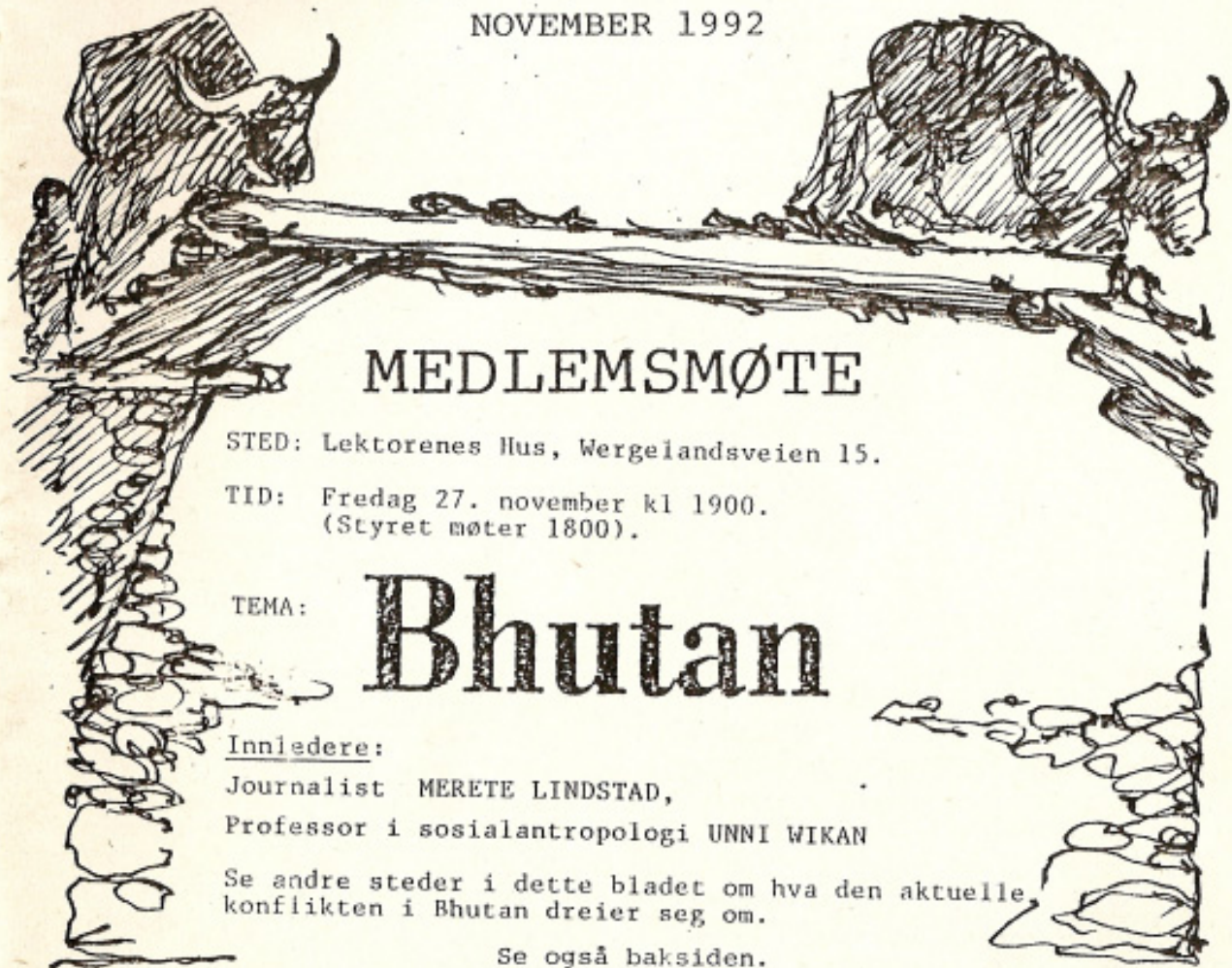




हाम्रो पत्रिका

HAMRO PATRIKA VARIAVIS
ORGAN FOR NORGE-NEPAL-FORENINGEN

NOVEMBER 1992



MEDLEMSMØTE

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TEMA:

Bhutan

Innledere:

Journalist MERETE LINDSTAD,

Professor i sosialantropologi UNNI WIKAN

Se andre steder i dette bladet om hva den aktuelle konflikten i Bhutan dreier seg om.

Se også baksiden.

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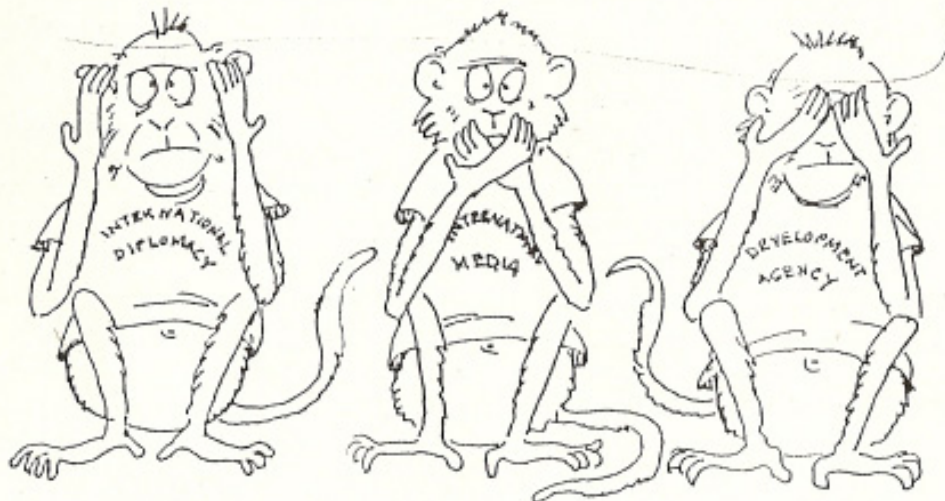
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The state of the ruling Nepali Congress, the absence of a democratic alternative to it, the course of relations between parliament and the palace, the position of the army and, above all, the extreme disparities in Nepalese society are all cause for unease about the progress of democracy in Nepal.



Democracy in the Himalayas

Anirudha Gupta

THE advent of democracy has let in a ray of hope and gaiety in Nepal's political life. One senses this while mixing with the crowds which gather round TV or radio to hear the budget; or in street-corner cafes filled with smoke and heated debate.

But there is a note of unease as well. One is over the state of affairs in the ruling Nepali Congress (NC). Despite a 30-year ban on party politics, the Congress launched a successful mass movement in 1990 to secure the fall of the panchayat system and form an interim government in association with several communist groups. This government gained the

allegiance of the palace and major political formations to frame and adopt a new Constitution and hold, finally, the general elections of May 1991. A grateful electorate of over 11 million duly acknowledged its debt by returning the Congress to power with 110 of 205 seats in the Pratinidhi Sabha. A year later, NC secured a landslide victory by annexing two-thirds of the seats in elections to local bodies. (see table for details.)

This was clearly the NC's proudest hour. Yet, curiously enough, few Congressmen appear to be in a mood for celebration. There are loud complaints

and, of course, a free scramble for high posts and sinecures. This is not unnatural, for few politicians make sacrifices for spiritual reasons; they want material reward almost as soon as they grab state power. "They come in tens of thousands", sighed the NC president, K P Bhattarai, "and they want 'mulyankan' (assessment) for personal favour. But, how can we satisfy all?"

A young activist, though, supplied further information: "We have no record to verify who went to jail, or lost job, or whether all those who come here are Congressmen or not." That is what happens, he ruefully added, when your party gets into power.

But the malaise perhaps goes much deeper than that. Until very recently, the Congress had been a movement-party which mobilised popular support to fight a particularly odious regime. It has proved in this eminently successful. But the new

role to work *for* rather than *against* a system calls for an altogether different style of functioning, which the NC must learn the hard way. In the meanwhile, all party units from grassroots to the top have come unstuck. There exists but little accord between the legislative and organisational wings of the party. Prime minister Girija-Prasad Koirala fails to maintain regular contact with the party headquarters. On the other hand, the two other members of the famous troika, Ganeshman Singh and Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, are suspicious of the prime minister's urge to function free of party encumbrances. All this led to a near showdown between Koirala and Singh at the party's eighth national convention held in Jhapa in February this year. Singh threatened to quit "frontline leadership", but a hastily convened meeting of the central committee reached a compromise formula to respect Singh's feelings and "act on consensus among the troika on major issues, including appointments to

high ranking posts, i.e. secretaries, general managers, ambassadors, etc" [*Saptahik Bimarsha*, February 17, 1992].

For many Congressmen the situation was strongly reminiscent of the years 1952-53, when Matrika Prasad Koirala, then NC president and also prime minister, was asked by the party to drop three of his ministerial colleagues. Matrikababu refused, which led to his expulsion and also a split in the party. Would a similar sequence of events bring down G P Koirala's government? The disgruntled elements may perhaps welcome that, but Koirala himself dismisses such possibilities. "In the first place, we have regained political freedom



which nobody wants to lose. Second, public opinion will not allow Congress leaders to act irresponsibly."

But he draws attention to a different kind of problem: "We had differences in the troika, yet managed to survive collectively. But how long can this state of affairs last? We all are in our 70s, and unless we train up and entrust a second generation of leadership with hard responsibilities, Congress may also

collapse when we leave." This is one sentiment which the younger elements forcefully articulated at the Jhapa convention. They argued that decision-making by consensus among the troika was not compatible with democratic practices and, therefore, there was need for decentralisation of authority from top to lower ranks of the party.

G P Koirala received the support of these elements when he also observed at the convention that NC should reform its working-style. "In the last five decades", he said, "many people died for the cause of democracy in Nepal. Many young leaders have been produced by this struggle. I am confident that the old generation of our leadership can comfortably place the responsibility of running the nation on the shoulders of these young leaders."

Was this a declaration of war? The older generation wondered. Their personal record of suffering, either in prison or outside, cannot be ignored. Yet



those still in their 40s—who joined the struggle around the late 1970s—gained a berth in G P Koirala's cabinet. The older generation thus have reasons to get hurt and angry.

There are also others, outside the NC, who are ill-disposed towards Koirala's leadership. Among them, the communists with 69 MPs present a formidable opposition. The only relieving feature is that these MPs, grouped under the United Marxist-Leninist Party (UML), do not pursue a homogeneous policy. The UML is a patchwork of several smaller factions, with the Marxist-Leninists (MALE) providing the nucleus. But this gives rise to embarrassing situations. In parliament, for instance, Manmohan Adhikary of the old Nepal Communist Party (NCP) is designated the leader of the opposition, but he has little say on policy matters which his MALE colleagues decide in

camera. As a result, Adhikari is not taken seriously even by his own group.

But MALE MPs too are not united. They follow varying ideologies and allegiances depending on which region or constituency they come from. Those from eastern districts have little knowledge about the ways and manners of MPs belonging to the far west. In addition, there is an independent group of nine MPs, which calls itself the United Peoples Front (UPF). This too represents a combination of three factions which do not believe in parliamentary democracy. Instead, they advocate establishment of Maoist democracy. To cover up the confusion in their own ranks, all communist groups press relentlessly for a confrontationist stand against the Koirala government. This makes the prospect for a democratic consensus, involving the NC

and the UML, a remote possibility. "We need perhaps a second democratic party to provide an alternative to the Nepali Congress", said the prime minister. "The communists are neither capable nor inclined to provide such an alternative." What about the National Democratic Party (NDP) floated by two former Pancha prime ministers, Surya Bahadur Thapa and S K Chand? "With just three

MPs, I do not see how NDP can make any dent on party politics."

The local bodies elections have thrown up many surprises. In 14 of 75 districts, NDP fared better than UML and carried at least two town municipalities with a majority. Thus, in contrast to its performance in the 1991 general elections, the NDP has emerged as a third force in both town and village development committees. The loser has been the UML with a rate of success below 20 per cent to NC's 56 per cent in municipalities and around 26 per cent to NC's 50 per cent in village committees (see table for details).

But have the local elections really settled the political dilemma before the nation, asks a Nepali commentator and adds, "how would the pattern of alliance emerge between the major parties? would

ideology take the lead there, or would expediency decide it? Finally, would the ruling party, which has clearly dominated the election results, now perform better than it has done so far?" [A Aditya in *Spotlight*, June 30, 1992].

This brings us next to the set of questions involving the palace and parliament. In 1959, when B P Koirala's Nepali Congress was swept into power with an overwhelming majority in parliament, nobody asked if the king was inclined to accept drastic curbs on his executive authority. Most observers and actors assumed that once the people had made their choice known, king Mahendra would limit his role to acting as a constitutional head. The opposite happened. By a single decree, issued on December 15, 1960, Mahendra dismissed an elected government, dissolved parliament and threw B P Koirala and his associates in jail. [These developments are discussed in my *Politics in Nepal*, Bombay, 1964.]

This time the actors are different, but they are not unrelated: B P Koirala's place is occupied by his youngest brother, and Mahendra's son, Birendra, adorns the throne. Would all this press for a repeat performance? The question haunts many, but no one is definite enough to supply an answer. The prime minister himself is

sanguine: "The king does not interfere in day-to-day administration. I do not anticipate, therefore, any complication from his side."

But there are shadowy elements, in and outside the palace, who have not reconciled themselves to the rule by the usurpers. The hard-core Panchas may have staged a tactful retreat from the scene, but they can be trusted to employ every means available to discredit the multi-party system. There are also allegations of the crown having influenced the choice of particular nominees for higher posts and ambassadorships. Some even allege that prime minister Koirala gives in too easily to royal pressure. All this may only prove to be passing irritants before proper norms are established to

govern the relationship between a constitutional monarch and the head of an elected government.

But the position of the Royal Nepal Army (RNA), with 16,000 men officered by the scions of aristocratic families, still remains vague. The Constitution chooses to be terse on the subject. It provides for a National Defence Council (NDC) consisting of the prime minister as chairman and the defence minister and the commander-in-chief as members. The king, as supreme commander "shall perform the operation and deployment of the army on the recommendation of the NDC". He will also appoint the commander-in-chief on the recommendation of prime minister. But "the establishment, management and other matters concerning the Royal Nepal Army shall be determined by law" [Provision 118 (3)]. Which law? The traditional ones which ensure complete allegiance of RNA to the royalty? If not, where are the new laws?

The Constitution has nothing to say about the bureaucratic apparatus. Yet this was the one sector which registered a phenomenal growth during panchayat rule. During 1960-80, the number of civil

servants rose from 3,000 to 75,000, i.e., 25 times in 20 years. In 1950, the district administration was rudimentary, with one magistrate for about 1,150 citizens. Now it has several departments filled by a

hierarchy of administrative, technical and scientific staff. But the seat of bureaucracy continues to be the capital, where everything comes cheap and in abundance—foreign funds, tourists, trade and, of course, consumer goods. Would such conditions reach other towns and regions? "We are trying. A hospital in Birganj, a polytechnic in western region, and new industries in Tarai", says the prime minister. But he too is concerned about the inherent bureaucratic thrust for self-aggrandisement. On the other hand, Kathmandu's traditional elite considers the Koiralas as rank outsiders (based in far-off Biratnagar) and, therefore, untrained in the finer traits of 'bharadari' (courtier) culture.

This brings us face-to-face with the extreme disparities in Nepalese society. One sees, on the one hand, "an explosive growth of a *nouveau riche* class" fattening on "wages and salaries, graft, corruption and other modes of rent farming. . . More ominously, the educated classes are becoming proprietary classes" [Devendra Raj Panday in Bhabhani Sen Gupta (ed) *The First South Asian Dialogue: A Report*, New Delhi, 1992].

On the other hand, there is rapid impoverishment of the countryside. Over 60 per cent of Nepal's 18 million people



live below the poverty line, and almost wholly in villages. No wonder the rural poor herd across international boundaries in tens of thousands in search of food and shelter. Their plight is no different from that of the Bangladeshi refugees, except that the latter have additional odium of being Muslims.

Need all this concern us in India? Despite widespread destitution, the peoples of Nepal and Bangladesh have achieved democratic rights after long and hard struggles. Unlike us, therefore, they are determined to defend and consolidate political freedom. Should their leaders fail to measure up to their expectations, their former oppressors alone would be the gainers. Yet such is the dilemma of democracy that it raises more hopes than resources to meet the minimum basic needs of the people. "My only aim is to provide drinking water to every village", says G P Koirala. But, where could he get the money? "Perhaps a part of the expenses could be met by motivating people to do digging and road construction. The rest, presumably, will come from external donors. No, not from the World Bank which wants my government to raise an additional levy on water even before it releases funds."

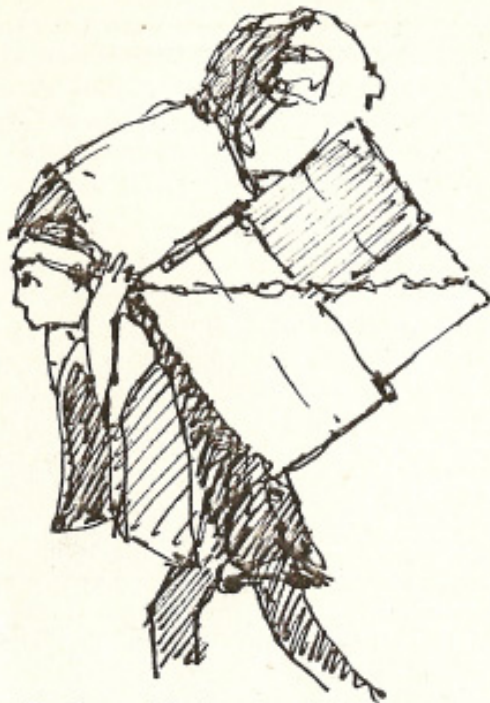
TABLE: DETAILS OF LOCAL BODIES ELECTIONS, JUNE 1992—PARTY POSITION
(1) Municipalities

Parties	Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Members	Total	Per Cent Share in Total
Nepali Congress	22	21	331	374	56.2
CP-UML	6	5	119	130	19.5
NDP	2	2	55	59	8.9
United Peoples Front	X	1	8	9	1.4
Sadbhavna Party	1	3	18	22	3.3
Independents	5	4	62	71	10.7

(2) Village Development Committees

Parties	Chairmen	Vice-Chairmen	Members	Total	Per Cent Share in Total
Nepali Congress	2,223	2,094	17,966	22,283	50.3
CP-UML	986	1,086	9,485	11,557	26.11
NDP	304	312	3,678	4,294	9.70
United Peoples Front	182	209	1,844	2,235	5.05
Sadbhavna Party	119	117	1,073	1,309	2.9
Independents	198	186	2,208	2,592	5.8

Source: Election Commission Office, Kathmandu.



Foreign aid has spawned research centres and NGOs. "Their areas sometime overlap, but we cannot impose rigid control for fear of losing even what we get." On the other hand, the government's annual budget does not impose taxes on big landholdings and urban property. It devotes total attention to promoting export-oriented industries. Says a Planning Commission document, *Approach to the Eighth Plan, 1992-97*, "Development of a sustainable export base and its gradual indigenisation will receive priority." Hence (a) export procedures will be simplified, (b) licensing requirements for exports will be removed, (c) pre- and post-export financial facilities will be made available from commercial banks, (d) Nepalese diplomatic missions will be utilised for this purpose, and so on.

Would you like Nepal to become a Hong Kong of the Himalayas? "If wishes were horses, yes", laughs the vice-chairman of National Planning Commission. "But, for the time being, we shall be happy to carve a niche in the Indian market." Others are less optimistic. Says Panday, once finance minister, "Nepal has learned the hard way that even its right of transit is a variable in the equation of overall relationship with India. Mean-

while, its principal natural resources, namely, Himalayan waters, remain unharnessed mainly because of a lack of understanding between Nepal and India" [in Sen Gupta, op cit]. No wonder Kathmandu's new rulers feel rather uneasy in meeting the 'viceroys' of New Delhi.

There are other rumblings as well. Claims of ethnic, linguistic and cultural rights may gain political strength. The Nepal Sadbhavna Party, which is purely Tarai-based, demands Hindi as a second national language. Another group calls for Sanskrit to be made compulsory at

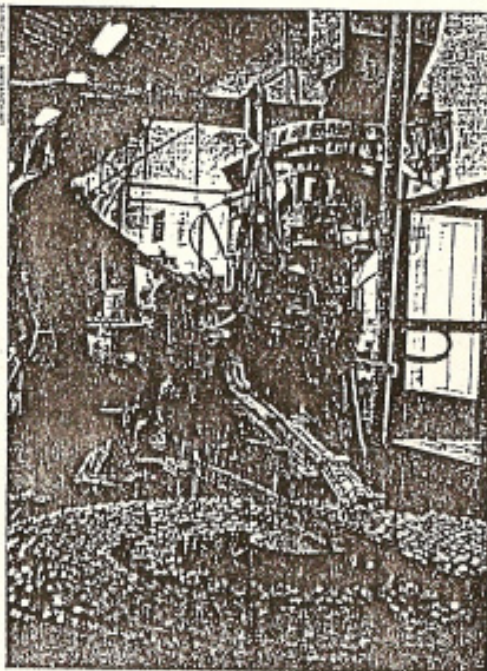
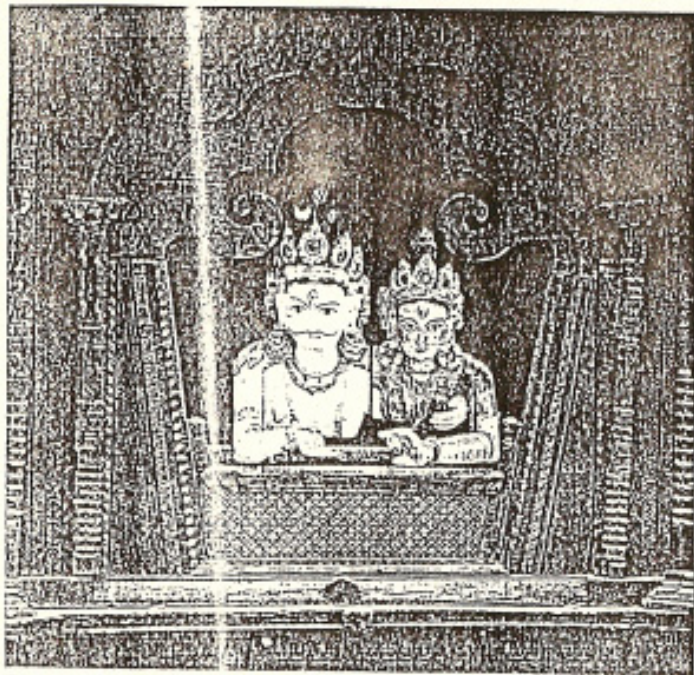
school level. Some hill-based ethnic organisations want the end of 'Bahun-Chhetri domination' of hill tribals. The Tamangs claim that most 'development investment' goes to the elite of Kathmandu—contractors, bureaucrats and professionals. Everywhere caste and ethnicity tend to mix, just as topographical distances divide the hill and Tarai people.

Would all these factors create new social tensions? Perhaps they may; but not to the extent of derailing the nation's democratic progress. In particular, Nepal finds no reason to fear a fundamentalist backlash. Not because over 95 per cent profess the Hindu religion, but because Nepalese Hinduism is very different from its older, but socially degenerate, version that prevails in the Indo-Gangetic valley. It is

liberal because it has learnt to draw inspiration from across the Himalayas in the north and as far down south as Kerala and Sri Lanka.

In some ways, therefore, Nepal holds greater promise of a bright future than other countries of South Asia. "We are lucky, as you say" soliloquised G P Koirala, "to have escaped religious conflicts of the type that are seen everywhere. But our primary concern is poverty alleviation. My plans still remain in the realm of fancy. But if democracy can generate popular participation, we will succeed. Otherwise, nothing is more tragic than to be prime minister of a poor country."

ADVERTISEMENT SUPPLEMENT



The traditional gives way to the modernisation of the economy.

The other face of Nepal

With a business environment which offers foreign investors up to 100% equity rights in all but three strategic fields: full repatriation of dividends and profits, tax holidays up to seven years and no income tax on export earnings, Nepal is well and truly open for business.

Nepal is a small, land-locked economy with a population of 18 million and a per capita income of about US\$170. The kingdom is administered by a democratic government formed from multi-party elections held in 1991, and operates within a constitutional monarchy.

In 1990, prior to elections, the country adopted a new constitution which included the scope for an array of market reforms founded on an irrevocable government commitment to privatisation. This resulted in the introduction of a wide range of investment incentives and safeguards for foreign investors.

The liberalised economic policy aims at increasing the role of the private sector and minimising government controls and direct intervention. A major policy plank is the facilitation of the flow of direct foreign investment into Nepal.

Cumbersome bureaucratic procedures have been swept away in concert with the introduction of streamlined investment procedures such as the "One Window Policy," which guarantees investors a reply within 30 days of project application submissions.

The kingdom has not lost sight of its domestic priorities in the new economy but sees them as interdependent, according to Minister of Finance Mahesh Acharya. "Our main focus is, and always will be, the alleviation of poverty. We have to expand social services, especially in the rural sector, and we have to

provide employment opportunities," he said.

Acharya sees the creation of employment openings very much as a responsibility of the private sector. "In the past, [previous governments] encouraged a regimented policy with tight controls. They discouraged real investment in the productive sector and this diverted funds to non-productive areas such as real estate. In effect, the [previous] government failed as managers."

Prime Minister Giris Prasad Koirala in a recent speech reminded both sides of parliament to remain within the parameters of the constitution for the institutional development of democracy. He implored all to "work for the all-round development of the country by keeping themselves above petty politics."

These could be seen as generous statements from the leader of a party which holds a comfortable 113 seats in the 205 seat parliament, but reflect more the determination of both sides of the political spectrum to forgo political gamesmanship for the good of the country. Nepal has a strong and vocal opposition party befitting any true democracy and, while differing in ideologies and application, both sides are united in their determination to alleviate poverty.

Setting up a free-market environment has not been an easy task. The agricultural sector still accounts for 54% of GDP and has been badly hit by poor monsoons in recent years with less rainfall than anticipated, growing by only 0.5% in fiscal 1991-92.

In the non-agricultural sector, the year-on-year growth rate in fiscal 1991-92 was an encouraging 6.97%. The agricultural sector is expected to rebound with a real GDP growth rate of 4.1% in fiscal 1992-93 — the non-agriculture sector is slated for 6.8%

Investment Forum Kathmandu
30 November-4 December 1992

growth.

Security of investment is guaranteed under the Industrial Enterprises Act passed by parliament recently. The government has a declared policy of non-interference in determining the price of industrial products, seeing its role clearly as a facilitator of an open and competitive atmosphere.

The kingdom suffered a bout of inflationary pressure in the 1991-92 fiscal year. The double depreciation of the Nepalese rupee (in tandem with India, Nepal's largest trading partner) coupled with increases in public sector utility prices, as subsidies were withdrawn, pushed inflation to 21.1% compared with the previous year's 9.8%.

"We are working to get this down to around 11% by the end of fiscal 1992-93," said the governor of the Nepal Rastra Bank (the central bank), Hari Shankar Tripathi. "A significant section of inflation was contributed by shortages in food grains caused by a poor monsoon. Imports of food grains will be stepped up if necessary to help stabilise prices," he said.

Fears that the introduction of partial convertibility of the Nepalese rupee (65% in March 1992 and now 75%) would seriously deplete the kingdom's foreign exchange reserves, which stand at around eight months of imports, proved groundless. Tripathi looks forward to when the rupee is freely traded. "For full convertibility, inflation must come down to around the 11% mark and the government deficit must be substantially reduced," he said.

"The user-pay philosophy for loss-making government corporations is a fine principle and should be applied. But first there needs to be privatisation to bring about better management," Tripathi said.

Soaking up excess liquidity in the domestic market and diverting that in the direction of the productive and export-oriented sector is a key priority in the government's fight against the public-sector deficit and its contribution to inflation. "There will be a general reduction of money supply by giving less credit to inefficient government corporations and more to the private sector. Last year the government received 2%, this year it will receive 1%," he said.

The success of the policy is beginning to show up with exports now accounting for up to 12% of GDP. The excessive foreign exchange surplus will be used to buy up imports further through additional easing of tariff controls which should also have the effect of controlling any counter-productive strengthening of the rupee. "It would be short-sighted to lose export competitiveness by allowing high inflation and to let the rupee out of balance with India," said Tripathi.

United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) resident representative Jerald Berke said, "Nepal is on the brink of a development surge. Although a least development country with a long road to travel, the elected government's dedication to improving the lives of the Nepalese people, and its liberalisation of the investment environment, hold much promise for the future. With an influx of private investment, and the backing of the international donor community, there is every reason to look forward to a bright future."

The major policy initiatives undertaken by the government are strongly supported by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, UNDP and several donor countries. This support is quantified with an expected 23% increase in donor disbursements this year.

These moves, combined with a political stability strongly endorsed by overwhelming government support in recent provincial level elections, have given Nepal rock-solid foundations from which to promote its drive for foreign investment. "A series of administrative procedure reforms have removed the discretionary power that used to be with the civil service," said Dr Ram Sharan Mahat vice-chairman of the Economic Planning Council, "and, as a result of policy reforms introduced concurrently, we are experiencing a flood of requests for the establishment of new industries."

The Ministry of Industry Foreign Investment Promotion Division has been working with the UNDP to pinpoint and evaluate projects within the kingdom which would attract foreign investors.

Their efforts have resulted in project proposals seeking foreign involvement from more than 80 local entrepreneurs, ranging from hotels and garment factories to sericulture and steel works. Pre-investment studies were prepared and are available worldwide at UNIDO offices for study ahead of an Investment Forum scheduled for 30 November-4 December 1992 in Kathmandu. ♦

Economic Indicators

%, unless otherwise stated	Fiscal Year		
	1990-91	1991-92*	1992-93†
Real GDP growth rate	5.55	3.13	5.10
Agricultural sector	2.80	0.50	4.10
Non-agricultural sector	8.85	6.97	6.80
Agricultural GDP/total GDP	53.4	51.3	54.1
Total consumption/GDP	93.5	93.07	90.0
Gross domestic saving/GDP	6.5	7.0	10.0
Total investment/GDP	20.1	19.8	21.7
Growth rate of M1	14.5	23.7	12.0
Growth rate of M2	19.5	24.0	14.0
Growth rate of NDA	-2.9	18.6	26.1
Growth rate of domestic credit	16.3	19.7	16.5
Growth rate of claims on private sector	20.9	25.7	27.4
Growth rate of time deposits	23.7	24.2	15.4
Govt. share in total domestic credit	48.0	45.0	37.3
Income velocity of M1	6.5	6.5	6.3
Income velocity of M2	2.8	2.6	2.7
Number of commercial bank branches	441	445	
Rate of inflation	9.8	21.1	11.0
Regular expenditure/total expenditure	37.3	39.2	35.7
Regular surplus/development expenditure	24.9	24.6	23.2
Total expenditure/GDP	19.3	18.8	23.8
Foreign assistance/development expenditure	66.3	62.4	69.3
Internal debt (increment)/GDP	1.2	1.6	1.1
Total export/import	31.4	42.3	44.3
Share of India in total trade	29.8	28.5	28.9
Total export/GDP	7.2	10.7	12.3
Total deficit/GDP	15.0	14.5	15.6
Current account deficit/GDP	9.7	8.4	8.2
Debt service/export of goods and services	8.6	7.8	7.4
Foreign exchange covering imports (months)	9.2	8.3	7.0
Balance of payments surplus (Rs million)	4,781.2	5,000.0	4,000.0

*Estimates

†Nepal Rastra Bank projections

*Development expenditure excludes Rs. 1,277.9 million spent by financial sector entities

Source: Nepal Rastra Bank

Prime Minister's statement

It has taken little more than a year since Nepal's first democratic multi-party elections for the new government to sweep away decades of lethargy and to revitalise a moribund economy.

Nowhere have the achievements of the past year been more evident than in efforts by our government in introducing a number of bold policy reforms to liberalise the economy and to forge a structural framework which will attract foreign entrepreneurs to invest in the spectacular growth of the non-agricultural sector in Nepal.

The introduction of a "One Window Policy" to provide all services and facilities under one umbrella and to fast-track applications (decisions are guaranteed within 30 days) for joint-venture or 100% foreign-owned projects is indicative of our government's work in facilitating foreign investment in our growing economy.



Girija Prasad Koirala.

More than 80 projects, ranging from hotels and cable cars to a sugar processing plant and garment factories have feasibility studies available for examination. The reports have been prepared by the Ministry of Industry with technical assistance from the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation.

His Majesty's government and its various institutions have introduced policies to complement this programme, stage one of which culminates in an international Investment Forum in Kathmandu from 30 November to 4 December 1992.

If your company is looking for a stable and accommodating environment with a large inexpensive labour force and generous tax holidays in which to start new operations, Nepal has everything you could need.

Girija Prasad Koirala
Prime Minister

TRADE

Incentives for local and foreign investors

The thrust by Nepal into the world arena of free trade pivots on a series of balanced foreign investment, trade and industrial policies which offer generous incentives to offshore and domestic entrepreneurs. The package is underpinned by the government's strong grip on political, macroeconomic and infrastructural realities and the kingdom's Eighth Five-Year Plan which sets out the requirements for social and economic progress to be achieved on a parallel basis.

Central to all aspects of development is an acceptance by the government that the fuel for development lies with the private sector and the dynamism and entrepreneurial skills of investors.

Nepal enjoys trade concessions with almost all major markets especially in the West where quotas on manufactured exports are almost non-existent. The garment industry is a classic example. "It [currently] accounts for less than US\$50 million worth of our exports," comments Narendra Basnyat, joint-secretary with the Foreign Investment Promotion Division. "Yet, the potential to increase garment exports sevenfold within a few years is very great, as Nepal, unlike most other developing countries in the region, does not face quota restrictions. Only the US has imposed quotas but this is limited to six categories."

Support for the garment industry is building up. A spinning mill set up with Asian Development Bank investment has recently come on stream and there are a number of joint-venture proposals looking for foreign investment among the projects isolated and evaluated for the Investment Forum in late November.

One of the popular myths associated with Nepal and manufactured exports is that because the kingdom is landlocked, shipping and delivery costs could write off any competitive edge in overseas markets. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Nepal has shipping rights through Cal-

cutta and can usually undercut its near neighbour when it comes to production costs. Even now, some Indian manufacturers are "trans-shipping" via Nepal to take advantage of concessionary access to foreign markets. A lot more sense would be to manufacture in Nepal in the first instance.

The government sees its role in the field very clearly. It wants to encourage export-related business on a sustained basis through a gradual reduction in trade imbalances and, simultaneously, expand employment opportunities.

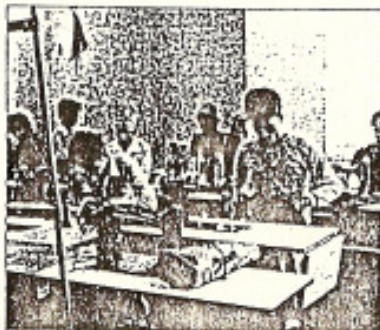
It is committed to implementing measures to attract foreign investment and the transfer of advanced technology and efficient management techniques. A Technology Development and Transfer Agency is being established to support the process of industrialisation. On the domestic front, priority will be given to investment in ventures which provide electricity, water and communication facilities.

Industries will be given priority for government land to establish their enterprises. Land and buildings presently owned by government corporations in industrial estates are to be sold to the private sector provided there is some form of guarantee that the sites will be used for industrial purposes. Public-sector trading corporations will be privatised and no private-sector operations will be nationalised.

The government has set up a Board of Trade under the direction of the Minister of Commerce. Already a number of trade restrictions have been scrapped. It is now no longer necessary to procure a licence for exports other than for a few specified, banned or restricted items.

The government has introduced a duty drawback scheme for the refund of import duty paid on raw materials and intermediate goods required for the production of export products and an export processing zone adjacent to the country's international airport is expected to be operational by mid-1993.

In the initial stages of industrialisation, the Nepal Government has committed itself to participate in joint ventures directly in essential industries where the private sector is not yet interested. But it has a firm resolve that it will be out of the partnership as soon as the industry is able to attract private capital. ♦



Increasing support for garment industry.

It's now easy to set up a business

The introduction of a "One Window System" in Nepal has done away with what is traditionally one of the biggest headaches for foreign investors — the seemingly endless number of approvals and registrations required before a business can begin operation.

An Industrial Promotion Board, chaired by the Minister of Industry is charged by the government under the Industrial Enterprises Act to guarantee responses to foreign investment project proposals within 30 days of application.

Former industrialist and now State Minister of Industry, Ram Krishna Tamrakar, sees the success of the open market policy as the best safeguard the kingdom can have to preserve democracy. "Nepal is a developing country at the primary stage and, without accelerated industrial development may have a struggle to provide schools, hospitals, roads, water supply and power," he said. "We have the resources and the manpower and now we have established the regulatory environment for the country to achieve its aims through a free-market economy. The 'One Window System' is indicative of our determination to promote, and then assist, the development of private sector."

The Board is made up of senior representatives from the Nepal Rastra Bank and the Ministries of Industry, Finance and Commerce, the National Planning Commission and representatives from the industrial, commercial and tourism sectors.

Initial evaluation of applications is undertaken by the One Window Committee, convened by the director-general of the

Department of Industry. Authority for the committee to make binding decisions has been officially endorsed by the government. "The power and authority relating to the provision of facilities and services of the agencies such as Ministry of Finance and its departments, Department of Commerce, Nepal Rastra Bank, Department of Immigration etc., will be delegated to the one-window committee," it states in official government regulations.

The One Window Committee also is required to give assistance to investors after approval by securing infrastructure facilities such as registration, land, electricity, water and taxation advice. The specific concessions and entitlements to which the industry is entitled will be spelled out in the letter granting approval.

In practice, the turnaround time for gaining project approvals has been less than the maximum allowable 30 days. Local businessman, Lochan Gyawali, who recently has set up a joint venture with a German company jokes that any delays he experienced were a result of him taking a week to answer a simple query. "My first application was on 9 July, I had a query back within a week but it took me until 23 July to get my answer through," he said. "After that, the approval was granted almost immediately."

Application for the registration of an industry following approval should be submitted to the Department of Industry within 35 days — the industry will be registered within 21 days from the date of receipt of the application.

Some examples of approved foreign investment of the more exotic nature, include a joint venture with a Japanese company to grow snow peas; and more Japanese want to grow tulips. Other potential exotics include orchids, chrysanthemums, roses, etc.

According to the Secretary of Industry P. P. Dahal, the Ministry is happy to assist industry sectors in coordinating and organising training programmes on a demand-oriented basis. "If we get the request, we are happy to coordinate and initiate programmes through the many privately owned technical institutions in the country — we will help to train the trainers," he said. ♦



Relaxing the rules

Nepal allows up to 100% equity ownership in medium-sized and large industry. Once investment approval is gained through the "One Window System" repatriation rights for equity sales, dividends, interest and principal of foreign loans and income from technology transfer arrangements are an automatic right for foreign investors. Foreign employees (experts) can remit up to 75% of their salaries and allowances in convertible currency.

Tax obligations vary but offer generous concessions. The government will take steps to conclude agreements with countries where there is a threat of double taxation. Interest on foreign loans, royalties and management or technical fees attracts 15% income from exports will be tax exempt.

Customs duty, excise duty and sales taxes levied on raw materials and semi-processed materials used to produce exports will be repaid within 60 days of application based on the quantity and value of actual exports. The concession also applies to locally manufactured goods sold for foreign currency to the

domestic market.

No income tax will be imposed on dividends received from investment in industries and, for the business itself, up to 5% of gross income shall be allowed as a deductible for charitable or social donation and a like percentage for advertising, promotion and business entertainment.

Tax and excise concessions ranging from 10-50% are available for industries established in defined remote, undeveloped and underdeveloped districts except in the case of alcohol, cigarettes and bid.

Industries are entitled to add 33% to the rate of depreciation allowed under the income tax law. Up to 40% of the cost of new additional fixed assets may be applied against taxable income provided the reinvestment expands capacity by at least 25%. A tax rebate of up to 50% applies to the purchase of equipment designed to minimise pollution.

Nepalese authorities are about to set up a Company Registrars Office for the administration of industrial and commercial companies and to facilitate the development of a secondary market through the management of issues for shares, bonds and debentures of public limited companies. ♦

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INVESTMENT FORUM is organised with funding from the United Nations Development Programme.

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Fax: 43-1-230-82-60
Tlx: 135612 UNOA

Foreign Investment Promotion Division
Ministry of Industry, Singha Durbar
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-216692
Fax: 977-1-220319
Tlx: 2610 MOI NP

NORSK BISTANDS- ENGASJEMENT I NEPAL

ORGANISASJON	ANSATTE FOR NEPAL i Norge	ANSATTE I NEPAL nepal. nordm.
Redd Barna	0	170 2
Den norske Tibetmisjon	3	ca. 15 1000
Strømmestiftelsen	1 konsulent for Asia	prosjektleder og frivillige
Norsk Forbund for Psykisk Utviklingshemmede	3 totalt på alle prosjekter	71 1
Landsforeningen for Hjerte- og Lungesyke	3/4 stilling for Nepal og andre	120 9 utlend., inkl. 2 nordm. LHL
Nasjonalforeningen for folkehelsen	ca. 1/10 stilling	
Lions Club International		Lokale RB-ansatte
Kirkens Nødhjelp	1 stilling for Asia	86 + 1 1/3 friv.
Care Norge	1 stilling for Asia	ca. 40 1 expat.
Den Norske Advokatforeningen	Frivillig	23
Røde Kors	1 saksbeh. for Asia	Nepal RK ansatte
Utviklingsfondet FIVH	1 saksbeh. for Asia	3 nep. ansatte i lok. org.

OVERSIKT OVER NORSK PRIV.ORG. BISTAND TIL NEPAL
Alle beløp i mill. kroner

ORGANISASJON	NEPAL FRA	MÅLSETTING	PROSJEKT	BUDSJETT 91 92
Redd Barna	1982	Bedre vanskeligstilte barns levekår	1. Integr. landsbyutv. 2. Helse/utdanning 3. Lokale NGOs	8,5 8,5
Den norske Tibetmisjon	1955	Å bringe evangeliet til nepalesere/tibetanere og andre i Himalaya	Utviklingsprosjekter gjennom United Mission to Nepal	3,0 3,5
Strømmestiftelsen	1990	Styrke lokale organisasjoners kompetanse	1. Pilot helse prosjekt via WIF 2. Utdannelse, treplanting via GAA	0,7 0,635
Norsk Forbund for Psykisk Utviklingshemmede	1985	Styrke rettigheter og bedre levekår for psyk. utviklingshemmede	Bygge opp og utvikle inter.org. for psyk. utv.hemmede v/AWMR	1,271 1,741
Landsforeningen for Hjerte- og Lungesyke	1984	Bedring av folkehelsen, spesielt bekjempelse av tuberkulose og lepra	Samarb. med BNMT: Tub.- og leprakontroll Medisindistribusjon Opplæring/samarb. helsepers./behandlere	1,011 1,297
Nasjonalforeningen for folkehelsen	1987	Tuberkulosearbeid	Innkjøp av tb-medisiner til Biratnagar Chest Clinic	0,195 0,350
Lions Club International	1992	Hjelp til selvhjelp for untouchables	(Forundersøkelse) By- og distriktsutviklingsprogram via RB	starter 93
Kirkens Nødhjelp	1985	Styrke utvikling av menneskel. ressurser og organisasjonsutv.	1. Øyehelseprogram 2. Landsbyutv. m/LWS 3. Elevstipend m/UMN	4,501 4,8
Care Norge	1985	Sos. og øk. forbedring med vekt på bevaring og utv. av naturress.	Integrert bygdeutvikling	1,306 1,450
Den Norske Advokatforening	1988	Fri rettshjelp til de fattige	Rettshjelp til kvinner, foreningsstøtte, medl.-blad v/Nepals Advokatforening	0,740 0,740
Røde Kors	1986	Distriktsutvikling	Community developm. project Morang	0,565 0,500
Utviklingsfondet FIVH	1983	Bevisstgjøring, egenorganisering, utdann., sosioøk. forbedring	Distriktsutviklingsprogr	0,312 0,315

TOTALSTØTTE FRA NORAD PRIV.ORG. 1991: NOK 24.438.544.
" " " " " 1992: NOK 23.617.000

BHUTAN



Bhutans kong Jigme Singye Wangchuk og hans søster Ashi Dechen Wangmo

The View from Thimphu Hoping for a Gentler Judgement

by Kinley Dorji

"If I, as the King, cannot protect the sovereignty and integrity of our country and ensure a secure future for our people, then it will be my duty to accept full responsibility and abdicate," King Jigme Singye Wangchuk told the nation, a pledge later repeated to an emotion-charged session of the National Assembly.

The 1988 head-count, the first detailed census in the country's history, was organised because the government officials said they needed better statistics to plan a process of modernisation after years of self-imposed isolation. The finding sent shock waves through the government: census officials estimated that more than 100,000 economic migrants had settled among the ethnic Nepali minority living in the kingdom's southern districts. The Buddhist Bhutanese, a population of farmers scattered over the world's highest peaks and valleys, suddenly saw the possibility of being — in the words of a government official — an "endangered species".

Immigration laws were immediately reinforced and all recent immigrations declared illegal, sparking protests and violent

demonstrations by those declared illegal. The protesters were supported by a section of Bhutan's ethnic Nepali minority, who the government says form one-third of the country's 600,000 population.

Looming in the background, in the view of the Bhutanese Government, were another six million ethnic Nepalis on the Indian side of the border. They eke out a meagre existence in crowded hutments along the highways and tea gardens. For them, the greener Bhutanese pastures, with free education and health services, more employment opportunities and higher wages, represented an "irresistible temptation."

The situation brought home to the Bhutanese the spectre often raised here by political analysts, academics and historians — the Sikkimese parallel. After years of migration by ethnic Nepalis into the kingdom of Sikkim,



"Druk"

sovereignty was lost in 1974 when the government was confronted by a Nepali majority opting to become part of India. That example heightened reactions to the realisation of recent large-scale settlement in Bhutan. Initially, the protest movement gained momentum through the regionally-dominant Indian press and the international media. Its direction has been somewhat incoherent, with the leaders first alleging a range of government abuses such as cultural and religious discrimination and more recently switching to issues of democracy and human rights.

The guerilla wing of the foreign-based Bhutan People's Party made raids into southern Bhutan, destroying property, looting villages, kidnapping and killing those refusing to join or support the movement. Other Kathmandu-based groups stepped up an anti-Bhutan propaganda campaign with support from political parties and a section of the Nepali press. Development in the area was virtually brought to a halt. The King has now ordered the resumption of activities, and ordered the reopening and renovation of schools. The security forces have been told to relinquish control of schools which they took over during the height of last year's terrorist attacks.

To heal the wounds of the past months, the King has pardoned more than 1,520 people arrested for "anti-national activities". Some have been allowed back into the civil service. Government officials and security personnel responsible for excesses against the people have



been dismissed and tried in court.

Despite a lukewarm response by many members of the public to such fence-mending measures, the King has visited the disturbed districts 24 times in 22 months. His Government has stayed firm on its immigration policy, but has recently expressed concern about the departure of Bhutanese citizens of Nepali origin. Some left because relatives were not given citizenship or were allegedly evicted by district officials; others cited insecurity or said they were persuaded to leave by anti-Bhutan groups.

In July, the King rushed to the south to talk to more than 400 people who had officially asked to emigrate. His appeal still echoes through the country: "Short of literally going down on my knees with folded hands, I have tried everything possible to resolve the serious problem we have today in southern Bhutan..." (For full quote of the King, see page 16.)

In response to complaints from some of the evacuees, Thimphu sent a high-level team to investigate alleged excesses by district officials and to examine the security situation in southern villages. The King also repeated his edict that no Bhutanese citizen will be evicted from the kingdom and that people had the right to apply to the judiciary, the Government, or to himself if they felt they were being unjustly treated. In a gesture of encouragement to people of Nepali origin, exemption from rural taxes was granted in the five southern districts.

But international media focus has shifted to eastern Nepal, where UNHCR estimates that 55,000 Nepalis live in refugee camps, arriving in trucks and buses from India. Coverage of allegations of government atrocities emanating from the camps has overshadowed Bhutan's demographic concerns.

"History has been unkind to kings," King Jigme once told a journalist. He must be hoping for a gentler judgement as, almost a lone figure, he tries to steer his kingdom through the biggest crisis in its modern history.

▷

K. Dorji is Editor of the government-run *Kuansel*, Bhutan's only newspaper. This article is reproduced here courtesy the Panos news service, London.



A Policy Born of Apprehensions

*History, culture and politics set the Lhotshampa and the Drukpa apart.
The Drukpa has decided to act, but can he prevail in the long term?*

by A.C. Sinha

It was Kazi Ugen Dorji — the chief of the King's household (*Deb Zimpom*), the Royal Chamberlain (*Gongzim*) and the Governor (*Jongpon*) of western Bhutan, who encouraged large scale Nepali settlement in the south-western part of the country in the last decades of the 19th century. British diplomat Charles Bell found 14,000 Nepalis on the Torsa river bordering India in 1903. In no time, the land-hungry Nepali cleared the thick vegetation and organised themselves as cultivators in the southern Duars.

Some 25 years later, in 1932, Captain C.J. Marris of the Gorkha Regiment was commissioned to investigate the possibility of recruiting Bhutanese. He made an extensive tour of the two Nepali districts of the south and made a crude estimate that the 1,500 households of the eastern and 4,000 households of the western districts contained a population of 60,000. He remarked upon the largeness of Nepali families. Marris stated that the actual number of Nepali settlers in Bhutan was much higher than his estimate because he had not included Sipechu area to the extreme south-east.

Nepali immigration to Bhutan continued well into the present century even though there was a shortage of arable land. The Drukpa *darbar* eventually banned further Nepali immigration in

1959. In addition, the Nepalis were forbidden to settle beyond an imaginary east-west boundary drawn north of the Himalayan foothills.

The bamboo and thatch houses of the Nepalis are less substantial than the multi-storeyed stone houses of the highlanders. The Nepali areas are predominantly agricultural, producing rice, maize, wheat, pulses, orange, pineapple, ginger, cardamom and so on. Migrating across from Nepal, Darjeeling and Sikkim over

the past 125 years, the Nepalis turned this 'negative land' into a productive breadbasket.

The Nepalis lead a frugal life. They are available for doing any type of work, and well-suited to the extreme climate of the Bhutanese hills. In addition to agriculture, they have provided the work force for the recent development programmes. With the emergence of Samchi, Phuntsholing, Daga, Sarbhang, Geylephug, Chirang and Samdrup Jongkhar as the new commercial and (albeit modest) industrial towns of southern Bhutan, the role of the Nepalis in the national economy became more pronounced.

Food, dress, the *khukuri*, perseverance, industriousness and 'mercenary' character make the Nepali-speakers one on an alien soil. They look to Nepal and India as the founts of their

civilisation, their historical achievement, and where their places of pilgrimage are. Elite Nepali castes practice ritual purity and shun beef, polyandry and widow remarriage.

The Nepalis are new entrants in Bhutan, and also occupy lower economic and political status in national life. As residents of Bhutan, however, Nepalis do expect to share in the destiny of their new homeland. They have some expectations of the Bhutanese nation state.

As the Nepalis found the Bhutanese environment stifling, they started to turn to India, where economic and educational opportunities existed. In the process, they also got politicised in schools and colleges, in trade unions, and in political parties. They returned to Bhutan expecting a rightful democratic share, which the Wangchuk regime ruler denied them.

The cultural, political and economic gulf between the Nepalis and the Lamaist Drukpa was, therefore, deep.

The Drukpa regime maintains no distinction between the sacred and the secular. For the average Drukpa, the King is not only the ruler but he is also to be revered. Traditionally, revenue collected by the State was paid in kind and was largely spent in maintaining a large body of monks. For the past 125 years, up until recently, state expenditure was drawn mainly from the subsidy provided by the Indian government.

Faith and Loyalty

In the Bhutanese hierarchy, faith and loyalty to one's superiors goes unquestioned. A society of pastoralists and subsistence farmers was happy to leave trade, commerce and industry in the hands of the royal family. Bhutan's dynastic rule did not permit an aristocracy to emerge. Thus, in today's Drukpa society consists of an all-powerful ruling family at the top, the commoners at the bottom and a monk-body in between.

The geographical compulsions of a mountainous country further isolated the Drukpa commoner from the shared experiences of a modern technological society. Under such circumstances, the urge for democratic participation practically does not exist. Any semblance of representation has to be sponsored from the top, and the regime is notoriously intolerant of dissent.

The stage was thus set for conflict. While the Drukpas tried to impose an assimilationist policy, demanding oneness in language (Dzongkha), dress (*Gho* and *Kira*) and cultural

systems, Nepalis regarded themselves as culturally superior. They naturally look west to Nepal and south to India, to populations with which they feel ethnic affinity.

The Bhutanese administration had always

kept a careful watch on the course of anti-feudal movements in Sikkim and Nepal, because the Lhotshampas have natural allies there. It therefore came as a shock to the Bhutanese ruler when the 334-year old Namgyal rule over Sikkim came to an end in 1975, succumbing to a movement organised almost entirely by Nepali-speakers.

Even closer to home, the Bhutanese found the armed struggle in Darjeeling ended with the Districts also being governed by Nepali-speakers. The realisation dawned that, in the long run, New Delhi's commitment to prohibit anti-Bhutanese movements on Indian soil had no meaning. In a changed political scenario, the Nepali-speaking rulers of Nepal, Sikkim and Darjeeling could nullify New Delhi's assurances. This they could do by instigating, supporting or even financing agitation.

Acting on these fears, the Bhutanese implemented an aggressive policy of cultural assimilation, starting with the implementation in 1988 of the Drig Lam Namzha code. The rest is the story of Lhotshampa flight from their Bhutanese paradise.

A classical theocracy turned into an exotic Wangchuk-ruled Bhutan had little experience of ethnic co-existence on its own soil. It has not been able to weigh the implications of its aggressive ethnic policy to assimilate an ancient, martial and substantive Nepali commonwealth into its relative thin, simple and recent Drukpa fold.

Drukpa policymakers, such as Foreign Minister Dawa Tshering, appear to have an exaggerated image of their powers. They tend to forget that their aggressive ethnic policy and false sense of absorptive capacity is bound to affect the pace of economic transformation. The Bhutanese aberrations might slow but cannot stop the Nepali expansion in the Eastern Himalayan foothills; rather, such antics as the Drukpa regime is currently engaged in may provide an impetus for a Nepali resurgence in the region.

Professor Sinha is Head of the Department of Sociology at the North-Eastern Hill University in Shillong, Meghalaya. His most recent book is *Bhutan: Ethnic Identity and National Dilemma* (Reliance Publishing, 1991).

Media under the Spell

The Thimpu Government shames every other South Asian government in its ability to charm and manipulate the media. With an expertly choreographed programme of depopulation in progress, the Government had to have ready answers to questions about refugees, so the public relations machinery of Foreign Minister Dawa Tshering ground into



King Jigme: Will he ever come down to earth?

action. "Cultural inundation", and terrorism by "ngolops" became the trump cards.

Numerous print, radio, and television journalists have been speaking words scripted by Thimphu over the past two years, and the list stretches from writers for vernacular dailies of Siliguri, to high-flying correspondents of the Western news outlets.

While she has since provided some more-balanced coverage, Barbara Crossette of the *New York Times* once filed a report on the problems of southern Bhutan that quoted only Bhutanese officials and the King as sources. Writing from Thimphu, she reported of "a campaign of violence and terror by small bands of ethnic Nepalese guerrillas in southern Bhutan." The militants' claims were "couched in the language of democracy and minority rights, but the goal of the movement is free access to the underpopulated forests and valleys of Bhutan for those of Nepalese origin." Crossette quoted no 'militant', however.

James Clad of the *The Far Eastern Economic Review*, from a reading of a December 1990 cover story headlined "The Khukuri's Edge" as well as the *Review's 1992 Yearbook*, does not try much harder in trying to fathom Druk and South Asian politics. Among other things, Clad believes that "many militants are advocates of a 'Greater Nepal,' asserting the right of Nepalese to political sovereignty over neighbouring territories they live in."

Journalists who pass muster in Bhutan's New Delhi Embassy are given visas and provided jet passage to Paro airport, from where they are whisked up to Thimphu as royal guests and put up at the Druk Hotel or one of two government guest houses. A chauffeur-driven vehicle awaits to take the reporter around, but never to the south.

The red-carpet treatment can be overwhelming, as can the English-speaking sophistication of the senior officials and King Jigme, and the obvious importance with which they regard the journalist's mission. In interviews, the King is urbane and realistic,

and goes as far as to make confessionals such as "I know that monarchy is an outdated system" and that "Democracy is the best...when the country is ready for it."

A Delhi-based Swiss reporter returned from Thimphu in April to boast that he had had a five-

hour audience with King Jigme and two hours each with the Foreign Minister and Home Minister. D.P. Kumar of the *Statesman* was flattered by "the unassuming young monarch — he stood at the doorway of the Throne Room of Thimphu's spectacular Dzong, the Kingdom's temporal and spiritual headquarters, without even an usher, to receive me."

The southern problem is clearly not as worthy of coverage as Bhutan's many other attractions. In October 1991, a BBC reporter made a programme on archery, Bhutan's national sport. Only on 30 June 1992 does he acknowledge that "some" Lhotshampa refugees had left Bhutan. In March 1992, Heinz-Rudolf Othmerding of the German agency DPA chooses to do a write-up on Thimphu's quaint urbanisation.

The most recent journalist to be taken in by Thimphu was Tarun Basu of *India Abroad*, a New York-based weekly, who wrote on 26 June 1992 about Indo-Bhutanese ties ("Harmony between Contrasts"), the King ("Austere Ruler Who likes Work"), the "Wondrous Stamp Museum", and so on. The one paragraph on the Southern problem says: "Operating behind the facade of a pro-democracy movement, the dissenters...had the backing of Gurkha leaders of India and Nepal who nursed visions of a pan-Himalayan Nepali state."

Bruce W. Bunting wrote in the May 1991 *National Geographic* that migrants "are coming still, seeking jobs and fertile land. In recent years, thousands of Nepalese have resettled as illegal immigrants in southern Bhutan — one reason the royal government recently imposed restrictions on all residents." Bunting, who does not quote Lhotshampas, also writes that the King "worries that the nation's cultural traditions might someday be swamped by the Nepalese living in Nepal, who outnumber Bhutanese by 25 to 1."

Only journalists out to do some soft holiday reporting seem welcome. One New Delhi writer who recently applied to go was denied permission, but did receive two bottles of Scotch just to show there were no hard feelings.

While malleable national-level journalists of New Delhi and Calcutta are invited to Thimphu to be charmed out, Thimphu knows that only hard cash will do for the vernacular press of the Duars. Siliguri-based papers that were

'sympathetic' to the refugees in the autumn of 1990 had made a quick turnaround by January 1991. Today, they treat Thimphu with velvet gloves while lampooning the exile leadership.

Just as only a few can resist being carried away by the mediaeval pomp in Thimphu, still fewer will return the bottles of Scotch handed out in paper bags at the end of press conferences in New Delhi. Forty-four cases of Black and Red Label whisky were distributed after the 1988 press conference announcing the multiple marriages of King Jigme, recalls Narain Katel, then a diplomat in Delhi and now a refugee.

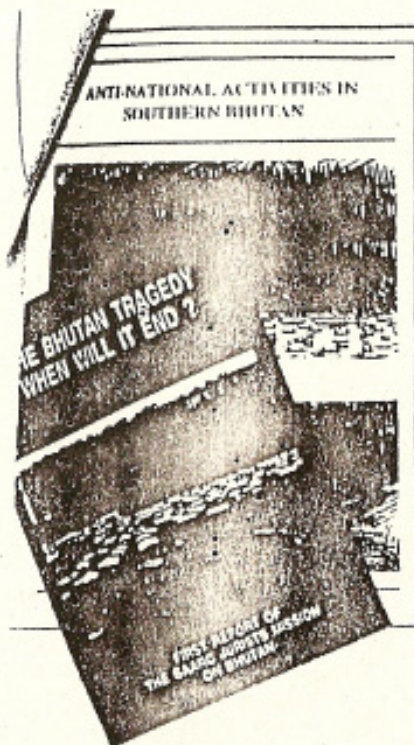
The Bhutanese proclivity for giving gifts is sometimes carried to extremes. Even the Foreign Minister might agree that it was carrying things too far when a Delhi-based diplomat turned up at the residence of Justice Krishna Iyer with jam, jelly, books, honey and liquor. Krishna Iyer had made a statement on human rights in Bhutan and was planning to leave for Thimphu as part of a South Asian fact-finding team. He is a former Chief Justice of India, and a teetotaler.

Nepali Overkill

One reason why the refugee exodus has not received the coverage it clearly deserves could be the Nepali media's obvious partisanship. In covering Bhutan, Kathmandu's vernacular press has relied almost exclusively on second-hand reports and hearsay. Initially, press releases sent over by the Bhutan People's Party were printed word for word, which led to exaggerated 'reportage' on alleged atrocities. Fresh out of Nepal's own fight for "human rights and democracy", the press took up the Bhutanese story with alacrity in 1990, but the coverage has trailed even as the suffering has increased.

Kathmandu, not New Delhi, is the proper place for Bhutan-watching, but editors of international news magazines and agencies tend not to trust their Kathmandu-based stringers on the subject. News filed by Delhi-based journalists, where the Bhutanese Embassy wields inordinate influence, is accorded more credibility. One particular instance of news overkill -- in September 1992, when some Nepali stringers filed reports of a massacre of more than 300 Lhotshampas by the Bhutanese Army -- is said to have played a role in turning the international editors off Kathmandu copy. The episode also provided Thimphu with the opportunity to play victim, and King Jigme told one reporter incredulously, "We don't even find people willing to kill dogs when rabies breaks out."

Selling the "Southern Problem"



Over the past two years, Lhostampa exiles and the Thimphu government have published their version of events. Also, a South Asian jurists' report was released in early August 1992 in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Facts behind Recent Developments in Southern Bhutan.

This booklet was produced to defend the policy of One Nation, One Identity against attack by Lhostampa leaders. It starts with Thimphu's version of how "anti-national" activities began in the schools and colleges of southern Bhutan and describes King Jigme's magnanimity in granting amnesty based on "his strong faith in the people," and the treachery of Tek Nath Rizal, once "an ordinary bulldozer driver" who was "sent to Australia by His Majesty so that he could learn English and broaden his outlook."

The text goes on to discuss the betrayal of trust by the faculty and students of the National Institute of Education, the Sherbutse College and the Royal Bhutan Polytechnic; defends the need for the 1988 census as "past records were totally unreliable and extremely inaccurate"; defends the mandatory wearing of the *gho* and *kira* underlining the "unavoidable necessity for a small country like Bhutan to have an easily recognisable type of dress"; justifies the promotion of Dzongkha as the national language; maintains that the South has received more than a fair share of the development budget; and on human rights states that, "Every Bhutanese citizen is completely equal before the law irrespective of whether they are Royal Family members, Government officials, businessmen or simple farmers."

The booklet does not have a date on it, but the copy *Himal* received has a penned note on the cover saying that it was "received from His

Majesty the King, on Monday, dated 26 February 1990 at Samchi. Attended the meeting for six hours."

Anti-National Activities in Southern Bhutan: A Terrorist Movement

(Department of Information, Thimphu, September 1991). After defending the policy of national cultural integration and describing development efforts in southern Bhutan and the availability of education and health facilities, the

book focuses on the "terrorist acts that have been perpetrated by the anti-nationals" since mid-1989. The text speaks of extortion, dacoity, sabotage, hijacking, kidnapping, murder, brutal torture, mutilation and decapitations, and as its centerpiece provides colour close-ups of the same.

The militancy that has taken place along the southern border appears to be of great propaganda value to the Bhutanese Government. The Embassy in New Delhi distributes stacks of colour pictures to inquiring journalists, showing in colour burnt schoolhouses, blown up electricity pylons and explicit views of mutilated bodies. The majority of these pictures, most of which are included in the booklet, are from 1990 and the latest one is dated 9 September 1991.

There is also a picture — widely reproduced in Indian newspapers — of "a contingent of anti-national terrorists" under custody. Refugee leaders claim these are prisoners of the September 1990 rally forcibly made to pose in camouflage fatigues. Another shows "arms recovered from anti-national terrorists," the majority of them muzzle-loaders, which the refugees claim are actually licensed arms deposited with the Government under orders.

The Bhutan Tragedy: When Will it End?

(INSEC, Kathmandu and the International Centre for Law in Development, New York, 1992). Subtitled the "First Report of the SAARC Jurists Mission on Bhutan", this report was prepared by a team of South Asian jurists: Justices Krishna Iyer of India, K.M. Subhan of Bangladesh and P.B. Singh of Nepal, as well as lawyer and human rights activist Clarence Dias. The facilitator was Prakash Kaphley of INSEC, who died in the Thai Airways jet disaster on 31 July 1992 while returning from Colombo, where the book was launched. Incidentally, two jurists were unable to visit Thimphu for the purpose of compiling the report because Druk Air in Kathmandu refused to accept their confirmed tickets.

The report contains much information that is valuable for those following events in Druk Yul. Two criticisms are that the tone is too strident and polemical for a jurists' report, which

needlessly undermines its strength, and that the use of the term "SAARC Jurists" implies the mission had the official sanction of the SAARC organisation, which clearly was not the case.

The jurists, in their "unanimous findings", state that the enactment of a number of discriminatory law and policies in the mid-1980s has triggered serious human rights violations in south Bhutan. These laws are being implemented in an arbitrary, discriminatory and "intimidatory" manner; there has been "systemic and manifold discrimination" against the Lhotshampas; the discrimination has been "conscious and directed" by sections of the ruling authorities; citizenship rights of a majority of southern Bhutanese have been illegally confiscated; there have been attempts at forced national integration; there have been widespread violations in the south of the rights to education, health and basic goods and services; there has been massive suppression of the right to dissent, associate and assemble; access to human rights organisations has been denied; and "there have been instances of ethnocide."

The report provides a review of Bhutan's laws, stating that "the 1985 Citizenship Law virtually *confiscates* citizenship rights by the ingenious device of changing the definition of citizenship." It also challenges Government claim that a small country like Bhutan cannot afford the luxury of diversity, stating that no Government document has shown "that ethnic diversity *has in fact* impeded the growth of social harmony and unity." The book's appendix provides much additional material, including relevant Bhutanese laws and Tshongdü resolutions, Government notifications and reports, petitions to the King, statements made by refugees ("Voices of Pain"), "victim's documents", and a BPP-produced chronology of events.

Bhutan: An Iron Path to Democracy

(INHURED, Kathmandu, 1992). Written by S.K. Pradhan, General Secretary of the BPP, this publication briefly reviews Bhutanese history and legal system, and then homes in on "denial of the right to nationality." It describes the process of granting citizenship and provides a comparison of citizenship laws of 1958, 1977 and 1985. The text expresses indignation that "the 1985 act was given retrospective implementation from 1958, superseding all previous laws and bylaws on citizenship before 1985."

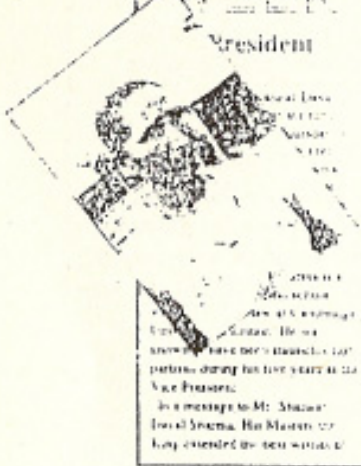
The booklet also contains sections on Drig Lam Namzha, the "peace protests" of the fall of 1990, and provides separate lists of the unlawfully detained, killed and injured, the houses demolished and burned, abduction, disappearance and rape.

KUENSEL

Bhutan's National Newspaper

Vol. VI, No. 2 Saturday, July 18, 1992

THE WEEK

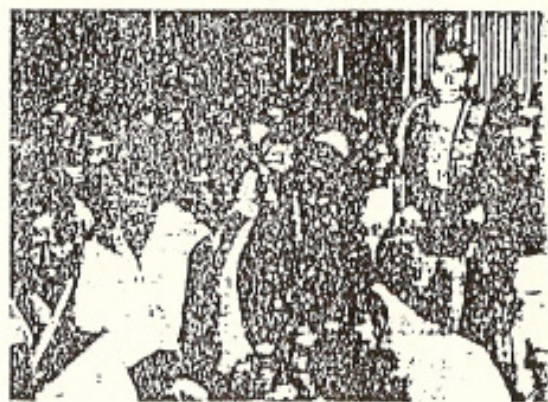


His Majesty appeals to Lhotshampa migrants not to leave their country

His Majesty the King made a personal appeal this week to Lhotshampa migrants not to leave their country when they go through a difficult period in their lives.

During the past week, the King has been receiving reports from the Lhotshampa community in the West and South. He has been informed that many of them are facing difficulties in their lives. He has expressed his deep sympathy for them and has urged them to remain in their country.

The King has also expressed his confidence in the Government and its ability to solve the problems of the Lhotshampa community. He has urged them to cooperate with the Government and to work together to build a better future for their country.



A woman from Suray gewog who had applied to migrate agrees not to leave a spouse to her

Dhana Maya Baral on the front page of Kuensel and at Goldhap Refugee Camp (inset).

Flight from Sarbhang

According to *Kuensel* (23 May 1992), a gang of terrorists gunned down Chimi Dorji, the *Dungpa*, or sub-district officer, of Geylegphug, as he was returning home from Taklai village. Dorji, 36, was shot several times on the chest. Four military guards accompanying Dorji in the Hilux jeep were unharmed. "A well known and popular official had been gunned down in cold blood." Dorji's death was treated as a cause celebre in Bhutan. He was declared a martyr and given a highly publicised state funeral in Punakha, with the *Je Khempo*, the Chief Abbot, the Crown Prince, and ministers present.

The Government had no doubt that Lhotshampa "ngolops" killed Dorji, but peasant refugees now in camps in Nepal are not so sure. They wonder how the killers managed to shoot Dorji thrice in a moving jeep, without also hitting the army men with the *Dungpa* and the jeep itself. They say they had heard of bad blood between Dorji and the Army, and also wonder whether the assassins could be the well-armed Meches (Bodos) from India, a group of whom he had confronted earlier that day on the road to Taklai.

Tobgay Tshering was assigned to take over as *Dungpa* of Geylegphug, a sub-division of Sarbhang district. Within a few days of taking office, on 4 June, he called a meeting of the surrounding villages in Geylegphug. He first asked for a show of hands whether families of persons identified as "ngolops" should be told to leave Bhutan. Only one man raised his hand.

The following is what Tshering then told the villagers*, speaking in chaste Nepali:

"Do you still have the dead *Dungpa*'s meat sticking to your teeth, you murderers? So you want to keep the ngolops. That makes all of you ngolops. We Drukpas fought the British, we fought the Tibetans. We spilt blood for this country, not you. This country is ours, and the Government is ours. You all were only guests, so now go back to your country. You definitely cannot stay here. You cannot pretend to be a citizen by just wearing the *bakhu*. Better to go while there is still time, or you will suffer. You have three days to depart. It does not matter if you are F-1 or F-7. Better that weeds grow here than you plough your fields. Do not run away, in the form of voluntary departure,



Take your compensation and go. The people of Sanchi who went before you have got citizenship in Nepal and have come back and thanked us for suggesting that they go. Go to Nepal, there the Koizala Sarkar will keep you in comfortable buildings and feed you. When you are all gone, we will come down here to hunt. Let it not be that we get some monkeys when we aim for the wild game."

The exodus from Geylegphug villages and other villages of Sarbhang began. The flood of refugees at the border post of Kakarbhitta notched

another high as an average twenty-five trucks with Assam number plates entered Nepal. (According to camp figures, refugee arrivals jumped from 5149 in June to 9152 in July, primarily peasants from Sarbhang.)

When the Sarbhang Dzongda (district administrator) sent a report on 9 June that more than 400 families, most of them from Geylegphug, had applied to leave, King Jigme sent a high level team to meet the families. On 14 July, he came down for a meeting with the migrant families. According to *Kuensel* the King said, "All of you are bonafide citizens who have been issued with Bhutanese Citizenship Cards. It is very important that I understand your problems and know the reason why you want to leave your country."

The King then said: "Short of literally going down on my knees with folded hands, I have tried everything possible to resolve the serious problem we have today in southern

Bhutan. I am therefore deeply pained that all of you here today who are genuine citizens have not only applied to leave your country but even declared that you would not wait for more than two days to have your applications processed. I have come here from Thimphu to ask you all not to migrate and leave your country. I have every hope that you will reconsider your decision and not abandon your country when it is going through a very difficult time.

"I have done everything I could think of to make you responsible citizens. I can now only hope and pray that you will stay back so that we can all live together like members of one household and make our country strong..."

Questioned by *Kuensel* how it could be that almost every migrant said they were leaving because he had asked them to, Dungpa Tshering said it was a frame-up. He said it was hardly possible that he could have said all those things when he had just joined office.

Kuensel reported on 19 July that after King Jigme's lecture, a number of Lhotshampas decided to stay back. The newspaper has a front-page picture with a caption that reads: "A woman from Surey who had applied to migrate agrees not to leave after His Majesty spoke to her." The person has now been identified as Dhana Maya Baral. According to co-villager Khagendra Neupane, who arrived at Kakarbhitta by truck on 21 July, immediately after the King went back to Thimphu, the villagers were shown a "list" that included Dhana Maya's name. Within two days, she was out of Bhutan, and a week later, like many others, at the 14 July meeting who had agreed to stay, Dhana Maya was at Goldhap camp as a refugee.

The Cabinet met in Thimphu on 17 July and constituted a team to enquire into the complaints made by the Nepali-speakers against Tobgay Tshering, the Dungpa. The team was appointed by Home Minister Dago Tshering, rather than by the King. The team might have searched for the persons the King spoke to on 14 July. Instead, the Bhutan Broadcasting Service reported that the team had found the allegations against the Dungpa were baseless.

* This is a composite quote as verified from independent interviews with the following refugees arriving in mid-July at Goldhap refugee camp: Padma Lal Timsina, Tulsi Ram Neupane, Thakur Prasad Luitel, Chet Nath Timsina, Meghnath Khadka and Narapati Pokhrel.

KULTURSJOKK I HIMALAYA

eller

HISTORIEN OM ØDELEGGELSEN AV ET LIKEVEKTSSAMFUNN.

Helena Norberg-Hodge:
"Ladakh - da Vesten kom til Himalaya"
København 1988, 168 s.
Pris for NNF's medlemmer: Kr 65,-.

Hva skjer med et lite, isolert, selvforsynt samfunn når det plutselig blir konfrontert med vestlig turisme og moderne teknikk? Forfatterinnen Helena Norberg-Hodge har som en av de få europeere kunnet iakta utviklingen på nært hold. Nært, fordi hun har tilbragt en stor del av sitt liv i Ladakh, kjente Ladakh fra tiden før turismen og snakker ladakhisk flytende.

Da hun første gang kom til Ladakh i 1975, var det fremdeles et samfunn i økologisk balanse hvis befolkning ikke oppfattet seg selv som fattig og underutviklet. Bortsett fra en høy spedbarnsdødelighet - kanskje opptil 30% - var befolkningens helsetilstand god, drikkevannet var rent og de giftstoffer som vi forurensar vårt eget miljø med, var ukjente.

Ladakherne arbeidet 4 måneder i året i et tempo som ikke var høyere enn at både barn og gamle kunne delta. I de 8 vintermånedene ble det arbeidet lite og det sosiale liv var desto rikere.

All mat og alle bruksgjenstander ble - med ytterst få unntak - framstilt av lokale ressurser og med en enkel teknologi som alle var fortrolige med. Alle ressurser ble resirkulert og det ble intet avfall.

Landsbyene var små og samfunnet derfor oversiktlig. Alle beslutninger kunne fattes av de som ble direkte berørt av dem. Følelsen av kontroll med egen tilværelse og mangelen på kunnskap om verden utenfor muliggjorde et samfunn av lykkelige, harmoniske og friske mennesker.

Så lenge det var balanse mellom befolkning og ressurser, var samfunnet også påfallende fritt for konflikter. Når ressursene ikke skulle deles opp for hver ny generasjon og både folketall og ressursgrunnlag var stabile, var det heller ikke grunnlag for konkurranse og konflikt om ressursene. Forfatterinnen tror at dette også var hovedårsaken til fraværet av vold og aggresjon blant folk i Ladakh.

Ladakh ble offisielt åpnet for turister i 1974. Få år etter kom de i stric strømmer i løpet av de 4 sommermånedene. De fremmede brukte like mye penger på en eneste dag som de innfødte tidligere brukte på et helt år, de omga seg med en utrolig luksus. Visstnok var de også omgitt av maskiner som

gjorde alt arbeidet for dem og lediggang så da også ut til å være deres viktigste kjennetegn. Det virket som ren magi.

Ladakherne fikk også stifte bekjentskap med moderniseringen fra en annen kant, nemlig sentralregjeringen i New Delhi. Av sikkerhetspolitiske grunner følte India behov for å markere overfor både Pakistan og Kina at dette var indisk territorium. Området måtte utvikles, militære styrker måtte utplasseres. En stadig strøm av lastebiler bragte med seg byggematerialer, brensel og mat.

Stilt overfor dette kultursjokket reagerte ladakherne med å betrakte sin egen kultur som mindreverdige. Rammet av dette mindreverdighetskompleks begynte særlig de unge å forkaste alt i deres egen kultur og ta imot uten motforestillinger alt det som kom fra den moderne verden bare fordi det var moderne. Dermed fulgte ønsket om å tilegne seg alle modernitetens symboler. Indisk og vestlig film (gjett hva slags!) skapte det inntrykk at aggressiv adferd var et naturlig trekk ved moderne kultur.

En utviklingskommisær sa følgende til forfatteren: "Hvis Ladakh noensinne skal utvikles, må vi finne ut hvordan vi skal gjøre disse menneskene grådige. Ellers kan man ikke motivere dem".

Han behøvde ikke bekymre seg. Penger hadde tidligere spilt en beskjeden rolle i Ladakh. Nå ble de et uunnværlig middel til å skaffe seg moderne forbruksvarer. Inflasjon truet imidlertid pengens verdi og ladakherne gled inn i et tiltakende avhengighetsforhold til en verdensøkonomi helt hinsides deres påvirkningsmuligheter.

Utvikling og modernisering trekker menneskene bort fra et sikkert utkomme på jakt etter en drøm som forarmer dem både materielt og psykologisk. De ender som slumboere som har forlatt deres hjemsted til fordel for drømmen om bylivet.

I et forsøk på å stanse denne utvikling ble Ladakh-prosjektet grunnlagt i 1978. Målet er ikke å bringe hjelp til Ladakh, men å informere ladakherne om problemene med den utviklingsvei de er i ferd med å slå inn på. Samtidig prøver man å vise at det finnes andre utviklingsmuligheter som tar hensyn til den lokale økologi og bygger på det beste i tradisjonell kultur. Gjennom Center for Økologisk Utvikling søker man å utvikle teknologier som på grunnlag av lokale ressurser kan bidra til å øke ladakhernes levestandard uten å true balansen i naturen eller skape avhengighet av import av dyre, fossile brennstoffer. Enkel anvendelse av solenergi kan erstatte olje og elektrisitet og bidra til at landsbyene fortsatt er levedyktige.

Norge-Nepal-foreningen hadde håpet å kunne invitere Helena Norberg-Hodge til foreningens medlemsmøte i november. Når det ikke lar seg gjøre, håper vi at det i stedet vil være mulig å få henne hit i løpet av vinteren. Hennes bok vil fortsatt være til salgs for foreningens medlemmer. De som vil ha boka sendt i posten må være forberedt på å betale ca kr 25,- for porto og emballasje i tillegg til bokens pris kr 65,-.

Yngve Gauslå
tlf priv 02-62 22 96
tlf jobb 02-41 22 14.

Ferdskriver funnet

Katmandu (NTB- Reuter-AFP): Redningsmannskaper fant tirsdag ferdskriveren og båndopptageren i cockpiten til det pakistanske passasjerflyet som mandag styrtet under innflyging til Nepals hovedstad Katmandu. De vitale instrumentene kan kanskje avsløre årsaken til flystyrten, hvor alle de 167 menneskene om bord omkom.

Det styrtede flyet er av typen Airbus A-300, og tilhører Pakistan International Airlines. Det er andre gang i år at et passasjerfly styrter i Nepal. 31. juli styrtet en Airbus fra Thai Airways i en annen fjellside utenfor Katmandu. Hele besetningen og de 113 passasjerene omkom.

Kokka som erobret ungdøren

Av Kjell Hagen
Vårt Land

I 1989 reiste lærer Torbjørn Gjedrem (34) fra Bjerkreim til Nepal som innbitt ungdør. Men kokke Bunu (26) ved den norske skolen i Katmandu viste at veien til mannens hjerte går gjennom magen. For fem uker siden ble paret viet i Bangkok, på vei til Norge.

– Det var nok ikke bare maten, selv om den var god nok, smiler Bjerkreim-brudgommen som sammen med sin Bunu har valgt å tilbringe noen av hvetebredsdagene på Hurdalsstevnet 92.

Bruden kommer fra en hindu-familie, men har gjennom åtte år på den norske skolen i Katmandu – som betjener flere misjonselskaper – blitt en overbevist kristen. Om en måned skal

hun døpes i Bjerkreim kirke.

– Selv om vi kommer fra to helt forskjellige kulturer, er vi likevel ikke fremmed for hverandres tenkemåte. Som kokke hos norske familier i åtte år kjenner Bunu ganske mye til vår livsstil, og jeg kjenner en del til hennes gjennom tre år i Nepal. Det hjelper bra, sier Torbjørn Gjedrem som hovedsakelig snakker nepali med sin kone. Hennes første og største utfordring nå blir å lære norsk.

– Det går nok ikke lenge før hun til og med snakker rogalending, mener ektemannen.

Da Torbjørn Gjedrems tre års kontrakt med Den norske Santalmisjon som lærer i Nepal utløp i sommer, var det forlengst bestemt at Bunu skulle bli med til Norge. Men paret ville gjerne feire bryllup der også noen fra hennes familie kunne delta. Nærmeste mulighet var Bangkok, der tillitsmann Eivind Haugli i Det Norske Misjonselskap viet paret, i nærvær av fami-



Hvetebredsdager i Hurdal for nygifte Bunu og Torbjørn Gjedrem.

FOTO: KJELL HAGEN

liemedlemmer og misjonærer. – Hva sier din familie til at du flytter til Norge?

– De synes det er greit, forteller fru Gjedrem.

Referat fra årsmøtet i Norge - Nepal Foreningen.

Møtet ble avholdt 8. oktober 1992 i Lektorenes Hus. 24 medlemmer var møtt fram.

Åpning : Styrets leder Ane Haaland åpnet møtet kl. 19.15 og ønsket velkommen.

Det ble holdt 1 minutt stillhet til minne om medlem Martin Hoftun som omkom ved en flyulykke i nærheten av Kathmandu i juli i år.

Forøvrig ga hun uttrykk for at det sto bra til med foreningen med en viss økning i medlemstallet og godt framme på de avholdte møtene i det forløpne året.

Valg av møteleder og referent : Møtet ga sin tilslutning til at Ane Håland ble møteleder, og Ingebrigt Toft ble valgt til referent. Marit Bakke og Niolai Arnø stilte som underskrivere av referatet.

Årsberetning : Ane Håland la fram foreningens årsberetning som ble godt mottatt. Det har vært et variert program for medlemsmøtene med et høydepunkt i feiringen av to-årsdagen for revolusjonen i Nepal med dal - bhat og sosialt samvær som en vellykket avslutning. Debattmøtet om en bærekraftig utvikling i Nepal, var også et godt besøkt medlemsmøte.

Det var ingen spesielle bemerkninger til beretningen, og den ble tatt til etterretning.

Årsregnskap : Kasserer Yngve Gauslå presenterte regnskapet som er revidert av revisor Roy Friis. Regnskapet viste et tilfredstillende resultat og ble godtatt av møtet.

Roy Friis sa seg villig til å fortsette som revisor for foreningen til neste årsmøte.

Vedtektsendringer : Kasserer Yngve Gauslå fremmet følgende forslag til endring av paragraf 3, siste ledd i vedtektene : " Medlemskapet opphører dersom medlemskontingenten ikke er betalt ~~innbetalt~~ i løpet av året den gjelder for eller etter første kontingentpurring i det nye året. Medlemskapet opphører også ved skriftlig utmelding til styret."

Videre foreslo han at paragraf 3 ble utvidet med følgende avsnitt : " Dersom en person melder seg inn i foreningen på årsmøtet eller etter årsmøtet, kreves det ikke kontingent for inneværende år. Dersom kontingenten da betales ved innmeldelsen eller før årets utløp, skal den gjelde for det følgende år."

Både endring og tillegg ble enstemmig vedtatt. Ingen andre forslag fremkom på møtet.

Valg av styremedlemmer " Valgkomiteen la fram følgende forslag til nye styremedlemmer etter de som trekker seg etter 2 år i styret :

Marit Kleppa : Stortingsbibliotekar, 3 reiser i Nepal.
Stein Bie : Sivilagronom og direktør ved NORAGRIC på Ås.
Ragnhild Krogvig Karlsen : Student, nordisk språk, musikk og teatervitenskap. Opphold i Nepal som tenåring.

De øvrige styremedlemmer stiller til gjenvalg. Ingen andre kandidater ble foreslått på møtet, og de tre foreslåtte kandidater ble innvalgt ved akklamasjon.

Valgkomiteen:

Tor Møgedal ønsket avløsning, og møtet valgte enstemmig Halvard Kuløy som ny formann. De to øvrige medlemmene i valgkomiteen, Hem Gurung og Inger Marie Bjønnes, er fortiden i utlandet, og hvis de ikke er tilbake i Norge innen neste årsmøte, ble styret av møtet gitt mandat til å velge to nye medlemmer til valgkomiteen.

HAMRO PATRIKA :

Dag Norling ønsker avløsning som redaktør for medlemsbladet, men har sagt seg villig til å fortsette inntil styret har funnet en ny redaktør.

Olaf Myrholdt sa seg villig til å tre inn som assisterende redaktør for å avlaste Dag Norling.

Eventuelt :

Da det ikke fremkom noen bemerkninger under eventuelt, var årsmøtets dagsorden behandlet og møtet ble hevet.

Referert av Ingebrigt Toft.

Bekreftes :

Marit Bakke

Nikolai Arnø

NORGE-NEPAL FORENINGEN

ÅRSBERETNING

For perioden 24/10 1991 til 8/10 1992

Styret har i perioden hatt følgende sammensetning:

Formann:	Ane Haaland
Nestformann:	Olav Myrholdt*
Kasserer:	Yngve Gauslå*
Sekretær:	Wenche Fossum
Styremedlemmer:	Dave Durkan*
	Basudha Gurung
	Elbjørg Erstad
	Hallvard Kåre Kuløy*
	Vibeke Eikås

Personer merket med * er på valg i år.

Foreningen har hatt et godt år. Vi har tatt opp flere tema som tydeligvis engasjerer medlemmene, det har resultert i godt besøkte medlemsmøter med frisk og engasjert debatt. Foreningen har en god økonomi, og medlemstallet øker.

Det er avholdt syv styremøter og fem medlemsmøter i perioden. Temaer på medlemsmøtene har vært:

28/11/91 Gurungene - et folk i Himalaya, ved Olav Myrholdt.
30/1/92 Turismen - et debattmøte med Hem Gurung, friluftsfilosofen Nils Faarlund og "eventyrreise-generalen" Ulf Prytz.

- 12/3/92 Bærekraftig utvikling i Nepal? Debattmøte med Desmond McNeill og Stein Bie.,
- 4/5/92 Jubileumsmøte med dal-bhat. Med rapport fra Nepal ved Vibeke Eikås, og fra Stein Fossum, med film fra hans arbeid som flyver for UNDP.
- 8/10/92 Årsmøte. Bistandsorganisasjoner som arbeider i Nepal presenterer seg.

Det er lagt vekt på å skape mer debatt i foreningen. Dette har vi søkt å få til ved bl.a. å invitere to innledere til en del av møtene. Sakene blir dermed bredere belyst, fra flere sider.

Styret har sendt ut fire nr. av Hamro Patrika, fremdeles velvillig redigert av Dag Norling, med sterkere engasjement og assistanse fra styremedlemmer. Hvert nummer av HP skal ta for seg et tema, fortrinnsvis relatert til tema på neste medlemsmøte. Dette vil gi medlemmene anledning til å sette seg inn i tema og engasjere seg mer i debattene.

Styret har etablert kontakt med andre Nepal-foreninger i Danmark, Canada og Tyskland. Vibeke Eikås koordinerer disse kontaktene. Vi utveksler informasjon med disse foreningene.

Spørsmålet om NNF skal engasjere seg mer aktivt i prosjekter eller hjelpeprogram i Nepal har vært diskutert i styret. Vi har vedtatt at foreningen ikke skal gå inn på dette området, NNFs

rolle skal være å skape debatt, informere medlemmene om utviklinga i Nepal, og være et forum for kontakt mellom Nepal-venner.

I desember 1991 sendte styret et brev til den nepalesiske ambassaden i London angående utnevnelse av ny norsk konsul for Nepal. Det er nå to år siden konsul Kåre Græsdahl døde. En representant for ambassaden har nylig vært i Norge, og vi kan forvente nyheter om utnevnelse av konsul snart.

Hybrisfilm kontaktet styret for å be om råd angående en film de hadde planlagt å ta opp i Nepal. Flere av styremedlemmene stilte på et møte sammen med filmmakerne og ga dem tilbakemelding på manus, ideer og vinkling av filmen, som tok for seg masseturismens påvirkning av Sherpa-kulturen i Nepal. Vi synes dette var en god måte å trekke på kunnskaper og erfaringer styret sitter inne med. Hybrisfilm har fått avslag fra Statens kortfilmvalg på sin søknad om støtte til filmen.

Foreningens formann har fungert som tolk for nepalesiske asylsøkere til Norge, og er registrert som tolk ved Oslo Politikammer.

Den tragiske flyulykken i Nepal i juli tok fra oss vår fremste ekspert på demokrati-utviklingen i Nepal - Martin Hoftun. Som fagmann, menneske og venn vil han bli dypt savnet i foreningen.

Medlemsoversikten pr. 28/9/92 viser 123 individer, 25 familier og 9 organisasjoner som har betalt medlemskap i 1992. I tillegg har 20 medlemmer ikke betalt i år, og 17 har ikke betalt kontingent på to år. Det er foreslått en vedtektsendring som innebærer at medlemmer som ikke betaler kontingenten i løpet av året blir strøket av kartoteket.

ÅRSREGNSKAP

ÅRSREGNSKAP FOR NORGE-NEPAL FORENINGEN PR 28.09.92.

<u>INNTEKTER:</u>	<u>16.10.91 - 28.09.92</u>	<u>19.10.90 - 15.10.91</u>
Kontingenter:	21.300,00	16.230,00
Beverting:	4.662,00	4.897,70
Tilskudd:	0,00	4.655,00
Renter på postgiro:	655,99	232,10
Boksalg:	353,00 1)	5.355,00 1)
Inngangspenger:	260,00	190,00
<u>Diverse:</u>	<u>3110,40</u>	<u>2.945,00</u>
	30.341,39	34.504,80

KOSTNADER:

Porto, gebyrer:	5.275,60	5.406,80
Adm., rekvisita:	698,20	ført under "diverse"
Beverting:	4.105,80	2.480,60
Lokalleie:	2.000,00 2)	3.500,00
Innkjøp av bøker:	2.059,00 1)	1.788,00
Trykking av HP:	8.364,00	6.726,00
<u>Diverse:</u>	<u>3.147,00</u>	<u>6.977,20</u>
	25.649,60	26.878,60
Resultat:	4.691,79	7.626,20

<u>Balanse:</u>	<u>28.09.92</u>	<u>15.10.91</u>
Kasse:	119,90	1.000,00
<u>Postgiro:</u>	<u>17.958,93</u>	<u>12.387,04</u>
Sum eiendeler:	18.078,83	13.387,04

Foreningen har ingen gjeld.

1) Lave inntekter og høye kostnader til bøker skyldes beskjedent salg av Hoftun-familiens Nepal-bok i dette regnskapsåret samtidig som bøkene var ervervet i forrige regnskapsår og til dels også solgt da. Faktureringen fant imidlertid sted først i det nye regnskapsåret.

2) Leie av lokale til dette årsmøtet er enda ikke fakturert. Leie av lokale til forrige årsmøte var forskuddsbetalt i forrige regnskapsår.

Regnskapet er revidert: 7/10 - 92

Ring *Grind*

NORGE - NEPALFORENINGEN

ETTER ÅRSMØTET

HVEM SITTE I STYRET

ANE HAALAND: 43 år. Master Degree i samfunnsvitenskap i Chicago og arbeider free-lance. Hun har arbeidet 10 år i Nepal for UNICEF og Redd Barna. Hun snakker nepali og er registrert som tolk. Hun har også arbeidet i Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Burma, Guatemala, Sierra Leone og Botswana og er stadig på reise fot. Hun har skrevet en bok om Bhaktapur i Nepal, utgitt i Bangkok.

YNGVE GAUSLÅ: 44 år. Utdannet cand.mag. Bokhandler med reisehåndbøker og kart som spesialitet. Han har vært i Nepal én gang som turist.

ELBJØRG HOLM ERSTAD: 26 år. Arbeider som sykepleier på Radiumhospitalet. Hennes foreldre har vært misjonærer i Nepal med tilknytning til Den Norske Tibetmisjonen. Hun bodde 8 år i Nepal som barn og har senere besøkt landet én gang som turist.

BASUDHA GURUNG: 23 år. Hun er født og oppvokst i Nepal og kom til Norge som 14-åring da hun begynte i 8de klasse. Hun studerer nå på tredje året på Landbrukshøgskolen på Ås.

VIBEKE EIKÅS: 47 år. Hun arbeider i Utviklingsfondet FIVH hvor hun har jobbet som prosjektkoordinator med Asia som sitt spesielle ansvarsområde. Hun har vært 4 ganger i Nepal for å følge opp utviklingsprosjekter.

WENCHE FOSSUM: 42 år. Hun er for tiden hjemmeværende husmor med barn. Hun har bodd i Nepal i 3 år da mannen arbeidet i Kathmandu for FN's internasjonale luftfartsorganisasjon ICAO.

MARIT KLEPPA: 50 år. Arbeider som bibliotekar i Stortinget. Hun har vært i Nepal 3 ganger som turist, to ganger med Den Norske Turistforening og én gang på egen hånd.

STEIN BIE: 49 år. Utdannet agronom og er for tiden direktør i NORAGRIC (Norwegian Centre for International Agricultural Development) på Landbrukshøgskolen på Ås. Han har vært i Nepal én gang og kombinerte da et ferieopphold med studiet av frukt dyrking i Kali Gandaki.

RAGNHILD KROGVIG KARLSEN: 23 år. Hun blir i disse dager cand. mag. med fagene nordisk, musikk og teatervitenskap. Som tenåringsbarn bodde hun noen måneder i Nepal sammen med sine foreldre.

DE NYE VEDTEKTENE

NORGE-NEPAL-FORENINGENS VEDTEKTER (revidert 8.10.92)

Paragraf 1: NAVN

Foreningens navn er Norge-Nepal-foreningen.

Paragraf 2: FORMÅL

Foreningens formål er å fremme samarbeid og forståelse mellom det norske og det nepalesiske folk ved:

- å arbeide for kulturutvekslinger mellom Norge og Nepal og for å utbre kjennskapet til Nepals kultur og tradisjoner blant nordmenn,
- å arbeide for økt norsk bistand til Nepal og bidra til koordinering av utviklingshjelp og forskningssamarbeid, og
- å fungere som forum for folk med interesse for Nepal.

Paragraf 3: MEDLEMSKAP

Medlemskap er åpent for alle med interesse for Nepal.

Foreningen har tre typer medlemskap:

- enkeltmedlemskap
- familiemedlemskap
- organisasjonsmedlemskap.

Medlemskap for organisasjoner gir bare én - 1 - stemme ved voteringer.

Medlemskapet opphører dersom medlemskontingenten ikke er betalt i løpet av det året den gjelder for eller etter første kontingentpurring i det nye året.

Medlemskap opphører også ved skriftlig utmelding til styret.

Dersom en person melder seg inn i foreningen på årsmøtet eller etter årsmøtet, kreves ikke kontingent for inneværende år. Dersom kontingenten da betales ved innmeldelsen eller før årets utløp, skal den gjelde som kontingent for det følgende år.

Paragraf 4: STYRE

Foreningens styre skal bestå av en leder, en nestleder, en sekretær, en kasserer og 5 styremedlemmer. Styret er beslutningsdyktig når lederen eller nestlederen samt minst 3 styremedlemmer er til stede. Ved stemmelikhet kan saken avgjøres med lederens dobbeltstemme, eventuelt nestlederens stemme i lederens fravær.

Styret er ansvarlig for den praktiske driften av foreningen, og for at foreningens formål blir fulgt opp. Når et medlem ønsker å fremme en sak for styret, har vedkommende anledning til å gjøre dette skriftlig eller ved personlig fremmøte på styremøte.

Paragraf 5: ÅRSMØTE

Årsmøtet er foreningens høyeste organ og sammenkalles én gang hvert kalenderår.

På innkallingen til siste ordinære medlemsmøte før årsmøtet skal det også gjøres oppmerksom på innleveringsfrist for skriftlige forslag til vedtektsendringer som ønskes behandlet på årsmøtet. Samme frist gjelder for innlevering til valgkomiteen av forslag til kandidater til nytt styre. Styret skal sørge for at samtlige av disse forslagene vedlegges innkallingen til årsmøtet.

Årsmøtet skal behandle følgende saker:

- valg av møteleder, referent og to personer til å underskrive årsmøteprotokollen (referatet),
- styrets årsberetning,
- revidert regnskap,
- saker fremmet skriftlig av styret eller medlemmer, herunder størrelsen på kontingenten for de tre typer medlemskap,
- valg av nytt styre, valgkomite på tre medlemmer, revisor og redaktør av Hamro Patrika.

Valgkomiteen velges for to år av gangen.

Hvert styremedlem velges for to år av gangen. Annethvert år skal leder, kasserer og tre styremedlemmer velges, og påfølgende år skal nestleder, sekretær og to styremedlemmer velges.

Revisor og redaktør av Hamro Patrika velges for ett år av gangen.

Paragraf 6: VEDTEKTSENDRINGER

Endringer i foreningens vedtekter skal vedtas av årsmøtet med 2/3 flertall.

Dag Norling
John Collets Alle 46
0852 Oslo 8



NESTE MEDLEMSMØTE :

(Se forsiden)

FOREDRAGSHOLDERNE:

MERETE LINDSTAD er utdannet ved journalisthøyskolen og har også fått med seg et kurs i ulandsjournalistikk.

Til daglig leder hun Innvandreredaksjonen i NRK. Hun har dessuten jobbet i Forum for Utviklingsjournalistikk og har skrevet "Kildehåndbok for den 3. verden" (1992, kr 100), et oppslagsverk for journalister. Hun har vært i Nepal tre ganger. Hun har tidligere holdt foredrag i vår forening om "Tyveri av Nepals kulturskatter".

Sine kunnskaper om konflikten i Bhutan har hun ervervet gjennom intervjuer med etniske nepalesere som har flyktet til Nepal fra Sør-Bhutan hvor mange av dem har levd i generasjoner. Om dette har hun skrevet en artikkel i tidsskriftet "Utvikling" nr 4/92.

UNNI WIKAN er professor i sosialantropologi. Hun har gjort sitt feltarbeid i Egypt, Oman, Bali og Bhutan. Feltarbeidet i Egypt og Oman har avstedkommet tre bøker:

"Fattigfolk i Kairo",
"Imorgen, hvis Gud vil...Kvinneliv i Kairos bakgater",
"Behind the Veil in Arabia - Women in Oman".

I årene 1989 - 1992 har hun besøkt Bhutan en rekke ganger og arbeidet blant de tre store befolkningsgruppene i landet, hvorav nepaleserne er den tallrikeste. Bhutans myndigheter tillater ikke sosialantropologisk feltarbeid. Unni Wikan har vært konsulent for en rekke forskjellige prosjekter hvor innsamling av data om samfunnsforhold har vært nødvendig. Helseproblematikk har stått sentralt i arbeidet, bl.a. forholdet mellom tradisjonell og moderne medisin og studier av mødre og barnedødlighet. Andre problemer har vært virkninger av vannkraftutbygging, og hvordan "utvikling" påvirker det bhutanesiske samfunn. Gjennom dette arbeidet har hun fått innsikt i økonomi og levekår i ulike deler av Bhutan.

A. post

HAMRO PATRIKA

NORGE - NEPALFORENINGEN

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