

Nepal Abroad

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Matrika Defends Employee Lockup, No Apology



Photo: Nepalhorizons.com

Minister Matrika Yadav on Thursday June 19, defended his action against an officer whom he locked up in a restroom for 'defying his order' on Tuesday following the repeated complain from the locals against him. Minister also said he cannot wait till the stringent law is enacted to check corruption. No apology was made for his action. However, Minister said he'd work further in his mission with other honest civil servants.

US Group Highlights Plight of World's Refugees

By Michael Bowman, Washington, June 19, VOA

A U.S. humanitarian advocacy group says in a report the number of refugees around the world continues to grow. It says refugees are facing mistreatment and a lack of assistance in dozens of countries. VOA's Michael Bowman reports from Washington, the report was issued on the eve of World Refugee Day Friday.

The U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, or USCRI, estimates the number of refugees has increased in the last year to more than 14 million people worldwide. Much of the recent growth comes from vast numbers of Iraqis, more than two million in all, who continue to flee violence and bloodshed that has gripped the country since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

Most Iraqi refugees have settled in Jordan and Syria, where they are prohibited from working legally, according to USCRI President Lavinia Limon.

"You have 40 percent of the professional class of Iraq who have left the country," said Lavinia Limon. "How many teachers, doctors, engineers, who speak the same language, who have common culture and religion to Syria and Jordan, and if they were allowed to work they would be contributing to those economies, instead of being engaged in underground work where they are exploited?"

Limon was speaking on Capitol Hill. She was joined by several U.S. lawmakers who accused the Bush administration of failing to do its part to welcome refugees from Iraq, especially those who once served as translators for U.S. troops and contractors performing missions in Iraq. Maryland Democratic Senator Ben Cardin:

"When you look at a country like Sweden, that has nine million people, and in 2007 alone

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US Midwest Floods May Raise Food Prices Worldwide

Heavy rains have triggered massive floods in the upper Midwest, causing widespread damage in cities and towns in Iowa, Illinois and Missouri. But the biggest impact of the flooding may be on world food prices since the area struck produces most of the country's corn and soybeans. VOA's Greg Flakus has more from Houston.

The flooding along the Mississippi river and many of its tributaries is only the latest manifestation of a problem vexing farmers in the region. The heavy rains that produced the flooding began

around a month ago, right at the time when most farmers were planting. While rain is necessary for crops to grow, too much rain can destroy crops. Both corn and soybean plants die if left in water for two days.

Roger Elmore, an agronomist at Iowa State University, speaking to VOA by telephone, says there will be a profound impact on this year's crops.

"Yields on both crops will be reduced significantly," he said. "Corn, I am thinking, will have at least a 50 percent reduction in yield."

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Madav Nepal As 'The First Consensus President'

Kathmandu June 20: "The Maoists and the UML have already arrived at a consensus to elevate Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal as the country's first president".

This, the UML senior leader, Mr. Bam Dev Gautam said talking at a program in the capital, Saturday, June 21, 2008.

"Ninety-nine percent it is certain that the UML ex-general secretary will be the first president of the republic", Mr. Gautam said.

However, talking at an interaction program in capital today around the same time, the Maoists' leader Mrs. Hisila Yami Bhattarai-wife of Dr. Babu Ram Bhattarai said that her party will

in no condition accept a CA poll defeated leader as the president of the country.

Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal was defeated in the CA election held almost two months back from two constituencies and is on record to have said that he would as a defeated candidate not seek any post or whatsoever.

However, the greed factor appears to have gripped the Brahmin from Gaur, Rauthat district. Mr. Nepal is one UML leader who willingly handed over the Mahakali River to India at a dirt cheap price, if one were to recall.

If he is elevated as the President of this India-locked country,

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Editorial:

Koirala's Revelation

One of the popular Nepalese weekly newspaper – Jana Astha on Wednesday June 18 revealed the conversation PM G P Koirala had with his close relatives in Kathmandu. He says, 'India is behind the Maoists... they are completely against me and my party. I will expose India and to the international community'. Koirala further says, 'The republic agenda in Nepal is the brain child of the Gandhi Family and the Indian communists.. we made a blunder in haste. India is going berserk in Nepal and no body speaks. I will prefer to die but not quit the government. I will expose the Indian highhandedness'.

A sovereign country's prime minister talking about the neighboring country's attitude, he and the country endured throughout these years clearly reveals what people in Nepal and other neighboring countries think about the Indian establishment. The other side of the stories (read the neighboring countries) is hardly covered in the main stream Indian media, and the neighbors are always projected as unfriendly and unsafe for 'democratic' India.

Given the political vacuum and uncertainty that engulf the country at the moment, people have started wandering who needed the republic more- the Nepalese people or the southern friendly neighbor?

The Indian ambassador to Nepal starts his speech stating Indias' non-interference policy on Nepal's internal affairs, but

wouldn't mind waking up early in the morning to have breakfast with the politicians in Kathmandu and so is the dinner. The Indian Ambassador rushes early morning to the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in Kathmandu to request to annul the writ that falls against their roadmap, and more. Hence, he's now the most disliked person in the country.

What is Indian ambassador doing in Nepal is something that cannot even be imagined in New Delhi - any country's' ambassador actively involved in the Indian politics. How can India allow its representatives in Nepal to insult the sovereign citizen, and yet complain about the hostile feeling the Nepalese people have for the establishment?

The time has come for all of us – in Nepal and outside to speak against this diplomatic aggression in Nepal. The end of monarchy shouldn't also end the admirable initiative of the energetic expatriates who wish for peace, progress and prosperity in Nepal. While many in Nepal are waiting to see the civil society leaders staging a protests in front of the Indian Embassy in Kathmandu, those outside can send email to the Prime Minister of India and the Indian Embassy in Nepal drawing the excesses of the diplomatic limits. This can be a part of the needed help Prime Minister Girija P Koirala is probably seeking from all of us to strengthen the sovereignty.

Friendly attitude earns friendly gesture, and this is true even at the state level.

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Cabin Waitresses Subjected To Sexual Exploitation

Kathmandu, June 20 (IRIN): "I constantly wish I could be run over by a car and killed," said Rekha Biswakarma, a traumatised waitress, who works at a cabin bar in the capital, Kathmandu. She was raped by a client and threatened by her employer to keep quiet or lose her job.

Her colleagues told the 20-year-old to forget the incident, warning that she would never be able to afford the court costs and had no evidence to prove the crime.

But forgetting such an ordeal has proven impossible. Biswakarma has tried to commit suicide several times but stopped herself for the sake of her five-year-old daughter.

Two years ago, she and her husband arrived in the capital to escape their impoverished lives in Makwanpur District where they constantly suffered food shortages for lack of income. They depended on her husband's work for a local farm and barely made US\$1 a day.

Her situation deteriorated in Kathmandu after her husband left her and disappeared.

She had some friends working in the cabin restaurants and they offered to find her a job as a waitress but did not tell her what the job really entailed; she only found out when she was sexually abused and raped in her first week.

Dangerous jobs

Cabin bars, established during the mid-1990s in the capital as part of the entertainment sector,

have since become venues for forced prostitution, according to local NGOs.

Each bar has separate and private cabins where the waitress has to "entertain" the clients to encourage them to spend lavishly on alcohol and food.

The waitresses, aged between 15 and 25, are mostly migrant workers from the villages in nearby poor districts such as Lalitpur, Dhading, Nuwakot, Sindupalchowk, Kavre and Dolakha.

Most of them are barely literate, divorced, internally displaced persons and/or victims of domestic violence, according to a local NGO, Saathi, which runs a project creating a safe environment for the cabin-bar waitresses.

"They should shut down all these bars or all the girls will keep on getting sexually exploited openly and without any control," said Biswakarma.

She is one of thousands of waitresses in the capital who suffer severe forms of sexual exploitation, including molestation, rape and violence, at the hands of both clients and bar owners.

According to the Nepal Restaurant Entrepreneurs Association, there are more than 20,000 waitresses working in 800 cabin restaurants and bars in Kathmandu.

"Their stories have always remained under-reported in the media and their situation remains grossly neglected by the government," said Uma Lama, an activist from Saathi.

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Nepalese Calendar

Sun June 22 / Ashad 08 '65
Chauthi
Mon June 23 / Ashad 09 '65
Panchami
Tue June 24 / Ashad 10 '65
Khasthi
Wed June 25 / Ashad 11 '65
Saptami
Thu June 26 / Ashad 12 '65
GorakhKali Pooja / Astami
Fri June 27 / Ashad 13 '65
Nawami
Sat June 28 / Ashadr 14 '65
Dashami

Mother Tongue Issue Gaining Currency

Kathmandu, June 17 (TRN): There is no national policy on languages, but the issue of Mother Tongue (MT) right is gaining currency in Nepal.

According to Clause 1 of Article 17 of the Interim Constitution of Nepal (2006), 'Every community has the right to get education in their mother tongue.' The three-year interim plan (2007-09) has recognised the need to institutionalize the system of education through mother tongue.

Although Education Regulation 1992 decided to keep mother tongues as a compulsory optional subject with local subject, it formally came into effect from the academic year 1998/1999.

The Flash I Report (FIR) 2007/08 published by the Ministry of Education shows that Chitwan, Kathmandu, Sindhuli, Dolakha, Ramechhap, Bhaktapur,

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Dr Jhunjunwala Visits DC, Campaigns To 'Save The Ganga'

Fairfax June 17: In an effort to raise awareness about the 'Save the Ganga' campaign, a public meeting was held at Durga Temple, Fairfax Station on Tuesday June 17 on the cascade of dams being built on the Ganga River. Dr. Bharat Jhunjunwala, PhD in Economics from Univ. of Florida, a former Professor at IIM Bangalore and a regular column writer for different newspapers in India led the discussion.

Dr Jhunjunwala explained that the Government of India is building

a series of Run-of-River dams are proposed bumper-to-bumper on the 300 km stretch that the river flows in the Himalayas. The Ganga will flow from tunnel to canal to reservoir and no free flow will remain if the Government is successful in implementing the project. This will lead to severe ecological impacts. The sediments will be trapped in the reservoirs and lead to erosion of our coasts. The Holy Gangasagar Island has already started eroding at a fast pace.

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Over 400 People Charged In US Mortgage Fraud Schemes

Miami June 20: U.S. prosecutors have announced a massive crackdown on mortgage fraud that has resulted in losses of about \$1 billion around the country. In Miami, VOA's Brian Wagner reports the schemes have worsened the problems facing the real estate and banking industries.

Federal officials say more than 400 people are facing charges in the mortgage fraud probe, including 60 people arrested Wednesday during sweeps in several major cities. Many

of the accused were employed in the real estate industry, as mortgage brokers, property appraisers or title agents, and some worked at banks issuing loans. Officials say those individuals abused their positions to inflate a property's value or pass along false information about a buyer or a home to claim the mortgage.

In Miami alone, officials say 102 people have been charged

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Calendar of Events

June 21: The America Nepal Society (ANS) invites all for Summer Picnic 2008 on Saturday June 21 from 12.00 noon to 6.00pm at Lake Accotink Park 7500 Accotink Park Road Springfield VA 22150. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

July 4: The Baltimore Association of Nepalese In America (BANA) is hosting 26th ANA Convention starting Friday July 4 to Sunday July 6 with the theme 'Dignity Prosperity and Integrity' at Baltimore Marriott Hunt Valley Inn 245 Shawan Road Hunt Valley Maryland 21031 For more information on convention visit ana-convention.org/2008 or nepalhorizons.com

July 12-13: The Computer Association of Nepal-USA (CAN-USA) has announced their first 'US-Nepal Technology Development Conference' on the weekend of July 12-13, '08 at the Alumni House, University of California, Berkeley. For more information on the conference visit can-usa.org

July 12: The Nepali Association of Oregon has scheduled to organise Summer Picnic 2008 on Saturday July 12 from 12.00pm till dusk at Cook Park Tigard 17005 SW 92nd Avenue Tigard OR. For details visit nepaloregon.org

July 13: The INLS (International Nepali Literary Society) invites all to celebrate 195th Bhanu Jayanti and 17th INLS Annula Convention on Sunday July 13 from 11.00am at Leesylvania State Park 2001 Daniel K. Ludwig Dr. Woodbridge VA. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

July 26: The Rocky Mountain Friends of Nepal (RMFN) has scheduled to celebrate Summer Potluck Picnic on Saturday July 26 at EB Rain JR Memorial Park 11701 Community Center Dr Denver CO 80233. For details visit rmfn.org

August 16: The Nebraska Nepalese Society (NNS) has scheduled to organize Summer Fair Picnic on Saturday August 16 from 10.00am at Lake Manawa State Park. For details visit nnsociety.org

August 30: The 7th Northwest Nepali Picnic is to be hosted by Vancouver B.C on saturday August 30 from 12.00pm to 8.00pm at Beer Creek park 8584 132nd Street Surrey Vancouver. For details visit nepalseattle.org

September 01: The Nebraska Nepalese Society (NNS) has scheduled to organize Dar Khaane on Monday Sep 01 from 3.00 pm to 8.00 pm at the Hindu Temple. For details visit nnsociety.org

ANMA/NASeA Convention 2008: The 2008 ANMA/NASeA joint convention would be held in Omaha, NE from Aug 29 Sep 01 '08 at Doubletree Hotel & Executive Meeting Center Omaha - Downtown 1616 Dodge Street Omaha NE 68102. For more information, visit 2008.jointconvention.org

October 18: The Nepali Association of Oregon has scheduled to organise Dashain 2008 Celebration on Saturday October 18 from 6.30pm to 11.00pm at Multnomah Arts Center 7688 SW Capitol Hwy Portland OR 97219. For details visit nepalseattle.org

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

US Envoy Opens Rule of Law Program at Supreme Court

Kathmandu, June 18 (THT): Supreme Court Justice Min Bahadur Rayamajhi and US Ambassador to Nepal Nancy J Powell formally launched the Strengthen Rule of Law Program today in a ceremony at the Supreme Court, says a release from US Embassy. The United States, through the US Agency for International Development (USAID), committed nearly \$2 million to the two-year program which will support Nepali initiatives for strengthening the judiciary and improving access to justice.

The Strengthen Rule of Law program, which will be implemented by the Asia Foundation, will help the judiciary in building the foundation for credible and efficient justice institutions and providing responsive and accessible dispute resolution

services. Speaking at the ceremony chaired by Justice Min Bahadur Rayamajhi, Ambassador Powell said, "This program will not only improve people's lives, but also help pave Nepal's path to sustainable peace by demonstrating the government's commitment to provide legitimate and efficient mechanisms for redressing grievances."

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"You have to come see for yourself the best promotion of Nepalese culture...outside Nepal": Kris Ghimire

Kris Ghimire is the Founding Member and the current President of Baltimore Association of Nepalis in America (BANA). He is also the Convener of the Annual Convention 2008 in Baltimore. Ghimire is very much involved in local community organizations and is affiliated with more than 10 Nepalese community organizations. Professionally, He owns and runs a mortgage company, GIMC, in Baltimore, MD. On Monday June 16 he talked to Nepal Abroad about the upcoming convention; below the results:

Q. How did the ANA Convention 2008 come to Baltimore?

Members of BANA including Prem Raja Mahat & myself went to 25th ANA convention in LA to bid to be a host of 26th ANA convention. There were few other cities bidding to be a host. Our bid was successful. Prior to going to LA we had been planning with Baltimore community members to be a part of proud ANA tradition.

Q. Why in Baltimore and not in elsewhere, say in the MD side of the DC Metro?

Baltimore has become the cultural capital of Nepal outside of Nepal. There're no other cities in the world besides Kathmandu that has more Nepali artists, singers, and musicians than Baltimore. In addition to the entrainment world, Baltimore has become the place to start a business, a place to live and attend a higher educational institution. We have

around 1000 Nepali students attending local colleges and universities. All of these made Baltimore the best place to host the 26th ANA convention.

Q. Can you explain how ANA and BANA are working to make the convention a success?

It has been a long journey since the last convention. We have over 100 volunteers, coordinators & artists working tirelessly almost everyday for past 11 months. ANA has been phenomenal in coordinating at the National level and providing a necessary support. BANA has made the convention the main priority for this year. We have mobilized all the resources at our disposal. It is all coming together now.

Q. How excited are the members and friends of BANA about the impending convention?

As our theme says this convention is going to be "BIG, BETTER & BEST EVER". Friends of BANA understand what is at stake here and the scale of preparation. So we have been prepared. It is very exciting for us to witness this historic milestone in ANA convention history where more sports teams than ever in the past will participate, children will participate in a little league competition for the first time and highly anticipated Nepali fashion show will take place. You have to come see for yourself and witness the best promotion of Nepali culture and Nepal outside of Nepal.

Q. As a president of BANA, how do you plan to make this convention different than the ones held earlier?

We can only improve and do better every year. For the first time, we have reached out to thousands by using new technologies like Web 2.0 (e.g. Facebook, Myspace and Blogs) to promote our events.



Kris Ghimire

The feedbacks from these types of social networking have been extraordinary. We have an unprecedented access to Nepali media that we can and will utilize them to their full capacity to get the word out about the important issues facing Nepal and Nepali. These topics will be thoroughly discussed in several ANA forums. Cultural programs will be one of its kinds: the program are produced and performed by the best in Nepali entertainment industry. We are going to bring the young or new generation to the convention by organizing the little league soccer and fashion shows. We want to make them feel that they too are part of the Nepali culture as their predecessors.

Cabin Waitresses Subjected To Sexual ...

Contd. from pg 2...

One of the reasons why the waitresses do not get enough police and legal protection is because they are often portrayed as commercial sex workers in the local tabloids, she explained.

Lama, who has worked on protecting the cabin waitresses for eight years, says she has met scores of women like Biswakarma who have been raped or sexually abused.

Most continue with their jobs because they have no alternative.

Re-training programmes

"A lot of my friends became sex workers after they were raped, abused and forced to have sex with clients because they felt there was nobody to protect them and it was better to agree and make a better

income," said Sabita Chettri, a former cabin waitress.

Chettri was rescued by Saathi and provided with temporary shelter and training as a masseuse; she now works at Himalayan Healers [see: <http://www.himalayanhealers.org/>], an eminent spa centre, which is also helping to provide jobs to sexually exploited waitresses.

Saathi has been helping 200 waitresses through its Gainful Employment Programme, which started in 2007, and trains them in security work, clinical care assistance, care-giving, massage, painting, driving, tailoring and as beauticians. Private companies have also joined up with Saathi to provide them with jobs after their training.

Recently, the NGO helped to rescue 55 waitresses, 32 of whom were younger than 16.

"The crimes against these women are so horrendous inside the cabins that we are often in tears when these victims tell us their stories," said Sulaksana Rana, an activist from Saathi, who also works as a counsellor.

"Most are extremely vulnerable as they lack protection and are very poor and have to survive on the sympathy of the clients, who are ruthless and dangerous," Rana explained.

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U.S. Concerns Over India-Iran Gas Pipeline

By Subhash Vohra Washington

A land-based pipeline from Iran to India would be four times cheaper than any other option, even after taking into account transit fee payments to Pakistan

To fuel its growing economy, India is turning to Iran. A proposed 2,600-kilometer gas pipeline would carry natural gas from fields in Iran to India to satisfy the country's increasing demand for energy. The proposed 7.5-billion dollar pipeline would run through Pakistan. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf cleared obstacles to the planned pipeline after the Iranian President's recent visit to New Delhi and Islamabad. Washington continues to oppose the pipeline because it believes the pipeline will bolster Iran.

At the International Atomic Energy Agency meeting in 2005 in Vienna, India voted for Iran to be referred to the U.N. Security Council because of its nuclear program. Tehran conveyed its disappointment with New Delhi, but said it had no plans to pull out of the gas deal.

Patrick Clawson is Deputy Director for Research at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy. He says the United States appreciates the support India has given on the issue of Iran's nuclear program. But he adds that Washington would be delighted if the Iran-India pipeline never got built: "The concern is that the international investment in Iran's oil and gas industries is giving confidence to the Iranian government, and that Iran is

not paying much of a price for its defiance of the Security Council over the nuclear matter." The United States says Iran would benefit from huge gas sales as a result of the pipeline. Washington fears the pipeline will reduce the West's economic leverage over Tehran - economic leverage that is necessary to persuade Iran to abandon its nuclear ambitions.

However, India's interest is obvious. India is the world's sixth-largest consumer of energy, while Iran is one of world's top oil and gas producers. India currently produces only half the natural gas it needs and imports 70 percent of its crude oil.

Vijay Rana, a London - based journalist and a former BBC

broadcaster, says India's priority is fulfilling its energy needs, and the gas pipeline is crucial to India, which relies heavily on fuel imports for its fast-growing economy: "It is an energy-hungry country, economic development is very fast in the country, and they really need energy resources. So, they are keen to have this gas pipeline."

Indian Foreign Secretary Shiv Shankar Menon says neither the pipeline nor the relationship between India and Iran should concern Washington or any other third country: "Everything we do with Iran is open, above board and quite clear to everybody. Frankly, from our point of view, the more engagement there is, the more Iran becomes a factor of

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Nepal's Changing Face

- Bhumika Ghimire, IN

Going back to Nepal after a two year gap, I was excited. Chance to meet and reconnect with family and friends, home cooked meals and an opportunity to see the changing face of a country in turmoil, I could barely contain myself when our flight took off.

After flying for more than 10 hours we arrived in Bahrain for 18 hour transit, driving through streets of Muharraq, brightly lit and looking majestic against the backdrop of Gulf of Bahrain, there were familiar faces staring right back at me. Nepali laborers toiling in construction projects, tending to manicured gardens, serving hungry customers at restaurants.

Waitress at the hotel we were staying, a Nepali woman from remote district of Khotang, painted quite a different picture of Bahrain, one that is seen only by foreign laborers in the country. Hard work, often with less pay than promised, loneliness, language issues and the stinging feeling being expendable in a country flush with cash and not so much worker's paradise. Still, Bahrain is considered far more accommodating of foreigners than some of its neighbors. It is one of the more modern (not just flashy buildings and shopping malls but modern outlook) and cosmopolitan countries in the region which had made an effort to

include women in public life by securing their right to run for office and vote and holds elections.

Next day, Gulf Air flight from Bahrain to Kathmandu was packed with Nepali laborers returning home. It was interesting to observe the way they interact with each other and the airline staff. The way they kept asking for more beer to the air hostess and their fake smile when asked about their employer, it showed a face of Nepal and Nepalese that breaks your heart.

A very dark and unhappy Kathmandu greeted us on our arrival. The city limping under power cuts, shortage of fuel and blanket of dust didn't look very happy to see visitors. Must have thought-more mouths to complain!

Kathmandu's traffic was an absolute nightmare. There is an air of impunity; people are breaking traffic rules, driving over pedestrian pavement, speeding with total disregard for others on the street and getting away with it.

Bagalamukhi temple, revered by Nepalese smells of animal and bird droppings, the temple grounds covered in dust and dirt. A place of worship where you hope to find comfort and solace so unwelcoming that you can barely spend five minutes inside before you want to puke your guts out.

Bagmati River which nursed the lush paddy fields of Kathmandu for years and years, part of city's culture and identity but covered with human waste, industrial pollutants and what not.

In every step you can see a failing nation, a failing society and yet the establishment seems to be totally content with the way things are going on in the country.

Journalists deal with these issues every day, what do Nepal's scribes think about the nation's situation?

On press freedom:

Hari Krishna, online reporter for Naya Patrika, a Nepali weekly said that although press freedom in Nepal is not as bad as the international media is reporting, journalists don't have it easy in the country. They are routinely harassed by the members of the Nepal Army and the Maoists. He said that the government, fully aware of the situation, is of little or no help.

Keshav Devkota, Editor of Janasatta, Nepali daily, said that recent reports on deteriorating press freedom in Nepal have been selective. When asked about international concern on working conditions for Nepali journalists, he said that the situation is getting better.

On Terai Unrest:

Devkota, on Terai unrest expressed concern that some people in position of influence and power have hijacked the movement and have turned it into a power struggle. Valid issues have been sidelined, and the "Madhesi cause" has been given a sectarian and regional color.

On Changing Nepali Cultural Scene:

Krishna pointed out the growing influence of West on Nepal, especially after the 2006 April revolution. Growing number of Churches and evangelical organizations across the country, more youngsters taking up western ways (not limited to drinking Coke and eating pizza, now Nepal's younger generation is celebrating Christmas, Valentine Day with more enthusiasm than native festivals). He expressed concern, pointing out the possibility of backlash from more conservative section of the society.

Bidur Giri, entertainment reporter for Nepal Samachar Patra, Nepali national daily, like Mr. Krishna expressed his concern on growing western influence on Nepali youth. He also pointed out that a growing number of Nepal's youngsters believe that adopting western ways is a way to show that they are educated, well to do and cultured and those who choose to stay traditional are often taunted.

Mother Tongue Issue ...

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Sindhupalchok, Rasuwa, Lalitpur, Nuwakot, Bara, Kavrepalanchok, Makawanpur, Mahottari, Rautahat, Dhanusha, Parsa, and Sarlahi have implemented MT as an optional subject with 100 marks.

Eighteen MT have been used in several schools but the Curriculum Development Center (CDC), Sanothimi, Bhaktapur has developed only 15 MT textbooks and nine MT child reference materials.

Presently in Nepal, approximately 5,000 out of 29,220 Primary Level Schools use MT as an optional subject, but the government has been planning to implement MT in the teaching learning process to make better interpretation of the subject matters for those students who do not have Nepali language as a MT at primary level.

Diwakar Chapagain, an officer of CDC said, "Neither MT teachers have been recruited to teach MT, nor the existing ones have been given extra salary."

The government of Nepal has conducted two-year 10 million Euro pilot project Multilingual Education Program (MEP) for All Non-Nepali Speaking Students of Primary Schools in Nepal (2007-09) with the financial assistance of Finnish government about the medium of education through MT. The program has been run in Nawajagrit Primary School in Dhut Magar language Palpa, Rastriya Primary School Kanchanpur in Rana Tharu, Bhimshen Primary School, Rasuwa in Tamang, Deurali lower secondary Dhankuta in Aathpaharia, Sharda Primary School, Sunsari in Urab and Maithili, Rastriya Akata Primary School in Santhal and Raj Banshi.

Initial feedback have shown that students and parents also demand English and Nepali subject along with their MT.

Arun Tiwari, deputy director of the Department of Education, Inclusive Education Section, said, "The plan shall address their special needs, histories,

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Tentative Schedule July 4 -7 2008

ana-convention.org

Thursday July 3 '08:

Registration: 6 pm-8 pm.

Convention Kick Off Meeting: 5 pm; Sports Team Meet 6 pm, Nepalese Literature Program from 7 pm-9 pm.

Friday July 4 '08:

Registration: 9 am-6 pm.

Convention Inauguration 9 am; General Assembly 10 am-1 pm; Literature Program 2 pm; Business Networking Forum 3 pm-4 pm; Professional Association conferences 5 pm-6 pm; Banquet 7 pm-8 pm; Cultural Program 9pm-Midnight. Sports: Soccer 1pm-7pm; Basketball 1 pm-7 pm; Volleyball 1 pm-7 pm. Children Camp: Noon-5 pm; Movie Screening 1 pm-2 pm and 4 pm-5 pm.

Saturday July 5 '08:

Registration: 9 am-6 pm.

Yoga- 7 am to 8 am; Forum: Ethnic Diversity- 9 am; Forum - Nepal: 10 am-Noon. Forum: Youth 2 pm; Forum-women and Cultural: 3pm; Reunions: 4pm-5pm; Food Festival: 6 pm; Fashion Show: 7 pm-8 pm; DJ Program 9 pm-Midnight. Sports: Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Children League 10 am-6 pm. Children Camp: Noon-5 pm. Movie: 1 pm-2 pm & 4 pm-5 pm.

Sunday July 6 '08:

Registration: 9 am-6 pm.

Yoga: 7 am-8 am; Forum-Women and Cultural: 9 am; NRN Forum 10 am-Noon; ANA AGM 1 pm-2 pm; Forum- Immigration: 3 pm; Reunions 4 pm-5 pm; Banquet: 6 pm-7 pm; Concert Program: 8 pm-11 pm. Sports: Soccer, Basketball, Volleyball, Children League: 10 am-7 pm; Children Camp: 11 am-5 pm; Bhutanese Program: 4 pm-6 pm.

Monday July 7 '08:

Post Convention Meeting: 9 am-10 am; ANA Ex Com Meeting: 10 am.

Dr Jhunjhunwala Visits DC...

Contd. from pg 2...

The reservoirs will lead to emissions of Green House Gases. Fish species such as the Himalayan Trout will become sparse or even extinct because they will not be able to travel upstream to their spawning areas. The chance of development of virulent strains of malaria will increase because dead coves in reservoirs provide breeding areas for malaria. There will be increased probability of earthquakes because of change of load on the earth.

The cascade of dams will also have negative spiritual impacts. The penance done on the banks of this river—past and present—is captured by the river waters as cellular memory. This spiritual quality helps the soul of our departed to

attain moksha. Pilgrims come to immerse ashes of their departed elders in the waters of Ganga because of this power. This spiritual power of Ganga will be hit by making of these dams. The water will get deprived of oxygen and beneficial chemicals and not carry these spiritual memories in same measure as earlier.

The Government understates the ecological impacts and does not recognize the spiritual powers of the Ganga and is, therefore, building these dams to produce hydropower for fulfilling the lower material needs of man. The meeting resolved to disseminate this information among the Indian Diaspora and to send a petition to the Prime Minister to reexamine this policy.

Over 400 People Charged...

Contd. from pg 3...

since last September. U.S. Attorney for south Florida, Alex Acosta, says some schemes involved people using stolen identities, for example, to get a mortgage on a home worth \$100,000.

"They will then flip [sell the house] that to a second stolen identity for 200,000[dollars], and flip it to a third stolen identity and sell it for 300,000. In essence, they are inflating the price year after year, so they walk away with 300,000 for a house they paid 100,000 for," said Alex Acosta.

Officials some of those charged in the probe belong to criminal organizations that were using the schemes to launder money raised through illegal activities.

FBI Assistant Special Agent Tim Delaney said the majority of cases involved the cooperation of several people tied to the real estate and mortgage industries, with the simple goal of making money.

"These are the frauds that the FBI is most interested in putting our resources to, because they inflate

the housing market prices when it is not warranted," said Tim Delaney. "In many of the cases we have seen, no one ever even lived in the house."

Officials say the fraud operations have a damaging effect on Miami and other communities, because they create artificially high homes values and often lead to foreclosures. They say additional arrests are expected as officials continue to uncover bogus mortgages.

In a separate action, authorities in New York arrested two former managers of Bear Stearns investment bank for concealing problems in some of the firm's sub-prime mortgage holdings. The men are accused of fraud in managing hedge funds that collapsed last year, months before the firm said it had lost billions of dollars in investor's money. The bank's problems helped spark the sub-prime mortgage market crisis. (VOA 6/20)

Madav Nepal As...

Contd. from pg 1...

the Indian establishment will have another version of Girija Prasad Koirala. India is the winner in any case, say analysts.

Mrs. Sahana Pradhan who expressed her views at the program said that if provided with the opportunity to be the president of the country she will perform her duties efficiently. Mrs. Pradhan is

the wife of late communist veteran, Pushpa Lal.

Speaking at the same program, Mr. Upendra Yadav said that the Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum will not retract from supporting a women candidate for the first president of Nepal.

The inner "bargain" is thus on whose corollary is that utility of Koirala for India is over. (TGW)

Low-Income Housing Limits To Be Waived In IN And IA

Washington June 19: The Internal Revenue Service today announced that it will waive certain limitations for the low-income housing tax credit in Indiana and Iowa so that owners of facilities in these states can provide housing to victims of recent storms and flooding.

The IRS will continue to monitor closely the housing situation in other states affected by the recent flooding and is prepared to act quickly as circumstances warrant.

“Our thoughts are with the thousands of families left homeless by these terrible tragedies,” IRS

Commissioner Doug Shulman said. “We are pleased to help these states to quickly house the needy whose homes were destroyed.”

Because of the widespread devastation to housing caused by storms and flooding, the IRS will temporarily suspend certain limitations for qualified low-income housing projects located anywhere in the states of Indiana and Iowa. Today’s action will expand the availability of housing for disaster victims and their families.

Formal notices detailing this relief will be issued shortly, stated the IRS news release.

Govt Enforces Micro Finance Policy 2065

Kathmandu, June 19 (TRN): The Nepal government has enforced National Micro Finance Policy-2065 BS with the objective of contributing in the poverty reduction through sustainable, easy and accessible micro finance services.

The policy has aimed to operate income generating and self-employment intensive activities by increasing access of disadvantaged and financially poor families and women on micro finance service, said Finance Ministry.

The policy also stated to render micro finance service in a reliable and easily accessible way

through micro finance organizations aiming to contribute in the alleviation of rural poverty and to help enhance necessary capacity to establish service-provider organizations in a sustainable manner.

It has also adopted a policy of developing a proper organizational mechanism so as to increase easy access of micro finance services and to provide such services smoothly. Likewise, it has also set a provision of setting up national micro finance development fund to provide with necessary resources and means for easy supply of such services in a long-term way.

US Midwest Floods May...

Contd. from pg 1...

He says many farmers will have the option of replanting if the flood waters recede and are not replenished by more heavy rain. The high prices will provide farmers with an incentive to plant rather than take payments from crop failure insurance policies.

Elmore says corn prices were already higher than normal before the floods, partly because of demand for the grain by plants that use it to produce ethanol, an alcohol that is used as a fuel additive in gasoline.

“Over half of the corn normally goes into livestock feed; ethanol consumes about 30 percent of the grain, the corn grain, and they

are going to be fighting for it because they have these huge facilities, and then the food uses, about eight to 10 percent of the corn grain goes into food [products]. All of those forces are going to be competing to buy corn,” he said.

Roger Elmore says market speculators are driving up prices based on the devastation they see in the Midwest fields. He says corn, which went for around four dollars a bushel just a few years ago has nearly doubled in price.

“Futures yesterday, I think, went up to \$7 [a bushel] for July futures on corn,” said Elmore. “Projections done by one of our economists here indicate it will be up to \$11 before this is all said and done.”

Elmore says the floods and the use of corn to produce ethanol are only two of the factors driving up corn prices. He says the weakness of the dollar, high prices for fertilizer and, above all, higher energy prices also play a big role. With oil selling for around \$140 a barrel, he says, farmers who depend on diesel fuel to run their tractors and other machinery need to get a higher price for what they produce. (voa 6/17)

US Group Highlights...

Contd. from pg 1...

relocated 18,000 Iraqis, and then you look at the United States, which has relocated around 5,000 [Iraqis] since 2003, you wonder as to the commitment our country has made to take care of people that we put at risk,” said Senator Cardin.

The U.S. State Department says it aims to relocate 12,000 Iraqi refugees this year and is processing applications as quickly as possible.

In its 2008 World Refugee Survey, USCRI lists nine countries it deems the world’s “worst places for refugees.” They include Bangladesh for its treatment of Rohingya refugees, China for its spurning of people fleeing North Korea, Russia for returning some refugees from Uzbekistan, and Thailand for expelling tens of thousands of Burmese refugees.

The report also criticizes many European nations for making it difficult for refugees to gain entry, as well as Kenya and other countries for confining vast numbers of refugees to sprawling, semi-permanent camps - a practice USCRI refers to as “warehousing.” Merrill Smith edited USCRI’s 2008 survey:

“The question now is: are we really protecting refugees by keeping them in camps at all? We saw what happened to the Darfurian refugees in Chad,” said Merrill Smith. “They were attacked repeatedly. Camps become notoriously infiltrated by guerrilla forces. It is an inhuman situation. It is not an

appropriate response to refugee protection.”

The report does note some encouraging signs, including the formation of coalitions in Israel to advocate on behalf of refugees from Sudan’s Darfur region, and similar pro-refugee initiatives in Thailand, Tanzania, and elsewhere.

USCRI argues that refugee rights are human rights, and that all nations have a duty to accept and look after people fleeing violence and danger in other lands. The organization acknowledges that burdens are inevitably placed on host countries, but that those costs must be defrayed through financial contributions and other assistance from the broader international community.

Condolence



Late Aatma Ram Adhikari
Sad demise on June 20, 2008 Denver, CO

You'll be in our hearts and minds, forever!

Ramesh & Sabita Koirala, VA
Ram Raj & Sirjana Adhikari, CO
Hari Raj & Usha Adhikari, CO
Roger & Sadhana Adhikari, CA
Shashi Raj & Rabina Adhikari, CO
Shakuntala & Mohan P Acharya, CO
Asha & Bishnu P Aryal, CO
Manorama & Purshottam Neupane, CO
Bikash & Bina Adhikari, VA

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Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	68.45	69.05
Canadian \$1	67.32	67.91
Euro 1	106.61	107.55
Pound Sterling 1	134.31	135.49
Australian \$1	64.83	65.40
Swiss Franc 1	66.28	66.86
Singapore Dollar	50.03	50.47
Japanese Yen 10	6.37	6.42
Chinese Yuan 1	9.96	10.04
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	11.35	---
Danish Kroner 1	14.29	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.77	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	18.25	---
Qatari Riyal 1	18.80	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.05	---
UAE Dirham 1	18.63	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	21.00	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, June 20 '08]

Cyber Law And Its Practice In Nepal: Future Perspectives

-By Sudeep Khanal, BE - Nepal

...Contd. from the previous week.

Future Perspective:

The policy makers should show their farsightedness and frame the Cyber Policy, Cyber Act and Cyber Regulations that boost up the growth of cyber regime. Two giant neighbouring countries, India and China are facing the music with the cyber crimes and criminals. We must have some long term plan that leads us towards the safe cyber journey. Although at present we, in Nepal, are not experiencing any high level Cyber crimes but tomorrow we don't want to see Nepal being victimized through the cyberspace. Prevention is better than cure. We must take some immediate actions to prevent the misuse of this hi-tech invention.

•The Electronic Transactions Act 2006 focused more on Digital Transactions rather than on Digital Property. Hence there is no specific law in Nepal other than the extended meaning of Regular Laws of physical property to address the issues arising out of Digital Property. For example, Domain Name is an important

property which any web site owner possesses. But who owns it and how it can be transferred etc is not covered by the Act.

•The government should monitor the web contents time and again and must be careful with the sites that are visited much. Government should have a good handshaking with all the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) and they should not mislead the Government.

•The Government should step in to keep the log of all phones and internet data. This will help to trace out the criminals. This policy has been recently announced by the United Kingdom and can be implemented in Nepal as well.

•Junk e-mail or spam are the advertising policies adopted on cyber space and is bane of the internet users. Such mails must be well filtered by the ISPs and individual must be aware about the junk e-mail or spam.

•ISP must take a leading role for detecting mails and web contents having viruses and banning them before reaching the destination.

•Banning pirated softwares from the local market.

•Launching Insurance Policies on cyber space such as Digital Signatures, Domain Name.

•Law must be strengthening for the ban of porno sites.

• The Government should organize some informative programs to make people aware of the cyberspace and laws.

Conclusion:

After the invention of computers and improvements in the technology, we have the pleasure to use the hi-tech inventions. A revolution is occurring in the way people transact business. Business and consumers are increasingly using computers for commercial purposes i.e. adopting electronic commerce. Electronic commerce (e-commerce), a part of cyberspace, involves the use of alternatives to paper-based methods of communication and storage of information. International trade through the medium of e-commerce is growing rapidly in the past few years and many countries

have switched over from traditional paper based commerce to e-commerce.

Due to the extensive use of internet all around the world, it placed an invitation to the criminals to enter. Cyber crime has flourished all over the world in short span of time. This is a serious issue. Most of the countries have placed the Cyber Law. Cyber law is the field of law dealing with computers and the internet, including such issues as intellectual-property rights, freedom of expression and free access to information [1]. The United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) adopted the Model Law on Electronic Commerce in 1996. General Assembly recommended that all States should give favorable considerations to the Model Law when they enact or revise their laws. The World Trade Organization is likely to work to handle its work in the area through the medium of e-commerce.

...to be Contd.next week

U.S. Concerns Over India-Iran...

Contd. from page 5...

stability in the region, the better it is for us all."

President Bush's offer to supply India with nuclear reactors is part of an ongoing effort to upgrade the U.S.-Indian strategic partnership. Several analysts say that India, while seeking to reaffirm its traditional neighborly relationship with Iran, has also been developing closer ties to the United States and Israel, both perceived as enemies by Tehran. Nonetheless, Vijay Rana says U.S. pressure on India to give up the gas pipeline project is likely to backfire:

"If Indian public opinion sees that Americans are pressurizing India because India wants to have good relations with Iran, then old memories of the Cold War come into play, and a big part of public opinion, particularly the left parties, say that we should not be pressurized by a superpower like America and we should be free to have whatever relations we want with any other country like Iran."

Pakistan is in favor of the pipeline project because, in addition to getting natural gas from Iran, it would earn an estimated one billion dollars annually in transit fees. Iran would ship approximately 5 million tons of natural gas to India over the next 25 years and would be worth approximately \$22 billion dollars.

Washington-based Pakistani journalist Khalid Hasan thinks the United States will not let the pipeline deal jeopardize its good relations with India and Pakistan: "The fact is that this pipeline suits Iran, it suits Pakistan, it suits India, says Mr. Hasan. "It will also be a major contributor to the goodwill of the peace process now underway between India and Pakistan. So, I think the national interests of all three countries will override any objections the U.S. might have."

However, Patrick Clawson of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy says he suspects this pipeline may not get built because Iranians have a long history of signing

international agreements and not implementing them. Officials from Iran, India, and Pakistan say they have agreed to complete the project by 2012, and Iran plans to begin exporting gas to India and Pakistan by 2013.

Many analysts say because India understands the importance of its strategic partnership with the United States, it would certainly keep Washington informed of any deal with Iran.

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Pt. Sridhar Gyawali

**Pashupati Buddha
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Mother Tongue..

Contd. from page 6...

knowledge and technologies, their value system and further social, economic and cultural aspiration." They shall participate in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of plans and programmes for national and regional development which may affect them directly, he added.

Ganesh Paudel, another officer of the Department, "It helps to reduce the dropout rate." According to F1R 12.4 percentage students of primary level dropout the class. According to population census 2001, 92 MT are in Nepal, so there were so many challenges to implement the plan, he stressed.

Amrit Yonjan, advisor of this pilot project said, " Two hundred schools are accepting multilingual education in Orrisa and Andhra Pradesh of India in 10 languages."