



# EJG NEWSLETTER

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## CHANGES!

"CHANGE IS THE ESSENCE OF LIFE, SURRENDER WHAT YOU ARE FOR WHAT YOU COULD BECOME"

Ghandhi said to "be the change you want to see in the world" and we are seeing a lot of change in our organization, EDUCATION JOURNALISTS' GROUP, as we approach our "new year". You will see a lot of new faces with the new Board members and a couple of new persons in the office. We have new objectives and will soon have a new Organizational Development Plan with our stated objectives and Action Plan for the next three years. But change also can bring stress and regretfully some good-byes. Purna Bahadur Shethra has decided to take a challenging position with new opportunities at COCAP (an NGO focusing on the peace movement) and Deepraj Sanyal will return to his previous position which has expanded its scope and "cannot live without him". We are fortunate to have both of these men around for awhile parttime as they phase into their other positions. We are thankful for their loyalty to us and help in this way as we try to find others for those positions. Kapil, who has worked as an Office Assistant for five years, wants to return to school and find employment in a position that will give him more experience in radio and children's journalism. We will miss them.

We welcome to the staff Pushpa Poudel, an experienced resource and program writer who will be working for EJG as Program Manager part time. He has presently been working as a consultant. We know he will be a strong addition to the office and our program. He will be working in Deepraj's position. Bipendra, our valued computer guru, has been promoted to Administrative Assistant. We are currently advertising for an accountant and Office Assistant. AND, did you know that we have a new Minister of Education and Sports, Pradip Nepal? Yes, change has occurred and brought new opportunities in both Nepal and EJG?

## CHANGES IN EDUCATION

A brilliant video clip (modified by Dr. Scott McLeod) illustrates the concept of change powerfully.

- China will soon become the number one English-speaking country in the world.
- The 25% of the population in China with the highest IQ's ...is greater than the total population of North America. In India, it's the top 28%. Translation for teachers: they have more honors kids than we have kids (USA).
- There are over 2.7 billion searches performed on Google each month.
- The amount of new technical information is doubling every 2 years. For students starting a four-year technical or college degree, this means that...half of what they learn in their first year of study will be outdated by their third year of study. It is predicted to double every 72 hours by 2010.

## MEET OUR NEW EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

**President, Bhuparaj Khadka** - see interview below.

**Vice President, Nirjala Kakshapati**

**General Secretary, Prakash Silwal** - grew up in Thanapati, Nuwakot; went to school at Nepaltar KTM; likes to travel, and wants to develop an organizational plan for EJG this year.

**Secretary, Arjun Khadka**

**Treasurer, MD Kulung** - grew up in Makalu-8, walung Sankhuwasabha in the Koshi Zone. He finished secondary school in Khandbari and passed B.A. from R.R. Campus. He wants EJG to be strong financially, to build a group working culture and trend, and to develop as an information center for education issues. He feels our efforts will be met in two years by a group working together. He enjoys photography and collecting books, but not reading them. ha...ha...ha...!

**Member, Raghunath Lamichhane**

**Member, Madhav Dhungel**

**Member, Bharat Sharma**

**Member, Purushottam Subedi** - a radio journalist was raised in Charikot, Dolkha. He passed his SLC at Kalinchwok and learned much at home. He holds B.A. in Degree in English and Journalism from TU. His EJG experience



on the Board will allow him to do "collective work". His interests include travelling and reading.

**Member, Prakriti Adhikari** - he is a reporter for the Gorkhapatra Daily  
**Member, Megha Bdr. Pariyar** - was born and educated in the Homla district. He is working on his Masters in sociology at Tribuvan University. As a student, he feels he doesn't have as much time as he would like, but as a dahlit himself, he is passionate about sensitizing the role and standards of dahlits in journalism. He feels that accurate data basis have not been kept on dahlits and EJG might be a way to encourage this and share it with other NGOs. He feels studying is his hobby and wants to develop a concept paper this year.

## A TETE A TETE WITH EJG PRESIDENT

- BY DEEPRAJ SANYAL



Mr. Khadka

Mr. Bhuparaj Khadka, the new President of Education Journalists' Group (EJG), brings with him 16 years of experience in journalism. Born in 2028 B.S. in Dadagaon of Khotang District in Eastern Region of Nepal, Mr. Khadka is a graduate of Tribhuvan University. He holds a Bachelor Degree in Law (B.L.). He began his career in journalism from Chhalphal Weekly in 2047 Bikram Sambat. He also worked in the Prakash Weekly. He was the co-editor of the Nawa Aawaj Weekly published from Kathmandu. He also worked at the Spacetime Daily as a reporter.

Mr. Khadka currently lives with his family in Shantinagar, Kathmandu. He has two daughters. His father and mother live in Khotang. He comes from a farming background.

A dynamic person, Mr. Khadka is associated with the Education Journalists' Group from its inception since 2000. He is one of the founder members of this Group. He was elected the EJG Treasurer twice. He also became the Group's General Secretary. His active involvement with EJG over the years means that he knows the EJG from inside out. Mr. Khadka has now been elected the President of the Group, a forum which brings together over 40 journalists covering the education beat from different media of the country. The following is the excerpt of the interview:

### How do you feel after your election as the President of EJG?

**Mr. Khadka:** I have been associated with this Group since the beginning. In fact, I am one of its founder members. So, I am well acquainted with the day-to-day activities

### Know your prez at close quarters!

**Born:** Dadagaon Village Development Committee (VDC)-4, Khotang District

**Date of birth:** 2028 B.S., Chait 25.

**Family:** Father, mother, wife and two daughters

**Education:** Bachelor of Law from Tribhuvan University, Nepal Law Campus.

Passed B.L. in 2054 B.S.

**Favourite place:** Many places, especially Rupakot hill in Khotang District.

**Favourite colour:** Black

**Favourite food:** Daal, Bhaat, Tarkari (Nepali food)

**Special interest:** To debate on political and social issues.

**If you were the Prime Minister for a day?**

- I would declare Basic and Primary education free and compulsory.

**Your role model in life?** - No one as such at present. But I was very much inspired by the late leader Madan Bhandari during my student days in college.

**Any unforgettable incident in life?** - I felt very excited and out of this world experience when my first report about the strike by Tribhuvan University students regarding the rise in the price of food at the hostel canteen was published for the first time.

of this organization. Moreover, I have worked as the General Secretary and Treasurer of EJG. Therefore, I do not have any 'extra' thrill about assuming the chair of EJG. I have no out of the ordinary feelings. But yes, I have felt that my responsibility has increased. I have the feeling that I have to do something the EJG could not accomplish during the last six years.

### How do you evaluate EJG'S current position?

**Mr. Khadka:** I have taken Education Journalists' Group as an organization which has vast potentialities and possibilities. It has a bright future and has a lot of scope. It is an organization that can play an important role in the country's education development.

### Now you are the leader of EJG, what are your three most important priorities after assuming the post of EJG President?

**Mr. Khadka:** My first priority would be to establish a system in the office through improved management. My second priority is to reach out to the EJG members, partners and donors. I would work for expanding the EJG's public relations. My third priority is to expedite meaningful partnership and collaboration with donors and governmental and non-governmental organizations.

### What in your view are the strengths and weaknesses of EJG?

**Mr. Khadka:** The EJG's strengths lie in the fact that it is an organization of media persons and has the capacity of having access to all sectors concerned directly or indirectly with education policy formulation including the governmental and non-governmental organizations. It has the capacity of bringing about policy-level changes in the education sector through media mobilization.

However, it is not without limitations. One of its limitations is that it is a forum of journalists and its working area is only in education. Being a media forum, EJG can not fully work like an NGO activist. Due to its very nature, it is neither fully an NGO as the term 'NGO' is perceived in society nor is it totally a charitable organization. So, EJG has to kind of do a balancing act as a semi-activist. But within this limitation also, I think there are unlimited possibilities.

We have already identified our strengths and weaknesses. Now, we have to increase our strengths and minimize our weaknesses. We are thinking of establishing separate watch groups in different sectors of education. We would be reporting in different media under these watch groups. In this way, I think, we would be monitoring the education sector as a watch group, which is also the role of the media.

We are also thinking of preparing different radio and audio-visual programs giving a true picture of the education scenario in the country. We would also highlight the different issues related to education through media interaction, discussion forums, research studies and documentary.

EJG would work towards dissemination of the correct information on education through correct means by publishing and broadcasting the same. EJG has been playing the role of advocacy on educational issues of far-reaching impact and bringing about policy change through debate and discussion and policy pressure.

### What is the greatest challenge for EJG at this juncture? How do you plan to tackle it?

**Mr. Khadka:** The greatest challenge for EJG at present is to move forward by balancing its role both as a forum of education journalists and an NGO. The reality is that EJG is a forum but it is seen as an NGO by the donors. So the need is to strike a balance in its role both as a forum and an NGO. Rather than an NGO activist, we work towards media mobilization and we will build up this organization on the basis of collaboration with donors.

### As EJG President, how do you evaluate the present education scenario in the country? What is the basic problem in Nepalese education?

**Mr. Khadka:** The current education policy of Nepal is not well developed. It is characterized by various flaws. This education system is producing two classes of citizens- one class educated in boarding schools and the other class educated in government schools. An education system producing two different sets of citizens is not found anywhere in the world. But it is the case in our country.

The country is embarking on the Education For All campaign whose goal is to provide education for all by 2015. But, looking at the current situation, it would be very difficult to achieve the goal of education for all by 2015 in Nepal.

Another problem in Nepal's education is that there is no adequate investment in education. Whatever investment is there, it is not properly and effectively utilized.

### What do you think is the role of private education in the country in the context of the CPN (Maoist)'s opposition to this concept and after they join the government?

**Mr. Khadka:** There is no doubt that schools run by the private sector have produced some positive results compared to the government run schools. But still, these need to be regulated and run under a uniform regime.

### What are your plans for building the capacity of EJG members and staff?

**Mr. Khadka:** There can be no two opinions that the EJG members and staff should be made well-acquainted with modern technology that is emergent in education and media. I strongly feel that our members should be updated on the modern developments and enhance their skills and expertise accordingly. We do not have a separate package for capacity-building as such for now. But we are seriously thinking on this line.

### What kind of role and cooperation do you expect from the EJG members?

**Mr. Khadka:** It is not the President alone who has a role in taking forward the EJG on the path of progress. It is an organization and it needs constructive cooperation from each and every member. EJG's is a collective leadership. There is no discrimination between the office-bearers and the general members. All are welcome in the collective

efforts of sailing the EJG. The organization's interests are best protected when everyone irrespective of his/her post contributes to the EJG's well-being. There is nothing personal; it is all EJG as a team. It is **TEAM EJG!**

### A BRIEF LOOK AT FUTURE WORK WITH DONORS IN 2007:

- **SAVE THE CHILDREN (NORWAY)** - Media mobilization for Education for All.
- **MS NEPAL** - Monitoring of student-teacher ratio in eight districts including the KTM Valley.
- **WORLD BANK** - School management by communities and financial support by the government. Form strategies for facilitating the transfer of money in the assessment of education
- **UNICEF** - Girls' education, marginalized education, and indigenous student involvement in schools and programs; EFA.
- **ACTION AID** - A research based study will be carried out on private schools. The joint effort of the management committee will result in the publication of a book.

### EJG MEMBERS AT WORK

A committee chaired by Sudarshan Ghimire started work on a "Proposal for Study on Private Education in Nepal". The objectives for this study are:

- To document the existing literature, opinion, views and related debates on the private education system with cases and examples.
- To identify the strengths and weakness of the private education system in the country.
- To explore the better options in private education management.
- To share the outcomes of the research and study among the stakeholders for broader policy inclusion and to remove implementation barriers.

The committee, at this time, consists of principals of private schools, EJG members, and Advisor, Dr. Tirtha Khaniya.

### DOES THE MEDIA HAVE A "WATCH DOG" RESPONSIBILITY TOWARDS CHILDREN'S PROGRAMMING IN RADIO AND TELEVISION?

There is much discussion about the use of media as a teaching tool as well as the media as a "watch dog" and advocate for education. This list was printed in the USA about the dangers of allowing too much TV watching. Could this be in the future for Nepal? What is the media's responsibilities now?

### 10 REASONS WHY MEDIA EDUCATION MATTERS

(about children in the United States)

1. The average child watches four hours of TV daily.
2. 56% of the children have televisions in their bedrooms.
3. 200,000 violent acts are seen by children by the age of 18 years.
4. 900 hours are spent in school, 1023 hours are spent watching TV.
5. They have seen 2 million commercials by 18 years of age.
6. 45% of parents use the television as a babysitter when they want to do something.
7. 4 hours 40 minutes are spent each day in front of a screen, 2.5 hours of these is in front of a TV.
8. 97% of the characters children use have been seen on TV (eg. Mickey Mouse, Pluto, NY Yankees)
9. 2-7 year olds watch TV alone, unsupervised at least 81% of the time.
10. 3 out of 4 teenagers say the portrayal of sex on television influences their behavior.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MEDIA IN EDUCATION

[www.mediastudies.com](http://www.mediastudies.com)

Good site for research and education in the media

[www.niemanwatchdog.org/index](http://www.niemanwatchdog.org/index)

Has a lengthy list of research topics, many are related to the States, but there is also information concerning fellowships

[www.cijj.org](http://www.cijj.org)

Center for Integration and Improvement of Journalism...is more for college and university level, but has information concerning fellowships and ideas for research

[www.learningfirst.org/g](http://www.learningfirst.org/g)

Recommended by Sudarshan Ghimire for research

[www.mediaeducation.co.uk](http://www.mediaeducation.co.uk)

It has a good article on "Welcome to Media Education", and how radio focuses with children in the UK. It also discusses forums.

[www.mediastudies.com](http://www.mediastudies.com)

### NEWS SUMMARIES - ENGLISH PAPERS, WEEK OF APRIL 1-6

KP=Kathmandu Post RN= Rising Nepal HT= Himalayan Times

**April 1**

KP - Paul Kavanagh, an Irishman donated 20,000 rs in scholarships to ALL (Access to Learning and Luthood) and 60 scholarships to marginalized students.

KP - SLC is set to run smoothly according to Lav Prasad Tripathi.

**April 2**

RN - Dhankuta - The Nepal Indigenous Student Federation is committed to Democratic Nepal.

RN - Results published by TU and KU will be presented on April 2.

HT - All Nepal National (Free Students Union) endorsed eleven members.

HT - First year MA exams were cancelled due to unrest at Putalisahek until after April 24

**April 3**

HT/KP - New guidelines for teaching about HIV/AIDS treatment produced by UNICEF for schools

RN - TU Institute of Engineering results available now for those held in Dec 2006/ Jan 2007

RN - Shree Ammar Singh Primary School shop is used as a tavern during festivals despite community protest. DEO claims no information about this.

RN - Students don't like exams! There is a dispute about effectiveness and purpose

HT - Students hold a Photo Expo until April 7 sponsored by the Art Council. 91 photos by 75 students are to be displayed.

HT - Libraries in Nepal seem to be by payment only, not free....Awon, British Council, Japanese Children's Library, for example.

**April 4**

RN - SLC exams for 368,678 students at 1,186 centers; disabled students will have 3 extra hours for 6 exams.

RN - 4,000 students in the Makwanpur district will receive new health and nutrition programmes run by the community Women Development Center.

RN - An editorial by Ramesh Prasad Gautan entitled "Peace, Politics and Civic Education" states that "the school is the place for learning skills, democratic values, norms and attitudes and other relevant knowledge required for individual and social development.....civic education should be designed to build better democratic societies where no one can misuse power".

HT - National Center for Education Development (NCED) "need-based certificates provides a 10 month training to 25,000 teachers through extended teacher network. Studies will be done to assess the transfer of skills program.

**April 5**

HT - A mother and son sit for the same SLC exam.

RN - Madhesi Professors Society has been reformed under Professor Dr. Ram Prasad Chaudhari to make active contributions to New Nepal in self-determination, social-cultural and linguistic values.

KP - A teacher has not passed the SLC after 32 times of trying.

KP - One hour after giving birth, a 17 year old girl went to take the SLC exam.

KP - Innovative practices in technical and vocational training was discussed by Dr. Suresh Raj Sharma, Vice Chancellor of KU and Dr. Iganz Rieser of Dhruhba Training Institute.

**April 6**

RN/HT/KP - SLC questions were leaked by teachers, Keshaw Shrestha and Prakash Man Shrestha of Ganesh Secondary School in Bhaktapur. Hand made copies of questions were being sold. SLC exams are scheduled for April 13. A three-member committee has been formed by Minister of Education, Nepal to investigate this matter.

RN - Asst. Supt. of Exams at Phidim Secondary School, Tejendra Karki was expelled by the District Exam Coordination Committee.

**DECISIONS, DECISIONS:** [Editor's Note](#)

- If you are not getting Board Reports, please let Prakash or Arjun know.
- Some options and changes may seem "unnecessary"! Try new strategies and ideas before discounting them. Change occurs with openness and effort
- Send your comments, likes, dislikes and what you would like to see in the Bulletin to Nancy.

