That sinking feeling

When PM KP Oli assumed office in February, he was blessed with almost everything he would need to deliver on his promise of rapid economic growth: he swiftly cemented his grip on power by unifying his UML party with the Mestis, inducting one of the two Madhesi parties into government, restoring ties with India and winning Chinese support for large infrastructure projects. But the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) government now seems to be sinking into a quagmire, like the submerged streets of Bhaktapur on Thursday (picture, above). His own ministers, especially ex-Maoist ones, are making things worse for the prime minister. PM-in-waiting Pushpa Kamal Dahal keeps a low profile, letting Oli strive in his own gravy as his ex-Maoist ministers mishandle hunger strikes.

As other political problems fester, hope is fading that Oli can revitalize economic growth. The private sector was cautiously optimistic about a Communist government, now it is nervous. Shukhar Golecha of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), told us: "The way this government is dealing with the private sector is very frustrating." Home Minister Ram Bahadur Thapa is on a selective crackdown. He ordered the arrest of four sugar mill owners for not paying farmers. He detained contractors for not completing construction in time, and NCP co-Chair Dahal’s landlord Sherada Adhikari enjoys impunity even though his firm is reportedly responsible for massive delays in high profile projects.

When a delegation of businessmen protested the high-handedness, ex-Maoist Industry Minister Matrika Yadav warned: “Be careful. This is a people’s government. It is not for businesses.” Finance Minister Yuba Rai Khatiwada, the architect of Oli’s economic vision, is raising taxes, but doing little to win the private sector’s confidence on investment. Ex-banker Anil Bhattarai says, “The hope that the investment climate would improve is fading fast, and this government is squandering a golden chance to set things right.”

RED RICE EDITORIAL PAGE 2

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REDD RICE

They say a picture speaks a thousand words. This one spoke billions—of rupees.

A lavish lunch is laid out with curry, dal and a variety of nutritious rice from Jumla. Turning it all are Prime Minister K P Oli and Prime Minister-in-waiting Pushpa Kamal Dahal. The third meal is their host business tycoon Drup Prasto, in whose house this picture was taken earlier this year.

The UML-Maoist alliance was in government, but negotiations on party unity had stalled. Prasto was mediating; this was the lunch meeting in which the deal was finally struck: the two would take turns leading the new party, and they agreed on dividing up positions for their loyalists.

The photograph went viral this week because it is symbolic of our times. Here is Drup who, as owner of the BHC Hospital in Jumla, is a powerful figure in the medical-industrial complex. He had a lot to gain from the unity of the two parties.

The trio is seen feasting on a multi-course lunch while today 1,000 km away in western Nepal, campaigning politicians CDP KC is on the 14th day of his fast-to-death to pressure the government on medical education reform.

The rise they are setting in the photo is the Medicine from Jumla, which is the highest paddi growing region in the world. The excess rice is well known for its nutritious value, but ironically it is in Jumla itself that KC is on his hunger strike to draw attention to the lack of health facilities in remote Nepal.

As the photograph was shared, public anger at the food and rice crisis was palpable—KC’s sacrifice and single-minded pursuit of equitable and affordable health services in this country has a lot of support from citizens fed up with shoddy hospital and expensive private care.

This is KC’s 185 day hunger strike. After previous ones he had pressed government for his main demands: stop corruption in universities according to affiliation to private medical colleges, restrict universitie to maximum five affiliations, limit the number of new private medical colleges in Kathmandu Valley to ten. This time, KC added one more demand: allow the Kamal Health Science Academy in Jumla itself to conduct MBBS courses.

Those who do not understand just how deep the rot is may not comprehend why anyone should be opposed to more medical colleges. Although there are more doctors in Nepal today than 20 years ago, the population has also increased in that period. Nepal’s doctors to population ratio is one of the lowest in the world. 2 physicians for every 10,000 people.

However, in a country so chronically mismanaged for so long, there are only a few areas where one can strike it rich quickly. Which is why smuggling and human trafficking is becoming a profitable shadowed racket. Extradition is a profession, and the practice of doling out protection money is so endemic most companies actually set aside a budget line for it.

But for the most lucrative way to make a fast buck is in education. An entrance test is a formality for students whose parents can afford a ‘donation’ of $500 million, and there is no shortage of those. This sets off a vicious circle where after graduation, new doctors seek immortality to recoup their investment by over-charging and over-prescribing, making treatment unaffordable.

They say a picture speaks a thousand words. This one spoke billions—of rupees.

It is no surprise that some politicians have gone public with the medical mafia, just as they also protect the hospital’s extraordinary representatives and the real estate barons. Besides Prasto who owns BHC Hospital, Ramendra Pandey and other former UML politicians have invested in the Man Mohan Memorial and the Kathmandu National Hospitals, NFC financier Upendra Mahato (whose brother-in-law is Transport and Infrastructure Minister Raghav Jhakar) also wants affiliation for another hospital in Kathmandu.

KC’s hunger strike is a direct challenge to KP, who wants to rank the Mahendra Education Bill through Parliament by deleting previously included clauses on the affiliation of new medical colleges in Kathmandu Valley — recommendations made by the Kedar Mahatmi commission. KC’s campaign is trying to break the cycle of commercialisation by ensuring affordable, accessible and quality health care in Nepal.

The tragedy of Nepal is that a government that came to power with so much promise for reform is letting the K Nepal strike even its deepest roots. State failure has enhanced our air, water, food, making Nepal iE. But it is a cruel joke that they could not afford treatment because of the same state failure.

The NFC government can reclaim some of its credibility by helping save the lives of tens of thousands of Nepalis by the saving the life of just one Nepali — Coverta KC.

The issue of Nepal Times from ten years ago this week (July 11, 2008) was preoccupied with the aftermath of the earthquakes in Oaxaca. Our editorial that week, ‘Ten years since the truck and the trees’, implied at the impact of the political uncertainty on Nepal’s times.

If so, forgive, every now there is a political transition in this country’s history. For while the earthquakes in Oaxaca were a natural disaster (after first February, there has been no accretion of heavy two heavy)

Now words after elections, the party that won the most seats in the assembly have been given a clear mandate. The current security status has been prolonged political deadlock in Kathmandu. This state of stalemate is turning a devotional impact on our current psyche and this plunder of forests that continues.

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The number of houses built on earthquake ravaged lands by the Nepal government. He has been one of the leaders in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners. He is a leader in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners. He is a leader in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners.

At home, in a rare moment of silence and pride in Kathmandu, a man dressed in $1000 dress shirt and 1000 Souvenir Airplane: ‘I wish I had known about the situation of the growing health emergency.’

OUTLINE PACKAGES

POISONOUS AIR

Wasting of air, one of the deadliest and most lethal in Kathmandu, at the New Delhi airport. A person dies every hour in this city. He has been one of the leaders in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners.

HOMES FOR THE HOMELESS

The number of homes built on earthquake ravaged lands by the Nepal government. He has been one of the leaders in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners. He is a leader in the campaign for the return of old lands to former owners.

BOOM TIME

ROAD RAGE

What is done from nowhere to nowhere. Rasanta Pratap Singh, 911. Money spent just for the sake of spending money. David R. Addor

This long and clearly it is quite sad, even though it was all predicted long before.

TASTIE BOOSTER

Gandak is an amazing ingredient and adds vitamin to the diet of a (A)Kai who takes in Caudam, Thomas Heath, 917. It is also a great way of preserving food for the bitter winter when few vegetables grow.

Eileen Castro Smith

Thanks for this great article on gymnastics. It is a quick dish which you can make very fast on the go. It also preserves Vitamin C Udaya Nausap

DOENOMING RECONSTRUCTION

What is an amazing initiative by Pisa group (Mapping the earthquake makeovers). Shri Ram Prasad Bhattarai, 917. Great job capturing the devastation and resilience.

Sahaj Thakerr

1,000 FLOWERS

Only when we let a thousand flowers bloom can we know if a flower is a weed. (Lust a thousand flowers bloom) Om Astha Rag, 917.

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Sewa Bhattarai in Bhairawa

Reef movers are at work trying to make up for lost time in the hotel industry. What will it take for the Gaumati Buddha International Airport. The Bhairawa-Butwal corridor is a six-lane highway with new hotels, steel and cement factories, residential areas, and even breweries.

Everywhere you look in Kupilewa and Rampundel districts there are signs of economic boom. The hidden potential for tourism, trade, and industries in this Central Tarai region bordering India that has remained untapped for so long, is about to be unleashed.

Take Lumbini. More than 200,000 tourists from India, Burma, Sri Lanka, Korea, China and Japan entered Nepal every year through Bhairawa for pilgrimage at the birthplace of the Buddha. But Nepal never really benefited because most of them came for day visits as a part of the Buddhist circuit tour package in India.

So far, Lumbini has been just a day stop for Indian tour packages to Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagar. Some even bring their own food,” explains Chandara Bahadur Thapa, general secretary of Nepal Association of Tour and Travel Agents for Province 5.

All this looks set to change. This week Nepal and India signed an agreement to jointly promote the Ramayana and Buddha Circuits. The Lumbini Development Trust (LDT) has also come up with new Buddhist Circuit tour packages that highlight other pilgrimage sites in Nepal like Kathmandu, Lalesi, Muktinath, Kakbatar and even Mansarovar in Tibet.

The idea is to make Lumbini a gateway to the Buddha Pilgrimage circuit, and not the other way round. All this is preparation to capitalise on the new international airport near Lumbini, which has been delayed by five years because of political corruption.

Tourism Minister Rabindra Adhikari is a man in a hurry. “There are 500 million Buddhists in the world, which is a huge market close to home. But we cannot benefit if we do not have the infrastructure. Even before the airport is completed, we need hotels, highways, airports, and other facilities in place, he says.

To be sure, the district is already buzzing with activity. Leading the trend is the 5-star Tiger Palace Resort owned by the Australian company Silver Heritage. With a foreign investment of $52 million, the largest yet in Nepal’s hospitality industry, the resort boasts of Nepal’s longest swimming pool and biggest casino.

Gambling on the future

Rows of palm tree great visitors on arrival, lining both sides of the driveway to the entrance of Tiger Palace Hotel. At the back are more palm fronds bordering both sides of a canal and the hotel’s swimming pool — the ambience is reminiscent of beach resorts in Dubai or Thailand. Just that a jungle forms the backdrop, and not an ocean.

Nepal’s latest and biggest foreign investment in the hotel industry, the Tiger Palace Resort, is located on the booming Bhairawa-Butwal corridor. Despite this, being amidst forests gives it a wilderness feeling. Owned by the Australian Silver Heritage company that specialises in gaming, the resort opened in March, and is designed to cater to the expected boom in tourists, pilgrims and luxury-minded visitors from India.

The resort has 150 rooms, two villas, a gym, spa, and a 12-lm swimming pool, supposedly the longest in Nepal. From some rooms guests can step directly into the pool, and swim to Cahan Avenue restaurants, or walk over to dine at Kamro Chowk. The hotel plans two more restaurants and also plans to expand rooms to 300 in the second phase, which will open soon.

Tiger Palace employs close to 500 locals, says its general manager Brett Model: “A lot of people are leaving Nepal to work, but many are coming back. We have employed some incredible talent who have returned with experience in hospitality in Dubai, Qatar, Malaysia. They are great assets.”

With Lumbini 30 minutes away and Chitwan 2 hours away by car, Tiger Palace Resort is well situated as a stopping point for visitors to the two international sites. It targets the busy international traveller with multiple attractions.

The resort also boasts of Nepal’s largest canopy of international standard, and now that it has its own ownership dispute sorted out, it is looking forward to a busy autumn season.

Brett Model also adds: “We wanted to be the first and largest 5-star integrated resort in Nepal, and we are happy to be the first in this market. I am very excited for what the future holds for Nepal’s tourism industry. We can offer an inspiration for others to push forward in business and improve the tourism sector.”

Sikuma Rai

NATION

13 - 19 JULY 2018 | PAGE 4

Biharwa and Lumbini are poised for more growth with the completion of a new international airport.

ALL PHOTO: BRIANIN

Boomtime in the Central Tarai

Istanbul stopover
Turkish Airlines marks one year of the free stopover service on round trip ticket and one country more than 20 hours. Istanbul in the past year 14,000 passengers have been served.

Pokhara ice cream
Sason Robbins Internationals, in partnership with Sun International, has opened its first ice cream parlor in Lakeside, Pokhara. This is the 12th Sason Robbins outlet in Nepal and was inaugurated by Mohanbhai Kataria of Grass Roots and Sun International.

Football livery
Golar Airways has supplied a feeling 757 aircraft with FFA livery that will fly to Moscow for the semi final and final fixtures this weekend. The airline is the official partner of the official airline of FFA, the 2022 FIFA World Cup will be held in Doha.

Buddha adds ATR-72
Buddha Air this week took delivery of its fifth ATR-72, phasing the airline’s fleet strength to 11 planes. The airline also started a weekly Varanasi-Kathmandu service, and is expected to soon launch Nepal-Nepal flights. The airline is also diversifying from Kathmandu and has stationed one of its planes in Biratnagar.

Investment bank
Nepal Investment Bank established its 73rd branch in Pokhara of Sun International as part of its campaign to extend rural banking. The bank aims to provide services to more than 15,000 customers of the town, offering small loans to 22,000 underprivileged families.
The Bhotekosi corridor is already a hub of domestic economic activity—two national highways—the east-west Mahendra and the north-south Siddhartha—intersect here, and other tourist hubs like Palpa, Chitwan, and Pokhara are a few hours drive away. Bhumki is now Nepal’s fastest growing city, offering modern hotels for a new breed of visitors who are not necessarily pilgrims.

New industries have come up in an area already known as an industrial strip (Jagadamba Steel, Russian Vodka, Weinstiein Beer, Hulas Auto Craft, Panchakanya Steel, Riji Cement, etc), which means hotel accommodation is in high demand. Not only are conferences and major events of the companies held at these hotels, but increasingly, social functions like weddings and gin-schil.

“I am quite impressed by the growing influence of this area. We are seeing many repeat customers, which means that the domestic market here can afford luxury hospitality, and has developed a taste for it,” says Brett Moulder, general manager of Tiger Palace Resort. “We hope that our success will attract more foreign investment in the hospitality industry here.”

With its proximity to the border, the resort also attracts Indian customers, who may not be particularly interested in Lumbini. Strict restrictions on alcohol and gambling in India have made Tiger Palace a draw, and there are many who come in for a few hours and go back before the border curfew at 9PM.

Indian families enjoy weekend getaways, and every so often there is a destination wedding, with the entire marriage party camping out at the hotel for a few days for all the ceremonies. Tiger Palace has already hosted a dozen such weddings, with customers coming in from as far as Delhi, Mumbai and Kanpur for a luxury ‘foreign wedding’.

The region’s new businesses, industries and hotels are also excited by the prospect of an International airport nearby, so that access will be easier and faster. More casinos and hotels are coming up to cater to the Indian market.

All eyes are now on the completion of the Gautam Buddha International Airport. After being stalled often, the project is expected to be completed in early 2019, making Lumbini more accessible to two distinctly different types of tourists: Buddha devotees, as well as free-spending tourists from across India.
Can’t fool all the people all the time

Nepalis now know what a world-class sports facility should look like because they have seen it during the World Cup.
Ocean to mountains
A group of Irish artists exhibit their work in Nepal for the first time

Sewa Bhattarai

A sk any Nepali about Ireland, and most have no idea where it is and some may mention the Irish pubs in Kathmandu, Thamel or Pokhara. Ask a person on the street what a “Guinness” is and they may answer you with a certain degree of world knowledge that is more akin to the dark beer.

Which is why the first-ever exhibition of Irish art in Nepal is such a landmark in Kathmandu’s cultural firmament. It is a small, but significant exhibition that gives people here in Kathmandu a glimpse of the sensitivities of this gentle land on the edge of the north Atlantic.

The artists, affiliated with Wexford Arts Centre in Ireland, have brought to the Kathmandu Art Gallery an eclectic collection that includes landscapes, portraits, mixed media and photographs. Viewers are exposed not just to contemporary art themes but also technique; some exhibits hang by clothes peg on washing lines, tiny installations are framed in the style of miniatures, and there are renderings of the Irish landscape.

Because the artists came from so far away and on such short notice, they mostly brought smaller pieces. The collection has landscapes which artists say is representative of contemporary Irish art trends.

“I do not paint exact representations of the landscape, what you see, are my emotional responses to it,” explains Olivia O’Dwyer (below, right) whose dreamy, almost pointilist series is called ‘Between the Sky and the Sea.’

Declan Cody looks for themes in the wild west, and creates surreal landscapes to visualise like cow skins, groups of birds, or a close up of a patch of sand. He says: “I prefer to call my art abstracted rather than abstract, to differentiate it from traditional abstract art.”

Oil and acrylic mediums and techniques of layering are popular among Irish artists, and they hope to foster a cultural exchange between Nepal and Ireland, learning from each other’s art forms through this exhibition. The Irish visitors attended an art camp for Nepali artists in Kathmandu on Thursday.

The use of blue, white, grey, soft pink dominate the paintings. Bernadette Doonan’s impressionistic portraits stand slightly apart from the trend of landscapes, capturing “emotions rather than persons”. Her titles like Determined, In Quiet Agreement, It’s My Party, I wish, are intense with emotional expression.

“As artists we pretend to be strong, but in reality we all have a child in us,” explains Doonan (below, left). “And children are strong, but also vulnerable. My portraits remind us all to let the child out sometimes.”

At the other end of the spectrum lie intimate machines, which photographer Michael Duggan hopes foregrounds in his skillful compositions. Texts like a pike and a forge, which have now fallen into disuse, give us a glimpse of the transition in Ireland’s traditionally agrarian society.

“I capture machines that were once beautiful in their efficiency, but today are just ornamental, and so, beautiful in another way,” says Duggan. “Documentary photographers everywhere try to capture things unique to that will disappear ten years later. Our work might not make sense at the moment, but it will be valued more as time passes.”

“The artists all agree that the scope of art as a career is limited and full of struggles in Ireland, just like everywhere else in the world.

“Any exhibition hosts works by two other artists who could not make it to Nepal. Kate Murphy whose titles seem larger than her miniature mixed media frames, and Paddy Lennon’s elegantly inked Water Series. “Nepal and Ireland have completely different landscapes, one has mountains and the other has oceans and islands,” said Veronica Cody, European Union’s Ambassador to Nepal, who is herself Irish. “Our landscapes affect how we see the world, and exchange of art is an opportunity to transcend that worldview and get a glimpse of another.”

Cody hoped the exhibition could be an inspiration for Nepali artists, and that Ireland would be inspired to host them in future.

Irish Artists in Nepal
An Exhibition of Mixed Media Works (28 July-20 August)
Bernadette Doonan, Declan Cody, Kate Murphy, Michael Duggan, Olivia O’Dwyer, Paddy Lennon

Kathmandu Art Gallery, Sabal Maiti (Kathmandu University)
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Saturday 12 noon - 5 pm

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Nepal’s bough: 970 motorcycles every day last year.

Kathmandu Valley alone has 820,000 two-wheelers.

There are over 2.4 million motorcycles and scooters in Nepal.

1/3 of Nepal’s petrol import is consumed by two-wheelers.

2% of motorcyclists cause half the pollution from two-wheeler.

**Poisoning the air**

Dust and smoke can be seen

Sonia Awale

Most residents of Kathmandu are aware of the dust and smoke in the air, but few know that their masks do not protect them from the poisonous gas emissions from the capital’s ubiquitous motorcycles.

Because of the nature of their engines, two-wheeler exhausts give off carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, and elevate the concentration of street-level cancer. Doctors say these poisonous gases have led to a worrying increase in respiratory ailments, cancers, Alzheimer’s Disease, diabetes and heart attacks.

“A few motorcycles would not be so dangerous, but there are now nearly 1.5 million of them on the city streets and their emission is a great public health hazard,” warns respiratory health expert Kajju Punjabi at HAMS Hospital in Dhumbarahi.

Although motorcycles burn much less petrol than four-wheelers, they are up to ten times more polluting per passenger-kilometre than buses and cars. The internal combustion engine of motorcycles is also less efficient, and their exhaust systems lack catalytic converters.

Because there are fewer two-wheelers on the roads in the West, emission standards for them are much lower than for four-wheelers. However, in places like Nepal, Vietnam or Indonesia, where motorcyles outnumber cars, their cumulative emissions poison the city’s air with noxious gases.

A recent study showed that up to 2% of poorly-maintained motorcycles contributed to close to half the total pollution from two-wheelers in Kathmandu’s streets.

“The recent spike in cardiovascular diseases in Kathmandu hospitals can partly be a result of slow carbon monoxide poisoning, mainly from motorcycles,” confirms cardiologist Prakash Rijal at GMR Hospital. Residents near congested intersections in Kathmandu with thousands of motorcycles emitting gaseous pollutants are the most at risk (see map, left).

Ozone is the other toxic gas formed when carbon monoxide and nitrogen oxides in motorcycle exhaust react in the presence of sunlight with volatile organic compounds. Large parts of Nepal have ground-level ozone in much higher concentrations than the WHO standard in the spring, as per several studies published last year in the journal Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics.

Aniso Pandey, atmospheric scientist at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) who co-authored the papers, explains that incomplete combustion of fuel in motorcycles engines gives off carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds like benzene, and oxides of nitrogen (NOx) which are precancerous gases to ground-level ozone – itself a highly reactive gas that can aggravate chronic respiratory diseases like asthma, bronchitis and emphysema.

The studies showed that minor servicing of two-wheelers did not reduce gaseous pollutants much, and motorcycles were a major source of carbon monoxide in Kathmandu Valley air.

Public awareness about air pollution has grown in the past two years after suspended dust particles from road-widening and water mains laying worsened air quality that was already thick with soot particles from diesel exhaust and garbage burning.

But only a few communities interviewed for this article in the past week knew of the invisible and odourless gases like carbon monoxide, ozone and nitrogen oxides.

Nine of ten motorcyclists had no idea about the poisonous gases and blamed only dust and diesel smoke for poor air quality.

Kathmandu air pollution levels on most winter mornings are the worst in the world. The hourly Air Quality Index (AQI) from the U.S. Embassy in Phuorte Dharbari stations which feed live into the Nepali Times website is a composite of the concentration of coarse and particles finer than 2.5 microns in the air. The daily averages in this paper (page 26) show AQI is high even during the monsoon, proving that the rains are not enough to clear the air of pollutants.

“Given that 80% of total vehicles today in Nepal are motorcycles and scooters, there should be a mechanism to monitor and control their emissions, like issuing green stickers,” says Bhawani Thadha of UN-HABITAT. In the longer term, however, only an efficient public transportation service can reduce the number of motorcycles and cars on the roads.
Besides Nepal, Vietnam and Indonesia also grapple with two-wheeler congestion and poor air quality. Boarding scooters by 2030, and China now only allows electric two-wheelers. Energy expert Manoj Dhakal says there is no sense banning motorcycles in Kathmandu without first offering a convenient alternative: “Two-wheelers are polluting and unsafe, but environment-friendly public transport policy should be implemented first.”

Moving to electric mass transit, a battery-operated Bus Rapid Transit, and offering tax incentives for electric scooters and motorcycles would be the first step. Experts say the cause of Kathmandu’s air pollution is government policy that allowed unlimited vehicle imports so as to generate greater tax revenue. “Lack of regulation on motorcycle numbers undermines the government’s own effort to promote zero-emission public transport and electric vehicles,” says communications officer Mona Sharma of ICIMOD. With local governments in place after 20 years, priority should also be on ending the monopoly of transport syndicates as the existing public transport system is streamlined.

An already-available alternative could be electric scooters, the prices of which have dropped to Rs138,000 for some models like the Japanese Terra Evo. Chinese-made Niu M1 scooters are cooler, but are stylish and convenient. Both have showrooms in Kathmandu. Taxi rebates can bring prices down more. Says rationalist Prakash Regmi: “The government has to decrease the number of petrol two-wheelers, provide better public transport and promote electric vehicles to ensure a healthy future for us all.”

Car biologist and environment expert Arvind Pandey points out: “The government is allowing 820,000 motorcycles in the Valley, but invisible poisonous gases in motorcycle emissions are making us sick.

BIKE MANDU

Carbon monoxide poisoning

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a lethal gas given off during incomplete combustion of fuel. Haemoglobin

Haemoglobin (Hb) is an iron-rich protein found in red blood cells in numerous, that carries oxygen to various parts of the body. It has an affinity to oxygen, but binds much more readily with carbon monoxide. When CO attaches itself to Hb, it prevents vital oxygen from reaching various tissues and organs. Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning (% CO concentration)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild poisoning (0.08%)</th>
<th>Headache, asphyxia, dizziness, dry cough, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, hallucinations and high blood pressure.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate poisoning (0.32%)</td>
<td>Motor paralysis and loss of consciousness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Severe poisoning (1.2%)</td>
<td>Comas, respiratory arrest, coma, leading to death in 3 minutes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ozone

Ozone is a byproduct of nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds in the presence of sunlight to form ground-level ozone. This is bad news, and different from “good” ozone that occurs in the stratosphere and blocks harmful solar radiation. The ozone molecule is composed of three atoms of oxygen, unlike the oxygen we breathe which consists of two atoms. At traffic junctions, ozone builds up during warm sunny days, harming lung functions. Kathmandu’s hospitals have recorded a sharp increase in patients with chronic respiratory diseases, and higher concentration of surface ozone is one of the factors. A 2017 study published in the journal Atmospheric Chemistry and Physics measured ground-level ozone at various points in Kathmandu and found that it was highest in the day, during pre-monsoon months, and at higher altitudes on the Valley rim, exceeding the 300 ppb standard. ICIMOD atmospheric scientist Arvind Pandey, who co-authored the study, “Ozone is a growing problem in northern South Asia, and a threat to both agriculture and human health.”
Chautari
Module: interdisciplinary students Residency 2018-2019 entitled ‘Chautari: Under the Shade’ shows, it works all young artists from USA and Nepal created during one month’s residency workshop under the guidance of visual artists/curator Murshid Lal Shrestha.
17-26 July, 11 am onwards. Gallery Mistletoe, Cheltenham, Colchester, 857,731012

Euro film fest
The 7th European Film Festival screens over a dozen documentaries on European art, heritage, and culture, and fiction films with engaging and thought-provoking narratives. Featuring: Taranta on the Road, The Oud, Odyssey, Escape from the Mountain Valley, Tiger Theory, Defenders of Riga, My Pure Land and Berlin Babylon.
14-21 July, 10 am onwards. Nepal Tourism Board, Home House available on Facebook. Locations: North Bank Hotel, Ashoka Hotel, and Nepal Tourism Board, Exhibition Road, 813,478645

Shades of Sound
Without much information by Woody from New Zealand as he represents concert, concert managers, tour bus drivers, and tour bus drivers in his mixed media work.
19-20 July, 11 am onwards. Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babor Mohit Road, 813,478618

Harish Mathema
A musical night with Harish Mathema and Legend Band in join and feel the music with good food and variety of cocktails.
19-20 July, 6 pm onwards. Capri Friday Bar and Grill, Lampit, 813,478717

Saturday Rock
Double entertainment with live musical performance by Arun Banj and live World Cup game screening after the show. Make sure to be there, it’s time to remember.
19-20 July, 2 pm onwards, Jnr Hotel, Restaurant, Kirtipur, 813,478679

Educational fair
The 12th ECAN Educational Fair with more than 100 stalls provides information and advice regarding education abroad.
19-22 July, 10 am onwards. Bhaktapur Durbar, 813,478607

From Darkness to Light
Sundaram Tagore’s ninetieth solo exhibition, consisting of 51 abstract and semi-abstract paintings of spiritual objects.
9-14 July, Art Council, Babor Mohit, 813,478618

Open Stage
Sukalok stage is open for anyone to sing their songs and tell their stories. Let the stage be yours.
16-19 July, 7-10 pm, Sukalok, Lamput, 813,478678

One mic. million stories
19-21 July, 6 pm onwards. Old School Restaurant, Ghandakali, 813,876796

Park Village Resort
Enjoy the grand finale of the World cup at the Park Village resort with indoor, dinner and overnight stay, far away from the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu.
Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha, Rs. 7,599, 813,478235

Namo Buddha Resort
Consistently voted World’s best spa and surrounded by lush greenery, the resort is an oasis of peace and tranquility, offering spectacular views of the Himalayan on clear days. A short hike to Namo Buddha and Thangfulung Village can easily offer much needed relief from the city stress.
Namo Buddha, Phulchowki, Rs. 7,106987

Gokarna Forest Resort
The Resort is a luxurious paradise, thick with century-old trees rustling out cheers for football teams. In the World Cup finale, enjoy the surrounding with the resort’s best offer, book 2 rooms on bill plan and get a complimentary room.
11-22 July, Gokarna Forest Resort, Hattal, Rs. 7,592,478525

Mango Brunch
Get your mouth busy brunching on mango delights. Shangri-La’s Saturday Brunch brings the king of fruits on the plate in varieties of ways. It’s Shangri-La’s 60th birthday, join the party.
16 July, 10 am onwards, Shangri-La Hotel, Lamput, Rs. 5,508, 478399

Our Pick
Bobby
Opens in Kathmandu on 13 July

The Nepali film, based on a real-life story, is a factor of the kind Nepali movie. Not only is it based on a real story, but it also stars the real couple. Every couple wishes for boys to be brought to movies and she be the one to see, but this couple’s wish came true. Directed by Milan Bhote, the film is shot in Nepal and Hungary. It stars Kabita Gurung, Thapa and Umesh Thapa as themselves, and portrays the unique journey of their relationship.

Air Quality Index
KATHMANDU, 6 - 12 July

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>PM2.5 (µg/m³)</th>
<th>PM10 (µg/m³)</th>
</tr>
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<td>07-07-22</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-07-22</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In study with study with Sali Saini, Ganga in this last week, there is still considerable dust and emissions pollution where the rains start. The Daily Jâg in the past week were maximum in the green area, because of the concentration of particulate matter under 2.5 microns (PM 2.5) in the city. The concentration has been maximum in the city, and it is that of large particles ranging on the 14-10 micron scale, the concentration of silicate, calcium carbonate, and soil dust and smoke. These are there both in emissions, especially from 6,233,000 engines in the city.

https://nepse.nepse.gov.np/air-quality-monitor/
With the World Cup drawing to a climax, everyone from economists to an octopus (RF) have tried to predict who will win. Germany and Brazil are out. But which of the countries participating in this year’s World Cup in Russia are tackling climate change, kicking out fossil fuels to score a better future for their country and the planet? We looked at the greenhouse gas emissions people in each country produce. So we ran the numbers. Nigeria has the best shirts in the tournament, as well as one of the cooler songs, and they are also the per capita emissions champions.

contributing a tiny 0.05 tons of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission per person per year. Nepal would have won this World Cup hands down with its annual 0.2 tons per capita emission. But their route to victory in the Climate Change Cup is shrouded in controversy. They beat fellow West Africans from Senegal, but Senegalese fans had reason to cry foul because Nigeria is a major oil exporter even though Nigerians may consume little of it. Costa Rica, which Nigeria beat in this low emissions final, is the first and only country in the world that has said it will ban fossil fuels entirely. Costa Rica deserved a free kick.

but are per capita emissions the best measure of whether a country is really a climate champion? To determine the economy while improving living standards, deployment of renewable energy may ultimately be more important. Traditional powerhouses Spain, Germany and Brazil may be out of the football World Cup, but they all made it to the Climate Change semi-finals. Brazil owes more to its reliance on hydropower than Neymar. Unlike the Brazilian football team which relied on one player for goals, the country itself has tried to diversify away from a single source of energy.

American soccer fans saw their team miss out on qualification, and their sorrow will be compounded by the fact that this is one World Cup they could have won. Despite Donald Trump trying to red the US out of climate action, the US launched more renewable energy projects than any of the nations competing in the 2018 World Cup. Only China has better stats, and the Chinese have only ever qualified for one World Cup.

Fighting climate change isn’t just about greenhouse gas emissions or renewable energy. We have already seen global temperatures increase by about 1°C since the 1880s, and even with serious action, we are going to see the impacts of climate change increase as well. While the World Cup was going on, the Siberian Arctic coast experienced the hottest and most prolonged summer on record. Unfortunately, the per capita carbon emissions champions were immediately eliminated in the World Cup qualifying rounds. Every African and South American nation is now out. This should be a wake up call for some of the richer nations at the tournament, who are supposed to be financing efforts to adapt. Instead, the adaption World Cup is dominated by small, rich European nations. And even then, it’s a pretty low scoring affair.

Most countries are simply not ready to defeat climate change. The most worrying is that the next World Cup in 2022 is scheduled to take place in Qatar – the country with the highest per capita emissions in the world. Qatar has a lot of work to do if it wants to be a World Cup climate champion.

Adapted from Responsible Business.
European Union Film Festival

**Escape from the Moomin Valley**
3:00 PM
The film shows the life of Tove Jansson, creator of the popular Moomin characters, who considered herself a painter first and foremost. The movie uses many of her paintings to portray the story, as well as scenes from her family and friends.

**Teoie Tygra**
3:15 PM
A comedy about an aging man who leaves for adventure and freedom, to get away from his controlling wife. After the death of his father in law, he realizes that his mother in law had been controlling him in the same way as his wife controls him, and his daughter controls her son in law.

**Defenders of Riga**
5:15 PM
The most watched Latvian movie after its independence in 1991, the movie depicts Latvia’s battle to protect Riga in WWII. Hitler leads German army, while a group of Latvian volunteers fight a much larger and better prepared army of Germans (left behind in the area, one year after the end of WWII).

**L’Odyssee**
15 July | 11:00 AM
This biographical French adventure, biologist, marine conservationist, writer, and filmmaker Jacques Cousteau spans 30 years of his extraordinary life. In his adventurous life, he researched the sea and all forms of aquatic life, and helped develop the aqua-lung.

**Bauhaus Germany**
3:00 PM
The movie traces the German art movement called Bauhaus from 1919-1933, that transformed the idea of composing art with craft, and combining all forms of art including architecture. The influential art movement has been called the ‘age of the 20th century.

**Taranta on the Road**
5:15 PM
A man and a woman are thrown together in their journey as illegal immigrants from Africa to Italy. Forced by circumstances, the strangers pretend to be a married couple in the eyes of the three musicians who have decided to help them navigate the tricky European passage system. A selection of European short films will be shown on 16 July.

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**MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS**

**ACCESS TO JUSTICE:** Norwegian Ambassador Lars Bjarne Jøhndensen and UNDP country director Thomas Tømmerløkken signed an agreement on Monday to launch a project to enhance justice in collaboration with the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs.

**CHINA BOUND:** Prime Minister KP Oli handed over a pair of one-horned rhinos named Asha and Rasol to Chinese Ambassador Yu Hong in Kathmandu on Thursday.

**VENICE OF THE EAST:** Drainage obstruction due to roads and houses caused a massive flood in Bhaktapur on Thursday, blocking the highway near Thimi.

**TROUBLED WATERS:** A school girl blotted by a flooded road in Bhaktapur on Thursday. Many schools were closed because of the flood on the Harumante Khola.

**ASSURANCE:** Ashoke SB Rana, CEO of Himalayan Bank and Naveen Prakash Pradhan of Lumbini General Insurance signed an agreement on Wednesday to deliver bank assurance services to 150,000 customers.
FROM THE NEPALI PRESS

Naming new provinces

Only two provinces have shed their numbers and got names, and also decided on their capitals. At a time when other provinces had not even started a debate over possible names and capital cities, Province 6 forged a consensus to name itself ‘Karnali’ after the river. It also chose Birrendranagar as its permanent capital.

Province 4 followed suit last week, but not as easily as Karnali Province. After an intense debate, Province 4 settled on Gandaki with Pokhara as its permanent capital city. But this was greeted with street protests from those who wanted it named Tamangwan.

What is the status of the naming of the other six provinces?

Province 1
Five months have passed after the federal government signed the Province 1 assembly, but the House hasn’t even debated its possible names. Members of the assembly are divided over whether to retain Rintang as the capital, or move it somewhere else. Pratap Prakash Halangam of the NC says: “A baby is baptised on the ninth day, but our province has not got a name even in five months.”

Chief Minister Sher Bahadur Rai assured that Province 1’s name and capital will be finalised before the ongoing monsoon session ends.

Province 2
Province 2’s MPs are divided over the name and capital. The ruling Federal Socialist Forum Nepal and the Raastriya Janata Party want to call it Madheshi Province. But the Nepal Communist Party (NCP) and the NC are against this, preferring Mithila Province. The NCP is ready to name it either Mithila or even Janakpur. Janakpur is Province 2’s temporary capital, but there is an intense lobbying to move it to Birgunj.

Province 3
Naming Province 3 has not been a divisive issue, but its capital is. Province 3’s MPs from Nawakot, Karrow, Bhotapar and Chitwan are against retaining Hetauda as the capital. The federal government has formed a 13-member committee led by MP Sushil Khadka to recommend the most suitable place, and it is unlikely to be Hetauda.

Province 5
Naming Province 5 is not as tricky as zeroing in on a capital. Chief Minister Shankar Pokharel favours his home district of Dang, but the NCP General Secretary Bhim Prasad Oli and the NC leader Balkrishna Koirala want to retain Butwal as the provincial capital. Other MPs are lobbying for Banke, Bardiya, Rolpa and Baitadi as well.

Province 6
The main opposition NC has tabled a proposal in the provincial assembly demanding Province 7’s name and capital be finalised soon, but there has been no debate yet. MPs from each political party want to move the Province 7 capital to their districts like Dali and Dedhaldhunga. But others want to retain the headquarters in Dhadingdi itself.

Detaining doctors

Just like how they used to kidnap people during the war, ex-Maoists – now part of the government – have kidnapped a doctor from hospital for refusing to prepare a fake report.

Less than a week after police arrested Sunkhari University Vice Chancellor Kailash Koirala from Kathmandu Airport and kept him in a garage at the PM residence for one hour, Home Minister Ram Bachaur Thapa (pictured, left, an ex-Maoist commander, has ordered the detention of a physician.

Shriniwad Adhikari (pictured, right), a doctor at Bir Hospital, was examining his patients on Tuesday afternoon when Thapa’s political adviser Surya Subedi, accompanied by other ex-Maoists, barged into the hospital and whisked him away.

Adhikari was told that the Home Minister wanted to consult a physician. But he was kept in an isolated room for one hour, and Home Minister Thapa never showed up at all. Instead, Subedi himself grilled Adhikari as if he was a police officer.

“I was treated like a criminal,” Adhikari said. “No one knew of my detention, and I did not know whom to contact. I was really terrified.”

Earlier that day, four ex-Maoist comrades had asked, Adhikari to give them reports exaggerating their wounds so as to claim bigger monthly allowances as conflict victims. Adhikari did not listen to them, and they went to complain to the Home Ministry.

“The Home Minister’s adviser threatened me by saying, ‘You have insulted our great soldiers, and you will have to pay for it,’” Adhikari said.

Thapa admitted to have taken Adhikari to the Home Ministry, but he denied he was threatened. “We just wanted to ask him a few questions about the concerns raised by his ex-comrades,” he said. “I gave him tea, and treated him well.”

DENIGE MOSQUITOES BITE DURING DAYTIME.

Is your child protected outdoors?

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Protect your child from dengue with Odomos. It’s safe on skin and gives 8 hours of protection against mosquitoes. Also available in Gel, Spray, Lotion, Roll-on and Patches. Visit us at www.odomosprotect.com / Odomos Cream has been tested under laboratory conditions at an application of 12 mg/cm². Odomos cream gives 8 hours’ protection against mosquitoes.
Deadline for earthquake reconstruction makes survivors erect sheds to claim payment

Om Astha Rai

Kamala Shrestha (pictured, right) wanted to build a new earthquake-resistant house after her two-storied ancestral home in Kathmandu was destroyed by the April 2015 earthquake. But the Rs400,000 housing grant for survivors was not enough to build a decent home.

Her four-member family lived in a tent for some months before moving into a rented room. Her husband went to Qatar to earn enough to rebuild their home. But he was cheated by his employer, and they could not begin work.

Then last year, the National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) gave a deadline to survivors who had already received the first tranche of Rs40,000 to start rebuilding their houses before January 2018 to be eligible for the second installment. Shrestha could not meet the deadline.

So, like her neighbours, the 35-year-old took a Rs200,000 loan from a local cooperative, and built a one-room tin-roofed shed in just three weeks so she could get the second and final instalments of her NRA grant, and pay back the loan.

The NRA’s January 2018 deadline was so unrealistic many families missed it. It was extended in April 2018, and then again to July. Because rumours spread that those who missed the deadline would have to return the first tranche and their children would not get birth and citizenship certificates, they quickly built sheds.

“I had already received and spent the first tranche, so I felt trapped,” says Shrestha. “I was worried that my family would be blacklisted, and my children would not be able to go to school.”

Like many others, Shrestha’s new home is so small her family will not fit in it. They could add floors later, but that would make it vulnerable to future earthquakes.

Thousands of families in the quake zone are now hurriedly building one-room structures, fearing the repercussions of not being able to meet the July deadline. The NRA can now claim reconstruction has speeded up, but most homes are not fit to live in.

“The government’s housing reconstruction and retrofit grants are a huge opportunity to leverage safer housing, but it could be lost if tranche disbursement deadlines continue to force people to build homes that do not meet their living requirements simply to get the grant,” explains Shibhan Kennedy at the Housing Recovery and Reconstruction Platform (HRRP).

When the NRA first announced the deadline last year, only 62,576 private houses had been completed. That figure shot up to 146,149 this July – a four-fold increase in just one year. The NRA and the government can boost that they are meeting targets, but the figures hide the fact that a significant number of the new houses are small, one-room makeshift structures.

Sangita Tamang, 36, is building a one-room house as well small for her seven-member family. Her old mud and brick house perched near Sitalpati National Park was damaged by the earthquake, but the family continued to live there after plastering the cracks.

Tamang wanted to build a proper two-room house after her husband returned with savings from Saudi Arabia next winter, but she had to build it in a hurry to meet the deadline.

“This new house will be our kitchen, but we will continue to live in our old house,” admits Tamang, who adds she was worried about her children not getting citizenship documents and missing out on education and jobs in future.

The NRA desires thousands of black-list families for missing the deadline.

“People will have to return the first tranche if they really do not want to build new houses, but the government cannot deny them their
The number of houses built by earthquake survivors has increased four-fold in just one year due to the July 2018 deadline. But watch this video to find out if these hurriedly-built homes meet basic living requirements.

Homes for the homeless

Kumar Tamang, 36, lived with his wife and son in an isolated two-room house atop a hill in Parwan municipality of Kavre district. The earthquake not only destroyed his mud and stone house, but also blocked their water supply. His wife had to walk up and down the hill every day to fetch water, so he built his ancestral land and bought a smaller plot where he recently built a one-room house.

“My father built a large house because we had a joint family,” says Tamang. “We do not need such a big place anymore because our family is very small.” The new house is adjacent to two other one-room houses built by neighbours Alle Tamang and Jumilsaya Tamang who share the same long tin roof (picture, above).

Not all the houses are being built small to meet the NPA grant deadline, out-migration and depopulation of the earthquake districts mean there are fewer people in the mountains. Traditional joint family units are also breaking apart, even in the villages. And some families have split deliberately to claim more reconstruction grants from the government.

Alle Tamang’s four-member family is now the largest in the neighbourhood, and he says they don’t really need a two-storey house anymore. Another neighbour, 31-year-old Jumilsaya Tamang, has also built a one-room house because she doesn’t have children, and her husband just returned from Malaysia after three years. “Why would we need a big house when there are just two of us?” she asks.

A survey by the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) in 2015 showed 86% of the 700,000 damaged houses had two or multiple floors. The UK-funded Common Feedback Project published a new survey report in May, which shows 84% of the newly built houses are just one-storey.

Survivors are building smaller houses due to multiple factors like migration, shrinking family sizes, inadequate land, increased construction cost, and the pressure to rebuild by the July 2018 deadline.

Civil engineer Anil Pandit says he sees no problem if a one-room house suits a small family. “But if the small houses are built to meet the deadline, they may not be strong enough to withstand future earthquakes.”

Om Astha Rai / Core
Nepal Army, Pvt. Ltd.

After years of conducting war on a war-footing Nepal’s skirmishes subside – are no longer pointing around. Now they have attained power through the barrel of the coffee. They have pranced proudly on a war footing as well. And since most of our officers are over the hill, there is not much to do. It seems we have an urgent need for iron discipline in this country. And we are better to wait in Army than order the military.

Which must be why the Minister of Communications, Infrastructure and Landscaping, Mr. Mallick, has announced that the war is to be prolonged to hand over the management of the Kathmandu Spinning Mill to the Nepal Army. My thought exactly. We cannot think of a better institution to manufacture garments on a war footing than the Nepal Army. With its glorious history of Gurkha soldiers, and the valorable snowmen it has made since to defend Nepal’s territorial integrity on land, sea and air, there is no more qualified to manage a task factory. An army that could set up an assembly line to manufacture better cannons to fight the British in 1856 can easily mass-produce suits.

And since the Army HQ is already making the Fast Track, it may as well take over various other drawbridge projects in the PM’s bucket list like the Sautaha-Ito, Portal Canal, and the Kapilvastu Irrigation Canal. Waterway for maritime navigation.

The army already provides uniform and from various manufacturers and agencies, and we are confident the Army can do a much better job turning the Kathmandu Spinning Mill into a top secret research facility for green warfare and Nepali secret biological weapon program. This is so high-tech, could it be what is going on there? But then I’d have to kill you.

The Nepal Army should also be given the task of completing the much-travelled Republic Tower National Pride Project. After successive contractors ran away with the money, this enigmatic structure is behind schedule by four years. If we cannot even finish a republic tower, why should the international community take our republic seriously?

But with the Army taking over, we can be sure it will look like a shiny bulletproof missile on a launch pad and serve as a strategic deterrent against foreign invasion or our motherland.

The all-female complex already has a name. The CBD lady.

http://www.facebook.com/olddurbar

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