

# Nepal Abroad

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Nepal Abroad

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## NJSA - NY Raises \$2201 To Help Dolma Sherpa



Photo: NJSA-NY

Somnath Ghimire- NJSA-NY Chapter President is seen handing the check to Madhuraman Acharya - Nepal's PR to UN.

The Nepali Janasamparka Samiti America (NJSA) – NY chapter raised \$2201.00 to save Dolma Sherpa's life. The President of NJSA NY Chapter Somnath Ghimire handed a check in the said amount to the Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations Madhuraman Acharya in his office in New York on the evening of Monday March 31 '08.

Ram B Dhakal- ex First Secretary of Nepal Mission, Deputy PR Madhuban Poudel, NY Chapter's Treasurer Maya Bhatta, Joint Secretary Phurba Sherpa, Members

Dawa Sherpa and Kanchan Gurung were present on the occasion.

In their press statement, NJSA NY Chapter expressed gratitude to all those friends in taking a significant move on this humanitarian initiative to help a Nepali in a personal crisis of this heartbreaking situation. The chapter is grateful to Phurba Sherpa NY Chapter's Joint Secretary for his endeavor towards this initiative, and appeals all individuals and organizations for their contribution to save Dolma Sherpa's life.

## US Central Bank Chief Says Economy Could Face Mild Recession

Washington April 02 (VOA): The head of the U.S. central bank, Ben Bernanke, told a congressional committee the U.S. economy could face a mild recession, but it should recover later this year. VOA's Barry Wood reports.

Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke said the economy is going through a very difficult period. While conceding that a recession is possible, he said it is too early to say the

economy is in recession, usually defined as six months of negative growth.

Opposition Democrats, who control both houses of Congress, wanted to know why the Federal Reserve last month stepped in to prevent the collapse of a Wall Street investment house, but is not doing the same to assist distressed home buyers having trouble making their mortgage payments.

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## Nepal's Envoy To India Presents Credentials



The Ambassador of Nepal, His Excellency Mr. Durgesh Man Singh, presenting his credentials to the President of India, Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, at Rashtrapati Bhavan on 4th April, 2008. (Photo: President's Secretariat, India)

The newly appointed Ambassador of Nepal to India, Dr Durgesh M Singh presented his credentials to the President of India Mrs Pratibha Devi Singh Patil at a ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Friday April 4 '08. During his meeting, President Patil said, 'our attention is centered on the CA polls in Nepal. This is a historic moment for the Nepalese people to determine their future', quoted Ambassador Singh.

Ambassador Singh arrived in New Delhi on March 26 to assume his assignment, the Embassy of Nepal in New Delhi stated in a press release.

The President had also received credentials from four other

head of the missions in New Delhi. During her interaction with the Ambassadors, President emphasized greater cooperation between developing countries and stated that India was committed to enhancing South-South cooperation, and that the developing countries should work together collectively for a greater role in international bodies whether at the UN or the International Financial Institutions, reads the press release from the President's Secretariat.

The credential presentation ceremony was attended by the senior members of the diplomatic missions, senior officials of the Ministry of External Affairs and of the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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**Editorial:****Diplomacy Through University**

Engaging in public discussion, sharing issues with the students and public through a academic institutions play a vital role in mobilizing a long term support, if the case is presented in an organized and logical manner. The university students attending the program pertaining to the international issues may find themselves in a place and position where their opinion may influence politics and policies of the institutions they associate with.

Last Thursday a similar program was organized by the Sigur Center for Asian Studies at George Washington University in Washington DC, and it was the public forum on Nepal and Sri Lanka to discuss the conflicts and transition. The speakers presented their arguments, and also provided opportunities for the participants to interact. While the Nepalese team discussed the ethnic minorities, the peace process and the upcoming Constituent Assembly election, the Sri Lankan team focused on whether

the LTTE problem can be solved militarily.

Countries like Nepal and Sri Lanka should always seek such opportunities to talk to the public in US so that they would encourage the US government to see issues in their country independently and not through the prism of India. The LTTE problem has been going on for a long time, and the Maoists problem has been dragging too.

The sustained conflict has denied several opportunities for these countries. At a time when Indian economy is booming, the government of these two countries is engaged with all resources in maintaining peace and stability. If these issues were to be resolved, Nepal and Sri Lanka would also be participating, and benefiting from the rising economy of India. Stable neighbor is a security to India as well. Therefore, aggressive quest for durable peace and stability should be pursued, through concerted efforts and by all means.

**Help Request for Samikshya Thapa**

Samikshya Thapa, 6, a resident of Dang, Nepal is waiting for help in India to cure her cancer.

She has been diagnosed with Blood Cancer (Acute Myeloid Leukemia AML-M2), and according to Kanti Bal Hospital, her treatment modalities are Bone Marrow transplant and chemotherapy which will cost approximately Nrs16-20 lakhs.

Samikshya has been admitted at TATA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL MUMBAI, INDIA (bed no. 203 A). Her father, Hikmat Thapa, a school teacher in Dang can not afford the huge amount, and therefore, her treatment is not progressing any further.

For all these reasons and for the cause of humanity, we have



set up a webpage (<http://swarnim.com/samikshya/index.html>) so that we can help her for her cancer treatment. We request families, friends, relatives, and Nepalese community to come together for this noble cause. She is one of us. She has so much to live for, so many dreams to fulfill and only from our help she can do this. Let's give her that chance.

**SDSU Nepalese Alumni and Well Wishers**

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**Concern Over Rising Insecurity Ahead Of 10 April Elections**

Kathmandu, April 1 (IRIN): Rising insecurity in Nepal ahead of Constituent Assembly (CA) elections slated for 10 April is causing concern among UN agencies and the national election body.

The UN is particularly concerned about escalating violence at the hands of armed groups in the Terai region of southern Nepal.

"Violence and threats from groups declaring their opposition to the election have continued, contributing to insecurity and fear," said a joint report by the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) and the UN's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) published on 30 March.

Some of the armed groups in the Terai - including the Madhesi Mukti Tigers (MMT), United Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha (UJTMM), Terai Cobra, and Janatantrik Terai Mukti Morcha-Rajan Mukti (JTMM-RM) - have openly declared their opposition to the elections and have been spreading violence across the Terai, according to local human rights groups.

Most at risk are election candidates and voters in eastern Terai, according to rights groups. The high alert districts include Sunsari, Morang and Kapilvastu, where UNMIN recorded several bomb explosions near candidates' houses.

A blast inside a mosque in Biratnagar, Morang District, nearly 500km southeast of Kathmandu on 29 March left two dead and several injured.

Ian Martin, special representative of the UN Secretary-General and head of UNMIN, told the media on 31 March in Biratnagar that violence had no place in the elections.

"I am glad efforts are continuing even in the midst of the election campaign to bring about a dialogue between the government and armed groups. I hope those efforts will continue, but I want to make clear that any group which in this election continues to pursue its grievances by violence will lose any sympathy from the international community," Martin said.

**Candidates most at risk**

According to UNMIN, most at risk were candidates of top political parties like the Nepali Congress (NC), the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPNM), Unified Marxist-Leninist (UML) and the Madhesi People's Rights Forum (MPRF).

"There continue to be warnings of plans to derail the election and undermine the peace process through violent acts such as the assassination of political leaders, which would outrage the nation and the international community," said the UNMIN press statement.

Among the gravest incidents have been the killings of political workers from the Maoist party - seven of whom have been killed this month.

In the past month the Terai region has been peaceful thanks to successful peace talks with pro-Madhesi parties who had been organising protests across the region, nearly crippling the economy.

**Boycott**

All the Madhesi political parties, except the four armed groups - MMT, UJTMM, Terai Cobra and JTMM-RM - are now participating in the elections, according to the Interior Ministry.

The four groups said they had decided to boycott the talks as the government had failed to release their members - arrested on charges of abduction, killing and attacks - from prison.

"The government will tighten security in the Terai to control the violence," said Ram Kumar

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**Nepali Calendar**

Sun April 06 / Chaitra 24 '64  
Aunshi  
Mon April 07 / Chaitra 25 '64  
Pratipada  
Tue April 08 / Chaitra 26 '64  
Tritiya  
Wed April 09 / Chaitra 27 '64  
Chauthi  
Thu April 10 / Chaitra 28 '64  
Panchami  
Fri April 11 / Chaitra 29 '64  
Khasthi  
Sat April 12 / Chaitra 30 '64  
Saptami

## Ambassador Chalise To Visit California

Ambassador Dr Suresh C Chalise is scheduled to visit California from April 14 to April 18, and therefore, would not be in the Washington DC, read the notice issued by the Embassy of Nepal. He'll be attending programs organized by the Nepalese communities and other organizations in the northern and southern California.

Those seeking service in the Embassy in DC are advised to carefully follow the ambassador's schedule and plan their trip accordingly.

On the evening of Tuesday April 15 Nepal Association of Northern California has scheduled an interaction program with Ambassador Chalise in



Dr. Suresh C. Chalise

Belmont CA. On Saturday April 19 he'll be attending the New Year 2065 program organized by America-Nepal Society of California in Chatsworth CA. This will be his first trip to the west coast since his arrival as the Ambassador in Washington DC.

## USCIS to Accept H-1B Petitions Sent to CA or VT

Temporary Accommodation Made for FY 09 Cap-Subject H-1B Petitions

Washington April 4 (USCIS): U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) announced today that it will not reject an H-1B petition that is subject to the fiscal year 2009 cap solely on the grounds that it was received at the wrong service center (e.g., the petition may have been inadvertently mailed to the California Service Center instead of the Vermont Service Center or vice versa).

It is important to note this accommodation does not apply if the petitions were sent to the Texas or Nebraska Service Centers.

USCIS is taking this limited, short-term measure to alleviate concerns from the public where an H-1B petition has been received by USCIS but at the incorrect Service Center.

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## Republic Issue To Be Settled By First CA Meet: PM

Kathmandu April 4 (HNS): Prime Minister GP Koirala today told the Supreme Court that the country's republican agenda will be decided by the first meeting of the Constituent Assembly.

"The third amendment to the Interim Constitution 2007 has introduced a provision that states that the first meeting of the CA will

implement the agenda regarding republic," Koirala said.

Submitting a written explanation to the apex court's show cause notice in connection with a case challenging the third amendment to the Interim Constitution, Koirala claimed the first meeting will implement the republican agenda,

... Contd. on page 6

## Calendar of Events

**April 05 '08:** The Nepalese Student Association (NSA) at St Cloud State University, St Cloud Minnesota is organizing its annual Nepal Night event 'Awadhi...a timeline' on Saturday April 05 at Ritsche Auditorium from 5.00pm to 7.00pm. For details mail at nsa@stcloudstate.edu.

**April 6:** America Darpan is presenting 'Indreni Saanjh' - a collection of varieties cultural programs on Sunday April 6 from 4pm to 8pm at Irving Art Center, 3333 N MacArthur Blvd, Irving TX. For details visit americadarpan.com

**April 6:** The Nepali Janasamparka Samiti America- NY Chapter is organizing free consultation on immigration matters by Khagendra G C-Attorney at Law on Sunday April 6 from 2pm to 4pm at 4507 40th Street, sunnyside NY 11104. For details contact Somnath Ghimire 917 742 7566 / Ram C Regmi 347 661 9062.

**April 10:** The Asian Division Friends Society of The Library of Congress presents 'Compiling the First Comprehensive English-Nepali Dictionary: a Lexicographer's Experiences', a presentation by Prof Shanker Raj Pathak, an educator and scholar in Economics and English Literature on Thursday April 10 from 12noon to 1pm at LJ-150 Jefferson Building, Library of Congress, Washington DC. For details contact Dr Allen Thrasher 202 707 3732, athr@loc.gov

**April 12:** The 'Nepali Night: New Year 2065' is being organized by Association of Nepalese in Quebec, Canada on Saturday April 12 from 6pm at 7400 rue Sagard Montreal H2E 2S9. For more information call 514 947 0399 / 514 386 4535.

**April 12:** The Rocky Mountain Friends of Nepal have scheduled Saturday April 12 from 6pm to celebrate **Nepali New Year 2065 BS** with the theme as 'Strength in Diversity', at North High School, 2960 N Speer Blvd, Denver CO 80211. More at rmfnd.org

**April 12:** The Nepal Education and Cultural Center Vitalization Action Committee (NECC VAC) is organizing a fund raising event New Year Sanjhi 2065 BS on Saturday April 12 from 6.00pm at Herndon Middle School 901 Lucast Street Herndon VA 20170. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

**April 12 '08:** The Nebraskana Nepalese Society (NNS) is celebrating Nepali new year 2065 on Saturday April 12. For updates visit nnsociety.org or call Sujana Bista Dhakal 402 880 3150 and Srimaya Gurung 402 871 5785

**April 12:** Nepal Seattle Society presents **New Year 2065 BS Party** on Saturday April 12 from 6pm to 1am at the Russian Community Center, 704 19th Ave E, Seattle WA 98112. Program features: Nepalese cultural program and dinner buffet, wine & beer bar. For details visit nepalseattle.org

**April 13:** The Nepal Education and Cultural Center (NECC) invites all to celebrate Ramnawami on Sunday April 13 from 11.30am to 2.00 pm at Pashupati Buddha Mandir Lanham MD. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

**April 13:** The Nepalis and Friends Cultural Association (NAFCA), Davis CA has scheduled Saturday April 13 to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065. Details would be updated later.

**April 19:** The Kentucky Nepali Society has scheduled Saturday April 19 to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065 BS at the Great Hall of Unitarian Universalist Church of Lexington, 3564 Clays Mill Rd, Lexington KY 40503. The details would be updated later.

**April 19:** The America-Nepal Society of California Inc invites community members and friends to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065 on Saturday April 19 from 6pm to 12:30pm at Raaga Indian Cuisine, 10110 Topanga Canyon Blvd, Chatsworth CA 91311. Ambassador Dr Suresh C Chalise will be the chief guest. For details visit ansca.org

**April 20:** The Association of Nepalese in Minnesota (ANMN) is organizing a cultural program to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065 on Sunday April 20. For updates visit anmn.org

**April 20:** The Baltimore Association of Nepalese in America (BANA) is celebrating New Year 2065 on Sunday April 20 from 8.00pm to 12.00 pm at Charles Evering VFW 8777 Philadelphia Rd Rosedale MD 21237. Also the General Meeting is scheduled to be on the same day from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm. For details visit nepalhorizons.com and banaonline.com

**April 20:** The Nepalese Society Texas has scheduled 7pm on Sunday April 20 to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065 BS at Ramada Hotel DFW South, 4440 Airport Fwy, Irving TX 75062. The program will include multicultural dance along with Nepali cultural dance and dinner. For details visit nepalesesociety.org

**April 27:** Radio Dovaan the communiyt radio in Washington DC is presenting Nepali feature Film Kagbeni North America Premiere on Sunday April 27 from 1.00 pm at Loehmann's Twin Cinema 7291 Arlington Blvd fa;;s Church VA 22042. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

**May 10 '08:** The America Nepal Women's Association of Greater Washington DC (ANWA) is organizing its bi-annual fund raising event 'Yard Sale For The Education' on Saturday May 10 from 7.00am to 3.00pm at 6481 Little River Turnpike Alexandria VA 22312. For details visit nepalhorizons or call Ambika Gurung 703 992 5882 Madhavi Karki 703 609 7165 Rita Tiwari 703 532 2343

**Nepali Class in MN:** The Nepali language classes in Minneapolis MN would be held on the following dates at Mt. Olivete Church 5025 Knox Ave S, Minneapolis MN. Saturday Jan 12, Jan 26, Feb 9, Feb 23, Mar 8, Apr 5, Apr 19, May 3 and May 17. For more information contact any executive members at anmn.org

**ANMA/NASeA Convention 2008:** The 2008 ANMA/NASeA joint convention would be held in Omaha, NE. For more updates, stay tuned.

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# Nepal-Bhutan: Bhutan Questions Identity Of 107,000 Refugees In Nepal

Kathmandu, March 30 (IRIN): As one of the world's largest third-country resettlement processes started this week in Nepal, with over 10,000 Bhutanese refugees scheduled to be resettled in various Western countries by the end of 2008, Bhutan has disputed that all the refugees are in fact from Bhutan.

Sonam Tobgay, head of the policy division of the Bhutanese Foreign Ministry, told IRIN on 27 March: "It is... factually incorrect to term all the people in the camps [in eastern Nepal] Bhutanese. Bhutan cannot accept a blanket reference to all the people in the camps as being 'refugees' from Bhutan."

According to Tobgay, Bhutan and Nepal - in talks going back since 1993 - have agreed that there are four categories of people in the camps, including non-Bhutanese people.

"The lack of a screening procedure when the camps were first established in 1991 allowed persons of all antecedents to congregate in the camps. The camps were opened by the government of Nepal, which sought UNHCR [UN Refugee Agency] assistance in 1991, when there were only 304 people claiming to be Bhutanese refugees," Tobgay said.

Tobgay said the problem of the people in the camps in eastern Nepal was not straightforward: "It is a highly complex issue with its genesis in illegal immigration, in a region marked by vast population movements, porous and open borders, poverty, environmental degradation and political instability."

But he added: "Bhutan stands committed to finding a durable solution to the problem of the people in the camps in keeping with the agreements reached with the government of Nepal."

As for the third country resettlement, Tobgay said Bhutan appreciated the offer by the USA and other countries to resettle people and believed this would ease the humanitarian problem.

## Heading for Arizona, USA

The first batch of some 100 refugees was heading for Arizona State, USA, this week, where they will be resettled after nearly 17 years of life in a refugee camp in Nepal.

The refugees - part of some 107,000 in seven camps in eastern Nepal - fled Bhutan during the early 1990s after enforcement of a citizenship act adopted there in 1985 made life intolerable for people of Nepalese ethnicity, according to various international human rights organisations.

According to the UNHCR's The State of the World's Refugees 2006 report, in 1985 the Bhutanese government established new eligibility requirements for citizenship that effectively disenfranchised many ethnic Nepalis, depriving them of their citizenship and civil rights.

In addition, the government introduced measures to enforce rigidly the Druk (Druk are the Buddhist majority of Bhutan) dress code and forbid the use of Nepali in the educational curriculum. Special permission was required for admission to schools and to sell cash crops, the UNHCR report said.

Around 200 refugees will be resettled by the end of March. Over

10,000 others would also leave the camps by the end of 2008 and be resettled in the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, the Netherlands and Norway, said UNHCR spokesperson Jennifer Pagonis.

"A total of 25,000 refugees have registered," said Pagonis in a press statement in Geneva.

## Selection process

Some refugees have complained there has been an unclear process of selecting refugee families for interview. However, the UNHCR said refugees would be called for interview on a first-come-first-served basis, according to the dates of their applications.

However, not all the refugees have registered for resettlement as many are still waiting to see how the resettlement takes place, while a large number are hoping to be repatriated by the Bhutanese government, according to refugee leaders.

The refugees are frustrated by a lack of change in their lives after 15 rounds of unsuccessful talks between the governments of Bhutan and Nepal, and many are now opting for third-country resettlement in a desperate bid to improve their lot, according to refugee activists in Kathmandu.

The refugees told IRIN they continued to face financial hardship, unemployment, depression and over-dependence on humanitarian aid.

"There is so much frustration among refugees that they have started to fight between themselves," said a refugee activist, requesting not to be named. He said there was conflict due to

disagreements over opting for resettlement or repatriation.

## UN report

A report by the UN independent expert on minority issues (A/HRC/7/23) released in February 2008 said: "Participants in the expert consultation [in December 2007] described how in 1985, the citizenship law of Bhutan stripped an estimated 100,000 individuals of ethnic Nepali origin of their citizenship rights, a factor leading to their forced expulsion from the country."

"According to the participants, the Bhutanese of Nepali ethnic origin are allegedly prevented from returning to their own country, denied the right to a nationality in their country of residence and are de facto stateless. Those remaining in Bhutan are also denied citizenship and consequently continue to live in a precarious legal limbo and fear similar expulsion from the country," the report said.

Doma Tshering, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Bhutan to the UN, said Bhutan was "disappointed with the selective and simplistic reproduction in the report of the Independent Expert of assertions that emerged during the so-called Expert Consultations of December 2007, of which the Royal Government was neither aware, nor invited to participate in. References to Bhutan contained in paragraph 58 of that report were regrettably rife with factual inaccuracies and fell far short of the minimum standard of objectivity expected of United Nations reports," she said.

## US Central Bank Chief Says ...

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"How can one justify going in with government back-up for Bear Stearns, or any large financial institution, and not for the millions of homeowners," asked New York Senator Charles Schumer, who is the chairman of the Joint Economic Committee.

Bernanke replied that the Federal Reserve did not bail

out Bear Stearns, the large investment bank and brokerage rescued from near bankruptcy in mid-March.

"Bear Stearns shareholders took a very significant loss," he said. "An 85-year-old company lost its independence and became acquired by another firm [JP Morgan Chase bank]. Many Bear Stearns employees, as you know,

are concerned about their jobs. I do not think any company is interested in repeating the experience of Bear Stearns."

Bernanke said that the Federal Reserve's repeated reductions in short-term interest rates during the past year will help distressed home buyers.

"Our interest rate cuts and our liquidity measures, in

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## First Nepalese Ambassador To Israel Presented Credentials In Jerusalem



Photo Courtesy: Embassy Of Nepal, Israel

The first Nepalese Ambassador to Israel Baija Nath Thapaliya is seen in the image above at the Presidential Palace in Jerusalem during the ceremony to present his credentials on Wednesday March 19 '08.

Nepal's first resident ambassador to the State of Israel Mr Baija Nath Thapaliya presented his credentials to the President of Israel Shimon Peres, amidst a special function at the Presidential Palace in Jerusalem on Wednesday March 19 '08. Earlier the Nepalese Embassy in Cairo, Egypt was concurrently accredited to Israel.

Ambassador Thapaliya conveyed the greetings and the best wishes of Prime Minister Girija P Koirala and the people of Nepal to the President Peres and the people of Israel. On the occasion,

President welcomed the Ambassador and his team and also congratulated them for opening the resident Nepalese embassy in Israel.

President Peres appreciated Ambassador Thapaliya's academic background, and also enquired about the latest political developments in Nepal; remembers B P Koirala as a man of great charm who enjoyed wide respect in Israel. President also noted that many citizens of Israel visit Nepal every year, and wished him success in his mission.

Also present on the occasion were the President's political advisor, senior Foreign Ministry officials, chief of State protocol, head of the Asia and Pacific Department, officials of the Nepalese Embassy and the Ambassador's family members.

The decision to establish the Nepalese Embassy in Israel was prompted by the announcements of the Israeli government on May 1 '07 that work visas will no longer be given to the Nepalese workers, in Israel since they do not have the embassy in the country.

Diplomatic relations between Nepal and Israel was established on June 1, 1960; and on March 1961, Israel opened its Embassy in Kathmandu Nepal. While the former PM of Nepal Late B P Koirala paid an official visit to Israel in 1960, the late king Mahendra paid a state visit to Israel in September 1963.

Nepal was the only country in South Asia until recent past to recognize the existence of Israel by maintaining continued diplomatic relations. Nepal continues to support the right of Israel to exist within secure and internationally recognized boundaries.

## Canada: Working Temporarily in Canada

(Courtesy: Citizenship and Immigration Canada)

Every year, over 90,000 foreign workers enter Canada to work temporarily in jobs that help Canadian employers address skill shortages, or as live-in caregivers.

A work permit is needed for most temporary jobs in Canada, though for some positions and business people it is not necessary

### Who can apply?

Some temporary workers require a work permit and some do not. For some categories of workers, permits are approved more quickly.

The requirements and processing times depend on the sort of work you will do when you come to Canada.

Read the information under *What you should know* and *Eligibility to*

*apply* to find out if you need a work permit or if you are in a special category where a work permit may not be necessary or is approved differently.

Remember, even if you do not need a work permit, you may need to meet other requirements. Read the information carefully.

There is a difference between coming to Canada as a business visitor and coming to Canada as a business person.

### How to apply

Remember that in most cases, you have to apply for a work permit from outside Canada. Your employer also has a role in the application process.

If you apply to work temporarily in Quebec, you must meet all the federal requirements and

you must get a Certificat d'acceptation du Québec (Certificate of acceptance) from the province.

### 1. Check the application processing times.

How long it takes to process your application varies depending on where you applied. You can check application processing times online at [cic.gc.ca](http://cic.gc.ca).

You can speed up the process by:

- including all the necessary information with your application
- notifying the visa office of any changes to the information on your application
- avoiding unnecessary inquiries to the visa office
- providing photocopies and documents that are clear and legible

- providing certified English or French translations of documents, where required, and;
- applying from a country where you are a citizen or permanent resident.

Your application will take longer to process if the visa office has to take extra steps to assess your case. For example, extra steps are required if:

- there are criminal or security problems with your application
- your family situation is not clear because of an event, such as a divorce or an adoption that is not yet complete or child custody issues that have not been resolved
- the local visa office has to consult with other Citizenship and Immigration Canada offices in Canada or abroad

...to be contd. next week.

# Lions Club of Annapurna Organized Semi-Annual Meeting



The Lions Club of Annapurna accomplished its semi-annual conference on Saturday March 22 '08 in Berkeley CA under the chairmanship of its President Lion Jagannath Gautam.

On the occasion, the chief guest of the program Lion David Kory- Governor of Lions Club International District 4C 3Co

handed to Lion Gautam 'Membership Excellence' award along with the appreciation letter presented to him by Lion Mahendra Amarasuriya – International President of the Lions Club International.

The guest speaker, Dr Nima Pahalvan of *Faces of Tomorrow*, talked about her organizations and its activities and services they provide.

Among other things they assist disfigured children get the surgery done at no cost, and also showed a documentary video about their activities.

Recognizing the invaluable humanitarian services rendered by *Faces of Tomorrow*, Lion Gautam provided the organization with financial assistance, and recalled their

monetary help to the flood victims of recent past in Nepal.

Other speakers of the program include past president Rajen Thapa, past district governor Linda Griffin, Lion Jim Lee, guiding lion Gyan Pantha, AL Satake, Mani Nepali, Laxmi Chaudhary, Sulav Regmi and Nimesh Shrestha.

## Elderly Immigrants ...

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Stanford University's Geriatric Education Center, explains that in the United States the larger society does not value being old. "They go out and they're not respected or welcomed in the way they were in their country. And so it's a hundred little ways where they experience a great loss."

Before he left India, Hardev Singh was fully retired after a long military career. Now, at 75, he's preparing to leave for the

job he had to take in order to get by – the overnight shift at a local gas station.

Kashmir Shahi has enrolled Singh in Medicare, put him in touch with other senior Indian immigrants, and he's working on getting him into less crowded housing. But Shahi says it is his very presence as an ambassador from Fremont that has helped Singh the most – showing that he's valued, here in the U.S. "In the real sense I think I offered him comfort, where he can enjoy his life."

## Republic Issue To Be...

...Contd. from pg 3

saying that the original provision in the Interim Constitution had stated that the first CA meeting will decide on the fate of monarchy.

Koirala defended the third amendment just six days before the CA polls.

The PM was responding to the court's show cause notice on why the country was declared a republic pending approval by the CA, and presidential and federal system of governance was proposed through the third amendment. "The third amendment was introduced for effective implementation of the republican agenda, which was originally introduced by the Interim Constitution," the PM's explanation said.

"Since the provision on the implementation of the agenda is based on the decision of the first CA meeting, as stated in Article 159 (2) of the

Interim Constitution, there is no need for court intervention on the issue," the PM said. The PM claimed that the amendment was introduced by a two-third majority of MPs. "As per Article 107 of the constitution, the amendment is the exclusive right of the legislature and thus the SC cannot review it," he added.

Koirala urged the SC not to examine the third amendment, as the amendment was introduced based on the consensus among political parties.

Advocate Achyut Prasad Kharel had challenged the third amendment, saying it violated the basic structure of the interim statute. He claimed it was illegal to bar supporters of constitutional monarchy from participating in polls. Stating that Article 138 (1) and 141(2) of the Interim Constitution were violated by the amendment, Kharel sought the SC's fiat to scrap the amendment. (Courtesy: *The Himalayan Times*)

## Maoists Kidnap Two UML Candidates

Kathmandu, April 5 (THT): Maoists abducted two candidates of the CPN-UML and beaten up over a dozen of political activists in the past 24 hours across the country.

Maoist cadres abducted UML candidate Chandra Bahadur Shahi from a remote Argha VDC of Mugu district this morning. Armed Maoist cadres abducted Shahi while he was on his way to Gamgadhi to attend a mass meeting. UML leader Shankar Pokhrel said that Maoists cadres also fired at party cadres and barred villagers

from attending a mass meeting. "We have also been informed by district leaders that some of our party cadres were injured in Maoist firing," Pokhrel said adding that details about the incident are still awaited.

Meanwhile, a group of Maoist cadres abducted UML candidate Ashok Rai from Thokсила VDC in Udaypur district last night. UML leader Pokhrel said that Rai was abducted by a group of 25 Maoist cadres while he was sleeping at Padam Darlami's house. Rai was released after three hours, he said.

... Contd. on page 7

## USCIS to Accept H-1B ...

...Contd. from pg 3

This measure applies only to H-1B petitions subject to the fiscal year 2009 cap that are received by USCIS before the close of business on the "final receipt date".

The final receipt USCIS will announce the final receipt date

once the agency determines it has received the number of petitions needed to fill the congressionally mandated limitations of 65,000 new H-1B visas and 20,000 U.S. advanced degree exemptions per fiscal year.

## IRS Urges Taxpayers To e-file Extension Requests by April 15

Washington April 3 (IRS): The Internal Revenue Service today urged taxpayers who need additional time to complete their tax returns to submit their requests for an automatic extension electronically by April 15. E-filing a request for an extension is convenient, safe and secure, and taxpayers receive confirmation to keep with their records.

The extension gives taxpayers until Oct. 15 to file the tax return. An extension does not give the taxpayer an extension of time to pay. Those who owe taxes can make a payment when they file the extension either by mailing a check or by several electronic payment methods, such as electronic funds withdrawals from bank accounts and credit card payments.

Some taxpayers can wait until after April 15 to file a return, pay any taxes due and make IRA contributions for 2007. As a general rule, those eligible get the extra time without having to ask for it. Eligible taxpayers include:

- Members of the military serving in Iraq, Afghanistan or other combat zone localities. Normally, the

postponement is until 180 days after the service member leaves the combat zone.

- Disaster-area taxpayers in four states affected by recent floods, storms and tornadoes. The postponement is until May 6 in parts of Illinois, May 19 in parts of Georgia and parts of Missouri and May 27 in parts of Arkansas.

IRS expects to receive 10.3 million extension requests during 2008 compared with 10 million extensions received during 2007. The IRS expects to receive almost 2 million extension requests electronically this year.

Taxpayers can get an automatic six-month extension of time to file their tax returns by filing Form 4868, Automatic Extension of Time to File.

It is also important for extension filers to remember that Oct. 15 is not only the due date for their tax returns, it is also the last date on which a return can be filed that will result in an economic stimulus payment. Taxpayers who file earlier, however, will get their economic stimulus payments sooner.

## US Central Bank Chief...

...Contd. from pg 4 particular, have significantly reduced the interest rate reset problem faced by many mortgage holders," he said. "And we have extensive efforts on the ground to work with community groups to help reduce delinquencies and problems of foreclosure."

After five years of steady growth, the U.S. economy has slowed dramatically, in part because the collapse of a speculative bubble in housing. In many markets, home prices that had nearly doubled from 2002 to 2005 have

subsequently declined by up to 30 percent.

The troubles in the U.S. housing sector spilled over into global markets last August, causing a severe contraction in credit and billions of dollars in bank losses.

**Nepal Votes**  
Historic Constituent Assembly Election  
**April 10, 2008**  
**Chaitra 28, 2064 BS**

## Lincoln's Summer...

...Contd. from pg 8

She adds that she and director Frank Milligan wanted to emphasize Lincoln's ideas not "decorative arts."

Visitors to the Lincoln Cottage today get that information in various ways...from an adjoining visitors' center, from quotes on walls, from guides, from actors' voices, projected through speakers, reading historic accounts of the day, and from videos shown on large screen

monitors and slide shows projected on walls, which illustrate the larger story of Lincoln and the Civil War.

Curator Erin Mast says she hopes the house conveys to visitors the essence of America's 16th president. "And that it gives them an opportunity to learn something new about one of the most well-known presidents in American history."

For many, the existence of the house itself, which was largely forgotten, will be a fascinating discovery.

## Concern Over Rising ...

...Contd. from pg 2

Chaudhary, minister of state for home affairs. He said the incidents would not derail the election.

### Maoists

There are also concerns, confirmed by UNMIN and OHCHR, about continued Maoist intimidation of other parties' candidates and voters.

"All political parties should respect the electoral code of conduct, and in particular the right of other parties to campaign freely in any district, any village," UNMIN head Martin said.

The Election Commission (EC) has expressed concern that frequent political clashes between Maoists and other parties have spread fear among ordinary civilians.

"Representatives of major political parties were summoned and given directives to avoid any means of violence and promote tolerance during the election campaign," said EC spokesperson Laxman Bhattarai.

EC officials said they were especially concerned about the activities of Maoists whose former rebel soldiers had left their UN-supervised cantonments to engage in political campaigning.

Martin said his office had met Maoist leaders and explained that such activity was in breach of the Agreement on Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies (AMMAA). The Maoist leader Prachanda said he had assured the EC and UN that no further incidents would occur.

## Maoists Kidnap Two...

...Contd. from pg 6

In another incident, at least six UML cadres were injured when Maoist-affiliated Young Communist League (YCL) cadres attacked them at Namadi VDC in Ramechhap district this morning. According to Pokhrel, the injured – Gyan Bahadur Khadka, Dor Bahadur Khadka, Sita Khadka and Arjun Kadka – are undergoing treatment at local health centre.

YCL cadres also beat up and abducted central member of UML's youth wing Bishnu BK from Hadhade VDC in Gulmi district this morning.

Meanwhile, a group of YCL cadres took hostage Rastriya Janashakti party leader Jagat Bahadur Thapa in

Jeetpur VDC of Dhankuta district this morning. Thapa was taken hostage at Laxmi Phuyel's house at Jeetpur, RJP district chairman Kumar Bahadur Thapa said. (Courtesy: The Himalayan Times)

### Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	63.85	64.45
Canadian \$1	63.13	63.73
Euro 1	99.91	100.84
Pound Sterling 1	126.84	128.04
Australian \$1	58.56	59.11
Swiss Franc 1	63.02	63.61
Singapore Dollar	46.16	46.60
Japanese Yen 10	6.21	6.26
Chinese Yuan 1	9.10	9.19
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	10.68	---
Danish Kroner 1	13.40	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.19	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	17.02	---
Qatari Riyal 1	17.55	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.02	---
UAE Dirham 1	17.38	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	20.02	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, April 04 08]

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### Nepal Horizons

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# Lincoln's Summer Residence Now Open to Public

- By Susan Logue , Washington DC

Washington April 03 (VOA): Abraham Lincoln is one of America's best-loved presidents. Known for his bold efforts to end slavery and to hold the nation together during a four-year civil war, the 16th president was assassinated on April 15, 1865, less than one week after the end of that war. He remains a favored subject of historians and the public alike. Now, as VOA's Susan Logue reports, those seeking to learn more about Lincoln can visit the summer house where he spent one-fourth of his presidency. From June to November in 1862, 1863 and 1864, Abraham Lincoln, his wife Mary and their son Tad resided in a 34-room house located in the District of Columbia 5 kilometers from the White House.

"It's always just that touch cooler," says Frank Milligan, director of the historic site, now known as President Lincoln's Cottage, "because we are on the second highest point of land in the metropolitan D.C. area." He adds the house was constructed to take advantage of breezes, providing an escape from the summer heat.

It also provided a respite from White House visitors. "This place was, for Lincoln, clearly a very different sanctuary than the White

House, where he was besieged by office seekers and political



opponents and colleagues. It was a world away."

The summer residence, built by a Washington banker in 1842, was purchased by the U.S. government in 1851, and the first retirement home for American war veterans was built on the grounds just a few meters from the house. Instead of having to deal with the usual parade of lobbyists and politicians seeking him out at the White House, Lincoln was surrounded by soldiers camped on the grounds to protect the family and veterans.

"These were grounds where the President was known to wander quite regularly in the evenings," Milligan says. "He'd

wander to the military camp, sit down with the boys and have a cup of coffee. And the veterans, too, provided Lincoln that respite from the ongoing demands he faced at the White House."

Veterans still live here in buildings neighboring the house. In fact, Milligan notes, the Soldiers Home used the house until it became a national monument in 2000. It served as a residence for female veterans, then as an infirmary. The military band also occupied it for a while. But Milligan's favorite use for the Lincoln Cottage was "the Lincoln Lounge, the bar on campus." He says the 16th president, who never drank alcohol "may have raised his eyebrows at that."

The National Trust for Historic Preservation took seven years and spent \$15 million to restore the house to the way it looked when Lincoln lived here.

"The importance of this site really can't be overestimated," Milligan says. "It's the only place where one can go where Lincoln lived as president for an extended period of time, to see where he was when he was forming some of his major policies."

Such as the Emancipation Proclamation, which freed slaves in states that had seceded from the Union. Although Lincoln commuted to the White House every day he lived here, Milligan says he drafted the Emancipation Proclamation at the cottage.

The house has a replica of the desk he used. The original has been in the White House since 1930, but curator Erin Mast says it was originally here at the cottage. "We knew that was something the Lincolns had out here. It was the property of the home, and so the White House let us reproduce that one piece."

Mast says none of the objects in the Lincoln cottage is original to the home, but the furnishings were chosen to evoke the Lincoln period. "You also see remnants of the Lincolns' life out here, whether it is a stovepipe hat, a shawl, a book we know Lincoln loved to read out here to friends or family."

The cottage is sparsely furnished, in part, Mast says, because history says it was. "A lot of the Lincolns' visitors comment on it being neatly furnished or plainly furnished, and in one account, sparsely furnished." ...Contd. on pg 7

# Elderly Immigrants Need Special Help

- By Lonny Shavelson

Fremont, California April 02 (VOA): The great majority of immigrants to this country are young, of working age. But in recent years more and more elderly immigrants – in their 60s and 70s and older – have been arriving, more than 100,000 a year. And for many, life here hasn't turned out the way they hoped. Fremont, California – the most ethnically diverse city in a very diverse state – is home to an especially large number of elderly immigrants. Lonny Shavelson reports on a new program designed to help them.

In a tiny walkup apartment crowded with Indian immigrants, Hardev Singh, 75, adjusts the volume of a Sikh prayer that plays over and over from a boom box. He says he moved to the U.S. to be with his daughter and her family. In Punjabi, he explains that his daughter actually invited him and petitioned for him to come over here, so they would stay together as a family.

But what Singh found here was a family under stress. His daughter and her husband worked the night shift at a medical supply factory. His adolescent grandchildren lived a lifestyle he describes, kindly, as unfamiliar. Then his son-in-law's parents also came, and there wasn't enough room in the house. Singh moved to this crowded apartment across town.

Kashmir Shahi translates Singh's comments. "He said his feelings were very hurt, but after some time you adjust with the time." Shahi, 42, is a software engineer from India's Punjab Province. He's one of 30 volunteers recently trained by the city of Fremont to work with elderly immigrants.

He says he's saddened by what happened to Singh and his family. "You know, it was really a shame for the family. They promised [their parents and grandparents] and they promised the system here that

they will take care of them, and they are not doing that."

But it's not neglect, says Mary Ann Mendall, Fremont's Administrator of Aging and Family Services. It's the reality of life in the United States. Parents and grandparents who come here expecting to join an extended family like in the old country, can be bewildered by what they find. "Husband and wife are working, children are in school, the neighborhood's deserted. They're home alone."

Mendall says she doesn't know how many senior immigrants are having family difficulties, because they're embarrassed to say so. But the desperate situation of the senior immigrants became clear to her at a meeting last year.

She recalls that no one in the audience said anything at first. "And it was very quiet. And then one senior spoke up and said, 'We

feel like we are parasites on our children. We depend upon them for money, for shelter, and for socialization. And we're all depressed.'" So the city of Fremont started the Community Ambassador Program for Seniors (CAPS), and held 14 focus groups in nine languages, to find out what elderly immigrants need to adjust to life here.

At a meeting at a Sikh temple, the seniors had numerous questions, including inquiries about learning to drive, survivor benefits for workers and financial aid.

The ambassadors now help elderly immigrants with housing, medical care, legal aid, family counseling and simple but crucial skills like getting around on buses. They say all of that is helping decrease the seniors' isolation and depression.

More difficult to remedy, though, is Americans' attitude toward the elderly. Marita Grudzen, with

...Contd. on pg 6