As his party prepares for its first convention in 22 years this weekend, it looks like Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai is here to stay on in Baluwatar. He has systematically removed all obstacles to ensure his longevity in power. He bought time in 2012 by playing off rival NC factions against each other, and confronted President Ram Baran Yadav by manoeuvring the Army chief to oppose any move to replace the caretaker. He then defused possible civil society opposition by floating trial balloons to nominate “independent” non-political candidates for PMship. He is now leaking to the press that he has a secret plan to make a Supreme Court Justice prime minister after the convention.

He defanged his own party chairman, co-opting his support in the party convention by striking a deal not to challenge Dahal’s continuation as chairman of the party and to ensure that he will support his candidacy for the next president. He has got the security chiefs on his side, convinced the international community that he alone can guarantee stability, and assured everyone he is for elections in May and it is actually the opposition that is against it.

The party convention, therefore, will be an anti-climax. Anyone expecting fireworks between Dahal and Bhattarai in Hetauda will be disappointed. The deadline to announce a date for elections by 31 May will lapse, the NC-UML led protests will fail to get traction, and the coast will be clear for Bhattarai to continue for as long as he wants.

Kunda Dixit

MIND YOUR LANGUAGES

Mark Tunn on the race against time to document and support Nepal’s increasingly endangered linguistic diversity

page 12-13

Editorial

Speaking in tongues

page 2
**SPEAKING IN TONGUES**

**The responsibility to preserve and nurture the diversity of Nepal's linguistic heritage lies with the state**

Nepali is the mother tongue. Maithili is second with three million speakers (about 12 per cent) followed by Chhetri and half million Bhojpuri speakers. While the national language and the Tarai languages thrive, the remaining 120 languages along with those that did not make it to the census, are fighting a losing battle against the homogenising forces of Nepali and English. The importance of marks in Nepali in SLC and subsequent civil service exams essentially puts non-Nepali speakers at a disadvantage and lies at the root of their under-representation in government and other salaried jobs. Children of parents, therefore, prefer that their children learn Nepali and English in school, eroding proficiencies in their own mother tongue.

Surveys have shown that children learn best in their mother tongue, and students the world over are more capable of learning multiple languages simultaneously. But most public schools are on tight budgets and cannot afford to offer classes in local languages. Private schools are better endowed, but they respond to parents’ demand for English education.

In 2011, Dharmashila Chapagain, Nepal’s State Minister for Health and Population, spent seven agonising minutes labouring through her speech in English at a UN meeting on AIDS in New York. Bloggers ridiculed Chapagain for her diction and posted deriding comments. She could have easily spoken in Nepali, but chose a language she was clearly uncomfortable with because she saw it as a status symbol.

The goal should be to make Nepalis trilingual: fluent in their mother tongue or local language, fluent in Nepali so they can communicate with other Nepalis, and fluent in English so they can speak with the outside world.

Nepal’s language does not have a single speaker who speaks one of them, Kusunda, is down to single digits. When a language becomes extinct, we lose a culture, a whole way of life, and a vocabulary of indigenous knowledge forever. The responsibility to protect citizens lies with the state, and so does the responsibility to preserve and nurture the diversity of our linguistic heritage.

Otherwise, by the time the next census comes around in 2021, many of the 123 languages will have vanished.

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**D**isagreement over the form of federalism killed the Constituent Assembly last May over demands for self-rule for Nepal’s bigger ethnic groups and giving more emphasis to their languages.

Identity politics became an easy way for political parties, especially the Mainists, to garner support but it did tap into historical grievances about marginalisation and a long-held belief that preservation of the lingua franca was undermining the existence of the country’s other languages.

The 2011 census showed a surprising increase in the number of languages and dialects spoken in Nepal from 103 to 123. This wasn’t because more languages were being spoken, but because people had become aware and proud of their identities.

As anthropologist Mark Turin argues on page 12-13, Nepal’s linguistic diversity mirrors the country’s ecological diversity and is an important identity marker. Language is an emotive issue, and if not treated adequately can lay the seeds of future conflict, especially when leaders cannot resist the temptation to make populist capital out of it at election time.

In the past, Nepal was promoted as Nepal’s national language because the fragile nation state needed symbols of nationalism and unity vis-à-vis Hindi in India. Today, leaders are making an emphasis to their languages.

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**GOING ROGUE**

Very sharp and incisive editorial (‘Going rogue’, #640). This piece is an urgent reminder to the ruling parties to get their acts together before time runs out and Nepal is extricated internationally. It’s good that the editor links the political stalemate with the lack of progress on Nepal’s ratification of its international commitments.

But is Baburam Bhattarai listening? He seems too busy intimidating journalists and human rights activists.

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**JUSTICE, INTERRUPTED**

No justice done to Sita means no justice done to all poor and powerless. ‘Justice, interrupted’, Bhrkuti Rai, #640. Injustice somewhere means injustice everywhere. Sita’s case is not only her story, it is the voice of all Nepali women who are suffering the same injustice in every part of Nepal. Every woman should stand strong in solidarity with her until the criminals are put behind bars.

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**Voice of the Victims**

Ram Kumar Bhandari begins his column by saying the transitional industry in Nepal has turned the entire peace process into a project. ‘Voice of the victims’, #640. However, it should have been the opposite: the transitional justice project in Nepal has turned the entire peace process into an industry. And Bhandari is one of those who has been reaping the most out of this industry.

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**PAIN IN THE PLAINS**

The situation of Madhesis is extremely worrying. ‘Pain in the plains’, Anurag Acharaya, #640. The people there die everyday of the cold, while the Madhesi netas are fighting to lose the state coffers, all in name of inclusiveness. The demand for federalism has become the most effective instrument for the corrupt and rich to themselves make to themselves.

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**KINDNESS COUNTS**

What a bouquet of heart warming stories. ‘Every act of kindness counts’, Santa Gaha Magar, #640. It is just a coincidence that all these selfless individuals are women? Amidst the gloom and doom of scary headlines of demagogue leaders, here are ordinary Nepalis making extraordinary contributions to those less advantaged. Congratulations to all the Rakshas, Sharmillas, and Diksha out there.

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**HIGWAY IN AMERICA**

I appreciate Deepak Rauniar’s effort to reach as large an audience as possible (‘Highway in America’, Mark Turin, #640). But when I see that only his own crew or ‘near and dear’ ones love this film which was clearly rejected by ordinary cinema, it makes me sad. Next time, please make a film for Nepali audience, otherwise just stick to making wedding videos.

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**Voice of the Victims**

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**SUSHANDRA JHA**

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**W**ould the current leadership, and particularly Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, care to comment on the growing clamour for transitional justice? SJS

**THE TIMES OF NEPAL**

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**Pains in the plains**

The situation of Madhes is extremely worrying. ‘Pain in the plains’, Anurag Acharaya, #640. The people there die everyday of the cold, while the Madhesi netas are fighting to lose the state coffers, all in name of inclusiveness. The demand for federalism has become the most effective instrument for the corrupt and rich to themselves make to themselves.

**Anonymous**

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**CAN THE CURRENT LEADERSHIP, AND PARTICULARLY PRIME MINISTER SUSHIL KOIRALA, CARE TO COMMENT ON THE GROWING CLAMOUR FOR TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE?**

**SJS**

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**THE TIMES OF NEPAL**

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**A functioning transitional justice system in Nepal is the most effective instrument for corrupt Nepalis to further enrich themselves.**
The disappearance of truth

After six years of platitudes, there will be no truth telling and the worst war criminals will walk free

BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

Two weeks ago a retired army officer in an online interview threatened a military coup if there is an investigation into war crimes. Other media did not pick this up and there was a conspicuous silence in the dailies. This was an act of unmistakable intimidation by an ex-army man who still claimed influence over Nepal’s republican army, and one would presume his remarks were sanctioned by the brass.

All this is good news for state security personnel who tortured, raped, murdered, and disappeared people; you don’t have to worry about your crimes being raked up because your former enemy is your ally now. Bahuram Bhattarai and Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal assured Kathmandu-based ambassadors that the pending TRC Bill will meet international standards. But in all likelihood there will be no investigations, and even if there are, they will be followed by mass amnesty. There are neither provisions for truth seeking, nor prosecution for war crimes and crimes against humanity under the newly proposed Disappearance, Truth and Reconciliation Bill forwarded by the government to the president’s office.

Bhattarai’s argument is that wartime excesses like the ones by Col Kumar Lama and the murderers of Dekendra Thapa come under the purview of the TRC, and he has been publicly advocating a general amnesty so as to “protect the peace process”.

Three years ago, a committee headed by Rakam Chemjong drafted two separate TRC and DC bills. Despite several gaping holes, it had the framework which the victims could use to fight for justice. Most importantly, it criminalised forcible detention, rape, torture, and custodial killings and there was no room for pardon in such cases. But the present bill has not only removed the clause which prohibited amnesty in those crimes, it removed all options for prosecution.

Bhattarai told the diplomats he was helpless because the president was sitting on his bill. What he did not tell them, and what the envos know full well, was how his government tampered with the earlier draft to water it down to such an extent that fellow comrades and state security will be off the hook.

Article 13 of the proposed bill states that the committee will have the mandate to investigate cases, provide financial reparation to the victims and ensure reconciliation, but it will not have the authority to recommend prosecution even in cases of grave violation of human rights. Further, the provision of command responsibility in such cases has been conspicuously removed from the bill. The provision under article 22 also gives the committee the right to initiate victims’ reconciliation with the accused, without perpetrators having to accept the guilt for the crime, while article 23 provides for amnesty in all kinds of cases. “If the present bill is passed as it is, it will make a mockery of justice and expose the Nepali state’s unwillingness to prosecute war criminals. This will invite further international responses like we saw from the British government in the Col Lama case,” says lawyer and rights activist Govinda Bandi. The Maoist-led government may be having problems agreeing with the opposition parties on a consensus government, but in not pardoning war criminals there is a consensus. This leaves victims and their families with no choice but to resort to international instruments.

Under Article 2 (1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, every individual whose rights or freedoms have been violated has the right to an effective remedy, notwithstanding that the violation has been committed by persons acting in an official capacity. The article, along with Rule 157 of customary international law, provides universal jurisdiction on cases of suspected war crimes and crimes against humanity.

The extent to which the present state machinery is willing to go in hiding the dirty secrets of the war can be seen in its ban on the feature film, Radhakala, which depicts the story of the notorious Bharalnath Barrack where the royal Army detained, tortured, raped, and executed suspected Maoists.

Director Manoj Pandit says that although the movie is fictionalised, it is based on historical facts which is probably why it was banned. The conflict has been over for eight years, but it looks like the ghosts of the past will haunt us for a long time to come.
The death of Catherine “Kitty” Houghton this week has shocked Nepal’s growing community of women pilots who were inspired by her to set up the Nepal Section of the Ninety-Nines. Kitty was a Peace Corps volunteer in eastern Nepal in the mid 1960s, spoke fluent Nepali along with 13 other languages, and remained connected to Nepal after retirement from the US Foreign Service. She visited the country several times to support educational and other initiatives in Dhankuta, and to interact with and encourage Nepali women pilots.

The Ninety-Nines is an international organisation of women pilots and as International Membership Chair, she focused especially on women pilots from developing countries. In the last few years she had taken several initiatives to support Nepali pilots, including helping to start and mentor the Nepal Section, making a video on the Nepal Section members, and helping with Nepal Section members’ visits to the United States.

“Kitty Houghton was a remarkably talented and vibrant individual who touched many lives,” said 99s International president, Martha Philipps, “she had friends all over the world and the sympathy messages immediately started pouring in to the 99s. Much of the growth of the international membership of the 99s is directly attributable to Kitty. We will miss her terribly and will think of her often.”

Houghton, 70, was stabbed to death in a random attack in a New Hampshire hotel lobby on 28 January by another guest she had never met. She had travelled there from California for the board meeting of a school from which she graduated in 1960. A 37-year-old man from Vermont is in custody, but police don’t know the motive.

“We are all shocked and deeply saddened by Kitty’s untimely death,” said George Varughese, Director of the Asia Foundation in Nepal, who frequently flew with her, “Kitty was a good friend of Nepal and a great supporter of women pilots in Nepal.” Kitty was deeply interested in aviation safety and pilot well-being in Nepal, wanting to always connect pilots with each other, with air traffic controllers, and civil aviation authorities in order to improve the conditions for aviation in Nepal.

“Kitty will be sorely missed but never forgotten,” the Nepal Section of the Ninety-Nines said in a statement, “the women of the Nepal 99s commit to realising her vision for female pilots in Nepal.”

www.ninety-nines.org
Too hot to handle

Burma’s rulers lift censorship but revoke licence of its first sex magazine

BANYOL KONG JANOI
in RANGOON

As the first light of dawn brightens the streets of Rangoon, news vendors are busy distributing the day’s magazines and journals. As Burma frees up its press and the country takes faltering steps towards democracy, circulation is booming. But there is one magazine missing this morning. Nhyot, Burma’s first sex magazine. Only 1,000 copies of the first and only edition of Nhyot (meaning ‘allure’) were published, and it sold out as soon as it hit the shelves. But the magazine had its licence immediately revoked, the first since the end of military rule.

Editor Ko Oo Swe admits the first issue of Nhyot raised many eyebrows, but said his magazine was aimed more towards educating readers about sex than titillating them.

“Nowadays we’re exposed to so many kinds of adult entertainment such as online sex, sex web pages, and offline adult entertainment in hotels or clubs,” he says, “we wanted the magazine to make people aware about sexually transmitted diseases.”

The first issue did combine sex education and entertainment and a red label on the front page warned readers the magazine contained adult material, and was to be sold to those above the age of 18 only.

Burma’s Information Ministry, which now allows coverage of opposition figure Aung San Suu Kyi and critical political coverage, found sex too hot to handle. It accused the magazine of breaching its licence as a fashion publication by printing sexually explicit articles and photos.

Official estimates put the number of Burmese with HIV/AIDS at 200,000, but in reality the number is said to be much more because of prostitution and injecting drug users. Nearly half of those afflicted are women.

Burma is still a conservative society compared to neighbouring Thailand, and many are shy to talk about sex or HIV, or even to read about it in magazines. Public health experts say that only by openly discussing sex can the spread of diseases be stopped.

Says Hmu Hey Thar Khae, a health worker: “This magazine helped cut work a lot because it reached lots of people across the country, we have to spread awareness about preventing sexually-transmitted diseases such as HIV.” But she adds that the pictures in the first issue need not have been so vulgar.

But Zin Mar, a 22-year-old accountant, says she can’t wait to see the next edition. “We need a magazine like Nhyot to spread knowledge. We can’t learn about this from our family or from school, our culture doesn’t allow it,” she admits. “If we don’t know anything,” she says, “we’re always more likely to do something wrong.”

Ko Oo Swe plans to appeal the censor board’s decision, and once the magazine restarts, wants to add more content, focus on HIV prevention, and tackle issues like violence against women.

Listen to podcast of this article on: nepalitimes.com
“Why Nepal? Why do you come back?” I’ve been asked often. I falter, unable to formulate anything neither consistent nor convincing. Disorder. This ‘why’ lies in a nebulous angle of my mind, elusive but dense.

I realise a certain match between my own disorder and the one that defines these towns and villages where I keep coming back, season after season. A certain match with this territory that does not know the void and where auspicious stones have been erected in the few places that were left virgin by the secular hustle: this territory that appeases me.

Descending from the airport each time I return, shaken up by the traffic jam and the insane driving, suffocated by the racket, the lead and the nitrates, I simply slip into a world where I already exist, soothed in the shadow of its chaos. A world in which I feel recognised. A glance, a dog, a twisted line of ragged walls, a pond, a ladybird on the half-open window of the car, a butcher’s shop on the pavement, the spasms of a bus, the light burn of the tea on the lip. I receive them as solace.

Nothing offends me: death, violence, fever, the air drizzling with dust and heavy metals, the overload of the space. I am in the right place. A place that is searching for balance, a balance between order and disorder, between fiction and reality. This is the Nepal I capture on my lens and where I begin to find my answer to “why Nepal?”

Frédéric Lecloux, a Belgian photographer, is displaying almost two decades of his work from Nepal at Alliance Française from 31 January onwards. This text is translated and freely adapted from an excerpt of a yet unpublished French book Ne plus voyager: Everyday Epiphanies.”
The young boy works as a domestic helper at former district vice-president of the NC, Ambika Kohar’s residence in Padariya, Rupandehi (2012).

Santosh (left) and Rakesh (right) pose for a photo in the middle of a tea garden in Ilam (2011).
CHIIAPROMA, the screening of this new trilogy of short films will be followed by discussion with acclaimed filmmaker Taerin Ritar Sherpa on independent film making, 1 February, 11.45am to 2pm, Martin Chautari, (01)4442228

Everyday epiphanies, an exhibition of photographs on Nepal by Frederic Lecloux, 31 January to 13 February, 10am to 6pm, Sundays to Fridays, Alliance Francaise, Thapathali.

STORYTELLING WORKSHOP
PODCASTING AND AUDIO STORYTELLING WORKSHOP learn how to develop, produce, and edit a compelling and dynamic audio story to develop, produce, and edit a compelling and dynamic audio story of photographs on Nepal by Frederic Lecloux, 31 January to 13 February, 10am to 6pm, Sundays to Fridays, Alliance Francaise, Thapathali.

EVENTS

THEATRE TRAINING, gain a comprehensive grounding in the performing arts, 1 February to 29 April, Sushila Arts Academy, (01)4015643, www.sushilaartsacademy.com

Aesthetics in photography, a five-day photography workshop with Norwegian photographer Morten Krogvold, 6 to 10 February, apply by 25 January, www.photocircle.com nrp

Pondering moments, an exhibition of paintings by artist Seema Acharya, 3 to 8 February, Imago Dei, Naxal, (01)4424303

Nepal International Indigenous Film Festival, the seventh edition of the annual NIIFF will explore issues related to Nepal’s minority, 25 to 28 April, City Hall, Nepal Tourism Board, Exhibition Road, (01)4102577, ifa_festival@yahoo.com, www.ifanepal.org nrp

8 DEGREES, from lemon lassis to spicy pork stews, this is a great place to try continental dishes. Jhamki

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

TRISARA, with dishes like flamebread prawns, crispy chicken, and khau soi, it would be a folly to ignore its aromas. Lajimpat

Tonic Restaurant, amazing food fit for family dinners or a night out with friends. Pokhara

Cibo, a sandwich bar at heart, this cafe serves one of the best sandwiches in town. Lajimpat

LORRYS, a newly opened restaurant its bistecca al funghi is a must try. Jhamki

Cafeenra, the extensive menu has something for everyone. Try their famous chips chilli. Sherpa Mall, Durbar Marg

Moksh, it may be well known for its cultural events but the food in Moksh is mighty fine. Jhamki

Dechenling, the place to head for Bhutanese and Tibetan cuisine, its pleasant and spacious garden is ideal for big gatherings. Thamel

THE VILLAGE CAFE, authentic Newari food that comes straight from the heart. Pulchok

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Club Amsterdam and Cafe Bar, great food, exotic cocktails, live band, BBQ, and more. Lakeside, Pokhara, (061)463427

Mike’s Breakfast, huge breakfasts and an endless supply of coffee amidst a lush garden setting characterise this cafe, popular among tourists and locals alike. Naxal, (01)444393

Saigon Pho, spacious interior with authentic Vietnamese dishes. Lajimpat

Pumpernickel Bakery, get an early breakfast or brunch with interesting choices of bread, experiment with its goat cheese or yaki cheese sandwiches, or have a sip of coffee in the classy indoor dining area. Thamel, 7.30am-7pm, (01)4259185

Cover

Himal Khararpatrika
23 Jan – 11 February

Cover

Vicious circle: Under state endorsement, Nepal is becoming an international headquarters for human trafficking.

Editorial

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God, reborn
I felt I was going to a friend’s house for dinner when I stepped into Cafe Cheeno (which I am told means keepakee in Nepali). The inner dining area features a couch, a mini-library, and a wine rack. Intricate traditional art adorns the walls and even the ceiling. Along one wall runs a shelf where tote bags and other souvenirs are on sale. The welcoming atmosphere makes Cheeno the perfect place to have a cup of coffee and chat with friends on a cold day.

If the weather is fine and the sun is out, however, you might want to make yourself comfortable at the outdoor garden instead. A wooden door leads to a charming cobblestoned courtyard, walled off from the noise, dust, and chaos outside. There are a number of interesting sights to check out while waiting for your food to arrive, like a wooden pagoda in the centre of a vegetable plot, a swing and a loom where you can buy colourful scarves and rugs.

The open courtyard is ideal for parents in company of restless children, as the food takes quite some time to arrive after ordering. Nevertheless, the waiters are friendly and helpful, even helping me shift my bags when the evening chill nudged me inside.

The starters are a little pricey, with the mini fried-chicken (Rs 350) being tasty, but nothing extraordinary. The potato wedges are a far better option, for just Rs 175 you get a platter of thick-cut potatoes lightly fried and covered with crunchy herbs and spices, the perfect appetiser for your main course. For those of us watching our waistslines, the roasted pumpkin soup (Rs 235) will do nicely: light, smooth, and slightly exotic.

You’re spoiled for choice at Cafe Cheeno when it comes to the mains, with a great selection of pastas, steaks, ribs, and other such Western dishes. For a lighter lunch, opt for a steak sandwich (Rs 250), a change from the typical burgers and hotdogs found at other restaurants. The steak is tender, the glazed onions give it an extra crunch and it’s accompanied by a generous serving of French fries.

If you have the time (and the appetite) the Breaded Chicken (Rs 450) is immensely satisfying. Although the chicken is average at best, the spaghetti topped with grated cheese in tomato sauce and the grilled vegetables make it a delicious and filling meal on the whole.

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If you have the time (and the appetite) the Breaded Chicken (Rs 450) is immensely satisfying. Although the chicken is average at best, the spaghetti topped with grated cheese in tomato sauce and the grilled vegetables make it a delicious and filling meal on the whole.

theater is a documentary based on the lives of slum dwellers Meena Basnet and her daughter Nirjala. Meena recounts how she came to the capital from Udayapur, became a widow soon after her marriage, and gave birth to Nirjala in a field. Nirjala, meanwhile, has converted to Christianity, much to the disapproval of her mother, but does well at school as long as her mother can pay her exam fees.

Amidst this tale of grinding poverty and faint hope, the main in power in Kathmandu pursue the emotions of the poor, while the government decides to bulldoze the huts of Thapathali. What will become of Meena and Nirjala?

1 February, 1.45 to 3pm, free entry

Sarwanam Theatre, Kalkaastaan, 8641526593

Hotel Heritage, enjoy the exquisite architecture and traditional ambience, but make sure to book your rooms online with NepalSutra. Bhat-Bhateni, (01)6611628. info@nepalsutra.com

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Pokhara Grande, a swimming pool to escape from the sweltering heat, a massage parlour and spa to loosen your muscles keepsake in Nepali). Cafe Cheeno (which I am told means keepakee in Nepali). The inner dining area features a couch, a mini-library, and a wine rack. Intricate traditional art adorns the walls and even the ceiling. Along one wall runs a shelf where tote bags and other souvenirs are on sale. The welcoming atmosphere makes Cheeno the perfect place to have a cup of coffee and chat with friends on a cold day.

If the weather is fine and the sun is out, however, you might want to make yourself comfortable at the outdoor garden instead. A wooden door leads to a charming cobblestoned courtyard, walled off from the noise, dust, and chaos outside. There are a number of interesting sights to check out while waiting for your food to arrive, like a wooden pagoda in the centre of a vegetable plot, a swing and a loom where you can buy colourful scarves and rugs.

The open courtyard is ideal for parents in company of restless children, as the food takes quite some time to arrive after ordering. Nevertheless, the waiters are friendly and helpful, even helping me shift my bags when the evening chill nudged me inside.

The starters are a little pricey, with the mini fried-chicken (Rs 350) being tasty, but nothing extraordinary. The potato wedges are a far better option, for just Rs 175 you get a platter of thick-cut potatoes lightly fried and covered with crunchy herbs and spices, the perfect appetiser for your main course. For those of us watching our waistslines, the roasted pumpkin soup (Rs 235) will do nicely: light, smooth, and slightly exotic.

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Lee Daniels is one of the few black directors working in Hollywood today. Critically acclaimed for Precious (2009), a film about a young black girl who fights her way through her abused childhood, with The Paperboy Daniels has produced and directed yet another troubling, but haunting film about race, class, and homosexuality, all of which are encapsulated in a gripping film noir set in a small town in Florida, aptly named Latimer.

The film revolves around a central murder mystery involving the killing of the town’s revered Sheriff, a cruel white man who is hated by both his own and the black community for his atrocities and indiscriminate killing. A man called Hilary Van Wetter (played by John Cusack in an astonishingly sociopathic turn) is convicted of the crime and put on death row.

Enter the titular paperboy Jack Jensen (he delivers the home-town papers that his father publishes), played surprisingly well by an otherwise almost too-good-looking Zac Efron. Jack is back at home after being kicked out of college for employing the campus pool one night in a drunken prank. An avid swimmer with a wounded heart, Jack’s one solace is his mother’s wedding ring, which she left behind when she abandoned her two sons and husband.

It is when Jack’s brother Ward (Matthew McConaughey) comes back from Miami with a fellow reporter in tow to re-investigate the Van Wetter arrest that things start to go awry. The trio is aided by the slightly crazed Charlotte Bless (played by an avishly vampy Nicole Kidman), a woman who occupies her time by writing erotic love letters to inmates on death row. Claiming that she and Van Wetter are in love and want to get married, Charlotte provides the journalists the crucial ‘in’ with Van Wetter.

As relationships start to develop and evolve, Jack falls in love with the disturbed but still vulnerable and undeniably gorgeous Charlotte. Over the course of their developing friendship and the ongoing investigation, several incidents occur that expose the vulnerable and ugly underbelly of rural 1960s Florida.

Films like these are little gems that often do not have the backing of huge studios that push on their behalf during awards season. Regardless, Nicole Kidman has been nominated for Best Supporting Actress for her unforgettable portrayal of a woman who just cannot help herself but is completely unapologetic about it.

I will warn you that The Paperboy may not be to your taste. It is often over the top and very violent, but this is Lee Daniels’ style. It is this very style backed by intelligence, undeniable directional skill, and an intimate knowledge of his deeply flawed but very human characters that makes for such a compelling film. Watch it, you’ll get to the end, and watch it all over again for the nuances you missed.

nepaltimes.com

Watch trailer

Keep your kidneys running

F orty-year-old Ram Maya has been feeling uneasy for the last three months. She is easily exhausted and has trouble sleeping. Recently she has been feeling queasy for the last three months. She is anemic and tired because she lacks erythropoietin. In majority of cases, chronic kidney disease is strongly associated with uncontrolled hypertension as in Ram Maya’s case or diabetes, another escalating health problem among Nepalis (in fact, South Asia has more diabetics than anywhere else in the world).

Many patients with CKD also die of heart attacks because the important risk factors (diabetes and hypertension) are similar for both CKD and cardiovascular diseases. It’s not possible to completely ‘cure’ CKD, but there are ways to slow the progress of the disease and prevent cardiovascular complications.

If you are 55-years or older, have diabetes or hypertension or family history of renal failure, get checked for chronic kidney disease immediately. Once diagnosed, you will need to make some major changes in your diet and lifestyle to prevent kidney failure. The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) is high in fruits, vegetables, and dairy products containing little saturated fat, and cholesterol. Lowering sodium intake, quitting smoking, exercising regularly, and keeping blood pressure and blood sugar level under control are also critical.
Nation in perpetual rage

In its pursuit of the ‘national’, the Indian media ignores the ‘local’

The growing role of the media in determining what constitutes the national, despite its inherently contentious nature, is provoking a litany of complaints, particularly against the 24x7 tv news channels. One has to just drive out of Delhi to sense the popular discontent, even anger, against the media. This is largely because people believe the media is short-sighted and self-obsessed, guilty of conflating Delhi and the metros with the national, and ignoring what they describe as the ‘real issues’ confronting the nation.

For them, the creaking infrastructure, intolerable power cuts, galloping prices, grinding poverty, and rampant unemployment are issues the national media should build its relentless campaigns on. The marginalisation of the local in the national media, in some ways, mirrors the earlier failure of national political parties to respond to regional aspirations, ultimately culminating in the fracturing of the Indian polity and emergence of a clump of regional and caste outfits. It is a failing which seems to have afflicted the media as well.

Think of the last time an incident outside India’s metros prompted the national media to launch a campaign on it. Think why the stories of brutality reported from outside the metros don’t shock the media into demanding justice. In other words, the media is being accused of what the Indian political class has been for decades: neglecting the hinterland, allowing it to languish and decay, and concentrating its energies on cities where its members reside.

In the 21st century you don’t just drive out of Delhi to sense what we see on the tv screen. Perhaps in a country of a billion-plus, the turnout of crowds agitating at different places over an issue can be a barometer of the national mood. We could also quibble over what the size of the crowds ought to be. Perhaps some would want to factor in social media. Others would say a raging nation is based on the impact it could have on the voting pattern.

The expanding footprint of India’s national media and its campaign style journalism have projected India as a nation in perpetual rage. It is debatable whether this rage is national in its sweep and depth or it has such an appearance because of the media’s projections of it, reflecting the concerns and priorities of those whose task it is to determine what constitutes the story.

It is through the media that a people spread over a vast geographical area evolve common perceptions about the vital issues pertaining to them, thereby developing a sense of belonging to a national community. The content of the media is consequently deemed to reflect the quality of conversation the nation is engaged in.

The conversation India is seemingly engaged in, as discerned from its media, is one of shock, disenchantment, and seething rage. Last year, relentless politicians Arvind Kejriwal and Prashant Bhushan riveted the nation for weeks through allegations of corruption against the rich and powerful. The media’s fervour for corruption, though, seemed to dampen as the irrepressible duo brought the corporate czars into the crosshairs.

Campaign style journalism reached a new apogee after the brutal rape of a 23-year-old physiotherapy student in Delhi. The extensive media coverage of the tragic incident, and the debate on patriarchy and gender inequality it sparked, reached a new apogee after the tragic incident, and the debate on patriarchy and gender inequality it sparked, soon as the irrepressible duo brought the corporate czars into the crosshairs.

Perhaps the problem stems from the use of the word ‘national’, which is often synonymous with Delhi. Since Delhi also happens to be the crossroads where most national media houses are located, their extensive coverage of agitation in the city catapults them into the national consciousness. They are subsequently discussed and analysed threadbare, reality is what we see on the tv screen. Perhaps in a country of a billion-plus, the turnout of crowds agitating at different places over an issue can be a barometer of the national mood. We could also quibble over what the size of the crowds ought to be. Perhaps some would want to factor in social media. Others would say a raging nation is based on the impact it could have on the voting pattern.

Corruption, rape, Indo-Pakistan relations share certain common features. Delhi was the proscenium on which the drama of corruption and rape unfolded. All the dramatic personae, the heroes and villains alike, belonged to Delhi or had made it the epicentre of their activities. Jammu and Kashmir is far removed from India’s capital, yet it is here that occurrences have been traditionally interpreted and transmitted India-wide.

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Nepal’s extraordinary biological diversity is matched by a similar level of cultural and linguistic variety. For a country with a relatively small landmass, 123 languages used as mother tongues remain an impressively high number and mean that Nepal is home to more language families than Europe. It has more distinct and individual languages than those officially recognised across the European community.

Language death is often compared to species extinction, and some experts believe that they have found an inverse correlation between language diversity and latitude. Areas rich in languages also tend to be rich in ecology and species. Around the world there appears to be a co-concurrence of rich flora and fauna and languages, as in the Nepal Himalaya which has 5,400 species of higher plants and more than 860 species of birds. This high level of biodiversity per unit area is matched by a similar degree of linguistic variation.

Yet, it remains a race against time to document, protect, and nurture Nepal’s increasingly endangered linguistic diversity. While some of Nepal’s languages are thriving, most notably Nepali, many other speech forms used by Nepal’s many distinct communities are not faring so well. The key measure of a language’s viability is not only the number of people who speak it, but the extent to which children are still learning and using the language, and the degree to which inter-generational transmission continues.

There are many reasons and ways by which mother tongues become endangered. Declining speaker numbers is the most common, an example of which would be the Kusunda language, recently documented by Tribhuvan University’s Central Department of Linguistics, and found to have only a couple of speakers left. Other reasons for the decline include the transformation of the traditional habitat of a linguistic community through deforestation, as in the case of the Raute, or even natural disasters such as the landslides that swept away two entire villages, almost wiping out the Koi-speaking community in Khotang district.

A more prosaic and often more pernicious reason for the decline in usage of Nepal’s mother tongues includes decades of state neglect towards marginalised and mostly rural ethno-linguistic communities, and the suppression of their speech forms. The effectiveness of the Nepali language media and public sphere in cultivating a sense of national Nepali identity at linguistic, religious, and cultural levels is to be celebrated, but has also helped to erode linguistic diversity. While state policy makers may speak of ‘language shift’ from regional mother tongues to a national language, members of the affected community may feel rather differently about it, and perceive this process as a form of encroaching ‘linguicide’.

One way to support endangered languages is through mother tongue instruction. While some suggest that learning ‘through’ Gurung or Bhojpuri at school would disadvantage children who speak these languages at home, it is the most common, an example of which would be the Kusunda language, recently documented by Tribhuvan University’s Central Department of Linguistics, and found to have only a couple of speakers left. Other reasons for the decline include the transformation of the traditional habitat of a linguistic community through deforestation, as in the case of the Raute, or even natural disasters such as the landslides that swept away two entire villages, almost wiping out the Koi-speaking community in Khotang district.

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GOING, GOING, GONE …

UNESCO’s classification system to measure endangered languages:

- Vulnerable - most children speak the language but only at home
- Definitely endangered - children no longer learning language as ‘mother tongue’
- Severely endangered - spoken by older generations, while the parent generation may understand it, they do not speak it to children or among themselves
- Critically endangered - the youngest speakers are grandparents or older, they speak it infrequently
- Extinct - there are no speakers left

Medium is the message

In a bid to promote education in the mother tongue of Nepalis, the government is trying through its School Sector Reform Plan (2009-2015) to introduce multilingual education in about 7,500 schools across the country. However, there are less than 30 schools where the medium has been changed to mother tongues in primary level.

“The government has formulated guidelines and the Interim Constitution of 2007 even has a provision for primary level education through mother tongues, but as always, implementation has been the hardest part,” says linguist Amrit Yonzon who also heads the Multilingual Education Society in Nepal.

Today, while there are text books for 20 mother tongues at the primary level, and Aya Garelo, a textbook for non-formal education, is published in 14 languages. However, experts note that just translating books is not enough, and the local culture that the language represents should also be included in the text.

Says Yonzon: “Unless elements of local culture are infused in the curriculum, mother tongue based education won’t be effective.”

when compared to mother tongue Nepali speakers, years of robust international research shows that children learn best in their mother tongue and perform better in their studies over time. The high rate of school absenteeism and dropouts among young students from non-Nepali speaking backgrounds has been directly linked to the challenges they face in a culturally and linguistically alien classroom.

Curriculum development is an important element in the development of mother tongue language materials. Historically, government-funded mother tongue initiatives simply translated Nepali language primary school books into other languages, without regard for cultural differences. Such schemes are doomed to fail, since the content of a school book must reflect the cultural, dietary, and religious values of its students. As for the suggestion that if students learn through their mother tongue they won’t learn Nepali or English properly, we would do well to remember that most of the world is multilingual and that young minds have an amazing capacity to learn, absorb, and process language. It’s not a question of either the national language or one’s mother tongue, since many languages can be learned, taught, and used simultaneously.

Mark Turin is a linguistic anthropologist who has worked in Nepal for 20 years. Collocated at Cambridge and Yale universities, he directs the Digital Himalaya Project (www.digitalhimalaya.org) and the Yale Himalaya Initiative (himalaya.yale.edu).

Listen to a three-part BBC series on linguistic diversity with a focus on Nepal.

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Salokya, Mysansar.com, 29 January

The Home Ministry officially declared 101 Nepalis as martyrs following the 2006/2007 people’s movement. People who were killed by the police, killed by criminal gangs in the Tarai, and even those killed due to personal enmity are all included in this list. Out of the 101 martyrs, 26 were involved in the 2006/2007 movement, 30 in the Madhes uprising, four were ‘religious martyrs’, and one was a journalist. Countless civil servants (employees from local bodies, from the Agriculture Research Council, from the finance field, teachers, even students) also made the Home Ministry’s cut. But how many of the 101 martyrs do you recognize? And why are there so many different categories of martyr?

Those of you anxious about how so many people made it to the list in such a short time, build your breath because these are just statistics from the Home Ministry, there are thousands more. When Pushpa Kamal Dahal was the prime minister, 8,000 Nepalis killed by both sides during the armed conflict were declared martyrs according to the recommendations made by the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction. The families of the “martyrs” received Rs 100,000 each as compensation. When Baburam Bhattarai came to power he gave out an additional Rs 200,000 to families of those who were killed or disappeared.

While the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction’s list includes genuine victims like Journalist Dekendra Thapa (who has not been called a martyr by any newspaper in the past two weeks), there are many bizarre cases like that of a nine-year-old boy who was killed when he mistook a bomb for a toy. There is also the mysterious case of Kulman Pariyar and Laxmi Thapa who the document says were killed on 2 October 2001, but the reason is not disclosed. According to Nepal Saptahik newspaper, Kulman and Laxmi were lovers who committed suicide after rumours of Laxmi’s pregnancy spread through their village. I don’t know what qualifies these two as martyrs, maybe the government should put them under the ‘love martyr’ category. Both Kulman and Laxmi’s families have received compensation from the state.

If we scrutinise these lists further, I am sure hundreds of Kulmans and Laxmis will turn up. If we scrutinise these lists further, I am sure hundreds of Kulmans and Laxmis will turn up.

DI Bhusan Pathak interviews former commissioner of Kathmandu Valley Development Authority (KVIDA) Keshab Shiptap on Tough Talk, News24 28 January

DI Bhusan Pathak: You said you would build a lovers’ park and underground parking spaces in Kathmandu, but people didn’t take you too seriously.

Keshab Shiptap: Despite pressure I have always dreamt big and worked tirelessly to make those dreams come true. It’s usually the older generation that criticises me, the younger ones have been very receptive and welcomed my ideas.

You went from backing the UML to being pro-king and now you support the UCPN (Maoist)?

I don’t care much about political ideologies and affiliations. I work with those who want to build a better and prosperous Nepal. I stayed away from party politics for a while, but now I am a general member of the UML and I hope to do meaningful work.

The same government which made you the commissioner of KVIDA, sacked you. Why?

None of the KVIDA projects and plans was approved by the cabinet. And although PM Baburam Bhattarai had promised you support, we were neither given any office space nor provided with resources. The PM had also said we would be allowed to work independently, but there was constant interference from Haidee Yami, his personal assistant, and others close to Bhattarai. I refused to follow their orders. When they realised they couldn’t get any benefits from KVIDA, they said I was incompetent and were not comfortable working with me.

Did you tell the PM about the constant interference and pressures? I tell him I didn’t have a problem, but couldn’t work under such pressure from Haidee and would no longer report to her about the functioning of KVIDA. It is ridiculous to think that a project up to 20 of his favours, when the organisation itself is in such a poor state. Although he assured me that he would take care of things, I was sacked.

The Supreme Court (SC) has intervened in your case, what’s the verdict? Yes the SC has stayed the government’s decision to dismiss me, but since I have already been removed from my post I cannot go back as commissioner unless the court orders.

If and when the SC reinstates you, what projects do you have in the UML?

Since Kathmandu is vulnerable to major earthquakes, the first project would be to prepare the Valley for such a disaster, raise awareness, and build emergency shelters. I would also work towards urban regeneration and making the newly expanded roads pedestrian and disabled friendly.

What if the PM calls you back? I would no longer report to her about the projects, yes I told him that I couldn’t work with him.

The cash Maoists

Online Khabar, 27 January

With the party’s general convention in Kathmandu a week away, the UCPN(M) is preparing to funnel large sums of money for the occasion. Known as South Asia’s richest party, just how much money does it have?

While the party is a mainstream party in politics, it has been accused of uncontrolled, unaccountable, autocratic, one-man rule. Let’s make democracy a stronger, not weaker force.

#Badhshala

Prem

Times

Online Khabar

Bihar model

People are watching the Bihar model with interest.

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Online Khabar

Watch the interview

Salokya, Mysansar.com, 29 January

Today is 16 Magh, Martyrs Day, a government holiday. We have been celebrating this day since the end of the Rana regime in 1951. Dasrath Chand, Shukra Bati Shrestha, Bhitarna Bhakti Mahadeva, and Gangyal Shrestha were given death sentences this very week 72 years ago. These four were not the only Nepalis who died during the Rana regime. There were hundreds of Kulmans and Laxmis who died during the Rana regime. The police, killed by criminal gangs, members of the Tarai, and even those killed due to personal enmity are all included in this list. Out of the 101 martyrs, 26 were involved in the 2006/2007 movement, 30 in the Madhes uprising, four were ‘religious martyrs’, and one was a journalist. Countless civil servants (employees from local bodies, from the Agriculture Research Council, from the finance field, teachers, even students) also made the Home Ministry’s cut. But how many of the 101 martyrs do you recognize? And why are there so many different categories of martyr?

Those of you anxious about how so many people made it to the list in such a short time, build your breath because these are just statistics from the Home Ministry, there are thousands more. When Pushpa Kamal Dahal was the prime minister, 8,000 Nepalis killed by both sides during the armed conflict were declared martyrs according to the recommendations made by the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction. The families of the “martyrs” received Rs 100,000 each as compensation. When Baburam Bhattarai came to power he gave out an additional Rs 200,000 to families of those who were killed or disappeared.

While the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction’s list includes genuine victims like Journalist Dekendra Thapa (who has not been called a martyr by any newspaper in the past two weeks), there are many bizarre cases like that of a nine-year-old boy who was killed when he mistook a bomb for a toy. There is also the mysterious case of Kulman Pariyar and Laxmi Thapa who the document says were killed on 2 October 2001, but the reason is not disclosed. According to Nepal Saptahik newspaper, Kulman and Laxmi were lovers who committed suicide after rumours of Laxmi’s pregnancy spread through their village. I don’t know what qualifies these two as martyrs, maybe the government should put them under the ‘love martyr’ category. Both Kulman and Laxmi’s families have received compensation from the state.

If we scrutinise these lists further, I am sure hundreds of Kulmans and Laxmis will turn up.
HARI BANSHA ACHARYA

In my three decades as an actor, I have travelled to major towns and cities across the country. I enjoy meeting Nepalis on the way and the trips are always fun. This past month, however, the Antenna Foundation Nepal’s crew and I left the Valley with a different motive. We wanted to meet Nepali brothers and sisters, we wanted to understand their pain, and document their everyday struggles. Our journey took us from the far West districts of Achham, Darchula, Doti, and Daling to the underbelly of the Tarai.

Despite abundant natural resources, Nepalis in the far-western districts are forced to live in unimaginable poverty. They are the forgotten people and there is little here to suggest the presence of the Nepali state. Poverty is rampant throughout the country as well, but this region is a different case all together.

Children are malnourished, parents and grandparents are too weak and ill from hunger, very few can afford healthcare. Hardest hit by the decade-long conflict, the region is still struggling to come to terms with its wounds and deal with the staggering number of war orphans. Parents have no one to look after them and 10-year-old boys think about migrating to India in search of jobs.

Our leaders in the capital make anti-India speeches in the name of protecting our nationalism. But if they really loved Nepal they would provide jobs to the thousands of young men and women who leave home and travel south every year in order to feed their families. If only the people of Accham, Darchula, Doti, and Daling could earn a living in their own villages, they could send their children to schools, and the young educated ones would slowly end traditions like chaupadi.

When we filmed them, the people shared their stories hoping we would help them out. But all we could do was to assure them that the rulers in Kathmandu would hear their voices. It broke my heart to make such hollow promises.

The people living in the remote villages of Tarai are also suffering due to state apathy. They look at neighbouring Bihar’s extraordinary progress and feel disillusioned. They wonder: what went wrong? Development has come to a grinding halt, there is no electricity, no water supply, and jobs are scarce. People try to make a living out of a few hundred square metres of land or work as daily labourers.

The Madhes uprising disrupted the social harmony in places like Rajbiraj. Most Pahadis abandoned their homes and migrated to Kathmandu, Hetauda, Biratnagar, and north of the highway. Today there are sign boards written in Nepali throughout the market. We ask the people if the authorities put these up forcefully, they tell us these boards have been here all along. They didn’t want to rewrite the messages in Hindi and writing in Maithili was hard. Madhesis want their Pahadi neighbours to return and blame the parties for igniting communal violence in a relatively peaceful, multicultural society.

It feels like the state has completely abandoned Nepalis living in these remote hinterlands. And in the absence of locally elected bodies and government appointed VDC secretaries who refuse to stay in villages, there is no one to listen to their problems, no one to help them.

However, despite the immense suffering Nepalis are fending for themselves. Families in the far-west make use of information from local radios and newspapers to educate their children on safe sex and warn them of the dangers of contracting HIV/AIDS while working in India. In Janakpuri, street dramas performed in local languages like Bhojpuri and Maithili are making people more aware and proud of their mother tongues. They don’t care about identity politics, they simply want to preserve their linguistic heritage.

Nearly 55 per cent of Nepal’s population is below the age of 25 and many of them live in the far-west and the Tarai. By turning our backs on them, we are undermining our potential for progress. They deserve better.
C’mon do something crazy

E

nnyway, Nepal has made it to the Lonely Planet’s 10 Most Memorable Places to Visit in 2013 list. Which got us thinking about making a list of 10 slogans to promote Nepal as an even more memorable destination:

1. ‘Visit Nepal, See Stars’. No light pollution in Nepal because there is no electricity, and Kathmandu is the only capital in the world in which the Milky Way is visible from the city centre.

2. Nepal is a Cardamom and Ginger Superpower. ‘Visit Nepal and Spice Up Your Life’.

3. Nepalis have held Guinness Records for everything from the world’s shortest man to the world’s fastest clock. ‘Come to Nepal and Set Your Own World Record By Doing Something Crazy’.

4. Large parts of the country have still not been declared Open Defecation Free. ‘Come to Nepal and Do It In the Open’.

5. Nepal is the ninth most corrupt country in the world. ‘Help Eradicate Poverty By Bribing the Natives’.

6. Communism is alive and kicking in Nepal. ‘See Stalin resurrected and Mao rise from His Maoseleum’.

7. ‘Visit Nepal and Go Back to the 17th century’. Time travel is not science fiction anymore. ‘Visit Nepal and Go Back to the 17th century’.

8. ‘Visit Nepal, All My Troubles Seem So Far Away’. When you see the shortage of power, water, gas, diesel you will never complain about your petty problems again. ‘Visit Nepal, All My Troubles Seem So Far Away’.

9. Lack of water can also be turned into a tourist attraction. ‘Visit Nepal, Get That High and Dry Feeling’.

10. ‘Visit the World’s Most-Memorable Airport, Kathmandu’. The longest immigration lines, shortest bus rides from plane to terminal, friskiest friskers, and most fragrant loos.

Alert readers will have followed the saga of Ketchup Stopit who was appointed by BRB to head the KTM Valley Commission, and then unceremoniously dumped last week by First Lady Ghusila. The Supreme Court has ruled saying he should have his job back, but by then Stopit had gone on tv spilling the beans about why he got the sack. Apparently he refused to approve kickbacks to fill Comrade Yummy’s tummy, and the last straw was a payoff from a luxury hotel on Kanti Path. But the former mayor of Ktown got so carried away with his confessions he also revealed that he had introduced the Maoists to Chinese arm dealers during the war. Whoa, comrades, is that the way to treat your arms broker?

Speaking of whom, Comrade Hasiya has been given a carte blanche by Comrade Hatoda and runs a parallel PMO from her office in Blubber Mahal. Now that Hubby Kamred’s days as Pardon Muntri seem to be numbered, the standard operating procedure is that decisions on all big contracts from multifuel powerplants to jet purchases are made by the First Lady’s secretariat. Any govt official who stands in the way is immediately transferred by a cabinet decision. Having broken national records on corruption, Ms Ghusila has now broken the world record for nepotism by getting seven siblings and relatives top jobs. The conjugal pair may be Raja Birodi, but they sure emulate Raja Paksa.

It is not true what people say about Comrade Red Flag being a Delhi implant. In fact, never in our nation’s history have we been as independent as we have been under the reign of Prime Minister Bhanu Ram. Just look at the evidence: we haven’t had an ambassador in Delhi for nearly two years now. In fact, not having a sitting envoy there means our plenipotentiary is not unduly beholden to the powers that be in the Indian capital. (Some even say: with Laalibhwoj as PM who needs an ambassador in Delhi?) If we don’t have an ambassador there, why keep the embassy? Let’s sell off the Itaharabamba property and earn a couple of arabs in INR to pay Nepal’s overdue bills to Indian Oil so they resume regular diesel supplies. The other way we have asserted our sovereignty is by stopping flights by Nepal Airlines to Indian cities. There. Serves them right.

Now we know why BRB is in no hurry to replace justices of the Supreme Court, he has hatched a top secret plan to promote the Chief Justice to replace him.