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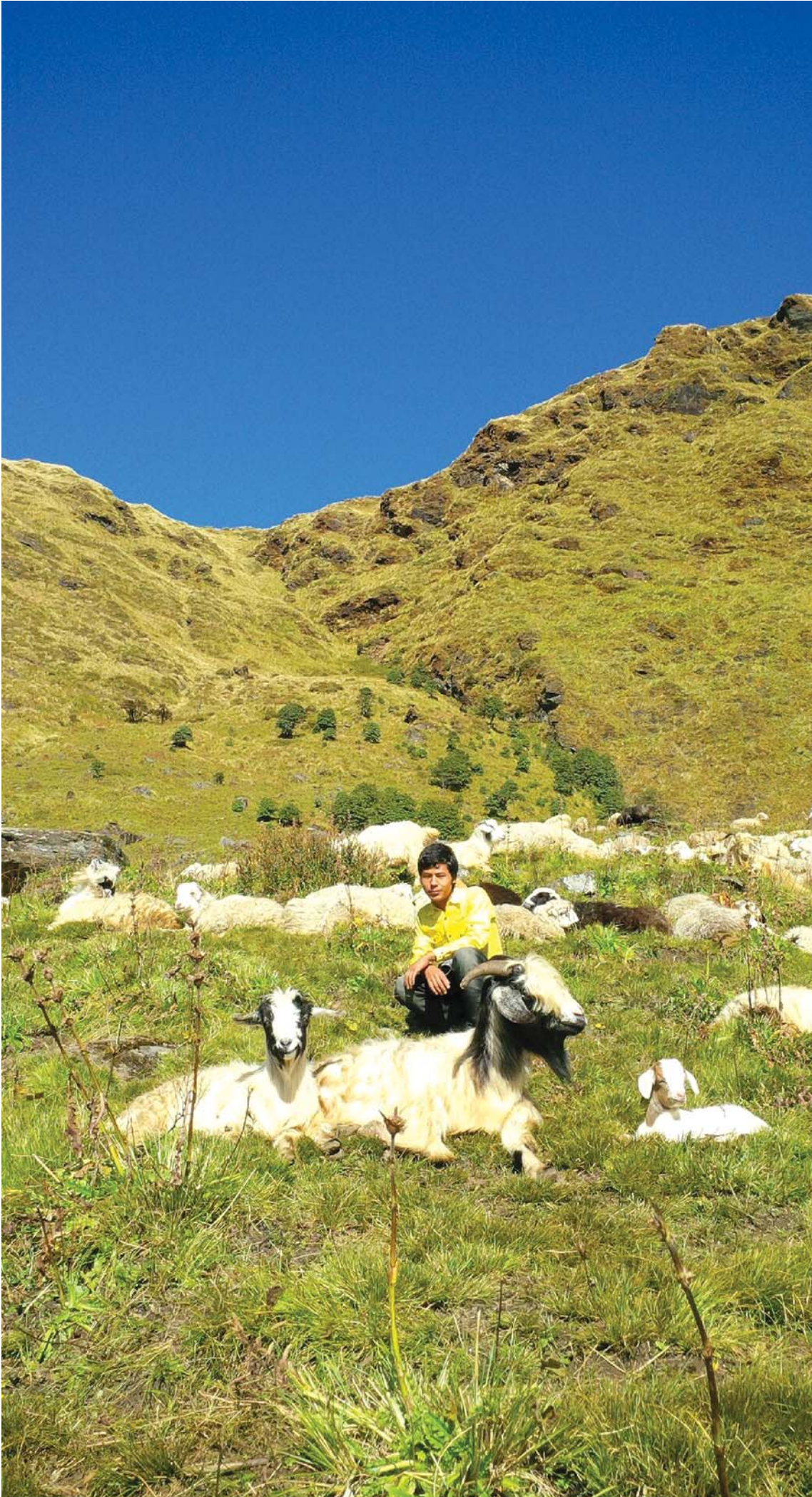
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NEW FRONTIERS

The demand for ethnicity-based federalism stems from centuries of feudal neglect, centralisation, and the domination of hill caste groups of Nepal's politics and economy. This needs to be set right. However, as the 2011 census results show, carving Nepal up with ethnic boundaries is fraught.

In the picture (left) sheep herder Umesh Lama poses with his sheeps on a high pasture on Wednesday. The ridge line above is the proposed future border

DEMOGRAPHY AND DEMOCRACY

EDITORIAL
PAGE 2

for the next four months to constitution deadline is to find a balance that doesn't leave any party aggrieved. If it looks too fragile to handle now, it may be wiser to address exclusion in other ways and leave state restructuring for later.

between the Magarat and Tamuwan provinces in Central Nepal. The challenge

POWER CUTS ARE HERE TO STAY WHY

Nepal will be dependent on imported electricity for at least another six years
BY SHYAMAL KRISHNA SHRESTHA

PAGE 4



Jazzmandu

Full preview of a week of the jazz festival you have all been waiting for

PAGE 10-11

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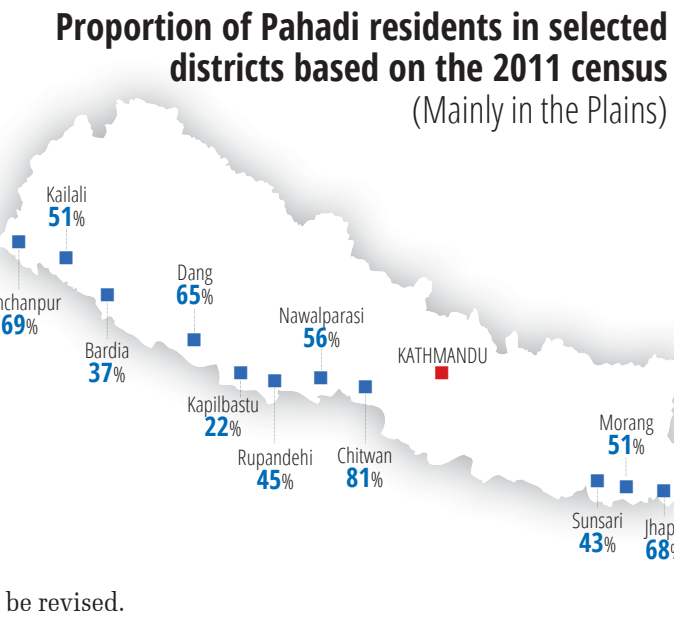
DEMOGRAPHY AND DEMOCRACY

Federalism is looking fraught, it may be wiser to address exclusion in the new constitution but leave state restructuring for later

In the political roller coaster ride we are all in, many of us haven't fully taken in the implications of the results of the 2011 census for the new constitution. Last week's Dasain holidays bore out some of its findings. Kathmandu's registered population in the census was 2,517,023, with a floating population of about 1 million which roughly corresponded with the police's estimate of the numbers that left Kathmandu for the holidays.

The main flaw of the census, as was pointed out when the results were announced last year, was that it did not count the absentee population away for more than six months. This cutoff essentially disqualified from the total the estimated 4 million Nepalis who are away at any given time. By putting Nepal's population at 28.412 million, we undercounted the total by 1.9 million according to the Census Bureau. Of these, 1.1 million were from the hills and 800,000 from the Tarai, 1.7 million were men and 200,000 women. But even the undercount is an undercount because many Nepalis working long-term in India (estimated at 2 million) were most likely excluded in 2011.

What this means is that all extrapolations on gender ratio, annual population growth rate, or the proportion of population in the Tarai are probably off by a wide margin. For instance, based on a total population calculation of 28.412 million, we concluded in this space two years ago that Nepal had defused its population bomb by bringing down the population growth rate in the past decade to 1.3 per annum. Of the missing population in the census most are men, which means females do not outnumber males as the census results, at first, seemed to infer. Also, since most of the absentee population is from the hills, the actual Tarai population in 2011 was still slightly less than the hills. If Nepal's actual population (counting migrant workers) was nearer to 32 million in 2011, then the conclusions need to



be revised.

The fertility rate does seem to have fallen. And the ongoing exodus from the midhills means that some districts have been depopulated by up to one-third compared to 10 years ago. Also, the youth bulge would be even wider if the young absentee population is counted.

These corrected census results have serious implications for the debate on federalism that has stymied constitution-writing. As Norwegian economist Magnus Hatlebakk of the Christian Michelsen Institute concludes in a recent article in the portal *setopati.com* only 14 of the 75 districts have a majority from a single ethnic group. Hatlebakk has counted Brahmins and Chhetris separately, but if one lumps them together it is clear that a majority of the districts have a hill caste majority, meaning that many of the proposed federal

provinces will not have a majority from the ethnicity they are named after.

His analysis indicates 'a clear conflict between economic viability and ethnic federalism' and that 'no hill ethnic group will have a majority in any (proposed) province'. The situation in the Madhes, which some politicians have tried to portray as a monolithic and homogenic region, is even more fragmented.

Take the 2011 census breakdown for Kathmandu Valley, which would be a part of a future Newa-Tamsaling province. Nearly half the population of Kathmandu district is composed of the Brahmin, Chhetri, Thakuri, Sanyasi combine. It is 33 per cent in Lalitpur and 35 per cent in Bhaktapur. In the Tarai districts which would be part of one of the proposed Madhes provinces, the concentration of Pahadi people is even higher: 81 per cent in Chitwan, 68 per cent in Jhapa, and 70 per cent in Kanchanpur.

The demand for ethnicity-based federalism stems from centuries of feudal neglect, centralisation, and the domination of hill caste groups of Nepal's politics and economy. This needs to be set right. However, as the census shows, carving Nepal up with new internal federal boundaries is fraught. The challenge for the next four months to constitution deadline is to find a balance that doesn't leave any party aggrieved.

If it looks too fragile to handle now, it may be wiser to address exclusion in other ways and leave state restructuring for later.

 **nepalitimes.com**

- Censoring the census, Editorial, #633
- In a state of flux, Anurag Acharya, #632

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

DEATH OF JUSTICE
A sharp and hard hitting editorial ('Death of justice', Editorial, #726).

Alan Paton

■ The three big political parties of Nepal are the worst offenders of human rights and justice. Why do we allow these criminals to continue to rule? Why do we still pin our hopes on these men who are guilty of murder, to bring us peace? There is only one thing left for us to

whom there will be no Dasain this year ('Children of war', Kunda Dixit, #726). However, I doubt that the government that let a hunger striker die will do anything for these children.

Pun

■ It's well known that children of war are the most vulnerable to psychological damage. Post traumatic disorder is common but can be treated and may get better with time. But perhaps the worst psychological effect



JAN MÖLLER HANSEN

do, only one thing we are capable of, and that is to hang our heads in shame for we couldn't protect Nanda Prasad Adhikari or his son Krishna Adhikari, and countless others who were murdered in cold blood by both the state and rebels.

Mahesh

■ Thank you *Nepali Times* for helping us remember the sorrow of Nepalis affected by the conflict for

R Rai

the war has left on these children is their loss of faith in humanity.

■ We need a war memorial for these people ('Still missing them', Deepak Gyawali, #726). At the very least a digital audio history, the membership fees to access such an archive can be put into a trust fund to help families affected by the conflict.

Namah

NEPAL'S SOFT UNDERBELLY
Ram Narain Dev is absolutely right in his statement that Madhesi should not be taken as one category ('Nepal's soft underbelly', Bihari K Shrestha, #726). While the benefit of reservation is provided at the cost of Dalits, Muslims and other marginalised tribal communities of Tarai, it is the traditionally advantaged groups like Kayastha, Tarai Brahmin, Rajput, Yadhav, Teli, who are enjoying the benefits. Same is the case in the hills too. The reservation system in Nepal is severely flawed.

Daniel

■ We are all Nepalis. Stop the division in the name of region and faith. Talk about unity, not division. Nepalis are only asking to live their lives in peace and dignity, without fear from any one. When will the leaders realise this?

Mahesh

■ The census should stop taking stock of castes and tribes and all kinds of stupidity. How about asking the education level, health status and income? Ask them what fuel or energy source they use to cook food and what mode of transportation they have?

Make a few GIS based maps on these parameters. Want a new nepal? First starting acting like the new nepal!

N

■ As a college student, I was opposed to the idea of reservation. Even though I belonged to an ethnic community, I felt I was no less capable than those from 'advantaged' groups and didn't need any special treatment. However, my views have changed over the years. I now understand that while I might

have been capable of competing with anyone, anywhere, majority of indigenous ethnics living in the rural areas of Nepal still need reservation policy to guarantee inclusiveness and progress in life.

Nepal has reserved about 11 per cent seats for adibashi janajati (indigenous ethnics) who make about one third (about 33 per cent) of population. This is clearly not enough. In terms of reservation policy, Nepal can learn a thing or two from India which has very strong reservation policy and reservation quotas proportionate to the population of different groups of people there.

Rai

THE HONOURABLE WOMAN
Is this another BBC attempt to give a more human face to Zionist "philanthropists" who keep Israel in place and thanks to whose businesses atrocities are perpetrated against Palestinians ('The Honourable Woman', Sophia Pande, #726)? Yet again now they thrive on Palestinian misery by making an "interesting spy thriller". Is there any support for what the Palestinians are going through in this miniseries, or are we to just hail the nobility, sensitivity and humanity of these civilised Zionists over and over again?

Emmy Woodhouse

CORRECTION
Due to an editing error, the caption to a picture in Happenings #726 about the funeral of UML leader Sahana Pradhan mis-identified her.

-Editors

THIS WEEK



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Most liked on Facebook
OPEN SKY: View of Annapurnas and Machapuchre from Ghandruk on a clear post-monsoon morning on Monday.



Most shared on Facebook
Still missing them by Deepak Gyawali

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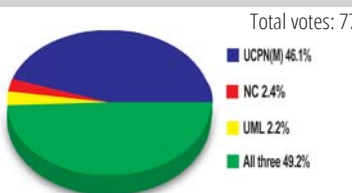
Most commented
Nepal's soft underbelly by Bihari K Shrestha

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #727

Q. Who was responsible for the death of Nanda Prasad Adhikari?



Weekly Internet Poll #728
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Do you think the formation of the HLPC will speed the constitution writing process?





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Power cuts are

SHYAMAL K SHRESTHA

One of the greatest failures of successive governments in Nepal has been the inability to generate adequate electricity to meet growing demand, and not fully opening its doors to foreign direct investment in hydropower.

Despite the signing of the project development agreement for the 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydroelectric project with the Indian company GMR last month, it is certain that the current energy crisis will continue and will restrict growth. This means the targeted 6 per cent GDP growth is not likely to be achieved in FY2015 because of a further 9 per cent drop in generation capacity due to the Bhote Kosi landslide that damaged power stations and transmission lines. This reduced the total installed capacity of 791 MW by 67 MW, against current peak demand of 1,201 MW.

Had we not imported 116 MW from India, there would have been additional power cuts. The message is quite clear: unless we get our act together on energy self-sufficiency, we will be at the mercy of external forces. The proposed addition of 628 MW to the national grid by

2017 will partially ease the energy bottleneck, but still fall short of the power needed for rapid economic growth. Because most of that power will be generated by run-of-river projects (except Kulekhani III) peak demand would still outstrip supply, making electricity imports necessary. The government's electricity demand forecast grossly underestimated demand surges due to high remittances, which had raised purchasing power and, hence, consumption.

Brace yourselves: Nepal will be dependent on imported electricity for at least another six years

Even by its dismal standards, the past five years mark the darkest chapter in the annals of Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) – the utility did not add a single new hydropower project. The last one was the 70 MW Middle Marsyangdi in 2008. Meanwhile, the 14 MW Kulekhani III, 30 MW Chameliya and 60 MW Upper Trisuli 3A which should have been operational by now have all been delayed. Policy makers should recognise the deep-



RIP: Homo economicus

KIEL – The world seems to be on the verge of another great transformation, with changes far more profound than news-grabbing economic or geopolitical headlines about Asia's economic rise or the fires in the Middle East. The coming changes will fundamentally redefine the nature of our economic interactions and the social dynamics that underlie them.

This is a transformation on the scale of the shift, more than 8,000 years ago, from nomadic hunter-gatherer societies to settled agricultural ones, which eventually led to the rise of cities. A similar transformation occurred in Europe with the Industrial Revolution. The particular characteristics of the impending transformation may involve revolutions in bio-, nano-, and digital technology, together with a social-networking revolution that eliminates geographical and cultural barriers. What is already clear, however, is that, like previous transformations, this one will involve a fundamental change in all of our economic relations.

Mainstream economics offers a straightforward analysis of and policy response to such a transformation. Whenever technological or other changes allow for people to be compensated for the benefits that they confer on one another (minus the costs), the price-based market system can adjust. When the changes create externalities, economic restructuring is required – say, adjustments in taxes and subsidies, regulatory shifts, or property-rights upgrading – to offset the costs and benefits for which the market cannot compensate. And when the changes give rise to particularly high levels of inequality, redistributive measures are needed.

This approach is based on the assumption that, if everyone is fully compensated for the net benefits that they confer on others, individuals pursuing their own self-interest will, as Adam Smith put it, be led, 'as if by an invisible hand', to serve the public interest as well. According to this view, everyone is Homo economicus: a self-interested, fully rational individualist.

But, as past great transformations demonstrate, this approach is inadequate, because it neglects the social underpinnings of market economies. In such economies, contracts tend to be honored voluntarily, not through

coercive enforcement. What makes these economies function is not a policeman protecting every shop window, but rather people's trust, fairness, and fellow-feeling to honor promises and obey the prevailing rules. Where this social glue is lacking people cannot exploit all of the available economic opportunities.

When people acquire expensive cars, designer clothing, and opulent houses, they generally seek social recognition. When couples or friends give gifts to one another or take vacations together, they perform economic transactions inspired by affiliation and care. In short, mainstream economics – and the concept of homo

economicus – recognises only half of what makes us human. We are undoubtedly motivated by self-interest. But we are also fundamentally social creatures.

This oversight is particularly crippling in view of the impending transformation, which will upend the underpinnings of contemporary society. Indeed, at present, despite unprecedented economic integration and new opportunities for cooperation, our social interactions remain atomised. The problem lies in deeply ingrained – and divisive – perceptions of identity. The world is divided into nation-states, each controlling many of the instruments of public policy. People's

social allegiances are divided further by religion, race, occupation, gender, and even income bracket. Where social barriers are sufficiently strong, economic barriers are certain to appear. These can range from protectionist trade policies and increasingly strict immigration controls to religious wars and ethnic cleansing.

Clearly, economic success vitally depends on how people perceive their social affiliations. One view is that our identities are immutable, impermeable, exogenously generated, and intrinsically opposed to one another. This classic "us versus them" dichotomy leads to sympathy for one's in-group and implacable conflict with out-groups – a bottomless source of conflict throughout history. But another view is possible: each person has multiple identities, the salience of which is shaped by one's motivations and circumstances. This idea – which is firmly rooted in neuroscience, psychology, anthropology, and sociology – implies that an individual has significant latitude in shaping his or her identities.

A growing body of scientific evidence shows that compassion, like any other skill, can be ingrained and enhanced through teaching and practice. Educational institutions can thus work to develop students' capacity for caring in tandem with their cognitive abilities. More broadly, societies everywhere should be driven by a common goal that transcends their diverse backgrounds. Resolving problems that extend across borders is a good place to start, with strategies involving specific tasks for various groups and countries to undertake that advance the greater good. Initiatives like conflict-resolution workshops, reconciliation commissions, cross-cultural education programs, and compulsory civic duty for school leavers could also help.

The mainstream view that people are wholly self-interested economic actors denies our innate capacity for reciprocity, fairness, and moral responsibility. www.project-syndicate.org

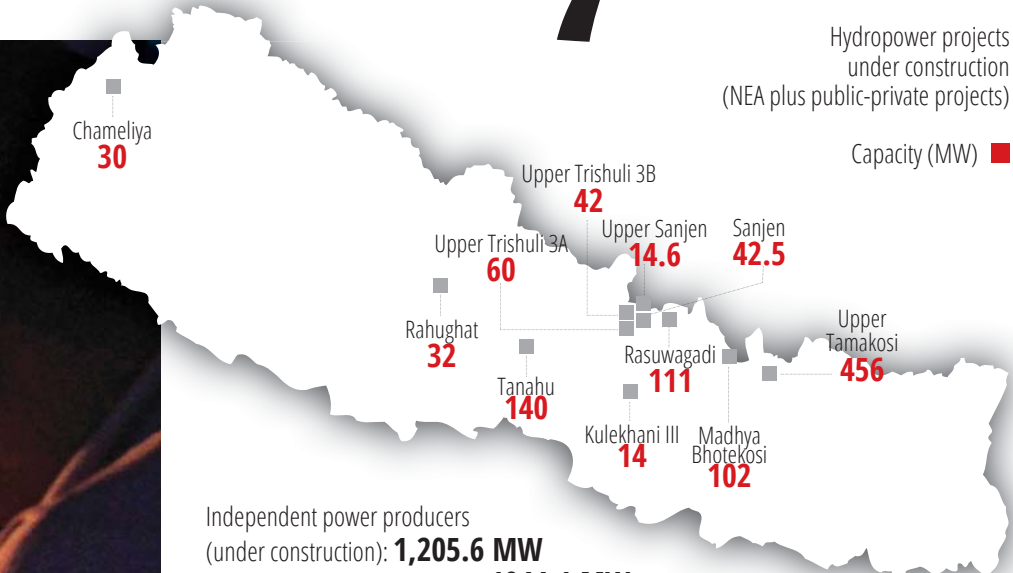
Dennis J. Snower is President of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy and Professor of Economics at the Christian-Albrechts Universität zu Kiel.



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seated 'moral hazard problem' leading to corruption that afflicts infrastructure development, and should revise various policies, especially on procurement, to ensure timely, cost-effective and quality delivery of projects. The NEA's growing losses, while blamed on slow tariff adjustment, is also due to large lump sum payments to unscrupulous contractors for inflated project costs. Reducing power leakage and electricity theft, maintaining and upgrading transmission and distribution networks, and recovering dues from willful defaulters can also restore NEA's

deteriorating financial health. Additional projects totalling 436 MW that are under construction would raise installed capacity to 1,855 MW by 2019-20, but that will barely keep pace with peak demand which is expected to rise by then to 2,052 MW. That 200 MW deficit would exist even if the proposed 140 MW Tanahu storage hydroelectric project is completed as scheduled by 2020. Nepal will therefore be dependent on imported electricity for at least another six years. A provision in the proposed Electricity Act (amendment) requires hydroelectric projects

to compulsorily allocate 10 per cent of their shares to local populations but this has not prevented politically motivated disruptions and, hence, delays. The proposed Foreign Investment and Technology and Transfer Act (amendment) identifies hydropower as a 'priority sector' but one of its clauses disallows FDI in hydroelectric projects less than 30 MW, barring capital in a highly capital intensive sector. Those thresholds can be raised once the country is self-reliant in energy.

New hydropower related legislations that liberalise transmission and distribution, but bar FDI up to 30 MW and impose conditions on investors will only discourage FDI. The experience with industrial policy instruments such as fiscal incentives in attracting FDI is not encouraging because of poor governance. As the social benefits of hydropower projects far exceed its social costs, the state should use force, if necessary, to remove local obstruction. Prior to the November 2013 Constituent Assembly elections, political party manifestos made wild promises of generating 5,000 MW within a decade and 45,000 MW in the next 40 years. For the moment, that looks like an unrealistic dream. Policy reforms and legal provisions must be undertaken and amended if we are to meet even half that amount. 🇳🇵

Shyamal Krishna Shrestha is an economist who was until recently with the World Bank Group's Investment Climate Department. @ShyamalShrestha

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Scratch and win

Springwood, a Nepali youth apparel brand, is offering Dasain-Tihar scratch cards to customers on purchase of Springwood apparels worth Rs 1,500. Customers can now win gift vouchers up to Rs 10,000.

Mirrorless cam

Samsung has launched a new range of Samsung Mirrorless Cameras – the Samsung NX Series that includes NX30, NX300 and NX3000. The NX30, NX300 and NX3000 are priced at Rs 90,000, Rs 65,000 and Rs 50,000 respectively.



Cash discount

CG MotoCorp, the authorised distributor of Suzuki 4-Wheeler, has launched the Auto Gear Shift car Celario. The company is offering a Rs 100,000 discount, and a scratch card from which customers can win an additional Rs 50,000 cash discount.



Safe roads

The Grand Finale of Honda's 'Jimmewar Chalak Ma' College Contest was held at Jyoti Bhawan on 20 September. The contest, organised by Syakar Trading, the sole authorised dealer of Honda, allowed students to come up with ideas on how to improve road safety. Team KUSOA, from Kathmandu University School of Arts, was the winner of the contest.



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Pack your gear and go

Trekking in Nepal is booming, but faces competition from a spreading road network and underpricing

ELVIN L SHRESTHA

Despite a lingering monsoon that has overstayed its welcome, the autumn tourist season is off to a flying start. September-November is a peak trekking season, seeing up to 40 per cent of annual arrivals. Autumn offers pleasant weather, clear skies and spectacular mountain views, ideal for trekking. An added attraction is that autumn also coincides with the festival season.

"We are expecting a big boom in trekking this season," says Ramesh Dhamala of the Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN). The bookings look robust, and there has been an unprecedented spurt in the number of Chinese trekkers. The increase in the number of flights to Nepal this year has also meant that last year's seat bottleneck is not as acute.

TAAN issued more than 90,000 permits for trekkers in the past year, which was a 10 per cent increase from the year before. It expects a further increase from the autumn numbers this year.

Despite growth, however, the trekking industry still has not benefited from the full potential for job creation and income generation at the local level. Hikers are still limited mainly to Annapurna, Langtang and Everest regions with other areas still only getting a trickle of trekkers. The trails in these regions are well maintained by locals because they are aware that it is related to their business, says Raj Tamang, of Responsible Adventures, an ecological trekking company. "But locals and the authorities have been lax about maintenance of trekking routes in other, less popular regions," Tamang says.



The potential for new trek routes in Nepal is unlimited, but many areas that would benefit most from trekking lack proper trails, quality lodges and other facilities. Most trekkers opt for the mainstream routes because they are well-established and there is a good support in case weather turns bad. Most other routes need expedition style camping and support, and turn out to be more expensive.

Nevertheless, in 2015 TAAN is trying to open up new trails along the Manaslu Circuit, Ganesh Himal, Rara, and alternative routes around the Annapurnas. This trend is gathering momentum because of the spread of roads and the demand from trekkers for trails that are away from pollution and honking. Construction of new roads have also triggered landslides, affecting many main trekking trails for example in the Chame area of Manang, the Kali Gandaki, Langtang and Manaslu.

"The biggest challenge now is to diversify established routes which overlap with motorable roads," says Dhamala.

The other perennial problem with trekking in Nepal has been price undercutting by agencies providing shoddy services which not only gives hiking in Nepal a bad image, but also reduces the income for porters and tea houses along the way. Trekking guides with limited experience are poaching customers from each other and compromise on services to offer the lowest price.

Tamang maintains that trekking in Nepal is underpriced, and unhealthy competition ultimately hurts the tourism economy. "The industry is too focused on wooing tourists with low prices and too indifferent towards improving their service," says Tamang, "We need to attract quality eco-tourism rather than mass tourism."

TAAN has lately started monitoring illegal and inexperienced travel agencies by implementing a system of proper registration with the Trekking Information Management System (TIMS) and issuing trekking permits. It coordinates with police checkpoints and park officers also ensure legitimate and safe trekking. 🇳🇵

www.taana.org.np
www.responsibleadventures.com

Shoes with soul

Lance Clark, a sixth generation member of the Clarks' Shoe family and its former head is coming to Nepal this week. In 2003 Clark founded the non-profit Soul of Africa which supports orphans in African countries. Soul of Africa sells shoes produced in three African countries, all profit from sales go to funding different projects of the organisation. Clark has said he hopes to start a similar venture here. *Nepali Times* spoke to Dulma Clark of Soul of Africa to know more about the planned initiative in Nepal.



Nepali Times: You come from a long line of shoemakers in the UK, where did the inspiration for the 'Soul of Africa' come from?

Dulma Clark: The Soul of Africa was launched in 2003 in South Africa after Lance visited an orphanage in the outskirts of Durban. A child there grabbed his hand and asked to help him. Since then Lance Clark has been determined to use his knowledge of shoemaking industry to change lives of people in need. Soul of Africa is a social enterprise which follows the philosophy of 'Aid Through Trade' based on concept of self-sustainable employment. All profit that Soul of Africa makes is donated to fund educational and nutritional projects for children and orphans affected by AIDS.

It has been 10 years, would you say that the idea has worked?

Our aim in making all of our shoes in Africa is to provide sustainable employment, giving Africans a greater chance to generate their income through their own skills and support their families independently. So far, it has created some 600 jobs and generated \$2 million to care for 10,000 African orphans. Today, Soul of Africa also operates in Tunisia and Ethiopia.

The most challenging part of raising money for charity through a commercial venture is sophisticated marketing.

How difficult was it to establish the theme in the market?

For the last 10 years, Soul of Africa has been successfully building its web and social media presence, increasing its online sales worldwide and raising awareness on the social issues it addresses. Our great supporter, Clarks Shoes, contributes an additional £3 for each pair of Soul of Africa branded shoes they sell through their own stores and online.

How do you ensure that the money to charity is properly used?

The Soul of Africa Company exists to raise money for the Soul of Africa Trust, registered in the UK, which funds projects to assist orphans and vulnerable children, mainly affected by the AIDS pandemic.

A strong, independent board of trustees at the Soul of Africa Trust determine how best to use the money generated from shoe sales. Lance Clark himself conducts on-site visits. The Trust works closely with reliable and well-established organisations, such as Rotary International in South Africa to find the projects to support. In Ethiopia, by selling



Soul of Africa Barefoot shoes, we are able to help vulnerable children through our support of the charity 'Beyond the Orphanage' with their primary goal of establishing safe, stable homes, and once that is achieved, working to help each child develop to their full potential and prepare for independent living as they approach adulthood.

You must have done a lot of homework before coming to Kathmandu. Is there a possibility for a 'Soul of Nepal' line of shoes too?

Our objective in Nepal is to develop a distinctive shoe style with unique identity which

MADE OF SOUL: Women at Data Rapid Sole Shoe Factory in Ethiopia make Soul of Africa Shoes (*above*). Lance Clark teaching women shoemaking in Durban, South Africa in 2003 (*below*).

is true to its Nepali origins and would be sellable on the world markets. We have been in communications with The Prince's School of Traditional Arts in the UK to help us on design and product development. The team from Alliance Nepal has also been providing us with invaluable information necessary to start the project.

Do you foresee any challenges in quality control or creating jobs in the shoe industry in Nepal?


Shoe making is very complex. It will be demanding to find reliable management to ensure quality and delivery on time. We hope that Alliance Nepal can help us to find reliable people.

If the venture did go through, how would you ensure that the recipient of funds from the sale

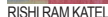
of shoes is more than a charity, and a sustainable enterprise? Do you see any possibility?

A close friend of Lance Clark, Sheron Hendry, wrote a book *Radhika's Story* based on true events that happened with a Nepali girl forced into prostitution. The book left a big impression on Lance. For a long time now, he has had a desire to bring his shoemaking project to Nepal. All the profit is planned to be allocated to an independent Nepali trust that will be set up to invest in Nepali girls and women education and rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Nepal's paubha master takes Kathmandu's traditional art to Japan

Lok Chitrakar is now used to international acclaim at various exhibitions he has been asked to put up at Harvard University or the Historical Museum of Shiga, Japan. When asked if he is proud to represent Nepal's original Buddhist art form to the international public, Chitrakar answers simply: "I'm just proud to be an artist." 

- Bring back the paubhas, #393
- The art of the gods, #669
- Nepal's biggest paubha mural, #32



Paubhas were first taken from Kathmandu Valley to Tibet in the 8th century when Bhrikuti was married to king Srong Tsen Gampo. She took paubha artists with her to Tibet, and this style later evolved into the thangka,


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10 October, 8pm onwards, House of Music, Thamel



Silence Festival,

Five international bands and eight local artists will play a lineup of rock, pop and metal music.

17 & 18 October, 12pm onwards, Bhrikuti Mandap Ground

Music Fest,

A music festival with international and Nepalis musicians and cultural presentations.

13 December, 12pm onwards, Bhrikuti Mandap Park



One night,

For the first time ever, watch Bipul Chettri perform his addictive tunes live.

11 October, 6pm onwards, Silence Street, Tangal

Jazz extravaganza,

The 12th edition of Jazzmandu festival will feature a series of jazz concerts in various venues of the valley, and masterclasses will be run by visiting artists.

16 to 22 October, 9803516450,

info@jazzmandu.org

KJ Denhart from the USA at Manny's Eatery,

17 October

Candenza Collective at Dhokaima,

21 October

GETAWAYS

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meet THE ARTISTS



KRISTIAN PERSSON ELEMENTS [Sweden]

Kristian Persson Elements cleverly merge progressive Jazz, Indie rock, Funk and Soul, to set nasty grooves that provoke uncontrollable head nods. The band is led by 24-year-old Kristian who has developed a distinctive trombone sound. After working on several projects, he is now rowing his own boat to contribute to the vibrant Swedish Jazz scene. Probably the most awaited band of Jazzmandu 2014, Kristian Persson Elements, will release their debut album this fall featuring Persson's original compositions.



KJ DENHART [USA]

Taking her roots in jazz, reggae, soul and folk, KJ Denhart has developed a music that she describes as "urban Folk-Jazz." The live performances of this autodidact are always suave, yet energetic and move you to laugh. Her silky voice and the Neo-Soul arrangements magnify her lyrics full of intelligent insight. Denhart's particular approach to jazz has made her music enjoyable for varied audiences and earned her four Independent Music Award nominations. KJ Denhart is affectionately known as the "triple threat" because she is an award-winning, one-of-a kind songwriter, guitarist and performer.

PITY CABRERA TRIO [Cuba/France]



Cuban pianist Pity Cabrera has shown his musical versatility by trying his hand in various styles like jazz, classical and traditional cuban music. Established in 2010 in Paris, Pity Cabrera has become a favourite musician amongst Europeans and is one of the most promising of his generation. With musical fluency, sensitivity and charisma, he has played at major venues and musical events in Europe.

KJC AND N.A. JAZZ ORCHESTRA [NEPAL]

The KJC-ARMY Jazz Orchestra is a recent collaboration between the Nepal Army Band and the Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory with the main purpose of promoting the big Jazz orchestra sound, something unique in Nepal. Its directors and conductors, Rajat Rai, Amul Kharki and Mariano Abello, lead this 18-piece orchestra, which plays Blues, Rock and Latin music arrangements. After only a year of training, the orchestra has had considerable success, playing for the US Embassy in Nepal and an Asian military function in South Korea. They received significant feedback and recognition for their talents and original arrangements.



JAZZ COMES HOME



EDUARDO MENDONÇA [Brazil]

Born in Salvador da Bahia, Brazil, tracing his lineage to a royal African family bearing the hereditary title of Mama Beka ("prophet of the royal court"), Eduardo Mendonça has lived for the past ten years in Seattle. A vocalist, guitarist and composer, he started his musical career with the Bakra Bata steel drum band. He then toured internationally as vocalist and percussionist with the folkloric troupe, Exaltação á Bahia before forming his own band, Show Brazil. Eduardo Mendonça has received significant recognition and many awards as an outstanding Brazilian musician.



ANGE TAKATS
[Australia]

Ange Takats makes us go back in time as she combines ragtime of the 30s and American Folk music of the 60s. The minimalist arrangements on her latest record, *Arva*, reveal her pure vocal tone. As a former foreign correspondent, her various trips have provided her with material to write enchanting lyrics.

Come Thursday 16 October, Kathmandu will once again groove to the sound of jazz. The annual music festival that has singlehandedly put Kathmandu on the world jazz map will, as in previous editions, take place at various venues in the city from 16-22 October.

Created by musician Navin Chettri in 2002, Jazzmandu is one of the most popular international events in the country. Now in its 12th year, the festival has become a part of Nepal's calendar.

"People look forward to it as much as they do Dasain," says Chettri, who is also a drummer for Cadenza, Nepal's first jazz band.

The biggest jazz party in the Himalaya has over the years brought to Nepal some big names such as Trilok Gurtu, Claudia Quintet and Rootman. In keeping with its goal to provide different flavours of jazz, the organisers have lined up a diverse collection of bands to play at this year's event from Australia, Brazil, Cuba, France, Japan, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, United States and Nepal.

www.jazzmandu.org



TROPIC GREEN
[SINGAPORE]

Tropic Green is a cosmopolitan Jazz band based in Singapore. The seven members from Cuba, Japan, Mexico, United States and Singapore unite to deliver vibrant compositions, all written by the leader, Susan Harmer. Their skillful arrangements have real depth of harmony, reflecting the tonal colours of the various instruments in the band. Lush voicing and delicate phrasing give Harmer's ballads a unique, charming quality. This band possesses that hard-to-find balance of punchy rhythmic beat matched with lyrical melody lines that make it a very listenable experience.



CADENZA COLLECTIVE
[NEPAL]

The story of Jazzmandu is closely tied to Cadenza Collective. Founded in 1992 by Navin Chettri (Jazzmandu's director), the band started experimenting with Jazz in 1998 while playing gigs around Kathmandu, breaking the mould in a city then dominated by Rock bands. As the house band at Jazz Upstairs, Kathmandu's first jazz club, the band evolved from a jam band experimenting to a mature collective of musicians who has nurtured Kathmandu's improvised-music scene. After a nine-year hiatus, Cadenza released in 2014 its 6th album, *Back to the Roots* which bridges Afrobeat and Nepali folk music.

WHERE, WHAT, WHEN



» Jazz for the next generation

The three selected finalists will perform for the crowd and the panel of judges, consisting of visiting Jazzmandu artists. The outstanding band will play at Jazz Bazaar (Gokarna Forest Resort) along with top international Jazz artists and will engage in a private workshop with Jazzmandu musicians.

16 October, 4 to 6pm, free entry
Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory (KJC), Jhamsikhel

» Groovin' at Upstairs

Cadenza and friends kick off the fest with a jam at the heart of Jazz in Nepal, Jazz Upstairs.

16 October, 7 to 9pm, Rs 450
Jazz Upstairs, Lajimpat

» Valley Jams

Different venues in Kathmandu will feature performances by the Jazzmandu artists. Take your pick and go where your favourite band will be jamming.

17 October, 7 to 9pm, Rs 500
Moksh, Jazz Upstairs, and House of Music

» Jazz Bazaar

A marathon of Jazz and traditional Nepali music.

18 October, 2.30 to 10pm, Rs 990

Gokarna Forest Resort

Free shuttle bus service from outside Hyatt Regency gate, Boudha, available every hour between 1 to 4pm.

Return shuttle bus available between 10 to 11pm, drop to Chabahil.

» Red hot Latin Jazz

A night of Latin Jazz, featuring authentic Afro-Cuban sounds of the Caribbean.

19 October, 7 to 9pm, Rs 1199
Hotel Summit, Kupondole

» Jazzmandu Master Class

The Jazzmandu master class is an opportunity for music students and jazz enthusiasts to interact with visiting musicians, share their experience and stories, and learn different instrumental techniques.

21 October, 1.30 to 3.30pm, free entry
Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory (KJC), Jhamsikhel

» Concert for school children

22 October, 11am to 12.30pm, invitations only

Alliance Francaise, Tripureswor

» Jazz at Patan

An evening of Nepali classical music fused with Jazz in a rich and soulful ambience. International musicians bring out their musical ideas and backgrounds with Nepal's top-notch classical musicians and Jazz band Cadenza.

21 October 6 to 8.30pm, Rs 1299
Dhokaima Café (Yala Maya Kendra), Patan Dhoka

» Jazzmandu Finale

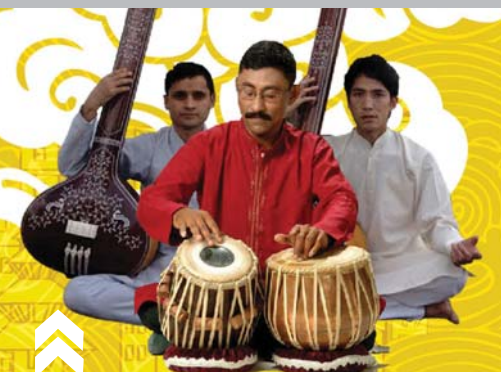
For the Finale BIG JAM, musicians from different bands play their sets and later jam together.

22 October, 5.30 to 10pm, Rs 990
(Gates open at 4.30pm and close at 8pm)
Hotel Yak & Yeti, Darbar Marg

www.jazzmandu.org

DHRUPAD CARAVAN [NEPAL]

Dhrupad is the most ancient style of Hindustani classical music where two singers sing together, Jugal Bandi style. Major tradition of Indian culture, Dhrupad has survived until today in its original form. It has a spiritual nature, seeking to induce feelings of peace and contemplation to the listener. Vishal Bhattarai and Inoue Sou have studied Dhrupad music under The Gundecha Brothers in India for six years. They began performing together in 2011. Rabin Lal Shrestha, a renowned Nepali tabla player in Nepal will be collaborating with the duo.



The Maze Runner



I admit that I walked into the theater to watch *The Maze Runner* having done very little of my homework. Before the marketing campaign for the film began I hadn't read, much less heard, of the Young Adults novel



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

(of the same name and written by James Dashner) from which the film is adapted. All I really knew was that it was the usual dystopian fantasy in line with *The Hunger Games* and *Divergent* books and films that has spawned numerous sequels and involved brave young kids fighting insidious, shady

establishments. I also knew that *The Maze Runner* had mostly boys as main characters. Imagine then my dismay when the opening scenes of the film start off with, well, boys behaving like frat boys, as Thomas (Dylan O'Brien) wakes up in "The Glade", a large grassy arena surrounded by a deadly maze and is more or less hazed by the other boys who have been there longer (some up to 3 years under equally mysterious circumstances) and struggles to remember his name. Thankfully, the film becomes a great deal more nuanced after this initial clumsy introduction, with truly memorable characters coming into light, including the chubby and quite adorable Blake Cooper as the wide-eyed vulnerable Chuck; Thomas Brodie-Sangster as Newt, a sensible young British boy who is the voice of reason throughout; Ki Hong Lee

as the quiet but deadly precise Minho, one of the few boys willing to run the maze during the day to try and map it; and Aml Ameen as Alby, the leader of the "Gladers" and the heroic boy who has been there the longest and struggled to keep everyone together. If all of this sounds a bit *Lord of the Flies* to you, you wouldn't be too far off. Certainly, this series must tip its hat to that seminal novel about how children participate in power dynamics when left on their own, often discarding any semblance of humanity. While *The Maze Runner* does vary from this premise to a certain extent (there is a larger overarching wickedness, or W.C.K.D, at work here) and successfully develops the essential adventure element that keeps the plot rolling, it really is the ensemble cast and the developing friendships that keeps the film's core strong and engaging through to it's fairly surprising climax - though of course things do not end there. Wes Ball, a first time director, is on board for the sequel *The Maze Runner: Scorch Trials* due out in September next year. Before that I might just be interested enough to have a go at reading Dashner's books - sometimes, a decent adaptation really can inspire the reading of the original source material.

nepalitimes.com
■ Trailer

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HAPPENINGS



TEA PARTY: Prime Minister Sushil Koirala welcomes UCPN(M) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal at a tea reception hosted by the Nepali Congress at the party's office in Sanepa on Tuesday.



SWING HIGH: Children line up for their turn to play on a traditional bamboo swing in Naxal on Thursday.



BRIGHT LIGHTS: A child lights a candle at the Boudhanath Stupa in Kathmandu on Saturday.



MULE TRAIN: Mules carry empty LPG cylinders back from the Annapurna Base Camp trail on Sunday.

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Nostalgic for the future

Many people know Jan Salter for her selfless activism at the Kathmandu Animal Treatment Centre (KAT) that she founded in 2004 to save the city’s stray dogs and pets. But few remember that she is also an accomplished artist.

The public saw that other side of Jan Salter in ‘A Retrospective Exhibition’ at the Nepal Art Council from 22 September to 10 October where 206 of her paintings and sketches were displayed.

“My work rescuing animals took me away from art, and this exhibition has helped to remind myself that I am an artist,” admits the 78-year-old Briton who first came to Kathmandu in the 1960s and never left.

The exhibition pieces were done from 1968 to 2014, most of them during treks around Nepal. “These pictures have remained in corners of my flat for years,” she said at the opening of the exhibition. “It’s only when seeing them displayed at the Nepal Art Council that I realise how many I have done.”

Salter had been sketching portraits from her early childhood, but it was only when she came to Nepal in 1968 that she really wanted to become an artist. “I fell in love with this melting-pot of

Jan Salter says her retrospective exhibition was to remind herself that she is an artist



STÉPHANE HUËT

faces,” she said.

Her style was refined after meeting Affandi, the Indonesian artist, in Jakarta. He had a different style from Jan’s, but she had been blown away by his work. “Affandi was the first person who told me that I had a chance as a painter,” she recalls. “He gave me confidence.”

Back in Nepal after travels in Indonesia,

Jan worked as a visual anthropologist, celebrating the diverse cultures and ethnicities of Nepal with striking portraits that first appeared in the book, *Faces of Nepal*.

Many of her first drawings were sold. “I needed money to support my Nepali son,” she recalls. “But after some time, I just found I couldn’t sell them anymore.” She considers

her pictures as her own children. “I think every artist must feel this,” she says.

Above all, it became clear to Salter that her paintings were actually a part of Nepal’s heritage. The creation of the Nepal National Ethnographic Museum by the Nepal Tourism Board became an opportunity to give an exposure to Jan’s works. The NTB is also planning to create an ethnic village in Champa Devi where 24 of Salter’s paintings will be on display.

After more than four decades painting the faces of Nepal, Jan now thinks that many Nepalis have lost the pride in their traditions. “I would like to think that my paintings could remind these people from where they are,” she hopes.

Salter also feels nostalgia for the time when Kathmandu used to be quieter, and some of her paintings look fondly at this now-unrecognisable calmness. Nonetheless, she is optimistic about Nepal’s future. “I believe the new technologies will bring people together, but I guess I won’t be there to see it,” she says.

Moreover, Salter is pleased to see that Kathmandu is becoming a vibrant place for arts. Her involvement in KAT doesn’t give her the time to follow the evolution of the art scene as much as she would like to. She adds: “I admire the work of some younger artists, and I think I have a lot to learn from the new generation.”

Stéphane Huët



PICS: RUBY TUESDAY

Food court at City Centre

When eating out with children the best place to go to are food courts- there is something there to suit everyone’s palate and you avoid whines of favouritism and sulky faces. Happy moms make for happy kids! The food court at the City Centre Mall in Kamal Pokhari houses outlets that sell food from across the world- chow mein to burgers, pastas and pizzas and

sizzles and ice cream and also food that grown ups will be happy with. The variety on offer is impressive but whether the same can be said about the food is debatable.

My son’s perennial favorite Haawaiian Pizza was the first to arrive at the table- lacking any visible sight of pineapple or ham. It came dotted instead with lurid red bits of chicken and mushroom.

On asking why, I was instead questioned whether I had actually expected pineapple on my pizza! My answer in the affirmative led to a hurried murmured conversation in the kitchen with the server returning shamefacedly to inform me that they’d run out of both ham and pineapple and that the chef hadn’t thought anybody would notice the switch. There was nothing more to be done than

eat what we’d been served- pizza a la Nepali style: ketchup tomato paste, liberal Kanchan cheese and the overwhelming taste of cumin flavoring it all.

The Indian food fared much better- warm roomali rotis with murgh korma. The chicken curry dish was luscious, rich and thick and the servings of chicken generous. The tandoor murgh is a basic tandoor grilled chicken

replete with a multitude of spices- marinated for many hours and slow cooked so each bite is satisfying and delicious. Accompanied by a praiseworthy mint chutney, onions, chillies and sliced lemon, this is a meal that is aromatic and odorous.

We ended the meal with blue berry cheese cake- its smooth uncomplicated taste was just what was needed after the heavy Indian spices. The prices at the food court vary according to the day you’re eating (weekdays vs weekends) and also the daily offers but a meal like the one above, tax and all costs about Rs 1800. Not bad at all for a sumptuous meal that left all eaters of varying ages pretty satisfied- the lack of pineapples notwithstanding.

Ruby Tuesday

How to get there: The Food Court is on the sixth floor of the City Centre Mall in Kamalpokhari.



Great Food Deserves Carlsberg

That calls for a Carlsberg

Pressure in the mountains

What governs blood pressure control mechanisms at high altitude is largely unknown. Many doctors recommend patients with high blood pressure not to travel to high altitude areas. This precaution may be unnecessary because several anecdotal evidences have shown



DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

that most people with controlled blood pressure do not face any problems when they are up in the mountains. However, there is no sufficient evidence-based study to back this up. This lack of



knowledge has often created panic in both travellers and doctors.

Take the case of a 44-year-old woman who was attempting to climb Everest. At 5000m, she complained of severe cold and cough. She had no past history of hypertension or any other medical problems. During the course of the examination, the doctors took

her blood pressure and found it to be inordinately high (180\115 mm of Hg). The patient was then asked to take a helicopter back to Kathmandu. The doctor warned her of the possible complications if she continued further. Reluctantly, the patient returned.

Her blood pressure continued to remain very high for the next few days but came back to normal without any medication. With a few additional tests, the doctors determined there was no organ (heart, kidney, eyes, and brain) damage due to her high blood pressure. (These are the organ sites which usually get affected

by long-standing blood pressure). Following this, the woman went back and successfully climbed Everest.

The above story is a common instance where doctors face dilemma regarding treatment for patients whose blood pressures shoot up at high altitudes. If a simple blood pressure study had been done in a large cohort of people travelling to high altitude, doctors could give more appropriate advice based on the study results.

This fall, the Himalaya Rescue Association (HRA) is helping to undertake a blood pressure study in the Everest region. The study will measure the change in blood pressure in a large population of trekkers as they ascend from Lukla (2800m) to Pheriche (4300m). A subset of this study population will also have ambulatory blood pressure measurements (a blood pressure cuff will be tied around their arm and a small mobile-phone like machine will take their

blood pressure at intervals and keep a record). This will ensure more accurate blood pressure reading.

Part of the same study will also examine 50 hypertensive trekkers on blood pressure medicines and record how their blood pressure responds as they ascend to high altitude. The HRA study, if carried out, will be helpful for doctors advising hypertensive patients travelling to high altitude and other groups including thousands of pilgrims who travel to high altitude religious sites.

Finally, this study will also address the question of high blood pressure and predisposition to acute mountain sickness (AMS). In all likelihood, high blood pressure does not lead to AMS. But it will be useful to have scientific evidence from our own backyard answer some of these simple but vexing questions regarding blood pressure and high altitude. It is high time. 🇳🇵

GIZMO by YANTRICK

i-Pleasing

Give it to Apple for continuing to remain the company whose product launches are nothing short of a world event. As with its predecessors, millions tuned in to watch Apple CEO Tim Cook reveal the latest iPhone models- iPhone 6 and iPhone 6 Plus, last month.

Cook called the products "the biggest advancement in the history of iPhone." A verdict on that statement will be delivered in the future. But, are these better than the previous 5C and 5S which were nothing more than stop gaps in the way of a full-blown new iPhone model? Yes.

The iPhone 6 is the more pocket-friendly of the two, both in terms of size and affordability.

Apple has traditionally stuck with iPhone screen sizes near the 4-inch mark, but the iPhone 6 breaks the mold with a 4.7-inch display. iPhones have always boasted phenomenal displays, both in terms of brightness and color

quality. The trend continues with the iPhone 6, which sports a Retina HD screen with a resolution of 1344x750 pixels which equates to screen density of 326PPI. Design-wise too, the iPhone 6 is distinguishable from earlier iPhones. At a third of an inch thick, and at a feather-light 128 grams, the iPhone 6 is a delight to hold. Its curved design and the metal back give it a nice, solid feel. The Touch ID home button remains at the bottom, and works the same as on the iPhone 5S.

The iPhone 6 ships with Apples latest iOS 8 pre-installed, with new deeper focus on extended functions like third-party keyboards, plug-ins, expanded notifications, and a new Health app, among others. Powered by a spanking new A8 processor, the iPhone 6 boasts a 25 per cent boost in speed and 50 per cent graphics boost over the iPhone 5S, which is ably backed up by 1GB of RAM. On-board storage has always been a



source of discontent in past iPhones, but while there is still no expandable memory slot, Apple has bumped up maximum storage to 128GB.

The megapixel count on both front and rear cameras remains the same as on the iPhone 5S (8 on the back, 1.2 on the front). A new 'Auto Focus' feature on camera allows for quicker and clearer snaps, and is especially useful for videos.

The App Store experience that Apple offers is still unrivalled in terms of the quality and quantity of applications, which the iPhone 6 takes full advantage of. The trade-off of a thinner, lighter phone is of course a smaller battery, which means if you are buying this phone, you might as well get a portable charger too. 🇳🇵

Yantrick's Verdict: At Rs 95,000 for the base 16GB model, iPhone 6 is definitely not cheap. But if you are an Apple-maniac, you probably wouldn't mind burying a deep hole in your pocket.

“I recommend Sensodyne for all day every day sensitivity protection.”

-Dr. Spiro Condos, dentist practicing in the US

24x7

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DANGERS OF DELAY

Post-festival, constitution writing will be a battle ground for competing personal and partisan interests

The nation may be immersed in a festival hangover, but away from the media glare the politics was churning away.

Speaker Nembang tried to drive a sense of urgency by detaining senior leaders from leaving Kathmandu, but so far the netas seem to be doing little but debating endlessly about the moral right of consensus politics.



BY THE WAY
Anurag Acharya

But they keep harping on about a timely constitution. This week, CA and Parliamentary affairs Minister Narhari Acharya told the people of Chitwan that the government will ensure constitution within stipulated time, but did not specify how that is possible given the opposition's obstruction of CA proceedings for over a month. Communication Minister Minendra Rijal delivered a similar platitude to people of Biratnagar, as did UML's KP Oli at his residence in Bhaktapur.

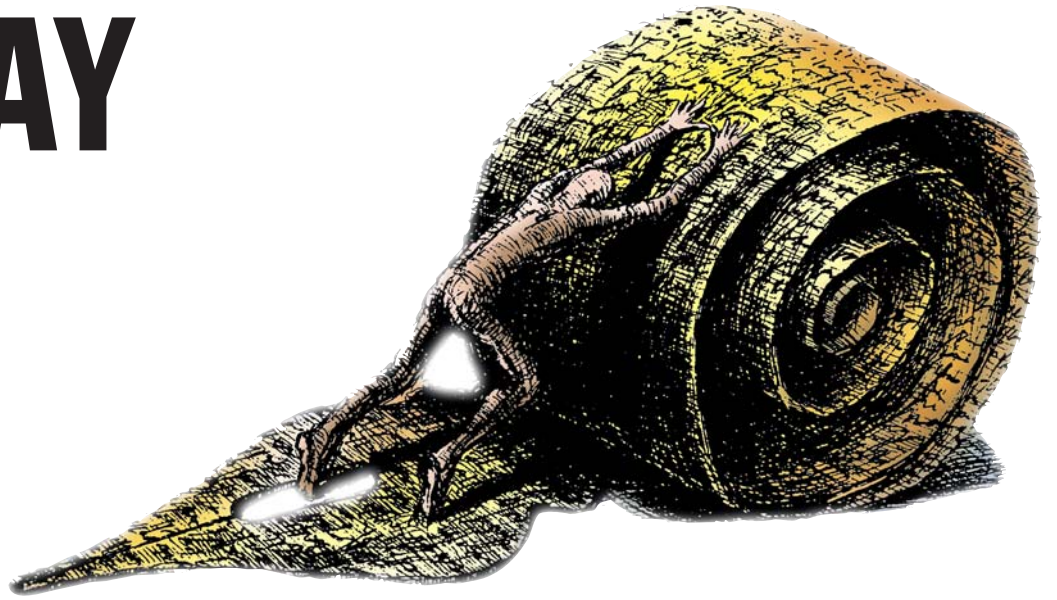
Although there has been no positive development on threshing out contentious issues, NC and UML leaders seem confident that the government will be able to table and endorse a constitution within a set deadline. This may sound encouraging

to a layperson who has no appetite for nuanced debates inside the CA, and those who just want normalcy restored to everyday life and economy. But those of us who have been covering blow by blow this political exercise since 2008 know, netas are either fooling themselves or insulting public intelligence.

In the run up to a winter showdown, the CA will become a battle ground of competing personal and partisan interests. But we should be more worried about its spillover effect on the streets.

For Pushpa Kamal Dahal and Mohan Baidya, being the silent partner to this exercise is an unattractive choice, since the erstwhile comrades are both struggling to maintain their political relevance with Baburam Bhattarai heading all negotiations inside the CA. After obstructing the parliament for over a month, Dahal finally returned to the political centre stage this week as the head of high level political mechanism. It will be interesting to see if Mohan Baidya also agrees to join the mechanism he once criticised

Similarly, Madhes-based parties who have an underhand in the bargain for state restructuring will try to make the most of their three seats in the HLPC. They will be fighting to establish their political agendas, just as they will be battling to save their own regional vote banks. And with big parties preventing their leaders from forming a cross-party caucus, janajatis inside and outside the



CA may look to take their cause to the streets.

But these are still groups willing to negotiate their terms within secular republic constitutional framework. The winter will see a rise of forces that do not seek to engage in the constitutional process at all, but are looking to intervene and disengage. The personal and political aspirations of those leading these forces are at odds with those engaged in the process inside the CA.

This week, NC's Khum Bahadur Khadka returned to his hometown Dang in the mid-west and threatened to wage war if Nepal is declared a secular republic in the new constitution. "The country will plunge into another war if the CA does not declare Nepal a Hindu state," warned Khadka. After serving his corruption sentence, Khadka returned to NC politics last year but has remained ineffective within the party. So, predictably he seems to be trying to win back his electorate by whipping up sentiments in politically and demographically sensitive Dang-Nepalgarj area.

On the eastern front, J P Gupta-led Tarai Madhes Rastriya Abhiyan has already

denounced CA as a 'slaughterhouse' and declared Madhesi lawmakers as traitors. After failing to convince ailing Jaya Krishna Goit to join his campaign, Gupta is also busy trying to woo leaders like Matrika Yadav and leaders from Limbuwan to expand his influence from Jhapa to Mahottari. Although Gupta does not have a separatist agenda like CK Raut, he insists only a political movement (presumably led by him) can help restore rights and dignity of Madhesis.

A common Hindu family of mid-west or a Madhesi from eastern Tarai may not necessarily buy into politics of a discredited Khadka or Gupta, but incapability of those charged with drafting the statute can frustrate the populace, making them cynical and flammable to any political spark.

Dasain is over and before long Tihar and Chhat will be here, after which the winter deadline for the statute drafting will be looming. If the parties don't find a way to resolve the deadlock on contentious issues of federalism and governance model soon, the approaching winter will be bitter and cold. 🇳🇵

@Anurag_Acharya

Dream come true

A Nepali returns to his homeland to fulfill his lifelong ambition

The coffee shop near the metro station was neat, clean and orderly. After all, this was Singapore.

I was sipping coffee with a young Nepali who told me of his dream of going back home to do



ON THE ROAD
Guna Raj Luitel

something good for his country. He looked around, and said he could set up a coffee shop just like this one.

Narayan Khakurel connected with me through Facebook while I was in Singapore on a journalism fellowship a few years ago. "I've had a wonderful time here," he told me, "I have learnt a lot not just about myself but also about how countries get ahead. I will take this knowledge and experience back to Nepal."

Overseas Nepalis tend to be a bit idealistic when they are away, but mostly, the fire in the belly goes out a few months after being back. I wanted to believe my new FB friend. He was committed, and sounded sincere. Still, I was skeptical.

South Asians, without



CAN I HELP YOU:
Narayan Khakurel at his Coffee Talk cafe at the Marco Polo Hotel in Kathmandu.

exception, are impressed with the progress Singapore has made. The wide and well-paved roads, the lush greenery, smooth traffic and superb urban transport set standards all urban planners aspire for. I was learning about good governance and leadership that had produced the results that have made communists and capitalists alike admire Singapore.

It all seemed a world away from the dusty, noisy, chaotic and dark streets of Kathmandu. Our politicians often promise to turn Nepal into Singapore. Krishna Prasad Bhattarai, the first prime minister after the 1990 People's Movement, was full

of optimism when he dreamed of the day when Kathmandu's streets would be washed down with water. Today, there isn't enough water even for drinking.

Narayan had tried his hand at organic farming in Nepal, but didn't succeed. He had been lured here by a vacancy ad for managers at a local KFC, which was where I met him next time. "Everyone can learn from experience if given the opportunity," he said.

"The job isn't easy," he added, between attending to customers. "But I know that if I can successfully manage a place here, I can do it anywhere in the world."

After returning to Kathmandu, I often wondered what had become of Narayan Khakurel. I tracked him down and found out that he had fulfilled his dream of establishing a café and bakery chain in Kathmandu.

It is called Coffee Talk with outlets at Marco Polo Hotel and opposite the US Embassy. Narayan has even started Coffee magazine, and trains young Nepalis in brewing and serving coffee, so that if they go abroad to study they can earn some money on the side working at a Starbucks.

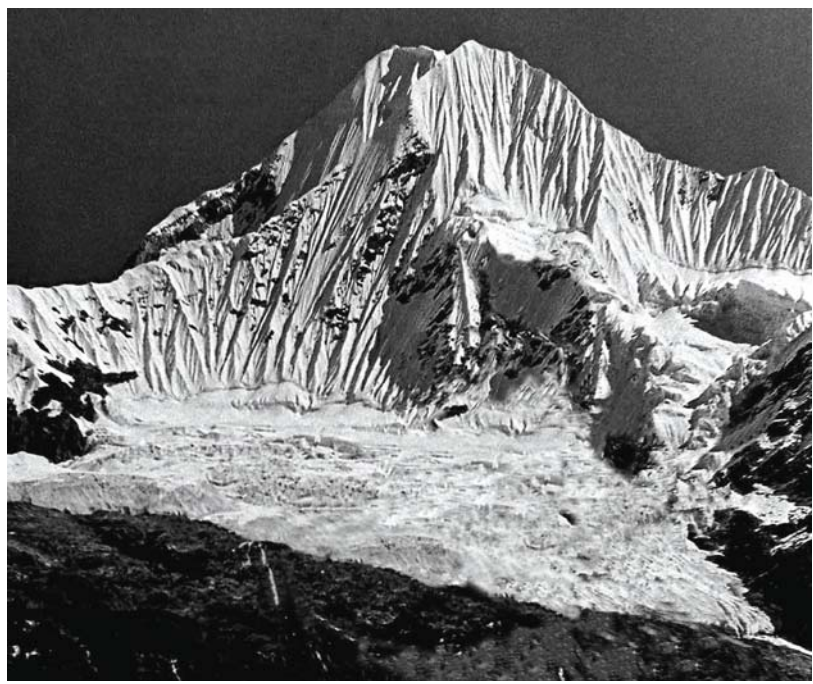
Narayan is busy and excited about the future, and although

reading newspapers makes him despondent at times, and despite all the shortages and problems, he admits being happier than when he was working abroad. "I'm on my way to the top, the best is yet to happen," Narayan says humbly.

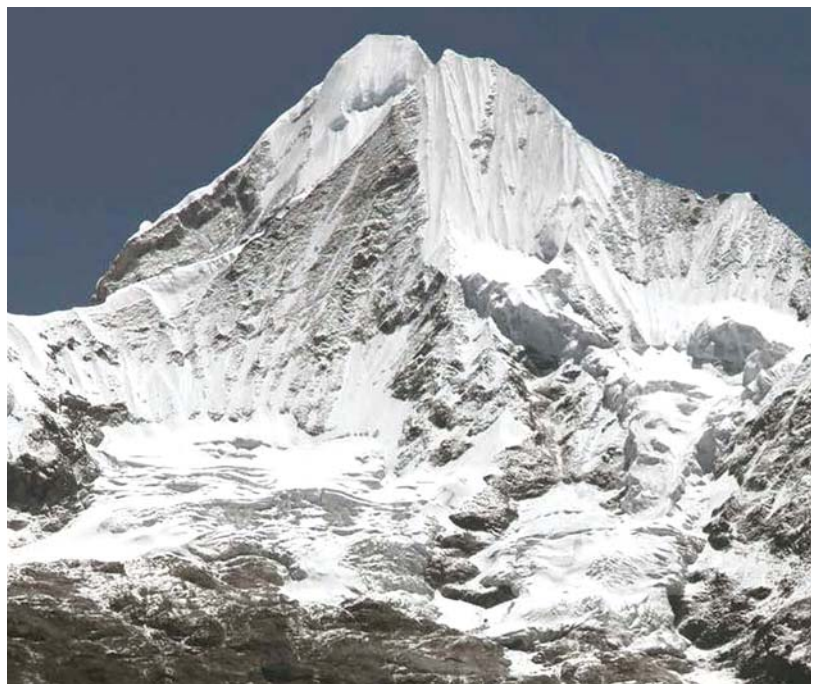
Narayan embodies a new breed of young Nepalis who have returned to the land of their birth, hoping to make a decent living with creativity and entrepreneurship. There are thousands of Narayans all over Nepal. You can tell when you get into a taxi in Kathmandu that the driver has come back from Malaysia or Qatar just because its interior is neater than other dilapidated cabs. Many have returned to start vegetable farms, or raise livestock. These are Nepali heroes who sweated it out for years in the Arabian desert, and have come back not just to earn a living but create jobs in Nepal for fellow-Nepalis.

Every time I pass Coffee Talk in Lajimpat, I stop by for a chat with Narayan. He is not the one to complain about everyday crises, instead he talks about how he has overcome them. Narayan doesn't just sit around lamenting the state of affairs, he gets things done. "*Lau na kehi garaun, dai,*" he tells me often, hoping that perhaps the politicians will listen to the media.

Every time I meet Narayan, I have the image of him sipping coffee at a café in Singapore where he first told me about his dream. A dream that he made sure came true. 🇳🇵
@gunaraj



MELTING CONE: The northwest face of Mt Chekigo (5257m) in the Rolwaling in 1975 and in 2010, showing the receding snowline caused by global warming.



ALL PICS: FRITZ BERGER

Nepal in the anthropocene

KUNDA DIXIT

Swiss photographer chronicles district transformed by human development in the last 40 years

When Fritz Berger first walked for four days from Lamosangu to get to Charikot in 1973, he was struck by the beauty of the land, its diversity, hard-working people, and its extreme poverty.

Today, 41 years later, Charikot is a boomtown with highrise hotels, shopping centres and several FM stations. Berger's photobook, *In the Shadow Gaurishankher: Dolakha from 1974-2011* which is being launched today is a labour of love. The photographer documents the district that has been transformed in the four decades he has worked there. Some of the changes are for the worse, a lot of it for the better.

It is hard for us to believe

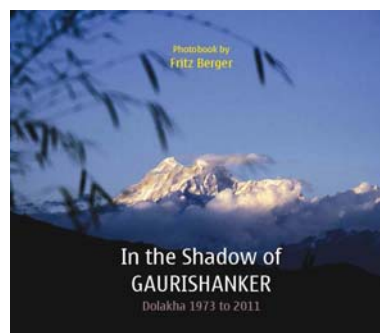
that Dolakha once used to be as remote as Dolpa is now. In 1973, the Swiss government 'adopted' these scenic mountains and tried to make it in their image by building cheese factories and planting pine. Later, they learnt from the mistakes of other projects and carefully planned Nepal's first 'green road'. They factored in job-creation during construction, literacy classes for workers, sustainable road maintenance, developing cash crops and market access, minimising landslides and social dislocation.

Berger specialises in photographs taken decades apart that show the force of change. This is time-lapse in the true sense: seeing a denuded slope above Jiri 25 years later draped in

forest, a young girl carrying a load of firewood in 1975 who is now a grandmother, a sleepy little village that grows, and grows, and grows into the small city of Charikot.

Berger's Swiss Development Cooperation was a catalyst for this change. It is a tribute to their meticulous planning that the Jiri road project left an enduring legacy, the impact of which can be seen to this day in Dolakha and districts beyond.

When he first visited the Jiri Haat Bajar in 1975, Berger was most impressed with how 'people from so many different groups could live so closely together'. This ethnic diversity is still harmonious



In the Shadow of Gaurishankher Dolakha 1973-2011
Photobook by Fritz Berger
Himal Books, 2014



ROAD SHOW:
(left to right) Charikot before the road got there in 1978, and in 1987, 1998 and 2011.





THE WAY IT WAS: The settlement of Charikot in 1973 before the road got there, with Mt Gauri Shankhar (Chomo Tseringma) and Mt Melungtse in the background.



BOYS AND GIRLS: The transformation of Dolakha was catalysed by the increasing enrollment of girls in schools. Boys on their way to school in Boch in 1974 (*left*) and in 2010 girls in unifrom head to school in Kolepa.



despite a decade of conflict, and the politics of identity that it spawned.

Berger divides his book into chapters by themes like farming, forestry, roads, and by places like Charikot, Dolakha, Jiri, Rolwaling, Nayapul, Sailung. He has interspersed it with his own musings as well as testimonials from the people he met on his first visits and with whom he has kept in touch.

The 110-km Lamosangu-Jiri Road employed 10,000 people at its height, and provided a market for potato, vegetables and dairy farms in the region. Community forests are sustainably managed by local user groups, and numerous saw mills are doing brisk business. Farmers have diversified into new cash crops like tea.

Berger is impressed by Dolakha's terrace farms as 'an

extraordinary cultural heritage' linked to a unique way of life. But with outmigration of the young male population, fields are fallow. The 2011 census showed that Dolakha had lost 32 per cent of its inhabitants in ten years. Nepal's mountains are being depopulated by migration and by falling fertility rates. The road accelerated the first trend, but the main reason for the second was an increase in

female literacy.

What is most encouraging about Berger's book on the human geography of Dolakha is how the people managed to cope with such dramatic changes. Although they suffered from the violence of the 1996-2006 conflict, there is a surprising lack of a sense of revenge as they recount the bombing of the potato research centre in Nigale, or the

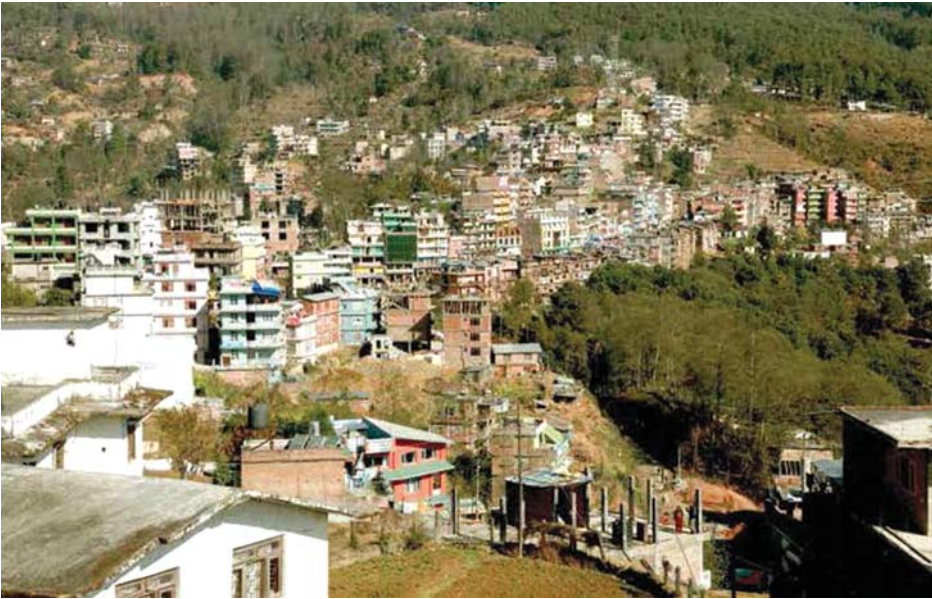
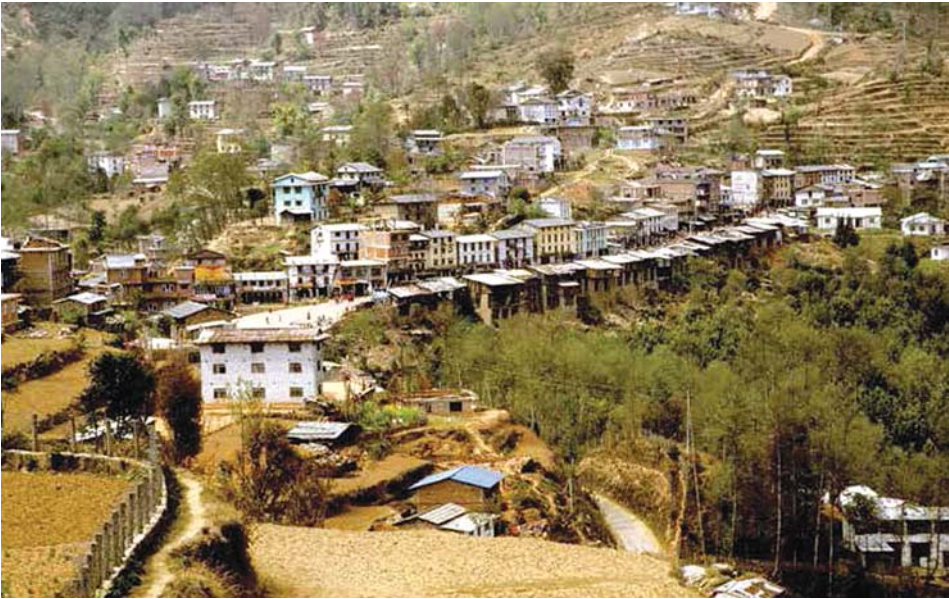
brutal execution of relatives.

Now the district is poised for a new spurt in growth with the construction of Upper Tamakosi and other hydroprojects, new roads are built. Tourism offers a huge potential as a road now makes it possible to do the Kalinchok pilgrimage in one day from Kathmandu. Environmental challenges remain, protecting high altitude forests as well as the effects of climate change which are melting the Rolwaling glaciers.

Dolakha is among the districts that has seen the most rapid changes in Nepal. And Fritz Berger's conclusion is that the people of central Nepal towns have adapted surprisingly well, and prospered. And he has pictures to prove it. 🇳🇵

 nepalitimes.com

- The way we were, Kunda Dixit's East-West blog
- Then and now, #118
- The great green road, #254



Nepali voices in Hong Kong

JB Pun, *jbpun.com*, 9 October

HONG KONG: As I went around talking to people in Central, trying to figure out why they were protesting China’s electoral policy, I noticed a large number of Hong Kong-born Nepalis were also actively taking part in the strikes. When I asked them why they were present, they told me they cared about their future and were fighting to protect it.

Earlier, in a moment of panic and misunderstanding, the Nepal

For the Nepali students taking part in the strikes, it is a question of universal suffrage. They want to make their vote count and elect a leader of their own choice. Those who were brought here when they were children are now in high schools and universities. They grew up with liberties and want to guarantee their future.

For their parents it is a question of survival. Like Hong Kong locals, they suspect China is trying to flood the Hong Kong market with cheaper and skilled labourers from the mainland and fear job loss.

Janajati Mahasangh (NAJM) in Hong Kong, 97 per cent of the 30,000 Nepalis in Hong Kong are Janajatis. It is crucial to understand that there is a distinct Janajati culture and thinking to Nepalis’ activities in Hong Kong. The Khas minority here are insignificant and they tend to follow whoever is in power.

For the last eight years, NAJM has been petitioning the NCCIHK, taking out street protests and gheraoing its office building to have a Janajati lead the NCCIHK, but it is quiet about the strikes at Central. Its chairman MB Thapa is also an active Nepali member of DAB and he has neither supported or condemned the strikes.

Then, there are also some Nepali groups in Hong Kong who have lobbied and funded for pro-ethnic causes in Nepal. When people of Hongkong take part in ‘democratic struggles’, these people are quick to label it illegal. In Nepal they consider themselves revolutionaries and opposition, but in Hong Kong they will gladly be a part of the establishment. This is reflected in the contradiction between their actions and words. They interpret sedition in Nepal as a fight for justice, while democrats here are labelled as imperialist pawns.

When students in Hong Kong protest, these Nepali leaders advise their community to not lend any support. Back in Nepal they play the victim, saying the Khas language, Hindu faith and Bahun men wiped out their language, culture, and religion.

This is why the new generation of Nepalis in Hong Kong is increasingly sceptic of them and identifies more with the youngsters in Central.



Chambers of Commerce in Hong Kong (NCCIHK) appealed to Nepalis to not take part in the strikes because it believed this would harm Nepal’s acceptance of the One China policy.

But even the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kathmandu knows very well that the strikes in Hong Kong are not a call for separation. It also knows that Nepalis residing in Hong Kong are not here under a work permit managed by the governments in Kathmandu and Beijing. Instead, thousands of Nepalis were handed residential papers under the 1988 ‘Sino-British Joint Declaration on the Question of Hong Kong’, which also gives them certain political rights until 2047.

“When representatives from Hong Kong’s local government and the Nepali businesss consulate asked Pradip Thapa of Nepalese Union Hong Kong to convince members to boycott the strikes, nobody was in favour of toeing the line,” says Adhiraj Rai, a participant in the meeting.

Thapa is a member of the pro-Beijing ruling party DAB and was handed a medal from the local government last year. Like Thapa, most Nepali leaders in Hong Kong are pro-establishment and have received similar medals. They also get funding for cultural programmes during festivals, which makes it impossible for them to support the strikes.

According to the Nepal Adivasi



Sleeve: Black markets

Demon: Price rise
“Long may you live.”

कान्तिपुर

Abin Shrestha in *Kantipur*, 6 October

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“If NC won’t agree to make Nepal a Hindu state, we will throw Koirala out of government and split the party.”

NC leader Khum Bahadur Khadka, *ratopati.com*, 9 October

PNS fan

Annapurna Post, 30 September

अन्नपूर्णपोष्ट

During its revolution the Maoists destroyed statues of Nepal’s founder king, Prithvi Narayan Shah, in many places across the country. The rebels saw King Prithvi Narayan not as a unifier, but a colonialist and feudal oppressor. Now, the leader of that party, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, is going around saying that his revolution was inspired by the same king.

“Many may think that I was inspired by Mao, Lenin and Marx, but most of all I read Prithvi Narayan Shah’s thoughts,” he said at the launch of a history book last week. Dahal said he spent most of his time after 1990 reading up on Nepal’s history in order

to prepare for the armed struggle. He said he analysed Prithvi Narayan’s political and military strategy and tried to find out what could be learnt from them.

He said history can be cruel but the road to history could be charted out. He said the Maoist party may be down, but was not out and asked that its relevance not be under-estimated. “A river meanders throughout the plains, but ultimately reaches the ocean,” Dahal said, “in the same way history can also be made to reach its destination.”

Dahal went on to credit Prithvi Narayan Shah for not just inspiring his party’s armed struggle, but also to give it up and join the peace process in 2006. “Communist movements have either survived or disintegrated,” he said, adding that he was now concentrating on preserving national unity forged by King Prithvi Narayan.

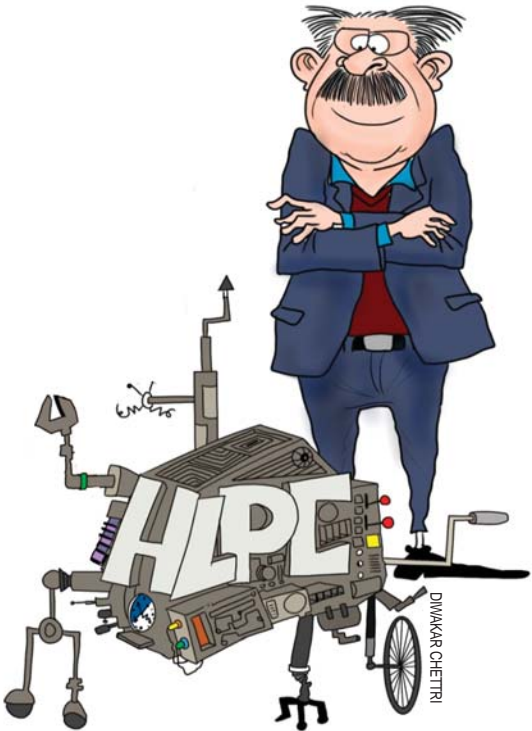
HLPC 2.0

Pahilopost.com, 8 October

पहिलो पोस्ट

The five-point agreement between the three largest parties to create an environment for political consensus:

1. A political committee shall be formed according to the following guidelines to help complete the peace process and keep parties in continuous consensus:
 - a. There shall be three members each from NC, UML, and UCPN(M) in the committee. Tarai-based parties will be represented by three members, while RPP Nepal and NCP-M will have one representative each. If other parties agree to take part later, there shall be one more member to represent them.
 - b. The committee will be chaired on rotation basis. UPCN(M) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal will lead for the first two months.
 - c. All decisions will be taken on the basis of consensus.
2. The government shall create a directorate to distribute, in two installments, Rs 200,000 to the families of those killed or disappeared during the insurgency and street protests.
3. The government shall create a directorate to register land in Rukum, Rolpa, Jajarkot, Salyan, and Pyuthan districts, which for various reasons could not be registered while being bought and sold, if the two corresponding parties agree. The government shall take no more than two per cent tax from the buying/selling of these lands during the current fiscal year.
4. India-registered vehicles entering Nepal shall be charged the same amount of tax as last year.
5. The government shall be requested to carry out the tasks in points 2, 3, and 4.



Editorial, *Kantipur*, 9 October

कान्तिपुर

Wednesday’s five-point consensus – to form a high level political committee to be chaired on rotation – between the three largest parties ended the UCPN(M)’s 41-day blockade of the Constituent Assembly but parties are back to square one as far as constitution writing is concerned.

Senior leaders have repeatedly stressed upon consensus and signed documents about agreeing to agree, but there are doubts to whether they can put this into practice. People are worried that this CA

will also be disbanded before a constitution is written.

It has been years that the same parties have been trying to solve the same contentious issues: federalism, form of governance, election process, and jurisdiction. The first CA failed because they couldn’t agree on these, and the parties are nowhere close to a solution 11 months after elections to the second CA was held.

In the meantime, they have attended dozens of meetings in the name of consensus but none of these had significant results. When there is agreement, it is because a few leaders or parties successfully hold others hostage. As long as these leaders, in whose clutches Nepal’s politics is trapped, do not rise above internal battles and power-politics, we will not see a constitution written before the 22 January deadline.

Because Nepal’s current politics is based on the second Jana Andolan in 2006, it is absolutely vital that there be cooperation and consensus

between the biggest political powers. But chanting ‘consensus’ and delaying progress every time they fail to see eye to eye is not wise any more.

The Political Dialogue and Consensus Committee failed to bring out consensus on any contentious issue and recommended the CA to decide on it. This can only mean the CA will extend its deadline to discuss the PDCC’s report. Extending deadlines makes sense if consensus is guaranteed. But it would be disastrous if the top leadership used this excuse to keep disrupting the constitution writing process.

Also, we only have 13 weeks to the constitution deadline. But judging by the parties’ halfhearted attempts at solving contentious issues, we have reason to fear that this deadline won’t be met. Before such a crisis becomes inevitable, it is crucial that the main parties, and especially the senior leadership, forget their short-term gains to write a constitution and ease this country out of transition.



ROYAL GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

The Kathmandu mandala

Like the city itself, the texture of Thomas Bell’s book is deceptively fluid and anarchic

DAVID SEDDON

After the launch of Thomas Bell’s *Kathmandu* last month, I was at a Newari restaurant in Patan with three friends, talking about the erosion of the language as Nepali takes over and the growing recognition of the distinctive Newari cuisine as a major cultural phenomenon. We also talked about the risk of a major earthquake in Kathmandu. Bell shares this concern in his book: ‘Often, in fact obsessively, when I’m walking in a narrow gully I look up and wonder where I’ll be when the earthquake comes and the walls open up like curtains of bricks. I look at the people who are walking around me and I think, which of us is going to make it?’ (p 399). Thomas Bell came to Kathmandu in 2002, became



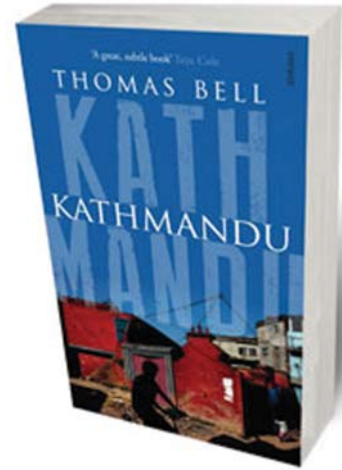
a journalist, married Subina Shrestha and (apart from a brief period in Bangkok) has lived in Nepal for over a decade. His vision and experience of Kathmandu are the result of his willingness to explore the nooks and crannies of the city and to embark on numerous encounters with its diverse inhabitants. Some of them, like old Dhana Lakshmi Shrestha (*pic, above*, his ‘informant on the traditions of the city’) see and comprehend it very differently. Like the city itself, the book’s texture and format is deceptively fluid and anarchic, its deep structure enduring yet surprisingly resilient. Episodic and shifting constantly in perspective and tone, as well as in time and place, the first part of Kathmandu comprises up to a dozen often only barely related topics, which like a kaleidoscope obliges readers to make their own way through the text. This part of the book explores the city as mandala or microcosm,

in part through the attempts of successive (mainly Western) scholars to ‘unpeel’ the history and pre-history of the ancient Malla kingdoms, and in part through visits by the author himself to parts of the city where the past still permeates the present as in the structure and layout of the buildings, the narrow lanes and choks, the temples and the monasteries. The ancient trade routes are still visible in the street plans of Kathmandu and Patan. ‘The mandala is more than a map of the city. It is a social and political ideology, a description of the order of the universe, which is repeated in a well-ordered city here on earth’ (p. 54). Bell’s *Kathmandu* is part of the wider Nepali political economy, and while his central pre-occupation is with the city itself, he does not confine himself to it. Nor is he only concerned with buildings and structures, as a journalist his main source of information is conversations.




He talks with all and sundry: with Maoists in the field, with politicians, with members of the army and the police, with expatriates. He listens to the ordinary and extraordinary citizens of Kathmandu, who speak often with great authority and insight. The second section deals with the many invasions, wars and revolutions that have transformed the ancient city over two and a half centuries, from the conquest of the Kathmandu Valley towards the end of the 18th century by a king who sought to ‘unify’ Nepal as a Hindu monarchy, to the People’s War, launched towards the end of the 20th by Maoists who sought to ‘re-structure’ Nepal as a federal socialist republic. This section has a historical momentum, and ends with the overthrow of the king in 2006. After an interval in Bangkok the author returns to the city in the ‘post-insurgency’ period, after the rise of ‘identity politics’, the Madhes movement, the elections for a Constituent Assembly, the departure of the king, and the decline in the power and influence of the Maoists. He gets married. He has a rant at the corruption and ineffectiveness of the foreign ‘aid industry’ and develops his walnut theory: ‘the international community and the state are bound together as tightly as two halves of the same walnut’. This is followed by the ‘revelation’ that the British, like the Americans, supported the king and his authoritarian regime to the hilt throughout ‘the conflict’, only abandoning this after it became clear that the people of Nepal, and equally importantly

THE VALLEY: This drawing of Kathmandu Valley from Swayambhu sketched by Henry Oldfield in 1850 is the end paper in Thomas Bell’s book, *Kathmandu*. the Indian establishment, were not prepared to accept a ‘conservative and limited democracy with a constitutional monarch’. British complicity in war crimes is more than implied. This final section is not encouraging: the rise and unresolved issue of identity politics, the reaction from the dominant groups, which now seem to include the Maoist leadership, and the ‘rule of three’ which allows for a continuing ‘sub-optimal equilibrium’. “There must be some things that have got better,” suggests the author to old Dhana Lakshmi. “People know how to eat,” she replies, “but now women have started showing their ass, and that I don’t like at all.” I warmly recommend the book to all those who find the city as familiar and as strange, as deeply and endlessly appealing, as does the author and as do I. 🇳🇵


David Seddon first came to Nepal in 1974, his first son was born in Patan and he has been coming to Nepal ever since. He is co-author, among other books, of Nepal in Crisis (Oxford University Press), Pokhara: the biography of a town (Mandala Press) and, most recently, In Hope and In Fear: living through the Maoist Insurgency (Adroit Press).



Kathmandu
By Thomas Bell
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Attain nirvana by doing nothing



As Dasains go, this year's festive season had a somewhat somnolent quality. Many of us logged 18 hours of sleep a day, waking up only to gnaw at a deceased mountain goat, belching frequently in a loud and carefree manner in our sleep, chewing the cud by re-eating juicy morsels of ex-goat lodged between our molars, plopping suparis into the mouth, sucking on a juicy paan, turning over, and going back to sleep. I know what you're muttering, you're muttering: how is all this different from a non-Dasain day at the Ministry of Labour's Department of Sloth and Lethargy? Um, I'll have to get back to you on that.

In fact, one expert who has closely researched the circadian rhythms of an average adult male in this country points out that a Nepali drone's sleeping patterns are essentially the same, Dasain or no Dasain. As citizens of a landlocked Himalayan republic that has never ever in its entire history been colonised by aliens from the Planet Voth, we have all had a nice long vacation and now,

fully rested, we can once more plunge headfirst into the task of not writing the constitution as we prepare for the next festival on the calendar.

Sad to say, there are workaholics among us who will insist on going to work in the coming week to push paper. Woe on such spoilsports, they need counselling. It's not that we are less lazy the rest of the year. But Dasain was the time that we really dropped all our inhibitions and let ourselves wallow in indolence. Even though we know how important it is to lie low and pretend to be comatose, we do sometimes lapse into exertion and toil. Vigilance, that is what is required. Vigilance against meeting deadlines set by the Deadline-Setting Committee of the Second Constipation Assembly.

We have always underestimated the role inaction plays in resolving crises. There is such a high chance that the decisions taken by a pro-active government will be huge mistakes that being indecisive actually prevents it from making blunders. Laziness also prevents violence. People who are too lethargic,

it has been proven, just can't muster the energy to fight. And as we all know from Newton's Third Law of Thermodynamics, a body at rest will remain at rest unless someone pokes a pin under the aforementioned body's hind quarters.

Deep-fried goat innards washed down with beer are an important ingredient to ensure inertness, which is why the gobbledent left no stones overturned in order to guarantee that 45,000 mountain goats were imported from the Tibetan Plateau this year in addition to the 100,000 plain goats that are brought up from the Tarai. Because without adequate supplies of goat, Nepalis may actually end up doing something useful and important in the national interest, like passing a new constitution. No kidding.

You may well say, this is all very well and good, but what about the post-Dasain period? What if some wise-guy Chairman of the Dialogue Committee or the Monologue Task Force actually goes and strikes a consensus deal on contentious issues that has bedeviled constitution-drafting? What then? How do we foil that?

Not to worry, the semi-government National Institute for Lassitude and Stupour has moved swiftly to do nothing so that those who are on hunger strike can go faster unto death. From now onto the SHARK Summit, top leaders are going to be sent to the US for treatment of sore throats and stomach aches to prevent the spread of Ebola. And everytime the vice-president goes anywhere we will close down the airport and bring traffic to a standstill so that nothing untoward will inadvertently be accomplished in the capital.



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