

Your **Dream Home**,
Not a Dream **Anymore**



NIBL HOME LOAN
@ 10.5% Interest p.a.

SMS | home to 7755 or Contact your nearest NIBL Branch

For more Information:
Retail Bank: 4228229, 4242530, EXT 304/324

www.nibl.com.np

नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक लि.
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.
Truly a Nepali Bank



Predator state

A 20-year-old Nepali woman returning from three years of work as a domestic in Saudi Arabia was robbed and raped by airport officials. She has just found out she is pregnant, and says all she wants is to see the guilty punished. The accused are putting political pressure to be freed. The woman pictured spoke to *Nepali Times* on Wednesday in her rented room in Balaju.

Full story on page 11 and on www.nepalitimes.com

BHRIKUTI RAI

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

LAVAZZA
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE

Lakpa chulo : Jhamsikhel
Nina & Hager : Lazimpat
Mail to lavazza@subhashingalintl.com

GENERAL PURPOSE GENERATORS **FIRMAN**
NEW POWER NEW LIFE

GAUTAM ELECTRIC AND ELECTRONICS CENTRE
Head Office: B.P. Chowk, Pokhara, T: 961 53752, F: 961 531426
Corporate Office: Bharosa Office Complex, 503, Thapathali, Kathmandu
T: 91 4210908, F: 91 4210913, E: info@gec.com.np
GAUTAM ASSOCIATES

Thick... Juicy... Tender
Steak @ grill me

grill me
Jhamsikhel, 5535294



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

Winter Camp Check-up

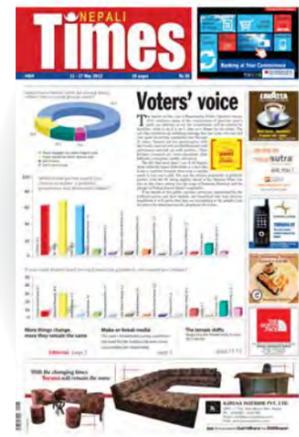
FREE WINTER CAMP FOR CHEVROLET, SUBARU & OPEL OWNERS.
Improve the efficiency of your vehicle and ensure peace of mind.

Services
Fog and Head Lamp check
Air-conditioning system check
Wiper Blades check
Rear defogger check
Battery check, free Car wash

plus Special discounts on accessories and spare parts
From **16th Dec. - 16th Jan. 2013**

To book appointments call 4425603, 4414625, 4433205 or 9801026547

Vijay Motors Pvt. Ltd.
Showroom: Naxal Bhagwati Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal.



THE PAST FORETOLD

If the political parties are terrified of parliamentary elections in 2013, why don't they at least agree to hold local polls and restore accountability to the grassroots?

2013 is not going to be much better than 2012 in untangling the political knot in Kathmandu, by the looks of it. The past year was one of missed opportunities, squandered mandates, wasted prospects. It was marred by political brinkmanship, blackmail and reckless identity politics. Greed and corruption maxed out this year, breaking all previous national and international records as coalition kleptocrats ransacked the exchequer, plundered natural resources, and awarded each other massive contracts under the table. With the government itself setting the example, goons extorted, ran protection rackets and crime syndicates that put post-1990 Russia to shame. It is difficult to imagine that the Nepali state can do any worse in 2013, but it looks like we are headed for another 365 days of the same.

It has by now become common knowledge that the reason for this open-ended deadlock is because the two top leaders of the Maoists are circling each other warily, unwilling to give the other an advantage in the forthcoming party convention. The candidacy of the NC's Sushil

Koirala was brokered by none other than Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal in order to sideline his rival within the party. Prime Minister Bhattarai saw through it and adamantly refused to step down if Koirala was going to replace him. The Madhesi partners in the coalition are cosy in their posts, and also refused to go along.

Seen from this angle, everything else is a distraction: the repeated deadlines by the president for a consensus government, floating the candidacy of a neutral caretaker or civil society stalwart, or even reviving the proposal to revive the CA. President Yadav decided to push ahead with his India visit because he knows fully well that for the formation of a consensus government, there first has to be a consensus within the UCPN (M).

The opposition NC and UML, devoid of any fresh ideas of their own, are in lazy reactive mode. It is not enough anymore to say you stand up for democracy, and against a prime minister with supposedly totalitarian mindset. What is your platform, how are you going to

confront a demagogue-in-the-making? C'mon, is Sushil Koirala the best you can come up with?

The question now is whether we are going to allow the nation to be held hostage for another month while we wait around for the Great Duel at the Maoist convention in early February. Even as we analyse the bewildering political convolutions in excruciating detail, the clock ticks towards 2013. By next week it will be too late to schedule elections for May. And that seems to be exactly what the parties are secretly hoping for by prolonging the haggling: to let the poll cut-off date lapse.

If they don't dare face parliamentary elections, one way for the political parties to collectively salvage their reputation is at least to agree on local elections in May. This would kick-start development, restore accountability to district and village units, and reassure the public's faith in government which is at an all time low. Sadly, that is the best we can hope for 2013.



ON THE WEB www.nepalitimes.com

RAPE FOR RANSOM

In Nepal we were happy and thankful about how we are not like Delhi the 'rape capital' of India. Nothing could be further from the truth ('Rape for ransom', Shatrudhan Kumar Shah, #635). All those horrible things that we read about raped women and girls in India -- victim blaming, police apathy and zero protection -- are all happening in our own backyard. But we are simply too busy talking about four-party consensus, and following the rat race, to care.

RT

● More shocking to me than the manifestations of power, patriarchy, and violence is the collusion of the Big Men in the government, police, and parties in hushing up the crimes and rewarding the rapists by presenting the victims as wives. How insensitive can these men be? The only solution is a carrot and stick approach of education and punishment.

Lina

● First, education and awareness of the authorities is a must. Secondly, the same should be applied to the villagers, and we must make sure that each person has the right to speak out and fight for their rights. There must be some kind

of organisation that can help these innocent women, and provide them with security. And finally, there should be capital punishment to such rapists and life imprisonment to all who are involved, including the policemen.

Shaahil

● As a UK citizen married to a Nepali woman, with children who are half-Nepali, and working in Nepal to improve the education of thousands of primary children each year, I am beginning to believe that I too am part of the problem. Maybe the country needs all of us to walk out. Educating these vile criminals is not the answer, but removing them from society is. And quickly.

Anonymous

● I feel disgusted when I read this kind of news. I'd say we chop off their parts and see who dares to do this again. You can't educate the girl and prevent it, nor jail the rapist and reduce it.

Anonymous

● Victims of rape are traumatised and greatly devastated due to the incident. Their self-esteem falls and they get depressed. The incident tends to replay in their mind over and over again. How can they survive living with the person who devastated them? I am strongly against the culture of rape victims marrying the culprit. The ones who force

such decisions are all criminals.

R

● This is sad, shocking, and very disgusting. Why are the accomplices to this heinous act calling themselves human?

@LaxmeGurung

SAVE THE CHILDREN

This is a powerful and heart-rending editorial ('Save the children', #635). I agree that the preventable death of 200 children in Nepal every day due to government disinterest is like mass murder. The tragic and needless daily deaths of so many children should be headline news every day.

Kim Rollie

● I'd like to add a small but important point. According to the latest United Nations inter-agency 2011 report, under-5 child deaths in Nepal have dropped down to 'only' about 100 per day. But death is only the tip of the iceberg. We have huge rates of malnutrition, significant disabilities, mental retardation, other chronic illnesses, violence, and abuse which make the life of many surviving children miserable.

Kul Gautam

● Much progress has been made in the area of children's health but

definitely we need to do much more. Let us continue the discussion in the media, and the action on the ground. Please continue highlighting social issues like these.

Sudha Sharma

● Women and children have always been oppressed in Nepal. This is one of the main reasons why Nepal has always been a backward country with a repressive society. I'm happy to read that at least there is one media entity in Nepal that is free from political pressure and meddling.

Surendra Singh

PATRIARCHY IN THE POLITICAL HIERARCHY

Very well written article by Anurag Acharya ('Patriarchy in the political hierarchy', #635). Patriarchy is at hearts of all the social institutions and is being endorsed by women subconsciously. We need to push agendas which include women as decision makers. A woman PM in Nepal sounds like a dream, but this is possible if we bring structural changes, attitudinal, and behavioural changes in people.

Kripa Basnyat

● What we desperately need in Nepal is women leaders at the top. I mean a woman Prime Minister.

Only then will things get better for women. Male Nepali politicians have not experienced any personal pain, shame, or grief. They are living comfortable lives and they know how to talk, that is all.

Bimala Thapa Magar

THE GOD OF CRICKET

We were all sorry to see Sachin lay down his bat ('The god of cricket', Ajaz Ashraf, #635). He will be remembered for uplifting the game of cricket, not only with his superb performance but also by elevating the sport to a higher plane and transcending sectarian and pseudo-nationalistic concerns.

Anonymous

Times nepalnews.com
Weekly Internet Poll #636

Q. Should the current government continue till the elections are over?

Total votes: 1,651

- Yes: 48.5%
- No: 48.3%
- Don't know/can't say: 2.2%

Weekly Internet Poll # 637. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com
Q. Do you think the UCPN(M) wants political consensus before its general convention in February?



Opportunity cost



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

On 27 May, Nepal made a tryst with destiny and at the stroke of the midnight hour unceremoniously dissolved the country's first elected body tasked with writing a new constitution.

The prime minister promised new elections by 22 November. That deadline came and went, and the prime minister has refused steadfastly to step down.

We are going through the umpteenth presidential ultimatum to the political parties to come up with a formula to set up a new government to oversee elections. If they can't meet that deadline by next week, which seems likely, elections in May 2013 are impossible.

A lot of people seem to think that a consensus government would be the magic wand that would resolve everything and set the country on a path to elections, and after that everything would be hunky-dory. We forget that there are fundamental ideological, political as well as personal differences among the top leaders, both between parties,



DEEPEENDRA BAJRACHARYA

All the difficult decisions we didn't make in 2012 will come back to haunt us in 2013 and beyond

and much more so within parties.

The deep differences on state structure and form of government in the new constitution was what led to the breakdown in negotiations in May, and those rifts remain. They just happen to be eclipsed at the moment by the competition among leaders to lead the next government. There is a zero-sum culture where the winners want to take all

which is what made 2012 such a dismal year to possibly break the deadlock.

Mainstream media headlines in the last few weeks, including front page editorials in Thursday papers paint Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Sushil Koirala as solution-seekers with no personal ambitions of their own, and as victims of an obdurate prime minister. The editorials buy into the feeble excuses of these two obsolete leaders,

covering up their inability to negotiate a deal by blaming the caretaker prime minister.

Let us remember that it is all about greed and power. Dahal's Machiavellian lies and doublespeak have caught up with him. The NC's Koirala is a puppet propped up by Dahal, and the man has willingly led his party into a Maoist trap.

One of the major sticking points in present negotiations is that the NC and UML refuse to own the agreements made in the CA, and want the new constitution to be written according to the mandate of new elections. But the agreements on the constitution in the dissolved CA were not just electoral agendas. They represented the aspirations of the people in the 2006 People's Movement, and the Madhes and Janajati movements that followed. Undermining them would turn the clock back.

The opposition also forgets that Koirala, or anybody who replaces Bhattarai, will need the cooperation of all constituencies when they come to power tomorrow. So, what they do now in the opposition could easily backfire on them.

This is not to say that NC should give in to Maoist demands. If the Maoists have been forced to accept multiparty democracy and parliament as a legitimate way of pursuing their political programs, NC and UML should also be willing to concede that there is room for improvement in the present model of parliamentary democracy.

What Sushil Koirala has been insisting as "core values" could easily be seen as the NC's resistance to change.

All this political uncertainty has prolonged the people's suffering, and our leaders are lucky that the pain threshold and tolerance level of Nepalis is so high. More people left the country in 2012 in search of work in India, Malaysia, South Korea and Gulf countries than ever before. Double digit food inflation has pushed even urban middle class families into poverty. Investors have been scared off by politics, extortion, and 14-hour daily power cuts in a year that the government ironically, and with much fanfare, announced as Nepal Investment Year.

The census results that were released last month show dramatic demographic changes that will have huge political implications in the years to come. Nepal's population is ageing, but 35 per cent of the population is below 20 years. For the first time, more people live in the Tarai than in the rest of the country. There is depopulation of the hill districts. At least 12 per cent of the population is working abroad. And the icing on the cake: in 2012, Nepal was ranked as the most corrupt country in South Asia after Afghanistan. We are an international pariah for condoning impunity.

All the difficult decisions we didn't take in 2012 will come back to haunt us in 2013 and beyond. □

THE NEW SWIFT MORE SWIFT



conditions apply

21112



Petrol
18.6*
K/L

* As certified by Test Agency Under Rule 115 of CMVR 1989.



12 Free Servicing

Anytime SUZUKI
Ask any help about Sales and Service.
Call: 9721404040

17 CITIES 21 SALES OUTLETS 15 SERVICE CENTRE

For more info type **DZIRE** <space> your name, address and **SMS to 5006**

CG Automobiles

Suzuki Showroom: Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, Tel: 5547165, 5547166, 5525066, Thapathali, Kathmandu, Tel: 4229086, 4229099, 4245361
Suzuki Service Centre, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, Tel: 5545907, Dhobighat, Tel: 5540462

Bagmati Dealers: Dhobighat: 9851100908, 5526770
• Maharajgunj: 9843062877, 4016090 • Nayabazar: 9841359262, 4389723 • Sitapaila: 9851014722, 4034571

Outside Bagmati Dealers: Bhairahawa: 523314, 9857030121 • Biratnagar: 9852027361, 536724 • Birgunj: 9845269167, 551075
• Birtamode: 9852678144, 541037 • Butwal: 9847068678, 438233 • Damak: 9804954234, 581122 • Dang: 9847992802, 563433
• Dhangadhi: 9858420192, 521242 • Dharan: 9852049179, 533179 • Hetauda: 9845210628 • Itahari: 587208 • Janakpur: 9854021020, 522020 • Narayanghat: 9855060498, 526975 • Nepalgunj: 9858025567, 551075 • Pokhara: 9856020169, 530028, 530107

Authorised Service Centers: Jadibuti, 6639177, Maharajgunj, 40160901, Mitrapark, 4114661, Sitapaila, 4034944

Nepal's fiscal cliff in 2013

If Nepal doesn't ratify its international anti-money laundering commitments next year it will join other rogue states

SUNIR PANDEY

When the Nepal Investment Year was announced last year this time, the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industries announced that if Nepal's economy was to grow by 8 per cent a year, up to 40 per cent of the GDP must be invested into businesses. This meant that the country needed to attract foreign direct investment from abroad. One year on, there has hardly been any new FDI, and even the existing investors are on the verge of packing up to leave.

Now, there is another crisis that could shut out all investment for good. Nepal faces the risk of being permanently blacklisted from all international financial transactions and join the ranks of pariah states like North Korea and Iran if it fails to ratify an anti-money laundering and terrorism convention.

In February 2012, Nepal narrowly escaped being blacklisted by the Financial Action Task Force. In June, the FATF again extended its deadline for Nepal after the President approved two crucial bills, the Mutual Legal Assistance Act and the Extradition Treaty Act through ordinances after the government tabled them at the eleventh hour. But the anti-money laundering and terrorism parts of the package were not passed because of opposition from some Madhesi and Maoist members of the coalition government.

When the Nepali team travels to Paris in January for a face to face meeting with the FATF, they will be informed of the commitments they must fulfil so that the FATF plenary that sits in February will not decide to blacklist Nepal for failing to make progress on its commitments.

The FATF wants the country to 'adequately criminalise money laundering and terrorist financing, establish and implement adequate procedures to identify and freeze terrorist assets, and implement adequate procedures for confiscation of funds related to money laundering'.

In other words, Nepal must amend the Anti-Money Laundering Act before the deadline in June 2013. Also, a meeting of the FATF in October concluded that it was concerned about Nepal's dillydallying over the Bill Against Organised Crime. Members of the ruling coalition seem to lack the political will to push through with the bills because they are afraid that their own cross-border dealings will be exposed.

However, the consequences of being blacklisted will be dire for Nepal's economy which is dependent on international remittances and tourism. The



few investors who remain would leave, imports would suffer as international banks refuse to honour Nepali letters of credit, exports would become more expensive, and international money transfers would be affected.

"A country like ours cannot afford to disengage from the international economy and go rogue," says Sidhant Raj Pandey, CEO of Ace Development Bank. "It would be a grave move, and the private sector would be the first casualty should we be blacklisted."

It would also mean that international banks could block the accounts of Nepali diplomatic missions, just like Citibank which closed the accounts of Nepali missions in Washington and New York. Foreign donors could impose more stringent conditions for aid and grants, once the country is blacklisted.

Baikuntha Aryal, joint-secretary at the Ministry of Finance told Nepali Times that the ministry was working hard to make sure Nepal fulfills its obligations before the deadlines pass.

"We have been lobbying the government across all levels to convince them that Nepal has nothing to gain from not abiding to international commitments," said Aryal. "Once we meet the FATF officials in January, we will be clearer about our positioning."

This year, the bills were opposed by some Maoist leaders who claimed it was against Nepal's 'national interest' to ratify such legislation. Later, the opposition joined in the bandwagon, saying the caretaker government had no mandate to table the bills and urged the President not to approve them.

Now, as the parties run circles around each other in search of political consensus to form an electoral government, Nepal's other equally pressing need is likely to be neglected until the last hour.

See Beyond the Usual



EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

OFFICIAL PARTNER



WIN A FREE TRIP TO SEE US PLAY IN ENGLAND



Buy an Epson product for a chance to win a free trip to watch Manchester United play from the prestigious Centennial Suite at Old Trafford, England!

All you need to do is register your Epson product within 14 days of the Date of Purchase by mailing the completed Warranty Card to: Mercantile Office Systems, #1429, Durbar Marg, P.O. Box No. 876, Kathmandu and It's Dealer outlet all over Nepal. Offer ends on 31st January, 2013. Please retain the invoice to claim the prize.

1 LUCKY WINNER

*Conditions apply.

MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.
Hini Pokhari, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4445920/4446773
Fax: 977-1-4437088, E-mail: market@mos.com.np

Win exclusive Man Utd merchandise like caps, T-shirts & key chains!

Kathmandu Dealers : Star Office Automation, Putalisadak : 4266820, Max International, Putalisadak : 4415786, Interactive Computer System, New Road : 4227854, The Waves Group, Lazimpat : 4410423, Click Solution center, Lalitpur : 5536649, Flash International, New Road : 4222384
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, 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, Dhangadhi : 091-523601, Dinesh Computer, Dhangadhi : 091-521392, Ugratara Technical Goods, Mahendra Nagar : 099-523872, Lahan Office Automation, Lahan : 033-561205, Rapti Computer Suppliers, Dang, Tulsiapur : 082-562375, R. S. Enterprises, Janakpur : 041-525565

nepalitimes.com

Get on with it, #593
Last chance on FATF, #605

Investing in the future

Nepal needs a definitive economic agenda in the new year, and urgent action not to be an international pariah



ECONOMY STUPID
Puja Tandon

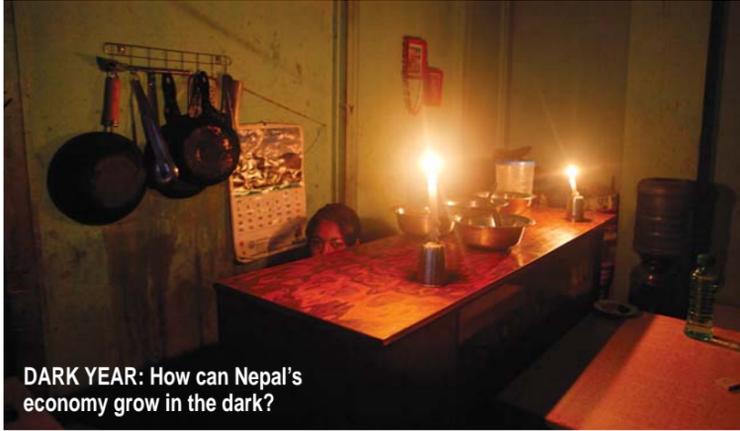
Politics cost the economy dearly in 2012, and 2013 looks like it will be no better unless we put our house in order.

Although some important policy changes were made in 2012 to promote investment, we will not see results unless the overall political climate improves. Bilateral investment promotion agreements were sealed, significant government institutions like the Board of Investment were established, government institutions were streamlined and revamped, and administrative capacity of the government departments improved in 2012.

But in 2013, Nepal plunges headlong into another crisis that threatens to turn us into an international financial pariah. We narrowly escaped being blacklisted by the FAFT (Financial Action Task Force, a global anti-money laundering body) by endorsing two bills on Anti-Money Laundering (Mutual Legal Assistance and Extradition Treaty) through ordinances in June. The third bill on Anti-Organised Crime Act was not passed because of political pressure. This landed us on FAFT's 'grey list', and it will all come to another review in January.

The endorsement of bills on anti-terrorism and organised crime, amendments to the act on anti-money laundering and automation of the Financial Information Unit (FIU) at the Nepal Rastra Bank to ensure transparency and exchange of information will pose the biggest challenge in 2013. Failure to pass these bills will put our international trade and reputation at risk and Nepalis living abroad will be under stricter surveillance and scrutiny.

Investments are going to be critical



DARK YEAR: How can Nepal's economy grow in the dark?

disposable income on consumer goods, luxury goods, bikes, vehicles, travel, and entertainment is rising. Young Nepalis who are well-travelled have rapidly changing consumption habits. This pent up consumer demand presents tremendous opportunities in the new year and the growing domestic market has attracted investors.

Bilateral companies are working at promoting cross border investments and 2013 will see a lot of indigenous SMEs (small and medium enterprises) redefining the classification and characterisation of the private sector. Venture funds are making forays into the market and these funds will provide productive finances and credit to the economy for business development and promotion. This will stimulate the private sector to lead business development, which will in turn lead to a stronger and more competitive economy.

However, the ongoing political deadlock has led to sluggish progress. Due to the musical chair of politics and differences among parties, the country has not been able to stick to a pre-determined economic agenda. And since no dramatic breakthroughs are expected to happen any time soon, the state of our economy might become more volatile in 2013 making the continuity of the past policies in the absence of wider political consensus highly questionable.

We need a definitive economic agenda in the new year and cannot afford to let politics overrule the economy. However, with elections announced for in April, it is likely that the parties will waste the first quarter of 2013 trying to build consensus and the economy will be forced to take a back seat once again.

in 2013, and Nepal should continue its reform agenda in order to maintain its current levels of FDI and also to better position itself for the future. To sustain reforms, managerial level skills and experience and the administrative capacity of the government needs to be continuously built upon and improved.

Middle-class families are on the rise and are increasingly spending their

BIZ BRIEFS

Safety first

Norton by Symantec the global leader in security software, has announced the appointment of Neoteric Nepal as the distributor for all Norton products in Nepal. By leveraging its extensive and well-established nationwide distribution network, Neoteric Nepal will help ensure wider availability of Norton products across the country and also raise awareness of cybercrime in Nepal. As part of this agreement, Neoteric Nepal will distribute Norton's entire suite of award-winning core security products such as Norton 360 and Norton Internet Security and Norton AntiVirus



New ties

Lava International has announced the launch of its wide range of mobile phones including Android powered smartphones in Nepal in collaboration with Chaudhary Group. Launched in 2009, Lava has a strong presence in India, Africa and Dubai and has strong focus on software front.



Speedy service

Sipradi Trading, the authorised distributor of Tata Motors in Nepal inaugurated Sipradi Training Center at the company's head office in Naikap. The centre will provide training to mechanics, drivers and fleet owners as well as institutional and individual customers on vehicle parts and will teach them about safe and responsible driving. It has also started Sipradi Express Sewa, which is aimed at offering fast, efficient and hassle-free services to its customers.



The Chimney
Fine dining and more

Mesmerize

Celebrate this New Year's eve with your closest ones at the most exclusive venue in town. An exquisite 5 course candle lit dinner and an enchanting evening awaits you at the Yak & Yeti.

WIN ROUND TRIP AIR TICKETS TO HONG KONG, THAILAND & MORE...

DEC 31, 2012 | 6:30 PM ONWARDS | THE CHIMNEY RESTAURANT
RS. 4,000 NETT PER PERSON | RS. 7,000 NETT PER COUPLE
INCLUSIVE OF 5-COURSE CANDLE-LIT DINNER WITH 2 GLASSES OF SPARKLING WINE EACH
FOR RESERVATIONS CONTACT 4248999

CELEBRATE THIS NEW YEAR WITH

JOHNNIE WALKER

Right climate to trade carbon

Bank becomes first Nepali company to go green by buying carbon credits



WINROCK INTERNATIONAL

BHRIKUTI RAI

While people in Kathmandu and other urban areas continue increasing their carbon footprint by using diesel generators, driving gas-guzzling SUVs, or relying on bricks baked by firing coal, some Nepali companies are switching to renewables like solar or biogas energy wherever they can.

But, one bank has offset its carbon use by investing in improved stoves. When the proprietors of Ace Development Bank in Kathmandu found out through a carbon audit that their company emitted 250 tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and they decided to do something about it.

The bank purchased emission reductions of 2,800 tons from the Dhading-based community organisation, Rural Mutual Development (RMD) for Rs 360,000. The Emission Reduction Purchase Agreement, between Ace as buyer and RMD

as coordinating and managing entity, for nearly 2,000 fuel-efficient stoves has set a milestone for voluntary purchase of carbon credit to promote renewable energy in the country. The revenue generated from this carbon offset initiative will be utilised for further promotion of improved cooking stoves in Dhading.

"We have established this benchmark as a responsible financial institution contributing to climate change mitigation," explains Ace's CEO Siddhant Raj Pandey. "We hope this first step will catalyse the creation of a national voluntary carbon purchase market."

By burning firewood more efficiently, each improved cooking stove reduces on average 1.5 tons of carbon from being emitted annually. And because the stoves are smokeless, they also reduce the incidence of lung infections, especially among children. In Dhading alone, the 1,935 improved stoves that Ace has financed saves about 2,800 tons of carbon dioxide



from being emitted into the atmosphere every year. The environmental group Winrock International is working with the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPCC) to promote improved cooking stoves in Nepal, and hopes to install over 5,000 such fuel-efficient stoves in Dhading, Sindhupalchok and Dailekh districts.

"We hope to finalise more carbon trading projects with banks in a few months," says Binod Prasad Shrestha of Winrock International. For banks like Ace, verified emission reductions offer a way

to offset unavoidable carbon emissions and thus contribute to the protection of the environment.

Besides trading in carbon, Ace harvests rain water at its new head office in Naxal, and is fully lit by energy-efficient LED lights, which are solar powered. Ace

has also contributed to rhino conservation and helped upgrade the rhino enclosure at the Central Zoo in Jawalakhel.

"We are yet to make the switch to total renewable energy," says Pandey. "So for the time being, we are doing our bit by buying carbon offsets locally from a certified project," Pandey said.

The Kyoto Protocol helped set up the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) to allow developed countries flexibility in meeting their emission obligations by offsetting their emissions and purchasing carbon credits from countries like Nepal

through forestry or renewable energy projects that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Certified Emission Reduction (CERs) can then be further traded in the international carbon market.

By 2009 Nepal had earned \$2.1 million through carbon trading from its globally-acclaimed biogas program. The AEPCC has been involved in developing CDM projects that replace firewood and fossil fuels with clean energy through forestry, microhydel, solar and improved water mill projects.

One biogas plant helps stop 60,000 tons of carbon from being spewed out into the atmosphere when the methane generated by fermented cowdung replaces firewood as fuel. However, Nepal is still way behind India and China in cashing in on the Clean Development Mechanism.

Says Raju Laudari of AEPCC: "We lack research based baseline data. For instance, we don't even have the data to quantify the immense potential of our hydropower and how much



Himalaya
HOTEL

New Years Eve

with Live Band

CINEY GURUNG & TATWA

DJ UMESH

31st December 2012
7 pm onwards
Rs 4999 nett per person
Rs 7999 nett per couple
Rs 2999 nett per child (Below 12 years)

Lavish International Buffet
Free flow of Drinks
Door Prize Galore

For Reservations call : 5523900





CLEAN SWITCH: Many households in Dhading have replaced traditional stoves with Improved Cooking Stoves (top) helping cut carbon emission. Ace Development Bank (below) uses electric cars to reduce its carbon footprint and also harvests rain water.

carbon it will replace." And although the government wants to encourage the private sector in carbon trading, it lacks clear guidelines and expertise. The climate for carbon trading is not conducive because of its plummeting price in the international market. Carbon was trading at up to 30 Euros per ton in 2008, while the current price hovers around 1 Euro, making carbon trading much less feasible than before. In addition, the entire CDM

process has come under fire in Europe because of fraud, and criticism from environmentalists that it doesn't really reduce total greenhouse gas emissions. But at least in Nepal, Ace has shown the way to companies aspiring to be green by pioneering carbon trading. 🇳🇵

nepalitimes.com
 Gobar, #364
 Mean Green #591
 Why Nepal needs Kyoto, #224



OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST

SULUX CENTRE
 Woodland Hotel Complex, Durbar Marg
 Kathmandu, Nepal





Rato Bangala School
 Excellence in Learning

Admissions Open

Application forms for Grade I can be collected from the school between 10:00 am -12:00 noon in the month of January 2013 except for Saturdays and public holidays. It can also be downloaded from the School Website: www.ratobangala.edu.np. Parents are requested to make an appointment for a **School Visit**.

Other important dates:

- Completed forms must be submitted to the School Office during the School Visit, 25 February to 1 March 2013.
- Entrance Evaluation will be held in March 2013.
- Registration for Admission: 28 and 29 March 2013 (15 and 16 Chait 2069)

Rato Bangala School
 Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur
 Phone: 5522614/5534318/5542045



Hi Honey

Let's stay young



Fit



Active



Glowing

Yes, it's true! Dabur Honey makes you stay **young!** Not only does it keep you in shape and give you energy, but the antioxidant in it gives you a glow too. Make Dabur Honey a part of your diet. Just replace sugar with yummy Dabur Honey in your fresh lime water, milkshakes, toasts, cornflakes etc.

Switch over, **say Hi to Dabur Honey**, and say goodbye to lethargy, calories and tasteless food.

Aafno Youth Ko Umer Badhau.



FREE 40g Dabur RED PASTE with 500g Dabur Honey.

FREE Attractive Stainless steel Spoon with 1Kg Dabur Honey.

To know more about Dabur Honey, e-mail us at healthnhoney@dabur.com, log on to www.daburhoneyforever.com | You can also follow us at www.facebook.com/daburhoneyforever



EVENTS

POKHARA STREET FESTIVAL, join the party as the lake city celebrates the Gregorian and Gurung new years. 28 to 1 January, Pokhara

B-boying competition, shake and bake, and do whatever it takes to win a cash prize of up to Rs 50,000. 26 January, 10.45am, Dasrath Stadium, 984925612/9849685110/9841721736



PEDAL FOR A CAUSE, the cycle rally aims to collect funds for the treatment of 2-year-old Pratik Bhandari of Godawari who has leukemia. 29 December, 7am, Basantapur, 9808856112, 9818272056/9851102042/9803276895

Ultimate photography workshop, learn the tricks of the trade from professional photographers Shahnawaz Mohammad and Rajeeb Maharjan. Rs 2,999, 3 to 5 January, 7 to 9.30am, The Image Park, New Road, 9841240341/9841497639/(01)4244348, theimagepark@gmail.com

Stop motion animation workshop, learn how to make your own animated films by designing and creating characters and backgrounds, storyboarding, capturing images using cameras and latest computer software, and compiling and editing them. 5, 6, 12 and 13 January, 11am to 4pm, shreyans@sattya.org

KJC winter camp for kids, music, movies, drama, arts, and a range of outdoor activities to keep your children excited this winter. 30 December to 11 January, for children aged 6 to 14, (01)5013554, info@katjazz.com.np

Sinners in heaven inferno, celebrate the the new year at the mother of all parties, and you could even win a round trip to Hong Kong. Rs 31 December, 8pm, Hotel Yak & Yeti, (01)4248999

MUSIC



KUSOMANIA, go see the biggest rockers in town at this live musical extravaganza as a part of Kathmandu University School of Management's annual festival. Rs 150/500/1000, 29 December, Army Officers' Club, 9841534693, 9841500191

Live at Café 32, live music and delicious food every Friday. 6pm onwards, Café 32, Battispurahi, (01)4244231

DINING



YOMARI FESTIVAL, savour the delights of authentic Newari food at this rooftop restaurant. 4pm onwards, 28 December, Kasi Restaurant, Darbar Marg

Salt & Pepper Restro Lounge, espresso, mocha, latte, frappuccino, cocktails, liquor, beers and flavoured shishas, with an outdoor lake-view terrace. Lakeside, Pokhara, (061)463484, 9846210568, www.saltandpeppernepal.com



DRAGON CHINESE RESTAURANT, try the Kung Pao Pork if alone and the Mai Cao if with company. Lakeside, Pokhara

Falcha, give yourself away to the twin pleasures of lemon jeera chicken and mutton handi kabab. Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur



NEW TUSHITA RESTAURANT, relaxing ambience and good food. Don't miss out on its penne with creamy bacon and mushroom sauce. Lazimpat, (01)44432957



EVEREST STEAK HOUSE, an old-school joint for everything steak, indeed a sanctuary for meat lovers. Thamel, Chhetrapati Chok, (01)4260471

New Dish, grab filling meals like pork momos, spring rolls, and chop suey and enjoy excellent value for your money. Khicchapokhari

Little Italy, go vegetarian at this new Italian food chain and don't forget to end your meal with the chef's special, chocolate bomb. Darbar Marg



THE HERITAGE, escape the hodgepodge of the tourist hub as you relish delights like paella and panna cotta. Thamel

Magic Beans, coffee, cakes and sandwiches with a magical touch and taste. Sherpa Mall, Durbar Marg, (01)4230914

Sarangkot Fordays Restaurant, have a Sarangkot special breakfast while enjoying spectacular views of the mountain ranges. Sarangkot, Pokhara, (061)696920, 9817136896



ALICE MEDICAL CENTRE
Subarna Shamsheer Marg, Gairidhara, Kathmandu
Tel: 01-4429207
alicegairidhara@gmail.com

FREE WI-FI ZONE
Visa & Master card accepted

Map showing location: Bhanubhawan Supermarket, Gairidhara Chowk, Way to Subcenter, Sanyal International College, Subarna Bank, Police Head Quarter, Lalitpur.

The Fastest just got Flexible

Enjoy mobile internet packs at less than half the price

For more information dial for free:



or visit our website.

Ncell, Here for Nepal

www.ncell.com.np

Reduced Mobile Internet rates

The rates have now been reduced to even less than half the price.

Data Package	Price (Rs)	To subscribe, dial
100MB	199	*99094#
300MB	299	*99095#
500MB	399	*99096#
1GB	699	*99097#

To subscribe the pack of your choice, dial the subscription code. For example, to subscribe 100MB, dial *99094#. All packs are valid for 30 days from the date of activation.

Who can subscribe?

The above packs are available for Prepaid and Pro tariff except Ncell Connect.

What happens if I buy more than one pack?

The data will be accumulated and the validity is taken from the last pack subscribed.



GETAWAYS

Winter camp at Borderlands, send your kids packing into the jungle where they get to develop their leadership, communication, and basic life skills while taking part in outdoor and extracurricular activities such as tent crafting, rock climbing, canyoning, abseiling, cooking and art, music, and dance lessons. 5 to 12 January, Borderlands Resort, Bhotekoshi, (01)4381214, 9802025666, www.borderlandsresorts.com



DWARIKA'S HIMALAYAN SHANGRI-LA VILLAGE RESORT, overnight package with accommodation, dinner, and breakfast. Dhulikhel, (01)4479488

Temple Tree Resort and Spa, a peaceful place to unwind, complete with a swimming pool, massage parlour and sauna, it'll be hard to leave the premises once you enter. Gaurighat, Lakeside, Pokhara (61)465819



ROCK REUNION

Lovers of music rejoice, the old horses of Nepali rock 1974AD are back again. Having made history by attracting 50,000 fans to their 2002 Rock Yatra concert, 1974AD expect to do it all over again. This time the concert will be a tour de force of sound and visuals, rock guitar going hand in hand with light projections as never seen before. So be there or miss the crowning moment of the legendary band's musical journey.

Part of the funds collected will go towards creating a scholarship at St. Xavier's School. 29 December, gates open at 2pm St Xavier's School, Jawalakhel Rs 300/500/1000 (get partial refunds on tickets at a partner bank)

बराह ज्वेलरी इण्डस्ट्रिज प्रा. लि.
BARAHA JEWELLERY INDUSTRIES PVT. LTD.

New Road Gate, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-2296915, 4232965, Fax: 01-4233511, Email: info@barahajewellery.com
 Contact Offices:
 Pipal Bot: New Road, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-2190004, 4266799 Dharan: Bhanuchowk, Mahendrapath, Tel: 025-526777, 520056, Fax: 025-522412
 Pokhara: Sabha Griha Chowk, Pokhara, Tel: 061-206570 U.K.: Aldershot, London, Tel: 0044-7824332127, 1252408272 Hong Kong: 12/F Gofuku Tower 62-64, Woosung Street, Jordan KLN, HONG KONG, Tel: 00852-27838955, Fax: 00852-25538966

ASTREK CLIMBING WALL

"TALLEST CLIMBING WALL IN KATHMANDU AT 50 FEET"

FACILITIES
 Wallclimbing
 Bouldering
 Training
 Food & Drinks

www.facebook.com/astrek.climbing

Astrek Climbing Wall, Club House, P.O. BOX: 3022 Bhagawan Bahal, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal
 Tel: +977 - 1- 4419265
 Email: info@astrekclimbingwall.com
 Web: www.astrekclimbingwall.com



SOMEPLACE ELSE

Within one year, Bagaicha (which means garden in Nepali) has already built a strong reputation for itself, largely for its spaciousness. In a place like Kathmandu where open spaces are virtually nonexistent, a parking capacity for 60 cars and over 200 bikes is quite impressive. On a normal day Bagaicha can host around 200 guests, but it has also catered to groups over 500. The menu is extensive offering a little bit of everything- Indian, Chinese, Continental, Thai, and Nepali. So I did what I have learnt is the wisest thing to do when faced with so many choices: ask the server for recommendations. And the recommendations were as eclectic as the menu, ranging from tom yam kai to pasta with



BAGAICHA

chili flakes to chicken mughlai. Bagaicha's chef Rek Bahadur Raut has worked in Kolkata, Ladhakh, Amritsar and Dubai and this probably explains the diversity of the dishes plated up. We decided to start with the nam tok kai, the restaurant's most popular dish. Marinated, julienned, and crisply fried chicken strips with parsley and onions all tossed together in



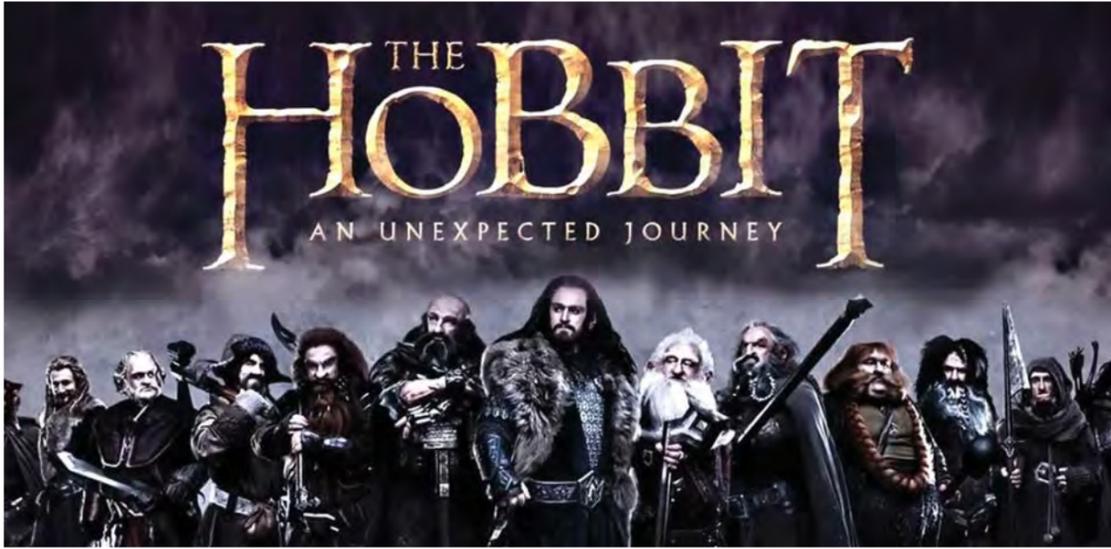
Thai hot sauce with a little bit of tart and a little bit of sweet is an excellent companion to the drink of your choice. The vegetable skewers were next and the usual culprits; onions, capsicum, tomatoes, mushrooms and paneer, were lined up and impaled together in an Italian sauce marinade for our dining pleasure. The tom yam koong, Thai shrimp soup with button mushrooms and galangal and lemon grass was hot, tangy and warming - the perfect dish for chilly winter evenings. The chicken biryani came piping hot in a copper dish, garnished with boiled eggs and cashew nuts and maraschino cherries. Many restaurants get this dish so wrong because they season it too liberally and make it so rich with extra helpings of ghee that you are already overwhelmed by the time you make it to your third spoon. At Bagaicha, chef Raut cooks heavy food with a light hand which makes the



dishes wholesome and filling yet delicate in their flavours. The restaurant is divided into different areas with a large hall and outdoor seating and also private rooms for bigger groups. On Friday nights Bagaicha dishes up live music and dancing with 'live' barbeque stations. However, it does not fit under any label. What makes Bagaicha endearing is that you can decide what kind of place you want it to be: a reasonable place for a work day lunch, a place to hang out with friends and get drinks at the end of a long tiring day, or for a romantic rendezvous or a big boisterous meal with the entire family. Do give it a visit and discover your own Bagaicha. Ruby Tuesday
 How to get there: At the Jawalakhel roundabout, turn left and head towards the Adidas showroom. There is a little lane right next to it, about 150 metres in, look to the left and you will see the signboard for Bagaicha.

Join The V Generation

RUSLAN VODKA
 100% Pure Vodka
 Drink responsibly



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

Walking into the theatre to watch "The Hobbit" had caused me some anxiety, I will admit. It is with some trepidation and real concern that I decided to see the film, the first of three, adapted from the novel by JRR Tolkien of the same name.

The anxiety I felt also had, in part, to do with the fact that I have loved the former "Lord of the Rings" trilogy, also directed by the very same Peter Jackson. However, while the "Lord of the Rings" films were based on an actual trilogy, my memories of reading "The Hobbit" reminded me clearly that this story, a prequel to the "Rings" books, was a much shorter, though thoroughly fantastic read all the same.

Hollywood has stepped in and expanded this brief but lovely tale of adventure into one of its behemoth multi-sequel moneymakers. And yet, this first film is more than good. Every element that Jackson had used in making the first three "Rings" films exceptionally good are also present here: the intimate knowledge of the characters and their past histories, the little details that readers love and treasure, the endearing comic, folktale-like aspects, the love of nature, the sophisticated and troubling depiction of evil, the camaraderie, the magic, and above all, the adventure that lies at the heart of all of Tolkien's beloved and long read and re-read tales.

For those who only dimly remember reading "The Hobbit", this film will delight you by reminding you of all you have forgotten. For those who haven't read it, maybe now,

you will? As for those who read it once a year, every year, well, perhaps you'll miss some of the things you treasured, but I think you will also find a number of other things that only an extremely well-rendered film can do, that is, to imprint onto your mind visual images that will enhance and perhaps even surpass that which your imagination had previously created in your head.

As ever with Peter Jackson, the computer imagery and the action are breathtaking. The cast welcomes back veterans such as Ian McKellen as Gandalf, Cate Blanchett as Galadriel, Hugo Weaving as Elrond, and briefly, Elijah Wood as Frodo and Ian Holm as the older Bilbo.

The company of dwarves who set out to re-claim their lost dwarfdom of Erebor (which is now the domain of the dragon Smaug) are too many to name here, and there are 13 in total, but they are wonderful, each with a distinct personality. Among them is Thorin, played to austere and grand effect by the undervalued Richard Armitage, and of course, there is the young Bilbo Baggins, played by the marvelous, immediately endearing Martin Freeman.

As I watched the film with increasing hope and delight, I could only think, "But, there are two more to go, what if they ruin the other two?"

Well, they might, one never knows, but this one passes the test. I am planning to see it again soon in the theatre, to delight in the things I missed this first, anxious time, and to revisit dear Middle-earth for another few hours where for a few precious moments I can keep company with Gandalf, Bilbo, and oft forgotten characters like the animal loving, madcap, but utterly entrancing wizard - Radagast the Brown.

nepalitimes.com
Watch trailer

Human versus machine



DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

When Dr Gurpreet Dhaliwal, an associate professor at the University of California in San Francisco, comes on stage to make a diagnosis, the audience looks on as if the doctor is performing magic. Considered to be one of the most astute diagnosticians, he 'thinks out loud' as a patient's case history, physical findings, and laboratory tests are presented to him.

The cases presented are usually difficult and most of the time the audience is packed with knowledgeable medical professionals. There are even some who will note with glee if he falters and makes a mistake. But more often than not, Dhaliwal gets the diagnosis right and the crowd erupts in applause.

Doctors follow a similar process during checkups as well. When a patient visits

her physician, ideally the doctor should listen carefully without interrupting too often. A physical examination is usually performed and the patient is ordered to undergo tests if necessary. If the doctor can obtain a coherent story, a diagnosis is established.

However, many times there may be a lot of 'noise' (in the history the patient gives, in the physical exam findings,



and in the subsequent test results) that can be misleading. These 'noises' (as opposed to the 'signals') can lead doctors astray from proper diagnosis.

The vital question is, can

a computer outperform doctors like Dhaliwal in the field of accurate medical diagnosis? There is no question that a computer can supplement the thinking of an intelligent clinician. Long after checklists were effectively put in place in training pilots, the medical profession recently caught up and introduced checklists to help with a wide range of activities, from helping make surgery safer to making diagnoses more accurate.

A popular diagnostic checklist program called Isabel is available in the market to ascertain that something has not been overlooked in arriving at a diagnosis. But for routine problems, most doctors will be reluctant to use this program as this will add one more 'thing to do' to their hectic schedule.

So doctors like Dhaliwal will continue to impress us with their knowledge and use it in making accurate diagnosis. But programs

like Isabel are here to stay because even when doctors may dismiss a case as 'routine', Isabel will be there to remind them to take another look at the checklist.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

ON THE ROAD: The RPP (National Democratic Party) chairman Khama Thapa leads a two-week rally demanding a Hindu state. The caravan started in Janakpur and ended in Pashupati on Wednesday evening.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

HARD SKIN: A man bargains the price of a pair of gloves at the Leather Fair at City Hall, on Monday. The fair ends on Monday.



BIKRAM RAI

ON YOUR MARKS: Elephants and mahouts do their best to finish first during the 9th International Elephant Race at Sauraha, Chitwan, on Wednesday.

READERS' PHOTO

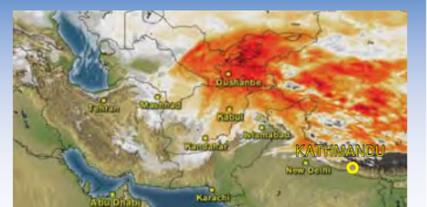


JULIA SQUIRE

RIGHT TO READ: A vegetable vendor leaves his morning duties for a while to read the daily newspaper near Kamal Pokhari.

WEEKEND WEATHER

The first westerly of the season is steaming towards us and is expected to bring more blizzards in northwestern Nepal over the weekend. Friday will be partly cloudy with the fast-moving front moving across central Nepal. Precipitation will be scanty and may not percolate down to the mid-hills. The Tarai will continue to be fog-bound with maximum temperature in the single digits in some places. This is not yet the winter rains that we are all expecting, but a rehearsal. Let's just hope for the sake of our hydropower generation and winter agriculture the real thing arrives soon.



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
19°-4°	21°-3°	22°-2°

Predator state

A young Nepali woman returning from Saudi Arabia is robbed by immigration officials and raped by a policeman

BHRIKUTI RAI

Sita went to Saudi Arabia to work as a domestic three years ago. An agent in Pokhara found her a job, got her tickets via Delhi, and organised a passport in someone else's name.

When she returned to Kathmandu in November, the 20-year-old from Bhojpur was arrested for possessing a fake passport at immigration. Then her ordeal began: not from abusive employers in the Gulf but from Nepali immigration and police.

After being threatened with detention by immigration officials at Kathmandu airport, and scared of being jailed and bringing dishonour to her family, Sita admitted her true identity. During the interrogation at the immigration office in Kalikasthan police constable Parsuram Basnet agreed to help her out only if she gave him a part of the 9,500 Riyal (Rs 222,624) she had saved while working abroad. When she refused, the officials snatched her bag and took her money, saying it was for "high-ranking officials". Then she was asked to sign a blank piece of paper by immigration official, Somnath Khanal, who said if she told anyone what had happened he would throw her in jail.

Meanwhile, Basnet was busy playing good cop and offered to get her a ticket to Bhojpur. He took her to Basnet Lodge at



BHRIKUTI RAI

Old Bus Park and raped her repeatedly through the night. "He almost strangled me to death when I screamed for help," says Sita, who only remembers being smothered with a pillow and passing out. In the morning, her purse was open, with her remaining money also gone. Basnet then put her on a bus to Bhojpur and gave her his contact number. He kept calling her over the next month, pressuring her to marry him.

Ashamed, Sita didn't speak about her ordeal until she broke down one day and told her sister everything. Her family was outraged and filed a complaint against Basnet and Khanal on 16 December. Says Sita's father: "We don't care about getting the money back, all we want is justice for my daughter."

A report submitted by a probe panel formed under the Ministry of Home Affairs on Sunday accuses immigration officials Ram Prasad Koirala, Tika Pokhrel, Somnath Khanal and Parsuram Basnet for the robbery. The senior immigration officials have been suspended for two months, while Basnet is in jail. The Home Secretary said this week all the accused would be punished under the Civil Servant Act 1993, but Sita's family wants Basnet to be charged for a criminal offence.

Sita has just found out she is pregnant, and doesn't want to keep her child. Sita wears a blue embroidered scarf and peers

out of a small window in her rented room in Balaju, and gives her young nephew a dazzling, dimpled smile. She sees us to the door, and says: "Now, I just wish they get punished for what they did to me."

Sita left her home in Bhojpur five years ago, worked at a restaurant in Pokhara before she left for Saudi Arabia after an agent gave her a passport belonging to Bimala KC and sent her to Delhi. In Saudi Arabia, she was abused by her employers.

"They treated me like an animal," recalls Sita, "not just the house owners but even their children used to beat me mercilessly." When her employer tried to rape her, she escaped and got another job in a household where the employers were kinder. She saved enough to send presents home, and at the end of three years decided to come back to Nepal with her savings.

Sita's case would probably have been forgotten if her cousin hadn't caught Basnet and taken him to the police station at Hanuman Dhoka. "Had Sita told us what had happened earlier, maybe the guilty would have been punished by now," says the cousin, who runs a tea shop near Balaju.

Basnet reportedly tried to stop Sita from filing a case, and even offered to return the money. Sita is now searching for counselling and assistance, in the fight for justice and hopes to get back on her feet.

Sita's name has been changed.

nepalitimes.com

Rape for ransom, #635
"I wanted to murder whoever did this to my daughter," #563

The privilege of grief

In hierarchical societies people empathise with the suffering of those who share their circumstance



LOOK OUT
Ajaz Ashraf

Among the most frightening aspects of power is the ability of its wielder to create a hierarchy of sorrow, influencing people to feel outraged at a tragedy befalling some and blithely ignoring its visitations on others.

Considering Delhi is dubbed the 'rape capital' of India, with 572 cases reported in 2011, it is simultaneously inspiring and bewildering to find thousands of people, particularly the young, take to the streets in protest against the brutal gang-rape of a 23-year-old physiotherapy student and the merciless beating of her male friend, a software engineer.

Perhaps Delhi was goaded into action because the tragic, gut-wrenching incident underlined to its denizens their own vulnerability. The couple had seen an evening movie in a spiffy multiplex and taken an auto-rickshaw to the point from where they could take a bus home. On the bus they encountered a nightmare from which Delhi and India have not stopped getting the shivers.

Had Delhi been a city with a conscience, the protests would not have demanded scrutiny and comprehension. As the 23-year-old woman continues to battle for her life, it may seem callous to assert that Delhi's outrage at her plight emanated from the hierarchy of sorrow. In the physiotherapy student and her friend, the young see themselves: they too go on dates, see movies in plush multiplexes, and take buses.

We didn't see ourselves in Thangjam Manorama, a 32-year-old Manipuri woman, into whose house personnel

of 17 Assam Rifles broke on 11 July 2004 and dragged her away. Her body was subsequently found, scantily clad, bearing nail marks and bullet wounds. Her family alleged she had been raped and killed. The spokesman of Assam Rifles said she was a member of the Peoples Liberation Army, and was shot dead as she tried to flee while taking the soldiers to the militant outfit's hideout.

Yet we should have seen ourselves in the hundreds of Manipuri women who stormed the Assam Rifles Headquarters in Imphal, scores of them stark naked and holding placards which read: 'Indian Army takes our flesh'. How many of our mothers or sisters or daughters would walk naked to protest against rape if the allegation had been doubtful?

On 30 May 2009, Nelofar and her sister-in-law Asiya were found drowned in Kashmir. The locals accused the

security forces of raping the women and then drowning them. A 1994 United Nations human rights report implicated Indian soldiers in 882 rape cases between 1990 and 1992.

In 2011, the state of Haryana which borders Delhi registered 733 rape cases. Many of the victims were Dalit women, and there were no street protests. Nor are we unduly perturbed at reports of sexual violence indigenous women are subjected to in the districts with Maoist violence.

It is inevitable in a hierarchical society to privilege the grief of some over others. It is also natural for people to empathise with the suffering of those who share our circumstances. Such is the manipulative skill of the powerful that it persuades us into believing that some are deserving of the tragedy we otherwise find despicable.

As for our bustling metros, we do not become furious as long as rape is confined to the slums. This is the reason why the 572 cases of rape last year did not provoke Delhi into besieging the bastions of power. We forget that an increasingly dehumanised society, with its forever widening gulf between rich and poor, can only produce criminals who can't be tamed by laws.

Perhaps there is no reason for us to be perennially pessimistic. It is possible those protesting on the streets of Delhi can understand through their own experience the pain and anger of the marginalised. Hopefully, they'd learn that their redemption lies in smashing the hierarchy of sorrow.

ashrafajaz3@gmail.com

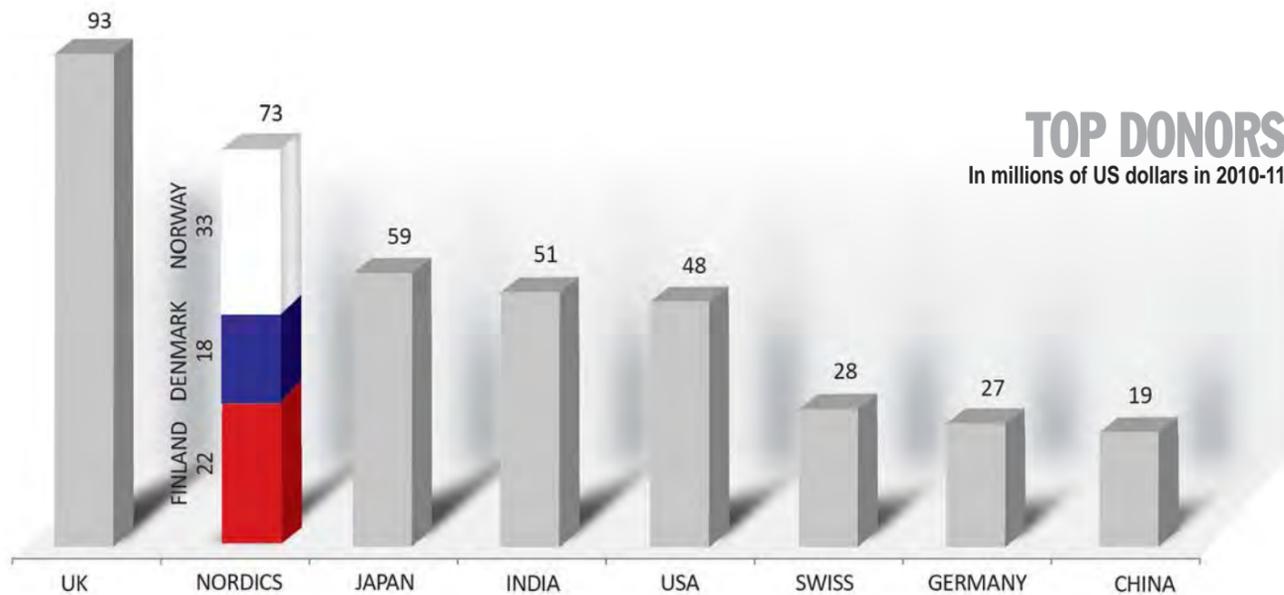


DAWN

“The political will not to

Three Nordic countries which together make up the second-biggest donor grouping say Nepal urgently needs elections and a constitution to move ahead

ANNA-KARIN ERNSTSON LAMPOU



More than a quarter of Nepal's annual budget is bankrolled by bilateral donors, but three Nordic countries that together make up 18 per cent of aid to Nepal seem to have less clout here than more high-profile countries. Norway, Denmark, and Finland, whose total combined population is less than that of Nepal, contributed

more than \$450 million in 2010-11, making them the second-largest bilateral donor grouping after Britain. However, because Nordic aid is confined to 'soft' sectors such as human rights, gender, and social justice the three countries are often in the background compared to geopolitically important players such as the United States, India

and China. In pre-holiday interviews, the three Nordic ambassadors in Kathmandu showed impatience with the lack of progress on issues like transitional justice, impunity, constitution and government formation. (See box)

"Nepal is right between two of the fastest-growing economies in the world, and it should be able to do much better than it is doing now. So why doesn't it happen?" Danish ambassador to Nepal, Jesper Mortensen, asks rhetorically.

To be sure, despite a decade-long conflict, Nepal has seen remarkable progress in poverty reduction, and is close to achieving its Millennium Development Goal targets by 2015, especially in health and education. Much of this was possible because of sustained behind-the-scenes support from Nordic donors.

However, the emphasis of European and other donors to reach the disenfranchised and marginalised, and their advocacy in favour of federalism has provoked

a backlash in Kathmandu with the government putting unprecedented pressure on them to channel aid to approved sectors.

The Foreign Ministry and the National Planning Commission are more assertive and want roles in vetting projects. Foreign

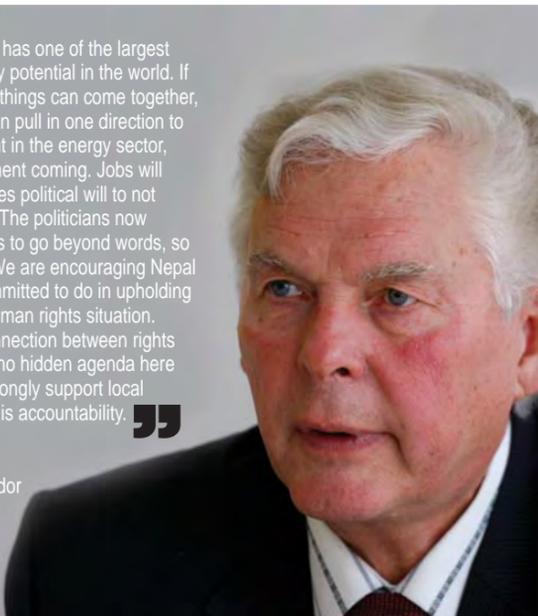
Minister Naryan Kaji Shrestha has told donor representatives that they should concentrate on infrastructure, agriculture and energy. A landmark report on exclusion supported by the World Bank and DFID has not been released because of government pressure, and a five-year UN Development Assistance Framework report was finally approved after references to discrimination and citizenship were excised.

Norway, Finland and Denmark have surprisingly put special emphasis on the structural roots of poverty and discrimination by supporting projects on inclusion, constitution, human rights and the rule of law. And despite the government's new emphasis, they say they are going to stay on track.

Nordic representatives say they will continue to work with the government on structural areas that have a bearing on poverty and inequality. However, there will be a transition from social sectors to infrastructure in the coming years with Finland dropping human rights as a

“Nepal has one of the largest energy potential in the world. If these things can come together, and the politicians can pull in one direction to facilitate development in the energy sector, you will have investment coming. Jobs will be created. But it takes political will to not politicise everything. The politicians now understand that it has to go beyond words, so I'm fairly optimistic. We are encouraging Nepal to do what it has committed to do in upholding and improving the human rights situation. There is a strong connection between rights and peace. There is no hidden agenda here from our side. We strongly support local governance so there is accountability.”

Alf Arne Ramslien, Norwegian ambassador



“We are quite heavily involved in human rights, supporting the National Human Rights Commission and also the Nepal Peace Trust Fund. But unfortunately, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Bill, in the form it is now, is not according to international standards, and that is probably why the President has not passed it. I don't see much interest from Finland to invest here.”

Asko Luukkainen, Finnish ambassador

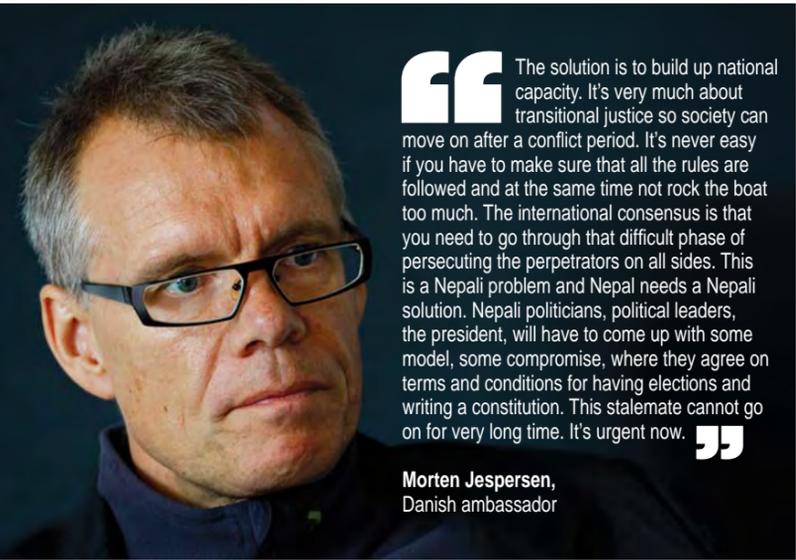


TEMPLE TREE
RESORT AND SPA



Pokhara: Gaurighat, Lakeside 6, Nepal | Tel: +977-61-465 819 Fax: +977-61-465809
Kathmandu: Arcadia Apartments, Thamel, Nepal | Tel/Fax: +977-1-421 5952
info@templetreeneepal.com | www.templetreeneepal.com

politicise everything”



“The solution is to build up national capacity. It’s very much about transitional justice so society can move on after a conflict period. It’s never easy if you have to make sure that all the rules are followed and at the same time not rock the boat too much. The international consensus is that you need to go through that difficult phase of persecuting the perpetrators on all sides. This is a Nepali problem and Nepal needs a Nepali solution. Nepali politicians, political leaders, the president, will have to come up with some model, some compromise, where they agree on terms and conditions for having elections and writing a constitution. This stalemate cannot go on for very long time. It’s urgent now.”

Morten Jespersen, Danish ambassador

PICS: BIKRAM RAI

key area, and Denmark moving from education to growth and employment in 2014.

The Finnish ambassador to Nepal, Asko Luukkainen, believes a well-functioning democracy is essential for the future development of Nepal and efficiency of donor programs. “When we don’t have locally elected bodies in rural areas, we don’t have a counterpart to discuss with. Local elections would be very important,” he told Nepali Times.

Alf Arne Ramslien, Norwegian ambassador to Nepal agrees. “If this political stalemate continues, it will be disastrous for development. In the present situation there is no willingness to invest in this country,” he says. “There is great interest from Norway, but why invest in an unpredictable situation when there are other countries wide open for investment?”

The three ambassadors interviewed for this article agreed that Nepal has great

potential if it can implement elections in 2013 to pave the way for a new constitution. They also feel that sustainable growth, equity and inclusion can only be achieved through true political decentralisation and inclusion which is why Nordic development assistance is also being channeled to these areas.

However, Nepal wants to see more emphasis now on aid and investment on transportation and energy in order to ensure growth and create jobs. Madhu Marasini at the Finance Ministry’s Foreign Aid Division told Nepali Times this week: “The Europeans and the Nordic countries are more concerned about democracy and institution-building, but we wish to broaden the scope of cooperation in hydropower, infrastructure as well as sanitation.” Marasini admits, however, that besides political instability, transparency needs serious attention.

International donors, including the Nordics, have often been criticized for relying too much on government channels for implementation which makes them inefficient and prone

to corruption. Yadab Bastola from National Alliance for Human Rights and Social Justice, a nation-wide network of grassroots rights groups, says donor resources would be best used by channeling it directly to the community level.

“Most international aid has been handled by bureaucrats or NGOs due to the lack of local elected bodies at the community level,” explains Bastola. “Even aid to the districts is divided up by the

all-party mechanism and doesn’t go to communities. It is a huge problem.”

The three Nordic envoys are aware of this, but can barely hide their impatience with the political disarray. They want to balance the social sector with alternative energy, forestry and agriculture. They say Nepal’s problems have to be dealt with in a country-specific fashion, and a timeframe that will work for a post-conflict Nepal.

Where is Sweden?



Norway, Finland, and Denmark together contribute the second largest assistance to Nepal. But conspicuous by its absence is Sweden.

In 2007, the Swedish government decided to focus foreign aid to fewer countries in order to increase the quality and efficiency of aid.

Nepal was not among the countries identified. However, Swedish aid reaches Nepal through multilateral donor projects, such as the UN and the Nordic Development Fund. Sweden was involved in supporting the Melamchi project but pulled out 10 years ago, and the country doesn’t even have an embassy in Kathmandu. However, the Stockholm-based group, International IDEA, is present in Kathmandu.

Explains Norwegian ambassador to Nepal, Alf Arne Ramslien: “There is space for Sweden also, every country has its own focus...you lose some of the effect if you spread your resources too thin.”

Acoustic Vibes

Enjoy a scintillating New Year's Eve with a wide variety of sumptuous delicacies and live musical performances by 'CONNECTION'

DEC 31, 2012 | 6:30 PM ONWARDS | THE SUNRISE CAFE

RS. 3,500 NETT PER PERSON

INCLUSIVE OF GALA DINNER & A WELCOME DRINK

WIN ROUND TRIP AIR TICKETS TO HONG KONG, THAILAND & MORE...



CELEBRATE THIS NEW YEAR WITH JOHNIE WALKER.



DRINK RESPONSIBLY

JOHNNIE WALKER



El Norte

Surendra Poudel in *Nagarik*, 22 December

नागरिक

After a bird flu scare forced him to abandon his poultry farm in Tanahu, and with no other way to take care of his family, Mohan Gurung left Kathmandu six months ago to seek his fortune in America.

He flew through Doha to Brazil and travelled overland from Sao Paulo to Guatemala City via Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Honduras. The 32-year-old Gurung is still in Guatemala, but four other friends from his village in Tanahu have already entered the US.

"We hope to be in America in the New Year," Gurung said in a Skype

conversation from Guatemala City, speaking on condition that his name be altered. "It has been a harrowing journey, but we are now excited because we are so close to reaching our goal."

A network of human traffickers have facilitated Gurung's journey so far, handing their human cargo of migrants from Nepal, India, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka from one country to another across South and Central America.

Gurung's journey began when he found out that a certain Dilip Gurung smuggled people to America, and paid him Rs 500,000 to take him up to Brazil. Gurung and four other friends easily crossed immigration at Kathmandu airport on 27 June even though they didn't have Brazil visas. At Doha airport, they talked their way through check-in by saying they were transiting Brazil to go to Bolivia.

After landing in Sao Paulo, they flew on to Cochabamba in Bolivia

where they got visa on arrival and travelled on to La Paz. After getting a Brazil visa, they flew back to Sao Paulo where Gurung and his friends worked in restaurants earning \$450 a month till September. In Brazil Gurung met many Indians, Bangladeshis, and Nepalis waiting to be taken to the US and joined one group, paying \$900 to be taken up to Bolivia.

An Indian trafficker took them from Bolivia to Peru for \$400 each where they were forced to destroy their passports and all travel documents. From Peru they were taken across the border to Ecuador and then to Colombia where they encountered military checkpoints, but easily passed through by bribing soldiers. They had to cross thick jungles to sneak into Panama, surrendered at an army checkpoint where they were given health checkups and sent on their way. The Indians don't have it so good in Panama, where they are

detained and deported if found to be from India.

Costa Rica was the next stop and it was relatively more difficult because the authorities detain illegal immigrants, and finger-print them if they want to apply for asylum. But Gurung's group were given a 'Salida' exit document that required them to leave Costa Rica within a week.

Passing through Nicaragua, El Salvador and Honduras to Guatemala was smooth and on each step of the way, they were handed over by one set of traffickers to another. Some traffickers take migrants in boats from Colombia, and some have perished at sea. Gurung is now waiting in Guatemala for his family to send him money so he can pay the traffickers who will take him to Mexico and to America.

Since April 2012, there have been 480 Nepalis who have passed through Guatemala of whom 400 have made it across the border to the US, but 180 of them have been caught at the border at US immigration.

Despite the risk and the expense, Gurung thinks the trip is worth it because of the chance of earning money so he can pay debts, and take care of his wife and family back in Tanahu. So far, he has spent Rs 500,000 to pay the agent in Kathmandu, and another \$8,000 to a series of traffickers from Brazil to Guatemala. Now he needs a further \$6,000 to pay the final installment to get into the US. Once he gets the money transferred from Nepal, he is off.

NEPALI TWEETS

कुन रिज्क
पिथिवी मात्र पहेँर हामि अझिका मा पुग्दा र अझिकले हक यता आए भने फेरी केहि बर्ष पछि हामि नेपाल जाने छिमी चिठ्ठा भर्छौं होला [Debut](#)

If the world turned upside down and we Nepalis landed in America while they found themselves here, maybe we'd apply for DV visas to Nepal in a few years.

Amit Agrawal
विदेशी Santa, Santa भन्छन् नेपालीहरू शान्ति शान्ति। आखिर दुवै Myth नै रहेछन्, आउने होइनन् बयार। [\[via Ankur Sharma \]](#)
The foreigners clamour for Santa while we keep chanting for Shanti. Ultimately, both turned out to be myths, and never came around.

Raju Nepal #मन्त्री
उहिले निगलिनगकोटको दाँड जितेर द्रव्य शाह राजा भएका थिए रे यसपालि चे जस्ले घुम्नाई जिउदै समाज्जन सक्छ त्यसलाई प्रधानमन्त्री बनाए कसो होला ?
Long time ago Drabya Shah became the king of Gorkha after winning the Ligligkot race. Maybe this time, whoever manages to catch Dhurbe alive shuold be made prime minister?

Babu Niranjana
जहाँ बुढाखाइहरू देश चलाउछन् र तन्नेरीहरू facebook, twitter चलाउछन्, त्यो देशको विकास कसरी होस् त
How can a country where old men are involved in governance and the youth is involved on Facebook and Twitter ever develop?

Dreesty Thapa
जन्मिएर भोटो अनि मर्दा कात्रो दुवैमा गाँजी हुँदैन तर पनि किन वाचुन्जेल गाँजी भन्न दाँड घुप? अनौठो जीवन
The clothes we wear after birth and after death don't have pockets, so why do we spend our entire lives trying to stuff our pockets with money? Strange life.

Bhattarai's four pillars

Saroj Raj Adhikari in *Kantipur*, 21 December

कान्तिपुर

The opposition has been on a warpath against Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai for eight months now, but he refuses to budge. Now, factions within the ruling coalition itself have added pressure on him to step down. His own party has started looking for alternatives to deputy-chairman Bhattarai. But Bhattarai is adamant about not quitting. "I'm not leaving," he says with finality.

When the CA was dissolved in May, Bhattarai had set elections for 22 November which never happened. One month after his deadline expired, Bhattarai is still unwilling to make way for an all-party agreement that will elect a government to hold elections in April.

But despite a lack of support at HQ, the loss of initial goodwill people showed towards him, PM Bhattarai shows no signs of discomfort and is on a confrontation course with the president, calling his statement unconstitutional. What could be the source of his power?

UML deputy chairman Bamdev Gautam says Bhattarai told him: "I have the goodwill of our southern neighbour, the Madhesi faction supports my stance, the army trusts me, and my party's earlier decisions are in my favour. Why should I quit?"

Everybody knows that India is deeply concerned about Nepali politics. Gautam says the BIPPA treaty, the unchecked flow of Indian agricultural products into Nepal, the handover of Nepal's water resources into Indian hands, and the government's nod to allow an Indian company to run Kathmandu's airport and immigration attest to Bhattarai's attempts to appease the Indian ruling class.

A former home minister says Bhattarai is close to Indian intelligence agency, RAW, and is in intimate terms with its current chief, while he is friends with the next chief Alok Joshi. At home, the same Madhes-based parties who had voted against UCPN(M) chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal's bid to become PM backed Bhattarai later. Madhesi leaders say that the four-point agreement is the basis for their support of Bhattarai. But almost a year and a half after that agreement was made, none of the subjects outlined have been fulfilled. It is because of their large presence in the government, as well as their leadership of important ministries, that the Madhesi

Front is loathe to withdraw support.

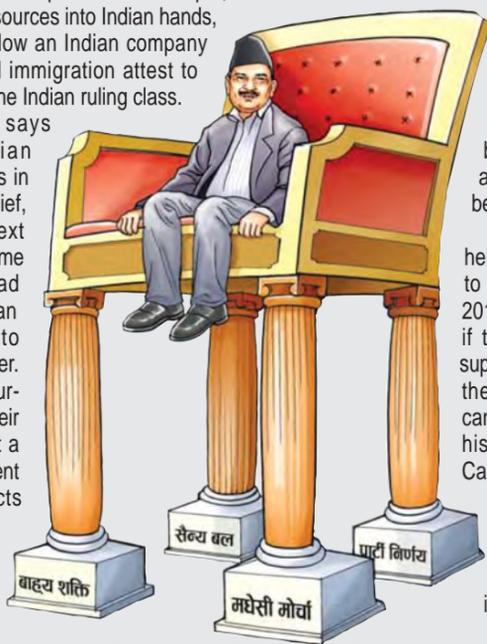
Even though the Front's leader Bijay Kumar Gachhedar publicly declared a week ago that they would seek an alternative to Bhattarai, the Front came out with another statement calling for 'consensus on a package deal' after the PM expressed dissatisfaction with party chairman Dahal wooing NC and UML leaders. NC leader Shankar Koirala says the Madhesi Morcha's support is the main basis for Bhattarai's staying power in government. In any case, a successful coalition with political forces that normally look southwards for blessings is important in Bhattarai's context.

PM Bhattarai also has a good relationship with COAS Gaurav Samsher Rana. They have a similar understanding of India's role in Nepali matters, and the PM even accepted Rana's advice regarding promotions when Chhatraman Singh Gurung was army chief. This is seen in the PM's approval last week of the promotion for Raju Basnet, an officer accused of gross human rights abuse.

When the November deadline for elections seemed unlikely to be met by Bhattarai's government, President Ram Baran Yadav summoned Rana for discussions. Rana is understood to have told President Yadav that the army's control lay with the government. Soon after, Bhattarai expressed his displeasure towards the president through Finance Minister Barsha Man Pun's public declarations. In recent meetings too, Bhattarai has been quoted as saying that the army is on his side.

Political analyst Jhalak Subedi says: "No matter how grave the situation becomes, the president cannot remove Bhattarai. It would be unconstitutional to do so, and Bhattarai is staying on only because of that technical reason."

Ultimately, Bhattarai is also helped by his own party's decision to nominate him prime minister in 2011, but he will have to step down if the party decides to withdraw support. Bhattarai's command within the party is weak, and the party can choose to remove him against his wishes with a majority vote. Calls for his resignation have been growing within the UCPN(M). Should such demands be realised, PM Bhattarai will have to leave the party to stay in power, or leave power to stay in the party.



Anti-INGO

Karobar, 18 December

कारोबार

The Social Welfare Council has said it will come down hard on INGOs which have violated rules that govern what they are supposed to spend their budget on. A 15-member taskforce has been set up by the SWC to investigate, regulate, and punish international non-profits operating in Nepal that it says "show a lack of transparency". The member-secretary of SWC Rabindra Kumar said the taskforce would begin acting immediately, inspecting the activities of INGOs, while inspections of

NGOs would follow later. "There have been problems with NGOs all along," he said, "but now even bilateral and multilateral donors have been found flouting the law. We have been asking these organisations for progress reports but a majority of them have never responded, so we decided to take action." Although 207 INGOs have been registered with the SWC, it claims that a majority of them have not been responsive and have not sent it required regular reports. The Council's director, Madan Prasad Rimal, says there are no records of how much money they brought into the country and what they spent it on. Rimal says the INGOs are flouting rules which require them to spend 80 per cent of their budget on an approved field of work.



Bhattarai: "There's no question of me leaving, the whole country will be destroyed!"
Debris: Development, constitution, elections, peace and security

कान्तिपुर Batsyayan in *Kantipur*, 24 December

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Our president must visit North Korea, Cuba, and other communist nations to figure out how they are standing up to the Americans.”

Narayan Man Bujukchhe, Chairman of Nepal Workers Peasants Party, on *Annapurna Post*, 27 December

SINNERS IN HEAVEN

INFERNO

FEATURING DJ ASHM & MC KABIR FROM NEW DELHI

DEC-31, 2012 MONDAY 8 PM ONWARDS
 THE ATRIUM & REGAL BALLROOM, HOTEL YAK & YETI
 RS. 2,200 NETT PER PERSON
 INCLUDES 4 DRINKS & BUFFET DINNER
 FOR RESERVATIONS CONTACT 4248999

WIN ROUND TRIP AIR TICKETS TO HONG KONG, THAILAND & MORE...

Y&Y
 H.O.T.E.L.
YAK & YETI
 KATHMANDU
 A Yak & Yeti Event
 www.yakandyeti.com



CELEBRATE
 THIS NEW YEAR
 WITH
JOHNNIE WALKER®

DRINK RESPONSIBLY
 www.johnniewalker.com

JOHNNIE WALKER

Naturally Nepal,
holy Charm

asianpaints
ROYALE Luxury Emulsion | Perfectly Natural

asianpaints

No Added Lead, Mercury, Arsenic & Chromium

www.nepalitimes.com

The asstrologer's prognosis for 2013

When politics becomes so unpredictable, the only way to inject some certainty into our lives is by allowing analysts like yours truly to forecast the country's future based on planetary alignments. The Astrologer General has decided that the Federal Kleptocratic Republic of Nepal is in the seventh house and Jupiter is aligned with Mars, so the President will have to keep on issuing new deadlines every week to the political parties to form a consensus government till at least July 2013.

ॐ

Pundit Tantrik Bihangamraj Timilsina is former asstrologer-in-chief of the Nepal Army, and in his illustrious career accurately predicted the downfall of a prominent general, who promptly excommunicated him. The soothsayer has in the past foretold the rise and fall of prominent kangresi politicians, and in an interview with a respected publication this week, he has even provided readers with his mobile number which the Donkey now reveals to loyal readers on condition that you keep it to yourself: 9841314120. Anyway, planetary alignments show that Jhusil Kaka's chances of becoming prime minister are better than all his rivals, since Jupiter is in Capricorn, but he better hurry because after mid-January his chances of making it to Balu Water will

vanish. Similarly, the cosmic location of Lion Brave's planets are so crazy he doesn't stand a chance of becoming prime minister for the fifth time. PKD's heavenly bodies are so misaligned that he may as well just retire from politics, according to astrologers. About Kingji's chances of restoring the monarchy, Pundit Bihangamraj says the moon is in the wrong constellation, but if the political parties continue to mess things up, who knows, the planets may just realign themselves and bring the Bad Shah back.

ॐ

BRB is using every trick in the book to keep on clinging on to Balu Water, and is outfoxing the Old Fox in foxiness. At a meeting this week, BRB caught everyone including PKD, off guard by proposing that he would be agreeable to step down if Awesome replaced him. It was a masterstroke, and came from Ram Babu's understanding that deep down that is exactly what Lotus Flower desperately wants. Then, to defuse pressure from the NC, BRB summons Bhai Gagan to Balu Water, sending the kangresis into a tizzy.

ॐ

It's now really getting difficult to track the factions within factions of the Baddie party. After Baidya Ba parted ways with Uncle Awesome, a serious rift has developed between PKD and BRB. Bhattarai Baje has

been busy wooing more Dahal Baje loyalists to his side ahead of the convention so as to present a serious challenge to PKD's chairmanship. It bears remembering that this party hasn't had a convention for 23 years, and BRB is seriously worried that if PKD stays on there will be a cult of personality problem. So far, PKD knows



that despite losing the backing of the Baidya Comrades he has the numbers and the cash to retain his leadership of the party. But if in January it looks like BRB is getting stronger, don't put it past Herr Fuhrer to put off the convention on some pretext or other. Which begs the question: what is going to happen to all the millions the Maobaddies and the Khaobaddies have extracted from businesses in the past weeks as "donation" for their party's Unconventional Convention.

ॐ

Multinational chains are jinxed in Nepal, it seems, and the latest travails of KFC just proves the point. No wonder McDonalds and Starbucks are so skittish about opening outlets in Kat Town. There is one Japanese international chain store that is not going to come to Nepal anytime soon (see picture) for obvious reasons, although who knows



it may be wildly successful if it does. On a recent flight to Malaysia, Nepali workers suddenly all burst out laughing when the in-flight announcement ended with 'Terima Khasi', which loosely translated means 'your mother is a goat', or words to that effect. There was even louder and naughtier merriment when the meal trays were handed out, and the Nepalis on board were amused at the Malay words on the sugar sachets that read 'GulaPutih'.



Panasonic eco ideas

econ Air-Conditioners

Enjoy cozy winters with Hot & Cold AC that's **3x** more efficient

FASTER HEATING | UNIFORM HEATING | UPTO 50% LESS ENERGY CONSUMPTION

HOT & COLD Air Conditioner

Panasonic Distributor for Nepal:
Triveni Byapar Co. Pvt. Ltd., Triveni Complex, Putalisadak, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-4248732 (ext. 541)
 Alpha Trade Nepal, Tel: 9851025931 • Esquire, New Road, Tel: 01-4242727 • New Superstar, New Road, Tel: 01-4242000 • A-One Electronics, New Baneswore - 01-4786222
 Visit our Showrooms: • Nava Durga Departmental Store (New Baneshwor) • Triveni Complex (Putalisadak)

Toll Free No. 1660012003

CDO Regd No 194/056/57 Lalitpur, Central Region Postal Regd. No 09/069/70