

NEPALI Times

#594

2 - 8 March 2012

16 pages

Rs 30



Home away from home

Dhana Maya Gautam is 60, lives in a grand pavilion, she has police guards, a sunny veranda, lawn and a great view of the city skyline. But Dhana Maya is homeless.

The Newari-style ornate brick structure was built during the 2000 SAARC summit to welcome foreign

heads of state to Patan. Dhana Maya has been living here for the past seven years after her husband died and her brother-in-law chased her out of the house in Okhaldhunga.

Dhana Maya's lawn is the traffic island, and she has improvised cardboards to ensure some privacy and

shelter her from the wind.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else, this is my home," says Dhana Maya, as rush hour traffic picked up on the bridge one morning this week. Thousands of people see her every day from buses and cars, and Dhana Maya represents



International Women's Day

the sorrow of Nepali widows, the continued violence against women, the plight of elderly women cast out by their families.

On International Women's Day on 8 March, there will be the predictable platitudes from ministers, lots of ribbon cutting and probably a new report.

Dhana Maya will likely not even know that it is her day.

[Full story](#) [page 6-7](#)

eBanking & Mobile Banking



Banking at Your Convenience

नेपाल इन्वेस्टमेंट बैंक लिमिटेड
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.
Truly a Nepali Bank



CONSTITUTION
THURAYA XT
 The most rugged satellite phone in the World!
www.constellation.com.np
 Tel: +977-1-5549252



LAVAZZA
 ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE
 Picasso - Jhamsikhel
 Lakpa - Chulo - Jhamsikhel
 For Business Inquiry: 9841505390



Ultimate Decor
 fine furniture
www.ultimatedecor.com.np • Tel: 4672997



Modular Kitchen
Joshi Trading Pvt. Ltd.
 Dhumbarai, Kathmandu, Tel: 4007568



The Only Authorized Dealer in Nepal:
Sherpa Adventure Outlet
 Thamel, Kathmandu
 Tel: +977 1 4445101
www.sao.com.np



END OF SEASON
SALE
 UP TO 40% OFF

offer available at Samsonite stores in JAMAL 4255161 PULCHOWK 5524812

très mode Catwalk

End of Season
sale
 UPTO 60% OFF

SHOE · A · HOLICS

Pulchowk Redefined, Below Laxmi Bank, Pulchowk 5524812

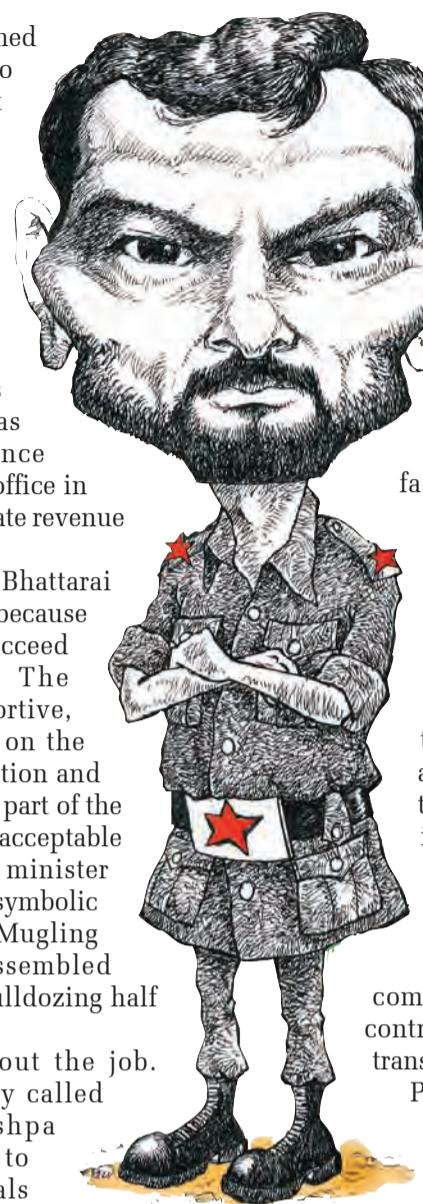
AGAIN, THREE MORE MONTHS

When Baburam Bhattarai assumed office in November last year to head a coalition government with the Madhesi Front as partner, Nepalis were cautiously optimistic.

A desperate public, disillusioned with the fourth non-performing government in four years, with delays in the peace and constitution process were willing to give Bhattarai a chance. The public perception of him was that he was upright, he was a doer, and he was different. After all, as a PhD finance minister during the Maoist tenure in office in 2008, he was credited with boosting state revenue and cracking down on tax evaders.

In November we had agreed that Bhattarai should be given the benefit of doubt because there was a chance that he would succeed where his predecessors failed. The international community was supportive, mainly because it saw no one else on the horizon to deliver on peace, constitution and stability. The Maoist party had to be a part of the solution, and Bhattarai was the most acceptable face among the Maoists. The prime minister immediately made some high-profile, symbolic gestures like inspecting toilets in Mugling restaurants, making the locally-assembled Mustang jeep his official car, and bulldozing half the city to widen roads.

Bhattarai had no illusions about the job. Hardliners within his party openly called him an Indian stooge, and Pushpa Kamal Dahal has done everything to undermine his deputy. The radicals



SUBHAS RAI

Nepal's politics will be stormy in the coming months. The bottom line should be holding the ship of state steady

were out to make Bhattarai look like a failure right from the beginning. Bhattarai had better relations with, and more cooperation from leaders of the NC and UML than from the hotheads in his own party.

But things have started going badly wrong for Bhattarai. Maoist ministers have been treating the national exchequer as their personal piggy bank. The other big albatross around Bhattarai's neck has been the partnership with Madhesi members in the coalition. To accommodate all members of the Madhesi Front, he broke all previous records by swearing in the biggest government ever. It wasn't just the numbers, the ministers lacked competence, were immediately embroiled in controversies like the "pre-paid" kickbacks for transfers of police and civil servants.

Privately, Bhattarai has admitted to journalists that he knew what his ministers were up to no good, but that his priorities were peace and

constitution and he needed to keep the government intact to reach that goal. But as the scandals pile up, Bhattarai himself has shown a woeful lack of maturity. Leaking the Chinese prime minister's visit date, saying he had "gambled" by signing an investment guarantee treaty with India, and that if Nepal wasn't careful it could be "merged" with our giant neighbours, are some examples.

While all this was grist for the opinion mills in the Nepali media, what eroded Bhattarai's popularity at the people's level this winter was his incapacity to deal with the fuel and gas crisis. We are used to shortages in this country because after a few weeks of long queues at fuel stations supplies usually resumed.

This time, there was no power, and no diesel for generators either. The fuel shortage has now lasted four months, and it seems like the Maoist supply minister is either unable or unwilling to resolve the crisis because he belongs to a Maoist faction out to prove the prime minister incompetent.

On assuming office, Bhattarai had extravagantly promised peace and constitution in "45 days". But the integration question is mired again in controversy, and with three months to go for a non-extendable deadline, the constitution is bogged down over disagreements on state restructuring and form of governance.

Our minds should now be focused once more on how to avert a constitutional crisis if the new constitution is not written by 31 May. Changing the prime minister now is not the priority, no matter whose "turn" it is. An all party government would have helped back in November, but now the extended haggling for portfolios is going to be another huge distraction and a gigantic waste of money.

Nepal's politics will be stormy in the coming months. The bottom line should be holding the ship of state steady, protect our democratic freedoms, and prevent a slide towards violent ethnic fragmentation.

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

UPROOTING DEMOCRACY

Just like they razed all the infrastructure in our country during the revolt, the Maoists believe they must wipe out all existing forests in order to create 'new' forests in 'new' Nepal ('Uprooting grassroots democracy', Editorial, #593). When will these morons realise that it's better to rebuild rather than destroy everything and start from scratch?

Chaku Naran

- What more can we expect from the pupils of Stalin and Mao? The only thing they believe in is 'uprooting' the 'old' which in this case happens to be our forests. They have destroyed our national unity, Nepaliness, institutions, infrastructure, morale, and have instilled a culture of intimidation and violence. With Lal Dhoj at the helm and a host of who's who of the criminal ring as ministers, there is little hope for Nepal.

Parag

- The forestry issue is not about the politicians, but about the welfare of ordinary Nepalis. All the leaders whether from the Maoist Party or the NC or the Madhesi front have betrayed and failed us miserably. It's time to improve the lives of the 99 percent Nepalis and send the one percent criminal politicians to prison. Otherwise people like Pushpa Kamal Dahal will continue living like royals, while commoners will struggle to eat one good meal a day.

Sangita Manandhar

- We Nepalis must stop putting our dear leaders on pedestals and treating them like deities, and the leaders should also understand that they are public servants, not gods. We need to interrogate their actions, hold them accountable and throw the ones who are guilty (like JP Gupta) behind bars. This is the only way to make progress.

Gareeb Nepali

- DON'T FIX**
Nepali Times, why are you so surprised ('Don't fix what ain't broke', Rubeena Mahato, #593)? The Maoists or for that matter, the NC and UML don't like anything which is organised outside their politburo and central committee chain of command or which could jeopardise their rent-seeking capacity. They destroyed community irrigation, community water supply, and community electricity and now they are after community forestry. NT, just admit that Loktantra is really loot-tantra and spare us this phony outrage.

Party Peedit

- Thank you Nepali Times for this timely article. There is no doubt what the government is trying to do by amending the Forest Act. But what surprises me is how little this issue is being raised and discussed in the other Nepali media. Also, are any organisations or civil society members protesting against this Act before it passes the house? If there are please update us and keep us informed.

Dolpal

- The media should not publish such a biased article. Accusing all DFOs

(district forest officers) of corruption is wrong. Former and current DFOs have actively promoted community forestry and have never acted against the program. If there are cases of corruption then members of user committees must be involved as well. CFUGs (community forest user groups) and activists need to understand that amending the Forest Act is a positive step from the government. Many CFUGs around the country have excluded communities which lie on the fringes of the forests. By collecting tax from the sales of forest products, the state will ensure that these marginalised communities also get to make use of the nation's resources and benefit from extra funding. So instead of dismissing the amendments and portraying the government's efforts negatively, it would be more advantageous if all the stakeholders got together and discussed the new act.

Ajeet Karn

- I consider this news about the proposed new law as probably the worst news from Nepal in a long time, hijacking its future. In fact, I think the author should write to a global petitioning organisation called AVAAZ and plead with them to make this an issue in their campaigns. They have 13 million members: <http://www.avaz.org/en/>

Nick Meynen

- While I appreciate the success story of community forestry in Nepal, (thanks to the public policy initiative taken by the state) I disagree with the

notion that the communities should be left 'free' and entirely on their own whatever they wish to do with the critical natural resources. A coherent overarching policy on the planning, production and utilization of all kinds of resources, including forestry, would therefore be beneficial for both the state and its communities. A dynamic equilibrium between the two are essential for the success and survival of democracy and society. Only through further empowering the local communities (to the extent of granting constitutional rights to call back their elected representatives should they work against the vital interests) can the 'center-periphery' problem be effectively addressed at a systemic level.

Anonymous

ABLAZE

Accusing women of being 'witches' and murdering them aren't simply acts of ignorance, they are crimes against humanity ('Then they set her ablaze', Narayan Dhungana, #593). The convicted deserve the harshest punishment such as solitary imprisonment for life. Unless we have stricter laws, such heinous acts will not end and people like Bikana Mahato will roam the streets with complete impunity.

Indra Giri

- I know illiteracy is still prevalent in large parts of the country, but how long will we use superstition and lack of education as excuses for the cold-blooded murder of women? I think there is something intrinsically messed

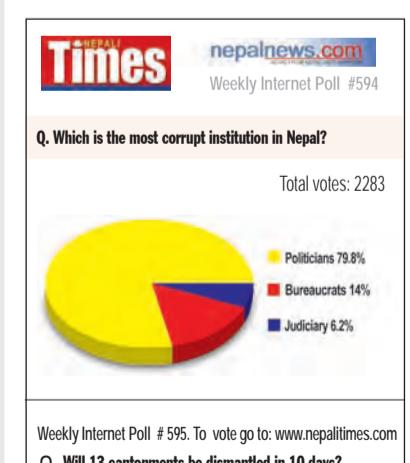
up about the Nepali psyche which tells us it's okay to treat women like animals, accuse them of all sorts of misdeeds and kill them to 'cleanse' evil from our society.

Maya Joshi

UNIVERSAL HEALTH INSURANCE

Universal health insurance is desirable in any developing country, but there are two important issues that we must consider ('Universal Health Insurance', Buddha Basnyat, #593). First, such a program requires a lot of homework and preparation and should be developed gradually, not on the whim of an INGO or a political party. And in many countries, health insurance schemes are pro-poor. But in Nepal, the problem of health care is not so much financial (most people pay out of their pockets already), but a matter of accessibility

Anoop Singh Gurung





BY THE WAY

Anurag Acharya

Into the void

BIKRAM RAI

Kathmandu is witnessing a resurgence of violent attacks on civilians. The population density and gaping holes in the security mechanism make the city an easy terrorist target. The blast in Babar Mahal this week and unexploded explosives recovered by the police in several other locations have done the trick: sow public fear.

The use of violence for political blackmailing has in recent years blurred the line between politics and terrorism. The increasing trend of terror groups, brandishing political cover for a supposed freedom movement with no mass base, has unfortunately been promoted by the state's own engagement policy.

The Babar Mahal incident which took place at a time when the government is holding talks with militant groups in order to provide them a political 'safe landing', may have been carried out by another group looking to draw the state's attention. Eroding political legitimacy and fear of political backlash have made the government incapable of dealing with such threats.

Investigations so far indicate that Monday's blast may have been a case of individual anarchism. Accused Devraj Lama of Dhankuta, who calls himself 'Biswo Kranti' (World Revolution) was until recently just a local thug who extorted money from people in Dharan.

The lingering transition and un-negotiated political space are feeding into anarchist terror

If a small town goon has the capacity to take on the state, it speaks a lot about how stateless we are. Metropolitan police chief Kuber Singh Rana was blunt: "We are too short on logistics to be policing a city of this size."

At a program this week in Dhulikhel, lawmakers and activists from Dalit, Madhesi, Muslim, Tharu, and various ethnic communities unequivocally condemned attacks on innocent civilians. They had gathered to debate the contentious issues that remain unaddressed in the constitution making process. Maoist lawmaker Ang Dawa Sherpa, who is a member of the ethnic caucus in the CA, said although there are pitfalls in ethnic federalism, rejecting the proposal may lead to a bigger disaster.

The Janajati and Madhesi activists present said their movement does not seek to establish the rights of indigenous people at the cost of others, and complained that the media has misrepresented their cause. This is not entirely untrue. A section of mainstream pundits are fomromongering by demeaning the genuine aspirations of the

people for a dignified presence in the national agenda. But the refusal of a few Janajati and Madhesi leaders to acknowledge that Nepal's social mosaic does not support ethnic enclaves is an even bigger problem.

Leftist intellectual Shyam Shrestha said those who are calling for ethnic enclaves must

understand that except for 14 districts where there is some population density of one community, it is impossible to carve out a single ethnic state. "The demography of the country only allows multi-ethnic, multi-lingual and multi-cultural federalism," he said.

Even as debates over state restructuring and forms of governance linger, the majority of lawmakers say they are helpless because their party bosses call the shots. This has

been one of the major fallout of Nepali politics: lawmakers are there only to vote by whip on the party diktat.

The countdown to the 31 May deadline on the constitution has already begun and the political landscape will only get murkier. If the parties cannot find mutual points for agreement, there is a real danger the ground will fall beneath them. This will not just bring a constitutional void, it will lead to more anarchism and violence like we saw this week. ☐

काम सानो ठुलो भन्ने हुँदैन । पसिनाको कुनै
रड र जात पनि हुँदैन । काम गरेर खान लजाउनु
पनि हुँदैन । चोरेर, ढाँटेर, छलेर, लुटेर खान
पो लजाउनुपर्छ । जो जहाँ रहेर जुन काम गर्छ ऊ
त्यसैमा रमाउनुपर्छ गौरब गर्नुपर्छ र समर्पित
भएर गर्नुपर्छ । काम नै शक्ति हो, भक्ति हो र
मुक्ति हो । कामको इज्जत गराई,
पसिनाको सम्मान गराई ।

नेपाल सरकार
संचाना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय
संचाना विभाग

14 Years of Academic Excellence

The Best College in Nepal

Internationally recognised IT Degrees

Enrol Now

Industry Ready

Bachelor Degree in Computing
(3 or 4 Years Track)

Career Prospects
Professional Programmer | IT Consultant | Project Manager
Software System Developer | Web Application Developer | Database Designer
System Administrator | System Analyst

Bachelor Degree in Computer Networking and IT Security
(3 or 4 Years Track)

Career Prospects
Networking Engineer | Planning Analyst | Network Administrator
LAN/WAN Specialist Network and Security Engineer | Network and Security Designer | Network Consultant | Project Manager

Bachelor Degree in Multimedia Technologies
(3 or 4 Years Track)

Career Prospects
Video Producer | Multimedia Designer | Game Designer | Visual Architect
Web Designer/Developer | Web Content Producer | Project Manager
Interactive Writer | Web Content Producer

All courses approved by Nepal Government, Ministry of Education

Entry Requirements
10+2 (Any Stream) or Equivalent

Intakes
September/October | January/February

Degree Awarded by London Metropolitan University, UK | Credit Transfer to UK, USA & Aus.

For more info
SMS Islington 2426

The Only UK UNIVERSITY affiliated College in Nepal

www.facebook.com/islingtoncollege
info@islington.edu.np

441-2929
442-0054

Islington college | Islington College (इस्लिङ्टन कलेज) | Kamal Pokhari, Kathmandu, Nepal



Ups and downs in Nepal

A trekker ambassador sees the need to be patient

On the Great Himalayan Trail, the team led by 21-time Everest summiteer Apa Sherpa, which is walking four months across Nepal, found an unlikely companion when it reached Tumlingtar: German ambassador to Nepal, Verena Gräfin von Roedern.

With four high passes over 3,000m, this segment of the 1,700km trail traversed Bhojpur, Sankhuwasabha and Solukhumbu districts. An avid

hiker, Roedern wanted to support the cause the trek aimed to highlight: promote ecotourism and bring attention to climate change in the high Himalayas.

But walking the three week up-and-down stretch from Tumlingtar to Lukla also gave von Roedern the time to reflect on the ups and downs of Nepali politics in the four years of her tenure as the ambassador. She came when Nepal had just



become the world's youngest republic in 2008, and the former armed rebels had just joined mainstream politics. Four years and five extensions later, we are still waiting for the constitution to take shape and the peace process to conclude.

"It is easy to get disappointed looking at things as they are," von Roedern told *Nepali Times*, "but Nepal has transitioned far better than most

post-conflict countries. Perhaps we should not be so impatient." This is refreshing coming from the dean of the Kathmandu diplomatic corps, which is sometimes better known for its cynicism about the deadlocked politics, corruption and poor governance.

It is her optimism about Nepal that sets the level-headed von Roedern apart, and patience is what the ambassador herself needed when at the end of her trek she was stuck for three days in Lukla due to bad weather.

But von Roedern also says she has been in Nepal long enough not to expect miracles overnight. "The good thing is, unlike what an outsider assumes from reading papers," she adds, "Nepali politicians are not always at each other's throats, but interact among themselves and are open to solutions."

Despite the history of bilateral cooperation going back 54 years, and the substantial aid that Germany gives to Nepal each year, the European economic powerhouse has maintained a low profile, keeping its interests

firmly on the country's economic development and not so much on domestic politics. And von Roedern seems determined to keep it that way.

During her three week trek across eastern Nepal she was more convinced than ever about the great potential that is just waiting to be unleashed in hydropower, medicinal herbs and tourism. So what is holding things back in her opinion? "There will not be any real economic progress in Nepal until there is closure on the peace process with integration and rehabilitation of Maoist fighters."

The last time she met prime minister Baburam Bhattarai, von Roedern joked that she wanted not flowers but a new Nepali constitution for her birthday on 28 May.

"There is a great opportunity for Nepali politicians to make a historical breakthrough," says the ambassador, "investors also want stability, and I really hope Nepali leaders rise to the occasion."

Rubeena Mahato

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

15% energy consumption approximately

Save more with low running cost at less than a rupee per page
Laser sharp printing with 1440 x 720 DPI
Reduce paper wastage with built-in duplexer
Work efficiently in network with built-in Ethernet connectivity
Optimise workgroup productivity with laser-like printing speed 16 ppm



Epson K100
Single Function



Epson K200
All-in-one

Kathmandu Dealers
Star Office Automation, Putalisadak : 4266820, Max International, Putalisadak : 4415786, Interactive Computer Center, The Waves Group, Lazimpal : 4410423, Click Solution center, Lalitpur : 5536649, Flash International, New Road : 4222384, Neo-Gen Solutions Pvt. Ltd., Uttardhoka : 6001042

Outside Kathmandu Dealers
Quality Computer, Birtamode : 023-540150, Birat Infotech, Biratnagar : 021-538729, 9852027264, Megatech, Biratnagar : 021-532000, Gagan Enterprises, Birgunj : 9855022388, Advance Computer, Banepa : 9851081595, Hi-Tech Trade Concern, Chitwan : 051-571564, E-Net Solution, Chitwan : 056-572096, Himalayan Office Automation, Pokhara : 061-525300, Computer Service Center, Butwal : 071-542699/675, Smart Link Dang : 082-561022, Dinesh Trading House, Nepalgunj : 081-527092, Manokamana Hitech, Nepalgunj : 081-521473, Ugratara Trading House, Dhangadi : 091-523601, Dinesh Computer, Dhangadi : 091-521392, Ugratara Technical Goods, Mahendra Nagar : 099-523872

MERCANTILE
OFFICE SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.
Hitti Pokhari, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4445920 / 444073
Fax: 977-1-4437088, E-mail: market@mos.com.np

COVER STORY

On the wrong side:
The CoAS falls for
Maoist cruel intentions

EDITORIAL

Be honest: The army chief
has a legacy to uphold

COMMENTARY

North to south
Keshav Man Shakya
Formula that works
Sher Bahadur Tamang
Question of integration
Manmohan Bhattarai

REPORTS

Exclusive Republic
Silent ride
State and structure

INTERVIEW

UCPN-M vice chairman
Mohan Bairya

HIMAL
KHABARPATRIKA
28 February-13 March 2012



New canine member joins the Great Himalayan Trail

Her name is Setuk, which is the name given to dogs with yellow eyebrows. She started following the Great Himalayan Trail team from just below Apa Sherpa's home village of Thame last week.

She was a playful dog, and we all took to her immediately. Some members of our team even swore that Setuk was the same dog that climbed up to Camp 2 (6,400m) on Mt Everest last spring.

We initially thought that she would follow us for the day and return home to Thame. But she stayed with us for the night in Thyangbo and was with us on the long and difficult climb up to the Tashi Lapsa pass the next day.

She was always there by our side and showed off her skills on the technically challenging icy sections of the pass. With hurricane force winds and minus twenty degrees outside,



she stayed in my tent vestibule as we camped 100m below the pass. The next day we crossed over into the Rolwaling valley, and with the last possibility of return behind her she has now become a permanent member of the Climate Smart Celebrity Trek that started in Kangchenjunga in January and will reach Humla in May.

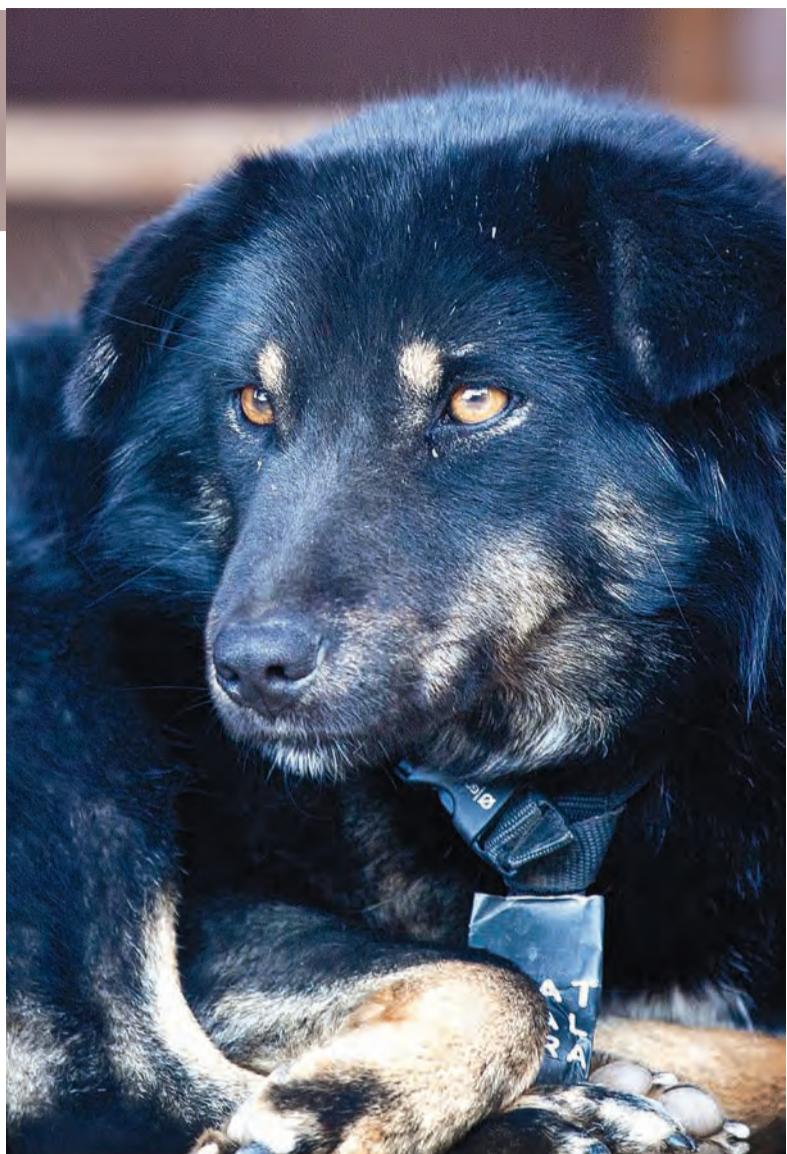
Setuk is a happy and

dignified dog although we occasionally see a glimpse of her wild hunter side when she chases goats as we pass through villages. She is intelligent, trail smart and understands instructions as if she can comprehend our language.

Lately, she is a little spoilt as she won't eat just any food. You have to set it down gently in front of her on a plate, she is the only member of the team who gets the royal treatment.

Setuk particularly likes to roll around in snow though there is very little of that, now that we are in the lower valleys of Helambu. She has been very useful to us as a guard dog too, and barks at strangers who come near our tents. She has also been very helpful when the group splits up by going back and forth to show the way. Until today she has walked over 250km with us. There is another 1,000 to go. 

Dawa Steven Sherpa



"Enough headroom for everyone"

Resta Jha, CEO of Prime Life Insurance spoke to the *Nepali Times* this week about how the rural areas are driving growth in the insurance sector. Excerpts:

Nepali Times: How is Nepal's life insurance sector performing lately and what is its growth potential?

Resta Jha: There has been a 20 per cent compounded growth over the last three years in life insurance segment and it seems this growth rate will continue for another three years. The major growth engine has been rural Nepal as a result of progressive cash flows from remittance, agriculture and tourism in this segment. Better awareness due to structured campaigns like 'Sunya Wa Teen' have also helped boost the premium collection. The total life fund of the industry today is more than Rs 20 billion.

Are there any Nepal-specific regulatory or environmental issues that are impending or fuelling growth?

The government's mandatory policy for Nepali migrant workers has definitely helped growth. On the other hand, a very low tax exemption limit of Rs 20,000 is hindering the growth. Overall, I find the current regulatory environment to be business-friendly.

There are over nine companies with life insurance licenses in Nepal, where does your company, PrimeLife Insurance stand?

PrimeLife has 18 per cent and 21 per cent market shares in first life premium and total first premium respectively. We have been able to achieve these phenomenal numbers because we competed with the low-penetrated market condition, rather than competing with the competitors. In a country with 23 per cent population having insurable interest and only 5 per cent having bought life insurance policies, there is enough head-room for everyone. We just need a better structured approach of doing business.

Which regions in Nepal have superior awareness of the benefits of life insurance?

Surprisingly, it's the rural sector taking the lead in terms of life insurance business in Nepal. Urban people might be more aware, but approximately 75 per cent of life insurance business comes from the rural areas. This is owing to the 'push factor' of the business. And eastern Nepal is ahead in terms of business.

 **USE YOUR
VISA
DEBIT OR CREDIT CARD
GET 10% DISCOUNT
AT
BHAT-BHATENI
SUPER STORE**



*conditions apply

Tel: 977-1-4419181, 4413825, Bhat-Bhateni Maharagunj, Narayan Gopal Chowk, Kathmandu, Tel: 977-1-4016130, 4016131, Bhat-Bhateni Koteshwor, Koteshwor, Kathmandu, Tel: 977-1-4601300, 4601301, Bhat-Bhateni Chuchepati, Boudha, Tel: 977-1-4485395, 4485396, Bhat-Bhateni Krishna Galli, Pulchowk, Tel: 977-1-5520988, 5220944, Coming Soon Bhat-Bhateni, Pokhara

Discount amount cannot exceed NPR. 500/- per transaction. Scheme is not applicable for wholesaler and bulk buyer. Valid from 1st - 31st March, 2012



Orphaned at old age

More grandparents feel less grand as they cross the 60's line

PAAVAN MATHEMA

If 60-year-old Dhana Maya Gautam described just her house, many might be envious. She lives in what looks like a palace with traditional carvings and lattice windows. The police stand guard outside, she has a sunny veranda and a garden.

But Dhana Maya is homeless, driven out of her home after her husband died. She has been living on the Bagmati Bridge for the past seven years. Every

day tens of thousands of commuters see her plight. No one stops by to help, or chat.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else, this is my home," says Dhana Maya, who still has property in Okhaldhunga but was forced to leave because of threats from her brother-in-law. Her son died and her daughter is in dire financial circumstances.

It is not difficult to meet



other elderly, homeless and abandoned women like Dhana Maya on the streets of Kathmandu. Many are victims of domestic violence in the hands of their extended families. While the ratio

of 60+ men is higher to women in Nepal, it appears that in most cases it is the women who are driven out of their homes. Women are also forced out after their husbands bring home

second wives.

"The husband was no longer mine, the house wasn't either," recalls 77-year old Jamuna Basnet (*pictured above, right*), at the old age home, Nishahaya Sewa Sadan where nearly all the residents are women. Old, female, single and homeless, and often uneducated, these women are abandoned in an uncaring city. The women don't have citizenship cards and recommendations from VDC

office required for shelters and end up on the streets.

With traditional family norms that valued and respected the elderly slowly eroding, grandparents feel neglected and disrespected in nuclear families. The trend of young families migrating abroad means that old parents are left behind with no one to look after them. The widening generation gap, family disputes and even physical abuse drive away the old into

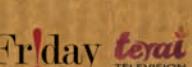
ARE YOU READY FOR THE BIGGEST MOMO PARTY OF THE YEAR?

www.facebook.com/thebakerycafe

I ❤ Mo: Mo: Mania

SATURDAY 10 MARCH 2012 | 3 PM ONWARDS
BHRIKUTI MANDAP

RS. 600 FOR ADULTS RS. 400 FOR KIDS
TICKETS AVAILABLE AT ALL OUTLETS OF THE BAKERY CAFE





PICS: BIKRAM RAI

the harshness of the streets.

With declining fertility rates and increasing life expectancy, demographic shift in age is among the most prominent global demographic trends of the 21st century. Japan's ageing population is now challenging its economic growth, with one in six people over the age of 80.

As the average lifespan increases, Nepal's population pyramid now has a small bulge in the 60 plus age group. In the 1950s the population of 60 plus citizens was just five per cent, it is expected to be over 10 per cent in the 2011 census. As nations age, the prevalence of disability, frailty, and chronic diseases such as alzheimer's, cancer and cardiovascular diseases also rise dramatically.

Nepal's universal pension plan for senior citizens and widows, which offers them

Rs 500 per month and health benefits, is a plus point. However, the bureaucracy is so daunting that many elderly people don't bother.

"Senior citizens are now a significant part of the population and with family care becoming weak, it is important that provisions are made for their benefit," says Ram Sharan Thapa, Office Chief of Pashupati Old Age Home which houses 230 senior citizens. "It is best if the family takes care, but there is a need for old age homes for those who aren't treated well." At present only 30 shelters for the elderly in the country with a majority concentrated in the capital.

Most depend on donors because of the special care required for the elderly. Says Sagun Shah of Nishahaya

Sewa Sadan: "Donors are more inclined to fund an orphanage or sponsor a child, than give to an ageing group that has outlived an economically useful life."

Suvekchya Ghimire of HelpAge International says that Nepal is ahead than most countries in terms of policies, but lags behind in implementation. She says: "Senior citizens should not only be seen as dependents, they can still be economically independent."

nepalitimes.com

Nepali women climbers set the pace, #590
Womanpower stays home to teach, as manpower migrates, #563
Women on air, #449
Holding up the whole sky, #457



Curry without Worry

Every Tuesday evening at 5.30 a crowd gathers under the pipal tree at Hanuman Dhoka for a 'party' thrown by Curry Without Worry (CWOW). As the familiar truck pulls in, the smell of warm food fills the air and there is a rush to form a queue as the buffet is set.

Warm rice, beans, roti, mixed vegetables and tomato pickle on a leaf plate- for most in the line this is one of the few full freshly cooked meals they are able to eat every week. CWOW is a charity that offers free warm meals to the homeless, and anyone else who is hungry, once a week. CWOW has been holding free buffets at the Hanuman Dhoka for more than a year and feeds over 300 people at one go.

The organisation was founded in 2006 by Shrawan Nepali in San Francisco where he opened a soup kitchen for the hungry in the city. Local businessman, Hem Ratna Shakya, would volunteer with Nepali whenever he visited the US and decided to begin the initiative here.

"The smile on the faces of our guests here motivates us to keep going," says Shakya. The weekly cost of CWOW is Rs 16,000. Anyone who is willing to contribute money or labour is welcome.

www.currywithoutworry.com
+977 1 4229475

BARAH
JEWELLERY INDUSTRIES PVT. LTD.



Head Office: New Road Gate, ktm
Tel: 4232964-65, Fax: 01-4233511
Pipal Bot: New Road, Pipalbot, Tel: 2190004, 4266799
Dharan: Bhanuchowk, Mahendrapat, Tel: 025-526777, 520056, Fax: 025-522412
Pokhara: Sabha Giri Chowk, Pokhara, Tel: 061-206570
U.K.: Aldershot, London, Tel: 0044-7824332127, 1252409272
E-mail: info@barahajewellery.com / www.barahajewellery.com

"We specialize in Handmade Nepali Jewellery"

OUR STANDARDS BEAT THEIR ASSURANCES!

When it comes to size, our small and nimble aircrafts have its advantages. We operate a fleet of 7 Jetstream 41 advanced turbo-prop aircrafts that have superior technology. What's more, we have an aircraft on stand-by always. Which means in case of any technical difficulties or other operational delays, our stand-by aircraft is made available to reach you to your destination on-time! Now when we don't compromise on our service, why do you settle for simple assurances?

At Yeti Airlines, you always come first.



Yeti Airlines operates 7 Jetstream-41 advanced turbo prop aircrafts catering to widest network sectors every day.

KTM-MTN-KTM Daily 5 Flights • KTM-PKR-KTM Daily 8 Flights • KTM-BIR-KTM Daily 7 Flights • KTM-BDP-KTM Daily 3 Flights • KTM-BWA-KTM Daily 2 Flights
KTM-KEP-KTM Daily 2 Flights • KTM-IKR-KTM Daily 2 Flights • KTM-DHI-KTM Daily 1 Flight • KTM-BHR-KTM Daily 1 Flight • KTM-TMI-KTM Daily 1 Flight

Yeti Airlines Domestic Pvt. Ltd, Corporate Office: Tilganga, Kathmandu, Tel: 4465888 Fax: 4465115 Reservations: 4464878 (Hunting Line), Kathmandu Airport: 4493901 Email: reservations@yetiairlines.com Sky Club: 01-6220940/4465888 (223/418/614) Email: skyclub@yetiairlines.com



Yeti Airlines
You come first

www.yetiairlines.com

News from Ujyaalo

Read while you listen
Listen while you read

Log on:

www.unn.com.np



You will be with Ujyaalo
Where ever you are...

Follow Us

www.facebook.com/Ujayalo90Network
www.twitter.com/ujyalo



Ujyaalo Online

Ujyaalo Home Shanti Chowk
Jawalakhel-4, Lalitpur G.P.O. Box 6469 Kathmandu,
Tel: 977-15000171, Fax 977-1-5549357 Email: info@unn.com.np

EVENTS



LIVE PERFORMANCE BY ATIF ASLAM

ASLAM, the famous Pakistani pop singer will be performing for the first time in Nepal. 3 March, 5:00 pm onwards, Jawlakhel football ground.

Summer Utsav, charity event to support children. 3 March, 2:00 pm to 8:00 pm, Lorry's Restaurant and Bar, Jhamsikhel

All Women Scooty Rally, join the rally to celebrate womanhood and girl power. 8 March, 8:00 am, Starting from Basantapur

Lecture Series LII, a talk by Todd Lewis and Subarna Man Tuladhar on Chittadhar Hridaya's Sugata Saurabha. 6 March, 4:30 pm, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan

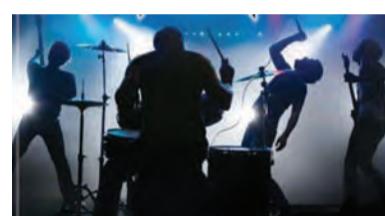
MUSIC

Live music by **SIGN** band every week except Tuesdays and Wednesdays. 7:30 pm onwards, Corner Bar, Radisson Hotel, Lazimpat. Call 4411818

Kutumba Playing for Heritage II, Kutumba will be travelling across Nepal to generate awareness on the preservation and protection of local heritage till 15 April

Baja Gaja, playing live every Tuesday 7:30pm onwards at Mosksh, Pulchowk. Call 5526212

Live music at Jazzabella Café. Every Wednesday and Friday 6pm onwards, Jazzabella café, Jhamsikhel, Patan. Call 2114075



METAL SUFFOCATION II, bringing together all the metal heads of Kathmandu featuring bands like And we came, Infected, Deadwishes, Shadow in shade and many more. 10 March, 1:00 pm onwards, Neon pub, Thamel. Call Suman Shrestha at 9841558087

DINING

New Orleans, offers a wide variety of western dishes that are scrumptious yet healthy. Get hooked on the rosemary chicken and hamburgers. Jhamsikhel, 5522708.



1905 RESTAURANT, feast on roasted delights within this converted aristocratic residence. Walled ambience and green surroundings make it an oasis within the city, Kantipath, 4215068

Bu keba, the organic restaurant in town, offers continental and Indian food along with chef's originals. Sanepa

Cosmopolitan Café, located in the heart of Basantapur, this cozy café offers arguably the best chicken sizzler in town. Basantapur (along Kathmandu Darbar Square), 4225246



ALFRESCO, for homemade pastas and other lip-smacking delights. Soaltee Crowne Plaza, 4273999

Irish Pub, for the simple reason that the place actually feels like a bar. Don't

miss out on their Irish coffee. Lazimpat, Ananda Bhawan, 4416027



DHABA, for an excellent range of North Indian delicacies, try their unbeatable Kashmiri Gosh. Thapathali



OR2K, one of the few vegetarian restaurants in the Valley, their Middle Eastern platter is delicious and their cocktails are simply amazing. Mandala Street, Thamel, 4422097



MILK COFFEE N COCKTAIL CAFE, coffee house during the day and a cozy lounge serving cocktails at night, try its yarchagumba and molecular cocktails. Woodland Complex, Durbar Marg



YIN YANG RESTAURANT, east meets west as you choose from a variety of Thai and continental dishes. Add a little spice in your life with its pad thai or green curry. If you can't handle the heat, fall into the safety net of western dishes. Thamel, 10am to 10pm, 4701510



CAFE HESSED, for those with a sweet tooth, the cafe offers a delicious range of cupcakes and doughnuts. Jhamsikhel

American by birth, Sherpani at heart

Caryl Sherpa finds love and a new family in the heartland of the Himalaya

More than 20 years ago at Bhole Odar, Caryl Sherpa feels she suddenly found the clarity she was searching for in her life when she met her guide, Nima. And two days into her trek of the Annapurna circuit she promises herself: "I will marry Nima Gyalgen Sherpa."

Caryl's book, *I taste fire, earth, rain: elements of a life with a Sherpa* traces Caryl and Nima Sherpa's journey as they crisscross the Annapurna, Los Angeles, Michigan and Solukhumbu and learn to reconcile their two worlds.

The memoir picks up in the spring of 1991, when 39 year-old Caryl leaves behind her posh home, difficult job as the manager of an interior architecture project and a messy breakup in Los Angeles and arrives in Kathmandu searching for a sense of purpose and in desperate need of change. Once on the trail, she quickly befriends one of her guides, Nima. While Nima is calm, assured and has strong faith, Caryl is restless, full of doubts and skeptical. Despite the language barrier and cultural divide, the two are instantly attracted to each other and risk a relationship.

While a large part of the book is devoted to stories about their love and marriage, Caryl also delves into the more serious issues of cross-cultural unions and the frustrations they experienced while adjusting to a world that did not fully accept Nima nor understood her feelings.

"Nima is wise, has been through some tough experiences and like other Sherpas was very adaptable. But it was still a very alienating environment for him and the way he dressed, or spoke, his lack of formal education, his rough edges made him an outsider. Sometimes people who want to emigrate to the US only see the money and opportunities, and fail to realise that



it can be very difficult," Caryl explained.

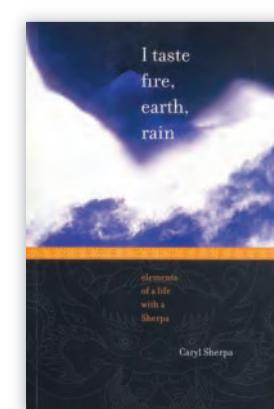
For readers who are unfamiliar with Nepal's topography, Caryl describes the Brahmin, Gurung and Tibetan villages that she passes through on her way to Thorung-La and Kala Pattar in meticulous detail. Her understanding of Sherpa culture and explanations of their customs and rituals will also fascinate and educate even Sherpas.

When asked about her first impressions of Nepal, Caryl told us in Kathmandu last week, she was amazed how despite the poverty, the Nepalis she met found joy in simple pleasures and their deep commitment towards their faith. Two decades later, she finds the country is almost unrecognisable: "When I came here

in 1991, there were very few tourists and we used to camp out on the river banks. Today there are big, fancy lodges even in the Khumbu, and there is a road around the Annapurna circuit."

After almost 20 years in the US, the Sherpas are now back in Kathmandu and preparing to settle permanently in Nima's hometown in Solukhumbu. Caryl who took 15 years to complete her first book while working full-time, wants to dedicate more of her time to writing. She told the *Nepali Times*, "I have plenty of free time now and living in the foothills of Himalayas will definitely boost my creativity." The couple is currently busy traveling back and forth from Kathmandu to Solukhumbu, making arrangements for their new home and planning to open a retreat for artists and writers near Namche Bazar.

Although Caryl says she misses her family in the US and might struggle to get through Nepali winters in cement houses with no central heating, she feels at home and is ready to start her life as a Sherpani. ☎



I taste fire, earth, rain:
Elements of a life with a Sherpa
Studio Press, USA 2011
ISBN : 9780983609421
346 pages



The Factory, a trendy restobar for a refreshing stopover in the chaos that is Thamel. Great food and drinks, with zesty music. Don't miss out on the cheesecake, it's a must. *Mandala Street, Thamel*



SINGMA FOOD COURT, for the best Singaporean and Malaysian cuisine in town. *Pulchok, 5009092 and Bhatbhateni, 4411078*,

Vesper Café, has quaint outdoor patio good for leisurely weekend brunch. Serves good salads, and steak-wraps. *Jhamsikhel*



BRONCO BILLY, a new restaurant in town offering Tex-Mex and Indian dishes. They make their own corn tortillas, which gets a big thumbs-up. *Pulchok, opposite Namaste Supermarket*

HANKOOK SARANG, from Bibimbab to Samgyeopsal, Hankook offers a wide range of Korean delicacies at affordable prices. *Thamel*

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

GETAWAYS



FULBARI RESORT, enjoy the scenic view as you pamper yourself with tennis, golf, drinks and dinners. Rs 6500 per person for 2 nights and 3 days. *Call 4461918, 4462248*

The Borderlands Eco Adventure Resorts, raft in the mighty Bhote Kosi, try a canyon descent, or an off-the-beaten trek to a hidden monastery. *Call 4700894*

Holiday at Grand Norling Hotel, Gokarna. One night and two days at Rs 4500 and two nights and three days at Rs 7000. *Call 447948*

The Last Resort, be a part of the Bungy or Swing Jump Event over the Bhote Koshi river 160 metres below or mountain bike up to the Tibetan border. *The Last Resort Sales Office, Mandala Street, Thamel, 4700525*



Day 40

The Climate Smart Trek led by Apa Sherpa arrived at Barhabise, Sindhupalchowk today, completing 530km (40 days) of its 1700km long trek (120 days) on the Great Himalaya Trail (GHT) to raise awareness on 'Climate Change in the Himalayas', and to promote the development of the GHT to build the climate resilience in Nepal's most vulnerable communities.

On the occasion Apa Sherpa said, "I have a message for my fellow Nepalis. Climate Change destroyed most of my property back in the Dig Tsho Glacial Lake outburst of 1985. I successfully climbed Mt Everest for the first time in 1990, and since then I have scaled it 21 times in 21 years. Tourism gave me back my life." The pro-poor sustainable development GHT project aims to address the impacts of Climate Change in the Himalayas.

The core GHT-CSCT team which includes Apa Sherpa (21 times Mt. Everest summiteer), Dawa Steven Sherpa (Mountaineer and Climate ambassador), Saurav Dhakal (British Council International Climate Champion and Journalist) and Samir Jung Thapa (photographer) began its journey on 15 January 2012.

On Facebook:
<http://www.facebook.com/climatesmarttrek>
Follow on Twitter:
@TheGHT_Nepal
<http://www.climatesmarttrek.org.np/>



Yellow Chilli



250) without an alternative description.

Every other menu entry is a dish from Kapoor's televised compendium, highlighting the colours and flavours from his family's home in Meerut or his Pashtun heritage. His signature dishes, indicated by his silhouette, were naturally sampled.

For starters, the Shabnam ke Moti (Rs 510) promises "mushroom caps overflowing with cream cheese and a subtle touch of blue cheese cooked to a golden hue in the tandoor," but what

was tabled was something more like a skewered cream of mushroom. The mushrooms were tender and generous but the blue cheese was indeed subtle.

Khaas Seekh (Rs 650) advertised as the "Chef Special" and "the softest seekh kebabs you'd ever have" were quite different from Kapoor's kebabs as televised in a September 2011 episode. Preparations may be different from the kitchen and the tandoor, and perhaps, watching Kapoor makes the food seem just more appetising. The minced chicken

that enveloped the paneer stuffing was hardly traceable.

Shaam Savera (Rs 650) the restaurant's "signature preparation of spinach koftas filled with paneer served floating in a velvety makhni gravy" sounds divine. But sad to say, the gravy tasted like treacle and the paneer was grainy.

Beverage-wise, the Peach Iced Tea (Rs 100) and the frozen Margarita mocktail were heavy on concentrate and required diluting.

Kapoor's saving grace, aside from its attentive service and comfortable setting, was in his sweets, as to be expected. Kesari Kulfi with Rabdi (Rs 225), apparently "sugar-free," was a toothsome dessert where the saffron married well with the homemade ice cream.

It appears that the Nepali extension of the streamlined chain may have been hasty and may have assumed that an Indian satellite would more or less sit well with the upstairs neighbour. For what is served, prices could better accommodate and the menu could be tweaked to suit the Nepali tongue and taste bud. But to be fair, the description of gulio bhat in parentheses and the addition of steamed chicken momos (Rs 650!) make an attempt.

Marco Polo
Blue Bird
Complex at
Thapathali
above the KFC
and Pizza Hut
Delivery



Cave of Forgotten Dreams



Despite these challenges Herzog, as usual, has made an amazing film. The cave paintings of Chauvet are dramatic in themselves, but Herzog has somehow turned his disadvantage into advantages with his narration, which is full of philosophical wonder at the epic gap in our knowledge between us and the Cro-magnons who painted these powerful renderings of lions, bulls, pre-historic wooly rhinos in the haunting, dark interior of the cave. Herzog uses the camera to drift and wander around the cave for long minutes allowing us to wonder and marvel at the paintings which are underscored by orchestral music that is both melodic and evocative. Finally, the other exceptional, aspect of this film is that Herzog chose to film it in 3-D.

Another film-maker might not have had the patience or the experience to succeed with this kind of technology in such an environment, but Herzog and his team are able to create a breathtaking film that allows the viewers to feel like they are in this most mysterious of caves themselves.

Pina



Oddly enough, yet another German film-maker of the same era, Wim Wenders, has also created a fantastic documentary, also in 3-D, about the famous choreographer and dancer Pina

Bausch. In *Pina*, Wenders uses the camera in a fluid floating manner that allows the dancers a measure of freedom of movement that is impossible with a more static camera. Bausch's amazing pieces come to life in this film that, along with Herzog's, push the boundaries of what we have come to accept as conventional cinema. Movies are still young, a little over a century old, and they entertain people young and old, the world over. Once in a while though, a few pioneers like James Cameron (with *Avatar*), Herzog, and Wenders take a few chances and set new standards that make one gasp at the almost magical potential of cinema. ☀

nepalitimes.com

Watch trailer



Once in a while, directors with true vision are able to take subjects that would confound an ordinary film-maker and create visceral, transcendent works of art. All films are not necessarily 'works of art', film is primarily a medium of entertainment, but there are individuals who have been able to achieve both aims: creating exceptional groundbreaking, captivating cinema that can also be called art.

Werner Herzog, the eccentric, poetic, German film-maker who insists on narrating all his documentaries in his own distinctly accented English has always gone out of his way to choose the most difficult and outlandish subjects. He has worked with a man obsessed with grizzly bears, a rocket scientist who hovers over the rain-forest in a hot air balloon, and writers and adventurers who live and work in Antarctica.

Now, with *Cave of Forgotten Dreams*, he chooses to document the millennia-old paintings found in the Chauvet Cave in the Ardeche region of France. The only problem was that the skeleton film crew were only allowed access for a few hours each day over the course of a week. Every documentary maker knows the absurd proportion of footage shot to the actual footage that ends up in the 90 odd minutes that is a feature length documentary. To be allowed to film only a few hours can be catastrophic to the viability of a film. Additionally, the cave being a fragile and compact environment meant that the crew often could not duck out of the shots and were forced to use only the most rudimentary equipment in a dark and hard to manoeuvre environment.

Hidden hunger



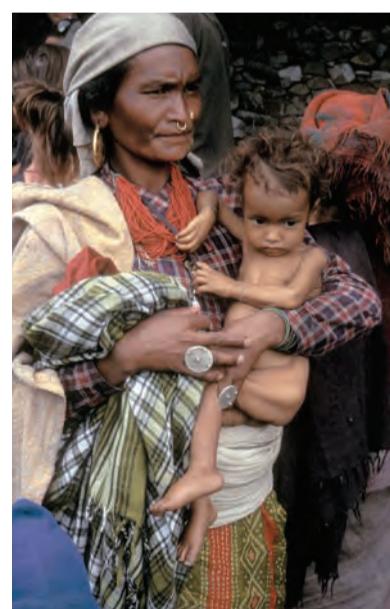
DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

Prompted by massive advertisement campaigns, sales of instant noodles and fizzy drinks have skyrocketed in Nepal. Among the world's 7 billion people, 3 billion either eat too little, too much, or eat unhealthily.

It is easy to detect when people are severely lacking calories because they will appear "marasmic" (chronic starvation). When people are obese, the effects are all too obvious as well. But it is "hidden" starvation (the group that eats unhealthily) that may go unnoticed.

If a nutrition survey is done in a Nepali village, it is likely to show a high degree of malnourishment. Many people are just barely healthy, which predisposes them to illnesses. While poor nutrition is the norm, people may have other priorities besides a healthy diet like buying a better television set.

Even in remote Nepal,



instant noodles have replaced the more nutritious sampa or sattu made of barley or other grains. Noodles, although very convenient to prepare, only provide empty calories compared to the vitamin B and mineral-rich barley. Since 'mohi' (watered-down butter milk) has been replaced by sugary drinks where available, the nutritional trade-off has been unhelpful in promoting health. People may not appear to be starving, but the 'hidden' hunger is taking its toll.

More than 160 million

children in developing countries suffer from vitamin A deficiency, and many are afflicted by night blindness and even permanent visual problems. Iodine deficiency which causes goiter and developmental disabilities affects 18 million babies each year. It used to be a significant problem in the Khumbu region in Nepal, when iodine-deficient salt was 'yakied in' from Tibet, but nowadays thanks to iodine-enriched salt, goitre and mental problems are much less common in that area. (Interestingly, with the decrease in goiter cases, fewer Nepalis are superstitiously blowing into their hands after touching their neck to ward off goitre).

In 2008 as part of the Copenhagen declaration, eight eminent economists were asked to propose plans that would be most beneficial for humanity. Half of them recommended proper nutrition. For young people planning exciting careers, a useful and satisfying future may lie in being a nutritionist to help deal with the world's problems. ☀

WEEKEND WEATHER

The prevailing high pressure system is keeping the moisture out, and bringing dry cold air from central Asia. This is prolonging the spring season, keeping the maximum and minimum temperatures lower than usual this time of year. As soon as the wind direction changes, the mercury should go into the upper twenties later next week. All this means that the winter inversion has persisted in the Indian plains as well as the valleys, and compounded with pollution has brought hazy conditions.



FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY



25-05

23-05

23-05



BIKASH DWARE

LEAPING HIGH: Winner of the 100m hurdle, female, Arati Pathak of Nepal Police Club, jumps to the finish line during the sixth National Games in Dhangadi on Wednesday.



BIKRAM RAI

STANDING TALL: Editor-in-Chief of Guinness World Record, Craig Glenday (right) measures Chandra Bahadur Dangi, 72, in Kathmandu on Monday. Dangi was announced the world's shortest man alive, as well as the shortest person ever measured by the Guinness World Records.



LET'S SHAKE ON IT: Vice President and CEO of International Finance Corporation Lars Thunell met Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai at the PM's office on Wednesday. Thunell reiterated IFC's commitment towards increasing investments in Nepal, particularly in infrastructure, and to support private sector development.



BIKRAM RAI

STREET DRAMA: Traffic police personnel penalise pedestrians who did not use the overhead bridge at Rani Pokhari to cross the road on Thursday morning.

Knotting for Nepal

A woman's personal hobby is helping others become self-sufficient and preserve traditional weaving skills

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

BHRIKUTI RAI

During a time when Nepali women had few economic and educational opportunities 30 years ago, Shyam Badan Shrestha gathered Rs 200, built a small workshop in her house and started making knotted handicrafts along with two friends.

That was the humble beginning of Nepal Knotcraft Centre, the country's first showroom for knotted products and bamboo furniture.

After working as a teacher for 13 years, Shrestha's foray into handicraft making was largely trial and error. "I was interested in macramé from an early age, but I had no formal training," she recalls, "so I read a lot of books and taught myself the art of knotting." She started by making small items and began experimenting with different materials like cotton, hemp and yarn when she gained confidence.

Today, the Centre produces a wide range of knotted goods such as hammocks, purses, belts, and decoration pieces at its factory in Patan Industrial Estate. Interestingly, ethnic dolls made of husk are one of the hottest commodities in the Kupondole outlet. Shrestha says



she was inspired to experiment with cornhusk due to the Indian embargo of 1990 and 1991 when there was a severe shortage of cotton twine.

During this time she also discovered indigenous weaving traditions practiced by Nepali women from diverse communities who had the expertise, but lacked technical knowledge and resources to use their skills to earn an income.

Nepal Knotcraft teaches local women's groups to blend their indigenous weaving techniques with contemporary styles. By the end of the training, the women



are sent not just with the know-how but a market for their handicrafts. This initiative has not only made them more socially and financially independent, but increased their interest in preserving their art and passing it to the younger generations.

The journey has been challenging. In 2007, the factory was shut down due to labour militancy and although business resumed after two years, Shrestha says starting over was difficult because many skilled artisans from the company migrated abroad for work.

Now, Nepal Knotcraft is struggling to compete with cheap, synthetic Chinese products which have flooded the market. But Shrestha is confident that increasing preference among urban Nepalis for eco-friendly lifestyles will make handicraft goods a household staple in the next 10 years.

Still, Shrestha is content and optimistic. She says, "The future of the industry depends on how well we tap into the country's abundant natural resources. If we can replace imported raw materials with local ones and develop research facilities, the handicrafts sector will take off in a big way."

www.knotcraft.com.np

Sewing a social safety net

Reena Rai has decided to dedicate her life to helping other women like her to be independent with skills training

HARIDEVI ROKAYA

The small single-storied house in Gyaneshwor is abuzz with the continuous clatter of sewing machines. Inside the home, poor women with difficult family lives are being trained in tailoring and other skills.

Women's Advancement and Skill Development Centre which manages the home has not only helped the women overcome personal and social obstacles, but also made them financially independent.

Among the group is 16 year old Sushmita Subedi who is learning to be a tailor. Before coming to Kathmandu, she worked as a domestic helper to support her family of eight and injured her hand in the process. She says: "When I worked as a servant, people ridiculed me and I was scolded frequently by my employers. I hope learning tailoring skills will change my situation and help me take care of my family." Subedi looks forward to owning a sewing machine and ending

her harsh life as a maid.

Sarita Karki, 36, of Sindhupalchok shares a similar background. After completing tenth grade, she was forced into marriage and recalls being regularly abused by her alcoholic husband. Karki, who has two children was desperate to break out of the cycle, earn a living and become self-sufficient. After struggling to make ends meet selling vegetables, she took tailoring classes. "No matter how educated a woman is, people won't respect her unless she is self-reliant," says Karki.



Like the women at the centre, Chairperson Reena Rai, too had humble beginnings. She started her career as a tailor, worked as an instructor for a while and then went on to establish the first women's centre in her home district of Makwanpur.

Rai says she started the centre because she wanted to impart her skills and encourage women in her village to seek economic independence. Until now Rai and her staff have trained 11,000 women from diverse classes and ethnicities.

However, she is disappointed by the apathy and negligence of the state and private sector and disheartened to see skilled women staying idle at home without work or income. Many of the women she trains don't have the capital to start their own ventures. Some don't even have the money to buy pieces of cloth to practice on.

Says Rai: "I wish the government or NGOs would help them financially at least during the initial stages. But so far no one has shown any interest."

Before coming to Kathmandu, Anju Poudel worked 12 hours daily at a garment factory in Birganj, where she earned Rs 2,000 and struggled to get by. Opening a toy store in Kathmandu didn't improve her economic position either. Following her sister's advice she joined the centre, learned to sew and now earns a reasonable income.

When Deepa Rai from Solukhumbu started her tailoring shop, her husband was opposed to it. Today Rai is a respected earning member of her family and says her husband is more supportive.

[For more information call 4412840]

They don't count,

No one knows how many Nepalis work in India, nor is there a reliable estimate about how much money they send home

ANURAG ACHARYA in NEW DELHI



Abhishek Mandal, 28, leaves his apartment in Tilak Nagar in New Delhi at midnight, and drives to his office Quattro Global Service in Gurgaon of Haryana state where he works as a diagnostic expert.

Asif Ali, 29, who works for IBM Global has a similar routine. Both Abhishek and Asif came to New Delhi from Biratnagar in eastern Nepal in search of a better life, and after years of struggle they both make a comfortable living.

Abhishek owns property in India and sends money regularly to his family. Asif educates his younger brother and sister at his own expense. His mother, Aamna, and sister, Nazia, now live with him in Delhi.

Abhishek and Asif do not fit the

stereotype of Nepali workers in India, who are usually gatekeepers, waiters or farmhands. Different studies estimate the number of Nepalis in India to be between 1 and 1.6 million. It is even more difficult to calculate the amount of money they send home every year. The figure of Nepal's annual remittance earnings of \$2 billion totals money Nepali workers wire home from the Gulf, Malaysia, Japan, and Korea, but does not include India.

Usually domestic labour market conditions determine migration trends, but in Nepal's case, simple push and pull theory may not sufficiently explain such a huge flux of labour. Rising unemployment at home, geographical accessibility, affinity with the local language, culture

and laws, and the open border, have certainly driven millions of Nepalis to India but the nature of the workforce they enter into is different. Although seasonal unskilled labourers make up a sizable number of Nepalis working in India, there are semi-skilled permanent job holders in various government and private institutions.

Historically, Nepalis have dominated the security profession. Tens of thousands of Nepalis work in the Indian Army and paramilitary forces (again, there is no exact count). Recently, private security companies have been hiring Nepali guards. Young Nepali boys are sought after in restaurants and hotels, and after the turnaround in Bihar, Nepalis have

replaced Biharis in Punjab's farms.

The lack of jobs in Nepal has also forced thousands of students in India to stay on after studies to find jobs there. Keshav Bashyal, who is doing his doctorate research from JNU on Nepali migrant workers told the *Nepali Times*: "There are people who are doing well in India with their creativity and hard work. Unfortunately, Nepal has not been able to entice them home."

Besides the loss of skilled manpower, the lack of information and unsystematic migration to India have put Nepalis at risk. Nepali domestic workers are often mistreated and exploited, and successive governments in Nepal have been unable to control trafficking of young Nepali

CHALO DILLI
Jyoti Malhotra

As the feverish election campaign in Uttar Pradesh winds down, there's only one question that is being asked around the city: is Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajwadi Party going to oust Dalit messiah and Bahujan Samaj Party leader Mayawati from the throne of Uttar Pradesh?

The stakes are enormous. The reason Uttar Pradesh lies at the heart of India's politics is because the state's nearly 200 million population elects as many as 403 members to the state assembly, and significantly, sends as many as 80 people (out of 545) to the federal parliament. In this case, the numbers are so overwhelming that nothing else in the country comes close. Uttar Pradesh also has a 600 km open border with Nepal, and what happens here with the Dalit identity and the fate of the Congress party always has an effect across the border.

Besides Yadav's home-spun rhetoric and Mayawati's ability to rouse up the state's Dalit population to passionate zeal, there is Congress dynast Rahul Gandhi's experiment with the thrust and parry of state-level politics.

Even on the road, Gandhi looks a bit like a movie star, with his angular good looks set off by the ubiquitous white khadi kurta-pajama that is the uniform of the average Congressman, completed by a set of running shoes.



THE FREE PRESS JOURNAL

the lower castes, has withered. This has left Mayawati fighting with her back to the wall.

As for the Samajwadi Party, the reins are slowly being taken over by Mulayam Singh's son, Akhilesh Yadav, member of parliament from Kannauj. Where Mulayam had once openly spoken out against the English language, son Akhilesh has sought to move the party into a new era by personally using a tablet computer.

Still, none of UP's major leaders can match the vision and the leadership shown by the chief minister of Bihar next door, Nitish Kumar, who is in alliance with the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party in the state but refuses to let Narendra Modi step into his province. Kumar, whose credentials as a socialist leader are impeccable, says he will not get into a slanging match with Modi or his creed. That only further builds up the people's respect.

Certainly, by improving the state's notoriously infamous indices on female and child mortality, Kumar has shown himself to be a leader not only of national stature but also someone who can be an example to all of South Asia.

Earlier in the month, his invitation to Nepal's prime minister Baburam Bhattarai, to attend the Bihar Global Summit as the chief guest, was received with great admiration as far away as the capital, Delhi. Interestingly, Narendra Modi may be an outcast in Bihar, but he is being welcomed in Nepal next week for a business conclave.

UP's politicians would do well to take a leaf out of Nitish Kumar's book once they settle down to governing. Mandates are precious things and must be treated with utmost respect. Even in the poorest parts of the sub-continent, one thing is already clear: if the rulers don't listen to the voice of the people, they will be changed by the people.

Down in UP

There are lessons for Nepal from the elections in the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh this week

He is a huge curiosity considering several generations of Gandhi-Nehrus have stood from the Amethi constituency in Uttar Pradesh.

But the party has been routed right across the Indo-Gangetic plains for the last decades, ever since it mutely witnessed the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992. Simultaneously, as the

genie of caste politics neatly divided up the state, the Congress was simply unable to provide either the leadership or the politics to overcome the challenge. It became an embarrassing also-ran, lying in the ground for the last 20 years, even as the world – and India – changed.

By most accounts the Congress

and the right-wing Bharatiya Janata Party are vying for the third slot in UP's electoral race. Dalit leader Mayawati is backed by the solid chunk of the Dalit vote, although it is a moot point that some of that vote-bank is also split. Clearly, the rainbow coalition that she had so successfully created in the last election, comprising the upper as well as

and are uncounted

AT HOME (left to right): Dil Bahadur Mahara from Dang with his co-worker at an Indian restaurant in Delhi. Asif with his sister Nazia, brother Kashif and mother Aamna. A Nepali rickshaw puller in Delhi.



PICS: ANURAG ACHARYA

his job there. "People are good to me, and I manage to save Rs 5,000 every month and send it home to my old parents and son."

Hundreds of thousands of Nepalis like Dil Bahadur don't count because they are not counted. Ganesh Gurung of Nepal Institute of Development Studies feels the government has disowned the Nepalis who work in India and believes the 1950 treaty is detrimental for the immigrant community, because while it allows free movement across the border, it lets Kathmandu wash its hands of the responsibility towards its citizens.

"How can protecting your citizens be at odds with your friendship with India?" asks Gurung. "Regulating the Indo-Nepal border will not create unemployment problem in Nepal, in fact it will make migration to India systematic through record keeping and help the state keep track of its citizens in India, reducing their vulnerability." ☎

(Some names have been changed.)

nepalitimes.com

Lost to the land, # 552

women to brothels and boys for circuses and work in dangerous jobs like the firecracker industry. The estimate of Nepali sex workers in India varies from 25,000-250,000, but no one knows for sure.

Piyush, 14, works at a roadside eatery near Delhi's Nizamuddin Railway Station. He ran away from his home in Gulmi district last year when his mother remarried after his father's death. "I didn't want to live with him so I ran away," says the sixth grader. A plucky young boy, Piyush says he wants to earn some money and go back to Nepal.

Dil Bahadur Mahara, 39, from Dang works in an Indian restaurant in Tilak Nagar in Delhi and says he is happy with



A beautiful mind

Shanti Shrestha came to India from Dhangadi in 1984 when she was just 24, as a beautician trainee. She has now opened her own saloon in Delhi's South Extension.

She began in a small basement in 2000, and now runs a chain of five 'Hair and Shanti' saloons in different parts of the Indian capital. "It has been difficult trying to make a living in a foreign country," says Shanti, "I did not understand the language and was often humiliated but it has all worked out."

Her partner in business and in life, Narayan (*seen above with then minister Shashi Tharoor*), is proud of his wife's success. "It is through her hard work and determination that we have achieved what we have," he says admiringly. "We will soon be expanding to 20 more places and in the next three years plan to spread the chain all over India."



Surya Nepal Masters 2012

INTERNATIONAL CLASS GOLF

Gokarna Forest Resort, Kathmandu
13th - 17th March, 2012

PRO-AM SPONSOR

Standard Chartered

SURYA NEPAL PRIVATE LIMITED GOLF TOUR 2012

JOHN PLAYERS

NEPALI GOLFERS' ASSOCIATION

PGTI Professional Golfers' Tour of India
Taking Indian Golf Global

NEPAL GOLF ASSOCIATION

NTB NEPAL TOURISM BOARD

'We should rise above ethnic and class sentiments'

Interview with Mohan Baidya, vice president
UCPN-M *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 13 March

हिमाल
एकल राजनीति

You are considered Pushpa Kamal Dahal's mentor. Who is leading the party, the mentor or the disciple?

Mohan Baidya: Let's not get into the teacher-student relation. He is our party president. He has his own ideals while I have my own. The party's official line is decided through dialogue.

What is the party's official line now?

We are in favour of writing a pro-people constitution and concluding the peace process quickly. Although we know there is no alternative to revolution if the peace process and constitution drafting fails, we will not come out on the streets immediately.

Are you in favour of extending the CA term or a people's revolt?

I cannot inspire or postpone a revolt according to my will. But I am sure people won't accept the new constitution if it does not guarantee their rights.

You have said that the armed revolution is incomplete. Are you planning to re-launch it?
Revolutionary movements need to evaluate the situation and adapt to different circumstances. The same modus-operandi does not work time and again. We have also adjusted our goals keeping in mind the current situation.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

The Maoists joined parliamentary forces when the insurgency failed. Why haven't they transformed into a democratic force yet?

We joined the parliamentary forces to oppose and fight against the monarchy. In my opinion, the joint movement was the right move, but the party should not have surrendered completely.

Does it mean the Maoists have been trampled by the parliamentary forces?

Not quite, but they have become dominant.

Do you think the ongoing debate on ethnic states has sprung out of people's awareness about their rights and country's geopolitical situation?

We raised the ethnic issue to address existing inequalities, not to divide the country. But there are pitfalls. We should rise above ethnic and class sentiments.

How do you assess the performance of this government?

This government has compromised the integration process and hurt the sentiments of our ex-combatants in the cantonments. Even the decision to legalise war-time land transactions was withdrawn under the pressure of the opposition. This has damped the party's image in front of the public.

Dead and forgotten

Santosh Yadav, *Sahara Times*, 13 February

सहरा टाइम्स

Every year on 18 Magh, CPN-UML Siraha mourns the death of its leader, Hem Narayan Yadav who was killed eight years ago during Gyanendra Shah's dictatorial regime. Yadav, a UML MP from Siraha, was abducted in broad daylight and killed because he challenged army officer, Babu Krishna Karki's abuse. Standing over Narayan's corpse UML leader Madhav Nepal made lofty promises of punishing the guilty. But justice for Yadav and his family remains elusive even after two UML led governments. Due to the apathy shown by the leadership, Yadav's wife and son severed all ties with the party last year and they were absent from the program this year. Although the UML nominated Yadav's wife into the parliament to engage the family and secure compensation for them, the family was not after monetary gain. They wanted justice, but the government only humiliated them further by promoting Karki and letting him walk free.



Branch: Democracy day
Nest: Democracy

कानपुर Batsyayn in *Kantipur*, 26 February

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“Don't associate me with people's revolt.”

UCPN-M vice chairman Mohan Baidya speaking to *Himal Khabarpatrika* this week



SALE UPTO 50%*

JOHN PLAYERS

Premium men's wear from SURYA NEPAL

PRIVATE LIMITED

*Conditions Apply

Constitution impossible

Interview with Nilamber Acharya, Chairperson of the Constitutional Committee in *Naya Patrika*, 26 February

नयाँ पत्रिका

The February 3 deadline for resolving contentious issues in the constitution is fast approaching. Will we be able to meet the deadline?

Since the rules have not been amended yet, the CA cannot even present its suggestions on the SRC's report to the Constitutional Committee by that time. A working committee was formed to look into that matter, but due to the problems within the SRC, the process is stuck.



At this pace, how can we draft the constitution in three months?

Except extending the deadline and altering the work-plans, we have done nothing concrete so far. This is not going to help. Unless we clean up our acts there is no way this constitution will be written in three months.

Are the problems only related to constitution making or are there other issues like relations

between the parties and the peace process?

There is a definite trust deficit among the parties. Look at how they have been making unilateral decisions on issues related to the peace process. No one has bothered to follow past agreements. Everyone wants to get ahead in the race by pushing away others. All this has delayed constitution writing. If we want consensus, the parties must forge better relations among themselves and come to a quick understanding.

Are you saying we need a government of national consensus?

Of course. We need a strong government that can make decisions.

Politicians are talking about a fast track path to the constitution. Can the constitution be introduced by sidelining state restructuring for the moment?

The mandate is to create the constitution of a federal democratic republic. There can't be a constitution without federalism in federal Nepal.

KYOCERA

TASKalfa 180 - MONOCHROME LASER COPIER



Cost per copy service is the exclusive service provided by Mercantile Traders for your imaging need.

This exclusive service is with the purchase of new machine or on the rental basis.

BENEFITS:

- Pay what you use!

Spend ZERO on:

- Stock – Toner
- Maintenance kits
- Preventive maintenance
- Transportation
- (To and from Service Center)

CPC Rental provides additional benefits to the companies:

- No Capital Asset or Lingering Residual Value
- Monthly FREE volume included on the payment.

Authorized Distributor

Mercantile Traders

TASKalfa 180



FOR FURTHER DETAILS:

Please call us @4220773 or email us at info_mt@mos.com.np

Mercantile Building, Kantipath, Kathmandu

Tel: 4220773, 4243566 | Fax: 4225407 Email: info_mt@mos.com.np



बम्पर उपहार

एक जनालाई काठमाडौं नयाँ बानेश्वरनजिक वागमती अपार्टमेन्टमा
२ बेडरूम अपार्टमेन्ट



हरेक महिना

TATA Nano कार र Mahindra Rodeo 125 स्कूटर
एक एक जनालाई



हामी आउँदैछौं तपाईंको घरदैलोमा फेरि एक पटक



थप जानकारीका लालि
नेपाल रिपब्लिक मिडिया प्राइ.लि.
जे.डि.ए. कम्प्लेक्स, बाबादेवार, काठमाडौं
फोन: ०१-४२६८६६५६, ४२६५९०० (Ext. २०४/२०५), ईमेल: circulation@nagariknews.com



हरेक दिन

Maxx Mobile र D.Light Solar Light एक जनालाई र शुक्रवार साप्ताहिको अधिवार्षिक ग्राहक र Digicom Stand Fan तीन तीन जनालाई



हरेक क्षण

हरेक ग्राहकले पाउनुहोस्न हात खाली नजाने स्क्रियाच कुप्र भित्र लाखोका उपहार



रजिस्टर गर्नका लागि CIR टाइप गरी भूरेख मा एस.एम.एस. गर्नुहोस्न।
यो सेवा नेपाल टेलिकममा मात्र उपलब्ध ह।

नोट : वार्षिक ग्राहक यी सबै योजनामा सहभागी हुन पाउनेछन्।
अधिवार्षिक ग्राहक बम्परबाटोक अन्य योजनामा सहभागी हुन पाउनेछन्।
त्रैमासिक ग्राहक भने हरेक दिन र हरेक क्षण योजनामा मात्र सहभागी हुन पाउनेछन्।

*सर्वहरू लागू हुनेछ



The dumbest smartphones in the world

Just like we needed foreign experts to certify the height of the world's shortest man, it looks like we need foreigners to help us with certifying the true height of Mt Everest. As the news went around the world this week that Nepal now had the world's littlest human being and the world's highest mountain, I guess the only headline we'd like to see next week is:

'World's Shortest Man to Climb the World's Highest Mountain'.



What's with our obsession with the Guinness Book of World Records anyway, this country needs to see a shrink. Nepal is in grave danger of getting into the Guinness Book for trying to be in the Guinness Book for:

- Trying to break the most world records
- Postponing the constitution-writing deadline most often
- The shortest ride from plane to terminal anywhere
- Having the world's fastest clock tower
- Having the dumbest smartphone service provider



As one district after another starts declaring itself '**no open defecation zone**', the Ass' first reaction when Sunsari became the latest to bite the dust was: "No shit!" But does this mean



Sunsari-basi's no longer have to put up with the open verbal diarrhoea emanating from Minister Gutch and SuzieQ anymore?



Nepal is now in strong competition with the Australians in intra-party back-stabbing. But the Ozzies have a lot of catching up to do. Comrade KP Oily looked thrilled when his Kamreds threw in a surprise birthday bash at United Trade Center the other day. JNK was also there, so was MKN. And it was quite painfully apparent that the **love triangle** within the eh-Maley party is getting tangled again. Makunay expressed unconditional love for the birthday boy, but Kamred Goli

was fluttering his eyelids rather flirtatiously at Jhol Gnat and ignoring his ex.



The happiest man after Minister for Graft and Corruption Jay Pee was sent to the gallows was none other than our very own Upadra Yadav. His supporters went around distributing laddus in celebration and there were firecrackers across Tarai towns. Gupta Sir's supporters tried to light a few tyres in protest of anti-Madhesi discrimination, but it got no traction because the ones celebrating the most were the Madhesis. Erstwhile comrade-in-arms and **Homestay Minister** Gutch was the first to visit JP in jail. The mule's mole in Sadarkhor provided a transcript of the conversation:

Gutch: So, how you liking it here? Everything cosy?

JP: About that bank account in Bihar...

Gutch: (Cutting JP off) Ha ha! No hard feelings, I hope? (offering JP paan)

JP: I could use a commode, the squatting toilet is killing my knees.

Gutch: (Shouting at guard) Commode for prisoner 536. Anything else?

JP: A pack of cards.

Gutch: Ok, but will you play solitaire?

JP: (smiling) No, I was hoping you would join me.



No surprise that the **State Minister for Deforestation** has been on the take, keeping his hands very busy under the table. But the guy's luck ran out this week when CIAA sleuths working undercover caught him in flagrante having his palms greased. The ministerial PA who was the middleman is now employing the JP formula and calling it a "conspiracy against the Madhes".



Meanwhile, BRB has instructed his demolition experts to finish razing buildings on the Lazimpat road "by mid-May". Balu Water watchers found that deadline significant. Why mid-May? Is that when the prime minister is planning to step

down in a hitherto unpublicised secret deal with the kangresis to rotate the prime ministership to Lord Ram Chandra? And, um, just a quick question: are we also going to repave the roads or is this a new idea from our Urban Planning PhD Prime Minister to make the city look like a war zone?



Latest from the **Red Villa** is that PKD has bought himself a treadmill and is regularly playing badminton with his YCL guards. The man has also cut down on masu-bhat and is going easy on the scotch. For more information, visit:

www.awesome.guv. But I wonder what PKD's YCL guards will do when the Baidya loyalist YCLs surround the Red Villa to demand that Chairman Ferociousness hand them back their stolen allowances.



Kathmandu's Finest sure has its priorities right. The day after a terrorist killed three outside the NOC, our ever-vigilant cops were out in force apprehending jaywalkers at Bubber Mahal, and fining people not wearing seatbelts in a traffic jam. They deserve a place in the Guinness Book.



Choose Your Turf

Vijay Motors Pvt. Ltd

9801026541/9801026542/9801026543/9801026544
sales@chevrolet.com.np, www.chevrolet.com.np

For Queries SMS "CAR" to 2426

Authorised Sales and Service Centers:
Pokhara: 9856022495, Butwal: 071-437648,
Nepalgunj: 9858021489, Biratnagar: 9852024601,
Thapathali: 9851112077, Birtamode: 9842700420

CDO Regd No 194/056/57 Lalitpur, Central Region Postal Regd. No 09/066/7

ISSN 1814-2613 00594