All eyes on 2023

It was clear that the UML convention last month was actually the party’s first election rally, it is even more evident during this week’s Nepal Congress (NC) jamboree in Kathmandu. In his opening remarks to the NC’s 14th general convention, party leader and Prime Minister Shehla Deuba had urged delegates to bury differences, and focus on the 2023 elections.

His predecessor Khadga Prasad Oli had said the same thing two weeks before in Chitwan, declaring UML’s cadre to mobilize for a majority in polls.

At its own convention last week, the Rashtriya Prajatantra Party (RPP) positioned itself for elections by pushing an anti-sectarian, monarchist platform (painted, and overheard its leadership by selecting Rajendra Lingden.

Pushpa Kamal Dahal’s CPN (Maoist Center), the third largest party in Parliament and NC’s coalition partner, is set to hold its own national conference next month with full focus on elections.

All four parties are using publicity surrounding their conventions to kick-start their party machinery for 2023. It is as if they suddenly woke up from slumber, after party infighting that had paralyzed them, snapping metal.

For the past three years, the UML and Maoist Centre were too preoccupied with their internal power struggles to pay attention to what voters might be thinking. The NC was not even playing opposition politics. And the Covid crisis gave everyone the excuse to do nothing much. That is why the conventions have been a way to energize the parties, galvanize voters, make up for lost time so parties can throw campaigning into high gear during 2023.

“The conventions were mini-elections,” admits the UML’s Krishna Pokhrel. “They were rehearsals for the real thing, and allowed the parties to streamline themselves for the election.”

However, except for the RPP, the three main parties have retained their tried, tested, and failed leaders. Five-time prime minister Deuba was re-elected party chair, as was Oli, and most certainly Pushpa Kamal Dahal will also get to head his Manjhi Centre.

“The conventions were an opportunity for the parties to rebrand themselves, but they have not seized it,” says political analyst Parajin Acharya.

Indeed, the country’s sinking economy, the Covid crisis and the urgent need for socio-economic reforms were not even uttered in the party conclaves, which were obsessed with leadership contests and electoral alliances.

Deuba’s NC presides over the coalition government made up of Dahal’s CPN, Madhav Kumar Nepal’s newly-minted Unified Socialist, Upendra Yadav’s Janata Samajwadi Party (JSP), and the Rashtriya Janamorcha.

Dahal and Nepal need the NC’s green wave, and have warned Deuba not to break the coalition, which is teetering due to differences over the MCC, which Parliament is due to ratify. Deuba’s NC supports the $500 million American Infrastructure project, but Dahal and Nepal are opposed. The UML’s Oli strongly backed the MCC while he was in power, but now sees it as a useful tool to ship away at the unity of the governing coalition.

“The Nepal Congress has no plans to form an alliance with anyone in 2023,” says the party’s general secretary candidate Gagan Thapa, “we will sweep the polls with a majority by ourselves.”

Indeed, the NC has benefited from left disunity and wants to deploy its new young supporters to rally voters in 2023.

Meanwhile, the main priority in polls for Dahal and Nepal is to weaken the UML and emerge as the second party with an electoral alliance if possible — proving accurate the theory that Communists see the party immediately to their left as more of a threat than those on the right.

Mahesh Babur

The Days of International Migration

Interview with former ambassador to Qatar

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World Cup fous
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Nepalis return to Korea
PAGE 10

The sizzling.

The new TUCSON is here.
The Days of International Migration

International Migrants Day on 18 December is a fitting time to take another long hard look at the magnitude and impacts of this most important migration flow in Nepal’s economy. Remittances from overseas workers make up nearly a quarter of Nepal’s GDP, and remittances from its four million migrants abroad is one of the country’s most important economic activities.

Migration is a global issue in this day and age, with many countries and regions in the world being affected by it. Despite these challenges, the潮流 of migration has not slowed down.

The crisis in Europe in recent years, the political turmoil in the Middle East, and the economic downturn in many developing countries have all contributed to this.

In this context, it is important to understand the causes and consequences of migration, and to find ways to address the challenges it poses.

The潮流 of migration is not just a matter of economics, but also a matter of human rights.

Every day should be December 18, the International Migrants Day

20 Years Ago This Week

In the Line of Fire

The Day's Online Packages

Eco-Friendly Prayer Flags

China’s environmental policies are being highlighted by a series of new initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions and combating climate change. The government has set a goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2060, and has launched a series of policies and programs to support this.

China's efforts in this area include the promotion of renewable energy, the development of electric vehicles, and the expansion of public transportation systems.

What’s Trending

Made In Nepal peanut butter

Nepal Times has been focusing on the production and promotion of products made in Nepal. The latest news includes the launch of a new brand of peanut butter made in Nepal.

Most popular on Twitter

Coliving a new history for Nepal

In this week’s Trending topic, we focus on the importance of coliving in the context of Nepal’s history and current political landscape.

Is democracy too expensive for women leaders?

A recent study by the United Nations Office of Women in Development highlights the challenges faced by women leaders in the context of Nepal’s political landscape.

Most visited online page

#QrTwEeTs

Nepal Times’ #QrTwEeTs campaign encourages readers to share their thoughts and opinions on current events.

Times’活動s

Nepal Times’ various activities, including workshops, talks, and workshops, aim to engage the community and promote the growth of Nepal.

Mentioned in the article:

- International Migrants Day
- Gauri Rath
- Most reached and shared on Facebook
- Most popular on Twitter
- Coliving a new history for Nepal
- Is democracy too expensive for women leaders?
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Let's only buy bio-degradable prayer flags

Buddhist prayers for virtues and compassion are getting a green makeover in Nepal

Ashish Dhakal

Long lines of multi-coloured prayer flags dangle from Buddhist stupas, they are strung up on Himalayan summits by mountaineers, and they flutter modestly at pilgrimage sites.

At Kathmandu’s Boudha shrine, the prayer flags stream down in four directions from the top, adding to the hallowed atmosphere under the ever-watchful eyes of the Buddha.

On 18 December, however, the stupas are getting a green makeover that will not be immediately visible to the eye. Prayer flags made from synthetic material will be replaced by biodegradable ones.

Called Longa in Tibetan for “Wind hows”, the prayer flags are essentials at Buddha shrines across the Himalayas from Ladakh to Bhutan. Activists are launching a campaign to replace them with more eco-friendly alternatives as expressions of faith and spirituality.

For Ang Dolma Sherpa, founder of Uphala Crafts in Kathmandu, this has been the culmination of a five-year campaign to spread the acceptance of the biodegradable prayer flags and Allah she initiated.

“I’ll start all with 15 Buddhist leaders from around the world, including the Dalai Lama, signing the Climate Change Statement to World Leaders at COP21 in 2015,” she says. “I was convinced small-scale initiatives like these can also help address pollution and climate change.”

The idea germinated in 2018 with Allah, the traditional ceremony where they almost every occasion, from birth to weddings, graduations, arrivals, departures and even funerals.

“Growing up in a Buddhist family, we used to have heaps of Allah in our house, and every month we used to sit and separate the old ones from the new to throw or recycle,” recalls Ang Dolma.

Even then, massive amounts of Allah went to waste. “When I was younger, I didn’t really care about it,” she says, “but when my father died in a car accident in 2011, I noticed during the funeral how much of it was thrown away.”

In the past, Allah used to be made of cloth, and sometimes silk, but this changed with the introduction of synthetic materials, such as polyester and nylon. And since Allah used in funeral cannot be recycled, these are either burnt or thrown away, creating greenhouse gases, pollution and garbage.

“I want to do the right thing,” says Ang Dolma. “Buddhism also teaches us to reduce waste and take care of our planet, and so why not start with Allah and make our own biodegradable Allah.”

But it was difficult to find a manufacturer at first. In 2019, Ang Dolma proposed biodegradable Allah to Idea Studio, a platform that young entrepreneurs around the world had identified with innovative business ideas addressing local social-economic and environmental issues.

It was during the incubation at Idea Studio that she felt she was on the right path. “Talking to other young people had a positive impact on me,” she says. “Many of us had similar views regarding environmental conservation, and I was encouraged.”

Later, she was awarded as a top seven “allauna” by the EU because of its originality and sustainability and she set up Uphala Crafts last year. But as she had no background in business, she found a partner in a friend who shared her philosophy.

“Why not? The most important is the ethos of the business, you have to be very patient to make that profit,” she says.

Allah have a huge market and are used by people across communities and religions, in celebrations and ceremony. However, most are not manufactured in Nepal but imported from India and China.

“Which is why we have to be involved ourselves,” says Ang Dolma, whose Uphala Craft does not have a factory but manufactures the flags and sources locally in Lalitpur’s Sankhu. The stitching and design are done by women at Ang Dolma’s neighbours in Patan, where Sherpa currently resides and her network is expanding with the demand.

“We are trying to export to Germany as well, but the idea is to create awareness and interest in Nepal first,” says Ang Dolma. Rather than branch out, I hope People in Bhutan or Ladakh are also inspired to manufacture their own biodegradable prayer flags.”

Currently, the Allah and prayer flags are available in white with abstract and prayer printed on them in water-based black ink, recalling the traditional design. Natural ink is also being planned as the business grows. Allah made of 100% natural fibre is priced at Rs120 and 100% cotton at Rs140.

Result is a prominent centre of Buddhism in the Subcontinent and attract thousands of tourists and pilgrims every day. Ang Dolma hopes that the introduction of biodegradable Allah will spread the word and encourage communities across the Himalayas to be more responsible.

Economic downturn

Lanka bank to give show to dollar's foreign currency reserves continued to plummet in the past month, while the rupee gained ground. The currency reserves fell by Rs5.3 billion or 8.3% in the month, from an all-time high of Rs63.8 billion in the month, this is equivalent to only six months of imports. The foreign reserves are a majordriving force and reduce government revenue from tax. The rupee was repressed to Rs6.78 from Rs6.8 billion in October-November, gaining 0.5% in the preceding month. Remittances from Nepalese workers abroad increased 7.5% to Rs177.1 billion in October-November, and 0.2% from the same period the previous month. For the fiscal year, however, Nepal exported only Rs156 billion worth of goods, while imports have gone up to Rs1.8 billion.

Japanese cosmetics

Japanese cosmetics (cultural goods)

Toyota Raize

United Traders Syndicate has launched Toyota Raize, a compact SUV with 200mm of ground clearance, 4-life居住 radius, tail gate boot space of the SUV is priced between Rs0.84-9.8 million and is available in 4 variants: 2.5L and 1.0L, with manual and automatic transmission.

Honda winners

Sporific Racing has announced seven women of it’s “Triple A Player Year 7th” with Honda” ceremony. Kabita Chaudhary, Pam Prakheti, Him Chaudhary, Antika Sunar, Pradita Devkota, Antika Sunar and Pradita Devkota each will get the top five winners. Sushila Shrestha received Rs1.5 million. All Honda customers get a 70% discount on spare parts for seven years and nine bonus service coupons for up to seven years.

New outlet

Banke Robert’s has opened its new outlet in Thame with 31 different flavors, two of them new, raspberry and vanilla flavor. The new outlet has previously introduced many unique flavors. A group of people all over the place, which includes scoops as light red for, we add sugar and slightly for cream flavors.

Jasmine Paints

Jasmine Paints of the Mahalakshmi Group has ventured into a strategic business with Nepal Uplifted Sugarcane. Based in Karonga, Mahalakshmi has 100,000 subscribers on Facebook with current location being largely on social issues and human values.

Global IME’s 15th AGM

The 15th Annual General Meeting of Global IME bank has been convened on December 11, 2021. The bank has declared 15% dividends for the local, 15% for the share, and 3.5% cash dividend from the capital profit. The bank has earned Rs2.4 billion in profit excluding tax, earned more than Rs2 billion in deposits and invested over Rs2.8 billion in loans.

Toyota Raize

Standard Chartered

Standard Chartered in 15th Annual General Meeting reported net profit of Rs2.21 billion and Rs0.44 billion respectively in 2020/21. The bank approved payment of cash dividends of 1.0% and bonus dividend of 10% to the shareholders. The bank reported a growth of 26% on its risk assets to reach Rs12.79 billion, deposits declined marginally by 3.10% to Rs15.99 billion.

Japanese cosmetics

Japanese cosmetics (cultural goods)

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Nepal must now send skilled workers to Qatar

Narad Nath Bharadwaj was till recently Nepal's ambassador to Qatar. He spoke to Nepal Times about the Covid crisis during his tenure. Excerpts:

Will there be well-paying jobs after the World Cup?

The attrition process of the embassy to approve job demand requests makes it mandatory for the duration of employment contract to be two years but hiring during FIFA will be for short term work. Outside FIFA, there are other short-term, lucrative opportunities for workers, and Nepal’s Labour Ministry can change its policy to facilitate high-paying short-term work with zero cost less. Those on short-term work for low salaries will be at risk. This needs to be done very carefully.

Infrastructure development was the biggest priority in Qatar till now, but the nature of hiring will likely shift to more skilled workers in maintenance and other technical jobs. There are only 600 Nepali engineers, 460 medical doctors and a few nurses. We should now prepare to send skilled workers.

Nepalis have a good reputation in the service and hospitality sectors, and we should focus on language skills so Nepali workers are not shortchanged abroad.

The 2005 Labour Agreement between Qatar and Nepal is being revised. What should it include?

Periodic revision of minimum wages as per inflation and living expenses. More proactive and regular dialogue. Facilitate investment in technical training institutes in Nepal which the Qatars are open about. Employers also want to directly recruit workers so we need to think about that to address multipliers' recruitment.

Qatar has a rationalisation policy which reduce over-reliance on expats, and it wants to become self-sufficient in sectors like agriculture. With careful planning, we can be the source of such human resources and products.

Is it true Qatar will send back workers before the FIFA Games?

The Qatari authorities had shared with us that new recruitment will be restricted temporarily in the run-up for FIFA. But they had not said anything about repatriating workers. Qatar is expecting about 2 million fans, players and delegations and they have invested massively in additional accommodation. Larger employers will not lay off or deport workers, but there has to be paid or half-paid leave for those sent back. Migrant workers are indispensable and employees will again need them after the games. Qatar is planning for a post-petroleum era, and will require migrant workers into the future.

How are Nepalis perceived in Qatar, and how can Nepal build on bilateral ties?

In my meetings with Qatari authorities including the Emir, they have always been very appreciative about Nepalis. They express their gratitude for the contribution towards Qatar’s development.

But in Qatar and the Gulf region, the authorities are more focused on top level dialogue and relationships and not procedural details, whereas we need to be more engaged on procedure and visit day to day activities of embassies as sufficient for diplomacy. Relationship building relies on dialogue and goodwill between the top leadership and high-level country visits.

Then came Covid. Initially, Nepali and other workers went into panic mode, but we had to reassure our workers, look after them and arrange repatriation flights. Companies went bankrupt and laid off Nepali workers. Ultimately, we managed 13 repatriation flights for 12,000 Nepalis. We managed this process without much chaos as was seen elsewhere.

Qatar initiated labour reforms in 2018. Have they worked?

We were insistent about the need for higher minimum wages which they agreed in principle, but it took time for implementation. The basic minimum wage has been raised to 1,600 Riyal, along with 300 Riyal for food and 500 Riyal for accommodation. Compared to other Gulf countries, wages and labour laws are relatively better.

Initially, the government removed the NDC, no objection certificate requirement and made it easy for workers to change jobs legally. But so many workers changed jobs that large construction companies objected. The government then required resignation letters which employers were not always willing to provide. The NOC decision was not effectively implemented. Employers have influence and can pressure the government, but are also under pressure to complete projects for the FIFA 2022 World Cup.

Are there going to be job openings in the service sector during FIFA?

Nepal Times Your tenure in Qatar coincided with the blockade of the country and the Covid crisis. What were your observations?

Ambassador Bharadwaj: Yes, Qatar had been under blockade by Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Egypt and Bahrain since 2017. Of Qatar’s population of 2.6 million, 2.2 million are migrants, of which 350,000 are Nepalis – in fact, more than the.local population. One of my first impressions was how a geographically small and thinly populated country with just one visible revenue source can stand up against such powerful neighbours.

The blockade forced Qatar to be self-sufficient and independent, and it increased its global diplomatic outreach, and also prioritised economic sustainability.

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Centennial of Nepal-Britain Hunting Diplomacy

Nepal’s Rana ruler hosted British royalty on a hunting expedition in Chitwan to lobby for a treaty

Tom Robertson

On 14 December 1921 – exactly 100 years ago – Edward, the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, arrived in Chitwan to start a week of “shooting big game” in the “Tara jungle” with Nepal’s long-time ruler, Chandra Shamsher Rana.

Exactly 10 years earlier, in December 1911, Edward’s father George V had hunted in Chitwan, just a few days after being crowned Emperor of India. In 1879, Edward’s grandfather Edward VII, then the Prince of Wales, had shot tigers in Sikkim and Bengal with Jung Bahadur Rana.

Many books and articles appeared about these hunts, mostly soldiers’ accounts by British authors writing for British audiences. To today’s readers, these accounts make for “rather depressing reading, as no one conservationist recently put it, as they are little more than “a record of who shot what and when.”

A century later, it is a good time to glance back at these extraneous but extricably linked hunting in Nepal, the British Resident noted a few years later, in a few words that don’t ring loudly. The first, and his companions ate well. On 14 December, for instance, according to the monitor for dinner that evening, written in French, the guests dined on two live porcupines, a large Ducal (salamand), Suprême de Poulet Maslin (chicken), Sole d’Agone (Rohn), Porcine sur Canapé (partridge), and other delicacies.

We know about this meal today because Rana’s account of the hunt, February 1876, the British writer Llewelyn described a British expedition to witness the greatest in the annals of big game hunting in India.

The British camp was just two miles from the rail station at Bhanshi. The most memorable highlight according to Elliston: “a mass of creamy white tents, shaded by giant forest trees, flanked by and over-looking the river. Beyond the river lay a great tract of forest land, and still further in the distance the snow-capped peaks of the Himalayas.” And at 42,000 feet, the jungle of the thickest kind.

The tents, arranged in a crescent at the foot of the distant Himalayan peaks, housed 49 European guests, including a young Louis Moncathen, the man who as British vice-roy in South Asia in the late 1940s, would oversee the partition of India and Pakistan. Another 250 Indians stayed nearby.

The British entourage included colonial administrators, military officers, seamen, and members of the press. This was a hunt, but there was business to be done. Too.

There was no shortage of luxury. Electric lights lit up the tents, and leopard skin carpets highlighted their floors. A writing table fashioned from rhino horn, and hide added extra elegance to the Prince of Wales’ tent. Each night, musical concert sweetened the air. In case anyone needed even more imperial sport, a polo field was built just across the border in India, a short drive away.

Hunting in Nepal was great. The British Resident noted a few years later, in a few words that don’t ring loudly. What made these hunts so grand? Over the years, historians have written about them, yet many questions remain.

For us today, the number killed (‘bagged’) in these hunts seems extraordinary. In 1931, King George V himself shot and killed 21 tigers, 10 rhinoceroses and two bears. His whole party killed 39 tigers, 18 rhinoceroses and four bears.

In 1921, the ‘bag’ was a bit more modest: 18 tigers, eight rhinoceroses, two bears and two rapids. And actually, the Prince said he was most proud not of his tiger kills but another quarry: while hunting one day he came across and shot a 10-foot-long king cobra.

So many dead bodies could make the camp unpleasant. At times, the naturalist Elliston pointed out, when we had five or six decapitated rhinos, together with numerous tigers and an old bear in different stages of skinning, the stench was very bad.

The long-term environmental costs were less than might be imagined. The hunts were surely bloody affairs, but ultimately not that damaging for wildlife. Conservationists nowadays agree that the tiger and rhino populations recovered from these hunts in a few years. A greater threat, in their view, was the loss of habitat.

Why did the British care so much about killing tigers? The reasons behind the hunts have been hotly debated. For one thing, they were just the latest in a long line of imperialist activities.

One of the reasons for the hunts was to give the British Royal Family a chance to see India, which had recently been brought into the British Empire. The hunts were a way to show off the country’s wildlife to the world, and to impress upon the British public that India was a land of plenty.

Another reason was to help finance the British military. The hunts were a way for the British government to raise money to pay for wars and other activities.

Finally, the hunts were a way to control the population of tigers and other large predators. The British believed that these animals were a danger to humans and livestock, and that hunting them would help reduce the threat.

In the end, however, the hunts were largely unsuccessful. The population of tigers and other large predators did not decrease as much as the British had hoped, and many other species were killed in the process.

Despite these failures, the hunts remain an important part of British history, and continue to be studied by historians and environmentalists to this day.

Nepal's full independence. In 1911, he didn't get it. But by 1931, the situation had changed. In World War I, over 100,000 Nepalis were killed, and Nepal was not in a position to defend itself, serving in India and in Europe, 14,000 had been wounded, 10,000 were seriously wounded. During the hunting expedition, Nepal and British officials reached a new understanding about Nepal independence, as Thomas Cox explains in an article in the Journal of South Asian Studies. They realized things two years later in the Treaty of Friendship. Nepal would get weapons and a formal acknowledgement of its independence.

At the hunt, the Prince of Wales went a note to Chandra Shumsher. He thanked the Rana leader for the meticulous planning and preparations that had made his hunt so successful. He also thanked Chandra once again for the great assistance Nepal had given Great Britain during the war.

Under the Conditions that Preval" None of this – the "realpolitik" manipulation, the reeds, the crested geese flying above the mountains, the rhino writing table, the fine French meals, the 463 elephants, Nepal's famous ring methodology, the 1883s were put together, with skill and knowledge of thousands of ordinary Nepalis, particularly the Tharu and other indigenous groups. Nepal did not have a zoo, a racetrack, a Safari, and the magic carpet of a zoo. A safari is a good idea, and the Nepali Government is working to create a safari in the future. The time was not right.

Among the casualties of the war were 12,000 "followers." For all the elephants, there were 3,000 additional attendants. In 1931, 36 miles of roads were cleared for water cars, and 22 miles of telephone lines were put up. The most challenging work may have been done by the jungle "bushmen." Pointing to the roads and telephones, Percival Landon applauded the "skillful"ARTICULATION OF the campaign by the Ranas, but above all what impressed him was the "slow concentration within the Mountains of the great game" of the Tarai. An army of "bushmen," he explained, was responsible for clearing the area and feeding them in weeks and even months before the opening of the "great game." After all, before the Ranas beat the beasts that infest the warm, damp, rich jungles of lower Nepal.

This meant walking in a line of hundreds through the jungle, scaring animals – by shooting, hitting, threatening, using dogs, attracting wild boar – from great distances away. It was a job that required a lot of hard work, a job that would be successful only in such a country as Nepal and under the conditions that prevailed there," Landon writes.

The conditions that prevailed there was a euphemism. Landon used for Nepal's automatic rifle mixed with a lot of forced labour. Despite the malaise that kept outsiders away much of the year, the work that went into the Rana hunting excursions shows that Chitrak's Tarai did not live lives of isolation, untouched and independent from the rest of society, as many of today's tourist brochures romantically imagine. At some time year they had to prepare for the big Rana hunts, at other times they had to raise funds for the state tax collectors. Some defenders of the Ranas like to point to the way they maintained and protected Nepal's independence through their secret diplomacy. If that is so, they did so with the help of a lot of ordinary Nepalis who were often discriminated against – the Gurkhas (and families) who gave their lives in World War I and the Tharu people who relied on the magnificient Tarai herds, as in the case of the Prince of Wales to Chitrak exactly 100 years ago this week. 

Tom Robertson, Ph.D. is a historian. He taught Nepali, Nepalese and South Asian history at the University of Virginia from 1991-1995.
EVENTS

Gewon Dance Festival

Music

Untitled Musical Eve

The KJC Christmas Concert

Weekend shows

Jijihisha

Film Southasia Submissions

Adrian Pradhan Collective

Sabin Rai & Pharaoh

Dining

Pangra Express

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Overeasy

GETWAY

Evergreen Eco-Lodge

The Terraces Lakhuri

Club Himalaya

The Old Inn

Hotel Fireside

AIR QUALITY INDEX

KATHMANDU

OUR PICK

The French Dispatch

Kathmandu Times

There is a secretly growing market in Kathmandu which will bring flowers of new shade of brighter colours, but it is not possible to talk about it in the media. There are several flower shops on the main road of Basantapur and in Sankhu which have been selling flowers for many years. They have a wide variety of flowers for different occasions and also offer delivery services. The prices are reasonable and the flowers are of high quality. It is a great opportunity for people to bring color and beauty to their homes. See the article for more information.
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Long wait over, Nepalis return to Korea

Stranded by Covid restrictions for two years, Nepali workers rejoining jobs in South Korea

When Aakash KC flew to Kathmandu from Seoul in February 2020, he was looking forward to a three-month break in Nepal from his job in South Korea. Little did he know that he would be stranded for almost two years in Nepal due to the pandemic. The Covid-19 restrictions delayed his return to Korea. Aakash’s Korean employer, who had paid him for the two months he had worked, was unable to send him back to Korea.

Aakash had to endure the uncertainty of coronavirus isolation and quarantine. He had to find work in Nepal and support his family. The Covid-19 regulations made it difficult for him to find work as a skilled worker.

Despite the challenges, Aakash was determined to return to Korea. He reached out to his Korean employer to enquire about his return and discussed options to resume his job.

In February 2022, Aakash finally returned to his job in South Korea after being stranded in Nepal for two years. His return was a emotional moment for him and his family. He expressed his gratitude to his employer for supporting him during this difficult time.

The Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the Nepali labor force in South Korea. Many workers were stranded due to restrictions and were unable to return to their jobs.

The Nepali government has been working closely with the Korean government to facilitate the return of stranded workers. The government has been providing assistance and support to stranded workers to help them resume their jobs.

The Nepali government has been proactive in addressing the challenges faced by stranded workers. It has been working with the Korean government to facilitate their return and resume their jobs.

The Nepali government has also been providing support to stranded workers in the form of financial assistance and legal aid.

The Nepali government has been encouraging workers to return to their jobs and resume their livelihoods. It has been working with employers to facilitate the return of stranded workers.

The Nepali government has been stepping up its efforts to facili
whistle on World Cup fouls

of the rights group FairSquare. “Being a migrant worker in Qatar today is really bad for your health, and can kill you.”

Ramshwar is from Surkhet district and works as an electrician in Qatar. He supports a Brazilian football team, works at a labour supply company. Like many other Nepali workers, he is worried that he will be sent home in 2022 before the FIFA games begin.

“They will keep maintenance workers, and might send everyone else back,” he said on the phone from Doha. “I am worried I will lose my job. How will I provide for my family after I return?”

To be sure, Qatar cannot be singled out for blame. The exploitation of workers by recruiters and harassment by officials starts back in Nepal, even before workers leave home. At a time when construction for the World Cup was in full swing in Qatar, the ambassadorial post in Doha was vacant from 2013-17 when migrant abuses, including sudden deaths of Nepali workers, were at their peak and getting worldwide attention.

Then, Prime Minister Deuba’s government recalled Nepal’s ambassador without naming his replacement, at a time when the need for labour diplomacy in Doha was most critical (see interview, page 8).

And this year, Nepal and Qatar haggled a lucrative employment deal to supply the Qatar Police with 200 Nepalis. They would have earned Rs160,000 a month, excluding overtime pay and end-of-service benefit. But most of the Nepalis, according to officials, knew that the deal was in trouble and at one point, the deal was cancelled.

“Everyone wanted a piece of the pie until there was no pie left for anyone,” said one activist.

Nepal has also failed to fulfill its promise of integrating workers who had to return due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Schemes like the Prime Minister’s Employment Program introduced with much fanfare have failed to deliver.

There are reports that Qatar could send back many construction workers, including Nepalis, on extended leave before the games begin in the stadiums and facilities the workers themselves built.

“Even if they let me stay, I cannot afford the tickets to go watch the games in the stadium,” said Ramshwar. “I will watch it on TV.”

There will be many Nepalis in the hospitality sector who will look after players and visitors in Qatar during the World Cup, and workers are hopeful that there will be future projects they can engage in.

But international rights watchdogs say the world’s attention is going to wane once the games are over, and the media glare shifts. They say not a single worker died during construction of stadiums in London for the 2012 Olympics, and there is no reason why Qatar with its resources could not adhere to similar safety standards.

“Despite Qatar’s PR offensive and showmanship, there is an urgent need for real and durable reforms because workers continue to suffer wage abuse, employers avoid accountability, complaints are ignored,” said Hina Zaidi of Human Rights Watch.

Meanwhile, back in Nepal, politicians are already in election mode (see page 11), and will be too preoccupied with their campaigns during 2022 to care for migrant welfare. There are already lofty claims about how, if elected, they will curb migration and create jobs back home.

Most Nepalis have heard all that before, and the trust deficit is so high that out-migration to Qatar and elsewhere seems like the more reliable — and for many, the only — alternative.

Activists say the government must immediately ensure that Nepal’s embassies in destination countries for migrants are adequately staffed and funded. It should also diversify out-migration towards better, higher paying jobs, and use bilateral labour agreements like the 2005 one with Qatar that is currently being renewed, for better worker protections.
License to analyse

As a newspaper of record, it is our job here to report on the ongoing party conventions by sticking to the facts — and not allow facts to get in the way of our analysis.

We journalists swear by our sacred code of conduct: “We believe that at the end of the day, the ugly truth will prevail” no matter what, and we have to let the potato chips fall where they may.

We take our adversarial role very seriously to combat the afflicted and afflink the uncomfortable, hold government to account, and publish all the heinous, no matter how trivial. We will print handouts in exchange for handouts. But that does not mean that we just take the money and run, we keep our end of the bargain. We will not think twice about saying what a great guy the Prime Minister is. We will think only once.

Luckily, Nepal’s Constitution gives us complete freedom not just to kick ass, but also to kick ass, as well as kick ass. That is why our media is the envy of other countries in the region. But we must not rest on our laurels. Nepal’s journalists must strive to be self-reliant, self-righteous, and self-censor. The Ministry of Disinformation and Propaganda henceforth requires all those desires of pursuing a journalism career to pass a license test to practice the profession. You have 1 hour to complete this exam. Good luck.

UNCERTAIN QUESTIONS

A source tells you not to hassle, and waiter brings the bill. Do you:

- Give the tip first
- Ask for the bill first
- Ask for the bill, give tip second
- Give both the tip and bill

JOURNALISM LICENSE EXAMINATIONS

Objective questions:

- What is the world’s oldest profession?
- Singing
- Glazing
- Marketing

- Jnal media
- News media
- Legal media
- All of the above

- Politicians fighters on camera, do you:
- Take note
- Remind the politician
- Take no further action
- Take photo and video

- Are the politicians fighters on camera, do you:
- Take note
- Remind the politician
- Take no further action
- Take photo and video

- Off the record, sources:
- Confidentially with the same sheet
- Remind the politician
- Take no further action
- Take photo and video

- In which media does propaganda masquerade as news?
- Online media
- News media
- Legal media
- All of the above

- A source tells you not to hassle, and waiter brings the bill. Do you:
- Pay it off
- Ask for the bill
- Ask for the bill, give tip second
- Give both the tip and bill

- What kind of event qualifies as “Breaking News”?
- Finding gathering
- Singing
- Marketing

- A source tells you not to hassle, and waiter brings the bill. Do you:
- Pay it off
- Ask for the bill
- Ask for the bill, give tip second
- Give both the tip and bill

NOTO OBJECTIVE QUESTIONS

Write an essay on three of the following subjects:
1. Press freedom means singing kumari in power
2. We做不到the reason, we should look
3. Gathering more than 5 per cent of Nepali can’t read or write anymore
4. What does press freedom in Nepali compare to, say, typo?

The Ass