

# NEPALI Times

#735

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BIKRAM RAI

## Kathmandala

Infrastructure is 'hardware', but Nepal's real bottleneck is the 'software' of management, government coordination, transparency and accountability. Investment in infrastructure without addressing the structural problems of governance will exacerbate inequality, lead to lopsided development, create wastage and harm the environment. Physical infrastructure is all well and good, but without improving the governance superstructure we will continue to be stuck in this dystopia.

**SUPERSTRUCTURE BOTTLENECK**  
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Narendra Modi's bilaterals during the SAARC Summit shook up the political establishment. Suddenly, there is movement on the constitution.

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BY DAMAKANT JAYSHI

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**GIFTS OF LOVE**

A Nepali Times guide to fair trade gifts for Christmas.

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## BONJOUR, PALPASA

Narayan Wagle's *Palpasa Café* gets a French avatar

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# SUPERSTRUCTURE BOTTLENECK

The most super-obvious thing you can say about present day Nepal is that the country has an infrastructure bottleneck.

Don't even get us started on energy. Although politicians like to use the conflict as the excuse for delays in hydropower projects, it has been eight years since the war ended and they have added barely 30MW to the national grid. The supreme absurdity is that in those eight years more than 400MW of captive power from private generators have been added, increasing diesel imports three-fold.

Some blame the catch-all phrase 'political instability' for our inability to get energy infrastructure off the ground. Actually what they mean is that competition between kleptocrats for kickbacks on big projects cancel each other out. It is not 'the lack of political will' that has delayed hydropower because there seems to be plenty of political will to undertake underhand deals. It's just that decision-making is paralysed by one side or the other sabotaging deals backed by a rival party. No surprise, therefore, that Nepal ranked at the bottom of the heap in the world in Transparency International's corruption index this week.

This is the same malaise that has delayed the Melamchi Project by 20 years. Forget for the moment that it was criminal to lavish \$700 million on a project to supply drinking water to a pampered capital when cheaper alternatives were available. (Bigger projects are more attractive to politicians because they have bigger kickbacks.) The scheme to bring Himalayan glacial melt through a 26km tunnel to Kathmandu has suffered prolonged delays due to political interference in the selection of builders, corrupt contractors who banked on getting cost variance approved through bribery, donor overlap and duplication.

As Elvin L Shrestha reported in last week's issue of this



BIKRAM RAI

Investment in infrastructure is not enough, we have to invest in the structural problem of governance.

paper ('Miles to go, and promises to keep', #734) Nepal's planners have long realised that investment in infrastructure would be the catalyst to spur the country to meet its goal of graduating from LDC status by 2022. A Marshall Plan to upgrade highways, airports, multi-purpose river projects would immediately create hundreds of thousands of jobs so Nepalis don't have to migrate for work. Once completed, the projects would unleash downstream benefits like energy sufficiency, reduce trade imbalance through power exports,

improve connectivity, boost agriculture and encourage investment in manufacturing.

Nepal is poised for growth, and there is a new sense of optimism after the visits to Nepal of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the signing of a power trade agreement with India which opened the floodgates for a series of delayed river projects like Pancheswor, Upper Karnali, Arun, Middle Marsyangdi and Tama Kosi III. Chinese investors are also waiting for the BIPPA agreement to put money in Nepal in a big way. Already, Chinese contractors are involved in a slew of hydropower projects, the Bhairahawa and Pokhara airports, and a new joint venture between Tibet Airlines and a consortium of Nepali investors.

All this is good news for the near term. But infrastructure is 'hardware', and Nepal's real bottleneck is the 'software' of management, government coordination, transparency and accountability. Investment in infrastructure without addressing the structural problems of governance will exacerbate inequality, lead to lopsided development, create wastage and harm the environment.

The post-SAARC Summit chaos at Kathmandu airport this week was every traveller's worst nightmare. It proved that upgrading physical infrastructure is never enough. Lack of management and coordination at the airport led to a massive pileup of air traffic, leading to horrendous delays, diverted flights, and angry visitors. This was a public relations disaster for the country that put off tens of thousands of tourists, and any potential investor stuck at the visa line at the airport would have immediately decided to take his money elsewhere. Weather and heavy traffic played a role, but it was first and foremost a management failure.

Physical infrastructure is all well and good, but without improving the governance superstructure we will continue to be stuck in this dystopia.

## YOUR SAY

www.nepalimes.com

### BACK TO WORK

The real nugget in your editorial this week ('Let's get back to work', #734) is not that CA members should be allowed to have a say. I doubt if decision-making was done by the 601 and not by the four top parties, that it would make any difference. No, the real reason is buried in the middle of the piece in which you say, 'The Dialogue Committee is deadlocked not because of federalism, but because of disagreement over who should be president, prime minister and CA Chair the day after the new constitution is promulgated...' Bingo. It's all about power, the deadlock has nothing to do with federalism, nothing to do with the constitution.

Nick

Your editorial's title 'Let's get back to work' should be more like 'Let's get back to snoozing'.

Namah

### INFRASTRUCTURE

Elvin Shrestha should mention his age next time he writes a piece (Miles to go, promises to keep, #743) so those who are in the driving seat of the country feels ashamed of their short-sightedness and are enlightened, and maybe rise above their personal interests.

Binaya Kumar Shrestha

Nepal's failure to develop adequate infrastructure, particularly in the power-energy sector is attributed among other things to red tape and corruption, yet

the author slams the CIAA for being 'heavy-handed'. The rot starts at the top with the NPC which seems unable to process policies, programs or projects. Let the CIAA intervene, but to speed up, not to slow down the procedures.

David Seddon

### TRAFFICKING

Thank you NT for highlighting this extremely important issue (Teach to fight trafficking, #743). The Nepali state and its political elite must feel ashamed about women/child trafficking and take responsibility for this serious crime. Of course the role of community leaders cannot be over-emphasised in fighting this heinous crime. It's well known that districts surrounding Kathmandu and few in the far west are worst affected but no part of Nepal is untouched by this plague. I agree whole-heartedly with Sunita Danuwar that awareness of parents/villagers is crucial. Sadly, political parties have used their women cadres/members for their political gain but not involved them in fighting women/girl trafficking.

R Rai

### GADHIMAI

A God doesn't need the bribe of blood and guts soaked in the pain of innocents to return His/Her blessings. (Overkill in Gadhimai, Lucia de Vries and Deepak Adhikari, #732)

Arif Jamal

The argument that people "need" to kill to eat is absurd. I would not still be here if they did. This "festival" is pure evil, and Nepal should be utterly

ashamed that it continues to be permitted.

A C Highfield

Adhikari shows a deep ignorance for the multitude of animal welfare and animal rights movements operating internationally, within the U.S. and Europe, advocating for humane and compassionate treatment of our fellow beings within our own borders. You think there aren't many vegans in the U.S. who believe as strongly in ending some of our own outdated and barbaric traditions? Cultural relativism has no place in issues of global interest, which include social justice and promotion of peace and compassion toward others.

Molesworth

Gadhimai Jatra is all nonsense and an insane practice of cruelty against other living beings, the issue here is of blind faith.

Tseten Tashi

Both points of view are respectable and interesting. I do not agree with ritual animal sacrifices. But the key in this ceremony is to sacrifice the animal in a religious ritual, and not sacrifice the animal to eat it.

Ernesto

All this hoopla is yet another Eurocentric self-righteousness, leftover of their colonial mindset. Europeans kill and eat more animals in a day than will be killed at Gadhimai, so what is the problem with doing so here out in the open?

Sagar Ruptse

Murder is murder, whether it's for religious reasons or to satisfy a food craving. May our children and grandchildren be born with more compassion than we have.

Megan

Please stop all the killings. It is all over the UK press and giving Nepal a very bad image.

Michael

This is a cruel tradition and I hope that it can be stopped because animals have no fault.

Myra Rodas

Incivilizados!

Horacio

I'm a proud vegetarian, and I oppose both forms of killing animals (whether for food or for religion). But killing in name for religion is more heinous because you think that you are pleasing a god/goddess and you are spreading this thought to next generation.

Pekon

### ASS

Hilarious spoof of our current paranoia about security ("National insecurity", Backside, #743). It made me cry. Thanks.

Jens

I don't know the source of the photographs in the Ass column, but they are always classic. Crane? What Crane? We are real Nepalis, we hire pole climbers.

N

## Times

### THIS WEEK



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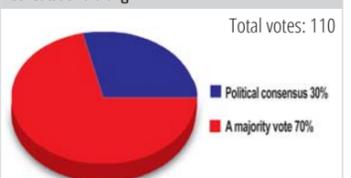
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## Times

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Q. Do you think the Communist party of Nepal will split again?

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# An (inter)national disgrace

## SAARC fails to confront the Bhutan refugee issue

During the SAARC Summit, Prime Minister Sushil Koirala is reported to have raised with his Bhutan counterpart, Lyonchen Tshering Tobgay, the issue of refugees from Bhutan who have been living in eastern Nepal since the early 1990s.



**THE GADFLY**  
David Seddon

Koirala is said to have stressed that it was the inalienable right of the refugees to return to their homes, and requested Bhutan to take special initiative to repatriate them. Tobgay reportedly commented that it was a complex humanitarian issue and that the ongoing process of resettlement should not be stopped.

The issue of Bhutanese displaced in the 1990s continues to rankle among the 100,000 or so forced to leave their country, some of whom remain in refugee camps in eastern Nepal. SAARC 2014 failed to address the issue, and neither Nepal nor Bhutan are

willing to take responsibility for repatriation or re-settlement.

Bhutanese refugee resettled in the United States, Mohan Tamang, sent this impassioned message from California to the People's SAARC which took place in parallel with the official Summit: 'SAARC has failed to address people's aspirations. We, the Bhutanese (refugees) are one example. We have suffered as refugees for decades. At least eight western countries have intervened to give humanitarian relief and the refugees are exploring how to add meaning to the rest of their lives. We are now campaigning in Washington DC and other donor countries to uphold the principles of human rights and democracy, especially in Bhutan. The voices of the people from platforms like the People's SAARC must continue.'

After a long history of increasing ethnic discrimination against the Nepali-speaking inhabitants of Bhutan (many of whom had been settled there for numerous generations) on the part of the allegedly indigenous Dzongkha-speaking Ngalop (people of Tibetan origin who migrated to Bhutan in the ninth century) and the government,

thousands of Lhotsampas living mainly in the southern regions of Bhutan were forced out between 1992-98 and taken refuge in Nepal, where they have since lived in camps under the auspices of the UNHCR for some two decades.

The Bhutan and the Nepalese governments debated the matter, but failed to achieve any resolution. Bhutan refused to re-admit those who wanted to go home, and Nepal refused to allow the refugees to re-settle and integrate into the local economy and society. The other members of SAARC expressed their concern, but were proved unwilling to help directly themselves.

In 2000 Bhutan and Nepal reached an agreement regarding the repatriation of certain classes of refugees living in camps in Nepal, subject to joint government verification. Bhutan claimed, however, that some of the camp inhabitants had never been Bhutanese citizens, and some not even residents of Bhutan. It also regarded some of the political groups among the Lhotshampa community like the Bhutan Peoples' Party (BPP) and the Bhutan National Democratic Party (BNDP) as

terrorist or 'anti-national' groups.

Among the other factors complicating repatriation, land and other property formerly held by Lhotshampa refugees had by now been resettled and taken over by the allegedly indigenous Ngalop settlers, many of whom were government officials and members of the military, with government encouragement. Nepal refused to offer integration into the local population, and refugees are restricted as regards movement, access to employment and access to the local justice system.

In March 2001, verification of refugees eligible for repatriation commenced but the progress stalled. In 2003, a Bhutanese verification team was attacked and injured in Jhapa, resulting in further delay. From 2008, the IOM and UNHCR, together with the United States, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Norway, The Netherlands and New Zealand agreed to resettle the refugees over a period of five years. By 8 April 2014, the United States had taken some 75,000 and other countries nearly 14,000 between them.

As late as 2011, only some 200 refugees in Khudunabari refugee camp had been registered

for repatriation to Bhutan, but none had actually gone back home. In April 2011, Bhutan and Nepal again opened talks on repatriation, by July 2011, they had held at least 15 rounds of bilateral talks, with no agreed outcome. Although Bhutan's state media have echoed its government's formal insistence on continued talks with Nepal, Bhutan has signaled its preference for third-country resettlement. In the face of this failure by the two countries most directly involved, and of the region as a whole, to repatriate to Bhutan or disperse and re-settle the refugees in Nepal, with full rights of citizenship in either case, the UNHCR remains committed to third-country resettlement.

SAARC 2014 has come and gone, and there has been no sign of movement on a bilateral basis, and despite the high sounding words of the final declaration of the SAARC there was no statement from the governments of the countries of the region, including Nepal and Bhutan, regarding their commitment to solving the long-standing, and disgraceful issue of the Bhutan refugees in Nepal. [@pigreen](#)



BIKRAM RAI

promised to Nepal was operationalised. Hydropower cooperation was enhanced by the signing of a power development agreement of the Arun III and public bus services between various Indian and Nepalese cities were flagged off.

Sub-regionalism in South Asia should be market-led and target East Asia, its largest market. South Asian countries need to implement the second round of their 'Look East' policies to link themselves to production networks in East Asia. Such policies would not only lead to higher economic growth in the concerned countries, they would also reinvigorate economic integration in South Asia through the following moves:

1. Complete economic reform programs begun in the 1990s mainly in governance and institutional reforms
2. Improve their information, communication, and technology systems to coordinate supply chains efficiently
3. Reduce logistics costs as this is a key determinant of their competitiveness
4. Support Trans-Himalayan Economic Corridors between India-Nepal-China to connect South Asia, with Central Asia, and East Asia seamlessly

The Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is the appropriate institutional framework to support the above policies because it connects South Asian countries (except Pakistan and Afghanistan) with several East Asian countries (Myanmar and Thailand). Nepal as the present Chair of BIMSTEC should push regional connectivity and integration in Asia.

As China steps up efforts to forge trade and connectivity with Central and Southeast Asia, South Asian countries will need to pursue bilateral and sub-regional arrangements to promote integration. They should not wait for SAARC, as time is not on their side. [@pigreen](#)

*Pradumna B Rana is Associate Professor at S Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore.*

## Forget SAARC Go for other options like bilateralism or sub-regionalism

SINGAPORE -- One of the biggest impediments to SAARC's progress since its inception in 1985 has been the continued conflict between India and Pakistan. Before last week's summit in Kathmandu there was hope that some positive results would come out.



**GUEST COLUMN**  
Pradumna B Rana

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's first day in office after his election in May was dedicated exclusively to bilateral meetings with the leaders of the SAARC

countries. His first state visit was to Bhutan and then to Nepal. During his visits abroad and even when engaging domestic audiences, Modi had stressed the need for increased regional cooperation.

In 1947, trade among South Asian countries accounted for around 20 per cent of their total trade. Presently, it stands at a mere 5 per cent – South Asia is the least integrated region in the world.

In the run-up to the Summit, three agreements on energy, easier access for motor vehicles, and railways were readied for signing to reverse declining trend of regional economic integration in South Asia. But this time, too, tensions between India and Pakistan took center-stage and only one of the three agreements was signed.

Pakistan was unwilling to sign all three

agreements because the 'internal processes' had not been completed. It was only under pressure from his colleagues during the retreat on the last day that Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif relented and signed the framework agreement on regional electricity connectivity, the details of which have yet to be worked out.

A frustrated Modi remarked that regional integration in South Asia would go ahead 'through SAARC or outside it, among all of us or some of us'. South Asian countries should listen to him and go for bilateralism and sub-regionalism outside SAARC.

A case in point is bilateralism between India and Nepal which is fruitful for Nepal despite the staminate on regional issues at the Summit. In the sidelines of the Summit, the \$1 billion credit that India had



# Mountain film festival

Seventy films from 20 countries will be screened at this year's Kathmandu Mountain Film Festival 2014 (KIMFF) which begins 11 December at Kumari Hall. A wide range of films from documentaries to fiction, shorts to experimental and animation will be shown.

Films are divided into three categories: international competition, non-competitive and Nepal panorama which features a selection of films by Nepali filmmakers. A new short film competition 'Generation Green' has been introduced this year which will showcase films by emerging local talent.

KIMFF will also host the general assembly meeting of International Alliance for Mountain Films (IAMF). Representatives from 21 mountain film festivals from around the world will meet, including Norwegian mountaineer and author of Penguins on Everest Dave Durkin and Nepali Times health columnist Buddha Basnyat. Photographer Henry Iddon will exhibit his series 'Hill People' at the venue, while film critic Yegesh will moderate a panel discussion on the correlation between literature and cinema.

British photographer Henry Iddon, US mountaineer and

filmmaker David Breashears and Italian filmmaker Paola Nessi are in this year's jury and will decide the top three films in the international competition, top documentary film and fiction film in the Nepal Panorama selection. There is also a US\$ 1000 award for the best film on mountain development issues

As in previous years, the popular quiz 'Know your Himal' will be hosted by *Nepali Times* editor Kunda Dixit.

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### Short listed

Ncell has announced the 24 finalist teams for its Ncell App Camp contest. Four winners will now be selected on the finale on 9 to 11 December and be awarded Rs 250,000 each, and one winner will be awarded an additional Rs 500,000.

### New Boeing

SilkAir recently launched a new Boeing 737-800 on the Kathmandu-Singapore route. The Boeing 737-800 touched down in Kathmandu on 1 December. The new aircraft has 162 seats, with 12 in Business and 150 in economy.



### Winter offer

Laxmi Intercontinental, the sole distributor for Hyundai vehicles in Nepal, has launched its new consumer scheme 'Hyundai Winter Fest'. Consumers can save up to

Rs 627,000 through cash discount, one-year free insurance and one-year free road taxes through this offer.

### New smartphones

Huawei, a leading global Information and Communications Technology (ICT) solutions provider, launched four new smartphones – Huawei Honor Holly, Honor 6, Ascend Mate 7 and Ascend Y520 at Rs 13,999, Rs 37,999, Rs 59,999 and Rs 10,999 respectively.



## #IMAGINE

UNICEF is organising a free musical concert 1PM onwards on Saturday 6 December at Tundikhel to celebrate 25 years of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) which also seeks to

encourage everyone to imagine a better world for children. Bipul Chhetri, Kutumba and Mitrata Nepal will be performing. Concert participants will also be able to take part in a mass singalong of John Lennon's ballad 'Imagine'. Unicef invites everyone to use a new mobile app #IMAGINE Touchcast to record their rendition of 'Imagine' and share it through Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and other social media with hashtag #IMAGINE.



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# 'C' for constitution

Back in 2012, when Baburam Bhattarai was prime minister and wanted to take disagreements on the constitution to the elected Constituent Assembly (CA) for discussion, there was pressure from all sides against the move. Had the Maoists and Madhesi acted on their own, it would have been seen as a violation of the peace process and confirmed national and international suspicions of their agenda of 'state-capture'.

History has come a full circle. The NC-UML coalition has a majority, and they want to put contentious issues to the vote in the CA. Only this time, the ruling parties put dialogue committee Chairman Bhattarai under moral pressure to send the issues to the CA. There is still debate over the mechanism, but it looks like all the parties agreed to take the constitution to the CA. All outstanding issues may therefore soon be decided by the House where the ruling parties command comfortable majority.



**BY THE WAY**  
Anurag Acharya

The NC and UML know that the day after the constitution is delivered they will need political allies to stay in power. So, Sushil Koirala and KP Oli's offer to bring the Maoists and the Madhesi in the government is neither sudden, nor without a motive.

With all major stakeholders in government, automatically avert the danger of the constitution being rejected from the streets.

The Madhesi know they are kingmakers again and are playing for a maximum bargain on the constitution. If they manage to eke out something for their constituency, it will cleanse their image and sustain their politics. Upendra Yadav may keep harping on about one-Madhes, but two-province formula for the Tarai looks like a done deal. Once that deal is struck, the incentive for the Madhesi to remain in the Dahal-led 22-party front will wither. Given time and the right offer of portfolios in the government, they will claim their share of credit for writing the new constitution.

As for Pushpa Kamal Dahal, he has little choice than to agree to take the contentious issues to the CA. It is the only way he can

take attention away from party rival Baburam Bhattarai who heads the CA dialogue committee. Dahal knows that if he misses the constitutional bus he will have nothing to show for the war he waged and eight

years of politics. He will lose whatever little mass base he has. His visit to Rolpa last month was to invoke his achievements in the cradle of the revolution. Bhattarai will be miffed, but he will swallow the bitter pill and continue his role inside the CA to remain relevant.

Inside the NC and UML, the power struggle between heavyweights will reach its tipping point as constitution looks more likely. Sher Bahadur Deuba will keep reminding Koirala of his promise to step aside after the statute is declared, while Madhav Kumar Nepal will look for every opportunity to take over from ailing KP Oli.

Nepal will settle for an 'improved' parliamentary system, whatever that means, and there may be six or seven federal provinces including two in Tarai. The future negotiation inside the CA will revolve around this bottom-line set by the ruling parties. The Maoists will press for declaring autonomous regions within the provinces as a sop to indigenous groups.

As the debates open up in the CA, other constituencies including women and the Dalits will also bargain for their own stakes in the new constitution. At the core of these debates will be greater representation for marginalised communities at all levels of the state. The 'C' word could be consensus, or compromise to clinch the constitution debate. The leaders know that the constitution is an evolving document and as long as the basic tenets are agreed to, details can always change when the political climate is more favourable. That way, no one loses.

Nepal may finally get its new constitution but it may not be in January

Narendra Modi wants in Nepal what he wants for India

# 'Tis the season for U-turns

Less than two months to go before the deadline to promulgate the new constitution. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi used his presence in Kathmandu for the SAARC Summit to try to clear the deadlock by urging all parties to forge a consensus and form a national unity government.

Modi's remarks on "consensus" while inaugurating the India-gifted Trauma Centre on



**THE DEADLINE**  
Damakant Jayshi

25 November initially shook up the ruling NC-UML, and boosted the morale of the Maoist-Madhesi opposition. RPP-Nepal was understandably happy with the Modi mantra.

Modi touched upon the perils of missing the Constitution deadline (22 January) and the need to pass a statute with agreed contents which could be amended later as was done in India. But it was his warning about taking decisions through numerical strength, deciding the contents through majority, that gained the maximum traction.

He was both praised and pilloried for that. Most tellingly, some UCPN (M) leaders said that although the Indian PM spoke what they have been advocating, he had breached diplomatic norms. In later one-on-ones with Maoist leaders at the Soaltee, Modi seems to have given the message that by "consensus" he meant meeting the NC-UML halfway.

Neither the Maoists nor the Madhesi parties and the loose alliance they have formed with smaller parties, most of which have no representation in the CA,

would be better than having a new constitution through consensus. In any case, even if the NC, UML, UCPN (M) and the Madhesi parties approve of a draft, RPP-Nepal is sure to cry foul. Clearly, some sections and some parties are going to reject the final constitution. Compromise means everyone agreeing to be slightly unhappy with the final decision.

Federalism got barely a mention in the first election in 2008, but was the main plank of the Mao-Madhesi combine in 2013. The UCPN (M) and the Madhesi parties were so sure of victory and the defeat of the 'status quoist' NC and the UML, that they categorically committed to go for the democratic process of voting to write the constitution if consensus failed.

After the election in which they got trounced even in their strongholds, these parties have done a U-turn. So, if there is no consensus, what do we do? Repeating "consensus" ad nauseam



DEVAKI BISTA

RPP-Nepal's Kamal Thapa is clearly the odd man out given that he does not subscribe to republicanism, federalism or secularism – principles that more than 550 lawmakers in the 601-member Constituent Assembly (CA) have committed themselves to. Even the Rastriya Jan Morcha has now accepted federalism with some reservations.

Although Modi's public 'bouquet speech' had something for everyone, it was clearly loaded in favour of the UCPN (Maoist) and Madhes-based political parties. Some thought it was to balance out his utterances during the last visit in August.

Some even went to the extent of accusing him of expressing his anger for Nepal government's reluctance to allow him to address a mass rally at Barhabigha Ground in Janakpur.

are averse to meeting the deadline by having the constitution with agreed contents. Some construe that this means passing the statute without provisions for state restructuring. This idea was first mooted by the NC and UML during the last days of the first CA in May 2012.

India's current political leadership seems very much aware and wary about the instability that would likely follow if the CA fails again.

It is not just provisions in the Interim Constitution but the election manifesto of political parties as well as their commitment to the process of voting when they drew up regulations for then CA II that sanctions voting if consensus fails. Let us not waste too much time over this.

In principle, and ideally, what

is not going to ensure an agreement.

Those harbouring plans for another election in the hope of a changed mandate forget that all credible surveys on federalism had shown, time and again, that the people were averse to the kind of federalism that the Maoist, the Madhesi and the Janajati parties advocate. Even a majority of Madhesi and Janjati respondents think it is a bad idea. The polls were proven right by the election result.

But if the parties continue to refuse to respect the mandate of the people, the NC and the UML have no choice but to act out what they have been saying in recent weeks – pass the constitution through voting and then leave it to the people, the ultimate arbiters.

@damakant

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१ कार्तिकदेखि

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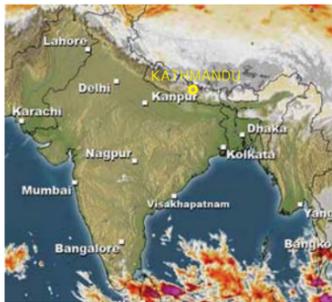
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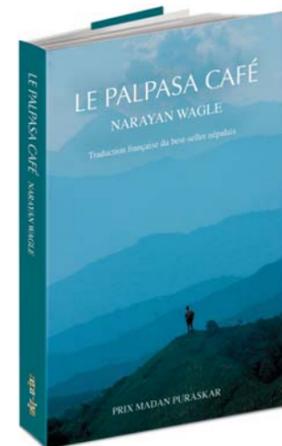
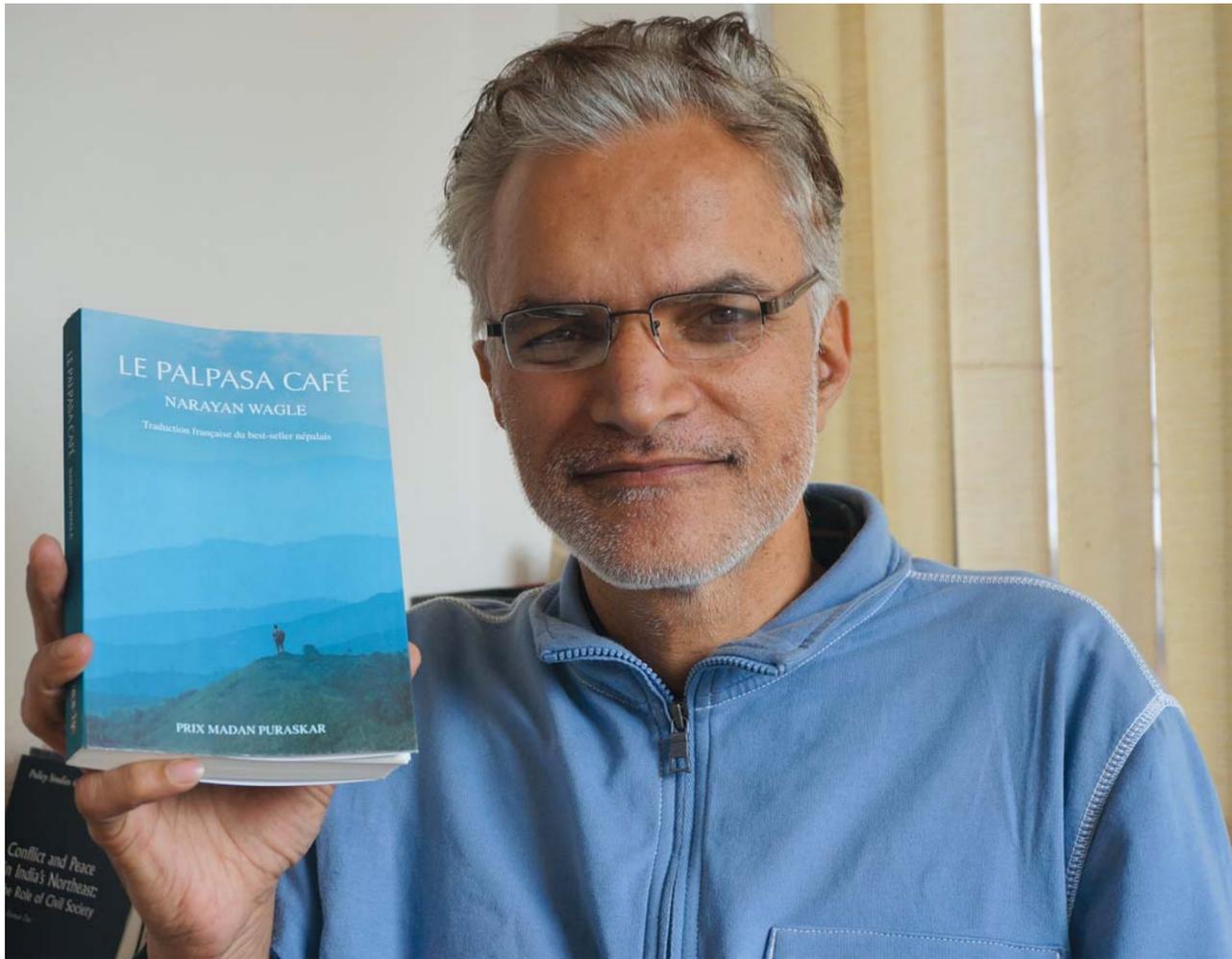
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Although we have three weeks to go for winter solstice, the event doesn't mark the coldest days of winter. Winter really sets in Kathmandu only in January. Maximum temperature has dropped due to the solar filtering action of pollution haze, but minimum temperature is still in the upper single digits. This is enough to already cause severe inversion effect in the Valley, which has resulted in thick smog. This will continue to delay morning flights out of Kathmandu. Fog in the Tarai has also started, with the sun coming out only about noon. These temperatures are not high by northern hemisphere standards, but the difference in Nepal, of course, is that it is colder inside the house than outside. Investing in insulation, stopping draft may end up saving energy costs.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
22° 9°	22° 9°	22° 8°

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**Le Palpasa Café**  
by Narayan Wagle  
translated by Suraj Shakya  
and Isabelle Lippitsch  
2014, Nepa-laya  
Rs. 495, 333pp

# BONJOUR, PALPASA

Narayan Wagle's *Palpasa Café* gets a French avatar

**STÉPHANE HUËT**

Suraj Shakya, a French speaking tour guide was a fan of journalist Narayan Wagle's column, *Coffee Guff*, in *Kantipur*. He never missed a column, which was written in Wagle's characteristic breezy, colloquial style.

When Wagle's first novel, *Palpasa Café*, came out in 2005, Shakya immediately bought a copy and read it within two days. The novel is set during Nepal's Maoist conflict, and Shakya was eager that his French-speaking clients also read it.

Shakya started translating the book himself and when he got to Chapter 25, started collaborating with several teachers of Alliance Française of Kathmandu to help him edit the draft. Everyone was doing this voluntarily, so it took Shakya several years to finalise the script. In the meantime, the Nepali version of *Palpasa Café* became a best-seller with 50,000 copies sold and the



book had been translated into English and Korean.

Kiran Shrestha of Nepa-laya, the publisher of *Palpasa Café*, was interested when he found out that Shakya had already gone ahead with the translation into French on his own. "It was great, but we needed a native French speaker to look at the book," he said.

Last year, French Isabelle Lippitsch

attended a talk by Wagle at the Kathmandu International Mountain Film Festival (KIMFF). "While reading the English version of *Palpasa Café*, I really wanted to meet Narayan Wagle in person," she told *Nepali Times* and was enthusiastic about translating his book into French.

Nepa-laya gave her Shakya's French manuscript, and she started working on

polishing the language that very night. She was supposed to leave Kathmandu the next day, but decided to stay. "I was committed to this job," she said "and I didn't want to leave Nepal until I had finished the whole translation."

At the launching of the book at Alliance Française this week, Lippitsch said that she wanted to be involved so the Nepal conflict would be better known in France. "If one isn't really interested in the history of the country, he won't know what the sufferings of the people have been during this tragic episode," she said.

Only a few books of Nepali literature, like Parijat's *Blue Mimosa*, had been translated in French so far. Kiran Shrestha sees this new translation as an experiment. Even if he printed only 1,000 copies of *Le Palpasa Café*, he believes in its success. "We hope we can bring the Nepali literature to an international readership," he said.

Lippitsch shares the enthusiasm, and says she was impressed by the professionalism and commitment of the Nepa-laya team. Asked if he would like to work on Wagle's second novel, *Mayur Times*, Shakya replied with another question: "Why not a compilation of *Coffee Guff* translated in French?"

Wagle says he is curious about how the French-reading public will receive his novel. "French is very rich language which produces great literature," he told us, "I'm excited to get feedback from French readers." 📖

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■ Fiction more real than fact, #256

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**EVENTS**



**Masters of Janakpur,**  
Crisis Recovery International showcases traditional Mithila arts by Maithili women of Janakpur.  
12 to 23 December, 10am to 6pm, Taragaon Museum, Hyatt Regency, Boudha

**Yerma,**  
A folk musical tragedy by the great Spanish poet and playwright Federico Garcia Lorca.  
Rs 200 (adults)/ Rs 100 (students), Till 21 December (Mondays off), 5pm onwards; 13 & 20 December, 1pm onwards, The Village Theatre, Lajimpat, (01)4001089, oneworldtheatre.np@gmail.com

**Nature and eternity,**  
A showcase of Pramila Bajracharya's paintings of abstract and semi-abstract figures and landscapes.  
Till 16 January, 11am to 5.30pm, Park Gallery, Pulchowk

**Particle fever,**  
Watch this film that gives you a front row seat to a significant and inspiring scientific breakthrough – the Large Hadron Collider.  
Free entry, 20 December, 2 to 4.30pm, Embassy Restaurant, make reservations: (01)4424040, 9802024040

**Natural dye,**  
An exhibition showcasing handmade clothes, shawls, jewellerys and carpets made from natural dye.  
Till 6 December, 11am to 7pm, Taragaon Museum, Hyatt Regency, Boudha

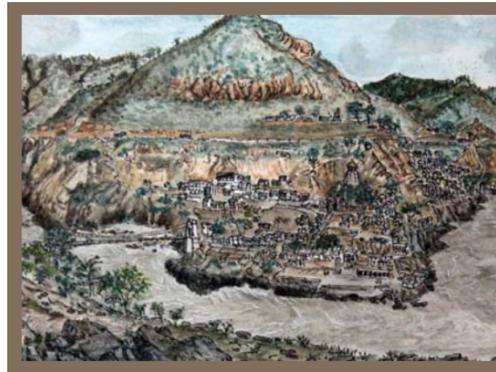
**Tokyo to Kathmandu,**  
Recollections in print of artist Kabi Raj Lama's artistic and spiritual quest from Tokyo to Kathmandu.  
Till 15 December, 11am to 5pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited

**Christmas cantata,**  
A Christmas concert that supports a number of charities, including Himalayan Heart, The Wise Women Shelter and Chhahari Nepal.  
6 December, 3.30pm onwards, The British School, Jhamsikhel



**Three paisa opera,**  
An adaptation of *The Threepenny Opera*, a play with dark humour in which all values on the fairground, stripped of their pretensions, unravel.  
7 to 14 December (except 10 & 11 December) and 19 to 21 December, 6.15pm, Naga Theatre, Hotel Vajra, Swayambhu

**10 Minutes,**  
A lineup of ten minutes performance arts of ten artists.  
7 December, 3pm, Taragaon Museum, Hyatt Regency, Boudha



**Along Ganga,**  
'Walking Along Ganga', a series of miniatures and pen-and-ink sketches by Jimmy Thapa while walking the length of the Ganga river.  
6 December, 5pm onwards, Galleria Ishine, Kupondole

**DINING**

**Christmas Eve,**  
Celebrate Christmas eve with a candle-light Christmas dinner, special pastries and free chocolates and cookies.  
24 December, Hotel Shangri-La, Lajimpat

**Lhakpa's Chulo,**  
Nepali dal-bhat, Newari khaja, Swiss Rösti, Italian Risotto, and Thai green curry - take your pick. *Jhamsikhel*

**Pagoda Chinese Restaurant,**  
Head to this jade palace if you are in the mood for Chinese with clean, green and peaceful environment. *Park Village Resort, Budhanilkatha, pvh@wlink.com.np*



**Mezze by Roadhouse,**  
A great Italian restaurant to dine in which is almost always crowded. *Darbar Marg*

**Lhasa Bar,**  
Enjoy a beer or a splash of cocktail at this springboard for excellent young musicians starting out on the Thamel circuit.  
*Thamel, 985101043*

**Vootoo,**  
The new home of Newari cuisine, as well as a continental menu for those who don't want an adventure. *Lajimpat, (01)4005222*

**Sarangkot Fordays,**  
Have a Sarangkot special breakfast while enjoying spectacular views of the mountain ranges. *Sarangkot, Pokhara*



**Kasi,**  
Spread out over a large terrace overlooking Phora Darbar, Kasi offers a delectable plate of Newari delicacies.  
*Darbar Marg*

**K-too,**  
Go in for the best steak in Thamel, a warm dining room, live sports on TV, and free Irish coffee with every main course and seasonal specials. *Thamel, (01)4700043*

**The Yellow House,**  
Enjoy sumptuous breakfast prepared with organically source ingredients and the freshest bread on this side of town.  
*Sanepa*



**Alice restaurant,**  
Step in for scrumptious Thakali, Chinese, Continental, and Japanese cuisine.  
*Gairidhara, (01)4429207*

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MUSIC



Purplefest,

Popular Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam will be performing with Nepali singers Sugam Pokharel, Yama Buddha. Also, Indian comedian Kapil Sharma and other Nepali comedians will join in on this fun-filled evening. 13 December, 3 to 7pm, Dashrath Stadium, www.ncell.com.np/purplefest

Music Fest,

A culture and music festival with performances by Nepali and international bands like Peshkar, Girish Khatiwada Abhaya and the Steam Injuns, Albatross, and Mukti and Revival.

12 December, 10am onwards, Bhrikuti Mandap, www.nepalmusicfestival.org

Deathfest,

Accomplished – local and international – Extreme Metal bands join together at a place to celebrate the glorious genre.

9 and 10 January, venue to be announced

Rusty Nails,

A fundraising concert by 1974 AD to help children with Glaucoma.

13 December, 7pm onwards, City Museum Kathmandu, Darbar Marg

Rock on,

Albatross will be rocking this week. Rs 300, 5 December, 8pm onwards, House of Music



Aki & Kuniko,

Japan's Aki & Kuniko Band and Nepal's Santosh Bhakta Shrestha showcase traditional and contemporary fusion of the two Asian music.

6 December, 4.30pm, Rastriya Nachghar, Jamal

GETAWAYS

Shangri-La Village Resort,

Set amidst peaceful surroundings with a breathtaking mountain view, landscaped gardens, water bodies and a relaxing ambience.

Gharipatan, Pokhara, (61)462222, (01)4410051, shangrilavillage@gmail.com

Glacier Hotel,

Good value and friendly service for travellers on the lap of Lake Phewa.

Lakeside, Pokhara, (61)-463722, www.glaciernepal.com

Balthali Village Resort,

A small, cosy retreat with a bird's eye view of green terrace fields dotted with ochre painted houses. Balthali, Kavre



Hotel Landmark,

Made entirely from traditional Nepali brick and woodcraft, this hotel is rich not only in heritage, but also in services and boasts an award winning restaurant, the Hungry Eye.

Pokhara, (061)462908/3096/4897, www.landmarkpokhara.com

Hattiban Resort,

Climb up to Chandragiri in the morning for a royal view of Kathmandu Valley and jog down to the hotel for a relaxed evening.

Pharping, Kathmandu, (01)4371537/56

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# A GUIDE TO CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

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## BAG IT

If you have been on search for an alternative to replace your bulky leather bags, then these lightweight hand-woven bags are just perfect. Café Cheeno has a nice collection of hand-woven bags (Rs 1,485) and satchels (Rs 200) made by Women Skills Development Organisation in Pokhara. *Café Cheeno, Krishna Galli*



## HOLIDAY WISHES

No holiday season would be complete without sending wishes to loved ones. Designed and distributed by SAAR Nepal to raise funds for their elderly empowerment movement, and by UNICEF for children in need, these christmas cards (Rs 45 per piece) will help spread cheer all around. *Smile Wear*



## WHERE TO SHOP

### Dhukuti

Dhukuti has a range of locally made handicrafts, home decors, ceramic crockeries, knitwears, jewellerys, especially launched for the Christmas holiday season. A retail store of the Association for Craft Producers, a non-profit organisation certified by the Fair Trade Organisation, Dhukuti provides design management, marketing and technical training to low-income Nepali craft producers, especially women workers.

### SABAH Nepal

SABAH Nepal is an organisation of home-based workers and has more than 1,100 members. These women produce fine quality

## CANDLE WARMER

Candle covers may not be the most talked about home accessory but once you take a look at these adorable ones knitted by home-based workers of SABAH Nepal, it will be hard not to buy one. At just Rs 90 a piece, this also makes for an economical Christmas gift. *SABAH Nepal stores in Kuponole and Lajimpat*



## CHRISTMAS SOCKS

Made from Nepali fabric, these Christmas socks (Rs 582-Rs 770) are a great way of adding that Nepali touch to the festivities. *Dhukuti & Mahaguthi*



## HOT WATER BAG COVER

Loadshedding has taught Nepalis to be well prepared for any kind of crisis and to find various ways (some amusing) to deal with power cuts. Hot water bags are perhaps the most used staple of a Nepali household. And, if you have ever used one you would know a hot water bag cover is a must. Get these ones made of felt for just Rs 300. *Sana Hastakala & Dhukuti*



## WIRED

These iron-plated wire ornaments with beads (Rs 115 - 450) are the ideal accessories for your Christmas tree. The pieces are made by women workers of Nepali Shilpakala Udhyog. *Sana Hastakala*

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## SHOPPING FOR THE HOLIDAYS



### CROCKERY

Ceramic tea pots, plates and bowls (Rs 400 - 600) made by workers in Newa Art Ceramics in Thimi. *Cafe Cheeno, Sana Hastakala & Dhukuti*



### PUZZLES

These wooden Christmas-themed puzzles (Rs 485) are perfect gifts for children of all ages. Comes in various designs. *Sana Hastakala, Kupondole*

accessories, home furnishing, apparel, and other hand crafted products which are sold in Nepal and neighboring SAARC countries. The organisation provides training in knitting, stitching and weaving to home-based female workers. The popular Village Café in Pulchowk is also run by members of SABAH Nepal and serves mouthwatering traditional Newari delicacies. Besides its Kupondole outlet, SABAH Nepal has also opened branches in Banepa, Khokana, Lajimpat and Pokhara.

#### City Museum

City Museum Kathmandu is showcasing jewellery for sale this holiday season. The jewellery are made by Nepali workers under the Himalayan Jewellery project initiated by Sano Paila and UK-based charity, Freedom Matters. The Himalayan Jewellery project provides training and employment to survivors of trafficking and the deaf.



### NETTLE SHAWLS AND SCARVES

Locally produced nettle shawls and scarves (Rs 1,635). *Sana Hastakala, Smile Wear & SABAH Nepal stores*

### HAND-PAINTED CALENDAR

With New Year around the corner, hand-painted calendar (Rs 99) such as these made of Lokta paper would make a timely gift for your 'organised' special someone. *Smile Wear*

### DRESS IN BAMBOO

Clothing made from bamboo fabric (Rs 1,500 - 4,200). The product is unique to Nepal and is immensely popular in the South Asian sub-continent. One standout feature of the product is that it keeps warm during winter and cool during summer. *SABAH Nepal stores*



### CARDBOARD TREES

Why cut down trees when you can have Christmas trees (Rs 350) made of recycled cardboard paper? Although not on sale, the ones used as decorations at the store can be booked and bought. *Mahaguthi, Kupondole*

### MITHILA MANIA

Jewellery boxes, mirrors, pencil holders, buckets, and more with Mithila art (Rs 45 - 750) made by women of Janakpur Women's Development Centre. *Cafe Cheeno, Smile Wear, Dhukuti & Sana Hastakala*



### CERAMIC BEAUTY

Made of ceramic, these Christmas decorations (Rs 25) are lightweight and are ideal if simplicity is your mantra. *Sana Hastakala*



### FELT SLIPPERS

Slip into these comfy indoor slippers (Rs 1,200 - 1,300) made of environmentally friendly felt fabrics. *Sana Hastakala*



# THE HUNGER GAMES: MOCKINGJAY PART 1

At the end of *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire* (2013), our plucky heroine Katniss Everdeen (Jennifer Lawrence) shoots an arrow into the force-field, setting the infamous arena in flames, thus putting an abrupt end to the festivities and effectively making herself public enemy



**MUST SEE**  
Sophia Pande

number one to the nefarious Capitol, in particular to President Snow (Donald Sutherland), who bombs District 12 to smithereens in response to Katniss's rebellion.

As Katniss wakes up in District 13's underground city at the end of that second installment of the Hunger Games films, she realises that her friend and partner in

the games, Peeta Mellark (Josh Hutcherson), has been left behind because of a lapse in the intricate plan by Haymitch Abernathy (Woody Harrelson), Katniss's mentor and former Hunger Games victor, and Plutarch Heavensbee (the late, great Philip Seymour Hoffman), a former head gamekeeper turned leader of the rebellion, to liberate the participants from the indescribably cruel games - an annual happening devised by the Capitol to keep all uprisings in the 12 Districts at bay through fear and intimidation.

If you are unfamiliar with the premise of these young adult novels turned blockbuster films, I suggest you read the rather good books first, page-turners indeed, which, in contrast to the usual vapid teen stuff (think the Twilight series written by Stephenie Meyer), sets its story, very firmly with social context, in a dystopian post apocalyptic world where people are treated according to their

proximity to the rich, frivolous Capitol, with District 1 being the closest.

While the novels, written by Suzanne Collins, number three in total, Hollywood as per usual has decided to protract its money making spree by turning *Mockingjay* into two parts, effectively robbing this film of its real purpose: a conclusion. As a result, what could have been a perfectly fine film is a bit of a bore, lacking action, and an impetus, even while it develops Katniss's character, justifying her evolution into the "Mockingjay" - a symbol for the rebellion against the Capitol.

I have been a fan of the books and the past two films, applauding the casting, and the intentions, but will say, frankly, that I am disappointed with this last installment. While decent enough, it is not riveting like the former films, partly because of its absence of focus, and the lack of spark usually derived from the friendship between Katniss and Peeta, a murky relationship that hovers between friendship and romance.

The books offer real, intense, social, political and personal drama. The films have gone wrong in prolonging all three elements. Still, with Jennifer Lawrence at the helm (supported by a cast including the likes of Hoffman, Julianne Moore, and many others) it's hard to fall too far short.

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■ Trailer

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**HAPPENINGS**



RSS/KUMAR SHRESTHA

**DIFFERENTLY ABLED:** Prime Minister Sushil Koirala addresses a function organised on the eve of International Day of Persons with Disabilities at his residence in Baluwatar on Tuesday.



DEVAKI BISTA

**THE MAN:** Home Minister Bam Dev Gautam (second, right) honours writer and scholar Satya Mohan Joshi with Satabdi Purush (Man of the Century) award on Monday.



RSS

**SOLELY RESPONSIBLE:** A meeting of the Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee on Wednesday decided to handover responsibility of preparing the committee's proposal solely to Chairman Baburam Bhattarai.



**BONJOUR PALPASA:** French ambassador Martine Bassersan speaks at the launch of Le Palpasa Cafe at Alliance Francaise in Kathmandu on Friday. Also in picture (r to l) are author Narayan Wagle and translators Suraj Shakya and Isabelle Lippitsch.

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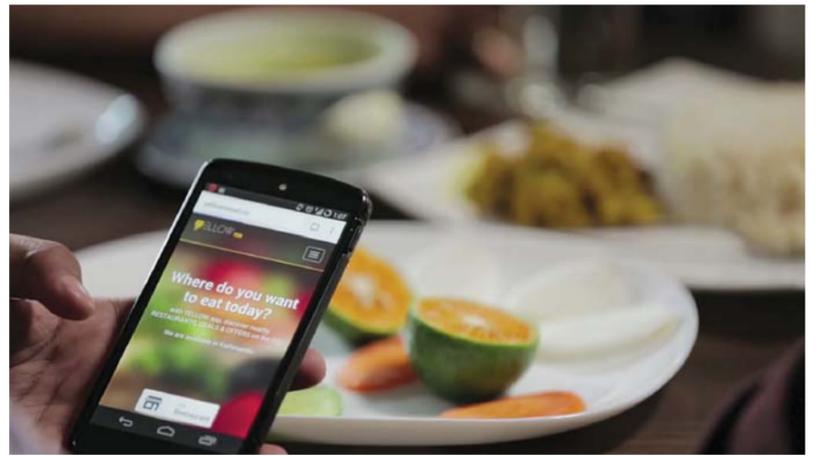
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Nepali app gets shortlisted for Google's app challenge



# Local goes global

Anish Shrestha created his first start-up, Nep Jilla, when he was in college at 22. Although the software company didn't do as well as expected, its failure was a lesson in business management for the computer engineer.

In May this year, Anish got along with his friend Manisha Karmacharya to develop Yellow Nepal, a discovery app which helps users find restaurants and food deals in Kathmandu. The app is among the top nine to be shortlisted by Google for its Business Group's Stories Challenge.

"It's not a revolutionary concept but one that people can use to save time and hassle of choosing a restaurant," says Shrestha. Yellow Nepal has been download 4000 times.

The app was developed with the idea of helping both restaurant owners and patrons. But, the developers (*pic, above*) found it hard to convince restaurant owners the benefit of being listed on the app.

"Some restaurant owners didn't understand how the app could help them to get clients," says Manisha. Of the 8000

restaurants in the city, so far only 1000 are registered with Yellow Nepal.

So, when the duo submitted their project for the Google Business Group's Stories Challenge just three months after the app was developed, they didn't expect at all to move past the first round. But, they did. After being selected for the semi finals, Yellow Nepal was shortlisted along with apps from Philippines, Sri Lanka, Mexico, Senegal and Uganda feature as the finalists of the contest.

The winning app will now be chosen based on the number of likes on their YouTube presentation and receive \$5000 in cash from Google.

"This is an excellent platform for us to promote our app and Nepali developers as a whole," says Anish. Encouraged by their performance at the contest, both founders now want to take the app global.

For now, Yellow Nepal is available only on Android and allows users to locate and review restaurants. The team is working on its development for iPhone and are thinking about the gamification of the app. Anish and Manisha also wish to list restaurants of other cities in the country.

Says Anish: "We did get the opportunity to develop in Bangladesh but we felt we should prioritise establishing ourselves in Nepal before venturing out." 🇳🇵

Stéphane Huët

To vote for Yellow Nepal, go to [www.google.com/landing/gbg/finalists](http://www.google.com/landing/gbg/finalists). Votes are open till 15 December 2014.

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

■ Watch their youtube presentation

# Café Aamu



PICS: ELAINE WANG YIWEI

Opened three months ago, Café Aamu is one of the newer restaurants in Krishnagalli, a quiet neighborhood (until a certain supermarket opened) in Lalitpur, that serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

The Aamu in Café Aamu is owner and chef Archana Tamang, who besides being a fantastic cook is also a human rights consultant. Archana's kitchen philosophy is to prepare food with "that extra dash of love".

### The Environment

With a balcony outside and a bar inside, the restaurant is a lovely place for travellers to relax after a strenuous trek or to meet long-lost friends for a meal. The

balcony might be a little small for a big group, but provides perfect seating for a group of four or two.

### The Food

Vegetarian or not, Café Aamu offers a lot of choices on its menu. If you are a rice lover and crave Chinese food all-day, all-week, then the Tofu and Chinese Black Mushroom with Rice (Rs 225) is a must try. The dish has traditional Chinese flavours and won my approval on the very first taste.

Chicken Tai Pao (Rs 200) was another crowd pleaser. While the steamed bun with meat and egg fillings tastes as authentic as one



can get here, the complimentary tomato and chilli sauce gives it a Nepali twist.

The restaurant also serves Chicken Da Pao (Rs 175). Archana said she was inspired to cook this version of the more famous dumplings after her husband, who works in China recommended it.

If your palate leans more

towards Indian flavours, then the Chicken in hot garlic sauce with rice (Rs 280) should not be missed. The dish is flavourful, garlicky and a perfect choice for winter.

Sweet Thai Pasta with chicken (Rs 200) will appeal to those who do not mind

experimenting with their food. The only dish that we ordered and didn't like at Aamu's was Chicken Chow Mien (Rs 145). It was bland, and lacked the flavours that other dishes had.

Although the Café has three cooks, Archana does 70 percent of the cooking. "I worked with the UN

in Nepal and attended meetings around the world, but my passion for cooking just draws me back to this place," said Archana.

A decent meal at Café Aamu would cost around Rs 300 per person, with tax and service fee included.

### The Service

Although the waiters are polite and kind, the waiting time for dishes is simply too long - our orders took 30 minutes to arrive.

Also, be sure to confirm your order with the waiter as well, otherwise you might end up having to wait extra 20 minutes because the waiter conveniently forgot the order.

Being a newly opened restaurant, Aamu's still has a lot of room for improvement especially in regards to their service. But, the owner's charm and her delicious food makes up for

the gap and this writer for one will definitely be visiting again with friends. 🇳🇵

Elaine Wang Yiwei

How to get there: Café Aamu is located in Krishnagalli, on a quiet lane between Bench Burger and Bhatbhateni supermarket.

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# The vaccine man

The success of vaccination campaigns in Nepal is well known. But, what many may not be aware of is how some of these vaccines were discovered.



**DHANVANTARI**  
Buddha Basnyat, MD

American microbiologist Maurice Hilleman, best known for his discovery of the MMR (mumps, measles, rubella) vaccine may not fit most people's description of a genius. Hilleman was known to swear like a sailor and said his main goal in life was to become a store manager for American chain JC Penney.

But, he is one of the most important albeit unsung

microbiologists of our time, credited with discovering over 25 vaccines.

He was inspired to find a cure for mumps after his daughter became sick with the disease in 1961. By using mumps virus isolated from his daughter, Hilleman developed the mumps vaccine which has saved millions of lives.

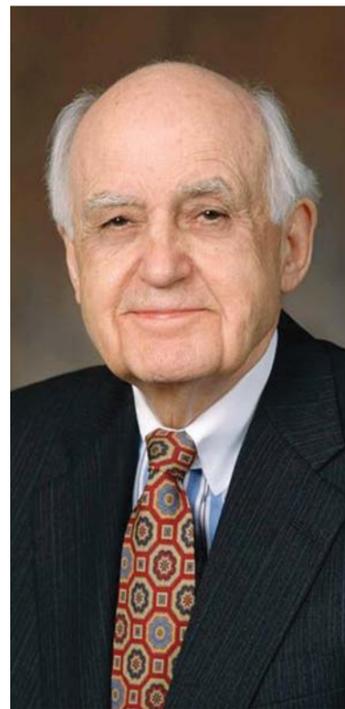
A word on how vaccines are developed. Vaccines are made from the disease causing organism which prompts the immune system to develop antibodies against the disease. The virus is first isolated and kept alive in the laboratory. Then it is weakened so that when the vaccine is injected, it doesn't cause a severe illness. This is achieved by passing it over and over through a series of cells like chicken embryo so that the weakened self of the organism will stimulate the immune system

without harming the host. It usually takes seven days for the vaccine to produce antibodies after administration.

During the spring of 1963, Hilleman designed a technique to administer another vaccine (measles) without causing common side effects like fever and rash. That same year, an epidemic of rubella broke out in Europe and spread around the globe. Hilleman worked to produce a vaccine against this dreaded scourge, especially to avoid this disease in pregnant women. (The vaccine is contraindicated in pregnancy.)

The initial vaccine, as Maurice recalled, was very "toxic" but he worked tirelessly to make the vaccine more acceptable until it was approved by the FDA (Food and Drug Administration in the US) in 1969.

In 1971 Maurice put together



his three efficient vaccines (measles, mumps and rubella) replacing the series of six shots with just two, thus tremendously improving patient compliance. Again in 1978, the prolific nature of this scientist led to an addition

of a newer and better rubella vaccine to the MMR combination.

Towards the end of his life, Hilleman suffered a huge blow when the British medical journal *The Lancet*, published an article questioning MMR's side effects.

The lead author in the article, Dr Andrew Wakefield, wrote that MMR caused an epidemic of autism. Maurice began receiving hate mails and death threats after the article was published.

However, multiple independent studies later challenged the findings of Dr Wakefield and *The Lancet* had to officially retract the infamous article in 2010. Unfortunately, the news came too late for Maurice who died of stomach cancer in 2005 and for European mothers whose children suffered from measles and some tragically died after declining to administer MMR vaccine to avoid autism.

## GIZMO by YANTRICK

With premium products like the Zeppelin Air, the P7 headphones, and its range of excellent speakers, it is easy to understand why Bowers and Wilkins (B&W) is synonymous with audio excellence.

B&W's earphones, the C5, also stood out from the crowd with its classy design and true audiophile sound. Recently, the company released an upgraded version of the C5, the C5 Series 2, which is sure to feature on the top of Christmas wishlist for techies the world over.

While the exterior of the C5 Series 2 is virtually same to the original C5, it is recognisable by its all-black design, as opposed to the translucent cable cover on the original C5. The C5 Series 2 also retains the unique 'Secure Loop', which is adjustable and helps secure the earphones in your ear. On the design front, the C5 Series 2 exudes class with a high-end quality design, with an artful tungsten/aluminum finish which features a seemingly sturdy build quality, with the metallic grille on the outside



## A treat for the ears

panel of each earpiece particularly easy on the eyes.

The C5 Series 2 sports an Apple-friendly inline remote and microphone for making phone calls, but be warned that not all of the remote's functions will work with Android and Windows phones. However, calls can be made with any phone when you use the microphone. B&W has included a few different eartips in the box, so you can pick the one that most suit your ear to achieve that all-important tight seal. Also included in the box is a premium protective carrying case.

While the original C5s were already stellar earphones, with rich and warm sound, and tremendous detail and clarity, the C5 Series 2 blows its illustrious predecessor right out of the park, and the differences aren't that subtle either. The

C5 Series 2's clarity is something that is bound to impress any listener, audiophile or not, and in any music genre. The C5 Series 2's deeper and clearly articulated bass, and powerful response, that remains distortion-free even at top, unsafe decibel levels is something that needs to be heard to be believed.

A premium piece of audio kit like the C5 Series 2 deserves high-quality sound files, so ensure that you have MP3s with high bit-rates, or lossless music files (FLAC, ALAC) to get the absolute best out of the C5 Series 2.

**Yantrick's Verdict: A Bowers and Wilkins product comes with a hefty price tag, and the C5 Series 2 is no different. A pair of the C5 Series 2 earphones will cost you close to Rs 20,000 but for those who need the best for their ears, this is an investment that will give you sound return.**

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# NEPALI BIKERS IN LANKA

Yak Attack has grown from a high-altitude mountain bike race in Nepal to an internationally acclaimed global series

**TYLER MCMAHON**



PICS: GAURAVMAN SHERCHAN



Two Nepali riders, national champion Ajay Pandit Chhetri and Laxmi Magar, took part in the Sri Lankan Airlines Rumble In The Jungle in Sri Lanka from 19-22 November, performing well and putting Nepal on the international mountain biking map. They were sponsored by Yak Attack, the mountain bike stage race around the Annapurna Circuit in Nepal, considered one of the toughest races in the world.

Over the past year Yak Attack has worked on creating a World Series of races spanning multiple countries, and the Sri Lankan race was the latest.

The field of racers for the first Rumble was stacked with talented riders all vying for a generous cash prize. The field included Cory Wallace, the Canadian Marathon Distance National Champion, Ismael Ventura the Spanish Cross-Country (XC) National Champ, and Yuki Ikeda a strong Japanese rider with many top results under his belt including runner-up in this year's North Face Yak Attack. Chhetri, racing in new territory would face a tough challenge, and the women's field was equally

tough. Rumble presented a unique challenge to the riders from heat (37 degrees) to jungles and river crossings, to massive climbs that reached heights of more than 2,000m to the interior of Sri Lanka.

After a flat start, Day 1 threw riders into the jungle with undulating roads and river crossings. After 52km the racers were greeted by a 13km climb leaving the jungle at 400m and finishing the day at 1,300m. Spaniard Ventura rode hard to a 23-minute lead over the field. Ikeda was 2nd with Nepal's Chhetri close behind in 3rd.

Day 2 with only 60km and less climbing was supposed to be an easier day but with 1,900 meters of climbing it was challenging. Ventura again won the day, with Cory Wallace not far behind. Ajay finished a consistent 3rd place moving him up to 2nd overall based on time.

Day 3 was the toughest day of the race. Starting with a 16km, 1,300m climb up to 2,100m the day then proceeded to an amazing trail that had been opened that day only for the riders. The single

track descent was epic, with some racers crashing hard along the way. Cory Wallace found his form during the day and finished just in front of Ventura, moving into 2nd overall. Chhetri, ever consistent, was 3rd on the day just ahead of Ikeda continuing their year long battle (Ikeda finished just ahead of Chhetri in the World

Championships).

Day 4 was mostly a downhill and the top four finished in the day in the same order as the overall results.

In the women's race, Yak Attack veteran, Sonya Looney Ewonus came on top in the stacked field. Laxmi Magar, representing Nepal, while not able to finish on the podium gained valuable experience to continue building her promising mountain bike career.

"For a first time race, Rumble in the Jungle was one of the best organised races in South Asia. It was perfect terrain and landscape for mountain biking, almost like the Himalayas without the altitude. The long climbs, tea gardens, and amazing trails made for an amazing race. The people in Sri Lanka were very friendly and helpful as well," said Chhetri

Yak Attack's next race 'Alpac

Attack' is in Patagonia next April, promising to be a beautiful and challenging addition to the race series. The growth of Yak Attack from a small stage race in Nepal to an internationally acclaimed stage race with a growing global series is impressive and offers promise for Nepal's bikers.

Yak Attack has been a boon to mountain biking in Nepal and more importantly the top national riders. It has offered low-cost entry fees and arranged entry sponsorships for the Nepali riders, helping send two to the Asian Championships and funded three of the national team members for the UCI Marathon World Championships. 🇳🇵

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

- Make way for Nepal's mountain bike champs, #700
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# Making peace with the past

For the women widowed by war, personal happiness comes last

**TRISHNA RANA**  
in MORANG

In her seminal book *A world of widows*, lawyer and a fierce advocate for single women around the world, Margaret Owen, who is a widow herself, writes: '... for all women the death of a husband has extra significance because it represents not simply the departure of a partner, protector, and breadwinner, but also heralds a radical change in her social status and lifestyle'.

For the women in Nepal who lost their husbands during the armed conflict, Owen's words hit home.

According to the 2011 census, there are almost 500,000 widows in Nepal, a number that is partly the result of the reckless brutality of our decade long war. For many of these women, the death of their husband results in the sudden uprooting of a life they once knew.

Widows lose control over the clothes and ornaments they can wear, their mobility, their finances, and sometimes even their children. Hindu customs in particular dictate that they lead isolated and austere lives at least for the first year. Families no longer trust the women and are always fearful that they might go off with another man.

"When you lose your husband, the family environment automatically changes: in-laws start behaving differently and become more distant," says



PICS: TRISHNA RANA

Kamala Tamang, a native of Tehrathum, whose policeman husband Man Prasad Moktan was killed in a skirmish in July 2001. "I didn't get any support from my husband's family. Where I am today is through my own struggles."

Renu Bishwas of Tetariya, Morang district recalls how her neighbours talked behind her back and questioned her every move after her husband's death. Renu's husband, a politician in the Sadbhawana Party, was shot by the Maoists and died in the

hospital seven months later in September 2004.

She says: "When I used to travel from my village to Biratnagar for administrative work, people suspected I was with another man."

The fall from social grace, the stigma of widowhood, along with the lack of financial independence make single women vulnerable to violence and abuse from relatives, neighbours, and strangers. For some widows the conditions became so bad, they have

completely severed family ties.

Ramwati Kamat's husband Ghanshyam was a health worker from Dadarberiya. He had been recruited by the Maoists to treat injured rebels. When Ghanshyam disappeared for days, his parents would scold Ramwati for sending him away, even though she had very little knowledge about his activities or whereabouts. She was also blamed for not repaying the loan that the family had taken out.

On 25 March 2004, Ghanshyam and two other men

**ALL ALONE:** Ramwati Kamat, Renu Bishwas, Lila Devi Tamang, and Gita Devi Mukhiya of Morang (clockwise from top left) have painfully rebuilt their lives in the absence of their husbands.

were killed in Thala VDC by the security forces. The Kamat couple had a nine-month-old daughter and a one-and-a-half-year-old son at the time. Mere days after his death, Ghanshyam's family began blaming Ramwati for the murder and mentally torturing her.

"My in-laws told me that I had 'eaten' their son and that I had gotten my husband killed on purpose because I was having an extra-marital affair," says the 31-year-old of the harrowing ordeal.

Unable to bear the cruelty, Ramwati moved in with her parents. Today she lives in Biratnagar with her children and has no contact with Ghanshyam's family. She has not received her husband's share of parental property.

Gita Devi Mukhiya of Sisbanijahada, Morang also lost her Maoist husband in an army encounter. She had two children at the time and was expecting a third. After her husband was killed, Gita's mental state deteriorated. Sometimes she would become delusional and believe that he was still alive.

The villagers taunted her by saying that she too would be killed by the security forces; they even accused her of being a witch. Like Ramwati, Gita returned to her parent's house to escape the mistreatment.

Gita received Rs 300,000 in compensation from the state, but has no real source of income and leads a hand to mouth existence. Her in-laws have refused to give her Ghanshyam's share of property because his family believes she is responsible for his death.

Without the protection of a husband or a male figurehead, widows are susceptible to unwarranted attention and sexual harassment from strangers as well.

Durga Khadka of Kerabari, Morang lost her husband Chandra Bahadur, who was in the police, on 15 January 2004 during a battle in Dhankuta. Today, the 36-year-old lives in Itahari with her teenage daughter.

Durga says a man she had never met came to her store once and casually asked her where her husband and in-laws were. She lied and told him that her husband was working in Qatar. At first she didn't doubt his intentions, but after he started showing up regularly at the store and troubling her over the phone, she got very scared.

"I lived alone with my daughter so I would lock all the doors and remain indoors," she recalls. "I was terrified for our safety."

Sita Khadka of Biratnagar, whose husband Inspector Jiwan Khadka was killed in combat on 1 April 2001, also remembers a time when a man she met at a program used to constantly harass her over the phone. After she threatened him by saying that

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**STRONGER TOGETHER (I-r):** The husbands of Parmila Karki, Sita Khadka, Hema Singh, Kamala Tamang, and Durga Khadka were policemen who died in combat. The women get together once in a while and take comfort in each other's company.

discussing their need for love and affection and even second marriage.

Since many widows are still struggling to build a better future for their families, personal happiness is understandably not a top priority for them. However, in a society which conditions women to put the needs of others before themselves and where widows are already under intense suspicion and scrutiny, it takes immense courage even for the well to do women to break the mould.

On the other hand, men who lost their wives to the conflict are actively encouraged by their families and communities to marry a second time so that they have someone who will look after them and their children.

"Very few widows have remarried for emotional support.

Others, who had no source of income, were looking for financial stability. As long as the children are well taken care of, there is no reason for society to oppose or object," says Hema Singh (*see box*) who was approached for marriage by a Nepali-Canadian widower, but turned down the offer.

To make war widows and their plight more visible, it is imperative, says Margaret Owen, to make them a part of post-conflict mechanisms. In Nepal, out of the 197 female members of the first constituent assembly, 51 were widows, many of whom had lost their husbands during the war.

Dama Sharma was one such woman. In 1998, Sharma's husband was killed in police detention in Kailali. Two decades later, the native of Dang won a CA seat for the UCPN (Maoist) and became a coordinator of the women's caucus within the assembly. She says Nepal has made significant strides in the past 10 years as far as rights for widows and single women are concerned, but admits there are still problematic areas such as that of citizenship through the mother.

Says Sharma: "Beyond providing the remaining compensation amount and fulfilling their demands for scholarships for children without age limit, the only enduring way to ensure justice for war widows and other victims is by drafting a people centric-constitution," says Sharma.

"We must address the root cause of conflict and make sure that historically marginalised communities feel a sense of belonging and have ownership of the country." ■

## Claim to compensation

Hema Singh's husband, Inspector Ajay Kumar, was killed in an ambush in Janakpur in April 2005. At the time, Hema had been living in Biratnagar and taking care of Ajay's three children from his late wife and her own son, who was three-years-old. After her husband's death, her in-laws wanted her to return to their village in Dhangadi, Siraha district, but Hema did not want to give up her independence.

Her relationship with Ajay's family quickly worsened when her father-in-law, Nathuni Singh, filed a case to be counted as 'dependents' for the relief package. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court and after three long years, the SC decided the compensation would be split among seven people: Hema, her son, her three stepchildren, and her in-laws. The Singhs, however, are a well-established and affluent family in Dhangadi.

Says Hema: "Yes they are his parents, but they were neither needy nor real 'dependants'. The way they hounded me for the money really hurt me."

Nathuni also used his clout as a former parliamentarian to claim a stake in the monthly pension that the police provides to wives. After the sharing out, Hema, who works as a doctor's assistant in a local hospital in Biratnagar, now receives Rs 6,000 per month.

"My in-laws were quick to assert their rights, but haven't bothered to give me Ajay's share of parental property. Since they don't care about me, I don't feel any love for them either," admits the 41-year-old.



## All for one

From 2013 onwards, wives and families of policemen, who were killed during the war, began receiving two-third of the monthly pension that the men would be eligible for if they were alive. Earlier they were entitled to only one-third of the pension. The new ruling came after five years of protests by victim families in front of the Pension Management Office in Tripureshwor. Scholarship amounts for children were also raised.

"None of these achievements would have been possible if we had not gotten together and raised our voice," says Kamala Tamang who was part of the protests in Kathmandu.

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# Nepal's sick hospitals

Kantipur, 29 November

कान्तिपुर

The roof leaks, the walls are cracked. Rats, cats and snakes go in and out through holes. This is the Lumbini district Hospital built 60 years ago and that treats patients from 19 surrounding districts. "It is like a cow shed," admits the hospital's communication officer, Laxmi Regmi. A study last year by the WHO put this on the list of top ten hospitals in Nepal most in danger of collapse during an earthquake. The hospital had proposed a new building with 500 beds and surgery unit at the cost of Rs 800 million, but it is stuck in the Health Ministry because of the lack of political will.

In Taulihawa of Kapilbastu, the 15-bed district hospital should have expanded services, but it has now shrunk to being no more than a primary health care centre that treats diarrhoea and pneumonia cases. The hospital was built with Indian assistance 50 years ago, today all it does is 'refer' patients to other hospitals. The facility has the budget, doctors and physical infrastructure, what it doesn't have is management and political will to run it. The x-ray machine is broken, there are no antibiotics to treat TB patients, the toilet in the outpatient ward stinks, the recovery ward is rundown. Bhim Hospital in Bhairawa was built 80 years ago and named after Rana prime minister Bhim



MANOJ PAUDEL/KANTIPUR

Sumshere. It has allotment for six doctors, but for the past month there is not a single doctor here. The presence here of the Lumbini Zonal Hospital and private hospitals means that there is no public pressure or political accountability to improve the hospital. The well-to-do take their relatives to Kathmandu or to India, the poor are forced to go to expensive private hospital because the government facility that is supposed to provide free care doesn't have doctors.

Bharatpur is being developed as a 'medical city', Birganj has the Narayani Regional Hospital and in between the 51-year-old Hetauda Hospital with 50 beds, has fallen between the cracks. There are

supposed to be 15 doctors here, but there are only two, which means even patients with simple ailments have to go to Birganj or Bharatpur. There is a shortage of anaesthesiologists which has affected surgeries.

In neighbouring Nawalparasi, one-third of the medical staff is missing in the Prithvi Chand Hospital. Interns are holding the fort, and for one year no one heads the hospital development board. A building donated by the Indian Embassy hasn't been handed over yet. It is the same situation in two government hospitals in Rautahat, patients in Gaur and Chandranighapur are

forced to go to private clinics because there are no doctors. The hospitals have allotments for three doctors, one medical superintendent and one medical officer – none of them are present.

Meanwhile, in Bharatpur Hospital there are 300 patients a day and there just aren't enough beds for everyone and patients have to sleep on the floor. When there is a highway accident, the number of patients swells. There are 415 beds, but there is always a shortage of beds. Last year, the hospital treated 180,000 patients. The development committee wants to expand the 60-year-old hospital to 500 beds to cater also to patients from Hetuuda and Birganj.



"Let's be civilised."

नेपाल

Ravindra in *Nepal weekly*, 30 December

## QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“ Don't tickle us with the offer of power-sharing.”

Hridesh Tripathi of the TMLP in *Rajdhani*, 2 December

## Illegal transit

Shambhu Kattel, *Annapurna Post*, 1 December

अन्नपूर्णपोष्ट

The arrest of two Syrians, who were planning to head to the UK with fake passports, has exposed a global human smuggling network with Nepal as the transit point. The pair was arrested along with their brokers from a hotel in Thamel on Sunday.

Fauad Ijeh and Fadiya had arrived in Nepal on Friday on fake Slovenian passports issued by brokers German Amrat Husain, and Turkish Jorrick Iradins. They were given a 15-day tourist visa on arrival. All four are currently under the custody of department of immigration.

Ongoing investigations have revealed that office driver Madhu KC and helper Januka Thapa had taken bribe from the Syrians to assist in filling arrival forms and directing their way out. A CCTV footage also confirmed that they helped the Syrians to move money past immigrations. The two have been suspended by the department.

"We took action against the two after it was proved that they were guilty of accepting bribe," said immigration department chief Govinda Karki.

Director of the immigration department Dhruva Raj Joshi said that investigations had begun and added that the statement from the four would reveal more about the illegal network of human smuggling.

## Euro-Sherpa

*Himal Khabarpatrika*, 22 November

हिमाल  
खबरपत्रिका

Although Sherpas are synonymous with mountaineering, Pemba has made her community well known in Europe for singing talent as well. Originally from Solu Khumbu Pemba Sherpa has brought out several albums in Nepali and Sherpa language and makes it a point to visit Nepal at least once a year to do her recordings here.

Pemba didn't stop singing when she moved to Europe. Now living in Spain, her popularity has spread far and wide, and she is the star attraction in shows in Germany, France, Portugal, Belgium and other European countries. "It's great that I can actually make a living with my singing career even in Europe," says 38-year-old Pemba. "It helps that there is a sizeable Nepali community in European countries."

Having trained under the tutelage of music gurus Sambdev Sapkota, Shila Bahadur Moktan and Chandan Shrestha,

Pemba's popularity is now so great no program organised by Nepalis in Europe is complete without her singing presence.

Says Pemba: "People find it strange that a Sherpa can also sing, and that has provided encouragement for me."



Mobile phones have now become a necessity, with the gadgets being used for more than just calling. Whether it is for sharing 'selfies' on Facebook or enabling farmers to know the market value and price of produce, mobile phones serve varied purposes. Introduction of smartphones and 2G and 3G services have further propelled its growth.

With around 42 Internet Service Providers there are increasingly more data usage than voice transfers. An estimated 8.9 million Nepalis use Internet, a third of whom access the net through their phones.

In Nepal, only 36 per cent of households have televisions, whereas 84 per cent of the population have phones. Every year around 3 million mobile phones worth Rs 10 billion are sold in Nepal. Nepalis are shifting to smart phones as they become cheaper but bar phones still make up 70 per cent of mobile sales. Trends show that customers here place higher value on the price than on brand.

## Dash vs Cash

Suresh in *Jana Aastha*, 2 December

आस्था

Another party has been born in Nepal. Comrade Netra Bikram Chand has parted ways with Comrade Mohan Baidya and formed another Maoist party. This brings the total number of Maoist parties in Nepal to four. (Or is it five? It might even be six.) The Maoists are a progressive and forward-looking party. Which is why the rate at which new Maoist parties are being formed will steadily increase as time goes by. The total number of Maoist parties is not going to go down. No way. There was a point in this country's history when there was only one Maoist party, but its cadre base was growing exponentially. Now, things are different. Today, the number of card-carrying members is going down but the number of parties is increasing all the time. This is the revolutionary change that has come about after the armed people's war.

The other Maoists have 'Cash', 'Dash' appended to their names. But Chand's party doesn't have a tag, it's neither Cash nor Dash. In fact it is a Maoist faction that has neither cash nor dash. Can such a party survive? The Cash Maoists survive because they have cash. The Dash Maoists survive because they are dashing. But a comrade from the Chand faction maintains that his is the only genuine Maoist party that is fighting for the liberation of the proletariat. A party that has no cash can speak for the majority of the population that has nothing, and therefore will be around forever.

# Bal Mandir rapists jailed



SUNIR PANDEY

The Kathmandu District Court on Monday sentenced two men connected to the Bal Mandir to 16.5 years each, finding them guilty of repeatedly abusing three autistic girls in their early teens.

Rabin Shrestha was a former head of adoptions at the state-run orphanage and Rabin Chalise was a student who ran a youth club there. The Court ordered them to also pay Rs 100,000 each to the three girls.

On 16 June, Shrestha and Chalise were arrested by the Central Investigation Bureau (CIB) after child rights activists presented new evidence of repeated rape and abuse of other girls and boys at the orphanage.

Monday's decision by the Kathmandu District Court came after Shrestha and Chalise were denied bail in July and were kept in judicial custody as court hearings in the last four months collected testimonies from the three autistic minor girls, the two suspects, Bal Mandir officials, doctors, caretakers and other people connected to the case.

According to the testimonies given by the three autistic girls to the CIB in July, the men would introduce themselves to the children as Bollywood film stars Amitabh and Abhishek Bachchan and would lure them into drinking alcohol and watching pornography before abusing them.

They would organise 'wedding ceremonies' every Saturday and dress the girls in red saris and have them dance to brass-band wedding music. One of them would spray water on the girls, who would then be forced to take off their wet clothes. This occurred during the afternoons, when Shrestha got a free pass at the orphanage. In the evenings, according to the children's account, Shrestha used to take the children to a bar in Thamel where they were groomed to be prostitutes.

These detailed testimonies were presented to the CIB by child rights activists from ACR-Int (Action for Child Rights International). The evidence was cross-checked for veracity, and was so compelling that Shrestha and Chalise were arrested right away, while a third man was questioned but couldn't be detained because of lack of evidence.

the CIB.

The abuses at Bal Mandir first came to light after Sarah Robinson, a British teacher came to Nepal in 2009 and decided to adopt a blind girl, whom she named 'Hope', from the orphanage.

Rabin Shrestha was in charge of adoptions when Robinson applied for papers for Hope. "I tried to adopt her, but Shrestha told me I couldn't do that. He wanted me to sponsor her instead and told me I would get a decision after she turned 16," Robinson told *Nepal Times*.

It had already crossed the 35-day statute of limitation on rape when Robinson finally filed a case against Shrestha (she was afraid he could deny her Hope if she accused him) so she only filed an FIR with police on grounds of sexual abuse. Shrestha was issued a warning in 2012, but not arrested. Lawyer Sapana Pradhan Malla also listed

This was just the latest in a series of scandals to rock Nepal's orphanages some of which are fronts for child trafficking and abuse. In February, the operator of Happy Home orphanage in Dhapakhel was arrested on fraud and child abduction charges after a seven month investigation by

five other pleas: amendment to the 35-day limit, a mandamus order to not dismiss the case, to teach children about sexual abuse, to set up a child-abuse monitoring system at Bal Mandir, and for the Central Children's Welfare Board to come up with a manual for regulation.

Subash Kumar Pokharel, General Secretary of Bal Mandir, was asked in July how the accused could go in and out of Bal Mandir, but he was evasive. Instead, he accused activists of using Bal Mandir's children against the institution that protected them.

Established in 1964 to take care of orphans and abandoned children, Bal Mandir was a powerful institution with royal patronage. With Queen Ratna at the helm, it put together buildings and 50 ropanis of property which are now prime real estate.

Administered by the quasi-NGO, Nepal Children's Organisation (NCO), Bal Mandirs across the country today take care of over 600 children in 11 homes. Since the loss of its royal backing, the NCO has been plagued by political interference and corruption. Its buildings and property have been leased out to private individuals, amidst allegations of huge kickbacks to political appointees in the NCO.

In 2011, the Public Accounts Committee of the legislature parliament ordered the NCO to systematise its lease process. Seeing the conditions at Bal Mandir, the Australian charity Mitrataa Foundation agreed to manage the orphanages for five years in 2009, but pulled out within 12 months alleging widespread corruption and mismanagement at the NCO.

*Names of Sarah Robinson and Hope have been changed for safety and privacy reasons.*

[nepalitimes.com](http://nepalitimes.com)  
Child predators, #714

अत्यन्त सरल फाइनान्स सुविधा

# न्यूनतम डाउनपेमेण्ट

# रु. ५,९९९/-

मा Hero चढ्ने मौका

मोडल	मासिक किस्ता
<i>iSmart</i>	रु. ५,२९० . <sup>३९</sup>
<i>Gladiator</i>	रु. ५,७२३ . <sup>६५</sup>
<i>Pleasure</i>	रु. ५,२७२ . <sup>२६</sup>

३६ महिनाको किस्ता, डाउनपेमेण्ट बाहेक सेवा शुल्क, फायर शुल्क, रजिस्ट्रेशन शुल्क, कतिप्रहेडिसम इन्स्योरेन्स तथा शेयर सदस्यता डिपोजिट तिवृणुमेख ।

हिरोका अन्य मोडलहरुमा पनि साधारण फाइनान्स सुविधा उपलब्ध छ ।

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# Punctuating communism

Just as it is not news that dog bites man, the new split in the Maobaddies did not make headlines. Which is a pity because it is an important development that carries on the grand tradition of binary fission in Nepal's left-out parties.

This means Cash Baddies are nearly cashless, Dash Baddies have become dashless, and we are running out of punctuation marks to designate new Communist Parties of Nepal. Having made it to the Guinness Book for having the highest number of communist parties per capita in the world, Nepal has taken another great leap forward to maintain that lead with Comrade Big Plop breaking away from Baidya Kaka.

In order to help academics who are doing their doctorates on the glorious history of Nepal's communists, we present here a glossary of communistic parties. Let me know if I have left out any of you.



PARTY	NICKNAME
Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)	"Cash"
Communist Party of Nepal - Maoist	"Dash"
Communist Party of Nepal Maoist	"Dashless"
Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist)	"Brackets"
Communist Party of Nepal "Mashal"	"Quotes"
Communist Party of Nepal Masal !	"Exclamation"
Communist Party of Nepal #Hoxha	"Hash"
Communist Party of Nepal Juchhe	"Double Space"
Communist Party of Nepal - Unity Centre	"Hyphen"
Communist Party of Nepal: Marxist-Leninist-Maoist Centre	"Colon"
Communist Party of Nepal; Unity Centre-Masal	"Semi-Colon"
Communist Party of Nepal, United Marxist	"Comma Communist"
Communist Party of Nepal.	"Full Stop"
Communist Party of Nepal (BRB?)	"Question Mark"
Communist Party of Nepal (Unified Marxist-Leninist)	"Eh! Males"
Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist-Maoist)	"Malema"
Communist Party of Nepal (Marxist-Leninist)	"Male"
Communist Party of Nepal (Federal-Marxist-Leninist)	"Female"
Communist Party of Nepal (United)	"Untied"
Communist Party of Nepal (Amatya)	"Amatya Uncle's Party"
Communist Party of Nepal (Manmohan)	"Manmohan Uncle's Party"
Communist Party of Nepal (Matrika)	"Matrika Uncle's Party"
Communist Party of Nepal (Pushpa Lal)	"Not Pushpa Kamal"
Communist Party of Nepal (Burma)	"Myanmar"
Communist Party of Nepal (Democratic)	"Anything But"
Communist Party of Nepal (Fourth Convention)	"Not Third"
Communist Party of Nepal (Janamukhi)	"People's Mouth"
Communist Party of Nepal Marxist-Leninist (Socialists)	"Socialites"

Comrade Big Plop boasted at the launch of his own party the other day that he had 3,000 guns. Whoa. Those must be the ones that PKD once said had been washed away by the river, how he must be regretting lying to UNMIN about the guns he hid. Dashless ex-gorillas seem to be behind the spate of Robin Hood bank robberies in recent weeks as a part of the party's fund-raising drive. Com Plop also warned that his vigilantes will now go after crooks. Good idea, takes one to know one. Maybe he should start with the CIAA. Or maybe he should investigate the corrodes spent on solar street lights some of which have already stopped working because of dust accumulation on the PV panels.



Speaking of SAARC, here are some Summit tidbits that somehow didn't make it to the news:

- The Summit was overshadowed by a visibly grumpy Nawaz Sahrif who felt overshadowed and outsmarted by Narendra Modi. The Pakistan PM apparently threw a tantrum when he found out Modi had brought his own chopper or two to fly to Dhulikhel. "I'd have brought mine too," he is reported to have said. Then he blew a fuse when he found out the Indians had commandeered 30 rooms at Soaltee.
- It didn't help matters that NaMo was always breaking the alphabetical queue, forgetting 'I' comes after 'B'.
- Good thing none of the HOGs had to use the loo at the Shitty Hall. A mole tells us the toilets wouldn't flush, and Nepal demonstrated living proof that South Asia is in the Turd World.
- Which must be why the gobblement has decided not to open the venue to the public, they don't want us to see how they squandered money on the shoddy renovation.
- The seats were so narrow several XXL ambassadors and delegates couldn't be shoe-horned into them.
- Nepal's First Lady SuzyQ (yes, she's back) miffed the Maldivian 1st Lady by lavishing all her attention on Mrs Sharif in Bhaktapur.
- In one-on-ones @narendramodi urged consensus, but our own Rajinder Mahato only wanted a #TraumaCentre in his constituency. Traumatic.
- SAARC Medal for Prime Minister Tobgay for going down to the Cashier at the Soaltee.



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