Deuba, Delhi and Doklam

In diplomacy, some things are better left unspoken, and that is exactly what India’s PM Narendra Modi did at a joint press meet with visiting Nepal PM Sher Bahadur Deuba in New Delhi on Thursday. Last year, when Pushpa Kamal Dahal visited, Modi advised him to ‘take all sections of the society on board for effective implementation of the Constitution.’ Earlier that year, during KP Oli’s visit, the two countries failed to issue a joint statement owing to differences over Nepal’s new Constitution, which India had rejected.

But this time, Nepal’s prime minister was warmly congratulated for successfully holding two phases of local elections, and in his teleprompted statement, Modi did not utter a word about the Constitution under which those polls were held. Parliament voted down an amendment bill registered by the ruling NC-Maoist coalition the day before Deuba left for New Delhi, but in Delhi he promised to continue trying to get Madhesi parties to own the Constitution. Some analysts here say India realized it may have pushed Nepal too far with the blockade, right into the arms of China, and is therefore trying a different tack.

“India’s strategic priorities have clearly changed after Doklam. It can no longer keep pushing for an amendment,” says Federal Socialist Forum Nepal (FSFN) MP Abhijit Pratap Shah, who is on Deuba’s entourage in New Delhi. “India now needs Nepal’s support and goodwill more than ever,” he adds. This could be why Modi invited Deuba for an unscheduled late-4-6th Wednesday evening, even greeting Deuba at the doorstep of his residence, ahead of Thursday’s official meetings.

When Deuba gulped while reading out his speech at the press conference, India’s External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj rose from her chair to offer him a glass of water.

Modi and Swaraj went out of their way to be gracious to Deuba with friendly gestures. Could this new bonhomie be due to the India-China row over the disputed territory of Doklam in Bhutan?

B C Upreti, an Indian member of the Nepal-India Eminent Persons Group, downplayed Doklam, but admitted there had been a shift in India’s policy towards Nepal.

Om Astha Rai in New Delhi
CHRONIC DYSFUNCTION

It is the chronic dysfunction and selfish ambition across the political spectrum that most prevent the change that we deserve.” That was Miguel Syjuco writing about his country, the Philippines, in a New Times op-ed last week. But he may as well have been saying about Nepal.

There are places that are hauntingly analogous to Nepal’s current 3-party dictatorship...it seems that loyalty is first always to the self, and a far second to the country. Our rulers, however, would have us believe that they are our heroes.”

On...as with (Game of Thrones) we can only watch and wait for the next episodes of deceit, betrayal, impunity and corruption. Meanwhile, our rulers readily wish accusations of contempt against any who refuse to cooperate. They miss the obvious irony. The contempt is ours, for them. For respect is earned, not demanded. They forget who, in a democracy, has every right to demand leaders worthy of our respect.

There is a message here for prime ministers who dominate while parochializing in for 15 minutes on a flood-ravaged land, for presidents who close down the capital when their motorcade moves anywhere, for Parliament that behaves like a Chamber of Commerce to pass bills favouring the medical-industrial complex for self-important officials whose sense of entitlement extends to extorting those they are supposed to serve. ‘Respect is earned, never demanded.”

Last week’s flood disaster is a notewor (See map below) The bungling of relief and delays in reaching marooned villages is a disaster within a disaster. The floods affected 20% of the country’s population, and exceeded the impact of the 2015 earthquake. A column of cloudwaters over the Chure Range was the trigger event, but there was sufficient early-warning, and the subsequent inscrution was the result of disaster of neglect and corruption by successive kleptocrats. Poorly planned infrastructure, encroachment, deforestation, sand mining of river beds and raised embankments right along the border that acted like dams: all played a part. The rivers took revenge, and nature punished us for our folly.

As our reports this week from Chitwan and Rastahat show, relief has been better organised and more fairly distributed in areas with poverty and less local governments. (See page 17) Even if Katmandu’s bungled relief, mayors and village council heads realised the disasters provide an opportunity to perform. There isn’t much accountability in evidence among public servants in Province 2, the worst affected by the floods and the only region which hasn’t had elections yet.

It may be a generalisation, but the moral of this story is that if there had been responsible local governments answerable to the people, the inundation would not be so extensive, and relief would be quicker and better coordinated.

A recent Supreme Court decision to decry the people have every right to demand leaders worthy of our respect.

GUEST EDITORIAL MAN B THAPA

Early warning

The 4th July 2021 Cyclone that hit Bangladesh in ’12 killed 540,000 people. The more powerful (Category 5) Cyclone that struck the same area in 2021 resulted in only 3,500 deaths. The reason: disaster preparedness.

Bangladesh can be prepared right now, cannot Nepal?

We can also minimise death and destruction from earthquakes and floods. We need to create an early warning system, formulate disaster management, and raise awareness at the community level.

The monsoon season is upon us, and Nepal receives 80% of its annual rainfall between mid-June and mid-September. Unfortunately, the river is sometimes subject to flash-flooding, which results in floods, flash floods, and landslides.

Advances in forecasting, remote sensing and communications have made it possible to very accurately predict information about rainfall, location, time and even amounts, and then transmit warnings to the public. The main concern here is the vulnerability of the people to disaster and the risk of disaster. The high-risk area is needed to be equipped with all the necessary and development programs. Disaster risk management must be part of regular planning development and planning. Early warnings should ensure multi-hazard risk assessments of the entire country to identify disaster zones, types of disasters and proper mitigation measures.

Main B Thapa is program manager at the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre.
DISCOVER EUROPE AND AMERICAS WITH SPECIAL FARES

EUROPE FLIGHTS STARTING FROM
NPR 68,123

AMERICA FLIGHTS STARTING FROM
NPR 97,733

EUROPE DESTINATIONS INCLUDE AMSTERDAM, ATenes, BARCELONA, Basel, BERLIN, BOLOGNA, BRUSSELS, BUDAPEST, COLOGNE, DUSSELDORF, GENOA, GOTHENBURG, HAMBURG, Kiev, LONDON, Luxembourg, MALTA, MUNCHEN, Milan, WIEN, PHIL, PRAGUE, Rome, Sofia, STOCKHOLM, STUTTGART, Tel Aviv, TUNIS, VENNA, VILNIUS, ZURICH.


SALE PERIOD: 15AUG17-15SEP17 | TRAVEL PERIOD: 20NOV17-31JAN18
FARES SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY. FOR FURTHER QUERIES PLEASE CONTACT TURKISH AIRLINES SALES OFFICE
014438363 / 014438436 | KTMSALES@THY.COM | TURKISHAIRLINES.COM
ON THE WAY UP
Kanak Mani Dixit

Mary Shepherd Sluser was born in 1918, and arrived in Kathmandu as the spouse of an American diplomat in the 1960s with a doctorate in South American archaeology. Following in the footsteps of the pioneering Sylvain Levi and Brian Hobtong Hodgson of the previous century, Sluser quickly understood the treasures hidden within the Valley’s toles and bahars. The incredibly profuse bibliography of Sluser’s work can be found in the blog of California-based history enthusiast Dipesh Rimal, who writes that it “serves as a final testament to [Sluser’s] long-standing and steadfast love of Nepal and Newa culture.” In Washington DC, Sluser lived in close proximity to the Sakler Gallery on the National Mall, where she worked. At 97, when she came to Kathmandu, she was very much more gregariously than many of us walking these ruins. Observing the devastation from afar, her worries came to focus on Kathmandu’s, the spiritual fulcrum of Kathmandu Valley, as Mount Meru is to the Universe. In the words of distinguished conservator Neel Gheti Chowk, the site is “the pivot of the (Valley’s) entire urban landscape.” Sluser was an authority on the Valley’s cultural microcosm taken as a whole, but repeatedly she returned to her research to Kathmandu, and in 1974 produced a book on the site—Kathmandu Valley: The Bhaktapur, with University of Madison-Wisconsin-based scholar Gaurav Vaja Vajracharya. Sluser played an important role in steering that the works of Nepali academics were disseminated and recognized worldwide,” writes Rimal. And it was to these friends that she turned as the ground shook in her Nepal Mandala, we have communication between Sluser and her Nepalese colleagues which show how all of her heartfelt fears for the Valley as a whole were poured into her worries for the fate of Maru Sattal (Kathmandu)—not merely the wood and brick, but the intangible culture that the structure represented and hosted. Kathmandu was built about 1,300 years ago to serve, according to Sluser, as a “public hostelling or rest house, situated at a crossroad of the ancient north-south trading route before the Kathmandu city-state grew around it. Used by pilgrims, merchants, mendicants and other wayfaring from the Valley and the surrounding hills, the satta’s location would have been ideal because of the Maru Hiti water source nearby. While built in its traditional brick and wooden building, it was the Maru Hiti water source that sustained the city-state. It was named after the maru, a large hollowed-out stone statue of a man, which stood nearby. It is believed that the statue was carved from a single piece of stone and that it was used for ritual purposes. The statue was later moved to a nearby temple, where it continues to be venerated today.

On the way up

Kasthamandap and Mary

Sluser was deeply apprehensive about the impact of the 2015 earthquake on the Valley’s heritage. When she first arrived in Nepal, she was struck by the beauty and richness of the architectural and cultural heritage of the Valley. She was especially drawn to the Kasthamandap, the spiritual fulcrum of Kathmandu Valley, and she wrote extensively about its importance. The Kasthamandap is a temple complex that is considered to be one of the most important religious and cultural sites in Nepal. It is home to a number of important shrines and temples, including the Siddha Mani, a large spherical stone that is considered to be a powerful amulet. Sluser was concerned that the earthquake would damage the Kasthamandap and other important sites in the Valley. She wrote, “The temple is a place of pilgrimage and is considered a sacred site by many people. It is a place of great cultural and historical significance and it is important that we do everything we can to protect it.”

Turkish tipping

Passengers from Kathmandu now have an opportunity to discover more of Europe and America through Turkish Airlines’ exclusive Early Bird Fares. Turkish Airlines’ Early Bird Fares are round-trip and one-way flights from Kathmandu to six international destinations, and the US from $688, $730 and $750, inclusive of taxes, respectively.

Ncell customer relief

Ncell customers in flood and landslide affected areas over 16.6 million communications under the company’s 30-free SMS per day offer to help ensure communications during rescue and relief operations. The facility was available 24/7 offered until 15 August.

Huawei wins cash

Huawei Consumer Business Group has received two awards from the European Image and Sound Association (EISA). The awards include the best smartphones under $400 and the best smartphone under $600.

Qatar spreads wings

Qatar Airways is ramping up its stopover flights from Doha to Prague, marking its first ever passenger service to the Czech Republic. The Doha-based airline also announced new flights to Kiev, Belgrade and Zagreb. Starting September, Cargo service will increase from four to five flights per day and Darwin service from two to three per week.

prathabank

BIZ BRIEFS

Turkish tipping

Passengers from Kathmandu now have an opportunity to discover more of Europe and America through Turkish Airlines’ exclusive Early Bird Fares. Turkish Airlines’ Early Bird Fares are round-trip and one-way flights from Kathmandu to six international destinations, and the US from $688, $730 and $750, inclusive of taxes, respectively.

Ncell customer relief

Ncell customers in flood and landslide affected areas over 16.6 million communications under the company’s 30-free SMS per day offer to help ensure communications during rescue and relief operations. The facility was available 24/7 offered until 15 August.

Turkish Airlines’ Early Bird Fares are round-trip and one-way flights from Kathmandu to six international destinations, and the US from $688, $730 and $750, inclusive of taxes, respectively.

Ncell customer relief

Ncell customers in flood and landslide affected areas over 16.6 million communications under the company’s 30-free SMS per day offer to help ensure communications during rescue and relief operations. The facility was available 24/7 offered until 15 August.

Huawei wins cash

Huawei Consumer Business Group has received two awards from the European Image and Sound Association (EISA). The awards include the best smartphones under $400 and the best smartphone under $600.

Qatar spreads wings

Qatar Airways is ramping up its stopover flights from Doha to Prague, marking its first ever passenger service to the Czech Republic. The Doha-based airline also announced new flights to Kiev, Belgrade and Zagreb. Starting September, Cargo service will increase from four to five flights per day and Darwin service from two to three per week.
HAVE BOLD TASTE
AND INTENSE CHARACTER
KEEP WALKING

Global Trading Concern (P) Ltd.
PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.
An antelope story

In 2014, an undergraduate student majoring in paper conservation visited the library at the Zoological Society of London for her research. Punmeta Sharma knew the building housed a collection of old wildlife paintings, but it was a carelessly folded sketch that captured her attention. It depicted a chini, a Tibetan antelope that is today among the most endangered species because of its valuable fur used to make expensive shawls.

After learning that Brian Houghton Hodgson, British Resident to Nepal from 1820-1843, commissioned the work from Nepali artist Rajman Singh, Sharma immersed herself in restoring the 63.5 x 63.5cm painting. “I really wanted to work on this. I could feel it in my heart,” says Sharma, who is from India. During restoration, her thoughts often went to two lines in Devnagari written on the painting by Hodgson himself: “When her parents, who moved to the UK in 1979, couldn’t translate it, she emailed the picture to her grandmother in India, but to no avail. Later, her uncle, Major General Vijaykumar Dutt, who served in the First Gurkha Rifles and had spent a considerable amount of time in Nepal, deciphered the meaning: “The deer is roaming in the King’s Jungle.”

Sharma’s restoration of the painting paid off, as it was framed and put on a wall of the library at the Zoological Society. She says: “I hope this painting will be a medium for people to understand Nepal like I did, not just the chini and Hodgson.”

Hodgson had handwritten on the back of the painting: “My Birds & Mammals done by my painter send to me by long Bahudur”. This suggests that lang sent several paintings, including ‘China’, to the British Resident. Although Hodgson left Nepal before Jang came into power, the two enjoyed good relations, as revealed by the letters they exchanged, which are preserved at the British Museum. After his tenure in Kathmandu, Hodgson stayed on in Darjeeling until 1843, studying Himalayan flora and fauna and Nepali language, caste and religion. He sent a total of 5,912 samples of wildlife from Nepal and Darjeeling to Britain: 672 of them were birds, of which 134 were new to the world.

The chini was the first mammal Hodgson discovered, and in 1835, he sent the mammal’s fur and horn to his friend Clark Abel in Calcutta, who named the undiscovered mammal Antelope huttonii. Hodgson himself carried out additional research and gave it another scientific name: Pseudoantelope huttonii. Based on Hodgson and Abel’s research, Nepal’s National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act, 2029, lists the Tibetan antelope as a protected species. The animal was supposed to be extinct in Nepal, but some are said to exist in the high mountains.

In his book, The Prisoner of Kathmandu: Brian Hodgson in Nepal, 1820-43, Charles Allen explains how a chini was raised at the monastery of the Tashi Lama (the seventh in a line of reincarnate Lamas, better known today as the Panchen Lama), was presented to the king of Nepal. Sherpa Thupa then gifted the antelope to the British Resident, but within a month, the animal died of heartache. Hodgson later sent the animal’s fur to his friend Abel in Calcutta.

Rabin Giri
Mani Poudel, mother of three, takes her children to a calligraphy class in Thamel every morning in hopes of improving their handwriting. The children, despite knowing French, have limited knowledge of Nepali as they spent their childhoods with their parents in Tanzania.

In class, the three children carefully scribble letters under the guidance of their instructor, Bal G. Kapali, whose classes for children from Grades 3-10 run for 20 days. When students reach the next level, they are given a special pen.

“Look, I have improved so much,” exclaims sixth grader Pritham Poudel, proudly showing his improved Nepali handwriting. It used to take him an hour just to write a paragraph, now he can do it in minutes. Pritham says that having better handwriting increases his confidence at school, plus he benefits from the evergreen trend of Nepali teachers associating good handwriting with solid performance.

Although the word calligraphy brings to mind fine, imprinted letters written with a quill, nibbed pen, Kapali and his calligraphy institute are more focused on helping children like Pritham improve their handwriting, and have been at it for about 30 years.

“We teach each child differently, keeping in mind their unique handwriting and style,” says Kapali, who has trained students from Pokhara, Bhairahawa, Thruval and Dharan, as well as Kathmandu.

Kapali takes inspiration from a number of sources. Pointing colorfully to his old, original Mac, he recalls that Steve Jobs learned calligraphy in college, and later used the fonts in Apple’s devices. UML’s former Prime Minister, Dr. Prem Shrestha, is also known for his calligraphy.

“This will aid their studies, augmenting the knowledge they will gain through the weekend’s class.”

ANAGRAMS: Sai Kapali, with the letters from Mr. Brown’s Angels and Detours, which took the same form above or below, and with pupils learning to improve their handwriting.

Teaching calligraphy as a way to boost students’ confidence

CALLIGRAPHY LESSONS

Watch videos of a calligrapher in Kathmandu and see how younger students are taught manuscript.

nepaltimes.com

THINK. IT. EAT IT!
Order food from the widest range of restaurants.

at same table menu price
Kathmandu roads are being dug up to lay new mains to distribute water from Melamchi when it arrives, but access to it will reflect existing socio-economic inequities. The centre, as usual, will have priority over the periphery.

The first phase of the Melamchi Project will transfer 170 million litres per day (mid) through a 27-km tunnel to Sundarijal, then via a new distribution network and the existing pipeline to various parts of the Kathmandu Valley. But, daily demand in the valley is 360 mld, so there will not be enough water for everyone, and even those connected will only get four hours of water a day.

"If there was plenty of water for everyone, the distribution could have been uniform because the project has an improved network and delivery system," says water expert Madhukar Upadhyaya. "But since the water will not be enough, I don't doubt for a second that the usual water politics will come out in full force."

Indeed, Melamchi may just repeat the findings of two recent PhD dissertations, one by Aditi Raina at the National University of Singapore, the other by Olivia C. Moleen of the University of Oregon: distribution will continue to favour richer households and those near main roads who already have greater access to government piped water.

"Without adequately addressing water access issues for low-income families and renters, Melamchi will likely perpetuate existing social inequalities in the city," says Moleen, a Fulbright scholar.

The distribution plan for the first phase of Melamchi water (see map) shows that areas inside the Ring Road, higher-income localities and those closer to the mains will get water first. The second phase will bring 340mld more water, but that may take another decade by then. Kathmandu Valley’s population will have exceeded 4 million.

At the Kathmandu Valley Water Supply Management Board, engineers say they are aware of the need for more equitable distribution, and plan to find water to neglected neighbourhoods through reservoirs strategically located outside the Ring Road.

"Uneven distribution was due to faulty engineering and haphazard planning in the past," (which meant, for example, that people who could afford it started using pumps to access more water), says Sanjeev Bikram Rana, an engineer at the Board.

"The Melamchi pipeline has been designed to provide a minimum of 10m residual height, which means people won’t need water pumps. We will also have a scheme for poor households who use limited water." The water supply utility, KUWL, will introduce a computerised system to monitor and control distribution. This will end the existing practice of manually opening and closing water valves, which favoured well-off neighbourhoods that could afford the service.

676km of pipes have been laid so far, making the city look like a disaster zone this monsoon, but with 80% of the network completed, 40,000 houses are
PIPE DREAM

Reservoir
Bulk distribution network
Water mains
Distribution pipes

SUNDARJAL
BANSBARI
ALUBALI
KIRITPUR
MAHANAKAL
PÂNIPOKHARI
ARUBARI
KATUNJE
KHUMALTAR

MACHINDRA BAHAL

Mr. Shukla's daughter, Reeta, lives around water. She used to wake up to wait for her line for hours every morning at the neighbourhood well in Machindra Bahal. But her community well dried up, so seven years ago she started to live at the stack of dawn to walk 20 minutes to the public tap at Mangal Bazaar to be first in line.

During her second pregnancy, she asked her husband to dig a well in their backyard. “We suffered a lot due to the shortage of water, so I wanted to make it easy,” recalls the 40-year-old. One of her neighbours even has a well under her bed and pumps water to sell to her community.

Shukla and families renting rooms to her house are all using water from the well in the backyard these days, and are not billed to the city supply. At one point she had even started selling water to the neighbourhood, and remembers “people from all over Patan used to come to me to buy water.”

But Shukla knows shortages could return any time, and is happy about Melamchi supply. “It will wash away all our problems.”

NYAKHACHOK

KUL did not supply water to Nyakhachok regularly, and men when there was water it was contaminated with sewage. So, 18 years ago people decided to dig a community well, and disconnected the city supply. Community leaders also planted trees, revived a park to recharge groundwater, and even collected harvested rainwater. Nyakhachok has set an example in Patan and still provides up to 250 litres of water daily to 250 households at only Rs 100 per month.

“We stopped paying our KUL water bill; we haven’t gotten any water from them in almost two decades. And now we don’t even need them,” said Suman Baiju, a resident. “A neighborhood area has hooked up to Melamchi pipes, and some like Anshu Shrestha would also like to do this but says: “We haven’t seen any pipe-laying work around here, I don’t know why.”

LUKHUSI

This Newari town was once so rich in water everyone envied its residents. But its ancient stone ponds started drying up and wells were yellow with iron contamination. A blizzard fell on the water treatment works and the government stopped water supplies, but not for human consumption. The community started buying tanker water and now Bhupak Maharjan has taken the lead. The community’s management committee is providing tanks and billable water to the community every day.

Local people have been using both KUL and tanker water, but a recent test found that both sources of water were below WHO standards for purity. Maharjan has been drinking tanker water since then.

The Melamchi project price-tag is more than enough, but it is a good investment. The project would cost almost Rs 10 billion, but the people of Lakhushi have high expectations. But after learning how to pay their bills for non-potable use, there are no complaints. (See box: Paying bills.)

Suniwata Maharjan “the government should offer to minimise the penalty for the poor.”

Well, well, well

Cantina Tamang, 28, (standing above) rents a room in Chyas with her young family. Band sends Rs 3,000 per month for water. She has to continue to live in her family’s house where she still relies on the 400-year-old neighborhood water supply, and well water. She is looking forward to having plenty of water for her son, the plastic piece that has been connected to the Melamchi pipe in the yard outside her house.

Sarang Baiju’s house in Nyakhachok, on the other hand, doesn’t trust the utility, is opting out of Melamchi and plans to stick with his community’s well-water distribution system by turning around water recharging.

“I’m not taking Melamchi, I’m not even sure if it’s even ours,” said 46-year-old Baiju. “We have never relied on the government, the community has already managed its own water for decades now. We will continue with that.”

Suniwata Maharjan of the research group institute for social and environmental transition Nepal (GET-N) “neighborhoods have been using well water, but we are ensuring that we are recharging the water table has gone down and wells are going dry.”

Everyone

Connected. Construction of five of the six new reservoirs, with a total capacity of 65,000 cubic metres, has been completed.

P ID and the Department of Roads are temporarily repairing roads dug up during pipe laying. Once the system has been successfully tested, roads under the jurisdiction of the municipality will be permanently fixed.

“If water arrives in Sundarjali, we are ready to supply in October,” says Prakash Khati, chief of the Project Implementation Directorate (PID).

Yet, the project is unlikely to meet its October deadline because the final 2km of the tunnel has been delayed due to soft rock. Once the final water finally arrives in Sundarjali, it will take six more months to test the flow and finish the treatment system. KULKUL says it may be May 2018 by the time the first Kathmandu-based households get Melamchi water, which is snowmelt from the Langtang National Park.

Kathmandu Metropolitan City architect Chandrasudha Shukla says that Melamchi must be seen primarily as a solution for drinking water, and communities should continue with recharging Kathmandu’s ground water, harvesting rainwater and reviving traditional channels and water spots for more sustainable use.

Adda Molden “Alongside the modern pipe network, revitalising old water systems can provide additional public water sources that people can access for a variety of reasons. The cost of Melamchi water could be anywhere up to Rs 400 per month for an average household. Experts hope putting a price tag on the water will force people to be more prudent with water use so that treated drinking water is not wasted to flush toilets. Madhokar Upadhyay concludes: ‘This is a hugely expensive project, and the water will have a cost, so we have to manage it locally, value it as a precious commodity and not waste or misuse the water’.”

.ny.
EVENTS

Reggae acoustic,
Don’t miss an opportunity to tip up to the reggae acoustic bars this weekend by Femba and Sunny from Sant’Lama International.
25 August, 8 pm, House of Music, Thamel, Free entry, 383 57 57

Basuri duo,
Indulge in an Asian musical evening by Krishna Nakagawa from Japan and Nagendra Bikkul from Nepal.
8 September, 5 pm, Alliance Francaise Kathmandu, RC Office 6300 DTI Students, 1 49 262

Famous Farm,\nWith the beginning of flowering birds and a fresh morning breeze walking in through the fields.

Music 101,\nRegister for group lessons to learn guitar, bass, voice and piano from the best music teachers.
August-September, Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jomsabil
(01) 5013098

Northside\nExperience the taste of ancient Newari culture.
18-27 August, 7, 8pm, Cafe I Love, Thamel 81, 701, 4917899, 383 323 861

Café Swetha,\nAn intimate setting in the heart of Patan, with an atmosphere of sophistication, romantic warmth.
Patan road, 551 89 89, yoswetha@janabani.com

Falch,\nGive in to the twin pleasures of lemon jesse chicken and mutton handi kabab, Jomsabil, Thamel, 383 221 475, dgoldil@gmail.com

Capital Grill,\nThis American-style diner offers a large assortment of appetizers and entrees to suit everyone’s taste.
jdhakikitchen.com, (01) 440 2024, jrkaliya@gmail.com

GETAWAY

Rafting Retreat,\nRiding a 2.5km above sea level, the neo-rafts boaters a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh green. Enjoy an organic homestay experience.
Shivapuri-Managam National Park, Jesso/Rekha-2, Jhul 847 27099

Rupakot Resort,\nGet campaigned in the lap of luxury amid stunning views of the Annapurna, Madhus-5, Rupakot, Rupakot, 520 269 670, 4906000 460 260 384, 403 384 403, rupakotresort.com

Haatibin Resort,\nClimb up to Chirapani in the morning for a grand view of Kathmandu valley and drop down to the hot for a relaxed evening.
Pharping, Kathmandu, 01757 37 36

Shivapuri Cottage,\nEscape the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu and enjoy peace, tranquility, good food and fresh air.
Budhanilkantha, 847 271 2737

MUSIC

Yala Mandala,\nSpend the evening at a cafe in this urban artesan in Raghu. Take a tour of the gallery and handcraft workshop with your food.
Kathmandu Food, Lalitpur, (01) 530 8400

The Best Fork,\nA charming European-style restaurant that offers the best salads and varieties of continental dishes. BDV Hotel, 383 324 088

Utopia,\nFor a relaxed ambiance and mouth-watering food, BDV Hotel available. Jabalpur, (01) 300 055

Deepening,\nThe place to head to for Bratwurst and Turkish cuisine; the pleasant and spacious garden is ideal for big gatherings.
Thamel, (01) 414 2788

Miss Motivation,\nKripa Joshi

MY RELIGION IS KINDNESS.

My religion is very simple.

Your religion is kindness.

MISS MOTIVATION

OUR PICK

QaDi Band,\nOpen in Kathmandu on 25 August

In this lost-morning, musical tale, seven prisoners in an Indian jail came together to form a band for a local event. As their music gained massive popularity on social media, they begin to use their songs as a platform to protest the country’s judicial system — and raise questions about their own freedom. The film features newcomers Kadar Jain and Hina Singh in lead roles.

FUJik Bakery,\nTucked in Chirapani, this bakery offers homemade goodies like apple pie, palm nut chocolate and banana cake.
Chirapani, (01) 547 2818

Dining

FALCH,\n
Give in to the twin pleasures of lemon jesse chicken and mutton handi kabab, Jomsabil, Thamel, 383 221 475, dgoldil@gmail.com

CAPITAL Grill,\nThis American-style diner offers a large assortment of appetizers and entrees to suit everyone’s taste.
jdhakikitchen.com, (01) 440 2024, jrkaliya@gmail.com

CAFE SWETHA,\nAn intimate setting in the heart of Patan, with an atmosphere of sophistication, romantic warmth.
Patan road, 551 89 89, yoswetha@janabani.com

FALCH,\nGive in to the twin pleasures of lemon jesse chicken and mutton handi kabab, Jomsabil, Thamel, 383 221 475, dgoldil@gmail.com

CAPITAL Grill,\nThis American-style diner offers a large assortment of appetizers and entrees to suit everyone’s taste.
jdhakikitchen.com, (01) 440 2024, jrkaliya@gmail.com

FUJik Bakery,\nTucked in Chirapani, this bakery offers homemade goodies like apple pie, palm nut chocolate and banana cake.
Chirapani, (01) 547 2818

Our Pick

QaDi Band,\nOpen in Kathmandu on 25 August

In this lost-morning, musical tale, seven prisoners in an Indian jail came together to form a band for a local event. As their music gained massive popularity on social media, they begin to use their songs as a platform to protest the country’s judicial system — and raise questions about their own freedom. The film features newcomers Kadar Jain and Hina Singh in lead roles.

FUJik Bakery,\nTucked in Chirapani, this bakery offers homemade goodies like apple pie, palm nut chocolate and banana cake.
Chirapani, (01) 547 2818

GETAWAY

Rafting Retreat,\nRiding a 2.5km above sea level, the neo-rafts boaters a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh green. Enjoy an organic homestay experience.
Shivapuri-Managam National Park, Jesso/Rekha-2, Jhul 847 27099

Rupakot Resort,\nGet campaigned in the lap of luxury amid stunning views of the Annapurna, Madhus-5, Rupakot, Rupakot, 520 269 670, 4906000 460 260 384, 403 384 403, rupakotresort.com

Haatibin Resort,\nClimb up to Chirapani in the morning for a grand view of Kathmandu valley and drop down to the hot for a relaxed evening.
Pharping, Kathmandu, 01757 37 36

Shivapuri Cottage,\nEscape the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu and enjoy peace, tranquility, good food and fresh air.
Budhanilkantha, 847 271 2737

MISS MOTIVATION

Kripa Joshi

My religion is very simple.

Your religion is kindness.

My religion is kindness.

GETAWAY

Rafting Retreat,\nRiding a 2.5km above sea level, the neo-rafts boaters a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh green. Enjoy an organic homestay experience.
Shivapuri-Managam National Park, Jesso/Rekha-2, Jhul 847 27099

Rupakot Resort,\nGet campaigned in the lap of luxury amid stunning views of the Annapurna, Madhus-5, Rupakot, Rupakot, 520 269 670, 4906000 460 260 384, 403 384 403, rupakotresort.com

Haatibin Resort,\nClimb up to Chirapani in the morning for a grand view of Kathmandu valley and drop down to the hot for a relaxed evening.
Pharping, Kathmandu, 01757 37 36

Shivapuri Cottage,\nEscape the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu and enjoy peace, tranquility, good food and fresh air.
Budhanilkantha, 847 271 2737

MISS MOTIVATION

Kripa Joshi

My religion is very simple.

Your religion is kindness.

My religion is kindness.

GETAWAY

Rafting Retreat,\nRiding a 2.5km above sea level, the neo-rafts boaters a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh green. Enjoy an organic homestay experience.
Shivapuri-Managam National Park, Jesso/Rekha-2, Jhul 847 27099

Rupakot Resort,\nGet campaigned in the lap of luxury amid stunning views of the Annapurna, Madhus-5, Rupakot, Rupakot, 520 269 670, 4906000 460 260 384, 403 384 403, rupakotresort.com

Haatibin Resort,\nClimb up to Chirapani in the morning for a grand view of Kathmandu valley and drop down to the hot for a relaxed evening.
Pharping, Kathmandu, 01757 37 36

Shivapuri Cottage,\nEscape the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu and enjoy peace, tranquility, good food and fresh air.
Budhanilkantha, 847 271 2737

MISS MOTIVATION

Kripa Joshi

My religion is very simple.

Your religion is kindness.

My religion is kindness.
Leading from beneath

The one-door policy for flood relief was widely criticised, but it can work if newly-elected local governments take charge

SAHINA SHRESTHA
in CHITWAN

Three months after Tara Kaji Mahara was elected deputy mayor of Kuhal Municipality, Chitwan saw one of the worst floods in recent decades. Although no lives were lost, nearly 200 houses were damaged, and settlements had to be razed.

Local women surrounded her on Tuesday morning, each wanting to share their woes. This was Mahara’s third visit to Dhurubari after the floods the first time she made a list of basic needs, during the follow-up visit she brought relief materials.

“Why aren’t you in school?” she asks a young girl outside a house. “The flood swept away my books,” the girl answers.

“I’ll bring you books and stationery soon, then you must go to school regularly,” says Mahara, who had brought dignity kits for pregnant women she met on her second visit.

In Ramaharup, Anita Rai, 13 (photographed) brings out books and notebooks she managed to salvage after the flood, placing them on a shelf. She remembers the water reaching her knees and her parents lying down their belongings, but the first thing Har Rai did was store her books in a higher place. Even that was not high enough and the sixth grader lost more than half her books.

“My friends are in school because they have concrete houses and their uniforms and books were saved,” she says.

On Monday, three organisations handed over needed relief materials to the flood victims in the village, in coordination with the mayor and deputy mayor of the municipality, UNICEF had brought water buckets, mugs and blankets for the children, Sushma Village Foundation came with notebooks, stationery, juice, and uniforms and Ratanagar Chamber of Commerce and Industry donated mosquito nets and prophyl to maintain hygiene.

That outcome was possible because local representatives co-ordinated data and coordinated with relief agencies that wanted to help. Chitwan district quickly formed a disaster management fast-response team chaired by CEO Vinayak Rastri Bhatta. The CEO implemented a one-door policy, where local representatives lead relief distribution.

“This is to ensure that there is no manipulation or duplication in relief distribution,” says Bhatta. “We need to identify and reach the right people for effective distribution of aid. With local representatives in place, it is easier to do so. They are more responsible and accountable as they know the people and the area.”

Local leaders say the policy has been effective. “The best part about this is people get what they need and nothing goes to waste,” says Bharat Gurung, chairman of Ward 6, Madhi Municipality. “What is the use of giving people quilts when they need rice?”

“The one-door policy has really been very effective in Chitwan,” says Anita Dulal, Chief of the UNICEF Office in Swayamb. “Since the local leaders are in place, there is better identification of those who need supplies, and therefore more effective targeted distribution of the relief materials being brought in through various organisations and individuals.”

This is in sharp contrast to Rajahat, one of the worst-hit districts, where the lack of elected representatives at the local level is slowing down relief distribution, which is being run mostly by private organisations.

“Sending employees to the field for emergency work is not ideal,” says Jibesh Banerjee, local development officer for Rajahat. “If we had local council members to count on, reaching those truly affected would be much easier and effective.”

While there are still places they haven’t been able to reach because roads were damaged, local leaders in Chitwan continue to strive to deliver aid. They say this is an opportunity to work for the people and help region communities’ trust.

“Even if she can’t bring anything for us, I am glad she at least visited,” says Tirtha Kumar Lachhecha of Dhurubari, after deputy mayor Mahara had left.

nepalitimes.com
For full story and more pictures

Do these cause sensitivity in your teeth?

“I recommend Sensodyne.”
- Dr. Satbir Geler, dentist practising in the UK.

Since 2001 AD

NCE
National College of Engineering
AFFILIATED TO TRIBHUVAUN UNIVERSITY

Do these cause sensitivity in your teeth?

Sensodyne

BE in
- Computer
- Electronics & Communication
- Civil
- Electrical

Admission Open

Submit your form at
nec.edu.np
Deadline: 2074 Bhadra 3

Quality For Excellence

All IET entrance passed students

World’s No.1 Sensitivity Toothpaste

*Retail Value Sales data 12 months ending 30th April 2016.

GSK
© 2016 GSK group of companies or its licencess.
For those who followed M Night Shyamalan's film career with glee, and then growing despair, there is now a flicker of hope. With Split, which came out early this year and is now on DVD, Shyamalan is back with a film that is so unpredictable and so deeply bizarre that you really have no idea what is going to happen, a trick that made the filmmaker so popular with The Sixth Sense (1999) and continued with a few subsequent films, but without as much success. Originality is a rare quality in the film industry these days. The big films financed by American studios, and now increasingly big Chinese corporations, are formulaic and often the source material is comics or novels: few risks are taken. Independent films coming out of North America are not particularly groundbreaking, leaving independent world cinema, and now television, to really push the boundaries.

Some of Shyamalan's films have been quite bad, and while Split is nowhere as good as The Sixth Sense, there are parts of it that are absolutely riveting. James McAvoy is the main reason for this. Playing a man with 23 different identities, McAvoy's portrayal of Kevin Wendell Crumb is a work of art, a feat that was only pulled off by a thespian of the finest caliber. McAvoy has always been impressive, but with this particular role he runs the gamut from loveable to pathetic, tender to bizarre, and finally to the horrifying — and it is awesome to watch.

The story itself is a real cipher and as with many of Shyamalan's films, it really is quite ludicrous once one snaps out of the haze of the film. However, as Byzantine as it may be, the plot does compel, and the central mystery lacks enough gravity to keep you focused.

There is also another phenomenon onscreen, the young Anya Taylor-Joy, who plays Casey, a girl who is kidnapped by one of Crumb's personalities. Plain-wise that's as far as I can go without ruining things for you, and I hope that these little clues will interest you enough to watch this strange film, which is full of flaws and yet one of the most curious productions I've seen in a while.

Shyamalan wrote Split as a sequel of sorts to Unbreakable (2000). While it really isn't a conventional sequel, there is enough in it to give way to a third, planned film, which is now in the works after the box-office success of Split. While his work is uneven, as is the case with the Shyamalans of this world, you just never quite know what you're gonna get and that is so much more interesting than the unoriginal, interchangeable film sequence at the end of another Transformers movie.

You may not like Split but it will leave you wondering for hours to come. It may not be everyone’s cup of tea, but those with a soft spot for this quirky filmmaker will breathe a sigh of recognition.

**HAPPENINGS**

**STRIKE A POSE:** Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba and his wife Anju, Rana Deuba with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Rastriya Shikshan in New Delhi on Wednesday.

**JAPANESE AID:** Ambassador of Japan to Nepal Masaharu Ogawa handed over emergency relief goods worth Rs 2.4 million to Home Minister Janardan Sharma at a ceremony at the Shikhar Gyan Sajha Aayana, Tribhuvan International Airport, on Wednesday.

**FERVENT PRAYERS:** A women performs a ritual to celebrate Tij at Krishna Mandir in Lalitpur on Thursday.

**“SAY ARTHA”:** Nepali army and US army conduct a health camp in Gorkha, which was the epicenter for the 2015 earthquake.

**GOAL:** Nepal’s Bikesh Koirala celebrates after scoring a goal against the Maldives at the SAFF U-15 Championship 2017, held at the ANFA complex, Lalitpur, on Monday.
Periods of banishment

Health assistant Sita Sejwai works at a local health post in Til Rural Municipality-9 of Jumla district, but she is forced to vacate her house during her menstruation.

“Boys don’t come to the health post for treatment if I am there during my periods. I am not allowed to touch patients and can’t stay at home,” Sejwai says.

Women, including many health assistants, in the far-flung villages of Jumla are forced to live in Chhapaudi during their periods despite continuous campaigns to raise awareness against it.

Government Relief Distribution “Go to the next room” “Go upstairs”

“Go down.” “Get out”

नामिक

अफसाहारी

Balu Bhatti in Annapurna Post

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“We believe even India wants to see the Nepal-China relationship proceed peacefully.”

Hua Chunying, spokesperson at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People’s Republic of China, Kathmandu, 26 August.
The golden age of the

A secular Nepal sees a surge in conversions to Christianity by evangelical groups

OM ASTHA RAI

Padam Parajuli’s right hand was paralysed, but all attempts to treat it had failed. He had almost given up hope when his Christian uncle told him that the pastor at the Rokha Church in Sindhupalchok district could cure him. The pastor asked the congregation to pray for Parajuli, and made him drink some ‘holy’ water. “It was a miracle: I was able to move my hand,” Parajuli recalls.

Nepal was still a Hindu monarchy at the time and practising Christianity was not easy. Devotees were harassed by police, and even jailed for spreading the gospel. Parajuli began to visit the church in Lamjung clandestinely, without telling his parents. The villagers soon found out, then abused and ostracised him.

“I was not bothered about what others thought, but I was upset that my father was upset because he was also taunted,” he says.

One Saturday, Parajuli saw his father sitting in the last row of the church. His heart pounded as his father approached him. “I was shocked that he would talk to me in front of everyone,” he recalls.

“But he hugged me and told me to be happy with the life I had chosen.”

Three decades on, Parajuli is now the pastor of a protestant church in Bhaisepati. His whole family has converted to Christianity, Sindhupalchok, where there was only one church when he was baptised, now has more than 175 — half of them opened after Nepal became a secular republic in 2008.

“The 200 years of monarchy was the dark age for Nepal’s Christians, now is the golden age despite all the recent attacks on us,” says pastor Kiran Kumar Das of Amuruwa Church in Kusum, Lalitpur.

But there is a growing backlash against conversions from conservative groups unhappy with the secular Constitution. In 2009, a blast killed two people and injured 10 at the Roman Catholic Assumption Church in Lalitpur. Police arrested Sita Shrestha, who grew up singing Hindu hymns with her father, a priest at a temple in Kathmandu. In an interview then, she told a reporter she was proud of what she did, and would do it again. “All the misery inflicted upon us...is because of these Christians, they need to be chased out of Nepal.”

Preaching on high

A Christian evangelical group is converting Buddhists in holy Himalayan valleys

BROT COBURN

In 2014, a group called MountainChild signed a 5-year agreement with the Social Welfare Council to open schools in rural Nepal; the Sama Learning Centre in Nubri of North Gorkha is one of them.

There were rumours that MountainChild was a cover for evangelical Christian missionaries engaged in religious conversion and ‘church planting’ across the high mountain belt of Nepal, even though the Constitution states, “No person shall...convert another person from one religion to another or any act or conduct that may jeopardise another’s religion.”

“Well, we’re giving them a choice,” the fresh-faced American director of the school said when I pointed to evidence of their hidden agenda of conversion. He was implying that any interest a student expressed in converting to Christianity was voluntary. But can such a choice be truly free will, at Sama Learning Centre’s KG and pre-KG levels, when the children are provided with food, clothing and promises of a glorious future blessed by Christ?

The Nubri and neighbouring ethnic groups proudly trace their lineage — their families, the generations of lamas and the teacher-disciple relationships — back hundreds of years. I asked the director how he could introduce Christianity without a scholarly background or personal knowledge of the millennium-old traditions, cultures and languages of the valley.

He replied: “Well, before Buddhism, they practiced another religion, then converted, so conversion is not new to this valley.”

He may have been referring to the 8th-Century saint, Padmasambhava, who transformed the pre-Buddhist deities into defenders of the faith. It seemed arrogant to suggest that some development aid, and a conviction of moral righteousness, could co-opt a cultural system that has
Fake secularism

I was declared secular in 2007, but it is not yet secular in the real sense. Secularism requires the state to be indifferent to all religions, or treat all religions equally. But the Nepal version of secularism, as defined by the Constitution, is an attack on the Hindu religion and alienates the Hindus.

The Constitution recognises a primordial Hindu identity (Sarvajanika Dharma) and the cow as the national deity. It also recognises other religions, but these are not given equal status.

Secularism means the state should not interfere in religious matters. But in Nepal, the state has interfered in religious matters, particularly in the case of the cow.

There is a need to redefine what secularism means in the context of Nepal. The state should be neutral towards all religions, not just the Hindu religion.

Dambar Cheunjung

In April this year the same church was set on fire by an unidentified man. The State continues to deny Christians a designated census, and political leaders often make disparaging remarks against the religion. Maoist leader Pushpa Kamal Dahal said recently: "The growing Christian population is a threat to Nepal."

All of this pales in comparison to what Nepal's Christians suffered during the monarchy. There was no record of a case of church burning, but there was the Hindu state-sponsored harassment of and discrimination against Nepali Christians.

Despite this, Tri Ratna Adam Tulshihari, who converted to Christianity when he was a teenager in the early 70s and is now pastor at the Christian Prayer House, says secularism has given Christians a breathing space compared to the harassment and fear they faced during the Panchayat. The number of visitors to his prayer house is increasing, and Pastor Tulshihari is opening another church in Buddha Nagar.

The Federation of National Christians Nepal (FNCN) estimates there are 12,000 churches in the country, and the number is increasing. The Koconita Mission, which began with the construction of a new church in 1978, already has 90 churches and is aiming to build 400 more over the next three years under its Vision 2020 program.

"We are so far concentrated in and around central Nepal, but we want to reach every corner of the country," says pastor Mangal Manandhar, who heads the evangelical group. While catholic Christians are not active in conversion and expanding their influence, non-catholic denominations are in full expansion mode.

Although the Census 2011 showed less than 2% of Nepal's population to be Christian, the FNCN says the number is now closer to 10%.

The Hindu, republic, political party RPP and other Hindu groups blame secularism for growing protonasticaly, and are demanding that Nepal return to being a Hindu nation.

Anthropologist Dambar Cheunjung argues that secularism is not the only reason why Nepal's Christian community is growing. "Hinduism is an inclusive religion," he says. "It excludes Dalits and others by creating a caste-based social hierarchy. They want to escape this exclusionary religion, and end up converting to Christianity." (See Gaur Editorial, page 7)

Cheunjung says Nepal is a parochial society because it still promotes Hindu identity, culture and symbols. He adds: "If Hindus are worried about Christians, they must push for real secularism. If Nepal becomes secular in a real sense, the Christian churches will have less impact."
Summit of Scoundrels

Good thing the rhinos that inadvertently swam into India due to last week’s floods were rescued and repatriated to Nepal, otherwise it may have sparked a diplomatic row just before Rama’s state visit to India. If only the talks on water and security matters could be as amicably settled.

Just before the Crime Minister scowled off, though, his party’s MPs filed a draft bill in Parliament allowing convicted murderers, rapists, human traffickers, drug pushers, kidnappers, carjackers, and other outlaw criminals sentenced to less than 20 years, to henceforth stand for elections by cutting the mandatory six-year cooling off period by half. A lot of people were outraged by this, little realising that this has been standard operating procedure in Nepal since the dawn of democracy and the advent of party-based parliamentary democracy (hereinafter referred to as ‘Goat Market’).

You can tell Prime Minister Dahal IV is an equal opportunity employer because he has formed a superpower kingpin with a large cabinet platoon of 50 ministers. And since the Chambers of Parliament are beginning to resemble the Chambers of Commerce, we can only hope that Nepal’s newly affiliated hospitals can operate (pardon the pun) without let or hindrance. Nepal is more advanced: in other countries the mafia is involved in killing, here the mafia is involved in healing.

However, Dr Govinda KC is right: we have reached saturation point with medical collapse in Kathmandu because competition has got so stiff (another subtle pun, if you all noticed) that hospitals are hiring ambulance drivers and chopper pilots. It is time for a referendum on medical colleges: let’s open training centres for malfeasance, and promote MMC (Mafia) tourism by conducting an international conference of mafia bosses.

Having notified up a few more points in the Transparency International Corruption Index this year, Nepal has won the bid to host the next Global Conference on Graff and Organised Crime, for which scoundrels have to pay a hefty bribe to attend.

Some of the world’s most renowned rascals will be here to deliberate for three days on how to swindle more efficiently, as well as to put finishing touches on the Universal Declaration on Plunder and State Capture.

At press time, more than 1,000 internationally acclaimed thieves and knaves have confirmed participation, including bigwigs such as Tedrosa Ongang Ngema Mbasog of Equatorial Guinea and Mossack Fonseca from Panama, with the opening plenary keynote by the legendary Melinda Marcos. Delegates will split into breakout sessions, and their highlights will be shared in the final Tyrants’ Networking Evening.