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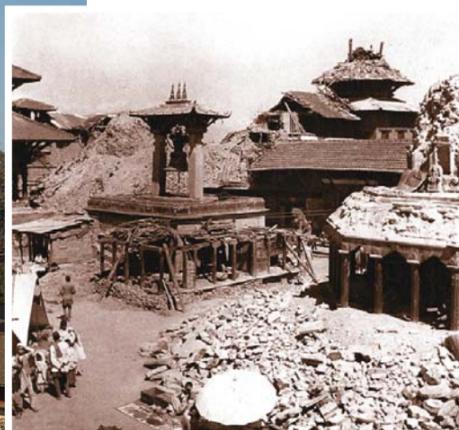
#1194

12 - 18 January 2024

12 pages

Rs 50

90 YEARS AFTER '90



SHAKEN: Patan Darbar Square after the 1994 quake (inset), and the overlapping restoration following 2015. 1934 was 1990 in the Bikram Sambat calendar.

GOPEN RAI

■ Sonia Awale

Exactly 90 years ago this week, Nepal was struck by the Great Earthquake of 1934 that killed over 8,500 people across the country. In Kathmandu, 70% of the houses collapsed in the 8.3 magnitude disaster.

Nepal has gone through many transitions in the past 90 years. From the Rana era to the 1950s interim years, to the Panchayat, the conflict and federal republic.

Nepal has also experienced many other smaller seismic events, including the 2015 Gorkha Earthquake which ended up killing nearly 9,000 people and damaging some 800,000 buildings. And as the 3 November 2023 earthquake in Jajarkot showed, Nepal is still not prepared for these disasters.

“The land seemed to twist and most of the buildings toppled. The movement was so strong ... the trees bent down as during a hurricane,” narrates Brahma Shumsher Rana in his book *Nepal ko Mahabhukampa* which came out later that year.

“Some sought support to keep themselves on their feet, while others ran like animals with their hands on the ground. Mothers having come out into the open ground went back for the love of their children and were crushed to death... But even men who ran away were not saved. The narrow streets and lanes in the towns became traps,” the book says.

Nepal is a seismically active zone and is struck by such earthquakes every 70-80 years. The 7.8M Gorkha quake in central Nepal in 2015 is often mistaken

for one of those megaquakes. Himalayan seismologist Roger Bilham told *Nepali Times* then that it was not the big one.

In fact, the faults in Central Nepal are still collecting energy and could be let off at any time. But even more imminent is the long seismic gap in western Nepal which did not dissipate all its energy in the November quake, says Surya Narayan Shrestha of the National Society for Earthquake Technology (NSET) - Nepal.

The last big quake in western Nepal in 1505 is estimated to be 8.9M. It killed one-third of Kathmandu Valley’s population including the king, devastated north India, and created the debris flow where Pokhara city is situated today.

“Energy accumulated in western Nepal is big enough to cause

an earthquake bigger than 8M, the Jajarkot earthquake released very minimal stress,” Shrestha explains. “This means there is still the possibility of a 1934 type event in Kathmandu, which could be deadlier because of the larger population.”

Such an earthquake would immediately destroy 1.5 million buildings across the country and kill 100,000 people, if it struck at night. Hospitals would collapse too, and the few still standing would be overwhelmed with some 200,000 individuals estimated to be seriously injured.

The 2015 earthquake should have been a lesson to Nepalis to be prepared for a mega-quake, especially in terms of implementing building code, but many in Kathmandu have blatantly flouted rules. “Our preparedness is still

negligible. The existing structures are already vulnerable but newer buildings even more so,” warns Shrestha.

Following the 1934 earthquake, a geologist and engineer identified only as Mr Eden made some observations and gave instructions for safe building in Nepal, which was published in *Gorkhapatra* at the time. He pushed for earthquake-proof buildings. “The type of the soil is not the only factor that causes destruction in an earthquake. It also depends upon the structural design, the materials used and the skills of the builders,” he is quoted as writing.

Nearly a century ago, we already knew what to do.

Concrete buildings are not necessarily stronger. In fact, substandard concrete buildings are even more of a death trap, especially given that Nepal does not have the search and rescue teams and equipment for such collapsed structures.

Warns Shrestha: “An 8M earthquake will happen one day, and all these substandard buildings will come crashing down. It will be a calamity of epic proportions.”

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No state for women

Can Nepali mothers confer citizenship to their children? The short answer is YES. But if we rephrase this question to 'Can women *independently*, like men, confer citizenship to their children?', then the answer is NO.



GUEST EDITORIAL
Neha Gurung

I write as someone with lived personal experience of prolonged legal battles, activism, self-education about citizenship concepts, and as someone who has transitioned into a lawyer.

The adoption of the Nepal Citizenship (First Amendment) Act 2023 followed by the amendment to the Citizenship Regulation were positive steps. It took the country more than seven years to align the Act in line with the 2015 Constitution.



In terms of gender, it echoes all the constitutionally guaranteed citizenship rights of women – including the right to confer citizenship to her child where a father is unidentified.

Nepali mothers can confer citizenship to their children, but conditions still apply

This is certainly a step in the right direction, and one that shows the impact of continuous advocacy and activism for gender equality in Nepal. This provision allows a person born to or raised by a single mother to acquire citizenship by descent. However, conditions apply.

- The father has to be 'unidentified';
- The person seeking citizenship should be born in Nepal;
- And both the mother and the person need to sign a self-declaration form confirming that the father is 'unidentified'.

This is a constitutionally required condition only for women. Nepali men are considered full citizens with independent rights without the need to sign such self-declaration forms to confer citizenship to their children, irrespective of the mother's citizenship status.

Another critical condition in the Act is that if the father is later proven to be a foreign citizen, then:

- The person's citizenship by descent, which they acquired through self-declaration will be withdrawn;
- The person will then have to sign another self-declaration form stating that no citizenship has been acquired from the father's country;
- This will then allow the person to acquire naturalised citizenship;
- If this self-declaration is later proved to be false, the person will not only be stripped of citizenship but also imprisoned for 6 months to a year and/or Rs50,000 to Rs100,000 fine.

Again, this punishment is based solely on the father's citizenship status. This proves that Nepal's nationality law is blatantly patriarchal as it reinforces that descent (bloodline) can only be inherited through males. If it is not a Nepali father, the child is not a citizen.

Some may say, so what? At least the person can acquire naturalised citizenship through a mother when the father is a foreign citizen. And at least there is an option for self-declaration when the father is unidentified.

- *Naturalised citizenship through mother is undignified.*
- Naturalised citizenship is not a right,

but a State's discretion. Granting it based on the citizenship of the mother implies that children of Nepali mothers are considered foreigners unless their father is a Nepali citizen.

- *There is no legal definition for 'unidentified'.*

This vague word 'unidentified' holds many societal connotations and one is that the woman has had multiple relationships and cannot identify who the father of the child is.

- *The Condition of 'being born in Nepal' is discriminatory.*

While claiming citizenship through a mother in cases of an 'unidentified father', it is mandatory that the person was born in the country. However, the person need not be born in Nepal to acquire naturalised citizenship through a Nepali mother and foreign father. This implies that there are additional restrictions to acquire citizenship by descent through a mother than earning a naturalised citizenship through her. This is subtly disguised as a benefit, but is a huge slap in the face to all Nepali women.

These discriminatory laws empower citizenship authorities to unjustly deny citizenship, exposing individuals to the risk of statelessness. I stand as a testament to this reality as I was denied the right to birth registration and at 16, also denied a citizenship certificate. I lived as a stateless person for the first 7 years of my youth and was barred from pursuing higher education or accessing fundamental rights guaranteed to citizens.

Enduring humiliation came with snide comments like these:

"Poor kid, I wish I could confer my citizenship by acting as her father!"

"If we give citizenship to a child 'like her' then nieces and nephews from across the borders will also claim citizenship!"

"How can you not know your husband?"
"Give us the smallest clue. We will search and make him accountable."

"No kid, it's not your fault, it's your mother's fault –she should have known how to keep her husband happy if she wanted to ensure her children received citizenship."

"Oh, just marry her to some Nepali guy and she can get citizenship through him."

A young me could not speak then. But today I will say this: my mother and all women are complete beings in ourselves and our citizenship rights do not have to depend on men.

State actors argue that equal citizenship rights for women might lead to an influx of people from across borders. Our patriarchal citizenship laws haven't helped this xenophobia.

Is denying citizenship rights to children of Nepali mothers and foreign fathers enough to stop dual citizenship? Aren't children of a foreign mother and Nepali father, where the mother's country also provides citizenship an issue?

Turns out gender discrimination is not a solution to prevent fraud or dual citizenship cases in Nepal. How is it fair to punish women for the government's incompetence?

It is too soon to celebrate actual equality. Unless the current Constitution recognises the independent legal identity of women at par with men, women continue to be second-class citizens.

Nepal's Constitution and citizenship laws violate the state's human rights commitment under international treaties. And denying citizenship serves as a strategic tool for state discrimination, enabling justification by labeling certain groups as non-citizens.

Many individuals born and raised by single mothers are silently weeping as they visit ward offices and CDOs trying to find what they did wrong, and how they are different from other children with fathers.

These young Nepalis are not allowed to contribute to society, and this is a big loss to the country. Gender equality is always a win-win, if only it is fairly implemented.

Neha Gurung is a human rights lawyer and co-founder together with her mother of Citizenship Affected People's Network and co-lead for the Global Movement Against Statelessness.

ONLINE PACKAGES



THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE OF NEPAL

This week marks the 90 years since the great earthquake of Nepal that killed over 8,500 people across the country. Man Maya Maharjan, Asta Maya Bajracharya, Sanu Nani Bista and Sukucha Maharjan have all lived a full life complete with personal tragedies and triumphs but they still remember the absolute terror of the 1934 quake. Watch them recount the disaster. Read stories on page 1 and 9.



THE LAST OF OLD KATHMANDU

The Last of Kathmandu Valley is an Instagram page dedicated to capturing the disappearing old architecture of Kathmandu Valley. Come on a tour of Kathmandu and Patan with the cousins who run the archival account and know how they came up with the idea. Read the story on page 6-7 and watch the video on our YouTube channel.



PASSION FOR PASHMINA

Nature Knit, a Kathmandu-based pashmina manufacturer and wholesaler, exports 90% of its products to Europe, the US, and Japan. In seven steps, experts at Nature Knit demonstrate how balls of non-descript cashmere yarn are weaved into some of the finest luxury garments. Read the story on page 12. Follow our YouTube channel for more original multimedia content.

FEDERALISM

Provinces themselves have not pushed enough for devolution of power, they wasted the first five years when there was most momentum ('Federal Express', Sonia Awale, #1193). Now that they are waking up, let's see what happens. They should wrest control first of policing, and kick out the CDO offices, which are anachronistic.

Suman Pradhan

- Our constitutional guideline for federalism is of self-ruled and shared-rule principle. How efficiently are the provinces and the local governments performing? Are they performing as per the mandate? The system and leaders complement each other in Nepal.

Prakash Khadka

- Very simply put, the sense of individual and communal 'ownership' toward the state is diminishing. In this scenario, the central authority is uninterested in relinquishing power, fearing it would jeopardise its existence. Present-day Nepal's centre resembles the Shah regime.

Saurav Raj Pant

- The provinces are very corrupt even without devolving power. Imagine if they also controlled the police.

Sanjeevani

Times.com

WHAT'S TRENDING



10,000 Bridges

The 10,000th bridge has been built in Nepal with the help of the Swiss government and the group Helvetas, with 740 in the past year alone. Much of the original Swiss engineering design for the bridges has been passed on to Nepali companies through technology transfer. Get more details at nepalintimes.com.

f Most reached and shared on Facebook

The F word

Editorial
Nepal's main political leaders who were themselves the architects of the federal constitution are loath to hand over power that they have decentralised to local governments. Federalism thus has failed not because the system is flawed, but because Nepal's politicians are. Visit our website for the full article.

X Most popular on X

Federal Express

by Sonia Awale
The three levels of the government all have their roles clearly defined in the Constitution. But Kathmandu is not allowing provinces and local governments to actually function as per their mandate. Join the discussion online.

66 Most commented

Nepal-India electricity trade

by Nepali Times
Nepal will export 10,000MW of electricity to India over the next 10 years. But this new 25-year bilateral power trade deal raises concerns about India 'capturing' Nepal's rivers. Follow us for the latest developments.

🔥 Most visited online page

QUOTES

Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
Kathmandu is still holding on to most of those powers and resources, not allowing provinces and local governments to actually function as per their mandate

Cheryl Saunders @CherylSaunders1
One of many lessons from Nepal- the need to pay attention to the design and operation of the civil service in creating a new federation.

Nepali Times @NepaliTimes
Follow us as we take you to Tanahu Hydropower Project site, 150km west of Kathmandu. It is only the second dam project in Nepal in 40 years. The reservoir will increase the dry season supply while also regulating the river. Watch full video and read story:

Aashis Josh @aashisjo
The ill-informed hubris of modern #humans to think we need to & can "regulate" a #river. The people behind such projects do not realize that within a couple of decades human societies will be in such a state of turmoil due to #climate change impacts that we won't be able to maintain these structures. Their crumbling remains will serve as a testament to #human folly. #climate #rivers

1,000 WORDS



YUVRAJ BISTA / RSS

HORSING AROUND: Following the trend of installing statues at intersections, the one of a horse was unveiled in Ghodetar Bazar of Bhojpur's Hatuwagadhi Rural Municipality on Wednesday. The figure was installed to commemorate the construction of a 19km road from Sun Baluwa to Ghodetar funded by local residents and organisations.

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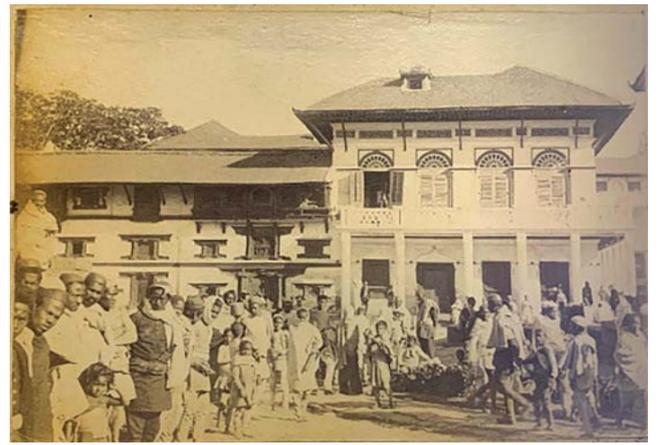
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PHOTOS: JOSEPH GAYE / BRITISH LIBRARY



J.A. DUNN / BRITISH LIBRARY



PRE-1934 KATHMANDU

Photographs show the architecture, street scenes and people of Kathmandu from the 1800s

■ Susan Harris

In May 2023, the descendants of amateur photographer Joseph Gaye (1852-1926) donated a collection of photographic material of his views of the Kathmandu Valley and India taken between 1888 and 1899 to the British Library. Joseph's descendant Mary-Margaret Gaye and her husband Doug Halverson spent many years researching Joseph's career in South Asia and identification of his views.

Joseph Gaye was born in Northfleet, Kent, in 1852. At 18, he enlisted with the 4th Battalion of the Rifle Brigade and went to India as a rifleman in 1873. Gaye left the army after completing his 12-year enlistment term in 1882 to lead several Indian military bands. In 1888, he, with his wife, Mary Elizabeth Short, moved to Kathmandu, Nepal, where he served as bandmaster to the Royal Nepalese Army under Bir Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana.

In 1892, he became a bandmaster in turn to three viceroys of India (Marquess of Lansdowne, Earl of Elgin, and Lord Curzon of Kedleston) before returning to England in 1899. In

1905, Gaye and his four sons moved to Canada, where he died in 1926 in Lemberg, Canada. From 1888 to 1899, he produced photographs of Nepal's Kathmandu Valley, Burma and India; these were among his possessions, along with a large studio camera, at the time of his death. The Joseph Gaye collection at the British Library, contains 91 glass negatives, five cellulose negatives and 32 albumen prints, primarily of the Kathmandu Valley, with a few from India. The subjects vary from architecture and landscapes to street scenes and people, including portraits of his family. Gaye's photographs provide a unique insight at a time when few foreigners were allowed into Nepal.

Here are a few highlights from the collection of Nepal's architectural monuments, some that remain today and others that have disappeared due to natural disasters or urban development:

A crowd of curious onlookers gathered before a building on the southwest corner of the Hanuman Dhoka Darbar complex in Kathmandu Darbar Square (above, far right). The building, from 1847, was the original Gaddhi Baithak, a palace used for coronations



OLD IS GOLD: (clockwise) View of the Patan Darbar Square, looking south. From the left: Krishna Mandir Temple (Chayasim Deval), the Taleju Bell, the Harishankar Temple, King Yoga Narendra Malla's Column, Narasimha Temple, Vishnu Temple, Char Narayan Temple, Garuda statue, the Krishna Mandir and the Vishwanath Temple.

Patan Darbar Square in the aftermath of the 1934 earthquake.

A crowd in front of the western facade of the original Gaddhi Baithak at Basantapur Darbar Square.

Steps leading up to the Swayambhu Stupa.

and for meeting foreign heads of state. It was in the Newar style with influences from the Mughal architecture of northern India. A western façade, as seen in the

photograph, was probably added later. Prime Minister Chandra Shumsher Jung Bahadur Rana (1863-1929) of Nepal, replaced it in 1908 with the neo-classical

building that exists today.

Patan Darbar Square, in the city of Lalitpur, is one of the three Darbar Squares in the Kathmandu Valley; it has been through two significant earthquakes in 1934 and 2015. Gaye captured the square before these earthquakes, looking south, towards a crowd of observers and a line of temples and statues (above, far left). John Alexander Dunn, an Officer of the Geological Survey of India (GSI), also took a photograph (above, centre) of the square, looking north, after the 1934 earthquake. The only recognisable landmarks still standing are the statue of Garuda, the Krishna Mandir, and the Vishwanath Temple with the elephants in front.

Gaye captured a winding pathway on the eastern flank, leading up to Swayambhu, an ancient religious site of temples and shrines at the top of a hill in the Kathmandu Valley (left). The photograph shows a pair of Buddha statues marking the beginning of the path, with small chaityas, or shrines, dotted along the route. 🇳🇵

The article was originally published on the British Library blog under a CC-BY licence. It has been edited for style.



Turkish A350 tour

Turkish Airlines hosted UK Business and Trade Secretary Kemi Badenoch, Airbus Türkiye President Simon Ward, and Rolls-Royce President John Kelly for a meeting and Airbus A350 tour. The discussions revolved around bilateral relations, investments, industrial collaborations, and sustainable aviation initiatives. Turkish Airlines placed substantial Airbus and Rolls-Royce orders. Badenoch highlighted the historic deal, emphasising Türkiye's opportunities for the UK's aerospace and manufacturing sectors. Rolls-Royce also secured an engine maintenance contract for Turkish Airlines' new Airbus orders.



Hult prize

Hult Prize Nepal hosted a session featuring Amul Baidya, Senior Manager at Daraz, focusing on sponsorship dynamics in driving social change. Baidya talked about corporate sponsorship's role in aligning with shared values, and stressed the need for clear communication for successful partnerships.

Ncell MoU

Ncell has signed an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Department of Hydrology and Meteorology to strengthen Early Warning Systems to cover 13 disasters



triggered by hydrological and meteorological hazards. This includes flood, flash flood, rainfall, thunderstorm, windgust, landslide, avalanche, snowfall, heatwave, cold weather, forest fire, air pollution and tornado.

Tata carnival

Sipradi Trading conducted the Tata Motors Fun Carnival 3.0 program during which customers exchanged their old vehicles of any brand for Tata's Nexon EV and Tiago EV and got an opportunity to get exchange bonus, free fast charger for EV vehicles, 1-year autoplus insurance, 1-year vehicle tax, accessories, a surprise gift, and an electric scooter as a bumper gift.



65 years of BC

British Council Nepal is hosting an exhibition at its London head office to commemorate 65 years of collaboration, partnership and impact. This coincides with 100th anniversary of the UK-Nepal Friendship Treaty. The London exhibition pays tribute to the British Council's efforts and contributions in education and culture sector.

Affordable internet

DishHome Fiber Net is the most affordable internet service provider in Nepal as per a recent study of Internet Service Providers. The study was conducted on the basis of the annual 200Mbps package. Customers can get the yearly plan at Rs11,121.

Global IME camp

Celebrating its 17th anniversary, Global IME Bank conducted free health camps in Madhes and Gandaki Provinces benefiting over 180 women with free services from gynecologists in collaboration with the Nepal Family Planning Association. The bank has also inaugurated two new branches, in Malgamba Municipality of Sarlahi and Dhulikhel Municipality of Kavre.



NMB & USAID

NMB Bank in collaboration with USAID conducted a Digital Financial Literacy and Product Awareness session in Biratnagar aimed at enhancing the capabilities of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises by providing insights into digital payment systems, various products, and marketing techniques. Over 110 participants from diverse industries engaged in discussions. NMB Bank also donated Rs2.5 million to the Kathmandu Institute of Child Health (KIOCH), Damak to establish a new hospital ward. The bank has also announced a new plan to get cashback up to Rs250 when sending money from abroad through Global Remit. Customers sending up to Rs25,000 will get Rs100, up to Rs50,00 will get 200 rupees those sending more than Rs50,000 will get 250 cashback. The offer is valid till 31 January.

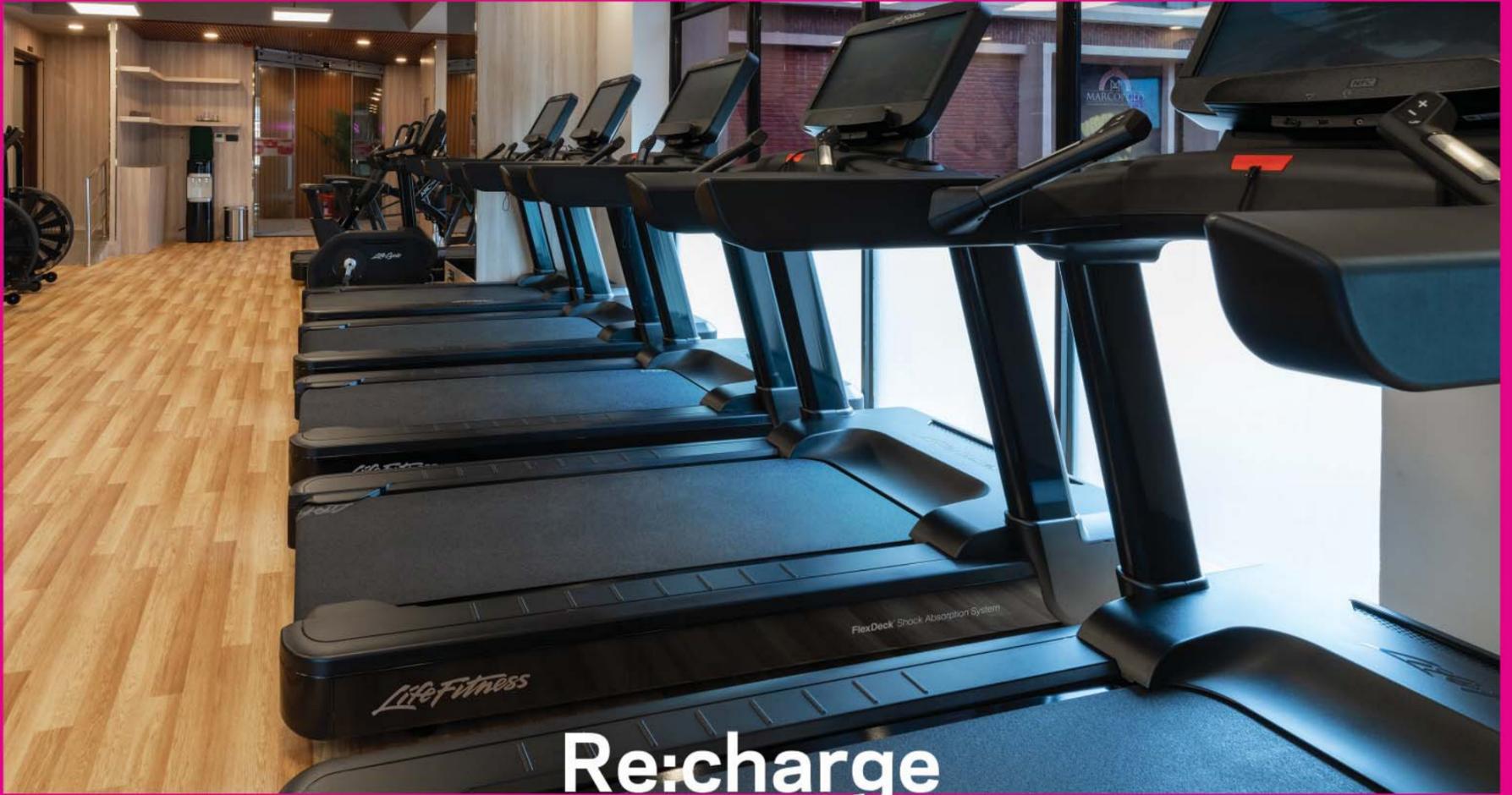
Himalayan Certification

Himalaya Airlines became Nepal's first and only IOSA Registered Operator, receiving certification from IATA on 28 December. The certification is valid until March 2025 and involves an audit of policies, procedures and practices contributing to operational efficiency.

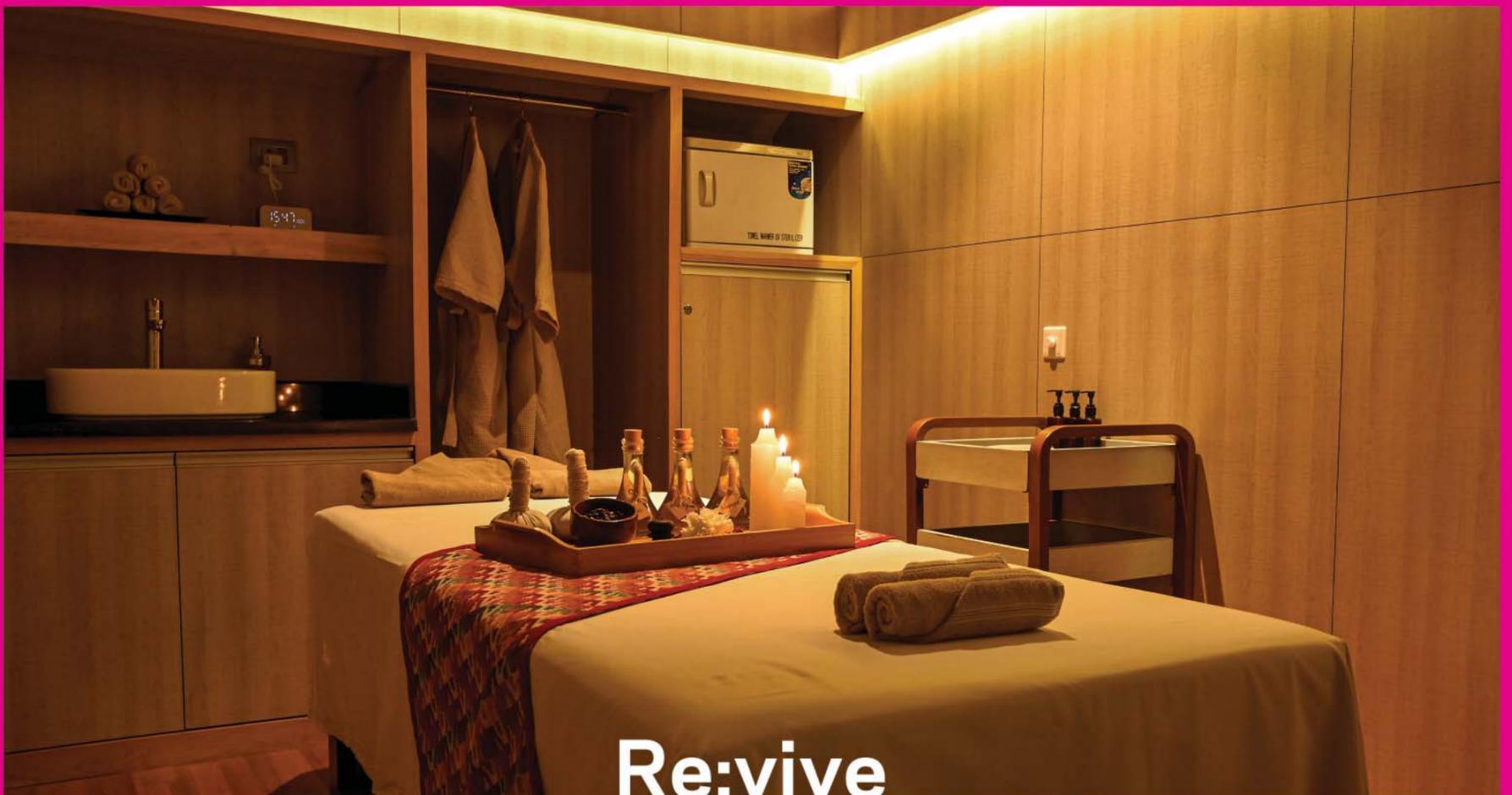




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The house in Yetkha with five wooden windows (left), two of the windows were demolished recently (right).

ODE TO OLD

Two cousins archive the architecture of Kathmandu Valley to catalogue and protect its heritage

■ Sahina Shrestha

In the narrow alleys of Kathmandu's inner city, cousins Pranidhi Tuladhar and Aabhushan Man Singh Tuladhar navigate busy Saturday traffic. They are sure footed and swift, ducking past motorcycles and making way for cars.

Their steps carry a familiarity cultivated through years of walking the same streets. They stop in front of an old house in Nardevi painted yellow with brown wooden windows and a balcony that wraps around the second floor.

They take out their cellphones and click a few photos, getting the best possible angle. They move on to other old buildings in Yetkha.

Pranidhi and Aabhushan run a page on Instagram called The Last of Kathmandu Valley, where they capture and share the slowly disappearing old architecture of Kathmandu Valley. Started in 2022, the page is an ode to old.

"We started to share our own curiosities," explains Pranidhi. "Then we thought this is important and this should be archived somehow. The goal is to make people care about old houses. If they notice it, they will start caring about it."

She came up with the idea for the Instagram page during one of her walks around her neighbourhood in Asan after returning from Paris where she studied fashion management and worked for three years.

In Paris she often roamed the city photographing its architecture. Back in Kathmandu, she started doing the same and fell back in love with her hometown.

When she realised that most people including her parents were not noticing these hidden gems around their own neighbourhood, she reached out to her cousin Aabhushan, and the Last of Kathmandu Valley was born.

"I find houses to be like people, here one day, gone the next.

The feeling of attachment is like with humans, the page captures that," says Aabhushan, who is an architect.

Aabhushan's appreciation and attraction to old houses came from hearing the tales of the exquisite terrace of his mamaghar in Tanlacchi Tole, near Tyauda. His mother's family are descendants of the Lhasa Newars, traders with Tibet who had opulent houses with beautiful woodwork.

Although he did not get a chance to view it in all its glory, the photographs he saw of the house fuelled his admiration and sparked his interest in architecture.

Older of the two, Pranidhi remembers the balcony in her mamaghar well. It wrapped around the house and she used to spend winter afternoons eating grapefruit and oranges. Her interest in arts and design was the reason she came to admire Kathmandu's old homes.

"I grew up surrounded by old houses in Asan, and I have a nostalgic attachment to them especially after I went abroad for studies," says Pranidhi who is now a design consultant.

One of the first things she noticed after she came back from France was that buildings like the Darbar High School, that were restored after the earthquake, were in scaffolding with China Aid signs everywhere.

Parts of Bir Hospital had been rebuilt in a "refrigerator type of architecture", and the neighbourhoods all looked different with the shop fronts and crowds. And everyone was building higher and higher, with cantilever floors that blocked the sky along narrow alleys.

"Haphazard," is how Aabhushan describes the current architecture of Kathmandu Valley. "It is like the city does not have an identity anymore. It is neither here nor there."

The way the Valley looked before the 1950s was shaped by influences over 2,000 years, developed through a unique cultural continuity that governed the lives of the urban dwellers which for a long while proved resilient to socio-political and historical changes.

Then the 1934 earthquake created an opportunity for the Rana rulers to remodel the city according to their notions of modernity. They introduced European neoclassical style distinguished by stucco façades, Corinthian columns and green and blue trim in their palaces.

The core city was rearranged, most significantly with the construction of Juddha Sadak (New Road) where old buildings and monuments were built over with columned porticos, parapets and white-plastered façades. Few families with access to India and Europe used reconstruction to modernise their residences as well.

Although it took several

decades for concrete to be used in Kathmandu, it came to symbolise modernisation with residents opting to build taller concrete houses, creating a hotchpotch urban landscape.

The 2015 earthquake destroyed many of the remaining old buildings of the Valley. The few old houses that remain are dilapidated and covered in dust behind tangles of black wires.

Maintenance of the old houses is costly due to lack of skilled craftsmen, which is why so many owners choose to rent it out cheap instead of restoring them.

The Last of Kathmandu Valley receives many nostalgic messages from people who recognise the houses they grew up in or had spent some parts of their lives in. One question that often comes up is, 'How do we maintain it?'

"Maybe one way to save the old houses is to introduce strict laws for maintenance as well as a stipend to do that," says Pranidhi, giving examples of Paris where strict regulations are in place to maintain the old architecture.

Another defining characteristic of Kathmandu architecture these days is the fragmented façades of buildings that are cut up like birthday cakes for inheritance. Exquisitely carved wooden windows are cut in half as parts of old houses are rebuilt from the ground up as tall, narrow structures.

In Yetkha, the two cousins had photographed a house with five carved windows. But on a recent visit, two of the windows and the space behind it was completely demolished, leaving a gaping hole between the windows.

"There must be a better way to divide up the homes," says Pranidhi, "like keep the façade intact and make changes internally."

Many times the two cousins have also seen old houses disappear within days. There was a house in Patan, with a white exterior and light blue windows they thought was beautiful, but the next day it had been demolished. "I felt a heavy sense of loss," Aabhushan laments.

But the city springs some pleasant surprises as well, like when the cousins come across a well-maintained lived-in house. "There is this blue and white house in Dhokabahal that has been freshly painted," says Pranidhi. "It is amazing what a fresh coat of paint can do."

With full time jobs, the two take pictures of old houses when they are on walks. They send the photos to each other and decide on the captions and when to post them on the page. Recently they have also started doing reels, and their clip on the balcony has got over 298,000 views.

"For now, we just photograph the house, but we want to include the memories of the people who live there or have lived there, maybe the history," says Aabhushan.

The two say that they are discovering and learning along the way and the collaboration as well as the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

Says Pranidhi, "We did not set out for this to be big. We just want people to notice and care about the old houses, so that they will do something about it. There is so much beauty hidden in plain sight in the chok and alleys of the Valley. All you have to do is, look up."



The Last of Kathmandu Valley is an Instagram page dedicated to capturing the slowly disappearing old architecture of Kathmandu Valley. Come on a tour of Kathmandu and Patan with the two cousins who run the account and know how they came up with the idea of launching an archival social media page.

ALL PHOTOS: GOPEN RAI



A freshly painted house in Dhokabahal that was built in 1950s.

EVENTS

**Board game night**

Join Hostel Nextdoor's game night every Thursday to play board games including Carcassonne, Keyflower, Citadel, Scrabble, Monopoly, as well as other games like Jenga and Uno.

Thursdays, 5:30 pm-9:30 pm, Kupondole

Conversations and food

Immerse in a world of storytelling, sharing tales of sisterhood at the Chiya and Samosa event.

13 January, 2 pm-5 pm, The Jane Goodall Institute Nepal, Sanepa

**Poetry open mic**

For aspiring poets and casual listeners alike: Start To Tell is a weekly open mic platform that organises the Poetry Open Mic.

Stop by and share works and ideas. Wednesdays, 6pm onwards, Bravo Cafe and Bar, Mid-Baneshwor

Art show

Stop by the BFA Show-2023 by Sirjana College of Arts. Explore sculptures, paintings, and graphic communications during the show.

9-14 January, Nepal Art Council, Baber Mahal

**Labim Bazaar**

Support small businesses at the Saturday Labim Bazaar. Buy baked goods, meals, handicrafts and clothes from local vendors.

Saturdays, Labim Mall

DINING

**Raithaane**

Discover Nepal's diverse cuisine at Raithaane. Taste dishes from communities across the nation, east to west, all sourced locally.

Kupondole, 9801002971

MUSIC

Rap battle

Join Nasto & Swagsto for a freestyle rap battle at Swayambhu this Saturday. A cash prize and special gifts await the winner.

13 January, 1pm-5pm, Matka Ghar, Swayambhu

**The Edge**

The Edge band, known for hits like Thaha Chaina and Timro Yaad is all set to ignite the stage this weekend. Get ticket details at arkoevent.com.

13 January, 7pm onwards, Club Omnia, Thamel

**Warm vibes**

Join Suraj Shrestha as he performs acoustic music live this weekend at Bluenote Coffee.

Call for more information. 13 January, 6:30 pm, Bluenote Coffee, Lazimpat, 9818137771

**Katjazz Sessions**

This special edition of Katjazz sessions features an exclusive album showcase by Samyog Regmi, presenting 'Unpopular Opinion,' recorded under the Dutch label ZenneZ Records in Amsterdam.

20 January, 7pm, Moksh, Jhamsikhel

Acoustic night

Musician Jason will be live at London Pub with his acoustic tunes on Tuesdays. Join with family and friends. Call to book seating.

Tuesdays, 8pm, London Pub, Darbar Marg, 9865438599

**The Workshop Eatery**

Indulge in doughnuts, fries, and burgers at The Workshop Eatery. The Nutella Doughnut and Workshop BBQ Chicken Burger are must-haves.

Jhamsikhel, 9860431504

New Orleans Cafe

Embark on a culinary journey at the garden restaurant with exquisite coffees, cuisine and fine wines.

Thamel, (01) 4700736

GETAWAY

**Aloft Kathmandu**

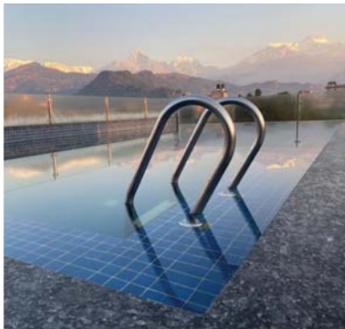
In Thamel's Chhaya Devi Complex, Aloft, a global hotel chain, provides modern luxuries, including spas, shops, and restaurants.

Chhaya Center, Thamel (01) 5252000

Pataleban Vineyard Resort

Pataleban Vineyard is an eco-resort offering splendid views, jungle walks, and picnics. Take an escape from your routine grind.

Chisapani (01) 4316337

**Dahlia Boutique Hotel**

Dahlia Boutique Hotel, a lakeside luxury hotel with a 180-degree mountain and city view, is just the ending to a memorable trek.

Lakeside, Pokhara (061) 466505

Mountain Glory Forest Resort

Located just 15 minutes from Lakeside, this resort by the Seti River offers the best of both worlds.

Dovilla, Pokhara, 9856064223

**Jagatpur Lodge**

The lodge, nestled in 8 acres of jungle grassland, offers five-star tent accommodations, each boasting a private deck for breathtaking views.

Jagatpur, Chitwan (056) 411085

Mamagoto Nepal

Experience fusion Pan-Asian cuisine at Mamagoto. Try the Maki Rolls, Satays, Dumplings, Ramen, and cocktails at this eatery.

Panipokhari, 9802320960

**The Diplomat**

Hotel Ambassador's Indian and Continental restaurant ensures both indulgence and comfort. Try the Pindi Chana, Murgh Makhani, Rajma Masala, Stuffed Kulchha and more.

Hotel Ambassador, Lazimpat (01) 4533949

WEEKEND WEATHER

**Chance of rain next week**

Thick ground level fog persists right across the Indo-Gangetic plains, and this includes the Nepal Tarai. Meanwhile, the three rainless months are expected to end next week as we await the arrival of an upper atmosphere low pressure system that is bringing moisture all the way from the Mediterranean. There is a chance of drizzles in Kathmandu Monday till Thursday, with snow down to 3,800m. The cloud cover associated with this system will push down the daytime temperatures.

FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
20° 5°	21° 7°	21° 6°

OUR PICK

In 1945 Japanese-occupied Korea, Jang Tae-sang is a wealthy pawnshop owner in Gyeongseong. When Tae-sang is threatened by a Japanese commissioner into finding a missing young woman, he teams up with a father-daughter sleuth duo who are also looking for someone they hold dear. Their search leads them to the Onseong Hospital, where the trio encounter greater dangers than they had imagined. The 2023 Netflix series Gyeongseong Creature is a story of revolution, liberation, and of humans who are far more monstrous than any figure of myth or imagination. Stars Park Seo-joon, Han So-hee, Soo Hyun, and more.

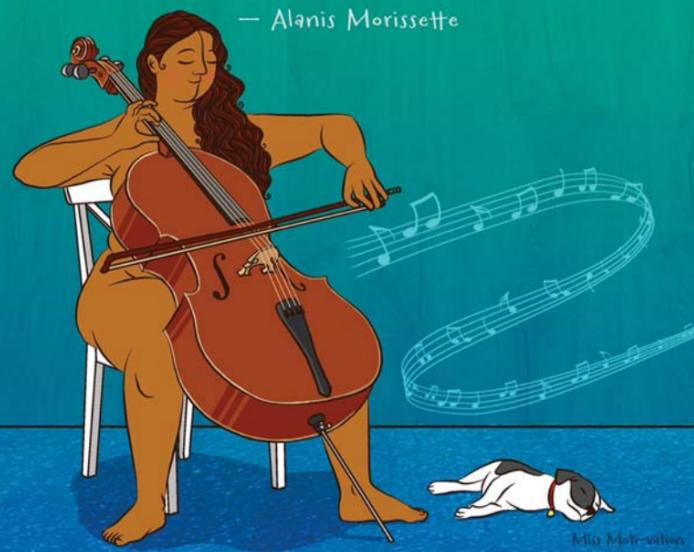


MISS MOTI-VATION

KRIPA JOSHI

I see my body as an instrument,
rather than an ornament.

— Alanis Morissette



सामाजिक सञ्जाल प्रयोगमा सचेतता अपनाऔं

- सामाजिक सञ्जालमा अपरिचित व्यक्तिको साथी बन्ने अनुरोधलाई विश्वस्त भएर मात्र प्रतिक्रिया जनाऔं ।
- अपरिचित व्यक्तिलाई जथाभावी साथी बन्न अनुरोध नपठाऔं ।
- सामाजिक सञ्जाल तथा अन्य विद्युतीय माध्यमबाट चिठ्ठा पुरस्कार जस्ता आर्थिक प्रलोभनका प्रस्तावको भरमा नपरौं ।
- आफूले प्रवाह गरेका सन्देश वा सूचनाबाट समाजमा पर्नसक्ने नकारात्मक प्रभावको ख्याल गरौं ।
- आफ्नो सन्देशले कुनै व्यक्ति वा अन्य कुनै समुदायको आत्मसम्मानमा चोट नपुऱ्याऔं ।



नेपाल सरकार
विज्ञापन बोर्ड

Memories of the Great Earthquake

Survivors recall the terror and grief when an 8.3 magnitude earthquake hit Nepal exactly 90 years ago this week

■ Sonia Awale

Man Maya Maharjan, 104

Man Maya Maharjan starts her day with an hour-long puja, chanting mantra and blessing family members. She ends the day the same way.

Man Maya's wizened face bears testimony to a long and full life during which she has witnessed many ups and downs. But the most striking memory is still of the Great Earthquake of 1934 that killed over 8,519 people across Nepal.

"It was the day after Gya Chaku Sanlu," recalls Man Maya, who was 14 years old then. "I heard shouts from all around. The ground started shaking violently. I don't know if I walked or fell out of the house."

She leaned on the wall which now



ALL PHOTOS: GOPEN RAI

is the Madan Smarak School in Pulchok. Her father was out in the fields, and he told the family later that the ground opened up and closed several times. He himself was nearly swallowed by one of these fissures.

"A lot of people died, many people were trapped. Houses collapsed," says Man Maya, relating how her family and neighbours stayed outdoors for weeks afterwards.

The Rana regime distributed money for reconstruction, but her family did not take it because they thought it was a loan and they had no way of paying it back.

Seven years later at 20, she got married and had three sons and three daughters. She now has nine

grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Her oldest and youngest sons have died, while the youngest daughter is settled in the United States. Mana Maya's husband died 46 years ago.

She was reminded of the 1934 quake in 2015 when Kathmandu shook again. But she knew it was not as strong as the big one.

Man Maya has had four janku, the Newa ceremony that celebrates long life because in those days most people died young. After three janku, the elderly attain the status of divinity.

"I've never had to visit a hospital in my life until a few months ago," says Man Maya, who was living by herself until four years ago, cooking and going about her daily life. "Even the doctor told me he has never met someone who has had four janku!"



Asta Maya Bajracharya, 102

One month before the 1934 earthquake, people were saying they heard a lion roar. They said it was a bad omen. This is Asta Maya's earliest memory of the 1934 earthquake.

She was playing with her friends in front of her house in Patan when crows and pigeons started flying about and then the ground lifted everyone up and threw them around.

"Soon, the houses started tumbling down all around us," recalls Asta Maya whose little brother, mother and older sister were buried under the rubble of their house. Her father, who was a priest attending a puja ceremony, came back running, one shoe missing, when he heard the news. Asta Maya remembers even the small details.

"He started digging right away with his bare hands, but it was too late for my six-year-old brother. He had no

injuries we could see on him but he didn't live," says Asta Maya, who was the youngest.

At 18, Asta Maya was married off and bore 13 children in all, but only seven survived to adulthood. She lost her husband 54 years ago, but has two dozen grandchildren, one and a half dozen great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandson.

She also clearly remembers the 2015 earthquake, and running to the courtyard next to Swotha, where a temple had already toppled over.

The family all slept together in one ground floor room but Asta Maya, having lived through 1934, was not as scared.

"I was healthy and strong until Dasain-Tihar festival this year," quips Asta Maya who went into shock earlier this year when a 23-year-old grandson died in an accident.

Sanu Nani Bista, 97

Although she is not a Newa, Sanu Nani speaks Nepal Bhasa fluently: "Ji nyara uble, boni manmaru, mhiti jakke ya," she exclaims. "I was five then when the earthquake struck, I didn't like studying, only liked playing."

She grew up near Sundhara in her mother's Newa household. It was here she experienced the earthquake 90 years ago.

"I remember lifting my trousers to run with my friends as the ground shook and the houses fell," recalls Sanu Nani.

Her mother was buried under the collapsed house of a neighbour, while her father was away at his job in Singha Darbar. She pleaded with soldiers to help find her mother. They managed to dig enough to uncover her

face and when Sanu Nani identified her, they left the rest of her family because soldiers had more people to dig out. Her mother was injured and bloodied all over, and had to be taken to the hospital, but she recovered.

One of the family members got Rs100 for reconstruction and bought 0.5 hectares in the Patan suburbs. But when the Rana regime came to collect what they borrowed, they were not able to pay back and were jailed. They were eventually let go and pardoned.

Sanu Nani was married at 14 and gave birth to three sons. She has four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

At 97, she is still very much active and goes to the neighbourhood Ganesh temple every day, and keeps herself busy in her garden.



Sukucha Maharjan, 100

"I was 10 and was visiting my mother's maternal home," says Sukucha of the 1934 earthquake with his eyes tightly shut. "All of a sudden we felt a shaking which got more intense and dust rose up to the sky."

Sukucha was a farmer all his life. He lost his wife several years ago, and because they were childless, adopted a sister's orphan.

"I'm the oldest but the gods have kept me alive still, I don't know why," says soon-to-be 101-year-old Sukucha who is slender in build as his name suggests, which literally means 'thin'.

He breaks out into an old Nepali song as neighbours in their Gabahal residence this week tell us he likes his music and dance.

"I used to sing and dance so much when I was younger," adds Sukucha who now has a hard time moving even with a walking stick but does not like

people helping him either.

Says Sukucha's 59-year-old nephew: "I lost my parents early on. He raised me when I was young and it's like now I'm raising him. He is not an uncle to me but my father."

After the 2015 earthquake, the family of nine had spread out in the tent in the courtyard along with neighbours but Sukucha did not join them because he said he was not scared.

Sukucha, despite his frail form, circumambulates the shrines in his courtyard. Then he has breakfast with a shot of aila, the Newa rice spirit. He takes the alcohol three times a day, but never on an empty stomach.

He has no chronic ailments and in his last medical check-up assisted by the community, he got a clean chit once again, as he always has for he past 100 years. 🇳🇵

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Jajarkot survivors show

They are not waiting for delayed government aid, and help each other rebuild homes and schools

■ **Durga Rana Magar** in Jajarkot

Life was already difficult for the people of the Karnali because of state neglect, failing agriculture, unemployment and out-migration. The earthquake two months ago just made everything more arduous.

The 6.4 magnitude earthquake shook the region just before midnight, killing at least 153 people and destroying 62,000 houses in 11 districts of western Nepal.

Familiar with slow delivery of government services, most surviving families have taken matters into their own hands to get through the bitter winter and to rebuild their lives and livelihoods.

Dhan Bahadur Gharti, 55, had recently returned to Sirpachaur in Jajarkot after a year working in Kashmir, and had plans to renovate his house for Dasain. But the earthquake destroyed his house before he could repair it.

"There's nothing left," Dhan Bahadur says, peering from inside his tent. Although his plans had to change, The unexpected destruction

left his plans in disarray, but there was an immediate need to provide a warm shelter and hot food for his three children.

He has some savings from his seasonal work in India, but after he builds a temporary house with the government reconstruction grant, Dhan Bahadur expects he will have to return to India to earn more money to complete the rebuilding.

Jasbir Thapa, 45, also returned from Kashmir for the Dasain holidays only to have witnessed first hand the devastation caused by the earthquake. The government's delayed aid and one-window policy compound his worries, leaving him torn between family responsibilities and the need to migrate again to India for work to earn money.

Even after two months, the initial instalment of the Rs50,000 grant for temporary housing from Kathmandu has not reached Sirpachaur.

Without jobs and earnings in Nepal, just about every one of the 150 households in Sirpachaur has at least one member working in India. It is hard manual work, and the pay is not good. Still it is more than they can hope for back home in Nepal.

"It's the same for everyone; survival is not possible in Nepal," says Thapa, "but working in India the pay is not proportional to the hard manual work we do."

Despite the mountain of hardship on which the earthquake has heaped another layer of misery, there is a sense of community



Poverty killed a mother,

It was being poor that cost Sharmila Chadara her life, not winter cold after the Jajarkot earthquake

■ **Marty Logan** in Jajarkot

Like any mother, Sharmila Chadara just wanted to get home to see her child. It was this primal urge, and other unrelated factors, that directly resulted in her death on the night of 24 November.

It was easy for journalists to assume that she had died from 'the cold' following the earthquake on the night of 3 November that killed 153 people in Jajarkot and Rukum West.

Many of Sharmila's neighbours in Ward 4 of Nalgad Rural Municipality and the surrounding mountains were forced to sleep outdoors after their houses collapsed.

A local politician was quoted saying that Sharmila had become the latest post-earthquake victim because she was sleeping under a flimsy plastic sheet as night temperatures dropped. The news was picked up by the media, and there was outrage across the country.

Had she survived, Sharmila Chadara would probably be sleeping inside the tiny home of her husband Dinesh in Nalgad located down a dusty path, a 15-minute walk from a narrow road. It was damaged but is habitable.

Dinesh, 26, sheltered from the sun against the house as he told us about Sharmila's final trip home. It was on Dasain Tika day in early November when Sharmila felt labour pains and they took a vehicle

down to the local hospital.

There were no doctors and the couple was advised to go to the hospital in Khalanga, where doctors in turn referred them to Surkhet. Sharmila had twins and it would be a risky delivery.

In Surkhet, she delivered the first baby, a girl. The boy was stillborn.

The doctors advised them to keep the girl in the hospital so she would gain weight. After five days, staff noticed that Sharmila, who till then seemed healthy, developed a cough. They diagnosed severe pneumonia and put her in the ICU.

But fluid built up in Sharmila's lungs and she underwent dialysis, recalled Sakuntala Sapkota, the matron at the Surkhet hospital. "She had many ups and downs," Sapkota added.

Sharmila had five dialysis treatments as she was shuttled back and forth between ICU and the general ward. At one point a doctor told Dinesh and relatives they might not be able to save Sharmila because her body was "completely infected".

After nearly three weeks, Sharmila had enough. She was missing her older son and wanted to return to Jajarkot. But staff urged her to stay two more weeks until she was fully recovered.

In Ladakh

Three years earlier, Sharmila had travelled to Ladakh where Dinesh was working, as were her own parents. It is normal for at least one member of each household in Jajarkot and surrounding districts to migrate for work in India and beyond.

Increasingly, many are taking illegal routes destined for the US. In Athbiskot Municipality there was one woman whose brother had been gone a year, and had only made it to Turkey after paying traffickers Rs10 million.

Sharmila stayed and worked alongside her husband at a cement factory in Ladakh, returning for the first time this past Dasain.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SHARMILA CHADARA'S FAMILY

collective resilience



DURGA RANA MAGAR

and a collective resilience with neighbours helping each other with the little they have.

Villages like Chiuri in Nalgad Municipality have come together to construct each others' temporary shelters. They are not waiting for the first instalment of Rs25,000 to come through, but use local material and volunteer labour to help rebuild.

Prasad Biswokarma got support from his fellow villagers, to erect a temporary shelter where at least his family would be protected from the bitter cold. He and the whole village are now bracing for rain and snow that is forecast for western Nepal next week.

The collective struggle for recovery extends to sharing food, blankets, firewood and other essentials. Harikala Rokaya from Pali village has been waiting for government assistance and help from charities but it never got to where she lives, off the road. With winter setting in and aid absent, she has built her own temporary shelter from salvaged bricks and timber.

Mayor Dammar Bahadur Raut of Nalgad Municipality admits that there is a delay in aid distribution, attributing it to bureaucratic hurdles. The allocation of reconstruction grants for temporary shelters from the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Authority has been marred by procedural delays mainly due to lack of coordination between various levels of government. The

delay is affecting 50,000 of the affected families.

In Sirpachaur, villagers have been contributing voluntary labour for fellow survivors to rebuild. Local activists, and civil society organisations have also joined hands to help the villagers.

"The bureaucratic delay in aid disbursement is testing the will and endurance of the affected families, and we have seen exemplary support by community-driven initiatives in this critical time of crisis," Mayor Raut adds.

Ward Chair Bir Bahadur Giri says migration to India is a safety valve, but says it also means that the men are away when there is reconstruction work to be done at home. Although many men who had returned for the Dasain festival and were at home when the earthquake struck will probably be staying a bit longer, sooner or later they will be going back to India.

With the men mostly away, there are almost only women, children and the elderly left in the earthquake-ravaged villages of Jajarkot and West Rukum. Many of the children are still traumatised by the destruction of the earthquake and the loss of family memories.

In one temporary shelter in Sirpachaur, 12-year-old Pashupati Gharti is a Grade 5 student, and

still has visible signs of anxiety in his face when he remembers that fateful night. He tries his best with two elder sisters to help his family inside their tarp-roofed shelter.

"I wonder when our house will be rebuilt," he says staring off listlessly into the distance.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, the boy would have nightmares and missed many days of school. But time heals, and Pashupati is now determined to help with household work in the morning and go to school in the afternoon.

There is not a single house intact in this village, rubble still lies in piles on streets where children play Seven Stones trying to hit a pile of stones. For the headmaster of the local school, this is a hopeful sign that the children are starting to play again as their lives return to a semblance of normalcy.

The school building in Chiuri village is also damaged, and classes are held in tents or outdoors under the sun. It was fortunate that the earthquake struck at night, otherwise there may have been many casualties among students when either classrooms collapsed.

The earthquake claimed the lives of 13 children in Chiuri village alone. Of the 36 killed in

Rukum West, 19 were children. Eighty-one children were among those killed on 3 November — more than half the fatalities. Most of the adults killed were women.

Twenty-three of the children who survived lost both parents, and measures are being taken for their protection and care. Efforts are underway to provide counselling for affected children. Child Welfare Officer Pradeep Rawal says some parentless children sheltered in orphanages require more time to recover.

In Aathbis Kot Municipality of Rukum West which saw a heavy loss of life among children, counselling is being provided to children even though schools are closed for winter holidays.

Temporary school construction is underway in Jajarkot and Rukum West, where the current buildings lack proper classrooms due to building safety concerns.

In certain areas, parental involvement in building temporary shelters has facilitated continued education for children. Parents' collaboration, aided by outside support, means wooden shelters have come up in some locations to ensure children have space for learning.

At Himalaya Devi Basic School in Sirpachaur, parental support helps temporary management, and there is now room for 150 students when schools reopen. Mayor Raut is happy parents themselves are helping to put up temporary classrooms. 🇳🇵



, not the quake

Dinesh remembers her falling ill in India and coughing up blood. A local doctor diagnosed it as 'weakness' and gave her medicine.

"But she didn't finish it," her husband told us. "She never finished medicine, even vitamins. I don't know why she was like that."

A neighbour remembers Sharmila as being honest and friendly. She did not like working in Ladakh, she added, but the pressure to earn money must have been strong.

At the hospital in Surkhhet, Sharmila threatened to pull out her IV drip, remove her oxygen mask, and die in her hospital bed if she was not taken home. Dinesh relented and booked an ambulance for the family's return trip to Nalgad.

The oxygen ran out on the way. "I was not even sure if she was breathing," he recalled. When they reached the hospital emergency in Radi Bazar at 2AM her vital signs were nil, staff told him. Sharmila had died.

Dinesh wanted to take her home. He hired a vehicle to carry her to the foot of the hill and rounded up people in the dead of night to carry her on a stretcher, reaching home at 4AM. Sharmila was finally reunited with her son.

Dinesh told us he has not made up his mind about returning to work in India. His in-laws have given him Rs150,000 to pay medical bills and he has borrowed more, but was still in debt.

Sharmila's daughter has been released from hospital, and continues to gain weight and get routine vaccinations.

Left out in the cold

When we visited Jajarkot and Rukum West nearly two months after the earthquake, survivors were still living in tents and plastic shelters.

A female community health volunteer (FCHV) in Athbiskot said she was having trouble finding a good tent for a mother just discharged from a health facility with her newborn.

Up the mountain, we reached the house of Seema Chand Malla, 28, who was eight months pregnant. Her brother-in-law was hammering together a door for a wooden shelter while waiting for the government's Rs 50,000 temporary shelter allowance.

Sitting on a windy ridge, Seema said: "It's very cold, but so far we're OK — let's see what happens."

Like many women we spoke to, Seema seemed to be receiving some, but not all, routine health services. She had gone for six pre-birth (ANC) visits, was taking calcium and iron supplements regularly and had been given medicine to prevent worms. As one of her three children, a son, played on her lap, she said her health was good.

The local FCHV used to visit to provide vitamins or information about the children's health, but Seema had not seen her since the earthquake. The family had received one blanket, a small tent, 25kg of rice and some buckets from the government and various agencies.

When we returned from Seema Chand's house four tractors arrived towing carts piled high with sleeping mats, rice and other goods. We saw such relief deliveries mixed with various stages of reconstruction work across the affected areas.

In Radi Bazar a crowd had gathered to get the forms needed to apply for government cash for shelters.

The damage seemed mostly random, with single houses on village roads reduced to rubble, but there were also whole clusters of homes that had fallen.

On a slope overlooking the scenic, glacier-fed aquamarine Bheri River, there

was a line of orange and blue tents. New mother Samjhana Bitalu, 19, crawled out from one of them to tell us that her house nearby was damaged in the earthquake and uninhabitable.

She and her 55-days-old baby Monika were staying here with her husband, who did not want to leave them alone to return to his job in Khalanga.

Samjhana said she gave birth to a nearby health post, but no staff visited her afterwards. The only help the family had received was a tent and 25kg of rice from the Ward office.

"When it rains it's hard to keep the baby dry because the water comes inside the tent, and she has diarrhoea," the mother said.

Following local custom, she did not think the baby should receive any treatment before she was two months old. But a health worker urged Samjhana to get medical care for the baby.

"It's more difficult because I have to manage everything alone," Samjhana said stoically. "Otherwise, everyone would have been together at home."

Nearby, Amrita Gharti, 22, was still living in her in-laws' house with her husband. She was almost two months pregnant.

Amrita previously had a miscarriage, despite being told by ANCs that she was healthy. This time, arriving at her local birthing facility for her first checkup, she was told to return when she was exactly two months pregnant. "They didn't do my checkup. They were too busy," she said.

Aruna Chaudhary of the Radha Paudel Foundation spent two weeks in Nalgad providing menstrual kits to 450 women and adolescent girls.

Demand for her support was great and the cold was especially hard on children, she told us.

"Many children have pneumonia and cholera and have to take medicine," she added. "There was lots of diarrhoea and many had injuries from the earthquake."

Pneumonia and other cold-related illnesses were also growing in Chinabagar where lack of water and sanitation was worsening the situation, especially for women and adolescent girls.

Dhani Kumar Giri from the group WOREC was assisting arrivals at a tent while the group also provided care door-to-door. In a nearby tent an organization was providing psychological counselling to those troubled by the disaster.

Some good news

Around noon on 6 December, Man Kumari Singh arrived with labour pains at the health post in Athbiskot-4 of Jajarkot. She was pregnant with twins, but had been declared healthy during previous visits to the facility.

But by 4PM her labour had not progressed and Man Kumari was starting to shake in distress. Staff decided to request a helicopter rescue, but by the time permission was granted from Kathmandu it was too late in the day.

Health post staff decided to send her to the municipal hospital in Dali, but doctors there referred her to the mission hospital in Chaurjahari instead. They sent an ambulance carrying two nurses to accompany her.

At 1AM that night Man Kumari's twins were delivered normally. By noon she had been transferred to the ICU at the provincial hospital in Surkhhet. Soon after she was moved to the general ward and by 19 December she had recovered and been discharged. The twins were also reported to be in good health. 🇳🇵

One Heart Worldwide arranged logistics for reporting on this story.



Passionate about pashmina

Integrating artisanal practices with new technology adds value to this wool fabric

■ Aisha MacDougall

Pashmina was once Nepal's top export, right there with carpets and tea. At its peak, pashmina exports accounted for Rs5 billion in 2000 only to fall sharply to Rs1.65 billion in just ten years.

The launch of Chyangra Pashmina brand helped the industry recover slightly, and Nepal now exports around \$27 million worth of pashmina products each year. Insiders claim that the industry is now growing rapidly as the demand for the Himalayan fabric grows internationally.

Nepal launched a National Pashmina Sector Export Strategy last February and joined hands with the EU to create the EU Nepal Trade and Investment Program to improve productivity and innovation.

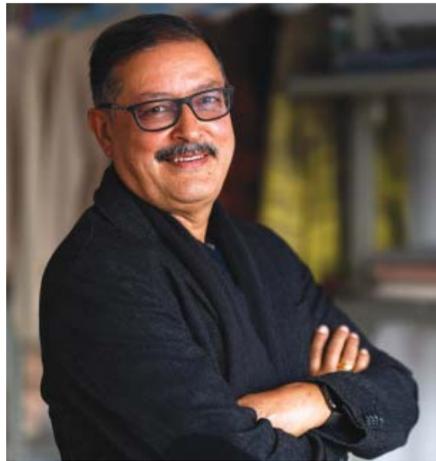
The plan is to increase the export of Chyangra Pashmina to Rs10 billion by 2026. Last year Nepali and Mongolian Pashmina entrepreneurs agreed to collaborate on quality testing, wool analysis and knowledge sharing.

As part of the deal, Nepali pashmina entrepreneurs would get samples of pashmina fibre, semi-processed wool, and woollen products tested and analysed by the Research and Development Institute of Light Industry (RDILI) of the Mongolian government.

Nature Knit is a Kathmandu-based manufacturer and wholesaler that has been in business since 2004. It now exports 90% of its products to notable multinational brands with orders mainly coming



AISHA MACDOUGALL



SUMAN NEPALI

product taking around six days to complete, says Bharat Adhikari (pictured, above), founder and Managing Director of Nature Knit.

"Beyond the brand's dedication to maintaining traditional and exacting artisanal practices, Nature Knit is also unique in the fact that over 70% of 250 employees are women," Adhikari adds.

Employees are trained in cashmere / pashmina creation while receiving a monthly stipend for their children's education.

The company also has its store in Thamel. Products here range from sweaters to silk prints to intricately woven blankets.

The term pashmina is often

used interchangeably with cashmere, both referring to the wool of the mountain goat called Chyangra. The practice of creating with this material is the product and amalgamation of the flow of trade and culture via the Silk Road.

Recently, the moniker 'Cashmere' has become more common, a reflection of the material's increased global popularity and commercialisation.

The growth of the industry has not been consistent, however. It faced challenges from the 2008 financial crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic and global supply chain issues. More recently, it is also being impacted by the climate crisis as extreme events and increasing temperatures affect Chyangra populations, ultimately affecting the industry and the livelihoods of those dependent on it. 🇳🇵

Get weaving

Nepal's cashmere / pashmina industry is set to grow but it is not immune to challenges. The most sustainable approach may lie in traditional practices integrated with technology to ensure consistency and precision.

In seven steps, experts at Nature Knit demonstrate how balls of non-descript yarn are weaved into some of the finest luxury garments:

- Each cone of imported yarn is assigned a barcode that when scanned shows the design, measurements, and texture of the desired products. This barcode is used throughout the manufacturing process to ensure the final product perfectly matches the initial design
- The measurements are given to the knitting department, who individually create each panel of the product
- The panels are checked for defects and to ensure that the measurements align with the requested size on the barcode system
- The panels are mended before being passed onto the joining department who join each panel together by hand
- The joined items are hemmed before being washed
- After being washed, the products are scrupulously checked for any holes or inconsistencies before being carefully ironed
- If the products pass the three rounds of checking and quality control, the items are labeled and packed, and eventually exported.

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