Burning bright

There is a rumble in the jungle as elephants in the Royal Chitwan National Park step out the red carpet for visitors. Before long, they will be roaming about the fields, backwater lakes, and forests, making their way to the Chitwan National Park. This is the best time to visit Chitwan and catch a rare glimpse of endangered wildlife. The best part is you don't have to rough it anymore; there are well-marked class trails with all creature comforts—at budget prices.

Seven digits

Kathmandu will have seven digit telephone numbers from 15 March. NTC says it will add a 4, 5 or 6 to front of existing numbers in Kathmandu. The Telecom Authority of India has decreed that you cannot call Nepal Times in Patan, you will have to dial 95-whatever. Numbers in Kathmandu will add a 4 and those in Bhaktapur have to add a 5. Numbers outside Kathmandu will carry six digits, but area codes remain the same.

SHARAD KC / KHAILANGA

Seven years after the Maoists launched their armed struggle in these hills of western Nepal, many villagers are hoping against hope that this ceasefire is for real. When the truce was announced by radio on the night of 29 January, it was greeted with whispers in dark rooms silenced by gunfire. Two weeks later, there is watchful hope here in Khaillanga, the district headquarters of Salyan district.

Villagers displaced by the fighting haven’t yet mustered the courage to return to their homes. The security forces still have their checkpoints, the army and police walk real on state police, the PPM-MAA curfew still stands. Khaillanga gos quiet after 3 PM. The army and the local police launched joint patrols, the 8 PM-4 AM curfew is still on. Khalanga goes quiet after four in the afternoon and the war-weary villagers are hoping against hope that the ceasefire this time is for real.

Arrivals are already beginning to pick up, and initial figures for this month show that they are healthier than the first ... as the main trekking and climbing season starts in March. The Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) has been preoccupied with the

Nepal welcomes tourists again

JANARDAN SURKET

With the news of the ceasefire and the upcoming Everest 50th anniversary, Nepal’s tourism industry is preparing for a spring revival this season. Animals are already beginning to pick up, and initial figures for this month show that they are healthier than the first two weeks of January last year. The numbers are expected to hit the 300,000 mark at the end of April, which is the peak season in Nepal.

The Nepali Tourism Board (NTB) has been preoccupied with the preparation for the Everest 50th anniversary. "We want to make sure that Nepal is open for business again," says NTB director general Kirti Maharjan. "We are expecting a big increase in tourists this year, and we are working hard to make sure that Nepal is ready for the tourist influx.

The NTB has launched a series of marketing campaigns to promote Nepal as a tourist destination. These include ads in international travel magazines and travel websites, as well as social media campaigns to reach out to potential tourists.

With the promise of peace, backpackers like these in Thamel this week, are flocking back to Nepal.

Bhagwanpur of the Hotel Association of Nepal. But former PNTA president, Subash Chandra Paudel, cautions that tourists are not an on-off switch. "People plan ahead. It takes six months or more for visitor numbers to rebound," he says.

This time, the Maoists look like they are preparing to use the truce and dialogue period to strengthen political programs. In case they have to join the mainstream, they promise they will continue to prepare for national elections and continue the "people’s war" on 15 February. The houses along the trail have freshly painted slogans with an ominous message: "We want constituent assembly elections, interim government and a guaranteed conference, or else...."
Prachanda and King Gyanendra...
The cradle of the revolution

Further up near Tiston, a young woman is sifting through a dirty sari, something she collects together as a sort of chronicle. "The girls will have another." Neighbours will guess and talk. Neighbours will read the signs. Neighbours will write their own story. Neighbours will talk about what to do first. Again, rebuilding seems an obvious place to start. Those 3,000 or so local government offices destroyed in the seven years of fighting need to be rebuilt sometime.

In other words, don’t allow the talks to fail. Take action that will ever see her husband again.

Rajendra Dhakal, Deputy Superintendent of Police, Salyan

New air route to Delhi

India and Nepal have agreed on a new flight routing that shaves off 15 minutes from the Kathmandu-Delhi flight.

The third joint secretary level transport talks between Nepal and India concluded Thursday without an agreement. The talks were held in Kathmandu.

The Japan Times.

Pre-emptive failure

The peace process must go on a war-footing.

Don’t wait for Kathmandu to rule the roost, it is locally. Kathmandu is the capital of stop institution, its people work in the service of stopping. People, talk about the new route. People, talk about the new route. People, talk about the new route.

Domestic briefs

Concluded inclusively

The third joint secretary level transport talks between Nepal and India concluded Thursday without an agreement. There was a lot of progress on a lot of issues, and we need to finalise it by a deadline, a large of which is the finalisation of a new land and waterway trade agreement, which is necessary to bring back the economy to a new level. The talks were held in Kathmandu.

The Japan Times.
Healing hands

Our rush to forgive or forget the past must not be allowed to obscure its lessons.

It is a delicate struggle for Nepal to view its past in the right light. You can gauge the gravity of the situation by the fact that even today, more than five years after the end of the conflict, we have not fully come to terms with what has happened. The country has been making strides in various fronts over the past years, but in many ways, its recovery has been a mixed bag. The Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission (TJRC) has been making efforts to shine a light on the human rights violations that occurred during the conflict, but it faces many challenges. The TJRC has received many complaints, but it has been slow in processing them. The government has not been fully cooperative, and the political will to address the past is lacking. This has left many victims feeling ignored and disenfranchised.

The need for a new approach to transitional justice in Nepal is evident. We need to strengthen our legal framework, ensure greater transparency and accountability, and ensure that victims have access to justice. This is not an easy task, but it is crucial for the country's future. We cannot afford to let history repeat itself. We need to learn from the past and ensure that such atrocities are never repeated in the future. This is not just about justice for those who suffered, but about building a better future for all.

ECONOMY

With peace and good governance, things will automatically pick up...

Saurav Jyoti is a third-generation entrepreneur from a family-run Nepal business house, Jyoti Group, which interests in trading, investment, and information services. In this interview, he discusses the economic situation of the country and how it affects business. Jyoti Group's vast diversified businesses have thrived in subterranean existence, transparent action can often prove traumatic. In his first formal interview since last year's sick-leaves, he talks about the company's future plans.

How has the economic situation affected business?

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When the conflict ended, there were high hopes for a new era of peace and prosperity. However, the economic situation remained challenging, with high inflation and unemployment. The country's political instability and lack of investor confidence have also been factors.

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The government has been making efforts to address these issues. The recent constitution has been hailed as a step towards greater stability and democracy. The government has also been working on addressing the country's economic challenges. However, there is still much work to be done. The country needs a strong political will to address the issues and ensure a brighter future.

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In conclusion, the economic situation remains a major challenge for the country. However, there are reasons to hope for a better future. The government has taken steps towards greater stability and democracy, and the country is making efforts to address its economic challenges. The future will depend on the government's ability to maintain a stable political environment and continue to take steps towards greater economic stability.

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ECO-TOURISM

SRADHAA BANSYAT in CHITWAN

Chitwan, Nepal is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the first national park in Asia, established in 1973. It is located in the floodplain of the Narayani River in the central part of Nepal. The park covers an area of 932 square kilometers and is home to the royal bengal tiger, the one-horned rhinoceros, and many other species of wildlife.

Chitwan was declared a national park in 1973. The park is divided into three zones: Sauraha, Chitwan National Park, and Royal Chitwan National Park. The park is known for its rich biodiversity, with over 500 species of birds, 40 species of mammals, 486 species of butterflies, and 570 species of flowering plants.

The park is home to the largest concentration of one-horned rhinoceros in the world, with over 500 individuals. Other notable species include the Bengal tiger, sloth bear, and the Indian python. The park is also home to a variety of reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

Chitwan is a popular destination for eco-tourism, with many lodges and campsites offering guided tours and wildlife viewing opportunities. The park is also home to a variety of cultural and historical sites, including the historic town of Chitwan and the ancient city of Lumbini, the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama, the founder of Buddhism.

Chitwan is a perfect destination for nature lovers, bird watchers, and wildlife enthusiasts. The park is a great place to experience the beauty of nature and the richness of biodiversity.
Priceless values

Humanity is tired of being used as an ass for the sake of its own security.

Columbia's spirit

Why can't Asia unite even for the sake of its own security?

The symbol of the crash lies in its redemptive messages.

W hen the space shuttle Columbia destroyed itself in mid-air over Texas and Earth's atmosphere, I couldn't help but think of the situation with Iran. Just a few weeks back, the US gave a go-ahead to a US war on Iran, despite the possibility of a Middle Eastern war. This again lies permanent dependence on human and technology. The chances of Asia creating a lasting alliance.

Some non-official commentary is understandable caution. Over the past decade, Asia moved from division between two superpowers to something that could be described as dominance by one. And that dominance could now be termed "Asia-centric". Asia has the value of collective security from Europe's post-World War II era. The West will do everything possible to prevent Asians from viewing Westerners as that enemy. In fact, most calls for Asian disunity can be overcome only if Asia as a whole confronts a common enemy. The West will do everything possible to prevent Asians from viewing Westerners as that enemy. In fact, most calls for Asian disunity can be overcome only if Asia as a whole confronts a common enemy.
There are a few steps in writing a story like this. First, I need to clean up the text and make sure it's readable. Next, I need to break it down into smaller, manageable chunks. Then, I need to organize those chunks into a coherent narrative. Finally, I need to edit and refine the story to make sure it flows well and is engaging for the reader.
VIKASH PRAHADAN

While most of us lament the great North-South digital divide and how the model would never work, it turns out if a digital divide exists, Nepal is not among it. They have come up with world class websites, like the ones that recently covered the 2nd Annual CIO Malaysia 2003. The idea was to showcase and promote the display of young Nepali website designers with the annual competition. This year’s judging jury consists of three main categories: content, visual appeal and user friendliness. An independent jury then decides to award their scores on a scale of 1 to 10. The scores were then averaged to determine winners in each category. The two scores were decided by using the average marks obtained by each of the annual competitions. There were 62 entries this year out of which only 57 were judged. The rest were disqualified for not fulfilling full criteria of the websites related to the category of the entry.

For designers who win the competition, judges also picked one winning website for each of the three categories, which would be awarded with a first prize of Rs 50,000.

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Under My Hat
by Kunda Dixit

Wrestling with our erotic past

It is hard to tell today that we are a people whose ancestors contributed valuable research data to Prof Vatsyayana so he could write his bestselling book, *The Kamasutra*. It is clear as we look around us today that we are only a shadow of the outstanding and upright people we once were. So let us take the opportunity of International Valentine's Day and our own Annual Mating Season this week to remember our forefathers in an affectionate manner.

These were the days when we didn't draw around the bush when it came to birds and bees. Let us get straight to the point. Of course, our women then, as today, pretended not to know what that point was exactly, but we knew they knew that we knew it was only a question of time before they got the drift.

Much of the valuable ornithological and apiarian data we Nepalis amassed through the millennia was lost to posterity because Prof Vatsyayana decided that it was too risqué for his book, and threw it into the bin. Luckily, our ancestors had backup hard drives from which they rescued facts and figures and promptly carved them into the eaves of Kathmandu Valley temples where they have become the backbone of our tourism industry today.

Some of the technical details of this priceless corpus of research may be way over our heads, but all you need is a pair of powerful binoculars and a secret vantage point in one of the Valley’s three temple squares to unlock the secrets of our holy architecture (From sanskrit: “arch”=dirty, and “itecture”=stuff). These erections give us a peek into what our ancestors did for fun and games in prehistoric times while laying the foundations of our civilization.

And it is obvious from a cursory perusal of the evidence on display that we as a people loved to tie ourselves into knots. This was not just a way to mix pleasure as they went about their business, but also a form of sustained activity. No wonder, then, that some of the most beautiful scenes on our temples show consorts that look uncannily like Greco-Roman wrestlers, imagine all the extra calories they burnt when progressing in the same weight class in a competition in front of half-naked, pubescent orator from other castes with greasy hair and ankle-locks, followed by quick body-kicks.

In a maneuver that the World Wrestling Federation (or, as they used to call it) “Pro Wrestling” earns the player three bonus points, the passive encounter ends when the man underneath completely reverses his position and comes to the top position. The other below-the-belt move is called the crotch-lift, which is employed by the aggressor to execute holds with his or her arms and legs, leading to front head-locks with amplitude.

We don't know what the final outcome of these bouts were, because our ancestors had such fertile imaginations that they soon ran out of temples to depict them on.

But we do know for a fact that our forefathers also loved to wrestle with sheep, water buffalo and other semi-mythical fauna in order to test their strength and stamina. In fact, they were such eager sportsmen that they wrestled in groups, and sometimes they even wrestled with themselves.

Following this grand tradition, it is important for us this Valentine’s Day to value and preserve our grand traditions by paying silent homage to the acrobats who laid the groundwork of the society we are now so proud to call our own. And without their seminal contribution, we can say with a great deal of certainty that we would not be here today to pen these lines of tribute from the bottoms of all our hearts.