CONNECTED NEPALIS

A Nepal Media Landscape Survey conducted earlier this year by the Shareers Initiative has brought out surprising new data about internet access, social media, mass media, and household communication devices, with an overwhelming 56% of respondents owning handsets at the household level.
FACE-TO-FACE WITH FACEBOOK

Half way through an interview with Britain’s Channel 4 News involving multiple hidden cameras last month, a man posing as an influential South Korean political power broker asks Alexander Nix of Cambridge Analytica to vote for his candidate in an election for his candidate's back home.

Could this be a staged scene? Nix himself is already looking forward to his days of political campaigning. Cambridge Analytica doesn’t know this is a staged scene. It’s a part of the smear campaign that is being waged against it.

Nix is a key player in the data-driven politics that is reshaping the political landscape. His company, Cambridge Analytica, has been at the center of a controversy over the misuse of Facebook data.

But it’s not just Cambridge Analytica that is facing scrutiny. Facebook itself is under investigation for its role in the data leak.

Facebook has repeatedly denied any wrongdoing, but the company has been forced to take steps to improve its privacy practices.

The company has also been facing criticism for its handling of user data and its role in the Cambridge Analytica scandal.

The Cambridge Analytica scandal has highlighted the potential for data-driven politics to be used for nefarious purposes.

The future of politics is uncertain, but one thing is clear: the role of data and technology in politics is becoming increasingly important.

Cambridge Analytica is not alone in its use of data to influence elections. Other companies and organizations are also using data to shape public opinion and influence political outcomes.

The Cambridge Analytica scandal is a wake-up call for those who believe in the power of data to shape the world.

But it’s also a warning for those who may be vulnerable to manipulation by those who seek to use data to their advantage.

The future of politics is uncertain, but one thing is clear: the role of data and technology in politics is becoming increasingly important.

Cambridge Analytica is not alone in its use of data to influence elections. Other companies and organizations are also using data to shape public opinion and influence political outcomes.

The Cambridge Analytica scandal is a wake-up call for those who believe in the power of data to shape the world.

But it’s also a warning for those who may be vulnerable to manipulation by those who seek to use data to their advantage.

The future of politics is uncertain, but one thing is clear: the role of data and technology in politics is becoming increasingly important.

Cambridge Analytica is not alone in its use of data to influence elections. Other companies and organizations are also using data to shape public opinion and influence political outcomes.

The Cambridge Analytica scandal is a wake-up call for those who believe in the power of data to shape the world.

But it’s also a warning for those who may be vulnerable to manipulation by those who seek to use data to their advantage.
TURKISH AIRLINES CELEBRATES

NEPALESE NEW YEAR
Reva, said: “As a doctor, we live a very stressful life. So for me, driving this EV is stress-free since the car is easy to drive, clean, can park anywhere and there are no hassles about refuelling.”

Agni Energy’s latest customer for the eZo model is the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) which bought three units. NEA Director Kul Man Ghising will drive one of them to work in Kathmandu.

Despite the growing popularity of electric cars due to the fuel crisis caused by the 2015 blockade, it was only a question of time before someone opened a maintenance centre just for battery-operated vehicles in Kathmandu.

There are now over 350 Reva and e2o cars running on Kathmandu roads, so it seemed like the numbers had reached critical mass for Mahindra’s authorised distributor for Nepal, Agni Energy, to add a dedicated service centre in the Valley.

Agni’s newly built facility in Kusumpelson was inaugurated on Tuesday by Nepali Times editor, Kunda Dixit. The spacious service centre provides necessary before and after service for its eZo, e2o and future electric models from the Mahindra stable. Cars can have post-delivery inspection to wash, diagnose, maintenance, charging and spares parts.

We thought it was the right time for us to open an exclusive service centre as many countries have been announcing deadlines to convert to electric, and India has a target of 2030,” said Cabinet Secretary of Agni Energy (pictured above).

Agni was absolved of its time when it bought the Reva dealership from Lotus Energy 12 years ago. That, the government was hesitant to support zero emission vehicles and customers were reluctant to switch, from petrol. However, with consistent lobbying by environmentalists, word of mouth appreciation of the benefits of electric by drivers, the popularity of the Revo, simple and light e2o grew.

Electric car owners from various professions attending the inauguration on Tuesday said they were happy that the new service centre was being opened. Sadha Basnet, who owns a bright red Reva, said: “As a doctor, we live a very stressful life. So for me, driving this EV is stress-free since the car is easy to drive, clean, can park anywhere and there are no hassles about refuelling.”

Agni Energy’s latest customer for the eZo model is the Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) which bought three units. NEA Director Kul Man Ghising will drive one of them to work in Kathmandu.

Despite the growing popularity of electric cars due to the fuel crisis caused by the 2015 blockade, it was only a question of time before someone opened a maintenance centre just for battery-operated vehicles in Kathmandu.

There are now over 350 Reva and e2o cars running on Kathmandu roads, so it seemed like the numbers had reached critical mass for Mahindra’s authorised distributor for Nepal, Agni Energy, to add a dedicated service centre in the Valley.

Agni’s newly built facility in Kusumpelson was inaugurated on Tuesday by Nepali Times editor, Kunda Dixit. The spacious service centre provides necessary before and after service for its eZo, e2o and future electric models from the Mahindra stable. Cars can have post-delivery inspection to wash, diagnose, maintenance, charging and spares parts.

We thought it was the right time for us to open an exclusive service centre as many countries have been announcing deadlines to convert to electric, and India has a target of 2030,” said Cabinet Secretary of Agni Energy (pictured above).

Agni was absolved of its time when it bought the Reva dealership from Lotus Energy 12 years ago. That, the government was hesitant to support zero emission vehicles and customers were reluctant to switch, from petrol. However, with consistent lobbying by environmentalists, word of mouth appreciation of the benefits of electric by drivers, the popularity of the Revo, simple and light e2o grew.
KEVENTERS
The Original Milkshake

WE’RE NOW DELIVERING

LABIM MALL
9843173550

THAMEL
9843402636

CIVIL MALL
9808816570
Adventurers in a vanishing land

The world, and Nepal, have changed since the days of Wilfred Thesiger and Freya Stark

Don’t buy Nepali Times.
Subscribe.
(and get a free ride on Chandragiri Cable Car)

SO FAR SO GOOD
Lisa Choegyal
Himalmedia
Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur
Tel: 01-500 5601-05
subs@himalmedia.com
www.nepalitimes.com

for
1 year subscription
of
Nepali Times

Rs
2,200

Call
Santosh
on
9851054729
today to collect your
free Chandragiri Cable Car coupon, and have
the print edition of Nepali Times delivered every
Friday morning to your doorstep.

Dame Freya Stark looked around her with some bemusement as we left the bustle of Kathmandu airport and headed into town. “I feel we must be somewhere East of the Euphrates,” she said vaguely.

Excited by my task of greeting the scholarly British-Italian travel writer, I was rather unwarmed by her lack of attention to detail – it was after all her second visit to Nepal. The snow-covered peaks gleamed on the skyline as we drove through emerald terraced rice paddies in the limpid clear air of the Valley that spring afternoon in 1940 – not at all like the sand dunes and deserts of her preferred habitat.

By the time we reached the oasis of the Shankri Hotel garden, the grand old lady of Anaboth exploration had remembered that she is back in Nepal, this time to trek in the Mustang region. We settled at a table and she reminds me how much she appreciates the muscled legs of the Nepali porters, and appreciate our arranging the same patient poby from Pokhara, which she insists on calling Red Bulls although its name is Red Bulls.

On the freshly watered lawns a fountain gurgles softly in the sunshine whilst an attentive American group is being briefed. Sporting heavy boots, clean daypacks and keen expressions, they are handed handmade gala paper Trek Permits and pour over the monochrome índia maps which were all we had in those days.

Freya Stark, the first Westerner to journey through many Middle Eastern regions, always had to wear a hat due to a childhood accident in which she lost her hair, sculpted by some dreadful machine in her father’s factory. Today she is dressed most unlike anyone’s idea of an eccentric adventurer: pearls, a demure green dress and fall-length peacoat suit. I find myself hoping that the other hotel guests realise it is fake.

An avid admirer of this resourceful and fearless traveller, I was most struck by her remark that travel is really all about observation and attitude. “One can explore just as well in one’s own back garden, just as long as you have the right view of life.”

It was with some alarm that we later discovered that this ‘poet of travel’ had dreamed of dying to the Himalayas, loved no doubt by the romance of a dramatic end to an unconventional life.

Thankfully for Mountain Travel, Dame Freya failed to achieve this, instead dying at her Italian home in Assisi a few months after her 100th birthday in 1995. She had written no less than 24 travel books and autobiographies, and eight volumes of letters from the 1930s, most of them now out of print.

Another nearly forgotten figure of early travel literature who appreciated Nepal was Sir Wilfred Thesiger KBE, DSO, FRAS, FRSL, FRGS, the unexpectedly beguiling hero of Iraq’s Marsh Arabs and the naked warriors of Assyntia, who was most at home traversing African deserts and mapping Arabic empty quarters.

Sir Wilfred preferred the challenges of travel on foot, or by traditional transport, he camel, horses, mule, donkey or camel armed only by a compass and the local knowledge. He was said to resent the intrusion of any technical innovation that post-dated the steam engine. Adopting traditional dress of the nomadic people with whom he travelled, he claimed to feel least comfortable in his own British culture and with his own kind. Thesiger’s classic travel books are characterised by elegant prose, disdain for fellow travellers, and sublime black and white photographs.

I had not expected to like him so much. With his purist approach to travel, it was with some trepidation that I met the gentleman explorer on his return from Tiger Tops, off the Twin Otter from Meghauli amidst the dust of Kathmandu’s domestic airport. I expected scorn and contempt for the centred tourism activities of 1960s’s Royal Chitwan National Park. Instead he was all aristocratic charm and effusive praise. The rugged features creased into a smile, the voice quietessentially Eton, Oxford and army. “Marvelous place, loved every minute of it,” he crowed.

We dined at Bin’s house in Saneja, and amidst the daal bhat and clatter I wallowed in his stories and listened wagg to his requiem for a vanished world. In the candlelit Sir Wilfred’s long, lived in face is a monoscope of centuries and regret: “The wild mountains, deserts, Alpine skies and fierce tribes I adore are all but dead.”

Perhaps not by chance, Thesiger lived more than another decade, dying in England aged 83 in 2003.
Shivani’s Kathmandu

Shivani Singh Tharu took nine years to write the thriller *Kathmandu Ma Ek Din*

Duksangh Sherpa

Shivani Singh Tharu always knew she was born to be a storyteller. And so it was through her colourful modelling career, television anchor, radio, and now as a novelist – the core essence of telling a story has always been what has driven her.

Tharu’s debut novel launched this week, *Kathmandu Ma Ek Din*, took nine years to write. It is a political thriller and revolves around a character named Chandra from the plains who battles social injustice in the unstable politics of the post-conflict era after 2006.

“Most people think of me as someone from the fashion field, and do not really associate me with literature, but those who have known me personally know that I’ve always been into writing and reading,” says Tharu, while autographing her book on Tuesday at the Russian Cultural Centre.

Since her childhood, Tharu has had a voracious appetite for everything from *Tintin* to *Tinkle*, and writers like Amar Chitra Katha to Manohar Kahranjan. She admits to being constantly drawn to the intriguing, macabre and mysterious world of thrillers and detective dramas.

One of the biggest challenges of writing a novel, for Tharu was to be able to write the kind of book that would satisfy the reader in herself. Now that it has been published, she is going through what most writers often experience: a sense of emptiness because she misses the process of writing, the fun, the struggle and the exhaustion.

Language was another obstacle she had to overcome because Tharu herself admits she has difficulty writing in Nepali. But she didn’t let this deter her, and overcame the handicap by reading Nepali literature vocally and doggedly. This is also her advice to aspiring writers: “To write, you have to read.”

Asked about her next book, she laughs gently and says that it is a secret. “People have already given me a hard time for taking nine years to write this book,” she says. “I am not making that same mistake again. I will only talk about my second book once it is ready.”

Tharu’s passion, energy and enthusiasm for the literary world is evident in her talent and personality. She knows mainstream Nepali men may not take her seriously because of her background, but Tharu defies the criticism saying she wants to be judged by her words.

She adds: “It is fine if some people cannot think of me as a serious writer. I know I am an underdog just now, and that’s okay. I’ve always loved underdogs, I will continue to do what I love and enjoy, which is writing.”

Shivani Singh Tharu

Shivani Singh Tharu where she talks about her journey of becoming an author, the many obstacles she had to overcome, and the nine long years she spent completing her debut novel.

neputimes.com

NOT TOO FAR NOT TOO CLOSE
Weekend or weekdays Pataleeban Vineyard Resort is the place to rejuvenate yourself with friends and family. A perfect gateway to get refreshed from your daily hectic routine.

We are here for your service with,
- Deluxe / Superior Rooms with Packages
- Family Retreat
- Day Conferences
- Resident Conference Packages
- Family / Corporate Day Picnics
- Orientation Programs
- Team Building Activities
- Wine Testing
- Day Hiking
- Forest Walk
- BBQ Facility

Contact US:
Chitwan-5, Badi Banjyang, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 00977 1 4316337, 0614275384
Kathmandu Sales Office
Lalitpur, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 00977 1 4650525
Email: info@pataleebanresort.com
www.pataleebanresort.com
Go take a hike

The Mardi Trek is so wild you don’t even know whether to breathe.

Locals say it never rains on Mardi Ridge, it pours. Or, it is snowy and hail. True to form, there is a terrific hailstorm that morning at Forest Camp. At Low Camp (2,970m), the clouds open up just enough to offer a magnificent view of Mt Machapuchre, blanketed in fresh snow (picture).

Budel Dansa lives up to its name, with clouds obstructing the view. Snow starts falling by afternoon in light swirls and by morning it covers the trail. The narrow trail hugs the cliff on one side with a sheer drop on the other, the rhododendrons are now deep red, looking like shining drops of blood on the snowy slopes.

High Camp (3,550m) is above the tree-line, and the trail along the ridge becomes even more precarious as winds to Viewpoint which doesn’t.

You walk on a carpet of petals through a fragrant

The conundrum of writing about a tranquil place not yet discovered by mass tourism is that you become the reason it loses its tranquility. Tourism worldwide has a tendency to despoil a place by ‘discovering’ another new untouched destination.

Many trekkers are now coming to Nepal to get away from places where all you see are other trekkers. More and more, they are going for off the beaten tracks to Kangchenjunga, Dolpo or Rolwaling.

The Prime Minister is launching a tourism campaign from Rusa Lake on New Year’s Day. Who is going to tell him that it may not be such a good idea?

One of Nepal’s hidden gems has always been the Mardi Trek. In fact for many years, those who went on it did not share their photographs and did not brag about how stunningly scenic the trip was.
Want to brag about once it is over so it remains that way was because they did not want hordes of tourists descending (ascending) to its knife-like ridge that forms the southwestern spur of Mt Machhapuchhare. Mardi (rhymes with ‘muddy’ not ‘handy’) is indeed more out-of-this-world than all other other-wordly places in Nepal, or the planet. It has unbroken vistas, big sky, solitude and wilderness. And the surprising thing is how accessible it is now from Pokhara.

If you start from Dhampus, the Mardi route first follows the Annapurna Circuit for a short bit, then strikes off at Pitan Deurali (2,050m) into and up a ridge ablaze with pink rhododendrons in this season.

forest.

It takes four hours to reach Forest Camp (2,300m) where there are supposed to be tea shops, but it is deserted. Unlike other popular trekking trails, the tea shops here are spaced more widely and since food has to be portered in, it is more expensive.

But there are signs that things may change soon. In anticipation of the growing popularity of the Mardi Trek, new rest houses are going up at a rapid pace. The lodges are all recently built, still smell of fresh wood and don’t even have names or menus yet. You just hope the new blue tin roofs do not photobomb the sweeping view of the Annapurnas.

offer any views by afternoon because of billowing mist. Mardi Base Camp (4,500m) is another two-hour climb, but for that you will need climbing gear.

If you don’t want to return the way you came, there is a straight descent down the slope to Siding (1,700m) from where there are jeeps to Pokhara. There is also a trail further down to Lswang or Lamjung.

A few wilderness areas in Nepal are so easy to get to, and offer in a microcosm the sheer verticality of the country as you climb from sub-tropical to Alpine and almost Arctic in four days. The unsurpassed view is a bonus.
^{NEW\ YEAR\ EVENTS\ 2075^}

**Purple Haze**
14 April, 8pm onwards, Purple Haze, Thom, Rd. 1, 800, 589/497/774

**Shangri-La’s Eve party**
Live performance by Lotta band, cultural dance troupe and lunch buffet.
13 April, Shangri-La Hotel, Lamjung, Rd 2, 800, (01/4111999/ 9871248556)

**Fusion Mantra**
Countdown to the New Year with live music by Fusion Mantra on the rooftop.
The band plays fusion of Eastern and Western music.
13 April, 6pm-12am, October Kathmandu, Woodland Complex, Dharahara, Rd 1, 800 (free for guests). 9867076611

**Achieva – La’s party**
Live performance by littra band, cultural dance and lunch buffet.
13 April, Achari Ho Ho, Lamjung, Rd 2, 800, (01/4111999/9871248556)

**Frohmen New Year celebration**
With the aim to see Pakharkhola’s famous lake, the 11th edition of Frohmen New Year celebration kicks off with 40 boats and commercial stalls, discount packages offers, folk dances, music and performance.
Major attraction: signing competition of the cultural folk song.
13-15 April, 11am-10pm, Lakekule, Pakharkhola, Rd 150 (boys), Rd 150 (girls)

**Road to 2075**
7 international and Nepal artists will be the highlight of the New Year celebration.
13 April, 8pm onwards, Trishuli Ghat (outdoor festival), Rd 150 (girls), Rd 150 (boys)

**Jyoti’s New Year’s Eve party**
Join Jyoti and a host of other local bands for a lively New Year’s Eve at Jyoti’s, 100% (75% boys, 25% girls).
13 April, 6pm onwards, Jyoti, Lamjung, Rd 150 (girls), Rd 150 (boys)

**Sahi**
A powerful Mahatma play about Nepal’s civil war and its impact on everyday people written by Ramesh Tanurin. Jr.
13-21 April, 5-6.30pm, Shikshya Theatre, Battamandhala, Mon 01/4401671

**Reopen Loh**
Beers N’ Cheers reopens with special events counting down to the New Year: live music, open mic, EVA screening and beer.
13 April, 6pm onwards, Beers N’ Cheers, Thum, Rd 1, 800, 554/34866

**Farms market**
For the health connoisseurs, take a new reel experience to buy only fresh and organic food from the farmers market, 10 minutes away from Boudha and soak your healthy and organic life.
April 14, 8am-6pm, SANKH RESIDENCE, Ramshaiti, Boudha, 800/596/175

**Sunrise Restaurant**
Celebrate Nepali New Year’s Eve with family, friends and Live 6 course dinner and 3 piece instrumental classical music that will tantalize your taste buds.
13 April, 6:30pm-11:00pm, Hotel Fari & Few, Rd 250, (01/4189599/ Emission 2003, 9867404940)

**Never before seen Pekhara**
57 photographs of Pekhara taken before 1950, collected by Sunil Tiplak on display.
13 April, Nepali Art Council, Bakhtapur, Mon 1/436755

**Sun Moon**
Playing jazz and 60’s music, the band Sun Moon will be with you to countdown to the New Year.
13 April, 5-7pm, Nepali Muzik Hotel, Gyanpoint, Mon 1/4000054/40005540

**Moksh**
Gypsy music and enchanting live performance by Mahala Dee Grippi, and Llama and the Boys.
Next door to make the eve of Nepal: New Year a memorable one.
13 April, 6pm, Moksh, Pashupatinath, Rd 250 (before 7pm), Rd 150 (after 7pm). 9816352832

**Pepsi Zero Mile**
The elite Indian band will be performing at Bikash Camp on the eve of New Year 2075. Join in for good music.
13 April, 8am, Bikash Camp, Gyanpoint, License, Ashq Thapa Dock, Mon 01/4625972

**The Burlington**
Celebrate New Years with Birds Meeting place, Godawari Bus Park.
4pm, Jan onwards, Godawari Rose Garden, Boudha
September 2017

**The BLVD**
Bring your favorite ingredients and toppings from a variety of delicious Nepali specialities and homemade pickles for a very traditional New Year’s Eve celebration.
13-15 April, Le Bistro, Boudha, Mon 01/454780/45478197

**Kava Restaurant**
Live buffet dinner, live BBD counter, live music and 3 complimentary drinks on the eve of New Years 2075.
13 April, 6pm onwards, Forney Field, Morrist, Thame, Rd 1999 (Nepalese), Rd 5299 (Nepalese), (01/4777999)

**Pasifika New Year’s Eve celebration**
A celebration of New Year’s Eve with live music and more.
13 April, Pasifika, Lamjung, Rd 2, 800, (01/4148700/4148701)

**Air quality index**

- **Shangri-La’s Village Resort**

Enjoy New Year’s Eve at the Shangri-La’s Village Resort, a luxury resort with a stunning view of the Valley. The resort offers a variety of entertainment options, including a New Year’s Eve dinner, live entertainment, and a fireworks display.
13 April, 4-9pm, Paschim, Rd 1250, (Nepalese), (01/4746674, (01/4746670, 7771112, 7771114)

- **Tiger Palace Resort**

Enjoy New Year’s Eve at the Tiger Tiger’s luxury resort, located in the heart of Kathmandu. The resort offers a variety of entertainment options, including a New Year’s Eve dinner, live entertainment, and a fireworks display.
13 April, 4-9pm, Paschim, Rd 1250, (Nepalese), (01/4746674, (01/4746670, 7771112, 7771114)

- **Anil Residency**

Celebrate Nepali New Year’s Eve with a live music performance by Nepali music bands.
13 April, 4-9pm, Paschim, Rd 1250, (Nepalese), (01/4746674, (01/4746670, 7771112, 7771114)

- **The Last Resort**

Enjoy the last resort’s New Year’s Eve party, featuring live music, dancing, and a fireworks display.
13 April, 4-9pm, Paschim, Rd 1250, (Nepalese), (01/4746674, (01/4746670, 7771112, 7771114)

- **Athithi Resort & Spa**

Continuously on the top ten list of hotels in Nepal by TripAdvisor, the resort is a quiet sanctuary that offers a true Nepali experience with modern amenities.

- **Hotel Country Villa**

Rise and shine with the New Year’s Eve on an enchanting new celebration at the Hotel Country Villa.

- **Hyatt Regency**

On Mother’s Day, enjoy a special spa treatment with a glass of champagne and a relaxing massage.

- **Kathmandu**

Getaway

- **New Year’s Eve celebration**

Celebrate an unforgettable New Year’s Eve at the Shangri-La’s Village Resort, enjoying a candle-lit dinner with wine and a relaxing ambiance. Don’t miss the fireworks display at 6:15am.
13 April, 4-9pm, Paschim, Rd 1250, (Nepalese), (01/4746674, (01/4746670, 7771112, 7771114)
Why politicians pamper the military

Ramesh Kumar

In September 2017, three months after this fiscal year’s budget was unveiled, a Cabinet meeting approved the Nepal Army’s proposal to buy three new helicopters, and the Finance Ministry had to fork out Rs81.8 million for the acquisition.

One month later, the Army tabled another proposal to buy another aircraft which was also swiftly endorsed by the Cabinet. And the Finance Ministry sent an additional Rs80.56 million to the ministry. In January 2018, the Army sought another Rs1.70 billion to upgrade military aviation for search and rescue, and the government quickly handed over a cheque to that amount.

No matter which government is in power, Nepal’s politicians quickly approve whatever the Army has in its wish list. In 2011, the Army sought Rs4 billion to buy two new Mi-17 helicopters, but Prime Minister Babaram Bhattarai sanctioned even more - Rs5 billion - without asking. In 2016, during K P Oli’s first tenure as Prime Minister, Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel allotted Rs27 billion in non-budgetary resources for the military.

During the insurgency, when the military was modernised in 2001 to defeat the Maoists, the government met every Army demand. But there is no longer a war to fight. There are no external threats, yet the Nepal Army’s budget keeps going up.

Use ex-Finance Secretary told us “Political leaders have always feared a military coup, so they want to keep the Army happy. The monarchy is gone and the Army is now under civilian control, yet the old mindset persists.”

But that is not the only reason. Another top Finance Ministry source puts it bluntly: “Politicians, the generals, everyone benefits from military procurements.”

Corruption within the military is never investigated. The Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) does not have a mandate to question the generals. In every annual report, the Office of Auditor-General points out glaring irregularities in military procurement, but no one in government has ever taken any action.

For this fiscal year, the Finance Ministry sanctioned Rs4.16 billion for the Army - a 20% increase from last year. This is on top of the Rs7.2 billion the Army has already got this year - Rs1 billion more for recurrent expenditure and Rs3.72 billion more for capital spending. The Finance Ministry has had to reallocate money earmarked for other programs to satisfy the generals.

Finance Minister Yuba Raj Khatiwada in his White Paper this month said the treasury was empty, yet it remains to be seen where he is going to get the cash to meet the Army’s demands for new helicopters and aircraft.

“When the generals march into the Finance Ministry with their armoured body guards, no one can say no to them,” says one official. When Bimal Kejriwal was Finance Secretary, Army Chief Gen Prakash Sinha reportedly threatened to throw him into the Bagmati River if the military’s budget request was not met.

In case the Finance Ministry does muster the courage to turn down the Army’s request, the generals simply go up to the Prime Minister or Defence Minister and get it sanctioned. After the Cabinet approves a military budget demand, the Finance Ministry has no choice but to meet it.

Ex-Finance Minister Devendra Raj Pandey asks: “Why do we need to have a budget plan if the Cabinet just hands over money arbitrarily to the military?”

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Will keep a record book where those who say I am a talker and not a doer can write their names. I will give them free tickets when Kathmandu-Pokhara railway comes into operation.”

Prime Minister KP Oli in an interview with Nepal, 8-14 April
017 was a good year for cinema. Among the nine films nominated for Best Picture almost all, barring the unnecessarily long Dunkirk, are special in their particular ways. Each of these films is distinctive in style, guided by the voices of their directors who want to push the boundaries of what can be done on film.

Steven Spielberg’s The Post is probably one of the most conventional of the films nominated this past year. Fortunately, it is so strong in its subject matter and in the force of the actors who guide the story that the film excels in its own right, even while it did not win the coveted golden statue.

Starring the great Meryl Streep and the wonderful Tom Hanks, The Post tells the incredible true story of how The Washington Post threw aside all caution to publish the Pentagon Papers in 1971, papers that exposed how the White House administrations, extending back to Harry Truman, through to the current administration (at the time) of Richard Nixon had been aware that the Vietnam war was a lost cause. The thousands of pages long, comprehensive report had been commissioned in 1967 by the then Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara (Bruce Greenwood), who had held off exposing this dreadful secret that would surely have brought down any sitting president.

After The New York Times is barred by a court injunction from further publishing the strategically leaked papers, The Post’s editor-in-Chief Ben Bradlee (Hanks) lobbies, hard, for Katherine Graham (Streep), the first female owner of any publication, to allow the paper to publish the hundreds of crucial stories that the report might generate.

This is a story about bravery, and doing what’s right, old without hypocrisy, in the most matter of fact, but stirring of ways. Hanks and Streep square off as adversary and confidante, switching back and forth as each struggles with his or her ethics, trying to draw lines about how far they will go to expose the truth or retain their hard won space in the evolution of political society.

There is a particularly riveting line, uttered by the former military analyst Daniel Ellsberg (played by another great actor, Matthew Rhys), the original source who leaked the papers to The New York Times, when he says that to accuse a paper of betraying a president and committing crimes against the state is dangerously close to the President saying “I am the state” — a dreadful definition on the real bent of democracy where the state is actually the people, who elect the head of state to represent their best interests. This is particularly pertinent in present day America.

There is so much to love about The Post, the performances, the fascinating procedural revelations about how such stories are told by a truly committed media, the will of a woman to do the right thing, the reporters who bite on to the truth like little terriers that won’t let go, and finally the insights into why people are sometimes noble, despite our fears.

**MUST SEE**

Sophia Pande

**DEADLINE:** Prime Minister KP Oli, Chinese Ambassador Yu Hong and Minister for Energy Barsha Man Pani visit Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project in Dolakha on Wednesday during which Oli wanted the 50MW project expedited.

**TOP COP:** Newly appointed Inspector General of Police Subendra Khanal receives a blessing from Home Secretary Prem Kumar Rai (in red) in Kathmandu on Wednesday.

**SOLAR DARBAR:** Prime Minister KP Oli and Chinese Ambassador to Nepal Yu Hong jointly inaugurate the Chinese-funded one-megawatt solar photovoltaic project, which was installed in Singhra Darbar on Tuesday.

**ECONOMIC ROADMAP:** Asian Development Bank announced at a Press Meet on Wednesday that Nepal’s economic growth rate would rise to 5.5% in 2018-19 if there is normal monsoon and infrastructure projects are expedited.

**CROWNING GLORY:** Former Miss Nepal Nikita Chandak from this year’s winner Shrinidhi Khatiwada in Kathmandu on Wednesday. The 22-year-old will represent Nepal in Miss World 2018 in China.

---

**M-Series Printers**

Get the most ECONOMICAL B/W PRINTERS ever

Best for Office and Commercial purpose

- Just 25 PAISA per page
- 8000 PAGES with initial starter ink kit
- JUST 12 WATTS POWER CONSUMPTION
- Upto 1 YEAR OR 50,000 PAGES

---

**EPSON**

EXCEED YOUR VISION

---

**MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS**

Kathmandu Valley Dealers:
-=[+] Kwik Print (01) 4435127
-=[+] Gande Print (01) 4435555
-=[+] Eloy Print (01) 4435233
-=[+] Dev Print (01) 4435133
-=[+] 2001 Print (01) 4435433

Outside Valley Dealers:
-=[+] Dev Print (01) 4435133
-=[+] 2001 Print (01) 4435433

-=[+] HP 4000X (01) 4435127
-=[+] HP 4000X (01) 4435555
-=[+] HP 4000X (01) 4435233
-=[+] HP 4000X (01) 4435133
-=[+] HP 4000X (01) 4435433
Lumbini burial
Annapurna Post, 12 April

A group of 48 Taiwanese pilgrims last month buried the mortal remains of deceased family members at the holy Mayadevi Temple sanctuary in Lumbini. An internal inquiry has revealed that the Taiwanese bribed policemen and field staff of the Lumbini Development Trust to allow them to perform their funeral rituals and inter remains of dead relatives beneath a tree near the temple on 26 March.

Although the Trust administration knew about the case almost immediately, it had not bothered to investigate. But locals put pressure on the Trust to reveal the truth, and an inquiry panel was set up on 5 April. It found the Taiwanese had entered the temple area after office hours by paying Rs 2,000 to each of the 18 policemen, security guards and caretakers at the birthplace of the Buddha.

They had brought teeth, nails and locks of hair of their departed family members all the way from Taiwan. These remains were wrapped in 14 plastic bags (pictures), which also contained ashes and rice grains. They dug a 0.5m x 0.5m hole in the ground where they placed all the remains and buried it.

Without the approval of the Trust and UNESCO, no one can carry out any excavation in the temple area. Pilgrims need to take off their shoes before going in, and they are not allowed to plant flowers or damage plants. At the entrance, security guards examine bags of all pilgrims.

But the fact that the Taiwanese buried the remains of their dear ones by distributing just a few thousand roupas has exposed just how vulnerable the sacred temple is. The Trust has sought clarifications from all caretakers who were on duty that day.

They told the inquiry panel they kept Security Officer Sabitri Ahmed in the loop, but he has been found innocent. The Trust’s Vice Chair Awadhesh Trapali has defended Ahmed, saying he allowed the burial only outside the temple periphery.

Discover
Johnnie Walker
AGED 18 YEARS
Smooth and sophisticated with hints of vanilla, almonds, orange peel and a wisp of subtle smoke

नयाँ वर्ष २०७५ को हार्दिक मन्त्रलाई शुभकामना
बर्षा वर्षले हबा समान अतिशिविल, संस्कारको र सामाजिकस्तरीय जीवन शान्ति, समृद्धि एवं सुखोबास्त्री सर्वसाधारणको हमीदारीमा तिर्नुस्तर।

Enter the world of frying...
How Nepal’s media landscape

Some 4,145 respondents in 38 sample districts of all seven development regions were surveyed in January and February this year to measure their ownership of communication devices, mass media consumption patterns, and their views on the press itself.

The exercise was undertaken by Shareast Initiative Nepal, and the 2018 survey was the third in a series supported by multiple Nepali organisations. The study also explores most popular radio and tv programs and stations, and current trends in social media engagement and Internet usage.

Province 4 led the way with the highest mobile phone ownership (99%) with 64% of them being smartphones. The province, of which Pokhara is the capital, also had 38% of its people using the Internet daily.

Mobile phones are by far the most common communication device in Nepal today with an overwhelming majority of 96% of respondents owning one at the household level, and individually they are owned by 90%. Of these, slightly more than half were smartphones, and only 18% of respondents said they used laptops, desktops or tablets at home.

Among the 35% who have access to regular Internet, 98% respondents said they use mobile phones for Net access. Only 3.2% of respondents said they used laptop/tablets for the Internet whereas only 0.8% respondents used personal computers.

Nearly three-quarters of those polled used mobile data to access Internet while only 15% said they had access to broadband Internet or WiFi at home.

Easy access to mobile data, smart phone penetration along with competitive rates from telecom companies are attracting mobile users to access the Internet on their phones. Broadband WiFi is still limited in urban affluent households.

Among Internet users, Facebook was the highest (81%) with Messenger, IMo, YouTube, Viber and Whatsapp trailing close behind. In the 16-24 age group, Facebook usage was 96%.

An estimated 4 million Nepalis or 1 out of 12 people have access to both Internet and TV channels, in addition to 10 million who watch TV at home.

And, the study reveals that online news consumption is on the rise with 37% of respondents saying they access online news on a daily or regular basis.

Media digital aggregator HamamPatro was the only Nepali application mentioned as a favourite by 1.3% Internet users.

In the electronic media, tv has overtaken radio with 94% of households owning tv sets with only 29% having traditional radio receivers at home. Access to electricity, DTH and cable coupled with remittance savings, among three respondents had someone from the household working abroad being used to buy tv monitors. Interestingly, 80% of respondents said they tuned in to FM radio on their phones.

Press readership trails behind radio with only 21% of respondents saying they have been able to get hold of a newspaper in the last six months. Among those readers, only 6% said they read a paper daily, relying on radio and tv for local, national and international news.

Among the respondents, 35% said they had regular access to the
is being transformed

Internet, with 24% of them using it daily. This finding contradicts the recent Nepal Telecom Authority data, which is primarily based on the mobile penetration distribution and states that 63% of Nepal’s population had Internet access.

One of the most interesting findings of this survey was in answers to the question about which source of news was most reliable. About a third said they trusted TV and radio, however only 5% trusted newspapers and less than 3% found information on the Internet to be reliable. Many found neighbors to be much more trustworthy than the information available online.

Unlike India and other countries in the region, the big chunk of people watching Nepali TV channels do so for news (85%) followed by entertainment (43%).

why, a majority said they did not find Nepali entertainment programs particularly appropriate.

An overwhelming 86% of TV viewers watch programs in the evenings, and more women watch television than men in the evenings. The men watch more TV in the mornings. This is true across variables such as age, province, ecological regions, caste, education and occupation.

Of TV users 39% of households have local cable without setup box, and 33% are hooked up to Nepal’s only direct to home (DTH) company. The remaining 28% use local set up boxes, illegal Indian and DTH as well as digital TV providers. This scenario is expected to change with the government’s new policy for cable companies to digitize TV sources.

Survey lead and analysis: Madhum Acharya, Surman Chapagain Statistics and methodology: Balkrishna Khadka

www.sharesit.org.np

How the survey was done

Interviews were conducted with 4,145 respondents in 38 sample districts over seven provinces in January–February 2016.

There is an error margin of ±1.2% at 95%. The 77 districts were sample frame stratified by provinces. The primary sampling unit was the district, with 188 sample wards selected from the 38 districts. Sample households (25) were selected using random walk methods.

Cambridge Assessment International Education

Cambridge International School

Study

GCE A Level

A Level

Admissions OPEN

FOR JUNE 2018 INTAKE

Admissions Available

Trade Tower, Thapathali, Kathmandu

T: +977 1511100/1/2

www.thebritishcollege.edu.np

The most important reason that students need to study A levels is because it is the best route for those who hope to enter one of the top universities in the world. Also a strong set of A level results will help students stand out to employers compared with other candidates. We can confidently claim that students studying at the British Model College will achieve excellent A level results, and develop their English Language skills. This is principally due to our highly skilled and qualified teachers, who possess superior knowledge of their subjects.
Rest of the news

A lot of important things happened in the past year that did not make it to the news, perhaps because they were crowded out by even more important things like the state visit to India by PM Oli and the 4th state visit to Nepal by the President of South Africa. As a newspaper of record, it behoves the Ass to list below some news items from 2023 that did not make the light day and fell between the cracks.

Nepal No Longer Landlocked
NEW DELHI – Prime Minister Oli, Nepal is no longer landlocked, reliable sources said. The prime ministers of India and Nepal agreed that the shanties of the Bay of Bengal will be removed to Biramangal so that Nepal’s merchant marine can sail the open sea proudly flying the national double triangle flag.

Experts said the move would be greatly assisted by China’s Belt and Road Initiative by global warming. “If Nepal cannot go to the ocean, we will bring the ocean to Nepal,” said the expert on condition of complete anonymity.

Crooks Released
KATHMANDU — Nepal’s most notorious mafia dons, smugglers and terrorists, have been released from jail by the new communist-led government and are now roaming around freely in broad daylight hours.

Said a government minister (whose name we forget, but we can get back to you if you insist on knowing his identity). “We protected stability and prosperity, and we have fulfilled the promise of the new era,” he said.

“Hey! I won’t!” roared the prime minister.

“I have a suggestion that Nepal should have now been visited to their age-old brother. It is the handshake. I said it!,” said a member of the entourage who witnessed the handshake at close quarters. “We can be sure Nepal’s sovereignty is in safe hands.”

NEED A BATTERY??
FREE HOME DELIVERY!!
WITH FREE FITTING SERVICES

MICRA ACTIVE
DRIVEN BY INTELLIGENCE

NISSAN Micra Active is an intelligent choice for a smart generation that perfectly fits their personality. It offers sporty looks, innovative technology and smart features that takes driving to a whole new level.

- Central Locking
- Front & Rear Power Window
- Electric Power Steering
- Steering Control Audio
- Alloy Wheels
- Dual Airbag
- Bluetooth
- Follow Me Head Lamps
- Keyless Entry
- ABS | EBD | BA

Pioneer Moto Corp Pvt. Ltd., Kathmandu, Nepal. Tel: 01-4427871. Email: sales@nissan-nepal.com

For more information, please visit www.nissan-nepal.com, NissanNep, NissanNepal, nissan_nepal or visit any of our dealerships across the country.