

Italian pizza can say 'cheese!'

A STAFF REPORTER

Fire And Ice, with its dazzling logo, is a landmark in Kathmandu. This restaurant, written about in *Time* magazine and *Lonely Planet*, is famous for its pizzas and its celebrity clientele, including Richard Gere, Sting and Everest climbers.

An Italian woman named Annamaria Forgione, who had been convalescing in Kathmandu way back in 1988, opened the restaurant there because of the restorative quality of the air in Nepal.

Last year, Forgione decided to open a branch in Calcutta, twin city of Naples where she

is from, and work in tandem with Sonarpur-based Indian Institute of Mother and Child to promote the Italian cheese mozzarella, part of a project for microfinancing mothers with children. Banks were to buy cows, which were to be lent to these women. Forgione was to buy back the mozzarella she taught them to produce. The Italian government was interested in creating jobs on a much larger scale.

Forgione chose a large space in Kanak Building, on Chowringhee, for her restaurant in October 2004. Folk artists from Janakpur painted frieze panels in Madhubani

style, showing red chillis which are a sign of good luck in Italy. The music system blasted Pavarotti.

But right before the opening on July 16, an injunction was slapped on her, disallowing her from using the name Fire And Ice, registered in Nepal. Dimpy G. Singh, owner of D'Fire and Ice, on Sarat Bose Road, had managed to obtain a temporary injunction against Forgione, claiming that D'Fire and Ice was a registered trademark.

In May, Forgione had already filed a case in Delhi High Court for restraining Dimpy G. Singh's Raj Hotels from us-

ing the name Fire And Ice anywhere else in India.

Depressed though she was with the injunction in Calcutta, Forgione took up the matter before the fifth bench of the city civil court.

Last Friday, the city civil court ruled that since Fire And Ice enjoyed a transborder reputation, D'Fire and Ice was not entitled to an injunction. Forgione's counsel Ranjan Bachavat and Phiroze Edulji established that D'Fire and Ice was not a registered trademark. Forgione, who keeps a Kali image in her office for inspiration, says her faith in the Indian judiciary is restored.



Annamaria's daughter, Amarilli, at Fire And Ice.

Picture by Rashbehari Das