



CHEVROLET

INCREDIBLY SPACIOUS

For queries SMS "CAR" to 2426

VIJAY MOTORS PVT. LTD. Naxal, Ph: 4433205/4414625



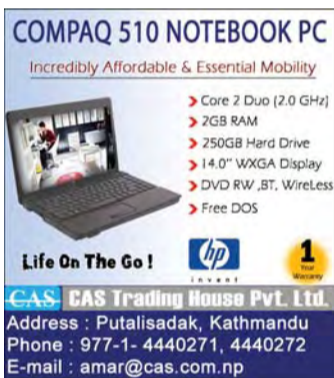
LAVAZZA
ITALY'S FAVOURITE COFFEE

Monsoon bar grill, Pokhara
Ambience Restaurant & Bar, Patan



www.ultimatedecor.com.np

Ultimate Decor
fine furniture



COMPAQ 510 NOTEBOOK PC

Incredibly Affordable & Essential Mobility

- Core 2 Duo (2.0 GHz)
- 2GB RAM
- 250GB Hard Drive
- 14.0" WXGA Display
- DVD RW ,BT, WireLess
- Free DOS

Life On The Go!

CAS Trading House Pvt. Ltd.
Address : Putalisadak, Kathmandu
Phone : 977-1- 4440271, 4440272
E-mail : amar@cas.com.np



CONSTELLATION

THURAYA XT
The most rugged satellite phone in the World!

www.constellation.com.np
Tel: +977-1-5549252



PERFORMANCEDEFINED

OAKLEY

Available at: LABELS Bluebird Multi Trigereshwar Sherpa Mall
Durbarmarg Ph: 4241882 Ph: 915819737 Ph: 4227102



LEGWORK: Travellers have no choice but to walk through the Maoist blockade at Nagdhunga, Tuesday.

KIRAN PANDAY

My way or the highway

The impasse in Nepal's peace process and the danger of it unravelling appear to be rattling policy advisers at the United Nations in New York and in capital cities around the world.

Baluwatar's swift and sharp reaction to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report to the Security Council took UN officials in New York by surprise. Although UNMIN clarified that the need for political consensus was something all political leaders in Nepal had themselves articulated, the speech became an opportunity for the ruling

coalition to draw attention to UNMIN's perceived pro-Maoist bias.

Said a Baluwatar insider: "Of course we say it all the time, but it is different when the UN Secretary-General comments on Nepal's internal politics. Whose side is UNMIN on?" What hasn't helped UNMIN are Pushpa Kamal Dahal's speeches claiming that the UN's report has vindicated his party's protests.

The Secretary-General's report to the Security Council, UNMIN chief Karin Langdren's briefings in New York, and the

Security Council meeting last Friday betray the UN's anxiety about Nepal's peace process, with UNMIN's mandate due to expire in January.

Most observers agree that the UN needs a success story in its chequered history of international peacekeeping, and that UNMIN's mandate will probably be extended. But what will be keenly watched is how it corrects its perceived tilt towards the former rebels. And the elephant in the room that no one mentions is India, its role in the peace process and the desire of advisers in

New Delhi to get UNMIN to pack up and go.

The row has distracted attention from the need to allow UNMIN to disarm the Maoists and dismantle cantonments, finish writing the constitution and allow parliament and the government to function. You can debate whether the UN Secretary-General was within his rights to call on the parties to work together, but few in Nepal will deny that he was right. ●

More on the UN conundrum: p4 Prashant Jha in New York



THE PUMA STORE

puma.com

SHERPA MALL, DURBAR MARG, Ph: 4230385

NEPALI
Times

editors@nepalitimes.com
www.nepalitimes.com

Published by Himalmedia Pvt Ltd, Editor: Kunda Dixit
Desk Editor: Rabi Thapa
CEO: Ashutosh Tiwari Design: Kiran Maharjan
DGM Sales and Marketing: Sambhu Guragain marketing@himalmedia.com
Marketing Manager: Subhash Kumar Asst. Manager: Arjun Karki
Hatiban, Godavari Road, Lalitpur
Fax: 5251013
GPO Box 7251, Kathmandu 5250333/845
Printed at Jagadamba Press 5250017-19



Donor dynamics

PASS THE BUCK

As the political tug-o-war spills into the streets, an already tottering economy is looking even more precarious. In the last couple of months, we have been knocked back by high inflation, labour unrest, transport disruptions, the liquidity crisis and a delayed monsoon.

But there is no sign any of this is worrying our political party leadership. They don't seem to care that the economy is in shambles, the budget hasn't been passed, highway arteries are blocked, and remote area airfields are being shut down by militant locals.

If the parties don't sort out their political quarrels, they will sink Nepal. Here's the lowdown on the economy.

Although most Nepalis work in agriculture, it contributes far less to GDP than the service sector and not much more than industry. Poor infrastructure and persistent transport disruptions have hurt productivity further, and the ensuing rural-urban migration has fed a growing law and order problem. Along with labour unrest and power shortages, this explains Nepal's industrial stagnation in large part. Politicians don't help by encouraging aggressive unionism, as the public offering of the Biratnagar Jute Mill recently attests to, and refusing to get tough on road blockaders.

Services, on the other hand, will stay strong so long as remittances and tourism, which have weathered the worst of the global recession, revive revenue and the housing market doesn't crash. Yet benefits haven't reached the countryside. Financial services, for example, grew by double-digit figures last year but mainly oiled Kathmandu's housing boom.

The government can't mandate big rural loans because the risks remain high and the financial infrastructure is straining under a glut of banks. If we're not careful, this bubble could burst with disastrous results. The government has the means to fix these problems since revenue collection is up, but it lacks the political will and imagination to spend the windfall meaningfully.

To stave off economic disaster, the parties must agree to a common program to immediately restore local bodies, renounce irresponsible unions and clamp down on transport interruptions. They must also agree to shore up agricultural productivity by extending rural finance and extending the road network.

It goes without saying that attending to the economy today will ensure that the politics will not be unstable tomorrow. A healthy farming sector will improve law and order, and building infrastructure creates jobs and controls runaway urbanisation.

The good news is that our problems are manageable. The bad news is that unless we move beyond politics to attend to the economy, whoever comes to power in this country will wish they hadn't because of the social anarchy resulting from a stagnant economy.



ONG KAI LING

With the failure of political party leaders to move the peace process forward, citizens and foreign donors have been pushing 'civil society' to the rescue. This is problematic for many reasons.

During the heady days of the April 2006 democracy movement, the common goal of ending the king's autocratic rule



GUEST COLUMN
Seira Tamang

united disparate groups. Indeed, the coming together of citizens, including civil society members, was extraordinary.

Donors pushing for citizens to rise up again miss the fact that people are tired and are struggling with basic survival issues. It is bizarre that while powerful civil society organisations in the US, for example, are not expected to lobby for healthcare reform or push to decrease troops in Afghanistan unless

The problem of overrating civil society in Nepal's peace process

they are actually involved in these areas, civil society in Nepal is expected to cajole political parties of fundamentally different ideologies to move forward together.

And while it is acknowledged in the US that the politics behind these issues are fundamentally much more complicated with various actors, agendas and interests, the same understanding is rarely extended to an analysis of Nepal's political situation. Equally lacking is the acknowledgement that the disparate, conflicting, overlapping and politically contentious role of civil society is actually the norm in Nepal and elsewhere.

Of late, foreign donors appear to have 'discovered' the well-known political party connections and allegiances of civil society. Current donor emphasis on the political affiliations of civil society overestimates the validity and importance of such ties in the current political situation, especially given the lack of democracy and accountability of political parties to citizens in general.

As noted by a senior political party and CA member recently, once the term 'political consensus' was inserted into the interim constitution, constitution making and the peace process were taken out of the hands of citizens, elected members, and given to top political leaders.

The emphasis on the political bias of civil society furthermore obscures the very political role of donors themselves. Their funding of 'civil society' in Nepal, as in Eastern Europe and other developing countries, has basically been to NGOs. Apart from a few exceptions, the fact

that NGOs are now defined by donors and themselves as 'civil society' is important to note.

A basic understanding of the relationship between democratic stability and civic groups is premised on the fact that internally, civic groups inspire habits of cooperation, solidarity, public-spiritedness and trust. Externally, these networks then aggregate interests and articulate demands to ensure the government's accountability to its citizens.

While the second of these functions appears to be at work in Nepal, given the competition over funding, the building of dense networks of association, solidarity and trust with other civic groups is lacking.

These groups are not more likely to develop networks of accountability to citizens or to the state, crucial from the perspective of governance, and are more likely to reflect the priorities and agendas of foreign assistance programs.

Issues of 'civil society' in Nepal are inextricably tied to the manner in which foreign aid functions in the country. Indeed, it is unclear how state restructuring can be discussed without including debates on the restructuring of foreign aid. Given the beneficial and important role of foreign aid in Nepal, to misconstrue a call for such discussion as 'donor bashing' would be short-sighted and detrimental to the interests of all concerned with democracy, accountability and transparency in Nepal.

As the head of a foreign-aid dependent NGO, I welcome such debates. ●

Seira Tamang is chairperson of Martin Chautari, a research and policy institute in Kathmandu

LETTERS

GADHIMAI SLAUGHTER

We all recognise that investment in education is the key to our success in many dimensions: it deepens democracy; it creates human capital to spur long-term growth; but it also helps us evolve as human beings.

It is in the last context that the Gadhimai sacrifices are relevant. You mention an article by Maneka Gandhi, in which she argues that animal sacrifices in the name of temple goddesses are also partly driven by economic motivations (@Stop the slaughter!, #475). I wonder how many of our NNSD-educated luminaries would jump in the pond to tear apart a live goat in the name of some cultural practice. The majority of us probably would not.

Thus, I would like to draw our Honourable Cultural Minister Dr. Rijal's attention to this issue. We were so quick to declare the country a secular state, and yet why can we not take actions to stop such a barbaric tradition?

As Ms. Gandhi argues, bad practices

like Sati, slavery, untouchability, Thagi and human sacrifices have been banned. Animal sacrifice should face the same fate.

To that end, investment in education is utterly vital so that people can make informed decisions rather than be blind followers. At the same time, some level of government contemplation in the immediate future on this issue may not be that bad either.

Alok K. Bohara,
USA

● If the goddess of the malignant Gadhimai mob is ghoulish enough to be appeased by blood, then the feverish participants can offer the ultimate sacrifice of their own blood and let the Red Cross properly and humanely collect it for

medical needs. What could please her more?

Alonzo Lucius Lyons, Kathmandu



"Stop the slaughter"
W

anyway, how about stopping the Christians Thanksgiving?

Prasanna K.C., Patan

OUTRAGEOUS

This is an outrageous abuse of power (Ow, Minister!, <http://www.nepalitimes.com.np/2009/11/12/308>). The sense of entitlement among politicians is obscene. Democracy should be a means to promote liberty, not put power in the hands of petty people with dictatorial impulses.

Christopher Lingle,
www.facebook.com/nepalitimes

GEOGRAPHIC FEDERALISM

The article seems to touch on the socio-economic and geographic dimensions, but I doubt whether any of the federal models proposed so far ensure populations easy access to service centres (@Geographic view of federalism!, #474). Besides, just wait for the gerrymandering that will occur come election time. People in the Tarai already got a taste for it during the CA elections.

Tej Prasad Adhikari,
www.facebook.com/nepalitimes

Wages of distortion

When Raghuji Pant went ballistic over UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report to the Security Council, which mentioned in passing that a government of national unity 'remained desirable' in Nepal, the former journalist deserved and received the benefit of the doubt. English is not Pant's forte, and the difference between *banchhniya* (desirable) and *abashyak* (necessary) is not very distinct in Nepali.

But now that the whole phalanx of politicians that make up the anti-Maoist coalition has joined the chorus, it appears



STATE OF THE STATE
C K Lal

there was more to the statement of Prime Minister Madhav Kumar Nepal's political advisor than what was lost in translation. This was clearly a case of wilful distortion on the part of Pant.

UNMIN is not very popular with the biggies of the 22-party alliance. Ram Chandra Paudel holds former UNMIN chief Ian Martin responsible for his lacklustre stint at the Ministry of Peace and Reconstruction. Rakam Chemjong probably has a similar grouse against Karin Landgren and wants to seek a clarification from her to hide his own ineffectiveness.

The Madhes-based parties appear to be under the impression that the Chinese and the Indians would be happy to see Landgren and her team leave Nepal. When Indian Ambassador to Nepal Rakesh Sood said his government wanted the anti-Maoist league to take the peace process to its logical conclusion, almost a dozen ministers present at the dais didn't feel the statement was a breach of diplomatic protocol.

Perhaps even jealousy explains the resentment of junior ministers in PM Nepal's unwieldy 47-strong cabinet: UNMIN personnel breeze past in fancy SUVs while they have to break the windshields of malfunctioning cars to expend their frustration. But there is more to the current regime's distaste for UN agencies than mere pajeros and politics. The continuing involvement of the UN in Nepal's peace process has begun to hit the front



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

The UN's involvement in the peace process means precious little funding is left over

organisations of the UML where it hurts the most – their bank accounts.

With its large bureaucracy and generous compensation packages, the UN system drinks up donor funds like an elephant. Other than a select group of mid-level professionals and suppliers, few locals benefit from the activities of UN agencies. There is a small clique of expatriates that keeps circulating between Cambodia, East Timor and Nepal, depending upon where the world body has more commitment from donors.

The INGOs are not happy at all. Prior to the arrival of UNMIN, INGOs and their local affiliates (NGOs) handled conflict-

resolution and the peace-building industry on behalf of bilateral donors. There was a time when the Brits, the Swiss and the Scandinavians vied with each other to send Nepali experts across the world on observation trips. With a large slice of donor funding now being diverted to expensive enterprises like the UNDP-run Centre for Constitutional Dialogue, the INGOs have been left high and dry.

NGOs fronting for the UML now have little income to contribute to the coffers of their mother party. Since they can't demand a ride on the UNMIN gravy train, they never lose an opportunity to deride it in the hope that donors may thus be

tempted to throw some more grants their way. From the perspective of NGO-entrepreneurs, it seems cruel that the installments on their Marutis go unpaid while foreign volunteers that worked for them until yesterday speed past them in duty-free White Elephants. If PM Nepal had his way, he would have thrown UNMIN out the day he took over from Pushpa Kamal Dahal.

The problem is the Nepal Army needs the goodwill of UNMIN to keep its lucrative peacekeeping accounts. That's the reason the Kathmandu media did an about turn and lined up behind the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council. UML bigwigs are past masters at eating their words, but this time even they may suffer light indigestion. The Bhadrakali brass knows that there is no fooling Karin Landgren, who may be soft-spoken but certainly doesn't mince her words.

If Rakam Chemjong insists on seeking a clarification, PM Nepal may be forced to reconstitute his cabinet for the ninth time in six months. ●

Did your paper arrive on time this morning? If not, call our

Customer care @ 525 0002

DIRECT LINE



Himalmedia Pvt. Ltd.
Hatiban Lalitpur

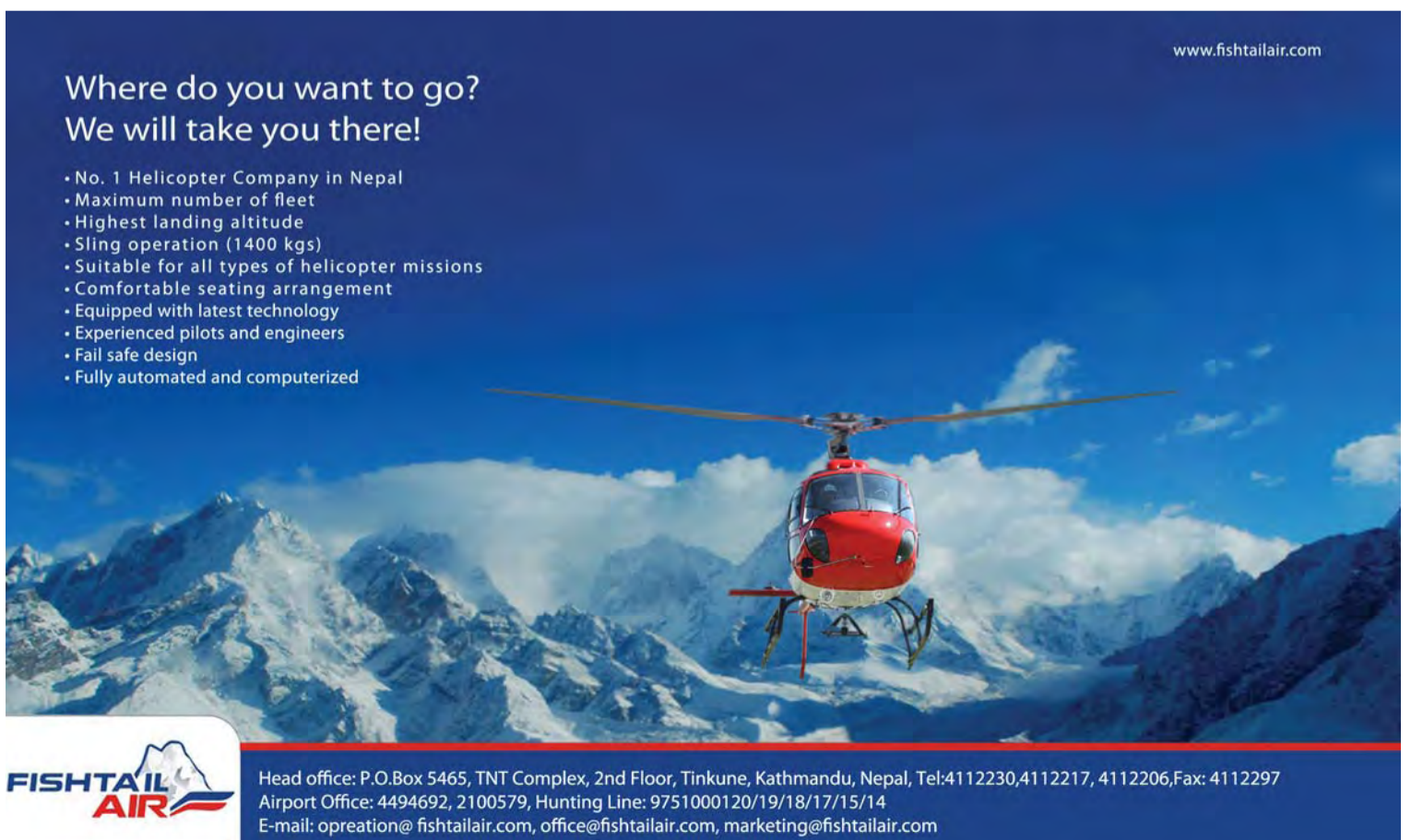
Where do you want to go?
We will take you there!

- No. 1 Helicopter Company in Nepal
- Maximum number of fleet
- Highest landing altitude
- Sling operation (1400 kgs)
- Suitable for all types of helicopter missions
- Comfortable seating arrangement
- Equipped with latest technology
- Experienced pilots and engineers
- Fail safe design
- Fully automated and computerized



Head office: P.O.Box 5465, TNT Complex, 2nd Floor, Tinkune, Kathmandu, Nepal, Tel:4112230,4112217, 4112206,Fax: 4112297
Airport Office: 4494692, 2100579, Hunting Line: 9751000120/19/18/17/15/14
E-mail: opeation@fishtailair.com, office@fishtailair.com, marketing@fishtailair.com

www.fishtailair.com



PARTNERS IN PEACE:
UNMIN Chief Karin
Landgren leaves the
Home Minister's office



Blame game

KIRAN PANDAY

New York ñIn the din over the government's entirely disproportionate reaction to the Secretary-General's report, the reality of what the UN feels about the current situation has been sidetracked.

A careful reading of the Secretary-General's report, UNMIN head Karin Landgren's briefing and interviews with key UN officials and interested member state representatives here reveals that the UN is deeply worried and has palpable concerns



PLAIN SPEAKING
Prashant Jha

about current tensions, the lack of progress in the peace process, and the impending end of UNMIN's mandate. The key players in Nepal need to do a lot more to address these concerns.

At the Security Council meeting last Friday, there was more intensity and urgency than usual.

Members reaffirmed support for the peace process, but grappled for ways to impress upon the government the need for urgent and tangible progress on CPA implementation. Members felt that the formation of a high-level political mechanism, and a review of the implementation of the CPA so far could be helpful. The need for the government and parties to take decisions that will allow UNMIN to complete its tasks within the mandate period

was emphasised so that it can lay out an exit strategy. And SC members appreciated UNMIN's efforts in difficult circumstances ñ where polarisation has deepened, risk of confrontation is high, and all parties use it as a scapegoat for their own failures.

What may be adding to the frustration here is the recognition that UNMIN's mandate limits its influence in shaping wider outcomes. It can only encourage dialogue between national actors, and push for convergence and consensus.

The underlying political analysis that marks many of these suggestions sees the growing political acrimony between earlier drivers of the peace process, or their steady marginalisation from the centre of politics, as the key factor.

The trust deficit between the parties ñ especially between Maoists and non-Maoists ñ has increased after the impasse in May.†But the roots lie deeper. The end of the power-sharing arrangement after the CA elections; the inability or unwillingness of the Maoists to make a break with their violent past and reassure other parties about their democratic commitment; the absence of any movement on security sector reform, the resurgence of the ñdon't touch the armyí line and the tendency to see integration as a tactical tool on both sides; and serious differences on the nature and breadth of social transformation are at the crux of the matter. The UN knows that it is not its business to seek to bridge these macro differences ñ it is up to the

national actors to come to an agreement as to how their society is to evolve.

To see the UN as a ñpro-Maoistí institution, as the 22 parties have hinted, is to misread why UNMIN is here in the first place. It is here to assist the peace process. The Maoists are a 50 per cent stakeholder in the peace process, and the key partner in the task of determining the future of former Maoist

downhill, but it can do little to alter the domestic political equations. This in itself is a testament to its limits and shows up the hollow nature of accusations of ñUN interferenceí. Until the only foreign actor capable of intervention, India, decides to engage in a ñcourse correctioní itself and recognises the benefits of getting the Maoists back into the power-sharing equation, the process is stuck.

In January, we will be back to a situation where the government will have to ñ even if it does not want to ñ request UNMIN to stay on. Some in New York feel an extension should not be granted easily, for that may be the only way to hold Nepali actors to their commitments. A few member states, including China, have emphasised the need to wait till January and then look at other options. But unless something drastic happens, UNMIN will probably stay on. The real question is whether Nepali politicians can find a way to use the UN more constructively by then, and finally address the situation of having two armies in the country. This could then pave a way out for the international body.

There is a serious message the Security Council is sending to Nepali actors ñ do not take the UN for granted, get your act together, re-engineer the consensus, implement commitments on both sides, don't look to violence or counter-violence as solutions to the problem, tackle the fundamentals, isolate the spoilers, and convert your fragile peace into a sustainable, stable arrangement.†† •

If we're stuck, it's no surprise the UN is stuck

combatants. If the peace process is stuck, the UN is stuck. Talking about the peace process, and urging actors to focus on it, necessarily means leaving space for the Maoists. UNMIN†is not here to do a humanitarian job, as a former finance minister implied. It has an inherently political†role.†The accusations against the UN only reflect the changed domestic political context ñ where the peace process has slid down the list of priorities, liberals and conservatives are united in their desire to keep the Maoists out, and Maoist actions have only added to doubts about their end goal.

What now? The UN can see things going



रेडियो कार्यक्रमको आदान-प्रदान नेटवर्क हाइवे

हरेक दिन बिहान र बेलुका साढे ६ बजेदेखि ७ बजेसम्म

 **Communication Corner Pvt. Ltd. Broadcast Office**
Kupondole, Lalitpur, Tel: 5546277
Sanepa, Lalitpur, Tel: 5551716

Fax: 977-1-5549357, P.O.Box:6469, E-mail: info@unn.com.np, URL: www.unn.com.np

रेडियो तरङ्ग १०७.६
पोखरा



फरक परिवेश
फरक संस्कार
फरक भूगोल

उज्यालो ९० नेटवर्क
सानेपा

रेडियो चितवन ९४.६
रत्ननगर

अब सधैँका साथी

Sky scraping



The board of directors of Everest Bank announced their un-audited results for the first quarter of the current fiscal year: their operating profits have increased by 24.20 per cent.

Flying high



Yeti Airlines announced the arrival of its seventh 29-seat Jetstream 41 at Tribhuvan International Airport. This addition to Yeti's fleet is likely to be used for regional flights and mountain flights.

Helping hands

As part of its corporate social responsibility program focusing on supporting education among underprivileged students, Everest Bank donated 24 computers to 17 educational institutions.

Biking terrain

In an attempt to promote mountain biking in Nepal, The Craft Art Studio along with EPIC Mountain Bike Adventure launched the Craft Art Studio Mountain Bike Club. The club will be organising national and international tournaments.



Tying up

Skoda MAW, distributor of Skoda Auto in Nepal, and Yeti Travels have signed an agreement whereby Yeti Travels will take over eight units of Skoda Laura.

Endless expansion

After Mero Mobile's Gift a Gift campaign, mobile operator Spice Nepal is extending its coverage to new parts of the country. It currently has more than 1.8 million subscribers.

Money matters

Himalayan Bank has decided to provide 31.5557 per cent of bonus shares and 12 per cent of cash dividends to its shareholders from the profits of the fiscal year 2008/2009.

Winning streak

Qatar Airways was named World's Leading Airline in Business Class for the second year running. Almost 1,000 representatives of the global travel and tourism industry gathered at the Grosvenor House Hotel, London, for the 16th World Travel Awards.



MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Hollow hope

Our newspapers never tire of reporting on the need for consensus among political parties. They do that because once they are thrust in front of loudspeakers, our politicians can't help but drone on and on about how consensus is important.

The politicians meet, talk and pretend to deliberate on weighty matters. They give interviews. But the result is always the same: guarded agreement to hold more talks in the future to look into ways of reaching a national consensus. Meanwhile, they go on quarrelling with one another. They paralyse the day-to-day lives of the very voters (and



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

their children) who sent them to the Constituent Assembly (CA) to draft a new constitution.

Nowhere else in the world is the word 'consensus' used so

flippantly as it is here by all parties. Yet what results, time and again, is not consensus, but quarrels and fights that mutate into traffic jams, highway blockades, ministry

gheraos and bandhs. Enlightened civil society pundits, ensconced comfortably as they are in Kathmandu's high society without having to go through the grind that most Nepalis endure everyday to eke out a living, continue to shrug off all these daily disruptions as the inevitable birth pangs of a young republic en route to reaching that theoretical utopia promised by democracy.

But what if we say that political parties have absolutely no intention of making the institutions of democracy work? After all, success in doing so

would actually lessen their hold on power and reduce their influence. Why would they want to do that? What if the parties have – through cunning political manipulations – mastered the art of hoodwinking the voters, fooling the donors, burbling pro-democracy platitudes, and enriching themselves while continuing with the usual game of political uncertainty as far as they can take it? Voters be damned!

We've evolved from a party-less democracy to a party-full one

After all, if the Panchayat styled itself as a party-less democracy, what we have today is 'party-full' democracy, in which parties decide everything, from which candidate you vote for to how you structure your day. If some group decides to block the streets, you may have to alter your travel plans, or perhaps your goods will not reach the market, with a corresponding decrease in income.

If the concept of 'party-full' democracy is not a valid one, how else to explain that instead of resolving differences through debates in the CA, some parties continue to cast themselves in the role of a government-in-exile?

Not that their antics outside of the CA, performed apparently on account of high-minded principles, have stopped them from accepting their monthly parliamentary paychecks. Who wouldn't want to have the best of both worlds – picketing the very institution that keeps you in clover?

If they do get their way by harassing, physically pressuring and threatening others to bend to their will, what's the point of hoping for a country in which the rule of law will someday reign supreme? Forget unleashing Nepal. The way parties have been behaving, it seems clear that they are more interested in putting Nepal on a short leash – stunting its growth, sapping its vigour, never letting it reach its potential and keeping it backward.

Nobody who cares about the Nepali people, for instance, would threaten to blockade airports. Such a threat may have played well in the local political theatre. But it causes a flurry of cancellations in hotel bookings and other tourism-related services. Even accounting for the income disparity within the tourism industry, who suffers the most? Waiters, maids and tour guides.

It's one thing to continue to hope for the best. It's another to critically examine the evidence on which that hope is based. If the recent past is any guide, the evidence does not leave much room for hope.

Photos in Lab quality anytime anywhere at your fingertips

EXCEED YOUR VISION

Battery Pack for True Mobility

With the optional battery pack, the PictureMate™ PM270 exudes the convenience of a mobile photo lab to print photos anytime, anywhere

PictureMate™ PM270

- Experience photo printing anytime, anywhere
- Lab-quality photo in 3 simple steps and as quickly as 37 seconds
- Simple navigation and intuitive user interface via 3.6" colour LCD screen

PictureMate™ PM215

- Achieve lab-quality photos in just 37 seconds
- Print easily in just 3 simple steps
- Easy navigation with 2.5" Colour LCD

MERCANTILE OFFICE SYSTEMS
Mercantile Building, Durbar Marg, Kathmandu
Tel: 4220773, 4243566 Fax: 977-1-4225407
Email: market@mos.com.np

STAR OFFICE AUTOMATION
PUTALI SADAQ, 4266820, 4244827
HIMALAYAN TRADING HOUSE
POKHARA, 061 521756
ECSC COMPUTER
Butwal 071 545699

UGRATARA TRADING HOUSE
DHANGADHI, TEL: 091 523601
MANAKAMANA HI-TECH
NEPALGUNJ, 081521473
ADVANCE COMPUTER
BANÉPA, 9841311011

DINESH ELECTRONICS
DHANGADHI, TEL: 091 521392
E-NET SOLUTIONS
NARAYANGHAT, 9855056309
BIRAT INFOTECH
021-538729

Undiplomatic

Lokmani Rai in *Kantipur*, 7 November

क्रान्तिपुर

Successive prime ministers in Nepal and diplomats have violated their own rules by not keeping the Foreign Ministry informed about meetings. State Minister for Home Affairs Mohammad Ansari went on a week-long visit to China last month, but the Foreign Ministry was not informed. Indian Foreign secretary Nirupama Rao met Defence Minister Bidya Bhandari and Foreign Ministry officials, once again, had no idea they were meeting.

For the Indian and Chinese embassies in Kathmandu, it has become routine to bypass the Foreign Ministry and go directly to Baluwatar. Recently, the Chinese ambassador met Madhav Nepal. Neither his embassy nor the prime minister's office informed the Foreign Ministry.

Such lapses of protocol indicate who actually directs foreign policy in this country. "We are fed up, there is no role for us when even low-level diplomats have direct access to the prime minister," complains a Foreign Ministry official.



KIRAN PANDAY

Prime Minister Nepal is just carrying on the tradition of his predecessors Girija Prasad Koirala and Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Koirala used to have secret talks with visiting Indian officials which he didn't even allow his personal secretary to attend. Dahal once got visiting Indian foreign secretary Shiv Shankar Menon to come directly to Baluwatar from the airport, while Foreign Ministry officials were waiting at Singha Darbar for a listed meeting with the prime minister. Even as leader of the opposition, Dahal refused Foreign Ministry cars to go to the airport and didn't brief the ministry at all about his visits so that the ministry could inform the relevant consulates. Says the Foreign Ministry official: "When they start meeting foreign visitors secretly, there is no archive anywhere of what was decided."



NITESH MATHEMA

Fire Begum

Editorial in *Kantipur*, 12 November

क्रान्तिपुर

Minister Karima Begum violated official decorum and broke the law when she abused Parsa Chief District Officer Durga Prasad Bhandari. It was a criminal act unbecoming of a state minister.

She barged into his office with 40 to 50 goons and slapped him several times, alleging that he did not send the vehicle she had demanded.

The minister has embarrassed the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum and the coalition government.

Although government officials and the home ministry have condemned the act, the council of ministers and prime minister remain quiet. The cabinet should remove her from her post and press legal charges.

The legal charges will stick because she admitted the act, even daring to say it was punishment for disobeying a minister's orders, and it was done in public. With this evidence, the CA chair can immediately file a public offence charge against her. Not only will this be just punishment, it will also serve to remind political leaders that everyone is equal before the law and boost morale among government employees.

Government employees are servants to the public, not political leaders.

Begum also set a bad precedent. There are legal means to punish government officials who don't perform their duties. In resorting to abuse the CDO instead, she was not only unethical, but took the law into her own hands.

In such circumstances, government action won't be enough. Her party should seek clarification and take necessary action too.

Arrogance

Editorial in *Gorkhapatra*, 12 November

गोरखापत्र

There is a growing trend among politicians to mistreat government officials who refuse to bend to their whims.

The moment a party wins power, its leaders become ministers, get vehicles with the national flag on the hood and flaunt their new authority. This is exactly what happened when State Minister Begum slapped Parsa Chief District Officer Durga Prasad Bhandari in public.

When a person of a state minister's stature, who claims to protect the people, commits a shameful act like this she tarnishes the country's reputation as well as her own. If leading government employees or officers don't respect the law, they ought to be punished accordingly.

Minister Begum should be well aware of official decorum. The Home Ministry's statement following Tuesday's incident condemned her conduct as unbecoming of a state minister, and government employees have raised their voices too.

Minister Begum should admit her wrongdoing. It is important to punish political party and government leaders who abuse civil officers and ordinary citizens as if they were slaves.



NITESH MATHEMA

Farmers fed up

Arjun Shah in *Nepal*, 15 November

नेपाल

For generations, the dalits of Bandhu have endured early mornings, hunger and back-breaking labour ploughing for the town's landlords. Now, they want an end to the tradition.

Poor and indebted farmers have often had no choice but to till for landowners. Forty-one-year-old Raghu Bibak has been ploughing for landowner Rajbahadur Khatri for the past 23 years, and Karna Lohar, unable to repay a debt, has been doing the same for 17 years. The farmers are responsible for planting as well as harvesting the entire field and are compensated with one meal a day and a sack of the yield every season.

"My family never gets to eat enough," laments Lohar, adding that a sack of rice is too little for his family of seven. But the farmers don't complain for fear of being dismissed with mounting debts left to repay. Thirty-two families in Bandhu, and as many as 1800 farmers in eastern Jhapa, face the same problem.

The government signed an agreement with farmers in 2008 to end the practice and rehabilitate those affected, but the agreement has yet to be implemented. Meanwhile, the farmers of Bandhu remain hopeful. Farmer Nandabir Wad says, "We will be liberated one day."



âWe are smoking it so well, it will cook on time.â
Note: Seven months to write the constitution
Cauldron: Constitution

अन्नपूर्ण पोष्ट Basu Kshitiz in *Annapurna Post*, 8 November



KIRAN PANDAY

Finding federalism

Nicole Tupperwien has been working on federalism for more than 10 years, and has been closely involved with the debate on federalism in Nepal for more than two years now. She works as an expert on constitution-making and federalism with the special advisor for peace-building of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.

Nepali Times: What is your assessment of the peace process and federalism in Nepal?

Nicole Tupperwien: The peace process and constitution-making are closely linked, and federalism is one of the big topics in constitution-making. When I first came to Nepal, I found people were mostly interested in what federalism was and whether it was possible here. The debate has changed. The country has already decided to become a federal republic, so the focus is now on how this can be realised and what it will mean for Nepal. I can

“Federalism creates fear and hope”

see there is a certain degree of urgency to come to an agreement because of the approaching deadline for the constitution. The CA committees have had many meetings. In the coming weeks important decisions will have to be taken to move constitution-making forward.

There has not been an agreement on the basis of federalism. What do you think would be most appropriate for Nepal?

This question only Nepal can answer. When we look at experiences across the world, we see some countries base federalism more on geography, others use ethnicity as a basis and still others have a mixed system. In the end what is more important is that people throughout Nepal, whether they are in a minority or a majority, can be assured that they can live with the federal system that is chosen.

No ethnic group really dominates any region in Nepal. How can we demarcate boundaries?

The interim constitution envisions Nepal as a federal country. Federalism has been chosen as a means to eliminate marginalisation and foster development. Demarcating boundaries can be used to address such

issues but it alone will not automatically improve the lives of marginalised people. That depends on a whole host of other issues as well, such as inter-ethnic relations, how federal units are organised or how problems are solved in different regions. We have to look at the range of possibilities, for instance whether certain ethnicities and marginalised groups have to be granted special rights to ensure equal opportunities.

What about the expenses of federalism for a poor country like Nepal?

We can argue that federalism incurs certain costs because you need administration at different levels. But Switzerland was a poor country when it introduced federalism. Switzerland owes its overall prosperity to many different factors, federalism amongst others. The central government still supports poorer cantons financially.

It is very difficult to answer the question on the costs of federalism. In certain cases, it is less expensive to deliver services and to have decision making done locally rather than have everything controlled by the centre. It might also prevent certain conflicts. It is only when we take all of these factors into consideration that we can determine whether a federal system is more expensive than a centrally run system.

There is no agreement among the parties on federal structure, forms of government and a number of other issues. Was it right for Nepal to opt for federalism?

It is never easy to write a constitution and to agree on a new system of governance. Difficult times during constitution making are fast overcome if the outcome is experienced as positive. The decisions can only be taken by Nepal because Nepal will have to live with the consequences of its decisions. On the positive side, federalism could help devolve more rights to regions and acknowledge different groups. There will also be new opportunities for new economic centres to emerge. In federal countries there are normally mechanisms at the centre that will incorporate the viewpoints of different regions in the national parliament. Such a mechanism can make government inclusive and help keep the country together.

What will be the consequences if the provinces fail?

First of all when federalism is introduced, the provinces normally aren't given full powers right away. Powers are gradually devolved and capacities are built in parallel. People are really eager to learn and build up capacity when they know they have to apply it, and I think this will be the case in Nepal. The process of implementation is important and has to be carefully prepared.

Federal units will not receive all powers. Some powers

will remain with the centre and there is always cooperation with the centre. For this there have to be certain mechanisms for cooperation. The idea of federalism is that on certain issues federal units can really make their own decisions. On other issues, the centre decides or can give certain guidelines. If provinces are not capable of assuming certain responsibilities, then the centre can limit the risks and provide support to the provinces in these areas. Cooperation between federal units and the centre will be an essential part of establishing partnerships between those levels of state.

What is an autonomous region with the right to self-determination?

Some understand it as the right to leave the country, while others interpret it as meaning that the population of a territory can decide on certain issues, elect its own representatives or make its own policies. It really depends on how self-determination is defined. International law in most cases defines it as right to internal self-determination without right to secession.

Is there any risk of secession?

The hope of federalism is that you make it attractive for people to remain in the country they live in. On certain issues they can decide for themselves and on certain issues they cooperate with the centre. They are not completely ruled by the centre. There are no absolute guarantees against disintegration, but if the system chosen gives people room to roam, happiness and security and they feel they have a good life, why should they want to leave the country?

What is the situation of the cantons of Switzerland?

We don't use the term self-determination but we have a very strong notion that cantons should be able to determine their policies on their own. They can have a bit of their own identity. In this sense they have the right to self-determination. But the constitution does not say anything about the right to secede. A long time back, before federalism was introduced certain cantons wanted to leave the confederation. The centre intervened and mobilised the military. More recently we had one case in which part of a canton wanted to form a canton on its own. There were extensive debates and finally they agreed on a mechanism whereby every district and village could decide whether to be part of the new canton. We managed to find a democratic solution that took up the wishes of the people. For us, federalism combined with democracy worked as a conflict management tool.

RUPA JOSHI

Upwards from the Rupse Chahara in Kabhre village in Myagdi district, the Kali Gandaki river narrows as it tumbles and rumbles its way through a steep, deep gorge. The power of the muddy river as it pounds on the rocks can almost be felt a hundred metres or so above on the equally narrow track that winds its way treacherously towards Mustang. Yes, a track. One can't quite call it a road, not yet!

Travelling through this deep gorge between two 8000-metre peaks, there is a great sense of awe and humility. Maybe it's the timelessness of the river that down the millennia, has been relentlessly cutting through the tough rocks in its search for the southern plains. It makes one seem so miniscule, insignificant and transient. The rock face now sports graffiti in many places.

Walking along these precipitous slopes is nothing compared to the adrenalin rush as one bumps and sways inside cramped buses along the one-monsoon old gravel track. Once the gorge opens up to the wide Kali Gandaki Valley, where the river flows relatively sluggishly, meandering from one bank to the next, it is a different story. Pedals hit the metal as the buses hurtle forward on the straight stretches, blowing their pressure horns impatiently to scare off trekkers straggling along the road. The horns echo back and forth along the contorted and pristine trans-Himalayan hillsides.

"One has to blow the horn continuously," explained one microbus driver as he dashed over the river bed past Kagbeni. "Otherwise these trekkers won't hear us through their head-phonied ears!"

The road has been a bane for the woman near Rupse whose eatery now lies below the new road. It has proved a boon to the lad in Kabhre who had to give up quite a bit of his land for the road, and now is building a 'hotel' by the roadside. His neighbour, too, thinks it's heaven sent for transporting the sick and ailing to health facilities.

Some farmers in the Kali Gandaki valley are happy that their produce of fruit and vegetables is fetching them a better price in markets elsewhere in the country, such as Pokhara. Ironically, vegetables are getting scarcer and more expensive for many locals in Jomsom!

Scores of jeeps now ferry pilgrims to Muktinath, and for those who are tired, unhealthy or simply naïve enough to be fleeced, there are about a dozen motorbikes with daredevil drivers to zip you up the zigzag path to the temple doors.

These vehicles are also a boon to those tired feet that have trekked down from Thorung-La or Lo-Manthang, which now have the option of reaching their destination a little quicker. And if you're really in a hurry to see the sights, then you can bypass the road altogether. Take a plane to Jomsom or better still, chopper it all the way to the foothills of Muktinath! ●



Along the

“I have to blow the horn continuously or the trekkers won't hear”





The road up the left side of the Annapurna circuit is functional, but by no means safe. Buses trundle along narrow tracks past Rupse Chahara (bottom left and right), near Tukchey village (left) and Jomsom Bajar (bottom), where petrol is now an essential commodity (bottom middle).



Kali Gandaki



Deluge of words

When the Maoists joined mainstream politics, the language of threat they employed in public speeches surprised Kathmandu's media and urban liberals across the country. When they became the largest party in the CA and led the government, it got worse. They began to call themselves 'winners' and labeled the rest 'losers'.

The Maoists may not be in government anymore but nothing has changed. Just this week Baburam Bhattarai declared that his party would "smash the state into pieces". Puspha Kamal Dahal has announced that if the government



INTERESTING TIMES
Mallika Aryal

decides to use force against Maoist agitations it will suffer "the same fate former king Gyanendra did".

The other political parties haven't kept quiet either. Deputy PM Bijay

Kumar Gachhadar has spoken of the possibility of 'bypassing' the Maoists to endorse the budget. A UML leader recently accused the Nepali Congress of plotting to do away with the CA and establish presidential rule. And small political parties never get tired of blaming the big political parties for the impasse.

These are strong words. Never mind that the UML leader in question recanted. Who are they meant for? Are they meant to put pressure on those at the decision-making level? Are they directed towards leaders of other political parties? Or are they meant for public consumption, as proof that the politicians are actively engaged? It seems everyone is talking but no one is listening

The only people listening, perhaps, are the Nepali people. But they too are desensitised by sensational slogans. They know that when the Maoists say they are going to "crush the government into pieces", it is just another threat by a party that is sitting in a corner and licking its wounds. Similarly, when

It seems everyone is talking but no one is listening

the political parties talk about presidential rule, people scoff at the idea, because they know how strong people power is. For the people, these are all hollow threats.

In reality, they only listen because they have no choice but to do so,

given media coverage. But Nepali politicians just do not understand that it is not kosher to talk about politics when they have been invited to non-political events. There is a right time, right audience, and a right place for everything. Just because the cameras are rolling and the event has journalists in attendance doesn't mean that politics is all people want to hear about. It is callous and downright offensive to hear keynote speakers talking about crushing the government at the opening of a primary school.

What our leaders have also not understood is that the people do not want to hear any more speeches. If you have heard one, you have heard them all. What they want is action, not name-calling, finger pointing or threats: that's the easiest thing to do in politics.

The priorities for this government are very straightforward – end the impasse and write the constitution on time. The country's budget, prepared months ago, hasn't been passed. There are 60-odd bills waiting their turn. Only seven of the eleven thematic committees of the CA have submitted their drafts. With less than six months to finish writing the constitution, there hasn't been a more important time in our history for our leaders to be delivering on the promises they made to the Nepali people.

The CA election last year was not just about writing a new constitution. When we went to the polls, we voted to end years of uncertainty and insecurity, in the hope that the country would move in a new direction. Our leaders are so consumed with their power struggles that they have forgotten the most important player in all this – the people. Stop badmouthing each other, stop this flow of negativity and hatred, come together like you did during the April Uprising and break this deadlock. ●



KIRAN PANDAY



YOGI KAYASTHA

After fifteen years working in the Kathmandu Valley, biking daily from my home in Bhaktapur to work in Kathmandu or Patan, I decided enough was enough. I packed my bags and left for Simikot, headquarters of Humla.

Humla is a different world from Kathmandu. Human settlements range from 1500 metres above sea level in southeastern Humla to a staggering 4000 metres in the Limi valley. Simikot itself lies at a daunting but refreshing 3000 metres above sea level. Although the second largest district, Humla has a population density of just 7 people per square kilometre. Compare this with Bhaktapur, the smallest district, which has a population density of 1780 people per square kilometre.

The life of a Humli villager is a harsh one. Most live on steep mountain slopes and struggle to survive. Some seem content with their lot, but others bitterly resent it. Schoolteacher Nanda Bahadur Rokaya from Yangu village, which sits in a deep valley cut by the Karnali river, gestures at the gushing Karnali below and complains, "This river has been flowing for thousands of years but is of no use to us. It neither gives us water nor electricity." Rokaya's frustrations are shared by many of his fellow-Humlis.



Yet Simikot is an easier place to live in than Kathmandu in many ways. There are no power cuts, except during regular maintenance of the local power station. Potable water is abundant and telephone connections are good. Locals enjoy 25 TV channels and, thanks to the recent Humla Development Initiative (HDI), email and internet access too. Most Humlis haven't ever seen a traffic jam. The local biodiversity, which includes many medicinal plants, is

Remote Simikot beats crammed Kathmandu



(left) Gothi village, two days walk east of Simikot
(bottom left) Humli children from Yangu village,
(bottom right) Humli Buddhists doing a Thaikur dance
(below) Making *lakkad*, buckwheat bread



Lost in translation

Soon after I arrived in Humla on an assignment, a member of the field staff asked me, "Sir, *asuro sanga lakkad khanu hunchha?*" (Would you like to eat *lakkad* with *asuro*?) Perplexed, I asked what *asuro* was. He looked at me quizzically and answered "It's a pickle made from *choti*."

"*Choti?*"

It went on like this for a while, but I finally understood that he was asking if I wanted something akin to radish pickle with my buckwheat bread, which Humlis know as *lakkad*.

Humlis also use much simpler verb conjugations, like *aya* (to come), *gaya* (to go), *khaya* (to eat), *diya* (to give), and *laya* (to bring), with all pronouns. It has been established that Humlis speak a variant of Nepali popular during Prithivi Narayan Shah's day.

PICS: YOGI KAYASTHA

Becoming Humli

sure to thrill botanists. Simikot is hemmed in by high, snow-capped mountains, but the weather is generally pleasant. In May, for example, when it was a blazing 42 degrees in Nepalganj, it was a cool 20 degrees here.

However, Simikot is so remote it calls to mind Soviet-era Siberia. Unless you want to walk 7 days from Accham's Sanphe Bagar, you will have to hop on to two-50 minute flights, from Kathmandu to Nepalganj, and again from Nepalganj to Simikot, to get here. To make matters worse, this is the most expensive air route, and yet still half as expensive as the next best thing: choppering in from Surkhet. Even if you have the money, you're likely to get stuck in Nepalganj for anywhere up to a fortnight. Too many Humlis have missed exams or job interviews in Nepalganj because of flight delays.

The expenses don't end there. Most things in Humla are three to five times more expensive than elsewhere in the country since they have to be flown in. Consider this: an

egg costs Rs.30 (Rs.8 in Kathmandu), a kilo of sugar costs Rs.180 (Rs.55, Ktm), a litre of soybean oil costs Rs.360 (Rs.110, Ktm), a bar of washing soap costs Rs.60 (Rs.12, Ktm), and a packet of instant noodles costs Rs.35 (Rs.15, Ktm).

The government does subsidise rice and salt, and last year spent 60 million rupees transporting rice and salt from Nepalganj and Surkhet to Simikot. This is a well-meaning gesture. But like many Humlis, I wonder when the government will realise that it may make more sense to invest that money in job creation or sustainable food production. Maybe then, more people like me will flood into this remote paradise. ●

Yogi Kayastha is working in Simikot as Programme Manager of the Humla Development Initiative.

For more pictures, go to www.nepalitimes.com.np



Sabah unleashed



INDRA SHRESTHA

Malaysia could teach Nepal how to diversify its tourism

Malaysian states like Sabah and Sarawak are beginning to draw tourists away from popular hotspots like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Langkawi and Malacca. Sabah and Sarawak's islands, jungles, marine life and natural beauty are even beginning to rival more obvious attractions such as Kuala Lumpur's Petronas

Towers and Penang's beaches. While just 335,000 international and 15,000 local tourists visited Sabah two decades ago, that figure reached 750,000 international and 1,300,000 local tourists in 2008.

Sabah and Sarawak are neighbouring states in the north of Borneo, an island off the southern coast of Malaysia. Sabah's capital Kota Kinabalu, which adjoins the South China Sea, is a 2½ hour flight away from Kuala Lumpur. Many towns and ports in Sabah are famed for the natural beauty that surrounds them, and there are 50-odd islands to explore. The marine treasures of Sabah are a real treat for people from landlocked countries like Nepal. If the idea of lounging about on Sabah's gorgeous beaches worries those who don't want to get their feet wet, they can visit the interior for glimpses of rare animals such as the Orang-utan.

The Malaysian government has lent ample support to schemes to accommodate tourists in traditional houses, or 'homestays'. There are 228 home-stays within 100 kilometres of Kota Kinabalu. Such arrangements have boosted the development of tourism as well as the local economies.

Thanks to tourist dollars, there isn't a road in Kundasang, a mountain town much like Nagarkot, that isn't surfaced or a house without a car. Local businessman Bajau, who has hosted some Russian tourists, says, "the Malaysian government has really boosted tourism here and that's also helped us." ●

Indra Shrestha



DAVID KIRKLAND

Sneak preview

The tourism industry contributes 12.3 per cent to GDP in Malaysia, compared to a meagre 3 per cent in Nepal.

With an eye on bolstering tourism further, the Malaysian government launched a 'Mega Fam Trip' earlier this year. Journalists and tourism sector workers from many countries, including Nepal, got the chance to see Malaysia close up. The guests got a taste of Malaysian culture and saw the sights.

Many Nepali tourists have visited Malaysia already, using the services of travel agencies such as Marco Polo. One such tourist is Mohan Kaji Shrestha, who visited Malaysia with his family in September. "There's no question you'll have a great time visiting Malaysia," he says.

Malaysia is the first country to have hosted such an event. If Nepal is to come anywhere close to meeting its target of a million tourists for Nepal Tourism Year 2011, then such initiatives may be key.

The Himalayan
unstoppable

As we pull out all the stops, The Himalayan Times now comes to you loaded with Specials everyday. Spanning the gamut of life, your daily is loaded with something exclusive for everyone. Easy to expect nothing less when you've accepted the unstoppable.

Specials

- Sunday - Shopping Plus - info, bargains, discounts, destinations
- Monday - Hi Tech Plus - technology and gadgets
- Tuesday - Health Times ; Medical Board - Nepal's best doctors respond to queries ; Wheels - everything automobile
- Wednesday - Campus Plus - collegiate life ; Appointments - careers and jobs
- Thursday - School Times - everything kids should know
- Friday - Green - environment matters
- Saturday - Property Plus - weekend two pager focusing on real estate

Non-violent action hero

After two decades in the Nepali film industry, veteran actor Rajesh Hamal is as busy as ever. He has starred in 235 movies, but laments the fact that despite the progress made by the industry, it has not really been able to change. In this interview with *Himal Khabarpatrika*, Hamal candidly shares his opinion on violence in movies, the state of the country, and stresses that unity, not mutiny, is the answer.

How would you assess the Nepali film industry?

In the past 5 to 6 years, international cinema has grown significantly. However, Nepali cinema has not been able to match this kind of growth.

Why do you think Nepali films copy Bollywood movies?

Politics and the culture of neighbours influence a country, and the same goes for cinema. Today, after mimicking numerous Hollywood films, Bollywood is in a position to compete with them. On the other hand, what do we consider 'originally Nepali'? Is it the old traditional Nepal, or the modern Nepal? Today's Nepalis are very different and depicting them with *dhaka topi* doesn't make them authentically Nepali. We can have Nepali actors flying in rockets to the moon and still consider them authentic Nepalis.

How long do you intend to act?

I think this decision is one for the audience! An artist aspires to remain an artist throughout his life, just like Amitabh Bachchan.

When will we get an opportunity to watch a movie directed by Rajesh Hamal?

I have an interest in creating and directing movies. Very soon you will get to watch a movie directed by me, also starring myself.

You also happen to be involved in anti-violence campaigns.

It is also the responsibility of an actor to serve the nation. I feel the participation of a public figure can make a contribution towards such a campaign.



ANUP PRAKASH

“Actors could fly to the moon and still be authentically Nepali”

Most Nepali films glorify violence.

Art imitates life, and vice versa. Commercial movies may depict violence to entertain their audiences to an extent but they condemn violence and never justify the use of it.

Why hasn't the Nepali film industry dealt with political issues?

It's not as if Nepali films have avoided politics altogether. *Dusgaja* dealt with border issues between Nepal and India, for instance. But it may be that in a situation of political flux, producers don't want to risk dealing with controversial issues.

Hasn't violence ruled over Nepali society as well?

In the last 12 years there's been a misconception that societal change and rights can be obtained through violence. Just because freedoms were obtained does not mean that violence was right. To sustain what has been achieved and further reform Nepal we now have to move towards agreement, cooperation and debate.

Death wish

“Their throats are gonna burst,” shuddered my companion as the National Finals of the Global Battle of the Bands got underway. Accustomed as I was to the howls and screeches of our indigenous metal scene, I was rather more blasé. But I was still surprised that two of the five bands playing for a place in the London finals next year represented that niche genre so disproportionately represented in Nepal – death metal.

The event at the National Music Center in Pingalsthan last Saturday was as well-attended as the premises allowed, with scores of youths crammed onto the rooftop looking down onto the courtyard stage. Five bands vying to represent Nepal for the chance to win \$100,000 and a world tour – who'd blame them for screaming? The odd men out were the charming Sutra, who opened with a two-song set of flute, tabla, madal and guitar. Shouty, leaden rockers Alt-F4 followed, then came Jindabad, a melodic, intense rock combo whose compositions bore the mark of future stardom. But it was not to be this time around.

When E.Quals strode out with black Ts, jeans and swirling hair (*below*), it was clear who the audience was rooting for. It was a set only a metal fan could really appreciate, but give the devil its due: their crunching, tight, menacing songs of angst were impressive enough to sway not just the head-banging SMS voters, but also the judges. The contrast with forgettable fellow-metallers Kaal Bhairav couldn't be starker.

It's clear E.Quals are good at what they do, but one fears it'll come to nothing if the judges in London next year, like most music-lovers across the world, simply don't think death metal is any good. Perhaps ours should have taken that into consideration. ●

Rabi Thapa



RABI THAPA



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Equal Access mission is to create positive changes for large numbers of people in the developing world by providing critically needed information and education through locally produced and targeted content; the use of appropriate and cost-effective technology; and through effective partnerships and community engagement. We invite applications from qualified, experienced and interested Nepali citizens for the following position based in Kathmandu, Nepal in anticipation of the departure of the incumbent for an International PhD:

Country Director - Nepal

The Country Director will lead the overall organizational operations in the realization of its Nepal program; oversee general administration and financial management of the Nepal office; develop and maintain key partnerships and represent the organization to key donors and partner groups; have oversight responsibilities for staff and contract management; and lead resource mobilization efforts. This position will afford the appropriate candidate the opportunity to play a leading role in the development, maintenance and scaling-up of development communication programs to support national efforts towards reconstruction and long-term development in Nepal.

Qualifications/Essential skills

Must be prepared to join a growing organization and take on the challenges associated with growth, see personal advancement with growth of organization; an advanced university degree with at least 7 years experience working at a senior management level in international development; background in media or a demonstrated capacity to understand and manage development media programs is strongly desired; a thorough understanding of Nepal and its challenges; strong leadership skills, a consistent communicator, both written and oral; solid business management and excellent networking skills.

Please submit a cover letter clearly stating why you have applied for and how you are suitable for this position, contact information for three referees, and salary requirements. Please include an updated CV/resume and send to the following address or email, no later than December 05, 2009.

Digital Broadcast Initiative Equal Access Nepal

GPO Box No: 118, Lalitpur, Nepal. Email: eanepal@equalaccess.org

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for interview. Telephone calls will not be entertained. Women and people from traditionally marginalized groups are encouraged to apply.

Please visit <http://www.equalaccess.org/about-career.php> for detailed position description.

top of the world coffee

November 2009 - Three New Products!

(1) Coffee Lover's Holiday Sampler Pack

A great personal or gift item, packed in a unique lokta (traditional Nepali paper) box, for celebrating the holidays...in Nepal or abroad.

Buy now for US Thanksgiving, Christmas & New Year 2010!

(2) Thai Raming Coffee

A delectably smooth nuanced Grade A coffee hailing from the Thai highlands north of Chiang Mai.

A great "primer" for your possible winter trip to Thailand?

(3) New Flavours

Caramel Swirl, English Toffee & Toasted Almond

For guaranteed freshness order on-line at:

www.topoftheworldcoffee.com

Free home & office delivery...no credit card required!

"Placing Nepal on the World Map for Quality Coffee"



ABOUT TOWN

EXHIBITIONS

- ❖ **Exhibition 2009 of Nepalese Buddhism and Hinduism Art Painting** by Sudarshan Suwal at Summit Hotel, Kupondole, till 30 November.

EVENTS

- ❖ **Gadhimai Dharna**, symbolic demonstration against the world's largest animal sacrifice, with Hari Bansha†&†Madan Krishna, Patan Darbar Square, 13 November, 4-6PM.
- ❖ **Japanese Film Festival**, at Khopa Engineering College, Bhaktapur, 14 November, 10AM onwards,†4426680.
- ❖ **Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter... and Spring**, movie screening at Lazimpat Gallery CafÉ, 19 November, 6PM onwards, 4428549.
- ❖ **Nepali Art: In Present Scenario**, documentary screening on 28 November, 2.30-3.30PM and 5-6PM, Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, 5553767.
- ❖ **Patan Press Club** meets every Thursday at Dhokaima CafÉ, 6PM, 5522113.
- ❖ **Himalayan Buddhist Meditation Centre**, Tai Chi 10-11.30 AM Saturday, Yoga 8.30-9.30 AM and Meditation 5-6PM weekdays, Keshar Mahal Marg, Thamel, 4410402.
- ❖ **AWON Christmas Bazaar** with locally produced arts and crafts. 5 December, 10AM-3.30 PM. Hyatt Hotel,†awoncom@gmail.com

MUSIC

- ❖ **43rd Yala Maya Classic**, a classical music series, at Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka, 17 November, 5PM onwards, 5553767.
- ❖ **Music with Desmond Oiflattery and Anthony Correll**, at Lazimpat Gallery CafÉ, 18 November, 6PM onwards, 4428549.
- ❖ **HyJazz** every Friday evening by Inner Groove at the Rox Bar, 4489362.
- ❖ **Baja gaja** every Tuesday at Moksh, Pulchok, 7.30 PM onwards, 5526212.
- ❖ **Live band** every Friday and rooftop bbq everyday at Kausi Kitchen, Darbar Marg, 4227288.
- ❖ **Sunday Jazz brunch**, at The Terrace, Hyatt Regency with barbeque and live jazz by Inner Groove from 12-3.30 PM, 4491234.
- ❖ **Live Band Sensation** every Saturday till late with Aprilrush at Rox Bar, 4489362.
- ❖ **Jazz evening** at Delices de France Restaurant every Wednesday, 11AM-2PM, 4260326.
- ❖ **Some like it hot**, every Friday BBQ and live music by Dinesh Rai and the Sound Minds, Rs 899 at Fusion, Dwarika's Hotel, 7PM onwards, 4479488.
- ❖ **Happy cocktail hour**, ladies night on Wednesday with live unplugged music at Jatra CafÉ & Bar, Thamel, 5-7PM.
- ❖ **Nepali Ghajals** and songs at DiLounge Beijing Duck Restaurant, every Thursday 6.30 PM onwards, 4468589.
- ❖ **Rudra Night** live fusion music by Shyam Nepali every Friday, 7PM at Gokarna Forest Resort, 4451212.

DINING



- ❖ **Norwegian Salmon** every day 6PM onwards at Rox Restaurant, till 20 November, 4491234.
- ❖ **Live continental BBQ Fiesta**, exclusive BBQ Dinner†at Splash Bar & Grill, Radisson Hotel, from 6.30-10.30 PM everyday.
- ❖ **Chocolate, Coffee and**

- ❖ **Caramel**, every evening at The Lounge, 4.30-6.30 PM, 4491234.
- ❖ **Wine and cheese**, every Friday & Saturday at The Lounge, 5-8PM, 4491234
- ❖ **A cafe's cafe**, Dhokaima CafÉ, Patan Dhoka, 5522113.
- ❖ **Jazzbell CafÉ**, relaunched at Jhamsikhel, TGIF, 10% discount all day, happy hour 6-8PM, 2114075.
- ❖ **The Corner Bar**, 5-7PM, 3-11PM, Radisson Hotel Kathmandu, 4411818.
- ❖ **Al Fresco**, for homemade pasta, steak and freshwater trout, Soaltee Crown Plaza, 4273999.
- ❖ **Kakori**, for biryanis, curries and kebabs, Soaltee Crowne Plaza, 7-10.45 PM.
- ❖ **Chez Caroline** for French and Mediterranean cuisine, Babar Mahal Revisited, 4263070.
- ❖ **Mediterranean cuisine** every Friday from Greece, Italy and the Middle East at The CafÉ, Hyatt Regency, 4491234.
- ❖ **Teppanyaki** meat items and garlic rice at Le Restaurant, Gairidhara, 4436318.
- ❖ **Plat Du Jour** at Hotel Shangri-La, Lazimpat, Rs 600, 4412999.
- ❖ **Reality Bites**, The Kaiser CafÉ, Garden of Dreams, operated by Dwarika's Group of Hotels, 9AM-10PM, 4425341.
- ❖ **Starry night barbecue** at Hotel Shangri-La with live†performance by Ciney Gurung, Rs 999, at the Shambala Garden, every Friday 7PM onwards, 4412999.
- ❖ **Himalayan Rainbow Trout** at Hotel Yak and Yeti, Darbar Marg, 4248999.
- ❖ **Tiger for Breakfast**, breakfast everyday at 1905, Kantipath, 4215068.
- ❖ **Stupa View Restaurant**, for vegetarian creations & clay oven pizza at Boudha Stupa, 4480262.
- ❖ **Gokarna Forest Resort** for a variety of sizzlers at Tripti bar, 4451212.

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

Quest Entertainment



Prem (Ranbir Kapoor) has a simple motto: be happy, make others happy and keep the town happy. But these supposedly simple mottos almost always result in disastrous consequences. A case of mistaken identity leads Prem to kidnap Jenny (Katrina Kaif). Sweet and simple Jenny, brought up by indifferent and uncaring foster parents, longs to love and be loved in return.†And love for Jenny makes Prem turn over a new leaf; he becomes hard working and puts Jenny's happiness above everything else. But Jenny remains blind to the reality staring her in the face.

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

काम सानो ठूलो भन्ने हुँदैन । पसिनाको कुनै रङ र जात पनि हुँदैन । काम गरेर खान लजाउनु पनि हुँदैन । चोरेर, ढाँटेर, छलेर, लुटेर खान पो लजाउनुपर्छ । जो जहाँ रहेर जुन काम गर्छ ऊ त्यसैमा रमाउनुपर्छ, गौरव गर्नुपर्छ र समर्पित भएर गर्नुपर्छ । काम नै शक्ति हो, भक्ति हो र मुक्ति हो । कामको इज्जत गरौं, पसिनाको सम्मान गरौं ।

नेपाल सरकार
सूचना तथा सञ्चार मन्त्रालय
सूचना विभाग

AQUA JAVA
zing

12 Branches internationally
Now OPEN in Kathmandu

THIN CRUST PIZZAS
INTERNATIONAL GOURMET CUISINE
REFRESHING COCKTAILS
FLAVORED HOOKAHS
FREE WI FI
SPECIALTY COFFEE
10:00 AM - 10:30 PM

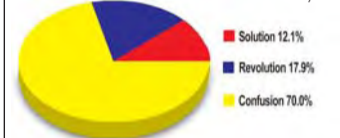
THAMEL
OPPOSITE: NEPAL INVESTMENT BANK
1st FLOOR
01-4254809

Times nepalnews.com

Weekly Internet Poll # 476

Q. Where will the Maoist protest movement lead us?

Total votes: 1,768

Weekly Internet Poll # 477. To vote go to: www.nepalitimes.com

Q. Who would you slap if you had the chance?

BEN'S COFFEE

Sanepe Road, Kupondol. Tel: 977-1-5011713

WEEKEND WEATHER

by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

The latest satellite pictures show a cyclone in the Arabian Sea that is steadily moving eastwards and has generated cloud cover in West India and Nepal. It is unusual for cyclones this time of year to affect conditions so far inland. Although the skies will only clear by Sunday, most of the clouds are unsaturated so conditions across the country, except for parts of western and northern Nepal, will remain dry. Rainfall is rare during November, which is traditionally the driest month of the year. Morning and night temperatures will be stable over the weekend, but daytime temperatures will drop by 3-4 degrees.



RECIPES

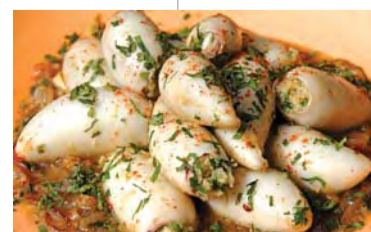
by GRAHAM SYDNEY

Couscous & Herb Stuffed Squid

(Serves 4)

12 medium	squid tubes
1 large	onion, finely chopped
3 large cloves	finely chopped garlic
½ cup	sherry
¼ cup	olive oil
½ cup	couscous
2 tablespoons	finely sliced spring onion
2 tablespoons	chopped coriander
2 tablespoons	chopped parsley
1 tablespoon	chopped capers
1 tablespoon	lemon juice
a pinch of red chilli flakes	
salt and pepper to taste	

Clean the squid by removing the head and skin. Cut the tentacles off the head and discard together with the skin. Chop the tentacles into small pieces and pan-fry for 30 seconds and set aside. Soak the couscous in cold water for 30 minutes, separating the grains with a fork every few minutes. Mix in the chopped squid, coriander, parsley, spring onion, capers, lemon juice and chilli flakes and season with salt and pepper. Fill the squid tubes with the couscous mixture, making sure you leave enough space, as the squid will shrink when cooked. Lightly fry the onion and garlic in half the olive oil and remove when soft. In the rest of the olive oil, on high heat, fry the squid tubes for 45 seconds on each side before returning the onion mixture and sherry. Reduce the heat and allow to simmer for 2-3 minutes until the sauce reduces by half. Serve immediately.



Summit Hotel
Somewhere special



KIRAN PANDAY

HISTORIC TIMES: Maoist protestors stand astride an equestrian statue of Jung Bahadur Rana in Bhadrakali during demonstrations on Thursday.



KUMAR SHRESTHA/NEPALNEWS.COM

UP IN SMOKE: The charred interiors of Lal Darbar after an electrical short-circuit caused on a fire on Tuesday that seriously damaged the building.



TAAN

KEEPING ACCOUNTS: A German tourist shows receipts given to members of his trekking group while in Manaslu by Maoists who extorted them for Rs 1000-1500 a head.



KIRAN PANDAY

PIT STOP: Members of a campaign to end domestic abuse against women stopped by Kathmandu Darbar Square on Monday during a tour across the country.



KIRAN PANDAY

ROYAL REWARDS: Ambica Shrestha, president of The Dwarika's Group, was honoured as Cruz de Oficial of the Order de Isabel la Catolica by King Juan Carlos I of Spain in New Delhi recently for her contributions to Nepal-Spain relations.

TOTAL SAVINGS to user
12,06,695
 Rs over 10 years

Customer Savings of Using a **REVA** i ElectricCity Car compared to Petrol Car

Saves 10 lakh on fuel costs over the next 10 years. Prices starting at 9.8 lakhs.

100% electric. Non-polluting with full option luxury features including Air conditioner.

AUTHORIZED DISTRIBUTOR FOR NEPAL

Eco Visions

Lotus Energy Complex
 Bhatbhateni, Kathmandu
 Tel: (1) 444 1394

Fax: +977 1 441 2924
 Email: info@eco-visions.com.np
 Web: www.eco-visions.com.np

Namaste Dhangadhi!

Yeti Airlines offers a promotional one-way fare of **Rs. 4500/-** (Inclusive of fuel surcharge) from 16-26th November 2009

Booking tickets are now easier with our hunting line:
4464 878

Clients of Everest Bank Ltd. and Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. can now book their flight-tickets online, just log on to www.yetiairlines.com

Kathmandu - Pokhara - Kathmandu	Daily 8 Flights
Kathmandu - Biratnagar - Kathmandu	Daily 7 Flights
Kathmandu - Bhadrapur - Kathmandu	Daily 3 Flights
Kathmandu - Bhairahawa - Kathmandu	Daily 2 Flights
Kathmandu - Nepalgunj - Kathmandu	Daily 2 Flights
Kathmandu - Janakpur - Kathmandu	Daily 2 Flights
Kathmandu - Dhangadhi - Kathmandu	Daily 1 Flight

Flight Route J-41

Corporate Office: Tilganga, Kathmandu
 Tel. 4465888 Fax 4465115 Reservations 4464878 (Hunting Line)
 Kathmandu Airport 4493901
 E-mail reservations@yetiairlines.com

Nepalgunj 081 526556 Bhairahawa 071 527527 Janakpur 041 693360
 Pokhara 061 464888 Biratnagar 021 536612 Bhadrapur 023 455232 Dhangadhi 091-523045/46

Yeti Airlines
 a great flying experience
www.yetiairlines.com

And we have lift-off

We have a problem. No, it's not that the peace process is about to unravel. Nor is it that the development process is completely stuck. No, the real national crisis is the crippling lack of cars and official residences for the soon-to-be-60-member cabinet. If MJF (Upadro) joins the government, which now appears likely, they will demand a bigger share than the rival MJF (Bijay) faction, but there are no more luxury vehicles for the new inductees.

Already, ministers are (literally) taking matters into their own hands. Last month, the Youth Minister smashed the windshield of her Corolla after it refused to pull her weight up the Kuponhole hill. This week, the state minister of agriculture slapped the CDO of Parsa four times (twice on each cheek) because he didn't have a **Big Car** for her when she arrived for a meeting. The CDO offered the other cheek, and is feeling rather like a punching bag lately: he was manhandled last week by the Birganj chapter of the YCL, which wanted a share of the customs loot.

Someone better do something about this shortage of ministerial

vehicles otherwise cabinet members are going to resort to armed struggle.



But all this still doesn't solve the problem of how to transport the expanded 60-member council of ministers for the proposed cabinet meeting at Everest Base Camp next week. Since it was his idea in the first place (#474), the Ass has several bright ideas to make it happen. The first is to drive in a convoy of SUVs into Tibet through Kodari to the Rongbuk Glacier. It doesn't matter which Base Camp, right? Besides, going to the Chinese Base Camp will emphasise the transboundary nature of the climate change problem. Bright Idea #2 is to take the entire cabinet on the army's Avro that seats 60, open the hatch above the Khumbu Glacier and **let the ministers freefall and paraglide** to Base Camp. By doing it this way, we will be killing two birds with one stone: we're drawing attention to adventure sports for the 2011 Visit Nepal Year while raising global awareness about climate change.



India and Nepal have signed a new air services agreement to allow airlines to fly a nearly indefinite number of flights between the two countries. But nothing is going to happen unless the state-owned airlines of the two countries get their act together. The less said about our own NAC the better, since the **motto of our national flag carrier** seems to be: 'Why You Complain? Look at the State of the Country'. But it is a matter of great consolation that Air India isn't much better, especially since it merged with Indian Airlines. The flight to Banaras the other day was four hours late. When it finally attempted to take off, the pilots slammed

on the brakes halfway down the runway and the cabin filled with smoke.

The plane taxied back to the apron, but the passengers were kept on board for an hour while mechanics pulled the engine apart in front of their eyes. When an asthma patient nearly croaked, they were finally allowed to deplane. No announcement, no info and AI staff hid their security badges so that the passengers would not recognise them. The flight was finally 'postponed' at 6PM and took off the next day. Air India doesn't need air marshals hovering six inches above Nepali territory in its cubicle on wheels in KTM, it needs better

planes and more polite ground staff.



The story of our ministers thrashing CDOs and vandalising their official vehicles reminds the Ass of a **particularly cantankerous American ambassador** who once lifted a UN human rights consultant into the air by his shirt collar and yelled obscenities at him in full view of guests at a reception. Now, why don't they send ambassadors like that to Nepal anymore?

ass(at)nepalitimes.com



Spread the warmth of friendship with winter wear from Peter England.

Enjoy the effortless warmth of friendships with Peter England Elements. Shirts, trousers, jackets and accessories crafted from cottons, wools, knits as well as denims. With contemporary weaves and comfort fits in vivid burgundys, purples, blues and charcoals to keep the cold out, and the cheerfulness in.

PETER ENGLAND
ELEMENTS

Exclusive showrooms: Putalisadak: Ph: 4225646.

Mahindra
RENAULT

Mahindra

LUXURIOUS | SPACIOUS
EACH IN A CLASS OF ITS OWN



LOGAN
The answer is here

- Intelligent Driver Assist System
- European standard safety
- Best mileage in its class
- Superior Ride & Drive comfort
- No compromise 5 adult seating with MAX individual headroom, legroom, shoulder space



XYLO
THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

- 2498cc mEagle CRDe Engine
- Rocking Audio System
- Spacious Theater Style 7/8 Seats
- Crisp Air-conditioning and loads of other well thought-out conveniences, you will truly appreciate the Xylo.



Agni Incorporated Pvt. Ltd., (Sole Distributor for Nepal)
Hattisar, Kathmandu, Tel. 4434610 Email marketing@agniinc.com.np URL www.agniinc.com.np

Call 4436721
we will be at your doorstep

Dealers / Agents: Birgunj: 051-521456, Dhangadi: 091-522058, 5260180, Nepalgunj: 081-521307, Pokhara: 061-532468/530107, Bhairahawa: 071-522929, Dang: 082-560278, Butwal: 071 541433/545986, Narayanghat: 056-526562, Birtamod: 023-541696, Dharan: 025-520397, Biratnagar: 021- 461178, Banepa: 011-664302, 664343, Hetauda: 057- 520838, Rajbiraj: 031-520442, 520345, Tatopani: 9741013350