

***New York Times* Articles on Asia/South Asia: 2005-2007**

2005

March 13, 2005

"A **Cricket Match** Bridges a Longtime Gap in Punjab," by Somini Sengupta in Mohali. "After a half-century of fratricide, three wars and a nuclear buildup, now comes another battle between Asia's blood rivals: the India versus Pakistan cricket match." Political and social responses at the first of this year's six-week long cricket series taking place in several Indian cities. Photos. [No attention to the game itself. For those who don't follow or are mystified by cricket, it may be useful to know that an individual game played at this level will take several days to complete, and a series is made up of several, usually an uneven number of games or matches.] [Also under SPORTS]

April 17, 2005

"In Japan's **New Texts, Lessons in Rising Nationalism**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. Examining the new government-approved textbooks that have triggered angry responses in China and South Korea. On the rising nationalism--and its consequences--in all three countries, with brief paragraphs on nation-serving distortions and omissions in Chinese and South Korean history textbooks dealing with the Second World War. [Also under WEEK IN REVIEW, EDUCATION]

May 25, 2005

"**China, New Land of Shoppers, Builds Malls** on Gigantic Scale," by David Barboza in Dongguan. "Not long ago, shopping in China consisted mostly of lining up to entreat surly clerks to accept cash in exchange for ugly merchandise that did not fit. But now, Chinese have started to embrace America's modern 'shop till you drop' ethos and are in the midst of a buy-at-the-mall frenzy." Interior view of the Golden Resources Shopping Mall in Beijing. Audio slide show: "The Great Malls of China." Graphics, including a map.

June 24, 2005

"**Cutting Here, but Hiring Over There**," by Steve Lohr. "Even as it proceeds with layoffs of up to 13,000 workers in Europe and the United States, I.B.M. plans to increase its payroll in India this year by more than 14,000 workers, according to an internal company document. Those numbers are telling evidence of the continuing globalization of work and the migration of some skilled jobs to low-wage countries like India." Photo of I.B.M. employees in a Boulder, Colorado global services center; graph of I.B.M. employees in India, 2002 - 05. [Also under TECHNOLOGY]

July 12, 2005

"Shanghai Journal: A City's Traffic Plans Are Snarled by **China's Car Culture**," by Howard W. French in Shanghai. "As people in this richest of Chinese cities have grown more and more affluent, they have displayed an American-style passion for the automobile. But for Shanghai, as for much of China, getting rich and growing attached to cars have increasingly gone hand in hand, and have produced side effects familiar in cities that have long been addicted to automobiles -- from filthy air and stressful, marathon commutes to sharply rising oil consumption." Photos of a crowded Shanghai subway train; a crowded highway interchange.

Aug. 4, 2005

"**Cultural Differences Complicate a George Drug Sting Operation**," by Kate Zernicke in Rome, Georgia. "When they charged 49 convenience store clerks and owners in rural northwest Georgia with selling materials used to make methamphetamine, federal prosecutors declared they had conclusive evidence. Hidden microphones and cameras, they said, had caught the workers acknowledging that the products would be used to make the drug. But weeks of court motions have produced many questions. Forty-four of the defendants are Indian immigrants - 32, mostly unrelated, are named Patel -- and many spoke little more than the kind of transactional English mocked in sitcoms." Informative exploration of cultural and linguistic elements in a law enforcement situation with overtones of racial/ethnic profiling.

Nov. 13, 2005

"**Hindi Film Gets the Indie Spirit (No Dancing, Please)**," by Anupama Chopra in Mumbai. "Traditionally, there were two schools of Hindi cinema. The center stage was occupied by Bollywood, which enthralled Indians globally with song-and-dance extravaganzas and melodramatic stories big on family values. The other was the Satyajit Ray-inspired realistic art-house films, which flowered in the 1970's and 80's. . . . Lately, a third type of India cinema has emerged. It's composed of smaller, offbeat films that are more realistic than Bollywood tales and edgier than art-house ones. The films have an urbane, uniquely Indian sensibility. Many, though not all are in Hinglish, the hybrid of Hindi and English that is spoken in metropolitan India." Photo: a scene from BEING CYPRUS, a gritty film about a dysfunctional Parsi family.[Also under INTERNATIONAL]

Nov. 24, 2005

"A Party Girl Leads China's Online Revolution," by Howard W. French in Shanghai. On China's most popular blog. "Sometimes timing is everything, and such was the case with the anonymous blogger, a self-described Communist Party member from Shanghai who goes by the pseudonym Mu Mu. A 25-year old, Mu Mu appears online most evenings around midnight, shielding her face while striking poses that are provocative, but never sexually explicit. She parries questions from some of her tens of thousands of avid followers with witticisms and cool charm." On the surge of blogging, on the authorities' efforts to stop or counter-act it. Several links, but not, sadly, to Ms. Mu Mu, whose charms the reader can see in a set of photos the TIMES clearly deems fit to print. [Also under TECHNOLOGY, where it is likely to remain for about a week.]

Nov. 28, 2005

"Upstart From Chinese Province Masters the Art of TV Titillation," by David Barboza in Changsha, China. "They called it **'The Mongolian Cow Sour Yogurt Super Girl Contest,'** and for much of the year, this 'American Idol' knockoff was one of the hottest shows on Chinese television. By the time it ended in August, more than 400 million viewers had tuned in, making it one of the most-watched shows in China's television history and creating another blockbuster hit for a group of daring television producers here at Hunan TV in south central Hunan Province." Photos. [Also under INTERNATIONAL]

2006

17 Jan. 2006

"Who Discovered America? Zheng Who?" by Joseph Kahn in Beijing. "A prominent Chinese lawyer and collector unveiled an old map on Monday that he and some supporters say should topple one of the central tenets of Western civilization: that Europeans were the first to sail around the world and discover America." Discussion and brief critique of this claim; attention to the related argument of Gavin Menzies who concluded in a 2003 book that explorer Zheng He visited America in 1421. Photo of Liu Gang before a slide of the map in question.

27 Jan. 2006

"My City: In Chinatowns, All Sojourners Can Feel Hua," by Jennifer 8. Lee. Informative, lively and personal glimpse of a **Chinese heritage lived out in American urban settings.** [Long-time subscribers will recall we have previously encountered Ms. Lee, a NYT reporter, after inquiries which raised (and answered) the question about her unusual middle name. I note that the NYT is now printing it with a period after the numeral.] Photos.

25 May 2006

"Mumbai Journal: **India's 'Idol' Recipe: Mix Small-Town Grit and Democracy,**" by Somini Sengupta in Mumbai. "For a glimpse into the hungry hearts of young India, step inside a giant hulk of a studio here in the country's film and television capital for the weekly taping of 'Indian Idol 2.' . . . a peephole into the zeitgeist of young India." Photos; slide show. Link to "The Official Indian Idol Web Site."

8 June 2006

"A Sea of Sand is Threatening China's Heart," by Joseph Kahn in Minqin. "A desert pincer is squeezing Minqin, a struggling oasis town, and China's long campaign to cultivate its vast arid northwest is in retreat. An ever-rising tide of sand has claimed grasslands, ponds, lakes and forests, swallowed whole villages and forced tens of thousands of people to flee as it surges south and threatens to leave this ancient Silk Road greenbelt uninhabitable." Striking photo. Multimedia slide show: "China's Sea of Sand." Map. Long article. [Also under SCIENCE]

16 June 2006

"Hanoi Journal: Deciphering the **Code to Vietnam's Old Literary Treasures,**" by Jane Perlez in Hanoi. "An American poet, John Balaban, who first came to Vietnam as a conscientious objector during the war and who has nurtured a love affair with the country ever since, is leading a drive to revive the script [Nom], which he says will unlock a trove of hidden Vietnamese culture." On efforts to revive, restore and translate works written in a nearly-forgotten, unused ancient Chinese-like script used by classical Vietnamese poets and philosophers, government officials and religious leaders." One photo with an example of this ancient calligraphy, banned in 1920 by the French colonial government. Some poetry translated.

23 July 2006. Travel:

"Foraging: Honolulu: Sourcing Asia," by Jocelyn Fujii. "A few years ago, no one would have believed that Honolulu's Chinatown, with its history of fires, bubonic plague, demimonde dealings and crime would become a center of art and

style. It's not quite there yet, but it's getting close." Focus on a design and custom interiors gallery, Sourcing Asia. Photo. Link.

19 Aug. 2006

"Shamsur Rahman, Bangladeshi Poet, Dies," by The New York Times. "The unofficial poet laureate of Bangladesh, Mr. Rahman [, in his late seventies,] was among the country's most important political poets during its independence movement in the early 1970's. . . . Mr. Rahman wrote in Bengali and helped adapt the language to modern poetic forms. . . . An outspoken opponent of religious fundamentalism, Mr. Rahman was attacked in January 1999 by a group of young men who talked their way into his house and tried to behead him with an axe."

1 Sept. 2006

"Where's Mao? Chinese Revise History Books," by Joseph Kahn in Beijing. "When high school students in Shanghai crack their history textbooks this fall they may be in for a surprise. The new standard world history text drops wars, dynasties and Communist revolutions in favor of colorful tutorials on economics, technology, social customs and globalization. Socialism has been reduced to a single, short chapter in the senior high school history course. Chinese Communism before the economic reform that began in 1970 is covered in a sentence. The text mentions Mao only once - in a chapter on etiquette. Nearly overnight the country's most prosperous schools have shelved the Marxist template that had dominated standard history texts since the 1950's." No photos. Clarification later that the changes "are at least initially limited to Shanghai."

Nov. 1, 2006

"Trading Recipes on the Rim of the South China Sea," by Julia Moskin. Interviewing Amy Besa and her husband, Romy Dorotan, "authors of the newly published Memories of Philippine Kitchens: Stories and Recipes from Far and Near . . . , the most comprehensive book in English on [their] country's rich and complex food culture." Links to three recipes: Javanese chicken curry, pork ribs adobo, shrimp and onion simmered in caramel sauce. Photo.

Nov. 14, 2006

"Leveling the Indian Playing Field?" by Anand Giridharadas in Vashi, India. "[As] this nation rushes in to the future, its byzantine, **wasteful [food] retailing regime is confronting a new foe: the ruthlessly efficient super- market,** with its boulevard aisles, refrigerated trucks and meticulous workers. . . . And no industry has more potential, if transformed, to resolve modern India's most pressing challenge: to enrich the poor." Photos.

Nov. 27, 2006

Three books of interest:

THE INHERITANCE OF LOSS, a novel by Kiran Desai. "The poised story, set in northern India, of disparate characters united by the toxic legacy of colonialism."

ORACLE BONES: A JOURNEY BETWEEN CHINA'S PAST AND PRESENT, by Peter Hessler. "The New Yorker's Beijing correspondent describes a country in constant motion and reveals its historical underpinnings." The only one of the three I have managed to read so far, this is an immensely readable and far-ranging survey of China's todays and yesterdays, some more distant than others.

TEMPTATIONS OF THE WEST: HOW TO BE MODERN IN INDIA, PAKISTAN, TIBET, AND BEYOND, by Pankaj Mishra. "The struggle of ancient societies to define themselves as Western influences encroach."

2007

Jan. 4, 2007

"In China's New Revolution, **Art Greets Capitalism,**" by David Barboza in Shanghai. On the soaring fortunes of Chinese contemporary art. Reporting on several recent auctions. "After the 1989 government crack-down in Tiananmen Square, avant-garde art was often banned from being shown here because it was deemed hostile or anti-authoritarian. . . . That has all changed." Photo; slide show. Long article.

Jan. 6, 2007

"The Land of Rising Conservation," by Martin Fackler in Tokyo. " . . . Japan is the **most energy-efficient developed country on earth,** according to most specialists, who say it is much better prepared than the United States to prosper in an era of higher global energy prices." Attention to how one homeowner, an architect, keeps his monthly energy bills low by using a home fuel cell that converts natural gas into hydrogen which is then used to generate electricity. Photos. Long article. [Also under HOME/ SCIENCE]

Jan. 8, 2007

"Momofuku Ando, 96, Dies; **Invented Instant Ramen**," by Dennis Hevesi. "Momofuku Ando, who - to the delight of dormitory students and other kitchen-resistant customers worldwide - invented those small packets of preflavored dried noodles that require just a three-minute boil, died Friday at a hospital in Osaka, Japan." Details about his discovery of how to flavor the noodles without making them mushy. Photo from 2005.

Jan. 17, 2007

"Bo Yibo, Leader Who Helped Reshape Chinese Economy, Dies at 98," by Joseph Kahn in Beijing. "Bo Yibo, the last of the Eight Immortals, Communist Party leaders who steered China through a politically volatile shift **from Maoism to today's market-oriented** economic boom, died Monday." Detailed review of the career of one of "an informal group of senior Communist Party leaders who were purged during Mao's Cultural Revolution but experienced a second political life after Mr. Deng's return to power in 1978." Photo from 1992.

Jan. 21, 2007

"Racial Subplot on British **'Big Brother'** Grabs Nation and Ratings," by Alan Cowell in London. "This has possibly been one of the most bizarre weeks in British television as increasing numbers of people switched to Channel 4 to watch 'Celebrity Big Brother' as it became embroiled in torrid charges [which reached and resonated in India] of **promoting racism** and set off a soul-searching debate about Britain's broader social failings."

Jan. 26, 2007

"Debate in India: Is Rule on Yoga Constitutional?" by Somini Sengupta in New Delhi. ". . . [The] question of whether public school students in India should be required to take up the sun salutation, or 'surya namaskar' as the common yoga exercise is known in Sanskrit, has engendered a legal and political row in this country, revealing lingering questions about how secularism is practiced and challenged in Indian politics. At issue is a measure by the Hindu nationalist-led government [i.e., BJP] of the state of Madhya Pradesh, in central India, that **required public school students to practice the sun salutation and recite certain chants in Sanskrit** during a statewide function on Thursday." Photo of seated young students doing breathing exercises.

Feb. 13, 2007

Human Rights Watch (New York City) has issued today a 113-page report, "**Hidden Apartheid: Caste Discrimination Against India's 'Untouchables'**" that some ASDP-L subscribers may want to see and study. The report was developed in response to India's submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), which monitors implementation of the 1965 International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial discrimination (ICERD). The committee will review India's compliance with the convention during hearings in Geneva on February 23 and 26. HRW's report alleges India has systematically failed to uphold its international legal obligations to ensure the fundamental human rights of Dalits, or so-called untouchables, despite laws and policies against caste discrimination. A press release at HRW's web site serves as an useful executive summary of the content of the report, the text of which is available online in a downloadable, PDF format. file. Printed copies can be purchased (\$10.00) from HRW.

March 7, 2007

China Stresses Ties With Japan Despite **Sex Slavery Issue**," by Jim Yardley in Beijing. "China's foreign minister on Tuesday urged Japan to accept responsibility for its use of 'comfort women sex slaves in World War II but made clear that the issue would not dampen China's desire to strengthen ties between the countries. The comments by the minister, Li Zhaoxing, were China's first official response since Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan caused international outrage last week by denying that **Japanese soldiers** had forced foreign women into sexual slavery during the war." Photo of Mr. Li at a press conference in Beijing yesterday.

March 17, 2007

"Japan Repeats **Denial of Role in World War II Sex Slavery**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. "The government of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe repeated Friday that there was no proof that the Japanese military forced women into sexual slavery during World War II. . . . The government stated that it would adhere to a 1993 declaration that acknowledged and apologized for Japan's brutal mistreatment of the comfort women. But Mr. Abe, who has been under pressure from the right wing of his Liberal Democratic Party to reject the 1993 declaration's admission of state responsibility, said last week that the women had been coerced by private brokers."

March 31, 2007

"The Saturday Profile: In Japan, a Historian Stands by **Proof of Wartime Sex Slavery**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. "It was about 15 years ago, recalled Yoshiaki Yoshimi, a mild-mannered historian, when he grew fed up with the Japanese government's denials that the military had set up and run brothels throughout Asia during World War II. Instead of firing off a letter to a newspaper, though, Mr. Yoshimi went to the Defense Agency's library and combed through official documents from the 1930s. In just two days, he found a rare trove that uncovered the military's direct role in managing the brothels, including documents that carried the personal seals of high-ranking Imperial Army officers." Attention to the current government's back-tracking on earlier government statements on this issue. Photo. Long article.

April 1, 2007

"Japan's **Textbooks Reflect Revised History**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. "In another sign that Japan is pressing ahead in revising its history of World War II, new high school textbooks will no longer acknowledge that the Imperial Army was responsible for a major atrocity in Okinawa, the government announced late Friday. The Ministry of Education ordered publishers to delete passages stating that the Imperial Army ordered civilians to commit mass suicide during the Battle of Okinawa, as the island was about to fall to American troops in the final months of the war." Photo: A Japanese junior high student reads a history textbook. Attention to PM Abe Shinzo's campaign "to reject what nationalists call a masochistic view of history that has robbed postwar Japanese of their pride."

April 25, 2007

"Japan's **'Atonement' to Former Sex Slaves Stirs Anger**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. "Facing calls to compensate the aging victims of its wartime sexual slavery, Japan set up the Asian Women's Fund in 1995. It was a significant concession from Japan, which has always asserted that postwar treaties absolved it of all individual claims from World War II. But the fund only fueled anger in the very countries with which Japan had sought reconciliation. By the time it closed as scheduled last month, only a fraction of the former sex slaves had accepted its money. Two Asian governments even offered money to discourage women from taking Japan's." Photo of a Korean woman, now 80, a former sex slave. Long article, asserting the essential failure of the "Asian Women's Fund."

June 3, 2007

"In a New India, an Old Industry Buys Peasants," by Somin Sengupta in Morbi. On old-fashioned, one-at-a time, **manual brick-making**: "For every thousand bricks, they earn a bit less than \$5.50. The family, with five adult laborers, pockets on average a little more than \$2.00 a day. This is the life behind the great Indian construction boom, propelled by an economy still growing at 9 percent a year. . . . The success of the brick business, in other words, is as much a portrait of the a growing industry as it is a testament to the dismal state of the Indian peasantry." Photo; map. Long article.

June 27, 2007

"Asked for Apology, **Japan Plays for Time in Sex Slavery Standoff**," by Norimitsu Onishi in Tokyo. "Even before a United States Congressional panel overwhelmingly passed a resolution on Tuesday urging Japan to apologize for its wartime sex slavery, the Japanese government said it would have no comment. But the vote of 39 to 2 by the House Committee on Foreign Affairs has set the stage for an adoption by the full House of Representatives next month, at which point Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will face pressure to respond in some way or another."

July 3, 2007

"'China's Mona Lisa' Makes a Rare Appearance in Hong Kong," by Keith Bradsher in Hong Kong. "Politics and art don't always mix well, but the combination has yielded a rare chance for Hong Kong residents and visitors to see what is arguably China's most famous painting . . . Zhang Zeduan's 'Along the River During the Qingming Festival,' a scroll painted in the early 12th century." This and other paintings are on loan from Beijing as part of the tenth anniversary celebrations of the Hong Kong reversion. Attention to the content and fame of this painting. Image: a detail from the painting. Long article.

"**Indian Shepherds Stoop to Conquer Caste System**," by Amelia Gentleman in New Delhi. "A fight for the right to be downwardly mobile exploded this week in north India, as a powerful community of Indian shepherds asserted that the best way to rise up in modern society was to take a step down in the regimented class hierarchy here. Tensions over the still-rigid caste classifications, which underpin the Indian social system, spilled over into riots across Rajasthan State, with at least 23 people killed." Downgrading the Gujjars, traditionally farmers and shepherds, would enable them to qualify for greater benefits under India's affirmative action program.

Aug. 8, 2007

"**Warming Threatens Farms in India**, U.N. Official Says," by Somini Sengupta in New Delhi. "As exceptionally heavy rains continued to cut a wide swath of ruin across northern India, a top United Nations official warned Tuesday that the vagaries of climate change could destroy vast swaths of farmland in this country, ultimately affecting food production and adding to the woes of already desperate peasants who live off that land." Photo of a villager in Assam State wading past submerged houses to get drinking water.

"**Cute Kitty Is Pink Badge of Shame in Bangkok**," by Seth Mydans in Bangkok. "It is the pink armband of shame for wayward police officers, as cute as it can be, with a Hello Kitty face and a pair of linked hearts. If an officer parks in the wrong place, comes to work late or drops a bit of litter, that officer would be decorated with an armband depicting Hello Kitty, the Japanese symbol of cuteness, no matter how many ribbons for valor he may already wear. . . . Ten armbands have been prepared, but none had been issued by Tuesday . . ." Photo.

Aug. 10, 2007

"**Indians Protest Wal-Mart's Wholesale Entry**," by Amelia Gentleman in New Delhi. "Wal-Mart, in a struggle to expand its global reach, is trying to enter India through the back door, but many consumers here have taken notice. Wal-Mart completed a joint venture this week with the Bharti Group to build as many as 15 large wholesale outlets over the next seven years. Most Indians will not be able to shop directly in the new stores, but many took to the streets Thursday, fearing that Wal-Mart could eventually undermine the small retailers that dominate the Indian market." Photos.

Aug. 12, 2007

"In China, a **High-Tech Plan to Track People**," by Keith Bradsher in Shenzhen. NYT's summary: "Security experts describe China's plans as the world's largest effort to meld the latest computer technology with police work." Lede: "At least 20,000 police surveillance cameras are being installed along streets here in southern China and will soon be guided by sophisticated computer software from an American-financed company to recognize automatically the faces of police suspects and detect unusual activity." Photo. Long article. Link to a related but briefer article: "A Chinese Tycoon, Inspired to Create Police Technology," also by Bradsher, focusing on an "unusual software company and the wealthy tycoon who runs it, Lin Jiang Huai."

"India's **Whiskey-Drinking Elite Make Room for Wine**," by Somini Sengupta in Gundamakere. "The tiny Indian wine market is poised to grow by leaps and bounds as the country's erstwhile whiskey-drinking elite cultivates a taste for wine." Photos.

Aug. 15, 2007

Op-Ed Contributor: "India's Internal Partition," by Ramachandra Guha in Bangalore. A liberal and secular Hindu **grieves over the separation of Hindus and Muslims in contemporary India** and the marginal prospects for reconciliation. Ramachandra Guha is the author of "India After Gandhi: The History of the World's Largest Democracy."

Aug. 16, 2007

"Economic Boom Fails to Generate Optimism in India," by Somini Sengupta in New Delhi. "Prime Minister Manmohan Singh **cautioned Indians against hubris** in his annual Independence Day speech on Wednesday and promised a spate of antipoverty measures that hinted at the vulnerabilities facing his government and the nation." Photo of PM Singh after his speech on Wednesday.

"Gyegu Journal: **Tibetans Turn Festival Into Mute Protest Against China**," by Howard W. French in Gyegu, China. A Tibetan audience responds with silence when a Chinese-speaking M.C. asks for enthusiasm from those gathered for a regional festival. "The Khampa Festival in Qinghai Province is one of the largest on the calendar and traditionally draws Tibetans from all over western China. This year, for the first time, local officials tried to use the event to promote tourism and development in one of the poorest areas of China. As the muted response to the announcers suggested, however, the event had also acquired a political subtext: the continuing struggle between China and its Tibetan minority over cultural identity and religious freedom." Photos; map.

Aug. 18, 2007

"New Power in Africa: **Chinese Entrepreneurs Flourish in Africa**," by Howard W. French (from Lilongwe, Malawi and from Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) and Lydia Polgreen (from Lusaka, Zambia and from Dakar, Senegal), date-lined Lilongwe. NYT summary: "Hundreds of thousands of Chinese migrants are doing business on a continent that had been terra incognita." Photo-graphs; slide show: "Chinese Businesses in Africa." Long article. Link to two previous articles in a series exploring China's deepening economic and political ties with Africa.

Sept. 3, 2007

"Modern Gloss on China's Golden Age," by Sheila Melvin in Beijing. "China spend the greater part of the last century struggling to become a modern nation. But after so many years spent looking outward and forward, some Chinese are once again looking inward and back - way back, to the golden age of philosophers like Confucius (551-479 B.C.) and Zuangzi (369-286 B.C.). On a **"current rage for things ancient** - known as 'national-studies fever' " and the continuing popularity of Yu **Dan's "Reflections on 'The Analects' "**, " a best-selling, highly-personal interpretation of "The Analects." Photo of Ms. Yu, a professor of media studies at Beijing Normal University.

Sept. 5, 2007

"Lobbying in U.S., **Indian Firms Present an American Face**," by Anand Giridharadas.

Sept. 9, 2007

"**Art Boom in China** Has Ripples Over Here," by Holland Cotter. "With its tainted exports and crackdowns on the press, China has lately been exposing the dark side of the Asian boom. Yet the Chinese contemporary-art industry continues to thrive, as museums and art districts sprout overnight, and Western dealers join the gold rush by adding Chinese artists to their rosters and opening spaces in Beijing." Attention to several mid-career surveys in New York, Tempe, Arizona, and North Adams, Mass. museums of prominent stars from the Chinese art world. Dates; no images.

Sept. 12, 2007

"**Philippines Ex-President Convicted**," by Carlos H. Conde in Manila. "A Philippine anticorruption court on Wednesday convicted former Philippine president, Joseph Estrada, of illegally acquiring wealth while in office and sentenced him to a maximum of 40 years in prison." Mr. Estrada, 70, once a film star and immensely popular with the Filipino poor, has been in detention since his ouster in a "people power" uprising in 2001.

Sept. 16, 2007

"Journeys | China: Let a Hundred Decadent Spas Bloom," by Joseph Kurlantzick. On the **surge of Chinese spas**, "giving themselves a makeover, upgrading their services so they can compete with the finer health resorts in Asia." Photos: spas in Shanghai and Beijing. Attention in the text to other sites. Visitor information:, with attention to six sources, five of them in Shanghai and Beijing.

Sept. 18, 2007

"World Bank and U.N. to Help Poor Nations Recover Stolen Assets," by Warren Hoge at United Nations. "The World Bank and the United Nations announced Monday that they were setting up a system to help developing nations **recover assets stolen and sent abroad by corrupt leaders that amount to an estimated \$40 billion a year.**" No Asian nations are included among the few places actually listed as perpetrators of this theft - though Africa is said to be where the problem of stolen assets is most acute. But in the last paragraph, Japan and India are listed as two of the 98 countries that have not ratified the UN Convention Against Corruption since it went into effect in December, 2005.

Sept. 23, 2007

"Frugal Traveler | Mumbai: Visiting in **Luxury, With Money Left for Philanthropy,**" by Matt Gross in Mumbai, wherein the writer devises a strategy to live the "high life, a weekend-long party of shopping, eating and luxuriating . . . on a budget of \$500, or 21,500 rupees. Let's be honest: in a city like Mumbai, that's a phenomenal amount, enough to sustain the backpacker for a month or one of the city's seven million slum-dwellers for a year. . . The challenge was not staying within my budget, but doing so while chasing luxury, a tough prospect in a city where a decent hotel costs upward of \$200 a night, a culture of private clubs breeds exclusivity and opportunities for throwing money away around."

Oct. 22, 2007

"Calcutta Journal: A 10-Armed Goddess Charms a Frenetic Megalopolis," by Somini Sengupta in Calcutta. "Half Mardi Gras and half Christmas, Durga Pujo, a five-day festival dedicated to the **Hindu goddess Durga**, is the most important religious event for Hindus in this part of India. Worship is only one part of the ritual." Informative report. Photos; slide show: "Durga Pujo in Calcutta."

Oct. 29, 2007

"Mandalay Journal: Myanmar Magic: Tell a Joke, and You Disappear," by Choe Sang-hun in Mandalay. Focus on the challenges of being satirists in today's Myanmar, with specific attention to The Mustache Brothers, practitioners of a-nyeint pwe, "**Myanmar's traditional vaudeville**, featuring puppets, music and slapstick comedy tinged with in-your-face political satire - all in a country where cracking the wrong joke can land you in jail." Later in this article, which reports the detention of the leader of the troupe a month ago, we learn the pronunciation of his art: "ah-NYAY pway." Photos; map.

Oct. 31, 2007

"Hello, India? I Need Help With My Math," by Steve Lohr. On **globalization of consumer services such as tutoring and personal assistance**. Offshore out-sourcing for big business thrived partly because the jobs were often multimillion-dollar contracts and the work was repetitive. . . . It is not all clear that similar economies of scale can be achieved in the consumer market, where the customers are individual households and services must be priced in tens or hundreds of dollars." Long article.

Nov. 4, 2007

"The World: A Modern Buddhist Uprising Strikes a Quieter Chord," by Richard Bernstein. Comparing Vietnam and Myanmar: " There's a lesson in the **comparison between these two Buddhist entries into politics**, and it's not just about the politics of democracy in a dictatorship. The lesson resides in the fact the news from aforementionedtrickle, while 40 and more years ago, the news from Vietnam exploded days after day in the headlines, thereby stirring the conscience of the world."

Nov. 9, 2007

"A Very Old [Zen Master and His Art of Tough Love](#)," by Ralph Blumenthal in Jemez Springs, New Mexico. "What would Buddha do? Every spring and fall, enlightenment-seekers from all over come here to find out, converging for arduous weeklong retreats at the Bodhi Manda Zen Center in a red rock canyon among the thermal springs and Indian pueblos west of Santa Fe. . . .But mostly they come to practice with an impish, smooth-faced Japanese monk, Kyozan Joshu Sasaki Roshi, a 100-year-old Rinzai Sen master, one of the oldest in the world, who tells his followers, 'Excuse me for not dying.'" Long, detailed consideration of [Zen Buddhism's arrival in the United States](#). Some elements of a rare interview with Joshu Roshi. Photos.

Dec. 5, 2007

"Choking on Growth: [China's Turtles, Emblems of a Crisis](#)," by Jim Yardley in Changsha. NYT summary: "The saga of the last two Yangtze giant soft-shells is symbolic of the threatened state of wildlife as a result of pollution, hunting and rampant development." Sixth in a series of articles and multi-media examining the human toll, global impact and political challenge of China's epic pollution crisis. Photos; video: "On the Verge of Extinction." Link to earlier articles in this series. Link to a summary in Mandarin. Very long article. [Also under HOME/ SCIENCE]

Dec. 24, 2007

"Hindu Radical Is Re-elected in India," by Somini Sengupta in New Delhi. ". . . On Sunday, voters re-elected the politician, Narendra Modi, arguably India's most incendiary officeholder, as the chief minister of the western state of Gujarat. His victory, by a wide margin, was a stunning defeat for the country's governing Congress Party and signaled that Mr. Modi and his charismatic, often pugnacious, brand of [Hindu supremacist politics](#) would be a force to be reckoned with in the future." Photo of Bharatiya Janata Party celebrating in Ahmadabad. Another photo; map. Link to a December 11 article on the election that brought this outcome.