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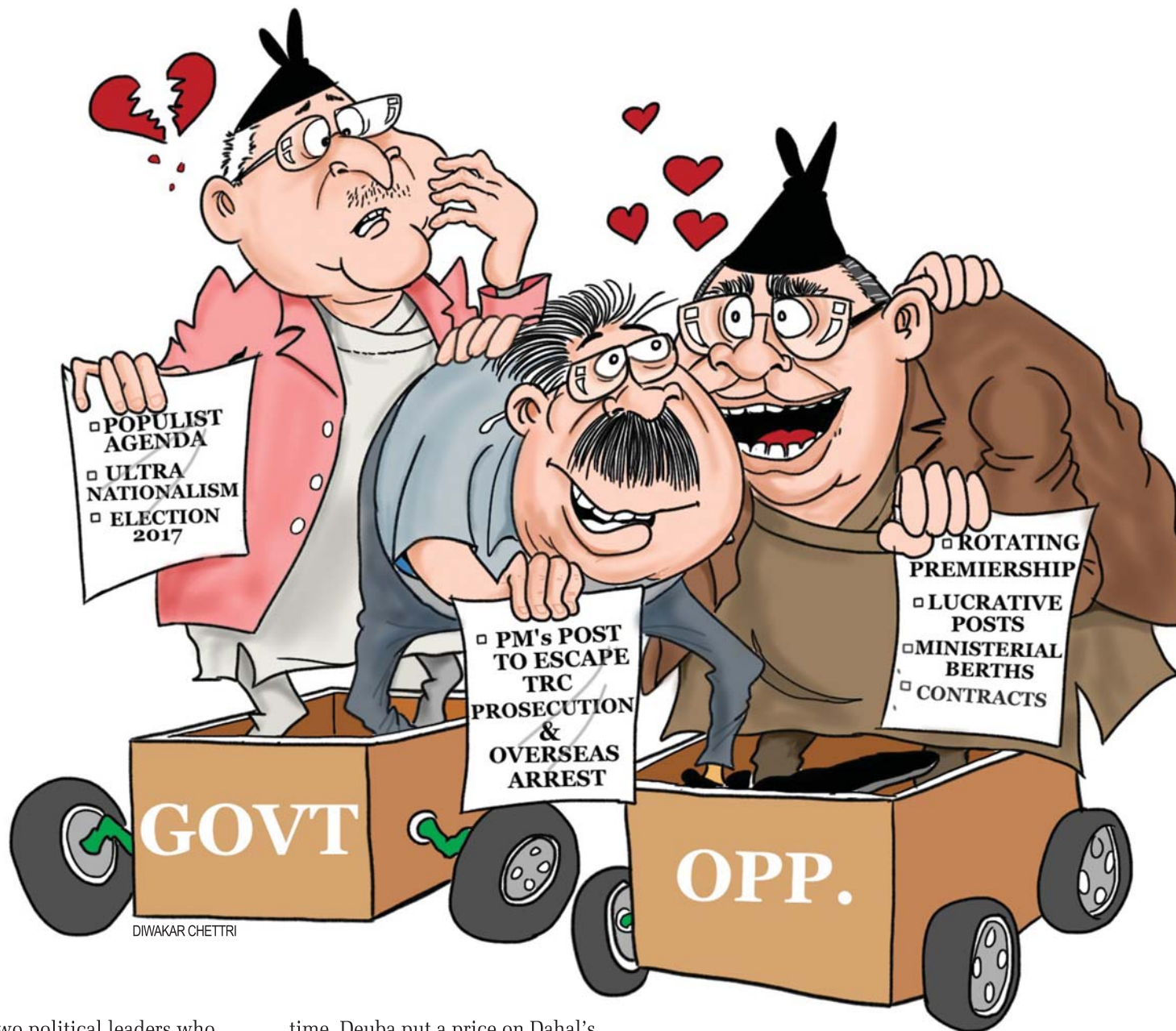
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Stuck with these three



Two political leaders who were once ready to kill each other joined hands this week to form a new government.

Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal suddenly switched sides, abandoning Prime Minister KP Oli for Sher Bahadur Deuba of the Nepali Congress. They agreed to take turns to be prime minister for the next 18 months.

The new-found friendship between these former foes could prove costly. The first casualty will be the Constitution that all three leaders pushed through last year.

Deuba was prime minister when the Maoists went to war in February 1996. In 2002, when he was prime minister for the second

time, Deuba put a price on Dahal's head. Dahal in turn ordered his guerrillas to kill Deuba, and he narrowly escaped a Maoist attack in Kailali.

Politics makes for strange bedfellows, but who would have predicted that Dahal and Deuba would one day be best buddies?

Oli foiled an earlier attempt to unseat him in May by charming Dahal out of an alliance with Deuba. This time the Maoist-NC ties seem stronger, and the deal allows Dahal to be prime minister first, to be replaced by Deuba after local elections in December and until provincial and parliamentary polls.

The Maoists registered a no-confidence motion against the

government on Wednesday, but Oli has refused to step down, preparing instead to face a vote in Parliament this weekend. But the arithmetic is against him. Madhesi and other fringe parties are backing the NC-Maoists, so Dahal is on course to be the next prime minister.

Seven years after a humiliating resignation following his failure to oust the Army chief, Dahal may be Nepal's 24th prime minister in 26 years. But he will be looking over his shoulder warily at Deuba and Oli.

Read full story page 5



EAST MEETS WEST

BY AYESHA SHAKYA

PAGE 7

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AUTUMN OF THE PATRIARCHY

Social justice, development and peace require Nepali women to be on equal terms with Nepali men in all fields.

When considering the hierarchy of causes for Nepal’s ingrained instability and persistent failure of governance, there is a persuasive argument that it is the result of systematically-entrenched and culturally-sanctioned patriarchy. Mapping district-wise figures for malnutrition, poverty and infant mortality rates against data on female literacy offers a direct correlation between gender and societal wellbeing.

Nepal’s worst-performing and poorest districts are in the east-central Tarai and mid-western mountains, where the rate of female enrolment in school is lowest, the caste system is most deep-rooted, and social justice remains just a hope.



woman Speaker of Parliament and Chief Justice (*pictured, left*).

However, despite now having a smattering of women in high places and a numerical increase in their representation in the political sphere, we have yet to see a commensurate increase in their participation in governance. A recent BBC Media Action survey of gender and governance showed that while 72 per cent of men in a nationwide sample actively participated in politics, only 48 per cent of women have the opportunity to do so. The researchers listed some reasons: cultural, social and religious barriers, poor education, and entrenched exclusion of women. It is not just women who are ostracised, even the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare had its allocation slashed from 0.29 per cent of the budget last year to 0.22 per cent — a telling indication of the lack of priority given by the overwhelmingly male powers that be.

The national average rates for fertility, and infant and maternal mortality have shown dramatic reductions over the past 15 years, and this is inversely proportional to the increase in female literacy in that period. Although the dropout rate for girls is still worrisome, it is clear that educated girls marry later and have fewer children, leading to overall enhancement of the quality of life of their families.

For every rupee Nepal spends on development, the best return on investment is if it goes to increasing the enrolment of girl children and upgrading the quality of instruction in schools. We know what works, we just have to go ahead and do it without delay.

Most conservative families inculcate patriarchal values in children, so it is up to the schools to counter this with a gender-sensitive curriculum where it is not just the girl students who learn about their rights, but the boys are also instilled with a sense of responsibility to engender social change.

more responsive to gender issues, the entertainment media perpetuates the objectification and stereotyping of women. Female literacy has empowered young women, but men remain steeped in a closed culture of male dominance.

Nepal’s new constitution, despite some glaring lapses on citizenship and inclusion, is far more progressive than previous ones when it comes to reservation and quotas for women at all levels of political decision-making. This is largely the result of active lobbying by the women’s caucus in the Constituent Assembly, which allowed women across party lines to join hands to push the provisions through. The caucus has a history of progressive lawmaking — during the constitutional monarchy period before 2006, women parliamentarians had successfully amended the royal succession rules to allow a daughter to become queen.

This week, Parliament ratified the appointment of Nepal’s first-ever woman Chief Justice, which is all the more notable because she was not a token female candidate, but one known for wise, courageous and impartial judgements during her career. Nepal has a female President, and a

and entrenched exclusion of women. It is not just women who are ostracised, even the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare had its allocation slashed from 0.29 per cent of the budget last year to 0.22 per cent — a telling indication of the lack of priority given by the overwhelmingly male powers that be.

A massive out-migration of men for work abroad has depopulated Nepal of young males. By default, most local decision-making mechanisms are now in the hands of women, hence they need to be included in the political structure whenever village and district elections take place.

Now that Bandana Rana has become the first Nepali to be elected a member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in New York, our predominantly male rulers may want to remind themselves that it is not sufficient to merely guarantee equal treatment in the law. Women must be given an equal start and empowered for maximum participation.

Social justice, development and peace require Nepali women to be on equal terms with Nepali men in all fields.

Times

THIS WEEK

UPASANA KHADKA

Most reached on Facebook

Night and Day by Upasana Khadka (15,761 people reached)

Most shared on Facebook

Night and Day by Upasana Khadka

Most visited online page

Night and Day by Upasana Khadka (1,870 views)

Most popular on Twitter

Night and Day by Upasana Khadka (53 retweets, 91 likes)

Most commented

Identifying with Identity by Mukesh Jha

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

EDITORIAL

A new man or woman has to be Nepal's new PM, and he or she should be neither Dahal nor Deuba ('Electing to govern', Editorial, #816). We must reject those who have already squandered their chance to turn things around in Nepal.

Hem Lama

IDENTITY POLITICS

Identity politics has never benefited anyone ('Identifying with identity', Mukesh Jha, #816). The issue that Nepal needs to deal with urgently is not about ethnic identity, but the rights and interests of marginalised communities. It is about how to safeguard their rights and interests in the best possible way. We cannot mingle ethnic identity with the rights of the marginalised.

Ketan

INSULT TO EX-PRESIDENT

Ex-President Ram Baran Yadav is now paying the price for heeding the voice of his conscience ('Insulting an ex-President', Rameshwar Bohara, #816). I do not think he committed a sin by advising political parties to put the promulgation of the new Constitution on hold for a few weeks. Had the parties listened to him, Madhesi parties would probably have supported the Charter. It is nothing but arrogance on the part of the parties.

Rakesh Jha

for anything? Can I demand a government job without the stamp of a university?

Utsuk Shrestha

■ Nepal is a racist state, and preys on its weaker citizens like women, Dalits, Janajatis and Madhesi. So we are stuck in a rut; we live in poverty and fear. The current political leadership is incapable of addressing this issue. The new generation will have to fight racism, which is entrenched in Nepal's political system.

Narayan Thapa

■ Do you really find structural discrimination in the system? Do you think education and merit do not count

Claire Cozens @clairecoz

Nice @kundadixit piece on a beautiful Nepali tradition. The quake destroyed its temple, but the rain god survived

Nepali Times @nepalitimes

Patan's ancient chariot festival binds citizens with their rulers, and the cosmos. http://bit.ly/29TmvkZ

Manorama @Manoramaaa

Such a rare and precious moment! A moment of pride for all girls and women in Nepal

Nepali Times @nepalitimes

President Bidya Bhandari administers oath of office and secrecy to newly appointed Chief Justice Sushila Karki.

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #817

Q. Do you agree with Dr Govinda KC's demand to impeach the CIAA chief Lokman Singh Karki?

Total votes: 357

■ Yes 79%

■ No 12%

■ Maybe/Don't know 9%

Weekly Internet Poll #818

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Q. Will the new government be able to implement the Constitution?

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Truth be told

Govinda KC may be stubborn, but he is a hermit who has done little else in life besides good things to help people in pain

There are only a number of moments in the course of one's life when decisive steps taken by those around us compel us to rethink and alter the way we interact with our society, surroundings and inner self. This is one of those moments.



ONE TO MANY
Bidushi Dhungel

If we cannot come together to condemn the trivialising of our collective health by a mafia that sees nothing but profit and power, and in support of the only individual willing to lay his life on the line for ours, then we will be doomed by our own small and selfish doing. On his eighth hunger strike, Govinda KC is not under the influence of the health industry, political power centres or individuals. This is a physician who is a hermit, a Gandhi-type who is stubborn indeed, but has done little else in his life other than good things to help people in pain. Those who wish to question his motives ought to know that if power, politics and publicity stunts were at the core of his efforts, he would have been



GOPEN RAI

made minister at least a couple of times by now. On the contrary, he refuses to join any political movement. Now is the time to question one's own moral integrity, not that of a lone crusader who wishes simply for reforms in a medical sector that has been shred apart by greed and corruption. More than any other sector of national life, healthcare is one that affects us all, and can mean the difference between life and death. Of all the tirades hurled against Govinda KC, most common is the one questioning his allegiance to liberal economics, growth and the

fundamentals of capitalism. It is as though a free market justifies systematically and consistently putting profits before people, and thinking solely of short-term gain. KC's essential demand is for a regulated private sector when it comes to medical education, and state-run social welfare that remains free from harmful political interference, with robust and just policies to ensure the best education and services for Nepalis. Every major liberal economy in the world has stringent oversight mechanisms to ensure that the health of citizens is not compromised. What good is producing 5,000 doctors a year

if we cannot give them jobs, and more importantly, if we cannot trust them with our lives? The criticism is less about free markets, and more about the right for the powerful and rich to loot the state coffers through public institutions, and the people through private ones. We all know the tendency of 'power-sharing' in Nepal supersedes the realm of Parliament and Cabinet, and festers in health, education, media, legislature, bureaucracy, and even the judiciary. Loyalties, allegiances and the depth of pockets override fundamentals in competence such as training, ability and honesty. Govinda KC points this out in the medical sector, for example, with children of rich parents buying their way into already-substandard medical schools that are propped up by a corrupt nexus of politicians, bureaucrats and business elite who profiteer from them. When a barely-passing student studies medicine at a barely-equipped medical college, what kind of doctors can we expect? Surely, that is not the kind of health system Nepal needs to foster — one where anyone who can afford it is on the next flight out as soon as a health emergency crops up. But what is happening to

the health sector afflicts every other segment of national life: mediocre or less-than-satisfactory individuals and organisations taking up crucial positions that determine our collective progress, and reproducing a culture of political protection and systemic corruption to sustain the system. One of the major players in sustaining the nexus between the political, bureaucratic and business elite is the head of the CIAA, and that is why KC has added the impeachment of Lokman Singh Karki to his list of demands. This did not come out of the blue, as Karki is a powerful figure not just within the medical industry but well beyond. This is the real litmus test for our elected officials, to see whether their loyalties lie with personal gain, profits and a dangerous mafia, or whether they lie with the people who voted them into power in the first place. If, on this occasion, the political parties and their leaders fail to deliver a solution, save KC's life, and act in the interest of the people, whether PM Oli is still in power or whether the Deuba-Dahal rotation has begun, they will have a sizeable number of very angry citizens to answer to. We must not let them off easy this time. 🇳🇵

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Best for six years
Turkish Airlines, Turkey's national flag carrier airline, has bagged Skytrak's 'Best Airline in Europe' accolade for the sixth consecutive year. The airline, which flies to more countries than any other, also picked up the 'Best Airlines in Southern Europe,' 'Best Business Class Dining Lounge' and 'Best Business Class On-Board Catering' awards this year. Turkish Airlines currently flies to 290 destinations in 116 nations globally.

Support to rebuild
Bank of Kathmandu (BoK) has provided funding of Rs 500,000 to 'Dhurmus Suntali Foundation', owned by comedian couple Sitaram Kattel and Kunjana Ghirmire. The couple has been engaged in

High profit
Qatar Airways Group made a 8.6 per cent operating profit margin for the fiscal year 2016, nearly three times more than last year. The company, which is in its 19th year of operations, reported a net profit of 1.6 billion QAR, resulting in a net profit margin of 4.5 per cent.

Bajaj V15 in town
Hansraj Hulaschand and Co. Pvt. Ltd. has unveiled the Bajaj V15 motorbikes, retailing at Rs 204,900. The bike is available in pearl white and ebony black, and boasts features such as a high-tech DTS-I 150 CC engine, wide tubeless tyres, single and double seats, hydraulic rear suspension and a 13-litre fuel tank capacity.

various social projects in earthquake-ravaged districts, and currently supports construction of 65 houses at Giranchaur VDC in Sindhupalchok district.

prabhu BANK

Even less confidence

OM ASTHA RAI

Hours after CPN (Maoist-Centre) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Nepali Congress (NC) President Sher Bahadur Deuba registered a no-confidence motion against Prime Minister KP Oli’s government in Parliament on Wednesday, NC legislator Amresh Kumar Singh warned in an interview that federalism will not work in Nepal.

Coming from a fervent proponent of ethnicity-based federalism in the new Constitution, his comments on BBC Nepali Service on Wednesday night set off a firestorm. Singh is an obscure NC MP who wields mysterious clout in Nepal’s politics, and is given to outlandish rhetoric.

When the NC agreed with the UML, the Maoists and the MJF (D) to fast-track the new Constitution after last year’s earthquake without the Madhesi parties on board, Singh nearly revolted. He allied with Madhesi leaders to foil the Constitution-drafting process led by his own party, and was even in the group that

went down to Kailali to incite the Tharus to rise up in August 2015. Later, eight policemen and a child were lynched in protests. Demonstrations swept across the Tarai and lasted six months, leading to a border blockade supported by India. Nearly 50 more persons were killed in police action against the protests.

Although he is just one of the 206 NC legislators, and not even a Central Committee member of the party, Singh’s remarks often create ripples across the political spectrum because he often boasts of his closeness to New Delhi. When his party fought against Gyanendra Shah’s authoritarian regime, he was nowhere to be seen on the streets. Nevertheless, he rose dramatically as a key player in the post-April Uprising negotiations between the NC-UML coalition and the Maoists.

It may not be wholly true that New Delhi uses Singh to extract information straight out of political negotiations in Kathmandu, but he does not try to hide his role as a ‘fixer’. In fact, he does not mind that the public perceives him as speaking the Indian line during times of turmoil in Nepal, and he seems to relish his image as the ‘Octopus’ — referring to the smart cephalopod that once predicted the result of the Football

World Cup.

Singh quickly retracted his BBC statement through Facebook, accusing the radio of editing out crucial parts of his answers. He said he was still ‘committed to federalism’ and clarified that ‘the Constitution should be more federal’. But his remarks have been podcast and hardly anyone believes his clarification. The question everyone is asking on social media is: Was New Delhi using Singh to float a trial balloon about scrapping federalism?

Singh was also involved in this week’s back-room deal between Dahal and Deuba to unseat PM Oli. Madhesi parties have vowed to vote against Oli when he faces a no-confidence motion this weekend. They are even ready to join the new government.

But Oli’s ouster has cast a shadow over the implementation of the Constitution. Political analyst and Maoist MP Shyam Shrestha says: “We will now face a new deadlock, and the UML will not help break it.”

Maoist leader Narayan Kaji Shrestha is now against toppling the Oli government. He calls the Dahal-Deuba alliance “unfortunate” because “Nepal was moving in the right direction to reduce its over-dependence on India for trade by reaching out to China”. “People had begun to see our party as a nationalist force,” he said, “how will we redeem that image now?”

Political analyst Puranjan

Acharya is convinced this week’s political games were orchestrated by an “outside force”. “It wanted to break the Maoist-UML coalition, and restrict the UML to the opposition bench.”

Meanwhile, anti-corruption crusader Govinda KC is growing weaker by the day. The political crisis has diluted his demand for

the impeachment of the Chief of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) Lokman Singh Karki because that would not be possible without the NC-UML partnership. 🇳🇵

(With input from Rameshwar Bohara)



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Nobodies who are somebody

What would the compensation be if Canadian nationals, not Nepali guards, had been killed in Kabul?

A Taliban suicide attack in Kabul on 20 June killed 13 Nepali and two Indian citizens working as private security guards at the Canadian Embassy. Since then there has been an outpouring of serious concern about the treatment of migrant workers in conflict zones.



GUEST COLUMN

Sangita Thebe Limbu

The debate must be seen in the context of military and security operations — previously the domain of national armed forces — being privatised. The Kabul carnage also revealed Nepal's dire remittance-dependent economy, and dismal governance.

In the last 10 years, the Department of Foreign Employment in Nepal has issued some 9,000 permits for nationals to work in Afghanistan. However, the actual number is said to be much higher, since recruitment is through informal channels and there is no official mechanism to record the number of returnees.

In 2006, War on Want produced an influential report that analysed the threats associated with the proliferation of Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs). Following the declaration of the US-led 'war on terror' and subsequent military invasions, private security companies operate throughout the world selling security services to governments, international institutions such as the UN, and private firms.



BIKRAM RAI

PMSCs provide direct combat, intelligence, training and security services in conflict zones, post-conflict reconstruction and so on. In Iraq and Afghanistan, with a declining presence of the US and allied troops, security services are increasingly outsourced to PMSCs, whose clients include Royal Dutch Shell, BP and ExxonMobil.

As an industry that profits from war and political conflicts, PMSCs have come under scrutiny and faced allegations of human rights abuses, absence of accountability, involvement in the illegal weapons trade, and catalysing or

exacerbating political conflicts. Even so, contractors are gradually becoming the accepted form of security.

After the killing of the Nepali security guards, there has been some debate about outsourcing security and whether the blame should be placed on the Canadian government, the British PMSC Sabre International that employed the guards, or the Nepal government for failing to protect its citizens. Or all three.

If we argue that PMSCs should bear the responsibility as they are the direct employers and are also in charge of upholding safety protocols, the question

that arises is what mechanism is in place to hold such companies accountable.

An International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers (ICoC) was prepared in 2010 in consultation with PMSCs, governments and civil society. However, ICoC is voluntary and based on self-regulation rather than being legally binding.

Recruiting vulnerable and desperate employees from poor countries puts PMSCs in a powerful and profitable bargaining position. For instance, there was a case in which Sabre International was receiving \$1700

for every Ugandan security guard recruited for the US government, but the security guard's actual pay was no more than \$700.

Private security guards from developing countries no doubt receive higher salaries than what they would earn at home, but the risks involved are high. By contracting out security at its embassy, the Canadian government protected itself from any financial liability towards the murdered guards. It leads us to the question: what would be the compensation be if those killed had been Canadian nationals, instead of guards from Nepal?

Since the public outcry over the loss of national soldiers and the subsequent political cost governments could face are significant, guards from poor countries become easy alternatives, risk minimisers and politically dispensable bodies safeguarding the interests of the rich and powerful.

The Nepal government has now imposed a ban on Nepali workers going to Afghanistan. It is doubtful if a blanket ban would work, considering that many migrants in Afghanistan use informal channels to get there and remain largely undocumented. Sabre International, for its part, has committed \$30,000 in compensation to each family of the victims of the Kabul attack.

The Canadian government condemned the killings and recently held a memorial service for the deceased guards, in the Canadian Embassy in Kabul in the presence of the Indian ambassador. No sign of any representative from Nepal, however. The Canadian government has been tight-lipped about compensation for the victims' families. This is hypocritical because Canada has exhaustive travel advisories when it comes to the protection of its own public service staff working in places like Afghanistan, who enjoy travel accident insurance, medical evacuation, dependent care and so on worth \$500,000.

The lesson from the Kabul tragedy could be the urgent need for regulation of the PMSC industry through a framework of legal obligations, with inter-governmental negotiations between countries that are either clients or countries supplying security personnel. The UN Human Rights Council has been developing a binding convention for the regulation of PMSCs, which is a positive step. But PMSCs are economically and politically powerful, and a strong backlash should be expected against any regulation.

As for Nepal, the incident is one of the many wake-up calls that relying on remittance without a long-term economic vision is not sustainable. ■

Sangita Thebe Limbu is studying Gender, Development and Globalisation at the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE).



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[illegible]

The Holy Hike

This monsoon, combine a trek with a pilgrimage in the mystical dales of Khaptad National Park

BINITA DAHAL
in KHAPTAD

If you're looking to get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and want a trek that detoxifies you both physically and spiritually, there is perhaps no destination more worthy than a holy hike to the Khaptad in the far-western mountains of Nepal.

In the past, Khaptad was just too remote: only the privileged — those with access to helicopters — and the really devout made it there. Now, with new roads, Khaptad National Park is surprisingly accessible and a fabulous way to see a part of Nepal that is literally off the beaten track.

About 100 trekkers visited Khaptad last year. The facilities are basic, but that is the whole point: to get away from it all, to a place with no mobile phones, no electricity, no concrete and no

sound of the internal combustion engine.

No wonder Khaptad Baba, one of the most revered holy men in Nepal, lived here for 50 years of his life, meditating in an ashram in the forest. It is said he first settled on the banks of Rara Taal, but found the view there too distracting and came to Khaptad, drawn by its biodiversity and treasure of herbs.

Khaptad Baba was a healer and used medicinal plants to treat villagers from the surrounding districts of Doti, Bajhang, Achham and Bajura, who brought yoghurt and food in exchange. King Birendra flew here frequently to seek Khaptad Baba's blessings. Today the ashram itself is a shrine maintained by the Army, and serves almost as a museum of



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books and daily utensils used by Baba.

Khaptad soars above the surrounding districts, its thickly forested flanks bathed in clouds this time of year. The top is an undulating plateau of pine forests and meadows with crystal clear streams and ponds. During this season, the place is crowded with pilgrims, as well as livestock that are brought here to graze.

The easier trail is from Bajhang

in the north, but one can also climb from Doti to the south. The rains have come after a long winter drought, and the submerged paddy terraces shine like mirrors. But soon, the trail climbs into the tree line. The forest is so thick that people have gotten lost here, so it is best to keep to the main trail.

There is none of the sophistication of Nepal's more popular trekking routes; only basic tea and buckwheat pancakes

with — if you are lucky — chutney made from the cannabis plant that grows wild here.

As the monsoon rains have started, the trails were slippery and leeches dropped from the canopy. Thousands of pilgrims from surrounding districts hike up to the plateau for the Ganga Dashara Mela to offer prayers at the Sahashra Linga, Nag Dhunga and Kedar Dhunga. They take a ritual dip in the Khaptad Daha and Triveni Dham.

Besides cleansing them of sins, the festival also traditionally serves as a gigantic match-making opportunity for young men and women. There is a lot of singing

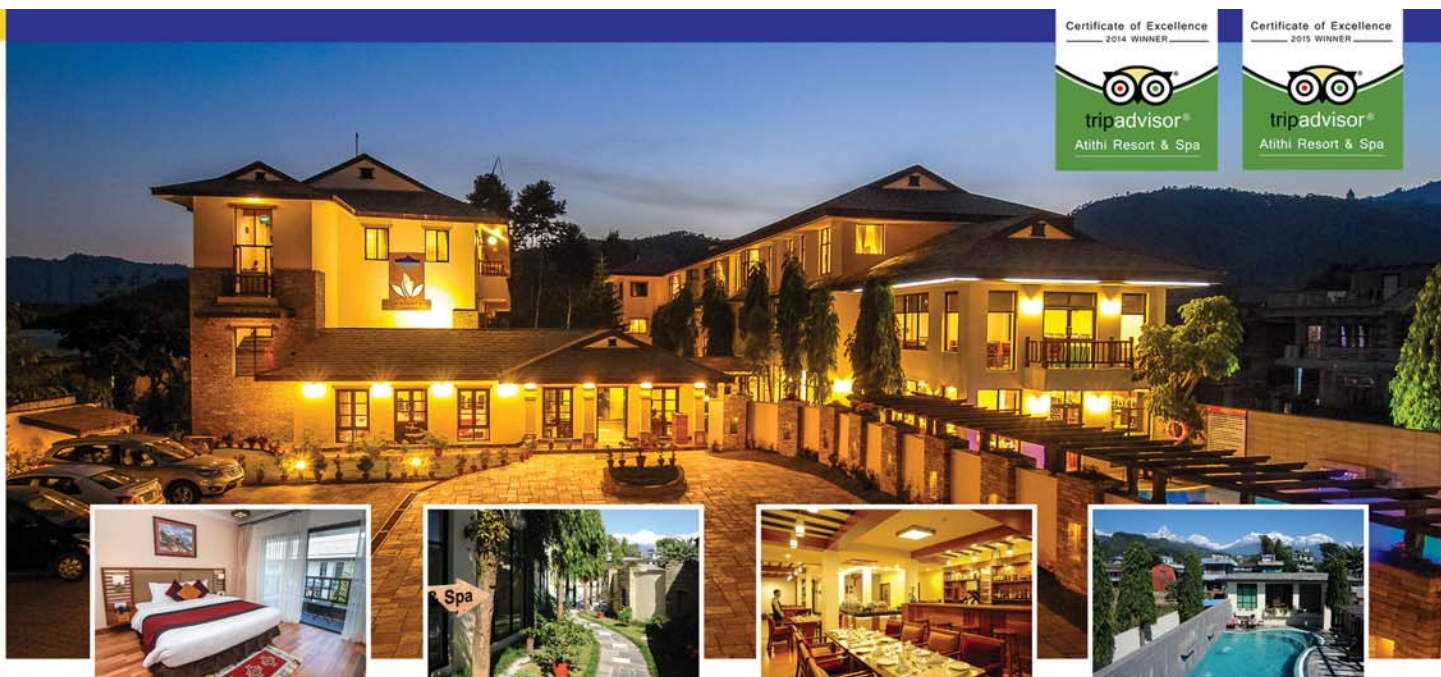
and *deuda* dancing, and love blossoms in the fields of flowers (known as *patan*) that characterise Khaptad in the rainy season.

Rich biodiversity — attributable to altitude variation — is one of the reasons Khaptad is a national park. It has 224 species of medicinal herbs, 266 bird species, and more than 20 species of mammals. From 3,200 m the terrain dips down to 300 m on the banks of the West Seti River down in Dipayal. 🇳🇵

Getting there

Fly or take the night bus from Kathmandu to Dhangadi, then the bus to Lamtola of Bajhang which takes 12 hours. Return via Doti.

ALL PICS: BINITA DAHAL



CAFFÈ
Italiano



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EVENTS



Temple run,
Make your run exciting with Kathmandu Running Club and circle ancient temples in areas like Bhatbhateni, Naxal Bhagwati, Kamal Pokhari, Gyaneswor, Handigoan and Tangal.
16 July, 7 to 8 am, Bhatbhateni temple

Otaku next,
Dress up as your favourite anime characters in the third edition of the Otaku Next Nepal Comic and Cosplay Convention.
30 July, 9.30 am to 5.30 pm, Alliance Française, Teku, www.otakunext.com, Tickets: Rs 300 (entrance free for cosplayers), Rs 350 (on the day of the event)

Karnali dialogue,
Mark your calendar for Prithvi Raj Ligal's talk on 'Karnali Area Development: A Strategic Framework' as part of the monthly seminar series, Karnali Dialogue.
19 July, 3 pm onwards, Martin Chautari, Thapathali, (01) 4102243, 9849206303/9851001569

Kavre poetry slam,
Enrol yourself in the Kavre Regional Slam, a poetry slam for youth aged 14 to 25, as part of the QC Awards 2016: National Poetry Slam.
30 July, 11 am to 2 pm, Banepa Village Resort, Janagal, (01) 5536974, Registration deadline: 18 July, Register at https://goo.gl/LCJIQB, Fee: Rs 100



KJC for kids,
Choir group, movie time, wall climbing, music, games, dance and more for kids at the KJC Summer Camp for Kids.
25 July to 12 August, 10 am to 2 pm, Monday through Friday, Ages: 5 to 11 years, Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5013554

Discussing restaurants,
A moderated panel discussion with market experts for start-up and seasoned restaurateurs to discuss tips and tricks for sustaining their business.
15 July, 2.45 to 4.30 pm, Moods Restaurant and Banquet, Thapathali, (01) 4215740

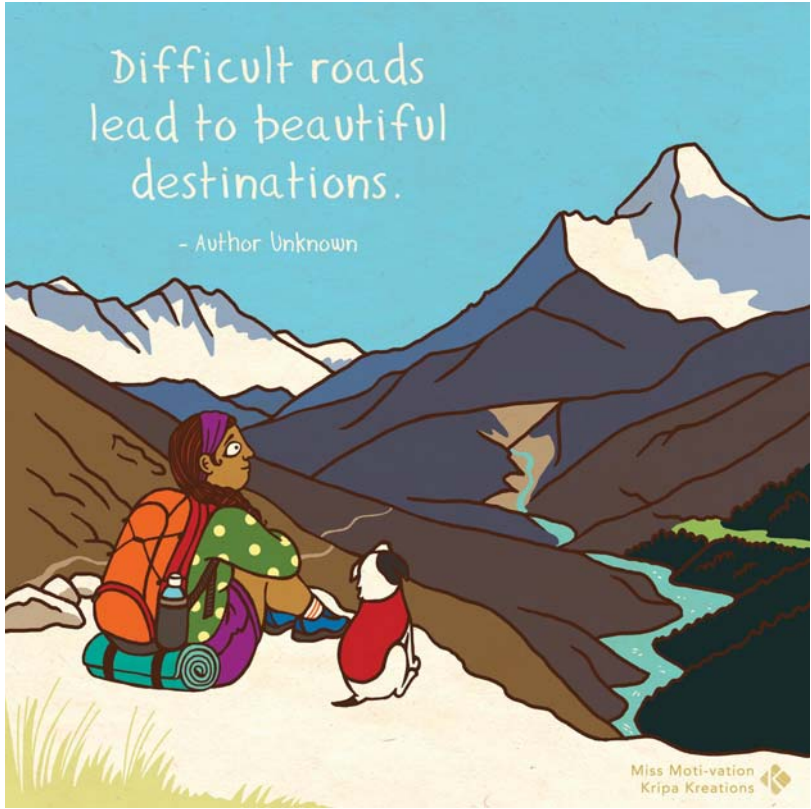


Kathmandu Kora,
Join hundreds of cycling enthusiasts and ride 50, 75, or 100 km to raise funds for a birthing centre in Nepal.
16 July, 7.30 am onwards, Mangalbazar, (01) 4412508, www.kathmandukora.net

Design a tee,
Bring out the creative in you and design a t-shirt with the theme 'men and women should grow hand-in-hand' during HACKDESIGN 2016.
23 July, 11 am to 4 pm, Leapfrog Academy, Dillibazar, (01) 6922971, Deadline: 20 July

Tedx Thamel,
Get a chance to hear from eminent personalities like Bandana Rana, Bhumika Shrestha, Ishaan and Joseph Silvanus at the independently organised Ted event, TedxThamel.
23 July, 11 am to 1 pm, Hotel Yak & Yeti, Darbar Marg, Tickets: Rs 500 (early bird), Rs 750 (regular)

MISS MOTI-VATION **KRIPA JOSHI**



DINING



Mezze by Roadhouse,
Spot a superstar at one of Kathmandu's most popular restaurants.
Mercantile Plaza, Darbar Marg, (01) 4223087

Shambala Garden Café,
Unwind at Hotel Shangri-La and enjoy a live performance by Ciney Gurung every Friday.
7 pm onwards, Hotel Shangri-La, Lajimpat, (01) 4412999 Ext 7520/7508, Rs 2000 per person



Hankook Sarang,
Serves incredible Korean delicacies, including superlative steamed rice to anchor meals fit for a king. *Thamel, (01) 4256615, info@hankooksarang.com*

Salt & Pepper Restro Lounge,
Espressos, mochas, lattes, frappuccinos, cocktails, liquors, beers and flavored shishas, with an outdoor lake-view terrace.
Lakeside, Pokhara, (061) 463484, 9846210568



Hyderabad at Sunrise,
Experience the true flavours of Hyderabad at Hotel Yak & Yeti with a spread of kebabs and biryani.
15 to 22 July, buffet lunch 12 to 3 pm, buffet dinner: 6.30 to 10 pm, Sunrise Restaurant, Hotel Yak & Yeti, Price: Rs 2,500 plus taxes per person (includes a glass of Pepsi)

MUSIC



Music mania,
Hear the Chahana timi mero pop sensation Naren Limbu live, as part of the Live Musical Era 2016 hosted by Fem Nepal.
30 July, 7 pm to 4 am, The Victory Lounge, Darbar Marg, 9801031277/9802961570, Tickets: Rs 1,000

Reminiscing 50s,
Sway to the tunes of the 50s with Kathmandu Cats and The Dirty Boogie Brass Band.
15 July, 8 pm onwards, Wicked Spoon, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5522968

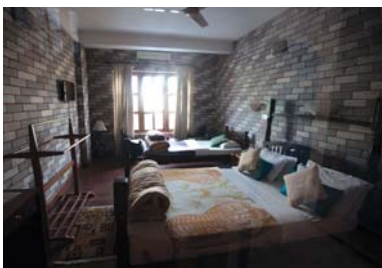
Majipa live,
Enjoy Friday night with Nepali hard rock band Majipa as they belt out some of their popular singles like *Mukti* and *Birsideu*.
15 July, 6.30 to 10 pm, Rato Mato Organics BBQ and Bistro, Lajimpat, (01) 4428576



Acoustic evening,
Spend a musical evening listening to live acoustic tunes, accompanied by food and fashion.
15 July, 6 to 9 pm, Fashion Delicacy, Lazimpat, 9841982676

Reggae sundown,
Tap to the beat of reggae music with the Nepali bands Cultivation and The Himalion as they belt out tunes of Cultivation's debut album *Plains, Hills and Mountains*.
24 July, 10.45 am onwards, Club 25 Hours, Gahana Pokhari Marg

GETAWAY



Glacier Hotel,
Good value and friendly service for travellers on the lap of Lake Phewa.
Gaurighat, Lakeside, Pokhara, (061) 463722, www.glacierenepal.com

Hotel Landmark,
Made entirely from traditional Nepali brick and woodcraft, this hotel is rich not only in heritage, but also offers great services and boasts an award-winning restaurant, The Hungry Eye.
(061) 462908/463096/464897, www.landmarkpokhara.com



Atithi Resort & Spa,
A quiet sanctuary that fuses Nepali tradition with modern amenities, complete with a fancy pool and a cosy restaurant.
Lakeside, Pokhara, (06) 1466760, info@atithiresort.com



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



Meghauli Serai,
Enjoy the monsoon offer at Taj Safari's Meghauli Serai and relax with fine dining and wildlife safaris in Chitwan.
Chitwan National Park, 9801301969/9851001548

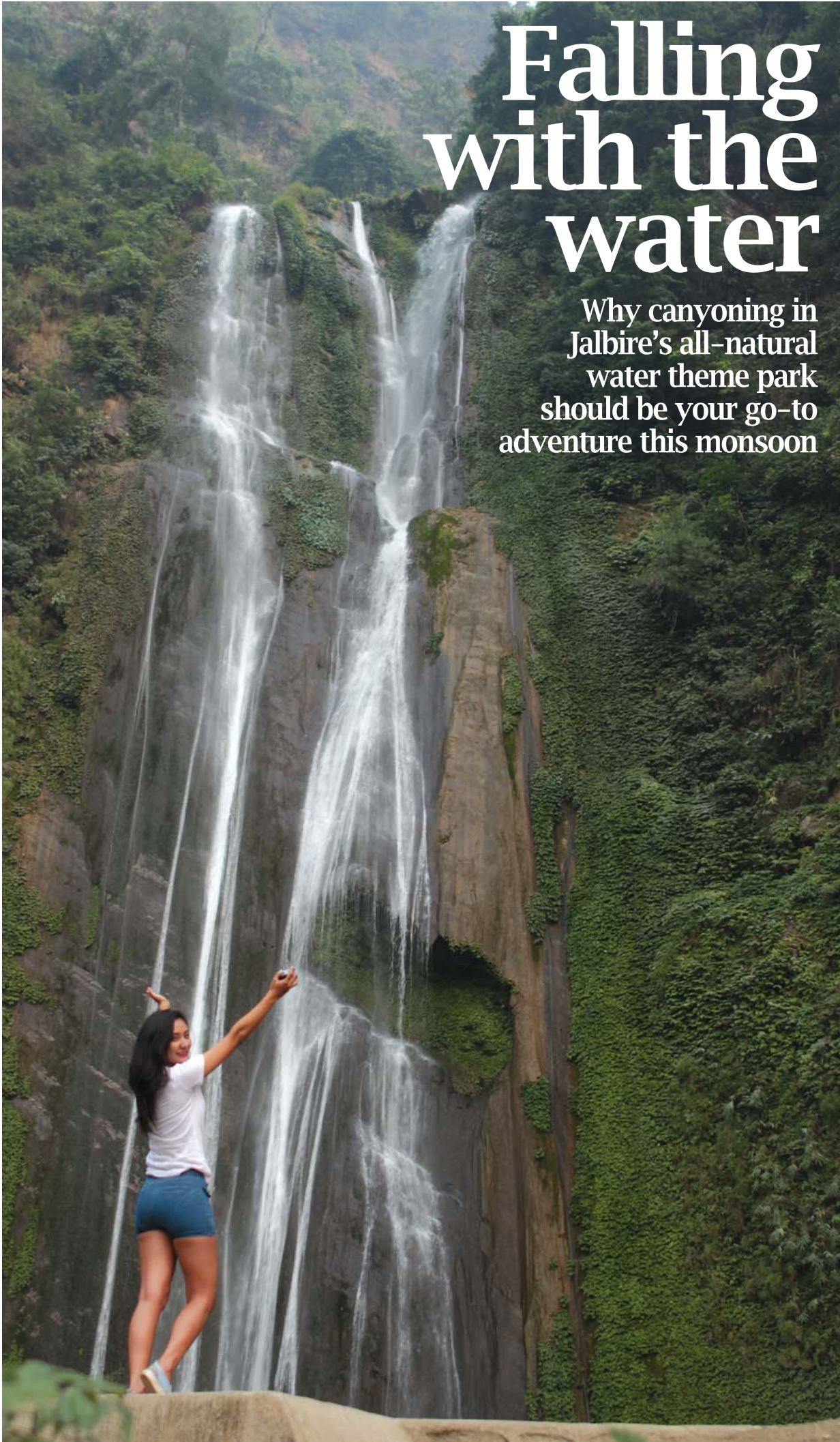
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Falling with the water

Why canyoning in Jalbire's all-natural water theme park should be your go-to adventure this monsoon

“Jalbire is this gigantic, gorgeous waterfall not far from Mugling. I can't think of a better place for you to shoot your canyoning adventure in,” said my camping guide Suman Dai. It was a starry night, wrapped up in a pine-scented breeze with our tents camped next to a dark, silent lake. I hope to share that story with you in days to come, here in 'Sammy Adventures', a new fortnightly series in *Nepali Times*.

Suman Dai said those words with such conviction that I had to look up the place. Next thing I knew, I was packed up and on the morning bus to Chitwan.

From the Prithvi Highway where we were dropped off, it is a bit of a hike to where the canyoning begins. But finally seeing the tall beauty at the end of the trail made the uphill effort worthwhile. Locals have been thronging to Jalbire's Lamo



SAMRIDDDHI RAI

Jharana for years now, but its popularity among non-locals is a recent trend.

“The monsoon is the best time to come here for a dip,” says Maila Gurung, a trained river guide and also our canyoning expert for the day. The rains create a huge natural swimming pool at the foot of the waterfall.

While relishing your moment at the waterfall, taking pictures and swimming in the pond are quite fun, it is the adventurers who know how to truly enjoy the gifts of this little-known paradise. Apart from the Lamo Jharana, the entire stretch of Jalbire has more than a dozen waterfalls, cliff-jumping spots and natural slides — just the perfect place for canyoning.

Generally, a canyoning experience means abseiling down a waterfall, and you would be pretty much done. But not in Jalbire. Here, you cliff-div, slide, and canyon through several

waterfalls. By the end of my three hours in this *au naturel* water park I was exhausted, and yet somehow still could not get enough of it.

I have undertaken several adventures throughout the country from sky-diving to rafting, but Jalbire canyoning is in a league of its own. And if anyone asks me for the one adventure they should look for in Nepal, I would definitely recommend this. 🇳🇵

Getting there

Kathmandu to Jalbire: 120 km
Approximate drive time: 3 hr 30 min

Samriddhi Rai is a singer/songwriter. Her 'Sammy Adventures' travel vlog on Jalbire canyoning is up on her channel, [youtube.com/samriddhiraimusic](https://www.youtube.com/samriddhiraimusic)

 **nepalitimes.com**
Watch video



Canyoning 101

Canyoning is simply hiking down fast-flowing mountain streams by abseils and rope works, supported by other outdoor activities like jumping, swimming and technical climbing.



Gearing up for the adventure requires a wet suit, helmet, life vest and shoes made specially for canyoning.



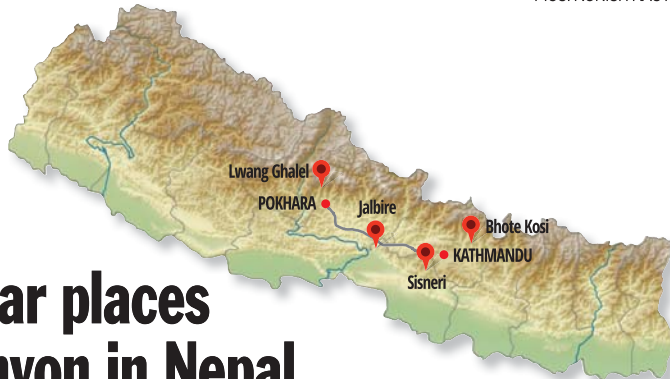
Canyoning should not be done without professional guidance. Pay heed to the safety instructions given out by the guides.



One needs to be fit to indulge in the sport, especially during the monsoon. The increased volume of water requires one to be strong enough to withstand the force of the waterfall.



PICS: RONISH RAUT



Popular places to canyon in Nepal

SISNERI: A newly discovered water world 30 km from Kathmandu.

LWANG GHALEL, POKHARA: Lwang Ghalel is considered one of the most beautiful villages in Pokhara, with a successful tourism story to share. The Kudi Fall is 107 m in height and a popular canyoning spot.

BHOTE KOSI: 113 km from Kathmandu, Bhothe Kosi is the country's unofficial adventure capital. There are many spots for canyoning, the famous ones being

Jambo Khola, Handi Khola, and Kavre Khola. By September, the road damaged by recent floods should be usable.

CANYONING PARTNERS

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THE LEGEND OF TARZAN



Having grown up enthralled by Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*, I've always had more of an affection for Mowgli over the other feral child who grows up to beat his chest, emit



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

his famous yowl (is there really another word for Tarzan's famous cry?), and is purportedly the lord of the jungle.

Over the years, due to several terrible film interpretations of Tarzan, the character has gained a reputation for being embarrassingly camp: a half-naked wild man who speaks broken English, communes with wild beasts, and drags women around by their hair.

Fortunately, the new screen adaptation pays attention to the original source material from Edgar Rice Burroughs's *Tarzan of the Apes* novels, allowing Tarzan (played by the very handsome Alexander Skarsgård) to be the noble, reserved, charismatic

and highly intelligent character that Burroughs wrote him to be, wielding enormous physical power matched by a quick brain that allows him the gifts of a polyglot. This romantic figure is buttressed by his aristocratic heritage: Tarzan is by birth John Clayton III, Viscount Greystoke, an English lord with immense wealth at his fingertips.

Set in the early 1900s, *The Legend of Tarzan* begins with the now-civilised Lord Greystoke being accosted by the British Prime Minister (Jim Broadbent), who tries to persuade him to accept an invitation to the Belgian Congo at the request of King Leopold II in order to help British diplomatic ties with Belgium. When Greystoke politely, succinctly, and articulately declines, we see the polished veneer of British nobility augmented with a flash of the wild, indomitable spirit that makes Tarzan so fascinating.

Ultimately the wild man-turned-gentleman is persuaded to return to the place of his birth by George Washington Williams (Samuel L. Jackson), an American diplomat who suspects the ugly truth —

that the tribal people are being enslaved to build road and bridges.

Tarzan returns to the jungle accompanied by his beloved Jane (the lovely, feisty Margo Robbie) and with Williams in tow, to try and save his former family (both human and animal). The real truth is far more ugly, and unfortunately a pretty fair indictment of how Western colonisers treated their fellow Africans, bringing a much-needed political context into the romantic tale of a man who was brought up by apes.

While the film has not done well at the box office, it is extremely well made: a visually gorgeous creation with scenes of Africa and wild life that are stunning on the big screen. For the continuing sceptics though, I give you this — never once in this engaging film are the words “Me Tarzan, you Jane” uttered, a blessing in itself and one more reason to give this surprisingly decent film some of your time.

nepalitimes.com

■ Trailer

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

MOTION OF COMMOTION: Maoist leaders Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Krishna Bahadur Mahara of the CPN (Maoist-Centre) file a no-confidence motion in Parliament against Prime Minister KP Oli's government on Wednesday.



BIKRAM RAI

LEADING LADY: Nepal's first female Chief Justice Sushila Karki assumes office on Monday.



BIKRAM RAI

NEW DAWN: Baburam Bhattarai reaches the Election Commission on Sunday to register his Naya Shakti Party.



GOPEN RAI

FLEEING FLOODS: Residents of Tatopani move to a safer location after being displaced by a flash flood in Bhote Kosi on Saturday caused by the river being blocked by a landslide in Tibet.



BIKRAM RAI

CELEBRATING PEACE: Folk instrumental ensemble Kutumba performs during an event to mark NGO Search for Common Ground's 10th anniversary on Monday.

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Tulsipur : 082-562575

“I will not spare the corrupt”

Nepal’s first female Chief Justice, Sushila Karki, in an interview with *BBC Nepali Service*, 11 July



BBC Nepali Service: Were you hand-picked by the Maoists as a Supreme Court (SC) justice when you were a senior advocate?
Chief Justice Sushila Karki: I am neither a Maoist nor a Congress. If anything, I am a democrat. They say I was hand-picked by the Maoists, but I have heard that the Congress leaders are cursing themselves for recommending my name because I delivered verdicts that were not favourable to them.

But is it not true that you were recommended by the Nepali Congress (Democratic) to be a member of the Interim Constitution Drafting Committee?
I do not know who recommended my name at that time. Now, all political parties, except the RPP-N, want to take credit for that. I dare any political leader to claim that I begged them to make me a justice.

Do you feel you lacked experience when appointed directly to the SC?
True, I did not have experience working as a judge, but I had the knowledge. It was not so difficult. I had not studied commerce, so I faced problems when hearing cases about tax and revenue matters. But I was good at hearing criminal cases right from my first day at the SC.

Would it not have been easier for you if

you had started working as a judge at the appellate court?
I do not think so. All I needed to work as a SC justice was courage, and I had that. Public prosecutors plead, and their statements are drafted and presented to us. Then, we get the statements from the defence lawyers. We thoroughly examine both, and reach a conclusion. If we are confused, we consult each other.

Who should be afraid of you as the new Chief Justice?
I do not think anyone should be afraid of me. But I will not spare those who are corrupt.

You spoke about CIAA Chief Lokman Singh Karki in the Parliamentary Hearing Committee.
I ran into him for the first time today, and asked him why he is spreading rumours that we are brother and sister. He just grinned, and did not say anything.

But the fact that you met him for the first time today does not prove that you are not a relative of his.
I do not know who he is, and I have not passed a single ruling about any case involving him in his private capacity. A case involving the CIAA should not be his personal case. But if the CIAA is involved in wrongdoing, should I not hear a case against it?

So Karki’s position is in danger?
I do not have personal animosity against anyone. I am just pointing out his mistakes.



What are your plans after retirement?
I came to Kathmandu to serve as a SC justice when I was doing well as a senior advocate. If I were greedy I would not have accepted the offer. Senior lawyers often refuse to join the Supreme Court because they earn a lot more as advocates. They say that what a SC justice SC earns, which is only Rs 40,000, is not sufficient to live on in Kathmandu. But I never thought about it because I am not after money. I do not have any vested interests, and will work impartially during my one-year tenure.

What about Khila Raj Regmi’s appointment as the Chair of the Council of Ministers while still serving as the Chief Justice?
Regmi was a very fair justice. A wise

person, too. But he ended up becoming Prime Minister when he was still Chief Justice. The judiciary is still paying the price for that decision.

In the Parliamentary Hearing Committee, you spoke of how much suffering you had to bear while serving as a SC justice for seven years.
I do not want to blame anyone, but as the only woman justice at the Supreme Court then, other justices would often pass disparaging remarks without realising my presence in the chamber. I would find it difficult to digest their comments. This gender discrimination permeates all strata of the state and society today.

The Judicial Council’s decision to recommend former UML legislator Sapana Pradhan Malla as a SC justice has sparked criticism that it opened the door for politicians to enter the judiciary.
I do not think so. Our Constitution and laws do not bar those involved in politics from becoming SC justices. Even so, we have not recommended those who were active in politics as SC justices. If Sapana Pradhan Malla is a political person, so are Hari Krishna Karki and Prakash Raut (who have been recommended as SC justices alongside Malla). We recommended Malla because of her capability. She is well-educated, an expert in her field, has been part of many court cases that resulted in landmark verdicts in favour of women rights, and is committed to law and justice.

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DISCUSSING HEALTH: Counsellor Bharat Kadayat (*centre*) discusses patients with psychiatrist Sikhar B Swar (*right*) while research manager Pragya Rimal (*left*) tracks the consultation process.

POSSIBLE

Neglect of the neglected

Official neglect has left Nepal's healthcare workforce unprepared to care for mental illness

BIBHAV ACHARYA
and **SONIYA HIRACHAN**

Shanti arrives at a clinic in rural Nepal complaining of aches and pains. The clinician examines and sends her to the lab for some tests, all of which are normal. In the last few years, she has spent a lot of time and money seeing generalists who tell her there is nothing wrong.

The clinician suggests this could be psychological; she should see a psychiatrist. Shanti is offended that the generalist thinks she is "crazy". Besides, the nearest psychiatrist is more than a day's trip away.

In a recently published study, our team at Possible spoke with 29 MBBS physicians, Health Assistants and Certified Medical Assistants from three district hospitals. Generalists described two groups of patients with mental illness.

For the first group, the patients' sense of reality is altered, resulting in severe behavioural problems in patients like Shanti. Generalists quickly recognised the need for a psychiatrist, and noted that well-resourced families take such patients to the nearest psychiatrist while poorer patients visit traditional healers. Patients who do not improve may be isolated and locked away for the rest of their lives.

Patients in the second group, however, continue to see health workers in private or government hospitals. In primary care clinics, almost 20 per cent of the patients have aches, pains, dizziness, and numerous other problems that have no clear source. Generalists usually suspect an underlying mental illness, but do not know what to do next. In desperation, they prescribe vitamins and painkillers, but the patients do not improve. Aches and pains move to a different part of the body, or the patient seeks services at another facility, spending more money on visits and repeated lab tests.

Often, patients hear stigmatising and dismissive comments about their problems from generalists: women are told their anxious response to domestic violence is a sign of weakness, others are told there is "nothing wrong" with them. These words are meant to normalise the situation and somehow comfort the patient, but have the consequence of patients thinking that they are being blamed or that their suffering is being dismissed as a non-issue.

Even though the generalists know that such patients require more time, they report being too busy to sit down with the patients to learn more about what ails them. With more than 70 patients waiting to be seen, it is easier to say a

few words of reassurance and prescribe vitamins.

In Nepal, medical schools and other health professional institutes include minimal to no mental health training. This is incredibly inadequate because mental illnesses are the biggest cause of chronic diseases. Such neglect has left our healthcare workforce woefully unprepared to care for people with depression, anxiety disorders, dementia, psychosis, epilepsy and substance abuse. This 'educational gap' among generalists is particularly concerning in the context of humanitarian crises like the earthquakes in 2015.

In response to these findings, our team has implemented a program to provide high-quality mental health care integrated into the primary care clinic at Bayalpata Hospital in Achham district. The strategy prevents patients from the costly and often stigmatising process of visiting a psychiatrist in the city. We have trained all generalists to recognise mental illness and avoid harmful and ineffective medications. We have recruited counsellors trained by Transcultural Psychosocial Organization (TPO-Nepal). When a generalist suspects mental illness, the counsellors conduct a thorough evaluation and make treatment recommendations. Sikhar B Swar, a Kathmandu-based psychiatrist, reviews cases and travels to Achham for training and supervision.

There are many all around Nepal who are receiving inappropriate or no mental healthcare. To address this, medical institutes must train our healthcare workforce in mental health. Generalists should be comfortable recognising and treating mental illness like any other common illness. In addition, psychiatrists must engage in training and supervising generalists and counsellors.

Given the severe shortage of psychiatrists, particularly in rural Nepal, patients cannot all be directly seen by a psychiatrist. The government must include counsellors as part of the workforce around the country. The cost of training and supporting counsellors is a very small price to pay for the benefit of avoiding unnecessary tests and clinic visits, setting aside time for the busy generalists, and providing non-stigmatising mental health services.

The post-earthquake period has increased the nation's attention to mental health. Now we have a clear choice: do we roll out services that are affordable and effective, or do we keep telling patients suffering from a real illness that there is nothing wrong with them? 📌

Bibhav Acharya, MD is the Co-Founder and Mental Health Adviser for Possible, which operates a healthcare delivery system in Achham and Dolakha in partnership with the Nepal Government. Soniya Hirachan, MD is the Co-Founder of Shared Minds, a non-profit that provides mental health training for generalist clinicians in Nepal.

DOWN

Possible correlation between migration, mental health and an increase in suicide rates

SMRITI BASNET

Ram, who was from Gorkha, went to work in Malaysia to support his family. Mistreated by his employers, the father of a six-year-old boy soon returned to Nepal but could not find a job in Kathmandu. He recently hanged himself from the ceiling of his room in Boudha.

Biswas was a 21-year-old Dalit who moved to Kathmandu from Sindhuli to run a small tailoring business. The father of a seven month-old daughter hanged himself in his shop.

The deaths of Ram and Biswas are among a dozen suicides reported to police every month in the Boudha area alone. Extrapolated nationwide, the statistics of suicides among young men driven to migrate for work are shocking. Neighbourhoods like Boudha

and Balaju, which have high migrant populations, have shown a greater incidence of suicides within the Valley.

"One contributing factor may be recent migration and poor living conditions. Such life factors contribute to overall stress and may play an important role in an individual's mental health," said American Fulbright student of Public Health Ashley K Hagaman at a talk at the United States Education Foundation, Kathmandu in May.

The world over, 90 per cent of all suicides are attributed to mental health problems. While Nepal has no recorded statistics of causes, experts cite migration, displacement and loss of support as leading to depression and driving some to take their own lives. Nepal's national suicide rate is 24.9

Mental

Mental health is not among the diseases for which returning migrant workers can seek compensation

SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

Like thousands of Nepali migrant workers, Ganesh Singh Dhami wanted to provide for his family when he left to work as a carpenter in Saudi Arabia last year.

However, within three months, he was back in Nepal. His company sent him to see a psychiatrist after he developed a memory disorder, and he was given a ticket home. Eight months later, Dhami has only a faint recollection of what happened to him.

"I just couldn't focus on my work. My mind wouldn't function and it was as if I was in a daze," recalls the 30-year-old father of three, "I missed my family a lot, and although I recovered a bit after taking medicines they sent me home."

Ganesh is now back home in Darchula, and on medication. But unlike other migrant workers who return with physical disabilities, he is not eligible for government compensation.

"My medical examination showed I was fit before I left, and I developed mental illness only once I got to Saudi Arabia. I have

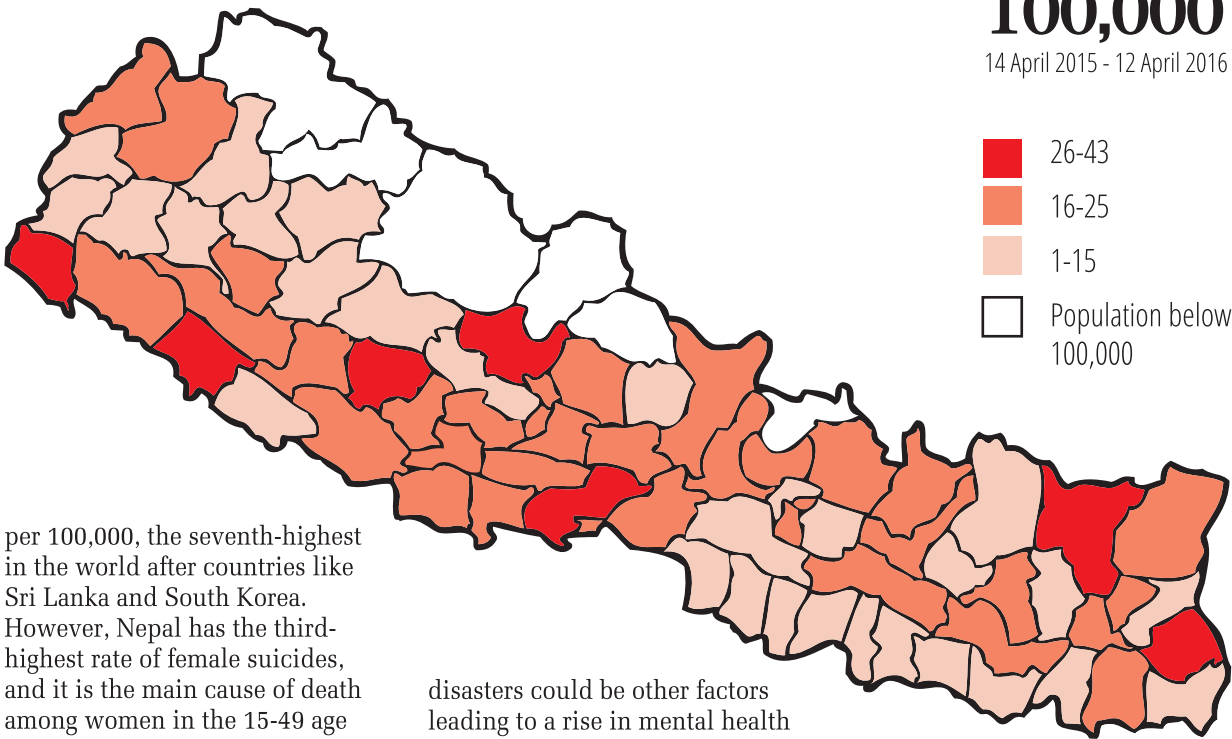


spent a lot on medicines since I returned, and I am waiting for the government to help," Dhami told us over the phone.

He had spent Rs 80,000 to pay his recruiter for the job, but came back empty-handed. He filed an application at the Foreign Employment Promotion Board (FEPB) under the Ministry of Labour and Employment, and became the first returnee worker to seek compensation for mental illness.

Nepal's Foreign Employment Act and other laws do not list mental illness as a disease. The

AND OUT



per 100,000, the seventh-highest in the world after countries like Sri Lanka and South Korea. However, Nepal has the third-highest rate of female suicides, and it is the main cause of death among women in the 15-49 age group in Nepal.

“People migrate for better economic opportunities. When they do not find them, they become frustrated, which may lead to depression,” said Ram Sharan Pathak, Professor and Head of Population Studies at Tribhuvan University.

Besides dislocation, exposure to violence during and after the war as well as recent natural

disasters could be other factors leading to a rise in mental health problems, believes Khem Karki at the National Health Research Council: “Over the years, the migration and displacement of people have been exacerbated by the ten year-long conflict, floods, landslides and most recently the earthquake. There is a lot of stress related to both internal and external migration.”

Jhapa in the eastern Tarai has seen a sharp increase in its

population due to new migration from the hills, and there seems to be a correlation with an increase in the suicide rate there over the last three years.

Hari, 26, moved to Jhapa with his wife from their ancestral village in Khotang. The displacement and new surroundings drove Hari to

alcohol while his family struggled with earning enough. In September last year, Hari hanged himself on a tree outside his house. He was among 249 persons who committed suicide between April 2015 and May 2016 in Jhapa alone.

The district’s suicide rate three years ago was 25 per 100,000, and rose to 31 per 100,000 this year. Jhapa has now overtaken the neighbouring district of Ilam, which had the notorious distinction of having the highest rate of suicide in Nepal.

“There is unhealthy competition, low coping skills and wide prevalence of alcohol and drug abuse in the district. People have become more aggressive as well,” said Saligram Bhattarai, a clinical psychologist with Transcultural Psychosocial Organization in Jhapa.

Although there is high out-migration of young men from the Tarai to India and overseas, the plains are seeing more people moving down from the mountains. Plains districts like Jhapa, Morang, Kapilvastu, Nawalparasi, Bardiya and Kanchanpur — which have high rates of in-migration — have witnessed a surge in suicides in the last three years. The suicide rate in other Tarai districts, as well as in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur, have remained constant, while Lalitpur has seen an increase.

Experts say that dislocation, in itself, should not lead people to take their own lives, but the absence of proper diagnosis and treatment of mental health has led to an epidemic of suicides.

Societal taboos and stigmatisation of mental health have made it difficult for many to seek help.

“Society is bent on undermining and keeping mental illness a secret, rather than cultivating an environment for people with mental illness to be a part of the society,” says activist Jagannath Lamichhane. With only one government-run hospital called Mental Hospital in the capital region and limited mental health professionals, Nepal lacks the human resource and infrastructure to tackle the problem.

The Ministry of Health’s Health Management Information System still does not list suicide as a category while recording deaths. Most data is from the Nepal Police, which treats suicide as a crime. Saroj Ojha of Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital says: “There is still a lot of social stigma when it comes to suicide. Therefore, it is important to spread awareness and address it as a mental health issue.”

Some names have been changed

Do not shy away from seeking help. If you, or anyone you know, would like to speak to a trained mental health professional, please contact:

TUTH Suicide Hotline: 9840021600
Transcultural Psychosocial Organization-Nepal Crisis Hotline: 1660 0102005
Mental Health Helpline Nepal: 1660 0133666

cost of migration



BROKEN STATE:
A Nepali migrant worker at a factory in Malaysia.

FEPB only accepts compensation applications from returnees who are physically ill or injured: they can get up to Rs 300,000 for 79 categories of physical afflictions. Family members of those who die abroad can receive Rs 500,000.

“Mental health was never considered when compensation provisions were made, but we can amend the directive in the future to also include returnee migrants with mental illness,” said Nirmala Thapa of the FEPB.

Health experts cite culture shock, homesickness, physically-taxing workloads and an

unfriendly environment as some of the reasons for mental stress among migrant workers.

“The lack of awareness about mental illness is one of the biggest challenges,” explains Dhana Ratna Shakya, a psychiatrist at the BP Koirala Institute of Health and Sciences in Dharan, “and treatment is difficult in destination countries because of language problems.”

FEPB data shows that 460 Nepali migrant workers have committed suicide, mainly in Malaysia, since 2010. Another study, by Pourakhi Nepal, found

that nearly three-fourths of the 151 female returnee migrants from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Malaysia, Qatar, Israel, Kuwait and Bahrain surveyed last year showed signs of depression. They complained of poor working conditions and various forms of abuse and stress.

Som Prasad Lamichhane of the Pravasi Nepali Co-ordination Committee says his organisation has dealt with 36 migrants with mental health issues in the past three years, adding: “But this is just the tip of the iceberg, as many others have never been recorded anywhere.”

THANK YOU.

Ama Foundation, USA and Ama Ghar extends heartfelt thank you to the following for their compassionate outreach after the terrible disaster at Pushpanjali School which took the life of one of our sweet girls leaving five others injured. We would also like to thank you for your communication, assistance and outpouring love towards Ama Ghar family in the time of grief and disaster.

Pushpanjali Secondary School, Taukhel, Godavari
All students and teachers did an excellent job of getting the injured to hospitals. The School has shown its constant concern towards the welfare of the injured and deceased students. It organised daily visits to the hospitals and to all memorial services, and provided counseling to students and parents.

B&B Hospital Thank you for the excellent emergency response and care for all the injured children. The teams in the emergency room and ICU prevented further complications and saved their lives.

Patan Hospital Emergency department did an excellent job taking care of the injured children.

CPCS, The Himalayan Innovative Society, SOS, Ankur Counseling, National Institute of Psychology, Antradrishi Counseling Youth Federation Nepal, Dr. Sneeda Mainali and Shine Dental, Nepal Youth Foundation, Shangrila-Home, Sunrise Children's Assoc, Our Sansar, Srijana Mukhiya, Happy Children's Trust, Kopila Children's Home, Chora Chori, Sano Paila, Dr. Tora of Sotai Therapeutic Massage.

Special thanks to people in Nepal and from all over the world who sent prayers and messages of love to children and staff. Ama Ghar family is strong in our togetherness and will continue in our mission to raise self-sufficient good Nepali citizens.

We ask everyone to make a personal commitment to increase awareness and implementation for the rights of children and their safety. Our children are the future.

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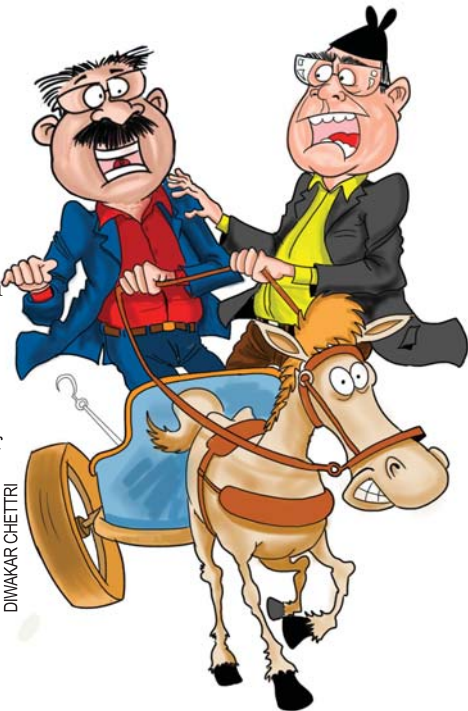
WANTED, DEAD OR ALIVE: A New Prime Minister

South Asia's oldest nation state and newest ex-monarchy that scores consistently high marks in the Corruption Perception Index and Failed State Index requires a 24th Prime Minister in 26 years.

This is yet another feather in the cap for a country that is always breaking World Records in the Guinness Book for categories including Kicking a Rubber Band with the Ankle Non-stop for 7 hr 56 min in the All-Nepal Free-Style Chungi Tournament, and for the first Dog to Climb Mt Everest Without the Aid of Artificial Oxygen.

Be that as it may, and to cut a long story short, a Himalayan Democratic Federal Republic that has already ceased being democratic and may not remain federal or a republic for much longer either (going by remarks by Comrade Amrace in his Fifth Column this week) has an urgent vacancy for a vacuous new Prime Monster that can take office ASAP. And that means now, mister.

Candidate should be a tall, bright, homely, fair-skinned vegetarian, DV-eligible teetotaler with elastic morals and expandable girth. Caste, age, disabilities, ethnicity,



gender orientation, sexual preference, marital status if any, eating habits, incontinence and incompetence are no bar.

Prospective Slime Minister should ideally have possession of at least one healthy kidney, and a functioning alimentary canal that can digest a 40% cut from each allocated government grant to community hospitals serving the rural poor. Should have experience serving as Prime

Minister of this country in at least one previous tenure — candidates who have been prime minister at least three times would be preferred — during which time he/she/it should have paid lip-service to secularism, given a tongue-lashing to the monarchy, plundered the exchequer, delayed projects of national prestige for personal gain, sabotaged hydroelectric plants being built by rival contractors, taken cuts on irrigation projects that collapsed during their first test, and indulged in nepotism, communism, sadism, anachronism and general buffoonery.

The candidate should have shown a demonstrable ability to both kick and kiss ass, grease palms, partake of kickbacks, play footsie with tycoons, pay off the Corruption Watchdog, amass cash in the Cayman Islands through intermediaries named in the Panama Papers, embezzled an amount equivalent to and not exceeding Three Arabs meant for rehabilitating ex-guerrillas, and have had a sidekick who was once caught in flagrante in a telephone tap for accepting from the embassy of a certain country, which shall remain nameless but which begins with the initial 'वि',

an amount in the vicinity of 50 Corrodes to buy off CA members.

Candidate should have passed at least Grade 8, and be able to provide continuity to the predecessor's frequent flights of fancy to promise piped gas into every Nepali home, launch a thousand ships in the high seas flying the Nepali flag, harness energy from hot air emitted while shooting the breeze at cabinet meetings to power electric railways to crisscross the country and, last but not least, pledge to turn Nepal into Singapore or Bhutan (whichever comes first).

If you think you are made of prime ministerial material, and wish to apply for this post, download the application form at www.gone.gov and attach a zodiacal profile attested by a certified soothsayer, a full medical report that includes a brain scan to prove the existence of an empty skull, as well as a receipt showing a pre-paid amount to certain beneficiaries.

QUALIFICATIONS:

20 years of experience in being sworn in multiple times as prime minister, ribbon-cutting, lamp-lighting, khada-draping, badge-wearing, bouquet-accepting, and speaking *ad nauseous* about any subject under the sun and/or moon.

Must have never completed previous terms, must have dissolved Parliament at least once and should have gheraoed the rostrum, raised slogans in Parliament, and thrown at least one chair at the opposition bench (or is it 'thrown at least one bench at the opposition Chair?'). Either way, should

have refused to hold local elections for 20 years.

Must have a long and distinguished career in the kleptocracy, with a Masters of Science in Wheeling-Dealing and a PhD in Horse-Trading and Arsing Around.

As opposition leader should have amassed experience in locking down the nation for not less than 56 days in a year by using terror tactics like burning taxis with drivers still inside, and making an arson of himself. Applicant must list all in-laws and out-laws on standby to take up ministerial berths at short notice, and also declare all wives they are married to at this point in time.

Prime Ministerial aspirant must be in possession of skeletons in advanced stages of decomposition in the closet, and a certificate (duly notarised by at least three referees who have been victims of his past extortion) attesting to candidate's exceptional fundraising capabilities.

Candidate must have clandestine links to organised crime, and be on a first-name basis with spooks and leaders abroad, to garner international solidarity for regime-tinkering at home.

SALARY:

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