

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 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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Editorial: Back to Terror Again?

Dear Readers:

I hope you have had a very happy Dashain. On behalf of TND, I would also like to extend our best wishes on the occasion of auspicious Dipawali.

During these festive days, Maoists declared unilateral ceasefire for nine days. The Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M), in a statement signed by its 'Chairman', Pushpa Kamal Dahal alias Prachanda, had stated that CPN-M would suspend all of its armed operations for a period of nine days, from October 20 to October 28, 2004 on the occasion of Nepali festival period, Dashain. So reciprocated the government. The period ended yesterday and the fear that had evaporated temporarily is slowly emerging back to Nepalese people's mind.

Hope this truce continues and may Lord Dugra protect all of us!

Thank you all.

Ujjwal Bhattarai

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Immigration Questions and Answers

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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. TND sincerely thanks and appreciates Mr. Shrestha's contribution. - Editor)

There are 2 questions and answers in this issue.

Question #1

Robin from Nepal asked:

My sister is US citizen and she is planning to apply permanent residency for my mother, while she will visit US on B1/B2 visa. Can she get permanent residency within 6 month of application?

Answer:

Robin jee:

Your sister can file a relative petition for your mother while she is in the United States. Due to the backlog in processing applications at the USCIS and the clearance requirements, it is highly unlikely that your mother will be able to obtain her resident status within 6 months.

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Question #2

Sanjiv Achary from USA asked:

I have a friend who came to US 12 on a student visa. Later on, he was not in status. Got Married with another illegal alien and had couple of kids. Now he is being detained by INS not being in status and process to be deported. Just wondering if he had a chance on not being deported?

Thanks.

Answer:

Acharya ji:

Your friend is a deportable alien. He will be placed in a removal proceeding. During the proceeding, he will have a chance to see an Immigration Judge. He can seek a relief which he might be eligible for. It is necessary to assess the whole facts of his case to ascertain whether he is eligible for any relief that would avoid his removal from the United States. I recommend that he contact an immigration attorney familiar with the removal proceedings.

Ramesh K. 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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Interview: Upendra Mahato

By Kamala Sarup

(Dr. Upendra Mahato is the President of the International Coordination Council (ICC), Non-Resident Nepali Association. An international entrepreneur based in Belarus, Dr. Mahato was born in Siraha District in 1960. He obtained his M.E in Hydropower and PhD and DSc in Soil Mechanics from Belarusian National Technical University and International Academy of Information Technology, Belarus. He is the Honorary Consul General for Nepal in Belarus and the President of Russia-Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industry. -Ed.)

1. What are the current activities of the NRNs? What are your latest programs?

The term Nepali Diaspora or Non-resident Nepali (NRN) refers to all Nepalis who are permanently or temporarily living in a foreign country. This broad definition covers all activities of Nepali communities around the globe. Overseas Nepalis are committed to a vision of making Nepal a peaceful and prosperous nation. But there are few challenges to overcome. The NRN movement is a new phenomenon and we obviously cannot do a lot of things immediately. At this initial stage we would like to concentrate more on creating a global network of Nepali Associations in various countries to streamline Diaspora's limited resources and energy so as to make the Diaspora a catalyst of economic and social transformation of our motherland. Spreading the awareness and spirit of 'NRN movement' both in Nepal and among Nepali Diasporas all over the world is what Non-Resident Nepali Association is actively involved in at the moment. Our other important mission is to preserve Nepali languages and cultures among overseas Nepalis.

2. What type of programs do you prefer for a country like Nepal?

Projects initiated by NRNs can be divided into three categories: financial investment, philanthropy, and knowledge and technology transfer. They are at different stages of implementation.

As far as financial investment is concerned, we would like to concentrate more on education and health care sectors. The importance of these two sectors in a poor country like ours is quite obvious. Further, China and India have a combined population of more than 2 billion. It is a boon for our service sector as no country in the world has that kind of potential of providing service to such a large population. Naturally, NRNs are highly interested in investing in service sector. In fact, many NRNs have already been investing in media, education, healthcare, hydropower projects, banking and finance sector, cottage industry and construction of housing complexes in Nepal. In addition, NRN Association is contemplating on launching an NRN venture fund and an "adopt-a-village" project. Some highly active and intellectual members of North American Nepali Diaspora have been involved in developing models of these ambitious projects.

Most often 'investment' is wrongly understood only as financial investment. There are NRNs who have prospered in education, work in executive positions in prestigious organizations. The term 'investment' does not only imply money but also bringing in their intellectual and professional qualities and managerial skills to Nepal. The potential of such expertise resource is much higher than any direct financial investment in Nepal. I think, more than our financial contributions, at the moment the country

needs our global exposure and experience. In order to have a better idea of the extent of expertise the global NRNs possess, NRN Association has initiated collecting data to compile an NRN skill directory.

NRNs have a long history of philanthropy in Nepal. There has been a remarkable surge of philanthropic activities of NRNs after the first NRN Conference held in Kathmandu in October last year. Non-Resident Nepalis seem to be more interested in constructing health-posts, schools, supporting orphanages and homes for old compatriots in Nepal.

So, you can see, we have already initiated, albeit gradually, mutually beneficial interactions with our country. We fully understand that without our active intervention things will not evolve.

3. What are the challenges now?

There are two main challenges: In Nepal, the challenge is quite obvious. Unless we have a lasting peace in the country, we really cannot contemplate on development and prosperity. However, Nepal is trapped in a vicious cycle of lack of development, poverty and violence. Both development and peace are our primary requirements. The conflict resolved today will again emerge tomorrow with greater ferocity if development is overlooked in our quest for peace.

Outside Nepal, the challenge is to create a global network of Nepali Associations in various countries and reorganize their resources and energy for the welfare of Nepal as well as for the progress and prosperity of the Diaspora itself. We certainly have to get rid of "Ke Garne?", "Ke Huncha Ra?" attitude. Together we can do a lot.

4. Do you think the NRNs (the organizations) are doing enough to combat poverty?

Poverty alleviation is one of the biggest challenges of Nepal and whatever efforts we make, it will not be enough. At the same time we must not forget the contributions being made by blue collar overseas Nepalis. Those are individual and small efforts but their impact is huge in our economy. The remittance earned in 2002-2003 was believed to be more than NRs 100 billion. The figure continues to grow by 30% annually. It has helped sustain and grow the annual GDP and improved the foreign currency reserve, consequently preventing the country from becoming a failed state. This fact should not be undermined. This is the greatest contribution that NRNs have made to the country- more important than the foreign and other direct investments in the present circumstance. Changed faces of many villages in remote parts of our country indicate that employment of Nepalis abroad has a remarkable positive impact on rural areas.

5. Why NRNs programs have failed to achieve the targeted goals?

We have not yet set our programs properly and you are already asking about their failure!! NRNs are mostly first generation people. Until recently we did not have much confidence in our ability and resources while people in Nepal were not aware of the legal status of Non-Resident Nepalis. NRNs are still not treated on par with other foreign investors. Forthcoming NRN legislation, jointly prepared by NRNs and HMG, will remove many policy hurdles and offer those facilities and incentives to NRNs, which were traditionally offered only to FDI. So, NRNs will come up with their own programs only after having a proper legal status in Nepal. You have to wait a few more years to assess whether NRN programs failed to achieve their targeted goals or not.

6. What should be the immediate role of UN? What is the UN's position regarding the mediation?

The UN can facilitate the peace talk as well as help implement negotiated solutions like monitoring future elections, reconstruction of country, and carrying out many other post-conflict social projects. UN definitely has a role in a peaceful settlement of this problem.

7. What responsibility should Non Resident Nepalis take to mobilize support from international community and help resolving this issue? Do you think our Non Resident Nepalis group is not very effective to gather support from international community?

Let us not harbor any illusion about our strength in the international arena. Being a relatively young Diaspora, we do not yet make a constituency of influence for our country at the global stage. Our resources are scarce and our populations far too sparse. However, that does not mean that NRNs do not have any role in the peace process. In addition to creating international pressure groups and providing moral support, NRNs as a group can influence the outcome of peace talks in Nepal while many NRNs individually can lobby for Nepal's peace and reconciliation with their connections and

positions achieved in host countries. The recent petition drive initiated in the USA was a good example. At least it managed to convey an important message that Non-Resident Nepalis cannot and should not remain indifferent to what is happening back home. However, we have only a limited role to play. NRNs can provide moral support or even create a greater interest of Nepal's problem among western policymakers and media, but this problem can only be resolved with the collective effort of political parties, civil societies and other concerned forces in Nepal.

8. In the past, the talks between the establishment and the rebels have failed. How do you see the present political crisis in the country? Have you seen any flexibility in the Maoists' demands?

The insurgency in Nepal is a complex problem. International experience suggests, such conflicts are not resolved in the course of a few talks. Sustained effort is needed, but the next talk should always be more productive than the previous one. I believe, present 'crisis' is a temporary phenomenon and sooner or later we will overcome it. All parties involved in the conflict and interested in its peaceful resolution for the unity and integrity of Nepal must show the flexibility.

9. Finally, is Nepal a failed or a collapsed State?

Neither failed nor collapsed! I am absolutely convinced that Nepal is failed only on TV screens. All along we have seen that the international media quite often does not provide objective news on Nepal. Sometimes our country is portrayed as a failed or even collapsed state and the insurgency- a problem that cannot be resolved with our internal efforts anymore. In fact, being a country exclusively dependent on tourism, such exaggerated and unfair speculations can have a debilitating effect on our economy and transform Nepal into a failed state. I think, Non-Resident Nepalis have a responsibility to help Nepal's tourism industry by providing objective information on the current situation of Nepal in countries of their residence.

10. Any message to NRNs?

I would like to reiterate that although Nepali Diaspora has limited financial resources, being disciplined, honest and hard working community we can be optimistic about our prosperous future. A growing mass of well-educated and intellectual Nepalis in our fold is even more encouraging. Non-Resident Nepalis from the Gulf Region and South East Asia have amply demonstrated that our little contribution can make a big difference in Nepal. Available evidences suggest the Nepali Diaspora outside the SAARC region is over 1.2 million strong. This is not a small number anymore and it is expected to rise significantly every year. As our number grows, the need to have a meaningful dialogue between Nepalis dispersed around the globe as well as between the Diaspora and our ever-suffering motherland has increased. We made the first organized attempt to bring overseas Nepalis together at the First Non-Resident Nepali Conference held on 11 October 2003 in Kathmandu. The conference not only generated a greater awareness of NRN issues in Nepal, but also helped produce the draft NRN legislation, which adequately addresses most of our needs and aspirations. After the conference we have witnessed a notable increase in meaningful interactions between Nepali Diasporas of different countries. NRNs are now more committed to a vision of making Nepal a peaceful and prosperous nation and more organized to achieve the vision. The first anniversary of the NRN conference provides us with an opportunity to demonstrate how committed we are to achieve that wonderful vision and access our ability and opportunities to play a pivotal role in economic and social transformation of our country.

Another important product of the conference is the Non-Resident Nepali Association. The association formed with a grand 'By Nepali For Nepali'- vision, provides a platform to join our hands. If all concerned and patriotic Nepalis from Nepal and abroad decide to seek a more pro-active role, the country will not remain in its present state of limbo.



Interaction with Dr. Prakash S. Mahat

Interaction: A Teleconference Interview with the Hon'ble Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Prakash S. Mahat, Nepal Government

(Participants representing Nepali diasporas: Dr. Gaury Adhikary, Dr. Alok K Bohara, Girija Gautam, Dr. Shiva Gautam, Aditya Jha, and Dr. Anup Pahari)

Transcribed by Dr. Alok K. Bohara

Professor, University of New Mexico, Bohara@unm.edu

Date and time: September 29, 2004 (9:30PM - 11:15 PM, North American Eastern Time)

[We, the NRNs (Non-Resident Nepali), are concerned about the situation in Nepal, and always try to stay informed through various means such as, Nepal forums, seminars, petition drive, and e-discussions. Honorable Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Prakash Sharan Mahat's visit to the New York City as the leader of the Nepali delegation to the current session of UN General Assembly presented an opportunity to enhance such interactions. Girija Gautam invited Dr. Mahat and organized the teleconference to seek an update on Nepal and exchange ideas.

Even though many of our other colleagues would have participated and meaningfully contributed in the teleconference, for practical purposes, the participating team was kept small in number but such that it would represent true spirit of the community. Dr. Alok Bohara, Dr. Shiva Gautam and Dr. Anup Pahari were selected because of their continuous writings on Nepal, Dr. Gaury Adhikary, the president of the Nepalese American Council (NAC) represented the member Nepali organizations, and Mr. Aditya Jha represented the investment interest in Nepal. This was an experiment of its kind to connect the community with the authorities back home and to start a formal and two-way exchange. The teleconference was transcribed by Dr. Alok K. Bohara.]

G. Gautam: Welcome, and thank you for being at this teleconference. We would like to welcome Mr. Mahat, and we extend our gratitude to him for agreeing to do this interview.

Jha (announcement): There is a NRN (Non-Resident Nepali) convention in Doha (January 21st - 23rd) and we would like to invite you. It is an important convention, and the fact that it is held in the Middle East underscores the importance of the Nepali people engaged in various activities (job-related) in that part of the world. It is also only appropriate given the recent Iraq incident that cost 12 Nepali lives.

Mahat: Nepali people in the Middle East do make a strong contribution to Nepali economy, and such a conference in that area is a good idea. Thanks for the invitation.

G. Gautam: You as a minister and as a part of the current government, what can you tell us about the current situation - peace prospect, negotiation etc.?

Mahat: Thank you for this opportunity to exchange ideas. It is natural for everyone, including those abroad, to be worried about the current situation in Nepal. As you know, a coalition government has been formed (without Nepali Congress, NC, party), and we have set out a minimum program (as a common denominator). It is a representative government as legitimate as any parliamentary one, and its validity cannot be questioned. The people of Nepal have expectations, (and this government is ready to meet those expectations and challenges).

There are two elements in this common minimum program: Peace process and election (moving ahead with it). Our earlier experience with the negotiation process lacked preparation, and so we are taking our time to prepare and do our homework. The Maoists used earlier negotiations (two failed ones) to strategize and regroup. This time, we will not give them any excuses (by not falling for it).

It is our belief that the constitutional forces, including the King, have to agree on a set of minimum programs, and we have done that part. Unified constitutional forces will then be able to force the Maoists to come to the table. In addition to the domestic forces, help and cooperation from friendly nations such as India would be important. Still, the major initiative has to be from within the country. The open border with India necessitates them to take this Maoists problem seriously. Furthermore, other outside help from sources like the international communities (expatriates and friendly nations) is essential to put pressure on the Maoists.

If we all unite, the (hard-fought) democracy of 1990 will only be stronger. We need to move on the election process.

G. Gautam: The Maoists have put forward 5/6 questions (demanding clarifications) in front of the government. What's your view?

Mahat: This is not the first time that they have asked such questions. (What's important) is that we need to sit down for a talk, and not engage in a question-answer session. For example, they have asked the question like: "Is the army under the government"? This type of question is designed to undermine the current government's credibility and its ability to protect the people. We should not be engaged in a Q.A. type debate.

Logical solution is what we are looking at; we can't predict the outcome but if we get three things: civil society's support, international cooperation, and unity among the constitutional bodies, then we can put pressure on the Maoists.

G. Gautam: Is there a chance for NC (Nepali Congress, Girija) to cooperate and be a part of the government?

Mahat: Deuba (current PM, and the president of the Nepali Congress, NC (Deuba)) approached Girija (former PM and the president of NC (Girija)) twice before forming the government. But, Girija, for whatever reason, had his own problems and "issues". Anyway, Girija's move (continued agitation) has not been appreciated (by the people). This government is different from the earlier ones, and it has power like a regular government. That is, it has executive power just like an elected government. However, the government would be truly multi-party with his help (if he were to join us.) His cooperation will also help move the peace process forward. Actually, within Girija's own party there are many who favored joining the government. We hope they will join us, and we are still open about it. A constant opposition (by Girija) will weaken the state, and will (only) strengthen the Maoists' (hands).

We hope that the friends in Nepal and abroad alike will put pressure (on him to adopt a cooperative steps.)

Adhikary: Given the fact that the army is getting support from countries like India and the US and getting stronger every year, why would they be interested in giving (up) power?

Mahat: It is our mistake to think that making Nepal Army strong will somehow make the democratic forces weak. In fact, if that had been their intention, they would not need all that extra arms and strength to face off (subjugate) the democratic forces. The reality is that the Maoists are a strong force and a strong RNA is only necessary (is the answer). Furthermore, the King has no intention to be autocratic and he has spoken many times about his commitment to multi-party democracy.

We need to be able to give minimum security to people, so the RNA's role is important. As long as the Maoists are aggressively engaged in activities like the recruitment and kidnapping, the RNA must remain strong. The help provided by India and the US is reasonable, and there is no need to be alarmed regarding an assault against the democratic forces.

Jha: I have three questions. What specific plans do you have to take advantage of the help you are being offered by countries like India and others?

Mahat: We are receiving support from India and other (countries). The current government has support of Europe, India, Japan, and China.

Jha: What are you doing to disseminate information and coordinate a vast amount of information being generated through various means such as, seminar and talk programs.

Mahat: We are doing our best to communicate with the international agencies. We are communicating with the UN too.

Bohara: As a last resort (in case the peace effort in Nepal does not go anywhere), do you think a peace conference by a body like the NRN (in the U.S. e.g.,) would be of use. (How would it be viewed by those in Nepal?) Such a conference may involve agencies like the UN, EU, the Carter Center, NRNs (Non-Resident Nepali), and a good number of participants from Nepal (second tier leaders - moderate perhaps-- belonging to various factions including the Maoists). They would come together to prepare a middle-of-the-road peace plan. Such conferences have been organized at Notre Dame during the era of Pinochet of Chile.

Mahat: We need help and will be appreciative of such efforts. I don't know if the Maoists would be allowed to come to the US, and even if they come to such venues, they always change their tone once they get back to their "turf". I had gone to Sri Lanka with some Maoist leaders a couple years

back, and that's what they did. They seemed very cooperative during the seminar, but changed their mind as soon as they returned to Nepal. A discreet approach may be better (at least from the government's point of view at this stage). The conference, as an idea, is not bad. We could use all the help we can get. The UN's involvement, on the other hand, may be tricky (and not be appropriate) at this point.

G. Gautam: (Given your response), India will have to be a party to it, and a meeting outside the country without its involvement may not have much relevance, (especially in the context of the UN-type involvement). How was the trip to India?

Mahat: It was a successful trip. This trip was necessary to quell rumors about the newly formed government. A high level trip was good in that regard. India is supportive. But, we did not talk about the venue of the (future) meeting, and any meeting program involving the Maoists.

S. Gautam: I have two suggestions rather than questions. We have these little problems with India from time to time. So, doing simple things like having exchange programs even tea parties between young junior Nepali diplomats with the young Indian counterparts may be beneficial in the future (through building PR relations.). So in the future when these two sides meet they are not only representing their countries they will be representing friendship and warmth developed through years. The second suggestion is, if we had a ceasefire, then in addition to the negotiations at the top leadership level only, if we could encourage contacts, interactions and negotiations at every level and between different groups of people (e.g. women to women, teachers to teachers, lawyers to lawyers) especially among the democratic forces and the Maoists, I think it will have increased chances of success.

Mahat: The confidence building measure at the local level has merits. But the Maoists are trying to take advantage of the terrain and the rural landscape; they are trying to rule through fear and intimidation. Under this atmosphere, it is hard to promote such initiatives.

We don't want to do unilateral ceasefire. They have betrayed us twice, and they used that ceasefire time in the past to regroup and enhance their strength. They openly acknowledged this.

Furthermore, ceasefire raises (false) expectations. So, we will not enter into it, and instead we will conduct discreet talks. (We don't need ceasefire per se), and if we converge on the political issues then getting into other technical aspects (arms, ceasefire, surrender) would not be that hard. (We don't necessarily need a ceasefire to start a dialogue.)

Pahari: At a conference in Vancouver, (a conflict scholar) Mark strongly opined that the Maoists have no intention of taking a middle ground. This position would be similar to that of the Naxalites in West Bengal (India). So, Basu (the Chief Minister of WB) used the stick and carrot approach. His party CPI (M) implemented a (massive) land reform program and deprived the Naxalites of a (social) cause. Does the Nepal state have any such (people oriented) reform package?

Mahat: The Maoists have spelled out their strategy as: defensive, stalemate, and offensive. They intend to take over the state by force, and they say it openly. The government takes the issue of reforms very seriously and will start to implement far-reaching reforms as soon as elections can take place. Government will go for elections if the peace process cannot be made to work. It is quite ironic that such perception does indeed exist in Nepal: "If we give them everything (something), we will get peace." I don't believe this, and we should not fall for it. Pressure is important. That does not mean we should not try it (implement reforms). We are actually concerned about it (lack of progress).

Pahari: Why can't the state acknowledge their mistake about the human rights related abuses? I ask this because of the culture of impunity that exists within the RNA and the Police apparatus.

Mahat: Yes, we need to be proactive and think of reforms (to win the hearts and minds). But, in the short-run, we need to try the peace process. However, we cannot wait forever for the peace process to unravel. At some point, we need to start thinking about starting the democratic process through election; we can do reforms afterwards.

And, I also agree that there is that perception about our security forces. But we are doing our best in terms of directing (through face to face contacts and meetings) them (the security forces) to be more than cautious about such things. They are getting training, and things are improving.

Bohara: If there is such an urgency to start the democratic process, why not then take a less costly route and "revive" the House?

Mahat: That's in the past-the revival issue, that is. Even the SC (Supreme Court) has put on a closure on that issue. We should go for election and get a fresh mandate. Punjab had only 10% turnout and still an election was held. Later the participation increased. Similarly, we should be ready to do it in phases. Constitutional monarchy is needed in the country, (and the multi-party system). So, election is the way to put the democratic process on track.

Bohara: Following upon this, I have had this speculation for a while that the Maoists have no incentive to come to the negotiation table. Why would they? The King and the Army have their issues, and the government is somewhere (on its own agenda). The grand old party like the NC(G) is on the street? Some political leaders have essentially conceded the constituent assembly to the Maoists. With such a fractured "front", the Maoists have no incentive to come forward. So, if the revival of the House can unite the constitutional and democratic forces, so what's wrong in doing it, especially if it is not that costly as compared to holding election? (I mean from the potential violence point of view.)

Mahat: There is no guarantee that the constitutional forces like NC (Girija), NC (Deuba), and the UML (and others) will remain united even if the House is revived. The new alliance may emerge (for election). So, peace negotiation is a better route, and election is the only way out.

G. Gautam: What's wrong in giving Constituent Assembly in return for peace?

Mahat: They should bring such issues to the table. We are also going with an open mind. But we need to know exactly what they have in mind. Perhaps, we can take care of many of their issues through amendments. A fresh election and a new mandate can, in conjunction with the 2/3rd rule currently in place, can implement changes in the existing constitution.

Jha: There is so much focus on the peace process. But we also need to focus on development. It should be visible to the outside world that we do care about development. You recall about my meeting with PM Deuba about the IIT Nepal project (opening Information Technical Institute in Nepal using private money). It has been nearly three years since I have tried in getting this Institute going in Nepal, and yet I still don't understand what's stopping it from getting approved.

Mahat: Unstable governments could be one reason. As you know we have been going through unstable period. People like you, who are interested in investing in Nepal, should be encouraged. In general though, violence hurts development efforts. I will do my best to make sure that people like you get support.

Jha: Twenty ministers are engaged in the peace mission. A few should pay attentions to other matters too.

Mahat: We are equally serious about other issues, including various development initiatives.

Pahari: We Nepalis here have a general sense that the government in Nepal is not very efficient. The Iraq incident is an example, especially in regard to the handling of the riots (following the slaying of the Nepali hostages by the militants in Iraq.).

Mahat: We are taking action against those (including police) who failed to take security measures during the riots. We are also investigating the perpetrators of violence. We have a commission investigating it.

Pahari: We get discouraged because of the constant bickering and fighting among the party leaders. It is amazing that we still can't unite even under such a grave condition (full-fledged insurgency).

Mahat: I agree that we did show disunity. Let's forget about the past. Despite all that, people are still firmly behind the core value that the constitutional forces represent. We will prevail. Constitutional forces will prevail.

Pahari: (Human rights) violation by the state is serious and such actions cannot be defended outside.

Mahat: The current government takes the human rights matter very seriously.

Pahari: Why can't you come up with a public statement against the human rights abuse?

Mahat: We have signed MOUs with the human rights organizations. Our security forces take seminars and trainings. And these activities are not private and done openly.

Jha: (I have suggestions rather than questions.) Focus on working on media and also work on ways to improve the PR (methods) with India. People will rally around strong messages and ideas (democratic values).

Mahat: We agree. We have shortage of managerial capacity and we can't fully engage in disseminating information. But we are trying. We need to work on our PR and media aspects, and will need help from people like you.

Adhikary (wrapping it up as a president of the Nepalese Americas Council, NAC):

We had supported United Nations Assistant General Secretary and Deputy Director of the UNICEF Kul C. Gautam, (a native of Nepal) and a petition drive was launched around his message. But in Nepal, I don't think he got much support, especially when it came to the idea of involving the UN (in relation to the peace and reconstruction initiative). Why is the UN not supported in Nepal?

Mahat: I talked to Kul Gautam Ji and the other officials of the UN. It is not true that we don't like UN; we have nothing against the UN. In fact, we have appreciation for what they are doing. We do recognize the UN is important, but the timing has to be right.

Finally, I would like to urge all of you to voice your opposition against the kidnapping of the school children in Nepal by the Maoists. These children are being deprived of their basic rights to educate themselves.

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Politics: US Presidential Race Bush Vs. Kerry

George W. Bush

John Kerry

Introduction

Age	58	60
Job	President of the United States	U.S. senator from Massachusetts
Family	Wife, Laura; twin daughters, Jenna and Barbara.	Wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry; two daughters and three sons.
Religion	Methodist	Catholic
Pets	Dog, a Scottish terrier named Barney; a black cat named India	Dog, a German shepherd named Cym
Running mate	Dick Cheney, vice president of the United States	John Edwards, U.S. senator from North Carolina

Issues

Abortion: Neither Bush nor Kerry support abortion.	Bush thinks it should be against the law for a woman to have an abortion unless the woman has been a victim of rape or incest or if giving birth would put her life in danger.	Kerry said he does not think he should turn his personal views about abortion into laws, and he thinks women should have the right to choose whether to have an abortion.
War in Iraq and war on terrorism:	The decision to go to war in Iraq happened during Bush's time as president. Bush maintains that removing Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein from his position, searching for terrorist leader Osama bin Laden in Afghanistan and getting rid of other terrorists are the best ways to prevent attacks on the United States, such as the ones that occurred Sept. 11, 2001.	Kerry thinks that Bush should not have gone to war in Iraq without a strong alliance with other powerful countries. He also says it was wrong of Bush to go after Saddam when bin Laden was the one responsible for the Sept. 11 attacks.
Education: Both candidates support No Child Left Behind,	Bush increased the amount of money the government gives to education to help pay for the new law.	Kerry says that Bush did not do enough and that schools need more money to successfully follow the law.
Environment	Bush says he supports a Clear Skies plan, which has a goal of reducing power-plant emissions and helping states meet new standards for the quality of the air. Bush also likes a plan called Healthy Forests, which would let companies cut down trees in some national forests in exchange for taking out small trees and brush that are a fire hazard.	Kerry says the initiative would allow plants to pollute the air more than current laws allow. Kerry wants to put back into place some older laws that do not allow logging parts of national forests that don't have roads.
Economy	While Bush has been president, he gave Americans several tax cuts, so they don't have to pay as much of their money to the government. He also supports something called Jobs for the 21st Century, which will help train people in schools and community colleges so that they can get better jobs.	Kerry has criticized Bush's tax cuts, saying that only rich people are paying fewer taxes and that the cuts did not help people who don't have as much money. Kerry says he will make taxes go down for middle-class people, who do not have as much money as the rich, and for many U.S. businesses.

Based on Sarah Evan's "Bush and Kerry differ on issues such as the environment" on Stateman Journal of Oct 27.



Politics: Government's Stupidity

By Kalyan Dev Bhattarai

After exercise of more than a week and input of so called think tank of the respective parties, the Government has come forward with such a reply which is not better than bullshit. The same rhetoric claim of the government that they are bona- fide, legitimate and powerful enough to take important decision without any solid evidence suggest that the political parties who are ruling the country neither do have any political vision to solve the country' problems nor do they have any seriousness to solve the present political crises of the country.

I was expecting that the present government will dissolved the present high level peace committee and formed new peace committee under the chairmanship of G.P. Koirala including Mr Rohit, Sherchand and representative of Sadvana party also to response the Maoist queries on the issue of involving all the major political parties of the country for the negotiation. Had they done this it would have been difficult to all the four agitating political parties to reject the offer of forming high-level peace committee.

To be honest the present reply of the government neither show any political commitment, nor seriousness nor is non-committal, week, superficial without any evidence of determination to bring peace in the country with required political will power and understanding of the ground reality. For me the recent response of the government is just to stick to the power and continue to loot the treasury and to fool the people as well as the palace.

I wonder when the present ruler do not feel ashamed to loot the country, can lie almost every day and feel no hesitation to betray the nation and people and jump for any opportunity of commission, why they feel shy to call spade a spade and accept the truth that the present government is nothing but the puppet of the palace. With this acceptance they should have requested the Maoist to come for negotiation with full commitment to implement the agreement, and joint agitation, if required with Maoist if king show any hindrances in its implementation.

It is high time to accept the truth that the present government can not make any decision on the various social, political and economical reforms that will be in the list of Maoist if they come to the negotiation table. However they can show their commitment for such reforms and determination to fight along with Maoist to implement the agreed reforms. And this commitment that is what the Maoist want from the present government and agitating four political parties also.

In reference to army, it is a known fact that the present government is working under the advice of the army and they are running the show. To day when the four agitating political parties are on the street against the King's action of 4th October, and young generation are demanding for the republican state and Maoist is fighting for their demand of constitutional assembly, King may feel happier and secured with the strengthening of the army and militarization of the country. But the King must realize that the monarchy can not be secured with the help of army rather its longevity is dependent upon the respect of the people and trust of the political parties. If the present mistrust between political parties and the King continues and the young generation continue to demand for the republican state and Maoist bottom line demand of constitutional assembly is not accepted, I worry that the strong army itself could be a threat to the nation because ,as it can not fight with both of its giant neighbors, its enhanced strength along with the growing mistrust between the King and political leaders and the republican demand of young generation could be an instigating factor to the army for the absolute power. It may look very remote today but that possibility can not be totally ignored. As we all know politics is the game of all probabilities.

King must realize that for the poor Nepalese people of the street who were continuously exploited by the Rana regime for hundred and five years,(1902-2007 by power hungry selfish leaders for ten years(2007-2017), by party less panchayti system for 30 years(2017-2047) , by corrupt nefarious leaders for last fourteen years(2047-2062) and further exploitation for next few decades by army will not make major difference and people will loose nothing more than what they have already lost. To be honest enough to-day the Nepalese people are in such a pathetic situation where they have nothing to loose further .However in this scenario the monarchy along with the so called leaders and cream intellectuals of the country will be will be loosing maximum.

Prepare for the worst and hope for the best this is what, at this stage the king should do. Taking into consideration all the global politics including the old relationship of US with Mr. Bin Laden and the role India played to weaken their rival Pakistan by splitting it in two in the name of democracy along with

the present regular interferences of the foreign countries, it will be lot better for the King to announce the constitutional assembly to bring lasting peace in the country and strong commitment to cooperate to implement all the progressive political, economic and social reforms that will be agreed upon during the impending peace talk between the Maoist and Political parties. This scenario will make the monarchy more strong and secured than the strengthening of the army and militarization of the country.

Here we all must understand that whatever cooperation the foreign countries are showing to us are not because they want the development of Nepal, rather for their own vested interests. Nepalese themselves must do the development of Nepal.

We all independent people must realize that to-day the involvement of UN in the peace process is very essential not only to satisfy and give confidence to the Maoist that the agreed issues will be implemented with out any problem and the Doramba episode will not be repeated but also to settle the arms issue of Maoist. I do not think in the present volatile situation the Maoist will handover their arms to any organization other that the UN. In this context the involvement of the UN in the peace talk would have solved the arms issue also without much difficulty. To conduct the constituent assembly without surrendering the arms to UN by Maoist and RNA returning back to barrack will be a mockery to the so-called sovereignty of the Nepalese people. The constituent assembly must be held without any pre-condition in fully conducive atmosphere, with full guarantee from UN that it will be fair, free and without any hanky panky. Such election can be conducted only under the supervision of UN as all the concerned parties, the Maoist and the army, which represents the king, and political parties do not carry the required credibility and confidence of the majority of the people.

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Politics: War against Terror

By Bishnu Simkhada

Any action which disturbs the right of peaceful living of mankind is terrorism, means anything which terrorise human-life either physically or mentally. It is very disastrous, tragic situation of the world to have human with terrorist mind. It makes everyone's life miserable.

Terrorists are trained to be happy hurting others. They are ruthless, subordinate, cool minded and have no mercy to others. Examples are tragic moment of the September 11, Bali bobbing, Killing of 12 Nepalese hostages in Iraqi, killing of more than 320 innocent children including parent in school of North Ossetia ,uncountable to name such tragic events. The way they are behaving is totally inhumane. Their brain is totally damaged by viruses, terrorist viruses, destroyed their sense of human being and turning down far below animals. Existence of terrorist is no longer good for human race. They are acting violently and ruthlessly towards innocent people. Due to their inhumane behaviour today everywhere everyone are in trauma and feeling of insecurity. Terrorists are sorrow of today's world. It is virulent for human race. Many innocent people are losing their life and suffering without reason. What a shame?

From whatever angle we look, terror and terrorism is the main problem of this 21st century. Person with terrorist mind is like a rotten apple in a barrel. No doubt for the necessity of the action to abolish terrorism from this world, for global peace, progress and prosperity.

But How?

This "HOW" is the biggest question to tackle wisely against this terrifying problem. Terrorist and terrorism is now upcoming to this world from somewhere guided by someone having cruel mind and followed by inhumane personality. Neither individual person nor a single nation can tackle this problem, alone. This is a global problem and should tackle globally. It is like AIDS, which is spreading rapidly. Everyone knows AIDS is unwelcoming, it leads the victim to death, nevertheless it is spreading rapidly, but why? May be due to negligence or can be due to ignorance, but once a person is victimised they lose hope in their life. They become weak physically, mentally, economically and socially. Initially in the nineties HIV persons were boycotted by society which became major cause for the transmission of this disease. Because everyone want to be social and have social life but in nineties we had no idea about how HIV get transmitted from infected to healthy person. So HIV victims were boycotted by the society. Consequence of this social injustice became major cause of spread of this disease. HIV persons hide their disease with fear of losing jobs or respect of the society. They were sick people, need of love, care and share to sustain their life but society did not understand what they need so the result became negative. I think we should think about how to go for "war against terror". We need to think wisely how can we treat the terrorist and tackle the terrorism.

In my view, terrorism is due to brain's malfunctioning. We should battle this war using the weapon of wisdom, non-violence, love and care. We need to think the fact that why terrorists' mind is against human races, their own race. Which factor is controlling their brain? Definitely, there is something wrong in their brain, which activates them to do mischief. May be it is wise to initiate research work in the terrorists' brain and investigate the factor (genes) which activate them to be cruel and cure them by gene therapy. Who knows, it may be wise to spend money in neuroscience to initiate research to find "terror factor of brain" and do therapy to treat this factor. If this is succeeded the "war against terror" will be over. In the mean time it is utmost necessary to take all possible precautions to protect us from madness of these victims. Hope neuroscience will be able to investigate the terror factor and beats terrorism very soon.



Politics: Government! What Thou Art?

By Nav Raj Pokharel

How anyone would take it when government shouts at the top of its voice to express its commitments to fulfill the need of the needy but does not do anything in that regard to materialize it?

Since government has monopoly on the country's economy, administrative and executive power to achieve peoples' prosperous lives making the nation's dream come true, would not the citizen feel betrayed once again when they see and know that what so ever the hidden reason, the government is not moving ahead the right direction?

The government does not feel tired reiterating that infrastructures for all round development in this country are on top agenda. In reality, no tangible works are done willingly.

There are arguments and dissatisfactions against government from every sector of life. Objections raised by the political parties may have partial truth. However, the dissatisfactions directed towards the government by the people, has its root on rock-hard ground. It signifies the governments formed in Nepal so far, with or without constitutional norms, have resulted in further disappointment. Reason is so subtle. No body seems to be pondering over it. It is 'their' center of actuation. There is little confusion on what they are up to. Of course, the power. The power that fetches luxury to them and theirs otherwise would not have been possible for them to have such effluences in the country where more than 95 percent of population is under poverty line.

Any one, who watches them on the state run television and listens on radio, understands that how they are pacifying the Maoist-insurgencies-hit-people with lip service. They tell people how to solve the problem, how to develop the country, and how effectively execute the plans to bring about the desired change in the country. However, in reality they are adamant to translate it in to reality. It seems they have a fear in the back of their heads that they are no more like leaders, if they have nothing to talk about the poverty, insurgencies, and conflicts.

They have wrong notion that as long as they have something to preach about, they can be in position to assume power. This is their center of actuation.

It is not that they do not see and know what is happening around them; it is that they do not like the change. It is not that they do not see the benefit of investing on infrastructures in the country, but they do not like to see such should happen.

The roads, airports, electricity, and basic health facilities, education and human rights are of urgent requirements for the people in this country. As always, the government does not seem to realize it.

No, but the government on one occasion realizes it. On one fine morning the government, as if touched by some magic stick, realizes that the roads, airports electricity and so other minimum facility are desperately needed for the people in the remote areas only when directives comes from head of the state.

After the directives, is not it a pity to see ministers with same framework of developmental policies and budget, commence new projects beginning from the planning to its execution level and costing some billions of rupees start taking place in the real field in Mid Western Region the next day?. How virtually in an overnight does such works costing millions of rupees become practicable and on the top of priorities today, if it was not viable, plausible or possible just yesterday?

Such representatives of the people should have no right to rule the country if they starts showing poppet like behaviors.

How can government do it if it was not possible yesterday? If it is not so, why did not the government realize the need of the people of that region to carry out such works yesterday? Then, "What has been the government doing in our country?" is the imperative question people are now asking.

Now, Nepal's one and only dire need is, merely a team of versatile people in the government that is always guided by a sense of love for the people, goaded by territorial integrity, motivated by all-round development of the nation and its people, and actuated only by happiness on the people's faces.

Nepal is now in dire need of such leaders whose only dream is the dream of poor people who have not enough meal for two-time a day.

No sooner than this, Nepal is a heaven.

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Women: Women Succeed in New and Difficult Roles

By Kamala Sarup



Speaking to this scribe at New Jersey, Board of Directors of YMCA of Philadelphia & Vicinity, and Chair of International Committee Mary C. Carroll, said: "The role of women in Nepal is a big topic, and I do not claim to be an expert in the subject. However, as a woman, I have an opinion about where we are today and where we should be. Furthermore I feel that I have a responsibility to do what I can to help other women no matter where they may live. Since I have a special love for Nepal, my efforts outside the US in any volunteer endeavor, including helping women, will be there. The ideas below have to be reality tested by Nepali women who know what is best for them. As an outsider I may bring some ideas to the table but they should be considered only as a jumping off point. wouldn't it be wonderful to have a women's conference in Nepal with all levels of society represented? I suspect some very practical and interesting ideas would come of it".

Mary C. Carroll is currently, a member of the Board of Directors, 1979-present, of the Philadelphia Suburban Corporation, Senior member of the board of directors, serves on Corporate Governance and Pension Committees. Second largest investor-owned water utility in the U.S. Shares traded on NYSE. Current market capitalization exceeds \$1 billion with 3-fold increase in stock price over last 5 years.

She further said "Thinking about the status of women in Nepal has meant considering the changing status of women in the US and throughout the world. We all know the last Century began a great improvement in the diversity and quality of women's roles. The greatest gains have come in the developed countries, but the role of women has dramatically improved in the developing countries as well. I can remember well when I was in college and deciding my career, my college counselors steered me into teaching, a traditional role with a salary of about \$4,000 per year. 20 years later my daughter graduated from Dartmouth College, a top "Ivy League" school not open to women when I applied to colleges.

She chose a career path of "Venture Capital" and began employment at an investment firm on Wall Street with a salary in six figures. Such a career would have been almost unheard of for women of my generation. In the US the role and opportunities for women have been turned upside down in about 20 years.

This turnaround has transpired for many reasons: new educational opportunities, new laws, but most of all new attitudes. Women have changed their own view of themselves from a helpless and lesser sex to a "can do" and perhaps "can do better" attitude. Women have grown in confidence as they see themselves and other women succeed in new and difficult roles. Men too have gained respect for women in new ways and more and more are willing to give women responsibility in higher professions such as business, scientific fields and vocations across the board". As a Trustee, of William Penn Foundation, (1987- 93), Carroll Participated in as one of five outside directors in all major funding decisions. Annual grants of \$65 million.

She is a Founder, Chairman, C.E.O., and Board of Directors, of Philadelphia Hospitality, Inc.(1982 - 2000). Philadelphia Hospitality, Inc promotes tourism and job creation by targeting high-level special interest groups from around the world such as the International Monetary Fund and the American College of Trial Lawyers and bringing them to the Philadelphia region. Over 500 such groups have been attracted.

"Yet, in the US the opportunities for men and women are not equal, nor is there equal pay for equal work. Women are still denigrated; doors are still closed; and attitudes about women and their limitations remain unchanged in some segments of society. Women are still struggling for advantages that are common to men. This can be seen as a struggle for power. Under pressure from women, men have released power to them when it is seen as an advantage.

Nepal is a step back in time and in many ways this has its wonderful charm and value. The family is cohesive; older people are respected, religion and cultural mores have meaning and give Nepalese life a genuine richness. Outsiders, both other Nepalese and foreigners, are treated with courtesy, respect and hospitality. These things and many more are what has attracted me so much to Nepal.

Many of these characteristics have been greatly diminished in the US or lost altogether. Of course I am speaking in generalities and there are many exceptions on both sides.

But, there is a negative side. One is the status of women. It is clear that Nepali women have greater opportunities than they did 15 years ago when I first started going to Nepal, but as Nepal is behind most countries of the world in many areas so are women also behind especially where it is important: education, health care and job opportunities.

Further they are held behind because of their attitude toward themselves, men's attitude toward them, and the laws that govern the availability of opportunity. So, in this respect Nepali women are in the same predicament that US women were 20 years ago and in some respects still are today. Attitudes and change don't come fast or easily". She said. Mary is also a New Source Management, Partner, (1995 -present). Consults in strategic planning and community affairs for business and non-profit organizations. Works with US Senators and Congressmen and other elected officials to bring about legislation and appropriations for various programs and organizations. Sample clients: Independence Blue Cross, Barnes Museum, US National Park Service.

She said "Every culture has special obstacles for women and I suspect that the caste system and certain religious views in Nepal work against women. But, I see this changing. The beginnings of a democratic form of government has helped change some of the discriminating laws, but democracy has largely failed in Nepal. Specifically it has failed in its promise to help women and minorities.

The present political crisis has brought Nepal's economy to a very low point and this may be an opportunity for women. When those in power realize that women are a valuable economic resource which can help rebuild the country, jobs and business opportunities will improve". Carroll has received Friend of Nepal award. First US citizen to receive the Award. She has been promoting Nepal/US Business Relations, 1995- present. She has conducted business with the Nepalese tourist, carpet, wholesale sweater, and woodcarving and brass industries.

"Education the Nepalese value education knowing that it is the key to success in almost any field including development. Nepalese women should encourage their daughters to go to school and find ways to encourage their own and their daughters self esteem and confidence.

b.) Attitude change each person's situation is different, but Nepali women can find ways to help other women. Every situation should be a discovery of a way to advance the cause of women and build the confidence and self esteem of female members of the family.

c.) Resourcefulness one universal characteristic of women is their resourcefulness. Nepali women are no exception. Women should show their interest in development and carry out ideas by themselves or with the help of other women. In some places in the Solu-Khumbu women pool their funds and help build communities. This requires capital, but sometimes a good idea can be carried out with little or no capital.

If they are successful, men catch on pretty fast that women are useful and can enhance the economic status of the family especially needed in Nepal's present economic downturn".Carroll arranged for Mayors of last two City Administrations to host events at City Hall and send official letters and small gifts to appropriate Nepalese officials to promote Nepal/Philadelphia projects. She also briefed the last two Prime Ministers of activities and projects in personal meetings in Kathmandu.

Mary C. Carroll further said " Women's programs should be designed for success. They should probably be simple but with a great deal of potential for economic growth. From a practical standpoint they can't require a great deal of money to initiate, but the returns should be immediate.

A male Nepali friend, who is an advocate for women, suggested that a good business might be to rent bicycles to women who would buy vegetables at the market and sell them by bicycle delivery to homeowners and hotels in Kathmandu. He said this market was monopolized by Indians who have proved that vegetable sales can be a successful business and that there was room for competition. Asian immigrants, even well educated ones, who come to the US, often initially support their life here from a street side fruit or vegetable stand. Once on their feet they go on to bigger and better fields.

I would like to discuss this idea with some of my Nepali women friends, get their ideas about what changes they would make to it and start such a program, but as an American this is impossible for me to do in Nepal's present political climate".

She said "I agree but the jobs they hold are often at the lowest levels: factory workers and farmers. These are not positions of power, but power must be leveraged from such positions. A labor union might be one way to do this. Insistence on keeping some of the proceeds from farm sales or selling some of what is produced to build a savings for another business or for their education, etc. This is a way to be empowered".

She also led a medical camp staffed with 4 physicians and a crew of 25 treating 1200 patients with 700lbs of medical supplies in a remote region of Nepal. Carroll opened NGO channels to provide schools in Western Nepal with supplies and construction repairs and improvements involving 10 schools and over 3000 school children.

"Nepal's governing forces, the monarchy, the political parties, the Maoists, have failed to bring about their promises to the Nepalese people. Everyone in Nepal has suffered greatly as a consequence. As yet a selfless and patriotic leader has not arisen. A real leader will capture the imagination of the electorate with the possibility of peace. provide a plan for regeneration of the economy and bring about the rights and improved lives of women and minorities. I fear that nothing much will be resolved until that leader is found. Perhaps such leadership will come from a courageous woman! That isn't so unusual in Nepal's part of the world".

She also received, on behalf of the organization, of the Conservation Service Award, the U.S. Department of Interior's highest award.

"While women's programs, and all other programs for that matter, must retain their focus and resolve, it has got to be both discouraging and extremely difficult under the present circumstances. I have had no experience in carrying out programs in the midst of conflict and danger. I suspect there are many Nepali women, wiser than I, who are heroically implementing programs and succeeding in spite of the turmoil".

She publicized activities through speaking engagements, media interviews and newspaper articles in leading newspapers here and abroad like the Philadelphia Inquirer, the Kathmandu Post, Nepal TV, etc. Carroll has organized and led a summer day camp for 175 Nepalese underprivileged children at the Laboratory School and donated a primary school library and sports equipment to the school.

Carroll has organized cultural exchange and concert series featuring Philadelphia performers in Kathmandu. She also established summer International Exchange Program between Nepalese and U.S. young adults participating in the US YMCA summer day camps with host family living arrangements.



Religion: Passion of Upanishads

By Surendra R Devkota

In the contemporary world, the Sanatana Dhrama is one of the necessities of the humanity. The very basic foundation of the Sanatana Dharma lies in the Vedas and Upanishads. In these holy days of festival season in Nepal, I am trying to share my primary understanding the Upanishads - a subject which I have a passion since my high school days. In the following sections, you will simply find a definition of the Upanishads.

The Upanishads are derived from the Vedas. Hence, they are also called Vedanta: literally "the end of the Vedas", but spiritually "the cream of the Vedas". Upanishads are like milk from the cow. They contain the record of eternal truth, which were discovered by many seers at different times (600 - 400 BC). The Upanishads enlighten you not only the duties and obligations one has to bear, but also actions to be done and to be avoided. Each Upanishad offers an intuitive knowledge which is categorized into types: A higher knowledge and a lower knowledge. The higher knowledge is the discovery of self-realization, self-revelation, self-manifestation, self-transformation, and self-perfection. The lower knowledge is the fulfillment of a physical demand.

The philosophy of the Upanishads is the immensity of the mind. Upanishads point out that mind is divine, which is almost under a constant attack of un-divine elements such as fear, doubt, and jealousy. As these unfriendly elements enter into our mind, another byproduct, ego evolves that will eventually backfire the origin of the divine mind. As you go through the Upanishads, it will delve you into a universe of knowledge, wisdom and self-identity. Therefore they are authentic and authoritative, and they share the glory of the Vedas.

Originally it is believed that there were 1180 Upanishads. Rishi (sage) Vyasa classified them as: Rigveda - 21 Upanishads; Yajurveda - 109 Upanishads; Athrvaveda - 50 Upanishads; and Samaveda - 1000 Upanishads. As centuries passed on, unfortunately many of them disappeared. As of now 108 are in existence, and 13 out them are very popular. They are: Isa, Katha, Kena, Prasna, Mundaka, Mandukya, Chandogya, Brhadaranyaka, Taittiriya, Aitareya, Svetasvatara, Kaivalya, and Maitri.

Life is a problem, so does death. The Upanishads teach you the theory of being, and secrets of life. May Durga Bhawani bless you all; Jayati Managla Kali Bhadrakali, Kapalini, Durga....

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Travel: An Experience For a Lifetime

By Neeti Aryal

It is certainly impossible but still if someone asks me to sum up my whole experience of my Japan trip in one word, the word would be "Overwhelming". And that's what I am feeling right now when I am trying to put my feelings into words.

It was almost magical the way I was selected for the programme. Having no plan whatsoever to go abroad in near future, I didn't even had a passport. And there I was! lucky to participate in South Asian Youth Invitation Programme.

Miss Ivanov's warm welcome at the Tokyo Narita Airport put the Nepali team at ease. We were the first team to reach that early; nearly at 7:30 A.M in the morning. All through the way from airport to Tokyo Prince Hotel, I saw the familiar flowers that were also back in my home and in my country. That made me feel so welcome and part of Tokyo that I forgot missing home and just thought as if Tokyo was welcoming me with open arms and I just made a promise to myself that I will forget every worry and tension back home and enjoy every moment of the trip. And that's what I did, as every moment; every second I spend in Japan has become a memory, which will forever remain imprinted in my heart.

After the orientation in 25th September we went to various traditional and local destinations such as Ueno, Asakusa and Edo-Tokyo Museum. And a hasty 15 minute shopping in hundred yen shop and we all were craving for more, especially the girls. Sumida River Cruise was entirely a novel experience for us Nepalese being a citizen of a landlocked country. We were enjoying every single second of it and trying to capture all those moments in our photographs.

Second Day we went to Ropongi Hill and we saw a whole miniature Tokyo from the observation deck of the top of the Ropongi Hill. Everytime we prepared our camera to capture the view of Tokyo downstairs, it would be covered by mist. The Tokyo city looked so misty and beautiful.

After all these roaming, it was time to get serious for the programme as the formal programme started since the lunch hour. We met our Japanese friends and we had a hard time remembering who was who. After being divided in small groups, it was no longer difficult. I was in Group A whose theme was to discuss International relations, security and Society. We discussed the issue of Security, Disarmament, United Nations, Miscellaneous Cooperation and Education. The group discussion was very enlightening and our Japanese team leaders tried their best to facilitate active group discussion session. Everyone in the group were from good academic background and with a excellent professional background. At first, I felt bit awkward and nervous, but later I found myself expressing my ideas which were eagerly listened to by everyone. The discussion made us realize that South Asian Countries, despite our regional and cultural difference share a similar problem: that of poverty and conflict. And we found a common understanding among us that divided we are weak; together we become strong. The Indians and Pakistani delegates were more bent on the issues of Kashmir however the discussion later become also focused in internal problems of Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bhutan and Maldives. But we realized that everyone has their internal problem in their country, we should be more focused on the South Asian Forum rather than dealing with the internal issues of our countries. Then, the discussion gained momentum and it was more focused on the cooperation between Japan and South Asia.

After 3 days of discussion and formalities, we were all opting for some excitement, which we got in a form of Welcome Reception Party on 28th of September. We met diplomats and representatives of the Embassies of all South Asian Countries and also various members of Japan Nepal Society, Japan India Society and so on. We exchanged our cultural songs and dances which brought us closer. The event however ended in a Nepali way; with everyone dancing merrily in "resham firiri", a famous Nepali folk song.

The major highlight of the programme was our audience with T.I.H. Prince and Princess Akishino. All the delegates were clad in their national dresses. We were all in our respective positions. When T.I.H. Prince and Princess entered the room we were all serious and we were feeling bit afraid and awkward. But we all were overwhelmed by their warm welcome and response and their interest on our countries. They talked to us individually and asked about our countries. We were both surprised by their politeness and warm response towards us. The Japanese Culture of Politeness and Humility really touched our heart and gave us a lesson that will last forever in our lives.

After this memorable meeting with T.I.H Prince and Princess we departed to Hiroshima in a bullet train. Watching the heart stealing scenes from the window of train, we didn't know how soon the time flew and we got off to Hiroshima and we were off to Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park.

And as the name itself, this park was the most memorable. It made us realize the futility and stupidity of war. A beautiful city went into pieces just in the name of some stupid scientific experiment!!!! We felt that after visiting this park, no one can dare to raise a gun, no can justify war. Our eyes were full of tears, we were too shocked even to cry. We just couldn't imagine how the people of Hiroshima had felt!! We must salute the courage of people of Hiroshima to rise above even after such a utter destruction. The lecture of bomb victim was equally heart shattering. We didn't have any words to say to her. The only thing we could do was admire her courage and bravery to face life after such desperation and pain.

The next day we went to Miyazima Shrine and had a wonderful time with deers. After lunch we gathered in Peace Memorial Park to meet our respective host families. Everyone was bit awkward and tense as we were leaving each other for whole one day as we had become so close. I was introduced with my host family. My Otosan and Okosan lived far off the main city in Hiroshima which was most delightful for me as I got opportunity to see the rural Japan. I had a wonderful time with my host family. My Okosan taught me to play koto, a japanese traditional musical instrument. We had a wonderful japanese dinner of tempura and rice and lots of vegetables. Next morning, I went to morning walk with my host mother. I cooked Nepali curry which was very much liked by my Japanese father and mother. It was surprising the way we had become so close in a single day. But time had come to say goodbye to them. They bade goodbye to me in Hiroshima station and we all went to Kyoto through bullet train. Next day, we visited Nijyo Castle and Kimono Museum.

Kyoto was old but beautiful. Despite its modernity, its traditional picture was still intact. This was a lesson for all of us to learn from Japanese people, the way they had preserved their cultural heritage despite the modernity.

So, that was how the trip ended. The whole trip was most wonderful. Our tour guides: Masaru san, Kimiko san, Akiko San and Nuno San were the most wonderful people we had ever met. In these 12 days, all 39 delegates had come so closer to each other that we felt so bad when the time came to bid goodbye.

The words won't be enough to thank Japanese Embassy to provide me for such a wonderful opportunity to visit Japan. I came to learn so much from Japan and Japanese people. The most important lesson is that of politeness and humility. "Bow down and the whole world bow down before you," I realized. I intend to share these experiences with as many people as possible. I wish that more and more people could visit Hiroshima and realize the destruction and futility of war. The message of Hiroshima should be spread all over the world to stop war.

ODEMO ARIGATO GOZAIMASH!

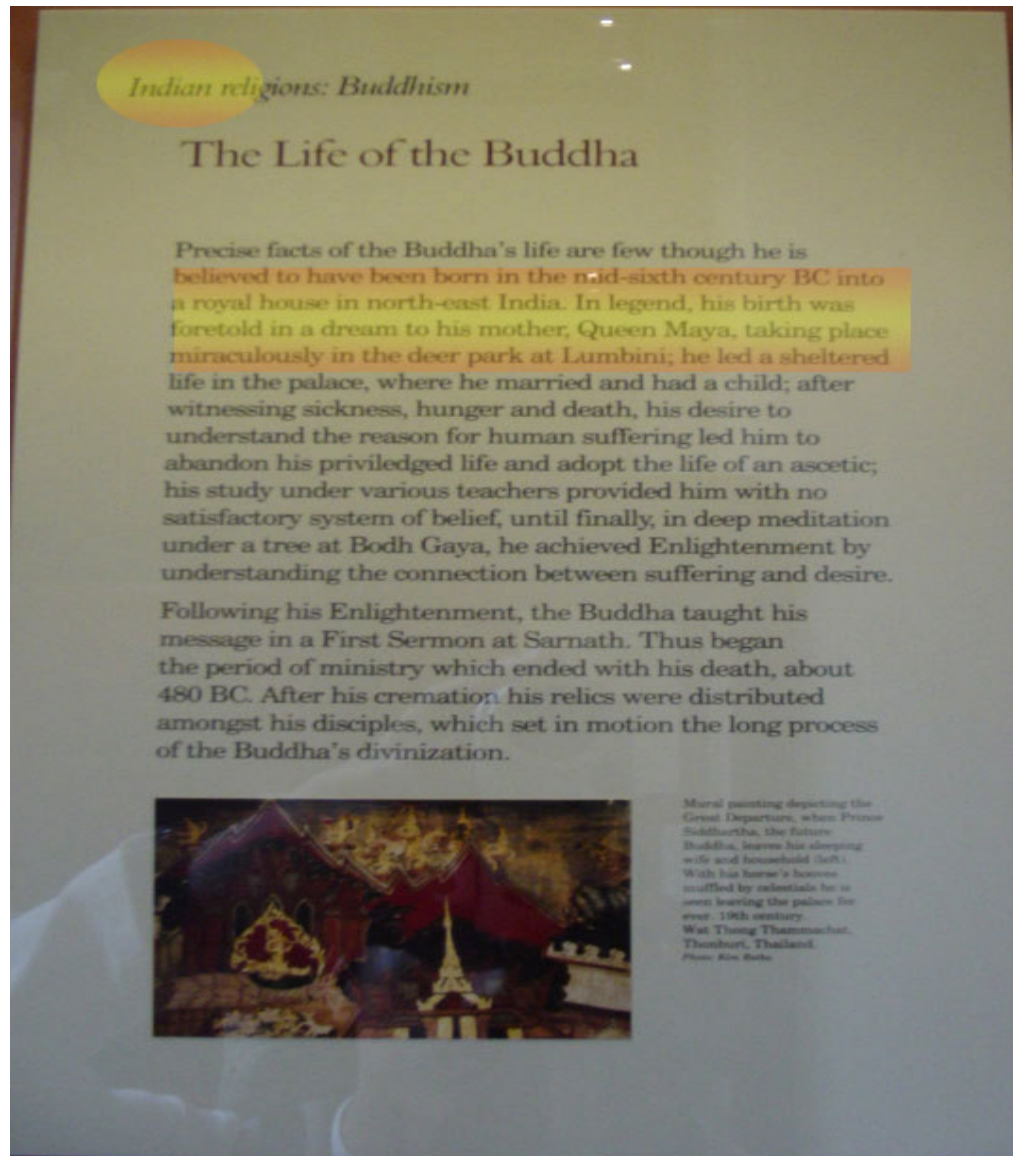


Social: For British Museum Buddha born in India

By Saroj Shrestha

Dear Friends,

Whilst visiting the section on Asia at the British Museum in London, I was surprised to read the information displayed regarding Buddha's birthplace. See for yourself - I have attached a photograph of the information board. What do you think?



The birthplace of Buddha has long been a bone of contention between Nepal and India, but if such a highly regarded institution such as the British Museum is showing that Lumbini is in India (North East India), then what hope have we of letting the world know of where the Buddha's true birthplace lies? Do you think we should act on this and inform the museum?

Hope to see any action against this topic.

Regards,

Saroj Shrestha

Oxford,
Uk

(Sent by Ananda Shrestha (ananda@ananda.com.np) from Kathmandu, Nepal based on his friend Saroj's experience in London.)

Indian religions: Buddhism

The Life of the Buddha

Precise facts of the Buddha's life are few though he is believed to have been born in the mid-sixth century BC into a royal house in north-east India. In legend, his birth was foretold in a dream to his mother, Queen Maya, taking place miraculously in the deer park at Lumbini; he led a sheltered life in the palace, where he married and had a child; after witnessing sickness, hunger and death, his desire to understand the reason for human suffering led him to abandon his privileged life and adopt the life of an ascetic; his study under various teachers provided him with no satisfactory system of belief, until finally, in deep meditation under a tree at Bodh Gaya, he achieved Enlightenment by understanding the connection between suffering and desire.

Following his Enlightenment, the Buddha taught his message in a First Sermon at Sarnath. Thus began the period of ministry which ended with his death, about 480 BC. After his cremation his relics were distributed amongst his disciples, which set in motion the long process of the Buddha's divinization.



Mural painting depicting the Great Departure, when Prince Siddhartha, the future Buddha, leaves his sleeping wife and household (left). With his horse's hooves muffled by orientals he is seen leaving the palace for ever. 19th century. Wat Thong Thammachul, Thonburi, Thailand. Photo: Eric Rabe

Networking: Project Coalesce: Linking the Job Seekers of Today

By Sanjaya Shrestha

FONNJ in collaboration with XMA is hosting this Networking Event for recent graduates and job seekers.

This exclusive three hour event will provide a unique forum to hear the key players in Pharmaceutical, Wall Street, Academic, Non-profit and Information-Technology fields with their insights and stratagem on gaining access to today's job market. This will also provide a platform for all job seekers to kindle a ligature amongst themselves and with other professionals present at the event.



Program

- + Welcome note by Master of Ceremony
- + Insights by "Estimable Panelists" on how to bridge the gap between today's job seekers and employers
- + Allotment for formal and informal networking amongst the attendees

Panelists:

- + Christina Valauri, Director of Research, First Albany Capital
- + Dr. Shiva P. Gautam, PhD, Assistant Professor of Biostatistics, Harvard Medical School
- + Dr. Subas M. Sakya, PhD, Senior Scientist, Pfizer Inc.
- + Niels Maagaard, Acting Chief of Recruitment, UNDP
- + James Cimino, CEO, Brightideas Software, Inc.

Venue:

Columbia University,
Aledge Lerner Hall 2920 Broadway (115th Street),
New York, NY 12 – 3 PM , November 6 (Saturday), 2004

To Attend:

Attendance will be limited and job seekers are encouraged to reserve their space early. Please visit the web site: www.fonnj.org to register your name or contact us by phone or via e-mail.
Sanjay Shrestha: shresths@yahoo.com, Phone: 201-869-2881 or 917-991-3707; Sagun KC: mitocore@gmail.com Phone: 212 472 3298



Help Nepal: HELP NEPAL NETWORK New York Fund Raising

By Help Nepal Team

Help Nepal Network USA organized a fundraiser for the second time this year on October 3, 2004 at the Roone Arledge Cinema at Columbia University with the screening of Numafung, a feature film about Limbu people of Nepal, directed and produced by Nabin Subba.

The program, attended by more than 200 people raised approximately \$3,400 through ticket sales and donations. The net proceeds of the event will go towards supplies and operational costs of the Help Nepal Health Post in Mugu, a remote far-western district of Nepal. A short speech elaborating on the goals, objectives and achievements of Help Nepal Network (HeNN) preceded the movie. The event generated a lot of interest and appreciation of HeNN's efforts. The organizers are optimistic that people will respond to their appeals and join HeNN in its efforts by contributing at least one dollar a month. One dollar can go a long way in Nepal and every dollar counts.

The Network is grateful to Columbia University for sponsoring the event. The Network would also like to thank all the volunteers for helping at different levels in promoting, selling and buying tickets and making the event a success.

Special thanks is due to the director and producer of the movie Mr. Nabin Subba for providing the film at a discounted fee.

Earlier in August, HeNN-USA screened Numafung in Boston and raised \$1,698 through donation and ticket sales. HeNN held various events around the same time in Sydney, Melbourne, London, Moscow, Venice, Vienna, Paris and Kathmandu to celebrate Help Nepal International Day generating in total about US \$14,000 for the Network's current and future projects.

HeNN takes this opportunity to thank its many supporters and well-wishers around the world. Particular mention must be made of Navin Dhakal who raised \$2,700 by completing a 56 KM walk in Canada despite a twisted ankle injury acquired just a week before the walk. Earlier Anil Thapa ran a 42 km marathon in Iceland to raise funds for HeNN.

HeNN has so far raised more than US \$65,000 since its founding five years ago mainly from Nepalis and completed over sixteen projects in mostly remote regions of Nepal. Please visit www.helpnepal.net for detailed information.

Help Nepal Network is a registered charitable not-for-profit organization in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and Nepal. Informal groups of HeNN are also active in eight other countries.

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Invitation: Nepal Sambat Day Event Announcement:

By T. Tuladhar

Dear friends, Pasa pin!

Jwajalappa! Namaste!

As the year turns, Nepal Sambat 1125 is upon us and on this significant datum Newah Organization of America (NOA) wishes all members of the Nepalese community here in Washington, the United States, Nepal and the rest of the world -

A VERY HAPPY, HEALTHY & PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR,
NEPAL SAMBAT 1125 !

All and many good wishes on the occasion of:

"VIJAYA DASHAMI, AND SUNTI NAKHAH – TIHAR DEPAWALI" Festivities!

Nepal Sambat Era 1125 has a special place in the history of Nepal and has promoted and identified the uniqueness of Nepal around the world. The indigenous nature of the Era brings recognition and pride to our country Nepal, and we as the people of Nepal must recognize the significance of this special event and celebrate it.

As in the year previous, this year too Newah Organization of America is organizing a special event on this occasion and would like to invite all members of the Nepalese community and leaders of various organizations to join us on this day.

Nepal Sambat born in Nepal is the true Sambat of Nepal and Shankhadhar Saakhwa, the founder of the Era, has been recognized by the government of Nepal as one of the "Rashtriya Bibhuti" of Nepal. As true son of Nepal he founded an Era we all can be proud of.

Venue: UPPER COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER

Date: Saturday November 13, 2004.

Time : 5.00 PM to 10.00 PM

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Reflections from a decade back: Unbiased News

("Reflections from a decade back" is a regular feature of rejuvenated TND which is compiled from materials published approximately 10 years ago in TND. - Ed)

From: **Ashutosh Tiwari**

Compiled by: **Pramod Pandey**

Originally from: Tue, 18 Oct 1994 19:15:55 -0400 (EDT)

Subject: **Unbiased news**

As a TND reader, I thank J.R. Joshi for his (a he, I presume!) for his thoughts. As a postscript to Rajpal's explanations, I would add the following points:

Regarding "Unbiased news": More and better news is always desirable, of course. Still, even in the face of limited time and efforts, TND is already doing a commendable service in providing whatever pieces of news on Nepal it finds. If anything, readers like you and me should be thankful for even that, for we very well know how HARD it is to come by news from Nepal in (at least) the American media.

Regarding "Meaningless discussions": I spent seven months in Nepal from Feb. '94 to Sept '94, and the BIGGEST frustration I had had there was the LACK OF PUBLIC DEBATES on anything. Sure, there were controversies about this and that, too many of them, in fact; but, let's face it, controversies never equal debates. At a very simple level, passion fuels controversies; while, knowledge drives debates. And, these sort of debates, the ones powered by knowledge, are what that give vigor to democracy.

I would argue that since there take place very few debates, if any, on public issues in present Nepal, the greatest threat to democracy comes not from Girija, not from the communists, not too from India, but from ourselves -- the "elites" by virtue of our education and training outside of Nepal -- who seem to resent the very idea of debates and dialogues by calling it "meaningless and unnecessary" and so forth.

I don't mean to say that all debates are equally important or even equally interesting. They are not. Some are good ideas worth defendng and some are bad. But we are never going to find what is what unless we allow BOTH the bad and the good ideas to circulate on this wire.

The rest of us are not so dumb as to accept every idea uncritically. Indeed, to borrow from J.S. Mill, in this marketplace of ideas called TND, let some ideas beat out other ideas, and let the best ideas emerge from the collective knowledge, intelligence and wisdom of us 750+ members. To that end, let there be vigorous disagreements, engaging kura-kanis, and so on on this net, -- in the name of "those are good things to pursue in and of themselves" and NOT necessarily because they would also help "Nepal ko bikas maa ... "

Re: "Green cards" : Just because someone talks about "nepal ko bikas" on this net, that DOES NOT, SHOULD NOT mean that he or she will be going back to "develop Nepal" per se -- though, that would be great! I would think that Nepalis who have green cards are as concerned and respectful of Nepal as Nepalis who do not.

And that for both, this TND is a medium to express their concerns and feelings and thoughts and what-have-you about/on Nepal. I think that's pretty reasonable or even normal to do that. After all, I am sure that those who talk about Nepal ko bikas are so dumb as to believe that development is a simple function! So, what they are doing, as it appears to me, is putting their thoughts on the screen, and that's worthy of praise in and of itself. [For the record, I do NOT have a Green Card; and, also for the record, I do NOT intend to apply for one.]

So, let me conclude on this note: We do not pay for TND; (maybe those on AOL or compuserve pay!). It is, what economists would say, a good example of "public good". Rajpal is already a busy full-time professional who has devoted substantial amount of time to the growth of TND. So instead of complaining about this and that, yo bhayena tyo bhayena type of complaints, let us ask, to paraphrase one of my heroes, JFK, "not what TND can do for you, but what you can do for TND."

Second, let there be debates. Good debates and bad debates. Because, remember, at the end of the day, you are intelligent enough to distinguish between the two. Bad debates, I am confident, would slowly drop out as more people like you -- intelligent, concerned and well-informed take part in, what I hope goo debates and lively kura-kanis. Come on, we are not wasting our time -- but challenging ourselves with this incredible resources that TND has drawn for us.

Namaste.

Ashu

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Poem: Scaringly Nice

By Ina Acharya

Oh my oh my
I whirl you afar
But you,
A limping soul,
Smell ash
As you near me again?

Oh my
You love me so badly
I squeeze and dump you into the bin
You spring up again
Like a vampire from the dead?

Oh Lord save me!
You grin and dance naked,
Like a witch
I dig my head into the pillow
But you tear my conscience apart?

I twirl and twist and suffocate
For a handful of fresh air
But your lips just stick to mine
And I lay paralyzed.
You smell wax!

Oh my
I have faith in you?
You are so good.
So good that
I stand here, your statue of liberty,
Naked, identity-less, and tantalized.

You love me that badly?
I thought I loved you too
But you are so nice
So nice you scare me off
Just scare me off!!

(Comments can be sent at inasharma@hotmail.com -ed.)

Poem: Rin Mathi Rin

रिनमाथि रिन

— जीरा

रिनमाथि रिन
नगद जिन्सी सबै उधारोमा चल्या' छ
नाइक खुइलिएर टिकमार्क जस्तो देखिन्छ
मलाई अलिकता पैसो चाहियो ।

फोनमाथि फोन
आफैले आफैलाई छैन भन्नु पन्था' छ
एउटी केटी मन पर्छ, तर डेट लान सक्छा' छैन
मलाई अलिकता पैसो चाहियो ।

प्लेन चढ्या' सपनामा पनि देख्न मुस्किल छ
धेरै भो देश जान सक्छा' छैन
पुन्टे र च्यान्टेलाई पीपी लानु छ
मलाई अलिकता पैसो चाहियो ।

थोत्रो गाडि उकालोमा अलि मान्दैन
ग्रीनलाईटमा रोकिंदा हर्न खानु पन्था' छ
बाउले पुन्थाएर ग'की फुच्ची लेक्सस चढ्छे
सान देखाउनु छ
लौन, मलाई अलिकता पैसो चाहियो ।

Humor: Philosophy 101 for Festival Season of Dashain/ Dipawali

Sent by Shambu Sagar

A professor stood before his Philosophy 101 class with several items in front of him. When the class began, wordlessly, he picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full? They agreed that it was. So the professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar. He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He then asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with a unanimous - - yes. The professor then produced two cans of beer from under the table and proceeded to pour the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand.

The students laughed. "Now," said the Professor, as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things - - your family, your partner, your health, your children, your friends, your favourite passions - - things that if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full." "The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else - - the small stuff." "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Spend time with your loved ones. Take your partner out dancing. Take time to get medical checkups. Play another 18. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first - - the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of beers!"