Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) Chairman Prachanda and the People's Liberation Army

This photo of the Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Prachanda, was captured from a documentary shown to the journalists and guests invited for a Maoist program in Rukum last week. This is the most recent photo of the elusive commander. The Maoists also have several documentaries they use for recruiting drives. (page 18)

Car accident and robbery claims the lives of 2 Nepali students in the US

Varshana Pradhanand, a Nepali student studying in Troy University, Alabama, died this month in a fatal road accident. In a separate incident, two armed robbers shot at Shekhar Regmi, 20, working as a clerk at the Finamart gas station. (page 6)

The Nagarkot Massacre

Soldier(s) from the Royal Nepal Army (RNA says there was only 1, locals say there were about 12) in civil uniform attacked a religious festival in this Nagarkot temple with machine guns, killing 12 and injuring dozens more. The following morning they swiftly ran a clean up operation before inviting the media and watch groups to the site. (page 5)

नेपालिया मानव अधिकार हनन, अमेरिकामा चिन्ता

नेपालिया प्रजातन्त्र प्रविष्ट र मानव अधिकारको संरक्षण एवं सम्बन्धितको स्थान आवाज सुलभ गर्न विवको बुझो पनि कुरा रहेका नेपालीहरुको नैराज्यिक अधिकार तथा कार्यकर्ता हनन आउँदै, यो वृद्धिको ले- स्थायी राज करी नेपालका पूर्व स्थायी प्रतिनिधि मुगङीराङ्गलाई रहेको। २३ जो अपनो वाणी मानवाधिकार दिवसको अवसरमा नेपाल मानव अधिकार संगठन, मेहिताङ्ग शाखाको माध्यममा आयोजना गरेको नेपालमा मानव अधिकारको समाजमा विद्यमान विद्बिध विचार गर्नेबाट नोच थाले उक्त विचार अवकाश गर्नुपर्ने हो। (page 8)

Shikhar Concert 2005

5 stops, a bill with some of Nepal’s leading pop sensations and an average audience of 8,000 to 12,000 people per show, Shikhar Concert 2005 is one of Nepal’s biggest pop tours ever. (page 11)
To all our readers and well wishes,

Thank you for being with us in the first few months of our publication. We look forward to better serving your news and information needs on Nepal and Nepalis, and hope for your continued support in the coming year.

... wish you all the best of this season’s greetings and a wonderful New Year 2006. Keep warm.

- Nepali Awaaz
23 Dec. 05

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Letters

Re: Ride of his life
Dear Nepali Aawaz team,
I was just wondering about the safety situation for your publication because of some the news items and the letter Ride Of His Life (NepA #6) you have published in the paper. Is it safe to do so in these times?
Shanti, Australia

Dear reader,
Thank you for your concern. We are not sure if it is safe, but we are certain that we have worked within our constitutional right in Nepal (or the USA, where we are published), when we print these items. However, many of our friends in the Media in Nepal have been harassed by the government for publishing materials that might question its motives or be embarrassing for the Monarchy.

Hi Nepali Aawaz,
I am a resident of New York and I heard that Nepali Aawaz is shutting down. Is this true? I hope not.
Concerned reader, New York

Dear Reader in New York,
No, Nepali Aawaz is not shutting down and has no intentions to do so. Upon inquiry, we learnt that this is only a false and vindictive rumor spread by a group of people in New York who are now “starting a newspaper to shut down Nepali Aawaz.” As you might have noticed, because of overwhelming response and support from the readers, our distribution has increased to many states across the US and 3 other countries in the last 1 months. Thank for the heads up.

Hi Nepali Aawaz,
Thank you for your coverage on The Uglyz. I have been their biggest fan ever since I heard Audai Jadai, and even more so after watching their video.
Yashodhara Shrestha, USA

Hi Nepali Aawaz,
It’s great to know that there is a publication like this for Nepalis and by Nepalis in New York. My question is, when and where do we get to see it in print in Nepal?
Sudeshana Sapkota, Kathmandu.

Hi,
I would like to wish all the Nepalis and everyone a wonderful New Year 2006. Let us hope it will be more peaceful than the last few years.
Rajesh Shrestha, UK.

To all the readers of Nepali Aawaz, Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year 2006.
Dipesh, Australia
नेपाल कम्युनिस्ट पार्टी (एमएसए) का मासूमनिर्वाण माहाकाव्य नेपाल राजा बनेन्द्रले मालतानी गरिहुनुहोस् नागरकोटमा जतिला हट्या बाधा भएको थियो।

विराटनगरमा र पूर्वाञ्चलमा आयोजित दिनहरूमा नेपाली आम लोगहरूले समस्या वालो रहेको मालतानी नेपालले मार्च मात्र प्रदेशको स्वरूप नेपाल थाल्दै भएको र को स्वतन्त्रता भएको हाता र जनताधिकारी विषयमा धर्म भएको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु गर्नु पर्दछ। नेपालले धर्मनुस्तात "मालतानी र राजा बनेन्द्रले विपक्षमा र झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ। उनले धर्मनुस्तात "एउटा मालतानीले र राजा बनेन्द्रले जप्ले निर्णयको झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ। उनले राजा बनेन्द्रले राजकीय भएको निर्णयको झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ। उनले राजा बनेन्द्रले राजकीय भएको निर्णयको झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ। उनले राजा बनेन्द्रले राजकीय भएको निर्णयको झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ। उनले राजा बनेन्द्रले राजकीय भएको निर्णयको झापा राजा महाकाली मालतानी लाई राजकीय भएको निर्णयको राज को उनको धर्म सरोकार बढाउनु प्रयास गर्दछ।
The Nagarkot Massacre

Soldier(s) from the Royal Nepal Army (RNA says there was only 1, locals say there were about 12) in civil uniform attacked a religious festival in this Nagarkot temple with machine guns, killing 12 and injuring dozens more. The following morning they swiftly ran a clean up operation before inviting the media and watch groups to the site.

DR. PRADEEP BHATTARAI

Pure Massacre: Soldier(s) from the Royal Nepal Army (RNA says there was only 1, locals say there were about 12) in civil uniform attacked a religious festival in this Nagarkot temple with machine guns, killing 12 and injuring dozens more. The following morning they swiftly ran a clean up operation before inviting the media and watch groups to the site.

Soldier(s) from the Royal Nepal Army (RNA says there was only 1, locals say there were about 12) in civil uniform attacked a religious festival in this Nagarkot temple with machine guns, killing 12 and injuring dozens more. The following morning they swiftly ran a clean up operation before inviting the media and watch groups to the site.
Following the tragic incident at Nagarkot on the 14th of December, and in memory of all the people who have lost their lives in the armed conflict between the Maoist and the Government, Nepathya held the Shantiko Laagi Saanjhh-batti program at the Shanti Mandal in Maitighar on Friday. Despite the fact that the city had witnessed large-scale protests and strikes during the day, hundreds of people showed up for the event, candles in hand, bundled in bulky clothes and huddled together to ward off the cold—truly a sight for sore eyes.

Amrit Gurung’s rendition of Ghatana, the 25-minute rock ballad from Nepathya’s new album, a touching account of the horrific deaths in the Maina Pokhari tragedy (Dolakha, May 9, 2004), appeared to move the audience a great deal. What lent the song even more effect, apart from the powerful vocals and heartfelt lyrics, were probably the images on the screen that had been placed behind the band, scenes from the incident. The atmosphere was one of profound grief—even though the performance had been stirringly beautiful, people found it inappropriate, even difficult, to applaud at such a time. Amrit remarked that performing the song was hard for him. “Incidents like those of Maina Pokhari and Madi should never take place in any corner of the world again,” he added.

The Shanti Mandal has been hosting quite a few Saajhbatti programs this past year. The Himsaa Birodh Abhiyaan (Campaign Against Violence) has been responsible for these events, vowing that as long as people continue to be killed in the conflict, they will light candles in their memory and urge people to pray for peace.

Varshana Pradhanand, a Nepali student studying in Troy University, Alabama, died this month in a fatal road accident. The 21-year-old female student was driving alone in her car when it skid off the road and hit a tree, causing fatal injuries to the driver’s head. Varshana had finished her high school from Budhanilkantha School in Kathmandu. Her family and friends could not be reached for comments.

In a separate incident, two armed robbers shot at Shekhar Regmi, 20, working as a clerk at the Finamart gas station. Shekhar, who is student at North Lake College, was shot in the head after he struggled to open the cash register as the robbers waited for him to hand them the cash. He was Harris Methodist Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. No arrests have been made as investigators hope the surveillance video will aid in finding the criminals. It was reported that the masked robbers were Caucasian.

Nepali Society of Texas in Dallas will hold a Hindu funeral for the young student on 23 Dec. Another clerk working with him at the time escaped unharmed as he hid himself in a walk-in cooler when he realised the shop was being robbed.
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REPORT
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нечто новое о нашей стране, о наших достижениях, о наших проблемах.

Страны и международные организации придают большое значение нашему докладу и готовой к сотрудничеству с нами.

Мы надеемся, что наш доклад будет полезным для всех, кто заинтересован в нашем развитии.

С уважением,

[имя]

[должность]

[организация]
देखि विराममा ओरालो लागेको व्यापार घर र दुवानी व्यासायी मार्गा

युद्ध विराममा ओरालो लागेको व्यापार घर र दुवानी व्यासायी मार्गा

-अनुशील येथै पुर्वाञ्चलमा

2062 महोत्सव

महोत्स्वमा व्यापार घर र मनोरञ्जन

ANUSHIL SHRESTHA

DECEMBER 23, 2005- JANUARY 3, 2006

Crown Prince Paras and his wife Princess Himani attend the Birat Mahotsav 2062.

027 साल पढी पाँच वर्ष हुन समेतको 'विराट महोत्सव' गुरुत रहमकाय साथ २८ मिनर ढेख ५ प्रया मा सम्पन्न हुदै । पुर्वहितक सुङ्गो आधुनिक व्यापारको नयाँ "विराटनगरमा व्यापार र पुर्वाञ्चलमा एक" व्यापारको साथ २८ मिनर ढेख ५ प्रया मा सम्पन्न हुदै जी दिने "विराट महोत्सव २०६२" को उद्घाटन २८ मिनर बुधवारी लिखितको संस्कृतको युवाविद्यालय पत्र पौर विक्रम शारदेच्छ साँझ भएको छी ।

यसो समयको मुख्य बिधिहरू "विराट महोत्सव २०६२" मा होको फिन धेरौ दर्जन बिज्ञापनहरू आफ्नो पहाडीको साथ नेपाल उपर स्थान पर्ने चाहरु भन्ने आफ्नो कला र दर्शन निकृह प्रकाश सम्म सकिँदा हुने भएको छ्न । यसलाई व्यापारको नयाँ कार्यक्रम र सकारात्मक कला र वर्तमानी तथा अन्य विवरणको कार्यक्रम निर्देशन गर्ने उद्देश्यले गरिएको छ । कार्यक्रमको आयोजनको समय तथा व्यापारको सकारात्मक तर्ज उन्मादनको लागि मनोरञ्जनको कार्यक्रमलाई विजेता प्रमाणित गर्दछ भनिएको ।

युद्ध विराममा ओरालो लागेको व्यापार घर र दुवानी व्यासायी मार्गा

--अनुशील येथै पुर्वाञ्चलमा

- REPORT

-NEPALI AAWAZ | 9

DECEMBER 23, 2005- JANUARY 3, 2006
Shikhar Concert 2005

5 stops, a bill with some of Nepal’s leading pop sensations and an average audience of 8,000 to 12,000 people per show, Shikhar Concert 2005 is one of Nepal’s biggest pop tours ever.

The long awaited Shikhar Concert, a nationwide pop tour, visited five of Nepal’s biggest cities and towns in 12 days: Nepalgunj, Narayanghat, Birgunj, Dharan and Pokhara.

First Shikhar Concert: 3 years ago with three artists in the bill with only two stops.

This Tour: Initially planned for 2003, it was postponed because of political instability. It is produced and Managed by Vogue Ad and Event Management.

Performing Artists and MCs: Amongst others, the bill listed Mausami Gurung, Kranti Ale, Sugam Pokharel, Raju Lama, Deepesh Kishor Bhattarai and Nima Rumba. The artists were backed up by the Little Star Band, headed by Bhuapendra Bajracharya (of Kalind fame) in the absence of Little Star himself. MC Aashish and Prashan Syangden a.k.a. the Rhythm Brothers, did a fantastic job of rocking the crowd as much as the pop stars did. In fact, in Dharan, they themselves were quite the celebrities.

Tickets: Rs. 20 (approx. $0.28),

Nepalgunj, 10 Dec. 05
This South West border town of Nepal was the tour’s first stop. Highlight: The Audience; they were the coolest amongst the five cities, they were there to have fun and they seemed like they were having every bit of it. More than 9,000 people showed up.

Narayanghat, 12 Dec. 05
Rupesh Sen, the band manager for the Narayanghat native rock outfit the Shadows, and his friends were the local coordinators for this stop. Highlight: Massive turnout. The crowd turnout was massive. Low-point: The Oranges that were thrown at the artists at one point during the show. Yes, this is much better than the trend of stones being thrown by fans earlier this year. No, this is still not acceptable.

Birgunj, December 14, 2005
Highlight: The Audience; they were the coolest amongst the five cities, they were there to have fun and they seemed like they were having every bit of it. More than 9,000 people showed up.

Dharan, 16 Dec, 05
Detour: The artists make a quick stop in Bara district to see for themselves the new “Buddha”, a 17 year old boy who has been meditating for over 6 months and has apparently not eaten anything during the time. With mixed feelings and religious fervor, the artists left for Dharan. Highlight: The crowd; wildest and biggest of the tour. The 12,000 strong audience chanted “encore” after almost every performer. For the first time (ever in Nepal, probably), there was crowd-surfing. A daily paper next day wrote g and tiring journey of 550 kms, the troupe reach their final stop, Pokhara. Highlight: Mt. Machchhapuchhre in the backdrop as the show kicked off in the Pokhara Rangashala. Home to a large fan following of the star, Raju Lama closed the tour with his other superhit “Sayaad”.

The tour also proved that DJ Raju’s recent remix “Chyangba Hoi Chyangba” sung by Kranti Ale and Mausami Gurung has become an instant super-hit across the country in just a matter of weeks. Everywhere throughout the kingdom, the song was heard in radios, local fm stations, cassette players, shops, hotels, bars, dance clubs! Kranti and Mausami’s rock version of “Chyangba Hoi Chyangba” was the best received preformance in each one of the five shows.

Top to Bottom: Mausami Gurung, Nima Rumba, Deepesh K Bhattarai and Kranti Ale perform in Pokhara with one of the most magnificent backdrops imaginable; Mt. Machchhapuchhare.
Catching up with Lochan Rizal
Singer is made White Band Goodwill Ambassador for the UN.

Almost 10 years after recording his first song, Nepali Pop Rock singer Lochan Rizal, who is also currently pursuing his Master’s degree in Ethnomusicology from Kathmandu University, was recently declared a White Band Goodwill Ambassador for the Millennium Campaign by UN on 10 Dec. A native of rural hill district of Panchthar, Eastern Nepal, Lochan moved to Kathmandu in 1995 to join a High School there. Nepali Aawaz caught up with him to talk about his new position, the responsibilities it entails, and his music.

I will probably continue doing that.

You recently teamed up with the rock group Looza. How are things going?
It’s going really well. We’ve been practicing and it’s been a lot of fun. Looza is also getting involved in some social causes. But yeah, things are working out well with Looza.

You are now doing your Master’s in Ethnomusicology. I know, and I’m absolutely thrilled about it. I have been granted a scholarship for it. Sometime in the future I want to explore ethnic music and styles of more groups and write thesis and books about them and popular music in Nepal, which would be designed more like a reference book for Ethnomusicology students across the world. I would really like to become a good scholar and help take Nepali music to a global audience.

You also give music classes. Tell us a little bit about that.
Well, my academics is keeping me very busy at the moment so I have had to leave teaching in Central School mainly because of a tight schedule.

Lochan Trivia:
Lochan recorded his first song in 1995, and his first album was released in 2001 by Moonlight Records, also the publishing company of this fortnightly.

Lochan’s last full length album Coma was released by SAV in 2004. It’s first single Chandrama became one of the hits of the year.

As per his parents’ wishes, Lochan wanted to become a Doctor when he was a young boy.

What genre? Rock, of course. According to the band, their debut album is mostly going to be contemporary soft rock with a lot of guitar pieces. “The 80s sound is a big influence as it is; Moreover, that’s the ‘in-thing’ in the international scene as well,” says Iman. And despite their flamboyant musical styles on stage, they have tried their best to keep things “simple” in the album.

“The second album is going to be more true to what we have learned as a band. It won’t have any compromises as far as music’s concerned,” explains Iman. But for now, the band can’t wait to release their debut album. And quite certainly, neither can a lot of their fans.

Calling all Nepali performing artists residing outside of Nepal! Send us your demos and brief bio and we could feature you in Nepali Aawaz!

letters@nepaliaawaz.com
“नाई मलाई केही चाहिदैन”को प्रिमियर रुपैँ गैयकको चलचित्रले दर्शक हंसाया

धरामसागर साइबर प्रेक्शन लिमिटेडको रसिलो चलचित्र “नाई मलाई केही चाहिदैन”को प्रिमियर रोग गत साता हुन चालनिय दर्शकको मनोरमन प्रदान गर्न सफल भएको छ।

पिरोले गरी हेजप्छिड विरोध प्रतिबद्ध हरू गैयकले अहिले समय अवशेष कमेंट चलचित्रहरूले भन्न भो चलचित्र अयोग गयाको वातावरण। “कलेप नेपाली चलचित्रको दर्शकको जनाब जनी हामीले खोलीएको हुनै तर समय क्याकल्प र प्रचार तथा व्यापारीकर्ताले नै दर्शकको आयहरू हामीले।” चलचित्रले गाँउको अवसरमा अन्तिम मानवीयतमा एकता, सामर्थ्य र एक आत्मसम्मत समाज रहेको तर सहरमा गर्न राज्य पाईद छैनी विवरणमा रामरी छैनीको व्यापारी अनुभवको “अन्तिम दर्शन तरी रामको चलचित्र दर्शाउन आफ्नो यस चलचित्रको देखाइएको छ।”

युग्म प्रेमको परिवारीक, हायक प्राप्त र सबै चलचित्रको गैयके पैरे हुने हेरिएको सोईको गाँवो धुंधल र सहको धुन धुरको गरी युग्म प्रेमको परिवारीक नै देखाइएको छ।

चलचित्रको क्षमता अनुसार जीन र रोगरीट जनाब पापो गरीको ठिकानो भएको छ। अन्तर्गत झुल्झुली न्यूज पटकले चलचित्रको लाभको मनोरमन सङ्गीत र देखाउने रुपमा वातावरण। “फलिपिक हामीले मानिसको जीवन र गैयकको क्षमता अनुकूलितनुभयमान हुन सक्ने र उनको मानिसको श्रद्धा छैन।” यसैमा भएको रिजेव।

लन्त्र नाट्य जनाब धरामसागर अयोग गैयकको चलचित्र “लक्जोको नसका र निर्देशन रहेको र वस चलचित्रको रिमार्क अनुसार गैयको नेपाल समयको देखाउन नेपाली चलचित्रको रिमार्क अनुसार गैयको नेपाल समयको देखाउन

(Above, Left and right) Scene from the slapstick comedy Nai Malai Kehi Chaidaina. (Below) Audiences leave the cinema hall after the movie’s premier in Dharan.

नेपाली फिल्म


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All Nepal Band Competition ‘62

Metal and Hard Rock dominates another band contest in Nepal.

The first round of the “All Nepal Band Competition ‘62,” organized by Times FM 90.6, took place at the Jawalakhel Ground on Saturday, December 10th. Tickets were Rs. 75 and a fairly good number of audience showed up for the event. There are altogether thirty bands that have been selected to take part in this battle of the bands, including Cuentus, Blood Blister, Rusty Hybrids, Atharba and Metal Box. There will be two more battle rounds with ten bands each after which 10 finalists will be selected for whom the audiences will vote to pick the winner.

Along with other prizes, the winning band will win a record contract for an album as well as a music video production package. The band will be provided with great assist and support for their promotion and success. “There is no cash prize, though,” says one of the organiser, noting that many band contests regularly give away cash prizes.

The bands that played in the first battle round include 3 Meek Puppets, Rudrakshya Mantra, Tipsy Phony and Zenesis. All of the contestants showed off their talents and enthusiasm and got the crowd going. The three that did make it to the finals that day were Sound Chemistry, Dr. Punk and Taremam. Dr. Punk was good, but not necessarily good enough to make it into the finals. Anyway, to their luck, they’ve already been chosen and that’s what really counts. Sound Chemistry, on the other hand, were pretty impressive. Their performances included a brilliant cover of Pink Floyd. Although Da Soul Band did not qualify for the finals, they stood out with their blend of Nepali rap with metal.

An odd thing about many of the participants was their music; many of them would perform an enthralling cover of a metal song and then proceed to performing an original song; pop with mediocre lyrics and composition.

The popular rock outfit The Shadows also made a guest appearance at the end of the show. To nobody’s surprise, they rocked so hard the audiences climbed up on stage, something that’s becoming all too common during a Shadows performance. The stage rush, however, forced the organizers to end the show earlier than scheduled.

The Experience

The Experience:

Project Experience, a one-of-its-kind collaborative musical escapade, marked another one of those splendid evenings at the Patan Museum on December 17, where musicians from different Nepali bands gathered to present what they called, “an experience, experimentation and expression” of themselves. Project Experience is headed by renowned Nepali musicians from different bands (Nirakar from 1974 AD, Robin Tamang, Yubaraj aka Vikku—an ex Rusty Nails and Sanjay also from 1974 AD). “It’s all about letting our creative juices flow,” says Nirakar.

The show started out with a lot of classic covers that have influenced them, including Steppen Wolf’s “Born to be Wild.” They went on to perform renditions of classics by Nepali legends like Arun Thapa and international icons like Bob Marley, Cat Stevens and Bob Dylan. The musicians performed some instrumentals and other original compositions as well.

The Experience was also joined by other well-known musicians for the show; Robin (of Kutumba fame) played the bamboo flute, Raju (also of Kutumba fame) played the percussions and Mariano from Spain blew us away with his saxophone. It was truly an enthralling musical experience.

Meet Jiwan:

With a debut album ready, Jiwan aims for the pop music industry.

What got you started?

When I was in Dipendra Police school, we had a teacher, Padam Bista. He helped me get started. But as far as interest in music goes, it was always there.

How long was it before you decided to cut an album?

I always wanted to cut an album but the time, circumstances and the money situation was never right. I continued to pursue my interest in music when I came to the US and one day some friends and decided that we should give it a go.

What inspired this album?

“Aaja phen…” is an album inspired by the sorrow, pain and hardships of living in a foreign country while missing friends, families and the homeland.

What was the experience of being in a recording studio like?

It was awesome. I had Sunil Upreti dai always around me, helping me as a brother would, from scratch to finish. So I was always taken care of. I had fun recording the music. It was like a dream come true.

How was the video making experience?

Actually my song “Thappa Rokiyo…” has been visualized twice. One for Hari Siwakoti’s video album, “The Globe”; and another for Lochan Man Shrestha’s “Dhuk Dhuke”. I learned a lot from both of them and the experience was quite pleasant. Plus, Miss Nepal 2001 First Runners Sabina Shrestha was there for it too.

Is this something you will pursue full time or something you do as a hobby?

Well! It’s my hobby and I think I’ll keep it that way at this time. I am still new and I want to learn more about it. As I grow and learn, if the reaction of the people gets better, I might take it further, who knows.

Bollywood star Arjun Rampal in KTM

Bollywood star Arjun Rampal was in Kathmandu on 17 Dec., for a special event premiere of his newest release Ek Ajnabee at the Gopi Krishna movie theater.

Adorned by girls for his looks and guys for his personality, it was no surprise that a huge crowd of fans waited for him outside the theater. As soon as Arjun Rampal got out of his car he was, but of course, swarmed by the throng of both male and female fans.

The tickets for the opening night were priced at Rs. 2,500 (approx. $35) for the balcony seats, which were also inclusive of dinner at Hotel de l’Annupurna, and Rs. 1,000 (approx. $14) only for the show for those in the rear stalls. Although the prices were bizarrely high, the cinema was packed to it’s capacity.
**Events in Nepal:**

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Blood Donation Program  
Organiser: Nodan Club  
Kathmandu in Association with Youth Organisations Nepal  
Venue: Jyatha (in front of the Nepal Byayam Mandir)  
**Date:** 24 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 10:30AM Onwards  
**Tkts:** N/A  
**More Info:** Volunteer/ Social Service. Raman Bhattarai: 9841232490

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Live music by Eternity  
Organiser/ Venue: Himalatte Restaurant and Bar  
**Date:** 31 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 7PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** Free  
**More info:** Live music by Eternity, whose members are originally from Looza and Revival. Himalatte: 4256738.

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Xmas Eve 05 Blast  
Organiser: Korean Restaurant & Bar  
**Date:** 24 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 5PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** Rs. 500 (Includes snacks and 1 drink)  
**More Info:** Live performance by the Knox Band

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Jatra Ladies Night  
Organiser: Jatra Restaurant and Bar  
**Date:** 28 Dec. 05  
**Time:** Evening/ Night  
**Tkts:**  
**More Info:** 1 free cocktail to all the ladies every Wednesday night.

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Uncork The Good Times  
Organiser: Dwarka’s Hotel  
Venue: Fusion Bar (Dwarka’s Hotel)  
**Date:** 30 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 7PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** Rs. 675 (Includes BBQ Dinner, a can of beer or soft drink)  
**More Info:** Every Friday night, Live Blues and Jazz with Cine & Par-E-Jat.

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Mega Dance Party  
Organiser: Club Black Pearl  
**Date:** 31 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 2PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** Rs, 500 and Rs. 1,000

City: Kathmandu  
**Event:** Live music by Eternity  
Organiser/ Venue: Himalatte Restaurant and Bar  
**Date:** 31 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 7PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** Free  
**More info:** Live music by Eternity, whose members are originally from Looza and Revival. Himalatte: 4256738.

Events in the US:

City: New York  
**Event:** Xmas Dance Party  
Organiser: DJ P  
Venue: 221 E. 27 Street, between 2nd and 3rd Avenues,  
**Date:** 24 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 6PM to 4AM  
**Tkts:** $25 (Includes dinner)  
**More Info:** The annual Christmas party by DJ P, the Himalayan DJ.

City: Seattle  
**Event:** Christmas 2005 Party  
Organiser: The Everest Kitchen  
Venue: The Everest Kitchen, 14561 Bothell Way NE, 14th St.  
**Date:** 25 Dec. 05  
**Time:** 6PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** $10 (NSS members) and $12 (non-members), Free (Children under 7)  
**More Info:** The Everest Kitchen

City: Boston  
**Event:** Lochaar Party  
Organiser: Tamu Samaaj Boston  
Venue: 30 Assembly Square Drive, Somerville, MA 02145  
**Date:** 3 Jan. 06  
**Time:** 6PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** $25/ person. $20/person for those wearing traditional or ethnic Nepali clothes. Free for children under 10  
**More Info:** A taste of Gurung hospitality in Boston.

City: New York  
**Event:** Tamu Lochaar  
Organiser: Tamu Society of USA (NY)  
Venue: 630 2 Ave., between East 34th and 35th Streets.  
**Date:** 7 Jan. 06  
**Time:** 7:30PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** $35

Website: www.gurungs.org

**Event in the UK:**

City: London  
**Event:** Nepz Night 2006  
Organiser:  
Venue: Face Bar at Ambrose Place, Chatham Street  
**Date:** 1Jan. 06  
**Time:** 6PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** 10 Pounds  
**More Info:** Nepali Cocktail and Dance Party. Harsha: 07990726493. Gopal 07917294118

Events in AU:

City: Sydney  
**Event:** Loshar 2006  
Organiser: Tamu Samaj, Sydney  
Venue: Marrickville Tennis Club, Corner of Sydenham and Centennial Streets.  
**Date:** 7 Jan. 06  
**Time:** 5:30PM Onwards  
**Tkts:** AU$25

City: Melbourne  
**Event:** Loshar Celebration  
Organiser:  
Venue: St. Ambrose Hall, 1-3 Dawson Street.  
**Date:** 8 Jan. 06  
**Time:** 5:30PM to Midnight  
**Tkts:** AU$20/ person.  
**More Info:** The annual celebration of Losar.

City: Melbourne  
**Event:** Nepz Night 2006  
Organiser:  
Venue: 221 E. 27 Street, between 2nd and 3rd Avenues,  
**Date:** 3 Jan. 06  
**Time:** 6PM Onwards  
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Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) Chairman Prachanda and the People's Liberation Army

All photos provided by Girish Pokhrel (www.nepalipost.com)

Above: This photo of the Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal, alias Prachanda, was captured from a documentary shown to the journalists and guests invited for a Maoist program in Rukum last week. This is the most recent photo of the elusive commander. The Maoists also have several documentaries they use for recruiting drives.

Below: People's Liberation Army (Maoists) put on a show as locals watch.

Top right: The comrades put on a cultural show during the event. The Maoists have in the past released several music albums.

Bottom right: A militiaman hold an M-16. The US government has provided Nepal with several thousands of these machineguns. The Maoists often loot the Army barracks they manage to overrun, taking most of their weapons such as the M-16s and the INSAS, which was given to the Royal Nepal Army by the Indian government.
Nepal's Maoists: Their Aims, Structure and Strategy

In less than ten years, the Maoist insurgency has transformed Nepal. The Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) has spread armed conflict across the country and reshaped its political environment irrevocably. But their political aims are still questioned, and not enough is known about their structure and strategy. This background report seeks to fill in many of the gaps, based on close study of their writings and actions and a wide range of interviews, in order to provide policymakers in Nepal and the international community with information and insights needed to approach a peace process realistically.

The Maoists are at heart a political party. They have developed military capacity but it is subordinate to political control. They use terror tactics and coercion but they are not simply terrorists. They maintain links to other communist revolutionary groups on the subcontinent but they are neither Khmer Rouge clones nor is their campaign part of any global terrorism.

Maoist strategy is of a protracted people's war, both political and military -- the two cannot be separated. They have a long-term vision, and they have patience. They can be extremely astute politically (their September 2005 unilateral ceasefire announcement) but can also make grave miscalculations in terms of their own long-term objectives (their mishandling of the three-month ceasefire on 3 September 2005). The international community needs to recognise that its engagement in any peace process will depend on their perceptions of risks and opportunities. The international community may play an important role in shaping these.

Senior Maoist leaders may well be motivated by a genuine desire for social and economic transformation. Their pursuit of domestic transformation takes precedence over their professed commitment to global revolution. They are more interested in controlling development efforts across Nepal and consolidating their grip on local populations' daily lives, than in any international cause.

That the Maoists must be dealt with realistically is something Nepal's mainstream politicians have long understood. Having been on the receiving end of many of the rebels' most brutal assaults, they harbour no illusions about Maoist respect for political dissent. But at the same time they see the potential of using both carrot and stick to persuade the Maoists to engage with them politically with the aim of getting agreement on a common program that would address certain of their demands that have won widespread support.

The Maoists themselves have acted pragmatically throughout much of the insurgency and have maintained a dialogue with mainstream forces partly to this end. They have also adopted a moderate policy towards international development efforts and have long called for international facilitation of a peace process.

Behaviour towards the newly established United Nations human rights mission will be a crucial test of Maoist attitudes and capacities. If they prove that they are ready for peace and capable of implementing a negotiated settlement, the political mainstream will be ready to deal with them. Judging by widespread popular relief following their September 2005 declaration of a unilateral three-month ceasefire, Nepal's people would back a reasonable compromise that delivers peace. They have never targeted foreign nationals.

their philosophy of people's war they are not dependent on popular support. The success of their engagement in any peace process will depend on their perceptions of risks and opportunities. The international community may play an important role in shaping these.

What should be done

The international community's one-party nationalism of government cooperation was reasonable as long as there were realistic indications they might oblige. However, the king's actions since February 2005 have undermined a political climate with moderate parties moving toward a more republican stance and the Maoists urging them to negotiate. Nepal's most influential friends need to engage in a serious rethink. They should: welcome the Maoist ceasefire and urge its indefinite extension, government and opposition, and that sides in the conflict seize the opportunity for substantive talks; continue suspension of military aid in order to maintain pressure on the royal government to restore democracy and governance; explore all avenues to peace talks; replace the traditional insistence on a constitutional monarchy alongside the Maoists, with moderate parties moving toward a more republican stance and the Maoists urging them to negotiate. Nepal's most influential friends need to engage in a serious rethink. They should: welcome the Maoist ceasefire and urge its indefinite extension, government and opposition, and that sides in the conflict seize the opportunity for substantive talks; continue suspension of military aid in order to maintain pressure on the royal government to restore democracy and governance; explore all avenues to peace talks; replace the traditional insistence on a constitutional monarchy alongside the Maoists, with moderate parties moving toward a more republican stance and the Maoists urging them to negotiate. Nepal's most influential friends need to engage in a serious rethink. They should:

Conflict history

Nepal has been ruled by hereditary prime ministers from the Rana clan or monarchs from the Shah family since the 18th century. A multiparty interlude from 1959-1960 ended when King Mahendra, father of Gyanendra, suspended the constitution following the election victory of the Nepali Congress Party. From then until 1990 a variety of constitutional formats emerced, all designed for genuinely free political parties. Coming under increasing internal and external pressure, Nepalese-established multiparty democracy within the framework of a constitutional monarchy in 1990.

However, democracy failed to quell Nepal's chronic political instability in the 1980s. Maoist rebels began a violent insurgency campaign against the government in rural areas from 1996, attempting to establish a People's Republic. As the pattern of strikes and later bombings intensified between 2001 and 2002, Nepal's constitutional and political order seemed under threat of disintegration. On 22 July 2001 Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba announced a unilateral ceasefire against the Maoists, which they immediately reciprocated. But the Maoists broke the ceasefire in November 2001, launching coordinated attacks on army and police positions. The conflict intensified over the following year and drew in the full participation of the Royal Nepalese Army.

In October 2002, King Gyanendra, facing a growing deadlock over potential plans to extend the state of emergency as a means to combat the Maoist insurgency, dismissed the government, assumed executive power and assured the public elections would be held in a timely fashion. However, the insurgency made the holding of elections impossible, and Parliament remained disbanded. A January 2003 ceasefire between government and Maoist insurgents collapsed in August that year, sparking a catastrophic return to mass violence: over 1,000 died in the following four months alone. Although the reappointment of Sher Bahadur Deuba as prime minister in June 2004 marked an attempt to heal the rift between the palace and political parties, this ended with the royal coup on 1 February 2005.

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