

NEPALI Times

#565

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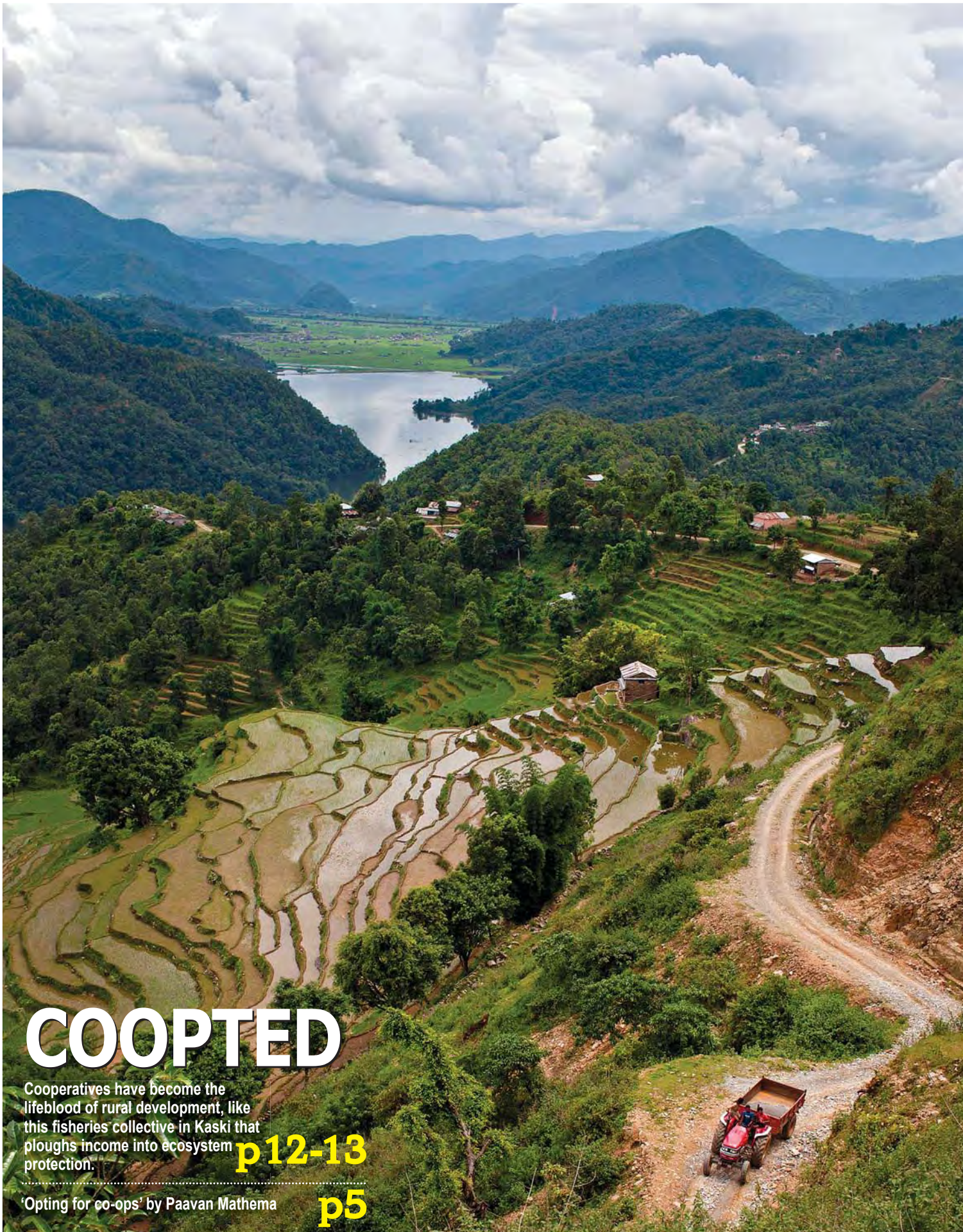
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COOPTED



Cooperatives have become the lifeblood of rural development, like this fisheries collective in Kaski that ploughs income into ecosystem protection. **p12-13**

'Opting for co-ops' by Paavan Mathema **p5**

JANA ASEN BRENNEROVA

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MAOIST PRIME MINISTER JHALANATH KHANAL

What does the US debt bill debate in the US Congress have in common with Nepal's peace process in the Constituent Assembly? Both are prone to last minute midnight compromises that are so watered down that they are meaningless.

Our politicians may secretly rejoice that they are not the only ones displaying an utter disregard for the national interest. But that is little consolation because this is a country that has already run out of time.

With less than a month to go for the renewed CA term to expire again, a prime minister who was lame duck ever since 28 May is still clinging to office. He just bought himself another two weeks by thumbing his nose at his own party and going along with a pointless Maoist reshuffle.

To Nepalis who haven't already tuned off to all this, it is pretty obvious that the replacement of Maoist ministers in the cabinet was an attempt to address a potentially terminal rift within the party. The peace process, constitution-making and indeed the whole country was held hostage to sort out an internal mess.

The only conclusion we can reach is that the Maoist party is not ready to demobilise. Why else would Ram Bahadur Thapa be given a new post of head of 'Military Department In-charge'? The Maoists could want things to drag on indefinitely so they can take advantage of any future eruption of popular frustration for a complete power grab.

Or, if that is not possible, remain incumbent (with a standing parallel army) when the repeated failure to finish the constitution leaves no other option but to declare new elections.

Things are no better in the other three parties. The NC is going through a sickening power struggle between a shameless three-time prime minister and an uncharismatic aparatchik whom few respect or trust. The UML is as good as split, and we have lost count of who belongs to which rump of the Madhesi alliance these days. Which is why Mr Khanal's plan for a

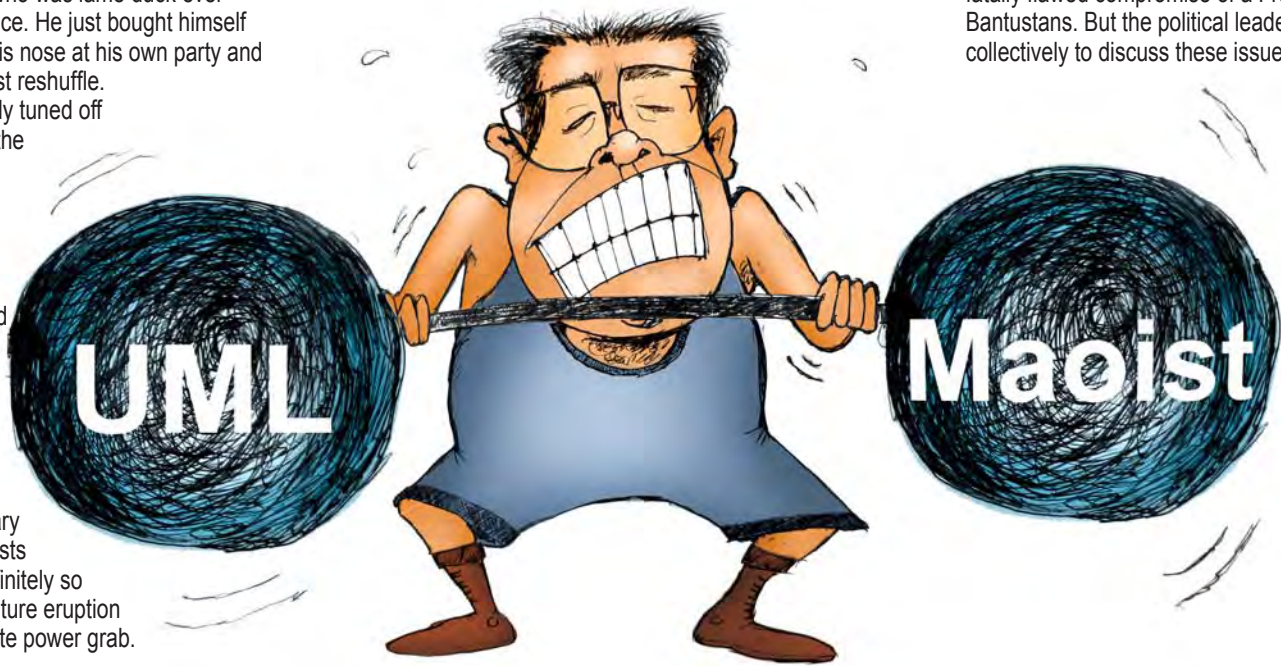
rotational leadership and CA extension till 30 November is so fraught.

Still, if the Maoists hadn't wasted time we should by now have had an agreement on the quantity, norms and modality for regrouping ex-fighters so they could be rehabbed or integrated. The Special Committee was making progress until the Maoists suddenly lost interest, and the group hasn't met now for more than a month. One wonders if the delay tactics were deliberate.

On the constitution, even if the committees have made progress there needs to be the political will to address the fatally flawed compromise of a French Model state with ethnic Bantustans. But the political leadership hasn't even met collectively to discuss these issues since 28 May.

Even those sympathetic to the change agenda of the Maoists must smell a rat. There is extreme reluctance to give up the warriors and adopt a democratic constitution. At this rate, 31 August will be no different than 28 May, and the leadership of the political parties will not even have the moral standing to say sorry to the people.

Two months ago, the parties through the CA asked the people for a last chance. They have two weeks to decide what the excuse is this time for another extension.



DIWAKAR CHHETRI

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

FAR FROM RIGHT

Anders Behring Breivik killed on the basis of his political beliefs and in order to further his political objectives ('One man's terrorist is everyman's terrorist', #564). The Maoists in Nepal killed on the basis of their political beliefs and in order to further their political objectives. What is the difference? Why is one lauded and given high political office and the other is condemned? The Norwegian government in particular were and still are very sympathetic and supportive towards the Maoists. Why then does the Norwegian government not treat Anders Behring Breivik in the same manner that they treated the Maoists?

Jange

- A warped nut acting alone does not need any qualifier appended to the "terrorist" tag to accurately describe what he is. With adherents of terrorist organisations, though, their actions are not guided entirely by fantasy or delusion, but rather by their self-mutilating loyalty to the objectives of the party or movement that have decided to serve. No one has ever hesitated to call a terrorist a terrorist, irrespective of the colour of his skin. That is, of course, until the political exigencies of Nepal's ongoing "peace process" made it politically incorrect to call certain terrorists what they are. The editor's discomfiture is understandable: it is difficult to point to the Maobadis as specimens of Nepali terrorism when they currently hold the largest share of seats in the CA.

John Kelleher

- The editorial ('Far from right', # 564) made sense until its first half. After that, the editor seemed to have smoked the weed. He implies that since the perpetrators are individuals the government should increase its vigilance and pursue their cybertrail. This is like asking for a Big Brother to keep track of individuals. I will take a risk of an isolated terrorist than a government that snoops on

individuals and hauls them to jail every time their activities arouse suspicion.

Chandra Gurung

- Absolutely spot on! Thank you.

John

- You are mostly right but I feel the anger that compelled Breivik to kill all those people was misplaced and no government could do a thing about preventing it. Nepal, despite the fact that its thoughtless leaders such as yourself have been so hypocritical when it comes to terrorism, there has been negligible terrorism. Give this country and its people some credit for that. The NY Times and others did not call it protestant terrorism because a criminal act under the guise of a political cause, is a crime by an individual notwithstanding the political cause. On the other hand, a political organisation with an organised army, using lies and using coercion to recruit little boys and girls to commit acts of crime is a terrorist organisation like our own UCPN (M). The ideology which promotes such violence is far worse than what any of these nutters could create. Nepali Times and other Nepali media accepting such a group's political legitimacy is a bigger oversight.

Soni

SOLAR POWER

Lotus, the pioneer of electric transport in Nepal with Safa Tempos now needs to develop bigger electric public transport ('The sun is free for everyone but not for Nepalis, it seems', #564). Safas were for the 1980s, Kathmandu's population has quadrupled since then. Government subsidy and incentives for electric public transport are needed so the micros and safas can all convert to economies of scale. But in the medium term, generating enough hydro is the only feasible solution for Nepal. Solar at current prices and because of the storage requirement is never going to be truly viable. Solar is great as a stop gap till the load shedding days are a thing of the past.

KiranL

- Solar is only sometimes useful for remote areas with no grid at all. It is far more expensive than grid power so "incentives" to install roof-top panels in places that are connected to the national grid would be completely wasteful. Wasting money on 35 watt solar panels would only delay installing the hundreds of millions of watts needed to end load-shedding. Pure scams like demanding solar subsidies in areas connected to the grid should be prohibited, not just taxed.

Arthur

BETTER DEAD

Good article by Dewan Rai ('Compensation by accident', #564), and one that brings to light one of the more ludicrous instances of the 'law of the compromise' Nepalis so like. Except it's not really compromise, but mob rule, and rule of dumb. It's convenient for incompetent traffic cops to say "tapai haru milnus na" when that usually means a populist outcome that keeps most people happy regardless of whoever is to blame. When will nepalis begin to take responsibility for their actions? Severe injury caused can end up costing more than death in an accident. This is the disturbing tendency of bus drivers and trucks in particular to back up over those they have been knocked down, so as to minimise costs and potential jail time. Better dead than in hospital for a month - at least from the perspective of the bus driver.

Reader

HUMLA GLOF

Great article Astrid and good photos (If this is what a small glacial flood can do, imagine a big one, #564). Let's hope that Gov of Nepal can do something meaningful to support its citizens when in need. And that outside agencies also can invest some time, money and expertise into finding solutions to this growing problem.

Mark Brightwell

- First time have seen the horror of what a GLOF can do. But let's not forget that many millions more are affected by the droughts,

floods and climate variability. However, since that deals with weather, it is more difficult to quantify than expanding glacial lakes in danger of bursting. Still, great story. Thanks to Astrid Hovden and Nepali Times for bringing it to the world's notice.

KL

PATAN PALACE

I'm really glad to see the Patan Durbar Square is getting the attention it deserves ('Facelift for the Patan Palace, #564). Played there, ate there, enjoyed the bhajans, bought colourful bangles, sat on those temple steps and gossipped, sunbathed, star gazed. I liked the positive tone of the article. We need more of these.

DR

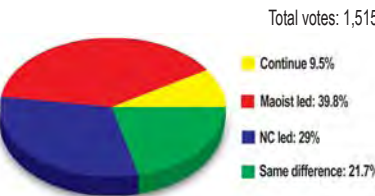
- I visited Patan Museum last year and can say that it is the best museum I have seen in Asia, and as a repository for Hindu and Buddhist artifacts it has no parallel in the world. Glad to hear that the rest of the Durbar Square is also being restored and the museum will be extended. I'll come again. Thanks to the work of Rohit Ranjitkar and his team.

Hoff



Weekly Internet Poll # 565

Q. What is the best way forward?



Weekly Internet Poll # 566. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com
Q. Will he resign after August 13th or not?



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Wounds that won't heal

The fact that we have two Madhesi as the heads of the state doesn't mean we live in a multicultural republic.



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

In the last few weeks, distrust between Kathmandu's hill centric establishment and the small but resolute Madhesi constituency has been growing. What happened in the BBC Nepali Service studio last week could have been a coincidence, but it set off a fierce debate in the media.

The broadcast was followed by a backlash in Prashant Jha's article in The Kathmandu Post on 27 July, and a sharp rebuttal to it by Dhruba Nepal in Nagarik on 29 July.

In the interview, when Jitendra Sonal refused to conform to Nepali nationalism devoid of his Madhesi identity, host Rabindra Mishra asked him: "Would you put Madhesi interest before that of Nepal?" The way this question was put reflected the thought process of Kathmandu's hill



BIKRAM RAI

community and summed up their position: you cannot be working in the national interest if you are working in the interest of Madhes. Mishra refused to acknowledge a significant remark made by Sonal, "The existence of Madhes is tied to the existence of Nepal".

Dipendra Jha of Democratic Freedom and Human Rights (DRFH) sees a danger in the Kathmandu political establishment's hardened stance on the Madhes.

"This will only weaken the moderate position in Madhes and strengthen

separatist tendencies," he says. Although instances of political violence has gone down in the Tarai, there is widespread proliferation of small arms indicating that politics is giving way to crime.

There is simmering frustration among the unemployed youth of the Madhes who can neither find a job in Nepal, nor can they any longer go across the border for fear of being called a "Maoist". They are told: "Yahaan kyo aate ho, tumhaara Prachanda khaana nahi deta hai tumko?" (Why

are you here, doesn't your Prachanda feed you?)

On 10 June, local postman Dhirja Hatoo was brutally murdered by an armed assailant in Bara bordering Ghodasahan village. The police followed the suspect into the district of East Champaran in Bihar, but was shocked to find that the culprit was being felicitated by the local police as a 'Naxal killer'. Local rivalry along with greed for easy money in absence of a strong state presence has made the Madhes a fertile breeding ground for criminals.

The Madhes movement of the winter of 2007-8 was an eruption of grievances piled up from years of discrimination and being treated shabbily by the hill-dominated Nepali state. After the steam was let off, four years later the pressure is building up again.

"I collect trash from their bins, but I am treated worse than the trash I collect," a Madhesi garbage collector told me recently. "Ask them if they behave in the same way with the Pahaadi garbage man." He has no doubt in his mind that this is racism. What does being a "Nepali" mean to thousands like this garbage collector who are reminded everyday of being second class citizens in their own land?

The fact that we have two Madhesi as ceremonial heads of the state is not enough to convince us that we are a multicultural republic, because it cannot bridge the prejudice we hold against 'bhaiyyas'.

Bhim Rai from Morang writes to Nagarik in response to Dhruba Nepal's article: "Nepal is a land of people belonging to various nationalities living within a state. I belong to the Kirati community and have every right to assert my identity and be proud of it, and so does a Madhesi."

Madhesi are Nepalis, but they must be allowed to accept this on their own terms, not ones dictated by others. 🇳🇵

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“China hopes for social stability”

The new Chinese ambassador to Nepal, Yang Houlan, spoke to *Nepali Times* this week on his country’s priorities in bilateral ties with Nepal, Sino-Indian relations and the plans to develop Lumbini.



CAI YUN

Nepali Times: What’s your view about the current state of Nepal-China relations?
Yang Houlan: The friendly relations between China and Nepal have a long history. Nepal is one of the early states to establish diplomatic relations with New China after its founding in 1949. Since the establishment of diplomatic relations, China-Nepal relations has

been witnessing healthy and stable development regardless of the international environment and two countries’ domestic situations. China and Nepal stick to the Five Peaceful-Coexistence Principles, mutual respect, treat each other equally, share mutual trust, and sincerely assist each other. The relationship between the two countries should be considered a good example

for international affairs. China and Nepal established a Comprehensive Partnership Relationship to take bilateral relations to a new height. With the promotion of exchanges and cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields, this partnership will have a bright future.

But the prolonged political uncertainty in Kathmandu

must be unsettling for your government?
Nepal is in the period of political transformation facing two historic tasks of peace process and constitution drafting. It’s not been long since my arrival in Nepal, but I have deeply felt the strong desire of the people who wanted to realise national peace and stability at an earlier date. People now have

different views on some issues, meanwhile everyone’s general aim in regard with promoting peace, stability and development is the same. As Nepal’s neighbour, China sincerely hopes and firmly believes that Nepal can conclude the constitution drafting and peace process with the joint efforts of the Nepali people and political parties.

What are China’s main concerns in Nepal?
The concerns you mention can be termed as hopes of China. Firstly, we hope that Nepal can realise long-standing of peace and stability as soon as possible. Secondly, we hope that Nepal can be on the track of fast economic and social development. Thirdly, we hope that China and Nepal should continuously strengthen the cooperation in safeguarding the stability in border areas, combat trans-boundary crime and maintain social stability of both countries.

Politicians in Nepal often try to play China of against India, do you think this is a useful strategy?
Nepal has two important neighbours, namely China and India. It is in their common interests that the three parties strengthen good interaction and mutually beneficial cooperation. Here, I want to emphasise that there is no conflict between the development of Nepal-China friendly cooperation and that of Nepal-India friendly cooperation.

People in Nepal are hopeful that China’s economic growth and the economic development in Tibet will help Nepal. What is your opinion about this?
China sticks to the policy of building friendship and partnership with neighboring countries. China cannot achieve sound development without the development of its neighbours. So we are willing to share the experience and opportunities of development with our neighbors and help promote their development. Over the past few years, the Chinese side has been strengthening the work of infrastructure interconnection in the hope of improving the bilateral economic, trade and personnel exchanges between China and Nepal.

And, in which sector would Chinese bilateral aid be concentrated in the next few years?
Since the establishment of China-Nepal diplomatic relations, the Chinese side has always been providing grant assistance to Nepal in a large number of public projects. I feel that the major fields of Chinese assistance are infrastructure construction, hydropower, agriculture, education and culture.

What are your plans for Lumbini?
I went to Lumbini to attend the roundtable discussion Advancing the Vision for Lumbini’s Development jointly organised by the Nepal government and UNESCO and knew all parties attached great importance to the development and preservation of Lumbini. As the birthplace of Lord Buddha, Lumbini has great worth in terms of history, religion and culture. As I know, some Chinese enterprises have shown keen interest of developing Lumbini. The Chinese side is willing to support Nepal’s plan for developing Lumbini.

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MY TWO PAISA

Paavan Mathema

Opting for co-ops

A cooperative response to cooperatives may help strengthen this third pillar of development



JANA ASENBRENNEROVA

Last month's budget recognised cooperatives as one of the three pillars for Nepal's economic upliftment, setting aside grants, seed money, capital subsidies, concessional loans and rebates on customs and duties. This set off an uproar from the private sector.

Those who have noticed a cooperative in every third house in district headquarters (sometimes even three in one house) may ridicule this special treatment for what are sometimes fly-by-night operations to loot shareholder money. Cooperatives have been blamed for siphoning equity from the market with their higher interest rates for deposits, and leaving established banks high and dry.

Captains of industry criticised the government for abandoning the free market, rolling back the policy of economic liberalisation that has been the central facet of Nepal's economy since 1990,

and taking the country back to a command economy.

There are bad eggs in all sectors of the economy. There are crooked businesses, sections of the private sector are involved in huge scams to cheat on VAT, trading houses are fronts for smugglers. It is therefore not unnatural that some cooperatives are crooked, but it would be unfair to tar them all with one brush.

Cooperatives have a business model that keeps the community welfare at the centre of its focus, and is not driven solely by shareholder dividend. And it just happens that across Nepal, there are amazing success stories of rural cooperatives that have helped lift living standards of farmers (see p12-13).

Perhaps what gives cooperatives a bad name is that some savings and loan schemes run by scoundrels have ripped off members. But there are now over 22,500 cooperatives in Nepal with

more than three million members and a total of Rs 122 billion in deposits and Rs 20 billion in capital. They are growing and have invested in dairy, agriculture, orchards, vegetables, bee-keeping, tea, coffee and even hydro-electricity.

Cooperatives can create economic linkages at the grassroots and can be especially effective in bringing together disadvantaged communities in rural areas. Members benefit by improved bargaining position vis-à-vis middlemen and access to markets for their produce. Many cooperatives have mandatory rules to invest

a proportion of their profits in community development. A cooperative of freed Kamaiyas in Kailali first helps its member farmers with equipment, training and seeds and then markets their harvest. The cooperative now has 427 members and apart from benefiting its members, also runs a school in its locality.

Cooperatives have also been credited for their role in economically empowering women. Nearly half of all members of cooperatives in Nepal today are women. With many men away working in the Gulf, women have coalesced into groups that save and invest in the community.

But cooperatives are still largely unorganised, governed by the Cooperative Act 1992 without a proper system of regulation and monitoring.

Most urban saving and credit cooperatives have been exploiting loose regulations, playing fast and loose with depositor money.

Nepal Rastra Bank and the Department of cooperatives are supposed to supervise and monitor saving and credit cooperatives with the annual transactions exceeding Rs 50 million, but central bank already has its hands full with over 200 financial institutions.

If cooperatives are indeed to become the third pillar for the country's economic development, the government has to weed out the crooks with better regulation and not punish those doing vital development work at the grassroots. Non-conforming cooperatives must restructure or shut down, but there is no reason for the private sector to panic. ■

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ALL PICS: CAI YUN

Pokhara in the monsoon

There is optimism about tourism in the lake city

CAI YUN in POKHARA

Ten years ago, you would be hard pressed to find a meal on Pokhara's lakeside in the monsoon. Most restaurants would be shut for the off-season.

With the Annapurnas obscured by clouds, even tourist guidebooks used to advise tourists not to come to Pokhara in the rainy season. But if the past few months is any indication, the monsoon seems to be the time to go to Pokhara. The rains actually seem to attract tourists, the lake front is bustling, restaurants are open, and adventure tourists are rafting in the Seti and even jumping off Sarangkot on paragliders.

"We used to have six months off-season period," says Biplab Paudel, chairman of the Pokhara Hotel Association, "now it is just July and August when the numbers dip a bit."

The reason is that the traditional European and Japanese tourists have been replaced in the monsoon by Chinese, Indian and domestic tourists from Nepal itself. Ten years ago, only five per cent of hotel guests in Pokhara used to be Nepali, today that has jumped to 40 per cent due in part to the 'Jaun Hai Pokhara' promotion campaign.

Indian tourists are up 25 per cent, and many of them



are pilgrims who drive up overland to go to Muktinath. Chinese tourists have increased by 15 per cent. Of the total number of foreign visitors to Nepal, Pokhara used to get only 15 per cent, now a third of all tourists to Nepal come to Pokhara.

Even if the mountains are not visible, there is plenty to see and do in Pokhara in the monsoon. With the highest rainfall in Nepal, Pokhara's waterfalls and rivers are dramatic, the midhills and valleys are all soothing shades of green.

"We are even promoting the rainfall," quips Poudel, "the rain is romantic and is an attraction."

Visitors seem to agree. French tourist Alexandra Hungston has come here to recharge herself after a long backpack travel. She says: "What can be more relaxing than reading a book while having a cup of tea besides this glittering lake?"

Kathmandu's middle class also sees Pokhara as a perfect getaway from the chaos and pollution in the capital. Chandra Acharya is an engineer living in Kathmandu and prefers Pokhara to Pattaya. "After a quick downpour, everything is so fresh and clean. The weather is cool as well, so I bring my family here," he says.

The attractions include Devis Fall, which is at its



maximum volume because of the rain. Operators are also popularizing the 'Rice Planting Expedition' in paddy fields on the outskirts, and Pokhara is soon to be Nepal's latest sky diving destination.

Pokhara has survived the conflict years, strikes and highway closures and is now looking forward to a busy autumn season. The chairman of the Pokhara Restaurant Association, Balam Pahari, says Pokhara has boomed despite the lack of government support. "I don't think the increase in visitor numbers is due to Nepal Tourism Year 2011, it was because of our own promotion and packages."

One tourist visiting Pokhara provides jobs for at least 16 local people, and tourism is now a vital part of Pokhara's economy. Says Poudel: "There used to be a time when restaurants would ignore Nepalis, now they have realised that a tourist is a tourist no matter what the nationality."

Baikuntha Acharya of Nepal Tourism Board speaks of his own constraints, but he says NTB aims to increase the choice of activities in Pokhara. "Pokhara sells itself," he says, "but with promotion and more attractions it can attract even more visitors." 🇳🇵



nepalitimes.com
Pokhara's monsoon attractions



JAUN HAI POKHARA!

The optimism of Pokhara's tourism entrepreneurs is evident in the expansion of 400 hotels and addition of the new ones. One such is the Temple Tree Resort and Spa which is one of the newest in the business. Its distinctive western Himalayan architecture by Siddharth Gopalan with slate roofs, stucco walls and hand-made furniture is an example of clever fusion between Nepali tradition and modern comfort. The hotel aims to attract the market for conventional tourists, health and wellness enthusiasts as well as serve as a stopover for trekkers. Basanta Gautam and Chandan Kayastha of Temple Trees (pictured) say they have invested in raising the standard of hospitality in Pokhara. "We have tried to integrate a Nepaliess to the architecture and raise the quality of tourism to international levels," says Gautam.



KUNDA DIXIT

Win some, Jomsom

The two things tourists have to be prepared for while visiting Pokhara in the monsoon are leeches and flight delays. Leech repellents are advised for short treks around Pokhara, but the inconvenience is more than compensated by the great views of lakes, forests and paddy terraces. There is less one can do about flights. Just like Lukla and Phaplu have not operated for a week, Pokhara-Jomsom flights have also been cancelled for six days in a row, stranding thousands of Indian pilgrims in Jomsom and Pokhara. The newly-built road is also blocked in five place due to landslides between Beni and Dana, making vehicle transport nearly impossible.

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Dikshya Singh

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EVENTS



Screening of Trophy Hunting, a documentary directed by Gorakh Bista, followed by discussion. 9 August, 5pm, Timur Restaurant, Mitrapark, entry: Rs 50, 9808870823

Group Art, exhibition of works by Nepali and foreign artists, organised by Unique Strokes. Till 12 August, 10am to 5pm, Park Gallery, Pulchok, 5522307, parkgallery@wlink.com.np

Little Voice, an exhibition of artworks by Sarita Dongol and Mamoru Hosoi. 6 to 15 August, 5.30pm on opening day, gallery hours: 10am to 5pm, Newa Chen Art Gallery, 5535532

Stitch, fashion show organised by Red parrot, followed by a cocktail party, DJ session and dinner. 6 August, 6.30pm onwards, Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Soalteemode, tickets: Rs 2,499 per person and Rs 4,499 for couples

Rural Urban Connection 2011, national conference and workshop. Till 9 August, National Trust for Nature and Conservation, Khumaltar

Nepal Gem & Jewellery Expo 2011, organised by Nepal Gem & Jewellery Association(NEGJA). 19 to 21 August 2011, 11am to 6pm, Soaltee Hotel, Soalteemode

Nepal Real State Expo 2011, organised by Nepal Land and Housing Association of Nepal. 25 August to 28 August, 11am to 6pm, Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu



Barcamp Kathmandu 2011, a place to share ideas and innovation with like minded people, invitation open to all. 6 August, 9am to 7pm, Staff College, Jawalakhel, 9851122092, www.barcamp.org.np



Organic Market, a weekly organic market where along with picking the fresh organic produce for home you can enjoy brunch. 16 July, 10am to 12pm, 1905, Kantipath

South Asia & China Trade Fair 2011, with Dashin Bazaar. Organised by Nepal China Executive Council. 15 to 19 September, 11am to pm, Bhrikuti Mandap, Kathmandu

Nepal Cine Symposium, a South Asia focused international film network and promotion platform for cinema which includes a film festival 'Something like a film festival' organised by DocSkool. Till 22 November, Submission open until 30 August, www.cinesymposium.com, amanyu@cinesymposium.org, 4471104



Mischievous Monsoon Party, live music with Nima Rumba, Avinash Ghisin and Mingma Sherpa organised by White Mischief vodka. 6 August, Gokarna Forest Resort, Jorpati, 9851012127

Hami Sarangi, Gandharva Festival featuring Shyam Nepali, Kiran Nepali, Barta Gandharva, Samuel Gandhrava and others.. 6 August, 7:30am Basantapur Durbar Square

MUSIC



Nepzydaz, Robin and the New Revolution and Abhaya and the Steam Injuns in concert, to generate funds to help rehabilitate a Buddhist nun who was gang-raped. 6 August, 7pm to 10pm, The Factory, Thamel, 9808474264

DINING

9th Annual Wine Festival, Kilroy's monsoon wine festival will feature 15 varieties of exquisite wines from six different countries. Till 15 September, Kilroy's of Kathmandu, Thamel, 4250440

Rounding up for more than business

Ten year old Pranil Moktan studies in Grade 3 at Ganesh Primary School in Sankhu on the eastern outskirts of Kathmandu. If Pranil had not received the opportunity to go to school, he would either be working in fields or selling firewood like his brothers. However, he is fortunate to be found by 'Freedom through Education', an initiative of a group of local businessmen who have decided to give deprived Nepali children a headstart.

Called Round Table Nepal, it is part of a global network of Round Tables in 52 countries, usually made up of a voluntary organisation of businessmen and professionals aged 18-45. Although the organisation was introduced in Nepal in 1989, Round Table Nepal was formally established in 1999 in Kathmandu under prominent businessman, CK Golchha. At present, there are 18 Tables in Nepal with more than 260 members.

Round Table Nepal's 'Freedom through Education' focuses on improving the quality of education in rural public schools. "Round Table Nepal has taken up this cause because education is the most important gift we should give our children for their future," says Diwakar Rathi,



CHECK LIST		
If you want to help Round Table Nepal's 'Freedom through Education' project, the following options are available. For inquiries and donations:		
Build a classroom	Rs	765,000
Build a 5 room school block	Rs	3,825,000
Sponsor a student	Rs	3,000
Furnish a nursery	Rs	50,000
Provide uniform for 40 students	Rs	60,000
Set up a computer lab	Rs	150,000
Start a library	Rs	50,000
Organise a medical camp	Rs	75,000
Provide meals for 20 students	Rs	504,000
Train teachers	Rs	25,000



the incoming president of the Table. In addition to improving school facilities, the initiative provides training to teachers, sponsorship, meals and stationery to students and also helps in streamlining the administration and management of local schools. The organisation also tries to improve the enrollment of children of areas it works in.

Seven years since it started, the initiative has helped over 26 schools and built over 165 classrooms, touching the lives of more than 35,000 students. The Table has contributed more than Rs 140 million for this propose. The fund for the project is collected through Round Tables based abroad, and locally through fundraising programs. The organisation runs on the principle of zero per cent overhead cost, which means that the contribution made is not used for administrative purpose.

Says Rathi: "This is our way of giving back to the society. We call on other corporate business houses and professionals to join in this noble cause."

www.roundtablenepal.org, Phone: 4442430, Email: info@roundtablenepal.org



उज्यालो ९० नेटवर्कमा

आर्थिक खबर

हरक दिन बिहान ७:०० बजे

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Lazy Gringo, fail-safe Mexican restaurant. The lemonade with refills is what won us over, but the food is mighty fine. Bring your own booze though. *Jawalakhel*

Jazoo, a quiet place ideal for beer and relaxing conversation. Bring a friend and enjoy their special barbeque set for a mix of everything. *Jawalakhel (near the zoo), 5538321*

Haddock, big compound with ample parking space, their Western and Thakali dishes are done to perfection. *Jhamsikhel, 5546431*

Lhasa Bar, enjoy a beer or a splash of cocktail at this springboard for excellent young musicians starting out on the Thamel circuit. *Thamel, 985101043*



Everest Steak House, an old-school joint for everything steak. A sanctuary for meat. *Thamel, near Chhetrapati Chok, 4260471*



Summit Hotel, posh Western-style dining area with candlelight and a romantic night view of the city. Get really busy with the succulent

ribs basket, and add the finishing touch with a hot Dutch apple pie. *Jhamsikhel, 5521810*

Buddha Bar, has been an establishment since the days of the hippies and offers a warm and cozy space for intimate conversations over a large selection of drinks. *Thamel, 9851053235*

Cosmopolitan Café, located in the heart of Basantapur, this cozy café offers arguably the best chicken sizzler in town. Frequented by famed guitarist Hari Maharjan, spot him there and you might get an impromptu performance with your meal. *Basantapur (along Kathmandu Darbar Square), 4225246*

Dechenling, the place to head for

Bhutanese and Tibetan cuisine, their pleasant and spacious garden is ideal for big gatherings. *Thamel*

Krishnarpan, a specialty Nepali restaurant at The Dwarika's Hotel, 6 to 22 courses, an authentic Nepali meal. *The Dwarika's Hotel, Battisputali, 4479488*



Le Bistro Restaurant & Bar, the outdoor dining area invokes a great atmosphere for a night of drinks with friends and family. While they serve a plethora of dishes, it is the Indian food they pride themselves on. *Thamel, 4701170*

GETAWAYS

Charikot Panorama Resort, enjoy mountain views and local culture in the historic town of Charikot. Special packages on offer. *Charikot, Dolakha, 5529463, thapamaag@gmail.com*



The Last Resort: One-stop for Adventure Sports. Take your pick – a bungee jump over the Bhote Khosi river 160 metres below or mountain biking up to the Tibetan border, The Last Resort is a paradise for adventure sports junkies. Relax after a full day of fun with great food and a cold beer at the Instant Karma bar before retiring to deluxe safari tents. *The Last Resort Sales Office, Mandala Street, Thamel, 4700525, www.thelastresort.com.np*

Monsoon Getaway at Gokarna Forest Resort. *Till 31 August, Gokarna, 4451212*

Park Village Resort, Saturdays and Sundays combo package with swimming, lunch and a bottle of beer. *Budhanilkantha, Rs 990 for adults and Rs 800 for children, call 4375280 for reservations*

SOMEPLACE ELSE



Cafe U

Infused with lemongrass, the complimentary cold tea is a refreshing herbal greeting. For an appetizer, the Lumpia Shanghai is a Filipino twist on the Chinese spring roll: rice noodles and veggies or minced pork rolled into egg washed wraps fried until golden for a crispy treat. U's lunch sets served bento-style are multilayered care packages presented on an assortment of porcelain.

Each set comes with bowls of miso, brown rice, and three vegetable sides: Russian salad, braised spinach tofu and sautéed okra, squash and aubergine. Among the bento options, highlights include the chicken adobo and the Okinawa Special. Chicken adobo, a Filipino national dish, tenders succulent dark meat and daikon radish simmered in a

vinegar, soy reduction and coconut milk laurelled with bay leaves, peppercorns and crushed garlic—a gravy, ladled on rice, that will leave even diehard vegetarians asking for more. The Okinawa Special stir-fries chopped bitter gourd, tofu and pork into a hearty dish. Veg options like the tempura—basil, carrots, and prawns battered



and fried—are equally filling. Home-sweet homemade Japanese confectionaries like the green-tea chiffon cake and yogurt cake end the nostalgic tour and pair well with a fresh brew of Batangas roast. Handmade Japanese pottery and imported goods like sake, brown rice and miso are neatly labeled and available for purchase at the counter. For frill-free, comfort food in an atmosphere second to home meet a friend at Cafe U, open for dinner on Fridays and Saturdays and serves lunch daily except on Tuesdays. *Marco Pollo*

North of the Nursing College on Milap Rd in Sanepa, look left at the first intersection and find the U.

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Patiala in Las Vegas




DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

LAS VEGAS: Two hundred alumni of the Patiala Medical College from India are gathered here in Nevada for a conference. As an alumnus from Nepal, I am one of the invited speakers at the Monte Carlo Hotel. This is a continuing medical education program for these doctors certified by the University Medical Center of Las Vegas. I spoke to Patiala graduates practicing in the United States about a vulnerable group called VFRs (Visiting Friends and Relatives). In this


case, VFRs are people in the US of Indian origin who visit India and fall sick. Unlike their Western counterparts most VFRs carelessly do not obtain the required vaccines like typhoid or hepatitis A and B when visiting India. In addition, the VFRs are also prone to traveller’s diarrhoea as living in the US may have decreased their immunity to common microorganisms in our part of the world. I also added a bit about about prevention of altitude sickness as many elderly ‘Indian Americans’ to sacred high altitude pilgrimage sites like Kailash-Manasarovar without awareness about altitude travel and its deadly complications: high altitude


pulmonary and cerebral edema which can be lethal. Most of the doctors gathered here are specialists in many fields (cardiologists, urologists, neurologists, and obesity and pain medicine experts), but they are generally ignorant about travel and altitude medicine. After the talks in the evening, there is a well-choreographed *bhangra* dance and plenty of *chole bhature* and *besan ke bhurphy*. We could be in a party palace in Patiala, and yet just down the escalators from this ballroom is the Monte Carlo casino in full swing with Americans playing blackjack, baccarat, poker, and the slot machines. The contrast is mind-boggling. The doctors also raise money among themselves to help their alma mater, Government Medical College, Patiala and the adjoining Rajendra Hospital (picture) so that underprivileged and needy students and patients will benefit. Hundreds of young Nepali doctors have recently gone to practice and live in the US, hopefully down the line they too will follow the Patiala example.





WEEKEND WEATHER
by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

We are now officially passing from the 'Asare' rain to 'Bhadaure' rain. There is a qualitative difference. The Nepali month of Asar has relentless plodding rainfall, whereas Bhadau rain is heavy and isolated showers with lots of rainbows. The northeasterly winds are still pulling in cooler air from Tibet from over the mountains and this is unleashing heavy showers especially at night. But expect this to be replaced by a monsoon front from the bay next week. The weekend should have bright partly cloudy days with brilliant blue skies and sharp bursts of rain in the evening and night.



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BIKRAM RAI

OVER SHADOWED: Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal, UML President Sushil Koirala and UML leader Madhav Kumar Nepal at an interaction program on challenges of the peace process in Kathmandu on Wednesday.



BIKRAM RAI

WON'T YOU STAY? Canadian Ambassador to Nepal Stewart Beck presented his Letter of Credence to President Ram Baran Yadav at Shital Nibas on Sunday.



BIKRAM RAI

HELLO KATHMANDU: Two trainee RJs practice at a studio in South Asian College of Media Technology, Kupondole, on Tuesday. The two are taking a radio technology training, supported by Helvetas Nepal, for students who have not cleared their SLC examintaion.



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One size doesn't fit all

Two threads run through India's bilateral ties with each neighbour: democracy and trade



CHALO DILLI
Jyoti Malhotra

From all accounts, New Delhi is putting in place a new strategy to deal with its neighbours. And contrary to what is widely perceived, this is not being sanctioned by the Almighty Americans. Hillary Clinton's exhortation in Chennai last month that India must "act like a regional power" (or words to that effect) are being taken with a pinch of salt here.



Each of India's neighbours is culturally different and each has a unique historical trajectory with Delhi, which means one size can't fit all. But there are two threads that run through India's bilateral ties with each neighbour: democracy and trade.

Democratic governments must be encouraged because India is the largest democracy in the world. This is not to say that Delhi won't deal with dictatorships. It was during General Musharraf's tenure that several long-pending issues were realised, and talks on that ever-elusive subject called Kashmir were significantly advanced. Delhi will also use trade and commerce as key instruments of its foreign policy, not least because the colour of money has little or no ideology.

Change is coming to both Delhi and Kathmandu this month. The deadline for Nepal's new constitution is not expected to be met, and India's new ambassador to Nepal, Jayant Prasad, arrives in Kathmandu a week or so before 31 August. Meanwhile, Akhilesh Mishra, newly returned from Kathmandu, is set to take over as joint secretary in charge of Nepal (and Bhutan) in the Ministry of External Affairs.

Short of second-guessing what Jayant Prasad is going to do, always a dangerous game for out-of-town columnists, the truth is that

Delhi is keen that Nepal resolves its internal political crisis sooner than later. This is the message Home Minister P Chidambaram had for a delegation of Nepali editors in town last week. He said India would not seal the border because there was too much at stake for both sides.

The crux of the new strategy: India has a stake in the improvement of its periphery and it will do everything it can to take its neighbours along on its own path of economic growth. Equally, neighbourhood democracies must meet Delhi half-way.

Bangladesh is a case in point. The Indian prime minister is all set to unveil dramatic new breakthroughs in border management when he goes to Dhaka in early September. Pakistan is being wooed by the promise of greater economic growth as a function of open trade with a Most Favoured Nation trading status, except Islamabad wants to call it "non-discriminatory trade". Delhi says it doesn't care what it is called, as long as it's done.

Do these models have a lesson for the India-Nepal relationship? Yes. With an open border and an open trading system, Kathmandu and Delhi can do so much more for their own people. 🇳🇵

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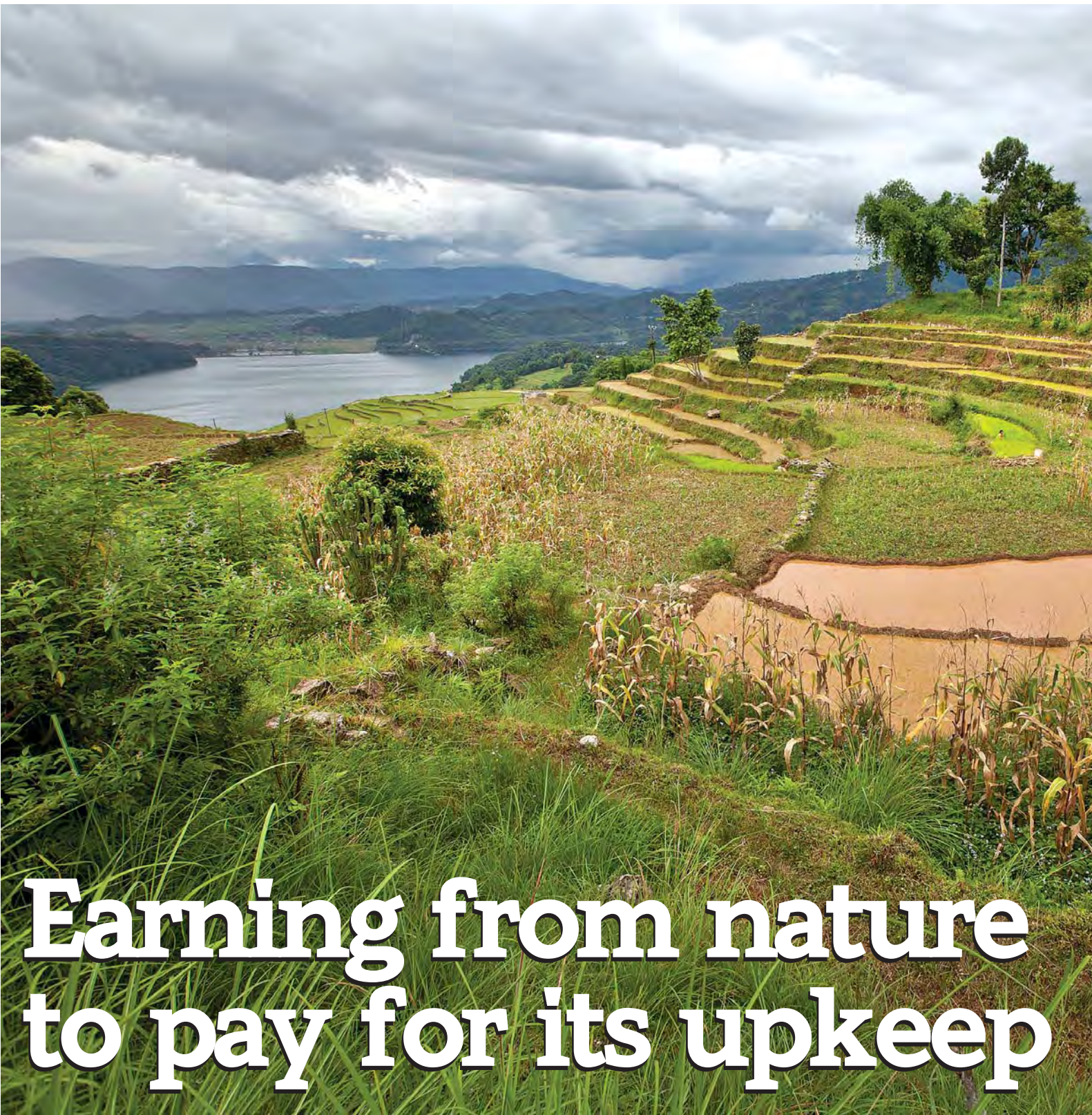
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KUNDA DIXIT in KASKI

It is 6:30am, and the small crowd that has gathered on the shore of Rupa Lake is getting impatient. Suddenly, someone shouts: “There they are.” Canoes appear one by one from behind a forested mountainside that plunges into the mirror-like lake. They row closer to shore where members of a local cooperative get their weighing scales and calculators ready. The freshly caught fish are still gasping as they are flung to shore. An attendant reads out the names of customers who have come from as far away as Pokhara to buy Rupa’s famous silver carp, tilapia and trout.



The Rupa Lake Rehabilitation and Fisheries Cooperative in Kaski is a unique collective because it not only improves livelihoods of local farmers, but also helps preserve the lake’s fragile ecosystem. “What we have shown is that it is possible to have economic benefits without destroying the ecology,” says the cooperative’s founder, Lekhnath Dhakal. “In fact, the



Earning from nature to pay for its upkeep

Unique cooperative puts a price tag on protecting the ecosystem

income from fish is helping protect the entire watershed and the lake. It is symbiotic.” Within 45 minutes, fish worth Rs 10,000 has been sold. This year, the cooperative had an annual turnover of Rs 6.5 million and the money was ploughed into raising fingerlings and maintaining enclosures as well as cleaning up the lake. The cooperative pays Rs 4,000 per year to 17 community forests in the lake’s catchment area for the ecosystem benefits that tree cover in the mountains gives to the lake. It pays another Rs 2,000 a year to 19 schools and gives scholarships to 52 students to spread conservation awareness upstream. “This puts a price tag on protecting the ecosystem,” explains Dhakal, “and it encourages communities up on the mountains to conserve their forest.” Rupa has a larger catchment than nearby Begnas, but a lake that used to be 150 hectares big has now shrunk to only 100. On the lake’s eastern shore is a local mother’s group that has been planting erosion-control fodder grass along new roads that have recently been built along banks. Ujeli Gurung heads the group which has 22 members each contributing to a savings scheme that lends

The culture of agriculture

SURYA ADHIKARI

No one inspired me, I inspired myself. I taught myself about soil nutrients. My neighbours thought I was mad because I used to go into town to collect the hair from barbershops and bones from slaughter houses, grind and spread them out as fertiliser. I learnt as I went along. Once, in Gulmi I saw they were growing coffee. I brought back 12 bushes and today Begnas Coffee is famous, we produce 22 tons of beans a year. But it wasn’t easy, during the 1990 democracy movement, the highways was closed for more than a week and all my chicken died on the way to market. I lost Rs 100,000 and went bankrupt. But out of adversity comes opportunity. I met the specialists from LI-BIRD and they taught me about sustainable agriculture and crop biodiversity. I have learnt that the most important thing is to follow nature’s rules. You can’t go wrong if you do that. You have to



protect the soil, that is the most important thing. This doesn’t just mean stopping erosion, it means not poisoning it with chemicals, it means replenishing the soil’s natural nutrients. Increasing food production is not going to be enough, we have to protect our soil and the agriculture biodiversity that god has bestowed on this

land. We have to protect the soil, air and water cycle. This is not an earth-changing revolution, we just want to make sure our seeds, plants and herbs don’t disappear. Everything is interconnected, we have to learn to live with the land. We have to protect the 16 local varieties of rice that are suited for the soil and the micro-climate around here. We have 12 different types of millet, 12 types of yams. Just like we set aside areas for national parks, we must protect this watershed that feeds into Rupa and Begnas as an agriculture conservation region. There is still lots to do, I want to set up an agricultural college here so that educated people start respecting the land and the people who work on it. We need to be able to feed our growing population. For this, you have to protect the land and those who work on it. Surya Adhikari (pictured) is a farmer in Begnas village in Kaski, a pioneer of coffee production and the home garden concept of crop biodiversity conservation.



ALL PICS: JANA ASENBRENNEROVA

to members. Last year, Ujeli took a Rs 5,000 loan from her group to buy a nanny goat, and has paid back and made Rs 30,000 from selling its kids.

The Rupa Lake cooperative and others in Kaski are being supported by the Pokhara-based Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD) which replicates the model in 29 districts and

even advises cooperatives in India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Tibet.

“Our main aim is to ensure food security by conserving agricultural biodiversity for the poorest of the poor families,” explains Abhiskar Subedi, LI-BIRD’s program director. “We get farmers to participate in improving crops so they are less vulnerable to climate change by protecting the



KASKI SKY: Farmers in Begnas use oxen to ready their terrace farms for paddy transplantation last week (left).

Sita Khadka (above) heads a cooperative that conserves, grows and markets local varieties of grain and vegetables.

Lekhanath Dhakal (below, right) who founded the Rupa Lake fisheries with Ramchandra Sapkota, who currently heads it. Income from fish has raised living standards and even paid for conservation of the lake’s watershed.

ecosystem.” Kaski has one of the highest annual rainfalls in Nepal, and this gives the region rich biodiversity in herbs, vegetables and fruits.

At the Pratigya Savings and Credit Cooperative on a picturesque village overlooking the lake, women members are having their weekly meeting. The farmers are involved in field trials of local rice hybrids that can resist pests and drought. What’s more, they also learn to market these products in the city to generate income.

Sita Khadka heads the cooperative, and says confidently: “We are now self-sufficient, we don’t need donors anymore, and we are creating jobs so our young men don’t have to go away for work.” 🇳🇵 www.libird.com



Rethinking cooperatives



“I am thankful for microfinance because even though I am in great debt and struggle to pay for food, I was able to save my daughter from sickness,” Sita said. She had borrowed Rs 200,000 from her Chitwan cooperative last year to pay for emergency treatment for her daughter, and is still struggling to pay off her debt.

The original idea behind microfinance was that the poor could potentially escape poverty by freeing themselves from local moneylenders who charged high interest rates. The low interest rate could be also used to build a business to sustain their families.

Microfinance has become an integral part of the government’s poverty reduction strategy in Nepal. In 2004, there were 2,345 saving and credit cooperatives and thousands of NGOs working in microfinance. Many of them were encouraged to provide financial services beyond credit and savings and form groups to rely on the internal resources of members’ savings to generate loans for members.

Today, however, many have come to question the role of microfinance in developing nations in alleviating poverty and helping the poor improve their lives. Analysing cooperatives in Chitwan and Butwal recently, it was clear those accessing microfinance services paired with other financial resources, such as remittance transfers from abroad, did benefit.

However, for the ‘poorest of the poor’ microcredit loans can actually make things worse. They become even more vulnerable to the point where, in some cases, they struggle to pay for food and basic household expenses. A woman who had taken a loan to buy a goat was in repayment difficulties because the goat died before it provided additional income to the family. In such cases, it is difficult for borrowers to maintain daily expenses, meet the saving expectations required for the membership of the cooperative, and deal with loan repayments.

For the poorest of the poor microcredit loans can actually make things worse

Many loans are taken to deal with health-related issues, a fundamental need in a country where over 14 per cent of children die before the age of five. Hospital fees can be expensive, resulting in substantial debt. Very poor households, like Sita’s family, often find themselves in a trap, and microfinance is used for medical emergencies rather than income generation. If the government provided better healthcare services, perhaps microfinance could alleviate poverty more efficiently.

Moreover, clients have to meet requirements like monthly savings and collateral to be eligible for a loan. The more land and savings one has, the easier it is to access the larger loans needed for bigger businesses. The system thus risks reinforcing some of the inequalities that arise within a caste and class-based society. Those already better off are in a position to make better use of microfinance than poorer people.

Nonetheless, it seems all members of cooperatives do benefit from training programs to develop the skills to invest in fruitful income-generating activities and build the skills and confidence to confront difficulties. Microfinance can encourage people to transition from a ‘passive’ state to an ‘active’ state, and improve lives. Many women say their membership of cooperatives gave them a “voice” and made them more “assertive” within their communities.

There are many models of microfinance, but generally it allows quick access to cash at low interest rates for investment purposes or for emergencies. For the more vulnerable, despite the advantages of empowerment and training, failure can carry heavy risks. An unexpected consequence may be that those people with low incomes and limited access to outside resources may actually seek the help of private lenders in order to meet their microfinance payment deadlines, so as not to lose face.

However, microfinance appears to cater well to those people who have access to remittance funds or other resources. In these cases, microfinance has been a stepping-stone towards the betterment of lives. 🇳🇵

Thouraya Bahri was a part of the Graduate Program in International Affairs, New School, New York.

Human trafficking

Interview with Charimaya Tamang,
Himal Khabarpatrika, 1-17 August

Himal: You have recently been honoured with ‘2011 Hero Acting To End Modern day Slavery Award’. What does this mean to you?

Charimaya Tamang: It’s not just a personal achievement for me. I would like to see this award as a recognition of the hard work we have all put to save thousands of women from being trafficked. In this regard, it is also an honour bestowed by the US government on Nepal.

How closely is this award related to your own living experience?

In July 1996, seven organisations in Nepal rescued 128 women including me from Indian brothels. Five months later, I filed a complaint against the person who sold me. My family separated from me because of the death threats that followed. When I look back at what I have gone through, this award feels like it makes up for all the hardships I had to face.

Why are so many women trafficked every year?

The main reason is the state of lawlessness and impunity in the country. The state has not even been able to prosecute a known

perpetrator who has lured young women from their own village and sold them off in Indian brothels. Besides this, there is a lack of awareness among the young women, especially in the countryside, about the serious threat they face, so much so that even educated graduates become victim of trafficking.



Where else are the women trafficked besides India?

In the recent years, women have been lured into foreign employment and sold in the Gulf countries. When they try to run away, there have been incidents where they have been subjected to brutal torture. Some have been trapped in fake case and put behind bars. Many have committed suicide.

What needs to be done to put a stop to trafficking?

There is no overnight solution. A multi-pronged approach: implementation of international conventions against human trafficking along with extensive campaign against trafficking throughout the country must be conducted. Anti-trafficking laws and programs have to be made a part of the academic curriculum and discrimination against the victim of trafficking has to end. Only then can we hope for a trafficking-free society in future.



Dhobi Ghat denounced

Editorial in *Laal Rakshak*, 31 July

लालरक्षक

The Dhobi Ghat episode has violated the tradition of selflessness and discipline in our party. It is a betrayal of the martyrs, the injured and disappeared from the great People’s War. Dhobi Ghat put revolution and the revolutionaries under a serious test. But the way UCPN-M leadership handled the crisis is a proof that the party is capable of overcoming any hurdle to prove its historical loyalty towards the people and cause of the revolution. Dhobi Ghat might have slowed down our path to freedom but it has made us more clear in our direction.

Let it not be seen as a sign of weakness, let it be known that our anger is not just against the betrayal, but against the culture of betrayal. The new found unity within the party is the result of extraordinary leadership skill exhibited by the Chairman. This is a resounding rebuff to imperialists and feudal elements who were waiting for an opportunity to divide and rule. They will come at us with even dirtier tricks.

It has been seen in the past that the more unity there is among the progressive forces, the more reactionary tactics are adopted by the regressive elements to break us from within. The days ahead are full of challenges. Hence, the leadership should transcend the internal rifts to focus on the class struggle. Leaders must understand that the unnecessary debate over party leadership is not in our larger interest. The Dhobi Ghat episode has taught us that there is no fun burning down the house for warmth.



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Compensation

Nagarik, 2 August

नागरिक

The government is preparing to distribute Rs 2 billion to the family of Maoist combatants who were killed and disappeared during the conflict. Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari has allocated the amount under the Peace and Reconstruction Ministry after being pressurised by the Maoists. The families will receive Rs 200 thousand each. Fearing protests from the opposing parties, Adhikari allocated the money discreetly under the Peace Ministry not mentioning it in the budget speech. Of the Rs 9.68 billion allocated for the Peace Ministry, Rs 2 billion has been set aside for this purpose. Finance secretary Krishna Hari Banskota and other officials involved in budget drafting had suggested that distributing money to individuals would mean siphoning money from development, Adhikari forced the program into the budget.



Organic cooperative

Bharat Koirala in Annapurna Post, 25 July

अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट

After working for 10 years in a farm in Japan, Mesh Bahadur Gurung decided not just to return to Nepal, but to his native Kaski and start an agricultural cooperative. The 45-year-old management graduate has tried to put into practice what he learnt in Japan, even though many here warned him it was a very risky investment. The farm is located in Sardi Khola in Kaski at 1,240 m, about 20 km from Pokhara, over a 80 hectare



BHARAT KOIRALA

plot surrounded by mountains. The Parbatiya Agricultural Cooperative has members who have invested Rs 200,000 each and is the biggest cooperative in the district with an investment of Rs 3.5 million. “We are currently carrying out a market study and we will decide on what to plant after talking to customers and traders, we believe organic vegetables are healthier and tastier,” explains Gurung. The farm is already growing tomatoes and has built 96 greenhouses for the autumn vegetable planting. Because it is an organic farm, Gurung also aims to keep livestock for manure and to sell meat. “This is an exemplary project,” says Beni Bahadur Karki of Kaski’s Agriculture Development Office, “it has encouraged others to do the same.” The cooperative is a model for creating well-paying jobs within Nepal that keeps youths from going abroad for work.



The criminal
The minister
The cop

हिमाल Bhanu Bhattarai in
Himal Khabarpatrika, 1 to 17 August

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“I will resign at a time when alternative is found to form a national consensus government.”

PM Jhulanath Khanal on 29 May, 2011

“If the Maoists don’t take the peace process forward as per their commitment by 13 August I will resign.”

PM Jhulanath Khanal on 2 August, 2011

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Don of a new era

The pace at which **top cops** are being sent to jail and **top dons** released, we are soon going to have a situation where the Central Jail will be full of policemen behind bars and they will be guarded by Mafioso wardens. Which will be a fitting tribute to the don of a new era in New Nepal.



After suffering an editorless week, Kathmandu's main papers are back to their normal selves again. Just as well, because we were getting headlines like 'Promotion for 2011 Nepal Tourism Year in 2012'. And an English language one which, while trying to provide a service to its non-Nepali speaking readers, translated the name of the Rastriya Janashakti Party as **National Manpower Party**.



Everywhere else in the world, 'Darfur' is a humanitarian disaster, but in Nepal it is a scam. And the reason Krishna Sitaula went to see the **Maximum Leader** at the Pistachio Palace recently was not about forming a new



consensus government, but to ask him to call off the blistering attacks in Nepal's largest circulation newspaper alleging his involvement in the Sudan caper. "I know you know I'm not involved. I also know you know you are involved, so why don't you talk to the editor," was Sitaula's message.



Mercifully, the political

parties have now issued a moratorium on those complicated multi-point deals like the 12-points agreement, the 7-point agreement or 5-point agreement that they never fulfill. PKD met JN the other day and the PMO spokesman told the ambush press later: "They had a one sentence agreement." So it's now come down to sentences, and we can only guess what that one was: 'I will pretend to ask for your resignation, you will pretend to want to resign, but you won't until I tell you to'.



The Standing Committee meeting at UML Potala in Balkhu was quite heated by all accounts. (Maybe they shouldn't have standing meetings, and should all sit down and relax.) Anyway, JN was unusually prompt and accommodative and allowed himself to be convinced. Just then, Leftist God Bum Dev,

was seen to surreptitiously SMS someone on his mobile. Because seconds later, JN's phone rings. The prime minister just listens and grunts. Then he tells the Standing Committee the deal's off and he's going to swear the Maoists in. He drives off in a cloud of dust to **Shit All Nibas**. No prizes for guessing who Bum Dev was texting and who called JNK.



It's all coochi-coochi-coo between **El Moustachio** and **Jhusil** these days. They just can't get enough of each other, and are going all touchy feely in public. Sushil Da even told PKD at a memorial to his cousin, GPK, the other day: "There is no one I can confide in after Girija Babu died. You should take the lead and become prime minister." Jhusil wasn't just trying to be polite he was trying to prevent BRB from leading the next govt and also to destroy any chance Lion Brave may have to making it to **Balu Water** again. Wily old fox.



And the medal for Junketeer-

in-Chief in the present cabinet goes undisputably to Upadro Yadav who has just travelled to Brazil via Lithuania and Belgium. The reason is ostensibly to inaugurate the new Nepal Embassy in Brasilia, but it seems the five member delegation is having a grand time at Copacabana beach. Can just picture Upadro in thongs with Renu in tow dancing to the tune of Laila Majnu. Dhananjay ("Whiskey in the Jar") Jha is also on the entourage hungover after a massive **boozeup in Brussels**. Nepalis in Belgium have petitioned the foreign ministry to stop him being our next envoy to the EU, re.



After the grand success in Delhi, it's only a question of time before the **Slut Walk** comes to Kathmandu. CA members, who don't seem to have much to do anyway, could take part. Charitraheen Chelis, where are you when the nation needs you?





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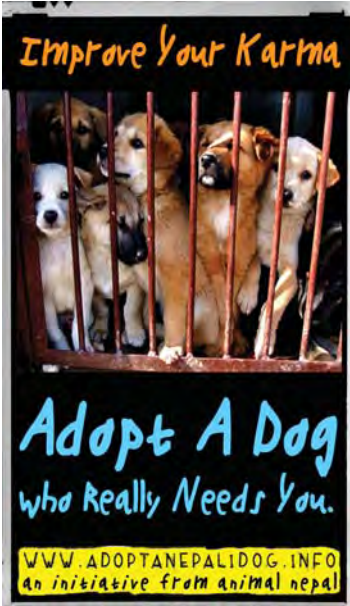
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