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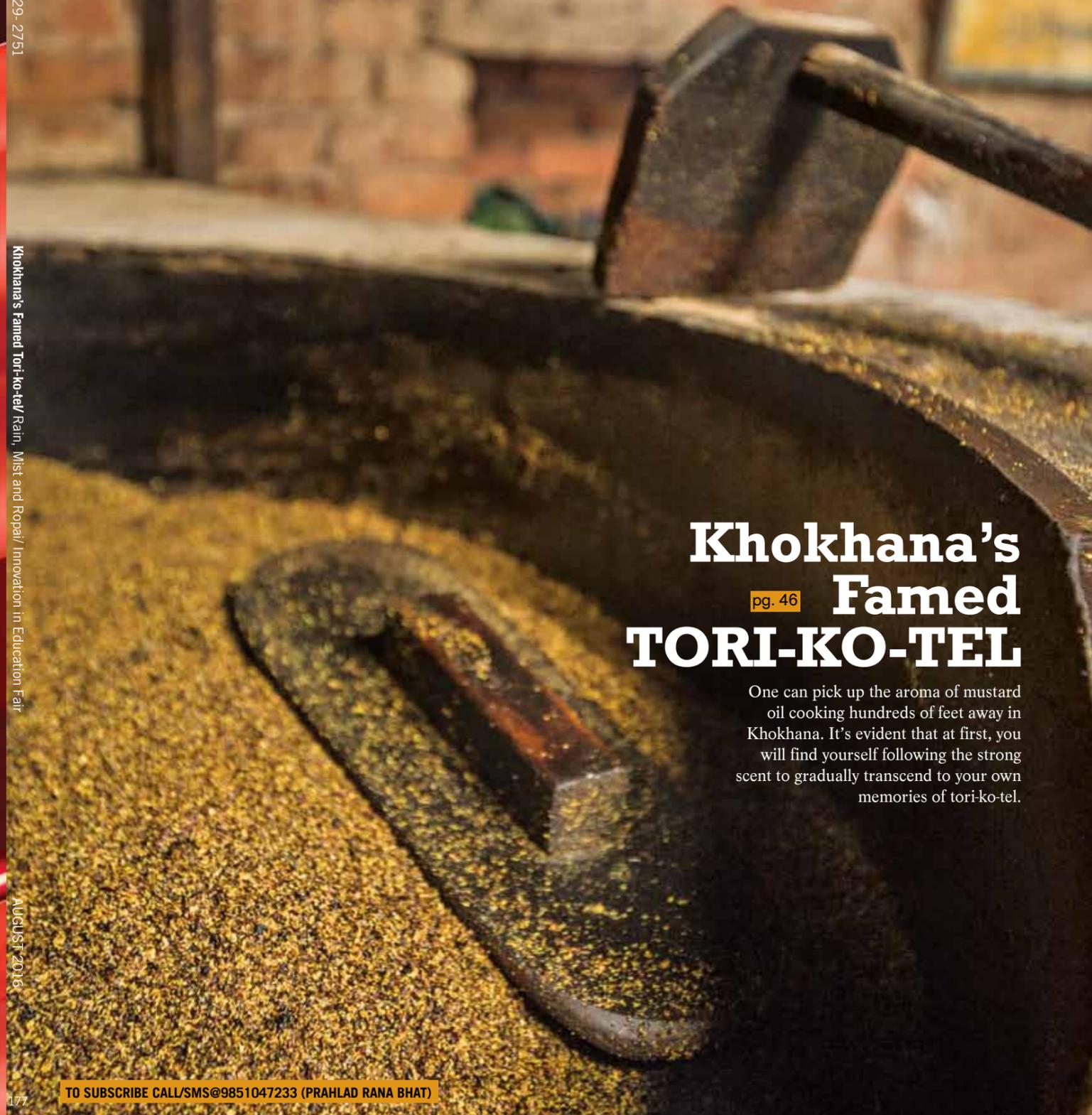
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Khokhana's pg. 46 Famed TORI-KO-TEL

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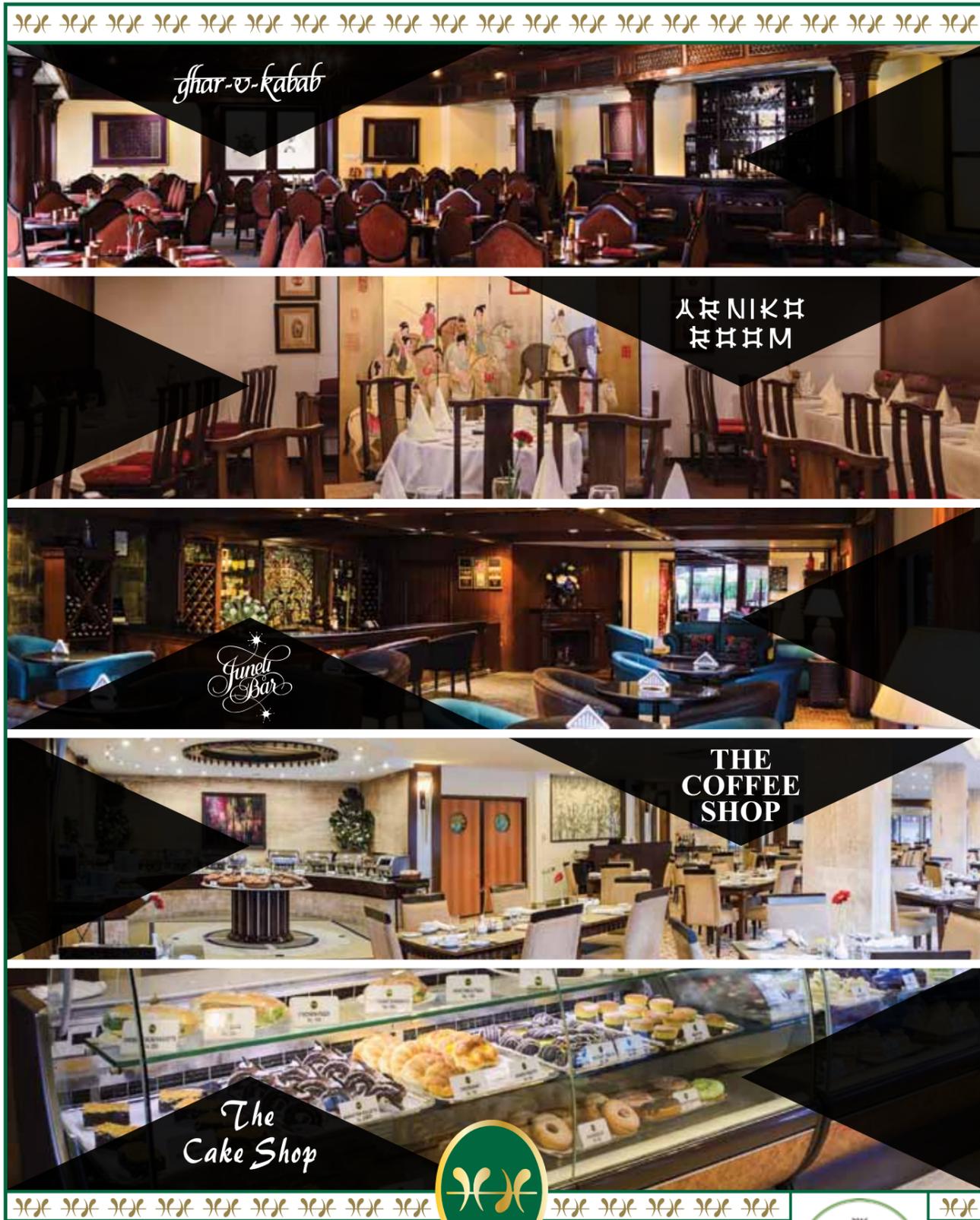


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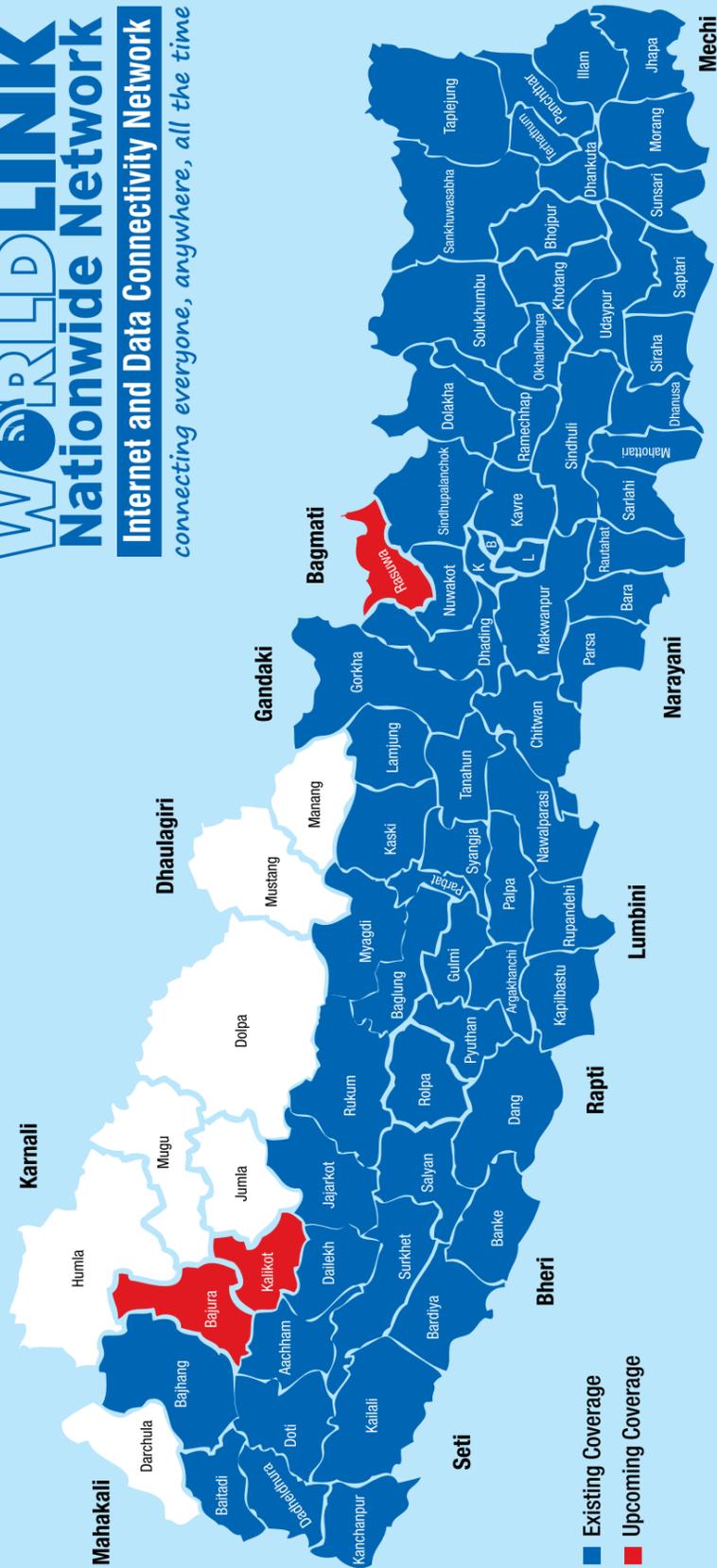
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Editorial

AUGUST 2016 • Issue 177



Pratibha Mahajan

Pack your Bags and Leave

Because you need to make it happen.

How often have you promised yourself a break? How often have you let out a sigh and have wanted to pack your bags and leave, to travel and experience the thrill of discovering new things, to feel alive.

The dreams of screaming on top of tall mountains, the fantasy of sleeping under the stars, the yearning to try something different, the need to look at life from a distance, the urgency to explore and discover yourself. Traveling is for the spirit they say and it's true. But, how often have you really gone with this whim?

This is the story of my life. And maybe yours too. I have a punctuated list of places that I want to visit before my thirties. List of places I want to have stories of, tales I can tire people with. But it's not that easy, is it?

"Life" is very good at keeping us busy - projects and problems hurling one after the other. Life keeps slipping in the urgency card with deadlines and appointments. But sometimes, I guess, you just need to make that choice: to leave everything behind and spend time with yourself; be a little selfish to get to know yourself.

This issue is a celebration of such moments; we hope the stories in this collective will drive you to pack your bags and leave, to realize those travel plans that you always had in the back of your mind. If you are just looking for a short getaway-read 'Khokhana's famous tori-kotel' to find out why the mustard town could be that place of (self) discovery. Or if you are just here for a week and don't know where you want to be going and what you want to be doing, make your plans with 'Travel Kathmandu and Pokhara in just one week'. But if you are looking for something more, hit the picturesque trails with our Great Himalaya Trails section.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue, as much as we enjoyed putting it together.

Happy Reading!

Srizu Bajracharya
Sub-editor

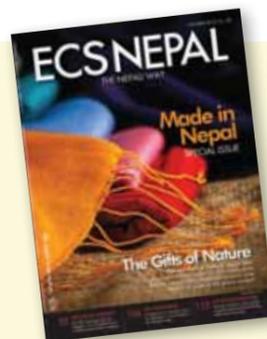
FromTheVault

December 2013

Nepali/Dhaka topi has been adorning Nepali heads for generations. A cloth cap that Nepali men wear on their heads is perhaps the most recognizable feature that sets a Nepali man apart from all others. Read the feature, Put a Cap on It,

to discover more about the Dhaka topi as a part of Nepali culture. It also talks about the oldest Dhaka topi shop of Nimal Tuladhar in Ason. Of course, the December 2013 issue of ECS NEPAL is not only that. The feature, Yatra for the Bull,

talks about the writer's experience on her Dipankha Yatra, while Dance of the Deities is about the dance of Astamatika performed in Patan. All over, this 'Made in Nepal' December 2013 issue is worth going through once again.



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The misty season of rain and rice is actually just a layering on top, if you cut deep, you will realize that it is the essence of hard work that Ropai is celebrating.



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We endorse the recycling of our magazine and would encourage you to pass it on to others to read when you have finished with it.

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46 **Khokhana's Famed Tori-ko-tel**

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40 Feature

Innovation in Education Fair

In the first week of August, local organizations active in Nepal are coming together to transform educational practices and learning through the Innovation in Education Fair. Here is an account of participating groups and why this initiative needs to be heeded to and celebrated.

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Photographer
Binaya Mangrati

Profile : I am a Freelance cinematographer. I am passionate about traveling and capturing memorable sights found along my journey.

Caption: The artist in making.



Photographer
Angel Chaulagain

Profile: I am a Film student and I love capturing images.

Caption: The sound of rain



Tell us about the things you have seen and the places you have been to. Send us your clicks that depict any dimension of the Nepali way and we might publish them in this section. Direct your entries to thenepaliway.ecs@gmail.com with your name, a short biography, your profile picture and the description of the photograph you've sent in.

Living In Nepal

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5 things to do in Nepal

Commonly known as Chameri Gufa, the bat cave both in Pokhara and Kathmandu is popular destination among not just tourists, but nationals as well. As the name suggests, it is named after the bats prevalent all over the cave's walls and ceilings. The cave is made completely of limestone. The tour has provisions for torches and emergency lamps, and a professional guide will be with you for a safe and thrilling experience.

2 Said to be the holiest month of the year, Shrawan is dedicated to Lord Shiva. Every Somwar (Monday) of this month, known as Shrawan Somwar, is a very special day in Shiva temples. Hindu women are clad in red and green clothing. This month is also famous for mehendi (henna) that women and young girls cover their hands and palms with. The main idea of the various rituals and fasts that women take every Monday is to pray for the long and prosperous life of their husbands. Also, young unmarried women pray that they find good and caring husbands. Bangles are an important aspect of Shrawan; women of all ages are seen wearing them. It is believed that bangles, especially green glass ones, are worn for fulfilling one's desires, and wishing a happy and prosperous life to families. This month also paves the way for women to enter the month of Bhadra that holds the most important festival for Hindu women in Nepal, Teej.



3 Strongly recommended by Trip Advisor, para-hawking is a form of paragliding, but with a twist. You get to interact with trained birds of prey in their natural environment. Combining paragliding and the ancient art of falconry, you fly with fully trained birds that guide you through the sky. There are currently two trained Egyptian vultures, Kevin and Bob, who will lead you through the best thermals, soar across the sky, climb above mountains, and slowly land on your hands to take food rewards many times throughout the flight. You can take amazing pictures and movies of your flight. It is truly a unique and unforgettable experience.

4 Vintage Vespa scooters have become quite popular in the city these days. Due to this, Vespa Valley has started a tour ride where one has the opportunity to get chauffeur-driven on a vintage Vespa to all the big sites and local favorites. This tour takes you on food journeys, culinary classes, and even gives people a chance to experience village life.



5 Gai Jatra falls in the month of Bhadra (August/September). The main idea of this festival is to worship Yamaraj, the god of death. Every family that has had a death among its members during the preceding year participates in a

procession in which they walk through the streets of Kathmandu leading a cow. However, modern day Gai Jatra has come to be quite different than what we started out with. Today, it has become a day when people are given the liberty

to criticize and satire the government and the system. Various comedy shows, acts, and dramas are organized in different places, including on television and radio. Special edition of newspapers are also published on this day with cartoon and comedy articles.

Nimki Food A Fiery Delight

Reminiscing nimki, the savory snack that has a special place in every festive Nepali's palette.

SACHI MULMI



The anticipatory excitement for festivals starts weeks before they are occasioned and leave behind a trail of good things - mostly memories, laughter and sumptuous food. The one food item that trails longer than most and is a must have festive favorite is the triangular shaped delicacy called nimki. The slightly salty and sweet mouthful, that pairs perfectly with a cup of warm tea shared with your family or friends.

Nimkis are a ubiquitous part of every festival and ceremony

in Nepali culture. What distinguishes it on the dinner table, amongst other regular cheerful delights, is its fiery orange color that is a statement onto itself. You can recognize it from afar in a sweet shop, stacked in a perfect pile, waiting to be bagged and consumed happily.

This snack occupies such a pervasive presence in our ceremonies mainly because of its namesake characteristic. In a festive palette which is dominated by sweets, nimki is the salty one. It provides a much-appreciated relief to our taste buds. For marriage ceremonies, it is used as a colorful decoration when the groom sends a host of gifts along with sweets to the bride.

Traditionally snacks and sweets such as nimki were prepared by the Rajkarnikars. There are considerably few Rajkarnikars making sweets as their main occupation these days. However, those who remain have much to share - with both their extensive knowledge of making sweets, and the stories that such an experience gives.

Although Rajkarnikars in Patan are unsure about the exact description of nimki's origin story and place, they say that the recipe has been in their family "for generations." What they do know is that this creation made out of clarified butter, flour, salt and food-coloring has never lost its popularity amid the valley residents. In the old days, Ranas ordered huge numbers of sweets, including nimkis, for every festi-

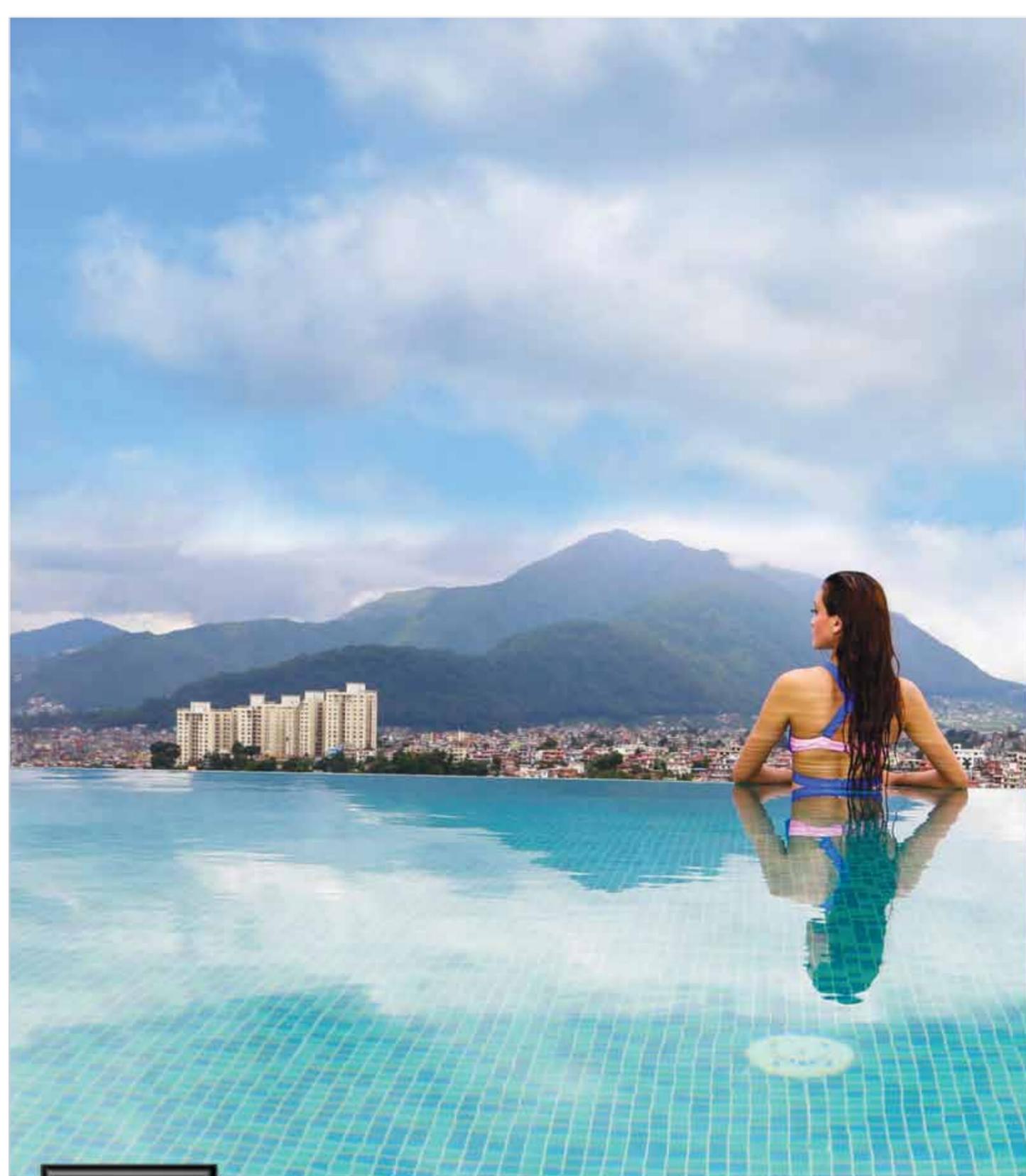
val or social function. It was also a favorite breakfast and snack item among them.

73-year-old Bindira Rajkarnikar has been working in sweet shops since she was a little girl of nine. She still runs a small shop in the Maru Galli of Patan, offering insights into our (sweet) history. She hints how the sweet shops in the main Durbar Square area are originally from the same line, but have since followed their own business. She remembers those specific days of our lunar calendar, like mother's day and father's day, when the shop would overflow with sweets and people.

"But there are more people to buy and eat these sweets. Consuming it is no longer limited to affluent people (like the Ranas)," she shares. The only thing to have changed is the quality of these sweets, for resources are scarce to meet the traditional standards. Despite that, nimkis are still popular and consumed eagerly.

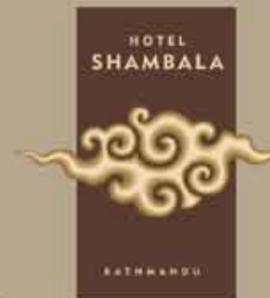
In Newari sweet culture, the lakhamari is considered the favorite, but nimkis have a variety and a place of their own. Sweets like pantusha, khaaja (punjabi), dui rang, fini, etc, are all nimki's cousins, made diverse by the color play, geometric structure, and even the sweetness. But they are made with almost the same technique.

So next time you pass by a sweet shop, give nimkis a second thought and maybe take them home for snacking!



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A Man's Vintage Friend

What I've seen

You don't stop riding when you are old; you get old when you stop riding.

VANSHIKA SHAH

The adage 'old is gold' perfectly fits the occasion when it comes to 73 year old Mr. Asta Bir Maharjan and his still older vintage bike. Maharjan is a loving husband and father to two sons and as many daughters. This grandfather of four, however, is a lesson to many much younger to him for his vitality, spirit and passion. His life mantra is quite simple and yet one which we easily forget: life is full of ups and downs but people tend to want only ups and no downs. The winner is the one who handles the downsides well.

Maharjan served the government as a health post in-charge till the age of thirty after which

he worked as a senior health worker. He has collected diverse experience helping and treating patients in remote regions of Gorkha and Nuwakot where electricity was scant and the roads were difficult to walk on. His indomitable spirit towards living life to the fullest has undoubtedly been molded by his early life experiences. On the 8th of Paus in 2056 B.S. his sons gifted him a Honda Vintage bike bought from a friend who had acquired it a month ago at an auction hosted by the UN.

I met Maharjan and his son, Indra Bir Maharjan for an interview, on a fine Thursday morning, at his pharmacy which he runs in Pulchowk along with serving as a general physician there. Outside the shop I saw an exquisitely designed reddish orange bike parked up in all its glory. Even though the bike was bought seventeen years ago, it looked well maintained and seemed brand new.

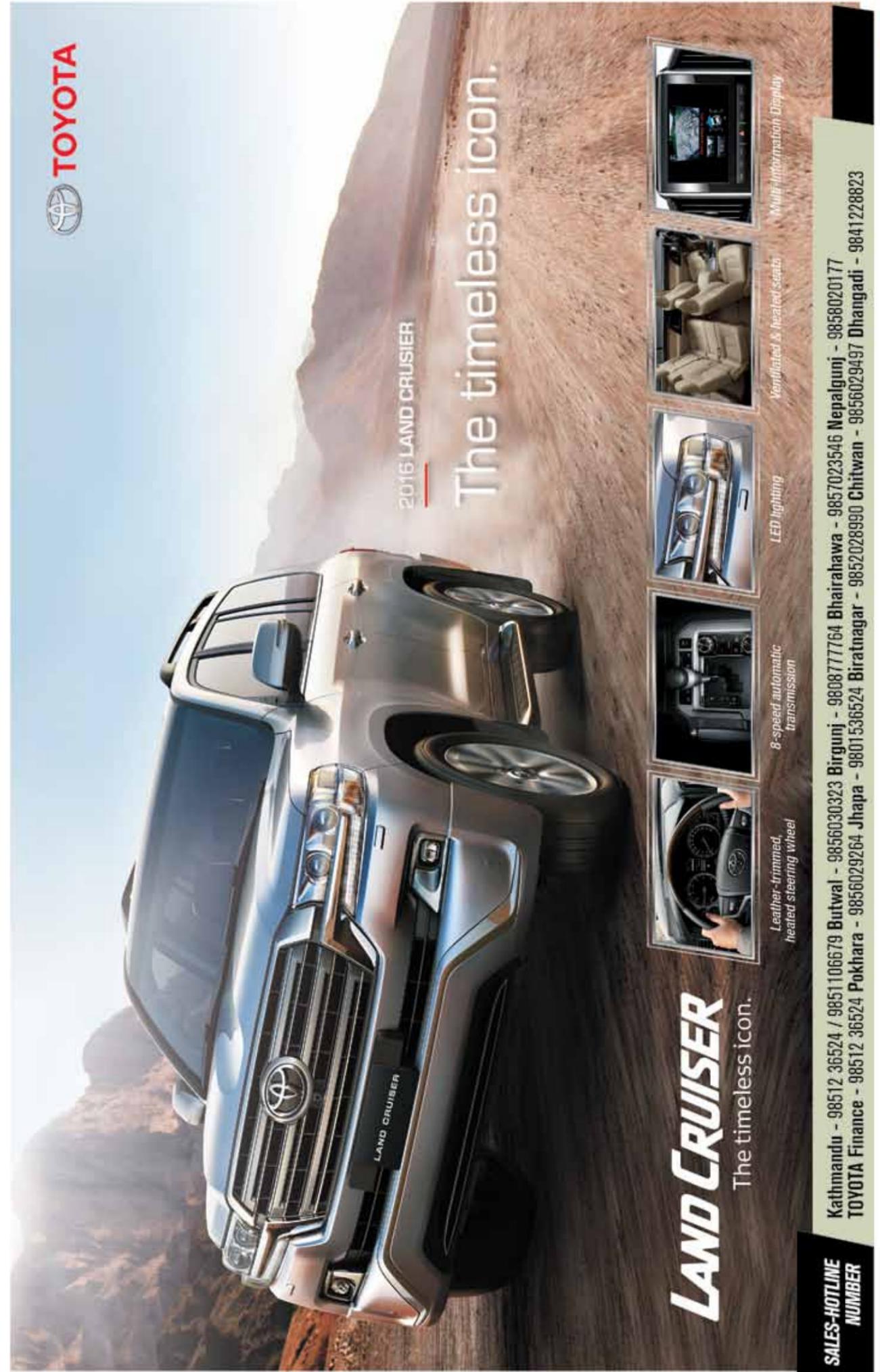
A believer in simplicity, until recently Maharjan use to ride between his home and the shop on a bicycle. His sons, concerned about his age, wanted to gift him a motorbike. Maharjan being short in height and frail due to his age, they understood that he will not be able to ride the modern bulky models that were available for purchase. Once they found about their friend wanting to sell a vintage auctioned bike they immediately got interested. The height of this bike is low and makes Maharjan feel comfortable riding it. The long body of the bike allows him to carry his medical around which is something he seems to cherish quite a bit.

There was, of course, some initial hesitation on his part. He was used to cycling for a long time and the motorbike seemed like a big change. But eventually as he rode around for a while, he fell in love with it. I will neither sell nor let anyone sell my bike, he says. He mentions how men get emotionally attached to things as they gradually become a part of their life. So much so, that the bike has now become a part of Maharjan's identity. When people see the bike parked around, they immediately recognize his presence. He proudly boasts that wherever he takes his bike people flock around to admire it. He even worships the bike every Dashain with great devotion and sentiments.

Maharjan can talk for hours the myriad memories that he associates with his bike, like experiences gathered with a dear friend. He mentions the troubles they bore during the recent oil embargo in Kathmandu valley, when his mere 3L petrol tank would empty every now and then. He would have to refuel it great hardships. He reminisces the times he would set his wife behind him and take her for her medical appointments. His wife feeling awkward sitting on the bike and him trying to make her comfortable.

Maharjan's story reminded me of cherishing the small things in life and making a moment out of all life experiences. It tells me that things over time do not simple get old and scrappy but sometimes they are witnesses to our fondest memories and thus become classics instead. Just like Asta Bir Maharjan's vintage bike.





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Crimson dots of faith

Call it a beauty mark, the spiritual third eye, a sign of devotion to gods or a symbol of matrimony, the tika is a much celebrated and integral part of Hindu religious practice.

DAYISHAA DAGA

Go to a temple and what is the one thing you will see common among the people?

Apart from voices swaying ceremoniously in meditational chant and the devotion and love towards the higher self in people's eyes, the one thing that is characteristically shared by Hindu devotees, is the dot on their foreheads, the anointment of the crimson tika.

Call it a beauty mark, the spiritual third eye, a sign of devotion to gods or a symbol of matrimony, the tika is a much celebrated and integral part of Hindu religious practice. Made of dried turmeric, the tika symbolizes purity of submission and devotion. Interestingly, the tradition of putting the tika is not mentioned in the vedas and puranas even once. Yet, it has always served its purpose as an embedded ritual in the daily lives of Hindu devotees.

Not being prescribed in religious texts gives the tika its variable form, a new kind of tika depending on region, culture and occasion. The small red tika worn everyday especially by women, a big red one covering a handsome portion of the forehead (mostly seen during dashain), a white tika (the shiva tilaka), an orange tika worn by devotees of the monkey god and a yellow tika. On the fes-



tival of bhai tika, a day celebrated by brothers and sisters, though, we see a tika of different colors etched linearly on their foreheads.

The tika is at once, a symbol of worship and religious omen giving it important significance in the daily practice of the Hindu culture. The tika is considered the point at which creation began. It has also been described as "the sacred symbol of the cosmos in its unmanifested state". Traditionally, the area between the eyebrows is said to be the sixth *chakra*, the ajna, the seat of "concealed wisdom". Applied in the center of the forehead close to the *eyebrow*, the tika anoints the *Ajna Chakra* and thus is considered to be associated with the *third eye chakra*. The tika is said to focus energy and increase concentration. It is also known to be the circle or dot around which the mandala is created; a spiritual symbol, a symbol of nirvana. The dot is meant to denote the center point for one's spiritual destiny and serve as a medium for personal sanctification.

There are twelve spots in the body where the tika can be applied after bathing, though it is not a common practice to do so. These

places include the forehead, the throat, the heart, the stomach, two shoulders, arms, and so on. Each time a mark is applied, the name of a particular deity is recited. This touching, marking, and evocation brings the effect of consecration to the body and the individual. The practice of putting the tika usually follows after offering prayers or religious ceremonies. For devotees who pray at home every day, the tika is a customary part of their appearance. Religious practice permits the tika to be put only after one has taken a bath and cleansed the body. Sanctification of the soul, after all demands bodily hygiene as well.

The symbolic little dot carried by devotees on their forehead comes to contain within itself a vast sea of spiritual devotion. What to the foreign eye may be perceived as mere ornamentation, is a ritual of faith for the devotee. It is a practice to obtain spiritual sanctity, a means to connect with the gods, the method to awaken the third eye and the goodness within. It is a crimson dot of faith that all of this can, after all, be realized and achieved.



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When it Rains for the Parijat

Festival watch

More than a year after the earthquake, Kathmandu valley prepares for its yearly celebration of the Rain God's search for the rare Parijat flower and a promise that followed.

AKANKSHYA SHRESTHA



Indra Jatra, an eight-day-long festival, takes place during Bhadra, the 5th month of the Nepali calendar. The carnival-like days pass quickly with worship, processions, dance, and music. Indra Jatra was started by King Gunakamadeva to commemorate the founding of the city of Kathmandu in the 10th century. Since Indra is 'Lord of Rain' and the king of heaven, some think that the Jatra is held to thank him for the rain. Others believe that it is celebrated in honor of Bhairab, a manifestation of Shiva.

A year has passed since the dreadful earthquake in Nepal, and Kathmandu has learned to smile again. Last year, Indra Jatra was celebrated as joyously as before, despite the devastation caused by the earthquake. The spirit of the city should be kept alive, the celebrations marked. The damaged roads were repaired for the festival's chariot procession, and reconstruction of temples and monuments took place. Now, almost a year after, Kathmandu is a much better place - in terms of infrastructure and in terms of people's morale as well. The festival this year will be a celebration of much more than just the traditional reasons.

The Jatra begins at Kathmandu Durbar Square, with several groups of local musicians arriving in the main area with drums and cymbals. A 36-foot wooden ceremonial pole is brought in to represent the Shiva Linga, which includes a flag on

the top, believed to be the flag that Indra received from Lord Vishnu for protection. Next, the Swet Bhairab statue is unveiled, where alcohol like jaand and raksi pours from its mouth. This Bhairab is only showcased during Indra Jatra. Individuals dressed as demons portraying lakheys perform mythical acts denoted through a symbolic dance. A stream of young men come running followed by an elaborately decorated team dressed as a white elephant, which is known as Tana-Kishi.

After the initial proceedings, the living goddess, Kumari, sits on her chariot, which is pulled through the massive crowds. Indra Jatra is the only time the Kumari leaves the seclusion of her temple. Carnations are thrown by the spectators as they enjoy the 'lakhey naach' and kumari's procession. Crowds gather to watch the Indra Jatra from the temples of Kathmandu Durbar Square or from the houses at Maru Tole. Since many temples got damaged during the earthquake, the surface of some temples above the stairs will offer very good view of the Jatra.

There are many stories behind the celebration. One story goes like this: Indra's mother needed parijat flowers, which were nowhere to be found in heaven. So, Indra came down to Kathmandu Valley to pick the flowers. A



Pradip Tuladhar

Since Indra is 'Lord of Rain' and the king of heaven, some think that the Jatra is held to thank him for the rain. Others believe that it is celebrated in honor of Bhairab, a manifestation of Shiva.

tantric scholar, caught Indra trying to steal the parijat flower and instantly spread his spiritual loop called Taraan, and encircled Indra within it. Indra could not move beyond that Taraan. When her son did not show up with

the flowers he was supposed to bring, Indra's mother herself came down to earth in search of him. She went around town and found her son in the tantric's web, who finally freed him only after his mother had promised timely rainfall in the valley. Since then, the festival is observed in Kathmandu to please Indra, so that enough rain in the valley is assured.

On the last day, the pole erected to represent the Shiva Linga is taken down. This marks the end of the Jatra. The festivity and merriment bring a sense of relief for eight days to the people of Kathmandu. The process of rebuilding Nepal is ongoing, and the people are finding strength to build back stronger with each passing day. The festival of Indra Jatra bestows a few days of strength and contentment into their lives, and in the country at large.



Pradip Tuladhar

The art

Art in Dolakha

What happens when residents of a trembling community are made to rediscover art in their everyday life? Kailash K. Shrestha's artistic experiments in Dolakha tell the story.

ICHCHHA PRADHAN

Art workshops, Photography workshops, Videography, Visual editing, Street art—all packaged together forms Artudio, Centre for Visual Arts. This is the center that initiated the Street Arts movement on a large scale in the year 2011 which took off from the walls of Hotel Himalaya and extended to various districts like Kathmandu, Pokhara, Tansen, Butwal, Dolakha, Jhapa, Janakpur and Sarlahi. Currently, the center has its spotlight focused on the future generation – children of Nepal. The intention is to ensure that their creativity can be harnessed from a young age. As a part of this initiative Artudio has been conducting Little Picasso, an art workshop for children and is on the verge of launching a website called Bal Kala Sangrahalaya, a virtual art museum for kids. Art Saturday is another workshop under Artudio organized every Saturday which caters to art enthusiasts of all ages.

The artists involved with artudio do not only believe in promoting art but also in serving it. Kailash K. Shrestha, founding artist of Artudio says, "We serve art. That's what we know. That's



what we do." Under their social initiative involving the arts, an art-social movement "Healing through Art" was born after the disastrous earthquake of April 25, 2015. The purpose of the campaign was to reach out to various districts affected by the quakes and offer psychological healing and comfort along with reinforcing positivity and constructiveness amongst the locals – all through colors and artistic activities. "I may not be able to do tough physical work but I can do something through my profession." Shrestha believes. As a part of their initiative, the Artudio team visited Dolakha too. As Dolakha is one of the gravely affected regions of the 7.8 magnitude earthquake in 2015, all the houses, schools and health post were destroyed or heavily damaged in the Gairimudi community. There were no safe spaces for children nor adults to support each other. With this reality, Artudio came up with the vision of creating a safe haven for the community and supporting them in their healing process. Gradually children from other villages started flooding in too and started participating in the after-school recreational activities organized by the team. With the increase in number of participants a more systematic and diversified space was required. To address this a community art center was built using bamboos and other available material with the help of local participation.

Since then, Artudio has organized several relief programs and



creative activities at the center and brought a lot of positive transformations within the community in Gairimudi. This is a platform for children as well as adults to participate in various activities which has now turned into a regular Saturday morning activity. These transformations have inspired them to escalate their initiative on a larger scale to establish a permanent art center in Gairimudi Ward 8.

This stimulus is on the verge of transforming into a long term plan to keep the connection of Art and the Gairimudi Community, as Artudio plans to build a more facilitated, systematic and large Community Art Center, Center for Breathing Love in collaboration with the local, national and international communities with open participation in five years. The idea of this Community Art Center is to

simulate the concept of "Haat Bazaar" where goods and daily commodities are exchanged; only to bring it into the contemporary context and modify it as "Art Bazaar", a platform for sharing and exchanging ideas. It would allow the local inhabitants to practice and perform different form of arts—art, music, visual arts, games and performance. The goal is simple—complete artistic transformation of Dolakha.

Along with the aforesaid ongoing plans, Artudio has also organized a short-term curated residency, "Dolakha Album" in Gairimudi, Dolakha. The Residency was curated by Contemporary Artist Kailash K Shrestha and co-curated by Nischal Oli. But why 'Album'? "An album is where you find history of events. Similarly, we want to put our artistic expressions too in a documented form as history", Shrestha answers. The motive of the residency is to bring art to grass root communities so that it is not centralized only in the capital city. Another purpose is to make the locals realize art in their simple surrounding and influence them in a creative way using locally accessible materials as art medium so that art can be consumed by people of all classes.

During this residency, an amalgam of five contemporary artists from Kathmandu— New



The art

Media Artist- Mr.SujanDangol, Printmaking Artist -Mr. SurendraMaharjan, Visual Artist- Ms. Sandhya Silwal, Sound based Multi Media Artist- Mr. Rajan Shrestha and Film Artist-Mr. Abhimanyu Dixit worked collectively with Gairimudi Community people to create unconventional works of art. They were hosted by families in the community to be able to really live like a local and integrate into the society. These artists created works in diverse forms; video art, land art, photography, site specific installations, new media and multimedia. Yet they were restricted on materials being introduced into the community so as not to baffle the local community with novel concepts. They were encouraged to reintroduce materials existing in villages as art materials and made the community people realize art within things that they had overlooked earlier.

After discussions with chairperson of the VDC, teachers of schools and the local inhabitants, the artists started research on the village to create art works based on it. As the art-making process started, artists were involved in the community as the community. Even art materials were carried in doko! "Kamero" used in construction, was used to paint bamboo sticks. "Baanskopatyang" was used as



a canvas for sketching portraits. Used chocolate wrappers were used to create collage works.

An interesting instance was when a weaving artisan, Chhabi Bahadur Shrestha who has been weaving doko and funglo all his life was asked to weave bamboo over electric pole. Observers were dumbfounded and very curious when they saw what he was doing. He shares, "I have never been asked questions about what I do, however during Dolakha Album when I was asked to weave bamboo in the same technique used to make doko and fungloon an electric pole, people from Gairimudi started getting curious. I was asked questions like, why are you making doko on an electric pole? Are you mad Kanchha? How would you get the doko out of the electric pole?"

When I was asked to weave the pole I had similar questions. Now Artudio has helped me open my eyes to look at my profession in an artistic way. I would have also become an artist if I had been exposed to this idea when I was young." What was observed from this experiment was that when the same technique was used in a different place, it was seen from a completely new dimension.

During the residency, similar kind of unique forms of art were explored and local art forms were brought into mainstream. Children created beautiful songs and even wrote lyrics themselves. These songs are in the course of being developed into an album. Short films based on local issues like Jhankriand earthquake ordeals were filmed. All artworks created during the residency were exhibited in the community space in Gairimudi. Dolakha Album successfully established art as a foundation for raising questions, creating awareness and initiating interactions and debates.

For a year, the Dolakha program was singularly funded by Artudio but now, Siddharth Art Foundation Education Initiative and Buddhakumari Foundation are also providing some financial support. Currently, the Artudio team is also researching in Manang for a similar initiative. And hence, they will be enriching another community, helping another village and telling new stories of simple people and objects. (Photo courtesy: Artudio)



The journey

A Homage to the Maestro

Ambar Gurung, the late Nepali musical icon, was a personality as myriad as the musical notes he struck. His friends share their fondest memories of this musician par excellence with ECS Nepal.

SATYAM SHRESTHA



A maestro; a true maestro in every single sense of the word, that's what he was. A maestro of what exactly, you ask? Well, in its simplest form, music. Now, don't get me wrong, I could go on forever with giving him honorary labels—singer, composer, songwriter—but, that's exactly it. It just isn't possible for me to define all that he was in a single word, nor is it plausible to babble on and on about his many musical feats and prowess.

A musical pioneer, Ambar Gurung stands on the same pedestal as immortals like Narayan Gopal, Gopal Yonzon, Aruna Lama, and others, with songs like "Naulakha Tara Udaaye" and "Rato Ra Chandra Surya", still sung with as much vigor even decades after their release. He breathed his last at 2:37 on Tuesday morning in Grande International Hospital at the age of seventy-nine. Pratik Karthak, a well-known figure in journalism who was very close to him, pro-

vides valuable insight into the life of the dearly missed icon.

What would you say was his most admirable trait?

Well, that has to be his perseverance and level of commitment and innovation he brought into the game. He wasn't just your everyday musician who came and went with the times as tastes and audience perception changed. He could infuse, he could adapt, learn, and most importantly, incorporate it into

his ever broadening style, too hard to be defined, and make it his own. Did you know that he was a major rock and roll fan too? (Oh, really? That's surprising, I thought he was an all classical type) Nope, not at all. He even listened to some forms of electronic music; that's what made him such a rare occurrence instead of some one hit wonder, you know? He could take elements from a Narayan Gopal song, some from modern era contemporary music, and combine it into a new song with his own personal touch, and just like that, create a completely unique musical gem. Besides, like I mentioned before, being an all-rounder like him is no easy feat, either. Nowadays, one person writes the song and another produces the track, and yet another is coached into singing the song, but not him. Ambar Gurung was the textbook definition of a self-made man.

Seeing how he has dabbled in everything, from serving as a music director at the Nepal Academy to composing music for hit Nepali films like Mero Desh and Man Ko Bandh, it's hard to pinpoint the pinnacle of his achievements. What do you consider his biggest feat to be?

Now, that's an easy one. With zero doubt, it's the national anthem. Although many do, equally many don't know that he was the genius behind the ingenious gem of an anthem everybody knows. Sadly, directors are seldom as



talked about as hit movies. Even fewer are aware of the fact that our national anthem is ranked among the top ten national anthems around the world. What bigger mark on history can you make than that? It definitely comes as no surprise, though. Anyone with half-a-mind can appreciate the beauty in his peace-preaching lyrics that unite different flowers in the garden as one.

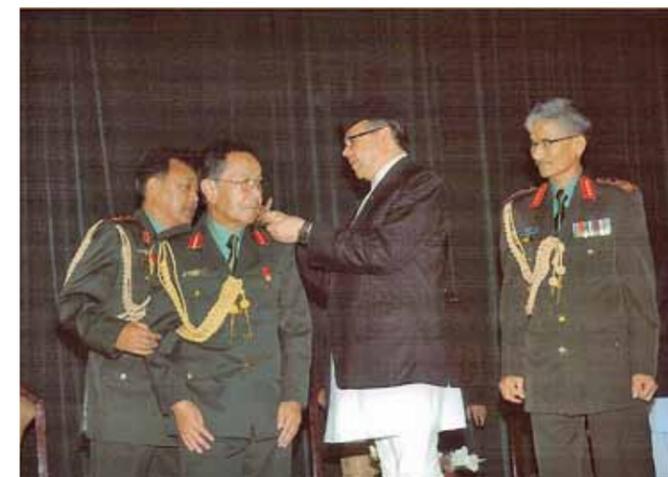
What do you consider his strongest trait to be?

Ambar Gurung was a man of many wonders, something I'm sure most are in unanimous agreement with. But, if I had to single out one specific thing about him, I think, for me, it

was his kind and benevolent nature. In terms of his profession, his ability to put his mind to something was quite extraordinary as well. Like, when he was in the middle of something, all he looked at was towards his marked goal. Didn't matter who released what hit, or what the prevalent trend in the music industry was. Neither did he care about fame, money, and producing hurriedly to sell more. He was simply focused on his own work, which I think was a key point behind his success.

Tell me more about this kindness, maybe some memorable memories?

Certainly, there is one in particular that I hold very dear to this age and day. Before I got settled in life and everything, you know, the years spent working to get where I am, there was this one time I was in a dire situation. Without going into specifics, let's just say I was in desperate need of money, and getting it was proving to be a very challenging task. Then one day, Ambar, I, and a few others happened to meet. It was just everyday routine stuff, nothing out of the ordinary. Then, next thing, right before my eyes, it ceased to be so. Ambar began talking to a friend about the hard financial time he was go-



The journey

ing through, and asked him if he could help. Although I was a bit perplexed, I didn't think much of it. Later on, pulling me aside, he pulled out a wad of cash and said it was for me. Obviously, I was confused, as I remembered him asking for help for himself moments earlier, and then it hit me. He'd taken the help from the other guy, not for himself, but for me. My appreciation and gratitude knew no bounds at that moment, and remains so till this day.

What about some funny moments/adventures?

Oh, this one memory does come to mind. Ambar, I, and a group of friends, I think around four-five people, were headed for Dakshinkali Temple. We traveled by car, and we took along a live chicken for sacrifice. On the way, the chicken somehow managed to escape! What followed next was absolute madness and chaos as all of us started running after the chicken. We were like little village boys running after tire wheels. Then, after a lengthy chase, came the most memorable part of it all. Ambar actually did an aerial dive for the chicken, which was nothing short of pure awesomeness. So, yeah, there are definitely millions of little memories like these that I cherish. I just consider myself super



lucky to be part of his legacy; a legacy that shall live on in the hearts of music lovers forever.

Now, it isn't just close friends and family who have so much respect for the man. Fans all over have paid their dues and tributes to the maestro through various social media like Twitter, Facebook, and covers, reworks, and remixes of his biggest hits on YouTube.

Born in Darjeeling on Feb 26, 1937, Ambar Gurung came to Nepal in 1969, at the invitation of King Mahendra, who wanted him to head the music department of the Nepal Academy of Arts and Literature. With a career spanning more than six decades, a quick glance at his portfolio shows an impressive 1000 plus

songs accredited to him; be it composition, song writing, producing, singing, or every other 'ing', as Peter said it best. A man of his caliber wouldn't stop only at the studio, though, as he's even overseen the musical production for the epic Nepali opera, Muna Madan. And, even if each one of his songs has a unique charm and universal appeal, some have particularly stood out for music enthusiasts. Songs like Naulakha Tara Udaaye, Raato Ra Chandra Surya, and Eh Kanchha have delighted listeners since time immemorial.

"Ambar dai, your music helped me and shaped me into the man I am today, you will always be dearly missed," blogs karthik36900. "Everybody tells me I have my own unique sound and style now. But what they don't know is, if it weren't for my maestro Ambar dai, there wouldn't be any sound at all, much less one as refined," tweets an old student and friend from long ago. It's clear that what he brought to the table as a musician impacted and influenced, and even gave birth, to a whole lot of aspiring musicians. Close friend Anuradha Koirala, CNN Hero of the Year 2010, and founder of Maiti Nepal, was deeply moved and distraught at the passing away of the legend. She states that he fulfilled his potential to the maximum. His creations are immortalized in hearts, minds, souls, and of course, records.



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Feature

Innovation in Education Fair

In the first week of August, local organizations active in Nepal are coming together to transform educational practices and learning through the Innovation in Education Fair. Here is an account of participating groups and why this initiative needs to be heeded to and celebrated.

 NIRANJAN KUNWAR



Srijanalaya

Quixote's Cove

In early 2009, a small bookshop opened inside an old building in Jhamsikhel. Unlike most bookshops in Kathmandu, the founders of this new venture, Suvani Singh and Pranab Man Singh, focused on events alongside sales. For example, they hosted discussion sessions with published writers and facilitated

creative writing groups. They also organized performances related to arts and literature. Gradually, the bookshop gained a unique reputation in the city, as unique as its name - Quixote's Cove (QC). The owners were asked to manage similar events for other interested folks. Two years after establishing QC, Singh and Singh successfully

organized Kathmandu's first international literature festival, the Lit Jatra.

However, due to soaring rent, the Jhamsikhel shop had to be closed in 2013 and shifted to an office space in Ekanta Kuna. QC's strategies and core mission also changed a bit - instead of running its own physical space, it opened outlets in pre-established

QC manages the US Embassy Book Bus, a mobile library that travels mostly to government and community schools inside and outside Kathmandu Valley.

spaces like Cafe Cheeno and Ramalaya. After 2013, the owners, who are also life partners, focused even more on creative programs and projects. For example, QC manages the US Embassy Book Bus, a mobile library that travels mostly to government and community schools inside and outside Kathmandu Valley. To make this program effective, the QC team spends a lot of time coordinating with school leaders because the Book Bus program involves more than just taking books to students and teachers. Artists, educators and folks from different disciplines travel on the Bus and lead co-curricular lessons and workshops at school sites.

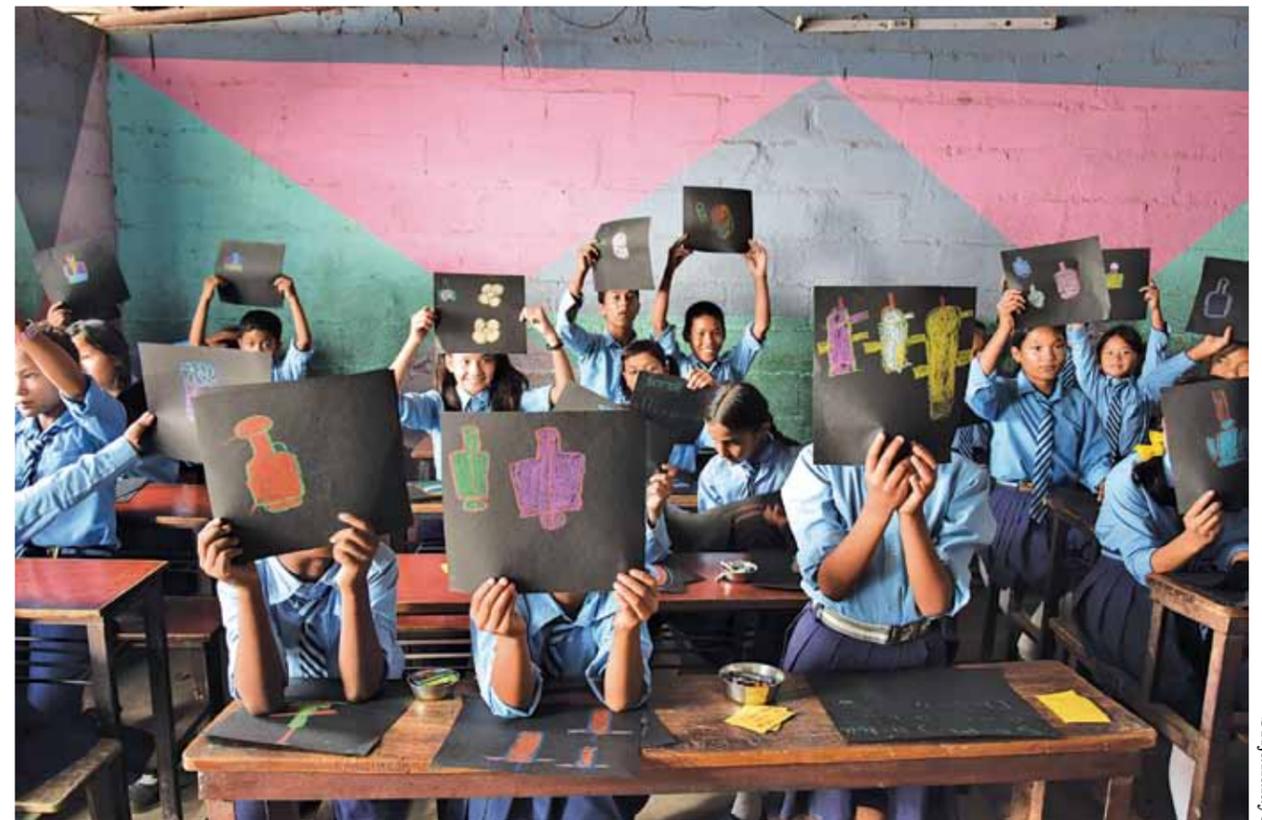
Earlier this year, Pranab Man Singh approached two other organiza-

tions, Srijanalaya and Karkhana, who have also been working with school children in various capacities. He suggested that they pool their resources and conduct an educational fair in the summer. They would invite teachers and administrators in order to share their work with the wider educational community. They would instigate discussions and push thinking. The focus would be on innovative ideas.

Srijanalaya

Sharareh Bajracharya, founder of Srijanalaya, agreed to curate the fair and coordinate with other participating organizations. She had returned to Kathmandu a few years ago after studying educational anthropology in the US and explored several professional options

Srijanalaya through ArtWorks program funded by Shikshya Foundation Nepal, travels to remote school communities to work with local students and teachers.



Srijanalaya



Robic Upadhyaya

Apart from QC and Srijanalaya, Karkhana is the third organizer of the Innovation in Education Fair that is going to take place on August 5, 6 and 7 in Tangalhood.

related to arts and education. She even joined an arts program at Kathmandu University Center for Arts and Design, and in 2012, was a coordinator of the Kathmandu International Arts Festival. But her goals eventually led her to establish Srijanalaya in 2013. Deeply concerned with social justice, Bajracharya and her team have since worked with young children - especially those that come from underprivileged backgrounds - and engaged them in art activities. The team believes that art activities provide healthy outlets for children to express their thoughts and emotions. It is also a way to engage disinterested students in learning new things.

With arts education as its core mission, Srijanalaya has also managed artist residencies and guided tour programs at Nepal Arts Council and the International Mountain Museum in Pokhara. After the April, 2015 earthquake, the team visited government schools and conducted art workshops with children in order to provide socio-emotional support in times of distress. They have also been

running the ArtWorks program, funded by Shikshya Foundation Nepal, which involves travelling to remote school communities and working with local students and teachers. Eventually, the Srijanalaya team intends to develop art materials that align with government curricula and support teachers who want to run effective art programs.

Karkhana

Apart from QC and Srijanalaya, Karkhana is the third organizer of the Innovation in Education Fair that is going to take place on August 5, 6 and 7 in Tangalhood. Similar to the other two organizations, Karkhana's core ideas, as well as its mission, have evolved since its inception. Over the years, founders Sakar Pudasaini and Pavitra Gautam have assembled a solid team and introduced them to cutting-edge educational ideas and practices. Grounded in design and technology, the Karkhana team believes that hands-on work with objects fosters creativity and deeper understanding. They take this belief to middle school classrooms in the form of

activities and lessons. Currently, Karkhana runs two different programs - Karkhana Innovators Club, which is an after-school program that engages children in project based learning, and BeeCreative, a co-curricular program that supports teachers who are interested in aligning lesson plans with Karkhana's pedagogy. Karkhana is currently working with 18 private schools and five government/community schools and has already developed over 150 lesson plans.

Aside from directly working with schools, Karkhana also co-organizes the annual Yantra, an Art/Science/Tech festival, that brings artists, engineers, architects and social scientists together in interdisciplinary projects. Karkhana also instigated MakerKT, a workshop module targeted at teaching technological skills to women. Karkhana members have participated in various international fairs, forums and festivals. During the three-day August fair, Karkhana will host workshops with middle school students and coordinate a conference with major stakeholders in the field of education.

Educators should strive to develop the minds and characters of students. The Innovation in Education Fair promises to inspire leaders inclined to make teaching and learning fun and engaging.

Outside the Classroom

Nepal's traditional education system has focused on theories, formulas, inane rules and routines that are disconnected from students' immediate lives. With a high emphasis on end-of-year exams, students are expected to rote learn text-heavy lessons and regurgitate them on answer sheets. Education, conducted in this manner, becomes impersonal and unstimulating to students. Furthermore, since most teachers do not facilitate critical thinking and problem solving, even the students who end up memorizing facts may not know how to apply them in real-life settings.

The Karkhana booklet states that knowledge is power only when you know how to use it. To that end, the focus is on the process of learning, on collaborating and exchanging ideas with each other. By working with and manipulating objects, learning becomes "visible" and concrete for young students who often struggle to understand obscure concepts. Karkhana believes that the world is malleable. In other words, the human mind has the capacity to create things and adapt them to make our lives more efficient, which is a basic, foundational premise of science and technology. By directly applying this premise to their lesson

plans and activities, Karkhana's dynamic approach supplements school curricula.

In today's high-paced globalized world, it is imperative to think of education in a different way. Srijanalaya's focus on arts education, a discipline generally ignored and misunderstood, is rich with possibilities. New bodies of research have revealed that the arts can provide multiple pathways to understand the world better and interact with it in an active way. A considerable number of children cannot access text-heavy lessons, many studies have demonstrated. Since human beings are diverse, we also have diverse ways of learn-



Srijanalaya

Feature

ing. Incorporating arts activities in the general school curricula is an effective way of targeting multiple intelligences and supporting those with different learning styles towards a path of growth and success.

On the other hand, QC extends the basic idea of education and takes it outside the classroom. During its initial phase, QC set up school libraries and trained teachers. It is extremely important to introduce good reading habits to students at an early age so that a love for reading can be fostered. To disseminate these ideas, QC organizes literacy and pedagogy courses. Aside from the Book Bus, QC manages the Danish Embassy sponsored "Write to Speak" project that introduces slam poetry to students all over Nepal. Since the project enables expressions of thoughts and feelings, it has become widely popular and effective.

The Fair

The Innovation in Education Fair will be a source of new ideas and energy. Several other organizations have partnered with the core team. Representatives will lead workshops and perform during the three-day fair. For



example, Albertina Barcelo of Kathmandu Jazz Conservatory will talk about the importance of music education in children's development. The Kathmandu University Center for Arts and Design will put up a collaborative mural and speak about their process with interested visitors. There will be a presentation by Nepal Picture Library on their ongoing Retelling Histories educational program which was piloted at several schools last year. Open Learning Exchange Nepal (OLE) and Nepal Prakriti Pathsala are also on board and will interact with visitors.

Additionally, Sunita Mahajan and Subima Shrestha, board

members of Srijanalaya, will run visual arts and movement workshops and put up dance and theater performances. The Book Bus will introduce various strands of their English and Science programs - racial discrimination, Newton's third law and literacy strategies in primary school classrooms. The Word Warriors will lead a session titled "Spoken Word Poetry: Teacher's Edition" and Karkhana will talk about "Running the Design Challenge in Schools".

The organizers intend to sensitize school leaders and policymakers to these crucial ideas. They are hoping that those working in Nepal's education sector will enthusiastically participate and engage with them during the fair. There will be opportunities to learn new techniques and plan strategies to incorporate them in schools, an ideal platform for principals and directors looking for ways to implement change in school programs.

Educators should strive to develop the minds and characters of students. The Innovation in Education Fair promises to inspire leaders inclined to make teaching and learning fun and engaging, personal and meaningful, rigorous and challenging. Here is hoping that by coming together and participating, everyone's capacity to imagine a productive and harmonious future for Nepal will be expanded.



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Projects Undertaken

INTERPOL, Nepal Police 10th Regional Conference	1989
UNEP-UNV Third Inter Governmental Meeting (IGM)	1993
Third LDC Ministerial Symposium Sustainable	1994
17th Surgical Conference of Society of Surgeons (SSA)	1997
34th Civil Aviation Director General Meeting	1999
11th SAARC Summit Kathmandu	2001
Weapons of Mass Destruction Awareness Conference (USA)	2003
International Resources Group (USA)	2005
Samjhuta Nepal	2006
Friends for Peace	2006
GACE (Global Alliance of Community Forest)	2006
ARD Inc. (Rule of Law project USAID Nepal)	2006
CECI (Canadian Center for Int'l Studies & Co-operation)	2007
MS Nepal (DARIDA)	2007
SDC (Slovak Development Co-operation)	2007
International Labour Organisation (ILO)	2007
Asian Development Bank (PPTA 4972-NEP)	2008
ICIMOD	2009
GTZ / UDLLE	2009
International Land Coalition IFAD (Italy)	2009
JICA / GEMSP	2015
Samata Foundation	2015
ILO	2015
British Council Nepal	2006 - 2015
World Bank Nepal	1998 - 2015
United Nations Office of The High Commission for Human Rights (OHCHR) Nepal	2009 - 2015
UNICEF	2009 - 2015
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Feature

KHOKHANA'S FAMED TORI-KO-TEL

One can pick up the aroma of mustard oil cooking hundreds of feet away in Khokhana. It's evident that at first, you will find yourself following the strong scent to gradually transcend to your own memories of tori-ko-tel.

 SRIZU BAJRACHARYA

 SAJANA SHRESTHA



In Khokhana, producing mustard oil was based on a community system, as the community owned the oil mill. But many people have started family units.

Traditionally, producing, drying and threshing mustard is manual work. The pressing work is done using wooden instruments, while the machine is used only on the later part, to produce oil from the used mustard dreg.



As we would drive into Khokhana, the strong scent of tori would whiff through the mud houses. And I would feel more home-sick already, because I would be lingering over the taste of hakku-choela and kachhila as tori-ko-tel was used for making these non-veg newari delicacies during Nakhatyas at home. My father enjoyed the smell of tori, and often while cooking, he would tell me with pride (as though he had made the tori-ko-tel himself), "Tori-ko-tel is our Nepali oil, and it's very healthy; you are thinking it smells, but this is not an odor, it's an aroma. Wrap yourself into it, and you will understand why I am saying what I am saying."

The scent of a place is often warped in memories. Here, in Khokhana, the scent of tori has again taken me back to my childhood memories. I can actually still hear myself silently sulking inside the blue van, wishing for the road to never end, because I would be returned to my hostel after my holidays, and my hostel was perched at the end of this road. But, often on these trips, I would gaze out of the van's small window to the green fields and the tori-ko-bari, and sometimes during the monsoon, I would find men and women busy in ropai. This was Khokhana, a place I had a love-and-hate relationship with even

at the tender age of twelve. Hate, because I would have to return to my hostel, and love, because the local people were friendly and the sweet aroma of tori always made me feel closer to home.

On winter holidays, when I would come back home to enjoy the sun on the terrace, my hajurma would massage me and my cousins' hair with tori-ko-tel.





She would also give my little baby brother a body massage, explaining to me how tori-ko-tel is even good for the bones. However, those idle afternoons have long been left behind.

This time here in Khohana, I and my friend entered this ancient town searching for its tori mills to write a story on them. It wasn't really that hard, but we both found ourselves adrift with our sun-dried memories.

Kanchha Maharjan seemed to understand our nostalgia attached with the scent of tori that wafted strongly from his tori mill: Gaabu Jyaasha Tel Mill. He let us be for a while, and then gradually started telling his story.

"I reopened this factory after almost 30 years," he says. As a boy, he enjoyed the smell of tori, he tells me the scent is his childhood. Originally, Gaabu Jyaasha Tel Mill had 144 stakeholders from his community, and one of the stakeholders was his father. But, later, it closed down, as the stakeholders went their different ways. For almost 30 years, the mill was abandoned, but Kanchha Maharjan wanted to continue what his family had been doing years ago; he believes his work is an inheritance that he should continue, a culture that needs longevity. "I have

taken this place on lease for 10 years; this is my third year, but I don't know what will happen after seven more years, because I have realized that this business is very difficult. It's not easy to run a tori-mill. The cost is rather too expensive, but it certainly gives me a sense of satisfaction for now."

And it's true; in recent years, bazaars offer a larger variety of oils: sunflower, olive, and mustard. Even Khokhana's tori-ko-tel is more accessible, as more and more private tori mills open within houses. Khokhana's tori-ko-tel today has a depleting number of customers. There was a time when tori-ko-tel used to be exchanged for tori itself. Local sellers would balance jerry cans filled with Khokhana's tori-ko-tel and carry them to houses, where they would be exchanged for tori. "When you have a big market, we don't realize which oil is the best; everyone is promoting their oils as the best. But, the way I see it, there is a lot of grey in this business. Most people mix oils and



Feature

sell them in the market,” says Maharjan.

Tori mills are dependent on tori from Nepal, India, China, and Bangladesh. “The mills don’t just depend on the Nepali tori, if such was the case, tori would be more expensive. We use imported toris to make the oil. Tori-ko-bari has seemingly disappeared, as you can see for yourself,” says Maharjan.

As I sit there in his factory, I am overwhelmed by the strong scent of tori, and the tori-komill becomes a muse for me. Leaving my memories to play at the back of my mind, I start observing the process of tori-ko-tel making. Shumsher Ale Magar, one of Kanchha Maharjan’s workers, is busy burning the tori in the bhatti (burner, previously called hadi). He is at ease, as he shovels and stirs the grinded mustard seed on the hot pan.

His next step involves pouring the hot grinded mustard

seed on to a metal bag with pores, which resembles a doko. Once the metal bag is filled, Anil Maharjan, another worker in the Gaabu Jyasa Mill, steps on to the huge steering and unscrews the traditional oil press for Ale to slowly slip in the metal bag in between the large wooden planks. When he is done, Anil tightens the steering, as I watch the oil oozing out from a small tap below the kol. “Before the 1934 earthquake, we had four of these kols (traditional wooden oil presses); the one you are seeing here is one of the oldest wooden presses. The locals worship this oil press as Bhairav, while the hadi is worshipped as Agni devata, and the kol is worshipped as Mahankal. Every year in the month of Baisakh, the locals worships the Bhairav that resides in this factory, and partake of a heavy Newari feast,” says Kanchha Maharjan

Khokhana’s tori-ko-tel is famous all around Kathmandu.





The Newars still go hunting for pure tori-ko-tel in bazaars to make delicacies like saag, wah, baara, choela, kachhila, and more. It is said that a tori-ko-tel merchant once went to Chobar Ganesthan, where he had rubbed the oil on the body of Ganesh, asking for his

blessings. Pleased, Ganesh had blessed him, saying, “Khokhana’s tori-ko-tel will always flourish,” and so it does even today. Although the number of customers is decreasing, those who know the taste of tori have always returned to the flavor. Perhaps this number includes

people like my father, who enjoys the scent of tori with a sense of pride.

As Kanchha Maharjan puts it, “This strong scent of Khokhana’s tori is the smell of my childhood.” This holds true for many Nepalis, Khokhana’s tori is indeed filled with memories.

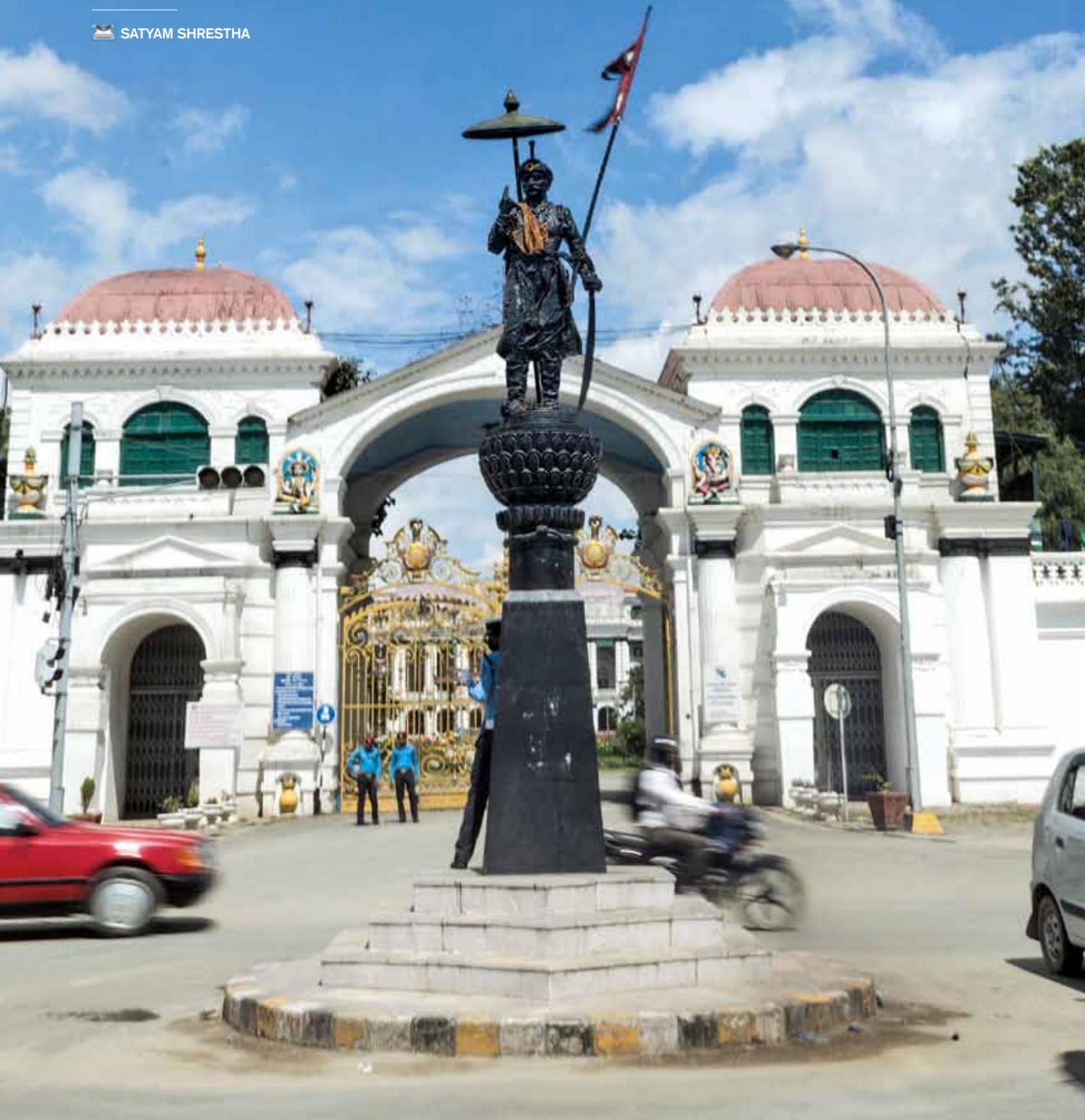
Mustard oil dregs (Pina) are used by people for washing their heads and bodies, in order to purify them.

THE FORGOTTEN IDOLS

Feature

Remembering the historical icons that contributed in making the Modern State of Nepal.

SATYAM SHRESTHA



Across the journey, many monarchs, queens, ministers, wrong doers, freedom fighters, dictators have left marks on Nepali history for better or worse.

Nepal has come a long way from being an assemblage of city-states and individually ruled provinces to the beautifully unified Mechi-Mahakali it is today. Across the journey, many monarchs, queens, ministers, wrong doers, freedom fighters, dictators have left marks on Nepali history for better or worse. However, certain iconic personalities and sites have managed to transcend the confines of memory and have been forever immortalized for all to see, remember, acknowledge and appreciate.

King Mahendra

King Mahendra has been heralded by various different historians as a true patriot to his nation through and out. Most famously associated with the classical “Ma mare pani mero desh bachi rahos” quote, King Mahendra touched many hearts. Although there is major controversy surrounding the Panchayat system, with some praising its revolutionary stance of abolishing political party system altogether and handing over more power to the people and others severely criticizing its very premise itself, his lesser known acts of benevolence are ones that shine out the most. He implemented a land reform

policy, which provided land to many landless people in dire need of it. Likewise, the Mahendra Highway (also called East-West Highway) that runs along the entire Terai belt in southern Nepal can also be credited to his highness as an effort to alleviate travel difficulties. King Mahendra’s biggest move was probably launching the Back to the Village National Campaign in 1967, one of the nation’s largest rural development efforts. Finally, if it were not for him, Nepal would not be a member of the United Nations in 1955.

King Prithvi Narayan Shah

Prithvi Narayan Shah, King of Nepal (1723–1775) is most arguably the one prominent historical figure that every Nepali identifies with. He was the ninth generation descendant of *Dravya Shah* (1559–1570), the founder of the ruling house of *Gorkha*. Prithvi Narayan Shah succeeded his father, King *Nara Bhupal Shah*, to the throne of the *Gorkha Kingdom* in 1743, at the small age of 20. The first *King* of a unified Nepal would not have it any other way. Before him, Nepal as we know it was divided and weakened under the Malla confederacy and regime which had reigned for centuries. He lies at the center of one

of the most intriguing historical anecdotes of all time. Although many variations of the story exist, it tells the same tale. A godly being personified as a woman once came to visit a young King Prithvi. She beckoned him to put forward his hands and proceeded to put some curd on it, then had him eat it up. Next, she asked for his hand again. But this time she spat on it instead. The startled king dropped it on his feet. The woman announced to the taken aback king, that if he had eaten the regurgitated mess, he would have conquered any and everywhere he set his sight. But as he dropped it on his feet, he would be able to conquer all the places he set his foot on. Whether this story has any bearing of truth to it or not is of little consequence, it is what he was able to accomplish that deserves attention.

Shahid Gate

Sahid Gate or Shahid Gate (Martyr’s Gate) is a monument in Kathmandu, Nepal. It is a famous memorial and sight-seeing hot spot where notable patriots and martyrs have been immortalized. As of 2016, four statues lie inside the gates. The statue of king Tribhuvan used to lie on top of the four, but a 2012 cabinet meeting decided to move

Feature

the statue into the Narayanhiti museum where it lies to date. These four brave souls, Dharma Bhatka Mathema, Ganga Lal Shrestha, Dashrath Chand, and Shukraraj Shastri are considered crucial historical figures, as they once stood against the 104 year old Rana regime. Around the 1940's, fate brought these brave individuals together into one political party, the Nepal Praja Parishad headed by Tanka Prasad Acharya. Dasharath Chand actively participated as

a writer spreading pamphlets against the regime alongside the support of the other three. Their party revolted for 4 months and it was starting to gain major momentum with more and more supporters too. But sadly, Ramji Joshi, another prominent member of the same party, decided to give in to the temptation of the 5000 rupee reward for information and sold out his brothers. As such, all the leaders were rounded up and these freedom fighters were tortured to no end

in prison. Despite being continuously demanded to beg pardon and have their lives spared, the martyrs refused to bow in the face of oppression and were tragically murdered in the subsequent year through shots to the head and nooses around necks. Amidst the tragedy at the end of their rebellion, Ganga Lal was allowed one last meeting with his family before his execution in shackles. This emotional aftermath would inspire his youngest brother Pushpa Lal Shrestha to take up arms later on too. Needless to say, these selfless patriots have deserved a spot at the Shahid Gate and the hearts of Nepalis forever.

King Birendra

Birendra Bir Bikram Shah (29 December 1945 - 1 June 2001) was the 11th King of Nepal and is unanimously credited by many as the greatest monarch in Nepali history, who lived to serve the people and not the other way around. The eldest son of King Mahendra, whom he succeeded in 1972, he reigned till 2001 after which he was succeeded by king Dipendra Bir Bikram Shah. He is described as one of the royal ones who wanted the Nepalese people to experience actual democracy instead of a thickly veiled façade. This was seen in 1980 when we gave the people the freedom to choose between multiparty democracy and a reformed panchayat system. Then in People's Movement 1, he decided to establish the constitutional monarchy in Nepal instead of fighting for dictatorship which he easily could have. However, not many know that he probably stands the most educated king in all of Nepal's royal bloodlines. He studied at Eton College in United Kingdom for his graduate studies, the University of Tokyo for another and even Harvard University in pursuit of a political theory degree. Despite his many acts of kindness for the people and nation as a whole, he is most closely associated with the Nepalese royal massacre which



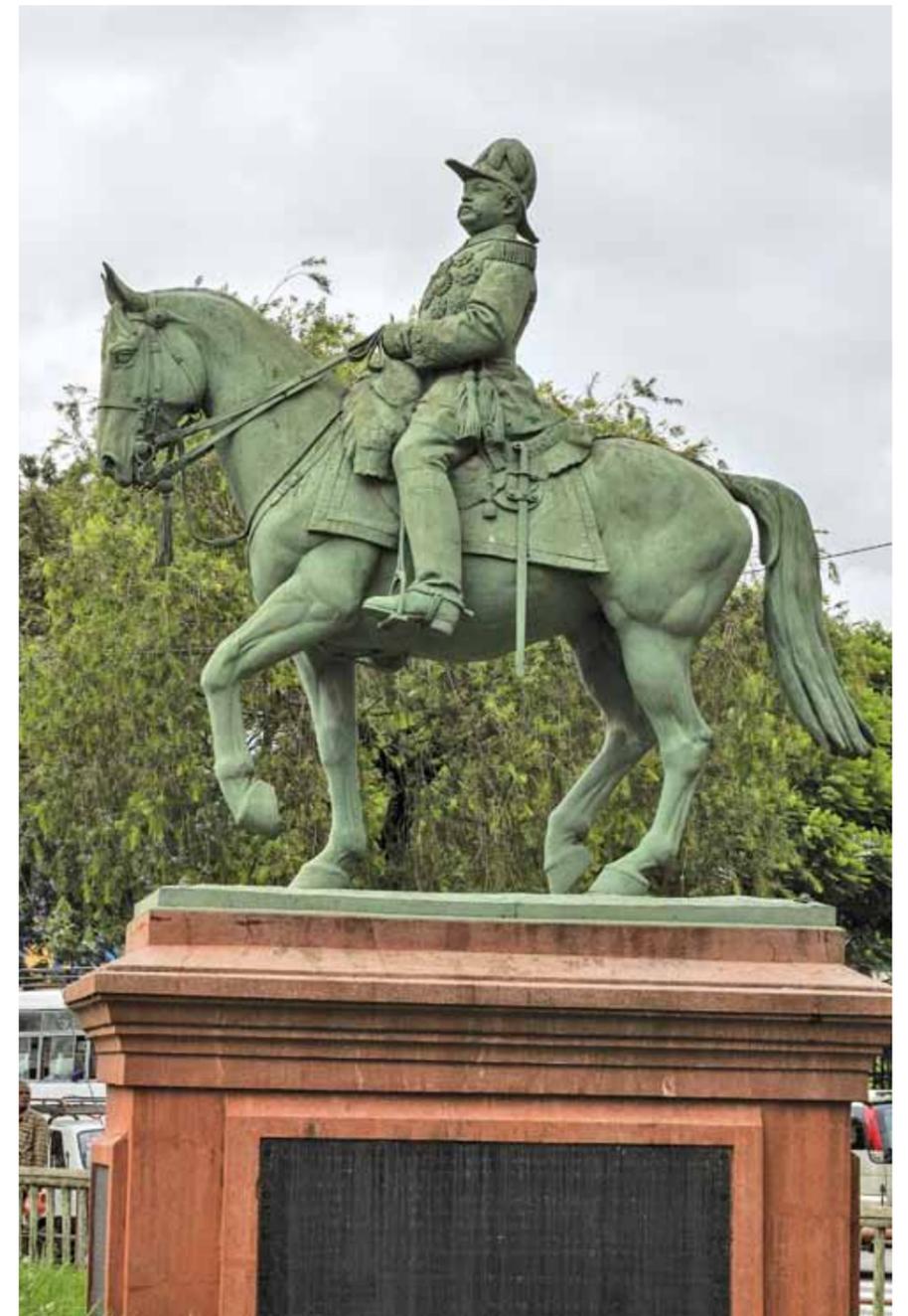




occurred on June 1, 2001, at the grounds of Narayanhiti Royal Palace. Although concrete evidence lies in no land in sight, the generally accepted consensus is that a heavily intoxicated Prince Dipendra attempted to massacre everyone in sight after a slight altercation with his father then shot himself in a fatal murder suicide scenario. On the other side of the spectrum, some conspiracy theorists even believe that Prince Dipendra did not even bloody his hands once and it was all some big cover up. No matter how the events may have transpired, the fact remains that such a blow was a highly unbecoming end unfit for a king of such kindness.

Jung Bahadur Rana

Of all the many different Rana rulers who have graced the seats of royalty, Jung Bahadur Rana most likely stands the most remembered and known. Maharaja Jung Bahadur (June 18, 1817, Kathmandu, Nepal - February 25, 1877, Borlang, Gorkha) was a ruler of Nepal and founder of the Rana Dynasty of Nepal. His real name was Bir Narsingh Kunwar but he became famous by the name of Jung Bahadur, given to him by his maternal uncle, Mathabarsingh Thapa in recognizance of his ferocious nature and courage. A man who wore his heart on his sleeve, he was able to successfully overthrow his rivals, and subsequently reinforce his command in the administrative, judicial and civil affairs of the country. During his reign as prime minister, he strived to maintain cordial relations with foreign nations in Europe and was known to have made trips to Britain and France with moderate frequency. He also strived to bring reforms by promoting modernization, revising judicial customs and working towards the abolishment of various social evils like 'Sati'. Regardless of his good deeds, it was frequently overshadowed by his



demeaning nature of "wifing" every girl he liked. And if she was already married like Siddhi Gajendra Laxmi, he would simply have his soldiers abduct the girl and bring her over to his place to serve as a mistress. Matter of fact, he is credited with over 13 wives and more than 2 dozens of sons and daughters. He married some for love, others for political alliances with various noble houses, including a sister of Fateh Jung Shah, one of the victims of the Kot Massa-

cre. He even took in a spy who provided priceless information as a wife. And it did not stop within the border lines either as demonstrated when he married a Coorg (royal Indian state before British takeover) Indian princess in Varanasi on his return home from England. Nevertheless, taking well informed and active steps to abolish the Kamalari and the horrible sati system will always be a move to forever remember and appreciate equally.

A MONASTERY ON A HILL Feature

Ngima Dorje Sherpa is the one his village puts his hopes on to get things done. When it came building a monastery in this distant community in Solukhumbu, Ngima Dorje took up a responsibility that changed his outlook on life forever.

by SACHI MULMI



When the earth shook that day in April last year, Ngima Dorje Sherpa's immediate thought went to a monastery perched on a hill at a village called Kharikhola of Juving VDC in Solukhumbu district. He was worried lest it had succumbed to the violent shakes of nature, or even worse, had put the monks in harm's way. However, when he got there two days later by flight, he was relieved to find that it had resisted. All was well, for now.

Ngima Dorje Sherpa is a trekking guide and a travel agent who has been running his trekking company since 1997. Born on March 1, 1972, he grew up familiar with the tricky trails and beautiful scenery of his village.

He has been actively involved in many social and community projects over the years, especially for the development of his village. To build what is now Pema Namding Monastery, however, took a completely new level of dedication. It was a different story.

The thought of building a monastery in Himalayan terrain in the middle of nowhere was very intimidating at first. "My community people were eager to have a monastery built in Kharikhola, as I'd earned a certain reputation for running around involving myself in different projects. But, this was something else, compared to launching safe drinking water or regulating mother groups," he says.

It meant mustering every stone and cement and hundreds of construction material, trans-

porting them from respective areas to his road-deficient village, and building from scratch. Sherpa thought about it, and didn't dare take on this very ambitious project until 2005, when he went for an international tour to reach out to his contacts and generous friends so as to collect sufficient funds.

After a Dutch organization donated 15,000 euros, he felt a little relieved, and confident enough to initiate it. After many glitches, it finally took off. The construction started in 2005, and in an unintentional but lucky occurrence, completed the entire project in three years, three months, three weeks, and three days, a lucky sign according to Buddhist beliefs.

Pema Namding Monastery is an interesting sight to anyone who has had the opportunity to see it. Sherpa insists that the view from the monastery is even better. The monastery operated with 17 monks from poverty-stricken households, offering them necessities and education up to 5th grade. For Sherpa, however, it was the kind of education the monastery was going to introduce that mattered the most.

"The kind of rituals that lamas of the village fulfill isn't enough in today's time. Young monks should be educated, so that they can later be people of influence and bring change to this village. This is my long term plan," he says. He sees danger in leaving the kids without education. "This is our effort to change things," he adds. Therefore, two teachers

from India and Bhutan have been engaged in their education.

But, running the monastery has been an even bigger challenge than constructing it. "The past decade has been the busiest of my life. I am busy looking for help and innovative ways to keep the monastery afloat," he says, adding, "I'm looking forward to a serious and effective long-term plan to make sure that it runs for hundreds of years even after we have gone."

So, the monastery development committee has been trying to engage interested trekkers and people as members to make a foolproof plan for its survival. Despite the difficulty, Sherpa is proud of what he has achieved. The villagers have put their trust and faith on him, and it has been this faith that has driven him to keep working at it.

"My village and the surrounding area are remote places where it seems as if everyone who matters has abandoned them," he shares.

In 1995, he met Sir Edmund Hillary, who made a deep impact on him. "He told me to 'leave my name behind.' I didn't under-



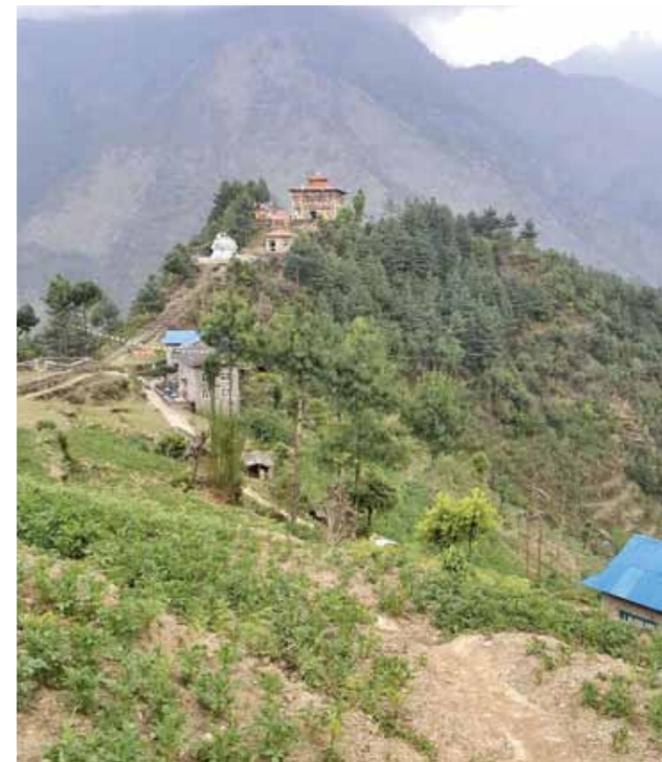
Pema Namding Monastery is an interesting sight to anyone who has had the opportunity to see it. Sherpa insists that the view from the monastery is even better.

stand it then. He was referring to how I should do something good for the community and for the welfare of the people, so that they would remember me," he says. He has not looked back since then.

And the number of projects in his list grows. Immediate are the long-term development plans for the monastery. "If I could, and if things were in my favor, I would invest to make the monastery area a tourism spot. It has the look and feel of one," he says. Mostly inhabited by people involved in agriculture and tourism, he hopes that it will help the economy of the village.

He is also looking for an opportunity to re-introduce free health camps to the locals there, like he did back in 2008. "But resources are tight," he laments. "After all, what is the use of initiating things if you can't end it properly?"

The partial damage brought forth by the second quake in May 2015 was an added blow to them. "However, it could have been worse," he smiles, adding that the renovation would probably be finished in a couple of months. With a little help from the Nepal Tourism Board, he hopes the monastery will meet all expectations. He's optimistic it will, eventually.



Rain Mist and Ropai

The misty season of rain and rice is actually just a layering on top, if you cut deep, you will realize that it is the essence of hard work that ropai is celebrating.

📷 🌿 AMAR DANUWAR RAI



The fields are ploughed into smooth mud pools with perfect consistency for planting rice seedlings.



A group of men and women, before leaving to sow their rice seedlings in their field, celebrate the season of planting. They drink kar-thow (a strong changg) and feast on dahi chuirea preparing with great zeal to finally get dirty in the mud; to sow the seeds that will eventually make their harvest. I on the other hand, am afraid that the soft drizzle might spoil my camera.

It is a lovely season, to be back in the fields again. I can see the men and women enjoying asaar, they are dexterously ploughing the fields and planting seedlings, some are tending to their ropai, done the other day, while some men are

entering the fields with a thermos: to maybe enjoy a hot cup of tea after a tiring day of planting.

The bulls too don't seem to mind the cold mud slushing through their legs. It is as if they understand the importance of the ropai season. Young girls and boys, are here on the field of Khokhana, relishing the asaar season in this muddy field. Their faces covered with mud, laughing and screaming splashing mud and celebration around them.

In my head, I am thinking, "do these kids understand the meaning of ropai? Do they know why they are celebrating the season of rain and rice?"

In recent years, the festival of ropai has become quite famous. But amidst the songs of ropai and

laughter, we forget that the true celebration of the season is not just for ropai but the hard work it involves; the efforts to plant rice seedlings to later harvest the gift of the blessed season.

Hard-work is a part of our lives; and even the basics to farming is about learning to work hard; to enjoy and relish the sowed seeds later as the fruits of labor.

It is the same with life, you endeavor now, to make your life easier for tomorrow. And that is ropai. The misty season of rain and rice is actually just a layering, if you cut deep, you will realize that it's the essence of hard work that ropai is celebrating.

So, have you been planting your rice seedlings well?



Young girls enjoy splashing themselves in the mud pool awaiting for ropai while a young boy helps his mother out in the field. He looks up at me as he acknowledges my presence in the field with my camera.





Festivals such as these celebrates the sense of togetherness.



LOCAL STORY

AEYY MACHHO AAYO MACHHO! AEYY MACHHO AAYO MACHHO!

(Fish is here, come on down, fish is here)

I hear him shouting outside, the machha (fish) wala is happy to see me, as he expects me to be one of his customers. But instead I interrogate him and he looks confused. Naresh Sahani Majhi is from Rauthahat. And he has shining teeth like those in the ads of happydent. He smiles joyfully at Kanchha Maharjan who is his regular customer. I ask him, "Why Machha, why not something else for business?"

"I went to Malaysia recently through manpower. But the job was not that good. I had sold my land to get an oversea ticket and to bear my cost of living in Malaysia. I earned nothing, instead ended up spending 3 lakhs. So, I returned home thinking, home is where I should be and my machhi business is perfect. I come around Khokhana every now and then and by the end of the day, I am almost successful at selling all these machhas. I could sell fruits but we do not earn much profit from it. That is why machhi is the best" says Majhi.

While I am still analysing his answer, he surprises me by asking, "so are you married?"

And I shake my head saying no.

"Well that's good. Because now you earn for yourself, it's difficult for me, I have my wife and my kids, if I don't make a living, life will rain down on me" says Majhi wearing that happydent smile again.



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Craft

REVIEW • CRAFTED TALE • PLACE OF CRAFT • CRAFT MAKER • CRAFT SHOP



A hand prayer wheel could be one of the perfect souvenirs to take back home from Nepal.

Palpali Karuwa

Crafted tale

From a household kitchen utensil, the Palpali Karuwa evolves into a luxurious art object. At the same time, ironically, the craftsmanship faces a threat of extinction.

NIRMAL SHRESTHA



Palpa, a scenic district in the Lumbini zone of Nepal, is well-known, amongst other things, for its traditionally designed 'Palpali karuwa'. A karuwa is a vessel used for serving alcohol and the palpali karuwa, as the name suggest, is a special metallic vessel made particularly in Palpa. Its curious design, interests not only connoisseurs of alcohol but also those fascinated with handicrafts and metallurgical arts.

The design of the karuwa reflects the art of primitive eroticism in its craftsmanship. Like in the fourth-century Peruvian water vessels with their snouts depicting the male genital organ, a similar depiction of primitive erotic art can be observed in the craftsmanship of the Palpali karuwa.

The practice of metal craft developed in Palpa, centuries ago in the Sen Period. An inscription on the bell of the Bhimsen Temple at Majhtole Haitya of Bhairavsthan VDC, Palpa, (which was built during the Sen Period) stands witness to the fact. After the assimilation of Palpa into the Kingdom of Nepal, the mint was shifted to Tansen's Taksar Tole from Samakot. The minters, who were Shakyas and Bajracharyas, came from the Kathmandu valley. These artisans were skilled in making utensils of copper, bronze, and dhalaut (a mix of different metals). When a fire broke out in Taksar Tole in 1909, mint production was stopped in 1910. After this, these artisans began making various utensils of metal.

Traditional vocations and skills began to fade away along with the development of modern technology and changes in social values. Artisans began to leave their professions as craftsmen, and were drawn towards salaried jobs. Till 1959, there were 16/17 families embracing this vocation, and by 1977, it was limited to only five families. Currently, just three families are involved in this metal craft industry.

The making of the Palpali karuwa that is so attractive to both domestic and international tourists, as well as to lovers of art and craft, has its own story. Reaching the customer only after its passage through different stages, the first step in the production of the Palpali karuwa is the making of the wax mold. In Newari, this is called making the 'thasa', and this is done with much effort by very experienced hands. At first glance, it looks just like a metal karuwa. In the second stage, the mold is cleaned and finely polished. After the mold is ready, three pipe like appendages made of wax are fixed to the upper part of the mold, through which, molten metal will be poured inside. This is called 'nau' in Newari. After this, in the fourth stage, the mold is plastered with a paste mixture of 'dewal' clay (termitarium clay) and cow dung. Able to resist even very high degrees of heat, this 'dewal' clay mixture is used to plaster the mold two to three times, and kept to dry.

In the fifth stage, the dried mold is further covered with



another mix of red mud and saw dust ('chyakmo' in Newari). First, one side is plastered carefully, and only after it has dried is the other part also as carefully plastered and dried. In this way, after plastering with the mix, and drying both inside and outside, the clay mold begins to be ready. The sixth stage consists of getting the final mold ready by melting the wax inside the mold. To pour hot molten bronze metal inside the clay mold, the top part of the pipe like appendage is cut through to the wax inside. To melt the wax inside, the mold is kept on the upper shelf of a special kind of two shelved oven. This is called 'san: bukewu' in Newari. After the mold has heated, and the wax pours out, the inside is emptied and the mold is now ready.

The most important stage is the pouring of the molten metal into the mold. After the mold is ready, the metal is heated in large vessels on the lower shelf of the oven while the mold is heated

The making of the Palpali karuwa that is so attractive to both domestic and international tourists, as well as to lovers of art and craft, has its own story.

to red heat on the upper shelf. Extreme precaution is needed at this stage. There must be equilibrium between the melting of the metal and the mold becoming red hot. Traditional skills and experience are required at this time. Bronze (a mixture of 75% copper and 25% tin alloy) is the fastest of all metals to solidify. A mold that is suitably heated to red heat helps to ensure that the bronze reaches all parts inside the mold. In the later stage, the clay mold is broken to reveal the lower part, upper part, spout, artistically carved bird, etc., which are then engraved, fixed, embedded, and polished to a fine shine.

In this way, just like the Phoenix bird that burns and again rises from its ashes, the Palpali karuwa also finishes the journey of its making by going through the remaking of molds again and again.

Because investment costs have increased and production has reduced due to shortages of raw materials and coal (needed for melting metal), and the need to pass through different stages to make the molds that cannot be reused and have to be made again and again, Palpali karuwa, instead of being a daily-use utensil, has become a luxury item for decorative purpose. And, the perfect memento or gift.

Destination

WHY YOU NEED TO GO TO DOLPO

Dolpo is an ideal and interesting location to spend the monsoon.

SASHA HOLMGRENS KIM BANNISTER





The trail to Shey Phoksundo.



Its diverse terrain and rich culture makes Dolpo an ideal and interesting location to spend the monsoon. Shrouded in the great Himalayas, it's what we call a 'rain shadow' area (where the land experiences little to no rain). While the rain can be very beneficial for farmers in the lower regions, bringing a flourish to their agriculture, it is not the same higher up. If indeed it does begin rain, you can look forward to clear blue skies and the smell of the crisp outdoors by the end of it. The recommended months to visit would be between June and August; during this time, there are fewer chances of getting altitude sickness, as the temperature is warmer. The low accommodation rates make it easier to find a place to stay if you are trekking, or simply just relaxing. You might ask yourself, 'why go to a rain shadowed area?' Well, the answer is simple, to escape being cooped up inside, while the rain falls in torrents around you. There are loads to do in Dolpo, and so much to

see, one of the activities being trekking. It has become an increasingly popular pass-time for those who wish to experience things from a wider and different perspective.

Some of Dolpo's population is nomadic, so they move from place to place depending on where they can find new and greener pastures for their livestock to graze on, thus creating a very humble way of life. Upper Mustang, also known as 'fertile land' in Tibetan, is home to ancient ruins and picturesque mountains towards the south. It is one of the most well-conserved regions in the world. The unique culture and historical monuments make it seem as though it has come straight out of a storybook. For those looking for a more varied route, Jomsom-Muktinath is just the right trek. Covering a diverse trail, from high altitude arid and dry zones to sub-tropical heat and terraced rice paddies, there is no doubt that you could never be bored. A few places to stop by along the way would have to be the Tatopani natural hot springs and

The recommended months to visit Dolpo would be between June and August; during this time, there are fewer chances of getting altitude sickness, as the temperature is warmer.

Muktinath Temple, which is sacred to both Hindus and Buddhists, and is visited by thousands of pilgrims every year.

Upper Dolpo is also recognized as a region where many Tibetans reside. One of its main attractions is Shey Phoksundo Park, where there is a wide array of flora and fauna. Though these regions are located in Nepal, they are very Tibetan in both their culture and lifestyle. The remote and isolated area is a dream for thrill-seekers and adventurers who wish to explore the routes that lead to the mid-western parts of Nepal. Its most popular, and most frequently seen, animal is the

blue sheep; this herbivorous mammal can be seen bouncing off rocks, and peacefully grazing away at the grass. As very few foreigners and tourists are allowed access to Upper Dolpo, the culture has been left untouched by the spread of tourism. Twice a year, the Himalayan pilgrimage takes place at the Shey Gumpa, where pilgrims make a kora of the crystal mountain known as Mt. Kailash.

The treks in Upper Dolpo are particularly challenging. As you trek, you will walk between high mountain passes surrounded by dry, arid land, and small tufts of vegetation. Ideal places to stay during your visit would





be in teahouses, not only does this help the local community earn money; it also allows you to see what life is like for them. For those who don't wish to stay in small teahouses, there are three-star hotels and hostels, too. You're not limited to only trekking; for those looking for a less challenging trip, walks and strolls in rhododendron forests might be also to your liking.

Finally, breaking down the top places to visit, you need to definitely go to Shey Gompa in Upper

Dolpo, and witness the Himalayan pilgrimage; Tatopani in Jomsom, and the Muktinath Temple; a stroll through the forests while admiring the beautiful mountains in the south of Upper Mustang; and exploration of ancient kingdoms and historical monuments. Dolpo is an adventure everyone should go on. I can assure you that there will be many unforgettable memories to be made, and you might even decide to come back again and re-discover new things that you didn't know existed.

The picturesque Upper Dolpo will keep you charmed.





Nepal for the Experience Discerning Traveler

Nepal pulls the traveling soul towards itself with a compulsive pull. Not once, but several times. Some times to stay. This perhaps makes up for the land's famed mystic quality. An exploration.

RAJ GYAWALI KIM BANNISTER

There are tourists, and then there are travelers, and Nepal is a paradise for the latter—offering experiences, learning, lasting friendships, and tons of fun—creating memories that last a lifetime. It's not strange then that Nepal has one of the highest percentages of return travelers in the world, many of who immerse and involve themselves deep into the country and its people.

The first thing that travelers notice when they come to Nepal is the infectious friendliness of the people, who laugh easily, smile continuously, and accept differences in culture very easily. This, perhaps, is our heritage of centuries of relatively peaceful coexistence among

a myriad of cultures: Indian, Indo-Tibetan, Tibeto-Burman, Indo-Burman, and everything in between. As Nepalis, we are constantly surprised by the traditions and practices of our own compatriots, to the extent that we are travelers in our own country.

This, perhaps, has developed in us a very deep quality of acceptance. The friendliness and nonchalance comes from the fact that we are essentially traders, bridging the gap between the north and the south for centuries. We are communities etching a living in one of the most inaccessible areas in the world in the past, the high passes and the highest mountain range in the world protecting us in the north, and a dense

jungle full of wild animals and deadly diseases bordering us in the south. This has led us to be a mysterious mix of people, from a mysteriously malaria-immune community of Tharus in the south (who purportedly are inhabitants of Rajasthan who fled the Moghul invasions of the past and settled in a harsh jungle beyond the impassable Ganges), to the legendary high-mountain conquering Sherpas (who fled the repression of Buddhism and settled in impassable valleys and protected the sacred philosophy).

Interesting theory here—these previously impenetrable high valleys, where enlightenment was preserved by these early Buddhist settlements that dot the northern side of the

The first thing that travelers notice when they come to Nepal is the infectious friendliness of the people, who laugh easily, smile continuously, and accept differences in culture very easily.

country, is considered Shangri La (not the valleys with springs, flowers, animals, and humans running around surrounded by plenty, but valleys where philosophy and the future of the world was preserved). As you

can see, the onion that is Nepal can be peeled several layers to go deeper and deeper, making it a land of discovery for the intrepid traveler.

Created by the continuous grind of the Indian plate into

the Tibetan plate, and constant rising of the Himalayas, Nepal is one of the steepest places on earth, boasting land between 70 m (above sea level) and the top of the world at 8,848 m within a paltry 250 kilometer breadth, creating climactic and geological zones that can grow anything from pineapple all the way to apple, walnut, and nothing. This steepness leads it to become a paradise for adventure, with hundreds upon hundreds of unexplored mountains, rivers, terrain, valleys, flora, and fauna. Again, another element of the onion that travelers love to peel.

Today, Nepal is a world leader in adventure sports that is slowly allowing more and more adventure lovers and enthusiasts



The element of discovery is endless for the traveler who is interested in these three assets that Nepal has—its people, its environment, and its myriad culture.

to enjoy what the country has to offer. Travelers often discover that the country allows one to feel audacious and test out their skills in a safe environment. The potential is endless, or so it seems right now, as new opportunities keep opening up. Travelers come here to realize they always missed something to do that was within reach, and hence have to come back. No choice.

The element of discovery is endless for the traveler who is interested in these three assets that Nepal has—its people, its environment, and its myriad culture. This is perhaps what makes it such a paradise for

travelers. This country has more festivals than the days of the year, over 150 different languages and dialects, over 100 different ethnicities, all within the 27 million odd inhabitants who live here peacefully.

What's coming up?

To bring things to context at this time of the year, it's monsoon, and life giving rains are coming down by the bucketful. Discoveries now will include the tradition and celebration of rice sowing in the mid-hills and the south of the country. In the high mountains, the rain shadow areas beyond the high mountains will have lush

pastures full of summer flowers, where communities are going into the alpine pastures right now to collect Cordyceps (yarsagumba), the incredible half caterpillar, half mushroom 'herb' that fetches thousands of dollars in the international market for its vigor-giving qualities, the yaks and livestock are in the meadows in their summer jaunt, and the jungles in the south are lush and wild. The shaman full moon festival, the thread changing ceremony, the festival of the dead, and the sarcasm and laughter festivals are coming up.

The discovery never ends for the discerning traveler in Nepal.



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People

SMALL BEGINNINGS GREATER ENDS

Two brothers who are running one of the most reliable and successful Mountaineering Expeditions in Nepal talk about their humble backgrounds, drive to climb and a shared vision that keeps them going.

EVANGELINE NEVE

Mingma Sherpa will be the first to tell you that he comes from humble beginnings. Born in a yak shed in Walung village in Makalu district, he only had the opportunity to study till the 5th grade. “Despite this, all that my parents taught me as a child made me what I am today, and this is what I still value most, and why I will always be thankful to them,” he told me. The family had eight children, six boys and two girls. Four are now involved in mountaineering. Mingma and his brother Dawa, together, have a mountaineering company called Seven Summit Treks. We met recently at the Arniko Room, Annapurna Hotel, to catch up on where they are heading next.

Mingma started his career in climbing at the age of fifteen. He worked his way up from the bottom, eventually becoming the first mountaineer to summit all 14 peaks over 8,000 m on the first attempt. A truly amazing feat!

Between them, the two brothers hold numerous other mountaineering records, too. And, it’s not just what they’ve achieved, but how they’ve got about doing so that makes their tale so fascinating. “We never took a single penny of sponsorship for our

climbs, we did it all ourselves, the same way we got started in the business, working our way up, saving, learning, till we got where we are now.”

Where they are now includes not only their climbing company, but also a clothing business, Yak Mountain. In addition, they are agents for Chinese sports brand Kailas, and are planning to launch Heli-Everest helicopter tours soon. But its Seven Summit Treks that is their most impressive achievement. Established in 2010, their company has been number one in volume of mountaineering expeditions since 2012. They’ve had the biggest Everest expeditions from the Nepal side annually; with 65 members this year, as well as last

year. And so far, touch wood, not a single accident.

When I asked them what they think has made their company so successful so quickly, Dawa explained that as they are climbers themselves, they know the details of what needs to be done from their own experience from the ground level up, “When people climb with us they don’t have problems with their expeditions. Until now, it has not been necessary to do any marketing. We don’t have time for it. Maybe in the future, but for now, people find us by word of mouth.”

In order to get all this off the ground, Mingma worked at Toyota in Japan to earn the money to climb, and when he



“We want to show a lot of young Sherpas that they can make their own lives like we have, and teach them how to run their own businesses.”

returned and set out to buy his mountain gear, relatives asked why he didn’t just settle down with a house and car, rather than spending money on climbing mountains. His reply? “If I buy a house and car, only you and a few friends will know me, but if I spend money on the mountains, the whole world will know who I am.”

“We had this vision,” explain the brothers, “and we invested in this, because we didn’t have much education. But this achievement will be the certificate that we will carry with us, and pass down from generation to generation.”

Their enthusiasm and conviction is certainly infectious. What I found impressive was how they have not just reached for success themselves, but are also determined to do all they can to bring other along with them, too. Already, they have trained 300 climbers, many of whom are working for them. After completing their train-

ing, these young people are issued a mountaineering guide certificate, and in fact, the insistence on being called that—guides and mountaineers, instead of porters—is something that is clearly very important to Dawa and Mingma.

“Foreigners often refer to us as porters, instead of climbers, but we carry huge loads, make the fixed lines, and we have earned the respect to be called climbers. Porters stay below the base camp, climbers go higher, wherever they are from. Fixing lines, making food, setting up camp, all at high altitude—just calling them porters is not fair. They are high altitude climbers,” they explain.

As our interview came to a close, I had one last question for these inspirational brothers. They have already done so much, what are their plans for the future?

Their answers come quickly. They want to open a moun-

taineeering school for young people from the Sherpa community, so that the young generation can learn the skills professionally, improve their English, etc. with the goal of converting these camps into proper degree programs in mountain climbing. “We want to show a lot of young Sherpas that they can make their own lives like we have, and teach them how to run their own businesses, and so on. We are also planning schools and donations to gompas in remote areas. Business is one part, but we want to use what we have for social work, too. We have many opportunities to go abroad, people often invite us, but we want to do something for Nepal, and in Nepal.”

With such a strong work ethic, and so many achievements already under their belt, I’m sure this won’t be the last we hear from these two dynamic men.

Promotion

At Nepali Chulo

Nepali Food is a Celebration of Appetite

If you are looking to dine the Nepali way then you should definitely try the food at Nepali Chulo.

NUMA SHAKYA

One of the worrying consequences of rampant modernization, which we have often heard our older generation re-iterate, is the sad fact that we often tend to forget relishing in our own traditions and cultural practices. At restaurants, when it comes to ordering food my dal-bhat-tarkari is my last option. My usual motto, and many can relate with this, is: if I am going out for dinner why not try something which is different from what I eat regularly eat at home. But sometimes, I guess, trying something different brings us back in a circle to acknowledging our own Nepali palette as the finest authentic dinner that one can go for.

At Nepali Chulo, when I and my foodie friend ordered for a Newari and Thakali dinner set, we were surprised as to how the restaurant celebrated their guest's appetite.

The popcorns teased our hunger, the slightly fried boiled potatoes tried to excite us for what was coming, the quati (bean) soup calmed our eagerness, followed by momo: the defacto Nepali food that set our stomachs' drums rolling.

And then came the big fat feast.

Samay Baji Set: Samay Baji is a sort of staple food for the Newars with samay, chhoela, aalu wali, bara, egg, achhar, spinach. The platter is rich with flavor and is usually spicy. The Nepali Chulo

Samay Baji Set although resembling the veritable samay baji set, was much subtler in taste. It celebrated the Newari food but in its own Nepali way. Keeping in mind that the spices cannot be too penetrable for the visitors here, the set was flavored with diluted spices but with just the right hit. My favorite off the set were the chicken chhoela and spinach that were flavored with ghew (Nepali butter).

Thakali set: A thakali meal for any visitor is a must try. It is the authentic Nepali dinner: daal-bhat-tarkari that is cooked every day in every Nepali home. And therefore, if you want to dine the Nepali way, what you should order for is a thakali set. The Nepali Chulo Thakali set served in a bronze plate had kalo daal, bhat, tarkari, golbheda-ko-achhar, spinach, and chicken curry. The Kalo daal and the chicken curry were my favorite in this platter. It set my stomach rumbling. I should say, it's easier to fall in love with Nepali food when you are served such a rich flavor in our staple food.

I think, the good thing about devouring a delicious Nepali authentic dinner is that it enhances our appreciation for good food and it did just that for me. Nepali Chulo surprised me with its authenticity and did not make me question why I did not go for the unusual.



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Weight: 950 grams



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Price: Rs 6900
Blade size: 12 Inch
Weight: 800 grams



Chukuri Pro
Price: Rs 8400
Blade size: 10 Inch
Weight: 650 grams



GI3
Price: Rs 7300
Blade size: 13 Inch
Weight: 900 grams



Dhankute Wooden Dragon
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Photo courtesy: Prajwol Maharjan



A Beginner's Guide to **MOUNTAIN PHOTOGRAPHY WITH MOHAN DUWAL**

Text: Madeleine Dolling

Most people meet Nepal for the first time through someone else's stunning mountain photography. Many are those who have wandered the Great Himalaya Trails in search for the perfect shot to capture the essence of this fascinatingly diverse country, be it through the impossibly high peaks, the spiritual mountain culture or the unending natural beauty. Those gorgeous images you see don't come easily. Unpredictable weather patterns, harsh climates and the sheer effort it takes to just get to the location you want to shoot are some of the challenges awaiting the aspiring mountain photographer in Nepal.

Someone who knows quite a bit about the trials of mountain photography is Bhaktapur native Mohan Duwal, a web-designer and developer by trade but photographer by design.

When he's not taking photos of his favorite subject; his cuter than cute daughter, Mohan heads out on the Great Himalaya Trails to capture one of his favorite scenes: Nature. And Nepal, as you know, has its fair share of it.

To get you prepared for your photographic journey of Nepal, Mohan has served us his top 5 handy tips on shooting in the Himalayas.

Location, location, location

Nepal is a special place on this earth and everything around us is a masterpiece waiting to be captured through our lens - from lifestyle to nature, culture and people, landscape and wildlife and much, much more. Personally I like to shoot in the mountains and especially along the circuit treks like Annapurna Circuit and Manaslu Circuit. The trails start around 300m and reach up to 5400m which gives fantastic theme variety. You'll get a chance to see different types of flora and fauna, waterfalls, beautiful mountains and meet with many different cultures along the way.



Carry light gear

Choosing the right gear is an important factor. Remember you'll be trekking for many hours a day to get that perfect shot so you don't want to be weighed down by unnecessary equipment. Try to avoid unwanted heavy gear and make sure you carry light accessories like 3-4 batteries, ND filter/Polarizing filter and a light tripod. I go for a 16-35mm lens for wide angle shots, 55mm prime lens for portraits and a 55-300mm lens for close range landscapes. At the moment I have a Sony A7r (full frame) camera and a cheap, lightweight tripod.



GHT How to



Chase storms, not blue skies

In the Himalayas a scene can change dramatically at any given moment due to the weather. Therefore, picking the right time to shoot is crucial. Many beginners think a sunny day is the best time to head out with the camera - but an overcast day with the looming threat of rain may present you with a better opportunity to create a moody image with ominous overtones. Look for storms, wind, mist, dramatic cloud formations, sun shining through dark skies, rainbows, sunsets and sunrises and work with these variations in the weather rather than just waiting for the next sunny blue sky day.

Composition is key

Good composition is key for taking good photographs, yet it's something very difficult to define. While shooting in the mountains, or any other landscape really, always spend time looking for a good foreground element and maintain focus from foreground to background. Work to get the sharpest possible image. You have to go very wide to capture the entire scene and look for small vignettes within the larger scene to find new perspective as well. So both wide and close-up lenses are important.

Keep yourself motivated

Shooting in the Himalayas is challenging, both physically and mentally. You need to be physically fit, alert and patient. If you're not used to the altitude you may feel lethargic and opt to stay in the lodge to rest rather than go out to explore your surroundings. Altitude sickness is also something to factor in if you're headed into the high mountain region so be aware of how you're feeling and know how to pre-empt altitude sickness before it takes hold. These are things I had to battle with in the early days when I started with mountain photography but soon learned to control, which is important, especially if you are shooting on assignment and may not have the luxury of rest days.

Furthermore, the weather is fickle in the mountains and patience is important, especially when waiting for the perfect conditions for the shoot or mood you want to capture. Stay positive, have fun and be flexible if the perfect setting isn't presenting itself.

To get inspired for your next shoot, head over to the **#MyGHT photo feed on Instagram with images from all over the Great Himalaya Trails shared by professional photographers and enthusiastic amateurs alike, all with the same goal of showing off picture perfect Nepal.**



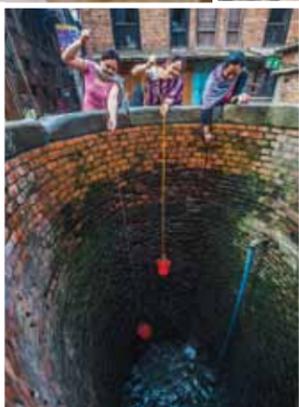
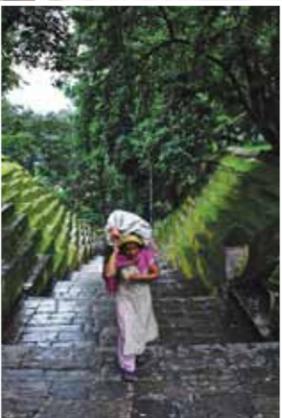
(All images in this article are taken by Mohan Duwal. **From top:** Meena Sherpa, proprietor of Khangba Ngingba, one of the oldest houses in Namche/ Riding on the edge in Upper Mustang / Beautiful smile by a local girl in Syangboche, Khumjung/ A misty morning view at Tengboche./ Searching for views from Everest.)

Wordscape



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Travel Kathmandu and Pokhara in Just One Week

A week-long action-packed travel itinerary to Nepal

In a busy world it is becoming harder and harder to find time to spend on a long vacation abroad. That, however, should stop no one from coming to Nepal and making the most of their time here. Kathmandu and Pokhara are the two scenic cities of Nepal offering the right balance of culture and nature, serenity and adventure in an action packed week. Find a suggested itinerary here:

SUSHIM THAPALIYA





Tang Yue Fan

Day

1

Welcome to Nepal

Upon your arrival in Kathmandu, you can take a taxi or a pre-ordered vehicle, which will pick you up from the Tribhuvan International Airport and take you to your hotel. Advanced booking hotels is

recommended during tourist seasons. Having just arrived, you can spend the first day feasting on some authentic Nepali food whilst enjoying the scenic view of the hills and the busy city itself.

Day

2

Sightseeing in Kathmandu

After breakfast, hire a local taxi to visit Pashupatinath- the famous sacred Hindu temple that attracts pilgrims from all over the world. After visit Swayambhunath, a sacred Buddhist Stupa. Lunch can be had at the famous Kathmandu Durbar Square and the “infamous” hippie abode of Freak Street, sitting next to the palatial ruins of 2015 earthquake. Late afternoon can be spent in Bhaktapur Durbar Square indulging the famous Juju Dhau (Sweet Yogurt). The same evening, you could drive to nearby hill station of Nagarkot and enjoy the spectacular sunset spending the night there.

Day

3

Travel to Pokhara

The morning in Nagarkot must be spent reveling in the spectacular sunrise along with breakfast. Nagarkot is known for its majestic view of sunrises and sunsets. Leave for Pokhara right after breakfast. The 6-7 hour long drive is made easy, thanks to the numerous beautiful scenic views along the way. Mouthwatering Nepali food is available around Mugling and Malekhu. Make sure you stop for lunch. You will be reaching Pokhara by early evening. Check in to your hotel and rest and later explore the lake side street and its life around nightfall.



Day
4

Sightseeing in Pokhara

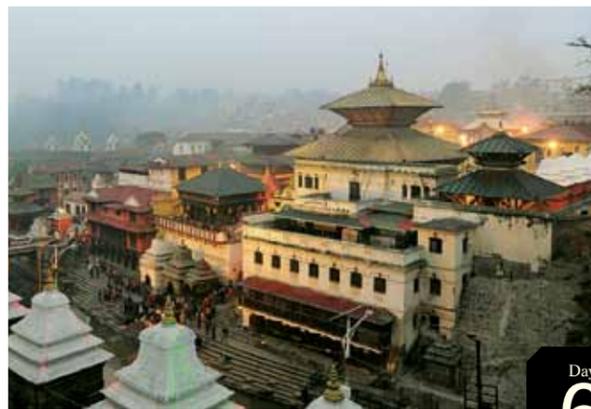
After breakfast go sightseeing around Pokhara. Recommended activities are boating in the mysterious Fewa Lake (you could row one on your own or hire a boatman), paragliding and also visiting the famous temples such as Tal Barahi. You could also visit Devi's Fall, Mahendra Cave and the Bat cave. Choose the activities you most like and savor those instead of trying to do all in the same go. After some shopping and dinner you can return back to the hotel, enjoy the sun setting behind the green hills.



Day
5

Return back to Kathmandu

Since it is a 6-7 hour drive, it is advisable to leave rather early from Pokhara in the morning, right after breakfast. While on your way back you could visit Manakamana Temple, which can be reached through a rope-way/ cable car. After returning back to Kathmandu you check in to a hotel and rest.



Day
6

Last day in Kathmandu

Back in Kathmandu and on your last day in Nepal spend your time exploring local places like Patan Durbar Square and the adjacent market places to buy souvenirs for friends and family. Alternatively you could also visit Thamel, the eccentrically vibrant corner of Kathmandu which has something to offer all its visitors - be it food, gifts or memorabilia. Enjoy the live music performances that keep happening around this touristy haven with a scrumptious dinner.



Day
7

Departure

Early morning after breakfast, check out from the hotel and transfer to the airport to board your flight.

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AN ISLAND ON TOP OF A MOUNTAIN

Experience

Imja Tse, popularly known as the Island Peak Summit, is a popular climbing option for those who wish to train for an expedition up the Everest. A group of trekkers share their experience of this breathtaking climb.

📷 🏔️ DEVENDRA SHAHI

Mountaineering is one of the most adventurous and challenging task. Although there are different kinds of adventurous activities in the world, mountaineering is incomparable. The formal history of mountaineering in Nepal dates back to the May 29, 1953 AD when Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay Sherpa successfully climbed the Everest. Even though many successful/unsuccessful attempts were carried out to climb different mountains in Nepal before this, none were able to garner this much reputation and recognition. The unrecorded history of mountaineering in Nepal stretches further back in times.

Today, thousands of mountaineers climb different mountains of Nepal which has increased the government's revenue on one hand and improved the livelihood of the local people on the other. Further, it has promoted the mountains of Nepal around the globe.

Island Peak expedition

Among the number of regions with beautiful Peaks and mountains in Nepal, Khumbu region is recognized as different and unique in its own way. Khumbu is not only famous for Mt. Everest rather other prominent peaks & mountains, Sherpa communities & their culture, historical Namche bazaar is what that makes this region unique.

This time also, Island peak expedition gets started from Kathmandu. After reaching Lukla by plane, it took us two days of hiking to reach the beautiful Namche bazaar of the Khumbu region. Namche bazaar was always the center of Khumbu region even before Everest got recognition. Namche was Sherpa's local market (Haat-bazaar) from long time ago. Today, Namche





is the most developed place in that region. Since it is located at the most appropriate altitude, Climbers & trekkers stay at least 2 days in Namche for altitude acclimatization. Moving ahead from the Namche, we reached Dingboche, gateway of Island peak, in three days. Between Dingboche and Chhikum, there is mesmerizing landscape. As a photographer, I can say that this

place has a photogenic features because you don't need to adjust angle for taking a picture. On the way from Chhikum to Island peak base camp at 5,087 metres (16,690 ft) called Pareshaya Gyab, the mountains along with the Imja glacier lake will really entice you.

At the base camp, preparations are done for Island peak summit. After few days stay at

the base camp, the team starts climbing towards high camp. It is here at high camp, where all the final preparations like necessary equipment, medicines, foods as well as mental preparation for climbing is done. Taking assistance of one another or Sherpa guide is of utmost necessity as you scale upward. You will have to be prepared to sit in ice and endure the temperature below -20 degrees. The dry wind blows causing breathing difficulty. Also, altitude sickness is another major problem for climbers causing many people to retreat even before the real expedition starts.

It is midnight when we start our final ascension towards the top. After 7-8 hours, we reach the top of the island peak, a great feeling arises within and I wonder, if it is this feeling that pulls hundreds of climbers from across the sea to the top of these mountains. It is really tough to conquer these tall mountains. But as one of the foreign climber says, "If conquering these mountains wasn't this tough and risky, where would I go to make my adrenaline rush. I live at sea but I am in love with these mountains because they make me alive."

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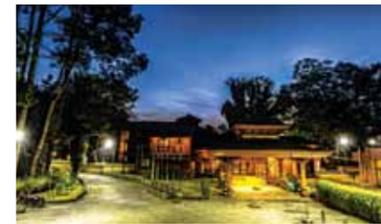
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Marcus Cotton, Managing Director
Tiger Mountain Pokhara Lodge, Nepal

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The Buzz

MARKET WATCH • EVENTS • NEWS



Mahindra launches ARJUN NOVO 605 DI tractors in Nepal

Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd.'s Farm Equipment Sector (FES), a part of the USD 17.2 billion Mahindra Group & Agni Group today announced the launch of the new Mahindra ARJUN NOVO -605 DI, the most technologically advanced and stylishly designed new generation tractor, based on a whole new platform. The new platform would be offered in range from 55-75 HP & right now the product offered

falls in 60 HP category. The new ARJUN NOVO 605 DI is in line with Mahindra's vision of becoming the pioneer in providing technology driven farming solutions to farmers across the country. With new benchmarks in technology, comfort and ergonomics, the latest offering from the Mahindra stable, is all set to change farming practices and improve efficiency and quality of output, leading to Farm Tech Prosperity.

The Invincible One

Hansraj Hulaschand & Co. Pvt. Ltd. added a new edition of Bajaj bike in its existing range of motorbikes with its band new creation – the Bajaj V15. This stellar new bike by Bajaj was launched at a happening event which was interestingly themed after the Nepalese Gurkha Army. The event showcased the daily 'war' of people against traffic and pollution on the streets as the Gurkha Army fights against enemies in warzones. An innovative Khuki dance was performed for the guests which captured the hearts of many attending the event.

Inauguration of CG | NXT GEN

A new initiative has been recently started by the CG | NXT GEN being the first of its kind brand center of Suzuki which will be displaying the new premium line of Suxukir products like Baleno, Scross, Ciaz and all

the new launches in future. Mr. Arun Kr Chaudhary did the inauguration, CMD-CG | NXT GEN and Mr. Shank Srivastav, Executive Director International Business, Mruti Suzuki India Ltd. CG | Motorcop.



Pinnacle Brand Launch

On 5th July, the Pinnacle Brands launched two new international franchise stores in Kathmandu- Amrapali Jewels and Planet Fashion, which will be located at the ground floor or Civil Mall, Sundhara.

With stores in U.S.A, U.K, Japan and India, Amrapali Jewels is a global brand, which has been a very popular

choice among Hollywood and Bollywood stars due to its unique designs and authentic, world-class craftsmanship. The store has affordable silver and gold plated jewelry for all events.

Planet fashion, as the name suggests, is a clothing brand that houses top-notch names- Louis Philippe, Allen Solly and Van

Huesen in one store. It has more than 240 stores all across India and has complete collections of menswear for all occasions from formal to casual wear. Both the stores will be offering a promotional discount upto 10% till 20th July, 2016.

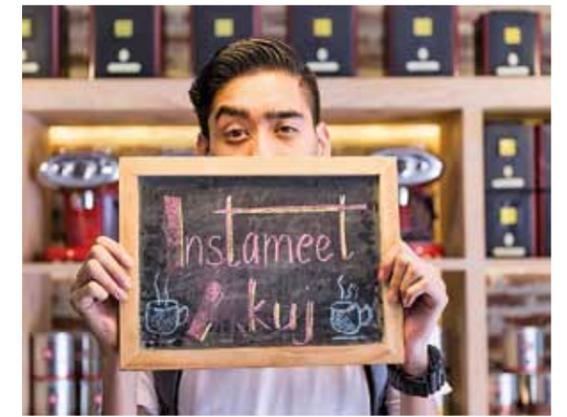
They will be launching three more international brands in 2016.

GALLERIA: MEN CLOTHING STORE

Shopping for men is a difficult task. There aren't as many clothing stores for men as there are for women in Kathmandu. Galleria has made it easy for men to shop. It is a branded store for readymade clothes for men. Galleria is a solely owned store by Mr. Hirawat and is under a partnership for the brand Clarks with Mr. Dipesh Khetan in Labim Mall. Galleria in Labim mall is operating since 3 weeks. The owner was motivated to open this store because he always wanted to be under business community. The store has two brands namely Galerius and Pierre Cardin. It believes that it upholds a certain standard and promotes the culture, updated to complement today's on-the-go lifestyle.

Berger Double Protection Offer

One of Nepal's leading paint manufacturers – Berger Paints, has come out with an exciting monsoon offer for its customers, entitled 'Berger Double Protection Offer'. The offer is on its highest selling exterior brand – Weather coats All Guard Exterior Emulsion. The company is giving an attractive umbrella for FREE with purchase of every 20 liters of Berger Weather coat All Guard Exterior Emulsion. Out with the slogan "Weather coat All Guard Le Ghar Ko Protection, Chhata Bhaye Monsoon Ma No Tension" the offer is endorsed by renowned comedian Sandip Chhetri and popular actress Nisha Adhikari.



Instameet Akuj

Instameet Akuj was held on the 9th of July. It was Instagramers Nepal's (@igersnepal) collaboration with Deli Akuj and Bhav Products to connect Nepali Instagram users. With around 50 participants, the meet was divided into 3 sessions: Meet and Greet, Capsule Challenge and Lekhau (A basic handwriting session with Bhav)

You can know more about the meet using #instameetakuj.

Instameet is group of Instagram users meeting up to take photos and videos together. Instagramers Nepal regularly hosts Instameets in Nepal from time to time.



Hyderabad Kebab and Biryani Fest

The Hyderabad Kebab and Biryani fest that took place in Hotel Yak & Yeti from 15th-22nd July 2016 brought the mouth-watering Hyderabad cuisine consisting of succulent Kebabs and steaming hot Biryani to Nepal. Cooked in aromatic flavors which are prepared by the highly talented chefs with exotic spices and rare ingredients are an absolute treat for the taste buds.

The menu offers a vast range of delectable specialties like Nizami Hand Biryani, Kachche Gosht Biryani, Whole Masala Rawa Fish, Kasturi Murg Kebab, Seafood kebab, Bharwan Aloo Dum, Aloo Udayagiri, Subji Panchamel, Gobi Muslum, Dhingri Hara Piyaj Masala and many more. It also includes some continental dishes if one wishes for a palette cleanser.

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Many excellent staff are registered with us, including cooks, guards, gardeners, maids and drivers. Our list is constantly updated. Interviews are carried at our office to help resolve language problems between our clients and the staff. If you are looking for efficient and reliable staff, please come and discuss your requirements with us and don't forget to register your staff with us before you leave. **PLACEMENT FEE:** Rs.5,000



NEPALI LANGUAGE CLASS FOR FOREIGNERS

ECS Services has been supporting foreigners to learn the Nepali Language (speaking, reading and writing) for many years. If you would like to learn or improve your Nepali vocabulary, please call us. Group or individual classes are available.

BASIC ENGLISH READING & WRITING

FOR HOUSEHOLD STAFF

Our clients and their staff often face problems when not communicating face to face. If your staff could read and write memos or notes, things could be easier for you. We present this reading and writing course that will enable your household staff to read notes/memos, write simple sentences, and take telephone messages. This will also help your staff to get employed after you leave.

BASIC ENGLISH LANGUAGE

FOR HOUSEHOLD STAFF

Our English class for household staff enables them to communicate with you in simple English. Language structures are taught along with vocabulary that is related to household matters (for daily use). Oral communication skills will be emphasized in this course rather than reading and writing skills.

NEPALI LANGUAGE CD

The revised ECS Nepali language CD is now available. It gives you the chance not only to listen but also to practice your Nepali along with the CD. We feel that this improved CD will help you learn the Nepali language more effectively. A booklet comes with the CD. **PRICE:** Rs. 999 (including booklet)

HOUSE KEEPING & FOOD HANDLING

FOR HOUSEHOLD STAFF

ECS is organizing food handling and hygiene course for your household staff. If you are unsure whether your staff is aware about hygiene then this is the ideal course. This hands-on class includes daily hygiene, importance of hand washing and preparation of fruits and vegetables. We will teach them the proper way of cleaning - tables, windows, kitchen floor and bathroom. We will also teach them how to take care of a refrigerator. We will discuss how illness is spread and why the corner and behind the door is important to clean. We intend this course to help your staff to clean the house properly. **VENUE:** Maharajgunj

SPECIAL COOKING

FOR HOUSEHOLD STAFF

ECS cooking course is an opportunity for your maid or cook to improve his/her cooking skills. At the end of this course, participants will be able to work as a cook independently and can even organize a small party. The course content includes information on different food items for practical cooking and will also make them aware about kitchen hygiene. We teach them how to prepare Indian, Chinese and continental items, as well as basic Western cooking techniques like simmer, sauté, etc. We will also discuss how to organize a kitchen, to prepare menus, cutting techniques, steps for serving food during small and big parties. This course helps them improve their skills so your staff will not only serve you better while you are here, but they will find it easier to find a job when you leave. **VENUE:** Maharajgunj **FEE:** Rs.15,000

INDIAN COOKING COURSE

Participants will be able to cook the following items.

- 1) Chicken Biryani
- 2) Paneer Tawa Masala
- 3) Bharwa Shimla Mirch
- 4) Murgh Makhmal Kabab
- 5) Pudina Paratha

DATE: 28th August, 2016
TIME: 1:00pm to 5:00pm
VENUE: Maharajgunj
FEE: 1,500

INTERNATIONAL COOKING COURSE

Participants will be able to cook the following items:

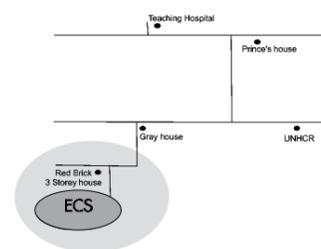
- 1) Jerk style chicken
- 2) Chicken with chunky pepper sauce
- 3) Soba noodles with vegetables
- 4) Insalata pizza
- 5) Potatoes with spicy cheese sauce

DATE: 25th September 2016
TIME: 1:00pm- 5:00pm
VENUE: Maharajgunj
FEE: Rs. 1,500

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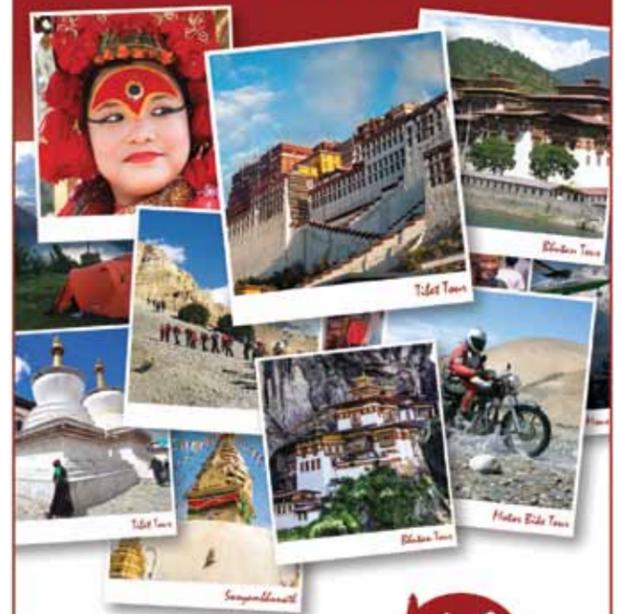
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Where am I ?

Sweet in Taste, Sweet at Heart

In Kathmandu, a place to escape from hustle-bustle of daily life, a place to enjoy yourselves. Can you guess where I am?

YI QING LUO



Outside a glass window, plenty of cars pass by with dust and smoke and all we can hear is the honking of cars. On this side of the glass

window, it is a quiet and clean sweet-smelling place where few tables and chairs are neatly set. This glass window is a magic door; the place I enter is a magical world.

It is not only a café but the paradise of dessert. Different flavors of cupcakes like chocolate and strawberry can be tasted. Besides, the doughnut and brownie served here are also delicious.

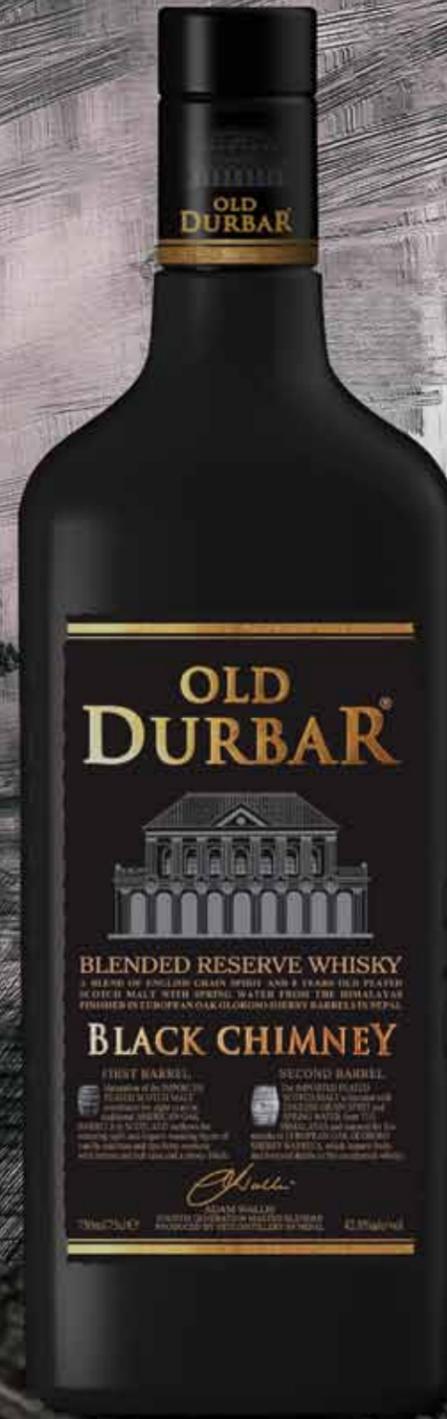
This café is owned by a Korean couple who have lived in Nepal more than seven years for their love of the relaxed Nepali lifestyle. The couple designed the space themselves and a beautiful painting is hung on own of its wall, created by their friend.

Every time I come to this café, I want to spend my whole afternoon here due to the peaceful ambience. Enjoying the sunshine outside the window, I can read some books I like without any disturbance. Sometimes, several high school students will stop by after school. With warm smiles on their faces, they are talking about some interesting things that happened in school that day, sharing their little love secrets or daydreaming about their unknown future with some elegant dessert on the tables.

I will watch them for a long time, recalling my high school time when several close friends were around and everyday was a new adventure. That memory tastes just like the chocolate cupcakes in this café, a little bit bitter at first bite, but soon after, sweet in taste and sweet at heart.

Have you ever been to this magical place? Do you know where I am?

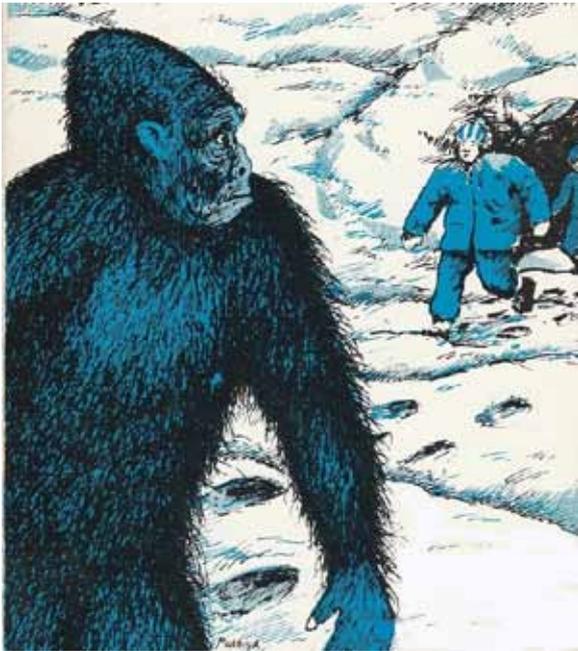
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Rules for Hunting Yetis

Spilled Ink

BY DON MESSERSCHMIDT

Why do we call this column ‘Spilled Ink’? Here’s one good reason - a six decade old American Government’s Foreign Service dispatch regulating yeti-hunting in Nepal.

It’s ‘news’ it’s old and unique (maybe) in the annals of diplomatic memo-making. It comes to us as an official document dug out of the U.S. State Department archives. This document was rediscovered in February 2013 by Slate magazine’s blog The Vault, under Historical Treasures, Oddities, and Delights. No joke!

Back in 1959, the American Embassy in Kathmandu came up with three rules about hunting yetis. An embassy counselor named Fisk signed off on them as addenda to existing regulations on Mountaineering and Scientific Expeditions in Nepal.

Now all you yeti-hunters, listen up. If the 1959 rules still stand you must abide by them:

- 1) Royalty of Rs. 5000/- Indian Currency (rupees) will have to be paid to His Majesty’s Government of Nepal for a permit to carry out an expedition in search of ‘Yeti’.
- 2) In case ‘yeti’ is traced it can be photographed or caught alive but it must not be killed or shot at except in an emergency arising out of self-defense. All photographs taken of the animal, the creature itself if captured alive or dead, must be surrendered to the Government of Nepal at the earliest time.
- 3) News and reports throwing light on the actual existence of the creature must be submitted to the Government of Nepal as soon as they are available and must not in any way be given out to the Press or Reporters for publicity without the permission of the Government of Nepal.

Just days before The Vault posted the rules, Outside magazine published a graphic history of yeti lore. It began in 1899, they say, when British explorer L. Austine Waddell encountered large prints while hiking in the Himalayas. That was followed by more footprint ‘sightings, mostly around Mount Everest. For example, Charles Howard-Bury, leader of the 1921 British Mount Everest Reconnaissance Expedition (north side), describes tracks in the snow at high altitude. His Sherpas said they were made by the Metohkangmi, or Wild Man of the Snows, aka the Abominable Snowman. And in 1953, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay reported seeing large footprints on their way up Mount Everest (south side).

During the decade of the 1950s, yeti-mania attracted some very determined and wealthy hunters. In 1954, an article in the London’s Daily Mail concluded that hair obtained from a yeti scalp on display at Pangboche monastery were probably from a coarse-haired hoofed animal. (The scalp was later stolen.) By 1957, such international attention encouraged Tom Slick, a wealthy

American oilman and amateur cryptozoologist, to start funding expeditions to the Himalayas to find a yeti, dead or alive. Result: zilch. But the increased interest apparently alarmed embassy officials enough to draft the 1959 memo.

Yeti scalp and hand at the Pangboche Monastery.

Photograph © Don Messerschmidt, 1966.

In 1983, the American Dan Taylor came back from his own yeti-hunting expedition in Nepal’s Barun Valley (east of Everest) concluding that it all came down to Asiatic black bears. Similarly, in 2000, after 12 years of chasing yetis off-and-on, the mountaineer Reinhold Messner concluded that they were probably Himalayan brown bears. Then, in 2009, the famed naturalist Sir David Attenborough weighed in, upending negative speculation by declaring that “There is very convincing evidence that yetis exist.”

Okay..., so the hunt and the hype have continued.

Meanwhile, here’s to the innovative directors of Russia’s Sheregesh Ski Resort in Siberia’s Zelyonaya Mountains who announced in 2013 that they were opening a yeti museum to hail the Abominable Snowman’s existence. How else do you generate world attention and attract paying customers to your resort when it’s so far away in, ...well, in remote Siberia?

May the hunt go on! And the marketing of it, which is good for business. Spilled Ink.

A cryptozoologist is someone who searches for cryptids, animals whose existence is not proven for lack of evidence. The yeti illustration by Tek Bir Mukhiya is on the cover of ‘An Encounter with the Yeti and Other Stories’ by Kesar Lall (Nepal, 1991). See Slate magazine’s The Vault blog story at slate.me/29fql6u, and Outside magazine’s yeti timeline at bit.ly/29hGTfu. About yeti mischief in Russia see <http://doubtfulnews.com/?s=yeti+ruusia>. Dan Taylor published his yeti-hunting story in ‘Something Hidden Behind the Ranges: A Himalayan Quest’ (2000). And see ‘Tom Slick and the Search for Yeti’ (1989) by Loren Coleman. Meanwhile, if you find a yeti dead or alive and don’t mind breaking Rule #3 to tell the world about it, contact Spilled Ink first with the details, at don.editor@gmail.com.