

# Nepal Abroad

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## Ambassador Chalise Presents His Credentials



Photo: Embassy of Nepal, Washington DC

The Nepalese Ambassador Dr Suresh C Chalise with the US President George W Bush at the White House on Tuesday January 22, 2008.

The Nepalese Ambassador to the US, Dr Suresh C Chalise presented his credentials to President George W Bush at the White House on Tuesday January 22, 2008. President Bush warmly welcomed Dr Chalise as Nepal's Ambassador to the US.

Nepal has undergone profound changes, moving from a monarchy to an emerging democracy, with an emerging economy, said President Bush in response to the remarks of Dr Chalise. He further added that the US saluted the progress made by the people and the Government of Nepal in the ongoing transition to democracy and commended Prime Minister Girija P Koirala for his role in leading Nepal's political parties towards

successful Constituent Assembly election.

The President further said that the US encourages the Government and the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) to work together to ensure that CA elections are held by mid April.

He further talked about the need to address the concerns of the Madhes and other marginalized groups in order to restore harmony in the nation. He reiterated the US Government's support to Nepal's efforts in its journey towards democracy and assured that the US would continue to work with the Government of Nepal and with the international community to foster environment conducive to peace, stated the press communiqué issued by the Embassy of Nepal.

## Serial Bombs Rock Janakpur

Janakpur Jan 26 (THT): Bombs were detonated at different places in Janakpur on Friday evening ahead of the seven party joint meet to be held here on Saturday.

Two bombs were exploded at Piradi Chowk and another at

Ramananda Chowk around 8 PM, SP Bhog Bahadur Thapa said.

Only minor damages were reported as the bombs weren't very powerful, Thapa said, adding security has been beefed up in the city.

## No Talks Till The Govt Meets Demands: Thakur

Bhairahawa Jan 25 (HNS): President of the Terai Madhes Democratic Party Mahantha Thakur said that his party would not sit for talks till the government made clear its stand on his party's 11-point demands.

Talking to journalists at a press conference here today, he said it is illogical to sit for talks before the government makes its stand clear on his party's demands.

"Why would we sit for talks when the government is claiming that all demands of Madhes were fulfilled?", he asked.

"The government is simply trying to trap us in the name of talks. We would not fall to the appeal." Warning that the three phases of security concept put forward by the government will simply invite more problems in Madhes, he said that the concept was an anti-Madhes move. Saying that the government should own responsibility for the clash between the Nepali Congress and his party cadres, he alleged that the government used force against the peaceful demonstration.

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## Minister Warns Against PLA-NA Integration

Palpa Jan 25 (HNS): Minister for Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation Prithvi Subba Gurung said today that the nation will split if PLA fighters are integrated with the Nepal Army.

Speaking at a press meet organized by the Palpa chapter of the Federation of Nepalese Journalists, he said, 'Army of a party can't be integrated with the national army in a multiparty democracy'.

He said, "PLA fighters should be mobilized for border security, industrial security and for developmental activities."

"No party except the CPN (Maoist) is for integrating PLA fighters with the Nepal Army," he said.

Gurung claimed that peace-niks in the Maoists are weak and hawks strong.

Claiming that the Madhes agitation erupted due to the Maoists, he called for the establishment of a democratic republic.

## White House, Congress Agree on Economic Stimulus Package

- Scott Stearns, White House

Washington Jan 24 (VOA): President Bush and Congressional leaders from both political parties have reached agreement on \$150 billion in tax relief in an effort to help stimulate the U.S. economy. VOA White House Correspondent Scott Stearns has the story.

The agreement includes provision to give up to \$600 in tax rebates to millions of wage earners and an additional \$300 refund for each child. It allows businesses to

immediately write off 50 percent of capital equipment purchases.

President Bush says it is an effective, robust and temporary set of incentives that will boost the economy and create new jobs.

"This package has the right set of policies and is the right size," he said. "The incentives in this package will lead to higher consumer spending and increased business investment this year."

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**Editorial:**

## The Jaleswor Episode

When the Nepalese people are anxiously waiting for the long due Constituent Assembly (CA) election, the violent activities by various groups including the anti-state elements across the country, have posed a serious doubts over the free and fair CA election materializing.

Not any part of the country is safe- whether it be the capital or any districts, as a natural corollary, people are absolutely unsecured, hence no strong presence of law and order in the country. When the violent activities were happening, and were reported on several media and forums by individuals, groups and organizations, the Seven Party Alliance (SPA) government was a mere spectator. Now when the Nepali Congress (NC) vice president Sushil Koirala on Tuesday January 22 was greeted with stones in Jaleswor, it has been projected as if it was a big surprise and an unexpected. This incident, if watched carefully, brings several arguments into fore.

The incident clearly reflected how unsafe ONLY the SPA leaders are; a conspiracy against the NC to demoralize and discourage their cadres and voters in their stronghold electoral district; and an orchestrated design to project a volatile situation in Terai by associating a high profile figure so that a strong force can be

deployed to contain the situation in Terai.

The ruling coalition should understand that if the people are safe, naturally politicians can feel safe as well. It is their governments' responsibility to provide security to the nation as a whole and not just to those affiliated with SPA.

The incident also discloses a possible conspiracy of some elements to create an environment of mistrust among the ruling coalition. The possibility of ploy by others to weaken the NC in their stronghold to impact the CA election output cannot be ignored either.

The situation is Terai is certainly not conducive for the election; given the violent activities happening and the threat to violence by various groups reported almost every day, raises alarm over the possibility of CA election. The Jaleswor episode can also be exploited by SPA government to substantiate the fluid situation in Terai and to employ excessive forces to contain the threats posed by the dissenting groups; and to conduct the election by all means.

To sum, the CA election is for the people and also to those political parties outside of the SPA, and any attempt to deny this opportunity to all can bring a unwarranted consequences to the nation.

## Women's Society Set To Establish Newa School

Kirtipur Jan 24 (RSS): With a slogan 'Newa School in Newa Settlements', Women's Unity Society, Kirtipur, is set to establish a Newa School in Kirtipur to provide education in Newari language.

Principal of the school Manjuli Maharjan said classes will begin from the coming academic session in the school aimed at raising the standard of education and protecting Newari language and culture.

Sanam Shrestha, a resident of Kirtipur which is one of the oldest settlements of the Newari community, said the establishment of the school has made him happy and said it was the need of the hour to

raise interest of kids in Newari language.

Meanwhile, in Kathmandu, the Ministry of Home Affairs has stated that in reference to the provision requiring the certification by National Academy for Uplift of Indigenous Nationalities and the National Dalit Commission for the indigenous nationalities and the Dalits respectively while calling applications for the posts in the Nepal Police and the Armed Police Force allocated to the indigenous nationalities and the Dalits, there is no need for a separate certification by the Academy and the Commission as regards the surnames classified by

*Contd. on page 8.*

## Risks Of Child Sexual Abuse Growing

Bardiya, Jan 21 (IRIN) - Nearly a year has passed since 13-year-old Maya (not her real name) was sexually abused and molested by her class teacher but her abuser has been walking free since he knows the victim cannot prove anything legally.

"I want that teacher punished but my only evidence against him is my testimony," Maya told IRIN in remote Milan Chowk village of Bardiya District, nearly 700km west of the Nepalese capital, Kathmandu.

She said her teacher had been molesting her every day during and after school for nearly three months. But she was too scared to complain to the school administration, fearing they would not believe her and then suspend her from school. Her only escape was to quit school and stay at home with her mother.

"I fear for other students because nobody is complaining about him or other teachers who 'do bad things' to children," said Maya. She said a large number of girls aged 10-13 were often sexually abused at her school, but their crimes always went unpunished despite complaints to the school administration.

Maya and her friends are ready to make their case public and take legal action but their only question is who will take the first step. "Everyone is too scared to speak up because we may not get justice," she said.

### Child sexual abuse "alarming", says NGO

There is no precise data available on the number of sexual abuse and rape cases but activists believe the situation is alarming.

A research study report entitled No More Suffering - Child Sexual Abuse in Nepal - Children's Perspectives published in April 2006 by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and Child Workers in Nepal (CWIN), found that nearly 18 percent of the 4,000 students interviewed had experienced severe sexual abuse, including molesting and rape.

Another research report on child sexual abuse entitled Silent Suffering - Child Sexual Abuse in the Kathmandu Valley issued in June 2003 by Save the Children Norway in Nepal and CWIN, said a large number of schoolchildren in Kathmandu had been subjected to sexual abuse. Nearly 13.7 percent of the 5,000 interviewed students had suffered from severe sexual abuse.

CWIN is a national non-governmental organisation (NGO) helping to rescue and protect children at risk of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation.

"The situation of child sexual abuse is alarming and strong measures have to be taken to protect the children at risk of being sexually abused," said Madhav Pradhan from CWIN.

CWIN's 24-hour emergency service called Child Helpline, which helps vulnerable children, has been receiving more calls from victims to help rescue them from being abused and raped on a regular basis.

"We immediately respond to calls from children to ensure that we report their cases immediately to the police so that they can start investigations promptly," said Bharat Adhikari, programme officer of Child Helpline.

### Strong laws needed

Adhikari said a lot could have been done to protect the children and punish their abusers if there was a stable government and strong laws

*...Contd. on pg 6*

## Nepali Calendar

Sun Jan 27 / Magh 13' 64	Panchami
Mon Jan 28 / Magh 14' 64	Shashthi
Tue Jan 29 / Magh 15' 64	Saptami
Wed Jan 30 / Magh 16' 64	Astami
Thu Jan 31 / Magh 17' 64	Nawami
Fri Feb 01 / Magh 18' 64	Dashami
Sat Feb 02 / Magh 19' 64	Ekadashin

## 'There should also be a mutual recognition and respect

for other's potential...: G G Prerana

Govinda Giri Prerana is one of the popular, contemporary Nepalese literary figures, who have over a dozen of works including poems, essays, novels, satire, travelogue, criticisms and short stories to his credit.

Born in 1915 BS in Tekkar Bhansari, Makwanpur district, he was raised in Hetauda, Nepal and went to Nepal Commerce College, Min Bhawan in Kathmandu to study business. However, he started his literary journey from 2034 BS and has so far received *Mainali Katha Puraskar*, *Yuba Barsha Moti Puraskar*, *Narayani Wangmaya Puraskar* and others. In travelogue, he earned accolades for his two popular works – *Phero* and *Tistako Kinaraikinar*.

While in Nepal he worked as an accountant at Tribhuvan University for over 22 years. After his retirement, he came to the United States in 2004 and in January 2006, he was a part of the publishing team of Vishwasandesh—a fortnightly edition published from the DC metro area. From January 2007, he independently started another fortnightly magazine – Vishwaparikrama, as its publisher and chief editor. Last week on Saturday January 19, 2008, publisher Giri organized a program to celebrate the first anniversary of Vishwaparikrama.

On Sunday January 20, 2008 he talked to Nepal Abroad about his experiences as a publisher. Below the excerpts:

**Q: What made a renowned writer turned journalist?**

A: Literary journalism is not possible in the US as readers need more than just literary contents. However, literature can be a part of the regular (print) medium.

**Q: You were first a part of the Vishwasandesh team, and later you started your own medium-Vishwaparikrama. What was the reason behind this move?**

A: There should be a kind of similarity in philosophical and intellectual ability, thinking capacity; similarity in understanding to obtain a defined goal among the team members.

There should also be a mutual recognition and respect for other's potential, which creates a healthy environment for a team's success. Unfortunately, things were little different in our team; therefore, I decided to go for an independent (print) medium.

**Q: Discuss the challenges and the opportunities for Vishwaparikrama?**

A: Even with the advancement of several technologies, print media is still a preferred form of communication in US, and it also applies to the Nepalese community. The demand for the (Nepalese) community newspaper is very relevant and significance in states outside of DC metro area and the increased rate of our subscription from other states substantiates this



Govinda Giri Prerana  
Publisher: Vishwaparikrama

argument. The States with less Nepalese expatriates needs more materials contained in our newspaper than in states with higher Nepalese population.

**Q: How different is Vishwaparikrama than others in delivering the contents for its readers?**

A: If one is to analyze the contents of our past 18 issues, we've focused more on literature, arts, culture and have been a forum for variety of news and views that caters to the Nepalese émigrés. In addition, not all local events get covered by the main stream media, and therefore, we focused on that story that gets local attention. Even though, they get coverage online, the convenience of the print cannot be replaced by any technologies.

**Q: Who and where are your readers?**

A: As of now, we've readers/subscribers across 35 states in the

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## Calendar Of Events

**January 27, 2008:** America Nepal Women Association of Washington D.C. (ANWA) invites all to participate in an event to mark the completion of the 1st year Basic free Medical Services to the Nepalese Community on Sunday January 27, 2008 at Pashupati Buddha Mandir 9114 Margo Ln, Lanham, Md from 11.00 am to 4.00 pm. For more information contact Sunita Siwakoti 240 506 3477 Sarita Dongol 240 361 8536 Beena Baidya 240 264 6751 For details visit nepalhorizons.com.

**February 9, 2008:** The Northwest Sherpa Association is celebrating Sherpa Lhosar (new year 2135 Chiwa-Lo (year of mice) Night on Saturday Feb 9 from 5pm at The Rocking Horse Dance Barn, 11820 150<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Renton WA. For details visit nepalseattle.org

**February 10, 2008:** The America Nepal Society (ANS) is screening a successful feature film 'Pyari Bahini' on Sunday Feb 10 at Loehmanns Plaza 7219 Arlington Blvd Falls Church VA from 1pm. Artists include Dilip Rayamajhi, Bipana Thapa, Arjun Shrestha, Uttam Pradhan and others. For details on tickets, call Kabindra Sitoula 571 259 3984/ Khem Bhattachan 571 242 5510/ Netra Ghising 703 597 4098 and other ANS members.

**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

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

## Nepal Scripts World's Best Child Welfare Story

Kathmandu, January 24 (THT): Despite a devastating 10-year civil war, Nepal has scripted the best child welfare story in the world, slashing child mortality by over 65 percent and magically improving child healthcare.

"Nepal is one of the seven countries in the world that has been successful in cutting child mortality by two-thirds," said Gillian Mellsop, Unicef's Nepal representative, releasing the report 'State of the world's children' in Kathmandu on Thursday.

"What is commendable for Nepal is that we were able to make this progress despite the conflict the country has experienced in the last decade."

In 2001 in Nepal 91 children under the age of five died in every 1,000 children, according to the health ministry.

Last year, the number was slashed to 61 per thousand, making Nepal one of the four top success stories in the world, the other three being Indonesia, Egypt and south Asian neighbour Bangladesh.

...Contd. on pg 7

## Five State Senates To Open With Hindu Slokas

Nevada Jan 24: Five State Senates in the US will have their reportedly first Hindu opening prayers containing ancient Sanskrit mantras in the coming weeks, thus creating a milestone in American history.

Rajan Zed, a prominent Hindu chaplain and Indo-American leader, will recite these history making prayers in New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Washington and Arizona, which will reportedly be the first Hindu prayers of these Senates since their formation.

Zed will deliver these prayers from ancient Hindu scriptures at Senate halls in State Capitols in Santa Fe (January 28), Denver (January 29), Salt Lake City (February 13), Olympia (February 22), and Phoenix (March 24). After



Rajan Zed

first reciting in Sanskrit, he will then read the English translation of the prayer.

Rajan Zed will recite from *Rig-Veda*, the oldest scripture of the world still in common use, dated from around 1,500 BCE, besides lines from *Upanishads* and *Bhagavad-Gita*

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# Assessing President Bush's Mideast Trip

- Bill Rodgers, Washington DC

President Bush's recent trip to the Middle East resulted in renewed promises to make progress on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. But for many analysts, it fell short on some other objectives, including democracy promotion and lining up concrete Arab support against Iran. The trip was Mr. Bush's most extensive to the region, but it came in the final year of his administration.

The Israeli-Palestinian peace process, Iran's nuclear and regional ambitions, and the promotion of democracy in the region were the principal topics raised by President Bush during his eight-day trip.

His first stop was Israel, where he sought to build on the Israeli-Palestinian peace process that was re-launched in Annapolis, Maryland last November. He prodded the leaders of Israel and the Palestinian territories to make progress on the issues that divide them, such as Israeli settlement construction in disputed territory. He also raised the peace process in subsequent conversations with Arab leaders during his visit.

At his last stop in Egypt, Mr. Bush received strong public support from Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak for his efforts to broker a peace treaty — leading the American president to express optimism about the prospects for peace. "The leadership in Israel and the leadership of the Palestinians is committed to a two-state solution. And I know nations in the neighborhood are willing to help," said Mr. Bush.

## Promoting Democracy

But while Mr. Bush may have made some progress on this issue, his efforts to once again promote democracy and freedom in the Middle East received a mixed response. In a speech billed as the centerpiece of his trip, President Bush spoke passionately about the importance of liberty and justice, and the need for free elections.

"You cannot build trust when you hold an election where opposition candidates find themselves harassed or in prison. You cannot expect people to believe

in the promise of a better future when they are jailed for peacefully petitioning their government. And you cannot stand up as a modern confident nation when you do not allow people to voice their legitimate criticisms," said Mr. Bush.

The president's aides said those remarks were aimed at Egypt as well as other nations in the region. Yet democracy activists noted that Mr. Bush publicly avoided direct criticism of the leaders he met with, such as Hosni Mubarak, for undemocratic actions — such as arresting and jailing political dissidents.

Middle East expert Danielle Pletka of the American Enterprise Institute here in Washington adds that Mr. Bush undercut his own message by delivering his keynote speech from the United Arab Emirates.

"Whenever you deliver a message about democracy from an unfree country, it sends a message about your own seriousness. And I think the president made a mistake by delivering his message from the United Arab Emirates, which is not a tribune of democracy, even in the Middle East," says Pletka. "The president could have gone to Iraq, the president could have done it from Israel. There are other Arab countries. The president could have even done it from Lebanon, where they are struggling for their democracy. But he didn't. He chose to do it from the UAE. I think that was a big mistake."

But promoting democracy in the Middle East is always a hard sell in a region ruled largely by monarchies or autocratic governments. Scott Lasensky, who specializes in Middle East issues at the United States Institute of Peace, says Arab nations have to be convinced that democracy will not undermine stability.

"In the minds of a lot of people in the region, Arabs in particular, reform seems to come at the cost of security and stability and it makes the democracy question, gives it sort of a bad name," says Lasensky. "And I think part of the challenge for the United States, part of the challenge for the president, is to make sure that we can convince

leaders in the region and the publics that you don't have to compromise your security and stability in pressing forward with domestic reform."

## Warnings About Iran

The other main issue raised by Mr. Bush was Iran. In his speech in the UAE, he warned about Tehran's support for extremists and its nuclear program. "Iran's actions threaten the security of nations everywhere. So the United States is strengthening our long-standing security commitments with our friends in the [Persian] Gulf and rallying friends around the world to confront this danger before it is too late," said President Bush.

His aim was to line up support of the Arab nations he visited. But it is unclear whether he received more than a polite reception from leaders such as Saudi Arabia's King Abdullah. Part of the reason may be that Arab leaders see the Iran issue intertwined with other regional problems, according to analyst Scott Lasensky.

"The Arab-Israeli question, stability in Lebanon — you have to get those things right or else things will fall apart. And I think part of the conversation that the president encountered with Arab leaders is the very inter-connectedness of the different issues in the region," says Lasensky. "You can't talk about Iran and the nuclear issue by itself without thinking through Iraq, how to stabilize it and the Lebanese political crisis, and also making sure that Arab-Israeli peacekeeping doesn't go off track. Each issue, which sort of exists separately, needs to have some forward momentum for the Iran question to be addressed."

## Lasting Results?

Even before Mr. Bush left Washington for his trip, there were no great expectations for major announcements or breakthroughs during his visit. And in the end, none materialized. And analyst Danielle Pletka is generally pessimistic that the Bush administration will be able to accomplish much in the Middle East in its remaining months.

"I think that what we can expect by the end of the president's

term [in January 2009] is that Saudi Arabia will continue to support wahhabi extremism around the world, although they will be less tolerant of al-Qaida, that democracy will have made very few steps forward, that the Palestinian territories will remain, in large part, a host for terrorist organizations," says Pletka. "And that thanks to the American military, we will be doing better in Iraq. Last, of course, we can expect that the Iranian government will have made significant strides forward in its effort to attain nuclear weapons. Not a very good track record."

But other Mideast experts, such as Scott Lasensky, think otherwise. He says the Bush administration in its last months will make a concerted effort to move forward on issues such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Lebanon and Iran.

In the end, President Bush's trip may have laid the groundwork for progress on those issues. But aside from the warm welcome from his hosts and the gifts he received, most analysts say Mr. Bush's Middle East tour seems to have had limited impact.

## No Talks Till The Govt...

*Contd. from page 1.*

Thakur, who looked not healthy replying to the journalists briefly, said that the Constituent Assembly poll would be meaningless till the Madhesi demands were addressed and added that his party's alliance with the Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum and Rajendra Mahato's Party is likely.

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## Lhochhar 2008 Celebrated In Washington DC



Photo : Nepahorizons.com

On Sunday January 20, 2008 the Greater Washington Tamu (Gurung) Samaj organized a program in Washington DC area to celebrate Lhochhar Festival 2008 with celebration and fanfare. The program was attended by a large number of people from around the DC metro area. The Nepalese ambassador to the US Dr Suresh C Chalise was the chief guest. Som Gurung is the current president of the GWT Samaj.

## 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.*

... Continued from the previous week

### **3. Sponsoring Your Family: Eligible relatives**

#### **Arriving**

When you arrive in Canada, you must show your Confirmation of Permanent Residence (COPR) and your permanent resident visa to a Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) officer at the point of entry to Canada. The officer will make sure your travel and immigration documents are correct.

The CIC officer will check that your permanent resident visa has not expired. The expiry date is shown on the visa. You cannot use the visa after it expires. A permanent residence visa cannot be extended, so make sure you use it within the time limit.

You must bring a valid passport from your home country with you. Your passport must be a regular, private passport. You cannot immigrate to Canada with a diplomatic, government service or public affairs passport.

You will have to answer questions like the ones you answered on your Application for Permanent Residence in Canada. The CIC officer

asks these questions to verify information on the application.

You must inform the CIC officer of any funds you are bringing into Canada (cash, stocks, bonds, money orders, traveler's cheques, etc.)

If there are no problems when you arrive in Canada, the CIC officer will authorize you to enter Canada as a permanent resident. The officer will also use the address on your COPR to have your permanent resident card mailed to you. Make sure your Canadian address on the COPR is correct.

Permanent residents are given the permanent resident card as proof of their status in Canada. Your card will be mailed to your Canadian address after you arrive in Canada as a permanent resident.

### **Frequently asked questions: Sponsoring your family / Spouses, partners and dependent children**

*Q: Why should I apply under the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada Class instead of applying to stay in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds?*

*A: People apply to remain in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds because they do not meet the criteria to apply in any other class. Spouses and common-law partners should apply in the Family Class. The Family Class will exempt you from some of the financial and medical requirements, and you can include other family members (who are in Canada or in another country) on your application for permanent residence. The process in the Family Class is much faster than an application on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.*

*Q: If I have overstayed my visa or visitor record or if I have been working or studying without a permit, can I apply for permanent residence under the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada Class? If yes, how do I apply?*

*A: Yes. You can apply for permanent residence under a public policy that creates exceptions to the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada Class, if you are still in Canada. You can download the application kit online, or order it by contacting the*

Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Call Centre, toll free at 1 888 242-2100 (from within Canada only). CIC will mail the application kit to you—delivery takes about two weeks.

The application kit contains everything you will need, including the sponsorship application that your spouse or partner must fill out.

*Q: I entered Canada without a valid passport or travel document. Can I apply for permanent residence under the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada Class?*

*A: Yes. You can apply under the public policy relating to the Spouse or Common-law Partner in Canada Class. However, you must obtain a valid passport from your home country or travel documents before Citizenship and Immigration Canada will grant you permanent residence.*

...to be continued next week.

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## Risks Of Child...

*Contd. from page 2.*

were in place. So far, the penalty against the accused rapist is a prison term of 11 years if the crime is proven within 35 days. But in cases of child victims, most of them report quite late due to fear and their state of trauma, according to Adhikari.

It takes them months to finally reveal the incident of rape and it is often too late to punish the alleged rapists.

Child rights activists expressed their concern that sexual abuse incidents could increase as the government had failed to give priority to non-political social issues, including the protection of children.

Government officials authorised to speak on the issue and laws related to sexual crimes were not immediately available for comment.

## There should also be ...

*Contd. from page 3...*

US. We also have subscribers in the United Kingdom, Russia and France. By the end of 2008, we plan to reach all states that have Nepalese expatriates.

**Q: How are readers responding to Vishwaparikrama? Do you have any interesting situations to discuss?**

A: I'd discuss the two contrasting situations. There were times like, when I sent a complementary copy to an unknown Nepalese individual, he responded immediately with a yearly subscription fees. On the other hand, when noted literary lovers were sent a complementary copy with a request for subscription, they responded by saying they don't have time to read the paper. But when these individuals attend any literary and other social programs all the complementary copies served gets claimed and can be seen in their hands. These are few to mention.

**Q: Financially, how's it doing?**

A: I'm very encouraged with what we had last year. We're able to generate 50% of the total cost involved through subscription and advertisement. I'm also encouraged by the growing interests of our readers and well-wishers. I'm hoping and confident that I can

afford full time for this newspaper with its own office, as a successful business, rather than working extra hours after my regular job.

**Q: Nepali community is a growing community, and so are the Nepalese entrepreneurs across North America. Do you see the possibility of these groups working with the mass medium tailored to our community?**

A: In general, the Nepalese entrepreneurs are slowly growing and establishing in their domain in different states. Very few among them realize and understand that media is for society and that they have to support them for mutual benefit. Once every entrepreneur realizes these facts, there would be a day when media and business run together smoothly.

**Q: How do you see the other (Nepalese) community mass media in North America?**

A: There are several mass media serving the Nepalese community in their own way. They only differ in the form and style, with similar objectives. All media men should realize that in the event of better coordination among them, the Nepalese community can benefit the most. Hence, an effort should be made also to work in this direction.

## Five State Senates To ...

*Contd. from page 3...*

(Song of the Lord), both ancient Hindu scriptures. He plans to start and end the prayer with 'OM', the mystical syllable containing the universe, which in Hinduism is used to introduce and conclude religious work.

Reciting from *Brahadaranyakopnishad*, Rajan Zed plans to say "Asato ma sad gamaya, Tamaso ma jyotir gamaya, Mryor mamrtam gamaya", which roughly translates as "Lead us from the unreal to the Real, from darkness to Light, and from death to Immortality." Reciting from Chapter three of Bhagavad-Gita, he will urge the Senators to act selflessly.

Zed has already delivered the historic first Hindu prayers in the recent months in United States Senate at Washington DC, California State Senate at Sacramento, and Nevada State Senate and Nevada State Assembly at Carson City. Sanskrit is considered a sacred language in Hinduism and root language of all Indo-European languages.

Nevada Clergy Association has congratulated Rajan Zed for his efforts in spreading the message of love and peace. Right Reverend Gene Savoy Jr., President of the Association and who himself is a highly respected Christian Bishop in Nevada, in a

statement here today, said that they were very proud of Zed because of his outstanding contributions in social, religious, and humanitarian causes in the region.

Dharam Loonaa, President of Prayer and Peace Circle, in a statement said that there was no match to Zed among overseas Indians in promoting ancient Indian heritage and culture, interfaith dialogue, and peace; and restoring a sense of belonging and self-esteem among Indians.

Hinduism, oldest and third largest religion of the world, has no datable beginning but some scholars put it around 3,000 BCE. It has no founder, no one authoritative figure, and no single prophet or holy book. One of its scriptures, Mahabharata, is the longest poem ever written, comprising over 100,000 couplets. Hinduism in North America was introduced in 1830s with Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau studying Hindu scriptures like Upanishads and Bhagavad-Gita. Vivekananda made a strong impression at World's Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893 and he then founded Vedanta Society. Protap Chunder Mozoomdar of Brahma Samaj delivered his first American address on September 02, 1883 in Concord, Massachusetts.

## Indian Widows Continue...

*Contd. from page 8.*

goes hungry. She brought her three children with her.

Jatav is a rare success story here, doing odd jobs and learning sewing and embroidery. Her children are getting schooling, in part thanks to a home run by the All India Women's Conference. The home's caretaker, Kamlesh Singh, says other widows prefer to beg rather than learn a skill.

She says donations are always pouring in to Vrindavan, so some women are now used to begging, and it is very difficult to convince them to go to rehabilitation homes. But those who are wise and value their own security, she says, go to the homes willingly.

Amar Bari, meaning "My Home," is a group facility run by another private organization. Among its residents is Ranu Mukherjee, 80, who sings a song

about a king who has so many worries while the beggar has no such cares.

Mukherjee, widowed in her early 20s, has spent the last quarter century in Vrindavan. There is little doubt she will spend the rest of her life here.

Recently, the Women and Child Development Ministry announced that it will begin rehabilitating and retraining the country's 33 million widows, and try to get them remarried. But activists are skeptical, saying India has a long way to go before such women, cast aside by society, can overcome the traditional stigma of widowhood.

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## Canada: Keep your records to support your tax return

Ottawa Jan 25 (CRA): Canadians who plan to file their tax returns electronically, or who do not submit information slips and receipts with their paper-filed return, should keep their tax records on hand in case they are contacted by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

Once tax returns are filed, the CRA begins work to verify the income reported, as well as the credits and deductions claimed. These reviews are an important way the CRA ensures that Canadians are paying their taxes. Last year, the tax returns of approximately 2.7 million individuals were reviewed and an additional \$700 million in taxes was assessed by the CRA.

Some initial reviews of deductions and credits are conducted when returns are filed, and before taxpayers receive their Notice of Assessment. However, the majority of reviews take place later in the year, as the CRA works to verify the information on an individual's tax return and compare

it with the information provided by other parties, such as an employer or a spouse or common-law partner.

During this review process, the CRA may contact taxpayers to request more information on income sources or dependants, and may ask for copies of receipts or information slips to support claims, including:

- medical expenses;
- charitable donations;
- childcare expenses;
- spousal or child support payments; and
- moving expenses.

Keeping your tax records on hand makes it easier to respond to these requests, and will help you explain your tax situation to the CRA if you do not agree with your reassessment.

Receiving a request for receipts or documentation does not mean you are being audited by the CRA. When an individual is selected for an audit, the CRA advises them that their tax situation is being reviewed and calls to arrange a meeting to begin the audit.

## Nepal Scripts World's...

*Contd. from page 3..*

Worldwide, more than 27,000 children under five die every day, most of them from preventable causes.

Last year, more than 80 percent of the deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa and south Asia.

The reduction in the child mortality percentage in Nepal was better than in its bigger neighbours China and India. China reported a 47 percent decline in its child mortality rate and India reported 34 percent.

"We are world leaders in this area," said Yasho Vardhan Pradhan, director of child health division at the health ministry.

"In Nepal, 5,000 children used to die of measles every year. But after our anti-measles campaign, there are only sporadic cases.

"Even in 2004-05, when there were shutdowns and devastation every day, we continued with our campaign, injecting 9.5 million children."

Nepal's other magic successes are axing iron deficiency by 77 percent and bringing 83 percent of Nepal's 4.5 million under-five population under other immunisation programmes.

Pradhan attributes the success to the state's willingness to embrace any new innovation and its faith

## White House, Congress ...

*Contd. from page 1...*

The president says he knows Americans are concerned about their economic future, with the challenges of higher energy prices and a falling housing market slowing growth.

Mr. Bush is urging the House and Senate to pass the agreement as soon as possible.

"We have an opportunity to come together and take the swift, decisive action our economy urgently needs," he added.

Stock markets around the world dipped sharply early this week amid widespread fears of a U.S. recession and its potential to drag down foreign markets as well.

The stimulus deal was an unusual display of bipartisanship in Washington, with Democrats and Republicans in the House making concessions to get the deal done quickly.

Republicans dropped a provision that would have allowed businesses to reclaim taxes previously paid. Democrats dropped their demands for increases in food stamps and unemployment benefits.

House Speaker Democrat Nancy Pelosi says she is not totally pleased with the package, but knows it will help stimulate the economy.

"This bipartisan package should be acted upon rapidly and can help alleviate the economic pain felt by millions of Americans," she said.

John Boehner is the leader of Republicans in the House of Representatives. He says it was not easy for Republicans and Democrats to agree on a plan, but he is confident it is in the best interests of the nation.

"This agreement is a big win for the American people," he said. "It will stimulate our economy in the most direct and effective way possible by putting money in the hands of middle income American families and by giving businesses incentives to create and build new jobs in our country."

Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson was the president's lead negotiator with Congress.

"I know the work isn't done yet," he noted. "As the Speaker said, we've got more to do. And I am looking forward to working with the Senate and working with the House to get a package as soon as possible, because, again, speed is of the essence."

Senate Majority Leader Democrat Harry Reid says he wants to get the plan to the president for signature by February 15. But changes in the Senate may slow passage of the package, as Reid says senators may consider restoring provisions to extend unemployment benefits.

in the communities that participate vigorously in childcare programmes.

"Over 48,000 women work as volunteers in their own communities," he said. "They are the backbone of our programmes."

While pneumonia and diarrhoea cause the maximum child deaths, malnutrition and lack of sanitation contribute indirectly.

"Malnutrition and sanitation still remain major challenges," warned Ian Pett, child survival and development advisor at Unicef's regional office in south Asia.

Despite the success with under-fives, Nepal still has one of the worst neo-natal and maternal mortality rates.

Pradhan says the problem needs a multi-pronged approach.

"We need better literacy rates, food security, personal hygiene and sanitation," he said. "We need an improvement in socio-economic conditions."

### 'Vishwaparikrama'

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### Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	63.35	63.94
Canadian \$1	61.93	62.51
Euro 1	92.45	93.31
Pound Sterling 1	123.69	124.84
Australian \$1	55.25	55.76
Swiss Franc 1	58.05	58.59
Singapore Dollar	44.20	44.62
Japanese Yen 10	5.96	6.01
Chinese Yuan 1	8.77	8.85
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	9.74	---
Danish Kroner 1	12.41	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.11	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	16.89	---
Qatari Riyal 1	17.40	---
Thai Bhat 1	1.92	---
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[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, 01.25.08]

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## South, Southeast Asian Countries Battle Bird Flu Outbreaks

By Anjana Pasricha

New Delhi Jan 24 (VOA): South and Southeast Asian countries are grappling with new outbreaks of bird flu as winter weather sweeps across the region. As Anjana Pasricha reports from New Delhi, the latest outbreaks are still confined primarily to poultry, but one new human death has been reported in Vietnam.

Health officials in India, Bangladesh, Thailand and Vietnam have ordered the culling of millions of chickens as they attempt to control fresh outbreaks of bird flu.

In India, the deadly H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus has spread rapidly in recent weeks among poultry flocks in the eastern state of West Bengal - a densely populated region of more than 25 million people.

**I n d i a n** Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar says the culling of affected poultry needs to be speeded up. He says villagers are resisting the culling of birds because there have been delays in granting them compensation.

"Authorities in West Bengal admit they are falling

behind in attempts to slaughter the affected birds, and have appealed to other states for assistance," said Pawar.

"There have been no human infections reported yet in India, but health officials in West Bengal fear that ignorance of the disease is increasing the chances of its spread to humans. There are reports of children playing with chickens in affected villages, and dead birds being dumped in ponds. Human beings can catch bird flu by coming into direct contact with infected poultry."

"In Bangladesh, which adjoins West Bengal, the virus has spread to nearly half of the country," said Pawar. "The government has been struggling to contain the disease since last March."

Thailand has reported its first outbreak of bird flu in 10 months in a region north of Bangkok. Officials say more than four thousand chickens have already been slaughtered in the country, which is among those hardest hit by the virus since it reappeared in Asia in 2003,"

said Pawar. "Vietnam has confirmed that bird flu killed one man in the north of the country, the first human fatality from the disease there this year. Bird flu has previously claimed 47 lives in Vietnam.

"East Asian countries such as Vietnam and China are worried about the increased risk of animal-related diseases during the lunar New Year holiday next month, when travel from one region to another and poultry consumption rise rapidly," Pawar said.

The World Health Organization's spokeswoman in New Delhi, Shima Roy, says the risks in Asia are especially high because poultry is so much a part of daily life.

"All in all it is a worry because we are dealing with very dense populations of animals and humans and their interaction," said Roy. "Poultry is part and parcel of our lives here in Southeast Asia, it is not possible to eliminate it from our lifestyles, so we should be vigilant and practice safe methods of keeping poultry."

The H5N1 virus is mainly an animal disease, but there are fears it could mutate and spread rapidly among humans, sparking a global pandemic. The WHO says more than 200 people have died from bird flu so far, mostly in Asia.

## Women's Society...

*Contd. from page 2..*

the Academy as the indigenous nationalities and listed in the schedule by the Commission as Dalits while calling for the applications to the posts.

The Ministry clarified that the certification by the Academy and the Commission would be required only in the case of surnames not mentioned in the Academy's classification and the Commission's schedule.

The decision to this effect was taken by the Government of Nepal (Ministerial level) on January 22. The Ministry stated that the agency concerned has been instructed for the implementation of the decision.

## Indian Widows Continue to Live Desperate Life in 'City of Widows'

- By Madhur Singh, Vrindavan, India. 1/24

Vrindavan, in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh, is called the "City of Widows." Upper-caste Hindu widows who are disowned by their families go there to live. Young and old spend their remaining years singing hymns in temples in exchange for food, and a small daily stipend of coins. As Madhur Singh reports from Vrindavan, despite efforts by the government and aid organizations, most of the women subsist in abysmal conditions.

Vrindavan in Northern India is one of the holiest cities of Hinduism. The deity Krishna, the philosopher-prince of ancient India, is said to have spent his childhood here. The city, with thousands of temples devoted to Krishna, attracts millions of tourists each year.

For centuries, Vrindavan has also been home to thousands of Hindu widows, mostly upper-caste women from West Bengal, who were either abandoned by their families, or are seeking refuge from greedy and cruel relatives.

An estimated 15,000 of these women are believed to be residing in Vrindavan today, and the number is increasing. Most survive by singing hymns in temples known as bhajan ashrams. In exchange for chanting six hours every day, the widows receive a little food, and the equivalent of 15 cents a day.

Some can also be seen begging on the streets, wearing white saris with their heads shaven according to custom. There have been reports that some, by choice or because of circumstances, have gone into prostitution.

Even as Indian women are making strides in the workplace, in a country where the president is a woman, the widows of Vrindavan continue to be victimized by traditions that critics call outdated and unjust.

Usha Rai, of the support group Guild of Service, is the author of the latest study about the widows for the United Nations Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM. She

says not all these widows come to Vrindavan voluntarily.

"Very often the women were taken there and abandoned there by relatives saying, 'We'll come back for you,' and who never came back," said Rai.

The UNIFEM study revealed that most of Vrindavan's widows are indigent and aged, with little access to medical facilities or government pensions.

The women are expected to spend their days contemplating God, living a frugal existence, and awaiting death.

Traditionally, upper-caste Hindus have not been allowed to remarry, but widowhood remains a stigma for most Indians, especially those in rural areas and from less-educated families. Land reforms initiated by the British enabled widows to inherit property from their dead husbands, which greedy relatives sometimes try to usurp. Since the women are considered inauspicious, people will not give them respectable employment.

Activists say Vrindavan's religious institutions do little to support the women, despite reportedly being flush with funds.

Usha Rai says the temples where the widows find refuge should take practical steps to help the women and their often-destitute children.

"With the money that they get, they could open schools for the children of widows. If they could provide skills training, it will be great," Rai added.

Government and private support groups do provide care and shelter for hundreds of women. But that is a small minority of total widow population.

Anita Jatav, 37, has spent the last six years in Vrindavan.

She says that after her husband died she was ill-treated by his family, who tried to force her to marry her brother-in-law, a drunkard. So she escaped to Vrindavan, where she heard no one

...Contd. on pg 6