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Weekly Internet Poll # 352

Q. How do you rate the performance of the interim government since it was installed two months ago?

Total votes: 3,388

Outstanding 54%
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Royalist 8%

Weekly Internet Poll # 353. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Should bandas be banned?

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Reviewed by Kunda Dixit

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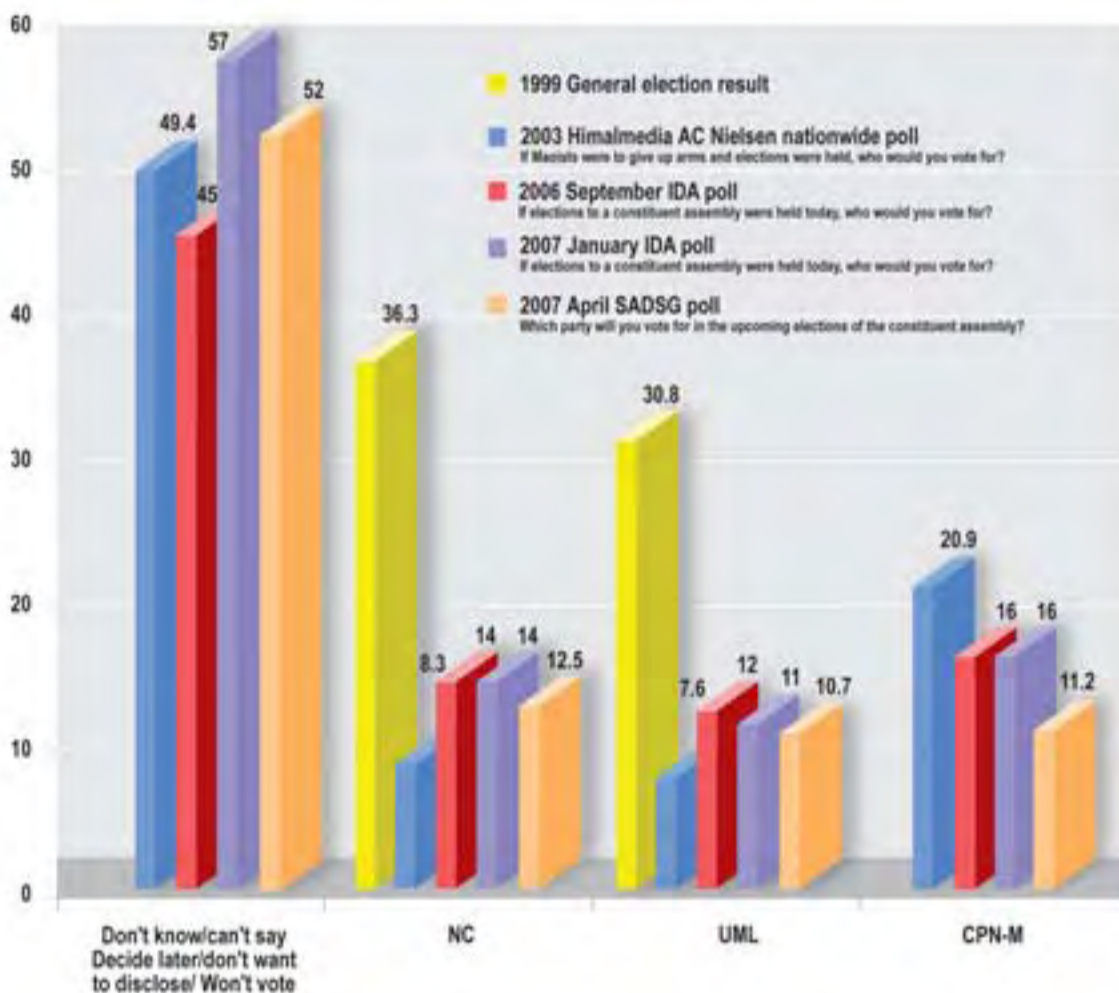
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Still undecided

Most Nepalis are either not interested in politics, or are unsure which way to vote

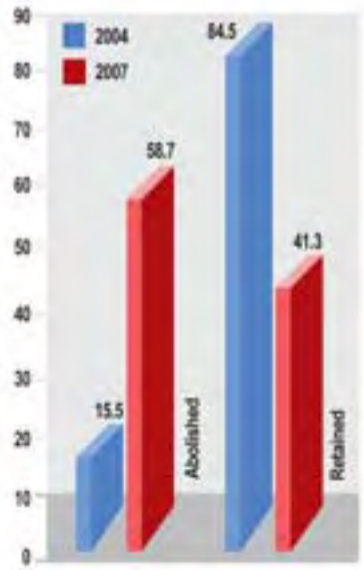


BILASH RAJKIRAN MAHAJAN

The people speak

- ✓ Support for monarchy at all-time low
- ✓ Overwhelming support for democracy
- ✓ Priority is the economy, not politics
- ✓ Persisting distrust of politicians
- ✓ Don't like Maoist harassment despite peace
- ✓ Reject violence, favour negotiations
- ✓ Mostly sure elections will be free and fair
- ✓ Everyone proud to be Nepali
- ✓ Majority dislike secularism

Do you think the monarchy should be retained or abolished?



We Nepalis are a trusting lot. We never expect much from our political parties, but we still have faith in the state's institutions. We count our small blessings, and see the glass as half-full. Most of us resolutely reckon elections can be held in an environment free of fear.

A public opinion poll conducted in April (see p10-11) shows continuation of trends seen in surveys since 2003. Support for monarchy is at an all-time low and more than 60 percent oppose secularism which may mean we are headed for a Hindu republic.

The people are more

interested in peace, jobs, schools, and health than on day-to-day politics. Nepalis are proud to be Nepalis, but increasingly identify with their ethnicity or religion. A clear majority support quotas for the excluded. Most Nepalis believe that a constituent assembly will deliver peace and development.

On the downside, most of us still don't really understand what a constituent assembly is all about. We vaguely equate it with lasting peace. We don't know how federalism works. More worryingly, while Nepalis overwhelmingly support democracy over any other form of government, we don't immediately associate it with

such important matters as development or justice.

Democracy remains a set of abstract principles, dimly desirable because dictatorship was such a disaster. Close to three-quarters of those polled feel no closeness to any political party. There is deep-seated distrust of those who inhabit the political sphere even though Girija Koirala and Madhab Nepal score mystifyingly high. The Maoists get points for bringing about positive changes in the social structure, but promptly lose them for continuing to harass and extort fellow-Nepalis even in peacetime.

The lesson from this poll is that our politicians still have a window of opportunity to show that they can rise above differences. This poll is a warning: they must disengage from incessant politicking and focus on the economy.

Despite this, things are looking up and that most Nepalis are hopeful about the future.

Full details p10-11

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Even wars have limits

Humanitarian law still has an important role in Nepal

The 30th anniversary this week of the adoption of the first two Protocols additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 commemorates a milestone in the evolution of how wars are fought. The protocols are among the most important international legal foundations for the protection of civilians during armed conflict.



GUEST COLUMN
Raoul Forster

Thirty years ago, the First Additional Protocol established rules on the conduct of hostilities. Among them is the crucial principle of distinction between civilians and combatants, and between civilian objects and military objectives. Attacks on civilians as well as on civilian objects are expressly prohibited. Another explicit rule in the protocol is that "acts or threats of violence, the primary purpose of which is to spread terror among the civilian population, are prohibited". The list does not end there.

Additional Protocol II was a response to the proliferation of internal armed conflicts for which only one article, article 3, common to the four Geneva

Conventions could apply. Indeed, this was the first treaty ever devoted exclusively to the protection of the victims of such conflicts. Its rules on fundamental guarantees for all those not involved in the fighting, on the treatment of persons deprived of liberty and on judicial guarantees for individuals subject to penal prosecution represented a landmark in the development of international humanitarian law.

Most armed conflicts today take the form of civil wars, during which some of the worst crimes are committed. One might reasonably ask "so what?" What good is the law of war if it is neither applied nor enforced?

The short answer may be that the real value of the Additional Protocols lies less in the good they have achieved than in the yet greater evil they have helped to prevent. With 167 countries currently party to the first Additional Protocol, and 163 party to the second, there is a growing recognition that wars have limits, not least in the specific duty of care required towards civilian populations.

And, as Mary Wertz, head of ICRC in Nepal said, "The painful humanitarian consequences of the recent 10-year armed conflict in Nepal show clearly that lack of international humanitarian law

instruments and their implementation in domestic law contributes to violations".

Of course, examples of violations of the protocols—and of international

humanitarian law in general—abound. But whereas accountability may once have been the exception rather than the rule in conflict, a wind of change in this regard is blowing ever-stronger thanks largely to a growing public awareness of international humanitarian law. The establishment in 2002 of the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, the world's first permanent war crimes court, was the fruit of years of negotiations. In addition, national legislators and courts are finally starting to live up to their respective responsibilities of ensuring that domestic legislation recognises the criminal responsibility of those who violate international humanitarian law, and of actually enforcing such legislation. The message is clear: war criminals can no longer take impunity for granted.

However, despite this undeniable progress, the political will to fully implement the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols remains insufficient. Parties to conflict have in many cases not yet realised the wisdom that applying and enforcing these legal restraints is in their own best interest: failure to prevent abuse against others ultimately lifts the safeguard against similar abuse in return.

In Nepal, the 30th anniversary of these protocols is a good time for the authorities to ratify and implement the still-relevant Protocols I and II additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions. ●

Raoul Forster is the communications delegate at the International Committee of the Red Cross in Nepal.

DIALOGUE, NOT DIATRIBE

Is media responsible for the current national mood of doom and gloom? Is it again spreading cynicism about the democratic process?

Partly. Take the Battle of the Bajes being waged on the front pages about who is a bigger criminal. The media just can't have enough of it.

To be sure, Prime Minister Koirala and Chairman Dahal are both pots that think the kettle is blacker. They are the ones feeding this media frenzy because both want to distract the people from real issues. Short-attention-span media, of course, laps it all up.

Behind the scenes and away from the media glare, midlevel political players in parliament are working diligently on a framework agreement on identity and representation. The State Affairs Committee achieved a breakthrough on Wednesday, tackling the critical issue of an electoral system for assembly polls.

There has been mass campaigning for a full-representational system. But there are fears this will open up a Pandora's box of demands and counter-demands among ever-smaller groups and sub-groups which would ultimately use up the little time remaining to prepare for elections.

The alternative is a 'mixed system' already accepted in the interim constitution and to make it fully representative so as to be acceptable to Janajatis and Adibasis, women, Madhesis, Dalits, and others. Half the seats in the assembly would be through the proportional representation system, and this is where the State Affairs Committee has come up with the formula in the Constituent Assembly Election Bill which the government submitted for ratification on Thursday.

The other half, the first-past-the-post system, would be left as is, with the expectation that in the evolved political system the parties would be diligent enough for the sake of sheer survival to select candidates acceptable to various communities.

We would still have hoped that the government had talked to the stakeholders on a parallel track to feed into the drafting of the bill. That would have convinced them not to resort to street agitation, and since this wasn't we must wait and see if there is another round of bandas next week.

This compromise won't make everyone happy, but it won't shortchange anyone either. All sides, political and communitarian, must realise the draft bill is the best deal possible. If there is agreement, the Election Commission can at last move ahead with preparations for November.

We can either stay entangled in identity politics or we can start untying the knots. Let's hope good sense prevails, and it is the latter.



KIRAN PANDA

Playing with matches

The Maoists want to fight fire with fire in the tarai

Travelling by day through the tarai these days is fraught with uncertainty. Things weren't this bad even during the conflict.

On the night bus from Birganj to Kathmandu the mood used to be irreverent. Strangers would easily strike up conversations about police inefficiency, military arrogance, administrative callousness, Maoist excesses, and the



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

avarice of politicians. But the Madhes Uprising brought an end to this spontaneity. These days people glance furtively at co-passengers as they get on. Few talk to strangers, and there is almost no conversation across the aisles. Silence hangs thick inside the bus until the first hills appear.

Last week, the tense ambience relaxed somewhat only when the bus crossed the Chure and neared Hetauda. A passenger sitting in the driver's cabin whispered to an

acquaintance, "We are only four Nepalis in the bus. All the rest are Forum."

The person making the comment may have been a victim of either one of the JTMM factions, or any other violent groups professing to be working for madhesi rights. He may even have been an activist of the Chure Bhabar Ekta Samaj, a 'society' formed to counter madhesi militancy. But his use of "Forum" to describe Nepal's plains-dwellers revealed the ingrained antipathy towards a group about to make peace with the government.

Upendra Yadav has lost his political brand even before its strength could be tested at the polls. No wonder Jayaprakash Prasad Gupta, the pragmatic radical, has swiftly abandoned the MJF ship he helped build and launch. "Forum" is not quite a generic term yet, but it has acquired anti-establishment connotations. Unfortunately, it doesn't sit well with the kind of leaders MJF has in the districts. Its foot-soldiers are mostly the rejects of mainstream parties, retirees from government service, and other ambitious individuals who had failed to find a niche in national politics.

Even though MJF cadres were at the forefront, it would be naïve for them to believe that they were the leaders of the Madhes Uprising. Like a bushfire, the conflagration in the tarai that began unnoticed this winter consumed everything in its path and then spent itself. What we see today in the plains are cinders of a fire that raged for almost three months. With their month-long agitation announced this week, the Maoists are playing with matches and will restart that fire. This strategy of fighting fire with fire can create unwarranted complications for the constituent assembly elections.

Contrary to conventional wisdom in Kathmandu, the tarai uprising hasn't affected the Maoists as much as we'd imagined. To begin with, the Maoists didn't have much of a base in the madhes. Second, their core supporters among the marginalised communities have been left 'untouched'. When Ram Bahadur Thapa began to camp out in Janakapur for extended periods, he may have found that half his job had already been done by the MJF.

Despite their antics in parliament, the NC's madhesi lawmakers have lost their legitimacy in the eastern tarai. The UML has been exposed as a party of pahadi priests. No mainstream party can truly claim to represent the people of the tarai today. The field has been left wide open for various armed groups, and that is the arena that the Maoists are all set to enter.

If things weren't complicated enough in the tarai cauldron, the coming month could see the growing one-upmanship between Pushpa Kamal Dahal and his military strategist Ram Bahadur Thapa come to a head.

Unlike the JTMM or the Chure Bhabar, the Maoists have an alternate vision, a political program, and a national network to support their adventures in the tarai. While this will embolden their YCL to militancy, the retaliation from fringe groups is likely to be equally violent. All this will exacerbate the terror in the tarai. The end result will mean that elections will be impossible in November. Possibly, this is what the Maoists secretly want. ●

LETTERS

WATERTIGHT

Economic Sense ('Water soluble', #351) does not make any sense. I don't understand why your economists prefer not to analyse issues surrounding Kathmandu's water in depth and simply wash it off as pro- and anti-privatisation. Ashutosh Tiwari dismisses the whole issue as Yami's 'the usual more-concerned-about-Nepali-than-thou rhetoric against privatisation and foreign investments' ('Why is it we are here?', #350). Artha Beed, the wannabe populist columnist, first charges that 'NGOs that helped end Arun III nearly 15 years ago have managed to now stall Melamchi helped by a populist wannabe minister', and then goes on to show us how much we are paying for water (as if we do not already know) and how this problem will be solved by a private company and the ADB.

Wake up, friends. The issues surrounding Kathmandu's water are more than just a high school debate on for or against privatisation. From day one, Minister Yami has said that she is for public-private partnership, she is simply questioning the process of selecting Severn Trent in a one-horse race and the reputation of a company which has been involved in corruption in the UK and been kicked out from countries like Guyana and Trinidad. Don't you think that a new minister has the right to raise questions? Give her a break. Coming from a party that does not really believe much in the strength of private sector, she has made a compromise by talking PPP, while the ADB, which preaches good governance, is refusing to go beyond its normal rhetoric of Severn Trent or no aid. Okay, so rethinking Severn Trent may set us back by a few months (see 'Not a drop to drink', #350), but why should that delay the entire Melamchi project? We can have Melamchi and a good system to manage Kathmandu's water if we are careful enough to analyse issues in detail and make logical decisions instead of just following the advice of few consultants of the Bank.

Have any of our economists taken a look at the contract Severn Trent was about to sign? No, because it is not accessible to the public. We are using public funds through ADB loan to pay three foreign managers from a discredited company \$11.5 million (the 'private sector' will not invest a single penny) to manage an essential 'commodity' such as water. Shouldn't we be concerned about what is in the contract? And if the minister says she wants to discuss it in cabinet before signing it, what's wrong? The Beed advises us to 'create an environment where the private provider is penalised for not delivering quality or quantity'. Well said, but the current contract does not do this. Shouldn't we, or at least the minister, raise this issue boldly and seek solutions instead of just following the status quo?

Bhushan Tuladhar,
Environment and Public
Health Organization (ENPHO)

There have been many articles lately, by Ratna Sansar Shrestha ('Not a drop to drink', #350) the Beed, and others in *Nepali Times* arguing why a PPP model needs to be adopted and how Nepali companies were not allowed to bid in the management of Nepal Water Supply Corporation (NWSC). As someone who has been closely following this process, I just can't help pointing out a few facts.

The currently proposed model is already a well thought-out PPP model with 50 percent of the company's shares owned by the municipalities, 30 percent

by the government, and the rest by the private sector, and the employees of the company. A competent private company was invited just to manage this newly established utility by providing three full-time residential experts and other highly skilled specialists as needed over the initial few years. It is sad that people are so swayed by rhetoric and hearsay and not told the real story. And having seen how NWSC has performed over the last two decades, there is a reason for asking for real life experience in managing a utility, and there was absolutely no country bar. Nepali companies were theoretically

allowed to bid, and they have done precisely that by forming partnerships with international firms. All the five firms that did put in the Expression of Interest (EOI) to manage NWSC had Nepali partners. The basic requirement for prequalification was that the company has managed at least two utilities in two countries.

Wasn't it prudent to ask for such a minimum requirement when seeking competent companies to help turn around a lost cause like the NWSC? And the requirement didn't even say water utility. Any company, be it Nepali, European, Asian, or from any ADB member country,

could bid as long as it has managed any two utilities (gas, power, water). I'm a nationalist and take pride in our doing things ourselves, but I can't see any Nepali company which can qualify. In the future there will be, but not yet. In the meantime, building up solid experiences by partnering with seasoned international firms would be a perfectly reasonable and practical first step. So, as much as I like your no-nonsense articles, this particular point that your reporters and columnists and the others out there keep repeating is not factually correct.

Name withheld, email




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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund) is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. UNFPA Nepal is in the process of recruiting the following position:

Post Title : Communications Officer
Closing Date : 15 June 2007
Level : Locally recruited international post
Duty Station : Kathmandu
Duration : One year initially

Under the direct supervision and guidance of UNFPA Senior Manager, and overall guidance of the UNFPA Representative, the Communications Officer ensures the following major activities:

- Develop and implement communications strategies focusing on UNFPA's global priorities in Nepal;
- Co-ordinate and oversee enhanced production and dissemination of communication and advocacy materials, including brochures, posters, pamphlets, and press releases as and when needed.
- Organize events and help raise national awareness on the issues that UNFPA advocates (including photo exhibitions drama festivals, song/poetry competitions, concerts, etc.);
- Network with Communication Officers of UN systems in Nepal, national and international media;
- Draft statements, speeches and press releases for the UNFPA Representative, and/or Senior Managers;
- Organize and undertake field trips for donors and international and/or national media to UNFPA programme sites and report on the events and progress;
- Assist in producing promotional materials in English, and Nepali together with national advocacy officer and others, including local dialects;
- Develop press and communication materials for media events such as World Population Day, State of World Population, International Women's Day, World AIDS Day, etc. and key national events such as launches of new projects and dissemination of key findings of study/research/assessments and evaluations;
- Make media arrangements for the UNFPA Representative at events and during the missions (involving local and national radio, television and news papers);
- Develop and produce a regular UNFPA bulletin on a monthly or bimonthly basis;
- Organize training workshop for country office staff, implementing partners and journalists to sensitize and create awareness on UNFPA's mandates and work in Nepal;
- Develop strategic partnerships with key media organizations to assist in resources mobilization;
- Produce photo and information materials on the implementation of the multi-bi projects funded directly by donors, after searching and informing the UNFPA Representative on the priority areas of each donor interests together with resource mobilization focal point;
- Edit various reports/proposals/studies, press releases, speeches to ensure quality, including its gender sensitivity and social inclusion issues for advocacy and fund-raising purposes
- Support Programme staff in advocacy efforts and component of ongoing projects.
- Lead design, maintain and update of UNFPA Country Office's Website;
- Ensure web applications are user friendly and visible;
- Write and edit web-based information materials; and
- Prepare response to the queries of the media;
- Any other tasks given by the UNFPA Representative.

The applicants should have university degree, (preferably advanced degree) in social sciences, journalism, communications; good knowledge of media and public relations; strong advocacy skills; at least five years of increasingly responsible experience in public relations, communications, web based content creation and presentation; excellent oral and written communications and edition skills in English; Nepali language skill is an asset; a thorough understanding of the UN system in general, and especially UNFPA mandate, its policies and operations and current development topics and political issues in Nepal; knowledge of policies and programmes in crisis and post crisis situations; ability to establish effective working relationship in the multicultural team environment; ability to work independently as well as a good team worker; networking, interpersonal, analytical and organizational skills; an ability to work well under deadlines; keen understanding of Nepal's culture, history and political contexts; familiarity with communications approaches for planning, executing, and monitoring communications strategies; computer/information systems skills; resourcefulness, initiative and maturity of judgment; and demonstrated willingness to work as part of a team.

A detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) can be collected from the UN Reception from Tuesday, 5 June 2007 between 10:00 and 17:00 hrs on working days at UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. Interested candidates should submit their applications, clearly marked the position of the job applying on the top right hand corner, together with updated "UN Personal History Form (P-11)" available at www.unfpa.org/about/employment/index.htm, curriculum vitae, full address and contact details and at least three referees. The application should be sent to the following address. Personal or telephone solicitation will disqualify the candidates. UNFPA reserves the right to appoint on the same or lower position. **Qualified female candidates are encouraged to apply.**

The UNFPA Representative
UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
 UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur

Nepali Times spoke with the heads of major business schools in Kathmandu and asked them three questions:

- Why people should spend money on a business degree when the general mood seems to be against businesses?
- How are students prepared to deal with business realities that include corruption, agitating unions, threats, strikes, and politicians who don't believe in business?
- What single feature makes your school different from the others?



LP Bhanu Sharma
Principal, Apex College

- The present mood of the country is temporary, and the situation will improve soon. Nepali business and economy are undergoing a paradigm shift, and our placement is excellent.
- We focus on human behaviour and social interdependence. MBAs are trained to be street-smart, insightful, and ethical. We see these negative trends in business and economy as transitory.
- Apex balances theoretical inputs and applied managerial skills in an environment of cross-cultural orientation and positive thinking.



Bijay KC
Dean, South Asian Institute of Management

- In education, expenses are an investment. Our challenge is to prepare graduates who can work under constraints and think of tomorrow. Things will and have to change and we have to contribute positively.
- Attitudes and behaviour need to change to fight corruption etc. We encourage our graduates to think positively, work in teams, be patient, and be solution-oriented. We make them aware of their social responsibilities and help them develop leadership skills.
- Our emphasis is particularly on South Asian values and developing managers and entrepreneurs with leadership skills and a global mindset.



Subas KC
Dean, Kathmandu University School of Management

- Business isn't just about profits, but about meeting the needs of people by providing goods and services. Negative perception of the business community is temporary and situation-specific.
- Our curriculum teaches the theories and skills needed to run businesses. In many courses, students go out and do projects. There they interact with people from the business community, observe and get a better sense of business complexities. They have to do summer internships too, which prepares them to deal with the realities of running a business.
- Our strength is our faculty. We have a pool of teachers who have both industry experience and academic excellence.



Kedar Joshi
Executive Director, Management Association of Nepal

- Surviving in the business world requires strategic thinkers, better management, and a competitive culture. Nepal is on the threshold of peace and development, and this is also the era of globalisation and opportunities around the world.
- We focus on developing managerialism [sic] and professionalism.
- Our blend of academics and professionalism helps produce academically sound and practically capable managers.



Mohan Das Manandhar
Head, Ace Institute of Management

- A business degree is a long-term investment. We are between two rapidly growing economies and some of the growth will trickle down to Nepal. We're going to need people with skills to take advantage of those opportunities.
- Our students' projects include having to find the best way of dealing with different scenarios. This teaches them about political uncertainties and preparedness. We also encourage them to conduct surveys and compile data to get a sense of what is going on in the business world and invite eminent

business people to talk about their real life experiences.

- Our teaching staff always brings up-to-date relevant information to classrooms to teach students about current business realities.

उज्यालो ५० एफ.एम. बिहान ५ बजेदेखि बेलुकी ११ बजेसम्म

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Learning curve

B-schools in Nepal need to move with the times

In the last eight years, the number of Kathmandu colleges offering BBA, MBA, and evening MBA programs has gone up. Thanks to college-friendly demographics, there's no dearth of applicants. It's clear from each year's crop of slick ads that the competition for tuition money is getting more lucrative.



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

This contrasts sharply with the hostage mentality with which most of our businesses operate.

Not a week passes by without multiple shutdowns. Swarms of Young Communist Leaguers take to the streets, believing that the only way to please Bhagwan Mao, motherland Nepal, and Chairman Dahal is by extorting money from small businesses, beating up businessmen, and seizing other people's hard-earned property. The recent failure of the government to deal pragmatically with the only available, if second-rate, foreign firm to help solve Kathmandu's water problems has given the practice of outsourcing management contracts for better performance a bad rap. That raises the cost of doing business, and provides first-rate investors with reasons to avoid Nepal.

Such activities signal that the momentum for businesses in the New Nepal will be determined less by rule-based, competition-driven

excellence, and more by either mob violence or ideologically-laced 'scientific' communism that labels dissenters as reactionaries.

Given this broader disconnect between what they teach and what's happening out there in Nepal's business landscape, should Nepali business schools start changing themselves?

Yes, along these three dimensions:
Engagement: In the future, businesses in Nepal will have to deal even more with agitating unions, threats and strikes, firebrand social activists, media-savvy environmentalists, civil society leaders, and Grown-up Communist Leaguers (GCLs) who will set national policies. How are business schools preparing students to adapt to these realities? To say that whatever's happening right now is a temporary phenomenon (*see interviews on facing page*), and that Kotler's marketing tips will solve all problems is to seriously underestimate the extent of the changes that will shape business activities in Nepal.

Entrepreneurship: Producing recruits for banks and INGOs is fine. But even such institutions cannot live up to their potential when unemployment is the most distressing social problem—witness the hordes of young men with nothing to do but roam the streets. Instead of getting stuck on a self-serving 'who got hired where' conversation, it's become

urgent for Nepali business schools to live up to their own promise of producing leaders by proactively looking for ways to promote entrepreneurship among students and alumni. This helps expand the range of employment opportunities for a bigger swathe of society.

Research: The role of the private sector remains unclear in new Nepal. Is it to be actively promoted? Is it to be kept as a milking cow for YCLs and politicians? How and where does the application of business principles make sense to raise productivity, incomes, and social welfare? Research helps answer these questions, and perhaps shape the content of conversations about the role of the private sector in our society. Given their intellectual capital, business schools are most suitably positioned to put the process of knowledge creation and sharing among their priorities.

Unlike other schools, business schools are most directly affected by the changes taking place in a society. If they ignore or make light of what's happening in Nepal now, then they run the risk of being irrelevant to their students' future. That is why, our business schools need to see what more they can do to better prepare both their students and themselves to understand and then address some of our society's pressing problems.



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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Population Fund is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. We are in the process of recruiting the following position:

Post Title : HIV/AIDS Project Officer
Closing Date : 15 June 2007
Level : NPPP-2
Duty Station : Kathmandu
Duration : Six months with the possibility of extension subject to the availability of funds

Under the overall guidance of the UNFPA Representative and the day to day supervision of Focal Point for HIV/AIDS and Assistant Representative for RH, the Project Officer contributes substantially to the effective management of UNFPA supported HIV/AIDS activities in close coordination with UNFPA - RH/HIV Specialist based in Department of Health Services, especially in regards to responsibility under II & III:

- I. Support to Country Office (CO) HIV/AIDS Activities;
- II. Support to Population and Reproductive Health Integrated project - Community Based Programme (PARHI-CBP);
- III. Support to Government/National Centre for AIDS and STD Control (NCASC) and Non Governmental Organizations
- IV. Support to UN agencies and the Secretariat of United Nations Theme Group (UNTG) Chair.

Qualifications and Experience Required

- Master degree in Public Health, Social Science or related fields;
- Thorough understanding of national HIV/AIDS related issues and challenges;
- At least five years of work experience in the area of HIV/AIDS, and RH;
- Sound monitoring skills;
- Strong analytic capabilities;
- General knowledge and understanding of population issues;
- Experience in working with the UN System will be an asset;
- Excellent written and oral knowledge of English and Nepali; ability to communicate fluently in a language spoken in the districts would be an advantage;
- Willingness to travel extensively to the field;
- Proficiency in current office software applications and good technical skills in data processing and analysis; and
- Ability to work in a multi-cultural setting, mature and willingness to travel frequently to remote areas.

Submission of Application

A detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) can be collected for the positions from the UN Reception from 4-13 June 2007 between 10:00 and 12:00 hrs on working days at UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. Interested candidates should submit their applications, clearly marked the position of the job applying on the top right hand corner, together with updated "UN Personal History Form (P11)" available at www.unfpa.org/about/employment/index.htm, curriculum vitae, full address and contact details and at least three referees. The application should be sent to the following address **no later than 15 June 2007**. Personal or telephone solicitation will disqualify the candidates. UNFPA reserves the right to appoint on the same or lower position. **Qualified women and those belonging to the socially disadvantaged candidates are encouraged to apply.**

The UNFPA Representative
UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur

Deceptive calm



KIRAN PANDAY

Interview with Bharat Keshari Simha, aide to King Gyanendra, in *Nepal*, 3 June

Was King Gyanendra's 1 February 2005 action his biggest mistake?

If the king had prohibited multiparty democracy from flourishing, you could have said so, yes. But after the takeover the king did not know what to do—as we say in Nepali, he did not know whether to swallow or spit. Everything he did was considered wrong—if he did nothing, we pressured him to do more, but when he wanted to do something, the people didn't even let him rule for three years.

So what will the king do now?

We never know what he is going to do. Even his right hand does not know what his left hand will do.

The prime minister says the king might abdicate.

The prime minister has two sets of teeth—those he shows and those with which he chews. If he is serious about abdication, he should impeach the king right now.

But it's the Nepali people who are disappointed in the king.

I am told there is a lifesize painting of King Gyanendra in handcuffs inside a mock prison in Ratna Park. Who gave the political parties the right to call him 'prisoner number one'? Toy too much with the cat and it strikes back. Be warned, the monarchy will do the same.

Why are the royalists so quiet these days?

There's always a calm before the storm.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

Ban bandas

Editorial in *Kantipur*, 4 June

There have been more than 100 days of general strikes over the past four years. Omitting Saturdays, this means five months' worth of nationwide bandas. Imagine the loss in work, the sick who couldn't go to hospital, the daily wage labourers who went hungry, the children who couldn't go to school.

The bandas of April 2006 brought about dramatic political change. The people suffered then, but at least the shutdowns had the political aim of ending dictatorship and establishing democracy. The same was the case in 1990. But bandas did not stop with the advent of democracy both times.

A nationwide general strike should be the last weapon to

fight an uncaring state. Now, it's become the first. There are many ways to carry out peaceful protests. In a democratic state, the government has no choice but to listen to legitimate demands. Those clamouring for rights can use the free media, lobby civil society, and try to convince the political parties. After all, those are the pillars of democracy—political parties, media, civil society—and they are the institutions through which one can work.

After teachers unilaterally closed down schools for 11 days, the janajatis shut down the country last Friday. There are more bandas in the offing. The tarai has been facing chronic shutdowns. Education is a basic right of children and bandas violate that right. It is criminal to use children to serve political ends. Teachers who use school children as pawns,

and workers who agitate just for the sake of agitation can't be regarded as legitimate.

Bandas are enforced by the threat of violence, and through fear and intimidation. The people have been forced to accept or risk being stoned and attacked. Citizens have said through the media that they don't want any of this, but this has fallen on deaf ears. The country suffers great economic loss during every closure. Unions and groups affiliated to various political parties use any number of excuses to announce sudden bandas. This has cost the country more than Rs 30 billion in the past four years.

The affiliates of political parties that call bandas should be aware of the damage their strike calls cause. Only if we ban bandas can the country find a way out of its present deadlock.

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East-west banda

Rituraj in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 30 May-14 June

It's easier these days to forecast the weather than to try to forecast when and where the East-West highway will be blocked. It all depends on the mood of those living by the highway. Jobless youth may suddenly get tired of their carrom games and want some action. Herders may get sick of herding buffalos. It's still not time yet for rice planting, and schools are closed, so everyone has time. Time to get a few logs, some boulders, cement blocks, and block the road. Add a burning tyre, and there you have: an instant banda. Who cares what they are protesting about?

Your columnist nearly had to camp out on the highway. East of Chandranighapur they were burning a madhesi minister in effigy, but we managed to pass that because the protester hadn't yet decided how serious their banda should be. A really serious banda was in progress further down the road near the Kamala river. Boulders were piled on the road and there was a queue of buses and trucks on both sides. The agitators were agitated and were carrying long rods. The reason was that the local transformer had been taken for repairs ten days ago and hadn't been returned. Villagers had to do without electricity. They had blocked the road to protest the NEA's delay.

We will soon be seeing more of this: road blocked because the telephones are out. Road blocked because of a fertiliser shortage. No sugar, so block the road. Schools closed, so close the highway. Students didn't pass their exams, block the road. Buffalo lost, close the highway. Wife eloped with another man, block the road.

We are lucky to have the East-West Highway, otherwise how would the people of the madhes express their legitimate and illegitimate demands?

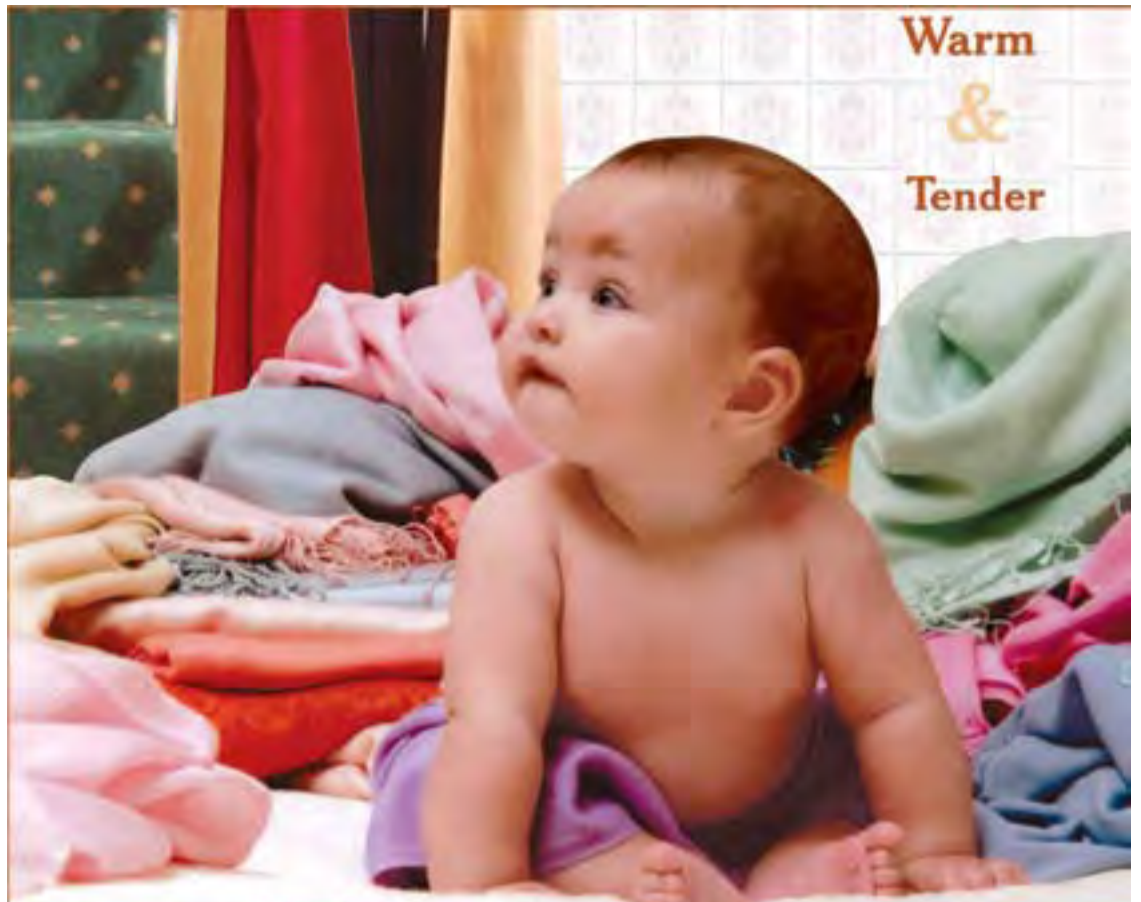
Rebels rebel

Jana Astha, 6 June

Three weeks ago in Ilam's Fikkal, the Maoist PLA detained three young men and took them away. No one knew who they were. It is belatedly known that they were three former guerrillas who had taken part in a rebellion from the Danabari camp.

This week, Jana Astha got a call from an Indian number from a certain Khadga Limbu purporting to be the leader of the mutiny. Limbu said he had taken part in many battles on behalf of the PLA but he and his followers had gotten tired of living a hard life in the camps while Maoist leaders enjoyed themselves in Kathmandu. The mutiny was planned a few weeks previously in Sitali Bajar in a meeting of up to 60 hardcore guerrillas. The plan was to kill the battalion vice-commander and capture weapons. Then they would attack the police stations in Danabari and Surunga, capture more weapons, and flee to the hills. There was no concrete plan about what to do after that, but the mutineers were confident they could continue the guerrilla warfare from there.

However, the plan leaked out, and the battalion vice-commander started taking action against suspected mutineers, torturing them and taking them to labour camps. Limbu says he fled from the area and is now with four other armed guerrillas. He says thousands have deserted the Maoists in recent weeks and the numbers of fighters inside the camps has fallen from 31,000 to between 25-29,000. "Why should we rot in cages when our leaders ride around in Pajeros," Limbu asked. "We got sick of camp life. Every night a couple of friends would get snake bites, there would be no medical treatment, and storms would destroy the tents. If the leaders don't care about our welfare, why should we stay in the camps?"



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Sign: Road Closed
 Chick: Refugees

Nepal, 3 June

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



"Girija Prasad Koirala must take back what he said about the YCL, or he will end with the monarchy."

CPN-M chairman Puspha Kamal Dahal quoted in *Annapurna Post*, 7 June.



DFID Department for International Development

Leading the British Government's fight against world poverty

1. TEAM LEADER – PROGRAMME COORDINATION and QUALITY ASSURANCE
2. COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

The United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) is working with the Nepal Government, multilateral, bilateral agencies and civil society to achieve the Millennium Development Goals through support that is consistent with the Government of Nepal's development priorities.

DFID's work in Nepal focuses on support for the immediate implementation of the peace process; helping to lay the foundations for an effective and inclusive state; the promotion of inclusive economic growth and aid effectiveness and harmonisation.

DFID Nepal is currently finalising an interim Country Assistance Plan and requires a **Team leader to lead the Programme Coordination and Quality Assurance (PCQA) Team and a Communication Specialist** to support the development and implementation of this plan.

The Team Leader will work with teams of technical advisers and programme management staff and will be responsible for the Quality Assurance of Programme Administration and Financial systems. They will also manage internal and external communications, corporate reporting and learning for their team.

The Communications Specialist will work with the PCQA, Effective and Inclusive State, Inclusive Economic Growth and Management Services Teams leading on effective communications. This will include developing and implementing a Communications strategy.

Applicants for both posts will need to demonstrate

- Commitment to development and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.
- Strong verbal and written English skills and a proven track record of presenting ideas/submissions orally and in writing.
- Effective People management skills.

Team Leader applicants should

- Have A Masters Degree and/or at least 5 years experience in managing Development programmes/projects.
- Be able to demonstrate that they are competent in: planning and delivery of work, analysis and use of information, decision making, working with others, communicating with others and influencing.
- Fluent written/oral communications in English and Nepali.

Communications Specialist applicants should

- Have a degree or equivalent in a communications related subject and at least 5 years experience working with the media.
- Having previous experience working in development would be an advantage
- Be able to demonstrate that they are competent in: planning and delivery of work, analysis and use of information, working with others, communicating with others and influencing.
- Fluent written/oral communications in English and Nepali.

Located in the DFID office in Kathmandu, the successful applicants will work in a fast paced, multi-cultural environment that places a high premium on inclusive team working. The position offers significant opportunities for professional and career growth. Though based in Kathmandu, some in-country and international travel will be required.

There will be an attractive and competitive local salary and benefits package.

DFID is an Equal Opportunities employer and appoints on merit by open competition. Applicants should be Nepali residents or have a relevant work permit to work in Nepal. Applications are welcomed from all parts of the community and we actively encourage interest from women, Dalits, disadvantaged Janajatis, Madhesi and those with a disability.

For an application form and more information, including Terms of Reference, please e-mail recruitment-nepal@dfid.gov.uk Please send a completed application form by e-mail to the same address. Only complete applications made on the prescribed application form will be considered. The closing date for applications is **15th June 2007**.

Springtime in Langtang Beyul

Langtang has the right combination of local charm and accessibility from the capital



ALL PICS: HIMALI DIXIT

KANAK MANI DIXIT

Langtang Lirung forms the perfect snow pyramid when viewed from points south, including Kathmandu Valley. What is not immediately evident is that the peak presides over a beyul—a spiritual sanctuary—enchantingly close and accessible.

Accessible, that is, if you discount the terrifying high road that leads up past Trisuli Bajar to Dhunche in Rasuwa and do not

have to contend with a driver focussed on locating and swatting flies even as the bus negotiates the ledge of a highway 800 vertiginous metres above the Trisuli.

The Trisuli rushes down from Kyarung in Tibet, but you leave the bus to take the east fork at Syabrubesi, following the gorge of the Langtang Khola. The lower reaches of the gorge are a deciduous zone rich in birdlife and flowers and harbouring the elusive red panda. The day is

devoted to walking uphill to the sound of falling water, past Pairobesi ('landslide base'), Bamboo ('Bombo'), Rimche (from where the map shows a non-existent trail up to the Gosainkunda lakes), Lama Hotel (many hotels in Lama Hotel, where an Alouette helicopter once crashed), until you arrive at Ghodatabela.

A day and a 1,500 m climb up from Syabrubesi, Ghodatabela is where the v-shaped river gorge begins to convert into the

u-shaped glaciated valley of upper Langtang. The name comes from when Khampa fighters set up a commune here and housed their steeds in the stables, now in ruins. There is a much nicer local name for the place, describing it as the midway meeting point for up-valley and down-valley travellers, but I cannot find it in my notes.

Speaking of names, locals insist on Langdang with a 'd'. The reference is to Guru Rimpoche, or Padmasambhav, who arrived here

in the guise of a bull, ate, and was satiated (lang = bull, dang = to be satiated). As for the locals of Langtang Khola, the census terms them Tamang, but they insist they are of the same stock as Helambu's Yolmos (whom the census classes as Sherpa), and trace their lineage up north to Kyarung and Lende in Tibet.

But names will be names, and what matters is that the people of Langtang are the custodians of a remarkable sanctuary close enough to Kathmandu to touch,



but old world enough that the lodges are still welcoming of 'domestic tourists'. "We have retained our dharma," says Dhendup of Ghodatabela.

The lodges here are fast dropping their Rasuwa rusticity, however, with the help of a tourism-for-poverty-alleviation project. You get clean sheets, solar powered lighting, and hot water showers up and down the valley. On the flipside, the distinctive local architecture that defines Rasuwa villages is being abandoned in favour of Namche Generic, constructions put up by rock- and-woodworkers imported from Solu.

Except at Kyangjin at the end of the trail, where garbage is openly strewn on the hillsides, Langtang is surprisingly clean. Sturdy Swiss-supported suspension bridges span the numerous ravines, while someone with a proclivity for pouring concrete has managed walking platforms across vertical rock faces to lessen detours.

From Langtang village, the view of Langtang Lirung is blocked by a towering escarpment, but that's fair because the peak got its name from the locality, rather than vice

versa. Following the Annapurna and Nanda Devi Sanctuaries, the area beyond this village deserves to be called the Langtang Sanctuary. You are surrounded 300 degrees with the rocky ramparts of the Gosainkunda Lekh to the southwest, the fluted ridges of Gang Chenpo of the Jugal Himal chain to the east, Naya Kanga and Yala Peak, and the massifs of Langtang and Kimjung that elbow for space north by northwest.

At the centre of this sanctuary is Kyangjin, where an not-yet-gentrified gumba retains the flavour of local reverence, spiced with aroma of Tibetan tea, butter lamps, and juniper. The day of the full moon in early June, locals are busy refurbishing their faith, fasting and putting up fresh windhorses on hilltops. As part of their piety, the Langtangba do not kill the local yaks for meat. But they're hardly puritan about it—lodge-owner Dawa in Kyangjin says when they go to Kathmandu they eat themselves sick on momos.

To eat well in Langtang, go during the yak cheese season in autumn. The cheese is made in a Swiss-built station that has been in operation for half-a-century,

EVERYTHING CHANGES: Langtang Lirung looks different up close than it does from Kathmandu (*facing page*); the Kimjung glacier is now also the Kimjung icefall (*above*); looking down from Kyangjin Ri, today you see Kyangjin's tin roofs, not the wooden roofs of old (*left*); with no Khampa fighters to stable their horses here, the stables at Ghodatabela are falling down.

with expertise currently provided by two Jirels. The Swiss also had a hand in building the small airstrip in the wide valley below Kyangjin, but flights stopped when the last Pilatus Porter crashed. Today, Langtang is served mostly by helicopter charters.

There are other signs of modernity. Kyangjin lodge-owners and staff like to listen to radio, but the wall of rock to the south blocks FM broadcasts from Kathmandu, so they tune in instead to tarai stations, whose radio signals somehow make it up here. Wireless CDMA phones are about to invade the sanctuary, and before long there will be full telephone and internet connectivity. Hopefully this will help keep back, or bring back some of the local youth, for whom the lights of Kathmandu are a natural draw, besides the momos.

It's springtime in Langtang now. Yak calves are everywhere and afternoon clouds turn up to provide shade just when the trekker needs it most. But all is not well with nature. Global warming is no longer a theoretical discussion for the Langtangba—above Kyangjin Gumba the Langtang Glacier has receded so far up its bed that it can now only be called Langtang Icefall. The same holds true for the shorter adjoining Kimjung Glacier.

But Langtang is so serene that even the massive landslides which gouge the mountains are and have to be considered a natural part of the landscape. The geologists' suggestion that landslips are a natural phenomenon in the Himalaya and cannot be blamed on the inhabitants, rings true in Langtang. As my trekking companion Shanta said, staring up at the massive scarring across from Rimche, "Why, even landslides have a right to go!" Certainly, in Langtang beyul! ●

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Find your own way to improve life and prospects in Nepal

Stir it up

There are no free lunches, no quick fixes. Life is a struggle, a series of challenges that take time to overcome. But as Nepal lurches along at the moment, a few things come to mind that might help a lot, fairly quickly. A useful exercise for any politician or development expert might be to make such lists themselves, assuming they're sincere—a big assumption.

What about English? Nepali has been a great success in this country as a lingua franca, a way to enable communication and politics from one end to the other. Controversial perhaps with janjatis and others, but none of them would advocate scrapping a national language.

They just want their own tongues respected and taught.

To this I propose a national push to make Nepalis at least trilingual. Their mother tongue, Nepali and English should be comprehensively available in schools. English is the world's language it does not belong to England, America or even,



HERE AND THERE
Daniel Lak

these days, India. If you want to set up a business deal between China and Argentina, you do it in English.

Imagine a trilingual Nepal where people from Jhapa spoke Nepali to do business with fellow citizens in Humla, then completed the deal with a call to Beijing or Cape Town in English. At home, the joys of indigenous languages could be celebrated in literature and song enabled by a booming economy where everyone could speak to, and deal with, everyone else. Britain, America, and other English speaking countries could help enable this. So of course could India. It would produce only gains and there is no chance of either Nepali or anyone else's mother tongue being swamped or swept aside. Nepal's living culture is powerful and its people are resilient, accepting change while retaining what works for them. Like their own languages.

Onto water. Isn't it time this country took its water resources seriously? A grand debate needs to go on with town hall meetings across the country. An independent assessment of hydroelectric and water potential, perhaps conducted by a United Nations agency or a consortium of respected INGOs and local organisations, must be conducted, and then let the debate begin.

It's obvious the country needs the jobs, resources, and electricity that proper water conservation and development will bring. It's also clear that there isn't enough money here to invest in projects on the scale that's necessary. But private investment alone is not enough, not accountable nor in the best interests of all concerned. Civil society and water users need to be involved at every level, with full access to information and spirited advocacy. There is no shortage of international discourse and debate about water. Nepal needs to join this, contributing and learning by turns.



The Nepali diaspora has always been a force for change in this land. Whether British Gurkha soldiers returning after the two World Wars of the last century, or the current crop of labourers and security people who toil around the globe, Nepalis abroad retain a love of their homeland and a real determination to help. Political change was catalysed by the Gurkha post-war experience; the grievances that helped the Maoists to power were pushed and funded in part by disgusted Nepalis abroad who wondered why they had to leave home to support families and build houses.

Today's diaspora is vast and more well-educated and worldly than ever. It has much to offer in cash and kind and needs to be listened to. Pakistan has long had a Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis to harness the energy of countrymen and women abroad. Why not start with that here, with government and independent agencies to engage with the world's Nepali community and work to apply their energy and resources at home.

Make your own list. What less than obvious things can be done to get this country moving? The space to do so has never been more open.

The state of

Wanted: comprehensive change, community identity, economic progress, better governance

KRISHNA HACHHETHU

An April 2007 poll conducted by the Nepali team of the South Asia Democracy Study Group in collaboration with International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) explores the state of democracy in Nepal. The first round of the survey was conducted in 2004.

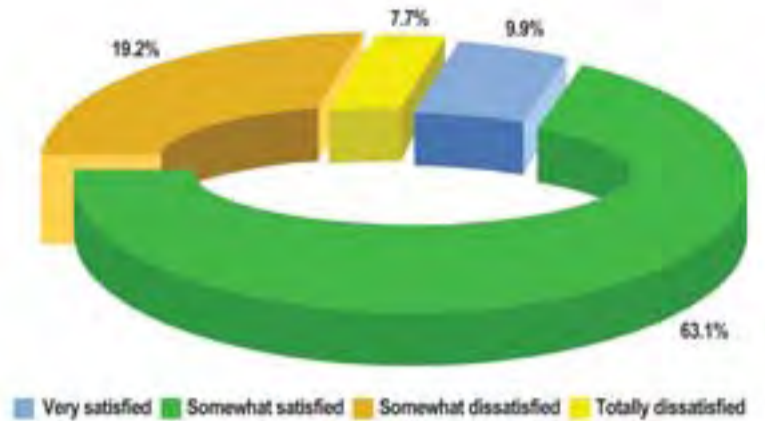
The survey shows that the 250-year-old Shah dynasty is likely to become a victim of the popular aspiration for change—59 percent of respondents chose a republic over retaining the monarchy. In the 2004 survey, only 15 percent did so. And this increase is not because of the royal massacre, the royal takeovers, or the tarnished image of royalty, but on principle. Two-thirds of the republican respondents wanted a government 'ruled by the people' or believed 'monarchy is not necessary in the modern era'.

People buy the Maoists' agenda, but trust other state and political institutions more.

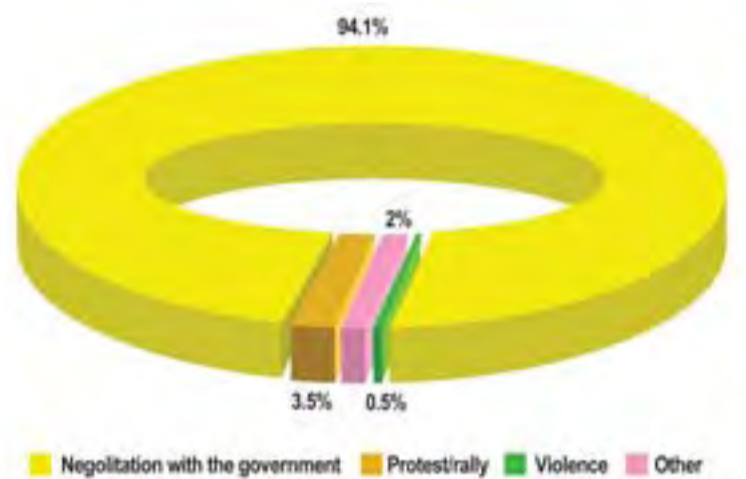
Two-thirds of the respondents 'believe' the changing ideological position of the CPN-M to varying degrees. This change in popular perception is reflected in responses to other questions too. Only 7 percent of those surveyed consider the Maoists as a source of insecurity, compared with 42 percent in 2004. The CPN-M topped the list of those sympathetic to the cause of excluded groups. Respondents were on board with the Maoist proposals to integrate the two armies (74 percent) and impose a land ceiling (61 percent).

Still, Nepalis trust the other seven political institutions more. Of the 934 respondents (from a total of 4,089) who identified themselves as close to a party, only 15 percent named the CPN-M, while 34 percent allied themselves with the NC and 32

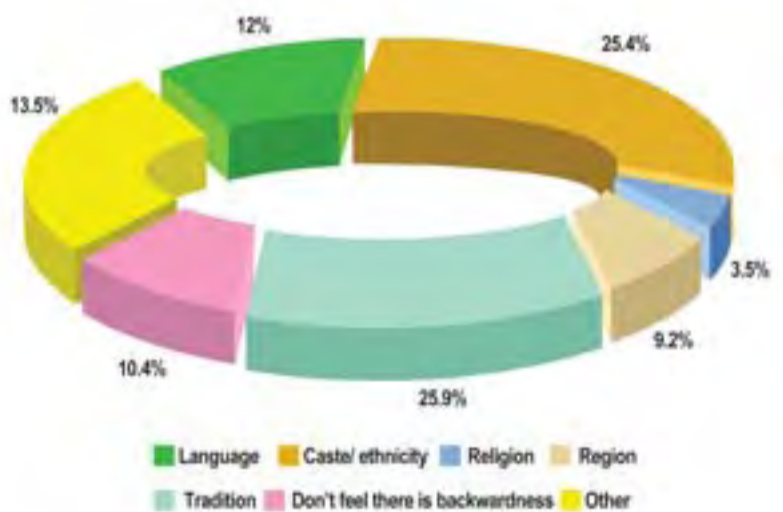
How satisfied are you with the functioning of the government since Jana Andolan II?



What is the best way to address the demands of backward communities?

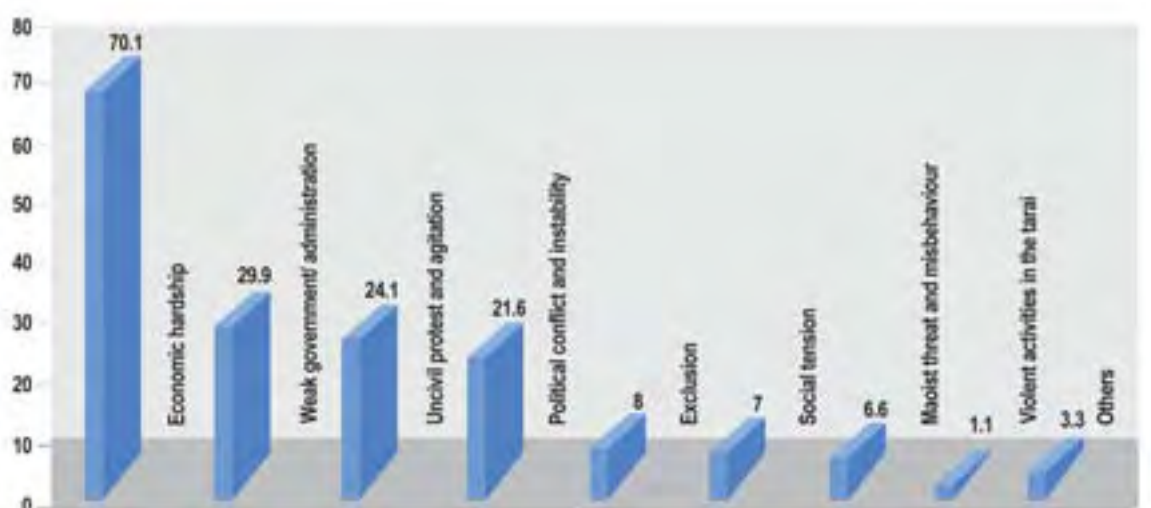


What do you think is the main cause for marginalisation/ backwardness?



All figures are in percent

What are the two major problems facing the country today? (percentage based on multiple responses)



Nepali democracy

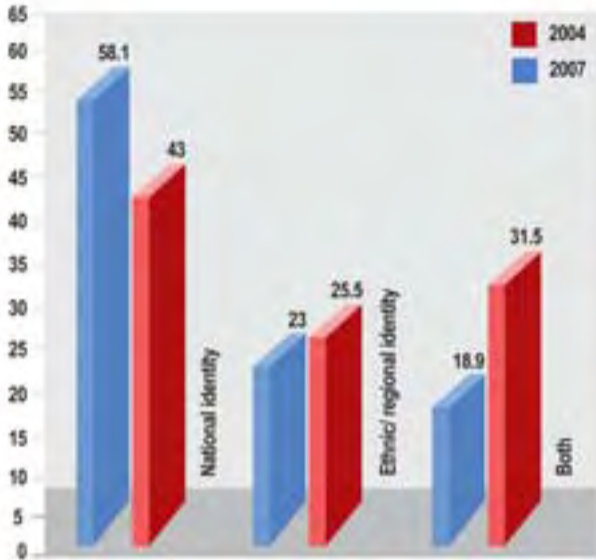
percent with the UML. Over half said they would either decide later for whom they would vote or did not want to tell.

Popular aspirations for change have been manifesting in different forms. The janajati and madhesi movements appear to be genuinely mass-based. Respondents identifying with just national identity dropped sharply to 43 percent from 59 percent in 2004. Instead, there has been a shift in favour of equal weight to both national and ethnic or regional identity, from 19 percent in 2004 to 31.5 percent. It's different in the tarai, though. Across caste, ethnicity, and religion, madhesis favoured an ethnic or regional identity (30 percent on average) over a national identity (18 percent). The figures were reversed in 2004. But identity politics do not threaten national integration—over 90 percent of respondents, including madhesis, said they 'are proud' to belong of their own community and also Nepali.

The 'New Nepal' project aims to make fundamental changes to the state—secularism, federalism, and multilingualism. The survey discovered a paradox: support for a secular state, bi/multi-language policy, and federalism has increased by 6.4 and 9.5 percent respectively since 2004. Yet 61 percent of respondents favoured retaining the Hindu state and a little less than that wanted a unitary form of government. A bi/multi-language policy, however, is endorsed by over half the respondents.

Hill origin respondents wanted a status quo on language and the nature of government,

How would you like to identify yourself?



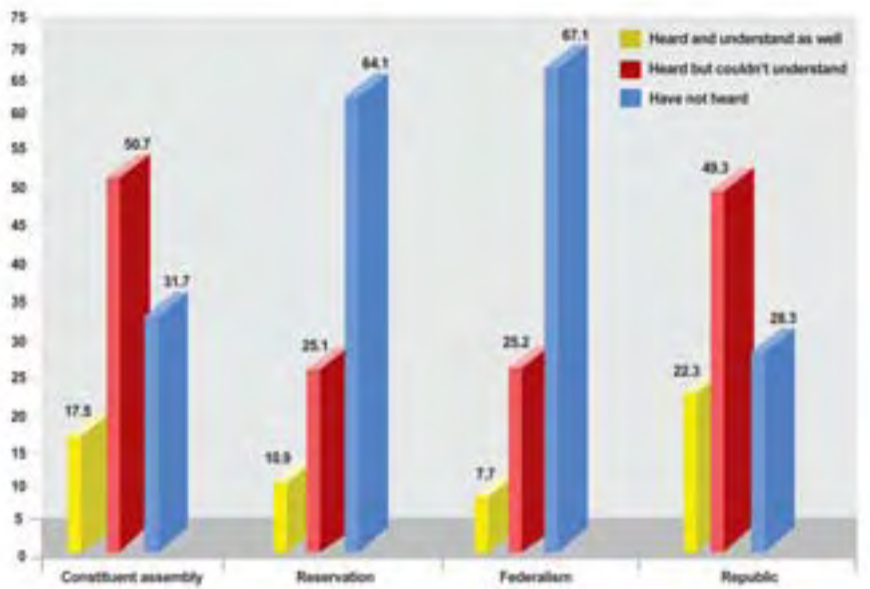
while most madhesis wanted alternatives. Hill ethnic groups and Muslims wanted a secular state, in contrast to a majority of caste and dalit hill and tarai groups.

All these issues will be settled by the new constitution. A large majority of the respondents (62 percent) felt the CA elections could be held in a safe atmosphere and 84 percent said international supervision would ensure free and fair elections. The surveyed citizens credited the eight-party alliance and resolution of the conflict for the improved security environment.

These are the messages from the findings of the State of Democracy 2007 survey:

- Civic education is essential, given the high percentage of 'don't know' responses on key issues such as the meaning of democracy and what the CA is

How familiar are you with the following?



- Not politics, but economic hardship is at the top of the list of problems and challenges facing Nepalis (70 percent)
- Uncivil agitation—bandas and chakka jams—are not the way to get people's support
- People expect results from the April Uprising and CA elections, notably peace through political reconciliation and stability through governance
- The democratic transition must be linked to the voices of the people.

Krishna Hachhethu is country coordinator of the South Asia Democracy Study Network, affiliated with CNAS at Tribhuvan University, and associated with NCCS.

This survey was conducted in collaboration with International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA).

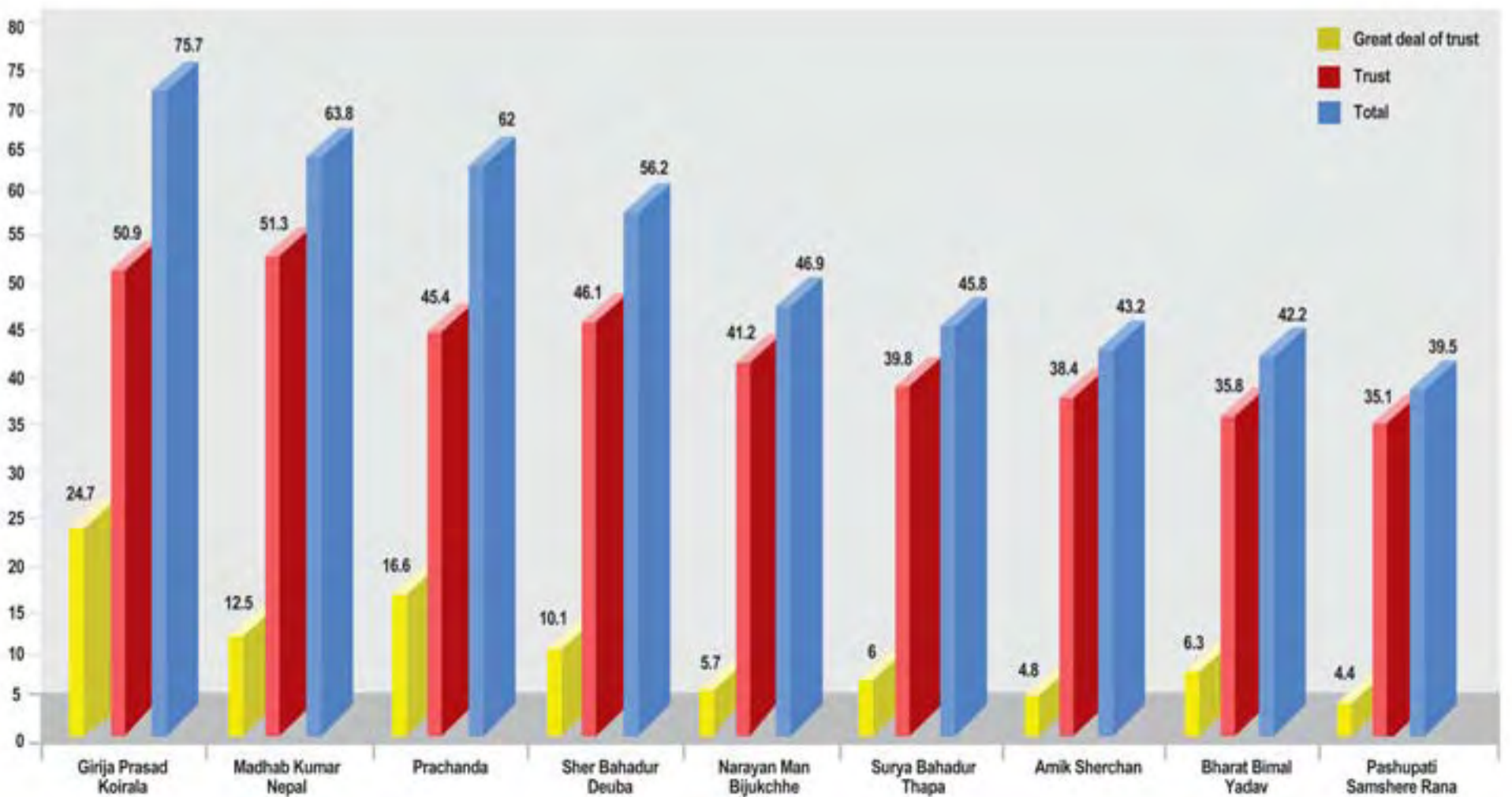


KIRAN PANDAY

How the survey was done

The survey was conducted from 28 March to 27 April 2007 in 162 polling stations (23 in urban and 139 in rural areas) spread over 41 parliamentary constituencies in 40 districts. A structured questionnaire was administered through face-to-face interviews with a nationwide sample of 4,089 respondents. The gender, rural/urban, and caste/ethnic make up of the sample size largely, if not absolutely, reflected the characteristics of the national population.

To what extent do you trust the following political party leaders?



Open doors

Pragmatic European governments ought to legalise and regulate migration

Over a million foreigners bypass the defences of 'Fortress Europe' every year. Some enter covertly, but most just overstay their visas and work illicitly. Even if Europe became a police state, migrants could get through: documents can be forged or stolen, visas overstayed, people smuggled, officials bribed. Draconian policies mostly drive immigration underground.



COMMENT
Philippe Legrain

Aside from a humanitarian crisis, with thousands drowning each year trying to reach Europe and thousands more detained, there is the soaring expense of border controls and bureaucracy, a criminalised people-smuggling industry, and an expanding shadow economy, where illegal migrants are vulnerable to exploitation, labour laws are broken and taxes go unpaid. There is mistrust of politicians who cannot keep promises to halt immigration, perceptions of immigrants as lawbreakers rather than enterprising people, and mistreatment of refugees that deters people who want to work from applying for asylum.

These problems are due not to immigrants, but to our immigration controls, which are costly, cruel, ineffective, and counterproductive. They undermine law and order, just as Prohibition did more damage to America than drinking ever has.

Immigrants are not an invading army; they are mostly people seeking a better life, drawn to Europe by the huge demand for workers to fill the low-end jobs that our aging and increasingly wealthy societies rely on, but which our increasingly well-educated and comfortable citizens



BAD NEIGHBOURS: The European Union funded the construction of this massive razor wire separation barrier to separate Ceuta, a Spanish exclave, from Morocco to try and curb illegal immigration.

are unwilling to take.

Many services cannot readily be mechanised or imported—old people cannot be cared for by a robot or from abroad—while people increasingly pay others to perform tasks they once did themselves, freeing up their own time for more productive work or leisure. As advanced economies create high-skilled jobs, they create low-skilled ones, too—they count for a quarter of western Europe's jobs. Today four in five 25-34-year-old Europeans have a secondary education, and even those with few or no qualifications increasingly shun dirty, difficult, dangerous jobs. Immigration helps reconcile our aspirations to opportunity for all with the reality of drudgery for some.

Consider old-age care, Europe's fastest-growing employment sector. Young Europeans need a huge wage hike to be

persuaded to work in a retirement home rather than a shop. Given fiscal constraints, that implies either less care for pensioners, budget cuts elsewhere, or tax hikes.

For immigrants, wages in Brussels are far higher than in Manila, for example, and Filipino immigrants are generally happy to do such work. This is not exploitation or undercutting wages, since most Europeans do not want these jobs. And it does not undermine social standards, because legal migrants have recourse to trade unions and the law. Migrants, taxpayers, young and old Europeans are all better off.

It is mutually beneficial to import computers from China, IT services from India, and investment-banking services from Americans, and can also make sense to import Filipino care workers, Congolese cleaners, and Brazilian bar staff. Policymakers who want products and

providers of high-skilled services to move freely but people providing less-skilled services to stay put are both hypocritical and economically illiterate.

Immigrants also spend their money on goods and services, creating more jobs. The unemployment rate in Spain, the European country that has admitted the most immigrants in recent years, continues to fall. Britain, Ireland, and Sweden opened their labour markets to the Poles and other new EU members in 2004 and still have low unemployment.

Immigrants also complement native workers' efforts. A foreign nanny may allow a British doctor to return to work, where hard-working foreign nurses and cleaners enhance her productivity. And while innovation sometimes comes from brilliant individuals—21 of Britain's Nobel prizewinners were refugees—it generally comes from the synergy of talented people in close proximity. In Silicon Valley, Intel, Yahoo!, Google, and eBay were all co-founded by immigrants.

Millions of Europeans want EU governments to lower their barriers to developing countries' exports, cancel third world debt, and increase foreign aid. Increased migration would help far more. Migrants from poor countries already send home \$200 billion a year and perhaps another \$400 billion informally, compared to the \$80 billion in aid given by western governments.

These remittances are not spent on weapons or put into Swiss bank accounts; they go straight into local people's pockets. They pay for food, clean water, medicines, and school fees. Returning migrants bring back new skills, new ideas, and the money to start new businesses. Africa's first internet cafés were started by migrants returning from Europe.

If open borders are politically unfeasible, our leaders should at least create a legal route for people from developing countries to enter and work. Yes, learning to live together can be tough. But Europe would thrive on the cosmopolitan dynamism that results from treating immigration as an opportunity, not a threat. ●

(Project Syndicate/ Europe's World)

Philippe Legrain is the author of *Immigrants: Your Country Needs Them*.

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PICS: MIN BAJRACHARYA

Get your hands dirty... ... and your head clear

MALLIKA ARYAL

Arriving at Newa Art Ceramics in Madhyapur, Thimi for my first pottery lesson, I expected to have some messy fun. But like many people, I also thought it was something I'd only do regularly if I had access to an elaborate studio.

The workshop, taught by Santosh Kumar from the Delhi Blue Pottery Trust all through this month, was an eye-opener.

To start with, we played with small pieces of clay. It didn't make any sense initially, but the more I rolled and kneaded the sensuous clay, the better I felt. The tension and knots in my shoulders and back slowly started subsiding, and I felt truly relaxed.

Kumar eased us into coil work—making thin lines of clay that resemble breadsticks. You don't need a potter's wheel for this—basic knives, spoons, and sponges do the trick. We rolled

the clay with the fleshy part of our palms. You gently press and roll, press and roll the soft, smooth clay until the coil becomes longer and of uniform thinness. You then make a flat spiral, stick that to the base of a small mould and work your way up the sides, covering the surface evenly. Later the clay is smoothed over with a wet sponge. Once the work dries up, the mould is overturned and you realise you've made a pretty bowl.

The basic coil is also used to create vases. Once you roll out the clay and make a base, you just keep piling on coil atop coil, using a spoon to paste the clay down to the base and the coils to each other as you work your way up so there are no empty spaces.

Beginners need to watch out for hairline cracks in the dried clay, and repair them fast by moistening the clay and gently evening out the surface with a knife or a spoon.

We'll soon be learning to work the wheel and fire our bowls and vases, which we will then paint over and glaze. It is indeed 'fun', but it's also strangely meditative and restful. You slowly learn patience and that creativity needs space to happen. ●





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WHO WILL IT BE?

19 colleges, all vying to send their representatives to the Mister and Miss University International pageant in Korea this July as WAVE Mr and Miss University 2007. Who will it be?

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ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

❖ **Colours of the sepals and petals** an exhibition of paintings by Neera Joshi Pradhan, until mid June, at Park Gallery, Lazimpat. 4419353

EVENTS

- ❖ **East is East** a comedy about Pakistani families in Britain, 8 June, 6.45 PM at the Lazimpat Gallery Café. 4428549
- ❖ **Fund-raising party** organised by Samadarshi Nepal, featuring DJ B.Man, 8 June, 8PM at 1905, Kantipath, Rs 750 including a drink and snacks. 9841258048
- ❖ **Kids Need Fair Trade** open house on the occasion of Fair Trade Day, 8 June, Mahaguthi Showroom, Kopundol. 5521607
- ❖ **Yuva Chalfal Shrinkhala** 'issues on Karnali on Youth Students' Organisations', 8 June, 3-5PM at Martin Chautari. 4107599
- ❖ **A Dolls House** a play by Henrik Ibsen, adapted and directed by Sunil Pokharel, until 10 June, 5.30 PM at the Sama Theatre, Gurukul. 4466956
- ❖ **Core Empowerment Training** by writer Paula Laxmi Horan, five day intensive retreat at the Farm House, Nagarkot, 13-17 June. 9803356700
- ❖ **CSGN monthly lecture** Unequal Citizens by Lynn Bennett, 22 June, 9.30 AM at Shanker hotel. 9851046543
- ❖ **Film South Asia 2007** Festival of South Asian documentaries, 11-14 October, call for entries deadline 30 June. www.filmsouthasia.org
- ❖ **School Bullying Workshop** 30 June and 1 July at The New Era, Battispatali. 9851023958

MUSIC

- ❖ **Soul of Raga** live classical and fusion music, every Friday night at Nhuchhe's Kitchen, The Organic Bistro. 4429903.
- ❖ **Open mic night** at Via Via Café, every Friday, 8PM onwards.
- ❖ **Live music** at the Red Onion Bar, Wednesdays from 8PM with Yanki and Zigma Lepcha. 4416071
- ❖ **Ciney Gurung** every Wednesday and Rashmi Singh every Friday, live at the Absolute Bar, Hotel Narayani Complex, 7PM. 5521408
- ❖ **DJ Raju and the Cloudwalkers** live at the Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency, every Friday and Saturday. 4491234

DINING

- ❖ **5th Annual Monsoon Wine Festival** 16 wines at Rs 150 a glass and Rs 600 a bottle, at Kilroy's of Kathmandu, Thamel. 4250440
- ❖ **Friday evening BBQ** with live music, at the Hotel Himalaya, 7PM, Rs 499 net. 5523900
- ❖ **Walk and lunch** every Saturday at the Shivapuri Heights Cottage. 9841371927
- ❖ **Kebabs and curries** at the Dhaba, Thapathali. 9841290619
- ❖ **Krishnarpan** Nepali specialty restaurant at Dwarika's Hotel, six to 22 course ceremonial lunch and dinner. 4479488
- ❖ **Weekend special** with sekuwa, bara, barbeque, Fridays at Ambassador Garden House, Lazimpat, 5.30 PM onwards. 4411706
- ❖ **Mongolian BBQ** Wednesdays and Fridays, 6.30 PM on at the Splash Bar and Grill, Radisson Hotel. Rs 1,000 for unlimited barbeque and beer. 4422828
- ❖ **Flavours of the Middle East** every Friday and the taste of Thailand every Wednesday at The Café, Hyatt Regency, Boudha. 4491234
- ❖ **Light nouvelle snacks** and elaborate cordon bleu meals at La'Soon, Pulchok, behind the Egyptian embassy. 5537166
- ❖ **Continental cuisine** and wine by the fire place at Kilroy's, Thamel. 4250440.
- ❖ **Smorgasbord** lunch at Park Village Resort, every Saturday. 4375280
- ❖ **Gyakok** at the Shambala Garden Café, Hotel Shangri-La, minimum four diners at Rs 450 per person, two hours' notice.
- ❖ **Retro brunch barbecue** with Crossfire Band at Le Meridien, Gokarna from 12-4PM, Rs 1,000 including swimming. 4451212
- ❖ **Calcutta's rolls, biryani, kebabs** Indian cuisine at Bawarchi, Bluebird Mall Food Court. 9741000735
- ❖ **Woodfired pizzas** at the Roadhouse Café, Thamel 4262768, Bhatbhateni 4426587 and Pulchok 5521755
- ❖ **Pizza** from the woodfired oven at Java, Thamel. 4422519
- ❖ **Jazzabell café** enjoy great food, exotic cocktails and music, Chakupat, Patan. 2114075

GETAWAYS

- ❖ **Weekend package** at Le Meridien Kathmandu Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa, two nights three days at Rs 8,888 and one night two days at Rs 4,444. 4451212
- ❖ **Wet and wild package** at Godavari Village Resort, every Saturday and Sunday, unlimited swimming, buffet lunch with a bottle of beer or a softdrink, Rs 690 net. 5560675

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors@nepalimes.com

Quest Entertainment



In *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*, Elizabeth (Keira Knightly), Will (Orlando Bloom), and Captain Barbosa (Geoffrey Rush) rescue Captain Jack Sparrow (Johnny Depp) from the clutches of the Kraken. Now they must face their foes, Davey Jones (Bill Nighy) and Lord Cutler Beckett (Tom Hollander). The crew must call the Pirate Lords from the four corners of the globe, including the infamous Sao Feng (Chow-Yun Fat), to a gathering that will make their final stand against Beckett, Jones, Norrington, the Flying Dutchman, and the entire East India Trading Company.

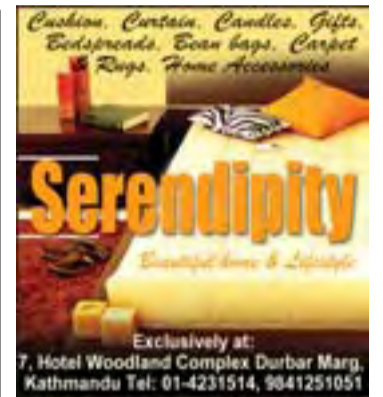
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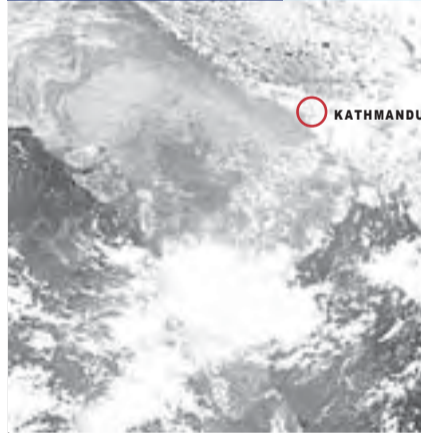
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WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL



The night rain this week is a sign that we are going into the pre-monsoon phase. Tuesday night alone Kathmandu got 41mm. Thursday morning's satellite picture shows both the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal branches of the monsoon as active. This week's pressure chart shows a low pressure trough over southeastern Nepal, which will mean vigorous precipitation in the foothills. Far west Nepal is also likely to receive light rain. Valley residents can expect a humid weekend with light rain on Friday, sunny intervals over the weekend, and thundershowers early next week.

KATHMANDU VALLEY



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KIRAN PANDAY

BLURRED VISION: Prime Minister Koirala swaps glasses as he marks the 'first day of issue' on postage stamps depicting those who died in the April Uprising on Tuesday at Baluwatar. On the right is director general of the Department of Postal Services, Sridhar Gautam.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

SWIFT GETAWAY: US ambassador James Moriarty checks out a battery-operated vehicle to mark USAID's 56th anniversary on Tuesday. The prototype is designed and built in Nepal by Shree Eco Visionary.



MIN BAJRACHARYA

FRIENDS OF THE BAGMATI: An interfaith function organised by the Nepal River Conservation Trust at Pashupati to pray for purity of the air, water, and earth on World Environment Day on Tuesday.

Stained teeth?*

WHITER TEETH IN 2 WEEKS

*Consumption of coffee, tea, wine etc can cause staining of teeth.

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UNFPA संयुक्त राष्ट्र जनसंख्या कोष

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The United Nations Population Fund is an international development agency that promotes the right of every woman, man and child to enjoy a life of health and equal opportunity. UNFPA supports countries in using population data for policies and programmes to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV/AIDS, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. We are in the process of recruiting the following position:

Post Title : Assistant Representative
Closing Date : 22 June 2007
Level : NO-C
Duty Station : Kathmandu
Duration : One year initially

Under the overall guidance of the UNFPA Representative, the Assistant Representative ensures the following major activities under the areas of Population and Development Strategies (PDS), Programme Development and Management; Monitoring, and Evaluation; Capacity Building; Knowledge Sharing and Partnerships, and Administration/Finance:

- Collects, analyzes and evaluates relevant sectoral data for advocacy and programming;
- Functions as the Focal Point of macro development issues, including PRSP, MDS and HDR;
- Manages PDS programme/projects of the Country/Regional Programmes;
- Coordinates with relevant Government, Donor, UN Agencies, I/NGOs and other Institutions
- Prepares country level monitoring and evaluation and statistical reports on the status of Reproductive Health, Population and Gender issues
- Provides technical assistance to the development of the CCA, UNDAF, Country Program, Country Programme Action Plan and Annual Work plans, including joint programmes ;
- Provides technical support to the PARHI/Community Based Programmes for monitoring and evaluation.
- Designs and manages different programme/projects evaluations and research reports;
- Prepares monitoring and evaluation capacity building action plan for country office, national partners and institutions

Qualifications and Experience Required

- Advanced university degree in demography, population studies, economics, social anthropology, other related fields such as political science, public health, statistics, business administration among others;
- A minimum of five years experience in Monitoring and Evaluation, Population Development Strategies, RH, Gender with UN-agencies or INGOs/NGOs;
- Advanced training courses on M&E and exposure to overseas experience is an asset;
- Fluency in oral and written English and Nepali;
- Fluency in Nepali local languages is a great asset;
- Excellent communications and presentation skills are required;
- Good advocacy and negotiation skills;
- Profound understanding political situation and peace process;
- Good knowledge on humanitarian assistance in addition to development assistance;
- Proficiency in current office software applications and good technical skills in data processing and analysis; and
- Ability to work in a multi-cultural setting, mature and willingness to travel frequently to remote areas

Submission of Application
 A detailed Terms of Reference (TOR) can be collected for the positions from the UN Reception from 4-20 June 2007 between 10:00 and 12:00 hrs on working days at UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur. Interested candidates should submit their applications, clearly marked the position of the job applying on the top right hand corner, together with updated "UN Personal History Form (P11)" available at www.unfpa.org/about/employment/index.htm, curriculum vitae, full address and contact details and at least three referees. The application should be sent to the following address **no later than 22 June 2007**. Personal or telephone solicitation will disqualify the candidates. UNFPA reserves the right to appoint on the same or lower position. **Qualified women and those belonging to the socially disadvantaged candidates are encouraged to apply.**

**The UNFPA Representative
 UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund)
 UN House, Pulchowk, Lalitpur**

The Young Columnist League

Call us Asses naïve, but we can understand the gravity of the diplomatic incident triggered by the American ambassador to Nepal getting stoned in Jhapa the other day.

Ordinary Nepalis in buses defying bunds get hit by bricks all the time, their motorcycles are regularly set on fire, the Ass's bicycle had its air forcibly extirpated last week by goons trying to make sure their bund was a "grand success". But all that is nothing compared to the missile attack on the Moriarty convoy. Kathmandu's insecure dips immediately raised the matter with MoFA which promised no stone will be left unturned (as it were) in apprehending future perpetrators.

Actually, by staging a missile attack on Moriarty our young commies demonstrated that they have achieved military parity with the world's hyperpower in ballistic missile capability. OK, the comrades still have to work on telemetry and range of their projectiles but as far as the warheads are concerned it is clear that, just like Iran and North Korea, Nepal's reds have forced Washington to sit up and take notice.



While inaugurating the YCL Annual Convention last week, Comrade Awesome gave in to pressure to take his Young Camikaze League's troop strength to 500,000 so they can run their parallel government, parallel police, parallel justice system, parallel tax department, and parallelograms. However, in a meeting with Nordic ambassadors this week His Fierceness denied having said

any such thing. All this is leading the Ass to conclude Chairman Pao has an enviable ability to speak out of both sides of his mouth. Like when he said he refused the 10 karod Injun sandalwood smugglers offered. ("You think I am so cheap?")

The question really boils down to whether or not a party in parliament and government can deploy Red Guards. Ever since the Buddhanagar HQ experienced two socket bomb explosions last week, the Maoists have beefed (now that we're secular we can use that word) up their security. The result is that platoons of Maoist gunmen escort departing or arriving Maoist leaders at the airport driving right up the tarmac to the plane. There seems to be parallel security at the airport as well.



Last week the Ass pointed out that Local Under-development Minister Deb Gurung had become the first incumbent to call a bund in Nepal's history. Not to be outdone, Anti-Forest Minister Matrika Yadav on Monday announced a month-long protest in the tarai with the whole works: tyre-burning, highway blockages, chukker jams, torch rallies, and of course nationwide bunds in which all Nepalis will be forced to voluntarily stay home. All this must have made Minister of Men Women and Children Khadga Biswokarma feel a bit left out because he too has thrown his weight behind the Dalit-Janjati-Adibasi bunds next week (one day for each). The Ass is generally not into conspiracies, only gossip, but is this sudden epidemic of government-

sponsored Nepal bunds part of a deliberate plan to reduce petroleum demand since we have no money to pay for it?



Having valet Gokarnaji back at Baluwatar after the First Daughter Banished him means Girijababu is now regularly getting his spoonful of honey and glass of milk before bedtime every night. This is giving him a burst of new energy which is probably what fortified the Rt Hon'ble Prime Minister to call the YCL the "Young Criminal League". If only Gokarna can add a little brandy GPK will be calling the YCL a "Young Cannibal League" next.

Look at it this way, a man the central bank has asked the police to arrest for embezzlement is mollycoddled by none other than the prime minister. He breaks bread with Makunay at a UML do. So, the YCL cleverly nabs him and hands him over to the cops. The Ass's forecast: Sitaram is going to walk free just as soon as the Young Commercial League gets its cut and when Makunay returns from his job interview in New Delhi.



So what's with the CP attending the Art of Living meditation sessions in Kathmandu? Why is a Sri Panch hobnobbing with a Sri Dui? Fellow-meditators were quite surprised to see a changed Paras sarkar moving around the cross-legged devotes asking them if they had attained nirvana yet.

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