Bimstec facelift

That the fourth BIMSTEC summit would be declared a "success" was a foregone conclusion because there wasn’t really much expected of the sub-regional economic grouping.

The two-day conference concludes on Friday with the signing of a charter on regional cooperation by the leaders of India, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Burma, Nepal and Thailand in Kathmandu. This is the first time after 2015 that Nepal is hosting such a high level summit, and the Nepali government sees it as a feather in its cap, pulling all stops to spruce up the capital.

"It is an honour for Nepal to host the Summit, and BIMSTEC has great potential, we just need to cooperate on poverty alleviation through closer economic cooperation and connectivity," Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali said.

But will Nepal really benefit? The proof of the pudding will be in whether BIMSTEC can go where SAARC has not because of the India-Pakistan rivalry. It also links South Asia to Southeast Asia, and it is now up to member countries to look beyond bilateralism.

"We are going step by step, but have made good progress on cooperation, including the energy grid," BIMSTEC Secretary General Shoab Mustafa told Nepal Times. This could be important for Nepal, with its hydro power potential.

However, only a day before the Summit, China’s Three Gorges indicated it may pull out of the long-delayed 730MW West Seti project designed to export surplus power to India.

SAARC countries, five of whom are BIMSTEC members, already have a framework agreement on energy cooperation, signed at the Kathmandu Summit in 2014 that should have allowed power trading if there was political will.

But India issued its energy trade guidelines in 2016, declaring that it will import hydro power from Nepal and Bangladesh only if it is produced by companies that are at least 51% Indian owned. That effectively killed Nepal’s chance of getting the Chinese involved.

Ex Energy Secretary Dwarka Nath Bhusal says: “Regional energy agreements mean nothing unless India revises its cross-border energy trade policy.”

In August, Kathmandu and Dhaka signed an MoU to export electricity to Bangladesh. Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina made that request during a visit to New Delhi in April 2017, but there was no mention of it in the joint communique. Nepal has never bothered to raise it with India.

Nepal aims to generate 15,000MW more electricity in the next 19 years, and could export the surplus to Bangladesh and beyond to Burma and Thailand.

There are also fears BIMSTEC may jeopardise Nepal’s relations with China. India has persuaded BIMSTEC members to conduct a joint military exercise shortly after the summit. Foreign Minister Gyawali clarified Nepal will not join any military alliance, but China and Pakistan are unlikely to be convinced.
10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The page is from Nepal Times (9 August 1992) and contains a story about the Aryan Games, which were a regional sports event in Nepal. The article discusses the preparations and expectations for the games, mentioning the involvement of various countries and organizations.

What a sorry state Nepal has become with its worsening economic, social, and political situation. The lack of law, impunity, corruption, and nepotism are some of the problems that are hindering the country's progress.

For more information, please visit Nepal Times online at times.npd.com.

SOS RITUALS

The ritual, which involves chanting mantras and making offerings to the gods, is performed by the people of the local community to seek blessings and prosperity. The ritual is believed to bring good fortune and protect against evil spirits.

Online Packages

For more information on online packages, please visit Nepal Times online at times.npd.com.

Whats Trending

Justice for Sale

This news story discusses the issue of corruption and the lack of justice in the Nepalese legal system. The article highlights the need for a fair and transparent judicial system to ensure justice for all.

Most Read and Shared on Facebook

Most popular on Twitter

Ted Akhins killed in climber

This news story reports on the death of a Nepali climber who lost his life during an expedition in the Dolomites. The article provides details about the climber's background, the expedition, and the circumstances surrounding the accident.

Most visited online page

Most commented

Quote of the Day

"Nepali Times" is a Nepali newspaper that covers news, sports, and entertainment. The quote of the day is a popular feature that highlights the paper's commitment to providing quality content to its readers.

-times.com

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Energy-saving Soaltee

Group’s new hotel in Nepalganj sets the standard in energy efficiency

Known for its pioneering role in high-end tourism in Nepal since the 1960s with its five-star Soaltee property in Kathmandu, the group has taken another step by setting Nepalganj on the map.

The new Soaltee Westend Premier in Nepalganj stands out for its elegant architecture and interior design, but it is what is in its basement that is more interesting: a computerised system to manage electricity, temperature, water, and waste that is ecological as well as economical.

“‘We wanted to take our pioneering role in Nepal’s hospitality industry to the next level, and set a new reference point for what hotels in Nepal should be,’ said Shii Kumar Shrestha, Group CEO of the Shrestha Group, today.

“Instead of energy-intensive central air-conditioning in Nepalganj where summer heat hits 45°, the hotel uses radiant pipes to send cold water at 8° to cool walls and floors of the rooms. In winter, the pipes carry heated water. This keeps the entirety of the hotel enclosed in a climate-controlled cocoon.

“So, in addition to measures like ventilation, temperature calibration, even Otis elevators with regen drives, the hotel saves 73% on its monthly energy bill. Rainwater is stored in the 350,000 litre underground tanks, ground water is recharged, toilet effluent is treated for recycling so there is no sewage outflow, and even the exhaust air from the kitchen is filtered before being released.

Nepalganj gets moving

With a six-lane highway joining the city to Kohlapur, plans to upgrade to a Metropolis, international flights starting soon from its expanded airport, a railway station connecting to India, and new hotels and cafes coming up, Nepalganj feels like a town on the move.

Adding to the excitement is the city’s can-do mayor, Dhwani Shumsher Rana of the RNP, who was re-elected last week and immediately set about improving Nepalganj’s crumbling roads, drainage and its poor image.

The city suffered an economic setback when it lost out to Bhuj as the capital of Province 3, but Mayor Rana is lobbying hard to declare Nepalganj a Metropolis in the Provincial City by merging with Kohlapur.

“Come back in a few weeks, you will see a different Nepalganj,” says Rana proudly as he supervised a road widening on a recent rainy Saturday.

“Pavement the boon in Nepalgjan’s emergence in recent years as one of the most popular gateways to Kohlapur in Tibet for Indian pilgrims. (See map). Devotees from all over the world travel to one of Hakamzwaja’s holiest sites, and the easiest route is through Nepalganj. Pilgrims also fly via Kathmandu and Lhasa, cross at Kerung, or go via India.

“The Nepalgjan route entails taking a plane to Simikot, changing to a helicopter to Tiktik on the Tibet border, and then driving by SUV to the sacred Lake Manasarover. Half the 35,000 Indian pilgrims to Tibet every year take the Nepalgjan route, and this week, hoteliers here were full of pilgrims waiting for flights to Simikot delayed by bad weather.

“Indians prefer to go via Nepal because the trip is smoother. The routes through India are very holy," says Yash Thakur, Director of Explore India Tours, which organises pilgrimages for Vindosh from India, South Africa, Mauritius, Fiji, the United States and Britain. “If there is more support from Nepal, we can take 25,000 more pilgrims to Katmandu via Nepal every year.”

Prakash Shrestha of Explore Katmandu has been arranging pilgrimage packages since 1999, and says if infrastructure bottlenecks are fixed, a lot more Indian tourists would prefer the Nepal route because they can also visit Pushpur and Mukteshwar.

“There aren’t enough helicopters, the weather delays flights, Nepalgjan has good hotels, but there are few facilities in Simikot or Tiktik,” says Shrestha.

There is also anticipation in Nepalgjan about Buddha Air Flights from Delhi starting in January which are expected to bring Indian tourists to the city’s new casinos, as well as Indian tourists to Sankhu and Dolpo, which have air connections from Nepalgjan.

“Nepalganj is going to be a multiple hub. We are going to expand Nepalgjan airport, extend the runway and apron and upgrade the terminal building,” says Mayor Dhwani Rana, “and in a few years we will also have a railway station connecting to India.”

Kunda Dixit

NEW NEPALGANJ

Nepalganj

NEPALGANJ

INDIA

Nepal-India followup

On the margins of the BMFETC summit, PM KP Oli and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi signed an agreement, a railway and the establishment of a bus service between India to Nepal and India. Following up on the agreement done during the visit of Prime Minister Oli to India in April. On Friday, Modi is expected to hand over a 400-km Darshamati bridge for pilgrims at the Pashupatinath temple premises in Kathmandu.

Prabhat Bank

BIZ BRIEFS

Mahindra’s XUV Maruti is the latest model to have launched in Nepal as its premium SUV, the product that offers 999955, featuring a bold new design. Luxurious interiors and higher power, enhanced suspension, a quieter cabin, electric sunroof, new white wall correctly, 7 inch touch screen compliant with Apple’s Apple CarPlay and Android’s Kausa Plus, and much more.

A thank you note

Thank you for your successful cooperation with banks and corporate institutions, a dinner event, for your support in addressing education inequality in Nepal. From the past 5 years we have been able to create an amazing impact in the children’s education with the help of various corporate partners and individual donors,” said Sri Divya, CEO of Touch Nepal.

Joint vision


NIB in Pashupati

NIB Nepal has decided to upgraded to seventh emission control in the memory of Pashupatinath under its CSR program, a move that will cut emissions from drones to the Pashupatinath temple.
Turning outrage into justice
Is it time for Nepali women to also learn jiu-jitsu like the Suffragettes?

The Kanchanpur rape case should go down in history as a landmark that brought long awaited changes in Nepal’s justice system. How it is implemented and delivered, and how rape is reported in the media.

COMMENT
Sumana Shrestha

In early 1900s when women all over the world were waking up and rising up against patriarchy and were demanding their right to vote, some women in Britain started to train in jiu-jitsu. Martial art came in handy while dealing with male vigilantes who believed women should be harnessed or beaten to submission, and the police who did the same in protecting women. The Women’s Social and Political Party (Suffragettes) was formed in 1903, and two decades later, finally, women over 21 won the right to vote.

Republic of rape
We are in 2018 now, and it is not just women fighting for women, but men are also joining the marches for justice. Rapes do not only happen to women. And in a land where we have to fight to even register a case, the chances of abuse of an irreversible penalty like capital punishment is high. Let us demand fast track courts, a well-funded and well-trained prosecution arm of police, safe houses for women, compensation for victims, and (not or) harsh punishment for the perpetrator. Let us also call for counselling services for rape survivors and efforts to remove stigma of rape. There should also be stricter punishment for those who obstruct justice regardless of their political clout or position in the police or bureaucracy. How is what each sector can do.

Major opposition party
It is shameful to politicise the rape of a minor on the street to try to get some airtime and harass the government. Each party has served in government when there were rape cases. You did very little then, so if you really want to be in the news, then fight it out in Parliament to which you were elected. If you want to join the protests in the streets, leave your political baggage and flags behind. Fight for the right as a citizen, not as a party heck.

Ruling government party
A compensation of Rs 1 million is not what the victim is looking for. Ask yourselves is that your price tag on the life of a child! Where can they go to heal? What is the Ministry of Women and Child Development really doing? What is the Home Ministry doing in Kanchanpur? If you believe the opposition party is fanning the flames, why weren’t you quick off the mark to address the problem? Why did you let it drag on to the point where it could be politicised?

Development agencies
Examine which activist group or government agency you fund and ask for a statement of solidarity from each of them for better implementation and delivery of justice and strict and swifter laws. Your mandate doesn’t need to explicitly state that you will be an ally of the rape victims and survivors. It is assumed.

Nepali citizens
Rapes do not only happen to Nepali women, men are also raped. You don’t need to have a mother, sister, daughter, aunt to empathise with the case. If someone needs to be shot dead to demand justice, then we really have no hope of expecting swift and stern action against perpetrators of other crimes as well. If you do not like ‘dollar wallets’, then create a rape funded organisation that will fight for the cause.

The culture needs to stop objectifying women, and releasing block-headers in which women have no role except to play a love interest of the ‘villain’ or ‘hero’, with no voice, no part at all in a plot in which men are rewarded with love and marriage for stalking a woman. Fight for women not because you think they (we) are weak, but because we want a just society. We want a society that will take responsibility for safety for everyone at all hours.

Media
Cover this as a trend, not an event to be forgotten. Keep following up.

Protestors and activists
Women in Britain 100 years ago were beaten, force-fed when they went on hunger strikes, and it took them almost 25 years to get equal voting rights. They passed the baton to a new generation of leaders, and kept fighting. In Nepal, it may take more peticoat protests, but the next generation of leaders must be groomed. Civilisation always progresses, but in the meantime, Nepal women may also need to learn martial arts to protect themselves.
Pilgrimage to Copenhagen

... to track down the Indian-born son of American missionaries who first built Tiger Tops in Chitwan

Matt Rolff’s Nordic blond hair was pulled back against the neck of his dark jacket, and he gazed across the Copenhagen skyline from her apartment window. “I loved the Chitwan jungle, but it was a trying time.” She smiled wistfully, but the wrinkle between her eyes did not hide the pain behind her eyes. “But life has moved on, let’s not dwell on those days.” Turning to me she crossed her delicate ankles and once again blocked the conversation, siding away from sharing any indiscretions with her young visitor.

I was visiting Denmark ostensibly to promote Nepal, but was hoping to glimpse from Mette more about her time in Chitwan during the early 1960s, married to John Coogman, the Indian-born son of American missionaries who had first built Tiger Tops Hotel, as it then was called. Never having met him, I had a shadowy image of a big blustering man with a rifle slung across his shoulders, a sort of South Asian Avengers figure without the charm or the witting.

How did this stylish slender old lady, dressed in soft twill and pastel cashmere against the summer evening chill, live in this remote forest for so many years in a remote chimpanzee sanctuary and RAMs hunting reserve in southern Nepal? I wasn’t guessing. Graciously hospitable in her modest cozy home, and helpful with travel agents and media contacts, in billing Danish cadence Mette made it clear that her colourful private life was off limits.

There were many gaps in the story but it seemed pretty glamorous to me, a wide-eyed twenty-something, curious about the exotic cast of expatriate characters that composed Nepal’s tourism history. Rumour and innuendo featured a dramatic and clandestine escape from an abusive andatical husband. The narrative went that Mette had made off to Kathmandu airport and freedom, carrying only a small handbag as so not to miss the Chinese Coogman’s turbulent suspensions — with a casual wave that she was “off shopping”, trembling she walked away from her entire Nepalese life.

Inger Lissavnich, Jutt’s Danish wife, provided illusory support and Elizabeth Hawley was a lifelong admirer. She was running Tiger Tops Kathmandu office for Coogman. “There were so few people around it was easy for me to help him out — he was a ‘difficult man’,” Elizabeth’s fingers made the quotation marks. “Mette was wonderful, the poor thing,” Elizabeth had no time for the CIA conspiracies that clung to Coogman, nor his boast that King Mahendra had died in his arms whilst on shikar in Chitwan.

It is hard to imagine what life must have been like for Mette, alone and allegedly confined to the staff bungalow whilst her bullying husband constructed the Africa-inspired conical roof of the main lodge and the first four treestop bedrooms in a spreading silk cotton tree. Two men of the millennium with a penchant for big game hunting, Teddy Lee Wynne Jr and Herbert W. Klein, had found the Chitwan site whilst out shooting tiger with their “white hunter” guide John Coogman, and contracted him to make it happen.

Smooth river stones were collected for the floor, and raw wood, bamboo and grass were cut from the forest for walls and thatched roofs. Set in a clearing overlooking the Rakti River near the Rapti confluence, from her locked room, on a fine day the Himalayas peaks shimmered on the horizon but at night the dense jungle din must have been daunting.

How John and Mette came to be married in the first place is a missing chapter of the book, but by November 1965 they received the first Tiger Tops guests, five Americans, who landed on the grass airstrip of Meghalai in a chartered Royal Nepal Airlines DC 3. Early photos show military-style uniforms, with guns, kisses and lances carried by shikarri guides and elephant drivers to ward off the perceived threat from fierce wild creatures.

The story switches to a cold evening in a New York brownstone at the 1971 annual dinner of the Explorers Club in East 70th Street, and a chance meeting between the Texas owners and AV Jim Edwards, a former banker and Pan Am salesman with the gift of the gab and a fledgling hunting company in Nepal. Tired of their rentact and unreliable manager Coogman’s colonial fantasies, funny tricks and a business reeling with debt, Jim persuaded the two Texans that he and his business partner Chuck McDougal were perfectly placed to take over the ailing management and realize their dream of creating Nepal’s pioneer wildlife tourism venture, in return for part ownership. The deal was done.

Jim’s selective memory and talent for exaggeration has probably embellished accounts of the Tiger Tops Nepal takeover, but after that conversation in New York, John Coogman was fired, leaving death threats and unpaid bills in his wake. Mette had long gone.

Jim liked to say that the new management took off “with a roar”. With no communication system to alert the Chitwan staff, Jim, Chuck and Shikarri Howley arrived in February 1972 unannounced and on foot, walking mile after mile through jungle tracks, wading rivers, and carrying a case full of cash to salvage the situation. There is no doubt they found a surly spectacle of starving elephants, unpaid salaries, broken vehicles and crumbling buildings. Jim claimed that food was so short on that first visit that they had to share a tiger’s kill.

John Coogman never again reappeared in Nepal and so was unable to defend his dubious legacy that faded into uncertain legend, even as Tiger Tops expanded. But we all stayed in touch with the much-loved Mette and her elegant but precocious life in Europe. She did not return either, but there were intriguing whispers about a generous English Duke and other Danish dalliances. But I never dared to ask.

ATTENTION: Tiger Tops during the Coogman era (1965) showing only four top rooms in the simuruglobe, and cuff crested in military-dyed uniforms

John Coogman’s hunting in Chitwan in the 1960s.

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London Times

31 August - 6 September 2018

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31 August - 6 September 2018
Lucia de Vries first saw the majesty of the Himalaya in Gilgit of Pakistan 25 years ago, and fantasised about becoming a Himalayan explorer. The Karakoram was mesmerising and mysterious to this young Dutch woman, and she dreamed of expeditions to unknown peaks. She wanted to follow the footsteps of the early Dutch missionaries Samuel van der Pelt who travelled to Lhasa via Nepal in 1720, and Petrus Rijekhart who was killed in Tibet in 1808.

De Vries herself was at the Jokhang temple in Lhasa when Chinese troops fired on demonstrators, and soon after nearly died when she got lost during a blizzard in Tibet. She was rescued by nomads, but her frightfulness was so severe she had to be hospitalized in Austria.

"I gave up my dream of exploring the Himalayas and decided to be an arm-chair Himalayan traveler," recalls de Vries, who first came to Nepal in 1988, and then decided to move here in 1992. "My main motivation was to do something more useful in life using my journalism skills, and to learn more about Buddhism and Hinduism."

She worked with the environmental group NEFII on its publication Hata Hati, set up a publishing house for children’s books and wrote from Nepal, for the Dutch and Belgian media. With friends, she established Animal Nepal in 2003 to take care of abandoned dogs and pets.

De Vries decided to commemorate her 25 years in Nepal with an anthology of writings from the Himalayas that had inspired her. The volume Mountain Bound contains material by everyone, from the 18th century British surgeon Henry Amosse Oldfield to the Japanese explorer Uesu Jiro Kogouchi, and right down to the American climber Arlotta Blum – all people whom de Vries admires for their courage and pioneering journeys of discovery.

For someone who grew up in a country whose horizons are unmarked by any kind of elevation, located partly below sea level, living in the Himalaya was not an obvious choice," de Vries writes in her Foreword to Mountain Bound.

De Vries has grown to love Kathmandu Valley, and the familiar silhouette of "Chimpanzi and her sister" as well as the snowy ramparts to the north that are almost home. However, she laments: "Kathmandu today is a far cry from the place I fell in love with three decades ago."

Her beloved Himalayan mountains are being ravaged by bad roads, unregulated urbanisation, and with climate change the mountains are more vulnerable than ever.

The book is a tribute to the Himalayas, and the 46 explorers (all European, except one Japanese) who were moved by the mountains to write in awe about them. The excerpts from 19th and 20th century are by ‘missionaries, mountaineers, mystics and mountaineers’. The earliest writing is by the Austrian Jesuit Ignaz Baudel, whose account of his journey to Lhasa in 1776 is included in the book because it was published in 1804.

For those overwhelmed by the available literature on the mountain scenery, culture and history of the Himalaya (or don’t have the budget to buy all the books), Mountain Bound is a useful primer. You get a glimpse of the adventures of people like William Kidnapping, George Mallory, Peter Matthiessen, Edmund Hillary, George Schaller, or Christoph von Flowe-Haimendorf, so that you can always go and buy their books if you liked what you read.

There is a useful glossary of the source books at the end.

Lucia de Vries has slipped in one of her own writings (The Winds of Change) to the anthology, which is a haunting profile of a Dali Monist guerrilla, Chandra, who was killed by the Army in an unannounced village in Central Nepal. It is one of the most mastered reportage of the Maoist conflict by a western journalist, and peels off the layers of caste, class, social injustice, state neglect and violence that lay at the root of the conflict.

This last paragraph from the chapter is a lyrical portrayal of the Nepal landscape during the war years: "Walking the trail towards the village, Chandra must have looked up at the moonless skies, huddled together like sleeping dogs. His eyes must have trailed along the ridge ... to the flowering fruit trees of his ancient home. He must have noticed the freshly boughed fields, rich golden brown, waiting for a new life." — Randa Dicht
Visit the collection and processing warehouse of Doko Recyclers in Sano Thimi to gauge the seriousness of Nepal's hazardous e-waste crisis. Hear experts tell us that after India banned e-waste imports last year, e-trash is piling up and Nepal needs to urgently come up with a solution.

As purchasing power
Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) that requires consumers to pay a disposal tax at the time of purchase of any electronic good, and manufacturers and importers to take back the end-of-life product to be safely disposed.

Lead and lithium batteries from inverters, vehicles and solar systems make up a large portion of the e-waste in Nepal, and it saw a surge during the decade of severe power cuts. Nepal has accumulated an estimated 35,000 tons of battery waste, of which nearly 10,000 were from inverters and 9,000 from solar systems.

The Alternative Energy Promotion Centre (AEPC) plans to establish a semi-automated recycling plan for lead acid batteries, but experts say it is too little, too late. Electric vehicle use is rising, which means very soon there will be a bigger problem of managing lithium ion batteries that power cars, laptops and smartphones.

The Solid Waste Management Act 2011 addresses industrial and hazardous waste, but there is no separate mention of e-waste. The public is left with only one option - sell e-waste to scrap dealers. But recyclers cherrypick the most valuable waste, and this involves unsafe dismantling, extraction of useful metals, and dumping of the hazardous waste in landfills, contaminating the soil, groundwater and rivers.

The government doesn’t have any plan on e-waste management, as of now, says Salaha Shrestha of the Department of Environment. However, a new Hazardous Waste Regulation is being drafted, which addresses the control and management of e-waste, and a ban on illegal import of electronic goods.

Nepal is a signatory to the Basel Convention that prohibits trans-boundary movement of hazardous waste, unless a country has a local solution for disposal.

Worldwide, some 45 million tons of electronic and electrical waste was produced last year alone, and this has been increasing at 7% a year. According to a study carried out by Nepal’s Department of Environment, Kathmandu alone discards up to 120 metric tons of e-waste last year.

Another survey earlier this year by Kathmandu University’s Soboth Laxmi found that e-waste makes up almost 6.5% of the total municipal waste in Kathmandu, which is close to the global average. That may not seem like a lot, but much more is discarded without the knowledge of the Municipality.

“At the pace we are moving, it could become a crisis,” warned electronic waste management expert Kushal Parajuli at a workshop on e-waste last month in Kathmandu.

Increasing purchasing power, planned obsolescence of electronic gadgets and the lack of strict regulation on disposal has eroded the Nepali culture of repairing, reusing and recycling, according to Sanjay Golchha of the Himal Ecologists.

“On average, Nepalis change their mobile phones every 15 months. More than 6 million phones are imported every year. There has to be a mechanism for their disposal,” he said.

Countries in Europe and East Asia are introducing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E-waste kg/person</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norway</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UK</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Denmark</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
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<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>France</td>
<td>21</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In the United States, America generates the most e-waste in the world. Although some states have strict regulations, a majority of the e-waste is exported.
How to deal with its e-waste?

As power rises, Kathmandu faces the problem of electronic waste disposal

The legislation around the world

**DENMARK**
A 2006 producer responsibility scheme makes manufacturers responsible for disposal.

**GHANA**
Known as the ‘e-waste dumping ground of the world’, the country now has an import ban on imported second-hand electronic goods.

**CHINA**
China is among the largest importers of e-waste. It has imposed a ban on 24 types of foreign garbage, including electronic waste, since last year.

**THAILAND**
After the Chinese ban, Thailand assumed the new dumping ground for the world’s electronic trash. But it will ban 432 types of e-waste within six months.

**INDIA**
Introduced extended producers responsibility in 2016, and imposed a ban on imports of all e-waste last year.

...Meanwhile in Kathmandu

Official imports of electronic items which ultimately end up being e-waste.

**E-waste generation (in tons) from household waste in Kathmandu Valley**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Mobiles</th>
<th>Televisions</th>
<th>Computers</th>
<th>Laptops</th>
<th>Washing Machines</th>
<th>Refrigerators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,346,495</td>
<td>138,134</td>
<td>8,772</td>
<td>214,140</td>
<td>14,527</td>
<td>126,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,371,981</td>
<td>140,888</td>
<td>98,037</td>
<td>168,268</td>
<td>14,527</td>
<td>126,386</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>1,371,981</td>
<td>140,888</td>
<td>98,037</td>
<td>168,268</td>
<td>14,527</td>
<td>126,386</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** DOEMENTAL
**GETAWAY**

*Tourist Hotspots, Getaways*

- **Okhaldhunga**
- **Kumaun Hills**
- **Khumjung**
- **Kathmandu Valley**
- **Pokhara**
- **Sikkim**
- **Gokarna Forest Resort**

**Okhaldhunga**

A vast tract of forest and fertile farmland, known for its scenic beauty and rich biodiversity.

**Kumaun Hills**

A mountain range famous for its beautiful landscapes and rich wildlife.

**Khumjung**

A small town in Solukhumbu district known for its cultural and religious significance.

**Kathmandu Valley**

The heart of Nepal, known for its ancient temples, vibrant culture, and bustling markets.

**Pokhara**

A popular destination known for its beautiful lakes, mountains, and adventure sports.

**Sikkim**

A small state in the northeast known for its snow-capped mountains, dense forests, and rich flora and fauna.

**Gokarna Forest Resort**

A luxurious resort offering panoramic views of the Gokarna forest and nearby wildlife.

**Barahi Jungle Lodge**

The first jungle lodge in Chitwan district offers a unique experience of wildlife and nature.

**The Fulbari Resort & Spa**

The ultimate grandeur and luxury, Fulbari is far and away the best in every field but at the centre of all that matters.

**Shangri-La Village Resort**

A night and day special package at the village resort for those who want to experience the wilderness.

**The Old Inn**

The Old Inn is a welcoming place with its old-world charm.

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**Critical mass KTM**

A great fun for the kids to gather at Kathmandu Durbar Square for a short ride around the streets to mark presence and entry in the gas.

**Nexilis night market**

Art, food, and a unique variety of handicrafts of high-quality from across Nepal.

**Muna Madan**

Directed by Sabin Kanti, Muna Manad, an epic poem by great poet Lalmi Prasad Devkota will be performed at the theatre.

**Scooter exchange camp**

Drop by to upgrade your petrol vehicles to a PUV.

**Base camp pot luck**

Bring your favourite home cooked meal and get to taste others’ dishes as well.

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**Moksh fest**

Chill out in the garden with live acoustic music and Chef Rajai Lama’s multi-course stalls. Do not worry about the kids as there will be a separate recreation corner including an art, painting, bonfire cattle and by train.

**Umang expo**

A free day outdoor event to celebrate with young female entrepreneurs, their ideas, products, and impact. They have created with the help of EWEP2018. Also featuring Made in Nepal products, food and game stalls.

**House of Music**

The Elements and Aadi Shrestha’s, Rabin Nirupane will be playing their original music to a great applause.

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**Godawari Running Fest**

Run, climb, crawl and wander to test your strength, stamina and team-building at Nepal’s first obstacle race. Register to participate in one of the FNW Ultra Run 10K, SAINING Trail Run 10K, Khaptad Trail Run 10K, Uphill Trail Run 10K, and Tourists Run 5K.

**PIT Night**

A night full of different genres: underground and deep house music, urban hip hop, house music and turntable, DJ, beatbox, soul-rolling in progressive psychedelic, played by various DJs.

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**Sun Down Affair 5**

Soak in the stunning sunset view at Sun Down Affair’s fifth volume this Saturday, with DJ SK and DJ Anika. Join the fun, enjoy the food, and of course, the music.

**Jammmin Thursday**

Meet fellow musicians and play a few tunes with them, or just enjoy listening to artists jamming and having fun together. A place for musicians, DJs, and music lovers.

**Taza**

The restaurant brings a bit of Middle-Eastern flare to Kathmandu with its all-Gurkha menu, Shwarma, Kebab, hummus, lebneh—everything is fresh and finger-licking good. Now, Taza also has a knack for offering creative and exotic Polite food.

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**Imago Dei Café**

The menu, inspired by Imago Dei’s features limited option for each weekend, yet thoughtfully created with healthy balance of protein and 500 calories. You can enjoy pizza over a healthy and filling variety of Imago Dei’s.

**The Bent Fork**

This European style restaurant offers the best salads and varieties of continental dishes. Cozy evenings with family and friends. Try these signature grilled Elder Dinner or Beef Burger.

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**Gokarna Forest Resort**

The resort is a paradise for nature lovers with stunning views of the natural landscape and great facilities for fine dining.

**Barahi Jungle Lodge**

The first jungle lodge in Chitwan district overlooking Chitwan National Park. Spa, boutique guest rooms, individual and two-in-one private villas, including a suite with a private swimming pool.

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**OUR PICK**

A man meets all the likes, but the only gadget to keep her one’s eye on when the visit is over to a certain location. Gradually he realizes that she is not a woman but a ghost who is here to meet away, behind hiding only their clothes. Now does he fall with her? Starring: Shaambhu Kapari and Rajlaxmi Rai, this horror movie directed by Amudalaskar is based on a true story legend in the villages of Kamtrakha.

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**Air Quality Index**

**Kathmandu**

- **24-30 August**: 50

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**The restaurant’s staff have kept both the BMC and pollution control in bank on central Kathmandu’s air, as the pollution level is still on alert.**

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**About Town**

**Dining**

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**Events**

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**Music**

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**Getaway**

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Can Nepal end child marriage by 2030?

Married young: Sresta Kunju Sada (14), whiteoped when 14 after her Grade 10 exam, but her father is away from work in India and she is prevented from studying by her in-laws.

Sudesh Rishidi, a 14-year-old from the Musar community was married at 13, a time when he had no idea what his husband’s responsibilities were.

Namrata is Sudesh’s friend and was married when she was 8 and had no idea what marriage was. His parents wanted someone to help with the cooking.

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Namrata Sharma, in Janakpur

Given Nepal’s poor record in enforcement and implementation, it is a given that here, passing laws are not enough. This is glaringly evident in the average age of marriage, which is stuck at 18 despite law raising the minimum marriage age to 20.

Data shows that 37% of girls in Nepal marry before the age of 18, and 10% are still married by the age of 15. This is the highest rate of child marriage in South Asia after Bangladesh and India. Despite the rise in female literacy, child marriage has not gone down significantly. This is seen as a proof that education is slow to reform deep-rooted patriarchy.

Child marriage is highest in districts with low female literacy and the Tarai districts have a particularly high rate. Experts say that even if marriage age can be deferred to 16 for boys and girls in the Tarai, it will be an achievement.

This has thrown the government’s target to eradicate child marriage by 2030 in doubt.

At a Girl Summit for the youth of Province 1 and 2 at the last month, local government officials, lawmakers and in this wrote a message to meet the zero child marriage goal by educating, empowering and employing girls. They heard from adults who were married when they were children, and were informed of pressures in male-dominated society from family and the influence of the Internet in encouraging early marriage.

Sahara Rishidi, from a Musar community in Kankali, Morung was married at 15 when he was married and did not know a husband’s responsibilities. “I knew I had to look after my family, but I did not know how,” recalls Rishidi, now a 26-year-old anti-child marriage campaigner.

Nalini is Sudesh’s friend and is now 26, but he was married when he was 18 and his wife was 14. His parents had five other children, and wanted him married only so they could have a daughter-in-law to help with the household chores. Today Nalini is a well-known Matrubhumi singer and uses her musical talent to raise awareness against child marriages.

Sakshi Kumari Sada from Chandranagar eloped with Indrajit Sada when she was 16, just after her Grade 10 exam. However, with her husband working in India, her in-laws refused to let him study and dismissed her back to her parent’s home. She is now worried about her future.

Posha Shah, 18, from Janakpur had to take care of her mother and three siblings after her father died. Relenting to pressure from her mother to get married, she wedded 21-year-old Sarker Shah, but says: “I did this for my mother, who was facing financial pressure to raise the family.” She is said about dropping out of school, but understands why her mother forced her to do it.

Ranit Khadu is now 15 and an active member of a political party, but was married when she was 11. “I was not even aware that I had been married,” recalls Khadu, who is now associated with the shadi chair of her party. She is glad the average age of marriage has climbed to 17, even though it is still low.

Ajoy Kumar Chaudhary, from Morung was married at 15 and in Grade 12. He is under pressure from family to get married but has evolved a clever strategy to deal with it; he brings in his friends to talk to his parents, or he disappears from his home when he hears that prospective bride families are visiting.

This has helped him to stay single till now, and he is involved in performing street dramas to show the Musar community reasons on why child marriage deprives women of opportunities in life.

Suresh is a 26-year-old anti-child marriage campaigner.

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BACK TO KATHMANDU: Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi being welcomed by Defence Minister Ishwar Pekharki in Kathmandu as he arrived on Thursday morning to attend the fourth BIMSTEC Summit.

ON THE MOVE: Newari communities in Bhaktapur play Gondu Bajri on the occasion of Janai Tumhina full moon on Sunday.

BOOM: Locals in Patan mark S氘prun, the festival of deaths and rebirth, with a Lahee Dance. The day is also observed as an occasion for sale so citizens can let off steam.

GAY PRIDE: Members of LGBTQ community in Nepal and their supporters participate in the annual Gai Jatra Gay Pride Parade in Thamel on Monday.

BEST AGENT: Qatar Airways country manager Jaya Prakash Nair and Senior Manager of Indian Sub-Continent Navneet Chawla award the Best Agent Award 2011-2018 to Osho World Travel Nepal at Radisson Hotel on Sunday.
Really smart phone

Just before the seventh generation of the Galaxy Note series hit the market, Samsung launched its latest Galaxy Note 9, a 6.4-inch device with a Snapdragon 845 processor, a 12MP + 12MP dual camera system, and a 3,300mAh battery. The phone is available in black, blue, and red colors and is priced at Rs. 60,990.

The phone’s screen is a Super AMOLED display with a resolution of 2960 x 1440 pixels and a 19:9 aspect ratio. It features a fingerprint scanner located under the display, a dedicated S Pen stylus, and a water-resistant IP68 rating.

The phone runs on Android 8.1 Oreo and is powered by a 3,300mAh battery. It supports fast charging and wireless charging. The phone has 8GB of RAM and comes in 128GB and 512GB storage options.

In the camera department, the Galaxy Note 9 has a 12MP + 12MP dual-camera setup on the back, with a 24MP selfie camera on the front. The phone offers features like portrait mode, depth control, and background blur.

The phone also features a 3.5mm headphone jack and supports 4G VoLTE, Wi-Fi, Bluetooth 5.0, and NFC. It has two SIM slots and comes with 4GB of RAM and 64GB of internal storage.

Overall, the Galaxy Note 9 is a powerful device that offers a great combination of features and performance. It is a must-have for smartphone enthusiasts who want a phone with both style and substance.
Sewa Bhattarai

It has only been two weeks since Nepal’s new Penal Code (Section 295) slapped heavy fines and jail terms for recording conversations (Section 299), and announced strict penalties for sending, receiving or using online data Section 300. Another privacy-related bill in Parliament will prohibit people from publishing personal information of public officials. But it has already had a chilling effect across the Nepali media.

A person who ridiculed the prime minister on Facebook was tracked down and arrested for photoshopping the prime minister’s photo, which violates Section 295 of the Code. Editors of Nagrik, Ansapurna Post and Kantipur were summoned to the Press Council for interrogation.

Photojournalist Usha Titikha was taking a photo of a damaged CTU’s camera at an airport recently, when she was stopped. “Don’t you know the new rules about not taking photos?” she was warned.

If enacted earlier, the new laws would have forced editors to spike their recent investigative reports on the Chief Justice’s defaulted certificate, photos showing collusion between top politicians and medical college owners, and stories of corruption in high places.

The Federation of Nepali Journalists last week issued its Godavari Declaration demanding that the proposals be immediately rescinded. The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), The Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) and others all condemned the move, demanding that Nepal adhere to the international standards and principles of freedom of expression. Although the constitution guarantees press freedom as an invisible right, the laws try to enforce constitutional provisions protecting a citizen’s right to privacy more strictly, even extending it to public figures.

Press adviser to the prime minister and former editor Kunda Aryal admits that a free press is important, but says the Nepali media has failed to self-regulate. “Journalists do not rein themselves in, they feel free to make derogatory comments, especially about women. It is necessary to regulate the press,” he told Nepali Times.

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The crackdowns started coming thick and fast after the Nepal Communist Party government was elected to power in January: it consolidated the surveillance arms of the state in the PML; proposed restrictions on advocacy through the National Integrity Policy, and banned popular areas for protest.

What Shahidul Alam’s arrest reveals about the political climate across South Asia

On 5 August, Bangladeshi artist, writer and activist Shahidul Alam was interviewed on Al Jazeera about the death of schoolchildren run over by a public bus. Alam said that the anger of the protesting youth were not just with the transportation sector but the dire situation of the country as a whole. He outlined a litany of everything that was wrong in Bangladesh: “The looting of banks, the gagging of the media, the extra-judicial killings, the disappearances, the use to give protection money at all levels, bribery at all levels, corruption in education.

That very day, security personnel in plainclothes arrived at Alam’s Dhaka home in the middle of the night and took him away.
The right to say the emperor is naked

Sitze flourishes best and is most productive when there are controls on free speech, and Harithan Acharya should know. He says he performed his most fulfilling and creative skills during the Puncharatna period.

"Saying '17.5% out load was banned,' since it was the year of King Mahendra’s coup. So we go by the saying ‘by the year between 16 and 18,’ remembers Acharya. "We also called Prime Minister Surya Nepal's 'Chapa' instead of Surja. We played cat and mouse with the censors, and it was more fun and creative. Today’s sitze seems to lack that art."

Satire, in fact, seems less necessary when there is full freedom, but it is a sideline during restricted periods. Everyone included the sultans and Shahs, the royal families, are necessary to let off a little steam. So, they allowed one day in a year in Gai Jatra (27 August this year) when people had freedom to do anything.

Kumal Aryal reassured us that the Code and laws can always be challenged, and his doing so gives officers who are in very similar positions as the Scout leader, the writers of the law that is more dangerous, more power.

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In the past week, several high profile activities and protests have been arrested. In Nepal in which is clearly a vendetta on the part of the government. And in Nepal too, the government has passed legislation that not only prevent journalists from reporting on state activity, but in Bangladesh, several people have been arrested for posting or sharing comments critical of the government on Facebook. The government there is planning to replace the existing National IC Act with even more draconian legislation. In Myanmar, journalists reporting on the Rohingya crisis have been arrested and charged with violating the Official Secrets Act.

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Hugging HOGs

On the way from Kathmandu to Pokhara, one can see the grandeur of the Himalayas, the glacial rivers, the terraced rice paddies, and the ancient cities. The trail winds through the mountains, offering breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape.

The trail is not for the faint of heart. It is a challenging route that requires a good level of fitness. The terrain is rugged, with steep hills and rocky paths. The weather can be unpredictable, with sudden rainstorms and storms. The trail is closed during the monsoon season, so make sure to plan your trip accordingly.

The trail is not just for hikers. It is also a popular route for mountain bikers and horse riders. The trail is well-marked and easy to follow, even for those without much experience. The trail is also a popular route for wildlife enthusiasts, with the chance to spot tigers, leopards, and other rare animals.

The trail is also a popular route for shepherds, who use it to move their flocks between different pastures. The trail is a symbol of the close relationship between the people and the land, and the importance of maintaining the natural environment.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of peace and reflection. The trail is a place to connect with nature, to reflect on life's challenges, and to find inner peace.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of beauty. The trail is a place to be inspired, to find new perspectives, and to be reminded of the wonder of the natural world.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of community. The trail is a place to meet other hikers, bikers, and riders, and to share stories, experiences, and knowledge.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of hope. The trail is a symbol of the resilience of the human spirit, and the ability to overcome challenges.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of possibility. The trail is a place to dream, to imagine, and to create.

The trail is not just for adventure. It is also a place of gratitude. The trail is a place to appreciate the beauty of the natural world, and the gift of the human spirit.