



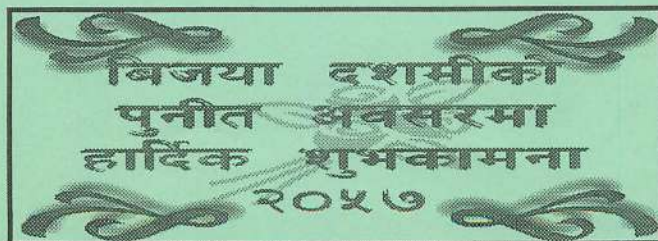
NEPAL VISION

A Quarterly Publication of Nepalese Association of Houston (NAH), A Non-Profit Organization

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Please include the writer's full name, address and home telephone number, and articles may be edited for purposes of clarity and space.

Cover: Nawa Bhagawati (Durga Bhawani)

This has been a wonderful quarter for Nepal Vision (NV) team. We have been experiencing post-premier-issue-syndrome hard to erase. We are absolutely overwhelmed by so many wonderful responses, encouragement, suggestions, and inspirations from across the globe. I hope all of you did get chance to read, browse if you were too busy, or at least scanned through the topics you were most interested in, in the June issue of Nepal Vision. As Mr. Ishwor P. Manandhar, president of Nepalese Literature Development Council, U.K., suggested "A Nepali script is a must regardless", and we indeed initiated the Nepali chapter in this issue.

The editorial committee of NV realizes that majority of the Nepalese abroad are young students pursuing higher studies and professionals making their living in various fields of studies. We also realize predominant of them touches to some degree of technical line of fields, such as science, engineering, computers, and others. The NV team, thus, strongly encourages articles that are based on experiences of *technocrats* that are pragmatic, address solutions that are economically viable, and effective in long run to the developing world. We have included *technocratic* articles in this issue. We hope, those who intuition articles only of abstract, historical, political or some other *guff-gaff* nature, would change their dimension of thinking and be encouraged to write more directional articles. We believe in articles that source from hearts, which act and inspire. This, however, does not imply articles of *guff-gaff* nature are not to be included in NV, whatsoever.

One certainly gets nervous when you find hard to drag your feet a foot, while you see your competitors make a leap in no time. Political instability, corruption, social dilemmas, social injustice, social inequality, and poverty are just a few issues of the many that always prevailed and never blessed our nation. Our country is in the brink of hopelessness. Let us not be discouraged. As Kanak Mani Dixit addressed to the young Nepalis to be "trail blazer", let's be a brick to the nation, not vice versa.

On behalf of NV editorial committee, we wish all Nepalese in the Americas and abroad, a very Happy Dashain and Tihar 2057 B.S.

Disclaimer

The articles views and opinions, unless otherwise noted, contained herein are those of the authors and do not represent the official statements or views of the Nepal Vision.

president's corner

Tis the season. Tis the season of the greatest festivals in Nepal: Dashain and Tihar. Of joy and happiness. Of peace and harmony. Of worships, veneration and offerings. Of an atmosphere filled with the sound of bells and fragrance of incense sticks. Of fresh fruits and flowers. Of cool, foggy mornings and bright days. Of colorful dresses and smiling faces. Of blue skies filled with colorful kites of different shapes and sizes. Of good food and loud music. Of decorated homes and festival of lights to welcome the Goddess of Wealth and worship oneself. Yes, t's the season. And t's the best time of the year.

Let us all get together and celebrate Dashain on October 7 at the Club House located at the corner of Bissonet and Cook Road. The festival of Dashain also helps strengthen the family ties. And we are like a small family. In the spirit of Dashain, let us have a good time and make new friends. I bet you will see many new faces in the Dashain party.

The Nepalese Association of Houston NAH, a non-profit organization, was established in March of this year with a goal of to serve the Nepali community by bringing all Nepali brothers and sisters on a common platform and helping each other at the time of need in every possible way. We have come a long way since then.

The July 4th annual picnic was a great success. Everybody who attended and participated in the picnic had a great time. We also organized the premier show of Karishma Manadhar's Nepali movie "Dhukdhuki" at the Funplex on August 14. Karishma Manandhar took time to grace the premier show and the Greater Houston Nepali community enjoyed the movie. A Hospitality Committee, headed by Nirmal Shrestha, NAH Public Relations Officer, will make every efforts to make the life of newcomers to Houston a little bit easy, and comfortable. Currently, we are trying to bring our legendary folk singer Kumar Basnet and his team, to Houston, for a gala evening filled with music and dances.

The premier issue of Nepal Vision, a quarterly publication of NAH, was brought out just in time for the Nepali Convention in Atlanta on July 4. The newsmagazine has been widely distributed all across the globe. We are overwhelmed by notes of appreciation and commendation from the readers of Nepal Vision that keep coming in. Such kind words make us feel very good and inspire us to continue our efforts. And now we are presenting you with the Dashain issue of Nepal Vision. Nepal Vision represents the culmination of the efforts by all involved, especially the editorial committee, as well as the contributors of the articles and the individuals and organizations that support it by putting their advertisements.

NAH executive committee has identified the need for a community center of its own to hold meetings, get together and cultural programs. Although it is a long term NAH goal, we have started collecting donations and contributions to help achieve it. It is never too early to initiate an auspicious venture.

NAH highly appreciates your continued support and contributions. Please get involved and participate to help NAH achieve its goals and objectives. You are invited to attend our monthly meetings and communicate your ideas.

Happy Vijaya Dashamil, Happy Deepawali

Rajendra Shrestha
President, NAH

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nepal news

A Combination of Gestures and Hand Movements is Usually All That's Needed to Get the Message Across

(Source: CNN News)

Visitors to the Bakery cafes in Kathmandu, Nepal, not only get their taste buds working, they also put their communication skills to the test. Food orders are placed using sign language because the restaurant's waiters can neither hear nor speak. With more than 30 physically impaired waiters serving in five branches across town, the cafe offers a unique and challenging dining

experience. For those making their first visit to the restaurants, things can be a little difficult, but good intentions on both sides go a long way towards resolving sign language hiccups.

"Initially when people had started coming here they didn't know waiters out here were deaf and dumb," said Prem Kinari <link.prem.kinari.ap.jpg>, the restaurant's customer relations officer. "Now most people know it. When the customer comes, the waiter goes and asks about their order with his sign language. They take it down with a notebook and give it to the kitchen," Kinari said. Sometimes, he said, intervention was needed on his part to clear up misunderstandings between the

customer and waiter, but for the most part, the venture was a success.

Kinari admits that the restaurant managers were initially skeptical about how the public would respond to the waiters. However it seems they need not have worried -- just ask one of the regular diners. "I find them very nice," said Karan Swaroop. "It's a very nice thing. They work very well, okay. And they are very efficient. I think this is very good for society." All the waiters get free training from the region's deaf and dumb association. The association is trying to encourage other restaurants to follow the example and employ more of its students.

Coop is the world for this boy from Nalang, Dhading

(Source: Kathmandu Post)

For Sil Bahadur Nepali, 13, the world is small indeed. Ever since the age of three, Sil Bahadur has been continuously confined to a wooden cage for an illness his parents find too expensive to afford treatment.

Mentally retarded by birth, Sil Bahadur is not even allowed to see the daytime sky here in Ainselu Besigaura village of Nalang Village Development Committee, which is some six-hours walk from the village town of Dhading Beshi. "There is no limit to his unruly behaviour. That is why I always put him in the cage," says Chakare, Sil Bahadur's father.

Sil Bahadur's parents had no other option but to lock him in the pigsty-shaped wooden cage after he developed symptoms of mental illness during early childhood. Ten years ago, they built this

wooden-frame for Rs. 50 and decided to lock him in it after having lost all hopes of Sil Bahadur's cure from the disease that his parents were ignorant of.

"We came to know that my son is mentally retarded after a local health worker observed him about three years back," says Sil Bahadur's mother, Gori. "But then we still lost hope when we were informed that it cost a lot of money for his cure."

Sil Bahadur can be often seen struggling to escape from his torturous solitary confinement. He is freed, all right. But then, his freedom is limited only for a few moments when Sil Bahadur needs to go to the toilet.

Other than that, both of Sil Bahadur's parents go out to till their land after throwing him into the wooden-cage the whole day. "He (Sil Bahadur) starts bullying local children if he is freed... What else can we do?" says Sil Bahadur's father, without a sign of remorse over

his face.

Often, Sil Bahadur keeps on weeping a lot and produces strange sounds while being caged. His food is also served inside the cage.

"During the nights, he sleeps with us. One of us have to guard him the whole night, otherwise he goes out of the bed as soon as he notices that we are all fast asleep," says Sil Bahadur's mother, Gori. The beleaguered family has no knowledge about the treatment that Sil Bahadur could receive for his ill mental health, let alone the facilities available in the capital city of Kathmandu. Also ignorant are they over the fact that putting a person in a cage in such a way, which they are doing to their beloved son, is illegal.

The innocent parents say, "Many have come here to take his (Sil Bahadur's) photographs...but nobody ever comes here to cure his illness."

Shey Phoksundo eyes world heritage status

(Source: Kathmandu Post)

One more natural heritage site of this Himalayan Kingdom is hopefully waiting to be enlisted in the World Heritage List.

Senior Advisor of World Heritage Committee (WHC) Dr James Thorsell indicated that Shey Phoksundo National Park might be honoured with the title of World Heritage Site this year. He said, "Right now, I cannot give any conclusion but big chances are there."

He further added that his group is at the end of completing all necessary work before the site is enlisted.

He admired that in Asia it is difficult to separate nature from culture. "Shey Phoksundo is a valley between nature and culture." It will be decided in the 24th session in Cairns, Australia in November-December this year. Ex-chairman of Nepal Heritage Society Karna Shakya said that from Nepali side, there is no danger of unfavourable human activities. "Still, cars from Tibetan side and encroachment to Lokta shrubs might become a problem in future," he said.

The 3,555 sq km area of Shey Phoksundo National Park, located at far western region, was proposed to be nominated for World Heritage Site two years ago. There are over 200 monasteries and Phoksundo Lake is at 12,500 feet altitude in the area. It is particularly popular for snow leopards and blue sheep, now in the verge of extinction.

Sagarmatha National Park and Royal Chitwan National Park are enlisted as Natural World Heritage Sites presently.

Experts call for relocation of Himal Cement Factory

(Source: Kathmandu Post)

Environmentalists have once again called on the government to give more attention to issues pertaining to the environmental pollution caused by Himal Cement Factory, the oldest cement factory in the nation.

At an interaction programme organised by The Explore Nepal Group Thursday speakers said that the factory should either be relocated or should be shut down.

Himal Cement Factory was established in 1975 at Chobar, just nine kilometers away from Kathmandu. "It has been very active since the last 25 years in

polluting the environment, whether it be air, noise or soil," the experts say.

Bharat Basnet from the Explore Nepal Group said that the members of parliament representing Kathmandu Valley play a very important role in making the government aware about the harmful effects of the poisonous air from Himal Cement Factory.

Hem Bahadur Khadka, an environmentalist and professor at Trichandra College said, "Kathmandu's geographical structure is such that it is very difficult for the air that enters the valley to go out. The poorly ventilated valley thus accumulates air containing polluted particles that can seriously harm people."

"The most effected by this poisonous air

are the labourers of the factory and the local people of Chobar. They are suffering from diseased relating to skin, respiration and many people have been found to have poor eyesight and hearing ability. Vegetation is also very poor and the productive capacity of Chobar area is three times less than that of other areas. Various rare herbs found there have become extinct and the soil has become hard and concrete like," Khadka added.

Kalyan Bahadur Pradhan, Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies said, "The government is concerned about the environmental problem created by the factory. Discussions are going on at various levels and our experts are also conducting research in this issue."

Kamaiyas facing a new problem

The Kamaiyas were free at last, on July 17, 2000, after serving as bonded laborers until that day. Over eight-five thousand Kamaiyas were liberated from five western districts of Nepal. Obviously, one would think it was a good news for the poor people who

were suffering in the hands of landlords. Not quite. As a matter of fact, their situation has gone from bad to worse.

The Kamaiyas were mainly involved in farming, agriculture being their only skill. Now that they are liberated, for one thing they have no place to live, because the landlords won't let them live

in their property. Secondly, they suddenly found that they were out of jobs. So they started looking for and doing low-paying menial jobs like pulling rickshaws. And the women and girls sought to take on the world's oldest profession: the flesh trade, to make a quick buck.

The latest from that quarter is: Kamaiyas are facing a new kind of problem. The privacy problem. Following their emancipation about three months ago thousands of Kamaiyas flocked into Dhangadhi bazaar. About 237 families have resettled in the old airport area of Dhangadhi. These families have been forced to stay and sleep together in crammed huts. As for example, three to four families have been living in a hut, 10 by 15 feet, lacking much space to sit properly, let alone sleep. This space problem has cost them a lot. Their

much needed privacy. When all members of the family are packed like sardines, how would they meet their biological needs? Consequently, the under age kids have been exposed to sex. This has led to teenage prostitution and all the social problems that go with it.

This sets just another example of the lack of planning, foresight and preparedness on the part of the government to liberate these poor people. Kamaiyas thought, after gaining freedom, they will be the happiest

people on this earth. Quite the contrary. Even the I/NGOs that raised this issue and put all their efforts to push the government to pass the legislation against the practice of bonded laborers could not be of much help at this time, because they ran out of resources. For the lack of a specific resettlement program, the government could not line up international donors to the emancipation fund. What is more, after a week following their liberation, the government appealed these people to go back to cooperate with their land lords and return to work.

Peaceful image for Nepal falls in flames of deadly conflict between rebels, government

(Collected by Divas B. Malla)

"Are you from China?...Pakistan?... India?... Vietnam?...Mexico?" People would ask me, "Hell No" I would say "I am from NEPAL" with pride in my voice. Tired of people asking me, "Are you from... (you know where)" except Nepal, I started wearing Nepali T-Shirts with 'NEPAL' written on it. Then people would ask, "Are you from Nepal?" Yes I would say with a smile on my face and would go on telling them how beautiful and peaceful MY country is. But as I was reading today's Houston Chronicle I didn't feel proud of my country but was rather ashamed and a thought crossed my mind ...is it time for me to hide those Nepali T- shirts? I just thought this might be of some interest to you. It's an article that was published in Houston Chronicle written by Marion Lloyd.

CHAUTARA, Nepal -- Tilak Prasad Sapkota was tending his shop in this quaint mountain town when five Maoist guerrillas emerged from the fog, brandishing a gasoline bomb and double-barreled shotguns, their faces

hidden behind scarlet bandanas emblazoned with the group's telltale yellow star. The shopkeeper panicked and fled through a back door into the hills, while the rebels detonated a bomb inside the store "They asked me if I was ready to atone for my sins," Sapkota said of the attack in Chautara, just three hours north of Katmandu along the main highway to Tibet.

As the son of a wealthy landlord, Sapkota had reason to be afraid. Three years ago, the guerrillas kidnapped his 70-year-old father from his sugar cane plantation, chopped off his leg and left him to die. It was one of hundreds of horrific punishments allegedly meted out by the Maoist rebels, who declared war on Nepal's government in February 1996 and have since infiltrated two-thirds of the mountainous terrain. More than 1,300 people have been killed in the fighting between the guerrillas and police. Most of the victims are either civilians aligned with the ruling party or illiterate peasants sympathetic to the Maoist cause. Human rights groups estimate an additional 60,000 people have been displaced by the fighting.

The rebels want to install a quasi-communist "people's democracy" in

place of the current system of power sharing between the king and a democratically elected parliament, which they say exploits the rural masses. The group has capitalized on the disillusionment following the restoration of democracy in 1990, which has done little to improve conditions for the country's 22 million people. The Maoists modeled their movement closely on Peru's now-defunct Shining Path, whose campaign against the Lima government left more than 25,000 people dead from 1980 to 1992. According to Maoist dogma, social change can only come about through violent revolution.

"Some killing is necessary. The people who are exploiting the poor people, they should be killed," said Shoba Konal, a 22-year-old college student who was recently jailed for the fifth time for alleged involvement in the Maoist insurgency.

She denied she had any ties with the rebels, saying she was arrested because she belongs to a leftist student organization.

Speaking inside the main female prison in Katmandu, Konal, who comes from a middle-class family, said she regretted

that innocent villagers had been caught in the crossfire. But, she reasoned, "in fighting -- some people die, sometimes they are innocent people. That cannot be avoided. This is war, and we can't control what happens in war."

The increasing bloody rebellion has damaged Nepal's image as a bucolic Shangri-La, and a Mecca for hippie peaceniks and mountaineers. The uprising also threatens the country's nascent democracy, already teetering under the weight of corruption.

The past decade of democratic rule has done little to bridge the gap between the feudal elite and the rural masses, who are among the poorest in the world. The annual per capita income in Nepal is \$220 per person, compared with \$360 in neighboring India. Literacy is roughly 25 percent, and 45 percent of Nepal's population live in poverty, according to U. N. figures.

"The village people don't know if we are exploiting them or not because they are uneducated," said Sapkota, the shopkeeper. "Anyway," he added, "how would we know what they need? They never tell us." Such attitudes are prevalent among Nepal's ruling classes, whose grip on power has been institutionalized through the country's entrenched Hindu caste system and feudal past. Nepal is the world's only officially Hindu nation, and the majority of its people live in remote villages, many of them a several days' hike from the nearest road.

Recently, power has started to shift from the old feudal elite to Katmandu, the capital. But political infighting has ensured no government lasts much more than a year, while badly needed development projects have fallen by the wayside. "The people who were exploited before and who were

expecting something after the restoration of democracy, they didn't get anything," said Sindu Nath Pyakurel, the leading lawyer representing suspected Maoist insurgents. "That's why they responded to the Maoist call."

According to the government's own figures, the rebels are active in 53 of Nepal's 75 districts. In some districts, the Maoists -- whose numbers are estimated from 5,000 to 15,000 -- have installed their own courts, tax-collection and public works projects. They fund their operations through extortion, according to human rights groups. The government, meanwhile, is trying hard to downplay the problem. "Besides a few incidents, the situation is quite normal," said Gopinder Panday, spokesman for the Home Ministry, which oversees internal security. He denied charges of rampant abuses by police.

In its 1999 report on Nepal, Amnesty International accused both sides of grave human rights violations, including hundreds of extrajudicial killings by police and maimings and torture by the Maoists. The report warned of the possibility of worsening repression by the government, which is currently debating revamping its anti-insurgency laws to expand police powers.

The spokesman also dismissed fears that the growing insurgency would hurt tourism, Nepal's main foreign currency-earner and the backbone of its tiny economy. He pointed to figures showing tourist arrivals had actually increased since the fighting broke out, from 393,613 foreign visitors in 1996 to 463,684 in 1998, the last year for which figures were available. So far, the Maoists have gone out of their way to spare tourists. There have been no reported incidents in the two main

trekking areas or in the capital. However, many Nepalis worry that the insurgency is bound to have a negative effect. Already, several foreign governments, including the United States, have issued travel warnings. Officials at the U.S. Embassy in Katmandu declined to comment on the Maoist situation, saying the topic was highly sensitive.

"For other countries, 1,400 people dead might be considered peanuts. But for us, this is a big problem. This has really marred our image," said Kapil Shrestha, director of the autonomous Human Rights Organization of Nepal. He said the government was wrong in trying to quash the movement by force, rather than addressing the root causes of poverty and social inequality. As long as the government continues to use strong-arm tactics against the population, he argued, the Maoist movement will grow. So will the number of people caught in the crossfire. "If we support the Maoists, the police will kill us. And if we support the government, the Maoists will kill us," said Dirgaraj Shahi, a 25-year-old schoolteacher from one of the hardest-hit areas. "We are trapped in between, helpless."

**HAPPY
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- Nepal Vision

who's who

Nepal Vision features *who's who* in its every issue. We select a true Nepali role model who has made the community proud and incessantly become a source of moral and academic inspiration.

We are privileged to introduce Dr. Anjali Amatya Jain in this issue of Nepal Vision.

Dr. Anjali Amatya Jain

- Born in Mangal Bazar, Lalitpur, daughter of Mr./Mrs. Purna Govinda Amatya.
- S.L.C. from Adarsha Kanya Niketan High School, Mangal Bazar, Lalitpur, when she was only 12 years old.
- Graduated from Tribhubhan Universtiy with a Bachelor in Science with Honor in 1968.
- Graduated with M.B.B.S. from Maulana Azad Medical College in New Delhi with Honors in 1974 when she was only 22.
- She did residency program at Irwin Hospital, New Delhi in 1976, at New York University in 1979, and Baylor College of Medical in Houston in 1981.
- Designated doctor for Texas Worker's Compensation Commission.
- Clinical Assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine since 1982.
- She has been practicing medicine independently since 1990. Her specialty is in physical medicine and rehabilitation.
- She is board certified medical doctor and also diplomat, fellow and member of various societies such as AAPMR, AAPM, AADEP, TPMR, AAEM, HPMRS, TMA, HCMS.
- She is also an active staff at various Houston hospitals.
- She has numerous publications and presentations in the field of medicine.
- Former vice president of the Nepalese in Houston.

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Hindu Marriage Customs; An introduction

- Dr. Jagadish Sharma

Like most Hindu customs, the Hindu system of marriage dates back to the Vedic ages. The marriage of Suryasavitri, daughter of God Surya (Sun), to King Soma, which is mentioned in the Vedas, is the form on which the present day Hindu marriage is based. AS the story goes, Suryasavitri and King Soma consent to marry. Once this is settled, Aswini Kumar, two brothers, go to Surya and ask him for his daughter to be married to Soma. Surya, who is already cognizant of the development that has daughter to Soma in marriage once he has had a chance to meet his would be son-in-law in person and determine his worthiness. The arrangement is thus finalized. This custom of arrangement is followed in its original form up to the present day. When the bridegroom's party goes to the bride's home to ask for the girl and finalize the arrangement, they always go in pairs. The religious part of the Custom, however, is completed during the marriage ceremony itself in the forms of Bagdan and Varani.

SWYAMBAR

The system of a bride's choosing her own husband is known as Swyambar.. The word Bara, it should be noted, means the chosen one. The mention of Swayambar as an established institution is found in several places in the Vedas. In the Vedic ages, Swyambar, the custom of choosing one's own husband, was a tight enjoyed by all women. The only restriction that was placed on it was the ban on choosing some one who related to the bride by blood, people such as bride's own brothers and first cousins. In the present day Hindu society, all that remains of this custom is only the religious part of it.

The ceremony of Swayambar is held at the bride-to-be's place. A day before the Swayambar is to be held, the bride's father sends the bridegroom a lavish invitation that among other things includes beetle leaves, nuts, red tika, and garlands.

In Swayambar, Goddess Indrani (wife of Lord Indra, the King of Gods) is worshipped. At the auspicious mement, which is previously decided upon by the astrologers, the bride in her finest clothes steps forward towards the bridegroom and puts a red Tika on his forehead and a garland around his neck. The bridegroom does likewise. These days, it is a custom to exchange rings as well.

PURPANGA

The worship that is offered to Gods prior to an auspicious

ceremony is known as Purvanga is also performed at a time pre-determined by the astrologers. At Purnanga, rituals such as digging up hole ground and drying grains in the sun by young girls, and making rice powder balls and preparing aromatic paste to perfume the body by married women are performed. Finally, the rite of worshipping ancestors is also held.

SAHIPATA

The bridegroom's presentation of gifts to the bride is known as Sahipata. This custom actually denotes the finalization of full consent on the bridegroom's side to the marriage. In Sahipata, the kshyatriya bridegroom makes a yellow handprint of both his hands on a big piece of white cloth. The Brahmin priests take this marked cloth along with the gifts and things which are considered to be an auspicious nature to the bride's home. The whole ritual is a gala event with the bands and musical groups accompanaying it. It should be noted that the marked cloth remains with the bride long after the marriage.

BARAYATRA

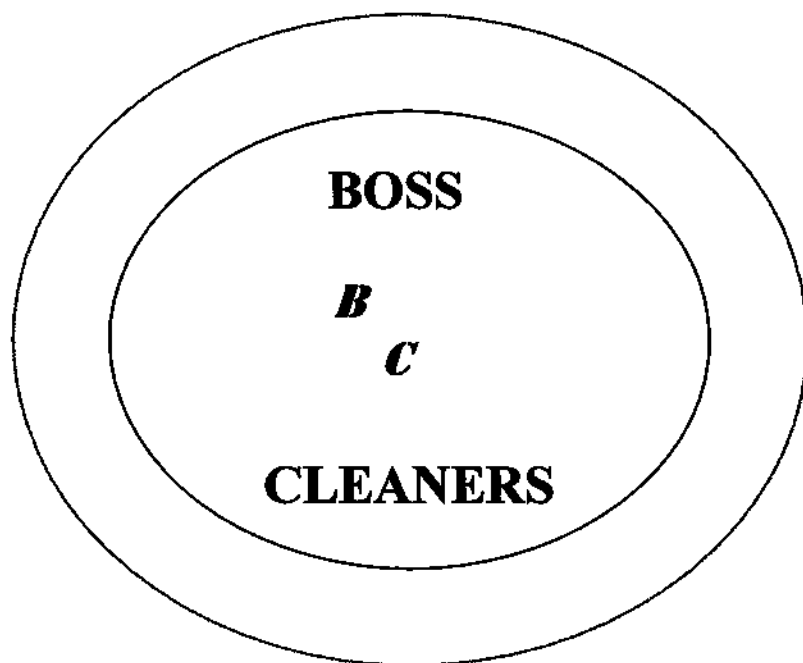
Barayatra, literally, means the procession of the chosen one. It will be recalled that the bridegroom has already been by the bride at the Swayambar as her husband to be. The Barayatra is the procession of the bridegroom to the actual marriage ceremony.

At barayatra, the bridegroom accompanied by his friends and relatives goes to the bride's residence for marriage in as Lavish a fashion as possible. It should be noted that the Barayatra, also known as Janti in common parlance, is the most joyous and delightful occasion in a Hindu marriage. Just before the bridegroom sets out for the procession, the bridegroom's mother gives him some very auspicious things to eat and take with him and then blesses him. The bridegroom 's father follows suit and his son his own shares of blessings .The prossesion is preceded by a Kalash(a jar full of holy water and things of auspicious nature) and Gansh(God of good Fortune). The Kalash and Ganesh are immediately followed by women chanting holy songs.

When the procession reaches the bride's residence, the father of the bride accompanied by his priests, friends and relatives comes forward to greet the bridegroom and the procession. He then walks around the vehicle of the bridegroom three times offering him flowers and worship . After this rite is performed, he takes the bridegroom inside his residence.

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BAGDAN: VARANI

Immediately after the entrance of the bridegroom into the residence, he is taken to the place constructed especially for the performance of the marriage rites where he is worshipped again. It is during this ceremony that the bride's father gives his word to the effect that he will give away his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom. This is what is known as Bagdan, literally meaning presentation by word. It should be noted that Bagdan is a religious part of the finalization of the marriage arrangement.

Bagdan is, however, performed only after the rite of Varani is completed in which the bride's father having met the bridegroom in person is convinced that the bridegroom is worthy of being the husband of his daughter. This is very much in accordance with the marriage of Surya-Savitri to king Soma as mentioned in the Vedas.

KANYADAN

Kanyadan is the ceremony in which the rites of marriage is actually solemnized. At the Kanyadan, the bridegroom is offered the worship of Madhuparka. It should be noted that the Madhuparka worship is indicative of the highest honour that is accorded to humans. Madhuparka worship is accorded only to the followings five categories of people and even then only once a year: Guru who solemnizes the Bratabandha, scholar who has been invited to perform a Yagya, the bridegroom, king dearest and a student who has just graduated. During the Madhuparka worship, the bridegroom is considered Narayana (Lord Vishnu) and the bride Lakshmi (Lord Vishnu's consort).

After the Madhuparka worship is completed, the bride is given away in marriage. The bride's father holds the thumb of the bride and puts it in the right hand of the bridegroom who is waiting for it all along with his palm open and arm extended. Holy mantras are chanted and the pieces of cloths which are hanging from around the waists of the couple are then tightly knotted. The entire ceremony is both solemn and romantic.

The following dialogue that takes place during Kanyadan is of special importance.

Bridegroom: (To the bride's father) I am as bright among my equals as the sun is among the star. I can conquer those who want to fight me.

(To the bride presenting gifts) Oh dear lady, please accept these and look beautiful. Please treat our wealth and

descendents according to your own conscience. Live a life of one hundred years and grow old with me.

(The bride accepts the presents. While covering a bride with a shawl around her shoulders) I pray to goddesses who made the threads, synchronized them and wove them into this shawl to bless you with a long life and protect you till you are very old.

Bride's father (addressing the two)- Look at each other with love.

Bridegroom (face to face with bride) – Let the Almighty Lord the Universe make the two hearts of ours complete.

(after accepting the bride given away to him by the bride's father) – Who is presenting this?

Bride's father: The will.

Bridegroom: To whom?

Bride's father: To will. Taking, giving, and being given away are all nothing but acts of will. I have given you my daughter. You shall not enjoy any more right than her especially in the fields of region, wealth and passion.

Bridegroom: No, I shall not.

(The bride walks along with the bride, and while walking, they look at each other).

(To the bride who is looking at him lovingly) your glance is sweet and gentle. Be good to me and remain cheerful. Bloom with humor and bear fruit. Be brave and give birth to brave ones. Comfort the two-and-four-legged ones. All my desire are now vested in you. Find enjoyment with me and allow me to find enjoyment with you.

(The Bridegroom and the bride sit together at the place of worship)

The priest: Pray the bride shall have a long and happy life, shall always enjoy the love and co-habitation of her husband, shall give birth to healthy children and shall enjoy happiness from those children.

The Bridegroom: Oh Fire, let all our activities be successful; let us find the glories of this world, lead us to good paths, give us a bright and honorable life. Let death stay at a distance from us.

Oh death, stay away from our divine path and do not

victimize our descendants.

The Bride: The fire is my witness. My relation with my parents and family must never be cut off and my husband must never desert me. I am stating this in front of this fire. Let my husband have a long life and let my friends and relatives lead a life of prosperity and happiness.

(To her husband) Oh my husband, I am offering this worship for your prosperity. Let this fire witness all those things which are mutual interesting to us.

SAPTADI

The literal meaning of SAPTADI is seven steps. In Hindu culture, close friendship based on equality is effected after

taking seven steps taking together and after taking to each other on seven different items. The bride and bridegroom also takes seven steps together and converse seven times in order to become inseparable friends with equal rights and duties toward each other.

This article is collected by Arpana Dhungana from Dr. Sharma's archive. It is based upon Prof. Ambika Prasad Adhikari's Vaidic Bibaha Vidhi: Ek Parichaya

(Dr. Sharma, Ph.D. from University of Pennsylvania in 1968 in International Relations, has authored number of books and numerous publications. He is also an executive advisor for Nepal Vision)

Peace Corps in Nepal

- Dr. Rajendra Shrestha

Peace Corps is a very familiar term in Nepal. Most Nepali people have come in contact with the Peace Corps volunteers at one time or another, or at least have heard about them. More than 4000 Peace Corps Volunteers have contributed to a number of projects in Nepal for the past 38 years, as a result of a bilateral agreement between His Majesty's Government of Nepal and the Government of the United States of America in 1962. Ms. Mary Lou Snowden is the Director of Peace Corps Nepal.

Currently, 106 Peace Corps volunteers have been working in projects related to Education, Nursing Education, Auxiliary health, Soil Conservation, National Parks, Community Forestry, Reproductive health, Water and Sanitation, Youth Development, Rural Construction, Community Development, Agro-Forestry and NGO development.

The Peace Corps volunteer's term lasts two years. The volunteers are posted in areas on a need-basis. They live and work in villages, towns and cities throughout the country. Peace Corps volunteers work closely with Nepali counterparts and live the life of the local people. Their first effort is directed towards knowing the Nepali language. They are actively engaged in many areas of development making the Peace Corps Program unique in Nepal.

I came in touch with two Peace Corps volunteers, Phil and Robert, at an early age in my life, when I was a six-grade student, growing up in a small town in Nepal. One of the

volunteers taught us science and gave me the first lesson in Archimedes' principle. I remember that vividly. They also introduced me to the U.S.A. by showing the postcards, coins and magazines, and talking about it. They cleaned, remodeled and painted the little two-bed room house they were staying, all by themselves. And I was impressed by their extraordinary skills and self-reliance. If nothing else, it certainly aroused my curiosity and the desire to learn and know more about this wonderful country.

It is interesting to note that the Peace Corps program evolved as an idea, at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor Campus. On October 14, 1960, the then Presidential candidate John F. Kennedy arrived at the University of Michigan at 2:00 a.m. to get some rest and sleep. But 10,000 students at the Michigan Union were wide-awake and eagerly waiting to hear John Kennedy speak. They got their wish fulfilled. Not only did they hear the future President speak, they also received a challenge if they would be willing to serve the cause of peace by living and working in the developing nations.

In the spirit of his words; "Ask not what your can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps on March 1, 1961. Since that time a total number of 155,00 volunteers have served in 134 countries in development projects including Education (40 percent), Environment (17 percent), Health (18 percent), Business (13 percent), Agriculture (9 percent), and other (3 percent).

The Peace Corps program has a budget of \$244 million in the fiscal year 2000. The three goals of the Peace Corps are as follows:

- 1) To help the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women.
- 2) To help promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served.
- 3) To help promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans.

The beauty of this program lies in the fact that both parties involved benefit. The host country benefit from the contributions made by the volunteers in their development programs as well as community welfare. In return, the Peace Corps volunteers get an opportunity of getting to know a country, its culture, language, traditions, customs, values, mores, etc. The experiences gained during the volunteering,

help them enrich their lives, and help them in their future professions and jobs. The Peace Corps volunteer program in Nepal has attained great success in that even after the volunteers go back to the U.S.A., they tend to become involved in the welfare of the community, in one way or the other, throughout their entire life.

This is a success story. The idea that was born forty years ago has realized and come a long way to achieve tremendous success in improving the quality of life of the people as well as promoting understanding between people of the U.S.A. and the host nations.

(Dr. Shrestha is a geophysicist by profession, owns his own consulting firm in Houston, TX. He is the founder president of NAH and also serves as an executive advisor for Nepal Vision)

Export of High-Tech Manpower: A Viable Model of Economic Development for Nepal

- Dr. Ratna K. Shrestha

In pursuit of economic development, Nepal has tried several models of development over the past years. But unfortunately, the pace of economic development has been painfully slow, if not worse. Many observers ascribe such dismal economic situation to corruption that has pervaded our public institutions even more forcefully after the restoration of democracy. While this may be partly true, I believe that the major reason behind our dismal economic performance is the failure of our policy makers to formulate economic policies, let alone sound economic policies. Despite unprecedented advances in the field of communication and high-tech industries around the world, Nepalese policy makers are still in oblivion. Yes, in oblivion! An outdated concept of "agricultural development for poverty alleviation" still predominates the Nepalese policy arena. While strengthening of agricultural sector is not a bad idea altogether, it is important to invest our limited resources more in the areas where we command comparative advantages, if we are to enjoy the fruits of economic development. A few such areas that come to my mind are tourism, water resources, and high-tech industries. While tourism and water resources have gained ample attention, though inappropriately in most instances, investment in high-tech sector is a very new concept for Nepal. Even more so the export of high-tech manpower to the industrialized nations such as the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. In this short note, I would like to chart a workable policy framework for the export of high-tech manpower that can prove an engine for economic growth in Nepal.

As a first step, Nepal can strengthen, in terms of both number and quality, the existing undergraduate programs in Computer Science and Engineering at Tribhuvan and Kathmandu Universities. Since both of these universities have very good physical and other infrastructure, the expansion of the capacity would not cost to our government much. Similarly, a few changes in the curriculum, perhaps the addition of a few courses in software Engineering, and the way the classes are conducted can substantially enhance the quality of the program. Since we lack experts in the field, some courses can be offered in module to tap the expertise of visiting scholars.

Second, our government in collaboration with commercial banks can make loans available to the recent graduates who want to pursue their post-graduate studies in Computer Science or Electrical (Electronic) Engineering in the US universities. I emphasize on the post-graduate programs only because it takes not only less time and cost to complete but also offers opportunities to strengthen an undergraduate program at home. In the beginning, the loan can be made available to a few talented but poor grads and can later be expanded as the program kicks off. Since all of these prospective students would be coming to the US under student visas, the program demands no bilateral or other form of labor treaty.

At present, many talented electronic engineering and computer science graduates end up unemployed for several months or even years due to the lack of proper job opportunities in Nepal. Given the acute shortage of high-tech manpower in the US and other industrial nations, if these

graduates can get some support from the government, they can turn into real diamonds for the nation. It is evident from the current high-tech wage rate in the US that is almost 70 times higher than Nepalese wage rate. An average salary in the US high-tech industries for a recent grad with a master's degree is over \$ 55.0 k.

The amount of loan can vary from \$ 5,000 to \$ 15,000 as deemed necessary, depending upon the cost of tuition and the economic status of the borrowing student. Given a high return of such investment, students would be willing to pay a much higher interest than the going market rate, currently estimated at 15 to 18%. The scheme is mutually beneficial, as the banks can get higher return from their investments and the students turn their education into a windfall.

Third, with the support from the government, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the banks can easily ensure the timely payment of the interest and the loan. The government can impose some restriction in the renewal of the passport of the borrowing student; it can make such renewal contingent upon the timely payments of the interest

and the loan after the student is employed.

In addition to the direct benefit that both the students and the banks get, this program can have a multiplier effect in the Nepalese economy. Within a few years, each student would be sponsoring several of his/her relatives, multiplying the export of high-tech skills every year. It would then be hardly a surprise that thousands of Nepalese would become a backbone of several silicon valleys around the Americas, as do Indians and Chinese. After a few years, capital and technology would also start flowing into Nepal. As these former borrowers turn into rich entrepreneurs, many of them would prefer to return or at least invest in Nepal to take the advantage of our lower wage rate. After a decade or two, Kathmandu would turn into another Silicon Valley of South Asia.

(Dr. Shrestha is an environmental economist and former assistant professor at Pulchowk Engineering College. He envisions tactical economic policies for Nepal. He is also a Nepal Vision Canada correspondent)



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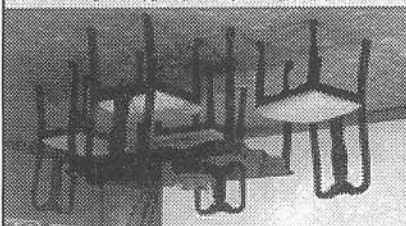
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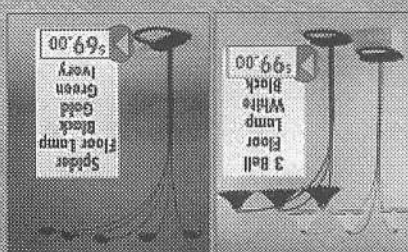


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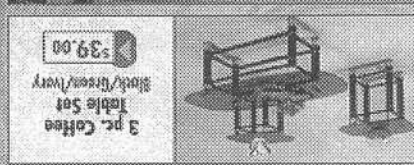
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including large files and visual images and a tremendous volume of statistical information at very high speed. Today, people have to travel to bigger cities to register vital statistics or apply for driver's licenses and ID cards. There would always be long queues of people in the local offices. Clerks have to collect statistical information from the people, put them in huge files. Retrieval of information from such files is a time consuming task. With the implementation of the satellite network, things will improve. The network will allow citizens to register anywhere except in the most remote regions. A transaction can be automatically entered at a regional office and the information could be distributed through the network right way. As an example, driver's license information that usually takes a while to get into the system would take less than half an hour. In addition to the improved service and coverage, it provides a reliable, high quality data transmission, and better response times. As a result, Government planners would gain a more in-depth understanding of the demographics of the country. In addition, it reduces the need for people from villages or small towns to have to travel to cities for a simple task.

d. Internet Access

The advent of networking and digital communications coupled with the development Internet security has transformed the way business transactions are carried out these days. The number of companies doing business in this manner has skyrocketed. This new way of doing business is a paradigm shift from the traditional way and is likely to grow exponentially in the years ahead. Nepal is definitely going to be affected by this new ways of doing business and the number of business transactions enabled electronically, or by the web is certainly going to increase in Nepal. In this knowledge-based economy, another factor causing the increased use of the net in Nepal would be the need for gathering information from the web. Furthermore, the increased number of e-mail users also increases the net traffic. There are now an estimated 9,000 Internet Subscribers, and number totaling about 30,000 if the e-mail facilities are included. This translates for the need of a fast, reliable, cost-effective, and high bandwidth link. The main advantage of using a satellite network is the reliable and high-speed connectivity it is able to provide for remotely located sites. Since Internet users use TCP/IP based protocol, it is imperative that the equipment in the link also support TCP/IP. A TDM/TDMA system using satellite router is recommended for Internet access. All the remote VSATs would have satellite routers in their system that directs the IP packet to the appropriate destination using TDMA packets.

The Hub would have a local connection to the Internet Service Provider (ISP). All the remote users wanting to access the Internet would be routed over satellite to the Hub and then to the ISP. As the demand for Internet access grows, more user sites can be added to the satellite VSAT network. The length of time required to implement new sites, which plagues the terrestrial system, will no longer exist. Response time will be much faster as compared to the inconsistent performance of the telephone lines. According to the report by IIDS, license has already been provided for 4 VSAT Networking Service Providers and 13 VSAT Networking users in the private sector.

e. Distance learning and Telemedicine

Distance Learning is a service that benefits students who are not co-located with the instructor. An instructor can be located in a different city and can broadcast lectures to students. For this application, it is imperative that the communications link is fast, reliable and offers high availability. A star based VSAT solution is recommended for such an application. The instructor's presentation is broadcast from the hub to all the remote classroom locations simultaneously. The remote sites can have been equipped with the necessary tools to respond back to the instructor. In this manner, a lecture could be broadcasted by a Professor at TU and "attended" by a student based in Biratnagar.

Telemedicine is yet another example of a satellite based application (similar to distance learning) where a expert doctor can create a video conferencing link with doctors at remote sites and communicate details of their surgery or some other pertinent medical information. This eliminates the need for patients needing emergency consultation to travel to travel to bigger cities which is very time consuming and risky.

3. CONCLUSION

Looking at the current economic and social trends in Nepal, it is possible to envisage a future where the populace is going to demand a cheap, reliable, and high-speed link. As we look ahead to pave our country's future path professionals, leaders, policy-makers, and entrepreneurs should all endeavor to implement communications infrastructure solutions that are geared towards meeting the demands of the populace. The idea is to not limit ourselves with what we have, but to look out for better alternatives. Another issue to seriously consider is that the successful implementation of any Telecommunication System calls for a careful study of system requirements, proper system design and analysis, and sound

program management. To conduct all these activities seriously and efficiently requires that the Telecom operator team be free to make independent decisions. This can be achieved by operating in an environment, which is, unaffected by political pressures as well as vested interests of different groups. This calls for a deregulation of the telecom sector and the provision of an environment where private telecom operators can burgeon.

The government has already encouraged other private telecom operators by providing licenses for VSATs, but should also allow access to the satellite space segment (bandwidth), which only NTC is able to do at present. Increased number of Telecom operators/providers would result in the delivery of a reliable, high speed, and cheaper communication solution to

the country. To that end, several technologies like terrestrial link (copper/fiber), microwave, and satellite could be employed, either in a stand-alone mode or in conjunction with other technologies. In my opinion, Satellite Communications would prove to be a useful means for paving our way into the information age.

This article is based on presentations in Nov 1998 at Kathmandu University EE Department and at Nepal Internet User's Group Seminar

(Mr. Thapa, graduate of Bristol University, U.K. and University of Southern California, keeps keen interest in the telecommunication infrastructure development in Nepal. He is also a Pacific correspondent of Nepal Vision.)

From Kingwood to Kathmandu

- Rebecca Wolf

For many of you that have been transplanted to Houston, you must have experienced culture shock upon arriving in your new home. As a Houstonian, who is currently living in Kathmandu, I want to briefly share some of the struggles and joys that I have encountered.

I recently spent a week in a village outside Bhaktapur and gained many cultural insights. I have come to realize that even though our cultures are vastly different, there are elements of the human heart that are universal.

I noticed the quietness and beauty of the village. There were only occasional buses passing through, so there was hardly any traffic and noise pollution. Being a Houstonian, I am always awed at the beauty of the endless fields and rolling hills of Nepal. I love my home in Texas, but it does not compare in anyway to the natural beauty and ancient charm of Nepal.

A second thing that caught my attention was the amount of hard manual labor the women do in the fields. Coming from a traditional American family, I generally think of that as a man's job while women should do less strenuous tasks. I began to notice the deeply rooted caste system. There seems to be a constant awareness of where one fits into the social structure. Even young children seem to have learned their "proper" place in the society.

I observed some very familiar family interactions compare to mine. My host family consisted of an older couple who live with their son and daughter-in-law, grandson and granddaughter-in-law, and two great-grandsons. As I watched the family, I realized they were much like my own. I saw the great-grandmother trying to steal a few hugs from her unwilling great-grandsons. This reminded me of the many times I have watched my own brothers try to squirm away from an affectionate grandmother. I also enjoyed watching the great-grandmother try to sneak some extra sugar to put on her yogurt. After her daughter-in-law left the kitchen, she whispered to her great-granddaughter, "Pass the sugar." I could just picture my own grandmother who likes to whisper, "Pass the salt" while her children are not looking. Through observing this family, I began to realize that family bonds cross all cultures.

I have learned that to successfully live in another culture, I must focus on the universals, the shared feelings, experiences, and mutual understandings. Dwelling on the differences will make me homesick and frustrated in my new country. I hope during your stay in America, you must have discovered some similarities of the heart that have eased your cultural adjustment.

- Ms. Wolf, graduate of Texas A&M University in Public Health, did her summer-internship with a NGO in Kathmandu when she was a Junior. Currently, she is studying Nepali Language at Biswo Bhasa Campus in Kathmandu. She is keenly interested in anything Nepal/Nepali.

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book review

Jung Bahadur Rana: The Story of His Rise and Glory

Author: Purushottam Shum Shere J. B. Rana

Publisher: Book Faith India, Delhi, 1998,

Jangabahadur Rides Again

- Swarnim Wagle

What are most remarkable about this book are the painstakingly detailed contents that it carries. The hundred years of rule by the Rana clan (1846 - 1951) bridged the country's transition from a secluded medieval territory to a modern nation-state. Jung Bahadur's story is thus not only a tale intertwined with anecdotes of an ambitious eccentric and somewhat inspiring initiatives by a rather good politician, but it is also an account of the beginnings of the existing Nepali state and its early struggles to remain sovereign. While the author has done a good job as a storyteller exposing the life of an almost mythical character, he has chosen to leave it to the readers to judge for themselves the brutality of time in a newly unified kingdom under the throes of consolidation.

Born Bir Narsingh Kunwar in 1817, Jung, was destined to rule. And, rule, he would, like a real ruler. But circumstances that marked his gradual rise appear to be of other people's making, especially those in the nobility. Jung, in this book, comes across as a relaxed rogue who played it cool all the way to simply outwit everyone else in seizing the best moments. Once the moments were his, they would never be let gone. This is clear when readers find that Jung shot his own prime minister uncle to please an unfaithful queen and her lover; that he murdered the lover to turn the queen love-mad; that he used the madness of the queen to kill most of his potential rivals; and as fifty-five of the day's top brass lay slain in one congested courtyard, he had himself declared the Prime Minister with the formality of the royal seal duly completed. On the bloody night of 12 September 1846, when Jung rose to become Prime Minister, and never fall again, he was merely 29 years old.

The next fascinating episode of Jung's life - and indeed Nepali foreign policy - began in 1850 when he became the "first leader in Asia" to visit Victorian England. Purushottam Rana's coverage of Jung's sojourn in Europe is not only fascinating because of the little details ("Jung's 17-member delegation boarded The Haddington in Calcutta on 7 April 1850"), but also for bringing out interestingly the skilled

manners with which Jung used native diplomacy and military flair to impressive effect in England, forcing his powerful hosts to take him and the land he represented more seriously than they hitherto or would otherwise have had. After three months in England, Jung had gone on to stay for another month and a half in France, where he had let his republican hosts know of his desire to see a "parade of one-hundred-thousand men." Having rubbed shoulders with leaders of empires for almost one year, Jung returned to the Nepal valley on 6 February 1851 following a protracted stopover in India, where he found time to fit in a proper marriage ceremony between the Princess of Katak and himself. At home though, attempts to kill him and besmirch his stature had already been planned. Rumours were rife that Jung had taken meals prepared by Christians and had slept with European women.

So complacent does Jung eventually appear about the security of his hold on power that in 1856 he resigned from the post of Prime Minister and conferred upon himself the hereditary title of Shree Teen. By lending the British a substantial military support during the suppression of the Indian Mutiny a year later, Jung secured back the swathe of territory in the west that was lost in the Anglo-Nepal war of 1814-16, and earned a knighthood from Queen Victoria.

Describing acts that reflect Jung's versatile persona, the author gives examples of how Jung prevented his sister-in-laws from committing Sati; how he instituted the *Jamindari* system to raise land revenue; how he ordered the first survey of the country; and how he gave the country its first written civil code. The author also elaborates on Jung's little known second visit to England that could not materialise. With a contingent that included 120 bodyguards, Jung had left Kathmandu in 1874. It was only put off after he had a nasty accident on a horse in Bombay.

Many events during Jung's reign reflect his conscious effort to preserve Nepal's sovereign status. Whenever the Ranas felt that their status had been relegated (e.g., being given a 17-gun salute instead of the preferred 19, or being assigned a seat alongside Indian princes), they protested boldly - and successfully. If there ever was one issue on which the oligarchs would not budge, it seems, it would be this country's desire to remain independent. This message has come out strongly in the book, and is perhaps one deed of the Ranas that ought to receive a sympathetic evaluation from historians.

Although the author has taken a damaged manuscript written anonymously as his source, the accounts generally appear as honest reporting. Because most events described here can be corroborated by reliable sources already published, there exists

little room for doubts over the authenticity of the contents. Purushottam Rana, in fact, deserves credit for making this bank of information on an important figure accessible to a wider audience. One wishes though that a more in-depth analysis of the chain of events of nineteenth century Nepal, instead of just plain narration, would have enriched the worth of the book further. But to be fair, the author, on his part, is absolutely clear right from the front page on the scope of his work - it is not an academic treatise but a story. And for a

story, there may be few that are as engrossing as that of Sir Jung.

(Born in Gorkha, Swarnim Wagle studied at the London School of Economics before returning to work in Nepal between 1997 and 1999, during which period he intensified his interests in Nepali politics and history. This review was first published in the December 1998 issue of the Kathmandu Post Review of Books. Swarnim can be reached with comments at waglesw@ksg.harvard.edu)

Harvard Square Ko Gaf :Exchanging International Experience

- Ujjwal Bhattarai

Evenings in Harvard Square are beautiful—beyond words. Meeting with friends there gives not only moments of exuberance but also a mesmerizing intellectual stimulation. *Au Bu Pain* (pronounced aa-bu-pe) lies just beside the Harvard Square, which serves as our meeting place to drink latte, to play chess and of course to discourse for hours.

That is where I met Theresa and Conner. Theresa Asakuma is a half American and half Japanese. She is my *sempai*. The day I met her, only Japanese word I knew was to thank, *Domo arigato gozaimasu* and to bow. Surprisingly, those two things brought me closer to my *sempai*. I knew *sempai-kohai* relationship is quite common in Japan. Whenever an elderly person and younger person are working (chatting in our case) together, *Sempai* as a senior is expected to indulge his *kohai*, and put up with all sorts of youthful excesses and errors from the junior. My other friend Captain Conner is a very educated and experienced person, the kind I like to hang with. He had lived and worked in Japan for a long time. He had previously told me that he used to work as a security consultant in a huge Japanese company. He spoke fluent Japanese, understood all the Japanese gestures and cultures and their

implications. He knew flawlessly “when to” and “how to” bow gracefully, an art which is never expected for foreigners to master. To be quite honest, it was he, who taught why, and how to study and respect foreign cultures and practices.

That evening conversation drifted towards sharing international experience. However, first I wanted to know more about Asakuma's past. Therefore, I requested Asakuma to tell more about herself. On our first meeting couple of weeks ago, when I had asked her if she were a Japanese, she had given me an odd and a crooked smile. She told me she was born in Hokkaido in the North of Japan. That was all I knew. That evening upon my modest request, she continued the story of her past. “My father was a Black American soldier in the base and my mother worked in a noodle shop where air force personnel visited,” she added. Even today, she had strange bitterness in her voice. “You know what *burakumin* are?” she asked. “They are untouchables of Japan. Before marriage, both bride and groom's family check each other's family history to be sure that there is no *burakumin* in the past. They are descendants of tanners and leather workers. I was lower than *burakumin* because I was deformed, I was shameful. In that country town, elders wished me dead, and children always cruelly teased me for my *ainiko* – big American nose.” Conner supported her “Japanese culture is very society based. If you are excluded once, it is for

all. Actually, foreigners, (and their children) can never be the *Japanese*.” I mentioned “One of my friends working in Japan, had told me the last two seats to be filled in the subway were the ones on either side of him. I sometime feel the same way here in States. May be, all foreigners feel unsolicited in any country to some extent. Conner said “No, Americans are more friendly to foreigners, at least more than Japanese.” and he added “Japanese airline stewardesses always asks passengers if they minded seating next to me – *gajun*, a foreigner, as if I did not understand Japanese”. I said, however, Japanese are great people, the most hardworking and the most innovative, the most courteous and most exploring. “Oh yeal” very exploring”, Theresa seemed to agree and added 150,000 Japanese students come to USA each year to study while 200 American students go to Japan.”

Nevertheless, I started to get a feeling that Japanese separate foreigners from their main stream more than necessary, cut joke behind them, create exclusion and subtly patronize. So I asked Theresa, “Are Japanese people Japanese first and human being second.” She just smiled shrugged her shoulder and said “family is family.”

Conner further said, “Japanese have very new way to do business. Exploring is a part of business. A Japanese studying in America studies the life style of Americans, understands the social and cultural values, but never forgets

where she came from and what her mission is. Japanese are tough. They say "business is war" and they mean it" Conner was serious.

"Business is war" I liked the idea. May be that is why world drives Honda or Toyota today more than any other car. World gets its evening news in Sony's TV set, world uses Toshiba Notebook for its business ... and think about Philips, Minolta, Yashika, Sanyo, Casio and all other market leader companies. No one can compete with them. They beat Americans and Europeans all alike. I always wondered "how?" I thought that might be the answer.

Quite enjoying his latte, Conner requested me to tell how was my experience here in the States. Obviously, when I first entered America, I had found quite significant differences. I was prepared for it. However, when I attended my first class in my University, I was not quite prepared for what I saw. I started recite from my memory "I was startled; nearly everyone in the class was Asian, both men and women. Those who were not Oriental were Indian or Pakistani. Out of thirty students only, three were white. I asked my Advisor, Dr. Sanders about it. He said it is very true that any Engineering or Physics class does not attract many Americans. It has been that way for years. Industry cannot find them either. We would be shit freak if we didn't have Orientals and Indians who come here to get doctorates in math and engineering, and then work for American companies." He added, "However, that is changing quickly. My Asian students are starting to go home. Koreans are going back to Korea. Taiwanese the same. Even Indians are returning home. The standard of living is going up in their countries and there is more opportunity back home now. Some of these foreign countries have large numbers of well-trained people. Dr. Sanders led me to

his office with a huge desk with a mess of stacked up books and papers, and asked me if I knew which city has the highest number of Ph. D.'s per capita in the world?" I replied, "Having 62 colleges and Universities around, it must be Boston." "Seoul, Korea," he said. "And now with foreign students going home, we don't have enough engineers to do American research; to create American technology. It is a simple balance sheet. Not enough trained people. Even big companies like IBM, Intel is starting to have trouble. Trained people simply do not exist. Getting curious, I asked "But how about these all new high-tech jobs? Don't they attract American students?" "No, not like investment banking, or law," he added with a laugh.

Story did not stopped there. What Dr. Sanders said next gave me an idea where America stood on that day. I got the picture of what American youths wanted. Dr. Sanders continued, "America may lack engineers and scientists, but we lead the world in production of lawyers. America has half the lawyers in the entire world. Think of that. America has five percent of world population, twenty-five percent of world economy but we have fifty percent of lawyers. In addition, we are producing thirty-five thousand more every year. That is where our productivity is directed. It is a land of "Law." Everybody is suing, everybody is disputing. After all, three quarters of a million American lawyers have to do *something*. They have to make their three-hundred-thousand a year. Aren't we crazy?" He seemed frustrated. "Even our brightest kids are now ranked twelfth in the world, after industrialized countries of Asia and Europe. That is our top students. At the bottom, it is worse. One-third of high school graduates cannot read a bus schedule. They are illiterate. And to make things worse—they are lazy. I teach Physics,

and it takes years to master. Nevertheless, all the kids want to dress like Charlie Sheen and make a million dollar before they're twenty-five. The only way to make that kind of money is in law, investment banking, and Wall Street. That is what current America is."

Now it was Conner's turn to share his experience in Japan as a foreigner. Out of his vast experience, he pulled one of his stories about scandals. "In America, public forgets scandals rather quickly than in Japan. In Japan, scandal is the most common way of revising the pecking order. Of getting rid of a powerful opponent. It is a routine procedure there. You uncover the vulnerability, and you leak it to the press, or to the government investigators. A scandal inevitably follows and the person or organization is ruined. That is how the Recruit scandals brought down Prime Minister Tanaka in the seventies. As Asakuma mentioned earlier business is war in Japan and they mean it," Conner further stated. "You know, Japan always tells America and the world that their markets are open; not quite. Well, in the old days, if a Japanese bought an American car, the government audited him. Soon, nobody bought the American car. The officials shrug: what can they do? The market is open: they cannot help it if nobody wants an American Car. The obstructions were endless. Foreign skis were once banned because Japanese snow was said to be wetter than European and American snow. Foreign drugs can only be tested in Japanese labs on Japanese nationals. Every imported car had to be individually tested on the dock to make sure it complies with exhaust-emission laws."

"To get better hand in business, Japanese would do anything. OK, what happened to American TV industry?" he

questioned. After World War II, America was the world's leading manufacturer of televisions. Twenty-seven American companies like Zenith, RCA, GE, and Emerson had a solid technological lead over foreign manufacturers. They were successful all over the world except Japan because Japan wanted the American companies to license their technology to Japanese companies. It was necessary for American government to keep Japan a friendly ally against Russia. Now, licensing is a bad idea. Soon Japan began to make cheap black-and-white TVs and export them to America. By 1972, sixty percent of American black-and-white TVs were imported from Japan and by 1976, the figure went to hundred percent. All American black-and-white TV workers were jobless. However, it did not matter much because America was already in color TV age. Once again, Japanese licensed the American color TV technology and by 1980, only three American companies were making TVs. By 1987, only one Zenith and which is far behind in competition."

I objected to the whole story. "Japanese TVs are better and cheaper, so they take the market." Conner contradicted and said, "Japanese TVs might be better but not cheaper. They were only cheaper because they were sold below production cost, to wipe out American competitors. That is called dumping which is illegal in America but not in Japan. Japanese think in long term unlike Americans. In America if a company's profits were reduced in 3 months, then the next day the CEO would be on street. After Japanese captured the American TV market, guess what, many American companies sued in Federal courts. Japanese spent millions against the antitrust and sued brought against them in Washington via their

lobbyists. By the time court decided on all those cases, twelve years had passed by and American companies could never fought back. In one of the anti-trust cases federal judge sent a Houdaille's (an American VCR Company) lawyer to Japan to gather evidence but the Japanese refused to issue him a visa." I objected again "But by dumping you lose money, how can a Japanese company survive?" Conner replied, "Yes, for a while. But you're selling a millions of units, so you can refine your production lines, and get your cost down. A couple of years later, you really can make products for a lower cost. Japanese think what will happen in fifty years from now not like American who wants profit every three months. Japanese want market share, wiping out the competition. That is what they have done in steel, consumer electronics, machine tools, and all other basic industries." I had another question. "So why don't Americans change their strategy? Don't they understand what is going on?" Asakuma, who had been quietly listening, commented, "Why do you think Americans eat hamburgers?" We all laughed loudly, even though I was not quite sure what it meant. Asakuma gave another example. "Why is a Japanese camera cheaper in New York than in Tokyo? You ship it halfway around the world, pay import tax, distribution costs, and it is still cheaper. Japanese tourists buy their own products in America because they are cheaper. Meanwhile, American products cost seventy percent more than they cost in America." I said, "It seemed American antitrust laws working against itself." Conner agreed and took a case of Universal Studios. "Several American companies tried to buy it but could not. Westinghouse tried in 1980; No deal, violates anti-trust laws. RCA tried; No deal. But

when Matsushita came in and there were no laws to prevent it. Therefore, Universal Studios was gone. You know, NHK (Japanese News Company) is starting Global News Network with a billion dollar in capitalization. Soon we may hear they have taken over Ted Turner's CNN."

Conner added, "Japan has controlled the world's technology. Now to control the American technology, Japanese are trying to control the Universities." I did not understand what he meant. "It is a business about professorships at universities like M.I.T." I could not believe it and exclaimed it must be illegal. "Nope, they're supporting scholarship. A very noble idea. Can you imagine havoc on any department of any university to lose a funding? That is the game they are playing. Money comes from Japan. On the other hand if an American company want to buy a Japanese company, it is virtually impossible." I objected, "GM own Isuzu, right?" "Nope just one-third, not a controlling interest. Whenever you want to buy a company, first you have to approach its bank and the get then agreement of bank. Bank never agrees. Some how you manage with bank and soon you will find that "Japan is closed" like T Boone Pickens did; He bought one-fourth of the stock of a Japanese company, but still he could not get on the board of directors. Japan is closed in business."

Asakuma seemed to agree with Conner on many issues, however not all. She brought out the topic of conservation and recycling. She said, "What America needs today is conservation. Americans think that conservation is synonymous with diminution of life-style. No. It is synonymous with more wealth, power, and freedom. The idea is to have

efficient heaters in houses, more efficient cars on streets and to have cleaner air and better health. If you tell an American that they have to conserve gas in their car, they would think that they will have to leave their car back or drive less or something like that. The idea is to develop cars that are more efficient. Japan has done it, so why American cannot do it. In last twenty years, Japan cut the energy cost of finished goods by sixty percent. America has done nothing. Japan now makes products cheaper than America

because they have pushed investment in energy-efficient technology. Conservation is competitive and Americans are not competitive."

I thought, like Conner and Asakuma a part of my sense of duty should also be to study the culture and life-style of this land and these people. I found myself in a situation where I am lost in my own small world and myself. I told myself, from today, green dollar would not be the only thing that I will seek.

(Conner, Asakuma, Dr. Conner are fictitious characters and the philosophy of Japanese economical behavior is based on M. I. T's visiting professor Michael Crichton's "Rising Sun".)

Harvard Square Ko Gaf is a permanent column of Nepal Vision and Ujjwal Bhattarai will be regularly writing it from Boston, MA. (Mr. Bhattarai works for a software consulting in Boston, MA. He is a NAH Atlantic correspondent)

COMES THE DAWN

After a while you learn the subtle difference between holding a hand and chaining a soul, And, you learn that love doesn't mean security, and you begin to accept your defeats with your head held high and your eyes wide open, with the grace of a woman, not the grief of a child. You learn to build your own roads today because tomorrow's ground is too uncertain for plans, and futures have a way of falling down in mid-flight.

After a while you learn that even sunshine burns if you get too much of it, so you plant your own garden and decorate your own soul, instead of waiting for someone to bring flowers. And, you learn that you really can endure, that you really are strong and you really worth. And, you learn and learn, with every goodbye you learn.



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The Game of Football "Soccer"

- Dinker Amatya

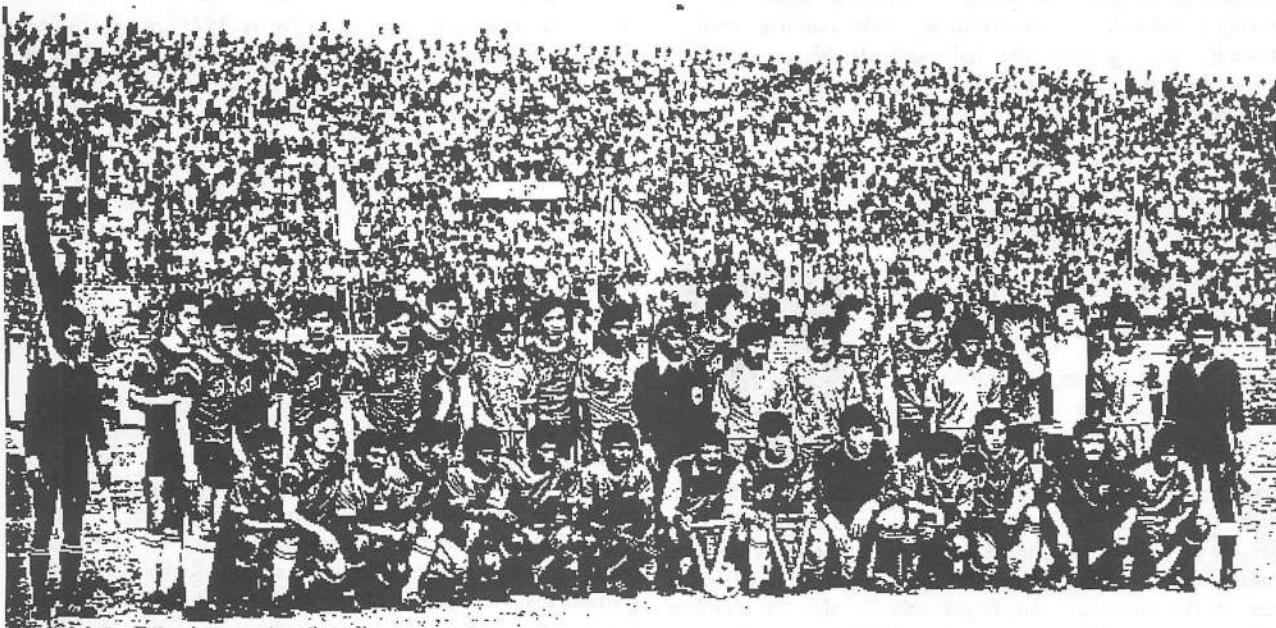
Football "soccer" is the most popular game on earth. For those of you who aim sky-high, football is a game that offers rewards. However, it requires complete dedication and sacrifice to succeed, and to be remaining successful.

Here is a spherical ball, just asking to be kicked. You kick it hard, aimlessly at first. Next, you try to direct your kick so that the ball strikes a particular target. By trial and error, you learn to adjust your kicking action to achieve better, and more consistent results. Opponent enters the field, he attempts to defend the object you are trying to hit. Then soon, you seek to kick it at a target of your own. In no time, you are

conscripted, so much involved in a competitive test of skill, the game of football. Others come to the field and adjust their defense and sides accordingly.

Now days, you find that this is no longer an individual test of skill but a team game. Gradually, teammates learn the value of assisting one another, if only to defeat the opponent. Thus, in order ensure fair game, unbiased officials are vital.

Football is a pleasantly simple game, a go-go-go-game, based on human instinctive actions such as running, jumping, kicking etc. When FIFA (Federation International de Football Association) drafted the first football laws in 1862, they first defined the meaning of scores, i.e. what is a goal? "A goal is scored whenever the ball is forced through the goal post." Today the rules are more detailed, but the meaning converges



Nepal National Football team, 1983; Dinker Amatya stands on 8th place on the standing row from right.

to the same point. The team that scores the most goals wins the match. The object remains the same as it always was.

Football always remained a simple game, complicated only by those who play it. Individual techniques obviously improved over the years and continued to improve. However, by far the biggest improvement has been in team play, individuals learning to knit their skills together to build an efficient conglomerate. Good teamwork is the key to success in the modern football, and the number of matches your team wins judges the level of success.

Physique does not hinder your career in football, as compare to many other sports. Diego Maradona, 5-5, Pele, 5-8 are just the few instances of the many that strikes your mind immediately.

You will not get anywhere without enthusiasm. Football at any level is fun, but the better you can play the more fun you can gain. Fitness, courage and determination makes the game of football more effective. Remember though, courage cannot be taught. Cleanliness and unselfishness are also equally important characteristics of good sportsmanship.

Today there are so many other forms of amusement available that youngsters are not inclined to practice and play football so frequently. As a result fundamental ball-skills are in decline and comparatively considered low-standard. This is a serious issue in an age where youngsters are more prone to indoor environmental-controlled-sports. Football skills include kicking (*mudhèbal with hosti*), the instep kick, trapping, heading, tackling, running with the ball and dribbling (*challaunè*), throwing-in, the corner kick, passing and positioning yourself to receive the pass etc. etc.

Pèlè from Brazil is the best football player ever born, they call him "Emperor of Football". Born on October 23, 1940 in a small town, namely, Tres Coracoes, in Brazil. his full name is Edson Arantes do Nascimento. He is the only player in the world played three times and won World Cup championship. He played the first World Cup in 1958 when he was mere 17 years old. The football loving people all over the world adored Pèlè. Still, Pèlè is one of the best-liked athletes in the world. Many kings and presidents invited him to visit their country. President of the Brazil stated that Pele is a national treasure. During the war that took place between Biafra and Nigeria in Africa, they ceased the war for a day for Pèlè's game in Nigeria. After the game, the war ceased for one more day for him to cross the cross the border to Biafra.

The simple truth is *football* is the world's most popular game. Encourage your children to play *football*.

(Mr. Amatya founded Three Star Club in 1973 and was in the national team in late 70's and early 80's. He moved to the States in 1984. Currently, he is a one of the few successful Nepali businesspersons in the States. He lives in Houston.)

inside kollywood

Yum Baral, Illamè Jewel

- Dikchhya Bhatta

*badalu ko ghumto le Illam Bazaar chhopinda
maile sub lai birshe chhu
timilai samjbinda.....*



Though Yum Baral started his singing career way back since 2044 B.S. with the song *Sagar Bhanda Gahiro Timro Preet Bhaidiyo* he did not gain much popularity till he came up with *Badalu ko.....* released in 2049 B.S. Today, Yum Baral is one of the most popular singer who is able to establish himself as a versatile artist in the Nepali Musical Scenario ... a voice equally suitable in movies, private albums - a folk or a modern music.

Yum Baral, born on the hills of Illam Bazaar, descended to Kathmandu in seek of better education. While studying his high school education at Bijaya Memorial School, he won a scholarship in Classical Music from the Royal Nepal Academy. With a year in classical music training, he also managed to successfully pass the *voice test* in Radio Nepal. With his hard and dedicated perseverance, he was placed third and first in the Modern Nepali Song Contest held on the

occasion of the 42nd and 43rd Anniversary of Radio Nepal, respectively.

He recalls his day of struggle when he desperately sought for recognition and was anxious to sing even at *welcome functions* in various colleges in Kathmandu. He used to perform the songs of Narayan Gopal and Bhaktaraj Acharya, dreaming to make his own goodwill, as Yum Baral one day. He remembers how badly he was treated by the guards of Radio Nepal, when he was not allowed in, when he was desperately trying to gather information in music and Radio Nepal. He realized that he would have to rut his own path of success. He says "Of course I don't have anything against them (guard) a but I knew by then that I will have to do something to rise above such humiliations." When he got an appointment to sing in Radio Nepal, he meticulously went through lyrics and chose the lucky golden song of his career, *badalu ko ghumto ma.....* When asked about it he says "I selected this song as it had a sentimental value for me, my Illam... and the words are so beautiful and meaningful, I felt like this was the right song for me; it highlights my village with so much crisp, it was hard to resist."

The lucky golden song was the turning point in Yum's career.

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प्रिय प्रद्युम्न श्रेष्ठ जी, नेपाल

विक्रम सम्वत् १९५८ अषाढ/भाद्रमाको पहिलो अंक "नेपाल भिजन" पढाउनु भएकोमा हार्दिक अभ्यवाह आपन गर्दिछु।

नेपाली साहित्यमा राष्ट्रिय चरमपराकाइ उत्थानित विदेशमा रहेका नेपालीहरू बिच परस्पर सहयोग, मदत र साहित्यगतको भावना जागृत गराउने माध्यमको रूपमा साहसवादीको मुनीत अन्तरमा अंग्रेजी भाषामा प्रकाशित "नेपाल भिजन"ले उल्लेख अन्वेषण पनि प्रशस्नीय छ। विभिन्न विषयहरूलाई साहित्यिक प्रकाशित गरिएका लेखनहरू अति महत्वपूर्ण र सारगर्भित छन्।

"नेपाल भिजन"ले नेपाली भाषा र्क पनि हस्तिलत गरि नेपालीमा लेखिएका लेखन, विवेक, ज्ञानताहरूलाई पनि यसमा स्थान दिनु भन्ने भन्ने गर्नुमा अर्को सार्थकता लाग्ने थियो र साथै विदेशमा रहेका पनि आफ्नो भाषाको धर्म- विवेक र ज्ञानलाई गर्नु हुने सम्बन्ध पुग्ने थियो।

"One pound a month fund for Nepal" अनि छापिएको विज्ञापन गर्नु वा सुन्नु अति उपभोगी देखिन्छ। भन्ने उल्लेखको परिपूर्तिमा लाग्ने विभिन्न देशहरूबाट नेपालीहरूको भोजन तथा सहयोग अति प्रभावकारी मानित भएका छन्। यसको परिकल्पना गर्ने श्री शक्ति सिद्ध ज्ञानलाई हार्दिक अभ्यवाह छ। लीडनबाट प्रकाशित हुने मासिक पत्रिका "नेपालका भद्रहरू"को माध्यम द्वारा पनि भन्ने गर्नु जानकारी दिनु भएमा अन्वेषण पनि भुविमा बसोबास गरेका नेपालीहरूले अझ बढि सहयोग गर्ने थिए होलान भन्ने मेरो सुझाव छ।

अन्तमा तपाईंहरूको जोगर, उत्साह र कठिन परिश्रमको कदर गरदै कामचारीको कामना गर्दिछु।

म अझ पुर्ब भिजनामा नरहेको भुवा नमो भिजनामा नै सम्पर्क गराउनु होला भन्ने अनुरोध गर्दिछु।

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शुभेन्द्र
१९९९
(इश्वर मानन्धर)
5.8.2000

तडप

पूर्णमाको रातमा
चन्द्रमामा सम्पूर्ण चाँदनी सजिएर पनि
जब सारा रात उदास-उदास हुन्छ
आकाश ढप्प ढाकेर
सदा चम-चम चम्किरहे पनि
जब ताराहरु सुक्क सुक्क गर्न थाल्छन
सम्झनु
तब म तिमीलाइ सम्झन थालेको हुन्छु ।

सिमसिम पानी परिरहँदा
मुस्कुराउँदै सजिएर आएका
इन्द्रधनुषका रंगहरुलाई
केले - केले जब फिका, फुस्रो र नियास्रो बनाउँछ,
अनेक गहना - आभुषणले सजिएर
साथी सगिनीहरुको माझमा नाचिरहँदा पनि

अनायशै, जब तिम्रो ओठको मुस्कान हराउँछ
सम्झनु,
म तिमीलाइ नै सम्झिरहेको हुन्छु ।

रगीचगी मौसमहरुमा
फूलैफूलको माझमा पनि
किन किन कता कता
जब तिम्रो मुटु रून थाल्छ,
दिल दुख्न थाल्छ,
टाढा धेरै टाढा अर्कै देशमा बसिरहँदा पनि
जब मेरा यादहरु तिम्रो परेलीहरुबाट पसेर
अश्रुधारहरु भएर निस्कन खोज्छन,
हो सम्झनु,
त्यतिखेर पनि म तिमीलाइ नै सम्झिरहेको हुन्छु
म तिम्रै यादमा सदा डुबिरहेको हुन्छु ।

सुनिता भटराई

Immediately upon this, he was asked to sing with Poornima Shrestha, a well-established singer in India, in the movie *Simana*. Since then there has been no looking backs, he says "Well, its hard to survive when top producers try to manipulate us and our talent." Recently, he was asked to go to Bombay for a recording of a song. However, the producer asked him to get his own air tickets. Is this fair?

I asked Yum about the future of Nepali singers, he says with optimistic smile "I believe it all depends on the individual. The singer who accepts music as the gift of Saraswati and works hard to please her, has definitely a very good future. Whereas, those who just take it as a hobby and don't honor the music so much seriousness, music will never honor them too." He guesses "A good and popular artist can earn up to 50 to 60 thousand rupees just through a single stage performance, excluding his/her album recordings and advertisements. Now, it is nothing in comparison to foreign artists but this is not too bad in our context and music industries. A stage show abroad brings in even more."

Naulo all the way

- Satish Jung Shahi

If Britney Spears can keep making music that keeps "hitting" the charts again and again, so will Nepalese singers – certainly someday. No matter what, the buzz is already out: many have already started to say that it is high time Nepalese made it big on MTV or bagged a trophy at the Grammy's. The quality of music has certainly shot up with the introduction of private FM channels. After all, it has already been so long since the southern border has been creating ripples on the Western airwaves, and it is high time we branded our music as the "in thing" soon.

That is way too far all right; But, certainly not too far off. Especially when Nepalese musical bands like Gahiro Teer and Dristhi have already launched their albums in the United States. Another such band is Naulo, which has been featured quite a few times in radio station like KCMU in Seattle and have been selling their albums through Amazon.com and MP3.com.

Naulo is a Seattle based Nepali band that wants to expand the bounds of Nepali music. Their first album is a musical experimentation whose product is a Nepali album with

With more than 300 songs in his account, Yum carries *filmi* and *non-filmi* song. Songs like *aba chot haru le poldaina malai*, *gahiro ghau chhati mai chha* in Allarè movie, and *mithuri le chhadera gai baali ..*, *berda berda arka ko bhai baali* of Chhaaya music album are some his recent hits in the market. Lately, his new album *Maan*, said to have a good sales, was jointly produced with Alok Shree, a reputed music composer.

Yum Baral extends his heartily wish of Vijaya Dashami and Dipawali to all the Nepalese abroad. He wishes the lights of the hearts of the entire Nepalese abroad glow brighter ... and ... brighter. He requests all the Nepalese in the Americas, Europe, and rest of the world, not to forget Nepal; there would be no barrier for this distance, in the language of hearts.

- Ms. Bhatta is a freelance journalist, audio jockey, radio disc jockey, and actively involved in social and cultural activities in Kathamandu. She is a NV Nepal correspondent.

musical influences from around the world. "We strive to be original and meaningful, hence the name NAULO," says Bhushan Khanal, one of the two band members.

Naulo got started formally in late January 1999. Currently the band consists of Bhushan Khanal and Sunil Joshi, both who have significant backgrounds in Nepali music. Bhushan Khanal collaborated with three other members of Crossroads to create their first album *Naya Mode*. Sunil has been an invaluable contributor to Nepali music around the Pacific Northwest. The duo finally released their first album *Sapani Ma* on Oct 4th 1999, after working at it for more than 9 months.

Sapani Ma, the Naulo venture, includes nine tasteful tracks with beautifully mastered music. Naulo's capabilities to produce excellent music can be seen in their softer melodious songs like *Jhuke Ra* and *Bageko Teer*. Their Nepalese touch can be actually felt in catchy track like *Pokara Ko Bajar Ma*. Remarkable is their song *Maya Ko*, with musical instruments that are normally not heard in usual Nepali pop songs – and yet sound so Nepali. Nevertheless, the flavour of other tracks as in *Sapani Ma* – the cover track – and *Farki Farki* might be linked to some previous songs of Crossroads, only that it sounds even better this time round.

However, Sapani Ma didn't come easily. Naulo says that many "stumbling blocks" turned up in their endeavour. "The composition and recording was difficult and quite expensive...But we found that the promotion and sales of the album was the hardest part as there are no strong distribution channels we can use to sell such work in the US", says Bhushan Khanal. In fact, Naulo has had experiences like recording their songs in their own kitchen in Seattle.

Meanwhile, the support from the Nepalese community in the United States has been highly commendable. They helped Naulo sell their CD during the Dashain Festival in 1999 at various states—New York, Boston, Washington DC, San Francisco, Denver, Detroit, Seattle and Portland. Even most of their album sales have been through the help of their friends located in the United States.

This certainly doesn't mean that the band which is trying to make a name for Nepali music abroad can't be heard in their own country. Not so long ago, they reached an agreement with Music Nepal that would enable the Nepalese audience to see the album in the local music stores. Let's hope we don't have to wait too long.

In their efforts to reach more people, Naulo has its own web site. Anybody who wishes to know more about the band can log on to www.naulo.com. And that's not the end of Nepalese music in the United States. As Bhushan Khanal puts it: "We will not promise any thing right now but I will say that Sapani Ma will definitely not be our last album." Good work, Naulo...Keep it up!

Naulo kura-kani

SJS: How come you got this idea of launching an album in the United States? How did you get in touch with Sunil?

Bhushan: It was somewhat of an evolution and also a little chance. We both had a lot of interest in music...Sunil had been performing in Seattle for a few years. After I moved to Seattle, we started playing together during Nepali events and at parties, then last year when I bought some recording

equipment, we took it much more seriously and that eventually led to an album.

SJS: How has Sapani Ma been received in the West?

Bhushan: It's very well received...considering the limited promotion we have done. We knew that it would be popular within the Nepalese community but we were very surprised to see how well our friends from other countries accepted it too. We get a lot of people visiting our web site from all over the world, I got an e-mail from a person in Brazil who had heard one of our songs from the web and he sent a really nice thank you note written in Portuguese.

SJS: What is the difference you feel now and then (as a Cross Road-er) in your music?

Bhushan: Good music is good music no matter where you are in the world. We have now matured in our thinking, our musical tastes have changed (hopefully for the better) and we have grown as musicians so all of these permeate through our music to produce a product that is very different from our previous efforts.

SJS: Do you see the possibilities of Nepali music making it big in the global market soon?

Bhushan: Nepali music has a lot of charm and uniqueness that can make it very appealing outside Nepal, a role that is very different from that of Hindi music and we feel that area had not been explored very much. Nepali music has an incredible sense of rhythm and melody and we would like to do all we can to explore and promote it. I have a lot of respect for artists such as Sur Sudha who have helped familiarize our music to the rest of the world but I still feel that there is much more left to do.

SJS: What are your future plans, any more releases?

Bhushan: Music is our hobby, quite a serious one but unfortunately it is not a profession. Yes, we are working on new compositions and will continue to do so as much as we can. This time around we are trying to create something for a wider audiences, not just limited to Nepalis, and we are trying to embrace more of the traditional Nepali music.

quotes

The reasonable man adapts himself to the world; the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man. - *George Bernard Shaw*

The spirit, the will to win, and the will to excel are the things that endure. These qualities are so much more important than the events that occur. - *Vince Lombardi*

No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive. - *Mahatma Gandhi*

houstonnepali

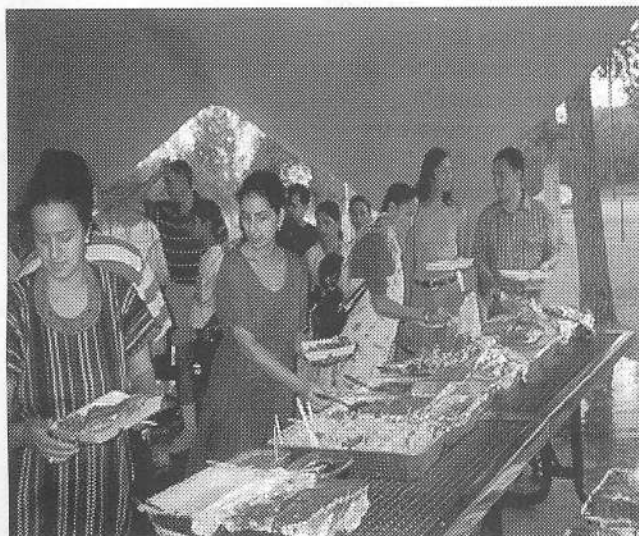


.....a family

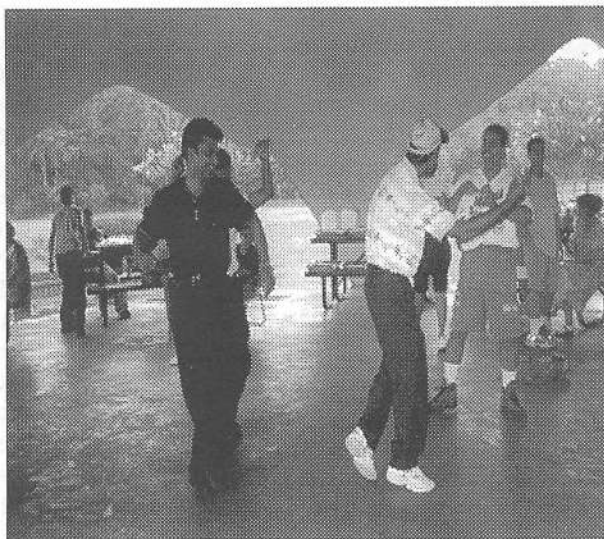


.....NAH President with hip hop crowd

NAH PICNIC 2000 HOUSTON



.....a lunch time



.... fun, lots of fun

Attitude Is Everything

Success at work is more than just performance

Being successful at work is based on more than just your work performance. A large part of it is your attitude. We've all heard the phrase – is the half empty or half full? We know what it means, but how does it apply to the work environment? Easy, it's based on how you see things – either you're an optimist or pessimist.

Being the person in the office with a positive outlook and attitude can really help you get ahead. Being positive means you are a team player. Bosses like that. Here is a list of phrases you can use to project that "can-do" attitude.

The OLD way

The NEW way

It's too complicated.....	We have the opportunity to be first
We don't have the resources.....	Let's look at it from a different angle
It will never work.....	Necessity is the Mother of invention
There's not enough time.....	We'll give it a try
We already tried it.....	We'll reevaluate some priorities
There's no way it'll work.....	We'll learned from the experience
It's a waste of time.....	We can make it work
It's a waste of money.....	Think of the possibilities
We don't have the expertise.....	The investment will be worth it
We can't compete.....	Let's network with those who do
It's good enough.....	We'll get a jump of the competition
We don't have enough money.....	There is always room for improvement
We're understaffed.....	May be there's something we can cut
We don't have enough room.....	We're a lean, mean machine
It will never fly.....	We'll never know, unless we try
We don't have the equipment.....	Maybe we can sub it out
It's not going to be any better.....	We'll try one more time
No one communicates.....	Let's open the challenge
Isn't it time to go home?.....	Days go so quickly around here
I don't have any idea.....	I'll come up with some alternatives
Let someone else deal with it.....	I'm ready to learn something new
We're always changing direction.....	We're in tough with our customers
It's too radical a change.....	Let's take a chance
It takes too long for an approval.....	We'll walk it through the system
Our customer won't buy it.....	We'll do better educating them
It's contrary to policy.....	Anything's possible
It's not my job.....	I'll be glad to take the responsibility

Dear Houstonnepali Association members,

Thank you very much for allowing me to join the Houstonnepali Association. It is my pleasure to join the Houston Nepali community. Although I reside in Mississippi, I am very happy to be a part of this community. No matter where we go and what we do, we must not forget who we are and what we are here for, so I believe that I could devote something to our community and that I could be an integral part of this society.

It is an incredible experience for me to see my county fellows together, since I have not met very many Nepalese ever since I came here in America. I also reviewed the articles that were handed out at the picnic spot. Those articles were well written. Everybody did an awesome job. It shows a commitment to our country and on top of that it shows how this committee is willing to help each other.

I fully enjoyed the picnic, even though I reached late at the picnic spot. Again thank you very much for considering me as a part of your community. I hope and pray that we will stay the same or even excel higher for what we have aimed. I STRONGLY BELIEVE THAT WE WILL HIT THE TARGET.

Regards

Moni Thapa
Mississippi

OBITUARY

NAH is deeply saddened by the demise of the niece of Mr. Narayan Aryal, an active HoustonNepali. She died at the age of 2 while she was undergoing intensive medical treatment in London. May her soul rest in peace.

Executive Members of NAH

President Rajendra Shrestha, Ph.D. Vice President I: Binod Shrestha Vice President II: Bharat Shrestha Secretary: Dinker Amatya Treasurer: Akhil Dhungana Public Relation: Nirmal Shrestha Assistant Secretary: Pradhumna B. Shrestha Assistant Treasurer: Sailesh Sigdya	Members: Mahiraj Aitwal Iroj Ghimire Arpana Dhungana Narayan Silwal Madhukar Amatya Mahesh K.C. Baburam Kharel Satish Neupane Indira Shrestha Biggyan Sharma Narayan Aryal Sanjaya Shrestha
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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 ₁₇	2 ₁₈	3 ₁₉	4 ₂₀	5 ₂₁	6 ₂₂	7 ₂₃
8 ₂₄	9 ₂₅	10 ₂₆	11 ₂₇	12 ₂₈	13 ₂₉	14 ₃₀
15 ₁	16 ₂	17 ₃	18 ₄	19 ₅	20 ₆	21 ₇
22 ₈	23 ₉	24 ₁₀	25 ₁₁	26 ₁₂	27 ₁₃	28 ₁₄
29 ₁₅	30 ₁₆					

Ashwin 11 / September 27: **World Tourism Day**

Dashain Holidays (12-22)

Ashwin 12 / September 28: Ghatasthapana

Ashwin 18 / October 4: Fulpati (Saptami)

Ashwin 19 / October 5: Maha Asthami

Ashwin 20 / October 6: Maha Nawami

Ashwin 22 / October 8: Vijaya Dashami

Ashwin 23 / October 9: **Annapurna Jatra (Asan)**

Ashwin 26 / October 12: **Kojagrat Purnima**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 ₁₇	2 ₁₈	3 ₁₉	4 ₂₀	5 ₂₁
6 ₂₂	7 ₂₃	8 ₂₄	9 ₂₅	10 ₂₆	11 ₂₇	12 ₂₈
13 ₂₉	14 ₃₀	15 ₃₁	16 _{November 1}		17 ₂	18 ₃ 19 ₄
20 ₅	21 ₆	22 ₇	23 ₈	24 ₉	25 ₁₀	26 ₁₁
27 ₁₂	28 ₁₃	29 ₁₄	30 ₁₅			

Kartik 9 / October 25: Kag Tihar

Kartik 10 / October 26: Laxmi Puja

Kartik 11 / October 27: Gai Puja

Kartik 12 / October 28: Gowardhan Puja (Goru Puja), Nepal Sambat 1121 starts

Kartik 13 / October 29: Bhai Tika

Kartik 17 / November 2: Chath Parwa celebrated only in the Terai

Kartik 22 / November 7: Her Majesty Queen's 52nd Auspicious Birthday

Kartik 23 / November 8: 10th National Constitution Day

Kartik 27 / November 12: Mahalaxmi Jatra in Sthankot

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 ₁₆	2 ₁₇	3 ₁₈
4 ₁₉	5 ₂₀	6 ₂₁	7 ₂₂	8 ₂₃	9 ₂₄	10 ₂₅
11 ₂₆	12 ₂₇	13 ₂₈	14 ₂₉	15 ₃₀	16 _{DECEMBER 1}	17 ₂
18 ₃	19 ₄	20 ₅	21 ₆	22 ₇	23 ₈	24 ₉
25 ₁₀	26 ₁₁	27 ₁₂	28 ₁₃	29 ₁₄	30 ₁₅	

Mangsir 6 / November 20: **Shree Guheswori Mai Jatra** Mangsir 9 / November 24: **Bala Chaturdashi**

Mangsir 16 / December 1: **Shree Sita Biwaha Panchami (Festivals and fairs in Janakpur region), World AIDS Day**

Mangsir 21 / December 6: **Shree Indrayani Jatra, Panga (Lalitpur)**

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