



THE KATHMANDU POST

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Federer starts Slam record bid with win Pg 8



IN GOD WE TRUST: Senior citizens return home after paying obeisance to deities in Bhaktapur on a foggy Monday morning. POST PHOTO: LAXMI PRASAD NGAKHUSI

Massive bureaucratic shakeup on cards

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

In a fresh move to overhaul the bureaucracy, the government has decided to transfer thousands of civil servants who have been based in the capital for the last two years to various districts across the country, officials said.

The government is also set to transfer civil servants working at "lucrative offices" that conduct huge financial transactions. Such offices include land revenue offices, customs offices and transportation offices across the country.

According to Minister for General Administration Pampa Bhusal of the Unified CPN (Maoist), the job of transferring civil servants will be completed in a month. "Only those civil servants

who have resources and links to higher-ups have been able to get transfer to places of their choice," Bhusal told reporters on Monday, announcing the decision.

According to her, the ministry will also identify those civil servants serving in the districts for years and seeking transfer to Kathmandu and meet their demands. The ministry has asked all civil servants across the country to submit applications if they want transfer.

She said the government will set up a mechanism to monitor the activities of those transferred to offices conducting huge financial transactions. "Tradition has it that only those who have links to high places serve in the office of their choice for years, leaving those powerless without choices,"

Bhusal said. "We have tried to break this tradition," she added.

According to her, 90 percent of civil servants want transfer to lucrative offices such as land reforms offices, airports, customs offices, land revenue offices and labour departments.

"The fact is that most civil servants seek transfer to those offices that conduct huge financial transactions. This gives credence to the suspicion that there is something fishy," she said.

On Sunday, Administration Restructuring Commission had recommended the government to identify lucrative positions and offices and set up a mechanism to consistently monitor the properties of employees working there. Bhusal said that if any employee

was transferred violating legal provision, the civil servant responsible for the transfer would be punished.

According to legal provisions, transfer of civil servants working for ministries should be done in the month of Magh (January–February) and those working for departments in Falgun (February–March). But civil servants have been transferred at any time violating the Civil Service Act. "Those violating the laws will be punished," she said.

The government has decided to set up Integrated Service Centres in 46 districts to effectively deliver services to the common people. According to the ministry, such service centres will be set up in places outside the district headquarters.

0 Tempora ! 0 Mores !!

• by Sarab •



Why're you elated? This letter says you've been transferred to Land Revenue Office, Dolpa.

Over 10,000 birds culled

POST REPORT

BIRATNAGAR, JAN. 19

The rapid response teams deployed at emergency-declared areas have intensified the bird flu control campaign, culling 10,100 hens and ducks till Monday evening.

Office head of Central Animal Quarantine, Dr. Ramkrishna Khatiwada, said the teams had culled 10,100 hens and ducks at various poultry farms at Kakadbhittha, Satighatta, Nakalbanda and adjoining areas.

Meanwhile, in Biratnagar, police arrested two Indian nationals red-handed while importing Indian eggs from India on Monday.

Mohammad Parwej and Mohammad Mustak of Jogbani, India were held with 70 crates of white Indian eggs. The local admin-

doctor, in the emergency-declared areas on Sunday.

On Friday, the government declared emergency in areas that lie within a radius of three kilometres from the quarantine office in Kakadbhittha after laboratory reports confirmed the outbreak of epidemic in the areas.

They also formed a 23-member monitoring committee to prevent the bird flu epidemic from entering the town. They charged government authorities with being reluctant to deal with the issue.

(Related report on Pg 3)

istration has already banned import of chicken products from India.

With the news of avian influenza in Jhapa, consumption of chicken has plummeted by 85 percent in Dharan, Sunsari.

Poultry farmers said their business had been pushed into trouble following significant decrease in demand for chicken.

They also formed a 23-member monitoring committee to prevent the bird flu epidemic from entering the town. They charged government authorities with being reluctant to deal with the issue.

(Related report on Pg 3)

First mixed-race US prez a ritual away

SURESH NATH NEUPANE

WASHINGTON DC, JAN. 19

Nearly 145 years after the end of the Civil War, and 45 years after the enactment of voting rights, the White House is all set to welcome the first African American president of the United States Tuesday in one of the biggest events in history.

With the dream of Martin Luther King Jr., President-elect Barack Obama, following the historic path of Abraham Lincoln, has come to the capital to be the president of the global superpower.

Officials here predict that nearly 2.5 million people are expected to witness the most expensive inauguration of the 44th American president. "People from all over the country come to Washington to mark the peaceful transition from one administration to another," said Senator Dianne Feinstein, the chairman of the Presidential Inaugural Committee.



The cost of the inauguration is expected to touch \$160 million, which includes \$45 million raised by Obama himself in private funds. President Bush had spent \$42.3 million in 2005 and Clinton spent \$33 million in 1993, according to

New York Daily News.

Security has been put on high alert. The Department of Homeland Security said 58 federal, military, state and city law enforcement and public safety agencies are working together to ensure a safe and smooth event.

President Bush declared a state of emergency to provide additional federal fund to handle the massive crowd in Washington DC during the 56th inauguration ceremony.

Obama will get a brand-new presidential limousine for the inaugural parade. The Secret Service placed the new car for Obama replacing the 2006 model presidential limousine President Bush had used.

The inauguration ceremony starts at 11:30 a.m. Eastern Time today with a procession in the capitol. The ceremony includes both oath and inaugural address.

According to inauguration his-

torian Jim Bendat, the procession will involve the incoming and outgoing president in one car, the incoming and outgoing vice president in another car, and the incoming and outgoing first ladies in another car.

The inaugural ceremony's theme -- A New Birth of Freedom -- was inspired by Lincoln's Gettysburg address. Michelle Obama, the new first lady, will hold the same Bible used by Lincoln in the inauguration ceremony for Obama. And reports have it that Obama's choice of the menu is not all that different from the menu at Lincoln's inauguration.

Obama opened the inauguration celebration Sunday. In an address to a crowd in front of Lincoln Memorial at the National Mall in Washington, Obama said, "In the course of our history, only a handful of generations have been asked to confront challenges as serious as the ones we face right now."

Budget session prorogued

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

The first budget session of the Legislature-Parliament ended on Monday, marking a 34-day delay in the CA calendar.

According to the calendar of events passed by the CA on Nov. 14, the budget session was scheduled to close by mid-December to allow lawmakers to focus on drafting the constitution.

The protracted session can be attributed to the long boycotts and differences between the opposition party Nepali Congress (NC), which stayed out of the House for two weeks demanding Maoist commitment to return seized properties, and the government.

After the government was ready to give in to NC's demands, the fringe parties

obstructed the House demanding that the government increase scholarship quota for Dalits and other backward communities in the bill presented by the government to amend the Scholarship Act.

Speaker Subas Nembang said the budget session lasted 147 days in which parliamentarians spent 150 hours and 52 minutes attending 47 meetings held on 45 days.

Among the 12 bills tabled by the government, the parliament cleared seven in this session. Four bills are under consideration at the legislature committee and a bill to amend the Electoral Rolls Act has been withdrawn by the government.

The government has planned to introduce an ordinance to clear the deck

for the Election Commission to update electoral rolls in six election constituencies where it will be holding elections on April 10.

The session unanimously passed two resolutions presented by Nepali Congress lawmaker Ramesh Lekhak, the first one directed the government to provide relief for flood victims of the far western region and another to take stern action against those involved in the murder of journalists and attacks against media.

The urgent motions of public importance related to safeguarding the Nepalese economy from the global economic meltdown; and solving the hard hitting energy crisis were also unanimously passed by parliament.

Maoists discuss HQ panel

RENU KSHETRY

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

The 15-member Unified CPN (Maoist) Central Secretariat on Monday discussed the formation of a five-member headquarter (HQ) committee headed by Party Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal to take quick decisions on various agendas.

Dahal will endorse the proposals after thorough discussion with four other senior leaders, namely, Baburam Bhattarai, Narayan Kaji Shrestha, Ram Bahadur Thapa and Mohan Baidya in the headquarter committee, if it is endorsed by the central committee (CC) meeting on Tuesday. The senior leaders will be handed over responsibilities for the government, the parliament, the army and the street.

Many see the formation of HQ as Chairman Dahal's attempt to consolidate his hold on the party. "Chairman Prachanda can hold on Bhattarai and Shrestha to put their weight behind the pragmatist faction that he leads, while Baidya is a firm hardliner," said a CC member. "Thapa is seen more as a non-committal middle-of-the-road person."

According to a source, the meet discussed on the formation of HQ panel. If the CC endorses it, the formal HQ committee will be the first ever in the party's history.

Dahal and Bhattarai were in the informal HQ committee of CPN (Maoist) formed after the Chungbang Meeting in 2005. Senior leader Mohan Baidya joined the HQ committee in 2007.

(Contd on Pg 3)

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NEWSLINE**Journos turn writers**

KATHMANDU: Renowned journalists Hari Bahadur Thapa and Kiran Bhandari have written a book entitled *Rajniti*.

Daupechhbita Karmacharitana in a bid to expose political intervention in the country's bureaucracy with a selfish motive. On Sunday, Constituent Assembly Chairman Subas Chandra Nembang released the 248-page book amid a function in the capital. Thapa, also the news editor of Kantipur daily, the sister publication of the Post, said that they had written the book so that no past mistakes would be repeated in the current changed political context.

Police post attacked

HETAUDA: A group of around 15 inebriated youths stormed a temporary police post at Padampokhari-1 in Makwanpur on Sunday night and attacked head constable Abadhesh Kumar Jha with sharp weapons while five police personnel fled the scene. Six police personnel are deputed at the police post without weapons, sources said. Seriously injured in the attack, Jha was taken to the capital for treatment. The attackers also looted Rs. 12,000. A police team from Hetauda held Sanjaya Lopchan and Bishwa Lamal of Chitwan on the suspicion of involvement in the attack.

Maoists return property

PALPA: Unified CPN (Maoist) Palpa returned seized land and properties belonging to Tharka Bahadur GC and Samar Bahadur GC of Jhadeva VDC on Monday. Maoist district secretary Tilak Malla said that their houses and land, which were captured during the insurgency, were released amid a gathering of political parties, civil society and locals in the village. He also pledged that the party would return all the captured properties soon in the district. (PR)



With the outbreak of bird flu reported last week in eastern Nepal, Kakarvitta, police destroy eggs illegally imported from India in Taulihawa, Kapilavastu, on Monday. Officials say the H5N1 virus has not been detected outside Jhapa district. Despite the ban imposed by the government, eggs and poultry are being smuggled from Indian cities.

POST PHOTO: MANOJ POUDEL

Rs 50m for Maoist leaders-run NGO

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN 19

In a controversial decision, the government has entrusted Sahid Pratisthan, an non-governmental organisation run by Unified CPN (Maoist) leaders, with the task of spending Rs 50 million for the education of children orphaned in the decade-long insurgency, officials said.

Previously, such programmes would be run by education offices. The government had allocated the amount in this fiscal year's budget for the education of the insurgency-hit children.

According to the officials, Sahid Pratisthan, which is led by the Central Committee leader of

the Unified CPN (Maoist) Posta Bahadur Bogati, will spend 45 million rupees on infrastructure building and five million rupees for various education programmes for the children.

"We decided to hand over

Post B. Bogati-led Sahid Pratisthan to launch programmes for conflict-hit kids

the amount to the Sahid Pratisthan as per the direction from the Ministry of Finance," said Lekhanath Paudel,

joint spokesperson at the Minister of Education.

Interestingly, the Ministry of Education had taken the decision to this effect without knowing the details of the NGO's programmes.

According to Paudel, the NGO will establish residential schools in all five development regions and educate the children.

The NGO's education programmes are yet to be approved by the National Planning Commission, Paudel further added. The NGO is registered with the District Administration Office, Kathmandu, and affiliated to the Social Welfare Council.

Journo's murder: FNJ unveils fresh protest

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN 19

Federation of Nepali Journalists (FNJ) on Monday unveiled its second phase protest programme demanding an end to the culture of impunity and punishment for the culprits in the murder of Janakpur-based journalist Uma Singh.

FNJ Central Committee meeting decided to continue the protest for the sake of ensuring press freedom and move the government to punish the guilty.

Issuing a press statement, FNJ said that the government has failed to punish those involved in the murder of Singh and make public facts related to the incident.

FNJ also said that the increasing threat to the security of journalists working across the country has drawn the federation's attention.

FNJ has taken positively the recently passed resolution in the parliament to guarantee press free-

Another murder 'suspect' held

POST REPORT

BIRATNAGAR, JAN 19

Police on Monday arrested one Bimalesh Jha of Janakpur, Dhanusha, in connection with the murder of Janakpur-based journalist Uma Singh on Monday.

Jha is the third person to be arrested on the same charge.

Earlier on Sunday, police had arrested Sravan Yadav, a CPN (Maoist) cadre, from Siraha while another Nemal Paswan was also held in Janakpur on Saturday.

Police said Jha was held as he was involved in issuing a press statement taking responsibility for Singh's murder. In the statement, a hitherto unknown group — Tarai Ektap Parishad — had said that "Singh was mistakenly targeted due to load shedding, when the

group had deployed its cadres to actually take action against a corrupt Pahade person."

Dhanusha CDO Shambhu Koirala said Jha was arrested as he was found sending press releases to various media houses from a place. During interrogation, Yadav admitted having known Singh's sister-in-law, a police source said.

Meanwhile, Paswan was taken to Kathmandu for treatment. He had received bullet injuries on his thigh when police open-fired at him in the course of arresting him on Saturday. Journalist Singh, a permanent resident of Maheshpur VDC in Siraha, was brutally murdered on Jan. 11 at her rented apartment in Janakpur-14 by an unidentified group.

dom, the statement reads.

Meanwhile, FNJ condemned the death threats being received by Kokila Dhakal, the Ilam-based journalist working for Rajdhani Daily and Kanchanjunga FM.

According to FNJ, commander of Federal Limbuwan State Council (FLSC) volunteer Madan Limbu had issued death threats to Dhakal for publishing news in the daily.

Meanwhile, media persons and rights activists organised protest programmes in various districts on Monday. Youths took out a protest rally at Rajghat, Morang, to protest the killing of journalist Singh and demanded action against the guilty. Scribes also staged a sit-in in front of District Administration Office, Bajura, demanding action against the murderers. Similar protest programmes were held in Siraha, Taplejung and other districts.

Eight-limbed baby born

DOLAKHA: In an astounding medical case, a baby with four legs and four hands was born at Betali VDC in Ramechhap district.

Januka Ghimire, 30-year-old wife of Rishi Prasad Ghimire, gave birth to the as-yet unnamed baby yesterday at 4 pm. Such case is very rare in the country's medical history.

According to villagers, the baby's condition is stable and her mother is in good health. A local, Ram Bahadur Bhujel, said Januka's house is thronged by people from far-flung villages to have the glimpse of the strange baby.

Some locals even believe that she was the reincarnation of the eight-limbed Hindu goddess of wealth and fortune Lakshmi.

It is suspected that the deformities due to the incomplete growth of foetus resulted in this kind of birth. Had the woman undergone proper medical checkups after she became pregnant, health workers could have detected such abnormal foetus, Bhujel added.

The mortality rate among babies with such severe deformities is still considered high in rural parts of the country where access to health services is poor.

(RSS)

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News

Khanal's political paper awaits CC members' nod

■ POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

At a time when Central Committee (CC) members were floating suggestions to the party leadership to reduce the 80 page political document tabled by CPN-UML General Secretary Jhalanath Khanal, the latter on Monday presented his 87 page political document after correcting the previous document and incorporating the CC members' suggestions.

The CC members in the 23rd CC meet last week had proposed corrections to the proposal of updating People's Multiparty Democracy, the party's take on CPN (Maoist) and correction of the date (Eighth CC) of the major political deci-

sion opting for Constituent Assembly election.

Standing committee member Amrit Bohara on Monday presented the



Jhalanath Khanal

ing committee demanded time to read the document before forwarding it to the Eighth national convention scheduled for Feb. 16-21. The meeting will resume Tuesday.

The political document will be finalised only after approval from the standing committee meeting as directed by the CC meet held last week.

Standing committee member Amrit Bohara said the meeting took place to discuss the management of the forthcoming national convention as well as ways to disseminate the political and amended party statute document at the grassroots level.

The central leaders have expressed concern that the

delay in disseminating the report to grassroots level cadres might affect their decision in the choice of candidates.

"Delay in endorsing the two major party documents could create confusion among cadres in understanding party policy and in deciding on the party leadership," said Central leader Shankar Pokhrel.

The election of delegates is starting from Jan. 28 to Feb. 4. So the document has to be made available at the grassroots level across the country beginning from Jan. 14.

"We have speeded up the process, but load shedding is creating problems in printing the document," said Bohara.

amended party constitution incorporating the CC suggestions.

The 13-member stand-

Quarantine check post 'dysfunctional'

NARAYANGADH: At a time when quarantine offices across the country have been put on high alert, Rammagar quarantine check post at Bharatpur is almost "dysfunctional".

The check post does not even have basic infrastructure to keep chicken supplies under surveillance. "I spend from my own pocket to run the quarantine check post," said Dr. Jayanarayan Neupane, office chief of Chitwan Quarantine Office.

"Vehicles carrying chicken products easily escape though we ask them to stop for necessary investigation. We cannot chase the vehicle on foot," he added.

Employees at the quarantine check post, which is the entry point for Kathmandu, Pokhara and other towns, are helpless due to lack of infrastructure.

CDO Ratna Raj Pandey admitted they could not initiate the bird flu control campaign effectively due to unavailability of resources. "We have apprised the concerned ministries time and again but they have paid no heed," said Pandey. (PR)

Murder accused CA member hospitalised

POST REPORT

BIRGUNJ, JAN. 19

The arrested lawmaker Baban Singh was admitted to Intensive Care Unit (ICU) of Narayani Sub-regional Hospital in Birgunj on Monday after he complained of chest pain.

Singh, who was arrested on Saturday in connection with the murder of local businessman Rajesh Kyal and Jatashankar Sah of Birgunj, was remanded in custody for three days by Parsa district court on Sunday.

"He is suffering from high blood pressure and angina," said Dr. Niraj Singh, who is involved in the treatment. According to him, the lawmaker could be discharged on Tuesday in case of improvement in his condition.

According to policemen who are on round-the-clock surveillance of Singh at the hospital, over 150 persons came to meet Singh in the ICU on Monday.

Talking to the Post, Singh claimed that he had received an e-mail from slain journalist Uma Singh prior to the murder in which she had mentioned that she was feeling insecure



Baban Singh

due to threats from Maoists.

"As I was about to go to Janakpur to expose fact, I was framed by the Maoists," he charged.

Oppn parties concerned

Major opposition party Nepali Congress (NC) and the Tarai Madhes Loktantrik Party (TMLP) on Monday expressed concern over the arrest of lawmaker Baban Singh.

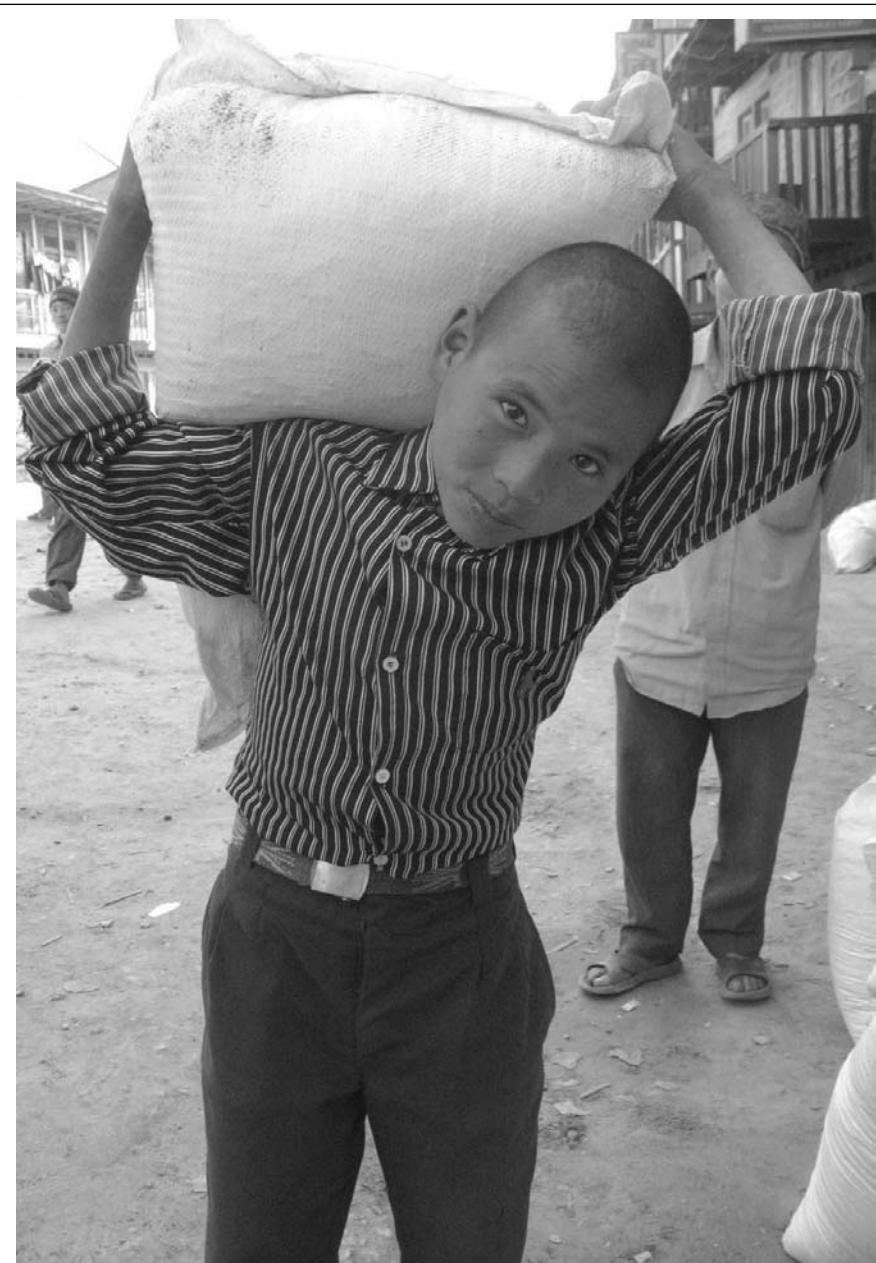
Speaking in the parliament meeting, NC lawmaker Ramsharan Mahat said the arrest of lawmaker Baban Singh by police has raised many questions since he was arrested after he threatened to disclose the names of Maoist cadres involved in the murder of journalist Uma Singh.

Mahat said NC would not accept any type of prejudice and bias by the government in this case.

"The government has hatched a conspiracy against Singh since he spoke against the Maoists in parliament," said Jitendra Prasad Sonar of the TMLP. "If the government had a justifiable reason, it would have conducted proper investigations before making the arrest."

It will take about a week to clear the floor completely," they said.

"The ministry is vacating the top floor where the



Dilip Rai, 12, of Nirmalidanda, Khotang, carrying a sack of rice provided by UNICEF to his home. The UN body distributed 130 kg rice and 15 kg lentil to 361 families of conflict victims, the poor and meritorious children.

POST PHOTO: DAMBAR SINGH RAI

NEWSLINE

444 cops transferred

KATHMANDU: The government announced the transfer of 444 police officers to various districts on Monday. Police Headquarters said all transferees are of the inspector level and they have been ordered to reach their respective duty stations immediately.

Diarrhoea claims life

RUKUM: A minor died of diarrhoea at Bhalchha VDC-5 in the district on Monday. Three-year-old Newton, the son of Prabhat Oli, died on way to the district headquarters Musikot for treatment. More than half-a-dozen children are also suffering from the disease in the village, said Surya Bahadur KC, a local.

TU set to reopen

KATHMANDU: Tribhuvan University is to reopen from Wednesday, said Vice-Chancellor Mahay Sharma. TU administration had called an indefinite strike beginning from last 18 days citing insecurity being experienced by the officials and other staff members. Speaking to the Post, vice chancellor Sharma said that TU officials on Monday decided to reopen the university, after TU administration, government and locals of Kirtipur reached an understanding to put an end to the stand off. (PR)

President to have new abode

■ PRITHVI MAN SHRESTHA

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

Some departments of the foreign ministry located at Sital Niwas have shifted to Narayanikh Palace premises from Monday to pave way for President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav to move into Sital Niwas from his present residence at Dhapasi in Kathmandu.

The offices of Foreign Minister Upendra Yadav and Secretary Gyan Chandra Acharya were shifted to Narayanikh Palace on Monday, according to foreign ministry officials.

"It will take about a week to clear the floor completely," they said.

"The ministry is vacating the top floor where the

president is about to make his residence," said Suresh Pradhan, spokesperson at the foreign ministry.

According to the ministry officials, they are vacating the top floor as the president's office asked them to do so as early as possible.

Economic advisor to the president, Bidyadhar Malik, told the Post that the presidential residence would be shifted after the floor being used by the foreign ministry is completely cleared and the required refurbishments are completed.

"The present residence being occupied by the president had been arranged on a short term lease contract basis. There is also not enough parking space and state resources are being drained unnecessarily because the government has its own building," he said.

"The government has had to rent another building adjoins the president's

office is hastening to clear the foreign ministry out of Sital Niwas, according to the officials.

President's press advisor, Rajendra Dahal, said that the delay in the shifting of the foreign ministry has been creating problems for the president and the presidential staff.

"The present residence being occupied by the president had been arranged on a short term lease contract basis. There is also not enough parking space and state resources are being drained unnecessarily because the government has its own building," he said.

"However, it will take at least another two months for the foreign ministry to shift out from Sital Niwas completely, according to the ministry officials.

residence to house security personnel," he added. The government had rented the present residence for the president at Rs. 1 million for a three month period. Additional rent is paid for the house being used by the security personnel, according to Dr. Ram Hari Aryal, secretary of the presidential office.

Nepal Electricity Authority had stopped providing uninterrupted power supply to the area where the president is residing since last week.

However, it will take at least another two months for the foreign ministry to shift out from Sital Niwas completely, according to the ministry officials.

E

Erring policemen to face music

KATHMANDU: Metropolitan Police Range Office (MPRO) has started taking departmental action against police personnel on the basis of public complaints.

A newly-formed Professional Standard Unit at MPRO recently took disciplinary action against 10 police personnel.

Looking into 11 complaints, police found that 10 police personnel had misused power. Some of the cops were found to be involved in serious crimes. For instance, one cop on duty even demanded money from a commuter and snatched his mobile phone set after the commuter could not cough up the demanded sum.

Another police officer manhandled a man, who was in a police station to meet a detainee, and demanded ransom for the detainee's release. Police have not disclosed the identities of the wrongdoers.

Chief of the MPRO Nava Raj Silwal said police had started taking action against the guilty. He has appealed to the public to complain against policemen involved in illegal activities by dialing 9849-023999. (PR)

Koshi repairs need three more months

POST REPORT

KATHMANDU, JAN. 19

A team of Nepali technicians said it will take three more months to complete the entire repair and reconstruction on Koshi embankment breach.

Resuming the East-West Highway will take at least one month if work continues unhindered according to the team.

"The contractor is yet to control two major water flows along Shreepur-Paschimkusha section and it will take at least one month to return the currents to their original course," said Mohan Bhattacharai, chief engineer at Water Induced Disaster Division Sunsari.

"The repair work is going on at a rather slow pace mainly due to lack of manpower," said Bhattacharai.

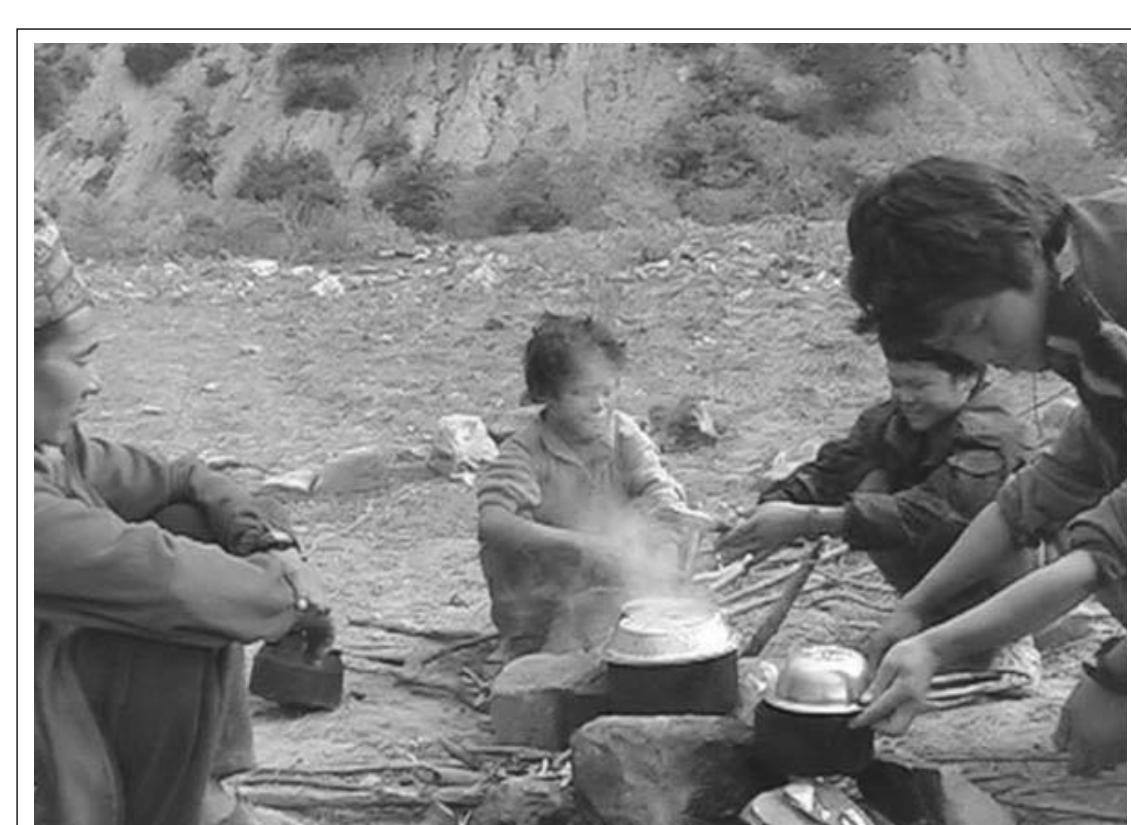
He warned that the river could wreak great havoc again if the work was not completed by mid-May.

The local administration has already drawn the attention of Bihar government to the slow pace of repair work. According to Ministry of Water Resources, of the three main channels formed after the Koshi breach, channel 1 and 2 have been constructed and channel 3 will be constructed within a week.

According to MoWR officials, waters through the three streams will be chan-

neled through the eight-kilometre pilot channel.

"The construction of embankment is not a problem once the Koshi is diverted to its original course," said Dongol. According to Dongol, work is being done on a war footing. Officials had claimed that the Koshi would be reverted by mid-December, but the deadline was extended to January 10, 2009. Now, due to workers' obstruction of construction, the deadline for diverting the Koshi waters to its original course has been extended to January end.



Porters cook rice after carrying luggage from Bairani border to Khandbari, the district headquarters of Sankhuwasabha. Even though a road has linked Bhojpur district with Khandbari, luggage is carried by porters and mules.

POST PHOTO: SURENDRA SUBEDI

Maoist leaders discuss HQ panel

Contd from Pg 1

"The headquarters can take immediate major decisions on four major agendas- the government, the parliament, the street and the army whenever necessary," said a party source. "At times, it might be difficult to bring together 15 secretariat members, so the party leadership discussed having a HQ committee to discuss major agendas."

The 175-member Central Committee meeting of Unified CPN (Maoist), which held its first meeting on Friday, formed a 15-member secretariat and a 45-member politburo of the new party, but division of responsibilities among party leaders could not be agreed upon.

Central Secretariat member Top Bahadur Rayamajhi said the meeting discussed the division of responsibili-

ties among party leaders. "The Central Committee will have a final say on the proposals put forth by the central secretariat on Tuesday.

The earlier scheduled CC meet on Monday could not take place due to inadequate homework on division of responsibilities.

Rayamajhi said the central secretariat meet would resume Tuesday morning followed by the CC meet in the afternoon.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

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Date: Saturday, January, 31st 2009

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(2km North from Dhungedhara bus stop, Balaju, Ringroad)

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All excited

The world awaits the Obama presidency with hope

Later today, Barack Hussein Obama will assume office as the 44th president of the United States. Hundreds of thousands of Americans are expected to attend his inauguration. This will not be possible for those living outside the U.S., but it is certain that millions of non-Americans will watch the ceremony on television. It is likely that more non-Americans will witness this event than any previous inauguration. More non-Americans supported and cheered Obama when he was up for election than any other candidate in history. And although the euphoria of the election has died down, goodwill towards him from all corners of the world is immense.

The world feels a deep connection with the United States, which, however, it is felt, is not reciprocated by those leading the country. The connection is felt, first, through the immense power and global reach of the U.S. which affects every country in the world. Second, the U.S. is perceived as a land of immigrants, and millions of people across the world have friends and relatives there who have left their native lands in search of opportunity. But the world is accustomed to seeing political leaders of the most powerful country in the world drawn from a small white elite, which is quite unrepresentative of the country's diversity. In Obama, the world will finally witness a genuine internationalist assume the highest office in the U.S. Half American and half Kenyan, Obama is very much a representative of the globalised world; his African father was a wanderer who moved to the U.S. in search of a better life. For the millions in the world who carry similar aspirations, Obama represents one of them.

Over the past eight years, under the leadership of President George W. Bush, the world has felt rejected by the country that occupies so much of its imagination. The world's relation to the U.S. has always lain on a continuum ranging from resentment and hostility to warmth and reverence. Due to the unilateralist policies of Bush, his decisive dismissal of world opinion, and the disasters he brought to the sovereign nations of Iraq and Afghanistan, the world currently feels mostly hostility to the U.S. Obama has demonstrated that he is the polar opposite of Bush. He has spent significant time in various countries across the world, and he is knowledgeable and sympathetic towards them. He is expected to take a much more multilateral approach to foreign policy, taking into confidence those countries that will be affected by the policies he adopts.

It is inevitable that the goodwill towards Obama will sour somewhat once he assumes office. So far he has been able to get by with a declaration of intentions. Once in power, he will have to deal with the specifics of relationships with many countries. It will not be possible to accommodate the aspirations of them all. But it is certain that he will attempt to rebuild America's relationship with the world. The world, meanwhile, awaits the Obama presidency with hope.

Divorce in cyberspace

SUVECHCHHA POUDEL

When marriages from the internet are on the rise in the globalized era, it is not uncommon to find divorce through video conferencing, though these are comparatively fewer. Divorce, according to a few counselors here, is sought on flimsy grounds on most occasions. Intolerance and the couples' tendency to contradict each other's views lead to divorce in many cases, say some psychologists. With the improvement in standards of living and awareness of women's rights, many working women feel that since they no longer have to rely on their husband's income, they are free to maintain their individual space.

POST PLATFORM

Male chauvinism does ruin marriages, as many husbands carry the wrong impression that they should oppose their wives' views just for the sake of opposing them

view that ego-related conflict, idiosyncrasies, western culture, strange habits, the stress of managing adjustment and inevitable disappointments, to mention just a few, are some of the reasons that lead to a divorce. In the past, not much attention was paid to the issue of divorce, its cause and harmful effects, nor were any measures devised to prevent it. But the cases of divorce were few and far between. Some say that the wife's desire to lead an independent life today is one of the main causes of separation. They add that that male chauvinism does ruin marriages, as many husbands carry the wrong impression that they should oppose their wives' views just for the sake of opposing them. The rate of divorce among young couples in the city is rising more steadily. Most of them go for it through mutual consent. A marriage broker revealed that seven out of 35 divorce cases she handled involved newly-weds.

In the ultimate analysis, the attitude and impatience of the younger generation were amply evident. It is their desire to take independent and tough decisions without pondering over the gravity of these decisions that are beginning to make cracks in the hallowed institution of marriage. And it is widely acknowledged that the divorce rate in Nepal has been increasing slowly and steadily.

The general view gaining currency here is that there has been an upsurge in divorce among newly-weds working in IT and other sectors as well. A leading marriage portal is of the

STATE OF FLUX



ADITYA ADHIKARI

The rebel wishes to overturn the existing order. The criminal simply wishes to violate the rules of the existing order to extract personal gain. The rebel and the criminal may both engage in similar actions -- of violence or other acts recognized by law as illegal -- but while the criminal accepts that he will face prosecution if caught, the rebel maintains an attitude of certitude and rightness regarding his actions. So the Maoists remain unrepentant, not only of the acts they committed during the war, but also of the violence they continue to inflict at regular intervals.

When Maoist leaders are asked whether they have once and for all renounced the politics of violence, they respond with a shake of the head and visible amusement: "To ask that question is to misunderstand the nature of the Maoist movement," they say. "We are not a criminal gang that inflicted violence upon society and state for personal gain. We waged a war against a state built upon a structure of violence; a state that has, for its own purposes, legitimised the perpetual violence it inflicts upon its own people. Our actions were undertaken to bring an end to the violence of the state. We are at a point where we can pursue our objectives by other means. But the revolution is by no means over, and we may well have to again resort to armed revolt to attain our goals."

The Maoist party has been built around a culture of regarding the members who brutalise selected targets as courageous heroes and those killed in counter-violence as martyrs. For such a party, the advent of the peace process has required a fundamental psychological shift. With the peace process, the Maoists exited the narrative of heroism and martyrdom and entered the narrative of

"post-conflict reconciliation." Here, they have had to deal with international human rights norms. Its members who were responsible for great brutality during the war are supposed to be prosecuted; reparations are to be provided to those brutalised. The "oppressor" against whom they may have undertaken "class action" is now the victim. Such a state of affairs is difficult for the Maoists to swallow.

So while they pay lip service to human rights, in their hearts they continue to believe that they have done no wrong. This is partially the reason why the Maoists have not been keen to rehabilitate the displaced, compensate the families of those disappeared or killed, or take other measures to heal the wounds of



war. What is called the "culture of impunity" does of course continue to flourish in Nepal. The powerful have always been protected from the consequences of their crimes. But for the Maoists there is moral justification in protecting fellow comrades.

So the Maoists have no real intention of prosecuting those responsible for violence during the war. Members of their party fought against the state and, as one would expect, the agents of the state fought back. The Maoists view this as perfectly natural and feel that nobody here was responsible for any "crime." And although they may have had to accept the narrative of the peace process and speak

of bringing the guilty to book, they feel this is a temporary state of affairs. Soon enough a time will come, they think, when the peace process is over, the war is universally recognized as one of liberation, and those accused of war crimes will become war heroes.

Things become somewhat more complicated regarding the Maoists' acts of violence after the peace process. There are now two contradictory narratives that the Maoists hold simultaneously: On the one hand they continue to maintain that the revolution is in need of completion; on the other they have accepted that the war is over and they have to accept rules of the game set in alliance with other political parties and social forces. Party workers accused of acts of violence are

party. The most notable example is that of Kali Bahadur Kham "Bibidh", who murdered Kathmandu businessman Ram Hari Shrestha and, after some months of lying low, has recently been rehabilitated into the position of Central Committee member of the Maoist party.

The fact is that both Kham and others like him were, in their ways, working for the benefit of the party. As such they are heroes. The murders they committed have actually increased respect for them within the party. For, when the party is wholly associated with the movement against the unjust state, all violence committed on its behalf are acts of heroic rebellion. Even when accidents take place (as when Kham killed Ram Hari Shrestha when he was only supposed to intimidate him) or when a party cadre misguidedly kills someone that brings more harm to the party than good, that person is still a hero. For his intention was to bring good to the party.

There exists an ideological purity to rebel movements when they first come into existence. As they become more enmeshed in violence, however, their ideological basis gradually becomes obscured. Consumed by the revolt against the state and those associated with it, violence takes a life of its own. It no longer becomes possible to examine every single action undertaken by party cadres to see if it accords with ideology. As a movement progresses, the party becomes synonymous with its ideology; any action taken for the party becomes an action taken for the ideology. And as cadres become increasingly socialised into the party, any action taken for their personal benefit is viewed as taken for the party itself. It appears that those who killed journalist Uma Singh in Janakpur did so for a combination of reasons: personal vendetta played a large part, but this was also an attempt to stifle criticism of particular party leaders. When police arrested a suspect who happened to be Maoist, a group of Maoist cadres blocked a section of the East-West Highway to protest against the arrest. The suspected murderer was a hero in the protesters' eyes. The line separating rebel from criminal was erased.

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All eyes on Obama

"His Popularity" and his impending challenges

CHIRAN JUNG THAPA

His Popularity" Barack Hussein Obama II, the first African-American president of the most powerful state in the world, will be sworn into office soon. Indeed, the electoral victory of this charismatic character has been greatly cheered by most of the world. And people are expecting great things from him. Whether he can deliver or not is yet to be seen. But for now, the immediate challenges for the president are not only daunting but also mounting.

Even prior to taking the oath of office, the incoming president's plate has already filled up with both national and international challenges. The most salient ones that will require his immediate attention include extricating American troops successfully from Iraq and Afghanistan, defusing the Israeli-Palestinian (Hamas) fracas in Gaza, preventing an India-Pakistan confrontation and arresting Iran's dogged nuclear pursuit.

But envisaging and executing a strategy to fix the ailing national and global economy will probably remain the president's most arduous challenge. Thankfully, President Obama already has a plan. He and his team have come up with a stimulus package. By injecting billions of dollars into the economy, he hopes to avert a financial collapse, create jobs and restore confidence in the market. Of course, the federal government will need to intervene in these dire circumstances. However, he will also need to make sure that capitalism stays alive, and that more effective oversight and regulations are legislated and enforced to avoid the financial improprieties that led to this financial predicament.

The president will also inherit two messy wars. The American entanglements in Iraq and Afghanistan have strained and drained America quite a bit. Financially, it is costing America close to US\$ 17 billion a month to sustain military operations and other activities in these two places. Politically, these ventures have blemished America's image and its unilateralist strides have strained relations with a lot of other countries. And it

has put an enormous amount of psychological pressure on the troops stationed there and their families back home.

One of the primary objectives for the commander-in-chief will be to gradually pull the troops out while ensuring peace and stability in both places. America can ill afford to abandon these two missions abruptly, but neither can it afford to prolong them. Amidst all this, it somehow has to emerge victorious. Hence, he and his team will need to formulate an exit strategy which is viable and in consonance with the objective of restoring America's image. Furthermore, it must be executed in a manner in which the withdrawal illustrates success and integrity rather than failure or weakness.

Then, there is the perennial Israel-Palestine conflict. Recently, Israel has unleashed its armed forces in retribution for the incessant rockets fired into Israel by Hamas. A full scale ground and air incursion into Gaza by Israeli forces has already resulted in great destruction. And this war is quickly destabilizing the entire Middle East.

President Obama and his team will need to come up with a peaceful and sustainable solution to this conflict. This will entail playing a hard but open-minded mediator/facilitator role. But in doing so, he will need to embrace Israel yet appear non-partisan to the Palestinians and satisfy the Arabs.

Next, there are the sabre-rattling South Asians. Following the Mumbai terrorist attacks, India and Pakistan are whiskers away from pulling the trigger at each other again. India claims that the terrorists were all from Pakistan and believes the perpetrators had links to government agencies there. Pakistan denies these claims and instead pledges cooperation in the quest and in bringing the perpetrators to justice. But in the meantime, perhaps sensing an imminent confrontation with India, Pakistan has redeployed an estimated 20,000 troops that were combatting Islamic militants in the northwest frontier to the eastern part bordering India.

Both countries are equally vital to American national interests. Pakistan's efforts in rooting out Islamic militants as involved newly-weds.

demanded by the American-led "War on Terror" remains very crucial. On top of that, Pakistan's good neighbourly role in stabilizing Afghanistan is also vital. Indubitably, Pakistan's significance to American objectives is evidenced by the aid it receives. Pakistan remains one of the top recipients of American aid. On the other hand, India being the largest democracy and an emerging superpower shares a special bond with America. India's growing significance is adequately reflected by the recent American willingness to make a special exception to the non-proliferation regulations to accommodate India's nuclear aspirations.

President Obama will most certainly need to step in to defuse the escalating tension. If this case is not handled carefully, this row surely has the potential to escalate into an all-out nuclear confrontation. Thus, here again, his administration will need to play a very astute balancing act to prevent the confrontation. Since both countries are equally important to American interests, it needs to play a non-partisan mediator/facilitator role and come up with constructive solutions which are palatable to both sides.

Then, there is Iran's dogged nuclear pursuit. Although Iran keeps on insisting that its nuclear programme is aimed at energy production and not bomb making, hardly do these assurances serve to allay the fears of Americans, especially when the Iranian president keeps on spouting provocative rhetoric against Israel's existence and clinging obstinately to its nuclear ambition.

Given the varying implications and repercussions, President Obama will need to grasp the nuances and complexities associated with Iran's nuclear ambition. If Iran acquired a nuclear capability then others could easily tread the same path leading to unrestrained nuclear proliferation. Also, given Iran's propensity to provide moral and material support to outfits like Hamas and Hezbollah -- which deem Israel as their mortal enemy, one cannot deny the possibility of Israel repeating an Osirak-like assault on Iran's nuclear infrastructure. The consequences of which could easily be catastrophic. But most importantly, Iran's nuclear capabil-

ity poses a threat to the American interest because of the prospect of Iran selling the weapons or the technology to stateless militant and terrorist outfits.

Despite all this, completely denying Iran the nuclear right appears legally and morally effete. First, as a signatory to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Iran derives the inalienable right to develop a nuclear energy programme for peaceful purposes (according to the fourth article of the treaty). Additionally, when the Americans and other western nations have a huge stockpile of nuclear weapons themselves, the morality and logic of telling Iran to halt its nuclear ambitions appears hypocritical.

Tackling the Iranian issue will require an immense amount of patience and dexterity. The presidential team will need to employ the "carrot and stick diplomacy" with great caution. And direct dialogue between the two nations and through other intermediaries is vital. This team will need to secure a mutually favourable outcome through compromise.

Until now, "His Popularity" has unquestionably demonstrated a pragmatic streak, great aptitude, admirable forbearance, and oozed charm. And these qualities have won him near universal plaudits. But now, the time has come for him to step up to the task and prove his worthiness. No doubt that his tenure will be inexorably demanding and it will certainly necessitate great dexterity on his part to overcome these challenges. Further, he bears an even greater responsibility than his predecessor because he not only has his fellow citizens to satiate, but there is an entire bevy of foreigners in the "Yes, we can" and "Change" bandwagons. They are all optimistically depending on his leadership to solve the numerous crises plaguing the globe. But people's patience is only ephemeral. If "His Popularity" does not expeditiously deliver on those expectations, it won't be long before he is tagged with a new title, "Oh, Bummer".

Mr. President, I earnestly hope you have the insight and fortitude to overcome all these daunting challenges. And I wish you a very successful tenure. The entire world is counting on your leadership.

Opinion

What you don't know about Gaza

A response

DAN STAV

Prof. Khalidi, in an article published in *The Kathmandu Post* on Jan. 15, boasts of giving his readers essential information regarding Gaza. These points, according to him, are missing in the media's coverage. Here are a number of points Prof. Khalidi seems to have concealed from his readers.

THE GAZANS - Most of the people in Gaza have indeed been refugees since 1948. Prof. Khalidi failed to mention that they became refugees as a result of an all-out war imposed on Israel immediately after its inception by armies of the Arab states and Palestinian militants. The war aimed to eradicate Israel from the map and destroy the Jewish presence on that land. The aggressors encouraged the Palestinians to temporarily leave their homes "until final victory", which never came.

True, a number of them fled from the advancing Israeli army. The Arab leadership preferred to perpetuate their status as refugees for political reasons. Unlike this attitude of the Arabs, Israel absorbed hundreds of thousands of Jews who fled from Arab states; just like Germany, which absorbed millions of German refugees after its defeat in the Second World War, and like India that became a home for millions of refugees after the bloodshed which ensued following the partition of the Indian subcontinent.

THE OCCUPATION - Indeed, Gazans have been under Israeli occupation since 1967. From 1948 till 1967, they were under Egyptian military rule. During this 19-year-long period, the Arab states and the Palestinians could have established a Palestinian state on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip; but they refused to do so because they insisted on establishing a greater Palestinian state that would also include Israel, the same agenda to which Hamas is committed till today.

THE BLOCKADE - Israeli operations regarding supervision of the movement of goods to Gaza by sea are done to prevent seaborne terrorist attacks and smuggling of arms to terrorist personnel in Gaza, in accordance with the accepted practices of self-defence under international law and in accordance with the responsibility vested in the Israel Navy under the Israeli-Palestinian Interim Agreement from 1995.

Israel declared, in September 2007, the Gaza Strip under the Hamas regime as a "hostile entity" following numerous acts of aggression that this organization has committed, especially since it orchestrated a bloody coup in Gaza (June-August 2007). Under international law, Israel does have a right to sever commercial and economic ties with its enemies. Israel allowed, however, unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid to the civilian population in Gaza through four major crossings.

Hamas has attacked these crossings nine times since 2006 in order to sabotage the flow of humanitarian aid through Israel with intentions to portray Israel as responsible for the humanitarian calamity in Gaza. Hamas solely bears the responsibility for the hardships in Gaza.

THE CEASEFIRE - The six-month lull in violence has been violated by Hamas and its proxies 538 times. Regarding the incident on Nov. 5, when six Hamas terrorists were killed by the Israeli army, Prof. Khalidi failed to mention that they were killed when they tried to dig a tunnel under the Israeli border to launch an attack and kill and kidnap Israeli soldiers and civilians.

WAR CRIMES - Prof. Khalidi is right when he says that targeting civilians, whether by Israel or Hamas, is a crime. But he has failed to mention that the Israeli army tries its best to avoid unnecessary injury to the civilian population while Hamas deliberately uses the Palestinian population as human shields for its activists. It uses houses of civilians, mosques and schools as weapons warehouses. The terrorists launch rockets and shoot at Israeli soldiers when they are near civilians.

Hamas further uses children to help its forces. Here is what a kid named Khaled from A-Rimal in Gaza said to *Kul al Arab* weekly (Jan. 9, 2009): "We children, in small groups and civilian clothes, are fulfilling missions in support of the (Hamas) resistance fighters by transmitting messages about the movements of the enemy forces, or by bringing them ammunition and food."

While Hamas cynically uses civilians for its war purposes, the Israeli army makes an effort to minimize the injury to the population. Millions of leaflets were distributed prior to the attacks to warn the population to vacate the targeted places. This is done to save the precious lives of innocent civilians at the cost of losing the element of surprise, as the militants also get to know about these attacks in advance.

The war in Gaza is to end the repeated aggressions of Hamas against Israel and to prevent it from being repeated in the future after adequate security arrangements have been put in place once the war is over. The only comprehensive solution to any political conflict is through a dialogue and not war. Israel has signed peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan and is seriously engaged in negotiations with the moderate Palestinian leadership. What does Hamas say about diplomacy and peace? Article 13 of the Hamas covenant reveals it all: "There is no solution to the Palestinian question except through Jihad (holy war). Initiatives, proposals and international conferences are all a waste of time and vain endeavours."

(The author is the Ambassador of Israel to Nepal.)

No other profession calls on its practitioners to lay down their lives for their art save the armed forces and, in Sri Lanka, journalism. In the course of the past few years, the independent media have increasingly come under attack. Electronic and print-media institutions have been burnt, bombed, sealed and coerced. Countless journalists have been harassed, threatened and killed. It has been my honour to belong to all those categories and now especially the last.

I have been in the business of journalism a good long time. Indeed, 2009 will be The Sunday Leader's 15th year. Many things have changed in Sri Lanka during that time, and it does not need me to tell you that the greater part of that change has been for the worse. Terror, whether perpetrated by terrorists or the state, has become the order of the day. Indeed, murder has become the primary tool whereby the state seeks to control the organs of liberty. Today it is the journalists, tomorrow it will be the judges. For neither group have the risks ever been higher or the stakes lower.

Why then do we do it? I often wonder that. After all, I too am a husband, and the father of three wonderful children. I too have responsibilities and obligations that transcend my profession, be it the law or journalism. Is it worth the risk? Friends tell me to revert to the bar. Others, including political leaders on both sides, have at various times sought to induce me to take to politics. Diplomats, recognising the risk journalists face in Sri Lanka, have offered me safe passage and the right of residence in their countries. Whatever else I may have been stuck for; I have not been stuck for choice. But there is a calling that is yet above high office, fame, lucre and security. It is the call of conscience.

The Sunday Leader has been a controversial newspaper because we say it like we see it: whether it be a spade, a thief or a murderer, we call it by that name. We do not hide behind euphemism. The investigative articles we print are supported by documentary evidence thanks to the public-spiritedness of citizens who at great risk to themselves pass on this material to us. We have exposed scandal after scandal, and never once in these 15 years has anyone proved us wrong or successfully prosecuted us.

The free media serve as a mirror in which the public can see itself sans mascara and styling gel. Sometimes the image you see in that mirror is not a pleasant one. But while you may grumble in the privacy of your armchair, the journalists who hold the mirror up to you do so publicly and at great risk to themselves. That is our calling, and we do not shirk it.

Every newspaper has its angle, and we do not hide the fact that we have ours. Our commitment is to see Sri Lanka as a transparent, secular, liberal democracy. Think about those words, for they each has profound meaning. Transparent because government must be openly accountable to the people and never abuse their trust. Secular because in a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural society such as ours, secularism offers the only common ground by which we might all be united. Liberal because we recognise that all human beings are created different, and we need to accept others for what they are and not what we would like them to be. And democratic... well, if you need me to explain why that is important, you'd best stop buying this paper.

The Sunday Leader has never sought safety by unquestioningly articulating the majority view. Let's face it, that is the way to sell newspapers. On the contrary, as our opinion pieces over the years amply demonstrate, we often voice ideas that

many people find distasteful. For example, we have consistently espoused the view that while separatist terrorism must be eradicated, it is more important to address the root causes of terrorism. We have also agitated against state terrorism in the so-called war against terror, and made no secret of our horror that Sri Lanka is the only country in the world to routinely bomb its own citizens. For these views we have been labelled traitors, and if this be treachery, we wear that label proudly.

Neither should our distaste for the war be interpreted to mean that we support the Tigers. The LTTE are among the most ruthless and bloodthirsty organisations ever to have infested the planet. There is no gainsaying that it must be eradicated. But to do so by violating the rights of Tamil citizens, bombing and shooting them mercilessly, is not only wrong but shames the Sinhalese, whose claim to be custodians of the dhamma is forever called into question by this

the freedoms for which you once fought so hard. You will never be allowed to forget that my death took place under your watch. As anguished as I know you will be, I also know that you will have no choice but to protect my killers: you will see to it that the guilty one is never convicted. You have no choice.

As for the readers of The Sunday Leader, what can I say but Thank You for supporting our mission. We have espoused unpopular causes, stood up for those too feeble to stand up for themselves, locked horns with the high and mighty, and made sure that whatever the propaganda of the day, you were allowed to hear a contrary view. For this I -- and my family -- have now paid the price that I have long known I will one day have to pay. I am -- and have always been -- ready for that. I have done nothing to prevent this outcome: no security, no precautions. I want my murderer to know that I am not a coward like he is, hiding behind human shields while condemning thousands of innocents to death. What am I among so many? It has long been written that my life would be taken, and by whom. All that remains to be written is when.

That The Sunday Leader will continue fighting the good fight, too, is written. For I did not fight this fight alone. Many more of us have to be - and will be - killed before The Leader is laid to rest. I hope my assassination will be seen not as a defeat of freedom but an inspiration for those who survive to step up their efforts. Indeed, I hope that it will help galvanise forces that will usher in a new era of human liberty in our beloved motherland. I also hope it will open the eyes of your President to the fact that however many are slaughtered in the name of patriotism, the human spirit will endure and flourish. Not all the Rajapakses combined can kill that.

People often ask me why I take such risks and tell me it is a matter of time before I am bumped off. Of course I know that: it is inevitable. But if we do not speak out now, there will be no one left to speak for those who cannot, whether they be ethnic minorities, the disadvantaged or the persecuted. An example that has inspired me throughout my career in journalism has been that of the German theologian, Martin Niemoller. In his youth he was an

anti-Semite and an admirer of Hitler. As Nazism took hold in Germany, however, he saw Nazism for what it was: it was not just the Jews Hitler sought to extirpate, it was just about anyone with an alternate point of view. Niemoller spoke out, and for his trouble was incarcerated in the Sachsenhausen and Dachau concentration camps from 1937 to 1945, and very nearly executed. While incarcerated, Niemoller wrote a poem that, from the first time I read it in my teenage years, stuck hauntingly in my mind: First they came for the Jews and I did not speak out because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Communists and I did not speak out because I was not a Communist. Then they came for the trade unionists and I did not speak out because I was not a trade unionist.

Then they came for me and there was no one left to speak out for me. If you remember nothing else, remember this: The Leader is there for you, be you Sinhalese, Tamil, Muslim, low-caste, homosexual, dissident or disabled. Do not take this commitment for granted. Let there be no doubt that whatever sacrifices we journalists make, they are not made for our own glory or enrichment: they are made for you. Whether you deserve their sacrifice is another matter. As for me, God knows I tried.

Indian Express



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savagery, much of which is unknown to the public because of censorship.

What is more, a military occupation of the country's north and east will require the Tamil people of those regions to live eternally as second-class citizens, deprived of all self respect. Do not imagine that you can placate them by showering "development" on them in the post-war era. The wounds of war will scar them forever, and you will also have an even more bitter and hateful Diaspora to contend with. If I seem angry and frustrated, it is only because most of my countrymen -- and all of the government -- cannot see this writing so plainly on the wall.

It is well known that I was on two occasions brutally assaulted, while on another my house was sprayed with machine-gun fire. Despite the government's sanctimonious assurances, there was never a serious police inquiry into the perpetrators of these attacks. In all these cases, I have reason to believe the attacks were inspired by the government. When finally I am killed, it will be the government that kills me.

I have the satisfaction of knowing that I walked tall and bowed to no man. And I have not travelled this journey alone. Fellow journalists in other branches of the media walked with me: most of them are now dead, imprisoned without trial or exiled in far-off lands. Others walk in the shadow of death that your Presidency has cast on

Class-ridden concept

This refers to "Rights now" by Dr Bipin Adhikari (Jan. 15, Page 4). He has rightly noted that various challenges are yet to be addressed by the committee on fundamental rights. I also agree that remedies are a must to ensure these rights. However, Adhikari favours free placement service over blanket provision of guaranteeing employment rights in the new constitution; this means that those who have already gained the privilege of higher education and skills, or more precisely, those who benefit from nepotism, should continue to get jobs easily, even in high ranks. Dr Adhikari's suggestion not to provide job guarantee to all demonstrates his support for the well-fed elite members of our society, who comprise a minority but have been ruling the country from every aspect.

Adhikari's concept on fundamental rights is enough to reveal which class he belongs to and whom he serves with his intellect. He seems to know much about Nepal's ruling class but nothing about the oppressed class. It is as if the 21 members

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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from various parties represent the entire country, including ethnic minorities, gays and Muslims. Unfortunately, human rights for the ruling class and the ruled class are different, even antagonistic, to each other. So one is compelled to decide on which side one stands; either you stand for the majority of the exploited people, or for the handful of exploiters.

Anil Adhikari

Hetauda

Martin's report

I think the recent report submitted by Ian Martin to the UN Security Council lacks neutrality ("Peace still rough weather, says Martin", Jan. 18, Page 1). Martin should realize that the decisions made by Nepal's democratic politicians are always in line with

their party policies. These are not individual decisions. So it is quite embarrassing to see how Martin's report tried to challenge the credibility of political parties. UNMIN's mandate does not allow Martin to openly stage this drama in front of the world. Similarly, his comments about the Nepal Army do not seem justifiable. I can't think of any incidents or activities of the Nepal Army that would harm the ongoing peace process. Martin should change his perception of Nepal's national army and democratic forces. Only then the peace-loving Nepalis will cherish his memory in their innocent hearts.

Saurav Basnet

Gongabu, Kathmandu

Punish them

Before leading the government, the Maoists had demanded that the culprits of the People's Movement be punished. They had raised their voice on behalf of the citizens disappeared during the conflict. But now they are in power, they have gone silent. The investigation report of Rayamajhi Commission has clearly stated that the guilty persons should be brought to book. When will the laws on disappearance be formulated? When will the Maoist-led government punish the culprits of the People's Movement? When will the government investigate the condition of the disappeared citizens?

Bijayamani Paudel

Katari, Udayapur

Nepali trauma

This refers to Dinesh Wagle's "The traumas of beauty" which discusses the traumas related to information technology and beauty pageants in India (Jan. 17, Page 5).



Comparing to Nepal's context, I would like to add that while the traumas in India seem to be caused by over-ambition, high but sometimes unhealthy competition, and the fecundity of IT companies and international beauty pageants, Nepal's traumas are caused by a lack of ambitions, lack of competitiveness, and low production of energy. While the trauma of the 'modern' Indian arises from the quest for prestige and dignity, the Nepali trauma arises from the quest for basic survival. The 'modern' Nepali is now cooking in darkness, eating in darkness and living his/her life in darkness.

Chet Raj Ojha

Bhainsepali, Lalitpur

Sports



Belamy set to join Man City

LONDON: Wales striker Craig Bellamy is set to leave West Ham for big-spenders Manchester City. The Hammers have accepted City's bid of around 14 million pounds (15 million euros) for the 29-year-old. Bellamy demanded a transfer to Tottenham on

Friday after rejecting the offer of a new contract, but his club were unwilling to sell to their London rivals. City have already had three separate bids for Bellamy turned down, and it was thought he would have preferred to join Spurs. (AFP)

NEWSLINE

Zimbabwe edge B'desh

DHAKA: Left-arm spinner Raymond Price returned career best figures with bat and ball to guide Zimbabwe to a two-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first one-day international on Monday. Price took four for 22 as Bangladesh were bowled out for 124, then hit an unbeaten 23 from 52 balls as Zimbabwe passed their target with four balls to spare.

Banasthali triumph

KATHMANDU: Banasthali's Public School won the First Republic Kathmandu District-Wise Taekwondo Championship with four golds, two silvers and six bronze medals, on Monday. Likewise, Jayahouse Mathatirtha Dojo came second with three golds, a silver and a bronze, while organiser Boy's Union A Team came third with three golds, two silvers and four bronze medals. Boy's Union's Dinesh Shrestha and Som Maya Tamang were awarded the best male and female player, respectively.

Rajan, Suraj sizzle

KATHMANDU: Sankata Saving and Credit Co-operatives Rajan Lama and Suraj Singh won their respective games at the Sankata Inter-Co-operative Snooker Championship, on Monday. Rajan beat his co-worker Kiran Shrestha 3-0 while Suraj got the better of Commonwealth's Phuri Sherpa 3-1. Likewise, Bajrayogani's Kunga Lama downed Gajraj 3-1 while Nawa Maruti's Sandeep Shrestha went down to Dhoni Saving's Buddha Lama. Kichaman Chitrakar, Bhuvan shrestha, Nirajan Tuladhar, Suman Gurung and Akash Shrestha also won their matches on the second day of the championship.

(AFP/PR)

Federer starts record bid with win

AFP
MELBOURNE, JAN. 19

Roger Federer made heavy weather of little-known Andreas Seppi at the Australian Open Monday before joining Jelena Jankovic and Novak Djokovic in the second round.

The Swiss great, who is one Grand Slam shy of Pete Sampras's record of 14, looked to be cruising after taking the first set 6-1 before his Italian opponent took the second to a tense tie-breaker, only to lose it 7-4.

Federer gritted his teeth to get through the third set 7-5 but it was a less than convincing victory.

Djokovic, the third seed, saw off a late revival by Italian qualifier Andrea Stoppini to win 6-2, 6-3, 7-5.

Earlier, under blazing sun, world number one Jankovic brushed aside Yvonne Meusburger 6-1, 6-3 in impressive fashion as she looks for a maiden Grand Slam title to silence the critics who ques-



NOT A STROKE OF LUCK: Jelena Jankovic of Serbia returns the ball to Yvonne Meusburger of Austria during their game in the Australian Open, Melbourne on Monday. Jankovic won 6-1, 6-3.

AFPIRSS PHOTO

tion her ranking.

A key rival here, Russia's Dinara Safina, wasted little time in disposing of compatriot Alla Kudryavtseva in straight sets, but

French Open champion Ana Federer starts Slam record bid with unconvincing win struggled before downing Germany's Julia Goerges 7-5, 6-3.

Ivanovic, the fifth seed who lost last year's final to Maria Sharapova, failed to dominate against a player ranked 107, reinforcing fears that she may not be ready for another Major title.

Other women progressing included Russian seventh seed Vera Zvonareva, tenth seed Nadia Petrova, also from Russia, and French 15th seed Alize Cornet.

Meanwhile, men's seventh seed Andy Roddick was running hot as he crushed Swedish qualifier Bjorn Rehnquist 6-0, 6-2, 6-2.

Spain's David Ferrer, the 11th seed, joined him in the next round after surviving a marathon five-setter with journeyman Denis Gretemayr, outlasting the German in just over four hours.

Argentinian hotshot Juan Martin Del Potro routed Germany's Mischa Zverev while former runner-up Marcos Baghdatis also progressed.

Keeping the home fans happy, Australia's Bernard Tomic became the youngest male winner here in history when he beat Italy's Potito Starace aged just 16 years and 90 days.

Defoe rescues Tottenham a point

AGENCIES
LONDON, JAN. 19

Jermain Defoe scored his first goal since returning to Tottenham Hotspur on Sunday, firing an equaliser in a 1-1 draw against former club Portsmouth to lift his side off the bottom of the Premier League.

The draw means the five teams at the foot of the table all have

21 points with Spurs moving out of the relegation zone on goal difference at the expense of Middlesbrough while also sending West Bromwich

Albion back to the bottom.

West Ham United made light of striker Craig Bellamy's absence, beating Fulham 3-1 to move further away from the danger area.

In Spain

Real Madrid came from a goal down to cut Barcelona's lead at the top

to 12 points with a hard-fought 3-1 home victory over basement boys Osasuna on Sunday.

Valencia lost ground on Real and Sevilla after falling to a 3-2 defeat at Athletic Bilbao. Atletico Madrid failed to take full advantage of Valencia's slip drawing 1-1 at Almeria.

Villarreal ended a miserable run with a 2-0 triumph over Real Mallorca to rise to fifth, a point behind Valencia.

In Italy

Serie A leaders Inter Milan suffered a stunning 3-1 defeat at Atalanta on Sunday before Juventus cut the gap at the top to three points with a 1-1 draw at Lazio. Genoa

earlier moved up to fourth with a 2-0 win at Lecce. AS Roma are now just five points off a Champions League place after a goal from Julio Baptista sealed a 1-0 win at lowly Torino.

Trinity, Unique advance

KATHMANDU: Trinity Club and Unique Group entered the quarter-final of the Seventh Women's and Eight Men's Trinity National Open Basketball Championship's men's pool, on Monday.

Trinity ended the challenge of Sunsari 63-291 to reach the quarter-final from group A. Binod

Maharjan netted 10 points for Trinity while Sunsari's Hemanta Rai scored 11 points.

In the other match played at Trinity International College, group B's Unique beat JB College 64-45.

Likewise, Yuvaraj Pun's 20 points helped Kaski thrash Nawalparasi 56-21 in Group C. (PR)

Nepal end chess tourney in a low

SHRAD PRAKASH DHITAL
NEW DELHI, JAN. 19

Nepal ended their Seventh Pasewarnath Open Chess Championship campaign in a disappointing note

PARSWARNATH INT'L OPEN CHESS

the unrated section, had to exit the tournament after going down to India's 2094 rated Diptyan Ghos in the

final round. With five points, Limbu was one win short of the award. Veteran players Sitaram Agrawal and Lav Kumar Shrestha had successful final rounds defeat-

ing 1708 rated Subham Suran and 1824 rated Palavi Dutta respectively.

Nepal Champion Surbir Lama wrapped up the campaign with a

win over 1848 rated Rajiv V, collecting 5.5 points while FIDE Master Manish Hamal also joined him on the top slot among the Nepali players with same amount of points.

Starts Professional Flights

Kathmandu Paragliding

Spot:
Bishankhunaryan VDC
Chapakharka, Kotdanda

(Free Pick up & Drop from Lalitpur, Sardabado International Sports Complex)

Contact: 5536863, 9841351943, 9841496232



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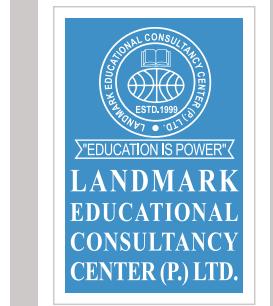
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FLOP SHOW

Bollywood's diplomacy bid bombs pg III

City Post

THE KATHMANDU POST | Tuesday, January 20, 2009

CHEER UP!
It's just another day pg IV



Model United Nations is a unique educational experience, an academic simulation of the United Nations where students take up the roles of ambassadors of UN member states and discuss certain UN agendas. Before taking on their roles as international delegates, the participants conduct extensive research on the country they are assigned. The participants then step into the shoes of delegates and enact certain bodies of the UN debating complex international issues from global warming to nuclear disarmament, food crisis to reunification of the Korean peninsula.

Over 200,000 high school, college and university students participate in MUN conferences all over the world every year. The students exercise their argumentative, decision making and public speaking skills in the Mock UN sessions and enact real UN bodies such as the Security Council, Human Rights Council,



Young AMBASSADORS



Environment Commission, Disarmament Committee and so on. The Model UN conferences usually last for three days with three issues up for discussion for each committee.

MUN sessions provide an unmatched educational experience that goes well beyond what students learn in traditional classroom setting. And they are a lot of fun. Byanjana Thapa, a Rato Bangla School MUN participant, says of her MUN experience: "Although it was hectic preparing for it, I had a great time during the actual conference".

Harvard University has been organising

MUN conferences for over 50 years. Other educational establishments like The Hague International, Ryan International, Delhi Public School also organise MUN conferences. In Kathmandu, the Rato Bangla School organised its third MUN through Dec. 18-21, 2008. Says Milan Dixit, principal of RBS: "Model UN curriculum is so exhilarating that students who participate get totally into role playing and get inspired to understand not only the issues but also the viewpoints of different countries. Overall, MUN helps develop self-motivated learners with skills that will help them in life."

Aayush Shrestha, who has represented China twice in MUN conferences, enunciates in his Chinese accent "Ni hauma!"

"I almost felt like a Chinese at the end of my second MUN."

MUN makes students understand the viewpoints of different countries in detail. Besides, MUN encourages the development of a variety of skills necessary for students throughout their lives such as research, writing, public speaking, problem solving, consensus building, conflict resolution, compromise and cooperation. MUN is not just about giving speeches. It requires writ-



What does a UN insider say?

Kul Chandra Gautam

Former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, on Model UN sessions

"How do you think young students benefit from Model United Nation sessions?"

Young students of today live in a rapidly globalising world. It is important for them to understand the great issues of our times that affect the whole of humanity. Participation in the Model UN offers them an opportunity not only to understand certain global issues, but also to appreciate how people of different nations and cultures view such issues. To become successful in today's highly interdependent and interconnected world it is very important for young people to understand issues of war and peace, economic development and social progress, human rights and global environment from different points of views. The Model UN offers young people an excellent opportunity to understand such issues, and to become mature and responsible global citizens.

"When you see students participating in Model UN conferences, how real do they seem to you and what improvements do you suggest?"

Most students attending Model UN conferences are remarkably knowledgeable and empathetic to the positions of the countries they represent. I was impressed with Rato Bangla School students who organised and attended the



recent Model UN in Kathmandu. Generally a useful improvement for students to make when attending Model UN is to try to learn a little bit more about the language, culture and current affairs of the countries they are representing. Also, it is important for students to learn about how countries at the UN work in different regional and political groupings - e.g. the G-77, P-5, Non-aligned Movement, the African or Asian Groups, etc.

■ IRA REGMI

So you fear public speaking?

Here are just a few hints, public speaking tips and techniques to help you develop your skills and become far more effective as a public speaker.

Mistakes

Mistakes are all right. Recovering from mistakes makes you appear more human.

Good recovery puts your audience at ease -- they identify with you more.

Humour

Tell jokes if you're good at telling jokes.

If you aren't good, best to leave the jokes behind.

There's nothing worse than a punch line that has no punch.

Gentle humour is good in place of jokes.

Self-deprecation is good, but try not to lay it on too thick.

Tell stories

Stories make you a real person not just a deliverer of information.

Use personal experiences to bring your material to life.

No matter how dry your material is, you can always find a way to humanise it.

How to use the public speaking environment

Try not to get stuck in one place.

Use all the space that's available to you.

Move around.

One way to do this is to leave your notes in one place and move to another.

If your space is confined (say a meeting room or even presenting at a



than they hear and will be impatient for you to get to the next point).

If all the technology on offer fails, it's still you they've come to hear.

You can learn to enjoy public speaking and become far more effective at standing in front of a group of people and delivering a potent message. When it comes to improving your public speaking skills we have three words: practise, practise, practise!

(Agencies)

माघ अंकको विशेष ...

नारी

**नेरीको
नयाँ रूप**

सर्वोत्तम

प्रार्थना

पार्टी वेयर पहिरनमा

शान्ति, सुख, तथा
स्थानिक डंगोल

फेसन

कर्त्ता होला
तपाईंको जोडी?

सांस्कृतिक
सेरोफरोमा
मिस नेपाल:

आकर्षक
घर

परिक्षण

अन्य रोचक सामग्रीसहित

बजारमा उपलब्ध छ ।

Grand Lhosar celebrations from Jan 25

The most important festival of the Tamang community, Laang Lhosar (Ox New Year 2,845) starts Jan. 27 as per the lunar calendar. The community is organising various programmes from Jan. 25 to mark the event. Lhosar is also observed by sev-

eral other communities in Nepal including several indigenous groups.

Keeping with the tradition, the festival will be celebrated in high spirit in the

Valley with participation from people of all walks of life. Around 97 different Tamang organisations under the coordination of Nepal Tamang Ghedung central president Dhan Prasad Tamang have joined hands to form an alliance, Laang Lhosar 2845 Brihat Mul Samyojan

will be the chief guest.

The preparations are almost at an end. To kick things off, an interaction programme on "The historical and social issue of Tamang community" will be held at Martin Chautari on Jan. 25. It will be followed by a motorcycle rally on Jan. 26,

country observe the festival in their own ways.

This year's festival will have some political overtures what with the demand for five-day national holiday for Tamangs during Loshar and declaration of Tamsaling Autonomous Region without further ado.



eral other communities in Nepal including several indigenous groups.

Keeping with the tradition, the festi-

Samiti. The committee is responsible for organising a Grand Loshar Cultural Rally and Cultural festival at Tundikhel on Jan. 29. Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal

a friendly football match between the Tamang artists and media person on Jan. 31 and Loshar Closing Ceremony at City hall on Feb. 11. Different regions of the

Everybody is free to participate in the programme that intends to promote Tamang culture, which as per the organizers, is on the verge of disappearance. (PR)

METALLICA Still the kings

The members of Metallica learned this week they'll be in this year's class of Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees. No act this heavy has ever received that honour. On durability and CD sales alone, the honor is deserved. Metallica is huge, after all, and has seemingly forever been huge: After the release of its latest record, "Death Magnetic," Metallica was cited by Billboard as the first group ever to have five CDs debut at No. 1. (The Beatles, U2 and Dave Matthews, none of whom ever



detuned an E string to add crunch, are the only others with four.) But for Metallica, which was putting the wrecking ball to the wall between fringe and mainstream long before there was a Nirvana, these latest recognitions aren't as righteous as, say, having its logo ironed onto Beavis' t-shirt all those years ago.

So at the Verizon Center (Washington, D.C.) on Thursday, a building packed with 20,000 real-life Beavises of varying ages and genders, no Metalican bragged from the stage about or even mentioned the induction or the chart-topping status. Instead, they delivered a punishing, cathartic set heavy with new songs -- "That Was Just Your Life" and "The End of the Line," which clocked in at more than seven minutes each -- that were as fast and furious as the stuff that broke them out of California 25 years ago.

Metallica's bond with its audience remains staggering. Guitarist/vocalist James Hetfield gets whatever he wants from the flock. Hetfield asked the fans to scream "Obey your master" during "Master of Puppets," and everybody in the building complied with every decibel they could muster.

(The Washington Post)

EVENT GRAPH

Temple Tiger
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For further information: Temple Tiger Jungle Lodges & Resort
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FOOD

- "Some like it hot" BBQ by the pool side at Dwarika's Hotel every Friday from 7 to 10 pm with live music by "Dinesh Rai and The Sound Minds". Rate: 999 plus 10% service charge. Reservations Recommended. Contact 4479488.
- Experience the exotic Nepali dinner at our Signature restaurant "The Krishnarpan" at the Dwarika's Hotel (open for dinner only). Meals from 6-22 courses available. Reservation Recommended. Contact 4479488.
- A fine dine with Indian Cuisine and enjoy the live Gazal with Sunil & Band (except Tuesday) at Maharaja Restaurant, 8th floor, Grand Hotel, Tahaclal, Kathmandu. Contact No. 4282452.
- Enjoy the festive season heat with Strawberry Flavours at The Lounge from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234 for details.
- Savor Flavors from the exotic orient at The Cafe showcasing famous wok fried specialties and curries of Asia every Wednesday. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234 for details.
- Enjoy the wood-fired oven baked pizza with Italian specialties served in a contemporary style every Monday & Tuesday exclusively at Rox Restaurant. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4493634 for details.
- Indulge yourself in best selection of wine and cheese every Friday & Saturday at the Lounge - Hyatt Regency Kathmandu from 5 pm to 8 pm. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234 for details.
- Every Friday join us to explore the culinary delights from the Mediterranean region Greece, Italy and the Middle-East at The Cafe. Please contact Hyatt Regency Kathmandu at 4491234 for details.
- Cocktails & Grooves - Swing to the rhythm of Jazz with Inner Groove & enjoy the Fusion Platter & a specialty cocktail of choice every Wednesday at Fusion - The Bar at Dwarika's Hotel. Fusion Hour: buy one get one free from 5-7pm. Tel: 4479448.

MUSIC

- Every Wednesday ladies night with free cocktail and unplugged music. Happy hour everyday 5 - 7pm. buy one get one free. Free hi-speed wifi everyday at jatra R & B.
- Jazz evening every Wednesday (with Mariano Abello), Chris's brunch on Saturdays and Sundays at Délices de France Restaurant, café & bar from 11 AM to 2PM. Ganesh Man Singh Building, 2nd floor, Thamel, Kathmandu. Contact no. 4260326
- Live music @ G's Terrace Restaurant N Bar, Thamel every Tuesday with Strings band.
- Wednesday ladies' night - Live unplugged music & one free cocktail to ladies at Jatra Cafe & Thamel.
- Happiest cocktail hours from 5-7pm. Tel: 4256622.
- Wild Wednesdays @ JazzaBell Café, Chakrapati, Patan every Wednesday, 6:30pm onwards with live band Epic. Tel: 2114075.
- Live fusion & classic music by Anil Shahi from 8pm onwards every Wednesday at Absolute Bar, Hotel Narayani Complex, Pulchowk. Tel: 5521408.

THEATRE

- The Frost Haired and the Dream Seer presented by Beavisá Sami Teáter (Norwegian National Sami Theatre), on Tuesday, January 20 at 12:00 noon and 4:30 pm. Passes available at Gurukul from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. this Sunday and Monday. Contact: 4466965.

GALLERY

- 'SACRED SPACES' - An exhibition of paintings by Mr. Binod Pradhan at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited from 15th January to 5th February 2009. Contact 4-218048 / 4438979.

ZEE TV

- 11:15 Anderson Cooper 360°, 9:15 World Report, 9:45 World Sport, 10:15 CNN Today, 12:45 World Sports, 13:15 CNN Today, 13:45 World Business Today, 14:15 World Sport, 14:45 Inside Africa, 15:15 Larry King Live, 16:15 World News, 16:45 World Sport, 17:15 World News Asia, 19:15 World's Untold Stories, 19:45 World Business Today, 20:15 Your World Today, 21:45 World Sport, 22:15 Your World Today
- 8:15:15 October Road, 08:15 Friends, 09:15 Rock, 09:45 Scrubs, 10:15 La Femme Nikita, 11:15 October Road, 12:15 Jimmy Kimmel Live!, 13:15 Monk, 14:15 Ellen DeGeneres, 15:15 Monks, 16:15 The Wire, 17:15 La Femme Nikita, 18:15 October Road, 19:15 Friends, 20:15 Seinfeld, 20:45 Whose Line Is It Anyway?, 21:15 Rock, 21:45 Scrubs, 22:15 Heroes, 23:15 Jimmy Kimmel Live!
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Who makes the Obamas dance? Wonder!



President-elect Barack Obama, Michelle Obama, Vice President-elect Joe Biden and Jill Biden perform "Shout" at the Lincoln Memorial for an inaugural concert on Sunday. AP/ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO

What President-elect Barack Obama has on his iPod may soon be a state secret, but musicians Stevie Wonder, Garth Brooks and Pete Seeger all got the president-elect moving at a concert on Sunday.

Obama, his wife Michelle and daughters Malia and Sasha sat sedately along with Vice President-elect Joe Biden and his wife Jill as Bruce Springsteen sang "The Rising" and Mary J. Blige did a knockout performance of "Lean on Me."

The concert, held in freezing weather on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C., aimed to kick off celebrations marking

Tuesday's inauguration of Obama as the first African-American U.S. president.

Early in the show, Obama's daughter Sasha, 7, fidgeted and a seemingly bored Malia, 10, laid her head on her mother's shoulder. Obama chatted occasionally with Biden as the two families sat behind bullet-proof glass at the side of the stage.

But there were signs of life when Garth Brooks took the stage, first singing "American Pie" and then "Shout," during which the first lady-to-be shot her hand into her air with Sasha.

Then came Stevie Wonder, Usher and Shakira -- the most diverse set of performers in a

remarkably diverse show. Wonder and Usher are African-American while Shakira is a Colombian of Lebanese descent. With Wonder's "Higher Ground," the Obamas were on their feet and even did a bit of dancing.

Obama stood up with his family as Jamie Foxx shouted, "Chi-town, stand up!" The president-elect also laughed heartily at Foxx's imitation of his sometimes monotone, staccato style of speaking.

The Obamas sang along to "This Land is Your Land," performed by Bruce Springsteen, Pete Seeger and a grandson of Seeger, as did the gigantic crowd that stretched from the

Lincoln Memorial down to the Washington Monument.

They also sang with Beyoncé as she performed "America the Beautiful."

Jon Bon Jovi, Sheryl Crow, Josh Groban, John Mellencamp and Irish band U2 also performed. Speakers included Steve Carell, Queen Latifah, Denzel Washington and Tiger Woods.

Sarah Rohrer, 28, from Dayton, Ohio, was one of the

stone for African-Americans. It was here that Marian Anderson sang in 1939 after being barred from Constitution Hall because of her race and where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Speaking on the steps of the Memorial to Abraham Lincoln, who took office as the Civil War loomed, Obama expressed optimism despite the fact that he will take office on Tuesday amid



thousands in the crowd despite freezing temperatures on a gray, overcast January day. Rohrer came to Washington on business and stayed a few extra days to come to the concert because she wanted to join in the excitement. "There's a new spirit in being involved in politics," she said.

The memorial is a touch-

two wars and the worst economic crisis since the 1930s. "There is no doubt that our road will be long. That our climb will be steep," he added. "But never forget that the true character of our nation is revealed not during times of comfort and ease, but by the right we do when the moment is hard."

(Agencies)

Thumbs down to Chandni Chowk

The first Hindi film to be shot on location in China has been poorly received by audiences and critics, in a fresh blow to Hollywood's bid to break into the lucrative Indian market.

"Chandni Chowk to China", a co-production with US studio Warner Brothers about a lowly Indian chef who is mistaken for the reincarnation of a fabled Chinese warrior, opened in cinemas on Friday. "I watched the film in theatres and everyone was hooting and jeering," Indian comic actor Shekhar Suman told the Midday newspaper Monday.

"I don't think there has been a film as sad or horrible as 'Chandni Chowk to China.' I declare January 16 (the day the film was released) to be declared National Mourning in India, as it's the day cinema died."

Critics were equally negative, amid reports that scheduled screenings of the action-comedy were being reduced across the country.



associated with the project will suffer losses. Unless there is a miracle, the prospects of 'Chandni Chowk to China' seems bleak." Hollywood studios have been taking an increasing interest in India's 2.1-billion-dollar-a-year film industry in recent years.

Sony Pictures made the first move, co-producing the love story "Saawariya" (Beloved) in November 2007. Walt Disney Pictures worked with Indian studio Yash Raj Films for the full-length animation feature "Roadside Romeo", released in October last year.

Warner Brothers had previously produced "Saas Bahu Aur Sensex", a small-budget comedy about unlikely investors in India's stock market, also in 2008. All three failed to do well at the box office.

Bollywood analysts had expected "Chandni Chowk to China" to be the breakthrough blockbuster because of its cast of Indian action-hero Akshay Kumar and Chinese martial arts film veteran Gordon Liu.

(AFP)

Trade analyst Amod Mehra told the Mumbai Mirror newspaper Monday: "Chandni Chowk to China" is a disaster. The film has no script, no action and no China. "Distributors are crying and they are bound to lose copious amounts of money."

Another Bollywood expert, Vajir Singh, wrote in the Hindustan Times daily: "Everyone

Winslet going by the book for BAFTAs?



British actress Kate Winslet acknowledged she would have to compose a speech for the BAFTA Awards next month, after her emotional acceptance at the Golden Globes.

Winslet, nominated twice in the Best Actress category at the British Academy Film Awards, had to apologise to the audience during her gushing acceptance speech at the Golden Globes this month, when she picked up two gongs.

"Well, clearly, I should prepare a speech because I didn't think that was going to happen at the Golden Globes," the 33-year-old said of her Golden Globes

success, at the London premiere of "Revolutionary Road".

"Some people apparently haven't been very nice about it, but luckily I've been in America where they've said very nice things."

In addition to her BAFTA nomination for "Revolutionary Road", Winslet was also short-listed for her performance in "The Reader". She previously won a Best Supporting Actress BAFTA in 1995 for "Sense and Sensibility". The BAFTAs are Britain's leading film and television awards and the ceremony will take place on February 8.

(AFP)

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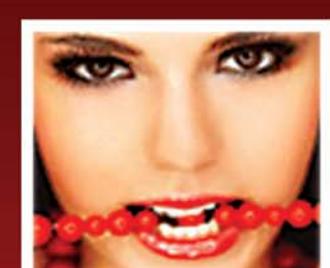
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Mountain Flight



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The Robot is no more

Bob May, who donned The Robot's suit in the hit 1960s television show "Lost in Space," has died. He was 69.

May died Sunday of congestive heart failure at a hospital in Lancaster, said his daughter, Deborah May.

He was a veteran actor and stuntman who had appeared in movies, TV shows and on the vaudeville stage when he was tapped by "Lost in Space" creator Irwin Allen to play the Robinson family's loyal metal sidekick in the series that debuted in 1965.

"He always said he got the job because he fit in the robot suit," said June Lockhart, who played family matriarch Maureen Robinson. "It was one of those wonderful Hollywood stories. He just happened to be on the studio lot when someone saw him and sent him to see Irwin Allen about the part. Allen said, 'If you can fit in the suit, you've got the job.'"

Although May didn't provide the robot's distinctive voice (that was done by announcer Dick Tufeld), he developed a following of fans who sought him out at memorabilia shows.

He went on to appear in numerous films with Jerry Lewis and in such TV shows as

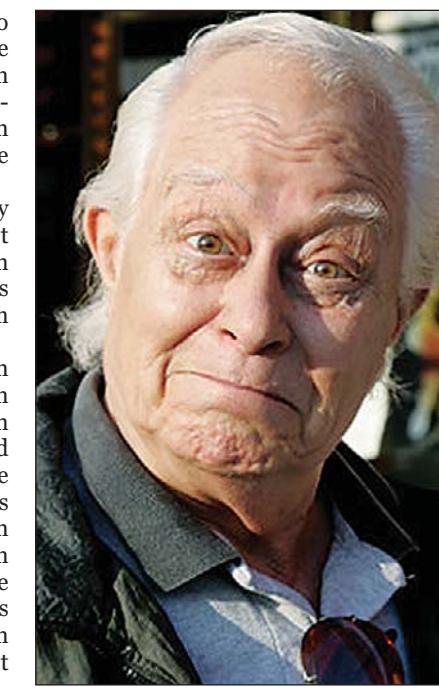
"The Time Tunnel," "McHale's Navy" and "The Red Skelton Show." He was also a stuntman in such 1950s and '60s TV shows as "Cheyenne," "Surfside 6," "Hawaiian Eye," "The Roaring 20s" and "Stagecoach."

He was particularly fond of his Robot role, once saying he came to consider the suit a "home away from home."

May and his wife lost their house in November when a wildfire destroyed their upscale mobile home park in the San Fernando Valley.

Survivors include his wife Judith; his daughter; his son, Martin; and four grandchildren. Funeral services are pending.

(AP)



HOROSCOPE TODAY

Aries



Once you start moving today, life should get much more interesting! Your great personal energy is driving you to greater heights of success, but only if you can keep your velocity pretty high.

Taurus



You're feeling pretty wary of a new plan or idea put forth by someone you usually trust -- and you're right to ask questions. Expect to peel away a few layers of illusion before you get to the truth.

Gemini



Like a lot of people today, you have a deep need to take quick action -- though yours could probably stand to be thought out a bit more than anyone else's. Your good mental energy helps you in the end.

Cancer



Everyone else around you is dealing with their own business today, so why don't you do the same? You may need to take care of someone's minor problem, but a little selfishness won't hurt anyone.

Leo



It's hard for you to understand how people can be so small-minded when the world is so big and (occasionally) wonderful. Though your energy is flowing quite well, you might take time out to show them how to chill.

Virgo



Show the world that you can take risks and dare to tempt fate -- though you've always got a back-up plan, of course! It's one of those days when you need to make sure you're a step ahead of the rest.

Libra



You're feeling the urge to really think things through and figure out what comes next through conversation with friends or family members -- and at least a few of them are ready to talk.

Scorpio



You may accidentally drop more than a few bucks on a purchase that you don't really need to make. Buyer's regret shouldn't be an issue, though -- sometimes your impulses are right on!

Sagittarius



Your great mood is downright infectious today -- only the most sour of pussies can resist the urge to smile around you! If you're momentarily down, it shouldn't take much to bring you right back up.

Capricorn



Things may look rather dire early today, but you're still committed to getting things done so you push ahead anyway. That commitment is all you really need to make your way toward success!

Aquarius



Your friends are more engaged than ever with your new plan and you can hardly believe your luck. It's one of those great days when your social energy merges with your brainpower.

Pisces



You are wondering how your friends can just sit there and take today's big news -- you may get quite righteous, even! That doesn't mean they're going to change their minds, but you may have some influence.

laugh out LOUD

A guy goes to pick up his date for the evening. She's not ready yet, so he has to sit in the living room with her parents.

He has a bad case of gas and really needs to relieve some pressure.

Luckily, the family dog jumps up on the couch next to him. He decides that he can let a little fart out and if anyone notices they will think that the dog did it.

He farts, and the woman yells, "Spot, get down from there."

The guy thinks, "Great, they think the dog did it." He releases another fart, and the woman again yells for the dog to get down.

This goes on for a couple more farts. Finally the woman yells, "Dammit Spot, get down before he shits on you."

Send your LOL at :lol@kantipur.com.np

Su Doku No. 1245x

9			2	5				
2	3		1	6				
	5	2	4					
9	4		6	2				
	8	9						
3	4		5	8				
	3	5	1					
5	6		4	1				
1	2			8				

Solution in the next issue
Difficulty : Very Hard

7	5	1	3	6	4	9	8	2
6	8	9	1	2	5	3	4	7
4	2	3	8	9	7	5	1	6
1	3	5	9	7	8	2	6	4
2	7	4	6	1	3	8	5	9
9	6	8	5	4	2	7	3	1
3	4	7	2	5	6	1	9	8
5	9	6	7	8	1	4	2	3
8	1	2	4	3	9	6	7	5

Fill the given grid with the numbers 1 to 9, so that every column, row, and 3x3 box indicated by the slightly heavier lines has the numbers 1 to 9. You can't change the digits already provided in the grid. The grid has numbers, but nothing has to add up to anything else. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

A TALE OF TORTURED SOULS

The issues addressed in "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" might not be as relevant in 2009 as they were back in the seventies, nonetheless, one cannot but be mesmerised by Czech-born Milos Forman's second Oscar-winning film and one that put him on the A-list of Hollywood directors. The distasteful mental health care techniques shown are no longer in place (electroconvulsive therapy and frontal lobotomies both outlawed), but the film's central theme rings true even today.

At the outset, the movie is about the struggle for supremacy between a patient R.P. McMurphy (Jack Nicholson) and

Nurse Ratched (Louise Fletcher). But dig a little deeper and one gets to touching distance of feeling the tyranny of the establishment against the individual.

Ratched and McMurphy are natural antagonists, and their conflict front and centre of One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest. She's a disciplinarian, he, an out and out rebel who likes to keep pushing the envelop at every opportunity.

For much of the



"One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest" is also about the individual's struggle against establishment, a common film and literature theme at the time.

Although McMurphy wins occasionally, in the end he is ruthlessly crushed. Ratched is all-conquering, as she must be in a

tale like this.

The strongest part of the film, unsurprisingly, is its uncompromising end. When McMurphy is dealt a cruel hand by fate, it is the Chief's friendship that comes to his rescue even though both the Chief and McMurphy attain redemption in their own ways.

Although by 1975 Nicholson's star was on the rise, he was not the first choice as McMurphy. One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest, eventually, got him his first Oscar as the Best Actor. His is top-notch acting, interspersed with the right blend of

humour and pathos. Louise Fletcher portrays Nurse Ratched with the delicacy the character called for.

Ken Kesey, on whose book the 1963 Broadway play and the aforementioned movie are based, was unsatisfied with the film. He felt it veered far from his central theme and refused to take part in publicising the final product. Nevertheless, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest became one of the most celebrated movies of the 1970s, winning all of the "Big Five" categories in Academy Awards.

One is hooked from the very first frame in the movie; Forman is successful in convincing people of the prison-like setting of the mental institution.

All in all, One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest is a beautiful cinematic experience, every single member of the cast turning out one stellar performance after the other.

■ VIJAYSHREE SUKHANI



film, the two torment each other, with McMurphy risking it all in a final gambit. Cool and stoic, Ratched is the arch-villain who believes she has to put up the facade - if only for the betterment of her patients, her strange logic serving to add a little poignancy to her otherwise hard-headed character.

On a less tangible level, "One Flew over

inauguration. While most Inauguration Days probably don't do much to lift people's moods, this one is different.

But second, even aside from considering the accuracy of the claim, just hearing the announcement that today is "the year's most depressing day" makes the day seem better. Even if I have a bad day today, I'm not likely to think, "Gosh, this is going to turn out to have

been the most depressing day of the year." Things aren't likely to be that bad.

There's a psychological term for this: downward comparison. Comparing my January 19th to the most depressing day I can imagine makes today seem bright. Downward comparisons tend to boost happiness, because they remind us to be grateful for what we have. In one study, people's sense of life satisfaction changed dramatically depending on whether they completed sentences starting "I'm glad I'm not..." (downward comparison) or instead, "I wish I was..." (upward comparison).

So, today, if you're feeling blue, you're not alone -- and if you're not feeling blue, you can appreciate that. (Slater)

"Most depressing day of the year" – not

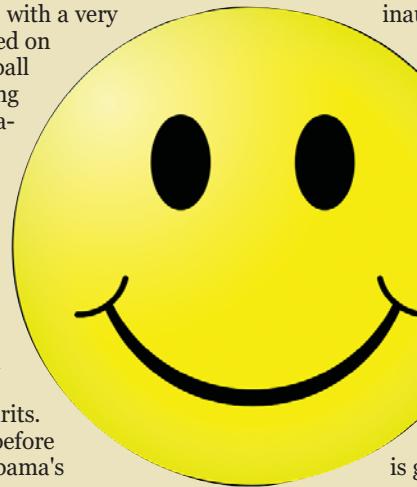
GRETCHEN RUBIN

Apparently, according to a mathematical formula devised by Cliff Arnall, Jan 19 is the most depressing day of 2009. Arnall's formula considers factors like people's failure to keep up their new year's resolutions, the weather, post-holidays blues (no more fun, lots of bills), and the date falling on a Monday.

Paradoxically, I got a happiness boost from someone's claim that today is the year's most depressing day. First of all, I got a kick out of the idea of trying to identify the most depressing day with a formula. Silly, but fun. What factors would you use to identify your own personal "most depressing day" formula? You'd

probably come up with a very different day, based on the end of basketball season, the opening of bathing-suit season, etc.

In the United States, this formula is certainly not accurate this year (Arnall is from the UK). Today is a Monday, but it's a holiday, and that raises people's spirits. Also, it's the day before President-elect Obama's



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CITYPOST STRIPS

Pickles



Ripley's Believe it or not



Archie



Peanuts



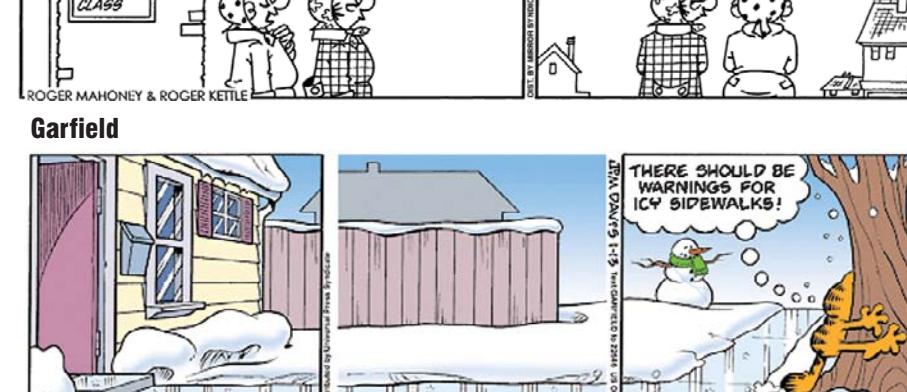
F Minus



Andy Capp



Garfield



ON AUG. 4, 1982, OUTFIELDER JOEL YOUNGBLOOD PLAYED FOR TWO DIFFERENT MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL TEAMS IN TWO DIFFERENT CITIES, ON THE SAME DAY!

Submitted By Dan Pavlin, W. Lafayette, Ohio, USA

VAMPIRE MOTHS! Europe's CALYPTERA THALICTRI MOTHS TYPICALLY FEED ON FRUIT JUICES, BUT A RUSSIAN POPULATION OF THE MOTHS INCLUDE MALES THAT ALSO FEED ON HUMAN BLOOD!

Submitted By Ian Ilyas, San Francisco, Calif., USA

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