Evolutions
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PASSED ON:Bir Narayan Chaudhury of eastern Nepal, on April 20, reputedly the oldest man in the world at 141. He didn't make the Guinness Book of Records though, for he had no birth certificate--nor did anyone else born in 1856. In 1996, Choudhury told the Kathmandu Post: "Oh, God! It's too long a life. I am tired."

SENTENCED: Somla Tamang of Nepal to prison for 12 years for killing a neighbor's cow two years ago, after an appeals court upheld the verdict. The cow is Nepal's national animal, and the penalty for killing a cow is the same as for murdering a person.

COMMISSIONED: Classical Indian dancer Nilimma Devi, by the US Smithsonian Discovery Theater, to present Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim stories for children on May 8 in Maryland. The event marked the 50th anniversary of India and Pakistan's founding. She mixed Kuchipudi dance, music, narrative, mime and hand-crafted puppets to tell three stories that share a focus on discovering truth. In the Hindu tale, baby Ganesha learns from his mother how to live peacefully with animals.

POORER: Financially, anyway--miner Subash Limaye of Nagpur, India after donating the world's largest double star ruby (1,275

carats, about nine ounces) to "its rightful owner," Lord Venkateshwara at the Tirupati temple. Limaye said he wasted two years trying to auction the "Jewel Rudrak-sha," because potential sponsors wanted him to hand it over merely on the assurance they would pay him a promised amount after its auction.