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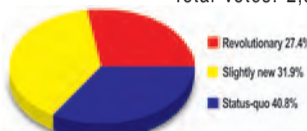
Sept 19th & 20th 2008

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**Times** nepalnews.com  
 Weekly Internet Poll # 418

Q. How would you describe the government's program and policy announced Wednesday?

Total votes: 2,991



Revolutionary 27.4%  
 Slightly new 31.9%  
 Status-quo 40.8%

Weekly Internet Poll # 419. To vote go to: www.nepaltimes.com  
 Q. How would you characterise the prime minister's India's visit?

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DAMBAR KRISHNA SHRESTHA

## 'B' for Budget

KIRAN NEPAL

After he became finance minister last month, Baburam Bhattarai asked the visiting Afghan economist Ashraf Ghani: "How can I keep my party happy while at the same time maintain economic stability?" Ghani gave Bhattarai a written list of things to watch out for. As he prepares to present the budget to parliament on Friday afternoon, Bhattarai will follow the advice of donors to balance the need to push some populist measures with keeping the economy on track. Bhattarai has said he wants the economy "to leap like a frog

and not slither like a snake," and he is satisfied with letting a few large highway and hydropower projects to drive growth for now. "There isn't enough time to completely overhaul economic policy, the budget will just put some dressing on the old policies," says Bhattarai's budgetary aide, Dipendra Chhetri. Costly programs like 'revolutionary' land reform, increased urban property tax, pension to women and farmers are to be dropped. Even the allowance for the elderly, widows and handicapped is expected to be limited to the Karnali, and debt forgiveness for small farmers will

only apply to the landless.

An ambitious plan to ensure 100 per cent literacy by 2011, is unlikely to happen, and not because of lack of money. "It is just not possible when 11 per cent of the children don't go to school and see no need to," says TU educationist Tirtha Khaniya, "children aren't going to go to school just because you build schools."

However, the Rs 225 billion budget is expected to announce major investment in expanding the network of rural roads in the hope of creating 100,000 jobs in the coming year and providing farmers with access to markets.

**LOOKING UP TO GOVERNMENT:** Children walking to the Mane Danda Primary School in northern Dolakha last week. Friday's budget is expected to set aside money to ensure 100 per cent literacy in two years.

Bhattarai has put his sights on revenue generation by controlling smuggling. A recent study showed that only 59 per cent of goods imported from India come through official channels. Just reducing smuggling by 10 per cent is expected to yield up to Rs 20 billion. This won't be easy: the Kodari customs was closed last week by traders after the government tried to stop smuggling.

The biggest challenge will be to ensure industrial security so that foreign investors will come to Nepal. The record so far is not good. ●



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# Goodwill hunting

"He is more like Manmohan Singh than Mao"

## MOLARS AND TUSKS

In Nepali there is a saying about elephants having tusks outside for show and the real chewing teeth hidden inside the mouth ('*Dekhaune dant ra chapaune dant*'). Dahal in Delhi showed off his tusks, his pragmatic side. He waxed eloquent about democracy, the free market and his vision for rapid investment-led economic growth in Nepal.

Not everyone was convinced. Least of all the CEOs of Unilever and Dabur whose manufacturing bases in Nepal are the targets of chronic stoppages by militant unions affiliated to the Maoists. In private meetings with leaders, our prime minister was quizzed on his commitment to consensus-building with other parties. Dahal was in his best behaviour, being Mr Pragmatism himself. But the message he got was: we like what you say but we will be watching what you do.

And so will we here in Nepal. On Sunday, before flying off to Delhi the prime minister gave us a glimpse of his molars. He went into a long-winded explanation in front of the Constituent Assembly of socialism and his party's ultimate goal of communism and how he had no faith in "traditional parliamentary democracy". In fact, looking back at the records, Dahal has never really used the words "parliament" or "democracy" in the same sentence in the past two years. Instead, he has always alluded to "multi-party competition".

And speaking to Indian leftist groups in Delhi on Tuesday, Dahal said his party's real goal was "janatantra" and not "ganatantra". There you have it: the goal has been a "people's republic" all along.

It is no coincidence that on the very day that Dahal was replying to comments from assembly members on his government's policies and programs, his hardline party boss Mohan Baidya had also spilled out his totalitarian value system. Speaking to reporters on Sunday, the comrade went as far as to declare that parliamentary democracy had been "a failure almost everywhere in the world".

It is now clear whose line the prime minister is parroting: his mentor Baidya whose reading of history we have always known is lopsided. Parliamentary democracy is flourishing in most countries, it is in fact Baidya's own Maoist ideology that has been a disastrous failure in every country where it has been attempted. Even the country of Mao's birth abandoned it in 1975.

If Dahal was saying what he did in the Assembly to appease hardliners within his party we have nothing to add. But we sure hope for this country's sake, and for the sake of his own party, that he rely less on his molars and more on his tusks.

NEW DELHI—Nepal's prime minister was a celebrity in Delhi this week. From arm chair revolutionaries to national politicians to the policy elite, everyone wanted to have a glimpse of a rebel leader who is now the head of government.



**PLAIN SPEAKING**  
**Prashant Jha**

In a smart suit and tie, Pushpa Kamal Dahal was at his charming best. The common theme in all his speeches was: "Trust me." And judging from the reaction, the message hit home.

The motive of Dahal's trip was not as much to energise bilateral ties but to tell New Delhi he is a man they can do business with. So he donned his free market hat, taking a business-dominated 50-member delegation and assuring representatives of Indian joint ventures in Nepal of security. He told Indian business what it needed to hear: private sector is at the heart of growth, Nepal will set up special economic zones, government is only a facilitator, we want

investment.

"I am really impressed," said one Indian corporate executive, "I had heard him the last time he was in Delhi two years ago and he has come a long way. His English has improved and he sounds more like Manmohan Singh than Mao."

Prachanda then addressed a gathering of strategic thinkers at the India International Centre and tried to come across as a statesman who had brought peace to Nepal, and he made it a point to thank the Indian establishment.

"Everyone I have met has told me India wants a stable and prosperous Nepal. I respect and appreciate that understanding. This peace process is our collective responsibility. If we fail, it will also impact India," he said.

Ties with India, he added, were far more intimate and could not be compared with China. He reached out to the entire political establishment but went beyond to meet critics like the BJP's L K Advani, telling him he looked up to him as a "guardian" and inviting him to visit Janakpur

and Pashupati. He spent an hour with BJP president Rajnath Singh to assure him that concerns about Maoist links with Indian Naxalites were misplaced.

Dahal knew what to say to which audience. Talking to a gathering of the India-Nepal People's Solidarity Forum, a group of radical left activists

headed by Maoist sympathiser Anand Swaroop Verma, he said: "I remember the time when you helped me during the war. Our revolution is not yet over. A communist republic is not possible immediately but we do not accept formal parliamentary democracy. The main battle now is with remnants of feudalism, the comprador bourgeoisie and imperialist foreign forces who have been meddling in Nepal."

Nepal's prime minister now needs to reconcile the interests of the Tata company which wants to invest in Nepal and the Indian radical left which wants him to fight corporates. He gave a clue about how he plans to do this, when he told reporters he wanted to carve out "a new form of democracy" where the majority of people will feel empowered.

At the banquet hosted by Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, all top Indian politicians from Sonia Gandhi to Sharad Pawar, Laloo Yadav to Mulayam Yadav were present. "I have been to 10-15 such banquets but this must rank as one of the most impressive and power-packed gatherings," said Siddharth Varadarajan, diplomatic editor of *The Hindu*.

The next day, political adversaries like the Congress's Digvijay Singh, CPM's Prakash Karat, Samajwadi Party's Amar Singh, and BJP's Murli Manohar Joshi were sitting on the same sofa to honour Dahal. Prime Minister told them he had spent eight out of his 10 years during the war in India, and wanted to strengthen the special relationship.

If his aim was to reach out to the Indian establishment and business, the prime minister succeeded. Now we have to see how he will leverage this goodwill for Nepal's growth. ●



PRASHANT JHA

# National rage

A middle-aged woman gets on the Ratna Park-Sat Dobato microbus at the busy Lagankhel stop. As the van starts moving the conductor nudges and prods the passengers to pay their fare.

A pick-up jams on the brakes to avoid hitting a motorbike. Two guys on the bike get off, stop the lorry and start arguing with the driver. One of them reaches through the window and slaps the driver twice across the face.

now one hears of violence at meetings and in the work place. Internet discussion sites are full of messages inciting violence. Last week, I overheard students in uniform using the terms "fix" and "beat" a number of times without any hesitation.

Very few have faith in our justice system. The police are not trusted to do their job properly. If a driver is involved in a hit-and-run, local communities block the highway before the police can take action, arguing that since they are not going to get justice, they may as well use other means to extract compensation. To run over a person in the highway is a terrible thing, but sometimes accidents happen. Sadly, patients do die at hospitals, yet Dhulikhel hospital—one of the nation's finest—was vandalised by relatives last month after a woman died at childbirth.

There is also something to be said about the issue of accountability. Impunity has been the biggest challenge in dealing with crime in Nepal. No one has been held answerable for the thousands of lives lost in the last 15 years. Organised gangs are getting away with crime, murder and mayhem because they have seen that if you kill enough people you can actually get to power. The war has ended, but the culture of violence that it nurtured will linger for a long time to come.

It is easy to take the law into your own hands when you know you can get away with it. ●



**INTERESTING TIMES**  
**Mallika Aryal**

The woman shows him her student card for a discount and pays seven rupees. The conductor refuses to give her ID card back because he claims she hasn't paid him enough. He threatens to grab her and throw her out if she doesn't pay up right away. The distance she has to go to is barely a kilometre. He rolls his sleeves up and gets ready to punch the lady. The passengers try to pacify him. He threatens: "I will beat up those who don't pay up."

It's rush hour at 5.30 PM in Maitighar.

## Since when did we become a nation of angry people?

Nepalis have never had much tolerance for injustice, but have we always been this angry? Why have we started thinking that the only way to resolve a sticky situation is through violence? When did we decide it was ok to take the law into our own hands if things didn't go our way?

In the past, it was expected that if you went to a night club or a rock concert, there would be plenty of people there who would lose control and start fighting. But

We have come out of a very difficult time in our history. War robbed many people of their youth and forced millions of Nepalis to live in constant fear. Many had to flee to protect their families. It was normal that when the war ended, people expected things to improve. However, the end of war also brought with it a sense of helplessness in society, a loss of direction that is perhaps the reason why people are now so ready to lash out at each other.

**LETTERS**

**WELCOME TO INDIA**

Mr Ambassador, what is so confusing about the concept of equidistance in the context of Nepal's relations with India and China ('Welcome to India, Mr Prime Minister, # 417)? Are you suggesting that Nepal cannot practice its own form of non-alignment? The current regional context you refer to can be interpreted in a variety of ways and your own interpretation as a former ambassador is hardly convincing. Should the prospects for cooperation between India and Nepal be under question in a situation where Nepal seeks truly equidistant relations with its two neighbours? That seems to be what you are suggesting—a truly crude vision of external relations, really. There may be some truth to the saying that India represents an open system with a closed mind, whereas China represents a closed system with an open mind.

*Y Lama, Moscow*

• Our own decrepitude and political short-sightedness is responsible for the way we are dealt with by India. But it's a fact that India has taken its own greater interest above Nepalis, without considering the 'non-adjective relations' as Mr. Mukharji says, manifest in its blandest forms in Bhutani refugee and trade issues. India hasn't done a favour to this country for the sake of so called 'special relations.' So I do not think it's inappropriate to ask for a neutral neighbourhood relationship. Why is there a need for India to try to persuade a 'special relationship' status with Nepal? And who is this compared with? Obviously China looms behind in the subconscious. China is a great potential tap for Nepali economy and there's no greater need to 'equiproximate' the relationship, especially if India wants a lopsided love from Nepal, at the cost of her own interest.

*Name withheld, email*

**UPENDRA**

Upendra Yadav is a true maverick, and he will be remembered as an important person in Nepal's history especially in the Tarai. (Underestimating Upendra', #417). He has original ideas, he is articulate, and he is a lawyer who truly believes in democracy and justice. These are the new breed leaders that Nepal will see as democracy matures.

*Anand Jha, Texas*

• Immoral and undemocratic means inevitably lead to immoral and undemocratic ends. The past history of this so-called great Madhesi leader is suspicious, controversial and is still a matter of debate in days to come. The people in the Tarai are exploited, suppressed and marginalised not because of Pahadi invaders, but from the traitorous landlords and deceitful

politicians from their own Madhesi community.  
*Sapan Singh, Sunsari*

**ABUSING YOUNG HEARTS**

Thanks to Emma Sciantarelli ('Abusing young hearts and minds', #417) for depicting the harsh realities of street children. It serves as an eye-opener to many of us having such indifference towards them. There are people who intentionally hurt children. However, we are also culpable because by unknowingly, unintentionally avoiding them, we treat them badly

*Sanjeev Karmacharya, Khusibun*

• Emma Sciantarelli's article contains some of the harshest and most damning criticisms to date on the tragedy of Nepal's street children. However she did not elaborate more on the attitude of the Nepali population. These children become non-people. I have seen people step over sleeping children on the street and walk by severely ill kids who desperately need help. The first step should be towards changing this attitude. It is pervasive and seeps into the police force, who have been known to beat these children. Until the people say enough and move to correct these terrible wrongs, I can see nothing being done. Nepal's abused are as needy as those in Africa and around the world. I had a very disappointed Nepali who wants to help, say to me for our lack of funding: "Nepalis are on the wrong continent and our skin is too light to get help!" Although shocked to hear that in the beginning, it makes sense to me now. Nepal is losing a generation of children and if they survive the horrors of the street, down the line in 10 to 15 years or less, Nepal faces a disgruntled and angry group of young men: illiterate, ill with HIV, addicted to drugs and psychologically destroyed. There's urgent need for reform. Money spent now will be money saved in the future.

*Lawrence Brown, Protego-Nepal*

**UPSIDE DOWN**

Min Ratna Bajracharya was at the right place at the right time to take a picture of the prime minister in front of an upside down national flag (#417). An omen?

*El Brahmin, email*

**LETTERS**

*Nepali Times* welcomes feedback. Letters should be brief and may be edited for space. While pseudonyms can be accepted, writers who provide their real names and contact details will be given preference. Email letters should be in text format without attachments with 'letter to the editor' in the subject line.

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# Chain reaction

Min Bahadur Gurung bucks the trend by expanding his supermarket business



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA



DEWAN RAI

**B**hatbhateni Supermarket opened a new branch in Maharajgunj this week. This is not just any old store, but Nepal's first international-standard supermarket equipped with escalators and lift, climate control, bar-code readers and security gates. It offers a goods exchange service and also refunds money for defective items.

At a time when many Nepalis are hesitant to engage in new business ventures, owner Min Bahadur Gurung has found Rs 750 million to invest in the new store, construction of which began two and a half years ago when no one was investing in anything. He plans to open more shops in Koteswor and Itahari later this year, and after that has his eye on Pokhara, Bhairawa, Butwal and Dharan.

"This is the time for the private sector to prove their competence and assure the government of their individual initiative and entrepreneurship," Gurung told *Nepali Times* after his shop was selected Company of the Month for September.

In 1986, with an investment of Rs

35,000, he opened a one-room, road-side shop selling cheese, curd and bottled drinks in Bhatbhateni—a far cry from today's multi-storey supermarket that sells everything from groceries to designer clothes and expensive jewellery, with assets worth more than five billion rupees. In those days he worked as a clerk in the New Road branch of the state-owned Nepal Bank while his wife ran the shop. He is the only male member of his family who didn't join the army.

Gurung says his motivation for the new shop came from Nepal's forthcoming 2010 accession to the WTO, which will allow foreign supermarket chains to open up here. "When there are options, customers always opt for better services and facilities, regardless of who owns them," he says.

His company has more than 600 employees, drawn mostly from Khotang, his home district in eastern Nepal. In the future he wants to create job opportunities for village farmers of other districts. "I also have a 10-year plan, which is basically to create a market for agricultural produce," he says.

His target is to open 100 stores across the country in that time, with at least one per district, and create 50,000 new jobs.

These shops would lend money to villagers to set up agricultural cooperatives and provide seeds and fertiliser as required. They would then buy back the crops, with any surplus going for export. Eventually, Gurung wants to venture abroad and open stores in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and sees an opportunity to market Nepali products abroad.

Gurung's business has already established an enviable reputation for its accessibility, range of products, quality, value for money and service. He claims to sell both Nepali and foreign goods at the lowest possible price. His daughter, a graduate from an American university, now helps run the business. His dream, apart from wanting to see his own business prosper, is for Nepal to develop into a modern, wealthy nation within his lifetime.

"If we are honest and work hard to achieve our goal, we can achieve it," he says. "But we need a collective effort to develop the country. I don't want to die a citizen of a poor country." ●

See also: *Strictly Business* by Ashutosh Tiwari, 'Lessons of Bhatbhateni', #178

## Four steps to success

Four points that have made Min Bahadur Gurung a successful businessman:

- 1. Start small. Mistakes committed when a business is small are not big:** They can easily be corrected and lessons are learned without wasting much money and time.
- 2. Trust:** Making a quick buck at the hapless customers' expense may be tempting, but the market rewards those who project consistently trustworthy actions. People, after all, buy and sell with those they trust.
- 3. Curiosity:** Be alert, you know a business is going downhill when owners start exhibiting a know-all attitude and are closed to different viewpoints.
- 4. Focus:** Gurung is clear about his focus: to sell Nepali and foreign goods at the lowest possible prices. He avoids distractions. All he knows is how to sell and has succeeded by doing only what he does best.



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## Open for business

Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal concluded a reasonably successful visit to India assuring India's business elite that Nepal is open for business. India showed its willingness to engage with Nepal's new rulers, but the government and business will be cautious and would first like to test Dahal on his commitments.

There was an in principle agreement to review the 1950 treaty. India promised to ease fuel supply for three months. Delhi will help facilitate easier movement between Jogbani and Raxaul in Bihar which will come as relief for all those stranded due to the damaged highway in Sunsari.

The water resource secretaries will discuss flood control, irrigation and hydropower. The Indian side is willing to give Nepal a role in maintenance and repair of the Kosi embankment in principle, but it will require work at the technical level. The Prime Minister made big promises about "mega projects". The commerce secretaries will look at how to overhaul the trade relationship.

The Indians humoured him but let it be known that they expect him to act on issues spanning from industrial security of Indian companies to hydropower.

Prashant Jha in New Delhi

## Dasain ayo

LG has introduced a new scheme for the Dasain season, 'LG Battis ko Babal,' which gives customers the chance to win a gold coin, a silver biscuit or an LG watch, along with a coupon which entitles them to win a 32-inch LG LCD tv through a live draw every fortnight on Image Channel's 'Music Of Your Choice' program.



## Jumbo savings

Himalayan Bank is offering new savings accounts. The Bishes savings account has a reduced minimum balance of Rs 2,000. There is also a three-year fixed tenure savings account and the Jumbo fixed deposit account with interest rates of up to seven per cent per annum. The services are available at all Himalayan Bank branches.

## Hot wheels

The third Himalayan Times Wheels Auto Show will take place on 19-20 September from 10AM-6PM at Bhrikuti Mandap. On the opening day there will be a treasure hunt with a Rs 10,000 first prize. Entry costs Rs 200.

## Winning scratch

Customers buying Dearhill Shoes during the Dasain season will receive scratch cards offering the chance to win prizes of Rs 50 to Rs 50,000 and discounts of five to 50 per cent, as well as the chance to win various electronic goods including an LCD tv. Customers can also send in photos of themselves wearing Dearhill shoes to be entered in a competition to win a motorcycle and become a brand ambassador for the shoes.



## NEW PRODUCTS

**WHISKY:** Himalayan Distillery has introduced 180ml bottles of 12-year-old Spey Livet Premium Rare Whisky, imported from Scotland. The brand is already available in 750ml bottles.



**WINE:** Akhil trading is now distributing wine from Angove's, one of Australia's longest established wineries. This is the first time that Angove's Red Belly Black label has been available in Nepal. The wine is available in both screw-top and cork-sealed versions in more than 250 outlets.



# Policing sleaze

There must be a balance between protecting citizens's rights and supporting business entrepreneurs.

When the Home Minister decided to shut down Kathmandu's seedy dance bars and ordered regular bars to close at



**ECONOMIC SENSE**  
Artha Beed

11PM, Thamel residents quickly put out an advertisement thanking him for bringing an end to the late-night sleaze in their long-suffering neighbourhood.

But next day, hundreds of nightclub workers streamed on to the city's streets to protest against the decision. After all, one man's meat is another man's poison. The right to do business is a universal right and in Nepal that has to be protected. In a country that sees tourism as a critical source of revenue, the city should not be closing down the nightlife just because it cannot regulate it properly.

In tourism-oriented cities the world over, there is always friction between residents and the owners of such businesses, who argue that their city cannot sell itself as a tourist destination if there is nothing for tourists to do at night.

However, this right to do business should not mean encroaching upon citizens' rights

to a peaceful life. The dance bars had become such a nuisance that neighbours had no option but to start shuttering their windows and trying to soundproof their homes.

Most of these bars received protection either from individuals in the social elite or from political parties to ply their sleazy trade and other forms of illegal business without paying taxes or being accountable to the state. It was becoming difficult for parents to explain to their

If bars have to function with loud music, then make them invest in soundproofing so the neighbours can get a peaceful night's sleep. Establishments that flout the law by selling illegal sex and other services should be taken to task, but at the same time the government needs to think of ways to regulate the world's oldest profession. Can zoning work?

In the long term, the government also needs to examine ways of separating residential and commercial areas. Nepal's

## The world's newest republic cracks down on the world's oldest profession

children what went on inside.

While Nepal slowly earned a reputation for cheap sex tourism, when *The Economist* decided to write about it we argued that the dance bars were in fact 'cultural centres', which is how they had been registered.

The easy option now is for the government to shut everything down. It's like a country which shuts down the entire Internet because there are some websites it doesn't want people to access. But that is the worst thing to do.

The government needs to understand that business people have rights too. It is easier said than done, but the only sensible option here is for the government to become an efficient regulator.

haphazard urban development has already created a lot of problems vis-à-vis infrastructure bottlenecks and environmental degradation, but this battle of the bars has brought to light other issues.

We have bars outside schools and colleges targeting the young, we have unhygienic meat sellers outside temple entrances, we have noisy religious functions with loud music in open areas, we have garbage piled everywhere.

The challenge for the government is to enable Kathmandu to operate as a city with a nightlife that appeals to tourists while also ensuring that its citizens can move around safely at night and sleep peacefully. ●

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**Opening hours**  
Mon–Thu: 0830-1700; Fri: 0830-1630  
Sat : 1000-1600 (Sun closed).

**Last date for applications is 10 November 2008 at 1630**  
shortlisted for interview will be notified by the second week of Jan, 09.

## “Flood-control, irrigation, hydropower”

India's union water resources minister Saif Uddin Soz speaks to Navin Singh Khadka *BBC Nepali Service*, 12 September

बिहार  
नेपाली

### Does the Indian government have any long term plans to deal with the Kosi problem?

We are in touch with the government of Nepal on the Kosi. I will have a one to one meeting with Nepal's water resources minister during Prime Minister Prachanda's visit. We are pretty conscious of our duty and we have to correct the situation. It is not that the neglect is inbuilt into the system. Things were very bad in Nepal, we have a treaty with the country and there is no violation of the treaty. We have been waiting for the proper opportunity to settle and sort things out.

### But the central government of India and the Bihar state government are engaged in a blame game.

It's not a blame game. The MP of that area, Mrs Ranjan got conscious of this thing. I told her these things are not supposed to be discussed over the phone. I asked her to give me something in writing, and it was at that moment I wrote a letter to

the Bihar chief minister Nitesh Kumar. So instead of the chief minister alerting me, I was doing the work for him. Sometimes it happens because state governments hands are full and floods come all of a sudden. Water is a state subject, it's not that I can go and interfere and take decisions in Bihar.

### Does the Indian central government think that Nepal did not cooperate to prevent this disaster?

No, I would not say that. See, Nepal's prime minister is coming. They are very serious about holding talks on Kosi with us. We have a comfortable relation, there is no worry and we shall sort out things. It's a situation that can be dealt with after the monsoon recedes. In the short term we have done whatever we can. The Ganga Commission's chairman and his team is closely in touch with the Bihar government.

### There have been reports that Bihar authorities have recommended the central government to push for high dams in Nepal as long-term measure.

High dams, embankments—there will be a review of the whole thing except the treaty. The treaty is in shape. But on the things that need

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to be done on the Nepal side and our side, we shall give our minute attention. It has to be tackled in a big way now.

**You think the Kosi treaty need not be reviewed, but Nepali leaders are saying otherwise.**

No, no, Nepal is an independent country. I don't think that treaty needs a fundamental review. But we will have good exchange of ideas. We are not worried about the issues they would raise. We shall settle them in a cordial manner.

**There is a deep running suspicion among many Nepalis when it comes to India's interest in Nepal's water resources. Do you have any plan to allay that?**

There were certain situations with the earlier government, largely they were one sided. We had a treaty and we wanted to have a good relation with Nepal all the time but it had a different kind of rule. Now there is a democratic process, it's not only the prime minister or water resources minister, there are so many actors in the field. Some of them have extreme opinions others are moderate. But broadly everybody is for good discussion on this issue.

**But what are your priority projects now?**

Those are matters of detail. There is tremendous advantage to both countries through hydropower generation, irrigation and flood management. We are ready to discuss those aspects, there is no worry. We have already taken decisions and we have to implement them honestly.

**What decisions have already been taken?**

Kosi is in focus this time in particular. Let's see what Nepal wants to discuss with us, I am prepared for that. Our chart of activities is well drawn, there is no difficulty.

**What is India's main interest in Nepal's water resources?**

Our main interest is flood control and irrigation. Those are our first and second priority. If we get hydroelectricity as a by product, it will be a bonus for us.

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In Nepal SNV operates through four portfolios: in West, Central Terai, Kathmandu and East. The East Portfolio Office is based in Dharan and is geographically focused on Eastern Development Region. Although there is scope of operating in other sectors, the main focus of the SNV Eastern Portfolio is on Small Holder Cash Crops.

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# ZZZZZZAS



## Fire and Ice, Thamel

Fire and Ice offers genuine Napolitana pizza. Established in 1995, this was one of the first pizzerias in Kathmandu. So good is its reputation that the name is now synonymous with pizza, and the tables are usually packed. There are dozens of pizzas to choose from, but we recommend the paesane—a combination of mozzarella, spinach, courgette and bacon.

**Price range: Rs 260-370**

## Himalayan Java, Thamel

While it may be better known as Kathmandu's most happening coffee place, Java's 12-inch Italian-style thin-crust pizzas are quite something too. Among the varieties on offer is the local topping of chicken sadheko pizza.

**Price range: Rs 225-455**

## Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza

One of Kathmandu's most famous Italian restaurants, Alfresco wouldn't be complete without its rich pizzas. With more than 20 years in the business, Alfresco long ago mastered the art. You don't need to stick to the menu: customers can choose their own toppings and watch the pizza being made in front of them. The chicken tikka topping has a real kick.

**Price: Rs 395**

## New York Pizza, Kupondole

One of the few to offer a home delivery service, New York Pizza specialises in huge thick crust American pizzas which would appeal to those with hearty appetites. There's even a monster 22-inch version. Customers can choose from a variety of 12 toppings and the bronzed and bubbling results show up in traditional nanglos.

**Price range: Rs 180-1,500. Home delivery: Rs 50 extra.**

## Moksh, Pulchok

The music never stops at Moksh and the fire in the pizza oven rarely goes out either. The Italian-style pizzas are the favoured item on the menu, and Moksh regulars rate the salami pizza best of all. If you're too lazy to go to them, they will come to you—for a charge.

**Price range: Rs 110-450 plus delivery charge.**

# Cash from



ROMA ARYAL

**A**rati Subedi is one of relatively few householders in Kathmandu who separate their kitchen waste into what can and can't be recycled. Her organic waste goes into government-subsidised bins to fertilise her small but lush garden, while empty glass and plastic containers are reused, returned to shopkeepers or sold to garbage collectors for recycling.

In her small way, Subedi is

helping to reduce the amount of garbage which gets dumped each day at the city's rubbish tip at Sisdole. If only there were more Arati Subedis in Kathmandu, the capital wouldn't have a trash problem.

A 2005 study found that 71 per cent of waste produced in Kathmandu Valley was organic and compostable. Paper made up 8.5 per cent, and this could be recycled.

Rabin Man Shrestha, chief at the KMC's Solid Waste Management Unit says garbage

disposal workers can't afford to sort the rubbish themselves because of lack of space and the huge amount of time required. "But if the garbage is separated at source, the volume of garbage is reduced and more of it can be recycled or composted," he said.

Rakesh Khadka is a recycling wholesaler who, with many others, works near the municipality's waste disposal site in Teku. Independent garbage collectors sell him rubbish which he separates out and sells to recyclers of plastic, paper and



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

## Toilet trained

**B**indeshwar Pathak is immaculately dressed in a Nehru coat, sitting at the table of the executive suite at a Kathmandu hotel. His assistant gives him a glass flask from which he scoops out a gray-brown dust.

"This is dried human excreta," he says, watching closely if the reporter flinches. It's hard not to. Then he holds out a bottle of clear water, screws open the top and offers it to a visitor to sniff. "This water is from the digester and is full of nutrients, it is an excellent fertiliser," he says.

Pathak is India's "Mr Toilet"—the man who has gone boldly forth where no man wants to tread. Single-handedly over 30 years, he has installed 1.4 million toilets in homes that didn't have any, 6,500 pay-to-use public loos in cities across India and provided employment for female scavengers.

For his single-minded obsession with public hygiene through his organisation called Sulabh, Pathak has been awarded Padma Bhusan in India and has been put on the Global 500 Roll of Honour by the United Nations Environment Program.

"It used to be very difficult in the beginning to get people to talk about toilets," Pathak told *Nepali Times* on a visit to Kathmandu last week, "but slowly people realised what a disgrace it was that so many people were forced to defecate in the open, the hardships this caused women and the impact this was having on public health."

Indeed, Mahatma Gandhi was so conscious of this when he came to India from South Africa that he once said he wanted to "clean India first, independence can come later". At that time, 75 percent of Indians did not have access to proper toilets. Pathak, as it turned out, became the most effective Gandhian in turning hygiene into a national campaign after launching Sulabh toilets in Bihar in 1970.

Since then, Sulabh has worked in liberating 'low' caste women scavengers who make a living collecting nightsoil. It arranged alternative employment for them and making their work less hazardous. Today Sulabh's design for twin-pit composting toilet has been replicated across the world, and Pathak is exploring the possibility of setting up a string of public toilets in Kathmandu using his sustainable pay-per-use model.

Sulabh's latest toilet models generate methane for street lights and kitchen stoves, the spent slurry is dried for use as fertiliser. A modern flush toilet uses only two litres of water instead of the usual five litres. Sulabh also runs a Toilet Museum in New Delhi where among the exhibits is the toilet used by Louis XIV and the first water closet invented in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Thomas Crapper.

"In a country like Nepal, educating people and improving sanitation is the best thing you can do for public health, especially to prevent unnecessary childhood deaths" says Pathak, "talking about good hygiene and sanitation is nothing to be ashamed about." ●

Kumar Acharya

## Music for a cause

**T**he vibrant monsoon song 'Ab ke sawan aise barse' is probably the first thing that comes to mind when the name Shubha Mudgal is mentioned. Her keenest fans would also remember 'Ali more angana' and her devotional songs. With simply lined kajal eyes, the neatly tied bun and an off-white sari, her humble appearance is in contrast to the rich versatility of her voice. While her music is firmly rooted in the classical style, Mudgal has lent her voice to many genres, ranging from folk to pop and jazz.

Admirers of this vocal virtuoso from south of the border have a reason to rejoice. She will be performing at the Hotel Yak and Yeti tonight, and for a noble cause—a fundraising concert organised by the Association of St Mary's Alumnae (ASMAN) and Surya Nepal.

Her distinct voice has won the hearts of many music lovers and her collaborations with international musicians and singers have often produced wonderful results.

Asked if her Nepali listeners would hear her sing some local Nepali tunes, she gives a chuckle: "I would love to. Maybe if I can learn some in the little time that I have."

The proceeds from the event will go to the Mary Ward School in Lubhu which provides schooling for students, especially girls, from poor and disadvantaged families. ASMAN supports more than 400 students at the school through its scholarship program. ●

Paavan Mathema

A magical evening with Indian musical Diva Shubha Mudgal  
Friday, 19 September, at 6.45 PM  
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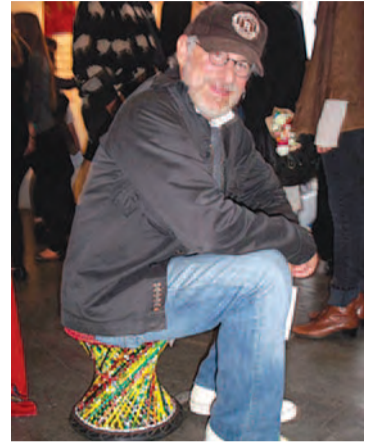
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# trash

City residents are slow to see the benefit of sorting their garbage



**RECYCLED SEAT:** Hollywood director Steven Spielberg sits on a stool made by women from Dhading

ROMA ARYAL

metal for a small profit. Dry paper sells for Rs 6 per kg, and Khadka sells 20 tons of trash a month from which he makes Rs 15,000 a month.

An organisation called Himalayan Health Care has been going around quietly for the past 16 years, collecting plastic from roadsides and cinema halls. The junk is woven into bins, stools and coasters among a list of over a hundred other products, all of which are exported abroad. Their partner, the Spiral Foundation, has opened a showroom for them

in LA and provided publicity through Hollywood big-shots like Steven Spielberg and George Clooney.

Sharad Parajuli, the founder of Himalayan Health Care says, "The returns are reinvested in the three VDC's in Dhading from which one thousand women are employed." The profit has paid for the establishment of a hospital in Illam, health posts, skills training, and major surgeries for the locals.

Across the river in Lalitpur, the Women's Environment

Preservation Committee (WEPCO) has been helping to improve waste management for more than a decade, by promoting the '3R' principle (Reduce, Recycle, Reuse), organising door-to-door rubbish collections, building community compost pits, promoting vermiculture and training other women ('Garbage in, compost out' #6). Largely thanks to the committee, more households in Kupundole now make their own compost and some have started to sort their rubbish before disposing of it.

In the middle of Thamel is a small firm called Jamarko which supplies its handmade, recycled paper products—such as greetings cards and lampshades—to offices and restaurants, among other clients. The labour-intensive process means profits are small, but the owners are optimistic about future export opportunities.

As the city's population grows, producing ever more waste, the work of individuals like Rakesh Khadka and of organisations like WEPCO and Jamarko will become increasingly

important. The Sisdole landfill site is expected to be full within the next six months, and the city authorities will be looking for a new dump.

But Bishnu Thakali, president of WEPCO, says there's an easier, more profitable alternative: "If it were really to be utilised, there's a 50 per cent profit in garbage." Instead of just chucking it all into a hole in the ground, why not use it in innovative ways that not only reduce the burden on the environment but also generate profit? ●



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# Still fighting

The Gurkhas' legal battle for equal treatment



SHUBHA GIRI

TOM OWEN-SMITH in LONDON

The street outside London's High Court of Justice rang with the sound of bagpipes this week as hundreds of retired Gurkhas and their families gathered to petition for the right to live in the UK.

Their protest came at the start of a two-day court hearing in which five ex-Gurkhas and a widow are challenging the British government's refusal to grant them settlement rights in the country. It follows a string of demonstrations in recent months—the latest part of a campaign stretching back to 2000 when the Gurkhas began agitating for equal rights to British soldiers.

On Monday a deputation of ex-Gurkhas delivered a petition with more than 25,000 signatures to Prime Minister Gordon Brown. In March, 50 veterans had handed back their medals in protest at the government's treatment of retired Gurkha servicemen.

Many veterans arrived outside the court on Tuesday dressed in full regalia, their numbers boosted by sons, daughters, aged grandparents, and many supporters and well-wishers, including British army officers, members of parliament, and

**FOR FLAG AND COUNTRY: Second World War veterans Lachhiman Gurung & Tal Bahadur Pun, who won the Victoria Cross during Burma campaign were among those who protested in front of London's High Court of Justice this week.**

actress Joanna Lumley.

In 2004, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair announced that Gurkhas would be entitled to apply for British citizenship and to settle in the UK after four years' service (see 'Ae Gorkhaliharu', #391), in line with soldiers in the British Army recruited from other foreign and Commonwealth countries.

However, the decision only applied to soldiers who had retired since 1997, when the Brigade of Gurkhas moved its headquarters from Hong Kong to the UK, following the former colony's hand-over to China. Those who had retired before 1997 were told they would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Most who have applied, like the six bringing this week's case to court, have been refused. Among the protesters were Second World War veterans Lachhiman Gurung, 91, and Tul Bahadur Pun, 86, who both won the Victoria Cross during the

Burma Campaign.

Pun was allowed to move to the UK last year after a long legal battle. His application had initially been refused by the Home Office, which told him: "You have failed to demonstrate that you have strong ties with the UK." But following an appeal, Immigration Minister Liam Byrne reversed the decision, citing Pun's "heroic record" and the "extraordinary nature" of his case.

True, not every Gurkha has been awarded the highest decoration for bravery which the British armed forces can bestow, but the refusal of visa applications on the grounds that they lack "strong ties" to the UK is insulting to many ex-Gurkhas.

"We are British soldiers," said Santosh Thalang, chairman of the Gurkha Army Ex-Servicemen's Organisation (GAESO). "We have been serving Britain for 200 years, but we still do not have the same rights as other foreign soldiers in the British Army."

The sentiment was echoed by banners carrying slogans such as: 'Wanted in Battle But Not in Britain' and '45,000 Gurkhas Died to Keep Britain Free'.

In the courtroom, the Gurkhas' lawyer, Edward Fitzgerald, said: "However distant their country of origin, whatever the location of their headquarters at a particular moment in history, however remote the battlefields on which they fought and risked their lives and shed their blood, all the Gurkha soldiers, past and present, were fighting for this country. This gives them

all equally strong ties to this country, to its life and history."

Tony Gould, a historian and former officer in the 7th Gurkha Rifles, also asserted that the 1997 move was, above all, administrative, and many Gurkhas had been living and training in Britain for a long time before that.

Apart from settlement rights, the Gurkhas have also been campaigning for equal pensions, as those who retired before 1997 receive about one-fifth of the amount paid to their British counterparts.

GAESO's legal adviser, Gopal Chintan, explained that many of the Gurkhas' conditions of service were established by the Tripartite Agreement between the UK, India and Nepal at Indian independence in 1947, which allowed Britain to continue recruiting Gurkhas from Nepal.

"The British Gurkhas' pensions have been based on the Indian Army pension," he said. "They are still basically treated like colonial soldiers."

The judge, Justice Blake, is expected to reach a decision on the case in the next few weeks. Apart from the six who brought the case to court, his ruling may have implications for several thousand pre-1997 retirees who wish to settle in the UK. Many have been waiting years for settlement rights and are hoping that this time their dream will be fulfilled.

Santosh Thalang said simply: "We are just asking for equality. That is all." ●

## Drying up

One side effect of the right to UK citizenship for ex-British Gurkhas and their families has been a drastic fall in remittances in the past two years. Particularly hard hit have been towns like Dharan and Pokhara, where land prices have collapsed and hundreds of houses are for sale.

Since the new terms and conditions came in two years ago, allowing citizenship in Britain, Gurkha remittances to Nepal have been reduced by 97 per cent. Not only are ex-Gurkhas all opting for citizenship, but they are also investing their savings in Britain as they have no one to send their money back to in Nepal.

On retirement, Gurkhas pensions are paid in the UK, not in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Dharan as earlier. "The value to Nepal of this UK right to recruit Gurkhas will steadily diminish to zero," says one former Gurkha officer, "Gurkha recruitment into the British army is now a one way street."

The new Maoist government has said it wants to ban recruitment of Nepali citizens into the Indian and British armies, calling it "slavery". The only reason recruitment was still going on was because of the benefits Nepal got from the money Gurkha soldiers and pensioners sent home to their families. If this money dries up, the argument of those who want to stop the recruitment will be bolstered.

If the present high court decision in London goes in the favour of those who want citizenship rights to all soldiers, not just those who retired before 1997, up to 20,000 more ex-Gurkhas and their families would move to the UK.

If that happens, not only will remittances dry up, but most ex-Gurkha families will also sell their property in Nepal and take their money with them—exacerbating capital flight. ● K B Thapa

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NAYANTARA GURUNG KAKSHAPATI

# Voice and sarangi

When Barta Gandharva sings, her voice carries a startling note of struggle that stands at odds with her stature and youthfulness. Her toes barely reach the ground when she sits at the edge of a chair, concentrating on tuning her sarangi.

It has been a long way from home for Barta and her sarangi from her little village in Bhojpur. She gives concerts at BICC and the Garden of Dreams, appears on television and toured in Norway and China this year. Barta spent her childhood travelling from one village to another in Bhojpur, singing and playing the sarangi to make a living.

With an absent father, she helped her mother run a household of five siblings. At age nine, Barta was spotted at Tumlingtar airport by human rights activist Gopal Siwakoti 'Chintan' who paid for her education in Kathmandu. Then, Barta joined the Nepal Music Center where she

began formal training in music.

Compared by many to Aruna Lama, Barta's voice is poignant yet uplifting. Even if the audience doesn't understand the words, her voice gives a sense of survival and hope. "Barta has fans in Europe," says Shyam Nepali, a popular Sarangi player and one of Barta's gurus at Nepal Music Center.

Barta is now preparing to enter the next stage in her life. She needs to find a place to live and a means to continue her education. But her exceptional gift resonates, and her quiet strength helps her create and draw on opportunities when they arise. Her genius is apparent to those who pause to listen. ●

**Barta in concert**  
**Saturday, 20 September, 5PM**  
**Patan Museum**  
**Tickets Rs 300**

# Stylish spine

It isn't just any other trophy. Made out of crystal and spectacularly cut, the new trophy for SIRC (Spinal Injury Rehabilitation Center) 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Charity function is like no other design.

"The SIRC trophy is the most shapely golf trophy in South Asia," says SIRC Chairman Kanak Mani Dixit with a touch of humour and hyperbole, "besides helping the spinally injured and getting

some exercise in the greens, the golfers are excited about vying for a trophy as attractive as this."

The trophy represents a stylised human spine, which is also the logo of the rehabilitation centre. It was shaped in glass by Crystal Galaxy in Dubai.

Suman Sachdev, director of the Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa, who has taken part in golf



tournaments in the subcontinent, says: "For sure this is a very innovative golf trophy, because it reflects the purpose behind the tournament. And aesthetically it is extraordinary."

Sachdev has had time to admire the travelling trophy over the past year because he himself won the SIRC Golf Tournament in 2007. Some of the others who have enjoyed the trophy over the past six years include Tashi Ghale, Eu Hazur Thapa, Tashi Lobsang and Kesang Lama.

SIRC works with spinally

injured patients, most of whom are too poor to afford treatment and rehabilitation. Spinal injuries are also fatal and most patients never fully recover.

Deepak Acharya, golf instructor and Golf Director at Gokarna Forest Golf Resort and Spa, says, "Golfers require sturdy backs and those with spinal injury lose their ability to use their backs, which is why we believe it's important for this game to contribute to their treatment." ●

*Shradha Basnyat*

6<sup>th</sup> Annual SIRC Golf Tournament  
 27 September at Le Merdien, Gokarna  
 All proceeds for treatment of patients at the Spinally Injured Rehabilitation Centre

# Criminal copycats

Most Nepali singers, composers and writers are ignorant of the country's copyright law—or if they do know about it, they have long given up seeking its protection.

Musicians are not surprised to hear their own music playing when they walk into a hotel or restaurant. They are resigned to the fact that there's little they can do to be paid for their creative talent which profits everyone else but them.

"For decades, most musicians in Nepal, however brilliant they are, have died penniless with their families suffering long after they are gone," says Prakash Sayami, vice president of the Music Royalty Collection Society of Nepal. Most people who should be protected, writers, composers, lyricists or performers, never see any royalty due to them under the law.



On 12 September, Sayami's society together with Bijay Vaidya & Rock Sitar organised a concert at Alliance Française to promote awareness of copyright law. "It's important that we promote copyright issues in Nepal, otherwise originality and creativity can never be preserved," said Alliance director, Philippe Martin.

Sayami said there was a need to set up a lobby group to protect and monitor the commercial use of artists' work. "It's not only a financial right, but it's a moral right that an owner is protected by copyright laws," he said.

Whether it is a Nepali song being given a Hindi makeover or vice versa, copyright laws are routinely violated and disregarded. In Nepal, most artistes blame the government for not doing enough to protect their rights. The problem is not a lack of laws, but a failure to enforce them. .

Says Rabin KC: "Copying is a criminal offence and it has to be stopped." This might be true in a legal sense, but judging by the scores of shops selling pirated material, Nepal has a long way to go. ●

*Shradha Basnyat*

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## ABOUT TOWN

## EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **Bridges of Love**, an exhibition of paintings by Toney Monsanto till 26 September, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Sunday- Friday 11AM-6PM, Saturday 12-4PM. 4218048

## EVENTS

- ❖ **In my country**, a film by John Boorman on 19 September, Lazimpat Gallery Café, 6.30 PM. 4428549
- ❖ **ASMAN and Surya Nepal** presents Shubha Mudgat, 19 September, Yak and Yeti, Ticket Rs 2500-3500, 6.45 PM. 5001192
- ❖ **A concert by Barta and Kutumba**, 20 September, 5PM onward, Rs 300.
- ❖ **KJC Concert** at Rato Bangala on 20 September, 6PM.
- ❖ **Lecture Series XXVII** by Konrad Ott, 4.30 PM, 24 September, Yala Maya Kendra. 4472807
- ❖ **The witnesses**, a free screening by Alliance Francaise, 21 September, 6.30 PM
- ❖ **Africando**, an African night at La'Soon Restaurant, 26 September, 6.30PM, Rs 900. 5537166
- ❖ **European Film Festival 2008**, from 26 September-1 October, Nepal Tourism Board Auditorium, Bhrikuti Mandap
- ❖ **Monsoon madness package** at Shangri-la Village Resort, Pokhara, Rs 5999. 4435741



## MUSIC

- ❖ **Poesie and Fags** a jazz vocal trio from Holland, Saturday at Patan .5522708, Sunday at Thamel.4700736. New Orleans Café, 7PM
- ❖ **Some like it hot** every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, 7PM onwards, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel. 4479488
- ❖ **TGIF** with live band EPIC every Friday, 7-10PM, Jazzabell café. 2114075
- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, 5-7PM, Ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra Café & Bar.
- ❖ **HyJazz Club** every Friday from 8.30 PM, Hyatt Regency, Kathmandu. 4489800
- ❖ **Dance and Cocktails** at Cube Bar, Kamaladi. 4438017
- ❖ **Fusion and Looza Band** every Friday night, Bhumi Resto Lounge, Lazimpat. 4412193
- ❖ **Rudra night** fusion and classical Nepali music by Shyam Nepali and friends, every Friday, 7PM at Le Meridien, Gokarna. 4451212
- ❖ **Sufi music** by Hemanta Rana, every Friday at 7.30 PM at Dhaba Restaurant and Bar, Thapathali.
- ❖ **Fusion and Classical Music** by Anil Shahi every Wednesday, rock with Rashmi Singh every Friday, Sufi & Raga with Hemant Rana every Saturday, 8 PM onwards, Absolute Bar. 5521408

## DINING

- ❖ **Sunday Jazz Brunch** at Hyatt Regency with performances by Mariano and his band from 12- 3.30PM. 4491234
- ❖ **Pizza & Pasta** every Monday and Tuesday at Rox Restaurant. Hyatt Regency. 448936
- ❖ **Fusion** of Marcela Regan's new menu and Mannie's new bar at Dhokaima Cafe. 5522113
- ❖ **Masala**, an Indian restaurant on Jawalakhel, St.Mary's school road. 4421634
- ❖ **Pasta pesto passion** at La Dolce Vita, Thamel. 4700612
- ❖ **Steak special** with free Irish coffee at K-too! Beer & Steakhouse, Thamel. 4700043
- ❖ **Continental and cafe item** with Live band every Friday at Vintage Cafe and Pub, Woodland Complex, Durbarmarg.
- ❖ **Unlimited wine offer** for Rs 990 at La Maison wine and cigar lounge. 9841333628
- ❖ **Home made pasta** at Alfresco, Soaltee Crowne Plaza. 4273999
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser Café, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9AM-10PM. 4425341
- ❖ **Steak escape** with Kathmandu's premier steaks at the Olive Bar and Bistro, Hotel Radisson. 4411818
- ❖ **Cocktails, mocktails and liqueurs** at the Asahi Lounge, opening hours 1-10PM, above Himalayan Java, Thamel.
- ❖ **Ily Expresson Coffee** at Hotel Shangri-la, Lazimpat and Mandap Hotel, Thamel.
- ❖ **Retro Brunch Barbeque** with live acoustic music by Sound Chemistry, every Saturday, 12-3PM at LeMeridien, Gokarna. 4451212
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-la with Live performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs. 666, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards. 4412999
- ❖ **Kebabs and curries** at the Dhaba, Thapathali. 9841290619
- ❖ **Socially Responsible coffee** at Himalayan Java, Thamel

For inclusion in the listing send information to editors(at)nepalitimes.com



A hip new Nepali movie, Sano Sansar is about the youth. In this movie we are introduced to Ravi, an average guy who has just graduated from college and faces the dilemma of not knowing what to do. Like Ravi, Reetu, a not so average girl, also doesn't know what she wants out of life. Unlike them, Suraj is a confident guy who knows exactly what he wants to do with his life. Manoj Sizapati (aka Siza) wants what every guy wants. All these characters soon find out the sano sansar that they live in and how they are interconnected.

Call 4442220 for show timings at Jai Nepal  
www.jainepal.com

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## WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

Two extreme-weather events took place in the Valley since our last week update: 84.3 mm of rainfall on the night of 12 September broke the past record of high intensity rain for this month. Then the daytime temperature crossed the 31° C on Wednesday with the humidity falling below 60 percent—very unusual for the monsoon season. September's total of 215 mm so far has already crossed the monthly precipitation quota (187 mm) for Kathmandu and makes up for the shortfall in August. This satellite radar composite for Thursday morning shows a late monsoon circulation in the Bay heading northwest. However, the system is finding it tough battling nascent westerlies, and we may just be grazed by the periphery of this trough over the weekend. Expect patchy clouds during the day and light shower at night for the next few days.



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## एफएम १०२ थोप्लो ४ मेगाहर्ज

**नेपाली रेडियो**  
**नेपाली आवाज**

**हालचाल**  
ताजा खबर थाहा पाउन  
हालचाल  
विहान: ८.४५-११.४५  
अपराह्न: २.४५-४.४५  
राति: ६.४५ र राती: ८.४५

**अंग्रेजी सिक्न सघाउने कार्यक्रम**  
Tuning In To Language and Culture  
प्रसार हुने समय : हरेक शुकवार बेलुका (६:१५-८:३५)  
हरेक आइतवार दिउँसो (१:४०-२:००)  
"रेडियो सगरमाथा निमित्त सुनी, अंग्रेजी सुधारी"  
(रेडियो सगरमाथा र अमेरिकी राजदुतावास, अमेरिकी केन्द्रको सहकार्य)

सम्पर्क: ५५२८००९, ५५२८२२५ मोस्ट अक्स.५५२८.६६६६ info@radiosagarmatha.org

हरेक विहान ५:०० देखि राती ११:०० बजे सम्म सूचना शिक्षा र स्वस्थ मनोरञ्जनका लागि भरपर्दो साथी रेडियो सगरमाथा १०२ थोप्लो ४ मेगाहर्ज



KIRAN PANDAY

**NICE TO BE BACK:** Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal waves to reporters as he arrived back in Kathmandu from his five-day visit to India on a scheduled Nepal Airlines flight from Delhi. Dahal leaves again on Saturday to attend the UN General Assembly.



PRASHANT JHA

**APOSTLE OF PEACE:** Prime Minister Dahal lays a wreath at the memorial for Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat in New Delhi at the start of his visit to India on Monday.



PRASHANT JHA

**FIRST CLASS:** Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal and his wife, Sita, en route to New Delhi from Kathmandu on Sunday evening.



PRASHANT JHA

**HIS OMNISCIENCE:** Journalist Rishi Dhamala (in pink shirt) joins the prime minister in disembarking through the ramp at Indira Gandhi International Airport in New Delhi on Sunday.



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# Dirty dancing and national security

We start our weekly backside recap with this debriefing on the prime minister's visit to India.

There was a security alert half-an-hour before **Prime Minister Bhayanak** arrived at the VVIP Departure Complex at Gauchar on Sunday. No, it wasn't a bomb scare. Alert prime ministerial security had spotted two monkeys frolicking on the runway. A **Follow Me** van was quickly dispatched to chase away the trespassing rhesus, which ran back across the domestic apron to Pashupati.

ॐ

Aside from all the monkeying around, the special NOTAM that banned all takeoffs and landings for one hour while the prime minister prepared for departure gave many present a sense of déjà vu. There were deep bows, bouquets and garlands just like in the bad old days of the royal regime.

Even before the flight there was a wild scramble among wannabes (including one particular willful defaulter) to upgrade to Shangrila Class to get up close and personal with the Awesome One on seat 1B.

Business wanted to travel business, but the ganyamanyas

had taken all the 12 seats at the front. So the tycoons had to settle for the glorified economy, Chyangra Class. Still, this didn't prevent all and sundry from trying to give themselves free inflight upgrades while the plane was cruising somewhere over the western sector.

The sycophancy at 35,000ft was pretty unbearable with the flight attendant even beginning announcements to "fasten seatbelt and stow your tray table" by acknowledging for the umpteenth time the presence onboard of the "Sanmaninya Pradhanmantrijyu". One government official, a veteran of the royal days, remarked: "Some of these rituals never change."

ॐ

However, conspicuous by its absence at Kathmandu airport was the **diplomatic corpse** which has decided once and for all that it is a complete waste of time to troop off to the airport every time the PM leaves or returns from a foreign visit, which is now becoming quite frequent.

ॐ

Even as everyone got off the ramp at Indira Gandhi International, it was already clear that the real guest of honour on this trip wasn't PKD but the omnipresent Rishi Dhamala. Some Indian hacks even

mistook him for a cabinet minister because he was on Awesome's coat-tails all the time. Our Sishi Gamala was much in demand even from Indian reporters because of his amazing knack of getting soundbites from Indian leaders. Sitaram Yechury dubbed him **Chief Mischief-maker** because he could work his way around India's supertight security.

ॐ

Ass admits, Awesome was in his element during his India visit, and seemed to genuinely enjoy taking tough questions and being fluently trilingual. When the proponent of violence as a political tool laid a wreath at the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat, however, the irony seem to have been lost on everyone. And **His Fierceness** made no mention of Gandhi in his short message in the guest book. Later, he sped off for his audience with Manmohanji without waiting for Foreign Minister Upendra, who was so miffed he walked off to have coffee with Binod.

ॐ

Meanwhile, back home on terra firma, Awesome's comrades in the cabinet were being **naughty**. Land Unreformed Minister Matrika Bhaiya was giving

this scribe stiff competition by making a total ass of himself once more. After gaining notoriety by locking up a quarry contractor in his office toilet, the minister this week took armed bodyguards along to demolish private property in Siraha and dared the Home Minister to take action against him.

ॐ

But Home Minister Bum Dev has been too busy shutting down nude dance bars and cyber cafes to pay much attention to law and order in the Tarai. Comrade Leftist God is convinced dirty dancing and internet porn is more of a threat to national security than the Tarai anarchists. Hey, how come he hasn't banned **Midnight Hot** yet?

ॐ

The winner of this week's New Name contest is Rishav Shrestha who thinks Right Honourable Prime Minister Prachanda should be now called **Left Honourable Prime Minister Prachanda**.

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Australia has become a popular choice for overseas students and the number of Nepalese students has risen sharply over the few years. According to the statistics published by Australian Education International, the number of enrolment of Nepalese students has gone up to 500% at times. In the year 2007, Nepal became the 13th largest source country in terms of number of student enrollments. In this year also number of students going to Australia has gone up compare to last year. The maximum number has commenced their studies in Vocational Education and Training Sector.

With the aim of attracting non-European migrants by the Australian Government, Nepalese started to migrate to Australia from 1975. There is no official data before 1975 and only 4 Nepalese permanently migrated to Australia in the year 1975-76. It is interesting to stipulate the Nepalese migrated to Australia from the year 2000. Nepalese migrants were 228 in 2000-01, 166 in 2001-02, 2002-03 in 176, 2003-04 in 235, 302 in 2004, 304 in 2005-06, 460 in 2006-07 (Source: Australia Bureau of Statistics). The number of Nepalese migrated to Australia is increasing every year and Nepalese community has been well recognized by Immigration Department.

People who want to live permanently in Australia must apply to migrate or, if already in Australia, apply to change their status to permanent residents. There are four parts to Australia's migration program and they are:

1. Skill Stream
2. Family Stream
3. Special Eligibility Stream
4. Refugee/Humanitarian Program.

For more information on Australian Education and Migration please email us at [info@eminent-ased.com](mailto:info@eminent-ased.com) or visit our website [www.eminent-ased.com](http://www.eminent-ased.com).



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