



Crusading physician Govinda KC's fast enters its 19th day on Friday. Even as his health deteriorates, Parliament shows no sign giving in to his demands to clean up the greed and corruption in medical education that keeps Nepal's health care unaffordable and inaccessible to citizens.

This week, Parliament fast tracked the National Medication Education Bill 2016, but not in the way KC has demanded. He had wanted a 10-year moratorium on new private medical colleges, but the draft submitted to the Social Welfare Committee of Parliament to be tabled in the House on Friday does not meet that demand.

In fact, the taskforce is said to have added a clause to the bill allowing medical colleges which had already received their Letter of Intent and built infrastructure, to go ahead. If the bill is passed, at least five new medical colleges will spring up in Kathmandu Valley alone.

KC rejected the draft and his negotiators have refused to talk with the government. After 18 days without food and water on Thursday, the doctor is sinking fast. Physician Dibya Singh at Teaching Hospital warned: "He may pass out and need medical resuscitation at any time."

Both the ruling and opposition party MPs reject KC's demand, saying no one can infringe on the right of the legislature to pass laws. Sociologist Chaitanya Mishra agrees, but adds: "If owners of banks, private schools and private medical colleges pass bills in the guise of MPs it is not acceptable."

Private medical colleges are either owned by politicians or have political protection. Given the scant disregard politicians showed towards another hunger striker, Nanda Prasad Adhikari who died during his fast in 2014, there is now reason to fear for Govinda KC's life. 🇳🇵

Om Astha Rai



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3-PARTY DICTATORSHIP

Ever since the conflict ended, Nepal’s political transition has inexorably concentrated decision-making power in the hands of the alpha males of the three main political parties. The Nepali Congress (NC), UML and the Maoists are the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost of Nepali politics, and their leaders Sher Bahadur Deuba, KP Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal have consolidated power both within their parties, and together over the Kathmandu establishment.

Reading the headlines in the papers these days it may seem like they are at each other’s throats, but that is an illusion. All three work hand-in-glove to preserve and protect their stranglehold on Nepali politics. The 10 governments in the last 10 years have been, in the main, permutations of these three parties. The last four coalition governments after the 2013 elections have just shuffled the cards, with the weakest of the three parties wielding the most clout because of its king-maker role in government formation.

In normal circumstances it could be considered a good thing that adversarial parties like the NC and the Maoists can work together even though their leaders, lest we forget, tried to kill each other off

not too long ago. But these are not normal times. The farce played out in Bharatpur is an extreme example of the unprincipled you-scratch-my-back-I-scratch-yours brand of politics today: Dahal convinced Deuba to withdraw the NC’s mayoral candidate in Bharatpur and support his daughter Renu. When it looked like she might lose, Maoists tore up ballot papers and later the coalition partners leaned on the Election Commission and the Supreme Court to order a recount.

The NC-Maoist combine regrouped and pipped the UML candidate by a razor-thin margin. A sign of the times was the photograph of the Maoist and Congress flags stitched together at Renu Dahal’s victory rally last week.

Shameful collective greed and power was also on full display this week in the talks the three parties held about addressing the demands of Govinda KC, who on Friday is on the 19th day of his fast unto death to reform medical education. (*See page 1*)

The kakistocracy has also been hard at work through its MPs to roll back the gains in devolving power to elected local village councils and municipalities by passing a bill in Parliament to limit their revenue-raising powers.

In the absence of elected VDCs and DDCs, the three parties ruled the country for the past decade through what they cynically called a ‘Political Mechanism’ – dividing up the spoils so that local budgets went into personal and party coffers. They either control, or influence, just about every other constitutional institution in the country.

Public apathy and disillusionment with the political parties, fed by ridicule on social media and the op-ed pages, is at its peak.

Time is now ripe for a credible alternative force to rise and challenge this stagnant status quo.

GUEST EDITORIAL RAMESHWOR BOHARA

Fix a date

After trailing badly in the first two phases of local elections, the Nepali Congress and Maoists are trying their best to make up ground in the third phase on 18 September in Province 2. However, in doing so they are both vying for votes from the Tarai-based RJP-N, and also have to contend with the UML, which is trying to build on its gains elsewhere. Both Sher Bahadur Deuba and KP Oli are campaigning in the plains, and the UML is suddenly raising the problems of the Tarai in Parliament.

The recently united RJP-N, however, is already on the verge of a split as the party is pushed into a corner in Province 2. It is having a public spat about how strongly to push for constitutional amendments before agreeing to contest polls. The Indian Ambassador in Kathmandu has reportedly met RJP-N leaders and urged them to take part, and he also drove over to Balkot last week to invite Oli to the Indian Republic Day ceremony. Oli is said to have expressed his doubts to him about whether the NC and Maoists were serious about provincial and parliamentary polls.

There is a constitutional deadline to hold those elections by 21 January 2018. There are signs that sections of both the NC and Maoists (still smarting from their poor showing in local polls) want to put off voting. Four-time prime minister Sher Bahadur Deuba’s record

on holding elections is also not very good. In 2002, he postponed local polls at the last moment, and they were not held again for 15 years. He was later sacked by King Gyanendra in 2005 for his inability to hold parliamentary elections he himself had precipitated by dissolving the House.

Despite reports that the Indian Ambassador is pushing for elections, there is talk that some in New Delhi don’t want elections under a Constitution it still dislikes. Deuba is scheduled to visit New Delhi this month, and there is concern that he may have to take orders there that he cannot refuse.

To be sure, the elections bills in Parliament are ready to be passed. The Elections Commission says it is ready, but may not be able to hold parliamentary and provincial polls together. If it gets really hectic, parliamentary elections can take place and the provincial one can be put off. Senior NC and Maoists admit the government has run out of excuses to postpone elections. That bodes well, but as long as Deuba is PM there will always be doubts.

Rameshwor Bohara is Senior Correspondent at *Himal Khabarpatrika*.

ONLINE PACKAGES



TALKING BREAST CANCER

Most breast cancer patients in Nepal wait too late for treatment, due to lack of awareness about the illness and taboos surrounding reproductive health. Watch a young breast cancer survivor speak about her battle with the disease, how she overcome stigma, and learn how early detection can mean a greater chance of survival.



MUSTANG MONSOON

Mustang has everything for everyone: pilgrimage, scenery, leisure, adventure. But three months of the rainy season are regarded as ‘off season’ and few tourists visit. This week we take you to the scenic Jomsom and holy Muktinath. See for yourself what you are missing by staying away.

INTERNAL MIGRATION

Kate Ryan’s story about internal trafficking in Nepal generated vibrant debate on the *Nepali Times* site about politically-backed manpower agencies, a patriarchal society perpetuating the cycle, and efforts by local organisations and women-led campaigns to stop trafficking. A sample of the feedback:

■ Where is the most important question about the connections between the manpower companies and political parties that are at the centre of the trafficking? (‘Internal Need’, Kate Ryan #870)? All such trafficking happens because of some involvement of the manpower companies protected by their political cronies. Until that issue is tackled head on, all other efforts are just superficial.

Lamat Pintet

■ For a piece that is purportedly about trafficked women, the fact that not one such woman has been quoted is quite bizarre. The writer treats women who have been trafficked as a backward group that cannot speak for itself or whose opinions and voices do not matter. A Kathmandu-based male then decides who these women are (‘we found them very ignorant’) and the piece uncritically accepts his position without thinking it necessary to question why these women choose the work they do. I’m happy the piece highlights and praises the work that volunteer non-profits are doing, but does not mention or describe any local, grassroots, women-led movements that work in their own communities. It promotes the narrative of Kathmandu organisations that know what is best for rural women and save them from being trafficked.

Amanda

■ We live in the dark ages, and the Nepali men are savages. The laws are weak and the pimps and the traffickers bribe the corrupt police to look the other way. What does this tell you about where out country is. The moral decay of Nepali fabric is directly related to a corrupt government and leaders.

Kabita Basnet

WHAT'S TRENDING



Pride Parade

by *Bikram Rai*

The *Nepali Times* online photo blog of the LGBTIQ community and supporters participating in the annual Gaijatra Pride Parade in Kathmandu was most popular on social media last week. Go online to view more pictures of the bright and colourful event.

Most reached and shared on Facebook
(7,903 people reached, 19 shares)

Most popular on Twitter
(61 retweets, 150 likes)

Internal Need

by *Kate Ryan*

While cross-border trafficking of Nepali women gets all the attention, domestic trafficking does not. This report was the most viewed story, and generated a lively discussion online. Visit nepalitimes.com to watch an uplifting video of how at-risk women have found jobs and financial security through math skills.

Most visited online page

Most commented

QUOTE TWEETS

Nepali Times @nepalitimes
Members of the #LGBTIQ community and their supporters take part in the annual Gaijatra Pride Parade on Tuesday More: <http://bit.ly/2HFnB5q>

Silva Mathema @silvamathema
When culture and tradition blends with progressive values #nepal #gaijatra

Nepali Times @nepalitimes
In #Nepal, child brides & grooms convince peers they are too young to get married. <http://bit.ly/2v2ovDr> @SoniaAwale #childmarriage

Sudeep Uprety @UpretySudeep
It is high time we focus on #adolescents, empowering them to realise child marriage is a big NO NO with community support. @GAGE_programme

Nepali Times @nepalitimes
Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba’s India visit date has been finalised, but not his agenda. <http://bit.ly/2uiOu6d>

Iswari Pandey @ippandey
No point since Deuba has no clear agenda for Nepal either! #Nepal #Deuba

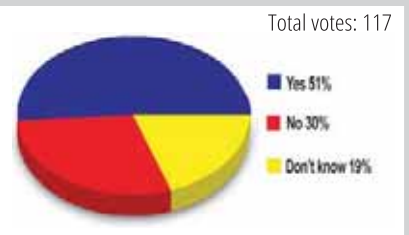
Rajendra Dahal @RDahal62
Perhaps you are talking about past days when ‘Agendas’ were relevant and necessary things for a PM visit!!

Santosh @wahakiparvat
Mr. Prime Minister @PM_Nepal @DeubaSherbdr it is important to strengthen ties with neighbours but plz don’t go just for the sake of going!



Weekly Internet Poll #871

Q. Can the new Bibeksheel Sajha Party break through in coming elections and become an influential force?



Weekly Internet Poll #872
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. How do you assess the performance of the Deuba government after two months?



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Publisher and Chief Editor: **Kunda Dixit**
Associate Editor: **Om Astha Rai** | Design: **Kiran Maharjan**
Published by **Himalmedia Pvt Ltd** | Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur | GPO Box 7251 Kathmandu
editors@nepalitimes.com | www.nepalitimes.com | www.himalmedia.com | Tel: 01-5005601-08 Fax: +977-1-5005518
Marketing: **Arjun Karki, Surendra Sharma** rachanas@himalmedia.com | Subscriptions: **Santosh Aryal** santosha@himalmedia.com
Printed at Jagadamba Press | 01-5250017-19 | www.jagadambapr.com





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Different regionalisms

It is important to get SAARC back on its feet, without denying the importance of the sub-regional BIMSTEC

There was once a multi-headed, consensual priesthood named SAARC which started out with seven priests and later added an eighth. It tumbled along for 30 years, not achieving great fame and fortune, but not hurting anyone either. It was at least a forum for the clergy to gather around the altar and sway to the hymns of regionalism.



That is the story of SAARC, which has been placed in suspended animation under Narendra Modi, who is out to teach Pakistan a lesson for being recalcitrant in so many regional initiatives. The latest being a SAARC motor vehicles agreement that was being prepared for signing at the November 2014 SAARC Summit in Kathmandu. The erstwhile Gujarat Chief Minister Modi started his term as Prime Minister of India as a regionalist, inviting the neighbouring presidents and prime ministers to his inauguration darbar in May 2014. He also unilaterally announced a SAARC Satellite to be launched by India to help development work in regional countries, a good initiative that could nevertheless have benefited from prior consultation. The crucial departure point was marked by Modi's address at the 18th Summit at the newly refurbished City Hall, where he



INDIA'S SECURITY UMBRELLA: Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj welcomed by Ambassador Manjeev Puri in Kathmandu for BIMSTEC Meet.

delivered the finely crafted lines: "The bonds will grow. Through SAARC or outside it. Among us all or some of us. We can all choose our paths to our destinations." The next departure was India's refusal to attend the 19th Summit slated for Islamabad following the militant attack

on Uri in September 2016. The chairmanship would also have passed from Nepal to Pakistan in Islamabad. Pushpa Kamal Dahal as Prime Minister of Nepal and concurrent Chair of SAARC had no capacity or inclination to argue with Modi even as he watched the application of the tranquiliser

syringe. The other heads of government also proved unwilling to take on the Delhi juggernaut. Islamabad did not protest too loudly either, preoccupied as it was with its own political turmoil and its attempts to reach out to Central Asia, China, Iran and the Gulf emirs. South Asian regionalism was thus allowed to slide in a manner that does not do justice to a region with nearly a fourth of the world's population, with its shared history, and the need for economic growth and social justice. With all its obvious weaknesses, SAARC signifies acceptance by the rulers of the need for peace, stability and cooperation in southern Asia. Besides losing three decades, allowing SAARC to gather dust on the top shelf would mean massive lost opportunities, and lead to exacerbated tensions among the region's countries. It would also push Pakistan further away from the South Asian fold, denying our civilisational history that began in the Indus plains. Certainly, SAARC could not function without participation of the second most populous member. The entire BIMSTEC Secretariat, officers and staff, headquartered in Dhaka, have moved to Kathmandu for the foreign minister's summit here this week, while the SAARC Secretariat at Thamel is jobless. The new SAARC Secretary General from Pakistan is finally at his desk, but there is no saying when he can get really active – much hinges on when Narendra

Modi decides that the time is right to allow the 19th Summit to happen. For now, the Indian prime minister seems intent on excluding Pakistan from regional activities, and does not seem shy even of using BIMSTEC for the purpose. The 'outcome document' signed at the BIMSTEC Summit in Goa in October 2016 included a pointed reference to Pakistan in the paragraph condemning terrorism. BIMSTEC was started in June 1997 as a sub-regional grouping for inter-state cooperation, the acronym originally signifying 'Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar – Economic Cooperation'. With the accession of Nepal and Bhutan in 2004, a title was required to justify the original acronym, and hence the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. Quite a mouthful. The overall collaborative regional format for the nation-states of South- and Southeast Asia should be such that organisations are complementary and cross-cutting. SAARC should prosper and so must BIMSTEC, and while the regionwide SAARC may emphasise peace, security and economic cooperation, the sub-regional grouping may more efficiently manage infrastructure and socio-economic matters. India's interest in promoting BIMSTEC should therefore be seen as positive and forward looking, while its insistence on putting SAARC in cold storage must be critiqued. A weakening SAARC can only make South Asia a more dangerous place, which is why we must try to get SAARC back on its feet. The first step for which would have to be holding the 19th Summit in Islamabad. As current chair of both SAARC and BIMSTEC, Nepal has the responsibility to move both organisations forward. Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, whose country hosts the SAARC Secretariat, must in his forthcoming visit to New Delhi try to convince Narendra Modi on resuscitating the organisation. 🇳🇵

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Rebuilding a dream

Progress for many who lost homes in the earthquake is painfully slow, still slower for others



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More than two years after the earthquakes of 2015, most people whose houses were heavily damaged or destroyed still haven't started rebuilding. The figure is 50% or greater in all districts except for Gorkha (48%), Syangja (33%) and Solukhumbu, where an incredible 91% have begun the task, found early results of the fourth survey in a series led by The Asia Foundation.

Other results are equally shocking. For instance, 23% of people in the 11 earthquake-affected districts were still living in temporary shelters. In Sindhupalchok the figure was 84%. At the other end of the scale was Lamjung (1%).

Among people who had received the first tranche of the housing grant, 47% did not know the requirements for getting the second tranche. That included 61%

of women and 60% of so called low-caste people.

There has been improvement. Sixty-two percent of people in the most-affected districts reported living in temporary shelters, compared to 71% in September 2016. The survey is part of the Independent Impacts and Recovery Monitoring Project carried out in April 2017 by Interdisciplinary Analysts for The Asia Foundation (TAF), with support from UK aid agency DfID and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

"The shelter and housing situation is improving but there is still a long way to go and progress has been slower than that following many other disasters in the region," says TAF's conflict lead, Patrick Barron. "There are some areas where progress has been particularly slow."

Marginalised groups are recovering

more slowly. Across all districts, 44% of people with a low income (below Rs10,000 per month) are still in shelters, compared to 20% with a medium income (Rs10,000-19,999) and 10% with a high income (Rs20,000 or more). 46% of low-caste people whose house saw major damage are still in shelters compared to 32% of high-caste people who had the same housing damage, Barron said.

The TAF briefing note points out that the differences 'are a product of differing abilities to recover rather than differing initial impacts from the earthquakes'.

In a recent article in this paper, Govind Raj Pokharel of the Nepal Reconstruction Authority (NRA) said work in the coming year would focus on ensuring that 'deprived and marginalised groups, including single mothers, the elderly, people with disabilities, the extreme poor, and Dalits, are not left behind'.

But Pokharel downplayed expectations: 'Our institutional capacities are weak, we lack skilled human resources and flexible financial mechanisms, and the country is in the midst of a political transition. Today the resource gap for physical rebuilding stands at \$3.9 billion but if we can add financing, we can complete most reconstruction in the next three years.'

In its latest full report in May 2017 following the third survey in the series, TAF called for urgent action on shelter and housing.

As in the earlier three surveys (June 2015, Feb-March 2016 and Sept 2016) 4,854 people were interviewed, where possible the same ones. Full results of the survey will be released in September.

Marty Logan

prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

Tibetan Airlines lands

Tibet Airlines has started direct Chengdu-Kathmandu-Chengdu flights four days a week. The Lhasa-based airline will operate Airbus 319s on the route, bringing the total number of flights to Chinese cities to and from Kathmandu to 35 a week.

Gas station strike

Long lines have started appearing at petrol stations as private dealers put pressure on Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) to increase compensation for evaporation during transport. NOC itself is under investigation for a land scam.

Baby-friendly Turkish

Turkish Airlines has introduced specially designed baby packs for families who fly with babies up to two years of age. They include a diaper changing mat, disposable baby bib, rash cream,

baby lotion, baby shampoo, wipe and breast pad.

Visa-free entry

Qatar will allow visa-free entry for citizens of 80 countries, effective immediately.



They will no longer need to apply or pay for a visa and will get free, multi-entry waiver at the port of entry.

Styleback in town

Sipradi Trading on Wednesday launched in Nepal the 'StyleBack' Tata Tigor which it says is intelligently engineered with superior legroom, is priced at Rs2.34 million for the Revotron 1.2L (petrol variant).



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India and China at tri-junctures

The Doklam standoff has driven a wedge between India and Bhutan

NEW DELHI — Nearly two months after it flared up, the standoff between China and India in the Doklam region of Bhutan is showing no sign of resolution. For New Delhi, the best possible scenario would be a mutual troop withdrawal by both armies and a return to the pre-16 June status quo near the strategic point where the borders of India, China and Bhutan meet.



DEL-KTM
Akanshya Shah

But India's offer last week for a mutual 250m withdrawal from the border has been already rejected by the Chinese, who instead claim that since India is in a third country's territory, there is little to negotiate about unless Indian soldiers withdraw unilaterally first.

India, on the other hand, has maintained an unusual silence over the matter. External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj did speak in Parliament, stating that the problem could be resolved only through dialogue. But there has been only one MEA statement, on 30 June, which said that the construction of a new road by China was a violation of the 1988 and 1998 agreements between Bhutan and China. It added that this had serious security implications for India.

There is speculation that the two governments are in touch, but what, if any, progress has been made is unknown. India's national security adviser, Ajit Doval, took up Indian concerns with the Chinese during his visit to China last month. But nothing public was said and in fact, China since then has stepped



up criticism of India through its media.

What complicates things is that India and Bhutan do not seem to be on the same page over the crisis. Some Indian security experts say India unilaterally sent additional troops to the Bhutan-China border without Bhutan's consent. It has emerged that Thimphu has long desired to end its border dispute with China. In 2002 and 2012 China-Bhutan talks, Beijing is said to have wanted to swap territory in north-western Bhutan with a region along the central border as a package deal. India opposed this as it would have weakened its own border talks with the Chinese.

For the first time, Bhutanese academics and journalists have

been openly critical of India, and some young Bhutanese have expressed strong anti-Indian positions in their blogs and on social networking sites. The standoff, therefore, has driven a wedge between India and Bhutan.

Given the rigid positions of India and China there are indications the crisis may drag on till winter. Neither nuclear power may want to risk a full-fledged war, but the dispute has opened some important facets. First, it has exposed the possibility of future flare-ups along other disputed parts of the Himalayan border. There have been standoffs before, notably in Dopsang in Ladakh four years ago, which took three weeks to resolve. This time, the Chinese want Indian troops to withdraw

even before any dialogue can take place.

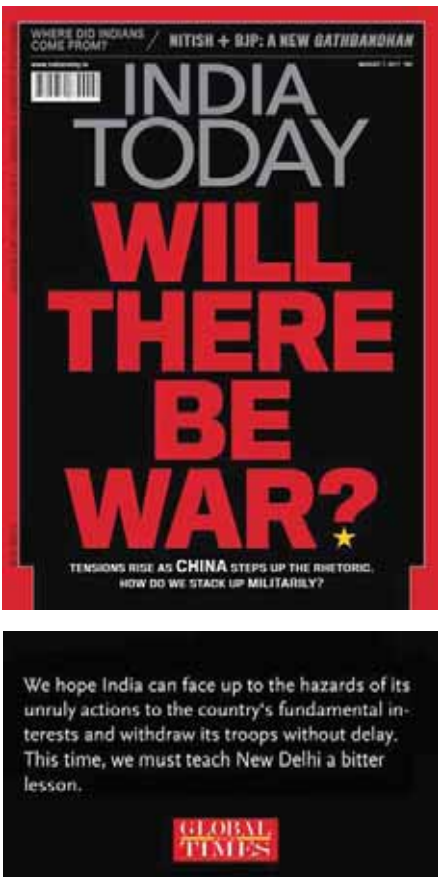
Second, China is openly challenging India's traditional space in South Asia. Besides its all-weather friendship with Pakistan, China is competing with India for influence in Nepal and Sri Lanka, and now with India's closest ally Bhutan. All this is a reflection of China's increasing international clout at a time when the United States appears to be taking a back seat.

Third, China appears to be sensitive to Indian efforts to seek strategic partnerships with the US and Japan – especially because of their joint naval exercises in the Indian Ocean.

South Asia's smaller countries, like Nepal and Bhutan,

need to urge their giant neighbours to strive for greater strategic maturity. Nepal Foreign Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara rightly stated this week that Nepal will not take sides in the current dispute, an important position statement just before Prime Minister Deuba arrives here next week for his first visit after taking office.

Deuba needs to tread carefully since Nepal has a similar tri-junction border dispute in Lipu Lekh, and Chinese officials have hinted that the Sino-Indian understanding of it (which left out Nepal) could be raised. Nepal's interest was dented when India and China were friends, but it will be much more damaging for us if the India and China dispute intensifies. 🇳🇵





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An active monsoon front is pushing its way across Nepal, and its trailing edge will be with us till early next week. This translates into copious precipitation right across the mid-mountains with snow flurries in the higher reaches. Skies will be mostly overcast, with passing showers, sometimes intense at night. By Sunday afternoon the bulk of the monsoon pulse will have moved west but localised convection systems will persist. Attire: umbrellas and gumboots.

FRIDAY	24° 19°	SATURDAY	23° 20°	SUNDAY	23° 19°
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The guilt of freedom

Saga of an Indian-Chinese family interned during the 1962 war has resonance today

As the Quit India movement gathered strength, the British colonial authorities in Delhi built an internment camp in the village of Deoli in the Rajasthan desert. One of the inmates in the many huts there in the 1930s was Jawaharlal Nehru. The British finally left India in 1947. Nehru became prime minister, and in the spirit of pan-Asian solidarity built strong rapport with Mao Zedong. ‘Hindi Chini Bhai Bhai’ was the rallying cry in those post-colonial times. This friendship did not last, and a dispute over sections of the 2,500km Himalayan border between the two countries (demarcated by Henry McMahon in 1913 but never officially recognised by China) flared into open warfare in 1962. More than 2,000 Chinese traders and businessmen who had settled down during British times in Calcutta, Darjeeling and



Northeastern India were rounded up, jailed and then transported in trains to Deoli, where many spent up to five years. Yin Marsh was 13 then, and her family was assigned the shed (pictured above) in which 30 years previously the same Nehru, who ordered the internment of Indians of Chinese origin, had been detained by the British.

Marsh (left) and her eight-year-old brother were released after a few months with the help of her mother, who had moved to Kathmandu to set up a hotel, restaurant and beauty parlour. Among her customers were members of Nepal’s royal family, and the American Embassy staff helped get the siblings out of Deoli and flew them to Kathmandu. Marsh had decided to forget the injustice, pain and separation of her early life, and after marrying an American diplomat at the Kathmandu embassy moved to the United States. But upon learning how little even the younger generation of Indian Chinese knew about the internment camps, she decided to write *Doing Time with Nehru*. The book has resonance today as relations between India and China are once more strained. Marsh begins her book with

a harsh reminder of the high-handedness of Indian officialdom when a rude policemen at Dum Dum threatens to arrest her for taking pictures as her extended family returns to Calcutta for a reunion in 2001. *Doing Time with Nehru* doesn’t have the sweeping historical tour d’horizon of Wendy Ng’s *Japanese American Internment During World War II*, or others like Kimi Cunningham Grant’s epic story of her grandmother in *Silver Like Dust: One Family’s Story of America’s Japanese Internment*. But Yin Marsh paints a raw picture of the consequences to individual lives when recurring racist ruthlessness leads insecure governments to arbitrarily treat an entire emigrant population as an enemy when war breaks out. Like Yin Marsh’s family, most Indian Chinese never got their property back, many returned to



Doing Time with Nehru:
The Story of an Indian-Chinese Family
Zubaan Books, New Delhi 2015
190 pages, INR 495

Mao’s China after being released and others are scattered all over the world. Her book is another tragic reminder of how families are torn apart and lives ruined when they are trapped in wars waged by men. **Kunda Dixit**

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Think pink

As breast cancer cases multiply, survivors break taboos and talk about the disease so it can be detected and treated early

SONIA AWALE

By the time she was 32, Suvekchya Ghimire had a promising career, a supportive family and breast cancer. For the first time in her young life the UK-based consultant overcame social taboos to talk openly about reproductive health (*see her article, below*). As she undergoes treatment, she is determined to spread awareness about the disease so it can be detected and treated early.

Breast cancer turned Pramita Kharel's life upside down. She was working in a development agency when she was diagnosed at age 40. After the initial shock, she found out it could be treated because it was diagnosed early. Now, she is determined to spread the message about regular self-examination, and counsels patients, some of them as young as 18.

Kharel and Ghimire are relatively lucky. Oncologists at Nepal's hospitals say there has been a noticeable increase in the incidence of breast cancer among younger Nepalis, in whom the malignancies are usually more aggressive, and most wait too

late for treatment by which time the tumour has usually metastatised.

"There has been an increase in the number of breast cancer cases here, especially among well-to-do urban families," says Sudip Shrestha, an oncologist at Nepal Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in Harisiddhi. "But there is also more awareness now about breast cancer, and as a result patients respond to treatment because they are coming in during the initial stages."

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among females worldwide and the second most common in Nepal, after cervical cancer. About 1 in every 10 female cancers in the country is breast cancer, and that proportion is increasing. Public health expert Aruna Uprety thinks the incidence could be even higher because a large number of breast cancer cases still go undetected in rural Nepal. "This could just be the tip of the iceberg," she told us.

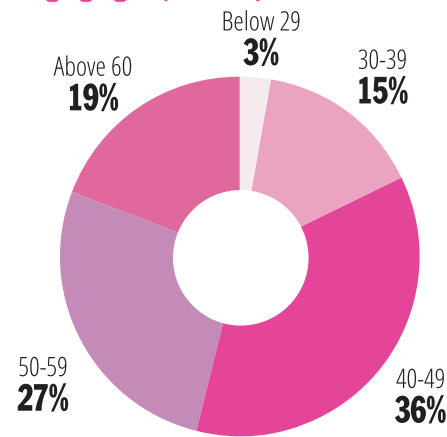
Studies in 2013 and 2016 concluded that a quarter of all breast cancer patients are below age 40, and that the malignancy is in an advanced stage and spreading by the time they are diagnosed.

"Breast cancer in younger women are



ON THE ALERT: Senior medical oncologist Sudip Shrestha consults a younger patient with her mammogram report at Nepal Cancer Hospital and Research Centre this week.

Prevalence of breast cancer among age groups in Nepal



more aggressive. We need to give special attention to early diagnosis in younger age groups," says Shrestha.

Unlike cancer of the cervix, breast cancer spreads rapidly due to its close proximity to the lungs, often leading to pulmonary metastasis. Follow-ups are also important because 10% of breast cancer cases suffer relapse after treatment of the primary tumour. Studies have shown that the average onset age of breast cancer in the high-risk age group is 10 years earlier than in developed western countries.

A study last year by the Nepal Cancer Hospital and Research Centre, confirmed by other surveys, showed that women in

Let's talk about boobs

As a teenager, my mother told me about two things: one was about my periods and the other was about growing breasts. The only other information I received about reproductive health was about sanitary pads and sports bras.



TESTIMONY

Suvekchya Ghimire

Since then, every so often, if my dress was too low she would give me that stare. My father, like most fathers in Nepal, never acknowledged my growing womanhood and left the responsibility to my mother.

We are told not to speak openly about our breasts or our reproductive organs. Our culture celebrates women as goddesses, but also puts women

behind bars in *chhaupadi*. Some argue that it's our culture, but this means internalising the taboos.

Women feel forced into unsafe abortions. They contract STDs and are too embarrassed or too afraid of judgment to seek help. Parents don't feel comfortable to discuss these issues and few schools include them as part of their curriculum. After having gone through treatment for breast cancer I realised that breaking taboos is the first step to saving lives. It is as important as medical treatment.

I was living a perfectly healthy life: doing regular yoga for over three years, eating mostly organic, and had a balanced life in general. I didn't smoke, I was a social drinker – just an average girl.

That morning in May, before going for a shower, my gut said something was not right when I looked at myself in the mirror. My doctor confirmed there were no visible lumps, no discoloration, no discharge, no inversion of the nipples. I didn't want to

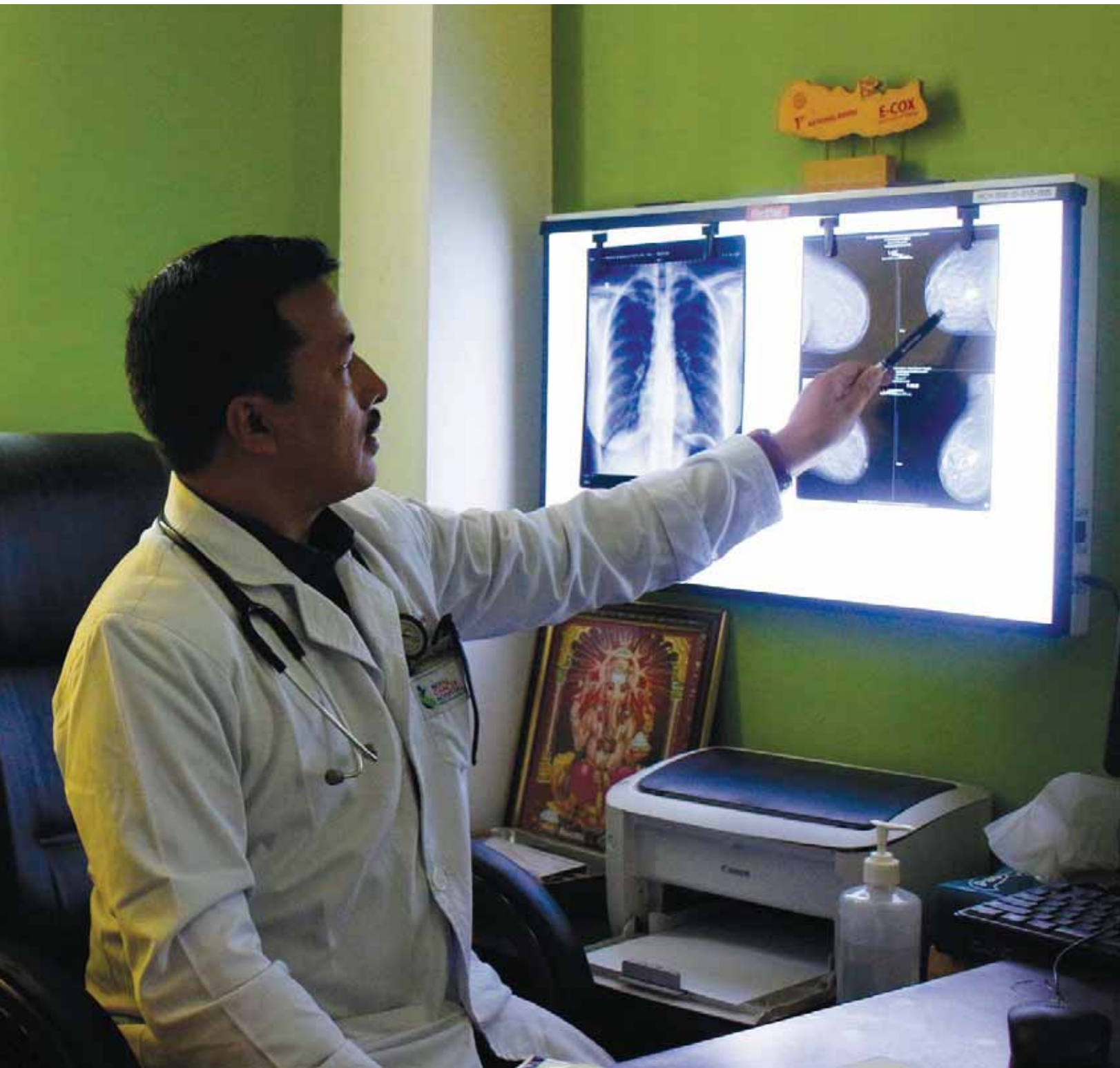
leave it at that, and insisted on seeing a specialist. I got an inconclusive ultrasound that led to a biopsy, which then confirmed invasive carcinoma, Stage 2.

Fast forward through all the emotional turmoil and the most daunting part: The Treatment. That I had cancer was an inescapable fact. A year on, the doctors are saying I've made an extremely fast recovery. I speak about it openly with my friends and families. I am writing this piece.

I've had people tell me that this happened to me because I've eaten meat, or because I have bad karma hangover from my previous life. I just remind them that 1 in every 10 women has cancer, so let's hope you also don't have a nasty karma.

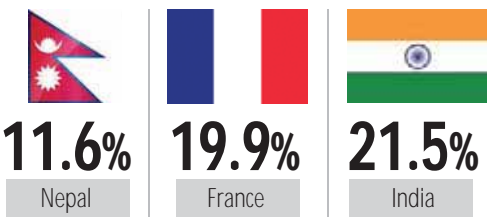
What do you do when you don't have any of the obvious symptoms? My lump was too small to feel from the outside. My husband, though ever so supportive and positive, also thought I was being paranoid. But I know my own body better





SONIA AWALE

Breast cancer mortality among all cancer fatalities in Nepal, France and India



WHO CANCER COUNTRY PROFILE 2014

with no help deal with the disease? So I decided to help, and I have found them motivated and determined to fight back after proper counselling.”

Although treatment of breast cancer is now available in Nepal, it is still expensive and not affordable or accessible to everyone. The government provides Rs 100,000 for treatment but it involves time-consuming paperwork.

Public awareness and early detection remain the best options, and every woman above 20 should ideally perform monthly self-examination. This requires adolescents to be educated about breast cancer in schools and government to reach out to the public so it is no longer a taboo. Rural areas can be reached through radio, tv and mobile camps.

“Government hospitals should add breast examination days to spread awareness, promote regular examination to detect hidden cases,” senior gynaecologist Bimala Malla at Valley Maternity Nursing Home told *Nepali Times*.

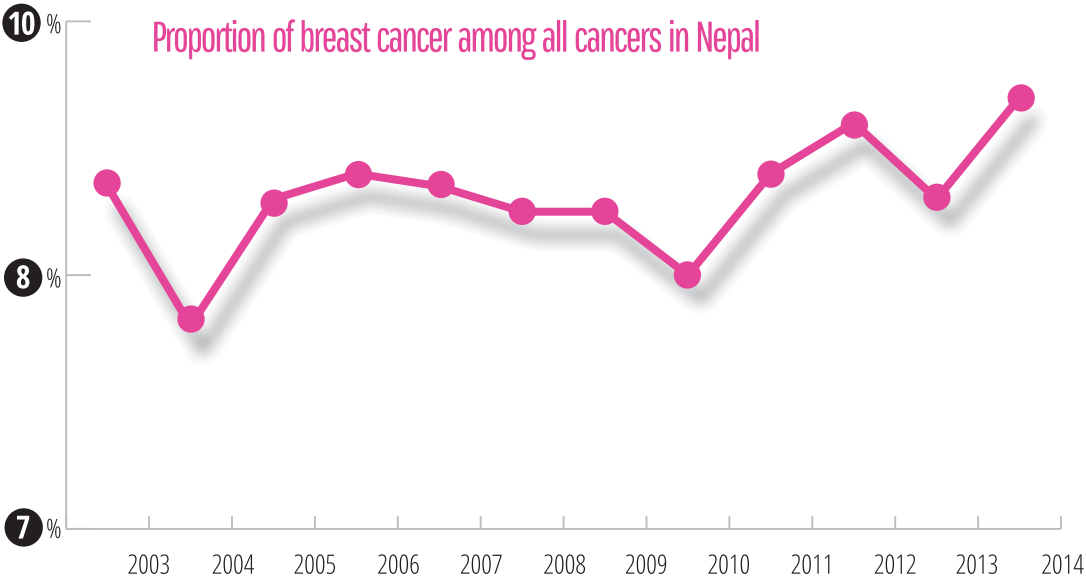
Risk factors for breast cancer include food habits, one’s genes, environmental toxins, obesity and smoking. Up to 10% of cases can be hereditary, so those who have two or more close relatives with the affliction should have regular examinations, along with women who have cervical cancer and all women under 35. Few people know that 1% of breast cancer patients in Nepal are male.

Better management of breast cancer requires early diagnosis, availability of proper treatment, insurance, and easy-to-access state subsidies.

Says Pratima Kharel of Kalyani: “If identified early, if there is positive thinking, strong willpower and family support, breast cancer isn’t a big thing. We can defeat it and lead normal lives.”

TELL TALE SIGNS

- Swelling even if no distinct lump
- Skin irritation or dimpling
- Breast or nipple pain
- Nipple inversion
- Thickening of breast skin.
- Nipple discharge



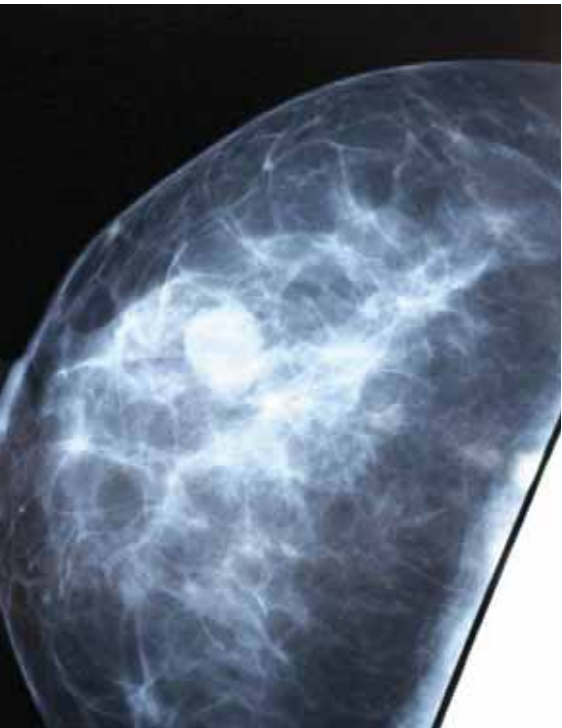
REPORT OF HOSPITAL-BASED CANCER, NATIONAL CANCER REGISTRY PROGRAM, 2014

their 40s are most at risk, with 33% of all cases in the 40-49 age bracket. Besides the economic burden on the family, breast cancer patients also suffer psychological trauma and will need family support.

Says Aruna Uprety: “When a patient has to get a mastectomy, she might go through severe depression due to stigma and taboo, and would also need counselling.”

Kalyani, a breast cancer support group in Harrisiddhi, is the first to introduce peer counselling by cancer survivors. A member, Pratima Kharel, explains: “My experience as a cancer survivor made me think that if an educated, career woman like me has a hard time with it, how will rural women

When you have to battle cancer at the age of 32, what do you do? Talk about it.



than anyone else, I was taught not to be ashamed of it, and had good reason to feel that something was not right.

Look at your body, familiarise yourself with your skin pigmentation, colour, shape and size. It’s also good for families to talk rationally about cancer (and other diseases that are becoming more common). Rationally because it is common for people to get overly sensitive and emotional about cancer. The more I speak about it, the more I find out about a friend’s father, a distant relative, my best friend’s aunt, a neighbour’s baby or a colleague who has cancer.

Breast cancer is the second most common cancer in the world and the most frequent in women. Developing countries like Nepal also have a rising number of young women diagnosed with breast cancer (see article, above). Lack of awareness of the condition, its risk factors, symptoms and curability are some of the challenges.

You should be doing a self-examination every month. The world does it on the 1st of every month and so should you. When something goes wrong, your body will give you signs that you should not ignore. Girls as young as 19 can develop breast cancer: it can happen to anyone.

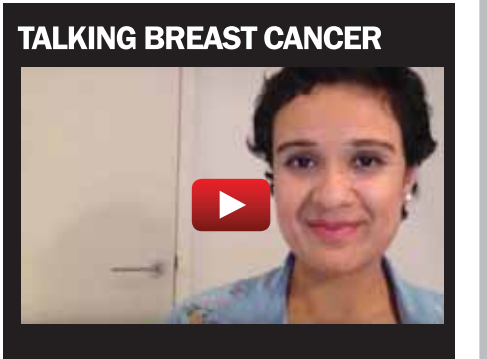
We are eating more processed food than ever: it contains chemicals. We have no idea where it is coming from and we believe that imported food is better. It is not. We think cancer is a disease of the western world, but denial doesn’t help. A small percentage of us will still get the disease, and this number is increasing.

A tumor is not a disease in itself, rather a product of something that is malfunctioning in our bodies. Until research can pinpoint the cause, we must take care of our minds, bodies and surroundings.

This is not only a problem in a culture that doesn’t talk about reproduction

openly. The main issue is self-awareness and public awareness. Let’s be brave. Let’s talk about tits.

Suvekchya Ghimire is a Senior Partnership and Resource Consultant in the UK.



Go online to watch Suvekchya Ghimire speak about her battle with breast cancer and how she overcame social taboos to talk about reproductive health. Learn how early detection improves the survival rate.

nepalitimes.com

EVENTS



The connection,

Participate in this charity event to support handicapped dogs. Money collected will be used to build a home for incapacitated and elderly dogs.
1 September, 7pm onwards, The Heritage Garden, Sanepa, Rs3,000, 9860130928

Comic con in Nepal,

Fans of Marvel, DC, Anime, games and the comic genre are in for a treat. The event will also host international cosplay artists from Japan, the Philippines and India.
9 September, 10am-8pm, Heritage Garden, Sanepa, (01) 5013096

Vocal workshop,

Register to learn singing techniques from renowned jazz vocalist Diandra Danieli, hosted by Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory.
5 July-30 August, (01) 5013554
<http://www.katjazz.com.np/vocal-teacher-diandra-danieli/>

Obstacle race,

Be adventurous and test your strength in Nepal's first obstacle race.
9 September, 6 am, Godavari Football Ground, Rs 1,000, free for ultra run.



Art without borders,

Save the date for this exhibition themed 'Buddhism in Modern Times'
12-16 August, 10am-5pm, Newa Chen Art Gallery, Kwalakhu Road, (01) 5533532



Become a photographer,

Register for a 10-day photography workshop.
August, 7-9am, Artudio, Chhauni Hospital Road, Fee Rs5,500, 9803779777, 9851180088, artudio@hotmail.com

Artmandu,

Book your seats for a musical event by bands MA and Cycle, from Kathmandu University, and get a taste of folk, traditional ensemble and a rare combination of sound.
14 August, 2-4pm, Sarwanam Theatre, Kalikasthan, Kathmandu, Rs1,000 (pre sale), Rs1,500 (door sale), (01) 4011027

Before the flood,

Support bird conservation by participating in a charity dinner and screening of the documentary *Before the Flood*.
11 August, 5pm, Cine De' Chef, CTC Mall, Sundhara, Rs3,000, (01) 4417805, (01) 4420213

MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI



MUSIC



Divine live,

Popular Indian hip hop singer Divine will perform live in Kathmandu for the first time.
18 August, 6pm onwards, The Factory, Thamel, (01) 4701185

Kanta dAb dAb,

Book your seats for a musical night with Nepali fusion trio Kanta dAb dAb.
18 August, 5:30pm onwards, Base Camp: Outdoor Lifestyle, Jhamsikhel, Rs500, 9841226397

Gypsy Jazz,

Groove to the tunes of gypsy jazz with international artists and Nepali guitar maestro Hari Maharjan.
11 August, 7:30pm onwards, Base Camp: Outdoor Lifestyle, Jhamsikhel, 9841226397

Astitwa,

Enjoy a live performance by Astitwa.
12 August, 7-10pm, Ai-La Lounge Restaurant, Lalitpur, 9801018681



Music for a cause,

Your favourite band B-8EIGHT and singer Sweta Singh Hamal will perform live to support the students of Palanchok Bhagwati Secondary School.
26 August, 6pm onwards, Titos Pub and Lounge, Jhamiskhel, 9841647747

Live with Jovan,

Spend the weekend with close friends swaying to the rhythms of Jovan Bhuju.
11 August, 6:30pm onwards, Bricks Café, Kupondole, (01) 5521756

OUR PICK



Opens in Kathmandu on 11 August

A car-chase thriller meets romantic musical, Director Edgar Wright's latest film tells the story of a young getaway driver pulled into a life of crime with his own tunes as a constant soundtrack. Starring Ansel Elgort in the title role alongside the likes of Kevin Spacey, Lily James and Jon Hamm, Baby decides to break free from his shady line of work for love and freedom but becomes trapped in a heist bound to fail.

DINING



Vegan night,

Treat yourself with delectable vegan dishes and savour a carnival of tastes.
11 August, 6pm onwards, Yala Mandala, Kwalkhu Road, Patan, 9841797260, 9818239744

Monsoon Sundays,

Food connoisseurs can relish a succulent barbeque with a choice of African, Arabic or Mediterranean specialties, along with access to the swimming pool.
23 July onwards, 12:30-3:30pm, Rs1,999 per person, Hyatt Regency www.kathmandu.regency.hyatt.com

Embers,

A large and cosy dining den serving continental and Nepali favourites.
Krishna Gali, Pulchok, (01) 5534766, embers.ktm@gmail.com, www.embers-restaurant.com

La Bella Cafe,

Cuisine to tease your palette this weekend.
Chaksibari Marg, Thamel, (01) 4700078

Fresh Cup,

This coffee-culture café is the place for aromatic Americanos and mochas. Try the grilled chicken sandwich, among other selections.
Kamaladi, Kathmandu, (01) 4428040



Café Jireh,

For a peaceful evening and the best firewood pizza.
Bhaisipati, (01) 5592102

European Bakery,

For patties, éclairs, Swiss rolls, cookies and many more. Don't miss the Saturday special doughnuts.
Chundevi, (01) 4422047

Lhakpa's Chulo,

Nepali dal bhat, Newari khaja, Swiss Rösti, and other continental cuisines – take your pick.
Jhamsikhel, (01) 5542986



Tabela,

Satisfy your taste buds with exotic biryani this weekend.
Narayan Chaur, Naxal, 9851198615

GETAWAY



Barahi Jungle Lodge,

The first eco-jungle lodge in Chitwan directly overlooks Chitwan National Park. Spa, boutique guest room, individual and two-in-one private villas, including a suite with a private swimming pool.
Megauli, Chitwan, (01) 4429820

Gokarna Forest Resort,

A numinous paradise that relaxes you and encourages meditation, just a 20-minute drive from Kathmandu.
Gokarna, (01) 4451212, info@gokarna.net

Dwarika's Hotel,

A little slice of paradise hidden in the middle of the city. Start the day with yoga classes in this award-winning heritage hotel.
Battisputali, Kathmandu, (01) 4470770



Rupakot Resort,

Get pampered in the lap of luxury amid stunning views of the Annapurnas.
Maidan-6, Rupakot, Kaski, (61) 622660 / (01) 4004687 / 9856038043, www.rupakotresort.com

Kasara Resort,

A luxury resort located in the lush setting of Chitwan National Park. For those who value their privacy and prefer a more secluded stay, Kasara offers two private villas with private pools.
Chitwan (01) 4437571/4438570, kasararesort.com

Pataleban Vineyard Resort,

16km west of Kathmandu, this resort is a perfect place to spend your weekends with food and wine. It offers astounding views of the sunset and mountains.
Chisapani Baad Bhanjhyang Road, (01) 4316377



The Last Resort,

Canyoning, hiking, rock climbing, rafting, mountain biking, bungee jumping – test your limits at the Last Resort.
Bhotekosi, (01) 4701247/4700525, info@thelastresort.com.np

Solid Rock,

Enjoy a relaxing stay in this traditional Nepali farmhouse away from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.
Solid Rock Lodge & Restaurant, Dollu, near Pharping, 9823233093



PHOTOS: SEAN SHOEMAKER

Jomsom in the off-season

Don't let the rains deter you from visiting Mustang in the monsoon

SEAN SHOEMAKER
in MUSTANG

The monsoon season is finally sputtering to an end, but as we know from previous years, it will not pass without a bang and some squalls are still in store.

These three months of rain are traditionally regarded as the 'off season' and do not precipitate tourists into Nepal. Though visitors are often discouraged from visiting at the height of the trans-Himalyan rain shadow, they don't know what they are missing.

That information gap is what some in the industry are trying to correct, with a new type of tourism: promote the rain as an attraction itself in the arid but oil-rich sheikhdoms of the Persian Gulf. Or, as some have done in Mustang and Manang, sell the areas where the rains don't reach.

Visitor arrival statistics show that the volume of tourists coming



to Nepal decreases in May each year. These numbers stay low until August, picking up again at the end of September. Monsoon tourism is restricted to Indian pilgrims or Tibet-bound tourists making a stopover in Kathmandu.

But there is tremendous untapped potential for tourism in the districts behind the Annapurnas because the high mountains stop the monsoon

clouds, says Tripple Gurung, owner of Om's Home in Jomsom.

"The government needs to promote the monsoon, it needs to advertise, we need more visitors in the rainy season," says Gurung, who also runs the Red House Hotel in Kagbeni.

Jomsom gets a flood of Indian and Nepali pilgrim traffic going to Muktinath, and there are also

high-end trekking groups to Upper Mustang that are ready to pay the extra fees for visiting the restricted area.

Hoteliers like Gurung are doing their own promotion, inviting guests staying in Jomsom to also spend a night or two in Kagbeni. The challenge for them is to fill up their hotels during the monsoon slump, when numbers

are down 80% from the peak in September-October.

"Most of our guests in the monsoon are pilgrims, but even that is erratic because the road to Pokhara is often blocked by landslides," says Karma Gurung, owner of Hotel Bob Marley in Muktinath where the famous Jamaican reggae singer is rumored to have stayed. Legend has it Jimi Hendrix also visited.

The seven-hour jeep ride to Pokhara is not for the faint-hearted, and flights are irregular during the monsoon due to weather. Priya Gridharan is a South Indian who lives in Oman. "Muktinath has always been on my mind: this happens to be the most difficult and sought after pilgrimage," she says, "but it is a very bumpy ride. Our jeep was going backwards and suddenly it stopped. Our driver wasn't able to go up and the tyres were skidding: I was really scared."

Pilgrims can now ride all the way to Muktinath. From there, visitors are able to catch views of the dramatic transition from sub-tropical jungle to alpine forest and high-altitude desert within a few hours of driving. The Kali Gandaki Gorge is the deepest in the world, with the river flowing between eight-thousanders Mt Dhaulagiri and Mt Annapurna.

Says Tripple Gurung: "Mustang is such a unique place, it is blessed compared to other parts of Nepal. It has everything for everyone: pilgrimage, scenery, leisure, adventure.

As challenging as it may be to fight the stigma attached to the monsoon, Gurung seems hopeful and determined. "We need to find a marketing campaign, we need to get this off-season out of our mind."



Watch tourists and pilgrims on their way to the scenic Valley of Mustang and the holy Muktinath. Spend the rainy season in the rainshadow.

nepalitimes.com

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King Arthur and the Legend of the Sword

I've always liked Guy Ritchie's directing style: his clever, almost glib, films with hilarious no gooders who are forever getting themselves into the most complicated scrapes are a riot. His first film *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels* (1998) is still a modern screwball



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

classic, and his subsequent attempts, while increasingly sophisticated (think the Sherlock Holmes reboot with none other than Robert Downey Jr and Jude Law in the main roles of Sherlock and his Dr Watson) have never quite been able to replicate the sheer freshness and cheeky fun of his earlier films.

That being said, Ritchie's latest production, *King Arthur and the Legend of the Sword*, is nowhere as abysmal rumoured to be. Now out on DVD after

a rather horrible run in the cinemas, Ritchie's version of King Arthur is fresh, modern, funny and hallmarked with his signature style where people speak fast, poke fun at each other, the action is anticipated often by speeding up or slowing down frame rates, and style is sometimes favoured over character development.

The wise guy in this film is the young Arthur (Charlie Hunnam) who, in a pretty decent origin story, ends up in a brothel as a child, and is reared by the unlikely people around him. He grows up with only vague memories of his escape after his father and mother are murdered by the awful Mordred (Jude Law), his acquisitive uncle who cannot stand the success of his brother Uther's (Eric Bana) rule and uses the magic of the mages to his own dark ends.

Though Merlin is mentioned without making an appearance, the role of Excalibur, which is clearly stated in the film's title,

is rather exciting. The climax of the sword in the stone trope is cleverly used for both dramatic and comic effect, cued up quite well with a cameo by David Beckham wearing a prosthetic nose and recognised only by his distinctly nasal voice.

Charlie Hunnam's charismatic Arthur is aided by a team of lovable ne'er do wells, a few loyal knights who fled when Uther was murdered, and perhaps most rivetingly, the presence of an unnamed, mysterious mage played by Astrid Bergès-Frisbey, who steals the show with her dark, unconventional beauty, her acid tongue and her uncanny abilities.

This re-imagining is worth watching for those of us who can never quite get enough of swords and magicians. Planned as a six-part series for Guy Ritchie to expand upon the universe he created in this first film, the disaster at the box office creates a real doubt that there will be any sequels. Critics have been accused of skewing who goes to cinema and who doesn't with review amalgamators like Rotten Tomatoes that are known for making mass generalisations. The latest iteration of Spidey was pretty boring for anyone over 20 and yet it was reviewed glowingly for what it really is, a facile action movie, whereas Ritchie's film, while not a classic, has so much more to it. Again, I will let you all decide.



Watch trailer online

nepaltimes.com

HAPPENINGS



NIRANJAN SHRESTHA

HELLO NEPAL: Indian Minister for External Affairs Sushma Swaraj arrives in Kathmandu on Thursday for the 15th BIMSTEC meeting (*see page 4*). Indian Ambassador to Nepal Majeed Singh Puri behind her.



WORLD VISION INTERNATIONAL NEPAL

NO MINORS MARRYING: President Bidya Devi Bhandari attends the launch of five-year nationwide campaign by World Vision Nepal 'It Takes Nepal to End Child Marriage' in Kathmandu on Thursday.



MANOJ GAJUREL FACEBOOK

"TREMENDOUS": Nepali comedian Manoj Gajurel impersonates US President Donald Trump during the satirical Gai Jatra skit 'Trump Comes to Kathmandu' on Monday in the capital.



ASIAN PAINTS

STARCHITECT: Vice President Nanda Kishore Pun (*centre*) and Budhaditya Mukherjee of Asian Paints congratulate Govind Prasad Mainali, second runner-up of the All Nepal Architecture Students Design Competition 2016-17 in Kathmandu on Tuesday.



THAI AIRWAYS

VERY SMOOTH: Participants of a blood donation and cardiac check-up program organised by Thai Airways pose for a group picture at Hotel de'l Annapurna in Kathmandu last week.

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Website: www.yetiairlines.com



“Simultaneous polls not possible”

Chief Election Commissioner
Ayodhi Prasad Yadav on
BBC Nepali Service, 9 August



BBC Nepali: Is it possible to hold both parliamentary and provincial polls before the deadline?
Ayodhi Prasad Yadav: We were expecting laws related to parliamentary and provincial elections by mid-July, and the constituency delineation commission’s report by July end. That did not happen, so the possibility of both elections before 21 January 2018 looks very slim. We are now just pushing for timely parliamentary polls, not for both. And even for that, the government needs to fix a date by no later than mid-August.

What about provincial polls after 21 January?
The Election Commission is in favour of holding parliamentary elections first, then provincial polls. The government has not officially reacted to our proposal.

How can the Electoral College be formed without provincial polls, and how can Parliament get full shape without it?
Parliament will not get full shape immediately. It will take time.

The Prime Minister has asked you to hold parliamentary and provincial polls simultaneously.
It would be very difficult to do that, not just technically but also in terms of management and voter education. Both polls have mixed systems, which means we will have to print four types of ballot papers, 700 million of them. It is a frightening prospect.

Does the EC want to introduce electronic voting systems for these polls?
The government, political parties and the EC need to sit down together to discuss this issue.

You have also proposed the use of the same ballot papers for both First Past the Post (FPTP) and Proportional Representation (PR) systems. How does that help?
That was just one idea.

The army, police and government employees were allowed in the past to cast votes under the PR, but not under the FPTP. This time?
We can introduce pre-voting for them. But if they vote prior to other voters, their ballots will just be counted as PR votes. We can arrange that even for voters who are flying abroad on election day.



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Position Title : Country Manager
Location : Kathmandu, Nepal
Group/Unit : Clean Energy, Environment, Water (CEEW) Group
Reports to : Senior Director, CEEW

Position Summary:

The Country Manager has responsibility for the effective management, project implementation, and strategic leadership for the Winrock International CEEW office in Kathmandu, Nepal to achieve the organization’s vision, mission and objectives. The Country Manager is responsible for CEEW portfolio management, staff development, and new business development, among other functions, but will also coordinate with other Winrock Groups and programs (Agriculture and Civil Society & Education) and the Chiefs of Party and staff for those programs. The Country Manager is responsible for representing Winrock to the Government of Nepal (GoN) and ensuring Winrock Nepal’s good standing with the GoN as an officially registered International NGO (INGO) under the Social Welfare Council (SWC).

Specific tasks and duties include:

- Project and program implementation
- Office and project personnel management
- Resource planning and allocation
- Ensuring financing management oversight and operational compliance in accordance with Winrock International’s headquarters in the USA
- Compliance with national laws and client/donor contract requirements
- Overseeing monitoring of and reporting on performance of projects
- Strategic new business planning for the CEEW Nepal team and Winrock Nepal
- Identifying, developing proposals, and securing new business opportunities
- Coordinating Winrock Projects, New Business and Operations to promote “One Winrock”

The Country Manager will focus on CEEW work, but will also be responsible for promoting a culture of communication and collaboration across Winrock’s technical groups in Nepal and globally to leverage organizational experience to the benefit of Winrock in Nepal. The Country Manager is expected to spend around 20% of his/her time on office management, representation, strategic planning, and staff development; 20% on new business development, and 60% on project implementation.

ESSENTIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Country Manager/Portfolio Management:

- Ensure timely, results-oriented, and successful implementation of service delivery by CEEW office and project staff for projects and programs, including direct technical work.
- Direct and lead Winrock Nepal CEEW operations and project performance.
- Ensure operational compliance with internal Winrock policies and procedures and project compliance with a diverse group of donors and clients.
- Prepare and effectively manage internal budgets at the office (core) level and project specific level.
- Ensure timely and accurate compliance with all reporting, managerial and financial requirements necessary to maintain good standing as an INGO under Nepali law registered under the Social Welfare Council.
- Represent Winrock in all strategic and program matters related to programs in Nepal, as well as within the broader portfolio of Winrock Groups served.
- Maintain professional, effective, service-oriented relationships with current and potential funders and partners across the CEEW, Civil Society and Education, Agriculture and Enterprise, and other Winrock units or practice areas as needed.
- Ensure Winrock Nepal is represented at key internal or external events relevant to existing projects, potential new business areas, and technical areas of work. This includes participation in meetings and public speaking engagements, where the Director can showcase Winrock’s relevant programs.
- Ensure Winrock Nepal complies with security standards and that security plans are updated.

New Business Development:

- Develop and lead a CEEW new business strategy for Nepal (including broader regional pursuits) with specific goals and targets, working with the US CEEW team.
- Provide leadership in identifying, developing, tracking and securing new business in relevant CEEW practice areas.
- Lead and support proposal development.
- In collaboration with Winrock colleagues in Nepal and around the world, strengthen relationships with key clients, organizations, associations and corporate partners to support business performance and growth.
- Prepare targeted marketing materials and client focused offering presentation in collaboration with home office program units, New Business Services and Communications teams.
- Coordinate new business efforts with other Winrock Groups’ senior staff in Nepal and the US to foster a One Winrock approach in Nepal.

Staff Development:

- Lead the day-to-day management of operations and technical staff, and facilitate a productive team environment.
- Mentor staff by working closely with them on a specific task or skill (project management, new business development, etc.).
- Identify training needs and opportunities, both internal and external, to support institutional growth and capacity; and arrange for key training to be provided.

QUALIFICATIONS AND BACKGROUND:

Education: Advanced degree (Master’s degree or higher) in Environmental Economics, Business Administration, Clean Energy, Environmental Sciences, Water Resources, Forestry, Ecosystem Services, or other relevant advanced degree required

Management Experience:

- Minimum 12 years of experience managing or supporting donor-funded programs (preferably USAID).
- Minimum 8 years’ professional field experience in renewable energy programming in developing countries. Experience in energy efficiency, water and other environmental areas a plus.
- At least 5 years’ experience working in developing countries, including work in complex, politically charged, unstable environments is crucial.
- Experience managing to the highest ethical standards international projects valued at \$25 million or more.
- Management and implementation of complex, multi-activity programming, on time and on budget.
- Financial/budget management, budget design, and complex grants program management facility is essential.
- Orientation toward community-led and – owned programs is preferred
- Experience targeting and reaching the most disadvantage groups especially girls, the disabled, pastoralists, returnees and internally displaced people
- Experience leading program design and strategic planning and implementing strategic plans.
- Expertise designing and implementing or overseeing monitoring & evaluation systems.
- Emphasis on building capacity of and empowering host-country people and institutions highly desirable.
- Capacity to build, motivate, and effectively supervise a diverse team of local and expatriate employees.
- Previous experience managing a large staff and implementing programs in multiple remote locations.
- Good track record working with and/or partnering with a variety of individuals and organizations, including senior US and host country government officials, international agencies, private sector companies, and donor organizations.
- Proven ability to demonstrate the highest level of ethical standards; ability to multi-task and juggle competing priorities while ensuring quality output.

Skills:

- Fluent English and Nepali language skills required.
- Facility with USAID regulations, policies, and procedures or those of an equivalently complex international government funding organization.
- Demonstrated effective interpersonal skills, creative problem solving, conflict, and ethical management skills.
- Ability to coordinate with home office, stakeholders, and clients is essential.
- Excellent verbal and written communications skills; demonstrated ability to interact effectively and sensitively with multi-cultural staff, external donors and collaborators is essential.
- Computer literate in word processing, spreadsheet, and presentation software (Microsoft).

APPLICATIONS:

Applicants should submit a current resume and cover letter referencing Country Manager, CEEW to ndahal@winrock.org by August 21, 2017

Winrock would like to thank all applicants for their interest but only candidates who meet all requisite criteria and are short listed will be contacted.



RPP splits

क्रान्तिपुर

Abin Shrestha in, *Kantipur* 7 August

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“ At times, I feel like going on a hunger strike myself ”

Education Expert Kedar Bhakta Mathema in
Nagarik, 6 August

Freezing a future family

Nepalis are increasingly preserving their eggs, semen and embryos but not just for urgent medical reasons

SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

Married for a decade but infertile, Sushmita Bhandari now has hopes of motherhood. She is waiting to conceive her first child next month through a frozen embryo transfer, a new technique to perform in-vitro fertilisation (IVF) just introduced to Nepal.

Bhandari's husband is a migrant worker in Malaysia and is unable to come to Nepal frequently for the IVF. When he was home two months ago the couple froze their embryos at Vatsalya IVF and Fertility Centre, one of the few clinics in Nepal that offers the procedure.

"Even if my pregnancy fails next month I can redo IVF, as four of our frozen embryos are stored in the lab," says Bhandari, 28. "My husband can only come back next year, but this means I can still try to get pregnant."

Bhandari married at 20. She has not been able to conceive naturally because of a fallopian tube obstruction but instead of going through the painful treatment to rectify it, she opted for this new technique, which is cost-effective and less invasive.

She has so far paid Rs190,000 to freeze the embryos for later transfer to her womb. But if the pregnancy fails, she can keep the remaining embryos in the lab for Rs30,000 per year.

Prashant Subedi of Vatsalya

PARENTHOOD: Sushmita Bhandari (*left*) examining her frozen embryos with IVF expert Prashant Subedi (*right*) at a fertility centre in Kathmandu last week.

explains: "Frequent steroids and stimulation can deteriorate the ovary. If 20 eggs or sperm are retrieved in one session, up to two embryos can be transferred at a time." He adds that the remaining eggs and sperm can be frozen in case of failed pregnancy for a later IVF. Studies have found that the success rate for frozen embryos is

higher than for fresh embryos.

IVF expert Dr. Uma Shrivastava explains: "There is a hormonal influence in the uterus when eggs are retrieved through stimulation. So, embryos are transferred to the womb only after a month." She adds: "The uterus gets time to heal, ultimately leading to high chances of pregnancy."

There is no official data on infertility in Nepal and many couples go to India for IVF services, but having sensed the demand surge, hospitals and clinics in Kathmandu are also setting up facilities for frozen embryo transfers even though the government hasn't yet come up with guidelines. (see box).

Until a few years ago, only infertile couples were using IVF but now others who want to delay conception are taking advantage of the technique.

Binay Lama, 29, was diagnosed with rectal cancer seven months ago. He will have to go through extended chemo

Why freeze eggs and sperm?


- Fallopian tube blockage
- Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome (PCOS)
- Ovulation disorder
- Endometriosis (uterus lining grows outside of it)
- Uterine fibroids
- Azoospermia (absence of motile sperm)
- Genetic disorders (Down syndrome)
- Fertility preservation (cancer patients)
- Venereal diseases
- Long-term separation of couples

works for an NGO and doesn't plan to get married soon despite pressure from her family. She has frozen her eggs just in case she has a late marriage.

"I don't want to compromise my career and get married right away. I want to have babies in my late thirties, using the 22 eggs that I have frozen now," she says.

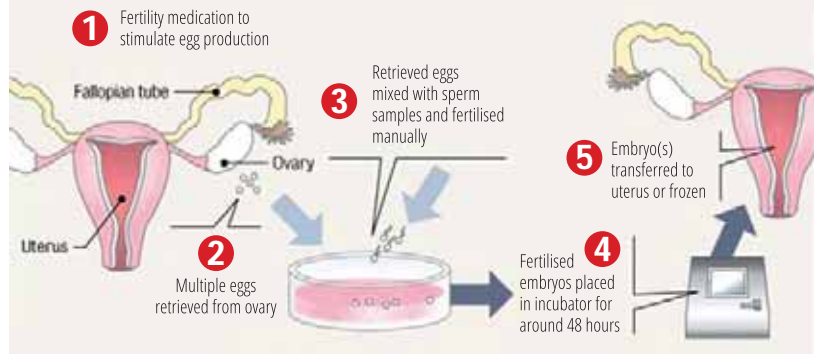
A 2010 UK study found that an average woman will have just 12% of her eggs remaining by 30 and that the quality of those eggs will deteriorate as she gets older.

Prakash (name changed) has been smoking for the last nine years and is aware the habit can reduce fertility by affecting the motility and shape of his sperm. The 27-year-old has had seven vials of his sperm frozen because he is living an unhealthy lifestyle, which includes drinking alcohol and no exercise.

"I am trying hard to change my lifestyle, but just to be on the safe side in the future, I have frozen my sperm," he explained. 

In-vitro fertilisation (IVF)

IVF is a popular technique for treating infertility in Nepal and worldwide. The process involves retrieving an egg and sperm from the couple and fertilising them manually in a lab. Once the embryo is incubated, it is transferred to the uterus. The first baby born through IVF in Nepal was in 2005.



and radiotherapy in the next two months, which carries the risk of permanent infertility. As a precaution, Lama has frozen five vials of semen.

"After two years of marriage, I want to make sure we can have children: that is why I have frozen my sperm," Lama told us.

Puja Bhandari, 27, is optimistic about her career. She



Same-sex parenting

Nepali’s Constitution is hailed as one of the most progressive in South Asia for guaranteeing rights for sexual minorities, but the Supreme Court has curtailed sexual minorities from having surrogate pregnancies. The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) community (*seen above at the Gaijatra Parade on Tuesday*) is lobbying for same-sex marriage and the right to adopt children, but a 2016 verdict ruled that altruistic surrogacy is illegal for

sexual minorities. Only infertile Nepali married couples will be able to practise it once the laws are formulated. Pinky Gurung of Blue Diamond Society opposed the SC verdict and demanded that it be scrapped: “Surrogate pregnancy is the only option for transgender couples to have babies as they are biologically unfit to conceive: the SC doesn’t agree with constitutional guarantees.” Article 18 of the 2016 Constitution forbids

discrimination against gender and sexual minorities. Even in 2007 the SC ruled to allow same-sex marriage, but the decision has not been ratified by Parliament. Nepal emerged as a hub for commercial surrogacy after India in 2013 prevented gay men and couples who had been married for less than two years from opting for it. But the service was banned here in 2015 because of legal loopholes and provided an option of altruistic surrogacy for couples married for at least two years.

Legal limbo

Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba was prime minister when he inaugurated Nepal’s first in-vitro fertilisation facility, Om IVF Centre, in 2004. At that time, there were no laws to regulate IVF services. Twelve years later Deuba is now prime minister for the fourth time, but Nepal still lacks laws governing embryo transfers. More than two dozen, private IVF clinics are operating in the Kathmandu Valley alone – none of them have legal standing. The Ministry of Health and Population (MoHP) hasn’t given permission to any hospitals or clinics to provide IVF services. Bhola Ram Shrestha of the MoHP’s curative service division says it is more important that IVF service providers attain a baseline: “They need to meet the standards set by the ministry, but we are working on the regulation.” After surrogacy was banned in Nepal in 2015, the MoHP formed a committee to address the issue of infertility, but it was unsuccessful. Mahendra Shrestha, who led the committee, told us: “We had prepared a draft outlining the baseline for IVF service providers, but I have been transferred to another department and don’t know what happened to it.” Shrestha blames insufficient human resources and frequent change of staff at the ministry for the failure to formulate laws on IVF: “We have asked the World Health Organization to help draft legislation and will come up with guidelines in six months hopefully.”

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Party time

Here we are at the end of another eventful week in the Confederated Demographic Republic of Nepal, and it is time for our Friday recap of the main points.

On Monday came the earth-shaking newflash, broken as usual by the state-run *The Rising Nipple*, that the **Landlocked Himalayan Republic of Nepal** had finally established diplomatic relations with the **Volcanic Archipelago of Cape Verde**. It is a triumph of Nepal's mis-aligned foreign policy that the country has managed to forge close bilateral relations with a country that has such profound geo-political significance to our continued existence as an independent and sovereign nation state, all while India and China fight over Bhutan, the BIMSTEAK party is on, and atomic Armageddon threatens the Korean Peninsula.

This development comes hard on the heels of Nepal establishing diplomatic relations with Djibouti on International Friendship Day, as well as the pomp and pageantry with which Nepal marked the joyous occasion of the birthday of His Majesty King Hassan of Morocco in Kathmandu last week. This unusual flurry of diplomatic activity serves one important purpose: it gives all of us an important geography lesson so that every Nepali of school-going age henceforth can point to where Cape Verde, Djibouti and Morocco are located on the world atlas.

At a time when democracy is on the retreat across the free world, it is up to Nepal to set the standard for

open society and freedom. The way we have conducted local elections should be a lesson for all, political parties in other countries can learn from the mayoral race in Bharatpur where the losing side snatched victory from the jaws of defeat after tearing up a few ballot papers. It would be wrong to call this cheating, as some pundits have, better: 'creative vote-counting'. This way no party can ever be beaten in elections since all losers can be winners if they play their cards right.

The other important example Nepal can offer is in how to split and unite parties. No other country chops parties up into little pieces as ingeniously as we do. So, when the RPP split this week, the splinter group called itself the Nationalist Democratic Party (Democratic), the rump stuck with Nationalist Democratic Party (Nationalist) and if it splits again it will name itself the Nationalist Democratic Party (Party).

By Thursday, just when we thought we had all the excitement we could handle for one week, came news that due to global warming the evaporation rate for petroleum products had risen so sharply that tankers had gone on strike to demand compensation from Nepal Oil Corruption (NOC). Tanker owners, whose breath reeks of petrol from siphoning the stuff out along the highway between Amlekhganj to Kathmandu, have shut down gas stations to protect their right to cheat customers.

Just another week in the Fedup Demagogic Republic.



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