

# THE BREAKFAST CHATTER

The Weekly Bulletin of the **Rotary Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town** - Volume No. 10/01 for # 832 April 21<sup>st</sup> 2006

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## DEAR MIDTOWNERS ► FRIENDS IN **ROTARY**

Last week we curfewed from 9am onwards, so we couldn't see each other. In the meantime a new or let's say better an old situation came back to Nepal and we are again at the 2002 situation, with the same politicians and politics. Well already the ancient Rishis were saying, that everything is moving in a circle. It looks as if God alone can help Nepal. Why to ask ke garne? It should be kina garne?

This time our **Rotary International** chapter is focused on the topic of famous Rotarians. It's interesting to know that there are quite a lot of them. This time Larry King has attracted us.

The other topic concerns the war cry for "Democracy" which we have heard in the last few weeks. Asked what the people calling for "democracy" meant with it, one could get a bit astonished. It seems there are quite a few possibilities how to see it. So it seems to be worthwhile to have a look at it. Having in mind that our pages are limited, we have split the article. This time we concentrated on what it can be, next time we will have a look at what are the chances and risks involved and what is necessary from the individual point of view to get successful.

Hope you'll enjoy reading.

Until next time,  
**Walter**

## **SPEAKER OF THE WEEK ► Shrijana Thapa** Director, Photo Concern

### THEME

On coming **Friday, 28<sup>th</sup> April** we will have a topic which seems to be also a very interesting one, as Shrijana Thapa has got also an award for successful entrepreneurship and she definitely knows what she is talking about.

*Below you'll find our planned activities. As you must have found out meanwhile, this has always been a tentative schedule. So don't be surprised if changes are taking place.*

## UPCOMING **SPEAKERS ► PREVIEW**

DATE	SPEAKER	THEME
28 <sup>st</sup> April	Shrijana Thapa	Entrepreneurship a challenge in Nepal from the perspective of a woman
5 <sup>th</sup> May	Club Assembly	Last one for this year
6 <sup>th</sup> May	Picnic	Hopefully
12 <sup>th</sup> May	DR RR Koirala	Ayurveda, chances and limitations

## THE MIDTOWN **CLUB ► NEWS AS THE COME IN**

**May 6<sup>th</sup> 2006**

### **Yearly Picnic Rotary URGENT**

Up to now 25 participants for our picnic have been confirmed. But the meeting of our ladies supposed to take place on 17<sup>th</sup> April has been postponed due to the unclear situation. So let's continue to hope that the picnic can take place on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May.

Most of you have got the minutes of our spouses meeting, so there is no need to repeat it here in detail. It is going to be a POTLUCK, fund raising picnic. Since this is a fund raising event our spouses will be organizing different games and would also like to hold an auction for which contributions are requested. Who is ready?

Please also send to [diller@htp.com.np](mailto:diller@htp.com.np) the information of your participation if you haven't done it yet. As time goes fast please do that as soon as possible.

### Rotary World Peace Fellowship candidates for 2007-09

Please begin the process of selecting Rotary World Peace Fellowship candidates for Class VI (2007-09). Submission of applications for the Rotary World Peace Fellowship should be forwarded to Evanston by July 1, 2006. It is targeted to get overall a pool of 500 applications which will enable the Rotary Centers Committee to select the top 60 applicants with superior qualifications.

For more information please refer to the Rotary Centers website for a timeline:

[http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb\\_scho/centers/application/timeline.html](http://www.rotary.org/foundation/educational/amb_scho/centers/application/timeline.html)

### Ramkot Clinic Visit

Kindly check the **Ramkot Roster** for your turn. If you have any question, contact Rtn. Dr **Rabindra Shrestha** (4469063, email: [drsr@wlink.com.np](mailto:drsr@wlink.com.np))

The doctor is **Dr. Khagendra Gurung**. Mobile No : 98510- 83044 Phone: 4287899

Call him by Friday latest.

## A WORD ON ROTARY ► WE CAN MAKE DIFFERENCE

### Famous Rotarians, this time Larry King

Rotary is rich on famous and successful members. Not only business people but also numerous heads of states, high government officials, astronauts, inventors, adventurers, but only one very successful media show man. After having seen in Nepal how influential public media is, we felt why not to look once also in this corner.

Well who is Larry? He is **the** competitor to the world famous Oprah Winfrey the only US\$ billionaire of the media show biz.

Larry King born as Lawrence Harvey Zeiger was born in November 1933. He is an award-winning broadcaster, who still today hosts a nightly interview program called Larry King live. His parents were Jews emigrated from Belarus to Brooklyn, one of the poorest parts of New York, a place which makes you wish to escape and not incidentally the place where Oprah also derived from. Larry grew up in Brooklyn. After graduating from high school, he worked some hopeless jobs, before he left Brooklyn for Miami, Florida at the age of 22.

Larry got his first job in radio through persistence. A small station in Miami hired him to clean up. When one of their announcers quit, he got his chance. His first broadcast was in May 1957 at the age of 24, when he worked as disc jockey. He became **Larry King** when the general manager suggested that Zeiger was too ethnic.

And then he started interviewing. He would interview anyone who walked in. His first interview was with a waitress at a restaurant. But tough as he was his Miami radio show launched him to local stardom. And a few years later, in May 1960, he hosted a show where he moderated debates on important issues of the day.

But no way leads only upstairs. In the early 1970s, he got entangled in legal and financial troubles. He even got arrested in December 1971 and was charged with fraud. The charges stemmed from a deal he had made in 1968, with a guy who himself was a fraud. The circumstances are unclear. According to King, he told the involved guy that he could arrange a special investigation by the incoming US Attorney General, to overturn the conviction, but King never delivered, and could also not pay back the money he had received for that purpose. But again he was lucky. The larceny charge was dropped, because the statute of limitations had run out. But King pled no contest to one of 14 charges of passing bad checks. As a result, he was off the air for three years and had to survive somehow during that time.

Luckily for him Larry was rehired on a radio how in Miami in 1978 inheriting the nightly talk show slot on a Radio Network broadcast coast-to-coast. King's show developed a devoted audience, paving the way for the likes of Art Bell, Rush Limbaugh, and King's weekend relief host Jim Bohannon, among many others. Larry would interview a guest for the first 90 minutes, allowing callers to continue the interview for another 90. At the end of the show Larry would allow the callers to discuss any topic they pleased with him. The show was wildly successful as a loss making show starting with few affiliates eventually grew to more than 500 affiliates. It ran for 16 years until 1994. During this time he got the reputation of a tireless worker. His parallel CNN show started in June 1985.

Unlike many interviewers, Larry has a direct, non-confrontational approach. His interview style is frank and no-nonsense, but with occasional bursts of irreverence and humor. His non-confrontational

approach attracts some guests who would not otherwise appear. Throughout his career he has interviewed many of the leading figures of his time. Among them Tony Blair, Marlon Brando, Johnny Carson, Mikhail Gorbachev, John F Kennedy, Dr Martin Luther King, Nancy Reagan, Frank Sinatra, Margaret Thatcher, Oprah Winfrey and Vladimir Putin. CNN claims that he has interviewed over 40,000 people.

After suffering several heart attacks, he established the Larry King Cardiac Foundation. In September 05 Larry aired, "How You Can Help," a three-hour special designed to provide a forum and information clearinghouse for viewers to understand and join nationwide and global relief efforts following the devastation to the Gulf Coast by Hurricane Katrina. With this show he was able to raise the majority of funds for the rebuilt of New Orleans.

Larry has received many broadcasting awards for Best Interviewer and for best Talk Show Series. In 1989, King was inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame. In 2002 he was named both the fourth-greatest radio talk show host of all time and the top television talk show host of all time. King was the only person to place in the top ten on both lists.

Well nice to belong to Rotary and discovering who else is in.

## OTHER TOPICS

### Democracy, what's all about?

In the last few weeks "democracy" was the war cry of most demonstrators in Nepal. But seems a lot of people do understand different things under "democracy". Following President Hu's arguments in Washington recently even the one party ruled China is a democracy and our rulers also insisted that Panchayat was democratic.

The Greek "demokratia" means "the common people rule". This simple appearing concept is obviously not so simple, otherwise it would not have been possible to interpret it in the many various ways throughout history. Various mechanisms have been developed through which the people control (or are supposed to control) the government. As such, there are several distinctions between important kinds of democracy.

### History of "democracy"

It is surprising that the earliest forms of democracy were not in Greece, but were used by republics in ancient India, established prior to the birth of Buddha. Among these states, Vaishali, now Bihar, India, was the world's first republic. Later during the time of Alexander the Great in the 4th century BC, the Greeks discovered "democracies" in states in what is now Pakistan and Afghanistan.

Athenian democracy is generally seen as one of the earliest examples of a system corresponding to some of the modern notions of democratic rule. Only a sixth or a quarter of the whole adult male population of Athens could vote; but this was a bar of nationality not of economic status: however poor they were, all Athenian citizens were free to vote and speak in the Assembly. Ancient Athenian citizens made decisions directly, rather than voting for representatives.

The 20th century expansion of democracy appeared as a successive "wave of democracy", some associated with wars and revolutions. In several cases "democracy" was imposed by external military force. The occupation of Germany and its democratization process from above, served as a model for the later theory of regime change like in Iraq now.

In the decades following World War II, most western democratic nations had a mixed economy and developed a welfare state, reflecting a consensus among their electorates and political parties. In the 1950s and 1960s, economic growth was high in both the western and communist countries, later it declined in the state-controlled economies, and in some western countries. Economic malaise in the 1980s contributed to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and the democratization and liberalization of the former Soviet bloc countries, including newly independent Soviet Republics. To western public opinion, and to part of their population, this also was a liberation. To a large section of their population, often the majority, the resulting economic collapse, and the sudden disappearance of state health and welfare provisions was a disaster. The sense of disillusion contributed to a political backlash, the rise of illiberal democracy in Central Asia, and a trend to authoritarian rule in Russia itself.

### What are the essential elements of a democracy?

It needs a group or "demos" which are in modern times the adult portion of the nation.

There is a nation state .

There is a decision-making procedure, which is either direct, in instances such as a referendum, or indirect, like the election of a parliament.

The procedure has to be regarded as legitimate, which is the willingness of the population to accept decisions of the state, its government and courts, which may go against personal choices or interests. It is especially relevant for democracies, since elections have both winners and losers. The procedure is effective in the minimal sense that it can be used to change the government, assuming there is sufficient support for that change.

### The four main concepts of democracy

There are at least four major contending conceptions of democracy.

1) In the **minimalism** concept, democracy is a system of government in which citizens give political leaders the right to rule in periodic elections. According to this conception, citizens cannot and should not "rule" because on most issues they have no clear views or their views are not very intelligent.

2) The **aggregation** concept of democracy holds that government should be a system that produces laws and policies that conform to the "normal" citizens' preferences. A good democratic government is one that produces laws and policies that are close to the views of the average voter.

3) In the concept of **deliberation** democracy is government by discussion. Laws and policies should be based upon reasons that all citizens can accept. The political arena should be one in which leaders and citizens make arguments, listen, and change their minds.

4) The concept of **participative** democracy holds that citizens should participate directly, not through their representatives, in making laws and policies. There are varied reasons to support this view. Political activity can be valuable in itself, it socializes and educates citizens, and popular participation can check powerful elites. Most importantly, citizens do not really rule themselves unless they directly decide laws and policies.

All forms of government depend on their political legitimacy, that is, their acceptance by the population. Without that, they are little more than a party in a civil war, since their decisions and policies will be resisted, probably by force. In a democracy, a high degree of political legitimacy is necessary, because the electoral process periodically divides the population into 'winners' and 'losers'. A successful democratic political culture implies that the losing parties and their supporters accept the judgment of the voters, and allow for the peaceful transfer of power. Ideally political competitors may disagree, but acknowledge the other side's legitimate role, and society encourages tolerance and civility in public debate. This form of political legitimacy implies that all sides share common fundamental values. Voters must know that the new government will not introduce policies they find totally abhorrent. Shared values, rather than democracy as such, guarantee this.

Free elections alone are not sufficient for a country to become a true democracy; the culture of the country's political institutions and civil service must also change. This is an especially difficult cultural shift to achieve in nations where transitions of power have historically taken place through violence.

### Main practical forms of democracy nowadays

**Direct democracy** is called so because the power of making decisions is exercised by the people directly. This form of government has been rare, mainly due to difficulties of communication. All direct democracies have been small communities, usually city-states. In recent times, advances in infotech have made it feasible to hold popular votes without getting all the people in one place. However there was little progress in that direction.

**Representative democracy** is called representative because the people elect representatives to decide for them. The number of representative democracies grew explosively during the 20th century and the majority of the world's population now lives under representative democratic regimes or "republics". These kind of democracies can be either "liberal" or "illiberal".

**Liberal democracy** is a type of representative democracy where the ruling government is subject to rule of law and separation of powers, while the people are guaranteed certain inviolable rights. Illiberal democracy is a type of representative democracy where law and separation of powers is in question and where the elected representatives are under no effective control. Looks we had in recent years such kind of democracy in this country.

The most often quoted criteria for liberal democracy take the form of specific rights and freedoms. They were originally considered essential for the functioning of a liberal democracy, but they have

acquired such prominence in its definition, that many people now think they are democracy. The criteria for a liberal democracy are the existence of the right to life and the security of a person, the freedom from slavery, the freedom of movement, the equality before the law and due process under the rule of law. Further criteria are the freedom of speech, the freedom of the press and access to alternative information sources, the freedom of association and assembly, the freedom of education, the freedom of religion and an independent judiciary. The right to own property, and to buy and sell the same, is often seen as a liberal freedom bound up with the above, though this is a very hotly contested proposition.

**Social democracy** has been derived from socialist and communist ideas, in a progressive, gradualist and constitutional setting. Many social democratic parties in the world are evolutions of revolutionary parties that, for ideological or pragmatic reasons, came to embrace a strategy of gradual change through existing institutions, or a policy of working for liberal reforms prior to more profound social change, instead of sudden revolutionary change. Today, however, most of the parties calling themselves social democratic do not advocate the abolishment of capitalism, but focus on regulation. In general, the hallmarks of social democracy are:

Market regulation; Social security, also known as welfare state; Subsidized or government-owned public school and public health services; Progressive taxation.

Most social democrats are also associated with environmentalism, multiculturalism, and secularity. Countries often indicated as social democracies are the Nordic countries, for their extensive welfare states and progressive taxation regime.

**(to be continued)**

## **NOW READY FOR OUR HEALTHY LAUGHTER CORNER?**

### **Health Management Operator (HMO) in Heaven**

An eye doctor, a heart surgeon and an HMO executive die and are in heaven. God asks the eye doctor why he should be let into heaven, and the doctor explains to God that he helped people save or regain their sight. God says, "Welcome to heaven, my son." God then asks the heart surgeon what he had done in life that should allow him into heaven. "I saved people from death from heart attacks and heart disease," the doctor replies. "Welcome to heaven, my son," God says.

God then turns to the HMO executive. God asked him what he was, and the man replied that he worked for an HMO. "Welcome to heaven, my son," says God, "but you have to leave in two days."

**After** Paddy had jumped a red light and smashed into another car, he dashed over to the other vehicle to discover that the driver was a priest. "Good God, man," said the badly shaken priest, "you almost killed me!" "I am really sorry for that," said Paddy, taking a bottle from his pocket. "Drink some of this whiskey for your nerves," offered Paddy. The grateful priest gulped down some of the whiskey, and then started shouting again, "What do you think you were doing?" he asked. "I am lucky to be alive!"

"Oh, Father," said, Paddy, "I am sorry. You will feel a lot better after you have drunk some more of this."

The priest had a few more stiff shots and then asked, "Why don't you have a drink?"

"I don't drink, thank you Father," said Paddy. "I will just sit here and wait for the police."

**Sandy** McTavish was sitting weeping at his fireside. "Eh, Sandy," said a neighbor, "what's troubling you, man?" "Oh dear, oh dear!" sobbed Sandy. "Donald McPherson's wife is dead."

"Oh well," said the neighbor, "what of that? She's no relation of yours."

"I know," wailed Sandy, "I know, but it just seems as if everybody is getting a change but me!"

**One** day a black man showed up at the gates of heaven and was met by Saint Peter. "I would like to be admitted to heaven," he said.

"Fine," said Saint Peter, "but first tell me what you have done lately which would permit you to be admitted." "Well," said the black man, "I marched in a civil rights march."

"A lot of people did that," said Saint Peter. "Maybe there is something else?"

"Yes," said the black man. "I got married at twelve o'clock noon."

"What is so unusual about that?" asked Saint Peter.

"I married a white woman," said the black man.

"When was that?" asked Saint Peter.

"Ah, about two minutes ago," said the black man.

**A Baptist**, a Presbyterian, a Methodist and a Catholic sat down to dinner. As soon as grace was said, a very large fish was served up. The Catholic immediately rose and helped himself to a good third of the fish, head included. Looking at the others, he pompously announced, "The pope is the head of the church." Naturally, being a Catholic, he is entitled to take the head of the fish; that's what his



understanding of religion is.

The Methodist wasted no time and reached across the table, helping himself to another third of the fish, including the tail. Chin high in the air, he said, "The end crowns the work."

The Presbyterian quickly removed the last of the fish, saying, "Truth lies between the two extremes."

The Baptist looked down at the empty plate and, faced with the prospect of a meager dinner, grabbed the glass of water and threw it in the faces of all the three and shouted, "I baptize you in the name of the Lord!"

**That's for today and see or hear from you soon.**

**Walter and Rabi**

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