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BASILEDWARD TEO

High and dry

Farmers in Sallaghari on the outskirts of Bhaktapur irrigate their paddy fields (above) with pumped ground water on Wednesday. After a weak start, the monsoon's progress across Nepal has been blocked by a persistent westerly front. Meteorologists in India have predicted a late and erratic monsoon season, which will impact food production, economic growth and drive inflation. Although it is expected to start raining again in Kathmandu during the weekend, farmers in large parts

of Nepal will not be able to observe paddy planting day on 29 June -- also the day President Ram Baran Yadav will be formally presenting the government's annual plan to parliament. Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, undergoing tests for suspected cancer in New York, has asked Deputy Prime Minister Bam Dev Gautam to officiate. Forecasters haven't said yet that the monsoon has failed, but deficient and late rains will have a significant impact on the economy in a country where nearly 80 per cent of farms are rain-fed.

BYE BYE-ELECTION

HERE WE GO

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WHEN GRAFT IS A GIVEN

BY THE WAY

BY ANURAG ACHARYA

PAGE 6



WORLD CUP Halftime in Brazil

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PAGE 10-11

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WHERE IS THE PEACE DIVIDEND?

In sharp contrast to the squalour, state neglect and rampant corruption we see around us every day in Nepal, the Multi-dimensional Poverty Report for 2014 released by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) shows that Nepal has made dramatic progress in reducing poverty, and has much lower levels of destitution than Afghanistan, and even India. 'Destitution' measures those among the poor who score below the cutoff in one-third of indicators like education, nutrition or mortality rates.

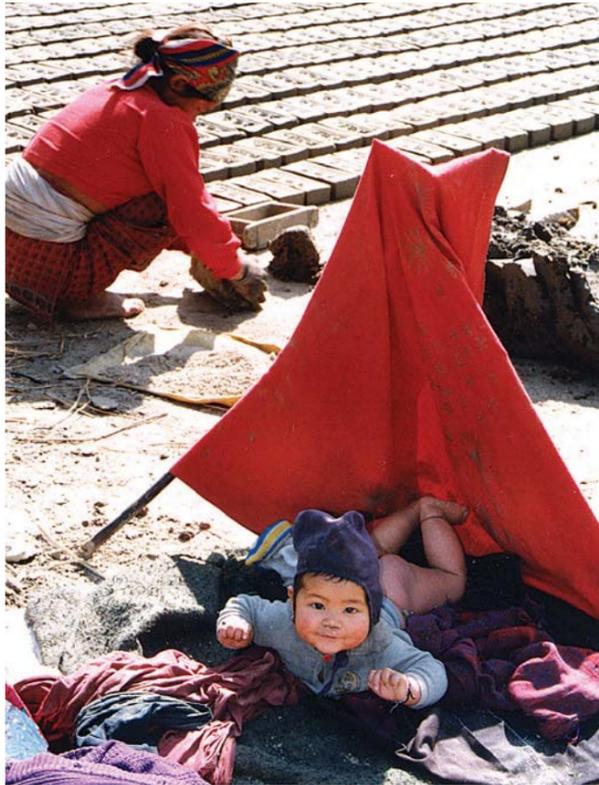
The report cites Nepal has made the fastest improvement among all developing countries, not just in South Asia. Since 2009, Nepal has improved its Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) from 65 per cent of the population to 44 per cent. And one in every five Nepalis is destitute, compared to 38 per cent in Afghanistan and 28.5 per cent in India. And although India has reduced its multi-dimensional poverty, eight Indian states still have more poor people than 28 of the poorest African countries.

Another recent report by the World Bank Group commended Nepal for halving the number of people living below the income threshold of \$1.25 a day from 53% to 25% in seven years. And yet another document, the 2014 Human Development Report by UNDP titled 'Beyond Geography' also highlights the progress Nepal has made in development indicators and reducing poverty, but recommends greater efforts in addressing regional imbalance, exclusion and taking advantage of the demographic dividend.

The danger about all this flood of good news is that it may make our policy-makers, planners and politicians even more complacent. Like all statistics, Nepal's progress in MPI and other poverty indices hide persistent inequality, uneven development, high dropout rates among girls and an unacceptable level of child malnutrition.

Nepal is doing well, but not quite well enough. The single most ominous alarm bell was the SLC high school exam results last week in which more than half the students did not get through, effectively labeling more than 370,000 young Nepalis 'failures'. Added to similar numbers from

Nepal is doing well, but not quite well enough.



previous years, this country has stigmatised millions of its young as 'worthless' over the past years.

Primary school enrollment is up, of course, and female literacy has doubled in 20 years. So, we are doing all right quantitatively in the input side. But the qualitative outcome

is disastrous, as shown by the SLC results. As in previous years, there has been a lot of hand-wringing and lamenting over the failure rate, but the annual outrage has already tapered off. And soon, we will all forget about it till next year's results.

If Nepal is to build on its dramatic development achievements, there has to be urgent emphasis on human capital. This 'soft' sector is much more important for the future of the country than 'hard' sectors like infrastructure, the government's current priority. Roads and airports can always be built later, but we are raising an entire generation of underachievers. Investments in human capital must go hand-in-hand with improving connectivity.

The World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have gone along with the government's infatuation with infrastructure. You don't need a hydropower engineer to tell you that meeting electricity demand through generation capacity is the single most important investment the country can make to spur economic growth and maintain the rate of poverty reduction.

'Inclusive, sustainable growth' has become the new buzzword, and the World Bank report looks at the obstacles preventing Nepal from harnessing its full potential, and names political stability and policy continuity as the main constraints.

Nothing there that we didn't know already. The economy has been held hostage by politics for too long, and real progress will only happen when our rulers pull themselves up by their bootstraps and improve governance. The shameful greed that propels elected members of the Constituent Assembly to demand Rs 50 million in pork barrel funds in the new budget, however, doesn't augur well.

Amidst all the indications of governance failure, the only hopeful sign is the dramatic improvement in poverty reduction and development despite conflict, instability, corruption and greed. Imagine how much ahead we would be if the political leadership could finally get its act together to reap the peace dividend.

YOUR SAY

www.nepaltimes.com

RELIGIOUS STATE

Re: 'Separation of state and temple', Editorial, #712. In India some Christian leaders assert that the word "propagate" gives them a fundamental right to convert people of other faiths into Christianity. This was rejected in toto, by the Supreme Court. The right to propagate is defined as the right to disseminate the tenets of a religion by advocacy and preaching, but not the right to convert, because each citizen has the same freedom of conscience guaranteed by the very provision. It cannot be done by means of force, fraud inducement or allurements. The act should not disturb public order, morality or health. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966 says: 'No one shall be subjected to coercion which would impair his freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice.'

Daniel Gajaraj

■ It is only in India, and now presumably in Nepal, that "secularism" means religious plurality, with the government supporting all religions equally, without favor. In the rest of the world it means 'non-religious', or 'civil', as opposed to religious. This is from a dictionary: '1. secular spirit or tendency, especially a system of political or social philosophy that rejects all forms of religious faith and worship. 2. the view that public education and other matters of civil policy should be conducted without the introduction of a religious

element.

Origin: 1850-55; secular + -ism"

Aldina Pom

■ Most western democracies use the term 'Right to Religious Freedom and Conscience' in their Constitution in contrast to secularism. One can find the word secularism mentioned only in three constitutions: Albania, Turkey and India (only after 1976).

Danny

■ The editorial misses the main concern of most Nepalis. The BJP coming to power has nothing to do with the discussion which should be whether we should allow conversions to go unchecked. I don't think we have any problem with Nepal remaining a "secular" state. As the editorial correctly points out 'In that sense Nepal was secular long before it was formally adopted as a state ideology in 2006'.

BNS

When the 240-year-old Hindu monarchy was abolished in 2008 and Nepal became a secular, federal, democratic republic, it angered BJP leaders, who criticised New Delhi for being a silent onlooker while the king was ousted under the pressure of Maoists ('Modifying Indo-Nepal ties', Damakant Jayshi, #712).

The Modi's administration could review India's neighbourhood policy—with a consequent impact on Nepal's new political order. The fact that the BJP itself has said in its manifesto that India's neighbourhood policy has failed means it's obliged to review it and take

effective and corrective steps.

There are many ways a Modi administration could affect Nepal, from the cross-border capillaries to Singha Darbar and the Constituent Assembly. This is a country that has opened itself up so wide to external influence that one hopes Modi's plans don't require Nepal as a prop for any purpose.

Anil Karki

■ Modi is a no-nonsense business man. His interest in Nepal is in power (hydro), security (tracking down ISI agents), and economy (selling Indian goods). Apologies for the repetition: Modi really does not care about 'Hindu' Nepal. He cares about powerless (energy) India, law and order of India, and business of India.

The time has come to be mature and deal with him on these three fronts as equals, rather than playing the religious card - which will get us nowhere.

Namah

SETOPATI'S SUCCESS

Does the author really mean to classify the diaspora into low- and high-brow by country of residence ('Setopati's one year', Kunda Dixit, #712)? Why assume that there are no high-brow readers in the Gulf and Malaysia?

James

■ Would be interesting to disaggregate the figures further and look at the success of Setopati and analyse its diaspora readership in more detail. Onlinekhabar.com and cybersansar.com.np appear to have more readers in countries with youthful

migrant workers, whereas Setopati is concentrated in countries where Nepalis are mostly students. The feedback sections of the three portals also show the level of engagement with content, with Setopati scoring better on the more "intellectual" comments from areas of the world where it has the most readers. Ratopati, on the other hand seems to be read only by party faithful, reinforcing the theory of online reader fragmentation depending on political alignment.

Gyan

PAUSE, PLAY, REPEAT

Well, if you are objective in your research ('Pause, play, repeat,' Trishna Rana, #711) you will find that all the major parties, even the royal family were responsible for the killings of the 25k fellow citizens You just need to see it with unbiased eyes.

B

THE SUCCESS LIST

This recent study by TU is not at all reliable or in any sense representative ('Who's where in Nepal', FTNP, #712). How can we fairly compare groups like Thakali (total pop. <13,000), Kayastha, Rajput (total pop. <50,000), Tarai Brahmin (total pop. <150,000) to much larger groups like Hill Brahmin or Chhetri or Magar? Population-wise of course these smaller groups will be seen as the biggest beneficiaries and over-represented. If this study truly incorporated findings based on population parameters and compared it to national population on average then the list would go something like -

1. Hill Brahmin
2. Newar

3. Tarai Brahmin
4. Chhetri
5. Kayastha/Rajput

This also provides strong evidence that Madhesi higher caste groups should be cut off from the state reservation programs. Newars should also be cut off from the Reservation system. Newars are the most advanced, cultured, literate, rich group of Nepal. So for reservation policy, higher caste Newars should be restricted from getting state reservations as these castes' people (forming around 40 per cent of all Newars) have historically never been backward.

P Lohani

GOLDEN HANDS

From now on when I see ads in flight magazines and so on belonging to Tiffany's, I will certainly remember Mr Risal and his family ('Hearts of gold', Matt Miller, #712)!

Bhaskar Koirala

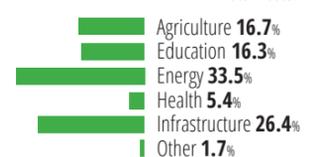
Times

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Weekly Internet Poll #713

Q. What should be the budget's biggest priority?

Total votes: 478



Weekly Internet Poll #714
To vote go to: www.nepaltimes.com

Q. What do you think about CA-members' demands for a Rs 50 million development for each constituency?

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BIKRAM RAI

Bye bye-election

Allowing candidates to run from two constituencies is a waste of time and keeps power concentrated in the hands of a few top gerontocrats

Seven months after the 2013 CA elections, thousands of Nepalis queued up to cast their ballots once again, not for local polls as the political parties had promised, but for bye-elections in four constituencies.

With 76 candidates contesting, more than 3,000 government officials and 6,000 security forces were deployed across



HERE WE GO
Trishna Rana

Kathmandu, Chitwan, Bardiya, and Kailali. It was a prodigious exercise that took months of preparation and left the state treasury lighter by Rs 110 million -- time and money that the Election Commission could have spent holding long overdue local elections.

Both the 1990 constitution and Article 5 (2) of Election to Members of the Constituent Assembly Act (2007) have allowed candidates to contest elections from two constituencies.

While Chief Election Commissioner Nil Kantha Upreti attempted to amend this provision and limit contestants to a single constituency last year, the proposal was vehemently opposed by the party leadership. And like in 2008, senior leaders from the three main parties smugly contested polls from two districts in 2013 as well.

Standing from two constituencies is an insurance policy for leaders: if they fare badly in one district they at least have another one to fall back on. More importantly, if they win in both, it demonstrates their dominance outside their traditional vote banks and is a great ego boost.

Neighbouring India, which prides itself in being the biggest democracy in the world, is not immune to this undemocratic culture. In the recently concluded general elections, Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) ran for parliamentary seats from Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh alongside Vadodara in his home state of Gujarat, where victory was guaranteed. Modi's emphatic win in Uttar Pradesh over Aam Admi Party leader Arvind

Kejriwal was symbolic not just of his growing stature but also the BJP's ascendancy in national politics. He later gave up his Vadodara seat.

For Modi as well as for Nepal's leaders, the wins however come at the expense of ordinary citizens whether it's through supporting parties with 'donations' or through the taxes we pay which are used to fund elections.

The 65 per cent turnout on average across the four constituencies in Sunday's bye-election was less than November's 80 per cent, and there is the danger of voter fatigue affecting future polls. If we have local elections within the next 12 months, people might decide not to show up in polling centres in large numbers. The practice of bequeathing two tickets to senior leaders means that younger candidates, especially women, have to wait for years, even decades, to compete in elections and thereby lose out on valuable campaigning experience.

If Nepal is to transform from a political gerontocracy to a more vibrant and open polity, reforms in election laws in the new constitution is a good place to

begin. We need to debate the pro and cons of a mixed electoral system and see if perhaps a pure proportional representation system is a better choice for us given that the first-past-the-post ballot has traditionally favoured big parties with 'celebrity' candidates.

Even if we decide to stick with what we have, the provision which allows candidates to run from two different constituencies needs to be discarded because it is a waste of time and encourages the concentration of power in the hands of a few top leaders. The PR system too needs a few tweaks. For example, the parties should be made to submit their lists before polls and the candidates should be clearly ranked in order of importance so that future elections are more efficient and democratic. 

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Volunteering to be a tourist

Trusting foreigners are scammed by Nepali companies offering volunteer work for a fee

BASIL EDWARD TEO
in POKHARA

When a Singaporean school teacher first stepped into the office of an organisation offering international volunteers an opportunity to work in Nepal two years ago, it wasn't what she was expecting.

Eugenia Ong had come to Nepal full of idealism to help the needy, and on the recommendation of a friend picked Volunteering Redefined.

But when she got to its office in Thamel, it was small and cluttered. She had to pay a \$480 fee just to volunteer in the village of Damdame in Pokhara.

"I was suspicious," recalls the 29-year-old, "there was no breakdown of costs. After handing them the money I realised I was so naïve." To salvage her trip, she went to Damdame anyway and worked in a library and with

children at a secondary school.

Ong is among hundreds of altruistic foreigners who are drawn to Nepal to volunteer in schools, health posts and farms only to discover when they get here that the programs they applied for are thinly disguised scams.

Volunteer travel, or 'voluntourism', combines tourism with helping for a charitable cause. In Nepal it has become an important component of the tourism industry, and although some organisations work genuinely to empower the needy, many are fronts to fleece trusting foreigners.

On her second trip to Nepal in June last year, Ong avoided Volunteering Redefined and went directly to Damdame to find that other volunteers had trouble paying for their homestay through the organisation.

Brian DeChant, a 26-year-old logistics specialist from Portland in the US, who volunteered at the same time as Ong told *Nepali Times*: "The beginning was great, but it quickly turned negative. My host family did not receive the money they were promised for my accommodation, and it soon became unpleasant."

Volunteering Redefined owed the village \$450 including accommodation costs for him and another Irish volunteer, and when confronted said they would pay the family "next week". It took three more months after DeChant turned up unannounced at the office for the payment to be made.

In a phone interview, Kshitiz Panday of Volunteering Redefined denied DeChant's allegations, and revealed that he had closed down the organisation. "I plan to go to

TOURIST DESTINATION: Damdame villagers gather for a meeting on a recent morning (above).

Village Chief of Damdame, Dar Kumari Gurung, with Singaporean school teacher Eugenia Ong (below, left), who returned to the village to volunteer with education and income generation loans.

Germany soon for my studies so there is no one to look after the organisation," he told us.

The Social Welfare Council (SWC) in Kathmandu which regulates NGO activities says 60,000 foreigners come to Nepal each year, more than half come for volunteer work but only 400 are registered with the SWC.

"A lot of volunteers come in on tourist visas and it is not allowed to work or volunteer;

CHECKLIST FOR VOLUNTEERS:

- You shouldn't have to pay to volunteer, an unannounced "fee" on arrival is an immediate red flag
- Do they put their financial reports online?
- Is it charity or empowerment?
- Is it sustainable?
- Are there undeclared "fees"?
- Google the NGO you have chosen and check the results carefully.
- Read feedback from previous volunteers (google is full of it, search for volunteer+scams+Nepal).
- If you can, come to Nepal first and "shop around" to see what is available.
- Post some feedback on the Internet: it will be useful to future volunteers.





STAYING HOME

Tucked away beyond low-hanging monsoon clouds, beyond the lake and ensconced in green hills of Panchase is the village of Damdame, a lurching one-and-half hour bus ride and a steep two hour trek west of Pokhara.

This is the Pokhara most tourists don't see: verdant, unspoilt, and happily isolated. But maybe not for long. This year, Damdame was registered as a village homestay on Airbnb, a website for people seeking to rent out lodgings with over 500,000 listings in 192 countries.

The home to stay is in the village chief Dar Kumari Gurung's house (pictured above): a two-storey traditional mud house for \$15 a night, food and warm-hearted company included. There are no restaurants, no shops, no wifi and mobile reception is iffy.

Everyone calls Gurung "Ama" and she embraces guests with open arms, offers some honey roti, and masala tea.

Time passes slowly in Damdame, and what goes on is exactly what you would expect of the countryside. At dawn, farmers are already in their terrace fields preparing it for paddy planting and they toil till dusk. Others descend to the nearby Tunikhola to fish.

Like other towns in the Himalaya, the young are leaving Damdame. Four families have already left in the past year alone.

Says Ama: "Education is poor, not proper healthcare, so whole families move to Pokhara for their children's future. Only older people like me are left."

Basil Edward Teo

HOME MADE: Damdame village chief Darkumari Gurung prepares a snack of honey roti with masala tea for guests.

nepalitimes.com

Gallery of Damdame
A whiff of the old Nepal, #557
Vacuum in the villages. #703

they are all illegal. But in reality, they still do it," SWC director Madan Prasad Rimal said. Many organisations that work with foreign volunteers are registered under the Company Act, so SWC cannot monitor their activities, he added.

Critics say voluntourism merely meets the desire for spiritual wellbeing of volunteers from developed countries, rather than helping local communities in Nepal to help themselves.

Caroline Scheffer, country director of The Umbrella Foundation which works with trafficked children, says the government needs to regulate voluntourism more carefully.

"There are so many organisations that can be found online. I doubt all of them work with the best interests in mind for the Nepali people," she says. "I am against the fabrication of volunteering opportunities to meet the demand of foreign volunteers."

Ong's initial motivation for volunteering still leaves her with a tinge of embarrassment today. "When I first came to Nepal, I had no knowledge of the culture," she admits, "I was going through some personal troubles back home and wanted to feel better about myself. I wanted my friends back home to say that...wow... I have a big heart for volunteering in a developing country."

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Gap year ripoffs, #372

EVEREST BANK BIZ BRIEFS



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Pooja International Nepal, the authorised importer of Volkswagen, has announced the winners of its campaign "Volkswagen Very Wonderful Offer" that was launched in September at the NADA Auto Show. The three lucky winners are Rabin Gurung, Naresh Giri and Sanjeev Shrestha.

Re-opened

NIC ASIA Bank opened 14 new branches on 22 June. Of the 14, four are located in Kathmandu and 10 outside Kathmandu valley. These branches were opened after re-location of 14 branches which were closed at the time of the merger of NIC Bank and Bank of Asia in June 2013.



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When graft is a given

Numbed by endemic corruption, we are losing our capacity for outrage



Six years ago, former Home Minister and MJF leader Bijay Kumar Gachhadar declared 986gm of gold when he was minister in the Madhav Nepal government.

Today he owns 4,640gm whose market price is approximately Rs20 million. Gachhadar has not furnished clear details of land and other



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

fixed property or cash he owns. Interestingly, gangster Sanjay Sah who was launched into politics by Gachhadar himself declared gold worth Rs20 million when he was minister in the same cabinet.

The incumbent finance minister and NC leader Ram Sharan Mahat has declared 1,102 gm of gold but refrained from providing details on value of diamond and precious stones he owns. Similarly Minister of

Information and Communication, Minendra Rijal of the NC who had declared cash worth Rs 1.5 million when he first became minister six years ago has now tripled his worth.

Rijal had declared stocks worth Rs 1.7 million in nine companies. Today, his stocks in 19 companies are worth at least Rs 10 million. His investment in Manjushree Investment and Finance alone has increased from Rs 125,000 to Rs 5 million.

These are just the wealth declared under a mandatory disclosure policy for public servants and obtained by investigative reporter Yasodha Timsina under the Freedom of Information Act. The officials have justified the possession of all that jewellery as 'dowry earnings' and ancestral property. The declarations are mostly incomplete, unusual or implausible. Most leaders have not fully declared cash holdings in their various bank accounts, or divulged details of fixed assets and company shares.

The media has often raised the issue of institutionalised corruption in Nepal's bureaucracy and politics, patting its own back for exposing a few rotten

apples. But rarely have we dared to dig deep into the barrel where the rot really lies.

An investigative journalist who used to specialise in muckraking admitted his frustration recently when he found evidence of officials in the anti-graft watchdog itself involved in cover-ups. "The same people who were being investigated for corruption by the CIAA are now in the CIAA," he said.

When the fox is tasked to guard the chicken coop, it raises questions about the intention of those who made the appointments or backed it. This has further entrenched a sense of impunity, and an institution designed to ensure good governance and the rule of law has itself lost its integrity.

When a gangster charged with multiple counts of extortion and attempted murder is caught red-handed with millions in cash, illegal guns, smuggled wildlife contraband, but still manages to walk scot-free for 'lack of evidence', it is time to worry.

When a judge miraculously presides over four different cases and hands down identical judgments that compromise public health, it erodes public faith

in the justice system. Retired officers have started to speak out about endemic corruption and under-table dealings in the police force, further shattering public confidence in the rule of law.

Last month, the Centre for Investigative Journalism commissioned a sting operation exposing hospitals buying patients from ambulance drivers to bring patients to their emergency with the clear intention of extorting the sick. The undercover reporter recorded phone conversations with nine hospitals, but no action has been taken and the practice continues.

A few months earlier, another report exposed how public money is embezzled in the districts in the name of fighting illiteracy. There have been a series of reports in the mainstream press about the political protection enjoyed by owners of quarries and crushers which are plundering the Chure Hills and the complicity of the local administration.

In Sarlahi alone, 2,500 hectares of forests under the Sagarnath Forestry Development Project have been encroached on by dozens of illegal sand mining and crusher companies smuggling aggregates to feed the construction boom in

India. Efforts by the government to declare the Chure a protected area is facing fierce opposition from ministers within the ruling NC.

While big crooks with political connections flout the law without fear of being caught, the police under Home Minister Bam Dev Gautam arrest a man for posting comments critical of police on Facebook. The Law Minister is pushing a contempt of court law in the legislature to deter media from exposing corruption in the judiciary.

From education to health, forest, energy and local infrastructure development, corruption has become so entrenched that even investigative journalists are losing their motivation to expose them. And in the public there is a sense of apathy, and acceptance that graft is a given.

When the state itself protects thieves, greedy legislators demand millions, the corruption watchdog turns into a lapdog, crime is normalised in the public conscience. When the public loses its capacity for outrage, democracy itself is weakened. 

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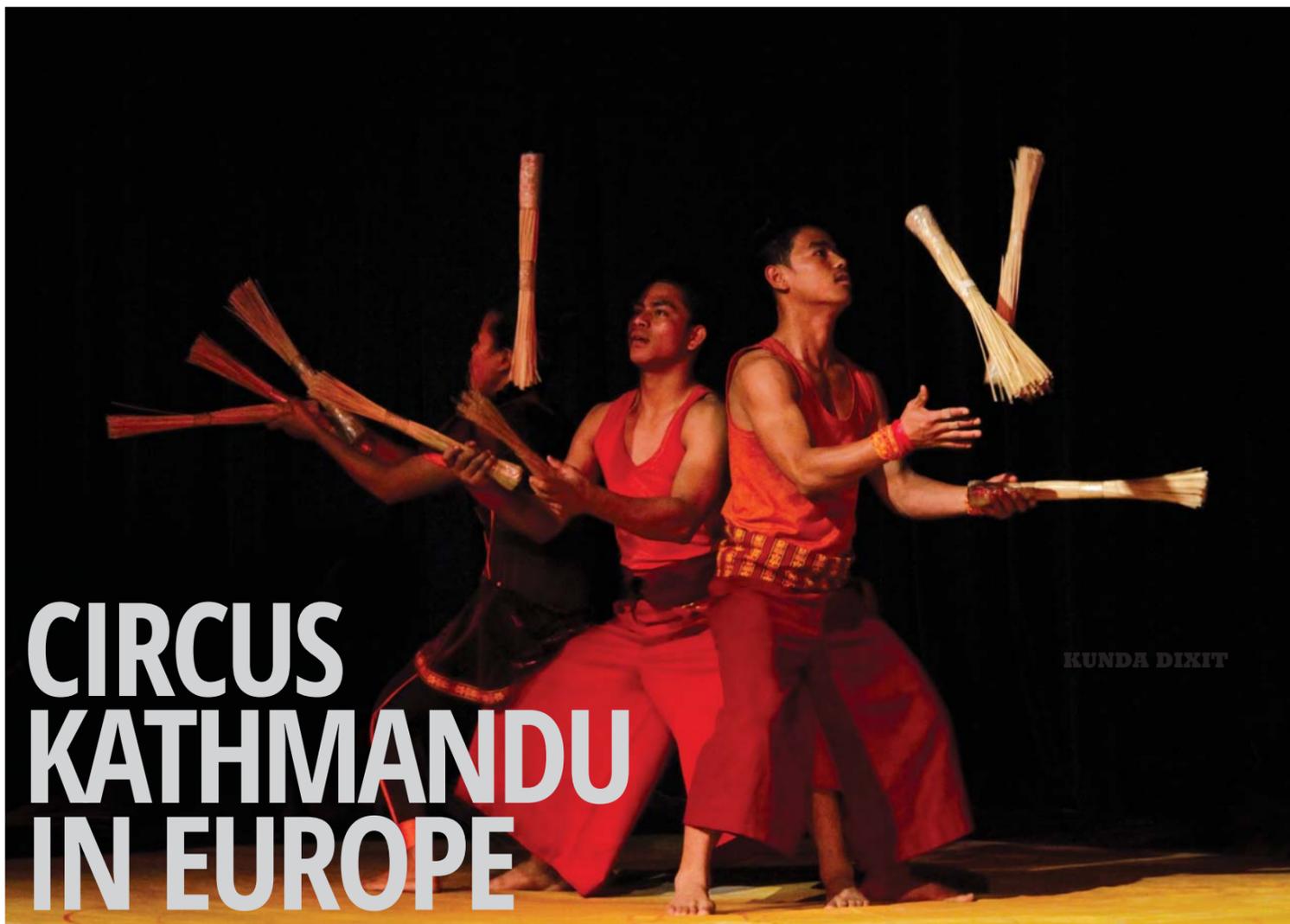
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The great annual tug-o-war between surging moisture-laden monsoon winds from the Bay and lingering dry westerlies is being waged above Nepal as we speak. After showing a weak start last week, the monsoon was chased away by a resurgent westerly system that brought dry wind and desert dust over Nepal. This situation will continue to prevail as the see-saw continues. But, ultimately wet will triumph over dry and the monsoon showers should start by late Friday and into the weekend just in time for paddy-planting day on 29 June.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31° 19°	30° 19°	28° 19°

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CIRCUS KATHMANDU IN EUROPE

KUNDA DIXIT



THE CIRCUS ACT (l-r): Members of Circus Kathmandu rehearse their group act before a performance at the Kalvoya Circus Festival in Norway.

Circus Kathmandu's first trip to Europe was hosted by Xanti Circus.

A girl shows her skills with hoopla rings during a performance.

The team goofs it up for the camera after a rehearsal.



MARIT BAKKE
in OSLO

Circus Kathmandu has arrived in Norway, and it is not just any circus. The performers are all Nepali children who were rescued from trafficking or the streets.

The circus was set up four years ago by the British charity, Freedom Matters, after it rescued the children from circuses in

India where they had been sold by human traffickers. Circus Kathmandu put their acrobatic skills and charisma to good use with structured training in a safe environment.

Earlier this year, Circus Kathmandu performed a fundraiser in Dubai prior to the current tour of Norway. The 10 circus performers are between 18-25 years old now and have been putting up shows for Norwegian

school children and conducting workshops.

Circus Kathmandu had its first show in Pokhara in May last year. The performers also conducted workshops among street children and in factories.

After initial funding from Freedom Matters, Circus Kathmandu is now earning its own keep.

It was a great disappointment last year when they were

refused visas to perform at the Glastonbury Festival in England, but they finally made it to Europe after staging events at the Kalvoya Circus Festival, Norway. Their five "Swagatam" performances from 20-22 June was greeted with huge applause from the audience as the Nepali performers showcased sommersaults, acrobatics with rings and re-enactments of their difficult childhood days.

Ali Williams is founder and



ALL PICS: MARIT BAKKE

creative director of NoFitState Circus, a 28-year-old company with an international reputation for creating innovative contemporary circus. He did a 14-month sabbatical in 2012-13 in Kathmandu working with Circus Kathmandu. Understanding the group's potential, Ali brought in volunteer trainers, including Felipe Salas from Colombia.

Felipe knew exactly what was at stake, having himself lived on the streets from the age of three before joining Circocolombia. He now works with homeless children to help them to become circus artists.

"Felipe told us to work hard, he pushed us," says Rajan, one of the performers.

Ali is full of praise for the determination and talent of Circus Kathmandu members, some of whom were trafficked into Indian circuses before they were rescued, rehabilitated and educated. In Norway, Circus Kathmandu has been hosted by the Xanti Circus. www.circuskathmandu.com

nepalitimes.com

Nepal's circus champs, #595
Juggling with young lives, #405
A faraway rescue, #571

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EVENTS



Ropain,
go to the fields and celebrate the rice-planting season. 29 June

Kathmandu kora,
join hundreds of cycling enthusiasts and ride for 50, 75, or 100 km to raise funds for a birthing centre in Pyutar, Lalitpur. 19 July, facebook.com/kathmandu.kora



A night with Mao,
fancy a date with a dead dictator? 27 to 30 June, 4 to 6 July, 5.30pm, Theatre Village, Uttara Dhoka

DJ Zumba
dance and stay fit as 25 zumba instructors from Kathmandu collaborate with a DJ. 27 June, 5 to 11pm Hotel Radisson

Cha cha cha,
learn one month's worth of Salsa in four days. Rs 1,000 for singles, Rs 1,500 for couples, Monday to Thursday, 7.30 to 8.30am/5 to 6pm/6 to 7pm, Salsa Dance Academy, Bhatbhateni

City Museum Kathmandu,
head down to Darbar Marg's newest gallery on the block for personalised guided tours. Tours run daily, accommodates up to 15 people, info@thecitymuseum.org



Retrospective,
a look back at the oeuvre of senior artist and cubism enthusiast Surendra Pradhan. Runs till 18 July, Park Gallery, Pulchok, parkgallery.com.np

Open house,
featuring the work of artists Arpita Shakya, Ashuram Khaiju, and Palpasa Manandhar. Runs till 7 July, 11am to 6pm, Gallery Mcube, Chakupat

Muna Madan,
Nepal's favourite epic on stage again. Runs till 16 July, Rs 100/200/300/500, Rastriya Nachghar, Jamal



Kickoff,
watch all the matches of the football World Cup live. Rox Bar, Hyatt Regency, Boudha

I feel free,
listen to poets Bikram Subba and Manu Manjil recite their poems. Rs 100/200, 28 June, 3pm, Gothale Theatre, Battisputali, (01)4469621

Movie time,
watch acclaimed films from Israel at the 9th Israeli Film Festival. 20 June, Russian Cultural Centre, 12.30pm, 3pm, 5.30pm



Refugee stories,
photo exhibition, film shows and talk programmes on the millions of refugees who have either found new lives or still yearn for home. Runs till 30 June, The City Museum, Darbar Marg

DINING



Mike's breakfast,
huge breakfasts and an endless supply of coffee amidst a lush garden setting characterise this cafe, popular among tourists and locals alike. Lakeside, Pokhara

Embassy,
positioned on Lajimpat's embassy-laden lane, this restaurant has a menu with Nepali, Indian, Thai and Japanese dishes on offer. Lajimpat

Alfresco,
for homemade pastas and other lip-smacking delights. Soaltee Crowne Plaza, (01)4273999



The Village Cafe,
authentic Newari food that comes straight from the heart. Pulchok

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

In Bruges,
try out the best brews from Belgium. Grill Me, Jhamsikhel

Mulchowk,
the blend of culinary expertise and charms of a bygone era. Babarmahal

Trisara,
with dishes like flambéed prawns, crispy chicken, and khao soi, it would be a folly to ignore its aromas. Lajimpat

Krishnarpan,
a specialty Nepali restaurant at The Dwarika's Hotel serving 6 to 22 courses of authentic Nepali meal. The Dwarika's Hotel, Battisputali, (01)4479488

Backyard,
incredibly reasonable prices, modest and simple food have made this restaurant a favourite among Nepalis and foreigners alike. Jhamsikhel

Capital Grill,
this American style diner offers a large assortment of appetisers and entrees to suit everyone's tastes. Bhatbhateni, Gairidhara



Saigon Pho,
spacious interior with authentic Vietnamese dishes. Lajimpat



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Music at Manny's,

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Manny's Eatery and Tapas Bar, Jawalakhel

GETAWAYS



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Dhulikhel, (011) 490114/494, dhulikhel lodgesort.com

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

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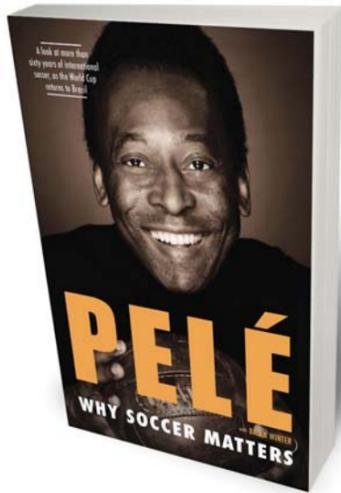
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PELE'S BOOK



Pele has come out with a book, *Why Soccer Matters*, in which he explores the recent history of the game and provides new insights into the game's role in connecting and galvanising players around the world. Interview with Sao Paulo-based journalist Brian Winter who co-authored the book.

Nepali Times: Why does football matter for Brazil?

Brian Winters: The book looks at the five World Cups that were important in Pele's life - as a kid, a player and as an "ambassador" to the game. The first is 1950, when he was just 9 years old and saw Brazil lose the Cup - at home - in heartbreaking fashion. Pele says that was the first time he ever saw his dad cry. The last cup we write about is 2014, with the tournament coming back to Brazil and hopefully a better result for the home team.

What was it like working on a book with Pele?

He's a really nice, genuine, simple man -- not at all the kind of ego you'd associate with such talent. As far as the writing goes, you have to remember he's been famous since he was 17 years old, and Brazil won its first championship. So he's met literally everybody. He was at Michael Jackson's 18th birthday party, for goodness sake.

What is it that makes Brazil the ultimate Football Nation?

I think the talent here is what sets Brazil apart. Also, the joy and improvisation of the Brazilian brand of football, although they have become a bit more formal in their style in the last 20 years or so. But Brazil is a giant, continent-sized country that many people often try to oversimplify. There are parts of Brazil where football isn't even the 2nd-most popular sport.

Why has Brazil not produced another Pele?

For the same reason the United States has not produced another Michael Jordan. Pele is one of those athletes that comes along once a century, maybe once ever. That was what made him so fun to watch.

AMERICAS' CUP

Latin Americans are having a ball in Brazil



BEST WORLD CUP EVER

Every day begins and ends with a party in Brazil

This is turning out to be a great World Cup. Goals are raining, even own goals. Penalties, yellow, and red cards given add to the drama. Every day begins with a party and ends with a party. As the ball is rolling across the country, the world's biggest sporting spectacle is turning into the best World Cup ever.

With the first touch from a Croatian foot on the newly-laid pitch at the Itaquera in Sao Paulo, the city of 21 million almost froze with tension in front of giant screens put all over the city during the first match of the World Cup.

As the opening game of the World Cup saw the fortune of Brazil dip and rise, Sao Paulo felt low and high depending on which feet - Brazilian or Croatian - had the ball. But some 500 kms away, on

the edge of South Atlantic ocean, Rio broke into one big party.

Just 45 minutes apart by flight, no two cities can be as different as Rio and Sao Paulo. Rio is all sun and sand. Sao Paulo is all grey concrete and incessant drizzle.

Before the first game of the month long tournament, as Sao Paulo was slowly getting into the futebol mood, Rio had already painted itself in green and yellow. A week before the opening game, all bars and cafes were adorned with the Brazilian flags, a lot of streets had been painted with the slogan "Hexa Copa" (Get us the sixth cup).

"The World Cup has come and gone but the football is going to stay with us. We are celebrating football. It doesn't matter who wins. Of course, if it's Brazil, we will have tremendous joy," says 54-year-old Joao Mendonca, sipping a beer at a bar in the Flamengo area.

Like any other sport, football has two sides. One is the action that takes place in the arenas: moves made, ball dribbled, goals scored, dreams fulfilled and hearts broken. But there is action far from the stadiums: people watching games in bars, dancing on the streets, crying on the sidewalk.

More than 1,000 Argentines closed the Avenida Atlantica at Copacabana Beach (pic) in Rio de Janeiro as they organised an open-air party, one day before their team's opening game against Bosnia at the Maracanã Stadium. The Argentinians were in such a fun mood that they even had a lookalike of Pope Francis, who is Argentine, carrying a replica of the World Cup in his hands. There were more than 35,000 Argentinians in the city to watch the game at the Maracanã. And after, there was one big party on Rio streets. Later, it was the turn of the Chileans to paint the city red as their team beat Spain 2-0 at the Maracanã, the graveyard of great expectations.

At least 600,000 foreign travelers are in Brazil these days, watching the games, having drinks, eating local food and just having fun. "If the World Cup in Brazil is going to be like this, just have all the World Cups in Brazil," Jason Davis of ESPN tweeted this week. Millions of people here and billions across the world will agree. 🇺🇦

Shobhan Saxena

ONE BIG PARTY: More than 30,000 gathered at the Fifa Fan Fest in Copacabana to watch Brazil-Cameroon game on giant screens.





SHOBHAN SAXENA
in RIO DE JANEIRO

Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff had promised that the World Cup in Brazil would be the Copa da Copas (Cup of Cups). Her political rivals scoffed at her for using the Cup as an election campaign. Civil society activists condemned her for being insensitive, left-wing extremists promised to spread chaos during the tournament and drug gangs warned the government to be prepared for terror.

Even as foreign teams had started arriving in Brazilian cities, it looked like the games would be a disaster. Some fans cancelled their visits amidst media reports of stadiums not ready, airports in chaos, crime, street protests.

But half-way into the tournament, the mood had changed. Even the most ardent critics of the Brazilian government and World Cup organisers have already declared it a success. A survey showed more than 72 per cent of Brazilians support the tournament. Another survey of foreign journalists showed most had a 'positive and favourable' image of Brazil because of its people who are 'warm and friendly'.

One reason is that the games have been exhilarating. With teams like Spain, Italy, England and Portugal all set to go home after the group matches and small nations like Costa Rica, Colombia, Uruguay and Chile progressing to the next round, this World Cup has become a graveyard of European football. Suddenly names like Xavi, Iniesta, Rooney, Gerrard, Pirlo

and Ronaldo have lost their magic, and the world is in love with Ruiz, Duarte, Suarez.

For Latin America this World Cup has become a home tournament. After Brazil and US, the highest number of tickets have been bought by the Argentinians (78,000), Colombians (60,000) and Chileans (45,000) and other Latin American countries. "It's a sign of our growing economies and the rise of middle class that so many people have travelled to Brazil. Earlier, it was not possible," says Jose Marin, a teacher from Buenos Aires.

Though the European challenge is still alive with teams like Germany, Holland and France, the spirit is completely Latin American, with all countries of the region supporting each other during the games with European and other teams.

"It's nice to see all South Americans backing each other. It really is a cup for all of South America," says Sara Faleiro, a writer and journalist. "We are re-discovering our football, culture and roots."

Of more than 600,000 foreign travelers in Brazil these days, close to 30 per cent have come from Brazil's neighbouring countries. At home in the weather in Brazil, the South Americans are just having a ball. Socrates, the late Brazilian football legend called the Doctor, was equally at home on the pitch as well as politics. He once said: "It's not about winning. It's not about who scores how many goals. Football is all about joy." 🇧🇷



Shobhan Saxena is a journalist and visiting professor at University of Sao Paulo. Nepali Times will carry his exclusive column for the duration of the World Cup.

PASSAGE TO EUROPE



Ruy Castro, 66, is best known for his passionate and moving biography of Brazilian football legend Garrincha. Equally at home in football, music and history, Castro tells *Nepali Times* why ordinary Brazilians do not care much for today's football stars.

Nepali Times: A lot of people around the globe believe that nothing defines Brazilians more than football.

Frankly, I never heard this assumption. It might have been true some decades ago, but it's not anymore. Brazilians may be defined by their love of Carnival, rich food or going to the beach, as much as by football.

But football stars play a role in terms of national identity and pride?

In the past, Pelé, Garrincha, Tostão, Zico, Sócrates, Romário and a few others could really be taken as national heroes. Brazilian great players were strongly identified with their clubs. Not anymore. As soon as a great young player appears, he goes to Europe. Neymar played for Santos as long as they managed

to keep him here, but eventually he also had to go. So, we're short of national heroes. Brazilians live much more in awe of their football clubs, chiefly Flamengo, which has around 40 million supporters across the country, including myself.

Who is bigger hero for ordinary Brazilians – Pelé or Garrincha?

Pelé is admired by people, but not loved. Garrincha was definitely loved. Pelé was --- and is --- rich, Garrincha was an alcoholic and poor. Brazilians tend to root for the underdog.

Do you think this will be a successful World Cup?

I believe that, despite all problems of infrastructure, this will be a great World Cup.

Will Brazil be lucky again to win the World Cup?

It is not probable, but it's perfectly possible. Brazil can win.

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MALEFICENT

Would *Maleficent* have worked without Angelina Jolie? Most certainly not. *Maleficent* (which rhymes with 'Magnificent') is almost the usual kind of sugary Disney concoction that makes the adult viewer cringe even as it delights its younger, perhaps less discerning viewers.



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

Disney has long been struggling to revamp its former iron grip on the highly lucrative junior audience, and succeeded phenomenally with last year's *Frozen*— a feminist reimagining of

the classical "princess in distress" tale.

Just as *Frozen* satisfies modern viewers with a little twist at the end – *Maleficent* too banks (quite literally, to the tune of over \$500 million to date) on people, and women in particular, who are tired of the bland princes who are obligatory in the grand rescue of the princess.

Helmed with great charisma by Angelina Jolie who plays the titular character, *Maleficent* goes a little bit further than just twisting the usual coda of Disney classics. While there are many moments of extreme cuteness and an array of fuzzy creatures, Jolie's characterisation of Maleficent is a feat in her display of range

Maleficent transforms from a trusting, young winged fairy into a wounded creature maimed by the man she loves. I was a little

taken aback by the depth of dark emotion that is displayed, worried it might seep into children's nightmares.

And yet, Jolie imbues her wounded and vengeful character with reluctant humour and latent warmth. The children will not have bad dreams after all. Thanks to their usual sharp instincts and Jolie's highly intelligent performance we know that *Maleficent* cannot truly go wrong.

Richard Dyer, the famous British film theorist transformed the way we view famous actors with his seminal books *Stars* (1979) and *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society* (1986). Even if you are not familiar with his name you will immediately recognise his now ubiquitous position that films are carried by the sheer charisma of the imagined persona of their star.

We are more than familiar by now with the star vehicle: Tom Cruise, Julia Roberts, Bruce Willis, Robert Downey Jr., and now of course Angelina Jolie, helm films that are made or broken by their star personas. Among the famous people who can be trusted to hold up a film with a budget of \$180 million, Jolie is one of the few women.

This reviewer can therefore write such a piece with scant mention of plot about an otherwise fairly boring re-imagining of the *Sleeping Beauty* fairy tale because, without a doubt, Angelina Jolie steals the show – and the film is all the better for it. 🍿

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HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

SECOND TIME: People await their turn to vote at a polling booth in Pepsicola, Kathmandu-2 during the Constituent Assembly by-election on Sunday. The by-elections were also held in Chitwan-4, Bardiya-1 and Kailali-6.



BIKRAM RAI

FIELD WORK: A farmer works on a paddy field in Bhaktapur on Tuesday. After much delay, the monsoon finally began late last week.



BIKRAM RAI

UNTIL NEXT YEAR: An official from the Guthi Sansthan holds up the *bhoto* (a sacred bejeweled vest) to the public during the Bhoto Jatra festival in Jawalakhel on Sunday. Bhoto Jatra marks the end of the month-long celebration of Rato Machhendranath Jatra.



NGIMA PAKHRIN

JOURNO MEET: Prime Minister Sushil Koirala, who is in the US for medical treatment, met Nepali journalists in New York on Sunday.

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CLIMATE REFUGEES

Until a decade ago, more than half of the twenty households in Dhe herded yaks for a living. Today, the village which lies at an altitude of 3,900m in Upper Mustang has only one. Thirty-six-year old Kungshan Rinzin (*pic, above*) who lives with his brother is Dhe's last remaining yak herder. Rinzin's story has been made into a documentary *The Last Yak Herder of Dhe*. Produced by WWF and Care, the film was released this year on World Environment Day.

The 33-minute long documentary begins with Rinzin's personal narrative. Rinzin tells the interviewer he is conflicted whether to continue his profession or follow in his fellow villagers' footsteps. "I have to live by

myself in high pastures. There's always the danger of being buried in a heavy snowfall," he says.

This is only part of the challenge faced by Rinzin in raising yaks in an area that is one of the worst affected by climate change. For the past decade, Dhe has been plagued by an acute shortage of water, and irrigated land size has decreased by half. The once green village now resembles a ghost town.

There is little food for the people, and even less for the livestock. Rinzin spends his

year moving from one pasture to another, but admits with each passing year the pasture lands are "drying". Erratic rainfall also brings with it its own set of problems. "When the rain is unexpected, it does more harm than good," he says grimly.

The harsh life in Dhe has forced many to seek shelter on lower grounds. Ten households have already moved, their deserted buildings leaving a hole in the community. Those who stayed back are also in the process of moving and rejoining the

earlier migrants to form a new settlement in Thangchung in lower Mustang.

However, this won't be the first time that residents of Dhe will be making an exodus from their home due to nature. Originally from Ghayul Valley, the group has moved twice in its history. It seems the people from Dhe will now have to make yet another move.

The Last Yak Herder of Dhe is more than just a personal account of a lone yak herder. It brings to light the extreme challenges of living in high altitude areas that are the most prone to climate change disasters. But the use of a narrator's voice throughout most of the documentary added an impersonal tone, and detached this viewer from the subject. The only times that the documentary had my full attention was when Rinzin was in the frame and speaking.

Summer Pasture, a 2010 film by Lynn True Nelson Walker and Tsering Perlo, chronicles a young nomad family one summer amidst changing times and uncertainty even about their future as nomads. This similar story felt to me to be a better watch.

Tsering Dolker Gurung

The Last Yak Herder of Dhe
 Director of Photography Samir Jung Thapa
 Research and Direction: Fidel Devkota
 Teaser Music: Sangam Panta

nepalitimes.com

Watch *The Last Yak Herder of Dhe*

For an ambience and décor that enhances an establishment there are two rules of thumb: make a subtle, tough to pinpoint atmosphere, or make it memorable. There is nothing subtle about Orange Café. The walls are orange. Parts of the windows are orange. Even the water canteen is wrapped in an orange covering. Only missing was a room full of Dutch nationals in orange gear watching highlights of Robin Van Persie's spectacular diving header.

But when the expected food at typical lunchtime eateries is virtually standardized, particularly those which serve students primarily, standing out is half the battle.

I ordered an orange juice to start—to blend in. The large selection of momos, chowmein, fried rice and snacks are standard, so ordering from the Orange Specials section was the obvious course of action.

Waiting a healthy amount of time for the sampling of orange specialties allowed for time to notice the other elements of the ambience and décor.

Many restaurants labeled 'café', don't feel welcoming to patrons killing time or getting work done. There were a few people with their laptops using the free Wifi in the



seating area with low tables and more common bench-style seating. For a snack and cold drink it is a reasonable place to sit and work undisturbed, if you like the music

selection.

A heavy meal of Katy Perry served the hungry customers at our table, and they were ready to roar if they didn't get their food quickly. And then like a firework, the chicken momo sizzler (Rs 220) erupted to our table, temporarily drowning out the pop superstar. The noisy dish smelled like popcorn near the end of its timer, and steam billowed up from the table. The chicken filling was moist and flavourful, complemented by the slightly

browned exterior. The chicken sizzler (Rs 230) was similarly tasty, but sizzler's rarely live up to their noisy hype and loud price tag. The thin noodles accompanying each were rather dry and bland, but the main attraction should always carry the show.

In the chicken mood, the special chicken wings (Rs 190) were nothing out of the ordinary. The crispy fried outside and dark meat was tasty, and had no need for the hot sauce on the side. But raving about only four chicken wings per order is an especially difficult task.

The last dish turned out to be the best. The simple kakara aaloo (Rs 90) snack was fried into thin



PICS: BASILE EDWARD TEO

wedges. They were delightfully crispy, but had enough potato in the thin cut covered in the savory sauce to still be easily picked up with each poke from a toothpick.

Matt Miller

Unless you're fascinated by the bright colour, Orange Café is not a cross town destination, but it's worth stopping by for students and professionals looking for a snack at a welcoming location. It is just up the hill from Hotel Himalaya.



Great Food Deserves Carlsberg

That calls for a Carlsberg

Snakebite Survival

Babu Ram Marasini, the director of the Department of Epidemiology and Disease Control Division (EDCD), has recently suggested that antivenin for the treatment of deadly snakebites could potentially be made in Nepal. The life-saving antidote has been imported from India, but among other reasons for the non availability of the antivenin here, apparently there are so many snakebites in India that there is not enough to export to Nepal this rainy season.



other related issues. Finally risks like anaphylactic shock are also potential complications of the antivenin.

Importantly, the ongoing Million Death Study of premature mortality in India has revealed that three out of four people dying of snakebite do not make it to the hospital or a treatment center. Dr Sanjib Kumar Sharma and colleagues showed that rapid transport of snakebite victims to treatment centers on a motorbike in the Tarai villages of Nepal lead to a better outcome for the victims.

Besides antivenin, the World Health Organisation (WHO) has long recommended a class



of drugs called anticholinesterase which can reverse the paralysis caused by deadly snakes like the cobra. Two robust studies carried out in the 1980s revealed that anticholinesterase drugs outperformed the antivenin, hence the recommendation by the WHO. But snakebite is such a neglected tropical disease that little additional research has been carried out in this area.

Finally while we wait for the availability of the antivenin treatment, another treatment modality Dr. Sharma highly recommends is using respiratory support like ventilators until the patient recovers. The real breakthrough however would be an antidote that is inexpensive and effectively used in the field without having to transport the patient to the hospital.

Amazingly it is manufactured in the same way French physician Albert Calmett first made it in the 1890s. The venom is milked from the fangs of the deadly snake into a cup. This venom is then diluted and injected into a horse or sheep. The animal after a period of time produces antibodies that are extracted from the animals' blood, freeze dried, stored and used in the victim as needed. Not every snakebite victim requires antivenin.

When it is available the government administers this treatment for free, but it is expensive to make. In India the antibodies necessary for treatment cost at least \$325. Antivenin may vary in effectiveness as well depending on the quality of the manufacturing, storage and



According to EDCD's conservative estimates, about 12000 people are bitten annually by snakes, out of which 2000 bites are from deadly snakes in the Tarai: kraits, cobras, or vipers. Unlike the Tarai, these deadly snakes are not usually found in Kathmandu, the mid hills and higher areas. A probable underestimation, the EDCD concluded that 200 victims die annually as a result of snakebites, while many survivors have limbs amputated and may be permanently disabled.

Globally there are five million people bitten by snakes every year. Of these, 94,000 die and another 400,000 have limbs amputated. It is estimated that about 50 per cent of these snakebite victims are in South Asia. Clearly this is a neglected tropical illness affecting the poor, especially farmers.

Antivenin is the cornerstone of treatment in deadly snakebites.

GIZMO by YANTRICK Score board

With the 2014 World Cup showing at ungodly hours, it has been impossible for even the most ardent of football fans in Nepal to catch all the sizzling Samba action live. As with most World Cup nerds, Yantrick's day these days starts with a roundup of the previous night's matches' scores and highlights- hail the internet.

However, constantly checking the phone for updates can be a real hassle. Checking scores on a sports website first, then scouring Google for highlights is time consuming and Yantrick was searching for a more convenient means to stay updated but without having to reach for the computer time and again. Enter the Bishwa Cup 2014 mobile application for android smartphones.

Created by Semantic Creation, a Nepali software company, the Bishwa Cup 2014 app has been designed to cater to a Nepali football fan's every need.

A mere 2MB in size, the app boasts a stylish, yet extremely user-friendly interface. The home screen displays live scores of the ongoing match, result of the past match and details of the upcoming match. Clicking on any of the three options takes you to the respective page where more detailed information of the match is available.

The 'Current Match' option displays the live score, screening venues of the match, along with up-to-the-minute live text commentary. The 'Past Match' page displays a scrollable list of completed matches sorted by date (newest first), and touching on the match of your interest displays its full match text-commentary, and, most importantly, the match highlights, while the 'Next Match' page displays a scrollable list of upcoming matches with Nepali timings.

The home page comprises of 3 other links at the top of the screen, the Schedule, Group and Teams links, with the Group and the Teams links especially handy if you wish to see the points permutations and combinations, read text commentary, watch highlights, and know the match timings of a particular group.

An ad-free app on the Google Play Store, downloading the Bishwa Cup 2014 is indeed a no-brainer if you happen to own an android device. This is the most complete yet easy-to-use World Cup 2014 app designed for Nepalis fans, packed to the seams with extensive match information, video highlights, live text updates, and live screening venue options in Kathmandu.



Yantrick's Verdict: The Bishwa Cup 2014 is the most complete World cup 2014 app for Nepali fans.

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DON'TS

One of the most common myths about frizzy hair is that only those with curly hair suffer from the problem, which is completely untrue. While the problem is more common in those with this hair type, frizzy hair is every girl's (and boys') nightmare. Here are some of its causes.



SUN EXPOSURE

Too much exposure to sun will leave your hair dry and damaged. Just as your skin, your hair needs sun protection too. Umbrellas and caps are handy so are hair masks.

CHEMICAL-HEAVY PRODUCTS

Hair products which contain alcohol are very drying and will make your frizz worse. Adopt more natural products or better yet create your own like actor Shaileene Woodley does.

PROCESSING

Bleaching is a big NO-NO. The process of dousing your hair with peroxide must not be. Pulling your hair back into a tight knot or ponytail causes the shafts of the hair to break, and the remaining hair will pop out and be frizzier than ever.

HEAT-INDUCED STYLING PRODUCTS

Blow-drying your frizzy, dry hair is not the way to go about the problem. Learn to air dry, and if you can't, use a diffuser. Also, avoid brushing frizzy hair as it will only make it frizzier.

LACK OF MOISTURE

Make sure that you are eating a proper diet and getting the necessary vitamins, minerals and nutrients into your system so that you can keep your hair moisturised from the inside out. Vitamins for healthy hair include the Vitamin B complex, particularly biotin, and Vitamins E, A and C.

HOME HAIR CARE

With the monsoon arriving, our hair tends to get very frizzy, dry and unmanageable. Here are ten simple things we can use from our kitchen to tame them.



BANANAS

They work wonders on dry and exhausted hair since they are rich in natural oils, vitamins, potassium and anti oxidants. That's one reason I eat a banana for breakfast daily. But they are good for split ends and to remove dandruff too. Mash the banana well, and when I say well, I mean to pulp, as you don't want to spend ages removing bits of banana from your hair. You can use it alone or mix it with honey olive oil or coconut oil.

OLIVE/COCONUT OIL

I normally use either of my two favourite oils to hydrate my hair since they are perfect conditioners to make hair soft and healthy. You can add an avocado or banana as mentioned above as a mask too.

YOGHURT

Since it is rich in proteins, minerals, vitamins and antioxidants I eat yoghurt every day with my meal. It is such a rich source of these, it can provide dry hair with nutrients and needed moisture, especially mixed with banana or avocado.

HONEY

It has a natural moistening effect for dull hair and restores its glow used alone or added with other mixtures. Don't use too much honey, or you'll be stuck with sticky hair. The best combination is banana honey and yoghurt honey. Hair tends to lighten slightly when you use honey too.

LEMON JUICE

It can remove excess oils from the scalp and close the pores. Lemon juice will lighten your hair, so dilute it with water.



EGG MASK

We all know eggs are a good source of protein and fat. So use a whole egg when treating dry and dull hair. It will moisturize the hair and heal the scalp. It can be used alone, or mixed with olive oil or a few drops of lemon juice.

BAKING SODA

An alternative to shampoo, baking soda cleanses the scalp hair, and can be added to yoghurt or mayonnaise.



AVOCADO

When eaten, avocado is a great source of natural oil, vitamins and nutrients. When applied to hair, it nourishes dull hair and gives it a shine. Use half an avocado for your hair mask or mix it with other ingredients such as olive oil, banana, yoghurt or milk.

MAYONNAISE

Amongst its ingredients, mayonnaise has eggs as well as oil vinegar. It's only logical to pack on your hair even if it sounds a bit unappetizing. It's a perfect combination for hair which is in need of hydration. For best results, mix with avocado and use as conditioner.



STRAWBERRIES

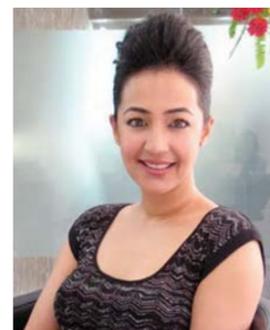
It might seem ridiculous to put strawberries on your hair, but they are an excellent source of vitamin C. When mixed with other ingredients, they regulate oil production.

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Nine years later,

“Being a victim comes at a great cost”



MICHELLE J LEE

MICHELLE J LEE
in CHITWAN

Nearly a decade after the Maoists detonated a bomb under a bus in Chitwan killing 38 people, survivors in the village of Madi are still suffering from psychosocial trauma and economic loss from the attack.

There were at least 100 people in the overcrowded bus on 6 June 2005 as it left the village along a road that traverses the national park. The Maoists had information there were soldiers among the passengers, and planted a bomb where the road descended into a rivulet, connecting it to a detonator via a



concealed wire.

It was by far the worst single attack by the Maoists during the ten-year conflict, and the physical and psychological scars of the tragedy are still visible in the people who inhabit this strip of Nepali territory sandwiched between Chitwan National Park and the Indian border. Three of the dead were soldiers, and 72 people were injured in the attack.

“I survived because I was sitting on top of the bus,” remembers Krishna Adhikari, who lost one of his legs in the blast. “For a long time, I was afraid to travel by bus because I would be reminded of what happened.”

Today, Adhikari is a stay-home father who struggles to



pay for the education of his children. The government gave just Rs 10,000 to victims like him. At least four of the injured died later because they couldn't afford treatment, and many like Adhikari used up their savings or took out loans to treat their serious injuries.

“Being a victim comes at a great cost,” he says, “while my friends have gone abroad and have made money, I am stuck at home because of my disability.” Most of the bitterness in

Madi among the survivors and relatives of victims is against the government for the neglect, as well as the lies. Compensation has been handed out by successive governments, but mostly to those with political connections and not to the genuine survivors or victims.

“The war should have been between soldiers and guerrillas, but the Maoists blew up the bus to sow terror,” says Shiva Subedi, who lost his father in the attack, “they knew the bus was full of civilians and they killed them on purpose.” Maoist chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal has admitted that the bomb was a mistake, and although he issued a statement regretting the incident, he hasn't formally apologised to the victims face-to-face.

Nama Ghimire remembers that day nine years ago like it

was yesterday. His son, daughter, son-in-law, sister-in-law, and two grandchildren were on the bus. None of them survived. Time hasn't healed his grief, and every festival season or anniversaries like the one earlier this month reminds him of the loss.

He could not bear to stay with all the memories and emptiness lingering in his house, and moved to another city. “In the beginning, there was so much stress and tension in my head,” Ghimire recalls, “my wife still can't come home because it breaks her heart.”

The Ghimires are struggling to educate their remaining grandchildren, and Nama's relations with his son's in-laws have soured. “When my son died my daughter-in-law took all the compensation money and married another man, I am worried about

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still in shock



MICHELLE J LEE



KUMAR SHRESTHA/A PEOPLE WAR

POST TRAUMA: Hari Ghimire and his brother whose sibling and six other relatives died when the bus was blown up on 6 June 2005 in Madi of Chitwan (left). (Clockwise from above) Krishna Adhikari with this wife and son, remembers how he was sitting on the roof and survived, but lost one of his legs.

- A mother in a white shroud and her baby were sitting in the bus and were instantly killed.
- Two goats tethered to the top of the bus survived.
- The memorial to the 38 victims at the site of the bomb attack.



MICHELLE J LEE



A PEOPLE WAR

my grandson," he says. Nama Ghimire's oldest son, Hari, adds: "My younger brother was the decision-maker in our household. It was his dream to see all the children well educated, but now our family has to struggle to educate them. They are so smart, but it breaks my heart that we cannot afford to send them to school."

For the people of Madi, the war isn't really over yet. They still struggle to come to terms with their loss, and the deaths of so many relatives and neighbours. Every anniversary, journalists come to Madi, but fewer than before. For the villagers, the questions remain unanswered: "Why were they killed? What will happen to those who killed them?"

Krishna Adhikari is nonetheless hopeful. He says: "I still believe that one day, justice will be done, education will be free for our children, and medical treatment will be given to those who were injured during the war."

It is evident there is a big gap in Madi between hope, and reality. ☑

स्वास्थ्यको जाँच हुनुहोस् पास

स्वास्थ्य जाँच गराउनुहोस्, स्वस्थ जीवन बिताउनुहोस्

थकानले हैरान ?

थाइरोइडको असन्तुलनले उदासी, सिधिलता, अनिद्रा वा कपाल ढर्ने समस्याले सताउन सक्छ ।

के तपाईंको मुटु स्वस्थ छ ?

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आफ्नो Lipids को जाँच गराउनुहोस् । Lipids को असन्तुलनले मुटुरोग लाग्न सक्छ ।

प्रजनन क्षमताको जाँच ?

प्राय सबै बौद्धोपन वा प्रजननका समस्याहरू उपचार हुन सक्छन् ।

निरन्तर व्यास र वजनको Loss ?

आफ्नो ब्लड सुगर लेभलको जाँच गराउनुहोस् ।

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Conservation first



Interview with former Finance Secretary Rameshwor Khanal who was appointed chairman of the recently formed Chure Hill Conservation Committee.

Why was the Chure Hill Conservation Committee formed?

The Chure region is an ecologically sensitive area, and the rampant degradation of the fragile Chure range has a direct impact in the Tarai. People downstream are already facing a range of problems including water sources drying up, frequent floods and landslides.

Why do you think you were chosen to lead this committee?

The Minister for Forests and Soil Conservation would be able to give an exact answer on this matter. But I feel that I might have been selected for this post since I was the finance secretary when the budget was allocated for Chure conservation.

What rights will the committee have?

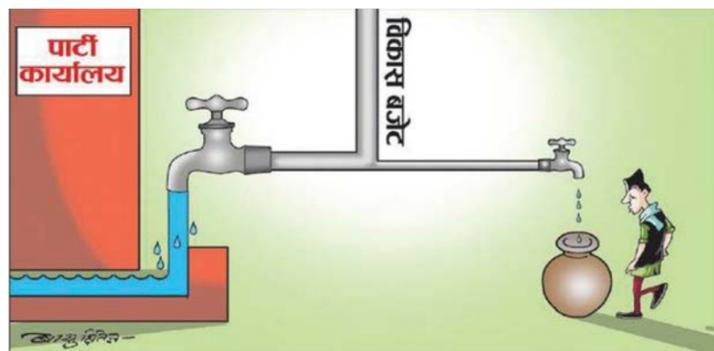
The main task of the committee is to stop the ongoing, indiscriminate extraction of sand and stones in the Chure range. The committee will be responsible for designing and implementing programs, and it plans to save it from this practice's destructive effects. It will also direct appropriate bodies to implement the committee's decisions. The second objective is to ease the burden on and improve the lives of affected local communities.

What will be done about ongoing debates over the jurisdictions of concerned districts and village development committees?

We will coordinate with all the district development committees and VDCs for Chure conservation. However, the conservation efforts shouldn't be affected regardless of which concerned body objects.

Similar committees to protect the Chure range in the past struggled to yield substantial results. How will this committee be different?

The Chure Hill Conservation Committee won't be ineffective as others have been because I plan to involve committed, capable and qualified people.



Fund mismanagement

Gopikrishna Dhungana, *Annapurna Post*, 24 June

अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट

The Ministry of Local Development has set aside money for more than a dozen similar projects that are driven by party interest.

7.6 million rupees have been set aside for Nepali Congress this year to construct buildings and memorials in the name of several deceased party leaders in 10 districts, including Rs 800,000 allocated for the construction of the Girija Prasad Koirala Memorial Foundation in Taplejung. When Narayan Kaji Shrestha was the Minister for Local Development he had allocated almost 10 million rupees for several organisations,

clubs and foundations affiliated to CPN (Maoist).

Last year, the party spent one million rupees for the construction of a martyrs' foundation building and used the fund to build the party leaning Radio Bahini's building.

According to an official at the ministry, the trend of misusing the budget for party purposes has increased in the last five years. The projects are determined by the minister's private secretariat instead of local governing bodies in the village, town and districts.

Dinesh Thapaliya, spokesperson at the ministry admits that there have been complaints over the misuse of local development budget by the political parties.

Rihana goes home

Pabitra Sunar, *Nagarik*, 24 and 26 June

नागरिक

Nearly four months after being burnt alive, 19-year-old Rihana Sheikh Dhapali of Banke is finally showing signs of recovery. On Wednesday she was given a two-week leave from Bir Hospital to go back and visit her parents on the condition that she would return to Kathmandu for further treatment.

"She is homesick and has been a victim of domestic violence. Being with her parents for some time will help her heal mentally," says Piyush Dahal chief of the Burns Unit at Bir Hospital. According to Dahal, her treatment is nearly over but there are still some patches on her leg where additional surgery is needed.



For a couple of weeks, Rihana had been requesting doctors to allow her to return home. Nurses said she would act like a child when asked to take her meals or take part in physiotherapy. Before heading to Banke on Wednesday, she was so upbeat that she even took a few steps without her walker.

Rihana now plans to open up a shop so that she can help her poor parents and younger siblings with their studies. She wants to live independent of her husband Farid Sheikh and his family, who are believed to be hiding across the border in India where they have relatives.

"I am never going back to them," she says. "They'll burn me again if I do."

Rihana was married last year and was seven months pregnant when Farid and his mother set her on fire on 17 March for not bringing enough dowry. Although she sustained severe burns over the lower part of her body, Rihana was locked up in her room and not taken to hospital for three days.

When her condition worsened, Farid took her to a hospital across the border in Bahraich in India, threatening her not to tell the doctors what happened. Later, she was brought back to Bheri Zonal Hospital in Nepalganj by her father Samim Sheikh Dhapali. But as her health deteriorated, Rihana lost her baby and had to be brought to Kathmandu for treatment.



Oli to Nepal: "Let's bet on it, whoever wins is Chairman."

नेपाल

Rabindra in *Nepal*, 22 June

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“We're all such monkeys.”

UCPN(M) leader Baburam Bhattarai after seeing a regional agricultural centre in ruins, *Annapurna Post*, 24 June

Together for development

Interview with NC lawmaker Gagan Thapa, *BBC Nepali*, 25 June

BBC नेपाली

BBC: Constituent Assembly members of Kathmandu recently submitted a 20-year Unified Kathmandu Valley Development document, what does it comprise of?

Gagan Thapa: The document encompasses mid-term and long term solutions for Kathmandu, and will act as a guideline for the valley's planners. We hope to add more issues in the future.

Will this document assist the existing and future government plans for Kathmandu's development or is it a completely new concept?

Gagan Thapa: This document was prepared in consultation and with participation of Nepal Government officials, so it doesn't stand in opposition of what is being done. We are only proposing that the way things have been done needs to be changed.

Although the document doesn't propose new things, why does it put forward the formation of a committee to implement its long term vision?

Gagan Thapa: First of all there is no coordination among the various bodies working for Kathmandu's

development, which is needed for administrative efficiency and to better manage within the existing framework. Acts on municipalities and metropolitan cities also need to be amended so that these bodies have effective control over their development projects which also help reduce duplication of development works.

There has been no effort from your own party, which has been in power several times to reform the existing practices you are complaining about.

Gagan Thapa: This is why the time has come for the reform to start. We cannot hide the mess that Kathmandu has become, we have a vision to change Kathmandu into the liveable city that it used to be.

How is this document different from other plans and projects that have not been implemented in the past?

Gagan Thapa: This is the first time we have taken initiative as elected people's representative to look into the failure of previous development projects. We have already begun the first round of discussion with government bodies and hope to take it to the grassroots in three and half years of our tenure. We hope that the discussion that we have started will open room for improvement and further reform.



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NEW LIVES (L-R):
Ex-combatant Mohan Adhikari, former guerrilla Bharat BK with his son at his shop, Karna Bahadur BK with wife Om Kumari Nepali (both ex-combatants) at their eatery in Ghorahi, Ubi Lal Gharti and his wife set up a *lokta* paper and nettle fabric which they export.

KANTIPUR

The ghosts of war

Kantipur, 21 June

कान्तिपुर

Former Battalion Commander in the Maoist militia, Mohan Adhikari, still has nightmares. He screams in his sleep remembering comrades falling in battle.

Adhikari used to be assigned to party chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal's security detail, and his entire family from Pyuthan had joined the Maoists. Today, after choosing the golden handshake, he feels betrayed by the party.

"I don't know if it is post-traumatic stress or a mental disorder," he says, "I think it is the ghost of the people's war that's come back to haunt me for the rest of my life."

Adhikari bought some land in Dang with his Rs 600,000 lump sum and settled there with his wife Pabitra, who was a platoon commander, and their two sons. The money is now finished, and like others who opted for voluntary retirement the former guerrilla feels abandoned.

"The party has forgotten its slogans of revolution, liberation, end of discrimination, the leaders have become selfish and left us to ourselves," says Adhikari.

Another former guerrilla Bharat BK of Rukum also feels the conflict ruined his life. He opened a small eatery with the Rs 500,000 retirement benefit, but he is finding it difficult to run a business. "We commanded a certain respect during the war, now the customers order us around, and it feels awkward," he says, "and they have a negative attitude towards us."

BK joined the guerrillas when he was 13, and hasn't known a life outside the party. Today, his money has run out, the business is not doing well, life in the town is difficult and he can't go back to his village because of stigma.

Platoon Commander Karna Bahadur BK also chose retirement with his wife, former guerrilla Om Kumari Nepali. They also found it difficult to go back to their village, but it is even harder to run the small lodge.

"When we ask people to lend us money, they say ask your party," Karna Bahadur says, "the party has forgotten us and so has the state. And the people treat us like murderers."

Karna Bahadur joined the Maoists when he was in Grade Seven, and he still hasn't been able to explain to his mother why he enlisted. Comrades wounded during the war are disabled, others have migrated overseas, many have become alcoholics, some have taken to crime.

Not all stories are so sorrowful. Ubilal and Radhika Gharti of Jajarkot invested their

retirement package to set up a traditional lokta paper and nettles fabric business and make a clean profit of Rs 50,000 a month. Not only are they not looking for a job, they provide income to hundreds of villagers who supply them with raw material.

Ex-Company Commander Dhan Bahadur BK and his wife Babita invested their joint Rs 1.6 million retirement benefit in a printing press in Khalanga of Jajarkot. Deputy Brigade Commander Krishna Raj BK put his money into a provision store and is doing well. Lalit Gharti moved down to Nepalganj and runs a



Integrating well

Former guerrillas who chose to join the Nepal Army seem to be doing much better than those who opted for retirement. Chitraman Roka of Rukum (pictured) says he feels for comrades who left, and have run out of money.



discuss politics in the barracks."

But Roka does reminisce about past battles with his former enemies in the army, and they share joys and sorrows. Roka's wife, Kamala, is also a former guerrilla and lives in Dang with their five-year-old son.

"If I had taken retirement, my 6 lakhs would be finished by now. In the village they respect me because I am a soldier," Roka said during a furlough in Dang.

"In contrast, we get a regular salary, life is good and it turned out well for us," Roka, who is posted in Sundarjijal says. "Our political life is over, we don't

tractor business. Deputy Company Commander Sarparaj Basnet has a lodge in Chhinchu of Surkhet.

Bal Bahadur Malla used to be a Platoon Commander, and he is now a contractor. "We fought for a cause, but we couldn't bring the changes the country needed," he says, "now we have to run a business to survive." Other ex-guerrillas have started poultry farms, auto repair garages, mobile repair shops, or farm vegetable.

Gopal KC returned to his ancestral village of Thawang to start a poultry farm after not getting any help from his party. Last year he earned Rs 200,000 from his business.

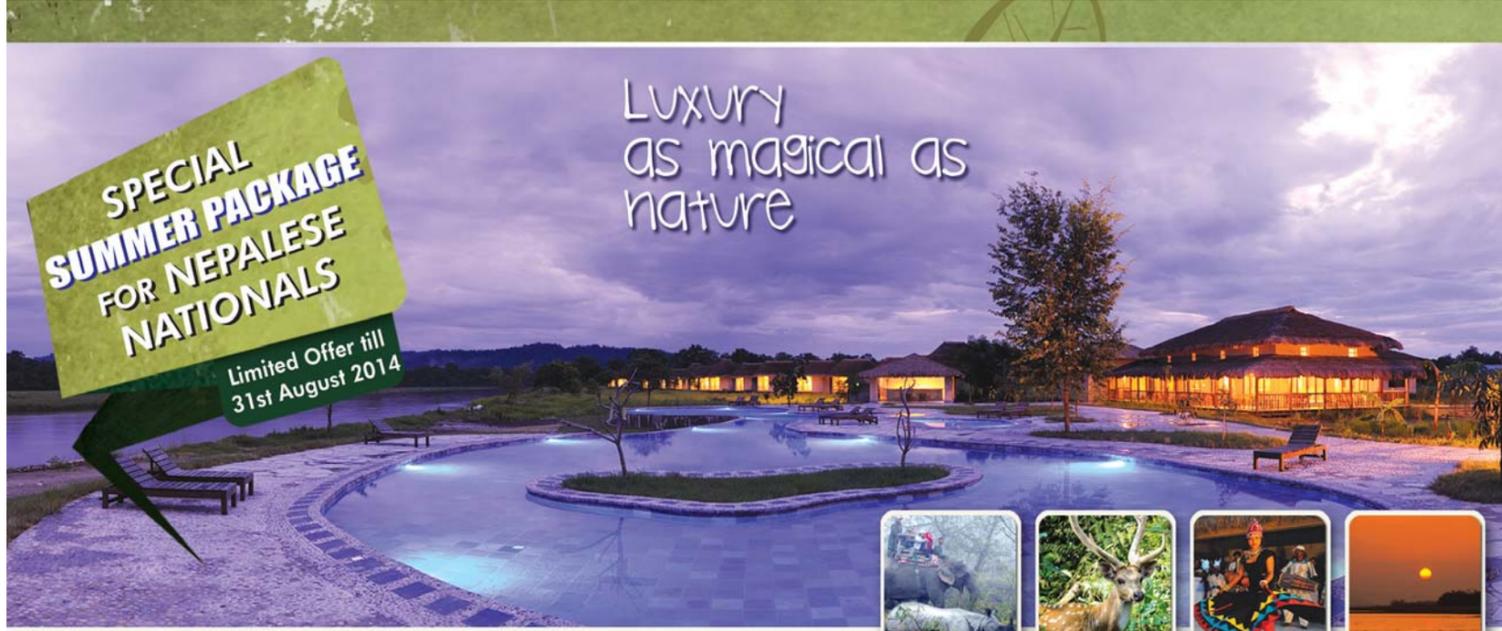
He says, "It is much more fulfilling to work independently than taking orders from the party, and in a small way I am contributing to society." 🇳🇵

Durgalal KC, Harihar Singh Rathour, Bhim Bahadur Singh, Krishna Prasad Gautam



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Beer Belly Barometer

The annual Freedom Index puts some countries in the 'partly unfree' category. That is like saying someone is partly unpregnant. Be that as it may, it is perturbing and perplexing that Nepal always ranks near the bottom of the Freedom Index despite us having had two-and-half democracy uprisings, and a history of selling our souls.

I know of no other countries where citizens are freer to do as they like. Where else are you allowed to throw garbage right on your doorstep, and get away with it? Where else can police confiscate an illegal firearm, sell it, seize it again and repeat the process seven times to make

a fortune? Only in Nepal can students stage a violent protest demanding the right to cheat. Tanker drivers have the freedom to pilfer diesel, and go on strike when caught. Only in Nepal are revolutionary Brahmin high priests free to join an atheist Maoist party that waged war against a Hindu monarchy for a secular republic. Only Nepal grants students affiliated to the ruling party the freedom to go on an arson spree to enforce a *band* against its own government.

GDP per capita only measures income and is skewed in favour of industrialised countries. We need to level the playing field by concocting new

indices to quantify freedom and development:

- **Freedom Benchmark:** In terms of liberty to break the law Nepalis top this list. There is total freedom to make illegal U-turns outside the CA building, and drive recklessly on the wrong side of the road inside Singha Darbar.
- **Constituent Assembly Not Functioning Days Quotient (CANFDQ):** This is an indicator of the vibrancy of democracy in a particular country. With a CANFDQ of 0.9, Nepal is right up there with vibrating democracies like the People's Democratic Republic of Amnesia and the Kingdom of Utopia.

- **Corruption Prevalence Ratio (CPR):** This is arrived at by calculating the square root of GDP per capita with the wealth-redistribution potential and multiplying it with an inverse decimal for the public expenditure as a proportion of total budget. For example if 35% of the bureaucracy is actually moonlighting as Commercial Desk Workers (CDW) then that gives us a CPR of 0.0006. This year, we will take a giant leap to the top of the league by earmarking Rs 5 corrodos to all 601 CA members, with 26 yet-to-be-named members reimbursed retroactively.

120,000 of his people very sad.

- **Bagmati Olfactory Gauge (BOG):** This is calculated by finding the square root of ambient hydrogen sulphide concentration at Bagmati Bridge divided by wind speed multiplied by seasonally adjusted Sewage Retention Factor rounded off to the nearest decimal point. There is a strong correlation between the NEPSE Index and the BOG. In other words, if the smell at the bridge is really bad you can be sure the stock market has hit the roof.



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- **Instant Noodle Index (INI):** Asia's economic tigers have shown that there is a direct correlation between consumption of noodles per head and Purchasing Power Parity. Nepal's exponential growth in instant noodle production gives us an INI quotient of 9.9 – which means we have the same quality of life as Taiwan or Singapore.
- **Beer Belly Barometer (BBB):** The more beer a country imbibes, the more powerful it is. Combined with the Gross Dal-Bhat Gut (GDBG) Nepal's BBB has now expanded the per capita girth of an average Nepali, giving us the status of a Regional Beer Superpower. Burp.
- **The Gross National Holiday Coefficient (GNHC):** Going by this parameter, Nepal is one of the most productive nations on earth. Our civil servants, schools and industries are closed 217 days in a year giving us a GNHC of 65%, and we still manage to get all our work done.
- **Gross Domestic Glee (GDG):** Nepal scores pretty high here because our people are so gay. But to give credit where it's due, the original idea of measuring national bliss emanated from none other than King Jigme the Joyful (father of Jigme the Glad) who reigns over a country that has attained the happiness coefficient on earth, a feat he accomplished by making about

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