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#811

3 - 9 June 2016

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CATCHING UP

On a sweltering morning this week, a village in Mahottari was humming with excitement. Women and children from the Dalit Musahar community jostled for space in a tractor trolley. Manaki Sada was holding a feast to celebrate her son's success in school exams.

Sanjay Sada had become the first Musahar in his village to pass the SLC exams. Although it is the home district of Education Minister Giriraj Mani Pokhrel, the literacy rate here — as in other eastern Tarai districts — is 46 per cent, much lower than the national average of 65 per cent. All schools were closed

for six months last year during the Madhes agitation. When the exams were finally held, many nervous students fainted. "They were under pressure because they hadn't finished preparations," said Dipak Shakya, Principal of Birganj Public College.

Madhesi parties are now focusing their agitation in Kathmandu, but students face a shortage of textbooks in the minister's own district. Ministry of Education's Hari Lamsal's response is emblematic of the government's buck-passing: "We are embarrassed, but what can we do if the state agency supposed to print textbooks does not finish in time?"

In the Tarai districts with low literacy rates, teachers, students and their parents were expecting a special education program, particularly after last year's disruptive Tarai agitation. But the government failed to fulfil these aspirations. Instead, Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel last week allocated merely 11 per cent of the budget for education.

Santa Gaha Magar in Mahottari

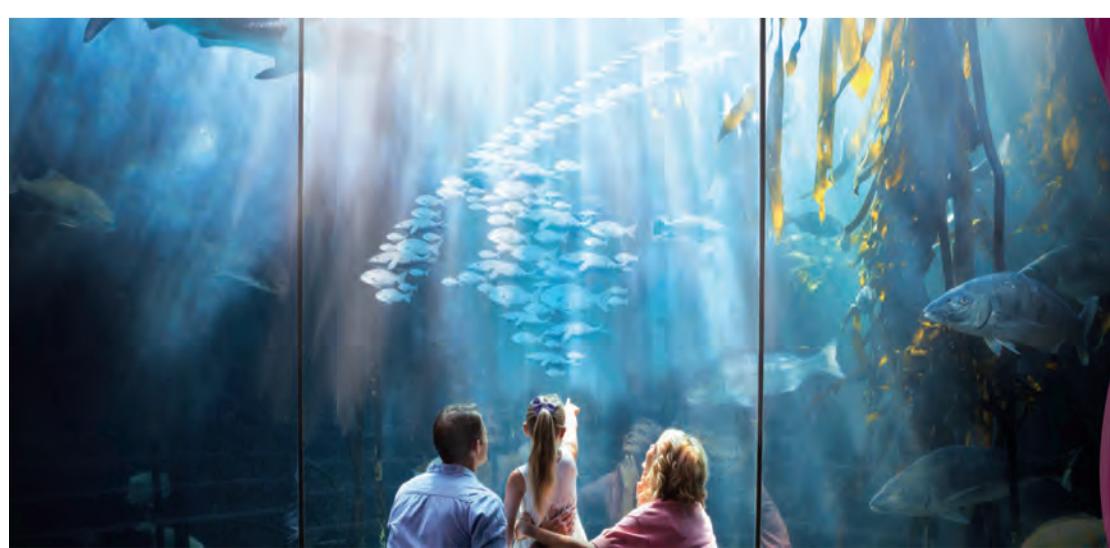
The game goes on

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BY NAVIN JHA
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SHARAD JOSHI/ICIMOD



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CLIMACTIC CHANGE

Green is not just the colour of the environment, it is also the colour of money.

As another Environment Day comes around on 5 June, you can be sure that our commitment to clean air, green cities and lean living will be confined to token rallies in which school children once again will be dragooned to carry placards along Kathmandu's roads. In the afternoon, a smattering of ministers will attend half-hearted functions in which they will read meaningless speeches to almost-asleep invitees. And that will be it until the next Environment Day on 5 June 2017.

And yet, the past 12 months have been a reminder to us in Nepal that disasters are not only of the earth-shattering kind — there are slow-moving crises like the climate calamity affecting us. It is not as immediately dramatic, but the warming earth is reaching a tipping point with almost certain catastrophic impact on the Himalaya and everything downstream.

This year Nepal suffered an unprecedented drought, and the only reason we haven't heard more about it is that it affected the country's poorest and remotest mountain districts of the far-west. Entire villages have been abandoned as people move to the cities in search of a means of survival.

In central Nepal, the onset of pre-monsoon rains has ended the drought, but springs have dried up because of the subterranean impact of the earthquake on aquifers. In this edition, photographer Kishor Sharma profiles a village in Dhankuta that has no water at all, and where households spend entire days ferrying water up the mountain from the Tamor River (*pages 8-9*).

To be sure, droughts are nothing new to Nepal. Monsoons have frequently failed. But there is evidence that climate change is making weather patterns significantly more erratic, leading to extreme rainfall events and prolonging droughts.

If successive national governments had been more proactive in rigging up irrigation systems and putting in place drinking water schemes, they would have addressed a chronic problem that has been made far more acute by global warming.



KUNDA DIXIT

Across Nepal, we see that villages with efficient and accountable leadership have been successful at lessening dependence on rain-fed agriculture. Today, they are the ones better able to cope with climate change. Unpredictable weather is only the latest hardship that Nepalis have to face, and has undoubtedly exacerbated all other existing problems markedly.

Climate change 'adaptation' is now a buzzword for governments, international agencies and NGOs in their fund-raising efforts. But in reality climate change has only brought to the fore existing structural problems of governance that render farmers vulnerable.

Then there are the overarching regional problems of longterm water shortages brought about by global warming. As we see in a special report in this issue (*pages 14-15*), over one generation the glaciers in Nepal and Tibet have receded, snowlines have moved up the mountains, and hundreds of lakes have appeared out of nowhere and are in danger of

bursting. ICIMOD researchers in Langtang this year observed the thickest spring haze ever.

There is reason to believe that not all of the melting of Himalayan glaciers is the result of global emissions, but is also caused by the deposits on the snowfields of soot particles from industries, crop and forest fires. Ironically, the forest fires were more widespread this year because of a prolonged drought, itself induced by global warming.

True, snow and ice get all the attention for Himalayan climate scientists, and the reason is that they are so strikingly visible. Weather gets less attention because its correlation with global warming is not yet conclusively proven, so scientists are reluctant to blame greenhouse gases in the atmosphere for the frequency and intensity of storms, droughts or cloudbursts.

Climate change overshadows all other crises, and is often seen as a stand-alone problem which has to be 'mitigated' or to which people have to 'adapt'. In fact, the rural poor of the Himalaya have always had to mitigate and adapt, and to cope with the underlying factors keeping them poor. The basis of their vulnerability is political neglect, but the reason they have to leave their homes today is environmental. Archetypal political corruption and patronage that disregards the environment in sand and boulder mining, or in quarrying the Chure make people there poorer.

The poor lack choice. If there is no rain, there is no irrigation canal to fall back on. If the springs run dry, they have to vacate their homes. When food runs out, they migrate to India. Nepalis will become increasingly more destitute because climate change will reduce their choices. They lacked options long before anyone knew the globe was warming — they have always had to deal with uncertain weather on their own. Now they also have to adapt to an uncertain climate.

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

our politicians. They have always forced us to live in the dark ages.

Umesh

MUSTERING UP ENERGY

The article ("Mustering up energy to face the future", Om Astha Rai, #810) does not explain why almost all hydropower projects are delayed in Nepal. Corruption is rampant in the energy sector.

Politicians and bureaucrats always seek cuts. But the article fails to shed light on this issue. It is good to have hope and dreams, but it is even more important to identify and remove the impediments to development projects.

R Oonta

■ We should not only keep in mind the Indian market when we build mega-hydroelectric projects. Even if India refuses to buy Nepal's surplus electricity for political reasons, we can use it to accelerate our economic growth rate. The more energy we consume, the more prosperous we become.

Biswas Shrestha

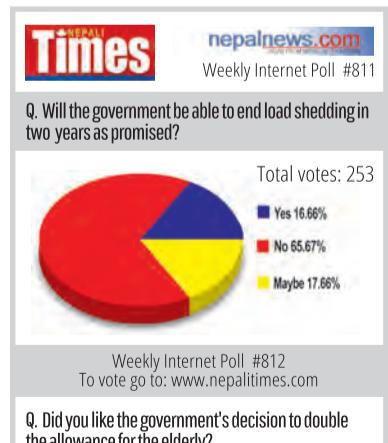
■ Why not tap both solar and hydropower potential at the same time ("Private

sector lead in solar grid system", #810)? Prices of solar panels are coming down, and it would really be a boon for Nepal's remote villages that are not yet connected to the national grid.

Eira Trovonen

■ Building hydropower plants is expensive, and takes years. Solar is a cheaper and immediate source of energy. However, we should be investing proportionately in both these sectors for a healthy energy mix.

Sarah Stacpoole



THIS WEEK

Most reached on Facebook
Radha Krishna Gharti, senior veterinary technician of Central Zoo, carries the tranquilised leopard which had entered a home in Kuleswor on Wednesday. The leopard was translocated to Shivapuri National Park. (17,783 people reached)

Most shared on Facebook
Facebook Live interview with Kunda Dixit on the 15th anniversary of the royal massacre. (28 shares)

Most popular on Twitter
Future power house of South Asia by Sujit Acharya (29 retweets, 39 favourites)

Most visited online page
Three kings in four days by Kunda Dixit (1,018 views)

Most commented
Future power house of South Asia by Sujit Acharya

The game goes on

The Madhesi parties want to keep agitation in slow boil until the Oli coalition falls

A week ago Prime Minister K P Oli sent a letter to the Madhesi Front calling for negotiations on their demand for constitutional amendments. Madhesi leaders, preoccupied with their street protests and in a bit of disarray themselves, ignored it.



MAKING IT PLAIN
Navin Jha

Oli had hedged his bets and met Madhesi leader Mahant Thakur, formerly of the Nepali Congress, before sending the letter. Thakur had suggested the prime minister send a formal invitation calling for an all-party meeting. As it turned out, Madhesi leaders boycotted the meeting anyway, voicing varying reasons.

The real question is why the Madhesi Front has not bothered to reply to Oli's letter. One line of reasoning is that it believes the lifespan of the Oli administration is limited and will not last more than a month. In fact the Madhesi parties are ready to join any coalition that will help bring down the present Maoist-UML coalition. But they have also been coy and said they do not want a berth in any future government.



Sources inside the Madhesi Front believe the time is not right for it to join the government after the six-month strike and blockade, and the month-long protests in Kathmandu. A hunger strike is planned in Kathmandu from next week.

The Kathmandu media has been rife with speculation that the agitation is losing steam, but Madhesi leaders say it is their tactic to join forces with Janajatis and wait for the Oli government to implode from within.

"We have decided that the

Oli government is not going to budge and respect our demands, so we will wait for it to be brought down from within," one influential leader told me. "We sat for dozens of meetings, but the Oli government went back on its word. We felt humiliated."

The so-called 'gentlemen's agreement' for Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal to replace Oli after the budget is unravelling. And there may be a power struggle within the coalition that will lead to a change in government. Madhesi leaders feel it is better to let that game play itself out, while keeping the momentum on its low-intensity street protests.

It is after the Kathmandu power games bring out a new leader that the Madhesi groups are expected to move on the demands for constitutional amendments, the central among which is the issue of the two-province Tarai model that will include five contentious districts in the east and west.

Here, the Nepali Congress's role will be critical. The NC is trying to woo the Madhesi electorate, and a Tarai-based leader from the party said last week he has sympathy for the Madhesi demand of two provinces encompassing the entire plains. This is a major departure from the NC's stated demand for north-south provinces.

One Madhesi leader summed it all up: "Let's wait for the Oli government to fall, then watch and see how the political map of this country will change. The game goes on." ☎

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Three kings in four days

15 years after the massacre that marked the beginning of the end of Nepal's monarchy

KUNDA DIXIT

It was the quiet before the storm. Pedestrians were hurrying home, motorcyclists drove down dark streets. In the hush of twilight in Kathmandu, there was the sound of distant thunder. Filaments of pink lighting illuminated the western sky as a pre-monsoon storm approached.

It was the evening of Friday, 1 June 2001. Kathmandu had been seeing a series of shutdowns organised by ever-bickering political parties, in the countryside the Maoist conflict was intensifying. Disillusionment was growing over democracy.

Page 1 of that morning's edition of *Nepali Times* had a cartoon by Subhas Rai of the strikes paralysing the country. The editorial was titled 'God Save the King' and analysed the Maoist ban on the royal national anthem in schools. On page 15, a translation of a piece by Kishore Nepal in *Naya Sadak* titled 'A Suitable Prince' described the discord within the royal family about Crown Prince Dipendra's choice of bride.

Little did we know that the editorial and the discussion about Dipendra's marital plans were harbingers of the tempest and



tragedy that were to engulf the country that evening.

At 9:30 pm, we got reports from Lazimpat of shots being fired in the direction of the royal palace. Only a few thousand people in Kathmandu had mobiles which had just been introduced, and they started ringing. The first thought in everyone's mind was that the royal palace was being attacked by the Maoists.

King Birendra had been shot, Queen Aishwarya was dead. Other members of the royal family had been rushed to Chhauni Hospital. A helicopter was trying unsuccessfully to find a gap in the storm to fly out to Pokhara to bring back Prince Gyanendra.

We cross-checked, tried to verify what we were hearing, but



decided that the story was too important to risk getting it wrong. At 1:30 am on 2 June we finally put up the first item of news on our website: at least six royal family members had been killed, we quoted a source as saying that the crown prince had shot everyone and then himself.

In the morning, many in Kathmandu were still unaware of what had happened, and gathered on street corners tuned to radios that were broadcasting mournful music. State media, instead of trying to quell rumours, went silent.

At Chhauni, seven royal family members were now dead. Dipendra was in a coma, Prince Dhirendra was struggling for life. The government was in disarray,



no one knew who was in charge.

An official announcement finally came in the afternoon of 2 June that said King Birendra and Queen Aiswarya were dead, but did not say how they died. It proclaimed Dipendra king, and Gyanendra regent. After Dipendra's funeral, Gyanendra was named king and he addressed the nation on television promising the people a "thorough investigation".

The funerals and Gyanendra's enthronement took place even as protests raged through the capital despite curfews. Nepal had had three kings in four days.

The probe team finally came out with its preliminary findings two weeks later, saying Dipendra was responsible. But the people, who had been lied to

and denied accurate information, did not believe the government when it finally told the truth. The *Nepali Times* printed its own investigation based on interviews with eyewitnesses and doctors, including a piece by Upendra Devkota, the surgeon who tried to save the lives of those in Chhauni.

By the end of May 2001, things had been coming to a head in the secretive royal family. Dipendra knew he had to get agreement on his marriage, and invited all clan members to the palace on Friday, 1 June. He is said to have phoned his uncle.

There is no evidence that Dipendra invited everyone because he wanted to kill them all. Family members later told us he probably just wanted to be king so he could do what he wanted, but appeared to have run amok after shooting his father and uncle.

To this day, most Nepalis do not believe the official account of what happened: that Dipendra killed everyone and then killed himself. As with the Kennedy assassination and the death of Princess Diana, the conspiracy theories will perhaps always be with us. ☺

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Menswear galore
Indian clothing brand Indian Terrain inaugurated its first brand store in Labim Mall, Pulchowk. The store houses a collection of cotton and

INDIAN TERRAIN

linen shirts, polo t-shirts, chinos and khakis, offering customers a wide range of men's clothing.

Celebrating success
To celebrate the worldwide success of its Mate 8, Huawei has announced reduced prices for these models in Nepal: Mate 8, Gr5, Gr3, Y6 Pro, Y6 CDMA, Gplay Mini, Y6 Gold, Y5c and Y3c.

Triveni in Jamal
Consumer electronics company Triveni Byapar opened a new showroom in Jamal. The store will offer a wide range of products from brands like Samsung, Symphony, Panasonic and Sansui, and will also have its in-house brand Yasuda.

Heritage month
Ford Motor Company with GO Ford, its local partner in Nepal, is holding its annual Heritage Month in June. To commemorate the company's 113-

The rain event
Sherpa, a Nepali adventure gear company, announced a monsoon sale

on all its products. The sale, slated to start on June 3, will last until June 10.

year history, it will offer special prices to customers and also host an anniversary event during the month.

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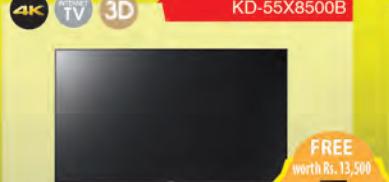
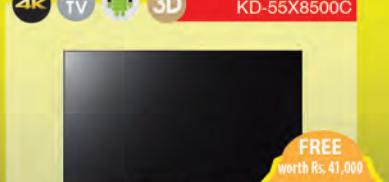
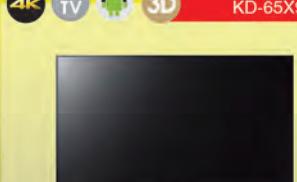
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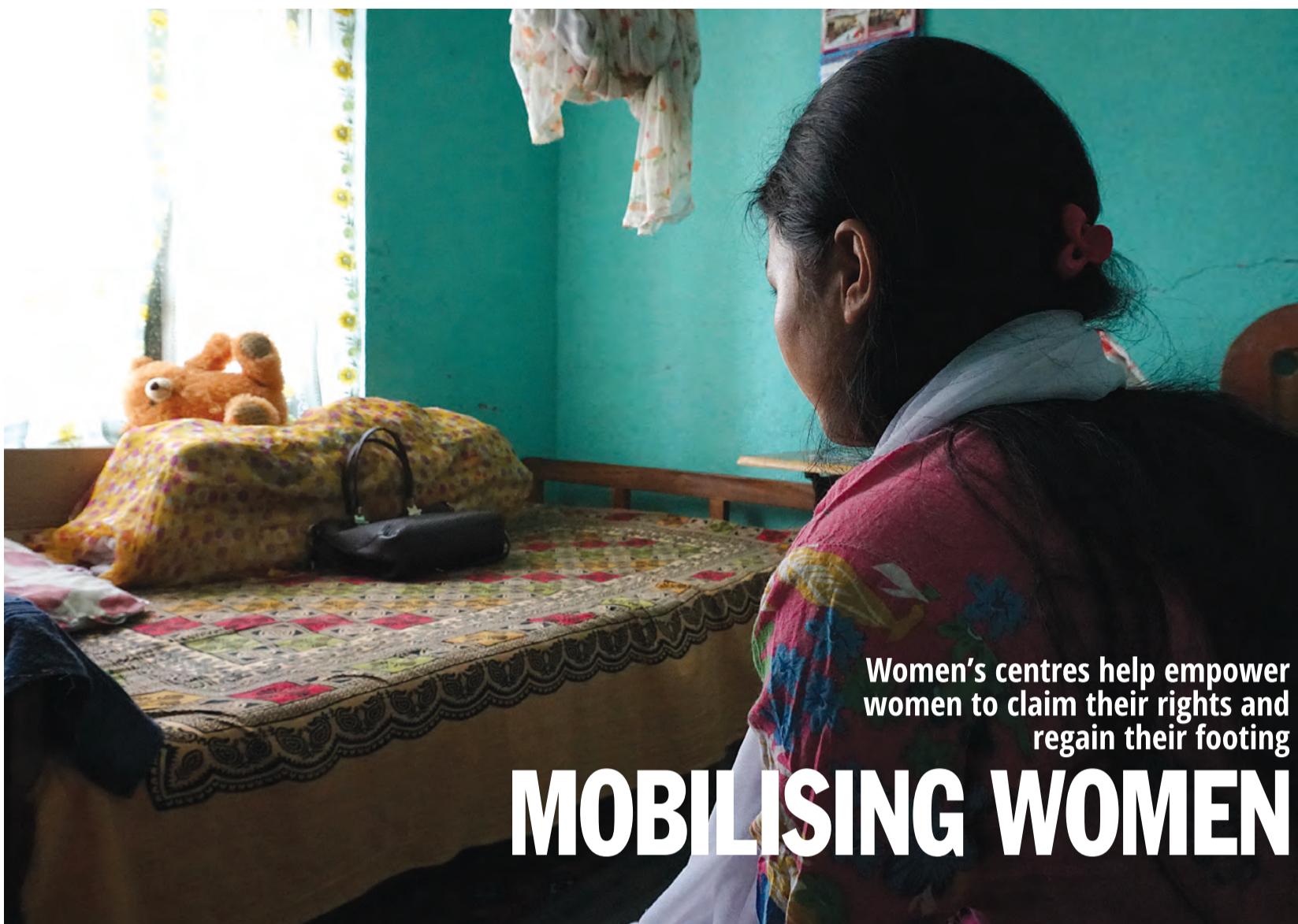
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Women's centres help empower women to claim their rights and regain their footing

MOBILISING WOMEN

PICS: AYESHA SHAKYA

AYESHA SHAKYA

Sita Rajbhandari*(above) was home alone in Taruka, Nuwakot when her cousin's father-in-law attempted to rape her. Instead of keeping mum and letting it go, Rajbhandari was adamant that the perpetrator be brought to justice. But the district police headquarters refused to file her case. Acting under pressure from political parties affiliated with the assailant, the police tried convincing her to settle the dispute without going through official channels.

Determined to get justice, Rajbhandari approached the Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) for help. Within a few hours Rajbhandari had registered her case.

"The police told me that I was wasting my time and that WOREC would not support me later. They told me organisations like WOREC would come and go but I would have to live here and deal with my problems alone," says Rajbhandari.

Over the past year, thousands of vulnerable women like Rajbhandari have been assisted by women's centres run by organisations such as WOREC. Established by UN Women in partnership with women's groups, these multi-purpose women's centres have been operational in Kavre, Sindhupalchok, Nuwakot, Gorkha and Kathmandu districts, and are geared towards vulnerable women such as widows, disabled women and women from low-income backgrounds.

The centres provide a diverse range of services, including psychosocial counselling, trauma assistance, legal advice and information dissemination.

While women like Rajbhandari approach the women's centre directly for assistance, a large portion of cases have been registered through social mobilisers

deployed in the community.

"As social mobilisers, we need to create a homely environment so that women who approach us feel comfortable in opening up to us," says Manisha Thapa, a social mobiliser working with WOREC.

Before meeting Thapa, Rajbhandari was almost coaxed out of her decision.

"I was told I would be given Rs 10 lakhs for social projects, including roads, to be completed in my name. Even my parents were ready to settle if the perpetrator apologised. But I refused because I knew that only the law would make this right," says Rajbhandari.

Thapa not only assisted



SUPPORT SYSTEM: Social mobiliser Geeta Basnet (second from left) talks to women in Bhattagaun, Nuwakot.

Rajbhandari with legal procedures but also counselled her, giving her the opportunity to share about her struggles and helping to boost her morale. While waiting for her SLC results, Rajbhandari is now learning sewing from the Chori Sanstha, a vocational training centre.

"I have been able to regain my confidence because of Manisha-didi's help. I wouldn't have been able to reach this stage without the guidance provided by the women's centre," says Rajbhandari.

According to Thapa, 78 cases have been filed in Nuwakot itself, 48 of which are related to domestic violence. Facing abuse from her husband and in-laws, Rama Gurung* left her home and moved to Bidur to live with her daughter. As an ex-Maoist cadre recruited at the age of 13, Gurung only received basic education and had no means to make a living.

"Joining WOREC last year encouraged me to start something on my own. So I took out a loan of Rs 90,000 and started my own lassi shop. On a good day, I get 20 to 25 customers. Although it is hard, it helps me pay my rent and raise my daughter," says Gurung.

However, much work remains to be done. Gurung is still fighting for full custody over her daughter, and Rajbhandari's assailant remains free after being detained for only six days.

"Although the final verdict is still pending, her assailant is back in the village. Since Sita will have to return to the village, we still need to plan how we can support her," adds Thapa.

*Names have been changed

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The pre-monsoon storms are taking a small breather. But don't be fooled, there is plenty of water vapour in the air and there is enough of an afternoon thermal updraft from the baking north Indian plains to drive them up the mountain, cool off into enormous cumulus systems sometimes rising to 50,000ft. When the precipitation occurs, that is when the static electricity sets off terrific lightning storms. From here on, the westerlies will fight a losing tug-o-war with the south-westerly monsoon which, contrary to its name, will approach us from the south-east. More on that next time.

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The Nepali special effects makeup artist who took the internet by storm

Shreejana's world of make-believe

SMRITI BASNET

Dressed in a black gown, adorned with life-like prosthetic wings and horns, Disney's iconic villain Maleficent re-surfaced in a video on the internet earlier this month. Only this time, it was not the work of Hollywood professionals but a Nepali special effects makeup artist Shreejana Shakya (right).

"I've always felt the need to experiment, to keep trying to come up with something new," said Shakya who is perhaps the first special effects makeup artist in Nepal. The video made for California's Cinema Makeup School was shortlisted in the top five for her makeup and costume design, through public voting.

An entire month of arduous planning and conceptualising culminated in a four-minute video.

Shakya uses locally available products to make complex designs and costumes, which is why they stand out. "I tried bringing in products from abroad but no one would agree, saying they would only export items in bulk so I decided to do it my way," explained Shakya.

Bold, unconventional and innovative, her artwork garnered popularity in less than

a month. Combining both artistic and technical elements, Maleficent's wings were made out of foam covered in fabric to resemble feathers while its armature was made by using plyboard, a door lock and a backpack strap to make a harness to keep the wings upright. For the horns, Shakya used wire rings covered in paper mâché.

A graduate of fine arts from Kathmandu University, for the 26-year-old the realisation that she wanted to become a makeup artist came late in her teens. A science student in her high school days, her mother wanted her to be a doctor. It was not her cup of tea so she switched to the arts and soon discovered a world brimming with ideas and innovation.

"I can't work when boundaries are created, I like it when I am given the space to experiment and exercise my creativity," said Shakya.

Over the years, she experimented with 3D surfaces, wall paintings and artworks centred around human faces and bodies. Gradually, teaching herself through trial and error, she moved on to armatures and prosthetics. "I always thought I would not limit myself to the canvas, so I kept on trying different surfaces and mediums," said Shakya.

Her desire to excel took her to Japan



PAWAN JOSHI

how far I could push myself," said Shakya.

Other works include special effects makeup in videos of metal rock bands like Underside, Shadows and Arogya done during her time at the Fuzz Factory Productions. Use of tissue paper and eye glue to resemble ageing skin for prosthetic hands, corpse painting, and mixing red and black ink as a substitute for blood capsules are recurring materials in her work.

"I tried my very best using household products, but I don't think it will work in the long run. As much as I love creating stuff, I feel I have reached a limit beyond which I cannot go," said the artist who will soon leave Nepal to study special effects makeup in California.

For someone who is just starting out and is new to the industry, she wants to return with skills and products needed back home. Said Shakya: "The movie industry in Nepal will eventually evolve and with it the demand for special effects makeup will rise."

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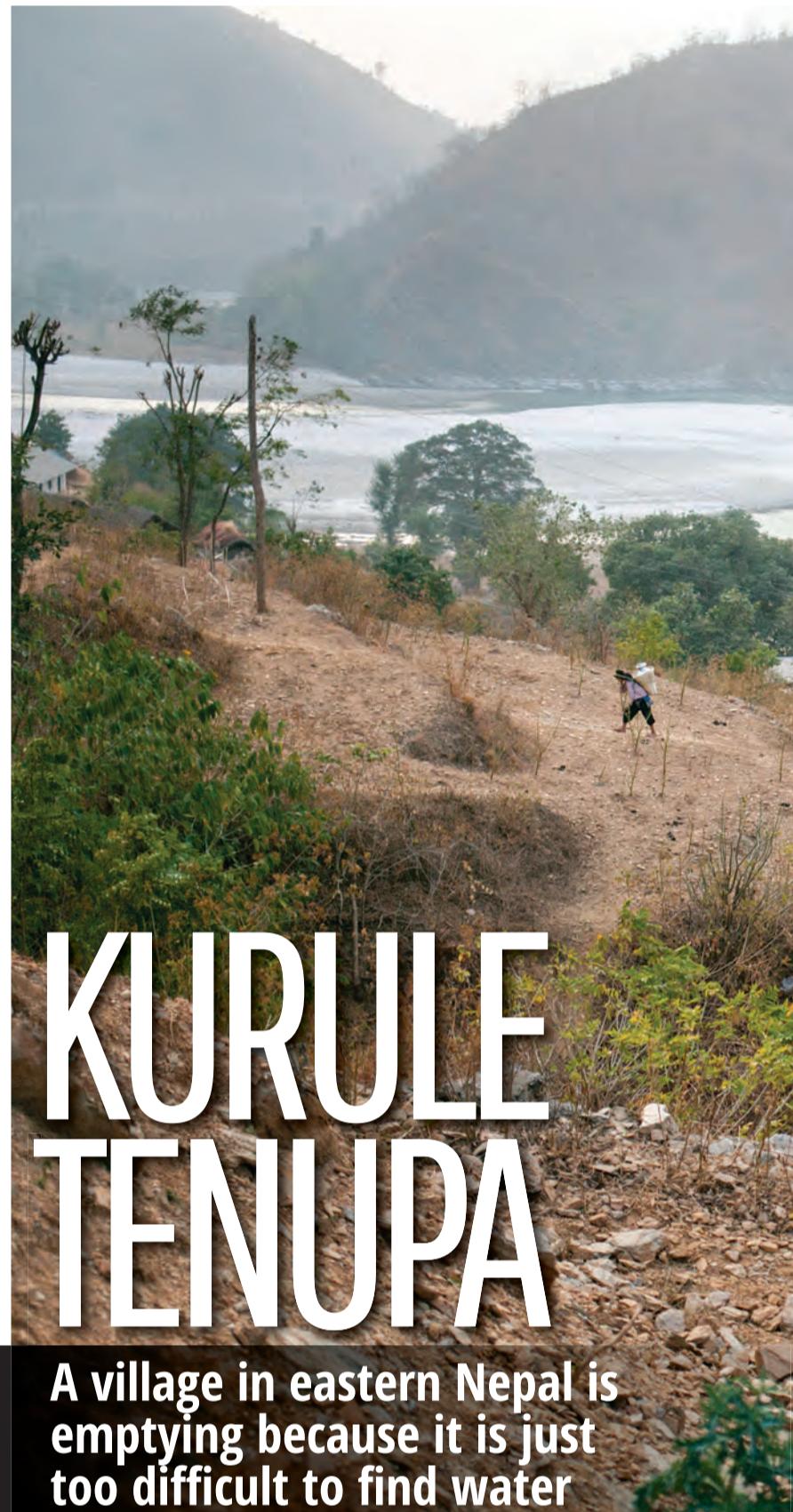
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Man Kumari Tamang, 24, with her daughter Srijana, 4. Srijana has a congenital heart problem, and when Man Kumari is not taking care of her she is fetching water up from the river.



Although the Tamor is nearby, because there is no pump most villagers spend the entire day fetching water.



KURULE TENUPA

A village in eastern Nepal is emptying because it is just too difficult to find water

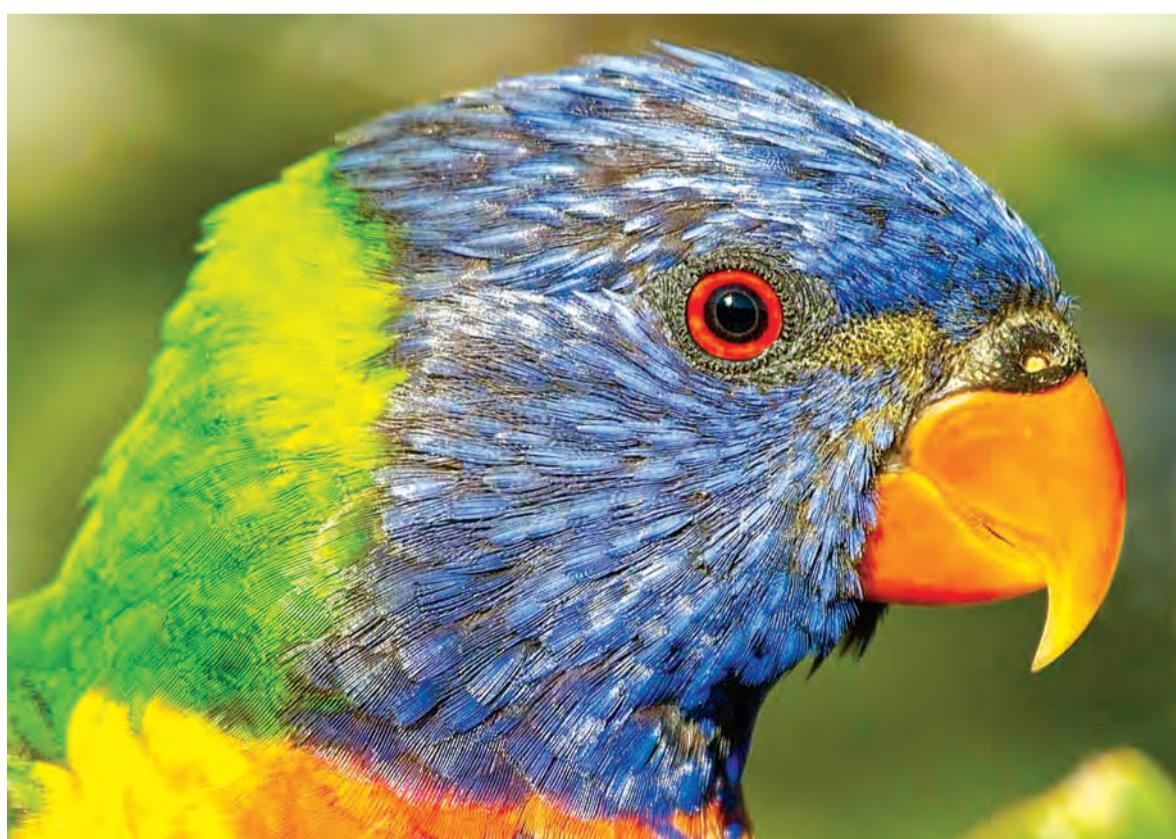
PHOTOGRAPHS BY
KISHOR SHARMA
IN DHANKUTA

The cool blue waters of the Tamor flow tantalisingly past the parched village of Kurule Tenupa here in Dhankuta district in eastern Nepal, but villagers have to make multiple

trips daily to carry the water up the mountain on their backs.

The village got its first drinking water supply 30 years ago. But the 18 km pipe from a faraway spring requires repairs and barely meets the needs of the village clinging to mountains that rise from the river bank at 730 m to a high ridge at 1,500 m.

For the Dalit and Majhi communities living along the river to



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A woman fetches drinking water from the Tamor River in Kurule Tenupa, one of several trips she makes daily.

the Tamang settlements above, the scarcity of water is now yet another hardship they have to cope with. This year, the drought and erratic weather have left the region parched and brown. Springs and ponds have dried up.

"It takes up to 20 minutes to make a single trip and we have to make at least 10 trips a day," says Som Maya Majhi.

In the past two years 154 families have left the village, and there are only 38 households left. One of the main reasons is the scarcity of water.

"If I don't get to the well by 3 o'clock in the morning it takes hours to fill my water jar, there is only one well left and even that is drying up," says Buddhiman Bishwokarma.

Although villagers are worried that more neighbours are locking up their homes and leaving, they have a faint hope some of them will return one day. Says 80-year-old Padam Prasad Ghimire: "If there was a project to bring back water, I think people will return."

Supported by the 2015 photo.circle grant program



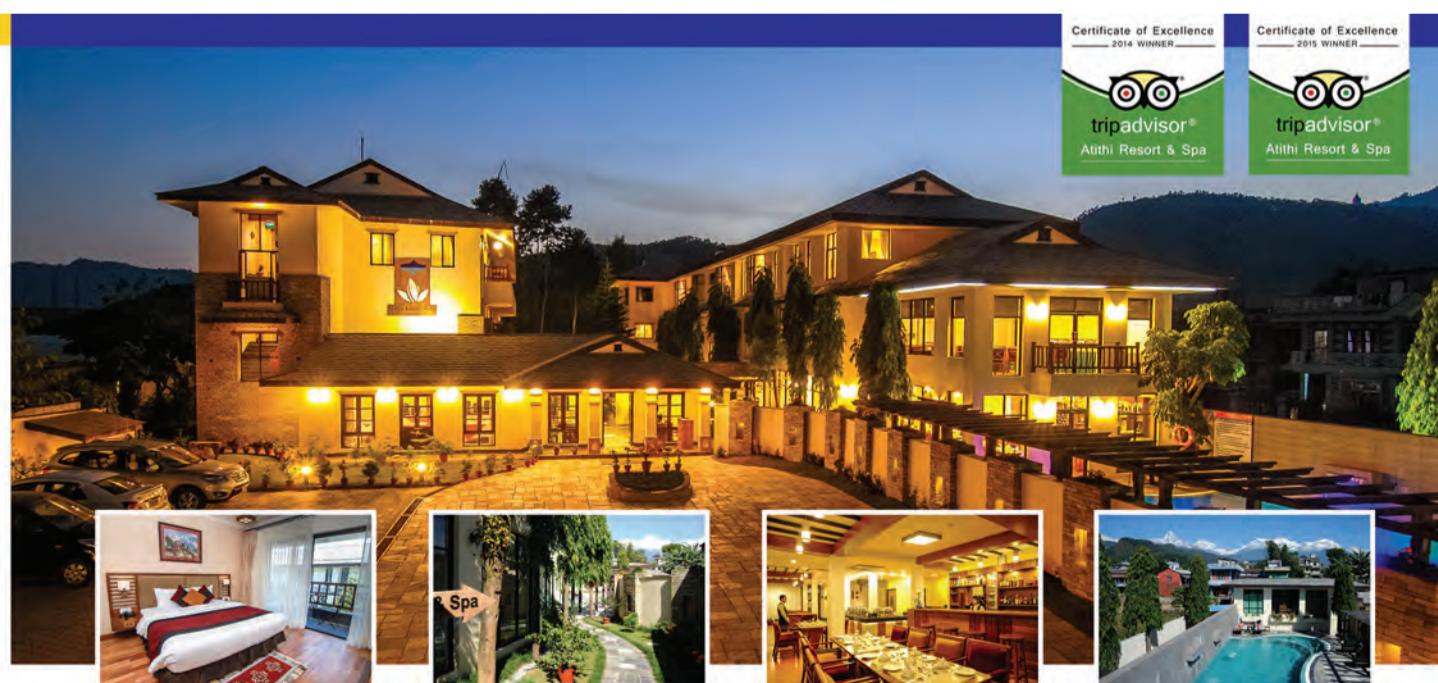
Purnima Tamang, 73, has to carry water because the only tap in the village doesn't have enough water.



More than 150 springs in Kurule Tenupa have dried up, and even the Bhale Pokhari pond has no water.



Even near the river, farming is entirely dependent on rain water. Villagers in this parched land wait eagerly for the monsoon rains.



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EVENTS



Celebrate nature,

This World Environment Day, join the masses as they come out on the streets to mark the day dedicated to Mother Nature.

5 June

Climate Change,

Attend a photography exhibition on climate change by photographers Kishor Sharma and Narendra Mainali. More on pages 8-9.

3 to 5 June, 9am to 4pm, Nepal Tourism Board, Bhrikutimandap

Go organic,

Get your hands on fresh farm produce, juices, coffee and all things organic at the Farmer's Market in Bu Keba.

4 June, 7am to 12pm, Bu Keba, Lalitpur, (01) 5524368



The Little Prince,

Don't miss out on Studio 7's musical based on A.S. Exupery's famed novel *The Little Prince*.

27 May to 12 June, 7pm onwards, every Friday to Sunday, Hotel Vajra, (01) 4271545, Rs 1000 & Rs 500 (for students)

Basketball in wheelchairs,

Cheer six male and three female teams on as they participate in a wheelchair basketball league championship organised by ENGAGE, with the support of the Swiss Embassy and Turkish Airlines.

Until 9 July, Army Physical Training or Sports Centre-Lagankhel, 9813053115, info.engagenepal@gmail.com or engagenepal@gmail.com

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KRIPA JOSHI



DINING



Hyatt Regency,

Enjoy a sumptuous four-course meal with wine as a perfect complement, at the Rox Restaurant.

3 June, 6.30 to 9.30pm, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, Boudha, 9802050429

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Music and art,

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Rs 200, 4 June, 6.30 to 9.30pm, Base Camp, Jhamsikhel, 9818204874

Top of the World Festival,

Join the Top of the World Festival at Jiri with music and art, held in celebration of Buddha Jayanti.

Tickets available at www.rocknrollnepal.com.
4 to 5 June, 11am onwards, Jiri, Dolakha



Tribute to Slayer,

Vomiting Snakes gets together with some of the big names in the Nepali music scene to pay tribute to the late Jeff Hanemman, Slayer's guitarist.

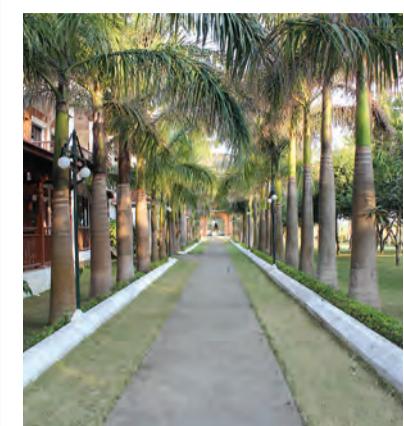
18 June, 2pm, Purple Haze, Thamel, Rs 300 (advance sale), Rs 500 (door sale)

Rock'estival,

Veteran music artists come together with newcomers in the industry to relive the glory days of rock and roll music.

Rs 1,500 (advance sale), Rs 2,000 (door sale),
4 June, 7 to 11.30pm, The Victory Lounge, Durbar Marg

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Under the able direction of Srijana Subba, it's the women who take centre stage in *Yuma*, currently being staged at Mandala Theatre. In a theatre scene where strong female characters are often conspicuously lacking, *Yuma* comes as a breath of fresh air, with a mostly female ensemble re-enacting a story revolving around gender roles in society.

In Limbu mythology Yuma is the ancestral goddess, the ever-powerful and nurturing mother of the universe and the teacher of civilisation, who was a rebel. In a male-dominated world where women are relegated to the back seat, she represents the power of everyday women. In the play, the audience encounters women who seek and finally find their individual identities and freedom in spheres where patriarchy reigns.

As the lights dim and the hall comes alive with music, the audience is introduced to five women - Yuma, Manji, Khusbu, Tanuja and Ruby, each with her own distinct personality and life story - walking the stage and dancing to the beat.

Yuma (Subba) is a wife and a mother struggling to come to terms with accusations and abuse from her suspicious and controlling husband Sundar (Sulakshan Bharati), who is employed abroad. She yearns to escape from his



OPEN RAI



stifling and relentless dominance over her, but is initially too meek to take the first step.

Manji (Pashupati Rai) is a guerilla-turned-communist lawmaker. She was married to another communist guerilla during

the war but got divorced as societal and familial pressure built up against their inter-caste marriage.

Khusbu (Sarita Sah) is a soft-spoken, former Kamlari who was enslaved by a judge. Finally free, she longs to return to her family after making something of her life. Together with Ruby (Ranjana Oli), a young student, they run the Ladies Corner - a quaint little café, where women can speak and move without restraint.

The entire play takes place in one set - the café - which has a separate table reserved for men, symbolising from the very beginning that it is the women who rule the roost here. The story picks up pace with the introduction of

YUMA

Rangeen Raag (Ankit Khadka), a charming, flirtatious musician smitten with Yuma. As the two slowly find lust (and perhaps share love), the sub-plot delves into the interplay between the female characters and Lokesh (Jiwan Bhatarai), a lawyer trying to help Tanuja (Kenipa Singh) break away from her cruel and abusive husband.

Whether it is Yuma leaving both her husband and her lover to live an independent life, or Tanuja finally having the courage to retaliate against her husband, the play brings to light the plight of the wives of migrant workers, and draws attention to the oft-suppressed realities of domestic violence and slavery.

What saves the play from being a clichéd attempt at defining or glorifying female liberation is the presentation

of the story by the director and actors. First-time director Subba not only plays the eponymous character with finesse, but has selected the actors commendably; their roles appear tailored for each of them. Rai's portrayal of Manji Rana Magar, the idealistic communist, is noteworthy, as are the performances by Bharati and Singh, who shine despite their short stage time.

Writer Yug Pathak gives the audience characters and a story that are accessible and thought-provoking, but the occasionally dense and literary dialogue tended to weigh down the play.

From the use of *Silamsakma* as doors in the set, to stories on Shahbaz, the royal falcon, and the apt use of music, the audience gains a subtle introduction to Limbu culture.

All in all, *Yuma* is a laudable attempt, by women, to showcase the daily realities of women's lives.

Sahina Shrestha

Director: Srijana Subba

Writer: Yug Pathak

Cast: Srijana Subba, Pashupati Rai, Ankit Khadka, Sulakshan Bharati, Jiwan Bhatarai, Laxmi Bardewa, Kenipa Singh, Sarita Sah, Sandesh Lamichhane, Ranjana Oli and Binita Gurung

Duration: 80 minutes

Mandala Theatre, runs till 12 June (except Mondays), 5.15pm (additional show on Saturdays at 1pm), Rs 300 (Rs 200 for students), 014249761

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X-MEN: APOCALYPSE

As the ninth film in a long-running and fairly even franchise, it is already apparent from the title that the writers who conceived the story for this instalment knew they were skating on thin ice. After all, the last film "X-Men: The Days of

Oscar Isaac) who was buried by his followers in an attempt to quell his unscrupulous, nihilistic powers in an opening scene that is fairly jaw-dropping but alas, also perhaps the best in the entire film.

You will have to be fairly current with your knowledge of what is happening in the X-Men universe to follow this film's nuances (of which there are way too few). In a nutshell, after "The Days of Future Past", when Magneto (Michael Fassbender) made headlines by trying to assassinate the American president so that he could take over the world and give mutants a fair chance, Charles Xavier (James McAvoy) has retreated back to his Arcadian mansion to teach and counsel his "gifted" pupils. Wolverine (Hugh Jackman) is nowhere to be seen, and Jean

Grey (played by Sophie Turner of "Game of Thrones" mega-fame) has just begun to try to master her formidable powers under the careful watch of Xavier.

There are always a few important characters, even with such a vast, yummy, ensemble cast (the gorgeous Rose Byrne reprises her role as CIA agent Moira MacTaggert; I rest my case), that keep us hooked to these films, and in this case, it is the charisma of McAvoy, Fassbender, and Jackman (who has one short but significant scene) that continues to rivet us with their good looks and easy camaraderie.

Unfortunately, the one-dimensional aspect of the bad guys, and repeated lapses of Magneto, despite his troubled past (Auschwitz survivor, separated from parents, tortured) begin to pall, and this viewer at least, despite Fassbender's dark, tortured handsomeness, is a bit fed up of his latest antics that are another indicator of the writers casting about for substance within an overdone cliché that is only just saved by a few laughs, our love of certain characters, and the introduction of some new, promising faces.

Jennifer Lawrence's sullen reprise as Raven/Mystique is an indicator of how tired the X-Men have become. Even the skilled hands of Bryan Singer (in his third time as franchise director) cannot really inject that hard-to-pin-down bit of fun into a plot that any child can guess at.

nepalitimes.com

■ Trailer



MUST SEE

Sophia Pande

"Future Past" (2014) also dealt with a near-apocalyptic scenario—but then again, which film in the genre these days doesn't?

So, yet again, "X-Men: Apocalypse" is about a baddie who wants to destroy the world. This time it is a 2,500-year-old mutant called En Sabah Nur (played by an unfortunately disguised

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HAPPENINGS



POWER SUMMIT: Prime Minister KP Oli with (from l-r) Sujit Acharya of the Energy Development Council, US ambassador to Nepal Alain B Teplitz, vice-chair of the National Planning Commission Yubaraj Khatiwada and Radhesh Pant of the Investment Board Nepal at the opening of the Nepal Power Investment Summit 2016 in Kathmandu on Tuesday.



TALKING FINANCE: Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel chats with ex-Finance Minister Ram Sharai Mahat before the parliamentary debate on the new budget on Tuesday after two days of house obstruction by the main opposition NC over the budget leak row.



FREE MAN: Bihar police with Birganj-based Nepali industrialist Suresh Kedia (left) at a press meet in Raxaul on Monday after he was kidnapped and taken to India last week.



LEFT WINGER: Prime Minister KP Oli dribbles the ball during a friendly football match between the PM XI and the Chief Secretary XI at Dasarath Stadium on Sunday.



I WON: Bed Bahadur Sunuwar of the Nepal Army comes first in the Full Marathon Open Category of this year's Tenzing Hillary Everest Marathon at Namche Bazar on Sunday.

In the name of the people

Hari Gautam in *Himal Khabarpatrika*,
15-21 May (Centre for Investigative
Journalism)

हिमाल
भारतपत्रिका

After the end of the Maoist war, most displaced families returned to their villages but Dhan Bahadur BK had to abandon his village in Rukum district, not because of the war but because it ended.

One morning in 2010 four years after the ceasefire, BK was harvesting his wheat crop when his neighbour Tauke Kami stopped him, claiming to be the rightful owner of the land BK had been tilling for the last six years.

In 2004, BK had bought the land for Rs 173,000 from Rane Kami. The sale was not registered at the local Land Revenue Office, but at the local Maoist parallel government. With the signing of the peace deal in 2006, all the land transfers authorised by the Maoist government became invalid. Rane Kami was still the owner of the land he had sold to BK, and he sold it again to Tauke Kami. This time, the transfer was duly registered at the government office.

When BK refused to leave the property, Tauke Kami lodged a case against him at the Rukum district court. The court declared Kami as the rightful owner, and BK left the village. He now lives as a landless squatter in Khalanga.

BK repeatedly requested Baburam Bhattarai, who was the chief of the Maoist government, and Janardan Sharma, a top Maoist leader from Rukum, to help him regain his property. "But they did not understand my problem," he says. "I regret trusting the Maoists."

In Rukum district alone, at least 3,500 families are in danger of losing their land titles of property bought during the war.



HARI GAUTAM

"The court doesn't recognise land titles given by the Maoists," explains advocate Yakka Bahadur Pandey.

People throng the local Maoist party office every day, complaining that they have lost their land titles. Gopal Sharma, a local Maoist leader, admits that people are suffering because land ownership certificates distributed by their war-time 'parallel government' are not considered valid.

The fifth of the nine points of a deal that Prime Minister KP Oli signed with UCPN (M) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal early this month is about this issue. In return for Dahal's renewed support for his government, Oli has agreed to validate land transfers made during the war.

Says Sharma: "The party failed its people. It is up to the leaders at the centre to find a solution."

The District Development Committee of Rukum formed an all-party taskforce to solve the problem, which failed because most of those who had sold their property

AFTER WAR: After being evicted from the land that he had bought under the so-called 'People's Government' of the Maoists, Dhan Bahadur BK now lives in Khalanga, Rukum.

during the war denied the transactions.

In January 2012, the Maoist government led by Baburam Bhattarai decided to validate the registration of conflict-era land transactions his party made. But the Supreme Court, acting on a writ petition, quashed the government's decision. Ironically, the UML, which has now agreed to validate conflict-era land transactions to save its government, had disrupted Parliament to oppose the Bhattarai government's decision back then.

Says UCPN (M) district member Birkha Bahadur Bista, who was one of the chief land transfer administrators of the Maoist parallel government in Rukum: "The locals who trusted us are now in big trouble. It is the fault of our leaders who took the decision and are now unable to implement it."

2 congrats

www.mysansar.com, 30 May

m मेरो संसार

When Nepal celebrated its ninth Republic Day this week, only two countries felicitated the government in Kathmandu. The Nepali media reported the message sent by one country, but the other country's message was not made public by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The country whose message to Nepal was made public was none other than the People's Republic of China, but the other was not India. Neither was it the US or the UK. The countries with whom Nepal has always maintained diplomatic relations did not bother to congratulate the Nepali people on 28 May – the day when Nepal officially turned from a monarchy to a republic in 2008.

The second country to congratulate Nepal on 28 May was the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea). Although the Nepali media did not cover North Korea's message, the official North Korean news agency KCNA published brief news about it:

Greetings to Nepalese President

Pyongyang, May 28 (KCNA) — Kim Yong Nam, president of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of the DPRK, Saturday sent a message of greeting to Bidya Devi Bhandari, president of the Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal, on the occasion of its national day.

There could be three reasons why North Korea's Republic Day message to Nepal was not made public in Kathmandu.

First, Republic Day is not mentioned in the message, which says 'national day'. Second, it is against protocol because it was not the North Korean President Kim Jong-un but the North Korean Assembly President Kim Yong Nam who sent the message to Nepal's President Bidya Devi Bhandari. Third, Nepal probably does not want to celebrate its relations with North Korea, which has been the target of international sanctions for its nuclear weapons program.



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हेटौडा	१८४८४२२००९,	१८५८८३४८८०
चपुर	१८४५४६३६३७,	१८०२९१६२६४
लालबन्दी	१८०४८९२१२२०	१८१४४९९६३१

When melting mountains



KUNDA DIXIT

Already at risk from global warming, last year's earthquake amplified existing hazards in the Himalaya

After the earthquakes last year, even as reports of death and destruction were coming in from remote villages, scientists worried if the jolts had weakened glacial lakes in the Himalaya formed by global warming melting the ice and snow.

An international effort immediately got underway to inspect rivers for landslide damming and assess damage to the terminal moraines

of glacial lakes. The results showed that although extensive, landslides were much less serious than anticipated, and that the tremors had not increased the risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs).

"The absence of any large GLOFs following the earthquake and aftershocks was very fortunate," concludes a recent report by the Kathmandu-based International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD). "But the relatively limited damage caused by this earthquake should not be taken as an indication that damage from a possible future large earthquake would be



"Mountain people paying

Director David Molden of ICIMOD (pictured, right) spoke to Nepali Times after a recent visit to the centre's climate research station in Langtang.

Nepali Times: What was the most visible impact of global warming in Langtang?

David Molden: There is nothing like a field visit to really experience the dramatic signs of glacial retreat — a stark reminder of the consequences of climate change. All 105 glaciers in Langtang Valley are retreating. The side and end moraines of Lirung, Langshisha and Shalbachum glaciers clearly mark the maximum extent of the glaciers during the Little Ice Age which were much greater than what is visible today.

One striking image was the thick brown haze, which we noticed even at elevations between 4,000 to 5,000 m. The ICIMOD research team had never seen such intense haze at high elevations. This was probably a result of increasing air pollution in the region, plus numerous forest fires we have recently experienced.

What does ICIMOD research show about how serious this problem is in the



Himalaya and Tibetan Plateau?

Our work so far has shown that Himalayan glaciers are highly sensitive to ongoing and future climate change, and we have measured continuous glacial retreat since the start of ICIMOD's glacier monitoring program. Except for the Karakorum in Pakistan where some of the glaciers are actually advancing, glaciers are in retreat

for agriculture and hydropower. Also, since glacial retreat can lead to the formation of lakes retained by fragile moraine dams, part of our work consists of monitoring the formation and stability of outburst-prone lakes and the hazards of glacial lake outburst floods.

Could glacial retreat just be part of a natural cycle after the last ice age?

Decades of climate change study have conclusively found that human emissions of greenhouse gases from burning fossil fuels and biomass are by far the strongest driver of current climate change. These greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere and alter the Earth's energy balance. As a result, the increased temperatures have resulted in greater melt rates, higher snowlines, and glacial retreat throughout most of the Himalaya. While glacial retreat may have started at the end of the Little Ice Age, it is incorrect to suggest that the current retreat is only due to what you call natural cycles.

It seems too late to mitigate climate change, do you agree that we should

across the Hindu Kush-Himalaya and Tibetan Plateau.

While glacial retreat is a spectacular indicator of global changes, ICIMOD's focus is on the impact of these changes in terms of livelihoods, ecosystem services and the environment. Research is directed toward understanding associated changes in the amount of downstream water availability

shake



PICS: JITENDRA BAJRACHARYA / ICIMOD

similarly low."

The Nepal Himalaya is one of the most densely-populated mountain regions in the world and is already exposed to the effects of climate change like floods, landslides and avalanches. The fear is that these risks could be exacerbated by earthquakes like the ones that struck the country last year.

Of the 489 glacial lakes in Nepal and China that were studied, only nine were found to have been affected by the earthquakes. However, there were many avalanches in Central Nepal on 25 April last

KEEPING WATCH: Most of ICIMOD's monitoring stations in Langtang were destroyed or damaged by last year's earthquake. Some, like these weather stations on Yala Glacier have been rebuilt to collect data on wind speed, temperature, solar radiation and glacial surface height changes.

year, and two of them were catastrophic. As many as 300 people died when Langtang Village was obliterated and 16 climbers were killed at Mt Everest Base Camp — both by avalanches triggered by the earthquakes.

Scientists are now trying to see if there is a link between global warming and an increased risk of avalanches and rockfalls on the mountains, especially during an earthquake. Frequent freezing and thawing, and the melting of ice that acts as cement in rock fissures, due to global warming could destabilise the mountains.

In Langtang, the earthquake set off a rockfall at 7,000 m that plunged into the glacier below, bulldozing it over a cliff and lifting 7 million cubic metres of ice and rock into the air. A blast wave that preceded the avalanche blew away the village. On Everest, a serac on the West Shoulder precariously balanced by spring melting appears to have been torn loose by the earthquake. In both areas, there had been a large accumulation of snow from heavy winter blizzards.

Under its Cryosphere Monitoring Project, ICIMOD has been studying glaciers in Langtang to measure the impact of climate change (*see interview below*). But as if to underline how an earthquake amplifies existing geo-hazards in the Himalaya, 80 per cent of its installations in Langtang were lost or damaged on 25 April last year.

Using glacial monitoring, remote sensing, and even drone overflights, scientists at ICIMOD have been measuring the rate at

which glaciers are melting, how fast the permafrost is thawing, if glacial lakes are expanding, and how all this impacts on the hydrology of Himalayan rivers. They were also trying to quantify how much of the ice is melting due to global warming, and how much because of soot particles called 'black carbon' covering the snow.

A team of ICIMOD scientists this spring observed that the dust and pollution being blown up the valley in Langtang was unprecedented. "I had never seen it so extreme, it was murky, and the surface of the glacier was dirty brown," recalls glaciologist Dorothea Stumm. Soot from crop burning in north India, unprecedented forest fires and industrial pollution covered the snow, causing it to melt faster.

Researchers want to analyse the grey particles covering the ice to find out where they come from, but need to bring the frozen samples down to Kathmandu and send them off to labs in the United States. Several previous attempts failed because airlines did not allow dry ice in cargo holds. Last month, a sample carefully packed inside thermos flasks finally made it.

"After analysing the samples we will be able to pinpoint the origin of the pollution," says Désirée Tredichler from the University of Oslo.

The glaciers of Langtang are not just retreating, but also thinning, creating melt pools and ever-larger lakes. Scientists want to evaluate what makes certain glaciers melt faster: its direction, slope, thickness of debris above the ice or soot deposition, or global warming.

Explains glacier analyst Sharad P Joshi at ICIMOD: "If we can estimate how much of the melting is due to local pollution, that will be easier to control than global warming which is more difficult to address."

One glacier at a time

For Sonam Futi Sherpa (*pictured at right, below*) the 2015 earthquake was a wake-up call. As a glaciologist, she was immediately alerted to rumours from her hometown of Khumjung that the Imja Tso glacial lake was about to burst.

Soon, with inspections and remote-sensing data Sherpa and others were able to dispel the rumours, and provide assurance that the moraine dam on this lake and others in central Nepal were intact and there was no danger.

"At that moment it occurred to me how urgent the problem of glacial lakes is, and how people's lives are at risk," said Sherpa who is working as a Research Associate Glaciologist in ICIMOD studying the impact of global warming on Himalayan glaciers, and how the melting ice is causing lakes there to grow dangerously big.

For Sherpa, one of the few Nepali scientists who lives in the area being studied, the impact of climate change is glaringly evident. What for visitors may look like a scenic panorama, is for Sherpa full of signs of accelerated meltdown in the mountains.

"There is more to glaciers than just ice, in addition to its importance for water availability it is also an indicator of climate change," said Sherpa, who is studying changes in the 'mass balance' of glaciers in the Everest region. She is also conducting a field survey to study how fast the ice and snow are melting on Yala Glacier on Langtang, and assisting in a study of permafrost in the area.

"Even though people are aware of the changes, they do not completely understand the reasons behind them, which is why more awareness is needed," explained Sherpa, who hopes the work of researchers like her will help Nepal adapt to the dangers of climate change.

Scientists in Nepal have to work with very little data, and they are cautious about jumping to conclusions. Sherpa says there is only eight years of data on some glaciers, and much more work needs to be done in the coming years to add to the knowledge base.

Says Sherpa: "The Alps have almost 50 years' worth of data on glaciers, we need similar long-term studies to accurately determine the exact way climate change is affecting our glaciers so we can plan for the future."

Smriti Basnet



SHARAD JOSHI/ICIMOD

price for climate change"



focus on just adaptation?

Mitigation actions taken now will reduce the amount of future warming, which can in turn prevent us from surpassing any dangerous tipping points while slowing down the effects of climate change on ecosystems. Keeping temperature levels below 1.5 degrees Celsius can slow the long-term rate of glacial loss, reduce the risk of hazards, and prevent cascading effects on the water and food systems that sustain us. Unfortunately, even if warming was stopped today, most glaciers would continue to retreat as they have been pushed out of balance by the rapid warming of the 20th century. In other words, the warming that is already in the pipeline, as it were, will only result in further glacier and snowpack losses.

The 1.5 °C target put forward at the last Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change meeting in Paris is a good start, but requires global commitment and lifestyle changes, particularly amongst high-emission nations. One issue for mountain people is that their contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is marginal compared to more developed areas in the world. Yet, mountain ecosystems and

people are extremely vulnerable to climate change and will have to pay the price. At the same time, there is a need to develop adaptation strategies and approaches for more vulnerable areas in our region.

How is ICIMOD helping?

First, ICIMOD is developing a deeper understanding of how climate change is taking place in the region, and what the potential impact is on social and ecological systems. This is particularly important for mountain areas which, despite being climate change hot spots, are sparse in data and scientific study compared to the rest of the world. Second, we work with communities, practitioners and governments to develop solutions through knowledge sharing. We are piloting climate-smart agricultural solutions for mountain communities to build resilience. Our approach is based on the critical need for knowledge sharing of the tremendous amount of innovation already taking place in the mountains. Finally, we interact with the global community to get the message of the mountains out, and tell how mountains are impacted, and that support is needed for mitigation and adaptation efforts.



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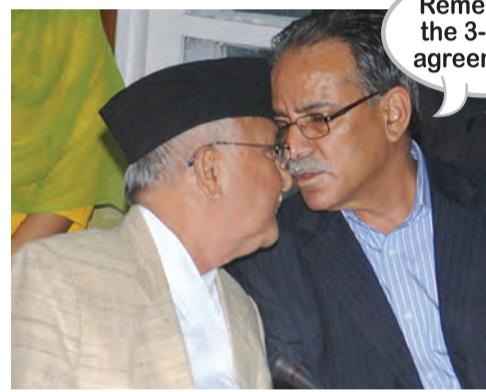
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You stab my back, I stab yours

Given the number of clowns who populate our government and the comedy that is politics today, it is time for the Ass to throw in the towel. The competition is just too fierce. These guys are really good, and they are putting amateurs like us out of business. Every time the Prime Minister gets up to speak, for instance, it is just one long stand-up comedy routine, and he has the whole country ROFL and LMAO simultaneously.

The Ass has been keeping careful count ever since the 12-point agreement in Naye Dilli in November 2005, various parties in or out of gobarmint have concluded a total of 1,543 points of agreement — and counting. That is the way we have done the business of politics here in Nepal for the past 11 years: whenever there is a point of disagreement we first grab each other by our testimonials and when the mutual squeezing gets too painful to bear, we let go and sit down to hammer out a multi-point agreement.

And the more points, the merrier. Why settle for 9 points when there can be 19? Thusly, by the end of the day, both sides have a face-saving compromise so they can let go of the vice-like grip they have on each other's gonads and live to conclude another multi-pronged agreement at a later date. Sometimes there is a disagreement about how many points of agreement there should be, and that is also easily settled with a 4.44-point agreement. The whole point about points is that the points are not meant to ever be fulfilled. In fact, the only point they agree on is that none of the points they agree on are supposed to be honoured.



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Take the 9-point agreement signed between Prime Minister Oily and Chairman Awestruck recently. Both sides were very clear that the 9 points were not legally binding. They even signed a top secret 3-point supplementary agreement within the 9-point agreement detailing the exact sequence of events on Oily stepping down after the budget to allow Awe-inspiring to become the primordial monster. The beauty of this 9+3-Point Accord was that both comrades knew that even the 3 points were not really going to be fulfilled. That is how fellow-communists have always shared power through this ingenious system of you-stab-my-back-I-stab-yours.

Now that the Ass's assets are frozen stiff and the donkey will soon be out of a job because of these clowns, I have my own 19-point demand which the grovelment will ignore at its own peril:

1. The government should, right this minute, demand back territory ceded to the East India Company in the

Sugauli Treaty, restore the country's pre-1814 boundaries and if necessary declare war on Great Britain for the sake of even Greater Nepal.

2. OK, if that's not possible then let the prime minister show just how nationalistic he is by getting us back Kalapani.
3. Never mind, just make sure for now that Border Pillar no 138 on the Mechi River is moved 20 m to the east and restored to its original upright position.
4. Comedians and court jesters thrown out of their jobs because of stiff competition from politicians should be compensated with an outright *ex gratia* payment to the amount of, but not exceeding, 1 kharab, 23 arabs and 98 corrodies.
5. Having said that, and come to think of it, just declare me a martyr and hand me 10 lacks.
6. My sixth demand is that all my previous demands including the 137-point ultimatum delivered to the Ministry of Midwifery, Animal Husbandry and Aquaculture be fulfilled post-haste.
7. Otherwise we may be forced to list all those 137 demands right here point-by-point and that may take till midnight, or until the cows come home, whichever happens later.
8. Oh yes, can I have a coffee? Black, no sugar.
9. All right, the budget allows journalists free dialysis treatment, but we'd also like free liver transplants please. And free haircuts.

10. We're only up to 10? When are we ever going to get to 19 points?
11. So, moving right along to the next point in the agenda: we demand that these demands be taken seriously with a pinch of salt. If not the Ass will go on a hungry strike and skip afternoon snacks until the cows come home.
12. Anyone detained by the Abusive Authoritarians will have the option of choosing the nature of their detention by ticking the applicable box(es): When arrested, I want to be under:
 - Court Arrest
 - House Arrest
 - Cardiac Arrest
13. Everything in Nepal should be free of cost, and all subscriptions to newspapers should come with gold bricks and/or diamond necklaces.
14. The Ass will suspend all protests on weekends and national holidays without prior notice. Management will not be responsible for the consequences.
15. Make available Journalist Discounts on all international and domesticated flights with immediate effect, otherwise we will create nuisances on board that may endanger the safety of fellow passengers and ourselves.
16. The next 3 demands (16, 17, 18) are non-negotiable. They can never be met.
17. Prime Minister Oily should stop clowning around. That's our job.



The Ass

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