

GOING PLACES TOGETHER

PAGE 16

GOPEN RA

Shiva Guest House : Bhaktapur
Valentine's Bakery/Cafe : (Hotel Namaskar, Biratnagar)
For Further Information Mail to :
lavazza@subhashingalntl.com

FOR REGISTRATION
Contact: Mr. Gaurab Sapkota +977 9841172656
Landline: +977 1 4620741
E-mail: training@gtn.com.np

 01-4420424

 4223498

STOP, THINK, THEN INK

Protests about the shape and modality of federal provinces can go on, but not at the cost of further ruining the country

The Big Three and the Madhesi Front were close to a political deal last week in this roller coaster transition. Then, predictably, there was a hitch. The goal posts were moved again. The Front put forth another six-point proposal and the Big Three, particularly the ruling coalition leader UML, rejected it outright.

In retaliation, Madhesi negotiators promptly quit a joint taskforce formed to draft the deal, alleging that the establishment was not showing requisite flexibility. Prime Minister KP Oli, who is in the habit of firing first and asking questions later, bluntly accused the Madhesi parties of not being serious enough to end the impasse.

Despite an understanding between the two sides to set up an all-party mechanism to redraw boundaries of the proposed two provinces in the Tarai within three months, the negotiators are still playing hardball. Then there are the elephants in the room (various sections of the Indian establishment, intelligence and bureaucracy) that are sending conflicting signals to those at the table. The end result is that a deal that could end this senseless torture of Nepal’s 28 million people remains elusive even after 25 rounds of talks.

We suppose the delay is due to the need to appease hardliners. But if parliament endorses the first constitution amendment bill early next week without a deal with the Front, it won’t resolve anything. In fact, the uncertainties will be compounded as the agitators sharpen their knives to resume protests in the spring.

So, we suppose, the good news is that they are still talking to each other. The taskforce set up to negotiate has been dissolved, which is logical because it is the top leaders who take all important decisions anyway. A breakthrough is not only necessary but also inevitable now that both sides, and India, have run out of excuses to drag this on. They are just anxious not to be accused of perpetrating this crime against humanity.

Now the bad news. Even if a deal is signed, it may not end the street violence, political instability and economic



crisis. The three month timetable just buys us time to resolve the provincial demarcation issue, it postpones the resolution. This means the two sides must use that time to build trust and work towards a durable deal.

The thorniest issue has always been the boundaries of the two proposed Tarai provinces. The Front is apparently willing to go along with a three-month hiatus, but is seeking a written commitment from the Big Three that the all-party mechanism will redraw boundaries of Madhes provinces

exactly in the way it wants. That is not flexibility. That is negotiating with a gun to the temple, which in this case is a protracted border blockade.

We don’t know if the Madhesi Front can act on its own or has to wait for instructions from on high, but it must now join hands with the Big Three to pass the constitution amendment bill. The issue of federal boundaries should be kept open for discussion within the all-party mechanism. Even if the Front, with Indian backing, now forces the major parties to sign a deal to create two Madhes provinces, its implementation will be impossible. People in the disputed districts in the eastern and western Tarai which the Front forcibly wants to be included into the Madhes provinces will be up in arms.

It is time for Madhesi leaders to halt the protests, think wisely, participate in constructive debate within the all-party mechanism and then ink a deal on federalism. They should lobby for a strong and accountable mechanism that will reopen and revisit all the contentious issues relating to federalism. Its recommendations will certainly be mandatory as the ruling parties have already agreed to authenticate it by getting it passed by Parliament.

Madhesi leaders must realise that they are accountable not only to their constituencies but also to Nepalis living in the hills and the mountains. All the top four Madhesi leaders have become ministers in the past, and they must look beyond the narrow confines of their region which, by the way, is suffering more than any other from the Indian siege.

Nepal’s leaders have inflicted too much pain on the people by holding them hostage. They must redeem themselves by ending this cruelty, and work towards repairing what they have ruined. Our in-depth report on this issue (*page 14-15*) shows that recovery may take decades.

Federalism is a work in progress, discourse on its relevance and protests about its shape and modality can go on, but not by strangling your own motherland.

Times

THIS WEEK

Facebook icon

Most reached on Facebook
PM's an Ass
The Ass is soon going to be out of a job if PM KP Oli keeps up all this joking and clowning around. (14,785 people reached)

Facebook icon

Most shared on Facebook
PM's an Ass by Ass (40 shares)

Twitter icon

Most popular on Twitter
Ex-minor ex-Maoists by Om Astha Rai
(93 retweets, 114 favourites)

Twitter icon

Most commented
With us, or against us by Rubeena Mahato (12 comments)

YouTube icon

Most visited online page
Ex-minor ex-Maoists by Om Astha Rai (2,197 views)

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

WITH US, OR AGAINST US
The Madhes agitation failed because it was never about Madhes or Madhesi people ('With us, or against us', Rubeena Mahato, #791).
Sangita Shrestha

■ I believe the future of Nepal depends on the ability of its people to truly believe that they are 'Nepal'. If an enterprising citizen's dream can be realised, irrespective of his/her caste, class, tribal affiliation, etc., we have 'arrived' at the new nationalism.

N

■ The political leadership of the Morcha, like that of the other political parties in Nepal, had their own vested interests and failed to represent the real needs and concerns of Madhes or indeed any of the ordinary people of the Tarai. This is why federalism is a dangerous diversion - it will lead simply to a number of new groups of political leaders of the same kind. What is really needed now is a genuine commitment to grassroots democracy and social justice across Nepal based on universal human rights and the needs of the mass of the people, not

on the multiple interests of selected minorities and identity politics as has become all too popular in recent years.
David Seddon

■ The demand of Morcha leaders for the delineation of the whole of Tarai as one province works directly against the interest of the people living there. The prosperity of the Tarai can be achieved only by planning its development in coordination with the higher reaches up north that provides them with necessary water and power supply that is essential for its agro-industrial development.

Bihari Shrestha

EX-MINOR EX-MAOISTS
I feel sorry for these people as they were used as pawns by the Maoist leaders to fulfill their own personal agenda ('Ex-Minor Ex-Maoists', Om Astha Rai, #791). The stark difference in living standards of the two groups tells the whole tale.
Anup

■ Maybe we owe them respect as much as compassion for their now 'erroneous' choices. Let's not forget the

entire continent of Latin America plus multiple other countries believed in these ideologies. There's nothing wrong with belief.
Ravi Raj Lama

THE INDIAN GHOST
'Road links to China' – are you serious ('Exorcising the Indian ghost', Bishal Thapa, #791)? Where is China getting its oil from? I think this whole article's sentiment is misplaced. We have water. We have sun. We have wind. It's time to think energy independence.
Namah

Times

nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll #792

Q. How do you rate PM KP Oli's first 100 days in office?

Total votes: 155

Good 14.84%

Bad 16.13%

Very bad 69.03%

Weekly Internet Poll #793

To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Do you accept the Madhesi Front's demand for two federal provinces encompassing the entire Tarai?

Times

Nepali Times on Facebook

Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter

Follow @nepalitimes on Instagram

Publisher and Chief Editor: Kunda Dixit

Associate Editor: Tsering Dolker Gurung | Online Producer: Ayesha Shakya | Design: Kiran Maharjan

Published by Himalmedia Pvt Ltd | Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur | GPO Box 7251 Kathmandu

editors@nepalitimes.com | www.nepalitimes.com | www.himalmedia.com | Tel: 01-5005601-08 Fax: +977-1-5005518

Marketing: Arjun Karki, Surendra Sharma | rachanas@himalmedia.com | Advertisers: Ram Krishna Banjara | Subscriptions: Santosh Aryal | santosha@himalmedia.com

Printed at Jagadamba Press | 01-5250017-19 | www.jagadambaprp.com

Better days to come

Nepalis are suffering because political bickering about the constitution has rendered everything else irrelevant

This week I found myself trying hard to think back to better days. Days without civil outcry, killings and blockades, when fuel was in ample supply and load-shedding wasn't really a problem.

I thought long and hard about those 'glory days', even attempting to revoke what few memories I had of my childhood in Kathmandu. I went as far



ONE TO MANY
Bidushi Dhungel

back as I could, through the years leading up to the conflict after the fall of the Panchayat. Alas, at nearly 30 years old, it is impossible to find better days. For my generation, there seems to have been no 'better days'. It is a generation which has survived on only the hope of better days to come.

Even today, more than 150 days since the beginning of protests in the Tarai, months of a border blockade that is squeezing the bloodline of the capital and far beyond, and with a political deal always at least at arm's length, the word on the street is still of better days to come.

"The blockade will end and when things ease in the Tarai, it will be better," is the general line of argument. There is also the "This government is the

problem" one-liner, which has been said about literally every other government that has been in power in Kathmandu. There is a feeling that this government with its oversized Cabinet and umpteen DPMs, is indeed worse than all the others. But, we all know deep down that the problem is far more complex than that, and the eternal hope for

a better tomorrow will need to be matched with action.

Nepal rules the roost when it comes to multiple and drawn out whammies. Nearly a decade in the constitution writing exercise, which was preceded by another decade of violence, has, in reality, led to very little more than an immeasurable sense of loss — of time, lives, growth,

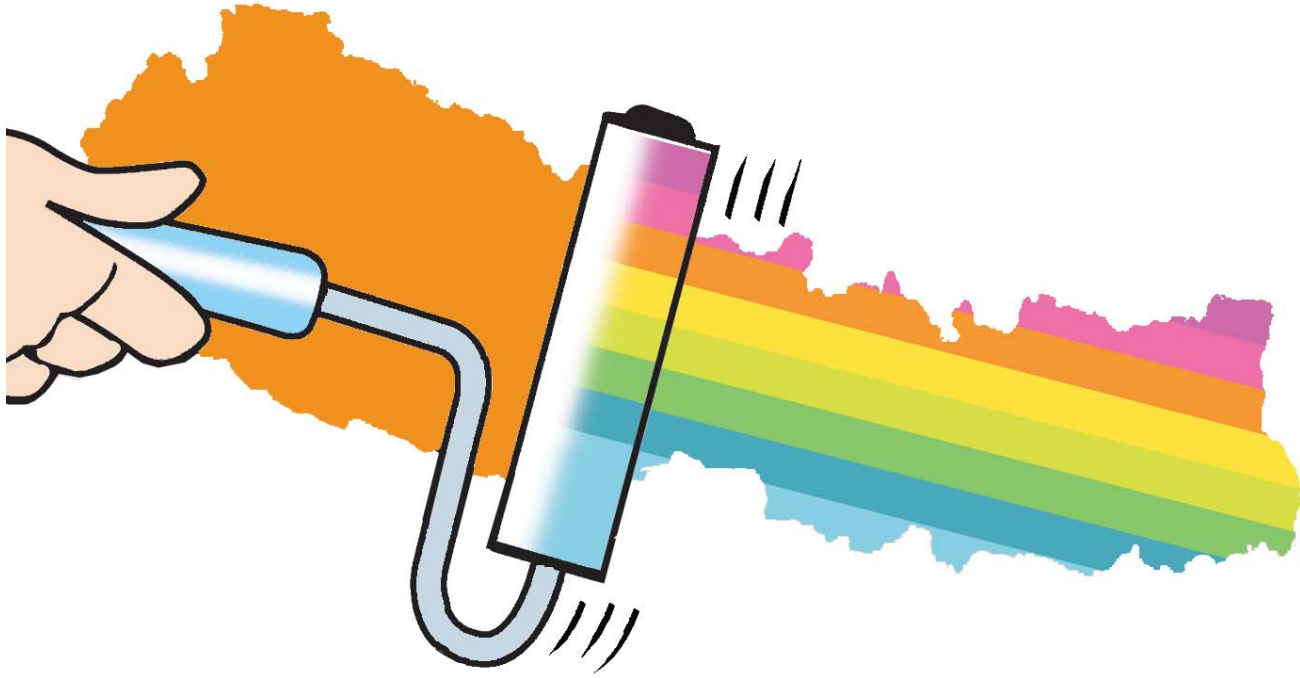
progress.

Before rushing to label these thoughts as 'regressive' or 'status quoist' it is worth questioning what exactly has come of the past decades. Democracy has been restored, the monarchy has been removed and the demand for inclusion is widespread. All very wonderful. No doubt, these are crucial indicators of

'progress' and building an inclusive state and society is central. But, it is now high time to think about the kinds of political priorities we have and match them against the kind of political priorities that foster stability, growth, innovation and satisfaction among people. An inclusive state with federal provinces that everyone likes is only a small fraction of the kind of change that needs to take place.

The time and effort that has been exhausted deliberating federalism, inclusion, a new state structure and so forth, has been spent not in vain but definitely at a cost. This cost has been accumulating and yet it is fervently ignored. I read yesterday that inflation has reached the highest it has been in over three years. Prices are skyrocketing and incomes are stagnant. There is a need to understand and internalise that people are suffering, and have been doing so, because political bickering about federalism and inclusion and constitutional amendments have rendered everything else irrelevant.

Even as quake survivors freeze to death, the bickering at Baluwatar doesn't stop to think even for a second about the impact the political crisis is having on the people both the government and opposition claim to serve.



Get **Fiberized** with **Vianet**



Now Starts

@ **2650/-**

Unlimited Plans*

1 Month **FREE** with Quarterly & Half Yearly Subscription

2 Months **FREE** with Yearly Subscription

Get up to **40% OFF** on Installation

End-to-end 100% **Fiber Optics** internet
For **Small/Medium Enterprises**

Why Choose **Vianet** ?

- 100% End to End Fiber Optics Internet Service
- Uninterrupted Service during LOAD SHEDDING
- Dedicated Speed (No Sharing Ratio)
- Dedicated Support team 24X7
- Compatible with CCTV
- Unlimited Speeds for YouTube HD Video Streaming, Google, Akamai and Local contents
- Data Top up feature



1st FTTH
(Fiber-To-The-Home)
service in Nepal.

4217555

www.vianet.com.np
sales@vianet.com.np

A grant failure

Agricultural subsidies and grants from the government are increasing, but many farmers have a negative return on investment

LOKMANI RAI
IN DOLAKHA

In 2013, Sabina Manandhar received a grant of Rs 2.4 million from the HIMALI (High Mountain Agribusiness and Livelihood Improvement) Project, an initiative of the Ministry of Agriculture to help farmers in mountain areas improve livelihoods.

Manandhar was supposed to start a goat farm with the grant, but she is now running a provision store in Charikot. The earthquake destroyed her farm forcing her to give away her goats to other villagers.

“I could not see the goats being kept in such poor conditions,” she said.

Manandhar’s story is a common one among recipients of government grants. A project intended to increase income and employment of farmers through agriculture and livestock development has failed to benefit them. The earthquake, livestock fertility, cheating by fake farmers who siphoned off the grants all played their part.

Manandhar’s husband, Rameswor is the President of the Dolakha Chamber of Commerce and Industry and has political



अन्नपूर्ण पोस्ट

OMG!

नपर्ने त कुरें केन !

अन्नपूर्ण पोस्टको हरेक वार्षिक ग्राहकले पाउनुहुनेछ Colors Mobile, हरेक साता एक जनालाई Home Appliances गिफ्ट ह्याम्पर र हरेक महिना एक जनालाई Bajaj Platina मोटरसाईकल । साथै एक जना भाग्यशाली ग्राहकले जित्नुहुनेछ Fully furnished अत्याधुनिक बंगला ।

पुराना ग्राहकहरूले पनि नवीकरण गरी यस योजनामा सहभागी हुन सक्नुहुनेछ ।
Bumper Prize मा २०७२ माघ १ गतेदेखि २०७३ पुस मसान्तसम्मका वार्षिक ग्राहकहरूलाई सहभागी गराइनेछ ।

BUMPER PRIZE

Fully furnished ready to move in 2.5 storey Bungalow at Yagyapuri Colony, Bharatpur, Chitwan developed by Roadshow Real Estate Pvt. Ltd.

SURE SHOT PRIZE

COLORS Mobile

Features:

- 1.77" QQVGA Screen
- VGA Camera
- Torch
- MP3/MP4 Player
- Dual Sim
- 3.5mm Jack
- Wireless FM
- 1000 mAh Battery

WEEKLY PRIZE

Home Appliances Gift Hamper

MONTHLY PRIZE

BAJAJ PLATINA

अन्नपूर्ण पोस्ट

अन्नपूर्ण सिटीमा लभार्क

कपरेट टावर, तीनकुने, काठमाण्डौ

फोन: ८८८२३०५, ८८८२२०७, ८८६९७५८

इमेल: circulation@3ni.com.np

काठमाडौं: अनन्त (९८५११२११५१), विजय (९८४१४६८४७२), ब्रजेश (९८५१००४५४७), दिलिप (९८४२१७२७८२), कपिल (९८४१४१७०२२)

पोखरा: शिवहरि (९८५६०५६१२९), इटहरी: नरेश (९२८५२०५७६१४), विराटनगर: रोशन (९८५२०३२१७३०), वुठवल: अनिल (९८५५०५०२२३), नारायणघाट: युधिर (९८४५०२४४४०)



DOOMED VENTURE: Makar Bahadur Thapa of Boch VDC in Dolakha is amongst the group of farmers who lost money after starting new business with grant assistance from the HIMALI Project.

The earthquake destroyed this goat farm belonging to Sabina Manandhar, one of the grant recipients.



BIKRAM RAI

connections, which explains why she was able to secure the grant in the first place. Unfortunately, other hardworking farmers who also got HIMALI grants have also not benefited much.

Navaraj Pokharel of Malu VDC bought forty goats with his HIMALI money, but only 30 were productive. “Some goats suffered miscarriage and some had fertility issues,” he said.

Had Pokharel raised these goats and their offspring to be healthy, he could have sold them at the local market price of Rs 10,000 per male goat and Rs 4,000 per female goat. But because they did not reproduce, the farmer ended up losing money.

“My cash expenses, excluding my salary, went above Rs 400,000

for salaries of helpers, livestock feed, grass and veterinary services and I suffered a cash flow deficit of Rs 160,000 even though I worked without salary,” he said.

Pokharel initially had asked for a grant in coffee farming, as per his expertise. But the HIMALI Project pushed him towards goat farming. “If there was no grant in goat farming, I would have never become a goat farmer,” he says.

The disaster of this goat grant is repeated with dairies and piggeries in Dolakha, and is emblematic of poorly designed and implemented top-down development projects with minimal participation.

Ram Bahadur of Bhimeswor Municipality received Rs 1.8 million to buy ten hybrid cows, a barn, and other necessary equipment. But, the cows fell sick and could not produce milk or calves, there was no veterinary support or a component for buying feed.

After many farmers returned their livestock after losing money, the HIMALI project has come under scrutiny. But there is also criticism that locals with political connections and no farming experience are also responsible for the failure. Pokharel says many genuine farmers could not fulfill the legal procedures and therefore could not secure a grant. “Many people who got the grants were never farmers to begin with,” he confirmed.

We put this to HIMALI’s grants coordinator Damodar Ghimire who accepted there had been weakness in implementation. “But, there are also successful cases,” he said.

There are many projects similar to HIMALI which are well-intentioned but end up being

a colossal waste of money because of poor management. In 2010, the government issued subsidises worth Rs 2.67 billion to farmers. In 2015, subsidies were more than five times that, at Rs 15.48 billion. Despite this, productivity growth in agriculture in the last five years is only 3.36 per cent on average.

A senior official at the Department of Agriculture confirmed that misuse of farm grants is one of the major reasons behind low agriculture productivity growth. “Subsidy and grants are misused by political cadres and social elites,” he said. “So we are unable to achieve reasonable growth proportionate to subsidy increases.”

Whether the problems are political or logistical, to genuine farmers struggling to rise above subsistence, something is not adding up. 🇳🇵

prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

Morale booster

Soaltee Crowne Plaza Kathmandu celebrated its annual Career Week recently as part of its parent group, InterContinental Hotel Group’s commitment towards career development and growth of its hotel



team members. The Nepal Culture, Tourism & Civil Aviation Minister was invited as one of the main guests to address the gathering.

Whiskey love

Pernod Richard has launched the entire range of its renowned single malt whiskey Aberlour in Nepal. Aberlour – 12 year-old, 16 year-old and 18 year-old – is now available in leading liquor outlets throughout Nepal at a price range of Rs 5,400 to Rs 16,000.



One more for Hyundai

Hyundai’s authorized dealer Laxmi Intercontinental inaugurated Royal Auto World, its new showroom, in Itahari recently. In addition to carrying out sales, the showroom will also operate as a service centre for its customers. The dealer plans to add more showrooms in 2016.

Loans galore

NMB Bank has launched NMB Sulav Karja and Personal Business Loan for small and medium enterprises. Registered SMEs can avail a loan of Rs 500,000 to Rs 5 million with



a processing period of five days. The Personal Business Loan has been initiated to finance individual entrepreneurs, and unregistered SMEs can apply for the loan as well.



REMO
Research & Monitoring System

GENERATE INFORMATION ON MAPS

DATA COLLECTED IS CENTRALIZED SIMULTANEOUSLY

SAVE EFFORT TIME MONEY

redefining research

REMO is Research and Monitoring System that can capture, analyze and visualize data together. Tremendously useful and cost effective, REMO opens a new frontier on how surveys are conducted. Smartphone-enabled and tablet-compatible, surveys can be created in a fly and modified on the go. Data Collected gets seamlessly aggregated on the system allowing web-based access that dynamically produce meaningful reports in real time. Using complex algorithm, data is instantly converted to intelligence.

Rooster Logic Pvt Ltd.
Campus Marg, Chakupat,
Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur, Nepal

T : (+977 - 1) 526 1530
M : (+977) 9851164335, (+977) 9860307694
E : info@roosterlogic.com

"1st Nepali System to be deployed in all 75 districts; 200,000+ sample size"

Virus & Slow PC are a Big Problem... Isn't It ?

Get **eScan** Today

Unique Features:

- Advanced Virus Control
- Endpoint Security with USB Vaccination
- Automatic Download of Critical Windows® OS Patches
- Intelligent Parental Control
- Gaming Mode

Awards

Award Winning, Lightweight, Powerful Anti-Virus Protection...

Comprehensive Protection for SOHO • SMB • CORPORATE • ENTERPRISE:

Authorized Distributor:

PHOENIX TRADING

Juju House 4th Floor, New Road,
Opposite Bhugal Park Gate, Kathmandu, Nepal
Ph No: 014264545 | Mobile no 9851036045

email: info@phoenixtrading.com.np
URL: www.phoenixtrading.com.np

24X7
FREE Online Technical Support

www.escanav.com



GOPEN RAI

Collateral Damage 5

The New Farce

It seems Comrade Baburam has had an epiphany and he wants the whole world to know

Just what this country needs, thought your scribe while reading the news, another political party promising salvation. A recent article reported that Baburam Bhattarai (BRB), Maoist ideologue, ex-PM, and recent absconder from the Maoist Party, had summoned foreign diplomats and donors to announce



MOVING TARGET
Foreign Hand

the launch of something called the New Force Campaign. It seems Comrade Baburam has had an epiphany and he wants the whole world to know. Sounding like a born-again free-market crusader, he explained the New Force was conceived to fulfill his dream of transforming

Nepal from the economic basket-case he did so much to create into a shining beacon of capitalist prosperity and political integrity. Maintaining a straight face throughout, he declared his Campaign was committed to rapid economic transformation, something he's already achieved, come to think of it, for all his cronies and entire extended family. A further promise of jobs for all has precedent in the full employment enjoyed by everyone close to him and his wife while he was PM. This absurd sales pitch from someone whose ideologically driven policies decimated Nepal's economy sparked an eerie sense of déjà vu, going back to the last time comrade BRB set about convincing the UN and embassy crowd that the Maoists would abide by the terms of the 2006 Peace Agreement.

As Prachanda's constant side-kick and the party's token intellectual, the ever-serious BRB was the perfect foil to El Supremo's obvious pathological tendencies. The only Maoist honcho who resisted the temptation to adopt a cool nom de guerre like Cloud or Awesome, his grim sobriety played an instrumental role in convincing UNMIN under Ian Martin that the Maoists had 30,000 fighters for the UN cantonments (they actually had about 7000, as admitted by Prachanda in the leaked Shaktikor tapes). He personally assured all players the Party would no longer engage in illegal activities like murder, extortion, armed robbery and kidnapping (the end of the war led to a tsunami of all such crimes lasting several years, orchestrated by the YCL wing of the Maoist party.) Here he is at it again, and it

would be fascinating to know if any of the assembled dignitaries actually believed him. The last bunch certainly did and one wonders if he scanned the crowd to see if any of the diplomats he fooled back then were still around. What will be much more interesting still, of course, is whether the Nepali people forget the damage his class-war policies have wreaked and can ever take him seriously again. In most countries a public figure's record means something. In 1996 BRB presented the hapless Deuba government with a 40 point list and a deadline, threatening war if the demands weren't met in time. One of the key ultimatums was 'the domination of foreign capital in Nepal must be stopped'. His party couldn't wait for the deadline to expire before launching the Pointless War and Maoist trade

unions continued to harass, extort and shut down Indian firms operating in Nepal for the next 10 years. With the new-found faith of the convert, BRB's now telling anyone who listens that Nepal must attract plenty of foreign investment to achieve prosperity and he's the only man with the vision to do it. He could have saved everybody a whole lot of trouble if he'd thought of that 20 years ago, when strong economic growth of 6-7% in the 1990s was squashed by the outbreak of the war he declared. His recent revelation that political stability is the need of the hour was a hoot, considering he's made a career of destabilising the state, while his assertion that full transparency in government is the only option forward had us wishing once again he practiced what he preached when he had the chance. Let's not forget BRB's chaotic 18 months at the helm of a Maoist/Madheshi coalition was heralded at the time as Nepal's most corrupt government in history. His efforts to distance himself from the rampant nepotism and graft of his tenure are forever hampered by the antics of his better half, Hisila Yami, whose avarice became the stuff of folklore. As if to prove the past will continue to haunt him, another article in the same newspaper reported the Supreme Court decision that war-time cases of heinous crimes, dismissed by BRB himself, will be re-instated. This momentous verdict might explain why BRB's suddenly in such a hurry to get back in power so he can dismiss them all over again. Or perhaps the Hand is over analysing and the motives behind this historic launch are simply too noble for us mere mortals to ever comprehend. As an ideologically pure Marxist, it may be BRB's manifest destiny to fulfill the words of his omniscient leader, Karl Marx, who famously stated 'History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.' His former party made sure we had the tragedy of a devastating war so perhaps his new party is destined to guide the nation towards a new era that fulfills the second phase of his guru's prophesy: New Farce. 🇳🇵



Imitating nature

Nepal's most modern printing facility. Jagadamba Press. now makes natural colours come alive with its state-of-the-art equipment.



City Office
Bakhundol, Lalitpur
Tel: 977-01-5529210/11

Printing Plant
Hattiban, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 977-01-5250017/18
sales@jppl.com.np
URL: www.jagadambapress.com



www.yetiairlines.com



A WARM GESTURE

Youth-led groups are directing ways to help earthquake victims this winter

SARTHAK MANI SHARMA

As a freezing winter set in and the government had still not provided relief to survivors of last April's earthquake, Abiral Karki and his colleagues decided to take matters into their own hands by collecting clothes and buying blankets for the victims. But Karki was not taken seriously, he recalls, when he stood on the street carrying a donations box.

"My friends asked me to get involved in a rally or call for a bandh to pressure the government," he remembers. "But what would have been more effective? Waiting on the government to take action or doing something yourself?"

Karki is a member of the youth-led political party, Bibeksheel Nepali, which has been distributing warm clothes and blankets to earthquake victims on the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley and in six other districts, including Dhading and Sindhupalchok. The group estimates it has reached 1,500 households since its campaign, Nyano Maya, began one month ago.

For the campaign, Bibeksheel Nepali partnered with more than ten other organisations including schools, colleges and local youth-clubs to collect relief materials. Volunteer Abhishek Basnyat explained that his group became a facilitator for individuals and organisations that wanted to help the victims but did not know how to reach them. "What began as a small effort really snowballed into something big," he said.

Among the survivors in affected areas, the group has prioritised children, the elderly and postnatal women. Having collection centers and point persons in targeted districts also helped the group plan more effective and efficient campaigns.

A needs-assessment study is done before each run. These assessments help the members to recognise those who are most in need and to plan the distribution

of materials in a more pragmatic way. Distinguishing between genuine and fake victims is just one problem. As another volunteer Sharan Karki explained, Bibeksheel's task has not been easy.

"You can't just go there and start distributing relief in a haphazard way. You have to do your homework," he says.

For example, in the village of Budhathum in Dhading, the government has not yet distributed cash grants of Rs 10,000 to victims. But based on the existing needs on the ground, cash grants may not be so effective, says Sharan, who is himself a resident of Dhading.

"Families in the higher reaches spend almost half of their Rs 10,000 just travelling to and from Dhading Besi to buy blankets and other essentials," he says. "It is materials, not cash that they need."

Bibeksheel is not the only youth-led group that has been spearheading efforts to help earthquake victims. The 'Nyano Baadaun' campaign has helped distribute over 140 blankets and almost 700 hats and mufflers, mostly in Lamjung. The eclectic group, made up of writers, journalists and singers was started on Twitter.

We asked volunteer Lenin Banjade whether a loose meeting of friends on Twitter could do serious work on distributing relief to earthquake victims. "We do have a lot of different commitments but we have been well-coordinated and effective so far," he says.

The group plans to expand its activities to the Tarai, where it will distribute clothes and other materials to a small Musahar settlement. It also plans to establish a 'Nyano Bank', a materials-storage system where winter clothes can be kept for annual usage.

At a time when the government is being criticised for doing little to lessen the suffering of earthquake survivors, youth-led groups are playing a positive role in instilling hope and confidence among the people.

"There was a lot of energy and positivity right after the earthquake, but

it's all evaporated. We need to keep up that spirit and not just rely on the government," says Basnyat.

Ranju Darshana, who at 19 is the youngest central committee member of Bibeksheel Nepali, was asked by one of the earthquake victims why she had been involved in 'social service' even though she was a member of a political party.

"The whole point of a political party is to help the people in society," she answered. "That's what mainstream political parties are not doing."

Interested donors can contact campaign coordinator Abiral Karki at nepalibiral1@gmail.com



DONATE A BLANKET

As the government largely leaves victims of April's earthquake to fend for themselves, one of Nepal's most popular online shopping sites, Sasto Deal, is organising a 'Donate a blanket' program. The blankets collected will go to the victims of the earthquake in Gorkha, Dhading, Sindhupalchok and villages on the outskirts of Kathmandu. So far, Sasto Deal has received pledges of over 1,100 blankets from donors in Nepal and around the world and has distributed over 700.

Donors can pay for the blankets through Sanima Bank, Nepal Investment Bank or Esewa and can also submit the payment at Sastodeal Office in Tripureshwar. International donors can make their payments through Paypal. sastodeal.com



NEPAL WHEREVER YOU ARE.

Times NEPALI

in your **lap** or **palm**.

www.nepalitimes.com

SEULKI LEE

On 12 January, a promotional slogan for a new video game surfaced on Twitter. It read in Korean:

'Does a game have to have a player kill the enemy or spend money in virtual world in order to entertain ourselves? We are making a new game where you can save people, animals and reconstruct villages. This is about life in Nepal.'

The tweet was promoting a crowdfunding campaign for the 2D adventure/action game called 'Himalaya Backpacker', developed by a group of young Koreans.

Himalaya Backpacker was created in direct response to the April earthquake. The game is designed to have the player respond to natural disasters like earthquakes, landslides, and avalanches by rescuing people and animals. Later stages of the game go even further, as missions encourage the player to reconstruct damaged villages and heritage buildings in Nepal.

A so-called 'social impact game', Himalaya Backpacker provides an interactive platform for players to engage and think about how to solve social issues across the world on a virtual platform. Other social impact games cover thematic issues that vary from climate change, medical research, and urban development to the life of refugees, LGBTQ issues, and the division of the Korean peninsula.

The developer of the game, Minseok Do says: "I noticed that people's interest in the earthquake had begun to wane and I wanted to bring their attention back to Nepal through a game as the country still needs help."

Do, an MBA candidate in



Gaming for a cause

A Korean video game developer has created a new educational adventure game to raise funds for earthquake victims

the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, has a background in electronic engineering and graphic design. He worked with three other developers and illustrators to ensure a high quality standard for the game's graphics.

In making Himalayan Backpacker, Do used two popular games as reference: Ubisoft's 'Valiant Hearts' and 11 Bit Studios' 'This War is Mine'. The former is an action/adventure game

set during WWI and based upon archaeological research, which covered the educational aspect. The latter was modeled for its social impact component, as the crowd-funded game uses real stories and images of the Bosnian War, and all proceeds went to war orphans through the Warchild Foundation.

The plot of Himalayan Backpacker begins post-earthquake as the protagonist, a Korean man who gets isolated during

a trek, has to figure out how to escape a cave in the Himalayas with a Nepali boy. As they reach Kathmandu, he scraps his plan to leave the country and decides to stay on to help with the relief effort.

Throughout the journey, the adventure game is not only strategic but also educational. The player has to figure out how to get food and water, how to help transport people safely from point A to point B, and how to conduct

first aid and CPR. The player is also charged with the moral decision of staying to help in a time of need and using his skills to get people to safety. The target users of Himalaya Backpacker are gamers above twelve, considering the difficulty of the puzzles and the cultural backdrop of Buddhism and Hinduism in the narrative.

The focus of Himalaya Backpacker crowdfunding is direct distribution to the neediest villages, rather than collecting large funds through partnerships with NGOs. The tentative price range for the game is expected to be \$3-5. "We are planning to sell it for \$3 without external advertisement and encourage users to pay extra money as a contribution or donation for reconstruction in Nepal," explained Do, who heads the game development company Dopage.

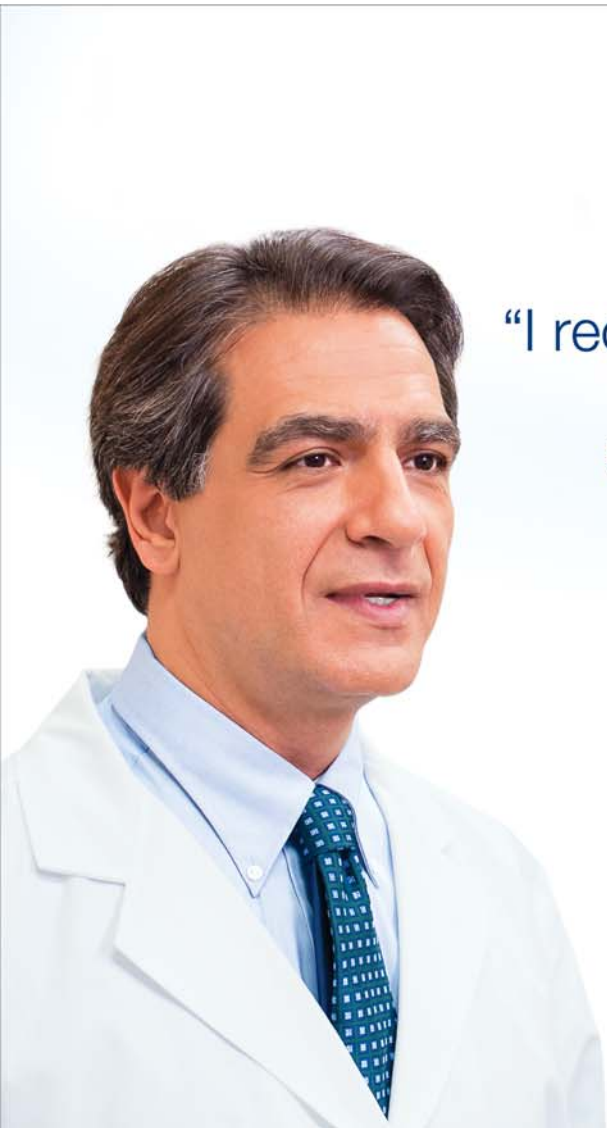
Do is finding a creative way to not only construct a platform to have fun, but also to expand the support of the earthquake relief effort to other communities through contributions.

Says Do: "I haven't been to Nepal but I was always fascinated by the Himalayas. Maybe that's why I felt hurt when I saw the natural disaster there and thought about ways to help the country."

Himalaya Backpacker will be released on the App Store, Google Play for iPad, Android tablet, PC and SmartTV in June 2016.

nepalitimes.com

Watch teaser



"I recommend Sensodyne for all day every day sensitivity protection."

-Dr. Spiro Condos, dentist practicing in the US



24x7 SENSITIVITY PROTECTION



World's No.1 Sensitivity Toothpaste

*Brush twice daily for continuous protection

EVENTS



Nepal Lit Fest,

Talk literature and much more with India and Nepal's finest journalists and writers.
29 January to 1 February, Pokhara
www.nepalliteraturefestival.com

First anniversary,

Visit Shop with a Story as it celebrates its first anniversary; features an exclusive workshop by social entrepreneurs and producers.
11am to 4pm, 24 January,
Babar Mahal Revisited

Bangladesh Expo,

Readymade garments, plastic products, cosmetics, ceramics and a lot more in the Bangladesh Expo 2016.
21 to 25 January,
Bhrikuti Mandap Exhibition Hall, Kathmandu

CAN Info-tech,

The year's most exciting info-tech and entertainment conference.
28 January to 2 February, Bhrikuti Mandap,
Exhibition Road

ComCraft,

Comic books, manga and graphic novel workshop for illustrators, designers, writers and enthusiasts.
Quixote's Cove, Ekantakuna, (01)5536974

Debate Championship,

Wow your audience in Nepal's largest debate tournament for high school students in both English and Nepali.
9 February to 13 February, Kathmandu
debate.dnn@gmail.com

Property rites,

Explore power struggles in this future-in-the-present action drama based on the play by Alan Haehnel and performed by Ullens IB students.
29 January, 6pm and 30 January, 9pm,
Ullens School, Khumaltar, Lalitpur

Donate a blanket,

Sasto Deal is organising a 'Donate a blanket' program for victims of the earthquake in Gorkha, Dhading and Sindhupalchok. Contribute Rs 500 per blanket.
info@sastodeal.com



Digital mapping,

How to use digital maps to showcase Nepal's stunning beauty and nature: Storycycle's workshop to learn Google's map-based tools.
31 January, 1pm onwards,
www.storycycle.com

DINING



Dhokaima Café,

Try indigenous cocktails at the Rukhmuni Bar.
Patan Dhoka, (01)5522113,
dhokaimacafe@yahoo.com

Mulchowk,

Select your special dinner from set Ala-carte menu or regular menu while enjoying classical fusion, and folk music by Mul band.
Babar Mahal Revisited, (01)4259801

Manny's,

Head down for some delicious Corn Fritters, Pad Thai Noodles, Crispy Crunch Potatoes and don't forget their signature Manny's Spicy Wings. All served with fine hospitality in an excellent space.
Jawalakhel, (01)5536919



Vootoo,

The new home of Newari cuisine, as well as a continental menu for those who want to play it safe.
Lajimpat, (01)4005222

Lal Durbar Restaurant,

Authentic Nepali dinner with a cultural show.
Hotel Yak & Yeti, Darbar Marg, (01)4248999,
reservation@laldurbar.com

Downtown,

Go Indian at this restaurant, although it serves Chinese and Continental food too. Don't miss out on the Biryani.
Pulchok Road, (01)5010751

MUSIC



90s grunge,

All Stars, Sound Chains Pilots and Newaz will conjure up the awesome 90s grunge.
20 February, 1pm, Purple Haze Rock Bar,
Thamel

Mental radio,

Contemporary hits from the 70s to pop rock and to present: groove to Mental Radio's tunes.
22 January, 8pm onwards,
House of Music, Thamel



Tribute to AC/DC,

The Midnight Riders' ultimate tribute to AC/DC.
13 February, 3pm onwards,
Purple Haze Rock Bar, Thamel, 9849076217



Blues n' Roots,

Come see Mukti Shakya and other star artists perform.
23 January, 2 to 8pm, Attic Bar, Tangal

GETAWAY

The Yellow House,

Bed and breakfast for the light traveller.
Sanepa, (01)5553869/5522078,
www.theyellowhouse.com.np



Park Village Resort,

Far away from the maddening crowd, yet so close to the city.
Budhanikantha, (01)4375280,
pvh@wlink.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, (06)1463468,
www.mumsgardenresort.com



Mango Tree Lodge,

Culture walks, rafting in the Karnali, wildlife exploration, and jungle safari at the Bardia National Park.
Bhetani, Bardia, (84)402008,
info@mangotreelodge.com



Dhulikhel Lodge Resort,

Located on a hilltop, the resort offers a magnificent vista of valleys, foothills, and mountains to the north.
Dhulikhel, (011) 490114/494,
dhulikhellodgersort.com

Yoga for the Soul

Relax and unwind on a three-day yoga retreat in Neydo, a Tibetan monastery nestled in the hills of Pharping, far away from the crowded streets of Kathmandu.

Discover the harmony and balance yoga can bring into your lives at this retreat organised by Pranamaya Yoga Studio. The sessions will be led by trained yoga professionals. Each retreat will have a minimum of 4 and maximum of 16 participants.

The package will include transportation to and from Thamel to the monastery; 10.30am pick up on Monday mornings and 7pm drop off on Wednesdays. The accommodation will be on a twin sharing basis and cover meals (vegetarian) and refreshments.

7 to 9 March, Neydo Monastery, Pharping
info@pranamaya-yoga.com
pranamaya-yoga.com



Put your **body, mind,**
and **spirit** in harmony



Call today: 98510 54729 (Santosh)

01-500 5601-07, Fax: 977 1 5005518 | subs@himalmedia.com

SPECIAL OFFER **Subscribe to Nepali Times**

&

Get a free coupon of
"Behaving Body, Mind and Spirit"

TRANQUILITY SPA

on your choice
@
Star Hotels

New Arrivals

Enter the world of furnishing...

Banking Partner
N. BILINSTALLMENT Available at 0% interest to Nabil Credit Card Holder

New Madan Furnishers Pvt. Ltd.
Kupondole, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel: 552 3236, 552 0318 Fax: 553 6927
info@nmfurnishers.com | www.nmfurnishers.com

THE BENT FORK



PICS: YUWEI LIEU

were not available due to the intermittent power outages. However, what they had to offer was more than satisfactory.

My dining companion and I were especially pleased with the wide range of vegetarian dishes available. Those who prefer a meatless diet will find themselves spoiled for choice with the sheer variety of options offered at The Bent Fork.

We started with a salad from their special menu: a delicious combination of sautéed shiitake mushrooms, grilled tofu, avocado slices and chickpeas tossed with the usual salad greens (Rs 500). The ingredients added a lovely crunch to the salad, making for a great mixture of textures. Topped with almonds and drizzled with tangy homemade vinaigrette, it was a great start to our meal and whetted our appetites for the main



OPEN FROM
8AM TO 3PM
5.30PM TO
8.30 PM

dishes.

I went for the Bent Fork Special Beef Burger (Rs 620), a juicy minced beef patty topped with tomatoes, greens, caramelised onions, crispy bacon strips and a sunny side up egg served between fluffy

buttermilk buns. With a side of fries, it perfectly satisfied my craving for a good Western meal.

My friend had the Veggie Delight Burger (Rs 580), made with a delicious patty combining potatoes, tofu, kidney beans, sweet corn and parsley, topped with

caramelised onions and served between buttermilk buns. A side of fries is served with every burger.

To round off our meal, we each had a drink to warm ourselves on a cold winter's day. I wanted to try the Cookies and Cream Hot Chocolate from their special Winter Drinks menu, but unfortunately its preparation required a blender, which could not work due to the power outage. However, the plain hot chocolate was good; the rich cocoa drink served with butter biscuits provided a sublime end to a satisfying meal.

Although the prices at The Bent Fork are a little steeper than your average joint, you don't mind the difference so much once you taste the good quality food here. Yuwei Lieu

How to get there: The Bent Fork is located inside the Heranya Hotel in Uttar Dhoka. The restaurant is closed on Mondays.

नागरिक संग भाग्य खुल्छो

मात्र रु. ३,८००/- मा
नागरिक राष्ट्रिय दैनिकको वार्षिक ग्राहक बन्नुहोस्
अनि जित्नुहोस्:

पक्का उपहार

रु.८०० - रु.१,००० जित्ने

साप्ताहिक

हप्तामा ५ वटा
LAZY SELFIE Smart Phone

- Beauty-fi software
- 8 MP with f2 aperture
- Android Lollipop 5.1

मासिक

vmoto ALIEN

- E-Scooter from VMOTO Australia
- High Climbing Capacity
- Top Speed: 60km/hr

बम्पर

Mahindra REVA e20

- Saves costs with zero spending on petrol and road tax
- Smart car that syncs with various smart mobile apps
- Easy city drive with smart body and power steering

विस्तृत जानकारीका लागि सम्पर्क गर्नुहोस्:

circulation@nagariknews.com, www.nagariknews.com/subscription तपाईंले आधिकारिक रसिद लिएर पत्रिका वितरण गर्ने व्यक्तिसँग पनि आफ्नो सब्सक्रिप्शन नवीकरण गर्न सक्नुहुन्छ।

काठमाडौं: ९८५१०३६५४९, ९८५१०४९२८८, ४२६८६५६/४२६५१००, Ext. २१०/२११, पोखरा: ९८४५११०७३४, चितवन: ९८४५१५१७३७, बुटवल: ९८४७४२६३८८, नेपालगञ्ज: ९८५८०२९९००, विराटनगर: ९८४२१६३५३६, वीरगञ्ज: ९८१६२९१७१०

I'LL SEE YOU IN MY DREAMS



It is hard to describe the ineffable qualities that make *I'll See You In My Dreams* such an indelible film. Aside from the poignant title, the initial summary on paper tends toward the banal: the film is about an older woman, Carol, played by Blythe Danner, the stunning, elegant mother



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

of Gwyneth Paltrow. In one of Danner's most captivating roles, we follow her character's placid retired life in California as it takes a series of unexpected turns.

Carol's days are occupied by bridge, golf, and numerous glasses of excellent Chardonnay. Her life is complete - she is busy with her activities and her inner life is rich,

complemented by an extraordinary sense of humour and a natural grace that sustains her through life's tragedies and comedies. Widowed for twenty years, Carol is adored by her only daughter, Katherine (Malin Åkerman), and her three long time friends: a hilarious trio played by June Squibb as Georgina, Rhea Perlman as Sally, and Mary Kay Place as Rona. It is when she begins an unorthodox friendship with the man who cleans her pool, Lloyd (Martin Starr), and attracts the attention of a very handsome silver-haired man named Bill (the dashing, ridiculously debonair Sam Elliott) that things start to get a bit screwy, albeit thankfully far more nuanced than the usual stuff of romantic comedies.

Blythe Danner embodies a woman with a beautiful mind. Her Carol has a generous heart, wit, and a luminosity that comes

from a shimmering, evolving intelligence. It is no wonder that *I'll See You In My Dreams* is so unforgettable when it is peopled by characters like her. The performance of the ensemble cast involving her friends, only child, lover, and beloved dog come in as close seconds.

It is rare to see a film that is honest about growing older, dealing with loneliness, and grappling with life's occasional, arbitrary callousness with a levity and profundity that carries the gravitas that these events deserve. The minutiae of life and how we deal with little dramas on a daily basis is the stuff of real importance when it comes to creating character - not our handling of life changing events, as we would like to think. It is not easy to romanticise the quotidian, and yet, those who deal well with the ordinary are often the ones who are at their best in the worst of times.

In a year of such mediocrity, I was delighted to find this gem disguised as a film about "older" people - an unfortunate subjugation of a seemingly generic film that transcends expectations. Do not mistake this as a film about and for older women. That would make you the intransigent, boring one. 🍷

 nepalitimes.com
■ Trailer 

HAPPENINGS



GOPEN RAI

LATE START: Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli unveils the reconstruction masterplan for Bungamati during the launch of National Reconstruction Campaign on Saturday



GOPEN RAI

WE QUIT: Madhesi representatives of the joint taskforce formed with the three big parties to prepare a deal, demand talks to be held at top political level at a press conference on Tuesday in Kathmandu.



GOPEN RAI

GRANTED: Swiss ambassador to Nepal Urs Herren and Lok Darshan Regmi, Secretary at Ministry of Finance shake hands after signing an agreement for a Rs 3 billion assistance for the education and agriculture sectors.



RSS

SNOW WHITE: The district headquarters of Mugu, Gamgadhi, blanketed in snow on Wednesday as the country felt the effect of the first westerly disturbance.



GOPEN RAI

FESTIVE FIESTA: Women from the Magar community celebrate Maghe Sakranti Festival with a traditional dance in Tundikhel on Friday.

M-Series Printers

EPSON
EXCEED YOUR VISION

Get the most
**ECONOMICAL
B/W PRINTERS** ever
Best for Office and
Commercial purpose



M200- PRINT / SCAN / COPY

M100- PRINT

Print upto
8000 PAGES
with initial starter ink kit



**JUST 12 WATTS
POWER
CONSUMPTION**



**UPTO 1 YEAR
OR 50,000
PRINTS**



**HIGH
SPEED
PRINTING**

MERCANTILE
OFFICE SYSTEMS PVT. LTD.
Authorized Distributor:
Hiti Pokhari, Durbar Marg
Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel: 1-4440773/4445920

Kathmandu Valley Dealers:
Lazimpat : 4410423, New Road : 4220058
New Road : 4227854, New Road : 4260173
New Road : 4222384, Patan : 5536849
Putalisadak : 4266820, Putalisadak : 4415788
Putalisadak : 4227474, Putalisadak : 4436307
Putalisadak : 4417050

Outside Valley Dealers:
Bareilly : 011-660888, Biratnagar : 021-538729, Biratnagar : 021-532000
Biratnagar : 023-540150, Butwal : 071-545399, Chitwan : 056-571764
Dang : 082-561022, Dhangadhi : 091-523601, Dhangadhi : 091-521392
Jankpur : 041-525565, Lahan : 033-561205, Mahendranagar : 099-523672
Nepalgunj : 081-527092, Pokhara : 061-525300, Surkhet : 083-522488
Tulsipur : 082-562575

Bribery in the Supreme Court

Tufan Neupane in *Himal Khabarpatrika*,
17-23 January

Chief Justice Kalyan Shrestha recently asked journalists not to write about corruption in the judiciary without solid evidence. He said: “If you print rumours about corruption, it will only help corrupt officials. We can take action only if such stories are written after a proper investigation is conducted.”

In the judiciary, corruption cases are always hush-hush. Justices, advocates, and administrative staff often hear of bribery cases but do not find enough evidence to expose the culprits.

But Shrestha now has something to dig into. A service seeker has claimed that she bribed three staffers of the Foreign Employment Tribunal, a court under the purview of the Supreme Court (SC), to forward her file.

Apsara Koirala, whose husband Chhatra Bahadur Shrestha, was arrested last year on



BHANU BHATTARAI

the charge of swindling migrant workers, alleges that the tribunal’s registrar, Kedar Poudel, and non-gazette staffers Narayan Prasad Sedhai and Ram Sharan Acharya demanded Rs 55,000 to forward her husband’s file. “I personally gave Sedhai Rs 15,000,” she said. “My cousin gave Acharya Rs 40,000.”

Shrestha is now in custody after failing to deposit bail of Rs 5.8 million. His wife, Apsara Koirala, wanted to offer her brother’s land in Dhading as bail guarantee.

Acharya has dismissed the assertion against him and his colleagues. “Her allegation is baseless,” he said. “We want a probe into her accusation.”

But Koirala says that even after bribing the tribunal staff, her work was not finished.

“After I gave them the money, they wrote to the land revenue office in Dhading to evaluate the land that I wanted to deposit as a bail amount,” she says. “Land surveyor Lekhnath Burlakoti demanded Rs 150,000 for this evaluation.”

Koirala complained to the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) about Burlakoti, and right after he accepted the money from Koirala, he was arrested. Burlakoti now faces a trial at the special court, but the CIAA has not shown any interest in investigating further allegations against the tribunal staff.

Now that Chief Justice Shrestha has the required evidence, will he look into allegations leveled against the tribunal staff? Koirala is waiting for the answer.



100 days in office

Book: Jokes

Podium: 1 Black market

0 Achievements

0 Relief

नागरिक

Robin Sayami in *Nagarik*, 19 January

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“I feel as though I was made to stand naked on the streets.”

Footballer Sagar Thapa in an interview with onlinekhabar.com, 20 January

A mother’s long fight for justice

Shova Shrestha in *setopati.com*,
17 January

सेतोपाटी

Devi Sunar has been waiting for 12 years to see the men accused of murdering her daughter, Maina Sunar, be brought to justice. Now that the district court has reopened the case, she is once again hopeful.

“I feel like my daughter has come back,” says Devi. “I have not cremated her yet. Her soul will now rest in peace.”

The case was put on hold two years ago as the defendants, former Colonel Bobby Khatri and three other army officers, never showed up at the court for seven years. Now with the court orders, the case will go to trial and a verdict will be reached even if the accused are absent.

Fourteen-year-old Maina was killed by the army as retribution for her mother’s vocal criticism of their involvement in the murder of her niece, Reena Rasaili. Accused of being a Maoist supporter, Reena was shot to death in her own backyard.

While other villagers suggested that the family cremate Reena’s body silently, Devi wanted a proper police investigation. Devi was determined to not go down without a fight to prove her niece’s innocence.

She sought help of advocate Govinda Bandi who with his colleagues visited the crime scene the very next day. Three days later, the story of what had happened to Reena was carried out by the media. Two days later, Maina was abducted by the



SETOPATI

army.

That day the army had come searching for Devi. Not finding her at home, they took away her two children - Maina and her brother. While Devi’s son was eventually let go, her daughter never made it back. Eyewitnesses say the soldiers thrashed Maina all the way to the barrack.

The next day, Devi went to the army’s Panchkhal Base, asking for her daughter. No one gave her any answer.

Since then, Devi’s search for her daughter and justice hasn’t ended. Then CDO of Kabhrepalanchok, Shambhu Koirala even told her: “The army has raped and killed your daughter. Don’t go looking for her anymore, save your son. Go home.”

Devi couldn’t believe the level of apathy displayed by the government. She

swore she’d fight for justice until the day she died.

As the army continued to look for her, Devi was forced to move to Banepa and then to Kathmandu. Meanwhile, Maina’s disappearance caught the world’s attention. Because of the wide press coverage of the case, Army Chief Pyar Jung Thapa agreed to meet with Devi and other human rights activists in Kathmandu.

“Give my daughter back,” Devi said upon meeting Thapa.

“Your daughter was killed back then,” admitted Thapa, for the first time. “Why are you still searching for her when we have given her body back to you?”

Hearing it from him, Devi was forced to acknowledge that her daughter was indeed dead.

The army then set up a court of inquiry to investigate the incident. Devi later received news that Maina’s death was ruled as extrajudicial murder and the accused Colonel Bobby Khatri, Captain Sunil Prasad Adhikari and Amit Pun were sentenced to six months imprisonment, fined Rs 50,000 and faced a ban on future promotions.

Devi felt the punishment wasn’t commensurate with the crime, so she decided to file a case in the civil court. She registered a complaint with the police, but the investigation went nowhere. During this time, with pressure from international human rights activists, Maina’s body was exhumed from Panchkhal barracks.

“I wanted her to be alive instead I found her skeleton,” says Devi, wiping her tears. “If Maina had indeed taken up arms, I wouldn’t be questioning the army’s actions. But Maina was just a child, how could they kill an innocent child?” Devi asks.

Five years after the incident, the case went to court but was put on hold after the accused managed to flee.

Devi now divides her time seeking justice for her dead daughter, and raising a new one, who was abandoned by her own mother. She has named the adopted daughter Maina.

Says Devi: “I feel like she is the reincarnation of my daughter. It is God’s way of giving back my daughter. So I live to bring justice to my daughter and bring this one up.”

British University Experience in Kathmandu

British Education. Global Opportunities. Local Cost.

A Centre of International Excellence

ADMISSIONS OPEN

- ▶ BBA
- ▶ BSc (Hons) Computing
- ▶ MSc International Management
- ▶ MBA (Executive)
- ▶ ACCA/FIA

Trade Tower, Thapathali, Kathmandu
T : +977 1 5111100/1/2
Email : info@thebritishcollege.edu.np
Web : www.thebritishcollege.edu.np

FOLLOW US ON

- [/TheBritishCollege](#)
- [/TheBritishCollege](#)
- [/the-british-college](#)
- [/TheBritishCollege](#)
- [/TheBritishCollege](#)
- [/TheBritishCollege](#)

BIG DELAYS IN

Across the country, hydropower and infrastructure projects are on hold as the blockade bites

SAHINA SHRESTHA

The \$1.5 billion Tama Kosi III in Dolakha would have been the biggest foreign investment project in Nepal. The Norwegian company Statkraft had been working since 2007 on the dam that would have generated 650MW of electricity for export to India when it was scheduled to be finished by the end of this year.

Last week, Statkraft decided enough was enough and backed out of the project. It cited bureaucratic hurdles, geo-political instability and fragile political situation – code words in investor parlance for corruption, India's reluctance to allow any other country to be involved in large hydropower projects in Nepal, and the blockade.

This came as a huge blow not only to Nepal's goal of finally exporting power to India, but also damaged whatever confidence foreign investors still had in the country. The Australian SMEC also pulled out of the export-oriented West Seti hydropower project in western Nepal four years ago after battling bureaucracies in India and Nepal for two decades.

Other foreign investment and aid projects in Nepal may not be leaving just yet, but they are facing costly delays due to disruptions caused by the earthquake followed by the blockade that has now lasted nearly six months.

The construction of the 456MW Upper Tama Kosi, which was to be completed this year to alleviate a ruinous power shortage, has been pushed back by at least a year. Other under-construction hydropower projects face similar delays.

"We need at least a year to catch up," Upper Tama Kosi project chief, Bigyan Shrestha told *Nepali Times*. Situated near the epicenter of the 12 May aftershock, the dam structure sank 7 cm, and the access road was heavily damaged by landslides. The project has been at a near standstill for seven months due to the earthquake and blockade.

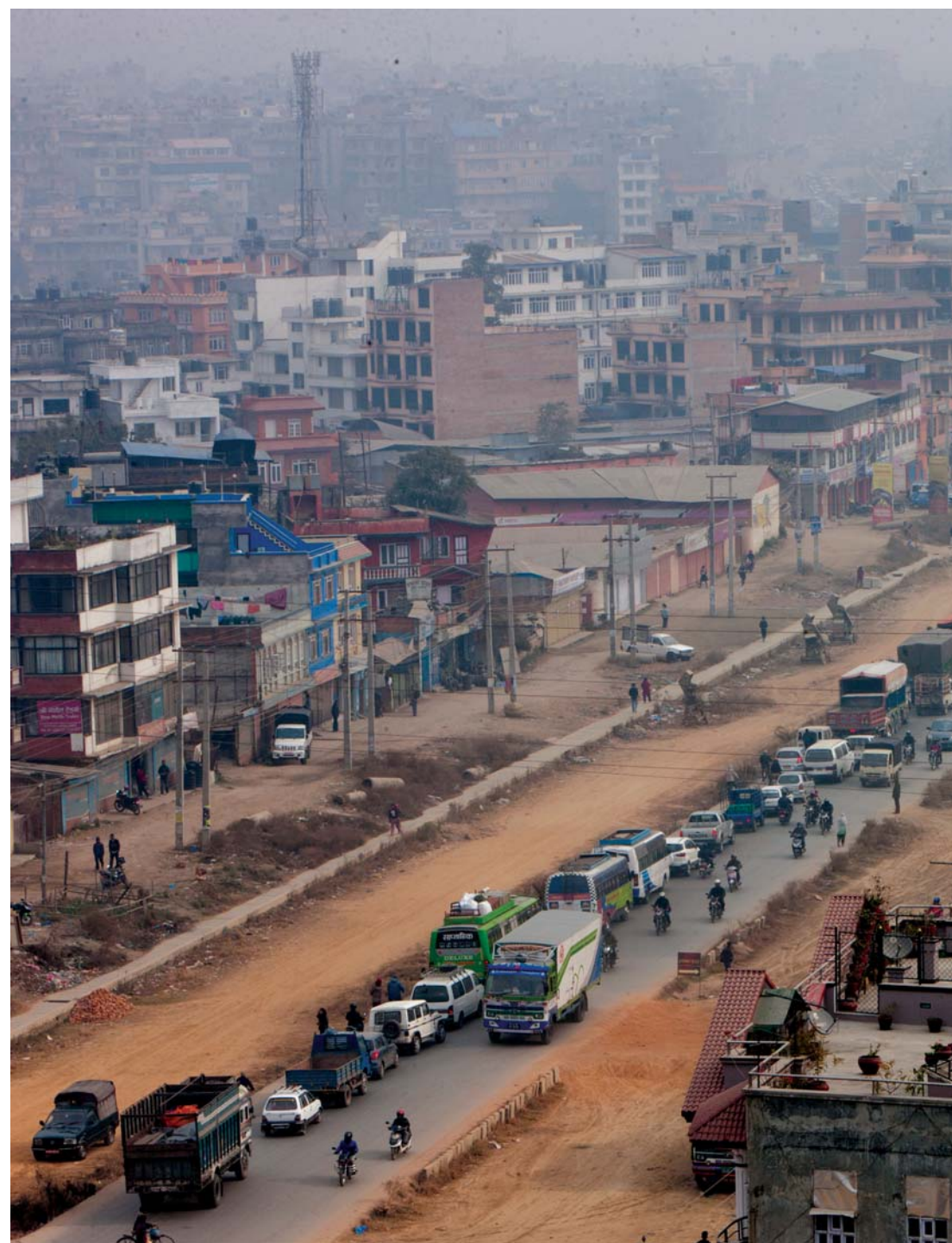
Work has resumed to repair the road to the powerhouse, but progress is slow. "We have only received 12,000 litres of diesel since November," says Shrestha, adding that the construction normally needs 50,000 litres every month. "We are managing somehow, but if this continues for two more months it will have a severe impact on the project."

Another big project, the 216MW Upper Trisuli I is delayed not because of the earthquake and blockade but because the Ministry of Energy is too busy firefighting the fuel crisis to sign the Project Development Agreement. While the Korean investors are eager to start, the government seems to be in no particular hurry.

"We are cooperating with the International Finance Cooperation but unlike the other countries, the Nepal government cannot multi-task," said Kim Joon Hyung of promoter, Korea South East Power (KOSEP).

Chameliya Hydropower Project in the Far-West is also facing delays. "Because of border blockade since September, we are having difficulties in supplying goods to the construction site," said Cho Sang Beom of Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power.

Meanwhile, the Melamchi Project to supply water to Kathmandu Valley which had been plagued by delays even before the earthquake has pushed back its completion date of October this year because of the fuel crisis. The Italian contractor Cooperative Muratori Cementisti (CMC) Di Ravenna



stopped construction after the earthquake and although some work resumed in September, it came to a halt again because of the diesel shortage. Only half of the 26.5 km tunnel is complete.

"By contract they are required to have

buffer stock and should not stop working without proper reasons. And although work has resumed now, the contractor is saying they may not be able to finish on time," explained Ghanashyam Bhattarai of the Melamchi Water Supply Development

Down, down, down

Four months into the Indian blockade, prices are soaring, the currency is depreciating and the economy is in the hands of black marketeers

OM ASTHA RAI



In August last year, as Madhesi parties began protests against Nepal's new constitution, Shiva Narayan Paswan (*pic left, with his family*) was one of the first textile workers to be laid off in Bara. The sole breadwinner of his family, he has been borrowing from friends to feed his family and is deeply in debt.

Paswan, 45, thought that the Madhes unrest would end and his factory would reopen soon. It has now been five months, and there is no sign of the blockade being lifted. There are hundreds of thousands of heads of households like Pasan across Nepal.

"Every morning I wake up with hope. But it just turns out to be yet another day of despair," he says sitting cross-legged on

BIG PROJECTS



BIKRAM RAI

Board. But even if CMC digs 1km of tunnel per month, the project which is supported by JICA, ADB and the OPEC Fund, will not be able to meet the project deadline and can be completed by April 2017 at the earliest. The construction of the Gautam Buddha

International Airport to serve Lumbini had just started with much fanfare in early 2015 when unrest in the Tarai brought everything to a grinding halt. “We will need at least six months to catch up with lost time even if the fuel

a mattress outside his mud and bamboo house. “No one is willing to lend me any more money.” His wife, Jitani Devi, added: “We sometimes sleep hungry. My little children shiver with cold, but we do not have money to buy warm clothes for them.” In the industrial corridor of Bara and Parsa, which was the flashpoint of violence in August and September, nearly all the factories closed down putting 100,000 workers out of their jobs. FNCCI estimates that the blockade has cost the industrial sector Rs 2 billion a day, forced the closure of 2,000 factories and over 200,000 workers have lost their jobs. “Now, just calculate how much money we have lost in the 150 days of Madhes agitation,” says FNCCI President Pashupati Murarka. “It’s a huge amount.” For an economy already reeling from the earthquake in April, the Madhes agitation and the blockade since mid-September has been fatal. Some checkpoints are opening but the Birganj border through which Nepal gets 70 per cent of its fuel imports from India is still blocked. “Some businesses are adapting to the crisis buying fuel in black-market,” says Murarka. “But

many remain either closed or only partially operational.” An estimated 700,000 people have been pushed below the poverty line, inflation is soaring and the currency is depreciating. “It is mostly low-income people who are losing jobs and paying more for food and fuel,” says Dipendra Purush Dhakal, a former Nepal Rashtra Bank governor. “In this kind of situation, women and children always suffer the most.” Dhakal fears that the malnutrition rate, which Nepal has successfully brought down,

could rise again if the current economic crisis continues. “We are now just looking at the economic impact of the blockade,” he says. “Its impact on our social indicators will also be very costly.” The Central Bank published the financial review of the first five months of the current fiscal year (mid July-mid December) this week, painting a grim picture of Nepal’s economy. The inflation rate has increased to 13.4 per cent in Kathmandu, it is now 10.2 per cent in the Tarai, but the actual

price rise could be much higher. The blockade has hit Nepal’s external trade, too. Revenue collection is down by 20 per cent, and it is now impossible to make up for loss in the remaining months of the current fiscal year. Income of service sector has shrunk by nearly 43 per cent. Not even five per cent of budget allocated for capital expenditure has been spent. “The loss of revenue will affect overall development,” says Dhakal. “If this situation persists, it is likely that the government

will have no money for national priority projects and social programs like elderly allowance and child immunisation.” The trade deficit has narrowed, balance of payment has improved and foreign currency reserves have increased because of the blockade, but economists say this is not a good sign. “Our stock of foreign currency has increased because we haven’t been able to import essential commodities,” says economist Keshav Acharya. “This is nothing to be proud of.” The political crisis may end any time with a deal between the ruling and the agitating parties, but the impact of the economic crisis will be long-term. Acharya says: “This crisis has discouraged investors. They will be thinking at least twice before investing money in Nepal.” Murarka of the FNCCI says: “Once the blockade ends, all the political parties must sign a written commitment that they will not target economic activity in future. And they must prove that they mean it, otherwise bringing back investors will be very difficult.”

With input from Suresh Bidari in Bara



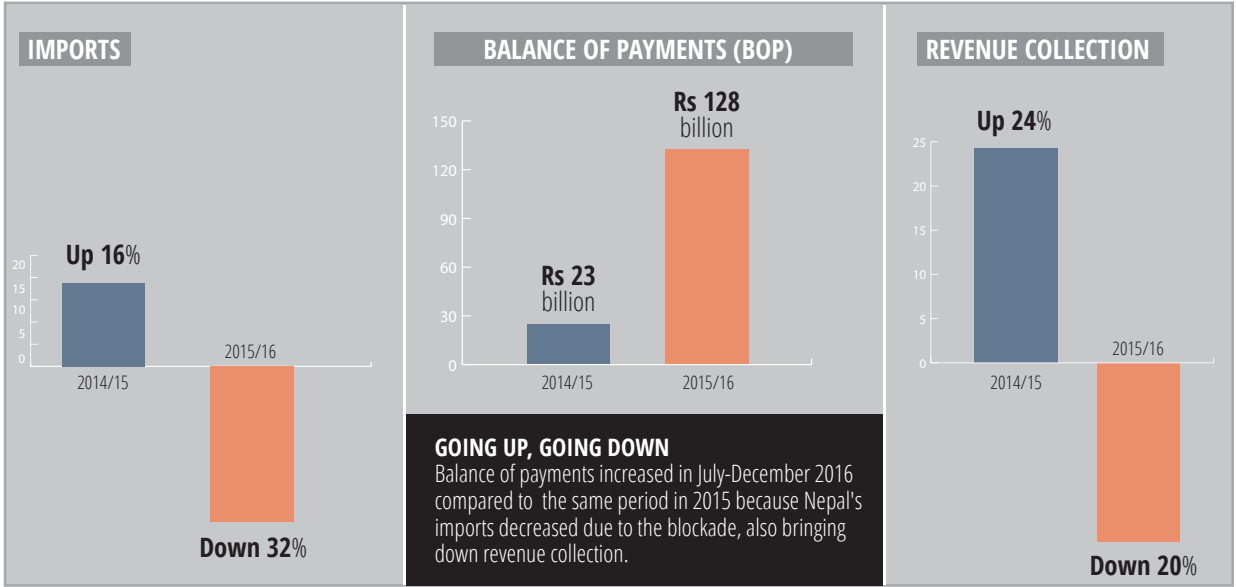
STANDING STILL: The Chinese-aided Ring Road upgrade project has been at a standstill for seven months because of the earthquake and blockade (left). The Kathmandu Airport runway extension work (above) as well as other hydropower and infrsatructure projects around the country have been at a standstill since September.

situation is back to normal,” Project Chief Om Narayan Sharma said. The project gets 12,000 litres of fuel every week, whereas the same amount is required every day at normal times. The other aviation project facing delays is the upgrade of Kathmandu Airport, where the runway, apron and taxiway expansion was supposed to be completed by March this year. Construction had resumed after the earthquake when the Spanish contractor Constructora San Jose stopped work citing difficulty in accessing raw material and lack of fuel. Only 15 per cent of the work in the ADB-supported project has so far been completed. “The government and the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal are 100 per cent behind the project. It has been delayed because of the contractor,” said Devananda Upadhyay, General Manager of Tribhuvan

International Airport. The other project in Kathmandu that has come to a standstill is the Chinese-aided Ring Road expansion from Kalanki to Koteswor. “We would have completed half the work by now, but the Shanghai Construction Group says it can speed things up and the project will be completed on time if fuel and construction material is available,” said Ashok Tiwari, the former head of the project. Work has resumed on Manahara Bridge, which contractors say can be finished in four months if there are no further disruptions. The fuel shortage has affected even telecom companies like Ncell, which used to have a dedicated electricity supply for its servers, but now has to use its diminishing stockpile of diesel. More than 13 million mobile users will be affected if its servers go down. Likewise, construction of five star hotels including Shanker Group's DoubleTree by Hilton has been temporarily put on hold.

nepalitimes.com

Interactive Map



SOURCE: NEPAL RASTRA BANK'S FINANCIAL REVIEW 2015-16

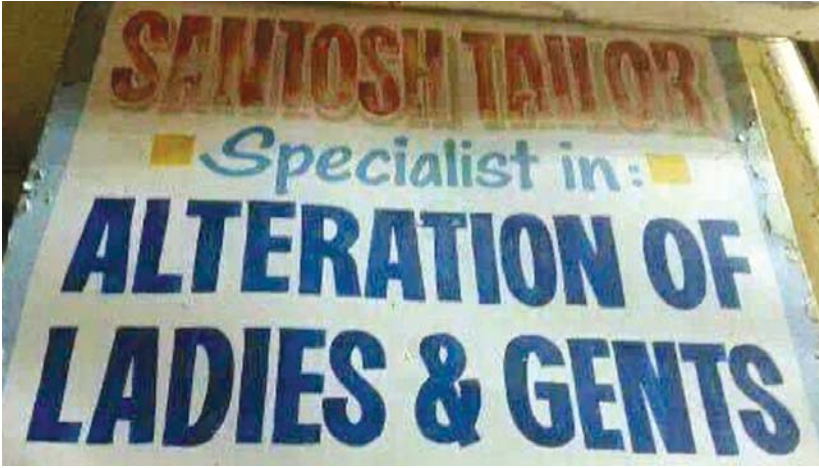
Black humour during blackouts

Now that we are being told unofficially that the officious blockade being officiated by officialdom will soon be semi-officially lifted through the good offices of the Home Office we might as well start getting used to more normal pre-blockade times here in Nepal all over again. Pity, because we had just invested a considerable amount of time and energy getting used to this quasi-blockade.

Luckily for those of us who will soon be longing nostalgically for the five months of blockade, rest assured that normal times in Nepal means we will still have periodic LPG shortages. We will go on having to line up for two days to buy petrol every time NOC fails to pay IOC. We will continue to have 15 hours of power cuts every day. National prestige projects will be indefinitely delayed, blockade or no blockade. Transformers will keep on exploding from time to time. And those of you raking it in by unofficially bringing in contraband petrol through the Thori Jungle need not worry since smuggling has always been the mainstay of this country's economy and will stay that way for the unforeseeable future. As long as this country is run on black market and black magic by black-listed blackguards we will continue to be blackmailed and have blackouts. In fact, it will be hard to tell the difference between a blocked Nepal and an unblocked Nepal.

And thank goodness for that. The Ass was starting to get all worried that we'd all have to get used to buying a full LPG cylinder off the shelf at Bhaicha's Store around the corner for the normal price without chaining the cylinder to a sidewalk railing for three days. Or that we could just drive up to Sajha and fill up the Yamaha with a full tank of petrol in 45 second flat. And what would we do if we couldn't ride on the roof of buses, or secretly chop down the last remaining community forests for firewood?

I know we are already three weeks into the new year, but as the geo-political checkmate drags on



and PM Oliji refuses to see that the game is up, the Ass has taken the trouble of listing all the possible scenarios that could transpire in this great nation of ours in 2016:

1. Pee-Em Khadga Prasad will continue in Balu Water and keep us all entertained with his black humour during the blackouts.
2. BRB's New Force will be like the Old Force except without the 'C' word in it, but he will continue to be the Dictator of the Proletariat.
3. The indecisive Morcha-Gobblement talks will continue inconclusively till December punctuated at regular intervals by very many near-breakthroughs and false alarms.
4. In a desperate bid to dominate the media, PKD will try something spectacular like making a pilgrimage to Kasi and saying he was for Nepal being a Hindu state all along which was why he carried out so

- many human sacrifices.
5. SuKo will conduct the four-day Kangres Konvention 2016 while fast asleep and still be re-elected Party Prez.
 6. We will resurrect the monarchy, and restore the Malla Dynasty.
 7. The country will announce an international tender bid for a management subcontract to run the country for five years. GMR will win the bid and restore Terrible International Airport (TIA) to its past glory.
 8. Nepal will have a trade surplus with India after April because of a dramatic increase in our exports of gin, rum and vodka to The Dry State of Bihar.
 9. After lifting the make-believe blockade, India will re-impose a real blockade around mid-August, but it won't tell us why and we will have no way to knowing what we did wrong. Maybe it will be just to teach KPO a lesson for going to China first. Or maybe not.
 10. Prez appoints an Ass as the next prime minister.

There is no guarantee any of this will really happen, of course, but the least we can do is hope. Last one out, please turn off the lights. Oh, I forgot, there are no lights.



The Ass

PAST PRESENT FUTURE

DIWAKAR CHETTRI



Routers - Switches - Security - Servers - Voice - Video - Collaboration

Call us at 5555659 or email at info@nexussolutions.com.np

- Rainwater Harvesting System
- BioSand Filter
- Greywater Recycling
- Wastewater Treatment System

GPO Box 13989, Campus Marg, Chakupat, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur, Nepal
P: +977-1-5261530, 5260506
info@smartpaani.com
www.smartpaani.com

PROUD WINNER OF SURYA NEPAL ASHA SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP AWARD

Save Energy. Huge Saving in Electricity Bill. Switch to Oppla LED Lightings.

Also Available : LED Bulb, LED Tubes, Downlight, Spot Recessed and Panel Light.

88% Energy Saving & FLICKER FREE

Asia's Largest LED Lighting Solution Now in Nepal

Authorized Distributor For Nepal: G.P. Trading Concern, Kathmandu, Nepal, Phone: 01-4242317, 4261456

For Trade Inquiry: 9801148744, 98011487558
Showroom: Oppla Lighting Store, Putalisadak, Kathmandu