


NEPALI Times

#572

23 - 29 September 2011

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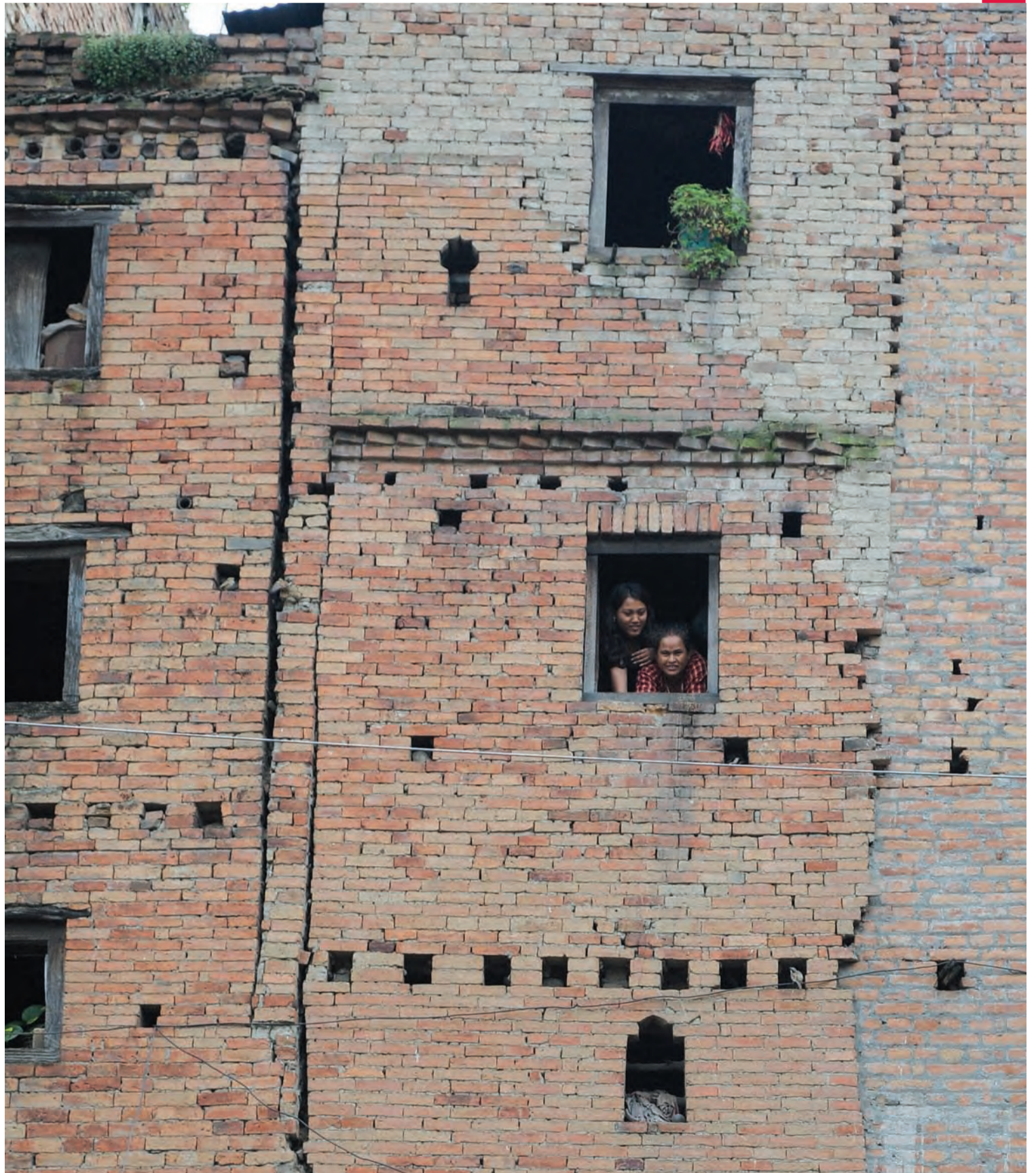
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Lean on me

Sunday's 6.9 magnitude quake left at least 11 dead and displaced more than 1000 families. Thousands lost their homes in eastern Nepal. Kathmandu's alluvial soil magnified the shaking. Three were killed and many houses were damaged, like this one in Bhaktapur. Next time, we won't be so lucky. Sunday's quake was a wake-up call, but will we learn from it? See Editorial, Dress Rehearsal for the Next Big One,

p2



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DRESS REHEARSAL FOR THE NEXT BIG ONE

We are probably not going to learn any lessons from Sunday's quake. Just like we didn't learn from the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in which thousands of school children were among those killed. Just like we didn't learn from the Haiti earthquake last year in which 200,000 perished.

September 18 was a dress rehearsal for the Next Big One that is bound to hit Kathmandu Valley sooner or later. If a 6.9 magnitude quake 270 km away caused so much damage and even fatalities in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, imagine a replay of an 8 magnitude earthquake like the one that devastated the Valley in 1934.

On Sunday, it was only a tremor in Kathmandu yet there was confusion and panic. People jumped out of windows, parliamentarians stampeded. The cell phone network was immediately overwhelmed. Pre-planning is the key, especially for disasters that we know are coming. There wasn't much of that in evidence on Sunday night.

At first light the next morning, there should have been aerial reconnaissance of eastern Nepal to assess the damage. There could have been massive landslides blocking the Arun and Tamor or their tributaries, impounding water and unleashing flashfloods in the narrow valleys downstream. Such disasters have occurred before in Nepal, the floods killing more people than the original earthquake.

This should have been the job of the newly created Disaster Risk Reduction Centre under the home ministry. Yet, all it did was play a passive coordination role. The prime minister and deputy prime minister both flew off to New York, and our foot-in-the-mouth home minister told parliament he prayed earthquakes would not happen elsewhere, not in Nepal. The dress rehearsal was a disaster.

The lesson from Haiti is that a major catastrophe here will overwhelm such a feckless government. Response will be chaotic and uncoordinated, especially since communications and transportation will be destroyed. The dysfunctionality of



BIKRAM RAI

the Nepali state is a given, the question is what are we going to do despite that. We will probably have to fall back on communities, families and individuals to be prepared for risk reduction, rescue and relief.

International help will take at least three days to get to Kathmandu, and will probably have to be para-dropped since the only runway of the only international airport may be damaged. Highways and bridges will probably be gone. We cannot expect much help from India since a major earthquake in Nepal will also seriously affect the densely populated Indo-Gangetic plains.

The forecast scenarios are staggering. Historical records show that there is a 8 magnitude earthquake in central Nepal every 80 years or so. Experts estimate an earthquake of that intensity would kill outright up to 100,000 people in the Valley alone. Depending on the time of day, a majority of them could be school children. The projected 300,000 severely injured

would have no hospital to go to since most of them will have collapsed. Some 1.5 million residents of the capital will be homeless.

As happened in Haiti, there will be a great exodus of the Valley population on foot to the hinterland. International relief should therefore be targeted at the moving population, and not concentrated in the areas with most visible physical damage. It should be a priority to help the displaced to stay in host families or communities, the infrastructure of the capital will not be able to support them. Emergency food aid, health, education and job creation should go to the rural areas where the internally displaced have migrated to. Rehabilitation should be decentralised to share the burden.

Kathmandu itself needs a plan for shelters and mobile clinics in open spaces, pre-positioned water and digging equipment. Prioritised rubble clearing is a must since rescue vehicles will otherwise not have access to the devastated city core.

Nepal's politics will be in disarray, the government will probably be paralysed with shock at a time when its rapid response will be needed the most. Learning from Sunday, our legislators should immediately pass the bill to set up a National Commission for Disaster Relief Management.

Western Nepal hasn't seen a major earthquake for 300 years, and tremendous tension has built up in the colliding tectonic plates below. This is bad news for big towns like Pokhara and Kathmandu since alluvial soil magnifies shaking. When the Big One does hit one day soon, it will make the casualties and physical damage of Sunday evening's quake look like picnic.

We got failing grades for the response this time around. It is a wake-up call to get our act together for the real thing.

nepalitimes.com

Sunday's earthquake

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

TRAFFICKING

How unfortunate to hear about the trafficked girls from Humla ('A faraway rescue', #571). I have travelled through this lovely area and would like to see those crazy western religious folk kept out. It is happily and successfully Buddhist and Hindu, and does not need these zealots tainting the area with there version of religion.

lot in her life with so little given to her. Bravo, and inspiring.

Alex Bickett

● Good job Haridevi Rokaya ('Karnali community', #571). Hope we can hear more stories from Karnali.

Biraj Bahadur Bista

● Congratulations to Haridevi and thanks to Rubeena Mahato for bringing the story of her struggle to light. It proves that there are many women in the Karnali who have to go through Haridevi did.

Gorakh Bista

● We people of Karnali are encouraged by the work of Nari Awaz, and Haridevi for her courage and determination to support the women and people here.

Suraj Sejuwal

● Thank you Nepali Times for constantly reaffirming our faith in the Nepali people with heart-warming stories like that of Jhamak Ghimire, Haridevi Rokaya, the Esther Benjamin Trust that rescues trafficked girls, and activists like Asmita Thapa of Shakti Samuha. And not to forget Narayan Shrestha of Sajha Sawal. They are the true heroes of the New Nepal.

Kiran L

SAJHA SAWAL

A true, calm journalist is our Narayan Shrestha. ('Sajha Sawal is 200', #571)

Prakash Sharma

● Sajha Sawal is only show I watch from

Nepal. But the show should also travel to the Himal, not just Tarai and Pahad.

D Gurung

● A fan here. I like Narayan Shrestha's voice, he has a unmatched by any other media personality.

Chandra Gurung

● After reading Rubeena Mahato's 'A new radio revolution', #571, I wondered whether there is any justification in Kathmandu valley having 30+ FM stations. Surely, it can't be anything other than an extreme example of "free for all" and a colossal waste of resources.

Armugam

REALITY CHECK

After reading your editorial ('Reality check', #571) I am convinced Gopal Kirati is a Trojan Horse. Bahun Chhetris that include Thakuris and Sanyasis, even Dalits, have never asked for a province or state with racial or ethnic labels. They are for federal multi-cultural, inclusive, proportionally represented fully democratic secular provinces representing the present ground reality of the comotion of various nationalities residing in them.

Tapan Das

● We want to believe that the new PM might be able to steer a path in this turmoil. We are desperate and that is why we want to clutch at any straw that comes our way. It is human nature. A desperate person tries to save himself with actions seemingly ridiculous to others. But beware: this is a desperate man. He can go to any extreme, and if he does,

the outcome can indeed be very dark for Nepal.

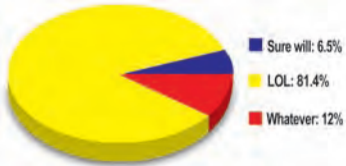
Kamal Kishor

● Let the Maoist split. That is the best thing that could happen. After the split you can arrest Pushpa Kamal, Kiran and Gajurel and charge them with treason. Baburam is an educated man, you can reason with him. As for the other three let us remind them that if they want to live by the sword, then we will be quite happy to see them die by the sword.

Bibek Sharma

CORRECTION

The poll result of #571 has been corrected as follows:



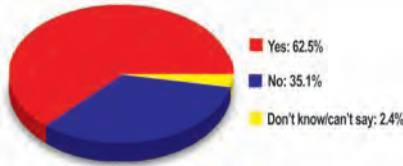
Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll # 572

Q. Should the Prime Minister travel in economy class?

Total votes: 2,638



Weekly Internet Poll # 573. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. How prepared are we for a bigger quake?



NAVES CHITRAKAR

Key questions

Handing over the keys to weapons containers has sparked an open mutiny in the Maoist party



BY THE WAY

Anurag Acharya

The skeletons are finally rattling in the Maoist closet and this time there is no wishing it away. When the party finally handed over the keys of its weapon containers to the Special Committee, it was seen within Nepal and internationally as a great leap forward by the ex-guerillas.

But it came at a cost. It appears to have sparked off an open mutiny within the party leadership even though a day before the handover, the party's central committee had approved the decision. "When we gathered to hand over the keys, we asked the leaders if it they were united in the decision. Vice-chairman Baidya was there and said he had no issues," a PLA commander told me this week.

He went on to explain how the PLA has been patient and committed in its share of responsibility and rubbished speculation of a mutiny. "We have been living in those makeshift camps for the last five years. We don't have to prove our commitment to peace and constitution just because some individual in Kathmandu makes a statement on our behalf."

The anger of the fighters against their leadership is unmistakable. Even though this has not spilled over to the increasingly bitter debate at Paris Danda, party factions are exploiting that anger and battling for their hearts and minds. The meeting of dissatisfied comrades at New Baneshwor on Wednesday indicates there is a gathering storm that is sure to hit the party's central committee meeting at the end of this month. The Baidya faction is sharpening its knives and hopes to have a parallel party structure in place over Dasain.

"If the leaders push for integration by majority decision, they will be responsible for what follows," warned Netra Bikram Chand, an outspoken Baidya-loyalist. His faction believes the purity of the revolution is in danger and the Baburam Bhattarai-led government has abandoned what they fought for. He believes his party's alliance with the Madhesi parties is an obstacle on the path to revolution, and other members of his faction have even labeled the four-point agreement an attempt to "Sikkimise" Nepal.

Chand's views represent the most rigid even within the hardliners, and it is natural that all those who did not get portfolios, or who have a visceral hatred for Bhattarai will gravitate to this faction. Even earlier fence-sitters like Ram Bahadur Thapa are now in the Baidya camp.

However, Bhattarai's aides are convinced that the hardline comrades will fall in line and integration will pick up pace once the prime minister returns from New York. The party mainstream doesn't seem very worried about what comrades like Chand say in private to reporters because, they say they are much more accommodative at party meetings. But even if the hardliners are saying one thing in public and another in private, it smacks of posturing and corrodes the party's image.

The big "breakthroughs" made by the Maoists in the last one month proves Pushpa Kamal Dahal still has the required numbers and influence to back his decisions at any level in the party. His unconditional support to Bhattarai government is the only thing that has helped retain people's trust that finally the Maoists really mean what they say.

However, like any left movement around the world there is a strong anarchist tendency within the party because of the ultra-radical line of some members. This rift has surfaced repeatedly in the last six years, and has been hurriedly patched up. It essentially boils down to those who believe the party should have fought on because victory was at hand, and those who believed that the peace process was just another kind of revolution.

So it is a disagreement over the means, not the end. The hardliners feel more Nepalis have to die in order to complete the revolution, and a lesser price is not change. The Baidya faction thinks it is ideologically pure and the other side has sold out.

What they don't realise is that they have got their history lessons all wrong. What do you expect of a party that has air-brushed the excesses of the Cultural Revolution in China? They fail to understand that change is an idea, and ideas are never permanent: they evolve, they are subjective and self-reflective. Ideas are not prisoners of doctrine, but dwell freely in people's aspirations. Perhaps the over excited lot must sit down and reassess what Lenin meant when he warned against fashionable preaching of opportunism going hand-in-hand with narrowest forms of action. 🇳🇵

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Plane speaking

There are enough of us in the airline who have abandoned neither Nepal nor Nepal Airlines



NEPALIPAN
Vijay Lama

For me and many loyal employees of Nepal Airlines, our country and our airline are synonymous. It could be because we are Nepal's international flag carrier. It could be because we have lived through trying times for both the nation and the country whose name the airline bears. Or it may be because we love both equally much.

Which must be why when Nepal's and foreigners talk disparagingly about our national airline it hurts me as much as when they speak ill about our country. My love and respect for my airline and the land of my birth will remain, no matter what anyone says, and no one can take that away from me.

I am no starry-eyed romantic, I am enough of a realist to know that both the country and the airline are

in deep trouble. But I also know that the fate of one affects the other, and in fact it is the rot in the country's body politic that is infecting the airline. I am not going to allow my belief in seeing a prosperous Nepal and a strong Nepal Airlines go unmet in my lifetime. Not without a fight.

Nepal is going through a rough patch during its transition phase, but this is not unique. We all knew it wasn't going to be easy. We often encounter turbulence in flight, but we can anticipate it, go around or climb above the weather to take the plane to a safe landing at our destination. We don't let go of the controls when we hit a few bumps, or leave it up to the gods.

On every flight to Malaysia or Qatar, in the cabin behind me are hundreds of my Nepali brothers and sisters who are seeking greener pastures



KUNDA DIXIT

abroad. Every flight out of Nepal is Nepal in a microcosm, the passengers represent the collective aspirations and hopes of all Nepalis. They are leaving because what they see around them gives them no hope.

I admit, there are times when I feel tempted to join them. There is no shortage of jobs for experienced 757

pilots, and I could earn many times more what I earn here. My family and friends wish me well, and ask me why I am wasting my time in an airline that is going down. Why am I stubbornly refusing to see that the political leaders, airline mafia, other airlines, the unions and staff are hell bent on destroying Nepal Airlines?

Why can't I just call it quits and go abroad instead of wasting my skill, knowledge and time?

How can I explain to them that this would be like abandoning my country? If your mother is sick, would you leave her? Do you just sit back and complain about what a burden she is on you, or do you try to find her proper care and nurse her back to health?

Things are not hopeless. We have come a long way since the war ended, and you can't expect politicians to behave any differently than they are doing here. But there are untainted political leaders with integrity and vision who are itching to set the country on the correct path. Same for the airline, if only the company was left to professionals it could prosper. There are enough of us in the airline who have abandoned neither Nepal nor the airline. We will be here till the end.

Politicians, stop interfering in Nepal Airlines. Leave us alone. We don't need fair weather friends, we need allies who will stay and support us while we negotiate the treacherous route ahead.

Vijay Lama is a Captain with Nepal Airlines with which he has been flying for 25 years.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Feel the difference

At a time when Nepali investors are taking their money out of the country, and new investors are scared away by power cuts and militant unions, one family-run company has stuck steadfastly to its core business.

It is Himal Iron and Steel, founded as far back as 1961 by Maniharsha Jyoti in Parwanipur of Parsa district. The factory transformed the once-sleepy town and laid the foundation of the new industrial belt between Hetauda and Birganj. It created 450 jobs and benefited tens of thousands in downstream industries. In fact, Himal Iron and Steel was a pioneer private sector venture in this field, and showed the visionary outlook of its founder.

Today, 50 years later, the factory is part

An iron will

Nepal's oldest steel factory marks 50 years

of a large industrial conglomerate run by family patriarch Maniharsha Jyoti's sons, Padma and Roop as well as grandson, Saurabh. Maniharsha Jyoti worked in a mining company in India that was a supplier to the Steel Authority of India. But he returned to Nepal to contribute to nation-building at a time when there was a lot of optimism about Nepal's industrial development.

The elder Jyoti understood that iron and steel were the backbone of a country's economy, but he had to counter a lot of nay-sayers who saw no future in the industry at a time when most Nepali homes were still not using ferrocement construction.

Himal Iron and Steel has constantly tried to keep pace with modern technology, investing in new equipment and expanding production. The quality of steel is even more important in a country like Nepal which is in a seismically active zone.

"Since the inception of Himal Steel we have never compromised on quality," says



Maniharsha Jyoti's grandson, Saurabh, "over the years with advanced technology, our quality has only grown from strength to strength."

The factory has also invested heavily in the development of Parwanipur, not just

by giving jobs to locals but also setting up in health and education infrastructure. Jyoti Group's mobile clinics have now taken the shape of Jyoti Clinic, a health post that provides free care to surrounding villages.

The group has also established Little Flowers School, a state of the art education center at the Jyoti Farm in Parwanipur in which children from the region get quality education. "The students at Little Flower are just as good as any student in an English medium school in Kathmandu," says Saurabh Jyoti.

From its inception, Himal Iron and Steel has always made it a matter of principle to hire local people as much as possible, upgrading their skills through training.

Today, Himal's construction steel props up the country's infrastructure from the Karnali Bridge to the Nepal Telecom building, the Engineering College in Pulchok, Sunkosi Hydro power house, Soaltee Hotel and many others.

Bhrikuti Rai

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Getting rich is glorious

How does China explain its governance?



STRICTLY BUSINESS

Ashutosh Tiwari

Its economy has been growing at the annual rate of 10 percent for most of the last 30 years. It is the largest exporter of goods in the world. Its per capita GDP is close to eight thousand dollars. It recently dislodged Japan to become the second largest economy in the world after the US. Its coastal cities are filled with tall and sturdy buildings, wide roads, high bridges and massive industrial complexes – all ready to inject a dose of massive inferiority complex to most Western cities when it comes to matters of infrastructure. Yet this country of 1.3 billion is ruled from Beijing by the Communist Party.

To learn more out about the software side of China's governance, I kept an open mind when I sat down with a Communist Party official earlier this week in Dalian. His explanations were as follows:

Feedback loops: Contrary to what outsiders think, the Party leadership is not rigid when it comes to making decisions. It does not first decide things then look for supporting arguments. It is open to



information coming from all sides – from local governments, from the media and from the outsiders. It has a mechanism in place to read, examine and interpret information. This process provides constant feedback to the Party with regard to how it is perceived, how its decisions are being played out, and what needs to be done next.

Social experiments: Because political leaders in villages and cities are party members, the party can afford to run many small-scale social experiments and keep tabs on progress. For instance, it may start a

new employment scheme in a small city, and monitor the results. If the results are satisfactory, the party may then roll out the scheme to several cities. At any time, there are thousands of such small social experiments that are going on, all providing feedback to the party, which discards what doesn't work and scales up what works.

Media: The party exercises considerable control over what gets printed, broadcast and transmitted over the Internet. But the people do not mind this sort of control as much as outsiders think. Taking a deep interest in the media helps the party

understand people's thoughts and voices, and act accordingly. This is an example of caring for the people so that they do not fall prey to bad elements. Of course, the outsiders may say that the party cares too much about the media.

Adaptability: Outsiders have this mistaken view that the party is a rigidly doctrinaire Marxist-Maoist entity. It is not. It is fairer to look at it as a way of governance that has imbued communism with Chinese characteristics, foremost among which is being practical about things. It is more important to be practical than stick only to theories. The way Chinese leaders groom their successors is an example of being practical. Overall, the party is flexible, practical and adaptable to new information and ideas. Communist parties elsewhere failed to adapt, and became less relevant. Being adaptable helps the party to reach to new information and makes the decision-making process match what is actually going on in reality.

I was struck that the official described the party as a kind of Hayekian computer: feeding on millions of random bits of information to come up with practical decisions that are likely to have good consequences. True, much of it could be just spin. But there's no mistaking that amidst China's economic transformation, which started in 1987 and seems visibly hardware-led today, the software side of governance appears to have evolved over the years -- both as a matter of practical necessity and to assert China's interests in the world. 🇨🇳

BIZ BRIEFS

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Sidha Cash Just Relax Offer: Customers purchasing Demak DMX-R will get a cash discount of Rs 10,000. Two will win a vacation to Malaysia.

Scratch & Get Direct Cash: With every purchase of Timex watch customers can win cash discounts.

Nagad Upahar Samridhdha Dashain Tihar: Account holders of Janta Bank's Samridhdha Savings account will be gifted one per cent of their total savings balance.

Ghar Gharma Khushi: Buyers of Pashupati Paints will receive prizes on every purchase. Fifty will even get a chance to win round trip tickets from Yeti Airlines to destination of their choice within Nepal.

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Film South Asia 2011 is in its eighth year and the prestigious regional documentary film festival will showcase 36 finest shortlisted films next week from 29 September to 2 October. The films are judged by a three-member jury and the best film is awarded the 'Ram Bahadur Trophy' for Best Film along with a cash prize of \$2,000. The second best film is awarded \$1,000 and the Best Debut Film gets \$1,000. This year's program:

3 PM The Other Song (120')
India, 2009, dir - Saba Dewan
In 1935, Rasoolan Bai the well-known singer from Varanasi, recorded for the gramophone a love song that she would never sing again.

10 AM Common Ground (52')
Sri Lanka, 2011, dir - Philip Buccellato
Increasing human populations and loss of elephant habitats poses a serious threat to the elephant's continued existence.

3:15 PM Ishpata (70')
Pakistan, 2011, dir - Afsheen Sajid Ali, Irfan Ali Shah
Despite gloomy scenario in the Kalash region of Pakistan , there are some people who have made a difference in the lives of their community.

6:30 PM I Was Worth 50 Sheep (72')
Afghanistan, 2010, dir - Nima Sarvestani
I Was Worth 50 Sheep is the story of a girl in Afghanistan, Sabere, and her struggle for life.





SURYA NEPAL

*conditions apply

1:30 PM Platform No. 5 (26")
India, 2010, dir - Vanaja C
The film examines the concept of love, fear, respect and money in the world of street children.

3:45 PM Aadesh Baba (77")
Nepal, 2011, dir - Aurore Laurent, Adrien Viel
Aadesh Baba is the story of the sadhu's quest for the divine. But men have to
set themselves free from pain to reach eternity.

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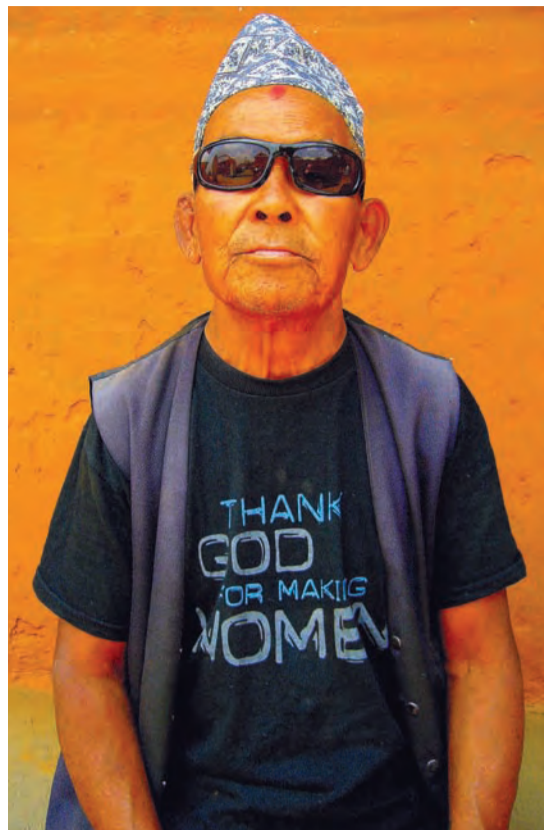


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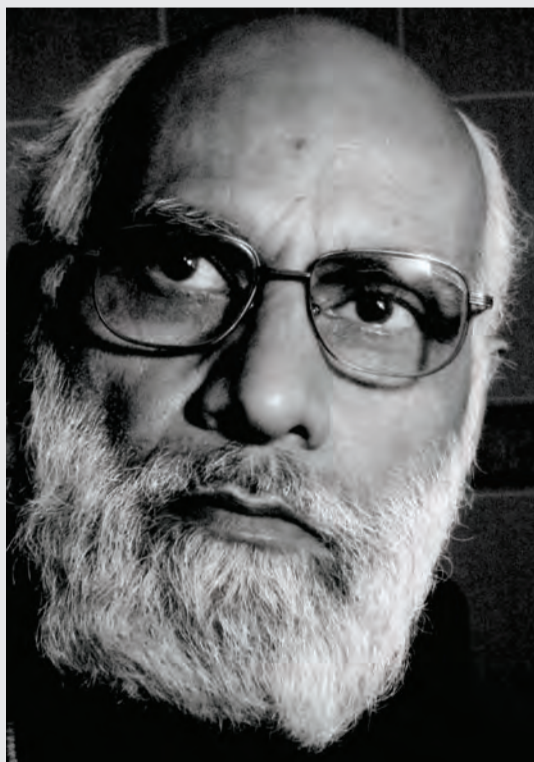
The creation of the first cities and the invention of writing lie at the heart of our very idea of civilisation. Indian photographer Satish Sharma, who currently lives in Kathmandu, has been intrigued about how they began together and neither

now exists without the other. For the first time in modern history, urban dwellers will outnumber rural dwellers, and city dwellers will be living in a “torrent of text”.

Sharma takes these texts and makes photographic images of them in the urban context. Ahead of his exhibition that opens in Siddhartha Art Gallery on Friday, Sharma told Nepali Times: “It is these

eyeball grabbing visual texts and their relationships with the construction of our lives in our consumer oriented cities that interest me. This is a relationship that I want to explore photographically in *Texts and the City*.”

Texts and the City
Siddhartha Art Gallery
Babar Mahal Revisited
23 September – 17 October
11AM- 6PM Daily
www.siddharthaartgallery.com



City words

Nepali Times: How did you get inspired to do *Texts and the City*?

Satish Sharma: I love reading and read everything. The signs on the streets say so much more about places, cultures and people than books.

What was it about the signage in Kathmandu that grabbed you?

Their raw reflection of the chaotic growth the city is going through.

When does photography transcend satire of the misuse of language to be a visual record of a landscape?

When it makes one look again. Actually see. And ask questions.

How this exhibition fit into the corpus of your other photography?

It continues to expand on my interest in the politics of photography: the politics of its use.



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HIMAL
KHABARPATRIKA
2-17 September

COVER

The Maoists are now wooing the 'upper caste' for votes in the party's rightwing journey.

EDITORIAL

Kiran Nepal talks about the dangers of ethnic polarisation in a multi-ethnic Nepali society.

OPINION

Krishna Khanal on the fragmentation of Nepal's diversity.

Bishwa Poudel on the chances of a new revolution in Mao's China

EYE WITNESS

The budget sanctioned for affordable housing to poorest of the poor in Siraha district is going in the pockets of the corrupt local leaders.

REPORTS

Rising incidents of domestic violence among lesbian couples.

Populist "relief" package exposed

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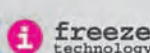
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NEPAL TOURISM YEAR 2011

EVENTS

Karaoke for a Cause, by the Filipino Community in Nepal (FCN).
Tickets: Rs 350, 24 September, 3pm to 11pm, 8 degrees, Jhamsikhel, call 9841861682, 9818418563, 9841143395

Poolbata Herda, adapting Arthur Miller's play: a View from the Bridge. 23 September, 5.30pm, Rimal Theatre, Gurukul



Siddhartha: Birth of a Dream, staging of Buddha's early life. 26 to 27 September, 6pm (on both days) and 2pm (on Tuesday), Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi, call 4240159

Changa Chait, usher in Dasain with the corporate kite flying competition. 28 September and 1 October, 11am onwards, Club Himalaya, Nagarkot, call 9841712350, 9851022064



Moving Planet Cycle Rally, a cycle rally to promote use of cycles for the future of the planet. September 24, 7am to 11am, Basantapur

Changa Chet, kite flying festival with music, food and fun. Bring your own thread and lattais. Rs 50 for entrance and Rs 50 for 5 kites. September 28, 10am to 5pm, Manjushree Park, Chobar

Manhunt Nepal, bringing together talented Nepali youth and corporate houses. 25 September, 4.30pm onwards, Army Officer's Club, Sundhara.

Cycle 6: Life, nature and wildlife photography by Om Yadav. 19 August to 30 September, 10am to 5pm, Galleria CUC, Maharajgunj



Exploring the Great Himalaya Trail, by Robin Boustead. Cultural Studies Group of Nepal presents its monthly lecture. September 28, 6pm, Shanker Hotel, Lazimpat



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Garage Sale, organized by Rakshya Nepal. *30 September to 2 October, 10am onwards, Trikuti Colony, Battisputali, call 9851023958, 9841024000*

MUSIC



September Paleti, Kiran Pradhan makes a comeback. *30 September, 'i' sala, Nepa-laya, Kalikasthan, 4412469, paleti@nepalaya.cpm*

Pink Floyd Tribute, a tribute concert to Pink Floyd. *1 October, 5pm onwards, St. Xavier's School ground, Jawalakhel*

Rock Awaaz, a social fundraising event with bands like Mukti and Revival, Monkey Temple and Rock Sitar performing. *Entrance fees: Rs 150, September 28, 1pm to 7.30pm, Jawalakhel*

DINING

Fire and Ice, the home to some of the most delicious pizza is back in town. *Thamel, 4250210*



Rox Restuarant, Hyatt Regency introduces the Sunday Pranzo menu so don't miss the Italian Specialties. *Sunday, 12.30 pm to 3.30 pm, The Café, Hyatt Regency, Boudha*

Farmer's Market, get your fresh supply of vegetables and organic greens. *Every Saturday,*



Sunday and Wednesday, 9am to 12pm (Sundays and Saturdays) and 4pm to 7pm (Wednesday), 1905, Kantipath (Saturday and Wednesday) and New Orleans, Pulchowk (Sunday), 4260326



Boudha Stupa Restaurant & Café, enjoy wood-fired pizza with a superb view of boudha stupa and free wi-fi. *Boudha, 2130681*

Chopstix, savory Asian food cooked in true Chinese fashion sure to charm and impress. Begin your feast with the Dragon Chicken; it is one-of-a-kind. *Kumaripati, 5551118*

Attic, newly transformed lounge/bar ideal for Friday night drinking before hitting the dance spots. *Uttar Dhoka, Lazimpat, 984161476*



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

Black Pepper Café & Pub, cosmopolitan dining and drinking in a traditional style courtyard, try the apple sauce pork chops and enjoy the good service. *Kopundole Height, Lalitpur, 5521897, 5536926*

Upstairs Cafe, a delicious range of Vietnamese cuisine to sample. *Maharajunj, near the US embassy*

Le- Trio Restaurant & Bar, a good

place to hang out and a better place to eat. *Pulchowk, 5521674*

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



Ghangri Café, a quiet place with comfortable sofas and a lovely courtyard, perfect for those sunny afternoons. Although famous for their open sui mai, they offer a few other great dishes as well. *Pulchok*

Jazoo, a quiet place ideal for beer and relaxing conversation. Bring a friend and enjoy their special barbeque set for a mix of everything. *Jawalakhel (near the zoo), 5538321*



SOMEPLACE ELSE



MARCO POLLO

Next week, Yin Yang turns 15. The traditional Thai restaurant holds fast to its antiquated décor but has withstood the vicissitudes of the Kathmandu gourmet in the last decade. Its impeccable service and dedication to quality have proven it to be a cornerstone of fine dining in Thamel. Beneath a patchwork of painted parasols depicting herons and flora, tokens of East Asian art, the pillowed lounge sets up an excursion true to Thailand's prandial offerings:

Snacks. The *sa-te* chicken, a fan of skewers grilled and complimented by a definitive peanut sauce and cucumber-carrot relish, is standard. For something different, try the *thod nam pla*, a savoury favourite distinct from the flaky, battered cod cakes of Chesapeake Bay. The deep-fried patties are a street vendor's specialty and are meant to be on the salty side. So, be sure to order a side of steamed rice and extra chilli sauce. Soups. *Tom yam kai* (chicken) or *tom yam kung* (prawn), the quintessential lemongrass soup is a fragrant hotpot done right and worth every rupee (all Rs 385/ Rs 425 respectively). Its pungency will likely clear the most unrelenting cold.

Noodles. What's Thai without *phad thai*? Yin Yang's *phad thai* is a genuine mingling of stir-fried rice noodles, egg drops and tofu. Fresh bean sprouts and hints of lime balance the sweet and slightly sour play, while crushed peanuts and dried shrimps end the bite with a salted crunch. Curries. The coconut-based *pha-nang* cooks tender slices of chicken, pork or beef in red curry and is ideal like most curries with a mound of steamed rice.

Salads. Great as a side or a zesty end, the *som tam* or green papaya salad is a shredded vegetable fantasy, colorful in flavour and display. Desserts. Thai renditions at Yin Yang are sadly limited to bananas: fritters or poached in coconut milk. But both are equally delicious. For sensitive buds, Yin Yang's preparations are spiced according to taste, and if that's not enough, a whole continental menu from start to finish is available. A full-course dinner at Yin Yang yields a hefty bill, but dishes are made for sharing. Marco Pollo

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DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

With a name like Buddha, it may be presumptuous to be guiding travellers around these sacred monasteries of Tibet, but such is life.

From Jokhang Temple in the Barkhor area in Lhasa to the nearby monasteries of Drepung (where a

and then west to the 15th century Newari-built monastery, the Gyantse Kumbum, and then to the Panchen Lama's Tashilumpho monastery in Shigatse which was plundered for its gold by the Gurkhas in the late 1700s. Finally we arrive near the Everest Base Camp north side at the Rongphu monastery at 5000m, the probable setting of James Hilton's famous novel The Lost Horizon.

To reach Rongphu we travel through the historically-rich Sakya monastery with its sacred archive.

a tremendous increase in the cleanliness and personal hygiene of the local inhabitants. For instance, it is obvious people are now using plenty of soap. There is now unequivocal evidence that the proper usage of soap leads to significant decrease in both respiratory and gastrointestinal ailments, regardless of the availability of medicines. Indeed long before antibiotics were discovered, infection rates had plummeted in the Western world with the rise in living standards.

In Nepal we used to say that the Tibetans don't shower due to the cold, but now they have the last laugh as we have no water for bathing and piled garbage is everywhere.



giant thangka was being unfurled for the Shotan festival), Sara, and the magnificent Ganden to Samye situated across the Yarlung Tsongpo (the Bhramaputra), we travel like pilgrims and light butter lamps.

After Lhasa we first head east to Tsetang with its nearby ruins

Then along the smooth Friendship Highway we reach the bordertown of Khasa (Zhangmu) and prepare for the bone-rattling trip along the Bhote Kosi to Kathmandu.

In the last 20 years having guided travellers five times all along this route, I have noticed

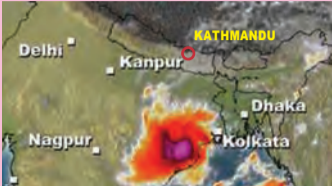
At Gyantse I talked with the famous Tibetologist, Mel Goldstein from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland. The Chinese government is sending aid money to the hinterland and not just spending it in Lhasa. The positive health impact of this programme appears to be obvious.

I secretly hope that in a smaller scale the hard-earned remittance money that our fellow citizens send directly to their wives and mothers in the villages will have a similar result in improving our rural health in addition to whatever the ministry, the NGOs, INGOs, and charity organizations do.



WEEKEND WEATHER
by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

This satellite radar composite image taken on Thursday afternoon shows a quite a big low pressure system moving inland from the Bay of Bengal into the Orissa course. This may well be the dying gasp of the monsoon. The trough will be battling the nascent westerlies while it will push the tentacles of the system over the Himalaya in our direction. This will bring some rainfall on Friday, with diminishing effect over the weekend. However, there still a lot of residual moisture and transpiration around, so expect isolated showers. But, in general, we may well have seen the curtains closing on this year's monsoon.



FRI	SAT	SUN
27-16	27-15	26-15



KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

THREESOME: Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai, Deputy Prime Minister Narayan Kaji Shrestha and Nepal's envoy to the UN, Gyan Chandra Acharya at a meeting with Nepali residents in the US in New York on Wednesday.



BIKRAM RAI

QUAKE EFFECT: Security personnel begin to clear the rubble of a house in Bhaktapur, that came down after Sunday's earthquake.



BIKRAM RAI

FASHIONISTAS: Models walk the ramp at the opening day of TGIF Fashion Week at Hyatt Regency, Boudha, on Wednesday.

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Mindquakes



KALAM
Rabi Thapa

To think I was impressed by the audience when, at the conclusion of my session at the Kathmandu Literary Jatra, they held out against the waxing rain to ask questions of the panellists. Two hours later, as the final session drew to a close with the fading light, the ground beneath us began to move. Incomprehension turned to horror, and as Narayan Wagle announced “bhuichalo ayo!” from the stage, we stumbled towards the centre of the Patan Museum courtyard, wide-eyed. Session moderator Buddhisagar exclaimed “Sakiyo hai...dar lagyo!”, but when I next looked to the stage, I was astonished to see a ponytailed youth with a microphone, asking a question. Apparently, the show had to go on.

This level of engagement was characteristic. By most standards, the festival that concluded last Sunday was an unmitigated success. The rain held off, and



KISHOR K SHARMA

The Kathmandu Literary Jatra held through rain and shine, but did its impact match up to the earthquake at the end?

barring a few unforeseen reschedulings, the crowds were treated to a seamless succession of sessions and lectures on literature and society, supplemented by kid's events, a photo exhibition, poetry readings, and heritage walks. The future of the Jatra seems assured.

The Jatra was great fun, of course, as any self-respecting jatra should be. The question of what it has achieved is less straightforward. The idea that such events merely

provide a stage for writers to strut around as celebrities is as unfair as the notion that a babble of writers can change the world is hubristic. Yet the fact that thousands of people came, not just to gawk at writers but to actually engage with them (favourite question, to William Dalrymple: “How can I develop a sense of humour?”), come rain, shine or quake, indicates that many Nepalis seek intellectual sustenance of the soulful kind, that which only

literature can provide.

While there is some truth to the assertion by Mohammed Hanif that writers can't really make a difference, and that of Tarun Tejpal that too many writers are working in an echo chamber, I do believe that the opportunity to discuss literature alters our perceptions of the world around us, whether or not the works in question are self-declaredly “social” or “progressive”. The effect of festival discourse tends

to be cumulative rather than revolutionary, a series of tremors rather than a life-consuming shock. The assertions of writers are received variously by their readers, who then calibrate their understandings accordingly. The impact of these calibrations, over time, can bring progressive change to society.

This may sound abstract, or at worst, self-serving. But there was nothing abstract about the indefinable pleasure of hearing poetry recited in Magar. Of learning from Kathmandu's youngest nonagenarian, Satya Mohan Joshi, about the roots of our oldest jatra. Of encountering P. Sivakami's bemusement at the peculiar Nepali fact of “Dalit literature” written by non-Dalits. Of going on a heritage walk with Thomas Bell to delve into a past beyond the anecdotal mishmash that tourists are subjected to.

There will be more such revelations in succeeding editions of the Jatra. And if Nepali readers conclude that literature, in of itself, helps them make sense of the world around them, then Nepali writers will no longer need to chain themselves to ideology in the name of progress. Now that's a lesson many more of us could do with absorbing.

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The next People’s War?

A significant faction of the Maoist party remains committed to armed revolution

SIMON ROBINS in BARDIYA


The split within the Maoists is seen by many as a final test of their commitment to peace, and a test of the resolve and authority of Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai. However, this remains a metropolitan discussion, centred around the politics of the CA and trading of policies for money and position that has long defined Nepali politics. One faction of the Maoist party has already taken the discussion out of the Kathmandu back-rooms to articulate its position on a broader stage. For the last month, a Maoist cultural program, dominated by the hardline Kiran faction, has gone around the country laying out its critique of the peace process and more pointedly of both the position and integrity of the party leadership. This program is a step above those organised during the ‘People’s War’, with a red tent, a sound system and headset microphones giving the performance the air of a tv show. The backdrop of the performance reveals its priorities: an armed PLA fighter in silhouette in front of a colourful explosion. The content has also evolved from traditional songs and dances of Nepal’s ethnic groups to a well acted, and often hilarious, drama. The show tells the story of a Maoist CA member allied to Prachanda’s faction who now lives comfortably in Kathmandu with a new young wife, and spends his evenings in bars taking money for favours from businessmen. He has short shrift with idealistic party members from his rural district, while his constituents live in poverty, nostalgic for the ‘People’s



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Government’. The penultimate scene refers directly to the issue over which the Kiran faction has chosen to fight the party leadership: control of the PLA’s weapons. A bizarre dance piece shows a group of PLA fighters committing to both the revolution and to never giving up their weapons, representing an almost obscene worship of the gun as a source of political power. The whole impression, sometimes looking like a North Korean Bollywood drama, nevertheless both entertains and moves the audience. The show’s denouement comes when a young party worker rejects the CA member’s bribes to work for his faction and returns to his village with a wounded PLA veteran, the wife of a man disappeared in the conflict, and an armed and uniformed PLA fighter, vowing to “continue the revolution”. The message is clear: a significant

faction of the Maoist party appears to remain committed to armed revolution as the only route to pursuing their political aims. The show clearly targets not the general public, but the party faithful, and appears to represent preparation for either an effort to overturn the leadership or, more likely, to break finally with a party that in their view has been compromised politically and ethically, and failed in five years of peace to advance the Maoist agenda in its heartlands. It is a message that will presumably delight those who have always maintained that in signing the CPA the Maoists were simply engaged in a confidence trick, confirming that there is no partner for peace. What the message really represents however is even more disturbing. It is a statement that Nepal’s politics has become so

corrosive and so driven by patronage that any party coming close to power will be both compromised and consumed by it, abandoning both principle and ideology for the next pay-off. The Maoist leadership has now itself been swallowed up by this and increasingly alienated from its traditional base. The scary truth is that the radicals within the Maoists have been proved right by the gridlock of the last five years: there appears no capacity in the Nepali political system for social transformation, not even, it seems, for effective governance. The narratives that drive the political logic of the cultural programme are that many rural Nepalis remain in the state of poverty and social exclusion that provided such fertile soil for the ‘People’s War’, and that the sacrifices made by its victims appear to have been for nothing. The poorest communities who provided the fighters for both sides of the conflict have seen no significant change in their lives since the end of the war. If the frightening message currently being heard from radical Maoists does lead to a second ‘People’s War’, the blame will lie not only with those who pick up guns, but with an establishment that has tolerated and fed a political culture that exists largely to sustain those at its heart. Baburam Bhattarai’s challenge is to quickly prove to both the radicals in his own party and to the party’s traditional constituency that this need no longer be the case.  Simon Robins is a researcher and activist working with victims of conflict in Nepal and elsewhere www.simonrobins.com

“Our feelings are hurt”

A few days after Baburam Bhattarai became prime minister last month, the keys to weapons containers were handed over. To gauge the mood in the Maoist camps about the peace process, Gopal Gartaula interviewed the division commander of the ex-guerrillas at the Chulachuli Cantonment in Jhapa, Yam Bahadur Adhikari.

Nepali Times: Why has there been such a backlash against what is seen as a largely symbolic handover of the container keys to the government? After all, your party heads the government.
Yam Bahadur Adhikari: It’s natural to be upset, the handover really hurt our feelings. It has left a bad taste in the mouth. But it is a party decision and we have to swallow it.

Is this a part of the disarmament process?
Look, we are a people’s army. An army has weapons, it has combat uniforms. We will not agree to DDR (disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation). We will go with our weapons and uniforms into the national army. That is what we have understood by the word integration. There can’t be integration without our weapons, we won’t let that happen.



The politics in Kathmandu is deadlocked over this issue of weapons and integration. How is it ever going to be resolved if you take that line?
You may be right. But what we understand by integration is that both armies are involved. After the modalities are worked out, we have agreed to be a part of a new directorate. We want to be integrated together, meaning a collective integration.
And if that isn’t possible?
You can debate this, but that is what will happen. We haven’t thought about alternatives.

So why all the fuss between your leaders about the handover of keys?
I told you: the handover of keys made it look like a defeat for us. It hurt our feelings. But maybe as we understand more about why it was done our anger will diminish.
How were the last five years for you in the cantonment here?
Good question. I was going to tell the media about this even if you’d not asked. We came here in 2006, and it was only supposed to be for six months. The term kept getting extended from the political level. It is almost five years. It is a hard life. The allowance has gone up from Rs 3,000 to Rs 5,000. We have only Rs 70 per day for food. It is difficult to survive with that.
Your leaders have become ministers and prime ministers. Why didn’t you ask them?
It is a bit difficult for me to answer that. Yes, of course, we asked them. Repeatedly. They just listen. We told this not just to Girija Prasad Koirala and Ram Chandra Poudel, we even told this to our own leaders, Prachanda, Janardan Sharma, Barshaman Pun every time we meet them. But nothing happened. If we have to keep living in this state, the outrage will grow.
So they have forgotten you after they get to power?
It may take some more time for me to reach that conclusion. Let’s see.

“We don’t regret laying down arms”

Ex-fighters are determined to see the integration process through, despite opposition from hardliners

DEWAN RAI

The day after the keys of arms containers were handed over to the Special Committee last month, vice-chairman Mohan Baidya announced a nationwide campaign against the decision.

Half a dozen central committee members leading a few hundreds supporters enforced a transportation strike and held torch rallies. The group boycotted the party’s standing committee meeting.

Since then, rival factions of the Maoists have locked horns all over the country, sometimes with violent outcomes that have left many injured. It all happened within three days since the Maoist-led government was formed on 29 August and less than a week after the party had unanimously decided to hand over the keys of the arms containers to the Special Committee if a government under the party’s leadership was formed.

“We supported Baburam because we thought he would not surrender before the state, but he let us down,” Netra Bikram Chand, a Baidya-loyalist told Nepali Times in an interview. He said it is essential for a party to have an intra-party debate to protect the purity of its ideology. Chand wants the the 4-point agreement revised. He denied that the party is headed for a split, but insisted his side was right and the other side was wrong and the disagreement would continue as long as the issue was not addressed. He rules out integration before the Maoists have a “people’s rule”.

However, the commander of the PLA’s Fourth Division and member of the Armed Integration Special Committee, Tej Bahadur Oli, told us the long-delayed “regrouping” that is supposed to precede integration will begin next week. “We have been given one week to decide on the number to be integrated, modality and rehabilitation package. Once we reach an agreement, it should begin immediately,” he said.

Speaking to Oli, one is puzzled what the hardliners are arguing about. He says the debate on the hand over of the keys is a storm in a tea cup because the decision was made in consultation with

the PLA and they don’t feel disbanded or dissolved.

“If you really want to know, we disarmed the very day when the weapons were locked in the containers. But we did it for the people for whom we took up arms in the first place, so we have no regrets,” Oli said, adding that he had visited all seven cantonments and found ex-fighters positive about their government’s decision.

However, the intensity of opposition to the handover seems to differ depending on whether a cantonment commander is loyal to the

Baidya or Dahal faction, with the hardliners regarding the keys handover as a symbolic surrender. (See interview and an analysis, overleaf.)

“We have sacrificed as much for change as anybody else and the only thing we ask for in return is acknowledgement and respect,” Oli quoted an ex-fighter in a cantonment as telling him recently.

But there is another problem. Even the moderate Maoists leading the government feel the NC and UML have gone back on their commitments on integration.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

“We have handed over weapons, we have returned most seized property, we have even said we are flexible on integration numbers. What more do they want as proof of our commitment?” he asks. “It’s time the NC and UML prove their part of the bargain by coming to the table with intention to find a solution.”

Questioned about districts where seized property is not being returned, Basnet

said the party can’t take responsibility for property seized by non-Maoists in the Tarai.

The prime minister’s political advisor Devendra Poudel is optimistic the integration process will begin next week. He said: “Some comrades want to throw the baby out with the bath water, we can’t let that happen. Our commitment to peace and constitution remains firm.”

IN MEMORIUM DR. GAURAV GOPALAN



BORN
DEC 6TH, 1975

LEFT US SUDDENLY
SEPT 10TH, 2011

Ph.D Aerospace Engineering (USA), B Tech from IIT, Kanpur

An aero space engineer who brought boundless energy, a vigorous intellect and startling insight to theatre with spell binding performances in Washington Shakespeare Company Avant Bard and Constellation Theatre Company. A wonderful son and brother, everloving, gentle, kind and compassionate.

Gaurav’s philosophy, “To discover who you are, being true to yourself always and performing your duties to the best of your abilities is the purpose of your current life.”

May your soul rest in peace...

Your loving family

Raj (Varadarajan) and Urmila Gopalan (Parents)
Siddharth and Namrata Gopalan (Brother and sister-in-law)

Official positions

Kantipur, 17 September

कान्तिपुर

Unofficially the leaders may say many conciliatory things on integration and rehabilitation of former Maoist fighters, but they have rigid official positions.

Maoists

- Number to be integrated:** Approximately 8,000
- Leadership:** Proposed directorate must be under the command of a PLA ex-combatant
- Modality:** Unit-wise
- Ranks:** Harmonisation
- Norms:** New
- Role:** Combat role
- Retirement/ rehabilitation:** Rs 700,000 to 1 million cash for the retiree. Rs 700,000 to 1 million worth education and employment package

NC-UML

- Number:** 4-5,000
- Leadership:** Proposed directorate must be under the command of Nepal Army
- Modality:** Individual entry based on qualification
- Ranks:** Standardisation according to NA's existing criteria
- Norms:** According to NA's existing criteria. Flexibility on age limit, education and marital status.
- Role:** Civil military role
- Retirement/ rehabilitation:** Rs 300-500,000 cash for the retiree paid in installments. Rs 700,000 to 1 million worth education and employment package

“Am I a Lin Piao?”

Self-criticism by Maoist leader Ram Bahadur Thapa at the 2005 Chunwang Meeting reprinted in *Naya Patrika*, 18 September

नयाँ पत्रिका

Everybody asks me about my relations with Chairman and what I think of him as a leader. I feel my relation with him at one level is very formal as between a commander and a soldier. But as a communist, we share an intimacy of comradeship. We have cherished in good times and wept together in times of agony. But I must confess at some point, may be intentionally or stubbornly, I challenged my

commander. I have lost, I accept my mistake, and defeat. I also want to confess that we, the leaders could not live up to our promise, not to let circumstances create rift among us. There is a fundamental rift and people have exploited our internal differences to weaken us. I never wanted to be at the summit, rather become a foundation that strengthens the party and the movement. I believe I have not been able to provide that strong foundation for which history will question: am I a Lin Piao who



betrayed the movement? Comrade Chairman and I were born into different cultural milieus. So although we share a healthy comradeship, tensions emanate out of our cultural backgrounds. As a Marxist I agree to a transitional leadership but my culture puts me at odds with it: driving anarchist tendencies. But today, in this historic meeting, I express my conviction to learn from my weakness and rise above those tendencies to play a supportive role in the party leadership.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



कान्तिपुर Deepak Gautam in Kantipur, 21 September



“I pray to God, spare Nepal and let Europeans and Americans face the earthquake. They are better prepared for it.”

Acting Prime Minister and Home Minister Bijay Kumar Gachhadar

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Their souls march on

Families and friends of those killed in the Ghunsa helicopter crash five years ago are helping nurture a new generation of Nepali conservationists

BHRIKUTI RAI and STUTI SHARMA



THE 29 SEPT 2006 ISSUE OF NEPALI TIMES WITH THE LAST PICTURE TAKEN OF THE PASSENGERS

It was five years ago this week that a helicopter crash near Ghunsa in the Kangchenjunga Conservation took the lives of Nepal’s pioneering conservationists. It left a huge void in Nepal’s environment protection movement, but the scholarships and endowments set up by the families of the victims seek to partially fill that gap.

Eerily, this week’s earthquake coincided with the fifth anniversary of the accident and the epicenter of the 6.9 quake itself was located very near the crash site in Ghunsa.

“It is almost as if the earthquake served to jolt our memories about that tragic loss five years ago,” says Hum Gurung, of Bird Conservation Nepal, who knew most of those who died.

Twenty-four people were killed on 23 September 2006, and included people like Harka Gurung, Nepal’s veteran geographer, planner and former tourism minister; Chandra Gurung, the founder of the pioneering eco-tourism model of the Annapurna Conservation Area Project; Mingma Sherpa, the noted conservationist who helped establish the Sagarmatha National Park; Tirthaman Maskey who found a way for people and national parks to co-exist.

Also killed were diplomats, donor officials, the State Minister of Forests and Soil Conservation, bureaucrats from the ministry of environment and journalists. They were returning from a ceremony marking the transfer stewardship of the Kangchenjunga Conservation

Area to local communities. The tragedy set back Nepal’s conservation movement by decades.

The government has since declared 24 September as National Conservation Day and family members and colleagues have set up memorial scholarships and funds to encourage more students and academics to pursue conservation work through practical action.



Nepal Conservation Memorial Scholarship

To honor the 24 individuals lost in the Ghunsa helicopter crash and their commitment to preserving Nepal’s rich natural heritage, the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has established a memorial scholarship fund that will assist students who wish to pursue careers in conservation. Each year WWF awards a Nepal Conservation Memorial Scholarship to a student who has completed 10 years of compulsory education and would like to pursue a technical certificate level (TCL) in forestry at the Institute of Forestry (IOF), Hetauda Campus.

Chandra Gurung Conservation Foundation

The Chandra Gurung Conservation Foundation (CGCF) is a social service organisation founded by



Chandra Gurung’s extensive network of colleagues, friends and staff. It works in tandem with its sister organization in the US, the Chandra Gurung Conservation Trust. Together, their mission is to mentor and support the next generation of sustainable development practitioners from Nepal, and to keep the legacy of Chandra Gurung alive, especially his people-centered approach to nature conservation.

The Chandra Gurung Memorial Scholarship

The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) has also established the Chandra Gurung Memorial Scholarship to provide financial assistance to conservationists from Nepal who wish to pursue a master’s degree in a conservation-related field. Chandra Gurung’s protégé, Hum Gurung, says the scholarship has given permanence to the memory of Nepal’s conservation heroes. He adds: “They may no longer be with us, but their work will go on.”



Mingma Norbu Sherpa Memorial Fund

Mingma Sherpa was in the first batch of students to graduate from the Hillary Khumjung School set up by Sir Edmund Hillary in Khumbu. This fund has been set up in New Zealand as a “living memorial to Mingma Sherpa”. It has established an endowment fund to support students from the Himalaya to conduct post-graduate studies at Lincoln University, New Zealand where Mingma also studied.

Mingma Sherpa Memorial Scholarship

The Mingma Sherpa Memorial Scholarship has also been established to award students who have completed 10 years of compulsory education and would like to pursue a Technical Certificate Level in Forestry at the Institute of Forestry (IOF), Pokhara Campus. After completing, WWF will also support Mingma Sherpa Scholars to attend a four-year Bachelor of Science Degree program in Forestry at IOF.



Gopal Meena Rai Academy Nepal

The academy was established in 2007 in memory of Gopal Rai, Minister of State for Forest and Soil Conservation and his wife Meena who died in the Ghunsa helicopter crash. It has been organising blood donation programs and recently provided a scholarship to a student of Tapeswor Higher Secondary School in Kavre.

Jill Bowling Schlaepfer Memorial Scholarship

Recognizing the tremendous loss of leadership with the untimely and tragic death of its Conservation Director, Jill Bowling Schaefer, WWF is helping build a new generation of conservation leaders to take on the many challenges facing Nepal in preserving its rich natural heritage. To encourage



bright and promising Nepali students from ethnic, indigenous, minority, or Dalit groups to continue or pursue careers in nature conservation, each year WWF awards one scholarship in the name of Jillian Bowling Schlaepfer who would like to pursue a Bachelor of Science in Forestry program at the Institute of Forestry (IOF), Pokhara.



Jennifer Headley Memorial Scholarship

In honor of Jennifer Headley, who had worked in community-based conservation in eastern Nepal, and her life-long commitment to conservation, WWF established a memorial scholarship fund that will provide financial assistance to a deserving woman candidate who will pursue a bachelor’s degree in forestry studies at IOF, Hetauda.

nepalitimes.com

Void, #317

AIR CRASH INVESTIGATION

The official inquiry of the crash of the Shree Airlines MI-17 helicopter 9N-AHJ cited pilot error for having taken off in overcast conditions with low clouds over the surrounding mountains. The inquiry blamed the pilot for violating flight procedures because the aircraft was certified for Visual Flight Rules only. The report also cited the crew’s unfamiliarity with the terrain. The report makes no mention of Ghunsa locals who said they had heard the minister putting pressure on the flight crew to take off because he had to get back to Kathmandu that day. Soon after it took off, the helicopter disappeared into cloud and villagers heard a big bang from up the mountain. The wreckage was only located three days later after the weather cleared at an altitude of 3,990m.

Sing with the birds, Fly with the winds, Find peace within

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ROYALE Luxury Emulsion

dazzlingly peaceful

Revolution is peace

The government's crackdown on adulterated food stuffs ahead of Dasain has been so effective that the concerned authoritarians are running out of shops to raid. Desperate to show that they are ever-vigilant, government inspectors who can't find any more people committing adulteration are now going after those committing adultery. In raids this week on cabin restaurants, some VIPs types have been caught with their pants down, as it were. Others have been found mixing business with pleasure during office hours. "Their identities are being withheld until their next of kin are notified," one official said on condition of anonymity.

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While delivering everyone a rude awakening, Sunday's quake struck just as a US military team was in Kathmandu to conduct a Disaster Response Exercise. The first tremors caught the American Jarsap while he was en route to the Army HQ where COAS Gen Twitchy was waiting, twitching even more



than usual. The dinner went ahead anyway, and it must have focused everyone's mind. As it did the minds of CA members who haven't lifted a finger to pass the Disaster Risk Management Bill, but ran helter skelter for their dear lives from the floor of parliament. Across town at the Sheetal Nibas, the president was ensconced with none other than our very own Reporter-at-Large, Rishi Hamala. Trust His Omnipresence to be at the right place at the right time yet again. As soon as the first tremor struck, according to the mule's mole at the Rastraparty Palace, the lights

went off and Hamala vanished into the darkness to file his scoop in Rajdhani. The prez groped his way to a newly-installed emergency staircase, but found the door locked. So he was escorted through a swaying corridor from the West Wing to the East Wing to safety. Speaking of Gamala, here he is (above) felicitating the guy whose name escapes me at the moment who has just completed driving a car from Mechi to Mahakali in reverse gear just to get into the Guinness Book. We knew the country was going backwards, but hadn't realised it was that bad.

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Baddie doublespeak is coming thick and fast. Quote of the week from Comrade Pumpa: "Revolution is peace." Quote of week from last week from Comrade Pushpa: "Integration is revolution." For someone who once said he was "absolutely allergic" to revisionism, it looks like Com Bhayankar has yet to fully explain what he was doing underground in Siliguri, and also why he keeps meeting Kingji of late. Awesome has just started threatening to go for "unilateral integration" if the kangresis don't stop putting a spanner in the works, and we were all wondering what he meant. Now we know. In a pep-talk he gave to commanders he said he had a cunning plan: for 6,000 ex-gorillas to use integration to infiltrate the army and for each fighter to indoctrinate three soldiers and then take over. It would be brilliant if only it wasn't Bhanayak once more being too devious by half. He is trying to prevent the PLA from falling for Kiran's faction.

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Foot-in-mouth Home Minister Bijaybabu has done it again by telling parliament he is praying that earthquakes devastate America and not Nepal. Wonder if there will be an official demarche from the US Embassy. He is already facing flak for unceremoniously sacking home sec Com Lila Mani apparently for being too enthusiastic in nabbing sandalwood smugglers and trying to deport 23 Tibetans. Gachhe can't seem to do anything right. People make fun of him even when he says that he wants to be a "model minister" or when he says he will have "zero tolerance" for corruption. Wonder why. BRB in NY seems to have given up on the Kiran faction joining his govt. Trouble is every Madhesi party in the coalition has got a disgruntled faction and there aren't enough portfolios to go around. So, the only thing Rambabu can do is create more ministries by splitting Peace and Reconciliation; Labour and Transport; Science and Technology; and General and Administration. That should take care of that.

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