

RAMESHWAR BOHARA

Om Astha Rai

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NOT PLAYING BALL

On the first anniversary of the seventh constitution in seven decades, Nepal is stuck again.

After the bloodshed in the Tarai that followed the promulgation of the 'fast track' constitution last year left nearly 60 people and a dozen policemen dead, it is once more decision time. The onus is on Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on his return from India to carry out a second amendment to the constitution to satisfy Madhesi and Janajati dissidents.

But on the first anniversary of the seventh constitution in seven decades, Nepal is stuck again. The first constitution in Nepal's history that was drawn up by a sovereign assembly elected by the people is supposed to be the last step in a peace process that began with the ceasefire in 2006.

There is hardly any precedence in recent world history of a constitution being passed by nearly 90 per cent of elected representatives. Despite that there was dissatisfaction in the Tarai, which some Madhes-based parties used to launch an agitation aimed at gaining back the support they had lost in the 2013 elections. The protests turned violent, and brutal police response on the streets led to many deaths.

The hurried promulgation of the constitution, despite misgivings from New Delhi, then led directly to a border blockade supported by India that crippled the country's economy. The human disaster of the earthquake was followed by a humanitarian disaster of the blockade.

Through Nepal's recent history of Maoist violence, the 12-point agreement in Delhi, the downfall of the monarchy and the decade-long transition after 2006 we have seen the impact of geopolitics on Nepal's internal affairs.

Although both Nepal's neighbours say they want stability here, recent decisions have shown that one of them prefers 'controlled instability'. Many believe that

some of the agitating parties that observed Constitution Day this week as a 'black day' and burnt copies of the statute may be acting at the behest of this outside force.

It is difficult to see how supporting such divisive politics of ethnicity benefits any domestic or foreign entity. How does uncertainty, anarchy and a constitutional limbo help a country with which we share a long, open border?

The main message that Pushpa Kamal Dahal attempted to give to both his Indian interlocutors and the public back home during his New Delhi visit this week was that he had restored India-Nepal bilateral relations to its earlier bonhomie. He may have succeeded in giving that impression in New Delhi, but back home the joint communique and purported secret deals have reinforced the belief that Nepal's leaders have once more sold out

to India. Even if it is not true, the perception that he did so is neither good for Dahal, nor for the country.

The fact that two of the four main demands of the Madhesi parties were addressed within five months in the first amendment is actually proof of the pragmatism and flexibility of the new constitution. It showed that democracy is alive and well, and taking legitimate democratic decisions. The Madhesi parties who want their other two demands to be fulfilled through the second amendment are a part of the constitutional process to press for those changes. The fact that they are working to achieve those ends through committees in the legislature is a healthy sign.

As we have emphasised in this space before, the demands of the Madhesi parties on border demarcations of the two Tarai provinces and the demand on citizenship cannot be fulfilled without the UML being on board. And the UML seems set to make it as difficult as possible so that it can extract its pound of flesh.

This deadlock is delaying all pending legislations governing the implementation of the new constitution which stipulates local, provincial and national elections to be held by January 2018. As former CA Chair Subhas Nembang says in an interview (page 13), the Election Commission's deadline for poll preparations have already lapsed. If voting at all three levels cannot take place in a little over a year, it could lead to a constitution crisis and bring us back politically to square one.

Parliamentary elections need to be completed by January 2018, and elected federal assemblies can only function if local and provincial elections are held so that the National Assembly can elect a president and vice-president. That in turn is only possible if there is agreement on the number of provinces, their boundaries — and for this the Madhesi parties need to be on board and the UML has to play ball. A deal is not in sight, and time is running out.



BHANU BHATTARAI

THIS WEEK



MUKUNDA BOGATI



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A former Maoist child soldier is disappointed his dreams of revolution were dashed



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Delhi run by Om Astha Rai

YOUR SAY

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CHIEF JUSTICE

Kudos to Chief Justice Sushila Karki for restoring faith in the judiciary ('Checking and balancing', Binita Dahal, #826). Under her leadership, the Supreme Court is functioning pretty well. But Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal has reportedly said that the Chief Commissioner of the Investigation of the Abuse of Authority (CIAA) Chief Lokman Singh Karki has made a secret deal with Chief Justice Karki. If true, this is serious. Chief Justice must prove these allegations wrong by delivering a fair verdict on the CIAA Chief's appointment.

Arun Shahi

Why is the success or failure of our PM's India visit judged by whether he can secure New Delhi's approval on our Constitution?

Mahesh Sharma

THE HORSEMAN

Netra Bikram Chanda, Mohan Baidya, CK Raut and those who planted bombs at schools in Kathmandu this week must listen to Murari Kushwaha ('The horseman of Lumbini', Deepak Gyawali', #826). He knows how it is like to be in a war. He knows that wars are not for the people but only for the benefit of a few leaders.

Sita Prasain

YOGA DIPLOMACY

Last year, the then-Prime Minister KP Oli's India visit was a failure because he could not sign a joint press statement with his India counterpart before returning home ('Yoga diplomacy', Editorial, #826). This year, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal had the opportunity to do so, but his visit was still considered a failure because India did not welcome the Constitution. As a sovereign nation, why do we have to get our Constitution endorsed by India?

RICH RITUAL

What a rich culture the Kathmandu Newari community has ('The legends of Pragya Paramita', Shuvechchhya Pradhan, #826) ? It would be better to scan it digitally and made it accessible for everyone to enjoy and practise. Even though the Kathmandu Newari Buddhist culture is old, it has not spread much beyond the valley. I think it is time to let the vajrayana sprout wings.

Gyurme Dondup



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@PM_Nepal you teach us to carry guns for government now you are the government beware teach us to carry tools of development and reconstruct



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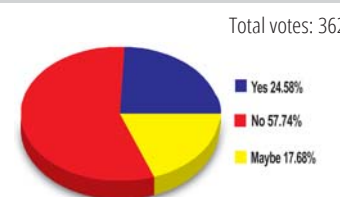


Giovanna Gioli @gggioli
Sheer (western) folly. Massive problem of security with street dogs at night, and please invest money for PEOPLE before! #PeopleNotDogs



Weekly Internet Poll #827

Q. Is Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's India visit fruitful?



Weekly Internet Poll #828
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Will the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons be able to find out the truth?




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Still waiting for the truth

Nearly 15 years after her son was disappeared, Ramkrishni Chaudhary has finally given up hope that he is alive

TULA CHAUDHARY
in BARDIYA

For years after her son was disappeared by the army, Ramkrishni Chaudhary used to look out every time a vehicle approached her mud house. She had held on to the hope that her son was alive, and would come home some day. Not anymore.

She is now hard of hearing, but that is not why she has stopped looking out at cars on the road. She has lost hope that her son, Bhaban Chaudhary, is still alive.

“He would not have kept me waiting for so long, he was a responsible boy and always cared for his family,” she says, eyes brimming with tears.

In September 2002, seven young men from Motipur village, including Bhaban, were on their way to India in search of jobs. They were stopped by an Army patrol near the border.

Ramkrishni Chaudhary thought her son had already crossed over to India. Four days later, she heard from villagers that Bhaban and his friends were detained at the Chisapani Army base.

Bhaban was 25 then, a quiet and hard-working man and not a Maoist. He just wanted to escape the violence and support his pregnant wife, aging parents and younger siblings. After his disappearance, his wife gave birth to a daughter who is now 14, and has never seen her father. Bhaban’s younger brother dropped out of school to support the family.

Chaudhary and the mothers of six others who disappeared, searched for their sons and finally learnt that they were kept at the Chisapani base. But the army denied they were there.

One of the men detained along with Bhaban was released because his relatives were in the Army, and that is how Chaudhary knows that her son was at the Chisapani Base. He said they had been



RAMESHWAR BOHARA



TULA CHAUDHARY

LOSING HOPE: The picture (left) of Ramkrishni Chaudhary was taken in 2002, a few months after her son, Bhaban Chaudhary, was disappeared by the Army. Fourteen years have gone by and Chaudhary (right) still does not know of his whereabouts.

tortured, sometimes with sacks of rice piled on top of them on which soldiers sat.

In 2004, under pressure from the National Human Rights Commission, the Army finally admitted that three of the six detainees were “killed in an encounter”. But it refused to say anything about the other three, including Bhaban.

Through the years that followed, Chaudhary kept up her struggle to find her son. Borrowing money from villagers, she travelled to Chisapani many times to ask

the Army to either release her son or show her the spot where he might be buried.

Once, she even took Bhaban’s clothes to Chisapani, and asked the soldiers at the gate to give them to him. The soldiers replied that they would set fire to his clothes and that he was not with them. Those clothes, a few photographs, and her son’s citizenship certificate are the only reminders left of her son.

Journalist Rameshwar Bohara’s photograph of a distraught Ramkrishni Chaudhary holding up her son’s citizenship card became one of the representative images of the plight of the families of the disappeared in the war. It was one of the pictures included in the *A People War* trilogy of photobooks on the conflict.

“Until I took this photo, no one knew that so many Tharu youths had been disappeared by the army in Bardiya,” says Bohara. “So this photo exposed the extent

of enforced disappearances in this district, and prompted the National Human Rights Commission to look into the matter.”

Early this year, Chaudhary finally registered a case at the Commission for the Investigation of Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP), one of the two transitional justice bodies set up nearly a decade after the end of the war. She wants the Commission to find out why Bhaban was detained, where and how he was tortured and what happened to him at the end.

“I am old, ill and I don’t have much time,” she says. “I want to know before I die where my son is. If he was killed, what happened to his body?”

But there is not much hope that the short-staffed CIEDP with its limited mandate and resources will be able to find out the truth. With more than 200 people disappeared, Bardiya had the most reported disappearances during the conflict. Most of them, like Bhaban, were young men from the Tharu community detained by the Army for interrogation and never heard from again.

The notorious Chisapani Barrack and posts set up to guard the Bardiya National Park were used in the Army’s counter insurgency operations for detention, torture and executions. Bhaban’s father, Amrit Lal Chaudhary, worked as a Kamaiya - bonded farmer - but was lucky to be freed even before the slave tradition was abolished in 2000. Bhaban and his brothers, therefore, did not have to work as Kamaiyas.

Bhaban’s younger brother, Thaggu, says his brother’s disappearance cost the family dearly. “He worked so I could go to school, but with him gone I had to leave my studies,” he says. Thaggu goes to India once in a while to earn money but mostly supports his parents in the farm.

The government has given a compensation of Rs 400,000 to Bhaban’s family. But Ramkrishni Chaudhary has not been able to spend this money because it is deposited in a joint account with Bhaban’s daughter, and can only be taken out when she turns 16 in two years. “The money is for my granddaughter’s future,” Ramkrishni Chaudhary says. “As for me, I just want to know what happened to my Bhaban.”



**20/10
CONFLICT
ANNIVERSARY
1996–2006–2016**



ICRC NEPAL

1,334

A year after the Maoist war ended with a peace accord in 2006, the number of missing persons listed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) was only 850. However, this number nearly doubled over the next few years, with more people mustering the courage to report disappearances of relatives.

However, in the last few years, the number of missing persons has either slightly dipped or remained constant every time the ICRC updates it. Last year, it stood at 1,350. But this August it decreased to 1,334.

The number of missing persons is decreasing not because disappeared persons are returning alive or their bodies are being discovered, but because people have given up trying to find them.

Bhojali Chaudhari (pic, left) of Dang waited for her daughter, Dhan Kumari Chaudhari, who had been disappeared by the Army to return for years. But she gave up hope, and finally performed the last rites for her lost daughter last year, which has been captured in ‘The doll’s funeral’, a documentary made by ICRC.

Dhan Kumari’s name is no longer in the ICRC list this year. Like Chaudhary, some families are tired of waiting, and just want to move on by performing final rites of their disappeared loved ones. But there are others who are tired and have not given up yet.

year, but without resources and a stronger mandate it will not be able to carry out meaningful investigations.

“Top leaders often say their priority is to conclude the peace

process, but none of them have given importance to finding the truth about the disappeared,” says Bishnu Pathak of the CIEDP. “I do not understand how they want to conclude the peace process without addressing the issue of enforced disappearances.”

Pathak says the CIEDP is short-staffed, and is functioning on a shoe-string budget. For this fiscal year, the CIEDP had sought Rs 500 million, but the government gave it only Rs 130 million. “The budget we have is only sufficient for salaries, administrative purposes and some program costs,” he says. “We need experts on human rights, humanitarian laws, conflict and forensic science, but we do not have money to hire them.”

Most importantly, the CIEDP lacks strong laws to recommend actions against army officers and Maoist leaders directly involved. Last year, it drafted a law that criminalises enforced disappearances, but the government has not forwarded it to Parliament yet. With CPN (Maoist-Centre) Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal and NC President Sher Bahadur Deuba (both of whom face more war crime charges than any other leader) at the helm of the government, the law drafted by the CIEDP is unlikely to be passed. And without it the truth will always be buried; perpetrators will walk free.

Toothless commission

OM ASTHA RAI

A decade after the 2006 Comprehensive Peace Accord, the government, last year, finally set up the promised commission to investigate enforced disappearances during the war. But only four months remain

of the two-year tenure of the Commission for the Investigation of Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP) with investigations still in their preliminary stages.

The CIEDP has collected 2,870 complaints from families of the disappeared, mostly from Bardiya (284), Dang (124) and Banke (121). The CIEDP is verifying these complaints before beginning the actual investigations.

The CIEDP has limited time, resources and legal instruments to find the truth about the disappeared persons and recommend legal actions against perpetrators. There is also a lack of political will from the state, which is composed of the warring parties who would like to sweep their excesses under the carpet.

The Commission’s tenure can be extended for one more

prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

Golf open

Turkish Airlines will be hosting the fourth edition of the Turkish Airlines Open in Antalya starting from 3 November to 6 November. Fourteen



times champion Tiger Woods is also schedule to appear for the event which will take place in the Carya Golf Club.

A fine evening

Soaltee Crowne Plaza hosted 'Our Table', an evening of fine dining with wine tasting, with Pernod Richard Winemakers' Alexandre Barre. Guests



were served delectable dishes like Rice Vermicelli and Forced Meat paired with suitable Jacob Creek wines.

Fly to Colombo

Himalaya Airlines recently introduced its second direct scheduled flight to Colombo, Sri Lanka. The airline will be flying from Kathmandu to Colombo on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays with airfares starting from



Rs 29,191 for one way and Rs 50,041 round trip, inclusive of governmental taxes.

Education award

Eleven Nepali schools were awarded with the International Schools Award by British Council Nepal in an event



last week. Endorsed by the Ministry of Education, the eleven schools were selected on basis of nurturing global citizenship in young people and enriching teaching and learning.

Spread the love

Coca-Cola announced a new campaign-Man Kholaun Coke Sanga- for the festive season. Customers



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guten appetit!

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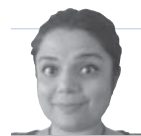
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Muckraking among bottomfeeders

Nepal is an interesting case study for the 350 investigative journalists in Kathmandu this weekend for an international conference

Last week, I missed a documentary showing in Kathmandu on the transition of the Maldives into a mafia state. To make up for the loss, I found the video on YouTube – an Al-Jazeera investigative series – and watched it from the comfort of my own couch at home.



ONE TO MANY
Bidushi Dhungel

The hour-long video follows a massive leak of information from three iPhones which belonged to the former Vice President of the Maldives, Ahmed Adeen, a self-professed 'boss of all gangs' in the archipelago and the various illegal antics he was spearheading, including money laundering, illegal business deals,

abductions and bribes in the executive, parliament and judiciary.

The documentary tells the story of how with the coup that overthrew President Nasheed's government, a parallel state that thrives on crony capitalism has been established by the country's power and political elite. The revelations are not only scandalous, but show a sense of helplessness and haplessness of a country and its citizens.

By the time the documentary comes to a close, aside from leaving the audience with a grim outlook for the Maldives, a Nepali viewer cannot help but begin to draw parallels with Nepal. Thankfully, some hope still lingers in Nepal: Truth will triumph and democracy will prevail. Perhaps nothing has instilled that hope in us more than the dealings of the Supreme Court and



its Chief Justice Sushila Karki in the past few months and weeks in particular.

Among the executive, legislature and judiciary, the latter it seems, may be the last stand against the complete failure of the state to safeguard its citizens and the democratic spirit. There is little hope that Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal can address this crisis of democracy. He even had the audacity to publicly declare that an 'agreement' had been reached with both himself and the judiciary and with the head of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) which would absolve him and his party of plundering billions in compensation from the state to his ex-guerrillas.

Thus far, one can only hope the 'agreement' with the judiciary is

propaganda and posturing. Since little can be expected of the executive, we have no choice but to root for further strength in the judiciary and actively work to embolden it. The few members of parliament who have shown the guts and sense of responsibility to address the CIAA's overreach and its impact on the functioning of our fledgling parliamentary democracy will also require more support.

The activities of the CIAA necessitate little elucidation now, for even what is yet to be proven is obvious to anyone who dares to look. In the Maldives documentary there are striking similarities – both physical and behavioural between the former Vice President Ahmed Adeen and Nepal's CIAA chief. If it took an international team of investigative reporters and journalists, with plenty of resources to uncover and unpack the irregularities of the Maldivian state, here in Nepal, local journalists and activists with little to no resources have done a commendable job in exposing the nexus between the CIAA and the political and bureaucratic class.

Even in an atmosphere of hostility, fear, blackmail and intermittent silence, much has surfaced in the past months that show Nepal is headed in the exact direction of the Maldives unless immediate action is taken. Little could be more worrisome than the mysterious lack of interest on the part of the international community which used to once be fixated upon corruption and governance.

Even with much to lose and at risk, some journalists despite threats of injury and death and despite the lack of support and resources, have been digging for information. And there is a lot of dirt to uncover in the agency that is itself supposed to expose abuse of power.

From direct intervention in government to shady business deals, gold smuggling and blackmail, it all reads like a crime-suspense political thriller with the CIAA at the epicentre. This could be an interesting case study for the 350 investigative journalists from 51 countries who are in Kathmandu this weekend for the Uncovering Asia conference organised by the Global Investigative Journalism Network (GIJN). 🇳🇵

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The southwest monsoon is not finished with us just yet. It is retreating, and that is when the chances of cloudbursts and erratic storms are highest. The mountains slopes, especially along the earthquake zone, are already saturated with water and further rain could easily trigger landslides. We have seen a spate of those, many of them with fatalities in the past week all over Nepal. The weekend will see some evening storms, with more rain in the coming week.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
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She for her

“Unless women are free, men will not be free”

SAHINA SHRESTHA

On an open-air stage in Lalitpur this week, 34 women from a dozen countries whistled, laughed loudly and danced. Where they come from, doing any of those things would be considered unbecoming for a woman.

It was a symbolic act of defiance and empowerment by graduates of the SANGAT workshop - a month long training on feminist capacity building. The participants are now ready to break gender barriers and take on the world.

On stage with the women is Kamla Bhasin, a noted Indian social scientist and gender activist. This is her 21st cohort for a workshop. It was originally designed for young feminists from South Asia but in recent years has attracted participants from Burma, Iran, Australia and countries in Africa.

These month-long workshops, organised by the SANGAT network, make participants understand patriarchy, gender, feminism and help monitor misogyny. For the rest

of the year, Bhasin conducts gender sensitisation trainings for members of parliament, journalists, activists, students, teachers and police across the subcontinent.

“I do more workshops with men because there aren’t enough men in South Asia who have understood that unless women are free, men cannot be free,” explains Bhasin. “The struggle for gender equality is not between men and women, it is among two ideologies: one that says patriarchy is better, and the other that says equality is better.”

In her workshops, Basin explains patriarchy as the exploitation of women where their physical power, reproductive power, sexuality, mobility are all controlled by men. It is based on violence or the threat of violence.

“Nature created difference, diversity. There are no two human beings in the world who are exactly the same, but human beings have created discrimination for power, control and exploitation,” says Bhasin.

It is not only men who dominate women in patriarchy, women are dominated by women as well.



GOPEN RAI

It is difficult to fight because it exists inside homes, with family members as perpetrators. Patriarchy also dehumanises men by boxing them into expectations of protecting women and ingraining the use of violence as normal.

In the 40 years she has been working for a gender-just society, Bhasin has seen the women’s movement change. Women now have the right to education and the right to vote, but cultural discrimination persists.

“What Nepal has done in the last five years is anti-misogynistic: women make up to 33 per cent of parliament, marital rape has been recognised, but cultural and religious patriarchy have not been challenged enough,” she says, “We are afraid of religion and even the women’s movement hasn’t succeeded in hitting hard it.”

Bhasin is also critical of what she calls “capitalist patriarchy” in which businesses make money portraying women as objects as does pornography, trafficking, the cosmetic industry and advertising. She says that in Nepal and the South Asian region, the women’s movement is challenging patriarchy but is not doing enough against capitalist patriarchy.

“Girls are told that if you are not fair, you are not lovely and then we have Bollywood songs and Indian serials perpetrating misogyny.” 🇮🇳

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Surrounded by rough terrain and scenery, Kathmandu Valley's rim is a trail runner's delight

SMRITI BASNET

With the monsoon nearing its end, the hills around Kathmandu Valley will be emerging into their best season for hikers and runners. Shiny green forests under incredibly blues skies, everyone wants to make the best of this window between the rainy season and winter haze.

For trail runner Raj Pradhan, the post-monsoon season is the best time to indulge in his passion. Ever since he was introduced to the sport six years ago, trail running has become an addiction leading him to explore many off-track roads around Kathmandu.



SUMAN BASNET

धरको पूर्ण विवरणका लागि
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Bumper Prize मा २०७२ माघ १ गतेदेखि २०७३ पुस मसान्तसम्मका वार्षिक ग्राहकहरूलाई सहभागी गराइनेछ ।

“Once you hit the trail, it is no more about losing weight. You do it because you enjoy being amidst nature, the energy just flows into your body,” said Pradhan who recently completed a four-day trail run all the way from Pokhara to Kathmandu with Australian Tim Blair and Nepali runner Narayan Acharya.

The trail running trend is becoming increasingly popular around the world, and is finally catching on in Nepal. Taking it as an opportunity to escape the daily hum-drum of congested city areas (*see map*), many locals and expats alike have been latching on to this form of running.

“The variety of trail possibilities is endless, which is what makes the Valley a special place,” says Roger Henke, former managing director of Summit Hotel and considered in running circles to have introduced and popularised the sport in Kathmandu.

Trail Running Nepal, Kathmandu Trail Running group, Lalitpur Trail Running group and events like Hash House Harriers, which take place every Saturday, are encouraging many to head for the hills.

“The people who know the trail properly can guide those who are new to the place, which gives us the opportunity to socialise and for them to explore new places,” says Suman Basnet who founded the Lalitpur Trail Running group in April 2014. They meet once a week for a minimum run of 20kms.

For runners like Bimala

Shrestha Pokhrel, the aim is beyond just socialising. “I have been partnering with communities, motivating Nepali girls to get out of their comfort zone and enjoy running,” says Pokhrel, who was inspired to do so after she saw poor representation of women in the Annapurna Run and the Tenzing Hillary Everest Run. She now organises group runs of up to 10 km in the Chobar area.

Trail running is catching on with events like the annual North Face Ultra Marathon, Godavari Running Festival, and mountain races like Annapurna Ultra Mountain, Tenzing Hillary Everest Marathon which have become international events.

Individual efforts of American runner Seth Wolpin and British ultra runner Lizzy Hawker, who ran continuously for several days and nights to complete the Kathmandu Valley Rim circuit, in addition to Nepal's inspirational ultra runner Mira Rai have encouraged many runners to follow suit.

“There is growing local interest, participation and opportunity to run races. Nepali runners are becoming more visible on the international scene and have started receiving recognition within Nepal,” says Henke.

Narayan Acharya sees trail running as a sport that can boost eco-tourism if trails leading to remote areas of the Valley are maintained. “It is a whole new world out there, and it is waiting to be discovered.” 🇳🇵

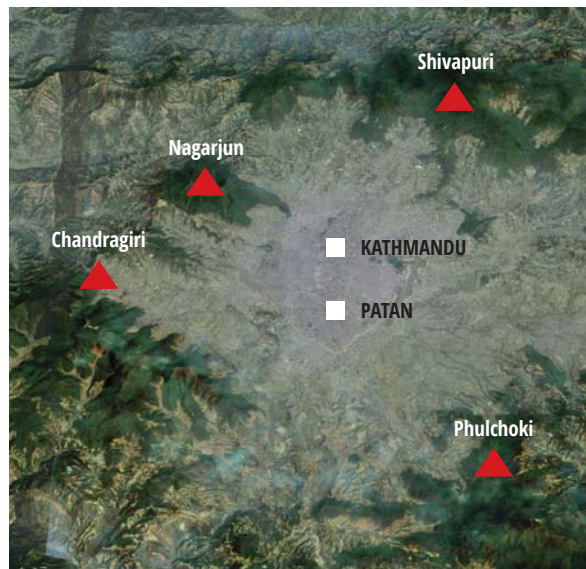
NAGARJUN

Now part of the Shivapuri National Park, the hills to the west of the city is heavy forests and teeming with birdlife. It also has a pleasant trail running to the top.

CHANDRAGIRI

Situated in the southern edge of the Valley, the ridge offers a wide selection of trails. Known for its scenic view of the city below and mountains beyond, runners can pick from the Chobar trails or the picturesque run from Hattiban towards Champa Devi.

WHERE TO RUN?



SHIVAPURI

The national park offers a wide range of trails from the standard path to the summit from Budanilkantha to Chisapani, or the run up to Bagdwar, the source of the Bagmati.

PHULCHOKI

The highest point on the Kathmandu Valley rim at 2300m, the steep trails running up this forested mountain is a good place to acclimatise for high altitude runs. With rich biodiversity, it provides nature and adventure.

TRAIL GURU

As far as he remembers, Hari Rokaya has been running all his life. Having grown up running up and down mountains in Jumla, the three time Everest Marathon runner was born to trails.

He is now training young athletes with the single aim of making Nepal renowned globally - like Ethiopia and Kenya - as a country famous for long-distance running.

“God has gifted us with such beautiful mountains and hills for mountain races.

We have to make Nepal known in the world,” says Rokaya.

Rokaya set up the Karnali Sports Club in Jumla in 2006 which has trained 22 young athletes. He sees immense potential in Nepali runners and believes they can easily earn a good reputation if they compete in international runs.

So far the club has produced ultra marathon runners like Bishnu Maya Budha and Dipendra Bam who have participated and won in international races in Hong Kong and China.



SYLVAIN BAZIN

What to pack

Although adventurous and exciting, runners need to be aware of their surroundings and always have an emergency kit at hand with:

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EVENTS

Rhythm and soul,

Enjoy an evening of Kathak and Flamenco performances by well known artists like Subima Shrestha and Maradee de Guzman. All proceeds go to Tewa for a fund to support women.

23 September, 6 to 7.30 pm, Nepal Army Club, Bhadrakali, www.sushilaartsacademy.com



Mero Chowk,

An exhibition and fair of poetry, photography, videography and stories based on research of the greater Patan Area, exploring concepts of belongingness, identity and change.

23 to 25 September, Tajaa Pha, The Heritage Home, Patan, (01) 5533770

Farmer's market,

For organic local food, chef brunches and wide green spaces visit farmer's market at Le Sherpa and Yellow House.

Every Saturday, 8 am to 12 pm, LeSherpa, Lajimpat, Every Sunday, 9 am to 12 pm, Yellow House, Sanepa, (01) 5522078

Breast Cancer awareness,

Participate in a 'Walkathon' organised by Rose Foundation Nepal to raise awareness about breast cancer and promote breast self-examination.

22 October, 8.30 am to 3 pm, Starts at Patan Darbar Square and ends at Jawalakhel football ground, 9813688226/9803557302/9849035012, rosefoundationnepal.org



Piano lessons,

Register for jazz piano lessons and get to know about jazz theory, harmony, improvisation, and composition with Indian musician and jazz pianist Shanoi. Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5013554

Yin yoga,

Calm your mind with an hour of yin-inspired yoga followed by a singing bowl session.

1 October, 6.30 to 8 am, Sooriya Wellness Yoga Studio, sooriyawellness@gmail.com, Fee: Rs 1,500



Godavari Running,

Choose from a variety of activities: an obstacle race, trail running, ultra run or basketball and spend your day outdoors. 24 September, 11 am onwards, Godavari Football Ground, 9841298400/9841729965

BAC Mela,

Local products, foodstuff and a second-hand garage sale plus entertainment for the whole family at BAC's monthly mela. 24 September, 1 pm onwards, BAC Art Cafe, Pulchok, 9851147776

Go green,

Pick tree saplings of Rudraksha, Jacaranda, Ficus Benjamina, Camphora or Kaiyo from the 1080 Chandra Gurung Conservation Foundation give away and make your city green. Followed by performances in Moksh by 1974 AD and Word Warriors.

24 September, 3 to 6pm (Collect saplings), Natural History Museum, Swayambhu, Tickets: Rs 999, Rs 499 (Students), www.cgcf.org.np



MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI



DINING



Mul Chowk,

Relish in a sumptuous Samay Baji meal while watching the lakhe nach, kumari nach and and vairab nach at Mul Chowk as part of its post Indra Jatra celebrations. 24 September, 4 pm onwards, Mul Chowk, Baber Mahal Revisited, (01) 4259801, 9860662252, machowkres@gmail.com

Alfresco,

For homemade pastas and other lip-smacking delights. Soaltee Crowne Plaza, (01)4273999

Barista Lavazza,

The Valley's best European-inspired coffee culture café serves excellent mochas and lattes. Don't forget to try their grilled chicken sandwich. Jawalakhel, (01) 5548597, barista.nepal@gmail.com



Hyatt Regency,

Celebrate Oktoberfest with Hyatt and enjoy delectable dishes like bratwurst, frankfurter, sauerkraut with a side of warm salads and pretzels. 24 & 25 September, 12.30 to 4 pm, The Café, Hyatt Regency Kathmandu, (01) 5178334, Rs 2300 per person plus taxes (including swimming)

Wunjala Moskva,

Treat your palette to Newari and Russian dishes in the lush garden with ancient trees and trickling streams. Naxal, (01) 4415236

MUSIC



Pop night,

Spend a musical Saturday evening listening to Nepali pop sensation Nabin K Bhattarai. 24 September, 7 to 11 pm, Trisara, Lajimpat, (01) 4410200

Unwind with Ciney,

Enjoy listening to one of Nepal's most popular singers perform live. Every Friday, 7 pm onwards, Shambala Garden Café, Hotel Shangri-La, Lajimpat, Rs 2000 per person, (01) 4412999 Extn. 7520,7508.



Bass Day,

Meet and listen to some of the well known bass players from around the city. 24 September, 2 pm onwards, House of Music, Thamel, 9851075172

Open mic night,

Grab the mic and sing your heart out at House of Music every Tuesday. House of Music, Thamel, 9851075172



Music mania,

Gear up for the third edition of Blackout Pride Phase featuring bands like Ugrakarma, Taamishra, Absorb, Undefined Human and more. 12 November, 12 to 6 pm, Thamel Reggae Bar, Thamel

GETAWAY



Shangri-La Village Resort,

Escape to the lake city and celebrate Dasain with their 'Special Sayapatri' offer that gives a two nights and three days package at Shangri La Village Resort in Pokhara. Gharipatan, Pokhara, (01) 4420252, 9860260894 / 9803553023, Rs 6999 per person

Famous Farm,

Wake up to the sounds of chirping birds and a fresh morning breeze wafting in through the aankhijhyal. Nuwakot, (01)4700426, info@rural-heritage.com



Gokarna Forest Resort,

A numinous paradise that relaxes you and encourages meditation, just a 20-minute drive away from Kathmandu. Gokarna, (01)4451212, info@gokarna.net

Hotel Landmark Pokhara,

For the best view of Phewa Lake. Enrich your stay with cultural performances every evening. Lakeside Pokhara, (61) 462908, 9851059096



Pataleban Vineyard Resort,

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Running for Nepal in Denmark

Last week, the town of Viborg in Denmark came together to raise funds for children's education in five villages of Madi, Chitwan. Through a run titled 'Children in Denmark run for Children in Nepal' the event saw over a thousand young participants, some along with their parents, to take part in the 4.2 km run.

For parents like Michael Kolthoff the event was the "greatest experience" as their children got to make friends and interact with Nepali children. His daughter, Marie, who completed the race within 45 minutes, was quick to make friends with Pradyal Adhikari, a Nepali boy living in Denmark.



HANS G N ANDERSEN

Having been to Nepal no less than three times and also having visited Madi along with his 14 year old son, Kolthoff said he plans to visit soon. "It was so easy staying in a village with children. I was always sure that wherever my son was, there would be friends around him," said Kolthoff.

With the funds raised in last week's race, the organisation is planning to arrange for a Bus Library which will tour the five villages continuously, with at least one day in each village. Equipped with books and two staffs, the bus will also host different children's events once it is in operation.

After a successful event in Denmark, the organisers are now planning for another children's run. Only this time, the venue will be Madi itself. Jutland Village Development in Nepal's Lone Peterson, along with co-ordinator of Viborg City Marathon, and Rolf Bücking -the co-ordinator of the children's run, will be visiting Madi in November to plan for the race to be held on 11 April, 2017. Selected children from Denmark along with families will also be present during the run next year.

Hans G N Andersen in Viborg

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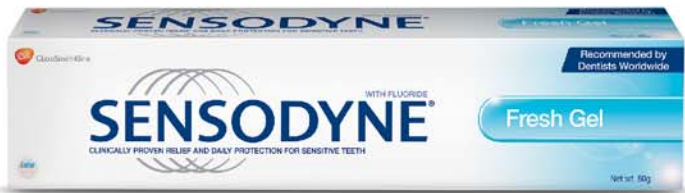
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A HOLOGRAM FOR THE KING

These days, with great television shows, Netflix and other streaming options, and a faster transfer from screen to DVD, it really doesn't pay to make a mediocre film. Tom Twyker, a German film-maker



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

who is known for experimenting with the traditional film form, has somehow managed to make a meandering, often boring, cliché of a film with his adaptation of *A Hologram for the King*, originally a

novel by Dave Eggers from 2012.

Starring the likeable, easy to adore Tom Hanks, who has excelled at playing the everyman, the film follows Alan Clay (Hanks) a once successful middle-aged salesman who finds himself on a business trip to Saudi Arabia, sent on a hapless mission to try and sell a new 3D communications technology to the Saudi government via a face-to-face with the King, a meeting that never seems to materialise.

This is a story of a man who is lost, finding himself in an utterly foreign country. Unfortunately, what could have been an uplifting fable, like 2011's excellent, hilarious, heart-warming *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*, also adapted from a novel, falls totally flat due to the utterly banal predicaments that Alan faces, along with a script, adapted by Twyker, that seems to have been written by an amateur with no idea of drama, dialogue, and dénouement - an astonishing lapse from the man who made the tightly wound, riveting *Run*

Lola Run (1998) and has since toyed, fascinatingly, with sci-fi in semi-successful but nonetheless mind-expanding experiments like *Cloud Atlas* (2012), and the Netflix series *Sense8* (2015).

Twyker's mistake seems to have been in trying to adapt a story for which he has no real affinity, resulting in a lack-lustre character (he really doesn't shine) that even Tom Hanks cannot bring to life. Alan Clay gets to Saudi Arabia, gets drunk, constantly oversleeps in his cookie-cutter hotel room, meets and befriends a Saudi man who is more American than him, and, please do not think I am giving this away, falls in love with a gorgeous Saudi doctor played by Sarita Choudhury, the only light in this dull film.

If you think that *A Hologram for the King* will give you an insight into Saudi Arabia, don't. This is self-indulgent nonsense that seems to have been forced upon Tom Twyker's usually kooky sensibilities, making for so much dissonance in the film that every character seems almost tone deaf. I winced many times through the film, but continued, hoping for Twyker's usual magical sleight of hand, which never materialised. Tom Hank's miserable mien in the film is one of the most depressing things I've seen in cinema in a while, making me question how a filmmaker like Twyker could have drifted so far from his usual, delightful experiments.

nepalitimes.com

■ Trailer

HAPPENINGS



BIKRAM RAI

CONSTITUTIONAL STAND: President Bidya Bhandari during an event to mark the first anniversary of the Constitution in Tundikhel on Monday.



RSS

MEET AND GREET: Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal with Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi at the Hyderabad House during PM Dahal's visit to India on Friday.



MoFA

THE OBAMAS: Minister for Foreign Affairs Prakash Sharan Mahat with US President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama on Tuesday. Mahat is on an official visit to the USA for the United Nations General Assembly.



BIKRAM RAI

DIFFUSING PRESSURE: The Bomb disposal squad working to dismantle a pressure cooker bomb in front of Kanchanjanga School in Dallu on Tuesday.



BIKRAM RAI

JATRA ENDS: Kumari, the living goddess, being carried to the chariot on the last day of Indra Jatra on Tuesday.

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Ex-speaker speaks out

Interview with Subhas Nembang, Chair of the now-dissolved Constituent Assembly in *Himal Khabarpatrika*, 19 September

हिमाल
खबरपत्रिका

Himal Khabarpatrika: How do you review the first year of the Constitution?

Subhas Nembang: We have failed to show the wisdom and capacity needed to implement the Constitution. The political parties that stood together to promulgate it are now divided, and it has hindered its implementation. A constitution gives us rights, outlines our duties and shows us the way to govern a country. But it does not give us the knowledge, wisdom and ability that we need to take the country forward.

Why are the parties that promulgated the Constitution not serious about its implementation?

They say they are committed, but their actions contradict this. The previous government had passed a timetable to implement the Constitution, but the new government has neither followed it nor replaced it with a new workplan. We are delaying the passage of key laws required for the smooth implementation of the Constitution. For example, the Election Commission needed election laws by mid-September to hold local, provincial and

parliamentary elections by January 2018, but we have not even drafted the election laws yet.

The new Constitution was amended shortly after its promulgation, and is likely to be amended once again. Is that normal?

The Constitution can and should be amended from time to time, and we are not against that. But it has to be justified. When the Constitution was amended for the first time in January, the parties that now run the government said in Parliament that the Madhesi and

Janajati demands were addressed. They had caused an uproar when the amendment bill was delayed for a few days. But the same parties are now preparing to amend the Constitution once again. Why? They need to explain this.

Why are those who signed the Constitution last year now saying it is 'discriminatory'?
Even those who rejected the Constitution took part in prime ministerial

elections. They are now members of various parliamentary committees. Some of them are committee presidents too and draw their legitimacy from the same Constitution. So there is no question about the legitimacy of the Constitution. It has already been accepted.

So what next?

There is no legitimate body that can pass another constitution to replace the Constitution endorsed by an elected assembly. So we have no choice but to implement it. The parties that passed the Constitution must be held accountable for its slow implementation. Instead of blaming each other, they must stand united again until the end of the political transition.

What if local, provincial and parliamentary elections are not held by January 2018?

The Constitution implementation process has certainly been slow, prompting people to doubt the parties' ability to hold all three elections within the stipulated deadline. But it is still possible to meet this deadline. People must exert pressure on the parties to work harder and more swiftly. The parties must explain why they are delaying the process. They cannot get away with missing the election deadline, and pushing the country into further uncertainty.



BIKRAM RAI

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Waiting for an industrial revolution

Failure to foster entrepreneurship is driving Nepalis abroad for work

Prithvi Narayan Shah built the imposing fortress palace in Nuwakot in 1762 as he swept eastwards towards Kathmandu Valley as part of the conquests that led to the formation of the nation state of Nepal. Just like the Malla palaces of the Valley, the Nuwakot palace signified prosperity, and was a symbol of a promising culture.



ECONOMIC CLASS
Manish Jha

King Prithvi Naryan's other purpose of keeping the Nuwakot Palace was to guard the trade route to Tibet via Rasuwa and Kerung. It is interesting that after the earthquake and landslides damaged the Kodari Highway, Nepal's link to Tibet and China has reverted to this ancient route.

The fact that nearly three centuries ago, Nepal had a strong economy that thrived on trade with its neighbours means that we have a history of entrepreneurship and private investment. You don't



BIKRAM RAI

MONUMENT TO DECAY: The ruins of the abandoned cement factory at Chobhar is testimony to the chronic state neglect of the industrial sector over the past two decades of democracy.

55,000 grocery stores. But when we check, we find many haven't really expanded. Nepalis are entrepreneurs, we just don't seem to have the skills to sustain businesses, and make them grow.

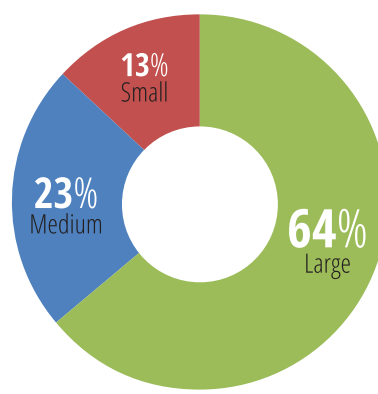
Nepal's history of industrial development is short. In 1936, after the formulation of the Nepal Companies Act, the Biratnagar Jute Mills was established as the first joint-venture industry. A few more government-owned industries were opened in the 1950s and 60s, often with support from China and the then USSR.

By 1986, there were 2,054 industrial establishments employing about 125,000 workers. And today there are 6,328 industries of which 13 per cent are large scale, 23 per cent are medium scale, and 64 per cent are small scale enterprises. Together, they employ about 512,000 people with nearly half of them in the big factories. This is the opposite of the rest of the world where small and medium-scale enterprises provide a bulk of the employment.

Analysing the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Nepal we see that most industries have a short lifespan. Many would-be entrepreneurs lack planning and do not have a proper business plans, or strategies. Moreover, they face constant legal and political hurdles which affect business operations. This has not only made difficult it to sustain businesses, but has also discouraged many aspiring entrepreneurs.

Lately, there is a realisation that only by reviving the traditional entrepreneurship of our forebears and providing incentives to investors will Nepal be able to generate new jobs and stop the outmigration of its population. That presupposes a visionary government with a long-term strategy. ■

Industrial Establishment in Nepal,
Upto March 2016



DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY

By the time Nepal was registering its first private limited company others nations in the neighbourhood were already industrialised. Businesses had no staying power. Public sector companies, many set up with foreign assistance, were allowed to decay.

It's not that individual Nepalis do not know business. Every time a highway is blocked by landslides, traders immediately take the opportunity to sell bottled water and food to stranded passengers. In Kathmandu Valley alone there are supposed to be

trade unless you have something to sell, or buy.

Yet, in the modern era Nepal's first private enterprise was only registered in 1925 by which time Michigan University had already launched its first course in entrepreneurship.

Somewhere along the way, we got lost in fostering private businesses. We abandoned the heritage of trade that once made Nepal a vibrant entrepôt. Kathmandu's Asan and Indrachok specialized in trade.

Somewhat the politics of the past six decades did not foster business. And that lapse has led to the lack of jobs and is the prime reason behind the outmigration of Nepalis to India, Malaysia, and the Gulf, for work.

During the Rana regime, we forgot to lay the foundations of private business, and institutionalising the process of entrepreneurship. And in the past 60 years, trade came to be synonymous with smuggling.

Nepal became a convenient place for trafficking goods destined for the protected Indian market. Successive regimes became complicit in this. Promoting the domestic industry was just not the priority. With the rate of return from smuggling so high, and with the prospect of raking in profits overnight, there was no incentive to invest in manufacturing and industries that would create jobs. The gestation period was just too long.

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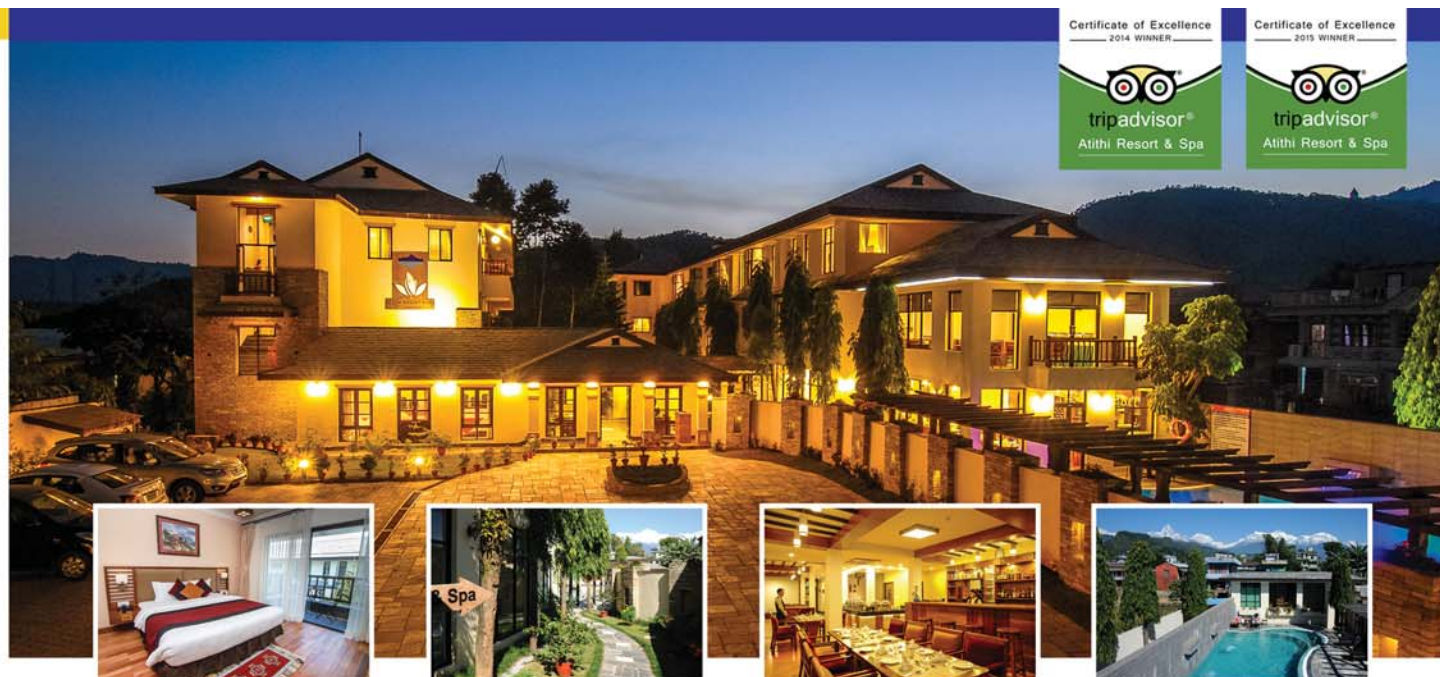
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Govt mulls taxing kickbacks

As conscientious Nepali tax payers, it is deeply satisfying for many of us to see that the government is putting our hard-earned taxes to good use by coming up with creative new ideas for new taxes. In this way, some of us who still have some disposable income will not just be sitting unproductively on our non-performing assets, but will finally get off our derrières.

Still, this is not the time to hem and haw, or for ifs and butts. It is the time for every Nepali of taxable age to ask himself and herself some wrenching questions: Is the government doing enough? Is it leaving any stones un-overturned to enlarge the tax bracket and widen the tax net? My personal feeling (and this is entirely my opinion and does not in any way reflect the opinions, if any, of my present employers, or of the various organisms that I have worked for in the past, and may work for in the future) is

that it is not.

The government is not doing enough. It is being complacent. It is evading raising taxes. The Right Honorary Prime Minister Comrade Lotus Flower is so busy re-aligning Nepal's non-aligned foreign policy that he has no time figuring out ways to increase state revenue. He better come up with new things to tax, otherwise there will be no tax-payer's money for him to purloin. Chairman Terrific must go boldly forth where no government has gone before to come up with new things to tax, otherwise at the rate he is going he will never meet the Tenth Plan target for profligacy, waste and revenue leakage.

In the interest of transparency, it is my civic duty as Donkey-in-Chief to bring to the attention of esteemed readers at the present juncture that there may be a slight conflict of interest in going any further with this

Even these doves don't think I'm a hawk anymore.



column since the Ministry of Finance, Pvt Ltd has just hired this scribe (hitherto known as "yours truly", and hereinafter referred to as "me") as a consultant to advise the government on a more futuristic tax policy. But in the national interest it is my duty to privately leak to you the salient points of my suggested recommendations to FinMin, provided you do not tell anyone. Promise? OK, here goes:

1. Torture. The government has stopped short of using this time-tested revenue-raising method on tax dodgers. This technique, which involves actual physical contact at the sub-cuticular level between the taxman and the fingernails of the payee has guaranteed efficacy. It is currently being used with excellent results in Guantanamo and torture chambers around the free world.

2. Graft Tax. The FinMin is soon to set up a Department of Kickbacks whose responsibility it will be to slap a 10 percent VAT, 2 percent Service Charge and 4 percent National Corruption Surcharge on every kickback and bribe given or received within the current boundaries of Nepal.

3. Capital Flight Levy. No, contrary to what you think, the government is not going to reintroduce an airport tax on all flights leaving the capital. This is actually a 50 percent tariff on all cash being smuggled inside the false bottoms of outgoing passengers.

4. Adulteration Tax. All fuel stations committing adultery by adding subsidised

kerosene to the diesel they sell at gas stations over and beyond the present 50 percent mixing they carry out must hand over half the money stolen to the Nepal Oil Corporation as Adulterous Tax. Otherwise, the gas station in question will be raided and booked for black marketeering.

5. Sunshine Tax. It has come to the notice of the Taxonomy Department that civil servants and slaves have been sun bathing on the terrace of Singha Durbar for free. A solar tax has therefore been slapped at a flat rate of Rs 100 per head per hour of sunshine. A Lunar Tax will also be announced soon as a levy on the extra income of moonlighters.

The above five bright ideas will put the government in a comfortable position to meet any exigencies by mobilising internal resources, and reduce our dependence on donor support.



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