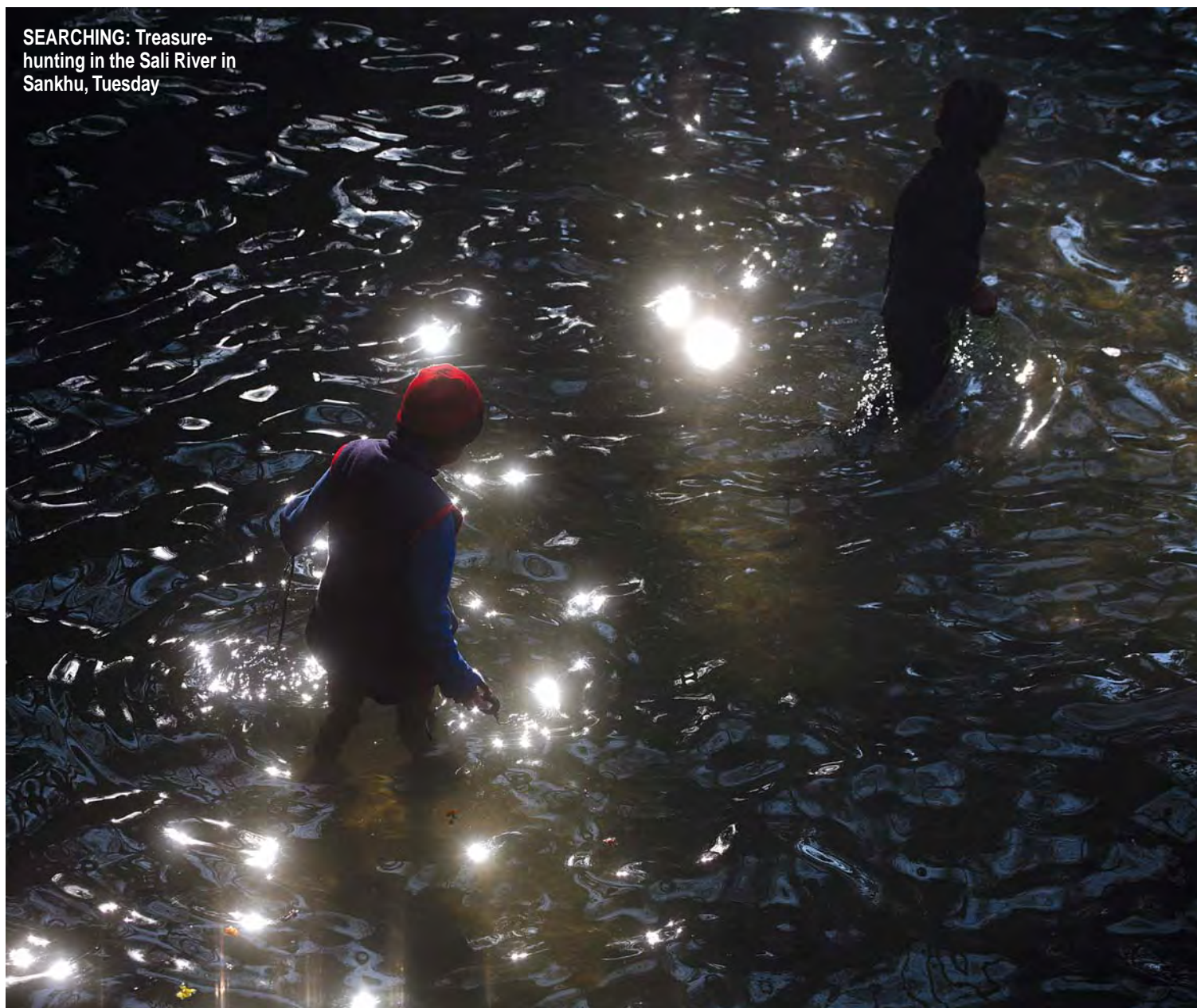


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**SEARCHING:** Treasure-hunting in the Sali River in Sankhu, Tuesday



KIRAN PANDAY

## Waiting for Godot

It's been a fortnight since the High Level Political Mechanism was formed. It has accomplished nothing save stir up controversy and confirm the self-serving nature of our politicians, both included and excluded from the party. With the Maoists' Standing Committee

now sitting down to discuss the way forward – presumably to decide on a united front on the political deadlock and the various unresolved segments of the peace process, including the constitution – we can only watch and wait, get on with our lives, and be thankful there's more to it

than politics.

There's a lot to look out for. The Jaipur Literature Festival, held over five days in the charming Pink City last week, was one such affirmation of life both transcendental and grounded in social realities. If Nepali representation at the festival was limited to observer status, the same can't be said for the ongoing Himalayan Film & Cultural Festival in London.



### Jaipur journey

Literature blooms in the desert state of Rajasthan.

p6-7

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## IN A STATE OF PARANOIA

Pushpa Kamal Dahal has done it again. He is once more blaming the messenger, the 'big media houses', for undermining his party. Usually when a politician repeats an accusation, it reinforces its significance. But with Dahal, the ranting now seems to have the opposite effect. He has cried wolf so often that the remark made during a speech in Sindhuli on Monday went either unreported, or was relegated to the inside pages.

Yet there is a sinister undercurrent here. The Maoists have made no attempt to hide their contempt for the notion of a free press, just as they have for non-violent pluralistic politics. When Dahal delivered his latest tirade against the media, the YCL broke into a chant of "Name them, name them," so they could 'fix' them.

Warming up to his theme, and egged on by the ovations, Dahal went on to accuse the media of

being 'anti-nationalist'. This has always been the Maoist method: accuse everyone critical of their continued use of violence, extortion and intimidation as being "feudal, running dog lackeys of Indian expansionism". The reason Nepal's mainstream media ignored these remarks, according to some editors, was because "he's said it before". But that is precisely why it is unacceptable. Dahal is a former prime minister and the leader of the opposition. Such incitement and xenophobia have no place in the vocabulary of someone who sees himself as a statesman.

Some of Dahal's other remarks in recent days are so out of it they sound downright paranoid. For example, he has publicly stated his belief that both King Birendra and Madan Bhandari were killed by Indian expansionists and that they're after him too. It is difficult to gauge what is worse: that the Chairman is just getting carried away with his own rhetoric and doesn't know what he is saying, or that these speeches are a calculated move to 'scare' the Indians into putting him back in power.

It has been the tradition within the Maoist party that whenever it is threatened by internal contradictions, it

turns to fear-mongering about the threat from the south. In 2005, just as Dahal's internal feud with Baburam Bhattarai was reaching a climax, the Maoists started digging trenches in schools across the country to counter an imminent Indian invasion.

The charitable explanation for all this is that the Maoists want to distract attention from fissures within. There is a strong segment within the Maoist Central Committee that is opposed to the ultra-nationalist flag-waving-at-the-border of the Fourth Phase of the agitation. If the Chairman's intention with these antics is to keep his party together, then good luck.

But the Nepali people have other worries. They fear that the peace process is mired, law and order is getting worse and development is non-existent. It would be better for the government and the opposition to start addressing the real and vital concerns of a long-suffering population.

KD



PLAIN SPEAKING  
Prashant Jha

The Nepal Army chief visits India, the Indian Army chief reciprocates by visiting Nepal. The Indian foreign minister arrives in Kathmandu, the Nepali home minister goes to Delhi with security chiefs. Indian interlocutors express concern about the use of Nepali territory for anti-India activities, ask Nepal to allow sky marshals on Indian aircraft from Kathmandu, and convey to the home minister the need to arrive at an agreement on the extradition treaty.

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to guess what India's primary interest in Nepal is right now. It is security, security, and

security.

The Nepali political class has to understand that they are dealing with a new, assertive, purposeful and focused Indian security establishment. P. Chidambaram's emphasis on a "thorough and radical departure from the present structure" has rung in the changes. In his path-breaking speech to the Intelligence Bureau in December 2009, the Indian home minister talked about how India is the site of all kinds of violence – secessionism, Maoism, religious fanaticism and added, "Never before has the Indian state faced such a formidable challenge." On the ground, the new security architecture has meant more police posts; more police personnel; better intelligence coordination; community policing; and quick response teams at the district level.

# Security sureties

At the top, the practice has been of multiple intelligence agencies reporting to different masters. There have been some changes since the Mumbai attacks. Through the Multi-Agency Centre, there is better coordination of information. There is also a daily meeting under the Home Minister of the National Security Advisor, RAW and Intelligence Bureau chiefs, with bureaucrats keeping track of intelligence reports and follow-up actions.

What Chidambaram is proposing now is the creation of a National Counter Terrorism

facilitated Chidambaram's plans. Chidambaram's drive has had some results. There was no terror attack in 'mainland' India through 2009. Violence in Kashmir and the Northeast is reported to have dipped a bit. And with help from a friendly Bangladesh government, India nabbed the head of ULFA, the Assamese separatist organisation. But none of these problems are resolved, and the Naxal threat has only grown.

Nepali politicians and bureaucrats need to understand where they fit into this Indian focus on security. India wants a

Indian security concerns. The sovereignty argument is shallow given how Nepali politicians lobby with their Indian counterparts and even bureaucrats for a range of favours, from becoming PM to getting one's son admission in a medical college.

India should ponder why despite this kind of leverage and investment, it cannot derive basic concessions. On their part, Nepali politicians should deliver on serious bilateral issues of concern to a neighbour on which we are totally dependent.

The Maoists should internalise this as well. Abusing India will only make them appear more unreliable to people like Chidambaram who come from a culture of corporate ruthlessness. If Prachanda thinks sucking up to Chinese intelligence officials, claiming India killed Madan Bhandari and Birendra, and arguing that any acknowledgement by the present government to Indian concerns is a 'sell-out' will scare India into accepting his supremacy, he is mistaken. It will only make the Indian ruling class more resistant to allowing an 'unreformed' Maoist party have hegemonic rule across the open border.

## The Nepali political class needs to understand where it fits into the renewed Indian focus on security

Centre along the lines of that in post-9/11 US, responsible for intelligence, investigation and operations. It would have the mandate to try to prevent and respond to violence unleashed by any group in India. All intelligence and security agencies would be under its oversight. The Home Ministry itself would deal only with internal security. The exit of M.K. Narayanan as National Security Advisor has

reliable and strong Nepali security structure. It wants an army which it can trust; a police and APF amenable to Indian requests; an intelligence department that keeps track of anti-Indian activities in Nepal and passes on information; and a political regime that is friendly.

Instead of waffling, the government must be more responsive, like it is in the case of China, when it comes to

### ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

#### SHOULD POLITICIANS RETIRE?

Ashutosh Tiwari ('Democracy and democracy', #486) has fallen into the trap of the typical Nepali mentality of regarding politics as a 'jagir'. It isn't. The younger generation politicians are simply too lazy and do not have the political skills, knowledge or experience to oust these old leaders. They are waiting to be anointed or hoping to be in the right place at the right time when the old ones drop dead. That is the problem.

there were a mechanism whereby a politician in Nepal could be sworn in for a maximum of two times as prime minister or president. This would effectively limit the power vested in any one person. There would be less horse-trading among the powers that be and a government would have a better chance of completing its term.

Manohar Budhathoki

● A lot of our problems will be negated by a constitutional limit. I even suggest there should be constitutional limits on internal party structures.

Satyajeet Nepali

● A lot of the present political deadlock would have been avoided if

● Most of the parties are based on

## Online exclusive

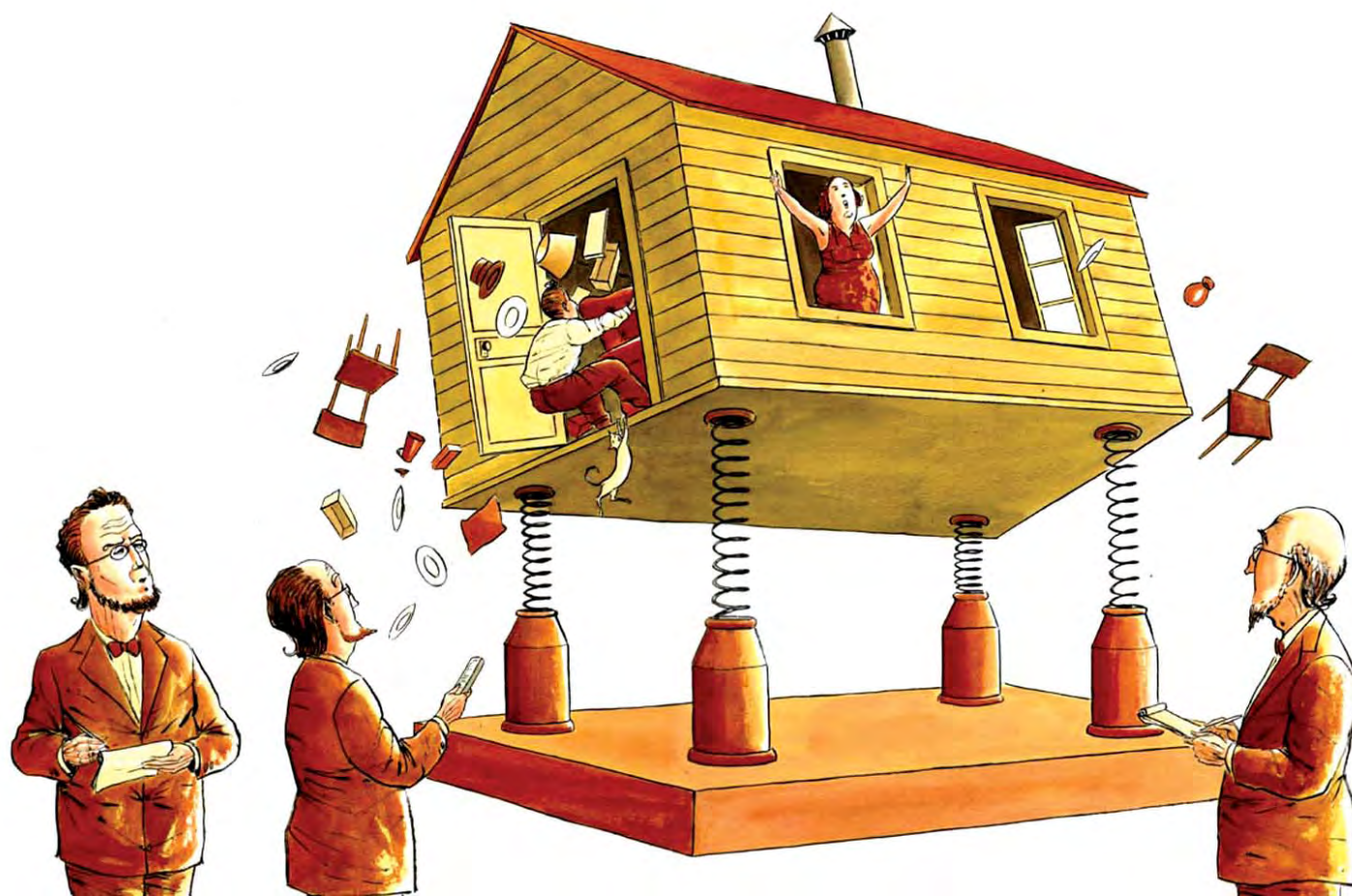
South Asian Games 2010



Continuous updates on Nepal's performance at the 11<sup>th</sup> South Asian Games in Dhaka, Bangladesh.



# Disaster Journalism



**FOURTH ESTATE**  
**C K Lal**

JALESHWAR. Port-au-Prince is a long way from Mahottari. In the central Tarai, foreign countries have only two generic names – Arab and Malaysia. Everyone in West Asia is in *Arabeea*, and all workers in Southeast Asia are Malaysians.

When Nepali television channels began to show scenes of devastation from Haiti last week, few knew where the place was and what it meant for them. Newspapers from Kathmandu too didn't provide much detail beyond the information that Nepali peacekeepers were safe. For much of the Nepali media, Haiti might as well have been on some other planet.

But if a similar tragedy hit Nepal, would news reach Haiti and the rest of the planet? The answer isn't very reassuring.

The Sagarmatha Satellite Earth Station at Thankot is the sole link Kathmandu Valley has with the outside world. Forget an earthquake, even if something on a smaller scale – a fire, a storm, a terrorist attack or sabotage – were to strike this facility, all such communication would come to a halt. Every locality has FM radio stations, but not many would be in a position to reassure panicky populations when (not if) a big earthquake does hit the capital. If land and air routes are blocked, the desperation will be much worse.

The news from Port-au-Prince is

depressing. At the last count, 150,000 bodies have been discovered; over a dozen were those of journalists. It will take at least a month for any newspaper to resume publication. Nevertheless, at least two radio stations are back on air. International assistance to retrieve and repair damaged media equipment has begun to arrive. Survivors are hoping that the Haitian media will keep an eye on donor funds because no other institution will be in a position to do so for quite a

## The media has a role beyond updating body counts when it comes to covering disasters


while. The projected cost of restoration in Haiti is \$10 billion over the next 10 years.

The international press is often quick to descend on the sites of natural or manmade disasters, but apart from a few follow-up stories, most depart as soon as they can. A BBC correspondent once termed this "Oh my god dying babies in the streets" journalism. Such an approach has its uses in the aftermath of

a catastrophe to help jolt the conscience of the comfortable in far-off places. However, it is the local media that has to help the affected population endure the tragedy and get on with life.

Disaster journalism needs to go beyond the what, when, who, why, where and how of reporting and concentrate on the mechanisms of coping. Press coverage has to play a therapeutic role in healing afflicted communities. This is where most mediapersons falter: trained as they are in digging up dirt; they often miss the real stories of victims helping each other, the catharsis of sharing in suffering and the fortitude of people faced with unimaginable tragedies. Holding government and donor agencies to account is important, as is damage assessment and lessons learned. The immediate need is to help people make sense of such tragedies.

Mahatma Gandhi attributed the suffering caused by the devastating Bihar/Nepal earthquake of 1934 to divine chastisement for India's failure to eradicate the morally abhorrent practice of untouchability. He was rebuked for his fatalism, but the Mahatma had merely used a tragedy to convey a social message: the earthquake couldn't have been undone by any scientific explanation.

Perhaps such a rationalisation was better than shifting the guilt on colonialists, as is being done in Haiti. When Nepal's turn comes, the media would be well advised to leave the blame game alone until after the dust settles. 

## THIS WEEK

### Power politics

Maoists threatened an Indian company to halt all works on the 300 MW Upper Karnali Hydropower project on Tuesday, saying it is not in favour of the country. The Maoists were also in the coalition government that awarded the contract to the Indian company but the party's politburo member Khadka Bahadur Bishwokarma said the government had made the decision by hoodwinking the party. "Now the issue is linked with the party's national independence campaign," he said. On the same day, residents of the Indian border town of Jogbani protested against the Maoists for their anti-Indian propaganda.

### Garbage politics

Kathmandu Metropolitan City has started garbage collection in the presence of security personnel after yet another strike by employees of the local bodies. On Tuesday, the Local Development Ministry made a decision to treat garbage collection with the same urgency as medical services. Officials have said anyone who tries to obstruct the collection will be arrested. Employees of local bodies resumed their strike last Thursday, a month after they had returned to work by issuing an ultimatum to the government to meet their demands relating to salary and employment terms. They have threatened to strike indefinitely.

### High alert

Airport officials stepped up security measures at Tribhuvan International Airport after being tipped off about a possible terrorist attack. Indian officials had warned that militants linked with



Lashkar-e-Taiba and al-Qaeda might attempt to hijack Indian planes on India's Republic Day, celebrated on 26 January. The alert warned that Indian aircraft bound to and coming from other South Asian cities were possible targets.

### Kingmakers

Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal turned up at Nepali Congress President Girija Prasad Koirala's residence on Wednesday and pledged full support to the octogenarian leader should he want to be the prime minister of Nepal. *Kantipur* reported that the Maoist leader, who has until now been demanding a national unity government under his party's leadership, requested Koirala to throw his support behind him if Koirala did not want the position. "You can lead the government from your bed," a source quoted Dahal as saying. Maoist politburo member Janardan Sharma denied Dahal had made such an offer, saying the reports were circulated as 'propaganda' to discredit his party.



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**अब सधैका साथी**



# The Sherpa

DUKSANG SHERPA  
in KHUMBU

Even though I am a Sherpa I had never been to Khumbu, the land of my parents. I am 16 years old, but hadn't yet discovered the 'Sherpa' in me.

We flew Yeti Airlines, owned by Ang Tsering Sherpa, to Lukla. Ang Tsering and my father had dreamed together of their future from the high pastures here. I was surprised by Lukla, my father's village. I was expecting a medieval settlement, but Lukla turned out to be a bustling, modern town with a busy airport and the gleaming summit of Karyolung peering down on it.

The trek was for Jeffrey Kottler and his team, who were here on a project to empower Nepali girls. We began in Ghat, where the uncle who named me, Pasang Sherpa, came from. He and my father AD Sherpa accompanied me, as did my cousin Dawa Chiri, an artist lama.

My father, who loved the yaks he tended here when he was my age, was nervous that we didn't know what to do when we encountered yaks. He told me and my sister Heyshe that when you pass yaks, you have to be sure you are on the 'mountain' side of the trail.

At Ghat, my father was to give six scholarships on behalf of his company, Friends In High Places,



A tree's roots are in the earth, but its branches are all over

to help Jeffrey's program. I was stunned by the patience with which the students had waited for us all morning because of our delayed flight. They were all clad in Sherpa dress, and held khatas. There was confusion about whether I was a foreigner or a Sherpa. I felt as confused as they did about my identity.

Jeffrey surprised me by saying that I had to give a short speech. Stage fright. Trembling, thanking my education and being emotional, all at the same time, I said that my experiences so far had been great and that one day I would come back to help the land of my forebears. I got applause, and a thumbs up from my father.

What touched me even more were the elder women saying 'ningjay' ('how affectionate' or 'what love'). Despite living in Kathmandu my whole life, I now felt hardwired into this community. We belonged to each other instantly.

Uncle Pasang had tried to make sure that our journey was comfortable. But all along the

## OUR FRIEND VIDHEA

A friend is someone who allows us the space and freedom to be

KUNAL LAMA

Fun, fashionable, finicky, faithful, forthright, fearless (and fearsome to some) was my friend Vidhea.

Vidhea and I had lots in common. She had studied in St Helen's Convent, where I also started my schooling. She knew most of my Kurseong relatives, who are still awestruck by the memory of her swinging down the cobbled paths of the bustee in high 70s glam, her mini-skirt riding above her leather boots, as scanty as the clouds above Kanchenjunga.

We loved forgotten words such as 'merkin' and the local daily headlines: "Hundreds of Chickens Desiccated by Lightning", or "Crash Course for Air Stewards". We rigorously sorted rupees, by denomination, the condition of the notes and the Kings of Nepal, which always had Yanik rolling his eyes. We considered number 9 magical.

I never tired of listening to Vidhea's stories of her maternal grandfather, an ordinary Nepali who

had become the coal baron of Assam. He had separate villas for his mistresses, a zoo and, for Christmas, used to present his granddaughters with Chanel No. 5. Not yet at an age to appreciate it, they would merrily empty the bottles into the fireplace, the fragrance flirting around them. He also played the jazz and the blues on a hand-wound gramophone, the very songs Vidhea loved and performed so beautifully.

Vidhea once expounded on the word 'friend'. As she put it in her usual measured manner, a friend is "someone who allows us the space and freedom to be, and the most beautiful discovery true friends can make is they can grow separately without growing apart".

Vidhea, you out-drunk, out-smoked and out-smarted us on every occasion. As you lay dying, you showed us when it comes to fighting the only weapons necessary are courage and dignity, laced with wry humour. You once thanked me publicly for being your friend. Likewise. ☺





# in me



OUR HOME: Me and my sister, Heyshe (left) and 12-year-old Lakpa in Thame (above) who juggles going to school and running the family lodge.

trail, I was sad to see children working. It was a feeling deeper than 'sad'. A combination of emotions, guilt for my own pampered life, my clothes and shoes, but also a surprise at seeing how happy and content the children were with whatever little they had.

But soon, it was the scenery that overwhelmed me: the familiar face of Ama Dablam and on leaving Namche, there rose before me Chomolungma, Nuptse

and Lhotse, which my father had climbed. It was in Thame, with a 360-degree view of Khumbu peaks, that I met my new 'boyfriend', 12-year-old Lakpa. He taught me how to play UNO cards under the howling of a chilly wind. The roof of his house had been blown away, and his father was drunk all the time. So Lakpa ran the lodge.

He is in Grade 7, and will have to move down to Khumjung next year to continue high school. Looking at Lakpa and his radiant smile made me happy for him that despite having to juggle school and work he behaved as if he didn't have a care in the world. My life is a thousand times easier, I don't have to work at all, my school is right next to my house. We are both Sherpas and Nepalis, I have so much and he has so little. Yet, he has the gift of independence.

A tree's roots are in the earth, but its branches are all over. I love prayer flags, thankas, khatas, chortens, Lhosar, and Sherpa stew. The visit strengthened my roots a little, and told me that I must move on if only to come back again. 🇳🇵

A Sherpa blessing:  
"May you always walk gently  
With your head amongst the stars  
and your feet firmly on the ground  
And may the gods guide the steps  
you take."

SAPNA THAPA

Having known her for almost a decade, Vidhea was for me a quintessential model of energy, laughter and friendship. I feel blessed to have had this special bond of love and warmth with her. I feel fortunate to have spent many wonderful moments discussing books, music and, most of all, sharing life with her.

Although I had met her regularly on many occasions, our friendship took on a new dimension when we joined forces to plan and organise Women in Concert in early 2002. Over the years, my admiration and respect for this beautiful and amazingly strong woman grew and flourished into a wonderful friendship that I treasure to this day.

Vidhea had an insatiable love for reading. From newspapers to novels, Vidhea had a wide range of literary taste. An exuberant storyteller, her conversations never failed to enrapture many of us. I remember her deep passion for music and singing. From jazz standards to rock and roll, Vidhea chose her songs with her heart and enjoyed singing every one of them.

Vidhea had an almost obsessive compulsive attitude towards work. I watched her doggedly pursue every detailed aspect for order and organisation. She could never tolerate incompetence, always making her distaste bluntly clear to people who failed to deliver, and taking on the task herself. From writing proposals to making expense sheets to setting up appointments for Women in Concert, she toiled away to make each concert a stupendous success year after year.

I would like to remember Vidhea as my friend who laughed with me, sang with me, danced with me and cried with me. I shall never ever forget for even a single moment that she was not just close to my heart but was always, and will be forever, in it. 🌈

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# Celebrating life



**ECONOMIC SENSE**  
**Artha Beed**

Jaipur: After 12 years, this Beed wonders at how little time it takes for transformation to happen. People will pay the equivalent of Rs 1000 in toll fares just to drive through a well-maintained highway. The conclusion is that it's important to let private concessionaires lead road development projects as people will pay for good roads – as the Beed did in driving down to the Jaipur Literature Festival (JLF). Interestingly, one of the festival's sponsors is a company involved in infrastructure construction.

The fifth JLF had a carnival setting, where many writers from different parts of the world jostled with each other for seats at an impressive range of debates and readings. What was most evident was the creative energy in the air. There were good vibes all over.

There are always discussions on how much affluence and economic growth fuel creativity. Perhaps the JLF is a case in point. The plethora of companies, institutions and brands that

supported the initiative demonstrates how small contributions from many players can make such events successful. Among the sponsors were investment banks, which know a good investment when they see one. It is not easy to get hundreds of writers to Jaipur and take care of them for five days!

JLF also demonstrated India's power in the emerging world economic order. Would writers have flocked to India 20 years ago for a literature festival? India is now the market. With 300 million plus English-

productive role it can play. The festival was well covered in the international press too, which means more people will return to the event next year. Even non-sponsoring media groups covered these events. Another lesson for Nepal. Here, media houses have this peculiar habit of not covering events sponsored by rival media houses, such as what happened during the Capital Market Expo. It is time to grow up and work towards collective promotion of events of interest to the public.

Another other big leap India has taken is that events like JLF are now managed very professionally by companies set up for the purpose. The coordination and preparation of the festival, which included over 100 planning sessions, was impressive. This is another lesson for those institutions in Nepal that put on great events, but don't outsource management responsibilities to a specialised firm.

The JLF, which is a must for all art-lovers, will hopefully see more Nepali faces and perhaps even a Nepal-centred event next year. In fact the Beed is toying with the idea of hosting a similar show in Nepal in April 2011. All volunteers are welcome!  [www.arthabeed.com](http://www.arthabeed.com)

## An action packed literature festival

speaking people, you would have to be a fool not to want to be there. Chetan Bhagat's literary skills may have been questioned, but at least he has introduced young Indians to the English novel. Future writers in the region must thank him for making books popular. This is also a big message for aspiring Nepali writers: if one can follow Bhagat's model in the region, you might break some interesting records.

The media's involvement in the event also shows the kind of

## Techno-passports

It's not official yet, but if a proposal discussed between Indian External Affairs Minister SM Krishna and Sujata Koirala comes to fruition, India will supply four million Machine Readable Passports to Nepal at US\$4 apiece, manufactured by India's state-owned Indian Security Printers. If the deal falls apart, then Nepalis may have problems travelling on conventional passports after 2015. See 'Grounded!' (#466).

## Going global



Global Bank opened its 24th branch in Chettrapati last week. It will provide services like business loans, consumer loans, small and medium loans, Letters of Credit, bank guarantees and remittance services. Also, the bank is expected to open new branches in Kupondole, Bhairahawa, Phikkal and New Baneshwor soon.

## Seeing double

Nabil Bank formally inaugurated two new branches in Satdobato and Kuleswor on

22<sup>nd</sup> January. Being the nation's first joint venture bank, it believes in breaking new ground and setting new trends in the Nepali market. The bank now has 15 branches in the Valley and 37 points of representation across the nation.

## e-pay

F1Soft International launched eSewa.com.np, Nepal's first online payment gateway. It claims to provide an easy and secured online payment system that will cover instant fund transfers to and from bank accounts. Laxmi Bank will be the first bank to make eSewa accessible to its customers.

## Traffic gifts



Hansraj Hulaschand and Company, the sole authorised distributor of Bajaj two-wheelers in Nepal, donated a Pulsar 180cc motorcycle to the regional traffic police office in Narayanghat last week. The company had previously gifted the Kathmandu Metropolitan Traffic Police Office six Pulsar motorcycles for use by its Quick Response Team.

# Coffee Culture

"What you do is not important, how you do it is important."

FOO CHEE CHANG



This statement by Gagan Pradhan, founder and owner of Himalayan Java, embodies his business philosophy and his can-do attitude to running his specialty coffee company, Himalayan Java.

Himalayan Java was established in the year 2000 and was initially located at Heritage Plaza in Kamaladi, a commercial complex that Pradhan had hoped would be able to sustain the business. This proved not to be the case as the coffee house floundered in its early days.

Pradhan attributed this to the persistence of a 'tea-drinking culture' in Nepal. Even when people did drink coffee, it was the instant variety that was much more affordable than specialty coffee. So Pradhan acted quickly to shift the coffee house, then only three months old, to its current location in Thamel. It proved to be a stroke of genius.

Snap judgments like these have characterised Pradhan's approach to his career. After completing his Bachelors in Hospitality Management at William Bleu International Hotel Management School in Sydney, Australia, he worked at a prominent five-star hotel in Nepal for a mere eight days before deciding to quit.

"End of the day, if you're not even satisfied with the job you're doing, you shouldn't be doing it," he explains. Looking for a business venture, he did a market survey and found that the city had all food and beverage operations covered...except a specialty coffee house.



FOO CHEE CHANG


Pradhan's love affair with coffee began while he was a student in Australia. He fondly recalled his frequent visits to small, independent coffee shops, which would prove to be the model and the inspiration for Himalayan Java – great coffee enjoyed in an equally great setting.

Despite Himalayan Java's humble beginnings, it's hardly just a coffee shop today. It's a 'coffee institution' in Nepal. Other than the fact that it only uses coffee grown in Nepal, the organisation is also involved in bringing in high-quality machines such as roasters, grinders, espresso machines and commercial urns through Mocca Trading, an arm of the company that also exports Nepali coffee to other countries.

At home, Himalayan Java has helped other cafés find their feet. From location scouting to hiring and training the right people, the company is keen on developing the local specialty coffee scene. Two examples of coffee houses that have benefited from their support are Coffee Express and Magic Beans.

Other than creating new employment opportunities and having more control over coffee quality, Himalayan Java hopes to increase the comparatively minuscule local output of 300 tonnes annually, and the 20 tonnes that they are currently able to buy and export to countries such as the United States and in Europe. The company is looking into growing its own coffee here, namely the Arabica variety that would thrive in Nepali conditions.

Himalayan Java has been recognised as a member of the Specialty Coffee Association of America and only uses coffee certified as organic by the United States Department of Agriculture. The company is now ready to take on competition from world-famous brands such as Starbucks and Gloria Jeans.

But Pradhan welcomes such challenges. "Customers will have a way to compare different coffees and decide which is best," he says. "Anything can come, I can still compete." 





PICS: RABI THAPA

# Jaipur journey

RABI THAPA

## Day 1: The road

As the Jaipur Literature Festival swung into action, I woke in the plush confines of a five-star hotel in Kathmandu, raring to go after a forced layover in my own city. I hoped another day wouldn't be sacrificed to the whims of the Delhi's Fog God and my prayers were answered, but it was a long day on the road by plane, taxi, bus and autorickshaw. The only satisfaction I derived from it was when I crawled into bed at 2.30am at the Arya Niwas Hotel in Jaipur.

## Day 2: The God of the Road

"Complete chaos", declared my friends when I roused them tousled-haired in the morning. "Many of the speakers weren't even there yet, and they had to improvise." "Wole Soyinka?" "No, not yet." Somewhat mollified at not having missed the Nobel laureate, I rickshawed down to Diggi Palace Hotel.

Car after car streamed through the narrow gates to disgorge shimmering visions of the literati exchanging kisses, handwaves, oohs and aahs. It was packed, not least in the ornate Durbar Hall (above), where the elite got the chance to skin their knees at a session on 'Public conscience'. Here, Dalit writer Kancha Ilaiah chastised them, and insisted Brahmins would be better off naked to demonstrate their guilt, as Hinduism was "a form of spiritual fascism".

At Wole Soyinka's noon reading, he chanted in a sonorous bass excerpts from his book *The Road* and his play *Death and the King's Horseman*. To Soyinka, Nigeria and India are both ruled by Ogun, the God of the Road, spiritually ("The road to heaven is long") and mechanically ("Driver, please take care"). He also had words for the road ahead

that Nepal could think on. Commenting on South Africa's process of truth and reconciliation, Soyinka (right) said that forgiveness is all very well, but restitution might be needed to deter those most versed in impunity.

The post-lunch session on 'Can the Internet save books?', alas, fell far short of its premise. Almost wholly due to moderator (and TV personality) Barkha Dutt's constant interjections, antagonistic remarks and ill-informed generalisations, the debate perfectly encapsulated her own absurdly unironic lament that literature and the long narrative form were suffering because of today's "short attention spans". As the debate morphed into 'Will the Internet doom good writing?', I found myself watching the squirrels behind the stage. Short attention span, you might say.

## Day 3: Indian queues, media scrums and Viking colonies

The festival doesn't mind celebrity. In the morning, Hanif Kureishi blocked his way through 'Migrant words' with statements such as "I'm offended to be in this session, the only migrating I ever did was 20km within London", and I almost felt for the audience. Only it was clear they were thoroughly enjoying every grouchy utterance. Out in the pleasant Jaipur sun, I watched a scrum of schoolgirls and journalists jostle around actor Om Puri and Chetan Bhagat, the bestselling author.

'Wanderlust' featured travelogue as comic relief, epitomised by Geoff Dyer's recounting of his futile yet perfectly understandable frustration with (the lack of) a queue at an Indian ATM. Isabel Hilton's measured, lyrical description of climate change in Greenland was in stark contrast.

Later, William Dalrymple conducted a reading to hypnotic Baul music of an India



## Literature blossomed in the desert state of Rajasthan last week

hidden enough to be exotic even to Indians. Here were impoverished Dalit workers scrabbling for a living nine months of the year, transformed into gods who possessed them come festival time. Here were Devdasis, who have sex with so-called devotees in some semblance of a divine union, falling prey to AIDS, one by one. Dalrymple goes places most adherents of India Shining care not to acknowledge.

## Day 4: Reaching out to heaven

Roberto Calasso, the Italian mythologist, was simply outstanding as he recounted a conversation between the sage Yajñavalkya and King Janaka (from the *Shatapatha Brahmanas*). The sage demands of the king,

"When you are free from this world, where will you go?" Janaka is speechless. "I do not know," he says, betraying the Vedic obsession – Moksh, but where to?

In the evening was an inspiring session on the late Urdu poet Faiz Ahmed Faiz, whose shayaris and ghazals inspired Pakistanis through difficult times, even through the four years of his imprisonment. We were treated to Pakistani novelist Ali Sethi's heartfelt rendering of two of Faiz's ghazals. Poetry for social justice, but poetry, too, for beauty. "Everything he wrote about," declared lyricist Javed Akhtar, sitting alongside Shabana Azmi, "became beautiful. Even jail."

## Day 5: A book or a cup of coffee?

On Monday, the festival attendance that had started with thousands had thinned considerably. But the crowds were back for the afternoon's 'Publishing in the next decade'. Shobhaa De was conspicuous in her absence. "She's probably gone shopping," sneered a panelist, and the tone continued when they began to discuss the equally famous Chetan Bhagat. "Is it even literature?"

The discussion revolved around *Tehelka's* rather surprising poll that suggested the Indian reading public is largely male, reluctant to spend on books, and drawn more to bestsellers than 'real' literature. The poll was dismissed by the panelists, but there were other problems. One publisher lamented the lack of effort by retailers to promote mid-list books without awards or celebrity authors to push them. But the reading public, too, had to be willing to pay more for intellectual property. And this property had to be valued appropriately. If cronyism meant a true critical culture was suppressed, then what would this mean for the reading culture? The good news, they all agreed, was the proliferation of small publishers willing to take risks.

How does this reflect on Nepal, where most publishers are little more than retailing houses with little respect for intellectual property? There's one way to test the waters. Watch out for the Kathmandu Literature Festival, 2011.

Read the full blog on [www.nepalitimes.com](http://www.nepalitimes.com)



Shakespeare's *Othello: The Moor of Venice* is a tale of passion. Passion for love. Passion for victory. And poisonously passionate jealousy. Adapting *Othello* for a Nepali audience is no less ambitious because of our penchant for restraint, tolerance and getting by.

For his efforts, director Eelum Dixit should get several gold stars. His *Othello: The Sen of Nepal* opens in Rato Bangala's Kamal Mani Theatre next Friday with an incredibly young cast selected by his equally young theatre company, Nepal Shakes.

Dixit's *Othello* is set in Malla Nepal and Nuwakot, during Prithvi Narayan Shah's unsuccessful first attack on the latter in 1744 AD. Hailing from Palpa, Othello is an outsider in the Malla kingdom, just like Shakespeare's North African Moor was in Venice.

Othello is a military hero, and here, played by Abiral Pant, is a towering figure. But he slouches forward just a little too much, as if in expectation of impending doom, perhaps wanting to protect his



Eelum Dixit's directorial debut is a triumph of youth in theatre

# Othello, Sen of Nepal

Desdemona, who he loves like a raging fire.

Desdemona is the soft-spoken lover of Othello and his victim when the 'green-eyed monster' takes over. She is also the heroine standing against her father and his courtiers to defend her marriage to Othello in a society plagued by prejudice. She

accompanies him to the battlefield where she meets a sad, haunting death, smothered by the man to whom she has pledged life-long loyalty and fidelity.

The master of this show, and the star of the Dixit adaptation, is Iago, played by Ashraya Dixit. "Iago is the perfect villain," says Mita Hosali, the play's producer.

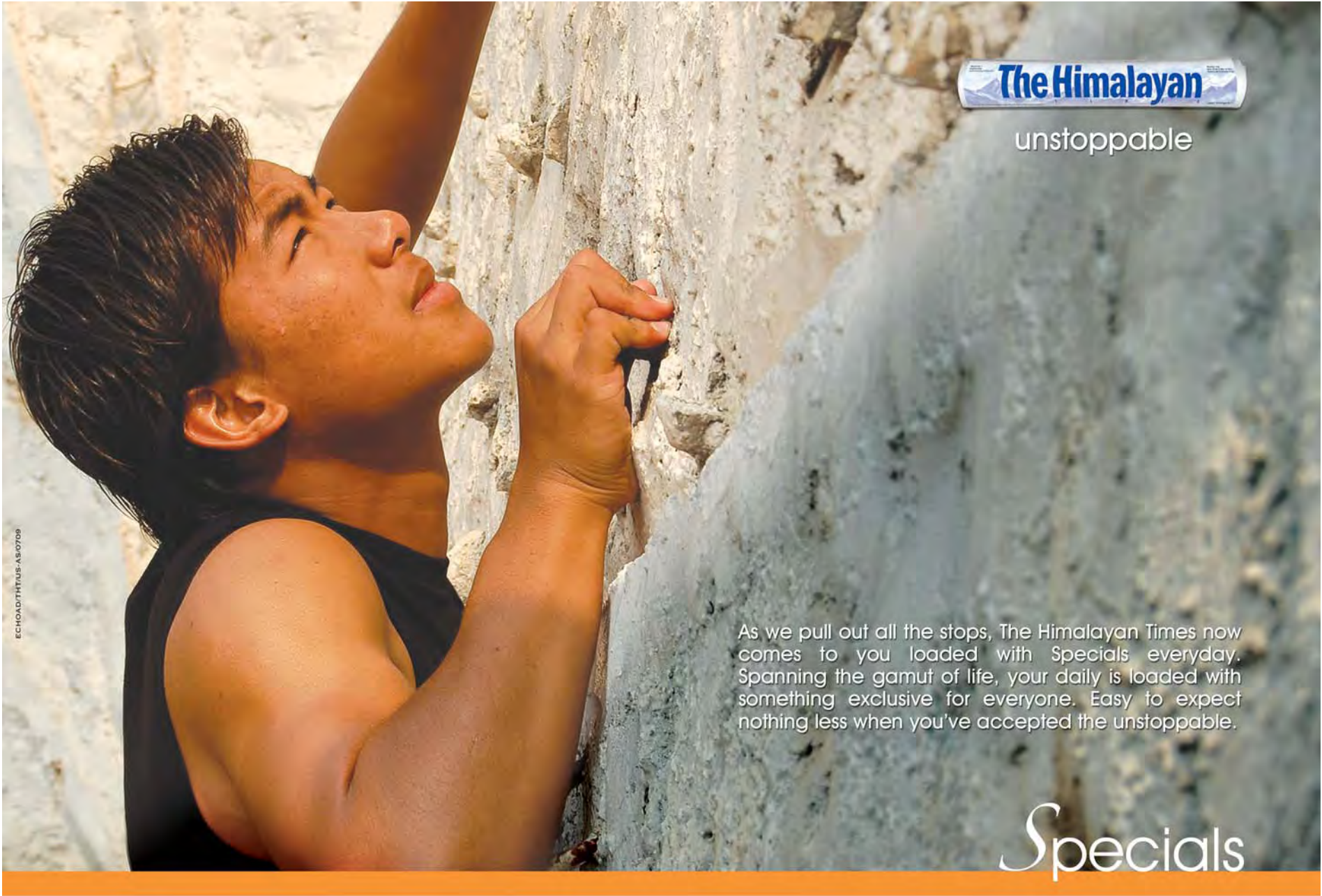
Iago hisses through his teeth and twirls his fingers in the air as if directing the venomous thoughts circulating in his head while plotting to destroy Othello and Desdemona.


Othello is also a victim, of Iago's manipulations and lies. He goes to Iago seeking evidence of his wife's infidelity and Iago



hands him lieutenant Cassio, whose recent promotion incurs Iago's envy. But mainly, Othello is a victim of his own ill judgment and insecurities. They turn him from a valiant war hero into a murderer.

For director Dixit, who recently graduated from college, *Othello* is a formidable first act. His hero needs to crank up his voice and stand up straight. Desdemona can sometimes sound a bit whiny. But considering the whole cast has very little prior theatre experience, they have come a pretty long way over the last six weeks. And with a week to go, they could definitely up their game. It would be worth attending the show just to inspire Dixit to work on a second such endeavour.





unstoppable

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Specials

- **Sunday** - Shopping Plus - info, bargains, discounts, destinations
- **Tuesday** - Health Times ; Medical Board - Nepal's best doctors respond to queries ; Wheels - everything automobile
- **Wednesday** - Campus Plus - collegiate life ; Appointments - careers and jobs
- **Monday** - Hi Tech Plus - technology and gadgets
- **Thursday** - School Times - everything kids should know
- **Friday** - Green - environment matters
- **Saturday** - Property Plus - weekend two pager focusing on real estate



# Kurchi Dasgupta's *The Mahabharata: An Impression*

Ever since the Mahabharata was composed, many have attempted to visually recreate the 100,000 lines of this epic – some of the works directly representational, others more abstract. Kurchi Dasgupta's *The Mahabharata: An Impression*, falls clearly into the latter category. Her exhibition was inaugurated by Indian Ambassador Rakesh Sood at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited, last Saturday.

With a bold colour palette and use of forms, Dasgupta has managed to render scenes from *The Mahabharata* in a highly conceptual and contemporary manner. The use of mixed media also demonstrates her fluency in various techniques – with the results as multi-layered and intriguing as they are personal.

Motifs such as the braid, representing the lives of the women who hold the narrative together, and depictions of humans as tiny silhouettes, perhaps telling of their uniformity and their insignificance in the greater scheme of things, tie the series together.

Speaking at the inauguration, Dasgupta drew a parallel between the circumstances in *The Mahabharata* and the “here and now of Nepal”, expressing her hopes of how “stupefying chaos may at times progress into unity and peace.”

*The Mahabharata: An Impression* is on display at Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited, till 13 February 2010.  
[www.siddharthaartgallery.com](http://www.siddharthaartgallery.com)



AHMAD ISKANDAR

## More than mountains



The Himalaya are the world's mightiest mountain range, and form the backbone of Asia. Many cultures meet here and a huge diversity of people make a living on the mountains' slopes and in their valleys. The Himalaya Film & Cultural Festival runs from 28 January to 12 February in various venues across London. It is the first festival in the UK to bring together film, music, art and photography from Afghanistan, Bhutan, Burma, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Tibet.

Taran Wilkhu, Director of Projects, explains the rationale behind this celebration of mountain life: “People in the UK have heard of the Himalaya

### A Himalayan festival in London is a chance for Nepalis there to get closer to home, and their neighbours

but a lot of the region's coverage is based on a few well-worn stories like Mount Everest and the Gurkhas...the Himalaya are much more diverse than that. With large communities from Afghanistan, Kashmir, Nepal and other parts of the Himalaya living in the UK, we wanted to raise awareness of life and culture in the region beyond the usual stereotypes.”

Nepalis in London will get the opportunity to sample rich and varied fare from their

homeland too, with the UK premiere of Bhusan Dahal's *Kagbeni* (left), hailed by many as the best Nepali film yet made, on 7 February. There are also fine art exhibitions from Govinda ‘Sah’ Azad and ‘Tene’ Garbuja from Nepal.

For more information, visit [www.himalayafest.org.uk](http://www.himalayafest.org.uk). The Himalaya Festival is not run for profit, and any proceeds will be donated to the Rescue Foundation.

## The Irish are coming

The Irish are known more for green hills rather than making one ‘green with envy’ but a day at Irish Pub in Ananda Bhawan, Lazimpat may well have that effect on you. The whole of the interior is done up in green and marked with the famous shamrock leaf, the

trademark of Ireland. Authenticity is no greenwash here though: even the furniture was imported from Ireland. At Irish Pub, it is all about keeping it true to tradition, and co-owner Lothar Rueck sticks to this principle zealously.

The atmosphere and drinks

are not the only reasons you should visit. Alongside dishes commonly found in most restobars, authentic Irish and German dishes make an appearance, thanks to Rueck's wife Monika. Keep an eye out for Irish favourites such as fish and chips, Irish stew and shepherd's pie.

And what is an Irish pub without song and dance? While their native songs blend nicely into the background, the main musical highlight is the live man (yes, not a band, but a man).



AHMAD ISKANDAR

It's not easy being green, but Irish Pub will warm the cockles of your heart

Solo artist J. Ryan performs weekly on Wednesday and Friday nights, weaving in and out of all genres. Personal song requests are also fair game if you feel like it.

If, for some unfathomable

reason, you just don't want to feel Irish, just gather your buddies and watch the live matches over good food and drinks. There's definitely more than one way to strike that pot of gold at Irish Pub.



EVENTS

- ❖ **The Mahabharata: An Impression**, painting exhibition by Kurchu Dasgupta, 23 Jan, 1pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited.
- ❖ **Let monkeys be allowed to live in the wild and be free**, painting workshop and exhibition at the Prerana Premises, Pulchowk, Lalitpur, 10am to 6pm, 23 January, 55318181, 5524188
- ❖ **The Fragile Valley 2**, watercolour exhibition by the late Suzan Maharjan, till 10 Feb, New Orleans Café, Pulchok



- ❖ **Othello: The Sen of Nepal**, performance by Nepal Shakes from 5-14 Feb, Kamal Mani Theatre, Patan Dhoka. Tickets available at Dhokaima Café (Patan), Chez Carolyn, (Babar Mahal) and Nanglo Bakery (Darbar Marg)
- ❖ **Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre**, Tai Chi 10-11.30am Saturday, Yoga 8.30-9.30am and meditation 5-6pm weekdays, Keshar Mahal Marg, Thamel, 4410402
- ❖ **People After War**, permanent photo exhibition, every day 11am-4pm, Madan Puraskar, Patan Dhoka, for bulk school bookings call 5521393

MUSIC

- ❖ **Celebrating Diversity: A Musical Caravan**, at the Garden of Dreams on 1 Feb and Basantapur Darbar Square on 2 Feb.
- ❖ **JSC Jazz Quartet**, every Saturday 8pm on at Upstairs Jazz Bar, Lazimpat, 9803160719
- ❖ **Chillout Lounge with DJ Miriam**, every Friday at the Bourbon Room, Lal Durbar Marg, 4441703
- ❖ **Saturday African Nite**, with African food and music from 8pm at Jazzabell Café, Jhamsikhel, 2114075
- ❖ **Robin and the New Revolution**, every Tuesday 7pm on at the Bamboo Club, Thamel, 4701547
- ❖ **Live band** every Friday and rooftop bbq everyday at Kausi Kitchen, Darbar Marg, 4227288
- ❖ **Some like it hot**, every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel, 7pm, 4479488

- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar, Thamel, 5-7pm
- ❖ **Nepali Ghajals** at D'Lounge Beijing Duck Restaurant, every Thursday 6.30pm, 4468589
- ❖ **Rudra Night** live fusion music by Shyam Nepali every Friday, 7pm at Gokarna Forest Resort, 4451212
- ❖ **Jazz evening** at Delices de France restaurant every Wednesday, 11am-2pm, 4260326

DINING

- ❖ **Boudha Stupa Restaurant and Café**, for wood-fired pizza and free wi-fi Internet, 012130681
- ❖ **Famous stews of the world**, enjoy famous stews of the world at the Rox Restaurant, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 6.00PM onwards, 4491234/4489362
- ❖ **Wine and cheese**, every Friday & Saturday, 5-8pm, **Strawberry High Tea**, 4.30-6.30pm, The Lounge, Hyatt Regency, 4491234/4489362
- ❖ **Arabian Nights** for Middle Eastern specialities every Friday from 6.30pm, **Oriental Nights**, flavours and specialities of Asia every Wednesday at The Café, 6.30pm, Hyatt Regency, 4491234/4489362
- ❖ **Chez Caroline** for French and Mediterranean cuisine, Babar Mahal Revisited, 4263070
- ❖ **Live continental BBQ Fiesta**, exclusive BBQ Dinner at Splash Bar & Grill, Radisson Hotel, from 6.30-10.30pm everyday
- ❖ **The Corner Bar**, 5-7pm, 3-11pm, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu, 4411818
- ❖ **Lavazza Coffee and Baskin n' Robbins**, at Blue Note Coffee Shop, Lazimpat, 4491234
- ❖ **A cafe's café**, Dhokaima Café, Patan Dhoka, 5522113
- ❖ **Jazzabell Café**, TGIF, 10% discount all day, happy hour 6-8pm, Jhamsikhel, 2114075
- ❖ **Al Fresco**, for homemade pasta, steak and freshwater trout, **Kakori**, for biryanis, curries and kebabs, 7-10.45pm, Soaltee Crown Plaza, 4273999
- ❖ **Teppanyaki** meat items and garlic rice at Le Restaurant, Gairidhara, 4436318
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser Café, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9am-10pm, 4425341
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-La with live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs 999, at the Shambala Garden every Friday 7pm, **Plat Du Jour** at Hotel Shangri-La, Lazimpat, Rs 600, 4412999
- ❖ **Himalayan Rainbow Trout** at Hotel Yak and Yeti, Darbar Marg, 4248999
- ❖ **Tiger for Breakfast**, breakfast everyday at 1905, Kantipath, 4215068
- ❖ **Gokarna Forest Resort** for a variety of sizzlers at Tripti bar, 44512126



KIRAN PANDAY

**BACK HOME:** The body of Krishna Lal Sharma arrives at TIA 18 months after he was killed in a road accident in Saudi Arabia, on Wednesday.



KIRAN PANDAY

**PAYING RESPECTS:** Hindu preacher Dinbandhu Pokhrel pays homage to his late father and the first religious martyr Narayan Prasad Pokhrel during Martyr's Week at the World Hindu Federation on Sunday.



KIRAN PANDAY

**STANDING GROUND:** Students line up in front of the Constituent Assembly on Tuesday demanding peace and security in schools after 10-year-old Santosh Karki was shot dead in Gothatar last week by Maoists.





KIRAN PANDAY

**SAY CHEESE:** Air hostess trainees take pictures during a tour of Tribhuvan International Airport after completing a three-month course at the Air hostess Training Institute in New Baneswor, Wednesday.



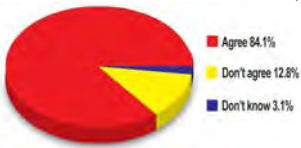
**RED RIBBON:** Indian Ambassador Rakesh Sood cuts a ribbon and presents 16 ambulances and six buses to several organisations to mark India's 61st Republic Day in Lainchaur on Tuesday.



Weekly Internet Poll # 486

Q. Do you agree that Prithvi N Shah is the founding leader of Nepal?

Total votes: 3,794



Agree	84.1%
Don't agree	12.8%
Don't know	3.1%

Weekly Internet Poll # 487. To vote go to: [www.nepaltimes.com](http://www.nepaltimes.com)

Q. Do you agree with the proposed 14-province ethnic federal model?




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**WEEKEND WEATHER**  
by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

There aren't many changes in the weather. In Kathmandu, it is partly cloudy and there is a light chance of rainfall over the weekend. However, conditions are drier than they have been for a while, so make sure to take precautions. A westerly wind has blown dust and smog into Kathmandu, and skies in other parts of Nepal, namely in the Tarai, are clearing up. While daytime temperatures in the Tarai are rising, residents of Dadeldhura should prepare for a short cold spell.



FRI	SAT	SUN
		
19-4	22-5	21-5

New Arrival



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# Envy thy neighbour



**KALAM**  
**Rabi Thapa**

Walking out through Delhi's new airport, all gleaming floors, smartly dressed officials and streamlined procedures (despite the fog and security concerns), you may feel this is, indeed, India Shining. My earliest memory of India as a child flying back from England to Nepal was that of crowds, sticky heat, and flies.

Such lasting impressions are further dispelled as I am smoothly propelled along the motorways to the city centre. In the wintry evening fog, humanity and poverty appear virtually non-existent. Ok, so the pre-paid taxi driver asks me if I mind him making a little extra by putting an extra passenger in the front seat, and the traffic is a little wild (though more regulated than anywhere in Kathmandu) but this *is* India, after all, and I am getting where I am going.

I hop on to a comfortable bus to Jaipur after an hour in a rather run-down station adjacent to Bikaner House, and the illusion resumes. More motorways viewed through reclining seats supplied with bottles of mineral water, a well-timed break at a food court, and I could be anywhere in the west. Has India really moved on, I wonder, half-admiring, half-resentful.

It's only when we turn into the roads leading into the Pink City of Jaipur that I am reminded the Old India hasn't gone away. Everything appears smaller, shabbier. There are figures huddled around fires, dogs, pigs, cows in clover, in garbage, and there are rows of tempos and rickshaws awaiting our arrival. It's the India of memory. But then a one-star hotel that's almost as good as the five-star hotel I was offered when my flight from Kathmandu

was cancelled? I exaggerate, it's true, but at least the Arya Niwas didn't have a cockroach greet me at the door.

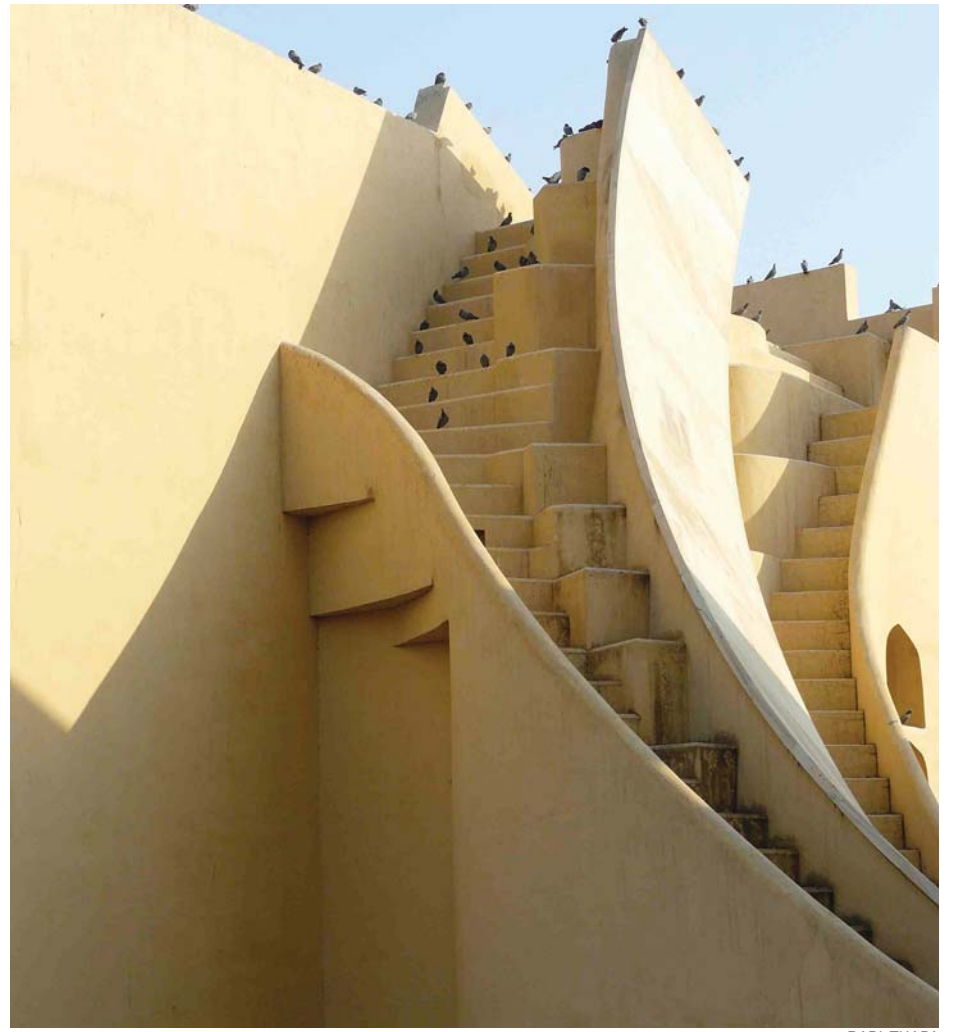
The Jaipur Literature Festival was another revelation. All may not have proceeded as smoothly as envisaged, with cancelled speakers, rearranged schedules and long lines for the food and drinks – but this is common to all festivals across the world, and the organisers juggled the more than 100 sessions and thousands of participants admirably. It was a world-class event.

Jaipur has its fair share of poverty, of course. While Dalit rights and writes were being discussed inside the Durbar Hall of

## India Shining, for all its woes, has more reality than New Nepal

the Diggi Palace Hotel, real-life Dalits sprawled on the urine-stained walks outside the venue. Jaipur has acquired a few fancy malls and brandname stores. But modernity still struggles to overcome conservative mores, with tight-jeaned girls, scarves over their faces, retreating to cavern-like spaces such as the Karan Restaurant to spend quality time with their squeezes.

So the impression just past India's 61<sup>st</sup> Republic Day is one of impressive advances in infrastructure and a burgeoning middle class in the megacities, well-linked to less impressive provincial cities and, one imagines, much less impressive satellite towns and rural backwaters where the old India is very much present. Clearly, if Kathmandu is a destination for families of Indian beggars, the Indian state is slipping somewhat.



RABI THAPA

The difference perhaps is that past glory – in Delhi as much as in the palaces and forts and the remarkable astronomical structures of Jaipur's Jantar Mantar (*pictured*) – has not been seen as a be all and end all in Indian cities. These are good for tourists, and the tourist infrastructure has been progressively attended to. But the Indian state clearly has an eye to the future of its citizens as well, even if one does not agree with the state's attitude towards those within and without its borders who

do not agree with it.

In contrast, successive Nepali governments seem content to bask in the reflected glory of a World Heritage Site they have done nothing to augment save with a cascade of ugly concrete structures almost totally unsupported by services. All we get are a series of singularly idiotic, unsubstantiated visions: Singapore, Switzerland, Naya Nepal. Here, we just want Kathmandu, Nepal, plain and simple, serviced and serviceable. 🇳🇵



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA



SURESH RAJ NEUPANE

## Nepal's hockey team fears a record rout at the South Asian Games

Predictably, Nepal is underprepared. It first practiced in St. Xavier's campus and then went to Nepalganj. India generously allowed them to play on astro-turf in Lucknow for 21 days. Coach Baburam Nepal says the practice was useful, even though it was short. "We played with the Indian team, which boosted our confidence."

Nepali players also got to mingle with Indian players and received good media coverage. "Although India is the leader in hockey, the sport is gradually losing popularity there. But the fact that a country that doesn't even have a field was competing in SAG amazed everyone," Nepal says.

Just before they flew to Bangladesh, Nepali hockey players were seen practicing on the running track at the Dasharath stadium to get used to the feel of a synthetic surface. But they had to wait for athletes to finish up before they could take to the track.

With their first match just hours away, their objective is to concede as few goals as possible, and not to repeat the 1995 debacle. They also hope to perform well against Sri Lanka. But their chances look bleak.

The coach isn't upbeat either: "We got 54 goals when we practised three months, what can we expect from 21 days practice this time?" 🇳🇵

# Damage control

SURESH RAJ NEUPANE

Nepal's national hockey team will compete in the 11<sup>th</sup> South Asian Games in Dhaka, Bangladesh, which begins today. While other participants angle for a medal, our hockey players are thinking: damage control.

The reason is the team's poor performance in the 7<sup>th</sup> SAAF games in 1995, when

it scored one goal and conceded 54 – and here's the kicker – in just four games. Nepal lost 1-10 against Bangladesh, 0-18 against India, 0-22 against Pakistan and 0-4 against Sri Lanka.

Hockey promptly dropped off the radar at the National Sports Council. Since 1995, only the 2009 National Games hosted a hockey tournament. This indifference, however, has only deepened the problems. There isn't a single hockey pitch in Nepal, and forget about astro-turf. India has three

fields in Lucknow alone and there are more than three dozen in Pakistan. Nepal's hockey team did not participate in the 10<sup>th</sup> SAG games in Sri Lanka.

At the 11<sup>th</sup> SAG, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and India will compete in a round robin competition for berths in the final. India and Pakistan, where hockey is the national sport, have the region's best teams. India has won the gold eight times in the Olympics and Pakistan three times.



# 61<sup>st</sup> Republic Day of India



भारतीय राजदूत, काठमाण्डू  
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA  
KATHMANDU



On the occasion of India's Republic Day, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to the Indian community and our friends in Nepal. Sixty-one years ago on this day, India adopted her Constitution and declared herself a "Sovereign Democratic Republic". Respect for human rights, plurality and a democratic ethos constitute the core of the Indian Constitution which the people of India have cherished all these years and have uncompromisingly upheld in all situations and contingencies.

The founding fathers of our nation gave us the Constitution which is a solemn, sublime and secular document, enacted in substantial fulfillment of the aspirations of the people of India. This Supreme Deed of independent India, bears true faith and allegiance to the tryst with its destiny and its journey towards a secular and democratic destination. Our jurists, statesmen and political leaders were the collective architects of this unique achievement, expressing their thoughts on the fundamentals of political supremacy, social philosophy and economic structure and reflecting their vision of an independent India. The great strength of the document they drew up was that it gave India's diversity and complexity a modern political form through a commitment to pluralism in various domains: in the political domain, through democracy; in the cultural domain through federalism; and in the religious domain through secularism.

The Indian economy is on a robust growth trajectory and boasts of a stable annual growth rate, rising foreign exchange reserves, booming markets and a resilient industrial base. An aspiring and rapidly growing middle class ensures that Indian's domestic demand will continue to be the engine of its growth. The Indian Government is committed in its efforts to maintain a healthy growth rate and provide a conducive policy environment to the enterprises, both public and private, to invest and grow their business in the country.

Yet the success of India, is essentially a reflection of the success of its endeavor in the field of Human Resource development. Every year, approximately 19 million students are enrolled in high schools and 10 million students in pre-graduate degree courses across India. Moreover, 2.1 million graduates and 0.3 million post-graduates pass out of India's non-engineering colleges. India's rise as a global player and power is based on harnessing the strengths and qualities of the intellectual capacity of its people.

The growth in India can be the engine of growth in the entire region. India's booming economy, world class institutions and its expanding market are an opportunity for the people of South Asia. It especially offers tremendous prospects to the friendly people of Nepal who share a special, civilizational and fraternal relationship with India. The success of the people's movement has presented Nepal with a historical opportunity to draft a new constitution, a constitution that is best suited to the needs and aspirations of people of Nepal and to embark upon a path of democracy, peace and prosperity.

India remains steadfast in its commitment to extend assistance for Nepal's economic development and institutionalization of democracy. India's support continues to be in accordance with the wishes and priorities of the people and Government of Nepal. India-Nepal Cooperation stands to be further strengthened with the ushering in of a new era of hope and peace in Nepal.

Jai Hind.

*Rakesh Sood*

Rakesh Sood

26 January, 2010

## NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS

Nobel Prize winners from India include Venkatraman Ramakrishnan (with Thomas A Steitz & Ada E Yonath) for their pioneering work on the ribosomes (2009); Dr. Rajendra Kumar Pachauri, Chairman, UNIPCC (with Al Gore) for contribution to international Global Warming Awareness (2007); Prof. Amartya Kumar Sen for Welfare Economics (1998); Dr. Subramaniam Chandrasekhar, for his work on stars and their evolution (1983); Mother Teresa, for dedicating her life for helping the poor (1979); Dr. Hargobind Khorana, for his contribution to medicine and physiology (1968); Sir C.V. Raman, for 'Raman Effect' (1930); and Mr. Rabindranath Tagore, for 'Gitanjali' (1913).



## OSCAR AWARD WINNERS

Oscar Award winners from India include A. R. Rahman [Best Score and Best Original Song (music)] for Slumdog Millionaire (2008); A. R. Rahman & Gulzar (Best Song) for Slumdog Millionaire (2008); Russell Pookutty [Best Sound Mixing (with Ian Tapp and Richard Pryke)] for Slumdog Millionaire (2008); Satyajit Ray received an honorary Academy Award (1991); and Bhanu Athaiya for Best Costume Design (with John Mollo) for Gandhi (1982).



## BOOKER PRIZE WINNERS

Indian Booker Prize Winners include Mr. Arvind Adiga for 'The White Tiger' (2008); Ms. Kiran Desai for 'Inheritance of loss' (2006); and Ms. Arundhati Roy for 'The God of Small Things' (1997).



## MISS WORLD & MISS UNIVERSE WINNERS

India is one of two countries (other being Australia in 1972) to have won the Miss Universe crown, the Miss World crown, and the Miss Asia Pacific crown in the same year [Lara Dutta: Miss Universe 2000; Priyanka Chopra: Miss World 2000; Dia Mirza: Miss Asia Pacific 2000]. India also holds the highest number of Miss World winners, only to be tied with Venezuela.





# All-round development with India's Cooperation:

India-Nepal economic cooperation was launched in 1951 with the objective to supplement the efforts of the Government of Nepal (GoN) in Nepal's national development. Government of India (GoI) is providing technical and financial assistance for multi-sectoral development of Nepal:



## Education

### School/College/Library buildings:

GoI focuses on creation of infrastructure by providing good buildings equipped with furniture, labs, computers etc. for institutions of all levels starting from primary schools to universities. The Small Development Projects (SDP) Programme has so far covered 70 districts by constructing 177 schools at an estimated cost of NRs. 500 crores in recent years.

### Manmohan Memorial Polytechnic:

This is the first polytechnic of its kind in Nepal providing technical education in three engineering streams and several vocational courses. The fully residential institute with the capacity of providing education to 500 students at a time was constructed at a cost of NRs. 50 crores in district Morang and was inaugurated by the Rt. Honourable Prime Minister of Nepal on 2nd November 2009.

### Polytechnic at Hetauda:

GoI has approved the proposal for construction of a polytechnic at Hetauda which will impart mid level technical courses in four engineering field.

## Telecommunications

GoI provided an assistance of NRs. 118 Crores for the laying of 904 Kms Optical Fibre cable along the East-West Highway and setting up of 80 stations of SDH equipment. The fibre optic cable forms the backbone of telecommunication network of Nepal.

## Flood Control and River Training

India has been providing assistance to Nepal for strengthening and extension of embankments along Lalbakeya, Bagmati and Kamla rivers with a total assistance of NRs. 878.2 million. Separately, India has committed assistance of NRs. 109.96 million for river training and flood protection works along Trijuga, Lakhandehi, Sunsari and Kankai rivers.



## Health

**GoI had been providing support in this sector and has helped in the creation of physical infrastructure and training of medical personnel.**

### Bir Hospital, Kathmandu:

Five storied OPD complex of the Bir Hospital was constructed with the GoI assistance in year 1984-85 with the capacity to accommodate 2500 patients. A modern Nuclear Imaging Medicine Centre as well as other equipment for use in the OPD were also provided by GoI making this hospital the premier Health Care Institution in Nepal.

### Trauma Centre at Bir Hospital, Kathmandu:

The Trauma Centre constructed at a cost of NRs. 148 crores is a super specialty hospital and first of its kind in Nepal and the second in South Asia after AIIMS, New Delhi.

### Goitre Control Programme:

GoI has provided assistance of NRs. 43.69 crore till 2007 for the goiter control programme and is further providing NRs. 3.0 crore for the year 2009-10.

### School Eye Health Care Programme:

Since 2007, GoI has been providing assistance to NNJS for holding eye camps in schools and providing 9,000 free optical dispensing device to vision impaired children and 300 low vision dispensing device to children at an annual cost of NRs. 2.67 crores. A mobile eye care van costing NRs. 21.63 lakh has also been provided to NNJS.

### Hospitals and Maternity Centers under SDP:

Several health posts, nursing campuses, maternity centres, eye hospitals, naturopathy hospitals are being constructed under the SDP scheme. Infrastructure of nineteen hospitals is being created with assistance of NRs. 44 crores in 10 districts of Nepal.

### B.P. Koirala Institute of Health Sciences:

BPKIHS at Dharan is the biggest hospital-cum-medical college outside the Kathmandu Valley constructed with GoI assistance of NRs. 192 crores. GoI is also providing medical faculty support to the medical college. The institute is providing MBBS and post graduate degrees in medical sciences.

### Assistance to Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (NNJS) for Cataract and Trachoma surgeries programme:

NNJS holds approximately 400 free Diagnostic Screening & Treatment (DST) and surgery camp for cataract (50 districts) and trachoma (14 districts) with GoI's assistance. More than 4.25 lakh people have been screened in about 1600 camps organized in 51 districts. More than 72,000 patients for cataract and 2,900 patients for trachoma have been cured. GoI has provided assistance of NRs. 11.77 crores (2001- 2009) and NRs. 3.58 crore for the year 2009-10 to NNJS.

## Electrification Projects

GoI has provided assistance of NRs. 15 crores for electrification of 27 villages through NEA grid and NRs. 18 crore for solar electrification of 15 villages. During the visit of External Affairs Minister of India to Nepal in January 2010, MoUs for electrification of five VDCs in five different districts at a cost of NRs. 10 Crores were signed.

## Drinking Water

GoI has provided assistance of NRs. 22 crore for drinking water projects in more than 200 villages in recent years. An ambitious project to provide drinking water facility at the base camp of Mt. Everest in district Solokhumbu is also being undertaken. Separately, GoI also provides required material to the ex-servicemen for constructing hand pumps and taps in 19-20 villages every year.

## Strengthening of Cross-border linkages

GoI has committed to provide assistance for establishment of Integrated Check-Posts at four major points i.e. Birgunj-Raxaul, Nepalgunj-Rupaidiha, Biratnagar-Jogbani, and Kakarbhitta-Panitanki. Both the Governments have decided to start work on the Birgunj-Raxaul Check-Post in the first phase at the estimated cost of NRs. 392 crores.

## Roads and Bridges

GoI has constructed 807 Kms out of the total road length of 1024 Kms of the East-West Highway from Mahendranagar to Mechi. Twenty two bridges were constructed on Kohalpur-Mahakali section of the East West Highway in 2001. Recently, fourteen village and urban roads and two bridges have been constructed costing NRs. 36.23 crores.



# CA business

"Don't you recognise your father?"

Rajdhani, 26 January

राजधानी

**Butwal:** MJF CA member Om Prakash Yadav has assaulted a police constable on duty, Prakash Gupta, for not saluting him.

Gupta was out on assignment and was drinking tea when Yadav appeared out of nowhere, pulled him by his collar and said, "You don't recognise your father, why didn't you salute me?" "He then started kicking me," Gupta told reporters.

Gupta dodged Yadav's kicks, and when he asked who he was, learnt that he was a lawmaker. "When I asked who he was, he replied that he was my father, a CA member and started kicking me again."

"I apologised for not recognising him but he said I should have looked at the badge on his coat and started beating me again," said Gupta.

The incident took place a week ago, but Gupta only went to the press on Monday. Yadav, upon encountering opposition from villagers, admitted his mistake, shook hands with Gupta and left. But he called up SP Chhabilal Joshi and demanded action against Gupta for misbehaving with him.

Joshi responded by making inquiries with Maryadapur police-in-charge Nokha Bahadur Thapa. "I was getting ready to take action against Gupta but it turned out to be something else," Joshi said.



## Logging

Shankar Acharya in Kantipur, 27 January

कान्तिपुर

**Parsa:** A joint patrol of the Nepal Army and forest users confronted Maoist CA member Chanda Devi Ram while she was involved in illegal logging in a national forest. On Monday she had already chopped down a dozen trees by the time the patrol apprehended her.

NA personnel deployed in Parsa Wildlife Reserve and members of local forest user groups arrested Chanda Devi Ram in a forest 800 metres to the east of the reserve. Bhim Bahadur Pakhrin, chairman of the Sunakhari Forest Users Group, said, "She was sitting on a tree that had just been chopped down when we got there. We have taken pictures of her sitting on the log."

When the patrol arrived, some ran away but a few including Ram were detained after security fired warning shots. Pakhrin said Ram arrogantly admitted that she had ordered her accomplices to cut down trees. "We asked her why she was destroying a national forest and her reply was 'I am a CA member'," he said. She also said she needed timber to build her own house. Pakhrin claimed an aide of hers even offered them a bribe to keep the incident secret. The patrol recovered a saw and four axes from the loggers. However, they did not detain her.

Ram now denies her involvement in cutting down trees and claims she never went to the forest on Monday. The officials in the district say they do not know about the incident.



Himal Khabarpatrika, 15-29 January

हिमाल

372 disqualified fighters were released from the Dudhauri cantonment in Sindhuli last month. But only 201 turned up for their Rs 22,000 allowance. The remaining 171 had already left the camp. Even those who were let go ceremonially were unhappy. "We were abandoned by the government, we will now take on the government from outside the cantonment," said Hira Shrestha, a former section vice-commander. Melina Rai left the camp with her 15-month baby and said she felt orphaned on leaving the camp, her home for the last three years.

# Back to the gun

UNMIN's delay in letting the disqualified fighters go was due to the Maoists not being ready, but when it did happen the fighters appeared confused. It isn't clear if they really went home or not, neither UNMIN or the government is monitoring this even though there was a plan for a rehabilitation package and six-month monitoring. Ex-Maoist leader Matrika Yadav has set up his own battalion of 450 fighters in Kathmandu and 150 in Dharan, and many of the disqualified seem to have joined the warlord. Of the 45 fighters from Yadav's force in Ohanusha, 25 are trained fighters from the cantonments and Dhanusha Secretary Dinesh Yadav says 2,000 others are joining his army.

# Identity or prosperity?

Geographer Pitambar Sharma in Nagarik, 24 January

नागरिक

My preference is for the federal provinces to be demarcated along development lines. Dr Harka Gurung also had similar views. Identity is one aspect of it, but equally important is the aspect of prosperity.

Inclusive development leads to prosperity. Even if you set up provinces on the basis of ethnic identity, its citizens will seek prosperity. The ingredients of prosperity are the natural resources and economic potential of each province. You may have identity but there needs to be rice on the plate.

Poorer provinces will be even more dependent on the centre and tensions will increase. Provinces based on the identity of one ethnic group could meet the grievances of one group, but it will leave the others high and dry. We shouldn't have more than

eight provinces. It is not clear whether the CA committee is going to decide on provincial boundaries based on population density or majority.

Majority could mean different clusters of population. In the Tarai, the committee is looking at linguistic majority, designating provinces for groups with one per cent of the population.

But how about the Sherpas, they make up less than one per cent of the population and 20 per cent of them live in Kathmandu, another 20 per cent in Patan or Bhaktapur. Yet we are setting aside a Sherpa homeland from Rolwaling to Kimathangka. Some Tarai towns have larger populations than this. Total population has to be taken into account when demarcating provinces, but there is no scientific basis for the present provincial boundaries. The eastern district of Jhapa is 60 per cent pahadi, but it is in the Madhes.

The One Madhes demand is completely unscientific. The Madhes was never one, and can never be. The Tarai is not contiguous, it is broken in Dang and Chitwan, where the Inner Tarai Tharus live. Dividing the Madhes into two provinces may be a good idea. My proposal is for six provinces and 16 districts, and it was criticised for harking back to King Mahendra. But this would strengthen the economic bonds between the Tarai and Pahad, and make the country's economy stronger. You can't carve out a Madhes to compete with the Pahad and to hold it hostage.

Earlier, I used to also advocate moving the capital. That would be ideal if we were a rich country. But it's going to cost billions and billions of rupees and take 25 years. Better to implement real decentralisation of the economy away from Kathmandu, which should be promoted solely as a political capital with culture and tourism.

Nothing is lost, sweet self,  
Nothing is ever lost.  
The unspoken word is not exhausted but can be heard,  
Music that stains the silence  
Remains -  
Oh, echo is everywhere,  
The unbeckonable bird.



Vidhea Shrestha  
October 17, 1951 – December 17, 2009

Vidhea has left son Yanik and brothers and sisters around the world.

Vidhea's Bardo (49-day puja) will be held at Lama Wangdu's monastery in Tusal, Boudha on February 4, 2010, 8am - 5pm.

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PICS: MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

# “There are caste systems within all ethnic communities”

The final session of Himal Khabarpatrika’s Constitution Yatra took place, fittingly, in the Kathmandu Valley. A lively debate ensued between those in favour of federalism and those who felt the decision to implement federalism was too hasty. But there was a consensus on the pitfalls of ethnic federalism.

## On the constitution-writing process

**Keshar Bahadur Bista (Rastriya Janashakti Party):** Federalism is understood in writing but not reality. While many good things occurred after the historic movement, some decisions were taken hastily, like the decision to write the constitution in two years. In fact, only two countries in the world have completed a constitution through a CA within two years. It usually takes 4-12 years. We have only five months left but the constitution-writing process has just begun. We should seek the help of experts and complete the task. Nehru appointed constitutional expert Ambedkar, who was not a member of the CA, and his team completed the constitution in four years. America, India, Australia took a long time not because their CAs were weak or incapable, but because a lot of deliberation went into constitution-writing. If the constitution is written in hurry, it might cause conflicts in the future.

**Lokesh Dhakal (NC):** Talking about federalism, we wonder how many states Kathmandu will have. Political parties

jumped to federalism without discussing its pros and cons in a country with diversity in ethnicities, languages and geography. But we cannot go back on our commitment. It is unlikely the constitution will be written on time given the pace and current situation of the country.

**Rameshwor Phuyal (UML):** The peace process benefited only the rebels. We are in this situation because political parties weren’t far-sighted after mainstreaming the rebels. The PLA integration process was not completed in the stipulated time. We could not safeguard the achievements of 1950 and 1990 in the past and what if we fail to safeguard the achievements of the Jana Andolan this time?

## On the capital and federalism

**Keshab Man Shakya (Nepa: Rastriya Party):** The voice of federalism was raised to end the colonisation of one caste, language and culture for 240 years. However, federalism is not the solution until cultural discrimination is resolved. With the Shah dynasty gone, Bahun rule has begun. We need federalism in order to avert future conflict.

**Raj Kaji Maharjan (UCPN-M):** The point of federalism is to challenge a feudal unitary state, and resolve ethnic problems, not worsen them. It should be based on culture, geography, economy and population. Giving privilege to a particular

caste will not resolve the problems. Newars are in majority in the capital but it does not mean Bahun, Chhetris and other castes will be banished. It is their right to lead in the region where they are a majority.

**Kaushar Shah (Muslim Association):** The constitution-writing process has been delayed due to the Maoists’ greed for power. As they failed to implement the 12-point agreement, there is no decline in the incidents of murder, violence and intimidation. Federalism should end gender, social, geographical, lingual and cultural discrimination. Muslims are natives of the capital as they have been living here for over 700 years, and their contributions should be acknowledged; what would they do in a Newar state?

**Narayan Koju (NPWP):** Ethnicity should not be the basis for state restructuring. We should make sure that natural resources are distributed evenly. No one caste is dominant everywhere, and not all conflicts are caste based. Last year, Gurungs murdered Gurungs for yarshagumba in Manang.

**Nirmal Pode (Dalit):** Provinces should be based on natural resources, not caste. There are Brahmins, Chhetris, Baishyas and Sudras within the Newar community. How ever much we deny it, caste systems prevail even in this community. What will happen to those who are discriminated within communities in new Nepal?

# “We want part of Kirat province”

Santhi Jirel, UML CA member, Dolakha

## What have you been doing now that CA sessions are off?

I’ve been very busy ever since I became a CA member. I have attended meetings, and feel guilty if I don’t, because people ask, “you’re our representative, what are you doing?” So I go to meetings even if I have nothing to get from them. I’m also busy doing work for my village.

## Has your committee submitted its concept paper?

The Committee for the Protection of Marginalised Communities and Minority Rights submitted its draft in May-June, and CA deliberations on them have been completed.

It’s been said that your committee submitted its draft without even defining ‘marginalised community’. No, that’s not true. During CA deliberations, people said the draft would have been better if it specified which groups fall under religious, ethnic and linguistic groups. This can still be added to the draft.



## The Maoists have unilaterally declared autonomous ethnic provinces. Which province are you from?

First, the Maoists put us in Tamsaling province, then in Sherpa province. According to UML’s plan, I am from Sunkoshi province. But my village properly belongs to a part of Kirat province.

## Why, are Jirals Kirati?

We are of Kirati heritage. Solu, Okhaldunga, Sindhupalchowk, Ramechap, Sunuwar, Jeri, Thami, Surel, Hayu, Bambule, Kirat Vaing, Tulung, Tllungka all have their own distinctive language and culture, so deserve a separate Kirat province.

## But the Maoists have put you in Sherpa province?

No party is allowed to bypass the CA and declare autonomous provinces unilaterally. Only the CA has the right to create provinces.

# “It’s not that we are too lazy to draw up a map of federal states”

Chakra Bahadur Thakuri, NC CA member, Kathmandu 3

What do you do when the CA is adjourned?  
The CA session resumes as soon as it receives draft reports from some thematic committees that have failed to meet the deadline. For now, we take part in parliamentary sessions. Besides, I have to lobby for development in the ministries and concerned authorities.

Why did your party not submit the draft on the new federal structure?  
This is a very sensitive and highly



debated issue. We presented the basis on which the state should be restructured. So you cannot say the NC did not even submit a draft on state restructuring. The policy of our party is that it should be finalised only after rounds of discussions with all stakeholders. It’s not that we are too lazy to draw up a map of federal states.

The biggest party in the CA has already declared federal states, what do you think will happen now?  
By declaring federal states, the Maoists have not only challenged the CA but have sown the seeds of ethnic conflict. The situation will get worse if other parties take decisions on state restructuring in a hurry.

Therefore, NC decided to finalise the issue carefully only after consultation with all stakeholders.

What should be the basis of state restructuring then?  
Geography and natural resources are the most important. The federal system won’t work out if these two are not considered. An appropriate allocation of resources should be made to foster cooperation among the federal states.

Your constituency falls under the federal state of Newars and Tamangs.  
Kanth state, which is an area separate from the neighbouring villages of the capital, has come into focus lately. State restructuring is a very sensitive issue, and should not be declared arbitrarily. Federal units should be created by considering the interrelation between the Himal, hills and Tarai, or else there will be conflict.

Will you still be a CA member if the constitution is not written by 28 May?  
It is not just my future, but the future of the political parties and the country that will be uncertain.



# The Fifth Phase

Makunay went visiting Kishunji the other day and immediately apologised that he couldn't bring along a bottle. The **grand old man** of Nepali politics is on the wagon, but that doesn't seem to have dented his legendary sense of humour. "Now that I have stopped drinking," he quipped, "there is more for the krantikari netas."



The Maoists are now in a dilemma: take the Fourth Phase of their agitation to a logical conclusion and liberate India from the clutches of world imperialism, or announce the Fifth Phase. The Fourth Phase is definitely spinning out of control with **Mau Mau posters of jackboots** trampling on the Indian tricolour released on India's Independence Day, sparking anti-Maoist protests in Jogbani on Tuesday. Which must be why Awesome backpedalled furiously in his 'roti-beti' interview with PTI in which he said how can I be anti-Indian when two of my dotters were married off in India, or words to that effect.



They tried civilian supremacy, they announced ethnic autonomous councils, they set up parallel govts, they threatened

to invade India but nothing seems to work. The Maoists are still no nearer to getting back to power. But wonder what the theme of the Fifth Phase of their agitation will be. Since they tried threatening India and nothing happened, why not threaten China next? Maybe they could reveal that their real goal is to **restore Maoism in China**. That should really spook the living daylights out of the Dengists in Beijing.



China invited the prez on a state visit, and our comrades didn't get the message. They summoned Awesome to Hong Kong to tell him to stop making trouble for everyone and sort things out with India, and he did just the opposite. Now, they've sent invites to **Home Minister Brawl** and **Defence Minister Biddy** to both visit China. Before he flies north, by the way, Bhim is trying to close down all casinos because they have become recruitment centres and the main source of revenue for the Baddies.



His Fierceness is really getting irked by media criticism and has lashed out. He took a swipe the other day at Big Media and 'English speakers' who were trying to prevent him from being PM again. Hmm, wonder if he was alluding to a



certain **Angrezi Ass**.



With the fourth consecutive winter drought, the water levels of Himalayan rivers are falling and this can only mean we'll be shedding more load in February. So those of you who haven't yet got a subscription to Kantipur, hurry because you can win a free inverter. But the subscription campaign ads are a greenwash because an inverter works by depriving others of power when there is electricity. At the rate inverters are flying off the shelves, NEA should be renamed the **All-Nepal Inverter Charging Authority**. And why are we complaining

about power cuts when even oil-rich Venezuela has six hours of load-shedding a day? Parts of Pakistan are powerless 12 hours daily. And the power in Delhi can go off at any time of day, far from the clockwork efficiency of our load-shedding skeds. Doesn't that make you feel much better already?



Just what is with the baddies showing **black flags** to ministers? Aren't they supposed to show **red flags**?

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We heartily congratulate **Mr. Pradeep Kumar Shrestha**, Managing Director of Panchakanya Group, on being nominated as the **Vice President** of the **SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industries** from Nepal for the term 2010-2011.

**Here is wishing you a cordial congratulation.**

The accomplishments that you have earned as an entrepreneur, innovator, visionary, and a role model are remarkable indeed.

Best wishes,



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