In his plush and spacious office in the refurbished former Janakpur Cigarette Factory, Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut has his hands full meeting the backlog of demands for development. His mind is in large infrastructure projects and grand new schemes to empower women and “link Province 2 to Nepal’s number one province.”

In an interview with Nepal Times last week, he said: “Kathmandu has developed too much authority to municipalities and village councils, bypassing provincial governments.”

Despite this, Raut’s goal is to revive agriculture, promote technical education, improve health services and tackle gender inequality. He is allocating big money for his “Save Daughters” campaign in the new budget on Friday. Provincial MP Manish Tumang says: “We cannot do much with so little authority and resources.”

The Constitution allows provincial governments to collect taxes from just entertainment, tourism and land registration, which is not enough. Finance Minister Yuba Rai Khaliwads allocated Rs11.19 billion for Province 2, which is just 7% of the total federal budget.

“The Centre collects 25% revenue from this province, but gives us back so little,” says Saman. “We did not fight for this kind of federalism. The Centre needs to devolve all power to provinces, except printing currency, foreign affairs and defence.”

During last year’s monsoon, flash floods ravaged Province 2, devastating crops and roads. Relief and reconstruction would have been faster if the region had autonomy. Or would it?

This year, as the monsoon once again threatens Nepal’s southern plains, there are no visible signs that the eight districts are any better prepared, even though there are 196 new elected municipal and village councils.

As it is, there is a critical shortage of medicines in most health facilities in Janakpur. There won’t even be oral rehydration saline when the floods arrive.

Across the country confusion over budgets and new procurement procedures in the new federal structure has led to a nationwide shortage of medicines.

Zip Narayan Yadav of Bonga Health Post in Janakpur says: “We faced shortages before, but it is more serious this time because we do not know where to complaint.”

After local elections, all District Public Health Offices were brought under self-governing local councils. Local governments now have the responsibility of buying and supplying drugs to health posts, but there have been delays.

Janakpur Sub-Metropolitan City was given Rs15 million to procure medicines for its health posts, but only put out a tender twice last month. Public Health Officer Mundrika Thakur says that would be too late for the expected epidemic during the monsoon.

Om Astha Rajmani
On June 2, 10 years ago, the Philippines was just starting to emerge from the影海, and the whole region was looking ahead to a brighter future. But few could have imagined the seismic changes that would ripple through the region in the decade that followed. The US-China trade war, the Brexit vote, the rise of populist and nationalist leaders, and the ongoing pandemic have all been major events that have shaped the region's political and economic landscape.

As we reflect on the past 10 years, we look at some of the key events and trends that have defined the region.

In June 2011, the Philippines was hit by a series of severe floods, which caused widespread destruction and loss of life. The government responded with swift action, deploying emergency services and aid workers to affected areas.

On June 4, 2011, a major earthquake struck Indonesia, causing significant damage and loss of life. The international community responded with solidarity and support, providing aid and assistance to the affected communities.

On June 6, 2011, the US and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to enhance cooperation in the areas of energy, climate change, and disaster management.

On June 8, 2011, the United Arab Emirates launched the Mars Orbiter Mission, which aimed to study the planet Mars and its climate.

On June 10, 2011, the European Union announced plans to introduce a new set of sanctions against Russia, in response to its annexation of Crimea.

These events and many others have shaped the region in the past 10 years. As we look ahead to the next decade, we anticipate that the region will continue to be shaped by a complex mix of political, economic, and social forces.
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Next Kim-Trump Summit in Lumbini?

The birthplace of the Buddha can be an ideal venue for other peace talks to end conflicts

The summit that may result in something or nothing cost Singaporean taxpayers $60 million (their dollars). But that was a small price to pay for peace. The Korean people suffered enough at the hands of the Japanese, the Americans, the Russians, the Chinese and their own rulers for a very long time. Hence the hopes for a lasting peace and reconciliation unification of the Koreans.

However, the world needs a venue for a summit of leaders to end a conflict. It could be Lumbini. It is a country where numerous wars were once fought. The space is filled with poetry, and at some point in time, poets who worked there. They can write and talk about their problems.

Gandhi will scoot, but what better place than the birthplace of the Prince of Peace for this purpose? There are new hotels, several diplomatic missions and embassies and there are plenty of Gulahs to protect and guard the venue. What we may need is a bit of help from Singapore on how to organize, manage and pay for such an event. But Nepal’s hospitality industry is gearing up for an expected boom in tourism. There are three new airports coming up and the existing one in Kathmandu is supposed to be upgraded. Luxury hotels and resorts are popping up all over the place: Kathmandu, Lumbini, Chitwan, Nepalgunj.

Nepal has also just launched the Nepal Year 2070. Maybe if Korean negotiations are protracted, we can convince South Korean President Moon Jae-in, who has a soft spot for trekking in Nepal, to fly over to Lumbini Air for a North-South Summit.

It’s not unfeasible. What will it take to get everyone to take this up? There are people who never believed the Maitreya would come. They would have thought power cuts would be a thing of the past.

All in all, we have had a busy week, the first of its kind in our history, and a busy week ahead of us. But we are doing our best to make the most of it.

Anil Chitrakar

President of Siddhartha Group

Dus Din Dilli Ke

As you walk through an entrance resembling India Gate accompanied by the strains of street music, you will be refreshed by a clay cup of Chai or Lassi. Further in, you will find a miniature version of Chandi Chowk, also famously known as the Street Food Capital of India.

"We have a food culture is an amalgam of Mughal, Persian, and on a much larger scale. We have been planning it for ‘Dus Din Dilli Ke’ (Ten Days of Delhi) food festival does not miss any of the food stories. It is a walk with the extravaganza of The Cakes in CafeRoyal Regency Kathmandu that starts Friday offers an unlimited buffet of scrumptious delicacies from Delhi, 24 June.

Santosh Kumar Koradi, the Executive Chef at CafeRoyal Regency Kathmandu, was born in South India but was brought up in the North. He proudly submits to the fusion food of Indian cuisine, Koradi always feels a belonging towards the food on the streets of India. So when he had an opportunity to showcase Indian cuisine in Kathmandu, he passionately went for what he loves: Delhi’s authentic street food.

Give yourself a royal treat, as you choose from the varieties of beloved paratha brought straight from Delhi’s famous Purana Qila Walk-Don. If you want to feel like Bollywood actors who reportedly visit on international streets for fun and quirky things, there will be a separate counter for chaats and golgappas as well.

We have had numerous food festivals before on a monthly basis, but this one is completely different, and on a much larger scale. We have been planning it for six months and preparing the ingredients for 15 days prior to the event," says Koradi. "We have four hours of splendid buffet with more than 100 Indian dishes."

The festival brings together more than 100 manmade enriched and EP smacking food items from a city that is a melting pot of ethnicities, with flavored recipes passed down through the centuries. Myth has it that butter chicken or achari kabab in Hindi was accidentally created by the three founders of Moti Mahal in Delhi. To try that in Kathmandu.

Chicken in tomato gravy, rich in butter and cream, by mistake. You can have butter chicken with the Butter Chicken here at the festival won’t be accidental. The dish is chef’s favourite, and chances are he might make extra effort on it. The chef’s favourite, Chef Koradi will give you a plate, his course on how history and preparation methods. It may make your decision even more difficult, but will surely make your indulgence more informed.

And vegetables also have reason to choose with dishes like Lau Pareri Tikka, Bhoota ke Kabab, Dal Makhani, Baigan ka Bharta, Mutter Paneer, etc. Delhi’s renowned curry, milk by the way, like Kesar rasamali, Phitori, Jalbi etc. have a separate counter in the restaurant. Make sure you watch what you eat and leave some room for dessert too.

With a team of 67 chefs from the Royal Restaurant, Banquet Team and The Cafe, we have small assistant commander-in-chief of what promises to be foodie heaven. For those who have not been to Delhi, here is your chance to taste it.

Sikum Rai

Dus Din Dilli Ke

15-24 June, 6:30-10pm
The Cafe, Hotel Regency Kathmandu
Boudha, (01) 4771218
Rs 700 (excluding taxes)

Feast on a plate

Sixth gateway
Omar Alam’s first non-stop flight from Delhi to Bodh at the Mini-Bodh Airport on Sunday, marking the airlines’ first

Sixth gateway in its third round of a new route in just nine months, Qatar Airways Flight QR 127, operated by an Airbus A320, was welcomed by atraditional cane sawaks.

World Cup in Nepal

Nepali cricket team will be facing their toughest opponents in their career as they are looking to qualify for World Cup 21.

Food and food talk

Foodtalks’s freshly launched ‘Verve you travel World Cup campaign offers up to 40% discount to customers who come for a night out while watching this exciting match, to their delight, Mouth-watering meal is just Rs 999 all inclusive.

Joining ventures

The signing ceremony of the joint venture between Turkish Airlines and Turkish Cars, Turkish cars 200 Express and Hong Kong based VN Airline Ltd. took place in Istanbul on Monday. The Hong Kong-India

prathema bank

BIZ BRIEFS

Feel the game

Samsung Electronics has launched a new campaign ‘Feel the Game’, offering customers cashback up to 27% on warranty and 9% EMIs on Samsung TVs, with gift with purchase of TVs.

Food and football

Foodtalks’ freshly launched ‘Verve you travel World Cup campaign offers up to 40% discount to customers who come for a night out while watching this exciting match, to their delight, Mouth-watering meal is just Rs 999 all inclusive.

Joining ventures

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Stereotyping women as victims

Do Nepali women really need to be rescued from a Hindu patriarchal order?

Radha Adhikari and Jeevan Sharma

Nepal has experienced a profound and impressive social change in just one generation with improvements in literacy, schooling, health and political participation.

There has been a shift from a deeply hierarchical social order, where gender differences were supported by a combination of ritual, law, political economy and state, to one where the call for women's rights is widespread.

The tragedy of the young woman (16) who was killed in Achham this week by her husband during her monthly banishment to a shed during menstruation reminds us again of the problems. Her family tried to keep her death under wraps because of the shame the media coverage would bring.

However, a stereotypical representation of Nepali women persists, one influenced primarily by the colonial discourses of Third World women needing protection, welfare and development which is pervasive in women's activism, public policy, development programs, and the media.

More worryingly, there is a strong tendency to view Nepali women's suffering mainly as a result of traditional Hindu religious and ritual practices. Positive developments in the lives of Nepali women remain largely invisible to dominant popular and scholarly representations.

These obscure the diversity of women's experiences in favour of stereotypes, and paradoxically imply that any demeaning practices which subjugate Nepali women can be done away with by replacing traditional values with modern ones. While social changes are underway in Nepal, it is dangerous to assume that gender inequalities will automatically prevail once traditional ritual and religious values are erased and replaced by modern ones.

It is vital that there is an appreciation of Nepali women's dynamic and diverse experiences, perceptions, aspirations and achievements, and that these be viewed within the broader political economic framework.

Gender relations are not just rooted in Hindu cultural and ritual sites as claimed, but equally embedded in political-economic structures and institutions, not only in Nepal but across the world. Discourses on Nepali women are created and sustained by an assembly of activists, media, development professionals, and policy makers, all of whom drive exclusively on a widely criticized colonial view.

The prevalence of stereotypical representation of Nepali women is reflective of lack of space for their voices. As such, these voices offer very little space for women's own experiences, perceptions, aspirations and achievements, and Nepali women are automatically considered victims of an unchanging patriarchy, in particular due to dominant Hindu religious and ritual order.

This is most evident in the widespread representation of chhaupadi, dowry, gender and sexual violence, and same-sex love, among others. The creation of a political space that allows women's voices to be heard is key to understanding the diversity of women's lives in Nepal.
Looking back from Sentosa

Away from the Kim-Trump summit, fiction is more accurate than fact in depicting the lives of North Koreans today

Kunda Dixit

The Kim-Trump Singapore summit this week is ‘historic’ in more ways than one. Both sides decided to jive-jive rather than war-war. But it also throw into sharp focus what kind of place North Korea is. And what the United States of America has become.

We don’t have to say much about the Trump regime, just read PUTIN tweets from @realDonaldTrump to see how he has corroded a government of the people, for the people and by the people – a nation that used to welcome the huddled masses yearning to be free.

However, we know much less about life inside the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea since the antimilitarist 46 years ago. How and why did an anachronistic Stalinist state survive to this day? The deep scars of war and America’s role in the suffering allowed the Kim Dynasty to deflect the people’s attention to a permanent outside enemy. The competing interests of Japan, South Korea, China, Russia and the U.S. locked the regime and its geopolitics for decades.

The world doesn’t know much about North Korea beyond impressive military parade, reports of famine and sibling rivalry leading to executions. Aside from a few tantalising glimpses from within the country, there is not much to go on.

When we arrived in Pyongyang on a flight from Beijing five years ago, there was a feeling of déjà vu: the austere terminal looked and felt like the old Kathmandu airport. Since there was no official to receive me, the police took my passport and were about to put me on the same flight back when my hosts showed up: a driver, translator, and minder.

The mandatory first stop for all arriving visitors is to the much-larger-than-life statues of The Great Leader and The Dear Leader, father and grandfather of president-for-life Kim Jong-un. Such bouquet of gladness cost $3. Then it is to the Great Kim’s nativity site. In the car, driving along desolate streets and past empty high rises, we are reminded of the sounds of no carrying local currency, no leaving the hotel unattended, no talking to people on the streets.

The apparatus of control looked similar to the GDR while it was behind the Iron Curtain, but the degree of social engineering and fear in the DPRK today are much more palpable. Even so, just like an one could have predicted the fall of the Berlin Wall, dramatic changes may be afoot on the Korean Peninsula as well.

Wonders never cease: meetings between South Korean President and former human rights activist Moon Jae-in and The Beloved Leader at the DMZ, and then the Sentosa Summit this week with Trump.

Condemned by sanctions, Kim knows his people cannot take it for much longer. He has to be seen to put food on the table and goods in the shops, and has used nuclear blackmail effectively to attain that. But what has it been like for ordinary North Koreans to live for nearly three generations under totalitarianism?

When facts are scarce, one needs to turn to fiction. And a newly-translated collection of seven short stories by an author with the pseudonym Bandi, which was smuggled out of the North is better than most travelogues in portraying the reality of every day life in Korea under the Kim.

The Accumulation: Forbidden Stories from Inside North Korea takes us inside homes and factories where no foreigners are allowed. In page after page, we are taken to rundown communes in the countryside, to pledge loyalty from Pyongyang’s sanitised, sterilised streets where pedestrians in suits are paid to walk all day. Where shoppers and shopkeepers in well-stocked stores in the main squares are probably actors.

Bandi weaves the reality of life in North Korea into tales of families caught up in a surveillance state with spies everywhere, and everyone is watching everyone else. The smallest indiscretion or disrespect can get them convicted for anti-revolutionary crimes and sent off to the gulags. All the seven stories have the same plot: individuals made slave to the state, everyone is an informer unless proven otherwise, even family members, they have to use flattery and favours to keep party sympathists happy – all the while trying to live lives with a modicum of human dignity, scrounging for basic necessities, just trying to survive from day to day keeping their heads down and trying not to be noticed.

It sounds like an Orwellian apocalyptic fiction, but it’s all raw DPRK, without exaggeration and embellishment. The characters are the flipside of jubilant outbursts of smiling revolutionary workers and soldiers seen in Pyongyang (above). A woman is forced to act out her grief at the death of the Great Leader, but is taken to task by a policeman who thinks her sorrow is not convincing enough. Her emotions are suspect because her husband is imprisoned for dissent.

In another story, Pyongyang runs out of flowers for The Great Leader and people are forced to match up to the mountains to gather wild blossoms. A mother tries to stop her baby from crying by scaring it with portraits of Karl Marx and Kim Il-sung outside the window, but the baby gets even more spoiled. The party suspects the family of being anti-revolutionary because they drew the curtains.

The handwritten manuscript was smuggled out of North Korea in 2013, and authenticated as having been written by a North Korean writer for state-owned media. Bandi in Korean means ‘firefly’, and the author says he chose the name of a pebble because he is ‘forced to shine only in a world of darkness’. It is an apt coincidence that ‘Bandi’ in Nepali means ‘prisoner’. ©

Kunda Dixit

The Accumulation: Forbidden Stories from Inside North Korea
By Bandi
Translated by Alexander Chee
Published by Serpent’s Tail, 2017
$12.99-Hardcover
246 pages

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Artivists at the Bank

An eclectic exhibition of Nepali art on the theme of social justice in Washington

In the lobby space surrounding the Preston Auditorium at the World Bank headquarters in Washington DC, a visitor will be surprised to see an exhibition of contemporary art from Nepal. Richings, ceramics, acrylic on canvas and pencil sketches take the viewer into a personalized vision of Nepal.

"Recovering Nepal" is curated by Marina Galvez of the World Bank Art Programme and Mohini Malhotra, a microfinance expert who left the World Bank in 2015 in part to pursue her passion for art. At the exhibit and elsewhere in the US capital, Malhotra is helping give Nepal's artists international exposure, and the World Bank exhibition presents a representative sampling and up-to-date evaluation of contemporary Nepali art.

Mohini Malhotra is the daughter of the well-regarded former government secretary Ram Chandra Malhotra who died in 2001. Her interest in the fine arts was sparked early on due to the portrait of a 'blue lady' that went with the family around the world wherever he was posted with the UN.

"The blue lady was a constant in my life, and led to my interest in the fine arts," explains Malhotra, who found out much later that the portrait was by Bombay-based Laxman Shrestha, who she regards as the foremost among Nepali artists.

Malhotra joined the Bank in 1994 and as she travelled the globe on work, developed an interest in contemporary and folk art. "My special mission has become trying to bring exposure and the market to the high art of women artists of the developing world," she says.

As an independent collector and curator, Malhotra is now expanding her personal collection which she plans to exhibit. She also works to develop the market for women artists from countries like Nepal. In Washington DC where she lives, she volunteers with organisations supporting immigrant and minority youth through the arts.

Explaining her focus on women artists, she says: "It is an attempt to correct an injustice. Only 5% of artists in the great collections of the West happen to be women. Less than 15% of solo art exhibitions are by women. Women artists are creating powerful visual stories, and the world needs to see and hear their stories - that call out social injustice, unequal voice and skewed power."

In bringing Nepali artists to Washington and the World Bank's permanent art collection, Malhotra collaborated with her elementary school friend Sangita Thapa of the Siddhartha Art Gallery in Kathmandu.

Says Malhotra, "I have found that the expression of Nepali artists, their use of cultural metaphors and their commitment to social justice, is unique. For an art world that is relatively small, the contemporary artists of Nepal are of high caliber. Nepali artists are activists, and played a large role in the earthquake recovery efforts, bringing art as therapy to children and adults in destroyed villages and in makeshift camps across Kathmandu," she adds.

CANVASSING: Mohini Malhotra, who helped curate the "Recovering Nepal" exhibition at the World Bank in Washington DC, says her mission is to bring exposure and the market to women artists from the developing world.

In "Recovering Nepal," Malhotra values the traditional themes of Pascha Buddha renditions with modern interpretations by Seema Sharma Shrestha, Surekha Darzehani's fresh depictions of what it means to be a young woman in modern Nepal, and Ragini Upadhaye's satirical take on contemporary themes. Other works are by Dil Man Gurung, Pushpa Shrestha, Nepal Kalyan Singh and Sundar Lams. The "Recovering Nepal" exhibition was organized in response to the 2015 earthquake, and has led to a significant addition of Nepali art to the World Bank Art Collection.

Kanak Mani Dixit in Washington DC
CRYING WOLF

Rather than a threat, the Himalayan Wolf may be the saviour of a fragile ecosystem

Ryan Davy

For two months of trekking across the remote mountainous region of Northern Nepal in search of the elusive Himalayan Wolf, I was beginning to feel like I was chasing ghosts. But one cold morning, there they were on the ridge above me (pictures). I was so happy I was crying. This is what I had waited so long for, and I quickly took pictures and video of the male wolf howling in the distance. I howled back, trying to talk to him. (Video online). Later, he was joined by a female and an adolescent on the slope.

Himalayan Wolf sightings are rare. Zoologists say they are a distinct species from the smaller Grey Wolves found in North America and Europe. Indeed, they were different—wolves I had tracked in North America which had become somewhat accustomed to tourists along the trails, and were easier to follow.

Himalayan Wolves are indigenous to Tibet and seem to migrate across the border to Nepal, attracted by the abundant yak herds on this side. During my search, there wasn’t one slope without the clanging of yak bells.

The wolves conduct yak attacks and are in frequent conflict with humans. Perhaps this is nature’s way of protecting the slopes from overgrazing, which leads to landslides and loss of topsoil.

The wolves of Nepal are much more mysterious than elsewhere, and probably the least understood carnivores. Villagers whisper the word “wolf” (Jwawa in Nepali, Shangri in Tibetan) with awe and fear, as if the animal would take offence at being mentioned.

NepalGazette often referred to my question about wolves with a slight smirk. “Go higher up,” they would say vaguely, pointing to the slopes. These shadowy animals which stalk the perimeter

The wellbeing of the

A Kamali river patrol shows how difficult it is to balance livelihoods with nature protection

Mikel Dunham
in Bardiya

The seven men armed patrol in two jeeps drove along a dusty track high above the Karnali River following the southern flank of the Siwalik Hills. The swift-flowing waters of this glacier fed river was blue-green in the early morning light. Lt. Shikhar Rayamajhi of the Shree Dal Battalion led this river anti-poaching patrol. The gear was unloaded in the buffer zone near the Bardiya National Park boundary. The rubber dinghy was inflated on a sandy beach as heroes watched from a distance.

Breathing with paddles and firearms, the raft was a tight fit for eight men as it floated hardly downstream. The tranquility was misleading: a stretch of rapids awaited us.

Lt. Rayamajhi explained that the guardianship of buffer zones is almost as crucial as protecting the interior of the parks. Oozing by the country’s Buffer Zone Management Committees, the Nepal Army acts as its boots on the ground steward. Cooperation from local villagers is vital. Half the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation’s revenue comes from tourism, and some of this is distributed to buffer zone communities, so that villagers are not forced to enter the national parks to extract natural resources.

The primary purpose of the Army’s raft patrol is to scout for clues of illegal fishing. Bunched-up nets hidden among riverbank boulders were one give-away. When the locals cast the nets, they not only capture golden mahseer (carp) and catfish, they may also catch endangered aquatic species. Top on that list is the Ganges River Dolphin.

Once endemic to Nepal, India and Bangladesh, the population of the fresh water aquatic mammal has dwindled to fewer than 2,000 in the wild, of which fewer than 100 dolphins still swim Nepal’s rivers.

Much of the danger to the dolphin is from fishing gear, poaching for dolphin oil, damming of rivers, and pollution. The Karnali is Nepal’s longest river and the only significant one that has not yet
of livestock enclosures in search of a prey have a reputation that precedes them. They are seldom seen, except by their unfortunate victims.

In summer, yaks in Nepal roam the high slopes, sharing territory with predators like snow leopards and wolves.

I came across a carcass of a half-eaten yak that lay submerged in a stream. It was clear the wolves ambushed it during the herd’s routine afternoon water step. The wolf packs take no survivors.

Nature knows its limits, but humans do not. The limits are often only discovered when wildlife clash violently with humans, and the retaliation is in proportion to the damage done.

Villagers in Nepal are compensated for snow leopard attacks, but not for wolf attacks. Three cubs were smoked and killed in their caves in Dolpa by yak herders two years ago.

Such conflict between wolves and humans is escalating along Nepal’s northern border. The yak’s importance as livestock and as pack animals for tourism means there is demand for them despite the spread of roads. The bigger herds attract wolves from across the border.

It is not the wolf’s fault that it is a carnivore, nor the yak’s that it is a herbivore. It is human activity that has created a need for nature to compensate for the over-abundance of yaks.

If yak numbers are limited, perhaps the predators would then reassert their homeland. If villagers have a stake in conservation, maybe they will not exterminate predators.

Have the wolves been summoned by nature to take care of the problem of yak overpopulation?

If so, the wolf may not be the villain, but the savior of a fragile Himalayan ecosystem.

Ryan Davis is a South African filmmaker who began his wildlife career at 17 in an anti-poaching unit. After a controversial illegal attempt to climb Mt. Everest last year, he is making another bid to help raise conservation in Nepal.

HERD MENTALITY
**EVENTS**

**Workshop on Vitamin D**
A call out for all parents and guardians to participate in the workshop by Yagoda Lily where they will elaborate on the importance of Vitamin D for children.
16 June, 2:30-4:30 pm, Kids Care, Jomwattana
9841742147

**International Yoga Day**
Level 1 of Sri Sri with Gurusatchar Sri Raul Shankar and celebration of International Day of Yoga on the final day.
13-17 June, 6-7 am, Art Uang, Shankdulam Centre, (01) 5420260

A talk on Goddess Sasthanvi
Pastika Sasthanvi, a spiritualist in Nepal goddess Sasthanvi and its traditional beliefs to understand its role in the composition of Nepal Hindu identity and practice, given to a talk on Gender, Power, Place, and the body in the xenography of the Goddess Sasthanvi.
15 June, 3pm onwards, Badikot Commission Auditorium, (01) 4446780

**Bake and taste**
Learn how to make the Le melait à la confiture, a special Genoise rolled cake filled with black currant jam.
16 June, 10:30-11:00am, Alliance Française Kathmandu, Pulchowk, R2750 (students)/F2000 (non-students).
(01) 5888921

**Property expo**
7th edition of the NZCU Property Expo has about 120 exhibitors and outdoors housing related exhibitors, expecting to attract more than 60,000 housing related business visitors and home buyers.
13-15 June, 10am onwards, Bhaktapur Development Exhibition Hall, (01) 5256841

**Open mic comedy**
A weekly dose of free comedy brought to you by the Comedy Circle.
20 June, 6pm onwards, Samast Atmananda, Khopal, (02) 9868079

**The Storytellers**
Session 19 of The Storytellers with Shinri R, Drisa, Baspati, Pramala Navina and Neha Harshini.
20 June, 5:30pm onwards, 25 Hours, Tangledwood, 4200 promo code RS62 (door pay).
(02) 9877771770

**Tim Gohier’s venture talk**
A venture talk with Tim Gohier, a private equity executive with a background in energy and technology, exploring high potential industries and the investment landscape of Nepal.
21 June, 4:30-5pm, Nepal Tourism Board Kathmandu, Pulchowk, (00) 5546879

**Kta Haru**
A local band performing and promoting original music with no genre limitations. Pramana Shrestha, Milan Neupane and Prasang Thapa in the mix.
15 June, 4-6pm, Kta Haru Coffee, Gyawal Mandal, Jomwattana
9841737752

**Kanta Dab Dab**
A well-meaned trio band with star, percussion and bass playing some unique contemporary compositions, creating a soulful fusion, before heading for their exclusive lunch tour.
16 June, 11-1pm, Shino Lounge and Bar, Thamel.
(01) 4011194

**Dus Din Dilli Ke**
Savouring the rich culinary heritage of Delhi, Dus Din Dilli Ke represents 10 days of Upsam’s animated burst of North Indian street food on review page 10.
16 June, 6-10pm, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, Bodhnath.
(882) 367-3687 (including taxes).
(01) 4777123

**Namaste Eid**
The exuberant culture of Muslim Community will be showcased in an Eid celebration. Come together with friends and family to participate in the festivities that will feature Halal food stalls, clothes designed by Muslim tailors, folk and cultural performances, and many more.
16 June, 7pm, cabinet Park, Pulchowk.
(01) 5256841

**Improv theatre workshop**
A 7-day workshop by Minoo Rehman, a Pakistani improv theatre practitioner. Participants of the workshop will give two improv theatre performances in Katha Theatre.
17-23 June, 7:30am, international Centre for Social Theatre Nepal, Bhaktapur Durbar Satta.
(01) 4804577

**The Dwarka’s Hotel**
Enjoy Friday dinner with a special Nepal beer and drinks at the hotel bar with live concertstations.
Every Friday, 6:30pm onwards, The Dwarka’s Hotel Kathmandu, Basantapur, (01) 4515010 (including taxes). For reservations: (01) 4474900

**Gangnam Galbi Barbeque**
Enjoy World Cup games with Korean barbecue, grill and rich food in a k a galbi, raised in charcoal at high heat to add more savouriness, flavor and creamy sauce to the meat.
16-21 June, Gyawal Mandal, (01) 4447470

**Kings Lounge**
World Cup heaven at Kings lounge is singing, a highly recommended place to enjoy the games with friends and family with amazing food, drinks and superb sound.
Drode Mang, (01) 4267770

**Reef Restaurant and Lounge**
Music, lucky draw, surprise gifts, special cocktails and much more to watch the World Cup games with.
Thamel.
(01) 4011253

**Marta del Grandi**
A sides performance by Marta to help raise fund for an upcoming art, music and fashion festival that will showcase works of multiple emerging and renowned street artists from Nepal.
16 June, 7-9pm, Base Camp, Outdoor lifestyle, Jomwattana.
(02) 9841757977

**Pink Floyd tribute**
On international Music Day, the finest musicians of Kathmandu will be delivering a special tribute to the most decorated psychedelic band in history, Pink Floyd.
16 June, Details on.
21 June, 7pm onwards, Club Nepaliy, Doctor Ming, hippy bar.

**DJ Woody**
Live flute and saxophone – electro lounge music with DJ Woody from New Zealand.
15 June, 6-10pm, Matchwork, Jostor Motel Restaurante.
(01) 4836877

**Movie Garden**
Watch the World Cup games in the garden with a fully stocked bar, a kitchen serving pizza all night, and the perfect seating overlooking Fewa Lake.
North Avenue, (01) 4807208

**Mount Kailash Resort**
Big screen presidencies of all the World Cup games with special offer on food and beverages, and the best seats minutes away from the Lake.
Palan, (01) 4857878

**Hotel Yuksung**
A new hotel built with Dutch te a tu, birds from Makka era, and Bhukawak’s wooden coils. Add a local and medicinal touch to your stay with unlimited buffalo dinners at the hotel, that also screens world cup games.
Thamel.
(01) 4836301/390 (rooms), (01) 4837556

**Dhokaiama**
Large projector and the TV at the bar will capture the excitement of the games for you, with awesome food and drinks.
Patan Dhike, (01) 5522113

**Ganesha**
A sequel to the 2005 film The Indelible, Incredible 2 picks up the story from where it ended in the first movie.
With a sudden change of events, Shangri is offered a job that requires him to head her family’s new business to put life together back on track.
Madhav Bandhu is tasked to stay at home and take care of the kids Golu, Vask and Jeev.
The movie, written and directed by Bird Bird, starring Craig T. Nelson, Holly Hunter, Sarah Vowell, and Samuel L. Jackson, has received praises for its animation and humour.

**Stinker Triangle**
Witness this year’s World Cup unfurled in a pub like experience. The officially Peri Peri wings or triple decker feast or any item from their Eurasian menu make a great combo.
Maligya Masala Kitchens, Maligya, (01) 4701700

**Dhokaiama**
Dhokaiama
Large projector and the TV at the bar will capture the excitement of the games for you, with awesome food and drinks.
Patan Dhike, (01) 5522113

**KATHMANDU, 8 – 14 June**

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There was smoke on Monday morning when for the first time in four years, Nepal Department of Air pollution monitoring station at Dharahara St tower was on the green ‘normal’ status. But this time we are hoping that the air pollution meter will stay low as we will see a lot more trees and water bodies in the green zone. The few haze readings for the 1250 people in the city is small but better than the previous readings. But let us hope that it will hold steady in the said period.

A pump invented by a young Nepali engineer has shown it can transform Nepal's farms

Installed a subsidised Barsha Pump, he made more than Rs3 million in profit from his farm. The pump brings up 12,000 litres of water a day from the Tara Kosi. The flats along the Tara Kosi that used to be fallow in the dry season are now lush green all year round.

“It all started with this pump, this is the key to my success,” said Shrestha.

In Sindhu district, Arjun Kumar Khatiwada from the village of Ratmane was practicing subsistence rain-fed agriculture. Now, he is lifting water from Sun Kosi River, 14m below his farm, with a Barsha Pump.

“I didn’t believe a pump could lift water without electricity until I saw one myself, our lives are transformed,” he says.

Barsha Pumps are now bringing this miracle to 12 countries including Indonesia, Spain, Turkey and Zambia. Thapa keeps modifying the design with feedback from farmers.

Lifting livelihoods by lifting water

While growing up in Lele village in southern Lalitpur, Pratap Thapa watched his parents plant maize on their terrace farm and wait for the rains. He often wondered how much of their drudgery could be reduced if water could be brought up from a nearby river.

Thapa went on to study engineering at Delft University in The Netherlands, where he obsessed about how to solve the problem of irrigation for his family in the mountains of Nepal to a cheap and sustainable way.

With his Dutch classmates, he invented a unique pump that derived its energy from the kinetic energy of the flow of water, and used it to pump water up. Like all breakthroughs, it was the sheer simplicity of the technology that made it so applicable.

Called Barsha Pump (after the Nepali word for rain) Thapa’s invention won him several awards, including the Phillips Innovation Award and Borse Point Award. This was followed by the registration of the company alma in the Netherlands in 2013 to promote the pumps.

It quickly caught on in Europe, but despite success there, Thapa had designed it with Nepal in mind. So, six years ago he brought a couple of prototypes and successfully tested them to irrigate nearly 130 hectares of farms above the Indrawati, Trisuli and Tara Kosi rivers.

“It’s ironic that almost two-thirds of Nepal’s farms depend on the rains when we are a country of 6,600 rivers,” says Thapa (pictured, below) who studied industrial engineering in India and did his Masters at the Institute of Engineering in Lalitpur.

Today, 331 Barsha Pumps have been deployed across 30 districts with subsidies to farmers from the government’s Agriculture Engineering Directorate, District Agriculture Development Office, and international agencies. Depending on capacity, the pump costs between Rs150,000 - 280,000.

The beauty of the Barsha Pump is that it uses the natural flow of water and doesn’t need fuel. Therefore it does not emit greenhouse gases, and has zero operating cost.

The pump has a special spiral pipe where the water helps compress the air, which in turn lifts water up to a maximum height of 20m or a distance of 3km.

Yuvraj Shrestha owns a one-hectare farm on a flat above the Tara Kosi River in Ramshap, and used to make Rs560,000 a year selling vegetables. His main problem was dependance on the rains, even though a glacier-fed river flowed just below the farm. But in the year after he

Sabina Devkota in Dolakha

photo marun khadka

RESCUE FROM RAINS

NATION

11
A WRINKLE IN TIME

It could not have been any fier for Ava DuVernay to successfully adapt Madeleine L’Engle’s beloved 1962 classic into a film. When it came out in theatres this year, children flocked to see this beloved story rendered on film. Determined to see what the fuss was all about, I read the book before I watched the movie. Finally understanding the depth of this special, fantastical, science-based tale about a young family who love each other so fiercely that they transcend the natural laws of physics.

The story begins with the portrayal of a perfect family. Not the boring kind we see onscreen sitting down for dinner together every night and bickering amidst lovingly, but the kind that deal with everything difficult with actual explanations, and above all, humour. Meg Murray (Storm Reid) is the eldest daughter of a neuroscientist (Chris Pine) and Dr. Murray (Gugu Mbatha-Raw). While experimenting with travelling across the universes, Alex Murry disappears one fine day, when his son Charles Wallace is but an infant. With a strong intellect of his own, the cute precocious child Meg transforms into the teenage Meg over the four years that her father has been gone, and begins to fade into an oblivion of grief and resentment—a combination that is disastrous in a budding teenager. Her only real consolation is her six-year-old brother Charles Wallace (Deric McCabe), a prodigy who speaks in full sentences, has some unanny precognitive abilities, and is essentially the family’s protector.

Their mother, Mrs. Murry, puts away the brave face for her children, and Meg buries her teenage self into a quagmire of despondency. Charles Wallace keeps everyone going with his milk, deep empathy, and sandwich making abilities. When he appears one stormy night with an eccentric, bubbly, magical woman named Mrs. Which (played with such fun by Reese Witherspoon), it marks the beginning of the children’s journey to find their father, hand in hand with Mrs Which, Mrs Who (Mindy Kaling), Mrs Who (Cynthia Addai-Robinson), and a young boy named Calvin O’Keefe (Levi Miller) who sees Meg for who she truly is: a bright, lovely, soul.

The children’s journey in space, dreamlike unattainable, is depicted and rendered quite beautifully through DuVernay’s keen eyes, a feat that everyone could have pulled off considering the level of abstract imagery in the original content. These visuals, together with the ensemble cast that work so well together, make for a rather extraordinary viewing experience, and a satisfying one for anyone who fell in love with the book.

Ava DuVernay is the first black woman to direct a Hollywood movie with a budget of over $100 million, and she brings her unmistakable stamp to a film where the characters would otherwise most probably have been cast as white by default. Instead, by bringing in actors of many colours (Mindy Kaling, Oprah Winfrey, Storm Reid, Gugu Mbatha-Raw, and Deric McCabe), DuVernay lends a completeness to an already universal story about the power of love. A Wrinkle in Time is a must-see for your children, but also for yourselves. Of course, as always, you must read L’Engle’s enchanting books first! A Wrinkle in Time is only the first of a quintet, and I myself can’t wait to dive into the remaining four books.

MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

Tom, Dick and Hari

Hari, a name in the same league as Ram, Suman or Sita in terms of originality, is nevertheless a commendably unique character. It is ironic that the writers, directors and producers in Nepal’s film industry these days churn every other character film, for this audience to discover it is the same old formula. And blonde one of that.

Hari is a film about a farmer who is selfless to a fault. Hari is a manager at a cooperative in Kathmandu with three other employees. Even though he is their boss, he doesn’t talk with them in a condescending manner, and a little wounded up, he lives with his mother and follows her word to the tee.

He doesn’t drink alcohol, and doesn’t eat anything with onion, garlic or meat in it. He abstains from every sample on his way to work and back, and is supersitious. One day, a bird shits on him. That’s when the story picks momentum. Was it a jinxing crow? Was it a good luck, or an omen? Good and bad things happen alternatively in Hari, but we cannot be sure.

That is the character-driven drama. Given the plot lines of Nepali cinema, Hari is a revolution—sweeping perfectly around its central character. It is a story generated by the central character: Hari, the great divide of what he is and what he wants; deep within himself. It is an existential film and every character, either pushes or pulls this central thread. There are no extraneous characters, scenes, or dialogues.

The search for a profound and memorable cinematic experience in Nepali means that anything that comes close will demand great attention. And perhaps it is not a perfect film, but it features an excellent use of cinematic tools. Its exquisit cinematography and minimalist art direction bring with purpose. Full credit to director of Photography Chhade Bhandari, and the superb acting of the inimitable Bipin Karki, who continues to challenge every other actor in the industry to do better.

The opening, however, is supposed to leave the audience with some questions. It is flat. For a film as intricately crafted as this one, the need to maneuver into a needlessly convoluted plot is disappointing.

But eventually the viewer can forgive and forget. There are so many moments in the film that stand out and will be remembered for years. Hari is an engaging, and often hilarious movie that manages to subvert some well-known tropes of good filmmaking. No dream sequences, they say Hari is full of them. Show, don’t tell? Hari narrates almost the entirety of this story. Be careful with that fourth wall! Hari breaks it like a bone.

And yet, it comes out on the other side as a great film. It is somewhat that more than likely we won’t be seeing anything like this in Nepali cinema for a long time. Hari is a highly recommended movie, which you don’t want to miss.

PILLAR OF NATION: Asian Paints announced the winners of this year’s Architecture Students Design Competition in Kathmandu on Sunday. Neeraj Maharjan from Kathmandu Engineering College was chosen the winner.
Khumbu wants its share

Rabia Giri in Khumjung, Himal Khabarpatra 3-10 June

Few places even in the Nepal Himalayas have such a scenic setting as Khumjung, the remote village nestled in a gently sleeping valley in the lap of the holy peak of Khumbila, and backed by some of the highest mountains in the world.

You might ask yourself: why did I not come here before? Stand at any point in this clean town of stone homes and cemeteries, and you will have a 360 degree view of the surrounding peaks: Thamserku, Ama Dablam, Lhotse, Chomolungma, Kongde.

The local people are friendly and gracious, and the town is spurred the throats of trekkers and mountaineers on the Namche-Tengboche trail. There is a well-equipped hospital and school established by Edmund Hillary 60 years ago.

But the beauty and contentment belies the grievances of the local people against the government in Kathmandu. Despite the Khumbu having a much higher standard of living than the national average, people here have always felt neglected by the state. Now, even federalism has failed to satisfy their demand for more say.

Tenzing Tashi Sherpa of Khumjung says: “All that the government cares about is to make revenue from the mountains, not the people who live in the mountains.”

Sherpa, who previously served as President of Khumjung Buffer Zone Committee of Sagarmatha National Park, adds: “The tourism budget allocated for Khumbu region is gobbled up by local politicians in the district headquarters – it does not trickle up to Khumjung.”

In 2019, the government decided to earmark at least 30% of tourism revenue for local people. The government collects about Rs350 million annually from Everest McGuery fees alone, and an additional Rs80 million from other mountains of the Khumbu region.

Ang Tsering Sherpa, co-President of Nepal Mountain Summit Association (NMA), who is from Khumjung, says: “If mountain revenue had been distributed fairly, our village would have been much more developed by now.”

Khumjung may be a victim of its own progress. Government authorities openly admit that Khumjung does not deserve a 30% share tourism revenue because it is already benefiting from Hillary’s projects.

Pradip Sapkota, Chief of Sola Khumbu District Coordination Committee, says: “Villages like Khumjung may not get 30% of the revenue because other underdeveloped villages need more tourism budget.”

After the three tiers of elections last year, National Natural Resources and Forest Commission has proposed allocating 90% of the revenue to the Centre and 25% each to provincial and local governments. But people in Khumjung are suspicious, and wonder if they will get even 25%.

Khumjung is reputed as a village of mountaineers including Ang Rita Sherpa who climbed the Everest without oxygen seven times, Appa Sherpa and Phurba Tashi Sherpa both climbed the Everest 21 times. Their world record for most summits was broken by Kami Rita Sherpa, who reached the top of the world a record 22nd time, this season. All these legendary Sherpas are from Khumjung, but this feudal village of mountaineers is no longer satisfied with just glory. Ngim Dorje Sherpa, who was elected Khumjung village council chair last year, says: “We need what we deserve, and I think they will not listen to us unless we make a real loud noise.”
From rebels to rulers

The leaders of Province 2 fought for autonomy, now they have to deliver

Om Astha Rai in Janakpur

Despite Yadav could not go home for months. He would spend the whole day shouting anti-Kathmandu slogans, burning tyres on the streets of Birgunj and clashing with police. As night fell, he was at the barricades on the Koshi border, burning cargo trucks from crossing into Nepal.

Like thousands of other Madhes youth alienated by mainstream parties and the new constitution, Yadav was a rebel during the 2015 agitation. Today, at age 29, he is one of the secretaries of Province 2 Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut, and at the centre of provincial power at the newly-rebuilt building of Janakpur Cigarette Factory built by the Soviet Union 50 years ago (picture attached).

The Constitution, however flawed, has given the Madhesi people almost what they fought for an autonomous province. They have risen up against Kathmandu’s perceived hegemonic thrust in the past decade, and finally they have a chance to fix things themselves.

However, Yadav thinks he is still a rebel, despite having free access to the corridors of power of Province 2. “My role has changed, but my core responsibility has not. It is still to serve the Madhesi people,” he says.

Yadav essentially personifies Province 2. The province government may rule the mid-eastern Terai, but it still struggles against Kathmandu for more autonomy. Last month, when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Janakpur, Chief Minister Raut raised hackles in the national capital by complaining about Constitutional amendments, and Kathmandu’s continued reluctance to grant them.

Raut told Nepal Times in an interview in Janakpur last week: “I cannot forget what the people of the Madhes fought for just because I am now Chief Minister.” (Overleaf)

Province 2 has been ground zero in the battle for federalism. After signing a peace accord in November 2006, the Maoists did not show much interest in the federalism they fought a war for. But the Madhesi people did, and they protested until the government agreed to institutionalise federalism through the Interim Constitution in 2007. In 2012, the mainstream parties wanted to pass the new Constitution without determining the number and boundaries of provinces. As a result, protests broke throughout the southern plains, and more than 50 people were killed in violent clashes. Mainstream parties were eventually forced to carve out provincial boundaries before the promulgation of the Constitution.

The Madhesi-based parties were still not satisfied, and they took part last year’s elections hoping to push for Constitutional amendments at a later date. After two Madhesi-based parties formed a coalition government in Province 2, Dipendra Jha, a lawyer critical of the Constitution, left Kathmandu and settled down in Janakpur as Chief Attorney.

He says: “I was not lured by a top government post, but by the prospect of helping make federalism work. We now have a chance to deliver what we fought for on the streets with our own bureaucracy, police, and autonomy.”

Indeed, Chief Minister Raut says that the failure of federalism in Province 2 could be used as an excuse by status quists in Kathmandu to cut back on regional autonomy. So he is aiming for rapid economic transformation of Province 2, and its development into Nepal’s #1 province.

Janakpur-based analyst Surendra Lahiri says people in the Madhes care deeply about federalism, and want to make it work because they have suffered from Kathmandu’s neglect.

“If federalism fails here, it will fail in the whole country,” he says.

The capital of Province 2 was cleaned up for the Modi visit, but is now dusty and scruffy again. A $10 million USAID project does roads in expanding major roads and builds a drainage system. Pavements of houses are being bulldozed in the core city, and roads are dug up every 10 days. But the local people are patient, and hope the crust of the Madh is in it will get a much-needed facelift when the project is completed in 2020.

The railway service from Janakpur to Kaychangar in India will resume next year, linking Nepal to India’s vast rail network. This 20km narrow gauge railroad track is being upgraded to broad-gauge, and it will be extended 100km north to Bardia in the next phase.

Province 2 will have better connectivity with the rest of the world when the proposed Kathmandu-Dhading Railway, Kathmandu-Tansen Expressway, the East-West Electric Railway and Nijgad Airport are built. Chief Minister Raut says Province 2 can easily boast other provinces by tapping into its stronger natural resources, agricultural revived, cultivating and investing in health and education.

But some are skeptical. Bhojendra Jha, a Janakpur-based analyst, says the provincial government has already failed to improve governance and oppose development. He says sarcastically: “If you believe PM KP Gill will turn Nepal into a Singapore in five years, then you can also believe Chief Minister Raut will turn Province 2 into the number one province.”

50% for Madhesi women

The government of Province 2 has identified gender inequality as the root cause of the region’s problems.

Chief Attorney Dipendra Jha puts it this way: “Province 2 is poor and backward because half of its population stays home. If they come out, our human resources will simply double.”

Unveiling its first policies and programs last week, the Province 2 government vowed to allocate half the seats in the state police force to women. Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut has publicly and repeatedly expressed a commitment to allocate 50% seats to women in all state-level structures.

Raut says: “When Madhesi women wear police uniforms and carry guns, it will raise their confidence. It will also help fight drug, dowry, rape and violence against women.”

The Province 2 government is also developing a mobile app that Madhesi women can use to alert police about rape and domestic violence. “I don’t know if this is going to help,” a woman veteran of domestic violence told us. “If it does help, I will have to shave my head to not off the police alarm.

At a time when the federal government has given just 35% seats to women, and the ruling Nepal Communism Party (NCP) does not even have 33% women in its politics and central committee, the 50% presence of women in Province 2 police would be revolutionary. It is happening.

The Province 2 government has also launched a “Save Our Daughters, Educate Our Daughters” campaign to reduce teenage pregnancy and increase investment in girls’ education. It has introduced a scheme to provide insurance for every Dalit girl child.

Critics say Chief Minister Raut has just copied a federal Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s “Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao” campaign, but women’s rights activists have no problems with the imitation.

Suchi Kama, a Madh art promoter in Janakpur, says: “Educating a son will help one household, but educating a daughter will benefit at least two households.”

nepaltimes.com

WORK IN PROGRESS: Workers busy for the Janakpur-Nagarpal Railway connecting Province 2 with India (right). Dipak Yadav at the forefront of street protests during the Mothers Movement in 2015 (inset, left) and now at the office of the Chief Minister of Province 2 in Janakpur.
“Province 2 wants to be the #1 Province”

Nepali Times: Where do you see Province 2 in the next five years?
Laibabu Raut: Province 2 may lag behind the other six provinces in several socio-economic indicators, but it has the potential to emerge as Nepal’s number one province. We have enough fertile land to feed the entire country. And we are also blessed with geographical advantages which other hill provinces lack.Nilupel Airport, Kathmandu-Tanahun fast-track highway, and several railway projects will complement our growth and prosperity.

What are your priorities?
I have given priority to reviving agriculture. Encouraging young men to cultivate their lands rather than migrating to the Gulf will be key to transforming Province 2. This will be possible if we can provide them with irrigation, fertilizer, and subsidy. I have also given priority to good governance, health, education and tourism.

What obstacles do you foresee?
We did not have laws, by-laws and a provincial structure to hit the ground running. We are now in the process of passing our own laws and creating our own structure. There is still a reluctance to devolve power to the provinces.

How will your girls’ education program help?
Social ills like caste-based discrimination, dowry and violence against women plague the entire country, but they are more rampant in Province 2. These problems will intensify in a society where female literacy rate is low. In the Madhus, daughters are still deemed to be a burden to their parents, which is why female foeticide is so rampant. Saving daughters will have a multi-dimensional impact.
GOOOOOOOOOL!

After staying away watching the World Cup opening ceremony, the Asi is writing this column with first pride. So, I would appreciate if you didn’t open the curtains. After cricket, football is the most being game on Earth. It is actually derived from an ancient Aryan sport in which men kicked around the de-sexualized head of the enemy god in a blood-soaked ritual. It has been downhill ever since in terms of excitement.

It does not help that the matches all happen in the wee hours, so called in Hindi, because that is when most boys in boarding school wet their beds. In contrast, the hockey combines 60-pointing and good fighting without players involved in a high-speed chase. American football is another essential sport that the boys love to bits because it is a Greek-Roman-Western-Society game with multiple controversies playing cost.

Essentially, football (or “soccer” to the West out there) involves 22 men in Mohawk, tatters, or blue half-kicking each other in their goals for 90 minutes without minding; at the end of which they continue to pay penalties or for another 30 minutes, and after that each side gets the target practice shots. They then strip it full of 3-ball on people and exchange jerseys.

How to make football more exciting?

That question has been asked since humankind even since the collapse of the Aryan empire. The Asi has a few humble suggestions.

1. Move goalposts. Increase goal width to 2m from the present 6m. There we can have scores like Century 73 - Argentina 31.
2. Allow offside. When a passer at enemy god post waiting for a long pass.
3. Don’t level the playing field, like it is at 15 to allow one side to run downhill to score more goal, so more to gain can be said.
4. Allow hands. Let’s use our god-given hands, let players grab the ball and run with it.
5. Permit Fouls. King Muir, Thai and Nepalese referees can bring down foul team members, and the referee too if he doesn’t behave himself.
6. Allow diving. Players who fall flat should not be given yellow cards anymore, they should be awarded Oscars in the Best Supporting Role Category.
7. No hands on catches. Defenders setting up a wall to face a free kick at the penalty area will no longer be allowed to protect their own jewels. It’s a disgusting habit.
8. Why only one ball? Multiple balls in the field will make games much more unpredictable and exciting.
9. Why round balls? Americans took a dietary game, and changed the shape of the ball to resemble a near-earth asteroid so it bounce more easily. And they have so much more fun.
10. Increase number of players. Each team must frenziedly have 14 players, with a 5-ball quota for frescoes. All members of winning team must mandatory take off jerseys.