

# Nepal Abroad

Published weekly from Washington D.C.

Nepal Abroad

Saturday Chaitra 09, 2064 B.S. / March 22, 2008

Year 3. No. 10

## Political Parties Help Displaced Voters Resettle



Photo: Kishor/NS

Nepal Samacharpatra- Nepal's national daily reported on Saturday March 22 that political parties like Nepali Congress, The Communists Party of Nepal – UML and the Maoists have started chartered flights to Simkot in Humla District (Western Nepal) helping displaced voters to their constituencies.

As of Saturday, the Congress and the UML have completed 2 chartered flights, while

Maoists have completed 1. In spite of the food shortages and harsh living condition, people are returning to participate in the CA election.

Twelve contenders will be contesting in the election on April 10 from different political parties from Humla district that has 45,000 population. The literacy rate of this district is 30%; the female literacy rate is 15%.

## Central US Prepares For More Flooding After Storms Leave 16 Dead

Officials say 16 people have died, and at least two more are missing, because of a storm that caused widespread flooding in parts of the central United States.

Hundreds of residents were forced to flee their homes in the flooding. The storm dumped up to 30 centimeters of rain over a two-day period that ended Wednesday.

President Bush declared Missouri a disaster area, qualifying the state for emergency funding. Missouri's governor Matt Blunt also activated the state National Guard to help with evacuations.

Weather forecasters warn that more heavy flooding is expected

as waterways swell to potentially record levels over the next few days.

The flooding has stretched across parts of Missouri, Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio and Texas.

Meanwhile, states in the north-central U.S. are preparing for a heavy snowfall.

The U.S. National Weather Service has issued several winter storm warnings. Weather forecasters say some areas could get more than 38 centimeters of snow.

The snow storms also have caused flight delays at two major airports (Minneapolis-St. Paul and Chicago). (VOA 3/21)

## New War If Maoists Lose Polls: Dr Bhattarai

Attariya (Kailali), March 23 (THT): Senior leader of the CPN-Maoist Dr Baburam Bhattarai on Saturday warned that his party would launch a new kind of people's war if it lost in the constituent assembly polls scheduled for April 10.

Addressing a public meeting in Constituency No 5 of Kailali district, Bhattarai said, "The new people's war will be a peaceful one, and urban-centred. No one needs to fear on any score."

Claiming that the Maoists would secure a comfortable majority in the CA polls, he said reactionary

forces had engineered to coop up 20,000 soldiers of the People's Liberation Army so that the Maoists would lose the polls.

"Ever since Maoists raised the issue of a democratic republic, even the parties that were indulging in terrorism have turned republican," said Dr Bhattarai. He added that the CPN-Maoist was the progenitor of the constituent assembly. "Only a parent knows what labour pangs are and what trauma she has to go through to bring the child into this world and bring it up," he said.

Bhattarai also warned other political parties not to be smug in the

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## Thirteen Nepali Candidates In Bhutan Elections

Kakadhbhatta March 22 - A total of 13 Nepali speaking Bhutanese, including a woman, are contesting from the southern district in Bhutan for the National Assembly Polls slated for Monday.

Nine of them are from Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (DPT), the party led by former premier Jigme Y Thinley, while the remaining four are close to People's Democratic Party (PDP) - headed by another former Prime Minister Sangey Ngedup Dorjee.

In the southern district of Samchi alone, the parties have fielded seven Nepali speaking candidates, hoping to cash in on the Nepali speaking populace.

The only Nepali speaking woman candidate, Lila Pradhan, has thrown her hat into the ring from Ugenchi-Yoshelchi constituency of Samchi as a DPT candidate. A retired government employee, Pradhan has served the Druk government as senior officer at the forest and postal departments for 19 years.

Likewise, Hemanta Gurung and Nar Bahadur Gurung are vying as DPT candidates from Dagana and Chirang districts respectively.

According to the Bhutanese government's news portal, Kuensel Online, the polls on Monday will elect 47 of the 94 candidates to the National Assembly and determine whether

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**Editorial:**

## Govt. Property Misused ?

With the Constituent Assembly (CA) election coming closer, all parties and groups are enthusiastically engaged in wooing voters across the country. The Maoists seem little ahead, campaigning outside Nepal as well. The recent trip (frequented in the past) of Comrade C P Gajurel can be seen in this regard too. Under different pretexts he's been frequenting in the Gulf countries amidst the Nepalese people working in the region. With all his efforts Gajurel may be hoping to get their families vote back home, if not theirs. He had claimed before leaving Nepal that he'd invite people to come home and participate in this important CA election.

Last week (approx. March 14 '08) he was in Qatar to participate in an interaction program organized by *Nepali Jana Pragatishil Manch – Qatar*. The program was organized in the premises of the Embassy of Nepal in Doha. He received a virtual red-carpet welcome in the embassy premises by the followers seen in red shirts. This incident has left many thinking people wondering how the government properties abroad (that too in the Gulf) was used by a group that till today is listed under the international terrorist group by the Department of State, USA. Whatever the nature of the program be, the goal was to reassert and advance the Maoists agendas, as was evident from the content of Gajurel's discourse.

Comrade Gajurel is not even the member of the nominated parliament, but just a peer leader of the foreign department of his party. The services rendered were little too unwarranted. Had the program been of economic importance or had the visiting guest talked about the economic policies of his party, the entire episode could have been easily digested. But the whole event seemed purely Maoists activities; therefore, this incidence is seen with distaste by many.

He could also be there raising funds for election in Nepal. There may be volunteers who would donate money to this group. But not until the tag is removed, it would be risky to make any contributions to such organizations. And there are institutions watching the activities of such organizations. But do we have any organizations that would tell them about the consequences of such acts to the contributing people?

This incident also makes one wonder- will the (Nepalese) ambassador posted in Qatar provide the similar arrangement for any visiting members of other parties- to those in the south and the recently emerged one on ethnic grounds?

Activities participated by such groups (affiliated to the Maoists) have other serious implications as well. Qatar and other gulf countries have been a land of opportunity for many Nepalese youths. Overtly engaging working (Nepalese) people in this region may lead to disenchantment of this workforce, primarily because of their association with the Communists group. And if this speculation turns into reality, it's the Nepalese people who would be denied future opportunities, and would be an abundant loss to our economy.

Experts on foreign policy should take this issue seriously, considering the larger interest of Nepal. Long term opportunities of the country should not be compromised to meet the short term interests of a group, whose credibility and popular support is still uncertain. Government resources/properties should not be used for purely political purpose.

One of the ways to avoid this situation from happening in future is to speak out to our nearest Ambassador, the representatives of any political parties we meet, the parliamentarians from our district, and to all thinking people. Let's not shy away from doing anything we can, if it helps Nepal and the Nepalese people.

## Thirteen Nepali Candidates

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DPT or PDP will be able to form the country's first elected government.

Meanwhile, Bhutan Human Rights Organization, issuing a press statement on Saturday, said the

election being held after chasing away many citizens to Nepal and India, had no meaning and was aimed at deceiving the international community. (Source: Kathmandu Post)

## Bhutan Set To Become World's Newest Democracy

Phuentsholing, Bhutan March 21 (VOA): Bhutan is gearing up to become the world's newest democracy with the country's first-ever national elections on Monday. The elections are a bold step for this isolated and traditionally Buddhist Himalayan kingdom toward the 21st century. Raymond Thibodeaux has this report for VOA from Phuentsholing on Bhutan's border with India.

Here, on the Bhutan side of the border, it is quiet. The streets are clean and the air is clear, a far cry from conditions just beyond Bhutan Gate in Phuentsholing on the border with India. By contrast, the Indian side is crowded, filthy and loud. Children in tattered clothes beg in the streets as buses and trucks rumble by spewing exhaust in the air.

It is as if the Bhutan Gate is a portal into a land that time forgot. This tiny Himalayan kingdom, wedged between the emerging superpowers of India and China, has been largely isolated from the rest of the world. But that is starting to change.

Ruled by monarchs for more than a hundred years, Bhutan is holding its first-ever election on Monday to choose members of parliament who will have real power, not just serve as advisors to the king. In a political model similar to Thailand's, the king will serve as a figurehead.

Ramgay Wangchuck manages a hotel in Phuentsholing. He says some people are reluctant to embrace democracy.

"Even the people have requested of the King, when he announced about democracy and the decentralization of the government, that [they] don't want to do that,"

said Wangchuck. "But the King himself has given that power to the people. And people are trying to fulfill the King's desire."

Bhutan has two main political parties. There is the People's Democratic Party with its symbol of a white horse. And there is the Bhutan Prosperity and Unity Party with its symbol, three black-necked cranes.

Aside from their symbols, there is not much difference between the two parties. And not much campaigning, for that matter. Both are running a simple theme of what people here call "Gross National Happiness". It is this country's measure of civic success with four pillars: environmental protection, cultural preservation, sustainable growth and good governance.

But editorials in newspapers across Bhutan reflect the country's skepticism of democracy in a country that has been largely peaceful under a succession of five kings.

Part of that skepticism comes as people here look toward its southern neighbor, India, with its democracy rife with corruption and chaos.

Jit Tshering is a lecturer on democratic politics at the Royal Institute of Management in Thimphu, Bhutan's capital.

"We do not have any dazzling or fantastic examples of democracy in the surrounding areas," said Jit. "And it doesn't help us, actually, because we are so conscious of our past and our roots and that we have been doing so well so far. We are

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### Nepali Calendar

Sun March 23 / Chaitra 10 '64	Dwitiya
Mon March 24 / Chaitra 11 '64	Tritiya
Tue March 25 / Chaitra 12 '64	Chauthi
Wed March 26 / Chaitra 13 '64	Panchami
Thu March 27 / Chaitra 14 '64	Panchami
Fri March 28 / Chaitra 15 '64	Khasthi
Sat March 29 / Chaitra 16 '64	Saptami

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## EC Starts Erasing Election Graffiti

Bhadrapur, March 20 (RSS): The Election Commission has started erasing the election graffiti on its own after the political parties here paid no heed to repeated calls by the commission to erase the graffiti.

The district election office had asked the parties to erase the election graffiti by February 20. But after the parties did not erase the same even after a month of the EC deadline, around 100 election office staffers including security men are now erasing the graffiti in all constituencies of the district.

Chief of the district election office Indra Kumari Thapaliya said the parties showed no interest in erasing the graffiti and removing the banners that violated the election code of conduct.

CPN-Maoist is on the front in Jhapa, followed by CPN-UML and CPN-ML, in painting the walls with their party slogans and hanging banners for poll publicity.

The election office has already erased poll graffiti in Bhadrapur and Chandragadhi area and continuing to erase the same in

Birtamod, Damak, Dhulabari, Kakarvitta, Anarmani and Jhilmile.

The EC is spending Rs 40,000 a day to erase the poll graffiti, Thapaliya said, adding that the EC is using local volunteers as well for the task.

Meanwhile in Lalitpur, Office of the District Election Officer itself has been preparing to erase the wall painting and to remove the banners put by different political parties for the election publicity in violation of the election code of conduct.

It has been reported that the frequent deadline given by the office to erase the election graffiti had fallen into deaf ears, which compelled the office to take such step.

Earlier, at an all-party meet, representatives of various political parties had made commitments to erase the election graffiti and to abide by code of conduct, but were not fulfilled at all, according to District Election Officer Gajendra Nath Sharma.

Sharma added that the office should be accompanied by

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## Implement Laws Against Caste Discrimination: NHRC

Kathmandu, March 21 (RSS): The National Human Rights Commission today urged the government to implement legal provisions against caste discriminations and make special arrangements for elimination of all forms of discriminations based on caste.

On the occasion of the International Day for Elimination of Caste Discrimination, the NHRC also urged the political parties, the civil society and other stakeholders concerned to realize and respect the fact that all human beings are equal.

A release issued by the commission said the agenda of elimination of caste-based discrimination has been the first priority in the upcoming CA polls, which should ensure proportional representation of all communities.

The commission has recalled that Nepal has ratified the International Convention against Caste Discrimination in 1971, declared the country free from caste discrimination and included the rights against caste discrimination and untouchability as a fundamental rights in the interim constitution.

## Calendar of Events

**March 22 '08:** The Nebraska Nepalese Society is screening Nepali movie KAGBENI n Saturday March 22 from 6.30 pm to 9.00 pm at Bellevue University, Criss Auditorium. contact Sushma Manandhar 402 203 4442. For details visit nnsociety.org

**March 22 '08:** The Dallas Everest Lions Club (DELCL) invites all to Dallas Everest Talent Show on Saturday March 22 at Irving Art Center 43333 North MacArthur Blvd Irving TX. For details visit dallaseverestlions.org and nepalhorizons.com

**March 23 '08:** The Nepalese Association of Northern California (NANC) invites all to participate in basketball tournament on Sunday from 9.45 am at 1110 Stevenson Blvd fremont CA.

**March 27 '08:** The Sigur Center for Asian Studies and the East West Center invites to participate in a Public Forum on Nepal and Srilanka on Thursday March 27 from 3.30 pm to 5.45 pm at the George Washington University Linder Family Commons The Elliott School of International Affairs 6th Floor 1957 E Street NW. RSVP with name and affiliation at gsigur@gwu.edu by march 25. For details visit nepalhorizons.com.

**March 28 '08:** The Nebraska Nepalese Society (NNS) is organizing Kid's Pajama Party for child from age 4-12 on Friday March 28 at Sujata's Dhungel Residencecat 3807 S 190th st Omaha NE 68130. For details call 402 935 0873 or visit nnsociety.org

**March 29 '08:** The Nepal Seattle Society (NSS) is organizing a fund raise to show support to help Marbin Shrestha who needs bone-marrow transplant on Saturday March 29 from 2pm to 4:30pm at The Everest Kitchen Lake City Way NE. Details at nepalseattle.org

**March 29 '08:** The Nepalese communiyt in Rockville-Silver Spring invites all to attend community event to support Nepal Educational & Cultural Center on Saturday March 29 from 1.00-4.30 pm at Wheaton Regional Library at 11701 Georgia Ave Wheaton Md. For detail visit nepalhorizons.com

**April 05 '08:** The Nepalese Student Association at St Cloud State University St Cloud Minnesota is organizing Nepal Night 2008. For details mail at nsa@stcloudstate.edu.

**April 06 '08:** America Darpan is presenting 'Indreni Saanjh' - a collection of varieties cultural programs on Sunday April 6 from 4pm to 8pm at Irving Art Center, 3333 N MacArthur Blvd, Irving TX. For details visit americadarpan.com

**April 10 '08:** The Asian Division Friends Society of The Library of Congress presents 'Compiling the First Comprehensive English-Nepali Dictionary: a Lexicographer's Experiences', a presentation by Prof Shanker Raj Pathak, an educator and scholar in Economics and English Literature on Thursday April 10 from 12noon to 1pm at LJ-150 Jefferson Building, Library of Congress, Washington DC. For details contact Dr Allen Thrasher 202 707 3732, athr@loc.gov

**April 12 '08:** The Nepal Education and Cultural Center Vitalization Action Committee (NECC VAC) is organizing a fund raising event New Year Sanjh 2065 BS on Saturday April 12 from 6.00pm at Herndon Middle School 901 Lucast Street Herndon VA 20170. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

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

**April 12 '08:** The Rocky mountain friends of nepal (RMFN) is celebrating Nepali new Year 2065 - Strength in Diversity on Saturday April 12 from 6.00 pm at North high School 2960 North Speer Blvd Denver CO 80211. For details visit rmfn.org

**April 13 '08:** The Nepal Education and Cultural Center (NECC) invites all to celebrate Ramnawami on Sunday April 13 from 11.30am to 2.00 pm at Pashupati Buddha Mandir Lanham MD. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

**April 20 '08:** The Association of Nepalese in Minnesota (ANMN) is organizing a cultural program to celebrate Nepali New Year 2065 on Sunday April 20. For updates visit anmn.org

**April 20 '08:** The Baltimore Association of Nepalese in America (BANA) is celebrating New Year 2065 on Sunday April 20 from 8.00pm to 12.00 pm at Charles Evering VFW 8777 Philadelphia Rd Rosedale MD 21237. Also the General Meeting is scheduled to be on the same day from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm.

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

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

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

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# Legacy Of Segregation Still Seen In Some US Schools

-By Sarah Hulett, Detroit, MI

In the half-century that's passed since the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown vs Board of Education* decision that outlawed racial segregation in schools, many schools have integrated along with the neighborhoods in which they sit. But some communities that were early destinations for middle-class black families are part of a phenomenon called re-segregation. Over the course of just a few years, their school populations are shifting from majority-white to majority-black, as white families move away. Sarah Hulett takes a look at a school in the middle of the shift, just outside Michigan's Motor City.

A decade ago, the suburban communities outside Detroit, Michigan, were nearly all white, and so were the schools. But since then, the racial makeup of the neighborhoods has changed, and the segment of minority students has grown. In East Detroit schools, it's increased by ten-fold — to about a third. That's thrown white kids and black kids together.

As Bruce Kefgen, superintendent of East Detroit Public Schools, puts it, "We've had more or less a shotgun wedding in that regard." He says the rapid shift in the racial makeup of the community means the district's schools have had to adapt quickly to change. "You have some different thinking that comes in, different styles, different art preferences, different standards of dress. And these are all things that can be acclimated into the school. But it takes a little bit of time."

And a little bit of time is about all some suburban school districts are getting to cope with

major demographic shifts. According to an analysis by the United Way for Southeastern Michigan, about a half-dozen districts in the area are in the same boat as East Detroit.

That might suggest that schools are achieving a nice racial mix. But that mix has not lasted in other communities that saw black families move in in earlier decades. In Detroit suburbs like Oak Park and Southfield, there are virtually no white students anymore. White parents have pulled their kids out of the public schools, and moved. That hasn't happened yet in East Detroit.

In a classroom at East Detroit High, history teacher Lincoln Stocks leads a discussion about the War of 1812. Like almost all the staff here, Stocks is white. There are just a few black students in his class. All of them sit near the back of the room.

Stocks has been teaching at East Detroit for more than 20 years. He says the kids who've lived in the area long enough to get used to the new racial mix don't seem to have too much trouble getting along. But he says other students, who are new to the district, and new to diverse environments, are having some problems.

Stocks is also the school's varsity football coach. And he says this year, those tensions were evident when it came time to elect team captains. "The African American kids voted for the African-American captains, and the white kids voted for the white captains," he recalls. "And I didn't want that kind of representation on our football team, so we didn't elect captains. We sort of had fire captains that shifted, because I didn't want there to be an

apparent division. And that worked against us all season long, that sort of split in loyalties."

And it's not just relationships among students that can be challenging. Students and teachers can also run into cross-racial problems.

Beverly Daniel Tatum is the president of Spelman College, a historically black liberal arts school for women in Atlanta, Georgia. She's written about race relations in the classroom. Tatum says fears about racial misunderstandings can mean students of color lose out on the help they need. She says she's seen situations where white teachers have been reluctant to call the parents of black or Latino children who are having difficulty in class, "for fear that perhaps the parents may be suspicious about the teacher's motive, and may even accuse the teacher of being racially biased in terms of her feedback if it's negative about the young person's behavior or school performance."

Tatum says that doesn't mean you have to take all the white teachers out of a school. But she says schools should invest in professional development to help white teachers feel more confident working with their black students.

Teachers at East Detroit High School have gone through sensitivity training, and administrators say they try to deal with problems directly.

Ella Doster is a counselor at the school — and one of the few black staff members. She says race relations require constant attention. "Well, I just left my office with a young man," she reports, "he was talking about issues relating to his

teacher, and being treated fairly, and that was one of the things he said. He says: 'she has it in for me.' He says, 'I have to say this kind of low, Ms. Doster, I think it's a racial thing.'"

When Doster was hired, in 1969, she was the only black teacher here. In the nearly four decades between then and now, she says she can count the black colleagues she's worked with on one hand.

East Detroit Superintendent Bruce Kefgen says he'd love to hire teachers that look more like their students. But he explains, it's not easy. "You have union contracts, and you cannot simply move people out in order to obtain that kind of racial or gender balance that you might prefer." So Kefgen says he has to rely on attrition. But even when there are vacancies, he faces the challenge of finding teachers of color to hire.

In the years ahead, Kefgen says he hopes East Detroit can sustain the racial balance it has today. Other districts that have been where East Detroit is now haven't been able to do that. They've flipped from almost all white to all black. "I would like to have East Detroit schools evolve into something that defies simple description, because I think that would truly be much more representative of the world in[to] which these students will matriculate. Then I can do them the biggest favor possible."

Kefgen says that favor would be going beyond the academics, and teaching students how to get along with people who are different from them.

# Harvard Researcher: Education Key To Longevity

-By Rose Hoban

Health researchers have noticed that some groups of people are more consistently healthy than others, and wondered... Is it race? Income? Where you live? In the United States, these disparities in health outcomes have been the focus of intense research for the past several decades.

Harvard University health policy researcher Ellen Meara says scholars have found some clues as to why some groups of people have more or less disease than others. She

says one important factor in people's health is the amount of education they have.

In her most recent paper, Meara looked at data from the United States census. These counts of people occur every 10 years. Meara and her colleagues examined data from several decades.

"We looked at life expectancy at age 25," Meara says.

"How many additional years can you expect to live if you

arrive at age 25 and your education has stopped at high school, or sooner? Versus how many years, can you expect to live if you've reached aged 25 and you've gone on to at least some college..."

Meara says they found that in 1990, a 25-year-old who only had some secondary school could expect to live for a total of 75 years. In 2000, a 25 year old with some secondary education could also expect to live to the age of 75.

In contrast, for a better educated 25-year-old, they could expect to live to the age of 80 in 1990. Someone with a similar education level in the year 2000, could expect to live to be more than 81 years, 81.6 years to be exact.

Meara says, not only do better-educated people live longer to begin with, but over just ten years, more educated people made

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## Festival of Color-Holi Celebrated Every Where



Photo: nepalhorizons.com

Images of celebration of Holi in Kathmandu on Friday March 21, 2008. However, this annual Holi festival in the southern part is celebrated next day. On this day, people exchange/smear each other bright colors and is believed to these colors represent energy, life and joy. The Hindus all over the world celebrate this festival with great enthusiasm.

## Canada: The Refugee System

(Courtesy: Citizenship and Immigration Canada.....Continued from previous week...)

### Refugee claims in Canada — Refugee rights

You have certain rights and may have access to Canadian services while your claim for refugee protection is being considered. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms protects all people in Canada.

When you first make your claim at a point of entry to Canada, you will be asked to fill out a personal information form for the Immigration and Refugee Board and to take a medical examination.

### Employment

In some cases, you may be able to apply for employment authorization to work while you are waiting for a decision on your claim. Only people who cannot live without public assistance are usually eligible for employment authorization.

### Education

You can also apply for student authorization to attend school while you are waiting for a decision on your claim. If you have minor children, they are automatically eligible to attend school when you arrive in Canada.

### Resettlement from outside Canada: Arriving—Health care

If you are a protected person in Canada who is not yet covered by

provincial health care, you are eligible to apply to the Interim Federal Health Program (IFHP). This Citizenship and Immigration Canada program provides emergency medical coverage while your claim is being assessed.

If you are accepted to be resettled in Canada, you are eligible for the IFH program. The IFH program is not meant to replace provincial health plans or give the same amount of coverage. As a refugee, you are eligible for full benefits until coverage begins under your provincial health plan.

Depending on the province, the waiting period for provincial health care coverage can be as long as 90 days after you arrive. Once your provincial health coverage has started, you will still be eligible for some benefits under the IFH program—for up to 12 months from the time you arrived in Canada.

Contact your local CIC office to apply for IFH coverage.

Refugees who are able to pay for their own health care services or who are covered by a private health care plan are not eligible for IFH coverage.

### Benefits

Coverage under the IFH program is limited to:

- essential health services for preventing and treating serious medical and dental conditions (including immunizations and other vital preventive medical care);
- essential prescription medications;
- contraceptive, prenatal and obstetrical care; and
- the immigration medical examination (only for those who are unable to pay for it themselves).

### Financial Assistance and Loans

The Canadian government has several programs to help refugees establish themselves in their new home.

### Resettlement Assistance Program

Resettlement assistance is provided by the Government of Canada to Convention Refugees Abroad and members of the Source Country Class, and in some instances, members of the Country of Asylum Class who have been identified as Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS) cases, admitted to Canada as government-assisted refugees. These funds are given to help pay for

- meeting the refugee at the airport or port of entry;
- temporary accommodation;
- help in finding permanent accommodation;
- basic household items; and
- general orientation to life in Canada.

This money is also used to provide the refugee with income support for up to one year or until that person becomes self-sufficient, whichever comes first.

### Immigration Loans Program

The Immigration Loans Program (ILP) is funded from the federal government's Consolidated Revenue Fund. Repayments on the loans replenish this fund. Loans are approved according to the applicant's needs and ability to repay.

Loans are largely given to government-assisted or privately sponsored members of the Convention Refugees Abroad, Country of Asylum and Source Country classes. The loans may be approved to pay for:

- the costs of medical examinations abroad;
- travel documents; and
- transportation to Canada.

Assistance loans are also available to newcomers to cover expenses such as housing rental, telephone deposits and work tools.

Interest is charged on ILP loans. The interest rate is set each January by the Department of Finance.

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## Bhutan Set To Become...

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asking, Is the new thing we are going in for going to spoil our successes that we've attained so fast? And that is the issues actually and that is why there is concern for the future."

It was Bhutan's fourth king, Jigme Singye Wangchuck, who nearly two decades ago vowed to surrender the throne in favor of a constitutional democracy. His 29-year-old, Oxford-educated son, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, the current king, is seeing that vision through.

Dolmo Choso runs a travel agency. Like many here, she is happy with the status quo. She

says there is no need to fix something that is not broken.

"We would still love our King to be our leader, but he has handed this down to the public to choose their leaders," said Choso. "So we should be good citizens and vote. I think we all have mixed emotions. We don't want [to vote], but we have to. It's for the future of Bhutan, I guess."

The biggest challenge for most people in Bhutan is the vast distances many of them must travel to cast their ballots in their home villages. For some, the journey back home can take up to three days by car, bus and on foot. But it is a journey they appear eager to make for their king.

## New War If Maoists Lose...

...Contd. from pg 1

belief that they would win this time too just because they won in the past. He added that only the party raising the issue of the constituent assembly deserved to win. Describing CPN-UML as opportunist, Bhattarai said the UML had hardly played any role in the peace process. He also said the UML had never taken a clear political stand at any time.

Condemning the UML for not agreeing to an electoral alliance with the Maoists, Bhattarai said the UML was trying to forge an alliance with reactionary forces. Recalling

that the NC had launched a decisive agitation 57 years ago to end the Rana hegemony, he said that now the NC would not be able to glean any dividend from that agitation.

Speaking on the occasion, Maoist candidate from Constituency No 5 Lekh Raj Bhatt said that if elected to power his party would ensure no one would have to go hungry or unclad in a new Nepal. Maoist candidate from Constituency No 4 Krishna Kumar Chaudhari and Constituency No 6 Lila Bhandari urged the people to allow the Maoists to draft the country's new constitution.

## EC Starts Erasing...

...Contd. from pg 3

political parties in such works as it is impossible to erase the whole election graffiti by the office alone.

Similarly, it is learnt that CPN- Maoist which is responsible for writing most of the graffiti has not erased them yet, RELEC General Secretary Ramesh Prasad Sharma informed.

District Secretary of Janamorcha Nepal, Dipendra Shrestha said that wall paintings carried out by his party were already removed.

CPN- Maoist District Secretary Usha admitted that her party could not erase the wall paintings as all leaders and workers were busy in election publicity.

No election graffiti carried out by other parties including CPN-UML and Nepali Congress can be seen in the district.

The code of conduct issued by the Election Commission has it that graffiti, banners and posters cannot be put during election campaigning.

Meanwhile, the District Election Officer's Office is to provide orientation programme for the polling officers and staff to be deployed in the election.

Some 1,800 employees will be deployed for the CA in Lalitpur.

Some 600 people including Polling Officers and Assistant Polling Officers will be given training, it is learnt.

### Vishwaparikrama

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## India Is Emerging As A New ...

...Contd. from pg 8

"I think there are two things going on here. One is purely commercial. The Indian defense budget is growing rapidly, and unlike China, they are buying weapons from overseas. India is one of the largest overseas acquirers of weapon systems, which is frankly good for the U.S. defense industry, if they are able to crack that market. So, there is a purely commercial interest here for the U.S. government," says Mr. Spiegel. "At the same time we should not underestimate the view of the U.S. about what China is up to there. They are trying to build a Bluewater Navy on their own, trying to acquire an aircraft carrier, are building submarines. I think the U.S. views the alliance with regional navies, particularly the Indian navy, as a real hedge against China."

Commodore Bhaskar says an increased U.S. focus on Asia, and particularly the rise of China, have caused Washington to better appreciate India's strategic importance. India's strong democratic tradition, impressive economic performance, and civilian control of the military are all seen as attractive factors in pursuing a closer strategic relationship. "The United States, to my mind, has come to a strategic determination that, with the end of the Cold War and the advent of what you might describe as post 9/11 global security scenario that they need to engage with India in the furthering of abiding US interests in the 21st century at least in the early part."

During his visit to New Delhi last month, U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates also talked with Indian officials about what has been dubbed the "1-2-3 Agreement." The agreement would put into effect a U.S.- India civilian nuclear deal that would allow the export of U.S. nuclear fuel and technology to India.

Los Angeles Times correspondent Peter Spiegel says the U.S. government has tried to keep the civilian nuclear deal separate from the U.S.-India military relationship.

"Secretary Gates, when he was in Delhi, and I was traveling with him, repeatedly emphasized that this was not his main reason for being there, that the civilian nuclear deal was a deal worked out between the governments of U.S. and India, but separate from the defense relationship. It certainly could hurt the US-India relationship if the deal falls through, but I think the military- to-military relationship is so important to the U.S. now that it would not affect the defense relationship if the civilian nuclear deal falls through."

Analysts say that, if the nuclear agreement can be implemented, it will be a milestone in U.S.-India relations. Meantime India's defense purchases are projected to double to more than \$30 billion dollars by 2012, and climb to a stunning \$80 billion by 2022.

## Harvard Researcher...

...Contd. from pg 4

gains in the length of their lives. Meanwhile, the life expectancy didn't change for less educated people.

Some of these gains can be explained. Meara says researchers know that people who are more educated are more likely to quit smoking cigarettes, or not start at all, compared to people with less education.

"I think it's a reminder not to be complacent," Meara says.

"Just because a population overall appears to be getting healthier, it doesn't always mean that those advantages and successes that many people have enjoyed really extend into all parts of the population. And I think that's something to really pay attention to

regardless of whether you live in the US or elsewhere."

Meara points out that education often determines income - people with more education frequently make more money. This makes them better able to access health care, and purchase other resources and services that can keep them healthier. But the data on income do NOT show that people who make more money are automatically healthier.

Meara says education is key. People need to be educated in order to take advantage of opportunities for better health.

Her research appears in the journal Health Affairs. [VOA 3/21]

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## Government Of Canada Helps Immigrants Achieve Success In Canada

Vancouver, March 20, 2008 — The Honourable Diane Finley, Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, on behalf of the Honourable Monte Solberg, Minister of Human Resources and Social Development, today announced funding that will allow the Government's Canadian Immigration Integration Project (CIIP) to continue until 2010 and help immigrants join the labour market.

This project was first launched in 2007 by the Government of Canada and the Association of Canadian Community Colleges, and due to its success, is being extended.

"Our government is taking action to ensure that Canada has the best educated, most-skilled and most flexible work force in the world," said Minister Finley. "By investing an additional \$3.8 million to help immigrants prepare for the Canadian labour market, we are improving newcomers' transition to the Canadian work force and strengthening that work force."

The CIIP, which is funded through Human Resources and Social Development Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition program, is designed to assist immigrants preparing to integrate into the Canadian labour market while they are still in their country of origin.

Today's additional contribution brings the Government of Canada's funding for the Canadian Immigration Integration Project to a total of \$8.3 million.

Since 2007, the Project has been offering orientation sessions on Canadian foreign credential recognition processes in China, India and the Philippines. The CIIP has been developed by the Association of Canadian Community Colleges.

"The Association of Canadian Community Colleges is pleased to be able to offer integration services with the support of Human Resources and Social Development Canada," said Mr. Nejat Gorica, Vice-President, Business Development and Technical Cooperation, Association of Canadian Community Colleges. "Since launching this service overseas in January 2007, we have helped over 2,300 immigrants, and more immigrants are using this service every day."

Human Resources and Social Development Canada's Foreign Credential Recognition program is improving the integration of internationally trained workers into the work force by funding and working with the provinces and territories, and key stakeholder organizations, such as professional bodies, trade associations and sector councils, to implement projects that facilitate the assessment and recognition of qualifications acquired in other countries.

In Canada and abroad, newcomers can also look to the Foreign Credentials Referral Office (FCRO), which helps internationally trained individuals find the information they need to get their credentials assessed and recognized more quickly. Established in 2007, the FCRO provides information, pathfinding and referral services to help internationally trained individuals use their skills in Canada. There are now 320 Service Canada Centres across Canada offering in-person services to newcomers.

Last fall, the Government of Canada also announced the expansion of the CIIP overseas orientation services to help immigrants from India and China. This expansion added services on a

## Vegetable Ghee Export Halted

Biratnagar March 22 (THT): Export of vegetable ghee to India has come to a complete halt for the last two weeks as the trade agreement between India and Nepal on vegetable ghee export — that requires renewal each year — came to an end on March 5. Indian government every year issues a quota of one lakh metric tonnes for Nepali vegetable ghee manufacturers.

Dinesh Golchha, director of Arun Vegetable Ghee Industries said that the process is on for renewal of the agreement. The joint meeting of State Trade Corporation of India (STC), Nepal-India Chamber of Commerce and Industries, Federation of Nepalese Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI), Industry and Commerce Department renews the agreement.

Though, India has fixed a quota of one lakh metric tonnes for Nepali vegetable ghee industries, the industries could not meet that export-quota this year. The association of Nepal Vegetable Ghee Manufacturers distributes the quota among the vegetable ghee industries according to their manufacturing capacity.

Regular Tarai bandh and fall in prices of raw materials required to produce vegetable ghee have hurt the industries in Nepal forcing them slowly lose their competency in the Indian market. Their manufacturing capacity has also been decreasing to only the half at 50,000 metric tonnes.

rotational basis in the states of Gujarat and Punjab, which are major sources of skilled immigrants from India. In China, rotational services have been added in Beijing and Shanghai so that services are available to more potential immigrants. Until now, the orientation sessions have been available in three cities in India, China and the Philippines.

Budget 2008 has proposed additional changes to modernize the

## Language ...

...Contd. from pg 8

Hooker believes the training students are receiving at Kent Gardens — and in similar language immersion schools across the country — will help them to communicate more effectively not just in their own American polyglot, but in the 21st century's increasingly global village.

Nepali vegetable ghee has market in all the 23 provinces in India but we could not meet their demand this year, said Laxman Nebatiya, general manager of Swostik Oil.

Currently, many ghee industries in eastern region have either shut down or facing closure due to lack of the raw materials. Rise in prices of raw materials, rising bank loan and complexities in production processes have forced Arun Vegetable Ghee Industries to close, while Narayan Vegetable has remained closed since long.

Prakash Mundada, director at Baba Vegetable, said that the export of vegetable ghee to India has been affected after the Indian move of levying additional tax on Nepali products.

According to the office that issues certificate of origin, the export of vegetable ghee to India till March 13 this year is less than 50 per cent in comparison to last year. The export in the fiscal year 2063-64 stood at 17,848 metric tonnes (Rs 80,48,41,950). But its volume plummeted in the fiscal year 2064-65 to only 8,302 metric tonnes (Rs 45,37,63,000).

Currently, Pshupati Khadya Tel, Swostik Oil, Sriram Refinery, Manakamana Vegetable and Baba Vegetable are in operation in the eastern region. These industries produce upto 40 tonnes of vegetable ghee daily. Most of these industries' target is Indian market.

immigration system to ensure that families are reunited faster, and that skilled and qualified workers arrive sooner to meet the needs of Canada's labour market.

### Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	64.55	65.15
Canadian \$1	63.42	64.01
Euro 1	100.58	101.51
Pound Sterling 1	127.82	129.00
Australian \$1	58.99	59.53
Swiss Franc 1	64.37	64.97
Singapore Dollar	46.51	46.94
Japanese Yen 10	6.51	6.57
Chinese Yuan 1	9.15	9.24
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	10.69	---
Danish Kroner 1	13.48	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.30	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	17.21	---
Qatari Riyal 1	17.75	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.06	---
UAE Dirham 1	17.57	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	20.30	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, March 23 '08]

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## India Is Emerging As A New Major Market For U.S. Defense Industries

During the Cold War period, non-aligned India bought most of its armaments from the former Soviet Union. But in recent years, U.S. arms sales to India have increased rapidly.

When India needed military transport planes and helicopters last January, it placed the order with Maryland-based Lockheed Martin Corporation. With the completion of this two billion dollar deal, Washington hopes the door is fully open on a major new market for U.S. defense industries. In this report we look at the emerging defense relationship between the United States and India.

Russia appears to be losing what was a near-monopoly on arms sales to India. Over the last several years, India has increasingly looked toward the United States and Israel to fulfill its needs for state-of-the-art military goods.

Commodore Uday Bhaskar was also Deputy Director of India's Institute for Defense

Studies and Analyses. He is counted among the leading defense analysts in India

Commodore Uday Bhaskar, is a retired Indian Navy officer with 37 years of service. He was a member of India's Task Force on Global Strategic Developments. He agrees that during the Cold War, India relied mainly on the former Soviet Union for purchases of advanced weaponry. But as U.S. – India relations have improved, so has India's desire for American military equipment.

"More recently, I would say, there has been a change in the texture of the relationship from what was once described as an estranged relationship, India and the United States are moving to a degree of cautious engagement. It is in that sense India has been looking at the most credible and viable sources for military equipment, and clearly the United States has a very credible global profile as a supplier of major military equipment."

Commodore Bhaskar says India has charted a wise course on delicate bilateral and multilateral issues. He adds that the stability of India's political system has played a key role in America's willingness to sell India "cutting-edge" weapons systems. "The vibrancy of Indian democracy and the way in which India has conducted itself, both as far as weapons of mass destructions are concerned, and the way in which India has honored all its global commitments without exception, these, to my mind, were taken on board by the United States, particularly the Bush Administration."

Next month, India seeks to purchase 126 new fighter jets worth \$12 billion dollars. Several U.S. companies such as Lockheed Martin, the world's biggest defense contractor, and aerospace giant Boeing, will compete for the contract, trying to edge-out their Russian and European rivals.

American defense contractors got a boost for their bid

when U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates visited New Delhi last month. Mr. Gates reaffirmed America's commitment to a strong defense relationship with India.

"I indicated that we obviously are interested and believe that we are very competitive in the selection of the new fighter, the multi-role combat fighter here in India and that we ask no special treatment, says Mr. Gates. "We simply are pleased to have a place at the table and we believe in a fair competition that we have a very good case to make."

Peter Spiegel, defense correspondent for the Los Angeles Times newspaper, traveled with Defense Secretary Gates on his recent trip to India.

Mr. Spiegel says that over the last three years, the United States has mounted a concerted effort to increase military sales throughout South Asia. He adds that Asian nations have reacted favorably to U.S. overtures, in part because they are uneasy about the rise of China.

...Contd. on pg 6

## Language Classes Popular In America's Public Schools

Washington, DC March 20 (VOA):As a nation of immigrants, American society is a polyglot. The diversity of spoken languages can be heard clearly in the nation's schools. Students often come from different national and cultural backgrounds. Learning a new language is a way of bridging those differences. Kent Gardens Elementary School, located in the northern Virginia suburbs outside Washington, D.C., is one of hundreds of American public schools now offering special foreign-language training programs. Mohamed Elshinnawi has a report.

More than 900 young students arrive at Kent Gardens Elementary every morning to take part in a system-wide language training program known as partial immersion. Its aim is to help students become fluent in a foreign language of their choice. In this particular school, French is the language being offered.

"Half of the day is spent with a French immersion teacher, where they learn math and science in French and the other part of the day

is spent with the English teacher where they are taught social studies and language arts in English," says Annie Dwyer, a 5th grade French teacher.

Students not only receive instruction in the French language but are also exposed to the cultures of French-speaking countries. They interact with teacher-interns from France. Some students host the French interns in their homes, establishing personal cultural links.

Students at Kent Gardens Elementary come from many different cultural backgrounds, and they give many different reasons for wanting to be fluent in a foreign language.

"I am actually Muslim," says Rosa Ahmat, "so my parents want me to learn about other cultures and people from other places."

Anwar Mendes says he expects to travel a lot in the future. "So I will have a pretty good chance of meeting a person that speaks French."

"It will be very hard to get a good job if you do not know the other languages," says Neha Rana.

Many educators support that belief. They say immersing young students in foreign language study for at least half of their school day gives them the multi-lingual skills they'll need to succeed in an increasingly global economy.

There are other benefits as well. "It expands the mind of the child and also gives them a greater cultural awareness of other cultures and makes them more tolerant of others' differences," says 6th grade French teacher Christine Bedoret.

Some critics of immersion programs believe that spending half the school day learning in a foreign language could negatively impact students' fluency in English. Richard Gordon, a 6-grade English and social studies teacher, disagrees. "One thing I noticed when I teach my students coming from the foreign language program is that they are very oral, they are very vocal, and they can express themselves very well in my English classes."

But French teachers like Francoise Brottet admits there are challenges involved in the

immersion program. "Since they do not understand everything (we say), we have to find creative and different ways to teach them."

Young students have their own challenges. "It can be a bit confusing at times, because you learn the terms in French and sometimes some tests and homework you get are written in English," says 6th grader Kimia Zadeگان.

Over the past decade, hundreds of American public schools have begun offering partial immersion programs to teach students Latin, Spanish, German, Japanese and many other languages.

Dr. Robyn Hooker, Kent Gardens' Principal, says that many of the students at the school are already multi-lingual, as well as multi-cultural, when they enroll. "Many of the children in our school, because it is an international school, come to us speaking perhaps two or three and in some instances four languages, so it becomes a part of our responsibility to prepare children for global society — and that always includes the languages."

Contd. on page 7...