

# Nepal Abroad

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## EU Troika For New CA Polls Date



Photo: Sabin Tuladhar/TRN

The EU Troika leader Pedro Moitinho de Almeida is seen talking to the media at the end of their four-day visit to Nepal on Thursday Dec 6, 2007. Among other things, they urged the government and the political parties to announce a new date for early elections to get the peace process back on track; suggested them remove obstacles for early elections; to show leadership to restore trust in the political process and to prioritize the interests of the people.

## Illegal Immigration, Focused on Hispanics as Political Issue, Affects Other Immigrant Groups

By Steve Mort, Florida

Orlando Dec 4 [VOA]: Illegal immigration continues to be a key issue for voters and candidates one year before the U.S. presidential election. A New York Times poll conducted in Iowa shows 86 percent of Republicans and 59 percent of Democrats view immigration as a very or somewhat serious problem. Much of the debate over undocumented migrants has focused on Hispanics, but political analysts say the issue affects other groups as well. Steve Mort reports for VOA from Orlando — home to one of Florida's largest Asian communities, including immigrants who feel the effects of the political stalemate.

In Florida's Orange County, the U.S. Census Bureau estimates nearly 45,000 residents

are of Asian descent, an increase of 13,000 in just six years.

As in other migrant communities, illegal immigration is an important issue for many people here.

Local immigration attorney Agnes Chau explains, "There's 12 million illegal immigrants in the United States. Out of the 12 million around 9 percent is from Asia".

The Pew Hispanic Center estimates the number to be higher than that. In a 2006 survey, Pew found 13 percent of illegal immigrants came from Asia.

And government statistics show that Asians made up 25 percent of the entire U.S. foreign-born population in 2005.

Agnes Chau says most illegal Asian immigrants she meets

...Contd. on pg 4

## Parliamentary Panel to Send MPs to Susta

Kathmandu Dec 8 (THT): The Parliamentary International Relations Committee (IRC) on Friday said it will urge the government to initiate dialogue with India on "border encroachment" and send lawmakers to Susta on a fact finding mission.

"The Committee will write a letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Sunday," IRC Chairman Narayan Man Bijukchhe said on Friday.

The IRC plans to discuss about sending a team of lawmakers to Susta of Nawalparasi with Chief Whips of all the parties in Parliament in its meeting slated for December 12. "The issue of 'encroachment' is serious in nature, therefore we have decided to send lawmakers to Susta," Bijukchhe said.

The December 12 meeting with Chief Whips is expected to set the date for the on-site inspection by the lawmakers.

## Biogas Technology Beginning To Make Its Mark

Kathmandu, Dec 6 (IRIN) - Over six million tonnes of carbon emissions could be avoided in the next five years by Nepal through large-scale use of biogas, according to climate change experts.

Biogas is a mixture of methane and carbon dioxide produced by fermenting organic matter like animal or human waste, biodegradable waste and municipal solid waste.

In Nepal, biogas systems are circular pits filled with cow dung. Constructed near to people's homes, the gas they produce is piped to where the cooking is done.

Nearly 85 percent of Nepal's 27 million people live in rural areas and around 95 percent of the rural population burn traditional fuels such as wood and agro-waste.

Biogas systems were first introduced in Nepal in the late 1950s and thousands of families now use them.

The carbon emissions thus saved in Nepal may be small in comparison to global emissions, but this is an example of how poor countries like Nepal can help combat global warming.

"Nepal's biogas use has received recognition on a global scale

...Contd. on pg 6

## Nod To SAARC-Wide Security Blueprint

New Delhi Dec 8 (THT): The standing committee of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) on Friday gave its assent to the establishment of a security network covering all SAARC member states.

Speaking to the media after the meeting of the committee, India's External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee said the nod to a SAARC nations' security network was given by the committee

following a recent meeting of home ministers of SAARC member states, which had called for the establishment of a SAARC-wide security network.

The home ministers' meeting had also called for greater sharing of information. It had also called for drafting of a mutual legal assistance document to draw up a common strategy to curb criminal activities in the SAARC member states.

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**Editorial:****The Invisible Light!**

The saying is, at the end of the tunnel there's always a light that gives people a reason and a hope to remain optimistic. Can this saying be applied to the State as well, as the body politic in that state are yearning to stay optimistic; but the optimism in a distant story.

In the process of defining democracy and rights of individuals, and with the hope to ensure its permanence, endless debates, negotiations, open and clandestine meetings are being held everyday in Nepal, but to no avail. Meetings conclude with a new date for other meetings, whether it is at Baluwatar, Singhdurbar or elsewhere. Each participating members compete to make media headlines by accusing others of not complying with their plans that represents (assumed) peoples' aspiration, mandated during the democracy movement II. But none is serious about seeking a REAL mandate from the people through a democratic process under free and fair election.

The people living outside the capital endure more sufferings round the clock. Although any form of harassment, abduction, killings and corporal abuses are stated frequently with serious pretensions as against any institutions policies, they occur regularly and it's the people who suffer. They are suffering every day, and these victims are losing their self-respect and lives in other instances, every day. The inept government cites the

transitional moments of the Maoists as an excuse, therefore, law enforcers also participates as a silent onlookers of all crimes. (Read weeklynepal.com story about 69 yr-old-woman abused by YCL activist forcibly accusing her to be a witch, while police remains a silent onlookers, on Wednesday Dec 12).

The newly formed armed groups in Terai are using the similar formula used by the Maoists-killings, abduction and destruction of individuals and properties to terrorize the population, raise their demands and put pressure on the government-all at the cost of precious human lives.

Human rights activists in Nepal are either not heard or perform their job silently in highlighting the deeds of the abusing party. Several stories are reported everyday in the mass mediums, but HR organizations aren't doing enough to highlight the issue, as in the past.

These are some of the many issues confronting Nepal today. Political elites are safe and don't seem to be affected by the problems country is facing. At the end of the day, it's the people who suffer. They are suffering; no body knows how long this would continue. There isn't any light visible at the end of the tunnel. It can safely be said that not until compromise and wisdom prevail, light might not be visible on the horizon.

**Letter To The Editor**

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is in response to Mr. Pramod Dhakal's article - **In search of Wisdom: Where does corruption lives?.** Mr. Dhakal realized - "Corruption lives in power" (second column). I realize that corruption lives in mind. Both corruption and power are nothing but the creation of our minds. Cleaning of mind is the only and only one way to remove them if one really wants to remove.

Not only corruption (negativity) lives in power, beauty (positivity) lives in power as well. Whether it is corruption or beauty depends on the type of mind associated them. A clean mind with power produces beauty while a contaminated mind with power produces corruption. So, power itself is not the source of corruption.

Ananta Niraula, via email.

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**Lack of Toilets, Poor Hygiene Fuel Water-Borne Diseases**

Kathmandu, December 03 (IRIN) - Schoolgirl Susmita Chettri is not alone in her embarrassment and disgust at the sight of men urinating in the middle of the Nepalese capital Kathmandu in broad daylight.

"When will this ever stop? These men are shameless and so unhygienic," said 15-year old Chettri walking to a bus stop to get to school. "If this happens in the capital, just imagine how bad it is in the rest of the country," added her classmate Tina Shrestha.

It is an every day occurrence in Kathmandu to see men and women defecating almost everywhere, from the main streets to public parks, near school compounds, government offices and residential areas.

The problem is nationwide: government statistics indicate that three-quarters of Nepal's 27 million people defecate in the open for lack of toilets.

**Children worst affected**

Health environment activists have expressed concern over the acutely unhygienic conditions, saying the lack of toilets is responsible for water-borne diseases, which cause large-scale diarrhoea among children.

"Following defecation, the urine stagnates at one spot and is a strong medium for bacteria which often contaminates the ground water and moist soil among others," said medical doctor Sanjay Bhattachan from Kathmandu Hospital. He added that the bacterial parasite reaches underground waters and contaminates the drinking water system and the wells causing diarrhoea and even Hepatitis A.

According to UNICEF, a gram of human feces has 10

million viruses, 1 million bacteria and 12,000 parasites.

In the villages of the Terai, open defecation can fill the fields with hookworms. People walking on the urinated ground can catch the worms, which can enter through their feet and then enter the blood. Besides diarrhea, open defecation also causes anemia and is a huge problem in the Terai, said Bhattachan.

Nearly 13,000 children die every year due to diarrhoea-related diseases and only 45 percent of Nepal's population has access to toilets, according to the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Poor sanitation is responsible for 70 percent of childhood illnesses with nearly 10 million cases of diarrhoea among children under five every year, according to Nepal for Water Health (NEWAH), a local non-governmental organisation (NGO) campaigning for clean drinking water and sanitation.

**Sanitation not prioritised**

"It's really sad that neither citizens nor the government are giving much attention to this crucial issue," said environmental health activist Prakash Amatya from NEWAH.

Amatya said sanitation had not been prioritised in the government's development programmes. It was high time the government earmarked special

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**Nepali Calendar**

Sun Dec 09 / Mangshir 23' 64	Aunshi
Mon Dec 10 / Mangshir 24 64	Pratipada
Tue Dec 11 / Mangshir 25' 620	Duwitiya
Wed Dec 12 / Mangshir 26' 64	Tritiya
Thu Dec 13 / Mangshir 27' 64	Chaturthee
Fri Dec 14 / Mangshir 28' 64	Bibaha Panchami
Sat Dec 15 / Mangshir 29' 64	Shasthi

## Pyakurel Attends Assembly of States Of ICC In NY

Subodh R Pyakurel, the chairperson of the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC) in Nepal, participated in the Sixth session of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) that started from Nov 30 at United Nations Headquarters in New York, NY. It would last till Dec 14, 2007. Pyakurel participated in several meetings, and met with the State representatives and the UN Dept of Political Affairs and OHCHR New York office, and discussed Nepal's current political situation from the human rights perspective. He'll be in New York till Friday Dec 7, 2007.

The Coalition for ICC has invited prominent NGO representatives from different countries to observe the Assembly and influence their respective country diplomats; it is also actively involved in the campaign for the ratification. The Coalition for the ICC-simultaneously a global network, coalition and campaign- has grown to include more than 2000 member organizations from all regions, representing a vast array of interests and expertise.

These groups are united in their support for a fair, effective and independent ICC and have made a significant contribution at all stages of the process, from the Preparatory Committee to the Rome Conference, from the UN Preparatory Commission for the ICC, to the Assembly of State Parties.

In Nepal, INSEC has been involved in the protection and promotion of Human Rights, and is



Subodh Raj Pyakurel

focused on working with such disadvantaged groups as the agricultural laborers, underprivileged women's, and socially discriminated people like the dalits and others, since 1989.

Pyakurel is meeting with the Officials at the State Department, USAID and USIP during his stay in Washington DC area. He's also participating in the talk program organized by the Human Rights Organizations of Nepalis in the USA (HURON) in Towson, MD on Sunday December 9, and the America-Nepal Women's Association of Greater Washington DC (ANWA) on Monday December 10, 2007 in Washington DC.

He's accompanied by his wife Lata Pyakurel, who is the vice-president of the Federation of Cottage and Small Industries-Nepal (FNCSI) that has more than 30 thousand members across 70 districts in Nepal.

## Calendar Of Events

**December 9, 2007:** The Indian Idol of Nepalese origin Prashant Tamang will be performing in Atlanta, GA on Friday Dec 9 at Center Stage at the Midtown Music Complex, 1374 W Peachtree St, Atlanta GA from 6pm. For more information, call 404 447 8272/ 404 805 4243/ 404 441 7781.

**December 9, 2007:** The Newah Organization of America invites all to celebrate the indigenous era of Nepal, Nepal Sambat 1128 on Sunday Dec 09 from 3pm to 10pm at Greencastle Lake Community Clubhouse, 3661 Turbridge Dr., Burtonsville MD. More at nepalhorizons.com / newah.org.

**December 10, 2007:** The America Nepal Women's Association of Greater Washington DC (ANWA) invites all to attend the celebration of Human Rights Day on Monday Dec 10 from 6:30pm to 9:30pm at Polo India Club, 1736 Connecticut Ave NW, Washington DC. The guest speaker is Mr. Subodh Raj Pyakurel, President of the Informal Sector Service Center (INSEC), Nepal. For details call Madhavi Karki 703 609 7165 / Bishnu Thapa 571 214 2267.

**December 16, 2007:** The Washington DC based America Nepal Society (ANS) has scheduled Sunday Dec 16 to organize a program to welcome the newly appointed Ambassador of Nepal to the US Dr Suresh R Chalise at Arlington Central Library, 1015 N Quincy Street, Arlington VA from 1:30pm to 5pm, and invites all community members and friends of Nepal to participate in the program. For details, visit nepalhorizons.com.

**December 16, 2007:** A group of Nepalese individuals are organizing the Christmas Dinner Party on Sunday Dec 16 at World Agape Mission Church, 933 S Lake Street, Los Angeles, CA from 5pm to 10pm, and invites all to come with their friends and families. For more info, contact Navin Bhandari 213 999 5651, Mitra Dangol 626 575 1158, Raju Thapa 419 371 8495.

**December 31, 2007:** On Monday Dec 31, the Nepal Seattle Society will celebrate New Years Eve 2008 and Members Appreciation Day. Details would be made available shortly.

To list the scheduled event(s) of your organization on the Community Events above, please email us: [enews@nepalabroad.com](mailto:enews@nepalabroad.com)

## Pradhan Talks Border Issues With Mukherjee

New Delhi Dec 7 (HNS): Minister for Foreign Affairs Sahana Pradhan, who is in New Delhi for the 29th SAARC foreign ministers' meeting, held a meeting with her Indian counterpart Pranab Mukherjee today.

The meeting was focused on border problems between Nepal and India, charge d' affairs at the Nepali embassy in New Delhi Tara Pokharel said.

During the meeting, Pradhan sought India's help to resolve the problems in the Terai region of Nepal. India is positive in this regard, said in-charge of the South Asia desk of the Indian foreign ministry Pradyumna Shah. The ministers

also discussed on the current state of affairs in Nepal. Foreign secretary Gyan Chandra Acharya and charge d' affairs Pokharel accompanied Pradhan while Indian External Affairs Minister Mukherjee was accompanied by Indian foreign secretary Shiv Shanker Menon.

Pradhan also met with foreign ministers of Maldives and Afghanistan today. All the foreign ministers of the SAARC nations will have a joint meeting with Indian Prime Minister Dr Manmohan Singh tomorrow morning, before leaving for Agra.

The Nepali delegation led by Pradhan will return to Nepal on Sunday.

## 'Landlords behind ongoing Terai agitation': P. Nepal

Biratnagar Dec 5 (RSS): The Minister for Education and Sports Pradip Nepal has said the ongoing agitation in the Terai is the agitation of landlords.

Landlords have formed criminal groups for their own welfare and they are spreading terror across the Terai, Nepal said, adding, the government has become a total failure in maintaining law and order in the Terai.

Speaking at a press conference organized by the Press Chautari Nepal, Morang, Minister

Nepal said there is nothing to fear about from the Madhes Rakshabahini formed by the Nepal Sadbhawana Party (Mahato). He also said he was unaware of the special security taskforce deployed by the government in different districts of the Terai.

On a query that the special security task force was formed by the cabinet, Nepal said he was unaware of the formation of the special security taskforce. 'You have to ask the authority

concerned about it. I would have resigned far ago if I were the Home Minister".

He stressed on meeting the genuine demands of the Terai groups through dialogues. He accused the agitating Terai groups of making contrasting demands and shying away from talks.

Nepal said the focus now should be on holding CA polls peacefully rather than changing the government leadership even though the PM is a total failure.

He said the Maoist activities were responsible for protecting the monarchy. He said declaration of a republic now will be against the constitution and everybody should wait till the first meeting of the constituent assembly for republic.

He also said all parties except Nepali Congress and Maoists are ready to go for polls.

He lamented politicization in the education sector and said he has not been able to reform the sector despite many efforts.

## Security Concerns Increase Oil Prices

By Jela De Franceschi, Washington

According to most energy analysts rising global demand coupled with attacks on petroleum facilities and oil-delivery interruptions have helped drive crude oil prices to nearly \$100 a barrel this year.

Many analysts say that securing oil assets has never been easy and that the problem is not new to the industry. For decades, oil producers have had to deal with guerilla and civil wars, sabotage and theft in many energy-rich areas around the world, including Colombia, Angola and the Middle East. While companies have been successful in keeping oil flowing and facilities secure, many energy experts say threats to the oil industry have increased in recent years. In 2004, for example, al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden appealed to Muslim extremists to attack petroleum facilities wherever they can.

Gal Luft, Executive Director of the Washington-based Institute for the Analysis of Global Security, says ten years ago, those risks never really existed. "We never had terrorists blowing themselves up in oil facilities. There were attacks on pipelines, but it is not such an epidemic as it is today. Since 9/11, everything has tightened quite significantly. Most of the attacks happen at the generating point in Africa, the Caspian, and the Middle East because that's where terrorists are known to operate and that's where they can get the most bang for their buck."

### Violence and Sabotage

Luft says all countries in the Middle East are concerned about violence, but industry analysts are closely watching Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Saudi Arabia has one of the most elaborate energy security systems in the world — including state-of-the-art surveillance equipment, some 40-thousand armed guards, anti-aircraft weapons, and air and naval forces protecting its oil facilities.

Many energy risk experts note that in Iraq — the nation with the world's second largest proven oil reserves, after Saudi Arabia — security is chaotic. Analyst Amy Jaffe of Rice University in Houston, Texas says that attacks in Iraq include the assassination of oil security officials, disruption of pipelines that feed Persian Gulf terminals and looting of oil facilities. "There is valuable equipment that is involved in producing oil. That can be everything from the copper inside wires that bring electricity to operate the oil pumps to the computerization that's used for the production of oil. In Iraq, the simple guarding of wires, generators and the computer system — all of those things — is a major challenge," says Jaffe.

In other places, like Nigeria, Russia and several oil-rich nations in Central Asia, pipelines often are targeted. "It just takes a knife to jam open a hole on an oil pipeline and drain out oil into a truck. It's like carrying money in the back of your car," notes Jaffe. "You can take out that oil or fuel and you can

resell it on the black market. That happened so frequently in the former Soviet Union that some of the companies had trouble maintaining full pressure on their line because there are so many holes in them."

Gal Luft says these are all pinpricks, but they add up, it's well over one million barrels a day that could have been in the market, but are not. "If we had another million barrels of oil today on the oil market, the price of oil would likely go down significantly. There is an inherent premium within the price of a barrel [of oil] that factors in all kinds of potential threats. The market has factored in something to the tune of 10-to-\$-15 a barrel," says Luft.

The sabotage of oil facilities is often politically motivated. Energy analyst Amy Jaffe says these kinds of incidents are frequent in places like Nigeria. "You have a local community leader in the Niger Delta who is unhappy with the headway he is getting negotiating with the government for resources. So he blows something up and then sends a telex to The Wall Street Journal or The International Herald Tribune [newspapers] taking credit. And when the price of oil goes up a dollar on the basis of his explosion, he is in a more powerful position."

### Not Just Troubled Regions

In recent years, even politically stable Western countries have been compelled to step up energy security measures.

Greg Stringham is Vice President of the Canadian Association

of Petroleum Producers, which represents 95 percent of Canada's \$100 billion annual oil and gas industry. He says safeguarding Canada's energy assets from terrorist attacks has taken center stage for oil producers. "The Canadian and U.S. governments work together to ensure that all international tips or incidents of even mentions of the word 'Canada', 'oil' and 'terrorism' are caught and are passed on so that people can be aware of what's coming internationally" adds Stringham. Occasionally, Canada does come up as one of the main exporting countries to the United States in some of the al-Qaida correspondence. We watch those very closely."

Stringham says other kinds of information are being shared between oil companies and authorities: "For example, if explosives that are being used in our industry for seismic activities get stolen and 50 or 60 miles away someone receives a bomb threat — if those types of things are communicated, then people can take them and judge them as being serious as they may be. Where if those aren't communicated, you could see them as two separate incidents."

Some experts compare the current international oil market to a car without shock absorbers. Each time it hits a bump in the road, passengers feel it. Most analysts say this bumpy road could last as long as attacks on oil facilities persist and nations are dependent on oil for energy. (VOA)

## Illegal Immigration, Focused...

*Continued from page 1...*

in Orlando leave their home countries to find a good education for their children. "They're developing countries, so a lot of times, especially education, they do not have those means or ability to let all of the children pursue the education they want," she said.

Professor Robert Moore, head of Asian studies at Orlando's Rollins College, says undocumented Asians are usually wealthier than those from Latin America. "I think Hispanic immigrants tend to go into working class jobs. These are more likely to

find themselves in these kind of small entrepreneurial ventures".

Outside Florida, Moore claims New York's Chinatown is home to tens of thousands of illegal immigrants. He says many have paid smugglers to bring them to the U.S., in some cases as much as \$60,000.

"The smugglers have tried to find routes that won't attract the attention of the authorities so that the authorities won't be looking for their cargo of illegal immigrants," said Professor Moore.

In China, Fujian Province is now believed to be the biggest

source of migrants to America. The U.S. State Department cites, as reasons, Fujian's relative economic liberalization and export industry.

But Moore suggests rising living standards in China eventually will lead to a decline in the number of people trying to leave.

In the U.S., Congress earlier this year failed to pass legislation to overhaul America's immigration laws. The reform would have given illegal immigrants, including those from Asia, a way to remain in the U.S. legally.

## Nod To SAARC...

*Continued from page 1...*

Mukherjee said a meeting of top-level legal experts and officials of the SAARC, to be held in Sri Lanka in April, will give final touches to the draft document. A recent meeting of SAARC foreign ministers also issued a declaration, which states that the SAARC member states should evolve a common agenda on environment and atmospheric issues.

## Prashant Tamang Performs In Washington DC



Photo: nepalhorizons.com

Prashant Tamang, winner of Indian Idol III on Saturday December 1, 2007 enthralled the audiences throughout the evening in an overcrowded hall at Oakton High School, Vienna VA. The program was a great success, attended by people from DC, MD and VA area. The program also had performances by guest artists like Saroj Khanal, Saranga Shrestha, Raju Lama, Dristi Rawat, Swechya Pokharel, Suchita Basnet, Luna Shrestha and Navin KC. Tamang was presented with Dhaka Topi and Khada before the program started. Dr. Suresh C Chalise-Nepal's Ambassador to the US was the Chief Guest. Vishwa Sandesh and Nepa Pasa Pucha Amerikaye (NPPA) had jointly organized this great event.

## Immigrating to Canada

(Courtesy: Citizenship and Immigration Canada)

Coming to Canada as an immigrant is an exciting opportunity. However, there are several things you should consider before you apply to be a permanent resident.

In most cases, you must apply at a Canadian visa office outside of Canada. In some cases, you can apply to become a permanent resident after you arrive in Canada. For example, live-in caregivers or people granted refugee protection can apply from within Canada. If you want to immigrate to Canada, there are a few different ways to apply. You will need to decide which immigration program will work best for you and your family. Find out about the requirements and the steps to apply in each category: 1. Skilled workers and professionals; 2. Investors, entrepreneurs and self-employed persons; 3. Sponsoring your family; 4. Provincial nominees; and 5. Quebec-selected skilled workers.

Contd. from last week...

### Confirmation of permanent residence

If your application is approved, the visa office will issue a permanent resident visa to you. Your permanent resident visa includes your Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) and your entry visa. Your COPR will include identification information as well as your photograph. Please check the information on your COPR to make sure it is correct. It should be the same as the information on your passport. If there is a mistake on your COPR, contact your visa office.

You must have your COPR and your visa with you when you arrive in Canada.

### Arriving

When you arrive in Canada, you will be greeted by an officer from the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA). The CBSA is responsible for border and point of entry activities in Canada. You can find more information about the CBSA in the Related Links section at the bottom of this page.

The officer will ask to see your passport and other travel

documents. Make sure they are not packed in your luggage, and you have them with you. This will help speed up your entry to Canada.

You must present the following documents upon your arrival:

- Your valid passport and/or travel documents. Your passport must be a regular, private passport. You cannot immigrate to Canada with a diplomatic, government service or public affairs passport.

- Your valid permanent resident visa, and your Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR). The officer will make sure you are entering Canada before or on the expiry date shown on your permanent resident visa. Please note that this document cannot be extended. Make sure you use it before it expires.

- Proof that you have sufficient funds to support yourself and your family after you arrive in Canada. You can find more information under Proof of funds in the Related Links section at the bottom of this page.

The officer will ask you a few questions to make sure you still meet the requirements to immigrate to Canada. The questions will be similar to the ones you answered on

your Application for Permanent Residence in Canada. The officer will confirm that you still meet the requirements for admission to Canada. This should only take a few minutes.

You will not be allowed into Canada if you give false or incomplete information, or if you do not satisfy the officer that you meet the requirements for entry into Canada.

If there are no problems at the point of entry, the officer will authorize you to enter Canada as a permanent resident. The officer will also confirm your Canadian mailing address. Your permanent resident card will be mailed to you at this address.

### Disclosure of funds

If you arrive in Canada with more than C\$10,000, you must disclose this information to the CBSA officer. If you do not disclose this information, you could be fined or put in prison. These funds could be in the form of:

- cash
- securities in bearer form (for example, stocks, bonds, debentures, treasury bills) or

- negotiable instruments in bearer form, such as bankers' drafts, cheques, travellers' cheques or money orders.

### Greet Your Friends & Families

To extend the New Year 2008 greetings to your families and friends through Nepal Abroad, please email us at [print@nepalabroad.com](mailto:print@nepalabroad.com) for more information.

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## Lack of Toilets, Poor...

*Continued from page 2...*

funding for hygiene and sanitation measures, he said.

Government officials say the Health Ministry has already allocated around US\$5 million this year for improving safe drinking water and sanitation, but activists say the government's track record is not a cause for optimism.

### Schoolchildren at risk

In the densely populated southern region of Terai, where most of the houses lack clean toilets or do not have toilets at all, the risks of infection

are higher, and schools have been identified as particularly high risk.

According to NEWAH, the state of toilets and washing facilities in schools in both Terai and hills, including lack of soap for all-important hand-washing, is a strong disincentive for students to attend: "The dropout rate especially among girl students is very high and the reason is always sanitation and toilets," said Amatya, who added that children even try not to drink water in order to avoid having to use the school's dirty toilets.

## Biogas Technology...

*Continued from page 1...*

and hopefully the country's contribution will be given more prominence," said Sandeep Chamling Rai, climate change adviser to the Nepal chapter of the World Wildlife Fund (WWF).

Rai explained that every biogas system in Nepal avoids nearly 7.5 tonnes of carbon emissions per year. Poor Nepalese farmers and low-income rural families use the systems most.

### Biogas partnership

Over 173,000 Nepali households now have biogas systems thanks to the Biogas Sector Partnership (BSP), the government's Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEP) and financial and technical assistance from the Dutch aid agency SNV.

These agencies pay over half of the US\$500 cost of building a biogas system and buying a gas cooker. Today, Nepal has the world's highest number of biogas systems per capita, outnumbering China and India, according to BSP.

Biogas has turned into an indispensable part of Nepal's

efforts to mitigate global warming, according to WWF-Nepal.

"Biogas has already replaced the use of wood in tens of thousands of households and we can easily see how much it has helped reduce carbon emissions," said Saroj Rai, executive director of BSP.

### Carbon trading benefits

In January 2007 Nepal started trading carbon emissions with the World Bank at the rate of US\$7 per tonne, and recently the AEP signed a deal with the Bank to sell carbon emissions at \$10.25 per tonne, according to WWF-Nepal.

Nepal is already earning over \$600,000 per year through its voluntary emissions reduction (VER), which unlike the Compulsory Emission Reduction (CER) of the Kyoto Protocol is not bound by any UN convention, according to the BSP.

"The government has already done its job of preparing a project design document and by 2012, Nepal will have traded a huge amount of carbon," said Batu Krishna Upreti, under-secretary in the Ministry of Science and Technology.

## India's Working Age...

*Continued from page 8.*

when we take up things like larger enrollment, we have to also see that the infrastructure of the schools are improved," said Dutt.

Many villages do not even have a primary school and, frequently, those that do are poorly funded and might not even contain blackboards or desks.

Another significant problem is that teachers are poorly trained and many, especially in rural communities, do not show up for class regularly. The report says many of those who do show up do not have an adequate curriculum and will discriminate against students who are from poor families or members of lower castes.

International organizations, including the World Bank, have contributed funds for expanding primary education in India. The country does have a number of high-quality convent schools, a legacy of the British colonial era. Private schools, most of which were established after independence, remain - with token exceptions - the provenance of the elite.

Former U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright told the forum it is urgent for India to narrow the gap between rich and poor if the country's education and manpower needs are to be met.

"Because it creates these issues that others have talked about, in terms of lack of education, lack of sanitation, bad usage of resources and the whole way of how to include the vast number of people within any society within the legal framework," she said.

The industrial confederation and economic forum joint report says India should improve the training and discipline of teachers, to ensure better education.

At present, nearly all of the money allocated for education by the central government goes to pay teachers' salaries. The government has financed various state-run schemes, including free textbooks for girls and the underprivileged, with varying degrees of success. In some states, critics say, money that is allocated is not being spent.

## BJP Forces Darjeeling Gorkha Council Bill Deferred

New Delhi, Dec 4 (IANS): Under pressure from the opposition Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the government Tuesday deferred the consideration of a constitution amendment bill to create an autonomous self-governing Gorkha Hill Council in Darjeeling.

Home Minister Shivraj Patil, who was to move the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2007, for consideration of the Lok Sabha, said the government was willing to refer the bill to a parliamentary standing committee as demanded by the opposition.

"I have requested that the two bills - the Sixth Schedule to the Constitution (Amendment) Bill 2007, and the Constitution (107th) Amendment Bill 2007

(Amendment of Articles 244 and 332) - to be taken up fast. But there have been suggestions from some members and political parties that these should be referred to a standing committee or a joint select committee.

"I have no objections. Hurry was because the delay would lead to deterioration of the situation in some sensitive areas," Patil said.

The ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) as well as its Left allies were keen that the bills were passed in the winter session itself because of fears that any delay might lead to the worsening in the law and order situation in the sensitive area of Darjeeling in West Bengal.

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# US Mortgage Bankers Freeze Rates on Some Home Loans

By Scott Stearns

Washington December 06 [VOA]: The U.S. mortgage industry has agreed to freeze interest rates for some homeowners who had been facing default because of adjustable rate mortgages. VOA White House Correspondent Scott Stearns reports, the Bush administration negotiated the deal in hopes of heading off further turmoil in the U.S. housing sector that has disrupted worldwide financial markets.

With U.S. home foreclosures at an all-time high, President Bush outlined a private sector deal that could help more than one million Americans who have been faced with the prospect of losing their homes next year.

The agreement concerns so-called subprime mortgages that target borrowers with poor credit. Those loans begin with low introductory interest rates and many are soon to re-set bringing sharply higher payments and increasing the odds of default.

"Some lenders made loans that borrowers did not understand, especially in the sub-prime sector. Some borrowers took out loans they knew they could not afford. And to compound the problem, many mortgages are packaged into securities and sold to investors around the world," he said.

Concern about American subprime home loan defaults have spread uncertainty throughout broader financial markets.

The agreement between banking regulators and lenders applies only to homeowners who have been making regular payments at the starter rates but can not make the higher payments. It allows them to refinance with a new private mortgage, move that loan to a government-secured account, or freeze their current rates for up to five years.

President Bush made clear the action is meant to benefit those most at risk not banks that made bad loans. "We should not bail-out lenders, real estate speculators, or those who made the reckless decision to buy a home they knew they could never afford. Yet there are some responsible homeowners who could avoid foreclosure with some assistance," he said.

White House officials say the Federal Reserve intends to announce further changes later this month. President Bush wants Congress to increase access to government-insured loans by lowering down payment requirements.

# Canada Announces \$38m To Help Newcomers

Mississauga-ON, Dec 7 (CIC): The Honorable Diane Finley, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada, today announced \$38 million in funding for 15 partner agencies in the Halton and Peel Regions of Ontario to deliver settlement and integration services to immigrants in the community.

The funding, which covers the period from October 2007 to March 2010, is expected to help more than 150,000 newcomers access settlement services in the region. These services, delivered by Citizenship and Immigration Canada through partner agencies and organizations, include: help finding a job through employment related services, orientation, translation and interpretation services; help with referrals to community resources; and counseling services.

The Minister made the announcement during an event at the Peel Adult Learning Centre in Mississauga, Ontario.

"The Government of Canada is committed to helping newcomers succeed with their new lives in Canada," said Minister Finley. "The Halton and Peel Regions in Ontario are two of the fastest growing immigrant communities in Canada. With this funding, thousands of new immigrants will be able to better integrate into their communities and have more opportunities to find work for themselves and their families."

"For 16 years, we have been providing services to newcomers from more than 40 nationalities from around the world," said Effat Ghassemi, senior manager of the Peel Adult Learning Centre. "With this new funding for increased programming to assist newcomers, we are excited to continue our partnership with Citizenship and Immigration Canada in meeting the settlement needs of those who choose Halton and Peel as their new home."

Funding for the fifteen agencies is provided under the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement (COIA). Through this Agreement, the Government of Canada has increased funding for settlement and language training to Ontario by a total of \$920 million over five years. Under COIA, Citizenship and Immigration Canada works with the province and immigrant-serving agencies to make a real difference in the lives of immigrants.

Overall, the federal government is providing \$1.3 billion in settlement funding over five years to provinces and territories outside of Quebec, which receives annual funding through a separate agreement.

Citizenship and Immigration Canada, in partnership with provinces, territories and settlement providers, delivers programs and services that help newcomers settle, adapt and integrate into Canadian society. In addition to the Immigrant Settlement and Adaptation Program, these services include: Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC), which provides basic language training; and the Host Program, which helps immigrants by connecting them with volunteers who help them access services, establish contacts in their field of work and participate in the community.

## BJP Forces...

Continued from page 6.

Speaker Somnath Chatterjee said he would not "stand in the way" if the government had taken a decision to defer the consideration of the bill. However, Parliamentary Affairs Minister Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi said the UPA and its allies were ready to pass the bill.

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### Notice

Dear Readers, we'd not be publishing on December 29, 2007.

Thank you- *Nepal Abroad*

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### Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	63.35	63.95
Canadian \$1	62.49	63.08
Euro 1	92.30	93.18
Pound Sterling 1	128.51	129.72
Australian \$1	55.16	55.68
Swiss Franc 1	56.03	56.56
Singapore Dollar	43.73	44.14
Japanese Yen 10	5.72	5.78
Chinese Yuan 1	8.55	8.63
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	9.82	---
Danish Kroner 1	12.37	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.13	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	16.90	---
Qatari Riyal 1	17.40	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.09	---
UAE Dirham 1	17.25	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	18.93	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, 12.07.07]

# India's Working Age Population Growing in Size, Lacking in Education and Skills

By Steve Herman, New Delhi

New Delhi December 05 [VOA]: Even as India emerges as one of the world's major economies, it is still struggling to achieve widespread literacy among its people, and officials say there is a massive shortage of skilled labor. VOA's Steve Herman reports from New Delhi that a large labor force by itself is not enough to offset the economic damage from a failure to educate.

India has 320 million people between the ages of six and 16. In a decade, India will be home to 800 million people of working age. All that available labor is touted as a competitive advantage over the rapidly aging populations of the developed world.

The equation, however, is not as simple as it seems.

A report by the Confederation of Indian Industry and the World Economic Forum has emphasized that India's burgeoning economy needs not just more workers, but more

skilled workers. The experts agree that failure to educate its people is hurting India's economy.

Chaly Mah is the Asia-Pacific chief of Deloitte, a global consulting company. He says there is a widespread misconception that India and China have a lot of people available for hire.

"I think that's a myth, because when you talk about skilled labor and skilled professionals, there is actually a massive shortage. And I think the core of the problem is you've got to start from the very beginning, and that is, ensure that you have a solid education system," said Mah.

India is still struggling to achieve nationwide literacy, especially among girls and the rural poor.

Some two-thirds of Indians are now believed to be literate, compared to less than 20 percent in 1951, when the first

census was taken after independence. But critics complain that literacy is often defined as merely being able to write one's own name. And one-third of a billion-plus people, those still illiterate, is an awful lot of people without basic education.

Education became a fundamental right for children in India only at the beginning of this decade. But many poverty-stricken parents feel compelled to have their children work, rather than go to school.

Shamsher Mehta is director-general of the Confederation of Indian Industry.

"A very high percentage don't go to school, an even higher percentage are dropping out of school. And therefore, while it looks like a demographic advantage today, if you don't do something about it - both in public and private - then I'm afraid this risk might just slip out

of our hands and might become a liability," said Mehta.

Mehta was among those speaking about the country's development challenges and risks during the World Economic Forum's India Economic Summit this week in New Delhi.

Shekhar Dutt is a former top education official in the state of Madhya Pradesh, and is now a deputy national security advisor. He told business leaders at the event that while India's state and central governments are serious about the goal of universal education, it is not just a matter of having higher enrollment.

"If you try to enroll girls into rural schools and if there are no toilets, it's a difficult thing. So

...Contd. on pg 6

## New Study Shows Fitness More Important Than Weight

By Carol Pearson

Washington December 06 [VOA]: A new study offers some encouragement to people who are overweight, particularly for those over the age of 60. The study suggests that fitness matters more than extra weight in terms of overall health and longevity. VOA's Carol Pearson has more.

Numerous studies have shown that regular exercise can do wonders for people's health.

It lowers blood pressure, reduces levels of bad cholesterol and may even slow progression of some neurological diseases.

It seems that at least some older people have already gotten the word about fitness.

Warren Hughes has big reasons for exercising. She explains, "I want to be able to stay active and I want not to be

confined in any way and live longer."

Other older adults echo Hughes. Bernard Solomon is 83. He exercises to help his heart. "What do I notice? I can do it. That's what I notice," he said.

Caroly Wilcox exercises to help fight her osteoporosis. She feels, "I'm stronger, got more stamina."

Experts in weight loss and obesity, such as Dr. Louis Aronne, agree that older people need to focus more on fitness. "We know that it is critical for older people to maintain their muscle mass and to maintain adequate nutrition stores," Aronne said.

Researchers followed 2,600 people over the age of 60 and found that those who were overweight but fit are more likely to live longer than their slimmer but less fit peers.

Dr. Steven Blair at the University of South Carolina led the study and explains, "Even in individuals who were fat, indeed even in people who were obese, if they were fit, they did not have a higher risk of dying."

And just how much exercise makes a person physically fit? Dr. Blair says if you do 30 minutes of brisk walking

five days a week, you are considered fit, whatever your weight.

And people who do more have a lower death rate.

"As a 68-year old fat man, I'm still running 25 miles a week," says Dr. Blair.

He adds, people who are severely obese do have higher death rates, but in general, fitness means living longer.

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To,