

# SUNIL BABU PANT

b. June 28, 1972

## NEPALESE POLITICIAN

*“People in general do not wish to discriminate against their fellow neighbors.”*

**In spite of his many accomplishments, Sunil Babu Pant insists that his work is far from complete: “With our progress, however, is the awareness that so many more need to be served.”**

Sunil Babu Pant is the first openly gay politician in Nepal. His 2008 election to the national legislature followed years of activism on behalf of the Nepalese GLBT community.

Trained as a computer engineer, Pant received a scholarship to study in Belarus. It was there that he first heard the word “homosexual” and identified as a gay man. It was also where he was first exposed to entrenched homophobia, inspiring him to fight for equality in his home country.

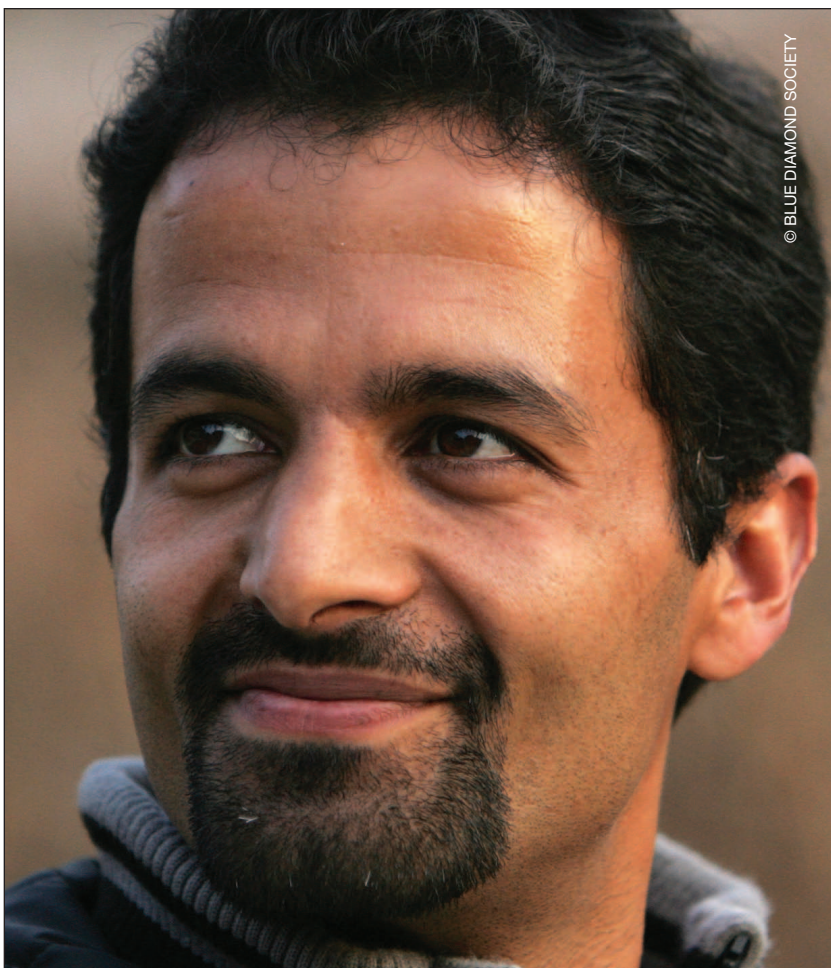
In 2002, Pant founded the Blue Diamond Society. The group consists of more than 20 organizations and 120,000 members representing the interests of the country’s GLBT and HIV/AIDS communities. Leaders and members of the society have continued their advocacy in the face of threats of arrest and violence.

The Blue Diamond Society was party to a 2007 case that led Nepal’s highest court to declare that GLBT individuals were “natural persons” who deserve protection and civil rights. The court also ordered the establishment of a commission to study same-sex marriage, as well as the addition of a third gender option on official government documents.

Pant was elected to Nepal’s Constituent Assembly as a member of Nepal’s Communist Party United. His legislative goals include equal justice and economic rights. He serves on a committee charged with rewriting Nepal’s constitution. In spite of his many accomplishments, Pant insists that his work is far from complete: “With our progress, however, is the awareness that so many more need to be served.”

In 2005, Pant and the Blue Diamond Society were awarded the Utopia Award, Asia’s leading GLBT honor. In 2007, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission bestowed the group with its Felippa de Souza Award.

Pant, who lives in Nepal’s capital city, Kathmandu, recently founded Pink Mountain, a company that offers GLBT-gearred travel packages to Nepal.



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