Nothing in Nepali politics is at it appears, one has to read between the lines of headlines. So, if it seems like the disagreement about the constitution is intractable you can be sure the argument is actually about something else: power sharing after January 22.

This being the case, there is no other way to break the logjam than to push through a constitution draft containing just the points of agreement, leaving the disputed issues for later. Failing that, we can allow the opposition to write notes of dissent. And if that doesn’t work either, the parties can extend the term of the CA again with the face-saving device of forming a government of national unity and pledge to finish the job once and for all by early 2015.

Political laxative needed

Sépème Huët explores the cradle of Kathmandu Valley civilisation and its world class museum

Stéphane Huët

Some are more equal than others

The pros and cons of positive discrimination in the new constitution.

The Gadfly by David Seddon

Time to grow up

We have already lost decades in stalled development, we don’t need messy politics to compound the problem.

By the way by Anurag Acharya

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he atmosphere inside the Prime Minister’s parlour at Baluwatar on 20 December was chilly, and it wasn’t just that the heating wasn’t adequate. The top leaders of the Nepali Congress, UML, UCPN(M) and Madheni Front who had gathered around did not have their usual smiles, and there was no back-slapping.

UML Chair KP Oli, bluntn as always, lashed out at Pashupati Kamal Dahal accusing him of being purely two-faced; sabotaging the constitution writing process while appearing to be working on finding an agreement. “Don’t try to divide the country by dragging it into ethnic conflict, and push an economically uneivable federalism,” Oli said. PM Koizala used more diplomatic language, but his advice to Dahal was the same.

Dahal got up and abruptly walked out. Outside, he accused Oli of trying to be a “mahara” and two days later held a press conference with 30 Mahdhis and smaller ethnic-based parties to announce a street stir and general strikes in the run-up to 22 January against what he said was the NC-UML trying to bulldoze a constitution on the basis of their two-thirds-majority in the CA. Even more intriguing, the CPN-M led by the ailing Mohan Baidya which boycotted elections, and isn’t even in the CA, also announced parallel strikes for mid-January “in coordination” with Dahal.

Nothing in Nepal politics is as it appears, one has to read between the lines of headlines. So, if it seems like the disagreement about how many federal provinces, of what kind, and what they should be named looks intracable, you can be sure the argument is not about federalism at all but about something else. Indeed, it is not the constitution that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down

strikes for mid-January “in coordination” with Dahal.

CONSTITUTION

We need to suggest a mechanism to do away with the deadlock, since both CA exercises have been futile (“Mixed signals” Editorial, #738). A roundtable as argued by escapists is childish.

Absolutely, spot on. The constitution has to be suitable for Nepal. Don’t indulge in discussions that are an individual’s specific goal but rather focus on benefits for all. #739

I like the idea of the doomsday clock and I will keep its work (‘Playing the shame game’, Marty Logan, #739). Now we need to station some better listeners to take up their idea and implement it. I don’t think a clock tower in front of BICC will work, our very competent and caring leaders would not let that happen.

Anonymous

It’s almost certain now that 22 January will come and go without the Constitution-Nepal’s deserve. So rest easy. Dissolve CA2 and start fresh. When we have waited 24 years for another year shouldn’t matter to find honest and sincere leaders. No constitution is better than a lousy one.

M

WAR

Nothing changed for these so-called fighters who were actually criminals (“Forgotten fighters”, Deepak Adhikari, #738). But a lot changed for those who were victims of the violence they unleashed.

Murray

Yet another example of the painfully high cost of revolution.’

Saroj Dhital

Maoist leaders like Dahal and Bhattarai are terrorists. They have a lot of blood on their hands and deserve the worst. As long as there are communists in Nepal, Nepal will always suffer.

Mahesh

How can the government expect NRNS to invest in Nepal when they refrain from going to look after their own women? This is downright discrimination. Nepali politicians need to broaden their aging brains or make space for fresh minds.

Shiv Bahadur

AMM TARTERS

Great work by the artist; a perfect blend of sensationalism and substance where the immense hype was backed up by its creativity itself. I would have to argue about the original (“Art for heart’s sake” ’Stephane Hue, #739). Most artists refrain from explaining the reasoning behind their work and leave the viewers to decipher the image for themselves. In this sense, the artist’s work is so powerful. Unlike mathematicians where we only have one concrete answer, the beauty in art lies in the fact that imagination can run free with varying interpretations. In an art show I hosted in New York, Nepalis hound the artist to explain the meaning to each of his art in detail. This is sad. Let an empty canvas put up for display be seen as it is – you, the patron and a (one-thinker) don’t need to be cheated off your analysis and have a mass-market produced explanation forced down your throat. Your own rational frame an explanation out there (including the art itself).

Karma T Nyangmi

It’s a great new place for my daughter to practice shooting arrows, but it’s a bit on the costly side (“Birging archery centre”, Vish Shreshtha, #738). Had vivid flash-backs of the cover from ‘In Utter’ and the single ‘Rape Me’. Am sure other Nirvana fans may have also been reminded of the song.

BOWS AND ARROWS

ASS

As always, you are the best (‘High resolutions’, Ass, #738). I am always entertained by your blog and look forward to a new one right after I read the current one. Ass, your writing is not only funny but informative.

Anonymous

Best column of 2014. You are the Ass Buchwald of the New Nepal!

S

If it’s the top leaders who decide everything in secret, what is the point having a Dialogue Committee, a Task Force or even an elected Constituent Assembly?

The Maoist-Madhesis on the other hand both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down that is holding things up since the NC-UML on the one hand and the Maoist-Madhesis on the other had both narrowed down
Some are more equal than others

The pros and cons of ‘positive discrimination’

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Times

2 - 8 JANUARY 2015

#739

THE GADFLY
David Seddon

In George Orwell’s Animal Farm, the last and most important of the seven commandments was that ‘all animals are equal’. But when the pigs, under the command of Napoleon and his henchmen Snowball and Squealer, gained power (having overthrown Farmer Jones and having established an animal-run society on the farm), they change this to: ‘all animals are equal, but some are more equal than others’.

Positive discrimination – whether formal or informal – can be used to consolidate the power of the minority, and in this way to undermine the principles of equality and social justice.

If a progressive social transformation is to take place in an unequal society, it may be engineered in various ways. Where it is the majority that is disadvantaged, it may be possible for them to mobilise or to be mobilised to overthrow or in other ways replace the minority in power and thus gain control of their own destinies. It may even be possible for a particular disadvantaged social group to mobilise in such a way as to gain major concessions from those in power, or an enlightened minority in power may simply agree to transfer rights and powers to disadvantaged groups. But the last of these is rare, unless there is pressure from below.

In Nepal, there is a real need for those who have been historically disadvantaged in various ways to mobilise themselves to increase their representation in the body politic. Existing rights must be defended and attempts to reduce them resisted.

Any suggestion, for example, that rights to citizenship may be re-defined to prevent children of Nepali mothers from acquiring citizens’ rights automatically where their fathers are not Nepali, should be strongly resisted and women’s equal rights in this regard – and others – maintained. Already, there have been substantial demonstrations of protest at the suggestion that the Constitution may replace ‘or’ by ‘and’.

But to what extent should ‘minority’ rights be privileged over the rights of others, rather than simply defended and ensured? In Britain, the Labour Party eventually – after much debate – decided to introduce women’s short lists for parliamentary candidates. This has undoubtedly boosted both the proportion of women candidates and the number of those selected as MPs. Even the Conservative Party has adopted a modified version encouraging some positive discrimination in favour of women at the level of parliamentary candidates. But concern that this is more tokenism continues and many, including women, disagree with this tactic.

How far and by what criteria should there be ‘reserved quotas’ for political candidates from identified ‘minorities’, as in India (scheduled Tribes and Castes), and as at present in Nepal (women, Dalits, Adivasi, Janajati, Madhesis, and others from disadvantaged regions)? It could be said that this is discriminatory in two ways: first, it privileges certain identified groups and second, it further disadvantages others, including all of the ‘minorities’ not so identified (eg Muslims, people with disability, etc). In this sense, it is selective and undemocratic. The proposal to divide Nepal into federal states also seeks to ‘redress’ historical disadvantages by positive discrimination, whether regional or by ‘ethnic identity’ – again, arguably both arbitrary and discriminatory, and ultimately undemocratic.

But this is to focus on the selection of political representatives. What about the process whereby the people are themselves represented? Why do they have to accept the candidates selected by others (eg the parties) and not be free to select their own candidates? It was to this that the participants in ‘the umbrella revolution’ in Hong Kong objected – the selection by the Chinese Communist Party of the candidates for election. Perhaps we should focus more on the process of selection of candidates and the process of voting?

Political parties in Nepal (as elsewhere) tend to select their own candidates and then present them to the electorate. But it would be perfectly possible to envisage a system in which there is greater possibility for ‘independents’ to stand and more than one round of voting (as in many presidential elections). Two of the major parties in Nepal have now, it seems, opted for a first-past-the-post system of judging who gains the majority of votes, others prefer proportional representation. It could be argued that the latter was the more democratic, but there could be (as in the first Constituent Assembly election) a combination of the two systems.

And, if there is to be positive discrimination, why accept the current practice in which each voter has only one vote – even if it is a single transferrable vote? The use of ranking is widely used in a variety of elections and it would be possible to adopt a system in which all candidates were ranked by voters in order of preference, and those with the top-ranked votes won. Finally, an even more radical suggestion: what about allowing each and Dalits three – giving Dalit women five votes.

...@pigreen

UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

But equality before the eyes of the law does not necessarily confer equality of opportunity, let alone equality of outcome.
The Chinese are coming

...but a lot more tourists from China would visit if there was more information about Nepal online in Mandarin

CLAIRE LI YINGXUE
IN POKHARA

One of the most dramatic changes along shopfronts in Thamel and Pokhara these days are the number of signs in Chinese. In the sidewalks you are now more likely to hear Mandarin than English, or even Nepali, as the number of visitors from China soars. Nepali shopkeepers have also learnt Mandarin and converse fluently with Chinese tourists. Even in Chitwan, the safari guides can tell you all the Chinese names of animals and along the Annapurna trail, lodge-owners have a smattering of Mandarin.

...but a lot more tourists from China would visit if there was more information about Nepal online in Mandarin

CLAIRE LI YINGXUE
IN POKHARA

A lot of this is borne out of necessity since the number of Chinese tourists is growing, and most of them do not speak English.

A walk around Pokhara’s Lakeside and in Thamel there are signs of a demographic shift in tourism. What used to be a hub for European backpackers and a haven for Nepali revelers today dominates by tourists from China. And, businesses are cashing in on the growth.

Signs in Chinese greet you from the many haphazardly constructed buildings that make up this tourist district. Nowhere in this more prominent than the lane from Jyatha leading towards Thamel which is now aptly called Chinatown.

Chinese businesswoman Sun Junhong came to Nepal last year and opened Jindingyuan Hotel, one of the dozen Chinese-owned hotels in the area. Sun was encouraged to open a business here by her sister who owns a Chinese restaurant just a few metres away.

“During the busy season, all our rooms get booked,” says Sun who is from Sichuan province. Most of the hotels and restaurants in Thamel’s China town are owned by Chinese nationals like Sun who are encouraged to come to Kathmandu by relatives. “The government issues business licenses to foreigners to open these establishments, that’s why it is easy,” says Sun.

However, the retail shops and travel agencies that dot this lane are owned by Nepalis, one main reason is that foreigners cannot apply for retail licenses.

Uttam Pokhrel who runs a travel agency in Chinatown says learning the language is key to dealing with Chinese tourists. “Only few of them speak English therefore we have to learn Chinese,” says Pokhrel who has trained all his staff to speak the language.

Aijaz Ahmad Rather of The Cashmere House, a popular store in the area echoes Pokhrel’s statement. Rather started studying Chinese three years ago along with his brother. “Back then there was only one Chinese teacher, today there are many,” he says.

Besides learning the language, shop owners like Rather have also
learned to use an online Chinese payment system, which makes it more convenient for him to deal with Chinese customers. Rather has downloaded popular Chinese chatting apps to communicate with his Chinese customers, such as QQ and Wechat. "Several years ago, I was waiting for American shoppers, now I’m waiting for Chinese.”

While visitors from China have been coming to Nepal for decades, it was after 2009 that their numbers took off. According to Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, the number of Chinese tourists increased sharply to 113,173 in 2013 from only 32,272 in 2009, a 250 per cent jump. Most young Chinese like to travel by themselves, they prefer to look up place to visit and stay, or airlines to fly online before they arrive. However, when they search for information about Nepal, it is still all in English.

This week’s Pokhara’s Street Festival and Chitwan’s Elephant Festival would have been huge events. Several Chinese tourists say they have been coming to Nepal since 2009, a 250 per cent jump. The number of weekly flights from Chinese cities to Kathmandu is going to be the Number One tourist market for Nepal," Neupane says.  "This is going to be the Number One tourist market for Nepal,“ said Neupane. "The prediction is that within one year China will be a progressive, profitable market for Nepal." A Chinese movie Up in the Air, which is expected to double to 70. By February, Himalaya Airlines, which is two Airbus 319s, will operate Lhasa–Kathmandu with two Airbus 319s.

Yeti Airlines, which is one of the "Top Ten places in the world to see before you die”. "It has been two years since we started getting more Chinese tourists," says Gita Lamal Sagat who has a paragliding store. "A letter hung outside the shop in Chinese reads: ‘It was so exciting, we enjoyed paragliding here’.

A Chinese movie Up in the Wind shot characters did in the movie. In addition, Chinese tourists love the Chitwan National Park, which is one of the “Top Ten places in the world to see before you die".

Sherpa gear
Sherpa Adventure Gear is looking to develop a talent pool for its manufacturing base for outdoor apparel and equipment in Nepal itself, founder Tashi Sherpa said at an interaction with media, NGOs and human relations officers in Kathmandu on Friday. The Seattle-based multinational sources part of its manufacturing in Nepal where it employs nearly 2,000 people. "We want to be a progressive, profitable company and connect the history of our people to its future," Sherpa said. The company ships its Made in Nepal products to 22 countries from here.

Making history
Qatar Airways’ first Airbus A350 XWB (Ultra Wide Body) and its fourth A380 arrived in Doha simultaneously on 24 December. The delivery of the newest members of Qatar Airways’ fleet of 146 aircraft are the first of 80 A350s and the fourth of 13 A380s on order. The A350 aircraft, for which Qatar Airways is the global launch customer, is set to commence service on the Doha–Frankfurt route starting in January 2015.

New colors
Colors Mobile launched its newest smartphone X113+ Quad last week. A Dual SIM smartphone, the X113+ Quad is equipped with a Quadcore processor and runs on Android 4.4.2 KitKat OS. The X113+ Quad is priced at just Rs 10,550. A Dual SIM smartphone, the X113+ Quad is equipped with a Quadcore processor and runs on Android 4.4.2 KitKat OS. The X113+ Quad is priced at just Rs 10,550.

Style check
Etihad Airways unveiled its new uniforms at a show in Abu Dhabi last week. The new uniform was designed by Italian Haute Couturier Etro. It was introduced system-wide from 27 December.

The winners
A team led by pro golfer Suraj Prasad Sharma won the Sunya Nepal Western Open Pre-Pro title at the par-70 Himalayan Golf Course in Pokhara on Saturday. The other members include amateurs Rupendra Shrestha, Jiwaram Gurung and Maj Brijy Mohan who accumulated 135 points to win the trophy.

Exchange Carnival
Proju International, the authorized dealer of Volkswagen in Nepal is organising the Polo Exchange Carnival on the occasion of 40th anniversary of sales of Volkswagen cars in Nepal. Customers can exchange their old cars for a brand new Polo G from 1-10 January at Thapathali and PasoPokhara showrooms. The company promises best valuation, special discounts and spot financing during the offer.

China by air
Air links across the Himalaya from Nepal to China are about to get much more traffic with the announcement that Sichuan Airlines is to start flying Chengdu-uhu-Kathmandu from this month, the fourth Chinese carrier connecting Kathmandu to the mainland. Presently, Air China flies the Chengdu-uhu-Kathmandu route four times a week, and China Southern connects Kathmandu to Guangzhou twice daily. China Eastern’s Kathmandu-Kunming flights will now be extended to Shanghai-Pudong International Airport. This leaves Beijing as the only major Chinese city with no direct flight to Nepal.

The number of weekly flights from Chinese cities to Kathmandu is expected to double to 70. By February, Himalaya Airlines, which is a new joint venture between Tibet Airlines, yeti Airlines and another Nepal partner will operate Lhasa–Kathmandu with two Airbus 319s. China is now the second largest tourist source country to Nepal, and the number of Chinese tourists has nearly doubled in the past year. "We are getting a lot of inquiries from Chinese agencies," says Prahva Neupane, the founder of the domestic online booking site, Nepalflights (see page 7).

Nepalflights is aiming to Chinese customers, because of the potential for growth. "The prediction is that within one year China is going to be the Number One tourist market for Nepal," Neupane told Nepal Times.
Two Hollywood movies about tragic mountaineering expeditions 60 years apart are to be released in 2015, with a blare of publicity for the Himalaya that is expected to give a boost to Nepal’s trekking tourism.

The first is Everest directed by Baltasar Kormákur who made The Deep and Contraband, and stars Jake Gyllenhaal, Jason Clarke, John Hawkes and Josh Brolin. The film is based on Jon Krakauer’s best-selling Into Thin Air.

The story revolves around Beck Weathers, an American climber who miraculously survived two nights above 8,000m and was rescued with a Taiwanese climber, by Nepali Army rescue pilot, Col Madan KC from Camp II. The risky rescue was the highest-ever helicopter landing in history at the time. Col KC’s role is played by Nepali actor and airline pilot, Capt Vijay Lama.

The second movie was also confusingly called ‘Everest’ and depicts the story of British climbers George Mallory and Andrew Irvine who disappeared in 1922 trying to be the first to climb Mt Everest. Mallory’s body was found 70 years later on the North Face of the mountain. The movie is based on a novel by Jeffrey Archer called Paths of Glory which says the two reached the summit.

For Vijay Lama, who has acted in numerous Nepali films over the last three decades, 2014 was an exciting year in which he got to experience how Hollywood movies are made. He was on location in the Italian Alps in early 2014 where some of the scenes of the helicopter rescue on Mt Everest were shot. Later, he went to Pinewood Studios to shoot some of the other scenes in a flight simulator.

“I got to be treated like a star with other members of the cast, including Josh Brolin, Martin Henderson, John Hawkes,” Lama recalled, “ever since my first Nepali film I had always dreamt of acting in a Hollywood movie. I am living proof that dreams are not impossible if you believe in it and pursue it honestly.”

Being a pilot made the role easier for Lama, who insisted on speaking in Nepali with his co-pilot with English subtitles.

Lama says he was also impressed with the logistics and preparation that goes into an international film shoot. “The crew and the cast of Everest is so huge that it took many people who were assigned specific tasks to work together,” he recalls, “one little mistake would mean huge losses. It was a team game, team spirit, team effort and most of all team discipline – something we in Nepal can learn from.”

Working in the mountains of Val Senales in Italy was not easy for the crew and cast, there were blizzards, wind and unexpected delays. In comparison, it was easier shooting at Pinewood where the summit of Everest, the Hillary Step, helicopter simulators were all recreated in the studio.

Says Lama: “Working with these international units have humbled me and have given me more reason to work harder in the coming days and learn to be more professional in the subjects I am involved in.”

Lama has been featured in a Channel 4 documentary on extreme airports, where he is filmed landing in Lukla and Talcha, as well as the 2011 Discovery Channel documentary on the world’s most dangerous airports. This year, he has also been busy with Nepali films, including playing the lead role in Sudarshan Thapa’s Ajhai Pani, and was acting in Punarjanam when his brother-in-law and director Alok Nembang died tragically. He is also acting with Sasupati Malla and Priyanka Karki in Sadanga.

Lama will have to leave in January for Bombay to shoot some more scenes for Everest and then for simulator training in Toulouse for the new Airbus 320 that Nepal Airlines is acquiring.

He says: “Looks like 2015 will be even more hectic than 2014.”

Kunda Dixit
Looks like we are headed for another bout of cloud and rain into the weekend as a storm in the Bay of Bengal heads north. The westerlies will blow some of the outlying tentacles away from the Himalaya, but the system is huge and it will bring cloud cover and some precipitation to central and eastern Nepal into Friday and Saturday. Expect travel times to be 2-3 hours at 5,000m and 24 hours or more on the lower valleys in the east. It’s time to worry about an extended period of a gap in the clear sky on Saturday and morning fog on Sunday.

After graduating in computer science from Tribhuvan University, Prakash Neupane worked as a software developer like many of his classmates. But unlike them he wasn’t angling to migrate, he dreamt of staying in Nepal and starting his own software business. He saw an opportunity to combine the leapfrogging potential of smartphone apps and Nepal’s growing aviation industry.

“I had the idea of integrating all travel businesses, providing a single solution,” said Neupane who initially wanted flights, hotels, trekking, even bungee jumping and elephant rides. But after careful research, he decided to focus on domestic flights. Nepflights is the only website providing solely domestic flights booking in Nepal with five airlines, four payment methods and up to 25 destinations.

At first none of the airlines were interested. Neupane changed tack and visited Flight Connection International, which came in as an investor and also brought the airlines.

With an ‘Agents’ section on its website, a travel agency can easily join the booking system. In fact, 95 per cent of Nepflights’ business comes from travel agencies in what is called ‘B2B’ (business-to-business). Nepflights receives a 6-9 per cent commission from airlines by providing a platform to sell tickets to travel agencies. Nepflights gives eight per cent of the commission to travel agencies. The other model is called ‘B2C’ (business to customer) in which travelers book directly from their websites and pay either online via Payal or Esewa or offline. Neupane hopes that most of his revenue will ultimately be B2C once he sorts out the online payment problem.

“We will be the Nepali version of Kayak for domestic flight in Nepal,” Neupane said. Kayak is the leading flight booking website internationally. (Although he decided to focus on the domestic market for the moment, Neupane always keep an eye on the bigger picture, and he is cashing in on the China market (see page 4-5).)

Asked where he sees himself in five years, the 25-year-old thinks for a while and says carefully: “We are going to be the platform for all travel-related businesses in Nepal.”

Elaine Wang Yiwai
In this digital era, billions of users around the world express their thoughts on blogs, social networks or in comments accompanying news articles. This is a gold mine for businesses that want to track what is being said about them, but it is a complicated process to track and analyze these opinions.

A decade ago, sentiment analysis emerged as a way to monitor opinions expressed on the internet using algorithms using key words to chart what is said about whom and when.

"Basically, it is the process of crawling raw data on the web to segment them between positive and negative sentiments," explains Chandan Ghospa, a computer student at Kathmandu University.

Considering that there wasn’t much research on the subject around the world, Ghospa started studying the domain for his thesis two years ago to analyze Nepali newspaper editorials.

While teaching elements of his research to Bachelor students in computer engineering, Ghospa met undergrads who were eager to explore the subject further. "I was more into Big Data before," says Amit Joshi, one of Ghospa’s students. "But it’s more exciting to be able to interpret data for sentiment analysis."

Knowledge acquired during research and a group of motivated undergrads were the base for the foundation of SentiNep in June 2014. Ashmit Bhattarai, Pratik Shrestha and Akriti Bhusar complete the team that conceived The Opinio app.

SentiNep worked continuously for the last six months to ensure the launch of the first sentiment analysis app of Nepal for the end of January. Its programming involved artificial intelligence, machine learning and natural language processing, The Opinio reads statements in English and Nepali. "Sentiments are often expressed in English and most of our press is in Nepali, we programmed it to be bilingual," explains Akriti Bhusar, the designer of SentiNep.

The premium version of The Opinio offers an all-in-one platform that enables businesses to receive notifications instantaneously and reply to users on different social networks directly from the app. "That’s our key selling point as no one has time to lose," explains Ghospa.

Ghospa won the Corporate sector prize at NCell App Camp 11 December 2014, and the developers say they have received good response from businessmen interested in the app.

Ghospa is first to admit that not all opinions can be readily quantified. Emotions are, as he says: "The Opinio can be a useful tool for businesses to understand their market, but often what users write on social networks is not what they really think."

Stéphane Huët
Since partially revamping its services, Sajha has shown that modern bus rapid transit is possible in Kathmandu. In a city notorious for unreliable and congested vans and three-wheelers, Sajha’s green buses are a sight for sore eyes with its proper ticketing system, automated doors, passenger load limit, CCTV cameras, display screens and even Internet services. All that was missing was the ability to see in a smartphone app how long it will take for the bus to arrive at a stop.

Enter Raj Kumar Shrestha, Rajiv Shrestha, Rupesh Karki and Niharendra Shalja of Luniva Tech with their ‘Hamro Sajha’ app. The team noticed that commuters didn’t know how long they had to wait because buses were stuck in traffic. Now, passengers with smartphones can open a map of the route and small moving icons will show you the bus number, its location and approximate time to the next stop — all in real time.

"Instead of waiting for the bus to arrive, passengers can now plan ahead and match their timings with the buses," says Rajiv Shrestha, "this saves a lot of time and hassles."

For now, tracking is available for two buses in the first phase, Bhanchha will be welcomed widely by the community celebrate the same festival differently. We will try to include the original process and for that a lot of research is necessary," says Shrestha.

A beta version of the app will be available for iOS and Android platforms on 1 January. In the first phase the app will only be available online, although an offline version is also planned. The team is also planning to make the app available in local languages apart from English and Nepali. Says Shrestha: “Since the rituals are local, the more localisation, the better.”

Bhanchha is an idea of five university students led by Adish Acharya, a senior computer student from the Pulchowk Engineering College and is based on the ‘dhaba’ lunch network in Mumbai, only this is done through the mobile internet.

"Pretty much anyone can provide the food on our platform," said Acharya, “from housewives to restaurant owners, anyone who is interested in cooking and has time." After their first step, they have contacted some chefs around New Road to establish individual profiles of amateur chefs.

Since many chefs may not have access to the internet, they are building an SMS system that automatically sends out SMS message to amateur chefs as soon as an order is made on the app.

As for the delivery, Acharya and his team provide two solutions. “The chefs can deliver by themselves, or when we grow bigger we can hire our own deliverymen,” Acharya explains.

The team is just on its fourth year in college, and plan to spend the new year developing the business plan and launch in early 2015.

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**Newari folk**,

Dhon Cholecha, a musical Newari folk tale play in an abridgment of Sangamotak Juddha’s ‘Buddhamiti Dhon Cholecha’.

10-15 January 2015 (except Tuesday), 6.45pm, Shilpee Natya Samuha, Battisputali

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**KJC Winter Camp**, A five-day workshop for the 5 to 12 years old with vocal training, playing instruments, drama, recording at studio and outdoor such as hiking and social awareness tour.

Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, 5 to 9 and 12 to 16 January 2015, 10.30am to 4.30pm

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Malini, A charity theatre show of Rabindranath Tagore’s Malini to support Nepal Critical Care Development Foundation in getting essential medical supplies.

In 500, 15 January, 4.30pm to 6pm, Theatre Village, Lajimpat

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**Art Market**, A place to sell and buy art in the form of paintings, prints, posters and design products, with a live gig by Cademus Collective.

3 January, 12 to 3pm, The Yellow House, Sanepa, (0)1 5006665, contact@image-ark.com

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**Cheers talk**, Subhash Ghimire, new editor at Republica and the youngest of a broadsheet daily in Nepal is the guest of the 31st session of Cheers Talk.

Rs 100, 3 January, 3.30 to 5pm, DECC Hall, 4th floor of United World Trade Center, Pepsicola, 8841-770110, cheersnp@gmail.com

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**Critique session**, An invitation to artists to present portfolios and projects to be critiqued by Regina Hofer, MA University of Bonn and Dr Robert M. Schmitz, Mathesius Kunsthochschule, Germany.

Siddhartha Art Gallery, 3 to 4 January, 10am to 4pm, malini.hu@gmail.com, sonia3@gmail.com, 9849519952, 9861089747

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**Ultra trail race**, Run an ultra distance trail race around the northern hills of Kathmandu starting at the Shivapuri National Park.

3 January, Shivapuri National Park, More information and registration: www.ultratrailkathmandu.com, info@trailrunningnepal.org

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**Little Picasso**, An art workshop for the school-going student to enhance their sensibility towards observational and imaginary skills.

Rs 500, 2-11 January, Artudio, Swayambhu, 9851180088, artudio@hotmail.com

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**#Occupy**, A collection of art objects with global conscience.

6 January, 10am to 6.30pm, The City Museum Kathmandu, Darbar Marg

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**Indo-Nepal relations**, A talk on India-Nepal Economic and Cultural relations by Ashish Sinha, First Secretary of Commerce Wing and Director of Indian Cultural Relations in Nepal.

3 January 2015, 3pm to 3pm, Bridgewater International College, Sinamangal, : (0)2299527, aidia.asia@gmail.com

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**Forum for freedom**, The 3rd Asia Liberty unites friends of freedom from over 30 countries and provide a unique opportunity to interact with intellectuals, think tank leaders and freedom champions who work to improve the climate of discussion for rational market-based economic policies and good governance in Asia.

8-10 January, Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Tahachal, www.acenetwork.asia/alf2015, srijan@ccs.in, manogya@samriddhi.org

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**Barista lavazza**, The newest addition to the Valley’s European inspired coffee-culture cafes serves excellent mochas and lattes, don’t forget to try the grilled chicken sandwich. (Jadibuti)
MUSIC

Underground GIG,
Nepal Underground’s gig, marking their journey of five years, featuring the four bands.
7 February, 7 to 6pm Purple Haze, Hotel Yak & Yeti, Kathmandu

Wave Tour,
A series of concerts across Nepal to mark the 20th anniversary of Wave magazine.
Prices to be announced from 17 January.

Deathfest,
The accomplished – local and international – Extreme Metal bands join together at a place to celebrate the glorious genre.
9 and 10 January, Borossa Lounge, Hattisar, Pokhara

GETAWAYS

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Good food and good company by the pool and jacuzzi to begin your weekends on right note.
On weekends.

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9 and 10 January, Borossa Lounge, Hattisar, Pokhara

Temple Tree Resort and Spa,
A peaceful place to stay, complete with a swimming pool, massage parlour, and sauna, I’ll be hard to leave once you go in. Gaunbadi, Lakeside, (01)465819

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

Fulbari Resort,
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Pokhara, (01)4461918/2241

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Hotel Yak & Yeti, Darbar Marg, (01)424899, reservation@laldurbar.com

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Times
2 - 8 JANUARY 2015}

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Citing the seminal realist filmmaker Robert Bresson, Olivier Assayas, the talented French director is rigorous about depicting life as is, with all its fascinating minutiae. Almost always writing his own scripts, this fairly prolific director jumps from subject to subject, hardly ever repeating his themes. In his latest, incredibly brave new film “The Clouds of Sils Maria”, which premiered earlier this year at the Cannes film festival, we have something of an anomaly. This is a cool clever script that becomes a fascinating puzzle of a film, hard to decipher even days after viewing, meant perhaps to be an enigmatic portrait of a woman growing old, albeit gracefully.

The film stars the wonderful Juliette Binoche as Maria Enders, a very famous A list star who is oblivious of vile internet celebrity culture, but understanding of the current Hollywood zeitgeist which deems actresses unemployable after 40 (or earlier). The plot is seemingly simple, Maria is travelling with her assistant Valentine (Kristin Stewart) in Switzerland, on her way to a ceremony that is celebrating the achievement of Wilhelm Melchior who wrote “Maloja Snake” – a now famous play that is about the intense love affair between an older powerful woman and a younger manipulative girl who quickly learns to wield her influence on her lover. Maria had starred as the younger girl when the play first opened, a role that catapulted her into fame. During the journey, Wilhelm is found dead near his alpine home in Sils Maria, and Maria herself wroth with grief, finds herself in an existential dilemma when she is approached to play the older woman in “Maloja Snake” for a commemorative show for Wilhelm. She agrees only to find herself detesting the psychology behind the older woman’s character, struggling to find a kernel of empathy, helped by her faithful Valentine during painful rehearsals.

As Maria deals with her own issues of insecurity, her relationships with Valentine, and Jo-Ann Ellis (Chloë Grace Moretz), who is cast as the younger woman, continue to be the crux of the film’s mystery as roles blur, people manipulate each other (or not), and nothing is quite as it seems. A true film of the art-house “The Clouds of Sils Maria” is compelling viewing, with Binoche at her best. Stewart, as always, is a bit wooden, very American in her delivery and her persona, though oddly watchable in a role written for her by Assayas. Moretz too, a previously talented actor, falters in her role as the spoilt ingenue, her character too thinly written, her antics just too shallow to be real. Despite these slight lapses, this is a film to ponder over – a compelling film for our times.

**MUST SEE**

Sophia Pande

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Manny's

What do Charlie Chaplin, tapas, siu mai, and Thai food all have in common? Manoj Basnet, better known as Manny, leaves us stumped. His newly opened, self-dubbed restaurant in Jawalakhel is an ambitious eatery and tapas bar with just too much on its plate.

Divided into four sections: 1) an outdoor garden with a big-screen projection for silent films and sports, 2) a formal dining area, 3) a coffee terrace and 4) lounge and dance floor, Manny's resembles a hotel lobby and an executive member's club designed without a general theme. As for its menu, Manny's eclectic tastes carry through. The concept of tapas is not foreign to the Nepali palate. Tapas are snacks that dance well in a chew-and-quench number. Manny's offers diverse savory bites like crispy buffalo wings and Chinese dumplings or siu mai. Patatas bravas is a classic Spanish snack composed of roasted potatoes lathered with a tomato-mayo sauce. But Manny's version, presented like lamb-chops, was dry and overcooked. Shame on me.

For repast, the tequila-marinated chicken is a letdown. The idea of meat simmering in an intoxicating sauce sounds exotic and appealing. But like the vodka shrimp penne at Roadhouse Café, it's a foolish faux pas. The chicken, presented like lamb-chops, was dry and overcooked. Shame on me.

The highlight on the menu, which miraculously summons back to last week's request, is the Philly Cheese Steak Sandwich. Done right, but needs just a tad more cheddar, the sandwich is a toasty, buttery baguette (so rare) lined with perfectly cooked strips of steak and is definitely worth the visit.

Ultimately, the 'Continensian' options at Manny's renders more confusion than 'non-fusion'. The trend in the dining industry to go international is an unfortunate one and should be left up to food courts and IHOPs. With Chinese, Mexican, Spanish, Thai, Japanese, Italian, American, and French dishes to choose from, Manny's is overwhelming. At the very least, as Manny says, the menu is momo-free (but like any 'good business', they're flexible, he adds).

Marco Pollo

South from the roundabout in Jawalakhel turn right into Shaligram Hotel and Apartments. This review is a reprint of the original that was printed in #567.

Nepali music is defined as 'new-school folk music' by the band members. Indeed, Night gives a refreshing vibe to the Nepali music scene.

The debut album shows that Night actually know their instruments. Up to 24 are played on ‘Ani Ukali Sangai Orali’ and most of them being recorded in modern settings for the first time.

But Night isn’t just instruments. Singer Sumnima Singh amazes as she easily shifts from low-tones to high-octaves. Her voice fits well with Jason Kunwar’s timbre to weave in the masterfully arranged compositions.

The whole makes ‘Ani Ukali Sangai Orali’ an album that is close to perfection. The emotion that lies in ‘Taina Ko Cha Hai Bhara’ is a good example. One could only regret the fretless bass isn’t more present in Night’s new-school folk.

Through the lyrics, Night also pays tribute to the harsh life of villagers they have met while moving around the country. The title track (meaning ‘With the climb, the descent’) alludes to the daily experience of Nepalis climbing up and down the rural hills.

The short and powerful ‘Sunko Jutta’ (Gilded shoes) is a reference to the steady rise of Nepalis going to the Gulf in search of a better future, but who return home in boxes.

Like the getaways in remote regions of the country have helped its composition, ‘Ani Ukali Sangai Orali’ is an exploration, a journey traditional Nepali music unveils with fresh bitters unbeknown sounds.
B for Barley

Barley (Jau in Nepali) may be Nepal’s most important crop culturally, but is being consumed less food these days.

Buddha Bhasnyat, MD

From babyhood when our mothers fed us barley water during illness to drinking scotch in adulthood, barley has stood us in good stead. In many villages in the Himalayan region, instant noodles have replaced tsampa (roasted barley) as a staple diet, chiefly due to ease of preparation. This is unfortunate because the health benefits of barley are numerous.

It is a rich source of B-vitamins and micronutrients, eases bowel movement, and also helps regulate blood glucose levels. There is also some evidence that consuming barley over a long period may help to decrease blood cholesterol.

The only downside is that like wheat and rye, barley contains gluten which makes it an unsuitable grain for consumption by those with Coeliac disease.

A recent article in the journal Science has shown that barley may be the reason why human habitation was possible in places as high as 4700m on the Tibetan plateau. Unlike other grains like rice and wheat, barley grows more easily than in these higher altitude areas.

The article co-authored by Chen Fahu and Dong Guanghui from Lanzhou University in China suggested that even when the climatic conditions became colder, it was possible to grow barley at high altitude in Tibet. Paleontological data (data from fossils) shows that humans have been living at high altitude in the Tibetan plateau since about 20,000 years ago. (This is in sharp contrast to high altitude human habitation in South America which is estimated to be about 6000 years old.)

After examining 53 sites in the north east part of the Tibetan plateau, what became clear to investigators Chen and Dong was that human settlement did not happen above 3000m for a long time. People did go up to higher altitude areas (above 3000m) in search of game such as goats, sheep, ass, and yaks, but no one settled permanently in these higher reaches. It was only after the Tibetans started growing barley that settlement became possible.

Barley arrived in Tibet by way of the Middle East around 3600 years ago where this grain had already brought about a farming revolution. In fact the Chinese study revealed almost a crucial contour line in these 53 sites designated by the kind of crop that was grown. Those above a certain contour line are dominated by barley and below that line is dominated by millet.

Many of us who have trekked in the Everest region know that at altitudes as high as 4300m (in Dingboche on the route to Everest), we can see both buckwheat (Phapar) and barley growing. But higher up, if grain plantation was carried out, it is only barley that grows successfully.

With its ability to grow in high altitude, under extreme weather conditions and the range of nutritional benefits it possesses, barley is a valuable crop that will continue to provide both physical and spiritual sustenance to the people of the Himalaya.

GIZMO by YANTRICK

The audio is a let-down. The sound from the TV is nice and broad, and movie monologues sound clear, while music is crisp and bass is also plentiful. Keep in mind that this is only a receiver, meaning you have to buy the speakers and woofer to accompany the 7.1 system separately.

The Yamaha RX-V567 AV receiver has a nice balance of connectivity options. There are the basics like AM and FM radio, two optical inputs, 4 HDMI inputs and one output, the usual group of composite AV ports as well. On the far left side there is a 6.3mm headphone jack for solo listening, a 3.5mm jack for your portable devices, and a 3.5mm jack for your portable devices, and a single set of composite ports for video and stereo audio.

As far as general audio performance goes this Yamaha AV receiver stays up pretty close with the leading competition. The frequency response is nice and broad, and movie monologues sound clear, while music is crisp and bass is also plentiful. Keep in mind that this is only a receiver, meaning you have to buy the speakers and woofer to accompany the 7.1 system separately. The Yamaha RX-V567 AV receiver has a nice balance of connectivity options. There are the basics like AM and FM radio, two optical inputs, two coaxial inputs, two component inputs and one output, the usual group of composite AV inputs and outputs for non-HD purposes and then a set of HDMI ports. The HDMI is version 1.4 and is 3D Ready. However, you need to install a firmware to relish the 3D capabilities. There are 4 HDMI inputs and one output, which should cover your basic HD needs. Those, along with the other ports, are all on the back side of the AV receiver. On the front side there is a section of AV ports as well. On the far left side there is a 6.3mm headphone jack for solo listening, a 3.5mm jack for your portable devices, and a single set of composite ports for video and stereo audio.

The Yamaha RX-V567 supports Dolby Digital Plus, Pro Logic IIx, EX and TrueHD, while on the DTS side of things, it supports DTS Neo: 6, ES, 96/24 and HD Master Audio. Although the Yamaha RX-V567 does not come with the option for Bluetooth connections, it has an adaptor, and also an iPhone/iPod dock is available for all Apple users.

If you want the complete home theater experience, then a capable receiver such as the Yamaha RX-V567 is a must.

Yantrick’s Verdict: A must-have gizmo for those finicky about their audio quality. Retail at approx Rs 45,000.
Opinion

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2 - 8 January 2015 #739

By The Way

Anurag Acharya

Professor Angus Madison’s The World Economy: A Millennial Perspective is considered as one of the most comprehensive works of economic history. It provides rich insight into global patterns of growth and demography in the last millennium.

By The Way

Anurag Acharya

From the fall of the Empires to the rise of modern nation states and expansion of international trade and commerce, the book gives us a broad picture and trajectory of global human development.

Madison sifts through data and shows us how Western Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and Japan were able to achieve rapid growth compared to the rest of the world. Similarly, he attributes the dramatic rise of economies including South Korea, China, Malaysia, Botswana, Brazil, Thailand, Indonesia, Hong Kong and Singapore to their sustained high growth rate in the last three decades of the millennium (1965-1995).

What hits us most is the realization that south Korea, Taiwan and Singapore were at about the same level of development as Nepal way back in 1965, but leap-frogged due to leadership, cohesive politics and good governance.

However, this achievement has not resulted in improvement in overall quality of life, as both our people and economy remain stunted. The political and energy crisis are feeding into one another to create a vicious cycle, forcing industries and business to shut down, and making farmers abandon their land. Lack of jobs has resulted in exodus of manpower.

At a discussion at Martin Chautari this week, Planning Commission member Swarnim Wagle pointed out that with 40 per cent of country’s population between 16-40, we can either reap youth dividend or set off the demographic timebomb.

Wagle said the classic excuse of geography as destiny does not necessarily explain Nepal’s failed development. “While landlockedness is a handicap, the bigger problems lie at institutional level,” he said, “if we can overcome these, Nepal’s geopolitical location between the two fastest growing economies offer huge potential.”

Indeed, as Wagle points out, ours is a problem of rent-seeking mindset where politicians are used to scribbling a project plan literally in the back of an envelope and passing it on to the planning commission for execution. A country which keeps big chunk of its workforce out of its own economy is actually killing its own potential.

Wagle went on to argue why he is against the fashionable demand to scrap the National Planning Commission. Instead, he wants the NPC to scrap its Soviet-style periodic planning model.

“We are doing building bridges and approving ministerial programs, let’s leave that to local bodies,” he says, “our job now must be to streamline longer-term sectoral strategies in coordination with the line ministries and focus more on monitoring and evaluating the impact.”

Wagle feels first generation economic reforms that advocated for unrestrained privatisation will not work anymore. The new team at the NPC is still trying to diagnose what the past planners overlooked, but they seem convinced that the state needs to play stronger regulatory role, guiding economy from extractive towards inclusive growth.

By Wagle’s own admission, reversing country’s growing manpower flight to fuel internal growth, and putting the scattered $6 billion remittance inflows to productive use in the interim period are the trickiest problems.

The bad news is, even if Wagle and his team manage to figure it all out, it will not be sufficient to kick-start Nepal’s stalled growth. For that those pulling the political strings from Singha Durbar, Bakhu Darbar and Lazimpat Darbar must first start acting like grown-ups. And today’s headline tell me that just ain’t happening anytime soon.

Interview with Swarnim Wagle on News24 TV

Time to grow up

We have already lost decades in stalled development, we don’t need messy politics to compound the problem

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एक ताजाय, न्यायालाई सुरक्षित, भुमिका ग्रहण गर्नु।
Looking down at Kathmandu Valley from Changu Narayan today, you can imagine what the first human settlers of this region saw: a deep blue lake fringed by steep forested hills and reflecting the snowy mountains to the north.

Besides its famous Vishnu shrine, the cradle of Kathmandu Valley civilisation now has a world class museum.

**STÉPHANE HUËT**

The lake did not drain away all at once, and during the pre-Lichhavi period there was probably a smaller body of water in the Manahara Valley to the north of Changu Hill. This is a place of antiquity, where you have to be careful not to step on religious objects and stone inscriptions scattered around the temple courtyard.

The Changu Naryan temple is dedicated to Vishnu, the preserver of the universe, and was first built in 325AD and predates the Licchavi Period. It is one of the few religious sites from that period that survives intact to this day because others were destroyed by fires, earthquakes or razed during invasions. This remarkable and sumptuously decorated double-roofed shrine is situated on a 1,540m hill which is actually the edge of a long spur that drops down from Nagarkot. The temple itself was rebuilt several times, the present structure was put up in 1702 although the stone sculptures and ornaments are much older. Hindu devotees come here to worship Vishnu, while Buddhists pay respects to Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

One of the oldest inscriptions found in Kathmandu valley, dating back to 464AD is carved on a pillar near the entrance of the temple which records that the Licchavi King, Manadeva persuaded his mother, Rajyavati, not to commit sati on the funeral pyre of her husband, King Dhrmapala. It also testifies that Changu Narayan was already an important site for pilgrimage at that time, and was also an administrative centre.

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CHANGU BY ANY OTHER NAME

Changu Narayan has changed its name several times over the centuries. The shrine was known as Dolakhanawansi during the Licchavi era, and was finally given its present Newari name during the reign of the Malla kings after “Aha” for the champak tree. Today, there are still some champaks left, but the slopes were infertile with pine during the Karna period which makes the shrine vulnerable to fires.

THE LEGEND OF VISHNU

Vishnu is one of the gods of the Trimurti who is the preserver of the universe while Brahma is the creator and Shiva is the destroyer. Most Nepalis are Shaivaites, but Vishnu is still venerated and the kings of Nepal were regarded as incarnations of Vishnu as were the gods, Ram and Krishna. The god is often seen riding his vehicle, the Garuda (below), or reclining on a bed of serpents, as seen in the Vishnu shrine at Budanilkantha. Vishnu is associated with light and therefore is also regarded as the sun god.

IN 2010, the Department of Archaeology started renovating the Amatya Sattal, which was in dilapidated state. “The owner of the Sattal had neglected the building for years and nobody claimed it,” says Mangala Pradhan, chief of the Monument Preservation and Palace Maintenance Office. As part of the renovation the Living Traditions Museum was set up with the first gallery opening on March 2011 to present and protect artfacts of various ethnic groups in Nepal. The Museum opened its second gallery earlier this month with a new permanent exhibition titled Changu Narayan, Now and Then Since 463.

Sunita Bhadel, 26, was born and raised in Changu Narayan. After graduating in Cultural Studies at Tribhuvan University she now manages the museum. “The village around the temple actually illustrates significant stages of Nepal, from the 5th to 17th century,” Bhadel explains, “and the second gallery shows the important story of Changu Narayan and the Kathmandu Valley during the Licchavi period.”

A 3m paubha mural made by Sundar Bajracharya (left) illustrates the mythological sites of the Kathmandu Valley during the Licchavi period. An important photographic reconstruction of the main pillar from the Licchavi period can also been seen.

The repoussé art section (below, left) in the second gallery was curated by James Giambrone of Indigo Gallery who says he wanted to showcase the traditional art of the Newars. This is the technique used to mould the gilt representation of Vishnu at the entrance of the temple. With the artisan Raj Kumar Shyam Gimbomb, he documented the 10 stages of the process.

LIVING TRADITIONS MUSEUM

HOW TO GET THERE

Changu Narayan is 20 minutes by car from Bhaktapur or turnoff from the highway to Nagarkot. The hiking trail from Nagarkot gradually descends through the terraced fields and traditional Tamang and Newari communities. Crossing villages with thatched houses, painted with ochre gives the opportunity to see rural Nepali lifestyle and architecture up close and personal. The first half of the hike is a cultural discovery, the rest of the walk offers a scenic view of the surrounding hills and the snow mountains beyond. The walk from Nagarkot to Changu Narayan is an easy hiking with relatively easy vertical gains that takes around 4h.
There won’t be any agreement with those who want to turn Nepal into Rwanda, and spread ethnic turmoil in the name of identity.

Why are you in the opposition again?
Pushpa Kamal Dahal: The CA is an institution that comes from historical movement and mandates set by citizens. Political leaders therefore have tried to agree on drafting a new constitution. The first thing that needs to be clear is that just because you have been elected and have majority doesn’t mean you can do whatever you want. When India gained freedom, they didn’t draft a constitution immediately. They went to elections, discussed and formed one through the CA. There are a certain fundamental principles including that of state- restructuring, secular state, republican federalism, inclusive and proportional representation that were agreed on beforehand. If you forget the historical agreements, there will be conflict. It is because of these principles that the country has a CA and is in the process of becoming a federal democratic republic. If we abandon these principles now, we will move back in time. Our party wants a constitution based on these principles according to the previous agreements, for that we are ready to be extremely flexible.

Why are you so adamant about the form of government?
The reason for Nepal’s political and economic instability is because we have been following a parliamentary system. The Westminster system brews extreme corruption and power struggles. For Nepal to move towards stability and economic development, it is imperative we have a stable government for at least five years. This is only possible with a directly elected president with executive powers. It isn’t like a directly elected presidential system is undemocratic. Can the US be called undemocratic?

President will make centre stronger and unite future federal states. Can the US be called undemocratic?

Why are you so adamant about the form of government?

There won’t be any agreement with those who want to turn Nepal into Rwanda, and spread ethnic turmoil in the name of identity. Why are you so adamant about the form of government? The reason for Nepal’s political and economic instability is because we have been following a parliamentary system. The Westminster system brews extreme corruption and power struggles. For Nepal to move towards stability and economic development, it is imperative we have a stable government for at least five years. This is only possible with a directly elected president with executive powers. It isn’t like a directly elected presidential system is undemocratic. Can the US be called undemocratic?
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF NEPAL

(An autonomous regulatory body established on 31st December 1998 under Civil Aviation Act 1996 has been set up with the objective of ensuring flight safety & sustainability of Civil Aviation)

We extend our best wishes & hearty congratulation to Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal on its glorious 16th anniversary

Happy New Year - 2015
The year has got off to a flying start with parties sticking steadfastly to their new year resolutions to keep partying on by extending the life of the Second CA. As the year-long revelries start, we should all brace ourselves to enjoy accomplishing even less in 2015 than we accomplished in 2014.

Some parties have really got into the mood and have scheduled district, zonal and national bandhs for the coming year. We can look forward to lots of do-nothing days that can be devoted to attending to personal hygiene and cleaning up our nooks and crannies. Now that 17 January and 19 January have both been declared Nepal bandhs by the Dash and Cash Baddies respectfully, many of us will finally have time on our hands to extract wads of lint from inside our belly buttons which can be sold to the nation’s pashmina industry to earn the national exchequer valuable foreign currency to pay for our burgeoning imports. If all of us Nepalis contribute by taking part in navel exercises in 2015, we can make this country great again.

Through trial and error over the past 50 years we have finally hit on the right formula for governance in our country: allow our rulers to goof off so they don’t goof up. However, with factions and splinter groups declaring bandhs left and right, there is a crying need for a coordinating body to schedule national shutdowns to avoid duplication and overlap.

The proposed High-Level National Strike Coordination Mechanism (HLNSCM) will be made up of a consortium of like-minded leaders who want the country to come to a standstill, but don’t want to get in each others’ way. With most days in January already taken, the HLNSCM has announced that January 20 is the only date still open for any political force for or against federalism which wants to declare a bandh for whatever reason. The Mechanism has apologised to the public for the oversight, which means some people will have to actually go to work on that day.

But the Mechanics are taking bookings for bandhs in 2015 on a first-come-first-serve basis, and technicians are working on an app so that political parties can use smartphones to block off days when they want to get agitated, and the public can conveniently find out which days are allocated to protest a particular clause in the proposed constitution. We can also virtually set fire to a digital version of the new constitution if we can’t get our hands on an actual hardcopy of the draft.

The success of a bandh hinges on people voluntarily keeping off the streets. But we must persuade them to keep their motorcycles at home by burning the first one that ventures out. We must train the guardians of our democracy in the art of shattering the windscreen of a speeding car from 25 yards. And who exempted rickshaws and airplanes? How can we defend freedom if we allow planes to fly around on Days of National Shutdown? Do we believe in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism-Vandalism or not? When we say we want to jam all chakkas, we should mean it, and that includes anything running on ball bearings.

A note of caution, however. The donkey hears through the grapevine that there are still political parties out there who do not believe in bandhs and are squeamish about using this great avenue to express our democratic desire to take a day off. Woe on such spoil-sports. How can our hard-won freedoms ever be safeguarded if we don’t vigorously exercise our fundamental human right to stay home and harvest our burgeoning lint?