



Her second monsoon

BIKRAM RAI

Not much has changed in Nani Maiya Prajapati's life since her husband and four other family members were killed when their house in Sankhu collapsed in last year's earthquake. The only difference is that, unlike when we interviewed her last year for a page 1 story in this newspaper (right), she is no longer dressed in a white mourning sari.

Everything else is the same: the tin hut next to the ruins of her home, the recurring nightmares, the loneliness, the lack of cash, and a heavy sense of grief and loss that time has not healed. Prajapati's husband, daughter, son-in-law, granddaughter and mother-in-law were all killed in



the earthquake.

She does not have money to rebuild her home, and without her husband she does not know how to do the paperwork to

seek official help. Many women survivors like her face their second monsoon in temporary shelters.

"The government hasn't given us anything, and I can't build a house by myself," she said. "I am working in the fields and knitting sweaters just to earn enough to survive from day to day."

Prajapati, 47, says she must look to the future. She has managed to buy some kitchen utensils, a gas cylinder, stove, and a clock (above). Time has ticked away while she waited for government help that never came.

BY SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

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KABUL KILLING

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EDITORIAL

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DYING, TO MAKE A LIVING

In a world numbed by senseless violence and tragedy, this week we were once more reminded of the hierarchy of news

Turmoil and terrorism have engulfed the crescent stretching across from Pakistan, through Iraq and Syria to Libya. But although they seem a world away from Nepal, the reality was brought home once more with the tragic deaths of 13 Nepali citizens in the bus bombing in Kabul on Monday. Yet again, families in Nepal grieved for sons killed in a distant land.

We are repeatedly reminded of the fragility of Nepal’s remittance-driven economy. More than half of the four million Nepalis working abroad are situated in the volatile Gulf region. The migrant economy now accounts for nearly one-third of the country’s GDP, and it is the blood, sweat and tears of our workers, and the money they send home, which sustain their families and keep Nepal’s economy afloat.

In 2004, 12 Nepali workers were taken hostage by Islamists in Iraq and executed in cold blood. At least a dozen Nepalis — most of them private security guards or soldiers with the British Army — have been killed in Afghanistan in the past decade.

This week’s attack on Nepalis guarding the Canadian Embassy in Kabul caused the most serious loss of life, and underscores the fact that Nepalis are literally dying, to make a living. Such is the desperation for jobs and for a better life, that Nepalis are one of only a handful of nationalities willing to put themselves in harm’s way in risky jobs that no one else will accept.

Fatalities involving NATO troops in Afghanistan have fallen due to cutbacks, but also because Nepalis have taken up duties as frontline sentries and convoy escorts. There are said to be at least 9,000 Nepalis — mostly employed by private security firms — in Afghanistan alone.

Monday’s killings were full of glaring ironies. It happened even as events were being held in Kathmandu to mark World Refugee Day. Nepali workers overseas may not be classified



BIKRAM RAI

WEIGHTY WAIT: Relatives of the Nepalis killed in Kabul wait in an army tent at Kathmandu airport on Wednesday for the bodies to arrive.

as refugees, but they are economic migrants who have been compelled to leave because of the lack of prospects at home.

And in a world numbed by senseless violence and tragedy, we were once more reminded of the hierarchy of news. A tweet on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation handle with breaking news of the attack said: ‘All Canadian Embassy staff safe ...’, raising questions about what that mission had done to ensure the safety of its own personnel, and whether they mattered. Are security guards are not staff? Who guards the guards? Who is responsible for the safety of foreign workers when a country subcontracts its security?

To trend globally, a news event has to be sudden and be coupled with dramatic visuals, the total loss of life has to be above a certain threshold, and then it depends on where the

fatalities take place or where the victims are from. In terms of news value, the death of a dozen Nepali security guards is more or less equal to one NATO fatality.

But even within Nepal, there was a glaring discrepancy in coverage. The terrorist attack garnered more prominence than coverage of the other daily tragedy that unfolds more slowly and silently — deaths of Nepali migrant workers in the Gulf and Malaysia from ‘natural’ causes.

For example, 603 Nepalis died in just one year (2014 to 2015) in Malaysia and Qatar alone. In the six years between from 2008 to 2014, the death toll was 1,121 Nepalis in Malaysia, 880 in Saudi Arabia, 739 in Qatar and 264 in the UAE. But these deaths did not happen all of a sudden in one place, they were scattered across the region, the workers mostly died quietly in their sleep, and the only visuals were of coffins arriving at Kathmandu airport. The heartbreak of affected families rarely makes it to the news anymore.

Nepali soldiers killed in action while fighting in foreign armies, and fatalities involving security guards who protect embassies and airports in war zones around the world also expose the contradiction between pride and sovereignty. On the one hand, we Nepalis boast about never having been colonised, and yet, even in this day and age, we allow our citizens to fight — and die — for foreign governments in far-flung lands.

The recruitment of Nepali citizens by militaries abroad is a historical incongruity that can only be mended by stabilising our politics and straightening out the economy. This involves getting our governance right once and for all. If we do not, we will continue to depend on overseas remittances to prop up our precarious economy, and tragedies like the one that befell our compatriots in Kabul this week will keep recurring, with no end in sight.

Times

THIS WEEK

SYLVIA CHANG/ CHINA DAILY ASIA WEEKLY

Most reached on Facebook

The Tibet Train by *Om Astha Rai*
China's railway arrives in Kerung in 4 years, Nepal should get its border infrastructure in place by then.
(23,448 people reached)

Most shared on Facebook

Bodies repatriated
(92 shares, 233 likes)

Most visited online page

The Tibet Train by *Om Astha Rai*
(1921 views)

Most popular on Twitter

The Tibet Train by *Om Astha Rai*
(56 retweets, 76 favourites)

Most commented

That time of the month by *Sahina Shrestha*

YOUR SAY

www.nepalitimes.com

THE TIBET TRAIN

I won't get excited until this really happens ("The Tibet Train", Om Astha Rai, #813). China will perhaps extend its Tibet railway to Kerung by 2020, but will Nepal be ready to benefit from it? Will the Kathmandu-Rasuwa Gadi road, dry port and customs building be ready by then? I am not hopeful, given that everything moves at a snail's pace in Nepal.

For example, the Melamchi project was launched ages ago but Kathmandu is still facing a severe water shortage.
Shanti

EARLY MENSTRUATION

Such an important topic ("That time of the month", Sahina Shrestha, #813). There should be increased awareness about all the junk that we eat. People should understand that menstruation is not the problem, but not talking about it is.
Ruchi

KALO POTH

The movie is a refreshing take on the Maoist conflict ("Kalo Pothi", Sophia Pandey, #813). It compels us to go beyond politics and makes us see, through the perspective of two innocent boys who have no hand in what is happening but are gravely affected. They humanised an issue, which should be the case because the war, although oft-said that it was for the people, was actually against them. It tells the story of every Nepali who suffered through the 10 years. Kudos to the movie makers. More such movies should definitely be screened!
Kesari

PRABHU GHATE

That is the problem with the Nepali elite ("Born to Travel", Shreejana Shrestha, #813). They think all Nepalis live that type of life. It is easy when your dad works for the UN, allowing you to travel around the world. But lecturing Nepalis about how they should visit other nooks and corners of this earth solely for the sake of discovery and leisure is ridiculous. We all know how far our green passport can take us.
Hurray

Q. Will the government be able to hold local, federal and parliamentary elections by December 2017?

Total votes: 441

Yes 36.06%

No 38.32%

Maybe 25.62%

Weekly Internet Poll #815
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Who is responsible for the safety of private guards when a foreign mission subcontracts its security?

Times

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NEPAL'S DEVELOPMENT BLACK HOLE

Why large energy and infrastructure projects never seem to get off the ground

LOKMANI RAI

Delivering his budget speech in Parliament last month, Finance Minister Bishnu Poudel, following in his predecessors' footsteps, reiterated: "I have envisaged a prosperous and self-reliant Nepal while charting out new fiscal policies and plans."

Poudel allocated Rs 311.9 billion for capital expenditure, up by 27 per cent from last year, and promised to disburse enough funds for all development projects. He emphasised grandiose projects such as two new international airports, the 1,200 MW Budi Gandaki project, the Kathmandu-Tarai fast track highway, Tarai feeder roads, north-south highways and the Kathmandu-Rasuwa Gadi highway to link with China. He also gave priority to PM KP Oli's ambitious dream projects, such as ending load-shedding in two years and generating 10,000 MW of electricity by 2026.

But even within Poudel's own UML there is a sense that he has overreached. Ex-Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari, a UML adviser, while noting that the budget is more development-oriented than ever before warns that it will need a strong political will to implement.

The history of large development projects in Nepal has never been one to be proud of. Two decades after the Mahakali Treaty, work on the 6,720 MW Pancheswor Dam has yet to start. The deadline for the East-West Midhill Highway — which was to be completed in 2014 — has been extended by another decade. The Melamchi Project is 20 years behind schedule.

There are already signs that Oli's mega projects will also suffer the same fate. His goal of generating 10,000 MW in 10 years is already a non-starter, with only six of the 99 procedures completed thus far. Early this month, a parliamentary committee instructed the ministries concerned to revise this workplan and set a new achievable target. But even the revision of the procedure is in limbo.

Subarna Das Shrestha, former President of the Independent Power Producers' Association Nepal, blames a lethargic administration for the failures: "There is bureaucratic apathy because the officials are neither

rewarded for good performance, nor punished for delays."

He says the civil service is influenced by politicis and will not make any decisions without a nod from the patrons. On their part, politicians have their own vested interests, which are governed by personal or partisan benefits.

For example, Maoist MP Top Bahadur Rayamajhi was one of the most vocal critics of US dollar-denominated Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs). Shortly after becoming Energy Minister early this year, however, he allowed the NEA to accept PPAs in dollar terms. This caused a setback for several hydropower projects — including the 216 MW Upper Trisuli 1 — of nearly two years.

The delay in passing the bill to amend the Electricity Regulatory Commission Act is another example of how politicians and bureaucrats seem to be in no hurry at all. The current legislation gives too much power to the NEA's Board of Directors, which is dominated by the Energy Minister and Energy Secretary.

Drafted in 2008, the bill proposes to curtail the power of the Board, hence the Minister and Secretary have both constantly put the bill on hold, demanding more time for review.

The Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) is also responsible for development projects being stalled. In September 2015, the CIAA issued a press statement asking then-PM Sushil Koirala to sack Energy Minister Radha Gyawali for misusing her power to select a contractor to construct the Solu Corridor transmission line. In March, Gyawali got a clean chit from the Supreme Court, and the CIAA simply deleted its statement about her from its Facebook page.

The Parliamentary Committee on Agriculture and Hydropower has recently begun monitoring progress to make the relevant agencies, authorities, companies and contractors accountable. Its President Gagan Thapa says: "We need a system to penalise those who delay projects, and we must amend laws that obstruct progress." 🇳🇵

prabhu BANK

BIZ BRIEFS

289 for Turkish

Turkish Airlines recently commenced flight operations from Košice, an urban centre of Eastern Slovakia, to Istanbul, Turkey's capital, on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.



With this, Košice joins the list of the carrier's 288 other destinations. Fares (including taxes and fees) from Istanbul to Košice start at \$99, and at €99 from Košice to Istanbul.

Obi in Nepal

California-based telecom company Obi Worldphone announced its entry into the Nepal market with the introduction of its SF1 and the SJ1.5 mobiles. The SF1 is priced at



Rs 21,599 for the model with 2GB RAM/16GB internal memory, and Rs 26,199 for one with 3GB RAM/32 GB internal memory, while the SJ1.5 retails for Rs 14,799.



Ford fun

Celebrating Ford Motor Company's 113th anniversary, local partner GO Ford announced GO Kart racing for all Ford owners on 25 June along with activities such as human swing, hoverboard and melt down, as well as food and drink stalls.

Huawei's addition

Keeping entry-level smartphone users in mind, Chinese telecom company Huawei has launched its Y3 II in Nepal. The device, priced at Rs 9,000, is

available in arctic white and obsidian black, and boasts a powerful battery and a 1.3 GHz quad-core processor.

Safe banking

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Freedom is not free

I was living a regular everyday life, then this happened ...

It all started with a call from the BBC Sajha Sawal TV talk show. “We want you to be a part of our discussion on youths in politics,” said a voice at the other end of the line. “I am definitely not the person you’re looking for,” I replied, “I know nothing about politics.”



GUEST COLUMN
Samridhhi Rai

Fast forward three weeks. Suddenly I was either a racist who shamed her community, a brave woman who spoke what was in the minds of the younger generation of Nepalis, or a pioneer campaigner against cyber-bullying — maybe all of these at the same time. For someone who has whole-heartedly rebelled against any kind of label, it was ironic that it was I who had unexpectedly earned thousands of labels, some of which I did not even know existed in Nepali vocabulary.

I had unwittingly signed up for a ‘Sajha Saga’ show and it certainly proved to be a steep learning curve. It turned out to



be an open discussion on race, ethnicity and communalism, and not just by those parading on the streets demanding ethnic rights.

I was on the set of Sajha Sawal, excited to hear the opinion of young Nepalis, and was abruptly thrown into the spotlight when the show’s host popped a question about the lyrics in my song *Ma Chahi Nepali*. My answer — given the fumbler that I am when it comes to public-speaking, on top of my laboured Nepali, zero skills in diplomacy and 100 per cent raw honesty — was: “When growing up, my aunt repeatedly suggested that I must marry a guy from my ethnic community, but because of all the coaxing I chose to stay away from them as a form of rebellion.”

And that was it. That was all it took for all hell to break loose. My Facebook notifications started erupting at one ping per second. There were 100 at first, then

200, 300, and soon thousands of messages had flooded my fan page inbox, mostly voicing strong rage against what I had said. Right then I knew that my day (and my life?) would not be the same anymore.

During the first phase of the controversy I apologised relentlessly. I realised that I had unknowingly hurt the people of my ethnic group, and hated that feeling. The second phase was like watching *Clash of Clans* unfolding live on social media, as those attacking and defending me had a go at each other. When the dust started settling in the third phase, I became aware of cyber-bullying as a serious crime, and also of the deeply-rooted ethnic sentiments in our society. The legion of young Nepalis who were fearless in expressing their opinions gave me the assurance to be unafraid to voice mine too.

I have always believed that we Nepalis are beautiful because of our diversity, and this controversy taught me to learn more about my own cultural heritage and traditions. This was the very diversity I was proud of.

But even these realisations did not change the viewpoint I had articulated on the show. I still

believe that ethnicity will never be a criterion for me to choose a partner. I could have couched my words more diplomatically perhaps, but my remarks not only broadened my own mind but also brought forth an enlightened discussion among younger Nepalis.

I was inadvertently bridging the gap between people fighting for ethnic identity, and those who idolise the concept of a greater Nepal. There are extremes in both schools of thought, and it is up to us to find common ground. Do we want our unique diversity to be our biggest strength, or a weakness? This is a question we all need to urgently address.

In the BBC show the host had also posed the question, “What is your idea of an ideal world?” My answer to that will always be — a world where people are without any labels: of gender, profession, race, colour, possessions, and even nationality. In my ideal world, we will blur those lines. 🇳🇵

Samridhhi Rai is a singer/songwriter, and a travel vlogger. Her ‘Sammy Adventures’ webisodes release every Thursday on YouTube.

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The monsoon arrived this week not with a bang, but creeping in slowly, advancing and receding until it held sway over the whole of central Nepal. Kathmandu Valley has already received 210 mm of rain in the first three weeks of June, due mainly to healthy pre-monsoon showers. Now, the hope is that the momentum of the moisture advance will be sustained in the coming weeks. Indian forecasters have predicted normal precipitation over the northern subcontinent, which means there is still the worry that heavy rains may trigger landslides along slopes in earthquake-hit districts where the mountains are still unstable. For now, enjoy the glorious mud.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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WHEELING TO LIFE: A match between Wheelchair Sports Association and Bodhisattvas in Action, at the Army Physical Training and Sports Centre hall in Lagankhel.

GOPEN RAI

SMRITI BASNET

The Army Physical Training and Sports Centre hall in Lagankhel echoed with the skidding of wheelchairs and thumping of a basketball. With onlookers cheering and coaches barking directions, the players vigorously propelled their wheelchairs while simultaneously taking aim. Sitting in his wheelchair on the sidelines, Bijay Bhatta (*pic, right*) contemplated his upcoming strategy as he observed his competitors battling it out.

Bhatta is one of two earthquake survivors who are among the 89 physically disabled players participating in the wheelchair basketball league championship organised by ENGAGE, an NGO based in Kathmandu. The 17-year-old had just completed his tenth-grade finals when the 7.8-magnitude earthquake struck central Nepal in April last year. Bhatta was trapped under the debris of his house and sustained a permanent spinal injury. “I

thought my life was ruined,” he said.

Some 5,000 persons were disabled as a result of the earthquake. “After training here I realised that given the right opportunities, people like us can do a lot,” said Bhatta, who is now playing for Nepal Spinal Cord Injury Sports Association (NSCISA). “And this social network is important, without it some of us might feel isolated and fall into depression.”

Bhatta’s friend Kesh Bahadur Tamang, a fellow competitor, also believes in shaping his own destiny. “It was hard to deal with my situation initially. But I realised that I still have my hands, if not my legs,” said Tamang who had fallen off a tractor while distributing relief materials, during a strong aftershock that hit Laprak, Gorkha. He is now a peer counsellor at



the Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Centre in Sanga, which has its own basketball team.

Supported by Turkish Airlines and the Embassy of Switzerland, six male and three female teams are competing in the championship that is spread over seven Saturdays. The finals are slated for 9 July.

“The game makes us sweat, releasing various toxins from our bodies, which would otherwise not be possible for most of us through urination,” explained Himal Aryal, who is team captain of the Nepal Army Wheelchair Basketball team and has been playing for the last five years. His paralysis from the waist down was caused by a mine blast in Rupandehi in 2003 during the insurgency.

ENGAGE brings in volunteer coaches to support and motivate the teams. “Our aim is to create a system that can bridge the

gap between persons with and without disabilities, through sports,” said Simone Galimberti from ENGAGE.

The training focuses specifically on a range of wheelchair manoeuvres and hand movements. Certain rules have been altered to suit the players’ needs but all games are held in international-standard basketball courts within the Valley.

“I have come with the hope of winning,” said 27-year-old Sarita Koirala, who was sixteen when she was buried under a landslide while working in the fields in Kavre. She feels the sport plays a key role in challenging conventional notions about people with disabilities. “People look at us differently now that we are identified as players,” said Koirala.

Additional investment is needed for infrastructure and wheelchairs, but league commissioner Michael Rosenkratz, who had helped bring coaches from the USA in 2013, is optimistic that this will evolve into a national-level tournament one day.

He said: “It is about creating opportunities to lead a full life. It is not about disability, but discoverability.”

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THE SECOND CHAPTER

Survivors of trafficking help one another rebuild their lives

TSERING DOLKER GURUNG
IN BANKE



TSERING DOLKER GURUNG

As far back as 1996, police raided prostitution dens in Mumbai and rescued 500 young women. More than 100 of them were from Nepal. The story received wide coverage in both the Indian and Nepali media, and spotlighted the enormous problem of young Nepali women being trafficked into the sex industry in Indian cities. At the time and in the years since, the Nepali media has been accused of being obsessive and insensitive, compounding

the problem for rescued young women who were stigmatised and ostracised by society — sometimes including their own families — as they tried to start new lives back in Nepal. Sunita Danuwar, now 41, was one such rescued woman, and remembers being subjected to constant scrutiny and judgment. “Families would refuse to accept their daughters, out of fear of being excommunicated by the community,” recalls Danuwar, whose own relatives disowned her

upon her return, because she had worked in the sex industry. “Even doctors testing us for HIV were scared of touching us.” The discrimination and stigma prompted 15 of the trafficked women to set up Shakti Samuha in 1997. It is Nepal’s first anti-trafficking organisation run by survivors to help survivors, and also address the push factors that lure the women away. “We have a simple objective: to fight trafficking, and help trafficking survivors rebuild their

lives by providing them with the kind of support that we didn’t receive,” says Danuwar, a founding member of Shakti Samuha and its current president. Shakti Samuha has set up a nationwide network to help bring victims of trafficking together and facilitate their reintegration into society by providing legal and psychosocial counselling, livelihood and skills development training, and support in income generation. There are now 22 such groups

in 10 districts, including Shakti Sahara in Kohalpur here in Banke, which has 21 members. Meena Salami, 37, was a teenager when she was trafficked to Delhi by labour recruiters promising to send her to Kuwait for employment. Fortunately, her family tracked down and rescued her before she could be sold to a brothel. “When I returned, people gossiped about me,” Salami recalls. “Many said I was a bad woman just because they assumed I had

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FRESH START: Meena Salami, 37, received a zero-interest loan from Shakti Sahara to start her clothing store business this year.

worked in the sex industry.”

Frustrated with the humiliation and lack of economic opportunities resulting from the stigma attached to being a trafficking survivor, Salami found herself once again being enticed by an agent's false promises.

“I was despondent, and convinced myself that there was no other way to improve my life and my family's, other than to go abroad and earn,” says Salami, now married with three children.

A chance meeting with Nirmala Thapa, a Shakti Samuha member who worked in the district, changed her mind. Salami says, “She said one should go abroad legally and be aware of one's rights before doing so.”

This year, she opened a small clothing store in her village with an interest-free loan provided by the group. Although business is slow, Salami says: “Shakti Samuha's support encouraged me to shed my fears and to believe in myself.”

Sita Sunuwar also obtained a zero-interest loan from the organisation to start a buffalo farm, and says she is now more confident and aware of her rights.

“There's a great sense of solidarity among the members because we have all been through the same things,” explains Sunuwar, recalling her own ordeal after paying an agent to take her

to Kuwait to work as a domestic helper.

Shakti Sahara distributes interest-free loans to members, which have to be repaid after a year and redistributed to other members.

“Our goal is to provide the initial support, and make you capable of running your own groups,” Dilip Koirala, legal and training coordinator for Shakti Samuha, was telling rescued women in Kohalpur recently.

In 2013 Shakti Samuha received the Ramon Magsaysay Award for its fight against trafficking, and last year it was conferred the French Human Rights Award. But despite groups like Shakti Samuha, around 7,000 Nepali girls and women are trafficked every year, according to a UNICEF report.

“The state has failed to provide opportunities for youth,” Danuwar says. “When people are desperate, it is easy to be tempted by fake assurances.”

Last year the Ministry of Labour and Employment revised the ban on women working in Malaysia and the Gulf countries, and allowed women aged 24 and older to work as domestic helpers. But no labour agreement has been signed with any of the countries.

Shakti Samuha has set up counselling desks at District Administration Offices to provide information about safe migration and trafficking to women wishing to go abroad. Says Danuwar: “We don't want to stop women from migrating, we just want them to do so in a safe and legal manner.”

About traffickers

The findings of a new study entitled *Imprisoned Traffickers in Kathmandu Valley* show that human traffickers are not aware of how high the risks of their activities are, and how low the financial reward can be. Published by the Centre for Strategic Knowledge, the report attempts to fill the gap in research on perpetrators of human trafficking.

While collating reliable data on human trafficking is complicated, particularly in the absence of adequate research and measuring tools, reports by the media and various organisations tend to focus on the trafficking victims, patterns, legal measures and prosecutions. Often missing from the discourse is information regarding the traffickers, who are at the nexus.

The study looks at the methods used by traffickers, their thought processes and experiences. It claims to be the first-ever initiative to provide a glimpse into evolving trends, by featuring two comparative sets of interviews with traffickers in Kathmandu Valley prisons. The baseline study was carried out in 2006, and the follow-up exercise was undertaken 10 years later. The imprisoned traffickers completed a short questionnaire, and in-depth interviews were conducted with willing inmates.


“One reason this study is significant is that it is among only a handful of studies on human traffickers,” says Jonathan Hudlow, the lead author. “To try to understand human trafficking and how we can more accurately deter and fight it, we have to know more and understand the traffickers,” he adds.

While reaffirming the persistence of recognised trafficking trends, the study also challenges popular perceptions relating to the trade. The findings indicate that at least in Nepal, a realistic cost-benefit assessment would show that engaging in trafficking is an iffy proposition at

best. Would-be traffickers appear to be unduly swayed by the seemingly profitable nature of trafficking, but in fact most of the traffickers in the study reported earning less than expected and barely breaking even.

This skewed assessment is made against a backdrop of a low perception of risk of being apprehended. The lack of access to accurate information — stemming partly from the loose nature of the network of traffickers — contributes to a situation where harsh penalties do not have the expected effect. Compared to eight years ago, the number of convictions has increased; so have the fines and length of jail sentences.

According to the research, Nepal functions mainly as a source country, with Nuwakot and Sindhupalchok persisting as the most popular source districts for recruiters. Trafficked victims are sent as far as China and the Gulf, but Delhi and Mumbai in India remain the most prevalent destinations. Promises of employment and assurances of marriage are still the primary tactics employed, implying that these are still successful and casting doubt on the effectiveness of awareness programs that have been implemented.

The authors concede that the traffickers' responses may have been distorted, and that when coupled with the multiple assumptions and unknown variables, the report's conclusions “are admittedly tenuous”. Nonetheless, the study suggests that efforts to alter the erroneous perception of the inherent risks and benefits may achieve a better outcome in reducing trafficking.  **Sahina Shrestha**

Study author: Jonathan Hudlow

Lead researcher: Dr Tek Nath Dhakal, Tribhuvan University

Publisher: Center for Strategic Knowledge, Kathmandu info@csk.org.np



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EVENTS



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25 June, 8 am to 3 pm, Bungamati, 9801123408, info@socialtours.com, For tickets: ropain16.eventbrite.com

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.
25 June, 9.30 am to 12 pm, St. Xavier's College, Maitighar, 9813053115, info.engagenepal@gmail.com or engagenepal@gmail.com



Spoken word,
Indulge in the spoken word with the Nepali slam poetry group Word Warriors, performing at NexUS Culture after a brief hiatus.
25 June, 4 pm onwards, NexUS Culture Nepal, Maitri Marg, (01) 5522393, nexusculturenepal@gmail.com

Art exhibition,
Mark your calendar for Umesh Shah's exhibition of artworks titled 'Invention in Tradition III'.
Till 30 June, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited, (01) 4218048/4433930

Create toothpaste,
Master the art of making your own non-toxic natural toothpaste, with certified raw food nutritionist Kathryn Sunantha.
26 June, 3.30 to 4.30 pm, BLISS Raw Café & Garden, Boudha, Fee: Rs 500 (fully redeemable for food and beverages at BLISS within a month)

Yoga sessions,
Rejuvenate and unwind in a week-long Isha Yoga program with trained instructors and varied discussions, meditations and yoga practices.
28 June to 4 July, 6 to 9 am or 2 to 5 pm, Lakshmi Narayan Sewa Samiti Ashram, Tangal, 9803867394/9841586573



KJC for kids,
Music, games, songs and more for kids at KJC music classes taught by Spanish kids class specialist Albertina Barcelo and music teacher Bhintuna Rajbhandari.
May to August, Age: 3-5-year olds Saturday (11.30 am to 12.30 pm), 6-8-year olds Tuesday (4 to 5 pm), 4-6-year olds Sunday (11 am to 12 pm), Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamiskhel, (01) 5013554, Fee: Rs 24,000 per month, Rs 700 per class

Emotional walls,
Attend the solo exhibition of visual artist Bishal Manandhar's artworks titled 'Emotional Walls'.
25 June to 4 July, 10 am to 5 pm, The Taragaon Museum, Boudha, (01) 4491234 ext 5926

National slam,
Register for the regional slam in Kathmandu and get a chance to participate in the QC Awards 2016: National Poetry Slam slated for September.
2 July, Application deadline 25 June (selected participants get to attend a one-day workshop at Thames International College, Purano Baneshwor), Register at <http://bit.ly/28Oqy51>, For more information: 9803820050/9803718587/9803353500

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Patan, (01) 5551184, info@traditionalhomes.com.np

MUSIC

The Edge Band live,
Enjoy Saturday evening with popular Nepali rock band The Edge Band belting out its hits.
25 June, 7 pm to 4 am, The Victory Lounge, Darbar Marg, Kathmandu, Ticket: Rs 1,000



Kings Among Men,
Attend the EP launch of the up-and-coming metalcore band Kings Among Men's first album and live performances by Horny Monks, Fragments, Space, and Dayroom.
25 June, 2 to 7 pm, Wicked Spoon, Jhamsikhel, Tickets (door sale): Rs 250

Indie night,
As part of Basecamp's Yomari Sessions, music therapist and singer Shreeti Pradhan will perform with folk music trio Baaja. Supporting act by fingerstyle acoustic player Abhyu Ghimire.
25 June, 6.30 to 9.30 pm, Base Camp, Jhamsikhel, 9818204874, Ticket: Rs 300

It's Jazz,
Enjoy a jazz-filled evening with Mahesh Tandukar on guitar and Albertina Barcelo on flute and vocals.
24 June, 6.30 pm onwards, Ratomato Organics BBQ and Bistro, Lajimpat, (01) 4428576

Funky Friday,
Groove to the beat of the Nepali funk band What The Funk, with hits like 'Funky dajju' and 'Sanjha ko jun'.
24 June, 8 to 11 pm, House of Music, Thamel, 9851075172

GETAWAY

Pataleban Vineyard Resort,
Japan-influenced eco-resort with great views, jungle walks, and picnics.
Chisapani, Kathmandu, 9841679364

Jhule mountain resort,
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Shivapuri-Nagarjun National Park, Lapsipedi-3, Jhule, (01) 6212399

Balthali Village Resort,
A small, cosy retreat with a bird's-eye view of green terrace fields dotted with ochre-painted houses.
Balthali, Kabhre, 9851075818

Himalayan Height Resort,
Tucked away near a jungle at the side of a hill with a 270-degree view of the Valley.
Pharping, Kathmandu, (01) 4371537, 4371561



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27 JUNE		
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28 JUNE		
	England vs Iceland	
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Sidhi (Stairs)

Having money is important, but is it more vital than family? What is one willing to do to attain ever-elusive wealth? *Sidhi* (Stairs), now at Sarwanam Theatre, seeks answers.

Written and directed by acclaimed Indian theatre director Subodh Patnaik, *Sidhi* revolves around a low-income female-headed family, and young people crushed between politics of the country and their desire for a better life.

Aama (Meena Khadka) sells corn cobs on the street to make ends meet. Her son (Arjun Neupane) and daughter (Sabina Gopali) are typical teenagers, unwilling to help their mother and ashamed of her work. While Aama toils daily, the son chants slogans at protests, and the daughter whiles her time away with her boyfriend.

Short of cash, the son resorts to stealing money his father left behind. The daughter splurges her share on a new bag. When Aama finds out, she leaves home, utterly disappointed in her children. The story, written in Hindi by Patnaik and translated into Nepali, is predictable and lacklustre. One cannot help but wonder if something was lost in translation.

Khadka does well in her role as the mother: she is loving and caring, but not hesitant to display her anger and disappointment. Gopali manages to pull off her character as a daughter, sister and a girlfriend. Neupane's best moment comes when he is out on the streets, protesting. But the actors need to hone their skills to make their acts believable. Their expressions were at times exaggerated, yet occasionally bland.

The background music was intermittently jarring, but the creative use of a set of bamboo stairs to alternate as a house, vehicle, horse and garden added a spark of drama and fun.
Sahina Shrestha

Directed and written by Subodh Patnaik
Cast includes: Meena Khadka, Sahina Bhandari, Sabina Gopali, Arjun Neupane and Bimba Adhikari
Duration: 1 hour
Rs 200, Rs 100 (students), 19 June-2 July, 5.30 pm (except Thursdays), Sarwanam Theatre, Kalikasthan, (01) 4011027

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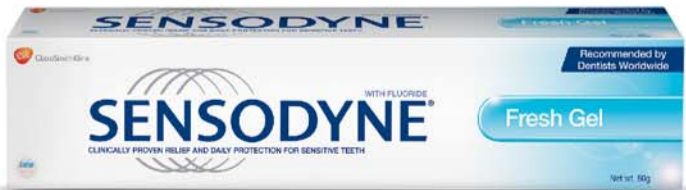
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PRIDE AND PREJUDICE AND ZOMBIES

It is a testament to Jane Austen's enduring popularity that almost two hundred years after her death, her novels continue to be used for various film adaptations including, most astonishingly in 2009, a pulpy parody titled *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* — a



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

book that even this reviewer could not get through. The fluffy, forced commandeering of Jane Austen's elegant prose, spiking her wit with heavy-handed, clumsy double entendres that are a bludgeon over the head, make it impossible to read through this unlikely version of a beloved story laced with a plethora of zombies rampaging

through 19th-century England. It was, therefore, quite a surprise to hear that *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* was to become a film, and that too with a decent cast, starring no less than the lovely, charming Lily James as Elizabeth Bennet. While the film is to be approached by only those with a high tolerance for the absurd and a real love for Austen's characters, this adaptation is surprisingly enjoyable (note: I did not say it is good). For those who enjoy a good old mash-up and plenty of tongue-in-cheek, well, this might just be your cup of tea. The plot is essentially the same except that the Bennet sisters, instead of being trained as young ladies, are experts in the martial arts, specifically famed throughout their region as zombie

killers. When Mr. Darcy (Sam Riley), another famed zombie killer, comes to town to look over the lay of the land (Britain is besieged by zombies and is just holding them in check at various key points), the fun begins, and the familiar courtship between the witty, strong-willed Elizabeth, and the proud, haughty Fitzwilliam Darcy begins — but this time, in addition to admiring Elizabeth's mind, Mr. Darcy also admires her ability to off nasty automatons with skill, efficiency, and grace. If all of this sounds absolutely preposterous, ruminate on whether you would like a romantic comedy infused with action and a healthy dose of science fiction-fantasy, gilded with high production values, and hybrid costumes that work surprisingly well. Also, some well-known character arcs have been slightly altered to confound expectations — the formidable Lady Catherine de Bourgh (played by the great and gorgeous Lena Headey) gives us a nice surprise with an about-face later on in the film, and the sleazy Wickham (Jack Huston) yields an even nastier secret. Personally speaking, I enjoyed *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* because of my own propensity for certain types of nonsensical fun, but I will warn that many people may find this film intolerable. For those with a higher threshold and a bit of imagination though, this can be a thoroughly enjoyable waste of time. 🇳🇵

nepalitimes.com
■ Trailer

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

BLOOD MONEY: Prime Minister KP Oli pays his final respects to 12 of the 13 Nepalis killed in Kabul on Monday. Their bodies were flown home on Wednesday.



NEPAL AIRLINES

OPERATION KABUL: Brothers Capt Srawan Rijal (*left*) and Capt Subash Rijal flew the special Nepal Airlines flight to Kabul to bring back the bodies of 12 Nepalis killed in the blast on Monday. Another 24 Nepalis working in Afghanistan were also flown back.



RSS

OPPOSITION: The main opposition leader Sher Bahadur Deuba attends the first General Convention of the Tarai Madhes Loktantrik Party in Nawalparasi on Monday, which has reelected Mahant Thakur (*second, from left*) as its President.



BIKRAM RAI

HANDS UP: Politicians, diplomats, bureaucrats and commoners participate in an event to mark International Yoga Day at Darbar Marg in Kathmandu on Tuesday.



GOPEN RAI

MONSOON PLANTING: A farmer prepares rice seedlings for planting in Khokana on Friday. The onset of the monsoon this week signalled the start of the rice-planting season across Nepal.

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BIKRAM RAI

Lives of our brothers

Profiles of some of the 13 Nepalis killed in Monday's bombing in Kabul.

Annapurna Post, Rajdhani, Kantipur, Nagarik 22 June

Jitendra Singh Thapa, Butwal

After retiring from the Indian Army, Jitendra Singh Thapa went to work in Iraq as a private security guard. His family members thought Iraq was too dangerous, and forced him to return home, but he subsequently convinced them to let him go to Afghanistan. The family thought Kabul was safer and did not put pressure on him to return. He came back on Wednesday, but in a pink wooden box. (His wife Sangita and four-month-old baby are pictured above.)

Madhu Sudan Koirala, Nuwakot

Madhu Sudan Koirala lost his son Sishir and daughter Swastika when last year's earthquake destroyed their house. He could not attend their last rites because he was guarding the Canadian Embassy in Kabul after having retired from the Nepal Army three years earlier. Koirala's wife and three remaining daughters moved to a rented room in Kathmandu.

He came to Nepal in April on the first anniversary of the earthquake, and observed the one-year memorial rites for his children. While in Nepal, he recorded a song: "My heart weeps ... may such a tragedy not befall anyone." He returned to Kabul because he needed to save money to rebuild his house in Nuwakot, and educate his

surviving children. He was among the 13 Nepalis killed in Kabul in Monday's Taliban bombing.

Chandra Bahadur Magar, Kavre

After surviving a deadly Maoist attack in Sindhupalchok in 2003 in which eight of his fellow soldiers were killed, Chandra Bahadur Rana Magar left the Nepal Army. He found a job as a private security guard in Kabul, and took a loan to buy a one-storey house in Kathmandu. After a holiday in Nepal, he had returned to Kabul in May. He died in the suicide bombing.

Nabin Singh Chhetri, Parbat

Nabin Singh Chhetri had been injured in a Maoist attack during the war. He left the Armed Police Force to open a shop in Kathmandu. When he found a job as a security guard in Kabul, his wife took over the running of the shop. At home on leave last month, Chhetri told his wife that his job in Afghanistan was too dangerous and he would soon return to Nepal. But before he could leave Kabul, he departed this world.

Ankur Moktan, Sunsari

Ankur Moktan of Sunsari was in the bus in Kabul chatting with his wife on Facebook messenger. Minutes after he ended the conversation, the moving vehicle was blown up by a Taliban suicide bomber. Goma Gole, Akur's wife, says: "He had promised to call me after he finished his duty shift, but that chat I had with him turned out to be our last conversation."



नेपाल Rabindra Manandhar in Nepal, 19-24 June



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Women still waiting to

Women survivors of the earthquake struggle to cope with grief, loneliness and government neglect

SHREEJANA SHRESTHA
IN BHAKTAPUR

Inside a tin hut in Bhaktapur that now serves as a bedroom, kitchen and living room hangs a fading laminated photograph of two men. They resemble each other.

The picture is one of the few mementos Nani Maiya Koju, 50, has of her husband and son who were killed when their three-storied house collapsed in the earthquake in April 2015. Since then, Koju has had to deal with bereavement, support her remaining family, maintain the temporary shelter, try to obtain compensation, and ponder how she can rebuild her home and life.

"I lost my husband, elder son, and everything else during the earthquake," she told us this week as monsoon rains pounded the tin roof. "Without the men in the family, no one speaks up for you."

Koju also lost her younger son who was suffering from kidney problems, five months after the earthquake. She now lives in the hut with her 22-year-old daughter Samjhana. The Koju family's circumstances reflect the special needs of thousands of other female-led households after the earthquake.

Nepal Police data shows that about 2,000 women were widowed in the earthquake, and some 50,000 women lost their homes. Just over a quarter of the total households impacted in the 14 affected districts are female-headed, according to a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment report prepared by the National Planning

Commission last year.

Among the distinct problems faced by women survivors are the lack of land titles and house ownership papers, and limited access to economic resources, including a dearth of job prospects. It was usually the men in the family who worked the system, dealt with the bureaucracy. With them gone, most women face severe challenges in the recovery process.

"Women in the earthquake-affected districts face problems in obtaining compensation, as land is generally not registered in their names," explained Lily Thapa at Women for Human Rights, an NGO that helps single women. "And the compensation process becomes even more difficult if the property is owned by their in-laws."

The National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) has commenced the first phase of grant distribution. Each earthquake-hit family receives Rs 200,000 to rebuild homes, on top of the Rs 15,000 most survivors collected immediately after the calamity. But 14 months later, many women like Koju have not received either of the government grants.

NRA spokesperson Ram Prasad Thapaliya said the authority could in future come up with a 'special grant' to top up the payment, but only for certain single women. "We can give single women above 75 years of age a special grant as a priority area in future, and help them rebuild their lives. But we need to come up with suitable criteria first." However, he admitted that the NRA has not pinpointed single women or widows for special consideration thus far.



LEFT BEHIND: Nani Maiya Koju (*right*) and her daughter Samjhana are the sole survivors of their family. Nani Maiya holds a picture of her husband and son, who were killed in last year's earthquake.



ENGENDERING RELIEF

After the earthquake we need to rebuild better, not just houses but also lives

Following the major earthquakes in 2015, Nepal's National Planning Commission (NPC) issued a Post-Disaster Needs Assessment report that strongly emphasised 'building back better' as the guiding principle for



GUEST COLUMN
Sangita Thebe Limbu

recovery and reconstruction. But what does this catchphrase really mean?

Most recommendations in the report focus primarily on technical interventions such as reconstruction of physical

assets, enhanced communication capacities and logistics, risk monitoring, vulnerability assessment, and improved legal and institutional arrangements. However, the impact of disasters and processes of recovery is embedded in unequal power structures, and therefore needs to be addressed by taking into account vulnerabilities and inequalities.

Disasters such as earthquakes are natural phenomena, but their impact is not. Various studies have shown that the effect of a natural disaster is unevenly distributed, and pre-existing inequalities and discrimination along the lines of gender, caste, class, ethnicity and disability



rebuild homes and lives



SHREEJANA SHRESTHA



LIFE AFTER

The past 14 months have not been easy for Nirmala Maharjan. Hardly a moment passes without her being overcome by memories of the day when her home in Patan collapsed and she lost four members of her family.

Maharjan and her two sons were pulled out alive from the ruins, but her husband, sister, brother-in-law and seven-month-old niece were buried under the rubble. Even though her life was turned upside down in the blink of an eye, she is determined to move on despite her grief and the seemingly insurmountable challenges.

“Everything in my life changed after the quake but I have had to overcome the hurdles. Each day I tell myself that I am not the only one who is going through this,” says Maharjan as she gets her nine-year-old son Nimesh ready for school (*left*).

For the past year, she has been living in a small room provided by the community *Guthi*, and has been doing odd jobs — such as knitting and working in a canteen — to raise her family. After her story appeared in this newspaper last year, donations poured in and the school has waived the tuition fees for her sons.

“I can provide for my family, and not having a place to stay is my only worry,” she says, eyes brimming with tears. “I doubt if my father-in-law wants to give a share of the house to me. My in-laws have changed a lot after my husband died.”

Many women widowed by the earthquake are facing similar problems, with their in-laws reluctant to part with property. Some face harassment in the absence of their husbands, or have even been evicted. But Maharjan says she is hopeful about her family’s future, and is willing to make any sacrifice necessary to ensure her sons are happy and successful.

She says: “A year ago, I never thought I would be able to get over the tragedy. But life goes on somehow, and I have to stay focused on taking care of my sons.”

“A copy of a land ownership certificate from a government office is sufficient for property to be transferred to a wife’s name if the husband was killed in the earthquake,” Thapaliya said, “and a death certificate for the husband should be enough to secure compensation to rebuild a house.”

Despite assurances, an Emergency Fund for Single Women set up by the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare before the earthquake has not been revived to help female heads of households, proving that there is little coordination between the ministry and the NRA.

Thapa said the government has already

collected Rs 30.5 million for an emergency fund earmarked for single women, adding: “We are lobbying the government to use those monies to help single women rebuild their homes.”

Many women like Koju blame fate for the deep personal tragedy they suffered in the earthquake. But it is easy to see that the government’s slow response in reconstruction is not fated, and has hit women survivors particularly hard. 🇳🇵



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are exacerbated and further reinforced in the relief and reconstruction phase.

An extensive study on natural disasters between 1981 and 2002 in 141 countries showed that in societies where the socio-economic status of women is low, calamities directly or indirectly killed more women than men. In the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, 80 per cent of the deceased were women and girls. Following the recent earthquakes in Nepal, 55 per cent of those who lost their lives were women and girls, in comparison with 45 per cent being men and boys.

In the case of the 2004 tsunami, more women and children died as they were inside homes, in contrast to men who were out in the fields. Women’s limited access to public spaces where information about disasters are given, social norms of modesty whereby women and girls are discouraged from activities such as running, swimming and climbing trees, and traditional clothing like saris that hinder women’s swift mobility also influenced survival during the disaster.

In the context of Nepal, the higher female mortality

rate during the earthquakes can be attributed to numerous factors such as male migration to the capital city and abroad, and women’s caretaking responsibilities resulting in a higher likelihood of women and girls being at home. In many cases, women were reported to have delayed their escape to rescue their children, older family members and valuables.

Being a woman does not in itself lead to higher vulnerability. It is the socially constructed gender norms like assignment of roles, responsibilities and ‘appropriate’ behaviours, along with unequal distribution of resources, rather than biological differences.

Gendered vulnerability is derived from intersecting identities and social relationships, so it is equally important to consider other identity factors — such as class, caste, age, location, marital status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, ethnic identity, religion, language, and absence or presence of disability — which influence the severity of the impact of disasters. This does not mean creating a checklist or doing an additive exercise, but instead understanding how

different socially constructed identities interact to create different experiences of vulnerability.

For example, a blanket approach to post-earthquake relief distribution resulted, in many cases, in those with political links and social status accessing the bulk of the resources. A study conducted during the relief phase showed that discrimination based on caste or political affiliation was perceived as one of the main reasons for unfairness in aid. Historical marginalisation and systemic exclusion have aggravated pre-existing vulnerabilities for many Dalits, Tamang and minority communities post-disaster.

Single women faced a unique set of challenges further complicated by geographical location, as many women — due to childcare responsibilities — found it difficult to make the long journey to local administrative centres to access relief. Only 19.7 per cent of land and houses is under female ownership, which makes it difficult for many women to directly access funds to rebuild their houses.

With thousands of health

centres and hospitals destroyed, it became especially problematic for pregnant women to access sexual and reproductive healthcare. In makeshift temporary shelters, women and girls faced added risks in terms of security, and lack of privacy and sanitary facilities. The prevailing social stigma against sexual and gender minorities was exacerbated as transgender users of segregated sanitary facilities in Kathmandu camps feared sexual harassment and encountered abuse.

In urban areas like Kathmandu, many casual labourers — predominantly men, and living in poor quality houses — were highly vulnerable to disaster risk, yet in the aftermath compensation funds went to household owners and not tenants who were directly affected.

The earthquakes have affected all social groups. However, identity and power relations make the experiences of vulnerabilities and risks different and complex. The focus should be on the inequities in daily life — and not just in times of disaster — when we strive to ‘build back better’, because yes, we need to rebuild houses but we also need to rebuild lives. 🇳🇵



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Knock-off knation

Those of you who are downhearted watching the news about fake doctors, fake pilots, fake gas cylinders, fake bank notes or fake Oakley shades in Thamel should remind themselves, like I do here every week, that since just about everything in this country is fake, none of the bad stuff is actually real either.

In other words, this is not the real Nepal. Whatever is happening here is not really happening. There is a parallel universe out there somewhere in which the actual Nepal exists in real time, and if it is not Switzerland already, that Nepal is at least a Swaziland.

The point I'm trying to make here, in the Ass' usual convoluted fashion, is that there is a silver lining in the clouds at the end of the tunnel in all this. Everything is hunky-dory in the boondocks in the real Nepal out there in the vast cosmos, and what we see around here is actually a pretend Nepal where everything is fake.

In other words, the fake government has cunningly allowed an underground economy to flourish in which counterfeit Benson & Hedges made in Wuhan floods the market because, as the world's 155th poorest country, we cannot afford to smoke the real thing. (Statutory Government Health Warning: As If We Care. It's Going to Kill You Anyway, So It Doesn't Matter What You Smoke.)

We have to learn to live within our limited means. It does not behoove us to indulge in conspicuous consumption and snobbishly insist on only buying expensive, original designer stuff.



And thank goodness we have the underground economy, because if we had only relied on MinFin, we'd all be doomed. Some people say that Nepal's economy is propped up by the fixed exchange rate with the Indian rupee. Not true. It is propped up by counterfeit Indian 500 rupee notes, and at the rate the fake currency is circulating, INR is going to be declared legal tender in this country just like in the good old days.

So, unlike most people, I am not worried that the diesel at the pump is adulterated, the gulab jamuns at weddings are made of flour, or that our bottled water is diluted with sewage. What all these knock-offs prove is the ingenuity and the can-do-do attitude of Nepal's fake entrepreneurs and their remarkable ability to launch unrealistic products that turn into viable businesses.

Here are some more ideas to make a slew of new forgeries:

Fake Wildlife Contraband: Here is a wild idea to control the poaching of endangered species. Start shipping fake rhino horns and artificial tiger wee-wees to China. Customers won't be able to detect the real thing, and *poof!* the bottom will fall out of the market. Ditto for yarsagumba: just use plastic caterpillars and false fungi.

Pseudo-Prado: These are knock-offs of the actual Mitsubishi 4WDs, but for a fraction of the cost. So, if you are a politician, all you have to do is to be only half-corrupt to be able to afford one of these pretend Pajeros.

Quasi-Diesel: Instead of pure diesel, which is expensive, you can power your generator with this fuel that is actually high-octane and highly inflammable Bagmati water.

Phoney-Telephony: These designer mobile phones with names such as

Nakia, Sonny, and Mutterola serve their purpose since we keep getting cut off anyway.

Sham Shampoo: Squeeze out a liberal amount of Head Over Shoulders shampoo with conditioner, rub gently over scalp, and rinse. Careful, now, we don't want the wig to fall off.

Pretend Democracy: Feign freedom in a make-believe land.

Fake Federalism: It doesn't matter how many provinces we have, because the boundaries are all imaginary.

Copycat CIAA: Thinks it is the CIA.

INR 1,000 Note: Even the counterfeit Indian currency detected in the false bottom of an imitation Delsey suitcase were found to be copies of copies. But lucky we have them, because we can pay IOC with fake bills for fake fuel.

Counterfeit Constitution: What do you expect from a document drafted by fake revolutionaries?

Pretend Ass: Even this column is fake because the lies we make up are actually true. This column is so substandard that the Department of Food and Other Iffy Stuff has declared it unfit for human consumption.



The Ass



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