

# The Nepal Digest

The First Nepali e-Magazine

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## About The Nepal Digest

The Nepal Digest (TND) is a publication of TND Foundation, global not-for-profit information and resource center (registered in New York, USA) committed to promoting issues concerning Nepal. All members of [TheNepalDigest.org](http://TheNepalDigest.org) will get copy of [The Nepal Digest \(TND\)](http://TheNepalDigest.org). Membership is free of charge and is open to all.

The Nepal Digest is the first Nepali electronic e-magazine in the Internet. The Nepal Digest hopes to create a free and democratic electronic platform -- free of all political views, free of cultural biasness, against prejudices and unjustness of all kinds.

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You can submit your articles, views and news at its website

<http://theNepalDigest.org/submit.htm> or via email [contact@theNepalDigest.org](mailto:contact@theNepalDigest.org). The TND team appreciates your support.

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## Message from the Editor

By **Ujjwal Bhattarai**

Jaya Pratap Rana, the Nepali Ambassador to the United States at Washington D.C., passed away during treatment at John Hopkins University Hospital earlier this month. We wish to offer our condolences and sympathy to the deceased's family and we are very sad at this loss of an excellent diplomat.

On a separate note, the ANA (American Nepalese Association) 2004 convention is upcoming in Phoenix, Arizona during July 4th weekend. ANA President Mr. Krishna Nirola and members of the organizing team of the convention have requested TND to help spread their message to Nepalese living in USA and elsewhere. Included in this issue of TND is a message from Mr. K. Nirola.

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Discussion on TND comment board

In February issue of TND, we witnessed boiling and burning debates on various issues. Active participation itself in the comment board fulfills its mission however it would be really worthwhile if writers maintain a cordial environment and a friendly discussion rather than getting personal and abusive. After all, please keep in mind that if anyone loses under these raucous verbal wars, it is only your beloved "The Nepal Digest" (TND).

Thank you.

Ujjwal Bhattarai  
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## Who said what?

### "Two Sides of a Coin"

"As the country is situated between two big nations, third party mediation would create further problems,"

- **PM Thapa** nixing involvement of any foreign country or even the United Nations in resolving Maoist insurgency

.....

"Our party is ready to cooperate with the United Nations to take steps to watch into the actual situation of the ongoing conflict."

- Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias **Prachanda**

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## Letter to Editor: "Everything is going wrong in Nepal"

By **Sunaj Pokharel**, Kathmandu, Nepal

To the Editor:

Everything is going wrong in Nepal. The cease fire has been broken and history is repeating itself. The dreadful time has again taken the people of Nepal to the circumstances which is getting worse day by day.

In my opinion, there are four main powers in Nepal, People (Citizen of Nepal), Political Parties, King and Maoist who are moving in four different directions. In this situation I guess it's not wrong to say Nepal is lacking proper guardianship. The so-called leaders are busy on protesting to claim their position in the Parlaiment, King is busy with his tours and felicitations, Maoist busy in killing people and collecting money, and poor people are in middle of no where.

I have got a question to ask, isn't it possible for the Maoist to come along with the political parties and fight election. They often talk about fighting for people and ground realities - I ask them why don't they accept election to know what the People of Nepal exactly wants. We have democracy in Nepal so let the people in Nepal decide.

If they are true fighters come and fight the war of ballots and not bullets and see for themselves where exactly they are in the eyes of people.

(Writer can be reached at [luniees@hotmail.com](mailto:luniees@hotmail.com) - Ed)

## Special Travel Diary: "Ravenous Kamailya said - I may die starving"

By Sarita Aryal

### यात्रा संस्मरण

### चाउरीपरेको भोको पेट देखाउदै कमैयाले भने: भोकै मरिन्छ होला

- सरिता अर्याल

धनगढी आएको चौथो दिन कमैया सिविर घुम्ने सिलसिलामा म नेपाल राष्ट्रिय दलित समाज कल्याण संघ धनगढीका हरि श्रीपाइलीलाई लिएर बेसको कार्यालय भित्र गएँ। १२:३० बजे हामी त्यहाँ पुगेका थियौं। त्यहाँका कर्मचारीहरूसँग सामान्य परिचय भयो। बेसका कर्मचारी रामदास चौधरीले विवादमा परेको क्याम्प हेर्ने मेरो चाहना अनुरूप मलाई एक जना सवारी सहितको पथप्रदर्शक दिने हुनु भयो। मोटरसाइकलको व्यवस्था गर्दागर्दै एक बज्यो। म र कृष्ण मरासनी १:१५मा धनगढीबाट कोटा गाँउ विकास समितिको नौनिया निमोबुजी जाने विचार लिएर बाटो लाग्यौं।

अत्तरिया नपुग्दै सेनाले रोक्यो। पत्रकारको परिचयपत्र देखाएपछि मोटर साइकलबाट अरु ओर्लिएर हिडेजस्तो मैले हिड्नु परेन। हामी अगाडी बढ्यौं। बाटोमा सेना, सशस्त्रप्रहरी र प्रहरीले धेरै ठाउँमा रोक्यो सोध्दै गर्दथे। हामी चौमालामा पुगेपछि अलि धेरै सोधी-खोजी भएको अनुभव हामीले गर्नुभयो। हामी २:३०मा सुक्खड पुग्यौं। त्यहाँ भन्दा अगाडी मोटरसाइकल लिएर जान सुरक्षित नहुने विचार कृष्णजीले व्यक्त गरेपछि मोटरसाइकल त्यहीं एक होटल अगाडी राखेर हामीले दिनेश यातायातको बस समात्नुभयो। बसमा झुण्डै १० मिनेट अगाडि बढेपछि सामुदायिक जंगलको छेउमा ओर्लियो। हामी ओर्लिएको ठाउँको कुनै नाम नै रहेनछ।

महेन्द्र राजमार्गको उत्तर दक्षिण दुवै तिर जंगलको छेवैछेउ कच्चीबाटो थियो। हामीलाई बाटोमा पानीले चुटेको थियो भने त्यहाँ पनि सिमसिम पानी परिरहेको थियो। बाटो ग्रावेल नभएकोले ज्यादै चिप्लो थियो। थारु बस्ती पार गर्दै हामी अगाडि बढ्यौं। हामीलाई कमैया सिविर पुग्न २० मिनेट लाग्यो सायद बाटो चिप्लो भएर होला। धान खेतको बीचबीचमा स-साना प्लाष्टिकले छाएका तीन सय जति छाप्राहरु त्यहाँ देखिए। भित्र बस्दा मुस्कीलले तीनजना पनि बस्न नमिल्ने क्षेत्रफल आगटेका ती छाप्रामा पानी पर्दा सिधा परेन भने सबै भित्र नै पस्दथ्यो। छाप्राको छाप्ना मात्र थियो, दायाँ बाँया कर्चिले मात्र बारिएको थियो। बाहिरैबाट छाप्रा भित्रको दयनीयता प्रष्ट देखिन्थ्यो।

सिविरको सुरुकै छाप्रामा एक जना ६० वर्ष जत्तिकी कमैया महिला बाहिर निस्कइन् उनी पछि सबै छाप्राबाट एक दुई जना गर्दै कमैयाहरु बाहिर निस्किए। अरु सिविरभन्दा त्यहाँका कमैयाको बसाई र लुवाईले उनीहरुको स्थिती वेग्लै छ भन्ने प्रष्ट पार्दथ्यो। दुई कुरामा मात्र एक रुपता देखियो, एउटा थियो थारु जाती भने अर्को थियो उनीहरुको क्षेत्रमा पुग्ने आगन्तुकलाई स्वागत गर्ने शब्द "मेडम नमस्कार"। यो शब्द सबै सिविरमा पुग्नासाथ सुनिन्थ्यो मानौं त्यहाँ पुग्ने महिलालाई 'मेडम' भनेर सम्बोधन गर्नु पर्छ भन्ने उनीहरु सबैलाई कसैले पढाएको थियो।

हाम्रो पछि पछि सबै कमैयाहरु आइरहेका थिए। हामी एउटा छाप्रा अगाडि केहि खालि ठाउँ देखेर त्यहीं बस्यौं। हामीलाई बस्न एउटा छाप्राबाट डोरीको खटिया ल्याएर राखिदिए। उनीहरु हामीसँग दुखेसो पोख्न थाले। उनीहरुले त्यहाँ व्यक्त गरेको अभिव्यक्ति सुन्दा लाग्दथ्यो मसँग उनीहरु धेरै कुरा माग्न चाहन्छन्। उनीहरुले मलाई राहत बाँड्ने व्यक्तिको रुपमा

हेरिरेहेको मैले अनुभव गरे । मैले मेरो त्यहाँ पुगनुको उदेश्य उनीहरुलाई सुनाए र उनीहरुको सामाजिक आर्थिक स्थितिको बारेमा जान्न खोज्दा ३५५ छाप्राबाट आएका धेरै बूढाबूढीले रुदै कमैयाबाट मुक्ति पाएपछि भनन दुःख पाएको बताए । उनीहरुले भित्र पसेको आफ्नो पेट देखाउदै भनेका थिए “मालिकको घरमा बस्दा पेट यसरी कहिल्यै भित्र पसेको थिएन । अहिले खान नपाएर कति दिन त लगातार भोको बस्नु परिरहेको छ । फर्किएर जान पनि अब काम गर्न सकिदैन । खाने नपाएर मर्ने भयो । ” ३०देखि ५०वर्ष सम्मका महिला पुरुषहरुको बनाई बेग्लै थियो ।

उनीहरु मुक्त भएर बस्न पाएकोमा सुखी थिए । उनीहरुको आवश्यकता नै बास हो भन्दथ्ये । बास नभएकोले छाप्रो छोडेर अन्त गएर मजदुरी पनि गर्न सकिदैन । काम केहि नभएकोले छोरा -छोरीलाई भोकै सुताउनु पर्दा त्यो क्षण सबैभन्दा पीडादायक भएको उनीहरुले बताए । ‘ महिना भरिमा दुई छाक भरपेट खान पाउदैनौ । परिवारलाई माठ खुवाएर राखेका छौ हामीले हाम्रा छोरा छोरीको भविष्यको बारेमा के सोच्ने ? कमैया बस्दा जोडेका केही गरगहना भाँटाकुडा बेचेर खादै छौ कतिदिन पुग्ला त ?’ उनीहरुको बनाई यस्तो थियो । घरमा भएको स्टिलको गिलास बेचेर एक किलो जति चामलको पोको खोलेर देखाउदै दानु चौधरीले भने “तीन दिनदेखि भोकी मेरी श्रीमतीलाई आज भरपेट माठ खुवाउछु ।” ‘ओ हो कस्तो दयनीय अवस्था’ त्यहाँ पुग्ने सबैलाई यो वाक्य सजिलै आए जस्तो लाग्छ ।

पाँच जना भन्दा कम सन्तान नभएका त्यो बस्तीका वासिन्दा थिए । केही युवाहरु कामको खोजीमा शहरतिर र छिमेकी मुलुक भारततिर गएका रहेछन् । त्यस्ता छोराको पठाएको पैसा दिएर छिमेकीकै छोरी किनेर आफ्नो बुहारीको स्थानमा सुरक्षित राख्ने सासू -ससुराको पनि त्यहाँ कमी रहेछन् । भोलि छोरो सहिसलामत फर्कन्छ, फर्कदैन । फर्केर आफूले किनि राखेको केटी विवाह गर्छ, गर्दैन त्यस तर्फ सोचाई कसैको पनि गएको देखिएन । छोरीको बुवाले बाँच्नकै लागि ७०० देखि ६ हजार सम्म छोरीलाई बस्तु सम्भरेर बेचेको पनि त्यहाँ देखियो । जुन छोरी विवाहको उमेरमा पुगेकी छैन त्यस्ती छोरीलाई शहरतिर वा गाँउमै पनि वार्षिक पारिश्रमिक लिएर दिने बाबुआमाको पनि त्यहाँ कम थिएन । आफू कमैयाबाट मुक्त भएता पनि छोराछोरीलाई कमैया बनाउने परिपाटी त्यहाँ यथावत रहेछ ।

युवापुस्ता आफ्नो संसारमा मस्त देखिन्थ्ये । उनीहरु सरकार वा गैरसरकारी संघ संस्थाले घर बनाइदिए र हामीलाई काम दिए हुन्छ भन्दैथिए । पढ्ने चाहना कसैमा पनि देखिएन । प्रत्येक छाप्रो धानखेतको बीचमा छुन् तर त्यो धान उनीहरुको होईन । त्यो क्षेत्र सुकुम्बासीले फडानी गरेर बसोबास गर्दै आएका रहेछन् पछि त्यै क्षेत्रमा छुटपुट कमैयालाई सरकारले बसाएको रहेछ । तर, सुकुम्बासीले त्यस्को विरोध गर्दै आएका रहेछन् । कहिले राती सुकुम्बासी आएर कमैयाको छाप्रोमा आगो लगाई दिने रहेछन् र कहिले कमैया र सुकुम्बासी बीचमा भै- भगडा र हातापाई पनि हुदै आएको रहेछ । गैरसरकारी संस्था वेसले छाप्राको छानाको रुपमा पलायिक र नेवाले दुईवटा टयुवेल दिएर सहयोग गरेको रहेछ । त्यहाँका कमैयाहरु अधिकांश परजीवी जस्ता देखिन्थे । कामैलाई आफ्नो जिन्दगी मान्ने, काम गर्नबाट नभाग्ने कमैयाहरु अहिले घरमा भएको सामान गाँउमा लगेर बेचेर खान सक्दछन्, छोराछोरी बेचेर खान सक्दछन्, दुई तीन छाक नखुवाएर नावालक छोरा छोरीलाई राख्न सक्दछन् तर दिनभरी कतै गाँउमा वा बजारमा गएर योग्यता र खुबी अनुसारको काम गरेर दुई पैसा कमाएर ल्यायौ भन्ने सोचाई उनीहरुमा देखिएन । हामी त्यहाँ पुग्दा धेरै कमैया युवाहरु तास खेलेर बसिरहेका थिए । सरकार र गैर सरकारी संघ संस्थाहरुले सित्तैमा दिएको बास र रासनपानीले उनीहरुलाई श्रमजीवीबाट परजीवी बनाएको त्यहाँ प्रष्ट देखिन्थ्यो ।

हामी सिविरबाट फर्कदा ५ बजिसकेको थियो सुखडमा चिया नास्ता गरेर हामी बाटो लाग्यौ । ७ बजे हामी राजीपुर आइपुगेका थियौ मोटरसाईकलको टायर पञ्चर भयो । म त्यहि एउटा घरको अगाडी बाटोमा बसे । कृष्णजी पञ्चर टाल्न जानु भयो । म बाटोमा एकै उभिएको देखेर घरपेटी दाइ आउनु भयो । हामी गफ गर्न थाल्यौ । घरका अरु सदस्य पनि आए । त्यत्तिकैमा ५० जना जतिको सेनाको टोली सर्चबाट त्यै बाटो गरी फर्कदै त्यहाँ आइपुगे । घरपेटी दाइ र सेनाको गफ हुन थाल्यो । गफबाट थाहा भयो गत राती त्यहाँ छ घर लुटेको रहेछ । उनीहरुको कुराबाट माओवादीको नाममा खाओवादीले घर लुटेको मैले थाहा पाएँ । लुटेराहरुले सातवटा कुखुरा पकाएर खाएर हिडुन्जेल सम्म पनि उनीहरुलाई समाउने वा पछ्याउने आँट कसैले पनि गर्न सकेका रहेनछन् । सेनाले राती ढोका नखोल्नु भनेर ती घरपेटीलाई सम्झाउदै थिए भने घरपेटी सेनासँग तर्क गर्दैथिए: ढोका थुनेर बस्दा भनन खतरा हुदैन र ?

मोटरसाईकलको पञ्चर बनाएर निकै अघि फर्कनु भयो । अध्यारो भएकोले मोटरसाईकलको गति कम गरेर हामी अगाडी बढी रहेका थियौ । मसँग टेपरेकर्डर, क्यामरा, मोबाइल फोन र एक हजारजति पैसा थियो । साथीसँग के के थियो थाहा भएन तर मलाई त्यो निष्पटु अध्यारोमा कतै छ घर लुटेने खाओवादीले हाम्रो यात्रामा अवरोध त ल्याउने होइनन् भन्ने डर लागिरहेको थियो । बाटोमा मान्छे देख्यो भने मनमा चिसो पस्दथ्यो । डराउदै डराउदै ९:१५मा हामी अत्तरिया आईपुग्यौ । अत्तरियामा बस्ने विचार कृष्णजीले गर्नु भयो तर घरमा पिर गरेर बाटो हेरिरहेका होलान् भनेर मैले धनगढीनै जाने विचार राखे । हामी अगाडी बढ्यौ । अत्तरिया धनगढी बाटोमा जाँदाको भन्दा बढी चेकिङ भएको थियो । नजिक

नजिक चेकिङ्ग भएकोले मलाई हामी सुरक्षित छौं भन्ने ढुक्क लागेको थियो । तर सेना प्रहरीहरू भने हामीलाई राती राती हिडेकोमा आश्चर्य चकित हुँदै अनेक प्रश्न र सुझावहरू दिईरहेका थिए । धनगढी पुग्दा आर्मी र प्रहरी बाहेक बाटोमा एकजना पनि सर्वसाधारण मानिस देखिएन । ९:४० तिर म घर पुगे । मूलढोका खोल्दै भनिजले भन्नु भयो “माइजू आज त धेरै ढीला भयो नि ?” टायर पञ्चर भएको बताउदै थिए उहाँले उल्टो प्रश्न गर्नु भयो “धनगढीको घटना थाहा पाउनु भयो ?” मैले सोधे “अहं के भयो र ?” “आज साभ्र नै नपरी प्रहरी उपनिरीक्षकलाई मारीदिए” प्रहरी र सेनाले बाटोमा हाम्रो धेरै सोधी खोजी गरेको र चेकिङ्ग पोष्ट पनि बढाएको कारण त त्यो पो रहेछ ।

## Message: ANA President's Message

- By Krishna Nirola

Dear ANA Members and well wishers,

Warm greetings to you all from the Nation's Capital Washington DC. And I am sure you all are having a great NEW YEAR 2004.

It gives me great satisfaction and pleasure to keep you updated on ANA and NECC activities. I am happy to share with you in this note, briefly, what has happened recently and what we are planning to accomplish with your help.

1) Our 22nd Annual Convention will be held from July 2nd to July 4th (Friday to Sunday) at the Double Tree resort, Paradise Valley, AZ. Nestled in the foothills of Arizona's famous Camelback Mountains, the venue is in close proximity to the popular Fashion Square Mall with entertainment facilities all around it.

The organizers are putting together an excellent show, with stimulating intellectual, as well as entertaining programs. The experience in the Wild West, the glimpse of the Grand Canyon and the exciting convention will be a vacation worthwhile for every one. For additional details please check the web at the "[www.ana-home.org](http://www.ana-home.org)" and "[www.ana2004.org](http://www.ana2004.org)".

Contact Mrs. Amrit Tuladhar (Chair) for art, poetry, entertainment, cultural programs and opening ceremony information, support, ideas and volunteering at (480) 575-1051 ( [amrituladhar@yahoo.com](mailto:amrituladhar@yahoo.com)) and Mrs. Sunanda Sharma (Co-Chair) for various sessions and registration related questions at (480) 706-4020 [sharun5@aol.com](mailto:sharun5@aol.com))

You want you to get ready for a fun filled three days of entertainment with Nepathya, hilarious jokes from Santosh Pant, dancing to the latest beats, poetry reciting, art shows, and intellectually stimulating sessions on Nepal Development Issues, Non Resident Nepalis, Young Adult Forum, Women's Forum, Health issues etc.

We are planning a ANA 2004 Convention Brochure that will consist of Directory - Yellow pages of Nepalis businesses across Americas (listing free, ads cost \$250.00 for full page (8,5 inches x 11.00), \$125.00 for half page, quarter page \$65.00) personal ads (ads from local businesses (open to all). For this to materialize we need help including financial support. Please help your organization.

2) Directory of Nepalis in the Americas- It can be separate or combined with the Convention Brochure. Please post your name, address, telephone and emails in ANA home page: [ana-home.org](http://ana-home.org). Follow the instructions as outlined in ANA home page. Please note the cut off date for every one to register and make changes will be March 30th 2004

3) Articles on social and professional issues, health, medical, pictures, stories, along with advertisements for ANA 2004 Convention Brochure to be published with convention program may be sent to Arun Sharma at email: [sharun5@aol.com](mailto:sharun5@aol.com) and for ANA News Letter contribution to [shuk8350@bellsouth.net](mailto:shuk8350@bellsouth.net)

4) We have a submitted Merger Proposal to ANMA answering their questions, keeping all our options open. We believe merger is an excellent idea however, whether or not we merge we still need to:

" Remain open to all ideas and suggestions from each other. We need to continue to participate on issues of national, and global issues based upon member's interest..

" Participate in all deliberation pertaining to improving community affairs.

" Phoenix organizers are planning a brainstorming session on Friday July 2nd, 2004 to develop common strategies of cooperation among Nepali Associations, first such historic event. Please contact Arun Sharma to reserve a slot for organizational participation at (480) 706-4020 or [sharun5@aol.com](mailto:sharun5@aol.com)

5) We request the By-Laws Committee to present the revised and amended version to the Executive Committee by April 17 the date of the next Executive Meeting for circulation to membership and passage on Annual Meeting on July 4th 2004.

6) Friends, we are in the process of publishing the revised and updated Nepali Cook Book so please send as many recipes as you can to Mrs. Jyoty Pathak as soon as possible.

7) On December 3, 2003, as authorized by BOT, NECC signed a contract with Valderrama America to prepare proposal and go ahead and apply for a Grant from Maryland State for NECC. Mr. Valderrama has informed us that bill is currently with the Maryland Legislators. We need to produce a two page write up about NECC which we will submit it when we are called to testify. I am looking for volunteers for this task, please let me know as soon as possible if you are willing to help. Dr. Balram Aryal and I will work with Mr. Valderrama on this Grant and will update you on the progress of this effort.

8) On February 18, 2004 we had Shivratri Puja at our temple where about 50 devotees were present. Shankar Shrestha, Meena Giri, Anu Sharma, Mahendra Karki, Selina Pradhan and Rita Nirola donated Prasadum on this occasion. NECC thanks for this generous donation. Pundit Shridhar Gyawali did all the rituals needed in grand style.

9) On March 20, 2004 NECC is having a Status/ Discussion/ Dinner at Vienna Community Center in Vienna VA, to share the information about the State of NECC. We strongly urge all the local organizations and its member to participate.

Lastly, I urge all members, friends to unite and let us solve the needs of ANA. United we can do better. Once again OUR FAMILY WISHES YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONE A VERY HAPPY YEAR 2004.

Thank you and God bless you,

**Krishna Nirola**  
President  
ANA

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**Politics: "Parties' Divergence from Democracy"**

**- By Raman Raj Misra**

The current Constitutional impasse originated due to the decision of Prime Minister, Sher B. Deuba not to hold the general election as required by this Constitution. The Article 127 of this Constitution was evoked, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, on 4 October 2002. This Article makes it incumbent upon His Majesty to issue necessary orders at his own discretion to remove the difficulty encountered with the implementation of the Constitution.

The paradox of the current situation is that the date and phased schedule for the election had already been announced. The Election Commission had declared its confidence to be able to hold the elections, and the army had declared its willingness to provide requisite security during the elections. Yet the purported "representatives of the people" were reluctant (scared?) to go to the people to solicit votes!

It was the lack of confidence of the six major parties "to go to the people" that had brought about the Constitutional obstruction. Rather than participate in the scheduled election, they wished for its postponement. And in the meanwhile, all of them wished to be in the government by the grace of a royal decree, without the mandate of the voters.

Had they been successful in their design, they would not have made any hue and cry. The protest against the current government and the royal action by the parties and the partisan intellectuals is an expression of their frustration, though deceptively laced with righteous "democratic logic." True, this current government is not elected. But then neither the government of the six parties would have been elected, if formed as they had wished, under the Article 127.

The hypocrisy of the party leaders and the partisan intellectuals (propagandists) is seen in their current attempt to vilify His Majesty. But apart from the partisan intellectuals, others who are cognisant with the precedent events leading to the decision of 4 October 2002, know that it was the very party leaders who had petitioned His Majesty for using the residual power granted by the Article 127. Yet it seems some Scandinavians are being goosed by such malicious propaganda.

Nevertheless, the current purpose of the Article 127 is to facilitate an election, so that this Constitution can be functional again. Before 11 October 2002, the leaders of the parties did not co-operate with His Majesty by sending their members to form an all-party, electoral government as desired by the monarch. They are not doing anything to facilitate holding election in the near future. Such behaviours of the major parties indicate that they are really NOT INTERESTED in making this Constitution functional again.

Rather than trying to facilitate the necessary election, the leaders of the parties are engaged in vilifying His Majesty and the incumbent government. So naturally, one is forced to wonder at the vested motive of the party leaders and the diversionary rhetoric. Why are they diverting the attention of the people from the vital issue of the election, needed to make this Constitution functional again?

Why are the party leaders not concerned about the possible means and ways to make the election possible? Why are the parties not doing anything to enable themselves to go to the people to ask for votes? Is the need of the party leaders to deflect the drive against corruption from themselves greater than their concern for making this Constitution functional? Do the party leaders hope to be able to bargain their way out from being charged with corruption by creating difficulties to the present government?

They have shown themselves to be more fearful of the symbol of Nepal, for using the Article 127 on their recommendation, than the Maoists. The Maoists are all out to replace this multiparty democracy, but the big parties do not seem to be concerned. The parties, who could not face up to the election due to the threat of the Maoists, have done nothing to ward off the threat.

The leadership of the major parties has done nothing to protect the lives of their own supporters, who are being killed in the districts. The parties, who are doing nothing to protect the lives and properties of their own followers, are ridiculously trying to project themselves as capable defenders of democracy. The democracy, which they have made a mockery of, in the past twelve years!

Perhaps, the fact that the leaders of the major parties fear the nationalist institution more than the Maoists maybe because they and the Maoists are directed by the same geopolitical "remote control". This would also explain why the major political parties are not doing anything to protect democracy from the Maoists, even when their own supporters are being killed, robbed and displaced from the districts.

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## Politics: "King's constructive role benefits the nation"

- *By Bishal B. Shah*

Since the advent of the multiparty political system back in 1990, Nepal has been the laboratory for the political experiments. The political experiments in a country, which is very poor, will be so expensive that the process of other development activities would be stalled. Thus, Nepal cannot afford any kind of political experiments. No one should even think about to make a fortune out of the political experiments. Unfortunately, it is the loophole in the framework of the Constitution that provided all sorts of political experimentations. It is the very loophole that prompted the political parties and leaders to exploit the situations ruining the country and the people. We have witnessed major flaws in every sector of the Government institutions because of the weak installation of the Constitutional framework. We should not be hesitating to say that the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal (1990) has become rotten. It is no longer relevant. How far it is appropriate to give life to the dead body? Does not this sound silly and impractical?

It is the weaknesses of the Constitution, which gave birth to the political maneuvering and this resulted into the sufferings of the Nepali people. The so-called democratic parties and leaders very cleverly exploited the weaknesses of the Constitution; played with the future of Nepal and finally, escaped without a trial. They rubbed Nepal and the Nepali people. The Constitution has failed to act as a shield against those culprits. It is the King who is risking His throne to save the country from

further destruction. It is the King who is in desperate attempt to rejuvenate the people's hope and put the country in a right direction as far as the economic development and the unity among the Nepali brethren are concerned. HM King, since assuming the Executive power, which is also the outcome of the flaws in the Constitution, has neither acted nor said anything against the democratic norms. What is wrong when His Majesty said, "the days are gone for the King to be a passive onlooker when people are grieving with tears?" Can anybody dare to say the King has no right to do something against the plight of the people? Can anybody dare to say the King has no right to fight against the enemies of the Nepali society i.e., poverty, hunger, illiteracy, corruption and the political mafiaism? Cannot the King solace the people in need? HM King, like we all, is a Nepali. If the King is Nepali, what is wrong when He wants to put the Nepali nation in a right track? What is wrong when He wants to stand in favor of the people? What is wrong when Nepal is recovering its lost dignity under the King's leadership?

Nepal was not seen in the list of the nations of rampant corruptions in 2003. We should be proud with such amazing news. We can hope this trend will continue further. It should be the guiding factor for the political leaders once the general elections take place, which the government of Prime Minister Surya Bahadur Thapa is desperate to make it happen as soon as possible. What scores more is, under the visionary leadership of the King, at least, Nepal could escape from its regular entitlement of one of the most corrupt nations in the world. For sure, the donor community feels secure to channel their resources to Nepal at a time when those are properly managed. If so, one can put forth a suggestion that while drafting the new constitution, the King's role to put the barrier against the economic mismanagement could be considered which seems to be beneficial to the nation. The people of Nepal have experienced that the King's assertion of constructive role is far more beneficial to the nation vis-à-vis His solitary confinement. If the King's constructive role is beneficial for the people and the nation, there is no reason to feel awkward giving Him role to play for the sake of the nation and the Nepali people.

(Writer can be reached at [bishalshah@yahoo.com](mailto:bishalshah@yahoo.com) -Ed.)

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## Politics: "Stop the Zero Sum Game of Politics"

- By **Surendra R Devkota**

The political maneuverings of the King of Nepal are still lagging behind to find a heliotropic ray. On the other hand, the time cost of prevailing uncertainty is being very costly. Obviously, it includes the totals of uncalculated amount of lives, destruction of physical capitals as well as foregone cost of such capitals, blockings of investments, cost of mass exodus of people from villages, etc. It is the people who have to bear the burden of all such unfortunate costs. The people of Nepal are being the victims of political foul players at different periods of time. That may be the reason that people assume politics is a dirty game. Since there are nobodies to clean the mess and all types of political actors busy in fishing in dirty water.

King, parties and Maobadis are playing a game of zero sum. A zero-sum game is a game in which each player benefits only at the expense of others. Here, "the others" are none other than "people", whoever wins the game (see table below). Hence we do not need this kind of game and players should avoid playing on the head of people as soon as possible.

Today we need a non-zero sum game where the sum of outputs does not equal zero. Both players could and should win. This is often called a win-win or non-zero-sum game that is also popularly related to the "Prisoner's Dilemma". In a nutshell, it is a game of the two players choose between two moves; either "cooperate" or "not cooperate". The idea is that each player gains when both cooperate, but if only one of them cooperates, the other one, who defects, will gain more. It seems that the King is gaining more, but could be victimized. If either player does not cooperate, both will lose. The situation is very much relevant to present politics of Nepal. Some possible outcomes of such games are presented in the payoff matrix based on their cooperation or defection behaviors (box).

We are already in no-talks scenarios 1 and 2, and heading towards no-talk scenario 3. We all know that guns will not herald a sustainable solution of the present problem. Lord Krishna told Arjuna that "problems are not solved if they are further in state of problems". Gandhi's says, "Nonviolence is the law of the human race and is infinitely greater than and superior to brute force". Since the present King himself is reincarnated as an Emperor of Hindu, playing a zero sum game is not suitable to his

status. Country will be saved only by a game of cooperation; so need talks, talks and talks, NOT GUNS.

<b>(Non) zero sum game scenarios:</b>			
<b>A. Scenario 1: King vs. Parties</b>			
		<b>Parties</b>	
<b>King</b>	No talk	No talk Maoists prevail	Talk Parties prevail
	Talk	Anti-party prevail	People prevail
<b>B. Scenario 2: King vs. Maoists</b>			
		<b>Maoists</b>	
<b>King</b>	No talk	No talk Country loses	Talk Maoists prevail
	Talk	King prevails	Country gains
<b>C. Scenario 3: Parties vs. Maoists</b>			
		<b>Maoists</b>	
<b>Parties</b>	No talk	No talk Civil war	Talk Maoists prevail
	Talk	Parties overcome	People's gain

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**Analysis: "The Maoist Insurgency in Nepal: A Review"**

**- By Chudamani Basnet**

The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) launched its "people's war" on February 13, 1996. One Maoist's official publication says that "the people's war is aimed at creating a New Democratic state, then marching towards socialism and then finally towards communism through a continuous series of cultural revolutions under the dictatorship of the proletariat." Inspired by Mao's philosophy that the Marxist-Leninist model of urban revolution is inappropriate for an overwhelmingly rural population, which is both conservative and parochial in outlook and attitude, Nepal's Maoists plan to join the vast peasantry to surround and finally dispose Nepal's urban ruling elites.

The insurgency began nearly 6 years after the restoration of "democracy" in Nepal. It has now spread to the whole of the country. Whatever Nepal's government claims, the reality is that Nepal's vast rural areas currently experience either outright Maoist control or a dual government. Latest figures put the total death toll well over 8000. There have been scores of incidences of gross human rights violation from both sides and thousands have been orphaned, widowed and displaced. The confusion is deep as both the Maoists and the security forces do not allow independent researchers to enter conflict zones. Based on six factors (the environment, organization, cohesion, popular support, external support, and the government role) as suggested by various insurgency experts, I will try to explore the emergence, sustenance and the future of the insurgency in Nepal in this article.

### **Environment (state, society and geography)**

A review of the most recent Human Development Report commissioned by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) helps understand the spatial and social inequality prevalent in Nepal. The report puts the country's Human Development Index (HDI) value at 0.466 with a life expectancy of 59.5 years and an adult literacy rate of 50.7 per cent. The report notes that the HDI for urban areas is much higher than that for rural areas. Human development in the mountains is far below that in the hills. Except for the central mountains, which benefit from their relative proximity to Kathmandu and from tourism, the mountains have low human development than the Tarai.

Among the development regions, the human development index for the mid-western region and for the far western region is lowest among Nepal's 5 "development regions." The human development report also shows that Nepal's "ethnic" and "indigenous" groups such as the Limbus, Tamangs, Magars, Tharus, and Musahars suffer a severe deprivation of opportunities in all aspects of life. The condition of the so-called "untouchables" is still worse. The human development report further notes that the level of human development correlates directly with investments in the country's development regions. The report convincingly poses that both human and income poverty persists largely because of the historic neglect of successive governments in Kathmandu.

Nepal in the 1990s increasingly witnessed ethnic cleavages. These cleavages were evident at the time of the drafting of the Constitution of Nepal 1990. Nepal's new constitution for the first time in Nepal's history accepted Nepal as a "multiethnic", "multilingual" and "democratic" country. But the demands of various ethnic groups to declare Nepal a secular state was refused by the constitution drafting committee. Similarly, the new constitution created a cleavage between the "official" Nepali language and the "language of nationalities." Ethnic leaders and activists took these instances as "exclusionary practices" of the Nepali state.

Nepal's current Maoist insurgency should be analyzed against these backgrounds. It is no coincidence that the emergence of the insurgency corresponds to the human development index of the county. The Maoist insurgency is strong in Nepal's rural areas than urban areas. It is strong in mid-western and far-western hills where the human development index is the lowest in the country. Similarly, the Maoist movement first originated in the mid-western hills where the Nepal's one of the most deprived ethnic groups, the Kham Magars, is predominant. Scattered studies and newspaper reports suggest that a large number of the Maoist cadres come from the deprived ethnic groups and the so called "untouchables." It seems obvious that the Maoists drew their support from those groups which were historically neglected by the Nepali state.

Nepal's geography is yet another factor that is conducive to guerilla warfare. More than two third of Nepal's total area is mountainous. Lack of transportation and communication facilities contribute greatly to the absence of the Nepali state in rural hinterlands. Like the Andes in Peru for the Shining Path guerrillas, Nepal's hills offer safe sanctuaries for the Maoists. The unfenced and unguarded boarder between Nepal and India further offer safe-hideouts to the Maoists. In short, a favorable geography, a sizable mass of people marginalized by Nepali state and vast rural areas neglected by the Nepali state all offer an ideal environment for the rise and sustenance of the insurgency.

### **Organization and Cohesion**

Little is known about the organization of the CPN-M, which has been underground from the very beginning. One fact is evident, the Maoist leadership, as is the case among Nepal's major political parties, is dominated by the Bahuns, the same caste which is historically criticized for discrimination and exclusion in Nepal. Maoists began their war with a few looted rifles and home-made explosives. In the past three years, the Maoists have become able to snatch away a sizable amount of sophisticated weapon from the army. Official sources claim that the Maoists have purchased modern automatic weapons from relatively easy weapon market in India, which is yet to be substantiated. The

Maoists have been financing their war through bank looting, and forced and voluntary donations. One estimate puts the Maoist treasury well above Nepali rupees 5 billion.

Many of the Maoist affected areas are inhabited by a large number of well-trained retired Indian and British Armies. Authorities suspect that some of these retirees might be providing training to Maoist guerrillas. While no one knows exactly the number of guerrillas, it is believed that there are 5000 to 8000 "hard core" fighters. This figure does not include "part-time" guerillas, who stay with their communities offering secret services both to the political and military wings of the party. In their announcement and published documents, the Maoists often refer to "companies," "battalions" and "squads." The Maoists depicted their strength as one of the "strategic balance" in early 2001; this means that the Maoists consider themselves as equal in strength to the government forces. Highly efficient attacks in recent years indicate that the Maoists indeed have already developed a sophisticated military organization.

Further, the Maoists have succeeded to woo a vast numbers of cadres from Nepal's largest communist party, CPN-United Marxist and Leninist and other small communist factions. Sister organizations like women, student, peasant, and worker organizations are the part and parcel of party propaganda. In fact, the Maoist "cultural organization" is one of the most powerful propaganda organs of the party. The organization "educates" Nepal's vastly illiterate rural peasantry about the sophisticated political ideology through "cultural programs."

Maoists time and again announce shadow local and district level governments in their strongholds. Finally, it is worth noting that, in 2001, the Maoists announced their own "people's government" headed by Nepal's legendary intellectual and one of the architects of the people's war, Dr. Baburam Bhattarai. The detail of the fate of this government and its modus operandi is yet to be known. So far as the organizational cohesion is concerned, the Maoists in their formal announcements claim that the party's organization is under the firm control of the party leadership and that there is no division and defection in the party. But observers in Kathmandu claim that the leadership of the party has passed from "political commissars" to "military commanders." This perspective claims that there is a general loss of control of the Maoist high command over their cadres. It should be mentioned however that there are no signs of visible effects of this supposed transformation of the party leadership.

### **Popular Support**

A look at the "40-point Demand" presented by the Maoists to the then Nepali Congress government weeks before they launched their war in 1996 helps to locate the Maoist strategy to win support from the people. The Maoists demanded that Nepal should be declared a secular state, all languages should be given equal status and "local autonomy" should be granted on the basis of ethnicity. Similarly, they demanded an "once and for all" end to caste based exploitation and equal property rights to women. Their demands stated that the land of rich landlords should be confiscated and distributed to the homeless and landless. Their demands further included the abrogation of the 1950 Peace and Friendship Treaty as well as the Mahakali river water sharing treaty with India.

These demands represent the popular grievances expressed by Nepal's ethnic groups, the poor, women, the "untouchables," and the peasants in general. The abrogation of the 1950 Indo-Nepal and Mahakali water sharing treaties were obviously directed at Nepal's urban elites. The Maoists have been using every opportunity to show the public that they are the ones who take up the peoples' grievances seriously. In rural areas, current Maoist activities include helping the local people build wells, trails and irrigation canals, and holding courts to dispense immediate "justice." Obviously, Maoists have included every segment of the Nepali society that resents the current state of the affairs in the country.

### **External Support**

It seems that the Maoists have succeeded at every front, but in the area of external support, their position seems precarious. Nepal's immediate neighbors, India and China, have denounced the insurgency. China has always distanced itself from Nepal's internal politics. So none of the governments, immediate or far afield, has supported the Maoists morally, politically and materially. The "international factor" is greatly debated among those Nepal's communist parties, which have taken part in the country's constitutional process. Many of the parties accept the political aim and even the means of the Maoists, but they disagree with them on the ground that the "international climate" is not "conducive" to the ultimate victory.

The Maoists have fraternity with Maoist organizations throughout the world. The Revolutionary International Movement (RIM) frequently issues statements supporting Maoists and criticizing the Nepali government. Currently, there are a number of violent Maoist movements in India. It is widely believed that Nepal's Maoists get training and even arm support from these organizations. Similarly, media speculations link Maoists to the "terrorists" organizations in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. But nothing has been substantiated so far. It is widely believed that Nepal's Maoists operate from their bases in India. So, one view among Nepal's politicians, journalists and even academicians is that India is "helping" the

Maoists clandestinely to destabilize Nepal. Nepal's unique geopolitical situation has attracted the attention of world powers from the very beginning. The United States prominently features in Nepal's current mess. In fact, the Maoists squarely blamed the failure of the last talks with government to the United States. In October this year, the US government froze "Maoist assets" in the US. In short, Nepal's Maoists have failed abysmally to garner external support; this alone puts their ambition in serious jeopardy.

### **Government Response**

When Maoists presented their 40-point demands on February 4, 1996, the then Nepali Congress government did not respond. In the early days of the insurgency, successive governments viewed the Maoists as a "law and order problem." The government in mid-1998 began the infamous "Kilo Sierra 2" operation against the Maoists and their supporters. Many attribute much of the Maoist sympathy today to the police high-handedness during the infamous operation. The Royal Nepal Army, which staunchly supports Nepal's King, publicly refused to go to the battlefield before the state of emergency was declared in 2001. This also raised questions of Nepal's civilian government's authority over the military. The debate between the King and the parliament has led some scholars to term Nepal's present politics as the classic "king-versus-parliament" politics. Hence, not only did the successive governments respond lightly to the crisis initially, but also it could not mobilize its security organs effectively.

Nepal saw a highly unstable politics in the 1990s. Intra and inter-party feuds was the hallmark of the period. Visionless governments came and went in quick successions, further alienating the people and exacerbating the problem. This seriously affected the government's action against the Maoists. The historical acrimony between the dominant Nepali Congress and the left parties further crated fertile lands for the Maoists to play off one against another. Political parties differed in their approaches to the problems.

Most serious of all, however, was the successive governments' reliance on an armed solution. Hence, they focused on smart weapons rather than economic development and social justice. In the meantime, Nepal's King took executive power on his own hand in November 2002, and instituted a puppet "interim" government. Currently, Nepal's mainstream political parties have gone to the streets against King's decision. This has further complicated the situation. In short, Nepali state's response has been utterly short-sighted and superficial, which only helped - is helping - fuel the insurgency.

### **Conclusion**

Looking at the six variables discussed above, it becomes obvious that Nepal's social, economic, geographical and political conditions have been conducive to the emergence and the sustenance of the insurgency. The Maoists have developed effective political and military organizations within a short period. Astutely formulated "demands" have ensured popular support; the government's response only helped alienate the people. It seems the Maoist are close to their goal. But, external support is the key.

Nepal's unique geopolitical situation - a land locked country between two aspiring military powers (India and China) - has historically drawn attention of the world's great powers. International support is crucial for both the Maoists and government. The "post-September 11" world has further put the Maoists at a disadvantage. Successive governments in Kathmandu have tried to link the Maoist insurgency to the US led "war against terrorism;" they continue to receive military and financial assistance from the US, the UK, India and China. Without any external support, it is unlikely that Maoists will win the war in the foreseeable future. It seems that there is a real possibility of a protracted war. This does not augur well for one of the world's poorest countries.

The Maoists sat for talks with the government twice. But no tangible results have come out so far. The insurgency has precipitated a massive political vacuum in Nepal. Nepal's "democracy" at present is

without people's representatives, both at the local and the parliament level. The Constitution of Nepal 1990, touted as one of the "best in the world", has come under serious stress. The war now has turned a "three way" contest - political parties Vs Maoists Vs monarchy. One thing is evident, however; the face of Nepal won't remain the same in the future. Although the cost has been heavy, the insurgency has generated a massive political consciousness among the people of Nepal. Whether the Maoists win or lose, this massive consciousness will affect the future course of Nepali society tremendously.

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## Opinion: "Enough is really enough!"

**- By Nav Raj Pokharel**

It was exciting moment to have seen the busiest roads in the capital free of traffic, to have breathed in the fresh air without any smell of petrol and pollution, to have felt a kind of peaceful silence in the environment without honking of horns and screeching of tires, seen people hustling and bustling on the roads, scurrying to catch the public transports, as it was a rare occasion to witness the impact of the call of Banda few years back in Kathmandu.

Now, the story has been upside down. Those rare and exciting moments are more than enough. The Banda has virtually not only tripled the regular 104 days of holidays (Saturdays and Sundays) in a year; but also crippled the economy of the country and the lives of people on the top of it. Now, people again want to see those regular activities in every walks of lives; suggestive it a symbol of normality, as almost every day the call of Banda has swapped it away.

The change is so sudden and should have been shocking to the people of all the walks of lives including the politicians. But to my astonishment it is not so. People, including the politicians, I realize now, have even the greater ability to make over him to the newer milieu. Perhaps they know their doomed fate is not going to change so easily. They must get themselves changed instead. It seems that the Darwinian theory of 18th century 'the survival of the fittest' is equally applicable to us even though we boast of entering in the 21st century.

People are now no more in illusion that the state-machinery is sturdy and capable to exercise anything to overcome the malfunctioning situation prevailed in the country.

People seem to know the reality that keeping quite and withstanding the brunt of problems is the last weapon left for them if they want to die a natural death, but not by the hand of other fellow men.

It is that's why when ever there is yet another call of strike they seem to accept it on the surface level that as if it were the normal part of their lives. But in the deeper level it is not so. The annals of history have evidence to support this point.

The pressure put to the lives of people has always yielded reimbursement. It is only a matter of time. This 'time-duration' is relative to the endurance capability of the people. To some people, the duration, this time, may seem a bit longer.

Sociologists and political-psychoanalysts now pin down it that shortly and with almost so futile a reason at hand the long suppressed distress, suffering, pains, misery and affliction is to surface at any point of time. After all there is limit for everything. When it is enough, it is really enough.

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## Politics: "Arming the Children"

**- By P.G. Rajamohan**

On February 22, 2004, the leader of All Nepal National Independent Students' Union - Revolutionary (ANNISU-R), the Maoists' students' wing, Kamal Shahi, stated that a decision had been taken in their January 10-11 party annual meeting to raise a children's militia of 50,000 by April-May 2004. According to a report released by Child Workers in Nepal Concern Centre (CWIN), two-dozen children have died in the past six months of conflict in the country and around 950 children were abducted by the Maoist insurgents and taken to their various training camps.

Since the collapse of the cease-fire between the Nepal Government and insurgents in August 2003, the country has been witnessing an increased frequency of abductions by the Maoists, of young

school students along with their teachers, for ideological indoctrination and military training of the children in the conflict-wracked Kingdom. Some reports indicate that over 30 per cent of the Maoist militia and army comprises children below 18 years of age. Most tragically, they have been used as cannon fodder and human shields in engagements with the state's Forces.

The intensified conflict between the Maoists and the Government's Forces has resulted in large numbers of child soldiers being trained in camps in the Maoist strongholds in mid-Western Nepal. A report quoting the Maoist sources said secondary and higher secondary students in many villages were being trained in secret camps, in line with the decision to increase the Force strength of child soldiers, and the recent spate of abductions, particularly in the Achham, Rolpa and Rukum districts, feed these camps. Some of the major incidents of abduction of school children since the collapse of the cease-fire include:

November 3, 2003: 29 students were abducted from Mugu district.

December 5, 2003: 200 children were abducted by Maoist insurgents from two schools at Achham district in western Nepal.

January 26, 2004: Maoist insurgents abducted at least 150 secondary level school students to participate in their mass meetings from Bannatoli Village Development Committee (VDC) area in the Achham district.

January 29, 2004: Maoists abducted atleast 140 students from Achham district.

February 2, 2004: Maoists abducted 65 students from different places in the Achham district.

February 11, 2004: The Maoists abducted at least 700 people, primarily students and teachers, to participate in their 'anniversary celebrations' from the Bhaishwale region of Achham district.

February 21, 2004: Maoists abducted at least 300 students and six teachers from a school at Holeree village in the Rolpa district of western Nepal.

February 23, 2004: Maoists abducted at least 200 people, primarily students and teachers, from five different VDCs including Thanti, Sodsa, Bindhabasini, Kuskot and Rishidaha in the Achham district.

February 24, 2004: The insurgents abducted 44 school teachers from Sugarkhal in the Kailali district, six girls from Dhigomandu area in the Achham district and six other students from Nawalparasi district.

February 25, 2004: Maoists abducted at least 60 school students from Birendranagar in the Rukum district.

March 10, 2004: 14 school students were abducted from the Chimkhola VDC area in the Myagdi district.

March 12, 2004: Maoist insurgents abducted at least 56 people in separate incidents, including 42 teachers, from the Jogbuda area of Dadeldhura district.

March 13, 2004: Maoists abducted 54 people, including 35 teachers, from Dadeldhura district and 19 students from Baglung district.

Reports suggest that the abducted students have been inducted into the Special Peoples' Military Campaign, which is being implemented in the Maoists 'model districts' of Jumla and Jajarkot in the mid-Western region, where the state's power and presence is almost non-existent.

The training for child soldiers comprises three phases, which are conducted in 'base', 'model' and 'special' areas controlled by the Maoists. After selecting the target school in their stronghold areas, the Maoists first encircle the school after the students have gathered in large numbers. Generally, the Maoists invite 'volunteers' to their training camps, and then select students aged between 12 and 15. Ordinarily, these students are initially abducted for the Maoists' political meetings, annual conferences or any other special occasions, such as the announcement of the formation of an autonomous region or of a 'People's Government'.

At the same time, students aged between 14 and 18 are required to undergo military drills and arms training under the supervision of top Maoist leaders at the insurgents' training bases. Though most of the abducted students are allowed to return to their homes after a couple of weeks, the trauma of the forced ideological and military training they undergo continues to haunt many of them. They are, moreover, on call for operational duties, as and when required, and are often directly attached to the main operational force in their areas. The Maoists variously use these young recruits as soldiers, sentries, messengers, cooks, porters and suppliers. The preliminary training is sufficient for these children to handle light weapons including .303 and .22 rifles, country-made socket and pipe bombs, etc., the weapons most widely used by the Maoist insurgents.

Maoists have intensified the recruitment of children in their armed cadres to fight against the security forces, and to create 'revolutionary zeal' among the young participants in the People's War. Observers

suggest various reasons for children being preferred for soldiering: recruitment and maintenance of a child militia is relatively cost effective; children can more easily be used in hazardous tasks like laying and clearing landmines; children are also more psychologically malleable, easily motivated and manipulated, and display a high level of dedication and obedience.

Not all recruitment of children is coerced. As the United Nations Report on 'Impact of Armed Conflict on Children' (1996) notes, "One of the most basic reasons for children joining armed groups is economic." For orphan children, joining armed groups is attractive and guarantees basic necessities like food, clothing, and shelter. On occasion, poverty forces parents to offer their children to insurgent groups, in return for money. In many cases, parents' affiliations with the Maoists group results in their children 'volunteering to join these Forces.

By and large, the Maoists prefer their 'students' policy' to be implemented through their 'students wing' the ANNISU-R, which has played a major role in institutionalizing their cadre base within the student community, including minors. ANNISU-R Central Committee leader, Kamal Shahi, has accepted their ongoing arms training campaign and the existence of a students' military force equal to a battalion in a regular army. The ANNISU-R has been active in implementing a campaign for 'one educational institution, one reformed militia', and boasts that it will soon have a 50,000-strong student militia and 375,000 members.

At least 300 children have been killed in the Maoist insurgency since 1996. Young children in large parts of the country have simply stopped going to school, as the Maoists increasingly bring their activities into the school premises. On February 18, 2003, two students were killed and another injured during a 'firing demonstration' by the insurgents in a school in Baglung district. Terrorist attacks have not spared schools either. On September 8, 2003, in a serial blast in the Kathmandu Valley, one student was killed in a school campus. Engagements with the state's Security Forces also inflict casualties. During a security force operation in a school in Madbhara in Doti district on October 13, 2003, for instance, four students and six Maoists insurgents were killed.

There have been repeated calls by international human rights organizations and concerned citizens' groups to declare the school areas as 'zones of peace', and to leave the students and children outside the bloody sphere of the current conflict. These pleas have, however, apparently fallen on deaf ears, and present indications suggest, if anything, a further intensification of the ongoing Maoist campaign to mobilize children - voluntarily or otherwise - for greater participation in their 'peoples' war'. There are reports of large numbers of schools closing down all over the country, creating long-term risks of declining quality of human capital, greater unemployment, and a burgeoning army of the unemployed which will keep the manpower supply lines to the Maoist cadres alive. At the present juncture, unfortunately, apart from regular denunciations from various quarters, of the Maoist practice of recruiting child soldiers, there appears to be no concrete set of policies or responses that can bring relief to this beleaguered country's unfortunate children.

(Author is a Research Associate at Institute for Conflict Management. Credit of this article goes to "SOUTH ASIA INTELLIGENCE REVIEW, Weekly Assessments & Briefings" Volume 2, No. 35, March 15, 2004)



## Analysis: "It is time, the political parties unite for the common cause of democracy"

- By Dr. S. Chandrasekharan

On 26 Jan 2004, in his first foreign media interview to Time Magazine, King Gyanendra began the interview by saying that the future of Nepal lies in constitutional monarchy and multi party democracy. If that is so, the future of Nepal is in great peril with both the monarchy and the leaders of political parties undermining each other, by taking rigid positions and refusing to budge!

In the same interview the King made the now famous statement that the "days of royalty being seen and not heard are over. We are in the 21st century."

If there was any doubt about what he meant, he reiterated his position and went a step further and said on 8 February 2004 at Nepalgunj- "The days of the monarchy being seen but not heard and watching the people's difficulties but not addressing them and being a silent spectator to their tear strained faces are over." Though he had not spelt out what he would do, what is clear to analysts is

that he would not be like his late brother who never interfered openly and allowed the political parties to learn by mistakes.

Almost one year before sacking Deuba's government, King Gyanendra in one of his rare interviews made certain remarks that went unnoticed at that time, but is now clear as to what he intended to do. He said in his interview (Paper 481 of SAAG) " that the people have a pre-emptive right to happiness under the system. However the situation is serious, given the public complaints that they are subjected to ridicule and exploitation in the name of democracy. He cannot keep quiet while witnessing such a plight of the country and the people.

If one looks at the past, the King did not have a reputation as a great supporter of democratic leaders, democratic parties or democracy. It looks now that even by the end of 2001 he had made up his mind to be an active King and he got an opportunity in October 2002 when Sher Bahadur Deuba of Nepali Congress without consulting his party made the mistake of his life in approaching the King to dissolve the assembly and go for fresh elections. The rest of the developments are history!

Political parties are in disarray:

The political parties who came to power by different permutations and combinations did not endear themselves to the King or to the public in their governance. In the first election held on the basis of 1990 constitution, the Nepali Congress rode to power with a comfortable majority only to be frittered away soon with senior leaders fighting among themselves like little children. Corruption was rampant and gone were the days when the very same leaders led humble and austere lives. There have been twelve governments in thirteen years- a record of sorts! .

In the same paper of 24.06.02 as a forwarding comment we had said- we quote

In view of the poor performance of the government after the introduction of multi party system, word is going round that the people of Nepal are fed up with the political leadership and that they long for a return to the Panchayat days and direct governance by the King. These stories are being spread around deliberately by vested interests. What Nepal needs is not less, but more of democracy.

But what we notice now is that the so called democratic leaders hardly allow any democracy within their own ranks. Due to ego clashes, inflexible attitudes and hunger for power, most of the parties have either split or on the verge of splitting..

The Nepali Congress has already split with the major faction remaining with Girija Prasad Koirala and the other with more of the younger leaders in the Deuba faction. Girija Prasad's faction is not a homogenous one either and there are rumblings with the danger of further split in the ranks. There are hardly good second ranking leaders who could inspire the cadres and the masses in both the factions.

The UML (United Marxist league), was almost split in the last central committee meeting and an open split was averted when nine of the loyalists of K.P.Oli were nominated to the central committee. There were credible rumours going round Kathmandu that Oli may join the Thapa government then.

The RPP of Prime minister Surya Bahadur Thapa is also split though not yet officially with the party chief Pasupathi Shamsher Rana openly demanding the PM's resignation.

The Nepal Sadhbhavana Party is already split with the Mandal and Anandi factions with each one claiming to be the real party.

Movement against October 4 recession losing steam?

The movement against the "October 4 recession" is chugging along with no visible support of the people. The students have entered the fray with the support of the agitating political parties. It looks that the government is taking the strike of the students seriously and so far have managed to keep the agitating students under control. But any misstep on the part of the security forces could get the law and order situation out of control. It is to the credit of the current Prime minister that he has managed to cool it down

With the political parties in disarray, it stands to reason that the King is not likely to come down for any compromise with the political parties. The government appears to be planning to begin the parliamentary elections sometime in November this year and spread over a period of six months. It is their hope that the Law and order situation created by the Maoists could be brought under reasonable control for elections to be held. The government is presuming that the political parties will take part in the elections. This is unlikely unless some demands of the political parties are accepted. The Maoists

are unlikely to participate either and in such a situation, elections to the Parliament will have no meaning.

The demand for restoration of parliament is no longer valid as the life of the now dissolved parliament will be over in two months. The first act of the parties is to get together and devise a common plan. There are differences. The leaders have not given up their ambitions to head the government once again. The road map of Madhav Nepal announced soon after meeting the Maoist leader in Lucknow has been rejected by the Nepali Congress of Girija Koirala. It is not clear where the 18 point common agenda set by the agitating parties stands now. In the absence of unanimity, the political parties have themselves to blame and no doubt the King would take full advantage of the differences.

**Maoist Incidents:**

A list of Maoists incidents since the previous update is given in the appendix. The Royal Nepal Army has officially announced the casualties since the cessation of cease fire. 118 security personnel have lost their lives as against 1270 Maoists killed. The latter figures for the Maoists are high. Kathmandu security has also been brought under the unified command.

Impartial observers notice that the writ of the government runs only in the headquarters of the districts and in the two valleys Kathmandu and Pokhara. It was a bold decision of the King to visit the Maoists strongholds- Rolpa, Piyuthan, Salyan and Dang districts on February as part of his tour of western regions.

The Maoists in the meantime are setting about autonomous regions where possible. They have one in the Bheri-Karnali region, one in Gandak as Tamang region, in Kaski and another in Madhesia region. Matrika Yadav who was in charge of the Madhesia division has since been arrested by Delhi and handed over to the Nepalese authorities.

All one could say is that the situation in the country side is not as rosy as the security forces would like us to believe. Meantime Prachanda, the Maoists leader took everyone by surprise by offering to accept UN mediation "towards making the environment for a peaceful process to get people's mandate." He also added that his party has never gone against a negotiated settlement. Another surprise was that the reaction to Prachanda's offer came swiftly from the Royal Nepal Army representative, rejecting the offer and not by the government!

Strange things are happening indeed!



## **Humor: "Charitahin Chelas Manifesto"**

### **- By Misunderstood Poet**

Charitrahin Chelas is an underground chelas organization of undergraduate students in the United States who meet occasionally over beer to discuss various issues about the current state of the Nepali state. Various issues were discussed and decided during a recent meeting held at an undisclosed location in suburban Philadelphia, USA. The meeting decided to publicize some of the important decisions. Here they are.

+ It was suggested that there were not a sufficient number of wars going on in Nepal. It was agreed that the Maoist war had not caused enough damage to the people, that teachers' and yatayat sanghs' strikes had not been strong and that the political parties' movement against regression had been confined to Kathmandu. A need to launch more effective programs -- so that Nepalis have more "fun" -- was seen by the participants. Encouraging ethnic, regional, and gender wars and divisions was therefore recognized as the main objective of the Chelas. The Chelas decided to send a letter of appreciation to the Charitrahin Chelis (CC) in Kathmandu for taking initiative in this regard.

+ The Chela-chairman Misunderstood Poet welcomed everybody to the meeting and informed them of the latest development in Nepal about the Charitrahin Chelis (CC) in Kathmandu. The chairman asked for members' opinion on whether the male CCs should approach the female CCs to unite and form CC-United. No decision was made in this regard. Mr Poet constituted the ninth 3-member committee headed by three of his best friends to investigate on this matter. There was some opposition regarding the formation of too many teams for the same issue. One member later commented: "This is so Krisna-Bhir Style! Three hundred contractors and the bhir never stops flooding."

+ It was proposed and decided unanimously that the Chelas send the minutes of the meeting to all the national dailies who have nothing better to publish than news about underground "movements"!

+ One member present in the meeting presented to the participants the 40-point agenda introduced by the Chelis in Kathmandu. One agenda -- that the Chelis have 50 percent representation, including the post of the Prime Minister -- was discussed in depth. The meeting decided unanimously that the Chairman approach King Gyanendra to appoint the Chelas to the remaining 50 percent seats. An unarmed guerilla war will be launched if the King fails to meet this demand within 24 hours.

+ To sit in front of PCs, miles away from Nepal, and to advocate changes in Nepal was recognized by the Chelas a right-by-birth. This will make sure, it was stated, that enough number of people get blamed for the political instability in Nepal. It was also decided that the Chelas would never propose a solution to problems in Nepal. Issues of dual-citizenship will be regularly presented and construction of temples will be encouraged to distract members of Association of Nepalis in America (ANA) from proposing a solution to crisis in Nepal. ANA will also be sent a letter of appreciation for living up to expectations so far!

+ To drink, smoke and spit paan in the street -- one of the major rights declared by the Chelis in Kathmandu -- was also recognized as a right of the Chelas. There was however a dispute as to how this right of the elite Chelis in Kathmandu intended to solve the agonies of poor women from remote areas of Nepal. Majority of the participants expressed that this objective of the Chelis was like a night-vision chopper without vision. The dispute settled after one participant opined that there could be some grand design expected to happen which could reveal a link between the Chelis' action and their objective. "Election is being held by diverting the money from election to RNA, RNA is protecting civil rights by holding people -- even lawyers! -- in barracks without notice to families of those being kept. That's how things work in Nepal. Probably the Chelis will get rid of the sufferings of the Nepali women by having fun in Kathmandu", the participant said. The Chelas agreed.

+ It was realized that felicitation programs had been an integral part of national development. It was decided therefore that one participant would be felicitated in every meeting. His Honorable-Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMG) will be requested to fund these felicitations. Taxpayers in Nepal however will not be informed of this.

The Chelas will inform the public of new developments in the organization.

### **Misunderstood Poet**

Chairman  
Charitrahin Chelas  
Underground ([mispoet63@yahoo.com](mailto:mispoet63@yahoo.com))

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## **Women Issues: "Women and HIV/AIDS"**

**- By Kamala Sarup**

The 94th International Women's Day was celebrated with different programs in Nepal. Nepal started recognizing the International Women's day since 1975. However, Nepal formally acknowledged the convention for eradicating all sort of discriminations against women only in 1991. International Women's Day is the ideal time to challenge current HIV prevention thinking. Protecting girls and women in times of conflict, protecting them from HIV, keeping them alive during childbirth - these are all goals UN is committed to but unless the powers that be fully respect and enforce the rights of girls and women, UN won't achieve any of these goals.

There were numerous inequalities among men and women at present in Nepal but the government has not been sensitive over this issue. HIV/AIDS prevention must be addressed in the broader context of reproductive health and must consider issues of pregnancy, other sexually transmitted diseases and overall sexual health and wellbeing. As we mark the National Women's Day, let us not forget that HIV and Aids touches women from all walks of life.

Too many women in Nepal are unable to refuse sex or insist on a condom because they lack social and economic power. Fighting this crisis is their right to equality and freedom from discrimination. Not only do women face greater risk of HIV infection for biological reasons, being four times more physically vulnerable than their male partners, they are also socially more vulnerable. Women were socially, culturally and economically still more vulnerable to HIV-Aids, while at the same time taking

the frontline in fighting the disease. Poverty and gender inequality are the main factors that make Nepalese women to be more exposed to HIV infection and cause them to succumb to Aids quickly.

We have three main challenges-The first is the promotion of safer sexual behavior. Our challenges here are not only to help people adopt safer sex, but also to design programs of communication and education with the view to mobilize women and people outside Kathmandu valley. In giving emphasis to AIDS publicity, AIDS education could play very effective role in controlling the disease. Increasing awareness is just imperative among women and girls who are the risk groups in several ways. Spreading message about the use of condoms to counter the AIDS threat is equally important. This again indicates that socio-economically imbalanced girls/women of Nepal are going to face the additional burden of AIDS crisis. Women in Nepal are facing bigger risk from AIDS virus and HIV transmissions is narrowing.

The baseline survey revealed a high level of AIDS awareness — 87 percent of respondents knew at least two ways to prevent HIV infection, one of which was condom use. Yet reported condom use was only 16 percent for men during their most recent sexual encounter. More than 50 percent perceived themselves to be at moderate or high risk for HIV infection. Given the high resistance to using condoms, other strategies were adopted, such as promoting fewer sexual partners and loyalty to one partner. Probably the most effective strategy was promoting aggressive sexually transmitted infection (STI) treatment and follow-up.

Women living with HIV in Nepal have no access to family planning services. They also suffer violence in the denial of their sexual and reproductive and economic rights. They are generally expected to interrupt their sex lives and forego childbearing to avoid transmitting the virus. In Nepal, we need to emphasize a family and approach to reproductive health and to develop a more helpful continuum of care.

Indeed, the government and NGOs could make remarkable contribution to check the spread of AIDS but most NGOs working on AIDS are not strong in Nepal. There is much duplication of activities including the development of health education materials. There is no focal point for the development of a policy for the district level AIDS programs. Lack of good counseling and follow up services, the victims of AIDS diseases are increasing.

The majority of HIV infected cases belong to the 20-29 age groups. Overall, the data suggests that HIV infection is becoming widespread and the rates of HIV-infected mothers are between 25 and 40 percent. According to WHO, the young children and virgins fall in a high risk group for contracting HIV through having sex with HIV carrier. According to American epidemiologist has estimated the number of HIV positive cases in Nepal by the end of last year may have reached nearly 25,000. The number of cases of full blown AIDS at the start of the new millennium is estimated to be 8,763 people.

The National AIDS Control Program was established in 1987 under the Department of Health. In 1995, a National Policy on HIV/AIDS/STDs was adopted by the Ministry of Health, and a multisectoral approach involving 12 government ministries was established. Even government has established a National AIDS Council chaired by the Prime Minister. The National Center for AIDS and STD Control under Ministry of Health is in the process of updating the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS for the Tenth Five Year Plan period. Yet, government departments are forced to combat the epidemic with limited funds available and the Health Ministry itself does not have enough professional or material resources to fight the spread of HIV.

HIV/AIDS prevention and control requires a multisectoral approach. A special focus is needed to alleviate the issue of trafficking of women. Lack of commitment and policy implementation pose as obstacles in solving the crisis. With the restoration of a multiparty democracy the people expect social security, justice, peace, health care, in society but Nepal's rules and regulations are incomplete as far as protection of innocent girls' trafficking is concerned. People, who traffic girls and women, capitalize on the economic situation of the destitute and unfortunate putting them at high risk for STDs and AIDS.

In order to achieve the goal in reducing AIDS threat, literacy rate especially for women has to be improved. AIDS counseling and follow-up should be strengthened and sexual biasness for boys over girls should be eliminated from society.

Working in partnership with international organizations, government NGOs must focus on reaching the goal of AIDS prevention through information, education, condom distribution. They should plan organize an implement programs effectively. May this way we can protect our invaluable citizens from

HIV and AIDS threat. Was the use of sexual violence based on ethnicity and gender paradigms? How the use of sexual violence during the war has challenged or reaffirmed gender paradigms in the aftermath? Do we have the answers to these questions? The consequences of the above and other unmentioned and unrecorded cases are many.

Nepalese women are silent about sexual issues for many reasons. Lack of respect for women's sexual and reproductive rights is a big problem in Nepal. Female genital mutilation, early and compulsory marriage of girl children, sexual exploitation, abuse and rape of girls and women, and the lack of any opportunity for may women to refuse unprotected sex all contribute to the high risk of HIV infection among Nepalese women. And all represent clear violations of women's sexual rights. Nepalese women cannot request, let alone insist on using a condom or any form of protection. Poor hygiene and limited health care foment sexually transmitted diseases, which strike women more than men and make HIV transmission more likely. Women must be empowered so that they are able to control their sexual relations

Nepalese women still do not have equal economic or educational or occupational or social options - men have greater power than women, and the imbalance in power negatively affects women's abilities to prevent being infected. Long-term strategies will depend on improving women's economic and social status. Empowering women is no longer an option, it is essential.

As men and women both have equal responsibility for women's health, more struggles should be carried out for rights in the days ahead. The government should prioritize women in health as the country can not achieve unless they are healthy. We should introduce immediately models of HIV prevention and improved reproductive health that incorporate economic interventions and educational initiatives for women and we should also design all HIV/AIDS prevention programs so that they are fully integrated with other reproductive health programs in every country and meet the gender-specific needs of women.



## **ANA 2004: Annual Convention, Phoenix, Arizona**

**- Arun Sharma and Smriti Dhungel Gyawali**

ANA's 22nd Convention will be held in the Phoenix, AZ from July 2nd to July 4th (Friday to Sunday) at the Double Tree resort, Paradise Valley. Nestled in the foothills of Arizona's famous Camelback Mountains, the venue is in close proximity to the popular Fashion Square Mall with shopping, eating and entertainment facilities all around it. The towering palms, lush foliage and sparkling fountains wait to welcome every guest to the 22-acre oasis. (For an early reservation do call 1-800-222-Tree or 1-877-445-6677.) The code is ANA convention.

The organizers are putting together an excellent show, with stimulating intellectual, as well as entertaining programs to suit the palate of young and elders alike.

This exciting event is being held for the first time ever in Phoenix, the land profoundly known for cacti and the mystic Indians. The experience in the Wild West, the glimpse of the Grand Canyon and the exciting convention will be a vacation worthwhile.

In planning, it is a biggest and boldest fun filled program with fun and excitement. From rock climbing, swimming, hiking, to tasting the scrumptious southwestern cuisine and shaking to the beat of "jumpy" musicals, it is nothing but plain exhilarating. It is about exploring the exciting adventures in this newer America with unparallel beauty, vista and color.

As always, the Convention will provide a forum for positive experience of camaraderie enriching the lives of the members at large; making of new friends and renewing the old ones. It will draw the Nepali community across the map of North America, as well as many other parts of the world including Nepal. The organizers are committed to preserve the tradition of excellence in this key yearly event along with new innovative ideas for the 2004 Convention here in Phoenix.

As the details become available, they will be posted at the [www.ana-home.org](http://www.ana-home.org) as well as sent out through the Nepal Horizon distribution list. Also, be sure to check out local information on [www.ana2004.org](http://www.ana2004.org) for additional local activities and details.

Contact Mrs. Amrit Tuladhar (Chair) for art, poetry, entertainment, cultural programs and opening ceremony information, support, ideas and volunteering at (480) 575-1051 and Mrs. Sunanda Sharma (Co-Chair) for various sessions and registration related ideas and questions at (480) 706-4020.

The Phoenix Convention is unique and historic on its own, as it is led for the very first time by ANA women leaders Amrit Tuladhar and Sunanda Sharma.

The team of local volunteers are ready to welcome to you for a fun filled three days of entertainment, music, dancing, poetry reciting, art shows, and intellectually stimulating sessions such as on Nepal Development Issues, Non Resident Nepalis, Young Adult Forum, Women's Forum, Health issues etc. A brief synopsis of the session in planning are as follows:

Introduced for the first time, this new feature "**Young Adult Forum**" will be interesting to the second generation Nepali Americans. The Forum will target age groups from 18 to 30 years old. It is a two hour session done daily, with an introduction, structure, and fun activities. The forum plans to create an understanding, foster friendship and camaraderie among peers of similar backgrounds. The young adults will be free to explore their issues of life-skills, careers, challenges faced- dual cultures, career dilemmas, and the changing goals. They will explore their horizons, identities, the changing times, new challenges, and the changing faces of Americas. Above all, they will have a lot of fun as always, which goes without saying. The contact person for this forum is Eva Sharma. Dr Deepak Simkhada has volunteered to provide some format for this interactive Young Adult Forum broadening and reaching new horizons. (Contact Eva at; [eva124@hotmail.com](mailto:eva124@hotmail.com))

**Nepal Forum** will explore Nepal's present peace and development impasse and explore the future roads for reconstructions- the challenges, opportunities for democratic and economic development. Many current issues such as perils in democratic process, constitutional crisis, and economic challenges will be broadly touched in this forum. This forum has always been a hit for last decade and half. Dr. Ambika Adhikari ([ambika\\_adhikari@yahoo.com](mailto:ambika_adhikari@yahoo.com)) and Arun Sharma ([sharun5@aol.com](mailto:sharun5@aol.com)) are working together to make this panel an exciting event, as well as a thought provoking intellectual exercise. Dr. Kul Chandra Gautam, Ambassador to Nepal and Permanent Representative to the UN are expected to be part of this forum along with many Nepali social scientists, as well as economists from US universities are expected to be the contributors to this panel.

The **Non Resident Nepali Sessions**- As the rise of Nepali Diaspora's has grown exponentially across the world, there are heightened expectations from both sides. Nepal's wishes for foreign investments and economic development. - Dr. Kunjar Sharma ([kusharma@bdo.com](mailto:kusharma@bdo.com)) and Naresh Koirala ([naresh1@shaw.com](mailto:naresh1@shaw.com)) are to lead ANA's effort along with Dr. Ambika Adhikari ([ambika\\_adhikari@yahoo.com](mailto:ambika_adhikari@yahoo.com)). A wide representation from other Nepali organizations and international communities are expected to make its biggest draw of Non Resident Nepalis to dwell, ponder, articulate, engage, debate on the issues, making it a special event of intellectual exercise. This panel will access impact on long term policy implementation, volunteering, and the act of giving as well as receiving. It is expected to sensitize an action oriented approach to tomorrow's need for the Diaspora. It will explore feasibilities, realistic expectations, and access the limitations.

**Women's Forum** will focus on how far Nepali women have come in terms of adjustments and adaptation to a new land; how they are breaking the barriers of sexism yet maintaining the ties with old culture. This forum will feature the dilemmas, struggles, challenges, rewards, losses, and the gain on identity, aspirations, and hopes and dreams of women caught with the baggage and burdened with opposite expectations from two cultures. They will explore the options of how to achieve the aspired goals without losing the trace of the path and a sense of identity of the past. Questions as to "- How far have Nepali American Women come and how to juggle the multiple roles a woman a wife, mother, sister, and also a person with professional aspirations and financial independence will be some of the topics discussed.

**Nepali Art Show**- Nepali contemporary Art Show will be led and narrated by Dr Deepak Shimkhada. He will facilitate and display how Nepali minds are using the color, brushes and aspirations to reach out the same way any other international artist does, to express oneself to the outside world. You may wonder if artists have any geographical barriers in expression and imagination.

A panel on Health Issues will debate physical and emotional aspects of health issues to younger immigrants, as well long time residents of the North America. This panel will comprise of a combination of medical doctors and health professionals trained in North America along with many Asian countries and practicing from research to diverse minority communities across the map of North America. The team will be able to offer advices on what to do and not to do to avoid any adverse impact long or short term. We are putting together a team of medical doctors and health professionals to run this program.

A session on Culture will help to seek a balance on spiritual as well as social aspect of an all round human well being.

For fun and entertainment, the artists, dancers, musicians from Nepal and various parts of the North America will be performing music numbers tailored for every age audiences. Santosh Pant, a popular comedian, is expected to perform his act for the Convention as well. Further, two nights of variety cultural programs are being planned with local, national and Nepali artists adding to the thrill and excitement of the late evenings and nights. The opening ceremony will contain exotic, colorful and energetic Native American dances. Contact Puru Subedi and Rohini Sharma for further details for the Friday night event. ([rosharma@cybertrails.com](mailto:rosharma@cybertrails.com))

International Nepalese Literary Society will have an evening of "**Kabi Samelan**" where you will enjoy a mixture of young budding as well as seasoned and published poets and authors expressing themselves to your fine taste and palates.

America West Airline is the chosen official carrier for ANA 2004. A group discount rate may further bring the cost down to lower than mentioned below. Be sure to plan well ahead for saving as well as conveniences:

ANA Official Airline- America West, call 1-800-634-2312 for reservations

Event: ANA

CAMS Discount Code: 8481

5% discount lowest published fare

10% off Y6Q, Y6, YUP6, YUP6Q or First Class

5% additional discount for tickets purchased 60 days in advance.

Good for travels between June 25th- July 09

To conclude the update, the local hosts here in Phoenix are waiting for you to join them with the sparks of enthusiasm, spirit of volunteering, adventurism and take a pro- active part in this positive and fun experience. We urge you to do an early planning to visit this Grand Canyon State.

Do participate in providing us a feed back as how we can make this Convention more dynamic and in uniting the communities together. The theme for the 2004 convention is, "STRENGTH IN UNITY," and your effort in helping us build a sense of community and an active participation will be highly appreciated. So! Get ready, and "Gear up for a joy ride to amazing Arizona, home of 2004 ANA Convention."



## Diaspora: "Grand Canyon: Jogging the Memory Lanes"

- *By Arun Sharma*

I remember my own first trip to Grand Canyon, mystic some what unique and yet an exciting and overwhelming experience. Arriving very late at night and tucked inside the car, as I was waiting for a reserved cabin to be available late next morning, it gave me no choice but to watch the nature and count the stars. It was a pitch dark night with a very faint moon on the sky.

I felt like a dark deep mysterious shadow all around had engulfed and overpowered me. This vast surrounding made me feel eerie and reminded me of being all alone a little dwarf in the shadow of that dark tamarind tree close to my home in Western Nepal. I feared as I was told the ghosts, all those who had died for centuries came to party together at night, in that small town in Kapilvastu. Deep dark silence pervading with weird invisible motion, an occasional animal's howling caused same uneasy feeling inside, while cool breezes slowly stroking my body made me shiver with an unknown fear and an excitement of mystery yet to be revealed. A little child inside of me always questioned if the ghosts were real. Though fearful I always yearned to check them out. In the stillness of night, an existence of life affirmed with occasional howling in otherwise peace and tranquil in this tiny part of the profound universe. It was reassuring to realize I was alive and awake as I could hear my own breathing.

The roaming moon in the sky shedding very faint light ensuring, there was a slow motion in otherwise a timeless vast space. The philosopher inside of me was asking if this was what the "nothingness" was all about. On one side it felt like time stood still in this darkness, on the other hand the sleepy eyes witnessed a slow motion of changing colors of the surrounding. The colors slowly move from dark black, to faint black, to blackish green, bluish green to light blue and then a red drop getting bigger and bigger with a huge red ball on the horizon. The gorges of Canyon changing

colors from dark blackish brown to many shades of brown to dark red with huge ball in the background, simply a spectacular scenery, a feast to my eyes. Now you can hear animals rustling, bird's chirping, life in full motion getting intense and un-mistakenly real. There was no question of vibrancy of life in action with the panorama of colors, the joys to my senses. I witnessed the nature dancing in the melodies of cool breeze and shading colorful attires one by one like that charming and beautiful dancer I had seen and mesmerized when I was 10 years old. She was so beautiful I still remember. Oh my! What charming attire, vibrant motion of the feet and wide piercing brown eyes!

The planets in motion, the setting of moon, flickering stars, the rising sun, and the dancing leaves will touch the cores of your being. The melody of nature will pulse your senses, stroking and soothing your soul, and closely Vishnu stands tall vigilantly - preserving and protecting. May be that is why the ghosts never came to dance. The Vishnu displays uncompromising power with His presence, the eternal god so close yet so far away. And the mystic Brahma is all pervading in its profoundness unmistakable yet invisible. So is the Chakra of Creation! You must feel this scene; you must hear the song that resonates within the depth of your body and soul. You must feel the peace and harmony and an immense presence of power resonating within yourself. You must feel the melting away of "I" and vanishing in this profoundness and eternity.

It is an experience of life time you can only feel inside as it is beyond words, beyond songs, and beyond music. You must feel this pulse - an emotional and a spiritual experience, seen through many angles from different corners and how they impact your being. You must feel the (in) significance on your (non) entity in this Universe and the frailty and frugality of one's being before the towering Vishnu and the invisible Brahma.

Suddenly, the sun is way above the sky and the color changed from dark red to golden white to the final color of bright white awaking you to bring you from a sleepy and colorful dream. Feel that immensity of color and the carving of nature an art work that took over 350 millions of years. So many passed by in this eternal landscape, one by one just like you and I!

Welcome to Grand Canyon an experience of life time! These is one pilgrimage you must make while in Arizona and savor the eternal splendor of Beauty, beyond expressions, beyond song, and beyond music. You must feel it again and again and finally come into terms of overpowering reality of the enormity of Nature. Many have defined spirituality with how they relate with Grand Canyon. This is one trip you must take while in Arizona. You do not want to miss one. This is one more reason for you to come join the 22nd Annual ANA Convention, in our heart lands here in Arizona. You must feel an experience of your life time in Grand Canyon as well as enjoy the ANA Convention. Welcome to, "Amazing Arizona", our home state! Welcome to the home of ANA 2004 Convention!

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## Education: "The Quest for Truth: Redefining Education"

- *By Ruchi Ahuja*

An expanded vision of what it means to be a human being is the starting point for reconstructing the educational system. "You have noticed that truth comes into this world with two faces. One sad with suffering, and the other laughs; but it is the same face, laughing or weeping. When people are already in despair, maybe the laughing face is better for them; and when they feel too good and are too sure of being safe, maybe the weeping face is better for them to see." --Black Elk.

It seems to me that education is about truth. It is about helping people to gain the necessary attitudes, values, principles for action and knowledge to judge for them what things in life will bring them closer to truth. Of course this is a very different kind of truth to that pursued by those with a positivist world view. This is truth which occupies the spaces that pulsate within us all. It is a truth that underscores all that we do and feel with a meaning we cannot really grasp yet intuit with the hope that runs in our veins and makes us human.

"Truth lies in between all regimes of truth."

It is elusive and alluring, it is part of the 'Big Picture' that contextualizes our existences. Black Elk, the Sioux shaman, saw it as the necessary corrective to any excess. The Sufi tradition speaks of truth as the sense of transitorizes which will make the happy sad and the sad happy; 'Today will not last for ever'. Sarkar saw it as the sense of purpose that lies at the heart of our humanity. For him truth represented, paradoxically, both the substance and goal of human existence. In this sense truth is Truth, the divine metaphysic which unifies us all, whether we know it or not.

And education is about equipping us for our struggle to come to some meaningful relationship with this Truth. People may think that what I am advocating is a religious education. But a rigorous quest for truth is going to lead to trouble in religious institutions; they are too embedded in current social and bureaucratic practices. The kind of world view required is a Neo-Humanistic one.

A vision which is integrative and reverential. This does not deny the need for solid curriculum; it just acknowledges that the primacy of the disciplines is misplaced and that what counts in education is not so much what you learn in the academic sphere but how we are taught to utilize the power of our learning.

#### The Current State of Play

In recent years, state education systems have sought to get value for money from their education systems. They have developed, or are developing, detailed and rigorous curriculum documents that will 'ensure' best practice on the part of teachers and best outcomes on the part of students. This move has been welcomed by some quarters of society who see schooling as largely a utilitarian institution that produces skilled citizens that are committed to the current value structures of capitalist society.

Many educators, who as humanists often do not share the narrow political vision of those at the helm of State education departments, have broadened the educational discourse to allow attention to be given equally to the individual, social and academic dimensions of students. Their language is often strongly humanistic and they pay a lot of attention to the ecological sensitivities that have emerged over the past decades. Their goal is to produce happy, sound individuals who are socially and environmentally conscientious. Such people they assume will be good planetary citizens.

Here we see an expansion of the concept of what it is to be human. A broadening of the truth of what it is to be human. We move from the utilitarian, economic view of the human as consumer and worker to that of the humanistic view of human as a balanced individual and social agent. A lot more education is required to succeed in the latter, and it is becoming increasingly clear that teachers on their own cannot succeed in this. Broader social forces are at work to undermine the best intentions of both parents and teachers.

Materialism and the focus of humanism itself, that of the individual, have both gained dominance in Western culture which is undermining the best efforts of those seeking to offer a closer representation of the truth of being human. Ben Okri has noted that "We began before words, and we will end beyond them." Anyone entering a classroom might be forgiven for thinking, however, that we are constituted as beings purely through language. There is so much talk and there is very little real silence, when pens stop scratching on paper (except pens no longer scratch). Of course social scientists will point out that a lot of socialization is occurring and that this has more to do with mores than words, yet the focus in our culture is the word.

It is the primacy of the word that has lead us to dismantle, and thus control, so much around us. It is the symbol of our supremacy over all we see, and a good deal of what we don't. The word is the sword of the enlightenment. It has, through unyielding logic and reason, sheared off mystery and shadow from our existences. All is revealed in words and what cannot be revealed seems of little count.

Humanism's failure to overthrow economic rationalism is because the word, first given prominence by the work of humanists themselves, is now being used more effectively by their opponents. The reductive, totalizing logic of language in the hands of materialists is coercive in the extreme. The word has been linked in this new discourse with desire, the individual's need to have their desire filled. The force of the argument is clear and simple: the capacity of individuals to achieve their desire is gained through success in meritocratic learning systems.

To succeed in the face of such opposition really requires an epistemic break that places power beyond the word and redefines desire within a much broader holistic environment where Truth, and our pursuit of it, becomes the relevant motives for education.

#### Neo-Humanism - A New Episteme

In making such a break we move from the utilitarian view of the human as a cog in the economy, beyond the humanist sense of the human as potent individual to a Neo-humanist view of the human being as an interactive agent embedded in a world of mystery and power. This sense of individuality is very potent as it draws on our interconnectedness for power rather than on our ability to dominate and

control. This means a lot when we start thinking about education. If education is about realizing our potential, and our potential is defined and measured by our sense of the truth of what it is to be human, then by acknowledging and celebrating our interconnectedness with the world we inhabit - the world that is a threefold phenomenon being material, psychic and spiritual - we are greatly expanding the domain of education and its function in our society.

Teachers are practical idealists. They always ask about implementation and have often discounted a good idea because it doesn't fit with their concept of what it means to teach. This shift of episteme to Neo-Humanism of course greatly expands the frontier of a teacher's responsibility. It will certainly intimidate the most hardy and adventurous teacher. But it also shifts the responsibility away from just teachers, the utilitarian and humanist episteme by promoting the individual would of course not do this, but the holistic nature of Neo-Humanist education will break down such a false separation and allow teachers to work in ways undreamt of.

This must happen because for us to redefine what it means to educate really requires us to totally reconceptualise what it means to teach and to learn. Schools as they are currently constituted will become dinosaurs and be relegated to museums. The richness that is Neo-Humanism cannot be contained in them.

Teachers, as those who only impart traditional academic learning, if they exist at all, will only be one part of the educational process. They will work along side a wide array of people such as tradesmen and poets, engineers and mystics in creating new educational spaces to assist in the realization of a greater range of now recognized human potential.

A teacher may however choose to break with their own tradition and begin to integrate into their own style some or all of the above and be tradesman, poet, engineer and mystic, or any other permutation they may choose. What is essential though is their developed sense of the Truth of their being human. Their sense of embeddedness in a universal drama that is so rich and open to interpretation and meaning as to allow all races, cultures and expressions equal pride of place. Thus education becomes open and infinitely varied.

So, as education is a quest for truth, the way leads us to a purposeful stepping out from the culturally prescribed boundaries that currently constrain our vision of education, to a form of teaching which is integrative and reverential. Neo-Humanism is the key to this as it embraces a vastly expanded vision of what it is to be human and thus frees us from the limitations of current educational practice.

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## Social: "Peace Movement of Shanti Sewa Asharm"

- By *Chitamani Yogi*

Once known the "Zone of Peace" Nepal is a much-troubled country these days due to the on-going Maoist insurgencies. The country of Lord Buddha, the forerunner of peace, is unbelievably plunged into violence and disharmony among the various ethnic and religious groups and political instability is one that has created disorder and lawlessness situation in the country. Many have lost their lives and people are feeling so unsecured.

Greatly taking this condition into consideration HVP and MSS (mother organization of HVP Schools) organized various peace activities to raise public awareness to restore peace in the country.

First HVP and MSS put a lot of efforts into bringing some like-minded educational and social organizations together. Though it is rather difficult to unite the different organizations with different ideologies in Nepal, the mission of HVP and MSS came true after their tireless work. Eventually, 21 different organizations agreed to go hand-in-hand for peace activities and for the first time launched a movement named "Journey for Peace" with "Collective Peace Prayers" from and on 2nd of Nov 2002. Since then a variety of peace activities are going on in various parts of Nepal at different levels.

### 1. JOURNEY FOR PEACE:

- Organized peace marches in many parts of the country mainly with active involvement of women of 21 different organizations. Thousands of people participated in peace marches and much-admired these marches. In peace marches only peace prayers were recited and oil-fed lamps were lit.

### 2. YOUTH CONFERENCE FOR PEACE:

- Organized on January 18th 2003.

Approximately 300 young people, both boys and girls from schools, colleges, universities and other areas participated in the conference. The prime objective of the conference is to build up in the youth of hope of peace. The reason is that it is youth who have become very negative and pessimist due to the continuous Maoists insurgencies throughout the country. The conference held the other objectives as

- to give a very holistic understanding about Peace.
- to create a harmonious relationships between youths.
- to provide an opportunity to the youths to express themselves.
- to build up a right appreciation for the life.

### **3. PEACE PRAYERS AND PEACE TALKS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES:**

- Organized this programme in about 20 different schools/colleges. Students highly appreciated this programme and joined in many other peace activities organized by the joint effort of 21 different educational and social organizations.

### **4. AN INTERACTION PROGRAMME WITH LEDING POLITICIANS OF THE DIFFERENT POLITICAL PARTIES:**

- Organized this interaction programme with a view to letting the political leaders know about a variety of activities of "Peace Movement" and get them to hear the joint voice for the restoration of peace in the country.

### **5. TEACHERS TRAINING FOR PEACE:**

- Will be organized for the teachers from the different schools and colleges to make them realize how they can contribute to restoration of peace through their teaching. Teachers, we believe, have a vital role in this process. Teachers are the ones who are responsible to produce dutiful, responsible and positive people to create a peaceful and healthy society.

### **6. TOUR FOR PEACE AWARENESS**

- Will be started with the participation of the representatives of all the organizations who are wholeheartedly involved in "Peace Movement" from the beginning. The main objective is to reach villages and towns of the different districts and to make people how we can all work collectively to establish peace in our country and appeal to the warring factors to let the simple and innocent villagers to lead a happy life.

Since we started "Peace Movement", many other religious, social and educational organizations have come up with similar types of activities and organized various peace processions and worships throughout the country. We do feel happy to state that our collective and continuous work inspired so many people and organizations to work for this common cause for peace. What we believe is that these peace prayers and peace marches and other peace activities finally made realize the warring political party called Maoists and the government the heavy loss of the country. And, they have now kept their prejudices aside and come to the table talk. They have held peace talks twice so far and will have more in the days to come for the permanent peaceful solution of the problem. These days it seems like peace has been restored in Nepal and people are experiencing peace after 7 years. Let's sincerely pray that there would be peace in Nepal again. May permanent peace prevail in the Himalayan Kingdom. May Nepal be known as "Zone of Peace" all around the world again !

Since the beginning Mr. Chintamani Yogi, founder principal of HVP School, has been tirelessly working as the main coordinator of the "Peace Movement". In fact Mr. Yogi is the inspirer of this movement, the movement which will keep going continuously in the future too. This is how HVP and MSS have been contributing to the process of establishing peace in the country and developing tolerance, social responsibility and understanding between warring members of Nepali society.

### **Shanti Sewa Asharam (SSA)**

"Peace for me, for my friends and for the entire universe"

An integrated center of Hindu Vidapeeth-Nepal (HVP) and Matribhoomi Sevak Sangh (MSS), which has been established with the following plans and aims:

- Orphan's Home

(Particularly for the children of war victims as well as for the children from so-called untouchable and very unprivileged communities . These children will get free education at HVP Schools. )

- Old Age People's Home
- Yoga & Naturopathy Center
- Regular Satsanga (Discourses)
- Organic farming
- Community Service
- Training Centre for Skill Development Basically for those who are from unprivileged communities as well as for those who are orphans.

**ACTIVITIES:**

- It will run different types of peace services / activities regularly.
- It will provide services and hospitality to the national/international visitors.
- It will provide services mainly to the victims of war.
- It will provide skill-based trainings to the people from backward and unprivileged communities.
- It will provide holistic counseling to the people suffering from various reasons and problems.
- It will organize camps, conferences, workshops, and discourses to meet its goals.

This Ashram (Peace Service Centre) has already begun with a small building in Koteswor, Kathmandu. Most importantly all the peace activities of "Peace Movement" have been guided and organized from this centre. It has been an exemplary centre for peace movement. Similarly, Weekly discourse has commenced on a regular basis. Many people do come to the Ashram once a week and discuss on various issues - national and international. The Ashram is still in a preliminary stage and has to do a lot to run in a full-fledged way as per its plan. First and foremost a proper piece of land should be bought slightly outside Kathmandu city where different activities of the Ashram can be conducted phase wise. This ashram welcomes the people from all the religions, castes, ethnic communities and the countries, as it strongly believes only in one religion that is "Human Religion". We all know that selfless service to the humanity is the only religion that helps people to have communion with the Almighty.

**Conclusion:**

There are still a lot to be done in Nepal. Development in Nepal is still in primitive stage, quite unbelievable in the 21st century. Nepal is one of the poorest countries in the world. Many problems are still prevailing in Nepali society. Thousands of children are deprived of even primary education and thousands of adults (both men and women) are illiterate. For this reason human development in Nepal is negligible compared to the developed countries. This is why Nepal has suffered a lot and has not been able to fulfill the very basic needs of its people. This is, no doubt, is the main cause of instability, disorder and violence.

So, the children should feel that they have a brighter future and that they would have better opportunities in the country. It is possible only if they get better and value-based education and trainings for the skill development. More adults should have opportunities to have at least basic education so that there would be better understanding and harmony in the family and the children would have better education and be better fed. Thus the standard of family would raise and quality of life would be achieved. Better education help people to live peacefully and let others live peacefully. Value-based education helps people learn and practice the ideal values such peace, non-violence, tolerance and international brotherhood in their daily lives. In this way happiness and satisfaction in every family would be maintained and eventually Nation would enjoy peace at large.

This is not that easy problem which could be overcome easily and with limited resources. Combined but selfless efforts and assistance from the developed countries will, no doubt, make a remarkable difference in the field of education in the country like Nepal.



**Social: Pokhara Public Library**

(Pokhara public library is run by a volunteer committee. It is managing the library services to the people of Pokhara and surroundings with the limited resources provided by local authority. On average this library greets 150 readers a day.

**Arjun Shrestha**, Member Secretary of Pokhara Public Library, is seeking ways to strengthen the library. - Ed.)

## विषय प्रवेश:

विक्रम संवत् २०५८ सालको राष्ट्रिय जनगणना अनुसार नेपालको जनसङ्ख्या २,३१,५१,४२३ रहेको र सो मध्ये ४२ प्रतिशत जनता निरपेक्ष गरीबीको रेखामुनि रहेका छन् । नेपालीहरूको सरदर प्रतिव्यक्ति वार्षिक आय अमेरिकी डलर २२० मात्र रहेको (विश्ववैश्विक प्रतिवेदन वर्ल्ड डेभलपमेण्ट रिपोर्ट २०००।२००१) परिवेशमा नेपाली जनताको वर्षभरिको आवश्यकता परिपूर्ति गर्न यति आम्दानीले पुग्दैन र यसमा पनि शिक्षा आर्जन र पाठ्यपुस्तक तथा शैक्षिक सामग्री खरिद गर्न निकै कठिनाईको सामना गर्नुपर्दछ । शिक्षा समाजको बलियो आधार हो, शिक्षाविना मानिसले समाजिक जीवनमा कुनै पनि प्रगति गर्न सक्दैन ।

नेपालमा नगरोन्मुख बस्तीहरू द्रुतगतिमा बढिरहेको छ तर जनताको आर्थिक अवस्था सुदृढ गराउने कार्यक्रम सरल र सहज रूपमा उपलब्ध छैन । यस कारणले गर्दा पनि विद्याको चाहना राख्ने विद्यार्थी तथा अन्य पाठकहरू आर्थिक स्रोतको कमीका कारण शैक्षिक सामग्री उपलब्ध गराउन नसकेर कठिनाई भोगिरहेका छन् । पोखरा कास्की जिल्लाको मात्र नभई पश्चिमाञ्चल विकास क्षेत्रको पनि सदरमुकाम हो । पोखराको जनसङ्ख्या वृद्धिदर ७.४ प्रतिशत रहेको छ, जुन नेपालको सन्दर्भमा सबैभन्दा बढी वृद्धिदर भएको स्थानको रूपमा चिनिन्छ । वि. सं. २०५८ को राष्ट्रिय जनगणना अनुसार पोखरा उपत्यकामा १,५६,३१२ जनसङ्ख्या रहेको देखिन्छ र यसको ठूलो हिस्सा युवाहरूले ओगटेको छ । कास्कीमा प्राथमिक तथा माध्यामिक तह पढाइ हुने सरकारी तथा प्राइभेट विद्यालयको सङ्ख्या ५६८ भन्दा बढी रहेको छ साथै करिब १६५०० भन्दा बढी विद्यार्थीहरू पोखरास्थित विभिन्न क्याम्पसहरूमा अध्ययनरत छन् तर पनि शिक्षा क्षेत्रमा भएको लगानी ज्यादै न्यून भएकोले शैक्षिक सामग्री, पाठ्यपुस्तक तथा सन्दर्भ पुस्तकहरूका साथै सूचना प्रविधिको पहुँच आम विद्यार्थीहरूका लागि धेरै टाढाको विषय रहेको छ ।

पोखरामा सञ्चालित सरकारी विद्यालयहरूमा पुस्तकालय सुविधा नगन्य रूपमा रहेको छ र प्राइभेट विद्यालयमा पनि पुस्तकालयको समुचित व्यवस्था छैन । यथार्थमा भन्नुपर्दा केही आंशिक विद्यालयहरूका नाम मात्रका पुस्तकालय बाहेक सबै विद्यालयमा पुस्तकालय भनेको के हो भन्ने कुरा पनि थाहा छैन भन्नुमा अफठ्यारो मान्नुपर्दैन । विद्यालय स्तरमा अनिवार्य तथा निःशुल्क शिक्षाको व्यवस्था भए पनि कतिपय विद्यार्थीहरू शैक्षिक सामग्रीको व्यवस्था गर्न नसकेर विद्यालय छाड्नु परेको पीडादायक घटनाहरू प्रकाशमा आएका छन् ।

जनतालाई सुसूचित हुनबाट वञ्चित गर्नुहुँदैन भन्ने मान्यता रहे पनि नेपालमा पुस्तकालयको स्थापना र सञ्चालनका लागि कुनै ऐनकानून वा नीतिनियम बन्न सकेको छैन । साक्षरता प्रतिशतलाई हेर्ने हो भने नेपालको पुरुष सङ्ख्याको ३७.८ प्रतिशत र महिला सङ्ख्याको ६५.४ प्रतिशत निरक्षर रहेको पाइन्छ । नेपालको सरदर साक्षरतालाई अध्ययन गर्दा कास्कीको साक्षरता प्रतिशत केही बढी देखिए तापनि यसलाई नियमित र अभि प्रभावकारी बनाउन विद्यार्थीहरूका साथै सर्वसाधारण सबैका लागि पुस्तकालय तथा सूचनाको पहुँचलाई सर्वसुलभ बनाउनु आवश्यक छ ।

यिनै समस्याहरूको पहिचान गरेर पोखरा सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालयको स्थापना गरिएको हो तापनि यसको व्यवस्थापन र सञ्चालनमा शुन्य प्रायः आर्थिक स्रोत र पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाको सीमित अनुदानले पुस्तकालय सेवा विस्तारमा पुस्तकालय समितिले जति प्रयत्न गरिरहे तापनि अपेक्षित लक्ष्य हाँसिल गर्न नसकेको हुँदा यसको विकासका लागि सहयोगी हातहरूको खाँचो छ । यस किसिमको विद्यमान परिस्थितिमा यस पुस्तकालयलाई स्थायित्व प्रदान गरी समयानुकूल विकसित गर्दै जान शिक्षा र सूचनाको लागि पुस्तकालयको आवश्यकता बुझेका व्यक्ति तथा सामाजिक संस्थाहरूको सहयोग अपरिहार्य सावित भएको छ । सबै क्षेत्रको सामूहिक प्रयास र सहयोगबाट यस पुस्तकालयलाई आम नागरिकहरूको शैक्षिक केन्द्रको रूपमा विकसित गर्नु आजको टड्कारो आवश्यकता हो ।

## पुस्तकालय परिचय

“न्याय हराए गोरखा जानु, शिक्षा हराए कास्की जानु” भन्ने प्रचलित जनश्रुतिले प्राचीन शिक्षा परम्परामा कास्की, पोखराको लामो इतिहासलाई सङ्केत गर्दछ तापनि आधुनिक शिक्षाको क्षेत्रमा पोखराको इतिहास त्यति लामो छैन । वि. सं. २००६ सालमा पोखरा पब्लिक स्कूल (हालको राष्ट्रिय मा. वि. ) को स्थापनासँगै औपचारिक रूपमा आधुनिक शिक्षाको थालनी हुन्छ । यसरी पोखरा पब्लिक स्कूल, कास्की पोखराको पहिलो आधुनिक शिक्षण संस्थाको रूपमा देखा पर्दछ भने वि. सं. २००८ सालमा खुलेको आदर्श पुस्तकालय कास्कीको दोश्रो शैक्षिक संस्थाको रूपमा देखा पर्दछ । यस पछि पोखरामा क्रमशः अरण्यज्योति पुस्तकालय, ग्राम विकास पुस्तकालय, विन्ध्येश्वरी पुस्तकालय, नारी विकास पुस्तकालय, बृटिश लाईब्रेरी, नेपाल भारत सांस्कृतिक पुस्तकालय, चेतन शिल पुस्तकालय, आधुनिक पुस्तकालय, ज्ञानज्योति पुस्तकालय, किसान पुस्तकालय, ऋषिकूल पुस्तकालय, सूचनाकेन्द्र, वीरेन्द्र पुस्तकालय पछि नगर पुस्तकालय आदि थुप्रै पुस्तकालयहरू खुले तर २०४६ सालसम्म आईपुग्दा नपुग्दा आर्थिक अभाव, कमजोर व्यवस्थापन

तथा दीर्घकालिन सोचको अभावका कारण ती पुस्तकालयहरू सङ्गठित एवं नियमित रूपमा सञ्चालन हुन सकेनन् र एउटा मात्र पुस्तकालय पनि बाँकी रहेनन् ।

पुस्तकालय शुन्य अवस्थामा रहेको त्यस किसिमको तत्कालीन समयमा पोखराको जनघनत्व, यहाँको शैक्षिक संस्थाहरू, विभिन्न कार्यालय, गैरसरकारी संस्था, पोखरामा आउने आन्तरिक तथा विदेशी पर्यटकहरू समेतको संख्यालाई ध्यानमा राखेर पोखरामा स्वायत्त संस्थाको रूपमा एक व्यवस्थित र स्तरीय पुस्तकालय स्थापना एवं सञ्चालन गर्नुपर्ने आवश्यकता महसुस गरी तत्कालीन पोखरा नगरपालिका र पोखरा उद्योग वाणिज्य संघको संयुक्त पहलमा २०४७ साल माघ २४ गते डाकिएको भेलाले पुस्तकालयको आवश्यकता महसुस गरी सम्भाव्यता अध्ययन कार्यदल गठन भएको र सो कार्यदलको सुझाव प्रतिवेदन अनुसार २०४७ फागुन १४ गते बसेको अर्को भेलाले पुस्तकालय स्थापना र सञ्चालन गर्न किटान गर्नुका साथै यसका लागि एक पुस्तकालय समिति गठन गरिएको थियो । उक्त समितिलाई दिइएको जिम्मेवारी अनुसार विभिन्न चरणहरू पार गर्दै पोखरा नगरपालिका, पोखरा उद्योग वाणिज्य संघ तथा विविध क्षेत्रसंग सम्बद्ध व्यक्ति तथा संस्थाहरूको सहभागिता एवं निश्चार्थ सहयोगको परिणामस्वरूप २०४९ साल वैशाख महिनामा पोखरा सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालयको स्थापना भएको हो ।

पुस्तकालय संचालनका लागि संगठित रूपमा अधि बढनुपर्ने भएबाट विधान तयार पारी कास्की जिल्ला प्रशासन कार्यालयमा २०४९ आश्विन १२ गते सामाजिक संस्था दर्ता ऐन २०३४ अनुसार दर्ता गरिएको र पुस्तकालय दर्ता एवं सञ्चालन सम्बन्धी शिक्षा नियमावली २०४९ अन्तर्गत २०५६ पौष १६ गते जिल्ला शिक्षा कार्यालय, कास्की पोखरामा दर्ता भएको छ ।

स्थानीय स्तरमा पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाबाट निरन्तर सहयोग प्राप्त हुनुका साथै पोखरा उद्योग वाणिज्य संघ तथा राष्ट्रिय स्तरमा नेपाल राष्ट्रिय पुस्तकालय एवं अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय स्तरमा UNESCO/DANIDA बाट विभिन्न योजना सम्पन्न गर्न पटकपटक आर्थिक सहयोग तथा भौतिक सामग्रीहरू सहयोग स्वरूप प्राप्त गरेको छ । यसरी नै पुस्तकालयको विकास एवं संचालनमा सुरुदेखि नै यस क्षेत्रका लेखक, साहित्यकार, शिक्षाविद्, पत्रकार, पुस्तकालय विशेषज्ञ तथा समाजसेवीहरूको सहयोग एवं सद्भाव प्राप्त गर्दै आएको छ भने व्यवस्थापन समिति अन्तर्गत एक स्वतन्त्र शैक्षिक संस्थाको रूपमा यस पुस्तकालय महेन्द्रपुलस्थित पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाको भवनमा सञ्चालन हुँदै आएको छ ।

पुस्तकालयको उद्देश्य

पुस्तकालयको विधान अनुसार यसका उद्देश्यहरू देहाय बमोजिम छन्-

१. समाजका प्रत्येक सदस्यलाई धर्म, लिङ्ग, जातजाति आदि कुनै भेदभावविना पुस्तकालय तथा सूचना सेवा प्रदान गर्नु ।
२. सर्वसाधारण जनतामा पढ्ने बानीको विकास गर्ने ।
३. पाठकहरूको रुची, चाहना र आवश्यकता अनुसारका विभिन्न पाठ्य सामग्रीको संग्रह गर्नु र पुस्तकालयको विकास गर्दै लैजानु ।
४. पश्चिमाञ्चल विकास क्षेत्रका कवि, लेखक, अन्वेषक, चित्रकार, प्रकाशकका पाठ्य सामग्री, लेखरचना तथा कला आदिको संग्रह गर्दै जाने ।

पुस्तकालयले हालसम्म सम्पन्न गरेका प्रमुख कार्यक्रमहरू

१. आधारभूत प्राथमिक शिक्षा परियोजना अन्तर्गतका ५ वटा श्रोत केन्द्र रहेको विद्यालयहरूमा घुम्ती पुस्तकालय सेवा सञ्चालन (२०५२ चैत्र १८ देखि) ।
२. बाल पुस्तक प्रवर्द्धनका लागि सेमिनारको आयोजना (२०५२ माघ ५ तथा २०५३ अषाढ २९) ।
३. बाल पुस्तक लेखन सम्बन्धमा राष्ट्रिय भेलाको आयोजना (२०५३ फागुन २४, २५) ।
४. पोखराका पुस्तकालयमा कार्यरत व्यक्ति र श्रोत व्यक्तिहरूको लागि नवीन सूचना प्रविधि सम्बन्धमा कार्यशालाको आयोजना (२०५४ माघ १८) ।
५. आधारभूत पुस्तकालय व्यवस्थापन तालिमको आयोजना (२०५३, आश्विन ६-१३) ।
६. पुस्तकालयमा प्रयुक्त हुने Bibliographic data base सम्बन्धि सूचना संकलन र खोज प्रणालीको लागि CDS/ISIS को तालिम सञ्चालन (२०५६ जेष्ठ १६-२६) ।
७. प्रत्येक वर्षको सरस्वती पूजाको उपलक्ष्यमा बाल पुस्तक प्रदर्शनी आयोजना गरिएको ( २०५५ माघ ८-१०), ( २०५६ माघ २७-२९), (२०५७ माघ १६-१८), २०५८ फागुन १२- १४), र (२०५९ माघ २३ र २४) ।
८. पश्चिमाञ्चल क्षेत्रीय पुस्तक प्रदर्शनीको आयोजना (२०५६ वैशाख १ - ७) तथा २०६० वैशाख १९ - २२) ।
९. बाल बालिकाहरूलाई पुस्तकालयमा अध्ययन गर्ने बानीको विकास गर्न २०५७ चैत महिनादेखि प्रत्येक शुक्रबार भिडियो चलचित्र प्रदर्शन ।

१०. फोटोकपी तथा कम्प्युटर सेवा ।  
 ११. बाल पुस्तक प्रकाशन:- हाम्रा कथा (२०५३), रमाइला सामाजिक बालकथा (२०५४), फूलवारी बालकथा (२०५६) तथा सगरमाथा आरोही अरविन (२०५८) ।  
 १२. लुम्बेस्थित हरियाली युवा क्लबमा घुम्ती पुस्तकालय सेवा सञ्चालन (२०५७ भाद्र ३१ देखि) ।  
 १३. पुस्तकालय भवन साँघुरो भएकोले मौजुदा भवनमा गत २०५८ सालमा ३० ट १० फिटको दुईवटा हल निर्माण गरी पुस्तकालय प्रयोजनमा ल्याईएको छ ।

व्यवस्थापन प्रणाली :

वि. सं. २०४७ मा संगठित भए पनि २०४९ आश्विन १२ मा जिल्ला प्रशासन कार्यालयमा संस्था दर्ता ऐन अन्तर्गत दर्ता भएपछि ११ जना कार्य समितिमा पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाको प्रतिनिधि १ जना र पोखरा उद्योग बाणिज्य संघको प्रतिनिधि १ जना पदेन सदस्य रहने व्यवस्था छ भने अन्य ९ जना साधारण सदस्यहरूबाट निर्वाचित हुने व्यवस्था रहेको छ । समितिले नियमित पुस्तकालय सञ्चालनका साथै अतिरिक्त क्रियाकलापहरू तथा पुस्तकालयको विकासका लागि वाह्य सम्बन्ध बिस्तार गर्ने जस्ता महत्वपूर्ण कार्यहरू गर्दै आएको छ । पुस्तकालय दर्ता एवं सञ्चालन सम्बन्धी शिक्षा नियमावली २०४९ अन्तर्गत २०५६ पौष १६ गते जिल्ला शिक्षा कार्यालय, कास्की पोखरामा दर्ता भएको छ । यसका साथै नेपाल राष्ट्रिय पुस्तकालयको पश्चिमाञ्चल शाखा पुस्तकालयको रूपमा पनि यसले कार्य गर्दै आएको छ ।

वर्तमान कार्य समिति यस प्रकार रहेको छ-

सि. नं.	पद	नाम	विषय/क्षेत्र
१	अध्यक्ष	कृष्णप्रसाद बास्तोला	कवि, सम्पादक पत्रकार
२	उपाध्यक्ष	श्याममोहन आले	उप-लाइब्रेरियन, पृथ्वी नारायण क्याम्पस
३	सदस्य सचिव	अर्जुनप्रसाद श्रेष्ठ	उप-लाइब्रेरियन, वन विज्ञान अध्ययन संस्थान
४	सह सचिव	सूर्य क्षेत्री	सहायक लाइब्रेरियन, जनप्रिय क्याम्पस
५	कोषाध्यक्ष	कृष्णप्रसाद बस्ताकोटी	लेखा परीक्षक
६	सदस्य	सरुभक्त श्रेष्ठ	कवि, लेखक
७	सदस्य	विश्व शाक्य	लेखक, फोटोग्राफर
८	सदस्य	चन्द्रकान्त पौडेल	पत्रिका व्यवसाय
९	सदस्य	सूर्य बहादुर खड्का विखर्ची	शिक्षण
१०	सदस्य	पशुपति श्रेष्ठ	व्यवशायी
११	प्रतिनिधि सदस्य	मानकाजी माकाजू	महासचिव, पोखरा उद्योग बाणिज्य.संघ
१२	प्रतिनिधि सदस्य	-	पोखरा उपमहानगरपालिका

पुस्तकालयको काम कार्यवाही कार्यकारी समितिको निर्णय अनुसार हुने र पुस्तकालयको लेखा व्यवस्थित तरिकाले राखी प्रत्येक आर्थिक वर्ष लेखा परीक्षण गराउने व्यवस्था छ ।

वर्तमान स्थिति :

**पुस्तक संग्रह-** पुस्तकालयमा खरिद तथा उपहारबाट प्राप्त पुस्तक संख्या ६,०६६ र बाल पुस्तक १४५६ रहेको छ । पुस्तकालयको स्थापनाकालमा वाचनालयको ज्यादै न्यून संख्यामा रहेका पुस्तक संग्रहमा समितिले विभिन्न संघ संस्थासँगको सम्बन्धबाट उपहारस्वरूप प्राप्त गरेको र UNESCO/DANODA र नेपाल राष्ट्रिय पुस्तकालयबाट उल्लेख्य रूपमा प्राप्त सहयोगबाट संग्रह अभिवृद्धि भएको छ । हाल पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाले विभिन्न समयमा कवि लेखकहरूबाट खरिद गरेका पुस्तकहरूसमेत यस पुस्तकालयले प्राप्त गर्दै आएको छ ।

**पत्र पत्रिका:** पोखरामा उपलब्ध हुने प्रायः सबै खबर पत्रिकाहरू पुस्तकालयमा उपलब्ध छन् । यस अनुसार त्रैमासिक । मासिक । पाक्षिक २१, साप्ताहिक २६ र दैनिक १६ गरी ६३ शीर्षकभन्दा बढी पत्रिकाहरू नियमित छन् । यसका अतिरिक्त विभिन्न संस्थाहरूबाट प्रकाशित हुने जर्नल, न्यूजलेटर आदि पनि उपलब्ध हुँदै आएको छ ।

**जनशक्ति:** पुस्तकालयमा काम गर्न पोखरा उपमहानगरपालिकासँगको सहमति अनुसार सहायक स्तरको १ जना र पियन तहको १ जना गरी जम्मा दुईजना कर्मचारी कार्यरत छन् । यसका अतिरिक्त पुस्तकालय समितिका सदस्यहरू स्वयंसेवकका रूपमा पुस्तकालयको नीति निर्माण तथा पुस्तकालयको प्राविधिक कार्यमा नियमित रूपमा संलग्न छन् । पुस्तकालयमा पाठकहरूको बढ्दो चापलाई थगने गरी प्रभावकारी सेवा प्रदान गर्न हालको कर्मचारी संख्या अपर्याप्त छ ।

**पाठक** : पुस्तकालयमा सर्वसाधारण पाठकहरूदेखि विद्यालय, क्याम्पस स्तरका विद्यार्थी, शिक्षक तथा शोधकर्ताहरूसमेत पुस्तकालयमा आउने गर्दछन् । यसका अतिरिक्त बालबालिकाहरूको सङ्ख्यामा समेत क्रमशः वृद्धि भैरहेको छ । पुस्तकालयको तथ्याङ्क अनुसार प्रत्येक दिन सरदर १४९ जना पाठकहरूले पुस्तकालय प्रयोग गर्दछन् । नियमित पाठक संख्याको आधारमा भन्नुपर्दा नेपालका सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालयहरू मध्ये सबैभन्दा बढी पाठक भएको पुस्तकालयको रूपमा यस पुस्तकालय परिचित छ ।

**सूचना प्रविधि**: UNESCO/DANIDA ले नेपाल राष्ट्रिय पुस्तकालयमार्फत् उपलब्ध गराएको कम्प्युटर, फोटोकपी मेशिन तथा टि. भि., भि. सि. आर. आदिवाट सूचना प्रविधिको सेवा प्रदान गरिदै आएको छ । साथै पुस्तकालयको संग्रहमा भएका पुस्तकहरूको Bibliographic Data base तयार गर्ने क्रम जारी रहेको छ । पुस्तकालयमा विभिन्न सिडी तथा अडियो क्यासेटहरू पनि उपलब्ध छन् । सूचना प्रविधिकै क्षेत्रमा पोखरा सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालयको नाममा टेलिफोन (५३२५११) को व्यवस्था गरिएको छ ।

**सेवा विस्तार** : पोखराका विभिन्न ५ वटा श्रोत केन्द्र रहेको विद्यालयमा घुम्ती पुस्तकालय सेवा सञ्चालन गर्दै आएको छ । यसका साथै लुम्लेस्थित हरियाली युवा क्लवमा घुम्ती पुस्तकालय सेवा सञ्चालन गरिदै आएको छ । पोखरा वरपरका पुस्तकालयको अनुरोध बमोजिम पुस्तकालयमा रहेका अतिरिक्त संग्रहबाट सहयोग उपलब्ध गराइदै आएको छ ।

**समय** : पुस्तकालय गर्मीको समयमा विहान ११.३० बजेदेखि साँझ ६.३० सम्म खुला रहन्छ भने जाडोको याम (मङ्सिर, पुष, माघ) मा विहान ११.३० देखि साँझ ५.३० बजेसम्म खुला रहन्छ ।

पोखरा सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालय पोखरामा स्थायी तथा अस्थायी रूपमा रहने सबै तहका पाठकहरूका लागि समर्पित सामाजिक संस्था भएकाले यसको प्रभावकारी सञ्चालन एवं विकासमा विभिन्न संघसंस्था र व्यक्तिहरूले पुऱ्याउनुपर्ने सहयोगहरू देहाय बमोजिम प्रस्तुत गरिएको छ-

१) पुस्तकालयमा आईपर्ने काम सम्पन्न गर्न माथि उल्लेखित कार्यहरू सम्पादन गर्न, वर्तमान अवस्थाको कार्य तथा संग्रह व्यवस्थापनका लागि आवश्यक जनशक्ति पुस्तकालय प्रमुख (प्रोफेशनल लाइब्रेरियन), पुस्तकालय सहायक र पियन स्तरका कर्मचारी व्यवस्थाका लागि आर्थिक स्रोतको खोजी हुनु अत्यन्त आवश्यक भएको छ ।

२) पुस्तकालयमा उपलब्ध गराइने पत्र-पत्रिकाको खर्चको व्यवस्था पोखरा उप-महानगरपालिकाले गर्दै आएको छ । यसका साथै पुस्तकालयको लागि उपयुक्त हुने र पाठकहरूको रुचि अनुसारका र उनीहरूको पठनपाठनसँग सम्बन्धित विषयगत जर्नलको व्यवस्था गर्नेतर्फ पुस्तकालयका पाठकहरूको अनुरोध मनन योग्य रहेको छ ।

३) पोखरा सार्वजनिक पुस्तकालयले अन्य विभिन्न स्रोतबाट पुस्तक खरिद तथा उपहार प्राप्त गरिरहेको छ । यसका अतिरिक्त पुस्तकालयका पाठकहरू तथा यसले सञ्चालन गरेको घुम्ती पुस्तकालय सेवाका पाठकहरूको रुचि र आवश्यकता अनुसारका पुस्तक तथा देश विदेशमा प्रकाशितहुने नवीनतम पुस्तकहरू, जुन पुस्तकालयमा संग्रह गर्न उपयोगी र आवश्यक छ, त्यस्ता पुस्तकहरूको व्यवस्था गर्दै जानुपर्ने भएकोले नियमित आर्थिक स्रोतको आवश्यकता छ।

४) पुस्तकालय सञ्चालनका लागि आवश्यक अन्य सहायक सामग्रीहरू - फर्निचर, विद्युत तथा पानी, सञ्चार खर्च, मसलन्द तथा छपाई एवं पुस्तकालयले सञ्चालन गर्ने अन्य नियमित क्रियाकलाप - पुस्तक प्रदर्शनी, सूचना प्रविधि गोष्ठी, तालिम, पुस्तक प्रकाशन र अन्य विविध कार्यका लागि आर्थिक स्रोतको आवश्यक छ ।

यी खर्च व्यवस्था गर्न पुस्तकालयको आर्थिक स्रोत पर्याप्त नभएको तर पुस्तकालय सेवामा नियमित रूपमा हुने कामकाज तथा अन्य कार्यक्रम सञ्चालन गर्न रकम आवश्यक हुने भएकोले नियमित रूपमा स्रोत उपलब्ध गराउन अक्षय कोष (Seed Money) को स्थापना हुन उपयुक्त देखिन्छ । यस अक्षयकोषबाट आर्जन भएको व्याज रकमबाट कार्यक्रमहरू सञ्चालन गर्न र पुस्तकालय सेवामा लगाउन सकिन्छ । यसरी पुस्तकालयको आवश्यकता पूर्ति गर्न स्थायी स्रोतको व्यवस्था भएको खण्डमा पुस्तकालय सञ्चालनमा आइपर्ने आर्थिक समस्याको समाधान हुने विश्वास लिइएको छ । वर्तमान अवस्थामा पुस्तकालयले दुई लाख रुपियाँको अक्षयकोष स्थापना गरेको छ । यस कोषबाट प्राप्त व्याज रकमबाट पुस्तकालयको विद्युत तथा पानी, टेलिफोन र डाँक खर्चको व्यवस्था जेनतेन रूपमा चलेको छ । घट्टो दो वैक व्याजदर र संचालन खर्चको आवश्यकता लाई ध्यानमा राख्दा यही कोष रकमलाई वृद्धि गरी रु. २०,०००००।- ( बीसलाख रुपियाँ ) सम्म पुऱ्याउने व्यवस्था भएमा यसबाट अहिलेको वैक व्याजदर को हिसावबाट जम्म वार्षिक १,००,०००।- आम्दानी हुने भई केही हदसम्म खर्चको व्यवस्था हुने देखिन्छ ।

पुस्तकालयमा पुस्तक खरिद गर्न, विषयगत जर्नलको व्यवस्था गर्न तथा पुस्तकालयसँग सम्बन्धित विभिन्न कार्यक्रमहरू सम्पन्न गर्न पुस्तकालयसँग अन्य आर्थिक स्रोत नभएकाले वार्षिक कार्यक्रमहरू सुचारु रूपमा सञ्चालन गर्न लाग्ने रकम को व्यवस्था गर्न अक्षय कोष अभिवृद्धिका लागि त्यस प्रतिष्ठित संस्थाबाट उपयुक्त पहलकदमीको व्यवस्था गरिदिनु हुन अनुरोध छ ।

आशातित उपलब्धि

१. पाठकहरूको रुचि तथा नवीन प्रकाशनहरू आवश्यकता अनुसार थप गर्दै जान सकिने भएकाले पुस्तकालयका पाठकहरूको अध्ययनमा सहयोग पुग्ने देखिन्छ ।
२. पुस्तकालयको संग्रहमा अभिवृद्धि हुँदै जान्छ । यसले गर्दा अध्ययनका साथै अनुसन्धान कार्यमा संलग्न व्यक्तिहरूका लागि पुस्तकालय एक महत्वपूर्ण स्रोत केन्द्रको रूपमा विकसित गर्न सकिन्छ ।
३. वर्षेनी आयोजना हुने पुस्तक प्रदर्शनीको स्तरीयतामा वृद्धि हुने , प्रदर्शनीको गरिमा बढ्ने ।
४. पुस्तकालयको सेवामा अभिवृद्धि हुने ।
५. यसबाट पुस्तकालयको सहयोगी संस्थाहरूको समेत प्रचार-प्रसार भई सेवा विस्तारमा सहयोग पुग्दछ ।

## Reflections from a decade back: "Want to Raise a Family in the US?"

Reflections from a decade back: "Want to Raise a Family in the US?"  
("Reflections from a decade back" is a regular feature of rejuvenated TND. Pramod Pandey compiles this section from materials published approximately 10 years ago. - Ed)

Compiled by: **Pramod Pandey**

Originally from: [mehta@cs.sfu.ca](mailto:mehta@cs.sfu.ca) (Manish Mehta)

Date: July 10, 1994

Source: The majority staff of the Senate Judiciary Committee (July 31, 1990)

### FACTS ABOUT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN THE U.S.

The most serious crimes against women are rising at a significantly faster rate than total crimes: during the past 10 years, rape rates have risen nearly four times as fast as the total crime rate.

Every hour, 16 women confront rapists; a woman is raped every 6 minutes. Every 18 seconds, a woman is beaten; 3-4 million women are battered each year. Since 1974, the rate of assaults against young women (20-24) has jumped almost 50%. For young men, it has decreased.

Three out of four women will be victims of at least one violent crime during their lifetimes. A woman is 10 times more likely to be raped than to die in a car crash. Only 50% of rapes are ever reported; of those reported, less than 40% result in arrest.

One third of all domestic violence cases, if reported, would be charged as felony rape or felonious assault.

Each year, more than one million women seek medical assistance for injuries caused by battering.

The crime rate against women in the United States is significantly higher than in other countries -- the United States has a rape rate that is 13 times higher than England's, nearly 4 times higher than Germany's, and more than 20 times higher than Japan's.

Of the American women alive today, 25 million either have been, or will be, raped at least once during their lives.

Last year, the number of women abused by their husbands was greater than the number of women who got married.

In 1950, police caught 83% of all rapists; in 1988 police caught only 53% of them.

Nearly 50% of abusive husbands batter their wives when they are pregnant, making them four times more likely to bear infants of low birth weight.

Of all those arrested for major crimes -- murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson -- rapists are the most likely to escape conviction.

If every woman victimized by domestic violence last year were to join hands in a line, the string of people would span from New York to Los Angeles and back again.

More than half of all homeless women are on the street because they are fleeing domestic violence.

More than 40% of college women who have been raped say that they expect to be raped again.

There were more women injured by rapists last year than marines wounded by the enemy in all of World War II.

There are nearly three times as many animal shelters in the United States as there are battered women's shelters.

Although campus studies suggest that 1,275 women were raped at America's 3 largest universities in 1989, only 3 of those rapes were reported to police.

- 1 out of every 7 women currently attending college has been raped.
- 486,000 of the girls now attending high school will have been raped before they graduate.
- The average age of a rape victim is 18 1/2 years old.
- Young women 16-19 years old are the most likely to be raped.
- 57% of college rape victims are attacked by dates.
- Girls raped before age 18 are least likely to report the incident to the police.
- Girls aged 12-15 are the most likely to be raped by strangers.
- Rape victims aged 12-19 are the least likely to receive hospital care.
- Since 1974, the rate of assaults against young women (20-24) has jumped 48%. For men of the same age group, it has decreased 12%.
- Half the cases of women killed in this country are victims of domestic violence.

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## Book Review: "Feelings of Remembrance by Kamala Sarup"

- *By Dr. Bikash Thapa*

Kamala Sarup is an obviously talented young story writer, and her stories has rightly acknowledged her importance. I do not doubt the legitimacy of either the writer's talent or success: Feelings of remembrance, Sarup's second collection, proves we have a significant and diligent new writer in the country.

A collection of eighteen short stories "Feelings of remembrance" (Samjhanaka Annubhutiharu) authored by Kamala Sarup, writes "We are in search of a mature conception of love,". She finds, in the end, of her story that "the need to love and to be loved is deeply placed in human nature," and "that love is an achievement," something that is not found, but created. Kamala Sarup's vivid characterization and the believability of their actions makes these stories interesting, but it is her language that carries the collection. Her love of words and imagery beats at the heart of every story, and makes the most prosaic scene spill over with stunning meaning and portent. Ultimately, this language makes the stories gathered here well worth reading. The strength of this collection lies in the writer's ability to open tiny windows into other people's lives. The stories are filled with desire and temptation.

What I like about her stories is the originality. I like her use of free verse and vivid descriptions that plunges the reader into her story. In addition, the subjects and characters are real and believable. It is a book that will be in my want to read again category. If the point of Kamala Sarup's stories collection "Feelings of remembrance, what makes up the bulk of Conditions of Love are the theories of love she picks up, considers, then puts down along the way. Kamala argues, love is historical because it has existed in different forms at different times. Kamala Sarup takes the path between conservative and liberal theories of love, and human relationship.

These are the parts of Kamala Sarup's book that stand on firmer, more seriously learned ground. The story in "Feelings of remembrance" is introspective, personal. It examines life and death and their connection and gentle, caring love. One of my favorite story is called "Maile maya gareko timi". Like a

life fiction story, it tells how it could easily have divided lovers. A reader need go no further than the first story, though, to know the strength of this book.

A powerful story, Kamala Sarup focus on women in particular and bring light to the emotional duress endured in a patriarchal societies where a woman's voice is usually not heard. "Bhagabati Kumariko sapano" This story tells unhappy marriage. Bhagabati has given up on love after experiencing heartbreak at her husband's hands. She's only ever wanted to love a man who had his own dreams and aspirations. Usually I like stories of life because they're easy for the author to pull off while keeping the characters, however, I think that Kamala Sarup has done it. I found her story to be interesting and quick paced and the lessons learned by the characters made them redeemable for their actions in the end. I recommend this book for fans of multicultural fiction.

This is a delightful stories collection. I enjoyed this book. Sarup more than succeeds in her wish and intimate with her characters—to feel their flaws and sensual awareness and excitement. The book is just over 100 pages long—and with prose that is beautiful and clear. Her stories bring to life people usually overlooked. Her characters, are native, and her lines are visual, rhythmic and strong.

In my opinion these stories are like poems about a culture. Her stories are short but there's a remarkable sensibility guiding these stories, an inquisitiveness, a strong sense of life and compassion. Sarup's really is a singular achievement. Her subjects, her style, her syllabic lines all are impossible to imitate or mistake for anyone else's.

Kamala Sarup's confidence with language is such that she can take on such subtle shifts of character without reducing the impact of the story. Words are sharply defined. Every line is equal. It is interesting that these stories deliver their emotional impact better than the others in the book. These are small complaints about a writer who has delivered an emotionally subtle and engaging collection of stories that has the great virtue of being easy to read. Sarup's characters are wonderful, but quite ordinary too; Her characters are equally fascinating.

In the eighteen stories Sarup seems eager to explore new forms and subjects for her writing, and in the process of this exploration, show how broad and varied her talent really is. The collection is wide-ranging. The stories revolve around exactly the kinds of moments good short fiction should.

This book offers much that is touching and wise. One of the great technical accomplishments Sarup has mastered is the line break. One of the most memorable story is "Logne." From the most abstract perspective, Feelings of remembrance is concerned with how life is mythologized - concerned with both the aim of art and its dubious moral effect. The Feelings of remembrance are the best Kamala Sarup has written.

## Announcement: "Bhutan and Taiwan Chapter of INLS"

### अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज, भूटान च्याप्टरको स्थापना

- आइ. पी. अधिकारी

नेपाली भाषा, साहित्यको संबर्द्धन, विकास र वृहत प्रचार प्रसार गर्ने उद्देश्य राखी, नेपाली भाषी भूटानीहरूलाई आफ्नो भाषाप्रति सचेत गराउन यही फाल्गुण, २५ २०६० का दिन अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज, भूटान च्याप्टरको स्थापना गरिएको छ । यस संस्थाको कार्य समिति निम्न अनसार रहेको छ ।

अध्यक्ष :- आइ. पी. अधिकारी

उपाध्यक्ष :- डिल्लीराम शर्मा (आचार्य)

महासचिव :- हरिप्रसाद काफ्ले

सचिव :- पदमबहादुर लुंगेली (मगर)

कोषध्यक्ष :- यादपप्रसाद अधिकारी

सदस्यहरु :- विद्यापति मिश्र

नेपाली भाषाको उद्गम स्थल नेपाल भएपनि विदेशमा बस्ने नेपालीको पनि यसमा ठूलो देन रहेको छ । भूटान यस मध्यको एउटा मुलुक हो । नेपाल बाहिर रहेपनि आफ्नो मातृभाषा प्रति सबैको अगाध आस्था रहन्छ । तसर्थ, यसको संबर्द्धन, विकास र उत्थानमा लाग्न सबै नेपालीको कर्तव्य हो । यसका लागि एकातर्फ यस क्षेत्रमा लागिपरेका नेपाली (भूटानी) को सृजनशीलतालाई निरन्तरता दिने अनि अर्कोतर्फ नया प्रतिभालाई प्रोत्साहन दिने

उद्देश्य यस संस्थाले लिएको छ । यसै मार्फत नेपाली भाषा साहित्यलाई अझ व्यापक र समुन्नत बनाउनेतर्फ यो संस्था लागि पर्ने छ । यसका लागि अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज, मुख्य कार्यलय, वासिंटन डिसिले शुरु गरेको नेपवली भाषा साहित्यको संबर्द्धन र विकास नीतिलाई निरन्तरता दिने तथा नेपाल र नेपाल बाहिर रहेका विभिन्न संघ संस्थाहरुसित हातेमालो गरी सहकार्य गर्दै जाने लक्ष्य यस संस्थाले राखेको छ । निकट भविष्यमा नै यस संस्थाले नेपाली भाषाको विकासको निम्ति विभिन्न कार्यक्रमहरु आयोजना गर्ने छ । त्यसता कार्यक्रमका निम्ति नेपाली भाषालाई माया गर्ने सबैबाट सहयोग र सद्भावको अपेक्षा यस संस्थाले राखेको छ ।

धन्यवाद

आइ. पी. अधिकारी

अध्यक्ष, अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज, भूटान च्याप्टर

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### अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज, ताइवान (फर्मोसा) शाखाको स्थापना

ताइवान (फर्मोसा) मा रहेका नेपाली साहित्यप्रेमीहरुलाई समेट्न ताइपेइमा एक समारोह बीच अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय नेपाली साहित्य समाज ताइवान (फर्मोसा) शाखा गठन गरिएको छ । यही मार्च 13 तारिखका दिन गठन गरिएको अनेसास ताइवानको कार्यसमिति निम्नानुसार रहेको छ ।

अध्यक्ष कपिल अधिकारी

उपाध्यक्ष फुर्वा शैर्पा

महासचिव कृष्ण काफ्ले,

सचिव लेखनाथ काफ्ले

कौषाध्यक्ष इच्छे गुरुड

नेशनल ताइवान युनिभर्सिटी मा भएको अनेसास ताइवान गठन कार्यक्रममा नेपाल सम्बन्धि स्लाइड पनी देखाइएको थियो । यस कार्यक्रममा नेपाली र ताइवानी को सहभागिता रहेको थियो ।

(कपिल अधिकारी, कृष्ण काफ्ले)

March 18, 2003

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### Immigration Q&A

**By Ramesh Shrestha, Attorney-at-law**

(Ramesh K. Shrestha is a practicing attorney in New York City. His office is located at 377 Broadway, Suite 801, New York, NY 10013. Tel: (212) 625-3394, Fax: (212) 431-4460, Email: [Rshresthalaw@aol.com](mailto:Rshresthalaw@aol.com). His practice concentrates on Immigrant and Nonimmigrant Visas, Business Immigration, Extraordinary Ability, National Interest Waivers, Labor Certification/Permanent Residency, Detention/Bond, Removal/Deportation Defense before Immigration Courts/Executive Office for Immigration Review, Department of Justice.)

*He will answer TND reader's immigration related questions. Questions can be asked by visiting our [submit](#) page or simply by emailing at [contact@theNepalDigest.org](mailto:contact@theNepalDigest.org). TND sincerely thanks and appreciates Mr. Shrestha's contribution. - Editor)*

There are 2 questions in this issue.

#### Question 1

Rajendra Sharma from USA asked,

Dear Shrestha ji,

Can serious health condition make you qualify for an asylum?

Rajendra ji:

Serious health condition cannot be a basis for asylum in the United States. Asylum can be sought if an individual was persecuted in his native country or fears of persecution if he returns to his country, based on one of the five enumerated grounds such as race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group, or political opinion. If an applicant fails to establish a clear nexus between the claim for asylum and one of the enumerated grounds, he/she would not be statutorily eligible for asylum.

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**Question 2:**

Paula Daniels from United States asked:

Dear Mr. Shrestha,

I have a fiancée in Nepal. We met online through a mutual friend, he is a movie director and I am a poet, songwriter. I wrote a song for a movie he was directing, and we became close. He then applied and got a multi-visa b1-b2 for visit to the states for us to meet. He came in may 2003 when he arrived in Seattle he was told he could only stay 4 months then he had to return to Nepal. While he was here in Spokane we fell in love we have known each other now almost two years. We wish to marry but when he arrived back in Nepal his visa was stamped cancelled without prejudice. Can he ask for reinstatement of this visa or does he need to apply again. We are willing to wait for marriage if I can get him here. We just want to be together. But I don't meet the requirement for financial sponsorship to do the fiancée visa. And finding a sponsor is about like teaching a rock to swim. Do you have any comments for us? Is there anyway to get him back here? Thank you.

Dear Ms. Daniels:

Once a visa is canceled, I do not think it is possible to reinstate. Your fiancée's visa is canceled without prejudice, that means he can apply again for a new visa. However, it is his burden to prove that he is a bona-fide nonimmigrant. If your fiancée applies for a visitor visa but indicates to the US consulate office that he is planning to get married in the United States, his application may get denied. Because we have dual intent problem.

The first option would be to apply for a B-1/B-2 visa in Nepal and come to the United States. If your fiancée does not get a B-1/B-2 visa and consequently, gets stuck in Nepal, another option would be K-1 (Fiance visa) since you have known each other for more than two years. Another option would be K-3 (a spouse of US citizen), but you need to go to Nepal and get married there. Either way you must be able to show that your fiancée/husband will not be subject to public charge.

Good luck.

Ramesh Shrestha, Attorney-at-law

(Disclaimer Notice: Legal answer provided must not be construed as a legal advice rather it is an answer general in nature. One must seek legal advice from an immigration attorney for his or her particular legal matter.)

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**Debate: "Understanding the US through cases of Martha Stewart and Howard Dean"**

**- By Ujjwal Bhattarai**

**Case of Martha Stewart**

Martha Stewart, an American icon, had her empire established on various walks of life such as gardening, dress design, books, magazines and TV shows. Martha's fame and her fortune, both were huge and it is pity to see that her downfall was caused by a controversial sale of mere \$227,000 in ImClone stock on December, 2003. Some argue that federal investigators have spent much more dollars amount of taxpayer's money on research and litigation cost against her in Court and thus this has been such a waste of money. However, the beauty of this case, as I see, is upholding the law that makes the United States of America the greatest country of the world.

"The sadness her conviction causes comes in part from feeling how it diminishes her, how she has diminished herself." wrote Vwelyn Klinkenborg on NY Times. How true.

As we usually like to compare political and judicial systems here in the USA to that of Nepal, what could might have happened if similiar incidents were to take place in Nepal? Do you think under the similar circumstances "Nepali Martha Stewart" would have had the same fate as in this case? Idea is open to comments.

### **Case of Howard Dean**

Many of us like to complain that politician don't talk straight. Howard Dean did talk straight - perhaps more straight than any politician. He had money, manpower and the will to win the Democratic nomination. Even Al Gore's support could not bolster him to get where he wanted. He lost.

Hence a new question arises. Was Dean's failure due to a combination of series of arrogant statements, miscalculated campaign or more importantly is it a sign that straight-talking-politician might rarely succeed?

Here are the most claimed pros and cons of Dean, which not necessarily need be accurate.

Pros of Dean:

- + Unusual style of campaigning
- + Plain no-nonsense way of stating his opinion
- + Popularity because of being an Washington outsider

Cons of Dean:

- Seen as unlikely to defeat President Bush
- Displayed unsuitable behavior to be the President of the US
- Defective campaign strategy

Now I open the subject to be pondered upon.

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