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GOPEN R

HOME FIRE: Six months after the earthquake destroyed her house in Sindhupalchok, Monika Tamang, 13, is still homeless and cooks a meal with firewood inside a tattered tent at a shelter. The fuel crisis caused by the Indian blockade has added to the misery of earthquake survivors like her.

RACE AGAINST WINTER

The fuel crisis caused by India's blockade has brought to a halt most reconstruction of earthquake damaged buildings and infrastructure. Already delayed due to political wrangling over the Reconstruction Authority, nearly two million survivors across 14 districts now face an uncertain future as winter looms.

The CEO appointed to head that agency, Govinda Raj Pokhrel, has also resigned from the National Planning Commission because of turf battles between the NC and the UML over the post. The \$4.4 billion pledged by the international community for reconstruction

cannot be spent until the agency is functional.

Humanitarian groups were trying to fill the gap, but their reconstruction and relief work is now halted due to the lack of diesel. Emergency food supplies and shelter need to be delivered to far-flung mountain villages before the snows come.

The agreement between Nepal and China to meet up to a third of Nepal's petroleum needs is unlikely to ease the crisis. India is only allowing 10 per cent of Nepal's fuel requirement through the border.

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KATHMANDU

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LOSE-LOSE

The blockade will turn out to be a costly blunder for the governments of both India and Nepal

A lot of words have appeared in the press about the India-Nepal impasse that has led to a near-total border blockade for more than a month. The entire drama is also being played out on social media platforms. The situation has degenerated into abusive name-calling from Nepalis with not only a false sense of bravado but hurt victimhood and ultra nationalism. And India is behaving like an overbearing bully with a crude and cruel attempt to throttle a petulant neighbour with disproportionate muscle-flexing. For Nepalis the most glaring aspect of this entire sordid chapter in our nation’s history is a lack of preventive proactiveness and a sense of urgency that were needed to stop the situation from getting so out of hand for this long. The mishandling of the domestic political fallout of the ‘fast-tracked’ constitution, the inability to contain the violence from spiralling out of control in the plains, the excessive use of force in quelling the riots, and misconstruing Delhi’s signals were what led to this crisis.

In their haste to make up for bungling post-earthquake reconstruction, politicians of the NC, UML and the UCPN(M) decided to push through a constitution, any constitution, that would pave the way for a national unity government. This strategy was driven by the political ambitions of two individuals: the UML’s K P Oli and the UCPN(M)’s Pushpa Kamal Dahal. The NC did a volte face on its commitment to the power swap deal and goofed up so badly on so many fronts that it would take too long to list them all here. None of the Big 3 parties is capable of multi-tasking, and they were so distracted by the election of the new president and vice-president that negotiations with Madhesi groups about constitutional amendments were unnecessarily delayed. Because the crisis has been allowed to ferment for so long and by not understanding the political dynamics in Delhi that drove the intervention, the whole thing is now knotted up, making it difficult to untangle. There are layers upon layers of issues: bruised egos of politicians and bureaucrats in Kathmandu, New Delhi, Birganj and Janakpur; the increase

in Madhesi demands for amendments from eight to 102; the need for Madhesi leaders to launder their image; cross-border sensitivities heightened by state elections in Bihar; the ultra-nationalism of the Kathmandu ruling class; Delhi’s historical geopolitical interest in ensuring a pliant Nepali state through swing votes in a Madhes buffer; paranoia in India about Chinese inroads into Nepal. Instead of trying to assuage an insecure Big Brother, our rulers are in the habit of constantly enraging it by flashing the China card. As India’s largest trading partner, China is unlikely to risk antagonising India over Nepal. But sections of the Indian establishment, egged on by hysterical media coverage, have latched on to China’s symbolic donation of 1,000 tons of petroleum as if it represents a declaration of war against India. Beijing obviously enjoys seeing India squirm in a quagmire of its own making, but that is not to say that it will upset its Himalayan spheres-of-influence accommodation with New Delhi. It doesn’t make sense for Nepalis to get all worked up about India’s stranglehold. It is our own doing. For the past 60 years we have only talked about our hydropower potential, and haven’t even harnessed 0.2 per cent of it. We have gone from being a net exporter of food grains to importing everything from garlic to gladioli from India. What have we done to proactively entice investors to create jobs at home? Far from being self-reliant in energy and exporting power to India, Nepal now spends more than 60 per cent of its total import bill on buying petroleum from India, and its volume has grown threefold in the last five years. We have done precious little to diversify our imports, and be more self-reliant. This crisis is a result of the incompetence of rulers of Nepal over the years, and the shortsightedness of a bunch of mean and arrogant Babus in New Delhi. We got a tantalising glimpse of a generous and friendly India last year during the visit here by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, one that rebooted relations for mutually-beneficial cooperation. But all that goodwill has now been squandered by decision makers in New Delhi who have callously turned an entire generation of Nepalis against India. This is a lose-lose for both countries. From here on, any Indian investment or joint river project will be much more difficult to implement because of hostile public opinion. There are three steps Nepal’s new rulers should take: **Short term:** Do whatever it takes to end the blockade. We can’t eat nationalism. **Medium term:** Jump start the economy. There is just too much politics. **Long term:** Diversify imports, move to a renewable energy economy.

Times

THIS WEEK



BIKRAM RAI (14,772 PEOPLE REACHED)

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After becoming Nepal's first female President, Bidya Bhandari greets her supporters in Parliament on Wednesday.

Most shared on Facebook

The first woman President by Om Astha Rai (71 shares)

Most visited online page

Messiahs of the Madhes by Jivesh Jha (3,379 views)

Most popular on Twitter

The first woman President by Om Astha Rai (211 retweets, 214 favourites)

Most commented

Messiahs of the Madhes by Jivesh Jha (15 comments)

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

FIXING WHAT'S BROKE

Oli needs to make an effort to mend ties with India, but do so on equal terms ('Fixing what's broke', Editorial, #790).

Poudyal

It is a well known phenomenon: Extremist leaders temper down their rhetoric once laden with state affairs. Oli will certainly follow that path. What I am concerned is if Madhesi leaders have the gravitas to respond with focus and firmness.

Namah

In the last blockade by India in 1989, the Indian Army Chief had advised Rajib Gandhi that it will be counter-productive to punish the family members of the Gurkhas of Nepal in the long run. This mantra by the Chief was taken into consideration by him and he listened against his babus' advice, and the situation became easy. There are about 70,000 regular Gurkha troops in India from Nepal and more in other services. Their family members are suffering due to shortage of daily supplies by the Indian action. The Indian Army

establishment needs to once again remind the Indian government of their misaction.

Chaku Naran

Oil should make all the ministers Deputy Prime Minister. Why not loot the treasury of poor Nepali people when you have the chance. What jokers Nepali leaders are. How many DPM do we really need.

Narendra

The whole point of having federalism is to counter-balance powers from federal states with big population ('Onus on Oli', Om Astha Rai, #790). Please explain to me how it is fair to other states if the entire Tarai belt becomes one big state with election constituencies in proportion to their population? Even in the US, Californians, New Yorkers, or Texans don't get to decide the fate of other Americans living in much smaller states.

Hurray

It is equally important for the Madhesi leaders to realise that some of their demands are not logical and they should seek to compromise too. Without

compromise from both sides we will be going down the path of instability for a long time to come and this won't be good for any of us including India. Hope Modi and his advisers also understand this as they have decided to intervene in a conflict which is not theirs and are now part of it.

BDS

Anyone who thinks ethnicity-based states are a good idea doesn't belong in the 21st century.


Pakhe

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #781

Q. Which community should the new President belong to?



Total votes: 381

- Janajati 23.88%
- Madhesi 18.11%
- Women 26.25%
- Dalit 12.6%
- Bahuni/Chettri 19.16%

Weekly Internet Poll #782

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Q. Are you happy with Bidya Bhandari being elected the President?

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A blockade is a blockade

But how long will it take for Nepalis to transfer the blame from India to our own inept political leadership

The neighbourhood of *Nepali Times* is dotted with hole-in-the-wall family run eateries offering modest meals to college students and office-goers at reasonable prices. Unlike bigger, posher restaurants and five-star hotels these businesses cannot fall back on steep profit margins to purchase gas cylinders at Rs 10,000 (almost 10 times the normal rate). As a result owners have been forced to pull their shutters down, losing valuable income day after day.



BETWEEN THE LINES
Tsering Dolker Gurung

Across the street, dozens of taxis wait in an unmoving queue for 10 litres of petrol that will be distributed only tomorrow. Few drivers are huddled together in the back of a car, gambling, talking politics. They will try to compensate for the lost work hours by charging customers double or even quadruple the normal rate. Who can blame them?

Back home in Ekantakuna, the last remaining gas cylinder is running low. The family is discussing alternative cooking options. My 14-year-old sister suggests building an improved firewood stove and says she has the know-how from a school project. If it weren't for the current crisis, she would have been ridiculed by the family, now everyone is giving firewood serious thought. If her pilot



GOPEN RAI

project is successful Mother says she could even help other families in the neighbourhood, many of whom are already cooking in their backyards.

A month has now passed since India's blockade of essential goods to Nepal, choking life across the country it calls its 'younger brother'. The clash of egos at the top between Indian and Nepali leaders has hurt ordinary Nepalis the most. These are people who can't afford to buy goods in the black market, they don't have relatives in powerful

positions to help them out in times of crises. They belong to all ethnic groups, including those in the plains, whose rights India is supposedly backing.

Besides being led by leaders who have zero credibility (even within their community) and are as corrupt (if not more) as those in Kathmandu, the blockade has greatly undermined the Madhes movement which was borne out of genuine grievances.

The fast-track constitution paved the way for KP Oli to

assume prime ministership and provided leaders a much-needed face-saver during a time when public discontent against the government for its mishandling of earthquake relief was rising high. But in their rush to reach the finishing line, the leaders failed to address dissenting voices, leaving more than half the population dissatisfied with the new constitution.

However, by allowing India to arm twist Nepal on their behalf, the plains

leaders have further distanced themselves from the rest of the country, including their own people. Their endorsement of the blockade which has created unneeded hardship for a population already reeling under the effects of two devastating earthquakes has made even those sympathetic to the cause question the tactic and legitimacy of the movement.

What's surprising in all this has been the international media's silence on the issue. By choosing to call the blockade a 'fuel crisis' reporters have reduced the true extent of the humanitarian crisis and helped paint a false picture of the goings-on in Nepal to the rest of the world.

Even the international community has been mysteriously silent, with the EU releasing a statement calling on India to ensure essential supplies only last week. The UN released a similarly belated and mild statement. Both refused to acknowledge that it was indeed a blockade.

Local media, meanwhile, has been reporting the issue with much fervour, but much of it is filled with op-ed spout jingoism. Many have chosen to highlight abuse and harassment of common people by Morcha cadres but completely ignored cases of police brutality.

Nepali leaders in turn are using the blockade to stoke nationalism and pass the buck of its own failures to India. Nepalis are used to hardships, but the question is how long will it take for the people to transfer the blame from India to our own inept political leadership. [@Chenreeyang](#)

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Carrot, stick and oil

The Indian Blockade is a reality, but so is the three-month Madhes agitation

We now have two women in senior positions: the UML's Bidya Devi Bhandari is the second president of Nepal and former guerrilla Onsari Gharti is the first woman to chair parliament.

For a nation in the throes of political transition, this is by no means a small achievement. But, as with promulgation of the constitution last month, the celebrations have been dampened and few outside Kathmandu are bothered.



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

From remote mountains ravaged by the April earthquake to the barren farms of the Tarai hit by the bad monsoon and more than three months of continuous unrest, there is anger against government apathy.

Feroz, 43, runs a footwear shop in Biratnagar and has to feed a family of nine. For the last two months, his business is down by half because his raw materials are stuck at the border.

"I do not understand politics, but there are people on the streets protesting for over two months. Some of them I know are good people, and if they are on the streets, I guess there is a reason for it," he says.

Fifty km away, thousands of people from hill communities in Rajbiraj of Saptari took part in a rally in solidarity with the Madhes movement. "We have witnessed deaths and people have endured much pain in the last two months, we hope to calm communal tension," local journalist Jitendra Thakur told me.

What began as a small protest by some disgruntled Madhesi leaders in August has grown into a mass movement, gaining support from all walks of life in the plains. From the innovative 'dhoti rally' to creating a human chain, hundreds of thousands are on the streets.

Kathmandu's ruling class and the

media have largely ignored this, reacting only to the Indian blockade which has created crippling shortages. In an op-ed a few weeks before the constitution was promulgated, Prof Krishna Khanal had warned: "Leaders who immediately addressed demands of protesters in Karnali and Surkhet and even Thori VDC, will have to answer why they have been ignoring the demands of Madhesi and Tharus."

None of the top leaders are comfortable explaining the rationale of the current arbitrary federal demarcation. Nor are they willing to accept that the discriminatory citizenship provisions in the new constitution could create a new generation of stateless citizens.

To be sure, the Indians have made

undiplomatic moves, expressing reservations on several clauses in the draft constitution, including secularism. The de-facto blockade is indeed a continuity of its 'carrot and stick' approach. But Kathmandu has nobody but itself to blame for alienating Madhesi, pushing them into New Delhi's arms.

"We have already got ourselves into a diplomatic mess, so has India, and there is no other way for the two countries but to try and normalise relations," says former ambassador to India, Bhekh Bahadur Thapa. "But this is our internal problem and the government must seek political reconciliation within, by reaching out to the dissenting parties. Both processes must move in parallel."

Diplomatically, the MoU signed

between Nepal and China this week will end India's historical monopoly over Nepal's petroleum market. In the long run, this will be in our national interest, but for the moment it will serve only to irritate Delhi further.

Nepal cannot afford to antagonise either of our giant neighbours, not just to ensure an uninterrupted international trade, but also to take economic advantage of our location between India and China.

So, instead of playing one against the other, K P Oli must strive to achieve a diplomatic balance on either sides of the Himalaya. We may have burnt our hands dealing with India, but it makes no sense burning our bridges also. 🇳🇵

@Anurag_Acharya



BIKRAM RAI

Messiahs of the Madhes

It's time for the Madhesi people to think about who their real friends are

The movement in the Madhes against provisions in the new constitution is now dragging into its third month. Plains leaders have successfully whipped up anti-Kathmandu sentiments, building on their past grievances. They have sown dreams of utopia, of how the Tarai will turn into Switzerland once it has federal autonomy.



COMMENT
Jivesh Jha

But in the process they have undermined their own agitation by making the Indian establishment such a close ally. Moderate Madhesi are reluctant to express their views for fear of being ostracised, but the reality

is that most plains-dwellers are against the blockade. They want to fight their own fight with Kathmandu, not have a foreign country intervene on their behalf.

Madhesi leaders are now trying to brand Kathmandu as being pro-Chinese, anti-Indian and anti-Madhesi just because a desperate government in Kathmandu is trying to find alternate sources of importing fuel supplies from China. They have been warning of anti-Chinese protests if Kathmandu imports petroleum from China.

Amid all this, the self-declared messiah of Madhes politics, Rajendra Mahato of the Sadbhavana Party, told an Indian newspaper, "what is good for India is good for Madhes" and that "only a strong Madhes can weaken Kathmandu's anti-India drive".

Neither anti-Indian nor anti-Chinese sentiments are good for the country. What did India expect by imposing a blockade on

Nepal? That Nepalis would roll over and welcome it? It may not be practical to source fuel from China, but that doesn't prevent Madhesi leaders from echoing the ongoing hysteria in the Indian media about "Chinese entry into Nepal".

As positions harden on both sides, Madhesi leaders are trapped by their own rhetoric. More than 45 people have been killed since August, and there is deep resentment in the public in the plains against state security forces, but also against Madhesi leaders for stepping on the bodies of the martyrs to get to power. The silent majority feel that they have been made to suffer for the past three months just so corrupt Madhesi leaders can improve their bargaining power to get plum posts in Kathmandu.

The constituent parties of United Democratic Madhesi Front (UDMF) had asserted that they resigned from the Constituent Assembly (CA) on moral grounds.

However, they never explained why they suddenly appeared in the CA to vote in favour of Sushil Koirala for prime minister last month. Even the man on the street in any Madhes town will tell you that they did so at India's behest.

Today half the young men of the Tarai are in Malaysia or Qatar. The economic collapse caused by the agitation in the past two months will push even more to go abroad, the only thing stopping them from flying out of Kathmandu is the lack of public transport. Yet, Madhesi leaders have nothing but empty slogans and false promises for their own people. Words do not fill stomachs. Destabilising the Nepali nation state as they have done by inviting open Indian intervention will not do the Madhesi people any good, nor will it be in India's own strategic interest. We, Madhesi people want development and jobs, and we want an immediate end to the blockade.

Negotiations are going on in Kathmandu between Madhesi leaders and a government team led by Foreign Minister Kamal Thapa. From what we hear the government is playing hardball, while Madhesi negotiators come up with ever more outlandish demands that have no relation to the new constitution.

The best move Madhesi leaders can now make is to call off the agitation for the Chhat festival, say no thank you to the Indian blockade and work with the government for agreed amendments to the constitution. This is what the Madhesi people want, it would be in India's interest and it would serve the cause of democracy and justice in Nepal.

Let's be smart and figure out who the real enemies are: leaders who allow themselves to be used by Big Brother for its own interest. It is time for the Madhesi people to figure out who their real friends are. 🇳🇵

Restraint, resolve and resilience

The movement is no longer about what the Madhes and Madhesis really want



BIKRAM RAI

The crisis in the Madhes need not be intractable. A resolution should be possible if the state concedes that Madhesi grievances are real and have to be corrected, their demands for rights and dignity have to be fulfilled and those who ordered and carried out torture and killings have to be investigated and punished.



THIS IS IT
Rubeena Mahato

If a solution means a new compromise on federal boundaries and agreeing to proportional representation based on population, the state has to be flexible on these.

But first the Madhesi Morcha has to end the blockade, dealign itself from interventionist forces and give up terror and violence. If they hope to bulldoze their way through unreasonable demands that seek to secure the interests of a neighbouring country than its own citizens, it will lose further legitimacy not just with the government but amongst the very people they claim to represent.

The question is whether the Morcha and its backers from within and beyond the borders care. They have quashed international law and diplomatic norms, abandoned politics of principles and have resorted to force, intimidation and bullying to get their demands met.

What is unraveling in the Madhes is plain blackmail. What started as a movement for rights has morphed into something sinister. How can the constitutional appointment for naturalised citizens be a Madhesi demand? A bunch of discredited leaders who have no support amongst ordinary Madhesis and were defeated in the last elections are using violence and terror to hold the entire region hostage.

There is a deliberate muddling of issues, valid and legitimate demands for dignity and rights have been hijacked by interest groups who are using the most divisive and violent means possible to do so, fuelling communal hatred and radicalism.

There is no pretense left. The movement is no longer about what the Madhes and Madhesis want, there is geopolitics at play. Madhesis want dignity and rights,

they want a stable and peaceful Nepal where they can earn their livelihood without disruption.

Madhesis believe there is a constitutional and democratic means to achieve this and made this abundantly clear with their votes in the 2013 election. The Morcha on the other hand believes in terror, blackmail and raw power. It has no illusions, the alarmist calls for separatism hold no currency amongst ordinary Madhesis who know their interests and survival are tied to Nepal.

Working with a foreign country to enforce blockade against fellow Nepalis, inciting violence by offering cash prize for martyrdom, provoking police to react through targeted lynching, throwing petrol bombs at moving buses, setting people ablaze for carrying fuel are Morcha tactics. To support this group and say that it represents ordinary Madhesis and holds sole claim to their demands is deceitful and dangerous.

It is tragic that some are willing to support the Indian blockade just because they don't support the constitution. They want to see Nepal forced to its knees and if that involves millions of people suffering and some losing their lives, it is a small price to pay. Businesses, industries and hospitals are affected, schools are closing down but this makes no difference to this delusional cohort.

Supporters of the Morcha, amongst them self-declared intellectuals, are the same people who supported violent groups in the past and opposed demands for accountability of war-crimes. Elitist, removed from reality, they have a deep-seated distrust towards common people whom they claim to speak for. For them, violence is the means to an end.

They do not believe in co-existence or in legal and political solutions. The fact that this constitution was voted by more than 90% of elected representatives makes no difference because democratic processes mean nothing to them. The fact that Nepal is actively appointing women and members from minority groups into positions of power and promoting inclusive policies through quotas and representation in state institutions does not impress them.

Changes do not happen overnight and institutional reforms would gradually change

mindsets and reduce inequalities provided there is stability for these processes to take root. The new constitution has flaws, but with amendments on controversial clauses, especially on citizenship rights, it can be improved. But to reject the entire document and push the country to another decade of uncertainty is criminal and malicious.

The Madhesi parties are doing a disservice to themselves and the Madhesi cause by allowing themselves to be pawns. One can only hope that genuine activists will break free of this unholy alliance, re-own the movement and bring it back to where it belongs: to the Nepali people and their government.

Despite all attempts to pit one group against the other, we have never been a communal country and we should do all we can to stay that way, even though some resentment has crept in now. We Nepalis will have to show restraint, resolve and resilience in the days to come. For far too long we allowed misguided people to get away unquestioned and unchallenged for the damage they have done. Let us hold to account those who created polarisation and pushed the country to the edge with their lies, misinformation and compromised silence. 🇳🇵

@rubeenaa

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World record for Turkish

Turkish Airlines recently launched its nonstop service from Miami to Istanbul. It also broke the world record for building the tallest sandcastle in Miami, for which it had partnered with 7-time Guinness World Record-holder, Sand Sculpture Company, and its owner Ted Siebert.

Everest milestone

Everest Bank has recently completed 21 years of operation. By the end of last fiscal year, the bank's total business had crossed Rs 130 billion. It has also expanded its network to include 53 branches and 80 ATMs and plans to add more.



Big merger

Five financial institutions - Clean Energy Development Bank, Bhrikutee Development Bank, Pathibhara Bikas Bank, and Prudential Finance Company – have commenced joint operations under the flagship name of NMB Bank. This marks one of the biggest mergers in Nepal's banking sector.



IME Scholarships

IME and Global IME Bank have announced the names of students receiving scholarships under the Global IME Akanshya Scholarship Fund. The scholarship funds the primary and secondary studies of competitive students from financially disadvantaged backgrounds.



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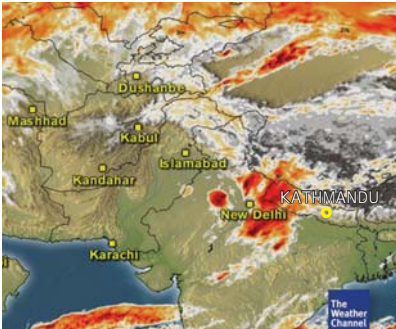
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Just when you thought the glorious weather and the blockade-induced lack of pollution would last, comes this low pressure system on the first westerly of the season. It is quite a big circulation, and we are likely to see increased cloud cover and some precipitation into the weekend. This will bring down the minimum temperature, and increase the chances of morning mist in Kathmandu. There will be the season's first snow in the higher reaches and down to about 4,000m. Since this trough is not part of a larger cyclone in the Bay of Bengal, it will not bring blizzards or heavy rain.

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PHOTO KATHMANDU IN PATAN

Nepal's first international festival of photography starts next week

From 3-9 November the alleys and courtyards of Patan will be transformed into a live exhibition space as the old town plays host to Nepal's first international photography festival, Photo Kathmandu. The week-long festival is being organised by the photo collective, photo.circle.

"Patan is an incredibly rich urban landscape - both in terms of tangible but also intangible heritage; the patis that are home to evening bhajans, the local corner shops that sell woh, aloo, sukuti, choela. By locating a festival in the midst of this, by trying to weave it into the fabric of the Patan streets, we would like to both celebrate this urban landscape as well as draw

attention to how it needs careful planning and preservation," says festival director NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati of choosing the festival destination.

Eighteen print exhibitions showing works of both national and international artists, with the theme 'Time' will be on display. Organisers say each of the exhibition represents a chapter in the history of Nepal and are hopeful visitors will recognise themselves in these images.

"At this present time of great political and social transitions here in Nepal- we hope these stories will spark retrospection and reflection on our past, present and where we would like to head in the days to come," says



TUOMO MANNINEN

Kakshapati.

A curated walk through Lalitpur is also on offer. Besides exhibitions, the festival is also curating several workshops and talks on visual story telling. Pre-festival events began this week on Tuesday with a workshop on oral history writing by Indira Chowdhury, director of the Centre for Public History at the Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology in India.

With over 45 international artists and many Nepali photographers from outside Kathmandu participating, the team has been forced to deal with unseen logistical challenges. However, the team is staying positive.

Says Kakshapati: "If people from places as far away as Belgium and Swaziland can make it, we figure, people from across town will make an effort to come to Patan."

EXHIBITIONS

BIND Photobook Exhibition and Library by The BIND Collective

An examination of the relationship between the memories of visitors to the festival and the city of Kathmandu, with artist readings of texts by Janette Winterson, Hervé Guibert, Aavek Sen and others.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 5pm
Newa Chen, Kulimha

Change of course by Prasiit Sthapit

Prasiit Sthapit's photographs of the village of Susta, calls for attention to this endangered settlement which once lay on the west bank of the Narayani River.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Chyosal

Everyday Epiphanies by Frédéric Lecloux

Photographer Frédéric Lecloux first came to Nepal 20 years ago, and says he finds a certain link between his own disorder and the one that characterises the towns and villages he keeps returning to.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Dhaugal-South Wall

Facing the camera: A History of Nepali Studio Photography by Nepal Picture

Library

A look back at how royal painters-turned-photographers started studio photography in Nepal.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 4pm
Keshav Narayan Chowk, Patan Museum

History begins at home: Diverse narratives of young people living in Kathmandu by Sharareh Bajracharya, Niranjan Kunwar and Nepal Picture Library

Features artworks created during a pilot program of Nepal Picture Library's 'Retelling Histories Education Program'.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Adarsha Kanya Niketan School, Patan Museum

Hope for Tomorrow by Nicolas Marie and Swotha Community

Hope for Tomorrow tells the story of a community: the inhabitants of and others connected to the Swotha Square in old Patan.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Swotha

In the Shadow of Hope by Philip Blenkinsop

Philip Blenkinsop captures Nepal after the Royal Massacre.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Old Court House, Hakka

Juju Bhai Dhawa: Keeper of memories by Nepal Picture Library

Juju Bhai Dhakhwa's photos capture the communal alongside the familial; a chorus of faces that repeat throughout the collection shows the fluid intersection between the private realm of the family and the public realm of festivities and excursions.

3 to 9 November, 12 to 4pm
Dhakwa House, Nagbahal

Living in the mist: the last nomads of Nepal by Kishor Sharma

A closer look at the lives of Rautes- Nepal's last remaining nomads.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Twilako Tol (Adarsha Kanya Niketan School north wall)

North Fake by Maia Ruth Lee and Peter Sutherland

The first collaboration between the husband and wife duo.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Pim Bahal

Patan Camera Obscura by Laura Diamond Dixit, Miku Dixit and Rene Fan

Using the principles of the camera obscura, the installation casts the inverted image of the void left behind the fallen temple of Char Narayan (destroyed in the April earthquake) into a room overlooking the square. The result: a view of the square that was impossible to see before the

earthquake.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 5pm
Yala Guest House, Patan Darbar Square

Patis in Patan by Christiane Brosius, Rajendra Shakya and Sujana Chitrakar

A curated walk through Lalitpur.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Patan Darbar Square, Chakrabahal, Sundhara and Chyosal

Portraits of Nepal by Kevin Bubriski

Former peace corps volunteer Kevin Bubriski has been photographing Nepal for over 40 years and is known for his iconic black and white images.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Bhai Dega, Patan Darbar Square

The 90s: A democratic awakening by Bikas Rauniar

A reminder of an era that is all but forgotten.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
Dhaugal- East Wall

The Man from Limbuwan by Surendra Lawoti

This two-part exhibition traces the journey of two men – father and son – both men from Limbuwan who travel far from their ancestral hills of Therthum, in the eastern hills of Nepal, to the heartland of Nepali politics and to faraway places around the world.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 5pm
Image Ark, Kulimha

Time maps and memories: The Sumitra Manandhar Collection by Nepal Picture Library

Spanning the period between the 1960s and the 1990s, this collection of 900-odd photographs illustrates the various dimensions of life within the Manandhar family, Sumitra's own experiences, as well as aspects of rural life in Nepal across the 1980s and 1990s.

3 to 9 November, 10am to 7pm
ZYU, Swotha

We by Tuomo Manninen

Finnish photographer Manninen's group portraits are an intermingling of documentary and dramatisation.

3 to 9 November, 10 am to 7pm
Mulchowk Entrance, Patan Museum

WORKSHOPS

Photographing the Everyday

Writer and photographer Frédéric Lecloux will work with young photographers to build a meaningful photography story with elements that might change the way they look at their lives and their context.

30 October to 2 November, 9am to 2pm
Alliance Francaise in Kathmandu, Teku



NEPAL WHEREVER YOU ARE.



in your **lap** or **palm**.

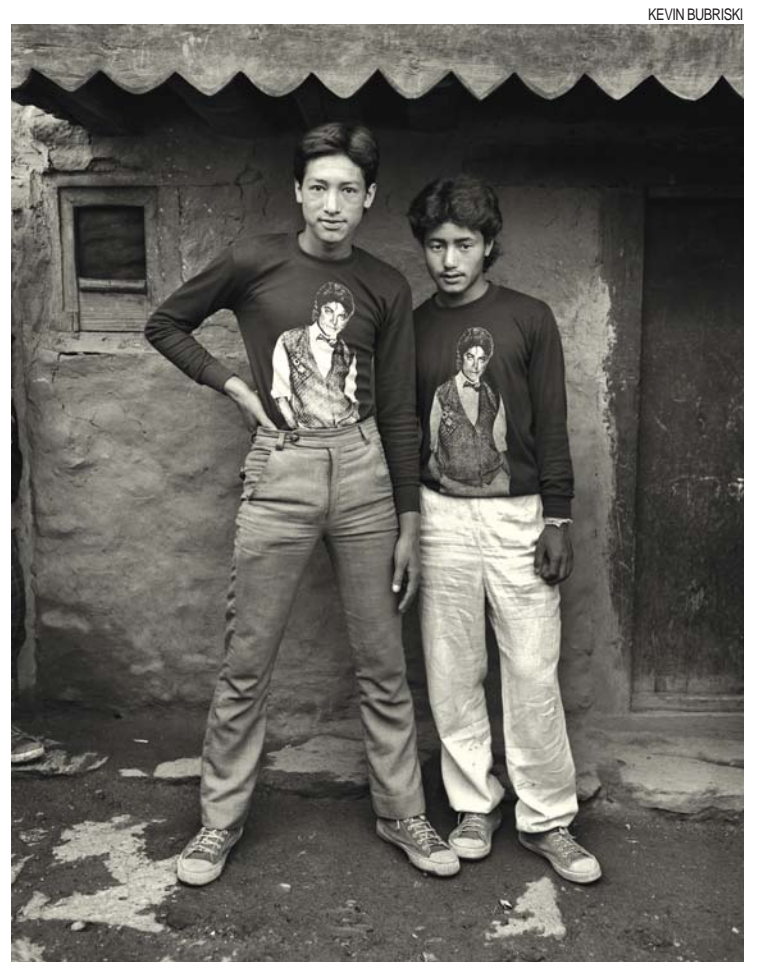
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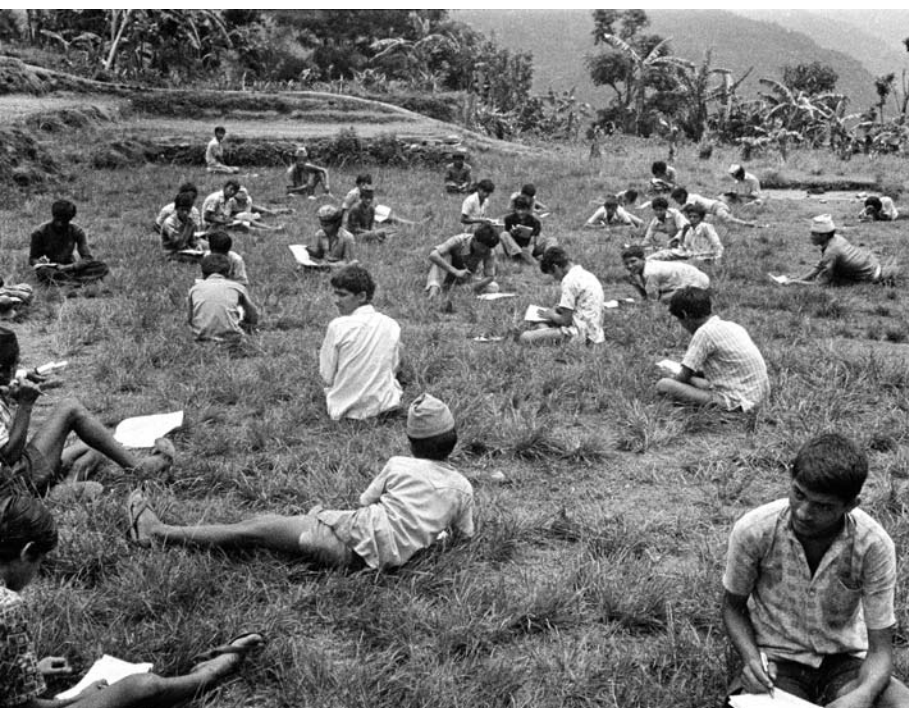
BIKAS RAUNIAR



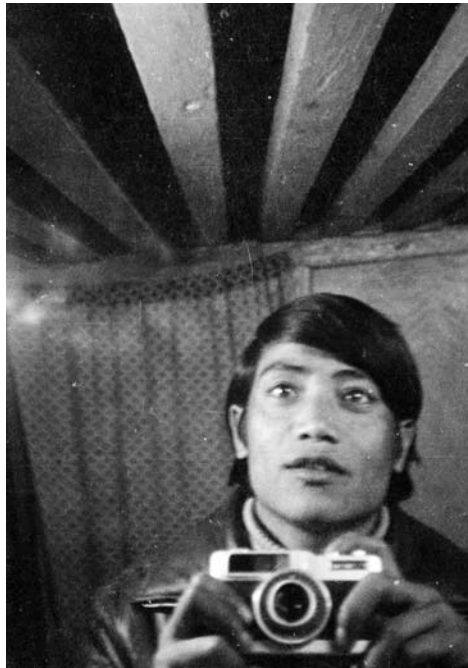
BIKAS RAUNIAR



KEVIN BUBRISKI



SUMITRA MANANDHAR GURUNG



JUJU BHAI DHAKHIWA



KISHOR K SHARMA

Visual thinking in the editorial process

Danish photographer Thomas Borberg will conduct the workshop and discuss how Danish newspaper *Politiken* works with photo and other visual elements.

1 to 4 November, 9am to 2pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Writing Photography

This four-day workshop will explore practical and conceptual approaches to critical commentary on photography. Moderated by Christopher Pinney.

2 to 5 November, 9am to 2pm
Sundhara House

Using visual media for social justice campaigns

The workshop will investigate a range of issues and approaches to use images for social justice, explore issues of representation, collaborative methodologies, and how to best prepare a communication strategy.

5 to 6 November, 9am to 2pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Beyond the camera

This two-day workshop will introduce participants to the basics of research, ethics, caption writing and digital workflow.

7 to 8 November, 9am to 2pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Inheritance

The Fearless Collective explores fears and memories that are passed on from one generation to each other.

7 to 9 November, 9am to 5pm
Patan

TALKS

Artist Talk: Philip Blenkinsop

4 November, 3 to 3.45pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Presentation: Students works from Danish School of Media and Journalism (DMJX)

4 November, 4 to 4.45pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist Talk: Strangers at Home-Migrant Domestic workers in HongKong by Robert Godden

4 November, 4.45 to 5.30pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Talk: Iraqi photography by Philippe Van Cauteren

5 November, 3 to 3.45pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist Talk: After an elusive world by Anne Golaz

5 November, 4 to 4.40pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: History of South Asian photography Christopher Pinney & Taznin Wahab, moderated by Pratyoush Onta

5 November, 4.40 to 5.30pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist talk: Kevin Bubriski

6 November, 3 to 3.40pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: The Journey of the Photobook Sohrab Hura & Dragana Jurisic, moderated by Nishant Shukla

6 November, 3.45 to 4.35pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Presentation: World, Press & Photo reflected by Micha Bruinvels

6 November, 4.45 to 5.30pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Instameet

7 November, 9am to 12pm
Dhokaima Café, Patan Dhoka

Artist talk: Yu: The Lost country by Dragana Jurisic

7 November, 2 to 2.40pm

Baggikhana Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist talk: Why are you looking at me like that? By Andrea Stultiens

7 November, 2 to 2.40pm
Gaushala Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Talk: Living with photographs – being a collector by Isabelle Darrigrand

7 November, 2.40 to 3.30pm
Baggikhana Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: Seeing comes before words, but who tells the story? Alisa Sett, Sohrab Hura & Frédéric Lecloux, moderated by Rabi Thapa

7 November, 2.40 to 3.30pm
Gaushala Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist talk: Rohan Thapa

7 November, 3.40 to 4.20pm
Baggikhana Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist talk: A river's tail by Gareth Bright

7 November, 3.40 to 4.20pm
Gaushala Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: Product vs Process Ankit Suwal, Brianna Bartlet, Indu Antony, Ralph Smit, Sanjeev Maharjan & Tushikur Rahman, moderated by Philippe Van Canteran

7 November, 4.20 to 5.30pm

Baggikhana Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: Professionalising Nepali photography Bikash Karki & Raj Bhai Suwal, moderated by NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati

7 November, 4.20 to 5.30pm
Gaushala Hall, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Presentation: Retelling histories curricular project by Niranjana Kunwar and Sharareh Bajracharya

8 November, 3 to 3.40pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Artist Talk: Finding your voice by Sailendra Kharel

8 November, 3.40 to 4.20pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

Discussion: The Earthquake and the Image Athena Zelandonii, Narendra Shrestha & Sam Reinders, moderated by Austin Lord

8 November, 4.30 to 5.30pm
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka

SLIDESHOWS

Showing works of various artists, 4 to 9 November, 6.30 to 7.30 pm, for venue information visit photoktm.com

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FUEL UP ON JAZZ

From 4-10 November Nepal’s Himalayan sky will once again come alive with the sound of jazz as the Surya Nepal Kathmandu International Festival, popularly known as Jazzmandu, celebrates its 13th year. The widely anticipated annual event will provide Nepalis with a melodic and rhythmic escape from the country’s ongoing blockade crisis. Aside from being one of the leading music festivals in South Asia, Jazzmandu has established Nepal as a key player in the international jazz scene. Each year, the highly sought-after festival brings musicians from all corners of the world to Kathmandu, where the artists celebrate their musical diversities while simultaneously showcasing their camaraderie through music. Created in 2002 by Navin Chettri, the lead

vocalist and drummer of Nepal’s first jazz band Cadenza Collective , Jazzmandu has successfully introduced jazz to Nepal and has over the years refined the country’s local music scene by bringing world class musicians to Kathmandu audiences. This year’s festival line up includes performers from Norway, the USA, France, Cuba and Argentina that will join local Nepali talent on different stages at various venues around the city. Each year Jazzmandu presents Jazz for the Next Generation, a music competition that promotes music education and gives young musicians a chance to demonstrate their talents in front of international musicians. This year’s edition will continue this tradition and will also feature a free concert for young school children to expose them to jazz from around the world. *Madeline Zutt*

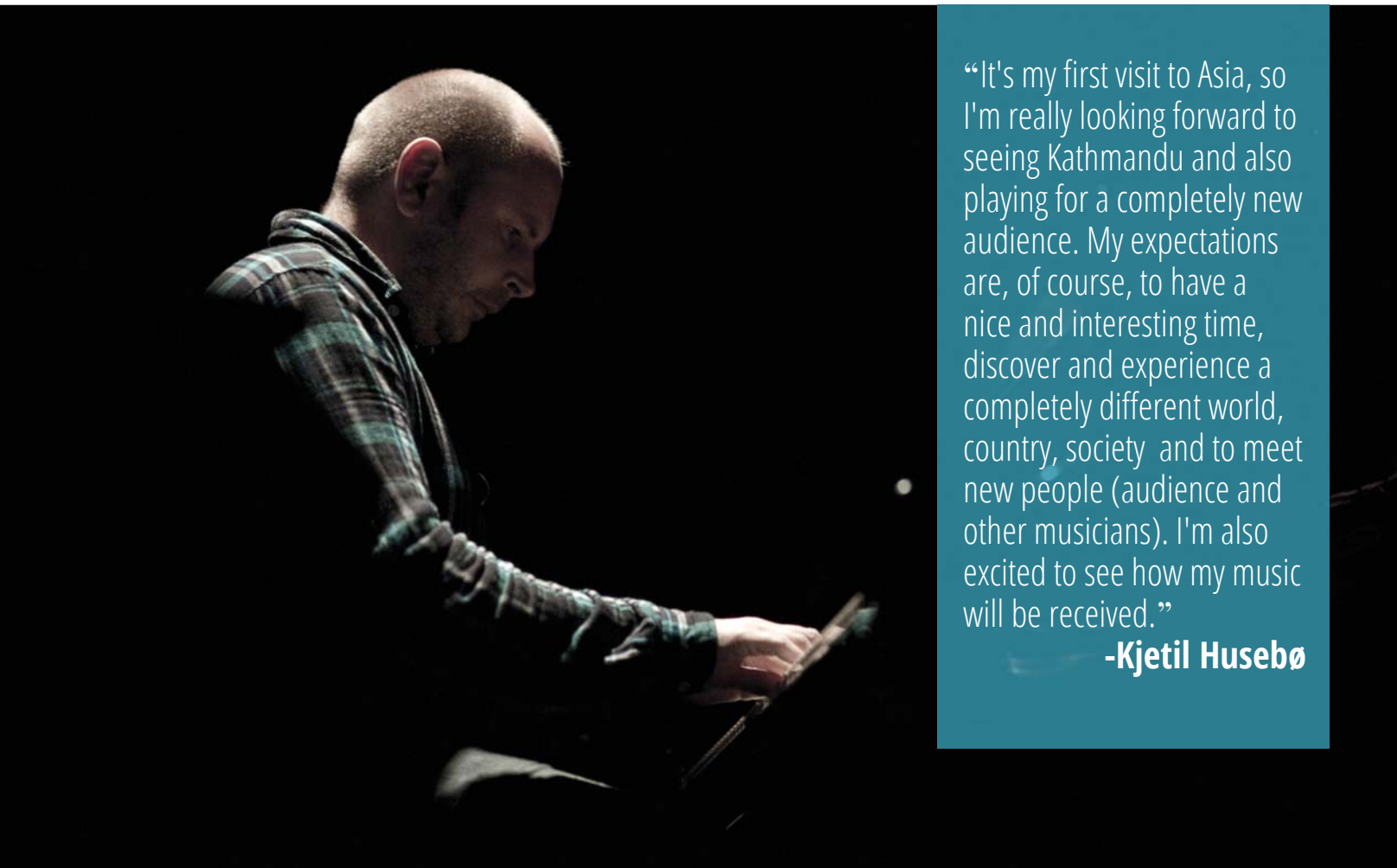


“We want to have the festival this year, more than ever.”

Nepali Times spoke to the festival’s director, Navin Chettri, about his expectations for this year’s festival.

Nepali Times: How will the country’s current fuel crisis affect this year’s festival?
Navin Chhetri: This is an interesting year for us. Despite the current crisis the country is facing, we want to have the festival, more than ever. We want to show that Nepalis are strong and ready to bounce back. It is also our way of getting more people to visit Nepal. We hope that we can make do with the shortcomings we are facing right now given the country’s current situation.

How is this year’s Jazzmandu going to be different?
We try to get different artists each year to attract a mix of people from all walks of life. We want to attract Nepalis as well as foreigners. This year we are collaborating with Photo Kathmandu to bring different aspects of visual art to the music festival. We are also trying to get school students more involved with jazz by offering a free concert to young kids so they can enjoy and experience jazz.
In addition, we have started the Jazzmandu Education Initiative where students meet every week at my studio, The Music Room, for an intensive course in music. Through this initiative, students who are dedicated to study music are given the chance to come together to learn and perform in different ensembles. Some of these student-teacher ensembles will be featured either at the Jazz Bazaar or the school concert on 5th November.



“It's my first visit to Asia, so I'm really looking forward to seeing Kathmandu and also playing for a completely new audience. My expectations are, of course, to have a nice and interesting time, discover and experience a completely different world, country, society and to meet new people (audience and other musicians). I'm also excited to see how my music will be received.”

-Kjetil Husebø

7

NOVEMBER
TIME: 2.30 TO 10PM

JAZZ BAZAAR

Escape the current Kathmandu chaos with a trip to Gokarna Forest Resort to enjoy a mix of Jazz and traditional Nepali classical music. Souvenirs and T-shirts will be on sale. Free shuttle bus service available every hour from 1pm to 4pm. Shuttle bus pick-up point, outside the Hyatt Regency gate, Boudha. Return shuttle bus available between 10pm to 11pm, drop off at Chabahal.

Location: Gokarna Forest Resort

Tickets: Rs 1090

8

NOVEMBER
7 TO 9PM
(GATES OPEN AT 6PM AND CLOSE AT 8PM)

RED HOT LATIN JAZZ

Seats are first come first serve, so come early to enjoy authentic Brazilian and Afro-Cuban beats.

Location: Hotel Summit, Kupondole.

Tickets: Rs 1299

9

NOVEMBER
1.30 TO 3.30PM

JAZZMANDU MASTERCLASS

The festival's masterclass gives music students and jazz lovers the chance to engage with and learn from Jazzmandu's visiting musicians. Come perfect your musical technique with the best of the best.

Location: Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel

9

NOVEMBER
6 TO 8:30 PM

JAZZ AT PATAN

Come out to enjoy an evening of Nepali classical music mixed with Jazz. The night will feature performances by Nepal's prominent jazz band, Cadenza.

Location: Dhokaima Café, Patan

Tickets: Rs 1299

10

NOVEMBER
5.30 TO 10PM

JAZZMANDU FINALE

The festival's musicians jazz it up one last time and trust us, you won't want to miss out on Jazzmandu's big finale.

Location: Yak & Yeti Hotel, Darbar Marg

Tickets: Rs 1090

4

NOVEMBER
4 TO 6PM

JAZZ FOR THE NEXT GENERATION MUSIC COMPETITION

Young musicians will compete in front of a number of international musicians and the selected finalists will perform for a panel of judges (made up of Jazzmandu artists).

The winner(s) will have the opportunity to join international jazz musicians at Jazz Bazaar and participate in private workshops led by Jazzmandu artists.

Location: Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel

FREE ENTRY
(LIMITED SEATING)

5

NOVEMBER
11AM TO 12:30 PM
(GATES OPEN AT 10.30AM, SEATING AT 10.50AM)

CONCERT FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN

The festival will include a free concert for school students giving them the chance to experience music from around the world and to interact with some of the festival's musicians, in an effort to encourage the appreciation of jazz music in the younger generation. Students who are interested should contact info@jazzmandu.org as soon as possible as there is limited seating.

Location: Alliance Francaise, Tripureshwor

5

NOVEMBER
7 TO 9PM

GROOVIN AT UPSTAIRS

Nepal's own jazz outfit, Cadenza Collective will kick start the festival. Come early to get a good seat, gates open at 6pm.

Location: Jazz Upstairs, Lajimpat

Tickets: Rs 500

5

NOVEMBER
4 TO 6PM

VOCAL AND RHYTHM WORKSHOP

The workshop features Afro Cuban Rhythm with Yaite Ramos and vocal techniques in Latin Music with Banda Magda

Location: Kathmandu Music Room, Naxal

FREE ENTRY
(LIMITED SEATING)

6

NOVEMBER
7 TO 9PM

VALLEY JAMS

Different venues around the city will feature performances by Jazzmandu artists.

Locations: Jazz Upstairs, Lajimpat

Moksh, Jhamsikhel House of Music, Thamel

Manny's Eatery & Tapas Bar, Jawalakhel

Tickets: Rs 500



WHO,
WHAT,
WHERE,
WHEN



“The experience I have had so far conversing with Nepali people has been extremely heart-warming and welcoming. Kathmandu has definitely been on my list of places to visit, and it makes me truly happy that I will get to discover and explore this magnificent part of the world through music and art. I look forward to building global music connections in a city of such rich cultural heritage. Based on what I have read so far about Jazzmandu, it seems like it's more than a festival, but a spiritual institution that encourages global music connection, interaction, growth and prosperity.”

-Magda Giannikou

EVENTS



Quake photobook,

Nepal425 launches a crowd-sourcing drive for printing a coffee table book featuring 700 pictures of the earthquake. All proceeds from the sales will go to quake-affected. www.nepal425.com

Conference on heart disease,

Conquering heart disease in the Himalayan region: the eighth international congress on the management of cardiovascular disease.

5pm, 30-31 October, Hotel Yak and Yeti, Kathmandu

For registration: (01) 4371123

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

Photography Workshop,

For students interested in taking street portraits: lessons on basic composition rules to frame their portraits and the skills to approach strangers to pose for them. 8.30 am to 12 pm, 1 to 3 November, Sattya Media Arts Collective, Jawalakhel

Kathmandu MTB Fest,

The ultimate cycling fest with prizes up to Rs 800,000 – both cross-country and downhill

Register: kathmandumtbfest.com 20 to 22 November, Hattiban



Shakti,

Celebrated artist Kiran Manandhar's fourth solo exhibition explores the mortal power and divine energy manifested in the female form.

Until 10 November, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babarmahal

Look Back in Anger,

John Osborne's play, directed by Shankar Rijal, portrays the disillusionment among youth in the 1950s

5.15 to 7pm, 20 November to 2 December Mandala theatre, Anamnagar

Film Southasia,

A biennial festival full of informative, entertaining, scintillating documentaries on South Asia.

19-22 November, Kathmandu www.filmsouthasia.org



Critical Mass,

A monthly meet-up for cyclists who want to reclaim the streets, followed by a brief ride around town. This month's critical mass is to be held in remembrance of conservationist Prahlad Yonzon 5.30pm, 30 October, Basantapur Darbar Square

Yak Attack,

The highest mountain bike race on earth. Get ready to climb dizzying heights above 5000 metres! Registration deadline: 6 November, North Face outlet, Thamel 7 to 15 November, the.yakattack.com

Photo Kathmandu,

Don't miss out on the first edition of this photography festival and its exhibitions, workshops and talks. 3 to 9 November, Patan www.photoktm.com

Business plan competition,

King's College is organising a business plan competition to promote social entrepreneurship in Nepal. 9818032872, 9841848212

DINING

Black Pepper Café & Pub,

Cosmopolitan dining and drinking in a traditional style courtyard, try the apple sauce pork chops and enjoy the good service.

Kupondole Height, Lalitpur, (01)5521897, www.blackpepper.com

Soaltee specials,

Soaltee Crowne Plaza is featuring special menus from seven award-winning chefs until November. Tahachal, (01)4273999



Hankook Sarang,

Serves incredible Korean delicacies, including superlative steamed rice to anchor meals fit for kings.

Thamel, (01)4256615, info@hankooksarang.com

Vesper Café,

Great for leisurely dining, serves diverse foods that reflect Italian lifestyle. Jhamsikhel, (01)5548179

Salt & Pepper Restro Lounge,

Espresso, mocha, latte, frappuccino, cocktails, liquor, beers and flavored shishas, with an outdoor lake-view terrace.

Lakeside, Pokhara, (061)463484, 9846210568



Barista Lavazza,

The Valley's best European inspired coffee-culture cafe serves excellent mochas and lattes, don't forget to try their grilled chicken sandwich. Jawalakhel, (01)4005123, barista. nepal@gmail.com

MUSIC



Folk Music Festival,

Fifth edition of the International Folk Music Film Festival, get to learn about music cultures and participate in a contest 26 to 29 November, Kathmandu



Jazzmandu,

Mark Your Calendars for the Biggest Jazz Party in the Himalayas. Visit the Jazzmandu Facebook page for chances to win tickets. 4 to 10 November

Nepal Music Festival

Nepal's biggest volunteer-run music and culture festival, includes performances by noted bands and fun activities. 28 November, 12 to 8pm Bhrikuti Mandap, Pradarshani Marg www.nepalmusicfestival.org

Open mic,

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

GETAWAYS



Barahi Jungle Lodge,

The first eco-jungle lodge of Chitwan directly overlooks the Chitwan National Park, spa, boutique guest room, individual and two-in-one private villas, including a suite with a private swimming pool.

Andrauli, West Chitwan, (01)4411113, bjl@barahi.com, www.barahijunglelodge.com

Jhule mountain resort,

Resting 2050m above sea level, the eco-resort boasts a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh pine. Enjoy an organic home stay experience.

Shivapuri-Nagarjun National Park, Jhule, (01)6212399, www.jhuleresort.com.np, www.jhuleresort.com



Shangri-La Village Resort,

Spend your weekend under the shadow of breathtaking mountain views, landscaped gardens, water bodies and a relaxing ambience.

Gharipatan, Pokhara, (61)462222, (01)4410051, booking@hotelshangrila.com, www.hotelshangrila.com

Mango Tree Lodge,

Culture walks, rafting in the Karnali, wildlife exploration, and jungle safari at the Bardia National Park.

Bhetani, Bardia, (084)402008, info@mangotreelodge.com



Himalayan Wellness Centre,

A one-stop centre for a relaxed mind and healthy body inside the Park Village Hotel. Budhanilkantha, 980-1066661, peace@wellness.com.np, www.himalayanwellness.com.np

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Smoke and mirrors

How do you make a subject like air pollution entertaining while at the same time conveying the essential message across to the intended audience? Answer: take the two most popular comedians in the country and make a telefilm with animation to appeal to viewers of all ages.

That is what the Institute of Advanced Sustainability Studies (IASS) and International Center for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) did: join forces with popular comic duo Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansa Acharya (MaHa) to produce *Dhuwa* (Smoke), which was broadcast on 18 October in Nepal Television.

The infotainment format opens with two adorable animated parrots Madan Gopi and Hari Gopi (voiced by MaHa) sitting on a branch of a tree discussing how air pollution and climate change



affects their health. The birds point out the major sources of air pollution and how humans have ignored its effects.

On the ground the viewer is introduced to Gangadhar (Hari Bansa Acharya), a chain-smoking plains-dweller who is always hunched around a bonfire discussing the abnormal fog

during winter. While his son warns Gangadhar of the consequences of inhaling so much smoke, the Dad pays no heed. When he finally falls sick, a plane is not available to take him to hospital because of poor visibility. He has to take an ambulance to Kathmandu.


When Buddhi Man Kaji (Madan Krishna Shrestha) burns garbage

in his front yard in Kathmandu, his new neighbour Ang Tsering Sherpa asks him not to do so. When Sherpa tries to explain how soot particles are trapped by temperature inversion due to the Valley's topography, Kaji doesn't take it too well. Sherpa invites Kaji's family to lunch the next day and shows them a documentary on how the smog and haze is not only blocking the view of the mountains but also melting the snow, the rising temperature causing lakes to form where there once were glaciers. The Kaji family doesn't like to be lectured, and leaves.

Kaji falls sick and ends up in the same hospital as Gangadhar. By then, both have finally realised the consequences of pollution in the environment as well as health.

The witty dialogue and animated characters make the film a fun watch and the producers succeed in raising awareness about pollution. *Dhuwa* informs the

viewers about the main sources of air pollution, describes its effects on health and climate and points out measures individuals can take to reduce air pollution.

The storyline is a bit rushed, however, with too much information packed into 40 minutes. The moments of epiphany for both characters seem a tad forced. Do they really have to get sick to realise their misconceptions? MaHa are master comedians and have used the infotainment medium for various programs including HIV/AIDS. *Dhuwa* is not in the same artistic league, but is a good start to raising public awareness about air pollution and its links to health and climate. 

Sahina Shrestha

Director: MaHa

Story/Script/Dialogue:

Hari Bansa Acharya

Concept: Arnico Panday,

Maheswar Rupakheta

Duration: 37 minutes

 **nepalitimes.com**

■ Watch *Dhuwa*



Blockade menu



FIRE AND ICE

This popular eatery is on full throttle since its pizza ovens are electric, and the other ingredients like pasta sauces are hand-prepared. On Monday evening, the tables were all packed and there was a queue outside.

Thamel

EMBERS

The whole menu is available.

Krishna Galli, Lalitpur

LE TRIO

The café offers a Blockade Menu which includes, thankfully, its famed jhol momo and a variety of salads.

Jhamsikhel

ROADHOUSE CAFÉ

Once you arrive here, the waiter ruefully tells you that the Blockade Menu includes "only" pizzas and salads. Which is a lot!

Boudha, Bhat Bhateni, Jhamsikhel, Thamel

THE BAKERY CAFÉ

This popular eatery is offering almost the entire menu.

Boudha, Bhat Bhateni, Dharahara, Jawalakhel, Maharajgunj, New Baneshwor, Pulchok, Teendhara, Teku

GHAR-E-KEBAB

Ghar-e-Kebab also has a temporary Blockade Menu which includes chicken tikka, naan and sheesh kebabs.

Hotel Annapurna, Darbarmarg

Le Trio's	
"NO FUEL" food menu	
Appetizers	
Nachos	Rs. 260
Aloo Saandheko	Rs. 215
Peero Aloo	Rs. 215
Sukuti Sandheko	Rs. 260
Steam Momo	Rs. 175/ Rs. 200/ Rs. 230
(Veg/ Buff/ Chicken)	
Momocha with jhol aachaar	Rs. 200/ 230/ 250
(Veg/ Buff/ Chicken)	
Salad	
Ceaser Salad	Rs. 240
Garden Salad	Rs. 200
Tomato & Mozzarella Salad	Rs. 260
French Salad	Rs. 320

DHOKAIMA CAFÉ

The Blockade Menu includes all the popular items, including the momos which are cooked in briquette stoves. Yes, the bakery is up and running and you can have the cakes too.

Patan Dhoka

TASNEEM'S KINGS KITCHEN

Tasneem's is one of the few restaurants in town that are offering the whole menu. The prices of the dishes have been slightly increased, though.

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DIPLOMACY

The opening scenes of *Diplomacy* are slightly jarring. Set during the extremely grave moments towards the end of World War II when Nazi-occupied Paris is about to be liberated by the Allied Forces, the film begins in the wee hours with the most intimate moments of the



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

commanding General Dietrich von Choltitz (Niels Arestrup). Choltitz is a German officer who has been ordered by Adolph Hitler himself to destroy all of Paris before they lose control of it. We are left

wondering why such a person, with all of his physical frailties would be so humanised on the cusp of such events. So begins a film that starts slowly but is written with such precision (unsurprisingly, it is adapted from a theatre version) that every moment is calculated to build up to another, however insignificant it may initially seem. As General Choltitz wearily starts this fateful day at his residential offices in the Hotel Meurice, which has been entirely commandeered by the Germans, we learn with growing horror the level of havoc and destruction that this failing army intends to wreak upon the Parisians. Working with a reluctant, dismayed French engineer, the Germans have planted thousands of explosives at strategic points, including all

the bridges, stations, landmarks (including the Eiffel tower and the Paris Opera) intending to kill and maim as many people as they can before they withdraw, leaving the beloved city unrecognisable. The film is set almost entirely in General Choltitz's rooms as he fields his own orders and reflects on his own mortality. It is when Raoul Nordling (Andre Dussolier), a Swedish diplomat who has lived in Paris all his life, sneaks into the General's offices via a secret passageway that Choltitz is forced to confront the enormity of his orders, and what the wilful destruction of an entire city at the end of a losing battle might mean to Germany for decades to come. Nordling cajoles, flatters, reasons, and appeals to all of Choltitz's humanity to try and achieve what he wants, always putting his cause ahead of himself in an act of bravery that is so quietly stoic that it can almost be dismissed as a fluke if one isn't watching carefully. We ourselves are at a crucial time in our history when a lack of professional diplomacy (which could also arguably be interpreted as an utter lack of care) has placed an entire nation in dire straits. It is heartening to watch a carefully crafted film that elucidates the usually (sometimes necessarily) clandestine meetings that must take place in order for reason to triumph over madness. Now we just have to hope that the same, somehow, prevails here.

nepalitimes.com
■ Trailer

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

HEAD OF STATE: Newly-elected President Bidya Bhandari waves to supporters after being voted to the ceremonial office by parliament on Wednesday.



RSS

WELCOME: Former Prime Minister Sushil Koirala welcomes his successor KP Oli at a tea party organised by the Nepali Congress in the capital on Monday.



NEPAL ARMY

BOTH NEW FACES: The new US Ambassador to Nepal Alaina B. Teplitz calls on Army Chief Rajendra Chhetri at Nepal Army Headquarters on Tuesday.



BIKRAM RAI

BRAND NEW: Hero Motorcyle Nepal launched its all new 111 CC Hero Dash on Thursday.



GOPEN RAI

ANOTHER BLOOMING FESTIVAL: A woman picks marigolds from a garden on Tuesday. The flowers are used extensively during the upcoming Tihar festival.

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Special page 1 editorials

Naya Patrika, 28 October

नयाँ पत्रिका

By punishing Nepal, a state that may be geographically smaller but has a bigger heart, India has nothing to be proud of in the international arena. In fact, India hasn't done much to improve relations not just with Pakistan, but also with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh. Even Bhutan and the Maldives regard India with suspicion. By browbeating good neighbour Nepal to teach it a lesson by ruining its economy, the world is going to ask India: "What kind of superpower are you trying to be?" Power is not just about territory, population and military might – it is also about international legitimacy. By losing the confidence of neighbours on all four sides, India has jeopardised even its status as a regional power, and this can only have negative consequences for the aspirations of 1.25 billion Indians and their leader Narendra Modi. True, Nepal hasn't tried to internationalise this sensitive diplomatic impasse, but a world exposed to social media is not unaware of what has been happening. The UN and the EU have already spoken out, tomorrow there will be more voices from all corners of the world. As the world's largest democracy, India will find it difficult to defend why it is stopping the transportation of medicines and food to this earthquake-ravaged country. There is no alternative for India but to lift the blockade and restore its reputation. This is in the interest of both India and Nepal.

Karobar, 28 October

कारोबार

Fuel crisis is just the most visible manifestation of India's blockade against Nepal. In fact, it has affected Nepal's overall economy already devastated by the April-May earthquakes. At a time when they should have been busy rebuilding the earthquake-devastated country, Nepalis are now forced to spend days and nights in petrol queues. This is unfortunate, to say the least.

It is already late to find solutions to problems created by the blockade. Diplomatic efforts to get the blockade lifted have already failed, and the government must now look beyond India to explore other sources of fuel.

India has cited protests by Madhesi people as the reason behind what it merely calls 'a disruption of supplies'. To be sure, Madhesis have blocked only Birganj, but freight movement has not been allowed even through other border points. As a result, Kathmandu-

New Delhi faceoff has hit its lowest point. So the blockade must end – India needs to lift it right now. We can't take it anymore.

Kantipur, 28 October

कान्तिपुर

The blockade imposed by India a month ago has adversely affected the country's industries, businesses, transportation and thrown the lives of Nepalis into turmoil. The blockade also threatens the relations between the two countries. Even though there are no protesters at border crossings other than Birganj, India has refused to allow normal supply of fuel to Nepal. This situation must come to an end. India should immediately end the blockade, which it has been imposing without any sort of explanation. Its interventionist activities in Nepal must also stop. For this to happen, Nepal's rulers must not hesitate to raise the issue of the blockade in the international community.

Likewise, Madhesi protesters should also stop staging sit-ins at border points, vandalising buses and attacking travelers. They must work to find a peaceful solution to this crisis by stopping their protests and engaging in talks with the government. But the government must first create a conducive environment.

The talks that have begun with the protesters have been positive so far. As soon as possible, both the agitating parties and the government should find common ground and end an atmosphere that makes external intervention in our country possible.

Rajdhani, 28 October

राजधानी

India has been denying imposing a blockade in Nepal, blaming the current situation on the protests at the border. In recent days, however, there have been no protests in borders crossings other than Birganj. But supplies are not coming in even from these areas. The protesters on the other hand have continued to vandalise public vehicles. From current events it is clear that if both the government and the agitating parties don't resolve the internal conflict, the pressure from India will build up further.

While India needs to lift the blockade on Nepal immediately, both the government and the disgruntled parties need to create a conducive environment for positive outcome of the ongoing dialogue. If both the parties move forward by bearing their responsibilities in mind, the agitating parties can be included in the mainstream.



Placards:
BLOCKADE
MADHES AGITATION

हिमाल

Bhanu Bhattarai in
Himal Khabarpatrika, 4-10 October

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“It's not only to end the current crisis but also to begin commercially importing fuel from China.”

Nepal's ambassador Mahesh Maskey after signing a petroleum deal with China
Annapurna Post, 29 October

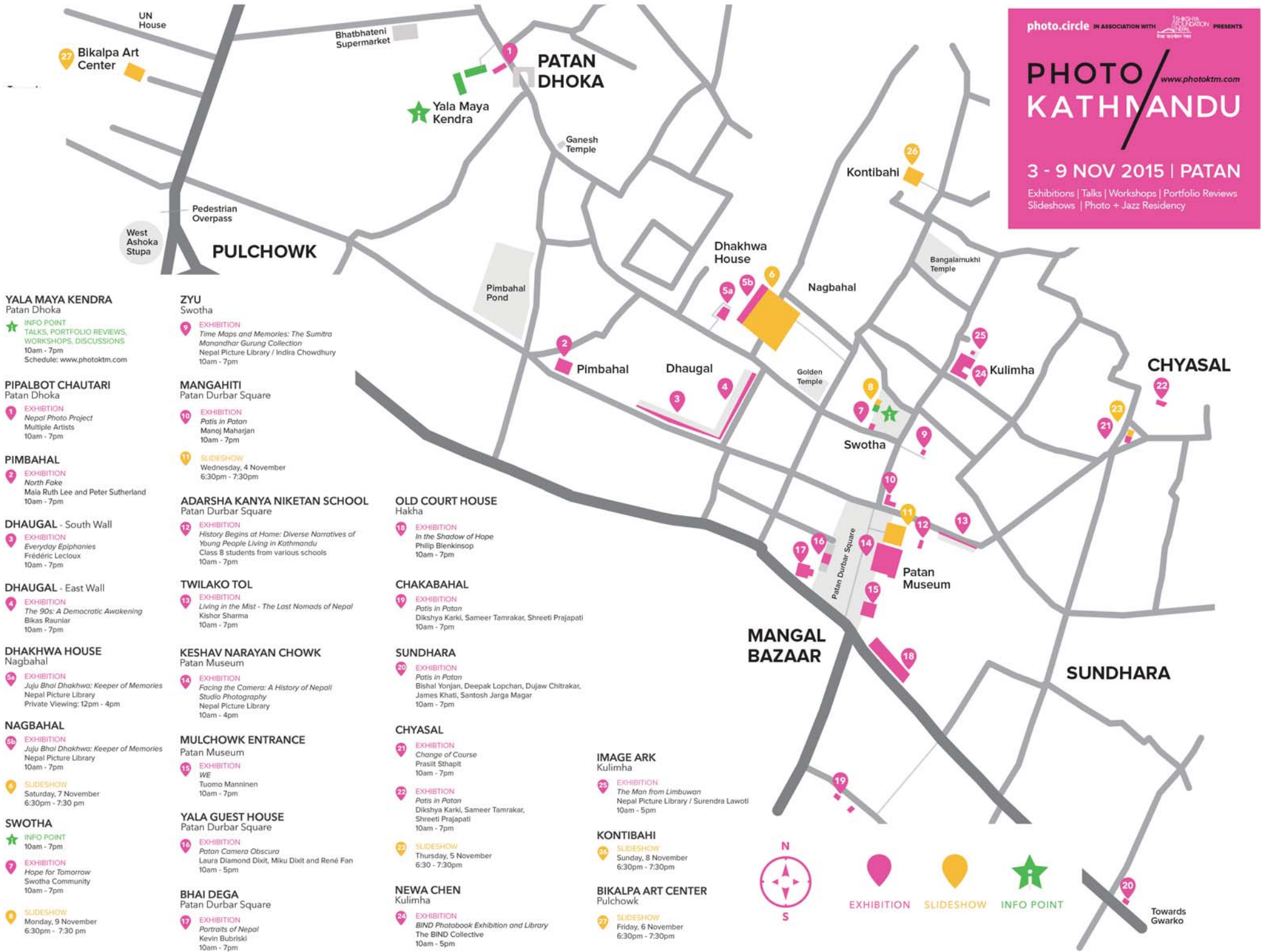
A journalist's request

I have been reporting on the Madhes movement for a long time and despite the challenges brought on by continuing protests and economic blockade, I continued to do so. My reports have highlighted the movement.

But the regular closure of the region and the blockade has caused an acute shortage of fuel and resulted in the flourishing of black market. As I need to travel regularly on motorcycle for coverage, I have been forced to buy petrol at exorbitant rates.

During the course of my reporting I was harassed by cadres of Madhesi Morcha, who spilt the petrol from my motorcycle's fuel tank all over the road. It is impossible to continue reporting from the ground given the circumstances. I apologise to all leaders, cadre and well-wishers of the Madhesi Morcha, but there's no way I can do my job in such difficult times.

RK Patel
Journalist with Prateek Daily/Radio Birganj
on Facebook, 25 October



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BHAKTA TAMANG, 32, CARRYING 90KG ON HIS BACK TO NAMCHE FROM LUKLA. HE IS PAID RS 25 PER KG.



TOURISTS ON THE LUKLA-NAMCHE TREKKING ROUTE IN KHUMBU REGION THIS WEEK.



PRANAYA RANA

Trekking trails half-full

... at least not half empty



YAKS CARRYING FOOD AND TREKKING GEARS TOWARDS EVEREST BASE CAMP.

PHOTOS by
SHANKAR DAHAL

Despite predictions that Nepal's tourism industry would collapse due to the earthquake, the real damage has been done by the Indian blockade. Even so, some of the trails like the Everest and the Annapurna regions which were not so badly affected by the April earthquake are seeing healthy traffic.

There is considerable trekking traffic along the Everest trail, with about 12 flights every morning from Kathmandu to Lukla. In the peak season last year there were sometimes up to 30 flights a day. Lodges along the way say they are seeing half the number of tourists as in normal times, and admit their real problem is the shortage of cooking gas.

The entrance to the Sagarmatha National Park used to see up to 200 trekkers per day during the peak season last year. Park authorities say the figure is down by 50 per cent this year.



THIS LANDSLIDE DAMAGED THE TREKKING TRAIL NEAR PHAKDING, BUT HAS BEEN REPAIRED. MOST OTHER TRAILS ARE INTACT.

Busy in the Annapurnas

Despite the earthquake and the Indian blockade, and dire predictions about dismal tourist arrivals, the trekking trails around the Annapurnas are surprisingly busy this season.

Although the figures are not as high as this time last year, a substantial number of tourists have still come to hike after informations read that the trekking routes had not been damaged by the April earthquake.

Between January and September of this year, 53,208 tourists visited the Annapurna region, a sharp decline from the 69,488 tourists it received in 2014. In the immediate aftermath of the earthquake, only 1,066 tourists were recorded in May whereas 9,578 tourists visited during the same time last year.

In Manang and Mustang, lodges aren't full, but there are tourists. According to Pranaya Rana, who recently trekked up to Tilicho Lake in Manang, the Tilicho Base Camp Hotel in Khangsar was full, with at least 15-20 people sleeping in the dining hall because they couldn't get rooms. However, most of the visitors were foreigners and the number of Nepali trekkers is still low. In October, 2,183 tourists visited Manang, compared to 4,517 last year.

Trekker numbers fell last year after a deadly blizzard struck the Annapurnas last October, killing 43 tourists and local guides and porters. Trekking traffic was almost nil in November and December 2014 in the Annapurna Conservation Area.

In Lo Manthang, tourists were scattered around lodges during the annual Yartung festival in August, and the region received only 1,717 tourists in October. However, ACAP figures showed that the numbers are steadily increasing. ACAP registered 5,353 trekkers in the region in September alone.

Ayesha Shukya

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A race against winter

The Indian blockade has impeded reconstruction and humanitarian efforts to protect earthquake survivors before winter sets in

OM ASTHA RAI

The walls of the Ramche Health Post of Rasuwa cracked when the 7.8 magnitude earthquake jolted central Nepal six months ago, but health workers are still working inside the damaged building. They have no other option. Health workers were hopeful that they would have a prefab structure before the Dasain festival, but the fuel crisis caused by India's blockade against Nepal has dashed hopes. "Now, I don't know for how long I will have to work here," says midwife Maiya Kharel. "It's very risky. I can see outside through the cracks, and mothers are afraid to deliver babies inside."

Karuna Foundation, a Dutch-supported charity, signed an agreement with the Ministry of Health to set up prefab structures for all the earthquake-damaged health posts in Rasuwa. The construction of a new Ramche health post building is part of this project.

"Our plan was to complete three health posts, including the one in Ramche, before Dasain," says Karuna's Country Director Deepak Raj Sapkota. "But the fuel crisis brought everything to a halt. We are not able to transport construction materials to Rasuwa."

In Sindhupalchok, Radio Sindhu is still operating from inside a makeshift tent set up after the earthquake. "We wanted to move to our new building before winter," says station



FLYING LIGHT: UN helicopters used to deliver earthquake relief to the inaccessible parts of Nepal are running low on fuel.

manager Ratna Prasad Shrestha. "But construction of our new building has stopped."

The fuel crisis has halted transportation of construction materials, delaying whatever work organisations and individuals had started in the quake-ravaged districts. Sindhupalchok's CDO Balbhadra Giri says: "Full-fledged reconstruction has not started due to confusion over the government's policies, but whatever work was going on has also now stopped."

Post-earthquake reconstruction was already in shambles due to the government's failure to revive the suspended National Reconstruction Authority by

passing a bill through parliament. The CEO appointed to head that agency, Govinda Raj Pokhrel, has now resigned also from the National Planning Commission because of turf battles between the NC and the UML over the post.

Amidst confusion over reconstruction policies, some people or institutions had already started rebuilding structures damaged by the earthquake. But now, there is no way to get construction material to the remote villages.

After India imposed a blockade against Nepal last month the flow of petroleum products has dried up. Heavy trucks and

containers are off the roads, and the supply chain of construction materials has been disrupted.

Jiban Shrestha, who runs a hardware shop in Chautara of Sindhupalchok, says: "Not a single truck with construction material has arrived here after the blockade, our stocks are running low and reconstruction has stopped."

With reconstruction a hopeless cause, humanitarian agencies are now racing against time to deliver food and emergency shelter to far-flung mountainous villages before they are cut off by snow. But the severe shortage of diesel has prevented even that from being delivered.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been providing food and cash to earthquake survivors for rebuilding quake-damaged infrastructure like roads and irrigation canals in six of the worst-affected districts. But the UN agency is worried that even this activity may have to stop.

WFP Nepal's Communication Officer Iolanda Jaquemet says: "The diesel we now have will not last more than 10 days."

Jaquemet says helicopters used by WFP to deliver relief to the inaccessible parts of Nepal are also running low on fuel. "If we fail to deliver food and emergency shelter to inaccessible villages for three to four months before winter, there will be a serious humanitarian crisis," she warns.

The earthquakes left nearly 9,000 people dead, and destroyed more than 600,000 houses. Humanitarian agencies say they have provided food to nearly two million Nepalis in the six months after the earthquake, but they add that much more needs to be done.

The European Union last week urged India to ensure essential supplies get through to Nepal, saying the blockade only hurts Nepal which is still recovering from the April-May earthquakes. But India has not admitted that it is a blockade, thereby ignoring to lift it.

Sapkota of Karuna says: "A prolonged blockade would mean that more Nepalis will be pushed below the poverty line."

(With input from Kishor Budhathoki in Sindhupalchok)

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Half-assed blockade

What you discuss in the privacy of your own homes is none of the Ass’ business. However, if the subject of your conversation these days is blockade-stockade then it becomes a matter of national security and must be divulged in the public domain. Refusal to do so is punishable by a jail term in Tihar this Tihar, or a fine of INR 5 lacks in counterfeit Indian currency, whichever comes first.

A word of warning to those of you whining and dining about the Indian Blockage: how dare you complain about something as petty as the shortage of oxygen at hospital ICUs when fellow-Nepalis are sitting out in the hot sun day and night manning the barricades in Birganj? What’s that? Of course, the sun doesn’t shine at night, you oxymoron. Isn’t it just so predictable for the permanent elite of Nepal from the hill Brahmin ruling class to quibble about such small things when the marginalised are camped at the border to uphold the principle of might is right in international relations?

For those of us old enough to have survived the 1988-89 Indian Blockade and lived to tell the tale, let me reveal to you youngsters that what we are experiencing now is a picnic. In fact, as an authority on the subject, I would go so far as to say that this is a half-assed blockade. Even the Indians are so embarrassed that they are loath to call it a blockade lest they have to enforce a real one in unforeseeable future. This alleged, ostensible, purported blockade therefore lacks several of the essential criteria necessary for a Very Big Country to squeeze the gonads of a smaller neighbour to achieve the desired outcome.

The architects of this particular whatchamacallit in Dilli should be reminded that it’s not doing the trick. The Neps are thumbing their noses at you and going about their daily lives as if everything is hunkydory for the hillbillies in the boondocks. They are just not taking India seriously enough, and to show them who is boss it is now time to make this a really air tight blockade that lives up to

its name.

In order to do so, we are furnishing 10 unsolicited suggestions to the Indian authoritarians. Only if these are implemented will the Nepal government be forced to give India whatever it is that India wants but doesn’t even know it, without further national embarrassment to both sides:

1. The problem has always been the open border, how can you enforce a blockade when people can just walk over and fill their jerry cans with petrol? Seal the border now! Build a 1,500 mile 20 ft high wall, plant landmines on no man’s land, and beef up (as it were) India’s security.
2. Expedite construction of unnecessarily elevated Indian highway embankments side so that the entire border strip is permanently flooded on the Nepal side. Aside from the wall, this will also serve as a crocodile-infested moat as further deterrence to those trying to break the embargo and smuggle essential supplies like pomegranates into Nepal.
3. Stop doling out medical scholarships to the offspring of Nepal’s political leaders. That should teach them a lesson, the ungrateful wretches. Those already in medical schools should be rusticated on national security grounds and be deported back to Nepal.
4. If China doesn’t halt the supply of petrol to Nepal through the back door, India should also blockade China.

5. If that doesn’t work, close down all Chinese restaurants in the National Capital Region and once and for all banish the dish called ‘chowmein’ from the Union Territory.
6. Drill oil wells in northern Bihar and suck up underground crude deposits so there will be nothing left on the Nepal side.
7. This week Nepal was ranked #2 in the World Bank Index for Ease of Doing Business in South Asia, while India was at #4. India shouldn’t lift the blockade until it can overtake Nepal.
8. What kind of blockade is this when Indian air space is being used for flights to and from Kathmandu? Scramble the IAF MiGs.
9. Stop diesel supplies to all embassies in Kathmandu that dare to issue statements about a ‘humanitarian crisis’ in Nepal caused by the blockade.
10. Reinstate capital punishment for all crossborder petrol smugglers.

These are all highly classified tips and I am revealing them to readers in the strictest confidence on condition that you do not tell anyone else. If you do, you will immediately be sent to Tihar this Tihar.



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