

Come Spark you life the Chevy way Hurry!!!



CHEVROLET

Vijay Motors Pvt. Ltd.
Bhagwati Bahal, Naxal, Kathmandu Tel: 4414625, 4433205, 016206621 Fax: 4433294

For Queries SMS "CAR" to 2426

*Conditions apply



ASHUTOSH TIWARI

Pressing concerns

Bald statements of fact are sometimes the only way to get the message across, whether it is to raise awareness about appropriate outlets for physical necessities or for that matter, political necessities. The difficulty lies in distinguishing fact from fiction, and commitment from lies. When all the parties were cajoled into signing a pledge to desist from activities likely to harm tourism during Nepal Tourism Year 2011, probably no one really believed

we would enjoy a strike-free year.

But few might have anticipated the haste with which the Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Tourism Workers Union (ANTWU) subsequently delivered an ultimatum to trekking agencies right in the middle of tourist season. In ordering trekking agencies to stop sending out trekking staff affiliated to the union, ANTWU claims it is merely pressing for implementation of the Travel and Trekking Regulations. But the

FOR NEPALI EYES ONLY: Poster campaign to end open defecation, practiced by 14 million Nepalis across the country daily, Tundikhel

methods and timing are awry, and risk a backlash not just from tourists but also union members.

The trouble with inbound tourism, however, has in recent times been mirrored by a surge in outbound tourism. Nepalis are travelling more than ever, and not just for a degree or a job.



In-and-out tourism

p4 & p7

LAVAZZA
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE



Hotel Bahari - Pokhara
Hotel Glacier - Pokhara
For Business Inquiry: 9841505390

Ultimate Decor
fine furniture

www.ultimatedecor.com.np

CONSTITUTION
THURAYA XT
The most rugged satellite phone in the World!

www.constellation.com.np
Tel: +977-1-5549252

Baleno S&K
I.P.ZONE
SALE

Durbarmarg • Bauddha • Bluebird Mall
4221451

HP Pavilion dv-4 Notebook
High Definition Entertainment, Anywhere, Anytime

- Core 2 Duo (2.2 GHz)
- 2GB DDR2 RAM (1 DIMM)
- 320GB Hard Drive
- 14.0" WXGA Display
- DVD RW/Wireless LAN
- Genuine Windows Vista Home

Elegance & Mobility

CAS CAS Trading House Pvt. Ltd.
Address : Putalisadak, Kathmandu
Phone : 977-1- 4440271, 4440272
E-mail : amar@cas.com.np

THE PUMA STORE
puma.com

SHERPA MALL, DURBAR MARG, Ph: 4230385



WIN-WIN

The peace process won't be complete without putting the finishing touches to the new constitution. The constitution can't be written until the Maoists are demobilised and the camps dismantled. That won't happen until there is an agreement on integration numbers.

That is what it has boiled down to: a numbers game. The Maoist leadership would want nothing better than to have their cadre in the camps go their separate ways because we all know (and they know we know) the real guerrillas are the YCLs.

But they have promised all 19,000 (12,000 if you want to believe the government's estimate) a place in the national army. There is no way the Nepal Army is

going to accept all of them, and what is holding things up is that the Army is saying 'zero' and the Maoists are saying '19,000'. This is like bargaining over the price of potatoes in the market. Ultimately both the vendor and the buyer will have to come to a figure agreeable to both. It is called compromise, and it is in very short supply in these polarised times.

However, there is hope of breaking the deadlock. Speaking in Nepalganj on Tuesday Chairman Dahal said it was up to his *ladakus* to decide whether they wanted to go back to their villages with a compensation package or join the national army. Surprisingly, that is exactly what the Army Chief himself said last week.

Of course, the military says the ex-guerrillas have to meet its 'recruitment criteria' but that shouldn't be such a big deal. If we were to leave it up to the fighters, there is a strong possibility that a whole lot of them would find a golden handshake much more attractive than an uncertain

recruitment procedure into the military. The Maoist leadership doesn't want this headache to linger either, so it's just a question of finding a win-win situation in which neither side loses face.

The leadership of all major political parties should have realised by now that it's their own survival that is at stake here. If they don't resolve the deadlock, they will all be swept away by the tidal wave of coming events. They will lose control to someone or something much bigger.

There is no point engaging in this blame game with the UN, it's just not worth it. They should instead be trying to show the UN that we don't need them anymore because we can resolve our disagreements ourselves.

KD

Towering folly

 **GUEST COLUMN**
Bharat Sharma

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal's plans to erect a Gantantra Stambha, or Republic Tower, appear to be set in the foundation stone he placed on the site recently. I have nothing against commemorating the republic. But it seems the location and dimensions of the proposed monument – meant to symbolise national dignity – are at complete odds with the needs of the public.

Take the location. The erection is going up in the Ratna Park area of Tundikhel. To make the matter even more bizarre, it seems the prime minister is pushing for a tower even taller than Dharhara, with a winged horse on top. Even Don Quixote wouldn't dare dream of such folly.

I do not question the noble intentions of the prime minister and his right to have a personal vision. The problem lies in his prescriptions for a project that is

clearly beyond his terms of reference.

It must be very difficult for the legions of Nepali fine artists and architects to swallow the idea that the prime minister is going ahead with his own design concept. This despite the Department of Urban Development and Building Construction's proposal for a design competition. As a

Why is the prime minister dreaming up a tower in Ratna Park?

professional body and the apex institute in this sector, it should take the appropriate steps, lest it be accused of neglecting its own terms of reference.

But aesthetics aside, it is the site of the proposed monument that is most questionable. For almost four decades now, the

open public space of Tundikhel has been abused in the most callous manner. The public has been looking on silently.

We should remember that the whole stretch of Tundikhel, right from Ranipokhari to Dasharath Rangasala (including Army HQ) was conceived as a single physical entity by our visionary ancestors. It was founded as a public domain and a natural endowment as far back as the Malla period, and the state's latest encroachment reveals it to be bereft of ideas. In fact, the prime minister's actions are as bad as the proposed building of a republic monument complex within the Narayanhiti precinct during the tenure of Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

So-called democratic prime ministers appear oblivious to public concerns, which puts me in mind of a conversation I had over two decades ago.

Back then, the late king Birendra had asked me to prepare a master plan for the area around Ranipokhari. I politely but firmly told him that if we really wanted to revitalise the area with its heritage in mind, then it would be necessary to pull down all

undesirable structures of Kathmandu's later development, including the Anchaladhish Karyalaya, because they were strangulating Ranipokhari and environmentally bifurcating the total entity of Tundikhel. Cosmetic treatment was not enough, I said.

Point blank the king asked me: did I want to bulldoze all such structures, right from Ranipokhari to Dasharath Rangasala? I replied it was not merely my desire but the right thing to do. To my utter amazement, he took my argument in good spirit and asked me to prepare a comprehensive master plan to protect the whole stretch of the public domain of Tundikhel as a single entity. Political changes, however, prevented this concept from being implemented.

Tundikhel is an open space of

tremendous public value. It sets off the manic urban sprawl of the city of Kathmandu. It is the hub of our sociocultural activities. After the 1934 earthquake this is where people sought refuge, and you will understand how significant this open space is. For quite some time now, open spaces such as Tundikhel have come under tremendous pressure in all our cities. They are not just shrinking, but disappearing.

We may be poor in Nepal, but let us not be poor in vision. It is time for us to consider our real needs before we embark on costly mistakes that we may regret later.

"Shrinking Tundikhel", #107



SPACES MAGAZINE

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

JUNK OR JUNKET JOURNALISM?

I share Mr. Mishra's disdain for 'controversial' politicians and 'politically biased commentators' ('Junk journalism', #493). Politically biased commentary twists facts and is a form of spin-doctoring.

Philanthropy is good and must be praised. But in the name of praising philanthropy, when a journalist promotes personality, it stops being objective journalism. When the rich are highlighted more than their causes of philanthropy, the praise becomes deification of personality.

Personally I am more inspired by individuals with little means but who raise funds in inventive ways, in order

to do good deeds, than rich people who can afford to give large donations.

Thurpunsich

- Though it is not a new issue, Mr. Mishra has presented it admirably. Media should play a very constructive role towards the nation and people. It should cover encouraging figures and facts rather than only highlighting negative aspects like violence, political games and inaugurations.

Neetu Pokharel

NEPALI LAG

A tremendous disadvantage that Nepali has in holding the interest of the young and well educated is the almost complete lack of interesting books for young readers ('Not so hip', #493). I've searched every bookshop in

Kathmandu for the Nepali equivalent of engaging English books for kids. There is a huge unmet need for books, magazines, and videos in Nepali for the under-10 age cohort. Come on Nepali entrepreneurs, get copying!

Kenji

- For urban, relatively privileged Nepalis, English is the lingua franca for development, progress, entertainment, and life abroad. Nepali hasn't kept up with English in having accessible media and pop culture, and most movies showcase a stilted ethnic and linguistic history, as the high-falutin' speeches the hero inevitably makes references to obscure Hindu philosophies foreign to many Nepalis.

J Sherpa

New blog

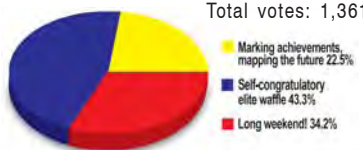
nepalitimes.com/blogs
Dining, wining, and pure swimming



nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll # 494

Q. What is the significance of International Women's Day?



Weekly Internet Poll # 495. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com
Q. Did the parties make a mistake by signing the 12-point Delhi agreement with the Maoists?

Crumbling state



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA



PLAIN SPEAKING
Prashant Jha

BIRATNAGAR—Over an afternoon chat in his office last week, the Morang CDO mentioned how his district was calm and stable. Same night, the Youth Force chief was shot in Biratnagar.

The UML shut the bazar to protest the assassination attempt. A day earlier, a bus driver in Jhapa was lynched by a wedding party after he requested them not to climb onto the top of the bus. The transport unions of Morang, Sunsari and Jhapa halted public transport to protest the killing of their colleague.

This is relative stability, for the further west you move, the more turbulent things get. Lahan was abuzz with the killing of two guests at a wedding. The same week, a villager was kidnapped by an unknown group. Police negotiated ransom without disclosing their identity, but when they got to the designated spot, the kidnappers ran off. The next day, the abductee was killed.

Janakpur bazar has just about recovered from Arun Singhania's murder. But those active in public life say they are worried about safety, remain extra careful while walking on the streets or talking to strangers, and return home early. A school management committee employee has been shot in the interim. An activist noted that the situation in Mahottari is worse, and there has been a spurt in abductions from villages instead of urban centres. Groups are now targeting families where remittance

money is coming in.

All this might lead one to conclude that there is total anarchy in the Tarai. That would not be entirely accurate. State institutions are still present and their penetration, though limited, extends into the interior. There has always been a higher degree of criminality in this belt. Many of the cases stem from histories of personal acrimony, commercial and property disputes, or political or caste rivalry.

But what they do point to is the increasing use of violence to resolve disputes, the easy availability of small arms, the blurred lines between politics

Who's to blame for lawlessness in the Tarai? Everyone, if you listen to everyone.

and crime, and the emergence of a generation with high aspirations and no opportunities that has learnt how to make a quick buck through loot and extortion.

The state has not failed yet, but the institutional and political relationships that constitute the state are crumbling, and everyone blames the other.

Take what a Janakpur MP told us. "It is the fault of the *prashasan*, administration. The police get a share of the loot. In fact, they have created many of these criminal groups and use

them when convenient." A more objective Siraha journalist concurred, "The Home Ministry in Kathmandu is run on smuggling, drugs and armed group activities in the Tarai. They are all in the loop."

The local administration employs precisely the opposite argument. A senior official in Dhanusha pointed fingers at the local parties. "There are so many outfits; two factions of UML, two Forums, TMDP, NC, Maoist, and Matrika. And all of them exert pressure on the police to release whoever is arrested, claiming he is their cadre." Local officials blame the central Home Ministry for not deploying more personnel or resources. Nepal Police lambasts government intelligence as utterly useless. And the CDO and the SP are sometimes operating at cross purposes.

The only way to prevent further institutional breakdown is to have a stable, strong and inclusive political authority that completes the political transition. Simultaneously, it has to initiate reform of NP, APF and NID; make it more inclusive so it has deeper penetration in society; re-engineer the politician-bureaucrat relationship; deal with longer term issues like political accommodation and putting in place federal structures; and push agrarian and land reform, industrialisation, education and employment generation. All of this will be messy, prolonged and difficult process, but the alternative is a lot worse.

Sadly, the country is saddled with a dysfunctional, corrupt and weak government whose sole purpose is to stay on in power. Madhav Nepal's biggest legacy may well be the further erosion of the state's credibility in the Tarai. 🇳🇵

www.subisu.net.np

GIVE YOUR BUSINESS A SECURED CONNECTIVITY

- MPLS VPN AND VPLS
- WORLDCLASS TECHNOLOGY
- BROADBAND INTERNET
- WIDER NETWORK
- 24 HRS SUPPORT & SERVICE
- AFFORDABLE RATES

mediaconcepts



An ISO 9001:2000 Certified Company
SUBISU
CABLE NET
Business Solution Provider

For 24 hrs service:
Ph: 4429616, 4429617,
Fax : +977 1 4430572
Email : info@subisu.net.np



काम सानो ठूलो भन्ने हुँदैन । पसिनाको कुनै
रड र जात पनि हुँदैन । काम गरेर खान लजाउनु पनि
हुदैन । चोरेर, ढाटेर, छलेर, लुटेर खान
पो लजाउनुपर्छ । जो जहाँ रहेर जुन काम गर्छ ऊ त्यसैमा
रमाउनुपर्छ गौरव गर्नुपर्छ र सम्पत्ति भएर गर्नुपर्छ ।
काम नै शक्ति हो, भक्ति हो र मुक्ति हो । कामको इज्जत
गरौं, पसिनाको सम्मान गरौं ।

नेपाल सरकार
सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय
सूचना विभाग

The way we give



SALIGRAM TIWARI/KANTIPUR

INDU NEPAL

Nepalis are donating big bucks, but not in the way social charities want them to

When the Manmohan Memorial Community Hospital decided to raise money to upgrade to 700 beds and invest in several smaller projects, it held a *mahayagya*—a nine-day worship marathon—last November. It raised a staggering 4 billion rupees in cash and contributions.

But what was most impressive

was not the amount raised (twice what the organisers expected), but the number of people who donated. Over 10,000 visited the *yagya* site every day, and most donated Rs 5001, which earned them a shawl as a token of appreciation. “We handed out a lot of shawls,” says Mani Banskota, co-secretary at the hospital. “I think those who

would have given a thousand or two probably donated more because they wanted that recognition.”

The event was publicised as a spiritual gathering for peace and stability in the country, but people were clearly motivated by more personally spiritual concerns. Banskota’s father Tika Prasad, for example, donated his

body’s weight in money to cast away the sins from his 78 years on earth.

Philanthropy is not a new trend in Nepal. There are plenty of examples of individuals setting up foundations in the memory of family members, or contributing time to build schools and canals. A group of women built the oldest school in Lamjung through *muthidan*, that is, by raising handfuls of grain.

The unprecedented amount of money raised by the hospital indicated that people are willing to dig deep for charity, but they do want to know what’s in it for them. When it comes to parting with cold hard cash, two types of interests seem to be pervasive—recognition by God and society.

When Siddhartha Rana donated Rs 10 million to Help Nepal Network, the charity noted that it was rare for someone to donate to a cause not directly linked to his family. Rana concedes he gave the matter some thought then decided to scrap his own charity, Tara Foundation, so as not to overlap with the activities of Help Nepal. “If in the US, Bill Gates’ foundation is trusted by Warren Buffet for his philanthropic activities, why can’t we do the same in Nepal?” he says.

In fact, this is how organisations that run on


philanthropic donations want people to give—for social causes rather than to boost family prestige or to placate adversarial planets.

“We need to inspire people to give for social justice,” says Rita Thapa, founder of Tewa, an organisation that funds women’s projects by raising donations from individual Nepalis. “Religious and cultural altruism has held the fabric of our society together. But it is important that people donate for social transformation itself.”

Tewa’s approach to philanthropy was groundbreaking when it was set up in 1995. Tewa trained volunteers to engage in local fundraising to support their programs. Over the years, it has mobilised almost 500 volunteers, who approach family, friends, and neighbours for donations.

Getting people to recognise good causes is difficult. “In the early days we approached scores of corporate houses for a gift of Rs 50,000. Only one of them gave readily,” Thapa says. “Corporate giving is tied with business interests rather than the practice of social responsibility.”

Compared to Manmohan Memorial Community Hospital’s feat, and two schools that raised Rs 51 million through *mahayagyas* in Pokhara this week, Tewa’s fundraising—

Rs 2 million per year—is modest. There’s no doubt that philanthropy is thriving in Nepal. But if you want to raise serious money, you might be better off calling your priest. 

Shoot-yourself-in-the-foot unionism

FOO CHEE CHANG

Sudeep Risal is the kind of guy who works hard six months of the year and lives one day at a time. Originally from Sindhupalchok, Risal has been a trekking guide for 13 years.

During the peak trekking seasons of March-May and September-November, Risal makes between Rs 550-700 a day leading groups through trails around the country, excluding tips and gifts.

While he finds the basic pay satisfactory, Risal feels it is the clients he makes friends with and their generosity that makes his vocation special—one of his two sons is currently in school, sponsored by a Swiss tourist Risal met on a trek.

Stories like Risal’s are in danger of becoming tales of the past, given the labour unions’ heavy-handed approach in demanding more pay and benefits for their members. Just last Sunday, the Maoist-affiliated All Nepal Tourism Workers Union (ANTWU) called for trekking agencies to stop sending out guides, porters, cooks and helpers until the Travel and Trekking Regulations are implemented. The guidelines stipulate an average two-fold increase in wages and insurance coverage among other conditions.



KIRAN PANDAY

The move could not have come at a worse time. A strike in the middle of trekking season places great pressure on trekking agencies to accede to ANTWU’s demands. But it is the workers themselves who will bear the brunt in lost wages, which make up a large portion of their annual income.

While unions such as ANTWU have worked to improve the lot of tourism workers through the years, “what they are presently asking for is unrealistic”, says Som Thapa, First Vice President of the Trekking Agencies’ Association of Nepal (TAAN). “Trekking companies will have to charge customers much more in response.”

Padam Ghale, founder of Mandala and Shambhala trekking agencies, which employ


The unions need to realise that while Nepal is a beautiful place, it’s not the only one accessible to tourists

more than 300 staff during peak periods, concurs. “Times have changed. Thirty years ago, we only received 30 rupees a day,” he says, adding, “these big unions are usually associated with political parties. When they fight for their members, they create goodwill among them and build political pressure at the same time. Until there is political stability in Nepal this will not change.”

Labour unions seem to be in an apparent win-win position, and are clear on the need to implement the trekking regulations agreed on by the unions and TAAN last year. In fact, Khagendra Kafle, central committee member of ANTWU, claims the regulations should have been implemented by December, and says they began an awareness campaign

ahead of the trekking season. “We are ready to negotiate, but are going to push this through, definitely. We will send back tourists if we need to.” Fellow unions, such as the Trade Union Congress, agree on the principle of ANTWU’s stir, though not the methods and timing. Vice-President Rewati Adhikari says, “The demands are fair and we support them.”

But ANTWU is also betting on the unwillingness of tourism business owners to hold out for too long before losses start to eat away at their bottom line. In their push to gain more political clout, what the unions are forgetting, are the very people they represent. They might be able to get away with playing their members like chips in a casino in the short run, but they could face a backlash in the event of a prolonged strike. Ideology and camaraderie cannot feed a hungry man.

For a country that depends heavily on tourism, worth about 25 billion rupees last year, things like this happen far too frequently, especially given the industry’s recent recovery from the decade-long civil war. The Nepal Tourism Year 2011 initiative aims to bring in a million tourists, but that appears a little far-fetched at the moment. If the country and the tourism industry cannot get their own house in order and provide the necessary support and services, tourists will be hard-pressed to include Nepal on their itineraries. No one will be a winner then. 



DPR

Camouflage fatigue



FOURTH ESTATE
C K Lal

Madan Bhandari's meteoric rise and equally sudden demise in the early 1990s left his widow Bidhya to ride the sympathy wave that followed his death. She has grown in stature since, but is not known particularly for her political convictions, even by the flexible standards of the UML.

When the anti-Maoist coalition of Madhav Nepal chose her to head the defence ministry, it was inferred that the government had decided to give the Nepal Army a free hand. Bidhya Bhandari, in confining herself to being an ardent defender of the sovereignty of the armed forces, has lived up to her prime minister's expectations.

For the media and the international community, too, the Defence Minister is little more than a diligent spokesperson for the army. This could be why UN Undersecretary General for Political Affairs B. Lynn Pascoe decided to deal directly with Nepal Army Chief Chhatraman Singh Gurung. Surprisingly, the Nepali media paid little attention to what transpired at that crucial meeting.

The public relations department of the army released a picture of a defiant Gen Gurung sprawled on a gilded


chair. His guest is all attention, hands suppliantly on his knees. Either the army didn't see fit to give the full story of the meeting to the media or the gatekeepers of the media in Kathmandu consciously decided to downplay the event. Other than the army chief's reluctance to admitting Maoist combatants en masse, nothing much appeared in the local press.

Reports in the Indian media were more thorough. With direct attribution to the army chief, Yubaraj Ghimire reported in the *Indian Express* that the Nepal Army couldn't remain confined to barracks indefinitely. Other

from demanding clarifications from the army chief for statements reeking of insubordination, tried to hide its helplessness behind the statement that the UN DSG had crossed diplomatic limits.

The responsibility of holding government to account where the peace process is concerned fell upon the frail shoulders of the Nepali press. Once again, it failed to rise to the occasion. Like all the other estates of the establishment, the media considers the Nepal Army the embodiment of a near-divine status and allows it to get away with almost anything.

The latest instance of media downplaying army excesses concerns the alleged rape and murder of three women, including a girl, at Hariharpur in Bardiya National Park. Since all the victims were poor Dalits eking out a living by collecting the bark of trees, our urban-centric media had little interest in finding out what really happened. The fact that the alleged perpetrators were men in uniform made the case doubly untouchable. Things would have been different had Maoist combatants or any of the Tarai's armed groups been involved.

When political authority is as weak as it is now, media and civil society have to be extra vigilant regarding the activities of the armed forces. The tragedy is that the media is concerned about its own security and prominent citizens are more worried about the timely promulgation of the constitution. The field for the army is thus wide open. 

With the media and civil society distracted, the army has escaped scrutiny of late

Indian media too gave prominence to the position taken by the army chief. Few considered it necessary to get to the official position of the government, as if the media accepted that the government had no control over the Nepal Army anyway.

The Council of Ministers, far

THIS WEEK

New Chief Justice

The Constitutional Council has chosen Supreme Court justice Ram Prasad Shrestha to replace Anup Raj Sharma as chief justice. Sharma's short tenure will end on 26 March. The appointment, which according to the constitution should have been made 20 days before Sharma's retirement, was held up because of Pushpa Kamal Dahal's absence from Council meetings and dilly-dallying on the part of the prime minister. Dahal wasn't present this time either, but legal experts say the appointment is valid nonetheless. Shrestha is known for bold verdicts and has a clean record. He has served in the judiciary for 34 years.

Big spender

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal's government is officially the most spendthrift since the country adopted multi-party democracy. The 43-member cabinet has already spent its annual budget, a whopping Rs 29 million, and is projected to spend twice that by the year's end. To put this in perspective, last year the government spent less than Rs 20 million. While some of this extra spending may be attributed to the bigger size of the cabinet, ministers themselves have also acquired bigger teams. Additionally, the cabinet has already exhausted the Rs 60 million set aside for overseas trips.



RAJESH KC

Cheater, cheater

An emergency meeting of the Nepal Medical Council on Monday decided to invalidate the entrance exams to the post graduate medicine program at Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH). The decision follows, and appears to confirm, allegations that the exams had been rigged by the Dean of the Institute of Medicine Arjun Sayami. The allegations were first made by students on Saturday and have sparked a series of protests, in which at least 20 have been injured. Students and doctors began an indefinite closure of TUTH on Monday, which they say will continue until Sayami is dismissed.

Scare tactics

The Maoists are considering tabling a no-confidence motion against the government in order to pave the way for a national unity government under its leadership. Soon after airing this intention, Pushpa Kamal Dahal announced on



SAM KANG LI

Tuesday that his party is preparing to call a special session of parliament, ostensibly to discuss matters of social importance unrelated to a no-confidence bill, including corruption, inflation and the worsening security situation. The party will require the signatures of one-third of CA members to call the session, and a further third to pass a no-confidence bill, if that is indeed on the cards.



उज्यालो 90 नेटवर्कमा

आर्थिक खबर

हरक दिन बिहान ७:०० बजे

वस्त्र र बजार

मुद्रा र मौसम

नयाँ र नौलो

रोजगार र अवसर

Communication Corner Pvt. Ltd.

Kupondole, Lalitpur, Tel: 5546277

Ujyaalo 90 Network

Sanepa, Lalitpur, Tel: 5551716

Fax: 977-1-5549357, P.O.Box:6469, E-mail: info@unn.com.np, URL: www.unn.com.np

Business and development



AHMAD ISKANDAR

 **STRICTLY BUSINESS**
Ashutosh Tiwari

From the hills to the Tarai, 14 million Nepalis do not have proper toilet facilities. They have no choice but to defecate in open spaces every day. The needless deaths of 154 Nepalis in Jajarkot last year were due to their using contaminated water, which inflamed the cholera epidemic in the mid-western hills of Nepal.


Businesses and entrepreneurs need to look beyond the bottom line to speed up the development of the communities they cater to

Likewise, an estimated 600,000 Nepali women still suffer in silence from uterine prolapse, a preventable reproductive disease, which significantly diminishes their quality of life. It's fair to wonder why this information is in this space. The answer is straightforward. Since 1951, such social concerns and others have been addressed in piecemeal fashion by various government bodies, donor agencies, NGOs and community organisations. Though much progress has been made, these and other problems are still with us, sixty years later. The longer they stay with us, the more they slow down our collective ability to benefit from the productivity of a healthy population that can go to school,

go to work and contribute to community development. Helping address such problems need not be the exclusive province of government, NGOs and donor agencies. It's time for both big Nepali businesses and entrepreneurially minded individuals to start using some of their skills, resources and contacts to visibly rethink how they can speed up the process. **Big business:** Most trekking trails are littered with instant noodle and snack food plastic wrappers. There is no reason why some of these foodstuff

companies cannot, in cooperation with local communities, start a campaign for cleaner cities and villages by providing incentives to customers to return or dispose of used wrappers. Such an attempt need not be on a grand nationwide scale from the word go. Interested companies could start small, see what works where, and gradually scale up efforts by roping in like-minded partners. This requires patience, persistence, an ability to deal with ambiguities and a range of people with diverse interests. But in these politically fractured times, such visible attempts to do good do pay off in that they strengthen Nepali companies' institutional abilities to get things done by engaging a wider group of internal and external

stakeholders. Some multinational soap companies are running a national media campaign about the importance of hand-washing. That is good, but not enough. They need to think beyond selling an extra cake of soap by actively engaging local civic institutions to make community cleanliness a matter of pride. True, it's not the job of a private company to push the issue of sanitation. But from a business standpoint, if such companies do not find effective ways to work with local health posts, politicians and women's groups, how do they expect customers to emotionally relate to their products as opposed to a competitor's?

Entrepreneurs: Most NGOs are started by socially minded entrepreneurs, who seek to solve a specific problem. Over time, they may receive funding that enables them to grow in terms of staff size and program range. Their growth correlates with a diffusion of their earlier idealism and a loss of measurable goals, which is often accompanied by "this is just a job" mentality. Nepali entrepreneurs who want to work on social problems are likely to be more effective when they stick to a single concrete issue with clear goalpost – say, providing complete and sustainable access to toilets in a particular set of VDCs or eradicating uterine prolapse in specific development regions by a certain date. Such a focus may be the best way to eradicate the social problems that continue to hamstring Nepal's progress – rather than the usual NGO mode of nibbling away at lofty, vague goals. 

Export rewards

Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal awarded Thomas Roetter, managing director of KREIGER GmbH, which ships Nepali carpets to Germany, with the Export Excellence Award on 23 February. PM Nepal said the government was committed to restoring carpet exports to its previous levels. He added that for this purpose a high level task force has been formed which will study the scenario and make recommendations to be implemented this year.

Mickey power

Dabur Real recently launched 200ml juice packs featuring different pictures of Mickey Mouse. Cool recipes and weekly gift hampers sweeten the deal for kids who cut and paste the different 'avatars' of the Disney character from the juice packs and send it to P.O. Box 14375, completing the sentence, 'I love Real because...'

3 models

Bama Motors announced three new models of Chery Automobile – QQ3, A1 and TIGGO. These models have features like keyless entry, power window, power steering, inbuilt AC and music system, rear wiper, defogger, day/night rear view mirror and body colour bumper.

Power up

Himstar CFL has come up with a special scheme: purchase a 5 to 11 watt Himstar CFL and get two Himstar Max Power 'AAA' batteries free; buy a 11 to 18 watt Himstar CFL and get 2 Himstar Max Power 'AA' batteries.



Safe water

Himalayas Spring Water organised a press meet to urge the Nepali government to provide a foolproof security plan for foreign investors. Himalayas Spring Water has finalised an agreement with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation to operate a factory to produce PET bottles with water from Langtang National Park.

New Gadget

Human Click Enterprises and Multronics International, along with Pulse Incorporated, launched products from the eminent brand M-Audio, a business unit of Avid Technology. M-Audio products are said to be designed to form integral creation systems, so that the user can focus on the music rather than worry about the technology.



Amulya Jeevan

LIC (Nepal) launched a new life insurance plan - Amulya Jeevan. The company says the new scheme is probably the cheapest individual life insurance plan available in the country. It is available for people aged between 16-60 and the premium paying terms range from 10-44 years.

EvoStore

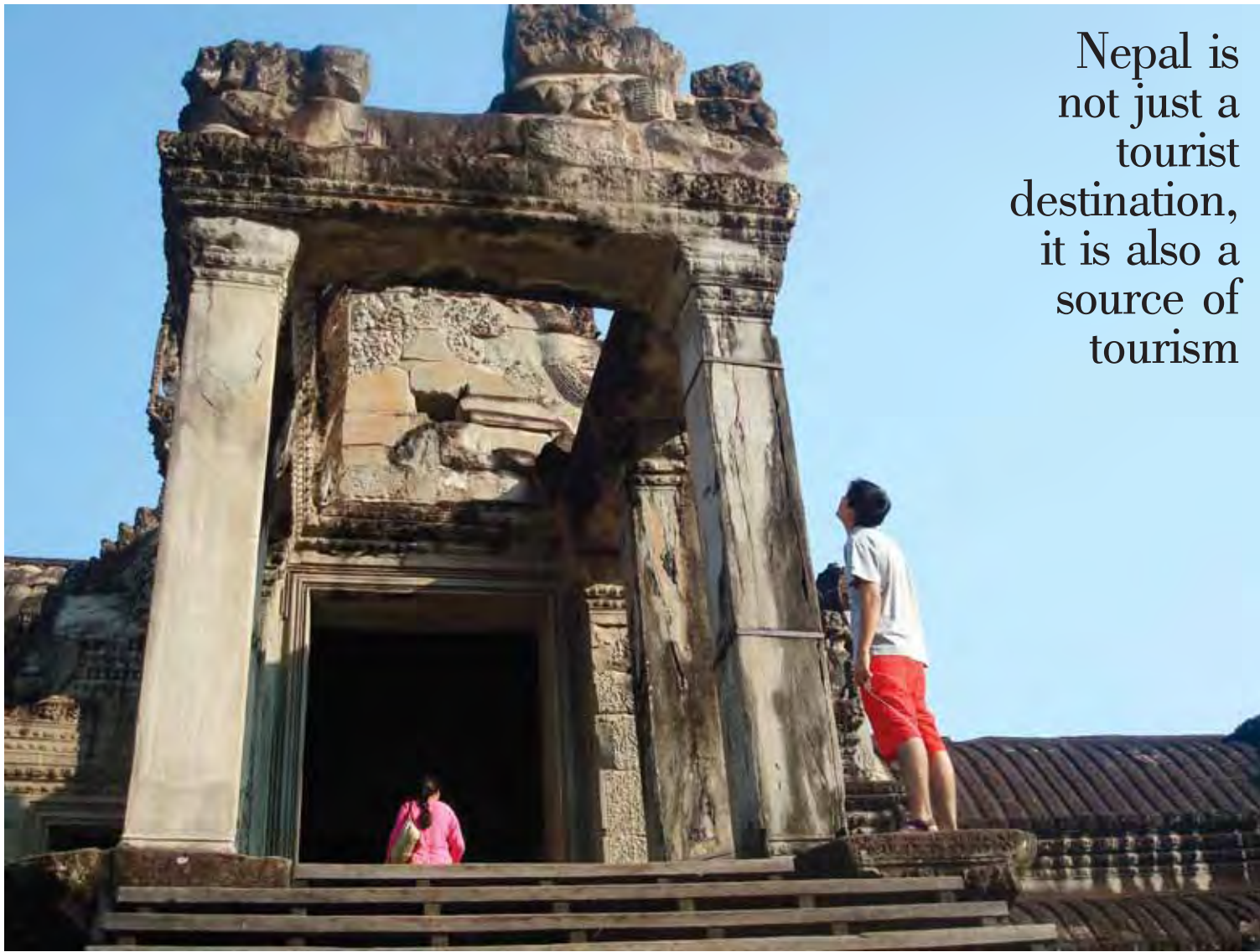
EvoStore opened its second exclusive store in Kumaripati. Evostore is the only showroom to showcase prominent brands like Apple, Bose, Sharp, JBL, Bowers and Wilkins.

Ncell

Spice Nepal's Mero Mobile has been rebranded as Ncell, with 'N' standing for Nepal, and has a new marketing slogan: 'Here for Nepal'. The rebranding is driven by the firm's majority shareholder, European giant TeliaSonera, which is looking to redefine telecommunications in the country. Ncell Chief Executive Pasi Koistinen says, "People want to improve the quality of their lives with the help of telecommunication services. Being the pioneer in the market, we are trying to introduce innovative technology and thinking." He added that new brand name will help the company target rural areas, a key objective of the group, as it aims to become the country's leading mobile operator by number of subscribers.

Showroom biz

Kalika Auto Link, a Bajaj 3S showroom, opened in Gaihat on 5 March. The showroom targets yearly sales of 500 motorbikes, but also provides servicing and spare parts.



INDU NEPAL

Nepal is not just a tourist destination, it is also a source of tourism

DEWAN RAI

It all started during the war, when Nepal was perceived to be unsafe for inbound tourists. So Nepalis who could afford it started going out of the country, especially in winter.

In the past decade, the number of Nepalis going to Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore or India for leisure and shopping has increased ten fold, according to travel agents. Nepal is now sending more tourists to Thailand and Malaysia than it receives from these countries.

A more cosmopolitan and savvy young generation, and a burgeoning middle class with disposable

Outgoing tourists

income, have been the push factors. "Liberalisation in the foreign exchange regime, simplified visa procedures and easy availability of tour packages have boosted foreign travel," says Subodh Rana of Malla Travels and Treks.

Bhola Bikram Thapa of

President Group sends more than 1000 Nepali tourists out every month. He offers package tours to Asian as well as European countries to meet the diversified choices of Nepali tourists. "The dramatic increase of outbound tourism is affordable price. A Bangkok tour is

cheaper than India," he says. Thapa is now eyeing Mauritius as the next big destination for Nepalis.

Supriya Shakya, tour manager of Marco Polo Travels, says Nepalis are travelling at all times of the year. There is no season, although winter sees heavier bookings. "Shopping, beaches, night life and parks, you name it and Nepalis are interested," she says.

Sensing the outbound tourism potential in Nepal, several countries are trying to tap the market by offering budget tour packages and seasonal discounts. Surprisingly, even faraway Egypt is trying woo Nepalis. "Cairo is an open museum of history," says Shakya, who is selling an eight-

night package including a Nile cruise.

Nepalis from diverse walks of life have taken to tourism as the opportunities have expanded. Ravin Man Bajracharya, chief operating officer at Lalit Mandap, says his company started out with pilgrim tourism to Thailand. Starting with just 40 pilgrims a year, Lalit Mandap now takes more than 1000 Nepali pilgrims and tourists to Thailand every year. "Our role is to make it easier for people to travel to places they have never been to," he explains. Honeymooners and conference tourists are also important segments of Nepal's outbound tourism, but Bishnu Prasai of Natraj Travels and Tours says one should not discount government officials, who often take a few days off when they go abroad for professional reasons. Of late, however, greater public scrutiny of the misuse of state money has put a damper on this form of tourism.

Milhika Dhakhwa of Zenith Experiences Travel Services is clear about why outbound tourism has emerged to complement inbound tourism. When the latter dried up during the conflict, the former bloomed. "We thought, if they're not coming here, we'll go there," she recalls. Such a transition, of course, may not be enough to make up the numbers. Deepak Tuladhar of Yeti Travels used to bring in 43,000 tourists in 1996, now it has gone down to 6000. "India and China have fast expanded overseas tourism but we have not been able to cash in this opportunity," says Tuladhar.

Perhaps Nepal Tourism Year 2011 will help redress the balance. Bhola Thapa of President Group is on the National Executive Committee, and is optimistic Nepal will be able to attract a million tourists. But it won't be easy. "Things will streamline in five to ten years," he says, "but we will have to do it the hard way. We don't have much time."

DHOKAIMA
A café with class and passion at the gates of Patan.

DHOKAIMA
क्याफे

5522113
At the premises of
YALA MAYA KENDRA Cultural Centre

At just NPR 77999* Bundle up mesmerizing memories on Star Cruises

Includes:

- Airfare KTM/SIN/KTM
- 2 nights Star Cruises / 2 nights Singapore
- Accommodation, meals & entertainment on Star Cruises
- Half day Singapore city tour
- Airport/Hotel/Cruise terminal/Hotel/ Airport Transfers
- Daily breakfast

Fixed Departure on 13th April 2010
Make sure, you are there

Call **4444076** for Wonderful Holidays with:
Zenith Experiences Travel Services Pvt. Ltd.
Hattisar street - 446, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel: 4444076, Email: info@zenithnep.com
Extended Working Hours 7am - 7pm, Hotline : 9721445918

WORLD **STAR CRUISES** **IATA** **GlobalStar**

Ze's Holidays



An Education

Lone Scherfig’s *An Education* is a grown-up coming-of-age movie. Jenny Mellor (Carey Mulligan) is a bright 16-year-old in 1961 London who has her sights on Oxford University. An older suitor (David, played by Peter Sarsgaard) seduces her with excursions to jazz clubs, fancy restaurants and shopping. This is a welcome change for Jenny, who professes a desire to “smoke as many cigarettes I want” at university. “Will David be the making of Jenny or her undoing?” the DVD cover asks mysteriously, but there is no doubt where Jenny is headed in this film, based as it is on an autobiographical essay by famed British journalist Lynn Barber. The best part of the movie is how David’s charming persuasiveness sets off Jenny’s acid wit. 3.5/5
IN

True Blood

Vampires are cool again, and nowhere more so than in *Bon Temps*, a Louisiana town equally enraptured and repulsed by the latter-day incarnations of the undead. For telepathic waitress Sookie (Anna Paquin), meeting someone whose thoughts she can’t read – brooding, courteous 19th century Bill Compton (Stephen Moyer) – is a blessed relief. But there’s more to vampires than their civilised, mainstream advocates for vampire rights and *True Blood*, the blood substitute that provides all the nutrients a good vampire needs. It comes as no surprise to us when the mysterious killings begin, but for Sookie, who is as drawn to Bill’s magic as she is appalled by the company he keeps, it’s more than simply a matter of life and death.



Alan Ball’s *True Blood*, the latest in a line of ‘fangtastic’ TV series, has delighted American audiences with its funny, gory, sexy take on the uneasy coexistence of humans and vampires. Try the stores in Mahaboudha. 3.5/5
RT

Julie & Julia

Nora Ephron’s *Julie & Julia* is a true story about two women who live three decades apart but share an interest in French cuisine. The now deceased Julia Child (Meryl Streep) was a TV personality who first won renown for authoring a cookbook that introduced the American middle class to French cooking. Julie Powell (Amy Adams) started a blog called the Julie & Julia project, in which she chronicled her quest to cook all 524 recipes in Child’s cookbook in the course of one year, and captured the hearts of thousands of culinary enthusiasts. The film depicts the highs and lows of the two women’s journeys from anonymity to celebrity. Some things about human nature just don’t change with the passage of time, the movie seems to say. Meryl Streep and Amy Adams, who were last paired together in *Doubt*, are a winning duo. 4/5
SP



EVENTS

Earnest revived



AHMAD ISKANDAR

As perhaps the best known Oscar Wilde play, *The Importance of Being Earnest* is a classic romantic comedy that hits hard – albeit with the subtle wit characteristic of Wilde – at the snobbish Victorian upper class. Celebrated as much as it was hated at the time, the play landed Wilde in hot water, and the legal fracas that ensued led to destitution and his death. More than a century on, the timeless classic is being revived by Greta Rana, the celebrated author and poet who directs the theatre group, the New Shakespeare Wallahs. The cast for this production is comprised of amateur volunteers with unconventional demographics to say the least – a young student, a biotechnologist, and an elderly man (playing a lady) for starters. Expect surprises as the plot unfolds in dramatic fashion. 18-19 March (6pm), 21 March, 2.30pm, Sterling Club, British Embassy, Lazimpat. Tickets at Rs1500, drinks and dinner included. All proceeds to charity. 4410583.

Tavern Tales@Quixote’s Cove, Pulitzer Prize winner Kai Bird discusses *Hamra Hajurama: Our Grandmothers* with writers and photographers, 6pm, 21 March, Quixote’s Cove, Jhamsikhel, www.qcbookshop.com, 5536974

Spring Camp 2010, organised by Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, invites children aged 3 to 12 years old to discover the joy of dance, music and theatre. 29 March to 9 April. Reservations at 5013554 or info@katjazz.com.np

Remanences, ‘Worlds in essence’, video installations by Emma Ponsart, 14-20 March, Sun-Fri, 11am-6pm, Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, 5521120.

Infiltration of Darkness, exhibition of paintings by Sunil Sigdel, 26 March-18th April, Kathmandu Contemporary Art Centre, Jhamsikhel

Pooja, feature film about maternal mortality, 5.30pm to 7pm, 19 March, The Kamalmani Theater, Rato Bangala School, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur



Exhibition of Tibetan Authentic Traditional Thangka, traditional art created by renowned artists following the true traditional teachings, 9.30am-7pm daily, Pathibara Art Gallery, Thamel, 4256004.

Poet’s Corner, send in and vote for your favourite piece of poetry at Lazimpat Gallery Café. Open entry until 21 March. **Movie screening of An Education** (read review above) at Lazimpat Gallery Café, 23 March, 6pm. Timing may change due to load-shedding. 4428549

Himalayan hash house harriers, a running club with a drinking problem, meet every Saturday to run a course around the Kathmandu Valley, details at aponarch.com/hhhh/

Annapurna Ultra Trail Race, start training for the 4th Annapurna Ultra Trail Race, 35 km and 71 km routes (mostly trails), starts 27 March, Barahi Hotel, Pokhara.

Painting for peace and harmony, mural painting on the south perimeter wall of Hyatt Regency Hotel, presented by The Himalayan Children’s Foundation of Kathmandu, 1-7 April

People After War, permanent photo exhibition, every day 11am-4pm, Madan Puraskar, Patan Dhoka, for bulk school bookings call 5521393

Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre: Yoga 8.30-9.30 am Meditation 5-6pm Mon- fri, Reiki, Tai Chi. Jyatha, Thamel, 4252251

MUSIC

Music with Ramshackle Blues, electric and acoustic guitar, slide guitar and harmonica. Featuring classics and new original compositions played on electric and acoustic guitar, slide guitar and harmonica, 6pm, 22 March, Lazimpat Gallery Café.

Chevrolet Concert Series, presented by Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, 2:30pm, 27 March. Free entrance. 5013554 or www.milesmusicfestival.com

Inner Groove, Hyatt Regency Hotel, relax with jazz music on Sundays, 12-3.30pm, 4491234/4489362.

Live music, drop by at Jazzabell Café every Wednesday and Friday, from 6pm onwards, Jhamsikhel, Patan, 2114075.

Filipino fusion band performing live at Bugles & Tigers Bar of The Everest Hotel, 7-10.30pm daily except Mondays. For reservations, 4780100, ext: 7711/7811.

Bottles n Chimney, feel the blues on Mondays with Nevkham, 7pm onwards, 2123135.

Fusion and classic music by Anil Shahi, Wednesdays, Absolute Bar, Hotel Narayani Complex, Pulchowk, 8pm onwards, 5521408.



Rudra, immerse yourself in a soothing Nepali music every Tuesday and Sunday, 7-11pm, Comfort Zone (rooftop of Bank of Kathmandu), Thamel.

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

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

DINING

Casa Toscana, for all things Italian, from pasta to confectionery delicacies. Pulchowk, 5537775.

Ghangri Café, for their signature open su mai momos and Special Fried Rice, Pulchowk.

Hankook Sarang, to whet your appetite with delicious Korean food, Thamel.

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, Hyatt Regency, 4491234/4489362.

Vegetarian Buffet, every Monday, **Oriental Nights**, flavours and specialties of Asia every Wednesday **Arabian Nights** for Middle Eastern specialties every Friday, 6.30pm at The Café, 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, 6.30-10.30pm everyday.



The Irish are at it again! Lots of balloons, crazy hats and free 2 for 1 deals at the bar at the only Irish Restaurant in Nepal. Kilroy's of

Kathmandu, Thamel, 4250440/41.

Jazzabell Café, TGIF, 10% discount all day, happy hour 6-8pm, Jhamsikhel, 2114075.

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.

Experience the Gyakok (hotpot with T-momos, meats and more) for lunch and dinner at the Shambala Garden Café, Hotel Shangri-La, 4412999 or at Royal Saino Restaurant & Bar, Darbar Marg, 4230890, 4239077

GETAWAYS

NexGEN Adventure Programme, rock climbing, daily departure, 016914541, 9841283385, www.canyoninginnepal.com

Dwarika's Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, Dhulikhel, 4479488, Overnight Package and Great Escape Package (locals).

Chiso Chiso Hawa Ma Special Package, Club Himalaya, Nagarkot, 4410432/4414432, locals and expats.

Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge, food, yoga, massage, meditation, walks, pool and more. 01 4361500 reservations@tigermountain.com

Mirabel Resort, Special Package Rates for locals and expats, Dhulikhel, www.mirabelresorthotel.com, 011 490972-4.

Godavari Village Resort, 5560675, 5560775, special packages for locals and expats at Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara, 4435741-44, Kids Break Package, couple with two children below 12 years sharing parents room complimentary.



SURYA NEPAL
presents

Beyond Radha

by

Suhas

Among the most sought after artists of Bengali modernism, Suhas has enjoyed a long and illustrious career as an artist and teacher in Santiniketan and Kolkata, India. A painter of great talent and also a graphic artist who spent many long years in France practicing print making. Suhas in his early years painted landscapes which were followed by series of portraits that eventually culminated into the famed Radha series, the portrait of the ideal woman.

March 25th to April 2nd, 2010 at Siddhartha Art Gallery
Babar Mahal Revisited, Kathmandu

Brought to you by:



Ferrari One

Speed and performance



EXCLUSIVE STYLE

- The Ferrari One proudly displays on its red cover the Scudetto Ferrari that has dominated Formula One since the very first race
- An 11.6" HD Acer CineCrystal LED LCD display, the amazing image quality on the Ferrari One.
- The built-in fine-tuned speakers deliver vibrant Third Generation Dolby® Home Theater®-enhanced surround sound.
- Championship performance
- At its heart, the Ferrari One is driven by a Second Generation AMD Ultrathin Platform with VISION technology

PASSION FOR ENTERTAINMENT

SWIFT CONNECTIVITY

- Stay connected with the Acer InviLink™ Nplify™ 802.11a/b/g/Draft-N Wi-Fi CERTIFIED™ network connection.
- Low-light-enhanced Acer Crystal Eye webcam allows excellent VoIP conferencing, even in noisy environments.



Acer Aspire Z5610 All-in-One PC, A Cut Above in Style, Performance and Multi-Touch Technology

INTUITIVE MULTI-TOUCH DISPLAY

Featuring 1920x1080 pixel resolution, the 23-inch HD 16:9 TFT display enhances games, Internet surfing and more with ultra-sharp, colorful imagery. Intuitive multi-touch technology brings an entirely new level of control to the computer user.

With multi-touch, users can intuitively interact with the PC using multiple fingers as they would a mouse. They can open and close programs, browse online newspapers, flick through photo albums and shuffle files and folders, using nothing but their hands.

- TouchPhotoShow • TouchMusic • TouchMediaShare
- TouchFriends • TouchMemo

MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS

Mercantile Building,
Durbar Marg, Kathmandu
Tel: 4220773, 4243566
Fax: 977-1-4225407
Email: market@mos.com.np

AUTHORIZED DEALERS:

Star Office International Putalisadak, 4266820/ 4233840	CITY Computer New Road , 01-4220058	E- Net Solution Narayanghat 9855056309	Smart link Dang 082-561022
The Max international Putali sadak, 01-4415786	DOS Trading Nag Pokhari 9851022786	Dinesh Electronics/ Dinesh Trading house, Dhangadi 9858420415/091 521392	Ugratara Trading House Mahendra Nagar 097-523604
The Waves Group Lazimpat 01-4427264	Birat Infotech Biratnager 9842020264	Manakamana Hi Tech Nepaljung, 081-521473	The Creative Group Hetauda 057-520256
IT Linx Putali Sadak Kupondol 01-5520623	Computer Elect. & Tradelink Butwal, 9857020299	Himalayan Trading House Pokhara 9856025310	Advance Computer Banepa 9851081595
Kupondol 01-5520623	Ugratara Trading House Dhangadi 091-523601		



LONG MARCH HOME: Girija Prasad Koirala and his doctor, Jagdish Agarwal, on their way to Sujata Koirala's home on Friday.




A SINKING FEELING: A noticeable decline in the water level at Kulekhani Reservoir last week accounts for the rise in loadshedding hours in the Kathmandu Valley.



GIANT LEAP: A jockey rides his horse over a fence in Tundikhel during a parade by the Nepal Army on Ghodejatra, the festival of horses.



PITTER-PATTER: Hailstones lie scattered on a street in Thamel after a brief storm on Tuesday.



Speed Dealer.

Nicky Hayden in the Ducati Oakley Jupiter™

OAKLEY

Available at:

LABELS Durbarmarg Ph: 4241802	ROOTS Putalisadak Ph: 4240328	Bluebird Mall Tripureshwor Ph: 016910737	LABELS Sherpa Mall Ph: 4227102
--	--	---	---

Step in for more varieties at



LIFE STYLE
design & decor

Show Room: SRD Building, New Plaza, Putalisadak
GPO Box: 3381, Te: 4425402, Fax: 00977-14437133,
E-mail: pujyata@wlink.com.np



HIMAL Khabarpatrika
14-28 March 2010

COVER STORY

The Opiate of the Masses
Investigation into opium cultivation in the Tarai

EDITORIAL

Journalism in danger

REPORTS

Maoists back in parliament
Girijababu's battle for survival
Sociology of the cellphone culture

WOMEN'S SPECIAL

Empowered women in Nepal
Identity and prestige through gender
Women in high places
Women leaders who beat up men

CONSTITUTION SUPPLEMENT

Radheshyam Adhikari: Is it advisable to extend the constitution deadline?
Sabitra Dura: Different kinds of Janjati leaders
Krishna Khanal: Identity and survival

COLUMN

Jugal Bhurtel: Leninism and bloody revolution

Did your paper arrive on time this morning?
If not, call our

Customer care @ 525 0002

DIRECT LINE



Himalmedia Pvt. Ltd.
Hatiban Lalitpur

WEEKEND WEATHER
by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

The westerly front that caused terrific winds and lightning earlier this week doesn't promise much rainfall this weekend. While it has generated significant cloud cover in the north, it has caused only dry smog in much of the country up to 1500m in altitude, which accounts for the hazy conditions in Kathmandu. However, there is a strong chance of short, sharp evening showers with lightning this weekend. Expect warmer nights too.



FRI	SAT	SUN
		
29-11	29-12	31-13

Tarai Maoists are seeking police protection as attacks on their leaders and cadres rise

RAMESWOR BOHARA
in RAUTAHAT

Just as Pushpa Kamal Dahal returned to Kathmandu from Chatara Sundari, having worshipped a buffalo and performed rituals for good luck, an armed group in Rautahat killed Shambu Ram Yadav, a member of the Bhojpura Sub-State Council. The following day, Rautahat district-in-charge Ashok Jaisawal approached the local administration, seeking security.

Jaisawal goes to the police office every day. "They say we need not worry as there is no threat to our lives. Security should be given before an incident takes place. What is the use after someone gets killed?"

His case is representative of the Maoists across the Tarai, where armed groups have been targeting their leaders and cadres. Rautahat's co-in-charge Upendra Shah says they don't feel secure. "It's natural to be terrified when the leaders are being killed one after another. Who wants to die for nothing?"

In the last one and a half months, 5 Maoist cadres have been killed in Rautahat, Bara and Parsa. But 36 Maoists have been killed since the peace process began; this figure excludes those killed in clashes with political parties and security forces in Rautahat and Dang. According to the Informal Sector Service Centre, 6 of these 36 were killed by the public and Tarai armed groups took responsibility for 14 killings.

While the killing of Maoist cadres is on the rise nationwide, they are particularly vulnerable in the Tarai. District level leaders have been asking local administration for personal security officers (PSOs). Chief District Officer of Bara district Tara Nath Gautam says leaders are provided with PSOs according to the degree of their vulnerability. Maoist CA members Shiva Chandra Kushwaha and Jayaram Dahal are among those assigned PSOs in Bara.

Police have also arranged special security for Maoist leaders in Rautahat. District Police In-charge SP Pitambar Adhikari says they escort CA members and also provide them with security officers. "When the Maoists organise programs in villages, we arrange special security, which UML and NC don't need," he says adding, "If the threat continues, the day will come when each leader will have to be given one personal security guard."

GRIEF KNOWS NO IDEOLOGY:
Sarba Sati Debi mourns the death of her son, Maoist leader Ram Prakash Yadav, killed by an armed group in January in Bara



PICS: MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Maoist insecurity

Despite these arrangements, the Maoists remain uncertain about their security and say the state is merely fulfilling formalities. But Rautahat CDO Kamalesh Kumar Sinha says he cannot provide a PSO to everyone. "The district security committee decides whom to give a security officer," he says. Maoist CA members Prabhu Sah Teli and Debendra Patel have been given PSOs.

Why are the Maoists being targeted in this way? Sunil Jaisawal, commander of the Tarai Liberation Front, has claimed that three Maoist cadres were killed in Ganjabhawanipur, Bara and Rautahat as acts of revenge. For many, joining or recruiting the services of armed groups is a way of getting back at the Maoists for

their actions during the decade-long insurgency. For the armed groups in the Tarai, claiming responsibility for any violent incidents is a way to generate publicity.

The state seems to be absent in the Tarai. Despite the Special Security Plan, there is no decline in the number of murders, kidnapping cases, bomb explosions, threats and extortion. The easy availability of weapons from across the border is a key cause, and cannot be controlled without support from Indian security. But the political parties, the Maoists in particular, need to take the initiative. As important as controlling arms is the need to push for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Maoists have no other choice but to support it if they are to improve security for their own.



FOES NO MORE:
Ashok Jaisawal, Maoist district-in-charge for Rautahat, calls on his local police chief to ask for security

Personal Assistant to the CEO Wanted

KATHMANDU INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE



We are looking for a full time Personal Assistant to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Minimum Requirements:

- To work according to the KISC mission, vision and values
- Bachelors Degree
- Experience of working in an expatriate environment
- Excellent skills in administration
- Excellent computer skills
- Excellent standard of English

Qualities required:

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Self-motivated and a high level of initiative
- Objective thinker
- Ability to interpret and implement policies and plans

For further information see the KISC website www.kisc.edu.np

To apply send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae/Bio Data and covering letter of application to the KISC Recruitment Officer, Liz Watson recruit@kisc.edu.np

Applications must be in by 9 April
Interviews will be held on 15 April

Only short listed candidates will be called for interview

Part Time Teachers Wanted

KATHMANDU INTERNATIONAL STUDY CENTRE



We are looking for a part time AS Level Geography Teacher and a Grade 6-8 Science Teacher for the Secondary School.

Minimum Requirements:

- To work according to the KISC mission, vision and values
- Bachelors Degree
- Experience of working in an expatriate teaching environment
- Excellent skills in behavior management
- Excellent standard of English

Qualities required:

- Friendly and enjoys working with children
- Works well with others
- Reliable, honest, punctual

For further information see the KISC website www.kisc.edu.np

To apply send a copy of your Curriculum Vitae/Bio Data and covering letter of application to the KISC Recruitment Officer, Liz Watson recruit@kisc.edu.np

Applications must be in by 9 April
Interviews will be held on 15 April

Only short listed candidates will be called for interview

Where the wind blows

SMRITI MALLAPATY

A crippling power shortage that is here to stay, ease of installation and affordability are making experts take a fresh look at windpower in Nepal.

There was optimism in abundance at a recent National Workshop on Wind Energy, organised by the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) and Tribhuvan University.

"This is the first time I have seen so many people keen on windpower," commented Rakesh Sinha, a researcher at a windpower company.

A mix of public and private stakeholders were invited, after a nine-year lull, to exchange experiences and review the draft national wind policy, recently prepared by the National Wind Task Force (NWTf). The paper intends to draw foreign investment for utility-scale wind turbines, particularly through the construction of a model project generating more than 500KW. It also means to protect the interests of local manufacturers of small wind turbines no larger than 10KW.

"We should hand over the draft policy to the ministry in the next three months. Parliament should pass it within six months, after which we hope to pilot a commercial wind farm in a year," says NWTf member Manoj Kumar Mishra.

Government, private sector and non-governmental organisations have invested intermittently in windpower over the past three decades. In 1989, two wind generators

HARNESSING NATURE:
A turbine built by Practical Action in Pakhel, Makwanpur.



PUSHKAR MANANDHAR

Necessity is forcing Nepalis to take a fresh look at wind energy

of 10KW capacity each were built in Kagbeni, Mustang, but both were blown down by high winds. This deterred further interest in windpower.

With power cuts, windpower has gradually regained credibility as a viable, quick, and possibly cheap solution. "In the past when one brought up wind energy, government officials would respond with *hawa ma kura garne* (talking in the wind). This is no longer the case," says Govind

Pokharel, formerly of AEPC. Windpower is quick to install and offsets carbon emissions by reducing deforestation and consumption of imported petroleum-based products.

Nepal presently has some small-scale, stand-alone wind turbines. AEPC has built six wind-solar hybrids – 400W wind and 150W solar – each capable of supplying a community of about 10 residences with enough energy to run one radio and a CFL bulb. Practical Action has invested in 18

small wind turbines of 200W capacity each since 2001. The army has constructed 10 larger turbines of 1KW in Nagarkot and students at Kathmandu University have designed and set up two 1.5KW turbines, using local material such as sal wood. Small wind turbines and wind mills have been installed by private companies and investors. AEPC also subsidises projects generating electricity to benefit remote areas that can't access the national grid.

All this falls far short of Nepal's 3000MW potential, as identified by a study on only 10 per cent of the total feasible area. Mustang alone could generate 500GWh a year.

"To make windpower commercially viable on a large scale, one needs to prepare a national wind map with five years of consistent data," says Tri Ratna Bajracharya, Director of the Center for Energy Studies at Tribhuvan University. But no measurements have been taken of elevations above 30 metres, the baseline for commercial production of wind.

Lack of data has also delayed reliable estimates of the Cost of Energy (CoE), and the lack of transportation and grid infrastructure in potential sites is a barrier to developing utility-scale wind farms. Tax regulation, purchasing power agreements, license distribution, land ownership and subsidies need to be agreed on before the draft national wind policy is finalised.

With political will and private sector interest as much as sheer necessity, however, windpower seems poised to take off.

Win

OOLTOBOLEE ITEM OF THE WEEK

Type OB<Space>Bid Amt & SMS to 2722

Technology by: **2722**

UNIQUE
BUT NOT LOWEST

LOWER THAN LOWEST UNIQUE
BUT NOT UNIQUE

LOWEST UNIQUE !!

don't say, jus' play !

ooltobolee

OOLTOBOLEE TIME (Every Week)

FROM Sunday 7am TO Monday 10pm

For further details, check out The Himalayan Times / Annapurna Post or Log on to www.thtlive.com/ooltobolee.asp or dial 012112722

Available on:



VIJAY LAMA

Real Nepal



GUEST COLUMN
Vijay Lama

In the 23 years I have been a pilot, I have crisscrossed much of this beautiful land of ours. From the air you see the incredible geographic diversity of this country, how it is laid out like a staircase to the heavens. From the hazy plains, through the rippled blue-green midhills to the dazzling saw-tooth of the northern horizon.

And wherever I land, in Simkot or Dhangadi, Taplejung or Bhadrapur, I meet Nepali men and women who are living proof of how our varied topography is reflected in Nepal's ethnic mosaic.

During the war, the people I met had just one concern: peace. Because I wore a smart uniform and came down from the sky, perhaps, passengers thought I would know, so they'd ask: "*Shanti kahile aunchha hola?*" Today, four years since the war ended, they are confused, disillusioned and fearful about the future.

Rural Nepalis are not demanding. They are satisfied with the little they have. They don't have great expectations. Most wake up in the morning, just wanting to get through the day, working in the fields growing enough to feed their families. They don't expect much from Kathmandu, and have long stopped demanding anything from their rulers.

I am a typical Nepali urbanite, and like many of you reading this, I have grown more and more disenchanted with the so-called New Nepal. All I see around me is cynicism, negativity and despair. So when I got an invitation to

attend the Chainpur Festival recently, I jumped at the chance to get away from it all. I am really glad I did, it restored my hope in Nepal's future.

We travelled by road from Dhankuta to Hile, along the spectacular forested ridge road to Basantapur and then down to Chainpur. High above, the pyramid of Makalu kept us company like an old friend. Chainpur was alive with the anticipation of the festival the following day, and despite the chilly night people from all classes and ethnicities mingled. The war and the memory of the fierce battle here six years ago had begun to fade. People from different political parties were working together putting up welcome banners.

Chainpur opened my eyes to what I had never seen from the air

That evening I had dal bhat, scented with pure Chainpur ghiu. Our host told us the aroma came from the herbs that the cows ate in the high altitude pastures of eastern Nepal. The old world hospitality and spontaneity towards total strangers touched me deeply. It reminded me of the sense of belonging that comes to me when I fly passengers wearing tika and marigold garlands at Dasain. I have always felt privileged to be the one uniting Nepalis by flying them to be together.

The next morning, Chainpur's quaint cobblestone lanes were filled with people dressed in daura suruwal, haku patasi, bakkhu, and the ethnic

GARDEN OF FLOWERS: The Chainpur Mahotsav showcased Nepal's diversity.

garb of the Tamang, Magar, Rai and Limbu. Whatever they were wearing, they were all speaking Nepali with a distinctive Chainpur lilt. That morning in Sankhuwasabha, I felt convinced more than ever before that it is our diversity that unites us, and it is the Nepali language that is the mortar binding the bricks of our nationhood. Chainpur that day looked like a garden, and the voices sounded like a symphony.

The procession ended at the Tundikhel. Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal landed his formerly-royal Super Puma in a cloud of dust. People clapped.

But a group of Maoist youngsters started waving black banners and shouting "murdabad". The entire atmosphere changed, people became tense, and started running helter-skelter. The riot police charged the protestors. When the ceremonies resumed, the carefree feeling had evaporated.

Till the politicians arrived on the scene, Chainpur was Nepal in a microcosm. No one saw each other as belonging to this or that party, or ethnicity. We were all Nepalis. We shared what we had with strangers without expecting anything in return.

Nepal Ama is broke, she can't give anymore. It's time for us to give back to Nepal Ama what she gave us. I thank the people of Chainpur for inviting me and for opening my eyes to the reality of the real Nepal that I had never seen from the air. 🇳🇵

Capt Vijay Lama is a pilot for Nepal Airlines.

Teaching happiness

SUVAYU DEV PANT

Srijana Singh and Father Brooks are on a mission to make Nepalis happy.

In 2008, they started Loyola Talim Sewa (LTS), a counselling centre, to help Nepalis develop interpersonal skills. "We want to help people deal with the emotional problems Nepal's political and social changes have thrown up," says Brooks.

The problems are evident everywhere, they explain. Youth are more violent, ordinary people, having despaired of genuine political and economic changes, are increasingly frustrated, and in the rush to claim new rights, matters of identity like sexuality are challenging the status quo. LTS believes such problems could be dealt with better if people learned to communicate with each other.

"So often, people don't really acknowledge one another's pain. They simply tell each other not to worry about their problems, without really making the effort to understand how they are feeling," says Singh.

LTS offers training in civic and moral education, counselling and leadership at its centre in Golphutar. It also works with NGOs and other organisations to train their staff. The training is more facilitated discussion than spoon-fed instruction, with participants put into groups and encouraged to open up to one another. Unlike other counselling services, LTS seeks to help people by empowering them to help themselves and those around them.



FOO CHEE CHANG

Loyola Talim Sewa gets to grips with the stress of modern-day Nepali living

"We don't begin by telling people they are sick and then diagnose illnesses. We give them the skills necessary to help themselves and live life more fully," explains Brooks. It's an approach that has served him well in the last 45 years, during which he worked extensively with young people (including serving as principal at St. Xavier's School for 10 years). He is now reaching out to a broader and more mature audience through LTS.

The centre is getting results. It helped one woman overcome a fear of men that she had had ever since being molested by her father at a young age. She is now happily married and has a child. LTS also helped a man come to grips with his homosexuality, a fact which led to frustration and caused him to behave violently.

Yet the challenges are steep. "We really expect a lot of trust from the people we help," says Singh. "Many of the people we see tell us things they wouldn't dare tell their own parents. But Nepali culture isn't exactly welcoming of this kind of trust."

Singh and Brooks are currently working on a book about LTS and counselling, and plan to continue working in Nepal for many years to come. Here's to hoping they make Nepal a happier place in the process. 🇳🇵

UNMIN meaning

Self-flagellation

Editorial in *Rajdhani*, 16 March

राजधानी

At first glance, the cabinet’s reaction to UN Undersecretary-General B Lynn Pascoe’s comments seems like a commitment to independence and sovereignty. Pascoe behaved in a colonial manner, threatening to withdraw UNMIN and raising questions about the competence of a sovereign government, so the cabinet’s reaction is better late than never. In the past four years various embassies and missions in Kathmandu have been violating the Vienna Convention. The Indian and Chinese envoys go around giving statements even before they present their credentials. The Maoists, UML and NC have all been mute. The Madhav Nepal government has been silent on UNMIN and OHCHR overstepping their bounds to make comments. So what is the cabinet trying to do by suddenly unleashing a thunderbolt against Pascoe? Why wasn’t the UN’s resident representative summoned by the Foreign Ministry, as would have been the norm, to be told about the government’s displeasure? The prime minister himself is obliged to donor largesse, so the cabinet’s statement doesn’t carry much credibility. The cabinet’s reaction to Pascoe’s statement is as objectionable as Pascoe’s own statement.

1. Send UNMIN back, and allow Indian expansionists to make inroads in Nepal.
2. Allow new recruitment into the army and prepare for war.
3. Prevent integration of the armies, use that as an excuse not to write the new constitution and lead Nepal into indefinite war.

Lighting the fire

Editorial in *Punarjagaran*, 16 March

पुनर्जागरण

What happens if a referee who is supposed to be neutral starts dribbling and scoring goals? That is what UNMIN is doing in Nepal with its controversial, dangerous and objectionable meddling. It started with Ian Martin and now his successor Karin Landgren is carrying on the tradition of protecting the Maoists. Her activities are

on the side of peace, it’s only the Maoists and UNMIN who are against it. The only solution is to not extend UNMIN’s mandate and ask it to leave.

“Sky won’t fall if UNMIN leaves”

Interview with former ambassador Bhekh Bahadur Thapa in *Drishti*, 16 March

दृष्टि

Drishti: What is your opinion on the debate over UNMIN?
Thapa: I blame both sides. The UN was in a hurry to come, and the Nepali side was also in a hurry to bring it in. There are very few instances of the UN actually restoring peace in any country. But the expectation was that the UN would be neutral.

of a sovereign nation in such an uncivilised way.

What will happen if UNMIN quits?
The sky won’t fall. The parties must agree on a minimum program to protect the peace process. Mediation can be done by parties, civil society and human rights organisations. If there is no basic agreement then there is a danger of a return to conflict.

The real reason

Editorial in *Kantipur*, 17 March

कान्तिपुर

The spat between the government and UNMIN has reached New York. American citizen and UN Undersecretary-General Pascoe blamed the political parties for stalling the peace process and this can be considered to be the opinion of UN headquarters. How could UNMIN have violated the Agreement on Arms and Armies Clause 2, which requires it to keep details of the strengths of the two armies secret, by giving numbers of Maoist guerrillas in the camps to the government? What if the Maoists ask UNMIN to provide details of the Nepal Army? If the government really wanted to know how many fighters there are in the cantonments, it could have used the JMCC, which has representatives of both the Maoists and the Nepal Army. In fact the JMCC was set up precisely for such complications. UNMIN’s role, after all, is not that of a mediator but of monitor. The ownership of the peace process is with the government and the Maoists, UNMIN is just there to help. The government and the Maoists have few options: either expand and extend UNMIN’s mandate or ask it to leave. But by embarrassing an international organisation which it invited, the government is putting a serious dent in Nepal’s standing. UNMIN was sent here by the decision of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council. Of them, the US, UK and China are not happy with the government’s handling of this issue. By trying to sideline the UN at a time when the peace process is stalled is to irritate a large segment of the international community just to please a regional power.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

War-loving government

Editorial in *Janadesh*, 16 March

जनादेश

The current puppet regime is trying to forget UNMIN’s role in the peace process. It is also unhappy with UNMIN’s neutral stance on the monitoring of arms and armies. UNMIN shouldn’t give in to such pressure tactics. The current puppet government is using a three-pronged anti-people strategy:

1. Send UNMIN back, and allow Indian expansionists to make inroads in Nepal.

endangering not just Nepal but also India, which is grappling with its own Maoist war. Landgren’s controversial role has been exacerbated by the undiplomatic and offensive tone of the remarks by UN Undersecretary-General Pascoe. The government had asked UNMIN to verify the numbers of guerrillas in its cantonments after receiving reports that these were down by 40 per cent. But UNMIN said it couldn’t breach secrecy, raising doubts about its role. UNMIN is itself responsible for creating the conditions for it not being possible to extend its mandate beyond 15 May. It is not serious about the peace process and is relentlessly pro-Maoist. The whole country and the national forces are

But Pascoe said UNMIN would leave.
That’s all he could say. I never expected the kind of undiplomatic words he used while here. He talked down to Nepal. Why did our leaders and the government tolerate it? I am surprised. He said the government was trying to gloss over its own shortcomings and blame UNMIN. He shouldn’t have said that. It shows how tarnished our international reputation is. I have never seen an international civil servant behave like that with the government of an independent country. And when he accused the political forces of incompetence, the Maoists were included. It did not suit him to address the leaders

Light weights

Sikshyak, March-April 2010

शिक्षक

The people of Finland have come up with a unique scheme to help teacher training in Nepal and stay healthy at the same time. They don’t have to raise money any more; all they need to do is lose weight, and an anonymous donor will donate 15 euros for every kilo shed. The project, announced in January, will continue until it raises 10 million euros. Finns wishing to take part have to go to designated weighing centres and once the kilos lost are certified, the donor will donate money to Nepal. The project is being managed by the group THL and the collected money will be handed over to Nepal by the Finnish Foreign Ministry. The scheme was kicked off in January by none other than Finland’s Minister for Foreign Trade and Development, Paavo Väyrynen. But we won’t know how much weight he has lost until May.



Poster: 100th Women's Day
"How time flies! When I first got here they were celebrating 70th Women's Day. Now they've got 100."

कान्तिपुर
Batsayan in *Kantipur*, 13 March

“दिन उत्रिने छिटै गए! म यहाँ आउँदा सत्रसौं महिला दिवस मनाथे! अहिले सर पुगेछ!”



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Joining janjati issues

SABITRA DURA

The focus of the nation is on two questions: will the new constitution be written on time and will it be pro-people? Nepal has had six constitutions, all written according to the king's wishes except for the country's First Statute 1947 and the existing Interim Constitution.

Nepal has been declared a democratic republic country. However, it is yet to be seen if this declaration will eliminate ethnic, regional, gender and class

marginalised groups better prospects.

The Janjati Caucus works towards unifying Janjati CA members. The Caucus has raised the common issues of Janjatis in draft proposals and even offered suggestions for a scientific demarcation of the proposed 14 ethnicity based provinces. Despite all efforts to bring them together, the Janjati Caucus is characterised by three types of CA members.

First, the status quoists who oppose the idea of the right to self determination, ethnic autonomy and political prerogatives. The

members feel responsibility towards the party they are affiliated with. At this historic moment, we should forget everything else and work in unison for a common cause. This is a golden opportunity for us, and one which might not come again.

Ethnic provinces, political prerogatives, right to self determination and autonomy are the common demands of Janjatis. We want ethnic provinces, not a province of a particular caste. Brahmin and Chhetris have their identity as well as representation in the state mechanism. We want identity and representation of the marginalised communities. To argue that ethnic, regional and gender equality is anti-democratic is conservative thinking.

There can be competition only among equally competent competitors. It is not undemocratic to give prerogatives to marginalised communities for a certain time. If they were as democratic as they claim, they would have given all an opportunity to flourish. It did not happen as certain communities ruled over other communities.

Natural resources were sold for personal benefit and registered in the name of influential individuals in the past. But when Janjatis claim their rights over natural resources as per ILO convention 169, how is it undemocratic?

We should jointly raise the common issues of Janjatis and get them passed in the CA. If we unite, we can win.

Dura is a Maoist CA member.

Birds of a feather flock together, but there are status quoist, moderate and resolute Janjatis

discrimination. The identity, access to and representation of the marginalised in the state apparatus are the real issues, and this should be guaranteed in the new constitution.

The real conflict is between the status quoists and progressive forces. The country has already decided to be a secular federal nation. Going back on this will disgrace the people's struggle and their sacrifice. In any case, it's too late for that.

However, it seems a Herculean task to guarantee the rights of Janjatis in the new constitution. With 218 members, Janjatis are well-represented in the CA. Yet it's unclear if this will guarantee

number of such Janjati CA members is very small, and they appear in public just to save face.

The second category includes those who are strong in word but weak in deed. They always renege on their commitments come decision time. A huge number of Janjatis fall into this category.

The third category includes those who are genuinely committed to the issues of Janjatis. These activists take up the issues and get them passed in the CA.

Ensuring the rights of Janjatis in the new constitution is the real task of Janjati CA members. Although party whips are not applicable to CA business, CA

“Many official languages”

Navodita Chaudhari, committee president and CA member from Sunsari, RPP

How important is the Committee for Determining Basis of Cultural and Social Unity?

At first, we all thought it wasn't that important a committee. Later, however, we began to believe the opposite.

Are there major disagreements in your committee?

Initially there was agreement on the draft, but then debate arose over whether to call the conflict 'people's war' or 'civil conflict.' We decided to put it to a vote. Besides that, there are disagreements about what the official state language should be.

What has your committee decided will be the official state language?

Currently, Nepali is the official language since it is spoken most widely. However, we propose that a language commission be formed to look into the feasibility of making particular languages the official language in the provinces where they are predominant.

Madhes-based groups are demanding that Hindi be made the official language. What do you say?

Hindi is also included in the census, so can very well be made the official language in some province.

Won't this put other languages spoken in the Tarai, like Bhojpuri, Maithili, Awadhi, at a disadvantage?

There are no restrictions here. Those languages can be made official languages too.



“Committee couldn't agree”

Sambhu Hazara Dusadh, committee president and CA member from Parsa, NC

The Committee on the Forms of Governance, hasn't even prepared a draft, it seems.

The draft is ready, but there isn't yet consensus on the form of governance and election system.

Even voting hasn't helped?

No, and the CA regulations aren't about what should be done in such circumstances.



Is it true that there was a physical scuffle between you and Energy Minister Prakash Sharan Mahat?

No. There was just some confusion during committee elections. The Maoists' model of a directly elected executive president got 18 votes, the NC-UML model of a directly elected executive prime minister and mixed-model got 13 votes each, but none had an outright majority. We didn't know if we should just pick the model which got the most votes. When I was giving my speech explaining the results, Minister Mahat took my speech from my hand.

Why?

He thought I was going to declare the Maoists' model as the committee's pick.

Have relations between you two soured?

No, we have friendly conversations every now and then.

Borrrrring!

Knew there was a catch to the Baddies signing the multi-partisan pledge not to disrupt Visit Nepal Year with bunneds and hurtalls. We forgot to read the **fine print** in the agreement:

‘However, the party deserves the right to close down any hotel at any time on any pretext just so that, while hiding behind the banner of our revolutionary trade union, we can continue to extort the hell out of any tourism investor who has not yet left this country in total disgust. The party will also stop all trekking from Saturday onwards by placing goons at strategic locations on the trails unless the trekking agencies triple the daily wages of porters, and pay us a donation. We will beat to pulp any Nepali porter we find on the trekking trails, disobeying our diktat. But we will leave the foreigners alone because we don’t intend to disrupt Visit Nepal Year. Because, although we may be atheists, we firmly believe that paryataks are debo bhava.’

I’m glad to see it’s not just the **Weekly Donkey** who is confused about Nepali political shenanigans. Indian state minister Dig Vijay, after an hour-long chat with fellow-Vijay (the Gachhedar) last week asked the MJF deputy PM: “So how is your UML party doing?” It’s all getting so baffling that Nirupama Behen didn’t want to get even more bewildered by meeting Herr Pascoe and his entourage, who had to be content with shaking hands with South Bloc’s Nepal desk handler. Which is probably why Pascoe was telling every bigwig he met in Kathmandu last week that if UNMIN departed, India would gobble Nepal up. Borrtring!

The YCL Don telling this paper last week that henceforth his paramilitary organisation would devote itself solely to controlling criminality is like letting Comrade Fox guard the Chicken Cantonment. The announcement coincided with a spurt in extortion terrorism in Gorkha, Tanahu and Kaski where the YCL has banned any DDC contract being awarded to anyone but them: on pain of death. The irony of it all, of course, is that the contracts are for re-building the health posts, VDC buildings, bridges that the Baddies themselves **bombed to smithereens** during the war.

Organisers of future sports meets in Nepal should have got the message by now. We proud Nepalis (who, need we remind you, have never been colonised) will never take any defeat lying down. If the American cricket team beats us, we will beat them up. And if Big Vito seems to be getting the upper hand (as it were) over Himalayan Tiger at the unfortunately-named World Trade Centre, then we will break a few chairs over the American wrestler’s head. Get that? **Take that, you imperialists.** And that.



By far the most momentous decision taken by the non-government organisation that is the present coalition was to declare Ghoday Jatra a national holiday. The government meets on Sunday to declare Monday a happy holiday. A govt bunned. Not that it mattered, because the entire Tarai was shut down anyway by the Tharus, Biratnagar was closed by cadres of the ruling UML and Jhapa’s highways were closed by bus drivers.

The Ass, as you have probably guessed by now, is not all that fond of horses. Why the country needs a holiday just so these haughty high-caste mules can prance around in Tundikhel in front of a visibly bored President, a Prime Minister who looked like he’d rather be taking a nap and a CA Chairman who gave the distinct impression he had more urgent matters to attend to, is beyond me. With all this horsing around, no wonder the **New Constipation** is stuck amidst all the heavy load-shedding.

Which brings us to the **Only in Nepal Quote of the Week**. Energised Minister Prakash Mahat (whose first name means ‘light’, hahahaha) told the press: “I am happy to announce that loadshedding this year is not going to exceed 12 hours a day.”

ass(at)nepalitimes.com



www.lalitmandaptravels.com

EUROPE
SEE MORE

LALIT MANDAP
PACKAGE TOURS

Lalit Mandap
Travels & Tours (P) Ltd.
ISO 9001:2000 Certified Company

HEAD OFFICE: Harihar Bhawan, Pulchowk, Lalitpur, Tel. 5546526,
BRANCH OFFICE: Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel. 4239000

Yeti Airlines'
e-ticketing Service

Simple, swift solution
Instant Ticketing
through secure Internet Banking

Click & Fly
Any time, Any where
www.yetiairlines.com

We operate 7 JetStream Aircrafts to the following sectors on time, every day:

Kathmandu - Pokhara - Kathmandu	Daily 8 Flights
Kathmandu - Biratnagar - Kathmandu	Daily 7 Flights
Kathmandu - Bhairahawa - Kathmandu	Daily 3 Flights
Kathmandu - Nepalgunj - Kathmandu	Daily 2 Flights
Kathmandu - Janakpur - Kathmandu	Daily 2 Flights
Kathmandu - Dhangadhi - Kathmandu	Daily 1 Flight

In Partnership with:

www.everestbankltd.com
Tel: (977-1) 4443377

www.nibl.com.np
Tel: (977-1) 4228230

www.globalbanknepal.com
Tel: (977-1) 4002507, 4002508

Clients of Everest Bank Ltd., Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. and Global Bank Ltd. can now book their flight-tickets online, just log on to www.yetiairlines.com

e-ticketing contact no: 016 215397

Corporate Office: Tilganga, Kathmandu
Tel: 4465886 Fax 4465115 Reservations: 4464878 (Hunting Line)
Kathmandu Airport 4493901
E-mail: reservations@yetiairlines.com

Nepalgunj 081 526558 Bhairahawa 071 527527 Janakpur 041 693360
Pokhara 061 464888 Biratnagar 021 536612 Bhairahawa 023 456232 Dhangadhi 091-523045

Yeti Airlines
a great flying experience
www.yetiairlines.com

CDO Regd No 194/056/57 Lalitpur, Central Region Postal Regd. No 09/066/67