



ANDY ROUSE / WWF


Conservation vs Conservatives

One of the few arenas for which Nepal has got well-deserved international praise is conservation. Nearly a quarter of the country’s area is protected, the wild tiger population has tripled in 12 years, rhino poaching is down, forest cover has doubled in the past 30 years to 45% of Nepal’s area. And that makes Forest and Environment Minister Birendra Prasad Mahato salivate. He has forgotten his portfolio is to protect forests, not destroy them.

The Minister wants to auction tiger trophy hunting licenses because “there are too many tigers”. “Beyond just unethical and unscientific, the proposal to cull tigers is illegal, illogical and unimplementable,” says Hemanta Mishra, who helped set up Chitwan National Park in 1973. “The proposal violates the CITES treaty and Nepal’s own laws. Even if super-wealthy foreigners shoot tigers in Nepal, they will certainly be breaking the laws of

their own countries if they take the trophies back,” says Mishra, who is now Global Ambassador at WellBeing International. Many find Minister Mahato’s assertion laughable that Nepal can earn up to \$25 million through tiger hunting fees to underwrite the cost of maintaining national parks. The tiger is on Appendix 1 of CITES (International Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna), and Nepal is among 184 countries to

have signed this international treaty. Nearly half of all tourists coming to Nepal visit national parks, and there are growing numbers of Nepali visitors also contributing to local jobs and income. In fact, 90% of the revenue of the parks is from tourism. Chitwan and Bardia are world class national parks and any loss of biodiversity would affect tourism. Admittedly, the increase in tiger numbers has affected prey density, forcing some to venture outside national parks and leading to contact with villagers outside. Expansion of forests has also led to crop loss from wildlife. The government is trying to dismantle other areas in which Nepal has achieved success, like community forestry, by allowing ‘management’ of trees. It is strongly backing the Nijgad Airport project that would decimate the last remaining native forests in the eastern Tarai, and it is drafting a bill to amend laws to allow resorts, hotels and infrastructure inside national parks. “Minister Mahato clearly has no understanding of how conservation works,” says environmentalist Babu Krishna Karki. “Someone who dreams of making a national park a source of revenue doesn’t know the first thing about conservation. How can he consciously spout such nonsense?” Minister Mahato has accused national park employees of colluding with wildlife poachers, and even blamed international

development partners of making money from Nepal’s achievement in tiger conservation. Mahato was appointed forest minister in May by Upendra Yadav’s Tarai-based JSP and has been trying to find ways to cash in by allowing extractive projects. “We have to be very careful not to kill the goose that lays golden eggs,” warns Ghana Gurung of WWF Nepal. “Tiger culling is a no-no, and any decision to allow resorts inside national parks has to be consultative and transparent.” Tarai national parks already face encroachment, river pollution, and climate change, and building roads, railways and irrigation canals will further damage them. Mahato is also trying to relax a ban on the collection of *Tamarix dioica*, a kind of lichen locally known as jhau that has medicinal properties. Forest Secretary Rewati Raman Poudel, who dared speak up against Mahato’s proposals, was transferred after he raised objections. A conservative politician, Mahato has no conservation background. His only claim to fame is that he is the brother of Belarussian billionaire of Nepali origin Upendra Mahato, and was the chair of Machhapuchhre Bank and has investments in hydropower. As minister, Mahato has also exerted pressure to pass the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) of the Rs3 billion Pathibhara Cable Car project which is opposed by the local indigenous Yakthung Limbu people. He has also forced officials to ignore EIAs on several hydropower projects in which he has investments. The National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act has provisions to operate facilities inside the park for tourism, but the regulation stipulates that any decision has to be transparent so it does not impact on the ecosystem. Under Nepal’s current governance climate, that is problematic.  Maheshwor Acharya

EXPERIENCE

The Quality of the True Italian Culture



MORE INFO: +977 9820 805943

19 YEARS

Outsource your
Non-Core Staff through
Suvidha Staffing

licensed company by DoL, MoLESS

100% Labour Law Compliant

+977-9851247213

www.suvidhasewa.com.np

Suvidha
Sewa



The Chinese Room



FOR RESERVATION:

9815597346

Durbarmarg

Free Parking Available at:

Hotel Annapurna

NEW ORLEANS CAFE

THAMEL 01-4700736

LIVE MUSIC

WEDNESDAYS
FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS

#1

GLOBAL WORLD

eScan

Anti-Virus

TOTAL PROTECTION

for Computers, Mobiles & Tablets

An ISO 27001 Certified Company

Contact no.: 01-4330980

www.escanav.com

SALE | FLAT 50% OFF*

UNITED COLORS OF BENETTON.

 DURBARMARG PH 5321454, LABIM MALL PH 9801270033.

T & C APPLY



Don't fix what ain't broke

Despite lack of resources, war and instability, Nepal's conservation achievements have won acclaim worldwide. From community forestry, our unique approach to conservation areas in fragile mountain regions, to integrating environmental protection with indigenous knowledge, Nepal has been a model.

As our page 1 story in this edition shows, Nepal has doubled its forest area in the past 30 years, 25% of the land area is protected, tiger numbers have tripled.

But now, Nepal has a forest minister hell-bent on undermining these gains. Forest and Environment Minister Birendra Prasad Mahato has proposed to auction Nepali tigers through global bidding so they

"It also dilutes the country's unparalleled achievements in bringing endangered species such as the rhino and the tiger back from the brink of extinction."

Mahato is from the Tarai-based Janata Samajwadi Party (JSP) and has been pushing for other anti-conservation activities including amending EIA laws to allow infrastructure inside parks, the trade of restricted lichens with medical properties to favour businesses, 'management' of community forests and the Nijgad airport project that would destroy the last remaining native forests of the eastern Tarai.

The government is amending regulations to allow major hydropower plants, hotels, resorts, paragliding and cable cars to be constructed within the national parks and reserves. The National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Manual 2030 (Fifth Amendment 076) and the regulations of six parks are being repealed and new regulations are being issued.

Now that poaching has been reduced, the biggest threat to Nepal's national parks and other forests are new roads, railways, transmission lines and irrigation canals crisscrossing them. And a greedy government.

Nepal's protected areas are the main attraction for nearly half the tourists visiting Nepal. Domestic tourism has lifted the economy of villages outside parks, and 90% of the revenue of national parks come

from tourism.

Any move to undermine the biodiversity of protected areas will not just hurt tourism jobs and incomes, but also damage the ecosystem. Head of World Wildlife Fund Nepal (WWF Nepal) Ghana Gurung has this to say: "Nepal stands as one of the models for conservation, and any sudden and drastic change will undermine those successes as well as hurt tourism."

Allowing hotels and resorts inside parks could be an option if Nepal's regulatory mechanisms were transparent and clean. But given the climate of corruption, poor governance and impunity in Nepal today, it would open the floodgates to the commercialisation of nature, and destroy hard-earned conservation achievements of the past five decades.

Tiger culling is such a ridiculous proposal that it does not even need refuting. Despite our successes, we are not out of the woods yet in conservation in Nepal. Population pressure in the Tarai, climate change, infrastructure, corruption and incompetent decision-making could unravel everything very quickly.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

Sonia Awale

The government's proposal to auction tigers for hunting is another gross illustration of greed, incompetence and malgovernance

can be trophy hunted to generate revenue because, as he put it, "Nepal now has too many tigers and license to hunt will reduce human-animal conflict".

Nepal was the first tiger-range country to nearly triple the population of its big cats from 121 in 2010 to 355 in 2022. This increase has indeed led to tigers coming out of parks to hunt livestock, but the solution lies in better management and setting up rescue centres for problematic tigers.

Mahato's proposal violates international norms and treaties including the International Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) of which Nepal is a party. Tigers are on Appendix 1 of CITES which includes species threatened with extinction. Nepal's own National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act has listed tigers as fully protected species.

Nepal's conservation pioneer, Hemanta Mishra, who helped convert Chitwan from a royal hunting reserve to a national park 50 years ago, told us: "The proposal is not just unethical and unscientific, it is irrational, illegal, illogical and unimplementable."

Mahato claims to have received offers from American and Japanese hunters to pay millions of dollars to shoot a tiger and believes Nepal can finance the entire annual cost of his ministry with that money.

"I fear this kind of loose statement makes Nepal a laughing stock in the global conservation community," Mishra told us.

20 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

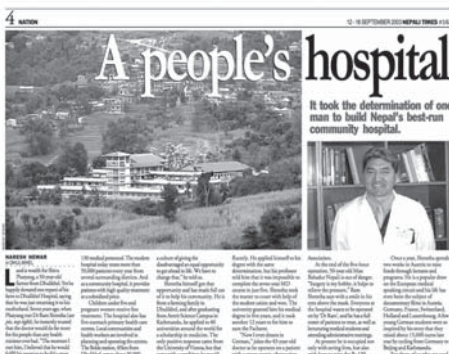
Health for All

In the recent past, Nepal has achieved dramatic progress in public health. The maternal mortality rate has come down from 539 per 100,000 live births in 1996 to 151 in 2021. Childhood malnutrition has declined sharply with stunting down from 57% to 36% in 30 years. The country's immunisation rate is among the highest in the world while cataract surgery in Nepal has revolutionised eye care in South Asia.

And yet, health infrastructure has not kept pace. The disparity between private and government hospitals is widening.

But a few hospitals have set an example by providing quality care to the neediest often free of cost. Excerpts from the report published 20 years ago this week on issue #162 12-18 September 2003:

Land is wealth for Shiva Phatyang, a 50-year-old farmer from Dhulikhel. Yet he happily donated one ropani of his farm to Dhulikhel Hospital, saying that he was just returning it to his motherland. Seven years ago, when Phatyang met Dr Ram



Shrestha, he instantly trusted that the doctor would do far more for the people than any health minister ever had.

The farmer was among 23 Dhulikhel residents who donated 28 ropanies of land to build one of Nepal's first community hospitals. What began in 1996 with just two rooms, now treats more than 59,000 patients every year from several surrounding districts.

Children under five and pregnant women receive free treatment. The Bolde station, 45km from Dhulikhel, serves about 30,000 villagers who come here from as far as Ramechhap and Sindhuli.

For archived material of Nepali Times of the past 20 years, site search: www.nepalitimes.com

ONLINE PACKAGES



Vertical hydroponics is an alternative farming method best suited for urban centres like Kathmandu to maximise productivity in a limited area while also saving water. Follow us to Muttha Nepal in Thecho, which uses this new technology to revolutionise urban agriculture. Read the story on pages 4-5. Watch the video on our YouTube channel.



Chuman Gharti Magar from Gulmi in western Nepal comes from a family of lahures. But unlike his friends and family, Magar decided to stay out in Nepal and start beekeeping. Today, even without any advertising or a physical shop, he has no problem selling all of the honey he produces. Read story on page 6-7 and watch the video online. Subscribe to our YouTube channel for more original multimedia content.

WHO'S WHO

We are challenged by non-communicable diseases as well as new and old communicable diseases, with gaps in health and gender equity. Obviously, it calls for a time-tested public health leadership at WHO SEARO ('Who's WHO', Aayusha Pokharel, #1178).

Rita Thapa

■ Shambhu Acharya is definitely the more qualified and experienced candidate. An outsider would ask why it is even a contest. As usual, in such appointments, it would be interesting to know the politics and horse-trading going on behind the curtain.

Keith D. Leslie

■ Dr Shambhu articulates a clear, succinct, innovative and forward-looking vision for WHO-SEARO. I have no doubt that if elected as Regional Director, he will hit the ground running from day one and will provide competent leadership.

Kul Chandra Gautam

■ Public Health leadership and expertise must drive public health issues, not politics. Dr Acharya outweighs his contender by every comparison. I truly believe for the WHO to deliver results and strengthen cooperation among the member states, they must choose him, as the best-fit candidate.

Bishow Parajuli

OUTMIGRATION

Lack of incentives and opportunities are driving youngsters away from Nepal—it seems nothing has changed over the last 50 years ('Push factors driving Nepal's out', Ramesh Kumar #1178).

Narendra Khadka

■ What a terrible indictment of Nepal's so-called leaders.

David Seddon

■ If only Nepal would allow people to build what they are capable of building.

Nepse Lightning

WHAT'S TRENDING

Documentary films come of age

by Smriti Basnet

Nepali films and filmmakers are going places, and many have been able to find their way into international labs, forums, pitches and events. Documentary films have also been doing well, but the challenge is to run and sustain the market and widen the reach for non-fiction films. Read more at nepalitimes.com

Most reached and shared on Facebook

Push factors driving Nepal's out

by Ramesh Kumar

Last year Nepal saw the largest mass exodus of young Nepal's in the country's history. Peer pressure, falling living standards, and growing hopelessness that the future will be worse because of corruption and political disarray are some push factors driving Nepal's overseas. Join the discussion online.

Most popular on Twitter

Who's WHO?

by Aayusha Pokharel

The WHO is set to nominate its South East Asia Regional Director soon. Nepal's candidate Shambhu Acharya has emerged as a clear favourite among international public health practitioners. But Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina strongly backed her daughter Saima Wazed during the G20 in New Delhi this week. Follow Nepali Times for latest developments.

Most commented



Highway accidents are no accident in Nepal

by Shristi Karki

A total of 2,320 people lost their lives in road traffic accidents in Nepal between April 2022 and April 2023, while 28,856 people were injured, many of them maimed for life. Reckless driving, poor engineering, and a lack of emergency response make Nepal's highways and roadways deathtraps. Visit our website for details.

Most visited online page

QUOTE TWEETS



Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
Nepali and Bangladeshi candidates vie for regional UN post, pitting experience vs expedience.



Najeeb Al-Shorbaji @shorbaji
Dr Shambhu Prasad Acharya from Nepal is tested for his integrity and knowledge. If I were Minister of Health in a SEARO country, I would vote for him.



Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
Last year, 775,000 Nepalis left for employment abroad, and another 100,000 students flew out to study overseas. Nearly a million young Nepalis left in 2021-22, and that figure does not even include those who went to India.



Ashok Pokharel अशोक पोखरेल @BigBlackYak
Nepalis are voting with their feet. Politicians are not interested in creating meaningful jobs and neither are bureaucrats simply because their own tenures are seemingly endless.

1,000 WORDS



PRADEEP RAJ ONTA/RSS



Nepali Times on Facebook
Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter
Follow @nepalitimes on Instagram

Editor Online: Sahina Shrestha Executive Editor: Sonia Awale Layout: Kiran Maharjan
Publisher: Kunda Dixit, Himalmedia Pvt Ltd | Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur | GPO Box 7251 Kathmandu
editors@nepalitimes.com | www.nepalitimes.com | www.himalmedia.com | Tel: +977 1 5005601-08 Fax: +977 1 5005518



WE'RE ALL CONNECTED: MALTA

Connecting more countries than any other.



TURKISH AIRLINES

ktmsales@thy.com | 01-4438363 | 4438436

Greening a concrete jungle

Vertical hydroponics can revolutionise farming in Nepal's urban areas

■ Pinki Sris Rana

Greenhouses are supposed to be hotter than the ambient temperature because the glass or plastic traps heat inside so plants can grow in winter. But one greenhouse here on the southern fringes of Kathmandu is an exception: it is cooler than outside.

It feels like an enormous refrigerator, and there is no visible thermostat. The agro-tech company Muttha Nepal has deployed a combined concept of vertical layered farming and hydroponics, allowing for plants to grow in a relatively small space with nutrient-enriched water.

Muttha Agro is the brainchild of Kushal Gurung of Wind Power Nepal and Gandaki Urja, who has also been promoting alternative energy sources in Nepal with Nepal's biggest industrial-scale biogas plant in Kaski and a series of wind farms.

"This is an alternative to traditional agriculture most suited to cities like Kathmandu with its limited land already crowded with concrete buildings and scarce water," explains Gurung, showing visitors around his complex. "The once-fertile soil in Kathmandu is also becoming too acidic for crops because of the overuse of fertilisers and pesticides."

Muttha stepped into production

in March 2023, and its applied demo system has also been installed in the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)'s Living Mountain Lab in Godavari for other farmers to adapt to or learn from.

After rooftop farming and the Mikawaki method of forestation where diverse indigenous plants are densely planted in small city plots, hydroponics can maximise productivity in a limited area while saving water by circulating it again and again.

Muttha Nepal goes a step further by integrating the global practice with local knowledge, adds Gurung. "In Nepal, most hydroponics are investing millions and bringing experts from abroad to install their systems. But we installed the whole setup by ourselves, understanding our own needs," he says.

Also unlike most hydroponics that have artificial heating or cooling, Muttha uses the natural temperature balance, bringing down energy cost and making the venture most cost-effective.

"Artificial temperature control is costly whereas sunlight is free," says Erik van Os, a Dutch expert with 40 years of experience in hydroponics.

Van Os is helping Muttha Nepal grow sustainably as part of Programma Uitzending Managers (PUM), which is committed to the sustainable development of small



and medium-sized enterprises in developing countries and emerging markets.

In a natural temperature setup, the topmost layer gets most of the sunlight, which means plants that need more sun are placed above while others go in their shade.

Farming is seeing mechanical and technical advances globally, but Muttha is making the most of what it has with inputs from advisers. Gurung and the team do not consider the lack of high-tech

appliances as setbacks.

Using a mid-tech greenhouse, surrounded by a white net, the vertical hydroponics structure provides enough space for ventilation. The net of the surrounding walls can be covered with plastic during heavy rainfall. The topmost layer below the plastic roof is a shade net that decreases the temperature by 2-3°C.

Inside the greenhouse, there are five perfectly aligned separate columns with four systems each of

six levels of pipes, each having six pipes with 28,000 holes in which leafy greens are grown. Each row has a 500 l tank half-embedded below ground level.

The nutrient-filled water is circulated throughout the pipes through these tanks with the help of a water pump. The plants are high-value produce like lettuce, basil, kale, arugula and celery, and poke out of the vertically arranged holes in the pipes.

"We have stuck with salads



NMB BANK
एनएमबी बैंक

Berger festive offer

'Berger Hamro Ghar Hamro Shaan' promotion scheme has been launched for the festive season.



products, and house owners will receive free consultation from interior designers.

One lucky winner will win a bumper prize of Rs500,000 while three more will get Rs100,000 each. The offer is applicable to selected Berger

Tiago.ev in Nepal

Tata Motors launched the Tiago.ev at NADA Auto Show 2023 in Kathmandu last week at an introductory price of Rs2.199 million and bookings are now open. Tiago.ev comes with premium interiors, leatherette seats, contrast roof, fully automatic climate control, projector auto headlamps, rain-sensing wipers, and cruise control. Also launched at the event were the sub-compact SUV Tata PUNCH and compact SUV Nexon EV MAX with a new trim XZ+ at Rs4.599 million.



Ncell helpline

Ncell Axiata Limited is collaborating with the Patan Mental Hospital so customers with Ncell numbers can call the National Suicide Prevention Helpline



1166 and seek necessary consultations. Ncell handed over Ncell SIM and a handset solution to Patan Mental Hospital on World Suicide Prevention Day on 10 September. Last month, Ncell also installed four 4G Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) at the district headquarters of Dolpo, Mugu, Bajura and Humla districts.



Hyundai Festive Delight

Hyundai has unveiled the 5-seater SUV Hyundai Exter as the bumper prize of its Festive Delight 2080 campaign. Customers can win prizes and cash discounts up to Rs600,000 and a complimentary one-year comprehensive insurance plan for each purchase. The scheme is valid until 19 November to coincide with Chhath Parva.

MG EVs

Paramount Motors has released the MG Comet EV and MG 4 EV in Nepal. The car offers a range of 230km on a single charge, has a battery of 17.3mAh and a motor of 31.26mAh, and is priced at Rs1.799 million. The MG 4 EV awarded 5 stars for safety in Europe is available in two variants, comfort and luxury. The MG4 EV can give a range of up to 435km.



EBL & Om Hospital

Everest Bank and Om Hospital have signed an MoU per which the hospital will offer a discount of up to 10% on IPD-Diagnostics, pharmacy and physiotherapy



services as well as a 5% discount on dental services to customers, card holders, mobile banking users, as well as staff and family members of Everest Bank. Everest Bank CEO Sudesh Khaling and Om Hospital CEO Yam Bahadur Mahat signed the agreement on 12 September.



Nabil-Sipradi

Nabil Bank is to provide collateral-free finance to retailers of Tata Genuine Parts and Tata Motors Genuine Oil. The deal was signed between the General Manager of Sipradi Autoparts Yuvraj Budhathoki and the Head of SME and Microfinance of Nabil Bank Amit Shrestha.



for two reasons. One, it has been the tested crop of hydroponics worldwide and is a sure success everywhere,” explains Gurung. “Second, it is a perishable high-value crop that cannot be imported.”

Muttha is also experimenting

with growing strawberries, coriander, and tomatoes but salads are their priority. With an investment of Rs6 in each sapling, it can earn up to Rs30 when it grows.

Muttha also runs training workshops to share its knowledge

to make farmers across Nepal climate-smart to keep up with rising temperature and droughts. Just this monsoon, parts of Nepal’s hills and much of Tarai were not able to plant paddy on time due to reduced rainfall. For now, deploying this combined alternative

farming in urban centres is a start to greening concrete jungles, while increasing productivity of farms.

Von Os sums it up: “Integrating hydroponics is the way forward to intensify the produce in places like Kathmandu with limited space but high demand.” 🇳🇵

Vertical hydroponics is an alternative farming method best suited for urban centres like Kathmandu to maximise productivity in a limited area while also saving water. Follow us to Muttha Nepal in Thecho, which uses this new technology to revolutionise urban agriculture. Watch the video on our YouTube channel.

ALL NEW RAIZE



HONEY = MONEY

Farmer teaches himself bee-keeping so he does not have to migrate for work



■ **Sahina Shrestha** in Gulmi

Chuman Gharti Magar cannot remember the number of times he has been stung by bees. But he clearly remembers what his friends and family had said when he spent Rs4,000 on two frame hives from a furniture shop.

Back then there were no buses to his village in Musikot, so he carried the two boxes on his back and walked all the way home. His fellow villagers were clearly curious, having never seen frame hives.

"When they found out it was a modern hive, people called me crazy for spending money for bees that naturally live in logs," remembers Magar. "But we have to move with the times otherwise we will be left behind."

Sixteen years down the line, the same people commend him for the respect and money he has earned.

Magar is now the proprietor of Malrani Mauripalan Kendra, where he keeps 150 hives of local Asian honeybees (*Apis cerana*) which produce 5-10 quintal of honey every season. He sells each kg of honey for Rs1,500 but says the price fluctuates.

"I haven't been able to fulfill the market



demand. As honey is considered to have health benefits, the demand is quite high," he says.

Most of his clients are locals in Gulmi but his honey has made its way to Kathmandu, Pokhara, Butwal and even abroad. Much of his business is through word of mouth, and customers usually call him with orders.

He also instructs other interested beekeepers, most of whom come to him for practical training. He also sells bees and beehives.

"Most of the beekeepers here sell bees and not honey, maybe because they don't know

how. But my priority is honey," says Magar. "Just like we keep buffaloes for milk, the bees are for honey."

Magar had passed his SLC and had tried his hand at farming for four years. But the weather and soil conditions in the mountains were not suitable.

"In the plains, if you farm for a month, you get to eat for eight. Here, if you farm for eight months maybe you get to eat for one," says Magar.

Magar grew up with a mostly absent father who was a lahure. He knew that he wanted to be with his children while also providing

a better life for them. So he gave up the idea of becoming a soldier like his father and neighbours and explored opportunities closer to home.

He first started with log hives but did not know how to handle bees, nor did he know what infrastructure was needed and where to get them.

"I learned it all by playing with the bees," he says. "Bees are technical creatures, they have their own system and habits. Once you figure that out, it is perhaps one of the easiest jobs to do."

Initially, it was even difficult for him to

STRIKING
ROOTS



Busy bee

Why a declining bee population should concern us

When we talk about bees, most of us in Nepal immediately think of honey. Indeed, it is an example of a thriving eco-business with some 16,500 beekeepers across the country producing over 4,000 tonnes of honey every year. The rest of the demand is met by imported produce, mostly from India.

While domesticated honeybees are important pollinators, much more important for the ecosystem are the 20,000 or more species of wild bees. Wild bees mostly gather pollen from native plants to feed their young in hives, while domesticated honeybees tend to pollinate crops, flowers and invasive species. Together with other insects, the more important wild bees are in decline worldwide.



Nepal's hallucinogenic 'mad honey' is popular because of a series of documentaries made about their collection. An ancient but risky honey hunting culture has Nepal's indigenous people venture up cliffs on flimsy rope ladders twice a year in autumn and spring to extract the Himalayan giant honeybee (*Apis laboriosa*) honeycomb, a 3cm bee species that forages at up to 4,100m.

Of the five honeybee species found in Nepal *Apis laboriosa*, *Apis cerana*, *Apis dorsata*, and *Apis florea* are indigenous to the Himalaya. Meanwhile, *Apis mellifera* is a European bee species introduced in Nepal for commercial purposes in 1990. Only *Apis cerana* and *Apis mellifera* are used for commercial honey production.

These bees graze on a variety of flowering plants determining their flavour including herbal rudilo, Indian butter tree, mustard, buckwheat, litchi and fixed flower honey among others.

But more importantly, bees are responsible for one of every three bites of food we take. Bee pollination can increase food productivity by up to 30%, but wild bees and honeybees are disappearing all over the world due to the use of pesticides, spread of parasites by humans, as well as new diseases.

Urbanisation and unplanned infrastructure have reduced grazing areas and caused farmers to switch to monoculture, leading to decreasing abundance and diversity of flowers. This has also affected bee populations. The climate crisis, with cloudbursts and unprecedented wildfires, are destroying habitats and beekeepers report a sharp decline in honey collection in Nepal.

A beehive in itself has a well-organised and complex social life. There are worker bees that find pollen, drones whose main job is to mate with the queen, and the queen bee who lays up to 1,500 eggs a day and controls the worker bees. 🐝



ALL PHOTOS: GOPEN RAI

source frame hives. The local furniture shops did not make them and ferrying them from Butwal was too expensive.

After three years of struggling to understand the bees, he not only understood the rules of the hives but also found someone who could make hives as per requirements.

Beekeeping is both "art and science", he says, and once mastered can yield benefits without much investment.

"One of the more important things to learn is hive management because if one is not careful during the seasons when bees

procreate, there may be nothing left of the old hive," says Magar.

Another thing to consider, he says, is making sure there is sufficient pollen for the bees to forage.

To ensure that all his bees have an ample amount of pollen, he takes a decentralised approach. Magar does not keep all his hives in one place, spreading them in the neighbourhood.

Professional beekeeping is an untapped business idea, says Magar: "If every village had 50-100 hives, we could probably export honey," he adds.

One of the major challenges for beekeeping is weather extremes due to climate change. Last year, when it rained for seven days straight, half of Magar's hive was wiped out.

"There is either too much rain or not enough, which has affected the productivity of the bees," he says. "The weather patterns these days are unpredictable, which makes it difficult."

Magar, however, is happy to be where he is today and credits it all to the bees: "If it wasn't for the bees, I would probably be working under the hot Gulf sun." 🇳🇵

RIKING
ROOTS



THE BEEKEEPER

Chuman Gharti Magar from Gulmi comes from a family of lahures. But unlike his friends and family, Magar decided to stay in Nepal and start beekeeping. Today, without any advertising or a physical shop, he has no problem selling the honey he produces. Watch video on YouTube.

EVENTS



Katja Brunner
Join author and artist Katja Brunner in a reading of her works during her Of Goodbyes, Hi's and Short Lies session. Entry is free for all.
19 September, 5:30pm, Patan House, Dhaugal

Puppy Yoga
Experience the magic of yoga surrounded by puppies at PetMama Nepal's therapeutic Puppy Yoga Retreat. Sign up at <http://surl.li/kxzlz>.
16 September, 9:30am-10:30am, PetMama Baluwatar



Wedding Album
Katha Ghera's upcoming play will bring to life Indian actor and film director and playwright Girish Karnad's Wedding Album, — translated by Akanchha Karki — to the stage.
21 September-14 October, Kausi Theatre, Teku

Art Exhibition
Hanuman Dhoka Darbar Museum's six-month long exhibition takes visitors back in history to the Malla and Shah eras.
Hanuman Dhoka Darbar Museum



Boudha Farmers market
Think global and shop local at the Saturday Boudha Farmer's market. Buy fresh local harvest, baked goods, meals, and support small businesses.
Saturdays, 8am-3pm, Utpala Cafe, Boudha

DINING



Teej at Nook
Ladies-- buy one buffet and get one free on the occasion of Teej at Aloft Hotel's Nook Restaurant. Call and reserve a table now.
17 September, 12pm-3pm, Rs3000, Aloft Hotel, Thamel, 9801976054

MUSIC

Flekke & Harip Tatwo
Catch artists Flekke and Harip Tatwo live this weekend. Buy tickets from Ticket Sansar.
16 September, Beers N' Cheers, Jhamsikhel



Samsaara
Stop by Watering Hole for an evening of free shots on the pub's Queen of the Night Wednesdays. Food and drinks will be accompanied by live music from Cambodia-based Nepali band Samsaara.
Wednesdays, 6pm-1am, Watering Hole, Naxal



Mukti and Revival
An evening of blues awaits at the Mukti and Revival show, with an additional live performance by Aawartan. Call and book tables now.
22 September, 6pm, Club Farenheit, Thamel, 9841726830



Weekend Music
Join Space, Panhelo Batti Muni, and Shephalika Dahal for a music-filled evening. The first 30 people in through the door get a free beer. Buy tickets now.
22 September, Beers N' Cheers

Vibration of peace
The Japan International Support Program (JISP) will mark its 10th year with an evening of live music from Kanta dAb dAb, Prince Nepali, Anish Tamang, Rupesh Pariyar, Ravi Shrestha and Abhijeet Shahi.
15 September, 7pm onwards, Ticket:Rs500, Moksh



Mamagoto Nepal
Mamagoto is a Pan-Asian restaurant that serves a variety of Asian fusion dishes. Enjoy Maki Rolls, Satays, Dumplings, Ramen and more all with a side of cocktails at the eatery.
Panipokhari (01) 4446299

Turkish Kebabs
Head to Turkish Kebabs and Pizza Hub to try some authentic Turkish cuisine. Order the kebabs, or try Turkish street food Dhurum.
Ekantakuna (01) 5439733

About Town

GETAWAY



Temple Tree
It will be difficult to leave once visitors get to Temple Tree Resort and Spa, which offers a peaceful haven complete with a swimming pool, massage parlour and sauna.
Gaurighat, Pokhara (61) 465819

Balthali Village Resort
A simple and cosy retreat just beyond Kathmandu Valley, Balthali Village Resort is ideal for anyone seeking to getaway but not too far away from the city.
Panauti, Kavre, 9851087772



Barahi Jungle Lodge
Perfect for travellers, stay in the individual or two-in-one private villas, or guest room the eco-jungle lodge offers and revel in the beauty of the surrounding Chitwan National Park. Spa, boutique guest rooms, individual and two-in-one private villas, including a suite with a private swimming pool.
Megauli, Chitwan (01) 4429820

Yatri
Indulge in a relaxing spa treatment which includes a full body massage, body scrub, sauna and steam at Yatri Suites and Spa.
Amrit Marg, Thamel, 9802063086



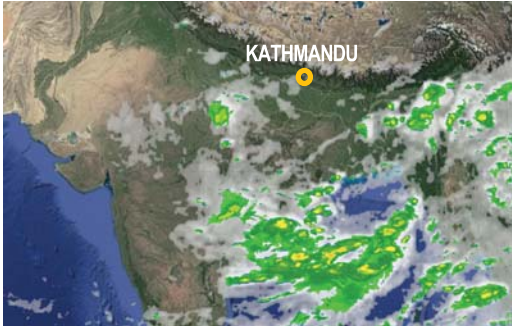
Milla Guesthouse
If one prefers the quiet and admires a mix of old and new, this is the perfect place to stay. Not too far from the city, yet worlds apart.
Bhaktapur, 9851024137

Everfresh
Everfresh offers the best chocolate-chip cookies and matcha latte to an incredible Teriyaki Bowl, a must visit for coffee lovers and breakfast enthusiasts.
Panipokhari, 9702026438



Tukche Thakali Kitchen
Having a hard time deciding what to make for lunch? Head to Tukche and get a taste of Thakali food made from the Nepali staple Daal Bhat.
Darbar North Gate (01) 4412462

WEEKEND WEATHER



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
30° 19°	29° 19°	29° 19°	28° 18°	28° 19°

Wet September
Do not be fooled by the Dasain-like weather. We are not yet done with the monsoon. The India Meteorological Department forecasts rains persisting through September. This will also hold true for Nepal, which is currently being influenced by convection systems lifting a new infusions of moisture from a trough in the Bay of Bengal. Expect short, sharp and localised 'Bhadaure Jhari' sometimes with lightning activity.

OUR PICK

In Anu Menon's 2023 whodunit Neeyat, Ashish Kapoor is a billionaire businessman who has fled from India to avoid going to prison after bankrupting his company. Exiled to a castle he owns in Scotland, Ashish throws a birthday getaway for close friends and family—including his secretary, brother-in-law, and stepson. But when a murder takes place at the party, CBI officer Mira Rao is tasked with unraveling the secrets of the attendees and solving the crime. Stars Vidya Balan, Ram Kapoor, Rahul Bose, Dipannita Sharma, Shashank Arora, Shahana Goswami, Neeraj Kabi and Amrita Puri.



MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI



गर्मी मौसममा संक्रामक रोगबाट बचाउँ र बचाऔँ

- गर्मी मौसममा मलेरिया, कालाजार, डेंगी, हैजालगायतका विभिन्न संक्रामक रोगहरू फैलिन सक्छन् ।
- संक्रामक रोग फैलाउने झिँगा, लामखुट्टे, भुसुना आदिको नियन्त्रण गरौं ।
- संक्रामक रोगबाट बच्न शुद्ध र उमालेको पानी पिऔं ।
- बासी तथा सडेगलेका खाना नखाऔं ।
- घरभित्र र वरपरको सरसफाइमा ध्यान दिऔं ।



नेपाल सरकार
विज्ञापन बोर्ड

Pokhara’s China Connection

The Chinese always had a soft spot for Pokhara that Pokhara has not taken adequate advantage of

■ **Durga Rana Magar**
in Pokhara

In 1960, during his second official visit to Nepal, Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai sat on a boat on Pokhara’s Phewa Lake with Prime Minister B P Koirala for one and a half hours and was spellbound by the reflection of Mt Machapuchre on the water.

King Mahendra’s chief adviser Gunja Man Singh and Chinese ambassador Yuan Zhongxian had signed the agreement to establish diplomatic relations between Nepal and China on 1 August 1955, only a year after Zhou became Premier.

In the nearly 70 years since, China has financed and supported infrastructure projects across Nepal — but especially those with links to Pokhara, like the Prithvi Highway that first linked Kathmandu to Pokhara by road.

Anand Raj Mulmi, former president of the Federation of Nepal Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FNCCI), notes that China initially wanted Pokhara to be its main focal point in Nepal.

“The Prithvi Highway was built to project China’s soft power, and advance its geopolitical interest to link Nepal to China through Korola in Mustang,” Mulmi explains.

Indeed, China worked on road, irrigation, highway and hydropower projects in Pokhara. After the Prithvi Highway, it financed the construction of the Pokhara-Baglung road in 1988. The strategy was connectivity, long before the Belt and Road Initiative was even



XINHUA

A Chinese team participating in Nepal-China Dragon Boat race in Pokhara earlier this year (above).

Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai with his Nepali counterpart B P Koirala at a press conference in Kathmandu during his second visit to Nepal in 1960 (right).



B P KOIRALA MUSEUM

thought of.

By 1980, China was also helping Pokhara’s irrigation sector, providing assistance for a hydropower and irrigation project on the Seti River. All this Chinese activity made India suspicious, and things ultimately did not turn out like Beijing wanted.

Even so, China’s love affair with Pokhara did not wane. The popular Chinese tv serial Deng Feng Lai (Up in the Wind) was filmed on location in Pokhara. Since then, many young Chinese have started booking holidays in Pokhara.

This dovetailed well with Rs22

billion Chinese ExIm Bank loan for Pokhara International Airport which was inaugurated on 1 January 2023. The first international flight to land there was Sichuan Airlines from Chengdu last month which brought 130 Chinese for the

first Nepal-China Dragon Boat Race Festival.

“Events like the Dragon Boat Race Festival will bolster Pokhara’s economy, and enhance the socio-cultural relations between our two countries and its people,” said

Chinese Ambassador Chen Song during the opening ceremony.

Although the pandemic killed tourism prospects in Pokhara, Chinese tourists are flocking back. Lakeside restaurants in Pokhara once more have Mandarin menus and the city is still hoping that Chinese airlines will start direct flights to the new airport.

Pokhara first established sister-city relations with the city of Linzhi in the Tibet Autonomous Region in 2008.

Since then, similar sister-city links have been established between Nepali cities and Kunming, Guangzhou, Yibin, Chiuchow, Haikou, Nanning and Yanji. But Pokhara has not been able to take advantage of the agreements.

“Pokhara’s sister-city agreements will only be relevant if Pokhara is promoted as a tourist destination in China,” says Mulmi. “Similarly, people from China also need to be invited to events in Pokhara.”

Bishwa Shankar Palikhe, president of the Nepal-China Friendship Association, has been actively involved in expanding exchanges between Pokhara and its sister cities in Kunming, Guangzhou and Linzhi. However, he admits a lot more needs to be done. Palikhe adds: “We must study the development and experiences of our sister cities and incorporate them into Pokhara’s development plans. Additionally, the entire world at present is trying to draw tourists from China, we must take advantage of our proximity.” 🇨🇳



SUBARU

ALL-AROUND SAFETY

X MODE

EyeSight
Driver Assist Technology

SUBARU BOXER
SINCE 1966

SYMMETRICAL AWD
SINCE 1972

Performance you can trust.
Capability you can feel.

Vijay Motors Pvt. Ltd.
Naxal, Kathmandu
www.subaru.com.np
9801026540 | 9801026541





GOPEN RAI

Better care of care leavers

■ Elisha Shrestha

After leaving their shelters at age 18, adolescents get little support for citizenship papers and jobs

In her small, shared rented room in Sitapaila, Kathmandu 22-year-old Nisha Chauhan (pictured) gets ready for her class at Padma Kanya College.

She wants to be a counsellor and a social worker because she herself was abandoned at age 5 on

the streets and rescued. Attempts to trace her parents failed, and she spent the next 13 years in a care home.

She has vague memories of her biological parents but considers the care home her family.

"The shelter had 60 children and we were looked after by our house parents and caretakers," Nisha remembers. "We could speak

with the house parents about our feelings and thoughts openly."

At 18, Nisha was required to leave the care home because she was now an adult, and it has been a difficult adjustment.

She relocated to a small rented room which she shares with a friend. The care home where she was staying provides her Rs5,000 a month, which is barely enough to cover the rent.

"It is a huge change to go from always having people around you to suddenly being on your own," Nisha explains. "And you have to pay the bills, find a job, and juggle studies."

Nisha now works as an intern at Umbrella Organisation Nepal, a family-based child protection organisation. The extra money helps.

For many young people in care, reaching adulthood and leaving shelters is a source of anxiety. They often struggle with their identity, face stigma and carry trauma from their past.

Young people leaving care are one of the most vulnerable groups in society. A 2019 research study in India shows that when care leavers step into the adult world without adequate education, vocational skills, financial support or a social safety net, they are often trapped by poverty, homelessness, mental health problems and exploitation. Many end up on the streets.

The Constitution of Nepal guarantees that the state is the ultimate guardian of children, responsible for their necessary protection and fulfilment of their rights. The Act relating to Children 2018 also states that children who are deprived of parental care or are on the verge of losing parental care should be placed in an alternative care system. However, there is no clear policy for the aftercare support of young people.

"Shortcomings on the part of the government and poor data gathering have negatively impacted care leavers in Nepal," says Ganga B Gurung, National Director of SOS Children's Villages Nepal.

According to the National Child Rights Council, in the fiscal year 2021/2022, there were more than 10,000 children in 417 alternative care homes. However, there is little

information on what happens to them when they leave the shelters after 18.

"The present system doesn't recognise their vulnerability and need for extended support," adds Gurung. "As a result, they are excluded from policies related to social protection and reservation."

Care leavers often fail to get documents such as citizenship, national identity cards, and birth registration.

General Secretary of Child Care Home Network Nepal, Rabin Nepali says that obtaining citizenship is a challenging process for many care leavers in alternative care systems whose parents are unknown despite the progressive constitution provision.

The Constitution of Nepal stipulates that young people who have a legal custodian, foster parents or orphanage have to vouch for their parentless status to be eligible to obtain citizenship.

But Nepali says that the authorities are often prejudiced and torment care leavers with needless harassment.

"It is difficult for care leavers to easily get legal documents such as citizenship unless they are accompanied by care home staff who can convince the official," he adds.

Rita grew up at SOS Children's Villages Nepal and took along her care home mother to the district office for her citizenship. Each SOS village house has 5 to 8 children in the 'family' and are raised by 'mothers' and 'aunts'.

District officials refused to accept Rita's citizenship application, saying her surname did not match the SOS mother's. "Although we tried to explain to them the constitutional provision, they wouldn't listen to us," says Rita, who finally got her citizenship after a lawyer accompanied her to the office.

Nisha also took eight months to get her birth certificate and citizenship card, while most others get theirs in a day or two.

Nisha wants to study abroad, but the idea of getting her passport makes her anxious because she doesn't want to deal with government officials.

"There must be many young people from care homes who have faced mental trauma as I did during the process of acquiring legal documents, and it is unfair to us," she says.

To ensure support for other young people leaving care, care leavers across the country have formed Baikalpik Herchaha Yuwa Samaj Nepal (बैकल्पिक हेरचाह युवा समाज नेपाल), a peer-support network where young people feel they are not alone with challenges.

"The objective is to form a network so care leavers like us have a platform to bring reform," says Binayak Manandhar, president of the organization. "Young people leaving care frequently feel isolated and lack the safety net of someone to talk to and advise them in a crisis."

Says Nisha, "Aftercare policies are crucial for our well-being and we need extra support for financial aid, jobs, and legal documents. Our inclusion at local, national, and global levels in policy and practice discussions is necessary. I don't think we are asking for more than what we deserve." 🇳🇵

Some names have been changed.

WORLDLINK

BE INVINCIBLE

With a legit internet pack dedicated to **PUBG MOBILE GAMERS**

PUBG MOBILE x WORLDLINK GAMERS PACK

250 Mbps @ Rs. 1,150* Per month

With High Speed **Nokia Beacon 1.1**

Lowest Latency | Fast Internet | Smoother Gameplay | 24/7 Support

The gentleman of Nepal's politics is gone

Subhas Chandra Nembang perfected moderate politics and his credo of consensus, cooperation, and communication extended beyond politics



NEPALI TIMES ARCHIVE

■ Santa Gaha Magar

In April 2011, Himal Khabar published a list of 51 bills and 10 treaties and agreements registered in the Parliament Secretariat, questioning the effectiveness of the Speaker in Parliament. The Speaker was Subhas Chandra Nembang.

The report concluded that the Constituent Assembly and the Legislative Parliament were not constructive as Speaker Nembang had not been able to hold CA members accountable for their wrongdoings.

Nembang, to whom the magazine reached out routinely for comment, did not refute the report, or even address it in public.

In his 42-year-long political career, Subhas Chandra Nembang was known for his politics of consensus, cooperation, and communication. His personal philosophy of tolerance and accommodation extended not only to politics but also to the media.

The UML vice-chair and former Speaker of the House passed away early Tuesday morning due to a heart attack at his Baluwatar residence. He was 71.

In an interview about state restructuring, Nembang said in 2009, "It is wisest to analyse Nepal's circumstances objectively and protect our achievements. Those who are uncompromising in their positions may soon find themselves having missed the forest for the trees."

Many were critical of Nembang's moderate politics. But over time, his analyses of Nepal's politics would mostly come to be on the mark.

Nembang had the ability to present disagreeable topics in a dignified manner, something that has become uncommon in Nepal's political leadership. It would not be wrong to call him a gentleman of Nepal's politics.

He was among a rare breed of Nepali politicians who understood the dynamics between politics and the press, expressing his respect towards media freedom even when journalists were critical of him.

When called on the phone for a quote, he would respond with, "It is much better to speak in person."

Over the years, during meetings at his office in the Parliament building in Baneswor, the Speaker's residence in Baluwatar, Singha Darbar, the UML party office in Balkhu or his Pioneer Law Associates, the gist of his conversation would always be the same: "Himal, Pahad, Tarai need to unite. There is no alternative to consensus."

Nembang was a shrewd communicator, often telling media personnel during conversations: "Quote me on this, and attribute the rest to 'sources'".

Nembang was born in 1953 in Ilam's Suntalabari village. He was politically active in the UML from his student days in 1971 at the Ilam Multipurpose Campus when he was elected chairman of the All Nepal National Free Students Union.

Nembang, whose father was

a district judge, followed his footsteps into law. As a lawyer, he was general secretary of the Nepal Bar Association in 1987. He was also a faculty at the Kathmandu Law Campus.

He was first elected to parliament from Ilam's second

constituency in 1991, and a second time in 1999. He also served as the Minister for Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs in communist Prime Minister Manmohan Adhikari's government.

Nembang served as the Speaker of the House in 2006 and as chair

of the Constituent Assembly in both 2008 and 2014. He was also the Speaker in 2015. With his constitutional and legal background, he is also credited with contributing significantly to the promulgation of Nepal's 2015 Constitution (pictured right). He became the UML vice-chair in 2018.

In November 2022, he was once again elected to Parliament from Ilam's second constituency. He was subsequently the UML nominee for Nepal's President but lost to coalition presidential candidate Ram Chandra Paudel during the presidential election in March.

During his four decades in politics, Nembang cultivated an image of an easy-going, approachable leader, and was seen as a non-confrontational politician who often took the initiative to resolve deadlocks in disputes within the UML, while also crossing ideological lines to mediate among Nepal's feuding political parties.

In an age of cynical, kleptocratic and regressive politics, Nepal will miss Nembang's gentle ways. 🇳🇵



GOPEN RAI

HBL
सवारी साधन कर्जा

नयाँ गन्तव्यहरू अब आफ्नै नयाँ गाडीमा

हिमालयन बैंकको "सवारी साधन कर्जा"

मासिक किस्ताको आधारमा भुक्तानी प्रक्रिया

आकर्षक ब्याजदर तथा न्यूनतम कर्जा व्यवस्थापन शुल्क

१ वर्ष सम्मको कर्जा अवधि

*शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन्।

HBL
Himalayan Bank Ltd.
himal@himalayanbank.com | www.himalayanbank.com
01-4227749, 4246218
QR SCAN FOR MORE DETAILS.
himalayanbankltd @himalayanbanknp Himalayan Bank Ltd. Himalayan Bank (Viber)



TATA MOTORS
Connecting Aspirations



go.ev with **Tiago.ev**



Introductory price
Rs. 21.99 Lakh*

Test Drive Today

Register your interest



- 315^ km MIDC Range
- DC Fast Charging - Fast charge in 58** mins
- Cruise Control
- EZ Charge App - Nepal's first and largest smart charging network
- Home Charging within 3.5 hours

SIPRADI TRADING PVT. LTD.,
An ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 45001:2018 Certified Company
Thapathali 01-5350643, 5322150, 5322152, 9801013469

SIPRADI

