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## POLLS APART

Even while the Election Commission and the Interim Electoral Council haggle over who should announce elections and dates, the political leadership is already in campaign mode. There are signs the elections (when, and if, they are held) are going to be a referendum on identity-based federalism.

Some leaders are campaigning in the districts, while Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal campaigns in the neighbourhood. He was in China last week and goes to India next week. Could it be that Dahal is trying to ingratiate himself to the two big neighbours as an insurance against possible prosecution for wartime excesses?

**FEDERAL EXPRESSION**  
EDITORIAL, page 2

**MR DAHAL GOES TO DELHI**  
by KANAK MANI DIXIT page 15



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FEDERAL EXPRESSION

As a country, Nepal seems condemned to repeat the mistakes of the past. We need to take to the streets to restore democracy every couple of decades or so because democrats emulate the demagogues they replace as soon as they get to power. Revolutionaries take the country through a ruinous conflict saying the suffering is a necessary part of attaining utopia, but when they get to rule they behave like oligarchs.

The Maoists used feudal injustices in Nepali society to fuel their revolution. The argument that the 1990 People’s Movement was unable to take the country forward was a persuasive one at a time when there was widespread disillusionment with the democratic parties. The oppressed had to rise up to overthrow the oppressors, they said, and used the grievances of downtrodden ethnic groups, women, and neglected areas of the country like the far-west to recruit fighters.

Later, they successfully used an overtly ethnic platform to garner votes in the 2008 elections. The party’s manifesto carried the promise of autonomy and self-governance for neglected ethnic groups and this translated into the proposal for single-identity federal provinces in the last elections. This was patterned after the Stalin-Mao model of provinces named after ethnicities, but which didn’t really have any power in an over-centralised communist command structure. Today, Janajati leaders have all been disappointed by Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal trying to play both sides and going progressively lukewarm on federalism.

Dahal resorted to usual doublespeak during his trip to Beijing last week where he assuaged Chinese concerns about the possible fragmentation of an ethno-



BIKRAM RAI

Indications are that elections (when, and if, they ever happen) will essentially be a referendum on single-ethnic federal provinces

federated Nepal by explaining that he was actually for ‘federal centralism’. His hosts must have been puzzled by this oxymoron and reminded of Mao’s own notion of ‘democratic centralism’.

Geo-strategically, there is concern both in China and some sections in India, that an untested experiment with federalism could seriously destabilise Nepal. The main reason we failed for four years to write a new constitution was because of the disagreement over the nature and extent of federalism. Even the compromise formula that the political parties had settled for in the afternoon of 28 May last year could have been disastrous because it would have left radicals on all sides dissatisfied. Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai probably did Nepal a favour by dissolving the CA and announcing new elections.

Nearly a year later, we are still planning to have that election. And we are poised to repeat history because the new CA will probably get stuck on the same old issue of federalism. Nothing has really happened in the last

11 months to bridge the gap between the positions of those for and against single-identity federalism. From the statements of politicians and ethnic pressure groups it is clear that the elections will essentially be a referendum on federalism.

Year after year since the last elections, surveys have shown that most Nepalis, including those from various ethnic groups, have misgivings about identity-based federalism. What they really want is development that is hastened by effective decentralisation and autonomy that redresses the historical lack of say of the marginalised in governance. The fear is probably that future provinces named after a single ethnic group may lead to internecine violence.

That needn’t be so. If we can ensure that the names of provinces are only symbolic and no ethnicity will have priority rights within that province, the election could be a way to finally finding a formula for federalism acceptable to all in the next constitution. But for that we need the political parties to abide by an electoral code of conduct not to fan communal flames during the campaign period.

It is because of the sins of our past rulers that we need to address the pent-up grievances of marginalised communities by recognising their identity while devolving political decision-making to the new provinces. It would have been best for development and the economy if the provinces had contiguous Mountain, Hill, and Tarai belts within them. But that may not be politically possible now.

However, we must remember that federalism in whatever form will guarantee development. We can only hope that history will not repeat itself and keep Nepal poor even after we carve up the country into those eight or so provinces.

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com



FOR SALE

The title of this article should have been ‘Not for sale’ (‘For sale’, Kunda Dixit, #652). When greedy morons like GP Koirala, Gyanendra Shah, and Pushpa Kamal Dahal rule the country, this is what happens. All three want to sell the embassy to the Indian billionaire and pocket a part of the money.

Jung

● The Nepali embassy in Paris is in a similar state as the one in London: stately on the outside (beautiful Parisian mansion on a quiet street), but run down and disgusting inside. In mild words it is an embarrassment.

SK

● The state of the embassy in London is an embarrassment for us all. Where is the pride of being a Nepali/ Gurkhal? We were never ruled by any foreign government or crown but now all that is gone. Our brave ancestors must be spitting on us. Look at us, no national pride.

Sameer

● If we had spent the money allotted for the embassy’s upkeep in the first place, we would be spending far less money right now on the major repairs. The point is, the money that came in was squandered, looted or/and stolen.

Epacific

● The leaders of this country need to be put up on sale. Or we can give them

away for free if anyone abroad wants them.

Bal Bahadur

An extremely powerful editorial on the embassy scandal (‘12 A’, #652). I wish all power to the brave Gurkhas like Major Ghale and Gurung who are now fighting for their own country, instead of others.

Arniko

● Kudos to Gurkha veterans for their effort to stop this new low of greed and desperation of our current rulers. The building of the embassy was a nice ‘gift’ in return for the effort of hundreds of thousands of young men in the two world wars of the last century. And now a billionaire wishes to snatch that little ‘gift’ to give to his off-springs? Maybe Mr Mittal does not yet know of the other gift given to the Sri Tre’s, some of which, their off-springs are sill enjoying.

Krishna S

● Sometimes I feel so ashamed to call myself a Nepali. We are corrupt at home, corrupt abroad and seem to have no sense of dignity or pride.

T Kumari

SEEDS OF REVOLUTION

The idea that Nepal should convert to organic agriculture is an elitist one (‘Seeds of revolution’, Ben Ayers, #652). Organic agriculture is based on the assumption that no input should be derived from synthetic sources. This premise, however, is not supported by science (synthetic inputs are not necessarily more harmful than naturally derived ones). It also rejects technology - which would be a mistake. The Nepali

government and farmers should work to ensure that technology which is adopted is appropriate for the country. There are certainly cases where this has not been done. However, a knee-jerk reaction by avoiding all technology in agriculture - which is essentially espoused by organic enthusiasts, would be a mistake. This is particularly true in Nepal where there is so much food insecurity and where people have to rely increasingly on imported food.

BC

● It’s easy to say what Nepal’s farmer and should not do. But I have seen how Nepal’s only ‘organic district Jumla’ is currently struggling to live up to its name of being organic. Its major produces such as red rice and apples constantly face threats from illegally imported pesticides and fertilisers. District head quarters’ links with Karnali Highway does 50 per cent of the damage to its reputation of being organic, the rest is agri-politics. After all when has politics spared anyone or anything?

Sabita Thapa

● Don’t go Genetically Modified (GM) otherwise Monsanto will control most of your food production.

Suzanne Ryan

PUSHPA KAMAL DAHAL’S INTERVIEW

Nepali Times should be congratulated for capturing the ridiculous verbiage coming from that man’s mouth into this succinctly written interview. I could not figure out how the video and the written interview were connected.

Anonymous

Q OF THE WEEK

Who’s your favourite Nepali person ?

facebook

Shiva Bashyal: Prithvi Narayan Shah  
Khimu Darlami Ajay: Marich Man Singh  
Shivanath Yadav: Dr Bhagwan Koirala  
Sushil Pyakurel: Puspa Basnet  
Barbara Clary: Bobby Malla  
Bpn Pun: King Birendra  
Sanjay Sam: Padam Kunwar (he slapped Prachanda)  
DurGa Mahat: Anil Keshari Shah  
Hari Dewan: King Mahendra  
Bhichhyan Rai: Shristi Shrestha  
Ketan Jung Dulal: Laxmi Prasad Devkota

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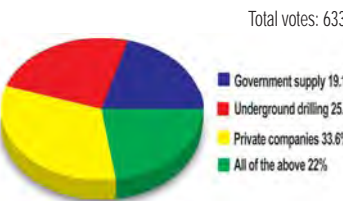
This week’s Question of the Week:

‘What’s your dream job?’  
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nepalnews.com Weekly Internet Poll #653

Q. Where do you get your drinking-water from?



Weekly Internet Poll # 654. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. What do you make of Pushpa Kamal Dahal’s recent visit to China?



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BIKRAM RAI

# What's left of the left

What vision can Nepal's communists offer society at a time of internal turmoil?



BY THE WAY  
Anurag Acharya

When Nepal's Maoists declared a 'people's war' in 1996, they were ridiculed at home and abroad for being on the wrong side of the history. Within a dozen years they were leading a government in Kathmandu after winning an election.

There is a myth that Nepalis are a tolerant lot with a high threshold for pain. That may be true, but they have also revolted against state oppression. In their quest for freedom and dignity, they overthrew the Rana regime and supported BP Koirala's socialist agenda in the 1959 election. In the 1990s, they followed Madan Bhandari and his concept of a New People's Democracy. Post 2006, they supported Maoist demands for republicanism.

Sadly, Nepal's leftist movement has neither been able to maintain its idealism

nor defend its commitment to a free and equal society. While the NC dumped BP's democratic socialism in favour of the Washington Consensus after 1990, the UML casually forgot Bhandari's New People's Democracy after his demise. The people were disappointed with both the parties and their corrupt leaders, who not only presided over infighting and mal-governance, but also failed to protect the country against Gyanendra Shah's autocratic regime after 2001.

So despite violent political history and radicals threatening to capture the state by brute force, most Nepalis accepted Pushpa Kamal Dahal's commitment to democratic and peaceful politics and voted his party into power. Four years later, they have been let down yet again.

"It is sad to see comrades who selflessly fought against this unjust state structure have shamelessly co-opted into the same system," bemoans Maoist leader Ram Karki who used to be close to Baburam Bhattarai

and has recently shifted to the Pushpa Kamal Dahal camp. At a program in Kathmandu this week to mark 65 years of the establishment of the original Nepal Communist Party, leftist leaders and thinkers came together to discuss what is left of the left in Nepal. Speaking at the program, Karki acknowledged that the UCPN-Maoist was undergoing an unprecedented ideological and moral crisis.

The party gained politically and had become financially stronger after 2008, but he admitted there has been erosion of ideological and moral moorings that had inspired selfless sacrifice in the party rank and file among leaders who are now becoming increasingly selfish and power hungry.

Another leftist leader, Ghanashyam Bhusal was equally critical of his UML

and said that after 1990, the leadership failed to gauge the gulf between people's aspirations and its own political program. "We never sat back and introspected why thousands of Nepalis were drawn to the Maoist's 'people's war' even though more than half of them voted for us in the elections. The UML made a mistake and now the Maoists are repeating it," he said.

Despite being on the periphery of power for so long, Nepal's leftist parties have always dominated the critical political discourse. Their interpretation of 'material political conditions' and vision of a just society have appealed to the masses.

But the duality in the behaviour of leaders reeks of hypocrisy and weak moral foundations. In private conversations, some leaders express personal distaste for 'money and muscle' politics, but go roundabout justifying it in the name of doing 'larger good'. As former Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai often likes to say: "These are small things, we should not be distracted by such details in the great course of revolution."

The left's proposal to seek a greater state role in the economy is significant in a remittance-driven economy for the upcoming elections. But before going to the people with their popular programs, the challenge for Nepal's leftist parties is to overcome the crisis and contradictions within their own rank and file. 🇳🇵

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# THE KATHMANDU AIRLIFT



NARESH NEWAR

Many people living in Kathmandu Valley’s densely populated core will not have much of a chance of survival when the next big earthquake strikes. So disaster preparedness experts are turning their attention to making sure Nepal’s only international airport will be operational to fly in relief.

Historical records show that earthquakes of magnitude 8.0 and above have hit central Nepal regularly every 80 years on average. The last one was in 1934, when at least 10,000 people were killed in the Valley although the epicentre was 150km to the south in India.

An earthquake of the same intensity would kill more than 100,000 people outright in Kathmandu Valley, experts estimate, leaving double that number

seriously injured and up to 1.5 million people homeless. Survivors will face serious shortages of food, shelter, and medicines. Highways leading to Kathmandu will have been blocked by landslides and the airport will be damaged.

A 7.0 magnitude quake in the Haitian capital, Port-au-Prince, in 2010 killed 200,000 people and damaged the city’s Toussaint L’Ouverture International Airport. Relief supplies couldn’t get in for three days until the US military repaired the runway and flew in air traffic controllers and navigation equipment.

Kathmandu’s Tribhuvan International Airport has only one runway and geological tests have shown that parts of it are vulnerable to liquefaction damage during an earthquake. Just thinking about it is scary for Kathmandu airport’s Operation Chief Deo Chandra Lal Karna. He says: “It is a huge challenge, but if all goes well we can be better prepared.”

Learning from the Haiti experience, the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) recently prepared a ‘TIA Disaster Response Plan’ with help from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and Canada’s University of British Columbia. It lays out emergency response for the first 72 hours to repair damage, restore flight operations, prepare staging areas, and logistics for flying in relief.

The plan covers overseas humanitarian assistance for one month and housing for 1,000 emergency personnel in the open areas around the airport, including the golf courses. A team of engineers from the Nepal Army’s Kali Baksh Battalion have been trained by the Hawaii-based USACE on emergency repairs after an earthquake.

“We have learnt from Haiti’s disaster and lack of preparedness and want to avoid the same happening



TARIKU TESHALE

here in Nepal,” explains Punya Shakya, project director of TIA Improvement Project at CAAN. Kathmandu Valley needs about 4,000 tons of food every day and the currently airport can only receive 533 tons daily. The airport could be Kathmandu’s only lifeline to the outside world and will be the entry point for food, medicine, tents, and international rescue

personnel. But unlike Haiti, which is only a two hour flight from Florida, Nepal is 10 hours away from the nearest US military base in the Pacific or Indian Ocean. Help from India could be limited because a big earthquake in Nepal would also devastate northern India.

“We now have a plan that will ensure that our airport is more prepared and the Home



# Attention turns to preparing Kathmandu airport to receive relief after the next big earthquake



- 1 Staging Area 1 Golf Course
- 2 Staging Area 2 Golf Course
- 3 Staging Area 3
- 4 Staging Area 4
- 5 Cargo Terminal
- 6 International Terminal
- 7 International Apron
- 8 Domestic Terminal
- 9 Domestic Apron
- 10 Domestic Hangars
- 11 Runway 02-20 (3,000m)
- 12 Parallel Taxiway
- 13 East Helipads
- 14 Aviation fuel depot

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**PUTTING IT ON THE MAP: A Google Earth image shows how Kathmandu airport is now subsumed by the city (above) and a US military C-130 at TIA (left).**

Ministry will give full support to the response plan," said Pradip Koirala, joint secretary and a senior member of the ministry's disaster management unit.

In September, the airport authorities are organising a full-scale drill to rehearse rapid response and practice coordination between airport officials, the Home Ministry's National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC), rescue and fire fighting services, the army, police, hospitals, and aid agencies.

The airport's runway is 3,000m long and can accommodate military cargo jets like the C-4 and C-130s and wide-body 747s, but if jets will not be able to land. Bhairawa and Pokhara airports are being upgraded, but won't be ready for at least three more years.

For now, the TIA Disaster Response Plan needs to be taken to another level: funding. The airport immediately needs \$1 million for prepositioning of food and other emergency relief supplies and equipment. Another \$10 million is needed for the airport to be fully prepared.

"The planning at the moment is at an advanced level, but there is a gap in funding support," says Andrew Martin, head of UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which is part of the Nepal Risk Reduction Consortium.

Under the plan, the UN's World Food Program (WFP) is supposed to take the lead in coordinating logistics with the government and locating humanitarian staging grounds. 🇳🇵

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Thinking the unthinkable, #638  
Not if, but when, #536

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The "Great Himalaya Trail" (GHT) is a network of existing paths and trade routes spanning the length of the country from Darchula and Humla in the West to Kanchenjunga in the East, packaged and promoted into one of the world's great walks. Potentially, the GHT traverses the length of the Himalayan Range stretching through impoverished mountain areas of Pakistan, India and Bhutan.

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BIKRAM RAI

# By the fireside

A Monday afternoon in the office for Bhusan Dahal involves intercom feeds, power cuts, and Gagan Thapa

KUNDAN SHRESTHA

In the middle of an intense discussion about the upcoming CA elections with NC youth leader Gagan Thapa, Bhusan Dahal suddenly nods his head briskly. This is not merely conversational etiquette, the 47-year-old host of Kantipur TV's Fireside program is actually acknowledging the mediator in the control room who instructs him through an earpiece to move onto a new topic.

In the glare of studio lights and cameras, Dahal simultaneously processes directions from the control room while the eloquent leader shares his views on Nepali youth's anguish. Thapa's monologue extends to the reluctance of political parties to allow young leaders to take over the reins, at which point the mediator urges Dahal to question him about his underachieving career.

Halfway through, the generator in the building gives in and brings the show to a grinding halt. Dahal apologises and the two men simply wait in the pitch dark studio. When the computers are rebooted and the lights illuminate the set, the mediator reminds Dahal that Thapa had been speaking about the burden political parties must bear to abide by their electoral manifestos. Dahal craftily frames his question so that they get to carry on where they

left off before the momentary blackout. The audience at home, however, never gets to witness these intriguing behind the scene moments. In the final cut of the program that we see on our tv sets, conversation flows seamlessly.

Having completed almost 500 episodes, the entire crew seems extremely comfortable



with each other and the mood on the sets is usually very relaxed although a bit noisy. At times intra-studio communication falters with changing mediators, at other times shooting is interrupted due to load-shedding, but Dahal rallies his team to push on.

While Dahal's easily recognisable voice is projected into our living rooms every Monday night at 9, it's the

people we don't see who are the real backbone of the show. The dedicated team spends hours every week monitoring the political situation and feeling the pulse of the public and is integral to the program's immense popularity and success. While the Nepali television industry staggers along, the Fireside crew has been able to maintain its high standards throughout these past 10 years.

The charismatic host likes to 'warm-up' with his guests over a cup of coffee while he lets the crew finish last minute lighting and audio arrangements. Today Dahal asks Thapa about his views on the UCPN(M) chairman's recent visit to China and voices his own frustrations about Nepali politics. As Thapa is immersed in Xi Jinping, the anchor's eyes dart towards his subordinates questioningly. Once he receives the cue, Dahal's transforms from an active participant to a crafty stimulator.

The commotion on the set and improvisations are all part of the ebb and flow of the television business and just another day in the office for the Fireside crew.

SEE INTERVIEW:  
page 18

nepalitimes.com   
Bhusan's fireside, #154  
Watch the interview

## BIZ BRIEFS

### Double offer

International Money Express and Ncell have launched a campaign called "IME Garaun Ncell SIM upahaar swarup paaou" to celebrate New Year 2070. During the two month long campaign, all IME customers will receive Ncell IME Pack with a SIM card and bonus balance.



### Treat time

EOL, the authorised distributor of Kelvinator refrigerators and washing machines in Nepal, has introduced New Year Treat offer. Customers will receive a gift item on the purchase of every Kelvinator product.

### Loving it

Syakar Trading, the sole distributor for Honda bikes and scooters in Nepal, announced the winner of "I Love DIO" Facebook photo competition. Shima Shrestha won a diamond solitaire ring after receiving the maximum number of likes for her photo on Facebook while Diwana Gurung won Rs100,000 through a lucky draw.



### PrimeLife

Secured Future

### Prime in Butwal

Chairman of Beema Samiti, Fatta Bahadur KC inaugurated PrimeLife's fifth regional office in Butwal on Tuesday.

The insurance company operates regional offices in Kathmandu, Hetauda, Biratnagar, and Nepalganj.

### Green path

ŠKODA's main plant in Mladá Boleslav has invested 66 million Euro to manufacture fuel-efficient vehicles. According to the press release, ŠKODA aims to lower energy and water use as well as waste and emission quantities by 25 per cent per vehicle by 2018 through its Green Future initiative.

ŠKODA



### Turkish delight

Akhil Trading Concern has brought one of Europe's leading furniture brands Istikbal of Turkey to Nepal. Renowned for its range of furniture – from Victorian to neo-classical to sleek modern – Istikbal furniture in Kathmandu offers tables, cabinets, bedroom sets, dressing tables, and wardrobes. ATC also presents Istikbal's textiles from duvets to carpets that are a hallmark of quality all over the world.

### Refreshing summer

Triveni Byapar has launched a range of juicer mixer grinders from Maharaja Whiteline and eight models of air coolers from Symphony.

The juicer mixer grinders have shock proof ABS body and overload prevention mechanism which ensures longer life of the equipment, while the air coolers consume minimal power according to the press statement.



### Fine taste

Global Trading Concern recently launched luxury whisky Johnnie Walker XR 21 in Nepal. According to the press release Johnnie Walker XR 21 is matured for at least 21 years, which creates smooth notes of golden honey, vanilla, and sweet fruits evolving into the deep richness of aged oak.

### Winning number

Pooja International Nepal, authorised distributor of Volkswagen, announced the winners of Volkswagen "Too Good" offer. Rabin Shrestha of Butwal won a Ducati Monster 696 while eight other winners won KTM Duke, tabs, and television sets. Volkswagen was launched in Nepal in September 2010 and currently offers 11 models and more than 30 variants in petrol and diesel versions.



### Building blocks

With the help of the Czech Embassy in New Delhi, Namaste Nepal and locals built a four room building for Bal Pratibha Lower Secondary School in Panchkhal Kavre. The school was also provided with furniture. The new building will be inaugurated by Vishnu

Agarwal, honorary consul of Czech Republic, on 28 April.

### Bling bling!

To celebrate its 24th anniversary, Ebisu Jewellers in Darbar Marg is organising a jewellery exhibition and sale that will last till 28 April. According to the press release, the exhibition will showcase latest gold and diamond jewellery and offer fabulous discounts.





With the first pre-summer showers in full flow since last weekend, maximum temperatures have dipped and the climes have gone from being hot and dry to cool and humid. Despite the relief felt in Kathmandu, the plains below get little joy because the tempests played out in high mountains lose all steam by the time they reach there. The pre-monsoon will continue throughout this weekend, lending us cool mornings and overcast afternoons until at least Friday, after which the summer heat will be upon us for the next two months.



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New Video May Aid in Search for Missing Ivy League Student

By Gio Benitez @GioBenitez

New images from a surveillance camera show 22-year-old Sunil Tripathi, of Radnor, Pa., moments after leaving his apartment at 1:33 a.m. on March 16, just twenty minutes after he last used his...

View on web

317

RETWEETS

38

FAVORITES

facebook

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MISSING

HAVE YOU SEEN SUNIL TRIPATHI?

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10,214 likes · 10,369 talking about this

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Community

Brown undergraduate Sunil Tripathi has been missing from his Providence apartment since early Saturday morning, March 16th. Please call the Providence police at (401) 641-9691 if you've seen him or have any information. We are very worried.

About · Suggest an edit

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Whoa! Epic closed captioning FAIL! “@joelmchale: Oh my RT @peterogburn: [pic.twitter.com/F3sbpmq9WO](#)”

7:00 AM · 20 Apr 2013

11,953 RETWEETS · 6,728 FAVORITES

# A slip of the tongue

## Don't believe everything you hear and only half of what you see

JUANITA MALAGON

‘You are the master of the words you don't say and a slave to the ones you do.’ This old adage is more relevant today in the age of digital social media than ever before. What you say on the internet is likely to be read, repeated, and forwarded far beyond what the reach of your words used to be. Furthermore, it's likely to stay here forever.

That's the ultimate FXXX OFF.' Later, he regretted the tweet and deleted it. But it was retweeted immediately by so many people that the remark is still in the Internet universe. During the US presidential campaign, another US singer and actress, Cher tweeted: 'If ROMNEY gets elected I don't know if i can breathe same air as Him & his Right Wing Racist Homophobic Women Hating Tea Bagger Masters.' She had second

the time Twitter and Facebook self-corrected, the damage to the boy's reputation had been done. The family posted on Facebook to try to salvage the truth. The new news outlets are increasingly Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, and other social media sites, and less the CNNs, BBCs, and Foxes of the world. And like in the mainstream media, the desire to be 'first' outstrips the need to tell the truth. But all is not lost, online information has the capacity to

Cher

@cher

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If ROMNEY gets elected I don't know if i can breathe same air as Him & his Right Wing Racist Homophobic Women Hating Tea Bagger Masters

8 May 12

Reply Retweet Favorite

Chris Brown

@ChrisBrown

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HATE ALL U WANT BECUZ I GOT A GRAMMY Now! That's the ultimate FXXX OFF!

50+ RETWEETS · 50+ FAVORITES

5:28 PM · 14 Feb 12 via Twitter for iPhone · Embed this Tweet

Reply Retweet Favorite

It takes only one tweet or one post on Facebook to break the news and its chain reaction is like nuclear fission as it spreads across the world at the speed of light. No matter where you are in the world, which time zone, people share or re-post information assuming it to be the truth. But what happens when the information turns out not to be true? Or the person who tweeted regrets and deletes it? Is there life after a tweet? Celebrities, for example, are known to tweet and then depending on the reaction of the public, just delete their message without making any further comments. As if it would be that simple. Nothing on the Internet is ever really gone. US singer Chris Brown, for example, is famous not just for his songs but for his short temper. He won a Grammy award and when colleagues in the industry tweeted that he didn't really deserve it, he retorted: 'HATE ALL U WANT BECUZ I GOT A GRAMMY Now!

thoughts and deleted the tweet. Too late. The message was already widespread. Even if the tweet had disappeared, the comments, replies, and retweets stayed on. People have memory and so does the Net. The Boston Marathon bombing exposed the problems with breaking news as well as the tendency of social network sites to spread false information. CNN made a mistake when it wrongly flashed the news that the authorities had a suspect in custody soon after the explosions. Not to be outdone, Fox News showed a suspect with this caption: 'Marathon bombing, he is 19-year-old Zoey Deschanel', mistaking the name of a Hollywood actress with the real suspect, Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. Sunil Tripathi, an Indian-American, who had been missing from his college at Brown since March was wrongly identified as a suspect when social media postings about him went viral. By

correct itself and smart phones have become a great tool for information on the go. The important thing is to be critical and not believe in everything you read and hear immediately. This is raw information and just like journalists do, one needs verification. As another adage goes: 'Don't believe everything you hear and only half of what you see.'

Juanita Malagon is the Online Coordinator of [www.nepaltimes.com](#)

## The unconventional

Unafraid and determined, this trio of young men unflinchingly followed their passion despite discouragement and cynicism of friends and family. Today, their success has left critics stunned.

SEE INSIDE: page 10-11

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EVENTS



**INKED FOR LIFE**, compete with tattoo artists from home and abroad or get tattooed on spot at the 3rd International Tattoo Convention. 26 to 28 April, Yak and Yeti Hotel, 9841471448/9841849786



**HIMALAYAN OUTDOOR FESTIVAL**, run, cycle, rapple, climb, and buzz through ziplines at the 2nd annual outdoor festival in Kathmandu. 3 to 5 May, Hattiban Resort, [www.himalayanoutdoorfestival.com](http://www.himalayanoutdoorfestival.com)

**Wheel-a-hoops**, wheelchair basketball training to promote and improve physical, mental, emotional, and social strength of persons with disabilities. 10 to 12 May, 10am to 4pm, Covered Hall, Tripureswor, 9801082797

**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/](http://www.unep.org/wed/blog-competition/bloggers/), #WED2013



**UKUS MUKUS**, an exhibition of drawings, prints, and multimedia by artists Kanchan Burathoki and Palistha Kakshapati depicting the drudgery of everyday life in Kathmandu. 28 April to 12 May, 10.30am to 6pm, Park Gallery, Pulchok, (01)5522307

**Kathmandu bike festival**, bike stunts, tattoo parlours, live music, good food, and an inter-school cross-country championship for bike lovers. 4 May, 12.30pm, Gyanodaya School, Sanepa



**DUTCH QUEENS' DAY**, sell an unusual toy, buy an unusual item, or play a musical instrument on the succession of the Netherlands' next king. 30 April, 12.30 to 5pm, Summit Hotel, (01)5523444/5521810

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

**Graphic voices**, an exhibition of graphic artist Dan Archer's work chronicling the lives of trafficking survivors. Runs till 14 May, 10am to 5pm, Image Ark Gallery, Kulimha Tol, Patan

**Oh to be a gooner**, watch Arsenal take on Manchester United, as they chase the Champions League spots. 28 April, 8.30pm, Reggae Cafe n Bar, Thamel

**Genesis of colours**, an exhibition of oil paintings by Marcos Duprat, Brazil's ambassador to Nepal. Runs till 2 May, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babarmahal

**Target arena**, get up to 50 per cent discount at the new paintball battle grounds. 27 April to 4 May, 8am to 7pm, Sanepa, 9851106850

**A country in verse**, gather round to hear your contemporaries wax poetic on Nepal and Nepalianness. 4 May, 4 to 6.30pm, Mahabir's Centre for Nepal Connection, Thamel

**Happy birthday**, the folks at Sattya Media Collective celebrate the second year of their lair's being. 27 April, 4.30pm, Hariyo Chok, Lagankhel

**I vitelloni**, films and music from the land of Gaius Julius Caesar. Rs 950, Runs till 28 May, Tuesdays only, 6pm, Black Pepper Pub, Jhamsikhel



**ANUBHUTEE**, an exhibition of paintings of eight Nepali female artists. Runs till 4 May, 10am to 5pm, Newa Chhen, Kulimha Tol, Patan Darbar Square

**Bharatnatyam**, dancer Charles Ma of Bangalore will evoke the classic hip-shake. 27 April, 6 to 8pm, Nepal Academy Hall, Kamaladi, (01)5550191

**Tech mashup**, bringing tech enthusiasts together to discuss startup culture and work for its promotion in Nepal. 28 April, 5 to 9pm, Baber Mahal Revisited

DINING



**CAFFE CONCERTO PIZZERIA**, a fine assortment of pastries, coffees, and Italian food. Lakeside, Pokhara

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



**CAFE DU TEMPLE**, famous for its delicious food, warm ambience, and a beautiful roof top view. Patan Darbar Square, (01)5527127

**Thakkhola Thakali Cuisine**, this restaurant skips the bland continental fare and specialises in Nepali food of the Thakali kind. Jhamsikhel

**Degaa Resto Lounge**, along with the usual selection of Western dishes,

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cocktails, and mocktails, Degaa offers incredible Newari and Indian cuisine. *Kumaripati*

**Reggae Bar**, a melting pot of sorts and a Friday night home for locals, hippies, embassy folks, bankers, and the NGO crowd. *Thamel*

**La Soon**, an excellent place to have a nice dinner in a peaceful surrounding. *Bhanimandal*

**Himalayan Pizza**, this restaurant has enough options to make both adults and children happy. *Thamel*



**GOLDEN DRAGON**, breathing fire, roasting duck. *Jhamsikhel*

**Cafe Cheeno**, comfortable and elegant, this is the perfect place to have a cup of coffee and chat with friends on a cold day. *Patan*

**Noyoz**, this tiny little joint serves food that tastes like your mother's home-cooked dishes. *Bhatbhateni*

**Casa de Cass**, the folks have created a new cocktail and a new menu of appetisers to go with it. *Pulchok*

## MUSIC



**SHASTRIYA SANGEET**, dabble in the magic of Hindustani classical music every new moon night. *9 May, 4pm, Ram Mandir, Battisputali*

**Earthwatch**, live music over dinner every Friday. *Rs 1,299, Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha, (01)4375280*

**Inter college band competition**, rock the living daylights out of your competitors and win the chance to cut an album of your own. *Rs 5,000, Bhrikuti Mandap, 1 May, 9813422986*

**Live at Cafe 32**, live music and delicious food every Friday. *6pm onwards, Cafe 32, Battisputali, (01)4244231*



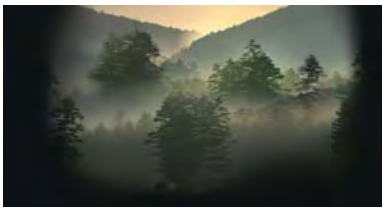
**SUMMER FEST**, 12 hours of loud music to defy the sweltering advent of summer. *4 May, 8am to 8pm, Fun Park, Bhrikuti Mandap*

## GETAWAYS

**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*

**Shivapuri Village**, eco-tourism close to the Shivapuri National Park replete with a charm of bygone days. *Patiswara, Shivapuri National Park, (01)4017725, 9851034141, info@shivapuri.com*



**BALTHALI VILLAGE RESORT**, a small, cosy retreat with a bird's eye view of green terrace fields dotted with ochre painted houses. *Balthali, Kabhre, 9851075818*

**Hotel Barahi**, enjoy a great view of Phewa lake, cultural shows, or indulge in the scrumptious pastries from the German Bakery on the hotel premises. *Lakeside, Pokhara, 061-460617/463526*

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

# When the veneer of civilisation falls off



Two middle class Kathmandu couples meet to negotiate a peace deal over a fight of their 11-year-old sons. What starts in a seemingly polite and civilised manner escalates into explosions of aggression, anger, pride, and contempt under a thin skin of tolerance. They lash out at each other in

poisonous rage, hurling accusations, revealing secrets, questioning intentions, all intensified by the flow of alcohol.

A typical example of the rapid speed in which Kathmandu society is embracing all aspects of materialism and modernity, from the high-rise buildings to the obsession with money, consumerism of everything foreign, and the call of self-optimisation and profit, the chaos within the four walls of a house becomes symbolic: a national malaise that prevents its people from solving the simplest problems.

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Your favourite yoga friends have a busy calendar this month, offering courses and retreats for beginners as well as long-time enthusiasts.

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**29 April to 1 May**, Inward meditation with Rupesh, Rs 24,000, Neydo Monastery Resort  
**2 to 5 May**, Kids yoga teacher training with Dilaram, Rs 16,000, Pranamaya Studio, Boudha  
**6 to 8 May**, Classical Indian philosophy with Sati, Rs 24,000, Neydo Monastery Resort  
**18 to 19 May**, Ashtanga yoga with Sati, Rs 11,500, Namo Buddha Resort  
[www.pranamaya-yoga.com](http://www.pranamaya-yoga.com), 9802045484

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# Doctor at your doorstep

SULAIMAN DAUD

In Nepali culture if a father falls sick, the son is responsible for taking care of him. But as joint families fragment into nuclear ones and dual income households become the norm in urban Nepal, people don't have the time to take care of sick family members. Taking leave from work is not always possible and puts pressures on those who live pay cheque to pay cheque.

To help fill this gap in Nepal's medical system, Bishal Dhakal, a cardiac surgeon by profession, started Health At Home in 2009 which brings healthcare services right at

peoples' doorsteps. "By providing care that is on par with hospitals, we allow people to can carry on with their work without constantly worrying about the well-being of their loved ones and also save them the hassle of travelling back and forth from the hospital," explains Dhakal.

Health at Home offers patients with long-term, chronic illnesses expert and personalised care in the privacy and comfort of their own homes. Although this is a fairly new concept in Nepal, services of this kind have been offered in the West for years. The process is pretty simple: families make an appointment with doctors who will assess the patient suggest services. Clients can then customise programs according to their budget and time constraints. "Families can choose to have healthcare services for 24 hours a day or just once a day, it all depends on their needs," says Dhakal.

The doctor turned entrepreneur, however, faced a lot of ridicule when he first started his business. His family tried to deter him from leaving his lucrative position as a surgeon to begin a venture that at



best was risky and at worse foolish. After winning the Surya Nepal Award in 2012 which recognises entrepreneurs who run socially responsible businesses, however, Dhakal silenced all his critics. "I cried when I heard the news and I was equally happy to have proven my detractors wrong," he says. "Although most people don't consider healthcare a business, if you're taking money from people in return for a service it definitely qualifies as a social enterprise. But it's equally important to give back to the community while still making a profit."

As Dhakal looks to expand his business to Africa and elsewhere in South Asia, he has a few words of advice for those looking to follow in his footsteps: "To run a social enterprise you need to be responsible, ethical, and self-sustaining in all that you do. Once that's taken care of, you will create opportunities for yourself and others." 🇳🇵

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CINDREY LIU



CINDREY LIU

# Dulla and the shoe factory

From almost dropping out of school to owning his own footwear company, designer Ahmed Dulla is now giving shoe lovers in Nepal a reason to smile

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"It was in my genes," Ashesh Kulung Rai, 19, says with an infectious grin when we ask him how he got into music. His fascination with eastern classical music began even before he was old enough to understand it and he remembers walking around home "banging on everything" in an effort to emulate what he saw at home and on TV. By seven he had settled on an instrument and was 'playing' his grandfather's unguarded tabla with a hammer.

Ashesh's grandfather, Ram Hari Gurung, played tabla in the palace of Chandra Shamsher, spent 24 years in India studying with renowned ustaads, and continues to play today at 87. Determined to pass on his musical talents to his prodigious grandson, Gurung began training Ashesh, bribing the restless eight-year-old with sweets and packets of Wai Wai. "Nobody else in Nepal could have passed on traditional music to me the way my grandfather did," says the tabla boy with deep gratitude. He feels the same way about his father whose support has been unflinching.

At 16, Ashesh outperformed many of his seniors and won the best tabla player and overall musician awards at the Kirateswor's annual traditional music contest. Two years later,

he completed his Master of Music degree in tabla from Prayag Sangeet Samiti in India. During the 2012 Jazzmandu Festival his magical hands won the hearts of a panel of visiting international musicians and bagged the 'Jazz for the Next Generation' band contest. From studying on scholarship at Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory to teaching his own classes, Ashesh now wants to learn Carnatic music in South India so that he can perfect his grandfather's sur and taal.

Although classical music runs through his blood, Ashesh has always had a welcome disregard for genre and classification: "Trying to put music into different genres is so constraining. There are no boundaries to music. Everything I hear inspires me, even the daily traffic noise. I find music in everything, everywhere I go." Bringing his musical background to the world of Jazz, he sees

opportunity where others would see obstacles. "I want to bring East and West on common ground and create real fusion," he says. "Today, people copy Western drum grooves and play them on tabla and call it fusion. They are using the instrument, but with limits, I want to use all the possibilities the tabla offers." 🇳🇵

## Talk to the hands

ROMAN GAUTAM



As a young boy, Ahmed Dulla would spend hours admiring footwear and picking out the most expensive pairs of shoes from shops. However, every trip ended in tears because his parents refused to spend thousands on a 10-year-old's shoe. In high school, Dulla fell in love with basketball, but more than the game, he was fascinated by the sneakers he saw on court.

"I knew my dream of becoming a NBA star was too far-fetched so I thought I would design shoes for players instead," chuckles the 25-year-old who launched his line of self-titled shoes in Nepal last month.

While not quite fit for a game of basketball, Dulla's personally designed, hand-made shoes are elegant, yet comfortable enough for daily use and are giving female shoe lovers in

Kathmandu a reason to smile. With over 100 pairs off the shelves and 150 pre-orders in less than a month, Dulla is thrilled with the way business has picked up through word of mouth.

"When I told my family and friends that I wanted to study footwear, they were skeptical. They would make fun of me and ask me why I was spending so much money and time training to become a 'cobbler'?" he recalls. "So it feels amazing to see two long years of hard work finally paying off. My family is also more appreciative now."

Not the most diligent student in high school, Dulla had thought about dropping out a couple of times. "I hated studying so much that at one point, I wanted to become a taxi driver," he says. But all that changed when he enrolled at Footwear Design and Development Institute (FDDI) in India. Within a few weeks he knew he had made the right



choice and found his courses so interesting that he attended classes religiously during his three years at FDDI and ended up winning an award for best attendance.

After graduation, the aspiring designer started interning at Aldo and Zara in Mumbai. Dulla says those were the toughest three months of his life where he felt he was being constantly exploited and not getting credit for his work. "No matter how hard I worked, at the end of the day others would take credit for my designs. That is when I realised that I couldn't work under someone else and had to start something on my own," he admits.

Although the company is based in Delhi, the designer chose Kathmandu for the official launch. "I always wanted to do something in my country and this is just a small effort," he explains, "I have felt a real demand for good-

quality shoes here." Dulla teamed up with Trendsetters to distribute shoes in the country, but tech savvy shoppers can also order online through Facebook.

The confident shoemaker has now set his sights on outshining cheap Chinese knockoffs that dominate the market and is looking to partner with Nepal's top shoe brands. He also has long-term plans of establishing the first footwear design institute in Nepal.

Says Dulla: "Footwear technology is such an alien concept here and the profession is still looked down upon. I want to change this and also help young designers. I know it's an ambitious goal, but I have the passion and determination." 🇳🇵

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# MAD MEN



**MUST SEE**  
**Sophia Pande**

When I first started watching *Mad Men* in 2007, it was a sort of rogue experimental program that AMC (the American cable network) had taken a bet on. Six years later, *Mad Men* is one of the most highly regarded shows currently on TV and the first few episodes of season six have just premiered on AMC to immense critical acclaim.

I will not mince my words, I have never found *Mad Men* easy to watch. In fact, somewhere between season two and season three I stopped watching it altogether, thoroughly disturbed by the actions of its entire cast of characters. Having just finished season five however, I feel a certain pressure to write about this show, partly because it is undeniably excellent and partly because a great deal of it pertains to Nepali society, even while *Mad Men* itself is set in the 1960s.

The title *Mad Men* refers to the highly competitive advertising agencies that resided on Madison Avenue in Manhattan in those days. These (M)ad men lived lives that are almost unbelievable in today's world of overt political correctness and seemingly sterile corporate culture. They drank starting at breakfast (whiskey, vodka martinis; nothing light), smoked like chimneys, and slept with practically every semi-attractive secretary type person in sight regardless of their marital status.

Jon Hamm plays the central character, Don Draper, a fiendishly talented, enigmatic, ridiculously handsome (in the old school style) ad man who is the star idea pitcher at his firm Sterling Cooper Advertising Agency. Draper is married to a beautiful Hitchcock type blonde, Betty (January Jones), who eventually divorces him over

the course of the series due to his almost sociopath-like tendency to womanise. They have two children at the start of the series.

It is hard to go into the entire ensemble cast here, all of whom are excellent. Matthew Weiner, the show's creator, head writer, and executive producer, reputedly runs a tight ship and it shows in the excellent, taut writing. Weiner's style is very specific, he tackles all of the era's ugliness without pulling any punches. At a time when women are slowly rising in the workforce, when sexism is rampant, some of the events

at Sterling Cooper are almost unbearable to watch, and yet, it is not hard to think that many women today are probably encountering the exact same environments here in Nepal.

Sexism, homosexuality, racism, everything else that was taboo then in the West is slowly coming to the forefront here and just as it was kept under wraps then, here too we rarely hear anything about sexual harassment (or any other transgressions for that matter) in the workplace.

Weiner does not judge his characters, who are deeply flawed, he only presents them in sometimes awful, sometimes hilarious situations, always with candour and a flawless sense of what is cinematic.

Watch *Mad Men* for its exceptionally subtle story arcs, its perfect recreation of a bygone era, its fully realised characters, and its nuanced high drama. It will make you think about all the things you have never wanted to acknowledge, about yourself, about society, about the flawed nature of humanity, and yet you will keep watching because *Mad Men*, is, overall, more than just a TV show, it's that rare work of art which will keep you awake at night. 📺

[nepalimes.com](http://nepalimes.com)

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**Smartness:** Built-in camera and video recorder, web browser, Samsung Apps

performances every year, without laying the actual TV to waste. Trends across the globe show that new TV buyers have been migrating towards an internet-connected television and the ES8000 is leading the line for hi-end televisions. 📺

**YANTRICK'S VERDICT:** The ES8000 offers peerless image quality, performance, and connectivity for a television of its kind. But the tax-inflated price tag will probably deter a lot of Nepalis from taking the plunge.

## The smart idiot

What with phones becoming smart(er), tablets providing convenient computing, and even the middle ground 'phablet' offering tablet power in a phone, every electronic device seems to be on the path to enlightenment. The next thing you will see is a wall painting coming to life at the sound of your voice. Enter Samsung's Slim LED TV ES8000.

The ES8000 captures the imagination not so much as a television, but as a very large all-in-one multimedia device. Samsung bills it as 'the centrepiece' of a living room that is also a 'lifestyle partner'. It certainly aspires to become one, offering via its 'Smart Hub' interface apps tailor-made for children, gamers, fitness enthusiasts, or for plain old internet surfers.

Moreover, Samsung has a range of wireless devices such as blu-ray disc players and home theatre systems which, when coupled with the wi-fi compatible ES8000, offer tangle-free solutions to home entertainment.

Remember playing Angry Birds on your smartphone, touching to pull the catapult and fire at the pigs? Well, now you can simply use your hands to show directions and propel the annoyed avians and the Smart TV will use its camera to sense your motion and let you enjoy your game

like never before. With over 1,400 other free apps in its TV App Store, Samsung seems to be carrying TV gaming to a different level of convenience. How long before gaming consoles are sent packing?

In addition to the motion detectors, Samsung has also added voice control and face detection to its new TV. These are features that will improve over time and Yantrick predicts you will use the two remote controls – one regular, the other a 'smart' touch-controlled – more often because there is always ambient noise in a living room and your hands will get tired of making motions to change channels.

As the leading maker and seller of televisions, Samsung certainly knows what it's doing. The company has sought to address the problem of television sets getting outdated by providing TV owners with an 'Evolution Kit' that upgrades technical specifications and

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# Tour de Nepal

For the past 14 years, Honorary Consul for Nepal in France, Didier Benard, has been promoting Nepal and encouraging the French people to visit the country he dearly loves. *Nepali Times* caught up with Benard in Kathmandu shortly after he returned from a trek to Rara.

INTERVIEW

**Nepali Times:** You have been a regular visitor to Nepal for the past three decades, what keeps you coming back ?

**Didier Benard:** I first came to Nepal in 1985. It was my maiden trip to Asia so I was fascinated by the people who are always so open and accommodating, the rich culture, and the mountains surrounding Kathmandu. There is so much to see and experience here. During my first visit I adopted a son and then five years later adopted a daughter. We made it a point to visit Nepal every few years because we wanted our children to learn about the country where they were born.

**How has Nepal changed in all these years?**  
The country has made immense progress in



the last 30 years despite the insurgency. I was in Mugu a few weeks ago and it was heartening to see so many girls in school. More than the high-rises in Kathmandu, it's indicators like increased awareness about education, health, and sanitation that show how far Nepal has forged ahead. Nepalis are embracing modern lifestyles, but are still keeping their diverse culture alive and this is great.

**How well do the French people know Nepal and what do they think of us?**  
The internet has opened up Nepal to a lot more French people. They can now get information not only from their countrymen (and women) but from travellers around the world who have visited Nepal. Most are lured by the snow capped peaks, but it is the people and diverse culture they fall in love with and that keeps them coming back again and again. Even during the conflict the number of French tourists was pretty high and they keep increasing.

**Tell us about your work as a consul in France.**  
Although I am a doctor by profession, I have been working as an honorary consul of Nepal since 1999. We don't just promote popular trekking routes and sightseeing destinations like Pokhara and Lumbini, but also lesser known places like the tea gardens of Ilam and the national park in Bardiya. We are always on the lookout for new travel locations. This year I travelled around Mugu and was spell bound by the rich culture

and raw beauty of Rara Lake. I want to introduce this region to the French people.  
The consul developed a website in French to reach out to a larger audience and I also travel a lot around France promoting the culture and traditions of Nepal.

**How do you assess the efforts of the Nepali government and private entrepreneurs in promoting Nepal in France?**  
The private sector has been quite impressive. It has bought in many French tourists despite the messy politics. The government, however, has been largely disappointing. The Nepali embassy's website in France is in English which obviously puts off many people. Nepali authorities have to be more dynamic in promoting their country. Even simple steps like developing websites in local languages instead of English would help.  
So many French people want to visit Nepal, but they are deterred by long and complicated flights. The Nepali government needs to work with its counterparts in Europe to make the country more accessible by introducing direct flights to cities like Paris, London, Brussels. Tourism in Nepal also has to move beyond the Kathmandu-Pokhara-Chitwan circuit.

nepalitimes.com

Foster father, #482

DEVYANI SHIVAKOTI



SOMEPLACE ELSE

Legend has it that a baby born in Thamel could grow into an old man before sampling every eatery the tourist mecca has to offer. If he was in the mood for Japanese, though, he could try Furusato in Thamel chok.  
Located on the second floor opposite a travel agency, Furusato offers a nice view of a luxury spa outside its windows. Together with carved wooden tables and Japanese curtains hanging from the walls, it feels both authentic and welcoming. If you would like to sit and eat in the traditional manner, a large wood-panelled section with cushions and sunken seats lets you host a big party Japanese-style.

## FURUSATO

The menu offers a wide range of delectable dishes, focusing on seafood and fried treats, better known as tempura. From a range of starters, we picked the chicken karaage (fried chicken pieces, Rs 240). Although served with a generous helping of coleslaw and drizzled with fresh lime, the karaage wasn't crispy enough to be called perfect.

However the salmon shoyaki (Rs 460) was a treat. Good salmon is hard to find in Kathmandu and although the piece given was rather small, it was worth the price. Fried lightly, the fish goes very well with the main dish, which will likely be either a rice or noodle bowl.


No Japanese meal is complete without the famous ebi tempura (Rs 460) and although the white batter could have been crunchier, the prawns tasted great when dipped in the light, sweet soya sauce.



The portions served for both the chicken katsu don rice bowl (Rs 250) and the curry udon noodles (Rs 460) were large and satisfying, enough for even a hungry diner. Although the steam from the covered bowl made the fried chicken in the katsu don a little soggy, the fresh onions, shallots, and egg omelette went very well with the sticky rice. The miso soup served together with the rice bowl complemented the flavours nicely. The curry udon noodles were spicy, but not overly so and a good choice to warm up during this



PICS: CINDREY LIU

spate of cold, rainy weather.  
With clean restrooms, efficient wi-fi service, and peaceful surroundings, it's a shame that more people don't know about Furusato. Hurry down before the crowds flock to the place.   
*Sulaiman Daud*

*How to get there: as you walk down Chaksibari Marg in Thamel, look out for Helena's Restaurant on the left, then turn into a small alley on the right. Furusato is located on the second floor of the yellow office building.*





# Live high, train low



altitude (about 2,000m) is most effective in enhancing performance.

This method known as 'live high train low' is so popular among coaches and management that players are made to sleep in customised tents that simulate a high altitude environment and train at sea level because obtaining

severe shortage of oxygen is not very helpful for contestants.

As we ascend, the barometric pressure falls and as a result the oxygen in the atmosphere decreases. The barometric pressure at 5,800m is half of 760 mmHg, the sea level pressure. The amount of oxygen is always 21 per cent of the barometric pressure whether at sea level or the peak of Mount Everest.

Since even a fraction of a second makes the difference between winning or losing, countries spend billions every year to find the 'optimal' altitude which would improve athletes' chances of bringing home the gold. Recent research suggests that training at low altitude (sea level) while sleeping at high

adequate oxygen during preparation is vital.

The reason athletes tend to do better when sleeping in these moderate altitudes is because the body senses the hypoxia (low oxygen) and triggers the production of more haemoglobin which carries the all-important nutrient, oxygen, to all the tissues of the body. This increase in haemoglobin is in fact a natural form of blood doping.

For winning competitions at high altitude, it may be good to train above 3,000m, but if you want to stand on the winner's podium, high altitude training is worthless. The 'live high train low' approach may be the best answer to breaking Olympic records. 🇳🇵



**DHANVANTARI**  
**Buddha Basnyat, MD**

The Bolivian football team is not going to win the World Cup. At an altitude of around 400m, there just is not enough oxygen in La Paz, the capital, to train to full capacity no matter how good a player is. Perhaps if the World Cup was held in La Paz, it might be a different story. On a similar note, some people hope that our high altitude marathon runners will one day win Olympic gold medals in marathon. However, the probability is very low because training at altitudes above 3,000m where there is a



BIKRAM RAI

**LOST IN THE REPUBLIC:** The family of Pradhyumna Khadka, who died during the 2006 Jana Andolan, put garlands around his statue in Kalanki to commemorate Republic Day on Wednesday morning.



BIKRAM RAI

**SAY CHEESE:** The Kumari is taken to Lagantol to watch the Seto Machindranath chariot procession on Saturday.



BIKRAM RAI

**GOLD DIGGERS:** Owners of jewelry shops shut down their businesses on Tuesday and organised a rally in New Road to protest against the government's monitoring campaign.



SAMIR PRADHANANGA

**HUNGRY HEART:** An elderly man takes food offered to stray cows at Basantapur Darbar square.

  
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# Mr Dahal goes to Delhi

The Maoist chairman needs to ingratiate himself simultaneously to the two big neighbours



COMMENT

Kanak Mani Dixit

Two matters need to be held up to scrutiny as the country continues its dangerous drift, now under a technocratic government: a) Pushpa Kamal Dahal's geopolitical activism, and b) India's activism in the Nepali polity.

The formation of the Regmi regime flew in the face of separation of powers and Nepal's jurisprudential experience, and one can only wonder at the enthusiasm with which the Indian Embassy and some Western powers joined this exercise. Dahal's own interest in implementing the agenda was clear: to get Baburam Bhattarai out of Singha Darbar before he amassed wealth and political power to match his own.

Making the sitting chief justice the head-of-government contravened the Interim Constitution, but few seemed to care. The direct fallout was the weakening of the two remaining independent state institutions – the Supreme Court and the presidency of Ram Baran Yadav. This was in line with the Maoist agenda of state-deconstruction, in the planning since the 'people's war' and one on which Dahal and Bhattarai concur.

Dahal remains the tornado of Nepali politics, even though his political journey is sure to be affected before long by investigations into the conflict-era atrocities under his command. Given the

inevitability, the chairman's strategy is to shock-and-awe Nepalis, throttle human rights activists and victims who dare speak up, and emerge as the unassailable satrap of Nepal that India and China are forced to recognise before accountability catches up.

Dahal needs to ingratiate himself simultaneously to the two big neighbours. Last week he was in Beijing, where the CCP gave him privileged access to the high and mighty. This courtesy was clearly part of Beijing's search for a reliable

ally in Nepal to protect its soft Tibetan underbelly, while at the same time sending a message to New Delhi that no part of South Asia is out of bounds.

For some time now, Dahal has desperately sought an official invitation to New Delhi to try and make up for his loud anti-Indianism of 2009-10 and to wean South Bloc away from Bhattarai, its favourite Nepali Maoist. Dahal has therefore taken to behaving in ways he believes will please the New

Delhi establishment and will promise everything and sign anything in Delhi next week.

Even as it prepares to meet Dahal, New Delhi may want to mull over the need for transparency in its dealings with Nepal as a friendly neighbour and assess its own contribution in the weakening of the Nepal polity. While Indian Foreign Minister Salman Khursid and Foreign Secretary Ranjan Mathai went to some length to reassure a team of visiting Nepali journalists that India has a

hands-off policy on Nepal, the reality on the ground lies somewhere else.

Over the last couple of years, the activism of the Indian Embassy and its ancillary agencies in Kathmandu has been at a level that no other national political establishment in the subcontinent would suffer, raising questions about the conduct of relations between sovereign members of SAARC. Amidst the stupefying acquiescence of Kathmandu's politicians, this hyper-ventilation is building resentment in hill and plain.

Over the last few years, India has waded in on the main key national issues. It helped prop up the Bhattarai-led Maobadi-Madhesbadi coalition over 19 months, turning a blind eye to the unsavoury four-point agreement of that cohabitation. On the federalism debate, New Delhi backed a plains-based buffer province, a bizarre non-contiguous unit 30km wide and 800km that would destroy the socio-economic prospects of the Madhesi population.

Indeed, the people of the Madhes find themselves doubly disadvantaged: by a Kathmandu establishment that now includes 'Madhesbadi' parties and leaders and the embassy's inexplicable agenda in the plains. Delhi may want to study whether the 'Madhesbadi' agenda supports the interest of the national underclass in the plains, including the Tarai Dalit, Tharu, Muslim, and Pahadiya.

The national leaders in New Delhi may be enmeshed in their own existential preoccupations, but Nepal can only emerge as a stable neighbour under conditions of peace and democracy. International involvement, even intervention, is welcome when the goal is to protect democracy, human rights, and an open society. On all other matters, a friendly neighbour should be left free to conduct its own politics. ■



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# ARMS and the MEN



HERE WE GO  
Trishna Rana

With the peace process officially over, Nepal’s security forces need to downsize and rethink their roles

For the past month and a half, the reels of Manoj Pandit’s controversial new movie, *Badhshala*, have shuttled back and forth between the Nepal Army, the Ministry of Defence, and the Censor Board.

The film depicts graphic scenes from the army’s torture chambers during the war at the Bhairabnath Battalion. The NA initially said it objected because the actors wore military uniforms without permission. A few weeks later, it changed its tune and said the movie shouldn’t be released as it could ‘derail the peace process’, a euphemism that in recent years is used regularly by both state security and the Maoists to hide wartime atrocities they committed. The film was finally allowed to screen in theatres after the producers agreed to cut a few ‘problematic’ torture scenes.

*Badhshala* is a flawed historical drama because it only depicts one side of the conflict and there is no doubt that the Maoist party would have reacted in exactly the same way if the story was about torture and summary executions by the Maoists.

However, as a filmmaker in a democratic country with constitutionally guaranteed provisions on the freedom of expression, Pandit and his team have the artistic right to pick and choose sides to represent history in ways they see fit.

By trying to ban *Badhshala*, the army and Defence Ministry overstepped their jurisdiction and also exposed their deep sense of insecurity which they need to address not by looking for outside targets but through self-examination. With the peace process now officially over, some introspection is in order for Nepal’s security



## Telling each

Now that the peace process has been officially declared over and Maoist combatants have either been demobilised, disarmed or assimilated into the national army, there is a need to address some of the underlying dissatisfaction among ex-combatants who have been resettled.

There have often been problems between the ex-guerrillas and members of local communities who have lost relatives to Maoist violence during the conflict. In areas where large numbers of them are settled, there is a need to help them integrate into the communities. One unique effort is underway in Chitwan to assist communities with mediation and dialogue so that the assimilation process is smooth.

There are three sessions of five days each in with 20 participants selected by their communities in Dang, Surkhet, Kailali, and Chitwan. They include men and women from local community and from the ranks of the ex-combatants. A fifth person from a community group also takes part. And the fifth works in each district for dialogue and peace-building.

“The sessions were really useful,” says Anju (*pic, left*) a participant from a local community, “the old and new communities bonded well together by sharing their pain and their feelings of anger, fear, resentment, pain or grief.” As part of their reconciliation exercise, participants are asked to put themselves in the shoes of the other community and assess their situation. Ex-guerrillas see themselves from the perspective of local community members who feel unsafe because of the memories of war. And local families see the difficulties that the ex-combatants face in being treated like outsiders.

The Support of Measures to Strengthen the Peace Process project is supported by the German aid group, GIZ, and the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction. For Dirk Splinter from Inmedio Berlin who conducted some of the sessions, it was more than a training. It was an encounter for many villagers who had never met former Maoist guerrillas before.

**Nepalis on both sides of the conflict step into each other’s shoes in a unique reconciliation effort**





BIKRAM RAI

forces to rethink their priorities and redefine their roles in a post-conflict society.

A country of 26 million currently supports an army 96,000 strong. There are another 35,000 men under arms in the APF, the paramilitary force set up to fight the Maoists and never disbanded. The state spends about Rs 24 billion just on the NA, up from Rs 18 billion in 2010/11. The army's budget is rising even though the war has been over for seven years and will go up further after the cabinet lifted restrictions imposed by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on weapons purchases last week.

In a country where half the children go to bed hungry every night, it is a travesty to waste so much on the military. For this to happen the state has to limit the army's role and downsize it to pre-war levels. A 50,000 strong NA looking after disaster management, infrastructure security, and wildlife is more than enough for Nepal. We need to redefine security in terms of well-being of Nepalis and not on the strength of our military. For lasting peace, we need more schools, more trained teachers, and healthcare workers, not more helicopters and guns.

With the police to oversee day-to-day law enforcement and the army for state security, there is a

case for completely disbanding the APF. However, since the security forces are one of the biggest employers in Nepal, the state will have to implement the long-overdue Security Sector Reform plan.

Since restructuring the country's defence system requires time and a more stable polity, the security forces in the meantime should try to rebuild the trust that was lost during the conflict. The army for its part has to allow an independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whenever it is formed, to conduct investigations without interference. Otherwise it will squander even the remaining goodwill it has among Nepalis. Making entry into the forces more accessible for women and other marginalised communities and easing the rigid hierarchy within will also help in an image makeover.

The police, on the other hand, have to treat ordinary Nepalis with respect and show greater accountability. It does not send a good message when riot police in full gear watch on as party-backed hooligans set vehicles ablaze and at another end of town arrest peaceful protesters.

While chiefs of the past are known by the wars they won, the chiefs of today will be remembered by how popular and respected their men and women are among ordinary Nepalis. 🇳🇵



# other's stories



“We feel that sustainable trust building is only possible if people talk about past experiences to overcome resentment,” Splinter explained. “We worked on skills and methods, but also on attitudes to be able to change perspectives, to be able to feel like the other person.”

In smaller groups, Bishna from Kailali shares a story of how she felt the Maoists were giving villagers like her a lot of trouble. But after the session, she told the story of Anil, a participant who is an ex-combatant. “He got tangled in barbed wire during a blast. Then, a friend helped him get to the hospital. But his group thought he had died and told his family. Once out of hospital, he arrived home to find funerals happening for him and for his grandfather who had died on hearing of his death,” Bishna said, recounting Anil's story.

Anil listens and then adds quietly: “It was very difficult and I felt so bad that my grandfather had died due to wrong information.” Anil then tells Bishna's story, about how her brother who was a soldier in the army was home on leave. She was seven and one day while walking to the market a bomb went off and killed her brother. She found her brother's body beside the road.

Anil continued: “I felt the pain that we caused to each other and after we shared our stories we felt relieved.” Bishna added: “I realise they were fighting because they really believed they could change the country.” 🇳🇵

Frances Klatzel



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# Election is the only way ahead



Interview with Gagan Thapa, Kantipur Television, 15 April

**As a young leader, how do you assess Nepali politics?**  
Nepalis are angry at the current state of affairs. During the four years of drafting the CA, we made it seem like the new constitution would magically end all our problems. When that didn't happen it led to further disappointment and disillusionment. The people have been bottling up their frustrations for far too long and will probably erupt if elections are not held on time. Unfortunately, the 'top' leaders are too busy playing power politics in Kathmandu to understand this.

**Voters are not satisfied and parties are woefully unprepared, how can the country hold elections and move ahead?**  
There is simply no alternative to elections. Now it is up to the parties to talk among themselves and with those protesting out on the streets to resolve the disputed issues so that the Nepali people can have some sort of hope. The parties who claim to have ended the gridlock by forming a CJ-led government need to take charge and drive the nation towards polls.

**In your personal opinion, are elections possible in November?**  
I do not have the luxury to think otherwise. I don't want to take part in the guessing game so I will do everything in my power to make sure that polls are held in November. Everyone knew that promises of elections in June were hollow from the beginning, but it cannot be delayed any further than November, people won't spare us.

**These are the same parties and same leaders who failed to deliver a constitution on time. How are you and others planning to face the people in this election?**  
Since this is the second time people will be voting for the CA elections, all the parties need to clearly outline the kind of constitution they plan to draft if they are voted into the government. There is no point keeping people in the dark.

**Isn't that wishful thinking on your behalf?**  
This time Nepalis need to know exactly who and what they are voting for. If no party wins by a majority and we have to settle for a mixed system then it will be impossible for parties with such different ideologies to formulate a constitution once again.

**Young Nepalis want to see youth leaders with vision in power. How long will they have to wait for this dream to turn into reality?**  
The parties have to seriously think about handing over leadership to the youth to keep the hopes of millions of Nepalis alive. If the political leadership could have capitalised on the success of the 2006 Jana Andolan, the country and the politics would have moved far ahead in the last seven years. Looking at the rigid hierarchies within parties, I don't think things are going to change drastically anytime soon. It will be a slow and gradual process. This is sad though because we are losing the opportunity to nurture a young brood.

**How different is the NC today than it was in 2008?**  
If we are able to take care of our internal matters and assure people that we will deliver on issues that they consider important, then we will find

ourselves in a far better position than five years ago. But we still need to prove our mettle by winning over people's confidence with our new mandate and leaving our mark on issues such as federalism.

**What about the UCPN(M)?**  
They won majority of votes last time through sheer force and intimidation. Their support has dwindled significantly in these few years and fewer people will vote for them this time.

**And the Madhesi parties?**  
The divisions within the Madhes based parties and the internal struggles need to be managed first. There are fundamental issues in Madhes that haven't yet been addressed and which has left the people of the region deeply disappointed. The NC needs to deal with those as well and win over the voters who had earlier pinned all their hopes and voted for regional parties to make their voices heard.

**What is the NC's stance on federalism after the recently concluded Mahasamiti meeting?**  
We made our position on federalism very clear in the now defunct CA. But ever since the UCPN(M) claimed that our views on federalism are vague everyone started singing the same tune. It's unfortunate how the political discourse in this country is completely dictated by the UCPN(M). Federalism is a process, an ongoing discussion, which is now engrained in our code of conduct. If a member doesn't agree on federalism, his membership is taken away, but things like these don't get much attention in the media.

**You weren't given a ticket to contest the previous elections, how do you assess this decision in retrospect? And do you think there will be any changes this year?**  
The heads of the party weren't willing to believe in the change that had swept across the country back then. Around three million young voters were voting for the first time, but our party still decided to give tickets only to those who had won previous elections. The NC had only one candidate below 35, while UCPN(M) had close to 145 candidates of the same age. It wasn't just me, many people my age were not given tickets in 2008. I think over time, our party has understood that voters want those candidates with whom they can identify, so I am hopeful young leaders will be given an opportunity in the upcoming elections.

## NEPALI TWEETS

**Rabi Raj Baral**  
शहीदको शालिक अनावरण गर्ने विषय छ दलहरूबीच । शहीद सेतु चिकको शालिक प्रचण्डबाट अनावरण गरेपछि कांग्रेस, एमालेको विरोध भएकै छ ।  
Parties are bickering over who is going to inaugurate a martyr's statue. After Prachanda unveiled martyr Setu BK's statue, the NC and UML have started protesting. #so sad #democracy

**Ranita Khatri**  
एउटा भन्छ, "चुनाव हुने नदिले पड्यन्च भइरहेको छ", अर्को भन्छ "चुनाव हुने पड्यन्च भइरहेको छ" चिनलाई आफैमा विश्वास छैन ।  
One says "There is a conspiracy to disrupt polls," while the other says, "there is a conspiracy to make polls happen." They don't trust themselves.

**FwDrps**  
अमेरिकन ड्रिम, तलब बढाउन, पद बढाउन, तर काम र चाप भने दिनदिनै बढ्छ -  
American dream, no pay raise, no promotion but work load increases daily.

**Nilima Raut**  
मासमा जानलाई बन्ने टिकटको आज देखि एप्लिकेशन खुल्छो रे, नेपाली जनता जाने कि सम्झा नेतालाई पठाउने होला! लोकतन्त्र मा सोच्ने पलै कुरा  
One way application to fly to Mars is now open. Should common Nepalis go or should we send our dear leaders! Things once must think in a democracy.

## WEEKLY BAZAR POLL #10

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. What time do you wake up every morning?  
3 to 4 7.2%  
4 to 5 30.1%  
5 to 6 42.6%  
6 to 7 14.4%  
7 to 8 4%  
After 8 1.3%
2. What time do you have the first meal of the day?  
9 to 10 41.9%  
10 to 11 29.3%  
11 to 12 13.3%  
8 to 9 10.1%  
After noon 5.3%

# Setting off the siren

Sita Mademba, Himal Khabarpatrika, 21 April

In 2002, Shyam Shrestha of Sunsari opened Goma Memorial Trust in his sister's name and operated an ambulance service as part of the organisation. Although the trust no longer exists today, the ambulance can still be found outside the gates of BP Koirala Health Sciences Foundation in Dharan, waiting eagerly for patients. Sita Sah too used to operate an ambulance under the Jawahar Sah Memorial Foundation, but that vehicle is also parked near the BP Koirala Hospital. Similarly, another ambulance registered to operate around Sunsari loiters around Siru Medical Hall in Dharan. There are hundreds of such 'trusts' and 'foundations' whose vehicles are no longer providing social service, but have become commercial vehicles that charge patients and their families exorbitant fares.

Only a month ago, a hearse that transported the body of a journalist from Itahari to Dharan charged Rs 3,000 – thrice the rate set by the Red Cross Society – for the journey. The father of the deceased said the driver of the hearse owned by Man Bahadur Shrestha Foundation did not even bother to hand him a receipt.

Some former employees of trusts have now become middlemen who work in and around hospitals hawking prospective passengers. Agents who offer services of Sristi Memorial Trust, Man Bahadur Shrestha Foundation, and Purna Bahadur Memorial Foundation were found inside the emergency ward of BP. An agent receives anywhere between Rs 500 to Rs 1,000 for each trip and those who can get passengers to Siliguri in India can earn up to Rs 2,000. This business is proving to be so lucrative that hospital employees and security guards are all part of a cross-border



ferry network. Agents even get commissions from clinics and hospitals in Siliguri for booking a trip that far.  
According to the Nepal Red Cross Society, there are 53 ambulances and four hearses operating in Sunsari alone. Chudamani Sharma, who headed a committee last year to investigate the misuse of ambulances and ferry vehicles in Sunsari, says that most organisations have ditched social service for personal profits. Sharma's committee had ordered the ambulance controllers to stick to what they were registered for – social service – but Umesh Thapa of the Red Cross says that nobody complied.  
Although the Ambulance Operation Policy 2060 has provisions to scrap licences of ambulance operators that flout guidelines, no one in Dharan is scared of losing their cash cow.



Regmi: "Polls? Yes, yes ... they'll happen soon!"  
Book: 101 ways to fool the public – Four parties  
Nameplate: Chairman, Council of Ministers

कान्तिपुर Abin Shrestha in, Kantipur, 25 April

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“The UCPN(M) is preparing to use the Madhesi parties as a platform for vote mongering. We are ready to challenge them if they have the courage to stand on their own.”

UML Chairman Jhalnath Khanal on Pushpa Kamal Dahal's declaration that the UML is extinct, Nepal Samacharpatra, 25 April



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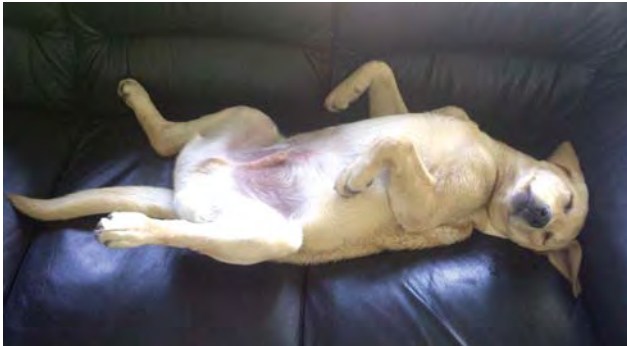
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# Going to the dogs

The Ass can't figure out what the big deal is about PKD clocking up mileage points with his shuttle diplomacy. This is a time-honoured tradition of Nepali leaders to kowtow to the North and grovel to the South and The Awesome One is just upholding it. It doesn't matter if they discussed golf, it is the photo-op that is important. Comrade Pukada has re-established himself as the Supremo in Nepali politics, not by fulfilling the expectations of the people, but by seen to be hobnobbing with neighbouring emperors.

But it was touch-or-go for a while. PKD wasn't getting an invite from the Delhi Darbar and it was already time to head to the airport to catch his flight to Shenzhen. Would he or wouldn't he get the green light from Delhi? Good thing Shri Prasad came visiting at the Lodging Part residence the morning of his departure for China with the itinerary for India. Otherwise, PKD would have been accused of going North first and made to suffer another five years in the dog house.

Speaking of dogs, this use of speciest language is uncalled for and unacceptable



in these politically correct times. The Ass would like to remind folks not to hurt the feelings of fellow fauna with derogatory remarks.

Throughout the long history of Man's relationship with the Animule Kingdom, he has been unfair to fellow creatures by barbecuing their body parts and eating their innards. Ever since their quadruped ancestors climbed down from the acacia trees in the Rift Valley, shed their prehensile tails, and started riding around in mopeds, they have treated animals abominably. Aside from the physical cruelty they inflict by grinding animals into paste so you can't tell which is horse and which is not, Man has also treated us animals with psychological

torture. Just look at how they use names of animals in everyday conversation by attaching negative attributes to them.

In referring to the dirty politics of the Big Four as a 'snake pit' think of what an insult it is to snakes. Similarly, by describing the preparations for the next elections as moving at a 'snail's pace', we underestimate and belittle the velocity of snail locomotion. And we show a singular lack of sensitivity to the feelings of our canine and equine friends when we "wolf" down "hors d'oeuvres".

But as an animal myself and a species that has reached the pinnacle of evolution, the Ass would like to remind humans to be less anthropocentric and more sensitive when referring to our four-legged and feathered friends in everyday conversation. In the beginning it will be difficult, after all we can't break a habit that we have nurtured over thousands of years to call an unpopular rival the offspring of a female dog. But please try?

As a service to our valued readers we offer below an introductory guide to replacing speciest language with more politically correct formulations:

**WRONG:** The only fly in the ointment was that the High Level Political Mechanism treated the Interim Government of Techno-Cats as puppets. **CORRECT:** Finally, towards the end of the cocktail reception, she mustered the courage to whisper that his fly was open.

**WRONG:** After observing the Chief Justice for a month, Nepalise realise that you can't teach an old dog new tricks. **CORRECT:** Kathmandu's canines yowled in celebration when they were told that the country was going to the dogs again.

**WRONG:** It is quite acceptable for bureaucrats to be sycophants and lick the asses of their political bosses. **CORRECT:** He has been a visionary statesman for donkey's years.

**WRONG:** The Finance Minister has kept a lion's share of portfolios. **CORRECT:** Leopards are generally satisfied with the location of their spots and don't want to change them unless forced to do so at gunpoint.

**WRONG:** Reporters at the press conference behaved like vultures. **CORRECT:** Famished vultures nibbled at the mortal remains of a deceased gnu like a pack of hacks at an airport press conference by PKD.



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