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DINESH SHRESTHA

Ashes to ashes

A profusely garlanded Prime Minister Dahal toured Bhojpur on Tuesday, which was damaged in a fire. The scene was heavy on symbolism: destroyed homes, heavy security, hollow promises of help from the leadership and citizens as spectators (*pictured, above*).

Second-time prime minister Dahal is in a tight spot once again as the country marks the tenth anniversary of the peace accord this week. He is preparing to table the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution in Parliament in the next few days, but no one seems to be on his side.

He assured the Madhesi parties he would deliver this time, but they are not satisfied with his compromise. The UML, the second largest party in parliament, has told him point blank it will not

support the bill. His coalition partner, the Nepali Congress, is letting him stew.

But Dahal is putting on a brave face. He told *Nepali Times* this week he doesn't feel burdened by his work. A self-proclaimed risk-taker, Dahal may be tempted to take a political gamble since it is a make-or-break for his career. He may go ahead and register the bill, and pass the blame on to the UML and NC.

Maoist-Centre politburo member Bodh Raj Upadhyay says: "The Chairman has lost his charisma, the cadres are frustrated and our party is on the verge of collapse. He needs to make a bold move and quick. If he succeeds, it will revive our party and his own political career."

Dahal is trying to make the constitution 'broadly acceptable' by pushing four amendments: tinkering with federal boundaries, easing restrictions on the rights of naturalised citizens, ensuring proportional representation in parliament and recognising more official languages.

But the UML is opposed to Dahal's proposal, saying it is not in the interest of Nepalis, and is directed by a foreign hand. The Federal Alliance has rejected the amendment bill, and even the Madhesi Front is luke warm, fearing a backlash from its plains constituency.

The NC is backing Dahal, but its President Sher Bahadur Deuba may want this deal to fail so he gets the credit for resolving the constitutional impasse when he takes his turn to be prime minister in May. If Dahal fails and the political crisis deepens, Deuba could have his chance even earlier.

Om Astha Rai

21 JANUARY, 2018
EDITORIAL
PAGE 2



20/10
CONFLICT
ANNIVERSARY
1996-2006-2016

SHADOWING PRACHANDA

Dinesh Shrestha's conflict-era photographs of a revolutionary turned politician.

Pushpa Kamal Dahal Interview

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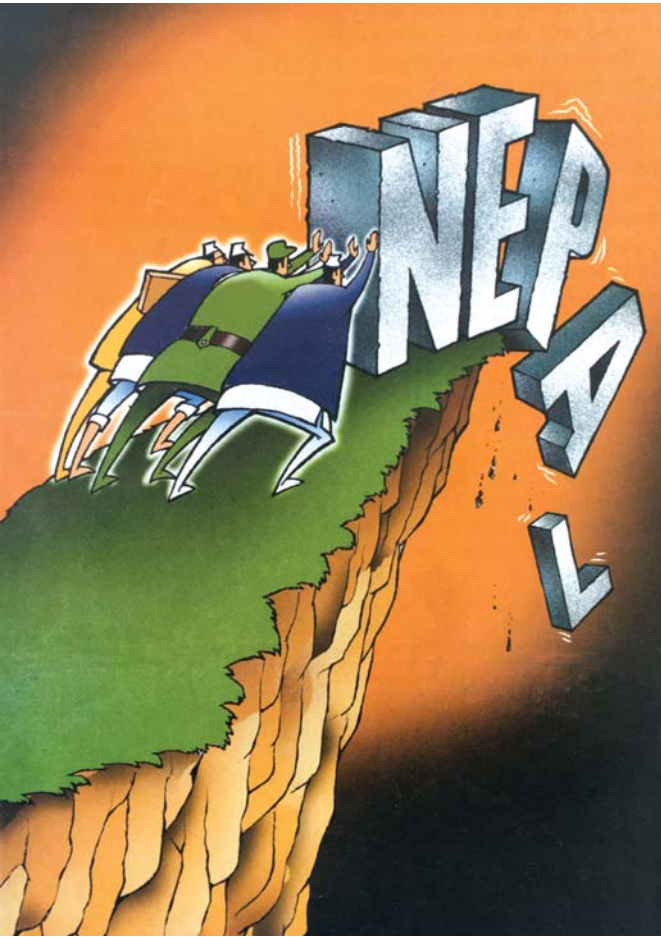
Nepal’s politics is sliding towards the edge of the cliff, and there isn’t much time left to meet the deadline for an elected Federal Parliament.

It is rare for national leaders to already be lame ducks when they assume office, but Pushpa Kamal Dahal is one of them. He started his tenure with a built-in nine-month expiry date. That backroom agreement paved the way for regime change and the current coalition between the Maoist-Centre and the Nepali Congress.

Knowing that his administration would automatically self-destruct in nine months hasn’t given Dahal much confidence. His roar is now a meow, and this is the weakest prime minister we have had for a while. Aside from ceremonial ribbon cutting and issuing 26-point directives to the bureaucracy (which it blithely ignores) Dahal has been unable to get his coalition partner as well as the opposition UML to back his formula for constitution amendments to appease the Madhesi parties. The ruling coalition doesn’t have a concrete plan on amendments regarding electoral districts, citizenship, language and federal provinces. The NC is leaving Dahal alone to struggle to find a compromise, probably preferring to wait until its own President Sher Bahadur Deuba takes over as prime minister in April.

Dahal has been coaxing the NC and the UML to agree on a least common denominator on the amendments. Being the second-biggest party in Parliament, the UML holds the swing vote on any proposal to change the constitution, and is driving a hard bargain. Party Chair K P Oli is still bristling at Dahal for pulling the carpet from under him to stage a coup in July, and has rejected outright the proposal to carve out new federal provinces. Oli senses that the Madhesi parties are themselves not in agreement on the finer points of the amendments, and is using that to his advantage. Ironically this lets Dahal off the hook vis-a-vis the Madhesi because he can say "I tried to convince Oli".

Mixing short-term vote bank politics with long-term constitutional provisions is always dangerous, but even more treacherous is to try to tamper with boundaries. The



SUBHAS RAI

constitution amendments involve, among others, the dispute over five Tarai districts in the far-west and east, as well as splitting up Province 5 to carve out a Tarai-only province. Dahal has tried his best to meet the two-week ultimatum

given by the Madhesi parties, and they have now threatened an agitation. The UML is also warning it will go on war-path. Protests have already started in Rolpa and Banke. Tensions simmer among the non-Madhesi populations of Jhapa, Morang and Sunsari. In the eastern Tarai there is festering resentment against Kathmandu’s attempt to roll back on autonomy. This does not bode well for Nepal’s stability.

There are other looming deadlines. With only 14 months left for the new federal constitution to go into force, time is of the essence. But you wouldn’t know that given the lethargy of our elected representatives who seem more intent on raising their own perks.

The current Legislature-Parliament’s mandate expires on 21 January 2018, and by that time we need to have already conducted local, provincial and federal parliament elections. Local and federal provincial elections have to be held at latest, by May 2017, but we haven’t even agreed on how many provinces and their boundaries.

Nepal is sliding inexorably towards the cliff edge. If the current Parliament expires, the country will be at a political dead end with no precedence on how to resolve the deep uncertainty about our future. The coming weeks will determine whether the political leadership will look beyond personal and partisan interests to the long-term stability and development of the country.

This week marked the 10th anniversary of the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord. Politicians were busy congratulating themselves at various functions held in the capital to mark the anniversary, but the last step of that process which involves promulgating and implementing a new inclusive constitution looks very iffy. That puts the entire peace process in jeopardy. Not having an elected Federal Parliament by January 2018 will also endanger the very existence of the political parties, and threaten Nepal’s democracy.

Times

THIS WEEK

Most reached on Facebook

The business of entrepreneurship by Triveni Chand and Pankaj Parajuli

With the amount spent even before they get the visa, students planning to study in the US can easily start a viable business at home. (7,300 people reached)

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Most visited online page

The business of entrepreneurship by Triveni Chand and Pankaj Parajuli

Most popular on Twitter

Who guards the guards? by Om Astha Rai

(31 retweets, 47 likes)

Most commented

Vote for Donkey Party by Ass

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

DEMONETISATION

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has turned out to be a sadist ('Gaining currency', #833, Jiyalal Sah). Last year he inflicted pain on Nepalis by imposing a blockade just when Nepal was recovering from a devastating earthquake. This year he is causing pain on his own people by rendering their hard-earned cash worthless. Last year it was Nepalis who queued up for fuel. This year it is Indians who are queuing up to exchange their currency.

Kishan Budhayer

If a particular Nepali community is worst affected by India's demonetisation move, it is the Madhesi people living along the border. But Madhesi leaders who boast of their close relationship with the New Delhi establishment have not raised this issue. Of course they do not have the guts to ask Narendra Modi to roll back his decision, but they can at least urge him to facilitate the exchange of Indian currency in Nepal.

Surya Pandit

NEPALI WINE

Promoting local products can boost the country's economy and I am always

up the local wines ('Wine wave', #833, Smriti Basnet). But Nepali wine companies should focus on quality production rather than selling inferior wines at lower prices.

Sandhya Sangat

Thanks to Dhokaima Café for bringing Fredy Andermatt to Nepal('Rolling in dough', #833, Shreejana Shrestha). I hope this café maintains quality production unlike most of the bakery companies in town. We need to have health inspectors to continuously monitor the bakery companies and minimum standards to operate such businesses.

Bhakti Gurung

BECOMING ENTREPRENEUR

Saying that with the money spent on application process can start a viable business looks like painting a very rosy picture ('The business of entrepreneurship', #833, Triveni Chand and Pankaj Parajuli). Maybe not everyone wants to be an entrepreneur and are looking to study a subject which is not available in Nepal.

Sam Malla

Sanjay Sharma@Chaupaari Nov 22

Here come the strong ultra-right. If the global trends were to apply to Nepal, they and the UML were to be the two biggest parties next.

Nepali Times @nepalitimes

RPP-N Chairman Kamal Thapa & RPP Chairman Pashupati Shamsheer Rana shake hand after announcing the unification of their parties in Kathmandu.

Stefan Nestler@Springinsfeld

A good day! One and a half years after the #earthquake in #Nepal #Boudhanath Stupa looks again like it did before.

Nepali Times @nepalitimes

A Buddhist monk circumambulates the Boudhanath Stupa on Friday.

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #834

Q. Should naturalised citizens be allowed to hold top posts like President and Prime Minister?

Total votes: 397

Yes 28.74%

No 61.36%

With Condition 9.9%

Weekly Internet Poll #835

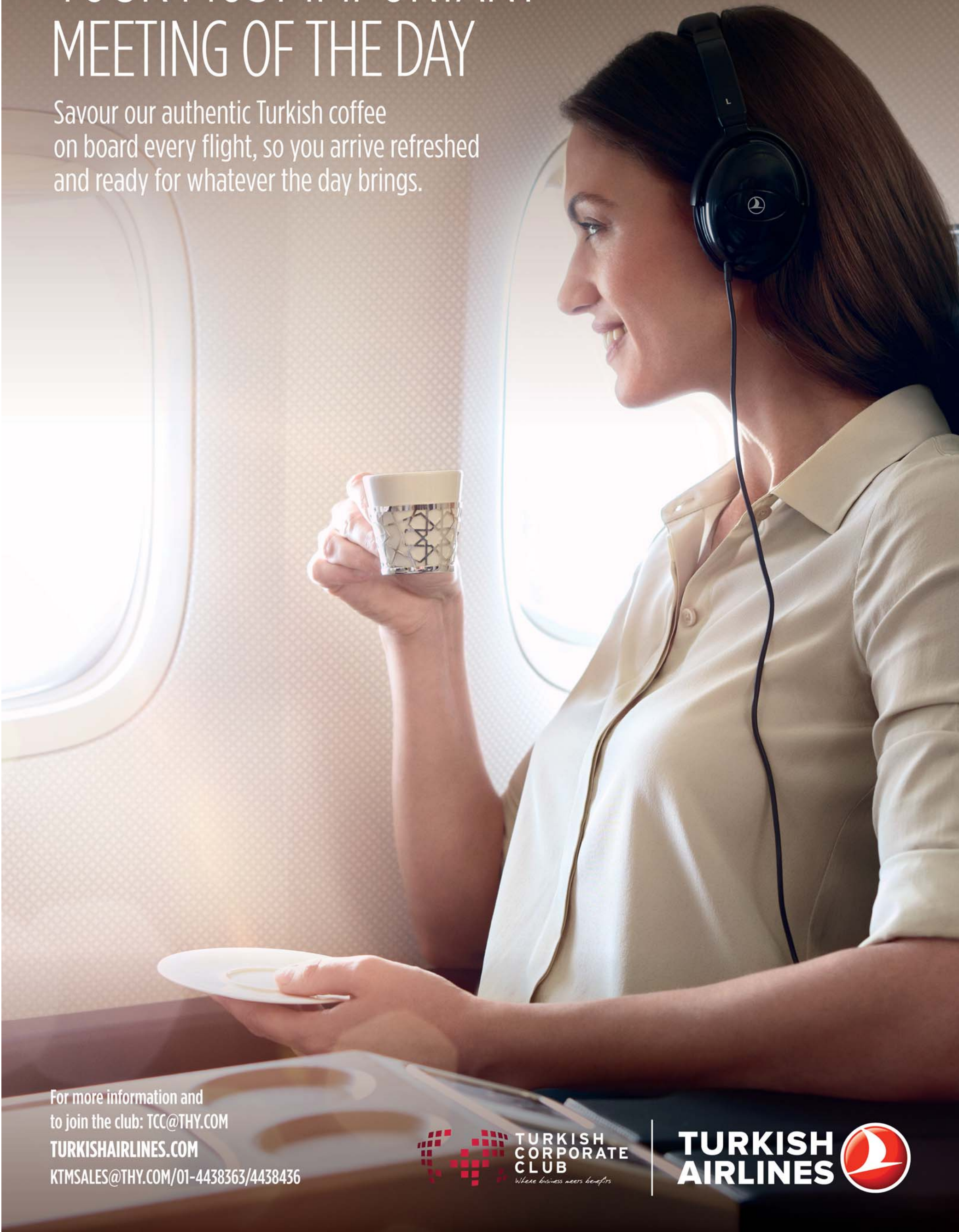
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Q. Do we need more than seven federal provinces in Nepal?

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Justice-in-Chief

Fiercely independent, Sushila Karki is determined not to be a token female and has flouted convention throughout her career

In the 65 years of the history of Nepal's judiciary, Sushila Karki became the first female Chief Justice in April for a 14-month tenure. Being the 26th Chief Justice she is leading the Supreme Court at a challenging time.



LEGALESE
Binita Dahal

Parliament has promulgated a new constitution but there is dissatisfaction especially among the people in the plains to some of its provisions. Her tenure has also seen the rise and fall of Lokman Singh Karki who headed an anti-corruption agency, but emerged as a parallel power centre. She also faced a backlog of cases with only seven justices in the Supreme Court. And as per the constitution, she needs to supervise the setting up of seven new high courts in seven federal provinces within one year.

Sushila Karki could not hit the ground running because Parliament took more than three months to ratify her appointment as Chief Justice because the three main parties could not agree on the composition of the Parliamentary hearing committee. However, ever since she was confirmed she has taken the bull by the horns, catching up with all the pending work in the administration of the judiciary and to restore the public's faith in the independence of the Apex Court.

In his last day as Chief Justice, her predecessor Kalyan Shrestha told the media that the Supreme Court had a strong leader under Sushila Karki. Another former Chief Justice Ram Prasad Shrestha

had once said that he selected Karki as a Supreme Court justice not because she was a woman but because of her integrity, dedication, fairness and courage.

Indeed, Karki proved her independence through her verdicts in some well-known corruption cases. She is the one who convicted J P Gupta when he was a sitting information minister. As someone reputed to be close to the Nepali Congress because of her Biratnagar background, it is interesting that Justice Karki's gavel fell mostly on Congress politicians in corruption charges.

It was only Sushila Karki with Justices Bishwamber Shrestha and Sapana Pradhan Malla who dared reopen the case about

the appointment of Lokman Singh Karki as the head of the CIAA which had been scrapped earlier by the Supreme Court. A new bench will start the much-awaited hearings on 1 December. There is a lot hanging on the case since Lokman Singh Karki also faces an impeachment motion in Parliament.

Sushila Karki was born into a well-off family in Biratnagar that was close to the Koirala clan. Fiercely independent, she also flouted convention at a young age to live by herself and not with her family. Forty years ago, there were very few women going to law school, but Sushila Karki bucked the trend becoming a successful lawyer in Biratnagar and Dharan.

She married former congress politician Durga Subedi who was always unemployed. Subedi looks after their children and Karki is the one who earns for the family (*see interview, below*). Before taking up the Chief Justice residence in April, Karki and Subedi lived in a sparse rented room in her sister's home in Dhapasi. The family is known for its frugality and simplicity.

This being Nepal, there were many who did not trust Sushila Karki to take a leadership role. Some Justices didn't have too good a reputation, and middlemen were known to fix cases. How could a woman Chief Justice survive in such a hotbed of intrigue? People dismissed her

as a token female. They said she lacked understanding of constitutional, economic and tax related issues. She was accused of favouring women in her cases. But even her staunchest critics now admit that she has shown integrity and fairness, restoring the Supreme Court's prestige.

Sushila Karki is determined to leave a mark, and if her past seven and a half months on the job is any indication, she will be known for bold decision-making and leadership. By the time she steps down in April 2017, she aims to leave a legacy with landmark judgments. Given the nature of some of the pending cases, it will not be easy for Sushila Karki.

The remaining six and a half months of her tenure will be equally challenging to cap her prove her nearly 40 years of judicial experience. She has both the challenges and opportunity to prove herself while some well-known and crucial cases are pending in the Apex Court.



SHAHIDUL ALAM / DRIK / MAJORITY WORLD

“A woman is as capable as a man.”

Chief Justice Sushila Karki in an interview with Binita Dahal of *BBC Nepali*, 22 November

BBC Nepali: How difficult was your journey to the post of Chief Justice?

Sushila Karki: In the legal profession you do not have a godfather. You have to have an in-built capacity to excel in this field. I was chosen as a Supreme Court justice because I had served as an advocate for 31 years, and there were only a few women in this field.

How challenging was it for a woman to study law in Nepal 40 years ago?

Only a couple of women were studying law at that time, and they were all in Kathmandu. I was lucky because my family was liberal-minded and never discriminated against daughters. My father initially wanted me to be a doctor, but later encouraged me to study law. I began practicing law in Biratnagar.

What is the current status of women in Nepal?

They are still left behind, more so in rural areas. The state and the society must be responsible to uplift the status of women.

You once talked about an unpleasant experience as a woman justice among male

colleagues in the Supreme Court.

Our society is still unwilling to tolerate the progress that women make, and does not believe that a woman can hold a top post. I worked with several Chief Justices, and some of them treated me like a token female. They thought I was handpicked only because I was a woman, and to fill the gender quota in the judiciary. They did not forward important cases to my bench. Luckily, there were other Chief Justices who were better.

What are you doing to end discrimination against women in the justice system?

As Nepal's first female Chief Justice, I am working hard to prove that a woman can be as capable as a man. Forwarding cases to justices and fixing dates for them is a vital function of any court. Since I became Chief Justice, the SC has been clearing a backlog of cases by fixing timings from 10 AM onwards. Some of my predecessors used to forward cases only in the afternoon.

Some say you believe in positive discrimination and prefer a woman to a man if both are equally capable. Is it true?

I have not chosen a less qualified woman instead of a qualified man. However, I believe that women should be given a fair chance; it should be a level playing field.

Does this translate into leniency towards women in verdicts?

No. But if a woman is constantly tortured by her husband and she kills him, we should also take into account her suffering while passing a sentence on her. Can that be really called favoritism towards women?

Why are you advocating for free legal service for victims of gender-based violence?

Women are shy about fighting for justice because of family pressure, lengthy legal process and expensive fees of advocates. More women will be encouraged to fight for justice if they do not have to pay.

You recently said you preferred to promote professionalism of women rather than their proportional representation. Why?

We hear grievances in the Tarai that Madhesi women are backward because the state has not ensured their proportional representation. Ensuring women's proportional representation in politics or other fields is an issue, but in the judiciary a woman has to be competent. What is the point of demanding proportional representation of Muslim women if they face cultural barriers in the home, are forced to wear

veils, are married off early and not given proper education?

Your husband once said in an interview that you are the breadwinner of the family and he just does household chores. Is your family matriarchal?

My husband always treats me as the head of the household. I earn and he takes care of the house. He raised our children. When I was practicing law and needed to study legal documents till late night, he used to make tea for me. I manage the money. My husband is like a hermit. He was never tempted to earn money. The clothes that he wears are his only property.

Most women want to marry rich and successful men. You married an idealistic politician.

Yes, I was impressed by his ideals and honesty. I thought I could make a living by myself and did not need a husband who had a salary. Had I married someone else, it could have been different. If my husband had been greedy, liked to drink, or boast about power I would probably not be where I am today.



nepalitimes.com

■ Listen to audio



Christmas thangka

A U.S. based non-profit organisation has found a novel way to honour both Tibetan Buddhist traditions and the Christmas festival by selling Made in Nepal thangkas depicting the Santa Claus myth in the United States to help a monastery in Kathmandu.

The Christmas Thangka project involves having a digitally created photo-painting printed on cloth and sewn as a thangka and accompanying it with a text that serves as the traditional 'peycha' owner manual for

A donation of \$300 is suggested for the Christmas thangka and is tax-deductable. The proceeds from the sale of the scrolls will go to Nepali families connected to the Zatrul Rinpoche monastery in Parphing near Kathmandu.

"The Christmas Thangka is for people who celebrate Christmas, this project is the Sherpa Buddhist take on it," says Hugh R Downs, author of the 1980 book, Rhythms of a Himalayan Village, who spent two years in Nepal as an apprentice to the Sherpa

monk painter, Ngawong Lekshit.

Downs also hopes that the thangka will serve as a sustainable substitute for evergreen trees so that Christmas gifts can be placed under a painting of Santa Claus visiting the valley of Junbesi. As a historical footnote, Downs recalls that in the 19th century Tibet's largest item of export to the west were yak tails that were used exclusively as Santa Claus' beards.

In the thangka, Santa assumes the figure of Kuber, the Hindu deity who is a



symbol of wealth and prosperity. Thangkas serve as meditation aid serving to cultivate a sense of selfless concern for other people. At the bottom of the Christmas thangka is a pile of traditional Christmas gifts and above them are depicted three windhorses bearing three flaming wish-granting jewels. In the backdrop is the scene of the Junbesi Valley with the Thupten Choling monastery and Mt Numbur.

Says Downs: "I hope the project will also reinstate the message of Christmas which has been drowned out by what some people see as hyperactive commercialisation."

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Turkish Airlines won the Gold prize in Epica Awards for the 'Batman v. Superman' advertising campaign. The airline was awarded under the product and brand integration category.

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Winning covers

Syakar Trading Company, authorised distributor for Honda motorcycles and scooters in Nepal, announced the winners of the 'Bipul Chettri cover song contest'. Singer Bipul Chettri handed over the cash prize worth Rs 100,000 to winners Bhushan Amatya and Chrisma Abigail.

HONDA

Two for one

Ncell introduced a new scheme 'Ek ma dui offer' for its voice pack users. Starting 21 November, pre-paid subscribers can call any other Ncell number at as low as 25 paisa per minute including taxes.

Ncell
an axiata company

Cake mixing

Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Kathmandu hosted a cake mixing ceremony to usher in the festive season. Women from various sectors of Nepal participated in the gala event.

Smart three

Hero MotoCorp launched three new motorcycles-Splendor iSmart 110, Super Splendor 125cc and Achiever 150, in Nepal. All three bikes come with i3S (idle stop start system) technology and are priced at Rs 166,000, Rs 176,000 and Rs 203,000 respectively.

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WHO CARES?

Women do the bulk of unpaid work in the household cleaning, cooking, washing, collecting firewood and caring for children and the elderly

In recent times, gender glass ceilings have endured some severe cracks, but they remain intact and formidable. Hilary Clinton’s defeat in the US presidential election has shattered the immediate possibility of the



ENGENDER
Sangita Thebe-Limbu

first female American president. The recent appointment of Portugal’s Antonio Guterres as the next UN secretary-general was made amidst growing call for the organisation to select its first female top diplomat.

Closer to home, the picture is comparatively positive with Sushila Karki appointed as the first female Chief Justice following the selection of Bidya Devi Bhandari as Nepal’s second President and former guerrilla Onsari Gharti Magar as the Speaker of Parliament. Yet, at the ministerial level and across Nepal’s civil service, civil society and media, the gender gap remains stark.

Substantive representation of women in political, social and economic spheres is an important agenda, but the politics of everyday life within households is commonly overlooked. This is particularly the case for unpaid care work, which underpins the functioning of every household and contributes in reproduction of labour force and the market economy. But it remains undervalued by society and policymakers alike.

Unpaid care work includes all household activities carried out by family members without pay such as cleaning, cooking, washing, fetching water, collecting firewood and caring for children, elderly, sick and/or family members with disabilities. While care is fundamental to our well-being, in most societies



SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

care is perceived predominantly as ‘women’s work’ regardless of caste, class, ethnicity or religion.

Based on extensive surveys in 65 countries, an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report concludes that the vast majority of unpaid household and care work is performed by women. In developed countries, women spend an average of 4 hours and 20 minutes on unpaid care work while men spend 2 hours and 16 minutes per day. In developing countries, women spend 4 hours and 30 minutes per day on unpaid care work compared to 1 hour 20 minutes for men. The higher gender gaps in lower income countries can be attributed to lack of time-saving infrastructure and technologies, limited or non-existent social care services, or inability to outsource domestic work.

The unequal distribution of care work within households



results in ‘time poverty’ for women and girls, where there aren’t enough hours in a day for productive activities such as education, training, paid employment or leisure. Women spending disproportionate amount of time in unpaid work also affects the quality of employment as more women tend to concentrate in part-time, informal or precarious work.

In Nepal, the female labour force participation is very high. It was at 80.7 percent in 2008 -- the highest in South Asia. It can be attributed to increased male migration, poverty where work is not an option, variations of socio-cultural norms, and in particular collection of goods for own consumption (example firewood) is included under the definition of work in Nepal.

However, of the working women, 84.3 percent are engaged in mainly subsistence agriculture.

Meaning there is a double burden of responsibilities where women are engaged in economic activities and they also perform the bulk of unpaid care work, which negatively affects their well-being and engagement in wider socio-political structures.

Much of the unpaid care work remains under the radar of labour market analysis whether in calculating Gross Domestic Product or formulation of economic growth policies. Even when it is recognised, how to measure it and its contribution to growth and productivity accurately remains a challenge. However, there are initiatives like ‘time use diaries’, which are being used as a tool to make unpaid care work visible and demand for policy change.

In a 2013 report, Action Aid showed that in Nepal women on average spend 268 minutes per day in housework (includes cooking, cleaning, washing, shopping) in comparison to 56 minutes per day by men. In contrast, men spend 101 minutes per day in socio-cultural activities (includes socialising, attending external events) as opposed to 24 minutes per day by women, which draws attention to the common social dichotomy of public as male and private as female space.

Care work is central to our everyday lives and crucial to our well-being. It forms the foundation of our society and the economy. Hence, the focus is not to undermine the importance of care but to put the spotlight on carers and unequal care work distribution. The prevailing social model of male as breadwinners and female as caregivers need to be challenged to demand for more equitable redistribution of care responsibilities and power balance within households.

Further, care work can be redistributed widely between the household and the government through social protection schemes (such as childcare support grant, early childhood education schemes) to support carers, effective public healthcare provision, and investment in inclusive and gender sensitive infrastructures and services. But the first step of course is to recognise that providing care is an important work in itself. 🇳🇵

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We are seeing the signs of winter setting in with morning inversion smog in Kathmandu Valley, which is a sign to be on guard against dangerous pollution levels. In addition, the wind direction has shifted, so that even if Kathmandu Valley's smog layer is removed by afternoon breeze we are getting dirty air from the plains. This will bring down visibility and the filter action will reduce the maximum temperature. The minimum will be in the high single digits for now. A few afternoon clouds on the Valley rim, but no rain.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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“FREEDOM IS NOT FREE”



The first Bangladeshi to climb Seven Summits wants to empower girls to scale life’s mountains

SMRITI BASNET

Looking down from the top of the world at sunrise last year, Wasfia Nazreen (*pic, above*) was overcome with emotion. On the summit of Mount Everest with other Himalayan peaks piercing a sea of clouds below her, the Bangladeshi mountaineer suddenly understood life.

Back in Nepal, and sitting across a table at a cafe in Bouddha, Nazreen admitted that at one point during the climb, she thought she was not going to make it. What kept her going was the promise she had made to the people of her country on the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh: to highlight how far women have come.

“I hope I never forget this moment in my entire life, it made me realise the value of my time on the Earth,” said the 34-year-old who became the first Bangladeshi to scale the highest points in the seven continents.

“Symbolically the struggle to climb the mountains was parallel

to the struggle women face in society,” explained Nazreen, for whom it was an uphill struggle even before she started climbing.

With no sponsorship, she sold off her ancestral jewellery to fund her expeditions. But soon, the media caught up, and she had people offering to help her. “One of them was a divorcee who came up to me with her alimony and said ‘free me on the mountain’,” she recalled.

Nazreen is all too familiar with the everyday battles women face, with minimal family and financial support she remembers the burden of paying her way through college.

She strongly believes in empowering women to be independent, and hopes that her climbs inspire other women in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

“For any South Asian woman freedom is not free. No one is going to make this possible for us, we have got to do it ourselves,”



PEAK PERFORMANCE: Bangladeshi mountaineer Wasfia Nazreen on the summit of Denali, the highest mountain in North America. two years ago.

PICS: SEBASTIAN GRAU

said Nazreen. In Bangladesh, men now come up to her with requests to take their daughters under her wings, but she knows that Bangladesh and South Asia still have a long way to go when it comes to gender equality.

Which is why Nazreen has set up Ösel Foundation, named after her Tibetan name that means ‘clarity of the human mind’, which aims to inculcate self confidence through sports and outdoor activities. The Foundation plans to establish an alternate school for

adolescent girls first in Bangladesh and Nepal and then in Sri Lanka and India.

“We want to tell girls that each one of them has the light in them, and it is possible to reach that potential,” said Nazreen.

The climber’s four years of climbing was made into a short film by Apple Inc, shot entirely on an iPhone. She was also awarded *National Geographic* Adventurer of the Year in 2014, and *National Geographic* Emerging Explorer in 2016.

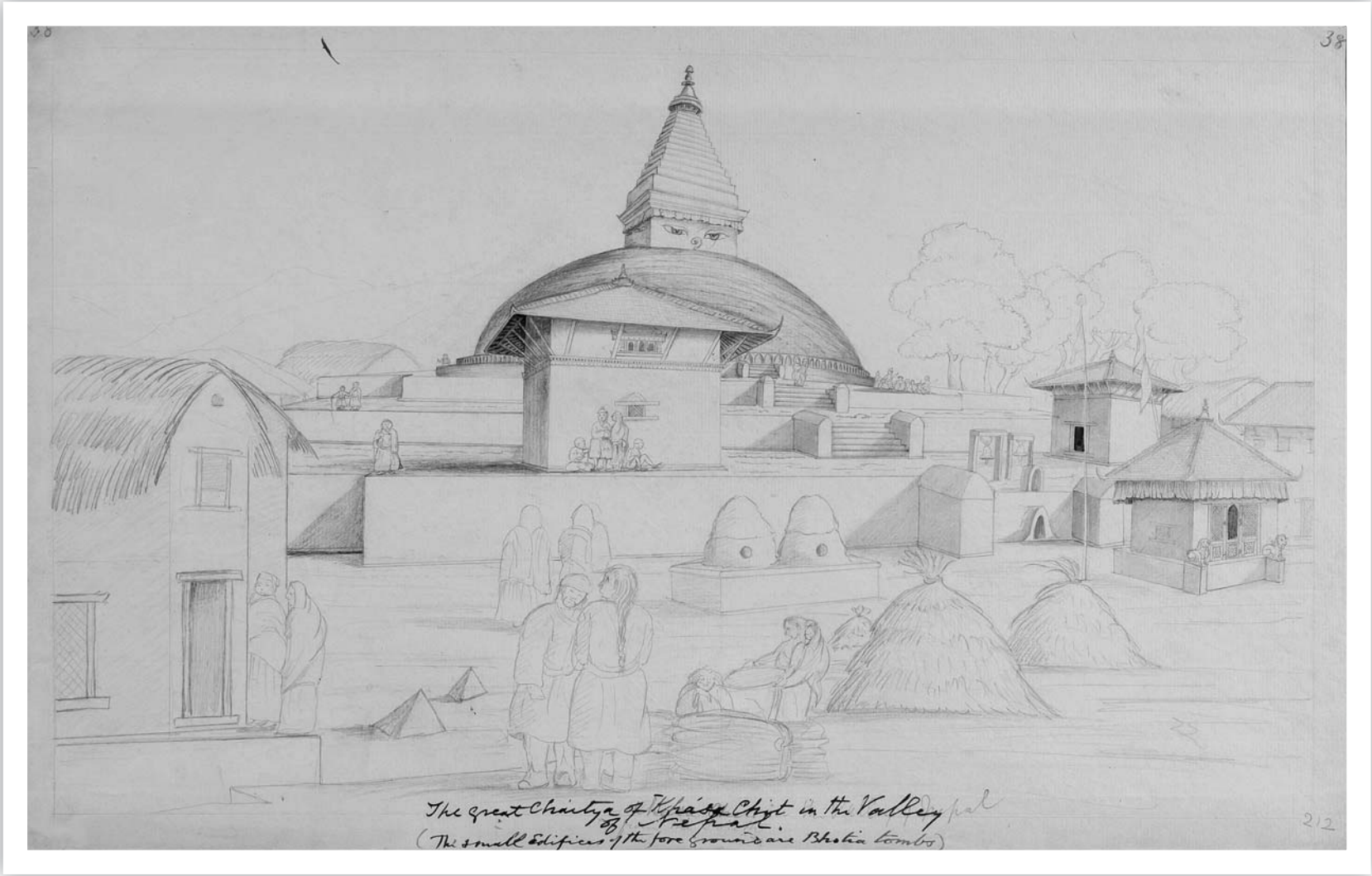
Nazreen also co-founded RESET, an organisation which designs trek and retreats around the world for leaders and works with World Bank and Facebook. Said Nazreen: “We need to start changing the minds of those who actually change policies.”

nepalitimess.com
Watch video



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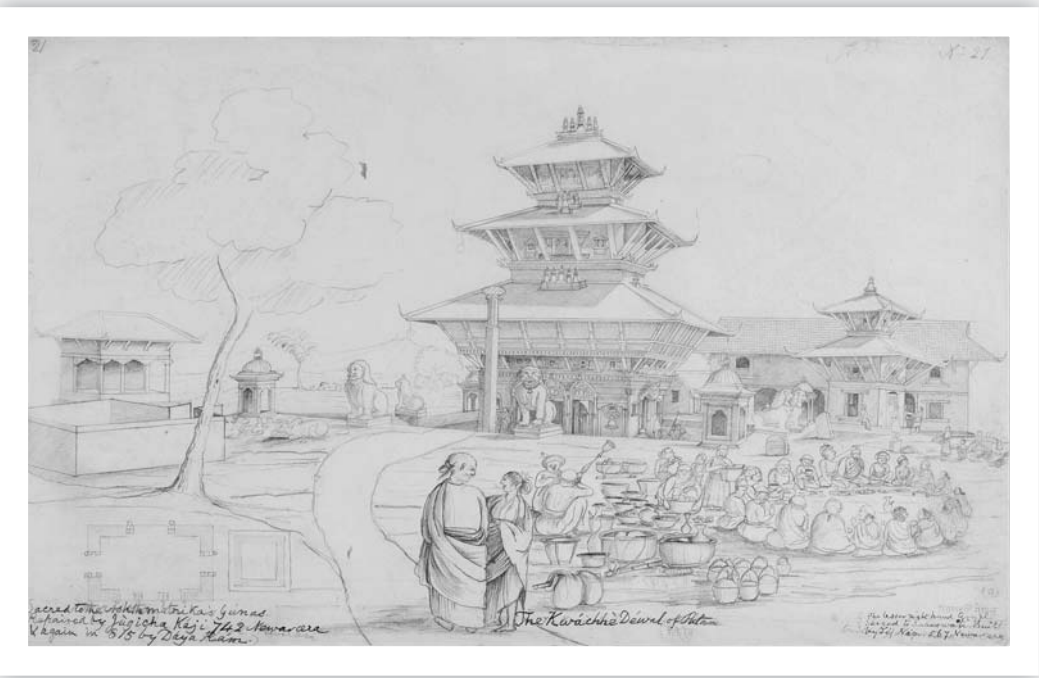
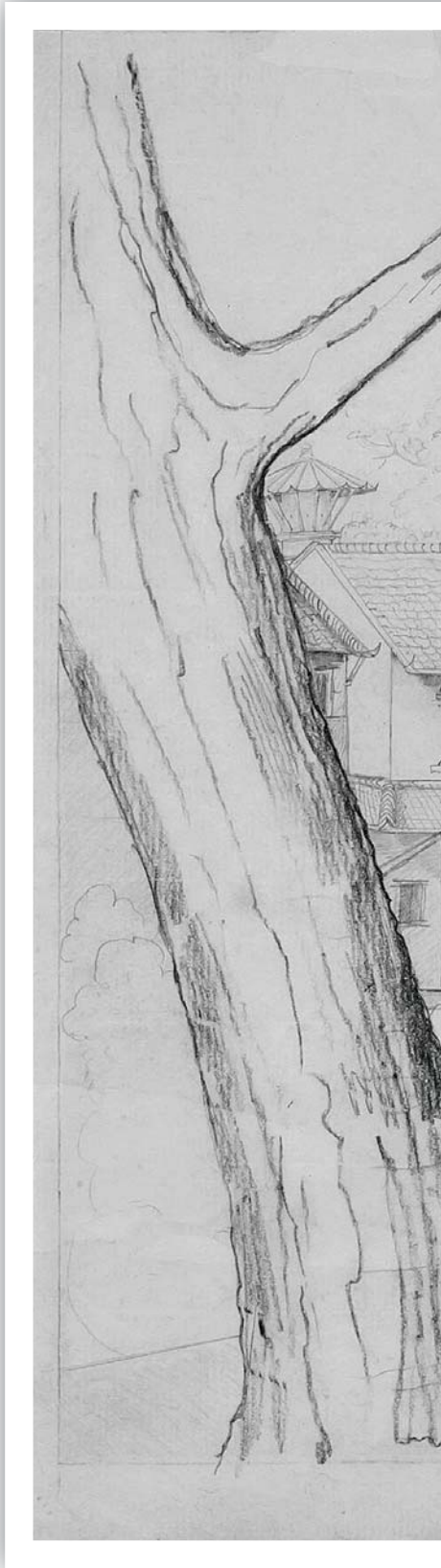
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www.nepalitimess.com



Pencilling in Kathmandu

Rajman Singh's exquisite drawings of Kathmandu Valley in the mid-19th century are being exhibited in Nepal for the first time

NIELS GUTSCHOW



Rajman Singh worked for the British Resident in Kathmandu, Brian Houghton Hodgson, from 1828-1844. But it took another 150 years to make his work known to the world, when Raymond Head 20 years ago published five of his 50 exquisite pencil drawings in the Royal Asiatic Society in London.

These are very different from the water colours produced by Rajman's contemporary, Henry Ambrose Oldfield, who was posted as surgeon at the British Residency in 1850 and who himself produced some 75 paintings which are

now in the British Library and the Royal Geographic Society. When two of Oldfield's paintings were published in the *Illustrated London News* in 1855 they were the first images to make Kathmandu Valley known to the world.

Some of Rajman's 50 drawings from the Asiatic Society are being shown at a rare exhibition in Kathmandu at the Taragaon Museum till 16 December. In 2004, the former curator at the British Library Jeremiah Losty wrote on Rajman Singh's diverse drawings of which a few were published by Hodgson.

Losty observed that these drawings 'grew increasingly skilful and confident in the European manner' and was sure that Rajman saw 'drawings in the picturesque manner' produced by the Calcutta School of painters. He is also sure that Rajman used the camera lucida, an optical device which allows a view to be traced in perspective.

I met Jeremiah Losty at the British Library and David Waterhouse at the Royal Asiatic Society in 2000. I was able to see them handle Rajman's original pencil drawings and was

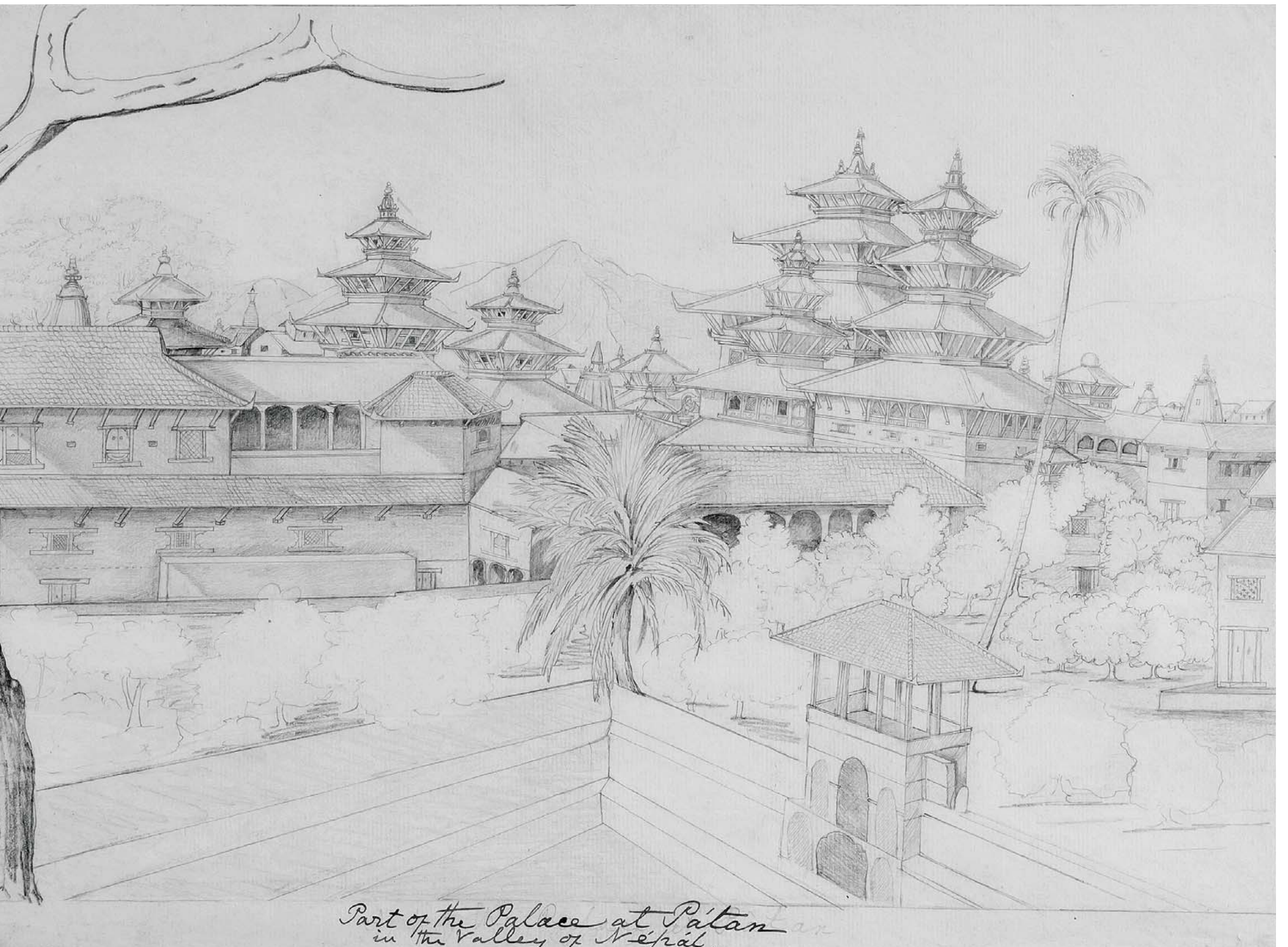
overwhelmed, and was determined to raise money to digitise them for an exhibition in Nepal.

Rajman was from the Chitrakar family of Patan, and was representing the temples of the Newar cities at a time when photography was arriving in the subcontinent. His drawing of the Nyatapola Temple in Bhaktapur chooses to place the pinnacle of the temple into the central axis. The temple is framed by bringing in the top view of the Aisamadu, what is today the Nyatapola Cafe and a tall building to the left which never existed. Rajman



STAMP OF HISTORY: No one really knows what Rajman Singh looked like, but this is how Madan Chitrakar imagined him for a postage stamp in 2012.

intentionally composed his views. His drawing of the Dattatreya Temple captures the background



in detail but the sheet of paper was large enough to add a stele with four representations of the Buddha which were never there.

Rajman not only presented picturesque views, but also documented a few ground plans of temples, albeit without any scale. He does this at a very early time, more than 100 years before Wolfgang Korn produced the first professional measured drawings of Kathmandu's temples in 1968 and which are now kept at the Nepal Architecture Archive.

Rajman presented the Lakshmi-Narayan and Mahadeva temples

at Hatka just opposite the Ibabahi monastery in plan and as a picturesque view. We learn from this drawing that the Mahadeva temple once had a triple-tiered roof, which was replaced after the 1934 earthquake by a clumsy dome. To turn the drawing of the two temples into a picturesque view, he added a palm tree in the foreground which probably stood somewhere in a courtyard but certainly not in the narrow road leading to Ukubaha.


There is also a rather strange composition bringing three temples of the Patan Darbar

Square together. The central one is the Char Narayan, identified by Rajman Singh as Tavadeva Narayan. It is seen in a deplorable state, on the verge of total collapse, but the portals of the ground floor and most of the windows of the upper tiers in place. It was obviously damaged by the earthquake in 1833 and exposed to the rains for a couple of years. The temple was restored and survived the 1934 earthquake, but not the one in 2015.

The Char Narayan Temple needs to be restored, but the question is how? The Kathmandu

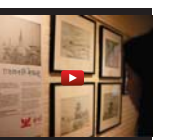
Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT) salvaged the smallest fragments of the ruin and is now putting together the portals so that as much of the original wooden elements as possible are used. This has never been done in historical times. After earlier earthquakes, what was left of destroyed temples would have been used as firewood, new portals would have been carved. The KVPT is using modern material techniques such as highly sophisticated screws, nut bolts and even stainless steel pins.

Unfortunately, heritage conservation is entangled in a

rather dogmatic debate based on belief systems. Indeed, conservation itself represents a belief system. There are many ways to restore and reconstruct a building lost in an earthquake, and no one has a monopoly on the truth. 

*Rajman Singh Exhibition
Taragaon Museum, Hyatt Hotel
22 November to 16 December*

 nepalitimes.com
Watch video



EVENTS



Rajman's Kathmandu,

Don't miss out on the exhibition of artist Rajman Singh's mid-19th century drawings of Kathmandu Valley. Read more on Page 8-9.

Until 16 December, Taragaon Museum, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, Boudha, (01) 5178334

Impact marathon,

Gear up for the 10km, 21 km and 42 km scenic trail route runs as part of the Nepal International Marathon.

26 November, 9 am onwards, Kakani, www.marathonnepal.com

India's policy,

A talk by Carnegie India's Constantino Xavier on New Delhi's new approach to South Asia and what Kathmandu and New Delhi can learn from the past to foster bilateral cooperation in the future.

28 November, 4 to 5.30 pm, Yalamaya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, (01) 5553767



Divine debris,

Attend an exhibition of sculptures by artist Meena Kayastha at Siddhartha Art Gallery.

27 November to 11 January, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited, (01) 4218048/4433930

Karavan Kathmandu,

Join Karavan Kathmandu as the Christmas seasonal markets kick off in Patan. Enjoy the atmosphere as you shop around for high-quality made products and witness the unique Nepalese craftsmanship.

26 November, 12 to 5 pm, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, Karavankathmandu@gmail.com

Book barter,

Put your love of reading to good use and bring along Rs 150 and a book to swap with other book lovers. All proceeds will go to the supplying of books in rural schools.

27 November, 1 to 4 pm, near International friendship Children's Hospital, Maharajganj



Monthly mela,

Live music, art exhibitions, craft workshops, local food, open air flea market and more.

26 November, 1 to 7 pm, BAC Art Café, Pulchowk, Lalitpur

Collaborative master class,

A presentation followed by an open collaborative session with artist Michael Candy discussing physical design, art and political problems that can be resolved using the unique application of technology.

30 November (presentation), 5.30 to 6.30 pm and 1 December (workshop), 10 am to 2.15 pm, Yalamaya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, Apply: <https://goo.gl/forms/ySKAEPoB733Uwuro2>

Japan and Nepal,

Celebrate 60 years of diplomatic relations between Nepal and Japan with a live cultural program, food stalls, games, arts and more.

26 November, 10.30 am onwards, Tundikhel Ground, Free entry



MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI

DINING



Bajeko Sekuwa,

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Gongabu, (01) 4352479

Radisson at sea,

Give your taste buds a treat and enjoy a sumptuous meal at the Norwegian Sea-Food festival.

Till 28 November, 7 pm onwards, Olive Garden Restaurant, Radisson Hotel, Lajimpat, (01) 4411818



Phat Kath,

Offers French-ish food, takeaway crepes, hookahs, and a formidable hip hop soundtrack for everyone.

Thamel, 9803314268

Irish Pub,

Don't miss Kathmandu's most hip and happening pub.

Ananda Bhawan, Lajimpat, (01) 4416027



Wine at Hyatt,

Experience the taste of Torres wines recommended by Josep Plana Monsterrat paired with an evening of delectable food.

3 December, 6.30 to 11 pm, Hyatt Regency, Boudha, Rs 3999 per person

MUSIC



Piano concert,

Famed Filipino pianist Adolovni Acosta will be performing live at KJC followed by a master class the day after the benefit concert. All proceeds collected during the concert will go for the KJC Scholarship Fund.

27 November (concert), 5.30 pm onwards, Rs 500, 28 November (master class), 11 am onwards, (01) 5013554

Ciney live,

Live performance by Ciney Gurung every Friday evening at Shambala Garden Café.

Every Friday, 7 pm onwards, Shambala Garden Café, Hotel Shangri-La, Rs 2000 per person, (01) 4412999 Extn. 7520, 7508

Himalayan Connection live,

Tap to the beats of The Himalayan Connection, a three-man reggae band.

26 November, 6 to 9 pm, Tangalwood, Naxal, (01) 4437486



Music workshop,

Grow in your passion for music through workshops that cover how to pitch your work, impact sponsors and promote new releases.

28 November, 5 & 12 December, Rs 1000 per class, www.katjazz.com.np

Music for a cause,

Groove with bands Atrocity, R.O.G, Squirt Guns, Childwife, Rage Hybrid, Kaal and Tumbleweed Inc. and help them raise funds for street children.

10 December, 12 pm onwards, Purple Haze Rock Bar, Thamel, 98496889967, Rs 300 (Advanced sales), Rs 500 (Door sales)

GETAWAY

Jhule Mountain Resort,

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

Mum's Garden Resort,

Head out to Pokhara for a peaceful and comfortable stay in beautifully designed cottages surrounded by a lush green garden with great views of Phewa Lake and the Annapurna range.

Lakeside, Pokhara, (06)1463468, www.mumsgardenresort.com



Famous Farm,

Wake up to the sounds of chirping birds and a fresh morning breeze wafting in through the Aankhihyal.

Nuwakot, (01) 4700426, info@rural-heritage.com

Balthali Village Resort,

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Balthali, Kavre, 9851075818



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The ecology of worship

Pollution and encroachment of the Vishnumati River have affected the culture and rituals that used to take place along its banks



ALL PICS: RAJANI MAHARJAN



RAJANI MAHARJAN

One of the primary attributes of the sacred Kathmandu civilisation have been the holy rivers that flow through its historic towns. From birth to death, rituals and festivals happen on the banks of the Bagmati and Vishnumati – in fact the rivers themselves are worshipped.

Rapid urbanisation, unplanned growth and waste mismanagement have turned the rivers into sewers. The rivers, frothing with foam, no longer command a divine status due to increasing pollution. While the government and donors have invested a lot of money into preserving the architectural heritage of Kathmandu Valley and its historic core, there hasn't been as much attention paid to restoring the rivers that give life to these temples and festivals. Our sacred rivers are the backbones of our culture and civilisation.

Kathmandu's inhabitants have used the rivers to purify the temples, places of worship and their own bodies, and the waters themselves are connected with life-cycle rituals. River festivals bring people together and the river is used as a part of the ecology of worship, strengthening ties to nature.

Fears of water-borne diseases have forced devotees

to dissociate themselves from the polluted river, supplanting river water with well or tap water. Some people have even started using bottled drinking water for performing rituals. Likewise, the rituals which need to be conducted at the river banks are already being performed inside the house and the offerings that need to be floated away into the river at the end of puja are being thrown somewhere else than the river.

The main cause of river pollution is the direct discharge of untreated sewage and industrial waste, garbage dumping as well as excessive sand mining. A citizen's movement to clean up the Bagmati and Vishnumati has begun, and sewage mains are being constructed to prevent waste water from emptying into the river. As the cleanup of the



Bagmati at Pashupati has shown, a combination of political will and private sector involvement can restore a holy river to its original sanctity.

Although a majority of respondents in a survey were frequently unhealthy, they no longer showed a religious perspective on disease and did not have an educated understanding of how infectious diseases are spread through water pollution and unhygienic surroundings.

People living along the banks chose to take medicines rather than performing puja to get better and they visited medical doctors only when seriously ill. Most of them did not think there was any religious or scientific connection between their poor health and river pollution.

The banks of the Vishnumati

have many important temples and holy sites. The most sacred part of the river is where it joins the Bagmati near Teku. But even here, the overpowering stench, mountains of garbage and pollution has eroded the belief that the river is divine.

The reverence of rivers in early civilisations came from the belief that their waters sustained life, and therefore their cleanliness needed to be protected. That necessity was translated into religious belief that held for millennia. But today,

most people do not equate river pollution and garbage dumping with injecting poison into the veins of the human body.

Aside from human health, the other great cost of the demise of rivers like the Vishnumati will be the rich identity and culture associated with the river. Just like the aquatic life of river, the cultural practices that require the river and its water is also going to become extinct if nothing is done for its improvement. www.friendsofthebagmati.org.np



HOLY WATER

Along the Vishnumati and Bagmati, there are many traditional rituals and religious activities that involve water from the river.

1 River water used to purify temples and homes:

Niti Puja
Palin Chiugu
Satya Narayan Puja

2 River water used to purify the body before worship:

Maghe Sankranti
Ekadashi
Janai Purnima
Teej
Rishi Panchami

3 River water connected to life-cycle rituals:

Rice feeding ceremony
Bara
Janko Puja
Cremation

4 River as a place of worship that brings people together:

Dya Thaeugu
Yalaa:
Naworatri

5 River water as a part of ecology of worship, strengthening ties to nature:

Dasain
Saradha



Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them

J.K. Rowling’s genius lies in her ability to create rich, varied worlds that are full of unforgettable characters. There is a deepness and a darkness in Rowling’s creations that belie the initial perception (to those who have not read the Potter books) that these are “just” children’s



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

stories. There are two fallacies that are inherent in the presumption that children’s literature is facile, the first one assumes that there is no real art required to execute the form, and the second affects that these creations are a lesser genre, conjured to entertain the kiddies and keep them quiet with stories of no

real importance. Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* disproves the first notion thoroughly, and Rowling’s Harry Potter series is a resounding showcase of British stoicism, humour, and a certain magical ingenuity that could only have come from the mind of an Englishwoman who, even through her darkest struggles, has managed to teach her readers, young and old, that emotional intelligence is perhaps the most important kind of all.

Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them is penned by the great Rowling herself in a first, enormously successful attempt at screenwriting. Directed by the talented David Yates who has a clear affinity for the world inhabited by Harry Potter, this new franchise exhibits all of the marvels of that wonderful, strange and often unsettling creation,

but starring a new cast of very promising characters, several of whom have already lodged themselves inextricably in this particular columnist’s brain.

Newt Scamander (Eddie Redmayne) is the star of this show, which introduces and elaborates upon the character’s endearing, particular oddness as he lands in New York City in 1926 on a mysterious mission to Arizona. An unlikely wizard who has hidden depths (quite literally) within his unassuming suitcase, Scamander quickly becomes embroiled (very inadvertently) in an ongoing brouhaha within the wizarding world in the United States. The ensuing chaos involves the eponymous fantastic beasts, a very evil wizard, a disconcerting, thought provoking case of hideous child abuse (an ongoing theme for Rowling if you recall how Harry was treated by the Dursleys), and two love stories between some hilarious eccentrics that bode well for future installments.

Having avidly gobbled up almost everything Rowling has ever written (aside from her first non-Potter novel *The Casual Vacancy*), most of my delight during this film was elicited by absolute ignorance of the plot, so I will do you the same favour by not elaborating further on exact details. You can rest easy that there are the same exquisite details and fierce, tender friendships that you loved in the books, laced with Rowling’s sure touch that guides this film firmly onto the list of things that make us happy. 🇳🇵

 nepalitimes.com
■ Trailer 

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

ALL TOGETHER NOW: Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal holds a crucial meeting on the constitution amendment with Nepali Congress and Madhesi parties on Wednesday.



BIKRAM RAI

UNITED WE STAND: Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal (RPP-N) Chairman Kamal Thapa and Rastriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) Chairman Pashupati Shamsheer Rana shake hands after announcing the unification of their parties in Kathmandu on Monday.



GOPEN RAI

SOLIDARITY WITH KC: Students picket the Office of the Tribhuvan University Vice Chancellor Tirtha Raj Khaniya on Wednesday to put pressure on the government to address Dr Govinda KC’s demands for reforms in the medical education sector.



SONIA AWALE

NATURAL SPEAKER: French Ambassador to Nepal Yves Carmona addresses the Planet Nepal festival on the theme of wildlife conservation organised by the Alliance Francaise in Jawalakhel on Friday.



BIKRAM RAI

FROM DARJEELING WITH LOVE: Singer Bipul Chettri performs during the Nepal Music Festival at Bhrikutimandap on Saturday.

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The surveillance state

Rameshwar Bohara in
Himal Khabarpatrika,
(20-26 November)

हिमाल
खबरपत्रिका

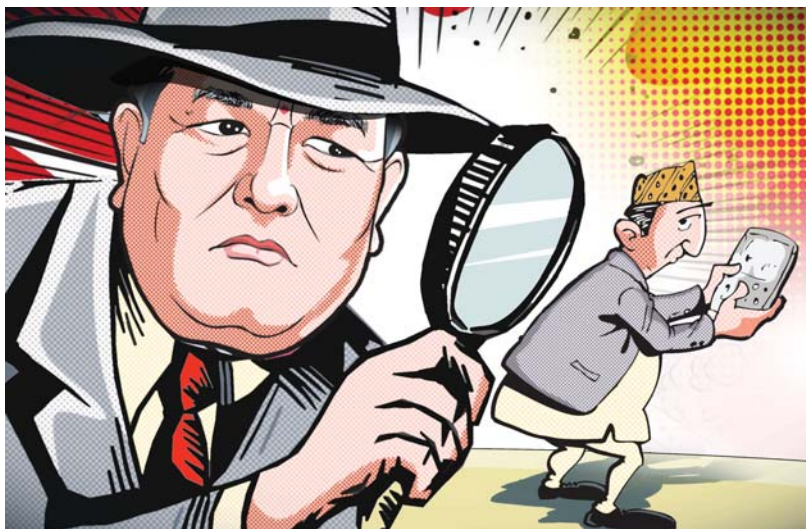
When 157 UML-Maoist MPs registered an impeachment motion against the CIAA Chief Lokman Singh Karki in October, they accused him of abusing his authority and committing crimes against the state.

One of the nine charges against Karki is that he unlawfully snooped on political leaders and security chiefs by collecting their call details and tapping their phone calls.

Phone tapping is illegal, and even police are not authorised to intercept calls even though the Narcotics (Control) Act 1976 and the Prevention of Organized Crime Act 2013 allow them to do it during the investigation of certain cases.

How did Karki gather the wherewithal and the authorisation to listen in to the phones of politicians, businessmen, journalists, lawyers and civil society activists? Parliament could investigate this, but hasn't.

However, after Karki's suspension government agencies and security officials who were earlier afraid of him are now spilling the beans. They are giving details of the elaborate surveillance network that used



BHANU BHATTARAI

to be directed by Karki from his headquarters in Tangal.

It was standard practice for the Home Ministry to second 100 selected policemen to duties at the CIAA. But after Karki's appointment he started to personally handpick senior officers and policemen for positions at the CIAA. He prepared his list of 250 personnel, got it endorsed by the Home Ministry and inducted them into the CIAA headquarters turning it into a barracks.

Shortly after becoming the CIAA Chief, Karki used an inspector to spy on the publisher of an influential newspaper. But the inspector refused and somehow managed to get transferred out of the CIAA. Since then, Karki started working only

with policemen he trusted and personally picked.

Karki sought budget from the Ministry of Finance to set up a state-of-the-art surveillance system, and chose police officers with training in electronic surveillance.

"The fact that he chose the best of our surveillance officers shows that Karki was up to something sinister," said a police AIG. "There is enough evidence that he intercepted calls of leaders, but what we do not know for sure is whether he did it from his own office or through telecommunication companies."

Police are allowed to rely on telecommunication companies to trace calls, SMS and geo-locate suspects in criminal investigations. But the

constitutional provision on the right to privacy does not allow them to intercept and tap phone calls.

There is speculation that some diplomatic missions in Kathmandu have their own equipment to intercept calls without relying on or informing telecommunications companies. The mysterious release in 2013 of an audiotape in which a man alleged to be Maoist leader Krishna Bahadur Mahara was heard requesting a Chinese businessman for Rs 500 million fuelled speculation that phone calls are being tapped in Nepal. The installation of such a system is very expensive, and can cost up to Rs 60 million. "But for Karki, that was not an impossible amount," said one police officer.

The CIAA Act 1991 does not allow the anti-graft body to tap phone calls either, so if Karki was intercepting calls he was doing so clandestinely. Even without such equipment, he could have still arm-twisted telecommunication companies to record phone calls for him. For someone who was harassing the Prime Minister, ministers and MPs, that would not be so difficult.

Using surveillance as a tool of harassment is not new in Nepal. In 2001 after a state of emergency was declared, former Chief Justice Biswanath Upadhyay confided with close friends that royal

army spies were spying on him. But the use of surveillance for harassment, bargaining and personal interests increased after Karki became CIAA Chief. He even used plainclothes policemen to spy on Chief Justice Sushila Karki, forcing the Supreme Court administration to raise this issue with police headquarters.

In April, Nepal magazine had published a letter written by the National Investigation Department (NID) Chief Dilip Regmi to Karki informing him about a 406-page report containing personal and financial details of 42 politicians, 62 bureaucrats, 39 retired bureaucrats and 52 retired and servicing security officers. Regmi also mentioned in the letter that he had prepared the list under the personal instruction of Karki.

As more details emerged, the NID report on personal details of politicians and bureaucrats turned out to be just a tip of the iceberg. It was when political leaders learnt that they were being spied on and could be arrested on corruption charges any time that they felt the need to impeach Karki.

Senior advocate and Nepali Congress MP Radheshyam Adhikari says: "Phone tapping by the CIAA violates citizen's constitutional rights to privacy."



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SHADOWING PRACHANDA

A photographer's pictorial documentation of Pushpa Kamal Dahal from revolutionary to two-time prime minister

“The revolution was a great achievement”

Nepali Times caught up with Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on Thursday morning before his pingpong game for three quick questions.

Nepali Times: How do you feel about the 10 years of peace process? Was the revolution worth it?

Pushpa Kamal Dahal: I feel the revolution was a great achievement for the people and the country. We have done away with a feudal ruler, declared our nation secular with no domination of one religion as our country is of multi-religious, multi-cultural character. The people are exercising full democratic rights and freedom they never experienced before. We have promulgated a constitution by the people's representatives for the first time in the country. With strengthened national unity and end of transition phase these epoch-making transformations are bound to lead our nation forward.

How do you see Nepal's future?

I see a bright future for our country. We have natural, human and cultural resources to develop our nation. We have almost resolved our political issues. With the consensus of all the stakeholders we will be able to fully implement people's constitution. In addition, we have resourceful neighbors ready to support our endeavors for national development.

The job must be stressful. How do you relax?

It's not so stressful. I believe we should not feel burdened and stressed by our own work. I enjoy going out to nature to refresh myself.



20/10
**CONFLICT
ANNIVERSARY**
1996–2006–2016



The Chunbang conference in 2005 was a watershed moment in the Maoist conflict. The war had been going on for nine years, and the revolution was losing momentum.

Prachanda brought forward a proposal to join King Gyanendra to sideline the alliance of seven democratic parties. Vice-chair and party ideologue Baburam Bhattarai opposed the move, and the clash nearly split the party. Bhattarai was expelled, and his wife Hisila Yami along with other supporters were detained.

The two did patch up, and ultimately the party followed Bhattarai's 'democratic republic' line to forge an alliance with the other political parties against the King. This paved the way for the 12-point agreement in New Delhi in November 2005.

Dahal and Bhattarai posed for photographs in Chunbang, pretending that everything was fine between them. It was photographer Dinesh Shrestha (*right*) who snapped the notable moments, just as he had throughout the conflict while shadowing Prachanda as his official photographer.

Some of Shrestha's photographs are rare images from the conflict never published before. Dahal trusted Shrestha not to let any of the photographs fall into the hands of the security forces. For many years of the conflict, no one knew what Prachanda looked like and there were even rumours that he was a fictitious character.

"I used to hide the conflict pictures at my relatives' houses in Kathmandu so that nobody could find them," recalls Shrestha.

Shrestha himself was jailed in 2002 for being a Maoist and more than 1,500 of his pictures from the conflict were confiscated by the Army and he never got them back.

The self-taught photographer followed Dahal closely and describes him as a very committed leader. "He always had this amazing memory and ability to convince everyone with his charm," says Shrestha, "he is a role model."

Shrestha says Dahal liked to be photographed, and knew that what he was doing was historic. He would like to set up an archive of his remaining photographs of the conflict.

Shreejana Shrestha



1 Baburam Bhattarai was reinstated after the Chunbang meeting, and his proposal to combine forces with the seven-party alliance was adopted. He is seen here with his wife, Hisila and Prachanda and his wife Sita in 2005.

2 Prachanda spent most of the conflict years in rented flats in New Delhi and Punjab, and crossed the border to trek to Rukum to attend the Chunbang meeting in 2005. This photograph with Baburam and other comrades was taken en route in Dang. In 2015, Bhattarai finally split and set up his own New Force Party.

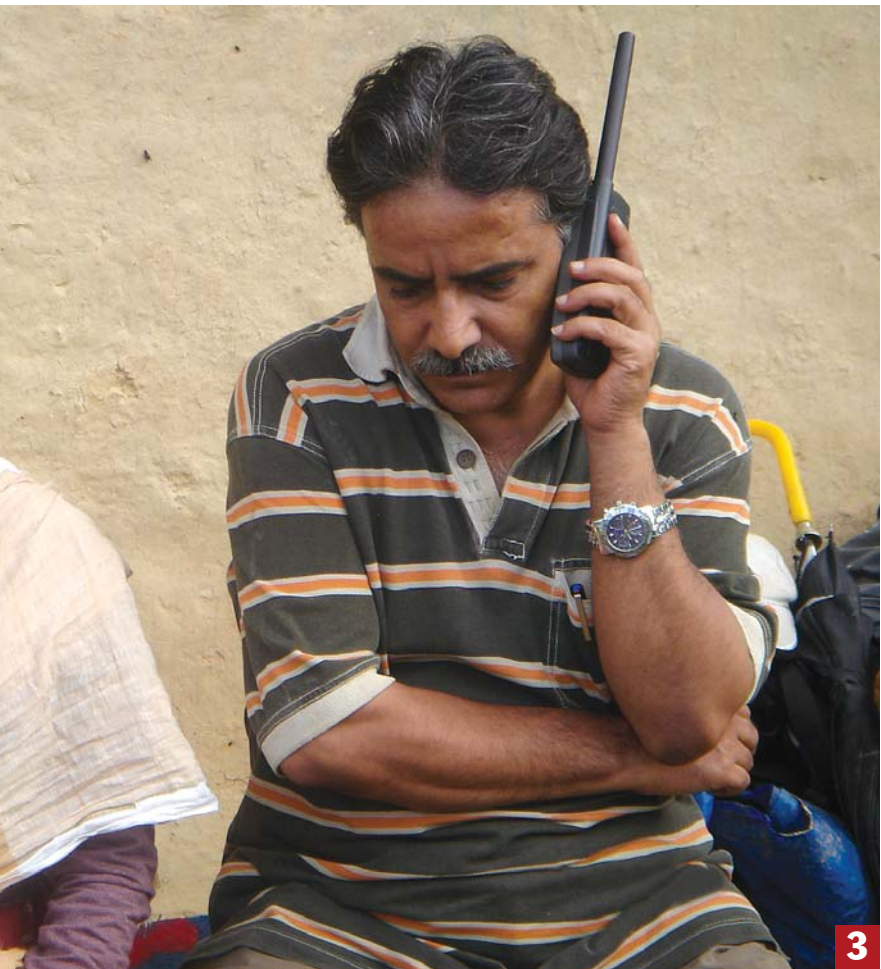
3 Prachanda speaks on a satellite phone with Sita alongside in Dang in 2005. The phones and pre-paid SIMs were sourced from Thailand by the party's procurement chief, Bhakti Prasad Pandey, who died of lung cancer two weeks ago.

4 Prachanda raises the red salute at a training of his guerrilla commanders and party leaders in Rukum in 2002.

5 Pushpa Kamal Dahal with Ram Karki in Rukum after the Chunbang meeting in 2005. Karki is currently Minister of Information and Communication.

6 UML leaders Bam Dev Gautam and Yubraj Gyawali met Prachanda in Rolpa in 2005 to prepare the groundwork for the 12-point agreement signed in New Delhi later that year. Also seen at left is Netra Bikram Chand (Biplab) who split from the party and now wants to continue with the revolution.

7 During his second tenure as Prime Minister, Pushpa Kamal Dahal wakes up every day at 5:30 AM and plays table tennis before meeting people in Baluwatar.



ALL PICS: DINESH SHRESTHA

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Equal treatment for all

Hold it right there. Where do you suppose you are going? You think you can just walk in here and start reading this column? Stand back, we need to frisk you first. Do you have a photo ID? What is your username? What is your password? Are you 18 year or older? Do you have security clearance to read this stuff? Here, fill out this form and bring it back duly rubber stamped by a public notary, we will take five working days to process your application and we will notify you by post.

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POUR SOMETHING
SMOOTH

Easy for you, isn't it. Do you have any idea how difficult it is to produce this junk week in and week out? Anyway, here is my 15-point demand and if they are not met within two weeks, I will begin a decisive relay hunger strike, which means skipping afternoon snacks. And if my ultimatum is not honoured in letter and spirit, I will stop writing this column. And that's a threat.

This is the land of jatras and we have the right to protest for and against anything, including the right to protest against protesters blocking streets. So, you hooligans, go forth and multiply and exercise your demographic rights with these bright new ideas:

1. Dacoits, crooks, highway robbers and revenue officials can organise a motorcycle rally demanding an immediate 20 percent increase in kickbacks, embezzlements, and bribes to keep up with inflation. "We haven't had an increase in decades," said one red-handed Cross-Section Officer.
2. Taxi drivers will park their vehicles and block the main roads in the city by burning their spare tyres to demand the right to cheat passengers for another fiscal year.
3. Pre-emptively protest any plans the Trump Administration may be hatching to scrap the US Diversity Visa lottery. Carry placards with slogans including: 'The Green Card is a Basic Human Right', 'Long Live Imperialist Running Dogs', or 'Yankees, Go Home, And Take Us With You'.
4. The main partner in the ruling coalition can organise an anti-government rally with angry slogans like: 'Down With Our Very own Government', 'Our Turn



To Ruin the Country', or 'I am Disgruntled Also'

5. Nepal Electrocution Authority employees are about to launch a decisive nationwide movement to protest the end of load-shedding which has deprived them of a guaranteed side income for the past 20 years. Rallying cry: 'Keep Nepal Dark, Raise Our Per Capita Income'
6. Rally of Ex-Ministers also demanding 5 million for international hospitalisation. Only one slogan: "We Also Want Equal Treatment"
7. Journalists' March: News hounds and houndesses from all walks of life, including columnists and their fellow-communists, will walk to Parliament after brunch on Saturday for no particular reason. Said one scribe to this scribe: "It's a slow news day and we were bored stiff." The march was chaired by His Excellency Richie Dhamala.



The Ass

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