

C.D.O. Regd. No. 151/039-40
Postal Regd. No. 20/064-65
1.00
2.00
2.00
US \$
US \$
US \$
Australia/New Zealand...
Europe...
USA/Canada...
1.00
1.00
1.00
US \$
US \$
US \$
China/Korea...
ME/Israel...
Hong Kong/Taiwan...
1.00
1.00
1.00
US \$
US \$
US \$
Other SAARC Nations...
Asean Countries...
Japan...
30.00
25.00
25.00
Nepal...
India...
Bhutan...
NRS...
IRS...
NU...

SPOTLIGHT

July 18-24, 2008



TEN PLUS TWO EDUCATION Competing For Quality

INSIDE

Politics: Power without Accountability
Special Report: Delivery of Death
Budget 2008: Interim Arrangement



Come together with **San Miguel**

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

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

- **Nima Rumba**
Singer/Actor



San Miguel BEER

CONTENTS

	Page
LETTERS	3
NEWSNOTES	4
BRIEFS	6
OPINION : Dr. A.B. Thapa	7
BUDGET 2008: Interim Arrangement	9
POLITICS: Power Without Accountability	10
NATIONAL: Seizures In Security	20
BOOK: Diplomat's Diary	21
QUOTEUNQUOTE/TRANSITION	23
PHOTO: Majestic Mountain	24



COVER STORY: Competing for Quality

Despite debates in favour of nationalization of education, the private ten plus two schools have emerged as the top choices for students because of their quality. Page 12

(Cover Photo by Global College of Management)



SPECIAL REPORT: Delivery Of Death

The very act of giving birth is a leading cause of death for poor and rural Nepalis women

Page 15

FACE TO FACE:

Kim Bok-Hee
Resident Representative of Korean aid agency, KOICA, in Nepal, Kim Bok-Hee shares the level of Korean assistance to Nepal

Page 18



SPOTLIGHT

THE WEEKLY NATIONAL NEWSMAGAZINE

Vol. 27, No 44, July 18, 2008
Shrawan 03, 2065

Chief Editor And Publisher
Madhav Kumar Rimal

Editor
Sarita Rimal

Managing Editor
Keshab Poudel

Senior Reporter
Sanjaya Dhakal

Cover Design & Layout :
Hari Krishna Bastakoti

Layout
Jyoti Dangol (Singh)

Photographer
Sandesh Manandhar

Legal Advisor
Advocate Lok Bhakta Rana

Marketing
Navin Kumar Maharjan
Madan Raj Poudel

Editorial Office
GPO Box 7256, Maitidevi, Kathmandu
Tel (977-1) 4423127 Fax: (977-1)
4417845
Chief Editor's : 4435594,
E-mail : spot@mail.com.np
Internet : www.nepalnews.com/spotlight

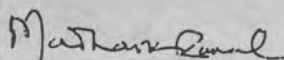
Distribution : R.B. News Paper Traders
New Road, Kathmandu, Nepal
Ph : 4232784, 2070247, 4244679
E-mail : rbnewspaper@hotmail.com

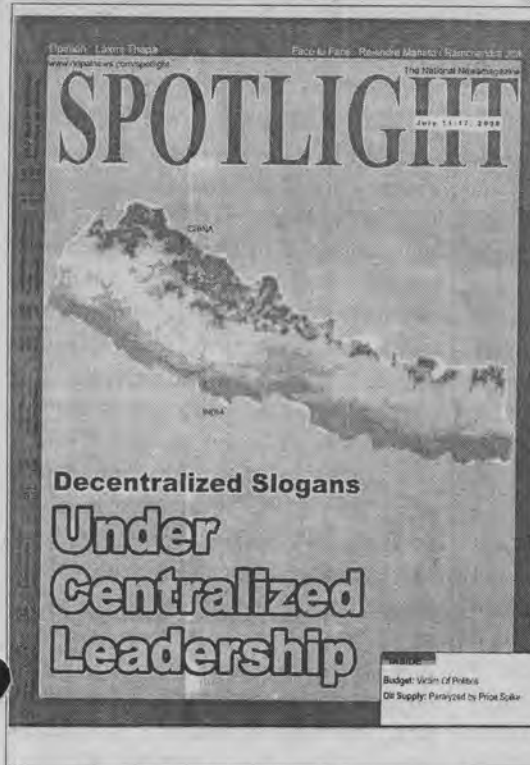
Printers : Pioneer Offset Printers (P.) Ltd.
Dillibazar, Kathmandu
Ph : 4415687, Fax: 977-1-4438650

C.D.O.Regd. No
151/039-40
Postal Regd. No
42/61/62
U.S. Library of Congress
Catalogue No. 91-905060

Americans, in general, are not interested in politics due to their busy lifestyle to be engaged in economic activities as it is their primary priority. It is more evident when other smaller countries of the world are concerned. But the government of the United States of America, by virtue of being number one power in the world, has to shoulder the unenviable responsibility of maintaining global peace and harmony. Consequently, it cannot ignore or overlook what happens in every nook and corner of the world. As south Asia is developing into a very important region in the world, it has started to attract greater attention of larger number of Americans and, indeed, of the American government. The never ending feud between the two bigger nations of south Asia—India and Pakistan—and the soaring ambition of the overwhelmingly poor giant—India—not only to dominate the region but to emerge as a regional super power also, are posing great threats to the peace and stability of the region. The Bush government's nuclear deal with India has added fuel to the fire, and if successfully culminated is definite to upset the already lop-sided balance of power in the region with the greatest threat of embroiling the region in a nuclear conflagration with the dreadful possibility of a third world war. The aftermath of 9/11, the Iraq imbroglio, the burning civil wars in Afghanistan and the ever increasing threat of global terrorism, particularly endangering American lives where ever they may be, all had impelled the U.S. to buy the fullest cooperation of the Pakistani government and President Bush did not think twice. Despite the animosity of the majority of the Pakistani people towards the U.S. administration, the marriage of convenience between Bush and Musharraf could not last long, and now the Pakistani general is being made to face his uncertain future alone. China's emergence as the possible challenger to the United States has brought the south Asian region into greater focus and Bush administration's paradoxical policy of developing intimate relations with both the inimical nations has made the American people as well as the world sit up. Till recently the Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf was being nourished and spoon-fed by the Bush regime as the most indispensable factor to fight global terrorism. But now, it seems, his indispensability has vanished into thin air. Alienating the para-military regime of Pakistan by such erroneous policies as well as engineering to cut down the Pakistani general's authority, the Bush government could have added more venom to the Islamic terrorism. As far Pakistan is concerned, many knowledgeable Americans here think, Pakistanis are quite capable of looking after themselves. And they also are hopeful that Bush's nuclear deal with India would, after all be aborted with the change of the regime in a few months. But, they do strongly believe that Pakistan can no more afford to give a blind eye to south Asian affairs and must play more prominent and effective role to maintain the equilibrium in the power balance in south Asia. They are looking up to the democratic government in Pakistan not to shirk their responsibility

Madhav K. Rimal in the U.S.


Madhav K. Rimal
Chief Editor & Publisher



Ironical Situation

At a time when country's political parties are all functioning under the centralized leadership, decentralization or federalism itself is a ridiculous slogan (Restructuring of State: Slogan of Decentralization under the Centralized Leadership (July 11-17). The cover story is very timely and shows the reality of Nepal's present state of politics. In a country where the local governance fails to function, I don't see federalism can work easily. However, everybody is championing the slogan of federalism and devolution of power to the state.

Yam Bahadur Gurung
Singapore, Via email

Devolution Is Difficult

Every one agrees that the issue of devolution of power is essential to recognize the rights of the people. However, it is not an easy issue. It requires many things to make the devolution of power possible. There are various models of federalism and they are different from each other. India's federalism is gives huge powers to the center, which can dissolve the state government. But, the American, Canadian, and Australian models of federalism are different. Our party leaders must make their mind clear on what kind of federalism they want. I don't think they are themselves clear on the issue. The recent political deadlock between the seven party alliance and three Madhesi parties indicate that choosing the modality for federalism is going to be a tricky issue.

Ganga Bahadur Shrestha
London Via-email

Expectations Dashed

It was very interesting to read cover story (Economy Overshadowed July 4-10). I agree with you that people have huge expectations over the forthcoming budget as it is going to be the first one prepared by a republican regime. The promise of New Nepal has been ringing loudly in the mind of the people who are looking forward to relief packages, economic prosperity, employment

opportunities and so on. Unfortunately, the political instability threatens to pour cold water over their expectations. Despite their commitments, they are yet to bring poor friendly budget and relief to the people. Instead of settling economic issues, political parties are more interested in the issues of power sharing. It is very unfortunate to say that Nepalese politicians do not care about people, what they want is power at any cost.

Girija Shanker Giri
Nepalgunj Via-email

Spur Growth

Nepal needs to have a program to achieve the economic growth rate of about 7 percent per annum. However, the current political trend shows that no political party has any program for economic development. In the name of making people's budget, Maoist leaders seem intent to destroy Nepal's financial institutions. After looking at their twelve-years-long insurgency, when they destroyed the infrastructures worth millions of rupees, it is not unthinkable that the Maoists can destroy the financial institutions. Instead of announcing the populist budget, the new government led by Maoists must announce the realistic budget for the country.

Pramesh Kamat
Biratnagar via email

Alarming Point

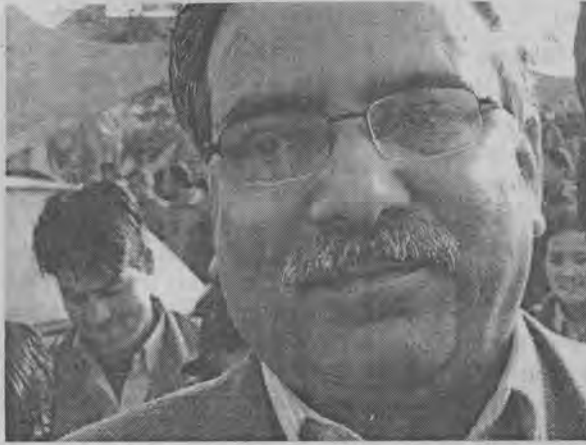
The remarks by Chinese scholar Wang Hongwei said in his interview 'Nepal May Head Toward Sikkimization' (Spotlight July 04-10) is quite alarming. His message is clear that India is following the 'smash and grab Nepal' policy like another Himalayan Kingdom Sikkim which it usurped in 70s. At the same time he also firmly holds the view that Nepal's patriotic forces will come to the rescue of the country in case of such situation. At a time when all are worried about the future of Nepal's identity as an independent nation, Chinese scholar Wang Hongwei's remark is very meaningful. Despite Indian and Chinese leader efforts to improve their relationship, they still have a longstanding and bitter border dispute. Thus, Nepal may have to face consequence of their rivalry. Along with China's policy towards Nepal, his observation on personality of king Gyanendra and abolition of monarchy is very valid. Had king Gyanendra made restrained efforts, the country would not have faced the present situation and monarchy would not have to face such humiliation. As a good friend of Nepal, all Nepalese need to thank Chinese scholar Hongwei.

Bimal Subba
Melbourne Via email

Full of Tirade

I am frustrated to read editorial of Spotlight as it is always directed against India. Being a close neighbour with such a diverse relation, India has genuine interests in Nepal. Instead of making constructive criticism about Indian policy, your editor promotes anti-Indian sentiments. India is our close neighbour and we need Indian cooperation to be a prosperous and stable nation. We need to use language of persuasion rather than language of hatred. I hope your paper will use persuasive language so far as writing about India is concern. Uttering anti-Indian slogans all the time cannot help any body. India has been spending billions of rupees in Nepal providing all kinds of educational facilities to Nepalese. India is a credible guarantor of peace in Nepal. As all of us know India and Nepal, though two sovereign nations, are geographically inseparable.

Himanshu Thapa
Via email



Maoists Blame NC For Delay In Govt Formation

The meeting of the central secretariat of the Maoists, Saturday (July 12), concluded that Nepali Congress (NC) was stalling their attempt to form the new government. The party has also concluded that it will opt out of the whole process if the procedure to form the government is not allowed to begin yet again. "It has been decided that we will opt out of the whole process if the procedure to elect president/vice president, CA chairman/vice chairman, and government formation does not begin following the amendment of the constitution," Maoist leader Dev Gurung told Kantipur. Gurung accused NC of stalling the process to form the new government. "The NC has been obstructing the process for the past three months," he said. The party has also said that it will not field its candidate for the position of president. The meeting had also decided to seek political consensus on allocation of powerful positions, including the president, vice-president and the chair of the Constituent Assembly. "We have decided to allocate the posts in a manner that will satisfy all," Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' told reporters after the six-hour long meeting held at a resort in Dhulikhel, Kavre district. *Compiled from reports*

Feb 28 Pact With Madhesis Was Flawed: UML Gen Secy

General secretary of the CPN-UML Jhala Nath Khanal said today that the February 28 agreement reached between the government and the then United

Democratic Mahdesi Front was flawed in its content and that it should be reviewed for the greater interest of the nation. "Clauses No. 2 and 5 of agreement are erroneous and we have strong objection over them," Khanal said, addressing the national-level gathering of the UML-affiliated Sampark Manch held at the party headquarters, Balkhu.

According to the clause No. 2 and 5 of the agreement, Madhes would be declared an autonomous Pradesh (State) and the "group-wise entry" of the Madhesi communities would be ensured in the Nepal Army. Prime Minister G P Koirala signed agreement on behalf of the Government of Nepal and three Madhesi leaders signed it on behalf of the then United Democratic Madhesi Front. "We will never accept this agreement because it intends at disintegrating the country. This agreement was done keeping the Seven-Party Alliance's talks team at dark, nor was the SPA consulted before the signing of the agreement in Baluwater," Khanal said. It was not appropriate to hold the election reaching such an agreement that compromises with sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity of the country, he said, adding: "Holding CA polls was not a greater issue than the protection of national interest." *The Himalayan Times daily reports*

Prachanda Fears Disintegration Of The Country

Maoist chairman Puspa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' has warned that Nepal could head towards disintegration if it does not stick to the path of consensus politics to prevent such catastrophe. Speaking at the special press meet organized by the Reporters' Club on Friday (July 11), he said attempts were being made to paint the ethnic issues with communal color to disintegrate the country. He accused 'regressive elements and foreign forces who claim to be strong democrats' for fanning the communal fire

especially in the southern belt. He expressed dissatisfaction at the remarks the leaders of the Madhes-based parties recently made at the Constituent Assembly (CA) saying they were disintegration-oriented. He emphasized that the political parties should work together until the new constitution is written. "But, the consensus should not be achieved on the basis of giving certain post to a certain person," he said. He also stressed that the post of president and chairman of CA should not become a component of power sharing. "Power sharing means sharing of ministerial posts," he said. At the same program, vice president of Nepali Congress (NC) and Minister for Peace and Reconstruction Ram Chandra Poudel said that the NC should be given the second choice in power sharing as it was the second largest party in the CA. Poudel called for unity between democratic and leftist forces to steer the country out of current crisis. He also expressed dissatisfaction over the remarks made by the leaders of Madhesi parties in the CA and their move to boycott the CA proceedings. On the other hand, CPN (UML) general secretary Jhala Nath Khanal asked that his party should be given the post of president to advance the consensus politics. He also stressed on the need to forge a common minimum program and code of conduct to run the next 'unity government.'

Compiled from reports

UNMIN's Western Wing Shut

The United Mission in Nepal closed its Pokhara-based western regional office on Friday (July 11). It may be noted that the UNMIN has already closed its offices based in the far-west and mid-west. Announcing the closure of the office, UNMIN chief Ian Martin thanked Nepali staffers for their cooperation. The office set up 15 months ago had a total of 68 staffers, including 43 Nepalis. Martin expressed worries over the failure of political parties to form a new government. He called for the formation of a new government through a due democratic process and early holding of local elections. "The political parties face the challenge of choosing the type of

federal system suitable for Nepal," he said. The UNMIN chief urged the government to bring Tarai-based agitating armed groups to a peaceful path and called the armed groups not to infringe on people's rights. Martin said he would soon brief the UN Security Council on the peace process in Nepal. The UNMIN chief urged the political parties to address the problems of victims of Jana Andolan II. Commenting on fuel and food shortages in Nepal, he said these are common problems of all Nepalis and they should work together to resolve them. *Leading dailies report*

Thapa Calls For Serious Talks On Federalism

Chairman of Rastriya Janashakti Party (RJP) Surya Bahadur Thapa has said serious political discussion is needed on the federal structure. Talking to Nepalnews on Thursday (July 10), former premier Thapa said that major parties "cannot decide the federal structure without discussing it with other parties represented in the Constituent Assembly (CA) and other concerned groups". "Only the CA only can decide the federal structure", he added, warning that federal structure determined without studying the geographical, economic and cultural aspect could even lead to disintegration of the country. Blaming the major three parties for creating political uncertainty, Thapa emphasized that they must respect the verdict of the people. According to him, power-sharing is not a difficult task provided the three parties become ready to move ahead according to the mandate of the people. *Compiled from reports*

Madhesi Leaders Spit Venom At Supplementary Bill

Even though the three Madhesi parties allowed the resumption of Constituent Assembly (CA) meeting, Wednesday (July 9) evening, their leaders blasted the government-sponsored and seven party-approved supplementary bill on constitution amendment claiming it does not address their demands. "Don't think that this is the end of our struggle. Our struggle has just started," said Upendra Yadav,

coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), indicating possibility of continued confrontation among major parties. He said that the Madhesi parties had to allow the resumption of the CA only because the country was heading to a collapse due to lack of budget, delay in formation of new government and similar important matters. Mahantha Thakur, chief of Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMLP), also blasted the supplementary bill. "In fact, we had not expected you (seven parties) to fulfill our demands," he said, adding that Madhesi struggle will continue. Rajendra Mahato, chief of Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP), also strongly deplored the bill and warned of intense struggle. Even as the Madhesi parties had demanded single Madhes province and group entry of Madhes in the national army, the bill has provisions, which state that Nepal will be a federal democratic republic by upholding the aspirations of autonomous provinces of Madhesis,

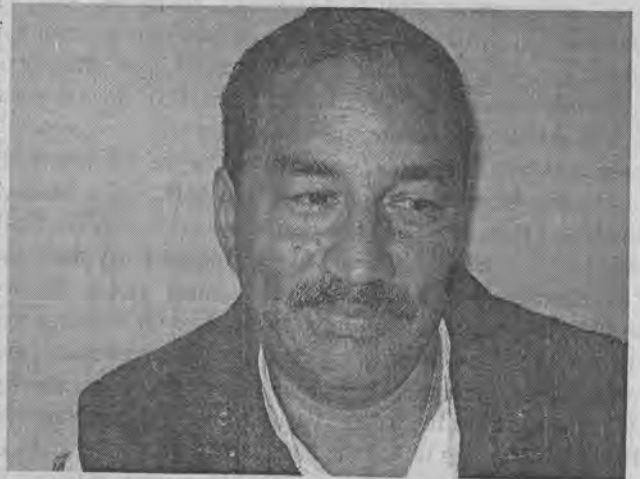
indigenous people and people from backward and other regions. The bill adds that the detailed definition regarding such provinces would be determined by the CA. Regarding the demand of group entry of Madhes in the army, the bill says that the army will be made inclusive on the basis of principle of equality and inclusion. *Compiled from reports*

Prachanda Sees Foreign Hand In Dividing Parties

Maoist chairman Prachanda has said that 'foreign power centers' were engaged in dividing political parties into different camps. Speaking at a program in the capital, Wednesday (July 9), he accused that domestic and some foreign power centers were hatching conspiracies against the people. He did not clarify the foreign power centers. "At times, you can find a leader of political party is not actually

representing the party but some other power centers – the US, Europeans or India," Prachanda said. He made these remarks at a time when there has been delay in the formation of new government, which Prachanda is preparing to lead as the leader of the party that emerged as the single largest from the April 10 Constituent Assembly election. *Compiled from reports*
RPP-N For Maoist-Led Govt

Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-N) chairman Kamal Thapa on Tuesday (July 8) announced that his



party fully supports the CPN- Maoist, the largest party in the Constituent Assembly (CA). Thapa also said that only the Maoist have the right to form the new government as per the people's mandate. Inaugurating the assembly of RPP-N' activists of Bagmati zone in the capital today, chairman Thapa said that a new government must be formed immediately in the leadership of the Maoist. He opined that the mutual agreements and understanding among the parties helped in concluding the CA election successfully. Mentioning that the democracy must be respected at all times, Thapa added that the people will revolt against the parties who do not assist the Maoist in forming the next government. The remarks come from the RPP-N which has always been known as a strong supporter of the monarchy at a time when the CPN-Maoist is poised to head the next government. *Compiled from reports* ■



People celebrate Bhanu Jayanti, as the birth anniversary of Nepal's Adikavi (First Poet) Bhanubhakta Acharya

EVEN THOUGH THEY ALLOWED THE RESUMPTION of the Constituent Assembly (CA) meeting, Wednesday (July 9), the Madhesi parties boycotted the session as the government tabled the Fifth Amendment bill. At the late night meeting of CA, leader of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) Jaya Prakash Gupta registered a 'protest notice' against the government's proposed bill. The notice was rejected by the CA following which the Madhesi parties including MJF, Terai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMLP), Nepal Sadbhavana Party (NSP), NSP-Anandidevi's Sarita Giri and Dalit Janajati Party members boycotted the proceedings of the assembly. Gupta claimed that the rejection of the protest notice gave the message that the CA would not be working in favor of Madhesi people and would sow the seed of division in the country. Subsequently, Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Narendra Bikram Nemwang tabled the amendment bill. Three days of time have been allotted for tabling of further amendments in the bill after which it will be put for decision. Meanwhile, speaking at the CA, leaders of smaller parties blasted the amendment bill and accused the Madhesi leaders of making divisive remarks. "It has been proved that the real intention behind the slogan of one Madhes one Province is to divide the country," said Chitra Bahadur KC, leader of Rastriya Jana Morcha.

DOCTORS HAVE ENDED THEIR HOSPITAL STRIKE after reaching an understanding with the Health Minister. On Friday evening, they decided to open health services after three days of closure of all services except emergency ones. They withdrew their closure strike after the Health Minister Giriraj Mani Pokharel agreed to expedite the introduction of Health Professional Security legislation, among others. Earlier the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) had expressed serious concern over the continued strike in medical sector called by Nepal Medical Association demanding security of the doctors and medical professionals. In a press statement issued Thursday (July 10), NHRC said the strike called after an incident at Everest Nursing Home, Baneshwor Kathmandu has denied citizens of their right to livelihood. NHRC said medical services must not be halted in any pretext. The national rights watchdog while urging the government to take initiatives for security of the medical professionals against misbehaviors,

also asked the doctors to take into consideration their ethics, duties and protecting rights of others. NHRC further asked agitating doctors to opt the measures of legal proceedings and dialogue to find a solution of the problem and not through strikes.

TOURISM INDUSTRY MAY FACE A SUBSTANTIAL LOSS

this season as the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu is not issuing visa for foreign visitors travelling through Nepal, reports The Himalayan Times daily. "Nepal will lose more than 20,000 visitors heading to Tibet," according to Nepal Tourism Board (NTB). Though the Chinese government opened Tibet Autonomous Region of China (TARC) for foreign visitors from July 1, an official at Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu said that they were yet to receive formal information from their government. Because of its geographical proximity and easy availability of flights, foreign visitors to Tibet have been using Nepal as their transit point for years. The Kailash-Mansarovar area, Lhasa and Everest Base Camp from the Tibetan side are the major attractions for the foreign visitors in Tibet. Likewise, Nepali tour operators are also handling expeditions to Everest and other mountain peaks from the Tibetan side every year. "We received a circular from Tibet Mountaineering Association (TMA) saying that Tibet was open for foreign visitors. We sold the package to our guests. But when we applied for visa, we were denied. We incurred a huge loss," a trekking operator shared his experience. According to Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), the transit visitors to Tibet stay at least three to five nights in Nepal. "They stay in our hotels, consume our tourism products and services and go to Tibet. They stay in Nepal on their way back home from Tibet and do some sightseeing and shopping also. "The closure of TARC will also incur significant financial losses," Nandini Lahe Thapa, tourism marketing and promotion director of NTB said. She further added that the closure of Tibet was one of the reasons behind the decline of tourist arrival via air in June. Tourist arrival in June had declined by seven per cent in comparison to the arrival figure of same period last year. Thapa predicted further decline in tourists arrival in July and August as it is the high time for Tibet visit. Nepal is set to lose more than 1,00,000 bednights and more than \$1.1 million, according to the NTB.

RENOWNED WOMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST and a member of the Constituent Assembly (CA) Sapana Pradhan Malla has bagged a prestigious award. The US-based Peter and Patricia Gruber Foundation has selected Malla along with Iraqi women activist Yanar Mohammad and Palestine feminist Dr Nadera Shalhoub for this year's Gruber International Women's Rights Prize. Malla bagged the award under the category Advancing Gender Equality. The prize carries a purse of half a million dollars (Rs 34.4 million) along with a gold medal. The foundation has recognized Malla's role in securing women's reproductive rights and her fight against laws discriminatory against women. "This honors my work," Malla said. She said she would invest the award money to build a shelter for women victims of violence and to strengthen the Forum for Women, Law and Development, of which she is a former chairperson. ■

LESOTHO EXPORTS WATER TO SOUTH AFRICA: A Lesson to Nepal

•AB Thapa



The Lesotho Highlands Water Project is one of the largest and the most intricate construction projects currently underway in the world. This project has been conceived to export water to South Africa and also to generate electricity. The first phase of this ambitious long-term master plan was scheduled for completion in 1996. It is planned to deliver 18 cum./s of water to South Africa as well as generate 72 MW of hydroelectricity for Lesotho during the first phase. The cost of the first phase project was US \$ 2. 518 billion based on

1991 estimate..

The entire cost of the project (excluding the hydropower addition that constitutes a small component of the total project cost) was to be recovered from the export of water to South Africa.

The net downstream benefit to accrue to Lesotho from the export of water to South Africa after deducting the project cost was US \$ 25 million per annum.

Lesotho Completely Encircled by South Africa

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

Lesson to Nepal

Nepal must hold negotiations to reach an agreement with India to get a fair share of such downstream benefit prior to taking the final decision to implement our storage projects. Else our country would be deprived of such downstream benefit for ever. We all would be failing to protect our legitimate national interest whereas even the most

backward landlocked country in Africa like the Lesotho is able to recover 56 percent of such net downstream benefit to accrue to the South African Republic from the use of the regulated flow of its rivers. Lesotho lagging far behind our country in human development index and completely

thrown at the mercy of the powerful South Africa has recently demonstrated that it too has a good sense to take full advantage of the opportunity to exploit its water resources to accrue multifold benefits.

Lesotho Highlands Project

For South Africa, the water was required to supplement the existing supply in the Vaal Basin catchments area, the principal source of water for the Pretoria- Witwatersrand- Vereening (PWV) area, the country's commercial and industrial heartland which includes the Greater Johannesburg and Pretoria conurbations. The Lesotho Highlands Project, one of the world's largest construction projects currently underway, is geographically divided into two sections. More than three-quarters of the tunneling and all storage reservoirs are located in Lesotho, the tiny landlocked Kingdom within South Africa. This constitutes about 95% of all

construction work required. Construction began in 1986 on the \$300 million Katse dam in southeastern Lesotho, the main component of phase 1A of the Highlands Water Project. Some 1,500 Basotho workers were to be employed on the dam project.

The portion in South Africa comprises the final 22km of the delivery tunnel network from the Lesotho border to the scheme's outfall near the Axle River (also known as the Ash River). From the outfall, the transferred water, a maximum flow of 18cum/sec for Phase 1A and equivalent to 567 million cum per year, will eventually enter into the Vaal Dam about 70 km south of Johannesburg.

By the year 2000, the PWV will accommodate 42% of South Africa's population and will generate 56% of all industrial and 79% of all mining output. It is expected that the population of

the Vaal River supply area downstream of the Vaal Dam will increase at a rate of 2.4% per year from 5.75 million in 1980 to almost 12 million by the year 2010. This represents an increase of 106%. The corresponding domestic and industrial water

demand is expected to increase from 979 million cum to 3803 million cum per year, an average annual growth rate of 4.6%. Phase 1A of the Highland's Project will secure a reliable supply of water to the PWV region to the year 2004 when the current 7 million population is expected to increase to 10.5 million.

Preparing the Groundwork

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

Royalties for the first 50 years are based on historical feasibility studies carried out by South Africa to ensure a reliable water supply for the PVW area. One of the earliest schemes investigated was based solely in South Africa and proposed diverting water from the Orange River and

using a combination of gravity and pumping facilities to convey it over about 500 km of canals and tunnels to the Vaal Dam.

With the Vaal Dam at a higher elevation than the intake, such a scheme would have been expensive both in terms of electricity for consumption for continued pumping requirements and for the ongoing costs of operation and maintenance. Investigation of an alternative scheme proved significantly more cost effective. Under that scheme water would be diverted from the upper reaches of the Orange in Lesotho where it rises as the Senqu River and be gravity fed to the Vaal Dam. It is on this scheme that the current Lesotho Highlands Project is based.

Sharing Net Downstream Benefit

South Africa agreed to pay for the capital cost of structures required for water transfer and to share with

Royalties for the first 50 years are based on historical feasibility studies carried out by South Africa to ensure a reliable water supply for the PVW area. One of the earliest schemes investigated was based solely in South Africa and proposed diverting water from the Orange River and using a combination of gravity and pumping facilities to convey it over about 500 km of canals and tunnels to the Vaal Dam.

Lesotho the total cost savings between this scheme and the original scheme based solely in South Africa. As such, South Africa pays to Lesotho as a lump sum each year a predetermined amount which constitutes 56% of the cost benefit savings between the two schemes. These

include the difference between the two schemes. These include the difference in the estimated capital costs of building each scheme; the cost of electricity saved by eliminating the pumping requirement on the original South African scheme; and the projected maintenance and operating cost savings between the two schemes. This amounts to an annual income for the Lesotho of approximately \$25 million per year (in 1991 prices) for the first 50 years of the Treaty, subject to various adjustments for inflation and other financial considerations. At that time, the difference in the capital cost of building each scheme will have been realized in full and royalties will be renegotiated for the remaining period of the Treaty. Undoubtedly, the downstream benefit to accrue to Lesotho after 50 years would be far exceeding the present amount because by that time the project cost would have been fully recovered.

BUDGET 2008

Interim Arrangement

The promise of new Nepal through economic development received a jolt as the govt failed to even bring a proper budget

By SANJAYA DHAKAL

Despite the high-sounding promises by political parties regarding their commitment to build a peaceful and prosperous new Nepal, their beginning has dashed people's expectations.

Experts and economists have joined their voices in flaying the political leadership for failing to bring a full-fledged budget at this critical moment. This is the first time in the six-decade-long history of budget in Nepal, that the government has failed to bring a proper budget.

As Finance Minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat presented advance expenditure bill instead of full-fledged budget at the Constituent Assembly (CA) meeting on Monday (July 14), they have said that the message will not be received well by people expecting huge economic strides in the aftermath of the promising political changes.

"This is a very sad day for those who wished for development," said Binod Chaudhary, a leading industrialist and a member of Constituent Assembly (CA). "We hope that this does not become a precedent for the years to come. The time has already come to bring the economic issues to the centerstage of national debate," said Rajendra Kumar Khetan, another prominent industrialist who is also a CA member.

Former Finance Minister Dr. Prakash Chandra Lohani said it was the failure of the political leadership that a full budget could not come.

On its part, the government has said that it could not bring a budget

before the annual policies and programs of the government, which, in turn, could not be presented as there is no head of state. As such, FM Dr. Mahat unveiled the advance expenditure bill, which allows the government to spend up to Rs 73 billion till a budget is presented by the new government.

The Constituent Assembly, Monday, unanimously, passed the advance expenditure bill presented by the government. The passage of the bill now allows the government to carry on with routine financial activities beginning July 16 when the new fiscal year begins.

Finance minister Dr Ram Sharan Mahat had presented the advance expenditure bill to act as an interim budget of Rs 73.5 billion for the new fiscal year 2065-66, which will be replaced by a full-fledged budget to be presented by new government later.

The interim arrangement about the budget allowing the government to collect revenue and spend its resources was presented at the constituent assembly Monday. The full-fledged budget could not be presented due to delay in formation of new government.

The tax plans, and economic policies of the budget presented last year will get continuity until a complete budget is presented by the new government.

Briefing about the current economic situation and macroeconomic indicators, Minister Mahat said that current fiscal year recorded 5.6 percent GDP growth – highest in the last



Finance Minister: Ad hoc management

seven years. Agriculture sector registered 5.65 percent growth while non-agriculture sector registered 5.57 percent growth.

The gross domestic saving increased to 11.5 percent, up from 9.7 percent last year. The government hopes that revenue generation by the end of this fiscal year would increase by 22 percent more than initial estimation.

Likewise, the foreign assistance has substantially increased from Rs 37.2 billion in the last fiscal year to Rs 57.6 billion in the current fiscal year. The government debt, during this period, has decreased from Rs 329 billion to 324 billion.

During the current financial year, the general expenditure of the government increased by 24 percent and the capital expenditure by 31.6 percent. Dr Mahat also expressed hope that the new government will take into consideration the demand raised by the government employees for salary increment. The new government, possibly led by CPN (Maoist), will adjust the expenditure made during this period while tabling the full-fledged financial bill. ■



Political Leaders : Power without accountability

LEADERS

Power Without Accountability

If the recent actions of political leaders are judged, one can raise question regarding their accountability of power

By KESHAB POUDEL

After they disturbed the proceedings of Constituent Assembly for ten consecutive days, members of Madhesi parties paved the way to pass the fifth amendments in interim constitution taking a surprising decision to boycott it at the last minute.

Nobody knows for what motive they disturbed the CA, which is regarded as a highest elected body, meeting for ten consecutive days and why they let the resolution pass subsequently?

After Madhesi's decision to boycott the meetings, the last two meet-

ing of CA endorsed some important resolutions. It passed the resolution for Fifth Amendment of Interim Constitution on 13 July and passed the finance bill on 14 July. The July 15th meeting even accepted the date for the election of president and vice president, speaker and deputy speaker on July 19. But, writing this story till Wednesday evening, it is yet to finalize the name of president. Despite their choice of CPN-UML candidate other than Madhav Kumar Nepal, prime minister G.P. Koirala is still forefront candidate. No body knows who will be the next president?

The fifth amendments paved the way for making and breaking of the government, elections of president and vice president, speaker and deputy speaker on the basis of simple majority.

Why it took such a long time to decide on such important issue. Why did the political parties not include the articles of making and breaking the government, which they were discussing for quite a long time, in the fourth amendment? Although both the resolutions were drafted in Baluwatar meeting, no body takes responsibility why do they ignore them.

"If the government and the ruling alliance parties could perform such a serious task so quickly why they have yet failed to replace that institution by a republican president? The only probable answer is that the same unseen force was not prepared to bring communists in both the capacity as president and prime minister. But as long as this elected body is there, there is no other way except to accept that reality," said the political analyst.

To understand it, one has to judge them by their actions. Soon after the election of CA, the first thing they did was declare Nepal as a republic. The parties tabled the amendment bill on May 28 but no discussions were permitted and none of the members were allowed to speak their mind against or in favour of the bill.

"They had some unseen compulsions to do and they did it instantly soon after the resolution was tabled by Home Minister Krishna Prasad Sitaula - who had lost the election and had no legitimate right to participate in the proceedings. There was no voice of resentment about the process except tiny minority group of four of RPP-Nepal members," said the political analyst.

Hardly can one find such a case

elsewhere where fundamental law of the country was amended six times in just over a year and no one were allowed to discuss on such a vital issue of abolishing the monarchy.

"I am confused when I was on the way to CA," said prime minister Girija Prasad Koirala when he came to attend the second meeting of CA on June 27.

"If prime minister, who has absolute power to continue as long as he can, confused and misinformed about such serious problem like that of Madhesis, no one can guess in what position he has been dealing with country's other problems," said the analyst. "Whether it is because of his advanced age or because of some machinations, he has been useful as a prestigious face than as a real chief executive." "That reflects not only the unstable mind of the ruling leadership but also shows utter lack of farsightedness."

At a time when even CA has been already made as a rubber stamp confining the CA just to endorse the resolution agreed by leaders of three parties, where are these politicians accountable to? At least, they are not accountable to CA or the people.

"Although they still claim that CA is the supreme body to decide the fate of the country, even after the election of the CA, the body is taken for granted as all major decisions are taken

outside its building while it is only served stamp the resolution," said the political analyst.

Even in political party's policy making body, central committee members are not allowed to speak or to discuss. Personalised leadership is ruling the party and committees and all other institutions are taken for granted. Even if whole party stands against Prime Minister Koirala or CPN-Maoist leader Prachanda, their opinion prevail. As both the leaders, though look powerful, are unable to stop Madhesi members from disturbing the proceedings.

These events show that political leaders are exercising the power without any accountability to the people or the CA.

Who has the power now?

In all the political events, overwhelming leaders are helpless including the elected members of CA. As CPN-Maoist leader Prachanda recently said, "The foreign forces are dividing the parties into different factions. On the face of it, some leaders come across as leaders of certain parties but they actually represent Indian, American, European and Chinese." (July 10, Kantipur).

"He made it clear that they are not at least accountable to the people. It does not mean that they have no accountability anywhere. They are accountable to unseen centers not to the people," said a political analyst. "Outwardly, the CA represents the people

of Nepal but its internal intricacies have turned it into a mere rubber stamp as was seen in its deliberations where members were given instructions not to



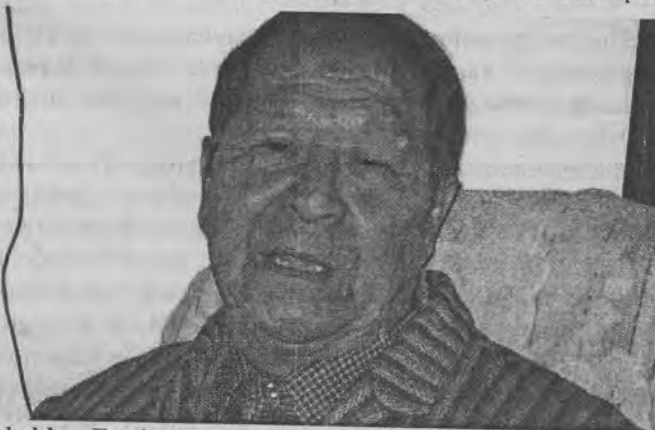
PM Koirala : Misinformed

speak out but raise their hands in favour of the resolution."

"India with the population of over 1 billion has 539 members in the house whereas Nepal having a population of 26 million has this big jamboree of 601 members. It appears that it was sheer foolishness to have such a huge number of members but keeping in view of the grand design against Nepal this was a cool headed and calculated move," said the political analyst.

Even the partners in power have gone on record saying that major decision of the government are guided and influenced by foreign forces particularly the closest neighbour India. From CPN-ML leader C.P. Mainali to Nepal Workers and Peasant Party leader Narayan Man Bijukcchhe to Lila Mani Pokharel, all in record blaming India influencing Nepal's power politics. As Prachanda's colleague Mohan Baidya Kiran, who claims that he was 10 years on hiding in various India cities, bluntly said: "India is blocking us from going to power?"

These events show that political leaders are exercising the power without any accountability to the people. Leaders who are exercising the power of the house are in fact neither guided by its opinion nor controlled by their capacity. As the leaders are ruling the country without any accountability, in this prolong stalemate anything can be apprehended in days to come. ■



Bijukcchhe : Frank admission

PRIVATE HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Competing For Quality

With growing private investment, Nepal's higher secondary education system has seen quantum jump in terms of quality and quantity. At a time when government schools/colleges are highly politicized and heavily subsidized, private higher secondary schools and colleges have come up to fill the gap. Along with imparting quality education, these schools are generating employment opportunities and revenues. The experiences have shown that private sector participation in competitive environment can transform the quality of higher secondary education making it qualitatively competitive

By KESHAB POUDEL

Like thousands of other young boys who passed School Leaving Certificate Examination (SLC) securing distinction mark, Bhupal Khatri, 16, a resident of Ramkot Village Development Committee, 12, kilometer west of capital, too, decided to join private higher secondary education known popularly as Ten Plus Two. Although there was a government-owned higher secondary school nearby his house and TU affiliated colleges, he preferred to study in private Ten Plus Two college.

Having secured 85 percent marks in SLC, Khatri is seeking admission in any of the top ten higher secondary colleges. "I will decide the college within a few days looking at academic environment, past performance and fee structure," said Khatri.

However, Sagar Dangol, 16, a resident of Sallaghari, Bhaktapur has already decided to go for management faculty in Global College of Management in Baneshwor. Although there are many higher secondary schools nearby his

residence, he preferred Global College because of the credibility of its performance and sound academic environment.

Founded by a group of professionals and education enthusiasts like former governor of Nepal Rastra Bank and member of CADr. Tilak Rawal, Professor Dr. Pushkar Bajracharya and Prem Raj Panta, among others, the Global College of Management has already been established as one of the top institutions for competitive and quality education in



Students at Global College: Dreams in their eyes

business subject in just over three four years.

Khatri and Dangol are two students among thousands of students who have been lured by the ten plus two private colleges. Although the government/community colleges and colleges under Tribhuvan University offer education virtually free of cost, bright and talented students naturally prefer private ones.

In terms of physical facilities, infrastructures and human resources, the government colleges are comparatively in advantageous position than the private colleges. The government colleges receive the fund from government whereas private schools and colleges rely on student fees for their operation and management cost. Even in this year's interim budget the finance minister Dr. Ram Sharan Mahat allocated Rs. 9.47 billion rupees out of Rs. 73.53 billion for education.

As they do not receive any grant and subsidy, the fee structures of private schools are higher. In terms of cost and benefits and, the rate or return of investment, private colleges are in better position. The students, themselves, are also

competent and they qualify for higher education offered in the county and outside.

"Private sector is doing thankless job investing money in education sector. Although we produce quality students with comparatively little investment than the government, every one blames us for making money," said Dinesh Shrestha, president of Lord Buddha Academy and president of Nepalgunj Medical College in an interactions program organized by SWATEE. "Private sectors have already shown that they can make difference in education sector in terms of quality and competitiveness."

As the government bears all the expenditure of the government colleges, the teachers and management do not have to worry much about the result and quality but the private schools need to prove their efficiency and quality to survive in the competitive market. "Although this is purely a social job, we need to be competitive and qualitative to survive," said Nara Bahadur Bista, promoter of Global College of Management.

"Because of failure of government colleges in providing quality education,

the private education institutions have come to fill the gap. In terms of infrastructures and human resources, we are not in a position to compete with government colleges. We are able survive because of our dedication and commitment to the education," said Bista.

Private Vs Government

Nepal's experiences have shown that government intervention in the education sector will ruin its quality. But still there is no dearth of people who promote this idea. Being a country of rampant poverty, populist slogans like free education and nationalization attracts attention of people but it won't work in reality.

Private higher secondary schools and colleges continue to face threat from various student organizations affiliated to major political parties, parents and so called civil society members.

Student unions, populist civil society organizations and education experts accuse private education institutions of creating disparities and making higher secondary education as a money making venture. In reality, the situation is different as the private colleges are filling the

gap of quality education encouraging the public sector to follow them.

"Private colleges and schools are commercializing the education. The government must nationalize them," said Lekhanath Neupane, president of All Nepal Free Student Union (Revolutionary), which is affiliated to Maoists, a party that is widely expected to lead the new government. "Education is a basic human right and the government must introduce the free education scheme."

Nepal has a very bitter experience of nationalization of education. After nationalization of education in 1972 under a New Education Policy by then Panchayat government, the quality of education had completely collapsed. After eight years of debacle, the government realized the need to invite the private sector in education. Subsequently, Tribhuvan University started to permit private college as well as the government started to permit the private schools.

However, nobody has time to remember the past experiment. "We want private investment but it must be under the government guidelines," said Pradeep Poudel, president of Nepal Student Union, a student wing affiliated to Nepali Congress.

Education of Globalized Quality

In the last few years overwhelming number of top class students who desired to compete in the globalized competitive market, chose the higher secondary education because the courses offered were updated version and competitive to global context. Whereas Tribhuvan University's curriculum of proficiency education is redundant and has not been changed for decades.

"There is flexibility in course and the curriculum is updated from time to time. This is the reason students are more interested to study higher secondary course," said Bista.

As higher secondary education was promoted to meet the global challenge, its curriculum needs frequent changes. "There is no question of compromise in the quality of education. Higher Secondary Education Board has been trying its best to teach new course and bring the results in time," said Dr. Upendra Koirala, vice chairman of Higher Secondary School Board.

"We promoted concept of higher secondary education with an aim to impart



Education fair: Attraction of quality

quality education back home luring Nepalese students going abroad for such education and make the education environment qualitatively competitive," said Congress leader Govinda Raj Joshi, former minister of education 1993-1995. "Of course, it has created certain disparities but it also saved huge amount of foreign currency from going abroad and produced quality students back in Nepal to compete in the global context."

"We will not compromise with quality education. We want to select the quality students," said Mukunda Silwal chief executive officer Golden Gate International College.

Tribhuvan University-affiliated colleges - which enroll more than 50 percent students - teaches outmoded courses of proficiency certificate level, and their quality naturally is very low. As a recruiting center for party cadres, the government colleges hardly care about the quality education.

The government colleges and schools have their own buildings; but their overall management is so poor that classes are overcrowded and broken windowpanes are seldom repaired.

"It is also important to improve the overall environment to make colleges/schools student-friendly. Along with providing quality education, we have also been trying to give good environ-

ment to the students," said Baburam Pokharel, founding principal of V.S. Niketan College and School, which is one of the top schools among higher secondary schools.

In line with growing demands, this year 497 high schools applied for operation at the Higher Secondary Education Council but only 116 got the permission.

According to Higher Secondary Education Board, there are altogether 1545 higher secondary schools. Out of them 965 are under the government and community and 290 are privately run. Among them, 160 are plus two schools and 130 are campuses. This year, the board received 497 new applications for its affiliation but only 90 government and 26 private schools were given the permission. Out of those 26 private schools, 10 will be based in Kathmandu.

Of the 2,55,652 students who passed the SLC, many will join the private schools. In the last four years, the number of students joining higher secondary education has drastically increased. In the year 2061, only 60,000 students appeared in class 11 examination. The number rose to 1,46,000 in 2064.

Private colleges have already proved that they can provide quality education if the government creates the competitive and friendly environment. Private-public participation is a key to transform the quality of education. ■

HEALTH GOVERNANCE

Delivery of Death!

The very act of giving birth is still the leading cause of death of women in the country. Latest Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), which is conducted every five years by the government, indicated a sharp fall in MMR from 539 in 1996 to 281 a decade later for every 100,000 live births. However, the decline is not evenly spread out across the country. Among backward communities and in rural regions, the maternal health situation is still unimproved. The same survey points to an unsettling fact: one in five of all women aged between 15-49 years who died during the survey period (2001-2006) died while giving birth or due to complications related to their pregnancies. Moreover, even among those women who survive childbirth, many suffer from chronic consequences. For every woman who dies during childbirth, there will be twenty others who suffer from debilitating consequences triggered by a host of reasons including lack of medical care, multiple pregnancies, early marriage and so on. This situation is a stark reminder of poor health governance in the country, particularly the concentration of health facilities in urban areas, which exposes a large segment of poor population to the serious health threats

By SANJAYADHAKAL

Rcently when a local social activist Prasis Mahara met Parvati Parki in Doti district of far-western region in Nepal, Parvati made a simple request – she

wanted poison. Unable to bear the constant pain and discomfort due to severe uterine prolapse (also called fallen womb), Parvati had expressed her wish to die at the first opportunity she

got to narrate her misery.

Wrinkled beyond her age, Parvati, 36, looks like she is a 60-year-old woman due to the hard life she has been through. She comes from a marginalised Dalit (so-



Parvati: Unbearable Agony

called untouchables) community. She was married at the age of 10 with a man 20 years older. She gave birth to 10 children – six of whom survived. Two years ago, she gave birth to her last child but that delivery proved too much for her frail, weary and undernourished body. Her uterus gave in. She suffered from severe case of uterine prolapse, which is a debilitating condition in which the supporting pelvic structure of muscles, tissue, and ligaments gives way, and the uterus drops out of the vagina.

“She cannot work or walk normally. She has to pass urine standing up. Simple daily routines have become grueling punishment for her,” Mahara said.

Doctors say that such a condition is often the result of difficult labour, frequent pregnancies, lack of antenatal care and rigorous working schedule.

They say that in less severe cases, the fallen womb can be stabilised by inserting a rubber ring, or pessary while surgery is required in severe cases. “In Nepal, where fertility is high and women carry heavy loads on their backs, one out of ten women are estimated to suffer from the condition,” according to United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The UNFPA has said that 600,000 women all over Nepal need urgent medical care for uterine prolapse.

Due to lack of money for treatment and social stigma associated with illness, Parvati had not disclosed her agony to anyone and had not visited a health center even though she lives few hours away from district administration office and health post in Dhamigaon-5 of Silgadi municipality in Doti district.

Each time she gave birth, she did that

all alone and used rusty sickles to cut off the umbilical cord. Particularly, in far and mid west region of Nepal, there is a tradition whereby women have to give birth in a secluded and unhygienic shed away from her husband and other male members of family. Most of them will get the help from traditional birth attendants. Some, like Parvati, go through the suffering all alone.

Even the latest DHS shows that a whopping 81 percent of births still take place in homes and remaining take place in a health facility. Five years ago, the percentage of women delivering in a health facility was less than half. Even now seven percent of births are delivered without any type of assistance at all.

On such a backdrop, the news of a sharp decline in MMR in a period of ten years - which were marked by extreme

instability, violent conflict and contraction of state's presence from various rural areas - has been received with much skepticism.

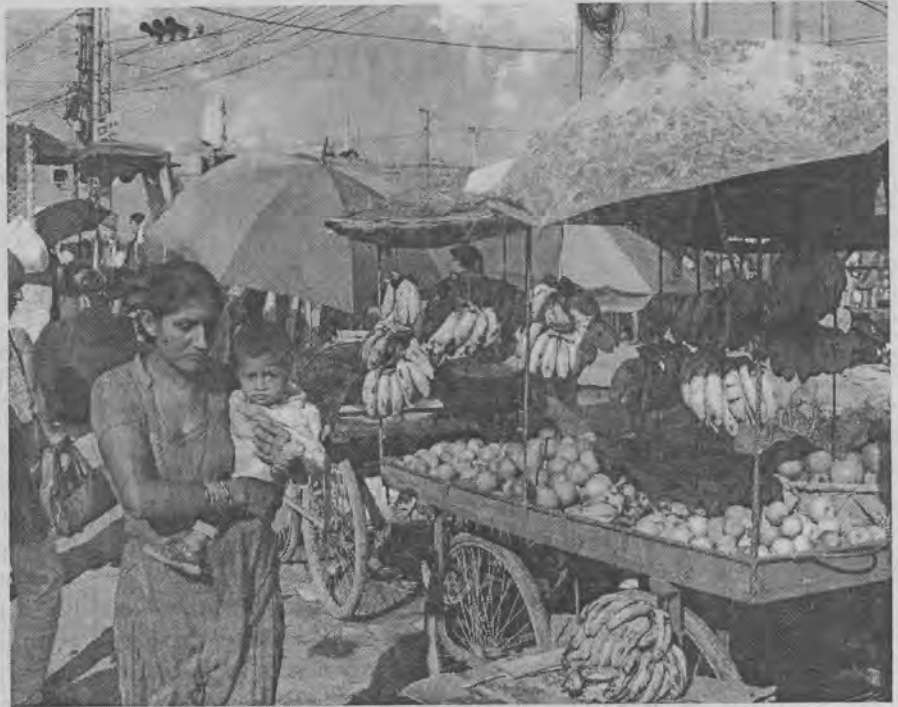
Even senior government officials have expressed 'pleasant surprise' over the dramatic fall in the MMR. "Various reasons like increased awareness, expansion of health care facilities, immunisation, antenatal care may be behind this fall. As the fall has been very substantial, we are currently engaged in further analysis to find out the truth," said Ram Hari Aryal, a former joint secretary at the Ministry of Health and Population.

Bhogendra Dotel, senior officer at Family Health Division of the Ministry, added that improvement in family planning awareness, which is evident by the increase in Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR) from 39 to 48 percent in last five years, is largely responsible for the decline in MMR. "The average family size has decreased from 4.6 children (for every parent) in 1996 to 4.1 in 2001 to 3.1 in 2006. This means there have been lesser pregnancies and, by that extension, lesser deaths," he said.

He, however, conceded that CPR and family planning awareness have increased much more in urban areas than in rural areas and among backward communities.

Mahara who has been working in remote areas of Doti district - which is one of the most backward districts in Nepal in terms of human development indicators - in promoting social and health issues for the last one and a half decade, says that she has not seen dramatic improvement in MMR situation in that region. "Maybe the MMR has fallen because of improvement in urban areas. But in rural areas, the fall is not at all that dramatic," she said.

Agrees former minister who hails from Doti district, Bhakta Bahadur Balayar. "The situation not only in Doti but other backward districts is similar. The improvement is coming very slowly in rural regions. The dramatic fall in MMR



Woman : Too little services

is possibly because of huge improvement in urban areas," said Balayar.

Substantiating their claims, the DHS shows considerable differences in maternal health indicators for women living in different parts of the country. It shows that while 85 percent of urban women received antenatal care from Skilled Birth Attendant (SBA is a person with basic training on maternal health), only 38 percent of rural women did so.

The DHS adds that about twice as many mothers living in central, western and eastern regions (which are relatively more developed) received antenatal care from SBA as mothers living in far western region. Urban women (52 percent) are twice as likely as rural women (26 percent) to have received four or more antenatal visits. The WHO has prescribed at least four antenatal care visits.

Almost half (48 percent) of children in urban areas are born in a health facility, compared with 14 percent in rural areas. Since Nepal is known as a country of villages - there are 3913 Village Development Committees (VDCs) compared with 58 municipalities - the poor situation in rural region would drag down the overall national growth.

Wrecked by violent conflict and grinding poverty, Nepal has not been able to improve its health situation. At present, for every 18,439 people there is one doctor. Likewise, for every 2349 people, there is one hospital bed. And even these doctors and hospitals are concentrated in urban centers.

As leaders of the world have expressed their commitment to improve maternal health substantially by 2015 as a part of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is imperative for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Nepal to redouble their efforts to bring down MMR and maternal health-related problems not only in urban but also in rural areas and among traditionally marginalised communities. Parvati and similar other women of Nepal deserve no less.

For this to happen, however, the government needs to overhaul its health governance system to make them people-oriented and expand the reach of the health professionals and health facilities to the remotest corner of the country where women like Parvati are continuing to go through immeasurable agony. ■

“Korea’s Unique Model Of Community Development”

Kim Bok-Hee

Ms Kim Bok-Hee is the Resident Representative of Korea’s overseas assistance agency called KOICA. She has been working in KOICA Nepal Office since last two years. She shared the Korean assistance venture in Nepal with SPOTLIGHT. Excerpts:

How has KOICA been supporting in Nepal’s development efforts?

Since 1991, KOICA has supported various development assistance programs in Nepal to share Korea’s knowledge and experiences accumulated over the course of our own development. Of these development assistance programs, KOICA has put special emphasis on human resources development as it serves as the basis for national development. In line with this, KOICA has dispatched Korea Overseas Volunteers (KOVs) to share our knowledge and technology in the fields of child education, nursing, ICT, automobile repair and rural development, etc. KOICA has also dispatched experts for policy level consultations based on the needs of ministries and organizations of the host countries.

Can you elaborate about your assistance on human resources?

To enhance the capacity building of Nepalese government officials, KOICA invites about 60 to 70 government officials to Korea every year for academic courses and training programs. These courses primarily deal with ICT and the governance sector with an aim to narrow the digital divide, spur economic growth and promote good governance. In addition to this, KOICA also offers courses on rural development, education, vocational training and energy, etc. In recent years, KOICA has focused on project type assistance in sectors relating to education and vocational training, health, and ICT to provide more efficient and result-oriented assistance commensurate with Nepal’s Development Strategies and Millennium Development Goals. Other than this, KOICA supports Korean NGOs in Nepal which are engaged in social welfare at the local level and conducts a provision of equipment such as computer and medical equipment.

What are the areas where KOICA is involved?

KOICA’s significant activity in Nepal began by supporting sericulture development projects from

1993 to 1996 as well as the feasibility study of Modi Khola Hydroelectricity in 1993 and Kanti Rajpath improvement from 1998 to 1999. Since then KOICA has involved itself in various fields of development activities with education, health, ICT and rural development being some of the priority areas of KOICA at present. While focusing its activities in the education and the health sectors, KOICA considers that ICT in recent years has been regarded as one of the essential component for economic development. Against this backdrop, KOICA is planning to expand its assistance programs related to ICT in Nepal. In addition, capacity building in sectors where Nepal has comparative advantages will also be supported.

Korea has been supporting Nepal’s E-governance project, how will Nepal benefit from it?

We are living in an era of information, and access to information is considered as a right which has become a vital issue for the private as well as the public sector. E-governance can contribute to efficient management of the organization and better public services. The obvious benefits from e-governance are increased transparency, less corruption, time saving, greater convenience and cost reduction. Nepal can avail these benefits through the adoption of e-governance to meet people’s growing expectations. But E-governance is a challenging task so that the top leader’s full commitment of implementation and wide range of innovation activities in the ministries are critical for successful E-governance projects.

Along with the IT sector, Korea has a unique model for local development, how can Nepal benefit from these programs?

Rural development is a pivotal issue for Nepal’s economic development and poverty alleviation because 80% of the population and 90% of the poor live in rural areas. Surely Nepal can adopt Korea’s unique model of community development known as “Saemaul Undang (New Community Movement)” in Korea.

Who has initiated the programs?

This movement initiated by the Korean government in the 1970s significantly transformed Korea’s rural areas in multiple dimensions along with the improvement of physical infrastructure and income

To enhance the capacity building of Nepalese government officials, KOICA invites about 60 to 70 government officials to Korea every year for academic courses and training programs.

generation capacities. It also promoted enlightenment of local people through "Saemaul Spirit" diligence, self-reliance, cooperation and leadership training. In fact, in the present context, where the country is in the process of transformation (regional autonomy), the "Saemaul Spirit" model to empower and enlighten rural communities could be a breakthrough for the New Nepal with a national vision of a "prosperous, peaceful and just Nepal."

Do you have any programs specifically targeted at local development bodies like village development and district development committees?

In fact, KOICA strategically selects its project location where local people can benefit the most. Bearing in mind regional balanced development in Nepal and having scarce resources in remote areas, KOICA has taken District Development Committees (DDC) and Village Development Committees (VDC) into consideration as development partners in the course of project identification so that it can serve the local people. Furthermore, in the placement of Volunteers such as nurses, medical technicians, teachers and engineers, priority has been given to local areas. Some KOVs are working very closely with local government, in particular volunteers in the fields of rural development and social welfare. Besides, the projects for the improvement of sericulture in Khopas and Itahari completed in 1996 are examples of community development. At present, KOICA has closely cooperated with Thimi Municipality for the hospital construction project in Thimi and with Butwal Municipality for the vocational training project in Butwal.

How do you see the performance of the projects launched by KOICA?

The performance of projects supported by KOICA is satisfactory. However, monitoring the sustainability of these projects by respective organizations could not be relevantly conducted due mainly to lack of sense of ownership and inefficient management from the Nepalese side.

How many projects are currently going on in Nepal?

KOICA is currently conducting various projects in Nepal. Here, I would like to introduce the three projects. The project for the establishment of the Korea-Nepal Friendship Hospital in Thimi aims to improve public health care services. The project for the establishment of the government integrated data and training center (GIDTC) aims to facilitate efficient e-governance services to the people of Nepal. The GIDTC is expected to open early next year. In recent time, the KOICA Nepal Office has signed the Records of Discussion for the estab-



lishment of the Korea-Nepal Institute of Technology in Butwal with CTEVT (Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training). This project aims to solve the severe problem of unemployment by developing human resources through the enhancement of technical skills, especially among youth. It can also contribute to promoting industrial development through the advanced skilled manpower supply based on demands from industry.

KOICA volunteers have been coming to Nepal every year, which areas are they supporting?

From 1991 to 2007, KOICA has dispatched a total of 181 KOVs to Nepal. They have served in various fields such as nursing, medicine, education, IT, agriculture and automobile maintenance. In 2008 alone, KOICA has dispatched a total of 16 New KOVs to Nepal so far. As of July, 2008 there are 47 volunteers. Out of those 18 are providing services in the field of education and computer, 20 in the field of health including two doctors, 1 in the field of rural development, 5 in field of industry and energy, and 3 in the field of social welfare.

Nepal is concentrating on poverty alleviation, how can KOICA's programs support this goal?

As a matter of fact, the main policy objective of KOICA has been focusing on poverty alleviation and sustainable economic development in partner countries. KOICA has also made efforts to align its work with and achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with the international community and partner countries. In this light, KOICA activities in Nepal have been conducted to support poverty alleviation through various programs and in various sectors. The KOICA Nepal Office would like to focus on community development for the direct benefit of poor people more than ever before by supporting a New Community Movement program to Nepal in the future, in particular. ■

In 2008 alone, KOICA has dispatched a total of 16 New KOVs to Nepal so far. As of July, 2008 there are 47 volunteers.



Revolting policemen: In the net

POLICE REVOLT

Seizures In Security

Less than a month after the government fumbled in dealing with a revolt, another group of junior cops follow their path

By SANJAYADHAKAL

Although it ended with relative ease, the second revolt in police within a month has thrown open a barrage of questions regarding the need to overhaul the security system.

Experts have been unanimous in flaying the government for its handling of the revolt in Shamshergunj battalion of Armed Police Force (APF) nearly a month ago. Senior officials of Home Ministry had held 'talks' with rebels and 'admired' their 'courage for speaking out' against discrimination.

Such an ending to the grave crime of revolt with rebels ending up as heroes was certain to stir a hornet's nest.

So when the junior cops at Riot Police battalion in Nepalgunj seized the barrack and held seven of their senior officers hostage demanding end of discrimination, they were only taking a cue from the month-old incident.

However, this time, the government took a firm stand and forced the rebels to surrender – sending out a message that it will not tolerate such revolts in future.

"The government did this time what it should have done earlier. But now the larger question of addressing inherent problems in security organs remain," said a security expert.

Surrender

Around 19 rebel policemen have been suspended from the police service and an investigation into the incident has been launched. Those facing suspension include Sub-Inspector Dhan Bahadur B.K, who led the 'rebellion', Sub-Inspector Sailendra Basnet and head constables Birendra Karki and Khusiram Choudhary. The four policemen have been taken into custody for further investigation.

Around 150 other policemen are also under investigation for their role in the hostage drama.

The police administration presented the four policemen before media persons in Nepalgunj on Monday (July 14) where they accepted their guilt and requested for pardon.

The 'rebellious' policemen at Riot Police Battalion in Nepalgunj had surrendered at around midnight on Sunday ending the two-day-long hostage drama. After the government refused to hold talks or entertain their '20-point' demands and asked them to surrender or face consequences, they chose to sur-

render when policemen from the Armed Police Force stormed the compound. All seven senior police officers including SSP Parasuram Khatri held hostage were released.

"We told them we cannot hold talks and they must surrender," said Narendra Raj Sharma, Chief District Officer of Banke district. "They will face action as per the Police Act," he said.

The government adopted tough stance after the emergency meeting of the cabinet on Sunday authorized Home Ministry to take all necessary measures to end indiscipline and anarchy. "The Ministry has been asked to prepare its own modality to bring the situation under control. It has also been asked to take necessary steps to prevent such incidents from happening in future," said Minister for Water Resources Gyanendra Bahadur Karki.

Since Sunday, the battalion had been ringed by policemen from APF. The Nepali Army (NA) also ran aerial survey of the battalion and a team of Ranger Force were also deployed on Sunday evening building up the pressure on 'rebel policemen.' The District Administration of Banke has declared the surrounding areas around the battalion as riot-torn area and has restricted normal movement of people there. ■

BOOK

Diplomat's Diary

Former American diplomat Fredrick Selby, who stayed in Nepal in early 1960s as an economic advisor to the US Mission, records the transformation of Nepal as he saw

By KESHAB POUDEL

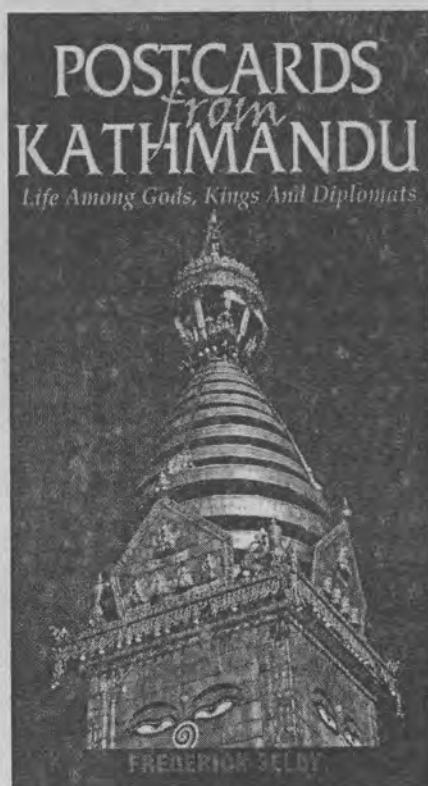
Though a few of the diplomats and foreign scholars who have stayed in Nepal have written their memoir, their observations have helped to enrich Nepal's history.

Because of their education, orientation and their habit of record keeping, western scholars and diplomats often collect enormous volume of information throughout their assignments. After leaving the place, they, too, carry the information in their mind about various events of the country.

Frederick Selby, who came to Nepal in a crucial political period when first elected government led by B.P. Koirala was dismissed, has narrated Nepal's social and economic transformation of the last fifty years. Selby who has visited Nepal several times in the past mentions political events just as a passing reference but that also provides many interesting insights about Nepal.

Selby's tenure in Nepal was characterized by the beginning of development programs. Selby witnessed all the ups and downs including exodus of Tibetan refugees into Nepal, political turmoil after dismissal of elected government and Nepal's entry into the phase of modernization.

He also discusses his personal relations with King Mahendra, prince Bashundhara, Barbara Adams, Tony Hagen, pioneer of tourism industry Boris, then Indian ambassador Harishwar Dayal and his wife Leela Rau Dayal. He pays great respect to Sir Edmund Hillary and his contribution to Nepal. Known as a man to have made the first Postcard of



**Postcards from
Kathmandu
(My Life among Gods,
Kings and Diplomats)**

By:

Frederick Selby

Published by:

**Vajra Publication, Jyatha,
Thamel P.O.Box -21779,**

Kathmandu, Nepal

Telephone: 977-1-

4220562

Email:

bidur_@mos.com.np

www.vajrabooks.com.np

Nepal, Selby also contributed to introduce Nepal in the global market as a Shangri-La for tourism and trekking.

"It certainly is a significant account of the people and life in Himalayas when Nepal opened its doors to the outside world," writes Peter Hillary mountaineer and son of Sir Edmund Hillary.

Along with the social and political life of the valley, the book also describes the life of diplomatic community in Nepal in early 1960s when travelling to Nepal was one of the most difficult job. Landing at Gauchar or present Tribhuvan airport sometimes took several days from Patna, a nearby Indian city because of weather. It was foggy during winter and clouds in summer made landing the plane at the airport virtually impossible.

"My life in Nepal, first as a diplomat then in later years as a trekker and climber, has provided me with the insights to feel empathy toward an often forgotten slice of the world's population," writes Selby in his introduction.

Long distance telephone communication was almost impossible. It required a drive to a small Indian telephone station at the Indian post office, near the Indian Embassy. Completion of a call often required waiting of more than an hour.

"I was surprised at how quickly I had developed a heartfelt feeling for the people of this beautiful but poor country. I was not here to serve my time but to try to make a difference in the quality of life of the Nepalese," writes Selby.

Published by Vajra Publication, this is a very interesting book which details Nepal's difficult phase of last fifty years. The book is very useful for Nepali as well as foreigners to understand the transformation of Nepal from merely a closed remote part of the world to a member of globalized community.

"This is the 50th publication of Vajra Publication. The book published by Vajra is available in worldwide market," said Bidur Dangol, proprietor of the publication.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE BOOK



His Majesty that an American boy was born on his birthday and had been given the name Mahendra. Some years later, a large, postcard-sized photo of the King arrived for our son, autographed by the other Mahendra. I enjoyed Basundhara. He had a pleasant, modest, laid-back aura about him. It took a while before he would provide information about himself- he was more a listener than a talker. He did not laugh.

On June 1, 2001, the popular King Birendra, son of the deceased King Mahendra, was murdered by his own son when crown prince Dipendra, a devotee of automatic weapons, descended on a family dinner firing a number of guns. Conspiracy theorists had their "say", implicating everyone from the USA- CIA to India, and to Gyanendra, the deceased king's brother.

Nepal's king Gyanendra remained aloof, uninvolved and a revolutionary movement headed by the Maoist, was born. The name monarchy was erased in May 2006. He was incapable of understanding the needs of the masses. And, so he no longer rules Nepal. ■

Alva Myrdhal, a native of Sweden and wife of the great Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdhal sent us a driver with written invitation to attend her gathering for prime minister Koirala (late BP Koirala). The same day the King decided to jail the prime minister. Prime minister Koirala's jailing was a serious blow to the educated youth who were fighting for democratic rule. Only then did I learn that she was the Swedish ambassador to India and Nepal and was visiting Nepal to present her credentials to the King.

I noticed that there were no picture postcards in Nepal, this most scenic country in the world. Without postcards, its great beauty would remain secret to tourists and travellers.

From a small clinic near Kathmandu, Dr. Bethal Fleming, a middle aged self assured woman physician graduated to larger quarters and found Shanta Bhawan Hospital in the mind 1950s. Several protestant medical missionaries came from the US to join Fleming.

To my question as to whether he regretted his inability to teach the gospel of Christ and his failure to be able to convert Nepali Hindus or Christianity, father Moran replied. "My fellow fathers and I educate young men and we teach them by book learning, lecture by personal example, to follow a life of morality, goodness and decency. We teach them to be charitable and to aid the unfortunate. When I see a graduate in later years perform good works, I feel fulfilled- it does not matter that he is not a Christian."

Most of the Khampas retracted to the Nepalese province of Mustang..... There and in the adjoining province of Dolpo, the CIA supplied these fighters with arms and ammunition equipment. The Khampas would cross the borders into Tibet to attack Chinese troops. The CIA backed operation was not well thought out.

The People's Republic representatives met with the Nepalese government and threatened to take over the state being used for arms smuggling to Tibet. The frightened Nepali ministers and king quickly closed the borders of the two states to visitors

I mentioned the availability of Mercedes to whoever would listen. Prince Bashundhara, Mharj Maurbahng, brother in law of the King, Boris, Nepal government officials and members of foreign embassy staffs. After a few days of getting the word out, a young Nepali acquaintance asked with me. His name was Juddha Bir Lama, an assistant to Nepal's foreign minister Dr. Tulsi Giri. "My minister Dr. Giri is interested in your car," he said. If it runs well and does not need repair, I have been authorised to give you the asking price in Nepali rupees."

I realized, of course, the Indian mission was most important to Nepal. The country was landlocked. At the time, there were no roads leading north over the Himalayas. The transportation was directed to the south, via India.

Prince Basundhara and Tika Sahib Mayurbhanj mentioned to

“The consensus should not be achieved on the basis of giving certain post to a certain person. Power sharing means sharing of ministerial posts.”

Pushpa Kamal Dahal Prachanda, Maoist chairman, at a press meet.

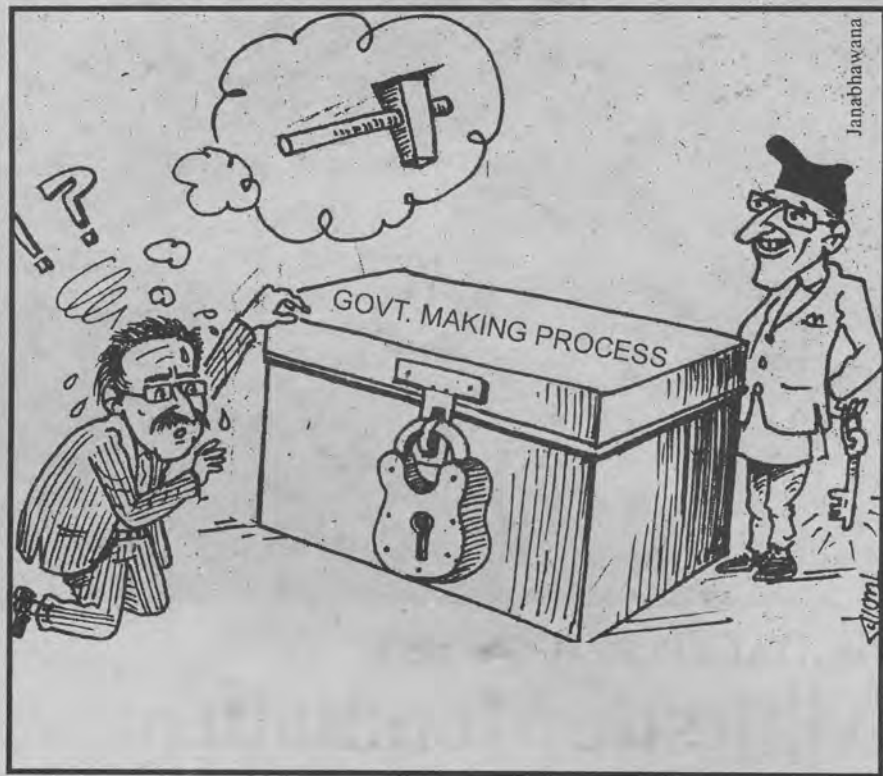
“Being the largest party, the Maoists should have their say on prime minister. Being the second largest party, Nepali Congress (NC) should have its say in choosing president.”

Ram Chandra Poudel, Minister for Peace and Reconstruction and vice president of NC, at a press meet.

“We will never accept this agreement because it intends at disintegrating the country. This agreement was done keeping the Seven-Party Alliance’s talks team at dark, nor was the SPA consulted before the signing of the agreement in Baluwatar.”

Jhal Nath Khanal, general secretary of the Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), deploring the February 28 pact with United Madhesi Loktantrik Forum, in The Himalayan Times.

“The party has decided that we will opt out of the whole process if the procedure to elect president/vice president, CA chairman/vice chairman, and government formation does not begin following the amendment of the constitution.”



Dev Gurung, senior Maoist leader, accusing Nepali Congress (NC) of stalling the process of forming new government, in Kantipur.

“Don’t think that this is the end of our struggle. Our struggle has just started.”

Upendra Yadav, coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), after allowing the resumption of Constituent Assembly meeting, indicating possibility of continued confrontation among major parties.

“It has been proved that the real intention behind the slogan of one Madhes one Province is to divide the country.”

Chitra Bahadur KC, leader of Rastriya Jana Morcha, speaking at the CA meeting, blasting remarks made by Madhesi leaders.

“There is no alternative to agitation. The three parties have played number game with us at the CA.”

Jaya Prakash Prasad Gupta, co-coordinator of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF), in Kantipur.

TRANSITION

ELECTED: Bijaya Kumar Gachhadar, unanimously, as the leader of the parliamentary party of Madhesi Janadhikar Forum (MJF) at the Constituent Assembly (CA). Chandrika Prasad Yadav and Mrigendra Kumar Singh Yadav, have been elected as chief whip and secretary of the MJF parliamentary party, respectively. Likewise, Dr. Tilak Rawal, Renu Yadav, Wakil Ahmad, Kalawati Paswan, Ramananda Mandal, Pramod Gupta, Nilam Barma and Ramjanam Chaudhary

have been elected as members of the parliamentary party working committee.

BAGGED: Sapana Pradhan Malla, woman rights activist and a member of the Constituent Assembly (CA), a prestigious award called Gruber prize. The prize carries a purse of half a million dollars (Rs 34.4 million) along with a gold medal.

RETURNED: Madhav Kumar Nepal, former general secretary of Unified Marxist Leninist (UML), after completing a visit to South America.

RESUMED: The meeting of the

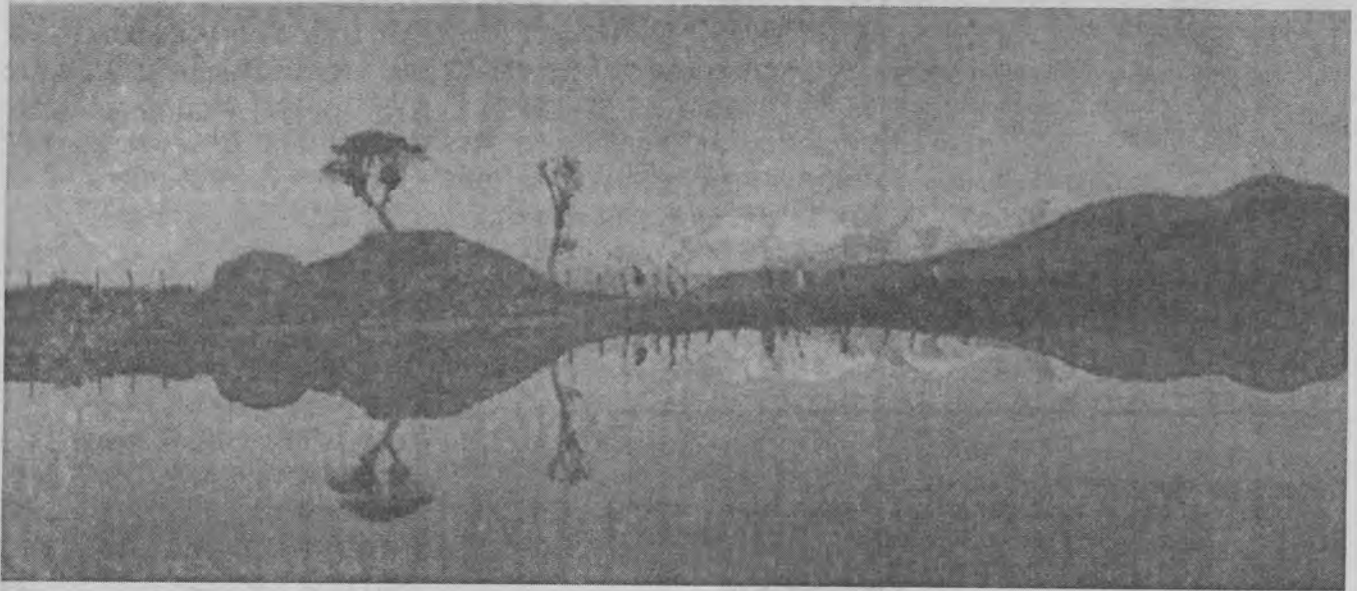
Constituent Assembly (CA), which were disrupted by Madhesi parties.

TABLED: The Fifth Amendment Bill along with supplementary bill, to make changes in the interim constitution.

REJECTED: A protest notice against the amendment bill, registered by Madhesi Janadhikar Forum leader JP Gupta, by the Constituent Assembly.

ENDED: The hospital closure strike, by the Nepal Medical Association.

ELECTED: Indra Kharel, as the president of Supreme Court bar association



DIGITAL PHOTO CONTEST

Majestic Mountain

Organized by International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), digital photo contest lured many photographers

By A CORRESPONDENT

Covered by beautiful mountains and Himalayas, the Hindkush region, which expands from east in Bhutan and China to west in Pakistan, is a home to world's renowned majestic mountains and hills. Along with the mountain, lakes and glaciers, it also consists of diverse presence of ethnicity, culture, religion and life.

As the temperature of earth is rising, the mountain regions are under the threat of losing their natural existence. The big lakes and glaciers, which are perennial sources of fresh water, are under the constant threat of outburst.

Unstable nature of mountain is also creating the trouble threatening the nature as well as life of the people living in the Hindukush region.

What one sees in the region today may not be there for people to see tomorrow since the region's nature is changing rapidly. The only way to recollect the past will be the memory that

can be saved by photos.

This is what the global digital photo contest intended to do. The activities and nature of the Hindkush region always attracts a large number of professional and amateur photographers.

Organized by ICIMOD, the Mountain and People Global Digital Photo Contest was held last week at the office of ICIMOD. It attracted photographs taken by various photographers in various periods of time.

According to an ICIMOD press release, various photographers from different parts of the world won the award. The press release says that ICIMOD Hindu Kush Himalayan Prize was awarded to Prem Hang Banem. Special mention awards went to Rajesh Sharma and Rabindra Roy.

Selected by three member judge Kishore Kayastha, Raju Bhandari and Pradip Shakya, there were various awards for other participants also. Other

contestants who received the Top 60 Mentions were Anup Gatraj, Nabin Bara, Susheel Shrestha, Pradeep Sitaula, John Gautam, Rajesh Sharma, Bimal Chandra Sharma, Radha D. Gurung, Kiran Pandey and Ashwin Dhakal.

"There is a need to use photos as a visual tool for outreach as well as to sensitize the public about the changing mountain world, especially in the context of climate change and globalization," said Dr. Andreas Schild, director general of ICIMOD.

Organized to celebrate ICIMOD's silver jubilee- which falls in December 2008- the photos sent for participation in the competition show beautiful scenes, rivers, mountains, lakes and various forms of livelihood.

As there was a wide level of participants from various photographs, the organizers have reasons to be optimistic. "This year's photo contests received some 1102 entries from 336 contestants representing 65 countries around the world," said Ujol Sherchan, senior program officer, Mountain Forum Secretariat as well as coordinator of the Global Digital Photo Contest 2008.

The participation by such a large number of photographers from all over the world shows that the high mountains, green pastures, rivers, lakes and glaciers remain the center of attraction for creative minds ■

SPOTLIGHT

The News
Magazine
Packaged
with
Up-To-Date
News
Views
&
Analyses
Our Readers
Deserve The Best



SPOTLIGHT

The National News Magazine

BALUWATAR, GPO BOX: 7256

TELEPHONE: (977-1) 4423127, FAX: (977-1) 4417845

Email : spot@mail.com.np



The Star is in Your Favor.

Choose Your Lucky Casino !



CASINO NEPAL
Soaltee Compound
Tahachal, Kathmandu
Tel: 4280588
Fax: 9771 4271244
rdt@mos.com.np



CASINO ANNA
Hotel de L' Annapurna
Durbarmarg, Kathmandu
Tel: 4228650
Fax: 9771 4225228
casanna@mos.com.np



CASINO EVEREST
Hotel Everest
New Baneshwor, Kathmandu
Tel: 4780925
Fax: 9771 4782284
everest@mos.com.np



CASINO ROYALE
Hotel Yak & Yeti
Durbarmarg, Kathmandu
Tel: 4438619
Fax: 9771 4223933
royal_royale8hotmail.com



CASINO RAD
Radisson Hotel
Lazimpat, Kathmandu
Tel: 4420311
Fax: 9771 4445525
casinorad@mail.com.np



CASINO TARA
Hyatt Regency
Boudha, Kathmandu
Tel: 4482517
Fax: 9771 4470722
casinotara@mos.com.np