



A Trump World

Donald J Trump's victory in the US presidential election this week shocked Americans and sent shock waves across the world. Here in Nepal, it had analysts scratching their heads about what it means to Nepal's, especially the country's tight balancing act between India and China.

Will President Trump really follow through on his threats to deport illegal migrants, and how will it affect the US administration policy on those seeking political asylum, like the Bhutan refugees?

Trump's disdain for human rights, his seeming sympathy for Russian President Vladimir Putin and criticism of Barak Obama's Asian Pivot doctrine vis-à-vis China could dramatically change America's place in the region.



BIKRAM RAI

Despite his closeness to Obama, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was one of the first to greet Trump with a warm-hearted message. Some Hindu Indian-Americans were vocal supporters of the Trump campaign.

Analysts say an unpredictable change in the US foreign policy could affect the political economy of East Asia and the Gulf where 2.5 million Nepalis work and send remittance home. What makes some nervous is quickly spreading Syria-Iraq conflict, dragging Saudi Arabia and Iran into the fray, and destabilising the region.

"The direct implication of Trump's victory will be his policy towards migrants and refugees," says Nischalnath Pandey of the Centre for South Asian Studies. "But what his approach will be towards India and China will also have consequences for Nepal."

Aside from strategic implications and foreign policy, there is also worry about what impact an inward-looking America will have on the US official development assistance and funding of the United Nations and non-governmental groups. The US has been one of Nepal's major development partners for over 60 years with investment in health, education, food security and post-earthquake reconstruction.

Trump's win has fueled speculation that the US will cut down on development aid across the world, especially given his vocal ridicule of climate change, which he has repeatedly called a "Chinese hoax".

Bhaskar Koirala of the Nepal Institute of International and Strategic Studies says Trump's pitch to the American electorate

LOSING THE LOTTERY: Nepalis are worried what will happen to the US Diversity Visa lottery under the Trump administration.

has been to make 'Make America Great Again', for which his administration would seek to avoid unnecessary and unproductive engagements, including diverting its resources.

"We can expect a scaling down of aid and a re-engagement on traditional bilateral relations that feature more regular high level visits and exchanges and a focus on business promotion between the two countries," Koirala says, adding that Nepal could assume greater importance under Trump because of its geo-strategic location between India and China.

Trump's victory has upset liberals world over, and comes at a time when Nepal itself is debating amendments in the new Constitution to meet demands from Madhesi and other groups on federalism, citizenship and electoral rules.

There has been an outpour of nationalist rhetoric in the past week after an unofficial Constitution amendment bill that seemed to be aimed at enabling naturalised Nepali citizens to be eligible for the posts of President and Speaker. Nepal, too, appears more divided than ever before, like Trump's America. 🇺🇸

Om Astha Rai and Smriti Basnet



A chariot through time

BY BRUCE MCCOY OWENS

PAGES 8-9

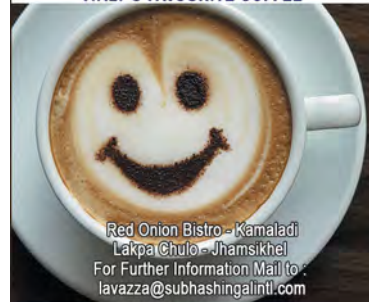
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GOING PLACES TOGETHER

TAMASHAS OVER

Nepal’s rulers still swing from one extreme to another: either needling neighbours needlessly or kowtowing to them.

Now that the three festivals, the tamasha of Indian President Pranab Mukherjee’s visit to Nepal and the US elections upset are over, the government can get back to running this country again. There is a whole host of pressing problems: having the Constitution up and running with necessary amendments acceptable to all, rushing urgent bills through Parliament, playing catch-up with lagging development and economic goals.

The post-holiday and pre-winter season, however, will be dominated by the impeachment proceedings against CIAA Chief Lokman Singh Karki which was abruptly interrupted on 25 October. Headlines about Karki’s abuse of power in the media are not a ‘distraction’ as some have claimed. Karki epitomises a clear and present danger to the democratic project, and the mangled mechanism through which he was installed in office shows how easily the system can be twisted and expropriated. It must be said, the politicians only acted when the man they helped appoint CIAA Chief posed a threat to their own political existence.

Last year’s mishandling of the fast-track constitution, the recklessly confrontational manner in which both the Koirala and Oli coalitions thumbed their noses at India, and the ruinous blockade should have taught us all a lesson. But we didn’t learn it.

Nepal’s rulers still swing from one extreme to another: either needling neighbours needlessly or kowtowing to them. They seem incapable of being attentive to the sensitivities of our giant neighbours while minimising interference. Macho hyper-nationalism is futile in a country whose economy is in a shambles, where citizens have no trust left in government.

Last year, Nepal’s political leaders vanished in the weeks after the earthquake. The government spokesman was nowhere to be seen, there was very little coordination of international relief. When the government did speak, it was to render one gaffe after another that made Nepal an international laughing stock. Instead of thanking donors and couching statements positively to highlight relief that

was really needed, the government came out looking mean spirited and uncaring.

To mask this prodigious incompetence the lame duck Koirala administration fast-tracked the constitution, and it was later promulgated without adequate consultation. Violence erupted in the Tarai, leaving at least 60 dead. Successive Nepali leaders visited India to reassure the Indians that Madhesi concerns would be addressed, and then came back and did just the opposite. India was miffed, and this turned to anger when Nepal’s leaders refused to put off promulgation by two weeks.

Things spiralled out of control after that, with the Indian blockade that lasted five months. Prime Minister Oli,

instead of trying to keep back channels of communications open with both New Delhi and Madhesi leaders fell back on grandstanding and leaning over backwards on China. Knowing fully well how it would rattle the Indians, he went ahead with largely symbolic moves to find alternatives to petroleum imports and trade and transit routes via China.

Whoever in New Delhi at the time was the architect of the blockade must be held responsible for a colossal blunder. India came across as a crude bully, reacting disproportionately to punish an entire people for the follies of a few in power. The blockade began to look like a siege, and the nationwide humanitarian disaster it unleashed was more destructive than the earthquake.

We wrote in this space at this time last year: ‘Short of declaring war on a neighbour and bombing it, a siege like this is the easiest and cheapest way for one country to wreck another.’ The most sobering aspect of the blockade was the utter disinterest of the international community which refused to speak even about the suffering of ordinary Nepalis.

This allowed Prime Minister Oli to convince many Nepalis that this was all India’s doing, and even deflect criticism of delays in earthquake relief by blaming it all on the blockade. The blockade increased the chasm between the mountains and plains, deeply polarising Nepali society.

Exactly one year later, President Mukherjee arrived in Nepal on what was billed as a fence-mending trip. Nepalis had not forgotten the blockade and the simmering anger was in open display on social media. But nowhere was the aftershock of the blockade more apparent than in the difference in the reception that Mukherjee got. Empty streets of Pokhara and Kathmandu contrasted sharply with the spontaneous cheering in Janakpur.

As we deal with a festival hangover, it is clear that the incompetence of Nepal’s politicians and the failure of the Indian establishment to understand the Nepali psyche have brought us back to square one.



Times

THIS WEEK



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
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by Om Astha Rai (77 retweets, 101 likes)


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YOUR SAY


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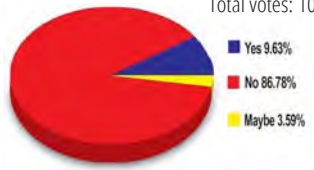
MUKHERJEE'S VISIT
India was the biggest loser in its cruel blockade against Nepal ('#PranabDaSaySorry', eSpecial, 2 November). What did India get by bullying Nepal? Nothing. It lost the goodwill that it was gradually gaining in Nepal, and pushed Kathmandu towards Beijing.
Arun Shrestha

 **Ashok Pokharel**@BigBlackYak
Maybe because of all the time spent in the 'jungle' but, our @cmprachanda, @PMONepal sure loves the flowers!

 **Nirmal Ghimire**@nirmalktm
@nepalitimes In contemporary history of many nations, people stood in favor of another country to revenge against their oppressive regime.

 **Nepali Times**@nepalitimes
India's prez received a grand reception in Janakpur where Nepal's prez was humiliated last year.

 **Nepali Times**@nepalitimes
Q. Do you agree with the government's decision to declare a public holiday on the occasion of Indian President Pranab Mukherjee's visit?



Total votes: 1059
■ Yes 9.63%
■ No 86.78%
■ Maybe 3.59%


Weekly Internet Poll #833
To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Who bears the biggest responsibility to prevent money from being stolen from ATM machines?

we really going insane?
Stephane
■ Mukherjee's Janakpur visit indicates that his main mission is to preach 'Hindutva' in Nepal. India is doing this to Nepal from the mantra that it learnt from its British colonial master: divide and rule.
Yam Gurung

IMPEACHMENT
Pawns are not players, so whether to impeach the dreaded CIAA Chief depends on the final decision of India ('C'mon, Congress', Om Astha Rai, #831). After all this talk about New Nepal, projecting party leaders as players is to delude the public.
Chhakka Panja

Anupam
■ Nepalis are good at running twitter hashtags, but who in the world cares about it? It is easy to blame someone else for your mistakes. Nations do not grow this way.
Alex

 **Pari Dangol**

■ Almost everyone is frustrated in Nepal, and this movie ('Chhakka Panja', Raisa Pande, #831) addresses the causes of frustration that plague our society. In doing so makes the audience laugh and cry. looking forward to more movies such as *Chakka Panja* and more power to the Nepali movie industry for attempting to entertain and raise questions simultaneously.

Times

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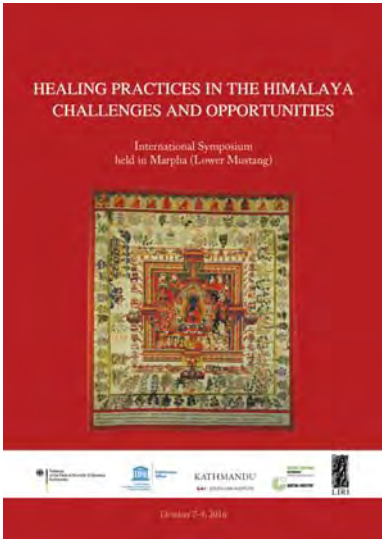
TURKISH AIRLINES 

I am an amchi

Marpha meeting of practitioners of Tibetan medicine plan revival of the healing tradition



GOPEN RAI



a long-standing history of Tibetan medicine, and we wanted to decentralise away from Kathmandu where most programs are held,” explained Nadine Plachta of the Kathmandu Office of Heidelberg University’s South Asia Institut.

Gaurav Lamichhane, a graduate student of the University of Heidelberg, said one of the reasons traditional Tibetan medicine did not have a wider reach was the lack of recognition by the government of Nepal. The state’s health policy is influenced by western medicine, and natural healing methods are ignored and not appreciated.

But Nepal has made progress in the preservation of Tibetan medicine. In 1993 the brothers and practicing amchi doctors, Gyatso (pictured above) and Tenzin Bista, founded the Lo Kunphen Amchi clinic in Lo Manthang and seven years later they opened Lo Kunphen Mentsikhang, a school and training centre for amchis.

The Bista brothers are founding members of the Himalayan Amchi Association which is active in the cultivation and sustainable use of medicinal herbs in the Himalayas and the improvement of medical standards. Since September 2016 a Bachelor course in Sowa Rigpa Amchi medicine has been offered by the Lumbini Buddhist University in collaboration with the Sowa Ripga International College Kathmandu. 🇳🇵

SABINE PRETSCH in MARPHA

Is Nepal losing the traditional wisdom of Tibetan healing? What kind of challenges do doctors practicing Tibetan medicine face? How will Nepal help preserve this ancient method of healing? These were among the questions discussed during an international symposium on healing practices in the Himalaya in Marpha recently.

Healers practicing Tibetan medicine, called amchi, came from Upper Mustang, Tsum, Kothang and Kathmandu with international experts and travelled to this scenic village in Mustang earlier this month for a three-day conclave.

In former times every village in Upper Mustang had its own amchi. Today one doctor is responsible for several villages. It has become more and more difficult for them to pass this wisdom on to the next generation,” said Nyima Samphel an amchi from Jharkot in whose family the practice has been passed down for nine generations through Buddhist and Bon Po rituals. He says the reasons for Tibetan medicine losing its appeal are out-migration, competition from western medicine, and a payment system that is based on voluntary donations.

Sowa Rigpa is Tibetan for the ‘science of healing’ and is still practiced in Tibet and throughout the Himalaya, originating from a mixture of traditional Chinese medicine and Ayurveda by

exploring the interconnectedness of the mind, body and soul of a patient. Delusion, attachment and aversion, referred to as the three poisons in Buddhist philosophy, can have a harmful effect on one’s health.

Tibetan medicine assumes that an imbalance of three humours (wind, bile and phlegm) has an effect on the disease pattern, too. Medicinal herbs, minerals and natural products from the Himalaya form the basis for medical products and alternative, curative treatment.

In Tibetan medicine the diagnosis is mainly established by measuring the patient’s pulse, the analysis of the patient’s urine, and an examination of the tongue and eyes. Medical herbs are prescribed to cure diseases and activate self-healing forces. External

therapies include bloodletting, moxibustion, compresses, oil massage and herbal baths.

Ani Kunsang, a female amchi from Tsum Valley explained: “The combination of several herbal ingredients with the qualitative value of the elements, water and fire, has the same therapeutic value as a bath in a natural, hot spring. In Tsum Valley medicinal herbs are identified and gathered up to an altitude of 5,000m. They are used for the manufacture of drugs and herbal pills.”

The Marpha symposium was also attended by German Ambassador to Nepal, Matthias Meyer, UNESCO representative Christian Manhart, and Christoph Cüppers who is a Professor of Tibetan Studies. “We intentionally selected Marpha as the venue because the region has

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KUNDA DIXIT

Being posted to their Embassy in Kathmandu seems to be a great career move for Indian diplomats. Several former Indian ambassadors have gone on to become Foreign Secretaries, or posted to important missions like the High Commission in London.

Diplomats also tend to be keen photographers and trekking aficionados. Former Indian ambassador to Nepal, Deb Mukharji, published a photobook the *Magic of Nepal* in 2008 and another one *Kailash and Mansarovar: Visions of the Infinite* which was published by nepa~laya in Kathmandu in 2009.

Jawed Ashraf was posted to Kathmandu 2004-7 during the critical period of the 12-point agreement between the Maoists and the political parties in New Delhi that led to the ceasefire and ultimately Nepal bidding goodbye to its monarchy. Like

in about the devastation in his beloved Kathmandu. Because of his knowledge of Nepal, Ashraf was given the responsibility to support India's rapid response team that rushed air support and relief to Nepal. A week after the earthquake, he came to Kathmandu and took more photographs. 'I saw the devastation around Kathmandu's Durbar Square. I saw despair, but also hope. And, the quiet determination and resolve of the people to rebuild their lives,' Ashraf writes.

This affection for the city is visible in *A Day in the Life of Kathmandu*, a photographic portrait of Kathmandu, and even in pictures from ten years ago one can see how much more the city is bursting at the seams. Flipping through the pages, it is clear that although the book is about Kathmandu Ashraf's eyes often dwell on the snow-capped peaks to the north.

The silhouettes of Himalchuli, Ganesh Himal, Langtang, Dorje Lakpa, Purbi Ghyachu appear in the many of the photographs like old friends. But there are also alluring images of the Patan temples emerging through the winter mist, pilgrims' progress at Boudanatha and

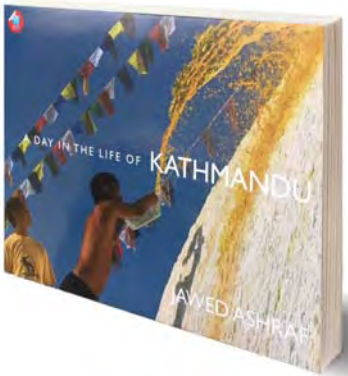
Swayambhu, the devotional fervour of the chariot pullers of the Machindranath and Indra Jatra festivals.

Ashraf devotes a whole section to the bahals of Patan and Kathmandu, some of which were badly damaged during last year's earthquake. 'The soul of Kathmandu lies — for me certainly — in the bahis and bahals, a quintessentially Kathmandu treasure,' Ashraf explains.

There have been many picture

books on Kathmandu, but this one carries a special perspective of a visitor who has an eye for the urban landscape and the terrain beyond, images that us natives take for granted. We can only wait for Ashraf to bring out another book of photographs taken of Nepal's landscape from during his numerous treks.

Ashraf's gift for the written word is almost as perceptive as his photography, he writes: 'Here is a tribute in photographs to Kathmandu — as life unfolds through the cycle of day and night, woven into its heritage, lived on streets and in public spaces and played out on a dramatic Himalayan stage.'



A Day in the Life of Kathmandu
by Jawed Ashraf
Wisdom Tree,
New Delhi 2016
NPR 2,500
136 pages

Mukharji, he hiked the Himalaya and snapped pictures along the way. Just before taking up his assignment as India's High Commissioner to Singapore, Ashraf was in Kathmandu last week to launch his own photobook, *A Day in the Life of Kathmandu*.

Ashraf dedicates the book to the victims of the 2015 earthquake, and recounts in the preface how he felt the tremors as far away as New Delhi and watched aghast as news came



prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

Agents award

Qatar Airways held its Agents Award Night to recognise its travel trade partners at Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Kathmandu this week. A total of five trophies and eighteen certificates



were handed out by the Ambassador of Qatar to Nepal, Yousef Mohammed Al-Hail along with Jayaprakash Nair and Debendranath Mallick of Qatar Airways.

Victory for Lee

Lee Westwood became the first Drone Golf Champion as part of a first



of its kind event hosted by Turkish Airlines. The event was the first of the three tournaments included in Race to Dubai's final series and saw a total of 78 players competing for a \$7 million prize fund.

Connecting cities

Cathay Pacific Airways will be introducing a four-time weekly service between Hong Kong to Tel



Aviv, Israel from 26 March 2017 which is still subject to government approval. This is part of the carrier's initiative to promote connectivity between key 'One Belt, One Road' markets.

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NIC Asia recently inaugurated seven new branches in different locations



across the country. With these additions, the commercial bank now has 76 branches and 69 ATM outlets throughout Nepal.

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The guardian of the shadows

Austrian architect Götz Hagmüller’s forthcoming memoir promises to be a homage to Kathmandu Valley’s heritage

SEBASTIAN GANSRIGLER

Austrian architect and filmmaker Götz Hagmüller sits on his porch not far from the collapsed temple at Bhaktapur’s Dattatreya Square and picks up a thick portfolio map full of articles and stories about his conservation work in Kathmandu Valley.

Hagmüller first came to Nepal in the 1980s to work on the Bhaktapur restoration project and was involved in upgrading the town’s sanitation system for the German aid agency. One of his biggest and most important projects, the Patan Museum, which opened in 1997 has become one of Nepal’s main tourist attractions with over 40,000 visitors annually. Along with his wife, Ludmilla Hungerhuber, he was involved in the restoration of the Garden of Dreams. Completed in 2007, it is a peaceful oasis in the heart of Kathmandu.

Hagmüller has been living in Kuthu Math, a restored 270-year-old courtyard in Bhaktapur for almost 40 years and is considered to be one of the most respected guardians of the Valley’s cultural heritage. Retired in 2009, he is now working on his memoir which he calls “a text book of my life” and is expected to be a guide for heritage preservation. The book will delve into form and functionality in design and architecture and how those two are inseparable.

“Architects haven’t easily succeeded in



SEBASTIAN GANSRIGLER

creating beauty with aesthetics. Form and function are equally important, modern architects disregard functionality. There are enough architects who think like that. Bauhaus, for example, counteracted this against the baroque,” he explains.

When he was a child, Hagmüller’s mother would advise him not to become an artist or a construction engineer like his

father. When he began studying physics in Vienna, he realised that he took a much bigger interest in the beauty and elegance of things than in mathematics.

Ever since the earthquake of April 2015, people in Kathmandu Valley have been struggling to rebuild. The centuries-old structures in Hagmüller’s neighbourhood are still in ruins. Rubble is still piled

up on the streets. For Hagmüller, the omnipresent dust and the smell of old clay awaken the spirits of the past.

“In Asia, the gods dwell in darkness, in the smoky, innermost shrine of the temple, surrounded in stillness by a few butter or oil lamps,” Hagmüller wrote in his 1991 book, Wenn das Licht ausgeht in Kathmandu (When the lights go off in Kathmandu). “Only rarely do they leave this abode: then, however, the gods are bathed with water and light and are carried around through their cities in festive processions. Until again they return to the darkness of their sanctuaries.”

Hagmüller’s inspiration comes from Japanese writer Jun’ichirō Tanizaki, who also wrote in his 1933 book *In Praise of Shadows*: “We Orientals tend to seek our satisfaction in whatever surroundings we happen to find ourselves in, to content ourselves with things as they are; and so darkness causes us no discontent, we resign ourselves to it as inevitable. If light is scarce then light is scarce; we will immerse ourselves in the darkness and there discover its own particular beauty.”

“A lot has changed. Some of the buildings I cannot recognise anymore as I walk through the old streets of Bhaktapur,” says Hagemuller who has dedicated four decades of his life in preserving the Kathmandu Valley. “Personally I’m very content with my own work, I wouldn’t have done anything differently.”

Hagmüller’s memoir which will be published next year will contain stories about his architecture work and life, covering a vast collection of photographs and topics.

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We all knew the past two weeks of crisp clean air was too good to last. A high pressure system over northern India that bent the jet stream to blow over central Nepal from the west-northwest. This cleared the air and brought down the temperatures. However, the westerlies are now blowing in from the southwest. Which means, you guessed it, that the thick smog blanketing Delhi is starting to blow our way. The views of the mountains will not be as clear, but the minimum temperature will be in the single digits. Some cloud cover in the afternoons.

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Tigers in 2008, he covered the Marxist JVP insurgency, crushed by government forces by 1992. Together, the wars killed over 150,000 while more than a million got displaced. Stephen Champion's war images were on display at the Photo Kathmandu exhibition Measures of Loss and Memories of War at Patan Museum. It was a selection from Champion's War Stories, published in 2008.

Displayed among the tall trees in the park behind the Patan Museum, they showed the terrifying impact of war on civilians. A Jaffna schoolboy showing his drawing of a bombardment by a military helicopter (*left*), with fire and dead bodies, and scared looking civilians; a young man grieving at the side of a body; amputees and internally displaced; blood seeping from a gate; messages warning people to vote; messages warning people not to vote.

The accompanying text by Champion reads: 'War is brutal at best. It is not meant to be anything else...While we continue to create systems of war, we are all very much responsible for the residual events. There is no such thing as a war crime. War is the crime.'

Among the 'residual events' of war, observes Champion, are violence within families, the rape of women, and the war on nature. The move from documenting the war between humans to the war on nature was a natural one, says Champion, "There is a strong connection between warfare and environmental pollution. The first chemical pesticides were developed to act as war agents. As in war, environmental destruction

helps some guys make a lot of money. And in both cases it's the common man who suffers most." Sri Lanka has become a dumping ground not only for pesticides but also second rate medicines and e-waste, reminds Champion. The country annually loses 1.4 per cent of its forest cover. Champion's adopted home is believed to be the world's fifth largest polluter of ocean plastics. The impacts are disastrous, not only for the island's biodiversity, thousands of Sri Lankans are dying from kidney failure caused by exposure to pesticides. Champion's 'Colours of Change' series reveal this transformation in detail. Bulldozers eating into the nation's forest hills, elephants foraging on plastics, cement fighters integrated into a Buddhist pagoda, the demolishing of historical houses, the arrival of kitsch tourism and entertainment venues. Interestingly, the images are taken with the same 1959 Rolleicord box camera Champion was gifted by his grandfather when he was 19 years old. Once a year the negatives are developed back in the UK and the prints scanned for use in publications.

Champion is not without hope. "My hope is that we start creating the dream that was dreamed by the idealists before the war started. It all begins with an understanding of our interconnectedness. We should know that by now: our mixed blood lines and DNAs prove it. We are all connected. We all depend on the same life forces and on each other. Understanding that gives us the freedom to be who we really are, and to allow others to do the same." 🇱🇰

War is the crime

Photographer Stephen Champion goes from covering war between men to war on nature

LUCIA DE VRIES



WILLEMIJN VAN KOL

Where to go after the war is over? Many photographers and reporters are confronted with this question after documenting violent conflicts. For Sri Lanka-based British photographer Stephen Champion (*above*) the answer was obvious: to nature. Or more precisely, to the war being waged on nature in the island. Stephen Champion was only

25 when he witnessed a man being torn to pieces by a bomb. He did not do what was expected of him: focus his camera and shoot. He crouched down and wept. Since that first death in 1986, the photographer has spent 23 years documenting the two wars that raged simultaneously in Sri Lanka. Apart from the Tamil separatist conflict which ended with the defeat of the Tamil

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A chariot through time

Exhibition that documents
40 years of the
Rāto Matsyendranāth festival
in photographs

The chariots of Rāto Matsyendranāth and Minnāth in Thaina, June 1977. The first picture of the chariot festival taken by the author.



Starting to pull the chariot from Poda Tole to Jawalakhel in 1982.



Previous Malini, Rita Mali, bearing the life of Bungadyah concealed in a ewer under her shawl, being welcomed by the thakalinaki at Tah Bahah upon her return from KotuwalDaha in 1983.

BRUCE MCCOY OWENS

Forty years ago at Patan's Mangal Bazar a gaggle of young boys vied to be my guide. All but one recited the same litany of sights to see: "Golden Temple, Mahabauddha Temple, Krishna temple..." But one boy asked if I wanted to see a festival. I hired him on the spot. The spectacle to which he brought me has fascinated me ever since. A towering chariot was stuck on what was then the muddy road leading through Thaina, and hundreds of people were struggling to pull it without success. The grandeur of Darbar

Square, combined somehow with its human scale and dizzying detail convinced me that this was where I wanted to live and study. I returned to research Rato Matsyendranath Rath Jatra as a window into Newa culture. I used photography as a tool for learning as well as documenting a festival that was inherently chaotic. As an anthropologist, I try to have as little impact as possible and introduce myself to the people involved and ask to meet them again to talk about what they were doing. I give them copies of the photographs and use them to ask questions. In the early years of my research, I used two cameras to shoot in color and black and white. Ganesh Photo Labs in Bhimsenthan developed hundreds of rolls of black and white, but



for color I used Kodachrome slide film because of its accuracy and longevity. Though people were appreciative of the prints I gave them, upon receiving them, they almost inevitably asked, "Rangin madula?" ("Aren't there any in colour?") The Exhibition at Patan Museum and my recent Photo Kathmandu exhibits in Matsyendra Bahal and Bungamati are continuations of my practice of learning through sharing images and thanking those portrayed within them. For the three exhibitions I have chosen only a few of the thousands, based largely on the power of the images to convey the beauty of the festival the wide range of participants who make it possible. I have focused primarily on images of decades past, as today thousands of festival participants

are also photographing and filming it. This exhibition is intended to honor all those who have contributed to the longevity and continued vitality of this extraordinary tradition, and I hope all those who view it will share their thoughts and memories with me and one another. 🇳🇵



Bruce McCoy Owens is Associate Professor of Anthropology at Wheaton College in the United States.

The Chariot Festival of Matsyendranath: 40 Years of Photographs
Patan Museum
Open all days of the week 10AM – 5PM
Exhibit on view till 26 November
Entrance Free



Brakemen who control the speed and path of the chariot with blocks of wood attached to peach tree branches in Jawalakhel in 1991.



The chariot on its descent from Chasikot to Jawalakhel on the final leg of its journey during the twelve-year festival of 1991.

EVENTS



Impact marathon,
Gear up for the 10km, 21 km and 42 km scenic trail route runs as part of the Nepal International Marathon. 26 November, 9 am onwards, Kakani, Registration deadline: 12 November, www.marathonnepal.com

Yantra 5.0,
A combination of art, technology and science featuring robotics competitions, workshops, art-tech exhibitions and others at Yantra 5.0. 30 November to 20 December, Nepal army training and Physical training and fitness centre, Lagankhel www.ran.org.np For tickets: <http://bit.ly/2eyuODa>

Adventure stories,
Watch inspiring and powerful adventure stories during the Adventure Film Festival organised by Himalayan Outdoor Festival. 3 December, 5 pm onwards, Moksh, Jhamsikhel, 9823287228, 9843817625



Artist talk,
Join in on a discussion on art and culture with artists Matt Magnus and Abhishek Shah as they talk about their exhibition 'Assignment of meanings'. 12 November, 5 to 9 pm, Nexus Culture Nepal, Bakhundole nexusculturenepal@gmail.com

Mustang madness,
Register to participate in the cross-country MTB race in Mustang to enjoy the best biking trails of the Himalayas and win cash prizes. The 220 km long race is a mix of adventure, culture, challenge and discovery. 24 November to 1 December Starts from Kagbeni and heads North towards Lo Manthang, 9818622466, 9860975472 www.themustangmadness.com

Ekareshma,
Attend screenings of 78 films from around the world as part of the International short film festival. 11 to 13 November, QFX Kumari, Kamalpokhari, 9847148108, ekadeshma.org

Planet Nepal,
A festival celebrating arts and highlighting environmental issues with the theme of illegal wildlife trade for its fourth edition this year. 18 & 19 November, Jawalakhel Ground, Lalitpur, (01) 4241163, 4242832

Art market,
Get your hands on some Miss Motivation postcards, posters, paintings and print and design products at the Art Market. 12 November, 12 pm onwards, The Yellow House, Sanepa, (01) 5522078

Yum Yogic,
Master the art of cooking Sattvic Yogic vegetarian food and learn to make dishes like custard fruit salad, Rajasthani curry, puri and more. 12 November, 10 am to 1 pm, Vedic Arogya Ashram, Satdobato, 9851135316, Fee: Rs 1500

Photography workshop,
Get to learn the basics of photography and images in the photography workshop organised by Artudio. 21 to 30 November, Artudio, Chhauni Hospital Road, 7 to 9 am, 9803779777, 9851180088, artudio@hotmail.com, Fee: Rs 5500

Cycle ride,
Take part in an eco heritage cycle ride starting from Kamaladi Ganeshtan passing scenic villages of Machhegau, Panga and ending at Chobar. 3 December, 6 am to 4 pm, Starting point: Kamaladi Ganeshtan at 6 am, 9841468009, 9841283584, Register at <http://bit.ly/2fju4kc>

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Alice Restaurant,
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Café Swotha,
An intimate setting in the heart of Patan, with an atmosphere of sophisticated, romantic warmth. Patan, (01) 5551184, info@traditionalhomes.com.np

Old House,
A beautifully renovated neo-colonial building, which houses an adventurous restaurant dedicated to the art of French cooking. Darbar Marg, (01) 4250931



Hyderabad House,
Dine like the famous Nizams of old Hyderabad. Bhatbhateni, (01) 4443839

MUSIC



Bipul's Maya,
Tap to the beats with Bipul Chettri as he belts out numbers from his new album Maya. First 300 ticket purchasers get a CD of the album for free. 20 November, 6 to 9 pm, Tangalwood, Naxal, For tickets: kgarira.com

Sine valley,
Electronic, experimental and many others musical forms by artists from Nepal, Maldives, Pakistan and India at the Sine Valley Festival. Till 13 November, Various locations, <http://bit.ly/2fuNsxX>



Superfuzz live,
Spend a musical evening with Superfuzz, good music and food. Every Saturday, 7 pm onwards, The Factory, Thamel, (01) 4701185

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

Blackout pride,
Mark your calendars for Phase III of Blackout Pride featuring bands like KAAL, Taamishra, Absorb, Asphyxiate, Aatmaglani, Screaming marionette and Shades of hope. 12 November, 12 to 6 pm, Thamel Reggae Bar, Thamel

GETAWAY



Buddha Maya Gardens Hotel,
Add value to your travel in Lumbini with a stay at one of the best hotels in the area. Lumbini, (71) 580220, 9801033109, info@ktmgh.com

Barahi Jungle Lodge,
The first eco-jungle lodge of Chitwan directly overlooks the Chitwan National Park. Andrauli, West Chitwan, (01) 4411113, bjl@barahi.com, www.barahijunglelodge.com



Dwarika's Resort
A holistic lifestyle retreat, drawing on ancient Himalayan knowledge and philosophy of care for nature and for oneself, set in magnificent natural surroundings. Dhulikhel, (11) 490612, info@dwarikas-dhulikhel.com

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



Shangri-La Village,
Enjoy a scenic view of the Annapurna range and Machhapuchre with a three-day-two-night package stay at Shangri-La. Valid for both Nepalis and expatriates till 30 November. Shangri La Village Resort, Pokhara, Reservations: (01) 4412999, 4420252, (061) 462222/9860260894, Rs 6666 per person on twin/triple sharing basis



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Old traditions, new meanings

RISHI AMATYA



ALL PICS: RISHI AMATYA



The history of Kathmandu Valley's architecture is the history of living, adapting and reconstructing between frequent earthquakes. This cyclical renewal is at the core of our building culture. The energy for each successive renewal process, however, comes from the strength of our intangible heritage: festivals, *jatras*, *nakhas* and *pyakhas*. These are social bonds that have gelled the Valley's society over the centuries.

For the indigenous population

of the valley, these traditional practices continue to hold deep meaning. Otherwise, why would the golden window in the Patan Museum be open during the recital of the Narsingh Avatar? Every year only for this recital, the golden window is flung open to honour King Siddhi Narsingh Malla. It remains closed the rest of the year.

Kartik Nach is one of the oldest and consistently staged dance drama (*pyakha*) traditions in Patan. It takes its name from the lunar month of Kartik, the month which held special importance to the

king who was a devout Krishna worshipper. The eleventh day of Kartik is Haribodhini Ekadasi and considered one of the holiest days in the year when Vishnu wakes up from his slumber and presides over the universe.

Siddhi Narsingh Malla first staged this performance in Kartik in the mid -17th century. It went on for a week, and his son, Srinivas Malla, and his grandson Yog Narendra Malla, added plays and comical skits, extending it to a month. This year, the dance is performed for 12 days from 3

November till 14 November.

A lot has changed since. Though the dance drama tradition still retains its religious values, it has taken a far more significant meaning. After centuries worth of yearly recitals, it has evolved from its roots as not just a socio-religious play but also as a part of Patan's cultural identity.

Residents of the town have absorbed this tradition in their cultural calendar. The elevated platform where it is staged is now known as Kartik Dabu, and this annual tradition with such high historical and cultural importance runs on a shoestring budget.

Earlier, the dance was financed by royal patronage. The Malla kings encouraged cultural expression, and under their tutelage the arts and crafts of the Valley flourished. Numerous scholars had identified nine such dance troupes, but today most of them exist as a ghost of their former selves.

The reason is a lack of resources. The minimum budget to run the yearly recital, including paying the artists, musicians and organisers, and putting up such extravagant show every night runs up to Rs 700,000. The Kathmandu Sub-metropolitan Office contributes Rs 100,000, the local chamber of commerce gives Rs 10,000, Rs 20,000 comes from the Patan Museum and the Ministry of Culture contributes Rs 74,000.

Starting last year, the organising committee did local fundraising on an ad-hoc basis. In between the acts, the organisers appealed to the crowd and the donations trickled in. They raised Rs 100,000 (Disclosure: My wife and I donated, and we are planning to do so this year as well) and the rest came from savings.

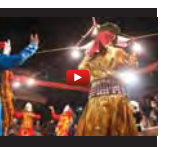
Every paisa raised goes directly to keep the tradition alive. The committee has registered with the Social Welfare Council and keeps an account of all income and expenses. It seems that the sense of identity and pleasure of viewing the performance prompts individual donations.

But funding fluctuates, and it may make sense to start something similar to Patreon the web platform that lets artists receive monthly payments from fans and well-wishers.

It's easy to point at government apathy for the preservation of cultural traditions and leave it at that. However, crowdsourcing initiatives like this should be emulated extensively, both within Nepal and outside as the ideal way to keep a tradition alive in these trying times. 🇳🇵



nepalitimes.com
Watch video





DOCTOR STRANGE

It is, quite frankly, very difficult to write about a fictional work when a catastrophic non-fiction event has just occurred in a country that has affected so much around the globe since World War II. More than ever, action films, from Marvel universes to X-Men reboots, bet their dramatic credibility on the incredibly high stakes that involve rescuing the world if not the universe, from disaster. From today onwards, with the shocking election of a fascist, racist, sexist demagogue, a purported billionaire who hasn't paid his taxes in over 20 years, who has been accused of harassing multiple women, the parameters of what is at stake have just changed again. *Doctor Strange* is a welcome break from our ugly world because of its digression from the usual tropes that make Marvel action

films so successful, but also so very predictable. With a cast of diverse talents such as Chiwetel Ejiofor and Benedict Wong, lead by a starring cast of Benedict Cumberbatch and Tilda Swinton, *Doctor Strange* abandons the usual break-neck action for a gentler, more humourously-paced origin story about a man who must re-evaluate his priorities when he suffers from an unexpected, debilitating accident. Benedict Cumberbatch's Dr. Stephen Strange is a familiar archetype: an arrogant, immensely successful neurosurgeon who wields the power of life and death in his hands. The Dr. Strange at the beginning of this film is the kind of anti-hero that Cumberbatch has excelled at making likeable (his Sherlock Holmes is mesmerising), even as he implodes at the loss of the skills that prop up his ego.

Enter Kathmandu, stage front, as the land to which Stephen Strange travels to meet the Ancient One (Tilda Swinton), whom he hopes will help him regain the full use of his hands. The film takes interesting risks as it attempts to define spirituality, fully indulging viewers in a Western concoction of what people imagine as mysticism in this part of the world. Backed by stunning visuals, and beautifully shot settings in our very own Swayambhu, Pashupati, and the stunning Newar architectural backdrop of Patan Durbar Square, *Doctor Strange* succeeds in bringing glowing, original visual backup to a quirky, cosmic story about a man who is trying to find his own way but gets caught up in an epic battle of good versus evil. As with most successful films of the genre, despite the exquisite visuals, it is the heart and the humour in the writing that wins the day, with the wonderful Rachel McAdams as Dr. Christine Palmer, the human foil and moral anchor to Stephen Strange's initially cold brilliance. At a time when the future of the tangible world seems so bleak, one can only pin hope in the belief that even the lost can find their way - in fiction and in reality. 🇳🇵

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HAPPENINGS



CEREMONIAL PRESENCE: Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal calls on Indian President Pranab Mukherjee, who wrapped up a three-day state visit to Nepal on Friday.



EXECUTIVE ADVICE: Nepali Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba shakes hands with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi on Monday.



NORTH AND SOUTH: Nepal's newly-appointed ambassador to China, Leela Mani Poudyal (*left*) and ambassador to India, Deep Kumar Upadhyay, at a function in Kathmandu on Sunday.



THE SUN GOD: Women devotees offer prayers to the setting sun during Chhath festival in Kathmandu on Sunday.



RECOGNITION: A travel agent gets an award at Qatar Airways' Productive Agents Recognition event at Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Kathmandu on Tuesday

'Bizarre and baffling'

Excerpts of Interview with Krishna Jung Rayamajhi, a former Supreme Court justice who headed the judicial commission that investigated abuse of power and misuse of the state exchequer during Gyanendra Shah's authoritarian rule. *Kantipur*, 6 November

कान्तिपुर

Kantipur: It has been almost a decade after the judicial commission headed by you submitted a report to the government, implicating several high-profile politicians, bureaucrats and security officers in abusing their authority to suppress the 2006 Democracy Movement. Are you satisfied with the implementation of the report?

Krishna Jung Rayamajhi: Not at all. Some of the authorities whom we found guilty of abusing power were later promoted, and they retired without being punished. Others were conferred medals and awards by the government. And some are still in power. The suspended Chief of the Commission for the Investigation of Abuse of Authority (CIAA) Lokman Singh Karki was also named for perpetrating excesses and abuse of power against pro-democracy campaigners during Gyanendra Shah's reign. But the same leaders whom Karki once

targeted anointed him as the head of the anti-corruption agency.

Why do you think the government couldn't implement your report?

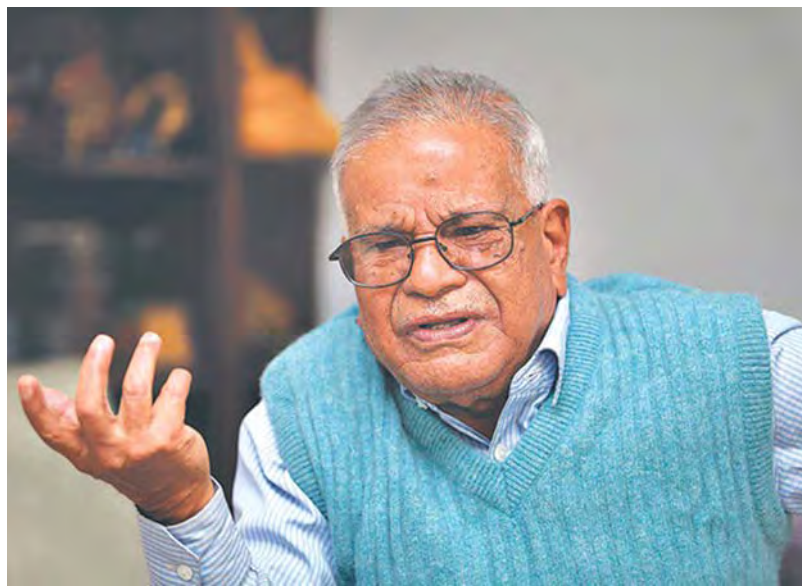
Those who were involved in criminal activities have political protection. They reach out to the leaders using their connections to get off the hook. Some might have even bribed political leaders.

Some have also argued that a person should not be convicted just on the basis of an inquiry commission report. What is your take as a former Supreme Court justice?

Our Commission had a mandate to investigate royal excesses, abuse of power and violation of human as well as civil rights by thoroughly examining evidence. And we just did that. It was up to the government to further investigate the cases, and punish or free those named. But the government trashed our report.

Did you also recommend action against Gyanendra Shah?

We have concluded that Gyanendra Shah was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers, and hence guilty. Tulsī Giri and Kritinidhi Bista were Vice Chairmen of the Council of Ministers and were also found guilty.



KANTIPUR

What actions were recommended against them?

We had recommended warning and dismissal against those found guilty of abusing authority to suppress the pro-democracy movement. They were to have been given a fair chance to defend themselves, and were to be punished only if found guilty. If the government had implemented the report, Lokman Singh Karki would never have been appointed. Implementation of the report could have benefitted the accused, probably including Karki.

How so?

Had the government implemented

our recommendations some of those found guilty would have got a clean chit. But they were neither investigated nor punished on the basis of our report. The Big Three chose the man found guilty as the CIAA Chief. It is shameful how, those that ignored the report and got him to fill in the position of the CIAA chief have now come together to focus their energies on impeaching him.

Why do you think the Big Three chose Karki?

It looks like political leaders were not genuinely interested in investigating excesses of the royal regime. They formed

a judicial commission only to douse public anger.

Political leaders argued that Karki was getting a second chance to reform himself.

Only an individual with a high moral character and integrity should be appointed CIAA Chief. This CIAA Chief was only fulfilling his own interests. He even obstructed the Supreme Court from issuing summons to him, which is wrong and has been counter-productive.

How do you view the role of the Chair of the then-Council of Ministers?

As a former justice, I find it unfortunate that Karki was made the CIAA Chief when Chief Justice Regmi was the Executive Head of the country. He definitely knows what worked in Karki's favour. He knows who lobbied for Karki, and from where. To the common people, Karki's appointment was bizarre and baffling.

Are you hinting at a foreign hand in Karki's appointment?

The political events surrounding Karki's appointment clearly indicate that. There is absolutely no need for an independent and sovereign country to rely on other countries to make its decisions.

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JUMLA TRANSFORMED: Dipak Bikram Shahi (*above*) sells designer clothing and branded accessories in Jumla.

Mani Neupane, 69, (*right*) used to walk 15 days to reach Nepalganj just to buy medicines, and cannot believe how much and how fast Jumla has been transformed.

Khagendra Singh moved to Jumla from Kathmandu to set up a fitness centre in Jumla (*left*)

Rupa Rokaya, 52, (*below*) is a successful entrepreneur and makes a profit selling fresh and dried apples after the Karnali Highway linked Jumla to Surkhet.



SHREEJANA SHRESTHA in JUMLA

Utter the word “Jumla” in Kathmandu, and the questions are of its grinding poverty, remoteness, poor health care, child marriage, high maternal mortality, chronic food shortages and malnutrition. Jumla has an image problem.

However, Jumla is changing and the reason is the arrival of the Karnali Highway which now connects this once remote region to Surkhet and the rest of Nepal.

Where there were once stone and mud houses with slate roofs, there are ersatz of modernity and development: cement blocks, steel framed windows, ATMs, department stores and a gym club.

“I am the first one to start a store of this kind here,” says Dipak Bikram Shahi of the Royal Fancy Collection that sells designer clothing and branded accessories that has a monthly

turnover of Rs 2 million. “The people’s buying habits and purchasing power is changing with the pace of development in Jumla,” he adds.

While many would lament the steady disappearance of Jumla’s quaint houses with roof terrace, og ladders and narrow cobble stone streets, most locals are proud of the town’s progress in the past ten years.

The district has even got a fitness centre, probably the first in the Karnali Zone. Khagendra Singh, 39, used to run a gym in Kathmandu for more than a decade but decided to return to his home town to open a fitness club.

“I wanted to set up a fitness trend here and succeeded in that. I already have 200 members,” Singh told the *Nepali Times*.

Construction of the Karnali Highway was delayed because of the conflict, but when it was completed in 2007 it linked Jumla to Surkhet (232km) and Kathmandu (850 km). The road

was blacktopped two years ago, and although narrow and treacherous has transformed the lives of Jumlis. The district’s apples and oranges which used to rot on trees can now be transported to markets, and the road has also made food and other essential items cheaper.

Rupa Rokaya, 52, is a successful entrepreneur and makes a profit selling fresh

and dried apples. She says her business would not be possible without the road. “I took an apple processing training under MEDEP (Micro-Enterprise Development Program) after the road arrived and I haven’t thrown away a single apple after that,” she says of the project started by the United Nations Development Programme



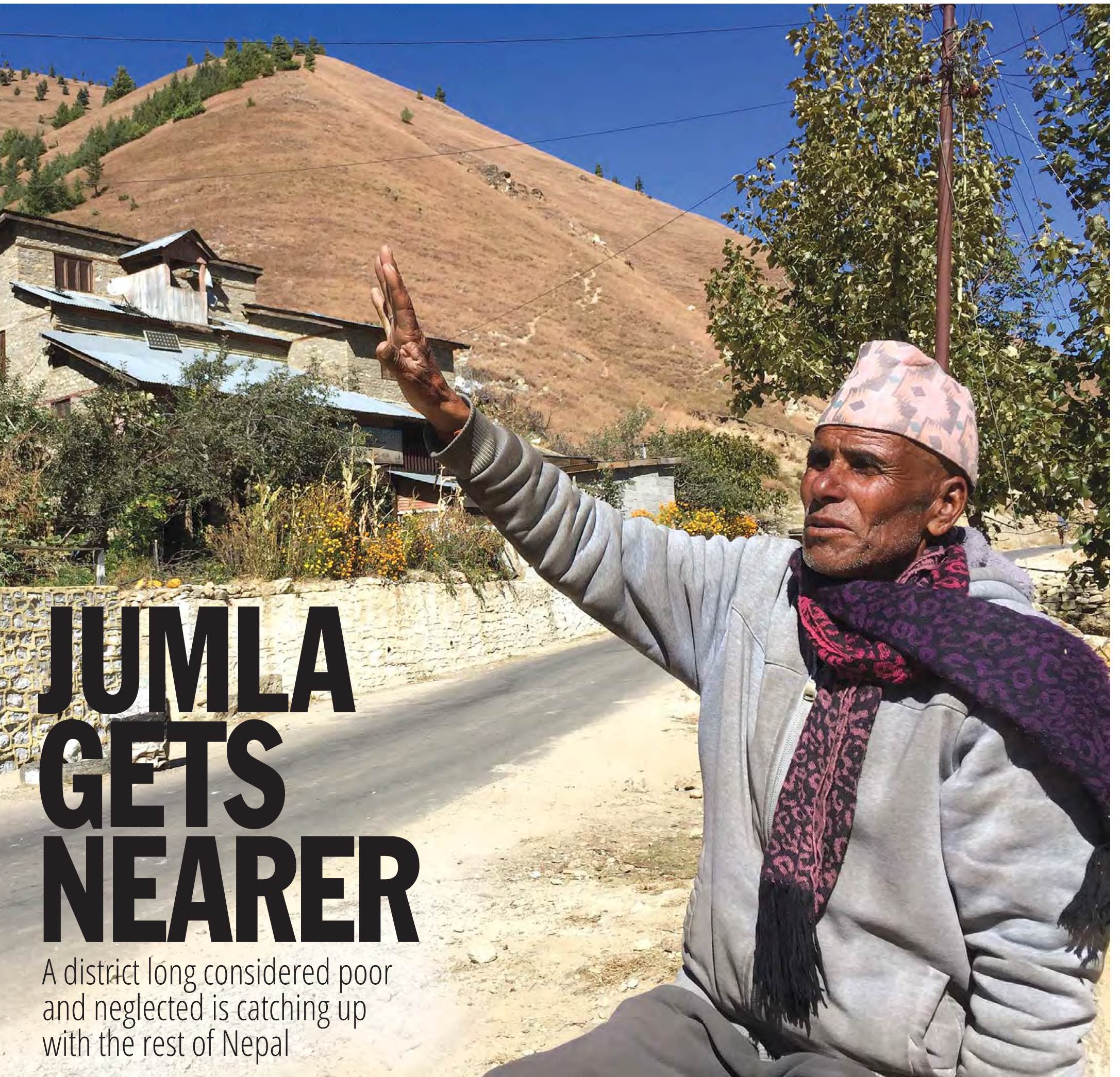
(UNDP).

Mani Neupane recalls he had to walk 15 days to reach Nepalganj just to buy medicines, and cannot believe how much and how fast Jumla has been transformed. There are now five daily buses to Surkhet, and two buses that connect Jumla directly to Kathmandu every day.

However, cheaper road transport has affected the Jumla Airport, which was upgraded ten years ago and used to see 15 flights a day to Nepalganj, Surkhet, Simikot and Pokhara, but now gets only about three daily flights.

“I feel lucky to live to see the development of my district. Sometimes, when I remember the old days, it feels like a dream,” says Neupane.

Although the Karnali Zone still lies close to the bottom in terms of Human Development Index, the town is proof of how fast a district can catch up with road connectivity.



ALLPICS: SHREEJANA SHRESTHA

JUMLA GETS NEARER

A district long considered poor and neglected is catching up with the rest of Nepal

Neighbouring Dolpa and Humla are the only two districts in Nepal yet to be linked to the national road network.

Already 24 of Jumla's 26 VDCs have dirt roads and this has meant better health and education. The government-run Karnali Academy of Health Science is now up and running and preparations are underway to start a medical college. Jumla District Hospital, the Karnali Technical School and health posts in almost all VDCs are being upgraded.

Local Development Officer Hari Narayan Belbase claims poverty has been eradicated in Jumla. "Food shortages are now a thing of the past," he says, adding that the district can now turn its attention to addressing various social ills like caste and gender discrimination.

Looking around Jumla today, there are no signs of two deadly Maoist attacks in

2002 in which the CDO, DSP, 33 policemen, four soldiers and more than 55 Maoist cadres were killed.

Even so, not everyone is enamoured with the new trappings of modernity in Jumla. Health worker Radha Paudel,

Waiting for a tourism boom

With better road and air connectivity, Jumla is waiting for a tourism boom. When new hotels with better facilities come up, Jumla can be the springboard for the scenic 4-day hike to Rara Lake, or a wilderness trek across the Kagmara Pass to Dolpa and on to Phoksundo Lake.

Jumla is also located on the Great Himalayan Trail and could be a stopover for trekkers heading towards Mt Api and Mt Saipal. Located at nearly 3,000m the Jumla Valley is the highest paddy-growing area in the world with its famous red rice.

The surrounding mountains get copious snowfall in January, and could be developed as a destination for cross-country skiing.


Travel entrepreneur Lalit Jung Mahat sees possibilities for both downhill and cross-country skiing holidays if lodging and facilities could be upgraded. In spring and summer, the area can also offer rafting and paragliding.

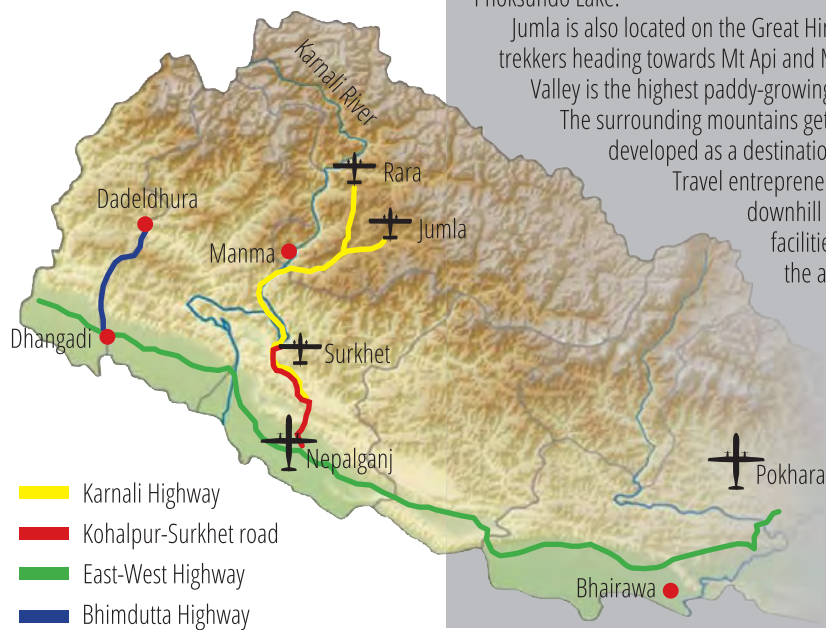
Promoting religious tourism to the famous Chandannath Temple and improving the hot springs at Tatopani could be combined as a health and pilgrimage package for domestic tourists.

"The proper management of Tatopani could boost Jumla's tourism because the waters are said to be therapeutic and have healing properties," says Laxmi Prasad Upadhyaya of Jumla DDC.

whose book - *Khalangama Hamala* - on the Maoist attacks that won the Madan Puraskar, says just replacing stone and mud houses with ferrocement buildings is not an indicator of development.

"The absence of war doesn't mean peace," she told us, "there are no more bombs and curfews but we have a lot to do for a socio-cultural transformation in the lives of the people."

Paudel says the absolute poverty rate may have gone down but there are many for whom proper health care is still neither accessible nor affordable. She adds, "The war may have ended, but the fight to ensure health care is ongoing, health posts still don't have medicines and water supply." 



nepalitimes.com

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Life without water

After gooseberry wine, the most overrated liquid in the world is probably water. Cosmologists tell us that life on other planets in our galaxy is impossible unless water is present. However, I know from personal experience in my own tole that semi-intelligent life can flourish despite not a drop of water having flowed out of our taps since the reign of King Amsuvarma. They found water in Mars, but no life. In Kathmandu Valley we have no water, but we have single-cell organisms inside Singha Darbar.

This is scientific proof, if proof was still needed, that we don't really need water at all to keep body and soul together. We can carry on in the trajectory through our current incarnation, as well as endless future cycles of life and re-birth, with no water at all. We don't need any H₂O, thank you. So very kind of you, sir.

Generations of Kathmandulays have

grown up in total absence of water, and our bodies have evolved gradually through a process of natural selection, and the survival of the fittest, to adapt to this waterless world. Our bodies have simply replaced water with alternative fluids wherever possible.

1. There are households in our neighbourhood, for instance, that have completely done away with washing. To clean Y-fronts that they have been wearing every day since Chairman Awesome's swearing-in for his second term in office as prime minister, they use a process called "dry cleaning". Basically, this means spreading said undergarment on an ironing board, sprinkling liberal amounts scented talcum powder, and incinerating the fungi, yeast, moulds and other eukaryotic organisms. Voila! Within minutes, the undies look and smell as good as new.

2. Brushing teeth is a very water-intensive

exercise. But many of us have totally obviated the need for water and toothpaste after discovering that one can brush one's teeth with great efficacy if one gargles with a chilled 500ml bottle of beer ("Probably the Best Mouthwash in the World") and then using the ensuing froth to vigorously reach all nooks and crannies within our oral cavities. Whiter, healthier teeth, no plaque, no need for water, and a great way to start a new day.

3. There must have been a huge shortage of water in ancient Egypt, because we know from historical parchment records that Cleopatra bathed in asses' milk. These hieroglyphic texts have been meticulously deciphered and have no records of what Mr Mark Anthony thought of this practice, or if he in fact joined her in the tub to do asinine things. But it did save the Egyptian Civilisation a lot of water since we are told that Cleopatra was in the habit of bathing

quite often.

We are acquainted with quite a lot of asses in our tole, but unfortunately none of them are presently lactating. This rules out bathing in asses' milk for me for the time being, but where there is a will there is a way.

4. Those desperately in need of a bath can join the entire city at the Das Rat Stadium Swimming Pool which has recently been converted into a giant communal bathtub where the entire Valley comes to take a dip and clean the black stuff that gathers in the gap between their toes. All we have to do is enforce a mandatory bath at the aforementioned facility for politicians and bureaucrats so they can also wash their greasy palms and dirty linen in public and ensure a squeaky clean administration.

5. In its effort to conserve water, the Kathmandu Metropolitan City has banned spitting in public and private places. Studies have shown that an average city dweller spits several dozen times an hour. All added up, this represents a grievous loss of precious moisture from the body and could lead to serious dehydration.

Now that we are aware of this, all we have to do is to swallow the copious quantities of saliva during the day, that we would otherwise extirpate, to quench our thirst. No longer need to buy Thirst Pee Mineral Water (Registered Trademark, Patent Pending).

6. Water also used to be needed for irrigation. Not any more. Many of us have perfected innovative ways to keep our gardens moist. Dogs can be trained to regard the pot of dodecatheon as the perimeter of their domain, which they then approach at regular intervals during the day, lift their hind leg, and turn on the sprinkler. For more water-intensive plants like the Delphinium belladonna, you can employ the services of the zoo elephant, Gajaraj, which will not only irrigate your garden, but also replenish the flowerbeds with valuable phosphorus and nitrogen-rich nutrients.



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