

**TURKISH
AIRLINES** 

VICIOUS CYCLE

Politics affects the economy
which in turn impacts on politics



After waiting eight years Nepal’s politicians finally patched together a new constitution and it was promulgated on 20 September. There is now a glimmer of hope that one of Asia’s poorest countries can make up for lost time to ensure political stability and economic growth for its long-suffering people.

However, the fact that it was greeted with fireworks in Kathmandu and police firing in Janakpur drew attention to an unprecedented and dangerous ethnic cleavage within Nepal. It also exposed a divergence in the international community: India and the United Nations were isolated as the only two not to welcome the constitution.

Indian Foreign Secretary S Jaishankar’s frantic and futile last-minute visit to Kathmandu, the official Indian statement and subsequent pronouncements and leaks by the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi have chilled bilateral relations to a point not seen since the Indian blockade of Nepal in 1989-90.

Eschewing diplomatic lingo and resorting to blunt verbiage has all but obliterated the gains made by Prime Minister Modi in smoothening relations between India and Nepal during his visits here last year. By giving the impression that they were passing on instructions to Nepal’s leaders about what to do, and by discounting a democratic exercise in constitution-building, India come across as being needlessly mean. Across social media, it has provoked an angry reaction antagonising even Nepalis

otherwise sympathetic to India (*see page 3*). Politics is about perceptions, and the perception in Nepal is that New Delhi has gone too far.

This is bad for both countries. Nepali leaders do tend to play victim and won’t pass up the chance to play up Indian heavy-handedness to mask their own shortcomings. Our leaders provoked the Indian reaction by ramming through a constitution without listening to Tarai voices.

But the Nepali public’s understanding is that India is bullying us again, and this is most counterproductive for India’s own national interest. We understand there is no monolithic ‘India’, and there are many factors at play here. The divergence in Nepal policy within the Indian administration among various MEA factions, the rivalry between intelligence agencies, the interest of the Indian Army which has 60,000 Nepalis in its ranks, the open disagreement between Prime Minister Modi’s advisers and the bureaucrats, and the interests of the state governments bordering Nepal. State assembly elections in Bihar next month also seem to be a factor.

Nepal has gone through dramatic political transformation in the past ten years. Prime Minister designate K P Oli has his work cut out to: immediately tone down the self-congratulation, urgently bring the dissenters back into the fold and kick-start the economy.

The three parties must go out of their way to start to heal the ethnic polarisation between hills and plains. Compromise

amendments to the constitution, especially regarding federal boundaries, could be one move. But Nepal’s politics will always be unstable as long as development is stagnant, and there are no jobs – politics affects the economy which in turn impacts on politics.

If we finally get our politics right, Nepal has everything going for it. It is a mid-sized country situated between the world’s two most populous nations, it has vast potential for hydropower and tourism, Nepalis are a hardworking people with lots of international goodwill. The country is an exuberant democracy with a vibrant free press, and registers over 80% turnout in elections.

Nepal is small only compared to its giant neighbours, India and China. Otherwise, with its 28 million people it is the world’s 40th most populous and has the economy of scale for a viable domestic consumer market. Nepal can benefit from its location to be a trade corridor between China and India, and a major destination for tourism and investment from both giant neighbours.

Due to the conflict and government mismanagement, electricity generation has not kept pace with rising demand, leading to crippling 12-hour daily power rationing. Cooperation with India on electricity and water-sharing is a win-win for both countries. Asymmetry in past bilateral river schemes has made water a politically sensitive issue in Nepal. But after the Modi visit projects on the Mahakali, Karnali and Arun Rivers that had been delayed for decades are finally moving ahead. Future growth in this rugged and mountainous land will also depend on fast-tracking transportation. Investors are just waiting for the right political climate to push highway, airport and railway infrastructure. Two new international airports in Pokhara and Lumbini are going ahead, and a proposed third will decongest Kathmandu to create alternative economic hubs.

Nepal’s tourism industry is underperforming because of poor facilities, inadequate marketing and security fears. A Marshall Plan for infrastructure and tourism development can create jobs so Nepalis don’t have to migrate to India, the Gulf and Malaysia in such large numbers for work, and it can start with post-earthquake reconstruction.

We don’t need to reinvent the wheel. In the 1990s, Nepal opened up its economy, streamlined regulations and attracted a flood of investors in hydropower, manufacturing and tourism. An innovative decentralisation and self-governance legislation devolved power to the grassroots, with positive impact on development. Nepal has shown the most remarkable improvement among developing countries in reducing maternal and infant mortality. We would have been much further ahead had it not been for the war, instability and corruption.

The new constitution marks an important milestone, a chance to fix the politics, bring dissenters back, and together focus on economic development.

YOUR SAY

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MAKING THE BEST OF IT

Potential for another demand for a Muslim province in the Tarai cannot be ignored. (Making the best of it, Editorial #776) Because Nepali Muslims are one of the most numerous groups with more than a million population. And about 95 percent of them reside in two clusters of eastern and western Tarai.

K K Sharma

■ The Constitution is here to stay. We can always amend it. Madeshi netas, who are quite corrupted and publicly tainted and without any character need to wise up. It’s time to move on and ahead. Nepalis can handle their own internal problems, India needs to stay out and not butt into our affairs. This is not the dark ages, its the 21 Century.

Niranjan Sharma

■ It may not be perfect but this is the most inclusive, pluralistic and democratic constitution Nepal has ever had (A constitution, like it or not, by Bidushi Dhungel #776). There is more that needs to be done - no doubt about it - but that can be done in the framework of the new constitution. The country has been waiting a long time for this day and in spite of the irresponsible violence

perpetuated by some, this is a major milestone in recent political history and the country is better off as a result. Let’s hope the spirit of constitution persists and there is more progress in the days and years ahead.

AiDeeAh

■ Most of the Madhesi activists railing against Brahmin leadership in Kathmandu are Brahmin zamindars themselves. They are politically conservative, rightwing, pro-Hindutva misogynists. And suddenly these corrupt and uncouth leaders who lost the last election are progressive? The only reason they are up in arms is to stoke communal interest to shore up their vote banks. Losers.

Rakesh J

■ “An observer, not a participant” US Ambassador peter Bodde’s affection for the Nepali people shines through the interview. (“An observer, not a participant, #776) Whether it is the US, halfway across the globe, or India, next door, the world wants democracy to take root in Nepal, for its hardworking people to create a higher standard of living for themselves.

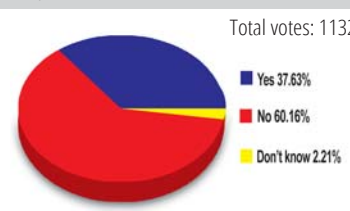
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Weekly Internet Poll #777

Q. Do you accept the new constitution?



Weekly Internet Poll #778
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Q. How do you feel about India's reaction to Nepal's constitution?

CAP FOR CAPTION CONTEST

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This week's Nepali Times cap for the best caption goes to : Paavan Mathema

THIS WEEK



GOPEN RAI (15 SHARES)



Most shared on Facebook

Firefighters try to extinguish a burning bus at Old Bus Park on Sunday. Protesters of opposition parties have carried out demonstrations throughout the Valley to oppose the new constitution.



Most reached on Facebook

Hollywood Himalaya by Madeline Zutt (3,595 reached)



Most visited online page

Hollywood Himalaya by Madeline Zutt (1,060 views)



Most popular on Twitter

High and dry by Ayesha Shakya (85 retweets, 90 favourites)



Most commented

A constitution, like it or not by Bidush Dhungel (27 comments)



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Hashtag revolutions

Social media online movements don't always result in real change

Nothing brings Nepalis closer than their mutual distrust of the Indian state. Shortly after India's Ministry of External Affairs released a statement (its second within 24 hours) on Nepal's new constitution, thousands took to Twitter on Monday to express outrage over what they saw as New Delhi's overbearing attitude.

The #BackoffIndia hashtag seems to



BETWEEN THE LINES

Tsering Dolker Gurung

have piggybacked on a Pakistani Twitter campaign against India and by Tuesday it was trending worldwide, by Wednesday the hashtag contained more than 200,000 tweets. The only other time Nepalis collectively tweeted on something that trended worldwide was in criticism of another Indian institution: its media for insensitive, over the top coverage of the April earthquake.

But do hashtags actually result in real change? Can they transcend from being only virtually existent to having a ground presence, or is their significance only limited to the cyberspace?

In case of Nepal, the past record is murky. None of the movements started online (#citizenshipthroughmothers, for instance) resulted in any concrete change. While Nepalis are relatively active on Twitter, neatly divided between activists,



intellectuals and the politically opinionated who never refrain from having a go at one another, on the social change front we have not had any major success on the scale of movements such as #Blacklivesmatter, #Umbrellarevolution and the Arab Spring.

Many may argue that the success of an online movement should not be measured only on the basis of tangible change, but also on its role in initiating dialogue on issues that are not getting the kind of coverage in the mass media that they should. Social media campaigns also help to ease communication among various groups, fosters coordination, and creates a mass outreach.

Worldwide, online movements have turned into real change bringers. The most noticeable hashtag of recent years has been the #Blacklivesmatter which was started by

three young black Americans in response to the acquittal of George Zimmerman, who shot and killed teen Trayvon Martin in 2012. Since then the hashtag has been used to speak out against systemic racism and police brutality. Although the campaign began without any leaders, today it is a well-organised movement spread out across the United States, fully devoted to the cause. These are all young, tech-savvy activists who have a large following on social media. When the #Blacklivesmatter campaign picked up again after a jury decided not to indict an NYPD officer who killed a black man, Eric Garner by putting him in a chokehold, protests erupted online. Thousands of tweets were registered within minutes of the decision, and prompted the attorney general to call a federal inquiry into the grand jury decision about the case.

Closer to home is the #Umbrellarevolution, a massive protest launched by Hong Kong democracy supporters last year to oppose the government's decision to stop civil nominations of candidates. The hashtag not only brought thousands of protesters on the streets to demand a change in the rule, it also made people outside Hong Kong aware about it. Activism on the social web brought out young activists who gave the movement leadership.

This week also proved that Nepalis' reach on Twitter is wide enough to make a topic trend worldwide. But having something trend on a microblog is different from real change in real life. Trending topics are also ephemeral just as the 140 characters are: here today gone tomorrow. [@Chenreeyang](#)

PAST PRESENT FUTURE

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Rebranding tourism with



Fly to trek

Great Himalayan Trail and Tara Air launch new promotional partnership

In a unique co-branding exercise, the Great Himalaya Trail (GHT) and Tara Air have decided to partner to promote quality trekking tourism in the Nepal Himalaya.

The GHT is a east-west network of trails across Nepal's northern region which offers a cross-section of Nepal's natural and cultural diversity (*see map*). It stretches from the base of Mt Kangchenjunga to the Api-Saipal Range and is 1,700km long, taking up to 120 days to traverse 10 high passes in the Himalaya.

Tara Air is a subsidiary of Yeti Airlines and operates short takeoff and landing

(STOL) flights to most gateways along the Great Himalayan Trail including Taplejung, Lukla, Phaplu, Manang, Jomsom, Dolpo, Rara, Jumla and Simikot.

"The partnership between the GHT and Yeti Airlines/ Tara Air is a reflection of the private sector's support to the GHT and its objectives," said Wouter Schalken of Samarth-Nepal Market Development Program (NMDP) which coordinates the project with support from UKAid for trail development, training and promotion.

The GHT registers trails and lodges that adhere to quality guidelines on Safe Trekking, environmental impact standards as well as social objectives to ensure fair working conditions and wages and respect for all indigenous cultures.


"The GHT is a reflection of improved quality and diversity of Nepal's tourism products," added Schalken.

Tara Air, for its part, will be the official airline of the Great Himalayan Trail and will carry the GHT logo on all its new DHC-6 Twin Otter aircraft (*see page 5*).

"We are proud to be associated with GHT and hope to launch further support promotion efforts, restore visitor confidence and attract tourists from new markets to trek in Nepal," says Umesh Rai of Tara Air.

Rai said Tara's new plane provides improved passenger standards and increased safety specifications that form a real example of the quality of Nepal's new tourism products.

Following the Annapurna blizzard last year and the earthquake, the GHT adheres to a Safe Trekking System and combines it with better quality accommodation and facilities. The GHT will also promote mountain biking, wilderness tourism, meditation, as well as a chance to explore Nepal's ethnic and natural diversity.

Samarth-NMDP is also working on a program to reduce poverty by injecting trekking income directly into the village economy.  **#MyGHT**
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PICS: KUNDA DIXIT

remodelled plane

Tara Air upgrades fleet with factory new Twin Otters

For 50 years the Twin Otter has been the Land Rover of the air in Nepal, operating out of rugged dirt runways in the Himalaya flying boldly forth where no other plane dared to go.

But as the road network spread and airfields went out of operation, many predicted that the Twin Otter's days were numbered. Indeed, Nepal Airlines, which once had 12 Twin Otters in its fleet now has only two airworthy ones left.

Despite this, airlines are still serving remote airfields with Twin Otters some of which are 35 years old, but the workhorses are still going strong.

Just as the the newest Land Rover SUV is a completely different machine from the vintage British Army Land Rovers plying as public transport from Dharan to Dhankuta, the Twin Otter has got a makeover with a new model.

De Havilland Canada manufactured nearly 900 Twin Otters since 1964, but stopped making them in 1988. In 2007, the Canadian aviation maintenance company Viking bought the type certificate for

the Twin Otter and restarted the production line with an upgraded version of the plane.

The airframe remains the same, it also carries 19 passengers. But while the older Twin Otters have analog dials, the DHC-6 400 Series has a full glass cockpit with modern avionics, a state-of-the-art Flight Management System, and an Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System. In fact, if it wasn't for its distinctive overhead throttle control, the new Twin Otter cockpit could well be on an Airbus 320. The Series 400 also has more powerful PT6A-34 engines and 800 modifications to improve on the previous models.

One morning last week at Kathmandu airport, Capt Santosh Shah was preparing his Tara Air DHC-6 400 'Kilo Yankee' for a flight to Lukla. Unlike older Twin Otters, here he was punching coordinates into a keyboard and selecting the route to Lukla from a pre-programmed list of flight plans. One of the three monitors came to life, showing what looked like a Google Earth image of Central Nepal showing waypoints Jiri and Lamjura en route to Lukla. The screen

had everything: TCAS traffic warning, terrain warning, weather radar, wind speed.

"It is the same plane, but the instruments are much more advanced, and that makes flying it easier," says Shah, who used to fly Yeti's BAe Jetstreams on trunk routes but is even more excited about piloting the Series 400.

Tara has also given its Viking Twin Otters an attractive new livery in its green and gold colours. It has added the Great Himalayan Trail logo on the side as part of the co-branding exercise to promote quality trekking tourism in Nepal. Tara is adding another 400 Series aircraft soon and plans to overhaul its entire fleet of older Twin Otters with the new model.

Viking has sold DHC-6 400s in 25 countries since 2007, including a latest deal for 50 planes worth \$7 million each to China this year.

Kunda Dixit

nepalitimes.com

See multimedia package on the DHC-6 400 Series

prabhu BANK

BIZ BRIEFS



100 days package

Soaltee Crowne Plaza has launched a special package-Soaltee 100 days package, for Indian tourists visiting Nepal. Guests get to stay at the hotel at a special price and enjoy at Casino Mahjong which is open 24 hours. The package is valid till 24 December.

Team sky blue

Ethiad Airways has launched its Sky Blue platform for Man City and Ethiad fans. Members get a 10% discount on flights around the globe, discounts on Ethiad stadium tours and merchandise on MCFC's official online shop along with other benefits.



To the winners

Worldlink Communications has honored the national U-19 Football team for winning the SAF U-19 Football Championship. The team was provided with high-speed internet. On the

occasion of completing 20 years the company is providing free high speed internet in the Patan Darbar Square area.

Premium blend

Chivas Regal has introduced its new premium blended Scotch whisky Chivas Regal Extra in the Nepali market. Chivas Regal Extra is a special selection of whiskies matured in Oloroso sherry casks together with the rarest and finest Chivas malts.



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Costly constitution

The good news is that the bias that the new constitution has institutionalised can be reversed

President Ram Baran Yadav’s promulgation of Nepal’s new constitution at the Constituent Assembly on Sunday marked the end of Nepal’s long drawn transition, and culmination of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in 2006. There



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

were jubilant celebrations in many parts of the country, but in the plains the constitution was symbolically set ablaze. Undoubtedly, all these years of deliberations in the CA, protests on the streets and pacts signed behind closed doors should have yielded a much better document. But it is also essential to appreciate both complexities and limitations of this democratic exercise. For common Nepalis, the entire purpose of the constitution




GOPEN RAI

was to reclaim their sovereignty which was repeatedly violated since the days of the absolute monarchy. For the political parties with diverging ideologies, it was a battle for contending visions of a ‘New Nepal’. Unfortunately, neither ‘we, the people’, nor the political groups representing us are a homogeneous category. There are layers of aspirations within the

electorate and partisan agendas. Our unflinching faith in this democratic exercise, overlooking its complexities and limitations, perhaps explains our disappointment. We may have forgotten that more than half the population were illiterate till two decades ago. Exploitative social relations between the stronger and weaker section of the population still exist and the political class is yet to internalise the essence of democracy. It is perhaps unreasonable to expect a bunch of conservative Brahmin men schooled in patriarchy and steeped in ultra-nationalism to suddenly shed their bias towards women and Madhesis. The good news is that the fundamentals of this constitution have not betrayed us, and as long as the sovereignty rests with the people, there is no limitation to improving this document. It is not the inequities enshrined by this constitution, but the mindset that conceive them should worry us. In a democracy that privileges the majority, if the parties with numbers on their side do not support an idea they can be criticised for it, but not coerced. But the intolerance shown by the government towards dissenting voices and the way state power

was abused to suppress them in the name of restoring law and order is unacceptable and must be questioned. To be sure, not all the protesters in the streets of Tarai towns belong to political parties. They have often resorted to vandalism and arson. The mob lynching of eight policemen in Kailali and one in Mahottari exposed the cruelty of the demonstrators and maligned the movement. But the way protesters are being shot dead at close range, many of them bystanders and children who had nothing to do with the protests, exposed the administration’s excessive use of force and bred more violence. The international community including the UN have taken serious note of human rights abuses by security forces during the recent protests and refrained from welcoming the constitution. India, in particular has taken a strong diplomatic posture and expressed its displeasure about the way the constitution was declared and protests quelled in the Madhes. Anti-Indian nationalism doesn’t help us now. By signing the 12-point agreement in New Delhi in November 2005, our leaders had accepted India as a stakeholder of this process. KP Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal are complaining now, but we have seen them dash off to Delhi for consultation before every major decision in the past.

In any case, instead of fuming over Indian interference, the leaders should focus more on getting their own house in order. Twenty Tarai districts have been shut down for over a month now, nearly 50 people have been killed, yet, none of the top leaders have visited these districts. Prime Minister Sushil Koirala has cancelled his trip to the United Nations and is reaching out to the disgruntled Madhes based parties to address their demands. The Madhesis are engaging for now, but the two sides are still very far apart. Meanwhile, Oli is in a hurry to be prime minister and will be exerting pressure on Koirala to step down. And that tussle will dominate the headlines in the coming weeks. 🇳🇵



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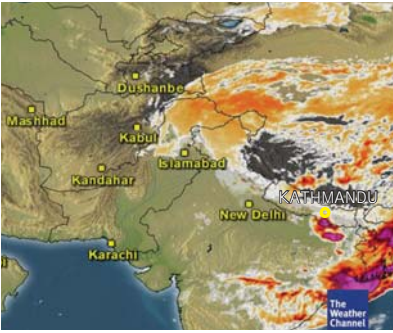


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As the monsoon officially draws to a close, we should not be letting our guards down. This is when the rally destructive cloudbursts have historically occurred in the Himalaya. The colder air from the northwest colliding with moist warm monsoonal flows create heavy localised thunderstorms and precipitation. We will some of this on Friday and into the weekend. The current system is the result of a low pressure circulation over the Bay of Bengal that is affecting a large part of northern India, eastern and central Nepal. By early next week we should see more season Dasain-like weather, but it will still be hot and humid when the sun is out.

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AYESHA SHAKYA
in MUSTANG

Standing in front of rows of neatly aligned glass jars, Gyatso Bista (*pictured, right*) runs his hands over the shelf and inspects each of the labels posted on it. Coming from five generations of Amchis, or traditional Tibetan healers, Bista is also the personal physician of the king of Mustang.

“This one is comprised partially of gold whereas the other one has some silver in it, the capsules are all from China,” Bista explains.

The tradition of Amchis in Mustang, Dolpa, Mugu and Gorkha are not as strong as they used to be so Bista with his brother Tenzin established the Lo Kunphen Traditional Herbal Medicine Clinic and School in Lo Manthang to preserve the culture, which has been practiced in Nepal for the past 1,000 years.

While India and China have recognised the significance of Tibetan medicine and established a number of schools and training centres, Lo Kunphen is the only certified institution within Nepal teaching this ancient branch of medicine.

“It is not only people from Upper Mustang who want to study to become Amchis. Students from any background, and even with no ties to Tibet, can come study here if they are interested,” says Bista.

As Amchi teachings are usually passed down from generation to generation, Bista opened the school hoping to teach a new crop of people interested in the ancient art of healing. Grades one to six are taught in Lo Manthang and grades seven to twelve in Pokhara.

“The basics of Tibetan medicine can only be taught after Grade 8. Students who have studied in our school have a huge advantage because we take them on field trips to introduce and collect Himalayan herbs,” says Bista.

Tibetan medicine is taught in several stages where the first stage of learning itself takes three years. Students are introduced to Tibetan medicine by studying about the role of amchis, various diseases as well as the significance of herbs and plants in treating these diseases.



PICS: GOPEN RAI

HIMALAYAN HEALERS

Traditional Tibetan medicine gets growing global following, but not much government support

Currently, there are 11 students who have completed this stage. However, due to a lack of textbooks and trained Amchis, higher levels are not taught.

“The main issue is language. Textbooks needed to study this branch of medicine is only written in Tibetan. Even though we have students from the United States or Japan, they cannot continue their studies because of the language barrier,” adds Bista.

Furthermore, while the popularity of Ayurveda has spread across the country and beyond, the government still has not given Tibetan medicine the recognition it

deserves.

Regardless of the government’s indifference, there has been a surge of interest in traditional methods of healing, both locally and internationally.

“There was a time when everyone preferred to use only allopathic medicines. However, with the knowledge that chemicals are bad, people are returning to traditional medicine like Tibetan medicine and Ayurveda,” Bista explains.

This is more commonly seen in commercial products where everything from soaps to creams to toothpastes now advertise themselves as free of chemicals



or comprising of traditional herbs. With competition from multinational companies, Amchis are struggling to gain access to adequate amount of herbs to produce their medicines. These herbs can be found in colder, Himalayan climate as well as in southern parts near Pokhara which is why Bista’s Amchi pharmacy is located there. 🇳🇵

nepalitimes.com

Watch interview with Amchi Gyatso Bista

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Beautiful Nepal,
Featuring works of 24 photographers on the subject ‘Nepal is beautiful’. Proceeds from sale of photographs will go to building safe drinking water system and community tpikets for Chhatre Deurali in Dhading.
25 to 29 September, Nepal Art Council Gallery, Babarmahal, Kathmandu

Climate + Change,
A dynamic exhibition exploring the effects of climate change on the Hindu Kush Himalayan region.
Till 30 September, 9am to 5pm,
International Mountain Museum,
Gharipatan, Pokhara, (061)460742,
immpkr@fewamail.com.np, www.internationalmountainmuseum.org

Photography workshop,
Artudio is organising its 53rd photography workshop for beginners.
7am to 9am, Until 30 September at Artudio,
Chhauni Hospital Road, Swayambhu
Rs 4,000. Register: 9851182100, 9803779777

Oktoberfest
Savor the flavours of German cuisine along with a supply of unlimited beer. Entry fees includes swimming.
3 to 4 October, 12.30 pm to 4pm, The Cafe,
Hyatt Regency, Boudha, (01)4491234,
Rs 2,300 plus taxes

Critical mass,
For cyclists reclaiming the streets, a monthly-meet up followed by a brief ride.
25 September, 5.30 pm, Basantapur
Darbar Square

Hemp exhibit,
Wide range of hemp products on display.

EVENTS

9 and 10 October, 11am to 9pm, Patan Museum, Lalitpur, 9841430679, 9818222722

Sustainability issues,
A presentation by Martin Hammers, co-director of Builders without Borders on sustainable rebuilding in Nepal.
29 September, 5 to 7pm, Alliance Francaise, Tripureshwor

Wholeness,
Artist Puran Khadka whose work is a meditative abstraction full of spiritual awakening exhibits his paintings.
Till 30 October, Park Gallery, Pulchok, (01)5522307, contact@parkgallery.com.np



Biking in Nagarkot,
A 30km mountain biking challenge from Nagarkot to Sallaghari.
26 September, Meet Nepal Travel, 9841205366
Rs 1,000 (includes breakfast, lunch and refreshments)



Art show,
Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre resident, Brenna K. Murphy displays work created during a five-month residency.
30 September, 2pm to 5pm, Patan Museum, Lalitpur

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

Empower her,
11 participants will pitch their idea of a service impact project, winners receive seed fund money.
10 October, 3pm, Amrapali Banquet, Bhatbhateni, Kathmandu, (01)443363, Tickets Rs 450

Walkathon
Walkathon, “Together For Hope”, to raise awareness on breast cancer and breast self-examination. Free t-shirts and water included.

10 October, 7am, Patan Darbar Square to Ideal Model School
facebook.com/rosefoundationnepal, 9841467697



Nepal Cup 2015,
A charity football tournament to raise funds to rebuild quake-affected schools in Nepal and promote the country as a tourist attraction.
2 to 4 October, Dasarath Rangasala Stadium, Tripureshwor, info@nepalcup2015.com, www.nepalcup2015.com



The Yeti Run,
Test your strength, stamina and teamwork at Nepal’s first obstacle race.
26 September, St Xavier’s School, Godavari, 9841226397, pareskshrestha@gmail.com

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Nepal’s chronology

For a long time, the prevailing notion among Western historians was that Nepal did not have a rich historiography. This was mainly because Westerners did not know about Nepal’s vamsavalis, Now, the 19th century Nepali chronicle, Nepalika-Bhupa Vamsavali, has been translated into English in a three-volume work, History of the Kings of Nepal – A Buddhist Chronicle and unlocks the secrets of Nepali history. The book was first translated by Daniel Wright in 1877 and while the ‘Wright Chronicle’ became the most readily available English translation of its time, it was incomplete and incorrect in many areas. Wright failed to translate many obscure passages and

he often misidentified places and misunderstood important concepts. This new translation aims to correct the mistakes and fill the gaps found in the earlier translation. The volumes were released on Wednesday at the Taragaon Museum in presence of the authors, Axel Michaels, Manik Bajracharya and Niels Gutschow (pic, above) all of whom are based at the Heidelberg University in Germany. The event was organized by the Hyatt Regency Kathmandu in conjunction with the Saraf Foundation for Himalayan Tradition and Culture, South Asia Institute, Heidelberg University and Social Science Baha. Michaels, who is the Head of the Department of Classical Indology at Heidelberg University,

hoped the volumes would reignite interest in Nepal’s history. The first volume of the book includes the original Nepali text of the chronicle that includes sections in Newari and Sanskrit. The second volume includes unpublished drawings (including one by 19th century Nepali painter Rajman Singh) and maps dating back to 1850. Gutschow who lived in Bhaktapur for many years but is currently based in Germany put his passion for history to good use by digging up much of the material in the book. Bajracharya is a Nepali research fellow at Heidelberg University who helped make sure that the English translation stayed close to the original text. As an emerging cultural hub of Kathmandu, Taragaon Museum was the perfect location for the book launch. The three authors spoke about Nepali historiography and noted that it is mainly about tale-telling, an entangled past where myths and legends are mixed with facts. While Nepali historiography may not be as scientific as it is in the West, it does not make it less valuable. Nepal’s future depends on its history. Nepali historians are not being read and appreciated as much as they should and hopefully this new book will renew an interest in the country’s history. When asked what effect he expected this book to have both at home and abroad, Bajracharya replied: “ it will show Europe that Nepal has a chronological sense of time. The books encompass a large, beautiful history and are a one of a kind work.” Madeline Zutt

DINING



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(01) 2239532



Dechenling,

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Thamel, (01)4412158



Vootoo,

The new home of Newari cuisine that also has a safe continental menu for those who are not yet ready to experiment with new dishes.
Lajimpat, (01)4005222

Starry night BBQ,

Come Friday 7pm onwards and enjoy the town's best barbecues and a live performance by singer Ciney Gurung
Rs 1,799 net, Shangri-La Hotel, Kathmandu, (01) 4420252

Taza,

An excellent new Middle-Eastern restaurant with a Syrian chef. Offers free deliveries within Patan. Don't forget their shawarmas!
Pulchowk, (01)5541592, 9860960177

MUSIC



Jazzmandu,

The 13th edition of Kathmandu Jazz festival.
4 to 10 November, www.jazzmandu.org

Open mic,

Calling all aspiring singers.
Every Tuesday, 7pm, House of Music, Thamel, 9851075172, sanzey@hotmail.com

Baula Jatra,

Put on your shoes, gather your energy, and get ready for the 'Slamming brutal death metal' bands.
26 September, 1pm to 6pm, Purple Haze, Thamel, 9843695278, 9803145286,

Gharana Music Festival

Don't miss out on this one-of-a-kind international classical music festival organised by the Gharana Music Foundation.
5.30 pm to 8.30 pm,
8 to 11 October
Hotel Yak and Yeti, Darbarmarg,
www.gharanamusicfoundation.org



Milla Guesthouse,

If you prefer the quiet, and admire a mix of old and new, this is the perfect place to stay. Not too far away from the city, yet miles apart.
Bhaktapur, 9851024137



Monsoon Madness,

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Rs 5,555 net per person, till 30 September, Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara, (01)4420252, (01)412999, 9818721492, 9860617403, shangrilavillage@hotelshangrila.com



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PICS: SARTHAK MANI SHARMA

BIG DADDY

Tucked away inside the crowded Himalayan Java in Thamel is Big Daddy, a zippy new place that serves mostly burgers and steaks. Big Daddy though its name may be, the restaurant's staff are avuncular and go to great lengths to make sure that the dining experience is pleasant and satisfying.

We headed off to the restaurant on a hot, humid day, so we had no qualms about ordering the homemade iced tea (Rs 130) and the lemonade (Rs 130). This summer, this reviewer has gulped far too many glasses of iced tea, but none has been so satisfying as the one this restaurant offers. The homemade

truly describes the taste, nothing industrial about it: natural, aromatic and not overwhelmingly sweet. The lemonade, too, was refreshing.

We then ordered the restaurant's special Chicken Burger with Bacon (Rs 400). Big Daddy lets you choose between a side salad and fries, and we unapologetically asked for the fries (the whole point of occasionally eating outside is not worrying about your diet). This burger, with its ground meat, bacon, melted cheese and mayo, was appetising, but lacked the richness of taste that other eateries we have written about earlier offer. To winkle out the deep flavours of the dish, Big Daddy could do well with patty that is less wet. The fries, though, are excellent, and we suggest that Big Daddy include them as a separate dish on the menu.

We then ordered the smoked pork sandwich (Rs 600). In thinly sliced pieces marinated with barbecue

sauce and jalapenos, the pork was decent and filling. This time, we tried the salad, looking leafy and lush and fresh to the palate. After the sandwich we were at a loss of what next to order. Our only quibble would be that the pork included far too much of the animal's fatty tissues, and prevented us enjoying the meaty parts. Big Daddy is pricier than other Thamel eateries, but is good value.

The ambience is probably also better in the evening, when the scruffiness of Thamel's streets are subdued. That is when Big Daddy's bar should also be a magnet for night get-togethers. On Wednesdays, the restaurant also offers a 'Buy one get one free' of Kathmandu beer.

Overall, the restaurant is a modish new addition to Thamel's ever-expanding food hub. A place for the hungry, huddled masses to head to. 🇳🇵

Sarthak Mani Sharma

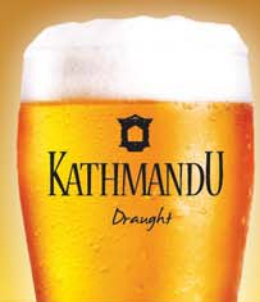
How to get there: Big Daddy is located in Thamel, near Himalayan Java.

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NOT JUST TALKING PEACE

Nepali artists are participating in a global peace event in London with international celebrities

SARTHAK MANI SHARMA

On Friday, as Nepalis were busy celebrating or burning the new constitution, a local folk band announced a collaboration with India’s Oscar-winning composer, A.R. Rahman, on a new musical track.

“We are privileged to announce that our band-mate Jason Kunwar, on behalf of Night, had a chance to collaborate with A R Rahman,” read a message on Facebook.
The two worked together

on *Ot*, a mellifluous new song in which Kunwar plays the flute and *dhime*, and is among eight tracks of an album that features names like Black Sabbath, ABBA and Duran Duran.
“I hope this track and the

collaboration with Night helps to inspire a positive change on the International Day of Peace and beyond,” said Rahman, famous for his lyrics in the movie, *Slumdog Millionaire*.
The album, *Peace Tracks*,

was released that day as part of the International Talking Peace Festival, an arts and cultural event being organised in London by the human rights group, International Alert. Nepali performers, including Night and other influential artists,



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PICS: INTERNATIONAL ALERT



FREE EXPRESSION:

The Nepali band, Night, whose member Jason Kunwar performed with A R Rahman in the new album, Peace Tracks, which was released at the International Talking Peace Festival in London this week.

Viewers at the London festival looking at the artworks of Shristhi Shrestha and Aditya Aryal.

we experienced true unity. The disaster taught us that we can achieve anything peacefully if we unite," she says.

'Talking peace' is a theme that runs through the entire event and features a culinary experience, too. Conflict Café, for instance, brings together chefs from countries that have experienced violence. In 'Conflict Café: Armenia and Turkey', chefs from both countries, which share a historically bitter relationship, will collaborate to serve a feast. Conflict Café will also serve Middle Eastern, Colombian and Nepali food.

The aim of the café is to stimulate interest in conflict regions and break down barriers with the 'power of food', as International Alert puts it.

Thapa hopes for more participation of Nepali artists and hopes a similar festival should also be brought to Nepal. Indeed, at a time when ethnic and geographic divisions are being dangerously highlighted in the country, such a festival could emphasise unity and peace.

"Especially after the promulgation of the new constitution, such a festival can be a starting point for bigger conversations around peace," she says. "Art, music, food can really break down barriers." 🇳🇵

The festival will be held in London until 3 October, 2015.
jkarlysheva@international-alert.org

are performing. Participants will also discuss conflict issues and ways to maintain peace not just through talks but comedy, art, food, poetry, photography and technology.

"We think it is appropriate for Nepali artists to have a strong representation in our peace festival," Chandani Thapa of International Alert told *Nepali Times*. She hopes that

their participation will highlight Nepal's cultural achievements and positively shape how foreigners look at Nepal.

Indeed, the timing couldn't be better. The April earthquake killed nearly 9,000 people in Nepal and destroyed some of Kathmandu's cultural heritage, and trekking trails. On Sunday, a new constitution was promulgated, but it threatens to prolong the turmoil.

"Political instability has spread chaos and fear among the people. The recent earthquake has made the situation worse," says Aditya Aryal (Sadhu X) a Nepali street artist participating in the event who has been painting murals on public walls and buildings in Kathmandu.

"This artwork is about not losing hope. It is about rising up and finding our peace of mind,"

says Aryal, who has a piece titled *Hope* in the event.

Shraddha Shrestha, another street artist, one of 20 taking part in #Art4Peace, a global campaign from International Alert that uses art to inspire conversations about conflict and peace. Shrestha, who goes by the name of Deadline, has a piece titled *And We Were One*.

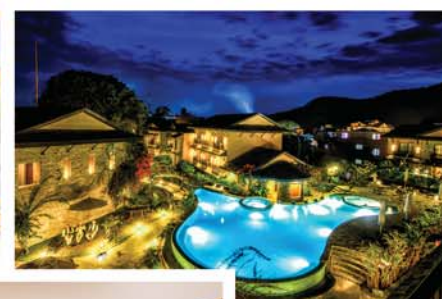
"When the earthquake struck,



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NIGHTCRAWLER

“Who am I? I’m a hard worker, I set high goals and I’ve been told that I’m persistent.” This is one of Louis Bloom’s earliest lines in Dan Gilroy’s *Nightcrawler* that premiered last year at the Toronto International Film Festival. This nocturnal thriller stars Jake Gyllenhaal as Louis Bloom, a relentless, charming and invasive cameraman who navigates the seedy world of Los Angeles’ crime journalism. Gyllenhaal’s grisly performance in *Nightcrawler* is his best yet.


We first meet Bloom stealing copper wire from an abandoned construction site. When confronted by a security guard, Bloom attacks him and steals the guard’s watch before leaving with the rest of the stolen material. To make a bit of money, he sells the wire to the foreman of a scrap

yard and asks him if he is hiring. The foreman accepts the stolen scraps but refuses to give Bloom a job, stating that he does not hire thieves. On his way home, Bloom witnesses a car accident being filmed by a cameraman named Joe Loder (Bill Paxton) who he discovers is a stringer, a freelancer who sells footage to local news channels. Upon approaching Loder to ask if his footage will air on television, Loder give Bloom the famous line: “If it bleeds, it leads”.

Feeling inspired, Bloom trades a stolen bicycle for a police scanner and a dilapidated camcorder in order to kickstart his own career as a stringer. Bloom is uninhibited in his reporting and is completely void of all ethical constraints. This is what makes him so corrupt but also so successful. He is meticulous and dedicated to the craft, ignoring all those who question the morality

of his actions. In fact, when his assistant Rick (Riz Ahmed) voices his concern about the integrity of their reporting, Bloom threatens to fire him. On the other hand, desperate local news producer Nina Romina (played by Rene Russo, Gilroy’s wife) encourages Bloom’s sleazy behaviour, believing that violent footage will drive up her show’s ratings by giving her audience something they “can’t turn away from”.

Bloom’s hunger for gory content manifests itself in his physical appearance as a gaunt figure whose eyes appear to be bulging out of his head for most of the movie. Known for testing the extremes of his physicality for roles, Gyllenhaal shed thirty pounds to better depict Bloom as a hungry scavenger. While Gyllenhaal’s appearance in the film is certainly unsettling it is not the most terrifying part of the film. What is even creepier is the way Gilroy manages to attribute a certain harrowing innocence to Bloom. The most alarming and uncomfortable aspect of *Nightcrawler* is that the audience actually begins to sympathise with Bloom as a polite, charming, self-starter who is simply trying to make ends meet anyway he can.

Gilroy’s script is so outstanding and Gyllenhaal’s performance so impressive that by the end of the movie you will find yourself nauseated by the fondness we’ve developed for Bloom’s character. 

 nepalitimes.com

■ Trailer 

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

SHAKE ON IT: UCPN(M) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal and UML Chair KP Sharma Oli shake hands during the tea party organised by CPN(UML) to welcome the constitution at the Dasarath Stadium on Tuesday.



BIKRAM RAI

ONE MORE ROUND: Top leaders of the three major political parties meet MJF(D) Chair Bijay Gachhadar at Sanepa on Tuesday.



GOPEN RAI

LET’S CELEBRATE: People celebrate the promulgation of the new constitution on the streets of Maitighar on Sunday.



YUVRAJ SHRESTHA

SELFIE TIME: Danish Crown Prince Frederik André Henrik takes a selfie during his visit to earthquake affected villages in Lamjung on Friday.



BIKRAM RAI

RENEWING ENERGY: A Newar priest performs rituals during the annual Chaitya Puja at the Hyatt Regency in Kathmandu on Wednesday.

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Every young mind is fragile and brains are like sponges that soak in the knowledge and unnecessary information the same way without any discrimination.



ALL IN THE MIND

Anjana Rajbhandary

What may be an off the cuff remark or an act in passing can have a deep impact in a child's mind and affect them into adulthood. As adults it is our responsibility to take care of our business like adults and not involve children because it only gets messy.

We may be going through a hard time or feeling upset, but it is unfair and selfish to put the burden on a child. Adults need to be careful and mindful of things they say and do in front of children, little siblings, nieces or nephews, because they might never forget.

Here are some things you should never tell a young girl. One of them is: "I am so fat". What an older role model such as a mother, aunt or older sister says about her body affects the young girl's body



GOPEN RAI

When little girls grow up

Adults need to be mindful of their words and actions in front of children as they might never forget

image and she will learn from it. She will learn to be critical of her body from a young age. Tell young girls that it is most important to be healthy and she can be the best version of her shape but she cannot change the shape of her body. Reading magazines and watching television should not make anyone

feel bad about how they look, it should only be entertainment.

Another one to avoid is "Men are awful" or words to that effect. Spiteful remarks towards men will make her grow up with the notion that men are bad in general. Just because you had a bad experience does not mean you should ruin her

outlook on life. Of course, tell her to be smart and use her judgment, but not stereotype. The one incident of badmouthing men may affect all her relationships with men in the future.

This one is ridiculous and very sexist, and a complete opposite to the last one. "Men will not like you

if....." If you have to change who you are to be accepted, how long can you keep up that facade? It gets tiring to continue pretending to be someone you are not. To be with the right guy, tell your little girl that he should like her for just the way she is -- not because she could be taller, thinner, fairer or more obedient.

Before this sounds too negative, there are also some very empowering statements that you can tell to young girls like this one: "You can be anything you want to be and you do not need to be an expert at everything." This is such a relief. You should always encourage her to follow her dreams while reminding her of reality. If she is not very academically gifted, a profession of a rocket scientist may not be in the near future but you never know. Do not make fun of her dreams, with time she will figure out if it was worth it or not.

My favorite one is, "I am always here for you. I was once that age too so I do not want to put any pressure on you or judge you for the unrealistic expectations of the outside world." Letting someone know that you are always there for them is the best thing anyone can do, but mean it. She may never call on you for help but knowing that you are there will mean the world to her. And let me tell you, one day as a young girl or a grown woman, she will need you to be there for her and you will have to keep your promise. 🇳🇵

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■ A little cup of self love, #767



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Give them a way

PICS: STÉPHANE HUËT

Gita Limbu was born a paraplegic and has been using a wheelchair since she was a teenager. Now 28, she remembers how hard it was to move around Kathmandu's thoroughfares both because of the lack of infrastructure and the look of other people.

"Some even asked me why I was out in the streets and that I should stay in my house," Limbu recalls. "That was painful."

She not as embarrassed these days because people are

less judgemental and they even help by pushing or lifting her wheelchair because Kathmandu is not exactly disabled-friendly.

"Kathmandu still lacks infrastructure for the disabled, the roads are in bad condition and it is worse during the monsoon," Limbu says.

Om Prakash Banjade who is blind has noticed a similar change in attitude among the sighted. "Three years ago, people had good intentions but they weren't sure if visually impaired would accept their help," says this English teacher. "Now they are more aware and they know we welcome their aid."

Banjade, 36, also wishes



Kathmandu was a more disabled-friendly city. He deplores the lack of information when sidewalks or roads are being repaired. "Last week as I was going back home and fell into a hole which was not in the pavement in the morning," he says.

Now, there are organisations like the Centre for Independent Living (CIL) which have been trying to promote disabled-friendly facilities in public transport and the streets. Its director Krishna Gautam says it is a disabled people's organisation run by the disabled themselves.


"For a long time disabled were placed in specific institutions," says Gautam who himself uses a wheelchair. "But it must be our own choice whether we want to be part of society or not."

After regular lobbying with other partner organisations, Gautam considers things are on the right track. Nepal signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in January 2008, and the government has approved accessibility guidelines proposed by CIL in 2012. Still, Gautam regrets the lack of progress in upgrading infrastructure. For example, one of the few tactile pavements in town (pictured) is blocked by an electric pole.

And it has to start with Singha Durbar, where some ministries have made their offices accessible to the disabled. Sajha Yatayat has ordered buses that will have space for wheelchairs behind the driver. The moving force behind these initiatives has been Rudra Singh Tamang Chief of the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC).


"There are no road standards in Nepal and it's hard to circulate even for abled. How can we expect the city to be adapted to us?" he asks, hoping that the 25 April earthquake can be taken as an opportunity. "While rebuilding Kathmandu we can turn it into a disabled-friendly city."


Stéphane Huët



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Collateral Damage -2

The Great National Unraveling (GNU)

In the same spirit as the politics that inspires it, the Collateral Damage series follows no logic or order of importance. Except now, when it's impossible to ignore the Pointless War's single most toxic consequence as it threatens to spins out of control.



MOVING TARGET Foreign Hand

Ethnic Federalism as a concept is a Maoist creation, used to whip up Janajati and Madhesi communities to fight the Maoist war. The on-going riots, bandas and murders in the Tarai are a direct result of this misguided idea, so fraught with danger it's since been abandoned by most everyone, including its creators. This is the war's nastiest hangover, from a potion so poisonous and divisive it may haunt the country for years to come.

In late January 2007 your correspondent filed Federalism or Death, subtitled 'If you hated the war you'll despise the justification'. Many suspected this newly trumpeted Federalist policy was merely a lame excuse for 10 years of carnage, a distraction from the wars' real purpose of seizing power and getting rich. Was it really necessary to tear a democratic country apart just to establish a federal system of governance?

The Hand's next column in early February 2007 was called GNU (Great National Unraveling), published immediately after Madhes blew up the first time. The fact much of that column could be re-printed verbatim today is troubling, made worse by the same old-face politicians being just as surprised by the recent violence, and equally inept at managing it, as they were then.



SHYAM GUPTA

Throughout the conflict the Maoist leadership found it easy to convince Janajatis/Madhesis to rebel against a distant government that had always excluded them from power. Kathmandu's neglect of the districts is legendary, and the Maoists cynically used divide and rule tactics to further their cause. Typically, it was these same poor villagers who suffered most, being on the frontline of every action and used as fodder in human wave attacks.

That was an early sign the Janajatis/Madhesis were being manipulated by those with an agenda, further confirmed when the Maoists dropped the cause once it no longer served their purpose. The festering resentment from these promises, made to be broken, has now become a serious liability for the entire country.

Much like communism, ethnic-based federalism is a great idea on

paper. The central government's abysmal record alone suggests devolving power to the districts can't be much worse than what we already have. Despite the distressing detail it adds more layers of government and opportunities for corruption, empowering local ethnic groups to run their own affairs makes eminent sense, promoting a more inclusive state through wider participation.

This argument begins to break down when looking at the ethnic composition of the Maoist proposed states. The major community that the state is named after usually comprises only 20 to 30 per cent of the total, a sign that Nepal has become remarkably well integrated. Redrawing the map around historic homelands of the major ethnic groups is sure to create problems where none

existed before, as the new set-up favours the dominant community at the expense of others.

Arguments over state boundaries and who gets what can easily escalate out of control, as we see from the rising death toll in the Tarai. Despite the cool names dreamt up by the Politburo for these mythical states (the Hand's fave: Tamasaling, which sounds like the cocktail I could use right about now) anything that increases the very real danger of regional ethnic cleansing is a terrible mistake. In a land already over-run by demons, God forbid this particular rachesse ever emerges from the shadows.

That's where Nepal finds itself now, at the mercy of opportunists (renegade Madhesi and Tharu 'leaders' stoking communal fever in the Tarai) who use the broken promises made by charlatans (Maoist luminaries under full

VIP security in Kathmandu) to incite racial hatred for their own purposes, just like they were taught by their gang-bosses during the war.

If there was any doubt about spin-off effects, NHRC has confirmed Maoist ex-combatants were responsible for the brutal murders of police in Tikapur and elsewhere recently. If you find yourself wondering how these hapless cops could be murdered so heartlessly, ask the party that trained the perpetrators.

The post-earthquake, rushed-through constitution has obviously alienated the Madhesi and Tharu communities, among others, who feel cheated by promises that should never have been made. Their MP's boycott of the final ratification bodes ill for the future, turning the whole exercise into a potential cause of more strife. That said, the sight of most MP's raising their hand in long overdue agreement was a thrill, and whatever was ratified can always be amended.

At the risk of sounding like a rose-tinted eyeglass-wearing Orientalist, it must be mentioned one of this country's true claims to fame has always been the remarkable harmony displayed between the many castes, communities and languages. Despite deeply ingrained prejudices towards everyone on the periphery, incidents of racial hatred were very rare indeed.

Inter-caste marriage is gradually becoming less unacceptable and the younger generation isn't much interested in antiquated concepts of caste and ethnicity. These incremental achievements towards an inclusive, pluralist Nepal, the supposed goal of the last 20 years of turmoil, are now in danger of being swept away, collateral damage of a strategy that was nothing more than a ruse to gain power. 🇳🇵

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- Federalism or death, #333
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LANGTANG RISING

A strong sense of community and help from outside is helping survivors rebuild their homes and lives



PICS: UPASANA KHADKA

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LUISMI ORTIZ / OCPUNE



FRITZ BERGER

UPASANA KHADKA

Pasang Dindup was preparing lunch for trekkers in his lodge in Langtang on 25 April when the house started shaking. There was a tremendous roar and the next thing Pasang knew, he was lying on a slope with a terrible pain in his arm. He had been blown off by the shock wave that preceded a massive avalanche triggered by the earthquake that destroyed this scenic trekking town, killing 175, and at least 150 outsiders including tourists and Nepali workers. Dindup lost his wife, and four trekkers in his lodge were also killed. Her body, as with most of Langtang’s victims

was never found. Tashi Tsering also lost his wife and his 4-year-old daughter and everyone on his wife’s side of the family. Tashi was on the balcony of his house with his mother when the earthquake hit, and jumped off. But his trekking lodge, his main means of livelihood is gone. Pasang Gyalbhu was at a friend’s place with his son when the earthquake hit. He and his son ran for their lives, but were hit by the avalanche. They only survived because they hid behind a rock. He ran back to the house and dug his wife out of the snow, alive. Dawa Gyalbo was returning from Kathmandu after dropping his son at school and had reached Trishuli when the earthquake hit. Worried about his family, he walked till Dhunche and hitched a ride in an Army helicopter. What he saw there was apocalyptic:

bodies everywhere, including of two little girls hugging each other. His mother was killed, but his wife and daughter survived miraculously. He collected the dead, including body parts and cremated them. Many Langtang survivors like Dawa, Pasang and Tashi recently completed Trekking Guide Training and Lodge Management Training Courses at the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHM) in Rabi Bhavan. It is an initiative of Harvard Kennedy School Nepal Fund, Rasuwa



Relief and tourism Cares to ensure that despite their tragic loss, the people of Langtang can build back their tourism industry and livelihoods. They will all get Porter/Guide and Lodge licenses and Lodge Management Certificates which will increase their job prospects.

With help from Sustainable Steps Nepal women are also being trained to make thand-knitted woolen products which are for sale at the Yellow Gumba camp, since there are no trekkers on the Langtang Trail this season. The training has also been helpful because many of the survivors lost immediate family members and have been living in a camp in Kathmandu’s unfamiliar surroundings. Many are still having nightmares.

“One night, at 11 pm I heard a roar that woke me up. I thought it was another landslide, and ran out dragging my wife and two children,” recalls Pasang Gyalbhu. “In my sleep I had forgotten I was in Kathmandu and the sound was of a plane taking off.”

Many want to go back to Langtang, and some have indeed returned to take care of their yaks in high pasture. Some like Tashi Tsering also dread going back because of the memories that it will bring back. “Here we are all busy with the course and taking care of the camp community. However, I am scared of going back and not being able to cope with the absence of my wife and daughter. That is when the pain will really sink in.”

In many regions in Nepal, people recognise that the effects of the earthquake could have been worse: had it been at a different time of the day and not late morning, had it been on a different day and not a Saturday. But not in Langtang which would have lost all no matter what day of the week it was.

Hidden under that mountain of debris that engulfed everything Langtangpas owned lies their homes and possessions, including their documents and identity cards. Many

will have to rebuild from scratch. The survivors have built solidarity and a sense

Langtang Treks in Spring 2016

While trekking in Langtang itself is unlikely to start right away, for prospective trekkers with skills such as masonry, carpentry, plumbing and electric wiring that could be useful for reconstruction. If you are making trekking plans for Nepal for 2016, be part of Langtang’s reconstruction process. The Langtang Management and Reconstruction Committee is promoting making plans for voluntourism for Spring 2016.

How to help

Langtang Management and Reconstruction Committee
Temba Lama at tembalama@hotmail.com

For Langtang Handicrafts at Yellow Gumba:
Tsering Pema +977 9741237420
To donate clothes to Langtangpas who have returned to Langtang:
Kartok Lama +977 9849881673

Langtang Disaster Relief Fund
<http://langtangreconstruction.com/>
Finjo Lopchan: reconstructionlangtang@gmail.com

Rasuwa Relief
www.facebook.com/groups/rasuwarelief/

Sustainable Steps:
www.sustainablesteps.org/

Tourism Cares: www.tourismcares.org

To sponsor bakery and cooking classes at the Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NATHM) www.nathm.edu.np/ <https://www.facebook.com/projects/help-earthquake-victims-from-langtang>

of community through social networking sites, posting and sharing old photographs. Now that the rains are tapering off, some from Yellow Gumba have gone to the Langtang Trail to repair mani walls and chortens, to recover property from destroyed homes and to cut grass for yaks in winter. But it will take longer to repair homes and lodges which will start in Spring 2016. The media interest on Nepal’s earthquake is waning, but the journey is just beginning for Langtangpas. Says Lakpa Jangba of the Langtang Management and Reconstruction Committee: “We are investing in producing skilled manpower for the future reconstruction. There is tremendous cooperation within the community and help from outside. We have government help for bridges and trails, we need help to rebuild our homes.” 🇳🇵



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“Now I can rest in peace”



UCPN (M) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal in an interview with Rabindra Mishra of BBC Nepali Service

BBC Nepali: You have achieved almost all the objectives of the war – republicanism, constitution through Constituent Assembly, federalism and inclusion, what’s next for you?
Pushpa Kamal Dahal: I got very emotional when Constituent Assembly passed the new constitution. That night, when I reached home, my security officer cautioned me against going anywhere else but Singha Darbar, Baluwatar and New Baneswor. But I told him that I was no more afraid of dying. I can now rest in peace because the republic has been institutionalised, and Nepal has embarked on a new journey.

Nepal has undergone political transformation, but it still remains an underdeveloped country. Is your mission really over?
But this political transformation is a precondition for economic development.

You had recently told us that you would like to be in active politics for at least seven–eight years, in what capacity you want to contribute to Nepal in this period?
Yes, I think I should be active in politics for at least seven-eight years. I want to win the next elections, oversee creation of federal provinces and implement the constitution to expedite economic development.

Don’t you need to be Prime Minister to do all that?
I am not thinking about any posts right now. But I want to make it clear that our party will be a partner of the next coalition government.

So Baburam Bhattarai does not stand a chance to be the party president any time soon?
I have prepared a proposal on how the handover of the party leadership. For me to be in active politics, I do not necessarily need to be the party president. But it does not mean that I am ready to step down right away.

Bhattarai has vowed to form a new political force, has he told you anything about quitting the party?
His new political force is an old story, and I do not think he is quitting the party. I am also surprised that a political leader of his stature is now publicly speaking and writing against the new constitution. I find it very unnatural.

That is perhaps because he is quitting the party?
If he quits the party, neither he nor the country will benefit from his action. I have put up with him for 30 years. No one has been as close to him as me. He has some qualities, but he is a complex character.

You publicly asked India to respect us if they want us to respect them, but what did you privately tell Indian special envoy S Jaishankar?
When I recently went to New Delhi, I told

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi that we want to be a good friend of India, not a ‘yes man’. We love our country and so do they. I told everyone I met in New Delhi: Nepal can address India’s concerns as a good neighbour, but never as a yes man.

What actually transpired between you and Jaishankar?
He bluntly told me that India will not welcome the new constitution if everyone is not on board. He also said the new constitution will be meaningless without India’s endorsement, no matter how many countries welcome it. I just told him: your visit is ill-timed, and you should have come 15 days earlier or 15 days later.

How do you now deal with the Madhesi parties?
We have made a political resolution to address grievances of not only Madhesis but also Tharus and Janajatis by amending the constitution. We had to hurry up to promulgate it because further delay would lead to loss of whatever momentum we have. When I used to sit in one-to-one meeting with Madhesi leaders, they would tell me that they would not endorse the constitution fearing backlash from their constituencies, but they encouraged us to move forward.

Do you see a possibility of a separatist movement in the Tarai?
A group in the Tarai is definitely pushing for separatism, but it doesn’t have strong support from the Madhesi people. I am deeply convinced that the Madhesi people will never want to secede from Nepal. Their allegiance towards the Nepali nation state is very strong.

Do you think India will exacerbate political tensions in the Tarai?
I am a bit worried about that. When I met Indian Special Envoy Jaishankar he said the Tarai unrest could spread across the border to Bihar and Uttar Pradesh and India was deeply concerned about it. He kept uttering the word ‘border’. I told him: your concern is genuine, but it would be wise for India to think beyond its borders and to a broader Nepal.



End impunity
One year after Nanda Prasad Adhikari’s death. His body is still in the Bir Hospital morgue.
Rajesh KC @phalano on **twitter**



“Our new constitution is just a skeleton, we now have to add flesh to it”
Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha addressing the 46th anniversary of Press Council Nepal, 24 September

Anger at Kathmandu

Front page stories from the 21 September issue of *Newspaper*, a Janakpur daily

When President Ram Baran Yadav promulgated Nepal’s new constitution from inside the beautifully-decorated and brightly lit Constituent Assembly (CA) hall in Kathmandu, his ancestral home in Janakpur was engulfed in complete darkness. The house was guarded by security personnel, but there was not one person lighting a lamp to welcome the new constitution.
Janakpur is home to Physical Infrastructure Minister Bimalendra Nidhi, too. His house was also in darkness. UML leader Raghubir Mahaseth and NC leader Ram Krishna Yadav did not call anyone from Kathmandu to light up lamps in their houses in Janakpur, either.



Janakpur observed a complete blackout when other parts of the country were celebrating with lights. Never before had Janakpur shown such strong solidarity with Madhesi parties that are against the new constitution. Everyone switched off lights between 7 and 8 pm. Even motorcyclists turned off lights while driving on the streets.
Madhesi cadres had carried out a motorcycle rally early in the day, asking everyone to switch off lights to protest the ‘discriminatory’ constitution. An indefinite strike called by Madhesi parties has crippled life across the Tarai for nearly one and a half month now.
Daily wage earners are the worst-hit by the political turmoil. Ram Sharan Mukhiya has not been able to earn anything ever since the Tarai unrest began. But he is more concerned about discrimination perpetuated by Kathmandu against the Madhesi people through the new constitution.
Mukhiya has amazed local Madhesi leaders by participating in protests over the new constitution every day. He and others like him are angry with Kathmandu and demands equal treatment. Like him, Janakpur residents all have black flags flying over their houses to mark the day of constitutional promulgation. During the day, they descend onto the streets shouting slogans against Kathmandu.

Counter-productive for India



Arun Baral in www.onlinekhabar.com, 22 September

What if India imposes an economic blockade against Nepal as it did in 1989? The general perception is that Nepal will suffer more. Actually it may end up harming India more. Here are five reasons why blocking the border is counter-productive.

1. Anti-India sentiment
Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi succeeded in removing anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal during his Nepal visit last year. That was why signing of Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection (BIPPA)

and Upper Karnali Power Development Agreement (PDA) hardly drew any flak. A blockade would radicalise a new generation of Nepalis. As a result, even years after the end of the blockade, India will find it difficult to do business with Nepal.

2. Indian market
Nepal imports goods worth Rs 5 billion from India every year, but exports are worth less than Rs 1 billion. The longer the blockade continues, the more Nepalis will turn to China for trade. Rs 5 billion may not be a huge amount for a giant economy like India, but it would lose out.

3. China card
New Delhi has always been cautious about Beijing’s influence in Kathmandu. By not welcoming Nepal’s constitution and warning of a blockade, India will boost Chinese influence. China does not have bigger interests in Nepal, but will benefit from Kathmandu’s alienation with New Delhi.

4. Less dependence
Nepal is becoming increasingly more dependent on India. But a blockade will encourage Nepalis to seek alternatives and become more independent. Even politicians will stop thinking that they cannot reach top posts without New Delhi’s blessing.

5. India’s security
If India distances itself from Nepal, Pakistan’s influence will also grow and Nepal has an open border with India. Anti-Indian feelings in Kathmandu will not bode well for India.



MIN RATNA BAURACHARYA



BIKRAM RAI

Rebuilding what is holy

Kathmandu Valley has always rebuilt its temples after earthquakes, but this time the international community wants to help, too

SAHINA SHRESTHA

Big earthquakes have destroyed Kathmandu every 100 years or so. Thousands have been killed, temples have come down, palaces have crumbled killing kings. But the communities always came together to rebuild.

Our ancient builders realised that the construction material used in temples and monuments had a life span and needed to be maintained. They perfected flexible joints on beams and columns to withstand shaking.

After the 1934 earthquake, many of the temples were rebuilt. It was done somewhat haphazardly, and some brick and timber pagoda structures were replaced with Moghul-style stucco domes.

Nearly 750 historical and cultural monuments in 20 districts were damaged during the 25 April earthquake including in the seven world heritage sites in Kathmandu Valley. The Post Disaster Needs Assessment report prepared by the National Planning Commission estimated that Rs 20.55 billion

would be required to rebuild these structures.

"We are preparing the designs and drawings and have started doing cost estimates for the three Darbar Squares in the Valley," said Bhesh Narayan Dahal, Director of the Department of Archaeology (DOA). "But since the Reconstruction Authority is yet to be formed, progress is a bit slow."

In 1934, it is said that Prime Minister Juddha Shumsher Rana insisted on not taking foreign help to rebuild religious sites. However, in 2015, the Nepal government actively solicited international help for post-earthquake reconstruction, including of temples.

Donors send in proposals addressed to government of Nepal which is forwarded to Ministry of Finance, and if deemed appropriate a general agreement is signed. The request is then forwarded to the DOA through

the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation where a MoU is signed. The donors can choose whether to extend funding, technical support or both.

So far, Sri Lanka has expressed interest in funding the reconstruction of the Red Machhidranath temple in Bungamati and Anandakuti Vihar in Swayambhu. "The technical part including the designs and drawing are complete and the rate estimation is in process," said Suresh Saras Shrestha of DOA. "We have sent the MoU to the Sri Lankan government for their consideration and are waiting to hear from them."

China has sent a proposal to reconstruct the Nautale Durbar at Hanuman Dhoka (pictured above) and the historic Sattale Durbar and its premises in Nuwakot. The MoU with the DOA is still pending. India had also expressed interest in

reconstructing monasteries along the northern border, as well as the Kastamandap temple. But no agreements have been signed yet. Nepal has requested assistance from UNESCO's World Heritage Fund which will be used for protection and salvaging the affected World Heritage Sites.

Earlier this month, the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) was awarded \$320,000 by the US Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation for the restoration of Patan Darbar Square and the temples surrounding Kal Bhairab including Jagannath Temple, Laxmi Narayan Temple, Kageshwor Temple, Narayan Temple and the two smaller temples dedicated to Mahadev located at the side of Taleju temples that were damaged during the earthquake.

The DOA is waiting for the Ministry of finance to release Rs 2 billion promised in the budget for heritage restoration. The DOA is also working with 25 architects and engineers and is in the process of hiring 50 more to aid in the

restoration and reconstruction.

It is also getting Robin Coningham of Durham University coming in to study the historic chronology of the damaged heritage in Kathmandu, Patan and Bhaktapur. DOA's Dahal says the original designs will be strictly followed in rebuilding.

Rohit Rajkarnikar of KVPT says simply following the original designs may not be the answer. He says: "It is important that we restore the temples as close to the original form as possible including the materials used. Instead of tearing everything down and rebuilding again, we should salvage existing materials."

Bhusan Dahal of UNHABITAT agrees, but adds that rebuilding cultural heritage should not only be about structures. "It should be about people as well. This is an opportunity to bring communities together," he says. "That is why we shouldn't just rely on foreigners, we must raise funds from Nepalis. This will give us a sense of ownership."



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Are you in a funk about Nepal?

To all of you whining and dining about how bad things are in Nepal these days, how feckless our government is, how hopeless our leaders are, how racist we have become, how repressive our police are, or how much you hate dal bhat, the Ass has only one message: if you don't like it here, leave. Good bye. Wait, take me with you.

Hold it, though. After scanning headlines from around the world it looks like Nepal is not such a bad place after all. Compared to Yemen and Syria, the Serbia-Hungary border, Ukraine, or Lampedusa. If you are in a funk about Nepal, look at all the places that are worse off than us.

You think you have problems with load-shedding? Try living in Aleppo. Concerned about a imminent blockade of food supplies? Go to Sanaa. Inconvenienced by long petrol lines? Go live for a week in Luhansk. So stop complaining already. Cry baby.

If you are cynical about our politicians, look at the shenanigans of leaders in other countries. US Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump proves that our civil society has a really long way to go in being uncivil. CA members who were most stubborn about not granting citizenship in the name of the mother should learn from Trump about how to be a master at passing sexist comments and casting innuendos about the menstrual cycle of tv anchors.

The city of Toronto had a mayor named Rob Ford who was caught on camera abusing substances, and when presented with the evidence said: "I was too drunk to know that I was snorting cocaine." Our leaders get plastered all the time, but can't even commit misdemeanours because they pass out.

Even when it comes to personal scandals, Nepal lags way behind international standards. Yes, our

Agriculture Muntri tried to grope a couple of women live on nationwide television during the Paddy Festival, and Comrade ("Son Also Rises") Prakash maintained three simultaneous liaisons. But the most disgusting thing our politicians can muster is Comrade Awesome picking his nose in public during the clause-by-clause voting on the new constitution. Which is why we as a nation are put to shame when it is revealed that the British prime minister committed porcine necrophilia while in college. #PigGate

Did I hear someone complain that Nepal is political unstable and has frequent changes of government? Well guess what, Australia is way ahead of us: they've had four prime ministers in two years while we could only muster only one prime minister in two years: Jhusil Da. And the kind of name-calling that accompanied regime change in Canberra made our politicians look like Boy Scouts.

There was uproar and outrage when some CA members last year out of sheer boredom started throwing chairs around in the August Assembly so they wouldn't fall asleep. We were outraged and called such behaviour 'unbecoming of a parliamentary democracy'. But look at what transpired in the Japanese Diet just last week. The floor of the parliament building in Tokyo looked like there was in indoor rugby match going on, with members tangled in a scrum, punching each other in their faces. This was a violent protest about a pacifist constitution. When are we ever going to learn to behave like that, and catch up with Japan's progress in democracy and freedom of expression?

You think Kathmandu pollution is bad? Try breathing in Singapore this week. And you think we cheat in our vehicle emission tests by bribing the inspector? Thank you Volkswagen for showing us how it is really done.



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