

Your **Dream Home**,
Not a Dream **Anymore**



NIBL HOME LOAN
@ **10.5%** Interest p.a.

SMS | home to 7755 or Contact your nearest NIBL Branch

For more Information:
Retail Bank: 4228229, 4242530, EXT 304/324

www.nibl.com.np

नेपाल इन्भेस्टमेन्ट बैंक लि.
NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK LTD.
Truly a Nepali Bank



DEEPPENDRA BAJRACHARYA

Thinking the unthinkable

School children on an outing at Swayambhu look down at an overbuilt Valley on Monday. Kathmandu is ranked number one among top 10 cities around the world where a catastrophic earthquake is imminent. An 8.4 magnitude earthquake like the one that struck central Nepal at 2:30 pm on 15 January 1934 will kill at least 100,000 people outright, and three times that number will be injured.

A disaster of that extent was so unthinkable that the government was paralysed into inaction, and didn't know where to start. However, scare tactics, greater awareness, donor pressure, and support seem to be finally yielding results and the government has started a campaign to retrofit schools and hospitals in the Valley.



Early warning

Earthquake alarms that detect fast-moving P waves can give up to 30 seconds of advance warning of an impending quake. Installing one in a home, school or office could save many lives.

Full story **page 12-13**

What will Kathmandu look like after an earthquake?

Photo gallery by **Bikram Rai**

Are you prepared for the Big One?

Extra coverage on Nepali Times online

nepalitimes.com

CONSTELLATION
THURAYA XT
The most rugged satellite phone in the World!
www.constellation.com.np
Tel: +977-1-5549252

LAVAZZA
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE
Hotel Mandala - Boudha
Samdup Restaurant with Garden - Boudha
Mail to lavazza@subhashgalingni.com

GENERAL PURPOSE GENERATORS
FIRMAN
NEW POWER NEW LIFE
GAUTAM ELECTRIC AND ELECTRONICS CENTRE
Head Office: B.P. Chowk, Pashupati, T: 961 53752, F: 961 531402
Corporate Office: Bharat Office Complex, 5th, Thapathali, Kathmandu
T: 01 4210908, F: 01 4210913, E: info@gaupl.com
GAUTAM ASSOCIATES

Meaty, Mouth-Watering, Delicious Burger @ grill me
grill me
Jhamsikhel, 5535294

THE NORTH FACE
Authorized Dealer:
Sherpa Adventure Outlet
Thamel, Kathmandu
Tel: +977 1 4445101
www.sao.com.np

Winter Camp Check-up



FREE WINTER CAMP FOR CHEVROLET, SUBARU & OPEL OWNERS.
Improve the efficiency of your vehicle and ensure peace of mind.

Services

Fog and Head Lamp check
Air-conditioning system check
Wiper Blades check
Rear defogger check
Battery check, free Car wash

plus
Special discounts
on accessories and spare parts

From
16th Dec. - 16th Jan. 2013

To book appointments call 4425603, 4414625, 4433205 or 9801026547

Vijay Motors Pvt. Ltd.
Showroom: Naxal Bhagwati Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal.

ABDICATING STATE OBLIGATION

The doctrine of sovereign rights is the last refuge of scoundrels and demagogues in the world's most brutal and authoritarian regimes. They don't want any outside interference as they go about committing genocide on their own peoples.

The police state needs complete independence to detain, torture, and even kill prisoners of conscience. Many of these states make a disingenuous distinction between individual freedom and the collective good, and argue that political rights are secondary to social, economic, and cultural rights. In a country plagued by inequality and discrimination, where hunger is rampant and good governance is seriously lacking, one can make quite a convincing case for shelving political freedoms until everyone has enough to eat. Which is exactly what one-party states, those still ruled by communistic parties, those under command capitalism or populist socialism are doing.

In countries as diverse as China and Singapore, Venezuela and Russia, political parties have, with varying degrees of success, lulled citizens into believing that one can't eat democracy, or that freedom makes you poor. In reality, ruling parties are just using this argument to consolidate or prolong their hold on power. Leaders exploit populism or whipped up nationalism to get to power and then proceed to systematically dismantle and emasculate the very democratic institutions that they used to get to office.

Every day that Prime Minister Baburam Bhattarai stays on in power, it is clear that he is most comfortable in an authoritarian role. It would be wishful thinking to believe that a hardcore ideologue-in-chief of the Maoist party would behave any differently. After all, this is a man who, when confronted with graphic images of



'Protecting the peace process' has become a euphemism for both the Maoists and the security forces to push a blanket pardon for all those involved in war crimes

executions and violence committed by his cadre during the conflict, defended the use of "political violence in a historical context".

Which is why Bhattarai's outburst on Tuesday in which he lashed out at the UK government for the detention and trial of Col Kumar Lama of the Nepal Army for his involvement in torture during the war was not at

all out of character. The irony of it all, of course, was that he was defending an officer of an army that his guerrillas fought against.

Nepal's war was different from others in the region because neither side won, and neither side lost, the warring sides are both in the establishment. Quite clearly, there is a cosy understanding between the Maoists and the Nepal Army, Police, and the Armed Police Force to let bygones be bygones and not rake up wartime atrocities. In the same speech on Tuesday, Bhattarai went one step further to warn that judicial proceedings against the killers of Dailekh journalist Dekendra Thapa would undermine the peace process. Thapa was detained, tortured, and buried alive by Maoist cadre who have confessed to the crime. 'Protecting the peace process' has now become a euphemism for both the Maoists and the security forces in Nepal for impunity and a blanket pardon for all those involved in war crimes.

If this is Prime Minister Bhattarai's take on justice, the protesters demonstrating for the past two weeks at Baluwatar against violence against women may need to assess whether holding placards is enough. Under the doctrine of 'state obligation' it should be a sovereign nation's responsibility to protect citizens and deliver justice. But we can't hold out much hope given Bhattarai's utterances on the Kumar Lama and Dekendra Thapa cases. They prove that justice is very low on the list of priorities for this prime minister.

When the state abdicates its role in state obligation, perpetrators can be apprehended anywhere and anytime in the world under the principle of universal jurisdiction. Col Lama's torture of one prisoner pales in comparison to the wartime atrocities of the comrades. And that precisely may be what is so scary for Maoist leaders who are now in positions of power.

ON THE WEB www.nepalitimes.com

WE SHALL OVERCOME

I agree with every sentence of Rubeena D Shrestha's article ('We shall overcome', #637). There's nothing sadder than growing up in a society where you feel unsafe and afraid just because you were born a female.

TD

● The root of the problem in Nepal is a culture where men and women alike perpetuate patriarchal and often misogynistic values. Rape, actual physical rape, is the most extreme and cruel form of the debasement of a woman, yet as Rubeena mentions and as I have experienced on a daily basis myself, women are consistently and tirelessly mistreated in Nepali society. It is not about men overcoming their 'weakness', or the women or any identifiable social group, but in overcoming a culture that is not able to keep up with underlying social changes that have occurred. Nepali women are more educated and opinionated now, taking on professional roles deemed 'masculine' by many, they head families, and are leaders in politics and civil society. The only long-term solution is to raise generations of Nepalis, girls and boys, to respect each other as equals.

S

● I think we are forgetting a very important part of the problem: women oppressing women. I am not defending male attitude towards women, but males quite often are pawns in female politics. Who is the person who expects the woman of the house to give birth to a baby boy? Who will find another wife for the man if the woman fails to

give birth to males? Who is more likely to be against sending daughters to school? The answer is usually women in the form of mother-in-laws, mothers, grandmothers, aunts, female relatives, and female neighbours. Therefore, half the battle is against the matriarch, blaming only the males, or society, won't solve the problem.

Poudel

THE GENDER AGENDA

As Anurag Acharya rightly says justice delayed is justice denied ('The gender agenda', #637). It is high time the government brought a strong law to deal with culprits of gender violence. There have been a number of cases in the past few months where the woman is either raped or tortured, but the perpetrators are walking freely. Women are being burnt for not bringing enough dowry, banished from home during menstruation in the name of chaupadi, forced to receive less pay than men even after working the same job. More than that, they are forced to tolerate everything. Women need to raise their voice and families have to support them.

Sujata Guragain

● Unless we change our attitude and enforce laws against criminals who inflict violence on women, true change is impossible. Men will continue to rape women as they are sure that society will

still accept them over women. We live in a hypocritical society where women are worshiped for their purity and tagged as Laxmi or even Parvati when the reality is we women never asked for it. Women just want to be treated equally with dignity. Let Occupy Baluwatar not be overshadowed by political claims and demands, but turn into a larger movement for women, and only women.

Paramita

THE WAR ON WOMEN

Thank you for putting the spotlight on these important issues ('The war on women', Editorial, #637). In terms of international norms, Nepal ratified the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against

abolish laws, regulations, customs, and practices that discriminate against women. In this 'political disarray' where is there the political will for any of this? As for women's consent, it is not only 'important', it is paramount.

Henny

● I agree that Nepal's patriarchy needs to be broken, and women need to be empowered. But I wonder how much change 40 people standing on Baluwatar's sidewalk in down jackets and fur boots, taking pictures of each other on iPhones to tweet from the site, can bring? For a campaign to turn into a mass movement, people have to spontaneously descend to the streets.

Sukilo

● Nepali Times is doing a good job of covering the issue of rape, and doing it well. The editorial is on the mark, as depressing as it is. I hope 2013 brings less violent news to write about.

Anonymous

INDIA'S SECOND WIND

Will you please send this article to Baburam Bhattarai to read? ('India's second wind', Martin Feldstein, #637).

POLITICS FOR POLITICS' SAKE

It is amazing to me that you chose to characterise King Mahendra's banning of parties, jailing of politicians, and forcing others into exile as his Majesty's desire to have a benevolent dictatorship ('Politics for politics' sake', Editorial, #632). Why can't you credit him as a farsighted leader

who knew that if Nepal were ruled by the parties, it would bring about unmitigated disaster? He was not anti-democratic, he just didn't accept the conventional wisdom that democracy has to be some sort of an imitation of the western European or North American political systems. He was in fact correct to be distrustful of the political parties. Have not the last 22 and certainly the last six years proven the veracity of his foresight?

Certainly the Panchayat system was plagued with corruption and mismanagement. But it was an honest attempt to develop a new sort of democracy which was rooted in and suited to Nepali society and tradition. How is what has replaced it since 1990 been in any way an improvement? Please don't say that there have been elections. The mere holding of elections by a group of criminal enterprises (political parties) can't be used as evidence of progress in a society.

Daniel Birch



Women (CEDAW) in 1991, but the politicians have failed to fulfil the state's obligations, such as the duty to eliminate discrimination in all its forms and to work towards fulfilment of women's rights. The government is also required to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person or organisation and to modify or

Nepal Times **nepalnews.com**
Weekly Internet Poll #638

Q. What do you think of civil society leader as the next Prime Minister?

Total votes: 1,823

Good idea	51.2%
Bad idea	25.8%
Won't make a difference	22.9%

Weekly Internet Poll # 639. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com
Q. Should the UK release Colonel Kumar Lama?



Win a share of 1,000,000 Qmiles

Travel in 5-star luxury to over 100 destinations worldwide and enjoy **complimentary tickets**, upgrades, excess baggage, Doha duty free purchases and much more as we offer a million Qmiles with Qatar Airways Privilege Club.

Book your First or Business class ticket by 31st January 2013 and enrol to Privilege Club at qatarairways.com/million to be entitled to the lucky draw.



Only applicable for First or Business Class Return bookings • 5 winners will be awarded 200,000 Qmiles each • The winners will be selected from Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka • Travel must be completed by 28th February 2013 to be entitled to the prize draw • Other conditions apply.

Tel: +977-1-4440467

qatarairways.com/million

QATAR 
AIRWAYS القطرية



BRIGHT AS EVER:
The restaurant and lounge at Meconopsis Hotel in Pulchok which is completely lit by LED lights.

BIKRAM RAI

Taking the lead

As more and more concrete high-rises dominate Kathmandu's skyline, undermining the Valley's historic heart, one new tall hotel in Pulchok is trying to be different. The 11-storey Meconopsis Hotel is aiming to be the most energy-efficient high rise in the capital by being powered completely by LED lights: all 2,000 watts of it.

"LEDs are expensive, but they consume less power and are ideal during long hours of load shedding when we have to use diesel generators, they help keep our electricity and diesel bills down," explains says Bishan Shah (*pictured*) of Meconopsis. LED lights with their longer lifespans and low energy consumption pay for themselves within a year, making them ideal for an energy-starved country like Nepal.



LED there be light

Move over CFLs, here come LED lights that save even more energy

BHRIKUTI RAI

Although their low energy consumption made LEDs ideal for diesel and solar-powered lighting in Nepal, they were just too expensive. Not any more. Prices of LEDs (light emitting diodes) have come down dramatically, and with Nepal's energy crisis here to stay, these high-tech fixtures have become affordable for home, office, and factory lighting.

Nepal made the switch from incandescent and fluorescent tubes to CFLs some five years ago, but LEDs save even more energy and money. In an LED bulb, electrons hit holes within the device to create electroluminescence, and depending on the quality of LED lights they last up to 40,000 hours - four times more than

fluorescent tubes and 10 times longer than incandescent lights. LED bulbs were initially used in rural electrification but are now becoming popular in cities as well.

Illuminium in Kuponhole which introduced customised LED lighting three years ago has seen a steady rise in customers with large corporate houses to restaurants and hotels (*see box*) eager to make the switch from CFL to LED.

"The leap from CFL to LED hasn't been as swift and massive as the switch from incandescent bulbs to CFL, but the demand for LED lights has definitely increased," says Anil Karki of Illuminimum, who urges that LEDs be arranged sensibly around the home or office to take maximum advantage of the interior.

What has deterred many Nepalis to adopt LEDs so soon

after switching to CFL, however, is the cost of the bulbs. Lighting companies believe it will still take some more years for individual households to join the LED revolution.

Many businesses now conduct energy audits to help them make the switch to more energy efficient products. And they have been replacing CFLs with LEDs, covering the initial installation cost through reduced electricity bills.

Raj Kumar Thapa of Solar Solutions says it is best for households with low electricity consumption to wait for a few years before making the jump to expensive LEDs.

"We have installed LED lights mostly for large organisations as it is easier for them to cover the initial cost than for smaller households," Thapa explains.




Given how the Nepali market

is inundated with costly but low-grade LEDs, new companies are stepping in to make sure customers are provided with lights that are worth their price tag.

"People pay almost 10 times more for LEDs than CFLs so they need to get value for their money," says Shashank Thapa of Tuff Lite which imports LEDs from Malaysia.

Companies in Nepal are hopeful that the gradual phase-out of CFLs across the globe due the health risks will eventually lead to competitive pricing of LEDs.

Says Raj Kumar Thapa: "Once the lights become more affordable I am sure Nepalis here will come flocking for LEDs." 🇳🇵

			
	LED	CFL	Incandescent
Projected lifespan	50,000 hours	10,000 hours	1,200 hours
Watts per bulb	6-8	13-15	60
KWh of electricity used over 50,000 hours	329 KWh	767 KWh	3285 KWh

nepalitimes.com 
LEDing Light, #522



TEMPLE TREE
RESORT AND SPA



Pokhara: Gaurighat, Lakeside 6, Nepal | Tel: +977-61-465 819 Fax: +977-61-465809
Kathmandu: Arcadia Apartments, Thamel, Nepal | Tel/Fax. +977-1-421 5952
info@templetreeneepal.com | www.templetreeneepal.com

Energising the economy

Making industries energy efficient will not be possible until they change their behaviours and attitudes



ECONOMY STUPID
Puja Tandon

Nepal is the second richest country in terms of per capita hydropower resource in the world, yet it contributes only three per cent of Nepal's total energy. Only 56 per cent of the population has access to electricity. The state likes to boast about Nepal's hydro potential and has made energy a high-priority sector, but it can only supply power to 15 per cent of Nepalis.

The net electricity generated per capita in Nepal is the lowest in the world and so is energy density. Since the state has failed to deliver the required power, households and communities have taken up the challenge and gone into alternative renewables like biogas, solar, wind, and improved water mills. Nearly 90 per cent of consumed energy comes from such sources and about nine percent of Nepalis have access to them.

With more than 12 hours of blackouts during the most critical and productive hours of the day, the economy has been the hardest hit by the chronic energy shortage. While commercial electricity consumption has swelled in the last two decades in large part due to growing consumerism (transport and retail, hospitals, the booming education sector), the government has been unable to meet the demand. And looking at current trends, demand will continue to outstrip supply for another five to six years.

However, even the available energy is being wasted through pilferage, system loss, and careless consumption leading to greater inefficiency and stunting the country's growth. Industries and commercial buildings that are unscientifically built without energy efficient



BHISMA PANDIT

LETTING OFF STEAM: Industries that are unscientifically built without energy efficient technologies are wasting energy and money.

technologies in lighting, heating, ventilation, air conditioning, insulation, roofing, windows, and appliances are the biggest culprits.

Both the state and international organisations have stepped in to encourage industries to minimise energy wastage. The Nepal Energy Efficiency Program (NEEP) along with the German aid agency, GIZ have identified the eight most energy-intensive industries in Nepal, such as hotels, and are helping them to reduce their energy consumption and save money. Similarly, donor agencies like Winrock and Adelphi are working on capacity building programs for efficient energy use.

Despite these efforts, changing deep-rooted work culture is a huge challenge. Commercial developers are not inclined to improve technologies or switch to greener methods due to high capital

costs; industries are ill-disposed to improve the energy efficiency of their equipment and premises because for them energy efficiency is not a prime concern. Since energy bills are a small portion of their overall operating costs, many companies would rather keep the production line running than to prioritise energy savings.

Making industries energy efficient will not be possible until we can change these behaviours and attitudes. This is where government intervention is needed. To ensure that there is acceptance and adoption of energy efficient products and practices across the board, the state should raise the standards for mandatory adoptions and introduce certain incentives.

Adequate monetary incentives like tax credits, tax deductions, solar rebates, and accelerated depreciation could be provided to industries and businesses who comply with energy efficient standards. Minimum energy efficiency quotients should be fixed for industrial equipment, and the adoption of such practices should be made mandatory for obtaining financing. Listed companies should be required to make disclosures on their energy performance, and energy audits should be made compulsory and part of financial audits for all companies to ensure compliance.

In addition, for maximum impact, energy efficiency efforts require greater engagement and participation. Awareness campaigns should be carried out among consumers and businesses to educate them on the benefits derived from making energy saving choices. Commercial property owners and developers must be made to realise that they can fetch higher rents from tenants for more efficiently designed and structured properties. Tenants should be informed that energy efficient properties will reduce their overhead and operating costs in the long run.

There is a saying in Japan about food: fill your stomach only 80 per cent. Here in Nepal, it may be premature to talk about energy efficiency until there is enough electricity to meet the country's demand. 🇳🇵

BIZ BRIEFS

Dream bike arrives

Sykar Trading, the sole distributor of Honda Motorcycle in Nepal launched the Dream Yuga motorcycle. Powered by 109cc Air Cooled, 4 Stroke, SI Engine, the stylish Yuga has longer suspension stroke, tubeless tyres, and a viscous air filter maintenance free battery.



Sporty ride

The highly awaited Hyundai Veloster has been launched in Nepal. The sporty Veloster combines the functionality of a hatchback and design elements of a coupe and is available in ten dazzling colours.



Smart choice

Allied Trade Link, the authorised distributor of Karbonn mobile in Nepal has launched



Karbonn A21 and A30 smartphones and Smart 10 Cosmic tablet. All the three devices are powered by Android.

Mind boggling

Nepal General Marketing, authorised distributor of Hero MotoCorp, has launched 'Dimag Kharab' offer on the occasion of New Year. The scheme offers 100 per cent cash refund on purchase of any Hero two-wheelers as the first prize, and 75 and 50 per cent cash refund as second and third prizes respectively through a lucky draw. Customers will also receive cash prizes ranging from Rs 6,000 to Rs 8,000.



शहर सफा राख्न उठेका छन् हात, हामी सबै मिलेर दिनु पर्छ साथ।



एकिकृत
शहरी विकास
केन्द्र



प्रिजम् परियोजना युरोपेली संघको
आर्थिक सहयोगमा सञ्चालित छ।

Transboundary jurisdiction

Thank goodness there are countries out there which still act on human rights violations, no matter where or when they took place



GUEST COLUMN
Prateek Pradhan

Harvard Professor Bryan J Hehir in his famous class named Ethics of Statecraft liked to say: “The strong do what they will, and the weak do what they must.”

Nepal falls into the category of nations that is forced to do what it must. Our despair and frustration at being a weak country means that we compensate for it with jingoism, pseudo-nationalism, and an inflated sense of our worth as a nation.

The latest example of that is the reaction in Kathmandu to the arrest of Nepal Army Colonel Kumar Lama in London by the UK Metropolitan Police. Had a British person who had violated human rights during the Northern Ireland ‘troubles’ been detained while trekking in Nepal, we would not be invoking universal jurisdiction to apprehend and prosecute him, for sure.

But should our ineptness and powerlessness infringe upon our need to uphold human rights and the pursuit of justice? The case of Kumar Lama might be over-inflated. The alleged torture of a civilian at Goringh Barrack in 2005 may not be comparable to what the Maoists perpetrated during the insurgency. It may be far less inhuman than the behaviour of US interrogators in Guantanamo.

For sure, Lama’s transgression was much less brutal than the monstrous treatment of journalist Dekendra Thapa by Maoists in Dailekh at about the same time. Thapa was severely tortured for two days and buried alive when he refused to accept his mistake in protesting Maoist acts. There were far more ghastly crimes committed during the insurgency, so Lama should not be the only one punished.

Let us look at this through the eyes of the family of Ujjan Kumar Shrestha, a shopkeeper from Okhaldhunga. A Maoist



BIKRAM RAI

named Bal Krishna Dhungel killed Shrestha out of personal enmity in 2004, nothing to do with Maoist ideology. Dhungel was found guilty and convicted by the District Court, but the Baburam Bhattarai government got him released and he is walking around a free man, even serving as a nominated member

of the dissolved Constituent Assembly.

If the Maoists remain directly or indirectly in power, Dhungel and many others like him will never be prosecuted and punished. Given this impunity, they may even resort to further violence in the future just as the Maoists in

Dailekh this week threatened journalists who are reporting on Dekendra Thapa’s murder. Thapa’s executioners would probably never have been booked had they not belonged to the breakaway Mohan Baidya faction of the Maoists.

So who is going to protect the proponents of freedom of

speech and other fundamental rights ensured by the Universal Human Rights Declaration and the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights if the state turns fascist, absolutist, or totalitarian? There are severe cases of violations of human rights by the security forces as well, but should we not take action against a culprit just because worse war criminals are still at large?

The argument some commentators have used to criticise Kumar Lama’s arrest in the UK reeks of paranoia and nationalist jingoism. If an independent journalist values national sovereignty more than justice, then the future is bleak indeed. At the rate things are going, the Baburam government may turn tyrannical and if that happens we need an international cushion to save critics of his establishment. Safety in such a case comes only from powerful countries that dare to take action under the doctrine of the responsibility to protect.

Ironically, the most naive and reckless reaction to the Lama case came not from an authoritarian-minded political force, but the party with the longest tradition of democracy and human rights: the Nepali Congress. Either the NC leadership has lost its core values or it simply thought that siding with the Nepal Army in this case was politically expedient.

Lama’s arrest in the UK has empowered Nepali journalists like me to be more vocal in the support of democracy, free press, and human rights. I do not mind that Nepal’s national sovereignty has been compromised because an individual’s right to live fearlessly transcends the physical borders of a country.

Thank goodness there are countries out there which still act on human rights violations, no matter where or when they took place. It is good to see perpetrators of similar violence squirming at the prospect that the strong arm of the law can transcend international frontiers. 🇳🇵

Prateek Pradhan is the editor in chief of *Karobar* newspaper in Kathmandu.



47 years in hospitality industry
Wherever you are, we are always at your service

Kathmandu Guest House THAMEL
Park Village Resort BUDANEL
Waterfront Resort POKHARA
Buddha Maya Garden LUMBINI
Maruni Sanctuary Lodge SAURHA

www.ktmgh.com, info@ktmgh.com



Waterfront Resort

Remembering Kesar Lall

Kesar Lall (Shrestha) was one of Nepal’s best-known folklorists and most widely published writers. He published over 50 books of stories and translations alongside significant collections of poetry and journalism in Nepali and Newari as well as in English. Kesar Lall passed away last month at the age of 85. The following are excerpts from a long interview with Kesar Lall conducted by Mark Turin in Kathmandu, 10 years ago.



Mark Turin: You don’t use the name Shrestha very often in your writings.
Kesar Lall: I like names with just two words; Ruskin Bond, Bernard Shaw. So I started to write just Kesar Lall. It wasn’t a rejection of my caste or of the name Shrestha, simply that in those days, people didn’t have to use their last names or their caste names unless they were writing a legal document or an application.

How did you start working with BP Koirala?
In 1951, soon after the revolution, BP who was then Home Minister and already a household name was looking for someone to work for him. A friend of my father’s asked my father whether he should look into getting me a job. I ended up working for BP as a typist for about eight months. When Koirala was out of office, I had to find another job. I had a friend who worked in USAID, which was called USOM then, and after that at the US Embassy for 30 years.

How did you end up feeling so comfortable speaking and writing in English?
I don’t know, but it just feels natural. But I am still learning all the time, and there are specific things that I have learned from different people. When Edmund Hillary was here, the prime minister asked me to prepare a draft letter to him. So I began with, “My dear Sir Hillary.” Mr Koirala said, “No, in English it should be Sir Edmund.” These are the little things that I remember, and they do matter. I like to write as simply as I can.

When I read Nepal Off The Beaten Path, I was interested that many of the metaphors you used and much of the imagery is very American oriented.
I have always been very influenced by what I have read. Irving, Kipling, of course. Sherlock Holmes, all those old books. (My writing style) may have something to do with my choices. I also read the Reader’s Digest and National Geographic. For the last 20 years, Ruskin Bond has been my guru. I wish I could write like him, with empathy.

Does your documentation of folk literature ever have a political dimension?
No, not at all. My first collection consisted of stories told by my mother and grandmother, and stories that I had heard from friends. Story telling was very common in those days. Whenever I went on a trek, I would ask people for stories. I found that one good way to encourage people to share their stories was to tell my own stories. Japanese stories, Newar stories, whatever. Gradually while I was talking to them and telling them my stories, they would remember their own stories and start telling me.

Is it a struggle to provide adequate context when translating oral history?
I have problems translating stories from Newari. Writers have a habit of muddling up the order and tenses, so sometimes I have to do quite a lot of editing, or cut something down to explain it in a better way. Translating from Newari is really difficult, whereas I find translating from Nepali to be easier.



When will your work be done?
I’m thinking in about two years’ time when I reach bura janko at 77 years, 7 months, 7 days, 7 hours, and 7 minutes. So I must work very hard, if I can, until I am 77.

nepalitimes.com

Review of Kesar Lall's collection of poems, Ageless wonder, #322

OYSTER PERPETUAL DATEJUST

SULUX CENTRE
Woodland Hotel Complex, Durbar Marg
Kathmandu, Nepal

ROLEX

See Beyond the Usual

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION
OFFICIAL PARTNER

WIN A FREE TRIP TO SEE US PLAY IN ENGLAND

IMAGING INNOVATION

Buy an Epson product for a chance to win a free trip to watch Manchester United play from the prestigious Centennial Suite at Old Trafford, England!

All you need to do is register your Epson product within 14 days of the Date of Purchase by mailing the completed Warranty Card to: Mercantile Office Systems, #1429, Durbar Marg, P.O. Box No. 876, Kathmandu and It's Dealer outlet all over Nepal. Offer ends on 31st January, 2013. Please retain the invoice to claim the prize.

1 LUCKY WINNER

*Conditions apply.

MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.
Hitti Pokhari, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 977-1-4445920 / 4440773
Fax: 977-1-4437088, E-mail: market@mos.com.np

+ Win exclusive Man Utd merchandise like caps, T-shirts & key chains!

Kathmandu Dealers : Star Office Automation, Putalisadak : 4266820, Max International, Putalisadak : 4415786, Interactive Computer System, New Road : 4227854, The Waves Group, Lazimpat : 4410423, Click Solution center, Lalitpur : 5536649, Flash International, New Road : 4222384

Outside Kathmandu Dealers : Quality Computer, Birtamode : 023-540150, Birat Infotech, Biratnagar : 021-538729, 9852027264, Megatech, Biratnagar : 021-532000, Gagan Enterprises, Birgunj : 9855022388, Advance Computer, Banepa : 9851081595, Hi-Tech Trade Concern, Chitwan : 051-571564, Himalayan Office Automation, Pokhara : 061-525300, Computer Service Center, Butwal : 071-542699/675, Smart Link Dang : 082-561022, Dinesh Trading House, Nepalgunj : 081-527092, Manokamana Hitech, Nepalgunj : 081-521473, Ugratara Trading House, Dhangadhi : 091-523601, Dinesh Computer, Dhangadhi : 091-521392, Ugratara Technical Goods, Mahendra Nagar : 099-523872, Lahan Office Automation, Lahan : 033-561205, Rapti Computer Suppliers, Dang, Tulsipur : 082-562375, R. S. Enterprises, Janakpur : 041-525565



EVENTS

BAL UTSAV, if you're running out of ideas to help your kids spend their winter vacations, let them take part in this international talent hunt for children aged 8 to 18. 9 to 20 January, Art of Living Centre, New Banewor, 9803039750/9808675895

B-boying competition, shake and brake, and do whatever it takes to win cash prizes up to Rs 50,000. 26 January, 10.45am, Dasrath Stadium, 984925612/9849685110/9841721736



STOP MOTION ANIMATION WORKSHOP, learn how to make your own animated films by designing and creating characters and backgrounds, storyboarding, capturing images using cameras and latest computer software, and compiling and editing them. 12 and 13 January, 11am to 4pm shreyans@sattya.org

Cultural Rejuvenation, an exhibition of artist Deeya Bajracharya's work. Runs till 11 January, 10am to 5pm, Nepal Art Council, Babarmahal

Bharatanatyam, witness the finest of South Asian theatre as Santanu Chakraborty dances to the beats of Carnatic music in the role of Siva. Rs 500, 13 January, 7pm, Indigo Gallery, Naxal, Limited seating (01)4413580/9851072333/9851097740 for bookings

Appreciative inquiry, learn how ordinary Nepalis can contribute towards building a bustling economy with management guru Ravi Shrestha. 11 January, 10am to 1pm, Mahabir's Centre for Nepal Connection



FILM COMPETITION, make a short, attractive, and appealing film on the themes of 'wealth creation' and/or 'economic development' and win prizes up to Rs 165,000. 25 January, 9851015260

Techkriti, Robotics Association of Nepal invites you to pitch your ideas for a chance to participate at the Autonomous Robotics Challenge organised by IIT Kanpur, India. 12 January, 9am, Local Development Training Academy, Jawalakhel

Video editing workshop, explore ideas and techniques to make your own independent movies. 12 to 24 January, Artudio, call (01)4002037/9841379780 for reservations

MUSIC

Live at Cafe 32, live music and delicious food every Friday. 6pm onwards, Cafe 32, Battisputali, (01)4244231



KHATRA FEST, party with the bands Jugaa, Horny Monks, Wakk Thuu, and Guillotine. Rs 200, 13 January, 4pm, Funny Monkey Restaurant and Bar, Thamel

Jindabaad live, the self-professed art-rock band Jindabaad will perform live, aided by Japanese group Overload on the light-show. Rs 200, 13 January, 6pm, Purple Haze Pub, 9841386652/9802013960

Shastriya Sangeet, dabble in the magic of Hindustani classical music every new moon night. 11 January, 3.30pm, Ram Mandir, Battisputali

DINING



NO NAME RESTAURANT, friendly ambience with palatable dishes, try its delicious momochas. Putalisadak

Kotetsu, authentic Japanese dishes that cater to your needs and taste buds. Lajimpat

Cafe Du Temple, famous for its delicious food, warm ambience, and a beautiful roof top view. Patan Darbar Square, (01)5527127

Falcha, give yourself away to the twin pleasures of lemon jeera chicken and mutton handi kabab. Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur

Sarangkot Fordays Restaurant, have a Sarangkot special breakfast while enjoying spectacular views of the mountain ranges. Sarangkot, Pokhara, (061)696920, 9817136896



MIKE'S BREAKFAST, huge breakfasts and an endless supply of coffee amidst a lush garden setting characterise this cafe, popular among tourists and locals alike. Naxal, (01)4424303

Yin Yang Restaurant, east meets west as you choose from a variety of Thai and continental dishes. Add a little spice to your life with the pad thai or green curry. If you can't handle the heat, fall into the safety net of its western dishes. Thamel, 10am to 10pm, (01)4701510



DRAGON CHINESE RESTAURANT, try the Kung Pao Pork if alone and the Mai Cao if with company. Lakeside, Pokhara

Shangrila Kitchen, try the majestic Gyakok and a wide variety of cocktails. 9 am to 10.30 pm, Hotel Tibet International, Boudha

Boudha Stupa Restaurant and Cafe, bide your time with free wi-fi as you enjoy wood-fired pizzas, home-made pastas, and the Tibetan gyakok. Boudha, (01)4485585

Tass and Tawa, savour a wide variety of Nepali meat dishes and reserve your palate for the heavenly Chusta. Pulchowk, Kathmandu

Magic Beans, coffee, cakes, and sandwiches with magical touch and taste. Sherpa Mall, Darbar Marg, (01)4230914

FREE WI-FI ZONE
Visa & Master card accepted

Way to Boudha Stupa
Sanskrit International College
Subarna Bank
Lainchaur

ALICE
RESTAURANT

Subarna Shamsher Marg,
Gairidhara, Kathmandu
Tel: 01-4429207
alicegairidhara@gmail.com

HITS FM MUSIC AWARDS 2069

CATCH US
LIVE on
HITS FM 91.2
NEPAL TELEVISION
www.hitsfm.com.np

Friday
18th January, 2013
3:00 PM

Co-sponsor

Indexfurniture

Associate Sponsors

PHILIPS

acer
notebooks

EPSON
PRINTERS PROJECTORS

Janata Bank Nepal Ltd.
जनता बैंक नेपाल लिमिटेड
तपाईंसँगै छ, सधैं...

GETAWAYS

Mango Tree Lodge, culture walks, rafting in the Karnali, wildlife exploration, and jungle safari at the Bardia National Park. *Bhetani, Bardia, info@mangotreelodge.com*



HIMALAYAN WELLNESS CENTRE, a one-stop centre for a relaxed mind and a healthy body inside the Park Village Hotel. *Budhanilkantha, open all week, 9801066661 www.himalayanwellness.com.np*

Mum's Garden Resort, head out to Pokhara for a peaceful and comfortable stay in beautifully designed cottages surrounded by a lush green garden with great views of Phewa Lake and the Annapurna range. *Lake Side, Pokhara, (061)463468, www.mumsgardenresort.com*

Stroke of genius

The two decades from the 1960s to the 1980s was a time when Nepali artists experimented with 'modernism'. Many artists who studied in India and elsewhere came back and lead the revolution and became vanguards of modern art in the country. Park Gallery invites art enthusiasts to a special exhibition to reexamine and reevaluate the works that helped shape modern art in Nepal. The exhibition will also feature works of later artists to reassess the progress made in the later years.

Discussion with Saroj Bajracharya on 13 January, exhibition runs until 31 January Park Gallery, (01)5522307, www.parkgallery.com.np, free entry



Degaa
Kumari pati, Lalitpur | 5008679



Yeah!!! You will love it.....



New Road Gate, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-2296915, 4232965, Fax: 01-4233511, Email: info@barahajewellery.com
Contact Offices:
Pipal Bot: New Road, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-2190004, 4266799 Dharan: Bhanuchowk, Mahendrapath, Tel: 025-526777, 520056, Fax: 025-522412
Pokhara: Sabha Griha Chowk, Pokhara, Tel: 061-206570 U.K.: Aldershot, London, Tel: 0044-7824332127, 1252409272 Hong Kong: 12/F Gofuku Tower 62-64, Woosung Street, Jordan KLN, HONG KONG, Tel: 00852-27838955, Fax: 00852-25538966

ASTREK CLIMBING WALL

"A SPORT WHICH HOLDS NO AGE BAR"

FACILITIES

- Wallclimbing
- Bouldering
- Training
- Food & Drinks

www.facebook.com/astrek.climbing

Astrek Climbing Wall, Club House, P.O.BOX: 3022 Bhagawan Bahal, Thamel, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: +977 - 1- 4419265
Email: info@astrekclimbingwall.com
Web: www.astrekclimbingwall.com

Map showing location near Hotel Malla, GAA Hall, The North Face, Himalayan Bank, Lazimpat, Royal Palace, Garden of Dreams, and Thamel Chowk.

RUSLAN 100% PURE MUSIC

SOMEPLACE ELSE

I am a non-apologetic meat lover and immune to proselytising by avid vegetarians. I will probably pay the price for my meat loving ways in the future, but pleasures in the now are worth every bit of pain that may follow. But if you can convince me that the food is good regardless of whether there is meat in the menu or not, I will give it a try. And it is this belief that brought me to Yeok Teck, a Malaysian Chinese vegetarian restaurant in Bhanimandal.

The decor is plain, uninspiring, and dark, not the most conducive dining experience specially in the long winter months. The menu is brightly printed and there are photographs of the dishes to help you make your decisions easier. The most intriguing part of the menu is the variety of



PICS: RUBY TUESDAY



'mock meat' dishes on offer. Mock meat, also called meat analogue, faux meat, or imitation meat, tries to replicate the appearance, flavour, and texture of meat and is usually made out of soy and/or wheat gluten. It is said to be the go-to choice for vegetarians, vegans,

and those seeking to curtail their meat eating ways. 'Guise meat' is believed to have first been developed by Buddhist monks to encourage new converts to stick with vegetarianism and to help them feel like they

weren't missing out. The folks at Yeok Teck have created an assortment of dishes ranging from chic to fis to pra (spelt exactly like that on the menu in the misguided ploy that incorrect/ abbreviated spellings will convince the eater that it is completely vegetarian and thus kosher).

YEOK TECK



stick to the real stuff. So will I go back to Yeok Teck? Actually yes. I will abstain from all forms of mock anything, but the actual vegetable dishes are nice and reasonable. They have good jasmine

tea. And there is no rush so you can sit and have three hour long conversations fueled by cups of tea and the owners won't mind.

On a parting note, as the Bard correctly said:

"O beware of jealousy! It is the green-eyed monster That doth mock the meat it feeds upon."

If you want to be vegetarian, that is your prerogative, stick to vegetables and leave the meat eating to us sinners. And please don't mock the meat because that is truly sacrilegious. Ruby Tuesday

How to get there: In Ekantakuna, walk down to Bhanimandal and Yeok Teck is across the road from the large basketball court. (01)5548930

Join The V Generation

RUSLAN VODKA

100% Pure Vodka

Drink responsibly



FLIGHT

MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

It's been a while since I've seen a film that has managed to mix in more than a few genres and still succeed in riveting the viewers' interest. Robert Zemeckis's latest film *Flight* is one such hybrid.

Though largely listed as a drama, the film combines action, suspense, and an intense character study, all in its slightly lengthy, but still engrossing 139 minutes.

Starring Denzel Washington as airline pilot captain William 'Whip' Whitaker, the film starts off with Washington's character waking up in a hotel room next to a beautiful naked woman. The two have partied hard, that much is clear from the empty bottles lying around the room as well as the disheveled and slightly pained faces of the two occupants. When the woman, Katerina, reminds Whip that their call time is at 9 am he leans over from the bed to the side table and proceeds to inhale a line of cocaine.

When Whip and Katerina get to the plane (it is by now abundantly clear that Katerina is one of the crew - a stewardess) Whip is more than bright eyed and bushy tailed; he has the slightly manic energy of someone who is both still drunk and high. What proceeds in terrifying, but spectacular cinema.

Taking off in bad weather, the plane experiences extreme turbulence, but Whip flies the plane through without losing his cool, though arousing the suspicions of his young and slightly nervous co-pilot. Just as

the plane is nearing Atlanta, however, it goes into a sudden seemingly uncontrollable dive, losing altitude at a pace that could be fatal. I will not elaborate on what follows for words cannot always describe great cinema.

Suffice to say that Whip manages to land the plane after some eye popping manoeuvres saving almost everybody on board, but killing Katerina and another stewardess who had unbuckled themselves to assist the passengers. Whip is lauded as a hero, but subsequent investigations by the pilot's union and the NTSB (National Transportation Safety Board) uncover Whip's drinking and drug habits as well as various other indicators on board the wrecked plane that point to his intoxication.

It is Washington's nuanced and restrained performance that holds this film together. His character evolves from beginning to end with the viewer never really knowing if there will be any kind of happy ending for a man who has the makings of a hero, but is destroyed by his habits.

Many amazing actors support Washington in this film as it unfolds in a way that no one can really foretell. John Goodman plays Harling Mays, Whip's cocaine dealer, Don Cheadle plays Hugh Lang, the lawyer hired by the pilot's union to protect Whip, the luminous Kelly Reilly plays Nicole, the photographer turned cokehead with a heart of gold, and then there is the great Melissa Leo who plays a key role at the very end, a role without which the film would not have come together in the way it does.

Watch this film and marvel at the skills of writer John Gatins who has crafted a story that is both subtle and daring at the same time, one that will surprise you at every turn.

nepalitimes.com

Watch trailer



MASS POWER: CPN (Maoist) chairman, Mohan Baidya, addresses the audience gathered at Tundikhel for the party's 7th National Congress on Wednesday morning.



SARI BARRICADE: Members of Mandala theatre join the Occupy Baluwater movement on Wednesday and protest against gender violence.



ACCESSIBLE ART: Street artist Milan Rai exhibits his white butterflies representing purity and transformation in Basantapur on Saturday.



HEAVY WEIGHT: Women walk long distances to gather fodder for their livestock and carry back the heavy loads on their heads in Ballatole, Arghakhanchi district.

Testing screens

DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

Screening tests for cancer leave big dents in peoples' wallets, but they help in the early detection of diseases and give patients a better shot at a healthy life. In this piece we will look at tests available for six of the most common cancers: breast, cervix, colon, lung, ovary, and prostate.

For breast cancer, mammography (which uses low energy X-rays) is the most common method to look for abnormal tissues. Doctors recommend mammograms every two years for women over 50.

In Nepal cervical cancer screening (Pap test) is still not widely used or available and as a result cervical cancer remains the most common cause of cancer-related death in women. Screening should ideally start at 21, regardless of the age of onset of sexual activity and repeated every three years until the age of 29. After that the test can be done every five years till the age of 65. Because the human papilloma virus triggers cervical cancer, vaccination against this virus is useful, but rather expensive.

Colon cancer is caused by polys (abnormal growth in the mucosal lining of the colon). Removing the polys can prevent cancer, so colonoscopy screening is recommended at 50

and every 10 years thereafter till 75.

Out of all the tests, screening for prostate cancer is controversial to say the least. Many low risk prostate cancers are slow to grow and may outlive the patient. So what is the point of screening? Furthermore, once cancer in the prostate is detected, most people will want to do further tests and procedures which may not be risk-free.

After evaluating the risk-benefit ratio of prostate cancer screening, the US Preventive Service Task Force no longer supports the commonly used prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test which is a blood test. They suggest the digital (finger) rectal exam instead.

For heavy smokers screening for lung cancer with chest X-rays or sputum exam is not worthwhile, but the low-dose CT (LDCT) of the chest is a good alternative. Of course, giving up smoking would be the best way to avoid this leading cause of death.

For ovarian cancer, no screening appears to be beneficial for women with average-risk, keeping in mind the risk-benefit ratio.

For patients with special risks (for example, patients with a family history of ovarian cancer, colon cancer etc), the recommendations discussed above for all the different cancers may not apply.



WEEKEND WEATHER

The cold blast that is freezing northern India is caused by the wind direction coming in from the west and north-west over the Hindu Kush instead of the usual south-west. The slight shift in the jet stream has also meant that the moisture-carrying frontal system has been waylaid. Kathmandu Valley is now going into drought conditions and into its fourth month without rain. There is still hope: winter monsoons sometimes fall in mid-January. But there is no sign of that yet. Expect the cold spell to ease a bit with some spotty high cloud cover on Friday. Minima will 'rise' to zero.



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
16° 0°	18° 0°	19° 1°

Republic of bananas

The unending transition, lack of elections, and impunity are turning us into an international laughing stock



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

As the Kathmandu-centric media's obsession with the knockout tournament of political wrestling continues, the people have become even more disinterested and detached with another presidential ultimatum to the parties to form a consensus government.

All this is taking its toll on the budget and the economy. We have become an international laughing stock for having a prime minister who pardons murderers and challenging the doctrine of universal jurisdiction. Coalition members have stonewalled on the ratification of an international anti-money laundering bill, and if Nepal doesn't meet the deadline next month it will be blacklisted: a disaster for a country so dependent on remittances and tourism.

The worst harm from this fluid transition is being caused at the grassroots. Local accountability was already suffering because we've not had local elections since 1997. A year after the dissolution of the all-party mechanism, which ran local government on an ad-hoc basis since 2008, millions of taxpayers' money are being embezzled across the 75 districts. Local political leaders, bureaucrats, and village strongmen are all in cahoots to loot state funds. When this crooked arrangement breaks down, there is violence, as seen in remote Simikot which was under curfew for three days this week.

A report released on Monday by The Asia Foundation notes



GOPAL GARTAULA

that corruption at the local level has become an enduring practice which has gained general acceptance among multiple stakeholders. The report points towards 'ethical degeneracy in local politics which is inherently different from opportunistic corruption' in other sectors of the government.

The report has made a detailed analysis of the mismanagement of health and education services in 13 VDCs of six districts and (surprise, surprise) concludes that the capacity of institutions at the local level and the quality of services they provide have not improved after 13 years since the Local Self Governance Act went into effect, depriving the people of the democratic dividend.

Baburam Bishwakarma of the Centre for Investigative Journalism comes to a similar conclusion about government neglect in improving the quality of education at the local level. Government-run schools in the districts have been inflating the number of students enrolled to cash in on the state's incentive program, people up and down the line in the bureaucracy and local political parties are on the take, and everyone gets a share.

The story, published in *Shikshak* magazine this month, exposes how the Ministry of Education couldn't be bothered. The plan to improve the quality of education and ensure accountability by transferring management to local communities has backfired, with a powerful few capturing school management committees

DIFFICULT LESSONS: Government neglect in providing quality education at the local level means that communities like this one in Jhapa have to depend on their own meagre resources to educate their children.

and pocketing kickbacks from construction of school infrastructure and procurement of books and stationery.

A similar story arises in community, health, and roads. Local health posts and hospitals lack equipment, medicines, and manpower. And despite a sharp increase in government spending on health sector (no 7.5 per cent of the budget), a lot of it bankrolled by donors, people continue to die in large numbers from preventable ailments. This is happening

not just in remote areas of the country. At the Koshi Zonal Hospital located in Nepal's second-biggest city of Biratnagar, doctors conduct surgeries by candlelight because there is no diesel for generators.

The Local Self-Governance Act devolved responsibility for local development in the 1990s to elected village and district councils without effectively giving them decision-making powers. And in the absence of elections, local units are now plagued with political interference and malfeasance. This has resulted in a breakdown in Nepal's much-vaunted progress at local development through community action.

The story is repeated across the whole spectrum of rural governance because of the criminalisation of local politics: rackets involving fake citizenship papers, logging inside community forests, and national parks, illegal sand-mining from the rivers, and the embezzlement of old age pension funds and the budget set aside for youth self-employment.

Investigative reports in the media about these crimes fail to force the government to act, confirming that corruption and impunity have gained general acceptance. The central government, obsessed with extending its tenure, seems past caring. Political corruption is tolerated because that is the only way the government can survive.

It has become fashionable for our leaders to blame everything on the transition and propose that people must be willing to sacrifice for the sake of the 'peace process' and 'revolutionary changes'. But an unending transition and lack of elections cannot be an excuse to turn the country into a banana republic.

For local governance to succeed in Nepal, we need greater devolution of power from the centre with a system of horizontal accountability. Going into a federal system of governance may address that to some extent, but it could also open a whole new can of worms unless local elections throw up responsible leaders. 🇳🇵

COME VISIT US @ OUR NEWLY RENOVATED SHOW ROOM

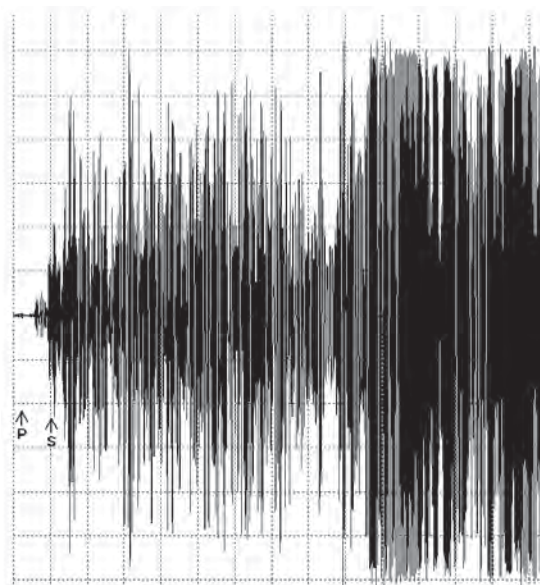
Please feel free to enter the world of furnishing...

New Madan Furnishers Pvt. Ltd.
Sahid Sukra Marg, Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 5523236, 5520318, Email: nmfpvtltd@yahoo.com

"Every single paisa you pay in buying briquette, contributes in our livelihood."

A joint initiative of Nepal Forum of Environmental Journalists (NEFEJ) and Himalayan Naturals to promote clean energy, green economy and community production.

Thinking the



It's that time of the year again, as Nepal gears up to mark another anniversary of the devastating 8.4 magnitude earthquake that struck Kathmandu at 2:30 pm on 15 January 1934, and killed at least 10,000 people.

As in previous years, government ministers will give speeches all next week and light lamps at disaster preparedness workshops. But the consequences of an earthquake of similar strength to the one nearly 80 years ago in 1934 are so unthinkable that no one seems to know where to start.

The public is aware of what an earthquake can do, but few are building seismic-resistant homes, retrofitting weak structures, or planning for the aftermath of a disaster. Historical records show that a big earthquake strikes central Nepal every 70 years: the next one is due any day now.

Earthquakes cannot be predicted exactly because scientists can't tell when the tectonic stress is ready for release. However, it is certain another 8.4 magnitude earthquake will strike Kathmandu, we just don't know when. In one scenario, 60 per cent of the buildings in Kathmandu Valley will be destroyed, more than 100,000 people will be killed outright depending on the time of day, and three times that number injured.

Many of the 12 big hospitals in Kathmandu will be damaged, and there will be few open spaces left for survivors. International relief will not get through because of damaged airports and roads. Casualties will be even higher if the quake strikes during school hours.

However, awareness generation, donor pressure, and scare tactics seem to be finally shaking up the government. "There is more awareness about earthquakes and preparedness," explains Amod Dixit of the National Society for Earthquake Technology-Nepal (NSET).

Two earthquakes struck Haiti and Chile in 2010. More than 300,000 people were killed in Haiti, and fewer than 600 were killed in Chile, even though it was a much bigger earthquake, mainly because the Chileans have better preparedness and stricter building codes. "Nepal has Chile-like earthquakes in a Haiti-like environment," says Dixit, "but we can also be Chile-like if we are prepared like they were."

Despite political instability and an aversion to long-term disaster planning, the government is finally beginning to retrofit schools and hospitals, implementing building codes, planning for prevention, and disaster relief.

Nepal took a big step forward in 2009 with the National Strategy for Disaster Risk Management. A new National



The only thing worse than a future mega-earthquake in Kathmandu will be its aftermath

Disaster Management Authority will be formed, and the National Planning Commission will integrate climate change and disaster reduction risk management into its development strategy.

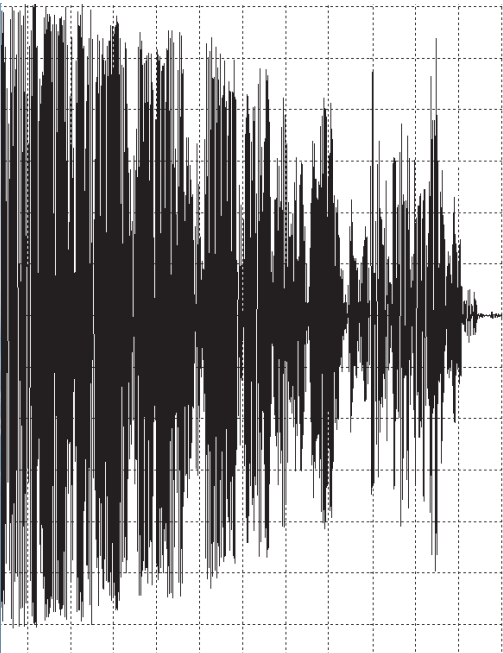
The government along with international partners has also formed the National Risk Reduction Consortium (NRRC) to prepare for future disasters, including earthquakes with school and hospital retrofitting on top of the priority list. The consortium includes the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Red Cross, UNDP, World Bank, AusAid, DFID, the

EU, Japan, the US Embassy, and WHO.

Pradip Koirala of the Disaster Management Section at the Ministry of Home Affairs says work has been done, but there is much left to do: "We have identified 83 open spaces for evacuation in Kathmandu Valley, emergency water supply, and sanitation."

Kathmandu is ranked number one in the top 10 cities around the world where a catastrophic earthquake is imminent. But John Galetzka of the California Institute of Technology says Nepal today is better prepared after the Haiti and

unthinkable



KATHMANDU #1

Kathmandu tops the list of the 10 cities in the world most vulnerable to a catastrophic earthquake in a survey put out by the US-based GeoHazards International (www.geohaz.org)

1. Kathmandu, Nepal
2. Istanbul, Turkey
3. New Delhi, India
4. Quito, Ecuador
5. Manila, Philippines
6. Islamabad, Pakistan
7. San Salvador, El Salvador
8. Mexico City, Mexico
9. Izmir, Turkey
10. Jakarta, Indonesia

Early warning



Although earthquakes cannot be predicted with any accuracy, earthquake alarms are available that give up to half-a-minute warning of an impending earthquake by detecting the first tremors. One earthquake alarm available in specialised stores senses the P wave (compression wave, pictured in seismograph

above) that first radiates out of an earthquake. These waves travel faster than S wave (shear wave) which are more destructive. The alerts can give homes, offices, and schools up to 30 seconds to flee to safer places, but the early warning depends on how close and deep the epicenter is. To order: www.earthquakestore.com

Fit again

The Tri-Padma Vidyashram School in Lalitpur is a model for a government school that has been strengthened to withstand earthquake shocks that are magnified by Kathmandu's alluvial soil. Tri-Padma's old masonry structures have been retrofitted with concrete beams and columns, and the walls strengthened with steel rods. The school also conducts regular drills so children and teachers are prepared when the real one hits. The students then take that awareness to their homes and alert other family members. Retrofitted buildings like the Balkumari School (pictured below) aren't just safer, they can also serve as shelters in the aftermath of an earthquake.




Japan quakes. "Remember that the UN mission in Haiti suffered, and they don't want that to happen again in Nepal," Galetzka explained, "they also know they will have to step in for relief and rehabilitation after a future disaster."

Foreign embassies and donor agencies have their own post-earthquake evacuation plans, they coordinate relief strategies for citizens, and conduct regular drills. Foreign earthquake experts have tried to convince Nepali authorities that spending a dollar on prevention and preparedness will save hundreds of

dollars in post-disaster relief. But until recently, no one was listening. Man B Thapa, manager of UNDP's Comprehensive Disaster Risk Management Program, says: "If you understand the value of preparedness you can reduce risk, so a school built without proper safeguards is not a good investment." Because the task is so overwhelming, it has been difficult to figure out where to start. The government has decided that schools and hospitals are the most urgent, and has undertaken an ambitious retrofitting campaign with donor support

(see box). The Kashmir and Sichuan earthquakes in the last 10 years were wake-up calls because of the thousands of children who died under collapsed classrooms. Most schools in Nepal are private and housed in buildings not designed as schools. Says NSET's Dixit: "If we were a rich country we'd demolish them all and build stronger schools. But we're not." NSET is working with the government to retrofit 50 schools every year in Kathmandu Valley to make them seismic resistant, and 300 schools will be

strengthened in the next four years. The UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction inspected every school in Kathmandu Valley last year and the overall target in the near future will be to retrofit nearly 1,000 additional school buildings. Retrofitting schools is important because besides helping to save lives, the buildings themselves can serve as shelters in the aftermath of a future earthquake. 

YES and NO

Editorials published in two Nepali newspapers on Monday for and against Col Kumar Lama’s arrest in the UK this week.



BIKRAM RAI

Punish Lama

Editorial, *Kantipur*, 7 January

कान्तिपुर

The arrests of Colonel Kumar Lama in the UK and the murderers of journalist Dekendra Thapa in Dailekh are positive steps forward in addressing the human rights violations during the conflict. The arrests of Colonel Lama in UK and the five convicts in Nepal have reminded us of the commitments made after the Comprehensive Peace Accord and the urgent need to form a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and a strong mechanism to ensure justice for the victims. Had the commission and mechanisms been put in place in time, it could have helped address rampant impunity.

The arrest of the five convicts in Dailekh comes eight years after Thapa’s torture and murder, so it doesn’t exactly call for celebration. It is unfortunate that the victim’s family had to wait for so long and also reflects the challenges in bringing war criminals to justice. It is about time the government and the political parties started acting on behalf of hundreds of Nepalis seeking justice and bringing the culprits to book.

While the arrest of Thapa’s murderers has been welcomed by all, there is news about the CPN-Maoists threatening the police and journalists about the arrest of its party workers accused of Thapa’s murder. The parties need to refrain from providing political protection to suspects in war crimes. It is unfortunate that the government is still not sensitive towards the formation of TRC even seven years after the signing of the peace accord. The government needs to take stern action against all those convicted and accused of human rights violation and provide victims the long overdue justice.



Release Lama

Editorial, *Annapurna Post*, 7 January

अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट

The arrest of Nepal Army Colonel Kumar Lama in the UK is a matter of deep concern for Nepal because it stands against the principles of international law and sovereign jurisdiction of a nation state. Lama was detained under section 134 of UK’s Criminal Justice Act 1988, which allows the Metropolitan Police there to arrest individuals suspected of overseas war crimes, torture, and human rights abuses.

However the Nepal government wasn’t informed prior to the arrest, making it completely wrong of the British government to arrest Lama. This is a blatant interference by the British government in Nepal’s internal affairs and an attack on our sovereignty. Political parties and the people of Nepal regard this issue very seriously, and demand that Lama be released forthwith. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has also submitted a strong protest note to the British government demanding the same.

Nepalis are still healing from the wounds of the decade-long conflict. Although the political parties have reached a consensus on principles to ensure justice to war victims, it has yet to be implemented. Our peace process might be moving ahead slowly, but at least it hasn’t derailed. It is clear that the British government, taking advantage of Nepal’s fragile political transition, made haste to arrest Lama.

There have been cases of impunity, but that doesn’t give the British government the right or the authority to arrest a serving Nepali military officer. The victims on both sides of Nepal’s conflict have been demanding justice for the violation of human rights during the war, and Lama’s arrest and trial in UK has now created a difficult environment to address such cases.

Submitting a protest note to the British government isn’t enough, the Nepal government needs to put strong diplomatic pressure at the highest levels to bring about Lama’s release immediately. The government also needs to take the initiative to let the British government know that what it has done isn’t acceptable to Nepal and Nepalis. The government also needs to commit to providing justice for all war crimes and punish Lama in Nepal if and when he is proven guilty.

Heavy burden

Menukala Rai, *Naya Patrika*, 7 January

नयाँ पत्रिका

When schools in Solukhumbu shut down in winter due to the cold, students skip their vacation and earn money as porters. Boys aged 10 to 14, most of whom are from Jubing, form a human ferry and carry loads from their own village to the district headquarters in Salleri.

But it is not an occupation of choice. 14-year-old Jasbir Rai from Jubing says he is compelled to do this if he wants to study. “I will minimise spending and save money so that I can buy copybooks. With the rest, I plan to buy some boots.”



It takes them three to four days to make the journey up from Salleri to Jubing. Jasbir says he carries 50 kg at one go and receives Rs 130 for it per day. For these paltry earnings, students studying from grades four to seven ply on trading routes to ease the burden on their families.

Keshab Rai says, “My parents don’t have a job, nor do they have any sort of earnings. So it is up to me to make some money for buying essentials.” Likewise, his friend and fellow villager Jiwan Khaling Rai says he will buy stationery and clothes with his savings and give his mother the remaining money.

Although they were born into poor families, and suffer as a consequence, they also say they are proud to stand on their feet at such a young age. By cutting costs and sharing resources, they save up to Rs 15,000 after each month-long shift.

For Hira Kaji Rai, it is a different matter. His friends may have been compelled into labour due to economic conditions, but Hira says he is here on his own wishes. “I saw that they earned money when I stayed at home, so I came here. I will buy some copybooks with the money I make.”



Wall: Solidarity against gender violence
Banners: Occupy Baluwatar
Plaque: PM’s residence, Baluwatar

कान्तिपुर Abin Shrestha in *Kantipur*, 9 January

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“If graft by the current government was investigated, the entire cabinet would be in jail.”

MJFN chairman Upendra Yadav in *Naya Patrika*, 7 January

NEPALI TWEETS



बबुराम कोइराला
मैले सोचेको बाबुराम हैन रहेछन यिनी मुखमा राम्राम बगलीमा छुरा चोकोका खोका आदर्शवादी तालाशाह पो रैछन, भयो बाबुराम म तिमी पक्छामा छैन अब ।

Contrary to my initial impression, Baburam has turned out to be an empty ideologue disguised as a two-faced tyrant. I am no longer on your side, Baburam.



Kalika Ghimire
डेकेन्द्रको हत्यामा सम्मानित शान्ती प्रकृया भोड्ने पड्यन्य रे । यस्तो जावो शान्ती प्रकृया त भोडिएको राम्रो !

If arresting Dekendra Thapa's killers will derail the peace process, let that worthless peace process be derailed.



माकुरो (SPIDE:R)
युवापुस्तालाई सेक्स र स्टेसले लिल्या छ, ३० का विदेशीको सेवामा, ४५ सम्मका गालि र उपदेश दिन व्यस्त, बाकिले राजनीति गरेर नेपाल एस्तो भो हो ।

Youngsters are occupied by sex and stress, 30-year-olds serve in foreign lands, the almost 45s are busy advising and admonishing others, and the rest are in politics: that's why Nepal is like this.



बेपानहायरी बन्नु
डेकेन्द्र पौडेललाई जिउदै गाइनेको मुद्दा रोक्न भनी भ्रष्ट प्रधानमन्त्रीले निर्देशन दिएका समाचार सुनेर कतौ नेपालीले निरापाको सास फेरे होलान् ?

I see Baburam as the Nepali Idi Amin. It would be good if he tried to improve himself.



Brabim Kumar
पिय बेलायत घर 'न्याय' भेम्सी रैछौं था पाइयो तर तिमी 'न्याय' कालागी विश्वयुद्ध लडेर अन्यायमा परेका हजारौं गोर्खालीको याद आइराख् म के गरे ?

Just found out dear Britain is a big lover of justice, but I am thinking about the injustice done to thousands of Gurkha soldiers who fought for your justice in the second world war.



Nrm Singh
यो देशमा यमराजले शासन गरेका छन् र हामी नरकमा छौं । र उनका दूतहरूले मान्छेलाई जिउदै गाउँछन् । #nepal

This country is ruled by the god of death, and we are in hell. And his messengers bury people alive.



paribes
कि युद्धकालका सबै घटनाको छानविन गर र अपराधीलाई कारवाही गर नत्र एक-दुई मुद्दा उठाएर ख्यास ख्यास नगर । नाटक बन्द गर ।

Investigate all cases of human rights abuse during the war and prosecute the criminals, but don't tease us with one or two cases. Stop this drama.

JOHNNIE WALKER®

KEEP WALKING™



v-chitra/JWB/2013

DRINK RESPONSIBLY
www.johnniewalker.com

THE JOHNNIE WALKER, THE STRIDING FIGURE DEVICE AND ASSOCIATED LOGOS ARE TRADE MARKS
© 2013 Johnnie Walker & Sons Limited. Global Trading Concern (P) Ltd.





Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath

Prime Minister Baburo Ram has been quick to take umbrage at the British government's detention of our Colonel and has demanded his immediate release. Unfortunately, there are no indications that the Brits are listening. It is therefore time to up the ante, and enhance our bargaining position. Not that the Ass has been asked for advice by Balu Water, but if it had, here are my 10 Brit-bashing tips for the PM:

1. Suspend diplomatic relations with the Court of St James, and if that doesn't do the trick ...
2. ... declare war on Great Britain and resume hostilities from where we left off in 1816
3. Terminate Gurkha recruitment by GB, offer Gurkhas to the Argies
4. Boycott British goods, drink only fake Red Label from Khasa
5. Nepal deployed deadly leather cannons to defeat the Angrez in 1814, restore our leather cannon assembly line in Chhauni
6. Retaliate by supporting Scotland's secession in 2014
7. Give military training to RIM
8. Suspend visa on arrival for Brits
9. Fast-track Nepal's clandestine program to enrich plutonium at a

top-secret underground facility in Gathhaghar
10. Return to London medals like the OBE and the Knights Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath conferred to our hereditary prime ministers

Businessmen are so sick and tired of extortion by the Dash Baddies that they got the FNCCI to speak up. The money was being raised to set up welcome arches and to feed and house hundreds of delegates from the districts who have congregated in Kathmandu this week to warn that they will resume murder and mayhem. So to summarise, the Dashies are forcing the Nepali people to fork out money so that they can kill them. It fell upon the FNCCI's Suraj Vaidya to say enough is enough, but only after all the extortion was over and the Dash Convention had begun. Vaidya: 0, Baidya: 1. Instead of spending all that energy on extorting the living daylights out of everyone in town, Kiran Kaka's loyalists should have forged an alliance with the royalists. They'd have gladly bankrolled him, and announced the alliance by inviting ex-Majesty Gyan Dai up on the stage at the Khula Munch on Wednesday. Mandalays and Maobaddies were always one and the same.



Even the baddest of the Baddies have bad days, but one Baddie is having it badder than the rest and that is none other than Herr Fuhrer himself who is being hounded by his own gorillas. Brother Number One has stopped going to Paris Hillock and stays within the heavily guarded confines of his Lajimpat villa. He doesn't want to face the wrath of UNMIN-disqualified Mau Mau minors who are now full-blown adults, and have gheraoed HQ to raise slogans against the chairman every time he stops by. But what really spooked PKD was BRB threatening him face-to-face at a closed door meeting that he may have to be prepared for a hastened departure into

the after life. Red Flag hasn't forgiven Lotus Flower for hatching a conspiracy to remove him when he'd flown off to Mugu last month in the company of the C-in-C. The reason Baburam needs the army brass on his side is not so much to checkmate the president, but as a deterrence against his own chairman.

The reign of His Serene Majesty Baburam Bhattarai is a déjà vu of the Panchayat years, and like the last Shah king the man seems to be his own worst enemy. Last year, he sacked the head of the government's own national television for not covering him in favourable light, and last month heads rolled in Radio Nepal when a studio guest was allowed to wax eloquent about the prime minister being in India's pocket. Then he shoots himself in the foot by opposing the investigation into the murderers of a journalist. Now, his Minister for Disinformation and Miscommunication has anointed a crony for the top job at state radio. Handing him the appointment letter, the minister who is also a self-appointed MJF Chairman, gave him a one line TOR and said: "Make me more popular than Baburam." Or words to that effect.





Panasonic

eco ideas

Enjoy cozy winters with Hot & Cold AC that's **3x** more efficient

 **FASTER HEATING**

 **UNIFORM HEATING**

UPTO
50%

LESS ENERGY CONSUMPTION

HOT & COLD

Air Conditioner

Panasonic Distributor for Nepal:
Triveni Byapar Co. Pvt. Ltd., Triveni Complex, Putalisadak, Kathmandu, Tel: 01-4248732 (ext. 541)
Alpha Trade Nepal, Tel: 9851025931 • Esquire, New Road, Tel: 01-4242727 • New Superstar, New Road, Tel: 01-4242000 • A-One Electronics, New Baneshwor - 01-4786222
Anun Electronics, Biratnagar, Tel: 9852020157 • S.L. Trading, Birgunj, Tel: 051-534221
Visit our Showrooms: • Nava Durga Departmental Store (New Baneshwor) • Triveni Complex (Putalisadak)



econ
Air-Conditioners

Toll Free No.
16600120003