



## Expedition Newsletter

Welcome to the Third of our regular news letters. If you discover anything of interest and want to share it (links, articles etc), let us know and we'll include it.

### Ripley Farmers Market

We have attended our first market and believe it or not we managed to raise about £60 for a couple of hours work.

Thanks to James K, Ian and Matt for helping out.

For future markets we are going to have a rota. If every body does one then we've 11 out of the 14 covered.

Next Market is Saturday 11th March

### Expedition Logo

We've decided to go with the "green logo" which is now at the top of this news letter.

So as not to waste Marks hard work we've adapted the other logo (No2) and now have it as a poster / PC wallpaper.

### Downs Link Bike Ride

Date of the Bike Ride is 15<sup>th</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> July 2006

### What can you expect?

Nepals unit of Currency is the Rupee which is divided into 100 Paisa. Almost all Nepalese money is paper and notes come in denominations of Rs1000, 500, 250, 100, 50, 25, 20, 10, 5, 2 and 1. Coins are found in denominations of 10, 25 and 50 Paisa. One annoyance is apparently getting change. Not a problem in large towns but try passing a Rs100 note to a village merchant and a game of bidding takes place over the amount of change you get as most Nepalis can't afford to keep large amounts of change lying around. £1 is roughly Rs125.

The Nepal flag is the only national flag that's not a rectangle or square. The blue border symbolizes peace, while red is the colour of the rhododendron, Nepal's official flower. The crescent moon is said to represent the royal house, while the sun represents the Rana family.



### In Brief

#### Some facts about Nepal

Full Name: Kingdom of Nepal

Capital City: Kathmandu

Area: 140,800 sq km

Population: 26,469,600

Time Zone: GMT +5.75hrs

Languages: Nepali (official)  
English (other)

Religion: 90% Hindu,  
5% Buddhist,  
3% Muslim,  
2% other

Currency: Nepali Rupee (Rs)



### News Spotlight

The Next Expedition team meeting will be held on **TUESDAY 28<sup>th</sup> February 2006** at 1<sup>st</sup> Merrow Scout HQ Starting 19:45.

Dr Piper will be at our next meeting. As well as being a local GP. He is a seasoned climber who has spent a lot of time trekking and climbing in the Himalays. He has agreed to give us a talk about Nepal and the health aspects we will need to consider. Should be interesting.

**388 days to go and counting**



## Expedition Newsletter

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### People & Customs

The population of Nepal was recorded to be about 25 million as of July 2002. Eighty-six percent of Nepalis follow Hinduism, while eight percent follow Buddhism and three percent follow Islam. The population comprises various groups of different races which are further divided into different castes. The distinction in caste and ethnicity is understood more easily with a view of customary layout of the population.

Some of the main groups are such: Gurungs and Magars who live mainly in the western region; Rais, Limbus and Sunwars who live in the eastern mid hills; Sherpas, Manangpas and Lopas who live near the mountains of Everest, Annapurna and Mustang respectively; Newars who live in and around the capital valley of Kathmandu; Tharus, Yadavas, Satar, Rajvanshis and Dhimals who live in the Terai region; and Brahmins, Chhetris and Thakuris generally spread over all parts of the country.

Nepali is the official language of the state, spoken and understood by 100 percent of the population. Multiple ethnic groups speak more than a dozen other languages in about 93 different dialects. English is spoken by many in government and business offices. It is the mode of education in most private schools of Kathmandu and some other cities.

#### **The Northern Himalayan People**

In the northern region of the Himalayas are the Tibetan-speaking groups namely Sherpas, Dolpas, Lopas, Baragaonlis, Manangis. The Sherpas are mainly found in the east in the Solu and Khumbu region; the Baragaonlis and Lopas live in the semi-deserted areas of Upper and Lower Mustang in the Tibetan rain-shadow area; the Manangis live in Manang district area; while the Dolpas live in Dolpa district of West Nepal, one of the highest settlements on earth at 4,000 meters.

#### **The Middle Hills and Valley People**

Several ethnic groups live together in harmony in the middle hills and valleys. Among them are the Magars, Gurungs, Tamangs, Sunuwars, Newars, Thakalis, Chepangs and majority of Brahmins and Chhetris. The Brahmins and Chhetris have long dominance in all pervading social, religious and political realms. There are also some occupational castes namely: Damai (tailor), Sarki (cobbler), Kami (blacksmith) and Sunar (goldsmiths). Though, there exist numerous dialects, the language of unification is the national language, Nepali.

#### **Ethnic Diversity in the Kathmandu Valley**

Kathmandu Valley represents a cultural cauldron of the country, where, people from varied backgrounds have come together to present a melting pot. The natives of the Kathmandu Valley are the Newars. Newari culture is an integration of both Hinduism and Buddhism. The Newars of Kathmandu Valley were traders or farmers by occupation in the old days.

#### **The Terai People**

The main ethnic groups in Terai are Tharus, Darai, Kumhal, Majhi and other groups that have roots in India. They speak north Indian dialects like Maithili, Bhojpuri. Owing to the fertile plains of Terai, most inhabitants live on agriculture. There are, however, some occupational castes like Majhi (fisherman), Kumhal (potter) and Danuwar (cart driver).

*Source: Nepal Tourist Board. Website [www.welcomenepal.com](http://www.welcomenepal.com)*

