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## TWO THOUSAND WIDOWS

ROJITA ADHIKARI

Nani Maiya Prajapati (above) was serving food to her daughter, son-in-law and their two children when the building in Sankhu started shaking violently just before noon on Saturday 25 April. She shouted "let's go" and ran out of the house, the others couldn't make it in time and were crushed. Nani Maiya lost her family and home, and is among Nepal's estimated 2,000 earthquake widows. Women's groups say widows and single mothers need a special government mechanism for help with rebuilding homes and livelihoods.

**FULL STORY**  
 BY **ROJITA ADHIKARI** ON **PAGE 16-17**

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**THE AUTHORITY TO REBUILD**  
**EDITORIAL PAGE 2**

**BETTER BUILD BACK**

Nepal's post-earthquake rehabilitation now hinges on the formation of a credible and independent Reconstruction Authority.

BY **SONIA AWALE** **PAGE 4-5**

**IT AIN'T OVER YET**

BY THE WAY

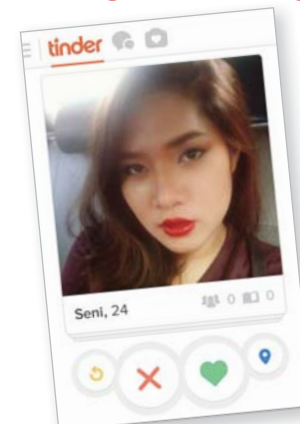
BY **ANURAG ACHARYA** **PAGE 3**

**BOUND BY BOUNDARIES**

AS IT HAPPENS

BY **OM ASTHA RAI** **PAGE 19**

## SOULMATES IN CYBERSPACE



An increasing number of Nepalis are finding their partners through Tinder, Facebook and matrimonial sites.

BY **KARMA GURUNG**  
**PAGE 10-11**

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# THE AUTHORITY TO REBUILD

How soon the earthquake has been forgotten, and the country has drifted back to politics as usual. The constitution is finally taking shape, but the attempt by the four top parties to ram through boundaries of six provinces in the draft last week set off a political earthquake. Aftershocks are still being felt, especially in western Nepal.

The delineation of boundaries was ad hoc, haphazard and arbitrary. If this is what we had to fight and die for in a ten-year war and suffer another decade of peace, then we might as well just have stuck to the five north-south development zones and devolved political power to them. We would have saved 17,000 Nepali lives, time, money, and a lot of heartache.

However, the 25 April earthquake did give Nepal's politics a mighty jolt and woke up our rulers from their slumber. The public's disillusionment with politicians was so great they had to try to hurriedly pass the constitution and use that as an excuse for regime change. Hence the 16-point accord. The opposition, including Pushpa Kamal Dahal of the UCPN(M) and Bijay Gachhadar of the MJF(L), are so desperate to get on board the unity government that they are trying their best to quickly quell the anger in the west and the grievances of the Tharu people to move ahead with the constitution.

Since the government of Prime Minister Sushil Koirala is not known for multi-tasking what has fallen by the wayside in all this is the formation of the Reconstruction Authority and the delay in the appointment of its head. The lives and livelihoods of three million people in 14 districts affected by the earthquake depend on it.

As our coverage graphically illustrates (*page 16-17*) nearly 2,000 widows are still waiting for help four months after the quake. More than two million people are living in tents and tin shelters. Two months after successfully concluding the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction (ICNR) and getting a pledge of \$4.4 billion, the government has gone back to sleep.

The appointment of the CEO to the Reconstruction Authority has been deadlocked because of a tussle between the ruling NC and the UML over their party candidates –



BIKRAM RAI

## Do we have the political will to save time and money to fuse the long-pending Disaster Management Authority with the Reconstruction Authority?

obviously because the agency's head has ministerial rank, a powerful mandate and control over a huge budget. Nothing new after all. But it is costing us our recovery.

As our analysis shows, the earthquake was stark proof of our lack of disaster preparedness, which in turn was a result of political and governance failure over the past ten years (*page 4-5*). We were fortunate that the earthquake spared much of the densely-populated areas of Central Nepal the catastrophic destruction that seismologists had been predicting. But better readiness would have saved many of the lives that were lost.

For the past seven years, an international consortium of donors including the United States, Australia, Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank had

been trying to alert the Nepal government about the need to set up a Disaster Management Authority to oversee preparedness, contingency planning as well as coordinate rescue, relief and rehabilitation when the earthquake did strike.

Of course, nothing was done. The bill to set up the authority has been in limbo in parliament – another casualty of the lack of political will. If that Authority had been in place, not only would we have been much more prepared but the rescue and relief would also have been speedier and smoother.

Despite the government's lapses on many fronts, it was admittedly overwhelmed by the scale of the destruction: more than 700,000 buildings destroyed, 30,000 classrooms in ruins. However, there were very few instances of people dying due to lack of emergency medical care, 3,000 injured were airlifted and nearly all got free treatment. The logistics of food and medicines has been relatively well managed. Despite the turf battle at national level, CDOs coordinated aid well. Local bodies would have performed even better if there had been elected VDC, DDC and municipality councils

Since the Reconstruction Authority with a mandate for rehabilitation over the next five years has still not been set up, our suggestion would be to fuse it with the proposed Disaster Management Authority. We need something more credible, and a little more permanent. After all, we are sure to have floods, landslides (and God forbid) another earthquake somewhere in Nepal in the next five years. The new head of the Authority, therefore, can then work on rehabilitation of this disaster so that it serves a model for earthquake preparedness for the rest of the country as well.

In fact, that is one of the most significant points in the draft Reconstruction Policy drawn up by the National Planning Commission (NPC): to scale up nationwide the reconstruction process in the 14 affected districts. The policy also favours job creation and use of local resources while at the same time encouraging the use of better quality reconstruction material and earthquake resistant designs. The theme is to coordinate centrally, but implement locally. And that may as well be our national motto.

### YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

#### BORDERING ON BRINKMANSHIP

Someone needs to explain and define what brinkmanship means to the Netas who dominate the Maobadi, NC and UML ('Bordering on brinkmanship', Editorial, #770). Brinkmanship can wipe you out from existence. Koirala and Dahal and Oli, appoint someone soon to head the Reconstruction Authority. People who lost everything have nothing more to lose.

Ramesh Thapa Magar

■ The Constitution is merely a mechanism for the purpose of regulating the work of various organs of the State. It is not a mechanism for political parties to be installed in office. What should be the policy of the State, how the society should be organised in its social and economic sides are matters which must be decided by the people themselves according to the time and circumstances. If you state in the Constitution that the social organisation of the State shall take a particular form, you are taking away the liberty of the people to decide what should be the social organisation in which they wish to live. This was the reason given by Dr Ambedkar to drop the amendment to insert socialism in the preamble of the Indian Constitution. So, no -ism to be inserted in the Constitution to satisfy

any leaders from the Gang of Four.

Grimalji

#### TEXT BOOKS

This is yet another damning indictment of the Nepali education system ("U r welcome, wanna cu ASAP 4 a drink", Sarthak Mani Sharma, #770). Pass the buck mentality is a continuing approach by education officials. Whether it is the School Sector Reforms Program or our recent research papers on quality education, nobody in the Ministry of Education seems to want to know about anything. Just last year they ignored offers to participate in whole system research, and don't even respond to copies of research sent to them by email. But maybe that's the problem, receiving advice from educated, competent, experienced educational practitioners who are young and female is forbidden. This issue will fade away in a week because nobody is prepared to stand up and constantly advocate for a better education system. We are a lone voice at www.nepalschoolsaid.org

Brian Metters

■ The Ass may think he is court jester of the Animal Kingdom, but clearly the hacks at the Curriculum Development Centre are Poet Laureates.

The Mule

■ Well-researched article on a very

important issue. More of similar write ups are needed to convince the government to start taking corrective action. Keep up the good work.

Mahesh P Adhikari

■ No wonder our education system is unable to produce expected outcomes. Where does the budget go?

Sabitri Gurung

■ This is unbelievable! Middle Ages are not over yet.

Len Rijnberg

■ This is a travesty. Someone should be answerable to this.

Nepali

#### SECULARISM

■ The Maoists killed people, politicians betrayed their oath to constitution, enabled entirely by a deracinate media ('Commodifying to survive, Bidushi Dhungel, #770). It is tiring to be calling out such constant ignorant words emanating from Nepal's (umm) 'intellectuals'. A bogus article filled with borrowed adjectives, and pretentious appreciation of real fears, and fails to address issues.

Leela

■ As an Indian I suggest all Nepali people to protest against secularism, and make Nepal a Hindu country.

Hiren

#### BLACK AND WHITE

Great job, Captain Lama. The idea to highlight positive energy is highly commendable ('Life in black and while', Sonia Awale, #769). We should focus the achievements of ordinary people doing extra ordinary things. Ninety-nine per cent of Nepalis are hard working, honest, loving and peaceful. It's only the corrupt leaders of Kathmandu valley that belong to the 1 per cent that are rotten to their core.

Heramba Poudyal

■ I have been watching Black and White for years, and it has brought out the heroism of ordinary Nepalis people spreading optimism and hope. Keep it up, Vijay Lama jyu.

Ina

#### VACANCY: PRIME MINISTER

Most Netas have no clue about The Ass' sense of humour ('VACANCY: Prime Minister', the ASS, #760).

Gopal Gurung

■ Our 'Ass' for Prime Minister, he is far better than those 'Asses'.

CK Mandal

■ Shame on you guys. Have some respect for your own prime minister.

Bidhubhusan M

Times

### THIS WEEK



GOPEN RAI (67,454 PEOPLE REACHED) (85 SHARES)



#### Most reached and shared on Facebook

37-year-old Monica Shahi from Kailali becomes the first transgender in Nepal to get a passport with category 'Others' on Monday.



#### Most popular on Twitter

Vacancy: Prime Minister by Ass (58 retweets, 50 favourites)



#### Most visited online page

U r welcome, wanna cu ASAP 4 a drink by Sarthak Sharma (1,616 views)



#### Most commented

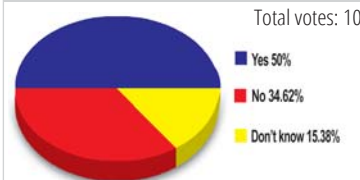
Bordering on brinkmanship, Editorial (32 comments)

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #771

Q. Do you prefer the six-province model to the eight-province model?



Weekly Internet Poll #772  
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Has the six-province model addressed the grievances of the Tharu community?



# It ain't over yet

The parties have arbitrarily drawn state boundaries, but who is going to own this draft constitution?

The Dialogue Committee led by UCPN(M) leader Baburam Bhattarai submitted its report suggesting amendments to the draft constitution earlier this week to CA Chair Subhas Nembang. This was the outcome of marathon meetings with political stakeholders and took into account public feedback gathered by lawmakers from their respective constituencies.



**BY THE WAY**  
Anurag Acharya

The report was made available to the lawmakers, following which it was also tabled in the Constituent Assembly. After being criticised for failing to finalise federal demarcation, the big four parties had reached an agreement to divide the country into six provinces, each bordering India in the south and 4 of the provinces sharing boundary with China to the north.

The committee report made several changes to the earlier draft, notably ensuring direct election of local representatives at village and municipal levels. The

report also expanded jurisdiction of the anti-graft body, and added the Nepal Army chief to the National Security Council.

But despite overwhelming feedback, the draft still has flaws: it is discriminatory towards women with regards to citizenship, exposing the leadership's patriarchal mindset. Women are not the only ones wronged.

The Tharu people, demographically the fourth largest community with 6.6 per cent of national population, rank top three in 14 out of 20 Tarai districts. The national census shows that they make up nearly 23 per cent of the population between Chitwan and Kanchanpur. Their population ratio is 41.5 and 25.6 per cent respectively.

Yet, the proposed six-model province has divided the Tharu population across six provinces, disregarding the prescribed basis of state restructuring. The conceptual report prepared by the CA's State Restructuring and Power Devolution Committee in 2009 had clearly set four categories of capability and five categories of identity (ethnicity, language, region, history and geographical continuity) as the basis for state restructuring.

Before walking out of the



MADAN CHAUDHARY/THARUWAN.COM

CA proceedings on Wednesday citing dissatisfaction with the report, Tharu lawmaker Narsingh Chaudhary said: "This assembly has been hijacked by three Bahun men." Rukmini Chaudhary of Sanghiya Loktantrik Rastriya Manch says the big parties have cornered Tharus to a point where fighting back was the only option. "My family is now scattered from Chitwan to Kailali. I am wondering which province I should call my home," she told me, holding the six-province map.

She also expressed dissatisfaction over national media's biased coverage of the protests in the mid-west and the far west. "They are giving all the coverage to Surkhet and Jumla

and ignoring the huge protests by Tharus."

Indeed, Tharus in the central and western Tarai have been agitating against the federal demarcation for the last four days, but you wouldn't know it going by the Kathmandu media. The Tharus are especially angry about Kailali and Kanchanpur being lumped in the Province 6, which has 19 districts.

The north-south demarcation will reduce Tharus to a minority in all three provinces of the region, and their leaders say the demarcation was done to benefit personal politics of UML's Bhim Rawal and NC's Sher Bahadur Deuba and Ramesh Lekhak.

Recently, I had reported in

this column how farmers in Morang were more worried about a failed monsoon than the constitution. Kailali was no different. There was plenty of rain here but people seemed fed up with regular strikes imposed by Hindu groups, those for an undivided far west province, and Tharus protesting the six-province model.

Rekha Chaudhary of Boradandi in Dhangadi does not care which province she is going to live in as long as she does not have to shut her shop. But Phulmati Rana sitting next to her believes her life will improve if Tharus have strong presence in the province.

In Kathmandu, 42 Tharu lawmakers across party lines have denounced the six state model and formed a joint struggle committee declaring a shut down in the Tharuhat districts for the next 5 days. Interestingly, the group is being led by Ram Janam Chaudhary of MJF-Loktantrik whose Chairman Bijay Gachhadar, a Tharu himself, is one of the architects of the six province map that excludes Tharus.

Last time Tharus hit the streets, the far western Tarai was shut down for a month. Warns Rukmini Chaudhary: "We will do it again, if we have to."

@Anurag\_Acharya

# 102.5

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# Better build back

Nepal's post-earthquake rehabilitation now hinges on the formation of a credible and independent Reconstruction Authority

SONIA AWALE

By 9AM on Sunday 26 April, the National Emergency Coordination Centre at Singha Darbar was beginning to fill up with government officials and politicians. Chief Secretary Leela Mani Paudyal arrived riding on the back of a motorcycle. Nearly 24 hours after the earthquake struck, it was becoming clear that the extent of the disaster was much greater outside Kathmandu.

The earthquake-proof room became the nerve centre, but it was obvious there had been no drills and there was no contingency planning for disaster management.

Because the mobile network was functioning, Constituent Assembly members became important not just as sources of information, but even to help Indian Air Force pilots navigate helicopters to remote villages.

Nearly four months after the earthquake there is still the urgent need to help three million survivors with rehabilitation, but also to learn lessons on how to be better prepared for future disasters. Despite the high death toll and destruction, we were lucky the time of the earthquake, its intensity, duration, and frequency of shaking limited the destruction. However, it is clear that better preparedness would have saved

many of the lives that were lost.

Despite international experts urging the government for the last seven years to set up a Disaster Management Authority and have contingency plans, preparedness was woefully inadequate. Valiant rescues were carried out by the army and police, but the government machinery appeared shocked and overwhelmed.

Nepal's topography made it difficult initially to even assess the damage, let alone deliver relief supplies. Even countries with better resources would have found it difficult to deal with the destruction of over 700,000 homes. And given Nepal's political instability and poor governance, it was actually surprising to some international relief agencies that the government performed as well as it did in the first two months.

For all the failures we associate with the government, more than 3,000 injured were evacuated by helicopter in the first three weeks. Few actually died because of the lack of emergency care, 25,000 injured got free treatment in hospitals, food and medicines reached most affected areas.

This is not to say there weren't shortcomings. There was bungling, poor coordination, needless bureaucratic delays,

and confusion due to ministries working at cross purposes. Nepal's international image was tarnished by the decision to tax relief supplies, or force donations to go to the Prime Minister's Relief Fund. The government appeared ungrateful and uncaring in turning back much-needed aid.

One commodity in short supply post-disaster were facts. The Ministry of Information and Communication that should have been holding press briefings every evening was nowhere to be seen. In its absence, rumours flew, there were wild distortions in the international press, the scale of the disaster in Kathmandu was exaggerated and the destruction in the districts initially under-reported. Many examples of local officials working night and day never got out.

The Nepal Army and Armed Police Force had better public relations, and highlighted their achievements in rescue and relief through the media. But the government was blamed anyway as if the army and the police are not a part of the government.

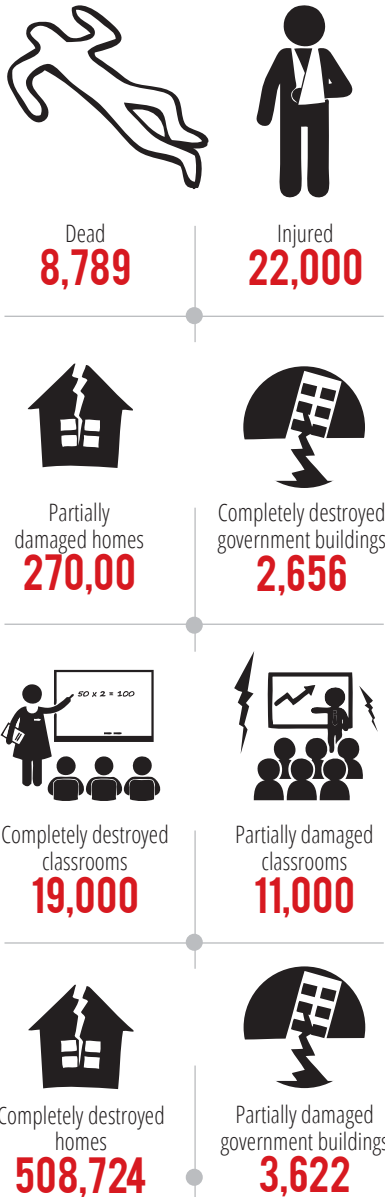
A major blunder was the Rastra Bank's directive in early May that donations be deposited in the Prime Minister's Disaster Relief Fund. As one senior government official told us, it had the effect of abruptly turning off the tap on tens of millions of dollars when it was needed the most.

In hindsight, it is clear that if the Disaster Management Authority had been in place, coordination and delivery would have been smoother. In its absence, there were multiple decision-makers battling over turf in Kathmandu. The outpouring of international emergency help was

## HOW TO RECONSTRUCT?

In the absence of the Reconstruction Authority, the National Planning Commission has gone ahead to draw up a draft Reconstruction Policy that will be the guideline for post-earthquake rehabilitation of homes and infrastructure. Its main principles include:

- ✓ Centrally-coordinated planning, decentralised implementation
- ✓ Build back better using local resources, skills and material
- ✓ Owner-driven reconstruction for private homes and donor help for public buildings
- ✓ Earthquake resistant designs and quality construction material to be used
- ✓ Resettlement to be localised to minimise dislocation
- ✓ Uniformity in the relief and help provided by the government and NGOs, and prioritising the marginalised
- ✓ Discourage use of second-hand materials including pre-fab housing
- ✓ Scale up policies and programs implemented in earthquake affected areas nationwide
- ✓ Draw lessons from India and China and get their help to rebuild infrastructure







GOPEN RAI



BIKRAM RAI

poorly coordinated and overwhelmed the airport. However, at the district level, the CDO and local administration coordinated aid well, and responded efficiently to the emergency.


One of the bright spots was the role of the National Planning Commission, which worked out of tents inside Singha Darbar to prepare the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment report. With the Finance Ministry it pushed through with the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction (ICNR) on 25 June in Kathmandu where \$4.4 billion was pledged. The NPC got crucial help from experts in post-disaster planning from Gujarat on setting up an 'extra-ordinary mechanism' for rehabilitation.

However, it has been two months and the Reconstruction Authority has still not been set up. The nomination of its chief is mired in coalition politics, and



rehabilitation process is in limbo. The delay has disheartened millions of survivors living in temporary shelters, district authorities under pressure to deliver are confused, and donors whose aid

pledges hinge on the rehabilitation agency's being set up are impatient. In a meeting this month, the Asian Development Bank Director General Hun Kim bluntly warned that it may cancel its loans if there was any more delay.

At a time when recovery and reconstruction should be top priorities, Nepal is squandering the goodwill it gained at the ICNR. The NPC hasn't waited for the authority to draw up a reconstruction policy that emphasises self-reliance, creating jobs during reconstruction, and restoring livelihoods. 

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

- Strategy for recovery #770
- Jump-starting the economy #769

prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

### Turkish Airlines brings media

Turkish Airlines is facilitating the arrival of a media team from the Netherlands to Kathmandu. The group will be involved in regular sight-seeing and tours and thereafter promote Nepal as a safe destination.



### Ncell App Camp

Ncell is re-launching its App Camp this year also as a popular mobile app development competition. Mobile apps can be submitted on [www.ncellappcamp.com](http://www.ncellappcamp.com)

### Qatar Airways A350

Qatar Airways has deployed the A350, the most modern aircraft in its fleet, on the airline's Dubai-Doha route. The latest twin-engine widebody will now be flying 28 routes worldwide.

### Levi's new store

Levi's has now opened a new store at City Centre, Kamalpokhari. Customers can purchase Jeans, T-Shirts and other clothes from the latest arrival. The company plans to open more stores in the city soon.

### Sagarmatha Cement Dealer Meet

Sagarmatha Cement recently completed its Dealers Meet at Fulbari Resort in Pokhara. It was attended by over 400 people for awards distribution, including for Best Dealer.

### Subisu's new call centre

Subisu Cablenet has launched a new call centre for its customers. New and existing customers can call (01)4235888, 9801235888 for inquiries, sales and technical support.

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NT ARCHIVE

# Race to the bottom

Unemployment creation, honouring the worst

During the dark days of war and constant political turmoil it seemed at times the world had truly turned upside down. Bad became good, wrong was suddenly right and crime paid. Perhaps the ancient scriptures were correct in predicting Kali Yug, the age of demons, when 'sin increases exponentially and virtue ceases to flourish'.



## MOVING TARGET Foreign Hand

How else can we explain Nepal going backwards, with our politicians leading the charge, while neighbouring countries advance? Instead of competing to improve the country's future, the parties outdo each other in wrecking it, through strikes, corruption, and chronic instability. What's wrong with

this picture? (Think: demons, age of.)

Despite the fact that over 1,500 Nepalis leave the country each day in search of work, our leaders rarely mention the economy, much less discuss ways to improve it. This was painfully obvious during the 2013 election campaign when the subject of creating jobs for the growing population never once came up.

At the risk of stating the obvious, there is no other democracy on earth where politicians could get away with blatantly ignoring what voters care most about.

The Hand relies on comparison to avoid getting lulled into thinking what happens here is normal. In most democratic countries elections are won or lost on the economy and the candidate's perceived ability to create jobs. When unemployment in America dropped to 7.9 per cent during the last election campaign, for example, it allowed the Democrats to brag about 'jobless rate below 8 per cent', which helped Obama get re-

elected.

Imagine that: they have percentile points in their statistics while we don't even have ball-park figures. For some strange reason no one ever asks our politicians about Nepal's unemployment rate or how to improve the moribund economy. If a competition was held to see which party created more jobs in the past decade they'd all come in last.

A closer look, in fact, reveals that each of the parties actively contributed to job losses while in power (or opposition) through obstructionist policies, greed, predatory tax departments and sheer incompetence. In the national race to the bottom all are guilty of retarding the nation's growth and robbing the young of their future, though some more so than others.

In an unprecedented development, the recent budget promised to create 50,000 new jobs in post-earthquake reconstruction, a welcome initiative that took a natural disaster to produce. Considering

the government has already forgotten the quake victims it's anybody's guess whether these jobs will actually materialise.

Maoist opposition leader Baburam Bhattarai weighed in saying 500,000 new jobs were needed, though he never said anything similar when he was PM. Nonetheless, no other party has spent so much time and effort in training and teaching new skills to thousands of young Nepalis. Unfortunately, the Maoists taught them all the wrong things: armed combat, bomb-making, kidnapping, torture and the finer points of extortion. Many youth left school to join the cause, and now that they've been discarded by the party, their lack of skills (apart from the above-mentioned) makes them basically un-employable (except by criminal gangs).

In the upside down world of Naya Nepal where bad is good, perhaps we should start honouring the worst (= best) among us. Since we can't applaud any party for creating jobs let's recognise those who destroy

them. While Congress and the UML wasted the last 20 years in typical short-sighted idiocy, looting the treasury when in power or blocking all progress when in opposition, the damage they inflicted on the economy was serious but not terminal. Leave that to the Maoists, who were responsible for more unemployment-creation than all the others combined and the only party far-sighted enough to plan long term job losses well into the future.

There are few better ways to wreck a country's prospects and ensure enduring joblessness than launching a civil war. When the war began in 1996 Nepal was enjoying its strongest economic growth in history, reaping the benefits of an unprecedented liberalisation of the economy. Manufacturing increased and exports of carpets, garments and handicrafts boomed.

Some say the fear that prosperity and a growing middle class would undermine their cause led the Maoists to attack the state when they did. Those with decent jobs and a future have no time for revolution. To ensure such jobs disappear, Maoist-affiliated unions sprang out of nowhere and forcibly took over factories, hotels and other places of employment. Needless to say, their militant tactics backfired (or succeeded?) and many businesses shut down, leaving more disgruntled workers to manipulate and use, which suited the party just fine.

When the war had served its primary purpose of gaining the Maoist leadership fabulous wealth, the party used the CA and mindless obstruction of the constitution to keep the country unstable and ensure prosperity (for others) remains a distant dream. Don't forget: prosperous societies don't need Maoists.

To be fair, most of our politicians have never had to earn a living so why should they worry about jobs? Perhaps they feel they've already done their part to reduce unemployment by hiring all their relatives or maybe they're simply realists, who see Nepal's unemployable youth as dispensable, good for nothing except demonstrating and rioting. After all, that's the only skill-set our leaders ever bothered teaching them. 🇳🇵



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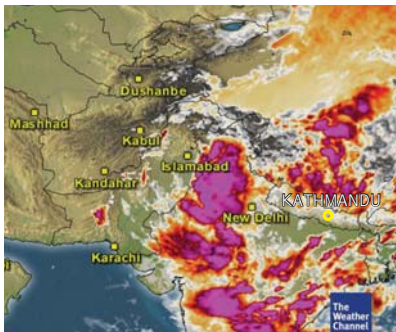


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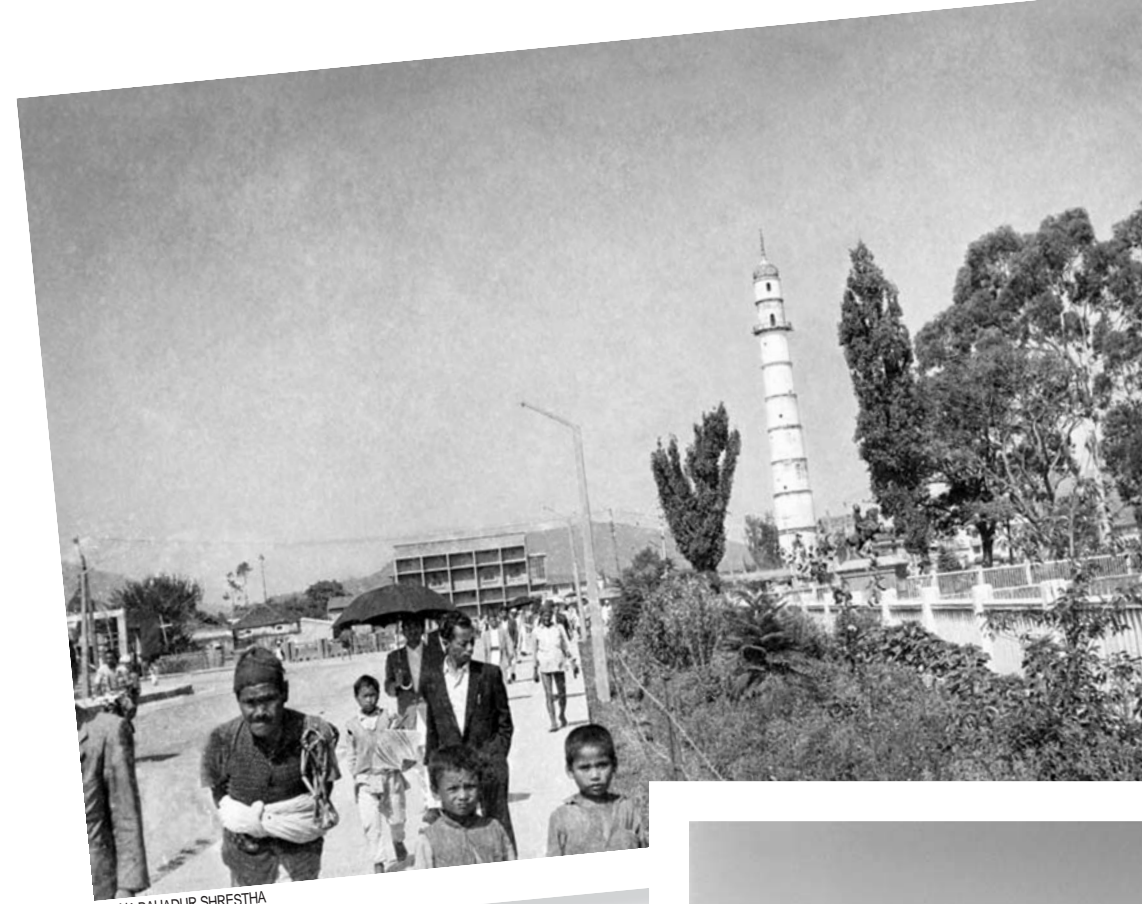
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# REMEMBERING THE FUTURE



In 2007, when Nayantara Gurung Kakshapati and Bhushan Shilpakar founded photo.circle with the aim of creating a platform for creative photography in Nepal they hadn't really thought it would grow into an ambitious attempt to digitally preserve archival images of Nepal.

Photo.circle's many workshops and exhibitions over the years created a group of world class professional photographers, improved their technique and marketed their work.

Three years after it was set up, the digital archives of Nepal Picture Library already has 50,000 photos provided by individuals from their family albums. The collection enables the exploration issues of memory, identity and history through private family images of Nepal's past.

In November, photo.circle is organising Nepal's first international photo festival, Photo Kathmandu, a project Gurung Kakshapati and Shilpakar have been planning for over three years.



"Our idea is to give the Nepali photography international exposure, and showcase some of the best work from abroad," says Shilpakar who is Director of Operations of the festival which will be held from 3-9 November in venues throughout Patan. It will feature print and digital exhibitions as well as workshops

conducted by renowned international photographers.

In the runup to the festival, photo.circle is organising a print sale of 36 archival photographs to raise money for the reconstruction of some of the historical houses and rest-places that came down in Patan during the earthquake. The 36 pictures


on sale are available in a limited edition of 100 per photograph and can be ordered on [support.photoktm.com](http://support.photoktm.com).

For this sale, photo.circle took 15 pictures from its Nepal Picture Library archive and 21 from the Peace Corps Nepal Photo History Project which has been archiving pictures taken by American volunteers since 1962.

"Since Photo Kathmandu will be anchored in Patan, we wanted to find a way to give back to our host city," explains Gurung Kakshapati who is busy planning the programs at the festival. "It is kind of like we are seeking support from the past to rebuild for the future."

Photo.circle is collaborating with Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), an independent organisation working to safeguard the historic architecture of the Valley to select the historical houses and patis to be rebuilt.

"There is support from big donors to rebuild temples and heritage sites," says Shilpakar, "but *patis* which are such important places in the social life of Kathmandu haven't got much attention."

Since the world has seen many images of destruction from Nepal after the 25 April earthquake, photo.circle wants this sale to show more positive images of the country. Says Gurung Kakshapati: "It's to tell people Nepal is still strong and beautiful." 

Stéphane Huët

<http://www.nepalpicturelibrary.org/>  
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 HONDA



EVENTS



**Collaborative photo book,**  
Nepal425 launches a crowd-sourcing drive for a coffee table book of 700 pictures of the earthquake. All proceeds from the sales will go for relief through VolNepal.  
*http://www.nepal425.com/*

**In Visible,**  
A photo exhibition by Rohan Thapa bridges the gap between visually impaired and sighted through perceptual experimentation.  
*Till 14 August, Nepal Art Council, Baber Mahal, (01)4220735, nepalartcouncil@yahoo.com*



**Wholeness,**  
A painting exhibition by Puran Khadka whose work is a meditative abstraction full of spiritual awakening.  
*Till 30 October, Park Gallery, Pulchok, (01)5522307, contact@parkgallery.com.np*

**Call for filmmakers,**  
Film Southasia invites submissions of non-fiction films made after 1 January 2013 for the tenth edition of the regional film festival to be held in Kathmandu from 19 to 22 November 2015.  
*Submission deadline 15 August 2015, www.filmsouthasia.org/submit*



**Lost in migration**  
*I have to feed myself, my family and my country* is an installation by Hitman Gurung reflecting the hopes and aspirations of migrant workers as well as the misery and death experienced by families of those who never return.  
*Opening on 16 August, 5.30pm, till 19 August, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited, (01)4218048*



**Call for submission,**  
Photographers, curators, photo-based artists, historians, anthropologists and other practitioners invited to submit work and ideas for digital projection, discussions, performances on the theme 'TIME'.  
*Deadline 15 September, http://www.photoktm.com*

**E Sports Carnival,**  
The biggest gaming calendar event 25 August, Civil Mall, registration on *http://ngamersclub.com/esc2015/*

**Inspire with pictures,**  
In celebration of the World Literacy Day, The Non Formal Education Center and UNESCO organise an open photography contest on the theme 'Women's Literacy'.  
*Deadline 25 August, pe.wong@unesco.org.*

**Earthbag summit,**  
Workshops and discussion groups about the benefits of earthbag building and earthquake resistant design.  
*4 September, 10am – 5pm, The Summit Hotel, Sanepa,*



**The Yeti Run,**  
Come out and test your strength, stamina and teamwork at Nepal's first obstacle race.  
*26 September, St Xavier's School, Godavari, 9841226397, pareshkshrestha@gmail.com*



**The Bagmati River Festival,**  
A 4.3km nice scenic rafting which starts with offerings to the holy Bagmati.  
*15 August, 7am, Gothatar Bagmati bridge, (01)4361995, nepalrivers@gmail.com*

**Support,**  
A special fund-raising print sale to contribute towards the rebuilding of heritage sites in Patan by Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT).  
*http://photoktm.com/#support*

**Whisky-tasting fundraiser,**  
One of the most expensive Whisky tasting, including one of only 50 bottles of rare Japanese whisky Karuizawa 1983, to raise money for five charities helping victims of 25 April earthquake.  
*www.whisky.auction and http://www.bonhams.com/locations/HK £6,000 per person, limited to 45 places, 3 October 2015, Old Billingsgate Market, London http://www.whiskyshow.com/whats-on/masterclasses/karuizawa-tastings/*

**Monsoon story camp,**  
Journalists and community leaders are trained in communicating about climate change so people improve agriculture production and be better prepared for adverse weather.  
*21 to 23 August, Patale Gaun, Kavre, storycycle@gmail.com*

DINING

**Krishnarpan,**  
A restaurant in a historic setting which will take you into the exotic cultures of Nepal.  
*The Dwarika's Hotel, Krishnarpan, (01)4479488, sales@dwarikas.com*



**Kaiser Cafe,**  
Have a BBQ lunch and a glass of wine or beer inside the peaceful Garden of Dreams.  
*Thamel, (01)4425341*



**Downtown,**  
Go Indian at this restaurant and also order Chinese and Continental. Don't miss out on the biryani.  
*Pulchowk Road, Patan, (01)5010751*



**Trisara,**  
With dishes like flambeed prawns, crispy chicken, and khao soi, it would be a folly to ignore its aromas.  
*Lazimpat, (01)4410200*



**Grill Me,**  
A restaurant with a warm ambience and delicious grilled delights.  
*Jhamsikhel, (01)5535294*

MUSIC



**Metal for Nepal,**  
A fund raiser concert with metals bands for the beneficiary of the earthquake victims.  
*Rs300, 15 August, 2pm, Club 25 Hours, Tangal, (01)4437486*

**Back to the 80s,**  
An evening that will bring you back to the 80s and the 90s with a live performance by What's Up! The night will be followed by a dance party.  
*14 August, 8pm, House of Music, Thamel, Thamel, 9851075172, sanzey@hotmail.com*

GETAWAYS



**Pokhara Grande,**  
A swimming pool to escape from the tropic heat, a massage parlour and spa to loosen up and a gymnasium to release stress, great options all around.  
*Lakeside, Pokhara, (01)4005025, reservationktm@pokharagrande.com, http://www.pokharagrande.com/*

**Prakriti Bhavin Package,**  
An exclusive two-night package tailored for Nepalis and Expats living in Nepal.  
*Rs 55,000 (half board basis), valid till 30 September, The Dwarika's Hotel (01)4479488 sales@dwarikas.com*



**Temple Tree Resort and Spa,**  
A peaceful place to stay, complete with a swimming pool, massage parlour, and sauna, it'll be hard to leave once you go in.  
*Gaurighat, Lakeside, (061)465819*

**Raniban Retreat,**  
Situated at the other end of the Phewa Lake and nested inside the Raniban Forest and the World Peace Stupa, this retreat has one of the best views of the Annapurna range, Phewa Lake, and Pokhara.  
*World Peace Pagoda, Pokhara, (61)692136*



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The leaflet announcing the photo exhibition, In Visible, was already very unique. It only had a fingerprint, the dates, the venue and photographer's name, Rohan Thapa. For more information about the event, we found out that photographs can be used to 'bridge the gap between the visually impaired and sighted through perceptual experimentation'.

Last Sunday as one stepped in the ground floor gallery of the Nepal Art Council for the In Visible's launch the first sense to be awakened was hearing -- with an ethereal music accompanying a video of a blinking eye (coming from the archives of the Sudrishti Eye Clinic) on an empty wall.

The 72 photographs of In Visible are stuck on six tables displayed in the middle of the gallery. Each picture is a blurry portrait -- 72 people shot by Thapa after



GOPEN RAI

they had undergone eye surgery at Tilganga Eye Hospital.

When the photographer went to take pictures of Tilganga's patients three years ago, he had no particular concept in mind. "I just wanted to address the vision issues in Nepal," he says. The first pictures Thapa processed came out blurred by mistake. "I

realised the people I was shooting were probably seeing me like this," he says. Like all great inventions, the technical mistake led to a creative new idea.

At first, pictures of In Visible look like simple portraits. But for sighted visitors, it becomes disturbing as they are not able to identify the details of someone's face. For

a brief moment, they can see as a visually impaired person sees. Thapa does this with sensitivity and perceptiveness, as it were.

Every picture has small pips in different alignments. These are words used in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights printed in Braille. In Visible breaks the usual barrier of galleries and museums because visitors are invited to touch the pictures and feel the Braille characters.

With In Visible, Thapa wanted to provoke interaction between the visually impaired and the sighted. "I think we can learn from each other," he says about the shifting of roles in his exhibition. While blind people are usually those who are guided, at In Visible's launch a visually impaired mother helps her sighted child to understand Braille words on the pictures.

Thapa conceived this sensory exploration to highlight visual dependency in our society. "It's our nature to touch," he explains, "like a baby who palpates everything to explore the world." With touching, sight and hearing, we wish In Visible had also stimulated smell and taste. 🇳🇵

*Stéphane Huët*

*In Visible*  
*By Rohan Thapa*  
*Set up by photo.circle*  
*Nepal Art Council*  
*Till 14 August 2015*



# Durbar Restaurant

Gokarna Forest Resort is not a place you'd go to to eat. The 18-hole golf course and one of the last remaining native forests in Kathmandu Valley are its main attractions.

But the Durbar Restaurant is billed as something royal and 'fit for kings'. That description may be a bit of a stretch as we learnt on a recent visit to sample the restaurant's most popular dishes.

Engaged as we were in the chef's pre-prandial chitchat, we did not realise how much time had already passed before the first dish, the sweet corn soup (Rs 325), was brought to the table. Though there was the natural flavour of garlic it wasn't something to get the tastebuds over-excited about -- especially for spice-loving Nepalis.

Perhaps the soup simply fit in with the overall ambience of the restaurant, which was empty when we visited -- as are most restaurants in post-earthquake Nepal. A throng of conference-attendees did arrive a while later, we guess probably for a seminar on post-disaster planning.

The Caesar Salad (Rs 375) was smooth, with tender pieces of chicken, this time generously seasoned, along with an excellent



PICS: ARPANA UPADHYAY

beat-root paste on the side which finally got the buds tingling. The croutons, however, could have been done better: the cubes did not feel crunchy enough.

One of the restaurant's strengths lies in its presentation of the items in the menu. Almost all of the dishes were great visual treats and it felt a bit sacrilegious to be ruining the get-up by eating them. Smoked salmon canapé in this plate of bruschetta (Rs 375) were striped beautifully with caramelised balsamic vinegar. The

visual mastery did not always translate into gastronomic achievement, it must be said. But, hey, looks count. The smoked salmon topped with mayonnaise was reasonable, but lacked the richness of flavour and taste one would expect from this popular antipasto.

The wine-glazed chicken (Rs 650) shared the same problems with the bruschetta. While it tasted decent, it wasn't extraordinary and was a bit flat -- as if the marinating



juices had not penetrated the fowl's tissues.

In the end, we were treated to the cake of the day, raspberry cheese cake (Rs 380) in which the sauce overwhelmed the cheese but it hit the right note.

It has to be pointed out that dining at Durbar Restaurant should be part of a whole-day visit or

even a weekend retreat amidst the verdant greenery, classy golf course and indoor pool areas of this resort.

Gokarna also has a spa with excellent massage facilities. Tucked away at the north-eastern fringe of the Valley, this former royal hunting reserve is a destination in its own right.

The Durbar Restaurant, with its seclusion and privacy, is an additional reason to visit. 🇳🇵

*Sarthak M Sharma*

*How to get there: head to Gokarna Resort on the way to Sankhu and find Durbar Restaurant.*

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Tinder is a social dating app that lets people discover prospective mates in one's neck of the woods. Like a simple computer game, you just swipe left for people you don't like and right for people you like. If you like a particular profile and that person likes you too, it's a match and only then can you chat with the person. It's difficult to fake because Tinder is linked to Facebook accounts.

Unlike shaadi.com or other traditional dating and matrimonial sites, Tinder is solely based on appearance and an interest between both parties. After causing a revolution in the Americas and even in neighboring India, *Nepali Times* set out to find what fellow online aficionados in Kathmandu felt about this app.

"I use the app to meet like-minded people. There is no such space here to meet people in Kathmandu," said Nima Tashi.

"I'm in Bangkok currently and am using the app to meet people from Nepal before I arrive," said Richie Job.

"I rarely use the app. It's only when I'm drunk kind of thing. Lol," wrote Rakesh Sharma.

Nepali girls' coyness online was a major concern among many men who have resorted to online dating, but there are still quite a surprising number of young women who keep their profiles active regularly.

For Sanna Gurung, a 22-year-old fashion blogger who lives by the Internet, online dating is a boon at this time when she wants to constantly meet people but also focus on her work.

**KARMA GURUNG**

**R**ajesh Tuladhar, a 27-year-old pilot, had just come back to Nepal after studying and graduating from aviation school in China and the United States. Back in Nepal for good as an eligible bachelor, he was looking for a suitable girl.

After he had little success head-hunting, a friend suggested he get into the social app Tinder to look for Nepali girls in his vicinity. A week into browsing through profiles and searching, Tuladhar has shortlisted three young women with whom he has started chatting online separately, unbeknownst to each other. Slowly, he hopes to ask one out on a date.

"It was much easier for me to date and find girls in China than here in Nepal, even though we had a language barrier," Tuladhar admits. "Even on Tinder, Nepali women are not very open and they are hard to approach."

# SOULMATES in



## Nepal's matrimonial scene is catching

"When I'm active on the site, it is not difficult to get a couple of dates in a week," says Gurung for whom the Tinder experience is completely different between Nepali men and foreigners.

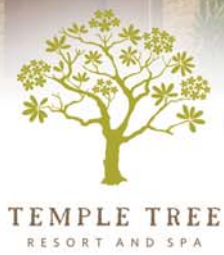
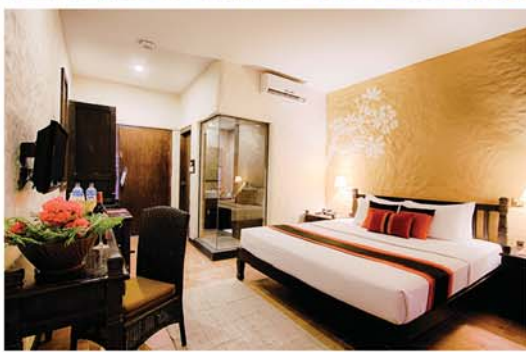
"I've gotten to know quite a

few foreign men online because we don't regularly hang out in the same places. As for the Nepali men you usually bump into on Friday nights, they just prefer to approach you online first before making a move," says Gurung.

Tinder is becoming popular among young urban men and women in Nepal and with the expat and tourist community mainly in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Just as most of the 5.3 million Facebook accounts in Nepal are of men,



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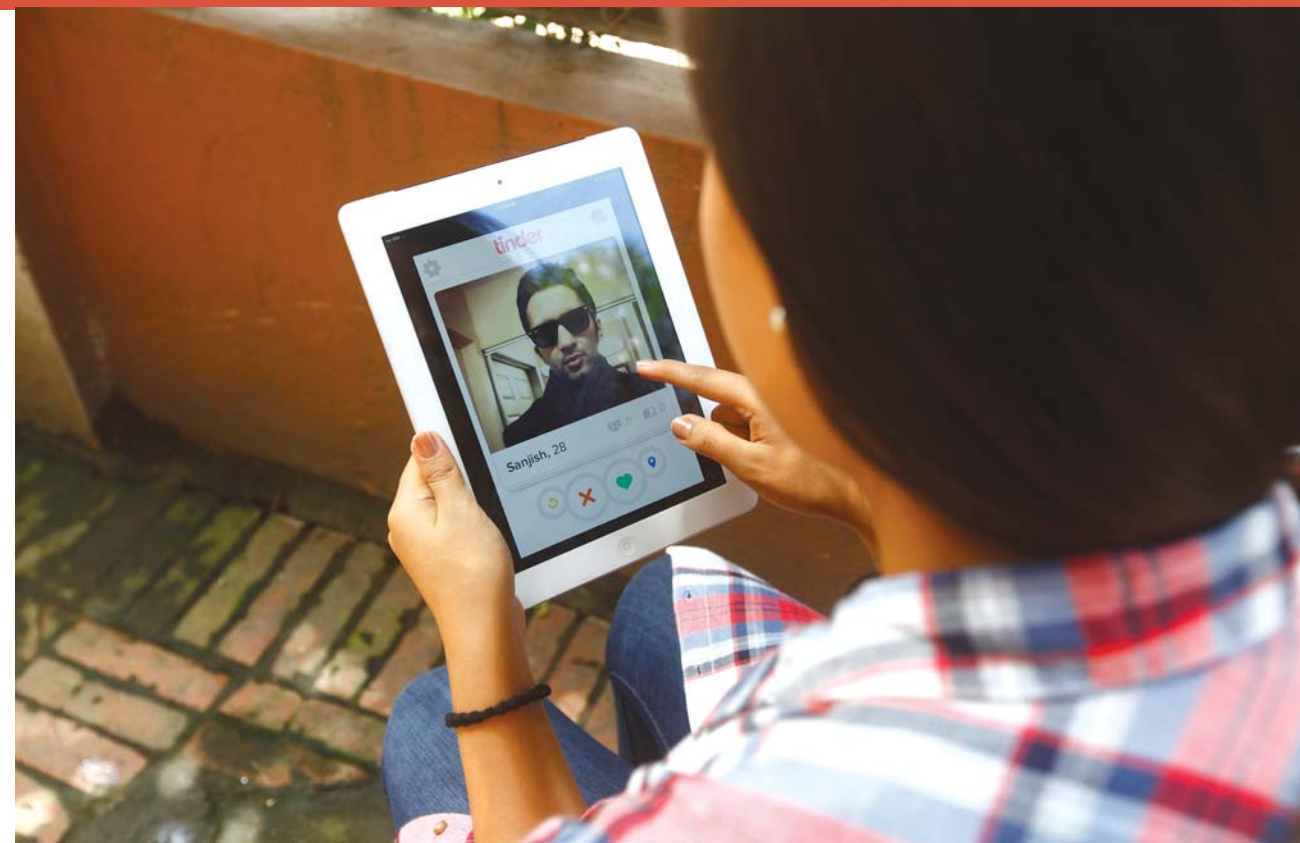
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# in CYBERSPACE



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## ing fire on Tinder and the social web

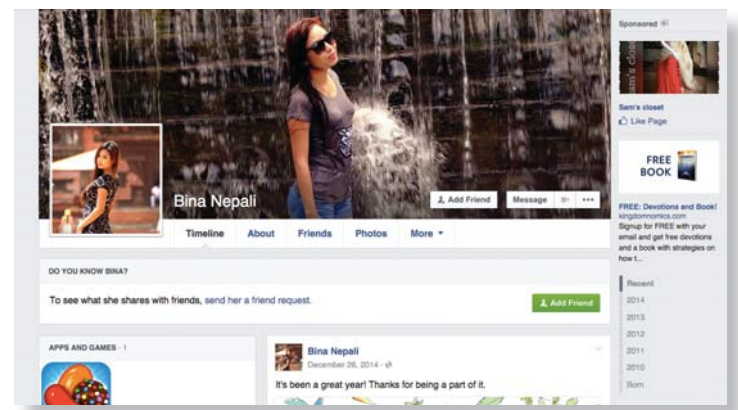
Tinder is also dominated by men in the 18-45 age group.

For the more common Nepali soul, the Internet is now filled with numerous dating sites just for Nepalis like [www.shubabibaha.com](http://www.shubabibaha.com) or [www.Nepallove.com](http://www.Nepallove.com) where

one may question the legitimacy of the profiles, many of which say the young men are 'currently based in a Gulf country'. The rising number of migrant workers and the spreading Nepali diaspora has led to a proliferation of online dating

and matrimonial sites.

Now our young don't have to wait for parents or peers to find them a match. The Net will do it for them, and making a profile on Tinder is a place to start. *Some names have been changed*



## FACE-TO-FACE

There are 5.3 million Nepalis on Facebook, and the number is rising as more people buy smartphones with data plans. Many use the Facebook app on their phones to find a person they can have a relationship with. After months of on and off chatting via Facebook, Kumar and Bandana Acharya finally tied the knot last year. Kumar first approached her

on Facebook via a mutual friend who also happened to be Kumar's cousin. This made things easier to begin conversations between the two and extended to become a marriage made in Facebook. With features like tagging friends and knowing each other's mutual friends, the social network has now become a hotspot for future couples.



## ONLINE PUNDITS

When NepalMatrimony.com first began in 2003, it was a pioneer in the field for online matchmaking. Now with easier Internet access, both the number of matrimonial sites and users have boomed. Most of these sites charge a fee to keep check of fake profiles and are heavily altered to fit the needs and demands of a prospective Nepali bride/groom. The

search engines are driven to find your perfect match from the district you want right down to the desired caste. Moreover, these days you can also search for Nepalis based in foreign countries. Milan and Rhiika Adhikari were two such lovebirds who discovered each other's profiles via [www.shubabibaha.com](http://www.shubabibaha.com) when in New York. After a brief meet, sparks flew, parents agreed, and now the two are happily married. To each other.



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# A LITTLE CHAOS

Since I have a sneaking fondness for landscape gardening, and a newfound interest in Matthias Schoenaerts (who had previously failed to impress me in 2012’s Rust and Bone, a grim, dour film by Jacques



**MUST SEE**  
Sophia Pande

Audiard), I may have to warn readers that it is quite possible that I am unduly biased towards “A Little Chaos”, a charming period drama starring Schoenaerts as André Le Nôtre – the famous French landscape artist who designed most of the gardens at Versailles.

Directed by Alan Rickman, a wonderful actor himself, A Little Chaos, which, barring Le Notre’s character, is mostly fictitious, takes a great many liberties with its characters, most of whom behave fairly anachronistically, a choice that pays off due to the singular talents of the ensemble cast which includes Rickman himself as Louis XIV, and the wonderful, luminous Kate Winslet as Sabine de Barra an anomalous (completely fabricated) female landscape gardener who is reluctantly recruited by Le Notre to help him in the immense task of designing the gardens at Versailles.

The strengths of this film, quite frankly, lie in the attention to detail given towards the process of manufacturing landscapes, and in the relationship between the characters of Le Notre and de Barra, both of whom begin

as fairly enigmatic creatures who passionately love creating gardens (albeit in very different styles), but evolve to become so much more than just creatures driven by ambition.

As you might imagine, being selected by Louis XIV to create the gardens at Versailles is a task that no single person can accomplish on their own. Le Notre, who carries with him the weight of his father’s success in the same profession, is forcibly propelled towards making gardens classically, holding symmetry and proportion above all as models. When le Barra moves one of his carefully placed urns at her interview, to interrupt the precise pattern it was meant to celebrate, Le Notre takes a leap of faith that results in the beginning of the oddest of partnerships and a very tender romance.

There are patchy bits in A Little Chaos, but they didn’t really bother me. Most of the characters are as well drawn as the two main ones, making the world of the film come alive, fleshing out life at the French court in contrast to the gritty struggle of making vast gardens that are equal to those very elite. Beautifully filmed and depicting several poignantly flawed relationships, A Little Chaos may not delight you quite as much as it did me, but, at the very least, you will probably come out of it being amused at the light fun it sometimes pokes at the characters it also lovingly renders.

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

## HAPPENINGS



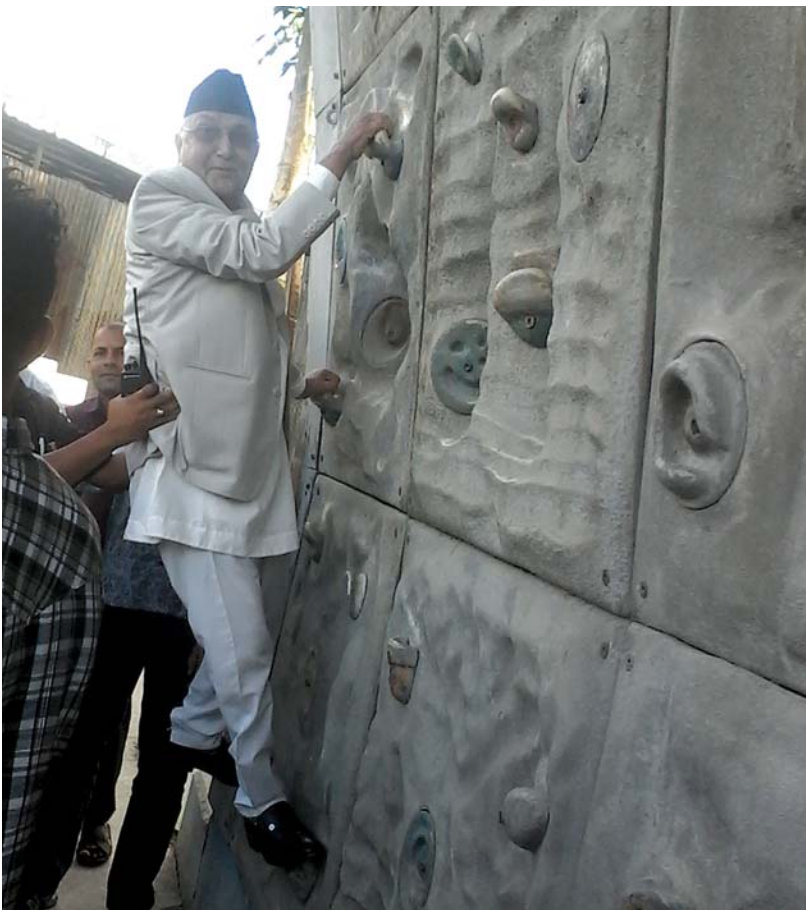
KESHAV RANA

**EXTRA FORCE:** A contingent of 120 APF personnel flew to Jumla by an army helicopter from Kohalpur on Tuesday to contain protests for an integrated Karnali province that turned violent.



BIKRAM RAI

**AFTER THE AFTERSHOCK:** Five-year-old Rashmi Pulami waits for a family member to pick her up from school after a 4.3 magnitude aftershock on Tuesday morning. Most schools closed following the tremor epicentred in Kathmandu.



THIRA L BHUSAL

**PM-IN-WAITING:** UML Chair KP Oli practices rock-climbing on a training wall at the Pasang Lhamu Centre after a meeting at his nearby party headquarter on Tuesday.



DEVAKI BISTA

**COOPERATING ON BUS TRANSPORT:** Kathmandu Metropolitan City and Sajha Yatayat on Tuesday signed a Rs 100 million deal to expand the existing public transport service in Kathmandu Valley.

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# An electrifying ride

A stylish, impressive necessity in the age of petrol queues




**E**lectric scooters may fall low on the 'hip' meter compared to their fossil-fuelled counterparts, but in a country where riders have to regularly queue up to fill their tanks and deal with volatile fuel prices, investing in a battery-powered two wheeler may not be such a bad idea.

One of the problems is that these eco-friendly scooters often receive flak for being unattractive. A relatively new entrant into the e-scooter market, Terra Motor Corps of Japan, aims to shake off that myth with its launch of its stylish A4000i e-scooter.

The scooter boasts a Japanese build and design. Available in a white-and-blue colour scheme, the 118 kg A4000i looks classy and feels comfortable and balanced under your feet. Undoubtedly, the A4000i's USP is the iPhone

functionality, which it integrates into its heads-up-display. While smartphone integration in cars is nothing new, Terra has come up with an innovative way to utilise your iPhone (3GS - 5) while you are up and about on your two-wheeler.

The two-passenger scooter features a small LCD display on its console, and most of the space is occupied by an iPhone dock. The rider places their iPhone in that receptacle, in landscape mode, and Terra's proprietary app is then able to provide real-time information, such as power consumption and remaining battery life, along with trip statistics such as duration, distance, average/maximum speed, and power consumption. Further, all of the recorded data can be monitored through the web. The smart phone application is updated regularly by Terra, to ensure that it is ahead of the pack.

The A4000i runs on a rear in-wheel motor which is powered by a removable 48-volt/40-Ah lithium battery. Once fully charged - this takes 4.5 hours - the A4000i is able to operate for over 60 km at a maximum of 60 km/h. This is perfect for getting around the city. It boasts both front and rear disc brakes, should you need to stop at once. Terra has also built its battery to last. With a life of approximately 50,000 km, it goes five times the distance as most e-scooters. 

**Yantrick's Verdict:** An attractive bike that will have you hitting the road while everyone else is lining up to fill the tank. Ranging from Rs 150,000 to 400,000

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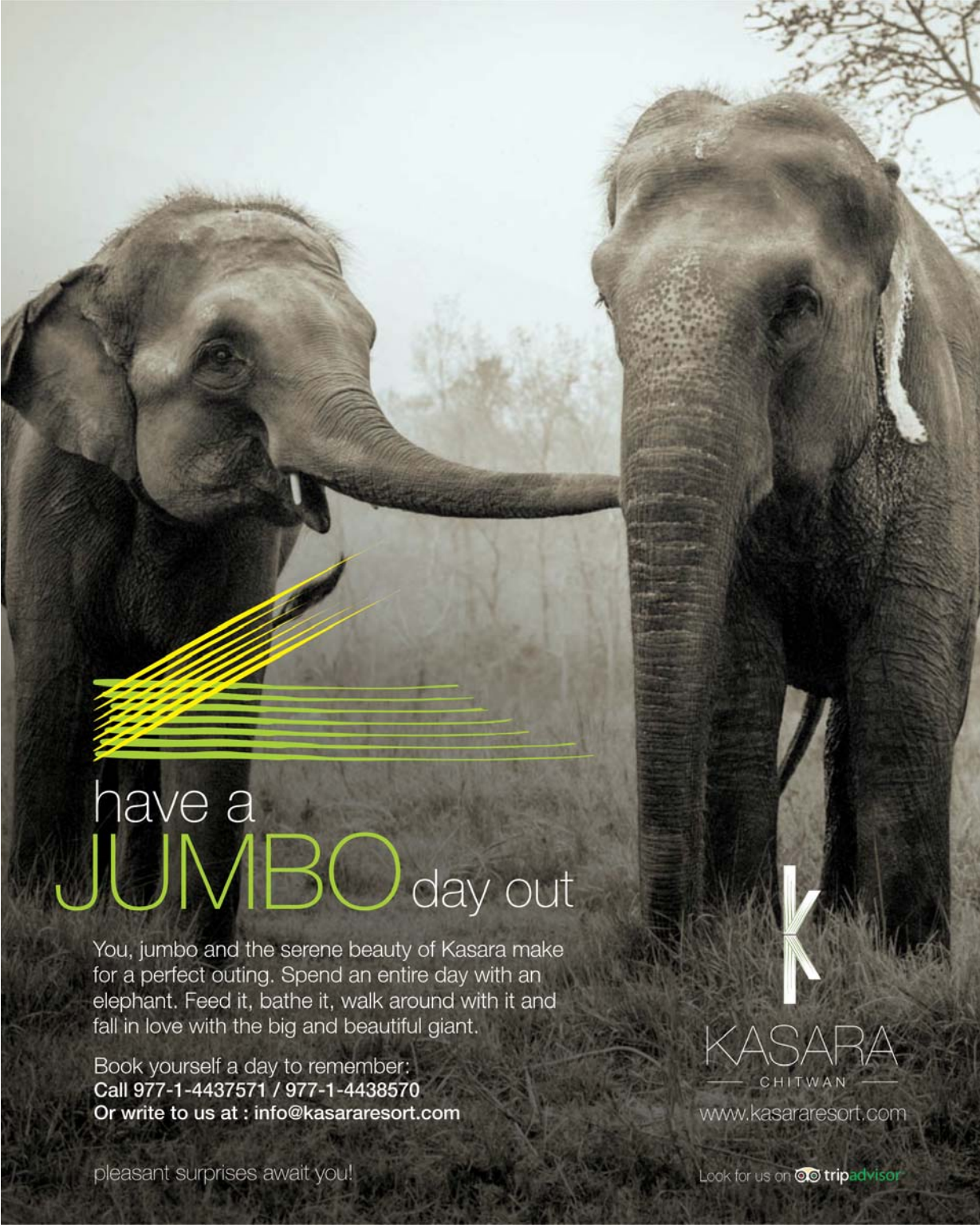
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# MAYBE BABY

It is unfair to expect a woman to be a great mother, daughter, sister, wife, niece, aunt, a successful professional who can still cook two meals a day

We are all used to hearing that a woman's life is incomplete without giving birth to new life. Women today, all over the world and even in Nepal now, are more likely to delay marriage than those a generation ago, a practice that pushes back time to have babies while women continue to focus on their career.

More and more women are choosing not to have children. The US Census Bureau stats say that more women are opting not to have children, and 'childlessness' continues to grow in the U.S.



**ALL IN THE MIND**  
Anjana Rajbhandary

Pooja, 28, is a strong independent professional who does not think choosing to be childless is a major issue. "I value my freedom and without a baby, I can take more risks in life without worrying. I can go anywhere, anytime I want, and that is important to me," she says.

Many people call this growing 'trend' selfish, shallow and self-absorbed because it is a beautiful thing to create life. I am not against women having children at all, but raising a child well is probably the most difficult task any woman can undertake. It is a commitment.

Katha is a 33-year-old lawyer who loves her nieces and says: "I love children but I have never had the maternal instinct. I have a lot more to achieve in life and I cannot do that if I have children now."

It is unfair to expect women to be all-rounders in life by being a great daughter, wife, mother or sister with a successful career, who raises children and is able to



ANJANA RAJBHANDARY

cook two meals a day while keeping the house in order. I admire women who are able to do it all, but most of us are not capable of such superpowers.

There are also cases in which having a baby is not possible because of health or financial reasons. The booming business of fertility clinics and/or surrogacy does help fulfill dreams for some people to have children, but it is expensive and many can't afford it. Plus, raising a child is expensive. Many are just not ready to take care of someone else, and think they could do a lot more with the money needed to send a child to a decent school for one academic year.

A parent needs to be selfless and prioritise the child over everything else, and it is unfair to have a child for the sake of it when one is not ready. I have no desire to have a child in the near future. But ask me again in six months, who knows.

Sara had a different reason for having a baby. "My relationship with my husband was not going well so I thought having a child would make it better. It did not. I feel guilty for that decision but I love my baby more than anything in the world. I wish it was under different circumstances."

It is clear that two people need to love each other before they decide to bring another life into this world. My best friend Shailu is the most amazing woman I have ever met and an excellent mother to Sammy, 2, and Abby, 1.

"You never know it is possible to love someone else so much till you become a mother," Shailu says, and she also has a very loving and supportive husband Jeff. These two girls are lucky to have parents that love them and love each other, and that is the ideal environment in which to bring a new life.

Women choose not to have a baby for various reasons. We need to respect their choices and keep our opinions and views to ourselves. 🇳🇵

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# The August Offensive

This is the fifth in the series on the experiences of the Gurkhas at Gallipoli exactly 100 years ago in August 15.

DAVID SEDDON

The Gallipoli Campaign had started on two main fronts, Anzac and Helles, and for three months since the invasion of 25 April 1915, the Allies had attempted to carry the offensive on the Helles battlefield at enormous cost for little gain. In August 1915, the British command proposed a new operation to reinvigorate the campaign by capturing the Sari Bair ridge, the high ground that dominated the middle of the peninsula above the Anzac landing. New assaults on Ottoman positions on the peninsula were planned, with the offensive to start on 6 August. It was hoped that the arrival of fresh troops would give the commander of the Allied forces one more chance to advance, this time from Anzac Cove north of Helles.

For this offensive the commander of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force, General Sir Ian Hamilton, was provided by Kitchener with three British New Army divisions: the 10th (Irish) Division, the 11th (Northern) Division and the 13th (Western) Division — all previously untried in battle. He was later reinforced with two Territorial Army divisions; the 53rd (Welsh) Division and the 54th (East Anglian) Division and one division of dismounted yeomanry; as well as the 2nd Mounted Division.

It was becoming a big war. The aged Sir Frederick Stopford was sent out as supreme commander of IX Corps at Gallipoli. He had actually retired in 1909 and had never commanded men in battle. His appointment was made based solely on seniority, but his hesitancy during the preparations for the landing should have warned Hamilton that he was not a fit choice for the command.

There had been some doubt about whether the British would abandon the campaign but this was dispelled when Winston Churchill made a careless speech in Dundee, stating that the battle would continue whatever the sacrifices. The enemy was now well aware that a renewal of the offensive was imminent. Consequently the Ottoman Fifth Army underwent a re-organisation and an expansion to 16 divisions. Ten of these defended the existing battlefields (six at Helles, which had seen the bulk of the early fighting, and four at Anzac). Three divisions defended the Asian shore of the Dardanelles and three divisions of the Ottoman XVI Corps defended the Gulf of Saros north of Bulair at the neck of the peninsula.

The German and Ottoman generals anticipated that the offensive would involve a ‘breakout’ from Anzac, but were unsure whether it would be north (towards Suvla) or south (towards Gaba Tepe). A new British landing was also considered likely, but Suvla was not rated highly as a candidate, consequently only a modest force of four battalions defended the

area. The Ottoman commanders also dismissed the possibility of an assault against the Sari Bair range due to the rugged terrain. Only Mustafa Kemal, commander of the Ottoman 19th Division at Anzac, expected the attack against the heights but he was unable to convince his superiors to significantly strengthen the defences — only one regiment was moved to the sector north of Anzac.

## The ‘Break-out’

In fact, the Allies considered the main peaks of the Sari Bair Ridge to be the prime target, and a night attack launched from the Anzac Cove beach-head was intended to be the battle winning blow. The bold (and in retrospect over-ambitious) plan to break the stalemate called for a vigorous offensive from ANZAC, the 13th Division and the 29th Indian Brigade combined with a surprise landing at Suvla Bay by IX Corps, under cover of a diversionary attack in the Helles area to pin down the Ottoman forces and prevent reinforcements being sent to the north. When the orders were issued for the offensive, some of the officers were deeply sceptical - particularly as to whether it was physically possible to carry out the planned flanking march at night in the dreadful country north of Anzac.

One such was Major Cecil Allanson, now commanding the 1/6th Gurkha Rifles, who confided his thoughts to his diary on 2 August:

“When the method of attack was disclosed to me confidentially that afternoon I gasped. It is to be remembered that Anzac is completely invested by the enemy; that no one has been able to reconnoitre the ground outside and that no one can absolutely guarantee the map. There are no villages and no inhabitants to help one, and the whole country seemed to be stiff, with very sharp rocky cliffs, covered with thick scrub.

I have a few ideas about night marches, their great difficulty and the need of careful reconnaissance; but when I was told that we were to break through the opposing outpost line at 10 pm on the 6th, march along the sea coast for three miles then turn at right angles and attempt to get under this big ridge about two miles inland, by dawn, and covered from the sea by innumerable small hills and nullahs, I felt, “What one would have done to a subaltern at a promotion examination who made any such proposition?”

The more the plan was detailed as the time got nearer, the less I liked it, especially as in my own regiment there were four officers out of seven who had never done a night march in their lives. The one hope was that the scheme was so bold it might be successful.”

Zulu Day for the break-out from Anzac as well as the Suvla landings was fixed for the night of 6-7 August. Major General Alexander John Godley, who was in charge of the New Zealand and Australia Division and was ‘loathed by the rank and file’, would be the commander



SARI BAIR BY TERENCE CUNEO

responsible and de facto corps commander. The approximately 4,800 strong ‘Indian’ force was to serve as the northern flank of ANZAC after the 29th Indian Brigade (including the three Gurkha battalions that had been involved previously) landed at Anzac cove on 5 and 6 August. It was decided that the new army divisions would actually land at Suvla after Godley’s troops had launched their attack in the hills above Anzac – via Lone Pine, Baby 700, Chunuk Bair, Hills Q, 971 and 60 – and all would combine to attack the Third Ridge. The 29th Indian Brigade, under Major General H Vaughan Cox was part of this plan, supposedly coming up to attack Hills Q and 971 located on Sari Bair.

The main operation started on 6 August, with a fresh landing 8 km north of Anzac at Suvla Bay in conjunction with the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps mounting an attack north into the rugged country alongside the Sari Bair range with the aim of capturing the high ground and linking with the Suvla landing. The attack from the Anzac perimeter was to be directed against two peaks of the Sari Bair range: Chunuk Bair and Hill 971. To distract the enemy from the impending offensive, on 6 August, at 5.30 pm, an attack was made at Lone Pine by the infantry brigades of the Australian 1st Division. While the attack was ultimately successful in capturing the Ottoman trenches, it was counter-productive as a diversion as it attracted reinforcements to the north. Another costly diversion was carried out at Helles which resulted in a pointless struggle over a patch of ground known as Krithia Vineyard. As was the case at Lone Pine, the British action at Helles did not restrain the Ottoman defenders from sending reinforcements north to the Sari Bair range.



Under the overall command of Major-General Alexander Godley, the attacking force included the New Zealand and Australian Division, the British 13th Division plus a couple of extra infantry brigades. The plan was for two assaulting columns to march out of Anzac on the night of 6 August. The right-hand column, comprising the New Zealand Infantry Brigade under Brigadier-General Francis Johnston, would head for Chunuk Bair. The left-hand column would head for Hill 971 and neighbouring Hill Q. Both objectives were expected to be captured by the early hours of 7 August – ideally by dawn.

It has been remarked that ‘the terrain over which the advancing force would have to move was rugged in the extreme, with steep spurs and gullies covered with dense prickly scrub. The few maps available were all inaccurate, the guides had little knowledge of the ground having had too little time for a thorough reconnaissance. This would have been considered formidable country to pass through in peacetime during daylight hours; the Gurkhas and those who were to follow them were expected to make their way through it in the dark, in the face of a determined and well-equipped enemy’

Smith also comments, presumably drawing on the same source as Farwell, that ‘the nature of the ground made it a

forbidding task, with rugged steep spurs rising up from gullies which were covered with dense prickly clumps of scrub. 29 Indian Brigade set off in the dark, with inaccurate maps and without having had the chance to reconnoitre the ground beforehand; all told, it was a hazardous enterprise, the successful outcome of which depended on the Chunk Bair peak being captured before daylight on 7 August’.

Starting out in the evening of 6 August, the advance began from the Anzac position and by the early hours of the morning the lower peaks had been reached and the way to the top appeared to be open. However, the advance seems to have been delayed. Smith refers to the ‘lack of any prior reconnaissance by junior leaders (which) began to play an important part as columns were delayed because guides lost direction’. Cox’s column, on the left, progressed slowly; tired, lost and scattered in the ravines, it never got close to the objective of Hill 971.

The 2/10th and 1/5th Gurkhas, plus one company of the 2/5th newly arrived from France, set off to capture Hill Q. The 1/6th reinforced the Australians, who were attacking the adjacent peak (Hill 971). Two companies of Gurkhas lost contact with their column and instead offered to help the three companies of the Auckland battalion attack Chunuk Bair. The column on the left heading for Chunuk Bair, under the command of General A H Baldwin, had a simpler navigation task as their route was to some degree visible from the old Anzac perimeter. But the guides still lost their way – as Hamilton reported, ‘in plain English, Baldwin, owing to the darkness and the awful country, lost his way’. 🇬🇧

(Next week: Uphill Work)





**DOUBLE SUFFERING:** After dreaming at night that her husband is still alive and her house is intact, Nani Maiya Prajapati (*right*) is reminded every morning that both are gone. She also lost her daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren in this ruin of her home in Sankhu.

Sunita Chitrakar (*left*) has been living with her two sons under a tent for the past three months. She doesn't know how to get roofing material and her Rs 15,000 emergency help.

Purna Laxmi Khadgi (*below*) showing a wedding photograph with her pharmacist husband who was killed with her one-and-a-half year old son when their home in Bhaktapur collapsed.



# 2,000 widows

Women who lost their husbands in the earthquake suffer bereavement and a lonely struggle for survival



**ROJITA ADHIKARI**  
in BHAKTAPUR

Every morning when Nani Maiya Prajapati, 47, gets up, she peers across the bed to check if her husband is there and over the field to see if her home is still standing, just as in her dreams. They aren't there.

Nani Maiya's life is never going back to what it was before 25 April. She is reminded every morning of the horror of that Saturday just before noon in Sankhu when buildings caved in with a frightful roar and her husband, daughter and son-

in-law, two grandchildren and mother-in-law were buried under her house. After a night of forgetting, she is reminded every morning of her loss. Time has not healed, the wounds in her soul are as raw as ever.

Nani Maiya was serving food to her daughter, son-in-law and their two children when the building started shaking violently. She shouted "let's go" and ran out of the house. The others couldn't make it in time and were crushed.

"I am the only survivor in the family. I lost everyone. I wish I had died too," sobs Nani Maiya, dressed in mourning white.

The earthquake killed nearly

9,000 people with 55 per cent of them female. Nepal Police estimates that up to 2,000 women lost their husbands, and there are another 50,000 single women whose houses collapsed. For the widows and single mothers, the struggle for survival after the earthquake has been doubly difficult because they are alone to rebuild and take care of families.

In patriarchal rural Nepal, it is mostly the men who earned, made important financial and other decisions in the household. They



**REBUILDING  
OURSELVES**

were the ones who did all the paperwork in the VDCs. The widows and single women now have to learn to do all this by themselves, as they try to claim the Rs 15,000 emergency relief and apply for reconstruction grants.

Nani Maiya, who farmed while her husband worked as a labourer, cannot read or write. Her citizenship papers and all land registration documents are buried in the ruin, and she has been living in a small shed made of two corrugated zinc sheets

provided by an anonymous donor. She looks dazed.

In nearby Dadhikot, 33-year-old Sunita Chitrakar also lost her husband who was a carpenter, and is now struggling to take care of her two children.

Three months after the earthquake, even though she lives close to the capital, Sunita has not received any money or roofing material and is still living in a fraying tent with her children. Others with men in the families have built temporary shelters from roofing material provided by the government, and they have got their Rs 15,000.

"No one told me where to go,





PICS: ROJITA ADHIKARI

## Special need

Women's groups and relief volunteers say widows and single mothers need special attention in post-earthquake rehabilitation because of the loss of breadwinner and the stigma of widowhood in patriarchal Nepali society. They will be needing financial and psycho-social support well into the future.

"Single women and widows will need a separate mechanism for support to rebuild homes and livelihoods," says Lili Thapa of the Women for Human Right, Single Women Group. Thapa wants a Rs 50 million special fund for single mothers and widows and a special relief structure to reach them.

When we put that to Minister of Women, Children and Social Welfare Nilam KC, she admitted such a program had not been planned yet. But she added: "We have looked at trafficking and sexual violence in shelters, but I will keep the agenda of widows and single mothers in the meeting of the council of ministers."

how to get the relief material," says Sunita. "During storms, I have to hold on to the flaps so the tent won't blow away. We need Rs 12,000 a month to survive, and there is now no money for food, to pay for school fees."

Purna Laxmi Khadgi, was married off when she was 19 and had been living with her husband for 11 years in Bhaktapur. Her husband and their one-and-half year old son were killed. She and her daughter survived.


"My husband and son were sleeping inside the house that Saturday," Purna Laxmi recalls, "I survived because I was washing clothes outside. The building

collapsed and it buried my husband and son. I miss them both terribly, I remember my son most at his feeding time."

Purna Laxmi has a degree in pharmacy and her husband had a drug store. They were relatively well off, but the loss of her husband has left Purna Laxmi without support. She has been living for over three months in a temporary shed built by her brother-in-law. "I have to survive for the sake of my daughter," she says.

Subhadra Marikhun also lost her husband and her house is gone. She cannot sleep because she is worried that she will not

have enough money for her son's school. "My husband loved me so much he didn't want me to get a job, how can I live without him now?" says Subhadra.

For the nearly 3 million people directly affected by the earthquake, life is a struggle but is slowly returning to normal. But for the 2,000 widows like Nani Maiya Prajapati, Purna Laxmi Khadgi, Sunita Chitrakar and Subhadra Marikhun, there is another dimension of loss. They need long-term help. 

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

■ More pictures online





# Finally federalism

Editorial in *Kantipur*, 10 August  
कान्तिपुर

Unless something unprecedented happens, the country is sure to have a new constitution in a few days. This will mark the end of the peace process during which we came through a ceasefire, the demobilisation and disarmament of fighters. Certainly, the current draft has some problems. Let's hope the door to resolve them will be kept open. Still, it is a great achievement that we are soon going to have a Federal Democratic Constitution after ten years of waiting. This announcement alone will restore

Nepal's national morale. It will also prove wrong those who said that the CA would never write the constitution, federalism isn't possible, or that demarcation was not feasible. The challenge is to implement the new federal structure, and the constitution will be judged on how that is done. The draft reflects the suggestions made by the public during consultations and feedback. There have been changes in the provisions for citizenship. Women and Dalits have been given more rights. Local officials will now be directly elected. However, even

though the draft guarantees 'complete press freedom' it still gives rulers undemocratic loopholes to muzzle the press. It is encouraging that the parties could push through with a federal structure with fewer provinces. There will be differences about boundaries. But agreeing on this model will open up a debate about devolution and these will have to be addressed as we move along. It is impossible to have a constitution that everyone agrees on 100 per cent. Even some leaders of the four main parties who are behind this draft are not happy with some of the provisions. But they looked at the national interest and compromised on each other's positions. It is the responsibility of the top leaders to address some of the more vociferous opposition to the current draft. The biggest weakness of this process so far is that the Forum Nepal and TMLP are not part of it. But the fact that there is a province that is east-west and located in the plains is itself an achievement. That is more than can be said for the Tharus. As a last resort future disputes can be resolved through future elections because the constitution can be amended as long as there is that mandate. No group now should push itself out of the national mainstream.



BIKRAM RAI

# No more bloodshed

Gopal Kiranti in *www.onlinekhabar.com*, 9 August  
onlinekhabar

"We should welcome the new deal signed by the four major parties Saturday night to carve out six federal provinces. The United National Front of the UCPN(M) has decided to accept the deal because it will institutionalise federalism and democratic republicanism. Everyone who aspires to see the Constituent Assembly achieving its goal of promulgating a new constitution should accept the deal. The agreement on the six-province model was inevitable because of the Madhesi parties' opposition to a draft constitution sans boundaries of federal provinces, the new balance of power in the second CA, and public feedback from across the country. Too much Nepali blood has already been shed to achieve this deal. We should not shed more. In India, only 11 states were created when the constitution was passed. But the number of states has reached 30 by now, and we are sure that Bodoland and Gorkhaland will also be declared

sooner or later. As in India, we have strengths and challenges to create more federal provinces in Nepal in future. Our biggest strength is political awareness and aspirations raised within the oppressed communities. And the challenge is to organise them to keep struggling to achieve their political aspirations. Although our National United Front has accepted the deal, we are against allowing Biratnagar to treat the Kirat land as its colony. We will keep fighting for an autonomous Kirat province. People of Magarant and Tharuhat have contributed immensely to the 'people's war'. So let us accept the six-province model for the time being, and keep fighting for autonomous Kirat, Magarant, Limbuwan, Tharuhat, Tamsaling, Tamuwana, Khasan and Newa provinces. Those who have accused Pushpa Kamal Dahal of kowtowing to the NC and the UML are reactionaries hell-bent on stopping the CA from passing the new constitution." *Kirati of the UCPN(M) started his political career by launching a separate armed struggle for an autonomous Khambuwan Province.*

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Now, I invite our young leader to say a few words.  
अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट  
Basu Kshitiz in *Annapurna Post*, 12 August

**QUOTE OF THE WEEK**

**“** The extremists who boycotted the elections, the rightists who never wanted the Constituent Assembly and the secessionists have joined hands to sabotages the constitution writing process, but we will not let them succeed **”**  
UML Chair KP Oli in *onlinekhabar.com*, 13 August

# Stalked by malnutrition

*Naya Patrika*, 9 August  
नयाँ पत्रिका

Cases of malnutrition have been detected among children living in shelters in earthquake affected districts, but despite advice from health workers they haven't been taken to hospitals. A study conducted by Child Health Division under Department of Health Services (DOHS) showed that 422 children between 6 months and five years out of the 1,055 referred for further treatment for severe undernourishment haven't gone to hospitals. The survey looked at the nutrition status between 28 June-5 July in Sindhupalchok, Dolakha, Ramechhap, Gorkha, Nuwakot, Rasuwa, Dhading, Kavre, Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Lalitpur, Sindhuli, Makawanpur and Okhaldhunga. Ten thousand

others were found to be underweight or stunted. "It is worrying that the children with severe malnutrition haven't reached hospitals," said Girija Raj Subedi of the Nutrition Division which had deployed 10,000 Female Community Health Volunteers, 4,000 health workers and 900 others for the study in which they went house-to-house. The surveyors also looked at the condition of pregnant and lactating women after the earthquake and distributed vitamin A, iron and folic acid tablets, promoted supplementary food, breast feeding and nutritious food. Over 40 per cent of children in Nepal under 5 were stunting due to lack of nutrition even before the earthquake. Eleven per cent suffered wasting and 46 per cent had anemia.

# More able

Sajana Baral in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 9-15 August

On a fine morning in 1989 a young boy of 14 entered a teacher's room at a local school in Bungamati and said: "I want to study as well." That boy, Jivan Dangol was blind and the school had no provision to teach visually impaired students. But Dayaram Maharjan, one of the teachers couldn't bring himself to reject a boy so determined to study. So, he taught himself Braille and started teaching Dangol. "We didn't have a typewriter, so we wrote with chalk on a slate," recalls Maharjan, now 50. "But within a year Jivan was able to attend class like others."



GOPEN RAI

When people saw a blind boy going to the school like other children, parents started bringing their differently abled children to school, too, to enroll them. This posed a new challenge for Maharjan, since many of them weren't blind, but deaf. So, he went to the Kathmandu Deaf Association and taught himself sign language. A few years later, Maharjan was visiting the nearby town of Khokana where he saw a four-year old boy paralysed from the waist down crawling on the ground. "It just hurt my heart to see that. I talked with his parents and brought him with me," recalls Maharjan who then got a tutor to teach him physiotherapy. In 2001, Maharjan registered the Disabled Service Association and rented a room from Karyabinayak Mandir Sudar Samiti, giving lessons to his three disabled students there. However, there was opposition from other parents who didn't want disabled children around the temple complex.

But gradually, people started understanding his cause and showed benevolence. He is now taking care of 53 disabled children in three houses he rents near the school where they get lessons in music, painting, photography, sewing, knitting as a part of their rehabilitation. Dangol, the boy who changed Maharjan's life 26 years ago himself teaches visually impaired students to read and write. Another of Maharjan's blind students, Satish Raj Pandey, hosts a program on Kalika FM. The people who once accused him of being a fool now praise his selflessness. "Disability is not a problem or a burden," muses Maharjan, "give them a chance, they'll be more able than the able-bodied."

**nepalitimes.com**  
■ Dayaram's Adarsha #691  
■ Different, but able #574



We believe that knowledge is the starting point to generate a conversation. This monthly knowledge series has been initiated in order to raise important questions and stimulate debate within Nepal's tourism industry. It is hoped that structuring the conversation based on new knowledge and developing an open platform to share ideas will lead to action, positive growth and impact in both the public and private sector.

## Innovations in Nepal's Tourism Industry

Nepal's tourism industry seems to be rebounding. The industry is more optimistic now than several weeks ago. Safety assurances, especially for trekking areas have helped. As have the relaxing of travel advisories from other governments. Nepal should continue to be promoted as a safe destination to visit, but there should also be a focus on using the impact of the earthquake to come up with innovations and improvements to the tourism industry.

Products and services need to be significantly improved if Nepal is to regain the confidence of incoming tourists and attract more visitors. Improving rural and urban infrastructure, training personnel and developing safe trekking systems would help improve quality and tourist experience.

New products should also be identified and promoted. A focus also needs to go towards rebranding Nepal's image to reach a wider audience. Nepal does need to encourage more trekkers and mountaineers, but it also needs to

attract more leisure tourists and pilgrims from closer by, especially India and China. One way to do so can be by promoting Nepal's intangible assets.

Some cultural heritage sites were destroyed, though many remain fully intact. What is the larger story behind and around these damaged monuments? These sites are maintained by a diverse set of communities that are more than willing to share their culture and traditions with tourists. The history and significance of damaged

heritage sites rests with the artisans who are actively participating to restore them, and with the close-by resident who has a faithful link with the physical assets. Can we promote these intangible assets that are within the hearts and minds of the people of Nepal? The coming months have countless festivals and celebrations. There should be a drive to attract tourists to come to Nepal for these experiences. A particular drive could be towards bringing non-resident Nepalis back for key festivals as a boost to the tourism industry.



### BADIMALIKA

Explore the vast grasslands, nomadic shepherds and terrace fields on your way to the Badimalika temple. Khaptad National Park is close-by. Enjoy views of mountain peaks like Mount Api from the temple premises. The area is lively and festive during Janai Purnima and Ganga Dasahara festivals.

### BARDIA NATIONAL PARK

This untouched wilderness in the Terai borders the eastern bank of the Karnali River in Bardiya. It contains one of the largest stretches of tiger habitat. Enjoy other features of the park such as the crocodile breeding centre, Tharu cultural museum, and the elephant breeding centre.



### SURMA SAROVAR

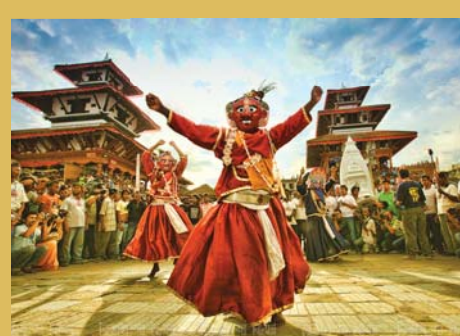
Surma Sarovar Lake in Bajhang district lies at an altitude of 4,300m. It is believed that taking a dip in this lake helps cure skin diseases, and please Goddess Surma who helps one to fulfill their wishes. The trekking route to Surma Sarovar itself is a major attraction. During the end of July, thousands of pilgrims come for a big annual festival called Birijaat to take ritual baths.



**Lets promote new and existing products by emphasising the people and the culture. Here are some examples of new destinations and old traditions that tourism entrepreneurs can use to diversify their products**

### LOWER MANASLU

Trek through the homeland of modern Nepal's unifier, King Prithvi Narayan Shah of Gorkha. Explore the historic, ecological and cultural splendour on the famous Manaslu Circuit Trek. The Lower Manaslu route is more moderate and passes through some famous places such as Gorkha Bazaar and Barpak.



### INDRA JATRA

Indra Jatra is believed to be a festival of classical dances. It is celebrated by both Hindus and Buddhists. One can observe many varieties of traditional Nepali dances on this day. The festival is named after Lord Indra, known as the king of heavens and the god of rain. (August/September)

### LUMBA SUMBA

Trek through Kanchenjunga Conservation Area and meet Nepal's various ethnic groups like the Limbus, Sherpas, Rai, Gurung, Magars and Tamangs. Explore alpine grasslands, temperate and sub-tropical forests, and low river valleys, and get a glimpse of the endangered snow leopard and red panda.



### GANESH HIMAL (RUBY VALLEY)

The trek falls between Manaslu Conservation Area and Langtang National Park. Get a panoramic view of Ganesh Himal, Manaslu, Lamjung, Langtang, Lirung and other several peaks. Walk through hillsides filled with blossoming rhododendron, pass through beautiful villages of people including Tamang, Chhetri, Gurung and observe their culture, and catch a glimpse of wild animals such as the Thars and musk deer.

### DASAIN

Dasain is a biggest festival of the year (September/ October). This 15 day festival celebrates the triumph of good over evil, and is symbolized by goddess Durga slaying the demon Mahisasur. The goddess Durga is worshiped with pujas, offerings and sacrifices throughout Nepal. Dasain also commemorates the great victory of Lord Ram over Ravana, the king of demons.



### TIJ

Tij is a three-day long celebration for women wherein they feast before the day of fasting and sing, dance and pray while celebrating the festival. Hindu women pray for marital happiness, wellbeing of their family and purification of themselves. The festival is traditionally dedicated to Goddess Parvati and her union with Lord Shiva. (August/September)

### CHHATH PARBA

During this four-day festival, commonly celebrated by people in the Terai, devotees worship the rising and setting sun. Men and women prepare special dishes of rice and molasses and feast after an audience with the sun. They take dips in sacred rivers and lakes with a belief that it will bring prosperity and happiness to them and their family (November).



### TIHAR HOLIDAYS

Tihar, the festival of lights, is celebrated for five days (November). Nepalis worship 'Yamaraj', lord of the netherworld, in different forms in these five days. They worship crows, dogs, cows, Goddess Laxmi, themselves, and their siblings. Houses are decorated with candles, oil lamps, and electric light, people celebrate by singing and dancing, while traditional food items are cooked in abundance.

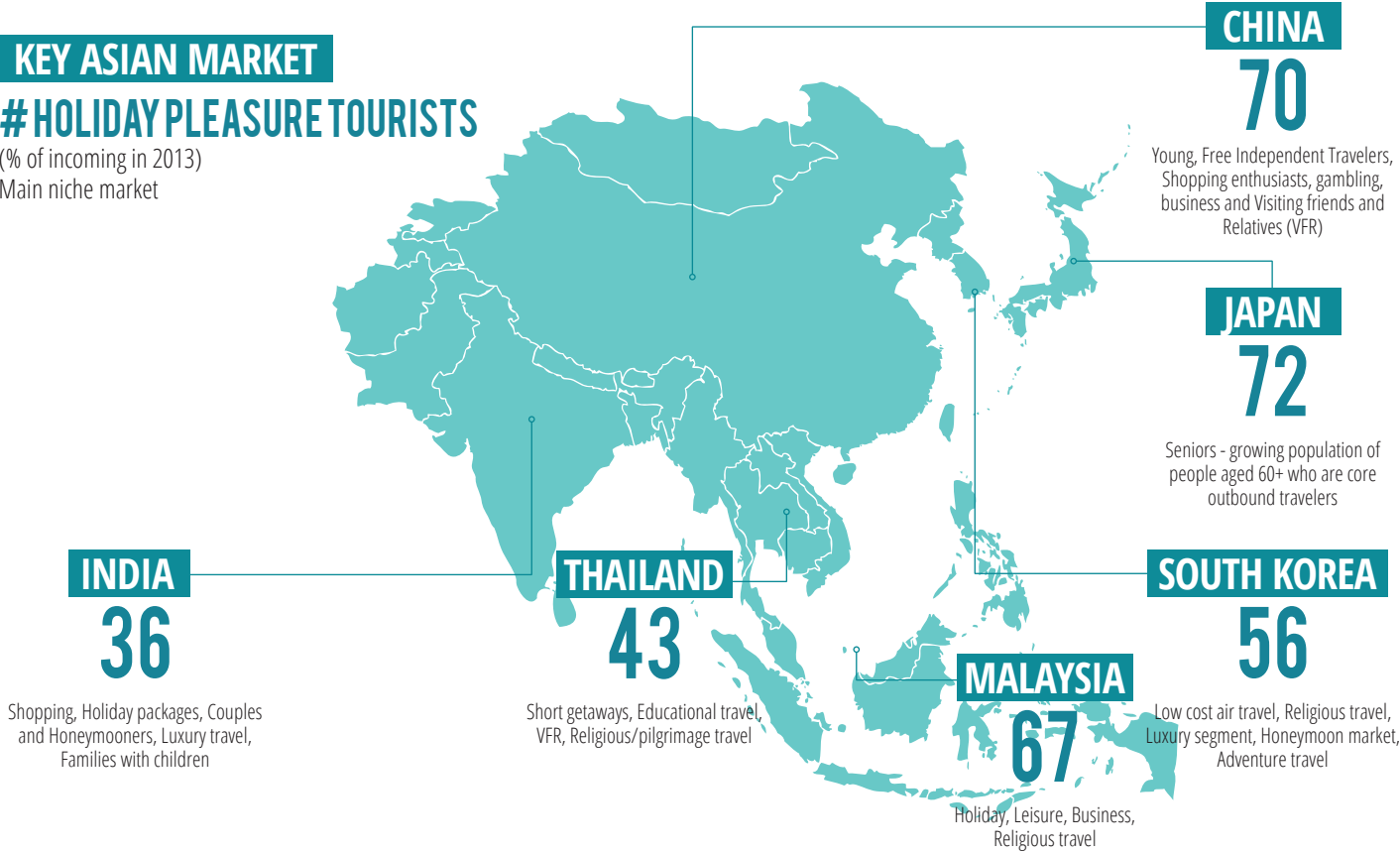


# Nepali businesses need to introduce new products to the market

## KEY ASIAN MARKET

### # HOLIDAY PLEASURE TOURISTS

(% of incoming in 2013)  
Main niche market



Instituting a system of 'Destination Management Organisations' for key tourism hubs in Nepal can foster effective collaboration and linkages among tourism entrepreneurs. Tourism associations can support such effort along with the creation of 'tourism product clusters'. Development of flagship attractions can also go hand in hand with this initiative.

Tourism associations along with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) should also design and implement an 'event strategy' for Nepal. There is now a need to market Nepal's intangible assets from across the country and calendar. Creating a strategy to promote these intangibles should serve a variety of target markets. Such a strategy may also help to improve seasonality patterns in the tourism industry.

More soft adventure products where higher levels of comfort are required should also be introduced and developed to cater to older tourists and those that have a shorter vacation time. Such types of products are especially necessary for Asian outbound travellers.

## REBRANDING Focus on content and overcome seasonality

Rebranding efforts of Nepal's tourism sector could begin with training for tour operators, hoteliers, and tourism professionals to focus on storytelling. By working with bloggers and content creators to share stories and build online brand, NTB and trade associations can inspire customer confidence. Effort towards the 'NepalNow' website is an encouraging start. As they should, sectors have come together to launch combined efforts and significantly increase their online presence.

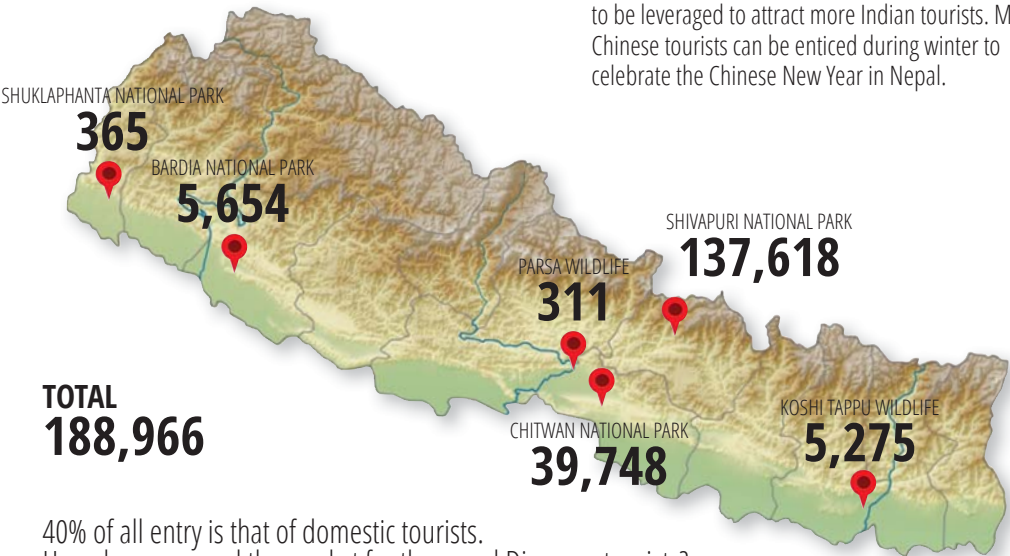
Familiarisation tours for tour operators, journalists,

travel writers and bloggers from Nepal's key markets (existing and targeted) can complement efforts to create better content and online presence. Various organizations have already taken such an initiative. NTB has to become the main organizing body to help spread clear and consistent message about Nepal.

Seasonal sales campaigns need to be more aware of the domestic market, especially with regular festivals that provide short breaks throughout the year, and academic holidays such as in summer and winter. Better seasonal marketing is very important in Nepal to minimise seasonal fluctuations and improve utilisation of destinations, facilities and services. Better campaigns in Asian markets can significantly mitigate risks from seasonality. Monsoons are cooler in Nepal than India and is a festive period that needs to be leveraged to attract more Indian tourists. More Chinese tourists can be enticed during winter to celebrate the Chinese New Year in Nepal.

### NEPALI VISITORS TO NATIONAL PARKS

(Source: Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation, Annual Report 2011-2012)



40% of all entry is that of domestic tourists.  
How do we expand the market for them and Diaspora tourists?

## Improving Products and Services

The earthquake has provided a unique opportunity for Nepal's tourism industry to improve the products and services it offers. An immediate form of improvement can come from higher quality services. Training service personnel (e.g. first aid training to porters), certification systems for guides, encouraging guides to learn another language and better communicate Nepal's intangibles, visitor management training programs for managers and operators, etc. could significantly improve the quality of service of Nepal's tourism industry.

The private sector does need to take initiatives to improve quality, however, NTB and relevant ministries also have a number of responsibilities they must fulfil:

- Design and implement improved and expanded tourism market research systems covering data collection, research, analysis and information dissemination. This effort can start by conducting exit surveys at the airport and key attractions (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation).
- Design and implement a new electronic application process for tourist visas to Nepal (Department of Immigration)
- Design and enforce tourism/land use planning policies and practices, mainly with regard to planning controls, waste management at sensitive destinations (Ministry of Urban Development, Ministry of Federal and Local Development, etc.)
- Develop and enforce international standards for health and safety across all aspects of the tourism supply chain

- Upgrade runway and taxi space, as well as management at Tribhuvan International Airport (Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation)

**Nepal Tourism Recovery**, a Facebook group with more than 6,000 members, is taking these immediate steps to improve the tourism industry:

- Improving our international airport, starting with a welcoming graffiti
- Creating promotional videos of Nepal
- Developing a website for 'NepalNOW'
- Organizing a promotional event for Gai Jatra

\* Ideas in the back page have been retrieved from Tourism Development International's 2014 study on trends in the Nepali tourism market.

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# Bound by boundaries

If the disputed districts must be recarved to bring the Madhesi, Tharus and Janajatis on board, let us do it.



Before the Maoist insurgency escalated beyond the mid-western hills nearly 20 years ago, the separatist Khambuwan Liberation Front in the east had gone underground and taken up arms.



## AS IT HAPPENS

Om Astha Rai

Founded by firebrand radical Gopal Kiranti, the group bombed Sanskrit schools, shot dead political rivals and threatened to chase away Bahuns-Chhetris after creating an autonomous Khambuwan Province.

After two decades, the Front no longer exists, and Kiranti is a staunch supporter of the Maoist Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal. When Dahal signed a deal with the NC, the UML and the MJF(D) on 8 August to carve out six federal provinces it obviated once and for all the autonomy that Kiranti fought for.

But Kiranti hailed the deal and urged pro-federalism forces to welcome the six-province model (see page 18). The transformation of Kiranti from a radical fighter into a pragmatic politician, is perhaps best explained by what Dahal said after the deal: “We had to compromise because we are now weak.”

Indeed, Kiranti contested the second CA elections from Jhapa and faced a humiliating defeat at the hands of the UML Chair KP Oli. Had Oli lost the 2013 election, as in 2008, the whole story could have been different. Kiranti would have probably not welcomed a deal that has led to violent protests in many western parts of the country. Or the deal itself would have not been possible.

The dynamics of CA-II are different from CA-I, and there is a growing realisation among the Madhesi and Janajatis that their dream of federalism is achievable. The Madhesi parties, except for the one that Upendra Yadav leads, have already given up their radical demand for a Single Madhes province. Even Yadav’s Federal Socialist Forum Nepal (FSFN) is

not as vocal anymore, with its Janajati members on the verge of peeling off.

FSFN lawmaker Birendra Mahato says: “If the one Madhes province is not possible, we can accept two states in the Tarai. But Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari should be part of the eastern Madhes province.” Some other Madhesi CA members, even from the FSFN, admit that they can compromise even if the southern belts of just Sunsari–Morang, and not Jhapa, are integrated with the eastern Madhes province.

Second-wrung leaders of the MJF(D), the only Madhesi party that signed the 8 August deal, are also not happy with boundaries of federal provinces. The MJF(D) leaders Jitendra Dev and Ram Janam Chaudhary stopped their President Bijaya Gachhadar for eight hours from signing the deal. But they eventually relented and left the Singha Darbar, and a crestfallen Gachhadar finally did the deed.

Although MJF(D) leaders, apart from Gachhadar, are against the deal they are not with other Madhesi parties, either. Dev says they can accept as many as three provinces in the Tarai. And Chaudhary says they can accept the six-province federalism if Kailali is divided between Province 5 and 6. So their discontent seems to just stem from integration of the Tharu-dominated parts of Kailali and Kanchanpur with Province 6.

In the east, the Limbuwan groups now say their province is “too large”. That is a weak argument and the Janajatis are unlikely to descend to the streets demanding a smaller province. The protests in the mid-west are merely manifestations of anger over reckless division of the development zone and districts. Not a single major identity group is now on the streets demanding Single Madhes, Limbuwan and Khambuwan. The Tharus are the only ones who have a legitimate demand and have descended on the streets, but even here parceling out Kailali and Kanchanpur may pacify them.

The six-province federalism model looks like a workable proposition, but the four parties need to tweak it by snipping and

tucking some district boundaries. If the Madhesi and Tharus own the new constitution if parts of the five disputed districts of the Tarai are given to them, the four parties should be ready for it. We are not signing a treaty with a foreign country by giving up our territory, after all.

Federating the country is just a process of strengthening unity. And as Kiranti says: “The battle for more rights will never end in a democracy. Even after the new constitution, the struggle will go on.”

@omastharai

## WHAT NOW?

The Constitution Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee has sent the text of the constitution to the Drafting Committee to finalise the document. Here is a timeline:

12

AUGUST

The CPDCC of the Constituent Assembly (CA) endorsed the new constitution’s draft with boundaries of six federal provinces.

24

AUGUST

The CA will endorse the constitution by approving each article with two-thirds majority, and the CA Chair Subhas Nembang will verify it.

17

AUGUST

The CA’s Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC) will finalise the constitution’s revised draft.

27

AUGUST

President Ram Baran Yadav will issue the new constitution.

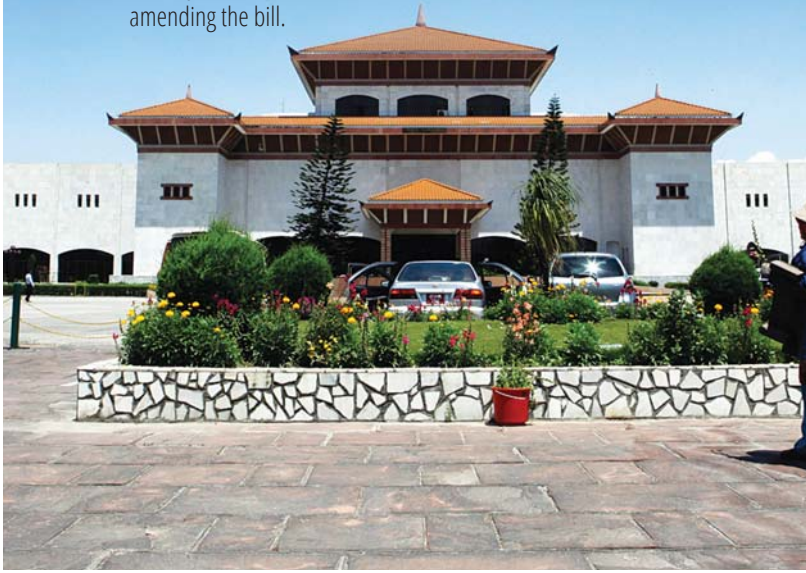
22

AUGUST

The constitution will be tabled in the CA as a bill. Two days will be allotted for amending the bill.

One week after: Change of government, K P Oli becomes new Prime Minister

One month after: New President



## Career Opportunity with British Council Nepal

The British Council focuses on cultural relations that build international trust and understanding, that generate opportunities for individuals to fulfil their potential and fosters the cooperation which contributes to a stable world. In Nepal we have a new Country Strategy to develop cultural relations by focusing on teacher training, examination reform, digital learning, examinations delivery and the development of a center for professional development and cultural convention space.

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Please note that the British Council Nepal office receives a high number of applications to vacancies. Many of these are rejected because they do not meet the skills, knowledge and experience criteria. Others are rejected because the applicants fail to fully complete the British Council standard application form. We therefore urge you only to apply if you do meet these criteria and in our standard application form. Thank you.

Further information to the post including detailed Role Profiles (job description) and an official application form can be downloaded from the British Council's website <http://www.britishcouncil.org.np/about/jobs>

All applications must be on the official form and should be e-mailed to [recruitment@britishcouncil.org.np](mailto:recruitment@britishcouncil.org.np), no later than **5pm on Wednesday 19 August 2015**.

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# Provincial mentality

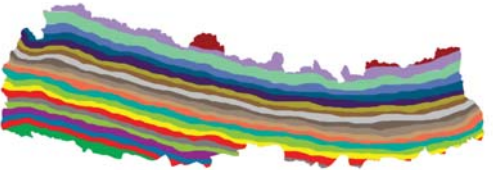
A nyhoo, the headlines are peppered this week with refutations. Everyone is in denial: KPO has denied that he is in a tearing hurry to be Prime Minister. Jhusil Da has denied that he is reluctant to step down, is perfectly happy where he is, and stoking opposition to the draft constitution so that he can get one last freebie to New York for the UNGA. PKD has issued a strong denial that he wants to be president so that he will be immune from prosecution for gobbling up mucho arabs meant for his guerreros, and also for having sent a whole bunch of people to kingdom come. Luckily, people in this country have so little trust in the froth estate that they don't believe the denials. Still, the leaders are not denying that they are deniers.

Everyone's priority now is to get the dreadlocked draught of the new constitution over and done with so we can all go back to medieval fun and games to make perfect arsonists of ourselves by burning tyres while they are still attached to parked cars. It was inevitable that all this would ultimately all boil down to territory. In the Darwinian sense, protecting one's property and watering the perimeter of one's domain periodically by peeing on the neighbour's front yard is a time-honoured tradition handed down to us from one generation to the next by our Proboscis Monkey ancestors. Which is why demonstrators are setting fire to police cars in Surkhet -- they can't help it, they are hardwired to risk life and limb to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the United Karnali (UK).


Many of you have Tweeted to The Ass in the past week, imploring that I make sense of what is happening to the constitution. To all your queries, I have

only one answer: "Who do you think I am, Dr Ambedkar?" But to cut a long story short and to get you off my hair, I have prepared the following models for provincial boundaries and handed them over to the Monologue Committee to do as they deem fit:

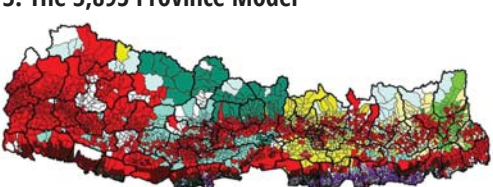
1. East-West 28 Province Model



2. North-South 28 Province Model



3. The 3,895 Province Model



4. The 4-Province Model


Kangresistan

Baddieland

Eh-Maledom

Ma-desh

5. The No-Province Model



These maps of boundaries, methinks, will adequately meet demands in the spirit of give and take (mostly take) so that everyone will be satisfied that these grievances will be addressed:

1. **Province#6** doesn't like the way it is shaped and wants to have more proportionate and symmetrical dimensions so it looks more attractive.

2. **Province#5** is perfectly happy with its good looks and doesn't want to oblige **Province#6**.

3. The northern part of **Province#6** wants to bifurcate and create a separate **Province#7** so that it can be even poorer than **Province#2**.

4. The southern part of **Province#6** wants to secede from **Province#5** even before it is formed in order to create a separate province so it can plunder its forests by itself.

5. Now that **Province#2** has got a Plains Province, it wants the borders to be extended to the mountains so that it can be more viable by selling off the waters of the Kosi.

6. No way **Provinces#1** and **#3** will give even an inch of their territory to **#2** since they want to sell off the waters of the Kosi themselves.

7. Some in **Province#1** think it's too big and want to divide it into **Province#1a** and **Province#1b**.

8. All Provinces want to have access to both the India and China borders so that they can facilitate Sino-Indian trade in wildlife contraband.

9. Province #5 doesn't have access to the Chinese border and wants a 100km tunnel to Tibet so it can continue smuggling yarsagumba.

10. **Province#2** wants the distinction of being the Least Developed Province so as to be eligible for more grants from the Centre.



The Ass

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