

Nepal Abroad

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Nepal Abroad

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Year 3. No. 11

Preparation For CA Election In Progress



Photo: Nepal Samacharpatra

Election materials for the upcoming Constituent Assembly election (April 10) are being loaded into the Army Helicopter on Friday March 28 '08 at Biratnagar Airport. Air transport is the reliable means to reach the hilly districts in the eastern Nepal like Taplejung, Panchthar, Bhojpur, Shankuwashabha, Terhathum, Solukhumbu and Khotang. The Nepal Army thus offered Helicopter to the Election Commission for use in purpose like this.

Bush, Democrats Promote Conflicting Economic Plans

By Kent Klein, Washington 29 March 2008

Republicans and Democrats agree that help is needed for the sagging U.S. housing market and the ailing American economy in general. But President Bush and a Democratic lawmaker have made it clear they differ on what kind of help is needed. VOA's Kent Klein reports from Washington.

The year's first major government effort to strengthen the U.S economy quickly passed both houses of Congress last month and was signed by President Bush. The legislation is intended to give Americans more money to spend, by providing about \$168 billion in tax rebates and business incentives.

In his weekly radio address, Mr. Bush said he believes the part of the initiative which gives business owners tax breaks for investing in new equipment this year will be especially helpful to the economy. "As more businesses begin taking advantage of these incentives, investment will pick up and so will

job creation. And together with the individual tax rebates, these incentives will help give our economy a shot in the arm," he said.

The Bush administration has also proposed giving the U.S. central bank sweeping new powers to more tightly regulate the country's financial industry. One provision of the plan would give the Federal Reserve the power to examine the books of financial institutions whose problems could threaten the nation's economic stability. Democrats are also calling for tougher supervision of Wall Street and the mortgage lending industry.

Differences between the two parties appear in their approaches to strengthening the U.S. housing market. Democratic presidential contenders Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are both backing a \$30 billion proposal for the government to refinance mortgages for up to two million homeowners

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Anti-China Protests Escalate In Nepal

About 20 Tibetan teenagers scaled the walls of the United Nations compound in the Nepali capital Friday, while police arrested dozens of other pro-Tibet demonstrators outside.

The teenagers, most of whom were wearing school uniforms, carried "Free Tibet" placards as they entered the compound.

A U.N. spokesman told British media (BBC) the students apologized for entering the compound and said they wanted to draw attention to the crisis in Tibet.

Police today also arrested at least 60 other demonstrators who protested outside the U.N. facility.

Tibetan exiles have held protests in Kathmandu nearly every day for the past two weeks. Nepalese riot police have dispersed the rallies with baton charges and arrested hundreds of demonstrators.

Nepal officially supports Beijing's "One China" policy, considering Tibet and Taiwan part of China, and the home ministry has said it will not tolerate protests against

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We Won't Accept Loss In Polls: Prachanda

Biratnagar, March 26 (HNS): CPN-Maoist chairman Prachanda today said the Maoists would not accept the results of the constituent assembly polls if his party lost.

Speaking at Pathari of Morang today, he claimed he has found a huge wave of public support for the Maoists and the Maoist victory was certain. Prachanda said only conspiracies could now engineer the Maoists' defeat.

Saying that the party won't accept the 'negative' poll results, he said the Maoists would carry on their revolution as long as class and community liberation did not come about. He said the Maoists would start a phase of economic revolution after the CA polls if they won.

"The Maoists fought a successful people's war for 10 years.

After the CA polls, they will fight an economic war so that no Nepali goes hungry or unclad," Prachanda said. He added that Nepali people had been cheated and exploited by feudal forces from the hills and the plains for years. To build a new Nepal the CPN-Maoist would harness the abilities and talents of people from all parts of the country, he said.

He said that vested interests acting at the behest of expansionist foreign forces were trying to hoodwink the people again.

Accusing some parties of having stolen the Maoist slogans of a republic, constituent assembly and federalism, Prachanda said, "Instead, they should present their own ideas and stances before the people."

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Editorial:**Election In Bhutan**

Bhutan held its first ever democratic election on Monday March 24, with two competing parties vying for majority in the National Assembly. Although the Druk Phuensum Tshogpa (DPT) won the majority, 44 out of 47 seats, the People's Democratic Party (PDP) emerged as the main opposition party with only 3 votes. Interestingly, they have no ideological difference, and both parties' are led by monarch's yes men.

For casual readers it might sound like the emergence of a new democratic state, with the successful completion of a democratic election that elected the member of their Parliament. Election held by excluding the minorities of the southern Bhutan holds no meaning, and therefore, questions the credibility of such election, and ridicules those who refuse to see the part of Bhutan's population in Nepal. Over one million people of Nepalese origin from southern Bhutan were forcibly evicted by the royal regime of Bhutan (late 1980s), with the green signal from India. Although Indian govt. denies any involvement, it is clear to all in the region how the Indian influence function. Bhutan is also India locked country, and without India's cooperation the evicted population wouldn't have ended up in the distant Nepal.

Seventeen years on and many still yearn to go back to the country they're born, and participate in the development process of

Bhutan. India's reluctance and indifference to Nepal's initiative in solving the issue has dragged their plight to this period, and their desire of returning home is still very remote.

Although several western countries have volunteered to take the refugees in their country, excluding this minority group has made Bhutan more a selective than an inclusive democracy.

Young and educated group may prefer exploring life abroad, yet majority of them are still confused and undecided. Yet preference is to go back to Bhutan. As a natural corollary of languishing for sustained period, several small armed outfits have emerged opposing the election, and warning of physical actions against the government employees and the elected bodies, tactics very similar to that of the Maoists in Nepal. If these grievances are not addressed on time, the Maoists style drama may be replayed in the Bhutanese soil. The success of the Maoists in Nepal has certainly been an encouragement for many such outfits in the region.

India orchestrated the safe landing of the Maoists guerillas in Nepal's main stream politics; they can as well play a pivotal role in solving the refugee issues, should they wish to, is what most of the refugee leaders believe. Unless the refugees return home, with the support from all, the selective democracy will have no meaning in Bhutan.

Maoist Army Personnel, Weapons Must Stay In Cantonments – Martin

Kathmandu March 28 (UNN) – The top United Nations official in Nepal today vowed that the world body would play its part to try to ensure that Maoist army personnel and weapons are contained to the agreed cantonments during the current election campaign for the Constituent Assembly.

Ian Martin, the Secretary-General's Special Representative and the head of the UN Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), met with the country's

independent Election Commission in Kathmandu, the capital, to discuss the effective monitoring of the cantonments through the Joint Monitoring and Coordination Committee.

Mr. Martin told election commissioners that the mission had made it clear to the leadership of the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (CPN-M) that it was a breach of the Agreement on the Monitoring of the

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TB Still Killing 5,000-7,000 People Every Year

Kathmandu March 25 (IRIN) - Ram Hari Chaudhary is worried his poverty-stricken family will suffer after he was recently diagnosed with tuberculosis (TB). It could take him months to get back to work to support his wife and three children.

"I am very worried about my family as they totally depend on me," said Chaudhary, who came to Kathmandu in 2006 from Bardiya District in southwestern Nepal, in a bid to escape poverty in his village.

About 90,000 people in Nepal reportedly have one form of TB or another, and the number is increasing by about 40,000 every year, according to the government's National Tuberculosis Centre (NTC).

TB kills 5,000-7,000 people every year, with most fatalities among those with drug-resistant TB, which can develop when patients fail to adhere to their treatment regimen, according to the NTC.

Local doctors told Chaudhary he would be cured in two months if he took daily medication under the Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS) programme, through which patients have to take medicines every day in front of trained health workers. The medication is not effective unless doses are taken daily.

Thanks to the national DOTS programme implemented by the NTC, the anti-TB drive has been successful, according to the World Health Organization (WHO) in Nepal office.

According to NTC, the success of the anti-TB drive can be seen in the reduction in annual TB-related deaths from 10,000 to less than 7,000 in the last decade, and in the increased detection and treatment success rates.

"The treatment success rate has increased to a great extent, and has been helping to save a lot of lives," said Puspa Malla, director of NTC. She said there was a case detection rate of 70 percent and a treatment success rate of 88 percent.

Introduced in Nepal in 1996, DOTS has expanded from a few hundred to 4,000 centres, including public health institutions and rural clinics. Nearly 60 percent

of health institutions have been providing DOTS treatment and the service is expanding to the rest of the country, said government officials.

International aid

Health officials said international aid for TB programmes had improved the situation considerably. Over 14 key agencies from Germany, UK, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and France have been actively supporting the national TB programme.

Experts have found the best way to improve the efficacy of DOTS is by raising awareness and educating patients. Nepal's success in that regard has attracted a large number of aid agencies especially after the government categorised the TB programme as a high priority.

According to the NTC, Nepal's efforts in terms of TB control are regarded as a model for other developing countries. Treatment success rates have more than doubled from 40 percent in 1994 to over 88 percent now.

The programme was also not affected by the decade-long armed conflict, which ended in November 2006. Despite frequent strikes, shutdowns and road blockades, sufficient stocks of the drug were available in all centres so patients had enough medicines.

"Patients continue to show up for treatment despite hardships," said Ramesh Shrestha, a local health worker who said displaced families were continuing to receive DOTS treatment as it was available in most of health centres and the drugs were free.

Nepali Calendar

Sun March 30 / Chaitra 17 '64

Astami

Mon March 31 / Chaitra 18 '64

Nawami

Tue April 01 / Chaitra 19 '64

Dashami

Wed April 02 / Chaitra 20 '64

Pap Mochan Ekadashin

Thu April 03 / Chaitra 21 '64

Duwadashin

Fri April 04 / Chaitra 22 '64

Trayodashin

Sat April 05 / Chaitra 23 '64

Ghodejatra/Chaturdashin

Public Forum on Nepal In Washington DC



Photo: Nepal Abroad

Speakers on the forum: (L-R) Dr. Saubhagya Shah, Dr. Susan Hangen and Dr. Mahendra Lawoti.

The East-West Center and The Elliott School of International Affairs, George Washington University jointly organized a 'Public Forum on Nepal and Sri Lanka' on the afternoon of Thursday March 27 on the topics 'Nepal: Is the Transition Floundering?' and 'Sri Lanka: Can Military Victory Resolve the Ethnic Conflict?'

Dr. Saubhagya Shah, the Program Coordinator for Peace, Development and Conflict

Management Studies (CPDS) at Tribhuvan University, argued, among other things, that there hasn't been any change in the style of functioning of the seven political parties in the government; as a result, the general population haven't really felt the change of governance; the transition period; the Indian influence in shaping Nepal's politics and others. He also talked about the failure of the United Nations

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810 Foreign Observers To Fan Out Across Country

Kathmandu, March 27 (THT): Altogether 810 international election observers from 29 organisations are scheduled to monitor the April 10 CA election across the country.

Earlier the Election Commission had stated that there would be some 550 international observers from 14 organisations and has already issued accreditation cards to 101 observers.

The deadline for filing applications for observer accreditation has already elapsed but the EC said it would make rules flexible.

"We will not accept new applications for observer accreditation but still the EC will exercise flexibility while dealing with the new organisations who have shown deep desire to engage in Nepal's

... Contd. on page 7

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Calendar of Events

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, atr@loc.gov

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

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

April 12: 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 Nebraska 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: The Nepal Education and Cultural Center (NECC) invites all to celebrate Ramnawami on Sunday April 13 from 11.30am to 2.00 pm at Pashupati Buddha Mandir Lanham MD. For details visit nepalhorizons.com

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Letter to the editor can be emailed to print@nepalabroad.com with your name, and contact no to verify the sender.

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'..Plans to devote my retirement period for building the cultural center fell into the deaf ears': Dr Padam Poudel

Dr Padam Poudel, 71, is a renowned name not only in the medical circle and not just in the Nepalese community, but also in the social field and among the south Asian community in Illinois, North Carolina and other states of Midwest. As a second child of a Nepalese migrant family in Burma, he grew up to become a medical doctor. The desire for further studies brought him to the US, but Dr Poudel also finds him actively involved in social services. Upon his arrival in the US in 1970, he has been involved in the community social services, like the formation of the Nepalese Association, his involvement in building the first Hindu Temple in Chicago IL, his active role in eliminating the discrimination against the foreign medical graduates in North Carolina.

After 45 years of medical practice, he is spending his retire life in NC.

Last Sunday he talked with Nepal Abroad about his life, career and experiences; below the excerpt.

How did you get to Burma; and how were the Nepalese minorities living in that country then?

My grand parents migrated to Burma (now called Myanmar) as civilian during the British Rule. According to my grand mother, we were in Poorba Panch No, and then moved to Darjeeling/Shilong for few years and finally to Myitkyina- northern Burma. I was born there.

The (Nepalese) Gorkha army helped the Burmese independence movement. The Nepalese migrants were mostly farmers, engaged in milk and dairy business and in army. In the later years, they were in into ruby and jade trading, lawyers, doctors, academicians and others.

After the military coup, junta introduced several regulations that discouraged people in foreign trade also. Since then, the Nepalese businesses had to concentrate only on the domestic markets. However, in the event of the return of democracy in that country, the Nepalese businesses will also flourish along with the rest of Myanmar.

The people of Nepalese origin in Burma (Myanmar) are identified more as Gorkhali than the



Dr. Padam P Poudel with his wife Usha Poudel

Nepalese. This minority group is well treated by the establishment, even today.

The Nepalese minorities were evicted from Burma, as they say. Can you recollect the reason(s) and the mood of the contemporary Burmese society and the government?

The Nepalese minorities were not evicted from Burma. It was a misunderstanding. After the military takeover, the establishment gave these minorities a choice either to stay as a citizen or leave the country wherever they wanted to go. Many people (primarily those engaged in the agricultural activities) got scared, misunderstood the intention and left Burma. Some left for Nepal while others stayed in India. But in Nepal these fleeing migrants gave the impression that they were there as a result of eviction from Burma.

There are over 300,000 people living in Myanmar even today.

What influenced your decision to come to USA?

I came to USA for further study and specialization in medicine. I had my MBBS degree in Rangoon, Burma from the University of Rangoon. I came to USA in December 1970.

Also, during the military rule, I wouldn't get the opportunity to specialize in Burma. Because it was evident that they would give preference to the Burmese citizens of local origin, I attended and accomplished ECFMG (Educational Council for Foreign Medical Graduates) test while in Burma and was invited by the University of IL at Ravenswood Medical Center, Chicago in 1970. This is how I came

to Chicago and started my specialization.

After that I realized that I wouldn't want to go back, because I found more opportunities here than in Burma, hence we decided to stay here.

How did you feel then to discover any Nepalese individuals and families around the Chicago area?

I was busy most of the time doing specialization, but my wife Usha felt little uneasy and lonely. But both of us were overwhelmed when we met Nepalese family. We felt like we discovered Nepal.

By 1976 we discovered more Nepalese families in different states in Midwest- OH, MI, WI and MN and we were around 6 families then. In the process we also collected more information about other Nepalese families around the area.

These days there are so many people of Nepalese origin that we communicate often with each other. However, the programs organized frequently by the local Nepalese organizations to celebrate Nepalese culture and religious activities makes one feel that we're all in Nepal.

Can you discuss the circumstances that led to the formation of the Association of the Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA) under your leadership?

To be in close contact with the Nepalese family in America, we started to get-together at different places frequently, collected names, their phone numbers and addresses. Later we decided to form Nepalese associations, as the number of Nepalese families and individuals were growing. The objective was to

socialize, extend help as needed, preserve and celebrate Nepalese culture in America.

In the beginning I took the initiative to communicate to all Nepalese people, formed Association of Nepalese in Midwest America (ANMA), registered in Chicago IL; I was elected the first President and then formed an executive committee. In the process we also planned to establish similar association in the East Coast, West Coast, South East, and other major cities in America. Ultimately, as per the plan, an umbrella organization would be established to coordinate all organizations across the country.

Before becoming the president of ANMA I was the second president of Burmese American Association (est. 1972). This experience helped me form ANMA.

How were you involved in building the 'Hindu Temple of Greater Chicago' in Lamont suburb?

The Indian community was already there in great strength, and was growing at the same time. They conducted all religious poojas and performances at individuals' house, and sometimes rented a hall for festivals like Durga Pooja, Krishna Janmashami, etc. I was a well known doctor then, was the Director of Radiation Oncology Department (Jan 1976) at Elmhurst Memorial Hospital, Elmhurst IL. I was also interested and supported the need to establish the Hindu temple along with other Indian community members. They invited me to the team in the establishment of the temple.

In this project I was one of the five founding members of the temple; was the chairman of the construction board/committee. The temple was constructed under my leadership in the beginning around 1977. We worked on to buy the land, developed it and was involved in several other things that ultimately saw the establishment of the first Hindu temple in the Chicago area in the few years time.

The local Hindu community grew larger and all realized the need to establish a Temple; 17 acres of land was

An Evening In Nepal- Dallas Everest Talent Show



Photo: DELC

The Dallas Everest Lions Club (DELC) has successfully accomplished its annual fundraising event 'An Evening in Nepal-Dallas Everest Talent Show 2008' on Saturday March 22 '08 at Irving Arts Center, Irving TX. The top three winners in the program were: (L-R): Tilasmi Bista (Winner), Aagya Sharma (1st runner up) and Sunil Sapkota (2nd runner up). For more images of the program, visit dallaseverestlions.org

Canada: The Refugee System

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

Refugee claims in Canada — Refugee rights

Interim Federal Health Program
Citizenship and Immigration Canada administers the Interim Federal Health (IFH) Program. Refugees are eligible for full benefits under the IFH Program until their provincial health plan coverage begins. Once provincial coverage has started, refugees are eligible for supplemental coverage under the IFH Program, which covers emergency dental, vision and pharmaceutical care.

FAQs: The Refugee System Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program

Who is eligible for sponsorship under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program?

The Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program provides opportunities for Canadian citizens and permanent residents to help resettle refugees from abroad in Canada.

To be eligible for sponsorship, a refugee applicant must be outside Canada, and meet the definition of one of the classes of Canada's Immigration and Refugee Protection Act. Three classes of refugees are eligible for assistance under the program:

- the Convention Refugee Abroad Class
- the Country of Asylum Class and

- the Source Country Class.

Who makes the final decision on whether a refugee is eligible for resettlement?

An officer at a Canadian visa office abroad makes the final decision on whether a person is eligible under one of the three classes of the Refugee and Humanitarian Resettlement Program.

The decision is based on:

- supporting documents submitted by the refugee applicant and the sponsoring group
- additional information available to the officer (such as conditions in the country the refugee is fleeing) and/or
- an interview with the applicant.

To be accepted for resettlement in Canada, the refugee must also pass medical and security checks. In addition, refugees will be assessed based on their ability to establish themselves successfully in Canada. The visa officer will consider whether the refugee has relatives or a sponsor in Canada, is able to learn to speak English or French, and has the potential for employment. When a family unit is applying, these factors are assessed for the family as a unit.

In some cases, the visa officer may determine that refugees are in urgent

need of protection, in which case they are not assessed on their ability to establish themselves in Canada.

Who is not eligible for sponsorship under the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program?

The following people do not qualify for private sponsorship:

- people already in Canada (people seeking Canada's protection as refugees should contact the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) Call Centre to find out where to go to get help and information on starting the refugee claim process,
- people who were the subject of a previous sponsorship application and who were refused, unless:
 - their circumstances have changed
 - new information that was not presented in the previous application has come to light or
 - Canadian laws affecting the case have changed.
- people deemed to be Convention refugees by another country who have been given permission to live there permanently
- people who fled persecution or civil war some time ago, but who can now integrate into the country where they are residing or can return home safely.

Who can sponsor a refugee?

- Sponsorship Agreement Holders. A sponsorship agreement holder is

an organization that has a formal sponsorship agreement with Citizenship and Immigration Canada to sponsor refugees.

- Groups of Five. This is a group of five or more Canadian citizens or permanent residents who live in the community where the refugees are expected to settle.
- Community Sponsors. A community sponsor is an organization, an association or a corporation based in the community where the refugees are expected to settle.

...to be contd. next week.

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'America 1908' Draws...

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children are raised has a powerful impact on what kind of citizens they grow up to be. "So we have a duty and an obligation to give them good environments as they are growing up," explains Rasenberger. "Take them off the streets. Give them good schools, good playgrounds, and good nutrition."

Then, as now, America was a powerful magnet for immigrants. The oft-used term "melting pot" was coined in 1908. Rasenberger believes that influx, more than anything else, helped create America's hopeful, "can do" attitude.

"By their very nature, those who immigrate to America tend to be hopeful people," he says. "Otherwise they wouldn't bother to come. They come here to make their lives better, and with the hope that they can do that."

By most measures, Americans are better off today than

they were 1908. The nation is richer and more egalitarian. Its people are healthier and better educated. Yet, according to a recent survey, Americans are far less optimistic than they once were. According to Rasenberger, that may be because we are living with the consequences of some of the wonderful machines that came about 100 years ago.

"It's hard to look at an airplane and not in the back of our mind be aware of all the bombs that have been dropped over the decades. We've seen 9/11. We can't look at an automobile now without understanding that they pollute the environment, they make us depend on foreign oil, and they get us involved in these foreign entanglements."

Still, Jim Rasenberger makes clear in his book *America 1908* that he remains hopeful. "We are a nation," he says, "that must be measured by the size of its ambition, at least as much as by its achievements." (VOA)

We Won't Accept Loss In...

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'State biased against Madhes'
SIRAHA: Prachanda on Wednesday said the people of the Madhes had fallen behind in the race for development due to the discriminatory attitude of the government. Speaking at a programme, Prachanda said, "Our fight is against those elements that are anti-Madhes." He said that

without the emancipation of the Madhesi people, progress would be impossible in the whole South Asia. Stating that the Madhesi people had suffered for 250 years under the feudal yoke, Prachanda said the CPN-Maoist was the only party that could end this state of affairs.

Prachanda also accused some forces in Rapti and Lahan of trying to ensure the CPN-Maoist's defeat in the polls.

Public Forum on Nepal...

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Mission in Nepal (UNMIN) in meeting their objective.

Another speaker, Dr Susan Hagen- Associate Professor of Anthropology and International Studies at Ramapo College of New Jersey, talked about the ethnic and marginalized communities, their role and participation in Nepal's development process. She is the author of *Creating a new Nepal: The Ethnic Dimension* and several articles on identity politics in Nepal. Her research interests include ethnicity, nationalism, and social movements in Nepal and the Nepali diasporas.

Dr Mahendra Lawoti, Assistant Professor of Political

Science at the Western Michigan University, opined that the peace process was hurriedly done, and therefore, has many flaws in it. Analyzing the transition period, he suspects the possibility of credible, free and fair election happening in Nepal, and argues further that, the post CA election will have a (brief) period of political confusion in Nepal. He also discussed, among other things, the law and order situation in the country, and stated that only an inclusive State can bring permanent peace.

The forum on Nepal was followed by the forum on Sri Lanka.

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'..Plans to devote my...

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purchased for this purpose. The Hindu Temple Commitee was now formed. I was elected as the chairman of the temple construction committee (1977). While the construction was in progress, there was a dearth of financial resources, and I was elected chairman of the finance committee to raise more funds to accomplish the project. Because I had very good relations with the presidents of the local banks, and also with the loan officers, I was able to manage the finances needed for the project. Ultimately, a big authentic temple was established for the Hindus in the Chicago metropolitan area.

Today the Hindu temples can be found in all major cities that has large number of people of Hindu.

The plans are progressing into actions in places like DC, NY, TX and also in northern CA to establish a Nepalese Cultural center under different names, but with similar objectives. Given an opportunity, how would you contribute to these projects?

The need to have the Nepalese cultural center was realized by all the Nepalese people and several (Nepalese) organizations like ANA, ANMA, NASA and other for the last 15-20 years, and they've been exploring the feasibility.

Since I had the experience working for the establishment of the Hindu Temple in the Lemont suburb of Chicago IL, I expressed my interests to the executives of ANA and discussed with them about how I can involve in this noble idea. I also communicated to the executives of ANA personally and in writing about my interests to work as a coordinator and contribute for the community center in DC or any other suitable locations, but to no avail. Until today, I haven't heard any thing from them.

Five years ago when I was planning for retirement, I was also thinking about working for and using my resources as well to establish the cultural center. Unfortunately my plans to devote my retirement period for this project fell into the deaf ears of stakeholders, because of the petty politics of the Nepalese communities and associations.

Until and unless our community leaders cease to engage in unnecessary community or personal politics, it would be very difficult to

realize any such common projects. The community center should be for the Nepalese people, by the Nepalese people and be reflective of Nepal and the Nepalese culture. It needs pure sincerity of the Nepalese community leaders.

What was your role in the formation of the Cancer Relief Society in Nepal?

As I am the Oncologist (Cancer specialist) by profession and in the process when I visited India in 1973, I found many Nepalese cancer patients waiting in line to receive the treatment at the cancer hospital at All India Institute of Medicine in New Delhi-India. They were in very much bad condition, lying down in the floor, in front of the hospital, waiting hours and hours, with no money, proper food and clothing.

I went to Kathmandu, met with the well known doctors and formally discussed to form Nepal Cancer Relief Society, Cancer Hospital and clinics.

How did the plan to establish a dental college in Biratnagar failed?

When I visited Biratnagar, I met with a dentist who mentioned about very poor dental problem in Nepal. He told me that he would be interested in establishing a dental school in Biratnagar; but I lost him and also could not find any other Nepalese dentist to bring the project into reality. So I lost the plan, and I also became very busy here in Chicago after I came back, and could not pursue further. Even today I feel bad about my unsuccessful plan. Now the political situation in Nepal is not conducive to introduce any constructive projects.

Do you still have any plans/project that you'd like to work on in Nepal or in USA?

I'm very excited to work in Nepal, should the political situation (in Nepal) improves and I'm still healthy I'd love to explore something to work for/in Nepal.

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First Foreign-Born Adopted Child Enters Canada As Citizen



Photo: CIC

Citizenship and Immigration Canada Minister Diane Finley presents a teddy bear to Rory Adele Wai Lan Chan Rushton, 13 months, the first foreign-born adopted child to enter Canada following new foreign adoption rules. The new law, Bill C-14, enabled her to leave China as a Canadian citizen with her new parents, Angela Chan and Mark Rushton of Toronto. Prior to C-14, adopted children would have to become permanent residents before obtaining citizenship. (CIC 3/25)

Bush, Democrats Promote...

...Contd. from page 1

who are in danger of defaulting on their loans.

Representative Bill Foster, elected in a special vote three weeks ago, said in the Democrats' radio address that his party's plan will help a large number of at-risk homeowners. "Next week, the House of Representatives will continue to work on a comprehensive plan to help families who are on the brink of losing their homes. Our plan will help more families avoid foreclosure and give cities the chance to rehabilitate foreclosed homes and put them back on the market," he said.

Republicans say the Democratic plan is irresponsible, and amounts to a bailout. President Bush says he will veto that proposal. "The problems in the housing market are

complicated, and there is no easy solution. But by supporting responsible homeowners with wise policies, we will help them weather a difficult period. We will help get our economy back on track, and we will ensure (that) America remains the most prosperous nation in the world," he said.

In his Saturday address, Mr. Bush promoted two of his administration's policies to help homeowners. Under a voluntary program called Hope Now, participating lenders freeze at-risk borrowers' interest rates at a low level. Another program, called FHA Secure, helps credit-worthy borrowers refinance so-called subprime mortgages that have a low introductory interest rate but later reset at higher rates.

Maoist Army Personnel...

...Contd. from page 2

Management of Arms and Armies for personnel and/or weapons from Maoist army cantonments to be present at meetings outside the cantonments – including for the purpose of providing leadership security.

While UNMIN recognizes the importance of adequate security arrangements for leaders and candidates of all parties, special security arrangements for the Maoist leadership were agreed upon in a signed understanding between the Government and the Maoists.

Nepalese voters go to the polls on 10 April to elect members of the Constituent Assembly, which will be tasked with drafting a new constitution for the country. The polls, which have been delayed several times because of political violence, are part of a democratization process following the end of the decade-long civil war, which killed an estimated 13,000 people until the Government and Maoists signed a peace accord in 2006.

Meanwhile, 21 Tibetans aged between 15 and 18 climbed into

the UN compound in Kathmandu this morning, and then peacefully presented a banner to UN staff with slogans along the lines of "Free Tibet."

After apologizing for entering the compound, the teenagers were given lunch and then taken home, with the UN asking local authorities to not take any action against the children.

Anti-China Protests

...Contd. from pg 1

what it describes as "friendly countries."

The U.S.-based Human Rights Watch says police are detaining monks and other Tibetans as they try to move around the capital, even when they are not engaged in protest.

The group also has called for Nepal to end the arbitrary detentions, threats and harassment of Tibetans in Nepal, and condemned excessive force used by police. - VOA 3/28

810 Foreign Observers...

...Contd. from pg 3

CA election process," said an officer at the Election Observer Resources Centre.

Of late, the embassies of Canada, Britain, France, Malaysia, Japan, Finland, Norway, Australia, Bangladesh and Thailand have shown interest to deploy poll monitors and

have contacted the EC in this regard. In addition, the National Election Observation Committee has added 65 more international observers in their list.

On Monday, 40 EU observers arrived in Nepal and on Tuesday the team of Asian Network for Free Elections published its preliminary report.

Pokhara to Delhi Daily Bus Service After Polls

New Delhi, March 29 (HNS): Modern Tours and Travels is going to start direct Pokhara-Delhi bus service daily after the April 10 constituent assembly election. The company has been operating the direct bus service in the route two days in a week since last October.

"We are going to start this service on a daily basis after the CA election keeping in view the increasing passengers of both countries," MTT president Keshav Adhikary said here.

Adhikary said they have launched the bus service for six months to attract Indian tourists to Pokhara. "We have been charging Rs 2,000 to go to New Delhi from Pokhara and INR 1,100 to come to Pokhara from New Delhi for the journey of 40 hours," he said. Adhikary said the passengers would not face any problem in their journey, except some security checking in some places of both countries.

MTT's New Delhi-based marketing officer Krishna Gaire said they have some 59 passengers daily at present, adding that the number of passengers are on the rise in the route.

Exchange Rates in Nepal

Currency	Buying (Rs)	Selling (Rs)
US \$ 1	64.10	65.70
Canadian \$1	63.06	63.65
Euro 1	101.10	102.05
Pound Sterling 1	127.83	129.02
Australian \$1	58.95	59.50
Swiss Franc 1	64.28	64.88
Singapore Dollar	46.40	46.83
Japanese Yen 10	6.41	6.47
Chinese Yuan 1	9.14	9.23
Indian Rupees 100	160.00	160.15
Swedish Kroner 1	10.76	---
Danish Kroner 1	13.56	---
Hong Kong Dollar 1	8.24	---
Saudi Arab Riyal 1	17.09	---
Qatari Riyal 1	17.62	---
Thai Bhat 1	2.04	---
UAE Dirham 1	17.45	---
Malaysian Ringgit 1	20.03	---

[Source: Nepal Rastra Bank, March 29 '08]

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'America 1908' Draws Similarities Between Today, Century Ago

- By Adam Phillips, New York March 24 2008

Eight years into the 21st century, it is fair to say that this is a time of change and challenge in America. But that's nothing new. The America of 100 years ago was also a country in the midst of change and extraordinary innovation. A new book recalls the nation in that exciting year and compares it to the America we know today. VOA's Adam Phillips reports.

For Americans in 2008, 1908 seems like the distant past. American men do not wear derby hats anymore, and American women no longer wear dresses that sweep the floor. Still, according to Jim Rasenberger, the author of *America 1908*, America today is similar in important ways to America back then.

"This was particularly true in the cities," he says, "where people [already] lit their homes with electricity and spoke on the telephone. In some cities they rode the subways to work. And if they went into a store they bought some of the same brand-name items that we buy today, such as Kellogg's breakfast cereal, and Coca Cola soft drinks."

1908 was also an extraordinary year in baseball. In fact, Take Me Out to the Ball Game, the

game's unofficial national song, was written and recorded that year.

Of course, American demographics have changed. A century ago, America was a nation of less than 90 million people, 90 percent of whom were Caucasian. Now, there are more than 300 million Americans and only 75 percent of them are white.

One hundred years ago, half of all Americans lived in rural areas. Today, most Americans live in urban areas. But wherever Americans lived in 1908, Rasenberger says, most believed they were at the dawn of a new age, and that America – and Americans – would define it.

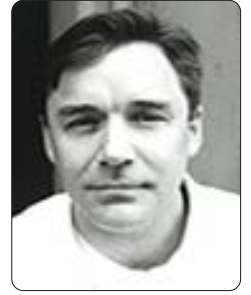
"Americans looked around and they saw so many remarkable things happening," he says. "Huge skyscrapers were going up in the cities. Wireless communication was a huge thing in 1908. People would talk about the future of the wireless, telephone, and organ transplants."

1908 was also the year that the Wright Brothers – who'd launched the era of powered flight five years earlier – held the first major public demonstrations of their historic "flying machine." "And they just blew people's minds away," says

Rasenberger. "I mean, when you see two young men from Dayton, Ohio, discovering the secret of flight, it almost gives you a sense of, well, 'there really is something special about Americans!'"

Even more significant, 1908 was the year Henry Ford introduced his Model "T" motorcar. It was the first automobile that was affordable for middle class families. Rasenberger believes that development, perhaps as much as any in the 20th century, was responsible for what America would become. "The road system was developed. People began moving out to these automobile suburbs. Fast food came about because of automobiles, and the vacations we take. So people had great hopes for the car in 1908."

Looking back, some of those hopes, such as that cars would make for cleaner city air than horses, were almost humorously misguided. In 1908, there were some 120,000 horses on New York streets, each dropping about 9 kilograms of manure a day. These piles would dry, turn to dust, and get blown into the air. Public health officials believed this caused widespread



Jim Rasenberger is the author of 'America 1908,' which gives the history of that epochal year

respiratory problems. Cars, they felt, would end that unhealthy situation.

Social mobility in America is far greater today than in 1908, when a philosophy called Social Darwinism still had a significant following. Social Darwinists believed that the tendency toward poverty, disease and criminality was "built-in" among the lower classes. They insisted it was nature, not nurture, which determined one's fate and social standing.

But the early years of the 20th century also saw the beginnings of the so-called "Progressive" movement spearheaded by President Theodore Roosevelt. It said that how

...Contd. on pg 6

'..Plans to devote my retirement ...

...Contd. from page 4

As a foreign medical graduate what challenges did you encounter to obtain medical license in NC?

The two primary challenges in NC were: obtaining medical licenses and the differentiated treatment with foreign medical doctors. The State of NC had several discouraging conditions before they issued license to practice. While American medical graduates, locally and from another states in US can easily obtain a license with no hassle, for a person like me, who moved to NC after practicing in Chicago IL for over 30 years, they wanted me to submit a letter from the Dean of the college I graduated from in Burma- to verify that I actually attended the college; and this was the case with all other medical graduates from abroad.

Even though we were no less competent than the US medical graduates, yet we were identified as Foreign Medical Graduates. The term

'foreign' made us little uneasy, and later, when the authorities got it changed to International Medical Graduates, it made us feel confident and more dignified.

Also in the process, since there were not many medical practitioners from Nepal I was in close relations with other south Asian doctors. The North Carolina Association of Physicians of Indian Origin was established in 1996 with the aim to eliminate the discrimination. I was elected the third president of this organization. I was very actively involved in this issue, talked to several (medical and other) stakeholders-including the Secretary of State in NC to get this matter resolved. Through this organization, we coordinated with the authorities in eliminating the discrimination against the foreign medical graduates.

Today, most of these discriminations have been resolved, and there are hundreds of

International Medical graduates like me practicing in NC.

How do you see Nepal Burma relations?

Both the countries- Nepal and Burma (Myanmar) needs democracy to prosper. Buddhism is the factor that fascinates Burmese people to Nepal. They like Nepal because it's the birth place of Lord Buddha. They are very religious people. Once the democracy is institutionalized, things would be better on both sides. The Nepalese people in Burma would love to visit Nepal-their country of origin. The government of Nepal should develop its relations further by expanding interactions at various levels, also reaching out to the people of Nepalese origin in Myanmar.

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