

NEPALI Times

#526

5 - 11 November 2010

16 pages

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Bright lights

KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

The sun's still shining but the nights are perceptibly colder, and once we breast the coming wave of Tihar and Chhat festivities, we'll feel the oncoming cold all the more. With loadshedding

looming on the horizon, we've all got cause to celebrate a glittering festival of lights.

Practically speaking, the festive season is drawing to a close and many of us will be thinking of what's to be done at

school and work for the rest of the year. Ditto the politicians, who seem to be making some headway with the High-level Taskforce. Fingers crossed, they won't wholly disappoint us.

Even without that concern, there's plenty to be happy about for Ganga and Deepak, Bhutanese refugees who were resettled from Jhapa to the United States in 2008. They are now living with their extended

family in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and are featured in this week's photo exhibition in the Jhapa refugee camps, *This Time*.

p12-13

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XINHUA

BACK TO WORK

Dasain has been busy for those of us travelling to be with family. It's also been busy for those travelling away from family, namely, an assortment of politicians flocking to northern climes under an assortment of excuses. A whole brigade of Nepalis headed to China – the vice president, PLA commanders, Pushpa Kamal Dahal, and then the president himself, mostly in connection with the closing of the Shanghai Expo. Speaker Subhas Nembang dashed over to Canada, ostensibly to discuss issues of federal justice. And now we hear Prakash Man Singh (NC), Narayan Kaji Shrestha (Maoist), and Bishnu Prasad Paudel (UML) are meeting leaders of the British coalition government in London. Shrestha himself will tuck in a trip to Belgium and France as well.

If it took a statesman with the chutzpah of Jang Bahadur to break the age-old taboo against crossing the 'kalo pani', nothing seems to curb the very average Nepali politician's appetite for foreign junkets these days. With the exception of President Ram Baran Yadav's state visit and Dahal's rather unstately visit, it may safely be concluded that all these visits are totally gratuitous. Doesn't Subhas Nembang have more pressing issues to deal with in the Legislature-Parliament, or is he content to allow the futile expenditure of political and taxpayers' capital ad nauseam? Why are the NC/UML/Maoist trio

visiting London instead of thrashing out issues in the inter and intra-party meetings? Most politicians in Nepal who have complained about 'foreign interference' have subsequently gone running to foreign lands begging for interference.

The irony of it all, of course, is Chairman Dahal's message from the Chinese. Stung by the Maharagate scandal (more indicative of a clumsy plant from the south than a genuine Chinese interest in buying off MPs to secure a Maoist victory) and concerned by the ongoing instability in Nepal, the Chinese Government made sure its message got across to all and sundry: "Don't rock the boat". Nepal has increasing contact with China, but so far the indication is that the dragon nation is content to promote harmony in Nepal as long as Nepal does the same for China, getting by with a little aid from its friends. Dahal's talk of a vague tripartite agreement between Nepal, China and India was simply a cover for the embarrassment of not having achieved anything politically advantageous for himself or his party.

The message seems clear enough. With India busy with President Obama, and China too busy to be dabbling in Nepali politics, it looks like it's up to us to sort out our own house. Once this round of junkets is over, with Tihar past us, the real work must begin.

ON THE WEB

www.nepalitimes.com

MORAL GROUND

There is no moral equivalency between Col. Basnet and Kham ('Cocking a snook', Damakant Jayshi, #525). Basnet is accused of overstepping his authority as an army officer while waging a government-sanctioned war against Maoists (who were designated as terrorists at that time). Kham is a pure cold-blooded murderer who killed for his smuggling and extortion business in peace time (this may very well have been sanctioned by his party bosses, we don't know). I am not trying to condone Basnet for his alleged misuse of authority, but you cannot write an article implying that both Kham and Basnet are guilty to a similar degree.

Please also don't forget that Prachanda, as a leader of the Maoist Army, was directly supervising killing, maiming and torturing countless so-called class enemies during the period of war. I have seen many victims first-hand in hospitals with broken legs (victims said they were forced on the ground while Maoists stoned their lower legs), cut fingers, head injuries, etc. So, please do not put the Army and the Maoists on the same level.

Concerned citizen

- Maj. Basnet's motivation can reasonably be presumed to have been patriotism, an army officer serving during an internal conflict and trying to win. Mr. Kham's motivation appears to have been criminal.

But what they are both accused of is complicity in murder. That's a crime for an army officer just as much as for a civilian.

And both the Army and the Maoists have, as Mr Jayshi writes, promoted and protected their own, refusing to turn Maj. Basnet or Mr. Kham over to civilian authorities.

There is indeed a large difference between the two men's likely intent, but the crimes they are charged with are morally equivalent and so is the way they have been shielded from arrest in defiance of Nepal's courts.

John

PLASTIC LIVING

My morning starts by drinking milk that comes in a plastic pouch ('Bags to grab', Shahani Singh, #525). In the afternoon a fruitseller packs my fruit in a plastic bag. Late in the evening, I dump my garbage packed in a plastic bag. Forget the narrow acidic stinking galls in Kathmandu strewn with plastic packets of potato chips, instant noodles, pan parag, khaini etc.

I don't believe removing plastic bags from one store in Kathmandu can uplift the face of the entire city.

However, if NTB can bring a campaign program for NTY 2011 to make it a year without plastic bags, someone can hope for a change. In the meantime, let plastic bag manufacturers go to hell.

Rohit Rai

AWESOME SPEECHES

President Obama:

As you are in India, what about having a mountain flights of Everest, and a brief stop by in Nepal to give a one-sentence speech: "Maoists dissolve your YCL". This will help stabilise peace in the region in all three countries, India, Nepal and China, a base of one third of the world population ('Obama in India', Jaswant Singh, #525).

Bill Friday

NAILED DOWN

Mr. Beed, All of your ideas are fantastic, save one: using Indian currency is an atrocious thought ('Looking east', Artha Beed, #525). We're already landlocked by our southern neighbour and Indians, as it is, think that Nepal is an Indian 'pradesh'. Using Indian Rupees would be the nail in the coffin.

hange

EMPTY FOREHEADS

Loved your article. As a Nepali in Melbourne, I comprehend very truly the small celebrations we have here with a strange and almost mystical sense of triumph ('Festive fervour', Rabi Thapa, #525). I felt an overwhelming feeling of happiness when I did have 'rato tika' on my forehead, trying to hold on to it dearly as it effortlessly kept slithering down. As much as in the annoyance, I felt the nostalgia and warmth of Dasain I seldom

feel otherwise. I quote one of my friends in the US: "another year gone, another empty forehead", just to emphasise how much Dasain means to us, regardless of who or where we are, if we are Nepali.

add

CORRUPTION, INC.

Perfect example of what 10 years of functioning democracy can achieve and cannot achieve...CHEERS Democracy, you made my day.

chasing_che

POWERING BUSINESS

Ms. Pushpa Basnet, Ms. Luna Shrestha Thakur and Mr. Kushwala along with many other new Nepali entrepreneurs deserve our strong encouragement to be egged on ('Empowering young entrepreneurs', Pavaan Mathema, #525). For sure, they are the backbone of Nepali society with its diversity.

In recent years a flood of capital has been trying to enter microfinance institutions. There is an urgent need to improve their management and corporate governance to cope with the growing competition in order to improve its credibility for those investing their time and effort.

I have seen two kinds of microcredit distribution that are working quite differently but both of them have found their pace and momentum:

1. The Grameen Bank practice: When there is a sufficient amount of money available for lending, five different borrowers can unite to petition for a grant. The borrowers are usually village housewives who are determined and are ready for entrepreneurship. They could be related but what is necessary is they must have absolute faith in each other's integrity. Each member becomes the guarantor of the other. That way when the deadline for reimbursement comes each can count on the others. This principle has been practiced by the aforesaid bank since 1983, and it had disbursed 6.38 billion US dollars to 7.4 million borrowers by 2007.

2. The Chinese Diaspora way: There is hardly any place the world over where the Chinese people ain't arrived. My curiosity made me ask one of them how they manage always to prosper so rapidly. He

told me about the very old method that Chinese people have been practicing with success for ages.

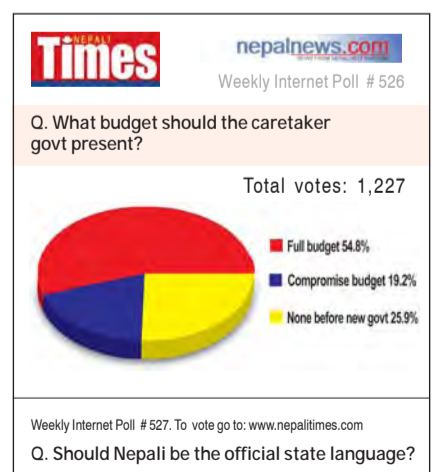
First off, they choose a destination and travel in a group of about a dozen. As they don't have visas, the easiest way is to embark upon an adventure of clandestine foray. When they arrive at their destination, each tries to earn his living mostly in Chinese restaurants as a dishwasher or kitchen aide. After say two years of stay, they decide to put their money together to start a new Chinese restaurant. When this restaurant starts making profits then another restaurant is opened, and this process continues until all of those previous participants have their own restaurants in a different town or agglomeration. Where there is a will there is a way.

Sargam

NEPALI GOMBAS

Nepali Times would like to make it clear that in saying "a Tibetan monastery was resurrected in Nepal" ('Tale of two gombas', Rabi Thapa, #524), we are in no way suggesting that the Namkha Khyung Dzong (Yalbang) monastery in Humla is a 'Tibetan' monastery. The reference is to the fact that the original Namkha Khyung Dzong monastery was in Tibet, and that the Yalbang monastery derives its spiritual tradition from Tibetan Buddhism, just as the Tumkot monastery does. Both monasteries are, of course, Nepali, and are funded, managed and maintained by Nepali devotees.

Ed.



Election hangover



MY TAKE
Damakant Jayshi

The Republican Party has already taken steps to lose the 2012 election. Fresh from an election victory – they have wrested the US House of Representatives back from their Democratic rivals and strengthened their presence in the US Senate – party leaders are already talking arrogantly. The incoming House Speaker, Republican leader John Boehner, has summed up the next two years.

“We’re going to do everything – and I mean everything we can do – to kill it, stop it, slow it down, whatever we can,” Boehner said on Tuesday as election results started pouring in. Arrogant? Yes. Effect? Disastrous.

The election results are a strong rebuke for Obama, who is now seen as someone who made a lot of promises during his election campaign but failed to deliver on them. It is a harsh assessment of the president, who was initially perceived by a large



KIRAN PANDAY

number of Americans and people around the world as transformative.

The reality is the Obama Administration has achieved in two years what President Bill Clinton could not in his two terms over eight years: giving the United States revolutionary healthcare reform. Besides delivering on his signature campaign issue, President Obama brought in a stimulus package for the collapsing financial sector and propped up an ailing US automobile industry.

There are some lessons here



Obama’s rebuke at the hands of the public mirrors the experience of the Maoists in Nepal

for politicians in the United States and elsewhere, including Nepal.

It might be easy for some Democrats and their apologists to blame it all on the global economic recession that began manifesting itself in 2008, and the unemployment in the US. What they might not admit publicly is the strong disconnect with the people, especially their own base, which wasn’t motivated enough to go to the nearest election booths. Boehner could face the same fate if he does not mend his ways.

Nepal and India furnish very good examples of this phenomenon. Rajiv Gandhi of India rode on a sympathy wave after his mother, Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, was assassinated in 1984. But the Gandhi-led Congress (I) party lost the 1989 elections. Don’t just blame the Bofors scandal. Arrogant Congress leaders and their disconnect with the voters did the party in.

The former Maoist rebels won the largest number of seats in the Constituent Assembly elections in 2008, though they

fell far short of a majority. That result was a rebuke to the Nepali Congress and UML, who had lost their grassroots support. However, this did not prevent the Maoists from acting so cocksure they refused to abide by written agreements. They made one ill-conceived move after another: forcibly removing the head priest (of Indian origin) at the holiest Hindu temple in Nepal, Pashupatinath; sacking the army chief on the pretext of upholding civilian supremacy; and enforcing an indefinite general strike. The high-flying Maoists, who acted as if they had the mandate to do as they pleased, were grounded in the aftermath of all three episodes, none more dramatically than in the public response to the strike this May.

Now Chairman Dahal is leaving no stone unturned to get back the prime ministership he himself threw away. One hopes his time in the wilderness, and lessons from America, will render him more reasonable and statesmanlike, for the good of his party and his country. damakant@gmail.com

THIS WEEK

High-level headway

The high-level taskforce formed to sort out the differences over constitution writing has resolved the issue of the judiciary. The Maoists had proposed bringing the judiciary under parliament. Now, the political parties have agreed to set up an independent judicial body to appoint and terminate Supreme Court tenures. The Constitutional Council and the Judicial Council are tasked with making recommendations for the appointment of the chief justice and other judges of the Supreme Court under existing constitutional provisions.

The taskforce also decided on a single federal citizenship with a provincial identity and declared the Nepali language the official state language, and dealt with some contentious issues in the report submitted by the Committee for the Protection of National Interest. The taskforce has been given a Friday deadline to resolve about 200 constitutional issues. The federal model and system of government are yet to be discussed.

Northern lights

President Ram Baran Yadav returned home Monday after his state visit to China. He attended the concluding ceremony of the Shanghai Expo and also met the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao. "This visit has further enhanced relations between the two countries", said Yadav upon landing at Tribhuvan International Airport. The Chinese premier also pledged Rs 750 million as grant assistance to Nepal. President Yadav has sent an invitation to Chinese President Hu Jintao to visit Nepal.

Election on

Two rounds of prime ministerial elections this week failed to elect a new prime minister. The sole prime ministerial candidate, Ram Chandra Poudel, received less than 100 votes each time. His party has 114 seats in parliament. The elections will not yield any results unless the UCPN (Maoist), UML and Madhesi alliance take part in voting. However, Poudel says he will only withdraw if there is a clear roadmap on the peace process and constitution writing first. The 16th round has been scheduled for 4 November.

Tough cop replaced...for now

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner’s Office on Tuesday deputed SP Bhog Bahadur Thapa as Chief of Kathmandu Police in place of SP Ramesh Kharel, who is leaving for Beijing on Wednesday to take part in a two-week security training program. There are widespread speculations that Kharel will be removed from office on his return. Kharel earned a reputation as a tough, incorruptible cop, but many believe he has earned enemies within the police force as a result of his commitment to better policing.

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Billing Boards

They may be ugly, but billboard advertising is a huge and growing business

RUBEENA MAHATO

Many may complain that they are Kathmandu's biggest eyesores, but streetside billboards are now the mainstay of the country's advertising industry and a major source of income for the municipality.

Stacked on top of each other on rooftops, obliterating the facades of new buildings and spreading across intersections, billboards have now become the city's new skyline.

There are 35 companies specialising in printing signage, and the number of registered sites in the city core is now

nearing 1,000.

"Advertisers prefer billboards because they offer a very cost-effective way of promoting products compared to print and television ads," explains Amit Gorkhali of Blitz Media. "They are also very visible, and relatively cheap."

Despite their rapid spread, however, hoarding boards remain an unregulated business. A Supreme Court ruling in 2006 banned hoarding boards near temples and heritage sites, but there are no fixed criteria on the size, location, building materials or safety standards required to get

a permit. Luckily no one was hurt when a storm blew down a giant hoarding board advertising a housing company last year, but it blocked the Ring Road for hours.

"It is very possible for similar incidents to take place in the future, we haven't learnt our lesson," says Awadesh Das of Ultimate Marketing, who has been advocating an insurance policy for hoarding boards. There are also examples of houses that have developed cracks because of the stress from scaffolds.

The municipality charges Rs 60 per square foot for hoarding

boards, but has not been able to regulate their haphazard growth. The huge billboards outside Maitighar and Singha Darbar cost about Rs 1.4 million in rental to the advertiser. Outdoor billboards now make up a full 50 per cent of Nepal's total advertising market.

"Technically we cannot object to people putting up hoarding boards on their private property even if it makes the city look ugly. We are, however, working on guidelines that will make people adhere to certain security standards," says Hari Bahadur Kunwar of the Kathmandu Metropolitan office.

Das of Ultimate Marketing says there should be a strict policy on size restrictions, locations and content of the ads. "The beauty of the city is being ruined because permits are granted haphazardly," he adds. "The idea is to promote products without irritating the visual sensibility of the people." He would probably concur with the widespread outrage over Coca-Cola's garish billboards in Venice, which obscure a section of the famed Doge's Palace that is under renovation.

As with most other sectors of the economy, unhealthy



It's big money

The expanding size and spread of billboards in Kathmandu are indicative of the growth in the market.

Although there are no accurate figures, industry insiders estimate the market of hoarding boards to be a whopping Rs 1.5 billion, half of the total advertising industry. "The figure is not big, if we take into account all outdoor advertising," Awadesh Das of Ultimate Marketing says.

The municipality earned Rs 10.65 million by taxing advertisers last year. Ten per cent of the city's hoarding boards, however, have been evading taxes, and the municipality estimates a 25 per cent decrease in revenue this year after the ban on all liquor and tobacco billboards.

The biggest boards are in Thapathali, New Road, Maitighar and Singha Darbar, where advertisers are paying between Rs 500,000 to Rs 1.4 million in rent every year.



PICS: KIRAN PANDAY



competition among agencies dealing in billboards has led to the city's disfiguration. Rival companies have been seen to place their boards on top of each other.

"Placement is the key, that is why companies want their boards to be placed in areas with high traffic flows even if they are already overcrowded," Gorkhali says. Ultimately, this is counterproductive because with

so many hoarding boards competing for attention from commuters stuck in traffic, the effectiveness of the message is diminished.

"Ten boards in one place does not make good business sense but every company wants to advertise in the same spot," says Balistha Shukla of Art Centre, the first company to start billboard installation in Nepal. 🇳🇵

Hoarding the boards

There are two types of companies working in hoarding boards. The first group have their own hoarding boards, flex printing facilities and in some cases, their own designers. They charge between Rs 300 to Rs 600 per square foot, including all charges, rental fees, and other taxes.

Others are advertising agencies that mediate with board owners, flex printers and authorities on behalf of the advertisers. They take about 15 per cent of the annual board rental. House owners are generally paid between Rs 50,000 to Rs 300,000 per year.

Humla's no Siberia



STRICTLY BUSINESS
Ashutosh Tiwari

It was as a schoolboy in Kathmandu in the '80s that I first came to know about Humla-Jumla. The names of the two districts were always bundled together, as if they were geographical Siamese twins. And the very name, Humla-Jumla, evoked such images of remoteness and difficulty that they could well have been tracts of arid land somewhere on the moon.

Our maths teacher used to joke that we should pay attention if we wanted to build bridges in Humla-Jumla someday. What Siberia was to the USSR, Humla-Jumla was to Nepal. Thirty years later, visiting Humla, it seemed things were a little different from what I had imagined, but not all that much.

Politics: Humla's politics are the same as in most places in Nepal. Humlis say that they elect their representatives, who then take up residences in Kathmandu where, engrossed in the

details of party politics, they hardly find the time to either visit Humla or raise Humli concerns in parliament.

Old Humlis complain that the nature of local politics has changed too. Young, politically active Humlis are more eager to trade blows on behalf of their political parties than for Humla's development. The result is that the old fear the young, and stay away from matters of local governance, and the young have splintered themselves into party-political factions – which makes getting anything done locally a maddeningly byzantine all-party appeasing task.

NGOs: NGOs get knee-jerk bad press in the Kathmandu media, in part because it fits in with the smugly unexamined narrative that 'NGOs are bad'. But the media never points out that in places like Humla,

both an elected local government and the private sector are absent. Either the locals fend for themselves as they have done for hundreds of years or they seek help. NGOs are there to help.

Indeed, in village after village, NGOs have helped construct taps, toilets, schools and trekking trails, transport food grains for distribution, vaccinate people against diseases, and share knowhow related to selling apples and herbs. It's hard to justify the unrelenting criticism of NGOs when they are often the only bodies that appear actively concerned about Humla's development.

Infrastructure: Humlis complain that they have not been able to use the mighty Karnali River, which just flows into and out of Humla. Because of Humla's harsh geography, this resource has not been utilised at scale for irrigation, drinking water, or hydropower. During the 10-year Maoist

insurgency, many suspension bridges were destroyed, rendering trade, transport and travel all the more difficult. A slow rebuilding of bridges is now underway.

These days, just as Nepalis living in the Tarai border

towns look at the wide roads being laid down in Nitish Kumar's Bihar and ask why we can't do the same, Humlis look at Chinese infrastructure on the other side of the border and wonder what's stopping the development of infrastructure in Humla and other high-altitude regions. Clearly, it's possible.

In many ways, Humla is hardly the moonscape I had visualised as a child. It's similar to most other places in Nepal: full of hard-working people who want to lead better lives as far as health, income and education are concerned, full of promise and potential for further growth in trade and tourism opportunities. Humlis may be hobbled by dysfunctional local politics and ignored by political representatives and national parties. Yet the district is inching forward, through NGO-assisted local efforts. 🇳🇵

Humla and Humlis really aren't all that different from the rest of Nepal

Eco exchange

Him electronics has announced that a customer can get Rs 15 off on every purchase of a Himstar CFL bulb, by bringing in an ordinary bulb in any condition. Himstar CFLs save 80 per cent power and come with an 18-month warranty. They are also available in warm tones.



Stay connected

Broadlink Network and Communication has launched Wi-Fi and internet-based telephone services that can be accessed through pre-paid internet vouchers. Calls between two Broadlink users are free.

Early savings

Save the Children has partnered with Bank of Kathmandu to launch the 'YouthSave' project, a multi-country learning



project to encourage low-income young people aged 12-18 in developing countries to save through formal sources. Supported by The MasterCard Foundation, the project will be implemented in Nepal, Colombia, Kenya and Ghana from 2010-2014 by a consortium of four organisations led by Save the Children.

Say cheese

Nepa Hima Trade Link has launched ultra-compact, interchangeable lens system digital cameras – the α NEX-5 and NEX-3. The models are the world's smallest and lightest interchangeable lens digital camera bodies, have new 14.2-megapixel Exmor APS HD CMOS image sensors, and take HD 1080i videos in AVCHD format.



New packs

Surya Nepal has launched Surya 24 Carat, a premium segment cigarette in Bevel Edge cigarette packs. Surya 24 Carat is priced at Rs 100 for a pack of 20 and is available in Kings as well as Lights variants.





MIN RATNA BAJRACHARYA

Growing wellness

Nepal has the potential to develop into a spa destination



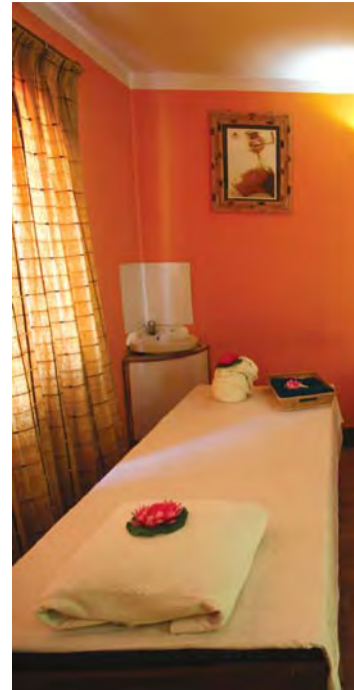
PICS: KIRAN PANDAY

PAAVAN MATHEMA

Going to a spa was once a luxury reserved for foreigners or those with deep pockets. The body twisting at the local *hajam* was quite enough for men and women preferred to splurge on beauty parlour services rather than bother with expensive body treatments.

But as the spa and wellness industry in Nepal has grown, it's no longer necessary to visit a five-star hotel; many independent spas have opened their doors around the city, and at affordable rates. Spa owners admit that their clientele is now an equal mix of Nepalis and foreigners. "The demand for spas grew as people started travelling and experienced spa treatments abroad," says Sadhana Tuladhar of Prana Spa. "Changes in lifestyle have also encouraged people to opt for spa services."

From ayurvedic to Thai and Swedish, spas here offer a whole



Pamper yourself

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Lazimpat
4420424

Chaitanya Spa
Sanepa
5547971

Serenity Spa
Thamel
4700248

Prana Spa
Darbar Marg
4221695

Zen Spa
Thamel
4700700

Himalayan Re-Treat Spa
Thamel
4700603

Harmony Spa
Boudha
4462996

Midas Day Spa
Darbar Marg
4230677

Gokarna Resort and Spa
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Hyatt Regency
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4491234

Radisson Hotel
Lazimpat
4411818

Soaltee Crowne Plaza
Tahachal
4273999

Yak & Yeti
Darbar Marg
4248999

Royal Hana Garden
Lazimpat
4416200

Shangrila Hotel
Lazimpat
4412999

The Fulbari Resort
Pokhara
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range of treatments, including traditional Nepali treatments. They're not just about massages either, and offer hydrotherapy, reflexology, facials, and body treatments. Spas have also expanded their services to cater to the beauty needs of their clients by providing manicures, pedicures, and even hairdressing services. "With local clients, our saloon is more popular," says Megha Chaudhary Shakya of Midas Day Spa and Saloon.

According to the Spa and Wellness Association Nepal (SWAN), there are about 20 spas in operation right now. Most independent spas are day spas and also offer medical consultations.

With Nepal Tourism Year 2011 just round the corner, SWAN is working with Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) and the Hotel Association of Nepal (HAN) to explore the possibility of developing Nepal as a spa destination. "The industry is growing and Nepal has great potential," says Hem Nath Regmi, Secretary of SWAN. "But there is a

need for us to develop the infrastructure and regulations to facilitate it."

At present, spas are concentrated in Kathmandu but there is room for them to expand into tourist destinations like Pokhara, Sauraha and the trekking areas. There is also a need to develop specialised manpower for the industry and guarantee the sourcing of the supplies needed to run a spa.

Spas have had to train their staff abroad or bring in foreign specialists for in-house training. Efforts are being made to set up training facilities in Kathmandu. Tranquility Beauty Academy in Lazimpat has been providing spa-related courses for beginners and professionals with certified trainers. "There is a very high demand for therapists in Nepal as well as abroad," says Bhuban Phaiju, Director of the academy, who also runs Tranquility Spa. "Therapists are among the highest paid in the hospitality industry and even basic education is invaluable."

The term 'massage' still has

negative connotations here and the spa industry has been trying to overcome that image. Spas often have to turn away male clients because they specifically ask for a lady therapist. "But the perceptions are slowing changing," says Rabi Shah of Zen Experience. "It has helped that security is now tighter, with police often raiding 'massage parlours' that provide illegal

services." Spa owners have been lobbying with NTB to launch a rating system for spa and massage facilities so customers can differentiate between the services provided. 🇳🇵

nepalitimes.com
The medium is the message #452
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EVENTS



Festive Mood, an exhibition of etching prints by young Nepali artists. 31 October to 14 November, 10.30pm to 5.30pm, Park Gallery, Lazimpat, 4419353, parkgallery@wlink.com.np, Saturdays closed

The Seven Henry Series: In Search of an Ideal Landscape, an exhibition of supracollages by the acclaimed Indic-British artist Syed Iqbal Geoffrey. Till 17 November, Siddhartha Art Gallery, Babar Mahal Revisited, Gallery hours: 11am to 6pm, 12pm to 4pm on Saturdays, 4218048

Planet Nepal Contemporary Art Exhibition, installation art and exhibition by various artists. Till 10 November, 5.30pm, Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, Gallery Hours: 11am to 6pm, Saturdays closed, 5521120

Media Discussion Series, screening and discussion on Shiromani Dawadi's *Surungdehki Saharsamma*, a documentary on radio stations operated by the Maoists during the war. 4 November, 3pm, Martin Chautari, Thapathali, 4238050, 4102027

Free Workshop on B-boying, organised by the famous B-boying team from *The Everest All Star A*. 13 November, 3pm, Moksh Auditorium, Jhamsikhel, Lalitpur, 5013554, info@katjazz.com.np

MUSIC

Starry Night Barbeque with live music by Cine Gurung. Every Friday, 7pm onwards, Shambala Garden Cafe, Hotel Shangri-La, 4412999



Gokarna's Rudra Night, live fusion music with Nepali style barbeque. Every Friday 3pm onwards, Gokarna Forest Resort, 4451212

Live music with J Ryan. Every Wednesday and Friday, 7.30pm onwards, Karaoke every Sunday, 7.30pm onwards. Irish Pub, Ananda Bhawan, Lazimpat

DINING

Boudha Stupa Restaurant & Cafe, enjoy wood-fired pizza with a superb view of Boudha stupa and free wifi, candlelight dinner options are also available for the romantics every full moon night. Boudha, 2130681

Singma Food Court, for the best Singaporean and Malaysian cuisine in town. Pulchok, 5009092 and Bhatbhateni, 4411078, foodcourt@wlink.com.np, www.singma.foodcourt.com

Ramalaya Tea Room, now open for dinner, experience Chef Mohit's creations from Cider-brined Pork Chops to Guava Cheese, also 10% discount on evening dinners to all *Nepali Times* readers when they mention this ad. Pani Pokhari, near Japanese Embassy, for bookings call 4006589, 4006589, www.rde.com.np/index.php/tea-room

Waffles promotion at The Lounge from 12.30pm to 4.00pm every day, **Vegetarian Buffet** at The Cafe every Tuesday from 6.30pm, and **Arabian Nights** at The Cafe every Friday from 6.30pm at Hyatt Regency, Boudha, Kathmandu, 4491234, 4489362

Dhokaima Cafe has a new menu, try the Blackened Norwegian Salmon and Grilled Shrimp Ajillo. Patan Dhoka, 5522113

Walter's Restaurant & Bar, offers gourmet cuisine in the regal setting of Babar Mahal Revisited. 4253337

Aqua Java Zing, soar high on low budget, buy one cocktail, get one free, buy two hookahs, get one free, only during happy hours from 2pm to 6pm. Ganesh Man Singh Road, Thamel

Alfresco, for homemade pasta and other lip-smacking delights. Soaltee Crowne Plaza, 4273999



Everest Steak House, an old-school joint for everything steak. A sanctuary for meat. Thamel, near Chhetrapati chowk, 4260471

1905 Restaurant, feast on roasted delights within this converted aristocratic residence. Walled ambience and green surroundings make it an oasis within the city. Kantipath, 4215068

Pumpernickel Bakery, get an early breakfast or brunch with interesting choices of bread and sandwiches. Experiment with their goat cheese or yak cheese sandwiches, or have a sip of coffee in the classy indoor dining area. Thamel, 7.30am-7pm, 4259185

GETAWAYS

Tiger Mountain Nepal, special Dasain & Tihar offers for expatriates and Nepalis at all lodges and camps. *Tiger Tops Chitwan, Bardia and Pokhara Lodge*, call 436 1500 for reservations, reservations@tigermountain.com

The Fulbari Resort & Spa, special Fulbari Festive Package for Dasain and Tihar. Till 15 November, Fulbari Resort & Spa,



Pokhara, 3 Days/ 2 Nights at Rs 6999 per person on twin sharing basis, 4461918, 4462248

The Dwarika's Himalayan Shangri-La Village Resort, overnight package with accommodation, dinner and breakfast. Dhulikhel, Rs 3500 (single), Rs 5000 (double), 10 per cent service charge extra, call 4479488 for reservations

Techniques of abstraction

The walls of Pipalbot Lifestyle at Babar Mahal Revisited are adorned with a unique collection of paintings called *Alchemy-watercolours and weaves*, made with a technique using watercolours and soap. The artist is Bangkok based Peter Delahaye, who specialises in abstract art. The collection also includes his designs, interpreted into natural fibre rugs by Tim Linkin's team of designers and weavers.

For those curious about his techniques and willing to explore their own, Delahaye is conducting a painting workshop on the theme 'hiding and revealing'. "It's a chance for people who perhaps have never painted before to experiment themselves and understand how I work to make abstract paintings," says Delahaye. The workshop will accommodate 10-12 participants for a 3-hour session in which Delahaye will demonstrate and explain how one of his paintings was made and the thought processes behind it. The floor will then be open for the participants to experiment with his and their own methods.

The workshop will take place on 13 and 14 November at Pipalbot, Babar Mahal Revisited. The cost per session is Rs 3,000 including tea, snacks and painting supplies.

Happy Dipawali
2067

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BIKRAM RAI

Mr Ford's in town

Ford Figoa sold 50,000 units in India in the first seven months after its launch and as Ford launches in Nepal, it is hoping to replicate this success. "We expect 70 per cent growth from the Asia-Pacific and African region. Nepal is part of this strategy and an important market for us," says Michael Boneham, President and Managing Director, Ford India.


Hatchbacks and compacts have dominated the car market in Nepal and Ford has made an apt entry with its first small car, Figoa. In fact, Nepal is Figoa's second export market. Boneham claims that with Ford, Nepali customers will get value for their money and enjoy a low cost of ownership.

Ford has opened its new dealership with GO Automobiles under Golchha Organization to market its cars here. Along with Figoa in the hatchback segment, Ford is rolling in Fiesta, a sedan, Ranger, a pick-up and the more familiar Everest, an SUV.

"Figoa and Fiesta have been made for

Indian roads and are thus built to run on road conditions similar to Nepal," says Akash Golchha of GO Automobiles. "Ranger and Everest, which come from Thailand, have fantastic off-road capabilities."

Ford's new showroom in Thapathali is already showing off these models and the service centre in Swayambhu opened with a three-day Ford Carnival. The event was a family affair, and showcased Ford's range while offering facilities like spot exchange, finance and insurance along with games and refreshments. Spare parts are readily available and Ford also makes child parts, which allows the customer to change independent components at a lower cost.

"Our target is to sell 600 units during our first year," says Golchha, and GO Automobiles might be on the right track to achieve that target, with bookings for 100 cars even before the launch. 

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Help! I'm on Everest



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DHANVANTARI
Buddha Basnyat, MD

Can you imagine Everest climbs becoming so popular a visit to the top of the world will be like going to Disneyland? The way helicopter technology has taken off, it's now possible to hover at 9,000m in a Eurocopter. This can only be described as revolutionary, as previously, helicopters could barely fly up to 5,500m.

Last spring, Swiss pilots and climbers, working in tandem with Nepali pilots, successfully rescued Spanish climbers at an

elevation of 7,000m in the Annapurnas. They not only saved lives but also made history. Ironically, their record-breaking feat will tempt many climbers to ascend higher and take more risks.

Presently, helicopters predominantly help trekkers suffering trauma in the mountains, life-threatening altitude sickness and its complications, severe hypothermia and frostbite, neurological problems like strokes, and acute visual compromise due to the hypoxia (low oxygen) of the mountains. Now, climbers with similar problems at much higher altitudes than trekkers (>6000m)

may be whisked off the mountains. Imagine how the 1996 Everest tragedy, which Jon Krakauer wrote about in the bestseller 'Into Thin Air', might have played out if Eurocopters were around then?

The rescues are as dramatic as the picture suggests. The helicopter hovers above the rescue area while an experienced climber slides down a cable from the helicopter. He lowers himself down to the injured climber, forms a human sling, and both are then carried to a safe area. But what about those fierce Himalayan winds when you are dangling from the end of a cable with blades of ice surrounding you? Clearly, the pilot has to be very competent, a real-life James Bond! Swiss pilots, renowned for their rescue work in the the Swiss Alps, are the most experienced in this regard.

The famous Dr Oswald Oelz, a physician-climber, has clear-cut views on rescue in the Himalayas. "You are in part killing the adventure. If you get into trouble you just call a helicopter. In the past you either had to fight your way out or you died," he says. He may have a point. Unless you are that foolhardy climber stuck on a Himalayan precipice. ❏



KIRAN PANDAY

TIME TO REAP: Potter's square in Bhaktapur was all gold on Tuesday as the locals winnowed rice from the fresh harvest.



BIKRAM RAI

ART OF THE ORDINARY: French Ambassador Jean-Charles Demarquis opened the Planet Nepal Contemporary Art Exhibition at KCAC, Jhamsikhel on Tuesday. The artworks were showcased at the Planet Nepal festival.

GREEN SCENE

Plastic-free Ilam

After a month-long campaign and trial period, Ilam Municipality has completely banned the use of plastic bags in the city. People now take a jute bag with them from home when they go shopping. Shopkeepers use either paper or leaves to wrap goods if customers don't have their own bags.

Tea entrepreneurs have agreed to use Nepali paper to package tea. The municipality has planned to maximise the use of paper and ban plastic use, except for readymade goods like noodles and biscuits wrapped in plastic bags.

The municipality recalled polythene bags

from all shops and a team led by municipality executive officer Yubaraj Dahal has been monitoring the market. If a shopkeeper sells goods in a polythene bag he will be fined Rs 500, while shoppers will be fined Rs 200 for using them.

Dahal argues that the drastic steps were necessary as plastic was littering an otherwise clean and green Ilam. The municipality has set aside 38 ropanis of land (>19,000 square metres) for processing degradable waste. "Our goal is to develop Ilam as a green city within two years by processing all the waste generated here. The Finnish ambassador has promised support, and has already visited the proposed site."

Ten thousand trees will be planted along either side of the roads within the municipality, and in deforested areas. A park is being constructed in Shera village, ward No. 3, next to the proposed processing site.

Hoarding boards advertising cigarette and liquor brands have already been removed from within the municipality, which has also implemented plans to attract tourists for Nepal Tourism Year 2011. ❏
Prabhat Bhattarai



AWARDING EXCELLENCE: Rotary International District 3292 established the Gopal-Kamala Raj Bhandari Rotary Award for Vocational Excellence, to be awarded once in two years to those making outstanding contributions to society. The award is worth Rs 1 million.

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WEEKEND WEATHER by NGAMINDRA DAHAL

Although there were predictions of heavy rain during the festive weeks of October, the Met office records of the Valley show that the total rainfall was below normal (only half of the monthly quota). November marks the driest month of the year with little hope of any rain. Satellite composites of Wednesday morning show no signs of the early arrival of the westerlies, nor are there any other sources to feed the clouds with moisture. A high-pressure system rules the current weather pattern of northern India and Nepal. Days will be sunny with occasional interruptions of passing clouds and clear nights. Open night skies mean a further drop in morning temperatures, by 1 degree Celsius a week. Enjoy autumn weather and a rain-free weekend ahead.



FRI SAT SUN



23-11 23-11 21-12

Let's talk about porn

POLITICALLY CRACKED
Indu Nepal

I am concerned that the title of this article might get the *Nepali Times* website banned because the government has recently decided that websites that include 'sex' in their content are dirty and should not be accessed.

The initial list of banned websites included explicitly adult websites along with more innocent ones, including the website for punk band the *Sex Pistols*, the movie *Sex and the City*, and the news aggregator *The Huffington Post*. It showed that the authorities, in this case the Nepal Telecommunication Authority, are completely out of touch with basic cultural and media milestones. It also highlighted the fact that sorting out the wheat from the chaff is an incredibly difficult task.

The Home Ministry said the ban was enforced because young people are addicted to porn, and are running around crazed committing sex crimes. Except there have been no studies on the link between porn and crime in Nepal and there are no numbers to prove there is one. In fact, sex crimes actually declined following the legalisation of



RICHARD BULL

pornography in Denmark in 1969. This is not to diminish the role of aggressive law enforcement, longer prison sentences, scientific investigation methods, and community programs in curbing crime. What was remarkable in Denmark, however, was that as soon as the blue stuff became easily available, interest in pornography went down and sales of all kinds of porn material declined.

In the mainstream newspapers, there seems to be an unwillingness to challenge the wisdom of the ban, perhaps because talking about sex or

images of sex openly isn't very becoming in Nepal. This ban, however, isn't just about porn but what could come after. If the reason is that porn is simply 'bad', then it is not and should not be the government's job to enforce morality.

There are legitimate arguments about the vices of the porn industry. Studies have shown that child pornography is the fastest growing form of porn on the internet. Many countries have restrictions on child porn and forced participation, and those producing or marketing porn must register their activity and

SEE NO EVIL: Banning porn might be harder than just blocking websites, as this stall at Pokhara Airport suggests.

pass appropriate inspections to address these concerns. Around 10,000 porn films are made in Hollywood every year and, as most of Tiger Wood's mistresses will testify, there are women who do want to make a living out of it. That illegal activities are present in an industry is not always an argument for banning the whole industry, otherwise most industries would be banned.

The clumsy attempt to ban internet porn reveals the idiocy of those in charge

The real problem is that of censorship. This infringes on two pillars of a free society – freedom of expression and freedom of information. Conversely, the restriction of these freedoms is essential to totalitarian societies such as China and Iran. If the government is allowed to restrict freedom of expression and information because of a shallow argument like 'porn is bad', how long until editorials that 'threaten stability' are prohibited?

Like the body searches on the road every night, the government has implemented the ban as an easy fix for crime. The fact that it has failed to demonstrate maturity and intelligence is all the more reason we should be wary of such attempts to limit individual freedom. Honestly, it might be a better use of their time if the bureaucrats educated themselves about the *Sex Pistols*. I would be happy to lend them a CD. 📀



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A new life

ALL PICS: KASHISH DAS SHRESTHA

This week, Kashish Das Shrestha opened a photo exhibition (organised by UNHCR and curated by photo.circle) in the refugee camps of Beldangi and Sanischare in Jhapa, portraying the lives of those who have left for resettlement in the United States over the last three years. *This Time* features photos from Atlanta, Baltimore, and Pittsburgh, and is part of a larger photo and video project on the lives of resettled Bhutanese refugees in six cities across the US.

Among those featured in *This Time* are Ganga and Deepak, who moved to New York in June 2008 as part of the resettlement program. In March 2009, *Nepali Times* ran a story on Ganga and Deepak, who had been dating in the refugee camp in Jhapa and got married in New York. This year, Kashish Das Shrestha revisited the families, who have since moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Ganga and Deepak now have a daughter, Dipisha, and both work in a fruit packing factory. They often get overtime and use the opportunity for extra income as Ganga's parents are around to take care of the baby while they are at work. 🇳🇵



Ganga's siblings Bishnu, Yubraj and Bhagirathi in the Neopaney family's apartment in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The family's second oldest daughter, Tuka Devi, continues to live in New York with relatives while pursuing her education.



nepalitimes.com
Home away from home #442



Ganga and her daughter Dipisha, who was born in New York last year. She moved with her family to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, soon after.



Virtual reunion

It has been three years since Ganga saw his aunt Shanti, who left Beldangi-2 refugee camp in Jhapa for the US. When he saw her full-size photo (below), tears filled his eyes. Shanti now runs a shop in North Dakota.

Many refugee family members have been separated during the resettlement of the last three years. They may have been able to write to each other and sometimes chat over the phone, but thanks to the ongoing exhibition *This Time*, those left behind now have the chance to actually see how their friends and family are doing in the United States.



PICS: GOPAL GARTOULA

Sancha Maya Tamang used to live in Beldangi-1, Refugee Camp Sector D. She's now in Georgia. Secretary at the camp TB Gurung, after seeing a picture of her whipping up some hot and sour *chana chatpate*, says, "It's strange to see her there, but I'm happy."

Altogether 36,618 refugees have been resettled in eight countries in the last three years.

Gopal Gartoula



The Neopanay household in Sanischare camp, Jhapa, now occupied by another family.



Ganga and Deepak live next door to Ganga's parents in Pittsburgh.

Guru of tea

Dambar Krishna Shrestha in *Himal Khabarpatrika*,
2 October-1 November

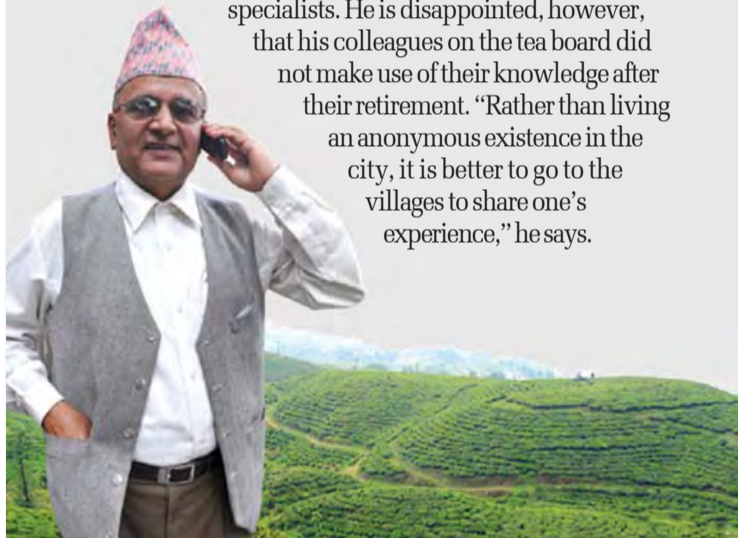
हिमाल
खबरपत्रिका

Taranath Sharma retired from his job as the executive director of the National Tea and Coffee Development Board six years ago but that has not stopped him from travelling across the country teaching farmers about the benefits of tea farming. He has been involved in the development of tea farming in Nepal for the last thirty years. Farmers in Ilam, Panchthar, Jhapa, Terathum and Dhankuta fondly call him the teacher of tea.

He first learnt about the commercial farming of tea from Robert William, who frequently recounted the success of Ugandan farmers in tea farming. This inspired Sharma to start tea farming with four farmers in Ilam nearly 35 years ago. Today, tea farming has spread to 18,000 farmers in five districts.

Wherever Sharma goes, he takes tea farming along. Thanks to his initiative, tea cultivation was begun in Nuwakot, Sindhupalchok, Dolakha and Ramechhap. Now he is visiting the villages of Bhaktapur and Kabhre to explore the possibilities of tea farming there. He is also working to introduce a cooperative approach to tea farming. A National Tea Farmers Cooperative has been recently set up for the purpose. "A cooperative approach will help in the commercialisation of tea farming," he says.

Sharma himself has cultivated tea on 7.5 hectares of land in Panchakanya. His two sons are also working as tea specialists. He is disappointed, however, that his colleagues on the tea board did not make use of their knowledge after their retirement. "Rather than living an anonymous existence in the city, it is better to go to the villages to share one's experience," he says.



Missing goats

Sagar Pandit in *Naya Patrika*, 2 November

नयाँ पत्रिका

The Bagmati Zonal Office of the Nepal Food Corporation has been found guilty of 'disappearing' 130 goats from the 4,000 that were brought for sale to Kathmandu during Dasain. The Corporation had claimed that 250 goats had suffocated to death in godowns in its report. An investigation carried out by the National Vigilance Centre, however, found that only 120 goats had died, confirming the corruption charge.

A team led by Police Inspector Indra Bahadur Dangi of the Vigilance Centre excavated the site where the carcasses were buried. "The dozer could not pull out more than 120 carcasses from the site. There is clear evidence of corruption," Dangi said.



An argument ensued between Corporation officials and the probe team members when the media was told about the number of carcasses found. Corporation staff accused the investigation team of incompetence. But if

the Vigilance Centre is to be believed, the Food Corporation secretly distributed goats to VVIPs during Dasain. Goats were presented to secretaries, directors and other high-level officials as Dasain gifts. And when the accounts did not match, Corporation staff simply inflated the number of dead goats, the probe team alleges.

Chief of Bagmati Zonal Office of the Food Corporation, Amar Bahadur Khadka, has denied the charge of corruption. According to him, goats died in previous years too. Khadka also accused the Vigilance Centre of conducting the examination in a slapdash manner.



KIRAN PANDAY

Budget, when?

Payshal Acharya in *Nepal*, 14 November

नेपाल

The special budget for four months is about to run out. Warnings of an economic crisis if a full budget is not presented within two weeks have been doing the rounds. If the government and the opposition party don't sort it out to pave the way for a budget, even the civil servants won't be paid their salaries from next month on.

The target rate of economic growth has not been achieved because in the last three years, the budget has not been presented on time. Delays in the budget have prevented the implementation of major plans and led to development budgets being frozen. Local governance is still weak, and it is difficult to implement the budget at the grassroots level.

Major projects have been stalled. The government's policies and plans for the new fiscal year are dependent on the budget, too, so investors are waiting in confusion for new policies to be announced. Revenue has also gone down because new interest and taxation rates have not been announced. Revenue increased by 24 per cent last year but this year is expected to grow just 10 per cent. This is the lowest growth rate the country has experienced in five years. In turn, this

decrease in revenue will affect the size of the budget next year.

The delay in budget presentation will also affect progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, and in increasing job opportunities, narrowing financial disparity, and achieving regional balance and long-term economic plans.

Finance Minister Surendra Pandey says that there are no constitutional barriers to presenting the budget. "We are under a compulsion to present the budget immediately to prevent further economic crisis," Pandey says, adding that when the new government is formed, it can always make modifications to the budget.

An option is for the 22 parties to bring out a consensus budget. But the main opposition, the Maoists, have refused to allow the introduction of a full budget under the caretaker government. Maoist leader Dev Gurung says, "We need to form the new government fast and then bring out the budget." Gurung adds that the interim constitution does not allow a caretaker government to bring out the budget and that the law has to be followed under all circumstances.



Smoke – Economic crisis
Water tank – Budget 2076/78
"Not now. We haven't forged a consensus yet."

कान्तिपुर Batsyayan in *Kantipur*, 3 November

Cleaners gathering dust



NAGARIK

Arjun Subedi in *Nagarik*, 1 November

नागरिक

Cleaning vehicles donated by the Chinese government worth millions of rupees remain unused because of government inefficacy and tardiness. Two months after

their arrival, they are still parked in the Kathmandu Metropolitan premises. The arrival of the vehicles was delayed by 10 months because of legal hassles. The Metropolitan complains that the Transport Management Department did not register the buses. The transport office, on the

other hand, claims the vehicles weren't brought in for registration.

Chief of the Environment Management Department of Kathmandu Metropolitan, Rabin Man Shrestha, says that all due process had been followed, but the transport office demanded COP (Conformity of Production) documents. "The Chinese companies then sent the documents through email," Shrestha adds, "but the department is now refusing to register without paper documents."

The Transport Department, however, denies it has received any applications for vehicle registration at all. "It has been two months since the vehicles have arrived but they have still not applied for registration. And they are blaming us?", wonders Director of the Transport Department Prem Kumar Singh.

The Chinese Government donated 108 cleaning vehicles, ambulances and road sweepers worth Rs 300 million to Kathmandu Metropolitan City following the visit of the foreign minister to Beijing last year.

American dreams

Makar Shrestha in *Kantipur*, 3 November

कान्तिपुर

Indra Kumar Tripathi, who teaches at a school in Malekhu, was in New Road this Tuesday filling in a DV (Diversity Visa) lottery form. This is his eleventh attempt. His wife Gayatri was trying her luck for the ninth time. The husband-wife duo has been filling the forms in every year, hoping to get lucky and fly to America one day.

"There are no jobs in Nepal and there's no law and order either," Tripathi says. "We don't see a good future here." In the crowd that had gathered outside the DV centre, there were not only youths like him but many older and experienced faces as well.

In a cyber café in Kathmandu, Santosh Khatri of Kapilbastu was filling in DV forms with his wife Sadhana, who works at Mega Bank. Khatri, who is trying for the first time, accused the political leaders of ruining the country. "If things were fine here, who would want to leave their loved ones and move to an unknown place," Sukriya Giri of Bhaktapur exclaimed.

Every year, towns across the country witness a large number of people lining up to apply for the lottery. Wednesday is the last day for submitting the DV forms this year. Nepalis who have completed 12th grade are eligible to apply for the DV. Two years of work experience in an occupation recognised by the US Labor Department are also accepted in place of a degree.



HIMAL KHABARPATRIKA 2-16 November

COVER STORY

Criminalised by casinos
Gambling addicts who have lost their lives
Industrialised crime

Analysis

The China Syndrome
Unpredictable and immature Maoist overtures
Purshottam Dahal: Let's learn from Jung Bahadur

Editorial

Political festivals

Report

Acute ideological division in the Maoist party
Ram Karki on communism and nationalism
The lives of the handicapped
Harvest season
Nice rice

Opinion

Tika Ram Bhattarai: So what if the CA fails?

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Rajesh Hamal
राजेश हमाल

**NEPAL'S No.1
FRUIT JUICE**

Eat, bray, love



We have the eating part all sorted out this Tihar. Love is taken care of because the parties are all pretending to have intercourse. It's the braying I'm worried about. What is the Ass going to do to help the process along? All suggestions to [ass\(at\)nepalitimes.com](mailto:ass(at)nepalitimes.com).



It is the time of year when each animule has his or her day. The crows are worshipped on Crow Day on Thursday. Dog Day on Friday is actually a national holiday. Cow Day on Saturday is when guys are actually holier than on other days. But why no Ass Day? Why doesn't this asinine country have a day set aside for us donkeys?

The whole of this week, the only decision the prime minister took during his cabinet meetings was to declare next Monday a national holiday. Yay! It seems the only way to have **Donkey Day** is to take a delegation of donkeys to Baluwatar and present the Take Care Prime Minister with a Gyapan Patra.



While we proceed to finish off the goats that somehow escaped decapitation over Dasain (see rescued goat headed to Budhanilkantha, above) it may be time to ask ourselves what would have happened to Nepal's rankings if Transparency International had found out about the goings on at the Food Corporation. Nepal would have pipped Afghanistan to be declared Asia's most corrupt country.

Apparently the big boss at the **Food Corruption godown** at Thapathali declared 250 goats were dead on arrival, so the chyangras were written off. The high mortality rate, however, raised alarm bells and the Auditor General ordered dozers to exhume and count the ex-goats. Forensic examination at the crime scene uncovered the remains of only 25 bokas and khasis. At the rate of 15,000 roops per goat, means someone made a cool 33.75 laks. Niiiiiice.



And now to politics where, I am glad to report, there is nothing new to report. Everything is where it was last week, and all is hunky dory. BRB's barbs are getting a little barbier, and PKD tried to frame his comrade by sending his name for a Nepal seminar in Delhi so his 'Indian connection' would be exposed. Awesome is up to his old tricks.

By the looks of it the party is headed for a three-way split, and to say that the tirades in the Baddie media are vicious may be an understatement. The Maoist press has such a fearsome reputation that even non-Maoist publishers have launched Maoist-looking newspapers to extort ads from businesses.

There is a slogan going around: "If not Ram Chandra then Ram Baran." The president may not endorse this, but someone should tell the Baron to order his **chakaridars** not to close down the airport at peak hour just because he is landing or taking off. NOTAMs for VVIP movement are a vestige of our feudal past and should be abandoned.



Had been ignoring Suzie Q because she hadn't done anything outrageous for a while. But after her limo got stopped by the Army while she was on her way to send off Ram Baron, she vented venom and scorn at the PM and the COAS. Then she went to the Reporting Club and declared that the army was getting too big for its boots and there would be a military coup unless RCP stepped down. Like Daddy like Dotter. Remember Girija Bau in 2004 unleashed his hired goons to unleash mayhem on the streets of the capital after Kingji's army's stopped him from driving to the tarmac to board a flite to Biratnagar? The Ass' Maruti had its windshield shattered in that riot. Well, the real reason for Suz Ma'm's frayed temper was that she wasn't included in the Prez's China entourage.



Looks like after a slew of China visits, everyone and their grandmother is headed south. Going to India are ex-kingG, Lion Brave and Sun Brave. Last one leaving turn off the lights.

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