With less than two weeks to go for the CA to come to the end of its extended term, Nepal’s politics is once again distracted by the need to find a new prime minister. President Yadav has given the parties till Sunday to come up with a new government, and the choice has narrowed down to the Maoist’s Baburam Bhattarai or the NC’s Sher Bahadur Deuba who wants to be PM for the fourth time.

The ideal solution would be for the big three parties and the UDMF to form a consensus government to push through last-minute agreements on the integration package for Maoist fighters. Only this would give the parties, the moral grounds to extend the CA yet again. But the gulf between the parties is still too wide to expect this to happen by 31 August.

Since no one trusts anyone, how about a cabinet made up of all senior leaders? This way, the government doesn’t have to keep referring to Paris Danda, Balkhu or Sanepa to decide on critical issues. They also won’t need any high-level task forces and committees meeting in five-star resorts. The all-party cabinet can decide everything on the spot. It won’t even matter who is the prime minister. But this is a final solution, after this there will be nothing to fall back on.

This deadlock has dragged on too long, it’s time to think outside the box. Unless someone has a better idea.
few will be staying awake this time till three in the morning on 1 September to follow the clifhanger of the Constituent Assembly extension. Most people are past caring, and will be trying to get on with their lives the best they can.

But the cost to the country’s economy, its development, the service delivery to people is incalculable. You can’t put a rupee and paisa price on all the patients who died because they couldn’t be taken to hospital because the budget to repair the road was plundered by a mafia composed of district office-bearers of the three parties.

Smelling weakness, everyone with a grievance is on warpath, punishing the people with strikes and extortion to get back at a fessel state. Eighty per cent of industries in this country have closed down, the latest this week is Surya Nepal’s Rs 700 million apparel export factory in Biratnagar. In the absence of a state, extortionists are masquerading as legitimate labour unions.

When elected leaders abdicate their governance role to indulge in endless intrigue and back-stabbing, the leadership vacuum is filled by lawless gangs. Political parties that supposedly believe in the rule of law and peaceful democratic politics are condoning crooks. Gangsters have now become the rule of law and peaceful democratic politics stabbing, and the leadership vacuum is filled by lawless gangs.

In the Maoist party, militant union chiefs have now amassed so much ill-gotten wealth that the party hierarchy is powerless to pull them up. The UML copied the Maoists, and it was Jalannath Khanal who set up the Youth Force. Later it was renamed the Yuba Sangh Nepal, but call it what you want, it was still up to its neck in crime. The little puppies have become snarling rottweilers. The UML youth wing is now a powerful nationwide network of organized crime to complement the YCL. In many places, like in eastern Nepal, the two are partners in crime. It is only when there is disagreement about the division of the spoils that they carve each other up with khukuris. Then the media sometimes gets caught in the middle as happened to the Biratnagar correspondent of Nagarik newspaper two months ago.

Khilannath Dhakal was forced to undergo a near-death experience when he reported on UMLgoons beating up a rival gangster inside a courtroom. The UML youth wing has since taken strong exception to Nagarik’s exposé on the range of its criminal activities in eastern Nepal. It all culminated this week in the mother party closing down Biratnagar for two days and the youth wing’s boss Mahesh Basnet threatening to jail Nagarik editor Narayan Wagle, shutting down his newspaper and threatening the Morang police chief and his family with bodily harm.

This has now gone beyond being just a threat to journalists and police; it is a direct challenge to the country’s interim constitution its guarantees of basic human rights and a democratic polity. And yet, the UML is so scared of the monster it created that the party can’t even condemn Basnet for continued catch-me-if-you-can defiance.

All this got wide media play because a journalist was involved, but organized crime, local outlaws and gangsters have been abducting children, maiming, raping nuns and murdering citizens with impunity. The state’s inability or unwillingness to stop this has emboldened crooks who are protected by their political bosses. Saying this is normal in a state of political transition is no excuse.

There is only one way to address Nepal’s descent into dystopia: reestablish a stable state, eradicate impunity and decriminalize political parties by agreeing on a unity government ASAP.

Descent into dystopia

BABURAM FOR PM?

It looks like the Nepali media is obsessed with Dr Bhattarai. (A moment’s sanity for consensus?, #567). It is unfair to portray him as a Superman to rescue Nepal from its current mess. Even if he heads a unity government, people from his own party will ask for his blood within no time. So think about other options as well.

Pradeep Adhikari

We need a national unity government with ministers who are professionals in their fields and not driven by the need to spread favours. It is a collective responsibility and not just the individual effort that builds a society, Dr Bhattarai.

Vija Shrestha

There are no true ‘revolutionary forces’ in Nepal. The Maoists only seek to impose a variant of capitalism, and anyone who reads their official economic program can verify that it. It should also be clear by now that any popular mandate the Maoists had or still have is for reform rather than revolution.

Deep

Loved Diwakar Chhetri’s cartoon (‘What are they waiting for?’, #567) , so why can’t I use my 3G to make calls, if using 3G was cheaper than, say, directly calling the number?

RJ

IMMORTAL MEMORY

Very much appreciate the work of Dorji Teering Sherpa in Makawanpur for the people of Siltapur where his daughter’s plane crashed last year. (‘Immortal memory’, #567). Thank you for remembering us in spite of your loss.

Govinda Nepal

Very sad, but the tragedy created a situation for the families to come together and build something useful for the village. DJT-ji we all know that you have been the prime mover in this case and we all appreciate your effort in particular.

Hemant Arjyal

VOIP

The argument in this article regarding legalisation of VOIP makes sense. The business model of the telecom industry to earn revenue using traditional phone lines is waning all around world. The next wave is the mobile Internet. Last time I was in Nepal, I was so proud that we had 3G. Why can’t I use my 3G to make calls, if using 3G was cheaper than, say, directly calling the number?

Jonathan Sharma

On the Web

www.nepalitimes.com

www.jagadambapr.com

Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter

Nepali Times on Facebook

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. Baburam Bhattarai for Prime Minister

Total votes: 2513

Hi-fi Import (829)

Nepalpravesh.com

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. What do you make out of APECF’s Lumbini Development Project?

www.nepalitimes.com

RJ

ELECTRIC FUTURE

Finally a breath of fresh air from a Nepali politician! (‘Electric future’, Interview with Gagan Thapa, #567). He has a practical plan that is the only way forward unless some greedy Maoist or elderly political has been from the NC or UML tries to spoil it. Just hand it over to the country to Gagan Thapa and Goraknath Bista and people like them.

Jens

Nepal politics need to understand that the issues are about jobs for the unemployed, growth in economy and India, creation of tourist revenue, public health and on and on. Let us see some real leadership. Enough corruption, enough shame. Its time for real change and real leadership...are you up to the task, dear Baburam Bhattarai, or are just like the rest of the pack?

Ram Prasad Sharma

Is this a formal endorsement of Baburam as PM by the Nepali Times? It certainly reads like one. A few months or so in Batuwal should cure Baburam of his hideously undeserved rockstar reputation amongst the “campaign clueless” contingent.

John Kelleher

In another anti-climax, #567 Anurag Acharya argues that “It does not require a herculean effort, just a bit of common sense and more assertiveness from a younger generation of leaders in all major political parties with a cross-partisan approach to nation-building.” Been there. Done that. It was called Panchayat! Remember?

Deep

In their
times

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. Baburam Bhattarai for Prime Minister

Total votes: 2513

Hi-fi Import (829)

Nepalpravesh.com

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. What do you make out of APECF’s Lumbini Development Project?

www.nepalitimes.com

RJ

IMMORTAL MEMORY

Very much appreciate the work of Dorji Teering Sherpa in Makawanpur for the people of Siltapur where his daughter’s plane crashed last year. (‘Immortal memory’, #567). Thank you for remembering us in spite of your loss.

Govinda Nepal

Very sad, but the tragedy created a situation for the families to come together and build something useful for the village. DJT-ji we all know that you have been the prime mover in this case and we all appreciate your effort in particular.

Hemant Arjyal

VOIP

The argument in this article regarding legalisation of VOIP makes sense. The business model of the telecom industry to earn revenue using traditional phone lines is waning all around world. The next wave is the mobile Internet. Last time I was in Nepal, I was so proud that we had 3G. Why can’t I use my 3G to make calls, if using 3G was cheaper than, say, directly calling the number?

Jonathan Sharma

On the Web

www.nepalitimes.com

www.jagadambapr.com

Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter

Nepali Times on Facebook

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. Baburam Bhattarai for Prime Minister

Total votes: 2513

Hi-fi Import (829)

Nepalpravesh.com

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. What do you make out of APECF’s Lumbini Development Project?

www.nepalitimes.com

RJ

ELECTRIC FUTURE

Finally a breath of fresh air from a Nepali politician! (‘Electric future’, Interview with Gagan Thapa, #567). He has a practical plan that is the only way forward unless some greedy Maoist or elderly political has been from the NC or UML tries to spoil it. Just hand it over to the country to Gagan Thapa and Goraknath Bista and people like them.

Jens

Nepal politics need to understand that the issues are about jobs for the unemployed, growth in economy and India, creation of tourist revenue, public health and on and on. Let us see some real leadership. Enough corruption, enough shame. Its time for real change and real leadership...are you up to the task, dear Baburam Bhattarai, or are just like the rest of the pack?

Ram Prasad Sharma

Is this a formal endorsement of Baburam as PM by the Nepali Times? It certainly reads like one. A few months or so in Batuwal should cure Baburam of his hideously undeserved rockstar reputation amongst the “campaign clueless” contingent.

John Kelleher

In another anti-climax, #567 Anurag Acharya argues that “It does not require a herculean effort, just a bit of common sense and more assertiveness from a younger generation of leaders in all major political parties with a cross-partisan approach to nation-building.” Been there. Done that. It was called Panchayat! Remember?

Deep

In their
times

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. Baburam Bhattarai for Prime Minister

Total votes: 2513

Hi-fi Import (829)

Nepalpravesh.com

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Weekly Internet Poll #567

Q. What do you make out of APECF’s Lumbini Development Project?

www.nepalitimes.com

RJ

IMMORTAL MEMORY

Very much appreciate the work of Dorji Teering Sherpa in Makawanpur for the people of Siltapur where his daughter’s plane crashed last year. (‘Immortal memory’, #567). Thank you for remembering us in spite of your loss.

Govinda Nepal

Very sad, but the tragedy created a situation for the families to come together and build something useful for the village. DJT-ji we all know that you have been the prime mover in this case and we all appreciate your effort in particular.

Hemant Arjyal

VOIP

The argument in this article regarding legalisation of VOIP makes sense. The business model of the telecom industry to earn revenue using traditional phone lines is waning all around world. The next wave is the mobile Internet. Last time I was in Nepal, I was so proud that we had 3G. Why can’t I use my 3G to make calls, if using 3G was cheaper than, say, directly calling the number?
NEW DELHI -- Five years ago, Nepalis made their own tryst with destiny when they mounted a Jana Andolan to force an absolute monarch to restore parliament and install a democratic government. Since that peaceful people’s movement from the streets, Nepal has seen four prime ministers in four years. As yet another prime minister resigns in Kathmandu this week, bemused Nepalis must be looking across the border to the snowballing anti-corruption street protests in India.

New Delhi is witnessing its own Jana Andolan of sorts. A 77-year-old Gandhian, Anna Hazare, announced he would fast unto death to protest corruption and black money. He was not just prevented from doing so but put behind bars. As the political establishment ordered a crackdown on the ageing activist, a wave of revulsion has swept the country.

For the first time in seven years that it has ruled India, the Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) coalition is looking nervous. It’s no longer about Anna’s blackmail tactics (he has threatened to go on hunger strike until his group’s version of a bill for creating an ombudsman or Lokpal is accepted by the government) or about the fact that Hazare’s ‘movement’ is restricted to a few thousand people. The issue has opened up a debate on whether civil society activists have the right to challenge parliament’s exclusive privilege to make a bill.

If Team Anna, as Anna’s people un-selfconsciously describe themselves, allow a vote to be taken on their bill, they might find to their surprise that there aren’t many takers. Wearing a khadi cap and calling yourself a Gandhian hardly squares with implicit threats of blackmail.

But here’s the thing: by disallowing Anna and his people to protest peacefully, limiting the number of people who could participate in the protest as well as limiting the number of days for which the protest was allowed, the Manmohan Singh government overplayed its hand.

The people wanted reassurance; they got a lathi charge. The people wanted the government to take action against the guilty and promise good governance. Several politicians and corporates were, indeed, thrown into jail, but it turned out the rot was deeper. On the backfoot, the government hoped to turn the tables.

Only, it has ended up with egg on its face. Whether or not Anna Hazare wins the right to fast as long as he likes in Ramlila Maidan, the fact is that the UPA government has never looked weaker.

There is no comparison between Anna Hazare’s people and Nepal’s Jana Andolan in April 2006. At the time in Kathmandu, there was a genuine outpouring of the people on the streets. Many tyres were burnt and the protests continued into the early hours of the night. Interestingly, the underground Maoists, who controlled the heart of the protests also ensured discipline. What the Maoists could not achieve in ten years of war was attained in three weeks of peaceful street protests.

That’s a lesson for both Nepal and India. In a democracy, you can’t afford to take the people for granted.
In the land of the Buddha

A Mysterious Plan to Transform Buddha's Birthplace Becomes Even More Mysterious

Two weeks ago, Culture Secretary Madrai Dotel resigned from his post amidst speculation about a controversial Chinese-backed supposedly multi-billion dollar investment to develop Lumbini into a religious and cultural hub.

Dotel didn’t say so explicitly, but expressed dissatisfaction over political interference from his Maoist minister. The resignation coincided with intense pressure from the Maoist hierarchy to sanction the Lumbini project even though there were serious questions about its legitimacy.

“arly last year, The New Times had reported on a meeting in Malaysia at which Xiao Wunan was unable to say it reached with the government. Over the decades many organisations have tried to pour money into Lumbini’s development, which is supposed to follow a UNESCO-backed masterplan sketched by Japanese architect Kenzo Tange. Since being completed in 1980. Successive governments have used Lumbini as a cash cow, and didn’t do much to further the masterplan.

The latest grandiose plan is the one involving APECF, a “consultant” and APECF as a “strategic partner” of Nepal’s Ministry of Tourism. Nepal Times has not heard officially about the MoU which specifies UNIDO’s role as “a consultant” and APECF as a “strategic development partner” of Nepal’s Ministry of Tourism. The document says the project has been in effect since 15 July with support from the Government of Nepal. The only problem is that the MoU does not specify committed budget amount or its source, raising questions on the initial objective of the project and its proponents.

Clause 4 of Article 8 of the MoU, which specifically talks about financial contribution, states: “the implementation of activities and projects envisaged in the Memorandum will depend on the availability of the necessary financial resources.”

Further, the brief description of the project in Annex document states: “The program shall lead to billions US dollar investment in Lumbini area, about 171 Km southwest of Nepal’s capital Kathmandu.”

However, the annex states that UNIDO project inputs amount to $100,000 euros with local breakdown of costs with a detailed ToA and timeframe.

Amidst serious doubts and misgivings, the parliamentary committee formed to monitor the development of Lumbini has asked the government to declare its official position on the APECF project. The vice chairman of the LDT, Karma Syangbo Sherpa, told Nepal Times: “We have not signed any agreement with external bodies that I know of!” Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Krishna Bahadur Mahara attended an AEPCF meeting in Malaysia last week which was attended by APECF’s vice-chairman Xiao Wunan and Nepal’s Tourism Minister Khadga Bahadur Mahara attended an AEPCF meeting in Malaysia last week which was attended by APECF’s vice-chairman Xiao Wunan and Nepal’s Tourism Minister Khadga Bahadur Mahara.”

The political and economic implications of this sort. Providing funding in a multi-million dollar investment in the country seems to be too tempting for Dahal.

But he risks angering the New Delhi in the process. The Indian Embassy in Kathmandu is known to be taking a dim view of the goings-on and New Delhi has instructed its UN mission in New York to find out what is happening. There is speculation that this is Beijing’s move to create a forward-looking strategy to deal with a post-Dalai Lama Tibet. Lumbini could be pushed by a proactive Indian plans to revive the ancient city of Nalanda as a Buddhist hub, which Gaya has served as a meeting point for Tibetan monks.

All this could signal another facet in Sino-Indian geopolitical rivalry, this time for the heart and soul of Buddhism.

The question for us is: do we want Lumbini and Nepal to be dragged into a future flashpoint? #567

By the Way

Anurag Acharya
Not non-profit

Social entrepreneurs are businessmen with motives beyond money

Thirty-year-old Ranjit Kanswar runs a unique organisation in Kalaya of Bara district which helps locals purchase their own rickshaws. Instead of paying Rs 60 everyday to rent rickshaws from businessmen, they set aside Rs 25 per day to eventually own it in two years or so.

Kanswar won seed money for his business plan in a competition and began with five families. Now, with the returns he is trying to work with 10 more families.

The enterprise is an example of an increasingly popular mode of doing business called social entrepreneurship. Traditional private sector or personal philanthropy can exist side-by-side, but many organisations are now adopting a formula that balances economy, ecology and social responsibility.

Contrary to traditional socially-driven organisations, social entrepreneurs use market-driven business models to address critical social and environmental issues. They don’t measure returns in terms of shareholder dividend alone but aim for financial independence.

Social enterprise is not just another fundraising strategy for non-profits, it is a long-term sustainable business that operates to redirect profits towards social and environmental goals.

The word “sustainability” may have become threadbare with overuse and misuse, but it is still very relevant in the Nepal context. Most non-governmental bodies here are supported by international donors and fold up when funds run out. How can an organisation benefit others if it itself needs help to sustain? Revenue-generating models could be the answer.

It is a fine line between having a social mission and financial viability, but it can be balanced. The Kathmandu-based store, EcoKendra, networks with farmers and producers in rural areas to market their organic food and natural fibre products. EcoKendra offers wares at affordable prices, keeps its margin to be financially independent, but helps farmers in the process with fair prices.

Social enterprises have an advantage over solely profit-driven ventures. Combining social objectives with business actually works as a relationship-building, awareness building, attracting and retaining customers.

The government can help with incentives to encourage social entrepreneurship, and not bundle them with traditional businesses. There isn’t a lack of motivated people with innovative ideas in Nepal, but they lack entrepreneurial skills that will assist in translating them to marketplace solutions. They need trainings to equip them with strategy-oriented plans.

Last week, Global Platform Nepal conducted a week-long training for young participants to help them apply business principles to organise and manage social ventures. The word ‘social’ and ‘non-profit’ often seem to tag along with ‘donors’ and ‘aid’ in Nepal. But social organisations must find a way to survive and thrive without waiting on handouts forever.

Branded surfing

Nokia Browser has been launched to ease internet browsing in Nokia series 40 devices. The browser has been first launched in Nokia C2-03. This dual sim model is a touch and type based phone.

New accounts

Mega Bank has launched Mega Swabhiman Bachat Khata, a savings account for senior citizens with interest rate at 10 per cent per annum, payable monthly. The bank has also launched Mega Nari Special Account for women, with interest rate 9.50 per cent per annum, payable quarterly.

Hi-tech alliance

Janta Bank Nepal is gifting a Tej hamper for the account holders of Smart Lady Bachat Khata. The women will also have the chance to get free e-banking service, cheque book, ATM card and a 50 per cent discount on locker service.

Shopping spree

John Players, Surya Nepal’s line of men’s wear, is offering up-to 40 per cent discounts in its products. This offer is available at all John Players brand outlets and selected retail outlets.

BIZ BRIEFS
The Chinese are coming

With rising affluence, Chinese are flying out on holidays in ever greater numbers with a spurt in arrivals in Nepal in the past year. After roaming countries in the region with big overseas Chinese communities like Singapore, Malaysia and Thailand Chinese tourists are opting for adventure destinations like Nepal. Indeed, in July alone the number of Chinese tourists coming to Nepal by air has more than doubled to 3,306 compared to the same month last year. This number does not include Chinese who traveled overland via Tibet. If this trend continues, the...
Chinese could overtake Americans as the second largest source of visitors after India.

“We are really encouraged by the increase of mainland China travelers, especially because they come in the July-August lean season and this evens out arrivals throughout the year,” says Prachanda Man Shrestha of the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB).

The Chinese seem to be attracted by the exotic Himalaya, Nepal’s Hindu and Buddhist culture, its proximity and the increase in the number of flights.

“The fast rising numbers of Chinese visitors have filled up the tourist vacuum during the monsoon off season,” says Suman Pandey of Explore Himalaya Tour and Adventure.

Chinese tourists can be seen on Sarangkot for the sunrise view, dining in Thamel, packing the Mt Everest sightseeing flights and moving in groups in Bhaktapur Darbar Square.

“What attracts me most is the unique culture and religious practices,” Zhang Liusha from Chengdu told us at Basantapur this week. “People here are so friendly, Nepalis on the streets even greet us in Chinese.”

Zhang shows a necklace that she says she wanted to purchase from a sidewalk vendor, but after chatting with her for a while the shop owner gave it to her as a present. “Where else in the world does that happen?” asked Zhang, who intends to stay in Nepal for ten more days.

Zhou Lou from Chongqing is encouraged by how easy it was to get to Nepal. “I got my visa in Lhasa and it was all very smooth,” she said.

Unlike western backpackers who come to Nepal mainly for trekking, Chinese tourists are more inclined to cultural activities and soft adventures. Material comfort lists high in their consideration, and they are put off by Kathmandu’s daunting traffic and pollution. And although there are more flights, flights from Nepal to China are very expensive, sometimes it is cheaper to fly to Europe.

The NTB’s Shrestha says the only solution is a strong national airline to tap the huge Chinese tourism potential. “Sadly, the priority for the government now is a stable constitution, rather than stable economic growth.” Still, NTB is planning to open an office in Beijing and Shanghai, and Shrestha says extending the Qinghai-Tibet railway to the Nepal border would boost Chinese tourism even more.

Air China’s Nepal manager, Wu Yong Qiang, is also enthusiastic about the growth in air traffic. From less than 3 flights a week in 2008, Air China, China southern and China Eastern now operate almost daily flights to Chinese destinations like Kunming, Lhasa, Guangzhou and Chengdu from Kathmandu.

He says: “There is a big rush during Chinese New Year and the Golden Week period, tickets have to be booked way in advance.”
ALL ROUND DEVELOPMENT WITH INDIA’S COOPERATION

The programme of India-Nepal economic cooperation was launched in 1951 and the objective of this programme was and remains to supplement the efforts of the Government of Nepal (GoN) in Nepal’s national development.

EDUCATION

School/College/Library buildings

The Nepal Development Project Programme of the Government of India (GoI) has so far covered almost 70 districts by constructing 390 school/college/library buildings at a cost of more than Rs. 350 million since 1960. Among 390 school/college/library buildings provided every year by GoI to Nepal, nationalities for undertaking various courses at the PhD, Masters, and Bachelor’s levels in India as well as Nepal in wide spectrum of studies ranging from engineering, agriculture, pharmacology, veterinary sciences, computer applications, business administration, nursing and the arts, etc. Since 2010, more than 10,000 scholarships have been provided to Nepalese students by GoI.

Mannohpur Memorial Polytechnic

It is the first polytechnic of its kind in Nepal providing diploma level technical education in three engineering streams and several vocational courses with a capacity of providing education to about 500 students at a time. The polytechnic was constructed at a cost of Rs 50 million and was inaugurated by the Prime Minister of Nepal on 2nd November 2000.

Polytechnic at Hetauda

ICL is going to construct a government polytechnic at Hetauda with an estimated cost of Rs. 61 crores to impart mid-level technical courses in various engineering fields.

HEALTH

Bir Hospital

First-aid OPD complex of the Bir Hospital at Kathmandu was commissioned with the GoI assistance in year 1956 with a capacity to accommodate 2000 out-patients and is equipped with extensive facilities. A medical wing is being gifted to the hospital on 15th August 2011.

Trauma Centre at Bir Hospital, Kathmandu

GoI has the support of GoI has built the Trauma Centre which is a super specialty hospital and first of its kind in Nepal and the second in South Asia after the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, for the treatment of trauma patients with a cost of Rs. 150 million. It is fully equipped with modern medical equipment. The medical professionals of this hospital will get specialized training in India for the successful operation of the center.

Goltri Control Programme

GoI has provided assistance of Rs 64.49 crores to GoI 1872000 for the programme of control of Goltri and other vector-borne diseases in Nepal.

Assistance to Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh (NNS) for Cataract and Trachoma Surgeries Programme

With the assistance of GoI, NNS has held six medical camps in Kayaghat, Kailali, Dang, and Mahottari districts in order to perform 2000 operations for trachoma cataract and trachoma surgery camps for about 6000 cataract patients from 2011 to 2012. GoI has provided assistance of Rs. 42.52 crores to NNS from 2001 to 2010 for holding diagnostic and surgical eye camps.

School Eye Health Care Programme

School Eye Health Care Programme from 2007 GoI through Nepal eye camps in schools in remote areas and provide free of cost 2.083 optical appliance device to “Vision Impaired” children and 530 Low vision appliance device to children in Nepal every year at a cost of Rs. 2.69 crores. A mobile eye care unit consisting of Rs. 21.63 lakhs has also been provided to NNS for holding eye camps in schools.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

(i) GoI has provided assistance of Rs. 130.84 crores for construction of 62 villages through VNSA and 1342 villages through VDO.

(ii) The GoI has constructed 880 kilometers of optical fiber cables along the East-West Highway and setting up 840 sites of DTT equipment.

ROADS AND BRIDGES

(i) Goltri has constructed 800 kilometers of roads through VNSA and 500 kilometers through VDO.

(ii) North-south transport and three bridges have been constructed with GoI assistance of Rs. 68.50 crores under SPS schemes to provide easy access to the people of remote villages.

ELECTRIFICATION PROJECTS

(i) GoI has provided assistance of Rs. 650 million for electrification of 27 villages through NEDA.

(ii) The GoI has expanded electrification of 5 VDCs in five different districts at a cost of Rs. 150 million. Process was signed.

WATER RESOURCES

(i) India-Nepal cooperation on the hydro-electricity projects on Koshi, Trishuli, Gandaki and Melamchi rivers account for the major portion of Nepal’s country’s electricity output.

(ii) The Trishuli Hydro Power Project was constructed as a part of Tribhuvan Hydro Power Project in the 1970s.

(iii) The Mahakali Hydro Power Project (55 MW) has been restructured by NHPC in 2011 and was handed over to the GoI in 1997.

(iv) The Trishuli Power Project, Kuniya Power Project and Prakaschikar Project have received assistance as well.

(v) The GoI, in the year 1996, signed the Mahakali Treaty, which involves the integrated development of the River Mahakali, the Gandak River, Trishuli River and Phanchhuchaur Project Cooperation in the area focusing on projects on the Gandak Mahakali River.

DRINKING WATER

(i) GoI has provided assistance of Rs. 26 crores for drinking water projects to more than 250 villages in remote areas.

(ii) An ambitious project to provide drinking water facility at Khajurang and Karki VDC’s is being undertaken by GoI.
STRENGTHENING OF CROSS-BORDER LINKAGES

Goi is providing assistance to Goi for establishment of Integrated Check-Post (ICPs) at four major points along the Indo-Nepal border namely:
(1) Birgunj (Indo-Nepal)
(2) Par penetration of the Indo-Nepal border.
(3) Narayani in India to Bhairahawa in Nepal
(4) Rupandehi in India to Nepalgunj in Nepal,
and
(5) Indo-Nepal border in Nepal.

Work has started on Raxaul-Birgunj with an estimated cost of NRs. 390 crores. The check-

posts will be the model of future in Nepal, including integrated customs and immigration for
smooth cross-border movement of people and goods. Indian Ministry of Rail has


Change of aaffles
Embassy of India, Kathmandu

On the occasion of India’s 65th Independence Day, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to the Indian community and our friends in Nepal.

The era of our independence involved the sacrifices of many freedom fighters - the Father of the Nation, Babasaheb Ambedkar, many other leaders as well as the people of India are deprived...
Last January, the Jaipur Literature Festival saw a convergence of some of the movers and shakers on Nepali letters. Among them were Suvan Singh and Pranab Singh of the bookstore Quixote’s Cove, host of some of Kathmandu’s hottest books events, who were there in force with Penguin author Susjey Shakya, a delegate at the Festival, and Rishi Thapa, whose short story collection was due out from Penguin. Aij Baral of the bookshop Bookworm, who is also the publisher of Fine Print, was also there, as was Buddhi Bhattarai, one of his best-selling authors. Kiran Krishna Shrestha of Nepalaya was accompanying his best-selling author Narayan Wagle, also a resident of Kathmandu, was also there and talk would inevitably turn to questions: isn’t it time Nepal had a literature festival of its own? It is time, and now it does have a literature festival: and not just one directly inspired a host of other festivals. Indeed, festivals, now, all over India, as well as in the wider world, Nepal offers fertile grounds for literary festivals. Indeed, literature festivals are one thing that Nepalis can take pride in the intellectual ferment. In terms of public discourse without multiple, critical voices, including economically brisk, and even fractious points of view. What a gift when they can come face-to-face with the nation. There is propaganda (of all kinds), lines. There is propaganda everywhere, and in postmodern (whatever and whenever) lines. There is propaganda all around South Asia. There are literary festivals, now, all over India, as well as in Pakistan, where free expression is fraught with danger, and in countries that officially enforce censorship: Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

It is a huge act of generosity to direct another one, we readers-and directors of the upcoming festivals, and even fractious points of view. What a gift when they can come face-to-face with the folks of the past and recent excavations, the coming of the world.”

This is all very good news for the intellectual life of Nepal. Till now, the biggest book-related event here was the annual Book Fair in Bhrikuti Mandap each May. Though in recent years some publishers have held readings and book signings at the Book Fair, the primary focus of a fair is not on engaging the individual reader, but on stimulating the book business by creating new links for publishers, booksellers, and distributors. Book fairs, by contrast, focus squarely on the individual reader. They connect readers and authors through books, and encourage debate, and an exchange of worldviews. They are mainly about ideas. Over the years, the Jaipur Literature Festival, directed by Namita Gokhale, William Dalrymple and Sanjoy Roy of Teamwork, has inspired a host of other festivals around South Asia. There are literary festivals, now, all over India, as well as in Pakistan, where free expression is fraught with danger, and in countries that officially enforce censorship: Sri Lanka and Bhutan.

With its intellectual hunger, its love for debate and deliberation, and its drive to forge a connection to the wider world, Nepal offers fertile grounds for literary festivals. Indeed, if in these rugged times there is one thing that Nepal can take pride in, it is the robustness of Nepali public discourse. Since 1990, the country has been in intellectual ferment. In terms of literary output, there has been an excavation of the past and recent history; a flowering of bhasa and English literature; an outpouring of testimonials; the writing of novels along social realist (Maoist and progressive) lines, traditional 19th century (bourgeois and centrist) lines, and postmodern (whatever and whenever) lines. There is propaganda here, there is poetry. There are schools (all kinds), lines. There is propaganda everywhere, and in countries that officially enforce censorship: Sri Lanka and Bhutan. The stuff of intellectual life

Nepal now has a literature festival, and not just one either. In August, the Nepal Literature Festival hosts Indra Bahadur Rai, Mark Tully, and many Nepali writers, including Momila and Nayan Raj Pandey. This festival is sponsored primarily by Ncell.

And in September, the Kathmandu Literary Jatra hosts Patrick French, Tarun Tejpal, Mohammed Hanif, and a host of other international and Nepali writers, including Yug Pathak and Sharada Sharma. This festival has a consortium of sponsors, including Yeti Airlines, Real Fruit Juice, and Gokarna Forest Resort.

Cine Saptaha, screening of short films, Forgive, Forget Not by Pranay Limbu and Watcher by Pranaya Rana and another undisclosed film. 21 to 27 August, 4.30pm onwards, Docskool Film Centre, Gaurighat.

Khumbaya Rain Dance, a fun family evening with food stalls, live DJ, discounted rate for swimmers and rain dance. 20 August, 4pm onwards, International Club, Sanepa Rs 400/- (Adults), Rs 325/- (Kids). Free entrance for children below 3 yrs, discounted swimming rate @ International Club for the day: Rs 150/- (Children) Rs 250/- (Adults)

Lyrics from the Junkyard, junkyard sculptures by Meena Kayathpa, 19 August to 9 September, 11am to 6pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, BabarMahal Revisited

Staging of Bukhyacha, a Nepali adaptation of Italian play About Face. 3 September, every day except Monday, 5.30 pm, Anrshan Theatre, Gurukul, Old Banesworp

Faces, a photo portrait workshop conducted by photographer filmmaker Gokhali Bista, Till 20 August, 11am to 3pm. Fee: Rs. 1500, Satyaa Media Arts Collective, Jawalakhel.

Organic Farming Training, training on bio intensive farming, organized by Eco Organic Nepal. Till 4 September, 10am to 6pm, EGN farm at Mahahanal. Fee: Rs. 400, 9949999980, dipu_all@yahoo.com

Nepal Real Estate Expo 2011, organized by Nepal Land and Housing Association of Nepal. 25 August to 28 August, 11am to 6pm, Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu

South Asia and China Trade Fair 2011, with Dashain Bazaar. Organized Nepal China Executive Council. 15 to 19 September, 11am to 6pm, Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu

August Rush @ Attic, month long musical treat with artists like Sabin Rai, Robin and the New Revolution and Abatrata. Till 17 August, Attic Bar, Utkar Dhoka, 9803010105

Upper Crust, featuring artists like Kristina Allen, Space Cake Break and Outrage Ln. 20 August, 1pm to 10.30pm, Krishna Vila Resort, Budhanikarha Height, 9849504519. Ticket: Rs 990 inclusive of two complimentary drinks

An Evening with Kutumba, fundraiser for the Namche community health clinic, a great initiative by the villagers of Namche to maintain their own health services. 3 September, 5.30pm onwards, Pals, Shangri-La Hotel, Lazimpat

Himalayan Enfielders Reloaded, city ride starting from Enfield Workshop, Lazimpat to their new workshop in Jhamsikhel. Party at Peri Peri, Jhamsikhel. 20 August, 3.30pm, 9841257636, himalayenfielders@gmail.com

Kathmandu Blogs, Bloggers’ Meia organised by the Himalayan Book Reader’s Club. 20 August, 3pm to 4pm. The British Council, Lalitpur, SMS ‘attending’ followed by name to 8948100300, or email at himalayabookclub@gmail.com

South Asia and China Trade Fair 2011, with Dashain Bazaar. Organized Nepal China Executive Council. 15 to 19 September, 11am to 6pm, Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu
What do Charlie Chaplin, tapas, siu mai, and Thai food all have in common? Manoj Basnet, better known as Manny, leaves us stumped. His newly opened, self-dubbed restaurant in Jawalakhel is an ambitious eatery and tapas bar with just too much on its plate.

Divided into four sections: 1) an outdoor garden with a big-screen projection for silent films and sports, 2) a formal dining area, 3) a coffee terrace and 4) lounge, Manny’s resembles a hotel lobby and is not foreign to the Nepali palate. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-swallow. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-swallow. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-swallow. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-swallow. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-swallow.

For repast, the tequila-marinated chicken is a letdown. The idea of meat simmering in an intoxicating sauce sounds exotic and appealing. But like the vodka shrimp penne at Roadhouse Café, it’s a foolish faux pas. The chicken, presented like lamb chops, was dry and overcooked. Shame on me.

The highlight on the menu, which miraculously summons back to last week’s request, is the Philly Cheese Steak Sandwich. Done right, but needs just a tad more cheddar, the sandwich is a tasty, buttery baguette (so rare) lined with perfectly cooked strips of steak and is definitely worth the visit.

For now, the desserts are bleak with no options listed. Card was offered, however, which was politely denied.

Ultimately, the ragbag of ‘Continesian’ options at Manny’s makes more confusion than ‘non-fusion’. The trend in the dining industry to go international is an unfortunate one and should be left up to food courts and IHOP’s. With Chinese, Mexican, Spanish, Thai, Japanese, Italian, American, and French dishes to choose from, Manny’s is overwhelming. At the very least, as Manny says, the menu is momo-free (but like any ‘good business’, they’re flexible, he adds).

Marco Pollo

South from the roundabout in Jawalakhel turn right into Shaligram Hotel and Apartments.

For more information please visit www.marcopollo.com.np

\*Prices starts from Rs 1300 per person and includes taxes.

Offer valid only during weekdays excluding Sunday and national holidays.

Stay-Getaway Packages

Package

Overnight Package @ The Dhaka’s Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, for local residents, Rs 4000/- (single), Rs 5700/- (double), Dhulikhel, contact 4479488 for reservations

Park Village Resort, Saturdays and Sundays combo package with swimming, lunch and a bottle of beer @ NRs 990 for adults and NRs 800 for children, Budhanikhatru, all 4375280 for reservations

Ahaa Daman Package at Everest Panorama Resort, for expats and Nepalis, Daman, 4412864, info@everestpanoramaresort.net

Grand Norton Hotel, countryside weekend package offering suite room, swimming, gym, massage, and discounts on other facilities. Gokarna, 4910163

---

**SOMEPLACE ELSE**

**DINING**

**MANNY’S**

an executive member’s club

offers diverse savory bites like crispy buffalo wings and Chinese dumplings or siu mai. Patatas bravas is a classic Spanish snack composed of roasted potatoes lathered with a tomato-mayo sauce. But Manny’s version is roughly an also-sandiko served with a mayo dip.

**GETAWAYS**

**OVERNIGHT PACKAGE**

Overnight Package @ The Dhaka’s Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, for local residents, Rs 4000/- (single), Rs 5700/- (double), Dhulikhel, contact 4479488 for reservations

Park Village Resort, Saturdays and Sundays combo package with swimming, lunch and a bottle of beer @ NRs 990 for adults and NRs 800 for children, Budhanikhatru, all 4375280 for reservations

Ahaa Daman Package at Everest Panorama Resort, for expats and Nepalis, Daman, 4412864, info@everestpanoramaresort.net

Grand Norton Hotel, countryside weekend package offering suite room, swimming, gym, massage, and discounts on other facilities. Gokarna, 4910163

---

**LIFE TIMES**

**10 – 14 AUGUST 2011 #567**
The Big C

When we were studying medicine we referred to cancer as the ‘Big C’. Recently the New Delhi-born Siddhartha Mukherjee’s debut book ‘The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer’ (Scribner) has galvanised international attention on the Big C. The good doctor practises oncology in New York, and writes magnificently. Egyptians knew about tumours and the Greeks even differentiated benign tumors (oncos) from malignant ones (carcinos). Similar to Vedic thinking, Galen in the second century AD, proposed that poor diet (probably non-vegetarian) and environmental factors triggered malignancy.

In the past we only suspected people had cancer, but now with imaging techniques (x-rays, ultrasound, CT, MRI scans) we can see the actual, sinister growth. In 1970 in America, President Nixon was feeling tired of the Vietnam War and realised how much the war drained away the mental and physical resources of the country, not unlike the present effect of the Afghan War in the US.

However “Tricky Dick” as Nixon was known, had a plan: he declared war on cancer in the hope that this would be a more popular move that could result in an unambiguous victory, compared to the other war he was faced with. Nixon’s war against the dreaded disease pushed it into the limelight and provided more political and financial support for research, diagnosis, and treatment with a universal impact. Treatment of cancer boils down to burn (radiation), slash (surgery), or poison (chemotherapy). But over the years, research has made it possible to deploy highly targeted relatively non-toxic-chemotherapeutic guided by genetics. Gleevac (imatinib is the pharmacological name) used against a special kind of leukemia called chronic myeloid leukemia (CML) is the poster boy for cancer medicine. Gleevac’s working mechanism is genetic based, so that unlike other cancer drugs which indiscriminately kill off all dividing cells (hence people on chemotherapy may go bald), gleevac targets a particular cancer cell. Gleevac is free for patients in Nepal.

Many doctors are pessimistic about the war on cancer partly because thousands of symptom-free people have to be screened with attendant anxieties, costs, and risks to prevent even one death. However, it is reassuring that Mukherjee allows himself hope. He should know because as a cancer doctor, and has the inside track. His book is a biography of cancer itself, tracing its history that is almost as old as human history. He narrates the stories of cancer patients, how they deal with the diagnosis and treatment. He was inspired by a patient with stomach cancer who asked him to give it to her straight: whether it was worth the trouble and pain of treatment. Mukherjee also delves into the new treatments that are in the pipeline, and how fast research is moving parallel at many levels. The book is a doctor’s eye view of the disease, with both the sadness and triumphs of treating the afflicted.
Toran and Tirsana migrated from Kabhre to Kathmandu after their marriage 11 years ago. Toran runs a catering business while Tirsana is a housewife. The family photo is complete with two sons, Tiroj and Tonas. And now a Nano. “We wanted a car, but the parking space in our house is very narrow,” says Toran. “The Nano was a perfect fit.” The family has bought a yellow Nano LX. “The car’s pick up is good, but the brakes are a little stiff,” comments Toran. Tirsana feels this is a good investment. “A car is important when there are two kids,” says Tirsana. “Especially, when we have to go out at night or when it’s raining.”

Tata Nano, the world’s cheapest car, was recently launched in the Nepali market. Although the tax rate increased Nano’s ‘one lakh’ tag by more than seven fold here the Nano took Nepal by storm. Within the first ten days after the bookings opened, more than 350 cars had been reserved. Sipradi Trading, the authorised dealers for Tata vehicles in Nepal, tested the car’s ability to handle Nepal’s rugged roads by taking them on a nationwide tour. “The Nano is superior to its competition when it comes to space, features, safety and fuel efficiency,” says Shawant Jung Sijapati, Deputy Manager at Sipradi. “And all this at a lower price.” Two weeks ago, Sipradi handed over the keys of the first 100 Nanos in Nepal. Nepali Times spoke to three families which now have the cars in their garages to gauge how they rate the Nano’s performance.

Pustun and Jebin Pradhan

Fifty-six years old Pustun had enjoyed the luxury of a car in the house when his father was employed in civil service. However, when his father retired, the family didn’t buy a new car. Pustun says: “I was busy and hiring a driver would’ve been expensive”. Pustun is an associate professor at Tribhuvan University while his wife Jebin takes care of the house. Their only son and daughter-in-law are living abroad. The couple now lives by themselves with a dog and a Nano as pets. “Getting a car became a necessity,” explains Pustun. “Taxis are too expensive and it’s uncomfortable to always ask for a lift.” The couple has bought a red Nano CX. “The car is comfy and has the basic facilities, what more do you need anyway?”

Naresh and Sudhi Lamichhaney

“We didn’t really have plans to purchase a car,” says Naresh. “But Nano came by and it seemed like a good deal.” Naresh is a financial auditor and Sudhi is an architect. The two have been married for eight years and have a seven-year-old son, Nripesh. Naresh and Sudhi live in a joint family and although the family already had a four-wheeler, this was this first personal purchase. Now a red Nano CX is parked in front of their house. “My husband and I use two-wheelers to get to work, but family outings were difficult,” Sudhi says. “With a car at home, it will be easier for all of us to go out together.”
**From poppies to paddy**

Farmers in Parsa have found better cash crops than opium and marijuana

---

**RUBEENA MAHATO in PARSA**

Nepal is turning into Afghanistan’ read the headline of a magazine cover two years ago. It wasn’t talking about a return to war, but the trend among farmers to grow opium poppy.

Even until a year ago, Parsa district was regarded as a centre for cannabis and opium production, which was sold across the open border in India. They were openly cultivated right next to government offices and under the very noses of the police. Many marijuana farmers had graduated to the drug trade, with the related rise of organised crime and addiction.

Processing factories in the jungles of Parsa and opium production, which was a result of political will, strong and clean policing and effective coordination within government to support alternative crops.

Travelling through Bara and Parsa last week, the fields were gone. Poppies had been replaced with paddy and the marijuana with vegetables. This was a result of political will, strong and clean policing and effective coordination within government to support alternative crops.

"You will not see a single cannabis plant in Parsa now," asserts Ram Chand Prakash Kurni, former DDC member and himself cannabis farmer. Locals give a lot of credit to the leadership taken by former Parsa police chief, Rajendra Man Shrestha.

Back in Kathmandu, we caught up with Shrestha who has been reassigned to head the peacekeeping wing of Nepal Police. “When I started, everyone warned me that stopping cannabis cultivation in Parsa was impossible,” he told Nepali Times.

“They said everyone was involved and it would lead to unrest.” *(See box)*

Drug cultivation enjoyed political protection and wide local support. Cannabis cultivation had always existed in Parsa and was used to generate support for the Panchayat in the 1980 referendum. When the Birgunj Sugar Mill was closed down ten years ago, farmers switched from sugarcane to cannabis and poppy.

Police were attacked when they tried to destroy crops. In Bhauratar two years ago, villagers set fire to a house with policemen inside. In the ensuing violence, three people were killed as the police opened fire.

In Subarnapur, most homes still have tightly sealed plastic drums full of unsold marijuana. The price of cannabis went down sharply after the crackdown and farmers switched to vegetables. A kilogram of ganja which used to sell for Rs 900 till two years ago now fetches barely Rs 200 from Indian wholesalers.

“No one grows cannabis here anymore. But there are still stocks like this in every home," explains a Subarnapur resident, “the police have made selling almost impossible and there is more profit in vegetables anyway.”

In the beginning of 2009, Shrestha launched a crackdown against cannabis farming with a carrot and stick approach. Working with the local group, Sano Paila, police showed documentaries about the dangers of drugs and also about alternative crops. After a few months, it was the farmers themselves who informed the police about cannabis fields inside the forests.

Shrestha also forged a partnership with Indian police across the border to stop drug mafia seeking sanctuary there. Recalls RK Patel, a Birgunj journalist: “As soon as the police stopped protecting the drug trade, production went down. It took just a few months of SP Shrestha being posted here that we could see dramatic changes. Indian buyers were no longer willing to risk buying Nepali drugs.”

---

**BEFORE AND AFTER: Opium fields being destroyed by police in Parsa last year (left) and a farmer who has switched from poppy to paddy sprays chemicals on his fields last week in Subarnapur.**

---

“I was determined to do it”

Rajendra Man Shrestha

My first priority on being posted to Parsa in 2009 as SP was to control the drug trade. Police in Parsa had a bad reputation for protecting the production and smuggling of cannabis and poppy, I was determined to change this. My resolve grew when I ran across a field of white poppies inside a jungle where we had gone to intercept stolen logs. I was shocked to find that farmers there had moved on from cannabis to opium cultivation.

We started destroying cannabis and poppy grown in public land first. We had to take about 500 policemen when we went to clear fields because villagers used to chase police away to save their harvests and have their women and children as human shields.

That made us rethink our approach and we decided to start when the farmers begin to plant cannabis. In the 11 villages that we initially selected, we did not let anyone plant cannabis at all. Any police who allowed marijuana to be grown was suspended. Cultivation dropped by half. We did not let anyone go off the hook: drug peddlers or the police.

We held an all party meeting to garner political support and worked with local NGOs, community activists and government offices. The District Agriculture Office pitched in with vegetable seedlings and extension support. Often, it is the village elders and political leaders on whose patronage cannabis farming is done. The police alone couldn’t stop it, we needed local support.

We argued that if cannabis farming was as lucrative as they thought it was why were Parsa farmers so poor? We told them you still live in mud houses and the middlemen and Indian businessmen have got rich.

I am glad to say that by the time I left in May, cannabis and opium cultivation had gone down by 95 percent in Parsa. If we can control cannabis and poppy cultivation for one more year, drugs will never be grown there again.

*(As told to Rubeena Mahato)*
“Looks don't count...”

“...but good looks attract attention.”

**John Players** Premium men's wear from Surya Nepal gift voucher on yearly subscription of Nepali Times.

We know, you sometimes like the attention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TERM</th>
<th>YOU PAY</th>
<th>YOU SAVE</th>
<th>YOUR ASSURED FREE GIFT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Year</td>
<td>Rs. 1,350</td>
<td>Rs. 210</td>
<td>John Players gift voucher worth Rs. 500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Year</td>
<td>Rs. 2,500</td>
<td>Rs. 620</td>
<td>John Players gift voucher worth Rs. 1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Year</td>
<td>Rs. 3,500</td>
<td>Rs. 1,180</td>
<td>John Players gift voucher worth Rs. 1500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For subscription, SMS: 9818476422 or call 977-1-5250845, 5250333 to have our subscription agent visit your home/office.
Two new movies released this month, one a science-fiction blockbuster, the other a revealing documentary, raise the issue of our relations with our closest non-human relatives, the great apes. Both dramatise insights and lessons that should not be ignored.

Rupert Wyatt’s *Rise of the Planet of the Apes* is the seventh film in a series based on Pierre Boule’s 1963 novel, *Planet of the Apes*, about a world populated by highly intelligent simians. Performance capture technology, originally invented for the movie *Avatar*, enables a human actor, Andy Serkis, to play the role of the chimpanzee Caesar, not by dressing in a chimp suit, but by having every gesture and facial movement, even the twitch of an eyebrow, transformed into the movement of an ape.

Will Rodman (played by James Franco), is a scientist seeking a cure for Alzheimer’s disease who experiments on apes. Many films would have glorified a scientist seeking such a goal, and treated the use of animals for that purpose as obviously justified. *Rise of the Planet of the Apes*, however, portrays Rodman as, in Franco’s words, “a cold, isolated person”. Only when Rodman’s superiors cancel his experiments and he takes home Caesar, an infant chimpanzee, does the scientist begin to care about others. The plot then takes another turn when Caesar becomes too big and aggressive to live in a human home, and is taken to what is supposed to be a primate sanctuary, but is in fact a dumping ground for unwanted apes, run by humans who display cruelty to the captive animals.

*Project Nim*, a documentary based on Elizabeth Hess’s book *Nim Chimpsky: The Chimp Who Would be Human*, is about Nim who was born in 1973 in a primate research facility in Oklahoma, and was taken from his mother when he was only ten days old, to be used in a sign-language experiment.

Rearred as part of a human family, he learned to use more than 100 signs from American Sign Language. But Nim was taken from his first human family and handed over to other teachers with whom he did not have the same kind of bond. He grew stronger and more aggressive and began biting his teachers. Herbert Terrace, the Columbia University psychologist who was directing the project, decided to end it and sent Nim back to the primate facility in Oklahoma. There, the pampered chimpanzee, who, when asked to sort photos of humans and apes, put his own photo among the humans, was locked in a cage with other chimps. Nim narrowly escaped being infected with hepatitis as part of a medical experiment, until he was eventually released to an animal sanctuary, where he died in 2000.

In 1993, Paola Cavalieri and I founded The Great Ape Project, an organization dedicated to the idea of recognising that great apes have a moral status befitting their nature as self-aware beings who are capable of thought and have rich and deep emotional lives. At a minimum, they should have the rights to life, liberty, and protection from torture that we grant to all members of our own species, regardless of their intellectual abilities.

Since 2010, the European Union has essentially banned the use of great apes in experiments. Experiments on great apes are now either banned or severely restricted in New Zealand, Australia, and Japan. In the United States, a bipartisan group of members of Congress is supporting legislation to end the use of chimpanzees in invasive research. Our closest relatives could serve to bridge the moral gulf that we have dug between ourselves and other animals.

Peter Singer is professor of bioethics at Princeton University. His books include *Animal Liberation*, *Practical Ethics*, *The Ethics of What We Eat*, and *The Life You Can Save*. Our closest relatives could serve to bridge the moral gulf between humans and other animals.

See the world differently this morning.

The best global and local news, in one simple package.

Subscribers will get free access to NYTimes.com

Call : 4268656 subs@myrepublica.com

A planet for all apes

Peter Singer is professor of bioethics at Princeton University. His books include *Animal Liberation*, *Practical Ethics*, *The Ethics of What We Eat*, and *The Life You Can Save*.
Elusive consensus

Besides, government formation and power sharing has largely affected the statute drafting process.

What happens if there is no progress by 31 August?
If the 5-point deal is not implemented, the nation will slide into uncertainty. The crisis was averted last time, but it cannot be avoided forever. It has to be addressed and resolved. All the parties agree on this in principle, but fail when it comes to creating a consensus to address it.

Does this mean that CA will cease to exist after the 31st? Question is not just about CA. When 5-point deal was signed, everybody was clear on how the nation would move ahead in the coming days: completing the major tasks of the peace process, preparing a single draft of the constitution and a national unity government to oversee this process. Question is why it was not implemented.

Amidst such distrust are you confident that the first draft will be prepared by 31 August? If the parties seriously engage in the process in the remaining days, I am hopeful they can save the nation from stalemate and uncertainty. There is no alternative to taking the peace process to its logical end and preparing the first draft of the constitution by the stipulated deadline.

If that does not happen, will the CA term still be extended? I hope it will not come to that, but if it does the parties are responsible to steering the nation out of the crisis. That would still need consensus.

Where is the leader?

Farewell Subhash Darnal

Baburam Bisworakarma in Himal Khaharpatrika, 18 August-1 September

Subhash Darnal was 18 when he came to Kathmandu for his higher studies from Mujburg, Palpa. In the 13 years that followed, he rose as a fervent defender and promoter of the dignity and rights of the Dalits. The way he heightened issues of the marginalised in such a short period was probably the most valued contribution to the field.

After being trained in media studies at the Nepal Press Institute, Darnal worked for a while at Himal Khabarpatrika covering Dalit and social justice issues. He later served as vice chairman at Action Aid Nepal. Darnal died at age of 31 and leaves behind his wife, Sarita Pariyar and a two-year-old daughter.

Economic progress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1995/96</th>
<th>2010/11</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Capita Income</td>
<td>Rs 7,690</td>
<td>Rs 41,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families receiving remittance</td>
<td>22 %</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary level education</td>
<td>34 %</td>
<td>78 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual expenditure per person</td>
<td>Rs 6,802</td>
<td>Rs 34,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families who use cylinder gas</td>
<td>14.7 %</td>
<td>21.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with electricity</td>
<td>14.1 %</td>
<td>69.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lavatory in household</td>
<td>21.6 %</td>
<td>56 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Road access within 30 minutes of dwelling</td>
<td>24.2 %</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
You scratch my back, I’ll scratch your eyes out

One of the many indications that Nepal may be headed the North Korea way besides the fact that we now call ourselves a Democratic People’s Republic is that the Department of Mines has announced that it will start prospecting for uranium in Mustang. Better late than never to have our own plutonium enrichment program so we won’t be kicked around by Big Brothers, hoina?

There is so much back-stabbing going on that no politician trusts anyone anymore even if they have a total of 250-point agreements in writing with thumb prints duly attested by witnesses and a public notary.

The latest major falling out is between JNK and PKD with each accusing the other of being a dirty double crossed. Neither had any intention of delivering on promises, they were just using each other to get to Bahau Water, or to keep someone they hated even more out of the House Built on Sand. They were so clever by half with the you-scratch-my-back-I’ll-scratch-out-your-eyes-out principle that the two inevitably parted ways last week.

PKD was mad at JN for offering to resign without his permission and, even worse, tabling an ultimatum on progress in the peace process. (“No one gives Unser Führer ultimata and that sort of thing, get that?”) So, Awesome leaked to the press that he had another "breakthrough" proposal up his sleeves, and the press duly reported this as “breaking news.” The breakthrough was PKD’s agreement to integrate only 7,000 PLA, give the rest a 5 lak golden handshake, make four senior gorillas colonels in the Nepal Army, etc. But, as with umpteen proposals before this, Comrade Lotus Flower suddenly went cold on the breakthrough plan. JN felt betrayed and trotted off to Shit-all Nibas to tender his resignation to the prez.

Whatever he may say in public about backing BRB as PM, that is the last thing PKD would like to see. He would rather have Lion Brave as PM, and has the NC’s four-time PM wagging his tail and wanning his paw. Till press time on Thursday it was looking like Share Bahadur was in no mood to share the PM-ship, especially if BRB got the job first.

The question on everyone’s mind now is whether Dahal will do to B Bhattarai what Girija did to KP Bhattarai way back when. Never know with these bahuns.

So it looks like the black plate wallahs have declared a nationwide transporters strike if their 41-pt demand is not met. Among the demands is that the constitution be written on time, so we can safely conclude that there will be no public transport for the next decade or so. But the main gripe of the microscopic bus owners is that the Badis are getting to import taxis duty free. “If Badis can have tax-exempt taxis, we Mao-badis should also have them,” they say.

And finally, @amnra just tweeted: “When asked who should be next candidate for PM Prachanda said “BRB” (Be Right Back) but everyone confused it for Babu Ram Bhattarai.

Sale up to 50% OFF

Starting from: 19th August 2011

Mens wear, Ladies wear, Kids wear & Accessories

United colors of Benetton

Gretn Kathmandu Clean Bagmati

The Festival of a 21st Century bagmati river project)

Initiated, 20.06.2011