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Staying afloat

With no government to speak of, the economy is barely surviving on remittances from Nepali workers abroad. On average, one coffin bearing the body of a Nepali worker arrives every day at Pashupati for cremation. Local boys use them as canoes.

Meanwhile, floods and mudslides ravage the country, with damage even in arid Upper Mustang this year. Global warming exacerbates the flood danger with glacial lake outbursts threatening a remote village in Humla.

p12-13

BIKRAM RAI

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FAR FROM RIGHT

Last week's terrible terrorist attacks in Norway made many accepted certainties uncertain once more. It proved that the international media hasn't learnt the lesson from the Oklahoma City bombing in 1995 when US commentators all rushed to blame Islamists, not noticing homegrown terrorism in their own backyard. Timothy McVeigh was a product not of militancy in some faraway desert, but of bigotry and rage against the state at home.

So was Anders Behring Breivik. This time, too, the first reports in wire services and the international news channels immediately rushed to point out Norway's NATO involvement, its sizeable immigrant population, the reprinting of Mohammad cartoons as probable motives, and to pin the blame on Islamic militants. The Wall Street Journal, CNN, and of course Fox News, all succumbed.

Even a week after the disaster, a cursory google search reveals a remarkable reluctance among European commentators to call Breivik a terrorist, a label that would have been automatically conferred on a suicide bomber in Kabul, Israel or London. As Anurag Acharya argues overleaf, we will probably never hear Breivik ever referred to as a "Protestant terrorist". Stereotyping and stigmatisation is so ingrained in the media now that the complexion of the mass murderer determines the label we tag him with.

Noted Norwegian-born peace activist and academic, Johann Galtung, described his

country's security apparatus as having "a left eye so sharp that it even sees the non-existing, but a right eye so blind that Breivik passed undetected". It was a reminder that extremists breed in the dark extremities of belief systems, be they religious, political or territorial. And all it takes is one unhinged misfit with access to a killing apparatus to go on a rampage.

As the Oklahoma bomb and Utoya massacre showed, weapons of mass killings are easily available over the counter. Strong anti-immigrant rhetoric is allowed to pass in the name of pluralism. Intolerance is tolerated in the name of freedom. And, as with the Olaf Palme assassination in neighbouring Sweden, the security-intelligence establishment is once more caught napping, complacent and lulled by the orderliness of society.

There are many lessons for countries around the world, including us here in Nepal, from the terror spree in Norway. The first is that if it can happen in a multi-cultural, affluent welfare state like Norway, it can happen anywhere. No country should assume it is immune to the scourge of terrorism, just as no country has a monopoly on compassion or brutality.

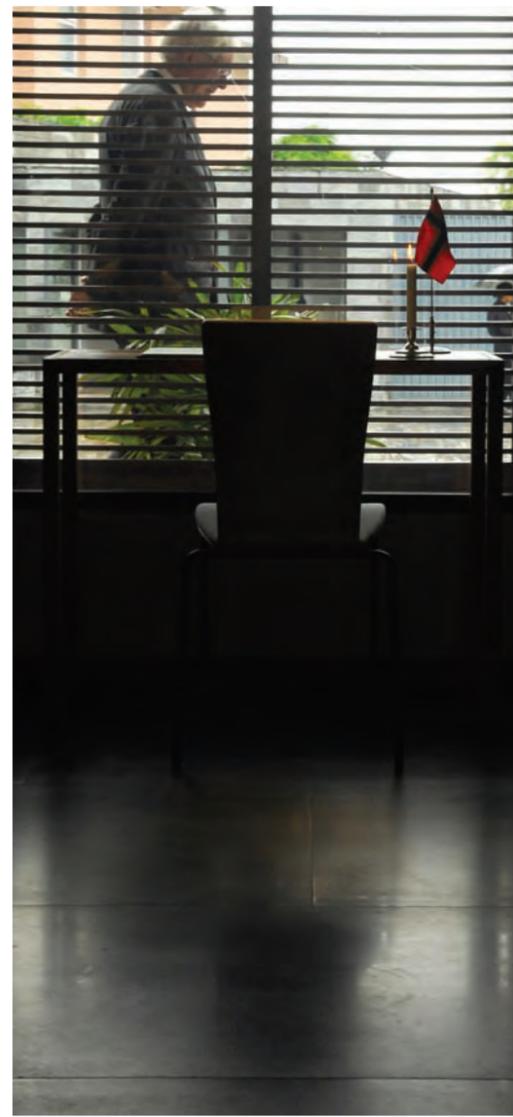
The Norwegians had done almost everything right. Their school curriculum is a model for civic education, teaching tolerance, inclusiveness, the responsibilities of citizens not just to their nation state but

globally. Like other Nordic countries Norway has an enlightened immigration policy. It sets aside more than one per cent of its GDP for foreign aid. They thought of everything, except the evil that lurks in some human souls. Who would have thought Dipendra Shah would end up massacring his entire family? Who would have thought a church would be bombed in Kathmandu? The far right is far from right, no matter where.

National security and intelligence need to be redefined. It is no more just about hefty military budgets, real-time satellite surveillance and drone cyber warfare. It is also about keeping tabs on the enemy within. It won't be easy with a terrorist who likes to work alone like Breivik, an anti-Muslim ethnic cleanser who kills Christians. Ears-on-the-ground intelligence must use undercover infiltration of extremist groups and sting operations. Since potential mass murderers often leave a cyber trail of clues about their intentions, surveillance of the internet has become essential.

For us in Nepal it also means tackling the precursors to violence, the grievances and injustice that feed the terrorist mind. It means bringing those who have been left out of decision-making into the fold, and making those who make decisions less exclusive. Leaders need to understand that society needs safety valves so incubated anger doesn't explode into violence.

The quote from one survivor from Utoya, a young woman of Sri Lankan descent, says it all: "I feel pity for him. If this man had enjoyed a good friendship with just one coloured immigrant, this disaster might never have happened."



BIKRAM RAI

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

NO MERCY

Straight hanging, with at least five kicks on the backside before gallows, for these rapists ('I wanted to murder whoever did this to my daughter', Dewan Rai, #563)

Nares H

- I feel sick to my stomach when I read that there was political pressure to free the rapists. They should be punished and not released no matter what.

Tshering

- Thank you Dewan Rai and Nepali Times for bringing this follow up article on the rape of the nun. Please let us join hand in hand for her early recovery and justice. If all of us (individuals, community groups, media, civil society) can work together, we can have a bigger impact.

We also contacted some of the local people and was everybody saying that the incident was too un-humanitarian, extremely shameful and absolutely unbelievable that a Buddhist nun can be raped in a land where Buddha was born

Suresh Tamang

- Shame on the criminal minds who perpetrated this inhumane crime. Don't you have even a shred of humanity in your heart? You should have a public hanging

Khyam BK

- Castrate the rapist. That is the only way such events will not be repeated in future

Badal Lama

- Maybe these girl guerrillas ('Sorry soldiers', # 563) need to give their husbands the same treatment they gave to Sanskrit teachers and ordinary NC/UML supporters in the village during the war. Come on, girls, you can do it. Violence

as a mean to get "justice" is an idea you are already familiar with. You should apply the doctrine you learned to your own household first.

Chandra Gurung

- These "fighters" had no problem kidnapping and murdering thousands of their own brothers and sisters and now they want sympathy after they invite the violence into their own homes? What a joke.

Truth

- Usually Nepali Times presents a "modern" veneer, trying to appeal to western donors and westernised Nepalis with its relentless attacks on Maoists. But this time the Maoists are attacked for getting divorces! In every modern society divorce is quite normal. Approximately half of marriages end in divorce (and marriage itself is withering away, with half of children born to unwed mothers).

Arthur

- Maoist have for long brought violence into other people's home, it was only a matter of time for it to seep inside their own. One reaps what is sowed.

Nepkath

- Take an immature girl, convince her with lies and a glorious future, riches and a good life then sell her to a brothel and it is a crime ('Love in a time of war', Aruna Rayamajhi, #563).

Take an immature girl, convince her with lies and a glorious future, riches and a good life then get her to kill people and it is a fight for justice. And the people doing it get rewarded with high political office.

Jange

STATELESS

These new provisions are shameful ('Stateless in their motherland', by Kunda Dixit, #563). What is deeply disturbing is that this is not some archaic law from decades past which

has yet to be repealed (indeed most countries have some of these). Instead, political actors have actually consciously discussed and agreed upon these provisions, even reversing previous 'progressive' rulings. This serves to highlight how completely out of touch the political establishment is with international norms and realities. The fact that so called 'progressive' parties can espouse such reactionary positions makes me doubt their legitimacy. If this is finalised in the constitution, it could result in the disenfranchisement of tens of thousands, particularly in the border regions.

Leguwa

- We believe that if we write everything in the constitution in favour of women that will be the magic wand 'Editorial, 'More than half the sky', #563. We tried positive discrimination measures as reservation to ensure the proper participation of women, dalits and other marginalised sections of the community. Unless there is an improvement in women's education, health and the economy, we will not have true gender balance. There is always reflection of country's poor governance and excessive politics everywhere.

Laxman Karki

CYBER-CENSORSHIP

Monitoring internet usage to curb crime (in this case VOIP) sounds like a good idea, but the same provisions and laws could be extended later to target bloggers or journalists who speak against the establishment ('Surfing under surveillance', Rubeena Mahato, #563). No surveillance should be allowed without a court warrant and a very solid legal basis behind it. This should also apply to wiretapping, espionage, personal communication and other areas.

On the other hand, Nepal's ISP's are no less irresponsible. They recently shut down the internet for some hours in the

name of "protest" and then went ahead to lobby internal and international rights groups to support such move of theirs. If ISPs are involved in illegal activities like the government claims, this kind of provision does nothing to solve it. The ISPs should be more responsible and government should be more far-sighted.

Bibek Paudel

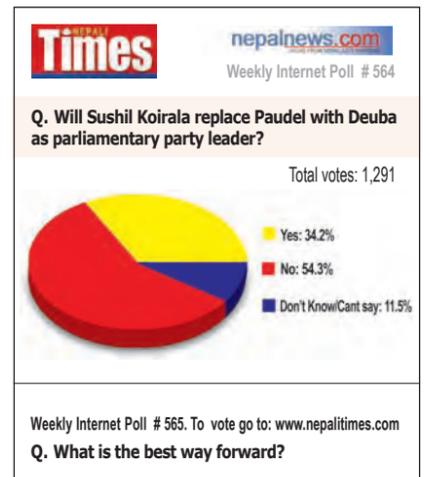
- Now all that's left to do is to create a department of homeland security. Who's going to man up?

Gyan Guru

BANK ROBBERY

If the banks are making money, then you and I are losing it ('Bank robbery', Paavan Mathema, #563). How on earth do you think that banks make a 'profit'? What do they produce and sell? I agree that businesses that produce genuine products and services need to profit (not profiteer). Banks are not the same. They produce debt. They sell money. Money is their commodity. Debt is the price of money that the public has to pay. Debt is an undesirable burden on us all as the world events have proven.

Jefferson



One man's terrorist is everyone's terrorist

Each society must deal with its share of extremism in its own way



BY THE WAY

Anurag Acharya

The terror attack in Norway last week revealed some home truths. While Norway and the world recuperates, it may be time for us here in South Asia to sit up and worry.

This is yet another instance of senseless violence unleashed in the name of religion. All religions preach compassion and tolerance, yet more human life has been taken by fellow humans for religious reasons in history than any other. There was a twist to this in Norway. A Christian man killed mostly Christians even though his real grievance was against Muslims. This should temper some of the knee-jerk blame on one religion or community for what is now a worldwide problem.

As state and religion compete for control despite constitutionally-separated powers, it is increasingly clear that monolithic religious ideas stand at odds with society's multicultural and democratic aspirations. South Asia has witnessed this ever since the holocaust of the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 and the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi by a Hindu zealot. More than seven decades later, the region is still regularly wracked by religious pogroms and politically-backed religious extremism.

In September 2004, a mob of trident-waving extremists, riding on public outrage over the brutal killings of 12 Nepalis in Iraq by terrorists, tried to restage the Babri Masjid demolition in Kathmandu's Jama Masjid.

It was clear at the time that religion was just an excuse and the democratic parties fanned the flames in order to corner the Gyanendra regime.

Another Mosque in Biratnagar was attacked with grenades in March 2008. A group calling itself the Nepal Defense Army, with a declared agenda of restoring the Hindu monarchy claimed responsibility. The same group murdered a Catholic priest in Eastern Nepal in 2008, and a year later planted a bomb at the Assumption Church in Kathmandu that killed three worshippers (pictured, above).

While the attacks by Islamist groups in India,



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Pakistan and Afghanistan are condemned worldwide, similar attacks by Hindu extremist groups in India and Nepal are rarely referred to as "terrorist" attacks. It's always "Islamic terrorists" and "rightwing Hindu extremists".

The bloody carnage in Gujarat in 2002 and Kandhamal in Orissa and Karnataka in 2008 have neither been referred to as a "terrorist" attacks nor have they been condemned at an international level with the same sense of outrage that one sees following a "jihadist

terror attack". In spite of the proven involvement of high profile priests and ex-army personnel in mosque bombings across India, it is somehow still only Islamists who bear the terror label.

Amidst the global "war on terror", the mainstream rarely looks beyond beards and burkhas for terrorists. And this is why western media and society is shocked to find terrorists in their midst. It is highly unlikely that Anders Behring Breivik will ever be called a "Protestant terrorist" on CNN.

Meanwhile in the

subcontinent our love for freedom and democracy has failed to teach us tolerance and respect towards multicultural values. We are lurching from a fatalistic society to one that believes in work and progress, but the relics of old power structures threaten to drag us back. What happened in Norway last week is no different from what happened in Mumbai in 2008.

Extremism is not a trait endemic to a particular community. There is a potential for violent outburst in every individual or group

in various ways and under different circumstances, when social, political, religious and cultural values rub against each other. There is no capsule solution to the problem and each society must deal with its share of extremism in its own way. Exporting or importing remedies won't work.

The Oslo bombing and massacre should prompt developed nations that while they invest heavily in promoting democracy the world over, maybe they ought to pause and take a closer look at their own society.



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Compensation by accident

It's the rule of the jungle when it comes to seeking damages after a traffic accident

DEWAN RAI

Rabindra Magar was driving his school bus at Rani Pokhari corner at rush hour recently when a speeding motorcycle, trying to overtake, sideswiped his vehicle from the right. The biker fell off and went somersaulting into the sidewalk.

As is the custom, a crowd immediately gathered around. Pedestrians and onlookers who were strangers to the motorcycle driver were ready to lynch Rabindra, but he was saved by arrival of the traffic police. "They would have burnt the bus if it was not carrying school children, so I was also spared," Rabindra recalls.

Traffic accidents are a spectator sport. There is a reversal of the might is right principle at work here. If a bicycle hits a motorcycle, the motorcycle pays. If a motorcycle hits a car, the car driver pays for damages even if it was no fault of his own. If a truck hits a car, and the car suffers greater damage, the car owner has to pay for the minor damage to the truck.

In Rabindra's case, the school was forced to admit the motorcycle driver to hospital, cover his medical expenses and repair his bike. The cost: Rs 250,000 for medical and garage bills. "There is nowhere to



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

go to complain," says Umet Shrestha, the school principal.

The rule of the thumb is that if a pedestrian is hit, it is always the fault of the motorised vehicle. If a bicycle hits a motorcycle, it is the fault of the motorised vehicle. The vehicle whose owner is deemed to be more capable of paying for damages is always at fault.

We put this to Valley

Traffic Chief Bigyan Raj Sharma, who admits it has been the practice that large vehicle are often held responsible. "There is no such rule, but we always try to investigate who is at fault," he says. "Our priority is that the injured should get immediate medical attention."

Traffic accidents have become the excuse for

HOLY COW

If a car kills a pedestrian in a traffic accident, the Vehicles and Transportation Management Act (VTMA 1993) provides for a compensation of Rs 500,000 to the next of kin and funeral expenses of Rs 25,000. However, if the pedestrian is severely injured, the expenses to the vehicle owner can exceed Rs 1 million depending on the seriousness of the injury and time spent in hospital. In the absence of third party insurance, the vehicle owner ends up paying this.

But, wait for this. If a car hits a cow on the street, the punishment is a fine of Rs 500,000 or life imprisonment or both, says Kathmandu SP Jagat Man Shrestha. However, Shrestha says police don't usually pursue the case. Compensation for the owner of the cow is also Rs 500,000, according to the VTMA.



RSS

extortion by locals, and neighbourhood toughies often get into the act to shakedown the vehicle owner in return of a cut of the payoff.

Rajan Khadka owns a fleet of taxis, one of which hit a middle-aged woman in Swayambhu recently. The driver took her to Teaching Hospital and drove his car to the police station and left it there. The relatives of the woman, who suffered a fractured leg, first demanded that she be treated in a private hospital. Khadka took her to B & B, where recovery was slow because she was diabetic. Then her relatives demanded she be flown to Delhi for treatment. By the

end of the ordeal, Khadka had spent nearly Rs 400,000.

The Vehicles and Transportation Management Act provides for compensation of Rs 500,000 and Rs 25,000 for funeral expenses if someone is killed in a traffic accident. But the cost of treating the injured has no limit because of extortion. Says Khadka: "It is cheaper if the accident victim dies. An accident isn't deliberate, and the injured is not always right."

Since there are no CCTV cameras to monitor traffic, police have to rely on witness accounts. Sharma admits that onlookers tend to have a soft corner for the injured. A solution would be mandatory third party insurance for vehicle owners.

"Accidents aren't deliberate, and it is usually one side that is negligent but the tendency is that no one readily owns up his mistake," says Sudarshan Lamichhane, district attorney of Lalitpur district. "The court asks for evidence and sometimes it might be against the victim."

Nepal's political transition has bred an atmosphere of lawlessness and impunity, where a mob rather than the rule of law metes out instant justice after a traffic accident. Usually it is the side that is seen to be more able to pay that has to pay.

Last year, there were 8,500 traffic accidents all over the country, double the number of accident compared to previous year, in which 200 people were killed and 6,000 injured. The number killed the previous year was 148.

Says Sharma, "The traffic law applies equally to all, be it pedestrian, cyclist, motorbike or lorry at least until I am in charge." He should tell that to people like to Rabindra Magar, Rajan Khadka and Umet Shrestha. ■

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Japan aid cut

Funding to developing countries will be cut as Japan rebuilds

SUVENDRINI KAKUCHI in TOKYO

International campaigns against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria are headed for cuts in funding assistance, now that Japan is reducing its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) budget in the wake of the disaster that hit the country in March.

These global programs, which are part of the Millennium Development Goal of fighting infectious diseases, one of eight anti-poverty targets governments around the world have committed to meet before 2015, could suffer reductions of as much as \$200 million, aid groups say.

In a bid to appease criticism, Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto recently explained to the press that the ODA reduction will be for only one year. Japan's 2011 ODA budget stood at \$7.2 billion dollars, less than 0.18 percent of GDP. But in April, the cabinet agreed to an almost 10 percent slash, \$600 million dollars, in the budget for fiscal year 2011.

Matsumoto called the cut "regrettable," but clarified that Tokyo would mainly cut spending for yen loans and contributions to multilateral funds in order to minimise the impact on the massive recovery plans after the 11 March earthquake and tsunami that hit Tohoku.

"Japan's ODA is a vital pillar of its diplomacy and an engine in Asian economic growth," said Professor Takeshi Inoguchi, a leading international relations expert. "The new cuts will mean a lower profile for Japan on the international stage."

Inoguchi said he does not



support the move, which he said is detrimental to Japan's national interests in the long run. Indeed, the huge outpouring of aid to Japan from countries that included small and developing nations was viewed here as a potent example of the international respect the country has gained by being a leading donor.

Another concern Inoguchi cited is the consequence of a fading Japanese impact in a rapidly changing Asia where the rise of China, now the world's second largest economy, and India will steer the future of the region.

"In the fast changing geopolitical world that is seeing newcomers such as China's influence in the region, the decision to keep slashing the ODA budget to support Tohoku recovery does not make much sense," he said.

Japan has been the top donor in Asia for the past two decades and, through ODA, has played a leadership role in the region by supporting better infrastructure, technology transfer that paved the way for international

investment in developing countries, and growth and poverty reduction.

Japan used to be second only to the U.S. as the largest aid donor for countries like China and Indonesia. And for the past two years, India has been among the largest recipients, with yen loans, grants and technology assistance extended to develop local industries and infrastructure.

But Japan's position has slowly eroded, and last year it fell to fifth place among countries belonging to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that are also aid givers. Japan's 2010 White Paper on ODA by the Foreign Ministry explains domestic economic concerns and lack of public support as the primary causes.

The document that outlines national policy on aid pointed to several new steps that have been established in the ODA framework, including a results-based approach and the promotion of a public-private partnership to facilitate higher impact in aid recipient countries. (IPS)

BIZ BRIEFS

Daily Dragons

Good news if you plan to travel to Hong Kong, or transiting. Dragonair, the Hong Kong-based subsidiary of Cathay Pacific will increase its flights to Kathmandu from three to daily from September. The airline began flying to Nepal in December 2007 with four flights a week, using a 150-seater A320, but now but now operates a 300-seater A330.

"The frequency increase is in response to rise in passenger numbers to Nepal from our key markets," says Alasdair Boyd of Dragonair Manager Nepal. Last year alone, the airline flew in more than 50,000 tourists to Nepal.

IHT here

Nepal Republic Media and International Herald Tribune (IHT) entered into a publishing alliance to publish Asia Pacific Edition of IHT from Kathmandu. This is the 40th print site for IHT, the global edition of New York Times. The paper

International Herald Tribune

THE GLOBAL EDITION OF THE NEW YORK TIMES

is priced at Rs 25. In the first week of launch, the paper booked over 200 subscribers.

Hi-tech award

Kumari Bank has been awarded the mBillionth Award South Asia for its Kumari Mobile Cash. The first of its kind, Kumari Mobile Cash pioneered the 'mobile wallet' concept in Nepal, which allows users to store cash balances in their mobile phones for deposits, withdrawals and transactions.

Right mix

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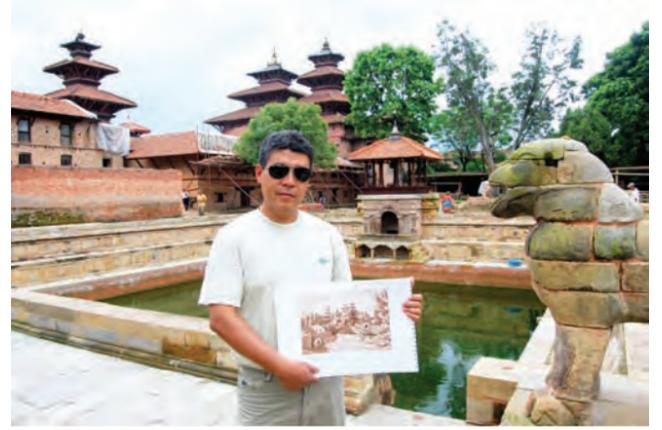
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ALL PICS: CAI YUN



Bhandarkhal Garden

From the Sundari Chok, chief architect Rohit Ranjitkar (above) leads us through a low-lying door out into the royal garden. This leafy area is an archaeological treasure trove because it was the dumping ground for debris after successive earthquakes. Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) has unearthed foundations of buildings dating back to the 12th century. The royal bath has also been restored based on period paintings and was inaugurated earlier this year. It will be opened to the public later as an inner city park. The Kathmandu Literary Festival in September will be held at this venue.

Facelift for the Patan Palace

The Patan Darbar Square is not just a Kathmandu Valley treasure but a World Heritage Site that is undergoing much-needed restoration

CAI YUN

Of the three Darbar Squares of Kathmandu Valley, the former seat of the Malla kings of Patan is regarded as the most architecturally elegant and harmonious. Built in 1734, the structure of russet brick on wrinkled wood rests on a far older foundations from the Lichhavi period of the 3rd - 9th century. The Patan Palace complex is now one of the seven UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the Valley.

Three beautifully carved courtyards, Keshav Narayan Chok, Mul Chok and Sundari Chok, each more splendid than the other, form the main attraction of the palace.

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Not just a museum piece, #19
The hush of centuries, #120
Patan's crown jewel, #517

nepalitimes.com

Patan Palace: Jewel of Kathmandu Valley
Exclusive interview with Rohit Ranjitkar
Chief Architect of the preservation project.



Patan Museum

More than 200 metal figures in the museum cover a long span of Nepal's cultural history. On exhibit are objects of Hindu and Tantric significance, Buddhist artifacts, and a newly added section of historical photographs of Kathmandu. Its main focus is on cast bronzes and repousse work of Hindu and Buddhist deities. When the museum is expanded to Sundari Chok, it will also house the wooden sculptures from the darbar.

Every display item is elegantly laid out and softly spotlighted, accompanied by detailed explanation on its form, history, and significance, in both Nepali and English. Visitors gain an extensive knowledge of Hindu and Buddhist culture and how they have evolved syncretically in the Kathmandu Valley.

The museum receives at least 75,000 visitors a year, mainly from US, Japan and Germany, but increasingly from India and China. Nepali researchers and students also use the museum.

"We are planning to increase local visitors with new schemes," says gallery in-charge Suresh Man Lakhe, "there will be memberships for students up to Grade 10, with the once-off payment of 50 rupees for unlimited visits with one parent."

From August, netizens will be able to access the museum resources and view gallery photos from around the world, available in both English and German. A new series of monthly cultural seminars, a public library and an audio-visual room is also under construction.

www.patanmuseum.org.np





Sundari Chok

Although this exquisite quadrangle is currently under heavy scaffolding, the exceptional architecture and crafts still shine through the piles of construction materials. Among its treasures, the most striking is the superbly carved sunken fountain in the centre of the square, which was commissioned by King Siddhi Narsingh Malla in 1647.

Every available space inside the bath is adorned with figurines of the gods, goddesses, mythical beasts and abstract patterns. Every stone alcove is devoted to members of the Hindu pantheon, reflecting the craftsmanship and devotion of the past masters.

The other stone images have also been attached with concealed stainless steel hooks so they can't be removed. Art theft is a problem. The main gilded bronze image of Laxmi-Narayan was stolen 18 months ago, and a Durga was stolen in the 1980s. Rare historical photographs and water paintings come in as a handy guideline for restoration. A special puja will be done to confer divinity to the new images when the restored Sundari Chok opens early next year. While incorporating modern technology, traditional building techniques are still employed as much as possible to keep the ancient craftsmanship.

Upon completion of the renovation project, Sundari Chok will be integrated into the present Patan Museum for a permanent display of antique wood carvings. The entire project is being supported by Nepali corporate sponsors, the US Embassy and the German government. However, funds are running out and there is an urgent need for infusion of cash if the restoration is to meet its target completion date of early 2015.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA



KUNDA DIXIT

Mul Chok

Mul Chok is the biggest and oldest among all the three royal courtyards. It has witnessed all major historical events in the Malla period, including religious rituals, royal weddings and investiture of the crown prince. The courtyard, including the exquisite figurines of Ganga and Jamuna (above) and the priceless toranas on the golden door is the venue for rituals during Dasain when the Taleju deity is brought down to a special room by priests. Mul Chok is also currently being restored.

Keshav Narayan Chok

The courtyard now houses the Patan Museum, regarded as one of Asia's most important museums for Buddhist and Hindu artifacts. Its signature huge gilded door guarded by two stone lions welcome visitors from around the world.

Before 1983, years of wear and earthquake damage, including its recent use as a school, left this jewel of Malla architecture almost in ruins. With funding and technical support from Austria, the Department of Archaeology restored the building to its former glory. Besides extensive renovation and partial reconstruction, the space was also redesigned to suit a modern museum that was opened in 1997.

Run by an independent board of directors, the Patan Museum is a model for sustainability in a country where most such projects are mismanaged. Revenue from the tickets, rent from the café and gift shops and venue rental for cultural events go for the museum's upkeep.



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EVENTS



Pokhrel, Salil Subedi and Sunil Babu Pant. Event is restricted to 100 attendees only who will be selected through application process. Forms can be downloaded from www.tedxkathmandu.com. 30 July, Nepal Tourism Board, Exhibition Road

Kafka: Ak Adhyaaya, a Nepali play based on the life of German writer Franz Kafka, to be staged by Actors Studio. 30 July, 6.30pm, Moksh, Jhamsikhel

The Himalayan Arts Project, an exclusive open day and launch party with two new collections from print and jewellery ranges. 29 July, open all day, launch party: 5.30pm to 8pm, *Imago Dei*, Nagpokhari

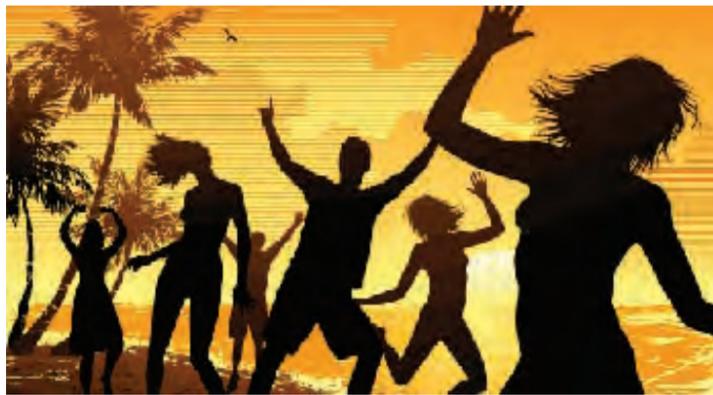
Research Seminar Series, in Martin Chautari on Chaitanya Mishra's *Badalindo Nepali Samaj*, Speakers: Pratyoush Onta, Rajendra Maharjan, Bhim Prasad Bhurtel. 31 July, Sunday, 3pm, Martin Chautari, Thapathali

Poetry Recitation, organised by Himalayan Readers' Book Club. 30 July, 3pm to 4.30pm, British Council, Lazimpat, 9849100300

TEDx Kathmandu, an independently organised TED event featuring speakers Ani Choying Dolma, Anil Chitrakar, Prabhas



Biodiversity Conversation in Nepal, a talk program by Rajendra Narsingh Suwal, organised by the Indian Cultural Centre. 29 July, 5.30pm, Darbar Hall, Bal Mandir, Naxal, 4412715, invitation only



San Miguel Beach Party, Insomnia creates a beach setting complete with wind surf boards, sails, sand and even an artificial sun, don't miss out on the fun. 29 July, 7pm onwards, *Insomnia Lounge Bar*, Durbar Marg, Ticket: Rs 500 inclusive of a can of San Miguel

Funky Fresh E.L.E.M.E.N.T.S., a youth empowerment program for young hip hop enthusiasts above the age of 13. 23 to 30 July, 10am to 6pm, *Sattya Media Arts Collective*, Jawalakhel/ Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel, fee Rs1000 (Scholarships available),

Nepal Cine Symposium, a South Asia focused international film network and promotion platform for

cinema which includes a film festival 'Something like a film festival' organised by DocSkool. Till 22 November, Submission open until 30 August, www.cinesymposium.com, amanyu@cinesymposium.org, 4471104



Arbitrary Constant, DJ session, live performances, creative bartenders and a fashion show all wrapped into one exclusive night. 29 July, 7pm to midnight, *The Tantra*, Paknajok. Tickets Rs 300. 9841687184

MUSIC



Lyrics Andy and Albatross live in House of Music. 4 August, 10pm to 11.30pm, Thamel, 9841904105



Mukti and Revival in concerts. 29 July, 6.30pm onwards, *Cafereena*, Durbar Marg. 30 July, 7.30pm onwards, *The Tantra Restaurant*, Paknajok, 4257171

“Do for nation”

Small amounts of money donated by a large amount of people goes a long way in Nepal

Nearly Rs 2.5 million raised by the Help Nepal Network (HeNN) from Nepalis in 14 countries around the world was given out at a ceremony on Tuesday to fund education and health programs in Nepal.

The money was donated through a project called 'Rs100 a Month Fund for Nepal' in which Nepalis all over the world forego a bottle of beer or plate of momo a month, and donate it to the network. Money collected has been spent on nearly 100 projects in health, education and disaster mitigation in the past ten years. The 100 Rupees a Month Fund also supports e-libraries, infrastructure for schools and health posts, and uses money donated by Nepalis from Austria, Canada, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Russia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and New Zealand.

Among the latest beneficiaries handed cheques on Monday were a school in Parbat that got nearly Rs 600,000 to build a library, a health post in Dhanusha, a project to train community school teachers in Kavre, a school in Ramechhap to buy science lab equipment, a water project in Dhulikhel and another school in Sankhu



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

that got nearly Rs 11 lakhs to buy classroom furniture.

"The Help Nepal Network links Nepalis everywhere with a chain of love," said actor Hari Bansa Acharya at Monday's ceremony, "the word 'donation' now also means 'do for nation'."

HeNN's Rabindra Mishra calls this "practical philanthropy" because it aims to collect small amounts of money from a large amount of people to make a difference. "We encourage Nepalis and those who love Nepal around the world to help Nepalis

with health and education in rural Nepal," Mishra says.

Also present on the occasion was Rameswore Khanal, the former finance secretary, who resigned earlier this year after his new minister refused to go after those accused in a fake VAT bill scam. Khanal said Nepalis shouldn't wait for political stability in Nepal to help or invest in the country: "If we wait for stability we may be waiting for a long time, and many of our problems can't wait."

Khanal added: "Ghettoised affluence is

inherently unstable, and will ultimately threaten those who are better off. You are not just helping long-term stability by helping the disadvantaged, but you also gain a lot of personal satisfaction for having helped the needy."

HeNN doesn't use any of the money donated from the 100 Rupees Fund for overheads and administrative costs. That is all paid from a trust fund of more than Rs 10 million donated by Siddhartha Rana. The new three-person office in Chabel runs on the

interest of the trust fund.

"Why complain that the government is doing nothing? Little things that we can do ourselves can bring great changes," says Mishra. A group of second generation Nepalis in London raised Rs 1.2 million running a marathon this year and the money funded a school upgrade project in Bajura, Sindhupalchok and Morang.

HeNN keeps careful records of all its projects and provides detailed accounts of where the money goes. Donors are kept updated about where and how their contributions are being used. Says Mishra: "Not everyone can be a social worker. What we are trying to say is you won't miss that extra beer or momo, but it will make a big difference back home. A little can add up to a lot." Kunda Dixit

Nepali Times is proud to be a part of the Help Nepal Network, and urges its readers in Nepal and abroad to support its activities across the country. www.helpnepal.com

DINING



OR2K, One of the few vegetarian restaurants in the Valley, their Middle Eastern platter is delicious and their cocktails robust. *Mandala Street, Thamel, 4422097*



9th Annual Wine Festival, Kilroy's monsoon wine festival will feature 15 varieties of exquisite wines from six different countries. *1 July to 15 September, Kilroy's of Kathmandu, Thamel, 4250440*

Chopstix, savoury Asian food cooked in true Chinese fashion sure

to charm and impress. Begin your feast with the Dragon Chicken, it's one-of-a-kind. *Kumaripati, 5551118.*



Cafe Hessed, for those with a sweet tooth, offers a delicious range of cupcakes and doughnuts. *Jhamsikhel*

Lazy Gringo, fail-safe Mexican restaurant. The lemonade with refills is what won us over, but the food is mighty fine. *Jawalakhel*



Hankook Sarang, serves up the incredible tastes of Korea, including superlative steamed rice to anchor

meals fit for kings. *Thamel, near Roadhouse Café*

Picasso, for its authentic take on French cuisine. *Jhamsikhel, 5009076*



Dhaba, for an excellent range of North Indian delicacies, try their unbeatable Kashmiri Gosht. *Thapathali*

Yin Yang Restaurant, east meets west as you choose from a variety

of Thai and continental dishes. Get a little spice in your life with their pad thai or green curry. If you can't handle the heat, fall into the safety net of their western dishes. *Thamel, 10am-10pm, 4701510*



Himalayan Java, this Thamel establishment, more known for its coffee, serves excellent sandwiches too. Picks – BLT (bacon, lettuce, tomato) and tuna cheese, *Tridevi Marg, 4422519*

Casa Toscana, varieties of yummy pizzas to try and other Italian delights. *Casa Toscana, Pulchok*

Tamarind, a multi-cuisine restaurant, offers a decent range of drinks and food. *Jhamsikhel*

Cinnamon Grill Lounge, offers delicious food and good music, added bonus- live performance by Ciney Gurung every Saturday. *Jhamsikhel*

GETAWAYS



Weekends Treks Out Package, for expat and locals, 3 Days Kathmandu Valley Cultural Trek (Kathmandu/Lankuri/Balthali/Namobuddha/Kathmandu), includes 2 overnight stays in Lankuri and Balthali with meals, guide and drop & pick-up services. *Hima Nepal Tours and Treks, Lazimpat, info@himanepaladventures.com, 9841766561, 012081099*

Monsoon Getaway at Gokarna Forest Resort.

The Dwarika's Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, overnight package with accommodation, dinner and breakfast. *Dhulikhel, Rs 3,500 (single), Rs 5,000 (double), 10 per cent service charge extra, call 4479488 for reservations*



SOMEPLACE ELSE

Restaurateur Kunal Tej Bir Lama irks at the word "fusion" when describing his menu at the reopened Café Mitra in Thamel. The term often renders ill-executed pairings like Hotel Radisson's recent, overhyped promotion of an Italian and Indian twist. But at Mitra, as Lama later concedes, the fusion of local ingredients and Chef Mohit Rana's culinary prowess yields eclectic, adventurous dishes that, according to my predecessor, hail Rana as Kathmandu's creative best.

From the new menu, the red-pepper cheesecake is



MARCO POLLO

Café Mitra

no dessert but a starter that blends three cheeses and a hint of pimento served with a spot of plum jam. The medley of heat and sweet draws tasters to the deserts of the Southwest US.

For mains, the Himalayan trout, a whole fish battered, fried and nestled on a bed

of rice, smile and sanuk tempered by a sweet Thai coconut curry, is a show-stopper. Ask for extra sauce to balance off the salted fish.

Chicken breast stuffed with cream cheese and laced with chocolate jus sounds mouthwatering *Like Water for Chocolate* but flounders

with its complimentary mishmash of fennel and potato.

Luckily, if food experiments fail to impress, Mitra holds onto its classic menu of reliable plates like the deep-fried tiger prawns, grilled mackerel and the steamed tofu dressed with

soy and ginger, a generous starter to share.

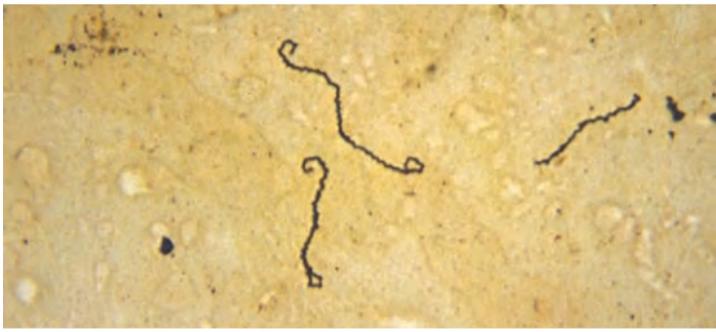
On the new dessert list, the iced peach soufflé is a mouthful of air that leaves an overpowering, potpourri aftertaste fit for a vanity. Stick to the classic menu and order the chocolate soufflé.

Renovations at Mitra have made for a quaint, festive space, modern and tasteful. But the new menu, particularly with its pocket-pounding prices, needs some rethinking.  *Marco Pollo*

South of Thamel Chok, look for a building on your left undergoing construction (likely to last for a while). If you've reached the Yak, you've passed it; sneak through the backyard to a revamped, intimate nook.

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Space | ★★★★ |
| Bread 'n water | ★★★★ |
| Service | ★★★★ |
| Deal-icious | ★★★ |
| Rep-eat? | ★★★★ |





Leptospirosis



DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

Twenty-five year old Ram Devi Shakya presented to a hospital with high fever, conjunctivitis, muscle pain, and breathing problems for a week. She was treated for typhoid fever, but did not improve. Meningitis was considered, but this was ruled out with appropriate tests. Her condition continued to deteriorate, and her husband agreed to pay for her blood sample to be shipped to Mumbai for further tests. The doctors continued with three new antibiotics, but to no avail. She died on the tenth day of hospitalisation. The report

from Mumbai came back later with the diagnosis of Leptospirosis. Leptospirosis comes from Greek and means finely coiled organisms (spirochetes). In a study done at Patan Hospital and published in the American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene in 2004, leptospirosis ranked fourth (after typhoid, typhus and pneumococcal pneumonia) as the cause of fever in over 800 consecutively admitted hospital patients. And yet for some reason this disease is under-emphasised in medical colleges and residency programs here. Many doctors in Nepal and India fail to consider leptospirosis in the differential diagnosis of fever. Leptospire are organisms which persist in the kidneys

of rats and other animals. Humans may be infected with rat urine. Exposure to rat urine (for example from puddles of water on the roadside) through an abrasion on the skin followed by flu-like illness approximately one week later is typical of leptospirosis. Many patients with mild disease will have resolution of their symptoms. However some like Ram Devi Shakya may have severe leptospirosis, also known as Weil's Disease which is characterised by respiratory and renal complications. Diagnosis is usually established by finding either high serum antibodies against leptospira or polychromase chain reaction (PCR) test to look for leptospira DNA. Neither test is readily available in Nepal.

Arguably, the drug of first choice for a patient with leptospirosis would have been the humble penicillin which is seldom used in Nepali hospitals. Hence the importance of knowing what are the specific fever-causing bugs in our community with which Nepalis may be infected and empirically treating with appropriate antibiotics based on that knowledge even when laboratory back up is pending (specimen sent abroad in this case) or unavailable.



WEEKEND WEATHER
by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

The rare trans-Himalayan circulation that has made monsoon moisture loop back to northern Nepal from the Tibetan plateau has brought unseasonal snow to the high Himalaya and torrential rain even in arid areas of the country like Mustang, Manang, Dolpo and Humla this year. While the rains take a breather in the plains, the hills and mountains have had copious precipitation. This trend is likely to continue into the coming week with a drop in maximum and minimum temperatures.



| FRI | SAT | SUN |
|-------|-------|-------|
| | | |
| 24-18 | 23-19 | 26-20 |



No Daag - No Dhabba, Only Beautiful Walls



BIKRAM RAI

NOW WHAT? NC leaders Prakash Man Singh, Sushil Koirala and Ram Chandra Poudel at the party's CWC meeting on Tuesday at the party headquarters in Sanepa.



BIKRAM RAI

HAPPY CAMPER: Baburam Bhattarai heads out to the balcony after a Maoist CWC meeting at the party's headquarter at Paris Danda in Kathmandu on Saturday. The meeting proposed a reshuffled cabinet and new work division of party office bearers. Bhattarai was named prime ministerial candidate.



BIKRAM RAI

LET'S CUT THE CAKE: Employees of Mega Bank listen to their CEO, Anil Shah, make a speech at the Bank's first anniversary, celebrated at their head office in Kathmandu on Saturday.

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F-port 2100

2100 looks good, too bad you'll be dead by then



Even the chief rep of the most scientific, rationalist, materialist, atheist religion Nepal has ever known has been known to scoot off to sacrifice a buff or two in exchange for blissful Baba Gaga. Why wouldn't the rest of us reactionaries exalt godmen who can see into the murk of time and offer us great balls of fire?

But my intent is rather nobler than those who trade cattle for chattel. This week I would like, in the true Nepali spirit of compromise, to combine the best of astrology and quantum statistics to give you the larger picture for 2100, a kind of Future Report of the State of Neo-Nepal. By 2100 all of you will be dead, so you should be able to consider the significance of my predictions with an intellect entirely shorn of selfish considerations.

People first. There should be lots of them. At current growth rates, there will be over 58 million Nepalis around, a full tenth of them crammed into the Kathmandu Valley. Unless the latter becomes the Newa Valley, in which case

expect the aforementioned millions to be scattered across the 103 provinces that will be declared by 2100 (including the Unidentified Dalit Province and the Unidentified Ethnic Province).

Crucial to our demographic robustness, however, is the ever accelerating phenomenon of outmigration. In 2010/11 350,000 Nepalis left to become slaves in the Gulf, and judging by the 50,043 who showed up for the Korean language tests last

become obsolete.

Fortunately, this means that we will be able to declare the whole of Nepal a National Park, in order to continue to attract tourists. In 'Nepal, Is it? Year 2100', projecting up from the glory years pre-peep's war, we will have between 4-5 million visitors. Hoorah!

Unfortunately, by 2100 the famed Himalaya will just be a bunch of black rocks, courtesy global warming, and anyway Bihar's continued industrialisation will smog up the whole of

With great joy comes great sorrow, alas, and the very same uplifting nature of the Indo-Australian plate* means that by 2100 we will be due not just one Big One, but two Big Ones (which, strictly speaking, means we will be due the Big Two). The first quake, which is imminent, will destroy the Kathmandu Valley in its entirety – world heritage apartment blocks, shopping malls and all. The second will devastate the donor-funded federal capitals soon to litter Neo-Nepal.

besides being patronising, or rather, patronising the only businesses that sustain Kathmandu and all the satellite towns to have seen White Man, namely restobars. Inflation will mean that by 2100, all the apartments on sale in the Valley will cost upwards of 2 crore rupees, making them eligible (and only affordable) for the aforementioned angels of mercy. Following the wholesale quake-struction of Nepal's first generation of residences and the continued acceleration of real estate prices, apartment blocks will comprise the capital's new, proud skyline.

Nepal's frens will not be alone, of course, in their quest to keep her seat in the UN warm. In the pitch dark of loadshedding 24/7 (no snow, no rivers, no batti), donors will hold closed door meetings with the political parties, of which, at the current rate of proliferation, there will be some 600-odd by 2100. On weekends, they will attend donor-funded exhibitions, concerts and film festivals inaugurated by politicians and ambassadors. By 2100, we will be a global hub for culture, populated in the main by restobar owners, politicians, NGO staff, brokers, and the odd peasant, a kind of a Shangri-Las Vegas with Candles. I can't wait. ■

*Taking migration to an extreme, the Indo-Australian plate's movement will in fact take the entire country of Nepal (and India, which will insist on tagging along) a full 1,500 km into Asia in the next 10 million years, meaning very soon there will be no Tibet (relax, China!) and eventually no China (relax, USA!), and Nepali Mongolians can reunite with Real Mongolians.



Friday, the desert isn't the only sinkhole of Nepali dreams. So we have two scenarios for 2100, as explained through scientific bullet points:

- Nepal will become nomadic, with a wholly floating population
- If migration turns to settlement, then the phrase 'dadakada dhakun' will

the northern subcontinent, obscuring even these views. So tourists might decide to stick to the Alps. Yes, we will be compelled to measure Everest without the snow cover, thereby submitting to those damned Chinese, but never fear, we will all be half a metre higher up than the rest of the world by then, and Nepal will continue to rise.

While this might discourage your average Israeli or high-quality tourist, never fear. Expats are made of rather sterner material, and like nothing better than to feast on the carcass of a failed state beset with plagues worthy of the Bible. Donors will continue to be the saviours of Neo-Nepal, selflessly stepping in pull us out of the muck,

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If this is what a small glacial lake



Glacier snout that hides a lake beneath the ice.



Collapsed icefall that triggered the glacial lake burst.



Melt pools downstream from the glacier.

ASTRID HOVDEN in HUMLA

Humla is one of the most remote districts in Nepal, and in a remote corner of Humla lies the settlement of Halji in Limi VDC. On 30 June this village of 400 inhabitants was hit by a flash flood caused by a glacial lake bursting upstream.

At around 4:30 pm there was a loud roar from up the valley, and everyone ran out of their houses. At first, the raging brown water was retained by the gabion walls, the last stretch of which was built only a month earlier. Soon, the embankments gave way and the water and the boulders raced towards the village with great force.

The ground shook and the water was nearly black because of the landslides along the banks. People managed to evacuate in time and move most of their

belongings, but had to watch as their homes and fields were carried away.

Fortunately no lives were lost, but some livestock was taken by the flood as were two houses and 200 ropanis of farmlands. Some poorer

families lost all their fields. Food aid will therefore be needed for the winter. Water mills, bridges and sections of the main trail through the valley and up to high pastures were washed away.

The disaster was caused

by a glacial lake outburst flood (GLOF) in the mountains above Halji. Due to global warming the water level of many glacial lakes across the Himalaya have risen dangerously, and could overflow with devastating

consequences. The flood at Halji which is the fifth since 2006 has occurred every year on almost the same date at the end of June.

The glacier lies on a plateau at 5,200-5,400m on the flanks of Mt Gurla



The flood thunders down the Limi Valley.



Arrives at the village and takes away houses...

The sun is free for everyone... ...but not for Nepalis, it seems



NEPALIPAN
Adam Friedsohn

In the early 1990s Lotus Energy was one of three companies promoting solar electricity for rural electrification. Everyone said solar was too expensive and that only micro-hydro was the way forward. MPs thought solar was used only for hot water.

Today there are over 70 companies in Nepal's solar industry employing tens of thousands of people to provide solar photovoltaic (PV) electric systems. There are very few villagers who do not know about solar.

The original solar subsidy

program was a project between Lotus Energy and Agriculture Development Bank Nepal (ADB/N) and its 1,400 branches. The donor-supported Alternative Energy Promotion Center (AEPC) was set up and took over the subsidy program for solar in Nepal, albeit at a lower subsidy amount, a lot more paperwork and without the in-built microfinancing that ADB/N had offered.

Since the Nepal government was now eating out of the hands of donors, it didn't take long before their subsidy conformed more and more to donor country designs, mandates, and restrictions. Finally, the AEPC was acting more as a bureaucratic bottleneck than as a promotion center for the technology. Frequent lapses in budget forced many struggling solar companies to shut down and damaged other survivors.

Only recently has the AEPC realised how solar has become so practical and reliable that it could considerably ease Nepal's power shortage. But restrictions still make solar incentives difficult to obtain and components difficult to import. Restrictions on the import of cheap inverters, which divert peak electricity and store it without generating anything, have backfired as these units are still smuggled from India while more efficient inverters from abroad are banned. While the import of inverters needed for larger solar grid tied arrays are restricted.

On the village level, some of the least expensive and most reliable technologies are banned. The donor-created Renewable Energy Test Station (RETS) claims to provide villagers the service of filtering "bad" components out of the Nepal



KUNDA DIXIT

market. They make technical recommendations based on outdated or unfair specifications and mandates from donors with vested interests.

flood can do, imagine a big one



Mandata in Tibet and there are five glacial lakes which feed into the river. But the flood was caused by another lake hidden under the glacier which is partly visible through a deep crevasse. Villagers who climbed the

glacier just after the flood in 2009 say the lake was partly covered by a big ice sheet about 20-25 meters thick. Parts of this may have broken off and fallen into the lake last month, displacing huge amounts of water and causing the flood.

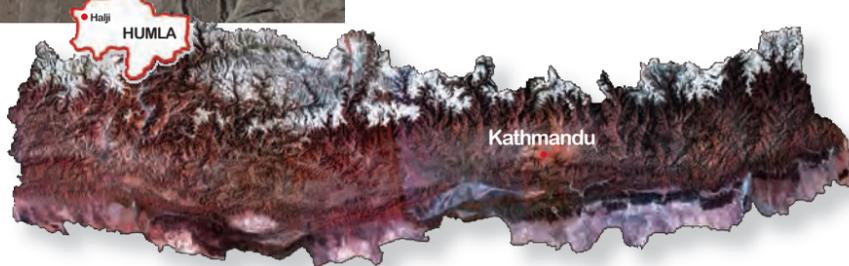
Halji village is constructed around the 11th century Rinchenling Monastery, one of the oldest in Nepal and

a potential World Heritage Site. Because of the valley's scenic beauty and location on the pilgrimage path to Mount Kailash at the very end of the Great Himalayan Trail, it is also becoming an increasingly popular destination for trekkers. The village and its 1,000-year-old monastery are now threatened by future floods.

There is an urgent need to provide food and rebuild the homes of affected families, as well as to rehabilitate and strengthen the embankments before the next flood. Experts

should also assess the risk of future outbursts of the glacial lake and develop a long term strategy to minimise the risks of a future, even bigger, disaster. Long term mitigation strategies may involve controlled drainage of the lake, building of further gabion walls to protect farmlands downstream by diverting water away from the village. 🇳🇵

Astrid Hovden is a PhD fellow at the University of Oslo.



 nepalimes.com
Exclusive video of the flood



...and farmlands.



The flood has altered the riverbed, threatening Halji village and its 1,000-year-old monastery.

ALL PICS: ASTRID HOVDEN



Excellent products like inexpensive easy-to-service solar tube lamps were almost banned, as were cheap solar batteries which were some of the

highest quality and longest lasting batteries used in Nepal, just because a German consultant didn't like them.

In 2003, a senior EU official came to see the solar program we were designing for remote areas. The consultant made it plain that no Nepali solar company could supply the equipment for a EU-funded project. "All the hardware must come from EU companies and nowhere else," he said. After a big outcry, the policy was later changed.

Another EU team leader resigned and told me he couldn't do the work with a clear conscience. Even though most donors "give" in some form, they "take" in another. Tied aid is alive and kicking in Nepal.

Nepal's solar subsidy program for villagers has inadvertently become a scam. When donors agree to give money, it operates for some months, and when funds run out or donors change their minds, it stops. This means that instead of buying the cheapest, longest-lasting solar year round with free market competition, the villagers buy expensive donor specified equipment like specialised tubular batteries only half the year.

Solar companies must sit idle for six months and try to pay their staff and rent with no incomes.

A duty and VAT break is possible only if you are lucky to fulfill some donor-specified criteria. Subsidies restrict which solar products one can buy and how they are sold. Nepal is responsible for its own development, it must not be influenced by donors who don't really add any value.

The very best and fastest way to increase solar proliferation in Nepal is simply to drop all taxes on all solar components and installation materials for stand-alone remote and grid-tied solar systems and

permanently end the unfair bureaucratic costly subsidies and dissolve the restrictions.

The cost of solar has dropped steadily for two decades while diesel and petrol constantly increases. RETS can be dissolved or converted to a research institute. The AEPC can remain as a true promotional body to provide microcredit and other incentives for urban and remote solar users. 🇳🇵

Adam Friedensohn is the chairman of Lotus Energy Pvt Ltd in Kathmandu
www.lotusenergy.com

WHY?

With 14-18 hours of rolling power cuts this winter, Nepalis should ask the government:

- Why can't we get all our solar equipment duty and VAT free?
- Why don't we get incentives for urban roof-top solar which generates power for the national grid?
- Why are solar companies not encouraged to fill in load shedding gaps with solar?
- Why are we taxed to help our own country?
- Why are you robbing our villagers of choices and more cost-effective solar products?



The old chickens are well fed now. Let us replace them with the new ones.
 Small box: Proposed Ministerial candidates
 Big box: Old Ministers

राजधानी Uttam Nepal in Rajdhani, 27 July

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“G. P. Koirala had warned me that my downfall would be at the hands of my own comrades”



UCPN (M) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal



Brand British

A Nepali Student in UK, *mysansar.com*, July 25

I study in one of those British colleges run by Nepalis in UK but, unlike what one of the major daily newspapers in Nepal recently reported, these colleges don't even match average Nepali colleges in infrastructure. Students are cramped into small classrooms and the labs in the colleges are neither equipped nor functioning. It is difficult to find reference books in the library and the students have to deposit money to borrow books. After the British government began Tier 4 program, the education providers have been charging hefty fees from fellow Nepalis in the name of providing a British education. With the inflow of students from Nepal in recent years, their income has gone up. Some have even managed to enroll sizable number of students and moved into a more spacious building but the quality of education in these colleges remain unsatisfactory.

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Empty coffers

Naya Patrika, 25 July

नयाँ पत्रिका

The government has distributed more than Rs 80 million from the state coffers as "financial assistance". Although the assistance is meant for poor, disabled and the needy, money has been distributed to powerful and mighty. Among those taking the assistance are NC president Sushil Koirala, Maoist vice chairman Narayankaji Shrestha and Bhutan refugee leader Teknath Rizal. Narayankaji Shrestha received Rs 1 million for medical expenses while Rizal and Koirala received Rs 1.2 million and 108,000 respectively. CA members have also received substantial help from state coffers. UML MP Dambar Bahadur Khadka whose son died in a motorcycle accident received Rs 1.2 million in compensation while Maoist MP Jaipuri Gharti received Rs 250,000 thousand to pay her medical bills. Organisations like Nepal Transport Workers Union, Dhading, Manka Khala Ceremony Organising Committee, Boudha Conference, Dhimal Festival and Kirat Dharma International Festival. Jivaraj Ashrit, Krishna Sen Ichhuk and Netra Abhagi Memorial foundations have been given Rs 5 million each this fiscal year. Rs 1.1 million was given to the International Youth and Students Festival and Rs 500,000 to ex-MPs forum to conduct a workshop on Peace and Constitution.

Three heroes

Upendra Lamichhane in *Nagarik*, 25 August

नागरिक

Like most Nepalis, Sriram Das, Tika Bahadur Khadka and Niroj Pradhan were directly affected by the war. But because all three had a positive mental attitude, they have been able to rescue themselves from the memories of the war's trauma and presented themselves as model citizens at a program organized by Radio Sagarmatha in Hetauda this weekend. "If I had carried a feeling of revenge, perhaps I'd have joined a militant group by now," says Das who is now a teacher and whose father was murdered by the Maoists during the war. Says Das: "My family decided to turn the loss into an opportunity to work for the upliftment of our community."



UPENDRA LAMICHHANE/NAGARIK

Khadka's family fled Maoist excesses in its native Dolakha during the war to settle down in Hetauda. Internally displaced Khadka started a business and is taking care of his family. "We felt it was better to make a living than to live like a refugee and be dependent on others," Khadka says.

Pradhan's fields in Palung Valley were washed away by floods in 1995, and during the war it was difficult to be a farmer selling produce in the market. But Pradhan persevered and set up a cooperative that now send up to 10 trucks of vegetables a day to Kathmandu. "The farmers now have an opportunity to earn in the village and don't have to migrate to work," he says. "Even those who had gone abroad have now returned."

Justice for Govinda

The Yomiuri Shimbun, 27 July

読売新聞

New evidence has come to light in the 1997 murder of a senior female official of Tokyo Electric Power Co. DNA analysis shows that semen taken from the victim's body did not match that of a Nepali man (Govinda Mainali) who has been convicted of killing her and sentenced to life imprisonment. He is seeking a retrial. According to results of the new tests, the semen's DNA type matched that of a body hair found at the scene of the crime, an unoccupied apartment.

the case is likely to be reopened. The high court should review the case thoroughly to clarify the truth by scrutinizing the old evidence as well as the results of the new DNA analysis.

The 39-year-old TEPCO worker was strangled in the apartment in Shibuya Ward, Tokyo, and 40,000 yen in cash was stolen from her bag. Mainali, living in a building next to the apartment, was arrested, but he has consistently denied killing the woman. The district court found him not guilty because it said there was reasonable doubt that the Nepali man was the perpetrator of the crime. The high court overturned this ruling on the grounds that the

district court had failed to evaluate the evidence correctly and misunderstood the facts. The Supreme Court upheld the high court's decision.

The case raises questions over whether the police

had carried out a thorough investigation. Why did the police not conduct a DNA analysis similar to the latest one when they investigated the case? Some observers say the amount of semen sampled was so small it was technically difficult to arrive at a conclusion. Another flaw in the investigation was that the police analyzed only four of more than 10 body hairs found at the crime scene. The prosecutors must clear up these doubts before the high court.

Here comes the story of Govinda Mainali

KUNDA DIXIT IN TOKYO

Like hundreds of other Nepalis, Govinda Mainali left for Japan on a three-month tourist visa in 1994 at the age of 26 to seek his fortune. He had got restless looking after the farm and his elderly parents in their ancestral homestead in Ilam. Although the family had property and was moderately well-off, Govinda knew he had to earn some money to take care of his pregnant wife, Radha, and a daughter.

Working on the top floor of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (Tepeco), Yasuko Watanabe was a bright and ambitious senior economist. But at age 39, she had hit the glass ceiling in Japan's conservative and male-dominated bureaucracy. Her father, with whom Yasuko was very close, had died when she was a teenager and she was supporting her

mother and younger sister. This is the story of how fate brought a young Nepali working in an Indian restaurant in Tokyo together with a high-flying corporate Japanese office lady who led a shadowy dual life. Their saga is the story of sex, murder, the shadowy world of Tokyo's red-light districts, and the secretive ways of Japan's justice system. It has captivated Japan now for five years. It is the stuff of thrillers—only this is not fiction.



GOVINDA

This fact shows that someone other than the convicted man might have been with the victim at the murder scene. It raises serious doubts about the ruling of the Tokyo High Court that overturned a decision by the Tokyo District Court acquitting the defendant. The high court said it was hard to believe the victim entered the apartment with a person other than the defendant.

Mainali's defence lawyers contended the DNA tests were sufficient new evidence for the court to declare the convicted man not guilty of the crime. They submitted the DNA test report to the high court, asking that it be admitted as new evidence for a retrial. If the court accepts the new evidence,

nepalitimes.com
Kunda Dixit's East-West blog

Panchakanya
Reinforcing the Nation

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EXHIBITOR PROFILE:

- Housing Developers
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- Modular Kitchen
- Vastu /Jyotish / Feng Shui
- Water Treatment/Deep Boring
- Soil Test/Geo Physicists
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- Steel Company
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Decisive govt decides to take decisions

One thing you have to say about this UML-led govt compared to the previous UML-led govt is its no-nonsense style. It takes decisions decisively with the snap of the fingers. There is no dilly-dallying and flip-flopping like the Makunay cabinet. For example, soon after deciding to award Rs 20 lacs for the patenting of a thought-controlled airplane, the cabinet decided on a decision to award four karods to put a Dalit on the top of Mt Everest. The decision came just before the government also decided to allocate another four karods to re-measure Mt Everest. This is probably a good thing because the few last metres of climbing at that altitude could make the diff between success and failure for our as-yet-unnamed Dalit alpinist.

The ignoramus (plural: ignorami) among you will of course ask silly questions like why, among all the crises afflicting this country at this juncture in our history, determining the height of the snow summit as opposed to the rock summit of Mt Everest is



such a life-or-death issue. But you underestimate the importance not just to Nepal but also to the world of having the exact height of Mt Everest measured and authenticated by our own scientists. Especially because the Chinese have determined the altitude of the rock summit accurate to the last millimeter. But what you don't know is that this monsoon has dumped unusually heavy snow on top of all the debris at the summit, so if we measure Mt Everest this autumn, the height is going to be

8853m, at least five metres higher than the Chinese calculation. But time is of the essence because geologists say the mountains are moving north at 2.5cm a year, and the summit may soon be entirely in China.

Whatever you may say about the lameduck primeministership of His Right Honourable JN, you can't fault his cabinet for having its priorities right. It decided to allocate 14 karods to build a new highway in Chitwan

called Prachanda Path. In a country where most airports, hospitals and highways are named after personas who are deceased, it takes a lot of guts to name a highway after someone who is still living. But the cabinet proved it does not shirk from taking tough decisions. It can bite the bullet, it can take the bull by the horns, it can cross the Rubicon and burn its bridges.

The other great decision taken in the budget was to allocate Rs 10 million to have all civil servants, who just got a 40% salary hike, wear uniforms to work. Civil servants will get free uniforms, while most school children in this country still have to buy theirs. All this of course, will be paid by increasing the tax on soft drinks by a whopping 75%. Tax on alcoholic beverages have also been increased, but by only 11%. As a permanent fixture in the neighbourhood watering hole, the Donkey would like to take the Financial Minister by the hand and personally thank him in no uncertain terms. **Hic.**

And guess why Chairman Awe-inspiring was so eager to agree to the cabinet reshuffle and dump his left-hand man Com Mahara? Because he had an ace up his sleeves, viz.: secretly instruct JN to sit tight and not resign. Which is what JN did. In the meantime, Jhusil, freshly back from the Home of the Brave as well as the Land of the Free, proposes PKD as PM just so that he can thumb his nose at his own impatient colleague, Lion Brave. Looks like the baddies have taught the kangresis well about the benefits of a two-line struggle. Lotus Flower knows that Sushil Da knows that he got his five karod cut from the Darfur Kickback from GPK for election expenses in 2008.

The reason Chairman Supercalifragilistic is again taken to wearing red polo shirts is not the weather. Must be on advice from his new Propaganda Bureau chief, Com Pasang. PKD has been abandoned by RIM and COMPOSA as well, and it's time to add red to the dress code.



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