

**Time to Celebrate 2018**

22<sup>ND</sup> DEC - 14<sup>TH</sup> JAN

**BUY MORE SAVE MORE**

Attractive Discount vouchers with a minimum purchase of **Nrs. 50,000.-**

Plenty of special offers on the way. Stay updated!

FOLLOW US [www.instagram.com/INDEXFURNITURENEPAL](https://www.instagram.com/INDEXFURNITURENEPAL)

LIKE US [www.facebook.com/INDEXFURNITURENEPAL](https://www.facebook.com/INDEXFURNITURENEPAL)

**Indexfurniture**

FURNITURE THAT MAKES YOU SMILE

METROPARK, UTTARACHOKA, LAZIMPAT 4415181, 4419308

STEEL TOWER, JAWALAKHOL, 5000270

**LAVAZZA**  
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE

Hotel Shanker - Lazimpat  
Soattee Crown Plaza - Takahal  
lavazza@subhashingalnti.com

CREATE YOUR "OWN" ENVIRONMENT

**Divine Wines**

For Trade Inquiry | Ph.: 01-4032624 | Mob.: 9801215111

ALL ORGANISATIONS NEED EFFECTIVE

**people**

Providing right candidate at right place at right time

RECRUITMENT  
SELECTION  
HIRING

t : +977-1-4620741  
e : info@gtn.com.np  
w : www.gtn.com.np

**greentick**  
MANAGEMENT CONSULTANT

**AMBIENCE LIFESTYLE PVT. LTD.**  
Bijuli Bazar, Naya Baneshwor, Kathmandu  
Ph: 4781 071, 4781 072  
Email: ambiencestyle@gmail.com

**TRANQUILITY SPA**  
"Balancing Body, Mind and Spirit"

☎ 01-4420424  
www.tranquilityspa.com.np



OM ASTHARA

## Shape of things to come

The current post-political transition in Nepali politics is not due to President Bidya Devi Bhandari sitting on an ordinance, or the Nepali Congress insisting that it get more seats in the Upper House.

What is actually holding things up is uncertainty over the announced merger between the UML and the Maoists. Whether they unite and how will, in large measure, determine the outcome of Nepal's politics in 2018 and beyond.

After their Left Alliance scored a better-than-expected win in this year's elections, the two party leaders K P Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal have been regarding each other with suspicion. Oli was a revolutionary who used violence as a political weapon in the Jhapa Uprising of the 1960s – long before Dahal launched his armed struggle in the 1990s. It would be a stretch to label either

of them 'communist' today, but both have suspicion, intrigue and conspiracy in their DNA.

Which is why in the past week, they have flirted with the two largest Madhes-based parties, threatening to go it alone. While the Maoists have kept quiet on the President, the UML has persuaded her from behind-the-scenes to put the ordinance in the bottom drawer.

The UML's strategy is to buy time to work on party unity by reassuring the Maoists that it is desirable, and shore up geopolitical support with the big neighbours to the north and south. Oli and Dahal finally met on Wednesday, cleared the air somewhat, and instructed their unification task force to begin work.

But progress will depend on how much trust Oli and Dahal can build on power-sharing. The two have decided to rotate the prime ministership, but the crucial bargaining is over who will chair the merged party. Dahal would

**PREVIEW:** In a scene that is probably going to be common in 2018, protesters at Bhanu Chok in Dharan demanding that the capital of Province 1 be located in their city. The other contenders are Itahari, Biratnagar and Dhankuta. (See story: page 17) There are similar protests in other provinces.

desperately like to, but Oli knows he will have a UML mutiny in his hands if he lets that happen. The other options under discussion are: taking turns chairing the joint party, co-chairing the party, or a joint coterie leading the party.

Meanwhile, confusion reigns over the powers of the new provincial assemblies, where their capitals should be, and where they should be housed.

For many, the bargaining for power in the merged communist parties and the wrangling in the provinces is a sign of things to come, and what lies in store for Nepali politics in the new year. **Kunda Dixit**



**huzz**  
**SPECIALTY COFFEE**  
PAGE 8-9

### Pokhara gets ready

BY YUVARAJ SHRESTHA  
PAGE 11

### To forget or not to forget

BY SHREEJANA SHRESTHA  
PAGE 16

### Thinking and acting locally

BY OM ASTHA RAI  
PAGE 17

**25 YEARS**  
25th Anniversary

**AIRLINE OF THE YEAR SKYTRAX 2017**

**More flights. More convenience.**

Enjoy additional flights from Kathmandu to more than 150 places worldwide, via Doha. With 28 flights weekly, you now have more convenient connections to the USA, Europe, Africa and the Middle East on board the World's Best Airline.

[qatarairways.com](https://qatarairways.com)  
Call us at +977-01-4440467

**QATAR AIRWAYS**  
الخطوط الجوية القطرية

GOING PLACES TOGETHER



# NEPAL’S #1 EXPORT: PEOPLE

If there is one aspect of Nepal’s socio-economic condition that touches almost every aspect of life of just about every Nepali family today, it is migration. There is no other more damning indictment of governance failure and criminal neglect over the last 25 years. This is flagrant abdication by the political leadership of its primary responsibility of protecting its citizens.

Human beings have historically been Nepal’s Number One export. Subsistence farmers fled indebtedness during the last two centuries to settle in Assam, Darjeeling and Bhutan, and young Nepali men started being recruited into British Gurkha regiments even before the Anglo-Nepal War ended in 1816, a process that continues to this day. Then there were the hundreds of thousands of young Nepali women trafficked first into India and now to the Gulf countries, duped into prostitution and abused by employers.

Ironically it has been since the restoration of democracy in 1990 that the export of manpower to the Gulf and East Asian countries took off – largely because recruiters had political patronage and lubricated the electoral machinery of the parties with a cut of the profits they made from fleecing fellow Nepalis. More than 4 million Nepalis went abroad in search of work in the last 20 years, nearly all of them paid a hefty fee to manpower middlemen. And this number does not even include the unknown millions who have migrated to India seasonally for work.

The most searing condemnation of the inability and disinterest of the Nepal government to guarantee safe migration is Amnesty International’s report released earlier this year: Turning People into Profits: Abusive Recruitment, Trafficking and Forced

Labour of Nepali Migrant Workers. Every page of this report is a searing account of state collusion in directly defrauding its own people, it should outrage us.

This month Amnesty published the results of its survey of Nepali migrant workers that revealed 88% of them were forced to pay prohibitively high fees to recruiters to get them jobs overseas, and most were heavily indebted as a result. Amnesty said such ‘country-wide exploitation ... was flourishing under an often indifferent government’. That is being polite: it is flourishing under greedy governments that have sucked the blood of citizens in direct partnership with middlemen, consigning many to a life of debt bondage.

We carry a report this week on the exponential rise in the number of Nepali migrants in Japan who use loopholes left open to source cheap labour. Nepalis pay recruiters exorbitant amounts to fix them up with student visas, which is actually for employment. Even a Japan government scheme for trainees is used by middlemen to sell visas. (See page 14-15)

After decades of actively encouraging its young men and women to leave for work abroad because it absolved the government from ensuring self-reliance and growth to create jobs at home, 2018 should be when a new federal government under a new, inclusive Constitution starts creating conditions for Nepalis to work and live in Nepal. The \$6.1 billion Nepalis are supposed to have earned from overseas remittance goes mostly into food and education of families back home. It pays for the country’s imports -- mainly petroleum, and now electricity. We are paying for oil with our sweat.

## Times MOST-VIEWED VIDEOS OF 2017



**The Last Dancing bears**  
One of the most popular videos in *Nepali Times* online this year was last week’s film by **Ryan Heng Chang** about the search and rescue of Nepal’s last pair of dancing bears. The camera follows the police across the eastern Tarai as they geo-locate the bear handlers based on their cell phone signals. The bears will be rehabilitated in he Parsa National Park, and the handlers will initially be employed to take care of them.



**Fuming Kathmandu**  
The impact of air pollution on public health last winter was vividly illustrated in this alarming video by **Sonia Awale, Smriti Basnet and Gopen Rai** showing how public transport can improve public health.



**Homemaker and Bodybuilder**  
Video by **Shreejana Shrestha, Sahina Shrestha and Bikram Rai** of bodybuilder Nanita Maharjan showed an important lesson: how being a champion wouldn’t have been possible without support from her family.



**Kirtipur by Drone**  
*Nepali Times*’ **Sebastian Wolligandt** took his drone up over Kirtipur for this stunning much-shared video of the historic hilltop town. Only 5 km from Kathmandu, it is a world away.



**Kathmandu’s Sole**  
**Shreejana Shrestha** and **Bikram Rai** profile the Wong family who settled in Kathmandu after fleeing Kolkata during the Sino-Indian War. Watch this popular video of Wong Shiao Leung and his family pursue their ancestral occupation in Bagh Bazar.



**Holy Hike**  
If you missed this popular travel video of the Dolpo Trek to the mesmerising Phoksundo Lake by **Kunda Dixit** and **Sonia Awale** you can watch it and dozens of other films of 2017 by subscribing to the *Nepali Times* YouTube Channel.

Times.com

### ONLINE PACKAGES



**NEPALIS IN NIPPON**  
Nepalis are migrating to Japan in droves, exploiting immigration loopholes. A new generation of young and wayward migrants has somewhat tarnished the once-positive image of Nepalis among the Japanese. Watch video of how a new influx of migrants and their families has brought new challenges. *Read sotry: page 14-15.*



**TO BEAN OR NOT TO BEAN**  
Coffee brewed with premium single origin beans is creating waves among coffee lovers around the world. Nepal, with the dream to grow the best Arabica coffee, is finding a niche. From picking the cherries to brewing the coffee, we explain the process and problems in our video. *Read story: page 8-9.*



**SKILLFUL TOUCH**  
Seeing Hands is a small project set up in 2005 with just four blind massage students, now it is ranked as Kathmandu’s most popular massage clinic on Tripadvisor. Follow us as we introduce you to their blind massage therapists and find out what makes them so special. *Read story: page 7.*

### WHAT'S TRENDING



**Dancing to freedom**  
by *Ryan Heng Chang*  
Families in the Tarai have been using performance bears to make a living despite being banned in 1973. The good news is the last two known bears were rescued from their owners last week in Gaur. If you missed this much-watched film you can still go online to view the rescue of the bears from captivity.

**Most reached and shared on Facebook**

### Put back what you pump out

by *Sonia Awale*  
Kathmandu Valley’s water table is falling fast as demand for water empties aquifers. But Shanker Hotel and Standard Chartered Bank in Lazimpat show how easy it is to put back into the ground the water they pump out. Read story and watch animation online.

**Most popular on Twitter**

### State of confusion

*Editorial*  
‘In a democracy, people are sometimes swayed by populism to make mistakes and elect despots. In Kathmandu, people made a blunder by electing an incompetent mayor, who is loyal and accountable only to his party boss.’ While many readers agreed, others felt the ethnicity of the mayor had nothing to do with his disregard for heritage preservation. Visit nepalitimes.com to read the debate, and send in your own comments.

**Most commented**

### On Queen’s pond

by *Sahina Shrestha*  
‘But Rani Pokhari will need a coffee shop. We will build it.’ Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya, KMC. Read to find out what more the Mayor is up to on the historic pond.

**Most visited online page**

### QUOTE TWEETS

**Nepali Times** @nepalitimes  
EDITORIAL: Who would have thought a Newar #mayor would devalue the living #traditions of the Valley, and work to actively destroy them? http://bit.ly/2Dr2uQS #heritage #Kathmandu

**Ujjwal Acharya** @UjjwalAcharya  
Kathmandu’s newly-elected mayor is a disgrace: @nepalitimes editorial’s strong statement reflects our helplessness. #OurLeaders

**Amish Mulmi** @amish973  
What is the correlation between ethnicity and authority? Unless @nepalitimes is suggesting ethnicity has something to do with the abuse of power in Nepal. (Which it has, but the next time there’s a scandal involving a Khas, it should say, who’d have thought a Khas PM...)

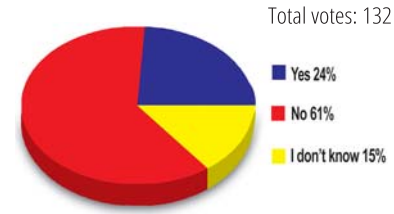
**Friday** @nawkhd  
I personally think as a local Newar he should have been even more sensitive towards the local heritage more than Bahun and Chhetris. But he isn’t. I guess being Newar he has more discredit to take.

**Prabin Acharya** @PrabinAcharya  
The Kathmandu Mayor maybe incompetent but only being Newar doesn’t mean he has values and traditions in him. Skill isn’t in blood/caste. Arrogance is his major.

Times

Weekly Internet Poll #890

Q. Do you believe the current deadlock over the Upper House is the final hurdle to political stability for Nepal?



Weekly Internet Poll #891  
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Will we have more political stability in 2018 compared to 2017?

Times

Nepali Times on Facebook  
Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter  
Follow @nepalitimes on Instagram

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







**TURKISH  
AIRLINES**

# NEW YEAR NEW DISCOVERIES

MAY YOUR NEW YEAR BE FILLED WITH NEW SIGHTS, NEW TASTES,  
NEW SOUNDS AND NEW FEELINGS TO DISCOVER.  
HAPPY NEW YEAR.

014438363 / 014438436 | KTMSALES@THY.COM | TURKISHAIRLINES.COM

A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER  



# A stable Nepal in 2018?

But parliamentary elections under a fairly good Constitution alone will not bring about stability

The elections to National Parliament and Federal Assemblies are expected to a decade of political instability in Nepal as well as a successful transition to democratic polity after the negotiated peace agreement with the insurgent Maoists in 2006.



COMMENT  
Yvonne Pande

The election results show that that two left parties the UML and Maoists-Centre will be the major stakeholders of the government for the term of new Parliament. Over the past two years I have been interviewing several political leaders across party lines about the effectiveness of power sharing to create stable politics in Nepal. Most leaders in that cohort have been involved in politics much before the insurgency and experienced many changes in Nepal in a relatively short period of time. In November 2005, the Maoists and the Seven Party Alliance came to the negotiating table in New Delhi for difference reasons. However, the talks themselves created an atmosphere of trust and ambition for both which meant there were inherent flaws in the three important peace initiatives: the 12-Point understanding in New Delhi, the Comprehensive Peace Accord and the Interim Constitution. These flaws



influenced inter-party dynamics and pushed the subsequent peace process towards mistrust and instability. The subsequent rise of identity groups led to an increase of new actors in the political arena, and this participation led to an increase in the demands for more inclusion. The main mechanism to include the groups was the Proportional Representation (PR) electoral system. This was a good tool to include identity groups even though it may have been tokenism. Still, there was a need to need to adjust the methods of PR elections, which actually had improved by the time this month's elections were held. The Election Commission wisely asked the parties to review

their lists and submit it to the EC as a closed one, which left little space for parties to manipulate the list after results. The electorate still isn't aware of the candidates in the PR list, and this may need to be streamlined. The frequent changes in the ideology of the parties in the past indicate that leaders focus mainly on the current situation and short term solution especially at election time. The change of ideologies makes it difficult for the constituents to understand their goals and ambitions which is crucial for their accountability. Continuous change of alliances, prime ministers and opposition are indicator of the short term time horizons which makes leaders focus on the current political situation, especially vis-à-vis inclusiveness. The rise in identity groups led to compromises which resulted in making more political participation possible. The Huntington Theory (1968) on political stability implies that if political participation rises the 'complexity, autonomy, adaptability, and coherence of society's political institutions must also increase'. In Nepal, political institutions created during and through the peace process have not reached the stage with which they

can create political stability. The 2015 Constitution is certainly a milestone, but political parties have yet to institutionalise internal democracy, parliamentary elections under a fairly good Constitution alone will not bring about stability. Barry Weingast says that a stable democracy with rule of law needs to create incentives to honour limits on the behaviour of the government. The last two elections brought unexpected

results, and they were more or less peaceful due to the belief of the pre-poll alliances that they would win. If the results had not met the expectations of the leaders, there could still be months of instability. Despite the current stalemate over the National Assembly, most Nepalis have not yet given up the hope that the polity and society must stabilise now.

*Yvonne Pande is a graduate from TU in Conflict Peace and Development.*

**BIZ BRIEFS**

### Easy Travel

To make passengers' travel experience barrier-free, Turkish Airlines, has started issuing Braille boarding pass and trained more than 100 flight attendants and ground staff in sign language to facilitate hearing impaired passengers.

### Golf in the East

Top professionals and amateur Golfers of Nepal gather at Dharan's Nirvana Country Club Health & Golf Resort for the Eastern Open of Surya Nepal Golf Tour 2017-18, from 27 to 29 December.

### OBOR unveiled

'One Belt One Road & Nepal: A New Perspective to Nepal-China Relations',

a book penned by Mitra Bandhu Poudel, Principal of Little Angels' College of Management was unveiled at Ember's Restaurant, Krishnagalli.

### Festive Sale

Damilano Italia and Rosso Brunello are offering a festive sale up to 50% till 23 January. The shops in Durbarmarg offer a range of footwear, bag, wallet and many more.

### Portable Durbar

Search for Common Ground – Nepal launched *Singha Durbar*, a governance mobile application for accessing information about federal structure, constitution, justice and legal services. The app funded by USAID and designed by Kazi Studios is available in Google play store.

# The Greatest Online Food Festival

Get ready to satisfy your taste buds with a wide range of multi-cultural cuisines from exhibiting restaurants of Kathmandu and Lalitpur. The event will bring you an amazing opportunity to celebrate the love for food with exciting online games and free giveaways.

**Play online games and Win Discount Coupons**

**Special delicacies at the best price**

**Win goodies on facebook/instagram**

**Free Home Delivery on every festive order**

**Surprise giveaways every day**

**2 free coupons from Kaffine on order of Rs.1000 or above**

**Free Coca-Cola on every order**

**Free Somersby to first 50 customers everyday**

**VISIT**  
[www.foodmandu.com/foodfest](http://www.foodmandu.com/foodfest)  
**DEC 22, 2017- JAN 5, 2018**

**Exhibitors**

Title Sponsor

INDOMITABLE SINCE 1859

Powered By

Refreshment Partner

TASTE THE FEELING

Internet Partner

Mobility Partner

Banking Partner

Truly a Nepali Bank

Media Partner

Magazine Partner

Supported By





**HAVE BOLD TASTE  
AND INTENSE CHARACTER**

KEEP WALKING



Global Trading Concern (P) Ltd.

PLEASE DRINK RESPONSIBLY.



# Towards 700% growth

Federal Nepal is an opportunity to start growing your business in 2018

Many commentators have pointed to the expensive recent elections for seven provincial assemblies, the declaration of seven federal states and the search for potential capitals as money wasted. However, we



1/2 FULL  
Anil Chitrakar

can also look at it as offering an opportunity for all businesses to attain seven-fold growth. As you read this column,

supermarket chains, branded restaurants, tea and coffee shops, car rentals, hospitals and schools must already be having internal discussions and planning to open franchised outlets in the seven provinces. This also means that Franchising 101 classes will be in higher demand and will be part of the new curriculum at all business schools that generate the required human resources for the 700% growth.

Politicians have always stated their desire to decentralise power that was concentrated in Kathmandu. For business, it means an opportunity to really



rent, time to connect power and water lines are all going to go up. Think of all the people you will need to hire. The early bird will get the worm. If you arrive late you may not be hiring the best in the area and may have to pay more to bring people from the 'outside'.

Federal Nepal is an opportunity to grow your business no matter what product or service you sell. For those who love to promote and use local products, here is an opportunity to scale up the manufacture of everything local and Nepali. From Palpa dhaka cloth to lokta paper, all could see huge demands if these governments planned it well. Nepal's law says you have to buy Nepali products if the price difference is less than 15% over the import.

Depending on who you believe and who you wish to quote, the estimated cost of establishing the federal governments and local governments and the needed infrastructures is about \$8 billion. The operations cost for the first three years will be \$1 billion a year. The silver lining, we are told, is that the number of government offices all over Nepal are estimated to go down from 3,500 to just 2000 as a result of the restructuring. I recall a visit to Nigeria when they were moving the capital to Abuja. Due to lack of housing for civil servants, many had to share rooms. There was an HIV epidemic in the Nigerian bureaucracy.

If we provide the same level of facilities for the political leadership that we have seen in Kathmandu since Nepal became a republic, the seven chief ministers and their cabinet will need a lot of vehicles, luxury bungalows, and an army of support staff. Some day they will retire and will want free housing. This could be a great opportunity to restore the old palaces, like Shital Niwas, all over Nepal that are in a dilapidated state today. The fort at Sindhuli Gadhi, the palace at Gorkha, the governor's complex at Palpa could all soon have new VIP residents.

Federalism need not be an expensive luxury, it can be a catalyst for growth. 🇳🇵

Anil Chitrakar is President of Siddharthine

grow, hire, take loans, acquire land and other assets, and make a bigger profit. Elusive objectives like standardisation, quality control, digitisation, integration, team building, inspections and management of supply chains will have a whole new meaning to these businesses and will have to hire the people who know how to do them.

The governor of the Rastra Bank has gone even further and asked all commercial banks to expand branches to all 753 village governments just when bankers were just beginning to discuss 'branchless banking'.

For national media companies the challenge will be to strike the right balance between local, national and international content. How much autonomy should the seven editors get and how much advertisement and circulation revenue can be raised locally? For many airlines there will be a boom in business as they open new routes as the volume of people travelling between provinces bypassing Kathmandu increases exponentially. Real estate agents and lawyers who do rent contracts and land sale papers will have to have seven teams on the ground all over Nepal.

For those who have not yet decided to expand their businesses you can be sure that land prices,

19  
Years of Excellence  
... ENSURING FLIGHT SAFETY & SUSTAINABILITY

HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS!  
CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY OF NEPAL  
(An autonomous regulatory body established on 31st December 1992 under Civil Aviation Act 1992 has been set up with the objective of ensuring flight safety & sustainability of Civil Aviation)

 Laxmi Bank	 NMB BANK एनएमबी बैंक move beyond	 NABIL BANK®
 एन एलजी इन्स्योरेन्स कम्पनी लिमिटेड NLG INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED	 Makalu air	 prabhu BANK
 TIANDY DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY CO., LTD.	 Nepal Airlines	 HELI EVEREST
 Tara Air Helping Develop Rural Nepal	 Simrik Air	 ALTITUDE AIR Pvt. Ltd. Above and Beyond
 सीटा एयर प्रा. लि. SITA AIR PTD.	 Saurya Airlines	 Yeti Airlines You come first
 prabhu HELICOPTER Anybody can fly	 AIR DYNASTY HELI SERVICES Air Dynasty Heli Services (P) Ltd. P.O. Box: - 10112, Simamangal Kathmandu Tel: +977-1-4477560/1/2/ Fax: +977-1-4468802 E-mail: wfo @airdynasty .com	 FISHTAIL AIR
 Simrik Airlines Pvt. Ltd.	 MANANG AIR	 MOUNTAIN HELICOPTERS PVT.LTD. your safety is our priority
 MAHAVIR SHREE INTERNATIONAL PVT. LTD. GPO Box No. 410 Tel: +977 (1) 4110860 Simamangal Fax: +977 (1) 4110855 Bakumun Acharya Sadak Kathmandu, Nepal info@mahavirshree.com.np www.mahavirshree.com.np	 Summit Air Wings of Everest	 shreeairlines
 EAST & WEST International Tours and Travels Head Office: Sagarmatha Bazar, Mandala Street, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal Tel: +977-1-4201196, 4201198 Tel: +977-1-4201197 E-mail: info@eastwest@gmail.com, eastwest@neltel.com.np Web: www.nepalholidaytours.com, www.eastwesttravels.com.np Our services: Air Ticketing Domestic & International, Mountain Flight, Tour Operating, Rafting, Trekking, Safari, Tibet / Bhutan Tour	 KATHMANDU MEDICAL COLLEGE SINAMANGAL, KATHMANDU WEB: www.kmc.edu.np	 Buddha Air

Are you interested in a career in coffee?  
WE PROVIDE  
**Barista TRAINING**  
on the basis of its GOLDEN RULES

**BARISTA TRAINING COURSE INCLUDES:**

- Production of Coffee
- Processing of Coffee
- Coffee Roasting
- Espresso Brewing
- Coffee Making
- Basic Coffee Based Drinks
- Coffee Art
- Beverage Cost, Inventory and Wastage Management
- About Espresso Machine, Coffee Grinder and Accessories
- Maintenance, Handling and Cleaning

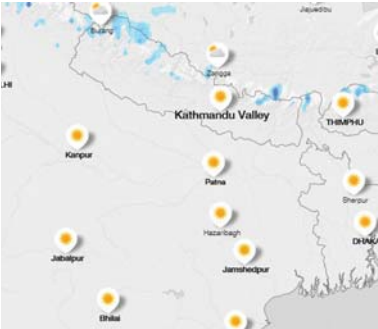
**COFFEE TIME** Baluwatar, Kathmandu Phone : 4429359 | Kamalpokhari Chowk, Kathmandu Phone : 4429455

Did your paper arrive on time this morning?  
If not, call our customer care

5005601-07/ 98511 86056

Himalmedia Pvt. Ltd.  
Patandhoka, Lalitpur





As winter grinds on, it is apparent that the average daily temperature is higher than normal for this time of year. There has been no major precipitation in central and eastern Nepal for about a month now, and the mountains are wearing a dry and rocky look. Machapuchre is bare and without snow. There is no discernible westerly front approaching, so it looks like the dry days are here to stay. Daytime temperature over the weekend in the Valley will climb to the 20s, while the minima will stay at about 6 mainly due to Kathmandu's urban heat bubble. Thick fog will cover the Tarai up to noon.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
21° 6°	21° 6°	20° 6°

oneworld

QATAR

AIRWAYS

القطرية

Going places together - [qatarairways.com](http://qatarairways.com)

## Kathmandu’s blind massage therapists thrive as word spreads of their unique skill

RYAN CHANG

The blind in Nepal face not only a health disability but also an economic one, however massage therapists of Seeing Hands Nepal are turning heads – and sore muscles – with their winning model of social entrepreneurship.

Consistently ranked #1 among ‘Things to do in Kathmandu’ by TripAdvisor and featured in Lonely Planet, Seeing Hands Nepal is now a self-sustaining venture. Income generated from its first two Kathmandu clinics in Patan and Thamel were used recently to open a third clinic at Boudha.

Owner of Seeing Hands, Chiran Poudel, says the secret is that blind massage therapists have a heightened sense of touch and can be more focused on the body’s pressure spots: “The eyes cannot see, but the rest of our four other senses are more active.”

Seeing Hands started out as a project in 2005 with just four blind students, including Poudel. British couple Rob and Susan Ainley tutored the students on

professional massaging techniques and practical therapy.

The clinic picks visually impaired students straight out of high school to help them find a secure career. Profits from the clinics are pooled into a fund to help new students. Poudel says: “I am happiest when therapists graduate and work at the clinics, because I am reassured that more blind people are getting the jobs they need.”

During the peak season, trekkers with blistered heels and aching muscles seek out Seeing Hands in Thamel. Satisfied customers Lawrence and Katia from Australia were on their way to Everest Base Camp last week, and stopped by Seeing Hands before setting out. They found the visually impaired therapists easy to converse with, and shared jokes to ease the tension.

Lawrence says, “If someone is blind but has an incredible demonstration of ability, it’s a good service even though it’s more expensive.” Therapist Ramji, who treated the Australian couple, even correctly guessed Lawrence’s weight purely by feeling with his hands. “Some clients don’t even notice that I’m visually impaired,” he says.

Thirteen therapists are now employed in Seeing Hands clinics in Kathmandu, many of them from poor rural backgrounds. They previously worked in vocational jobs such as making candles and incense sticks.

Having been born blind to a family with 13 siblings, Poudel blames the lack of education in Nepal for the social stigma blind people suffer because they are seen as a burden to family and society. The 2015 Constitution commits to ending the discrimination, and makes it mandatory to provide facilities and education for people with disabilities, but many new laws and budgetary reforms haven’t been implemented.

Of the estimated 100,000 visually impaired women in Nepal



PHOTOS: RYAN CHANG

### UNKNOTTING A SHOULDER:

Massage therapist Bina (*above*) helps a Japanese client with a Swedish Relaxation Massage.

Chiran Poudel, owner of Seeing Hands, resting between sessions with two other massage therapists, at the Thamel clinic (*right*).



only 134 are employed, according to the Nepal Blind Association. Seeing Hands therapist Lalu is from Tanahu and says she enjoys talking with her customers who are from all over the world. “I didn’t have much money before, but my life is changed now,” she adds.

Having previously worked as a

disc jockey for a radio station, Lalu says a regular source of income means she feels less of a burden to her family: “My mother and father supported me through college, but now I send money back and my parents are very happy for me,” she says. 🇳🇵

[www.seeinghandsnepal.org](http://www.seeinghandsnepal.org)

**Kathmandu:**  
32 Brahma Kumari Marg,  
Thamel  
01-4253513  
**Lalitpur:**  
Maitrimarg Bakundol,  
Patan  
01-5555425

**Boudha:**  
Fubari Boudha,  
Kathmandu  
01-4910780  
**Pokhara:**  
Ammat Street,  
Lakeside  
061-465786

### A SKILLFUL TOUCH



Go online to see how the visually impaired therapists work daily with their clients, and how they detect muscle problems with their hands

[nepalitimes.com](http://nepalitimes.com)

Do these cause

sensitivity

in your teeth?

FREE

SENSODYNE

EXPERT

TOOTHBRUSH

Worth

₹90

INSIDE THIS PACK

Dr. Satbir Golar, dentist practising in the UK.

“I recommend Sensodyne.”

SENSODYNE

WITH FLUORIDE

Fresh Gel

Net wt. 130g

World’s No.1 Sensitivity Toothpaste\*

\*Offer valid on 130g packs of Sensodyne Fresh Gel and Fresh Mint in select cities/outlets till stocks last. Price depicted above is in Indian currency.

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

© 2016, GSK group of companies or its licensor.





# Riding coffee's Third Wave

Something is brewing in Nepal as the coffee fad morphs into a culture

SIKUMA RAI

Coffee connoisseurs are touting the Third Wave of the beverage: moving beyond the coffee-shop culture epitomised by Starbucks to one that values knowledge of the cherries and beans from the plant to the cup, served up via independent cafés. Like craft beers and boutique hotels, specialty coffee is sweeping the world. In Nepal, however, the Nepal Tea and Coffee Development Board continues to label all coffee ‘Himalayan Specialty’ without first doing a proper quality check, which is confusing for consumers and risks leaving local producers shut out of global markets. But an

increasing number of growers in Nepal are waking up to smell the coffee. “I am continuously hunting for the best coffee origins in Nepal,” says Q-grader Nima Tenzing Sherpa of Lekali Coffee Estate, who believes producing Specialty-grade beans is the only future for Nepal’s coffee industry. “The potential is there, but the perspective of farmers towards coffee needs upgrading because they are the first one handling the cherries.” Nepal’s geographic and climatic conditions are ideal for growing the finest quality coffee beans: shaded hills situated between 1,000m and 2,000m with both ample sunlight and rain. Farmers have been quick to recognise the potential of this global beverage: 32,186 of them in



LEKALI COFFEE ESTATE

41 districts are now growing coffee. Producing Specialty-grade coffee starts with selectively picking the red cherries, then storing the green beans away from moisture. Experts like Raj Kumar Banjara Himalayan Arabica Coffee, which has been Specialty-certified, says currently there are weaknesses all along the supply chain. Banjara is Nepal’s first ‘Q-grader’, certified by the Specialty Coffee Association of America to rank Specialty Arabica coffee, and says that without more such growers and laboratories to quality test them, Nepal’s coffee will continue struggle for consistency. The effects of climate change have added another complication to that quest. According to Sanat Raj Thala,

roaster and brewer of Coffee Time: “If the whole process of producing and packaging of Nepali coffee was done with more scientific research and stricter standards, not only international but domestic markets would be able to enjoy its own product.” Thala does concede that it will take time for local consumers, used to instant coffee heavy on milk and sugar, to appreciate the Specialty coffee flavour. Coffee culture is still young in Nepal though the country counts more than 1,200 cafés today. Converting the nation of tea devotees to coffee lovers is a major challenge, which would have obvious impact on the tea industry. Another hurdle making local producers bitter is a burgeoning black market in lower-quality

## COFFEE LIFE CYCLE



Coffee flowers are white, small and fragrant.



The plant starts bearing cherries after 3-5 years of plantation.



Cherries are sun-dried or wet-processed for pulping.



Pulped seeds are fermented, washed and



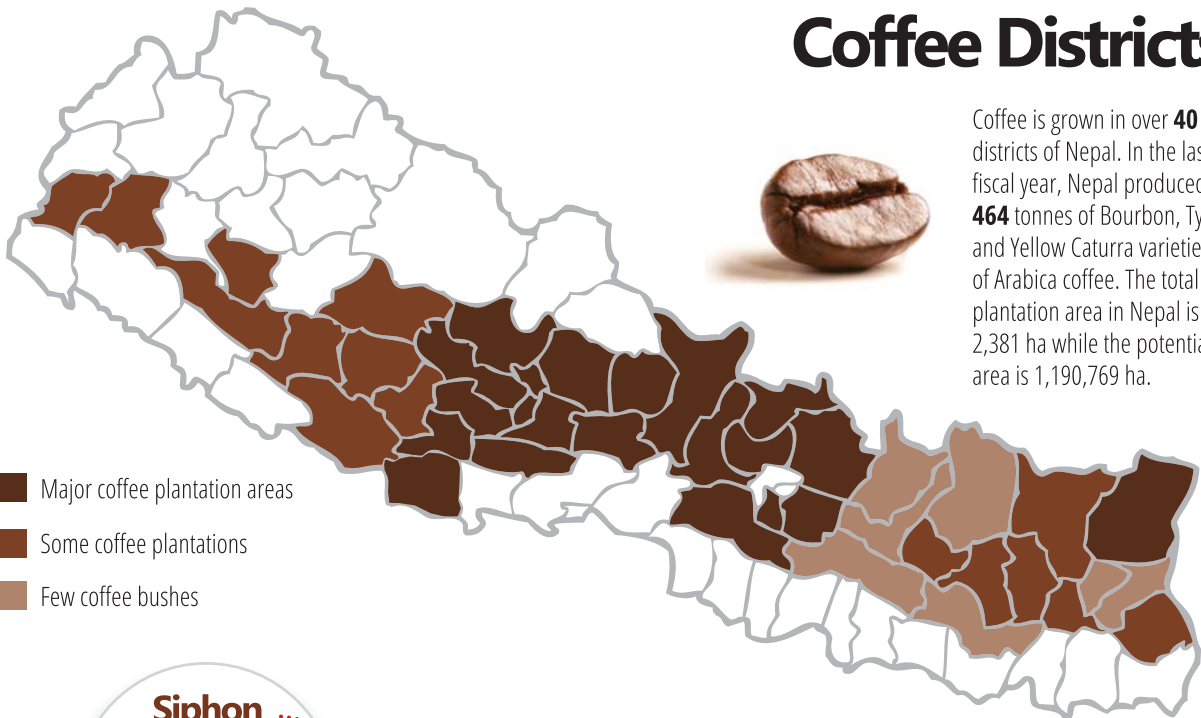


# What is the Third Wave?

**First Wave:** Profit-driven, mass marketing, air tight containers and instant coffee. Consumption of coffee worldwide starts growing.

**Second Wave:** Artisan-driven, origin and roasting style become important, epitomised by Starbucks and espresso.

**Third Wave:** Characteristics of the beverage take centre stage: origin of the beans, consistent processing techniques and roasting style. Independent coffee shops demonstrate craftsmanship and knowledge of coffee beans from plant to the cup, promoting ethics and transparency.



## Coffee Districts

Coffee is grown in over **40** districts of Nepal. In the last fiscal year, Nepal produced **464** tonnes of Bourbon, Typica and Yellow Caturra varieties of Arabica coffee. The total plantation area in Nepal is 2,381 ha while the potential area is 1,190,769 ha.

SOURCE: NEPAL NATIONAL SECTOR EXPORT STRATEGY COFFEE 2017-2021, ITC

## Brew in style

Espresso, Latte, Cappuccino and Americano are for cafes. Brew your own cup of coffee at home in various new styles.

### Dripper

Pour hot water over medium grind coffee for best flavours

### Moka

Place it on a stove with low heat, vapour pressure will do the rest

### Siphon

A mad scientist way of brewing using total immersion method, aka vacuum coffee maker

### Cold brew

Infuse coffee with room temperature water overnight, store in refrigerator for a week

RYAN CHANG

Indian coffee beans that undercut the Nepali beans. All these challenges will need to be overcome if Nepal's product is to become part of the global, highly profitable, Third Wave of coffee. 🇳🇵



The story of specialty coffee starts at the farm and goes through a lengthy process - watch the journey your beans take to reach your cup.

nepalitimes.com



RYAN CHANG

## The Coffee University

It has been less than two months since Università Del Caffè inaugurated its 28th branch, and first in Nepal. Yet, it has already completed three Coffee Expert and Coffee Lovers course. The Italian coffee university located at the Silver Mountain School of Hotel Management, is dedicated to upgrading Nepalis' knowledge of coffee, starting from the coffee plantations to the processing right up to training baristas.

The university offers four courses: Coffee Lovers is for those who seek knowledge about the types of beans and their origins. Coffee Expert, including two days of internship, is beginner-friendly, while Master Barista includes tastings.

Tailored Consultancy is offered as a customised workshop for those with unique needs.

According to Moreno Faina, director of Università Del Caffè, what sets the institution apart is its scientific laboratories, research and intensive field works. "The results are translated to fit the understanding and knowledge level of the Nepali market," says Faina.

With a café-like ambience showcasing various brewing equipment, coffee cups and coffee from Illy, the founding brand of the university, this little hub is a great place to start a conversation about coffee over a cup of coffee.

## Who is a Q-Grader?

“A Licensed Q-Grader is a highly trained and calibrated coffee expert who professionally grades Specialty Arabica coffee under Specialty Coffee Association of America protocols. They are authentic on tasting, cupping and evaluating coffee quality very objectively.”

Raj Kumar Banjara, Nepal's first Q-Grader who recently returned from China after renewal of his license.



dried again.

After the outer layer is removed, beans are graded and sorted.

Green beans are roasted to achieve various chemical properties.

Roasted beans are grounded right before brewing for best results.



# EVENTS



**ArtSaturday,**  
Interact, experiment, explore and learn with contemporary artists Kailash K Shrestha and Krisha Tamrakar at the art class for all ages.  
30 December, 8-10am,  
Artudio, Swoyambhu, Rs 400,  
9823490390/9851180088,  
artudio@hotmail.com

## Friday Happy Hours,

Celebrate the last week of 2017 with a bonfire, warm cocktails, delicious momos served by CharCoal Lounge & Bar and a special talk by Tyler McMahon from Smart Paani.  
29 December, 4pm onwards, Nepal Communitere, Pulchok, (01) 5530229

## Critical Mass KTM,

Cyclists gather for a short ride around the streets of Kathmandu to mark their presence and be a part of global movement of cyclists.  
29 December, 5:30pm onwards, Basantapur Durbar Square

## Circus Kathmandu,

A circus show followed by buffet dinner and live music awaits you to end the year together.  
30 December, 6 to 9pm, Moksh, Jhamsikhel, Rs 2000, For Tickets: 9801131995/9843130995, Timro concept store



## Boksi,

The first edition of the monthly 'Moonshine Affairs' exhibition and performance featuring Anjila Manandhar, Irina Giri, Keepa Maskey and musicians from DidiBahini. Kaalo. 101 opens its door for art enthusiasts every full moon.  
2 January, 4 to 8pm, Kaalo.101, Nagbahal, Patan, 9818301954, wearekaalo101@riseup.net

## Katha Ghera,

An intimate, improvisational and interactive form of theatre to talk about your life stories, expressions, feelings, and watch them being enacted on the spot.  
30 December, 5 to 7pm, EVOKE Café & Bistro, Jhamsikhel, 9841226959



## Flexibility Class

Yogi Laxmi is all prepped up to help you make your body flexible. Get your yoga outfit and mat ready.  
30 December, 7 to 8:30am, Zumbandu, Bhimsengola Marg, For booking: 9803266533/9843818794

## SXC Alumni Day,

All the Alumni are welcome to reminisce wonderful college moments and catch up with old pals.  
30 December, 12pm onwards, St. Xavier's College, Maitighar, Rs 500 (for dinner), (01) 4244636, For Registration: bit.ly/regscxalumni

## Free Health Camp,

Get your gynecological health checked by the doctors for free at the two days camp.  
30 to 31 December, 8am to 5pm, Pulse Health Care and Diagnostics, Mid Baneshwor, For Registration: (01) 4466141

# MUSIC

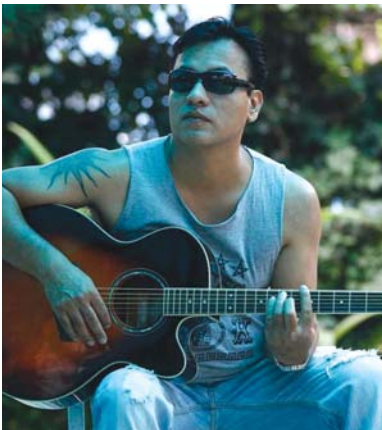


## Jazz Funk and Soul,

One / Three but Whole, an instrumental project directed by Jazz musician Marcus Dengate, will be playing swing jazz, funk jazz, Latin and ballads from artists like Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Duke Ellington along with their original compositions.  
31 December, 7pm onwards, Places Restaurant and Bar, Saath Ghumti Marga, (01) 4700413

## Raagmani at Radisson,

Raagmani band is all set to perform at Radisson Hotel for New Year's Eve. Free flow of snacks dinner and alcohol for your festive appetite.  
31 December, Radisson Hotel, Lazimpat, (01) 4411818



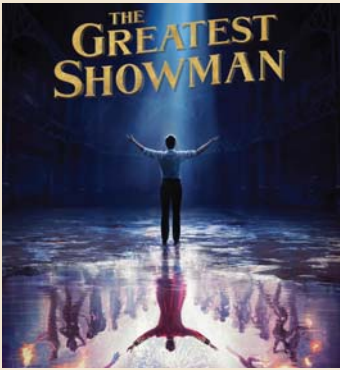
## Reel Rewind,

The legendary band, The Crossroads with Sanjay Shrestha will be bringing back 90's musical scene right on the stage of Ambience 365; don't miss out.  
1 January, 5pm onwards, Pulchowk, Rs 500, (01) 5535725

## Blue Night,

Sway your soul with live Blues performance by Suman & the Blue Fret at the House of Music.  
29 December, 8pm onwards, Amrit Marg, Thamel, 9851075172

## OUR PICK



Opens in Kathmandu on 5 January

*The Greatest Showman* is an American period musical drama, directed by Michael Gracey, starring Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron, Michelle Williams, Rebecca Ferguson, and Zendaya. Inspired by the story of how Barnum & Bailey Circus was started, the film takes the spectators to the mesmerising world of show business. The songs of the movie are produced by Academy Award winners Benj Pasek and Justin Paul (*La La Land*), and are certain to take you on a magical trip.

# DINING

## Yak and Yeti

Dine at the Sunrise Restaurant, overlooking expansive and beautifully landscaped gardens and pools, on the Eve of New Year.  
31 December, 6:30 to 10:30pm, Hotel Yak and Yeti, Durbar Marg, Rs 4,500, (01) 4248999, reservation@yakandyeti.com.np

## Chez Caroline

Full set of vegetarian and non-vegetarian menu including 'mises en bouche' at the French restaurant for your festive delight.  
29 December to 15 January, Baber Mahal Revisited, Rs 5000/6,000++ per, (01) 4263070/4264187, carolinedsengupta@gmail.com/chezcarolinenepal.com



## Bajeko Sekuwa

Offering you barbeque items and live music for New Year's night.  
31 December, 5pm onwards, Battisputali, 9801188465, informbaje@gmail.com

## Shangri-La

Enjoy New Year's Eve at Village Resort in Pokhara or New Year's Day brunch at The Lost Horizon Cafe, Kathmandu—make your choice.  
Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara/ Hotel Shangri-La, Lazimpat, For more details: (01) 4412999/985602272



## Hyatt Regency

Reserve your seats at The Café or Rox Restaurant at the Hyatt for a lovely New Year's Eve dinner or a brunch on 1 January.  
Hyatt Regency, Boudha, Rs 5000/5700, For Reservation: (01) 5171234,

## Summit Hotel

Inviting you to celebrate New Year's Eve special dinner with live music.  
31 December, 6 to 9pm, Kupondole Height, Rs 2000, For more detail: 5555202/ 5524694

# GETAWAY



## Annapurna Base Camp

Fly to Annapurna Base Camp or take a heli-tour to Pokhara with Simrik Air, a special New Year offer for an extraordinary experience.  
29 December to 1 January, Rs 19,999 (to ABC), Rs 4,500 (to PKR), (061) 467544/ (01) 4155340, info@simrikair.com.np

## Pataleban Vineyard Resort

Countdown the hours to 2018 away from the hustle and bustle, with campfire, barbecue and musical poetry performance by Mi-Ku, a contemporary folk ensemble band.  
Chisapani, Rs 15,000(for couple), (01) 4316377, 9841679364, www.patalebanresort.com

## Fairfield by Marriott

Avail a package at Rs 12,000 (single) and Rs 15,000 (couple) to make this New Year exciting with selection of international cuisine.  
Fairfield by Marriott, Tridevi Sadak, Thamel, (01) 4217999

## Gokarna Resort

For a full package of New Year's countdown-entertainment, drinks, dinner and stay over.  
The Courtyard, Gokarna Forest Resort, Ranikunj, Rs 16,999 (single), Rs 22,999 (double), For more details: (01) 4451212



## Rupakot Resort

Drive to Pokhara this weekend to celebrate New Year among the beautiful lakes- Begnas, Rupa and Fewa and on the lap of Annapurna Himalayas.  
Rupakot, Pokhara, Rs 8,625 (per person), (61) 622660/9856038043, info@rupakotresort.com

## Country Villa

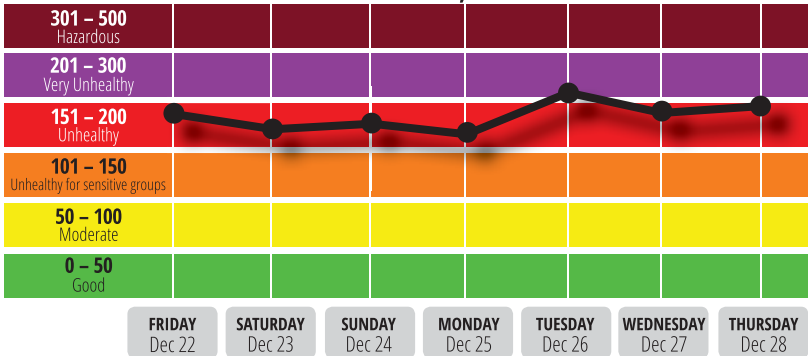
Rise and shine with the beautiful sun after an exciting eve celebration at the hotel.  
Hotel Country Villa, Nagarkot, Rs 9,999 (single), Rs 11,999 (double), For Reservation: (01) 4700305/ 9851192106

## Om Adhyay Resort

Boating in Kulekhani, Markhu hike, barbeque and live music at the resort-everything you need in a New Year's retreat package.  
29 December- 2 January, Tistung, Palung, (01) 4301437/4671980/9851213058

## AIR QUALITY INDEX

KATHMANDU, 22-28 December



We don't know if Christmas celebrations had anything to do with it but the Air Quality Index (AQI) in Kathmandu Valley on 26 December was in the purple 'Unhealthy' band. Not that the rest of the week was any better. The concentration of particles smaller than 2.5 microns was only slightly less, and the residents of the capital breathed 'Unhealthy' air all week, as the graph above shows. These are daily averages, but during morning and evening peaks the AQI was often in the 'Very Unhealthy' zone, mainly due to vehicular emissions trapped by the winter inversion layer.  
<https://np.usembassy.gov/embassy/air-quality-monitor/>



# POKHARA GETS READY

YUVARAJ SHRESTHA  
in POKHARA

The dispute over whether to elect the Upper House under the single transferrable voting or the majority system has not only deadlocked the formation of the federal government in Kathmandu but also the provincial one here.

Just like in the Centre, the Chief Minister of a state needs to be elected within 30 days after the Election Commission (EC) publishes the final results of provincial polls. But the EC is waiting for the President to verify an ordinance on which the UML has objections.



Even after parties forge a consensus on how to form the Upper House, the formation of federal governments will still not be smooth sailing. Because Nepal has never practiced federal governance before, setting provincial governments in motion is likely to be punctuated by major hiccups.

Unlike in other provinces, there is not much discord over where the provincial capital will be for Province 4. Political parties have almost zeroed in on Pokhara, despite some mild protest from neighbouring Lekhnath municipality.

Pokhara may be the undisputed capital city of Province 4, but it lacks physical infrastructure for the 60-member state assembly hall, ministries and the Chief Minister's residence. Although a resolution on turning Nepal into a federal state was passed a decade ago by the Constituent Assembly, no government ever allocated a budget to build the necessary infrastructure.

"We now have to utilise the buildings constructed for other purposes," says Laxman Aryal, the Western Regional Administrator – a position that will be turned into provincial Chief Secretary. "Most of these buildings are old and derelict, but we do not have time and money to renovate them."

A team headed by Aryal recently examined all government buildings in Pokhara to find out which of them is suitable for Province 4 government departments. The committee has chosen the Town Development Training Centre's office for the state assembly, and the District Development Committee building for the Chief Minister's office. The committee has also found out buildings for several ministries, but renovating them could cost up to Rs 280 million. 🇳🇵



UNIVERSITÀ *del* CAFFÈ  
Nepal

# Admission Open

## Barista Training

**Courses Offered:**

- Coffee Expert (1 week)
- Coffee Lovers (1 day)
- Master Barista (2 days)
- Tailored Consultancy (As Per Request)

SAVE  
**15%**  
EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNT  
(for the first three months)

 THE MOST COMPLETE COURSE  
FOR BARISTA PROFESSIONALS 



### CLASS STARTS EVERY SUNDAY

 American Hospitality Academy

**SILVER MOUNTAIN**  
SCHOOL OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT

Tel: +9771 4415038 / 4429151 / 4412584  
Email: admission@silvermountain.edu.np





# CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR Celebration OFFER\*

Exclusively at SONY CENTRE, LABIM MALL

This holiday season, celebrate with SONY with discounts upto 16% on exciting products. Don't miss out and get SONY today!



## MDR & SRS

Get **15% Discount\*** on MDR & SRS



## PS4

### BUNDLE OFFER

Get PS4, 2 Controllers and a Game Just at **Rs. 55,000/-**



## BRAVIA

Get **16% Discount\*** on the whole range of BRAVIA



## Alpha α

### YEAR END PROMOTION

**Super Deal\*** Upto 20,000/- Off  
**Free Gift Bundles\*** Valued upto Rs. 60,000/-  
**Lens Promo\*** Upto Rs. 30,000/- Off



## XPERIA

Get **8% Discount\*** and **FREE GIFT** on all Xperia Models

This offer is valid from 1<sup>st</sup> of Dec 2017 to 5<sup>th</sup> of Jan 2018 exclusively for SONY Centre at Labim Mall Only.

 Nepal Himal Trade Link (P) Ltd.

For details please contact  
**Sony Centre**  
Labim Mall (Shop no. 204), Tel: 5535164

 Sony Digital Workshop  
Register for free training at your nearest Sony Showroom

 Buy Smart, Be Assured!  
Product an Official Warranty, it makes it different!



www.facebook.com/Nepal.SONY

\*Offer Valid Till Stock Lasts. \*Condition Apply



# Best of 2017

Here is a list of the year's best barring a slew of films that are yet to be shown in our part of the world: award contenders traditionally released late in the year to stay in the consciousness



## MUST SEE

Sophia Pande

of those who vote for the Golden Globes, the Screen Actor's Guild, and the Academy Awards. So here, in no particular order, are five of the funniest, most entertaining films of 2017:



### Get Out

Jordan Peele's comedy horror about white hegemony and the exotification of black skin is a hilarious, horrifying indictment of the way the world still sees and treats people of African descent. This is a great horror movie, and a clever but searing comedy - not to be missed.

### Valerian and the City of a Thousand Planets

Luc Besson's latest sci-fi dream is just that - a beautiful, albeit extremely adventurous, dreamy



film that unlike most, yells to be seen in 3D. Based on a famous French comic series the film is one of the most fun I've seen this year, and visually, just stunning.



### Star Wars: The Last Jedi

Hands down the most anticipated movie of the year, this Star Wars film delivers everything required of it plus some more: the wailing, adorable wookiee, the squeaky robots you wish were your pets, an alarmingly conflicted young man who struggles with his power, and a young woman whose courage and openness seems to know no bounds. Star Wars also surprises because of its visual beauty, brought on board by Rian Johnson - an auteur that pays attention to detail.



### Murder on the Orient Express

While this may not be everyone's cup of tea, the latest screen realisation of Agatha Christie's twisty murder mystery is a fine thing directing and starring Kenneth Branagh as Hercule Poirot, the great Belgian detective. The film, while not as amazing as the other three already mentioned, is still destined to be a classic with its cast including the great Michelle Pfeiffer, Judi Dench, Daisy Ridley (from the new Star Wars trilogy), and Johnny Depp.



### Okja

Netflix now produces brilliant and original feature material but with Okja, premiering this year at the Cannes Film Festival, the streaming service hit a new high. The tale about a young Korean girl and her pig Okja, a special giant hybrid designed to be eaten, is both a tender story of love between person and pet as well as a searing criticism of people who think that being human means being at the top of the food-chain. This is essential viewing for anyone who mourns the lack of original material in cinema.

### And since the very best this year wasn't in the cinema:



### The Handmaid's Tale

A ten part series based on Margaret Atwood's intense novel from 1985, starring Elisabeth Moss is as good as it gets. Stark in its depiction of a post-apocalyptic world where women are used as breeding cattle, Moss's character 'Offred', i.e. belonging to Fred, is a feisty poetic handmaid who defies all imposed regulations to keep herself alive under nausea inducing oppression without ever losing her sense of humour and her sense of self.

Watch trailer online

[nepalitimes.com](http://nepalitimes.com)

## HAPPENINGS



CHETAN ADHIKARI

**BASKING IN THE SUN:** CPN Maoist Centre chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal (*left*) meets with CPN-UML chair KP Oli to discuss on government formation at the latter's residence in Balkot on Wednesday..



RSS

**CONCRETE HERITAGE:** Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya inspects Rani Pokhari on Tuesday after heritage conservationists padlocked the gate in the morning protesting the use of concrete in reconstruction. The Dept of Archaeology on Wednesday ordered the reconstruction suspended.



JICA NEPAL

**KEY NOTE:** Kozo Nagami of JICA Nepal hands over the key to a newly constructed building of the Palungtar Area Police Office in Gorkha to Police Chief of Province 4, Assistant Inspector General Kamal Singh Bam on Tuesday.



GOPEN RAI

**RITUAL PURIFICATION:** Priests perform the annual ritual bathing of Seto Machindranath in Janabhal on Tuesday.



DABUR NEPAL

**GARDENING FOR HE-MEN:** A contest of PROstyle Manhunt International Nepal 2017 plants a sapling at Balkumari Community Forest in Surya Binayak on Sunday.






**GUARANTEED DUCTILITY 500D**



**नेपालमा पहिलो पटक**  
**Guaranteed Rebar**



Lowest Carbon

Less Impurities  
(S+P= 0.075)

Min. Elongation  
16 %

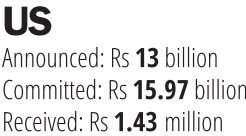
हरकै खरिदमा पाउनुहोस् ग्यारन्टी कार्ड



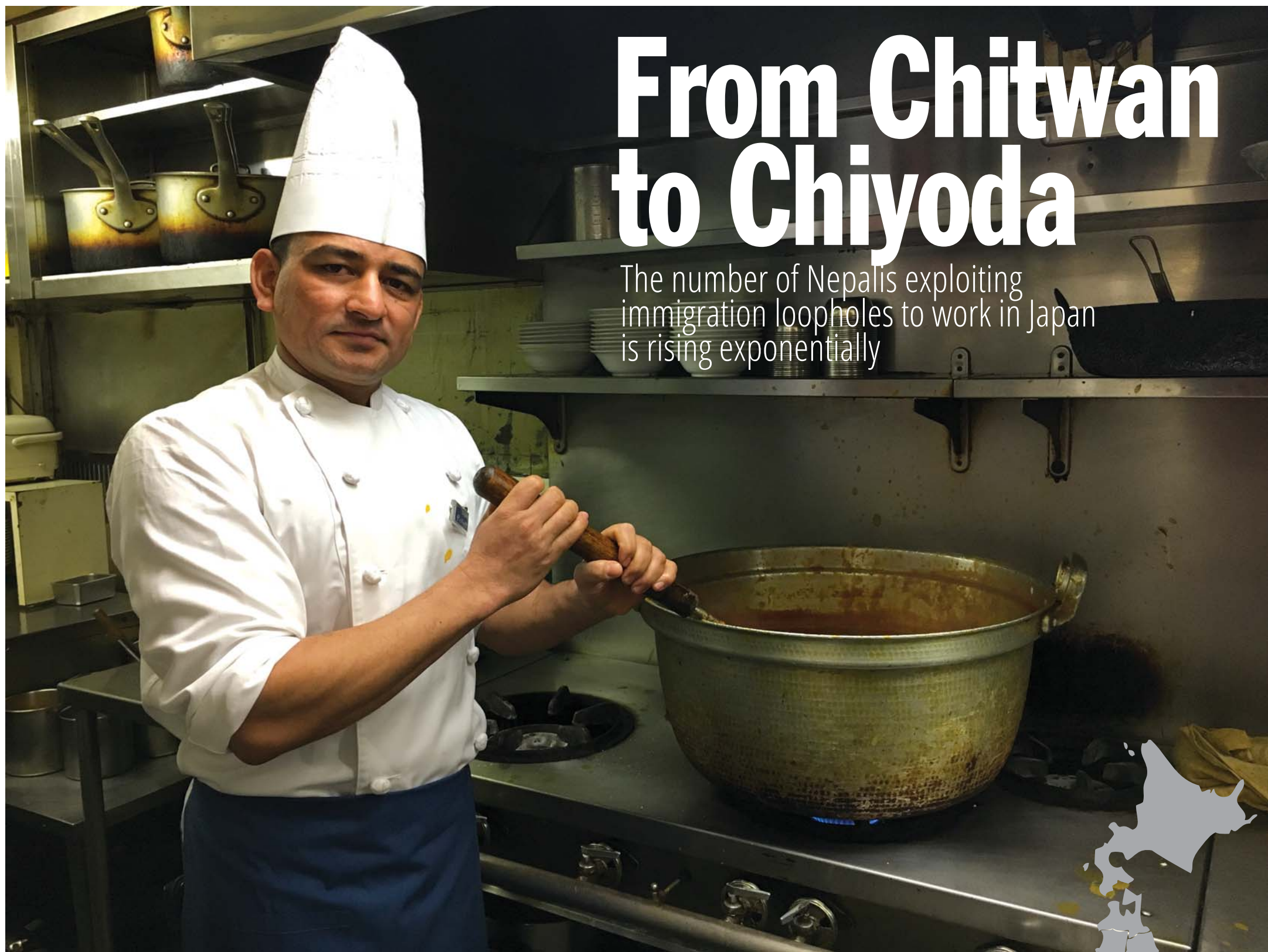
**नेपालमा पहिलो पटक, नेपालकै लागि**

**Available at :** Samakhushi (01-4384786), Sanobharang (9841356008), Satungal (9841687562), Dhumbarai (01-4446169), Sanepa (01-5555259, 01-5525049), Bhaktapur (01-6616205), Banepa (9851054994), NGT (056-570695), Parsa Chitwan (9855055795), Bardibas (044-550702), Birtamode (9842871718), Balkhu (01-4450166, 9851120096), Pokhara (9845494757), Gwarko (01-5200333, 9851027694), Dakshindhoka, Jorpati (9851007467), Sallaghari (9851118515), Janakpur (9844104194, 9854020183, 9854026965), Birgunj (9855025151), Sitapaila (9851133746), Kalanki (9851152480), Melamchi (9851058093), Sukute (9851089323), Dharan (9852056372), Biratnagar (9852020186, 9842360444), Itahari (9852020953), Hetauda (9855067550, 9845030450)









# From Chitwan to Chiyoda

The number of Nepalis exploiting immigration loopholes to work in Japan is rising exponentially

**KUNDA DIXIT**  
in TOKYO

The number of Nepalis in Japan has increased ten-fold in the last ten years, and as the number crosses the 70,000 mark Nepal already ranks sixth among countries with the most migrants here.

The recent spurt in influx is the result of a loophole in Japanese immigration law which is prone to abuse, encourages exploitation and human trafficking, and has tarnished the once-positive image of Nepalis among the Japanese.

"The Japan government doesn't want to open the main door for unskilled labour migration, so Nepalis are allowed to come in through the back door to fulfill the need for cheap labour to make up for Japan's shrinking workforce," explains Masako Tanaka, professor at Tokyo's Sophia University.

In the 'Cook Era' of migration in the early 2000s, Nepalis fleeing conflict back home flocked to Japan on skilled labour visas that allowed restaurants to hire chefs. The number of undocumented Nepalis has now fallen, but the current 'Third Wave' of migration includes Nepalis on student, cook, dependent and trainee visas.

Nepalis prefer Japan because unlike Korea, there is no need to pass a language test, earnings are higher and cooks on skilled labour visas can bring families. Students and dependents are also allowed to work 28 hours a week which can earn them more than \$1,000 a month. In some cases, the wives earn more than their underpaid husbands who are cooks in Indian

or Nepali restaurants.

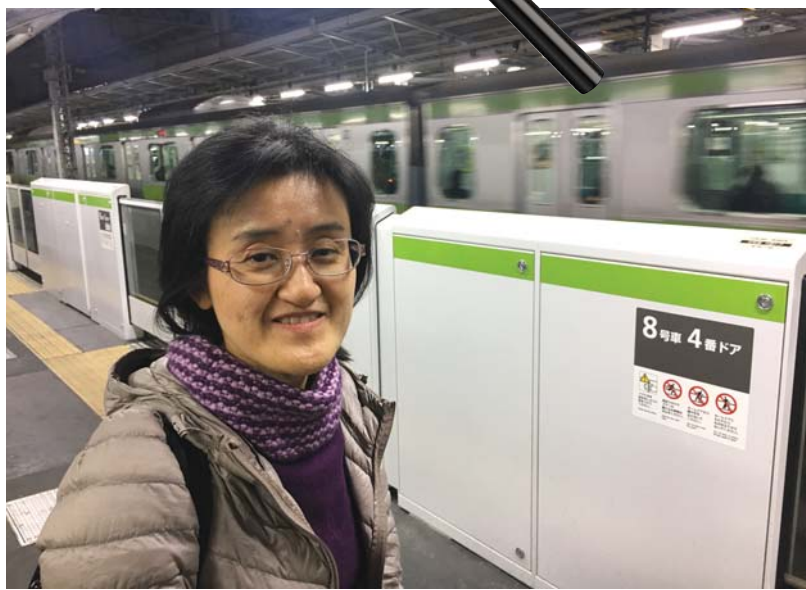
Vietnamese and Nepalis now make up the biggest number arriving on student visas: up from only 164 in 2003 to 10,000 in 2015 alone (*see graph*). Japan is now the top foreign destination ahead of even Australia, India and the US for Nepali students. A student visa is not so much about studies but employment, and education consultancies in Kathmandu charge up to Rs 1.5 million to fix a visa.

There are now more than 1,500 Nepali restaurants all over Japan (more than the total number of Thai restaurants) and Nepalis are also owners of many of the 4,000 'Indian' restaurants as well. Each can bring 3-4 cooks, so opening a restaurant has become a lucrative avenue for visa peddlers. A labour recruiter will charge anywhere up to Rs 2 million for a Japanese cook visa.

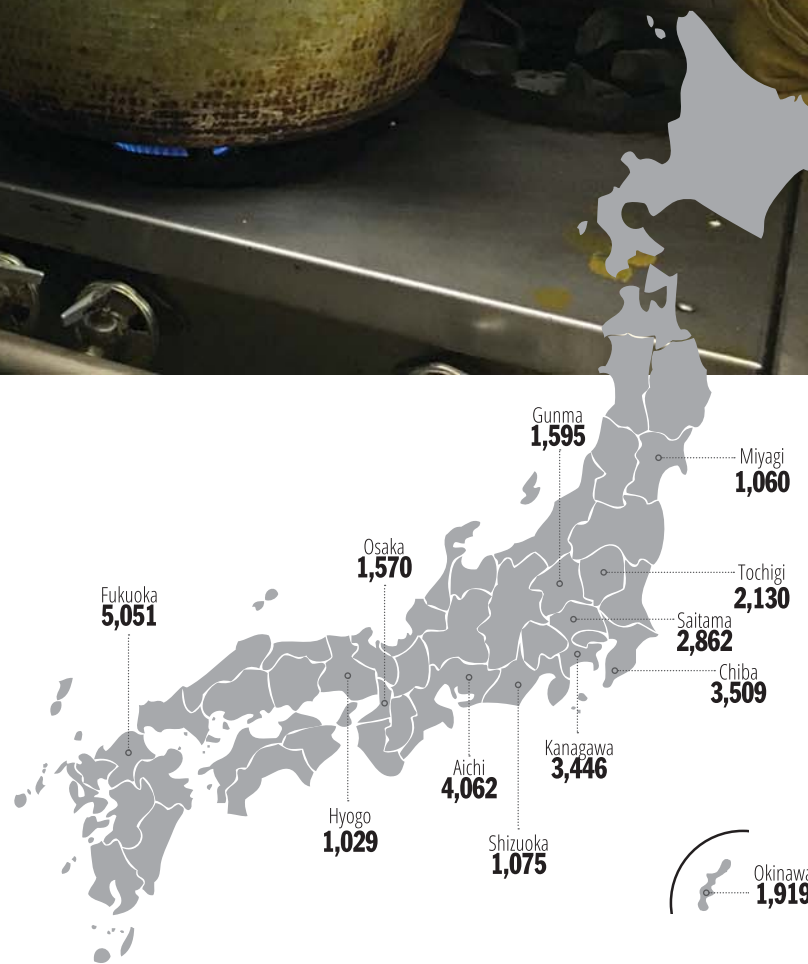
The Shin-Ōkubo ward in Tokyo used to be called Little Korea, today it is known as Little Kathmandu. Some 15,000 Nepalis live here, and the streets are lined with Nepali restaurants with names like Nanglo and Aangan. A recent afternoon, students pack the Sakura Nepali restaurant at lunch time for the all-you-can-eat 500 yen *dalbhat*. They eat quickly to go back to class.

Some evenings, it is a different story. Nepali youngsters have started becoming a nuisance, often arrested for drunken behaviour, vandalism, and harassing women. Japanese law enforcement agencies have even brought in Nepali-speaking police to hotspots like Shinjuku to curb young Nepali troublemakers.

"Japanese employers have always preferred Nepalis because of their hard work



Professor Masako Tanaka (*left*) of Sophia University in Tokyo has researched Nepali migrant workers in Japan. Tilak Malla (*right*) runs a Nepali newspaper, a restaurant and a school in Tokyo.



and honesty, but there is a new generation of Nepali migrants, some of whom are misbehaving and giving the community a bad reputation," admits Tilak Malla of Nepali news portal, *Samudrapari*.

Dipak Babu Nepal has been

working as a chef at an Indian restaurant in Tokyo's Chiyoda ward, and is so worried about Nepal's image he mobilizes local communities in clean up campaigns not just in Tokyo, but also Chitwan — a process he calls sending "social





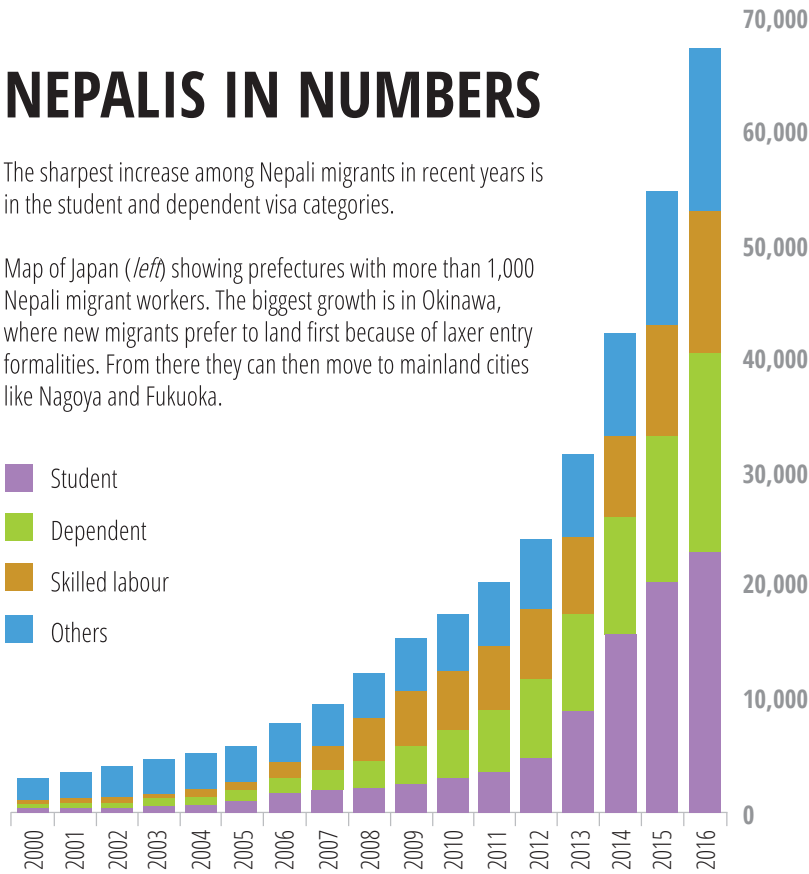


**CLIMBING UP IN LIFE:** Everest International School caters to the children of the growing population of Nepalis in Japan (above). High demand means the school is moving to a bigger building and adding upper grades, says principal Pradip Thapa (left). Dipak Babu Nepal from Chitwan (far left) is a chef in an Indian restaurant in Chiyoda and is working to restore the reputation of Nepalis in Japan.

## NEPALIS IN NUMBERS

The sharpest increase among Nepali migrants in recent years is in the student and dependent visa categories.

Map of Japan (left) showing prefectures with more than 1,000 Nepali migrant workers. The biggest growth is in Okinawa, where new migrants prefer to land first because of laxer entry formalities. From there they can then move to mainland cities like Nagoya and Fukuoka.



remittance” home.

Nepal says: “Ten years ago we had a very good reputation, I am ashamed to say it is not so good now. It is up to us to change this.”

Many Nepalis with visa problems apply for political asylum to stay on legally and also because there is no 28 hours a week limit on work while their papers are being screened. Last year 1,451 Nepalis applied for political asylum in Japan, second only to Indonesians. Few got it. The arrival of women is going up and 40% of Nepalis here are now female. Many younger migrants share accommodation to save money, and the abortion rate among new arrivals in Shinjuku is one of the highest in Japan. In prefectures like Gunma and Tochigi, migrant neighbourhoods and public toilets have posters with instructions in Nepali about garbage disposal and hygiene.

As more children join parents, the number of Nepali children has also risen to 4,000, prompting investors to set up the bilingual

Everest International School in Suginami ward of Tokyo.

Says Principal Pradip Thapa: “Many parents are worried children are losing their Nepali, and they also want them to have English skills to give them a competitive edge in Japan. Nepali is for identity, English is for career.”

Poorer parents send children to free Japanese schools. A night school in Haneda has mostly Nepali teenagers whose parents work nearby packing lunchboxes and at courier companies. The minimum working age in Japan is 14, and many of the students have day jobs cleaning aircraft cabins between flights at the nearby airport.

Some Nepali youngsters have misused dependent visas to pay pretend parents in Japan to sponsor them. One teenage boy who was not able to keep up with the monthly fee of 50,000 yen to his fake father committed suicide recently at Kamata station by jumping onto the tracks of a commuter train. A dozen young Nepalis have committed suicide in the past two years.

Clinical psychologist Bijay Gyawali who is doing a PhD here told the *Japan Times* that recently stress related to the gap between expectations and reality of working in Japan is driving many Nepalis to take their own lives.

There has also been misuse of trainee visas managed by Japan International Training Cooperation Organisation (JITCO) allowing Nepali apprentices in farms and construction. Activists say this is disguised labour exploitation, and in Nepal middlemen sell trainee visas for as much as Rs 600,000 each. Mysteriously, of the estimated 700 who have got trainee visas so far, a third are Tamang and Chepang women from just one village in Makwanpur district.

Japanese immigration has now started tightening visas procedures for students, trainees and cooks, but many Nepalis have found a loophole via Okinawa, where Nepalis now outnumber Chinese and Americans (see map, left) as they wait to move on to Nagoya, Fukuoka and other cities.

Sophia University’s Masako Tanaka says the Japan government should have work permits for unskilled workers so they are less prone to exploitation by recruiters in Nepal, or to avoid paying high tuition fees to language or vocational schools in Japan and have better labour guarantees: “Japan’s immigration policy is totally out of touch with reality.”

What would help is to remove middlemen so only the qualified can apply for caregiver or skilled visas. But, as he loaded *naan* into an oven at his restaurant recently, Dipak Babu Nepal said: “Mostly it is a case of Nepalis swindling Nepalis.”



Watch video of Nepalis in Japan, and how a new influx of migrant workers and their families has brought new challenges.



## “Returning my debt to Nepal”

Arjun Singh first came to Japan to work in 2011 to support his wife and two daughters back home in Bajura. After being hospitalised with TB five years later, he went back to Nepal. He couldn’t find a job and had amassed Rs 2.2 million in debt to pay middlemen, so he returned to Japan.

Singh had found someone’s credit card on the street, and had kept it in his wallet without using it. During an unrelated investigation on 13 March, police found the card and arrested him. After two days in detention in Shinjuku he was presented before the Tokyo Prosecutor’s Office where he collapsed and died at 11AM.

Tohru Takahashi (above, with court dossier on Arjun Singh), an activist with the group Solidarity Network with Migrants Japan, investigated and found that police had shackled and handcuffed him, leaving him lying on the ground for hours. Suspecting that the Nepali had died due to police mistreatment, and to protect the body as evidence, Takahashi prevented cremation so they could do a proper post-mortem.

Along with fellow-activist Azuma Toyohisa (below, left) they took the body to a Zen temple in Nagoya and carried out an autopsy. With the help from head priest



Rev Takaoka and Nepalis in Nagoya, Takahashi and Toyohisa paid for the autopsy and bringing Singh’s wife, Ambika Buda from Nepal in June for the funeral at the temple.

“I couldn’t tell whether I was living a nightmare or a reality,” Ambika told us this week in Kathmandu, where she is waiting for word from the courts in Japan on the cause of her husband’s death. “The Nepali Embassy in Tokyo did not help to take the body home to Nepal, but instead of helping they threatened us. If it wasn’t for the Japanese people who helped me, I would never have been able to bring my husband’s ashes back for cremation here. I hope no one has to go through what I did.”

Here in Tokyo, Takahashi told us: “The body was the evidence, so we had to prevent it

from being cremated, now we are waiting for the final report. Even dead people have human rights.”

Thousands of Nepalis have made it good in Japan, and send money home to take care of families, but there are many horror stories like this. Azuma Toyohisa and others played a critical role in the final release of Govinda Mainali, falsely accused of the murder and robbery of a Japanese woman in Tokyo in 1997. Mainali spent 15 years in jail in Yokohama while the Justice for Govinda pressure group made up of activists and human rights lawyers pursued the case. (Go online for links.)

Toyohisa and his colleague Junko Hasumi took turns visiting Mainali in jail regularly and paying to fly his family in on visits in order to keep his spirits up. Defence lawyers presented new DNA evidence to prove Mainali did not commit the crime, he was finally released in 2013 and granted compensation.

Mainali, now 50, was in Tokyo last month to thank all the people who had helped him, and in an emotional airport farewell told them: “My freedom would not have been possible without you. I thank you and promise to dedicate my life to help other Nepali detainees like me, so their families back in Nepal can be cared for.”

Asked what makes him devote his life to helping Nepalis in trouble in Japan, Azuma Toyohasi says: “As a trekking guide in Nepal I came to admire the dignity and honesty of the Nepali people, they were always generous and showed respect to strangers like me. I am just returning my debt to Nepal.”

(With additional reporting by Sonia Awale)



Wartime victims are still bearing the brunt of the conflict. Can provincial government redress for wartime crimes?



**SHANGRI-LA**  
VILLAGE  
POKHARA

Presents

# New Year's Eve

Live Performance By  
4 Black Smith Band  
DJ Session  
Lavish Gala Dinner | Attractive Door Prizes  
@  
Shangri-La Village Resort, Pokhara

**Ticket Price: Single NRS. 3,000 Nett | Couple NRS. 5,000 Nett**  
**(Inclusive of 10% Service Charge & 13% VAT)**

Sponsored by:

For Assistance : 061462222/9856022272  
9846020321

**RUSLAN VODKA**  
100% PURE VODKA

**Nepal Ice**  
Natura

**Coca-Cola**  
TASTE THE FEELING

**THAI**  
50th ANNIVERSARY  
IN KATHMANDU

**clear tv**

**POKHARA**  
internet

**Buddha Air**



# Thinking and acting locally

Federal Nepal is an opportunity to start growing your business in 2018

OM ASTHA RAI  
in DHARAN

The Centre is yet to decide where to set up temporary headquarters of state governments, but people in Dharan have already declared their city the capital of Province 1.

The iconic bust of the 19th century Nepali poet Bhanubhakta Acharya at the centre of this sub-metropolitan city that grew as a pension distribution centre for British-Indian Gurkha soldiers is draped in a banner that reads: 'We welcome you to the capital of Province 1'.

Nearby, beneath the Dharan clock tower which is a replica of the one in Hong Kong's Kowloon neighbourhood, a group of cross-party political cadres have been staging a sit-in, demanding that their 120-year-old city be officially declared the seat of the Province 1 government.

Aindra Sundar Begha, who was a Maoist candidate for mayor in June, sits cross-legged, constantly grinning and asking every passer-by to sign up for solidarity. He says: "Dharan is the soul of the identity movement of Janajatis, and the federal government needs to respect it." Pradip Bhandari, a newly elected State Assembly member, adds: "Sentiment aside, Dharan has all practical reasons to be the provincial headquarters: from geographical advantage to



OM ASTHA RAI

infrastructure needed for state assemblies, Chief Minister and ministers."

The locals of Dhankuta have been even more aggressive to have their city declared as the Province 1 capital. After carrying out rallies and shutting down the bazaar recently, they sent a delegation to Kathmandu to lobby with leaders.

Umesh Ghimire, President of the Dhankuta Chamber of Commerce and Industry, says: "Federalism will mean nothing to people living in the remote hills of eastern Nepal if Dhankuta is not developed as the provincial capital."

After Dhankuta was chosen as the regional headquarters of the erstwhile Eastern Development Region during the Panchayat, the government invested billions to build nearly 400 office buildings.

Ghimire argues that the investment in infrastructure will be wasted if Dhankuta is not chosen as the provincial capital.

Not to be left behind, political as well as business leaders from Itahari and Biratnagar are also using their political clout to have their own cities declared as the capital of Province 1. Like the selection of the venue for the Olympics, each city has listed its advantages. While Itahari claims to be on the main junction of Province 1, Biratnagar says it is already developed enough to be the provincial capital.

Kedar Karki, a State Assembly member elected from Morang, says: "If Biratnagar becomes the provincial capital, the Centre does not need to spend a single rupee on infrastructure. We have everything that the Province 1 government

requires to function smoothly."

Under the new Constitution, State Assemblies can decide for themselves where to locate their capitals. The Centre is allowed to choose temporary headquarters, where provincial MPs will be sworn in. However, the fact that cities are already trying to outsmart each other to become provincial capitals signals how provincial politics will play out in 2018.

If 2017 was the year of elections (three phases of local and two phases of provincial-parliamentary polls), 2018 is set to be the year of provincial politics where politicians from different parties will be united for common local causes (state headquarters and names) and cadres of a same party will be divided if they come from different cities.

CAPITALISM: A banner draped around the statue of poet Bhanubhakta Acharya in Dharan reads: 'We Welcome You To The Capital of Province 1'.

There are already some hints of what is to come. For example, the UML and NC cadres were at each other's throats in elections earlier this month. Now, they have buried the hatchet and joined hands to have Dhankuta declared as the Province 1 capital.

As Kathmandu looks obsessed about whether UML and Maoists will eventually unite, or who will become the new Prime Minister, people in Province 1 have found their own political drama much more thrilling. In every public sphere, they are discussing who will be their first Chief Minister: Sher Dhan Rai or Bhim Acharya.

Acharya may be a UML stalwart in this region, but party Chair KP Oli values Rai more for saving their party-organisation from falling apart in eastern hills after Ashok Rai formed his own party. And a majority of directly-elected provincial MPs of UML are loyal to Oli, who will not support Acharya, who himself is closer to UML leader Jhal Nath Khanal.

What is now happening in Province 1 is a microcosm of how provincial politics will be played out in the new year multiplied by seven. The outcome will define Nepal's experiment with federalism. 🇳🇵

IN A GAME OF  
MIND OVER MATTER  
WINNER IS THE ONE  
WHO NEVER GIVES UP.

In the game of Baag Chaal, the clever goats know that battle is won or lost in the mind. To defeat a mighty tiger, all it takes is spirit over mind and mind over matter... **the indomitable spirit, what legends are made of.**

**Khukri XXX Rum**

**INDOMITABLE**  
SINCE 1959

khukrirum.com /khukri-rum





ELEVATE  
YOUR EXPECTATIONS

http://www.facebook.com/olddurbar

ENTRANCE

Presents

NEW YEAR EVE  
2018

FREE ENTRY

LIVE Music  
with GONE ELVIS

Emcee:  
POOJA MAGAR

Games and  
Free Gift Hampers

Venue : The Entrance Café, Bakhundole, Lalitpur

Tel : 01- 5510616, 5510617 Time : 6pm onwards Date : 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018

Sponsored by:

CHIVAS

Mocktails

JACOB'S CREEK

Carlsberg

WORLDLINK

Coca-Cola

SOMERSBY

100 CINEMA

facebook.com/TheEntranceCafe

# Gobarment by the people

The Ass cannot fathom why everyone is in a tearing hurry to form a new gobarment. What’s the rush? I am perfectly happy with Lameduck Lion Brave as the Great Helmsman. At least with him (as with Trump) what you see is what you get, whereas with the Lefties you never know what they have up their sleeves.

Since grovelments are prone to making blunders, not having one means we won’t be making any big faux pas (*Is that already plural? –Editor*). So, this is what the Left Alliance meant by promising ‘stability and prosperity’ – Nepali politics after the elections is now even more stable than before because it has remained exactly the same, and politicians are behaving identically to the way they always have, and in the process they are becoming more and more prosperous.



During the numerous Christmas parties in the past week, many of you, rum punch in hand, have asked the Ass if the political transition is indeed over. You were also impatient to know what was holding up government formation. My reply, as always when asked rhetorical questions, was: “Let me take your second question first. How should I know, I am an Ass,

not an Anal-ist.”

If I was more sober, my reply may have been: “Actually we are in a transition within a transition while we wait for the party that won to grab defeat from the jaws of victory.” Aside from all that, this is nothing unique to Nepal. Look at Germany, they had elections four months ago and they are still stuck. So, relax, and let’s talk about something else.

No sooner had Comrade Oily had a chat with Comrade Upadro of the Fed-up Socialist Party (FSP), than Commandante Awesome’s antennae went up. That tête-à-tête was followed by a tits-for-tat as the Supreme Opportunist initiated discussions with Rajinder Bhai of the RJP (Bharat).

This is the thing with our revolutionaries -- since they are always contemplating stabbing class enemies in the back, they think the reactionaries are also contemporaneously contemplating the same thing. What we have with the Left Alliance is a cosy you-stab-my-back-I-stab-yours sort of relationship.

The media then obliged with screaming headlines that the Alliance was in tatters, thus trying to make it a self fool-filling prophecy, and that this was due to machinations of a certain Uncooked Chieftain who dropped into town on a surprise visit while the Ambassador was away.

As we go to press, we hear that the top leaders have directed their joint committee to revive re-reunification talks. Which means that after a new constitution and three elections in a row, the rule of the game is still: we believe in government for the people, by the people, and for the people in government.



The Ass

NEED A BATTERY??  
FREE HOME DELIVERY!!  
WITH FREE FITMENT SERVICE

OFFICIAL ONLINE STORE  
FOR AMARON BATTERIES

AMARON

CALL US  
9860 125 193/98010 23133  
9808 684 414

QUICK DELIVERY  
AT YOUR DOOR-STEP

FREE DIAGNOSTIC  
& INSTALLATION

GET BACK ON  
THE ROAD

facebook.com/info.pasaal  
instagram.com/pasaal\_auto

SHOP NOW  
pasaal.com

ITALIAN BRAND  
NOW IN NEPAL

Brought to you by:  
  
House no. 82, Saradha Marg, Bhatbhateni, Kathmandu, Nepal  
T : +977 1 4413454 E : info@eas.com.np / bialetti@nepal

HOME AND OFFICE  
ESPRESSO MAKERS