

**B**post

"Hamro Patrika"

Norge-Nepal foreningen  
Postboks 155  
3001 Drammen

**MEDLEMSKONTINGENT:**

|              |          |
|--------------|----------|
| Enkeltmedlem | kr 100,- |
| Familie      | kr 150,- |
| Organisasjon | kr 300,- |

Postgirokonto: 0802 420 2438

**Program for møtet 26. februar 1998:**

\* Lysbildeforedrag "Turist i Nepal" v/Øystein Berg. Skildring av en seksten dagers ferie i Langtang Himal, Nagarkot og Chitwan. Øystein Berg reiste i Nepal sammen med Georg Torstvedt, Ingrid Andresen og Siv Øystese i desember 1997.

\* Daal bhaat (kr. 50,-)

\* Te/kaffe og utlodning

Velkommen i Norge-Nepal foreningen!



हाम्रो पत्रिका

**HAMRO PATRIKA** VAR AVIS  
ORGAN FOR NORGE-NEPAL-FORENINGEN

*Nr. 1, februar 1998*

**Velkommen til festmøte  
med daal bhaat  
i Norge-Nepal foreningen  
26. februar 1998 kl. 19<sup>00</sup>  
i Wergelandsveien 15, Oslo**

**Lysbildeforedrag v/Øystein Berg:  
"Turist i Nepal"**

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**Neste møte blir 23. april 1998**

## NORGE-NEPAL FORENINGENS STYRE:

| Navn:                     | Adresse:                                       | Telefon og faks<br>Jobb:        | Privat:                         |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Ingela Flatin (leder)     | Tangenvn. 204, 1450 Nesoddtangen               | 64 94 98 01<br>faks 64 94 07 60 | 66 91 29 08                     |
| Nikolai Arnø (kasserer)   | Fossekallen 32, 3034 Drammen                   | 32 24 64 13                     | 32 81 86 39                     |
| Cathrine Reid (sekretær)  | Røa terrasse 6, 0755 Oslo                      |                                 | 22 50 09 95                     |
| Kirsten I. Greiner (red.) | Landingsvn. 84, 0767 Oslo                      |                                 | 22 14 11 01<br>faks 22 14 11 01 |
| David Durkan              | Lars Muhles vei 10, 1300 Sandvika              |                                 | 67 56 56 34                     |
| Christine Engen           | Haxthausensgt. 1, 0263 Oslo                    |                                 | 22 44 42 04<br>92 210 057       |
| Anuradha Gurung           | Kristian Kølles vei 7, 1335 Snarøya            |                                 | 91 149 347                      |
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| Narendra Km. Shitaula     | Kringsjø stud.by 1357, Sognsvn. 218, 0864 Oslo |                                 | 22 18 79 51                     |
| Sigrun Eide Ødegård       | Schultz gt. 7, 0365 Oslo                       | 22 77 99 44<br>90 982 846       | 22 66 66 63                     |

### PERSONER MED VERV UTENFOR STYRET:

|                                  |                                 |             |             |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Roy Frills (revisor)             | Peiskrokvn. 8, 1482 Nittedal    | 22 93 71 04 | 67 07 69 08 |
| Wenche Fossum (valgkomité)       | Bjørnestupet 25, 1453 Bjørnemyr |             | 66 9168 77  |
| Thrond Berge Larsen (valgkomité) | Dannevigsvn. 12, 0463 Oslo      |             | 22 71 98 73 |

Hamro Patrika er Norge-Nepal foreningens medlemsavis som utkommer fire-fem ganger i året. Forespørsler angående avisen og foreningen kan rettes til styremedlemmene.

## Medlemskontingent for 1998!

- på tide å betale:

Enkeltmedlem kr. 100,- / Familie kr. 150,- / organisasjon kr. 300,-

## Nytt om fly til Nepal

Quatar Airways har nylig opprettet en flyrute London-Dhaka-Kathmandu (fredag, med retur lørdag). Etter sigende er ruten rimelig og svært punktlig, trygg og effektiv. Informasjon fåes via reisebyrå i Norge eller Quatar Airways i London.

SAS åpner sin fjerde ukentlige flygning til Delhi. Oslo-København-Delhi med SAS og Delhi-KTM med Indian Airlines er da den raskeste ruten. Overgangen i Delhi fungerer fint.

I begynnelsen av 1998 etablerer Lauda Air (Østerrike) en rute direkte fra Wien til Kathmandu, en erstatning for Lufthansas rute som ble nedlagt i april 1997. Antakelig er Tyrolian Airways (godt selskap som samarbeider med Lufthansa) sin rute fra Oslo og Gøteborg til Wien en grei første etappe.

OLAV MYRHOLT

## Nepal på reiselivsmessen

Også i år var Norge-Nepal foreningen tilstede på Nepal's stand på reiselivsmessen som ble arrangert på Sjølyst i Oslo 8-11 januar. Det var rekordstort antall besøkende på messen og stor aktivitet. Fiere fra foreningen (både medlemmer og styret) besvarte spørsmål og informerte om Nepal og foreningen. Takk til alle som tok seg tid til dette! Og takk til Magne Berger Nilsen som også i år ordnet med stand og tilbød oss å være med.

### TRAVELOGUE August/1997

## Tallest Stupa at Lumbini

A Buddhist Stupa designed to be the tallest one in the world is being constructed at Lumbini, the sacred birth place of Lord Buddha. The construction work is being financed and supervised by a prestigious Japanese Buddhist institution, Nipponjan Miyohoji.

A Japanese monk, Yunataka, engaged in the construction work of the monastery was killed on July 3, 1997.

After the murder of Yunataka, construction work of the monastery was

left pending for four days. Monk T. Tanaka from Darjeeling and monk K. Nakasato from Baisali thereafter were sent to Lumbini to supervise the construction work.

The Stupa will be 155 feet in height which will be the tallest in the world.

The construction cost of the monastery is estimated at 250 million rupees.

Nipponjan Miyohoji institute has constructed about 80 monasteries in various places in the world. The stupa is taken as a symbol of Lord Buddha's meditative posture.

Late monk Yunataka and other two monks who are supervising the construction work are the disciples of great religious priest of Japan, Nichidatsh Fuji.

About 200 disciples of the priest Fuji

who died 13 years ago are engaged in the construction work of the monasteries in various places in the world.

Japanese monk Tanaka says that the monastery is being constructed as a fulfilment of their esteemed priest Fuji's dream to construct the tallest monastery in the world at the sacred birth place of Lord Buddha, an apostle of peace. Monk Tanaka expresses his firm belief that the construction work will be completed within three years from now.

Monk Tanaka berieved by the murder of late monk Yunataka says that he never dreamt of such unfaithful event. Monk T. Tanaka and K. Nkasaki are temporarily supervising the construction work who are supposed to be replaced by another monk from Japan.

# Årsberetning

Medlemmer: Personlige: 145 Familier: 39 Organisasjoner: 14

## MEDLEMSMØTER:

### 5.DESEMBER 1996

Fellesmøte med Den Norske Tibetkomite.

Harald O. Skar snakket om bilateralt samarbeide Norge-Nepal.

Roar Vestre snakket om Lamaenes rolle i Tibet.

Hem Gurung fortalte om den politiske situasjonen i Nepal

Tilslutt spilte Jigme Drugpa bhutanesisk folkemusikk.

85 personer tilstede.

Invitasjon i HP 1996:4

### 6.februar 1997

Daal bhaat fest-møte.

Lysbildeforedrag ved Rita Koirala og Rinjan Shrestha : A journey to

Damodar Kunda i Mustang. Deretter ble det servert daal bhaat for 50 personer.

Invitasjon i HP 1997:1

### 10.april 1997

Foreningens medlemmer viste lysbilder og fortalte om sine minner og opplevelser i Nepal - under tittelen «gyldne øyeblikk». 21 personer tilstede.

Invitasjon i HP 1997:2

### 17.september 1997

Informasjonsansvarlig i Amnesty international Norge John Peder Egenæs snakket om menneskerettighetsspørsmål i Bhutan, Tibet og Nepal.

John Peder Egenæs fikk et års medlemsskap i foreningen for sitt foredrag.

Tshewang Wanchuk viste flotte lysbilder fra Bhutan.

34 personer var tilstede.

Invitasjon var sendt ut på eget ark.

### 30.oktober 1997

Årsmøte.

Susan Høivik: Dolpo og Muktinath-dalen: livet i tibetansk Nepal.

Foredrag med lysbilder.

Invitasjon sendt ut med HP 1997:3

Det har vært et aktivt år i Norge-Nepal foreningen:

6.11.1996 var foreningens leder på møte hos Bistandsministeren

der alle organisasjoner og industriforetak, som har interesser i Nepal, var tilstede.

Det var i anledning av Bistandsministerens forestående besøk og avtaleinngåelse om bistandssamarbeide mellom Norge og Nepal. Dr. Harald Skar NUPI gav en orientering om den politiske, sosiale og økonomiske situasjonen i Nepal.

9.01.1997 til 12.01.1997 deltok foreningen på Reiselivsmessen på Sjølyst.

Nepal hadde en egen stand. Tema : «Visit Nepal '98». 1998 er utpekt som turismens år.

Standen fikk positiv respons av Generalkonsul Bjørn Korsvold og Nepals Ambassade i London.

Ambassadesekretæren kom ens ærend fra London for å kaste glans over åpningen.

Vi fikk «takksigelser» for vårt store engasjement.

For å kunne presentere foreningen laget vi et informasjonsark, se vedlegg<sup>(s.4)</sup>. Sammen med det fulgte også en oversikt over dagens styre, foreningens adresse og kontingentsatser + innbetalingspostgiro.

03.03.1997 var Styret invitert på Grand Hotel for å ta avskjed med Ambassadør Shrestha i London. (Som bekjent er Skandinavia underlagt Ambassaden i London.) Det var det første og det siste møtet med Shrestha, men jeg håper og tror at det betyr at vi nå «regnes med». Ny ambassadør er utnevnt, men han har enda ikke overleveret sine akkreditiver til Kongen. Styret håper det blir anledning til å treffe han når han kommer til Norge.

09.05.1997: 6 kvinnelige parlamentsmedlemmer + 2 sekretærer var i Norge på studietur, invitert hit av Bistandsministeren. Se forøvrig også artikkel i HP 1997:3.

Det ble holdt middag hos foreningens leder med deler av styret til stede, ialt var vi 14 personer tilbords.

Hamro Patrika: Det er utgitt 4 nummer av vårt tidsskrift. Kirsten Greiner har også i år nedlagt et stort arbeide som redaktør. HP har fått meget ros. Mange nyheter på Internett har vi også fått presentert.

HP 1997:3 har hatt «gjeste-redaktører». Ingela Flatin, Anuradha Gurung og Øyvind Amundsgård har gjort en fin jobb, da Kirsten Greiner er utenlands i hele høst.

Brosjyren fikk vi endelig ut fra trykkeriet i mai 1997.

Alle medlemmene har fått den tilsendt i posten. Vi vil også sende den ut til relevante organisasjoner. Takkebrev er også sendt til Norad for de kr.25.000,- vi mottok som støtte til trykking av brosjyren. Uten disse pengene hadde det ikke blitt noen brosjyre.

Heretter vil vi selge brosjyren for kr 40,-. Dessuten vil alle nye medlemmer motta den.

Genralkonsulatet har også brosjyren for salg.

For styret 30.10.1997

Marit Kleppa

Foreningens økonomi - se regnskapet

Leder

# Nepal

**Norge-Nepal foreningen** har vært et aktivt forum for Nepal-interesserte siden 1984. Medlemskap er åpent for alle. Foreningen søker å fremme forståelse og samarbeid mellom det norske og det nepalesiske folk ved:

- å arbeide for kulturutveksling mellom de to landene,
- å utbre kjennskap til Nepals kultur og tradisjoner blant nordmenn,
- å arbeide for økt norsk bistand til Nepal og bidra til koordinering av utviklingshjelp og forskningssamarbeid,
- å fungere som et forum for folk med interesse for Nepal.



## Norge-Nepal foreningen tilbyr:

### ❖ Foredrag

Foreningen arrangerer årlig 4-5 møter i Oslo. Her gis lysbildeforedrag om Nepals kultur, folkegrupper, sosiale forhold, politikk, utviklingsarbeid, ekspedisjoner, økologi m.m. Enkelte ganger serveres nepalesisk mat. Alle er velkomne på møtene, der medlemmer går gratis og andre betaler en symbolsk inngangspenge.

### ❖ Forum for Nepal-interesserte

Foreningen fungerer som et forum der kontakter knyttes og det etableres vennskap med andre Nepal-interesserte og mellom nepalesere og nordmenn. Blant foreningens norske og nepalesiske medlemmer finner du både pakketurister, globetrottere, Himalaya-klatrere, bistandsarbeidere og de som bare er nysgjerrige på landet. Her utveksles opplevelser og kunnskap i et sammensatt miljø med trivelig atmosfære.

### ❖ Medlemsblad

Bladet «Hamro Patrika» («Vår Åvis») utkommer 4-5 ganger i året og sendes medlemmene. Her finner du nyheter fra Nepal, artikler om land og folk, opplysninger for Nepal-reisende og informasjon om foreningens arbeid.

### ❖ Brosjyre om Nepal

Foreningens Nepal-brosjyre er et informativt og nyttig 50 siders hefte som vil gi deg større utbytte av et Nepal-besøk. Du får økt forståelse for natur, miljø, samfunnsutvikling, politikk, økonomi, sosiale forhold, tradisjoner og skikker i Nepal - informasjon du vanligvis ikke finner i ellers gode turisthåndbøker om landet. Foreningens medlemmer får tilsendt brosjyren uten kostnad. Den kan også kjøpes for en billig penge direkte fra Norge-Nepal foreningen, eller fra Nepals konsulat i Norge (Generalkonsul Bjørn Korsvoll, Haakon VII's gt. 5b, 0161 Oslo) og bokhandelen Nomaden (Uranienborgvn. 4, 1258 Oslo).

## Velkommen i Norge-Nepal foreningen!

## Årsregnskap for Norge-Nepal foreningen

Regnskapsperiode 23.10 1996- 16.10 1997.

| Inntekter            | 1996            | 1997            |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Kontingenter         | 16900,00        | 17150,00        |
| Bevertning           | 3884,00         | 2675,50         |
| Tilskudd             | 0,00            | 0,00            |
| Renter på Postgiro   | 138,26          | 88,96           |
| Salg                 | 995,00          | 1300,00         |
| Inngangspenger       | 1475,00         | 3830,00         |
| Loddsalg             | 3873,00         | 3380,00         |
| Diverse              | 0,00            | 0,00            |
| <b>Sum inntekter</b> | <b>27265,26</b> | <b>28424,46</b> |

| Utgifter               | 1996            | 1997            |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Porto gebyrer          | 3959,50         | 7172,00         |
| Rekvisita              | 155,50          | 0,00            |
| Bevertning             | 4003,90         | 3027,10         |
| Lokalleie              | 4400,00         | 4400,00         |
| Gaver bøker reisetils. | 1448,00         | 2094,00         |
| Trykking av HP         | 4674,00         | 8381,50         |
| Diverse                | 983,00          | 6212,75         |
| <b>Sum utgifter</b>    | <b>19623,90</b> | <b>31287,35</b> |

|                 |                |                 |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>Resultat</b> | <b>7641,36</b> | <b>-2862,89</b> |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|

| Balanse              | 1996            | 1997            |
|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Kasse                | 616,50          | 407,40          |
| Postgiro             | 15222,56        | 12568,77        |
| <b>Sum eiendeler</b> | <b>15839,06</b> | <b>12976,17</b> |

|                             |                 |                 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Gjeld                       | 0,00            | 0,00            |
| Egenkapital                 | 15839,06        | 12976,17        |
| <b>Gjeld og egenkapital</b> | <b>15839,06</b> | <b>12976,17</b> |

23/10-97

Nilsen Amø

27.10.97

Regnskapet revidert  
Roy Enis

# Waiting for the king

KATMANDU

**S**LOWLY, Nepal seems to be drifting into political disarray. On January 8th the prime minister, Surya Bahadur Thapa, asked King Birendra to dissolve parliament and to fix a date for a general election. Under the constitution, this should be simply a formality. But the king has hesitated. On January 14th he asked the Supreme Court for advice.

The king is entitled to do this, although it is not clear why he is doing so. The hesitation has upset Mr Thapa. He says it is "not right". A former chief justice, Biswonath Upadhyay, says it is "not necessary now". He fears that social unrest, even "chaos" or "anarchy", may follow. Both men, and others concerned with government in Nepal, are worried that the authority of the office of prime minister is being undermined by the delay. The country has had multi-party democracy only since 1990. Before that the king was pretty much an absolute ruler.

No one would be surprised were he nostalgic for the old days. Since 1990, Nepal has had four largely inefficient governments. They have been burdened with huge cabinets of close to 50 ministers, constructed to please numerous political interests, with little attention given to the quality of leadership.

Mr Thapa's government, a coalition of three parties, took office only in October. It has not been a happy group. Critics of Mr

Thapa in the coalition have been talking with the communist-led opposition about ways of destroying the government. Among them have been Lokendra Bahadur Chand, whom Mr Thapa dislodged as leader of the Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP). Mr Thapa's request for an election followed an opposition threat to move a no-confidence vote against his government. Although the government theoretically has a small majority in parliament, Mr Thapa was not sure he could count on the loyalty of all his notional supporters.

Mr Thapa is hopeful of staying on as prime minister in a new government. A general election, he believes, would enable him to get rid of his more prominent critics, especially Mr Chand. The result, he confidently claims, would be a stable government. The opposition is determined that he should go. Mr Thapa used to have royalist sympathies. In the pre-democracy period he was chairman of the king's "council of ministers". The RPP was established to counter anti-royalist forces, especially the United Marxist-Leninist Party, which has a lot of support in Nepal, one of the world's ten poorest countries.

The opposition would like to have the chance to form a government in the present parliament, but this is not an option under the constitution. So it is pressing for an all-party caretaker government to manage the country in the approach to the proposed election. Leaving Mr Thapa in charge would give him an unfair advantage, it says.

THE ECONOMIST JANUARY 17TH 1998

## Nepal's trek to democracy

Editorial  
(The Kathmandu Post)

<http://www.south-asia.c...97/Feb/Feb4/feb4-ed.htm>

If you let your thoughts wander as to the reasons that led to the debacle of the Nepali Congress despite the enormously inflated coalition government just on the eve of the by-elections in three of the five constituencies in the immediate past, the problems that the Congress failed to visualize and then to tackle should stare you in the face. The reasons for the Congress debacle in the by-elections run from the paucity of competent leaders who could

enthuse and inspire both party workers and the people, loss of faith of people in the leaders scrambling for power, the party being driven with disunity, their weakness for power and money, their unprincipled alliance with leaders of other parties and their penchant for cutting each others' throats have discredited them beyond redemption. One can go on counting the reasons and make a pretty long list. It should be appropriate to refer here to His Majesty's repeated warning that political parties despite their differences on smaller issues should rise above their petty party interests on 'issues that warrant national concern' and that they 'should be addressed with a national consensus. His Majesty, again in his message on the auspicious occasion of His Majesty's accession to the throne has subtly warned that political parties under multi-party democracy should better stop making farcical exercises and stop confusing people's patriotism with their forced obedience to leaders. The most worrying aspect of democratic instability in the country today is the growing disenchantment of the people with political parties and their leaders and with democracy itself. The apathy of the people towards democracy is fraught with dangerous consequences.

Political parties with no democratic credibility cannot be the instruments that promote the cause of democracy, a system in which the will of the people is supreme. But unfortunately, the leaders of political parties try to ignore the people and their problems soon after their election to the posts is over. This is exactly what has cost the Congress so dearly. The leaders know it well that they are nothing without the people who can ditch their leaders at the polls. The Congress, as is evident, would not have lost so heavily in Sunsari, which is long considered to be the home-turf of the Congress. The political implications involved in this defeat are indeed very great. You may not agree that Nepal's trek to democracy has been very tortuous. If this trend continues for a few more years, Nepal will be ruled under something other than democracy.

Democracy, after all, means to live together by not giving undue importance to small differences and to work together to create an atmosphere for such a future where all can work and live together in peace. Why should there be bitterness against each other? Do we have leaders who by ignoring bitterness of the past, can explore the possibility for building a future on the basis of consensus? The country needs leaders who can, despite petty party differences, work together. It would not be unfair to say that the country will have to do away with some of the present breed of corrupt leaders. Maybe we may never have an opportunity to freely breathe in an atmosphere where everyone will be working for the common good. As things are today, it seems only appropriate here to refer to the remarks made by Rishikesh Shah, a human rights leader. Though not known to have been consistent with any political idea, he has said that the people who are not happy with the kind of democracy in the country are looking towards His Majesty the King for succour.

His remark in actuality has articulated the deeprooted feelings of the people for whom democracy means something more than mere political parties engaged in intrigues and squabbling about things the people have nothing to do with. The common man is distraught and frustrated. They have no access to the leaders and ministers. If party leaders are only to look after their party men, who are to look into the grievances of the people who do not necessarily belong to any of the political parties? People have begun to drop their allegiance to the ruling Nepali Congress. Corruption is rife and blatant. The Congress alliance may soon go, giving way to the UML. We will not be surprised if the UML calls for general elections to have overwhelming majority in the parliament for reasons other than making democracy a part of life.

By Govinda Rajbhandari

## Conversion in Nepal

By Dr Hari Bansh Jha

The KTM Post, Oct. 9, 1997

Recently an international organization called Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA/Nepal) has generated controversy by proselytizing in Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet into Christianity. ADRA has been violating the terms and conditions for operating in Nepal by carrying out illegal conversion activities. The media has charged ADRA of luring poor and innocent villagers to accept Christianity.

The main allegations against ADRA is that it has been using Asian Aid funds to proselytize students by sending them to study in Roorkee and Pune in India. ADRA operated the Nepal Adventist School to convert young children to Christianity by forcing them to attend the Banepa City Church operated in the student's hostel in Banepa. ADRA has also been charged of misusing the duty-free facility to import recording equipment by recording Christian materials. If investigation is carried on, even commercial organization, like the Grindlays Bank will not be spared. This bank has opened accounts of several unregistered wings of ADRA.

Veteran leaders of UML and former Education Minister Modnath Prashrit has said that ADRA Nepal is carrying on religious conversion by spending millions of rupees. ADRA has denied all allegations made against the organization regarding violation of the Memorandum of Understanding by being involved in illegal activities and proselytizing. Advertisements have been published in all the leading papers that ADRA is not involved in issues related to any such activities.

After the formal complaint lodged against ADRA with the Ministry of Health, a committee was formed under the convenorship of Dr Durga Prasad Manandhar, Special Secretary of Ministry of Health. The Committee ordered ADRA to stop raising funds for the Adventist School, Dhulikhel (Banepa). Volunteers from foreign countries were asked to refrain from such activities. ADRA was also asked to stop its recording studio which many people in Nepal believe is for propagating Christianity. Government health post and sub-health post staff

should be involved in Field Mobile Clinic which provide service in the health sector. And lastly ADRA cannot do more than what is agreed between the Ministry of Health and ADRA Nepal.

During the press conference organized by the World Hindu Federation (WHF) recently, how ADRA converted the poor and illiterate common population in the name of health and education activities figured prominently. The figures presented at the conference were, in fact, an eye-opener for Hindus all over the world. According to WHF, until 1981 over 400,000 people in Nepal have been converted to Christianity, when the number was only 5 in 1971 and 36,000 until 1991.

It was brought to the notice of the press that the WHF believes that all the 81 INGOs working in Nepal have been overtly or covertly engaged in converting the poor and illiterate mass. There is a lack of transparency among these organizations which spend over half the total government expenditure. It is also due to this that the population of Hindus dropped from 89 percent to 86 percent between 1981 and 1991.

Gyanendra Ghale, a former employee of ADRA, presented audio and visual facts during the WHF press conference in which he showed how USAID grants were used by ADRA for conversion in Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. Also, cases of misuse of funds by ADRA and efforts at cover ups made by certain embassies in Kathmandu was discussed. Over and above, USAID was also criticized for misutilizing the American taxpayers money for its support to ADRA. Neither ADRA nor the USAID are prepared to give the figures regarding the amount given by USAID and the amount spent for conversion.

It is surprising how lawmakers have failed to execute the constitutional provisions of punishing culprits involved in conversion activities. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal Clearly spells out, "Every person shall have the freedom to profess and practise his own religion as handed down to him from ancient times having due regard to traditional practices ... no person shall be entitled to convert another person from one religion to another, and every religious denomination shall have the right to maintain its independent existence and for this purpose to manage and protect its religious places and trusts."

According to the *Muluki Ain*, a man is liable to be imprisoned for three years if found trying to convert a person. And if he is already successful in converting, he is to be imprisoned for six years. In case, the converter is a foreigner, he is also to be expelled from the country following the imprisonment.

It, thus, follows that law is quite clear about punishing the culprits involved in proselytizing. But it is the weakness of the administrative machinery that has failed to punish the culprits. After the advent of political change in 1990, no person is reported to have been imprisoned though hundreds of thousands of people have been converted during this period.

Networking among the Hindu organizations will greatly help to expose the missionaries involved in converting poor people. But if it is not done the Hindus will have to pay a great price for their indifferent attitude to religious affairs. All possible efforts, therefore, need to be mobilized to pressurize the government so that the provisions in the constitution are implemented and the culprits punished. ■

## Cynicism towards NGOs: Is it justified?

<http://www.south-asia.com/Ktmpost/1997/Oct/Oct18/oct18-hd.htm>

By a Post Reporter

Headline (The Kathmandu Post)

KATHMANDU, Oct 18 - To sing in praise of non-government organisations may sound a bit too unpalatable for public taste. Some say it is the media's doing: giving NGOs all sorts of bad names and generating repulsive attitude towards the NGO sector. Whatever the case, there is no harm exchanging bouquets or brickbats, they say.

"NGO is a family enterprise where the members of the family work together to maximise benefits," says D R Dahal, reader at Centre for Nepal and Asian Studies(CNAS). Although many share this stark cynicism, some like Dr Prabha Basnet, former secretary at the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare, refrain from taking sides.

"They are doing fine," Dr Basnet says of NGOs. "Just that there should be better co-ordination among the government, NGOs and the INGOs. There should also be a clear demarcation of responsibilities between Social Welfare Council and the Ministry."

Kathmandu district office alone has more than 4,721 NGOs registered till date. Whether they are all functioning is again a different story. Authorities at the district office deal with about 25 new NGOs each day. Seven years ago the number of NGOs registered at Kathmandu district office was a mere 84. It galloped to 328 the following year. Since then there has been no turning back as the number of NGOs took to dizzying count. Estimated number of the NGOs across the country stands at 25,000 plus including 6000 plus NGOs affiliated with the Social Welfare Council.

Kathmandu district office authorities attribute this sudden rise of NGOs to more liberal registration ideals that was adopted since the restoration of democracy. This apart, says the assistant chief district officer, the registration fee of Rs 100 is too nominal. This has also encouraged the spurt of new NGOs, some of which, say the authorities, are mere name-sake. The NGO authorities say, there is no need to be wary about the increasing number of NGOs. Neither should people fret about the NGOs being ruled by family members alone. "In Bombay alone 300,000 NGOs operate and in the United States the NGOs are not even called NGOs. They are PVOs: private voluntary organisations which can be started even by an individual," says Diwaker Chand, president of the Association of Development Agencies of Nepal(ADAN), a consortium of NGOs.

Yet, even those in the NGO sector are aware of the few rotten things that are spoiling the whole basket. One of the causes is, yes, unaccountability.

For the NGO sector to stay upright, there should be a mechanism that asks for accountability to the government, say experts.

"If some NGOs are showing unaccountability, it is because the government is not asking for it. I blame the government for this," says Chand, an economist who has over a decade of experience in the NGO sector. "The government has the authority to check if there are inconsistencies and punish the culprits. But what I see is, the government is not concerned about the NGOs. The NGO sector, which represents more than a million people committed to serving this sector, is not a priority for them. There is not even a national plan of action for NGOs. The government has not been able to assign the NGOs with specific function."

The NGO movement in Nepal has evolved with the years. Observers say it has moved from the social service module to the development service module.

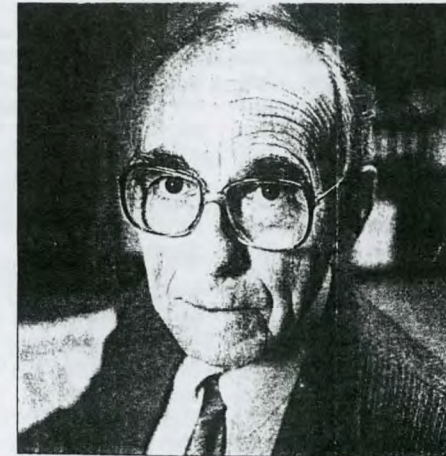
"NGOs, for example, are contributing as much as 80 percent service in the eye care sector. But they are still dependent on the government to supply them with the needed manpower. The NGOs are not self-sufficient. There is a need for capacity building," Chand says. ■

Odd Hoftun:

Aftenposten 27. des. 1997

## Bistand krever dialog

- Det er forkastelig med bistand som vel-dedighet. Ved at vi gir mister mottageren sin selvrespekt og evne til å hjelpe seg selv, sier sivilingeniør Odd Hoftun, 70 år i dag, som gjennom 40 år har gjennomført en rekke vellykkede bistandsprosjekter i Nepal.



LANG ERFARING: Etter 40 års erfaring med bistandsprosjekter i Nepal mener Odd Hoftun å vite noe om hvordan lønnsom utvikling kan skapes. FOTO: KNUT M. REKVE

ESPEN UTAKER

70 år

1. januar er det 40 år siden Odd Hoftun og hans kone Tullis for første gang satte sine ben på nepalsk jord for å bygge et sykehus på et isolert sted i Vest-Nepal.

Veler fantes ikke, og materialene måtte bæres inn til fots. Dårlig fremkommelighet gjorde at arbeidet tok fem år før bygget endelig sto ferdig. Men da hadde den nevenyttige sivilingeniøren fått blod på tann og var i gang med nye prosjekter. Siden den gang har det ballet på seg.

### Må stille krav

Fremdeles pendler 70-åringen mellom hjemstedet i Tvedestrand og det lille fjelllandet som skvises mellom India og Kina. På dagsordenen står det drikkevann som skal skaffes til 700 000

menesker som lever med permanent vannmangel i Kathmandudalen. Gjennom en 27 kilometer lang tunnel skal vann føres fra et vassdrag utenfor byen og ned til et kraftverk.

- Vi håper at Norge vil være med på å dekke kostnadene til et prosjekt som har så stor betydning for folket som lider under vannmangel i Kathmandu, sier Hoftun, som er glad Nepal er blitt et av Norges nye hovedsamarbeidsland på bistandssiden.

Likevel er han skeptisk til deler av den internasjonale bistand som blir satt i gang.

### Svake sider

- Bistand til Nepal har åpenbare svake sider. Landet blir dynget ned med tilbud om utviklingshjelp av konkurrerende bistandsorganisasjoner. Bistandsorga-

nisasjonene leverer ofte fra seg en ferdig pakke, i stedet for å la mottagerlandet definere hva som trengs, sier Hoftun oppgitt.

- Giverorganisasjonene må ta seg tid nok til å skape en dialog hvor begge parter forstår hverandre. I dag skal kontraktene skrives under så snart som mulig, dermed øker risikoen for misforståelser.

Etter 40 års arbeid for Den Norske Tibetmisjon vet Hoftun hvor vanskelig det er å lage vellykkede prosjekter. Likevel har han greid å skape lønnsomme virksomheter oftere enn folk flest, og med langt mindre penger.

### Starte i det små

- For at det skal foregå en vellykket utvikling, må det være langsiktige prosjekter som starter i det små. Tegnet på et vellykket prosjekt

er at det går med over-skudd. For å få det til må en være nøktern, og da er det bedre med for lite penger enn for mye. Da presses man til å greie seg med enkle midler, sier Hoftun.

- Som oftest er de menneskelige ressursene viktigere enn pengene. Vår oppgave er å motivere til selvhjelp, og for at det skal fungere, må det stilles strenge krav. Å stille krav er halve utviklingsjobben. Det kan være vanskelig å stille krav til de aller fattigste, fordi fattigdommen stjeler vilje og tro på at de kan lære seg noe.

Den beste fattigdomsorienteringen er derfor å motivere den unge generasjonen som vokser opp. De har potensial i seg til å lære, sier Hoftun, som har fått stor

anerkjennelse i Nepal for å motivere og utnytte unges potensial ved å la dem gå i skole hos læremestere.

### Kjøp bruk

Odd Hoftun erfarte tidlig landets skrikende behov etter tekniske fagfolk, og idéen om et senter for yrkesutdannelse tok form tidlig på 60-tallet. Gjennom praktisk arbeid ble læregutter innen ulike tekniske fag utdannet.

Fagfolk fra Odd Hoftuns industrisenter har siden den gang vært sterkt ettertraktet ekspertise, og har stått for en viktig del av utviklingen av Nepal. Rundt yrkesskolen vokste det opp et bredt spekter av industri som ble et lokomotiv for Nepals vekst.

Industriene var begynnerfasen fortrinnsvis basert på brukte norske maskiner som ble kjøpt billig eller mottatt som gaver. Odd Hoftun fortrekker som oftest de gamle slitesterke maskinene fremfor ny teknologi.

### Lokale ressurser

- God utviklingshjelp er hjelp som kan kopieres med lokale ressurser. Det var nyttig u-hjelp å samle inn brukte maskiner fra Norge fordi disse mye lettere kunne vedlikeholdes med lokale ressurser. Det er altfor mye plunder med moderne elektronisk utstyr, samtidig som en gjør seg mer avhengig av leverandørene, forklarer den NTH-utdannede sivilingeniøren. ■

## Red tapism and joy of adoption

<http://www.south-asia.com/Ktmpost/1997/Oct/Oct26/oct26-hd.htm>

By Binaj Gurubacharya

Headline (The Kathmandu Post)

KATHMANDU, Oct 25 - When Meera Maria Elizabeth Wellving was adopted by a Swedish couple eighteen years ago, she was just four months old. Now as a teenager, she has returned to visit the land she was born in.

Meera is just one of the few hundred children that are adopted by foreigners to realize their dream of being parent(s). Though there are no official or systematic records of how many children have been adopted by families living abroad, the existing records show only 579 cases of adoption - of which 200 were from France.

Home Ministry, the regulatory body, has introduced new sets of regulations and record keeping process to keep track of all the adoptions made to foreigners since the beginning of this year. Their records show that seven children have been adopted since the current fiscal year began in July. During the 1996/97 fiscal year, an estimated 82 Nepali children were adopted.

According to regulations, children can only be adopted from *Bal Mandir*, the state-run children's home, or from other government-recognized homes that have 20 or more children and with recommendations from the chief district officer.

"We introduced the new regulations to make the adoption process more systematic," says an official of the Ministry, admitting that the process includes additional paper work, including approval from the minister, but never takes more than 10 days.

Individual adoptions are barred and the adopting parents need to comply with the regulations that include submitting proof of financial, social and family stability.

However, the move has been criticized by many as being an "unnecessary bureaucratic hurdle" that is nightmare for any one wishing to adopt a Nepali child.

In addition, messages and articles have been pasted on the Internet by some critics of the Ministry. Writes one lady: Deep in the hallways and sparsely furnished offices of Singh Durbar is one of the country's little known secrets. Here, in the offices of Home Ministry, foreigners and Nepalis alike are put through a tortuous and degrading process when they come to get permission to adopt an unwanted child.

The interpretation of the *Muluki Ain* (Civil Code) is left to the Ministry, which can choose to create additional barriers to the adoption, regardless of their validity or basis of law even after meeting the criteria mentioned in the above law, she adds.

Officials disagree with their critics, saying that the laws were needed to restrict any illegal acts or exchange of money or goods for the child. Such cases are frequently carried in the international media, where poor parents of developing countries "sell" their child to rich childless foreigners. With the adoptions only executed through recognized homes, these organizations can be held accountable in case any thing should go wrong.

But for Meera and children like her, there could have been no better place to grow up than with their adopted parents and families. "I don't know if I would have been happy here growing up with my biological parents...Because I never had the chance to compare," says Meera who for the first time met her biological parents this week.

"I don't know why they left me at *Bal Mandir*," she says. "My biological mother broke down in tears before she could tell me the whole story...I guess the timing was bad."

Meera and many of the 60-to-70 Nepali children in Sweden have always known where they come from and watched slides and film on Nepal. During Deepawali, Meera and many of her friends gather in Stockholm, the Swedish capital, and exchange news and views about themselves and of Nepal. In addition, they enjoy Nepali food especially prepared to suit the occasion.

So was it difficult getting mixed up with other children who are either blonde or brunette and have lighter complexion? "I did not have much problems...I had many friends and they thought that I was pretty with my dark hair," says Meera, who has the look of an enchanting Himalayan girl.

However, she says she is aware of racism existing in most of the western countries, including Sweden. "People may have talked behind my back but never with me," she says. Meera now lives with her adopted parents and older brother, who was also adopted from Finland. She will be graduating from high school this spring.

Besides adopting Nepali children, Swedes have made contributions towards the well-being of over a hundred children in Nepal. Vilma Minkinen Brandt of the Nepal-Sweden Association, this week, handed a cheque to *Bal Mandir* gathered from sponsors in Sweden.

Brandt, who has made 35 trips to Nepal in the past nine years, makes the trips to coordinate and bring the badly needed funds for the children. "People are recommended to provide Rs 760 a month per child. But some provide more funds and continue to do so even after the children are out of the Homes," she says. Anna Ahlstedt Elcsgo, who had also adopted a Nepali girl in 1979, brought her daughter to Nepal to visit the country she once belonged to.

"She made our lives much richer. We have never felt that she is our adopted child," says Anna. "She's our princess." ■

# Sacred art of Nepal

## Thankas and paubhas

by Meryl Dowman

Shangri-La, Oct-Dec 1997

For more than eight hundred years an artistic tradition of great skill and beauty has flourished in the Kathmandu Valley. As long ago as the 12th century, Newar painters, bronze casters and architects were famed across Asia and highly sought after for their talents. The Emperor Kublai Khan in distant China invited them to work for him. They were patronized by the great lamas and monastic institutions in Tibet. The Malla kings of their own homeland competed for their skills to enhance their palaces and temples. Generation after generation, century after century, the painters of Nepal demonstrated their extraordinary gifts. In nearly every remaining great monastery and temple in central Tibet, the indelible print of their hand and the influence of their vision can be seen in the wonderful frescoes and breathtaking statuary.

Traditionally, painting in Nepal is a family profession. Artistic techniques are passed on from father to son or uncle to nephew and survival of their heritage has depended almost entirely on either royal or religious patronage,

After the 18th century when the Malla dynasty in Nepal came to an end, the demand for Newar art declined. The ruling Ranas' taste in art and architecture drifted towards the West, towards secular motifs, Victorian ornament and sensual European statuary. There was little demand for Newar paintings of the traditional kind, or *paubhas* as they are called. The tradition of Tibetan *thankas* or religious scroll painting continued, however, and those ethnic communities in the Nepalese hills whose culture was based on Tibetan Buddhism supported their own village *thanka* painters, often sending such artists to spend many years in the monasteries of Tibet.

One painter from the upper hills now lives in a quiet corner of Kathmandu on the fringe of the city. The son of a married lama from Tukchey on the Kali Gandaki, Sashi has been painting since the age of nine. His father was a renowned doctor and meditation instructor, as well as a highly skilled artist, and it was from him that Sashi learned *thanka* painting.

*Thanka* paintings depict the sacred images of the Buddhist Mahayana or

Vajrayana religion. They are hung in temples, monasteries, private houses and nomad tents. In Tibet, on special holy days, vast applique *thankas* are displayed in the open air on hillsides, to be viewed from miles around. Used for ritual evocation, meditation and devotion, there is great merit to be obtained by donating a *thanka* to a monastery or by commissioning an artist to paint one. When a family member has died, such a commission can remove obstacles to his obtaining a good rebirth. Using a *thanka* for the correct visualization of certain peaceful or wrathful deities can assist in protecting and purifying body, speech and mind.

It is extremely important therefore that *thankas* used for these purposes be accurate in terms of form, color and content. When preparing a canvas for painting it must first be properly primed. *Thankas* need to be supple and the ground and paint have to have proper adhering qualities if they are to survive for long. Rolling and unrolling in the course of transport to the sites of rituals, from household to household and from storage to public viewing, soon crack and damage a poorly crafted painting.

So care must be taken that the cotton cloth on which the painting will be painted is well stretched on its hardwood frame and sized with yak or buffalo skin glue. Several layers of chalk white paint are applied according to the correct formula and polished - often with especially smooth river stones. Only when a perfect surface has been achieved will the design of the images be mapped out. Ideally a *thanka* represents divine form and bal-

ance. A Buddha should never resemble a misshapen demon and each of his emanations, each deity and his or her retinue have not only prescribed proportions but also a predetermined place on the surface of the *thanka*. Drawing out the composition requires great skill and the measurement of body width to height, head to torso, is calculated in units - the length of a barley grain, the width of a finger and so on - balanced against the perfectly vertical and horizontal axes of the canvas.

The same rigor applies to the use of pigments. Fine quality stone colors, highly prized for their luminosity, are costly and require careful grinding and preparation. Only patient work with a pestle and mortar and extraction of impurities will provide an artist with glorious sky blues, cinnabar reds and mountain greens. Special meditations are undertaken by those well taught in mixing color, which help heighten the quality of the painter's vision as well as that of the pigment.

Of course recent access to commercially prepared paints has meant that many *thanka* painters today bypass some of the arduous processes of paint preparation. Sashi, however, though he has even tried using acrylics, prefers the traditional methods his father taught him. He does use fine sable hair brushes from England and Japan, when he can obtain them, but there are certain kinds of brushes he prefers to make himself. Older painters in the hills often keep a pet cat. "There's a small patch at the base of a cat's tail that has especially fine hair that's straight and strong. It's perfect for the kind of brushes we need

for doing outlines. If the cat's sitting on your lap enjoying being stroked, it hardly notices if you gently tug a few hairs out as well," Sashi says smiling.

Today there has been a wonderful artistic resurgence in Nepal. Tourists, travellers and other visitors from abroad have become some of the most important sponsors of Sherpa, Tamang, Newar and Thakali artists. Coming from industrialized nations, travellers recognize the time and application it requires to produce these lovely paintings. And while they may not fully understand them, they are moved by the wise compassionate smiles of the Buddha images, the fearless energy of the wrathful deities and the curious birds and beasts that accompany them.

In answer to the new demand for paintings, little by little, artists' ateliers have sprung up around the Kathmandu Valley. Karsang Lama comes from a village of mask makers and painters on the northern border of Nepal. He learned to paint thankas from his grandfather, who, over ten years ago, founded a school for painters in Kathmandu. Karsang is now in charge of more than 120 artists of varying levels of training, ranging from beginners to accomplished painters.

Housed in the outer courtyard buildings of an old Rana palace, the school takes in new students on a trial basis. For the first few months they must pay their own way, but if they show aptitude, Karsang enrolls them as apprentices and gives them a good basic salary. If they maintain progress for two years they are assured permanent employment.

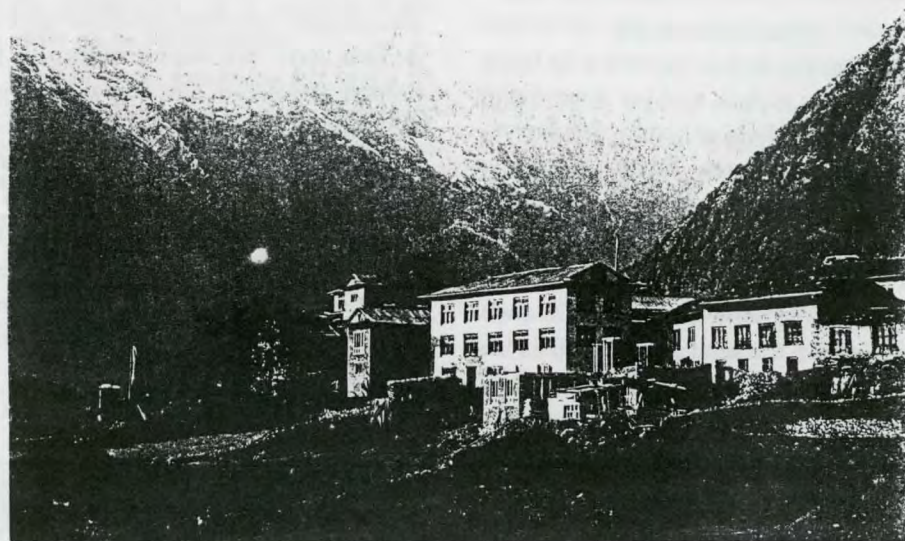
In a warren of small rooms running



off an old wooden gallery, all stages of the painting process are under way. There is an impressive atmosphere of steady concentration and quiet in the workshops as boys and men of all ages sit cross-legged and barefoot on cushions in front of their canvases.

Thangka painting was traditionally an entirely male occupation. Inevitably Nepal's recent exposure to other cultures has brought innovation. Karsang has recently inaugurated a small workshop for training girls. "We can't pretend that the 10th century and the 20th century are the same. The mentality has changed and the painting will change with it," he says.

There is no doubt this is true, and with new vision and inspiration, the skill that is the heritage of Nepalese artists will continue. Among the Buddhas and graceful gods and goddesses they are painting today, some undoubtedly rival their ancestors' in the great fine art museums of the world and will continue to do so. ▲



LUKLA ER utgangspunkt for mange fjellvandrere.

## Det lille landet mellom gigantene

Tekst og foto: Johnny Haglund

REISER & ferie

*I Nepal kjemper mer enn 240 topper på over 6000 meters høyde om oppmerksomheten. Kulturen er som naturen, særpreget og enorm. For en reisende har Nepal uendelig mye å by på, men det er allikevel i fjellene Nepals hemmeligheter ligger, og dit kommer du bare til fots. Fjellsko og god pust bør ligge øverst i sekken.*

Sola dukker såvidt opp bak åskammen og sender sine første varmende stråler ned mot Kathmandu, hoved-

staden i det lille kongeriket Nepal. Varmen er velkommen og jager morgen-tåka og frosten på dør, samtidig som den

belyser trange gater allerede fulle av mennesker, kuer og biler. Morgenbønnen gjenlyder i den kjølige lufta og blir akkompagnert av rauting fra kuer og tuting fra taxier.

En strøm av folk plukker meg opp og fører meg avgårde gjennom den farverige og livlige basaren. En mann med en halv geit til salgs prøver å overbevise meg om at jeg trenger nettopp dette. Alt blir solgt. Kobbetøy, tepper, tredukker, kniver, gull og fargerike sarier. En mann dukker fram fra intet, «buy hashish, cocaine, marijuana?».

Rockemusikk dunderer gjennom lufta og flere små restauranter med fargerike skilt, «Lasagne, French Onion Soup, Pizza» roper mot meg. En rekke turister slurper i seg morgenkaffen og iakttar livet på gatene. Ved Kathmandus turistattraksjon nummer en, Hanuman Dhoka, eller Durbar Plassen, krydres omgivelsene av en underlig blanding mennesker. Vestlige turister med fotoapparater og moderne klær vandrer side om side med tradisjonelt kledde lokale.

De gamle templene (det finnes over 50 monumenter her) legger en lun atmosfære over det hele. Lukten av ferske brød, kaffe, kuer, åpen kloakk, røkelse, friske appelsiner og blodet fra en slakters kniv fyller luften. Kathmandu er byen som aldri tar slutt. For meg står Kathmandu som en av de mest eksotiske byene jeg har vært i.

Nepal er ikke noe stort land, der det ligger klemte mellom gigantene India og Kina (Tibet). Allikevel huser kongeriket mer enn mange land som er tyve ganger større.

Den geografiske variasjonsbredden er enorm. Frodige jungler bebodd av både

tigre og neshorn, store høyfjells-ørkener hvor ørner svever over landskapet, skogkledde daler og selvsagt enorme snøkledde fjell, hvor den sagnomsuste snø leoparden patruljerer, gjør Nepal til en ganske så unikt land. Selv om landet bare er 90 mil langt, fra øst til vest, og maks 20 mil bredt, ligger hele 8 av verdens 10 høyeste topper i dette lille kongeriket.

En annen spennende side ved Nepal er det etniske mangfoldet. Over 20 millioner mennesker lever i Nepal, og etnologer anslår at det eksisterer mellom 30 og 50 forskjellige minoriteter i landet.



#### VALG AV TREKKING-RUTER

Kathmandu inneholder en rekke severdigheter, men er du først kommet til Nepal, bør du så absolutt tillate deg minst en uke til fots i de veldige fjellene. Det finnes mange alternativer både med tanke på trekking-ruter og måter.

I Kathmandu kan du bli med på et organisert trekk, hvor andre bærer din bagasje, setter opp telt (der det er nødvendig) og koker mat o.s.v. Eller du kan leie utstyr (hvis du ikke har med) fra de mange trekking-sjappene i byen, og bevege deg ut i fjellene alene. Mulighetene er mange, og går du alene treffer du garantert folk underveis. Hele den nordlige

delen av Nepal er uten veier, og den eneste muligheten til å oppleve dette området på er å bruke beina.

Du kan korte avstanden litt ved å fly til for eksempel Lukla eller Jomosom, men ofte er det forsinkelser på grunn av dårlig vær, så belag deg på god tid. Kart over regionen du ønsker å traske i kan du få kjøpt mange steder i Kathmandu, og er selvsagt til stor hjelp. Husk å ordne med tillatelse i Kathmandu før du legger ut på en fjelltur. Dette er bare en formalitet, men kan ta noe tid om det er midt i turistsesongen.

Et annet problem er å velge hvor du vil gå. Det finnes en rekke alternativer, men alt er avhengig av hvor lenge du vil gå, hvilken tid på året det er og hva vil du oppleve. De mest kjente, som for eksempel Annapurna rundt og Mount Everest base camp, tar kanskje tre uker inn og ut.

Disse stiene er fulle av folk fra midten av oktober til slutten av november og slutten av februar til midten av april. Hvis du ikke har noe imot andre turister, vil du oppleve et landskap badet i knall blå himmel og en behagelig temperatur. Det er fullt mulig å gjennomføre de samme trekkene stort sett hele året, men enkelte forhåndsregler bør da tas, særlig om vinteren.

Det er kaldt i desember og januar, og noen av passene kan være nedsnødd. Ta med ekstra mye tøy. Jeg trakk til Gokyo og Mount Everest base camp i januar, og hadde ingen problemer. Sommeren fører med seg monsun og varme. Det kan lett bli for mye av begge, særlig sistnevnte, men jeg har møtt mange som har vundet i fjellene under monsunen og like-

vel hatt en glimrende tur.

#### INN I FJELLRIKET

Etter en uke i Kathmandu reiser jeg med buss til Jiri. Jeg har alltid drømt om å se verdens høyeste fjell, og etter noen dager til fots er jeg omgitt av store fjell, skog, frisk luft og blå himmel. Målet mitt er å nå en plass ved navn Gokyo, hvor litteraturen har fortalt meg at mange av verdens 8000-meters topper er innen synsvidde. Fordi det fortsatt er januar og et kjølig klima, treffer jeg nesten ingen turister.

Etter noen dager gjennom et vakkert landskap ankommer jeg Junbesi, en liten landsby omringet av en storslått natur. En familie tilbyr meg husrom for en natt til den store sum av 13 kroner, inkludert mat! Chapati med ris, ost og poteter er helt greit og smaker faktisk ganske godt. Toalettene i disse områdene er forholdsvis langt fra hva vi i Norge er vant med, allikevel er husverten min meget stolt av familiens nye toalett. Et lite skur, på baksiden av huset, er satt opp med tre vegger, tak og et hull i midten.

En morgen sniker jeg meg ut med et sterkt behov for å prøve den nye anord-



BLIDE OG VENNLIGE mennesker møter man overalt i fjellriket.

ningen. Jeg har akkurat satt meg da en familie kommer ruslende forbi. Det er ingen dør på dette toalettet så jeg, med min vestlige innstilling til dette med toalettbesøk, synes privatlivets ukrenkelige intimitet er veldig truet.

«Se å kom dere bort!!», tenker jeg i mitt stille sinn samtidig som jeg presser



*NEPALS FJELLDALER kan være overraskende grønne og frodige.*

fram et høflig smil. Men neida. «Namaste», smiler mannen og stopper. Det samme gjør kona og datteren. «Haw arle yo?», «wod yo layk a sigaret, sir?». Jeg prøver å få fram enda et smil. «No thank you», stammer jeg fram. De smiler og rusler videre.

#### **NAMCHE BAZAAR**

Toalett-episoden er glemt og mange da-

ger etter avreise fra Kathmandu befinner jeg meg i de «virkelige» Himalaya-fjellene. Namche Bazaar (3446 m.o.h.) er Sherpaenes hovedstad. Her er butikker fulle av engelske bøker, sjokolade og fjellutstyr samt restauranter, hoteller og souvenir-butikker.

Allikevel er det ingen kjørbare veier som fører til denne lille fjellbyen. For å besøke Namche Bazaar må folk enten bruke beina eller fly til Syangboche, en liten flystripe rett ovenfor byen. Utallige fjell og klatre-ekspedisjoner har hatt sitt utgangspunkt fra Namche Bazaar, noe byen så absolutt bærer preg av.

Jeg frårser i god mat en dag ekstra før jeg tidlig neste morgen setter kursen mot Gokyo. Himalaya-fjellenes kompakte og massive tilstedeværelse føles utrolig levende på iakktageren, men også litt skremmende. Jeg føler meg liten og sårbar, som et insekt i en steinrøys. Dagen før kom det et solid snefall så alt er dekket av et fløyelshvitt teppe akkompagnert av en knallblå himmel. Luften er kald, men uhyggelig klar og frisk. Jeg må selv trække opp stien, noe som gir meg en slags fornemmelse av å være en pioner, herlig.

Enorme Ama Dablam (6856 m.o.h.) og Kangtega (6685 m.o.h.) ruver over landskapet og forteller meg at jeg er i gigantenes rike. Dette er verdens tak og intuisjonen av å være et lite insekt blir forsterket. Jeg ankommer Dole (ca. 4200 m.o.h.), og blir møtt av en hyggelig

dame som serverer meg en kopp med varm chai (te med melk og sukker). Under sengen hennes står en stor blå kasse med innskriften - NORWEGIAN MT. EVEREST EXPEDITION 85 -. «Jeg har kjøpt den i Namche Bazaar» forteller hun og tilbyr meg å kjøpe den som en souvenir (3 kroner er ikke mye penger, men hva skal jeg med noe slikt?).

Natten er kald. Termometret viser 20 minusgrader utenfor når jeg legger meg for kvelden. Det er en helt spesiell følelse å ligge her, høyt oppe i Himalayafjellene og høre vinden ule utenfor samtidig som lukten av bål fyller rommet. Kroppen er støl og sliten, men jeg har allikevel en god følelse inne i meg og sovner som et barn før klokken slår åtte.

#### **DEN AVSKYELIGE SNØMANNEN**

I løpet av natten kommer det mer snø. På vei opp mot Macherma dagen etter, mister jeg stien flere ganger. Farlig. Noen år tilbake gikk en Australiener seg vill i dette området. Over 40 dager senere ble han funnet igjen i en hule. Halvdød av sult og tørst berget han såvidt livet. Tross mange turister og et forholdsvis bra redningsapparat - Himalaya-fjellene skal man så absolutt ikke spøke med.

Jeg tar en rast i Macherma. Her bor det bare en mann og hans kone. Mannen snakker forholdsvis bra engelsk og forteller meg at jeg nå er i Yetien's rike. Den avskyelige snømannen regjerer i denne delen av verden. «For noen år tilbake drepte Yetien to kraftige yak okser og skadet en ungjente akkurat der du nå står», forteller mannen.



*FOLKET I DOLE på 4200 meters høyde er vant til langveisfarende gjester.*

Det nærmest lyser av øynene hans når han forteller om denne hendelsen. Jeg vet at det har blitt observert fotspor i disse traktene som angivelig skal komme fra denne mystiske skapningen, men ingen ting har blitt bevist og forskerne antar fotsporene kan komme fra bjørn. Allikevel, ekskrementer og sort pels, som ikke har latt seg identifisere, har blitt funnet dypt inne i fjellheimen. Legendene og myte-produksjonen om Yetien synes fortsatt å leve i beste velgående.

Solen har nettopp reist seg og kaster sine første røde solstråler på landskapet rundt meg. Det er ikke hvilket som helst landskap. Mount Everest (8848 m.o.h.), Lhotse (8511 m.o.h.) og Cho Oyu (8153 m.o.h.) er noen av toppene som omgir meg. Jeg står på Gokyo peak (5483 m.o.h.) og puster tynn luft. Målet mitt er nådd, og selv om det har kostet litt slit er bare denne lille stunden, når sola farger Everest rød, verdt alt! Øyeblikket er alt. Glemte diaren, den tynne lufta, den solbrente nesa og de siste dagene da toalett-papiret gikk tomt og ble erstattet med snø (forbannet kaldt i 20 minusgrader!!). Jeg tror, for å si det litt banalt, at utsynet mot Everest og møtet med Nepals fjellverden for alltid vil stå på en av hedersplassene i en globtrotters verdensvante bevissthet. **R**

## Japanese Encephalitis in Kathmandu Valley?

In the summer of 1995, alert doctors at the Patan Hospital noted some cases that appeared to be a form of encephalitis (brain infection) among their Nepalese patients. Blood tests on two patients confirmed that the patients were suffering from Japanese Encephalitis (JE), a viral disease carried by mosquitoes. JE is known to occur in parts of the Terai, mainly during August to October each year. Until this past summer, it was thought that JE did not occur in Kathmandu Valley.

JE is a serious concern. Although many people get infected with the JE virus without becoming ill, those who do show symptoms can either die or suffer serious brain damage. The question that needs to be answered, however, is whether the cases in the valley were due to some mosquitoes that got transported up on a truck, or whether the disease has indeed taken root around Kathmandu. The virus that causes JE usually infects pigs and waterfowl, and the disease is inherently rural in nature. The cases that were discovered last summer seemed to cluster around a small village about a half hour drive south of the Ring Road. The doctors at Patan Hospital and a U.S. Army viral research unit plan to study the problem next summer and try to come up with a definitive answer.

In the meantime, the U.S. Embassy Medical Unit has decided to immunize their diplomatic and aid missions in Nepal against JE. This raises the question as to whether all residents and tourists to Kathmandu Valley should receive the vaccine against JE. What is the risk of a foreigner acquiring JE in Nepal? The actual risk is difficult to calculate, **as there has not been a single case of JE in a foreigner in Nepal.** This doesn't mean that it is not possible for a foreigner to get the disease, but that the actual risk must be extremely low. The question as to whether JE has become a risk to foreigners in Kathmandu Valley has not yet been answered.

We feel that it is not necessary for foreigners and tourists who are living in and visiting Kathmandu to be vaccinated for JE. If further research shows that the risk exists in the valley, or that it is spreading, we will keep you informed. We still recommend, however, that foreigners who will be living in known JE endemic areas, such as most of the Terai, should be immunized against JE.

The JE vaccine is manufactured in Japan, and consists of three shots over a one month period. Although it is generally a safe vaccine, side effects do occur, including rash and fever. We have the vaccine, and we will make it available to anyone who wishes to have it. **However, we feel that there is no reason at present to recommend immunization for people who are living in Kathmandu, or for any tourists who are visiting Kathmandu, Pokhara, or any trekking areas.** We will report on next summer's research into JE in Kathmandu as soon as it is available.

The CIWEC Clinic - Durbar Marg - Telephone 228531

# TUMLINGTAR

## The back door to Mt. Everest

by Sally Norman

Shangri-La, Oct-Dec 1997

A hundred feet from the Tumlingtar airstrip, an elderly lady is running after a cow. "Whose cow is this? Whose cow can this be, eating my corn?!"

Waving a stick at the offending beast, she skips gingerly in her bare feet between the corn stalks to her right and a dizzying gorge to her left. She has a surprisingly quick sprint for a lady of her age, and is undeterred by the fact that a wrong move would send her plunging into the Arun river far below. The river is flashing silver in the late-afternoon sun and foaming like champagne as it tumbles from its headwaters near Mt. Makalu, the world's fifth tallest peak.

This is the Arun River Valley, one of the deepest valleys in the world. The sub-tropical bottom of the valley is only 435 m above sea level. Not far from the floor of the valley is Tumlingtar, a tiny town where sturdy propeller planes land in full view of thatch-roofed farmhouses and quivering cornfields.

But within 40 km, the terrain tilts steeply upwards until it reaches the stark white tip of Makalu at 8,481 m. Balmy banana groves give way to

forests bright with orchids; then come sub-alpine fir trees and rhododendrons, which are replaced in turn by cool alpine pasture.

The lowland Hindu villages of thatched, mud-walled houses and low-lying water buffalo disappear in favor of hardy Buddhist settlements where prayer flags ripple in the highland mist. And then, finally, there are no people at all - only red pandas, musk deer, Himalayan *tahr* and clouded leopards pursuing their reclusive lives near the Tibetan border.

And trekkers, of course. But not many. And that's one of the charms of the Sankhuwasabha district of remote northeastern Nepal.

Since this part of Nepal is roadless, flying into Tumlingtar is the simplest way to begin a trek through the culturally diverse valley to the wilderness regions of the Makalu-Barun National Park. The airport is sometimes described as a back door to Mt. Everest, because it's possible to trek to that famous peak from Tumlingtar. In fact, that's the route that was taken by early explorers to Khumbu.

Tumlingtar itself is not a place to lose any extra pounds gained in Kath-

mandu. The valley is relatively level and makes a charming destination for tourists who don't care to sweat up and down hills, but would still like to see the countryside far from the discos, restaurants and other accoutrements of Nepal's more heavily visited areas.

Most of the inhabitants of Tumlingtar and its neighboring low-altitude villages are Kumals, members of a Hindu occupational caste who have traditionally made pottery from the red clay of the region. The town's main road - the only road, really - has a handful of cozy, rustic hotels that double as shops selling the necessities of daily life: sandals, *topi* caps, school notebooks, slingshots. Every Friday is vegetable market day where villagers, in the words of one Nepalese observer, "sell the stuff from their gardens to their neighbors."

As one tourist commented, "It's hard to believe this is an airport town." The comment was a compliment. The peaceful atmosphere of the lush town in the eastern hills is seductive. In this emerald-green valley with its balmy weather, as one local farmer put it, "Life is easy."

If you don't mind walking, that is. Tumlingtar lies a three-day hike from the nearest roadhead, at Hile, so the tiny airfield supplies a vital lifeline for local people as well as trekkers to the five-year-old national park.

Not all of the visitors make the full trek, which is a long haul. The trek to Makalu Base Camp is a 19-day round trip, at minimum, from Tumlingtar. And the wilderness area has no shortage of other adventurous treks for mountaineers and other hardy souls,

such as the ascent to Mera Peak (6,654 m), which take even longer.

But you don't need to have rippling muscles (or have three weeks of spare time) to make an interesting trek through this little-known region. A three-hour walk up the trail from Tumlingtar is the sprawling bazaar town of Khandbari, the headquarters of Sankhuwasabha district, where stone-paved streets are bustling with shoppers. All of the goods - from salt to Coca-Cola - are carried in by porters!

For the Rais, Sherpas, Brahmins and Chhetris who live along the trail, the heavily Newar town of Khandbari is the Big City. Its weekly Saturday market is a hopping, crowded affair where you can find a bargain on anything from wheels of molasses to squealing piglets to bamboo trays for winnowing rice.

This is not a place to find items made specifically for the tourist trade. It's a place to enjoy the genuine culture of Nepal while marveling at rolling green hills ribboned with rice fields, heavy with jackfruit and mango trees, and shadowed by a skyline that includes Mt. Makalu, Mt. Chamlang (7,319 m) and Mt. Baruntse (7,129 m).

Each year about 400 trekkers pass through Tumlingtar and Khandbari on their way to the Makalu-Barun National Park and Conservation Area, a 2,330 sq km area that begins three days from Khandbari. Although it's not practical to venture into the park without a lot of advance planning because of the park's lack of human habitation (a few seasonal herders and about 40 full-time residents at a monastic settlement called Saisima), the park itself is surrounded by a heav-

ily inhabited buffer zone called the Makalu-Barun Conservation Area.

Rumor has it that a car once made it to a village somewhere between Khandbari and what is now the Conservation Area, having first been dismantled and loaded piece by piece into bamboo baskets. The car, it is said, was run for about a year, bouncing up

and down the rocky trail as best as it could, until the owner gave up on his novel mode of transportation and packed it off to a more suitable home in the flatlands of the Terai.

And how did that legendary car get in and out of the roadless area? By airplane, of course. ■

## Polyandry Still intact in Humla

48-year old Changju Lama of Bargaon, Humla, will soon have to accept Ram Bahadur Lama, the youngest of her brother-in-laws, as her fourth husband. She has no choice once it is decided by the seniors of the village. The custom of polyandry is common in the area. She has already been married with two of her younger brother in laws. But fleeing from the village to Simkot, 21-year old Ram Bahadur Lama is determined not to marry and says, "I hate this tradition. How can I marry my own sister-in-law more than twice of my age?"

Moreover, the family has already decided to strip him of his share in paternal property. But, Chhangju seems to have silently accepted her fate.

It's already been 8 year since Khotap Lama of Bhuchu Gaon, a village located at a far distance from Bargaon, has left home for the fear of marrying the same woman with his two brothers. And so is the case with Chhenwang Renjan of Lumkot. He, too, fled home five years back, for his conscience did not allow him to marry his own sister-in-law.

Many a people may find it difficult to believe that the custom of marrying 4-5 brothers of the same family to a same woman is still prevalent in Nepal. But this is a reality. People of many villages in Humla

still live along the old practices of marriage. Polyandry practiced in Bhote families of Humla is, posing a grave social challenge. And the women of Humli Bhote families are suffering by this social sore silently. But no one dares to oppose this practice, because doing so is dangerous. Threatens an old Lama of Tumkot, "This is our established tradition and nobody can dare to break it."

The issue of gender equality is frequently being raised in the capital city and other towns. But Humla is too remote to hear and break the primitive shackles. 31 years Yangzen Lama of Tumkot says, "This is an old tradition and we are helpless, who will break it?"

Polyandry is a bitter reality of Humli society. Because of the system of polyandry, there is a situation of revulsion in families. It has also created problem for many adult women to get married. In fact, many women are forced to remain single.

Kusum Malla, a school teacher seems right when she says, "This tradition is a big insult and pain for all woman. Apart from giving birth to other social problems, this is the sheer example of superstition, physical and mental exploitation of the women and grotesque reality. (Kantipur)

# Woman in charge

Meet Sumitra Dangal, the nation's only female tempo driver

By Naresh Newar

Don't try taking her for a ride. She'll take you for one instead. She's got the controls in her hands. The gear's all hers. Yep, we're driving at Sumitra Dangal, the nation's only female tempo driver employed with the Safa Electric Vehicle Industry (SEVI).

Not many know her by name, but she's becoming the talk of the town. A woman behind the wheels, and that too of a tempo, is just the kind of sight that would make many sit-up and take notice. And those who haven't seen, but only heard the rumours, are real curious to see how a Nepali woman looks as a tempo driver.

As she steers the Safa wheels towards the Lazimpat street — the starting point of her daily journey — everyone's staring, pedestrians, taxi drivers, passengers, bystanders and of course, other women. Some laugh stupidly at her, some gaze intently to make sure that she's really a female, and most look on with surprised expressions. That's what we observed as a couple of us journo from *The Independent* went for a ride with Sumitra last week.

Originally from Jhapa, Sumitra, in her early 20s, surely is not your average Nepali girl. She is ambitious, has a vision for womenfolk and carries an in-

least bothered about her interest to work with his company. Only when she landed at the SEVI office in Lazimpat, Sumitra got all the support and encouragement from its GM.

"So, you see it's really not easy for women. Men's negative attitude towards women should really change. Once women develop, men will be less burdened in managing the family bread. Women will contribute to the household income."

And she found the Safa Tempo tempting. "At the first sight of a Safa Tempo, I decided that I would also be one of the drivers. Anyway, I knew how to drive a car." In fact, she was more curious about driving the tempo.

Working with SEVI for nearly two months and having driven about 80,000 passengers, Sumitra has not felt any bitter experience on the job. Indeed she enjoys it. And she believes that "it's not so easy as riding scooters as many women do nowadays".

She explains that as it is a public vehicle, "attention should be paid when they ask you to stop at any point and then collect the money." Occasionally, on office request, Sumitra even works overtime, sometimes about 12 hours a day. Usually, she starts at 7 in the morning and continues till 3PM.

"All you need is the courage and determination to do something and the rest will be easy. Of course, you also need commitment and have to love your time," says Sumitra who opted not to go home to Jhapa during Dashain. "As tempo drivers, we are all *majdoors* (labourers). You don't get holidays or any leave."

Bred in a large, middle-class family and as the youngest daughter, Sumitra had to struggle to pursue her studies and to stand on her own feet. She even started her own venture, Pashupati Tuition Centre at Bag Bazaar, and ran it successfully for two years

domitable spirit to change the conservative Nepali social system.

And she's well educated too. A graduate in economics and political science, Sumitra is also a student of B.Law from Mahendra Bahramukhi Campus of Dharan which she completes after writing a thesis paper. In the meantime, she continues to study M.A. in economics privately.

Equipped with the right qualifications, Sumitra believes that she still can enter a 'good' line of career. "Like for instance working with the NGOs — people's perception of a good job," she states. "Some laughed at me and even commented that I was desperate for a job," she recalls passenger reactions.

"But I wanted to prove that as women, we can take up any job like men. Whatever I'm doing now is to actually set an example that women are equally capable," Sumitra makes her point and gets intense talking about the social taboos of Nepali society. She says, "I would challenge this male-dominated system where women are dictated to do this and that. I don't believe that women should tie their hands and do nothing constructive."

Sumitra recollects that even applying for the tempo driver's job was difficult. She was discouraged at her first meeting with the GM of one of the Safa Tempo companies who seemed

until she jumped into other kinds of work. Social work remains her ultimate aim. She first came to Kathmandu in 1993.

Sumitra plans to stick with the tempo business for another six months and with her experience and knowledge, wants to start her own driving school. She hopes to train 14 women from 14 zones of Nepal free of cost and sent them to their own areas to drive the tempos. "That way we will have more woman drivers. It will then become a common trend for companies to accept women as drivers without any hesitation."

Sumitra has plans to collect funds from all levels of people. And she expects more help and support from the media. But even with such a unique ability to start her own crusade for women's



In the driver's seat: Sumitra Dangal at work. Photo: *The Independent*

equal status. Sumitra still likes to remain media-shy. Publicity is the last thing she needs, says Sumitra. "I really don't want to

highlight myself. Let women's issue be of more importance to the media." ■ *The Independent*, November 12, 1997

## Conservation of Rhinoceros in Nepal: A great success story

By Basant Subba

The IUCN Asian Specialist Group Meeting in December 1995 estimated the number of the greater one horned rhinoceros, Rhinoceros unicorns, to be 2135. If India has about 1600 of the rhinoceros, Nepal's rhino population is said to have reached 500. With only around 100 Rhinoceros the mid 1960s to 210 in 1978, the rhino population reached 376 in 1988. The 1994 rhino census conducted in Royal Chitwan National Park counted 460 in the park.

Characterised by tropical and sub-tropical forest, Chitwan valley with the flood plains of Rapti, Rue and Narayani river is the prime habitat to the rhinoceros in Nepal. The valley was well known for big games until 1950 and was exclusively managed as hunting reserve for the Rana Prime Ministers and their guests. In 1963, the area south of Rapti River was demarcated as a rhinoceros sanctuary. It was gazetted as the first national park in 1973 to preserve its unique ecosystem.

The poaching of rhinoceros and tiger had started long before the area was gazetted as a national park. As far

back as 1940, the Rana administration had formed 'Gaida Gasti' or the 'rhino patrol' to protect the rhinoceros. The 'Gaida Gasti' comprised of armed units of ex-servicemen under a retired colonel and had its head office in Chitwan with two posts: one at Tikauli and the other at Nawalparasi. The Gaida Gasti were to cover the entire area where the poachers were active. After the area was gazetted to National Park in 1973, Nepal Army moved in to protect the endangered wildlife species and the 'Gaida Gasti' of ex-armymen were relieved.

The poaching of wild animals has always remained a serious problem in all protected areas. The poaching of rhinoceros increased with the rise in price of rhino horn in some east Asian countries. The tradition of hunting and the subsistence economy of certain ethnic groups living in and around National Parks/Wildlife Reserves further aggravated the situation. The years 1992-1993 witnessed the highest rhinoceros mortality both due to natural cause and poaching. Fourteen rhinoceros were killed by poachers, ten met natural death whereas five deaths were tiger related. Factors like switching over of

tiger poachers to more lucrative rhino poaching, and transitional phase after the political turmoil in the country were largely responsible for the sudden increase in rhino poaching in the early 1990s.

The rhino is killed for the so-called medicinal and curative properties of its horn. Killed for a cure, the poachers are said to have been paid from Rs. 50,000 to Rs. 100,000 for an average 700 gram horn. In late 1993 the horn are believed to have been sold for around Rs 550,000 per kg.

The size of poachers vary. So do methods they use to trap and kill the rhinoceros. Pitfall digging are found to be most widely used method. Poisoning is followed by the use of firearms. Often poison is put in pumpkin or maize and left for the rhino to eat. It is said it takes up to 5 hours for the rhino to die after eating the poisoned food.

After Nepal entered into the modern era of conservation with the enactment of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act in 1977, the Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (DNPWC) has been playing a lead role in the conservation programmes through a network of protected areas. The Department deals with the management of the protected areas, provides scientific and legal basis for protected species and has formalised buffer zones for protected areas. After the Nepal Army moved in, the park staff under DNPWC are left to concentrate in park management. But the Army posts stationed inside the National Parks are not obliged to patrol extensively. And the park staff are not sufficiently armed to face the armed poachers on their own. Two members of a patrolling unit had been killed by the poachers in the Babai Valley of Royal Bardia National Park in 1988. The presence of army posts inside the parks are better poaching deterrent than their limited patrolling. The provision of a fine up to Rs. 100,000 or jail up to 15 years or both for the poachers or dealers in endangered wildlife species has further served as a great psychological deterrent.

The role of National International Conservation Organisation in Nepal's Conservation endeavours is truly commendable. With the co-operation of conservation partners like the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), International Trust for Nature Conservation (ITNC), King Mehendra Trust for Nature Conservation (KMTNC) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN), DNPWC has launched various programmes such as people's participation in Buffer Zone development, training for protected area staff, extensive patrolling, and the strengthening of information gathering network on illegal hunting.

Poaching is not possible without the help of local villagers living in and around the parks/reserves. The

subsistence population whose livelihood heavily depend on forest products like fodder and firewood, often gives rise to park people friction. The crop damage and occasional loss of life and property by foraging wild animals further complicate the situation.

His Majesty's Government is aware that it would be a fruitless endeavour unless the local communities are involved in conservation activities. The local communities, in turn, need to be strongly motivated to protect the wildlife species.

The Government has passed the buffer zone regulations and it is all set to declare the buffer zone around national parks and wildlife reserves. After the declaration, users committees will be formed to utilise 30 to 50 percent of the revenues earned by the respective national parks/reserves for the development and management of buffer zones. The objectives is to give wide ranging benefit to the local communities and make them aware that such benefits are the direct result of the conservation of wildlife species and the conservation areas. In the fiscal year 2052-2053, eighty-three thousand tourists visits Royal Chitwan National Park and the park earned over 4.63 crore rupees in revenue.

Stewardship of local communities may ultimately enable them to conserve and manage local natural resources and also protect the wildlife species. The UNDP funded Parks and People Project implemented in five Terai Parks has launched community development activities like skill development, income generation and community forestry. The aim of the project is to ultimately safeguard bio-diversity while fulfilling the immediate needs of the communities. ■



The Kathmandu Post, November 23, 1997

# Visa and Trekking Information

## TREKKING INFORMATION

### Trekking Permit:

a. A trekking permit is required to visit Nepal's interior, i.e. areas determined for trekking by the government. If you plan to trek in two different areas, two trekking permits are required.

| b. Area                         | Fee                                                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| i) Kanchenjunga & Lower Dolpa   | First 4 weeks- US\$10/week*<br>After fourth week- US\$20/week* |
| ii) Upper Mustang & Upper Dolpa | First 10 days- US\$ 700<br>After 10 days- US\$70/day           |
| iii) Manaslu                    | Sept. to Nov.- US\$ 90/week<br>(Dec. to Aug.)- US\$ 75/week    |
| iv) Humla (Simikot-Yari)        | First 7 days- US\$ 90<br>After 7 days- US\$ 15/day             |
| v) Everest and other areas      | First 4 weeks- US\$ 5*<br>After 4 weeks- US\$ 10/week*         |

(\* in Nepalese currency)

**Tourist Information Centers.** The Department of Tourism at Babar Mahal and an Information Center at New Road provide brochures and free posters on Nepal from Sunday to Thursday from 9 am to 5 pm. On Fridays, it closes at 3 pm. The department stays open until 4 pm in winter. Tourism information centers are also located in Birgunj (Tel: 22083), Pokhara (Tel: 20028), Bhairahawa (Tel: 20304), Janakpur (Tel: 20755), and Kakarbhitta (Tel: 20208).

### Important Note

- For the trekking permit, please attach two copies of photograph with the application from the individual trekkers in the following areas.  
Kanchanjunga, Upper Mustang and Dolpa, Manaslu, Humla (Simikot-Yari)

## VISA INFORMATION

1. Department of Immigration:  
The Department is located at Tradevi Marg, Thamel, Kathmandu.  
(Tel: 412337/418573)

2. Office Hours:  
Sunday to Thursday: 10:00 am - 5:00 pm  
10:00 am - 4:00 pm in winter  
Friday: 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

3. Tourist Visa:  
a. Entry: A Visa is necessary to enter Nepal and can be obtained for the following durations from any Royal Nepal Embassy or Consulate or at the entry points in Nepal.

| Period (duration)        | Fee        |
|--------------------------|------------|
| 15 days (Single Entry)   | US\$ 15.00 |
| 30 days (Single Entry)   | US\$ 25.00 |
| 30 days (Double Entry)   | US\$ 40.00 |
| 60 days (Multiple Entry) | US\$ 60.00 |

b. Re-entry facilities on tourist visa (can be issued from the department):  
Single Re-entry US\$ 25.00

Double Re-entry US\$ 40.00

Multiple Re-entry US\$ 60.00

### Miscellaneous Fees (in Nepalese currency)

- Travel document (in case of loss/damage/loss or expiry of the passport)- US\$ 10.00
- Issuance of entry visa from the department 25% together with regular entry visa fee
- Certification of Arrival or Departure stamp or visa Transfer- US\$ 1.00 (one)

### Kilder:

- Official Travel Manual of Visit Nepal '98
- Travelogue, August 1997
- Shangri-La, Oct-Dec 1997

### Note:

Re-entry facilities should be used within the validity of the visa period. It is not considered as a visa extension.

### c. i) Visa Extension:

A tourist visa can be extended at the Department of Immigration, Kathmandu or the Immigration Office, Pokhara for a total of 120 days. If tourists require a visa extension beyond 120 days, an additional 30-day visa can be granted on reasonable grounds by the Department with the approval of the Home Ministry. In one visa year (January to December) a tourist may not stay in Nepal longer than a cumulative 150 days.

### ii) Extension Fee:

Per day - US\$ 1.00 (one) in Nepalese currency.

Note: For a visa extension, please attach a photograph with the application form.

iii) Fee for overstay on a Tourist Visa:  
100% along with regular visa extension fee.

### Note:

Visa (only for seven day overstay period) can be regularised at the Immigration Office at the exit point within the period of 120 days in a visa year.

### d. Fee exemption:

Children under 10 years

### 4. Transit Visa:

a. A transit visa can be obtained from the Airport Immigration for a period of 48 hrs on the presentation of air ticket.

b. Fee for Transit Visa: US\$ 5.00.

### Entry or exit points

- Entry or exit points for all passports are below
- International Airport, Kathmandu
- Kakarvita, Jhapa (Eastern part)
- Birgunj, Parsa (Central part)
- Kodari (Northern Border, Central part)
- Bethi, Bhanjishwa (Rupandehi, Western part)
- Jamunaha, Nepalgunj (Banke, Mid-Western part)
- Mohana, Dhangadhi (Kailali, far Western part)
- Gadda Chauki, Mahendranagar (Kanchanpur, far western part)

**Airport tax.** The airport tax levied on all passengers departing from the Tribhuvan International Airport is 600 rupees to SAARC countries and 700 rupees to all other international destinations. Domestic tax is Rs. 50.