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THE TROIKA

After a prolonged tug-of-war that polarised the ruling Nepal Communist Party (NCP) to the point where it looked like it was headed for a split, a three-way truce this week has defused the crisis for now.

Prime Minister KP Oli is co-chair of the NCP with Pushpa Kamal Dahal, and relations between the two had soured over Dahal's suspicion that Oli was not going to stick to their 2017 'gentlemen's agreement' in which they decided to take turns being prime minister for 2½ years each. While Oli was in Delhi for Narendra Modi's swearing-in last month, Dahal even leaked a memo that proved the pact was in writing.

The third leader in the Communist Troika is former Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal, who has also been critical of Oli's desire to go it alone, both within the party and in government. He even sang

a line from a popular Nepali folk song while Oli was in Davos earlier this year, which likened the PM to playing the fiddle while the country burned. Nepal has publicly sided with Dahal since both felt sidelined by Oli, and gained influence by using the swing vote of his loyalists to play kingmaker in the party.

With the government and party paralysed by the equal numerical strength of members loyal to the three leaders, something had to give. It appears that the combined strength of Dahal and Nepal convinced Oli that he had to compromise on appointments to the central committee, politburo and party department heads, as well as chiefs of fraternal organisations.

The first indication of this was a breakthrough this week on dividing up the functions of the 441 members for district in-charge and party structure at the local level. Inability to do so had

kept the party's decision-making centralised in Kathmandu, thus undermining true devolution.

What complicates matters is that many of the 441 central committee and 135 politburo members are also elected representatives in all three levels of government. Also, the 60:40 formula between former UML and former Maoist members would not reflect loyalties to the Troika.

Still, it looks like good sense has prevailed, and Oli has assured former UML dissidents that he will do more listening henceforth. Oli's detractors are also putting pressure on him to relinquish either the prime ministership or

party chairmanship under the one-post-one-person rule that they have demanded.

There are still some much-delayed formalities to conclude before the NCP can be considered truly united. After that happens, Oli is expected to reshuffle his cabinet to address some of the widespread criticism of his government's non-performance.

For many analysts, the Communist Troika is behaving no differently than the Nepali Congress' own tripartite leadership under GP Koirala, KP Bhattarai and Ganesh Man Singh after the 1990 People's Movement. 

Kiran Nepal



buzz

UPCYCLING

PAGE 8-9

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GOING PLACES TOGETHER

ACT GLOBALLY, THINK LOCALLY

As nearly 300 scientists from 60 countries arrived in Kathmandu this week to attend the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to plan its next report, it is as if the rain god was waiting to remind them to be more forthright about the causal link between climate change and weather.

After being three weeks late, unprecedented monsoon squalls this year hit the country with record precipitation in places. Floods and landslides killed nearly 80 people in Nepal, affecting millions of people downstream in India.

It must have been premonition that drove us to write an editorial in this space on 28 June warning of just such a calamity. We said floods are an annual phenomenon in Nepal and farmers have learnt to live, even benefit, from them. Floods are natural, we wrote, disasters are not.



It is when we let the city expand into the floodplains of rivers, when we construct ill-designed road embankments or block natural drainage systems that floods claim lives. We saw ample evidence of that this week from the Kalanki and Nakkhu neighbourhoods of Kathmandu, where streams turned into raging brown torrents to reclaim their original courses.

And in Rautahat, which saw a repeat of the 2017 disaster caused by flood control levees on the Bagmati narrowing the river, which was then dammed by a road embankment across the border in India. The fatalities were much less this time because the Indian embankment gave way, releasing the dammed water. But in the process, it inundated large parts of northern Bihar.

Bad urban planning combined with climate-related weather extremes will surely lead to future catastrophes. The way to be prepared for them is to understand rivers, not block their paths to the sea. The river will always win.

This was a point driven home at the IPCC meeting in Kathmandu this week by co-chair of Working Group 2, Debra Roberts of South

We really do not need more evidence that the climate emergency is happening. The question is, what we are going to do about it.

Africa. She told our reporter: “Kathmandu has been tested over the last week by an unusual monsoon – you need the people who run and design this city to have access to information on major global transitions like how urban infrastructure can cope with future climate events.” (Page 14-15)

Indeed, urban infrastructure is one of the four major global transitions that countries need to pay attention to in coming decades, underlined the IPCC’s 1.5 Special Report last year. The others are land use, industry and energy systems.

The scientists writing the IPCC’s 6th assessment in Kathmandu this week will be focusing on adaptation and impact, but their final report will not be released till 2022. The danger is that, at the accelerated pace of warming that we are witnessing, the data used to predict impact will itself be outdated.

Just as the Himalayan Assessment released by ICIMOD earlier this year showed, the warming trend is already much worse than we thought. Our mountains are warming up to 0.7°C degrees faster than the global average, melting and shrinking glaciers at an accelerated pace.

If we go on with business as usual, spewing the same amount of carbon we do today, two-thirds of the ice in the Himalaya will be gone this century, with catastrophic effects for the up to 1.6 billion people living downstream.

Ice and snow get all the media attention, but weather extremes are already depleting aquifers and as groundwater levels drop, springs are going dry in Nepal’s mid-mountains.

Our governments have a tendency to blame all their past neglect and poor governance on the climate crisis. In fact, climate change is a god-sent excuse for them to do nothing. However as we know, Nepal’s poverty, dependence on rain-fed agriculture and lack of clean drinking water, are structural problems that pre-date climate change. The global climate emergency just makes all our existing development problems more challenging.

What we have to be prepared for is that even the IPCC’s findings presented in Incheon and Katowice last year may be too optimistic, and that warming trends will certainly be much worse.

We really do not need more evidence that the climate emergency is happening. The question is, what we are going to do about it. Being an inter-governmental body, the IPCC is a vital interface between scientists and politicians. Policymakers now need to turn the knowledge available into specific action for the local context. The old cliché may have to be turned around: act globally, think locally.

10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Ten years ago this week, the front page story in *Nepali Times* by Prashant Jha from New Delhi (#460, 17-23 July, 2009) dealt with what Nepal-watchers in India’s capital were thinking about the political goings-on in Kathmandu. Then, as now, Delhi seemed confused. Excerpt:

‘There is a great deal of confusion in India about the political confusion in Nepal, but officials here say they want the Maoists to “reform internally” and support the Madhav Nepal government.

Sections of the Indian establishment concede Nepal’s government suffers a legitimacy crisis. They insist that the process must move forward in the present framework. Indian officialdom wants the government now to try to get the political process back on track. India is learnt to have told Madhav Nepal to “keep the doors open” for the Maoists and constantly engage with them.’



ONLINE PACKAGES



HORNS AND BONES

Upcycling is gaining momentum in Nepal. Everything from paper to cars has been transformed into usable and wearable items. Discarded buffalo horns are turned into Maori-inspired pendants, waste fabric into clothing items. Story: [page 8-9](#).



HIGH AND DRY

Travel to Upper Mustang on Nepal’s northern border to see the effect of either too much snow at the wrong time, or no snow when it is needed most, on farmers in this arid region. The impact of climate change on weather patterns has forced entire villages to move because of water shortage. Story: [page 14-15](#).

TOXIC NATIONALISM

We are proud Nepalis, we were never colonised, Nepal is the land where Buddha was born, has Mt Everest, and we once set a new bar for gallantry (‘Toxic pseudo nationalism’, Editorial, #968). But does any of that contribute to the nation’s prosperity? Buddha was born in Lumbini, but how many of us voluntarily practice any of his tutelage? Has not being colonised helped Nepal? Do we even pay all our taxes? This is probably one of the most honest articles written by a Nepali journalist. It exhorts us to assess our inert mindset insulated by toxic nationalism.

Bobby Sharma

■ Actually, Everest has three faces and only one is in Nepal. And to be fair, the Chinese have also turned Kailash into an outdoor latrine that is far, far worse than Nepal’s Everest Base Camp. But fair point.

Ed Douglas

#METOO

The women are brave to speak out. (‘Nepali women take to media to expose abuse’, Reeti K.C., #968). It should be on the political, social, national and local agenda. Abuse is unacceptable.

Renate Schwarz

■ To make their accusations stick, women have to be proactive. Film and record the perpetrators, get evidence. Otherwise the men will keep getting away with it.

Alex Ferguson

GOOD DOCTORS

Proud of Nepali doctors who are upholding their profession as real healers, without any help from the medical industry/pharmacos (‘New treatment for Nepal’s leprosy patients’, Sonia Awale, #968).

Prasanna Parajuli

SPIRITUAL TOURISM

I’ve been going to Nepal a lot because of this spiritual offer for quite a long time, and I am not the only one. (‘To make up for monsoon slack, Nepal opts for spiritual tourism’, Sonam Lama, #968). I don’t know the income this brings to Nepal, but it must be significant, not to mention the social benefit, the monasteries often take charge of the education and health of all the young people they welcome.

Etienne Loyon

WHAT’S TRENDING

Nepali women take to media to expose abuse

by *Reeti K.C.*

Nepal’s #MeToo movement dropped out of the headlines because few of the accused faced action. Upset by impunity, women now share personal testimonies of harassment online. This article was widely circulated on social media and generated many comments. Visit [nepalitimes.com](#) to join the discussion.

Most reached and shared on Facebook

Most commented

New treatment offers hope for Nepal’s leprosy patients

by *Sonia Awale*

A revolutionary new treatment for open wounds has reduced the healing period of leprosy patients in Nepal, saving them money and prolonged pain. Read the full story on our website and watch video of how the treatment is carried out in a leprosy hospital.

Most popular on Twitter



Nepal’s fatalistic ‘ke garne’ culture


by *Anil Chitrakar*


Corruption and a fatalistic ‘ke garne’ culture make us accept that budgets need to be spent in the last days of the fiscal year. Citizens should not tolerate *Asare Bikas* because they are the only ones who do not benefit from it.


Most visited online page

QUOTE TWEETS

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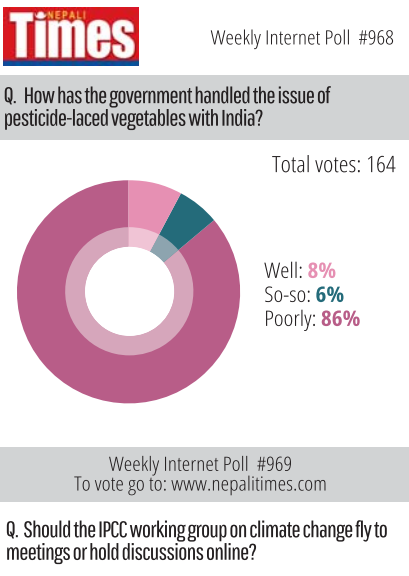
Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
The monsoon arrived late, but when it did it burst with vengeance. Many parts of #Nepal saw their monthly average rainfall for this time of year in 3 days.
- 

Maddy Broadbridge @Madeleine_Br
Absolutely awful to hear of the floods in Kathmandu and eastern Nepal. Thinking of the beautiful communities and all those affected.
- 

Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
Why does #Nepal spend all this money in the last two weeks of the Nepali month of Asar? And what is this Asare Bikas making waves in the Nepali media this week? Read for yourself in this edition of 1/2 Full by Anil Chitrakar.
- 

Saniaa Shah @SaniaaSan
I cannot agree enough. Both government and private sector organisations try to spend their leftover annual budget in Asar, and do a shoddy job of things. Procrastination problems! Is it because we are अलसी by nature, as a people?
- 

gehendra dhakal @360_parallel
Classic example of ‘learned helplessness.’ Citizens NEED to unite for social cause and not whatever political ideology they subscribe to. Let the politicians earn their political capital and let us all start to form our social capital. Only then can real development be had.



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So you'd like to do business in Nepal?

The rule banning FDI under Rs50 million is a slap in the face of small and medium enterprises

It is whimsical to expect a small tree to provide boundless fruit without fertilising it and enabling its roots to grow. But that seems to be what Nepal's policymakers think. Government revenue has become dependent on imports, instead of nurturing an enabling business environment for small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs).



GUEST COLUMN
Ritu Pradhan Malla

Such narrow vision is discouraging entrepreneurship and making Nepal further dependent on the outside. Our largest export market is labour, with income generated by the as many as 5 million young Nepali men and women who send money home making up 28% of GDP. That money boosts consumerism, which means more imports. Not even locally grown fresh vegetables can compete with imported, pesticide-laced vegetables because of the high cost of production compounded by lack of human resources to farm the land. And now, the climate crisis will reduce crop yield further. Nepali SMEs have not been able to fulfil local demand in food and manufacturing sectors, as imported goods are cheaper. To compete requires access to technology, markets, information and finance, which is evidently not available. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

should be able to change the situation, but SMEs are barely surviving due to neglect and adverse rules. A recent law banning FDI under Rs50 million is a slap in the face of the SME sector. It looks like Nepal's policymakers did not do much homework before taking this knee-jerk decision. It dashes the dream of entrepreneurs who want to use better technology to deliver competitive goods in the current market. It kills the initiative of entrepreneurs who do not have collateral to work with a bank and would have had the option from a foreign investor. A recent example is an energetic young entrepreneur who was partnering with a foreign investor to settle her high-cost loan. She will no longer be able to do so as the investment threshold has now been increased ten-fold. One can only imagine how many products and services would have been built in Nepal and how many jobs could have been added without the new law. To address the lack of capital and technology transfer, private equity funds in Nepal are still working to make things happen and to attract FDI even when the cost of doing business is still very high. The government needs to create an inclusive environment for investors, who are helping build Nepal's economy. An SME's ripple effect on the local economy can be huge. Business Oxygen (Bo2), for instance, accelerates the growth of Nepali SMEs to help create direct jobs, reduce imports, create

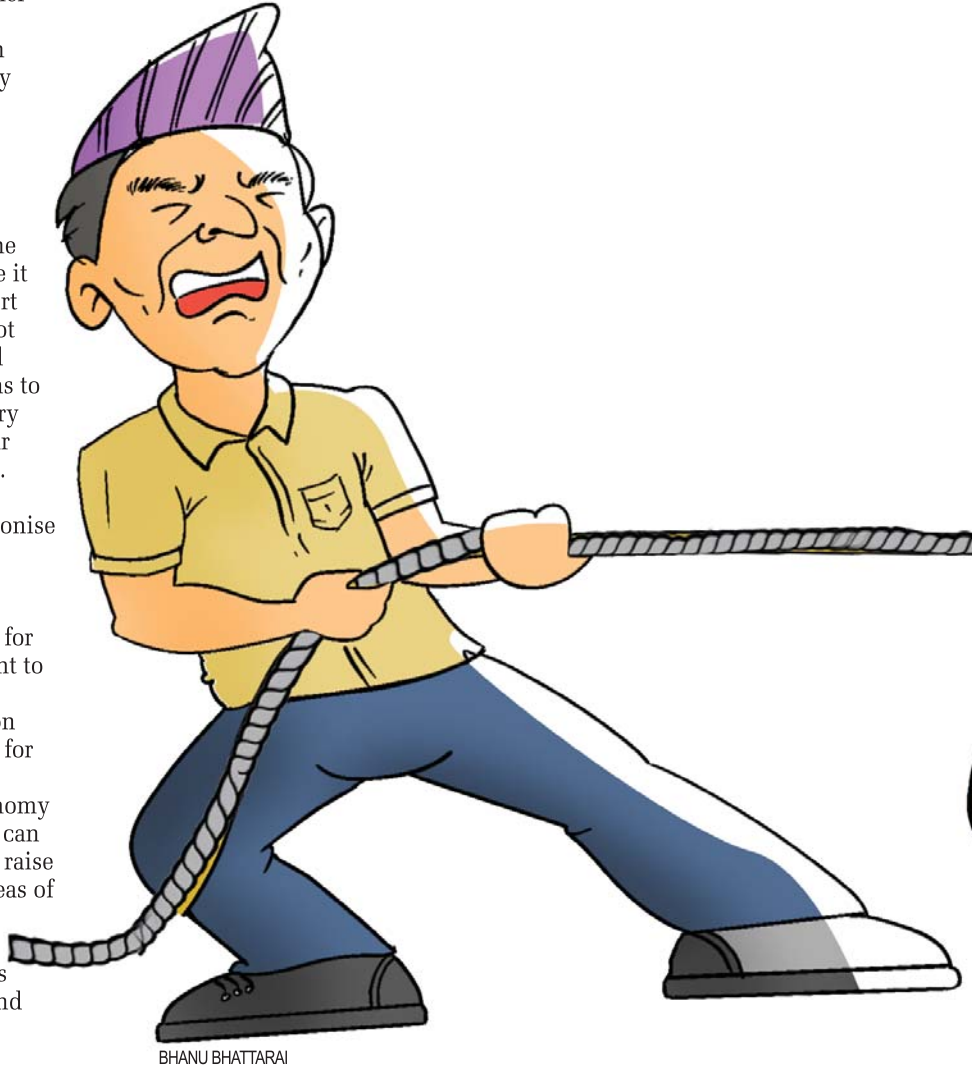
markets, increase dollar revenue and attract new SMEs in the value chain, etc. There is still a yawning market gap in access to finance for SMEs working in sectors restricted under the new law, including primary agriculture and dairy. This further constricts the growth of SMEs in the agri-sector at a time when the climate emergency is already affecting Nepal's food security. Foreign investment could help Nepal's commercial agri-entrepreneurs become more climate resilient, but the recent FDI threshold limit discounts the need for this intervention where it is Nepal needs a stronger support ecosystem for FDI – it should not derail SMEs with new rules and red tape. After all, we have plans to become a middle-income country by 2030 and to achieve all of our Sustainable Development Goals. Here is a checklist to help harmonise the business environment:

- Create a sector-specific permission process
- Provide special concessions for private equity firms that want to help scale up Nepal's SMEs
- Provide special consideration of the working environment for foreign investors supporting inclusive growth in the economy
- The Department of Industry can always check proposals and raise questions when there are areas of suspicion.

Ninety percent of companies registered in Nepal are SMEs, and yet we are restricting FDI under

Rs50 million. It is no wonder that in 2019 Nepal's position in rankings for the ease of doing business fell five points to 110.

Ritu Pradhan Malla is Senior Investment Manager at Business Oxygen Pvt Ltd



New, improved yomari



YOMARI CORNER

Most people are familiar with the traditional yomari filled with molasses or concentrated milk. The Newa delicacy is usually eaten on a special full moon day in winter, and the elongated dumplings made of rice flour with high calorie fillings are supposed to ward off the cold. Now this Kathmandu favourite is getting an upgrade with even more flavours: chicken, potatoes, vegetables and chocolate at Yomari Corner, Lazimpat. Essentially what

the innovative founders of the eatery have done is turned yomari into a kind of large momo. Yomari Corner was established by three childhood friends who are proficient in their own occupations: furniture businessman Suman KC, hospitality professional Bijay Karki, and Vastu professional Manish Nasnani. Their aim is to promote Nepal's own food items and create a long-lasting legacy. The six flavours of yomari each have a unique taste. The chicken,

potato, and vegetable flavours are savoury and can be consumed as light snacks or meals. The potato yomari, they say, is a healthier alternative to the greasy deep fried samosa. The chicken and the vegetable options taste similar to momos, though they are larger and shaped differently. That brings up the question: why not just stick to momos? "We are very careful about the dough we use, and only use traditional rice flour. That is much healthier than the processed white flour that goes into momos in the fast food market," says Bijay Karki. "Besides, yomari is a typical Nepali food that originated in Panauti, while momo's origins are debatable. So it is also an effort to promote food with Nepali roots." After chicken or potato yomari, customers can choose sweet cream, molasses, or chocolate yomari for dessert. Traditional yomari fillings are runny, but Yomari Corner has improvised and made them pasty so that they do not drip when biting into them. Khuwa and chaku are still the most popular flavours, but chocolate was introduced to entice children. It seems to be working. Yomari Corner also takes pride in how the yomarais are made: all the pieces are homemade and handmade using organic ingredients. It sources the sweet cream from Dhunkharka village in the outskirts of Kathmandu, and employs women who are in need of jobs. "Our aim is not just to sell food and earn a profit, but also establish a social enterprise that gives back to the community," says founder Suman KC. **Sewa Bhattarai**

BIZ BRIEFS

Turkish #MissionRescue

Turkish Cargo has performed another life-saving, animal airlift. An endangered rare griffon vulture that became exhausted after flying 1,600 km in Europe along

its migration route was picked up and delivered to Belgrade by the airline. Earlier, the carrier's #MissionRescue initiative transported four lions from Ukraine, which were weak with hunger, to their natural habitat in Johannesburg.

120+ km E-scooter

Electric scooter brand NIU has launched the N-GT, partnering with Bosch and Panasonic. The e-scooter features two removable 60V35Ah lithium-ion batteries that can be recharged in 3.5 hours and a Bosch 3000W electromotor with 70km/h max speed and over 130km range. All scooters come with a prepaid SIM card to connect to the NIU app, which offers 24/7 info on a GPS.

Shorter flights

The opening of Pakistan's air space for east-west through traffic for international airlines has shortened air route to and from Kathmandu to Istanbul by 1 hour and to the Gulf region by 35 minutes.

World Bank supports GoN

The World Bank has renewed its project to support Nepal's effort to strengthen fiscal federalism and improving public financial management. The \$100 million project will be coordinated by the Ministry of Finance.

Qatar's new 777s

Qatar Airways and Boeing finalised an order for five Boeing 777 freighters during a ceremony at the White House on Tuesday 9 July, witnessed by Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir of Qatar and US President Donald Trump. The Boeing 777 freighter has the longest range of any twin-engine freighter and is capable of flying 9,070km.

Samsung Service Centre

A Samsung mobile service centre has opened at Tamrakar Complex in Pako on 17 July, moving from the fourth floor to the

third floor, expanding to 10 help counters. The service centre will provide services such as software, parts replacement and flagship phone repair.

Nepal risks being blacklisted on money laundering

An international task force is not convinced Nepal has done enough to tackle financial crime



Sharad Ojha

Nepal will be evaluated for international money laundering activities by the APG (Asia Pacific Group) of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) during 2019, and may be blacklisted if the government does not adequately crack down on illegal cross-border money transfers.

If Nepal is not able to come up with a workable mechanism to identify criminal activities and bring offenders, including

prominent businesspersons and politicians, under the purview of the law by the end of 2020 it faces the danger of being blacklisted by the task force.

The FATF was established in 1999 to track down and stop money laundering and funding of terrorist activities around the world. Nepal is a member of its associate organisation APG, which investigates regional member countries. With an investigation due, Nepal had hastily passed

the Money Laundering Prevention Act in 2008, but took 2 years to implement it.

An APG working committee evaluated Nepal, and concluded that its attempts to control money laundering were not effective enough. On

February 2010, it put Nepal on an international monitoring list. Nepal then established a Money Laundering Investigation Department. With the help of the IMF and World Bank, the government created legal structures and adopted policies to prevent money laundering. After it took these steps, it was removed from the international monitoring list, which meant that it was not prohibited from doing financial transactions with other countries or international organisations.

Though Nepal improved its legal stance on money laundering after the first international investigation, it does not seem to have made much progress since then in actually preventing tax evasion and money laundering.

In the past, the APG had evaluated Nepal on the basis of its legal safeguards and policies. However, in future it will be looking for concrete action to see if Nepal implemented the 40 suggestions and 11 results that it

made in 2010. "The next evaluation will be focused less on laws and more on implementation and results," admits Binod Lamichhane, spokesperson of the Money Laundering Investigation Department. "So if our implementation remains as weak as it is, it could create problems for us."

Experts say the government will find it very difficult to implement its own laws because so many of those involved are powerful businessmen enjoying political protection. "If the Money Laundering

Prevention Act is implemented, then politicians and officials will have a hard time showing the source of their earnings. Which is why implementation of the Act never became a priority for Nepal. Clearly, it was created only as a showpiece to assuage foreigners," a former director general of the department confided.

Indeed, although everyone agrees that corruption and tax evasion are rampant in Nepal, there is no record of prominent persons being investigated for it. However, since the APG will be investigating on its own next year, the department has been forced to conduct its own secret probes. Director General Rup Narayan Bhattarai says he cannot speak about the investigations at the moment but according to sources, well known Nepalis, including a businessman who is expanding outside Nepal, another tycoon who created an international business network after the 2006 movement, a prominent trader accused of gold smuggling and an industrialist who suddenly switched to tourism, are under investigation.

However, the going is not expected to be easy, because the Money Laundering Investigation Department lacks coordination with other powerful agencies, which is international practice and considered essential to investigate money laundering. Though the law states that Nepal Rastra Bank should coordinate with other agencies and provide information to the department about suspicious financial transactions, the implementation of this law is weak.

"Since our mechanism for identifying illegal wealth is weak, we are not able to figure out if the money, property, shares, gold, etc, deposited in banks are legal or not," says an official of the bank. "So at the moment we are unable to effectively pass on useful information."

Currently, FATF has blacklisted Iran and North Korea, while 12 countries, including Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Cambodia, Ethiopia, and Syria, are currently on its international monitoring list. Nepal risks joining these countries if the APG evaluation does not meet international criteria for transparency.

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Sir Ed would not have liked the queues on Everest this spring

Sir Edmund Percival Hillary KG ONZ KBE was born 100 years ago, on 20 July 1919. A big man in every way, Sir Ed is the Sherpas' beloved Burra Sahib, a towering presence in the Sagarmatha story, the most celebrated New Zealander, with his profile enshrined on every Kiwi five-dollar bill.



But I like to remember his shy ragged grin, the baggy corduroys, a gentle giant reclining during his latter years in the huge brown leather armchair in his Auckland home, surrounded by books and Himalayan mementos. Often one of Lady June's cats would perch on his knee, and during the last of his many regular visits to Nepal my Labrador puppy strayed onto his lap on my Kathmandu sofa (*right*).

From his bee-keeping origins throughout all his accolades and acclaim, Sir Ed remained the consummate Kiwi — humble and approachable, his phone number listed in the public telephone directory.

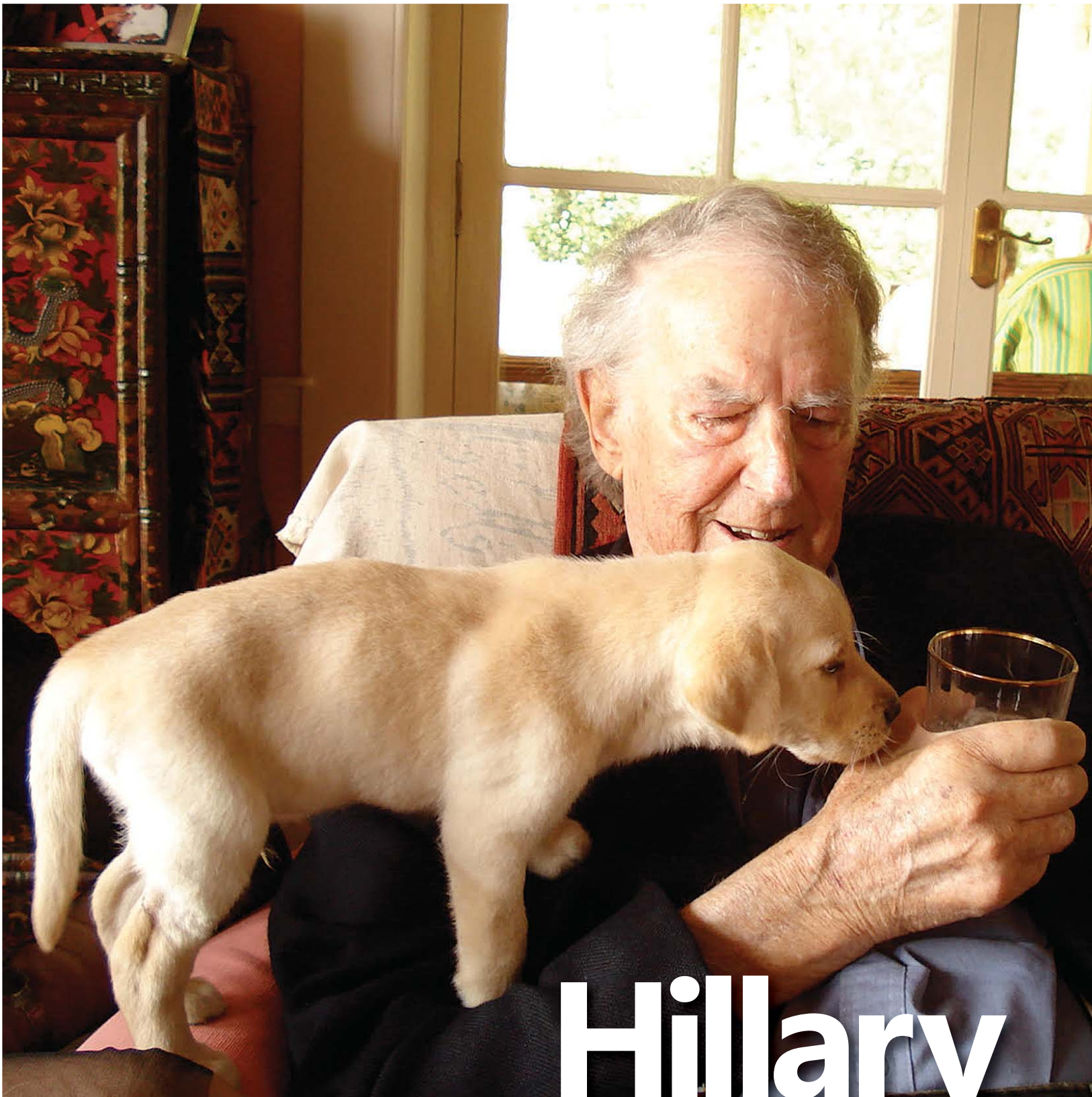
Sixty-six years ago, that last step onto the pristine summit of Mt Everest catapulted Ed and Tenzing Norgay into the textbooks. Defying altitude and endurance they ventured beyond known human limits to the highest point on earth.

The news of the 1953 expedition success was announced on the morning of the young Queen Elizabeth's coronation, thrilling a war-weary Britain with visions of conquest 'high in the thin cold air'.

Mountaineer, explorer, philanthropist, writer, Sir Ed recorded his adventures with an elegant turn of phrase in a shelf full of books. As well as mountaineering, he jet boated up the Ganges, crossed Antarctica on tractors, and was the first to reach the North and South Pole as well as the top of Everest.

By the time I knew him, Sir Ed had hung up his boots, having lost his tolerance to altitude, but he continued to helicopter annually into the Khumbu and travel the world raising funds for his Himalayan Trust. He 'gave back' to the people without whom he would not have got to the top.

The Sherpas led an uncertain life in those days, struggling for survival in the shadow of Sagarmatha as farmers scraping a living from the poor upland soil, traditional trade with Tibet and occasional expedition



Hillary Centenary

work. Sir Ed invested his time and energy to provide education and health to enable his Sherpa friends to cope with the impending changes of the modern world.

To support the Himalayan Trust schools and hospitals that were constructed with his own hands and family help, Sir Ed built Lukla airstrip in 1964 on a steep hillside at 2,860m. A chorus line of Sherpa and Sherpani dancers were mobilised to compact the ground with their stomping steps. Surprised and alarmed by the visitor influx that he unwittingly unleashed with the new airstrip, Sir Ed was unflinching in his criticism of the negative aspects of tourism, and was never convinced by commercial mountaineering.

‘The highest rubbish dump in the world’ was a phrase coined by him, and he never appreciated the benefit in terms of fees, royalties and employment brought

to Nepal's mountain communities by our 200,000 trekkers, 6,400 trekking peak climbers and 2,300 expedition members every year. Sir Ed would have hated the recent image of Everest summit queues that went viral online and on front pages around the world.

This year we marked Sir Ed's birth centenary with a reception on his Sagarmatha Summit Day, 29 May, on a humid evening in the warm yellow glow of the British Ambassador's historic Kathmandu residence. The terrace was covered by a white sail to protect against the threatening monsoon rain, sparkling glasses clinked, and uniformed waiters circulated with promising plates of dainty eats.

Amongst the guests dressed in their best who thronged the graceful rooms was Helen Clark, the new patron of the Himalayan Trust who, as New Zealand's

prime minister, had presided over Sir Ed's State Funeral in 2008. Climbers recently returned from mountain summits jostled with expedition leaders, Everest guides, and a crowd of Nepalis, Sherpas, Kiwis and assorted others with an affinity to Sir Ed's work and memory.

British Ambassador Richard Morris sported a scrappy beard and adrenalin-fuelled vigour having raced the Everest Marathon that morning, choppering back just in time to host the celebration.

I made a beeline for Nirmal ‘Nims’ Purja, the stocky ex-Gurkha Special Forces soldier just back from climbing six 8,000m peaks within 31 days, including Everest, Lhotse and Makalu in 48 hours, as part of his extreme mountaineering feat to summit all 14 Himalayan 8,000m peaks within a single seven-month season. Last week, he climbed another, Nanga Parbat in Pakistan.

HIGH QUALITY SOFAS FROM THAILAND



F
FURNITURE LAND
Furniture Land Store
www.furnitureland.com.np
Showrooms Tripureshwor: 4224797

Maitighar : 4266372 | Maharajgung : 4016277 | Pokhara : 61- 536596

बालबालिका माथि हुने हिंसा, दुर्व्यवहार, शोषण भएको, जोखिमपूर्ण अवस्थामा रहेको वा बालअधिकारको उल्लंघन भएको छ भने बाल हेल्पलाइनको पैसा नलाग्ने
फोन: नं. १०८८ मा खबर गरौं ।



नेपाल सरकार
सञ्चार तथा सूचना प्रविधि मन्त्रालय
सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग



LISA CHOEGYAL

New biography has nuggets of new information about the first man on Everest

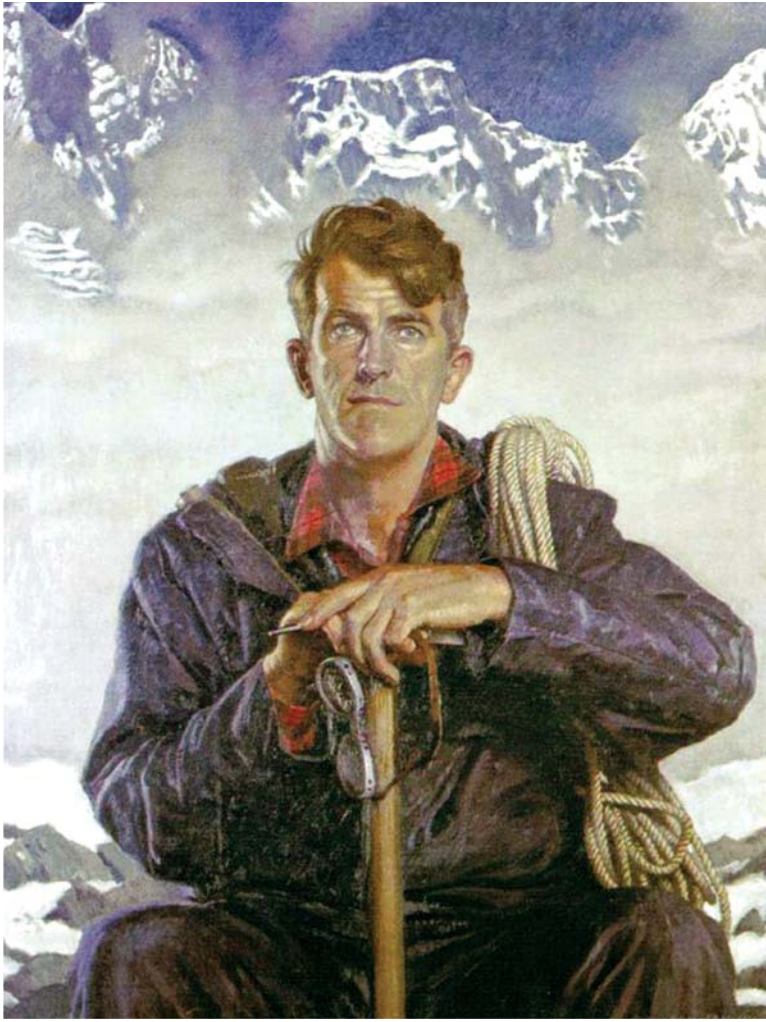
Nims had taken that summit queue photo that so shocked the world and prompted such moralising criticism, not as any sort of ethical judgement but, he grinned: “Just to prove why I could not break my own speed record for bagging Everest and Lhotse. I got slowed down by all those people and ended up directing traffic on the Hillary Step.”

One hundred years on, Sir Ed might not have liked the orderly line queuing along Everest’s narrow summit ridge on their way to his virgin spot on top of the world, but he surely would have admired the athletic ability and dedicated ambition of the amazing Nims and his Project Possible. I know I do. 🇳🇵

***Lisa Choegy** is the New Zealand Honorary Consul General in Nepal, and has been writing this fortnightly column ‘So Far So Good’ in Nepali Times since 2016.*



The monsoon is taking a short breather after its fury last week that brought nearly a month’s worth of rain within a day in some places. The monsoon will now settle down to its more normal habit: bright mornings, hot and humid days giving way to afternoon buildup and rain by evening and night. Some of this can come in short, sharp bursts. The slopes are now soaked, so even a little rain can trigger landslides along highways.



AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

Kunda Dixit

How many of us knew that Edmund Hillary had written a novel called *Call Not To the Gods* under the nom de plume Gary Sankar about an expedition on Gauri Shankar that involved monks, memsahibs and mountaineers?

Or that when Hillary’s permit to climb Makalu in 1961 was cancelled because he made an unauthorised ascent of Ama Dablam, it was British writer Desmond Doig who negotiated with Prime Minister Tulsi Giri to get the permit reissued.

The Pilatus Porter that crashed on takeoff from Kathmandu airport in 1975, killing Hillary’s wife Louise and their daughter Belinda, was piloted by Peter Shand, a New Zealand bush pilot who was hired by Royal Nepal Airlines even though he had lost his job in Africa for carelessness. Shand did not perform a pre-flight check, and forgot to remove the wooden aileron wedges before taking off for Phaplu that morning.

These and many other nuggets of new information are embedded in the 544 pages of Michael Gill’s carefully researched new

book, *Edmund Hillary: A Biography*. As a friend and climbing partner, Gill had unprecedented access to archival material, private correspondence between Hillary and Louise and hitherto unpublished details about his life.

We know of Hillary’s mountaineering triumphs, his family tragedy and devotion to the development of Khumbu. But Gill fills in the blanks about what drove Hillary’s determination and ambition, the private details of his life, as well as how after climbing the world’s highest mountain, Hillary had to conquer his own personal Everests of grief and depression.

The book starts with a lengthy account of Hillary’s grandparents and his father’s war experience in the brutal battle of Gallipoli during the First World War, which turned him into a pacifist. When the next World War came around, Edmund Hillary himself became a conscientious objector, later changing his mind to serve as navigator on a Catalina amphibian aircraft in the South Pacific.

We discover how the challenging mountains of New Zealand’s South Island drew Hillary to climbing, and that his first trip to Mukut Parbat in Garhwal brought him to the notice of Eric Shipton and other

legendary British explorers who then invited him to Cho Oyu in 1952 and Everest in 1953.

The account of the first ascent of Everest has been told and retold many times, but Gill delves into early expedition history and the critical role that bottled oxygen played. As a climber himself, he objectively explores the dynamics among members of the John Hunt expedition. The ascent was all the more remarkable because of the clunky and unreliable oxygen cylinders, inadequate clothing and rudimentary tents, compared to today’s space-age climbing paraphernalia.

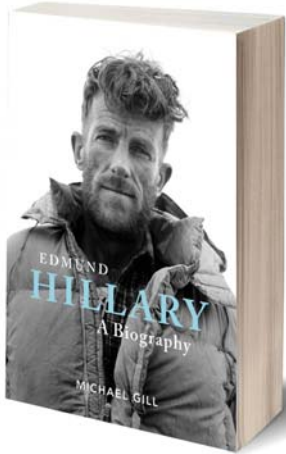
We follow Hillary’s post-Everest trajectory, the South Pole (‘Where do you go after you have climbed Everest?’), Barun Valley, and jet boats on the Sun Kosi and the Ganges, as well as the Silver Hut expedition to research the impact on human physiology of prolonged exposure to high altitude. Here the book goes into first person, since Gill accompanied Hillary on those later expeditions.

Desmond Doig joins Hillary’s yeti-hunting expedition in the Rolwaling in 1973, where he imitated yeti mating calls and entered Beding announcing in Nepali that he would ‘pay for a yeti, dead or alive, or parts thereof’. But no luck.

Hillary overcomes personal tragedy by devoting his life to building schools, hospitals and airports in Solu Khumbu, and becomes New Zealand’s envoy to India and Nepal. In interviews before died, Hillary regretted building the airfield in Lukla and the mass tourism it brought to the region.

Edmund Hillary should not just be known as the first man to climb Mt Everest, he was a larger than life persona. In the words of James (later Jan) Morris, the correspondent from *The Times* who accompanied the first expedition in 1953, Everest was ‘...the last earthly adventure before humanity’s explorers went off into space’.

And that is worth pondering on the week of Hillary’s birth centenary, and the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11’s first landing on the moon. 🇳🇵



Edmund Hillary: A Biography
by Michael Gill
Vertebrate Publishing, 2019
£24.00, 560 pages
ISBN 9781911342960

TATA MOTORS
Connecting Aspirations

TATA NRG
NEPAL'S YOUNGEST CUV



LAHANA

Paper makes up 9% of Kathmandu's household waste and 23% of commercial waste. Although discarded in landfills, much of this is actually recyclable. Co-Founder Ramita Maharjan first got the idea for Lahana Paper Crafts while an undergrad at Kathmandu University. She learnt to turn discarded paper into baskets and jewellery, and today, the company employs women and reduces paper waste in the city. At Lahana, newspapers, magazines, school books, invitation cards, calendars, brochures and

Lahana Paper Crafts



comic books are transformed into colourful earrings, necklaces, bracelets, pens, even laundry baskets. Discarded paper is gathered and shredded into strips, and rolls of paper are turned into 'beads' and attached to metal pieces, or woven into baskets.

The work is done by local women, who sit in a circle chatting away as their nimble fingers skilfully weave rolls of paper around waste baskets or cut up old magazines and newspapers faster than a machine. Maharjan makes sure that the women are paid well and given meals and transportation fees.

Like any other upcycling business, Lahana Paper Crafts also faces difficulties in convincing customers to buy its products. Many in Kathmandu still doubt the durability of the products, even though they are sturdy. Besides, it is the thought of being less wasteful that counts.

Today, Lahana has buyers from all over Nepal and even abroad. Maharjan also holds workshops to train people interested in making paper accessories.

She adds, "Our products are becoming more popular because they are handicrafts and they help manage paper waste." 🇳🇵



TATWA

Tatwa

In the last fiscal year, Nepal imported 10 million bottles of alcohol. While some of them are recycled, many cannot be rebottled in Nepal and end up as shards of glass on the banks of rivers and around landfill sites.

Doko Recyclers has been collecting garbage house-to-house in Kathmandu to covert organic waste into fertiliser and recycle other material. Now, it has launched a new brand for upcycled products called Tatwa, which takes unrecyclable imported beer, wine and liquor bottles and converts them into candle holders, drinking glasses, tumblers, glass containers and even toothpick holders. Tatwa has so far repurposed over 6,000 imported bottles collected from households, restaurants and hotels around the country.

Discarded bottles are first thoroughly cleaned and sterilised before being cut down by industrial

machines. Then comes the time-consuming, labour-intensive sanding and finishing phase to give the products a smooth texture. With Tatwa's minimalistic and logoless designs, the finished products barely resemble the alcohol bottles they once were.

Says Tatwa's Shivani Saria, "We rethink each item considered to be waste, where it comes from, what its source element is and how a thoughtful recovery of those items would mean valuing the environment and understanding waste from a new perspective."

Tatwa means 'element' in Nepali, and Saria says the venture is all about focusing on the importance of understanding waste as a resource that has lost utility in its present form. Beyond blue and green-hued glass products, Tatwa is also working on items like metal straws, bamboo toothbrushes and reusable cloth bags. It hopes to create an entire range of sustainable upcycled products to replace objects of daily use.

Saria says, "Recycling in Nepal is a new industry and there are not many recycling facilities, which is why we have to explore options in upcycling, turning non-recyclable and difficult to recycle waste items into products that can re-enter the market. With upcycling, we reduce waste that would otherwise end up in the landfill with creative business ventures that also generate jobs." 🇳🇵

Upso UPCYC

UPCYCLING verb

up·cy·cle | \ əp-sī-kəl \
upcycled; upcycling

transitive verb

to recycle (something) in such a way that the resulting product is of a higher value than the original item: to create an object of greater value from (a discarded object of lesser value).

Sanghami



aling CLING

When actress, fashion designer and, more recently, the director of her debut film *#Horror*, Tara Subkoff, popularised the term ‘upcycling’, she may not have known that she was launching a new fashion trend. Even in faraway Nepal.

Young, idealistic Nepali social entrepreneurs may have borrowed the word, but they have gone beyond the world of fashion to craft items for everyday household use repurposed from products that would otherwise be discarded at landfill sites. The idea is not just to be trendy and smart, but also to address growing environmental concerns among customers about garbage, pollution and consumerism.

In this centrefold, *Nepali Times* profiles some companies that have upscaled upcycling to a whole new level.

itra Subba

After water buffaloes are converted into momos, their innards are often discarded by the banks of Kathmandu’s rivers, where kites, crows and dogs pick at them, while their bones are ground into powdered fertiliser.

But lately, some of the horns and bones are collected from butcher shops and taken to Shailee Crafts, where they are turned into carved figures, pendants and buttons.

Shailee was set up by the father of Success Dhamala and his brother Shailesh to make handicraft items that had a strangely Polynesian look. In 2013, years after their father’s shop went out of business, Success and Shailesh revived the business to sell modern items with ethnic designs, made from natural and sustainable materials.

Their raw material of choice: buffalo horns and bones. The raw materials are gathered, cleaned, cut, shaped and carved by the steady hands of local artisans, who use traditional Nepali tools to fashion intricate Maori designs like the Pikorua (twist), Toki or Hei-Matau (fish hook). Buttons and statues are made with keen attention given to minute details, each ridge and curve carved with precision.

Shailee Crafts

Shailee Crafts also makes pendants based on Game of Thrones themes, with the sigils of House Stark, Targaryen and Greyjoy. And beyond the traditional Pacific or pop culture designs, the brothers also turn buffalo bones into quirky buttons with geometric cutouts and unorthodox patterns.

Although upcycling bones and horns is new to Nepal, pendants made from carved bones have been an integral part of Polynesian and Maori culture for centuries. Leftover bones from animals have been used to create traditional jewellery, like fish hook pendants, or hunting tools, like spears.

“When we first started using buffalo bones for pendants, we were just following what they do elsewhere, but we realised we were also reducing Kathmandu’s waste by upcycling,” says Success Dhamala.

Shailee Crafts uses natural products like hemp and recycled fabric for the buffalo bone necklaces, adding a modern feel to traditional Tibetan prayer beads and ensuring that horns and bones do not come from buffaloes that have been sacrificed.

The store also conducts weekly carving workshops on Sundays, where visitors can hone their skills carving horns with traditional tools. 🇳🇵

SHAILEE

Taalo

When clothing items like saris, t-shirts, kurtas and shawls are made, unused fabric is just thrown away. Sujhan Ghimire set up Taalo to repurpose these scraps into wearable fashion items. He designs all the products himself and has curated a line of brightly coloured ties and bow-ties, scrunchies, headbands and scarves, all within the Rs120-200 price range.

From silks to chiffons and Lycra to cotton, Taalo’s products are made from a variety of available and usable fabric.

To reduce fabric waste, the business has also partnered with textile factories, clothes manufacturers and even tailors to upcycle and recycle their scrap.

At first, Ghimire found it hard to convince consumers to buy his products. Many were sceptical about upcycling and believed the products were made from used clothes. After an awareness campaign to explain that the fabrics were never worn, sales boomed.

Now in its second year of operations, Taalo has a consumer base that runs from teenagers to environmentally-conscious adults. The company’s popularity is also a result of growing consumer consciousness among Kathmandu citizens, who see a lot of trash lying about. People are becoming more aware of sustainable alternatives to products that they want to buy.

Ghimire’s venture is not only environmentally conscious, but



ABHILASHA SHRESTHA



also socially aware. The Kamlari women from Nepalganj who manufacture Taalo’s products are paid an extra Rs2 for every product that they make, in addition to their daily wages.

“People are becoming more aware about what they are spending money on and where the products come from,” Ghimire explains. “At Taalo, they can buy things they want knowing that they are helping both women from underprivileged backgrounds and the environment.”

Ghimire says he now wants to expand Taalo’s upscaled product line to include bracelets and even backpacks. 🇳🇵

Dhaasoo

“To make customers understand upcycling, we first need to educate them about the importance of reducing waste, recycling and reusing,” he adds.

This is why a lot of thought has gone into making Dhaasoo’s products more approachable. Social media marketing, explaining upcycling jargon and repurposing products that people are familiar with have been some of the strategies. Dhaasoo also sells Pinterest-inspired, rustic-themed, minimalistic items to satisfy both Gen Z and Millennial consumers. If customers come in with a photo of a Pinterest product, Dhaasoo crafts it with upcycled materials.

The business also preserves vintage collectibles with historical value. While scouring Kathmandu’s dumping sites, Dhaasoo found a 1st generation Ipad in working condition, a WW2 gas tank used by British Gurkhas and even a 1947 rotary dial telephone. Some of these items are for sale to collectors.

To expand the niche for upscaled products, Dhaasoo is now creating products designed for kitchens, gardens, bedrooms and terraces. 🇳🇵

HORNS AND BONES



Upcycling is gaining momentum in Nepal. Everything from paper to cars has been transformed into usable and wearable items. Discarded buffalo horns are turned into Maori-inspired pendants, waste fabric into clothing items.

nepalitimes.com



DHAASOO

When Dhaasoo was established in 2015, no one in Kathmandu really knew what upcycling was. Four years later, Dhaasoo has changed the game for reusable utilities and home decor.

Dhaasoo is Bollywood movie slang that roughly translates to ‘daami’ in Nepali or ‘awesome’ in English. Founder Nitesh Sharma wanted an attention-grabbing name to draw customers to a new concept. It worked.

From glass bottles to cans, car parts and even cars, Dhaasoo has upcycled and sold them all. It has upcycled hookahs, lamps, planters, book shelves and even a desk made from an Eco Sport car.

Dhaasoo works on one project a day, taking requests for customised products or selling in-house designs. Customers either arrive with a product concept in mind and guide the designers, or they simply ask the company to create something new. Many of the products are therefore literally ‘priceless’.

“Our products don’t have price tags because everything is made to order,” Sharma explains. “We never know what the customer will request and what it will cost.”

But while Dhaasoo is becoming popular, it is not what you would call mass market. Sharma still struggles to make people understand that just because a product is upcycled it is not always cheaper, as a lot of work goes into repurposing those materials.

EVENTS



Toygraphy Art Exhibition
Take a look at Sunny Shakyas collection of digital prints that depict toys of Marvel, DC and other popular characters in a Nepali setting. Read more in this issue: page 12.
12-24 July, 11am-5pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal, (01)4218048

KJC Summer Camp

Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory presents its annual summer camp for kids aged 6-12. With arts and crafts, wall climbing, musical games, instrument workshops and more, the summer camp is a great opportunity for kids to learn and have fun.
22-26 July, 10am-2pm, KJC, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5543554

Everest Hackathon

Everest Hackathon is the biggest international hackathon in Nepal. It is the perfect place for coders and aspiring innovators to solve challenging codes, build something exciting and work closely with mentors.
19-21 July, Nami College, Jorpati, 9822888890



Kora Cycling Challenge

Join the 9th edition of Kathmandu Kora, a yearly cycling challenge that invites cyclists from all over Nepal to bike 50km, 75km or 100km around Kathmandu Valley to raise money for charitable causes. Pledge to raise Rs100 for every kilometre completed.
20 July, 7am onwards, Patan Darbar Square, 9801123401

The Park Bazaar

Support your local artist at The Park Bazaar's Eco Lifestyle Night Market. All items sold are made with natural or sustainable materials. Stalls with second hand items are also available.
21 July, 5pm onwards, Astrek Park, Thamel, (01) 4412609

Continuum Art Exhibition

Sunita Rana, President of the Women Artists' Group (WAGON) and a prominent Nepali artist, presents Continuum, a series of paintings depicting Nepali life, colourful landscape and heritage.
11am-6pm, 11 July-10 September, GG Machan, Jhamsikhel, 9841291531



Sound Healing Meditation

Experience the healing powers of the sound vibrations of singing bowls. Enter a relaxing meditative state as the reverberations restore your inner peace and rejuvenate your mind, body and soul.
Rs1,300, 26 July, 6pm-7:30pm, Sooriya Wellness and Yoga Centre, Lazimpat, 9818481972

Climate Change Panel Discussion

Listen to a discussion on the impact of climate change and its implications in Nepal led by IPCC scientists Dr Tabea Lissner and Dr Adelle Thomas, along with Nepali climate change experts.
19 July, 12:30pm-3pm, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan, (01) 5522113

Handicraft workshop

Transform old books into home decor, pieces of art or utility. AFK will provide all necessary materials and teach you how to upcycle your books. This is also a great opportunity for you to practise French and meet other creative people.
Rs100, 24 July, 10:30am-12pm, Alliance Française de Katmandou, Jhamsikhel, 9808418422

MUSIC



Nabin K. Bhattarai

Nabin K. Bhattari, regarded as the King of Nepali pop, will perform his medley of rock, pop and folk influenced songs with his band. Resident DJs and Dynamix will also perform.
8pm-11pm, 19 July, Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Kalimati (01) 4273999

Places Monsoon Jazz

Celebrate the monsoon season with jazz quartet Pseudo Phonics this friday evening.
19 July, 7pm onwards, Places Restaurant and Bar, Thamel, (01) 4700413



Adrian Pradhan Unplugged

Former member of 1974AD, Adrian Pradhan is considered to be one of the greatest musicians of his generation. Listen to him perform his greatest hits.
Entry Rs1,200, 19 July, 6pm onwards, Los Escobar's, Gairidhara, 9851164380



Majipa Album Launch

Join Majipa Band at the launch of "Ma Sapanama Baachna Chahanchhu," their newest rock album.
27 July, 6pm, Moksh, Jhamsikhel, 01-5528362

DINING

Lhakpa's Chulo

Tucked away in a hidden part of Jhamsikhel, Lhakpa's Chulo offers a variety of delicious Nepali and Continental cuisines. With a menu spanning both Asia and Europe, enjoy dishes like spinach and cheese momos, Thai red curry and even Chicken Parmigiana.
10am-10pm (except Mondays), Jhamsikhel, (01) 5542986



Cibo Bistro

With simple dishes and fresh ingredients, enjoy a wide variety of pastas, pizzas, sandwiches and mouth-watering desserts. Kid-friendly options are available as well.
10am-10pm, Pulchowk, (01) 5541940

The Chocolate Room

Enter a world of chocolate cupcakes, decadent brownies and chocolate of every size and shape. Between the chocolate, try the Peri Peri fries and milkshake.
9am-9pm, Jhamsikhel, 9851056096

Kebab Village Restaurant & Bar

Kebab Village offers some of the best and largest variety of kebabs in Kathmandu. From Hara Bara Kebab to Kebab-E-Sabziyan, this restaurant serves them all.
7:30am-9:30am, Naxal, (01) 4422177



Little Tibet Restaurant and Bar

Escape the monsoon rain with a piping hot bowl of noodles, da-pao and mouth-watering Tibetan, Bhutanese and Nepali food.
9am-9:30pm, Thamel, (01) 4242656

GETAWAY



Hotel Heritage

Immerse yourself in the rich culture and heritage of the ancient city of Bhaktapur in this Newari-style boutique hotel. Hotel Heritage also offers some of the best authentic Newari food in Bhaktapur.
Suryabinayak, Bhaktapur, (01) 6611628

Hotel Annapurna View

Situated at 1,600m atop Sarangkot, this boutique hotel offers breathtaking views of the snow-capped mountains and Phewa Lake. Catch a glimpse of the panoramic scene of the Annapurnas from the dining area.
Sarangkot, Pokhara (01) 443566

Buddha Maya Garden Hotel

Just beyond the historical Maya Devi Temple and near the heart of Lumbini, stay in the beautiful Buddha Maya Garden Hotel. Take a morning stroll in the Lumbini World Heritage Garden while listening to the spiritual hymns of nearby prayers.
Lumbini, (71) 580219/220, 9801033114



Village Heritage and Resort

Located at the top of Rara Hill, this humble hotel offers one of the best views of the breathtaking Rara Lake and the spectacular forest of Rara National Park. In the summer, ride horses along the lake and go on scenic boat rides that can last as long as a couple hours.
Rara-2, Mugu, 9802097690

Marriott Kathmandu

Escape the dreary monsoon blues of Kathmandu without venturing beyond the valley at this new five-star deluxe hotel. Enjoy the luxury amenities of this global brand, stay in any one of their 200 rooms and dine at their Thamel Kitchen, Edamame or Raksi Music Bar.
Naxal, (01)4443040

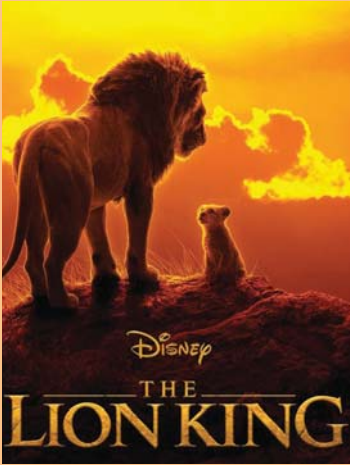


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Uttar Dhoka, Lazimpat | 12th Century Courtyard, Patan | Durbar Square, Patan

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OUR PICK

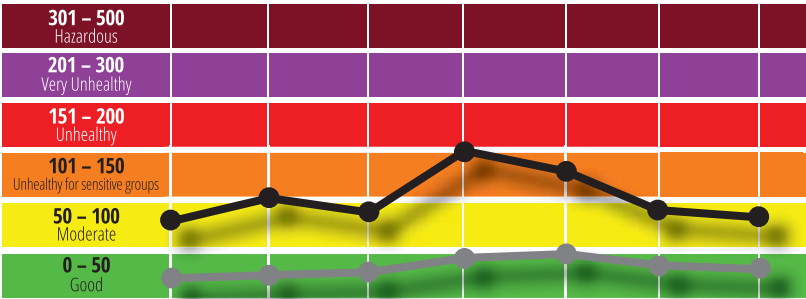


Opened in Kathmandu on 19 July

The Lion King is a popular favourite with young and old alike. This animated Disney classic returns in a new form: live action in 3D. This is the story of a young lion prince who flees his kingdom after his father is killed. Directed by Jon Favreau, it is now voiced by many popular actors, like Donald Glover, Beyoncé, Seth Rogen and Chiwetel Ejiofor.

AIR QUALITY INDEX

KATHMANDU, 12 - 18 July



This week's graph (above) is proof of the direct correlation between the Air Quality Index (AQI) and monsoon precipitation. Heavy rains last Friday brought the pollution levels to the 'Good' green zone, which rarely happens. However, as the rains tapered off during the week, the showers were not enough to scrub the particulate and gaseous emissions emitted by traffic. In addition, the air was loaded with fine dust as the muddy streets dried during the day. Thursday morning's heavy rain brought the AQI down to the Moderate Yellow Band again.
<https://np.usembassy.gov/embassy/air-quality-monitor/>

African Americans in Cold War Nepal

Black aid workers in the 1950s found themselves in the middle of a changing Kathmandu

Tom Robertson

Race formed a contentious part of the early Cold War in South Asia. During the 1950s, several African American aid workers found themselves in the middle of a changing Nepal, and a changing world.

The first African American technician in Nepal was George Talley Brooks, a 30-year-old entomologist who arrived with his wife Mary in September 1952. He was the only African American in Kathmandu among 10 Americans, mostly from rural states, in the years just before Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement changed the US.

Brooks and his wife had their own motivations for coming to Nepal, amidst larger historical forces of Cold War competition between the US and the communist bloc.

‘The coloured peoples of Asia and Africa, who total two-thirds of the world’s population, seldom think about the United States without considering the limitations under which our 13 million Negroes are living,’ US Ambassador to India and Nepal Chester Bowles wrote in 1953.

South Asian audiences often asked Bowles about the treatment of African Americans, particularly segregated schools and violence against blacks. ‘I can think of no single thing that would be more helpful to us in Asia than the achievement of racial harmony in America,’ Bowles noted.

As ambassador, Bowles encouraged the recruitment of African Americans for US overseas work. ‘I have tried in every way I know to get qualified Negroes assigned to our posts in India ... the Negroes we have had have done us a world of good,’ he wrote.

George Brooks’ main job in Nepal was to devise ways to control crop pests, including with pesticides. Because of his entomological expertise, he was brought into malaria control programs using DDT. He and George Moore, the American mission’s first physician, designed one of the first malaria programs in Nepal, in Balaju.

Brooks also accompanied US Operations Mission Director Paul Rose on the 1952 survey trip to Chitwan that led to America’s major project in Nepal for the next decade, and whose first on-the-ground American director, Herman Holliday, was also non-white. Brooks enjoyed malaria work so much that he switched to public health for the rest of his career.

Unlike some of his American and Nepali colleagues, Brooks did not look down on Nepal’s rural peasants. In a report, he noted Nepal’s ‘crude and inefficient’ agricultural methods but also spoke of ‘the ingenuity of the people’. Relations with his American teammates were mixed. Brooks got on well with fellow scientist and malaria worker George Moore. Pictures show the two of them together on a research trip to Helambu.

But according to Nancy Dammann, who worked for the US Information Service in Nepal, the other Americans (mostly from the American South) at first ‘snubbed’ Brooks and his wife ‘because they were black’. A former history teacher, Mary Brooks made some of her less accomplished white neighbours nervous.

Yet, Mary and George Brooks got along



US NATIONAL ARCHIVES



MADAN PURUSKAR PUSTAKALAYA



COURTESY GEORGE MOORE



MADAN PURUSKAR PUSTAKALAYA

GROUND REALITY: (Clockwise, from left) George Brooks inspecting a vegetable farm in the early 1950s.

Brooks and George Moore trekking in Helambu.

Brooks on a field visit in the Tarai. Brooks and Moore in the early 1950s somewhere in Nepal. Mary Brooks mixed well with Nepalis, making some of her American colleagues nervous.



MADAN PURUSKAR PUSTAKALAYA

well with Nepalis. Interested in Nepali history and language, Mary Brooks had good relations with Nepali women. She and her husband were the first Americans to invite Nepalis to their house. Most other Americans mixed with Nepalis only at work and at official receptions.

Dhruba Bhakta Mathema, who worked for the US program, grew very fond of George Brooks and, because of him, America more broadly. About Brooks, Mathema once told me, ‘We learned that those who studied could advance despite their background and colour.’

The British Embassy in Kathmandu also kept the African American couple out. ‘We don’t invite Negroes to our parties if we can help it,’ a British second secretary told Dammann. In June 1953, Brooks and his wife were deliberately left off the invitation list for the coronation party of Queen Elizabeth. Once they learned of this, the other Americans refused to attend as well. ‘I was proud to watch my southern countrymen decide to turn down the coronation invitation,’ Dammann wrote.

American race relations often came up in conversations with Nepalis. After one dinner at the home of Foreign Minister Khadgaman Singh, a former political prisoner, an informal debate was set up between George Moore, the only American present, and a supporter of Nepal’s Communist party.

As Moore later recalled, the Communist leader gave an animated talk in front of the guests, highlighting corruption in the US, exploitation of the poor and racial discrimination, including the violence American blacks faced, such as lynchings. Moore, a New Jerseyian who had recently worked in Virginia, countered that the situation had changed and that American blacks now had many opportunities. As Exhibit #1, he pointed to George Brooks.

It was a complicated time. In the late afternoon one day in 1954, several Americans drove into Kathmandu to shop, arriving in the city centre to find themselves in the middle of a Communist anti-American rally. Noticing the American jeep, the demonstrators quickly surrounded it. Red Saunders, the American who was driving, navigated slowly through

the crowd. Suddenly, someone cut the top of the jeep with a knife, terrifying its American occupants, who quickly returned to their Rabi Bhawan compound, rattled but unharmed.

One of the women in the car was Mary Brooks, an outspoken critic of racial hierarchy and discrimination in the US. It is unlikely that the protestors knew that the jeep held one of the African Americans that their compatriots often used as evidence of America’s exploitative ways. Unfortunately, there’s no record of how Mary Brooks or the others involved made sense of the contradictions of the event, or the profound complexities of early Cold War politics. 🇺🇸



Tom Robertson, PhD, is the author of ‘Front Line of the Cold War: The US and Point Four Development Programs in Cold War Nepal, 1950-1953’ in the June issue of *Studies of Nepali History and Society*. He is director of Fulbright Nepal. His views are his own.



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Hulk Bahadur and Barbie Maicha

Usually a venue for contemporary Nepali art, the latest exhibition at the Siddhartha Art Gallery at Baber Mahal Revisited is unconventional in both form and substance.

The exhibits are digital prints depicting characters from Marvel and DC Comics, while Designer Disneys wear Nepali costumes in the city's landmarks, and there is even Ronaldo and Messi wearing dhaka topis.

"I chose international characters because they are globally recognised icons, and I wanted to showcase Nepal's cultural heritage sites," explained artist Sunny Shaky, who started out as a sculptor, but switched to toygraphy, combining toys and photography. He got the idea when he took a picture of toy key rings with the background of Bhaktapur.

People liked his work and he came up with more toys and more settings, combining his photography skills with knowledge of culture and sculpting.

This is an unusual way to feature Nepali culture — taking photographs of Barbie dolls draped in *Hakupatasi*, super heroes in Nepali caps, and the Joker playing the near-extinct Nepali string instrument, the arbaajo.

The photographs divide the exhibition into sections: Spiderman and Batman fly kites with Spidey's web in place of string in the section with a Dasain theme. There is a Hulk and Batman series with a little story of a fun love triangle. Captain Jack Sparrow from Pirates of the Caribbean poses on a boat in Phewa Lake, where he is the Pirate of Pokhara. Super villain Thanos carries a doko collecting grass in

Ghandruk, and has obviously given up trying to eliminate half the world's population. Aquaman protests the Guthi Bill in front of Rani Pokhari and there is Spiderman in front of Tribhuvan University.

"I try to make pictures meaningful," Shaky explains, pointing to a photo of Hulk wearing a Nepali cap and waving the national flag with a background of people demonstrating against the Guthi Bill at The Mandala recently.

Shaky also used names such as Hulk Bahadur or Hulk 'Cha', Barbie maicha, Wonder Woman is Wonder Kanchi, Captain America is Captain Nepal. Thor holds a trisul instead of his hammer.

"I have been sculpting for 15 years, but the last eight months working on these photographs is the happiest I have been, and I have gained much more recognition," says Shaky, adding that he plans to do more photo stories to promote Nepal's ethnic attire and tourism. 🇳🇵

Toygraphy by Sunny Shaky
Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited
Until 24 July



ALL SMILES: Prime Minister KP Oli, with Japanese Ambassador Masamichi Saigo, inaugurates the new building of the Paropakar Maternity and Women's Hospital in Kathmandu on Friday.



DEAL SEALED: World Bank Country Manager Faris H Hadad-Zervos signs a \$100 million project to renew the bank's support to the Government of Nepal to strengthen fiscal federalism and public financial management.



KHUDA HAFIZ: Foreign Minister Pradeep Gyawali on Thursday seeing off a Nepali Muslim pilgrim who was leaving for the Haj in Mecca.



LIVING LEGEND: Poet laureate Madhav Prasad Ghimire and his spouse Mahakali are honoured with a chariot procession on the occasion of the 206th birth anniversary of Bhanu Bhakta Acharya.



DAZZLING: Actress Swastima Khadka receives the National Film Award from President Bidya Devi Bhandari for her performance in the critically acclaimed movie *Bulbul*.

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BIKRAM RAI

Development = Destruction

Editorials in three Nepali language dailies about the destruction caused by floods and landslides nationwide last week

Naya Patrika, 17 July

नयाँ पत्रिका

Nationwide, there are problems with landslides and floods. People have been killed, made homeless, crops destroyed, fisheries and farms submerged and factories flooded. This annual calamity is related to Nepal's topography and the nature of our rivers, which is why human settlement and construction have to follow nature's laws. If we don't, the people who ignored those laws will have to suffer.

Disasters also have a class aspect. The people affected are mostly poor. Tarai families affected by floods are mostly those who live in huts in high-risk areas. In the cities, it is the urban poor settled along the floodplains of rivers or those residing on the ground floor who are worst affected. People living in fragile and steep slopes are exposed to landslide risk. Villages and settlements downstream from the Chure are also disproportionately affected.

Lately, the activities of excavators and bulldozers have made already fragile slopes even more precarious. This has increased the risk for those living in villages near these roads. The construction spree in the cities has increased demand for construction materials, which are unsustainably mined from river beds, making them prone to more destructive floods. The destruction of the Chure is symbolic of the negative development model we have adopted. The country is threatened with desertification, and in the monsoon the floods are becoming more catastrophic in the Madhes.

We have to rescue our country from the corruption and crony capitalism that is driving this destruction.

Annapurna Post, 15 July

अन्नपूर्ण

This year, rivers and streams in the federal capital have overflowed and flooded neighbourhoods. The constricted rivers could no longer hold the water, not because there was more rainfall than previous years but because we have narrowed

the rivers. Collusion between government agencies and the land mafia has squeezed rivers until the water has nowhere to go. That is why this year marooned residents had to be rescued by rafts.

The capital's rivers were turned into canals and we replaced the canals with roads. We have built over the floodplains of rivers. This year's destruction was not caused by rainfall but by greed. Local governments finish their budgets building embankments, get their kickbacks, then capture the land along the river banks. These have been turned into landfill sites, where raw sewage empties into the water. In other countries, property along the river is more expensive; in Nepal it is the lowest.

We must restore the rivers' freedom to flow naturally, even if it means demolishing illegal structures and taking action against the guilty, including government officials if necessary. If that is not done, future floods will be much worse.

Nagarik, 16 July

नागरिक

Damage from monsoon floods is increasing every year as rivers and water bodies can no longer contain the water. But we can no longer call these natural disasters – they are manmade. Rivers have been narrowed by embankments and other construction in Nepal, and across the border in India, which submerges villages on the Nepal side of the border. Every year Nepal raises this issue with its neighbour, but after the rains end everyone forgets about it.

As in previous years, Rautahat was flooded again because of an embankment in India. The problem was discussed in Parliament and MPs concluded that the cause was lack of preparedness. People on both sides of the border, Nepalis and Indians, both suffer from the poorly designed embankments that cause flooding, yet the problem has not been resolved. The two countries must get together and fix this issue before more destructive future floods hit both countries.

YETI AIRLINES' JOURNEY TO CARBON NEUTRALITY

MEASURE

Using GHG inventory tool, the calculated carbon emission was 19,665 tonnes of CO₂e. Our aircraft operations were responsible for nearly 19,648 tonnes of CO₂e emissions, with our vehicle and facility operations producing only 17 tonnes of CO₂e.

OUR MAIN EMISSION SOURCES



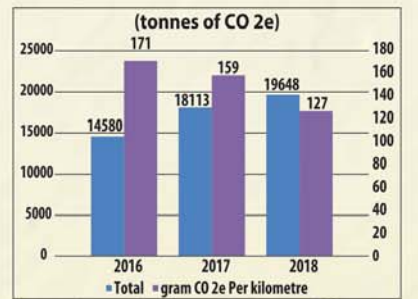
TOTAL FOOTPRINT IN 2018
19,665 tonnes CO₂e
- THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO PLANTING -
325,165 TREES
TO GROW OVER 10 YEARS



REDUCE

From 2017, we reduced our emissions through fleet upgrades and reduced fuel use. In future, we will initiate to reduce emissions from our main source of emissions, i.e. aircraft operations and build private-public partnerships to make greater impact together as per the Government of Nepal in the 2013 Action Plan on CO₂ Emission Reduction.

OUR STRATEGY FOR REDUCING EMISSIONS



Comparison of carbon emission per kilometre

OFFSET

We have embarked journey of carbon neutrality by purchasing certified emission reduction equivalent to 2018 emission through UNFCCC Carbon Neutral Now platform.

As an airline industry highly depend on fossil fuels, we seek to offset any unavoidable emissions through feasible technological replacements and carefully selected projects from credible and certified sources.

CREDIBLE & CERTIFIED (CERs)
We source carbon credits from UNFCCC - certified Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Projects

OFFERS SDG CO-BENEFITS
We support projects that offer win-win situations by contributing to broader SDGs in Nepal.

REPORT

Based on the baseline set by GHG inventory, we ensure transparent and detailed reporting, inform strategic and technical decision-making, and raise ambition since 2018 and in the years to come to contribute further to achieve broader sustainable development goals.



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| Appointment Management Apoinment management with required doctors in different hospitals. | Equipment Rental & Drug Supply Drug supply at your doorstep and best quality medical equipments in rent. |

Weather warning for

Sonia Awale

More than 260 scientists from 60 countries were in Kathmandu this week to start work on their next climate report, just as a delayed monsoon unleashed storms killing nearly 80 people in Nepal, and affecting millions downstream in India.

The Second Lead Author Meeting of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II will put together its 6th Assessment Report. Due out in 2022, the report will examine impact, adaptation and vulnerability to climate change.

“IPCC chose Kathmandu exactly because of the growing recognition of the impact of climate change on Himalayan weather. There are more frequent heat waves and freak rains as we have had in Kathmandu this monsoon,” said Philippus Wester, climate scientist at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), co-hosts with Nepal’s Ministry of Forests

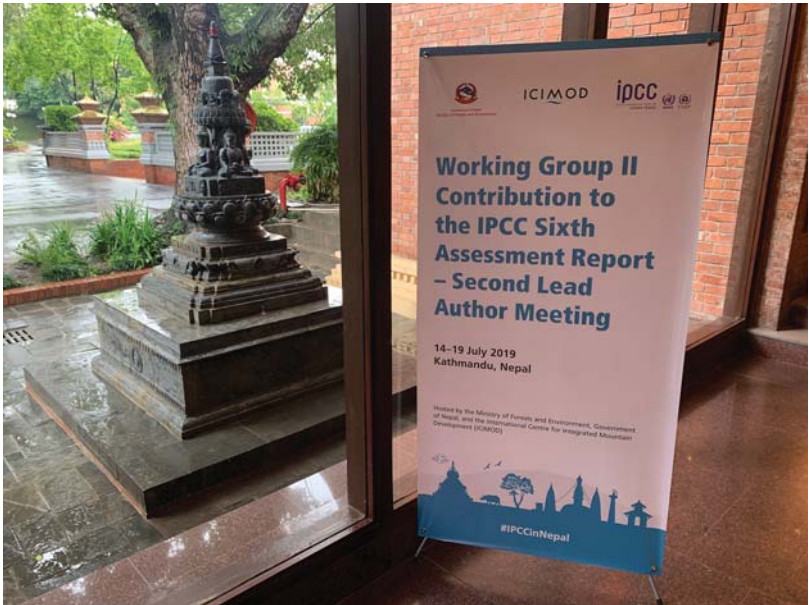
Scientists gathered in Kathmandu to discuss climate change this week just as Nepal experienced a freak monsoon

and Environment of the meet.

The scientists got a ringside seat for climate-induced extreme weather this week. Parts of Central Nepal got nearly 700mm of rain last weekend, nearly the monthly average for July, after the monsoon finally arrived three weeks late. The flights of many of the delegates had to be rerouted because Kathmandu airport was closed for the whole day on 12 July (*See box, overleaf*).

“It is difficult to attribute a single weather event to climate change, but there is now growing evidence that there is a correlation,” explained Hans-Otto Pörtner, co-chair of Working Group II. “We know that many natural systems have already reached the limits in coping with these unprecedented transformations.”

Besides the monsoon, an ICIMOD assessment of the impact of global warming on the Himalaya this year showed the mountains are melting 0.3-0.7°C faster than the



global average. Even in the best-case scenario, the Himalaya will lose more than one-third of its glaciers this century, said the report. At the current rate of carbon emissions, two-thirds of Himalayan ice will be gone by 2100, with devastating consequences for the more than 1.6 billion people living downstream.

Scientists said predictions in a previous IPCC report presented at the Paris climate conference in 2015 underestimated the rise in average global temperatures and the impact on weather patterns, sea level rise and melting of the polar ice caps. Another meeting in Poland last December predicted more

heat waves, flash floods, storms and starvation – which the world already witnessed this summer.

“The timing of the Kathmandu meeting is significant because it happened when unprecedented rain triggered floods and landslides across the country,” said climate expert Manjeet Dhakal. “This

The cost of peace in post–

Dilrukshi Handunnetti in Colombo

The advent of peace in four countries that experienced wars hasn’t been kind to the environment, with a new study showing greater rates of deforestation during peacetime than during conflict.

The paper, published in the journal *Land Use Policy*, shows how Nepal, Sri Lanka, Peru and Ivory Coast experienced ‘alarming forest loss’ in the years immediately after the end of their wars. The study analysed satellite forest-cover data to show that even though the deforestation rates were not as high in Nepal as in the other three countries, there were higher levels of erosion, flooding and landslides after the war ended in 2006.

“Rates of deforestation in war

zones show a dramatic increase once peace is declared, and except for Nepal, it is significantly high for the other three countries we studied,” said coauthor Nelson Grima of the University of the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources in the US.

The nature and duration of the conflict in each country differed, from two brief civil wars fought between 2002 and 2011 in Ivory Coast, to two simultaneous conflicts in the north and south of Sri Lanka that lasted 25 years. In Nepal and Peru, communist uprisings ran for 10 and 30 years respectively.

What the four countries do share, however, is loss of forest cover. The average rate of deforestation in the five years after the end of the respective conflicts was 68% higher than in the last five years of the conflicts, according to the study. The data, based on analysis of Landsat satellite imagery, gave the global



climate meeting



ALEX TREADWAY / ICIMOD

supports scientific predictions of anticipated effects of climate change, and a reminder that there is a cost to delayed action." Scientists at the Kathmandu meeting will be assessing the latest evidence about the extent and impact of the climate emergency. However, some scientists are

afraid their predictions may be overtaken by events such as Europe recording its hottest ever June, Japan's heat wave last year that saw historically high temperatures, and unprecedented droughts in Australia, sub-Saharan Africa and southern India this year. "We are in Kathmandu which



KUNDA DIXIT

Carbon footprint of climate conferences

The nearly 300 climate scientists from 60 countries attending the big IPCC conference in Kathmandu this week are aware that each of them will have emitted between 6-10 tons of carbon flying to and from Nepal. Civil aviation contributes more than 3% of the carbon emissions that are warming the atmosphere. Ironically, this year's freak monsoon was partly caused by climate change, and forced many of the scientists' flights to Kathmandu this week to hold for hours in the air, or to be diverted, further increasing their carbon footprints. Many in social media are asking if flying 300 scientists frequently across the planet to write voluminous reports that governments ignore is worth the carbon it generates. Why can't they just Skype? "As individuals we try to reduce travel as much as we can using Skype, but given the complicated nature of the issue and how fast it

is changing, some things we just have to do face-to-face," explains Bronwyn Hayward, who flew from New Zealand, but combined her trip with a fact-finding visit to community forestry user groups in Kaski and Bandipur. "Tourism is also essential for the economies of Nepal and New Zealand, but travellers come from all over the world burning all that carbon," she added. Some scientists said they regularly buy carbon offsets for flights to their conferences, while others said decisions taken at these conferences are too important to be done on Facebook Messenger. As the host government, Nepal has tried to ensure that the weeklong meeting at the Yak & Yeti Hotel in Kathmandu will be as green as possible. All conference meals are vegetarian and the use of plastic is actively discouraged.

has been tested over the last week by an unusual monsoon, so you need the people who run and design this city to have access to information on how urban infrastructure can cope with future climate events," said Debra Roberts, co-chair of the IPCC working group. Experts say that the challenge now is to convert evidence of the climate crisis into policy and action globally and by nation states. Since the IPCC is made up of 195 governments, it is a bridge between the latest scientific knowledge and policymakers. However, even as evidence about the seriousness of the crisis grows, some countries are in denial, while others wait for funds to adapt to climate impact. Feasible technical solutions to reduce carbon dioxide in the atmosphere are available, including switching to renewable energy, and enlarging carbon sinks through forest cover, but these are stuck

at the policy or implementation levels. Even so, there are many examples of communities in Nepal that offer solutions to resource conservation that also contribute to reducing the impact of the climate emergency. "Nepal offers many inspiring examples of what a far-sighted community can achieve in spite of limited resources," said Bronwyn Hayward of the University of Canterbury in Christchurch an IPCC contributor. She visited Sikles and Bandipur, where local communities are using forestry and eco-tourism to build resilience to cope with the changing climate. "These achievements are now threatened by what is happening globally. The rest of the world has the responsibility to step up and do their bit," added Hayward. The Himalaya has become a touchstone for the impact of the climate emergency: what is

happening in the mountains is an indication of what will happen to the rest of the world. The Oceans and Cryosphere Special Report that IPCC is publishing in September will have a full chapter on mountain ecosystems, and a crosscutting paper in the IPCC's sixth assessment will further describe the impacts of climate change in the Himalaya. Said Wester: "We want to present our research findings with a sense of urgency in such a way that it is not alarmist but honest, based on the knowledge that we have. It is up to governments and societies to decide what to do with it but we are already starting to see a shift." "These mountains are a climate change hotspot, and having the IPCC meeting in Nepal means the world is paying attention to the Himalaya," added David Molden, Director General of ICIMOD. 🇳🇵

conflict countries: forest cover

average rate of increase in deforestation as 7.2%. "We don't want people to think we support armed violence in any way. But our findings show that when the fighting stops, a number of factors lead to an increased rate of deforestation," said Simron Singh, co-author and a researcher at the University of Waterloo, Canada. Forests are used as cover for guerrilla warfare, and as such, they become danger zones that few people are likely to enter. This often means the forests are less likely to be logged or hunted in.

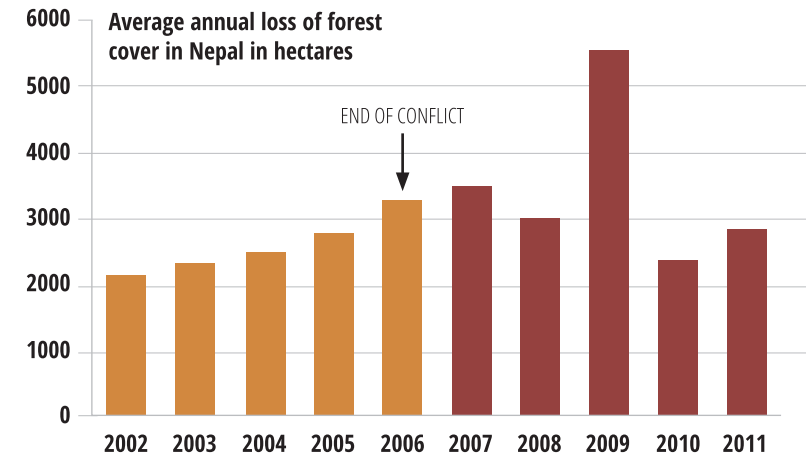
Once the fighting ends, the forests are no longer seen as dangerous. Often post-war reconstruction demand resources, and forests offer the raw material to help rebuild an economy and society. The period is usually marked by political instability and weak policy

implementation, allowing rampant exploitation of natural resources. The researchers say the negative effects are derived from a mixture of reduction or suspension of conservation activities due to security concerns and diversion of international aid resources to

peacekeeping. But they also note positive effects, such as release of pressure on ecosystems and on natural resources due to settlement changes, creation of buffer zones, and reduction or suppression of certain economic activities. For Sri Lanka, which boasts the highest biodiversity density in Asia and high endemism, the post-war forest cover loss has been dramatic. Nepal's showcase success with community forestry saw a gain in canopy cover in the mountains, but pressure on forests increased in the Tarai plains where 52% of the population lives. Nepal saw 33% post-war deforestation and Sri Lanka 32%, although the respective duration of the conflicts was 10 years and 26 years. There were also similarities in the problems experienced in the two countries: higher levels of erosion, flooding, landslides and other natural disasters post-war, due to increased deforestation.

"The issues for all surveyed countries are similar: corruption at different scales, lack of funding for the entities in charge of forest and environmental management, inadequate policies and their poor implementation," Grima said. Peru's conflict ran for more than 30 years, with the rate of deforestation in the five years after the end of major fighting in 2011 up 58% from the five years before. Ivory Coast's post-war deforestation rate was 82% higher than in the last five years of conflict. For all four countries, Grima said the solution is community-based forest management to get around the limitations of the central government. The study concludes that former war zones need support for ecosystem services, which in turn could reduce the probability of areas becoming the focus of future conflict. 🇳🇵

REMOTE SENSING: A NASA satellite image of Nepal taken in 2002 at the height of the conflict (left) shows extent of green cover. Graph (right) from a recent paper in the journal *Land Use Policy* shows the average annual loss of forest cover in the last five years of the Nepal conflict, and the first five years after the war ended in 2006 with a peak in 2009.



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Slime with a Smile

Nepal's tourism planners have always called the monsoon the 'off season', which has kept visitors away from country during the rainy season since the Lichhavi Period. It is time to change that and trademark the new slogan: 'Off to Nepal in the Off Season'.

The monsoon is the best time to visit Nepal — we just have to do some creative marketing to turn what is considered a liability into an Asset. We should swoon over our monsoon, be singing in the rain: have you ever seen the rain, or a hard rain's a-gonna fall.

Everywhere else in the world, it rains cats and dogs, but in Kathmandu it rains hippos and buffalos. This is a meteorological oddity, which climate scientists have not been able to satisfactorily explain, and should be our USP.

The rain opens up endless possibilities for re-branding Nepal as an adventure destination, and we should hire the public relations firm that put up all those posters in the London Underground last week, and do a whole new series with a catchy jingle like, "It Never Rains in Southern Kathmandu, It Pours."

Three months a year, we turn Kathmandu from a dust bowl to a mud bath, opening up a great new opportunity to launch an ad campaign. After all, if an obscure village in England called Glastonbury can sell its mud, there is no reason why Gongga Bu can't do it – the stuff is oozing all over the place. Here are some catchy slogans for which The Ass, in the national interest, waives copyright:

- Visit Kathmandu for a Summer Course in Political Mud-slinging
- Chabahil: Our Name Is Mud
- Try Wallowing in Waling
- Muck-raking Internships in *The Himalayan*
- Nepal: Slime with a Smile

The monsoon is also a time for gastrointestinal issues, but this need not be a deterrent. We can in fact promote diarrhoea; we just have to simplify the spelling of the word so we can use it in tv commercials to be aired on BBC and CNN:

- Learn To Spell Diaria in 5 Easy Steps
- Have Your Runs in the Rain
- Visit Nepal and Loose 10kg in 10 Days, or Your Money Back. Conditions Apply. If in Doubt, Consult Insurance Lawyer and/or Gastroenterologist
- Nepal: I Have a Gut Feeling
- Go To Nepal, Be Part of a Violent Uprising

Kathmandu's flooded streets can also be turned to our advantage as we show Nepal to be a Two-in-One Venice and Las Vegas of the East Rolled into One, where you have to take a gondola from the airport to the casino. Or, visitors can go white water rafting, and shoot the rapids in an adventure-filled ride to their hotels. Even flights delayed by bad weather can be turned into a tourist attraction:

- Come to Nepal and Start an Umbrella Movement
- Stuck in Lukla? How about a Rain-check?



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