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JIYALAL SAH

Trading tears for votes

A bullet killed her son. Now she is turning to the ballot for justice, not just for herself but for everyone in the community.

On a calm afternoon in September 2015, when the Constituent Assembly was on the last lap of promulgating Nepal's new Constitution amidst protests by Tarai-centric parties, Anita Devi Patel (pictured) and her son Chandan, 4, were buying vegetables in Bethari, Rupandehi.

Suddenly, a clash erupted between police and protesters, and she ran for safety, carrying Chandan on her shoulder. But she could not outrun the bullet that killed her son on the spot.

Patel, 27, is now running to become deputy mayor in Pokhariya municipality, near Birganj. The Madhes-based RJPN, which boycotted the first two phases of local elections, has fielded her as its candidate in the

last phase of polling, in Province 2 only, on 18 September.

Two days after the second death anniversary of her son next week, the mother of likely the youngest 'martyr' of Nepal will try her luck with the ballot box.

"I still cry when I remember my son, but now is the time to wipe my tears off and fight for justice," she told *Nepali Times*, carrying Chandan's photo during an election rally on Thursday, a day after registering her candidacy.

More than 18,200 candidates have entered the fray in Province 2. Of them, 6,627 will be elected as mayors/ deputy mayors, village council chiefs/deputy chiefs and ward council members.

The fanfare accompanying candidates' registration shows that the voters of Province 2 were desperate for local polls – the first in 20 years – which were postponed three times in a bid to persuade the RJPN to participate.

It's hard to predict the results of Province 2 polls, but one thing is clear: they will shape national politics. The ruling NC, which won in 226 local councils in the first two phases, might catch up with the UML (276). The UML could further widen its gap over the NC and Maoists by taking Province 2 – which could harden the party's stand against a constitutional amendment.

If the RJPN and other Madhes-based parties collectively emerge in the lead, they will see it as endorsement of their demand for that amendment. If they lose, they will face a moral crisis. Locals in the flood-devastated province are more concerned about whether elected representatives will fix their problems. "Everything has been disrupted by floods, but this election is giving us so much hope," said RJPN cadre Manoj Kurmi.

Jiyalal Sah in Birganj

FLOTSAM EDITORIAL

BETWEEN THE CRACKS

GUEST EDITORIAL

BY BHOLA PASWAN

PAGE 2



Back to the land

These migrants decided to remain in Nepal after finding out they can earn more growing cash crops

BY SONIA AWALE PAGE 14-15

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GOING PLACES TOGETHER

FLOTSAM

It will take a long time for the Eastern Tarai to recover from the floods that ravaged the plains in eight districts, affecting 20% of the country's population.

At last count at least 50 people had been killed. Tens of thousands have lost their homes, granaries and standing crops have been destroyed, livestock has been washed away. As the waters recede, the true scale of the devastation is becoming evident. It will take years for the region to recover from this calamity, and because these are also districts with some of the highest rates of out-migration of young men, there is an immediate need for food and shelter.

It is a cruel irony that the worst-affected districts are also part of Province 2, where local elections are due in a week's time. Had there been local elections, perhaps some of the poorly-planned infrastructure on floodplains in Nepal and across the border in India could have been prevented. The floods would not have been as bad, and the relief distribution would have been more fair and expeditious.

Elections are finally happening, but for the victims living in temporary shelters without food, water and clothes, it is too late. Amidst this devastation they are also preparing to elect their local representatives on 18 September.

As cynical politicians everywhere never let a serious crisis go to waste, candidates of various parties have predictably been promising rapid rehabilitation, and distributing token relief. The flood-hit



BIKRAM RAI

people cannot offer even a glass of clean water to those canvassing hut-to-hut for votes because they don't have any for themselves. The flood disaster has been closely followed by an epidemic of infections, with more than 50,000 people, mainly children, ill.

Every time politicians visit flood survivors asking for votes, the people should ask them a counter question: Why did you cause so much suffering for us?

The politicians have argued that this was a natural disaster, and to a certain extent there was record rainfall in the catchment area. But the people of the Tarai want to know why the politicians let the Chure range immediately upstream be denuded by loggers and sand-miners. Why was no thought given to drainage when roads and embankments were built? Why did no one discuss with India the construction of levees and elevated roads on its side of the border? And the most important question: what plans do you have to prevent such floods in future?

In a democracy, people can question their leaders and leaders must have answers. An election gives the people a chance to question their candidates directly, and voters in Province 2 are doing just that. The people can now hold their elected leaders accountable, and hopefully this will improve conditions in this neglected region.

While they are at it, the people are also asking candidates why they had to wait till 18 September to vote when the rest of the country cast their ballots months ago. What did they gain from the delay? The questions are especially pertinent to the Tarai-based parties like the RJPN and the FSPN.

Democracy, as it is said, is the worst system of government except for all the others. We have to make it work by putting leaders on notice that it is not enough to win votes. Their performance once in office will be closely watched.

GUEST EDITORIAL

BHOLA PASWAN

Between the cracks

Saptari District is still reeling from the destructive flooding of last month. Twenty thousand families have been affected, and 5,000 here have lost their homes. Many people have yet to receive relief and aid, a situation that political parties have capitalised on for political gain.

Although Saptari experiences flooding most monsoon seasons, this year was particularly bad. Floods spanned much of the Eastern and Central Tarai simultaneously, fed by small rivers that originate in the Chure hills.

Soil erosion caused by haphazard sand and gravel mining in those hills over the past couple of decades exacerbated the flooding. The state has been complicit in this environmental destruction, profiting from taxes on products removed from the area in certain months, which is allowed despite the President's Chure-Tarai Madhes Conservation Development Board program. In addition, corrupt officials have colluded with contractors to mine illegally.

In the aftermath of the recent flooding, the behaviour of all political parties has been disappointing. Many people had high expectations for the Madhesi parties, but their response has been lacking. Here in Saptari, the widow of Rajib Raut, who was killed by police during the 2015 Madhes movement and whose martyrdom became a rallying point, says that no Madhesi party leaders have visited her since the disaster. Her house in Bhardaha was

submerged, destroying all the family's possessions and food, and she is having difficulty feeding her children.

Likewise, mainstream parties have failed to adequately address flood victims' needs. Local leaders from the major parties have been in Kathmandu for the past two weeks to advocate for themselves in the centralised process of choosing candidates.

At the same time, distribution of government relief has been politicised. Province 2 still lacks elected representatives of local bodies, and the process for families to register as "flood affected" is mediated by local party leaders. Leaders from all parties – Madhesi and mainstream – seek to allot the relief to their own supporters.

Mainstream parties may not be particularly concerned about Chure degradation but the Madhesi parties should be, because it threatens their main constituents. In addition to focusing on rights, Madhesi parties need to address the day-to-day needs of Madhesi people. Voters should question all politicians about their plans to halt Chure degradation, and cast their votes accordingly.



Bhola Paswan is a journalist in Saptari.

Times.com

ONLINE PACKAGES



BACK TO THE FARM

Udaypur has one of the highest rates of out-migration in Nepal, with at least one male member from each family away. But in recent years, migrant workers have returned to grow crops that earn hard cash. Travel with us to this eastern inner Tarai district to watch former migrants now earning much more than they did in the Gulf or Malaysia as successful commercial vegetable farmers.



MORE THAN A SCHOOL

Meet Sonam Gyalmo, who was ostracised by her in-laws for giving birth to three daughters, left her house in Dolakha and came to Kathmandu alone with her children. Niten Memorial Higher Secondary School (NIMS) in Tokha changed the course of her life. Watch the heart-warming video of Gyalmo and others sharing their stories of survival and hope.



TAKING THE PLUNGE

There might be too much water to trek in the monsoon, but not for canyoning, which is attracting a new breed of thrill-seeking youngsters. The 108m Lwang Ghalel waterfall in Kaski is drawing Nepali adventurers from across the country, and organisers hope more foreign tourists will start taking the plunge.

CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS

It's good to see Kanak Mani Dixit reporting from the field ('Border wall', Kanak Mani Dixit, #874). He is correct to castigate the powers on both sides of the border for a failure to manage effectively the water system that affects ordinary people on both sides. But it will not be effective to play the 'blame' game for long — constructive suggestions for bilateral water management at local, national and international levels are all badly needed. Maybe, as Dixit hopes, the newly elected local representatives in Province 2 will be able to galvanise the appropriate authorities and water management specialists into action?

David Seddon

CULTURE OF TRAVEL

I love your writings Lisa ('One day of life in the jungle', Lisa Choegyal, #874). We lack the culture that guides us to travel. It is a must to promote and encourage not only international tourism, but domestic too, which I believe can be a primary source for Nepal's ecological and economic prosperity. I was overwhelmed and honoured by people with diversified culture and tradition, with their service, thick forests and wild animals and birds when I was on vacation in Chitwan District last season. My next destination is Bardiya National Park for a deep forest tour. Would like to leave a message to all *Nepali Times* readers to do the safari tours at least once.

Tamang

WHAT'S TRENDING



Sweet original sessions

by Sahina Shrestha

The behind-the-scenes video of the Yomari Sessions, an online series that promotes Nepali artists through one-take live recordings, was the most watched video last week. Visit nepalitimes.com to see how songs are recorded at Yomari, and why the indie music scene is a breath of fresh air.

Most reached on Facebook
(8,330 people reached)

Most visited online page



Flood and food

by Sanir Pandey

This field reportage, illustrating that many farmers in the Tarai will have no harvest until next year, generated an outpouring of concern from readers and was widely shared on social media.

Most popular on Twitter
(31 retweets, 23 likes)

Middle ground in Doklam

by Dinkar Nepal

Last week's agreement between India and China was a tactical win for India, but China won strategically, wrote our columnist. Many readers agreed, some didn't and it was our most commented story online.

Most commented

QUOTE TWEETS

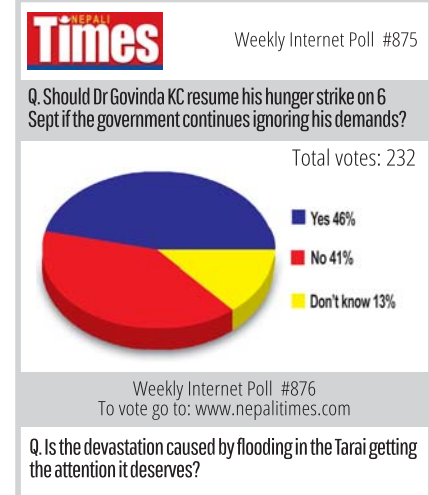
Nepali Times @nepalitimes
"We would have had enough rice to last us a year, now it's all gone. What am I going to do?" #NepalFloods2017 More: <http://bit.ly/2enyyK4>

Jo Chaffer @Joperdu
Not a natural disaster but man-made: made by few, suffered by millions

Nepali Times @nepalitimes
#POLL Should Dr Govinda KC resume his hunger strike on 6 Sept if the government continues ignoring his demands?

puza @puza_tulika27
Good people should not die in hunger strike, we need leader like Dr. KC, to challenge these politician and stand as election candidate

Bivek @bivek_karki
Those who say yes, why don't you try? Seems like you will be happy losing a good human, which is hard to find nowadays





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A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 20 YEARS

Day of the carpetbagger

Gangamaya's hunger strike for justice is tied directly to Nepal's economic progress

Let me put it this way, so as to try and yank the reader's head from the sand: the fight for justice of hunger striker Gangamaya Adhikari with reference to the 2004 murder of her son, Krishna Prasad, is linked in an unbroken strand to the hopes of Nepalis for material progress and 'developed country' status.

How so? Well, the material



ON THE WAY UP
Kanak Mani Dixit



BIKRAM RAI

progress of the people of Nepal requires economic growth, whose foremost precondition is financial investment, domestic as well as direct foreign. If we want wholesome, competitive business organisations to invest and turn profit from the vast untapped natural resources of Nepal, so that we can spread the wealth through equitable distribution via taxation, the absolute prerequisite is rule of law.

Rule of law is necessarily holistic: one cannot have due process only for the corporate sector and international investments, and nowhere else. Due process necessarily has to apply across the board, from human rights to land rights to state administration to the protection of FDI.

Due process does not only mean the existence of a fine Constitution and constituent laws. In addition, we need an independent and incorruptible judiciary, a bar and academia that demands the optimum application of jurisprudence and an executive branch that stands by the Constitution. None of these criteria are presently fulfilled in Nepal.

What you have instead is a scoff-law situation exemplified by the fact that murder convict Bal Krishna Dhungel can thumb his nose at society, while the Nepal Police refuses to respond to the call of the Supreme Court to accost and put him behind bars.

The problem, as we all know, emanates at the top of the

political superstructure. The lack of responsibility and good sense among the political party bosses has left governance in tatters. We may have had little hope from the Maoist leadership, with their history of deadly violence, but a minimum of ethics was expected of the Nepali Congress and the CPN-UML.

The Maoists were coddled by the Western international/donor community during the post-conflict era, many actually believing the professed social transformation. Later, India began using its own considerable leverage with the former rebels to intervene in national politics.

The UML and NC leadership did not have the fortitude to stand up to humanitarian principles,

and went into successive coalition governments with the Maoists. The all-time low is now, with the NC in electoral alliance with the Maoists everywhere, from local government to the Federation of Nepali Journalists.

This abandonment of ideology has happened in the party of BP Koirala, Krishna Prasad Bhattarai and Ganesh Man Singh.

The 'democratic' party leaders have been so compromised in the embrace of Pushpa Kamal Dahal that they have lost the ability to be part of the side demanding accountability for excesses committed by the warring sides during the decade of conflict – rape, abduction, torture and murder. And so Gangamaya's husband Nanda Prasad Adhikari was allowed to die more than two years ago, his fast-ravaged body dumped in the Teaching Hospital morgue. No one seems to feel the shame that, till today, he has been denied last rites.

Janardan Sharma, a Maoist battlefield commander whose 'exploits' can be downloaded on YouTube, is Home Minister. The immediate past attorney general, Raman Shrestha, did everything in his power to undermine due process and rule of law while the Nepal Bar Association simply watched, not even dumb-founded.

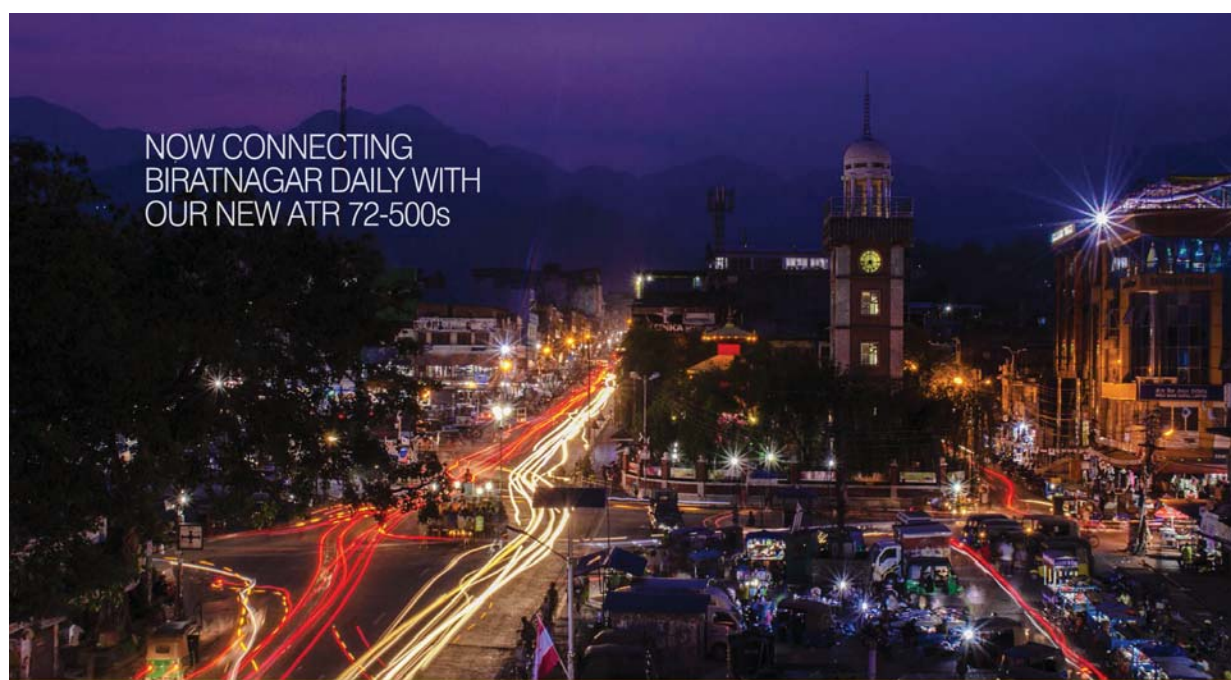
All things are relative, but over the centuries Nepal Mandal

has been a society marked by rule of law and due process. Today, the compromises of the political bosses have made a mockery of the legal/judicial system. Starting with the refusal to see justice done on conflict-era crimes against humanity, the political cohabitation with the Maoists has lowered the threshold of probity in public life, even as the level of corruption among the bureaucrat/politician combine has gone up from crore to arab.

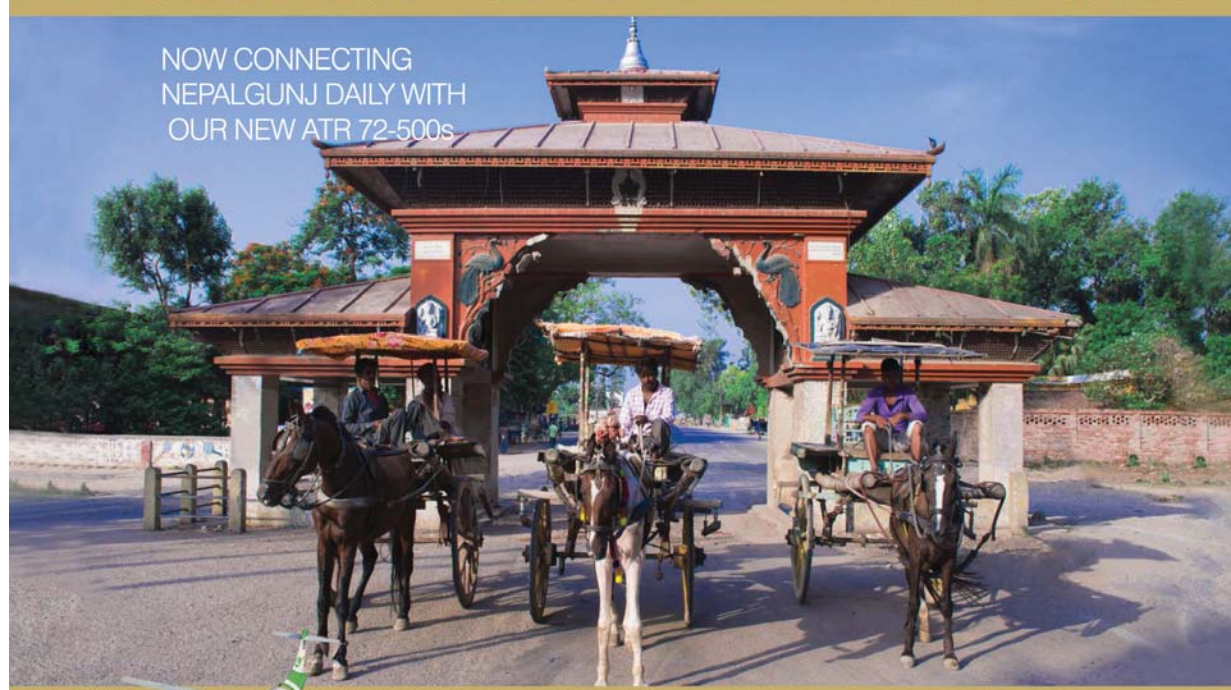
We are generating a kind of mal-governance such that legitimate, competitive business houses will fear to tread the soil of Nepal. They will not invest because they fear the capriciousness of government; arbitrary and abrupt altering of laws; the reneging on the commitment to repatriate profits; lack of trust in local dispute settlement mechanisms; and all the bribery and financial blackmail.

Gangamaya Adhikari is in frail condition at Cabin 7 at Bir Hospital, unrelenting in her demand for justice. And her battle for justice is directly linked to the hopes of Nepali citizens for progress. It is not enough to have democracy in name, we need it there in practice, as seen and proven first and foremost in the judicial accountability for murder, rape, torture and abduction.

In the absence of rule of law and due process, it will be the *sukulgunda* who will have the run of the economy. Domestic and international carpetbaggers will make humongous profits on the back of the citizens, while the political parties scrabble about for the crumbs. 🇳🇵



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around the world. Films and dramas featured include Star Wars, Fast and Furious, Toy Story, Mad Men, NCIS, and Modern Family.

Solar solutions

Leading solar product company Greenlight Planet has announced its partnership with Him Electronics with an aim to accelerate the pace of delivering solar solutions to Nepal's 16.5 million



people who are off the grid. To date, over 6,500 products have been sold in Central, Eastern and Western Nepal, where locals experience frequent power cuts and blackouts. Distribution will

soon expand to the mountainous region and highly off-grid parts of Eastern and Western Nepal.

Baggage-free Turkish

Turkish Airlines has expanded the scope of its Miniport service providing luggage transport between Ataturk Airport and Taksim in Istanbul.



Passengers can leave their baggage in hotels that have a contract with Turkish while they enjoy Istanbul, before and/or after their flights. The service is also available at the Marriott, the Ritz Carlton and the Pera Palace hotels.

Apple offer

Genxt, the only authorised distributor of Apple iPhones and products in Nepal, has announced its Dasain and Tihar offers. With every purchase of an iPhone, consumers can get a free silver



coin and special discounts on MacBooks. One lucky customer will win a scooter via a monthly draw.

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People, politics and placentas

Despite dramatic improvements in maternal survival, many Nepali mothers are still dying needlessly at childbirth

BIKASH GAUCHAN
in ACHHAM

Nineteen-year-old Khima Saud from the village of Ramaroshan was brought to Bayalpata Hospital with a retained placenta 26 hours after delivering her first child at a remote health post. She had been carried for six hours on a stretcher up and down mountains, and finally to a jeep that charged Rs4,000 for a 20km trip to the hospital. She had married 10 months previously: her husband was away working in India.

Saud had suffered massive blood loss and needed an immediate transfusion if she was to survive. The hospital did not have her blood type. One of the doctors and an auxiliary nurse midwife donated blood while she was resuscitated with intravenous fluids.

Her haemoglobin count was down to 4.8 g/dL, whereas the normal is 12. Her distended bladder was blocking the pathway for the placenta, so a catheter was used to empty it. Her bleeding stopped, and Saud received four bags of blood.

“I am reborn now,” Saud told staff as she prepared to return home with her baby a few days later.

Across Nepal every year, there are thousands of Khima Sauds who suffer complications at delivery. Although the country’s maternal mortality rate has dropped dramatically from 880



BIKASH GAUCHAN

per 100,000 live births to 258 in the past two decades, many young mothers still die needlessly at childbirth due to unavailable obstetric care.

“She was lucky,” said Shital Khanal, who was on duty when Saud was brought to the hospital. Massive bleeding due to retained placenta continues to be the leading cause of maternal mortality in Nepal. Last year, a mother from Khaptad was rushed here with retained placenta 24 hours after childbirth, but she could not be saved.

Nepal’s success in reducing the maternal mortality rate is

mainly due to the government’s Safe Motherhood Program, started 20 years ago to increase institutional delivery. The Ministry of Health provides incentives to women to complete at least four antenatal care visits and deliver at health facilities. There are thousands of Female Community Health Volunteers involved in maternal and child health at the village level. More recently, even comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care, which ensures the availability of an emergency cesarean, has been put in place in each village council or

municipality.

But even with a seemingly robust health system and progressive maternal health policy, why did it take 26 hours for Khima Saud to arrive from a health post that should have been able to deal with her condition? Why do more than 40% of childbirths in Nepal still occur at home? Why is Nepal’s maternal mortality rate still three times higher than the UN’s health target?

Khima Saud’s mother-in-law, Hima, said she was alone at home which is why she could not bring her earlier. Outmigration from

LIFE AFTER BIRTH: Khima Saud smiling and holding her newborn baby at Bayalpata Hospital in Achham recently. She nearly died because the health post in her village could not treat her retained placenta.

Nepal and patriarchal norms mean that it is difficult for women to make decisions on their own – especially because of the cost.

But cultural norms and poverty are just part of the story. While country-wide data shows an improvement in maternal health, much of this is in the cities. Many village councils and municipalities do not have access to the highly regarded comprehensive emergency obstetric and neonatal care. Many district hospitals still cannot provide round-the-clock emergency cesareans.

“No women should face the situation Khima had to face,” says nursing chief Gauri Sunar at Bayalpata Hospital. It is time for policy makers, health workers, ministry officials and others to make safe motherhood a reality in every village and municipality.

We have the resources. We have the policies. What we need is the political will to make sure mothers and newborns do not die because of the lack of care in poorly-equipped and understaffed health facilities. 🇳🇵



Bikash Gauchan is a General Practitioner at Bayalpata Hospital in Achham.

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The monsoon is now on its way out, but it is still capable of springing a surprise or two as we have seen in previous years. There is still a lot of water vapour swirling about, and these will build-up into afternoon and night storms in the weekend. Saturday will be relatively sunnier, so it is the time to head to Chandragiri or Nagarkot. Get out early to see the mountains. Even as the rains taper off, however, keep the umbrellas in the bag. You never know when the next shower will spring on you.

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Window to a new future

I would not have been able to complete my high school if it hadn't been for this school

SHREEJANA SHRESTHA



ostracised by her in-laws for giving birth to three daughters, Sonam Gyalmo (*photo below*) left her house in Dolakha and came to Kathmandu three years ago. She was just 23, alone and looking after three girls.

"I mustered the courage to leave my husband and in-laws

but I didn't have any income to survive in Kathmandu, and wasn't educated," said Gyalmo. She had just passed her school exams when she married at 16, having her first baby a year later, and had to leave school. She gave birth to a third child to fulfil the family's desire for a boy.

After her husband left for

Saudi Arabia and didn't return, Gyalmo was tormented by her in-laws and left them. Destitute and abandoned, she arrived in Kathmandu with a dream of educating herself and her children.

That's when she came across Niten Memorial Higher Secondary School (NIMS) in Tokha. More than a school, it is also a home for 410 children without families and survivors of disasters and trafficking. Gyalmo completed her own studies there, and now her own children are also enrolled at NIMS.

"I can't imagine what would have happened if not for this school," she says.

Established in 1995 as a school for street children, 340 students have graduated from NIMS since then. Apart from classes, the institution also has vocational education so students have skills when they pass out.

NIMS was started by Nicole Wick Thakuri, who comes from a privileged Swiss family. "As a child I didn't understand why


all children did not have the same right to education," she says. This feeling deepened when she saw street children in Thamel, and led her to establish NIMS.

Sapana Tamang is another NIMS alum. Her mother died when she was a baby, and her father remarried and abandoned her. Tamang was taken to NIMS, where she was raised and educated. After finishing secondary school, NIMS helped her find sponsors to do an MBBS in Bangladesh. At 27, Tamang today is a pediatrician at International Friendship Children's Hospital and runs a medical clinic at NIMS itself.

"I want to give back to the school that gave me a new life," says Tamang. "Forget about becoming a doctor, I would not have been able to complete my high school if it hadn't been for this school."

One former NIMS student, Kamala, got pregnant after she was raped by her stepfather at 16. Shunned by family and society, she was taken in by NIMS and gave birth to a baby boy. Kamala

completed her higher secondary level, and today she works in a cold store and is studying for a Bachelor degree at a private college.

Now that NIMS has grown from its initial few street children, Nicole Wick Thakuri feels she has larger responsibilities. She has given up her Swiss nationality to remain in Nepal and focus on raising money to take care of more needy children. 

Some names have been changed.



PHOTOS: GOPEN RAI



Watch video of students in NIMS during their lessons and extracurricular activities, and Sonam Gyalmo talk about how the school turned her and her girls' lives around.

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Falling with water

PHOTOS BY YUVARAJ SHRESTHA IN POKHARA





People say there is too much water to trek in the monsoon. But there is never too much water for Nepal’s other adventure sport: canyoning.


The country’s topography offers many waterfalls, and endless opportunities to abseil down them. And the most exciting time to do waterfalls is during the monsoon.

Besides the Bhote Kosi Valley and Jalbire on the Prithvi Highway, the 108m Lwang Ghalel waterfall in Kaski is becoming the most popular for canyoning among Nepali youngsters seeking adventure.

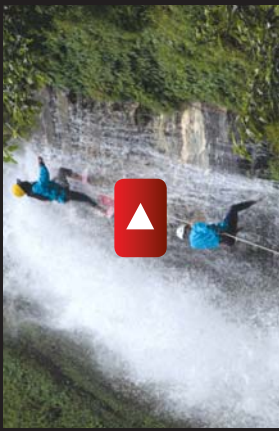
Canyoning from the Ghalel Fall is being promoted by Ram Gurung. He is training 16 local, unemployed youth to abseil respecting all the safety norms so they can be guides. He set up Pokhara Canyoning and now has a mostly Nepali clientele. College student Puja Thapa, 23, says she is addicted to the adventure of falling with a waterfall. “At first I felt like what Spider Man must feel. The edge from which I jumped off was so slippery, and towards the middle the roar of the water and the mist was so scary I screamed with excitement,” she said, dripping wet at the foot of the falls.

Binod Rai travelled from Ilam just for the canyoning because he found it so thrilling the first time.

Actress Srijana Subba (*main picture*) was in Pokhara recently on location to shoot her next movie ‘*Panche Baja*’ and decided to go canyoning. “It is an adventure like nothing else, but you have to muster the confidence to jump off,” said Subba after taking the plunge.

Gearing up for the adventure requires a wet suit, helmet, life vest and shoes made specially for canyoning. Newcomers to the sport need professional guides. 

TAKING THE PLUNGE



Join Nepalis from various walks of life as they jump off waterfalls in the country’s latest adventure sport, which could attract a new breed of tourists.

 nepalitimes.com

EVENTS



Let's dance,
Register if you want to learn to move your feet with Maria Lopez from Spain, including the popular American dance Lindy hop. Classes on Mondays.
11 September (first class), 6-7pm, Nritya Aagan, For information: (01) 5013554, 9813556945, infor@katjazz.com.np

All about arts,
Renowned art manager and cultural leader Pooja Sood is in town for a presentation on Arthink SouthAsia Fellowship. Followed by a panel discussion at the British Council (by registration).
8 September, 5pm, Himalayan Bank Auditorium, Kamaladi, 9849519933

Nepal Africa Film Festival,
Don't miss the opportunity to watch selected African films at the sixth edition of the Nepal Africa Film Festival.
18-20 September, 9am-5pm, Russian Culture Centre, Kamalpokhari, (01) 4416650



Divine fervor,
The on-going exhibition of artist Govinda Dangol features 12 different forms and moods of Lord Ganesh.
27 August-15 September, 10am-5pm, Park Gallery, Pulchowk, (01) 5522307, 9849830765

Displaced,
Visit this art exhibition reflecting stories of refugees in Nepal.
30 August-12 September, 8:30am-10:30pm, Yala Mandala, Kwalkhu Road, Free, 9841797260, 9818239744



Comic con in Nepal,
Fans of Marvel, DC, Anime, games and the comic genre are in for a treat. The event will also host international cosplay artists from Japan, the Philippines and India
9 September, 10am-8pm, Heritage Garden, Sanepa, (01) 5013096

Mexican Amate,
Save the date for the Mexican Amate painting exhibition.
2-14 September, 11am-5pm, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Baber Mahal Revisited, Kathmandu, (01) 4218048, (01) 4433930



Birds talk,
Don't miss this unique presentation on 'The birds of the Bagmati and Taudaha Area' by Arend van Riessen, followed by his book launch.
9 September, 2:45pm, Shangri-La Hotel, Lazimpat, (01) 4417805, (01) 4420213

Obstacle race,
Be adventurous and test your strength in Nepal's first obstacle race.
9 September, 6am, Godavari Football Ground, Rs1,000, free for ultra run.

MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI



MUSIC



Hazy Farewell,
Enjoy and groove to a final night of tunes with musician Chiney Gurung & The Band.
13 September, 9:30pm onwards, Purple Haze Rock Bar, Thamel, 9803719781

Monsoon Music,
Sample a mix of cuisines, check out product booths and enjoy a blend of upcoming and traditional Nepali musicians at this lively food fiesta.
9 September, 10am-5pm, RITZ, Balkumari

Unplugged Awaj,
Unwind with cover tunes by local band Unplugged Awaj.
9 September, 8-11pm, House of Music, Thamel 9851075172



Mitho tour,
MiKu presents a month-long city tour, the 'Mitho Tour,' for those who enjoy a unique blend of poetry and music.
9 September (Moksh), 22 September (Cafe Aamu), 7-10pm, Free entry

OUR PICK



Opens in Kathmandu on 8 September

Opens in Kathmandu on 8 September
This Nepali film relates a series of comedic errors by two hapless, long-time smugglers. Their loss one day of a transaction slip and a Rs2 bill launches the pair on a quest to recover it and save themselves from a whole host of characters.
Directed, written, and starring Asif Shah. Nischal Basnet and Buddhi Tamang also snag leading on-screen roles.

DINING



Manny's,
Kick off your Fridays with a selection of mouth watering tapas, paired with red or white wine or a mocktail and a choice of sizzling meat for Rs999.
Jawalakhel, (01) 5536919

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



Le Trio,
Some of the most succulent jhol momochas (soup momos) in town.
Narayanhiti Path and Jhamiskhel, (01) 4435440 / 5521647

1905,
Heritage boutique suites with garden dining, 1905 Suites and Restaurants is now open for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Bookings open for four boutique suites.
Nagpokhari, Naxal, For more information: 9860374450



Ventures Café,
Stop by for the best fusion menu and all local favourites and enjoy the breezy outdoors seating. A great venue for beer connoisseurs.
Baluwatar, 9851228014

Coffee Pasal,
The place to sip an aromatic cup of coffee while gazing at Narayanhiti Museum.
Darbar Marg Darbar Marg, (01) 4246483



European Bakery,
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Chundevi, (01) 4422047

Dunga,
Head over for delicious continental food and don't forget their signature cocktails, all served with fine hospitality in an excellent space.
Lakeside, Pokhara, (061) 463321

GETAWAY



Shangri-la Village Resort,
Two nights, three days at Shangri-la Village Resort, Pokhara, with cash back coupons worth Rs3,000. Rs6,299 net per person on twin sharing basis.
Pokhara, (061) 462222, shangrilavillagepokhara

Jhule Mountain Resort,
Resting 2,050m above sea level, the eco-resort boasts a farmhouse that stretches across a hill covered in fresh pine. Enjoy an organic homestay experience.
Shivapuri-Nagarjun National Park, Lapsipedi-3, Jhule, (01) 6212399

Park Village Resort,
Yoga, detox and ayurveda treatment in a quiet corner of Kathmandu.
Himalayan Peace and Wellness Centre, Park Village Resort, Budhanilkantha, (01) 4370286, peace@wellness.com.np



Haatiban Resort,
Climb up to Champadevi in the morning for a royal view of Kathmandu Valley and jog down to the hotel for a relaxed evening.
Pharping, Kathmandu, (01) 4371537 / 56

Raniban Retreat,
Situated at the other end of Phewa Lake and nestled inside Raniban forest and the World Peace Stupa, this retreat has one of the best views of the Annapurna range.
Phewa Lake, Pokhara, (01) 4411855

Glacier Hotel,
Good value and friendly service for travellers on the lap of Lake Phewa.
Gaurighat, Lakeside, Pokhara, (061) 463722, www.glacienepal.com

Tiger Mountain Lodge,
Situated 1,000ft above Pokhara Valley, this resort offers spectacular views of Machhapuchchre, Dhaulagiri, Annapurna and Manaslu.
Pokhara, (061) 4426427, 9849194874, www.tigermountainpokhara.com



Megghauli Serai,
Enjoy the relaxing fine dining, then venture out for monsoon wildlife safaris in Chitwan, via the Monsoon offer at Taj Safari's Megghauli Serai.
Chitwan National Park, 9801301969, 9851001548



GOPEN RAI

The beautiful square

After two earthquakes, a long-overdue restoration reveals Sundari Chok's glory

SAHINA SHRESTHA

The southwest corner of Sundari Chok, the earliest surviving courtyard in Patan Darbar Square, has a large bay window that looks out over the city. In 1627, when the courtyard was built, this may have been where King

Siddhinarasimha Malla looked down upon his kingdom.

Once the centre of a society, where court was held and rituals performed, the Chok deteriorated over the years. After being partially damaged in the 1934 earthquake, the famed sunken bath of Tusha Hiti, with its exquisite stone deities, was all but abandoned.

Elements of the intricate lattice windows on the first floor of the three-story palace, with its embellishments and images, were damaged or missing. Many others were looted. The leaking roof had damaged the interior leaving the walls damp and the woodwork rotting. The square

even housed a police station and a prison till 1993.

But walking through the restored palace during the soft opening of the courtyard earlier this week, Sundari Chok was transformed. It took nearly 10 years, and an earthquake interrupted the restoration, but the re-making of the square is finally complete.

"It is easy to rebuild from scratch but in-situ conservation, especially of this proportion and importance, takes time. This is one of the most important buildings in Kathmandu Valley, both in terms of history and architecture, and we are happy

to have restored it," says Rohit Ranjitkar of the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT). The Trust started the restoration in 2007 with support from the German Government, the US Ambassador's Fund, Prithivi and Pratima Pande, and other donors.

The soft-spoken Ranjitkar downplays just what a momentous feat the restoration was. For 60 years, there had been no maintenance. The west and south wings were badly damaged, and the hurried reconstruction after 1934 did not respect the original style of the façade: many elements were missing. "It was not done carefully, they used different types of unoriginal bricks," says Ranjitkar.

This time, the team tried to stay as true to the original as

possible. In the west wing, KVPT used minimum intervention to keep a segment of the historic plaster wall intact. The team also uncovered two murals featuring narrative horizontal bands, representing temples and processions, animals and deities, on both sides of a room in the south wing. In 2013, the murals were restored by a team from the Institute of Conservation at the University of Applied Art Vienna, and the precious relics have now been encased in glass.

Because there is no photographic evidence pre-1934, the palace has been restored to its post-earthquake state. But the modern bricks have been replaced by traditional ones, and the original windows have been reused. While the façade hasn't changed, the interior has been modified for use as a gallery.

"In the east wing, we have added an interior balcony at the end of the corridor. We are happy to include it as something that is practical," says Ranjitkar.

Although initially planned for completion in three years, assessing and documenting the Chok's condition took a couple of years. The restoration process started in 2009 but the slow arrival of funds pushed the date further. By 2014, three of the wings – west, south and north – had been restored; then the 2015 earthquake brought the east wing down.

"While the earthquake reinforced many of the structural decisions we had made, it also made us consider what new problems may arise and we worked accordingly," says Ranjitkar. "Given that we don't have a culture of maintenance, we have worked on making the complex more durable."

With the physical restoration complete, Sundari Chok will be used as an extended gallery of the Patan Museum, which the public will be able to visit as soon as October. Says Ranjitkar, "It will be exciting because the complex itself is an artefact." 📷





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यस कलेजको बि.ई. तहमा २०७४ व्याचका लागि सिमिल, कम्प्युटर, इलेक्ट्रिकल र इलेक्ट्रोनक्स एण्ड कम्युनिकेशन विषयमा भर्ना भई अध्ययन गर्नका लागि

पुनश्च: यसअघि नै भर्नाका लागि फाराम भरी दोस्रो सूचीसम्म पनि नाम प्रकाशित नभएका विद्यार्थीहरूको यसअघि भरेको फाराम नै यथावत हुनेछ ।

भर्ना कार्यक्रम

- तेस्रो भर्ना सूची प्रकाशन- २०७४ भाद्र १६ गते बिहान १० बजे
- तेस्रो भर्ना सूचीका विद्यार्थीहरूको भर्ना- २०७४ भाद्र १७ र १८ गते साँझ ५ बजेसम्म

विस्तृत जानकारीका लागि

नेशनल कलेज अफ इन्जिनियरिङ्ग

तालिखेल, सातदोबाटो, ललितपुर, फोन नं. ०१-५१५१३८७, ०१६२०३६००



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EVENT PARTNERS





“Equity” is a film that I’ve been saving for a fallow period — a time when there’s nothing in the theatre aside from *Baby Driver*, which I am betting is probably okay watching at home on your sofa, and a third-rate horror movie that doesn’t really bear any mentioning.



MUST SEE
Sophia Pande

Directed by Indian-American director Meera Menon, daughter of film producer Vijayan Menon, *Equity* is a 2016 film about Wall Street, naked ambition, passion, hard work, betrayal and one woman’s grasp on her own integrity as things start to fall apart.

Anna Gunn plays Naomi Bishop, a high-ranking investment banker who has succeeded more than she has failed. Only a chair away from the top position in her firm, Naomi is hindered only by her

straight-talking personality and the fact that she wears heels instead of brogues. She is cool, smart, determined, and her story is as much a character study as it is an indictment of capitalism (at its worst) — namely the people who make their living playing the stock market and insider trading.

When Naomi lands a coveted account: an initial public offering (IPO) for Cachet, a Facebook-like entity that guarantees a secure closed network, she knows it is her chance to the top. She does her job well but is betrayed at every turn, and the result is a nail-biting film that never loses its focus, which is Bishop herself, played in an unforgettable performance by Gunn.

Other characters have important roles in the film, but the surprising thing about *Equity* is its dual message. While it seems to be a film made by women about women surrounded by glass ceilings, it is also another, sharply insightful, look at the cost of

living in an amoral environment, no matter how smart and hardworking you are. Gunn plays it straight, though everyone around her has an agenda.

The film, written without sentiment but with knowledge of the context, portrays the luxurious world of high-powered investment bankers so that we know what’s at stake: extreme comfort, status, handling huge sums of money, and the intoxicating effect of learning how to best the smartest at their mind games.

It is refreshing to see a story told without an enormous ego behind the camera. This is almost a quiet story, but it is a must see for anyone who likes a really good thriller and spending a few hours in the life of a woman who we grow to care for despite her prickly, distrustful exterior. As we learn more about her, we realise that she is kind, good and has a hearty laugh.

The resemblance of Gunn’s character, Naomi Bishop, to Hillary Clinton is striking, and for those who have believed in Hillary all along, like this writer, you will feel the familiar, overwhelming despair at seeing a strong woman brought to her knees by a world that only looks at her stiff outer shell and judges her for her profession. This scrutiny discards her years of hard work to get where she is now — the equity never paid off. 🇳🇵



Watch trailer online

nepaltimes.com

HAPPENINGS



EMBASSY OF INDIA

SHINING RELATIONSHIP: Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba inaugurates the Festival of West Bengal in Kathmandu on Sunday. Organised by the Embassy of India, it celebrates 70 years of Indian independence and India-Nepal diplomatic relations.



RSS

ELECTION FEVER: Mayor and sub-mayoral candidates in Rajbiraj register their nominations on Wednesday for the 18 September local election in Province 2.



RSS

READING PARTNERS: Popular comic duo Madan Krishna Shrestha and Hari Bansha Acharya during the launch of Shrestha’s autobiography ‘Ma’ in Kathmandu on Tuesday.



GOPEN RAI

SPOOKED: Laxman Ranjit performs the Lakhe dance at the Indra Jatra Festival at Hanuman Dhoka on Sunday.



QATAR AIRWAYS

BEST AGENT: Senior Manager Naveen Chawla (left) and Country Manager Jaya Prakash Nair (right) present Osho World Travel Nepal with the top prize at the Qatar Airways agents awards night 2016-2017 in Kathmandu on Tuesday.

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100 days of Kathmandu's mayor

Ramesh Wagle in
www.pahilopost.com 6 September



Kathmandu Mayor Bidya Sundar Shakya completed his first 100 days in office this week. During the honeymoon period of his election campaign, he had promised to complete 100 tasks, including ridding Kathmandu of air pollution and turning the capital into a 'smart' city.

Shakya turned out to be just another politician, who promises a lot during the election but delivers nothing after being voted in. Although he failed to fulfil any of his 100 promises, he often made headlines for the wrong reasons.

The first board meeting of Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) chaired by Mayor



BIKRAM RAI

Shakya decided to buy mobile phones worth Rs30,000 for all ward council chairs, and more expensive ones for himself and the deputy mayor. After widespread criticism, Shakya said that he had withdrawn his decision. Later, ward council chairs revealed that KMC did buy them mobile phones. An elected mayor is the executive chief of a self-governing municipal council, with legislative and judicial authority, and is superior to a deputy inspector general (DIG). But DIG Sarbendra Khanal, chief of the Metropolitan Traffic Police Division, invited Shakya to his office, and admonished him for not improving roads and ending traffic jams. Shakya just listened, without defending himself or vowing to work harder.

When a school girl died after being swept into an open drain during heavy rainfall in

Kathmandu, Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba instructed authorities to patch all potholes on the capital's streets within 15 days. Mayor Shakya's response: "Patching potholes before monsoon is a waste of our budget, so we do not have any plans or intention to do that."

UML Chair KP Oli chose Shakya as the party's candidate for mayor, brushing aside other senior aspirants. Shakya tried to return Oli's favour by inviting him to be chief guest at his swearing-in ceremony. But that was not all. When Oli returned home from an unofficial foreign trip, Shakya went to the airport with a bouquet to welcome his party boss. A mayor usually ventures to the airport to welcome a President or Prime Minister: Oli is neither at the moment.

Big promises, no cash

www.onlinekhabar.com,
7 September

onlinekhabar

When Nepal held an investment summit in March, China outshone every other country by pledging to invest over \$8 billion – a little more than 60% of the total pledge of \$13 billion. Eight Chinese companies showed interest in Nepali hydro-energy, mining, railway, hospital and other infrastructure projects.

Six months on, none of the Chinese companies have started the process of investing in Nepal. While a few firms are inquiring about today's investment climate, others have not gone that far.

After the summit, Industry Minister Nabindra Raj Joshi formed three committees to start the process of getting the cash pledged to Nepal. While Joshi himself led the main committee, the other committees were led by the CEO of Nepal Investment Board and a Joint Secretary of the



National Planning Commission.

When NC President Sher Bahadur Deuba succeeded Maoist Chair Pushpa Kamal Dahal as Prime Minister, he did not appoint an industry minister. He kept the portfolio for himself, practically rendering the three committees dysfunctional, and delaying the process of translating investment pledges into actions.

Nepal's ambassador to China, Leela Mani Poudyal, says he is constantly following up with the Chinese companies, but their responses are not encouraging.

Nepali business leaders

say Chinese and other foreign investors think twice before investing here, mainly because of the lack of coordination between government agencies. Despite recent reforms, foreign investors still must get approval from multiple ministries, departments and agencies. The much hyped one-window policy has not really worked, which is a huge deterrent for foreign investors.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Affairs Minister Krishna Bahadur Mahara flew to Beijing this week, aiming to speed up the investments.



Basket: The Corrupt
Signpost: Election

अन्नपूर्ण

Basu Kshitiz in *Annapurna Post*, 3 September

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



“Elected representatives of the people will effectively facilitate rehabilitation of flood victims. So I urge all voters in Province 2 to participate in local elections on 18 September.”

Chief Election Commissioner Ayodhi Prasad Yadav

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Back to the land

These migrants decided to remain in Nepal after finding out they can earn more farming vegetables

SONIA AWALE
IN UDAYPUR

Ghaman Singh Magar worked day and night for four years in Malaysia to earn just Rs15,000 a month. Cheated by a recruiter who had promised a much higher salary, he ended up in a metal factory. Today, back home in Saune of Udaypur, Magar saves much more money from his vegetable and livestock farm.

"We can work hard in the Gulf or Malaysia, but we can earn just as much in our village and among our own family here," says the 35-year-old, inspecting a cauliflower patch (*right*) damaged by last week's heavy rainfall.

Business is so good, he leased another plot to expand vegetable production.

This district in the eastern Inner Tarai has historically either had too much rain or too little, discouraging the production of cash crops. Udaypur, therefore, has one of the highest rates of outmigration in Nepal, with villages like Saune and Bagaha



having at least one male member from each family away.

But in recent years, migrant workers like Magar have returned to grow crops that earn hard cash.

Rajendra Rai was in Malaysia for four years, returned and then went to Dubai to work in an aluminium company. Despite long hours, he earned only Rs20,000 a month. Today, he makes more than Rs50,000 selling his farm

produce.

"I've learned that we can comfortably raise families right here in our own village. I want to tell others that if you choose to stay back and work as hard as in foreign countries, you don't need to go away," says Rai.

However, floods like the one in the Eastern Tarai last month mean agriculture is still a high-risk profession,

and income from traditional farming is not enough to sustain families. ICIMOD's Himalayan Climate Change and Adaptation Programme (Himalica) through the Centre for Environment and Agricultural Policy Research, Extension and Development (CEAPRED) is training farmers in Udaypur in water and crop management, bio-composting, off-season vegetable production

and cost-effective techniques like mulching, drip irrigation and tunnel farming.

"People don't have to migrate for work because they can have a good income from sustainable agriculture here," says Shyam Krishna Ghimire of CEAPRED.

Proof of this is Kabita Chaudhari (*above*), 26, who has a nine-year-old son and a husband who is working in Malaysia. Yet she single-handedly manages a farm and runs a tailoring business on the side (*see box*). Her family, which at one time didn't have enough to eat, now earns over Rs150,000 yearly from the farm.

"After I learnt the right method of vegetable farming, I am more independent and I haven't had to use any of the money my husband sends home," says Chaudhari as she prepares to irrigate a new row of tomatoes. She has also paid off all her loans, and sends her son to an English school nearby.

Commercial vegetable farming has also reduced Udaypur's dependence on neighbouring districts and India. "There used to be a shortage when the roads were blocked even for a day, but now it



PHOTOS: SONIA AWALE

“I’m independent now”

Rani Kumari Chaudhari had a dream that her daughter would grow up to be more successful than all her peers. Two decades later, her dream has come true.

Rani Kumari lost her husband when her daughter Kabita was just three. She took odd jobs at construction sites, earning Rs50 a day, but often there wasn’t enough for the mother and daughter to eat.

“I know how difficult it was for my mother to raise me, but she always wanted me to move forward,” says Kabita, now 26, and a mother of a child herself. “She encouraged me to study, attend agriculture workshops and get trained.”

A few years after the birth of their son, her husband Nageswor left for Malaysia. Back home, Kabita started learning about greenhouses, drip irrigation and growing organic and off-season vegetables (left).

“We had the land, but productivity was always low. I’m independent now because I can manage the household without using any of the money my husband sends home,” adds Kabita. She manages the entire farm on her own, earning Rs150,000 a year from selling tomato, cabbage, cauliflower, bitter gourd and chilli, as well as millet, wheat and maize.

Kabita’s tailoring shop is also doing well. When swamped with work, her mother helps out. But Kabita wishes her husband had stayed back to help on the farm instead of going abroad: “He is coming home soon, and this time I will try to convince him to stay. We can easily earn Rs4-5 lakhs a year right here.”



doesn’t make a difference because local farmers grow the vegetables we need here,” says Gayatri Purbe at the Gaighat market.

Despite the technical know-how and increased production, poor roads limit the options for farmers like Rai and Chaudhari.

“While vegetable farming is a good option for returning migrants in Udaypur, farmers need better access and support systems,” says Amina Maharjan, an agricultural economist at ICIMOD. “Agriculture needs to be commercialised for it to be a sustainable source of income.”

Shree Krishna Adhikari has been providing modern agro-technology services to farmers in Kathmandu for five years after returning from Israel, where he learnt about drip irrigation on a kibbutz farm. (see box right)

“Traditional farming alone is not enough. For families to earn more from farms they need mechanisation to reduce the drudgery,” says Adhikari, 35. “The tax on imported equipment and agricultural tools should be reduced.”

The challenge for Nepal is to alter the perception that farming

is hard work and only for poor people, and to reverse the trend of young people leaving their farming families after studies.

Siddhi Chandra Baral of the Asian Human Right and Cultural Development Forum returned from South Korea to prove to other young Nepalis that they can make a decent living by combining farming and tourism in their own country.

“We can grow local ethnic foods, run homestays and promote both our culture and our agriculture, while increasing income for families,” says Baral.

Shiv Chandra Mandal, a former government agriculture extension officer, is back after working in Israel, and agrees it is not necessary to leave Nepal to earn money, provided there is a sound business plan. But he adds: “There must be sufficiently large plots of land for commercial farming, hassle-free help for farmers, fixed production costs and earnings from cash crops.”



Join us in Udaypur district to watch former migrant workers who have become successful commercial vegetable farmers, earning much more than they did in Malaysia or Qatar.

nepalitimes.com



The conflict in Nepal forced Shree Krishna Adhikari (above) to leave his job of health assistant and migrate to Israel 15 years ago. He toiled in the heat in Gaza for nine years, survived Hamas rocket attacks by hiding in bunkers and was convinced the drip irrigation he saw in a nearby kibbutz farm could revolutionise commercial farming back home in Nepal.

“The weather and the war made it difficult. But I admired how the Israelis had made their desert green, and sold vegetables in Europe, and it got me

Shalom Nepal

thinking,” recalls Adhikari, 35: “If Israelis could do this in a desert, imagine what we can do with our fertile soil and rainfall.”

He returned to Nepal determined to farm, and helped transfer Israeli drip irrigation technology to farmers across Nepal to reduce labour cost, save time, and boost productivity by irrigating fields with limited water supply.

“When we first came back from Israel and started making greenhouses and farming, our neighbours thought we were mad: now they also want to learn how to do it,” he says.

Along with drip irrigation, Adhikari has adopted other techniques he learnt in Israel, like growing seeds with coco peat and nursery trays. Through his shop, Shalom Agriculture in Balaju, he sells UV-proof plastic for greenhouses, thermal shade and insect netting, net houses, tomato clips and mulching plastic to farmers across Nepal.

“We can only convince people not to leave for the Gulf if we can increase the productivity of the land by adopting new technologies,” explains Adhikari. “Agro-technology has made farming attractive to young people, and the government now needs to implement farmer-friendly policies.”

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Trek King

Unlike other countries which only have four directions, in Nepal we have six cardinal points on the compass: North, South, East, West, Up and Down.

It is this third dimension that has given rise to the mainstay of Nepal's tourism industry: trekking. The word 'trek' is derived from the Afrikaans word 'trekken', which means: "Carry your body weight and a backpack weighing a ton up and down vertical mountainsides for 10 days, share sleeping quarters with yaks, while attending to calls of nature in full view of spy satellites." Why we had to import a South African word for a completely indigenous form of torture, I have never figured out.

At the start of the autumn trekking season we bring you some useful tips on making your next trek fulfilling for mind, body and sole:

Am I fit?

The main pre-requisite to trekking is that you should train yourself in the art of walking straight up and down like a gecko. Practice on a wall at home. Dig a hole behind the bush in your garden and practice outdoor squatting every morning.

What should I eat?

Muesli. This energy-packed cereal is what they give mules to eat for breakfast on the Lo Manthang trail so their after-burners can kick in during the steepest inclines, adding critical thrust to propel them over Chuksang Pass in time for lunch. Important hint: According to Newton's Third Law

of Thermodynamics, burping slows you down.

Dal-bhat with alu, dal-bhat with mula, dal-bhat with banda, dal-bhat with bodi, dal-bhat with sag, or even dal-bhat with dal-bhat.

To level out a steep uphill there is nothing to beat the locally-brewed, high-octane apple brandy. Pour a little of this into your tank just before a steep stretch and watch yourself fly like the wind. (Statutory Govt Health Warning: Hangovers are a pain in the ass.)

Is it safe to drink the water?

The first rule of thumb is not to drink anything that doesn't have the mandatory hologram Seal of Approval of the Nepal Bureau of Standards ISO 90002. Adhering to this rule will mean that you will die of thirst on the first day of your trek. Management does not bear responsibility for any untoward incidents if you drink pure Himalayan spring water directly downstream of defecating water buffaloes.

Nepali greetings on the trail:

Very beautiful! = La-la, chha-chha!
How's it hanging, bro? = Bhat khana bho?
Hi, no money. = Namaste ma bideshi datri sanstha hoina.
Whose father can do what? = Kasko bau ko ke tagat?
There are fleas in my bed, I'm going back to Tokyo = Malai udus ra upiya le tokyo.
I want donut and jam. = Euta chukka jam dinos.



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