forces that are more powerful than politicians. However, nobody seems willing to go into the root causes of the malaise.

The consolidation of the political system requires continuity in the constitutional process. Only through stability in the political system can the country expect to overcome its multiple challenges. The United States has been able to normalize the situation within a short period of time because all political parties and the American people have rallied behind President Bush. Had such a tragedy hit Nepal, the first thing most Nepalese politicians would have done was demand the resignation of the prime minister and other officials and call for the enactment of a new constitution. "It is standard practice in Nepal to blame politicians, the government and the constitution for any happening or non-happening in particular points of time," says a political analyst.

Democracy in Nepal presents a confusing picture, as if it is a system to demand everything at any time. Those who do not follow the mass hysteria whipped up by politicians are easily designated as



anti-democrats. A democratic government is largely dependent on the leadership qualities of politicians for the process of consolidation, structure of civil society and political and other institutions. As they are still in the process of evolving in Nepal, the cycle of confusion and chaos continues to run faster.

Frequent calls for amending the constitution or its outright abrogation would destabilize the institutions and prolong the debility. Only mature and stable institutions can help the country overcome the crises it faces. More than 50 years after the overthrow of the oligarchic Rana regime, the economic and political record of Nepal offers an ambivalent picture. Nepal has not made any effort to build institutions nor drawn up any concrete proposal for economic development because leaders have been preoccupied with political infighting and maneuvering in the pursuit of power.

#### Strength of Institutions

Even after such tragic incidents in the United States, the situation has stabilized because mature institutions have helped to apprehend the crisis. As political institutions have become so sturdy and resilient, they have supported all presidents with the same breadth and strength. Be it Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, Franklin Delano Roosevelt during World War II or George W. Bush today, American institutions have rallied to the support of all presidents in times of need.

Instead of moving to consolidate the country's institutions through unity of purpose, political leaders in Nepal are seeking to replace the constitution. "It is unfortunate that nobody is defending the existing constitution," says senior advocate Mukunda Regmi, who was a member of the panel that drafted the basic law. "At a time when the world's sole super power is calling for global support to eliminate the menace of terrorism, our political leaders are in a race to amend the constitution."

Experiments in other countries have shown that a period of constitutional sta-

bility is needed to consolidate and build institutions. The needless debate generated by political leaders of all ideological hues has further shaken institutions like the judiciary and bureaucracy. "Their style of functioning is one that would precipitate complete breakdown, as nobody knows what will happen next," says a senior bureaucrat.

To confront the crisis and find a solution, Nepal should work to build stable institutions, which can function independently. Unfortunately, all institutions seem to have been shaken one after another in the last five years, mostly out of political expediency. From the family to political organs and from the security apparatus to the judiciary, all institutions have been badly bruised. No one is certain what role



**Common people :** Poverty is nobody's priority

they would be able to play in times of need.

"Political leaders are calling for amending the constitution without understanding the basic elements of the constitution," says a political analyst. "They have not bothered to explain to the people which articles of the constitution need to be amended and what obstacles the existing articles have created in the process of democratization."

It seems that major political parties have already agreed informally to amend

the constitution despite palpable hostility within their ranks. Former prime minister and senior Nepali Congress leader Krishna Prasad Bhattarai has, however, openly challenged these calls, stressing the need to follow the letter and spirit of the constitution. "The constitution does not need to be amended now. It should be allowed to function properly for another 30 years," Bhattarai, who headed the interim government that approved the constitution, said last week.

As all major political leaders, including his party colleagues, are demanding amendments to the constitution, Bhattarai's voice seems to be in the minority. Hence, no one seems to take it seriously. "We don't have to hesitate to amend the constitution as long as we preserve its basic essence," says Arjun Narsingh K.C, a powerful member of the ruling party. "I don't think that amending the constitution would bring any political instability in the country."

As the government and Maoist insurgents are engaged in negotiations to find a way of ending the violent insurgency, political parties have found it convenient to raise public discussions on the need for amending the constitution. However, no political leader has a clue about which clauses and articles need to be amended in an effort to accommodate the Maoists and make the political set-up more responsive to the needs and aspirations of the people.

"There is a need to amend the constitution and our party is ready to change every article and clause except the four unchangeable provisions," says Bharat Mohan Adhikary, chief whip of the CPN-UML and an architect of the current constitution. "If we amend the constitution, the situation will improve automatically." Although Adhikary's party has already endorsed proposals to amend the constitution, he does not have valid reasons to show why his party has demanded those changes.

As the United States is calling for global solidarity to fight against terrorism, Nepalese politicians seem to be more con-

cerned about the raising what are essentially non-issues and further destabilizing existing state structures that could play into the hands of agitators and anarchists.

### Wish Unfulfilled

Every Nepali had high hopes of an improvement in quality of life in the beginning of the new millennium. But Nepal found itself gripped in great trauma even before the beginning of the new millennium because of assorted crimes of violence and terrorism that spread across parts of the country. According to the World Bank and the United Nation Development Program (UNDP), Nepal is still one of the poorest and least developed countries of the world. As per capita income hovers around US\$ 200 and social development is insufficient, Nepal ranks at the lowest rungs of the UNDP's Human Development Index.

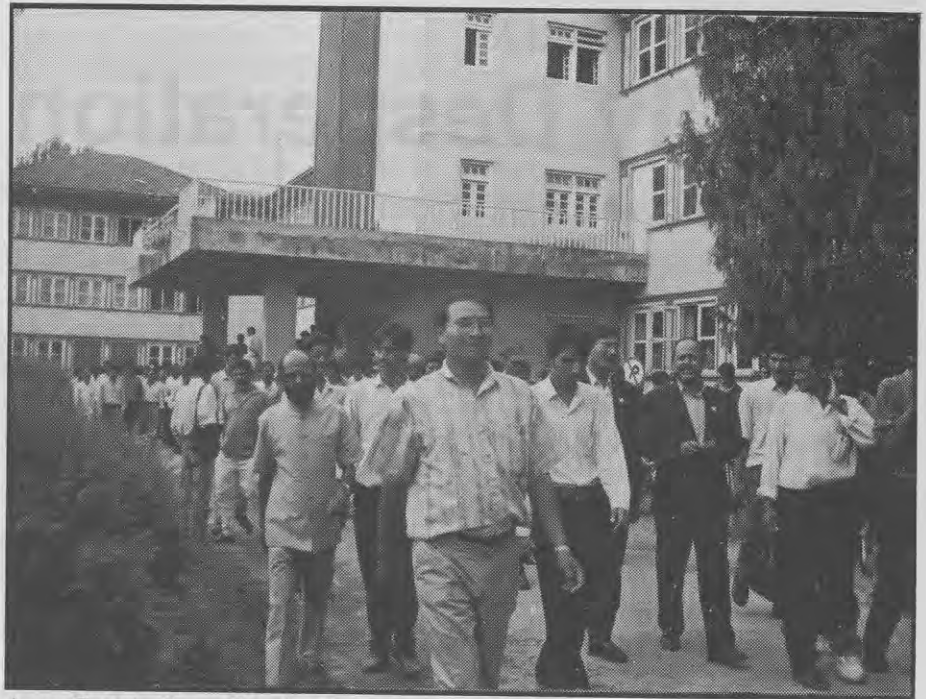
Despite their enormous social and economic problems, Nepalis have not lost their zeal for democracy. More than 60 percent of the registered voters cast their ballots in the last five elections, a turnout higher than in many industrialized democracies of the West.

President Bush's call for a global alliance against terrorism has generated some hope for peace among Nepalis, but their quest to overcome poverty is obstructed by the turmoil their leaders are fostering deliberately or otherwise.

The country's political, economic, legal and sociological structures have been passing through a phase of great convulsion. The long spell of instability has made the miserable conditions of the people worse. The country has seen Nepalis killing each other, which is against its traditional culture of tolerance and harmony.

In the last six years of the Maoist insurgency, more than 2,000 Nepalis have lost their lives, but the world's civilized and democratic community failed to take sufficient notice. While a few official statements against violence and for peace were issued in some foreign capitals, lawlessness continued to flare up in different parts of Nepal.

Suddenly, the world has changed in a most tragic but dramatic manner after what happened in New York City and Washington DC. The fight against terror-



**Apex Court :** Strengthen institution

ism is not a matter of concern only for Americans but for the whole world.

The events of September 11, 2001 have redefined international relations in a profound way. The conflicts of the past were mainly between competing interests of states. Now fanatically inflamed terrorism has come in the garb of religion. Religion has been hijacked to promote the dreams of fanatics.

This reorientation is bound to affect Nepalese politics in ways that may not be fully understood today. Nepalis need to understand that when highly developed democracies seem to be helpless in the face of shadowy enemies, Nepal cannot isolate itself from the evolving global scenario. However, pointless arguments on non-issues would only serve to prolong instability. "This constitution has everything in it to bring change in society as the country is yet to fully implement and exercise constitutional provisions," says senior advocate Regmi. "I don't think the time has come to amend the constitution."

Politicians need to consolidate the current system as revolutionary slogans of a bygone era cannot feed, nurture and educate children nor ensure a safe and secure life. The greater the political instability, the larger the scale of problems the people would have to face.

After various experiments over four decades, a democratic constitution exists in Nepal today with clear provisions guaranteeing the rights of the people. As long as the right to elect representatives to parliament remains guaranteed and an independent judiciary exists to interpret the laws of parliament, the people will remain decision-makers of their fate.

These provisions exist to prove that Nepal has a democratic alternative to meet any kind of challenge it faces. Unfortunately, politicians with substantial strength in parliament ignore this vitality of democracy and are carried away by easy ploys of populism.

As every country needs political stability and consolidation of the system, will the debate over amending the constitution benefit the country? The constitution is a mean to create a system of institutions and infrastructure of governance. Nepal has that kind of constitution. The task is now to adhere faithfully to the provisions of the constitution and consolidate the gains the country has made. Nepalese politicians actually should have been leading informed discussions on ways of building institutions, fulfilling the needs of the people and decentralizing power to local communities in the process of democratic consolidation. ■



## SUICIDE SQUADS

**Deadly Desperation**

Terrorism draws strength from a deepening sense of individual despair mixed with fanatic faith in a cause

By AKSHAY SHARMA

**T**he September 11 attacks in New York City and Washington DC—the worst terrorist assaults in human history—was brutal in its scale and impact. The United States swiftly announced an all-out war on terrorism, carefully building a broad international coalition.

While the images transmitted around the world on that fateful morning brought to life the wildest fancies from Tom Clancy thrillers, the aftermath has prompted a new look at the phenomenon of suicide-terrorism and ways of confronting it.

“Whereas it is certainly not possible yet, to create an acceptable definition of terrorism, it is both possible and necessary to specify certain features to the phenomenon,” says Cindy C. Combs in “Twenty-first Century Terrorism”.

The Japanese air force organized kamikaze suicide squadrons in the last months of World War II. Pilots flew their aircraft loaded with explosives directly into US naval vessels. Kamikaze pilots, sacrificing their lives in a last-ditch effort to stop the American advance, sank about 40 US ships. Most modern terrorist groups draw strength from this mixture of an individual’s willingness to die for a cause he or she deems nobles.

“The terrorists, are often than not, seem to be succeeding in pushing the government in a no-win situation. Unsure about how to respond to the challenges posed by terrorism, the government has been unable to prevent the situation from deteriorating,” writes Ved Marwah in “Uncivil Wars.” “Unfortunately, there are popular misconceptions about what needs to be done. General ignorance of the nature of terrorism and what motivated the terrorists is not limited to media persons and unformed citizens. Even our political leaders

and so-called ‘security experts’ are often unaware of all the facts about terrorism and terrorist acts,” says Marwah, a former director-general of the National Security Guards of India.

He adds, “The authorities have a different and an inevitable task. But that does not justify their reluctance to discuss the issues and learn from their past mistakes. There can be more than one view about how a particular situation should be handled, but an informed public opinion is the surest safe guard against wrong policy decisions and their faulty implementation.”

The US State Department currently designates seven world governments as state sponsors of terrorism. Though most no longer engage directly in terrorist activity themselves, they may support terrorist groups by providing funding, arms, or other material support; or by providing training, logistical support, sanctuary, or diplomatic facilities. The United States employs a wide variety of economic and other sanctions to pressure states into discontinuing their support for terrorism. In some (but not all) cases, allied states or the United Nations may impose sanctions, as well. In the early 1900s Austrian psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud developed some of the first psychological theo-

ries of suicide. He emphasized the role of hostility turned against the self. American psychiatrist Karl Menninger elaborated on Freud’s ideas. He suggested that all suicides have three interrelated and unconscious dimensions: revenge/hate (a wish to kill), depression/hopelessness (a wish to die), and guilt (a wish to be killed).

An American psychologist considered a pioneer in the modern study of suicide, Edwin Schneidman, has described several common characteristics of suicides. These include a sense of unbearable psychological pain, a sense of isolation from others, and the perception that death is the only solution to problems about which one feels hopeless and helpless. Cognitive theorists, who study how people process information, emphasize the role of inflexible thinking or tunnel vision (“life is awful, death is the only alternative”) and an inability to generate solutions to problems.

According to psychologists, many suicide attempts are symbolic cries for help, an effort to reach out and receive attention. When this sense of deepening despair enters the shadowy underworld of international terror, it creates a recipe for almost limitless disaster. Groups with diverse, even opposing, ideologies and differing goals often help each other when

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&  
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rooms

they share a common enemy. While a terrorist act may be over in a matter of minutes, the planning and the coordination of such an event may take years.

Despite their ideological differences, Middle Eastern terrorist organizations participated in two international summits — in Beirut, Lebanon, and Teheran, Iran — in the year before the September 11 attacks, intelligence experts say. Two Palestinians, Musa Abu Marzouq, of Hamas, and Ramadham Abdullah Shallah of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, organized the conferences, which were called “The Jerusalem Project”.

“Unlike the soldier, the guerrilla fighter, or the revolutionist, the terrorist... is always in the paradoxical position of undertaking actions the immediate physical consequences of which are not particularly desired by him,” says terrorism expert David Fromlin. “An ordinary person may kill someone because he wants the person to be dead, but the terrorist will shoot down everybody/somebody even though it is a matter of complete indifference to him whether the person lives or dies.” That is what makes the war on terrorism at once scary and necessary. ■

## Snooker Challenge 2001

Surya Tobacco Company is organizing “Surya Nepal Snooker Challenge 2001” from September 24 to October 14. “Our maiden venture, the First Surya Nepal Snooker Challenge, was a grand success and our commitment to make the event a pan-Nepal championship will now be realized with our second championships,” Ravi Raj Aryal told reporters on behalf of the Surya Tobacco Company.

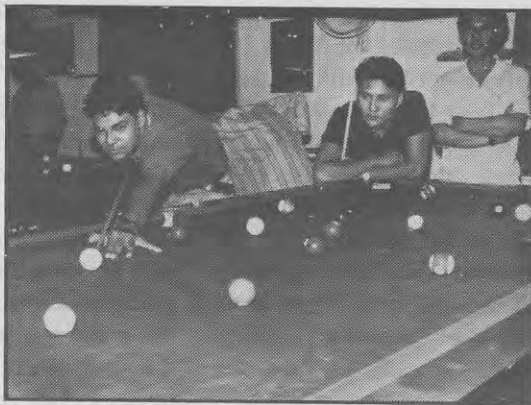
The prize money has been increased three times, reaching a whopping Rs 530,000. The tournament is being organized jointly by the Surya Tobacco Company and the Billiards Snooker and Pool Association of Nepal (BSPAN) and is also supported by the Cosmos Solarium.

The preliminary rounds are to be held across the 28 parlors in the cities of Kathmandu, Pokhara, Narayanghat, Butwal, Dharan, Birgunj, Itahari and Biratnagar. The finals shall be held at the Lainchaur Covered Hall in Kathmandu. The qualifying rounds will be completed by October 1 and the final rounds are to commence from October 7.

The turnout is expected to exceed 1,000. Participants will compete with themselves over 20 days with the winner getting richer by over Rs 75,000 plus a certificate and a trophy. The runner-up will take home Rs 50,000 and the second runner-up Rs 25,000 respectively along with trophies and certificates. The player securing the highest breaks in the final rounds will win a prize of Rs 25,000. Winners in the qualifying stage and the runner up will take along with them Rs. 6,000 and Rs 4,000 respectively.

Two players will qualify from each of the venues for the final round and they will compete among themselves with the eight seeded players in the BSPAN order of merit.

“We will continue to strive to make the tournament international by ensuring that all specifications are per international standards,” said Aryal.



**Snooker** : Gaining popularity

## NINTH SAF POSTPONED

The Ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) games have been postponed indefinitely after the host nation, Pakistan, called off the games in the wake of impending US retaliatory attack against Afghanistan. Slated to take place between October 6-15 in Islamabad, the games were expected to draw over 1,6000 sportspersons from the SAARC region. The National Sports Council (NSC) was preparing to send a 213-member strong delegation, including 157 athletes, to the Islamabad games.

The government had already sanctioned the budget for the participation. The NSC estimated that it would spend a total of Rs 36.6 million for participating in the games. The games might be convened in the next six months, officials hoped. The games is held every two years and is participated by all seven members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation — Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

The 14-disciplines of games that were to be played in Pakistan included athletics, boxing, football, kabaddi, karate, shooting, swimming, table-tennis, taekwondo, volleyball, weight-lifting, wrestling, badminton and squash.

The Nepalese athletes had been in close-camp training for the games. Some players had been sent abroad for training. Taekwondo players were sent to Bangkok, whereas karate players were in Iran. Boxers were sent to Pakistan. ■



# 'INGOs Should Work In Areas That Are Of Interest To The Country'

—Dr. TIKA POKHAREL

*Dr. TIKA POKHAREL is the member-secretary of the Social Welfare Council (SWC). The council is responsible for giving affiliations to non-governmental organizations (NGO) in the country. Dr. Pokharel spoke to KESHAB POUDEL and SANJAYA DHAKAL on various issues concerning the NGO sector. Excerpts:*

## **How many NGOs are currently affiliated to the SWC and which areas are they involved in?**

There are 12,600 NGOs and 103 INGOs presently affiliated to the SWC. They are the real NGOs. The council gives affiliation to only real NGOs, not to spurious ones. There is one big problem with the act. The act does not give us the right to register such organizations. They are registered by the District Administration Office (DAO). The DAO registers any type of organization — profit-making institutions, clubs and all. This has led to confusion among the people that all these organizations are NGOs. But these are not, we simply cannot term profit-making institutions as NGOs. Take for instance boozing clubs, which have no other objective than drinking alcohol. We cannot call them NGOs. We have certain criteria to define NGOs and we give affiliation to only those that conform to them.

## **What is the definition of an NGO, then?**

Four things determine whether the organization is an NGO. First, the institution should not be profit making. Second, it should be aloof from political activities. Third, it should be development-oriented. Fourth, it should be fully democratic, that is, it should run according to democratic norms. Any organization that does not fulfil these four criteria cannot be considered an NGO.

## **What contributions have NGOs made to the country's development?**

The NGOs have lent real and visible contributions to the country's development. There is a misconception among the masses that all NGOs are bad or corrupt. They have reached this conclusion by comparing the behavior of some DAO-registered organizations that are involved in bad practices. But if one looks at the grass-root level, if something good is happening there, that is because of NGOs. Whether it is vegetable farming — now there are many pockets in the country where this is growing tremen-

dously — or community forestry, public awareness-raising campaigns or the loan/saving programs, NGOs have seeped into villages with their noble programs. If one studies the health sector, out of the 17 eye hospitals, 16 are run by NGOs. Look at the Dhulikhel hospital and the Banepa children hospital, they have set high standard. So, it is necessary to look at the grass-roots level to get an idea of how NGOs are helping in the country's development.

## **Which sectors are most NGOs concentrated on?**

Community development seems to be the sector on which most NGOs are concentrated. We have divided it into 10 sector for our convenience, including community development, women, children, HIV/AIDS and so on.

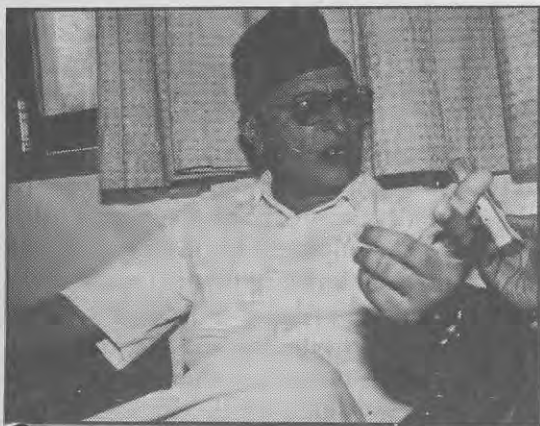
## **It is charged that most NGOs limit their work in and around cities and do not venture into rural areas. Is that true?**

It is not true. People level this charge because most NGOs are registered in Kathmandu or other cities. But they work in rural areas. In fact, NGOs only get money if they agree to work in, say, Humla or Jumla. Nobody gives them money to work in cities. So, this is a false charge.

## **While one set of NGOs affiliated to the SWC may be doing their job well, there are others who are not under the umbrella of the council and who are wasting resources by organizing seminars in five-star hotels on topics that may not be of priority to the country. Is there any way they can be controlled?**

We have started to regularize them. A few years ago, when the SWC was not active, people from such organizations were pleased. They used to receive money in the name of some NGO or say child welfare, and ended up riding sleek vehicles and engaged in business. But this practice has been stopped now, leading many people to criticize me. They think the council is obstructing them. The council is on its way to managing the sector. Now no INGO can give money directly to an NGO without seeking permission from the council. This will ensure transparency on how much money has come from different sources and where it is going to be utilized. Besides, NGOs have to fulfil such requirements as submission of annual reports and audit

*Take for instance boozing clubs, which have no other objective than drinking alcohol. We cannot call them NGOs.*



reports to be able to receive money from INGOs. This is ultimately going to make the NGO sector run in accordance with the law. And this very thing has irked a section of NGOs, which, like you pointed, are busy only organizing seminars in hotels. But real NGOs working at the grass-root level have welcomed these provisions.

**What is the level of financial contributions of INGOs to the country?**

The budget commitment of the INGOs, as per their agreement with us, stands at Rs 2.4 billion for fiscal year 2057/58 as compared to Rs 1.45 billion for the year 2056/57. It is increasing.

**Do you think INGOs should spend their resources here in accordance with their interest or should they do so in sectors that are of interest to Nepal?**

They should do it in the sector that is of interest Nepal.

**Do you think this is happening?**

It is not happening to a certain extent. Of late, the major part of the resources that come here through INGOs is being spent in the areas of our interest. That is because, since last four years, they have not been allowed to go directly in the field. Previously, they used to work on their own here and it was not always clear which areas they were involved in. Now, they have to go into implementation with local partners only. Furthermore, local NGOs have to submit their proposals at the SWC to receive such help. So, we can study their proposals and ask them to go ahead if it is in our interest. If the proposal is not in our interest, we tell them so. As far as NGOs that are not affiliated to us are concerned, the council can do nothing. They are in the field as per the agreements with different ministries. I don't think the ministries are in position to minutely probe how they are working.

**How many INGOs are working outside your framework and in accordance with agreements with the ministries?**

I guess there are 15 to 20 INGOs still working based on their agreements with the ministries. There is a stark need to bring all NGOs under a single umbrella of the SWC. The SWC Act also envisages this and so does the Ninth Plan document. This kind of uncoordinated approach will only invite anarchy in the sector. I have asked the government from time to time to take necessary steps to develop the SWC as the single umbrella organization to handle NGOs/INGOs. We have not been able to run the SWC as per the act or as per our policy. If the SWC is made the umbrella, we will be in a position to provide records and increase accountability of all NGOs/INGOs working in the country. Right now, we know only about the 12,600 NGOs and 103 INGOs.

**So many seminars are held on different issues so often. Is there any policy to encourage INGOs/NGOs funding low priority sectors to do so in the more pressing areas?**

I agree that the NGOs should organize seminars or workshops but only when they have reached a certain point and do not know where to proceed from that point. Seminars will help identify their further destination. We, at the SWC, always advocate seminars only during such circumstances.

**In the present context of liberalization, how can you ensure that NGOs are allowed to work on their own and at the same time be monitored?**

The SWC does not control NGOs. We only regulate them. But if one talks about NGOs that are, say, misusing funds, they have been controlled. The council has only asked NGOs to run in accordance with the law of the land and in accordance with their own internal constitution. If somebody still says that the SWC is controlling or obstructing them, one should understand the malafide intention behind such allegations.

**Do civil society organizations also come under the SWC?**

No, civil society is a very broad term. It includes everything outside the government — the political parties, NGOs, commercial enterprises and so on. NGOs are only those that fulfil the aforementioned four criteria.

**But so many NGOs are working in the name of civil society?**

When people work with good intentions, they do so remaining within the realm of the NGOs' definition. But for the vested interest groups, there will always be room for exploitation. I differ with many people regarding this. I ask them to be forthright. If they want to run an NGO, then they have to run it like an NGO, not like some profit-making institution or political organization. ■

*I agree that the NGOs should organize seminars or workshops but only when they have reached a certain point and do not know where to proceed from that point. Seminars will help identify their further destination.*



## EXHIBITION

# The Revelation

Two prominent artists exhibit works on the rich heritage and traditions of Nepal

By AKSHAY SHARMA

Two luminaries in the top echelons of contemporary Nepalese art, Shashi Shah and Batsa Gopal Vaidya, are exhibiting their works at the Siddhartha Art Gallery. SAARC Secretary-General Nihal Rodrigues opened the show this week.

Amid the plethora of colors on the walls, Vaidya told SPOTLIGHT: "My focus this time is on the rich heritage we have. I have tried to reflect in all my paintings the vibrant culture we have. In my canvas paintings, I have focused on painting with oil and acrylic."

Vaidya says there has been a marked change in the way society looks at art. "When I returned from Bombay after completing my art studies in 1970s, artists were held in low esteem. My studies were not appreciated then in Kathmandu because of such attitudes. But today, there are a growing number of Nepalis who buy art in a market that only saw foreigners until fairly recently."

Vaidya, who works at the Department of Printing in Singh Durbar, has won several awards inside the country and abroad. His works have been a serious topic of discussion for art lovers. "As a schoolboy, my optional subject was maths, but I took arts instead," he remembers. "I was doing my intermediate in commerce when I noticed an advertisement in the newspaper. It was a scholarship for a student of arts and I found that on the last day. My sister supported me when I applied at the college when the advertisement appeared for the second time."

Vaidya was born and resides in the ancient city of Patan. "Below his lattice windows the busy streets of Mangal Bazar bustle with life. From his balcony the mountains and the fabled rooftops of Patan Durbar Square dominate the

Himalayan skyline," says Sangeeta Thapa, director of Siddhartha Art Gallery.

**The focus of Shashi Shah, whose name resounds in the art world in Nepal, is on the Dash Avatar (Ten Incarnations). "There is a chapter in the Bible — The Revelation — where Christ comes on a White Horse to save the world from chaos and it is similar to the Hindu tradition where Vishnu's reincarnation comes on a white horse in the Kali Yuga," says Thapa, pointing to a painting.**

The focus of Shashi Shah, whose name resounds in the art world in Nepal, is on the Dash Avatar (Ten Incarnations). "There is a chapter in the Bible — The Revelation — where Christ comes on a White Horse to save the world from chaos and it is similar to the Hindu tradition where Vishnu's reincarnation comes on a white horse in the Kali Yuga," says Thapa, pointing to a painting.

Shah says, "The Ten Incarnations is the great philosophical tale of the progress and evolution of our culture and civilization. Among them, the kalki avatar is the protagonist of my paintings, a symbol. The declaration of Lord Vishnu 'Wherever there is a crisis in humanity, I take on the incarnation to protect the world', is the basic element

for the survival of our world and civilization."

Thapa says: "Shashi Shah is a master draught person. His early drawings in pencil, pen and ink reveal the power and austerity of his lines. His early wash paintings and drawings tell the story of a restless sensitive artist, seeking to give an evocative voice to the injustices and inequalities in life: twisted figures merge in a surreal nuclear landscape, faces scream silently at you. Shah's paintings straddle the cycles of time in the Hindu cosmos — the ten incarnations of Vishnu becomes a subject of artistic meditation and personal philosophy."

Although the Kalki avatar is the last one of all philosophical avatars, Shah says, it is the expression of a desire and

hope for peace and a vision for the continuity of the future. "No matter what crisis we face and whatever the dangers may be, the world is surviving up to now. In order to protect the world from its possible doom, a situation is always created in one form or another, from somewhere or someone. It is, however, not necessary that the Kalki avatar should appear, it is only a symbol. Our world, our civilization must survive at any cost. This is the Kalki's mission," adds.

Thapa says: "To understand the surreal imagery of Shah's paintings, one should delve and dwell in the ten incarnations of Vishnu: Matsya (Fish), Kachayapa (tortoise), Baraha (boar), Narasimha (man-lion), Bamun (dwarf), Parashuram, Ram, Krishna, Buddha and the Kalki (the white horse).

"Some of Shah's mixed media works deal with the Royal massacre in Nepal — newspaper clippings of the royal obituaries are complexly interwoven with drawings, in an attempt by the artist to look for some answers in his art," Thapa says. "These works reveal a time of spirituality in chaos, a world turned topsy-turvy as symbolized by scattered chess pieces."

The exhibition will continue until October 17 at Siddhartha Art Gallery from 11 am to 6 pm. ■

## MUSIC

# West Meets East

An American comes up with a music album of Nepalese folk songs

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

**W**hen Josh Brody first came to Nepal in 1994, little did he know that he was going to end up as a Nepali folk singer. A native of Pasadena, near Los Angeles, the 29-year-old lanky American is coming up with his first Nepali music album called "Soaltee" in October.

The album has seven songs, most of which are based on folk tunes. He has already made a music video for Nepal Television (NTV) where he can be seen singing and dancing with a village girl in a particularly humorous song called "Khutrukai paryo.. gore moraale..". He has also given himself a Nepali name — Gajab Bahadur Gurung.

Brody came to Nepal in 1994 as a student of anthropology. He visited the nooks and corners of Nepalese villages with his teachers and soon developed a rapport with rural life. A keen music-lover from his childhood, Brody was instantly struck by the cultural practices of the country. A master of mellifluous voice, he started singing folk songs with the villagers.

Brody has been working in Khandbari, in the north-eastern district of Sankhuwasabha, in a remote education project since 1997. It was here where he met Khem Raj Gurung, the popular folk-pop singer who made a sensational entry in the Nepalese music scene early this year with "Wari Jamuna, Pari Jamuna".

Brody and Gurung became fast friends and it was their mutual interest in music that brought them even closer. "We (Khem and myself) used to take part in local con-

certs in villages where people loved my singing," said Brody. At that time both were struggling — Gurung was still an unknown singer. Though they had released a joint album few years ago, nothing came of it, as it was not promoted well.

But now both buddies are reaping



Brody (right) with Gurung: New singer on the block

their success. While Gurung is already a household name, Brody promises to bring a different kind of attraction. Accustomed to hearing Nepali voices, audiences here would definitely find it interesting to listen to their folk songs in a foreigner's voice.

Among the seven songs in his album, two are duets with Khem Raj and Sarana Shrestha each. He likes Khem Raj Gurung, Kunti Moktan and Dipesh Bhattarai among the present lot of Nepalese singers. "Among the western ones I like Cat Stevens, James Taylor, Peter Gabriel and Paul Simon," says Brody.

He likes folk music more than pop or modern numbers. But he believes the combination of folk melody with pop tune is not bad as long as they keep the basic spirit intact. His forthcoming album "Soaltee" includes folk songs as well as few pop numbers. The music has been composed by Shila Bahadur Moktan. The lyrics reflect rich ethnic dialect. "And I understand the meaning of all my songs," boasts Brody.

Brody is currently involved in the education project in Khandbari. "My fellowship is for another two years after which I don't know what I will do."

Back home in LA, Brody's parents and friends think his singing "funny".

"They loved my songs, in fact," says Brody smiling. His father is an ophthalmologist, who had a couple of years ago come to Nepal to conduct an eye surgery camp in villages, and his mother a schoolteacher. He even sings Nepali songs for his mom's students whenever he goes home. "... and they really like it," he said.

Close on the heels of his friend's success, Brody is coming out with his album early next month. As the initial response goes, he is confident that Nepalese audiences will find him an interesting singer. ■



BOOK

# Roots Of Relations

Panday explains the diverse elements that have contributed to the growth of Nepal-Japan relations

By KESHAB POUDEL

From top leaders to the common people, Nepalis have deep affection for Japan and great admiration for the country's impressive achievements. Although Nepal remained under the influence of the British empire for nearly a century, the development model of Japan often inspired the rulers of that time.

Prime Minister Dev Sumsher Jung Bahadur Rana, known as a modernizer, was the first Nepali ruler to have been inspired by the Japanese model of development. Although he ruled the country for less than six months before being overthrown by his ambitious brothers, Dev Sumsher seemed to be knowledgeable about Japan's march to progress

and how the country's experience could be replicated in Nepal. Interestingly, the first traveler from Japan visited Nepal a few years before Dev Sumsher pledged to emulate Japan's approach to development.

Although geographically far apart, relations between Nepal and Japan have remained close. The ties began at the people's level a century ago when Ekai Kawaguchi visited Nepal in 1899 as the first Japanese visitor. Ever since, both countries have cemented their cordial relationship in diverse areas through mutual respect and appreciation.

Nepal and Japan established formal diplomatic relations in 1956. Since then, Japan has continued to play an important role in modernizing Nepalese society. Japan is a leading donor to Nepal, contributing to projects in such vital sectors as road, hydro-power, communication, drinking water, education, health and agriculture. Japan's contribution to the economic development of Nepal has remained impressive both in terms of the volume of assistance and the range of sectors.

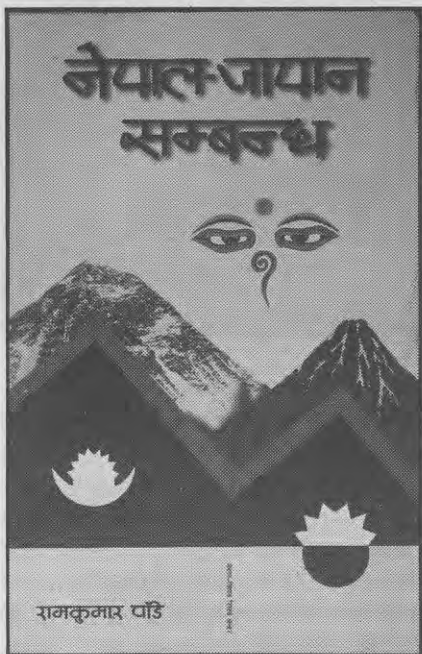
After the construction of Kulekani hydropower project, Japan has helped to bring changes in patterns of consumption as well as production of electricity in Nepal. The completion of Dhulikhel-Bardibas road will add a new dimension to Nepal's quest to develop its infrastructure.

Although several books have been written on the importance of Nepal-Japan relations, Professor Ram

Kumar Panday's volume sheds light on many new facets and contains up-to-date information. Panday, who has written extensively on Nepal-Japan relations, underscores the fact that Japan has extended development assistance without attaching any conditions. Panday also examines how the exchange of visits between the leaders of the two countries has helped to strengthen relations. Then-Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori trip to Nepal last year and the visits of Nepalese leaders highlight the importance both governments attach to cementing bilateral relations. The common positions of the two countries on vital international issues and their shared quest for international peace and stability have solidified their friendship.

A professor of geography, Panday also discusses the historical, cultural and other aspects of the relations between the two countries. Nepal is one of the popular destinations for Japanese tourists, with Lumbini, the birthplace of Lord Buddha, remaining a prime attraction. Panday emphasizes the important role played by Japanese mountaineers and travelers in fostering mutual understanding and appreciation at the people's level.

Although many errors seem to have crept into the book, it can be expected help Nepalese readers to acquire a broader understanding of the state of Nepal-Japan cooperation and its historical development. Since it is written in Nepali, a wider readership can benefit from Panday's work.



*Nepal-Japan Relations*  
By Ram Kumar Panday  
Published by Nepal Nippon Research Center, Kathmandu, Nepal  
Price: Rs. 250, Pages: 189  
Language: Nepali

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By M.S.KHOKNA



**TRANSITION**

**DESIGNATED:** Her Majesty Queen Komal Rajya Laxmi Devi Shah, as the Prithuladhish of Orders and Decorations of the Kingdom of Nepal, by His Majesty the King, in accordance with the Bibhushan (fourth amendment) Regulations 2058. His Majesty the King has also conferred the Nepal Pratap Bhaskar on Her Majesty the Queen.

**RE-ELECTED:** Bal Krishna Khand, as the president of Nepal Tarun Dal, youth wing of ruling Nepali Congress party, unopposed, by its second general convention.

**ELECTED:** Jaya Dewan, as the president of the Nepal Association of Travel Agents, for the next two years.

**Suman Pandey,** as the president of the Trekking Agents

Association of Nepal, for the next two years.

**Narayan Govinda Halwai,** as the president of the Nepal Engineers' Association and Bharat Raj Pahari, as its general secretary.

**AWARDED:** Sapana Shree, singer, with Narayan Gopal Youth Music Award for this year, by the National Youth Service Fund.

Jomsom Women Association, with this year's Abraham Conservation Award, for their contributions to environment conservation.

**LEFT:** A five-member delegation of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party led by its general secretary **Pashupati SJB Rana,** for the People's Republic of China, at the invitation of the Communist Party of China. ■



# 'We Don't Have A Clear Policy On Sustainable Urban Development'

—RAMESH C. POUDEL

*Mayor of Biratnagar sub-metropolis, RAMESH CHANDRA POUDEL, knows that he hasn't been able to fulfill many of his promises. Elected as a UML candidate four years ago, Poudel says he has tried doing a lot of things within his capacity. With less than one year remaining in his tenure, Poudel shared his views with BHAGIRATH YOGI in Biratnagar last week. Excerpts:*

## **How would you recollect the major works in the sub-metropolis under your leadership over the last four years?**

Our major concern in the beginning was to transform the municipality into a credible, accountable and autonomous local government. We are still experimenting on making this sub-metropolis into an independent, impartial and prosperous municipality. I have focused on making this municipality autonomous in a legal way, promoting institutional strengthening of people's representatives and empowering the people.

## **What are the main tangible developments of this period?**

The water logging and lack of sewerage have remained major problems in Biratnagar. Surrounding village development committees were also accommodated into the municipality but they did not have basic amenities like road, power and drinking water. Therefore, we gave priority to developing infrastructure in those areas. The social conditions in those areas were also quite poor. The municipality has been launching such activities as encouraging parent to send children to schools, safe motherhood, and health facilities, among others. People in ward nos. 5, 6, 7, 15 and 16 have mainly benefited from these activities.

## **Have the people felt some difference?**

Certainly, we are enjoying more fa-

cilities than the people in rural areas are. People are getting facilities like primary health care, education for children, parent education and social feelings. In order to improve the environment within the municipal area, roads have been broadened and black-topped, drains have been built, efforts have been made to address the problem of water logging and manage solid waste, among others. You can see Biratnagar as a spacious city. The road network here may be double that of Kathmandu's. We have also made efforts to raise revenue for the municipality. We need to invest up to Rs 5,000 million to change the face of this city. However, we will be able to spend not more than Rs 600 million during the period of five years.

## **What is the situation of industries within the municipal area?**

Due to the bad policies of the past, most of the industries kept themselves away from the municipal area to avoid higher taxes. No new industries were opened. Therefore, we are trying to promote new industries in the municipal area. We are trying to develop an Export Processing Zone (EPZ) to be modeled as a free economic zone. We are also trying to develop labor-intensive industries by training the abundant labor force available here. We are also trying to undertake technological changes as much as possible.

## **How is the Eastern University doing?**

The office of the Eastern University is located within the municipality but more than 800 bighas of land belonging to this university in the northern part of the Morang district. Some campus belonging to the university operate within the municipal area whereas most of the campuses affiliated to the university are operating outside the municipality. The university still needs to work hard in

expanding educational activities.

## **Local bodies have been demanding more power for quite some time. How justified are they?**

Nepal has signed the United Nations protocol to provide powers to local bodies in accordance with the principle of decentralization by 2001. However, we are far behind in implementing that concept. We lack authority as well as economic resources. The Decentralization Commission headed by (Sher Bahadur) Deuba had recommended implementing a number of measures to empower the local bodies. Mr. Deuba himself is the prime minister now but he hasn't shown any interest in this direction. At a time when we are talking of amending the constitution, we should also discuss incorporating the rights of the local bodies in the constitution. Most of the provisions for local bodies are impracticable. There have been clashes between the mayor and the municipal board when they come from different political parties. We have 132 members of the municipal council but the mayor is responsible for executive decisions. How can he take decisions by incorporating the views of all of them?

## **What needs to be done?**

We need to develop a clear attitude in mobilizing people's participation in local governance. We still don't have a clear-cut policy on sustainable urban development. Our judicial and administrative officers and even legislators are in a confused situation. So, first of all, we need to have clear guidelines regarding the role and responsibilities of the local bodies. Only then can we move forward in fulfilling the aspirations of the local people. ■



**Now In Town**

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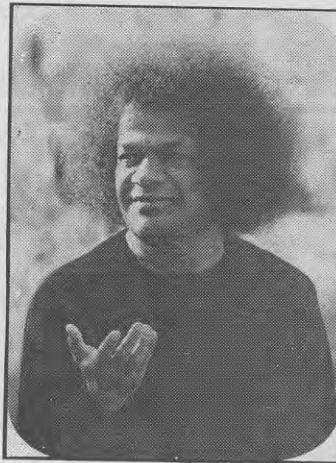
- Octopus II
- Osmosis Jones
- The Others
- American Pie II
- About Adam
- Fhll Eclipse
- American Sweetheart
- Watcher III
- Ghost of Mars
- Species IV



**Hindi**

- Kiyun Ki Mein Jhooth Nahi Bolta
- Nayak
- Ittefaz
- Dil Chahta Hai
- Yeh Raaste Hai Pyar Ke
- Lajja
- Yaaden
- Tum Bin
- Lagaan
- Gadar

(Source : Super Star Video, New Road)



*“Your Body  
is the  
Temple of God”*

**- SATHYA SAI BABA**



MR. BOFFO



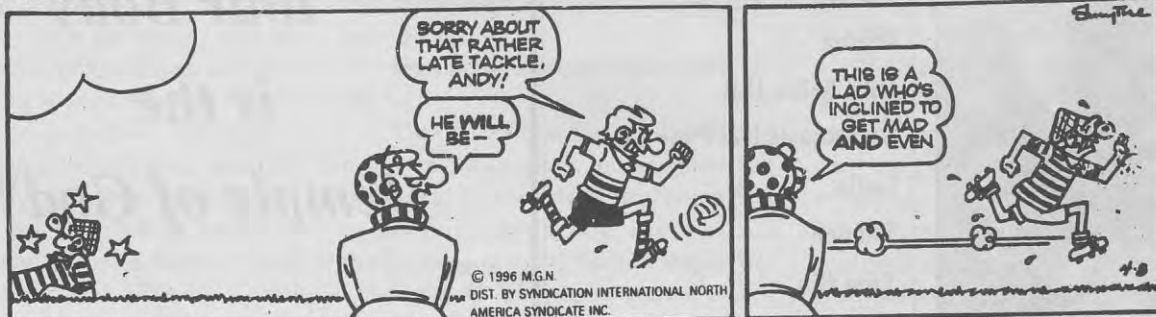
CATHY



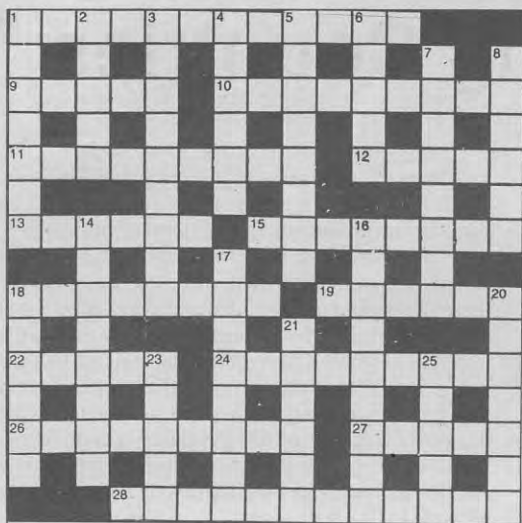
FOR BETTER OR FOR WORSE



ANDY CAPP



# CROSSWORD



## ACROSS

1. Cause trouble, using personal stereo? (3,2,3,4)
9. Numbers of Romans backing the same view of the city (5)
10. Perhaps faces up, or gives to a challenge (5,4)
11. Teachers may prefer these financial incentives (4,5)
12. Letter that he takes to heart (5)
13. Island where start of spring begins frostily (6)
15. Vehicle in the distance is not hostile (8)
18. Stupid ringer that's employed by a boxer? (4-4)
19. Run and expose (6)
22. Ring contains right gem (5)
24. An uplifting sailors' cry (2-5-2)
26. It raises the issue of a senior professional post (4-5)
27. Indian songbird ñ not the genuine article (5)
28. Get into grave debt in attempt to succeed in ambitions? (4,4,4)

## DOWN

1. They may be of untold value (7)
2. What'll finally turn up about five creatures of Carroll's ? (5)
3. Craft association given support, in the main (5-4)
4. Advocates intercepting stolen capital on an island (6)
5. Apology heard during a dance (6,2)
6. Steer wrongly, and do this to make adjustment (5)
7. Supplier of combs to the Queen? (5-3)
8. Get to grips with having to start a battle (6)
14. Drive a camping convertible (8)
16. Purge has racist components (9)
17. Cooperate to meet a delivery? (4,4)
18. Deep water shelter erected to secure small port (6)
20. A professor of infinite wisdom (4,3)
21. Greek ferry operator cast anchor (6)
23. Dodgy profit needing to be laundered? (5)
25. Books are picked u pas source of inspiration (5)

**Down :** 1. Secrets 2. Toves 3. Yacht club 4. Hobart 5. Excuse-me 6. Reset 7. Honey-bee 8. Engage 14. Campaign 16. Catharsis 17. Play ball 18. Depths 20. Know-all 21. Charon 23. Lucre

**Across :** 1. Set by the cars 9. Civic 10. Backs down 11. Easy terms 12. Theta 13. Sicily 15. Amicable 18. Dum-bell 19. Streak 22. Pearl 24. Yo-heave-ho 26. High chair 27. Shama 28. Sell ones soul

NOILUTOS

# BRIDGE

**NORTH** 4-17  
 ♠ A K  
 ♥ J 5 4  
 ♦ A 9  
 ♣ A J 10 7 3 2

**WEST**  
 ♠ J 9 7 4 3  
 ♥ 10 3  
 ♦ J 8 5  
 ♣ K 9 5

**EAST**  
 ♠ 8  
 ♥ Q 8 7 6  
 ♦ 10 7 6 4 3  
 ♣ Q 8 4

**SOUTH**  
 ♠ Q 10 6 5 2  
 ♥ A K 9 2  
 ♦ K Q 2  
 ♣ 6

Vulnerable: Both  
 Dealer: South

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♠	Pass	2 ♣	Pass
2 ♥	Pass	2 ♠	Pass
2 NT	Pass	3 ♣	Pass
3 NT	Pass	4 NT	Pass
5 ♦	Pass	5 ♥	Pass
5 ♠	Pass	6 ♣	All pass

Opening lead: Heart trey

**“Our memories are independent of our wills. It is not so easy to forget.”**  
 — RICHARD SHERIDAN

In the winter of 1970, the Aces played a marathon match against the Omar Sharif Bridge Circus. The group toured seven major cities in the United States and Canada, with the Aces winning a seesaw match. Today's deal, a slam which neither side made, was the unforgettable deal of the tour. Looking at all four hands, can you find a way to score 12 tricks?

After North's two-club response forced to game, an Aces Scientific sequence followed, and the excellent spade slam was reached.

After West's heart lead trapped East's queen, and with West's heart 10 dropping, all South needed was a decent trump break to claim his slam. Unfortunately, after dummy's top trumps were cashed, the horrible trump stack became unmanageable.

Italy's Georgio Belladonna also failed at six spades after a diamond lead. But he was the first to find the solution in the post-mortem.

South should win dummy's diamond ace, cash the club ace, and ruff a club. After cashing his king and queen of diamonds to discard a heart, he leads a trump to dummy's king and ruffs another club. South then cashes his top hearts and leads a third heart, ruffed by West and overruffed by dummy. With West holding J-9-7 of trumps and South holding Q-10 of trumps and the heart nine, South leads a club from dummy while discarding his heart. West must ruff and lead in to South's trump tenace, giving South his 12th winner.

A tough slam to score? At the table it was; in the post-mortem, it was a little easier.



# Human Development Issues In Developing Countries

By DEEPAK R. JOSHI

Human development remains a big challenge for developing countries, with human capital becoming the most vital aspect of development efforts. The most indispensable capabilities for human development are to ensure long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable of to have access to the resources needed to maintain a high standard of living, and to be able to participate in the life of the community. Human development shares a common vision with human rights.

Human development is an integral part of management development, a systemic process of improving managerial effectiveness, increasing productivity, augmenting human capital by imparting education, training, knowledge, by increasing skills, changing attitudes and enhancing human quality. As management guru Dale S. Beach says, "Management development is a systematic process of training and growth by which individuals gain and apply knowledge, skills, insights and attitudes to manage work organizations effectively."

The emphasis of management development is on handling situations, people and problems for better results. Human development is contemporary to human resources development through which individual and community growth can be achieved in its fullest potential. Education is the major contributor to that process, because it directly and continuously affects the formation not only of knowledge and abilities, but also of character and of culture, aspirations and achievements.

Human development, human resource development and human resource management should be carried in a network of components in which things are interrelated and interacted, and act simultaneously to achieve the ascribed goals. Across the world, we see unacceptable levels of deprivation in people's lives. Of the 4.6 billion people in developing countries, more than 850 million are illiterate, nearly a billion lack access to improved water resources and 2.4 billion lack access to basic sanitation. Nearly 325 million children are out of school and 11 million children under age five die each year from preventable causes.

The ultimate goal of human development is sovereignty (freedom). Bondage is an outlandish reality that developing countries are not precisely in a hurry to pay heed to. Moreover, the citizens are in an ever-changing ferocious cycle of life. Kamaiyas in Nepal and the people of Jharkhand in India have raised the voice of freedom, but they are compelled to survive in dispossession and destitution. The rhetoric of "liberation", "human rights", "social security", and "poverty alleviation" become unbearably loud during paper presentations, elections, interaction programs, coffee talks, workshops, seminars, and conferences. The United Nations Development Program has advocated the Human Development Index (HDI) to measure actual human progress. It captures three dimensions: real per capita income, adult literacy, and life expectancy. South Asia and Sub-Saharan African are far behind other regions.

The adult literacy rate in South Africa is still 55 percent and in Sub-Saharan Africa 60 percent, well below the developing country average of 73 percent. Life expectancy at birth in Sub-Saharan Africa is still only 48.8 years, compared with more than 60 in all other regions. Moreover, the share of people living on less than \$1 a day is as high as 46 percent in South Asia, compared with 15 percent in East Asia and the Pacific and in Latin America. If the governments of this region want foreign capital and overseas markets, they must create investor-friendly as well as socio-friendly political and economic systems. They should concentrate on reducing poverty by providing quality education, employment opportunities, fair remuneration, safe drinking water and better health services.

The recession virus this time is being spread not only by currency speculators, but also by the collapse in America's information technology investment. Many developing countries blame the overseas slump for all their economy woes. Some will wrongly conclude that further globalization

should therefore be resisted. Actually, everybody would ultimately benefit from a globally incorporated market when there is assortment of demand and production in long-term perspective.

These large deal surpluses of these regions are widely seen as a sign of renewed economic strength. In fact, they partly reflect a failure to generate stronger domestic demand as a result of not completing promised structural reforms. Poor countries occupy two-thirds of world's population, and suffer marginalization once through incomes and again through prices. Part of the reason may be that elite in developing countries, like their counterparts in the rich world, are content to deem either that inequality is falling, or that inequality is good because it is the source of incentives. Growing inequality is analogous to global warming. Its effects are far-reaching and long-term, and there is always something more pressing to deal with.

Differences among regions and countries are predominantly noticeable in economic growth, which generates public resources to invest in education and health services and increases the resources people have to enjoy a well-brought-up standard of living and perk up many other aspects of their lives. Economically active population in the labor force is the prompt focus of human resource development (HRD). Labor force represents physical energies and by imparting knowledge, skills and attitudes, HRD converts labor force into human resources. It has been found that HRD helps to enhance knowledge, skills, attitudes and experiences of employees and gives efficiency and effectiveness on the job. Majority of the economically active population of this region on most days has to go without food. As a result, most of them relapse into a life of stand-in repression.

Productivity is direct utility of the level of human resources in any economy but the issue of productivity is shadowed in this region. The productivity level of inhabitants of this region has been found to be very low, for there is lack of adequate education, skill development activities and vocational training facilities. Although capital-labor ratios show an increasing trend, the census input-output ratio are near constant, which shows that increasing capital intensity has helped little in increasing productivity. In the context of improving productivity, wages, employment and overall social as well as industrial relations, workers could be social partners for sustainable development, but South Asia lags behind. A higher level of productivity is determined by many factors such as education to all, employment to all, appropriate wages and fringe benefits, on-the-job training, and skill development and provision of health and safety nets. The large part of the region's work force lies in the informal sector, which is not considered at the policy making, implementing and monitoring stages. There is a need to minimize advertisement of informal sector workers to the possible extent, for this sector is circumscribed by structural constraints such as long working hours, low payment rate, widespread use of child labor, existence of bonded labor, highly influenced gender discrimination, absence of minimum wages and non-existence of social security measures.

The high demand of skill-oriented activities is not pauperizing rather suffering from various problems like imitated policies, demand less programs, lack of sound monitoring policy, poor quality control, poor coordination, unmanaged regulatory system, urban bias, cost factor, politicization, lack of commitment, unequal distribution of opportunities, cultural and traditional aspects to some extent. Policy is a guideline for decision making to achieve the targeted goals and HRD policy greatly affects the HRD process, which is concerned with enhancing human capability. ■

*Joshi writes on human development issues*



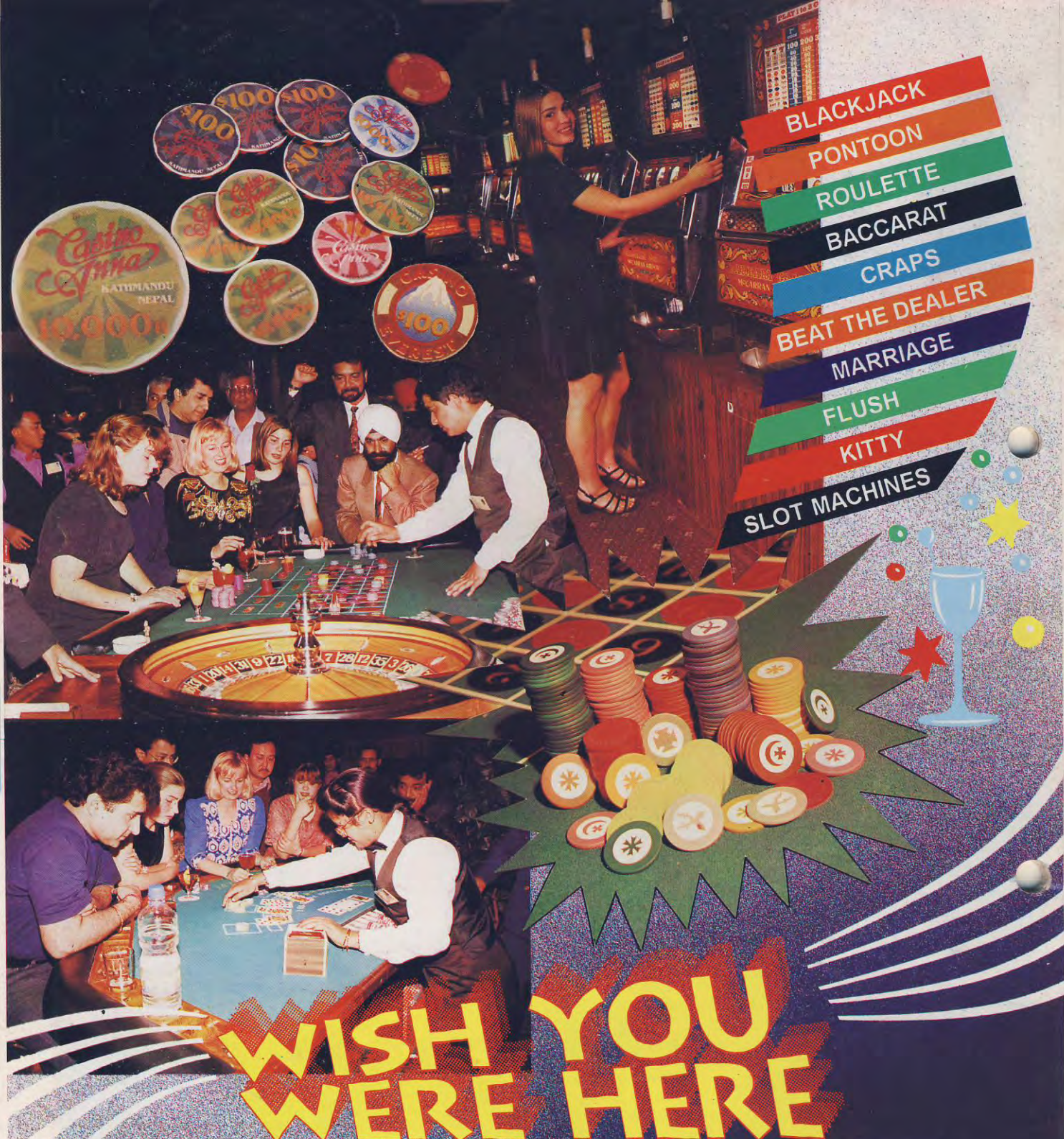
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**Casino Nepal**  
 Soaltee Compound  
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