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DEALS OF THE WEEK

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SONIA AWALE

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SONAM CHOYEKI LAMA

BOLD WOMEN: Pampha Nepali, Rupa Maharjan, Ishwori Bhandari, and Nanmaiju Prajapati (clockwise from top left), survived the earthquake, and now try to survive deep-rooted patriarchy as they raise their families.

Being a country of stark inequities, relief and rehabilitation four years after the 2015 earthquake has also been unevenly distributed. Particularly vulnerable have been excluded groups, women, senior citizens and children who need extra support.

Even among female survivors, it was single women-headed households, widows, divorcees, or those ostracised by in-laws who are worse off. Of the 812,371 households affected by the disaster, more than a quarter were headed by single women, and 2,000 were freshly widowed by the earthquake.

They face challenges in renewing land titles lost in house collapses, in-laws who refuse to hand over a dead husband's property, or even getting citizenships for children

born after fathers died in the earthquake. All this has added to the economic burden for women who have lost breadwinners.

A UN Gender Equality Update states that women's duties increased after the earthquake: they were spending four-five hours a day cleaning the debris, and it took them three more hours to get water than before. Many had to check on children as they went about their daily work, delaying chores. Women were found to be less aware of the steps they needed to take for aid.

Women of all categories faced these extra burdens, but the impact was most deeply felt by single women who for the most part started rebuilding

much later than others, as our profiles of women in this issue of *Nepali Times* show. Many women did not know how to work the system, and lacked vital documents like citizenship or birth and marriage certificates needed to claim compensation or share of property.

"Often, married women's in-laws were unwilling to identify them in front of government officials, because they were scared that the women would get their documents and demand their share of property," says Upasan Rana with Women for Human Rights (WHR). Without these documents, land and property remained with their husbands' families.

The NRA (National Reconstruction Authority) has

identified 9,024 single women above the age of 65 in its 'vulnerable' category, and is verifying their identities and giving them Rs50,000 more to help rebuild homes. The government's Single Women Security Fund is also supposed to help with education, training, income generation, and relief, but many do not know about it.

"There is not much awareness about this facility especially among earthquake affected women who need it the most," says Bipana Dhimal of Oxfam. Adding to the problem is that after the country became federal, the fund's district level structures were annulled putting even more rural women out of its reach.

Sewa Bhattarai

FULL STORY PAGE 8-9

4 YEARS
25 APRIL 2015

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3/4TH OF THE SKY

While a debate about equal citizenship rights for women raged in Parliament this week, single women who survived the earthquake are quietly and bravely struggling against deep-rooted patriarchy to rebuild homes and carrying on with their lives.

On International Women’s Day, this illustration by Diwakar Chhetri shows where Nepali women are today: their responsibilities have increased and so have their capacities and achievements. But they continue to face impediments from all sides, most glaringly from the state.

Since the mid-1990s female literacy in Nepal has doubled, and this has brought far-reaching changes that have ultimately empowered women. Employment and property ownership rates, and maternal and neonatal health have dramatically improved

community forestry and irrigation. It won’t be too far-fetched to say that much of the credit for ground-level development, despite the absence of local government for 20 years, goes to women. And now that we have local governments it is women who are standing up to corrupt male counterparts in some municipalities.

To be sure, not everything is rosy. Juggling their dual roles of breadwinner and primary care givers in homes and raising children has increased their burden. This inequitable distribution of work is more prominent in urban areas where women have both careers and homes to make. Men and society in general have been slow to accept these changes, and see the economic benefits of shared responsibility at home and office.

Among survivors of the 2015 earthquake, women were more affected. There are an estimated 2,000 earthquake widows and 50,000 single women whose houses collapsed in the disaster. In lack of reliable support, reconstruction and survival has been more difficult for them as reported in this issue (*page 1, 8-9*). But despite these shortcomings, women are going boldly forth where men have gone before in rebuilding lives and homes.

We have produced some of the finest females doctors, pilots, engineers, artists, teachers and historians in the past few decades

(*page 6-7, 11, 12*). But despite the fact that for the first time FNCCI is headed by a woman, and 80% of Nepal’s labour force is female (one of the highest proportions in the world) women continue to be restricted to ‘informal sectors’.

Though there are higher numbers of women in politics today than ever before, there are still very few in leadership positions. Despite women

heading all three organs of the government, the legislative, judiciary and executive at one point, there are still too few actual decision-makers to exert enough influence. This has led to situations like the current citizenship debate, where a male MP this week said providing citizenship to the children of rape victims will encourage rape.

Clearly, higher literacy has not led to behaviour change among males in our conservative culture that sees women as an inferior gender. Given opportunity, women have proved themselves time and again and prevailed despite roadblocks and limitations. All they need now is a little help from institutions like the state and family to remove the obstacles that impede progress.

– all because women were more aware about health and rights.

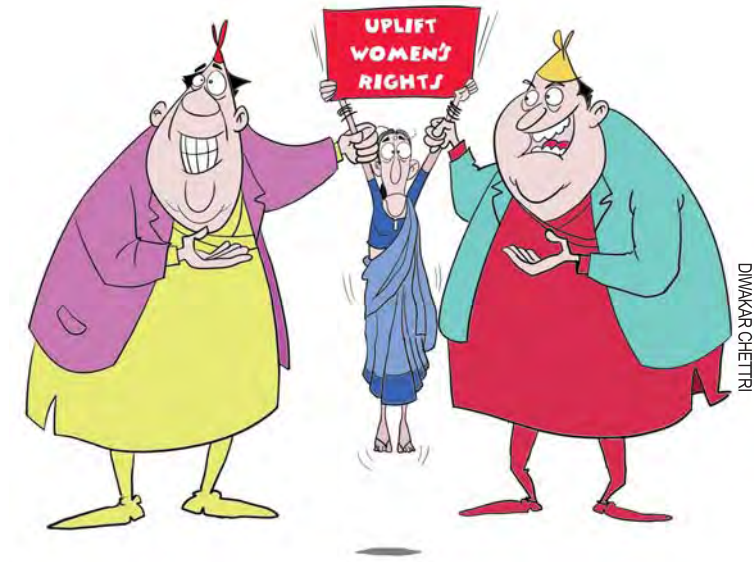
There has also been progress in politics, the economy, and sports (*page 4*). Not so long ago, the Chief Justice, Speaker of the Parliament and President of Nepal were all women and at the same time. We have also had one of the most inclusive parliaments in history in terms of gender. Most municipalities in Nepal have proactive female deputy mayors.

Nepal’s National Women Cricket team returned home this week after clinching second position in the World Cup Asia Region Qualifier in Thailand. Not long ago, our women’s blind cricket team won the First International Women’s Blind Cricket Series in Pakistan. Nepal’s women football team was second runner-up at the Gold Cup in India last month.

The outflow of men for overseas work has had many consequences, and the most notable is the feminisation of rural Nepal. With the men away, women have taken charge both in their homes and communities. They have decision making power in the management of schools and health posts, in

The responsibilities of Nepali women have increased and so have their achievements, but they continue to face impediments from all sides, most glaringly from the state.

DIWAKAR CHHETRI



10 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

The *Nepali Times* edition #441 dated 6-13 March 2009 had on its cover photographs that week of the Maoist militia and the Nepal Army both parading. It highlighted the fact that elected Maoist Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and former Maoist Supremo commanded two armies. We wrote this in a page 1 analysis titled ‘Present arms’:

The tit-for-tat recruitment by the Maoist army this week in response to the Nepal Army taking in 3,000 new soldiers has escalated tensions between the two armies, but it has also exposed a serious rift within the Maoist party.

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal's mediation skills, praised even by his adversaries, will be severely tested this week as he tries to bridge the gap between the two armies he commands, while simultaneously trying to appease his own restless guerrillas.

Last month, while addressing the PLA in Chitwan, Dahal told them they were no longer a Maoist army but would take orders from the Army Integration Special Committee. This didn't go down well with the fighters, and party hardliners quickly cashed in on the murmurings of discontent.



ONLINE PACKAGES



SINGLE SOULS

There are an estimated 2,000 earthquake widows, and more than 50,000 single women whose houses collapsed in the disaster. Reconstruction and struggle for survival after the earthquake has been doubly difficult for the women in the lack of a proper support system. Meet Nanmajju Maharjan whose husband and four other family members were killed in the earthquake.

Story: page 8-9.



THE SURVIVOR

Samira Byanjankar is among 20 survivors of the tragic Air Bangla in Kathmandu airport last year. Today she is a medical intern, still grieving for the four roommates she lost. Go online to watch video and find out why she is determined to dedicate the gift of life to her family and patients. *Story: page 14.*

TERRORISM

The tragedy of post monarchical Nepal continues ('It's crime not to call it terrorism', Kunda Dixit, #949). All those who thought that it was a good idea to usher in a multiparty system bear some blame for the results of their actions. The parties represent a government that is nothing more or less than organised crime families constantly vying for power. Whatever the shortcomings the monarchy may have had, it is difficult to believe that the present system is an improvement. The descent into lawlessness and chaos was easy to predict and is impossible to deny. It's unlikely the situation would improve under the current scenario.

Danny Birch

■ Where is the justice ('Terror attack leaves tragedy in its wake', Sonia Awale, #949)? How many more threats and deaths do ordinary Nepalis need to bear? The sad reality is that Nepalis face a long road to recovery from these kinds of trauma as well as that of the recent earthquakes. However, I hope the perpetrators will be arrested and locked up for life.

Kumar Gurung

HELICOPTER CRASH

'Undue psychological pressure'. As indicated, clear similarities to the tragic Ghunsa crash in 2006 ('The last journey', Ramesh Kumar and Gopal Gartaula, #949). But was this ever clearly stated in the 2005 accident enquiry report? I suspect not, which meant that a key lesson for the future was missed.

Sam Cowan

■ Tragic. However here is a question. Why was the pilot asked to fly in such bad weather? This was against all the protocols.

Stephen Scott-Fawcett

SUBTITLES PLEASE

Sounds like a fantastic movie ('Bulbul', Prakriti Kandel, #949). But once again expatriate community in Kathmandu will not be able to watch it in the lack of subtitles. When will the industry learn that there is a big audience of non-Nepali speakers right here that would gladly pay to see these movies if we could understand them.

Ludo Van Vooren

WHAT'S TRENDING

Terror attack leaves tragedy in its wake

by Sonia Awale

Family of Sing Prasad Gurung remembered a proud soldier, devoted husband, father and friend at his memorial, after he was killed in a terrorist blast at the Ncell office. His family looked shell-shocked by the tragic loss. Go online to read the full story.



Most reached and shared on Facebook



Most visited online page



It's a crime not to call it terrorism

by Kunda Dixit

The terror attack on Ncell's head office that cost an innocent life and seriously injured three others proved that Nepal's Maoist conflict never really ended. This hard-hitting commentary provoked much condemnation of violence for extortion, and was widely shared on social media. Catch up with the debate at [nepalitimes.com](#).



Most popular on Twitter

The last journey

by Ramesh Kumar and Gopal Gartaula

The chopper crash in Taplejung on 27 February was a tragic repeat of the 2006 disaster 25km away that killed Nepal's top conservationists. Readers raised questions about why a helicopter was flying in a blizzard. Join in the online discussion about aviation safety in Nepal.



Most commented

QUOTE TWEETS



Nepali Times @nepalitimes

The terror attack on Ncell's head office that cost the life of Sing Prasad Gurung and seriously injured three others proved that the Nepal conflict never really ended, writes @kundadixit. Read full story here. #Nepal #conflict



Mallika Aryal @mikaness

The rep of the party responsible for the bomb in #Kathmandu last week calls the loss of life 'little' and that they're waging a 'revolution'. They want to reinstate the war that ended 10+ years ago.



rahul chapagain @RahulChapagain2

Still we do not have the right to prosecute those responsible. Which in turn is legitimising the use of violence in future. #NoRuleOfLaw #Impunity



Sangeeta @Sangeeta02501

Sad extremely sad situation. RIP martyred



Nepali Times @nepalitimes

Rabindra Adhikari was one of the few ministers with a clean, can-do image. He revived the construction of two international airports and removed bottlenecks at Kathmandu airport. His hometown of Pokhara is in shock. #planecrash #RabindraAdhikari #nepal



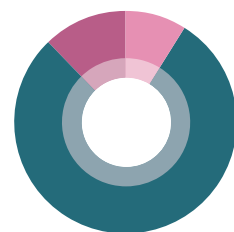
Kenichi Yokoyama @YokoyamaKenichi

Deeply saddened by this unbelievable news. Met Mr Rabindra many times in Nepal, and liked him very much for his dynamic vision and love for the country. May his aspirations live in people's hearts and help Nepal realize them all...



Weekly Internet Poll #950

Q. Is the 'Biplav' faction of NCP Maoist justified in declaring a parallel government?



Total votes: 101

Yes: 9%
No: 79%
Can't say: 12%

Weekly Internet Poll #951
To vote go to: [www.nepalitimes.com](#)

Q. How has women's increased participation in the economy impacted them?



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Publisher and Chief Editor: Kunda Dixit
Design: Kiran Maharjan
Published by Himalmedia Pvt Ltd | Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur | GPO Box 7251 Kathmandu
editors@nepalitimes.com | [www.nepalitimes.com](#) | [www.himalmedia.com](#) | Tel: 01-5005601-08 Fax: +977-1-5005518
Marketing: Arjun Karki, Surendra Sharma [rachanas@himalmedia.com](#) | Subscriptions: Santosh Aryal [santosh@himalmedia.com](#)
Printed at Jagadamba Press | Production Plant: 01-5250017-18 | City Office: 01-5529210-11 | [www.jagadambapress.com](#) | [sales@jpl.com.np](#)





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Nepal's better halves

At the current pace of feminisation, Nepal may well have to institute affirmative action for men

Last week, women engineers and managers in power utilities from across South and Southeast Asia gathered in Kathmandu for their first ever conference. They came from Afghanistan, Vietnam and countries in between.



1/2 FULL
Anil Chitrakar

As more and more women are building and managing energy plants in power hungry Asia, these work places will have to be women friendly. The entire ecosystem from science and technology education to recruiting and retaining women in the energy sector were discussed at the Kathmandu meeting. We heard about women who struggled to rise up their career ladder and the prices they paid for it, including family separation.

Traditionally, women have an exalted place in Nepal. We worship the female attributes in the form of the Nava Durgas and the Asta Matrikas. We celebrate the life of Maya Devi, the mother of the Buddha, Sita, daughter of King Janak and Bhrikuti, the queen of the ruler of Tibet.

Today, four years after the earthquake and failed attempts by men, Rani Pokhari is going



to be restored by the women of Bhaktapur. We have trekking companies run by women for women. We may soon see pink taxis with women drivers for women passengers like in east Europe.

Not too long ago, Nepal had a woman chief justice, a woman speaker of the house and a woman President of the republic. A woman CDO has just taken charge in Jumla. Women are in line to be secretaries and directors in many ministries and government agencies. The head of FNCCI is a woman.

More and more girls are in school and the dropout rate in east Nepal, for example, is higher for boys than girls. In colleges and universities, here and globally, there are more women than men. This is partly because boys are absorbed into the job market more quickly. From Bhaktapur to Dhangadi, all deputy mayors are women. In four years they could all become mayors. Pokhara will probably be represented in parliament by the late Rabintra Adhikari's wife.

With the men having migrated overseas for work, rural Nepal is being rapidly feminised. All aspects of the social and economic life are being led and managed by women. Many women have also left their villages, in-laws and

small pieces of land to go to cities to educate their children, paid for by remittance money from their husbands.

More and more land is being registered in the name of women and the reduced tax for them is working as an incentive to accelerate this process across Nepal. This may be a good time to revisit the process of aggregating fragmented fertile land and initiating commercial and contract farming. It is also time to go for high value crops for cash and no longer for subsistence.

Nepali women have shown that given the opportunity and a level playing field, they excel in every field. They climb the highest peaks, they run the most successful businesses, they are in the army, police and in banks. They are doctors, engineers, teachers and administrators. As more and more men leave the villages and cities for work abroad, women are taking charge.

This must not be seen as a default but a real opportunity to empower Nepal's women. We need to change our perceptions and mindset, and stop saying that the particular opportunity went to a person only because she was a woman. At the current pace of feminisation, within a decade or so Nepal may well have to institute affirmative action for men. 🇳🇵

Anil Chitrakar is President of Siddharthinc



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prabhu BANK BIZ BRIEFS

Mid-term report

Nepal Rastra Bank has released a mid-term report of the budget for the Fiscal Year 2018-19, and the news is not good. As expected, Nepal's chronic problem is not lack of money but its inability to spend it. Finance Minister Yuba Raj Khatiwada presented a capital budget of Rs313.9 billion in Parliament last year, but he said on Tuesday that the government has been able to spend less than 205 of it. He now wants to decrease the interest rate and banks will have to reduce their spread rate to a maximum of 4.5% by the end of this fiscal year.

Enhanced Services

Qatar Airways unveiled its enhanced Economy Class at the ITB Berlin 2019, which is the world's largest travel and tourism trade show. At ITB Berlin from 6-10 March, all visitors will be able to interact with Qatar Airways' latest products and its world-renowned hospitality. A large Nepali delegation from the travel trade is also in Berlin to promote Visit Nepal 2020 with a target of doubling tourist arrivals to 2 million next year.

Michelin in Nepal

Michelin Tyre's first showroom in Nepal has recently been inaugurated at Teku. The showroom provides a range of tyres for commercial and passenger vehicles and two wheelers. Sipradi Autoparts, through dealer Shyama Trading, will distribute these products.



WOW Women

WOW Women Achievers Awards 2019 recognised extraordinary women achievers in five categories. The recipients were Sajal Pradhan for entrepreneurship, Akanchha Karki for arts, Sita Adhikari for Leadership, Padma Khayargoli for social service/activism and Uma Devi Badi as the Inspiring Woman of the Year. Hyatt Regency and Media 9 Pvt Ltd jointly organised the event.

Galaxy S10

Smasung released a new range of phones, the S10, to celebrate 10 years since the first Galaxy S was launched. The S10 line has four unique devices with innovations in display, camera and performance. Galaxy S10 is made with the world's first Dynamic AMOLED display, offers the first ultra-wide lens in S series and has improvements in security and internet usage.

BEST FLYER

Turkish Airlines was the recipient of *Global Traveler* magazine's three 2018 Tested Reader Survey awards, including Best Corporate Travel Program for Business Travellers, Best Airline for Business Travellers and Best Airport Staff/Gate Agents.

prabhu BANK

Nepal's transition to peace needs justice

In January Nepal extended the tenures of two transitional justice commissions which have so far failed to deliver

HARRIET LAMB and RABINA SHRESTHA

At International Alert, as a global peacebuilding organisation, we often point to Nepal alongside South Africa or Northern Ireland as a country working through a peace process successfully, proving that peace can be writ large.

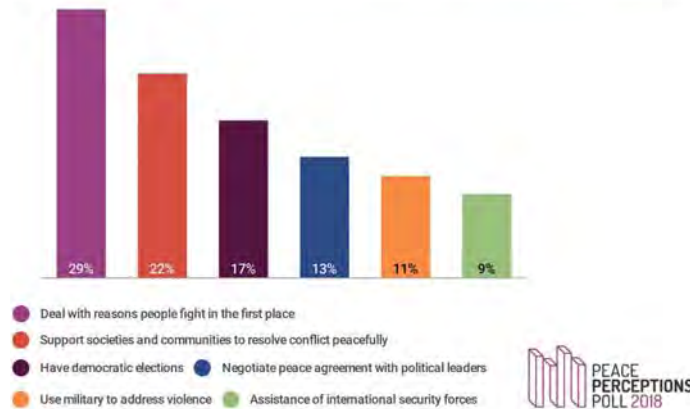
Of course, all three countries are still beset by troubles and the peace is far from perfect. In Northern Ireland, for example, today Brexit threatens the peace agreement, while in South Africa entrenched economic apartheid persists. But the guns have fallen silent, and stayed silent. Given that globally, half of all peace deals fall apart within 5 years, that is quite an achievement.

Recently, International Alert and our partner Forum for Women, Law and Development (FWLD) held a meeting in Nepalganj for victims to meet with the local service providers – local government, district administration, the hospitals, businesses and social services. The aim was to get practical help at the local level, while still pushing for a national solution.

And the scars of war, still unresolved, were still fresh: One man told us how on 8 July 2001, the Maoists cut off his leg, suspecting him of being an informer. Six times he has approached the government offices seeking medical support, but no-one listened to him.

The man sitting next to him told us that his leg was cut off the very next day on 9 July

WHAT WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE IN CREATING LONG-TERM PEACE



2001: "My house was destroyed and I was tortured by the Maoists. I get interim relief but not adequate compensation. I registered my case with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and so want to know what is going to happen next." He wears an artificial leg, but has to treat himself.

Calmly, patiently, a woman spoke up for all those waiting for men who have disappeared, calling simply for the truth, another for a lost son, another for a missing father. A woman said she was blindfolded and raped by security forces in the barracks. Severely traumatised and suffering from serious uterus problems to this day, she needs medical support and psychosocial counselling. But like too many others, she is left without support and justice.

These victims and their families are struggling to be heard by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and the Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared Persons (CIEDP), the two bodies in charge of pushing forward transitional justice in Nepal. Both have so far failed to deliver, despite having registered 63,000 complaints. Last month, the four-year tenure of both transitional justice commissions were extended, and new Commissioners will be appointed.

The victims of sexual assault, rape and torture, for example, have not received any support – no recognition that they are victims, no interim relief, no compensation. That is deeply demoralising for the victims and International Alert has been calling on the Nepal government to support a gender responsive transitional justice process.

These initiatives desperately need substantial funds with matching political will to ensure progress. The wounds of war cannot be left to fester and must be proactively addressed. If the Nepal government seems lacklustre to prioritise these issues, the victims' groups are full of gritty determination. People are more than ready to mobilise to find the truth, support victims to receive compensation and find new work or


to mourn their loved, lost ones. To be more effective, the civil societies and victim groups must come under one common platform to take the transitional justice advocacy ahead.

Nepal still has an opportunity to move forward the transitional justice process constructively in the coming months and to address truth, justice and reparation for victims. But this work needs the Government of Nepal to step up, and it needs donors to commit. If we want peace to last (and who does not?) then it needs long term, patient investment.

Which is why the long time frame of the US Global Fragility and Violence Reduction Act is so vital. The bi-partisan Act was passed overwhelmingly through the House of Representatives on 28 November. If it passes the Senate, it commits the US Government to invest in 10 countries (five already at war, five fragile) over 10 years, with coordination across all government departments from USAID to the military.

Too often, governments lose interest in countries once the crises are past. NGOs are left with one or two-year projects sputtering to an end and no donors in sight to continue investing in building everyday peace. But that is to ignore the evidence and misread the public.

Evidence shows that peacebuilding is effective, and also cost-effective. Every \$1 spent on peacebuilding saves \$16 in the costs of war, according to the Institute for Economics and Peace. A 2018 global poll undertaken by International Alert with the British Council found the public strongly favour 'dealing with the reasons why people fight in the first place' and 'supporting societies to deal with conflict peacefully', as effective means of creating long-term peace.

So in 2019, the community of peacebuilding organisations will be pushing for the US Act to be passed into law, for other governments to adopt the approach, and for concrete progress for victims in Nepal as another building block of lasting peace. 

Harriet Lamb, CEO of International Alert and
Rabina Shrestha, Manager of International Alert
Nepal



Learning about teaching

Prakriti Kandel

With her long blonde hair and Nordic looks, Helen Eikeland looked like many of the other *bideshis* sitting in a café in Patan this week. Guests in adjoining tables couldn't help eavesdrop because as they heard her clean, colloquial Nepali.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the Norwegian speaks better Nepali than most young Nepalis whose mother tongue is degraded by 10+2 education and Facebook shortcuts. Born in Gorkha's Ampipal village to a missionary teacher, Eikeland played *guchha* and *dandibiyo* with

neighbourhood children and went to school with them.

"I was just like every other kid, but an albino one," she jokes in chaste Nepali.

Eikeland grew up listening to conversations between her father and local teachers, and she was in awe of how articulate and knowledgeable they were. Village teachers in Nepal in the 1960s were gurus in the true sense, they were community leaders, problem solvers and idea generators.

Even though Helen left to go back to Norway with her family, her love for Nepal never diminished. Eventually it brought her back. She found her calling in education and became a teacher herself. She taught English at Mahendra Bhawan School in Kathmandu, and worked on education with various organisations.

Growing up listening to her father's colleagues in Gorkha left a deep imprint in Eikeland's mind, which is why it was inevitable that the PhD dissertation she completed last year is about the lives of 12 teachers in Nepal.

The most exciting part about teaching in Nepal for Eikeland is the opportunity to raise and build people. "The first priority is loving and valuing children, recognising their potential and helping them reach there," she says. "The subjects in class are secondary."

The values are more important than the content or method. She believes in treating every child as a book themselves, and connecting their understanding with the topic at hand.

During her work in the late 1990s in rural Nepal, Eikeland found that essential sense of commitment which she

had admired so much as a child in Gorkha was missing among younger teachers.

"All the different teachers I spoke with knew about the problems. For instance, all of them knew why the children were dropping out. But they were not doing anything to solve the situation, simply waiting for a donor program to come and fix things," she recalls.

She worried that teachers were losing confidence, and this is what led to her PhD topic of documenting the life histories of a dozen teachers to find out where they derived their motivation and value systems from.

Not surprisingly, Eikeland found that their struggles as children, their own early teachers, financial and domestic hardships, were all intimately connected with how they perceived their role as teachers.


Eikeland's conclusion is that the solution to the crisis in the quality of education is not another foreign-funded program implanted into Nepal's school system that teachers feel alienated with, but a homegrown effort to restore the passion she saw among teachers in Gorkha as a child 40 years ago. She believes that teaching pedagogy must acknowledge the local and cultural experiences of teachers to help them become confident and feel ownership of their jobs.

Eikeland is now associate professor at the University of Agder in Norway, and says she is often borrows ideas she learnt in Nepal to implement in her other motherland to see if teachers in Norway can also be as passionate about their profession.

"My work represents the immense respect I have for Nepali teachers and what they have taught me," she adds. "Of course, not everything about Nepali culture is perfect, but Nepali language and values are not inferior, and can teach us many important ideas." 🇳🇵



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"From the peace in the home to peace in
the world make education sage for all"



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सूचना तथा प्रसारण विभाग



All right, we are now officially declaring winter over. It has lasted long enough. A normal winter has 3-4 westerly disturbances, this year we had 12, and it has dumped record snow on the mountains. A high pressure system now holds sway over northern India, and it means clear skies and sunny days over the weekend with steadily increasing maximum temperature climbing up to 22 Celsius by Sunday. Minima will stay in the single digits for the time being. Get your t-shirts out.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
19°	21°	22°
7°	8°	8°



HIMALARCHIVE

Meet these three self-motivated teachers

Sarala, Rabina and Sita are three of 12 teachers that Helen Eikeland profiled in her PhD thesis. Their stories are a part of her attempt to understand how local and cultural experiences impact their role as teachers.

Sarala

Sarala is a model teacher in her district now, but her own education was possible because her father helped her persist through difficult times. Her mother had poor health, so as the eldest among eight siblings, Sarala had to devote many hours in their care.

Sarala’s father believed education was the most important element that would enable her to stand on her own feet. There were multiple times Sarala wanted to quit so she could manage the heavy workload at home, but her father never let her, even if she failed.

Marriage, at 19, brought more hardships. But with her father as an anchor she battled depression and continued studying, even

if that meant she had to get up at four in the morning to fetch water, clean the house, and then go for classes. She ultimately passed SLC and got a job as a teacher.

In the beginning, Sarala taught in the same ways she had received education: with harsh consequences to discipline the children. When some Scottish volunteers questioned why all teachers carried sticks in the classroom, Sarala answered that it was impossible to discipline children without them.

But the school’s principal later introduced child-friendly policies. Sarala attended an 11-day training run by UNICEF and participated in learning activities, which deeply impressed her. She no longer had to resort to draconian methods like squeezing children’s fingers or

verbally threatening them, but could foster learning in a fun way. “If we can play and learn, why can’t the children? I started looking forward to trying it out in my own classroom.”

With a strong support from her principal, Sarala has implemented most activities like job charts, group seating and news sharing. She now enjoys an even closer bond with her students. When she was sick one day, the children came to visit her with biscuits.

Not all of Sarala’s colleagues were impacted by the newer child-friendly methods during the training. But Sarala’s belief in child-friendly teaching is strong. She is proud of her accomplishments and says, “I imagine how it would have been if we had the chance to be taught like that.”

Rabina

Rabina’s childhood was steeped in hardship: her father was an alcoholic and her family had to make do on her mother’s meagre earnings. She went to a government school, was hungry most days, and wore plastic shoes when her friends wore leather.

At one point, the school’s fees increased and Rabina’s mother could no longer afford to pay. She was only allowed to stay on because one of her teachers convinced the principal, but she could not participate in house activities, and felt embarrassed.

Still, Rabina was never discouraged because she knew good education was her key to success. At home, her father would disrupt her studies, so she would study under an oil lamp after dark. Through sheer perseverance Rabina passed SLC with a first division. She started volunteering in the school she had studied in, and became a teacher.

One of the proudest moments in Rabina’s life was when she dressed in a sari on her first day as an official teacher, and her students congratulated her with flowers. Rabina remembers that aside from some teachers who inspired her and one in particular who allowed her to continue school, other teachers were not supportive of weak students.

Now, as a teacher herself, Rabina puts in extra effort for the students who are lagging behind. She tells her students not to be afraid to fail. “F-A-I-L is short form for First Attempt In Learning,” she tells them.

Rabina firmly believes that education must go beyond passing exams to learning lessons for life. She herself overcomes the scarcity of practical activities in the curriculum by including model-making, diagrams and other activities.

Sita

Daughters were generally not sent to school when Sita was growing up. But she received an education because of a Save the Children project which paid the fees of students from underserved families. Sita did well in class, and started teaching in the same school after completing her SLC. She involved herself in community development activities like forest protection and securing clean drinking water.

During the Maoist insurgency the police alienated the people by their heavy handedness. The Maoists began to recruit from the women’s village committee, and Sita also joined. Today, she does

not want to speak much about her war years, but after it ended she continued her education and received a Masters in English.

However, after devoting 22 years to teaching and in spite of her qualifications, Sita is disheartened that she does not have a permanent job. She has applied for positions, but only those that have political affiliation get the jobs. Sita has distanced herself from politics now because she does not believe in its power to change society, she is more convinced of the power of education.

She adds: “One of my students is a well-known engineer in my district and I feel proud of that. I have had a job that has lifted people up.”

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“I’m not sure how to tell my story. There is so much pain inside me that I never get to share ... I am terrified to voice them.”

Originally from Chapagaun, Rupa Maharjan used to travel to Patan every day for work. Born in a poor farming family, she never went to school. So, getting a job even as a daily wage worker at a metal craft factory in the city meant a lot.

This is also where she met Babu Ratna Maharjan. They were soon married and lived happily despite limited resources. But seven years later, Babu Ratna was diagnosed with brain tumour. His family had to sell a part of the ancestral land to pay for his treatment, but first they had to win a court battle against relatives.

The money was soon gone, and so was Rupa’s husband. He was 30, she was 29 and her son Bishal was eight. She shared an old three-storey house in Kapinche Tole of Patan with her in-laws, two brothers-in-laws and their families. Half of Bishal’s school fees was sponsored by a monastery, but she had to work herself to the bone to pay the other half.

When earthquake struck on 25 April 2015, she and her son lost their home. But her husband’s oldest brother kindly decided to give her his share of the house, and with a Rs400,000 bank loan Rupa has started rebuilding. She was not eligible for the government’s reconstruction grant, as the



SONIA AWALE

Making gods for a living

The earthquake destroyed her home, cancer took her husband, but Rupa Maharjan keeps creating deities

design did not meet the standards set by the National Reconstruction Authority.

Rupa is now 39, but her small, thin frame, tired eyes and wrinkled hands make her look frail. She shows a visitor around the building, which is still under construction four years

after the earthquake. She shares a tiny bedroom with her son and the open kitchen is bare.

“I will continue pushing myself for my son’s future, he is all I have got left, and I am all he has,” says Rupa. “I worry about being

able to afford his higher studies because I still have to pay off my loans.”

Rupa’s job at the metalcraft shop entails working with solvents to clean metal for gold plating, and this has given her allergies. The work is also not paying as much because Kathmandu’s handicraft industry is suffering due to cheap Chinese imports.


Bishal is now 16 and will be taking his Secondary School Examination later this year. Unlike other boys his age at school who are exploring their interests and planning ahead for engineering and



computer science studies, Bishal does not have big dreams and is considering to learn Chinese and become a tour guide.

“All I know is that I have to support my mom as soon as possible,” says Bishal, who can barely bring himself to mention his father who could have guided him.

“My nephew has accepted the reality of our family and does not ever demand a thing,” said Rupa’s brother-in-law, Karma, 50. “I worry he won’t be able to continue his studies and that he will end up not having a choice in what does in life, just like us.”

The next morning, it is just another day for Rupa Maharjan as she prepares a simple meal for her son before he goes off to attend extra tutorials to prepare for his exams. Then she is off to the workshop, where she will spend next eight hours bringing bronze figures of deities to life. 

Sonia Awale

A house for the Nepali family



BIKRAM RAI

Pampha Nepali struggles against patriarchy to earn enough to give her children a home

Pampha Nepali never learnt to read and write, and yet at age 50 uses a measurement tape to stitch blouses for her customers. It is that determination that led her to start building a house in Sitapaila two years after the earthquake, even though she had no money for it.


Nepali lost her husband 17 years ago when her children were very young. She continued to live in their home, even though her in-laws tried to drive her out. She and the two children now live in a small plot even though her father-in-law refused to pass the property in her name, fearing she might run away with another man if he did.

When the earthquake destroyed

their home, Pampha Nepali and her children built a little tin shed in the corner of the property and lived there for two years. She toiled in her tailoring shop 12 hours a day, never taking a break, to feed and educate her children.

Ideally, Nepali would have signed an agreement with the NRA and got money from the government to build her home. But since the land deeds were not in her name, she was unable to do so. Instead, she took loans from friends and started construction. The money kept running out, and it took her 15 months for the structure, which still lacks a proper roof.

The family has a house to live in, but Pampha Nepali is now starting to worry about paying her loans. Her son just passed Grade 12 and decided to stop studying and start working to help out with expenses.

Nepali also worries what will happen to the house when she is no longer around. “Everyone knows that the land belongs to my husband and it is mine by right. So I have stayed there by force of will, even though my in-laws continue to ostracise me,” she says. “But I still don’t have the deeds, and they could throw out my children when I am gone.” 

Sewa Bhattarai

Surviving the aftermath

Most of her family perished in the earthquake, but Nanmaiju Prajapati finds hope in raising the next generation

It has been four years, but for Nanmaiju Prajapati it seems like yesterday. She was preparing lunch for her family when their home in Sankhu on the northeastern edge of Kathmandu Valley started shaking violently.

It was just before noon on Saturday 25 April, 2015. Prajapati immediately realised it was an earthquake and shouted at everyone to get out of the building.

She was hit by falling bricks, but made it out. The rest of her family could not leave on time. Her husband, daughter, son-in-law and their two children were all killed. Only her son, Suraj, survived.

There was a big roar as buildings in her neighbourhood collapsed in clouds of yellow dust. People were screaming, and there was a fearsome grinding sound from beneath the earth.

Prajapati is now 50, and looked surprisingly composed as she recounted the horror of that day while she knitted a



SONAM CHOEKYI LAMA

woolen sweater. After living for three years in a tin hut, she has managed to start rebuilding her house.

Without her husband, no income, and having lost her land titles and other documents, it was a struggle to rebuild.

But she sold her land, and with savings from her knitting work, she managed to put up concrete columns for her future home.


“The government hasn’t given us much, so I had to put this together myself,” she says, gesturing at the unfinished first floor that is incomplete even after one year.

Prajapati says she is reminded of the impermanence of existence by the tragedy. “What do we do with money? We have to leave it all behind when we go, still we need money to survive and to rebuild,” she adds, knitting away.

She has tried to get her

surviving daughter-in-law, Anita, to also knit to augment the family income, but she says she doesn’t know how to. “Do I knit, or do I take care of the baby?” asks Anita.

Prajapati says her son is sick, and cannot work. The house is incomplete but the money is finished and she has to earn by knitting. She says: “I have to do everything around here.”

But as the memory of the earthquake and the death and destruction it caused begins to fade, and Nanmaiju Prajati starts coming to terms with the loss, another generation of the family is being raised. It is the baby that gives her hope for the future. 

Sonam Choekyi Lama



Staying positive

Despite a life of hardships made worse by the earthquake, Ishwori Bhandari counts her blessings

At 65, Ishwori Bhandari is a happy-go-lucky woman. She has no family, no obligations, and lives alone. She recently went to India to attend the Kumbha Mela with a hundred other devotees from Nepal, and says god has given her a good life.

But ask her about her sorrows, and her eyes well up. “Don’t ask me about that, it hurts me deeply,” she says. “I must ignore it and look only to the positive so that I can live.”

After her husband died 25 years ago, she fought a long legal battle for her husband’s share of ancestral property, but got only a small portion which she had to sell to pay the lawyers.

Bhandari’s long and hard life was made worse by the 2015 earthquake. Her third brother-in-law helped her get joint ownership for the house she was living in. The earthquake destroyed that house, and she

wanted to build a new one. But her brother-in-law died, and his wife refused to sign over the legal rights. Without it, Bhandari could not get the housing grant from the Nepal Reconstruction Authority (NRA).

Bhandari is among tens of thousands of single women who have been disenfranchised by a patriarchal system that gives men the advantage in property ownership.

The earthquake made all this worse for single mothers and widows who needed land titles and house ownership certificates to get compensation. Single women like Ishwori Bhandari are particularly vulnerable because they cannot afford lawyers and have no family support.

Four years after the earthquake, Bhandari lives in a small tin shed she has constructed beside her destroyed house. “It is very difficult to get through the winter and now the rains will come,” she says.

Still, Bhandari calls herself fortunate to at least have a shed. She is much better off than the really poor earthquake survivors she has come across.

“I saw one woman who did not even have a hut, she was living in a cave and could not walk,” says Bhandari, who helped the woman by referring her to social workers. “She blessed me, and it is because of that blessing I am able to live an independent life despite the misfortunes.”

Bhandari suffered a heart attack after the strong aftershock on 12 May 2015 and is on expensive and lifelong medication. She had broken her left leg 20 years ago and walks with a limp because it swells from time to time.

She says: “I don’t want to be a burden on anyone. I want to live long and help others. I just wish my shed was warmer and did not leak.” 🏠

Sewa Bhattarai

SINGLE SOULS



There are an estimated 2,000 earthquake widows, and more than 50,000 single women whose house collapsed in the disaster four years ago. Reconstruction and struggle for survival after the earthquake has been doubly difficult for the women because of the lack of a support system. Meet some of these brave women rebuilding their lives and livelihoods despite shortcomings.

nepalitimes.com

EVENTS



Zumba
Celebrate International Women’s Day with a zumba routine. A certified instructor will introduce and guide the participants, and the cost will include a light lunch.
8 March, 1-3pm, Rs800 (members), Rs1000 (non-members), Rs600 (students), Bihani Social Venture, Dhobighat, 9860616292, 98624368, 9803867707

Women’s Day Movie

The movie *Sunakali* is about a girls’ football team from Mugu district and how their journey of training and participating in a football match helps them find their passion for the sport. Director Bhojraj Bhat will also be there for a Q&A session after the screening.
8 March, 6-8pm, HUB, Thamel, 9866273244

Dalit Discussion Series

The first discussion of the series will be about ‘Persistence of Violence against Dalit Women and State Charter’. The key speakers will be Gaura Nepali and Dhana Kumari Sunar.
14 March, 3-5pm, Martin Chautari, Thapathali, (01) 4102027

Move4Women

An international movement highlighting the importance of gender equality in the media. You can join Move4Women in Nepal with your support this Women’s Day.
8 March, 1-3pm, Bhrikutimandap



Movie Monday

March will celebrate women in films by showcasing movies directed by women or with women leads. The selection this week is the 1979 science fiction horror movie *Alien*.
11 March, 7-9pm, Base Camp Outdoor Life Style, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5536051

Self-Defence workshop

Rotaract Club of Kathmandu Mid-Town brings a self defence workshop with master trainer Bidha Bista for this women’s day. Call the number below to reserve a place.
9 March, 10am-4pm, National Open College, Sanepa, 9861665943, 9808963708

Paint it Chrome

Beginners and advanced artists can both join to learn how to employ painting techniques to create shiny objects on paper. Lucretia Torya will be your instructor for the day.
9 March, 10am-3pm, Rs800 (including all supplies), Sattiya Media Arts Collective, Jawalakhel, (01) 5521812

Games evening

Learn French with specially designed games that cover a wide range of activities: strategy, role-playing, skills and comedy.
14 March, 5-6pm, Alliance Francaise, Pulchok, (01) 5009221



Sound Healing Meditation

Experience the healing power of singing bowls and learn meditation to help you relax your mind.
8 March, 5:30- 7:00 pm, Rs1200, Soorya Wellness Centre, Lazimpat, (01) 4001714/19, 9818481972.

Swing Dance Workshop

Absolute beginners can join this workshop organised by Swing Academy Nepal to learn some Swing/Lindy Hop dance moves. This is an American dance form which has evolved with jazz music over the years.
9 March, 4-6pm, Rs200, Hotel Yangrima, Boudha, 9851170018

Trailblazers

A 2-day photo exhibition to mark International Women’s Day organised by the UN and British Council, featuring inspiring Nepali women who have broken barriers.
8-9 March, Lalitpur Metropolitan Office Garden, (01) 5523200

MUSIC



April Rush

April Rush will perform live this Friday night. Create a memorable Women’s Day evening with your friends, accompanied by good music and delicious food.
8 March, 7:30 to 10:30pm, Melrose Restaurant and Bar, (01) 4258861

Women In Concert

A yearly concert on International Women’s Day for aspiring female musicians. The theme this year is singer-songwriter and the concert has a line-up of six new singer-songwriters who will perform their original songs.
8 March, 2pm onwards, Bhrikutimandap

Udumbara

A musical event that will explore a variety of themes about life. Join Shreeti Pradhan (Vocals), Mannu Shahi (Guitars, Sarangi, Sarod) and Birat Basnet (Percussions) for a unique, soulful and soothing music.
8 March, 7-9pm, Evoke Cafe and Bistro, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5532021



Night

This week, Base Camp Music Festival will feature the folk band Night. The band works to revive endangered or lost Nepali instruments and create original sounds with cultural inspiration.
9 March, 6pm, Rs 500 (pre-sale available at General Store), Rs1000, BaseCamp Outdoor Lifestyle, Jhamsikhel, (01) 5536051

Saturday Night Live

Enjoy live music by the duo Rajesh Nepali and Prajwol Lama.
9 March, 6:30 - 9:30pm, Hardik’s Lounge, Arun Thapa Chok, 9851022524

DINING



Gangnam Galbi Barbeque

Korean barbeque, grill and stick food, a.k.a. galbi, roasted in charcoal at high heat to add more softness, different flavors and scent to meat.
Lal Colony Marg, Naxal, (01) 4434780

Women’s day special

Celebrate Women’s Day with a 25% discount in the special buffet at Garden Terrace restaurant.
8 March, 12:30 to 3pm, Garden Terrace restaurant, Soaltee Crowne Plaza, Tahachal, (01) 4273999



Prazada

Enjoy Prazada’s selection of chilled draught beers in the lush garden with aromatic food and special pizzas accompanied by relaxing music on Fridays or a Pop-up market on Saturdays.
Baluwatar, (01) 4410473

Durbar Restaurant

Experience the feeling of dining in a palace at the multi cuisine restaurant. Dine inside or sit outside facing the beautiful courtyard.
6am-10pm, Gokarna Forest Resort, Thali, (01) 4451212



Vegetarian and Vegan Night

Special vegetarian and vegan menu featuring some innovative, fresh vegetarian and vegan items from around the world. Make your reservations soon.
Every Wednesday, 6pm onwards, Chimes restaurant, (01) 5549673

GETAWAY



Womanhood Package

Hyatt brings a special womanhood package for complete relaxation and rejuvenation this March. The package includes a 60-minute massage of your choice, a 45-minute body scrub, a 15-minute express organic cleanser, steam, sauna and whirlpool.
Throughout March starting 8 March, 8am - 8pm Hyatt Regency, Boudha, For Bookings, for reservations:(01) 5171234

Raniban Retreat

A unique boutique hotel located on the secluded hillock of Raniban forest, offering an eco-friendly environment specifically tailored for guests. A must visit for peace and serenity and views of Himalayas.
Pokhara, (01) 5185435



Barahi Jungle Lodge

The first eco-jungle lodge in Chitwan directly overlooks Chitwan National Park. Spa, boutique guest rooms, individual and two-in-one private villas, including a suite with a private swimming pool.
Megauli, Chitwan, (01) 4429820

Balthali Village Resort

A small, cosy retreat with a bird’s eye view of green terrace fields dotted with ochre painted houses.
Panauti, Kavre, 9851087772



Chhaimale Village Resort

Adorned with pear trees, the Resort is an ideal destination for anyone seeking to escape the hustle and bustle of Kathmandu city.
Chhaimale, (01) 4268121

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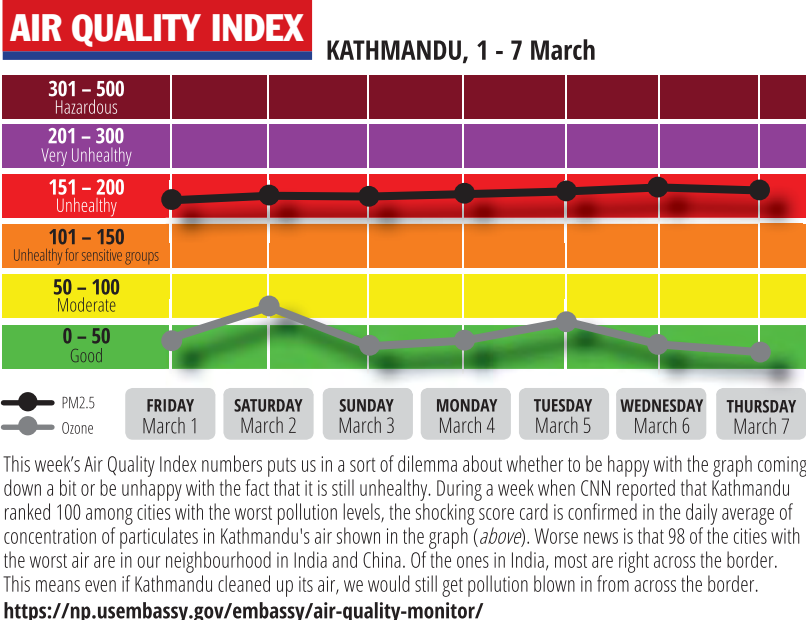
NEW Arrivals

Show Room: SRD Building New Plaza, Putalisadak, Tel:4425402

OUR PICK

Opens in Kathmandu on 8 March

Badla brings together Amitabh Bachchan and Taapsee Pannu again after Pink, and promises to be just as intense. This is the story of a woman caught in an extra marital affair, who claims she is framed and wants the lawyer to get her out of it. The trailer depicts mind games aplenty, and an unconventional heroine. The movie is directed by Sujoy Ghosh, an old hand at women-centric thrillers with the acclaimed Kahani under his belt.



Saving Kathmandu’s past for the future

Archaeologist carries on her passion for heritage conservation from one generation to the next

Sonia Awale

As a child growing up in Bhaktapur in 1970s, Saubhagya Pradhanang saw first-hand how a German-supported project helped restore the architectural heritage of her hometown. The painstaking renovation ignited in the young girl a life-long passion for cultural preservation.

Coming home from school every day, she would listen to her parents talk about customs and traditions, the importance of festivals and rituals in her Newa community. Pradhanang remembers pestering elders on why they celebrated *sithinakha*, observed *ghya chaku sanlu* or *quati purnima*.

“In Newari families we live our culture. From the moment you wake up till you go back to bed at night, our daily lives revolve around our traditions, and as a child it fuelled my curiosity,” recalls Pradhanang, now 47, and Chief of the National Archives in Kathmandu.

Born and raised in a middle class family, Pradhanang grew up surrounded by the rich indigenous Newa culture and a father who cared deeply about keeping it alive. Her father died when she was 10 years old, but he left a lasting impression that has helped Pradhanang in her heritage work.

After completing her SLC from a government school in Thimi, Pradhanang majored in archaeology and heritage as an undergraduate, went on to top her Masters and



BIKRAM RAI

teach Nepal Bhasa and culture to college students.

After a stint at the Nepal Heritage Society she worked at Lalitpur Municipality as an Archaeology Officer during which she worked to restore ancient waterspouts, prepare an inventory of the historic townships like Khokana, and revive the traditional cleaning of wells and water sources during *sithinakha*.



All this knowledge stood her in good stead when the April 2015 earthquake struck, destroying many of the monuments that she had personally helped restore. Working in the World Heritage Division she coordinated with the Department of Archaeology, Nepal police and local community to rescue precious wood and stone carvings, and bronze figures

of deities from the rubble.

“The earthquake was a learning experience and an opportunity to rebuild many of our crumbling monuments,” says Pradhanang. “We have saved and are rebuilding nearly 200 heritage sites and it gives me a huge sense of achievement.”

Although Lalitpur and Bhaktapur have moved fast on restoration, Kathmandu is lagging behind because of disputes with contractors and a debate about whether restoration should follow

traditional methods strictly, or use modern materials and methods.

Community ownership and responsibility drove much of the progress in the reconstruction of monuments in Patan and Bhaktapur, but the same cannot be said of Kathmandu, and this deeply saddens Pradhanang.

“Kathmandu Valley is a living heritage and a vital part of our identity, we must work to preserve and rebuild using traditional techniques,” says Pradhanang, who says earthquakes have historically helped Kathmandu keep its architectural traditions alive. She thinks competition between local and international groups have delayed Kathmandu Darbar Square restoration.

But she is happy that the model community-led rebuilding of Kasthanandap Temple and the revival of Rani Pokhari with experts from Bhaktapur has now started after relentless pressure from local communities.

Pradhanang is glad her children are also interested in heritage and tradition, just as she was as a child. Her children often accompany her on site visits, and are curious to look at the creations of their forebears.

“Archaeology is a field where we are constantly learning new things and where we get better understanding of the origin of our civilisation,” says Pradhanang, “but there is still so much to be discovered and preserved for posterity.”

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Etched in our memory

Saunganga Darshandhari's *Stories* is a collection of etchings inspired by moments from her life. Through her art, the Nepali visual artist and printmaker tackles themes like the human bond with nature, time as it has evolved since her childhood, and social evolution.

Darshandhari is a trained fine artist who has a Master's degree in printmaking. In *Stories*, she uses a technique she knows well -- the etchings are initially carved into metal, then coloured, and finally transferred to print, which is the final work we see.



PRAKRITI KANDEL

Almost every piece features people who are having conversations or are immersed in nature. But all the faces are empty. "Giving a face would limit the experience to that particular person, but without a face, the character could be anyone," explains the artist.

Darshandhari is deeply inspired by the joy nature brings to humans, and natural elements like birds, fish, lotus, peacock, leaves, vines, feature prominently. Clouds intersperse many etchings and symbolise how transient moments in life are. We cannot hold clouds no matter how massive they are, moments also melt away with time. The lotus is another recurring element. It is a flower that emerges from the water to bloom and Darshandhari uses it as a symbol of that struggle.

Even though the artist uses ordinary subjects in her etchings, her presentation and how she weaves the elements together create an almost fantasy-like feeling. In '*Unknowingly shifting*', the moon is pink and filled with vines against a midnight blue sky. Three aged people in Nepali clothing are riding atop a gigantic white swan, journeying smoothly, a rendering of migration.

In '*Yomari*', the Newa delicacy takes the role of a ship with a woman ensconced in a gigantic yomari. Other tiny ones are spread below it like fish, the purple splash adds to its mystery. '*Mero*

ama ko thaill' is a series that pays tribute to the artist's mother and her childhood.

"I grew up through the money in my mother's *thaill*, which jingled with the sound of coins. Those coins do not have the same significance now as in my childhood because of paper money or credit cards," Darshanadari explains. The *thaills* are presented in varied styles, designs and backdrops, telling stories of their own.

Traditional elements interject the etchings, from the *chaubandi* that women wear to the traditional architecture in the background. Traditional lotus pedestals form the feet of her persona, conveying the message that we must respect ourselves first.

Darshandhari also explores technology's encroaching impact on human life. In '*Time*', logos of social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, WeChat replace eyes, and the brand names of famous technology companies cascade down the t-shirt of the character.

The details in Darshandhari's art, the interactions between elements, her use of colour and shape all integrate to convey ordinary stories from a unique perspective. She makes us think about various elements, from the beauty of nature to the influence of technology.

Prakriti Kandel

Stories
Saunganga Darshandhari
Siddhartha Art Galley, Baber Mahal Revisited
Until 23 March

nepalitimes.com

Watch video of Darshandhari at the Kathmanu Triennale



GERMAN EMBASSY

BUNDESTAG IN BALUWATAR: A delegation from the German House of Representatives led by Tobias Pfluger (*centre*) met with Prime Minister Oli at his office in Singha Darbar to discuss governance and economic development.



INDIAN EMBASSY

HELPING HAND: Indian Ambassador Manjeev Singh Puri on Wednesday signed an agreement with the Central Building Research Institute (CBRI), Roorkee for post-earthquake reconstruction of 72 educational facilities in Nepal.



UNDP NEPAL

TOP ADVOCATES: Lokshari Kunwar, Hira Bahadur Thapa and Freed Kamaiya Women receive UNDP's N-Peace Awards on Wednesday in Canada for their contribution to women empowerment and gender equality in Nepal.



PARAS KHADKA

HOWZAT: The Women National Cricket Team returned home this week after clinching second position in the Women's World Cup Asia Region Qualifier in Thailand.



MONIKA DEUPALA

BELIEF BEYOND BORDERS: Buddhist devotees arrive in Boudhanath on Tuesday to observe Tibetan communities' new year Gyalpo Lhosar.

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The power and pull of Pathibhara

Hardship is supposed to be part of the package of a pilgrimage to this mountaintop shrine in eastern Nepal

Sewa Bhattarai
in Taplejung

There is a belief that a pilgrimage to the mountain-top shrine of Pathibhara (*right*) is all it takes to have one's wish granted by the gods. However, there is also a belief that if the journey is too easy, the blessing may not be granted.

Many kings and politicians in the past have been thwarted by weather or other obstacles from taking a helicopter to the shrine located at the summit of a monolithic 3,800m high pyramid-shaped mountain in eastern Nepal.

Like other holy places in other religions, the hardships endured in the journey are as important as the act of worshipping and sacrificing sheep at the shrine. It is not supposed to be easy.

Tourism Minister Rabindra Adhikari, Yeti Airlines founder Ang Tshiring Sherpa and five others had flown in from Kathmandu to Tehrathum on the morning of 27 February to inspect a proposed airfield. The weather was closing in, and angry dark clouds had enveloped the mountains to the north.

There was talk about the weather getting worse, and the need to get back to Kathmandu. But after the helicopter took off, the group appears to have decided to make a quick trip up to Pathibhara (*picture, right shows Minister Adhikari with the high priest just before boarding his fatal flight*).

We will never know who proposed the side trip, but within ten minutes the chopper was on the helipad below the shrine. Soon after, the pilot radioed the tower at Suketar airfield that there was heavy snow and it was not possible to take off. The passengers waited it out inside the helicopter sipping tea, and waiting for the clouds to clear.

Information pieced together from conversations overheard by the temple priest suggests that one of the passengers suggested they take off because the weather enroute was fine. That turned out to be a fatal decision, the helicopter crashed into the cliff at Sisne Bhir a minute after takeoff.

Pathibhara was an animist Limbu shrine, but after the Gorkha conquest came to be revered by Hindus and Buddhists alike as a holy shrine. The temple is so called because the mountain is shaped like a pathi (a grain container). Local Limbus worship it as a place



SEWA BHATTARAI

of power and purity. No matter how old the devotees, they are all guided by devotion to undertake the steep all-day climb up from the road.

That Pathibhara temple is located so high and the trail is almost impassable during heavy rain or snow, means many try to fly there, and helicopter companies offer quick roundtrips from Suketar, or even Dharan.

It is not just the final climb on foot that is arduous, the ride from Birtamod to Fungling is no less difficult – it can take a whole day along narrow and serpentine mountain roads.

In the old days, people had to make a two-week trek from the plains, but with the road to Taplejung, the journey time was cut to three days. Now, an expensive and jolting jeep ride takes pilgrims up to Tallo Phedi. Many prefer to walk because the roller coaster ride on the jeep is not for the faint-hearted. There is also a shortage of jeeps, which means pilgrims returning prefer to walk back to Fungling instead of waiting.

From Tallo Phedi it is a long climb to Mathillo Phedi, the ramshackle base camp for



SEWA BHATTARAI

UDAYA BHATTARAI

the final summit climb. Hundreds of pilgrims cram into tin huts huddled together for the night. The hardships are part of the pilgrimage, and endured uncomplainingly by devotees.

Pathibhara gets over 350,000 visitors per year. Some even wake up at 2AM and walk with flashlights just to be ahead of the crowds.

The forests are lush with oak and rhododendron, giving way to pine and alpine meadows. In a few weeks the rhododendron will be out in full bloom in many colours.

The majestic peaks of Jannu Himal and Mt Kanchenjunga accompany visitors throughout the climb, and the 360 degree view from the summit is stunning.

Even those who are not particularly religious are overwhelmed by a feeling of exhilaration by the panorama, the crisp cold air and the mysterious energy of the shrine that pulls many to it.

The Minister and Sherpa reportedly flew to Pathibhara to inspect a proposed cable car up to the shrine. Perhaps the legends are right, and the gods of Pathibhara do not want it to be more accessible. 🇳🇵



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1 year after US-Bangla crash,

Kunda Dixit

One year after the horrific crash in Kathmandu of US-Bangla Airlines Flight BS211, new evidence confirms the captain was mentally unstable and unfit to fly. But this is of little consolation to the relatives of the 51 who perished in a tragedy that was easily preventable if safety standards had been met.

Capt Abid Sultan was abusive, erratic and incoherent even before the plane took off from Dhaka on a flight to Kathmandu on 12 March, 2018 with 67 passengers and 4 crew. A full transcript of the Cockpit Voice Recorder (CVR) obtained by *Nepali Times* shows that the mental state of the Captain was much worse than first indicated in an ATC (Air Traffic Control) tape, and should have set off alarm bells even before the plane took off.

On approach to Kathmandu the Bombardier Q400 turboprop twisted and turned over the airport before crashing and bursting into flames off the runway. The government’s Accident Investigation Commission released its report in January, concluding that Capt Sultan was ‘stressed and emotionally disturbed’ about another female pilot in his company. Actually he was more than that, he was excessively obsessed with her.

The transcript (*overleaf*) begins with conversation between US-Bangla Operations while still on ground in Dhaka. Sultan is volatile and explodes into foul language for no reason at all. First Officer (FO) Prithula Rashid, on her first route proving flight to Kathmandu must have already been terrified by the outbursts. But crew gradient seems to prevent her from reacting to her senior instructor.

Capt Sultan talks nonstop during the flight with angry monologues about another young female pilot whom he had trained, Farhat Lamia Khaled. He is obsessed about her alleged comments doubting his competency to be an instructor.

Sultan’s hostility towards Lamia also seems to be personal – in sentences peppered with bilingual obscenities he casts aspersions on her morality and disparages her appearance. Halfway through the



MONIKA DEUPALA

flight, citing rumours about their involvement Capt Sultan breaks down and starts weeping openly, telling his copilot that he was quitting the company because of Lamia.

As they start their descent, Capt Sultan temporarily regains his composure and in a professional and calm voice resumes his role of an instructor pilot, preparing the trainee pilot for approach and go-around procedures for Kathmandu. Throughout the transcript he alternates between being polite and kind to her one moment, even complimenting her airmanship, and then reverting to abuse-laden tirades the next.

The plane is cleared for approach, and Capt Sultan confirms landing gears are down, when they are not. In the course of the next few minutes he asks FO Rashid five times if she has completed the Pre-landing Checklist even though she confirms it every time. All the while, the landing gear error audio warning is sounding in the background.

Kathmandu Radar hands the flight to tower frequency and it is cleared for the standard VOR-DME approach. But when the plane should be on finals, it is actually 3km to the east of the approach path at rooftop level.

Margie Donahue is an American educator living in Balkot, and remembers seeing the plane with a blue tail flying very low and fast over her house. “I thought it would hit our roof and I waited for a big

bang because I was sure it was going to crash,” she told *Nepali Times*.

In the ATC tape, a female controller then comes on the radio to alert the flight crew: “BanglaStar211, you were given landing clearance to runway 02 ... You are going towards runway 20.” Seeing the plane so far to the east, the controller appears to have thought the flight was entering downwind to make a circling approach to Runway 20 from the north side. After confirming the pilot is visual, a male controller takes over to instruct the plane not to land yet because of another traffic on finals.

The CVR transcript indicates Capt Sultan mistakenly thinks the VOR beacon is ahead of him when the plane is already flying northeast of the airfield straight towards Shivapuri mountain. There are miscues, misinterpreted intentions, language problems and lack of assertiveness on the part of controllers.

After reviewing the CVR, a shocked Airbus 320 commander told us Kathmandu Radar should have first warned the plane he was deviating from the approach path, and failing that immediately ordered the plane to carry out a standard missed approach procedure when it overshot the runway. Instead, the Tower let the disoriented pilot blunder on.

Meanwhile in the cockpit, the EGPWS (Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System) is going off loudly and continuously

as the plane approaches Shivapuri. To avoid hitting the slope, Capt Sultan puts the plane into a steep turning climb (*see map, right*). Probably sensing that his co-pilot is nervous, he reassures her, admitting calmly that he has made a mistake, adding, “It happens, isn’t it?”

At Gagalphedi village at the base of Shivapuri, locals hurriedly gathered to watch the Q400 descend dangerously low, and at the last moment pull out of the dive with both its landing lights on, and main gears down. A mobile video posted on YouTube is a key piece of evidence showing how close the plane already was to a crash. (*Go online to watch clip*).

Two pilots on domestic flights are then heard on the ATC tape warning the tower in Nepali that the Bangladesh plane seemed lost: “He looks disoriented, doesn’t know where he is going. Vector him out of here.”

The plane makes an orbit at base leg northwest of the field at 6,500ft while both pilots look out of the runway. When he sees the airfield, Capt Sultan descends steeply in an abnormal and dangerous approach, banking steeply left, and missing the hangar roof by only 45ft.

In the Tower, shocked air traffic controllers duck when they see the plane come straight at them. The Q400 then flies over the international apron narrowly missing a fully-loaded 777, and several 737s and 320s. The plane is

at a 15° angle to the runway heading when its right landing gear hits the tarmac hard before veering off, and down the slope.

Driving to the airport on the Ring Road, frequent flier Arnico Panday saw what he thought was an ATR-72 make a tight turn over the hangar, nearly hit the tower and disappear. “Moments later I saw the plume of black smoke,” Panday recalls.

Most of the passengers on the left side of the plane were either killed by the impact or the ensuing fire. Many who survived were sitting on the right side, or towards the front.

The Investigation Committee Report concludes: “The PIC (Pilot in Command) was under stress and emotionally disturbed as he felt that the female colleague of the company questioned his reputation as a good instructor. This together with the failure on the part of both the crew to follow the standard operating procedure at the critical stage of the flight contributed to loss of situational awareness to appreciate the deviation of the aircraft from its intended radial that disabled them sighting the runway.”

All audio warnings on the flight deck are going off simultaneously in the last few seconds of the CVR: “Terrain, Terrain”, “Sink Rate, Pull Up, Pull Up”, “Bank Angle, Bank Angle”.

The Radio Altimeter warning calls “100 Minimums”, then “50”. The last words heard are of FO Rashid, sounding alarmed: “Sir, Sir!”

With reporting by **Sharad Ojha**

Individual tragedies, and a national loss

Monika Deupala

With her white coat and a stethoscope slung around her neck, Samira Byanjankar was doing the rounds at Patan Hospital on Thursday, trying to save lives after her own life was spared in the crash of US-Bangla flight BS211 exactly a year ago.

Byanjankar was among 20 of the 71 on board who survived the fiery crash at Kathmandu airport in which she lost four of her roommates from a medical school in Bangladesh. Among the dead were ten other Nepali medical students who had just graduated, most of them young women. Sitting on a right-hand aisle seat of the Q400 aircraft, Byanjankar survived while her friends in rows in front and next to her were either killed, or died later in hospital.

Byanjankar herself fractured her hip, and still has a scar on her lips. She spent four months in hospital and is now an intern at Patan Hospital where she has devoted herself to healing others, partly to take her mind off the horrific tragedy and memories of friends she lost.

“We were so excited when we went to Bangladesh for the first time,” Byanjankar recalls with a faraway look in her eyes. “I did my pre-med with Charu Baral and we applied for MBBS together. Ashna Shakya was my closest friend from school days. Princey Dhami was outgoing and always sweet. Algina Baral dreamt of doing a postgraduate in America.”

The five were inseparable in medical school in



Bangladesh, they helped each other in their studies and went on trips together to nearby Shillong in India because it reminded them of home. Classes were hectic, but the five would watch South Indian movies together on laptops when they got some time off.

All five were among 20 students from Jalalabad Ragib Rabeya Medical College in Sylhet who flew back together. The last group photograph of the five friends (*above*) at Dhaka airport that morning shows smiling young women full of promise, looking forward to meeting their families and becoming doctors. They were making calls to parents, taking selfies, and buying last-minute presents in the duty free area before the flight boarding announcement.

“I don’t know if I am lucky or not. I got to live, but losing so many dear friends at the same time is hard. I still have not mustered the courage to visit the parents of my friends. It will be even more difficult for them,” says Byanjankar in a quiet voice.

Most of the students dozed off during the flight, and woke

JUST MEMORIES: Only Samira Byanjankar (*far left*) in this last group picture taken just before the flight at Dhaka airport survived the crash of the US-Bangla plane last year. Ashna Shakya (*third from left*), Saruna Shrestha (*second from left*), Algina Baral (second from right) and her cousin Charu Baral (*right*) all died.

each other up when the mountains of Nepal came into view. The plane was descending, and those with window seats started pointing at familiar landmarks. The students had done the flight many times before, but they knew something was wrong when the plane aborted its landing, flew low and then climbed and turned steeply.

Suddenly, there was a big bang, and for Byanjankar it all went dark. When she came to about ten minutes later, she was wet from the water hose of the fire trucks. She tried to wake up her friends, but they were not moving at all. She was pulled out before the fire consumed the crushed cabin, and taken to KMC Hospital in an ambulance.

Before boarding the plane in Dhaka, Charu Baral had exchanged her boarding pass with Byanjankar so she could sit with her cousin Algina. Samira then sat next to Princey Dhami. That seat swap cost Charu her life, and probably saved Samira’s. Princey was grievously wounded and died 20 days later in hospital in Delhi.

Most of the students were from middle class Nepali families who had invested their savings to afford medical education for their children. The Byanjankars had sold a portion of their land. The stories of individual tragedies in the families add up to a national loss. A dozen aspiring doctors were killed, as well as one of Nepal’s top neurosurgeons, Bal Krishna Thapa of the BP Koirala Memorial Cancer Hospital in Chitwan.

“I was fated to live, and I want to devote this gift to my family and my patients,” says Samira Byanjankar. “I see my friends often in my dreams, where we are all planning trips together again.” 🇳🇵



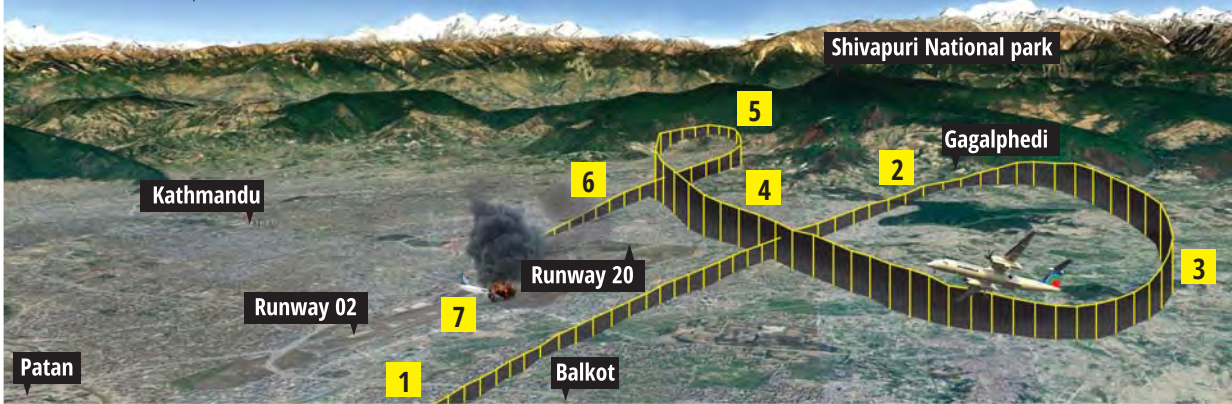
Samira Byanjankar is still grieving for the four roommates she lost in last year’s crash. They would have been medical interns like her today, and dreamt of becoming doctors. Go online to watch video and find out why Byanjankar is determined to dedicate the gift of life to her family and patients.

nepalitimes.com 🖱️

fingers point to pilot

LAST FLIGHT

Final flight path of the US-Bangla flight BS211 on 12 March 2018. Yellow boxes correspond to CVR times



GRAPHICS: KIRAN MAHARJAN/GOOGLE EARTH

“Sir! Sir!”

The Accident Investigation Commission set up by the Ministry of Tourism and Civil Aviation in January presented its report in containing the graphic transcript of translated conversation picked up by the Cockpit Voice Recorder on US-Bangla BS211. Till now, clues about the state of mind of the pilot in command had come from the Air Traffic Control tape posted on the Internet on the day of the crash. This transcript shows that Captain Abid Sultan's state of mind was much more unstable than first thought. Excerpts:

CODE
Internal cockpit conversation in **red**
Conversation with Ground in **black**
UTC Time in grey
Numbers in **yellow** boxes in transcript correspond to point in flight path
["SQUARE BRACKETS"] are audio cockpit warnings

FO: Flight Officer
PIC: Pilot in Command
Bangla: Conversation translated from Bangla
KTM: Kathmandu
ADC: Air Defence Clearance
FIC: Flight Information Centre
Romeo: Waypoint southeast of Kathmandu
VFR: Visual Flight Rules
EGPWS: Enhanced Ground Proximity Warning System
DME: Distance Measuring Equipment (miles from beacon)
VOR: Visual Omni-directional Range beacon
ROD: Rate of Descent

FO: 0636:20.2 Dhaka Ground BS211 good afternoon
Dhaka Ground: 0636:20.2 BS211 good afternoon, go head ma'm
FO: 0636:34.8 BS211 standing at 28 South flight for KTM FL 240
PIC: 0642:24.0 Do you have the ADC number? (Bangla)
FO: 0642:25.9 No Sir, I have one number 2177
PIC: 0642:25.9 Operations, BS211, how long will you take to respond, I want the ADC and FIC. (Angry tone)
OPS: 0643:31.5 KTM FIC for 211 is 1171 ADC KX 848 and for 212 FIC
PIC: 0643:39.7 I don't want f--k 212, I want 211 (Very angry) ... I don't want to f--k you, read you, again? Keep your f---ing mouth shut.
PIC: 0650:10.5 Got the clearance?
FO: 0650:09.1 Yes sir, line up is due.
PIC: 0650:16.0 Don't be scared, I am going to stay for another 3 months, I am going to f--k these people right and left.
Tower: 0650:25.7 BS211 clear line up runway 14
FO: 0650:30.4 Clear line up, clear line up runway 14, BS211

PIC: 0651:03.5 Bismillah, have we done the takeoff checklist? (Bangla)
FO: 0651:40.5 80 kts, power set, V1 rotate, positive rate
PIC: 0652:32.5 Look out for birds
PIC: 0652:44.9 Autopilot engaged, 1,000, turning right. Perform the flow check (Bangla)
Tower: 0652:49.9 BS211 airborne 52, call turning right
FO: 0652:46.4 We are turning right BS211
Tower: 0652:57.5 Roger re-cleared to 240, call passing 4,000
FO: 0652:57.5 Recleared to 240, we'll call out of 4,000
PIC: 0653:31.5 Even I am abusing others, you don't be afraid, Buri, I am addressing you as Buri to show my affection for you. (Bangla)
PIC: 0656:14.5 Operations BS 211?
OPS: 0656:17.5 BS 211 Operations, go ahead Sir

PIC: 0656:32.5 Why the hell you need the onboard fuel? Why do you ask me the onboard fuel? Tell me the reason you want to do with onboard fuel, let me know now ... I want written f---ing explanation before I come back to Dhaka
OPS: 0659:27.5 Copied Sir, Wilco, Safe flight Sir
PIC: 0659:34.5 I don't f--k care about the safe flight, you f--k your duty ... Don't talk to me unless I call you
PIC: 0700:04.5 Okay, after takeoff checklist done? (Normal tone)
FO: 0700:07.5 Sir, yes, Sir done
PIC: 0700:09.5 Mother f---er, piglets, son of bitch (Bangla, low voice)

PIC: 0715:33.5 (Paraphrased and shortened from transcript) Lamia was the worst trained in US-Bangla, now in Biman Bangladesh talks ill of US-Bangla instructors including me. They said we f---ed in the cockpit. Lamia is not even worth approaching, she is ugly, fat with obnoxious appearance...what the f--k is she, the beauty queen of the world? My wife is far more beautiful, I don't need Lamia. If I intend to buy sex, I can do that with 100 dollars. Because of the mother f---er Lamia, only Lamia, I decided to resign. She talks big, what she knows about flying ... if this impression goes to my wife and imagine if you were my wife, if you learn that your husband is fooling with another girl, how would you feel?
FO: 0715:33.5 Oh no, oh my God.
PIC: 0717:40.5 That f---er, that son of a gun, bitch, she asked to fly 100 hours with me. With no intention that she has big boobs nor she would do sex with me. If I want to f--k her, I can f--k her in the hotel. And you know that your friend is f---ing

too horny. She has a... she does sex with 6-7 guys I know. You note it, she is not a virgin ... So, your friend Lamia is a prostitute. (Bangla)
FO: 0720:46.5 Sir, shouldn't I switch on the radar?
PIC: 0804:52.5 That f---er Lamia, she made me... look at my f---ing eyes... weeping ... crying... where did I do mistake (crying)? I take the blame and resigned. What is my next source of income? At least look at me f---er (crying and blowing nose) Do I need to cry like this?
FO: No, no Sir.
PIC: Look at me now (crying, choking and blowing nose). So, it is my problem that I have not been able to teach you.
PIC: 0806:08.5 Okay, let us do the descent checklist (Bangla).
FO: Yes Sir, it is time (Bangla)
PIC: 0806:55.5 I have suffered a lot, my child (bursts out crying, blowing nose)
FO: Sir, please forget. The God is above us. Even if you find it hard to forgive her, please forgive her.
PIC: How can I forgive her. The girl for whom I have taken so much pain. We don't know f--k how do I accept that, tell me (crying and blowing nose)
PIC: 0807:42.5 We will do approach checklist at Romeo, okay (Bangla)?
FO: Yes Sir
PIC: Ask, request for descent
FO: 0807:49.5 Kathmandu, BS211 ready for descent
KTM Control: 0807:49.5 BS211, descend to FL 160
PIC: 0810:17.5 Do you know that I have not slept during the whole night and I cried a lot (Bangla). I have received so much pain ... you have seen me now. I have cried enough my daughter, cried a lot.
KTM Approach: 0813:41.5 BS211, Reduce to minimum speed and descend to 12,500 ft
FO: 0813:45.5 Descend to 12,500 and reduce speed to minimum BS211
PIC: Good job my daughter.
FO: Sir
PIC: 0819:03.5 I have dropped my cigarette, let me find the thing, do you know where I have dropped it ... it is on the left. There is possibility of catching fire.
FO: 0819:22.5 Sir, we are getting into cloud
PIC: Forget it. Okay adjust the pitch control of Weather Radar ... Okay we don't need this now out of cloud (Bangla) ... Why are you holding the power levers? I am the pilot flying, idiot, I should be holding. What is our QNH 1015 okay? Okay put your HDG bug on top.
KTM Approach: 0822:15.5 BS211, confirm holding over Guras?
FO: 0822:15.5 We are continuing approach

PIC: 0822:57.5 How much will it be at 13 DME? 9,800. Is it okay? Pumps on, Flaps 5
FO: Okay. Speed good for flaps... Flaps 5
PIC: 0823:00.5 Flaps 15 ... Do the Before Landing Checklist ... Do it
FO: 0823:17.5 Landing Gear
PIC: Down Three Green
FO: Flaps
PIC: 15 set
FO: Sir, not yet set [LANDING GEAR UNSAFE WARNING] ... Sir, Speed Speed Speed
PIC: No worry, no worry [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING]
KTM Approach: 0823:46.5 BS211, Position 10 Miles, contact Tower 118.1 [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING CONTINUES]
FO: 0824:37.5 Kathmandu Tower, BS211, Finals RW 02 [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING]
KTM Tower: 0824:45.5 BS211, Kathmandu Tower, wind 230 degrees 8 knots, tail wind component 7 knots, runway 02, continue approach
PIC: Okay do Before Landing Checklist now (Bangla)
FO: Sir, have done Before Landing Checklist
PIC: What altitude at 5 DME
FO: At 5 DME 6,640
PIC: 6,640 So let me increase the ROD
FO: Yes Sir, the ROD needs to be increased ... 4 DME, Sir we are 600 ft high
PIC: I do not understand what you are saying, say slowly. (Bangla) ["MIMINUMS, MIMINUMS"] [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING]
PIC: 0825:46.5 Have we seen the runway? (Bangla)
[EGPWS "MINIMUM" "SINK RATE"] ["TOO LOW-GEARS"] [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING CONTINUES].
KTM Tower: 0826:33.5 BS211, wind 220 degrees 7 knots, tail wind component 6 knots, runway 02, clear to land. [EGPWS SOUND] ["TOO LOW-GEARS"] [GEAR UNSAFE WARNING CONTINUES]
FO: 0826:37.5 Clear to land, BS211
FO: 0826:46.5 Sir, Gear not yet down! (Bangla)
[GEAR UNSAFE WARNING] ["TOO LOW – GEAR"] ["TERRAIN"]
PIC: Okay put the gear down. Flaps 15, and Before Landing Checklist
FO: Landing Checklist done Sir
PIC: Done? Okay set the Go Around Altitude 10,500
PIC: 0827:17.5 Have we seen the runway (Bangla)?
FO: No not yet (Bangla)
PIC: Not seen yet? (Bangla) No problem, it will be in front.
KTM Tower: 0827:43.5 BS211, Tower... you were given landing clearance to runway 02
PIC: 0827:45.5 Affirmative Ma'am
KTM Tower: 0827:48.5 You are going towards Runway 20
PIC: 0827:53.5 I think we are going to Runway 02
KTM Tower: 0828:01.5 Ok, BS211, runway 20 clear to land
PIC: 0828:03.5 Clear to land
PIC: 0828:08.5 Can we see the Runway? We have set up everything, all done but we are not seeing the Runway
FO: No
PIC: That means the runway is to our right ["TERRAIN"] So, we have crossed the VOR, is not it, okay? (Bangla) [EGPWS "TERRAIN, TERRAIN, PULL UP, PULL UP"]. Let us turn right then, okay (Bangla)? [EGPWS "PULL UP, PULL UP, PULL UP"]. So, we have gone past (Bangla) we will approach runway 02, 002 [EGPWS "TERRAIN, TERRAIN, TERRAIN, PULL UP, PULL UP, PULL UP"]
FO: Okay (Scared voice) [EGPWS "PULL UP, PULL UP, PULL UP"]
KTM Tower: 0829:07.5 BS211, Kathmandu Tower, request your intention [EGPWS CONTINUOUS "PULL UP"]
PIC: 0829:09.5 I would like to land on 02
KTM Tower: 0829:14.5 BS211, and confirm you're VFR
PIC: 0829:14.5 Affirmative
KTM Tower: 0829:20.5 BS211, join the... (Garbled) ... right downwind runway 20
PIC: 0829:21.5 Copied
PIC: 0829:33.5 We have crossed and that's why we

have not being able to make it (Bangla)
FO: Sir, how have we missed the runway?
PIC: No worry, no worry. We are going to VOR. [CONTINUOUS EGPWS WARNING]
KTM Tower: 0830:12.5 Join left ... right downwind, runway 02 ... BS211, I say again, do not proceed towards runway 20. Clear to hold your present position
PIC: Copied Sir
PIC: So, our VOR is on to the left, is it not? Okay, Before Landing Checklist is done?
FO: Yes everything done
PIC: 0830:37.5 Tower, Ok we are making an orbit to the right
FO: Sir, this is runway
PIC: Have you seen the runway, where is it?
KTM Tower: 0831:00.5 Ok that's good, but do not land. Traffic is on short final runway 02
PIC: 0831:12.5 We know that sir. Copied, let us know Sir once the aircraft lands
PIC: So I have done mistake, it happens isn't it? It can happen since I was talking to you! Where is our VOR, gone left isn't it, so let me make a turn 15 degrees to come back to the final.
FO: Okay (More confident voice)
KTM Tower: BS211 runway ah... clear to land ... runway is vacated. Either runway 02 or 20. Confirm you need vector? ["BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE"]
PIC: 0832:07.5 Sir, we would like to land RW 20 ["BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE"]
KTM Tower: 0832:09.5 Ok, runway 20 clear to land. Wind 270 degrees 6 knots
PIC: 0832:10.5 260 copied clear to land
PIC: 0832:16.5 We have to now find the runway isn't it? We are 4 miles now. Which side should the runway be? (Bangla)
FO: 12 O'clock
PIC: Where is the runway? [EGPWS "TERRAIN, TERRAIN PULL UP, PULL UP, PULL UP"]
Unidentified voice in Nepali: 0832:31.5 *02 gayo jasto cha khoi?* (May have gone to 02, where is it?)
KTM Tower: 0832:38.5 BS211, confirm you have air... runway in sight?
PIC: 0832:40.5 Negative Sir
PIC: Where is the runway? (Bangla)
KTM Tower: 0832:44.5 BS211, turn right and uh... you have runway... confirm you have a runway not in sight yet?
FO: 0832:44.5 Sir runway, runway. Sir 3 O'clock. ["BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE"]
PIC: 0832:47.5 Affirmative, we have runway in sight, request clear to land Sir
KTM Tower: 0832:52.5 BS211 Cleared to land
PIC: 0832:55.5 Okay put the Flight Director Standby ... keep the Heading Bug Zero ... Okay, Landing Checklist Done? "
Unidentified voice in Nepali: 0833:11.5 *Jahaj dekhira Chaina? Dekhira chha Sir. Downwind ma chha. Tei ta, yo ta purai almiya. Pheri orbit garyo Sir.* (Can you see the plane? Yes, he is downwind, it is completely confused. He is making another orbit, Sir.)
PIC: 0833:23.5 Have you given 022 [RADIO ALTITUDE CALL "100, MINIMUMS"]
KTM Tower: 0833:26.5 BS211, that is not the runway... over... that's not the runway. BS211, that is not the runway I say again. Take off clearance cancelled. [EGPWS "SINK RATE, PULL UP"]
PIC: 0833:35.5 We have the runway in sight Sir. Are we cleared to land?
FO: 20 ... Oh my God, Sir ["BANK ANGLE"]
KTM Tower BS 211, I say again turn ... ["BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE, SINK RATE, SINK RATE"] ["50"] ["BANK ANGLE, BANK ANGLE"]
FO: 0834:04.5 Sir! Sir! (Very alarmed)

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Unfair sex

Speech delivered by the Director General of the Department of Women, Children, Labour, Home Affairs and Animal Husbandry on the occasion of the Day of International Women. *(Please check against delivery.)*

“Madam Chair, Respected Futions, Distinguished Desks, Honorable Sofas, Ladies and, last and also the least, you gentlemen at the back talking loudly in your mobiles who are an utter disgrace to manhood.

Now that I have your undivided attention, allow me to begin my lip-service. As far as this Grumblement is concerned, and if it was up to us, we’d declare all 365 days in the year as International Days About Women.

I think I speak for a majority of my all-male colleagues here on the dais when I say that we would not be doing justice to members of the female species if we celebrated today only once a year.

This is why we propose that henceforth every day be devoted to women except April First, which as a token gesture, has already been set aside by the United Nations as the International Day for Men. Going by your tumultuous applause, I hereby declare that motion passed.

There is now a consensus in the scientific community that women hold up only half the sky. In fact, if it wasn’t for us men holding up the other half, the sky as we know it, would fall. We must grudgingly admit that Nepalese women have taken great strides. Admittedly, these strides have not been as great as the

strides we menfolk have taken but, hey, we’re not here to gloat.

For example, us men have amassed a lot of experience in vitally important activities such as mansplaining, and making hilarious sounds by cupping our palms under our armpits. Allow me to demonstrate.

Now, show me one woman who can do that. The fairer sex has a lot of catching up to do to be at par with us of the unfair sex who are governed by the left hemispheres of our brains (unlike women who are governed by the western hemisphere).

Men have had a headstart in the race to makes asses of ourselves. Women, therefore, have a lot of catching up to do, but given perseverance, commitment and determinism they can be as (if not more) idiosyncratic as us. You will just have to try harder.

Ever since cave men chewed mastodon innards with their mouths open, right down to the modern industrial age where men still haven’t learnt to stow toilet seats in an upright position during takeoffs and landings, us boys have been rightly called the stronger sex.

Some men may have their egos dented when they see women overtaking them in this march towards mediocrity, but there is nothing to fear. Both sexes now have equal rights to make oxymorons of themselves.

After all, GONe is an Equal Opportunity Employer.”

