

NEPALI Times

#651 12 - 18 April 2013 20 pages Rs 50 NOW WITH CHINADAILY

Index annual SALE

UP TO 30% OFF

Offer valid till 1st May, 2013

FREE DELIVERY & INSTALLATION

Index furniture (EXCLUSIVE FURNITURE FROM THAILAND)

Like us on facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/INDEXFURNITURENEPAL>

METROPARK BUILDING (1st FLOOR), LAZIMPAT 4415181
STEEL TOWER (OLD UNITY TOWER), JAWALAKHEL 5000270



KUNDA DIXIT

The Seventies

The percentage of desperately poor people in Nepal has declined from 65 per cent five years ago to nearly 40 per cent today. At this rate, the poverty rate in the country will fall by half in 10 years. Poverty could be eradicated in 20 years says the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative in its new multidimensional poverty

index report for Nepal.

On Sunday, the Nepali calendar starts a new decade of the Seventies. In 10 years time, this Grade 4 student in Dadeldhura (pictured) will be 22 and of voting age.

Nepal has made the most dramatic progress in development among the world's low income countries. This has happened despite war,

corruption, political disarray, and instability. Imagine how much farther ahead we would be by 2080 if only we had a peace dividend, a more inclusive constitution, elections, and better accountability.

First the good news

by KUNDA DIXIT

page 16-17



You can't eat elections

by DAMBAR K SHRESTHA

page 15

Too good to be true

Editorial, page 2

LAVAZZA
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE

Hotel Glacier: Lakeside
Hotel Barahi: Lakeside

Mail to lavazza@subhashingalintl.com

Step in for more varieties at

LIFE STYLE
DESIGN & DECOR

Show Room: SRD Building
New Plaza, Putalisadak, Te: 4425402

SOLAR ELECTRICITY CO. (P) LTD.

Solar Complex, Bagbazar, Kathmandu.
Tel: 4225253, 4227876, Fax: 4223851
Email: ises@vianet.com.np

SOLARLAND SunLink PV
EverExceed SHARP UNIKOR KANEKA

Installing Solar PV Since 1991

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

FIRMAN "New Power New Life" - Petrol, Diesel & Generator based Generators, Backup from 1.2 to 1000 kVA, 1 year Warranty

GAUTAM ELECTRIC AND ELECTRONICS CENTRE
Head Office: B.P. Chowk, Pokhara, T: 961 53525, F: 961 53146
Corporate Office: Bhairavi Office Complex, 503, Thapathali, Kathmandu
T: 91 4210908, F: 91 4210913, E: info@gaupl.com

GAUTAM ASSOCIATES

THE NORTH FACE

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

Wish to have peace-of-mind anywhere you park?

4-in-1 anti-theft key to keep your scooter safe even while it is out of sight.

Mahindra RODEO RZ
SYM 125CC
LET'S DO MORE

4 in 1 Anti-Theft Key

Mahindra Rise.

MAHINDRA RODEO RZ MILEAGE 59.38* kmpl
DCDI SYSTEM

28 DISTRICTS 34 SERVICE CENTER 45 DEALER NETWORK 30 CERTIFIED SERVICE POINT

Nepal's Largest Selling 125 cc Scooter

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Eating and defecation. Activities so vital to our everyday lives, but which we take for granted. We don't think about them much, so we turn over the pages with coverage of charpis or chulos.

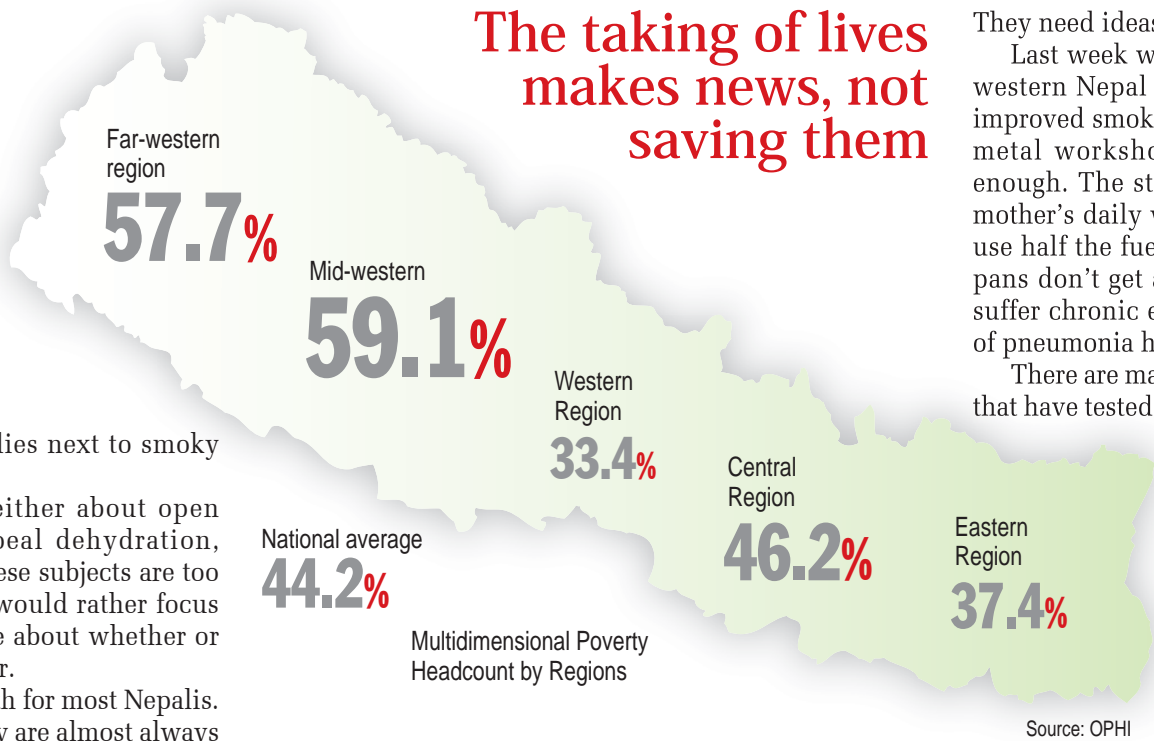
No one cares much whether this country grows enough food or not, whether farmers get proper prices for their products, what happens when children don't get enough calories at a young age, or how Nepali mothers spend their entire lives gathering firewood and cooking for their families next to smoky stoves.

The media doesn't care much either about open defecation, hand-washing, diarrhoeal dehydration, separate toilets for girls in school. These subjects are too distasteful to write about, we hacks would rather focus on important subjects like the debate about whether or not elections will be held in November.

Yet, these are matters of life or death for most Nepalis. Eighty per cent of Nepali mothers (they are almost always women) cook with biomass: firewood, straw or dung. In remote mountain villages, indoor smoke from the hearth is a major killer of children. If it's not acute respiratory infection and pneumonia, come summer children die from diarrhoeal dehydration or cholera because water sources are contaminated by open defecation.

On World Water Day on 22 March, we carried a story that pointed out the glaring fact that only 40 per cent of schools in Nepal had toilets and only one-fourth of those schools had separate facilities for girl students. Only one-third of the population washed hands after defecation and only 14 per cent of them with soap.

The taking of lives makes news, not saving them



They need ideas and affordable solutions. Last week we carried a story from Dadeldhura in far-western Nepal where mothers have seen the benefit of improved smokeless stoves that have become so popular, metal workshops can't manufacture the chulos fast enough. The stoves cost Rs 400, but they can reduce a mother's daily workload by more than half because they use half the fuel wood, cook twice as fast, and pots and pans don't get as dirty. The women and children don't suffer chronic eye infection anymore and the incidence of pneumonia has dropped dramatically.

There are many small-is-beautiful initiatives like these that have tested well at a local level and are in the process of being replicated nationwide. The Bhattarai government before it stepped down last month gave a target of 2017 to fit all four million households in Nepal with smoke-free stoves. That is also the year by which time all of Nepal's 75 districts will hopefully be open-defecation free and all schools will have toilets. Even if these targets are not fully met, the impact on child survival and increasing lifespan of Nepalis will be huge.

Nepal has made the most dramatic progress in all-round human development among the world's low income countries. As our coverage on page 16-17 shows, this has happened despite war, corruption, political disarray, and instability. Imagine how much more progress we'd have made if we had an actual peace dividend, elections, and better accountability and transparency.

But you won't hear much about this in the media because the taking of lives makes news, not saving them.

The media isn't really bothered much that the government is now on a toilet-building spree and districts are competing with each other to declare themselves open-defecation free. Already women in villages are refusing to marry into families that don't have toilets. Catalysed by donors, water, hygiene and sanitation campaigns have now moved beyond being just an NGO project. It is a social movement which doesn't need money as much as a change in mindset and awareness about how little it takes to save lives. When communities are empowered, they don't need a donor-funded project.

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

NEPAL'S YOUTH BULGE

It will take another 20 or 30 years for the current group of 60 plus politicians to be phased out (through old age) and for young Nepalis to finally take charge ('Nepal's youth bulge', Trishna Rana, #650). Unfortunately, those who are in their 20s and 30s today will be 50 plus by that time and the same cycle will repeat. Therefore what we need is not a few young leaders here and there, but a complete overhaul of the system.

PB

Excellent analysis. We do really have strength in numbers. But I worry about the thousands already conscripted by the parties who rear their ugly heads during bandas and on campuses and universities playing politics.

'Young maanche'

IT IS ROCKET SCIENCE

Thank you Kunda Dixit for a very uplifting article on improved cooking stoves ('It is Rocket science', #650). I would like to congratulate all those involved in this simple yet tremendously effective technology available to poor families. Of course, it's not rocket science, but for millions it is more important and relevant than rocket science.

R Rai

Rocket technology was also introduced in Zimbabwe in the 1990s, but the usual lethargy literally killed the project. We at Total Energy Solutions want to play our part. Great article, let's change lives.

Ronnie



One aspect not touched upon by this article is that smokeless chulos are instrumental in reducing burn injuries, a major cause of death in Nepal. In the 1980s, Nepal Paediatrics Society carried out a survey in Bhumisthan of Dhading district and found out that burn injuries were extremely common and an extrapolation of the results to the entire country revealed that 1.2 million burn injuries occurred every year. Of the 1,110 households in Bhumisthan, 237 accepted installation of smokeless chulos. In these households there was a reduction of over 70 per cent in the incidence of burns and scalds.

Narayan Bahadur Thapa

OVERFLYING EVEREST AGAIN

Commemorating the 1933 flyover Sagarmatha was okay, but linking it with Douglas Douglas-Hamilton's grandson's normal mountain flight was way too much ('Overflying Everest again', Kunda Dixit, #650). Saying that the flight is a 'recreation' is wrong because that naturally would have required taking off from Bihar's Purnea WWII strip, which, in all probability, is no longer in use.

Armugam

BORN POSITIVE

As far as I know the first school for

HIV positive students was Punarbal Shikshya Sadan in Sitapaila chok ('Born positive', Sunil Neupane, #650). It was established in 2007 to provide educational services to children infected and affected by HIV and later integrated other non infected children to minimise discrimination.

Sunila Baniya

KOLOR KTM

While Kolor Kathmandu is undoubtedly producing excellent work why does the team see political slogans as filth that needs to be cleaned up ('Koloring Kathmandu', Tsering Dolker Gurung, #650)? Are they not a form of art and expression too? And why is Kolor Kathmandu any better than political slogans? I hope that street art in Kathmandu remains for all and does not become sanitised and NGO-ised.

James

It's an irony that some street artists take money from embassies and NGOs and create these development murals. It's just sad.

@arpan_shrestha

SETTING THE RIGHT FIELD

I suggest the cricket boards of Nepal and Afghanistan to work together as this would boost the growth and visibility of both teams at the international level ('Setting the right field', Sunir Pandey, #650).

Manu Welo Gunazali

Wonderful interview of Raees Ahmadzai. The man is an exceptional young leader and we are proud of him.

Maroof

'CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT THEM'

What are Rahul Gandhi's performance records and what are his qualifications other than being Sonia's son ('Can't live without them', Ajaz Ashraf, #650)? Just because his congress party men do not have the courage to question him, there is no reason why the Indian people should not question him.

Manoj Bhandari

Dynasties are not just an affliction in South Asia. The Americans have Bush senior and junior and the North Koreans their three Kims: Kim Jong-un, Kim Jong-il, and Kim Il-sung.

Sunny

BRICS WITHOUT MORTAR

There is a lot of wishful thinking in Joseph S Nye's arguments ('BRICS without mortar', #650). 'Disparate countries' as he calls them, can organise themselves successfully around a strong enough common goal - look no further than NATO and EU for that. You could argue the French have even less in common with the Americans and there is far more cultural and political acrimony between them than China and Brazil. Yet, they have remained a part of US-dominated alliances primarily because of their strategic goal of ensuring strong Western influence in the world.

Aideeah

CORRECTION:

Embers restaurant ('Someplace else', #650) is currently open on a trial basis and will begin operations officially within the next few months.

Q OF THE WEEK

What do you want to happen in Nepal in 2070 BS ?

facebook

Samir Pradhan: I want a new constitution to be drafted
Suman Regmi: Nothing what we want will happen, we can only expect political game
Sharad Duwal: I don't expect the political scene to improve, apart from that let everything good happen here
Simanta Lamichhane: Free and fair elections
Sanju Shrestha: Nepal's overall development be accelerated by double

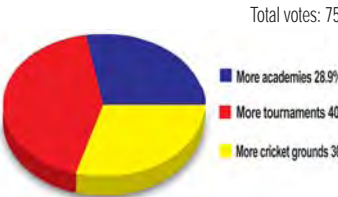
twitter

@ruptse: People having courage to stand up for themselves and not as political stooges. Oh and no load shedding
@sardogsnepal: Lasting peace, new and smart generation of young politicians, security for our weak industry and many more women in politics
@anilbhattarai: Sajha buses ply Kathmandu streets



Weekly Internet Poll #651

Q. What does Nepali cricket need to improve its standards in the long-term?



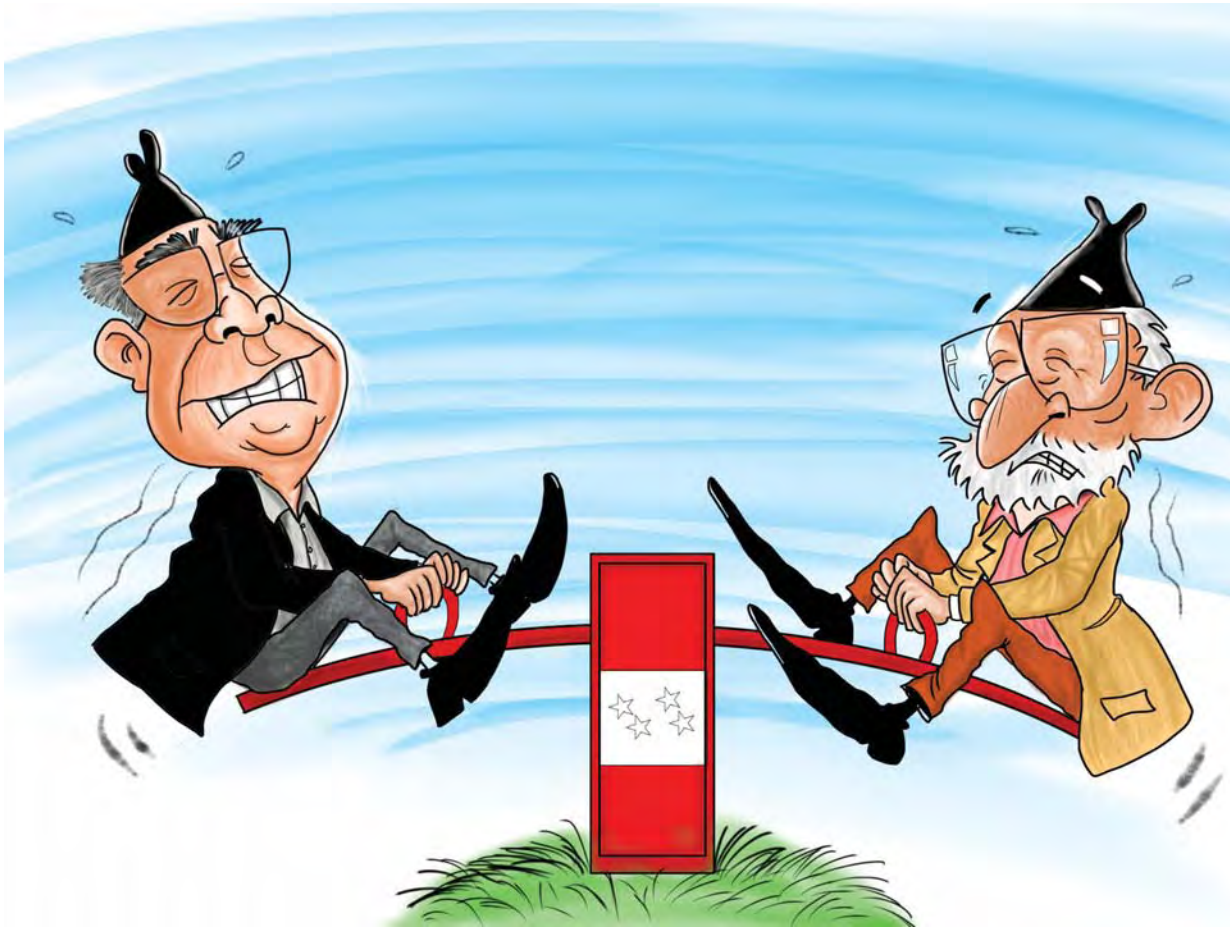
Weekly Internet Poll # 652. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Does the recently announced budget meet your expectations?



Nepali Times on Facebook
Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter





DIWAKAR CHETTRI



BY THE WAY

Anurag Acharya

About 1,000 Nepali Congress leaders gathered at Triveni of Nawalparasi this week to chart out the party's vision and mission for the upcoming CA elections. The Mahasamiti meeting was expected to clarify the NC's political position for which the party has been criticised from within and without.

Two days of meetings later, expectations turned into frustration and discontent as the leaders headed home. Things didn't get off to an auspicious start because a religious guru reportedly criticised secularism and hinted that the party should try to revert the country back to a Hindu state.

"We were hoping that the party would take a progressive stance on issues of federalism, inclusion, and the Madhes,

instead we got whiff of a dangerous conspiracy against fundamental achievements of the People's Movement," NC leader Indrajit Gurung told me over phone as he prepared to board a bus back from Nawalparasi on Wednesday.

The political document presented by Ram Chandra Poudel failed to impress Mahasamiti members, particularly those from Janajati and Madhesi background, who criticised it for failing to offer a clear position on federalism and identity.

"We have consistently maintained that federal states must be multi-ethnic with no front rights, but each ethnic identity must be recognised with rights to cultural (not political) self-determination," Gurung explained. "So to create confusion and say that Janajatis are trying to upset communal harmony by asking for ethnic states is nothing but a lie."

The strong rebuff from Janajati and Madhesi leaders has once again exposed the democratic deficit inside the

oldest party which claims to be the bastion of Nepali democracy. The leadership, primarily consisting of elderly Brahmin men, will be increasingly under pressure to address the grievances of the marginalised within the party.

The disgruntled members have given the heads a week to clarify the party's position on federalism and identity and warned that ignoring the voice of the marginalised could cost the NC dearly in elections.

Leaders like Gurung may still be hopeful that their concerns

The NC's 12-year itch

The frustration of being out of power and angst of defeat in the last CA have seeped into Nepal's grand old party

will be addressed, but they have no illusions about exclusive coterie politics that plagues the party.

Madhesi members who spoke at the meeting also expressed their displeasure over the proposed Madhes pradesh in the document. They said they did not support the single Madhes demand, but they were equally critical of Poudel's proposal of carving out north-south states.

The frustration of being out of power for over a decade and angst of defeat in the last CA elections have seeped into the old party as it looks to improve its performance in the upcoming polls. Like the Maoists, the NC also hopes to tap into dipping popularity of Madhes-based parties and reclaim its original position in the Tarai.

But despite their tainted record in office, Madhes-based parties still champion all the necessary agenda to rally voters while the NC has failed to impress even party loyalists.

After the demise of Girija Prasad Koirala, the NC suffered a leadership crisis with a coterie of old men holding the party hostage to their personal ambitions. These men have neither commitment nor vision to lead a party that can negotiate the constitution-drafting process.

The NC's wish of securing popular support to become the biggest force in the next election will remain a dream unless the elders make way for younger visionary leaders who can show both flexibility and commitment to democratic norms. ■

Representative & Service Center for

SHIMANO **FOX** **RACING SHOX**

KATHMANDU BIKE STATION

Panipokhari, Maharajgunj
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 009777-1-4444250
Web: ktmbikestation.com
Email: info@ktmbikestation.com

Step In For Adventure...

AM Cague 6550
Powerkid 24 boy

Please feel free to enter the world of furnishing...

New Madan Furnishers Pvt. Ltd.
Sahid Sukra Marg, Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 5523236, 5520318, Email: nmfpvtltd@yahoo.com

SHAH RUKH KHAN
AND HIS AQUARACER

TAGHeuer
SWISS AVANT-GARDE SINCE 1860

SULUX CENTRE
Hotel Woodland Complex, Durbarmarg
Kathmandu, Nepal.

“Tremendous opportunities”

Kenichi Yokoyama, Country Director of the Nepal Resident Mission of the Asian Development Bank (ADB) spoke to *Nepali Times* this week about infrastructure bottlenecks, political fluidity affecting the investment climate, and Nepal's macroeconomy.

***Nepali Times:* The ADB has been working on a five-year plan for Nepal, what is its main thrust?**

Kenichi Yokoyama: ADB's draft new country partnership strategy has three thrusts: accelerating economic growth, pursuing inclusive and employment-centric growth, and emphasising institution building. Our assistance will be about \$250 million per year and will focus on addressing bottlenecks in energy, transport, and urban infrastructure, building human capital, and transforming agriculture.

Multilateral agencies in Nepal seem to swing wildly between deep pessimism and unrealistic optimism about the country's future. Where do you fit in?

No one questions the bright prospects for hydropower, tourism, high value agriculture and agro-processing, IT, and other industries. But there are also substantial hurdles to overcome in triggering high growth process. Developing industries call for infrastructure bases particularly power, better enabling environment, and strategic and proactive promotion policies. To resolve power shortage, foreign investment needs to be drawn with rigorous attraction of investors while enhancing credibility of the off taker, that is, the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA).

But we have seen countries with political instability doing pretty well economically. Why is it necessary to get politics right first in Nepal?

Countries growing strongly and resilient against political changes tend to have firm and diverse growth bases. For example, a system that can maintain high level of quality public investment in physical and human capital will provide resilience. So will stable policy and legal frameworks that can protect the interest of private industries and investors even in times of political change. FNCCI has been pursuing political consensus on the minimum economic agenda, which can serve such a purpose.

What are the challenges in promoting investor confidence in Nepal?

Recent business surveys indicate political instability, power and other infrastructure deficit, weak governance, difficult labour relations, low confidence on macroeconomic stability, etc. While some would require medium-term efforts, there are areas that can bear immediate results. We think the government can be



CINDREY LIU

more proactive in attracting foreign investment by welcoming them as invitees and providing attractive incentives commensurate with the level of the country risk. Also helpful would be strong anti-corruption drives and enforcement of law and order to protect public investments, industries, and their employees. Stable policy and legal and regulatory framework can also help provide predictability to investors.

How important are remittance inflows in sustaining Nepal's economy?

There is no question that remittance has played a vital role. It accounts for 23 per cent of GDP in official statistics and could be much higher if informal inflow is included. It has contributed to reduced poverty and higher human development indicators (education and health) at household level, helped finance burgeoning imports and maintain balance of payment and overall macroeconomic stability. On the other hand, this has increased the country's dependence on global economic conditions. There is a higher risk of disruption due to external shocks. High remittance is also a reflection of insufficient jobs in

Nepal, stemming from a lack of viable investment opportunities that can create jobs to 450,000 youths entering into the labour market each year.

What can be done to maximise benefits from remittances, as the Philippines or Sri Lanka have done?

Countries like the Philippines are also facing the same dilemma since remittance is largely used for consumption. In Nepal, the challenge is bigger, since the import content of consumption is high, that means consumption does not induce local production so strongly. The good news is that nowadays we hear a lot of stories about returnees investing in high value products in rural areas and gaining good incomes. Such new dynamics can be nourished by rural business incubation with value chain development and other technical support. Improved access to rural finance will also help to channel remittances to productive usages.

You mentioned energy as the big obstacle to future growth. Is the ADB planning bigger involvement in hydropower generation?

ADB has just approved a \$150

million loan for 140MW Tanahu Hydropower Project, together with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and other co-financiers providing \$280 million. In the new assistance strategy ADB is putting highest priority to help fully resolve the power crisis. Nepal may also see the development of hydropower not only for domestic use but as a major source of export. In this regard we are exploring further and larger hydropower projects to fully satisfy the domestic requirements while targeting export potential

Sufficient investor confidence needs to be built, with reforms within NEA and establishing a regulatory environment conducive for rapid expansion of the power sector. The governments of India and Nepal are discussing an umbrella power purchase agreement, which can substantially facilitate private sector investments.

How about other infrastructure?

Water and transport are high priorities, the former including water supply and sanitation in urban areas, irrigation in rural areas, and integrated management systems. Above all, ADB is strongly committed to deliver clean water to Kathmandu by early 2016, by completing the Melamchi tunnel, water treatment plant (assisted by JICA), and associated distribution systems. Besides roads, ADB is also extending assistance for airport improvements in Kathmandu, Bhairawa, and remote domestic airports. We believe these will provide essential bases to attract investments in domestic industries and tourism.

How can Nepal benefit from its strategic location between India and China?

We see tremendous opportunities. We need to think beyond national borders, since district areas along the borders are strongly connected with the neighbouring economy. The five bordering Indian states alone have a population of over 400 million and have seen rapid growth in recent years. China has also waived tariffs on a large number of export items, including agriculture products. Nepal can greatly benefit from regional economic integration by substituting imports and exporting energy and other goods and services.

Low project performance has always been an issue in Nepal. Are things getting better?

When measured by implementation timeliness, impact, and sustainability, Nepal's performance has been low compared with ADB-wide average. ADB along with the World Bank, DFID, and JICA have long been jointly pursuing improvements through a forum called Nepal Portfolio Performance Review (NPPR). Over the years, the performance has been improving, although this year is a challenge due to lack of full budget and other constraints.

nepalitimes.com

Read full interview

Cleaning out our cabinets

Nepal has a long way to go before it can be electronically governed



ECONOMY STUPID
Puja Tandon

A young man from Darchula travels to the capital to make his passport. After a three-day bus ride, he has to wait in line for hours before he can even enter the passport office in Narayanhiti. Not to mention the hours he will spend trying to find his way through Nepal's notorious bureaucratic maze. Now imagine if there was an office in the district headquarters connected to a national digital database, the same task could be completed within an hour or two, helping save the man (and the state) his money and energy.

E-governance or digital governance is not a new concept in the west. States have been using technology to provide public services and information 24 hours a day in an efficient and transparent manner. Submitting documents, paying bills, taxes, filing tax returns can all be done online, substantially reducing the time and cost involved. Most importantly, e-governance vastly improves access to state services. It also leads to

standardisation of services, enhanced transparency, and accountability.

India began computerising its data and records in the seventies. The National e-Governance Plan intended to ensure access to all state services through electronic media is being implemented aggressively. In Pakistan the prime ministerial secretariat has been automated with applications for Hajj and even salaries for government



officers processed online. Even countries like Ghana and Sierra Leone in west Africa have set up new electronic technologies and systems. Although the Nepali government created a master plan for e-governance in 2006, transition to the new system has moved at a snail's pace and ubiquitous filing cabinets and grey folders are still a very common sight. The potential remains largely untapped.

Nepal loses millions

every time there is a banda. Electronic service delivery could compensate for this loss to some extent and provide relief to common citizens and businesses. Such technology will become indispensable as Nepal gradually transitions into a federal set up and will help facilitate better coordination between provincial governments and the central government. Furthermore, to make Nepal more conducive for investments from abroad, foreign investment procedures could be delinked with visa processes for investors and their technical staff.

Going electronic, however, requires major improvements in IT infrastructure (like latest computers, well-equipped data centres, fast and reliable internet connection) and a qualified labour force to set up and run the system. Overall development in terms of electricity supply, improved road networks, and a population which has basic e-knowledge is also crucial.

However, more than physical infrastructure, transforming the habits and makeup of the current bureaucracy will perhaps be the biggest challenge for Nepal. Government officials will most likely resist change because it will close many of the existing loopholes that make corruption and tardiness an epidemic in the country.

BIZ BRIEFS

Shinning Ray

Morang Auto Works has launched Yamaha Ray scooter in Nepal. It has 113cc air-cooled four-stroke SOHC engine and offers mileage of over 40 kmpl. According to the press release, Ray's exhaust systems and new transmission settings have been optimised for better performance in Nepal's rough roads.



Chicago bound

Qatar Airways has started flights from Doha to Chicago O'Hare with its flagship long-haul Boeing 777-300. This is the airline's 126th passenger destination and newest US gateway, following successful operations to New York, Washington DC, and Houston said the press release.

Happy New Year

CG Electronics, the authorised distributor of Toshiba home appliances in Nepal has introduced Toshiba Power Bulletin 'Bhari Chut ko Sukadh Samachar' this to celebrate new year 2070. The company is offering customers cash discount up to Rs 4,000 on purchase of Toshiba products.



Small steps

IFC, a member of the World Bank Group, will train bank officials in Nepal to help them address the financing needs of small and medium enterprises. According to the press release the training initiative will allow financial institutions to reach out to more small entrepreneurs.

Speed matters

Subisu Cablenet has launched 'New Year 2070 Offer'. Under this scheme, customers are entitled to broadband internet with cable TV channel, cable modem, and antivirus internet security. With the purchase of any single bandwidth package, they will receive equal bandwidth package for free.



Bumper offer

Nepal General Marketing, the authorised distributor of Hero two-wheelers, has launched 'Baaf reh Baaf! Scratch and Win' offer to mark Nepali New Year 2070. The offer is valid for one month and includes cash prizes of up to Rs 25,000 and a bumper prize through a lucky draw said the press release.

New Year सा New Pinch को मजा

Samsungले दिनेछ New Gifts
Loved onesले भन्नेछन् New Pinch

Microwave Oven
- Microwave Oven Kit

Washing Machine
- Bajaj/ Himstar Iron

Refrigerator
Single Door: 3 ltrs. Real Juice
Double Door: 6 ltrs. Real Juice

22" & 26" LED/LCD TV
- Himstar Rice Cooker*

32" & above LED/LCD TV
- Bajaj Bravo Mixer Grinder

* conditions apply.

Marketed in Nepal by:
NIM ELECTRONICS PRIVATE LIMITED
JDA Office Complex
Bag Durbar, Sundhara, Kathmandu
Tel: 977- 1- 4267760, 4263127

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

Samsung का उत्कृष्ट उत्पादनहरुको खरिदमा अब पाउनुहोस् - नयाँ-नयाँ sure-shot prize !
For Service: Toll Free No.: 1660 - 01 - 88088

PRISMA - 05M/13

Bijli, pani, and corruption



PRESS TRUST OF INDIA

If Arvind Kejriwal can take Delhi in elections, he could do an Obama in India



GUEST COLUMN

Ajaz Ashraf

It is possible the pugnacious Aam Admi Party leader, Arvind Kejriwal, could emerge as Barack Obama when the Indian capital elects its state assembly in December 2013.

Five years before Obama became the first black president of the United States, he had caught the popular imagination there through a stirring speech in the Democratic Party convention in Chicago. Yet, nobody then really believed that the young, promising politician could eventually become the president of a country torn by race prejudices.

India's Congress and Bharatiya Janata Party should remember this as elections to the Delhi assembly nears. The mainstream political parties grudgingly accept Kejriwal's growing popularity, but

superciliously dismiss the possibility that he or his party could become a factor in the assembly polls. They ask: can they even find candidates for all the 70 seats of the Delhi Assembly? They can't field Kejriwal everywhere, can they?

AAP's charm for the electorate can be gleaned from the fact that over one million people submitted electricity bills to the party, pledging not to pay. Consumers in Delhi have been reeling under high electricity and water bills and Kejriwal's satyagraha is a protest against privatisation as well, apart from introducing a new style of political formation.

A public opinion survey of voters in Delhi showed that the AAP could muster between 14-18 per cent of votes, a commendable feat for a party established only a few months ago. Since the poll was conducted 45 days before Kejriwal went on his fast, it won't be off the mark to predict that AAP could soon breach the

crucial barrier of 20 per cent: the figure beyond which support begins to translate into votes. Should this indeed turn out to be the case, the vote share of the Congress and the BJP would dip below 30 per cent, at which point they will begin to lose seats in far greater proportion than the swing against them would have ordinarily caused.

Further, this opinion survey asked voters to list their preferences for the chief minister of Delhi. No names were provided; it is the kind of question for which a substantial percentage of respondents tick the don't know/can't say box. Nevertheless, Delhi Chief Minister Sheila Dixit topped with 16 per cent of votes, Kejriwal was second with 11 per cent, and BJP's Vijay Goyal lagged behind with just five per cent. The pollster's questionnaire also asked who among the candidates would be best for Delhi. Kejriwal received the maximum votes.

On a visit to Sundar Nagri, I

discovered that the support for Kejriwal has percolated below the middle class, from which he had drawn sustenance during the anti-corruption movement, to those who are fired less by promises of turning our cities into Shanghai or New York and more by rhetoric hoping to make their tomorrow a tad more tolerable.

Perhaps comparing Kejriwal to Obama is inappropriate in a parliamentary democracy which, unlike the presidential system, is theoretically said to be impervious to the charismatic influence of individual leaders. But in India we have seen leaders spearhead their parties to victory on their individual steam. Think of the impact Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, and Sonia Gandhi have had on the fortunes of the Congress. Or look at the BJP cadre clamouring for Narendra Modi, believing the party under his leadership can triumph in the 2014 election.

AAP's growth, as also its ambition, could still get nixed for various reasons. For one,

the perception that a fledgling outfit, however well meaning, doesn't stand a chance to win often prompts even its diehard supporters to cast their votes in favour of one of the two leading political parties they consider as a lesser evil. Second, it is still uncertain whether AAP's politics of interest, as spelt out through the agenda of bijli, pani, and corruption can neutralise the irresistible lure the politics of identity (caste and religion) invariably has for the Indian electorate.

Should the AAP manage to spring a surprise in the Delhi assembly elections, it could have implications for the 2014 General Election. A victory in Delhi for AAP augurs well for Delhi, for it could hold out the hope of changing the complexion of the existing political class, whose members boast family lineage, are often rich, and consider power not as an instrument to transform society but to enrich themselves. ashrafajaz3@gmail.com

A greener way to fly....

In 2010, Yeti Airlines took an initiative and launched "Green Far West Project" with a strong partnership with RAAKA Tours and Travels, DRSP (District Road Support Programme) and Tiger Mountain Nepal.

Under this Green Project, for every ticket sold in Kathmandu, Dhangadi or Nepalgunj sector, Yeti Airlines plants a tree sapling on passenger's behalf in one of the chosen community forest in the Far-Western region of Nepal. Till date, more than 0.1 million tree saplings have already been planted and taken care of. Yeti Airlines contributes Rs. 20 /-(one way ticket) and Rs. 40/-(a round trip ticket) for Kathmandu-Dhangadhi or Kathmandu-Nepalgunj sector only. You are welcome to visit any of the community forest sites where your tree saplings are planted and taken proper care.

Come, be a part of this step with the nature.
Fly with Yeti Airlines and help make the world greener.

Green
Far-West
Project



Yeti Airlines
You come first

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

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

Yeti Airlines Domestic Pvt. Ltd. Corporate Office: Tilganga, Kathmandu, Tel: 4465888 Fax: 4465115 Reservations: 4464878 (Hunting Line), Kathmandu Airport: 4493901 Email: reservations@yetiairlines.com Sky Club: 01-4487020/4465888 (223/418) Email: skyclub@yetiairlines.com
•Bhadrapur: 023-455232 •Biratnagar: 021-536612 •Tumlingtar: 029-575120 •Janakpur: 041-520047 •Bharatpur: 056-523136 •Pokhara: 061-464888 •Bhairahawa: 071-527527 •Nepalgunj: 081-526556 •Dhangadi: 091-520004

www.yetiairlines.com

The only reason it wasn't hotter than it was this week was because of the wind-blown sand from the west, from the Indian desert and even from the Arabian peninsula. This is the time of year when tiny sand particles shroud the Arabian Sea and northern India till and up to an altitude of 3,500 m. This week was made worse by smoke and ash from wildfires that raged across the Tarai and some high up in the mountains. A slight low pressure system will bring some localised storms across central Nepal this weekend. In Kathmandu maximum temp will still stay below 30.



QATAR AIRWAYS القطرية
World's 5-star airline. qatarairways.com



MEMORY LANE: This almost 100 year old photo taken from Bhadrakali shows a small gravel road lined with pine trees leading towards Singha Darbar.

PURSHOTTAM SHAMSHER RANA'S COLLECTION

Flashback to the future

With half a dozen different new years, we Nepalis have an excuse to eat, drink, and be merry every few months. This year, the planets have conspired to let us party for 48 hours straight as we welcome Bikram Sambat 2070 on Sunday. So book those weekend getaways, send out Facebook invites for your wild house party, or get hold of concert tickets of the band you have been dying to hear. Short on ideas? Let us help

(Page 8-9).
New year is all about new beginnings and if you haven't lived up to the resolutions you made in January 2013, now is a good time to revisit them and set things right, again. But even as we move forward into 2070, we take a look back at Nepal and Nepalis over the last 100 years. Old places, old faces tell us how we have journeyed far.
Meet three (great) grandparents as they reminisce about

experiences that although oddly familiar, seem straight out of history books. They have lived through the devastating earthquake of 1990 BS, witnessed the rise, fall, and extinction of dynasties and several political systems, and seen Nepal take baby steps towards democracy. But they also remind us of things worth hanging onto: green trees, open spaces, and the occasional jeri swari at the local mithai pasal.
Find out the history behind the Bikram Sambat calendar. And discover how our neighbours around the region celebrate the big day.
With elections, a constituent assembly, and a new constitution on the horizon, here's hoping for naya Nepal (version 2.0) this naya saal. 🇳🇵

SEE INSIDE:
page 10-11

Mark your calendars

In a country with 90 days of public holiday (and 103 ethnic groups), it's not surprising that sometimes we have new years within two weeks of each other. Put your party hats on and get ready to celebrate and then some more!

Nepali New Year 2070 14 April 2013	Newari New Year 1134 (Nepal Sambat) 4 November 2013	Islamic New Year 1435 (After Hijra) 4/5 November 2013
Gurung Tamu Losar 2141 30 December 2013	Gregorian New Year 2014 1 January 2014	Kirati New Year 5074 (Yele Sambat) 15 January 2014
Tamang Sonam Losar 2141 31 January 2014	Sherpa/Tibetan Gyalpo Losar 2141 2 March 2014	

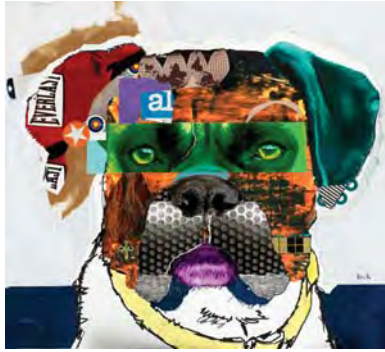
HONDA
The Power of Dreams

BRIO
It loves you back

You wanted a car you'll love.
We built a car that will love you back.

JYOTI
Honda Car Showroom, Dhotibhat, Ring Road, Lalitpur
Tel: 5549741/8721383223 Fax: 877-1-5549742
Thapathali Showroom Tel: 2003769
E-mail: hondacar@sykar.com.np
www.honda.com.np

EVENTS



PHOTOCHOP, get out of the comfortable confines of digital image manipulation and learn the art of photo-collage as done in the good old days.
Rs 1,000, 17 to 21 April, Sattya Arts, Jawalakhel, shreyans@sattya.org

Bikers day out, get on your bikes and ride! 200 Enfielders will be vroom-vrooming from Kathmandu to Pokhara.
13 to 15 April, www.enfieldpokerrun.com

Inked for life, compete with tattoo artists from home and abroad at the 3rd International Tattoo Convention.
26 to 28 April, Yak and Yeti Hotel, 9841471448/9841849786

Girls on wheels, ride your scooters around town in a treasure hunt, solve puzzles, and complete tasks to win a grand prize of Rs 50,000. *Rs 1,500, 20 April, Kathmandu College of Management, 980103373/9841570061/9851061065*

Cross-cultural documentary workshop, learn from award-winning

Natasa Muntean how to develop informed, intelligent, and creative films that contribute directly to critical cultural practice.
Rs 2,000, 10 to 14 April, 10am to 5pm, Sattya Arts, Jawalakhel

Think, eat, save, 200 million people could be fed with the amount of food wasted in Europe. Vote for bloggers who are actively urging the public to shift from conspicuous eating to conscious eating.
www.unep.org/wed/blog-competition/bloggers/, #WED2013

Basantapur festival, celebrate the coming of Nepali New Year 2070.
12 to 13 April, Kathmandu Darbar Square

Expressions of devotion, an exhibition of etching, unique print, and video installations by Uma Shanker Shah and Seema Sharma Shah.
Runs till 17 April, 10am to 5pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babarmahal



OH TO BE A GOONER, watch Arsenal take on Norwich as they chase the Champions League spots.
13 April, 7.30pm, Reggae Cafe n Bar, Thamel



MR CATRA THE FAITHFUL, a documentary on the Brazilian singer who sings about poverty in the favelas of Rio Di Janeiro and is mistreated by the police in return.
14 April, 6.30pm, Sattya Media, Jawalakhel

Free hit, watch the Indian Premier League everyday.
3pm, Bagaicha Restaurant, Jawalakhel, (01)5548148

Pranamaya yoga, learn the healing techniques of emotional freedom technique with Maggie Hankamp.
Rs 3000, 13 April, 11am to 4pm, Pranamaya Studio, Patan

NYE Resolution, bid farewell to 2069 wiith salsa, trance, and a countdown to 2070.
14 April, Red Carpet Restro and Lounge, Sherpa Mall

Beyond 2070, celebrate the new year undisturbed by the chaos of Kathmandu.
Rs 4,000, 13 to 14 April, Royal Beach Camp, Kurintar, 9851006419/9841188257

The Boys Next Door, book your new year's eve for a night in the company of this popular band.
Rs 700, 31 March, 7pm, Asian Village Restaurant and Bar, Lajimpat

DINING



CHONGQING FAST FOOD, gear up for some mouth watering Chinese dishes like Sour and Spicy Pork and Kung Pao Chicken. *Thamel*

Byanjan, enjoy great food at an affordable price. Shrimp cocktails, grilled fish, and desserts are favourites among guests.
Lakeside, Pokhara

Dragon Chinese Restaurant, try the Kung Pao Pork if alone and the Mai Cao if with company.
Lakeside, Pokhara

Chopstix, savoury Asian food cooked in true Chinese fashion sure to charm and impress. Try the famous drums of heaven. *Kumaripati, (01)5551118*

Dragon Cafe, enjoy momos, sizzlers, and vegetable coins at the most reasonable prices. *Kumaripati*



FUJI BAKERY, tucked in Chakupat this bakery offers homemade goodies like apple pie, pain du chocolat, and banana cake. *Chakupat, Lalitpur*

Saturday brunch, if you're heading to Shivapuri for bird-watching, a sumptuous meal awaits you on the way back.
Rs 1,400, 11am to 3pm, Poolside Garden, Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha, (01)4375280

Sal's Pizza, almost round, almost cheap, always delicious, the cheesiest pizzas in town.
Lajimpat, behind Jazz Upstairs

Cafe Du Temple, famous for its delicious food, warm ambience, and a beautiful roof top view.
Patan Darbar Square, (01)5527127



BOOMERANG RESTAURANT AND GERMAN BAKERY, offers a large selection of cuisine for those who want to enjoy a full meal and desserts.
Lakeside, Pokhara, (061)461412/462978

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

Hadock, big compound with ample parking space, its western and Thakali dishes are done to perfection.
Jhamsikhel, (01)5546431

नव वर्ष २०७०
र
चौथौ वार्षिकोत्सव
बहार

नागरिक दैनिक, रिपब्लिका र शुक्रवार साप्ताहिकको वार्षिक ग्राहक एकैसाथ रु.५,८०० मा बन्नुहोस् र Wynncom मोबाइल तुरन्त प्राप्त गर्नुहोस् ।
यो योजना स्टक रहनजेलका लागि मात्र उपलब्ध छ ।
ग्राहक बन्नका लागि CIR टाइप गरी ५२२५ मा SMS गर्नुहोस् ।



wynncom
Atom W105
Specifications
Dual SIM (GSM+GSM)
4.6cm (1.8)QVGA Display
900 mAh Battery
Video Recording (MP4/3GP)
Audio Player
Schedule SMS
SMS backup & Restore
Hindi language support
Digital Camera
Bluetooth Support
FM Radio
Expandable Memory up to 16GB
Smart Auto Call Record
Mobile Tracker
Dual Torch



थप जानकारीका लागि
नेपाल रिपब्लिक मिडिया
ओ.डि.ए. कम्प्लेक्स, बागदोरबार, काठमाडौं, फोन: ०१-४२६८६५६, ४२६९०० (ext. २०४/२०५)
इमेल: circulation@nagariknews.com

MUSIC

Suramya Sandhya, acclaimed Hindustani classical singer Guru Dev Kamat will give a rare Kathmandu performance.

20 April, 3.30pm, Academy Hall, Kamaladi

Earthwatch, live music over dinner every Friday.

Rs 1,299, Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha, (01)4375280



GUERRILLA GIG, top bands Jindabaad and Albatross will perform with lots of others at the historic Patan Museum. Rs 350, Patan Museum, 9841315997, 9851161414

Jumpin' barz, bid farewell to 2069 with much fervour.

Rs 150, 12 April, Attic Bar, Lajimpat

Live at Cafe 32, live music and delicious food every Friday.

6pm onwards, Cafe 32, Battispatali, (01)4244231

Loadshedding, catch this exciting new band live on new year's eve.

13 April, Bagaicha Restaurant, Jawalakhel

GETAWAYS



MARUNI SANCTUARY LODGE, nestled in a Tharu village on the border of the Chitwan National Park.

Rs 9,999 for twin-sharing, 2 days 3 nights, Chitwan, (01)44700632, 9841792225

Mango Tree Lodge, indulge in culture walks, rafting in the Karnali, wildlife exploration, and jungle safaris at the Bardia National Park.

Bhetani, Bardia, info@mangotreeelodge.com

Mum's Garden Resort, head out to Pokhara for a peaceful and comfortable stay in beautifully designed cottages surrounded by a lush green garden with great views of Phewa Lake and the Annapurna range.



SHIVAPURI COTTAGE, good food and fresh air, far from the madding crowd.

Rs 3,500 per person per night inclusive of dinner and breakfast, Shivapuri, 9841371927, 9802012245, info@shivapuricottage.com

Hit the highs

Time-travel to yesteryears as bands pay tribute to the legends of music at the first music and film festival in Kathmandu.

April 12

Kurt Cobain, 6 to 10pm, Reggae Bar, Thamel

Charlie Parker, 7 to 10pm, White Horse, Baluwatar

Jim Morrison and the Doors, 7 to 10pm, Fluid Bar

April 14

Mr Catra: The faithful, 7 to 9.30pm, Sattya Media, Jawalakhel



बराह ज्वेलरी इण्डस्ट्रीज 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: 061-306570 U.K.: Aldershot, London, Tel: 0044-7824332127, 1252409272 Hong Kong: 12/F Gofuku Tower 62-64, Woosung Street, Jordan KLN, HONG KONG, Tel: 00852-27838955, Fax: 00852-25538966

Good earthy food

Bhumi
Restaurant & Bar
Lazimpat • 4412193

Element™
Blood Glucose Monitoring System

For free demonstration and home delivery call: 4436928/29/30 Rajeeva/Suraj or mail at meditron@srd.com.np

- Automatic code Setting (No manual coding required)
- Painless with only 0.3µl Blood sample
- Only 3 seconds measuring time
- Meal/Exercises/Medication Setting (Glucose control per daily routine)
- Alternate Site Testing (for frequent test user: Taken from Arm, Thigh, Palm...)

Available at:
R.K Pharmaceuticals
SRD Building, New Plaza, Putalisadak
Tel: 4415227
and leading Chemist Shops

Marketed By:
Meditron International
Putalisadak, Kathmandu.
Tel: 4436928/29/30
E-mail: meditron@srd.com.np

Graphic voices

Adapting testimonies of trafficking survivors into comics, Dan Archer chronicles the abuses they suffered and gives a voice to the most unheard members of Nepali society. The unique combination of graphics and illustrated reportage lets interviewees see their likeness being created in real-time, gives them a window into the creative process, and preserves the impact of their stories without revealing their identity. Dan hopes the cartoons will appeal to a younger, hard to reach audience, engage them, and teach them about the dangers of human trafficking.

The exhibition will form part of a pioneering survey in conjunction with Stanford and Vanderbilt universities to measure the impact of awareness-raising materials across a range of media in remote areas of Nepal.

www.graphicvoices.com
www.archcomix.com
www.image-ark.com

Graphic voices from Nepal: An investigation of human trafficking
16 April to 14 May, 10am to 5pm except on Saturdays
Image Ark Gallery
Kulimha tole, Patan
(01)5006665
9851016572

Roadhouse Cafe
where the good times roll

wood-fired pizza, coffee and more!

Now open at

Pulchowk 5521755
Thamel 4262768
Bhatbhateni 4426587
Boudha 4916446

'Wherever you are in Nepal, We are at your service'



'47 years in hospitality industry'

Corporate/Reservation Office:
KGH Complex, Thamel, Kathmandu NEPAL.
P.O Box No: 21218 | Tel: 4700 800 / 4700 632
Email: info@ktmgh.com | Website: www.ktmgh.com

KATHMANDU GUEST HOUSE
Thamel, Kathmandu

PARK VILLAGE RESORT & SPA
Buddhanil (Budhanilkantha) Kathmandu

WATERFRONT RESORT
Sedi Height, Lakeside Road, Pokhara

MARUNI SANCTUARY LODGE
Bachauli, Chitwan

POKHARA VIEW GARDEN
Lakeside, Pokhara

PARK VISION INN
Telkot, Bhaktapur

*Wishing you all a prosperous
New Year 2070 !!*



KOLORING KATHMANDU

TSERING DOLKER GURUNG

For decades the white washed wall linings of Kathmandu have fought a losing battle against layers and layers of political slogans and posters. Yuki Poudyal, the brains behind Kolor Kathmandu, along with Sattya Media Arts Collective (*see box*), however, are on a mission to replace the sea of red letters and give the battered walls of this city a much needed facelift.

“Kathmandu’s residents have been treated to visual pollution all their lives. I wanted to change this by making our streets more appealing through mural art,” says the 27-year-old project director who was inspired by street art in Philadelphia (*see interview*).

held in Bara every five years.

Along with resuscitating the Valley’s sick walls, the project is nurturing young talents and providing them an opportunity to learn from veterans. First-timers are asked to shadow an experienced artist, after which they can submit their designs. Once their plans are approved, they can lead their own mural. Eighteen-year-old Sangrachana Chamling is one such aspiring talent who assisted an international artist before creating her own mural at Sanepa.

As the popularity of the murals spreads through word of mouth, support for the project is gaining steam. When Kolor Kathmandu posted



A team of local and international artists are transforming Kathmandu into the second mural city in the world

With 12 international muralists including popular German street artist duo, Herakut, and 25 local artists, Kolor Kathmandu has painted 25 murals in Baluwatar, Shankhamul, Bhotahiti, Jawalakhel, and other parts of town so far. They receive Rs 7,000 each for their hard work. The goal, says Yuki, is to create 75 murals by September and name them after the 75 districts of Nepal.

While some artists have focused on landscapes, others have chosen to depict social stigmas and problems faced in their districts. Anish Bajracharya’s Bara in Bhanimandal for example pays homage to the popular Newari lentil dish which shares its name with the district and also incorporates the Gadhimai festival

a request for aluminum ladders on its Facebook page, there were plenty of takers. Recently Pashupati Paints agreed to provide supplies for the artists. Not to miss out on the fun, people living outside Kathmandu have been asking Kolor Kathmandu to come paint their home towns.

“It’s great to see the artists’ efforts being appreciated,” says Yuki, “but they created the murals not for themselves or for Sattya. The art belongs to the neighbourhoods. We want people to be inspired and take ownership and protect it as their own.”

www.kolorkathmandu.sattya.org

nepalitimes.com

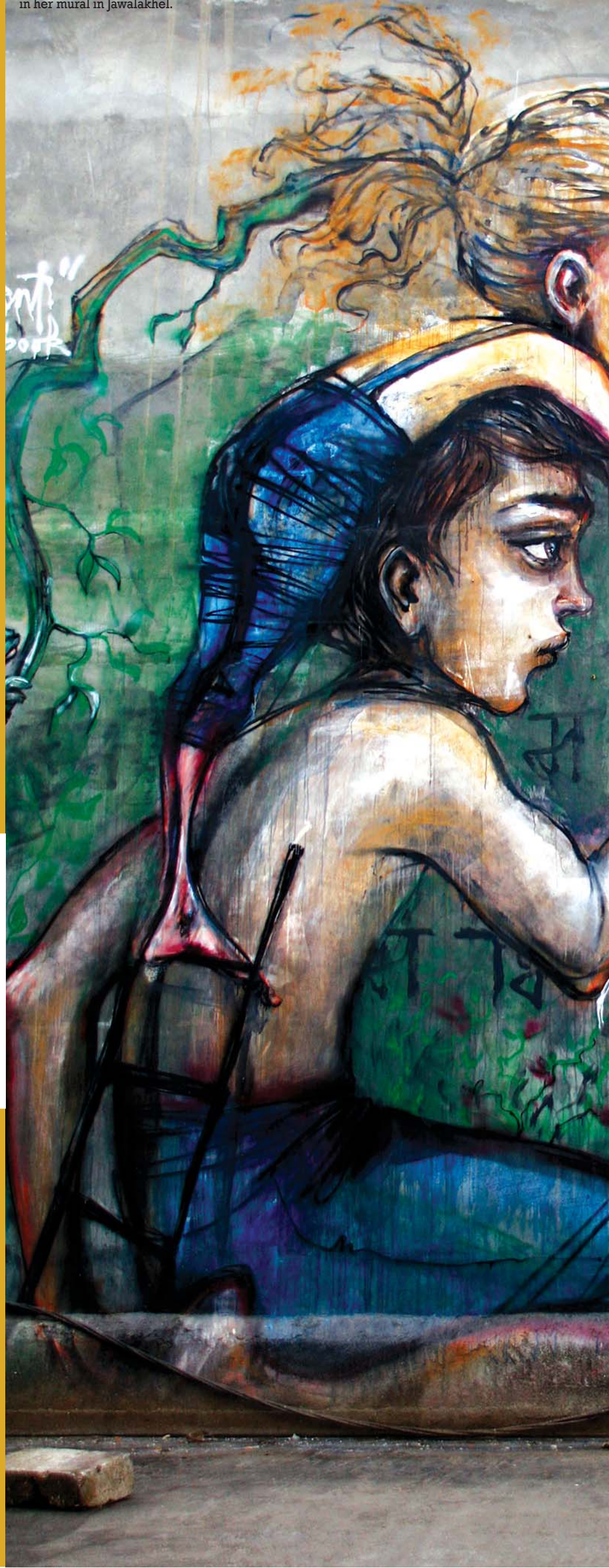
Watch artists in action

1 The mandala of bees painted by Daichi in Lajimpat represents Makwanpur district.

2 Kabina Shrestha, 27, works on her mural near Ideal Model School, Jhamsikhel.

3 German street artist duo Herakut completed this 25 feet mural at Bhotahiti in two days.

4 Priscila De Carvalho depicts the disturbing rise of consumerism in her mural in Jawalakhel.



A brush with street art

Was it difficult to get funds?

Surprisingly, money wasn't a big problem. Sattya is supported by Open Society Foundations, a grant-making organisation based in New York and we also receive funding from Prince Claus Fund of Netherlands.

Why did you choose mural art?

We didn't want to create art that would only be displayed at galleries and exhibitions. This is our way of reaching out to a larger Nepali public and saying we will not stand and see our city get more damaged than it already is.

How do you pick locations?

Finding places to paint has been the biggest challenge so far. We have a team of volunteers who go around town searching for locations, but sadly people still see street art as vandalism and are not very accepting. For most murals we ask for permission from owners or whoever is in charge, but with some we just go ahead and paint.

Do you think politics and art can go together?

There is so much filth in Nepali politics these days. It is constantly abused by those in power. Only if we can clean up our politics can art become a part of it.

Project director Yuki Poudyal tells us her vision for Kolor Kathmandu.

Nepali Times: How did Kolor Kathmandu start?

Yuki Poudyal: When I lived in Philadelphia, I was amazed by the amount of art that filled the city. The paintings and graffiti brought a sense of positivity to the community and inspired me to do something similar in Kathmandu. Nepal is fragmented at so many levels, but art is one way to show our unity. And this is why we are creating 75 murals to represent each district.



GROWING ART



Started in 2009 by Anya Vaverko and Yuko Maskey, Sattya today is a hub for artists, photographers, filmmakers, and writers. "We wanted a place in Kathmandu where creative people could connect, learn from one other, and share their ideas," says Anya.

The media arts collective regularly organises photography, documentary making, graphic designs, and screen printing workshops. Along with supporting Kolor Kathmandu, Sattya holds free screening of documentary films and discussions in public places around the Valley – aptly called Bato Ko Cinema - as well as teaching urban farming and ways to create green spaces in a congested Kathmandu through its Hariyo Chowk project.

www.sattya.org



SEVEN PSYCHOPATHS



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

In 2008, British-Irish playwright Martin McDonagh, came out with his first feature film, *In Bruges*, a sublimely violent, darkly comic caper of a film that delighted people who have an affinity for clever writing, a nonchalant attitude towards extreme violence on screen, and a love of the absurd.

Admittedly there is more to Donagh's writing than just the above. His plays were lyrically inspired, extremely bloody pieces brilliantly satirising the plight of the Irish post conflict era. Works like *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (2001), were critically acclaimed, chronicling the wanderings of a mentally unstable Irish National Liberation Army officer who has just found out that his cat, who is also his best friend, has been killed.

Seven Psychopaths, though not in the same league as *In Bruges*, is very much worth watching for its own brand of young unstable men indulging in their own particularly hilarious and neurotic antics. Sharing an animal as a key plot point with *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Seven Psychopaths* follows the madcap activities of a duo of dog thieves: Hans Kieslowski, played by the

wonderfully deadpan Christopher Walken, and Billie Bickle, played by the always watchable Sam Rockwell. These two are offset by their friend, the struggling screenwriter Marty Faranan, played by the very Irish Colin Farrell in his first decent role in years (his last good one was in *In Bruges*).

The thieving duo who steal dogs and return them to their owners to claim the reward are caught in a particularly uncomfortable situation when they kidnap a ridiculously adorable, mini panda like Shih Tzu (called Bonny), from a psychopathic gangster named Charlie Costello (Woody Harrelson). Meanwhile, Marty has been writing a screenplay titled *Seven Psychopaths* and is constantly on the lookout for real life psychos to inspire and alleviate his writer's block.

The plot is terribly confusing to go into, suffice to say that at one point, Marty, Billie, and Hans find themselves on the run from Costello, who is armed primarily with an oft misfiring pistol and a flare gun. The trio, meanwhile, are armed with very little, travelling in a vintage Buick, Billie carrying Bonny under his arm as their only real defence. Also involved are the seven psychopaths; Billie, Costello, and Hans are all revealed as three of the seven over the course of the film.

It is difficult to justify or even try to come to terms with this brand of film-making. Roger Ebert, the great film critic who passed

away this week, often defended films that had good intentions, even if they were fairly mediocre in execution (not that this film suffers from mediocre production values).

Well, the intent behind *Seven Psychopaths* is opaque indeed. McDonagh, who is both writer and director, has clearly honed his style quite enough to be able to achieve this level of clever silliness without any real effort. While *In Bruges* portrayed a real kind of existential angst experienced by the hardened gangster, *Seven Psychopaths* sails past any kind of metaphorical meaningfulness, opting instead for some fairly shallow philosophising about life after death.

This is not, in any way to say that *Seven Psychopaths* isn't worth watching. With its fine cast of characters (Tom Waits makes a great cameo as one of the psychopaths), its clever script, general hilarity, and of course, the Shih Tzu, the film will keep you more than entertained, although undoubtedly scratching your head at the end of all the carnage.

Watch it at your own risk, without your children around, and at the end of it all, perhaps you will be left thinking only this, how far would you go to get your dog back? 🐶

nepalitimes.com

Watch trailer



GIZMO by YANTRICK

As thin as they get

As smartphones and tablets continue to set the bar for all consumer technology, one can imagine all computing of the future will take place at the swipe of a finger. What, then, of personal computers? A few years ago, the IT industry came up with an answer: the ultrabook. Larger than a tablet and smaller than a laptop, it is made for long hours on the go.

Largely known as a maker of computing equipment, Fujitsu has also ventured into the personal computer market, with its flagship product - the Lifebook UH572 - leading the line. Packed with a third-generation i5 processor, 4GB RAM, and a roomy 500GB hard disk, the Lifebook offers precisely what it is made for: a mobile professional workstation.

Weighing in at 1.6 kilos and lying flat at just 18mm thick, the Lifebook is certainly on par with its competitors. Its 13.3 inch wide screen, a requirement for ultrabooks, is quite adequate for office work and its LED backlit HD screen even provides deep saturated colours for viewing photos and videos.

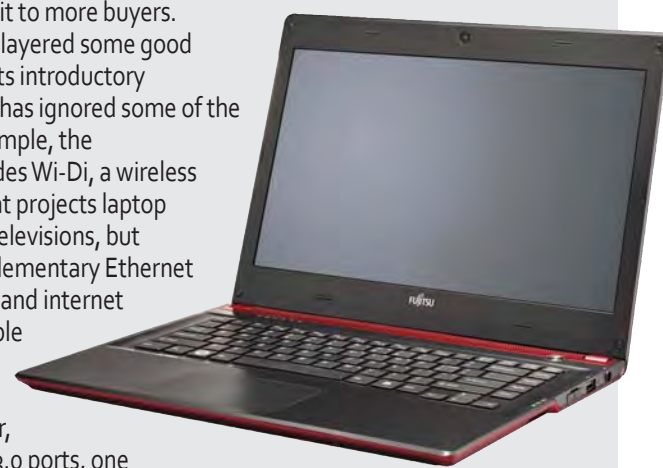
Where it does underperform is on the trebly, clanging sound that emanates from its speakers. Of course, ultrabooks are hardly designed for heavy multimedia use and sound does improve on headphones, but a well-rounded multimedia performance would have only endeared it to more buyers.

Fujitsu has layered some good features onto its introductory ultrabook, but has ignored some of the basics. For example, the Lifebook includes Wi-Di, a wireless technology that projects laptop displays onto televisions, but somehow an elementary Ethernet port is missing and internet access is possible basically only through the Wi-Fi. However, with two USB 3.0 ports, one of which charges other devices even when the Lifebook is powered down, one USB 2.0 port, an SD card reader, a 1.2 megapixel webcam, and an HDMI port, connectivity is not limited.

The Lifebook scores high marks on handiness, visuals, sturdiness (something that Fujitsu is known for), but it could have done better on other areas. The four-cell, five-hour battery life is just not enough for a long day at work, especially with Wi-Fi turned on. The keyboard provides no backlight, but the touchpad is quite handy in that you can get from one corner of the screen to another in one swipe.

The Lifebook comes with Windows 8 pre-installed, but with no touchscreen to make the most out of it. Other webcam and multimedia software bundled in with the computer are quite useful and you even get anti-virus protection for a limited period of time, courtesy Norton Systems.

Specifications: Intel 3rd generation 1.7Ghz processor, 4GB DDR3 RAM, 500GB HDD, 13.3 inch display, Intel HD graphics, 5 hours backup, Windows 8 professional, silver and black colours. Available at E-space, Putalisadak (014221605) for Rs 112,000, comes with laptop bag and charger. 🇳🇵



Yantrick's verdict: although MacBook Air sets the bar for ultrabooks, Fujitsu's Lifebook makes a handy debut and is a welcome addition to the 'slim' market.

See Beyond the Usual
with Brilliance
that moves the world!



EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION
MULTIMEDIA PROJECTORS
WORLD NO.1 FOR
10 YEARS IN A ROW

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION



Desktop Projectors



Wireless Projectors



Ultra-portable Projectors



Interactive Projectors



Home Theatre Projectors



MERCANTILE
OFFICE SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.
Hitti Pokhari, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4445920 / 4440773
Fax: 977-1-4437088
E-mail: market@mercantile.com.np

Kathmandu Dealers

Star Office Automation, Putalisadak : 4266820, Max International, Putalisadak : 4415786, Interactive Computer Center, 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, E-Net Solution, Chitwan : 056-572096, Himalayan Office Automation, Pokhara : 061-525300, Computer Service Center, Butwal : 071-542699/675, Smart Link Dang : 082-561022, Dinesh Trading House, Nepalgunj : 081-527092, Manokamana Hitech, Nepalgunj : 081-521473, Ugratara Trading House, Dhangadhi : 091-523601, Dinesh Computer, Dhangadhi : 091-521392, Ugratara Technical Goods, Mahendra Nagar : 099-523872

REVIEW

Clearly a good day

Hari Maharjan is many things at once. Those who frequent Thamel will recognise him as a gypsy jazz guitarist par excellence. Followers of Nepali popular music will discover he created the riffs of some of the most memorable Nepathya songs in the last few years. And to those who look up to him as a teacher and senior musician, Maharjan is by far the best guitarist in Nepal.

Now, two years after the release of their first album *Kalakarmi*, Maharjan's band Hari Maharjan Project is back with another gem. *Sudina*, Nepali for 'a good day', is finally out for those who want a made in Nepal eargasm.

It is Maharjan's brilliant guitar playing that drives the listener through the noisy chaos of the Valley in the opening track *Memories of Kathmandu* and yet manages to extract a semblance of seclusion in *Sudina*. The energy of *Easter* and *Pullu Kishi* at once transports you into the whirlpool pull of chariots in the narrow



streets of Asan and Patan.

Because of his vast experience in arranging over 15,000 songs, Maharjan's music too escapes conventional genres and nomenclature, even though all the songs in *Sudina* are structured around a virtuoso guitar.

We don't have to cry anymore is a relaxed sit-down as the sarangi wails along with the guitar, while the next track *Spirit of Shiva* takes you right into Tandav mode, guitar ascending and descending in tandem with the Destroyer's limb movements in tabla beats. Again, *Sequency and*

things provides a moment of calm, while *Keep on running* accelerates proceedings. The album is rounded up by two of the strongest tracks in *Birds of a feather stick together* and *Enough is enough*.

In addition to Hari Maharjan's regular band members, Riju Tuladhar on bass and Daniel Rasaily on drums, guest musicians from the Netherlands have also contributed to the album. Peter Keijzers, executive producer, is omnipresent with his bass. The famous Nepali folk-band Kutumba also

feature throughout the album, lending its jazzy improvisations a somewhat earthy feel. Part recorded in Venlo, Netherlands, and in Kathmandu, *Sudina* transcends all technical barriers and sounds better than *Kalakarmi*.

Driven by Maharjan's roving guitar and backed by the groovy rhythm section, *Sudina* alternates between dense clarity and clear density, finishing faster than the 57 minutes its tracks take up.



SUDINA

Hari Maharjan, guitars
Peter Keijzers, bass
Riju Tuladhar, bass
Daniel Rasaily, drums
Ben Fikkert, piano
Theo Thomassen, classical guitar

Rs 350

Available at Kathmandu Music Centre, Thamel
(01)4259968, 9851067909



SOMEPLACE ELSE



Along, tiring climb is not what you want when you are delirious with hunger. And as you huff and puff your way to the top of the building to Degaa Resto Lounge, you will probably curse the owners for being 'inconsiderate'. But once you step in, your weary legs will

find comfort and your taste buds will be pleased because there is something for every type of foodie at this Kumaripati restaurant. Along with the usual selection of Western dishes and cocktails and mocktails, Degaa offers incredible Newari and Indian cuisine that makes it stand out among the litter of restaurants in the neighbourhood.

After flipping through the extensive menu, we wanted to sample as much as possible. Our 'first course' was a round of Newari dishes. The vegetable and egg chatamari (Rs 70) and the buff and egg bara (Rs 90) were perfect starters to share around the table, light and crisp with the egg serving to hold both the vegetable and buff fillings together. The buff sekuwa (Rs 170) was a little tough and the portion was rather small but went well with the other starters. We added a plate of BBQ chicken wings (Rs 250) to fulfil our craving for 'western' food. The wings may be the best thing on the menu. Marinated in spices and covered in herbs they got our taste buds rolling.

We decided to go Indian for



PICS: CINDREY LIU

our main meal and ordered a plate of chicken biryani (Rs 200), garlic and butter naan (Rs 30 and Rs 50), along with chicken tikka masala (Rs 280) and chicken and apricot curry (Rs 200). And as we waited patiently for a bite of our neighbour's food down south, we comforted our still hungry tummies with fruity drinks. But the pineapple mocktail (Rs 125) was too sweet for my taste. I suggest the virgin flamingo (Rs 125)



instead since it is smoother and more refreshing.

When our biryani arrived, I must say I was a little

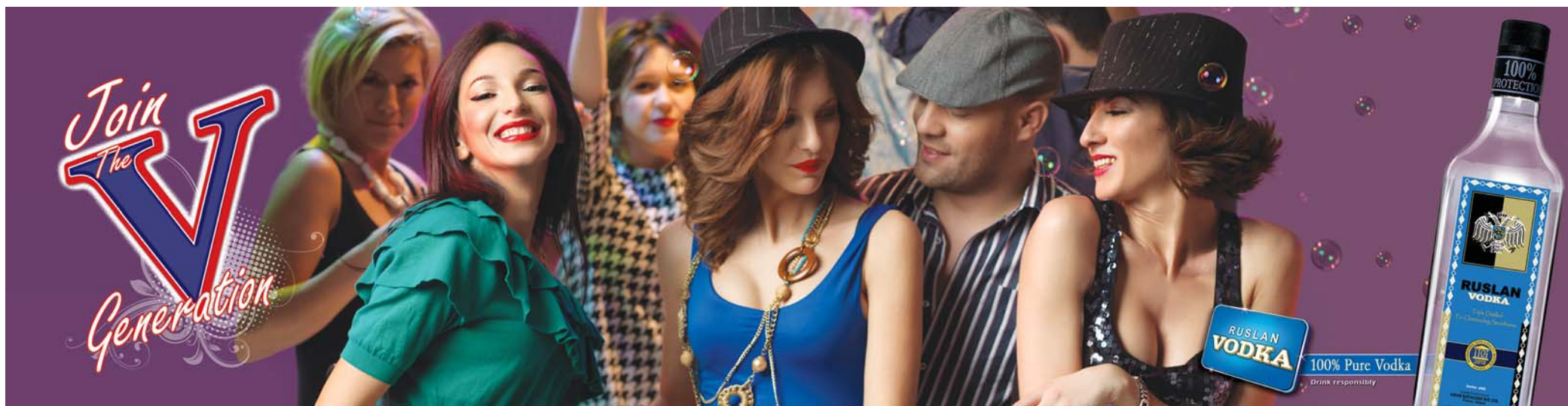
disappointed. Although the chicken and the coconut flakes combined surprisingly well, the rice itself was a bit stale. However, the fluffy naans were superb, going especially well with the spicy masala. The apricot curry tasted more exotic, definitely a choice for the gastronomically adventurous.

A visit to Degaa is worth for the spectacular views of southern Kathmandu alone and is perfect for a dinner with a large group of friends. We don't recommend visiting during the afternoon

because load-shedding means there is no music, no mood lifters. The music and lights definitely make Degaa a pleasant place to eat and chat while looking out at the city skyline.
Sulaiman Daud

How to get there: from the roundabout in Jawalakhel turn into

Kumaripati road and walk until you see Siddhartha Bank and Phillips showroom on your left. Enter the building, walk up to the top floor.



Making safety a high priority



DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

When American Peace Corps volunteer John Skow travelled to Khumbu region in 1973, he was disheartened to see the number of Nepali porters and trekkers who died from something easily preventable like acute mountain sickness (AMS). The same year, Himalayan Rescue Association (HRA) was started with the goal of saving lives and improving trekking safety.

For the past four decades, HRA has been instrumental in bringing about a sharp decline in AMS casualties. From March to May and September to November, volunteer doctors run an hour long class every day at the clinics in Pheriche (Everest) and Manang (Annapurna) where trekkers and their guides are taught about the importance of acclimatisation through

gradual ascent. They learn how to prevent and identify the onset of frostbite, hypothermia, AMS, and life-threatening complications like water collection in the brain (high altitude cerebral edema, HACE) or in the lungs (high altitude pulmonary edema, HAPE).

The clinics, run completely by volunteers, also treat hundreds of

the system. HRA 'rescues' patients by treating altitude sickness and other illnesses and saves lives, but it is rarely involved in actual rescue of climbers in the Himalayas using high-powered, medically-equipped, state of the art helicopters.

HRA has been successful in fighting acute mountain sickness.

However, despite its best efforts, many porters and climbers still suffer from severe frostbite every year. Not much has changed in the treatment of frostbite since the 19th century when Napoleon's army succumbed in its attempt to conquer Moscow in subzero temperatures. In Nepal, there are no readily available, cost-effective, modern breakthroughs to treat frostbite. Therefore prevention is critical.

Even as it attempts to address these challenges, HRA's work in the field of alpine safety and rescue remains unparalleled in South Asia and as the organisation completes 40 years, the entire team deserves praise for quietly carrying out methodical and conscientious medical work and research under difficult conditions. 🇳🇵



HRA

injured or sick trekkers and locals. While international patients pay for the services, locals are charged a nominal fee so they don't abuse

HAPPENINGS

THIS WEEK IN PICTURES BROUGHT TO YOU BY:

SHOE-A-HOLICS

MAYALU CENTER, OFF DURBARMARG
JAMAL TEL: 4225627

GROUND FLOOR, LAXMI BANK BUILDING
PULCHOWK TEL: 5524812

SHOE-A-HOLICS

EXCHANGE YOUR OLD SHOES
WITH NEW ONES AND
GET UPTO 30% OFF*
APRIL 1 - 30

**SPRING
CLEAN
YOUR
CLOSET**



BIKRAM RAI

Money matters: Finance Minister Shankar Prasad Koirala announces the budget for 2012-12 in Singha Darbar on Tuesday evening.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

HORSES FOR COURSES: Horses perform the fire jump to mark the end of Ghode Jatra program at Tudikhel on Wednesday afternoon.



CINDREY LIU

SHOWER TIME: Tourists enjoy the shower as elephants take their baths at the Rapti River in Chitwan on Wednesday.

READERS' PHOTO



STEPHEN KEELING

ROUTE LESS TRAVELLED: Mountain bikers ride through the newly opened track of the proposed Bagmati fast track highway in Makawanpur.

RAGING BULLS
Economy spurred by revived bourses, P12-13

PLAYING IT FORWARD
Indian high-flyer blows a trail in IT sector, P24

CHINADAILY

On deadly ground

NEPALI Times

We have ignition

POKHARA

TWO IN ONE

Subscribe to an expanded
20-page **Times** and get **CHINADAILY**
free every Friday from 1 March.

For renewals and subscriptions:
Santosh Aryal
(01) 5005601-8
santosha@himalmedia.com

You can't eat elections

People have no time for polls in the mountains of north-western Nepal, they are too busy trying to stay alive

DAMBAR K SHRESTHA IN BAJURA

The talk is all about elections under the CJ-led government in Kathmandu, but here in remote north-western Nepal people are too busy finding enough to eat to care.

There are still two months to go for the monsoon, the fields are dry and dusty. Last year's food ran out long ago. Farming in the rain-fed fields only provides food to last three months in a year, so the men have always migrated to India. Undernourished children fall prey to infections and the child and maternal mortality rates in Mugu and Bajura are more than twice the national average.

These two districts are among 30 that are supposed to get food assistance from the state. Although the quota of 1,000 tons of rice allocated for Bajura has been nearly met, officials are planning to fly in 600 tons more from Kathmandu to meet increased demand this year.

Sixty-year-old Pune Sarki of Boldik village of Bajura and his family of 10 depend on subsidised rice for nine months of the year. Since there is no fixed distribution schedule, sometimes Sarki makes the five hour journey back home empty handed because the rice runs out. At other times he doesn't have enough money to pay Rs 40 for a kilo of rice. People from Humla walk for up to two weeks roundtrip to get rice from the depot at Kolti airport in Bajura.

"I am taking rice on credit for now. My husband will pay back the loans when he returns from India in June," says 30-year-old Dewu Tamata, one of many women here who have to buy food on credit.

In Mugu's Talcha airport, only 400 tons of the allotted 1,440 tons of rice for the district have been flown in this season. Nepal Food Corporation's

regional chief in Dhangadi, Surendra Raj Bista, says food is on its way. The government budgets Rs 370 million every year to subsidise and fly in food to these roadless districts, but it is always late and never enough.

The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) distributed 2,370 tons of rice in Bajura and 900 tons in Mugu as part of its 'food for work' initiative under which families can earn up to four months worth of food by working on roads. Even 17-year-old Hira BK from Mugu, who studies in ninth grade, helps in construction during holidays to earn food for his family.

About 65 per cent of Mugu residents have calorie intakes of less than the minimum daily requirement of 2,709 kilocalories and the district has the highest rate of stunting among children. When children do fall sick, there is no treatment. The district hospitals in Bajura and Mugu never have doctors, nurses, x-ray machines, and labs.

Says 66-year-old Badri Prasad Regmi of Kolti: "We are being cheated by nature and the government. We don't have food at home, we don't have money to pay for treatment even if there were doctors." ■



HUNGER TO LIVE: The hair of this young girl in Kalikot district has turned blonde due to under-nourishment. The mountain districts of mid-western Nepal have the highest rates of stunting among children because of the lack of enough food.

HARIDEVI ROKAYA



DAMBAR K SHRESTHA

Flying food

It has been a chronic problem of the trans-Karnali: the government and donors fly in subsidised rice to address the food shortage so people have stopped growing traditional nutritional crops like millet, wheat, corn, buckwheat, oats. They walk for weeks on end to queue up outside distribution depots for their sacks of rice. The rice culture is now so pervasive that even irrigated land is left barren, making the districts increasingly dependent on the

outside. Mugu politician Gopal Bahadur Bam says: "Rice has become a staple here and people don't want to eat anything else. Local food is not seen as real food anymore."

Millet is a good source of iron and magnesium and has higher protein and carbohydrate content than polished rice. Buckwheat is also rich in protein, calcium, magnesium, phosphorous, and Vitamin B. But most people still prefer rice, says Parshuram Mandar, a school principal. He adds: "If the government had encouraged and helped people to be self-sufficient in traditional crops, there wouldn't be a food crisis here."

NEW YEAR 2070 OFFER !

UNLIMITED
BROADBAND INTERNET WITH CABLE TV CHANNELS
@ RS 1,000 / MONTH

DOUBLE THE BANDWIDTH @ SAME PRICE

FREE CABLE MODEM + BITDEFENDER ANTI VIRUS WITH INTERNET SECURITY 2013 (PC OR ANDROID)

OFFER VALID IN KATHMANDU VALLEY ONLY



* CONDITIONS APPLY

For further details, please contact
T: 01 4429616 ext: 219,220
E: rfmarketing@subisu.net.np

Follow us at www.facebook.com/subisu

ONLINE PAYMENT FACILITY:

नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक लि.
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.

भारत बैंक लि.
Himalayan Bank Limited

PayBill
any bank any amount

true
CABLE
exceeding expectations

SUBISU
CABLE NET

First the good news

Nepal is doing better, but not fast enough, to improve living standards of the poorest

KUNDA DIXIT

Depending on who is counting, the proportion of Nepalis who are poor is either 44 per cent, 19 per cent, or 25 per cent. But no matter which criteria is used, all indicators point to Nepal's poverty rate declining dramatically in the last 15 years.

The sharpest fall was announced earlier this month by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Index which showed that Nepal's Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) had come down from 0.350 in 2006 to 0.217 in five years. The percentage of poor people declined from 65 per cent in 2006 to 44 per cent in 2011.

The MPI employs 10 indicators to measure poverty using health, education, and living standard parameters and is regarded as the most accurate measure of the prevalence of poverty in a country. Sometimes, it is widely different from other indicators like international absolute poverty levels and the national

income poverty line.

For example, on the basis of the percentage of people earning less than \$1.25 per day, 25 per cent of Nepalis were absolutely poor in 2010. But when the threshold is raised to \$2, the proportion of poor people jumped up to 57 per cent. The National Planning Commission's own survey in 2011 showed that 25.2 per cent were living below the poverty line.

As a measure of deprivation, the MPI is the most comprehensive indicator of poverty because it looks not just at income, but also the status of health and education and indicators like access to safe water, sanitation, electricity, cooking fuel, and assets.

"Nepal is doing considerably well for a low-income country and if it continues at this rate it will eradicate absolute poverty in 20 years," said Sabina Alkire of Oxford University's Department of International Development. In fact, Nepal did better than India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh jumping from the poorest country among seven South Asian states to the fourth poorest.

The biggest factor seems to be remittances from Nepali workers abroad, which has improved the assets of Nepali households. Health indicators like under-five child mortality, maternal death rate, and nutrition have also improved, as have enrolment rates and years of schooling. One reason could be that the baseline data for Nepal was 2006, which was just after the conflict and a low point.

Within Nepal, the fastest reduction in poverty has been in the western Tarai where the total number of poor went down from 67 per cent to 33 per cent in five years. The far-western Tarai also saw a dramatic drop from 81 per cent poverty to 50 per cent.

However, in terms of incidence of poverty, the mid-western districts had the highest proportion, 60 per cent, with the far-western hills slightly lower. The districts of the western region had the smallest proportion of poor people at 33 per cent.

"Nepal surprises everyone for poverty reduction despite low economic growth and political instability," said Bal

Gopal Baidya of the research group, New Era, at the launch of the MPI results last month.

The MPI is closely linked to the concept of 'human security' which defines security not just in military terms, but also takes into account human rights,

transparency, accountability, governance, social justice, and delivery of basic services.

This is the subject of the new book, *Human Security in Nepal: Concepts, Issues and Challenges* which looks at the broader definition of security ever since



Peace dividend for



COMMENT

Kul Chandra Gautam

Quantitatively, Nepal has made impressive progress in basic education in recent decades: 90 per cent of children enrol in primary schools and there is virtual gender parity in enrolment. Nearly four per cent of GDP and 17 per cent of our national budget are allocated to the education sector.

But the quality of education in government schools is so poor that eight per cent of children in Grade 1 drop out and 23 per cent repeat the grade. Only 70 per cent of the original cohort complete the primary cycle and less than a third reach Grade 10. Less than half the students from public schools appearing in the SLC exam pass, compared to 90 per cent of those from private schools. Basic education is a fundamental human right, but we see a dual education system: one for the rich and one for the poor.

So far, very few attempts have been made to bridge this gap. Here is a 10-point checklist to improve the quality of basic education and turn it into a strong foundation for national development:





KUNDA DIXIT

the idea was first proposed by the late Mahbub ul Haq of UNDP in 1994. The book has a chapter by Yuba Raj Khatriwada who is now Governor of Nepal Rastra Bank, in which he writes: "The focus of the state so far is on peace building and drafting

a new constitution, not much work has been done to transform the economy and society."

For more improvements in human security and living standards, do Nepalis have to wait till we get our political house in order? In fact, as we

see from the improvements in MPI, progress has happened in spite of government neglect and even though the country suffered a ruinous war, political instability, corruption, and bad governance.

The launch of the MPI report

LESS POOR: Group of women in a village near Baglung where there are no young men because they have all gone abroad to work and send money home to their families.

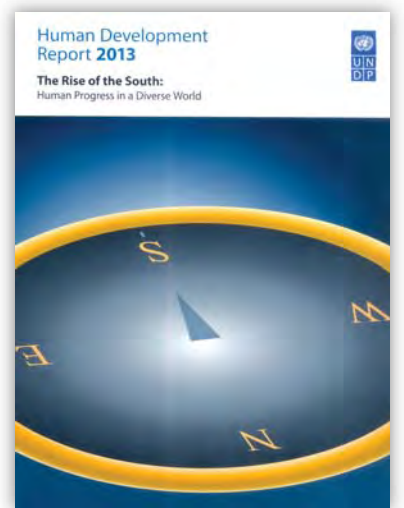
also coincides with this year's *Human Development Report 2013*, which this year focuses on The Rise of The South and looks at how trade between emerging economies of the South has boomed and helped reduce poverty. The report also mentions Nepal as a low-income country that has made the most rapid progress in overall human development.

Despite all this, we get a sobering reminder of just how skewed development within Nepal is in another book, *The Landscape of Madhesh: Politics, Society and Economy of the Plains*. One chapter in the book by Uma Shankar Prasad makes it clear why Tarai districts which pay such high revenues to the state are so low on the MPI: the percentage of public expenditure in the Madhes is only 20 per cent even though it has nearly half the population.

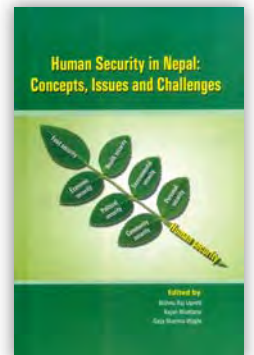
In fact, per capita public expenditure by the state in the Tarai is only Rs 4,078 when it is nearly Rs 15,000 in the hills. Madhesi Dalits are at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder with 80 per cent of them living below the poverty line and only five per cent of them literate.

This regional inequality within Nepal is what is driving the demand for federalism in the Madhes, the far-west, and other neglected regions. Despite progress in the national average for nearly all development indicators, the record is uneven and the gap is growing between those who are ahead and those left behind.

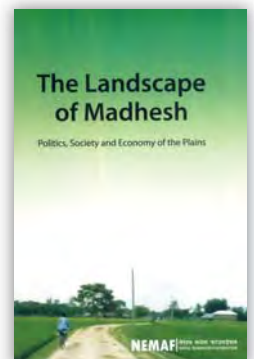
Elections, a new constitution, and stable politics would help, but are not a pre-requisite for more efficient service delivery to deprived regions. 🇳🇵



Human Development Report 2013
The Rise of the South: Progress in a Diverse World
UNDP, New York, 2013



Human Security in Nepal:
Concepts, Issues and Challenges
Edited by Bishnu Raj Upreti, Rajan Bhattarai,
Geja Sharma Wagle
Nepal Institute for Policy Studies and South Asia
Regional Coordination
Office of NCCR
(South-South), 2013
Pages: 296
Rs 400



The Landscape of Madhesh
Politics, Society and Economy of the Plains
Edited by Ruhi Tewari and Anirudh Prasad Sah
Nepal Madhes Foundation, 2012
Pages: 152
Rs 300

quality education

A 10-point checklist to improve the quality of education in Nepali schools

1. Expand early child development programs: Nepal's politicians and community leaders tend to give higher priority to upgrading schools from primary to secondary and from Plus-2 to universities as signs of educational progress. We need to reverse this trend and give greater priority to building a strong foundation for life-long education starting in the earliest years of a child's life.

2. Make schools child-friendly: Many children fear going to school. Teachers are often untrained, uncaring, and quick to give corporal punishment. Schools are dirty and lack minimum sanitary facilities, especially for girls. The method of instruction involves rote learning rather than encouraging children to explore and understand what they are learning.

A test of whether a school is truly child-friendly is to ensure that it is especially girl-friendly. There are excellent child-centred learning approaches in Nepal, we need to benefit from these experiences.

3. Increase women teachers: A strategy for making schools more child-friendly is to vastly increase the number and proportion of female teachers. Having more women as primary teachers is not only desirable because of gender equality and social justice, but it has a very direct impact on enrolment and retention of girls in schools. Only 40 per cent of teachers at the primary

level, 17 per cent in lower secondary, and a miserable 13 per cent in higher secondary schools are women. We must adopt affirmative action to aim for at least half of all teachers being women in the next five years.

4. Affirmative action for the disadvantaged: While enrolment of over 90 per cent in primary schools is impressive, the 10 per cent who are out of school are mostly from the historically, geographically, economically, and socially deprived communities. Only 38 per cent of children from indigenous communities, 20 per cent of Dalits, and a mere one per cent of disabled children are enrolled in primary schools. An aggressive affirmative action plan is needed to ensure extra support in basic education for the disadvantaged.

5. Make education inclusive and multi-cultural: Historically our education system has not been responsive to our diversity. Our text books perpetuate a stereotypical image of traditional inegalitarian Nepali society. The language of instruction is mostly Nepali or English, both neglect mother tongues and over-emphasise rote learning. This is pedagogically unsound. But it would be unwise to follow a rigid formula in this regard. Pedagogical soundness and parents' wishes should be given priority over the wishes of ethnic or linguistic activists.

6. Focus on quality: Our new slogan should not be just education for all, but quality education for all. These interventions require changes in attitudes and behaviour, not necessarily huge capital intensive investments. Over-crowding in classrooms is another problem, especially in the Tarai. Nepal has a shortage of at least 60,000 primary teachers. We need more teachers, not more soldiers.

7. Cultivate public-private partnership in education: While some private schools offer quality education, many are seen as highly commercialised enterprises. Nevertheless, private schools do meet a felt need of parents for quality education. Instead of threatening to close private schools, or disempowering them through excessive political interference and over-regulation, Nepal should harness the power of public-private partnership to improve the quality of basic education.

8. Transform schools into Zones of Peace: During the conflict, many schools became battle zones, much intimidation and violence was inflicted against children, and education was seriously interrupted. A number of Nepali and international organisations introduced the idea of children and schools as Zones of Peace.

9. De-politicise basic education: Currently Nepal suffers from hyper-politicisation that affects all aspects of life. Teachers' unions, students' organisations, and educational institutions, even at the primary level are not exempt from political activism, often quite unrelated to genuine educational issues. All political parties in Nepal are guilty of such politicisation of education.

10. Education as genuine peace dividend: Now that peace and democracy are at hand, we must make up for all the lost time and opportunity. Let us redouble our investment in education by creating a peace dividend of reduced military expenditure and other wasteful expenses. Let us recognise that education is not only a human right, it is the engine of all human development.

Kul Chandra Gautam is former Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. This is an excerpt from his keynote address to the international conference, Quality in the Classroom, organised by Rato Bangala Foundation from 4-7 April 2013.
kulgautam@hotmail.com
www.kulgautam.org

‘We are protecting Nepalis from this circus of elections’

Interview with Mohan Baidya, chairman of CPN-Maoist, 8 April, *News24*



Dil Bhushan Pathak: Looks like your party is back to its old days - destroying property, imposing bandas, capturing land, and terrorising people. Our aim is not to terrorise people. A new kind of dictatorship has been forced upon the country and we are protesting against it through this movement.

Is shutting down the whole country a part of your struggle?

We are aware that bandas are bothersome, but it was a last resort to make ourselves heard in this so called democracy where unless you do something dramatic nobody will even bother to listen.

Do you have any idea how harmful bandas are?

There are many other things that are harmful for the country, so our banda alone cannot be blamed. Nepal was shut down for 19 days in 2006. In fact all the parties who are in power today reached there after a similar struggle, so it is not just us.

You obstruct people’s right to free movement because you want to showcase the party’s strength. How do you justify that?

We are compelled to come out on the streets because democracy in Nepal has



failed to embrace thousands of marginalised people who are still suffering and being exploited. Look at any other country and you will see that revolt is necessary to achieve democracy. These struggles will carry on forever. People will continue to fight unless they are truly liberated.

Moving on to vandalism, how many laptops has your party seized or destroyed so far?

Let’s not put it that way. We are only trying to protect ordinary Nepalis who are being forced into this circus of election. When certain people tried to prevent our peaceful protest, we had to respond and some damage might have taken place at that time.

When you were with UCPN (M) the party was in power. What reform and changes did it usher?

When we were in government we didn’t have much power because the existing bureaucracy with its old ways didn’t allow us to make much change. Also some of our party members diverged from the goal of working for the people and the country.

So what was the point of the decade long armed conflict, which allegedly began after foreign intervention and killed thousands of Nepalis?

These are all conspiracy theories of the reactionaries who do not understand the spirit of the revolution we undertook to free the Nepali people. Thousands have been killed in other countries as well, there is nothing unique about us, in fact our revolution was less destructive in comparison.

Since your party hasn’t registered with the election

commission yet is there still any possibility of unifying with UCPN (M)?

We tried to resolve our differences while we were still one party. When that didn’t work we had to split so it will be difficult to go back and reconcile. We haven’t registered at the EC yet because of technical issues.

How much faith does your party have in democracy?

We believe in a democracy that is for everyone in the country and not just for a handful of powerful men. The present democracy in Nepal is run by five per cent of the privileged class. We want a system where people from marginalised communities are also equally represented. And our ultimate aim is to establish a socialist state.

Why is your party hesitant to go to polls?

We haven’t decided on that yet. This election is not going to take the country out of turmoil since the decision was forced on us by the four party syndicate. They have overstepped the values of democracy in the name of polls. We won’t go for election until this government is scrapped and all the fringe parties are included in discussions about the country’s future.

nepalitimes.com

Read the full version

Watch the full interview

NEPALI TWEETS

Prateek Pradhan
सम्पादक महोदयहरु बोक्सीको आरोप लागेको पत्रिकामा फोटो छापेर उनलाई थप पीडा नदिएर सकिन्छ भने पिडकको फोटो छापौ।
Dear editors, please don't add insult to injury by publishing photos of those accused of 'witchcraft'. If you can, please show us the faces of the abusers.

Manoj Smart
एउटा विदेशीको नेपालीको व्यक्तिगत गुनासो टेलिभिजनमा आइरहेको छ उनी नेतासँगै गुनासो गर्दछन्, चिथरा । के तिनले रेकर्ड राख्छन् ?
There's an NRN on TV complaining about politicians, poor man. Will the politician take a note of what he is saying?

मोक्ष
अरु कतिन्जेल टवीटर मा बस्छन् भनेर लेखाजोखा गर्दै बस्ने मानिसहरुलाई 'बाल सलाम' गर्ने मन लाग्छ।
I have little respect for those who spy and keep detailed logs of others' twitter activity.

रहर बरै पाईन्छ?
यहाँ सबै मन मुटु कलेजो, गिदि, खोपडिको कुरो गर्छन्, भावनाको न कुरे छैन...
Everyone talks about their hearts, livers, brains, and skulls here, but no one talks about feelings.

WEEKLY BAZAR POLL #8

In weekly polls conducted with the support of The Asia Foundation, *Himal Khabarpatrika* asks 375 respondents in 14 cities across Nepal every Monday for their opinion on contemporary issues. This week's result of interviews taken in households across the country:

1. How do you rate the drinking-water supply you get at home?
Bad 52.4%
Good 46.5%
2. Do you face problems from decreased supply in the dry season?
Yes 62.8%
No 34.2%
3. Where do you get your drinking-water from?
Tube wells 44.6%
Government supply 38.4%
Ground springs 5.65%
Dug wells 5.1%
Private companies 2.7%
Drilled wells 1.95%
Tank wells 1.35%
Rivers and streams 0.85%

Down the drain

Bishwambhar Pyakuryal, *Kantipur*, 10 April



An annual budget that comes three times a year in three installments is a clear indication of this country's badly stuttering economy. Even Iraq and Afghanistan that are emerging from decades of devastating conflict have posted impressive growth rates. It's time we looked at our neighbours for a few lessons.

Although every successive government says the budget is progressive, growth stimulating, and poor-centric, there is always a wide gap between what's written on paper and what actually happens on the ground. We spent only 26 per cent of our total budget in the last eight months.

The partial budgets have arrived at a time of sluggish economy and also dampened whatever hopes ordinary Nepalis might have had from their government. In July and November 2012, the budget wasn't on time and when it was finally announced it didn't stimulate any growth. Instead it was used to cover general expenses and as a result, the growth rate dropped from 5.3 per cent to 4.2 and has now nosedived to 3.65.

Nepal is an agricultural country, but only 13 per cent of all agricultural produce finds any market. Farmers can't even save three per cent of their incomes and thus have little possibility of improving on their returns. Not surprisingly,

growth in this sector has fallen from five per cent to one in the last seven months.

Our trade deficit has also surpassed last year's total within eight months. Currently import volume is eight times all exports and exports to India even shrunk to a quarter from last year.

Some friends in the government and the private sector have been chanting mantras of double digit growth. But even if we are able to invest Rs 700 billion (the current budget is Rs 400 billion), our track record suggests we will not be able to sustain such growth. From 1997 to 2003, GDP formed four per cent of the budget, from 2003 to 2008 it dropped to three, and from 2010 to 2013 it hasn't gone above 3.8 per cent.

Nepalis spend 88 per cent of their income and whatever little they save is not enough to reinvest into the economy. There is such a huge gulf between savings and investment that trying to bridge this gap through domestic products is nearly impossible.

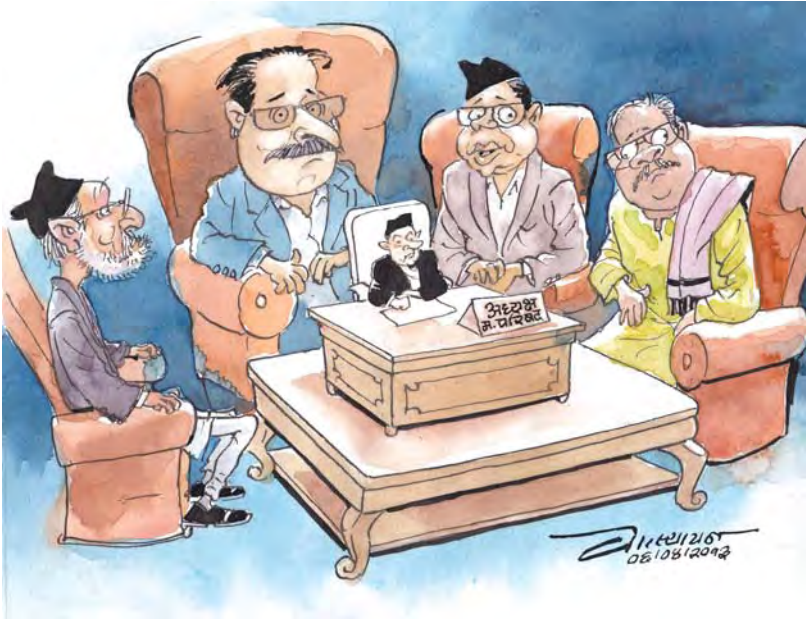
Poverty is one of the biggest challenges for citizens and government alike. Different local and international agencies have their own definitions and reports on poverty, but despite the decrease in the absolute number of poor people, severe inequalities still exist.

We are heading from an unregulated and centralised economy to a decentralised and self-sustaining federal structure.

But the centre still spends five times more than the local government and 32 per cent of Nepal's districts earn only five per cent of their annual expenses. Our greatest challenge now is to make these regions capable of contributing to the entire economy.



HERE WE GO AGAIN: Finance Minister Shankar Koirala announces the budget on Tuesday.



Nameplate: CHAIRMAN, Council of Ministers

कान्तिपुर Batsyayan, *Kantipur*, 7 April

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“If they can prove that my government or party was involved in corruption, I am ready to face all charges.”

Baburam Bhattarai on President Ram Baran Yadav's concern over the previous government's abuse of authority, *Annapurna Post*, 10 April

“We don’t need international approval for everything”

The last time *Nepali Times* interviewed UCPN(M) Pushpa Kamal Dahal was four years ago just after he had been elected prime minister and the Maoist YCL attacked the Himalmedia office and physically assaulted the editor, CEO, and other staff. This time Dahal was more relaxed, forthright, and made eye contact as he answered questions from interviewers on everything from the TRC Bill to elections.

Nepali Times: You must be thinking: how can I back get to power and lead the country?

Pushpa Kamal Dahal: Not really. I am still learning the art of competitive politics and the dynamics of this process is still new to us. For 10 years we were in a different struggle and since then we have been in and out of government.

What do you like and dislike about this process?

It is fair to all since one has to prove oneself through competition. But the chronic power struggle, corruption, and coalition crafting just to get to the government is flawed. Once a party accountable to the people is elected, it should be allowed to govern for full five years so it can get things done.

Our recent Himalmedia Public Opinion Poll shows that 60 per cent of the respondents also favour an executive presidential system.

It is the most appropriate system for our country which will soon have federalism. There has to be a strong unified centre to hold the centrifugal forces together. And that is best done through a directly elected president.

But there is a fear that an executive president may breed a dictator?

The only people saying that are the ones still held hostage by the status quo. Nowhere in the world has a directly elected presidential system ever led to a dictator. The UML and NC may be opposed to this idea, simply because it is our proposal.

You seem to have reached the conclusion that the Regmi government isn't in a hurry to hold polls?

All I am saying is that the government should have announced the election date in June immediately after forming the cabinet and let the Election Commission get on with the job of putting the logistics and laws in place.

Doesn't it also prove that the parties have no confidence in a government they formed just three weeks ago?

When I had proposed a government under the leadership of the chief justice it was on conditions that elections should be held in June. Had the other parties gone along with that proposal earlier, it would have been possible to hold polls in June.

So the CJ idea was yours, or was it on advice of a neighbouring country?

This talk about foreign hand stems from an inferiority complex. We had been in talks with both our neighbours along with America and Europe for months about elections, but the CJ option wasn't in the cards. When the parties refused to form a unity government under Baburam Bhattarai we decided to pass the leadership to the NC, but even that didn't work so we decided to settle for an incumbent CJ-led government hoping it wouldn't invite controversy. We put that to the neighbours, America, and Europe and

they also thought it was a good idea.

You were ready to hand over government leadership to Sushil Koirala, but it is said Bhattarai vetoed it?

Baburam Bhattarai had agreed to the party's decision on the package deal to make Sushil Koirala the prime minister. As per the package it was decided that the NC and UML would at first serve in a Baburam-led government briefly to

sort out legal issues related to elections, after which the leadership would be transferred. Bhattarai was in Mugu and misunderstood my statement in the media, but there was no difference between us on offering the NC

premiership in a package deal.

If elections can't be held in June, does that mean this government will be in power until polls take place?

If elections can't happen in June, there will have to be a political consensus for a different provision. The continuation of the election government will be in doubt if it can't hold polls in June.

How do you plan to get the CPN-Maoist along with 33 fringe parties to take part in polls?

The High Level Political Committee, which I currently chair, has invited them to talk and involve them in the committee to address their concerns about elections.

Bal Krishna Dhungel is a murder convict, but you are often publicly seen with him.

The case against Bal Krishna is against the spirit of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement that states war time cases

should be dealt through the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Everything in the TRC meets international standards. Dhungel has already spent eight years in jail, he has suffered. We Nepalis listen a bit too much to outsiders. We have to get out of the habit of seeking international approval for everything we do.

Are you visiting China to clarify their concerns about ethnicity-based federalism?

Federalism isn't the agenda of my visit there. I am visiting China to strengthen the relationship between the two countries and the two parties.

You talk of inclusiveness, but the country's politics is still driven by four-five male Brahmins from the hills.

That is not true this time since we also have five leaders from Madhes taking part in all discussions. We are committed to bring the marginalised communities and regions into the mainstream. We feel the people of the Madhes are still been neglected, Kathmandu is still dominated by the hill feudal class, and they are the ones who have kowtowed to foreigners, not the Madhesis.

nepalitimes.com

Read the full version
Watch an excerpt of the interview



Mahindra XUV 500

EXPERIENCE THE THRILL

WITH CHEETAH INSPIRED MAHINDRA XUV 500

Sturdy design with a stylish look. With bold, glorious lines that trace the world's most agile animal in action. Muscular wheel arches that accentuate its impressible, broad stance and the distinct, paw-styled door handles that you can't tear your eyes off. But the fierce, assertive look is most apparent head on.

One glance at the intimidating, jaw-like honeycomb grille and you'll notice the vehicle's innate desire to pounce at anything that stands before it.

THE CHEETAH INSPIRED SUV-XUV 500

ROBUST FEATURES OF THE CHEETAH:

- 6 airbag (front, side and curtain)
- Intimidating jaw-like honeycomb grille
- Static-bending Projection Headlamps
- Hill Hold and Hill Decent control
- ESP with Rollover Mitigation
- Advanced Blue Sense technology
- Intelligent All Wheel Drive(AWD)
- ABS with EBD
- 140 bhp(103kW) 330 Nm torque with powerful mHawk diesel engine
- Sporty Suspension and Monocoque construction
- Elegant Interior attached with unique cool box.

Now available in Nepal, for bookings contact the authorised dealer of Mahindra; Agni Incorporated Pvt.Ltd.

Mahindra Rise.



Agni Incorporated Pvt. Ltd.

Hattisar, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel : 4436721, 4434610, 9801085500, 9802095500 Fax : 4442275, Email : marketing@agniinc.com.np, URL : www.agniinc.com.np,
Branch : Birgunj, Tel : 051-521456, Workshop : Balaju, Tel : 4352806, Spare Parts Outlet : Kuleshwor, Kathmandu Tel : 4277140, Authorized Service Centre : A.M. Automobiles, Balkhu, Tel : 4277864 / S.B. Auto Link, Jorpati-5, Tel : 4910533, Dhangadhi : 091-522058, Nepalgunj : 081-551599, Pokhara : 061-532468, Bhalrahawa : 071- 522929, Dang : 082-560278, Dharan : 025-520397, Rajbiraj : 031-522666, Surkhet : 9857830462, Jumla : 087-520151, Birtamod : 023-541114, Butwal : 071- 541433, Biratnagar : 021-461178, Banepa : 011-664302, Chitwan : 056-525317, Janakpurdham : 041-521609, Kanchanpur : 099-520854



History is no constant.
Change is.



roÿale **PLAY** | **Feel The Change**
For more information email to: royal.play@asianpaints.com.np



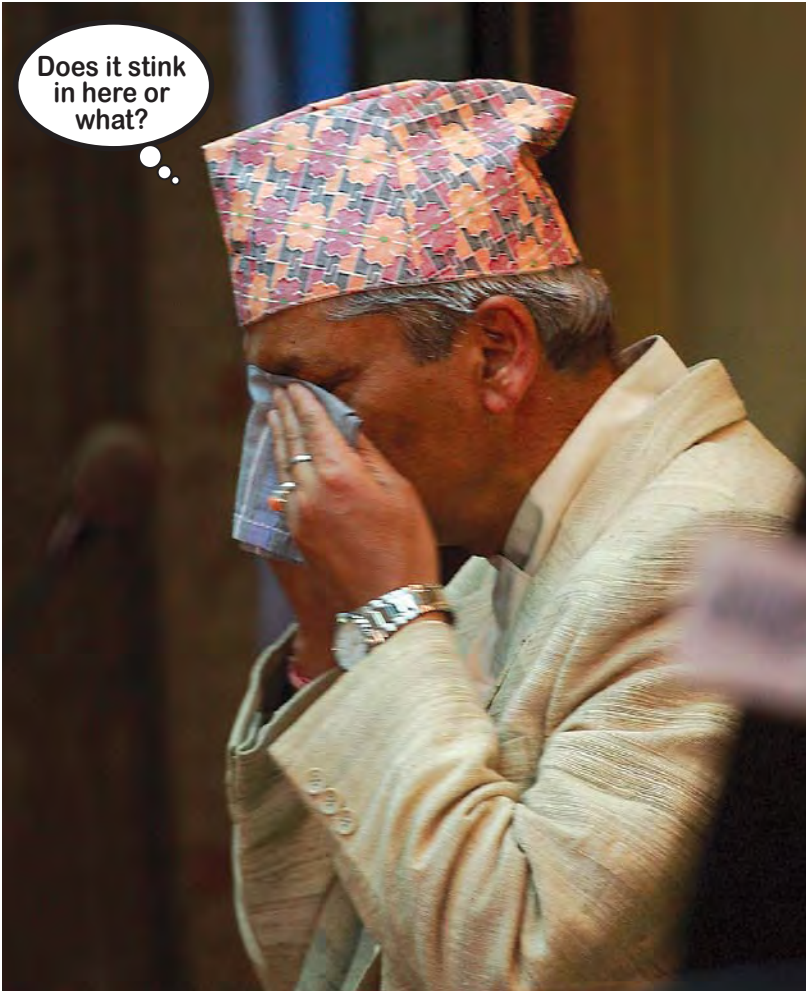
Darkness on the Sewage Canal

To tell you frankly, the Ass is getting sick and tired of listening to some of you who have insisted on whining on and on at the neighbourhood watering hole about the current load shedding regime chaired by CJ Khil Raj Regmi.

Thankfully, people like you are in a minority and an overwhelming number of Nepalis are optimistic and have a positive outlook about the fact that we have become creatures of darkness. We hole-heartedly welcome load shedding because we see its brighter side. You may well ask, so what are the silver linings of power cuts? Whoa, not so fast, can't you see I'm thinking?

As I was saying, all you need is a positive attitude to take advantage of our return to the pre-industrial age. In fact I would go as far as to venture that cutting off power to the people for 70 hours a week is the single most outstanding achievement of the post-Comprehensive Peace Accord dispensation and we should all be singing hosannas (if we aren't already) in praise of He who made this possible.

There is even more delightful news that the people may have to do with even less



power than they have at present which can only mean that, god willing, the little power there is will be concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. But, as the adage goes, let's not get too excited about that and start counting our chickens before they die of a mysterious

flu-like epidemic. So ladies and gentlemen, thank you for waiting. As promised, and totally off the top of my head, here are some reasons why load shedding is good for this great nation of ours that has never suffered under the Colonial Yoke:

- Current load shedding timetables are very complicated and one needs a PhD in Plasma Physics to figure them out. With the layman in mind, future schedules will be much simpler: power supply every alternate day for 15 minutes.
- Nepalis will be watching less television. This means that instead of engaging in our national pastime of fondling the remote, we will be indulging in a new national pastime of playing interactive games with each other in the dark. As a result, the country will see a new baby boom and a demographic bulge to quadruple the nation's GDP by 2025.
- Nepal Tourism Board will use the Berlin Travel Mart this week to unveil its new promotional campaign under the slogans: 'Once Is Not Enough, Take Another Trip to the Dark Ages' and 'Visit Nepal-The Heart of Darkness'.
- Nightvision goggles will no longer be a restricted military item but an essential consumer electronic gadget for everyday home use. This will facilitate finding one's way from the bedroom to the bathroom and taking accurate

- aim in the general direction of the waterloo (Important Reminder for Male Nightvision Customers: Our Aim Is To Keep This Place Clean Your Aim Would Help.) Kids can catch up with their homework using nightvision equipment and one can go bar-hopping in Thamel again without the threat of inadvertently finding oneself neck-deep in a booby-trapped pot hole.
- Load shedding means less time wasted aimlessly surfing the net. The time saved can be employed in taking long walks with kith and kin and ensure strong family bonding. My particular favourite is to stroll along the Bagmati Promenade inhaling the full methanogenic aroma of our very own Sewage Canal.
 - The proposed 32-storey skyscraper coming up in Purano Bus Park will be a symbol of national pride since it will be the tallest erection in South Asia when it is completed by 2015. But since projections show load shedding will still be in the vicinity of 28 hours a day, the high rise will enter the Guinness Book as the tallest building in the world without a functioning lift.



नयाँ वर्ष २०७० को शुभकामना ।

Chevy **X-change Mela** + New Year Special Offer on New and Pre Owned Cars

Contact: 9801059060, 9801026544, 9801026542