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THE DELUGE



DIWAKAR CHETTRI

A belated monsoon resurgence dumped nearly 100 mm of rain on central Nepal over 24 hours on Thursday. While it was just another inconvenience for the residents of the capital, there was alarm on the Sun Kosi downstream from the landslide that blocked the river two weeks ago.



MOST VICTIMS WOMEN AND CHILDREN

Naresh Newar's field report on the survivors of the Bhote Kosi disaster

PAGE 16-17

Head in the sand

DEADLINE
BY DAMAKANT JAYSHI

Nepali politicians are too busy protecting gangsters to prepare for future Bhote Kosis

PAGE 3



Rs 1

The school for street children that runs on one rupee donations from hundreds of people.

PAGE 7

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AN EVERGREEN REVOLUTION

Nepal has taken giant strides in improving maternal and child health in the past 10 years. In his lectures in Kathmandu last week, Swedish medical statistician Hans Roslin described Nepal as a “champion” – the only poor country in the world that has made such dramatic improvements.

We all deserve a pat on our backs. But imagine how much further ahead we would have been if we didn’t have to suffer a ruinous ten-year war, if we had stabilised our politics by now, if we had better governance, if ...

However, there are two Millennium Development Goals in which we haven’t fared as well: gender equality and eliminating extreme hunger. The two may seem unrelated, but are inextricably linked. As Sunir Pandey reported in this paper last week, persistent patriarchal values that encourage child marriage cause malnutrition among mothers and children. Despite campaigns, three-fourths of Nepali women are still anemic.

The proportion of children in Nepal who are physically stunted due to the lack of food decreased from 58 per cent to 40 per cent in the last ten years putting us on track to meet the 30 per cent target. But those are national averages, and in the mountains of western Nepal and in the eastern Tarai, especially among Dalit and other marginalised families, the malnutrition rate is still an acceptably high 60 per cent. It is a moral outrage that more than half the children in some parts of Nepal still don’t get enough to eat.

In another report from Rasuwa last week, Mallika Aryal wrote that even having enough to eat is not enough to guarantee adequate nutrition. Indeed, new research on public health in India shows that even when they had enough to eat children were stunted because poor



BIKRAM RAI

The state’s (mis)treatment of small-hold family farmers keeps rural Nepalis poor, which is why hunger lingers.

sanitation and open defecation led to chronic gastric infections affecting the body’s nutrient uptake. Although the prevalence rate of open defecation is double in India compared to Nepal, sanitation-related malnutrition is a serious issue here too.

The primary reason for hunger, however, is still the chronic and pervasive lack of food caused by low farm productivity, or staples being unaffordable to the poor. In

the mid- and far-western mountains of Nepal, rainfed small-hold farms produce enough food to last families only for 160 days in a year – forcing more than half the young male population to migrate to India to work.

The government tries to boost agriculture production through subsidies, incentives and support for cash crop producers or commercial farms supplying produce for the urban market. This is lopsided because 80 per cent of Nepal’s food production comes from small-hold farms. Because they are poor and are scattered across remote regions of Nepal, family farmers are ignored. Yet, small-hold agriculture is sustainable, doesn’t need expensive inputs, and has decent productivity despite the lack of irrigation, extension and support from the state.

We need a paradigm shift in the way we look at hunger in this country by not just addressing food security, but nutrition security. This means looking at three aspects of nutrititon: calorie hunger, protein hunger and the hidden hunger caused by deficiency of micronutrients like iron, zinc, and vitamin A. The state’s (mis)treatment of family farmers is keeping rural Nepalis poor, which is why all three types of hunger linger. As men migrate, family-run small farms are also increasingly women-run. Gender imbalance and poor sanitation stunt children, impairing their physical and mental development.

At an international conference on family farming in Chennai last week, green revolution guru M S Swaminathan said increasing calorie intake is not good enough, we need to bolster nutrition by re-aligning our priority to support family farmers. Stunted children today will stunt the country’s future development.

YOUR SAY

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CALCULATED RISKS

India wants to build Narmadas and Tehris in Nepal to store monsoon water ('Calculated risks,' Editorial, #719). As you say, Nepal could also benefit from this. But how is India going to compensate Nepal for submerging its valleys to prevent floods in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and for dry season augmentation? The test of changed India-Nepal relations post-Modi will be how greedy India is and how much India arm-twists Nepal into accepting an unfair deal.

Hem B

■ Having lived in India and Nepal for extended periods, I can confidently say that Indians hold the Nepali people in high regard because of the Gurkhas, etc. But Indian officials are the scum of the earth when dealing with Nepalis, since they need to show their 'influence'. Nepalis are mostly disdainful of loud, boorish and uncouth Indians, but will tolerate them. Nepali officials go out of their way to ferret out anti-Nepal sentiments and language where none exist in Indian actions and words. Modi has pressed the reset button. India should gift a hydro project, agree on a price for future energy sales and open up its market for Nepali goods. for their part, Nepalis need to address India's security concerns and not bluff with the Chinese Card which is obsolete.

Namah

Nepal must think of India as an opportunity, not as a threat ('Great expectations,' Anurag Acharya,

#719). When it does, it'll find itself soaring to the heights of prosperity, lifted by the tide of rising India. For India, it's necessary to never take Nepal for granted. The high notes of the Modi visit must herald a new era of trust and friendship between the two countries. Nepal wants to upgrade its status to a "developing country" by 2022. It's high-time for Nepal to seek economic and development partnership with India. Efforts should be made by Nepali and Indian leaders to build trust and confidence and open up new development prospects for mutual benefit.

Anil Karki

■ Delhi is pressing for rail, road transit through Bangladesh to its northeastern states which would make the shortest route. Bangladesh wants hydropower from Nepal. So the transmission line through India is a possibility now as Dhaka will certainly press for it. Bangladesh has huge deposits of natural gas, India has coal, Nepal has hydropower so there is regional complementarity. Leaders of the three countries must act like statesmen and now is the opportune time.

Gajaraj

COPING MECHANISMS

I have one question for you and all others who are so enamored with local elections. ('Coping mechanisms', Ashutosh Tiwari, #791). If those elected continue the same tradition of allowing illegal mining, building of houses, how is it going to make any difference? Corruption of elected vs non-elected officials is going to be the same. Having 75 upright officers (one

for each district) who are absolutely untouchable is the minimum starting point. Mining, Building Permits, etc. need to be centrally managed. A national Disaster Relief plan needs to demarcate sensitive areas (much like the Risk Board that Ashutosh tiwari advocates). Regular followup with inspections at actual locations to ensure no encroachment. I am not against local elections, but I doubt if it is going to make much difference.

Nam

THE GREEN HOUSE

The real green houses of Nepal are those that are in the villages, made of natural products ('The green house,' Dambar K Shrestha, #719). The houses that are insulated with rick skin mixed with mud, thatched roof, wooden windows are the real eco houses.

Hurray

GENERAL'S LABYRINTH

■ Gen Katawal was a law unto himself, as proven by turning up at Baluwatar with two trucks of commandos. ('A general's albyrith', Kunda Dixit #718). Remember, he planned to surround and destroy the UCPN-M party office in Kathmandu with special forces, in response to a low level kidnapping a few days before the 2008 election, and didn't inform PM Koirala.

Sunjeev

Pandey

Gen Katwal was right to ask and reprimand Kul Bahadur Khadka for meeting the Prime Minister without his order. The army has a chain

of command that must be obeyed. He also needs to take all security precautions to protect himself.

Kobid

The priority of the government was to make a constitution at that particular moment in 2009. Over-ambition and the hunger to conquer power led to the downfall of Prime Minister Prachanda.

Iceean

TRAFFICKING IN KATHMANDU

Look at the contrast in the design of the two roads; the Tikune- Bhaktapur and Tinkune –Maitighar ('Trafficking in Kathmandu,' Ass, #719). The one designed by the Japanese has median divider so it is much safer as headon collisions are avoided. Although this was constructed earlier, no lesson was taken by our engineers while building the Tinkune-Maitighar road. Design is not caricature?

Harry Subba

■ Dearest Ass, do you realise that you are recklessly endangering our health with columns like this? Some of us could actually die laughing. Every line is a gem.

Jung

CORRECTION

In 'Happier days' (#791) by Gopal Gartaula in Manchester, the last paragraph referred to 15 rounds of failed negotiations about repatriating Bhutan refugees back to Bhutan. Those talks were between Nepal and Bhutan, and not with India as inadvertently stated.

Times WHAT'S TRENDING



BIKRAM RAI

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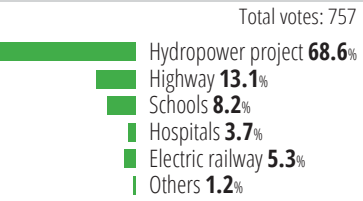
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Having enough to eat is not enough by Mallika Aryal

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Times nepalnews.com

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Q. Will the UCPN(M) infighting affect constitution writing?



Adrift

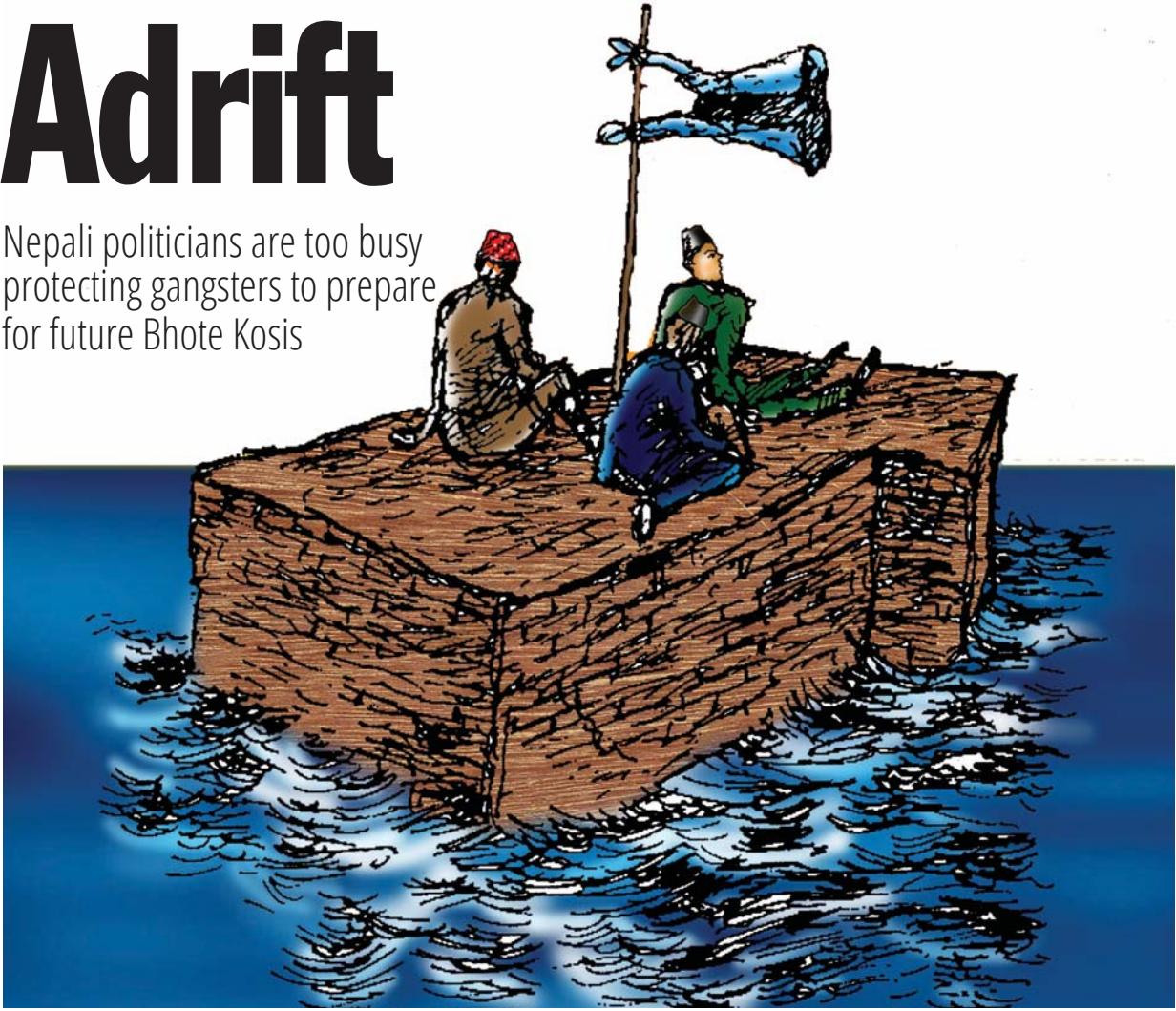
Nepali politicians are too busy protecting gangsters to prepare for future Bhote Kosis

In the early hours of 2 August, a massive landslide obliterated a village and blocked the Bhote Kosi river. Although only 33 bodies were recovered, more than 150 are presumed dead – at least 50 of them children from one school. Some families have already performed the last rites of missing relatives, even though their bodies were never found. (See page 16-17).



THE DEADLINE
Damakant Jayshi

The Nepal Army has tried to cut a channel to drain the 4km long lake, but because of the huge rocks it is proving to be difficult. These boulders are a blessing in disguise because if the river had been dammed by sand and mud, it would have been easier to breach, unleashing a catastrophic flood downstream. Indeed, the tragedy is a wakeup call and a reminder of the dangers of living and building in the Himalaya. Settlements along river banks, on steep and fragile slopes are at risk even during a year with scanty rains as this monsoon season. Building



highways and hydropower projects that factor in the danger of flashfloods will make them more expensive than they already are, and even then, they will not be fully protected. The seismicity of the Himalaya adds another layer of threat to this already perilous situation. Combine earthquakes with heavy monsoons, and you compound the risk even more.

But now, we have to factor in one more danger: climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released its 5th Assessment Report in Islamabad last week with this dire warning: 'The impacts of climate change will influence flooding of settlements and infrastructure, heat-related deaths, and food and water shortages in South Asia.'

The weather has gone crazy is a familiar refrain. Older people in Tarai shake their heads about never-before cold, the trans-Himalayan district are abnormally snowless in winter, or there are erratic monsoons like this year. Photographs of the glaciers below Mt Everest taken 80 years apart show lakes where there used to be ice, and are stark reminders of the creeping catastrophe of

climate change. These lakes can burst because of their fragile moraine dams, and during a major earthquake there could be multiple bursts of several lakes simultaneously. Unfortunately, while the tragedy unfolded in Jure and the Bhote Kosi timebomb ticked away, the state's attention was divided between the Narendra Modi visit and the alleged encounter killing of a UML-affiliated gangster. This week, UML lawmakers raised a ruckus in parliament alleging that the police killed the mafioso in cold blood. The debate in parliament was final vivid proof - if proof was still needed - about the criminalisation of Nepali politics. The idiocy of the UML MPs is astounding: they don't even realise how they have foolishly incriminated themselves. Or maybe they don't care about what the public thinks. And that is even more worrying. With the priorities of the media and the politicians on gangland killings, there was little attention on the plight of the survivors of Bhote Kosi. The danger of a dam collapse is not yet over, and the Kodari Highway is still cut off. This time it was a landslide. Next time, it could be a glacial outburst flood or an earthquake. Bhote Kosi was a test case for a national level response, which (except for the Army) was woefully slow and inadequate. Both the political parties and the government need to have their priorities right: the protection and welfare of citizens. This week we saw living proof that the state's priority is elsewhere. 🇳🇵 @damakant

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Workers in exile

International spotlight on mistreatment of Nepali workers is leading to labour reform, but much needs to be done

CLARE HENNIG

Bartender Aim Upreti emptied a beer and excitedly divulged that he was leaving for Qatar the next day. He had impressed the recruiters with his bartending résumé and had been promised a job in a five-star hotel in Doha. That night, his last working in Thamel, Upreti danced and sang along to the music as he served customers and poured drinks. He couldn't wait to start his new life. Each month, 16,000 Nepalis leave the country to work in the Gulf. One in every three families in Nepal has someone working abroad and sending money home. Remittances form nearly a quarter of Nepal's GDP. However, recent international exposes have revealed harsh conditions many workers face abroad. It has been called 'modern-day slavery': workers, especially those in construction, live in cramped, insect-infested housing with poor access to both sanitation and cooking facilities. They often work long hours in gruelling conditions -- sometimes up to 16 hours a day for paychecks that are frequently late. In Qatar alone, 400 Nepali workers have died in the past three years. The responsibility for ensuring labour conditions and workers' rights lies on the

shoulders of the country of employment. The exploitation, however, begins at home, in the recruiting agencies in Nepal. "Everyone is looking for money," said Som Prasad Lamichhane, general secretary of Pravasi Nepali Co-ordination Committee which works for the rights of migrant workers. "Recruiting agencies take fees from workers and send them abroad where their contract may be different than promised," he said, "This is a huge problem." According to government regulations, a recruiting agency may only charge up to Rs 80,000. But some charge more than double that, and Lamichhane said, workers will sometimes sign contracts in Nepal only to find on arrival at the host country airport that there is no job, or that the pay and job description is not what was agreed. "There are 761 manpower agencies in Nepal but only about 400 of them are registered," said Lamichhane. "The monitoring system is very weak even among the registered ones. Our government needs to take more responsibility." Abdul Sattar of Manpower Middle East which recruits Nepali workers, agreed. The Labour Department must approve all his foreign employment contracts, but most of the follow-up monitoring is left to recruiting agencies. "The monitoring system is not

effective," explained Sattar, "recruiting agencies are just the middlemen. It's up to the government to solve the problems, we cannot do anything." There is nothing stopping recruiters to make immediate changes to ensure better working conditions abroad, but the problem is a lack of incentives, explained Kathmandu-based journalist Pete Pattison who broke the original story in *The Guardian* about Nepalis in Qatar earlier this year. "First of all, they could only deal with recognised, trustworthy brokers. That itself is a massive step," said Pattison. "They need to be more rigorous in vetting the companies that they do business with." Other improvements would be to formalise the relationship between the agencies and local brokers abroad, charge appropriate recruiting fees and guarantee minimum wages in all contracts. Recent coverage in the international press, and with spotlight on construction related to the 2022 World Cup, there are signs the Qatar government is taking notice. The Qatari Attorney General was in Kathmandu last month to meet senior officials. Nepali officials are aware of the problems and the need to protect its citizens, but are reluctant to give a higher profile to the issue for fear of retaliation from the Qataris. Said Pattison: "The Nepal government also knows that people are looking at them for answers. The question is whether it will deliver." 

 [nepalitimes.com](#)

■ Helping workers abroad, #532

■ Too little, too late #673

■ Interactive visualisation on migrant workers




DAMBAR K SHRESTHA

Sudden death

PETE PATTISSON

On a recent visit to Qatar, I was given a tour of the accommodation housing the workers building the first venue for the 2022 World Cup, the Al Wakrah stadium. It was immaculate. Tidy bedrooms, clean toilets, social areas with flat-screen tvs and even a games room with table football. It was in stark contrast to any other workers' accommodation I had seen in Qatar, and it felt too good to be true. It was. A few days later I went back to interview the workers. Some of them told me they were being paid the equivalent of just Rs 800 a day. Others were earning as little as Rs 77 an hour for overtime work. I left feeling despondent. How could workers building a showcase World Cup venue, in one of the richest countries in the world, be paid so little? Is the committee organising the World Cup incompetent, or just indifferent? On the same trip, I met a group of workers from India, Sri Lanka and Nepal, who had fitted out two floors of lavish offices in the Al Bidda tower in Doha. The offices are currently being occupied by the same

World Cup organising committee, but some of the men who built them have not been paid for over a year. The offices are finished in glossy white stone and etched glass, but the workers are living six to a room in a crowded, dirty building. "I want to go home but I don't have any money," one of the men from Nepal told me, "Who would stay here if they had money?" The Qatari authorities were informed about the plight of these men in November 2013, and yet they have still not received any salary. Some leading figures in Qatar seem to be in denial about the problems facing migrant workers. In a recent interview the head of Qatar's elite Aspire sports foundation, Khalid Al Sulaiteen, claimed migrant labourers live in, "a very comfortable and healthy environment". This appears to extend to the number of migrants dying in Qatar. According to Qatar's own figures, 882 migrants from India and Nepal died in 2012 and 2013. The vast majority of these deaths were classified as 'sudden death, cause unknown'. I met the colleagues of Rishi Kandel, who died in May 2014. They told me that he went to sleep one night, and simply never woke up. But despite the hundreds of unexplained deaths, neither the Qatari state nor the

Nepal government have commissioned any research in to why so many migrants are dying in this way. The Nepal government, manpower agencies and construction companies are all partly to blame for the exploitation of Nepal's migrant labourers. However, the real problem is the utter indifference and outright discrimination that characterises Qatar's treatment of its migrant workforce. What is really needed is a change in the attitude of Qatari state, so that they no longer see migrants as a disposable people, there simply to help them achieve their World Cup ambitions, but recognise them as human beings with equal rights. 



Pete Pattison is a British journalist based in Nepal who writes for *The Guardian*.

 [nepalitimes.com](#)

■ See *The Guardian's* investigative report



A glimmer of hope

International media attention on construction workers from South Asia has heightened with Qatar preparing for the 2022 World Cup, the completion of the New York University (NYU) Abu Dhabi campus, and the Louvre and Guggenheim museums being built. The impetus for change is largely external, international criticism and widespread scrutiny is creating pressure for change from the governments involved. On 20 July, Qatar announced plans to improve labour laws with tighter regulations and a ban on working under excessive temperatures and increased fines for employers who confiscate workers' passports, and a new system of electronic payments directly to employees' bank accounts. Amendments were also proposed to the current kafala system, where workers are tied to their employer and can neither change jobs nor leave the country without permission. However, no time frame was given for the implementation of these reforms. In June, with the completion of NYU Abu Dhabi's controversial new campus on Sadiyaat Island, an email was sent by the university's Vice Chancellor in New York to the student body announcing an investigation into allegations of labour standard violations. Before construction of the campus began, NYU had announced a Statement of Labour Values regarding wages, conditions and working hours and were assured the contractors were upholding the standards, but violations were exposed by *The New York Times* shortly before completion of the campus. The international investigation firm Nardello & Co is heading the inquiry but has not yet published its findings. In Nepal, the Department of Foreign Employment has promised to tighten the regulation of recruiting agencies in the coming months. It hopes to impede fraudulent agencies by making it compulsory for all contracts between migrant workers and agencies to be signed in the presence of a government official. At the moment, the provision would only apply to those going to Oman, but plans are underway to expand it to other Gulf countries as well. Such reforms, both from nations sending and receiving workers, is just the beginning. And the world is watching because high-profile football tournaments, famous universities and museums are involved. But more importantly, workers' rights need to be respected by both the home and host countries.

Clare Hennig in Abu Dhabi



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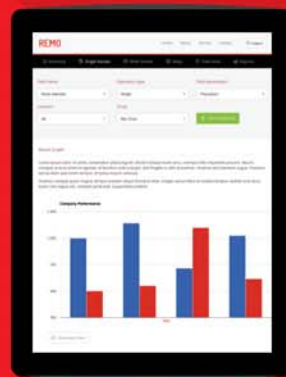
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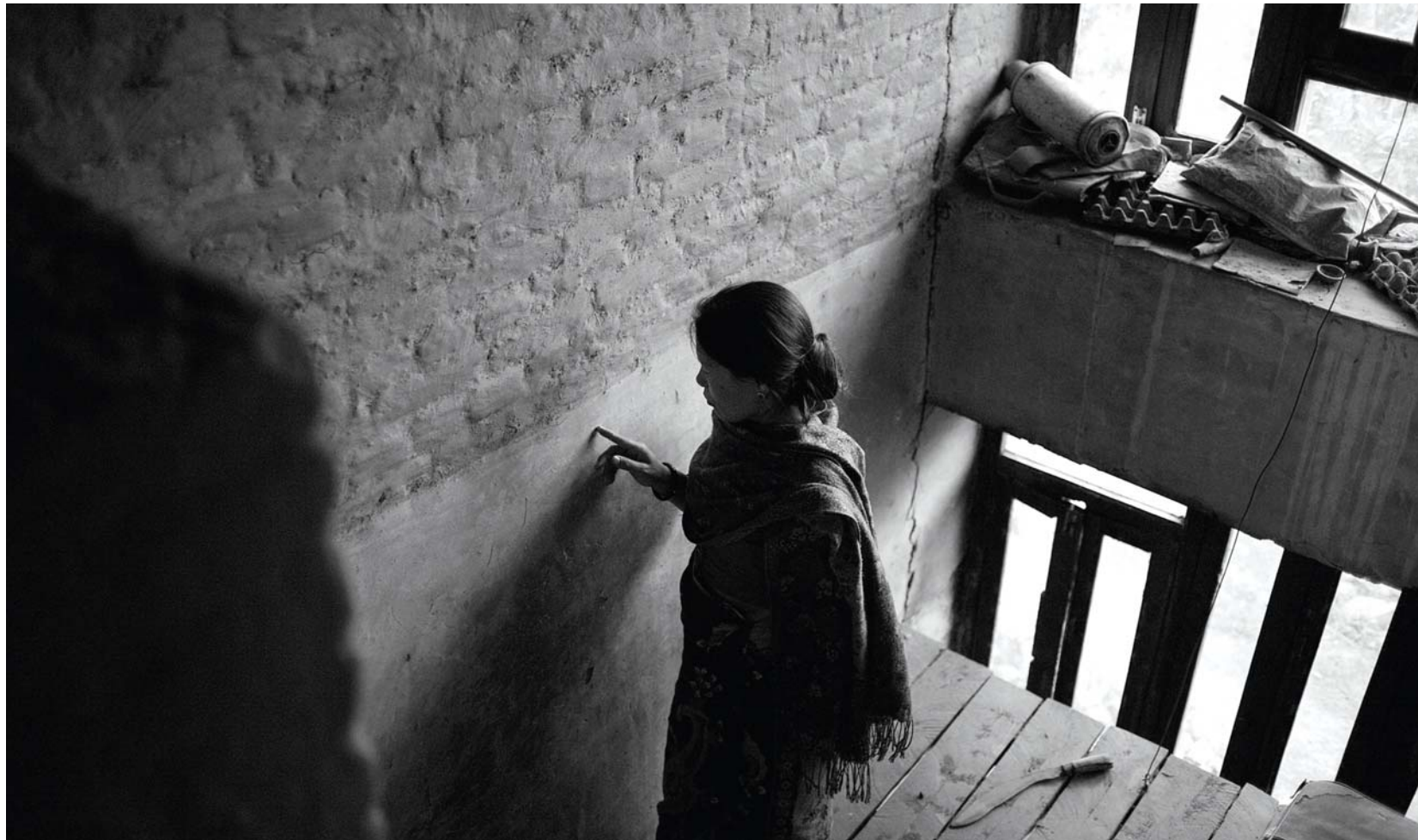
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On the sidelines of justice

A gender-blind and victim insensitive Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be a futile exercise



NAYANTARA GURUNAG KAKSHAPATI

TRISHNA RANA

As fighters, as ordinary citizens caught in the crossfire, as mothers, wives, and sisters who lost loved ones, Nepali women have had to bear an inordinate brunt of the decade long conflict.

However, the transitional justice mechanism as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2071 fail to acknowledge that women's suffering and experience of victimhood were different than men because of their place at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

"We still haven't been able to convince our leaders and policymakers that women's rights are an integral part of peace process and human rights," says Renu Rajbhandari of Women's Rehabilitation Centre.

With the death, disappearance, displacement of their male relatives, many women had to grapple with the added responsibilities of being the sole bread earners, helping others cope with trauma, and leading the fight for justice while continuing to fulfill their regular social and religious obligations.

"For years I travelled back and forth between Kathmandu and Kavre in search of my husband," says Purnimaya Lama (*pictured*) whose husband Arjun was taken away by the Maoists on 19 April 2005 while he was attending a program at a local school in Dapcha. Lama was held captive for about two months before he was killed, his body has never been found.

"The Maoists threatened to finish our whole family if we continued looking. We could no longer live in the village, I and my six children became displaced. My father-in-law died of grief. At times I feel like no one in this world has suffered through the pain I have." Purnimaya's frustration is

palpable.

The six men she named in the FIR including former Maoist lawmaker Agni Sapkota walk freely and there have been no efforts to provide the family with closure by helping locate Arjun's body.

In the absence of love, affection, and security net that their husbands provided, widowed women have had to struggle to admit their children in schools, to open bank accounts, to pass on their citizenship and find themselves at greater risk of abuse from neighbours and villagers.

Laxmi Koirala's husband Nandalal, a school teacher in Saurpani, Gorkha district, was killed on 16 March 1998 by the Maoists. Although her family was supportive, the villagers drove her out because she had spoken out against the injustice and demanded that the guilty be hung.

Says Laxmi: "I left behind everything I knew and moved to Kathmandu with my toddlers. We lived like refugees in the capital, struggling to pay rent and school fees."

While the interim relief package started by the state in 2008 helped many war affected women to move out of the four walls of their house for the first time, the money also became a source of conflict within the family. Even as the next of kin, not all widows had access to the money, some had to share it unfairly with extended family members, and those who remarried did not receive a single paisa.

"After her husband's death, the widow loses trust among her family. The in-laws worry that she might remarry, claim a stake on the property, and neglect the children," explains Rajin Rayamajhi, program officer at Women for Human Rights.

A future reparation program should therefore not only make sure that widows have unhindered access to financial packages, but

also broaden the scope of relief. Reparation should be made available to those who have remarried because their pain and suffering are equally valid. Many war affected women also say that ensuring free education and healthcare, skill development and training programs for the family and connecting them directly to the job market are far more beneficial than a one-time monetary compensation.

"We want justice, but we also want financial support. How long are we supposed to sustain our families with the Rs 1 million compensation?" questions Situ Joshi of Bhaisipati who lost her husband and two children in the Badarmude bus explosion on 6 July 2005.



The blast left her youngest son disabled. "If our husbands were alive, they would have gone to any length to provide for and educate the children, now the state has to take guardianship."

The blatant impunity that both the security forces and rebel forces enjoyed during the war engendered widespread and systematic abuse of women. Rape, sexual abuse, pretend marriages, cases of abandoned wives, and children born from rape were not uncommon. The TRC Act includes two provisions that can be seen as small victories for women victims. Rape and sexual violence are defined as 'serious violation of human rights' and the commission cannot recommend rape cases for amnesty. However, those accused

of committing sexual violence (ie forced prostitution, sexual slavery, strip searches) can be recommended for amnesty or reconciliation with victims.

The effectiveness of the commission in providing justice to rape and sexual violence survivors is also curtailed by anachronistic laws. First, the 35-day statute of limitation for reporting rape is still in effect despite the Supreme Court's verdict in January 2014 demanding that this clause be removed. Second, since domestic law defines rape as non-consensual penetration by sexual organ, other acts that count as rape in international law are rendered invalid. Third, in the absence of forensic or medical evidence, it's unclear how the state envisions going about verifying statements.

But the larger concern here is given the immense social stigma attached to rape and sexual violence and the culture of victim blaming, how many women will want to risk 'dishonouring' their families and jeopardising the life that they have so painstakingly rebuilt over the past decade by sharing stories of their abuse? Even those who are willing to open up might not have much trust and confidence in the state because it has done so little for them in the eight years since the end of the conflict.

The Ministry of Peace and Reconciliation has records of the number of killed, disabled, and injured, but rape and sexual violence survivors became the invisible victims of war. When the government distributed interim relief package in 2008, this demographic was completely left out.

"If the government had set up health camps or counseling centres in targeted VDCs, women would have had a space to talk and gotten time to heal and much of the documentation would have been completed by the time a TRC was formed. Some might have

then felt comfortable sharing their stories in front of a commission or a hearing," explains Rajbhandari. "Now if we ask survivors to testify or come out in the open, we will be revictimising them."

Mandira Sharma of Advocacy Forum also sees the failure of media and human rights groups for not recognising and respecting survivors of sexual violence. "If we had treated the women like national heroes, provided them medical care, and shown our support, it would have helped to get rid of the stigma and they would have felt encouraged to tell their stories to society," she says.

While human rights activists admit that the TRC Act in its present form is neither victim-centric, nor female-centric, they still see scope to make the process gender-friendly when drawing up the working procedures for the commission by including more women and establishing clear guidelines for confidentiality.

"As a society we don't talk about personal issues with the opposite sex. So when a woman who has been a victim of sexual violence finds herself in front of male lawyers, male judges, male officers it is very not comfortable and creates an unbalanced power relation," says lawyer and former CA member Sapana Pradhan Malla.

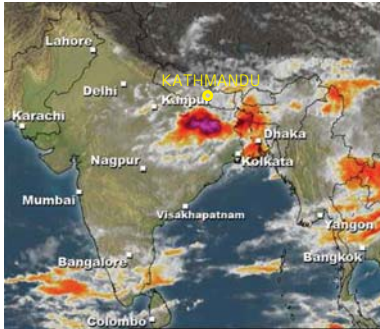
One way of building confidence and creating an enabling environment for survivors is by bringing women on board who have not only experienced the war first hand, but can also advocate on behalf of their sisters. And there are plenty of potential candidates: Laxmi Koirala to Purnimaya Lama to Devi Sunuwar whose daughter was killed by the Army in 2005, and Sabitri Shrestha, who lost two of her brothers and her niece to the conflict.

Currently, the TRC Act stipulates a minimum quota of one woman in the five-member recommendation committee as well as the commission. Rajbhandari recommends having a female majority at every level from commissioners to experts to officials to lawyers to make the process truly inclusive. She says: "Women won't neglect hardcore issues like extra-judicial killings or disappearances, but with men there is a tendency of leaving out 'soft' women centric issues like rape and sexual violence."

The Act and the commission are a result of blood and sacrifice of thousands of Nepalis. While not all cases can be investigated or prosecuted, the state and political parties should at least follow sound procedures and show victims that they are making a genuine effort towards providing justice.

Beyond truth seeking, investigation, and prosecution, the commission should also look into ways of improving women's access to justice and addressing the inherent inequalities in our legal and social set up that led to the exploitation in the first place. A gender-blind and victim insensitive TRC will be a futile exercise. 🇳🇵

@TrishnaRana1



The Rs 1 School



PICS: DEVAKI BISTA

Donate a rupee a day and educate a child

DEVAKI BISTA



Teacher Mala Kharel was on her morning walk around Pasupatinath ten years ago when she came across a crowd -- a young girl who lived on the street had been raped by a priest. According to bystanders, she was lured with the promise of a five rupee note. The story affected Mala

deeply and motivated her to do something for the street children of Kathmandu. She started out with four girls, all victims of abuse, and began educating them, but soon realised the problem was much bigger than she had imagined. "I couldn't sleep knowing there were many other vulnerable children on the streets," she says. So, in 2005, Mala (pictured, sitting front row, above) opened Bal Sarathi Academy, which provides free education to street children who also get one meal a day, textbooks, stationery and uniforms, all free of cost. Initially, Mala paid for everything herself, but later got help from an American sponsor for 75 students. The school also gets support from Action Aid to rent its building and has eight

volunteer teachers. When the money ran out, Mala thought she may have to shut down the school. But a chance meeting with RJ Rita Limbu with Image FM at a program changed that. Limbu came up with the idea of the Rs 1 campaign which asks donors to pledge to give one rupee a day to the school. Limbu began the campaign from her own home, collecting Rs 1 a day from family members. The number of contributors has now grown to 85 and the school raises up to Rs 13,000 a month from this initiative. Before joining Bal Sarathi Academy, six-year-old Sanjay Giri would spend his entire day begging around at Pasupati, where his parents also begged for a living. Today, Sanjay spends his day at the school and says he

loves it. Four-year-old Manoj Shrestha, who lost one of his feet to cancer, started at the school two years ago and would have nowhere else to go if the school wasn't there. The students love being in class so much that they even come on weekends and public holidays. "One of the reasons why they attend school regularly is because of the free meal, which they wouldn't be getting if they were out on the streets," says Mala. After they pass their Grade Five exams, the students are sent to Sharada Higher Secondary School in Tilganga and Baba Vatika Secondary School, both of which have agreed to educate the children free of cost. www.balsarathi.org.np 9841321857, 9841164310

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EVENTS



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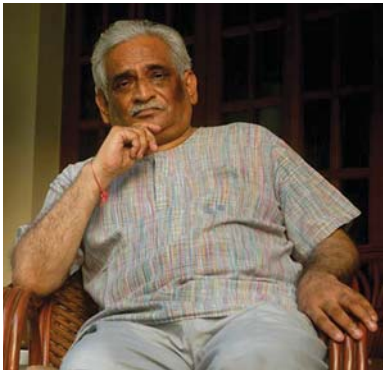
Cultural fair,
A charity program for the visually impaired cricket team of Nepal, concert by Kutumba, exhibitions and food stalls.
Rs 50, 16 August, 10am to 12pm, Jawalakhel Ground



Newa film festival,
support local filmmakers, skip the mall, and come enjoy an open-air film screening every evening for a week.
6 to 12 September, Janabahal, Kathmandu

Flagbearers,
Join hands in attempting to break the Guinness World Record for the ‘Largest Human National Flag’ by bringing together more than 30,000 participants and breaking the previously held record of 28,957 participants.
Rs 100, 23 August, 6 to 9 am, Tudikhel, Kathmandu, (01)6201888, 9813138024

Kick off,
The world cup may be long over, but the new football season is already upon us: can Manchester City defend their EPL crown? *16 August onwards, Star Sports*



Free press,
A public lecture by Indian lawyer and International Commission of Jurists Commissioner Rajeev Dhavan on the constraints news media face in emerging democracies.
Free entry, 15 August, 4pm, Kumari Hall, Hotel Annapurna, Darbar Marg, (01)4472807

Food fiesta,
Enjoy multi-cuisine food with live music from 1974 AD, Anuprastha, Albatross, Cobweb, and more bands, in the Umanga NATHM Food Fiesta 2014
10am to 5.30pm, Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management, Ravi Bhawan, 9818448622, 9849819663



Art conversation,
Visual Artist Sujan Chitrakar will be talking about Mural Arts.
29 August, 4.30pm, Taragaon Museum, Boudha, (01)4481786

Anything can happen,
Kuch Bhi Ho Sakta Hai, a play about a journey to stardom, with Anupam Kher
22 August, 5 pm onwards, Army Officers Club, 9801074430



Charya Nritya,
Experience Kathmandu’s version of dance meditation under the tutelage of Prajwal Ratna Vajracharya and immerse yourself in nature, consciousness and compassion.
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DINING

Red Carpet,
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Darbar Marg

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spot a superstar at Kathmandu’s most happening restaurant. *Darbar Marg*



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Embassy Restaurant and Bar, Panipokhari,



Vol Au Vents,
go crazy with your choice combination of fillings for scones, crepes and vol au vents with the Lounge’s new interactive menu.
Rs 400 (exclusive of tax) onwards, The Lounge, Hyatt Regency, Tusal



Chongqing Fast Food,
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30 August, 1pm to 6pm, Purple Haze Rock Bar, Thamel



House of Music,

For five days a week, this bar and restaurant is packed with musical events that include open mics, karaoke and jam sessions. Open Tuesdays to Saturdays, 4pm to 11pm, Amrit Marg, Thamel, 9851075172

Unplugged Battle,

An unplugged music competition with exciting prizes.
15 August, 11am, Pop's Restro and Bar

Lipan conjuring,

Local musicians Kamero will be performing a tribute show to legendary prog-rockers Tool.
Rs 300/500, 23 August, 3pm onwards, Purple Haze Rock Bar, Thamel, 9843664132



Starry Night BBQ,

Spend your Friday dinners listening to soulful numbers by Ciney Gurung.
Rs 1,499, Shambala Garden Cafe, Hotel Shangri-la, (01)4411999 ext. 7520/7515

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Gaurighat, Lakeside, Pokhara, (061)-463722, www.glaciernepal.com

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Shivapuri-Nagarjun National Park, Lapsiphedi-3, Jhule, (01)6212399



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Waterfront Hotel, Sedi Height, Pokhara, (61)466 303/304, 9801166311, sales@waterfronthotelnepal.com

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WRITTEN ON STONE

Padam Bahadur Tamang has started on a clean slate by reviving an age-old art form

SARTHAK KARKI

For over two millennia, Swayambu has been a holy place visited by pilgrims. Today, tourists throng the curio shops and handicraft galleries that encircle the temple on the hill. Among the puppets, thangkas, and bronzewares, one form of art stands out: carved stone tablets.

Most of Nepal's history is literally written in stone: inscriptions hewn on slabs of granite or slate found in ancient temples and archaeological sites. The practice of carving letters and drawings on stone is centuries old, and has found a new lease on life due to the tourist industry.

Unlike sculptors who carve stone into three-dimensional figures, Padam Bahadur Tamang etches intricate designs on stone tablets, finely hewing gracious curves, sharp angles, and elaborate calligraphy. It is called 'Kila Lekh' (writing on stone) and is heavily influenced by Buddhist and Hindu religious motifs.

The smooth dark slate on which Tamang carves is from quarries in Dhading, and its texture makes it ideal for engraving.

Tamang starts work on a clean slate, as it were, with a small chisel and mallet, and slowly the stone comes alive with intricate details. Once the work starts, there is no margin of error, mistakes once made cannot be erased or corrected.

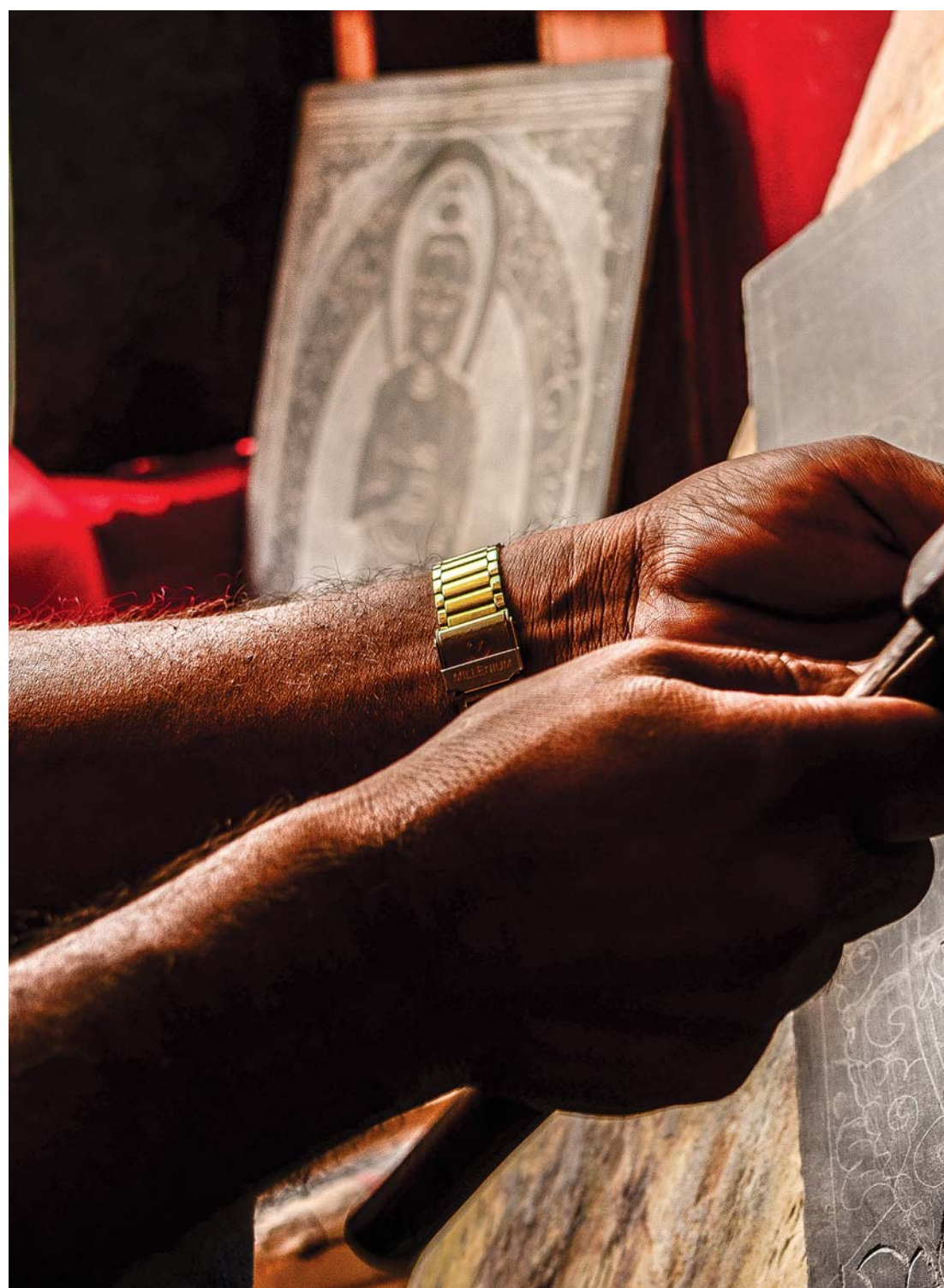
Tamang has been working on his craft for over a decade and started selling his work nine years ago when he opened a shop at the base of Swayambu. Three years later, he started the Top Stupa Stone Art Gallery near the temple itself and this is where he spends most of his time now.

Tamang's wife, Man Kumari, who is a student of the art herself, believes that many forms of local and indigenous art are dying because of lack of local patronage. Luckily, sales to tourists and pilgrims keep them alive.

"It is mostly the tourists who buy our work, they are attracted by its originality and uniqueness," Tamang says, looking up from a piece of slate on which he has just started to carve. 🇳🇵

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EDGE OF TOMORROW



Occasionally a studio gets the usual summer confection just right. While *Edge of Tomorrow* is clearly not in any way a film that aspires to do more than rake in the millions, unlike the hideously awful and barely watchable *Transformers: Age of Extinction* (reviewed previously



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

in this column), this one, is a surprisingly good action movie that really does keep you at the edge of your seat. It goes without saying that Tom Cruise is a very strange man.

But regardless of his supposed arranged marriages and his devotion to the possibly quite nefarious Church of Scientology, the man is a mega star. Cruise is likeable even while he's cocky, a trait that has served him well in the infinite variations of the (usually same) persona he portrays onscreen.

In *Edge of Tomorrow* he does not stray far as General Bill Cage, a smarmy but quick to learn army officer who has never been in a battle, this in a world where yes, of course, aliens have invaded and humanity is on the brink of extinction. When Cage's witty quips land him smack dab in the middle of the main offensive on the "mimics" (the rather terrifying and very speedy octopi like aliens who can also control and manipulate time), he finds himself dead - efficiently offed by an "alpha"

mimic who spatters black bodily fluid all over him as he dies. Thus begins the slightly preposterous central refrain of the film, a time loop. Cage finds that the mimics have inadvertently transferred to him (via blood, albeit black) the ability to reset time every time he dies, giving him an opportunity to live longer each time as he teaches himself which pitfalls to avoid on the battlefield? Sound tedious? Well, I promise you, the film livens up the moment he meets the luminous Emily Blunt. Ridiculously named Rita Vrataski, Blunt is a special forces warrior who has been made a poster child for her fighting skills, and while this charming, delicate British actor may seem like an odd choice for an all out action movie, you will soon begin to see the genius behind the casting.

It is fair to say that in addition to having very high production value, scary aliens, and some pretty stellar action sequences, the main draw is the camaraderie that develops between Cruise and Blunt, two stars who have clear chemistry, leavened by a script touched with humour.

So forget all the alarm bells that may go off in your head trying to figure out the time loop dynamics and enjoy a perfect summer distraction. 🇳🇵

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HAPPENINGS



ANANDARAM DANGOL

UNITING FORCES: CPN-UML Chairman KP Oli meets senior leader Madhav Kumar Nepal at his residence in Koteswor before the party's central committee meeting on Tuesday.



BIKRAM RAI

SACRED THREAD: A priest ties a Janai (a sacred thread) around the wrist of a devotee on Janai Purnima near Pasupati temple in Kathmandu on Sunday.



GANESH LAMSAL/RSS

BUILDING BRICKS: Forest Minister Mahesh Acharya lays the foundation brick for the construction of Shradha Ashram, an old age home in Biratnagar. The project is a joint partnership of NRN Australia and Biratnagar Sub-Metropolitan Office.



BIKASH DWARE

BIG MAN: A visitor looks at photographs of BP Koirala on display at an exhibition to mark his 100th birthday at Nepal Art Council in Babarmahal on Saturday.

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Tulsipur : 082-562575



Calling home

When Bipul Chhetri released his first song *Wildfire/Dadhelo* on the online audio platform Soundcloud, it spread among Nepalis (and Nepali-speakers) like flames. We heard hinting at a forest fire searing through the Darjeeling hills, but what really tore him apart were the pent-up dreams raging inside. He sang out his anxieties at such a frantic speed that before the song was over, we had it on repeat.

Chhetri followed up his blazing hit with

a song about the monsoon. In *Asar*, he managed to douse the flames of *Wildfire* and sang sagely about the need to balance life and love. On the outside, the song was about the rainy season in his hometown Kalebung, but mind wandering among rain clouds and unending mist seeping through town, it was also an evocation of a beloved.

This week, Chhetri released *Sketches of Darjeeling*, an EP that features three other

songs in addition to the three we already knew. From forest fires to the smell of the first monsoon rain, from the meditative chanting of Om Mani Padme Hum to the choo-choo of the famous Toy Train, *Sketches* paints a nostalgic picture of life around the Darjeeling hills.

In *Deorali Darah*, Chhetri reminisces about a childhood in the hills, and wishes he could still casually walk around the windswept town. He is now living in Delhi, having taken the train away. *Ram Sailee* is Chhetri's tribute to his father, the late Nirendra Mohan Chhetri who also wrote the song long ago and is still regarded as a pioneer of folk music in Kalebung.


No portrait of Darjeeling would be complete without mentioning its famous Toy Train. The upbeat march of *Rail Garee* takes us past local landmarks while Chhetri sings about eventually taking the same train to seek work outside the hills. "I'm going away, choo

choo," Chhetri sings without regret, joyfully closing the album.

Besides making music and performing at select charity concerts, Chhetri currently heads the arts department at the Vasant Valley School in New Delhi. The songs he released on Soundcloud have received over 450,000 hits and been played numerous times on radios in Nepal, India, and UK.

When Diwas Gurung recreated much-loved Nepali folk songs on his excellent album *Rato Mato*, he gave us a taste of what was possible with the vocabulary of folk music. With *Sketches of Darjeeling*, Bipul Chhetri has taken it further and established a place for himself in our growing neo-folk scene.

The masterful blend of earthy tones and unmistakably Western harmonies, layered around Chhetri's melancholy singing makes *Sketches* essential listening, despite the brevity.

What everyone is dying to know is how long will we have to keep pressing repeat before we get to see him live, in Kathmandu.  **Sunir Pandey**

Sketches of Darjeeling, 21"5', is available on iTunes.

 nepalitimes.com

■ Listen online



Gokarna Forest Resort

The resort is gorgeous. There are no two ways about it. You cannot beat its pristine lush surroundings, the rolling golf greens, the tiny trails that disappear into the woods hinting at to-be-discovered wonders just waiting around the corner.

Just a twenty minute drive away from the city, the Gokarna Resort is a numinous paradise, thick with century old trees rustling out words of wisdom to those who linger and listen. It is the kind of environs that brings out the poet in you, slows your breathing and encourages meditation and reflection. All this in the deluxe settings of a five star resort complete with multiple dining outlets, a spectacular 18 hole golf course, spa and Kathmandu's only indoor temperature controlled swimming pool. And it is in the pool area that I spent most of my Sunday afternoon and also had lunch.

The other times I've been to Gokarna have been for the Saturday brunches and weddings and other assorted events and I realised I'd only ever eaten their lavish buffets. And they have always been excellent. Sadly the same can't be said for my meal this time round.

Dining with seven year old boys meant our orders were limited to French fries, burgers, pasta, steak, fish and momos and I admit that my review does not cover the entire scope and range of the very



PICS: RUBY TUESDAY

extensive menu that the resort offers, but for an organisation that avers to serve 'multi-cuisine known for its consistence quality', it falls miserably short of its tall claims.

The French fries, and I judge

every restaurant by the quality of the ubiquitous fried potatoes they serve, were soggy and droopy. The Gokarna Veggie (Rs 375) had a chunky clumsy patty in a bun that disintegrated rapidly. These basic simple elements that can make or



break a meal. I don't care if you've sourced the finest linen or served the food in plates crafted in the south of France. I don't think I'm being unreasonable when I say I want my burger to stay put when I take a bite of it.

The fish and chips served with aioli (Rs 650) was squelchy, oil-logged and flavorless. The chicken momos they got right, thankfully, and the spicy chili sauce they served with it was rather delicious. The sauce added the right amount of kick to the otherwise adequate, but not great, Chicken Lasagna (Rs 450). I had to flirt with the waiter to get me bread, which I think is ridiculous because which half-decent eatery doesn't serve bread to sop up the meat sauce with?

The Dijon steak (Rs 650) was not marinated in mustard as was promised on the menu, but instead came with a condiment serving of mustard sauce, of the store-bought, mass-produced,

bottled variety found at every supermarket in the valley. Of the homemade potato (and I love jacket baked potatoes), let us just say I now know what arid tastes like.

Our favourite thing about the meal was the chocolate milk-shakes (Rs 250) we had-thick, rich and cold- a glass full of deliciousness. I don't know whether it was just a bad day at the kitchen, but it was a disappointing meal, especially since the resort is so gorgeous. Oh wait, I said that already, didn't I? 

Ruby Tuesday

How to get there: The gorgeous Gokarna Forest Resort is a 10km drive from Kathmandu's airport and is located inside the Gokarna Forest Reserve in Thali.



Great Food Deserves Carlsberg

That calls for a 



EBOLA

Do we need to worry about Ebola in Nepal? To recap: the first patient with the disease lived near the Ebola River in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1976 and hence the name.

It was originally called Ebola Hemorrhagic Disease, but now it is known as Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) because not all patients had a bleeding problem (hemorrhage). A complication of dengue in the Nepal Tarai also got a recent name change from dengue hemorrhagic fever to simply severe dengue for probably similar reasons. This name change is useful as it is more accurate and will not mislead clinicians and treating physicians.

Because Ebola is not transmitted through airborne infection, the danger of transmission is much smaller than flu or a cold. But, unlike them, EVD is deadly. It is chiefly transmitted

through direct mucous membrane or broken skin. So, blood, body fluids (for example, sexual contact), indirect contact with environments contaminated with such fluids can lead to transmission. In Africa, burial ceremonies of Ebola victims, where mourners come in direct contact with the corpse, led to infections.

The symptoms and signs of this disease are non-specific and could be mistaken for many common Nepali ailments. Patients present with fever, malaise, sore throat which may gradually progress to the liver and the kidneys and also may lead to internal and external bleeding. In Nepal there are many common diseases such as typhoid, murine typhus, hepatitis, and leptospirosis to name just a few that could mimic EVD. The crucial difference is a history of travel to areas of Africa where Ebola is endemic.

Anyone who comes to see a doctor in Nepal with fever and other non-specific complaints needs to have one important question asked: has he or she been to Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Nigeria or surrounding

regions. Perhaps it may be easier to first ask for a simple travel history to Africa in the recent past, and then if necessary, ask for details about specific countries in the region the patient might have been to. Most importantly, the suspected patient must be immediately brought to the attention of the health authorities.

The incubation period (the time from which the organism enters the human host to when the symptoms are first noticed) is said to be from 2 days to 3 weeks. So it may not matter if the person was in Sierra Leone five or six weeks ago and now comes with flu-like illness, because this will be past the incubation period.

At present there is no vaccine or proven drug therapy to treat the illness. However an interesting ethical problem has risen, about treatment with the 'experimental' drug ZMapp. Apparently two American aid workers (working in Liberia, now in Emory University Hospital in Atlanta, USA) received this drug and are thought to be improving.

Some activists have asked why two white American aid workers received the drug while hundreds of Africans are dying from EVD. But what if this experimental drug, which has not even gone through typical animal testing for side effects, had been used on Africans? The headlines would have screamed that Africans were being used as guinea pigs.

In Nepal there is probably no need to consider an EVD diagnosis unless a patient with flu-like symptoms has a travel history to Ebola-affected areas in the past month. Our immigration authorities have to watch out for such passengers. 🇳🇵

GIZMO by YANTRICK

One click wash

If there's one thing that Yantrick absolutely detests, and I am sure many of you do too, is doing laundry. The thought of having to wash stacks of dirty linen is enough to send this one on a procrastination overdrive. But the truth is nobody can avoid laundry day, not even the sartorial connoisseurs amongst us.

Now, you, like many of my friends, might be thinking, "Wouldn't it have been easier to just get a washing machine or give it to a *dhobi*?" Believe me, I thought about both. My experience with a *dhobi* wasn't very pleasing and I didn't think a washing machine was a good idea, given the long hours of load shedding we suffer from, besides the once-in-10-days water supply.

So when Yantrick was asked to try the Samsung WF700B0BKWQ, a front-loader, he had his doubts. Even though the product might be amazing, he felt it wouldn't be good enough to make him switch to automated washing.

The Samsung WF700B0BKWQ is available in white, with a chrome loading door decorating its face. An LED display bar is located at the top-right corner, the detergent tray on the top-left, with a control panel of dials and button in between.



Boasting dimensions of 23.6 inches x 21.7 inches x 33.5 inches, the machine is heavy at 64 kg. The width, however, is adjustable from 17.7 inches to 21.7 inches, making it convenient to fit into households with limited space.

The maximum washing capacity of the machine is 7 kilos. The best part about this product is the numerous options it offers to cater to your washing needs. The Cotton, Synthetics, Denim, Bedding, Dark Garment, Daily Wash, Sports Wear, Baby Care, and Wool modes should have you covered for any laundry situation. Features like Quick Wash, Easy Iron, Rinse Hold, Pre-wash, Intensive Wash options, along with the options to select water temperature from 20°C to 95°C, and washing spin speed up to 1,200 RPM, makes the WF700B0BKWQ a highly customisable machine.

The Samsung WF700B0BKWQ has a brushless digital inverter motor designed to run at a cooler temperature than conventional washing machine motors, consequently using less energy while lasting longer as well. Samsung offers a 10-year warranty with the product, another reason to feel at ease over the investment.

Its new streamlined 'Diamond Drum,' with small water-exit holes, enables delicate handling of even the softest of fabrics, while preventing them from sticking out and being damaged.

Samsung has also packed the WF700B0BKWQ with Volt Control, a feature that safeguards the machine from high and low voltage levels, much needed during erratic power outages. 🇳🇵

Yantrick's Verdict: Retailing for almost Rs 70K at Samsung outlets across the country, the Samsung WF700B0BKWQ Front-loading Washing Machine is a top-of-the-line washing machine that will soon find a home in Yantrick's home.

Rare is union of Beauty & Purity

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68TH INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA



1. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi with Hon'ble President of Nepal Dr. Ram Baran Yadav
2. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Nepal Shri Sushil Koirala at Tribhuvan International Airport, Kathmandu, Nepal
3. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi addressing the Constituent Assembly
4. Minister of External Affairs, Govt. Smt. Sushma Swaraj with Foreign Minister of Nepal Mr. Mahendra Bahadur Pandey along with Foreign Secretaries of India Mrs. Sujatha Singh and Mr. Shankar Das Baidagi of Nepal, Mr. Ranjir Rae, Ambassador of India to Nepal and other officials

HIGHLIGHTS OF INDIA-NEPAL PARTNERSHIP

A multi-layered program comprising 494 ongoing and completed projects at the cost of over NRs. 65 billion in almost all key economic sectors based on the priorities of the Government of Nepal. Prime Minister of India Sri Narendra Modi has announced a concessional Line of Credit of US\$ 1 billion (approx. NRs. 100 billion).

भारतीय राजदूत, काठमाण्डू
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA
KATHMANDU



On the occasion of 68th Independence Day of India, I extend my warm greetings and best wishes to Indian citizens and our friends in Nepal. On this auspicious occasion, I recall the glorious sacrifices of our freedom fighters. We bow our heads in their memory.

In the decades since Independence, India as a multi-party democracy has made great strides in the advancement of her people and in her contribution to regional and global peace and prosperity. We have developed strong foundations for our economic prosperity which rests on the innate talents and dynamism of our youthful population. Today India is in the forefront in the frontier areas of science and technology and IT.

As close neighbours, India and Nepal share a common civilizational heritage. The open border defines the unique nature of our relationship. Intensive engagement, both at Government and people-to-people level, spanning a wide spectrum of activities has benefited our countries and peoples. India rejoices in the strides that Nepal is making for peace, progress and prosperity.

The official visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, to Nepal, earlier this month, represents a transformational moment in our bilateral relations. Our cooperation is poised for a big leap forward. Opportunities for enhancing our partnership, particularly by developing Highways, Information ways and Transways will bring great benefit to our countries. As Prime Minister Modi said, we are prepared to walk hand-in-hand and shoulder-to-shoulder with Nepal to take our socio-economic and cultural partnerships to a higher level.

As I wish all my fellow Indian citizens happiness and success, I also wish the friendly people of Nepal, Godspeed as they work for concluding the historic task of drafting a new Constitution reflecting their aspirations for peace, stability and prosperity.

Ranjit Rae

15 August 2014

Ranjit Rae

SMALL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS (SDPS)

- Cover wide ranging infrastructure development and capacity building projects each worth NRs. 50 million.
- 228 school/campus projects ongoing or completed.
- 24 hospital projects in 18 districts ongoing or completed.
- Work on 18 roads/4 bridges ongoing or completed.
- Other projects are in critical areas of drinking water, cold storage, river training, tube wells, electrification and capacity building.
- Since 1994, India has gifted 422 ambulances and 82 school buses covering 72 districts of Nepal.
- Eye care camps organized by Nepal Netra Jyoti Sangh through funding by the Government of India: Since 2001, a total assistance of NRs. 211 million extended by the Government of India. More than 1,07,000 surgeries performed, more than 37,000 students have been provided with optical devices under School Eye Health Care Programme launched in 2007. Govt. of India is providing NRs. 33.90 million to NNJS for eye care programme during the year 2014-15.
- Goitre Control Programme – Since 1973, GoI has provided assistance of NRs. 685.8 million for Goitre Control Programme. Govt. of India is providing NRs. 69 million to Govt. of Nepal for Goitre and Other Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme during the year 2014-2015.
- India is providing funds amounting to NRs. 50 million to Gandhi Global Family Nepal for conducting 30,800 diabetic basic lab test and for providing free medicine to 1,450 diabetic patients for 6 months and free advance diabetic diagnostic test to 4,400 diabetic patients.

MAJOR ONGOING PROJECTS

- Integrated Check Posts (ICPs) are being built at 4 points on the India-Nepal Border. Indian assistance of NRs. 4.32 billion for the segment falling in Nepal.
- Cross-border railway links being constructed at five locations on the India-Nepal Border namely Jayanagar-Bardibas, Jogbani-Biratnagar, Nautanwa-Bhairahawa, Rupaidiha-Nepalgunj and New Jalpaiguri-Kakrabhitta. Work on Jayanagar-Bardibas and Jogbani-Biratnagar being taken up in Phase I with an estimated cost of NRs. 10.4 billion.
- First phase of Terai Roads Projects cover 19 roads of 605 km in 13 Terai Districts worth NRs. 11 billion. In Phase II, 845 km will be covered.
- Super Speciality Trauma Centre in Kathmandu with 200 beds facility with an estimated cost of 1.60 billion.
- Govt. of India assistance of NRs. 256 million for installation of 2700 Shallow Tube Wells in various districts of Nepal. MoU has been signed during the visit of Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India to Nepal.
- Decision to establish Project Development Authority for Pancheswar Multipurpose Mega Project.

FLAGSHIP COMPLETED PROJECTS

- Five-storied OPD complex of Bir Hospital (Kathmandu) constructed with a capacity to accommodate 2500 outpatients.
- BPKIHS, Dharan, the largest public-sector hospital-cum-medical college outside Valley. Since, 2013-14, India is providing an annual funding of NRs. 16 million to BPKIHS for five years.
- Mammohan Memorial Polytechnic set up in 2009 became the first polytechnic providing technical education in 3 engineering streams and other vocational courses. Indian faculty support going on.
- 807 km of the East West Highway from Mahendranagar to Mechi (Mahendra Raj Marg).
- 22 bridges on Kohalpur-Mahakali section of the East-West highway constructed.
- 904 km Optical Fibre Cable project along the East West Highway and setting up of 80 stations of SDH equipment.

EDUCATION

- Embassy of India is awarding 2934 scholarships to Nepalese students in 2014-15.
- 2200 scholarships awarded to Nepalese students for studying in undergraduate and graduate courses in Nepal.
- 554 scholarships awarded to Nepalese students for studying in India; The Mission conducts a COMPEX examination each year for Nepalese students to study in MBBS/BE/B.Pharm/B.V.Sc/B.Sc (Dairy Tech)/B.Sc (Agriculture) courses in India, which has been growing in popularity every year.
- 33 seats are provided to Nepalese students for studying from Class VI to IX and Class XI in Army Public Schools at Dhula Kuan, Noida and Pithoragarh.
- 180 slots for short-term training in India for Government/non-government employees of Nepal under ITEC/Colombo Plan.

EX-SERVICEMEN WELFARE ACTIVITIES

- Disbursement of pension worth NRs. 15.70 billion in the FY 2013-14 to GoI pensioners.
- Disbursement of other than pension (OTP) payments amounting NRs. 41.90 million in the FY 2013-14.
- Disbursement of AGI/MBS amounting NRs. 155.50 million.
- Welfare Schemes amounting to more than NRs. 110 million executed every year.
- NRs. 20.80 million was spent on educational scholarships for 205 students.
- 1,26,000 medicine packets worth NRs. 32.50 million are under consideration for 2013-14 as part of Medicine Packet Scheme.
- Till date NRs. 332.50 million has been expended for 17 solar projects benefitting around 1,50,000 people.
- 1049 drinking water projects are implemented so far. 14 projects worth NRs. 40.90 million benefitting 1,04,000 people are under consideration.
- Three Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) have started functioning in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dharan.

INDIA-NEPAL BILATERAL TRADE

- Total Bilateral Trade between India and Nepal increased to NRs. 418.03 billion in 2012/13 from NRs. 349 billion in 2011/12.
- 46% of total approved foreign direct investment from India.
- The India-Nepal Transit Treaty was renewed for a period of seven years until 5th January 2020.
- In 2006-2007, Government of India extended US\$ 100 million Line of Credit (LoC) to Nepal to develop hydro-electric, power transmission line and road projects.
- Another Line of Credit of US\$ 250 million was signed between Exim Bank and Government of Nepal for development of hydro-electric, power transmission lines, roads and infrastructure projects.
- Commerce Secretary level meeting held in Kathmandu on 21st-22nd December, 2013 and the meeting focused on trade, transit and cooperation to curb unauthorized trade besides discussing new measures to facilitate investment.
- Aid to construct embankment of Kamala, Lalbakeya, Bagmati and Khando Rivers. Till date NRs. 3.28 billion has been disbursed to Government of Nepal.

CULTURAL COOPERATION

- An MoU signed between Doordarshan and Nepal Television for exchange of programmes.
- MoUs between Nepal Academy of Fine Arts and Lalit Kala Akademi, Nepal Academy of Music and Drama and Sangeet Natak Akademi, Press Council of India and Press Council of Nepal are ready to be signed soon.
- ICCR Chair functioning at Pokhara University and new ICCR Chairs to be set up at Tribhuvan University and Kathmandu University.
- Indian Cultural Centre conducts regular programmes for Yoga, dance and music.
- Festival of India held in May 2014.
- Art magazine International Gallerie's special issue on Nepal to be launched this month.



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Jamnagar in India is the world's largest oil refinery

WORLD'S IT NUCLEUS
Nearly 75 per cent of Fortune 500 companies source their technology-related services from India





Landslide survivors struggle

Most of those killed in the Bhote Kosi landslide were women and children

NARESH NEWAR
in SINDUPALCHOK

Ram Thami, 50, was overjoyed at being a grandfather twice over. It was just before midnight when his daughter gave birth to twin sons, and he called relatives and friends on their mobiles to tell them the good news. Four hours later, the mountain fell on their village. Thami, his daughter and the newly-born twins were taken away in their sleep.

The Thamis were among 145 people killed in the Bhote Kosi landslide on 2 August that swept away the villages of Jure, Itini and Kaguni, and blocked the river. More than half the victims were women – the result of the outmigration from Nepal's

mountain districts of men in search of work.

Among the dead were 50 children, 28 of whom were students at the Bansagu Secondary School, which was well known as a model for other schools in the area. Scattered half-buried amidst the rubble of the landslide are bits of the distinctive green-painted exterior wall of the school building.

Nearly two weeks after the disaster, the stench of rotting flesh is overpowering. The rescuers have stopped looking for bodies, and their attention has turned to rehabilitation, draining the lake that threatens the valley downstream, and trying to re-open the Kodari Highway to Tibet.

"It is painful, but we have to move on from this tragedy," says Balaram Timilsina, 55, principal

of Bansagu School, which had dedicated teachers and one of the best SLC results in the district. Timilsina's eyes tear up when he talks about the students who are never coming back.

"I remember their innocent faces, many had shared their dreams of a bright future," says the school principal, breaking down into sobs. Two surviving students, Iswor and Ayush Nepal, comfort their teacher even though they are grieving the loss of their own classmates.

"I lost six of my best friends, and now I have to live with this for the rest of my life," says 16-year old student Babita Parajuli, wiping tears. Her family home was destroyed, and only two houses in Kaguni remain intact.

The school has been trying to resume classes in temporary

structures scattered across the area, but it hasn't been easy because the children are so traumatised.

"Many of them had close shaves, and were witness to death and destruction, they lost relatives and friends, we are worried about them," says Sanjana Shrestha of Save the Children, which is helping the District Education Office start temporary learning centres.

It is a four-hour walk from where the highway ends abruptly to the village of Dabi that clings precariously to the side of a steep mountainside above the Bhote Kosi.

Local villagers and rescue teams from the APF and the Nepal Army wear masks which does little to keep away the smell of buried bodies.

Dabi has the best view of

both the landslide and the lake, and curious onlookers, some of them Chinese tourists from across the border, have to be kept away as they try to take pictures with their mobiles. Ironically, the disaster tourism has helped the local economy as grocery stores have sprung up along the trail.

"We earn Rs 3,000 a day now, the visitors are good for business," says 15 year-old Elina Shrestha forcing a smile. She had a narrow escape when a huge rock crashed through the main door of her house that morning. Elina's family and nine others now live in tents. 🇳🇵

nepalitimes.com

For photo gallery and video interviews with survivors





INHERITANCE OF LOSS: Survivors at a relief centre in Lamosangu seek shelter in a storage shed (*far left*). Two children live in a tent with surviving members of their family overlooking the landslide-blocked river.

Balaram Timilsina (*centre*) principal of the Bansangu School stands amidst the ruins of his school with students Ayush and Iswor Nepal, who lost their classmates.

Kabita Parajuli (*left*) lost six of her classmates, 28 of the 50 children killed in the disaster were from her school.

Sabita Gharti (*below*) who lost 13 of her relatives now tries to earn a living selling provisions to travellers traversing the landslide on foot to get to the other side.



ALL PICS: NARESH NEWAR

to survive the aftermath



Ticking timebomb

For communities downstream there is still fear that the rocks and boulders damming the Bhoté Kosi (*left*) will suddenly burst, and unleash a flood.

The government has been trying to assure the public that the water level is going down, but contradictory reports in the media has spread confusion.

"We are keeping everyone informed, but it takes time to earn their confidence," admits Lt Col Suresh Kumar Karki of the Nepal Army which helicoptered in three disassembled excavators this week to widen two channels draining the lake, and opening another one. The Army's controlled blasts have limited effect because the blockage is made up of huge boulders and rocks.

The Army is trying to ensure that the outflow of water is greater than the inflow, but with heavy rains in the catchment area this week, it is a race against time. On 12 August, the outflow of water was 210 cubic metres per second, barely more than the inflow of 205 cumecs upstream.

"There is less danger of the water level rising further or the dam bursting," says Karki. The obstruction of

landslide debris is 300 m wide and 100 m high. In similar disasters elsewhere, water is siphoned off through huge pipes, but Nepal does not have the technology.

The challenge for the government now is to relocate, rehabilitate and support the displaced and vulnerable population. Other urgent tasks include restoring the vital trade route to China, and repairing transmission lines that provided 55MW of power to the grid from three hydropower stations on the river. An alternative route via the Jiri Highway has been opened to Kodari, but the road is rough.

"This is a major disaster and while we are very committed, but we are overburdened by demands from the affected population," says Sindhupalchok LDO, Yubaraj Katel. Relocation of families will be a huge task, and one in which the national government will have to be involved, he says.

Seventy-year-old Lankaman Tamang lost his home, and is living in a tent in the army camp with three other families from Itini. He says: "We can work and earn money to buy food, but we need to rebuild our homes to resume our normal lives."

Outside of Valley Attaria 551244 Baglung 520174 Baratpur 526697 Bardibas 550552 Bhairahawa 523930 Bhairahawa 524290 Biratnagor 545227 Biratnagar 463754 Biratnagar 536896 Birgunj 522772 Birjuri 529667 Birtamode 543248 Butwal 542725 Chandranigahapur 540739 Damak 581463 Damauli 560477 Dang 560262 Dangadi 522484 Dharan 526522 Gaidakot 502399 Gaur 521109 Golbazar 540327 Guleria 420608 Hetauda 525386 Inaruwa 561498 Itahari 580066 Jaleshor 521095 Janakpur 523644 Kapilbastu 550160 Kawsoti 541001 Lahana 569955 Lalbandi 501628 Mahendranagar 520745 Mircharya 550803 Narayanganj 523567 Nawalparasi 521002 Nepalgunj 551598 Parsa 583199 Pokhara 537333 Pokhara 539398 Pyuthan 460464 Rajbiraj 523542 Sarlahi 521711 Siraha 520442 Surkhet 525196 Tikapur 560426 Tulsiapur 520808 Waling 440610



DEVAKI BISTA

GANGSTERLAND

DIPESH KC

When I visited Charkhal Jail in 2008 for an investigative story on organised crime, I saw a group of young, attractive women enter the prison. They swayed over to the corner where a good-looking inmate was sitting. Like fan girls swooning around a favourite rock star, the young women seemed to be in complete awe of the man.

He was Dinesh Adhikari, already gaining notoriety for being the local boss of organised criminals, and known to law enforcement officials and politicians as ‘Chari’ (bird). Even in jail six years ago, you could see he commanded a certain following, if not respect, even though he didn’t yet look like a gangster.

Last week, Chari was killed in a movie-style police encounter in Samakhushi, an incident which prompted the UML Chairman KP Oli to criticise his own government. Chari is said to have the protection of politicians, including Oli. The news spread like wildfire in the media because it had all the ingredients of a thriller: crime, blood and politics. The public may have been relieved that a criminal was killed, but Chari’s end does not mean an end to the criminalisation of politics and the politicisation of crime.

Society is organised around political parties, or special interest groups. These can be based on identity, protection, even power. In countries in the throes of political transition, where law and order and the institutions of democracy are not fully functional, organised criminals

FAILED GETAWAY: The body of Dinesh Adhikari (left) has not been claimed by his relatives 17 days after he was killed in an encounter with the police. Kathmandu’s other infamous gangsters (right) are either in jail or protected by politicians.

wield parallel power – often in a symbiotic relationship with politicians.

Kathmandu’s infamous gangster bosses emerged after 2006, benefiting from the instability, political patronage and attraction of money and power. Many of the gangs were closely knit along community lines, hence their names: Manange and Kavreli gangs.

Lack of political representation and opportunities also pushes socially and politically groups excluded into gangs for power, prestige and income. Most have a history of struggle within their families, others have been victimised by the state and have a rebellious streak towards rulers and the security apparatus.

Add to that the country’s youth bulge, lack of jobs, and peer pressure and it is very easy for these individuals to be lured into a world of crime. Politicians who need hired goons and a corrupt police hierarchy provide gangs a further reason for being.

Politicians protect goons and turn them into dangerous criminals, jails are supposed to be correctional institutions but it is here that they establish loyalties for violent gangs when they get out. The police has a role in removing organised crime, but it can’t be stopped unless the state addresses its structural roots and the nexus with politics.

It may not be possible to have a society that is completely crime-free, but a country where crime is so embedded can never prosper. The ideology of violence that propels gangs also undermines the democratic process, where muscle matters more than minds.

We have seen elsewhere that criminal groups grow in number and influence whenever a gangster is killed encounter-style. It proves that our steps to manage



Chakre Milan



Kaji Sherpa



Ganesh Lama



Ramesh Bahun



Deepak Manange



Kumar Ghaite

crime are inherently flawed. Maybe it is time to consider alternatives and reach out to marginalised communities where crime is a form of protest against the status quo.

People like Chari and his band of followers are symptoms of our societal malaise. It is wishful thinking to say that killing one Chari will prevent another from taking his place. 🇳🇵

Dipesh KC is working on a doctorate on cross-border crime at the Jawaharlal Nehru University in New Delhi.

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Upholding Nepali manhood



As a bonafide Ass, I can say with reasonable conviction that some people are complete manholes. And there is one day in the year when Nepali alfa males can make even bigger manholes of themselves than they would on other days in the year. And that day was last Monday, when the government thoughtfully declared a horriday in Kathmandu so us guys could make Jack asses of ourselves. It is an indication of Nepal's improving gender parity and inclusiveness that this year, you gals out there also went out of your way to make Jenny asses of yourselves.

But the question troubling all able-bodied Nepali males of reproductive age is this: did we fully use the opportunity provided to us during this year's Guy Jatra to stoop to an even lower level of debauchery than we usually do? Can we in our heart of hearts say, with full self-assurance, that our level of idiocy meets international standards? Unfortunately, the answer to both

questions is: Yes and no.

It is only now becoming clear that we have been seriously lax on the irreverence front since the promulgation of the Interim Constitution, we take ourselves far too seriously, and must make up for this deficit in the current fiscal year by stooping even lower to be insufferable. Why do only snowmen have the right to be abominable?

Guy Jatra was a day we gais could have made up for lost time by taking rapid strides in the arena of farce and buffoonery, forgetting our cares and worries, letting our hair down, and casting aspersions about the gender, if any, of the Rt Hon Prime Minister and members of his and/or her cabinet.

Why exactly this particular festival ended up getting the sex of our rulers mixed up has a long and glorious history which I will tell you about in the run up to next year's Guy Jatra. Suffice it to say that this week us macho menfolk of the new federified republic got temporary license to make even bigger oxymorons of ourselves than we usually are by carrying out the grooming rituals of Nepali manhood, including:

- As a civil serpent in the Ministry of Commerce and Surprise it is in your job description to put your hand in your pocket and vigorously attend to a subterranean itch in full public view when the occasion so demands. As a member of the male species, you

- can do this whenever and wherever you want, especially when someone is looking. After all, it's a free country.
- As a microbus driver, you can take a break as passengers alight to admire yourself in the rearview mirror and squeeze blackheads from your nose cone. (Government Health Warning: Zits may be larger than they appear in the mirror.)
- Sharpen the non-flammable end of a matchstick and use it like the robotic arm of the Mars Explorer to reach hitherto unexplored and remote caverns in your mouth cavity containing fossilised remains of last year's Dasain goat, and dispatch the specimen for further olfactory inspection and ingestion. The above habit is in full display among the male clientele of the Red Cock BBQ outlet in Naxal.
- One of the easiest ways to tell if people are still alive is to ascertain if they are still breathing. Therefore it is of paramount importance that we keep our pulmonary tubes clear of obstruction and in good working order. The art of dislodging phlegm accumulation at regular intervals by setting off controlled explosions has been passed down from one generation of Nepalis to another, right to the present day. This is done by a sharp intake of air through the nostril which propels said glob from the nasal cavity into the oral cavity whence it can either be expertly defenestrated with a smart pthoo onto the street below, or inducted into the alimentary canal as a protein-rich nutrient. At first, badly aimed ooze may land on the head of a passing policeman, but with practice most Nepali men are capable of winning gold medals if Throat Clearing is ever included in the Asian Games.
- Who said press freedom in Nepal has been curtailed? This column proves we can get away with writing any disgusting rubbish.



The Ass

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