**Weekly Internet Poll #418**

Q. How would you describe the government’s program and policy announced Wednesday?

Total votes: 2,991

- 14% Unsatisfied
- 57% Satisfied
- 29% Neutral

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After he became finance minister last month, Baburam Bhattarai asked the visiting Afghan economist Ashraf Ghani: “How can I keep my party happy while at the same time maintain economic stability?”

Ghani gave Bhattarai a written list of things to watch out for. As he prepares to present the budget to parliament on Friday afternoon, Bhattarai will follow the advice of donors to balance the need to push some populist measures with keeping the economy on track.

Bhattarai has said he wants the economy “to leap like a frog and not slither like a snake,” and he is satisfied with letting a few large highway and hydropower projects to drive growth for now.

“Some people want to completely overhaul economic policy, the budget will just put some dressing on the old policies,” says Bhattarai’s budgetary aide, Dipendra Chhetri. Costly programs like ‘revolutionary’ land reform, increased urban property tax, pension to women and farmers are to be dropped. Even the allowance for the elderly, widows and handicapped is expected to be limited to the Karnali, and debt forgiveness for small farmers will only apply to the landless. An ambitious plan to ensure 100 per cent literacy by 2011, is unlikely to happen, and not because of lack of money. “It is just not possible when 11 per cent of the children don’t go to school and see no need to,” says TU educationist Tirtha Khaniya, “children aren’t going to go to school just because you build schools.”

However, the Rs 225 billion budget is expected to announce major investment in expanding the network of rural roads in the hope of creating 100,000 jobs in the coming year and providing farmers with access to markets.

The key to success is sometimes the doorway to freedom.
In Nepal there is a saying about elephants having tusks outside for show and the real chewing teeth hidden inside the mouth (‘Dehaune dant ra chapane dant’). Dahal in Delhi showed off his tusks, his pragmatic side. He waxed eloquent about democracy, the free market and his vision for rapid investment-led economic growth in Nepal.

Not everyone was convinced. Least of all the CEOs of Unilever and Dabur whose manufacturing bases in Nepal are the targets of chronic stoppages by militant unions affiliated to the Maoists. In private meetings with leaders, our prime minister was quizzed on his commitment to consensus-building with other parties. Dahal was in his best behaviour, being Mr Pragmatism himself. But the message got lost: we like what you say but we will be watching what you do.

And so we will here in Nepal. On Sunday, before flying off to Delhi the prime minister gave us a glimpse of his molars. He went into a long-winded explanation in front of the Constituent Assembly of socialism and nationalism, the last ultimate goal of communism and how he had no faith in ‘traditional parliamentary democracy’. In fact, looking back at the records, Dahal has never really used the word ‘democracy’ or “d’ocracy” in the same sentence in the past two years. Instead, he has always alluded to “multi-party competition”.

And speaking to Indian leftist groups in Delhi on Tuesday, Dahal said his party’s real goal was “panatrantra” and not “pananatrantra”. There you have it: the goal has been a “people’s republic” all along.

It is no coincidence that on the very day that Dahal was relying to comments from assembly members on his government’s policies and programs, his hardline party boss Mohan Baidya had also spilled out his totalitarian value system. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, the comrade went as far as to declare that parliamentary democracy had been “a failure almost everywhere in the world”.

It is now clear whose line the prime minister is parroting: his mentor Baidya whose reading of history we have always known is lopsided. Parliamentary democracy is flourishing in most countries; it is in fact Baidya’s own Maoist ideology that has been a disastrous failure in every country where it has been attempted. Even the country of Mao’s birth abandoned it in 1975.

If Dahal was saying what he did in the Assembly to appease hardcore factions within his party we have nothing to add. But we sure hope for this country’s sake, and for the sake of his own party, that he rely less on his molars and more on his tusks.
WELCOME TO INDIA
Mr Ambassador, what is so confusing about the concept of equidistance in the context of Nepal’s relations with India and China? (‘Welcome to India, Mr Prime Minister, #417). Are you suggesting that Nepal cannot practice its own form of non-alignment? The current regional contest you refer to can be interpreted in a variety of ways and your own interpretation as a former ambassador is hardly convincing. Should the prospects for cooperation between India and Nepal be under question in a situation where Nepal seeks truly equidistant relations with its two neighbours? That seems to be what you are suggesting—a truly crude vision of external relations, really. There may be some truth to the saying that India represents an open system with a closed mind, whereas China represents a closed system with an open mind.

Y Lama, Moscow

● Our own deceptively and political short-sightedness is responsible for the way we are dealt with by India. But it’s a fact that India has taken its own greater interest above Nepal’s, without considering the ‘non-adjective relations’ as Mr. Mukharji says, mainly the drugs and blandest forms in Bhutan refugee and trade issues. India hasn’t done a favour to this country for the sake of so called ‘special relations.’ So I do not think it’s in appropriate to ask for a neutral neighbourhood relationship. Why is there a need for India to try to persuade a ‘special relationship’ status with Nepal? And who is this compared with? Obviously China looms behind in the subconscious. China is a great potential tap for Nepal economy and there’s no greater need to upset the relationship, especially if India wants a lopsided love from Nepal, at the cost of her own interest.

Name withheld, email

UPENDRA
Upendra Yadav is a true maverick, and he will be remembered as an important person in Nepal’s history especially in the Tarai. (Underestimating Upendra, #417). He has original ideas, he is articulate, and he is a lawyer who truly believes in democracy and justice. These are the new breed leaders that Nepal’s history especially in the Tarai. Upendra Yadav is a true maverick, and he will be remembered as an important person in Nepal’s history especially in the Tarai.

Sanjeev Karmacharya, Khusibun

● Emma Sciantarelli’s article contains some of the harshest and most damming criticisms to date on the tragedy of Nepal’s street children. However she did not elaborate more on the attitude of the Nepali population. These children become non-people. I have seen people step over sleeping children on the street and walk by severely ill kids who desperately need help. The first step should be towards changing this attitude. It is pervasive and seeps into the police force, who have been known to beat these children. Until the people say enough and move to correct these terrible wrongs, I can see nothing being done. Nepal’s abused are as needy as those in Africa and around the world. I had a very disappointed Nepali who wants to help, say to me for our lack of funding: ‘Nepalis are on the wrong continent and our skin is too light to get help!’ Although shocked to hear that in the beginning, it makes sense to me now. Nepal is loosing a generation of children and if they survive the horrors of the street, down the line in 10 to 15 years or less, Nepal faces a disgruntled and angry group of young men: illiterate, ill with HIV, addicted to drugs and psychologically destroyed. There’s urgent need for reform. Money spent now will be money saved in the future.

Lawrence Brown, Protego-Nepal

UPSIDE DOWN
Min Rana Brajcharaya was at the right place at the right time to take a picture of the prime minister in front of an upside down national flag (#417). An omen?

Sanjeev Karmacharya, Khusibun

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LETTERS
Nepal Times welcomes feedback. Letters should be brief and may be edited for space. While pseudonyms can be accepted, writers who provide their real names and contact details will be given preference. Email letters should be in text format without attachments with ‘letter to the editor’ in the subject line.

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Chain reaction
Min Bahadur Gurung bucks the trend by expanding his supermarket business

DEWAN RAI

Bhatbhateni Supermarket opened a new branch in Maharajgunj this week. This is not just any old store, but Nepal's first international-standard supermarket equipped with escalators and lift, climate control, bar-code readers and security gates. It offers a goods exchange service and also refunds money for defective items.

At a time when many Nepalis are hesitant to engage in new business ventures, owner Min Bahadur Gurung has found Rs 750 million to invest in the new store, construction of which began two and a half years ago when no one was investing in anything. He plans to open more shops in Koteswor and Itahari later this year, and after that to focus on Pokhara, Bhairawa, Butwal and Dharan.

“This is the time for the private sector to prove their competence and assure the government of their individual initiative and entrepreneurship,” Gurung told Nepali Times after his shop was selected Company of the Month for September.

Four steps to success
Four points that have made Min Bahadur Gurung a successful businessman:

1. Start small. Mistakes committed when a business is small are not big: They can easily be corrected and lessons are learned without wasting much money and time.
2. Trust: Making a quick buck at the hapless customers' expense may be tempting, but the market rewards those who project consistently trustworthy actions. People, after all, buy and sell with those they trust.
3. Curiosity: Be alert, you know a business is going downhill when owners start exhibiting a know-all attitude and are closed to different viewpoints.
4. Focus: Gurung is clear about his focus: to sell Nepali and foreign goods at the lowest possible prices. He avoids distractions. All he knows is how to sell and has succeeded by doing only what he does best.

These shops would lend money to villagers to set up agricultural cooperatives and provide seeds and fertilizer as required. They would then buy back the crops, with any surplus going for export. Eventually, Gurung wants to venture abroad and open stores in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and sees an opportunity to market Nepali products abroad.

Gurung’s business has already established an enviable reputation for its accessibility, range of products, quality, value for money and service. He claims to sell both Nepali and foreign goods at the lowest possible price. His daughter, a graduate from an American university, now helps run the business. His dream, apart from wanting to see his own business prosper, is for Nepal to develop into a modern, wealthy nation within his lifetime.

“If we are honest and work hard to achieve our goal, we can achieve it,” he says. “But we need a collective effort to develop the country. I don’t want to die a citizen of a poor country.”

Seavizz: Strictly Business by Ashutosh Tiwari, ‘Lessons of Bhatbhateni’, #178

Sunday Jazz Brunch at the Hyatt

Choose the Hyatt for a relaxing Sunday Jazz Brunch in the beautiful Rox gardens, to catch up with close friends and family. Design your perfect meal, with our Rox team preparing fresh pastas, crisp salads and barbecue made to order in front of your eyes, all accompanied by mellow jazz tunes performed live by Mariano and his band.

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DEWAN RAI
**Open for business**

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal concluded a reasonably successful visit to India assuring India’s business elite that Nepal is open for business. India showed its willingness to engage with Nepal’s new rulers, but the government and business will be cautious and would first like to test Dahal on his commitments.

There was an in principle agreement to review the 1950 treaty. India also agreed to ease restrictions on trade for three months. Dahal will help facilitate easier movement between Jogbani and Rashni in Bihar which will come as relief for all those stranded due to the damaged highway in Sunsari.

The water resource secretaries will discuss flood control, irrigation and hydropower. The Indian side is willing to give Nepal a role in maintenance and repair of the Kosi embankment in principle, but it will require work at the technical level. The Prime Minister made big promises about “mega projects”. The commerce secretaries will look at how to overhaul the trade relationship.

The Indians humourd him but let it be known that they expect him to act on issues spanning from industrial security of Indian companies to hydropower.

Prashant Jha in New Delhi

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**Jumbo savings**

Himalayan Bank is offering new savings accounts. The Bishes savings account has a reduced minimum balance of Rs 2,000. There is also a easy-save account and Jumbo fixed deposit account with interest rates of up to seven per cent. The accounts are available at all Himalayan Bank branches.

**Hot wheels**

The third Himalayan Times Wheels Auto Show will take place on 19-20 September from 10AM-6PM at Binkul Mandap. On the opening day there will be a treasure hunt with a Rs 10,000 first prize. Entry costs Rs 200.

**Winning scratch**

Customers buying Dearhill Shoes during the Dasain season will receive scratch cards offering the chance to win prizes of Rs 50 to Rs 50,000 and discounts of five to ten per cent. Customers can also send in photographs of themselves wearing Dearhill shoes to be entered in a competition to win a motorcycle and become a brand ambassador for the shoes.

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**NEW PRODUCTS**

**WHISKY:** Himalayan Distillery has introduced 180ml bottles of 12-year-old Spey Livet Premium Rare Whisky, imported from Scotland. The brand is already available in 750ml bottles.

**WINE:** Akhi trading is now distributing wine from Angove’s, one of Australia’s longest established wineries. This is the first time that Angove’s Red Belly Black label has been available in Nepal. The wine is available in both screw-top and cork-sealed versions in more than 250 outlets.

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**Policing sleaze**

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"Flood-control, irrigation, hydropower"

India’s union water resources minister Saif Uddin Soz speaks to Navin Singh Khadka BBC Nepal Service, 12 September

Does the Indian government have any long term plans to deal with the Kosi problem?

We are in touch with the government of Nepal on the Kosi. I will have a one to one meeting with Nepal’s water resources minister during Prime Minister Prachanda’s visit. We are pretty conscious of our duty and we have to correct the situation. It is not that the neglect is inbuilt into the system. Things were very bad in Nepal, we have a treaty with the country and there is no violation of the treaty. We have been waiting for the proper opportunity to settle and sort things out.

But the central government of India and the Bihar state government are engaged in a blame game.

It’s not a blame game. The MP of that area, Mrs Ranjan got conscious of this thing. I told her these things are not supposed to be discussed over the phone. I asked her to give me something in writing, and it was at that moment I wrote a letter to the Bihar chief minister Nitesh Kumar. So instead of the chief minister alerting me, I was doing the work for him. Sometimes it happens because state governments hands are full and floods come all of a sudden. Water is a state subject, it’s not that I can go and interfere and take decisions in Bihar.

Does the Indian central government think that Nepal did not cooperate to prevent this disaster?

No, I would not say that. See, Nepal’s prime minister is coming. They are very serious about holding talks on Kosi with us. We have a comfortable relation, there is no worry and we shall sort out things. It’s a situation that can be dealt with after the monsoon records. In the short term we have done whatever we can. The Ganga Commission’s chairman and his team is closely in touch with the Bihar government.

There have been reports that Bihar authorities have recommended the central government to push for high dams in Nepal as long-term measure.

High dams, embankments—there will be a review of the whole thing except the treaty. The treaty is in shape. But on the things that need...
You think the Kosi treaty need not be reviewed, but Nepali leaders are saying otherwise. No, no, Nepal is an independent country. I don't think that treaty needs a fundamental review. But we will have good exchange of ideas. We are not worried about the issues they would raise. We shall settle them in a cordial manner.

There is a deep running suspicion among many Nepalis when it comes to India's interest in Nepal's water resources. Do you have any plan to allay that? There were certain situations with the earlier government, largely they were one sided. We had a treaty and we wanted to have a good relation with Nepal all the time but it had a different kind of rule. Now there is a democratic process, it's not only the prime minister or water resources minister, there are so many actors in the field. Some of them have extreme opinions others are moderate. But broadly everybody is for good discussion on this issue.

But what are your priority projects now? Those are matters of detail. There is tremendous advantage to both countries through hydropower generation, irrigation and flood management. We are ready to discuss those aspects, there is no worry. We have already taken decisions and we have to implement them honestly.

What decisions have already been taken? Kosi is in focus this time in particular. Let's see what Nepal wants to discuss with us, I am prepared for that. Our chart of activities is well drawn, there is no difficulty.

What is India’s main interest in Nepal’s water resources? Our main interest is flood control and irrigation. Those are our first and second priority. If we get hydropowerity as a by product, it will be a bonus for us.
The humble pizza may have started life in Napoli but it has ended up in Nepal. The pizzerias of Kathmandu have heated up their ovens and we’re giving you a sneak peek at the amazing toppings coming out of ovens all over town.

**Hyatt Regency, Boudha**

Mondays and Tuesdays are pizza and pasta days at the Hyatt. Covered with organic herbs and vegetables straight from the hotel’s garden, each slice is loaded with flavour. For those who didn’t know that a pizza could be folded up like a pie, the calzone is a unique experience. The smoked chicken pizza is also a speciality.

*Price range: Rs 600-800*

**Roadhouse Café, Thamel, Pulchok and Bhatbhateni**

One of the first places to offer pizzas baked in wood-fired ovens, Roadhouse Café has traditional ovens that add a rich, smoky taste to the pizza. The quiet and quaint Nepaliness of the restaurants make them popular with both Nepali families and tourists. A major selling point is the speed with which the pizza arrives at your table. Try the grilled vegetable pizza or the four cheese version.

*Price range: Rs 250-415*

**Ciao Ciao, Thamel**

Previously known as Marco Polo restaurant, this place is a bit of Italy in Kathmandu. The crispy, thin-crusted pizza, straight out of a wood-fired oven, is simply delicious. Ciao Ciao’s 13 varieties of pizza include not just the regulars, but a few less common varieties like the pizza capricciosa, an eccentric mix of mozzarella cheese, eggs, ham, olives and artichokes.

*Price range: Rs 120-295*
Fire and Ice, Thamel
Fire and Ice offers genuine Napolitana pizza. Established in 1995, this was one of the first pizzerias in Kathmandu. So good is its reputation that the name is now synonymous with pizza, and the tables are usually packed. There are dozens of pizzas to choose from, but we recommend the paesane—a combination of mozzarella, spinach, courgette and bacon.

Price range: Rs 260-370

Himalayan Java, Thamel
While it may be better known as Kathmandu’s most happening coffee place, Java’s 12-inch Italian-style thin-crust pizzas are quite something too. Among the varieties on offer is the local topping of chicken sathiko pizza.

Price range: Rs 225-455

Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza
One of Kathmandu’s most famous Italian restaurants, Alfresco wouldn’t be complete without its rich pizzas. With more than 20 years in the business, Alfresco long ago mastered the art. You don’t need to stick to the menu: customers can choose their own toppings and watch the pizza being made in front of them. The chicken tikka topping has a real kick.

Price: Rs 395

New York Pizza, Kupondole
One of the few to offer a home delivery service, New York Pizza specialises in huge thick crust American pizzas which would appeal to those with hearty appetites. There’s even a monster 22-inch version. Customers can choose from a variety of 12 toppings and the bronzed and bubbling results show up in traditional nanglos.

Price range: Rs 180-1,500. Home delivery: Rs 50 extra.

Moksh, Pulchok
The music never stops at Moksh and the fire in the pizza oven rarely goes out either. The Italian-style pizzas are the favoured item on the menu, and Moksh regularly rates the salami pizza best of all. If you’re too lazy to go to them, they will come to you—for a charge.

Price range: Rs 110-450 plus delivery charge.
Toilet trained

B

indeshwar Pathak is immaculately dressed in a Nehru coat, sitting at the table of the executive suite at a Kathmandu hotel. His assistant gives him a glass flask from which he scoops out a grey-brown dust.

“This is dried human excreta,” he says, watching closely if the reporter flinches. “It’s hard not to.” Then he holds out a bottle of clear water, screws open the top and offers it to a visitor to sniff. “This water is from the digester and is full of nutrients, it helps to reduce the amount of garbage which gets dumped each day at the city’s rubbish tip at Sisdole. It only they were more Antal Subedalis in Kathmandu, the capital wouldn’t have a trash problem.

A 2005 study found that 71 per cent of waste produced in Kathmandu Valley was organic and compostable. Paper made up 6.5 per cent, and this could be recycled.

Rabin Man Shrestha, chief at the KMC’s Solid Waste Management Unit says garbage disposal workers can’t afford to sort the rubbish themselves because of lack of space and the huge amount of time required. “But if the garbage is separated at source, the volume of garbage is reduced and more of it can be recycled or composted,” he said.

Rakesh Khadka is a recycling wholesaler who, with many others, works near the municipality’s waste disposal site in Teku. Independent garbage collectors sell him rubbish which he separates out and sells to recyclers of plastic, paper and metal.
trash

City residents are slow to see the benefit of sorting their garbage

metal for a small profit. Dry paper sells for Rs 6 per kg, and Khadka sells 20 tons of trash a month from which he makes Rs 15,000 a month.

An organisation called Himalayan Health Care has been going around quietly for the past 16 years, collecting plastic from road sides and cinema halls. The junk is woven into bins, stools and coasters among a list of over a hundred other products, all of which are exported abroad. Their partner, the Spiral Foundation, has opened a showroom for them in LA and provided publicity through Hollywood big-shots like Steven Spielberg and George Clooney.

Sharad Parajuli, the founder of Himalayan Health Care says, “The returns are reinvested in the three VDC’s in Dhading from which one thousand women are employed.” The profit has paid for the establishment of a hospital in Illam, health posts, skills training, and major surgeries for the locals.

Across the river in Lalitpur, the Women’s Environment Preservation Committee (WEPCO) has been helping to improve waste management for more than a decade, by promoting the ‘3R’ principle (Reduce, Recycle, Reuse), organising door-to-door rubbish collections, building community compost pits, promoting vermiculture and training other women (Garbage in, compost out #6). Largely thanks to the committee, more households in Kupundole now make their own compost and some have started to sort their rubbish before disposing of it.

In the middle of Thamel is a small firm called Jamarko which supplies its handmade, recycled paper products—such as greetings cards and lampshades—to offices and restaurants, among other clients. The labour-intensive process means profits are small, but the owners are optimistic about future export opportunities.

As the city’s population grows, producing ever more waste, the work of individuals like Rakesh Khadka and of organisations like WEPCO and Jamarko will become increasingly important. The Sisdole landfill site is expected to be full within the next six months, and the city authorities will be looking for a new dump.

But Bishnu Thakali, president of WEPCO, says there’s an easier, more profitable alternative: “If it were really to be utilised, there’s a 50 per cent profit in garbage.” Instead of just chucking it all into a hole in the ground, why not use it in innovative ways that not only reduce the burden on the environment but also generate profit? •
Still fighting
The Gurkhas’ legal battle for equal treatment

TOM OWEN-SMITH IN LONDON

he street outside London’s High Court of Justice rang with the sound of bagpipes this week as hundreds of retired Gurkhas and their families gathered to petition for the right to live in the UK. Their protest came at the start of a two-day court hearing in which five ex-Gurkhas and a widow are challenging the British government’s refusal to grant them settlement rights in the country. It follows a string of demonstrations in recent months—the latest part of a campaign stretching back to 2000 when the Gurkhas began agitating for equal rights.

In 2004, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that Gurkhas would be entitled to apply for British citizenship and to settle in the UK after four years’ service (see ‘A Gorkhaliharu’, #391), in line with soldiers in the British Army recruited from other foreign and Commonwealth countries.

However, the decision only applied to soldiers who had retired since 1997, when the Brigade of Gurkhas moved its headquarters from Hong Kong to the UK, following the former colony’s hand-over to China. Those who had retired before 1997 were told they would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In 2005, the then Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced that all Gurkhas who had served before 1997 would be entitled to apply for British citizenship. In the courtroom, the Gurkhas’ lawyer, Edward Fitzgerald, said: “However distant they are from the battlefields on which they fought and risked their lives and shed their blood, all the Gurkhas, past and present, were fighting for this country. This gives them as all equally strong ties to this country, to its life and history.”

The judge, Justice Blake, is expected to reach a decision on the case in the next few weeks. Apart from the six who brought the case to court, his ruling may have implications for several thousand pre-1997 retirees who wish to settle in the UK. Many have been waiting years for settlement rights and are hoping that this time their dreams will be fulfilled.

Santosh Thalang said simply: “We are just asking for equality. That is all.”

Drying up
One side effect of the right to UK citizenship for ex-British Gurkhas and their families has been a drastic fall in remittances in the past two years. Particularly hard hit have been towns like Dharan and Pokhara, where land prices have collapsed and hundreds of houses are for sale.

Since the new terms and conditions came into effect, Gurkha remittances to Nepal have been reduced by 87 per cent. Not only are ex-Gurkhas all opting for citizenship, but they are also investing their savings in Britain as they have no one to send their money back to in Nepal.

On retirement, Gurkha pensions are paid in the UK, not in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dharan as earlier. “The value to Nepal of this UK right to recruit Gurkhas will steadily diminish to zero,” says one former Gurkha officer, “Gurkha recruitment into the British army is now a one way street.”

The new Maoist government has said it wants to ban recruitment of Nepali citizens into the Indian and British armies, calling it “slavery”. The only reason recruitment was still going on was because of the benefits Nepal got from the money Gurkha soldiers and pensioners sent home to their families. If this money dries up, the argument of those who want to stop the recruitment will be bolstered.

If the period of high court decisions in London goes in the favour of those who want citizenship rights to all soldiers, not just those who retired before 1997, up to 20,000 more ex-Gurkhas and their families would move to the UK. If that happens, not only will remittances dry up, but most ex-Gurkha families will also sell their property in Nepal and take their money with them—exacerbating capital flight.

Santosh Thalang said simply: “We are just asking for equality. That is all.”
**Stylish spine**

It isn’t just any other trophy. Made out of crystal and spectacularly cut, the new trophy for SIRC (Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Center) Annual Golf Charity function is like no other design.

The SIRC trophy is the most shapely golf trophy in South Asia,” says SIRC Chairman Kanak Mani Dixit with a touch of humour and hyperbole, “besides helping the spinaly injured and getting some exercise in the greens, the golfers are excited about vying for a trophy as attractive as this.”

The trophy represents a stylised human spine, which is also the logo of the rehabilitation centre. It was shaped in glass by Crystal Galaxy in Dubai.

Suman Sachdev, director of the Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa, who has taken part in golf tournaments in the subcontinent, says: “For sure this is a very innovative golf trophy, because it reflects the purpose behind the tournament. And aesthetically it is extraordinary.”

Sachdev has had time to admire the travelling trophy over the past six years include Tashi Ghale, Eu Kesang Lama.

And aesthetically it is purpose behind the tournament. Some of the others who have enjoyed the trophy over the past six years include Tashi Ghale, Eu Himur Thapa, Tashi Lobzang and Kesang Lama.

SIRC works with spinaly injured patients, most of whom are too poor to afford treatment and rehabilitation. Spinal injuries are also fatal and most patients never fully recover.

Deepak Acharya, golf instructor and Golf Director at Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa, says, “Golfers require sturdy backs and those with spinal injury lose their ability to use their backs, which is why we believe it’s important for this game to contribute to their treatment.”

**Nayantara Gurung Kakshapat**

**Criminal copycats**

Most Nepali singers, composers and writers are ignorant of the country’s copyright law—or if they do know about it, they have long given up seeking its protection.

Musicians are not surprised to hear their own music playing when they walk into a hotel or restaurant. They are resigned to the fact that there’s little they can do to be paid for their creative talent which profits everyone else but them.

“For decades, most musicians in Nepal, however brilliant they are, have died penniless with their families suffering long after they are gone,” says Prakash Sayami, vice president of the Music Royalty Collection Society of Nepal. Most people who should be protected, they walk into a hotel or restaurant. They are resigned to the fact that their rights are never be preserved,” says Alliance director, Suman Sachdev.

And creativity can otherwise originality and creativity can never be preserved,” said Alliance director, Philippe Martin.

On 12 September, Sayami’s society together with Bijay Vidyas & Rock Star organised a concert at Alliance Francaise to promote awareness of copyright law. "It’s important that we promote copyright issues in Nepal, otherwise originality and creativity can never be preserved,” said Alliance director, Philippe Martin.

Sayami said there was a need to set up a lobby group to protect and monitor the commercial use of artists’ work. “It’s not only a financial right, but it’s a moral right that an owner is protected by copyright laws,” he said.

Whether it is a Nepali song being given a Hindi makeover or vice versa, copyright laws are routinely violated and disregarded. In Nepal, most artists blame the government for not doing enough to protect their rights. The problem is not a lack of laws, but a failure to enforce them.

Says Rabin KC: “Copying is a criminal offence and it has to be stopped.” This might be true in a legal sense, but judging by the scores of shops selling pirated material, Nepal has a long way to go.

**Nayantara Gurung Kakshapat**

**Voice and sarangi**

When Barta Sanchana sings, her voice carries a starting note of struggle that stands at odds with her stature and youthfulness. Her voice rarely reach the ground when she sits at the edge of a chair, concentrating on terror her sarangi.

It has been a long way from home for Barta and her sarangi from her little village in Shour. She gives concerts at BICC and the Garden of Dreams, appears on television and toured in Norway and China this year. Barta spent her childhood travelling from one village to another in Bhagpur, singing and playing the sarangi to make a living.

With an absent father, she helped her mother run a household of five siblings. At age nine, Barta was spotted at Tumlingtar airport by human rights activist Gopal Siwakoti ‘Chintan’ who paid for her education in Kathmandu. Then, Barta joined the Nepal Music Center where she began formal training in music.

Barta has fans in Europe,” says Shyam Nepali, a popular Sarangi player and one of Barta’s gurus at Nepal Music Center. Barta is now preparing to enter the next stage in her life. She needs to find a place to live and a means to continue her education. But her exceptional gift resonates, and her quiet strength helps her create and draw on opportunities when they arise. Her genius is apparent to those who pause to listen.

Barta in concert Saturday, 20 September, 5PM, Patan Museum

Tickets Rs 200

**Nayantara Gurung Kakshapat**
ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- **Bridges of Love**, an exhibition of paintings by Toney Monsanto III 26 September, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Sunday-Friday 11AM-8PM, Saturday 12-4PM. 4219048

EVENTS

- **In my country**, a film by John Boorman on 19 September, Lazzimat Gallery Café, 6.30 PM. 4428549
- **ASMAN and Surya Nepal** presents Shubha Mudgal, 19 September, Yak and Yeti, Ticket Rs 2500-3000, 6.45 PM. 5001192
- **A concert by Barta and Kutumba**, an exhibition of paintings by Toney, October-November, Nepal Tourism Board, Auditorium, Bhrikuti Mandap.
- **TGIF** madness package at Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara, Rs 5999. 4439747

MUSIC

- **Poese and Fags** a jazz vocal trio from Holland, Saturday at Patan, 5527078, Sunday at Thamel.4077368. New Orleans Café, 7PM.
- **Some like it hot** every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, 7PM onwards, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarka’s Hotel. 4479488
- **TQIF** with live band EPIC every Friday, 7-10PM, Jazzabelle café. 2114075
- **Happy** cocktail hour, 5.7PM. Ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar.
- **Hy Jazz Club** every Friday from 8.30 PM, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4488800
- **Dance and Cocktails** at Cube Bar, Kamaladi. 4438017
- **Fusion** and **Looco Band** every Friday night, Bhumi Resto Lounge, Lazimat. 4411938
- **Rudra night** fusion and classical Nepali music by Shyam Nepal and friends, every Friday, 7PM at Le Meridien,Gokarna. 4451212
- **Suli** music by Hemanta Rana, every Friday at 7.30 PM at Dhaba Restaurant and Bar, Thapathali.
- **Fusion and Classical Music** by Anil Shahi every Sunday, 6AM-10PM. 4425341

DINING

- **Sunday Jazz Brunch** at Hyatt Regency with performances by Mariana and his band from 12-3.30PM. 4491234
- **Pizza & Pasta** every Monday and Tuesday at Rix Restaurant. Hyatt Regency. 448938
- **Fusion of Maradka Regan’s new menu and Mamrie’s new bar at Dhukama Cafe. 552113
- **Masala**, an Indian restaurant on Jawalakhel, St.Mary’s school road. 4421634
- **Pasta pesto passion at La Dolce Vita, Thamel. 4700812**
- **Steak special** with free Irish coffee at K-tooo! Beer & Absolute Bar. 5521408
- **Retro Brunch Barbeque** with live acoustic music by Sound Chemistry, every Saturday, 12-3PM at LeMiredien, Gokarna. 4451212
- **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with Live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs. 666, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999
- **Socially Responsible coffee** at Himalayan Java, Thamel

A hip new Nepal movie, Sano Sansar is about the youth. In this movie we are introduced to Ravi, an average guy who has just graduated from college and faces the dilemma of not knowing what to do. Like Ravi, Reetu, a not so average girl, also doesn’t know what she wants out of life. Unlike them, Suraj is a confident guy who knows exactly what he wants to do with his life. Manoj (Sarath Sista) wants what every guy wants. All these characters soon find out the sano sansar that they live in and how they are interconnected.

Call 442220 for show timings at Jai Nepal www.jainepal.com

WEEKEND WEATHER

Two extreme-weather events took place in the Valley since our last week update: 84.3 mm of rainfall on the night of 12 September broke the past record of high intensity rain for this month. Then the daytime temperature crossed the 38°C mark on Wednesday with the humidity falling below 90 percent—very unusual for the monsoon season. September’s total of 215 mm so far has already crossed the monthly precipitation quota (187 mm) for Kathmandu and makes up for the shortfall in August. This satellite radar composite for Thursday morning shows a late monsoon circulation in the Bay heading northwest. However, the system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be witnessing a peak in this low-pressure system as per a few models. The satellite radar composite for Thursday morning shows a late monsoon circulation in the Bay heading northwest. However, the system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be witnessing a peak in this low-pressure system as per a few models. The system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be witnessing a peak in this low-pressure system as per a few models. The system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be witnessing a peak in this low-pressure system as per a few models. The system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be witnessing a peak in this low-pressure system as per a few models.
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HAPPENINGS

NICE TO BE BACK: Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal waves to reporters as he arrived back in Kathmandu from his five-day visit to India on a scheduled Nepal Airlines flight from Delhi. Dahal leaves again on Saturday to attend the UN General Assembly.

APOSTLE OF PEACE: Prime Minister Dahal lays a wreath at the memorial for Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi at the start of his visit to India on Monday.

FIRST CLASS: Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and his wife, Sita, en route to New Delhi from Kathmandu on Sunday evening.

HIS OMNISCIENCE: Journalist Rishi Dhamala (in pink shirt) joins the prime minister in disembarking through the ramp at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Sunday.

Nice to be back

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal waves to reporters as he arrives back in Kathmandu from his five-day visit to India on a scheduled flight from Delhi. Dahal leaves again on Saturday to attend the UN General Assembly.

Apostle of peace

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal lays a wreath at the memorial for Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi at the start of his visit to India on Monday.

His omniscience

Journalist Rishi Dhamala (in pink shirt) joins the prime minister in disembarking through the ramp at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Sunday.
Dirty dancing and national security

We start our weekly backside recap with this debriefing on the prime minister’s visit to India.

There was a security alert half-an-hour before Prime Minister Bhandari arrived at the VVIP Departure Complex at Gauchar on Sunday. No, it wasn’t a bomb scare. Alert prime ministerial security had spotted two monkeys frolicking on the runway. A Follow Me van was quickly dispatched to chase away the trespassing primates, which ran back across the domestic apron to Pashupati.

Aside from all the monkeying around, the special NOTAM that banned all takeoffs and landings for one hour while the prime minister prepared for departure gave many present a sense of déjà vu. There were deep bows, bouquets and garlands just like the ones in the royal days, remarked: “Some of these rituals never change.”

However, conspicuous by its absence at Kathmandu airport was the diplomatic corpse which has decided once and for all that it is a complete waste of time to troop off to the airport every time the PM leaves or returns from a foreign visit, which is now becoming quite frequent.

Even as everyone got off the ramp at Indira Gandhi International, it was already clear that the real guest of honour on this trip wasn’t PKD or even the cabinet were being mistaken for a cabinet. Some Indian hacks even made no mistake in identifying Awesome’s coat-tails all the time. Our Sishi Gamala was much in demand even from Indian reporters because of his amazing knack of getting soundbites from Indian leaders. Sitaram Yechury dubbed him Chief Mischief-maker because he could work his way around India’s supertight security.

But Home Minister Bum Dev has been too busy shutting down nude dance bars and cyber cafes to pay much attention to law and order in the Tarai. Comrade Leftist God is certainly dirty dancing and internet porn is more of a threat to national security than the Tarai anarchists. Hey, how come he hasn’t banned Midnight Hot yet?

Not that it had any relation to the official visit, but the very next day after the prime minister left, the charity donation box at the departure lounge of the airport terminal was broken into and an estimated Rs 30,000 stolen. The suspicion has fallen on the police on security duty.

The winner of this week’s New Name contest is Rishav Shrestha who thinks Right Honourable Prime Minister Prachanda should be now called Left Honourable Prime Minister Prachanda.

ass@alpineetimes.com

Wood Craft
Manufacture of Handicraft Furniture

Prime Minister’s visit to India

Australia has become a popular choice for overseas students and the number of Nepalese students here has increased over the past two years. According to the recent estimates published by Australian Education International, the number of overseas students here has gone up to 5696 at the end of 2007. Despite being the 10th largest source country in terms of number of student enrolments, in the this year number of students going to Australia has grown considerably last year. The number of student enrolments in Vocational Education and Training Sector has grown.

With the aim of attracting European tourists by the Australian Government, Nepalese tourists are now given up to 50% off at the airport. The Nepalese tourists who visit Australia from the year 2003, 15% off in 2004, 16% in 2005, 17% in 2006, 18% in 2007, 19% in 2008, 20% in 2009, 21% in 2010, 22% in 2011 and 23% in 2012, 24% in 2013, 25% in 2014 and 26% in 2015.

Prime Minister’s visit to India

Eminence Educational Institute

For more information on Australian Education and Migration please email us at enrolment.ausm@gmail.com or visit our website www.enrolment.com.au.