



shanker PROTON e.MAS7 INTELLIGENCE THAT ELECTRIFIES

0%* INTEREST RATE

8 YEARS UNLIMITED MILEAGE WARRANTY*

#Best EV Under 1 Cr.

JAGDAMBA MOTORS

BOOK YOUR TEST DRIVE VISIT OUR WEBSITE



PARTY TIME

Shristi Karki

New and old, businessmen and former diplomats, engineers and academics — they have all been trooping to the Election Commission to register political parties ahead of the Sunday deadline.

Till press time Thursday, five new parties had been registered and 21 new parties were in the process of applying. Behind the scenes, new parties are head-hunting, well-known figures are shopping for parties to join, while older parties are splitting or uniting to form new ones.

“It is reason for optimism that people are enthused to form new parties,” notes political analyst Indra Adhikari. But, she adds, this does not mean that despite the celebrity status they will win votes and succeed in politics.

The outlier in all this are the Nepali Congress (NC) and the UML. They are still licking the wounds

after being swept out of power by the GenZ protests in September.

Neither party and their leaders have shown any remorse for the 8 September massacre, or understood the outrage on the streets against their decades-long incompetence and corruption.

Notable among the new parties certified this week was Gatishil Loktantrik Party (गतिशिल) backed by Buddha Air founder Birendra Basnet and led by sociologist Dinesh Prasai. Dharan Mayor Harka Sampang’s Shram Sanskriti Party is also registered.

Energy and Infrastructure Minister in the interim government Kulman Ghising is backing Ujyalo Nepal with former secretary Anup Kumar Upadhyaya as its chair. Ghising has been playing coy about his political ambitions, and is planning to resign from his cabinet post a month before elections.

Ghising had been talking to Rabi Lamichhane’s RSP about joining, but negotiations failed. Former RSP lawmaker Sumana Shrestha was supposed to join

Ghising, but pulled out following Ghising’s reluctance to resign from government.

Ghising has public support because he is credited with ending power cuts as head of the Nepal Electricity Authority, but is now getting flak for being unwilling to give up his portfolios while still wanting to contest elections.

Ujyalo has hit other snags. GenZ activist Tashi Lhazom, who was considered for a Cabinet position last month but was dropped by PM Sushila Karki, has denied being a party member despite being in the Central Committee. Another member has said that he will not be a part of Ujyalo due its “lack of political culture”.

Even though Nepalis from across backgrounds and professions are eager to participate in the country’s new political landscape, there are doubts about the structure of their parties, ideology and electoral platforms.

Hurriedly set up parties without a shared philosophy have

less chance of political influence and longevity. For example, the RSP was formed just months before the 2022 polls to become the fourth-largest party in Parliament, and has now lost its momentum, and its leader is in jail.

“Parties like the RSP, which did some positive work after being elected, have still not been able to establish a clear ideological roadmap or organisational structure,” Adhikari says.

“It is easy to form parties, the real work goes into building an institution, which is the hard part.”

OLD GUARDS

Meanwhile, despite expectations of increased and inclusive youth participation not just at the polling booths but also on the ballot, only a few GenZ-led parties are applying at the Election Commission. They include the Rastriya Pariwartan Party and the Rastriya GenZ Party Nepal. Most other parties are led by men in their 40s, even in their 70s.

Analysts note that despite hopes of young blood in politics, Nepalis are still inclined to trust those with experience, as evidenced by GenZ’s choice of Sushila Karki to succeed K P Oli as Prime Minister after the September protests.

“So it will be difficult for young Nepalis without prior political experience to lead parties and it will be even more difficult for them to cultivate enough public trust to get votes,” says Adhikari.

Then there are the old political players, who have been breaking up and making new alliances. Resham Chaudhary quit his Nagarik Unmukti Party and registered a new one.

And last week, Puspha Kamal Dahal’s Maoist Centre and Madhav Kumar Nepal’s Unified Socialists merged along with smaller leftist parties to form the Nepali Communist Party (NCP). Disgruntled former UML members like Bhim Rawal have also joined the NCP. On the other hand, Janardan Sharma has fallen out with Dahal and is going his own way.

Even though the NC, UML and NCP show little sign that they have learnt their lesson and will be turning a new leaf, they still have the party organisation and vote banks to fall back on at election time in the runup to 5 March.

Says Adhikari: “At the end of the day, Nepali society remains hyper-partisan. And although the newly-formed parties and their popular candidates may give older leaders a run for their money, established parties will still benefit from their solid vote base.”



BREAKFAST, LUNCH & DINNER

New Orleans Cafe

Thamel 01-4700736



SeWahh Service to Your Door

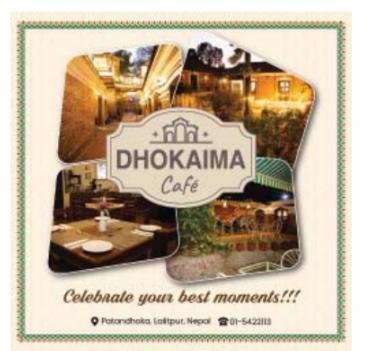
Gentle Care for Every Elder

Compassionate home caregiving with SeWahh

- Professional
- Respectful
- Trusted by Families
- Nepal Labor Law Compliant

BOOK NOW +977-9704805037 www.sewahh.com

A Suvidha Holding Entity



DHOKAIMA Cafe

Celebrate your best moments!!!

Putanchoke, Lalpur, Nepal 01-542213



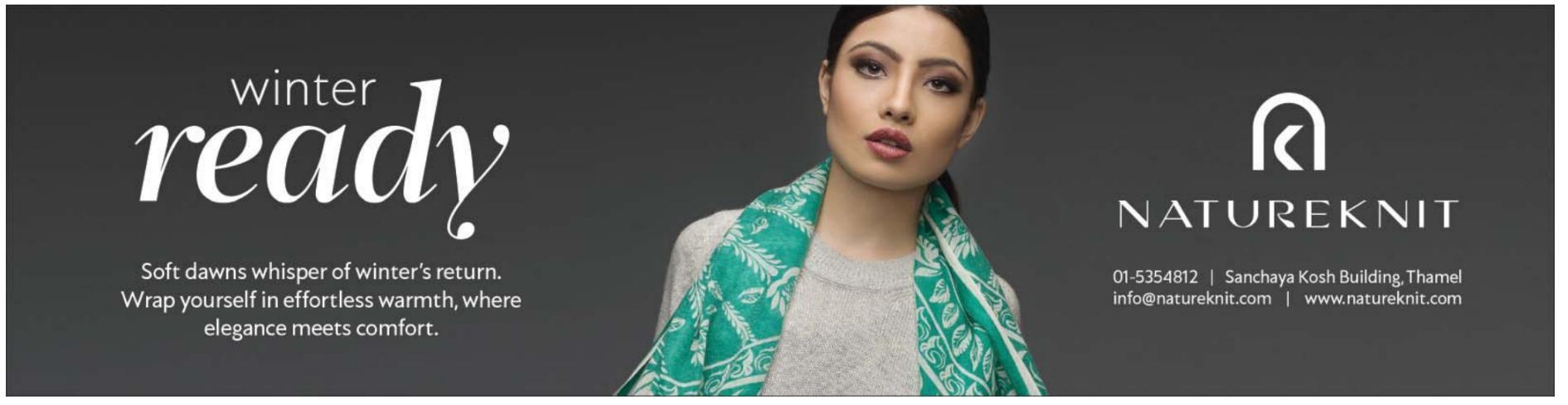
TRANQUILITY SPA "Relaxing Body, Mind and Spirit"

Nepal Largest Spa's Chain

Discover treatments crafted for pure bliss

- Signature Massage
- Therapeutic Therapy
- Relaxation Therapy
- Shirodhara Therapy
- Hot Stone Therapy
- Spa Packages
- Hydro Therapy
- Beauty Therapy

tranquilityspa.com.np



winter ready

Soft dawns whisper of winter's return. Wrap yourself in effortless warmth, where elegance meets comfort.

NATUREKNIT

01-5354812 | Sanchaya Kosh Building, Thamel info@natureknit.com | www.natureknit.com



Climate of tragedy and apathy

Nepal's inability to raise Himalayan haze and permafrost issues at COPs and regional fora exposes failures in science and diplomacy



GUEST EDITORIAL
Kanak Mani Dixit

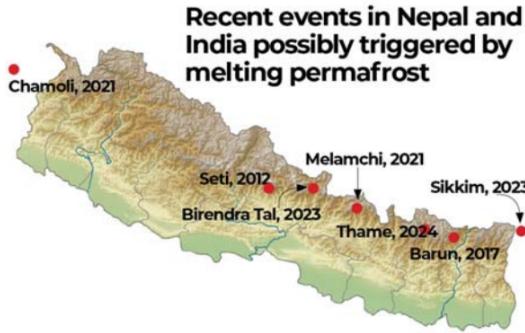
You do not have to be a climate expert or atmospheric pandit to claim that Nepal is not pulling its weight on the grand narratives of the Anthropocene. As a heavily populated 'country-on-an-incline' from the Tarai to the Himalaya, Nepal is a thermometer of global warming.

Its people are human witnesses to environmental and climate breakdown, but remain mute observers to the unfolding crises. Nepal should be leading the pack at the COP30 climate conference in Belém, backed by science and lived experience.

But it is doubtful that two of the most crucial climate-related subjects central to the culture, economies and human wellbeing in the Himalaya and South Asia will be discussed at the summit in Brazil.

The first topic that should be raised at COP is Black Carbon or the South Asian Brown Cloud, made up of tiny suspended particles in the air. This is not just a transboundary health hazard, there is now enough science to make the case that Himalayan snowmelt is accelerated significantly by the albedo effect that makes ice melt faster because of reduced reflectivity.

But Kathmandu has not been able to make governments near and far listen. In 2014, I



wrote a short piece published in Outlook magazine explaining why Indian PM Modi looking northward from a SAARC Summit retreat in Dhulikhel was unable to see the Jugal Himal range barely 30km away. His view was obscured by the pollution layer arriving from as far away as Lahore with substantial contribution from Delhi.

The forest fires within Nepal as well as Kathmandu Valley's pollution contribute to the haze, but the shroud that suffocates the region through autumn, winter and spring is mostly transnational. Last year, these anthropogenic fine aerosols actually curled over the Bay of Bengal and invaded the airspace of Sri Lanka and Maldives.

Even as the soot particles accelerate glacial melt and impact everything from infrastructure to public health, the most visible effect is on tourism. Nepal's economic future is based on tourism, and much of this relies on being able to see the snow mountains. Hoteliers in Nagarkot have started a campaign:

'Visit Nagarkot 2025: More than Sunrise and Sunset'. While clever, the slogan is a response to the acclaimed Himalayan vista from the hill station, now obscured by the haze for most of the year.

As the bellwether country of South Asia when it comes to the climate crisis, Nepal must build diplomatic confidence to reach out to the governments of Pakistan and India even in their present state of antagonism. Kathmandu must launch 'haze diplomacy' for its own sake and for the region.

IMPERMANENT FROST

Permafrost is understood mostly as a phenomenon of the Arctic, Antarctica, Siberia and Alaska. Mountains elsewhere did not figure, though it was natural for the ground to freeze all year round at high altitudes.

In the Himalaya, besides the snowfields and glaciers, frozen moisture binds rocks and stabilises slopes. But global warming is melting the permafrost that used to cement mountain flanks, including boulders, sand and scree slopes. Some of the debris (गैजिन) did tumble down, but much of it remained entombed on high, thanks to permafrost.

Pokhara Valley and the Seti River reaching all the way up to the base of the Annapurnas, is the best place to observe this dance of geology between gravity and the mountains.

Rubble from the collapse about 700 years ago of paleo-Annapurna IV created the sediment field on which Pokhara is situated today. However, much of the debris from the crumbled mountain is still lodged



Trending Online



"I was born to be a nurse"

by Alpana Adhikari
Nepali nurse Alpana Adhikari migrated to the UK under the G2G nurses recruitment scheme for a better future for her son, who was diagnosed with Williams Syndrome. Read the latest instalment of Diaspora Diaries at nepalitimes.com.

Most reached and shared on Facebook

Nepal Jaynagar-Janakpur Railway

by Dan Edwards
The NJJR was built probably to transport logs cut on forested birta land in Janakpur to sell in India. Travelling at 15km per hour in the eastern Tarai for 76 years, the railway was a part of Nepal's history. Visit our website for the full story.

Most popular on X

Himalayan climbing

by Vishad Raj Onta
Storms, delays in rescue permits and new uncharted peaks increased mountaineering risk this autumn climbing season. This was a lesson for future expeditions and for the Nepal government. Follow us for the latest developments.

Most commented



Nepal haemorrhaging nurses

by Shristi Karki
Nurses at Nepal's private hospitals are forced to work for far less than Nepal's minimum monthly wage – without overtime, breaks, and other benefits and under taxing conditions. This is driving many qualified nurses to emigrate. Details online.

Most visited online page

Letters

NURSE MIGRATION

The plight of Nepal's nurses must be a concern not just for nurses' or healthcare professionals', but for every Nepali ('Nepal haemorrhaging nurses', Shristi Karki #1284). I worked three years in Nepal and have worked three years in the UK now, and I've got zero ounce of regret or guilt for leaving Nepal except for the fact I had to leave my family behind. I was born and raised in Nepal, there's nothing else that appeals to me to go back. Instead I always regret not leaving sooner, having had the delusion that I would do something in my home country. But I ended up giving my time, energy and a chunk of my youth just to get humiliated and kicked out for speaking out about receiving only a partial salary for six months.

Everyone deserves basic rights. Sadly Nepal is far behind, and Nepal is way too tolerant.

Prabina Rana

■ The crisis that nurses are facing mirrors many other professions in Nepal. So much young talent going to waste. What is the root of this tragedy? If you find the answer to this, then young Nepalis must do something about it.

Gill Porteous

MOUNTAIN RESCUE

True, rescues in Manaslu which are happening a lot right now, cannot take place for trekkers needing it in an emergency because of the amount of paperwork and red tape ('Deadly autumn in Himalayan climbing', Vishad Raj Onta, #1284). It is ridiculous.

Raj Gyawali

■ The risks are due to a lack of basic common sense, and going

up mountains during heavy and continuous snowfall.

Neville Contractor

PARTIES MERGE

The only good side of Nepali politics is there is no polarisation between parties on ideology ('Politicians Splitting, Parties Uniting', Kunda Dixit, nepalitimes.substack.com).

Binod Paudyal

DEVELOPMENT FINANCE

There is still a popular opinion that aid is insufficient and will never compensate for colonial greed ('Development finance must shift away from aid', Justin Yifu Lin and Yan Wang, #1284).

Tony Jones

NJJR HISTORY

What a classy railway the NJJR has been ('The saga of Nepal Jaynagar-Janakpur Railway', Dan Edwards, #1284). Thank you for digging out all those pictures.

Djaz T.

Quotes



Nepali Times @NepaliTimes

Nurses at private hospitals are forced to work for far less than Nepal's minimum monthly wage – without overtime, breaks, and other benefits and under physically and mentally taxing conditions. This is driving many qualified nurses to emigrate.



'Gaijin' - A Pessimist! @Gaijin_Ram

I have relatives who get paid 8k a month! Nurses are a boon to the society and not a bane. Treat them well!



Nepali Times @NepaliTimes

Nepal's energy future is threatened as lakes replace glaciers, putting them at risk of bursting and destroying hydropower plants. This threat is most real with Tso Rolpa, one of Nepal's largest and most unstable glacial lakes. Ayusha Chalise reports:



samnbiddev @samnbiddev

If so known why not have projects to control flow of those lakes which can benefit both ways fortified tourism point and risk mitigation for future disasters.

Online Package



THE LAMA'S SON

In the northern Nepal's Lubra, amid a community of Bon followers, an aging lama awaits his son's return from the US so that he can inherit his father's title. Meanwhile, as young people leave the village, its lifestyle faces extinction. Watch trailer on Vimeo.



LAKE RISK

Rising average temperature is increasing the threat of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) in the Himalaya. This in turn will affect downstream infrastructure and 2 billion people. Subscribe for more multimedia content.

1,000 Words



NON-MAOISTS: The Maoist Centre united with six other Communist parties to form the Nepali Communist Party and have started the process of application to the Election Commission. Senior party leaders including Barshaman Pun, Rajendra Pandey, and Dev Gurung gathered at the Commission on Tuesday to submit the necessary documents for party registration.



Nepali Times on Facebook
Follow @nepalitimes on Twitter
Follow @nepalitimes on Instagram

Editor: Sonia Awale | Special Correspondent: Shristi Karki

Reporters: Sudiksha Tuladhar, Vishad Raj Onta | Layout: Kiran Maharjan

Publisher: Kunda Dixit, Himalmedia Pvt Ltd, Patan Dhoka, Lalitpur | GPO Box 7251 Kathmandu

editors@nepalitimes.com | www.nepalitimes.com | www.himalmedia.com | Tel: +977 1 5005601-08 Fax: +977 1 5005518



A STAR ALLIANCE MEMBER 

WE'RE ALL CONNECTED: LONDON

Connecting more countries than any other.



TURKISH AIRLINES

ENGLAND

Global warning bell in Belém

Energy diversification, climate finance, and carbon credit remain priorities for Nepal at COP30

Sonia Awale

At the opening plenary of COP30, which stands for the convolutedly named 30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in Belém on Tuesday, Nepal brought up the threats to the Himalayan watershed.

Nepal's delegate Rajendra Prasad Mishra, Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, also spoke on behalf of Bhutan and Bangladesh after the three countries formally called for tripling grant-based adaptation financing from 2015 levels to at least \$120 billion per year by 2030, and to ensure a more simplified, scaled-up access to finance their National Determined Contributions (NDCs) to reduce emissions and adapt to climate impacts.

"Bhutan has already graduated from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, while Bangladesh and Nepal are in the process of graduation," said Mishra. "Graduation reflects development progress, but does not reduce our climate vulnerability nor the scale of support required to safeguard development gains."

The Loss & Damage Fund is also finally coming into effect, so countries can now apply for \$5-20 million to make up for damage from climate impact. But claiming damage and linking disasters to



GOPEN RAI / NT ARCHIVE

climate breakdown has not been an easy process.

"When a 200MW hydropower plant is destroyed by a glacial flood, it is a big loss for Nepal's GDP. Every megawatt costs us \$20 million to build," says energy entrepreneur Kushal Gurung. "Our lobbying should be top-notch, and hydropower can make a good case

for us."

Belém marks the tenth anniversary of the Paris Agreement that brought the world together to pledge to keep global average temperature to 'well below' 2°C above pre-industrial levels and limit it to 1.5°C.

COP has also returned to Brazil after 30 years of the Rio Conference

in 1995. Since then there have been numerous summits, which have been criticised for being just hot air and being hosted by fossil-fuel exporting countries like UAE and Uzbekistan. Belém was selected because it is a gateway to the Amazon, but Brazil has now also become a major oil producer after new offshore finds.

A recent report shows that compared to 2019, the world is set to reduce its emissions by 12% in 2035 if countries are to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions even though the figure needs to go up to 40% to meet temperature targets.

There has been progress. Before the Paris Agreement the world was on a path for 4°C increase during this century, and this has now come down to 2.5°C because of the clean energy transition. But a lot more needs to be done to meet the Paris 1.5°C target.

"This progress is proof that multilateralism is working, it is delivering," Manjeet Dhakal of the Climate Analytics South Asia told us from Belém. "Having said that, it is simply not enough. Emissions need to go down much further, and a lot of it is tied to developed countries providing climate finance to do so."

Many developing countries have adopted 'conditional NDCs' which means their emission reduction targets cannot be met without international climate finance. In its third NDC, Nepal set a target of a 17.1% reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions and 26.8% by 2035. But achieving that has a price tag of \$73.74 billion, with much of it from international climate finance.

NMB BANK एनएमबि बैंक

Turkish profit up

Turkish Airlines has generated revenue surpassing \$17.8 billion in the first nine months of 2025, posting a third quarter profit of \$1 billion, the carrier said in a press statement. With strong October traffic results, including a 19% increase in passenger numbers and a 16% increase in cargo volume, the trend for the future looks positive. The airline carried 27.2 million passengers in



the third quarter. Turkish Airlines Chair Bolat stated; "As Türkiye's most valuable brand on the international stage and a global leader in worldwide aviation sector, we will continue to grow and invest in line with our 2033 strategy. Our focus goes beyond profitability – we are committed to achieving long-term and sustainable success." Meanwhile, Turkish Airlines has relaunched four weekly flights between Istanbul and Sulaymaniyah in Iraq, which were stopped in 2023. The destination will add to other cities: Baghdad, Basra, Erbil, Kirkuk, and Najaf.

Global IME + NAS-IT

Global IME and the Nepal Association of Software and IT Services discussed expanding the bank's portfolio, banking services, and loan schemes for the IT sector. The companies plan to hold joint employee training programs.

Wlink 6G

WorldLink has introduced Nokia 6G routers with 40% more enhanced coverage than the previous model WiFi, and four times more bandwidth of 500Mbps for Rs1,334 per month. "Faster seamless internet will help develop Nepal's digital economy," said WorldLink's Dileep Agrawal at the launch this week. "Customers will benefit from the internet of things in Nepali homes where there are many more devices than before."

SEBON protest

The employees of the Securities Board of Nepal have called off their month-long protest after the government formed a panel to study benefits. The government argues that SEBON's welfare and protection funds violate GoN rules. SEBON employees demand autonomy, and have banned chairman Santosh Narayan Shrestha from office. The strike affected 100 companies awaiting regulatory approval or IPOs.

Samsung M17 5G

Samsung's new Galaxy M17 5G comes with a 6.7" screen, 128GB storage, Gorilla Glass, and AI features. 4GB variant costs Rs25,999 while 6GB is Rs27,999. It also has Optical Image Stabilisation for smooth videos and clear photos. The Galaxy Tab S11 has a 11" screen, S Pen, and AI features for writing, drawing, multitasking and costs Rs129,999. Samsung DeX Extended Mode transforms the device into a dual screen workspace. The Galaxy Buds3 FE cost Rs19,999 and comes with Active Noise Cancellation and AI voice isolation for clear call audio.



Aloft gastronomy

Aloft Kathmandu Thamel hosted the US-Nepal Gastronomy Exchange, bringing Michelin-starred chefs from the US, France, Singapore, Dubai and Nepal. The highlight La Grande Bhoj held on 9 November reimagined Nepali flavours over seven courses such as bara with bhanga sauce, sino geele, yak cheese foam, an egg, and juniper-ginger aila.

Ncell NPL 2

Ncell renewed its 'powered by' partnership with CAN for NPL 2 under the theme United by Cricket, Connected by Ncell. The tournament starts on 17 November at the TU Cricket Ground in Kirtipur. Matches will be broadcast on the Ncell App. Meanwhile, Ncell and MetLife Nepal's Data Sangai Jeevan Beema offers life and health insurance on buying Ncell data packs through the Ncell App.



KMC internet

Kathmandu Metropolitan City will install 1Gbps/500Mbps high speed fiber internet across 71 ward offices, health centres and other service points such as police stations and heritage sites. NTC will execute the project.

Smarter TikTok

TikTok has launched Creator Care Mode, which learns from creator behaviour to auto-hide abusive or obscene comments. The Live Muting Tool lets hosts mute or block users who act inappropriately. Finally, Content Check Lite allows users to see whether their videos may have restricted content before posting.

Chetak exchange

Bajaj Chetak Nepal is holding a 'From Old to Bold Exchange Camp' in which riders can exchange old motorbikes for the electric Chetak, 9-14 November, 11am-6pm at Biker's Cafe in Naxal. Free accessories, easy financing, free coffee with test rides, complimentary couple's lunch at Biker's Cafe are part of the program. The Chetak has a range of 153km and costs Rs324,900.

Melamchi water

The residents of Helambu, the source of Melamchi Water Supply to Kathmandu have demanded that the government allocate 25% of the revenue for local development and welfare. Locals have diverted the Melamchi River to its original course, halting the flow of water to the Valley.

Himalayan Distillery

Himalayan Distillery has launched Shlok Himalayan Premium Whiskey in select outlets across Kathmandu. The spirit is matured in Quercus Alba barrels and features honeyed oak, soft vanilla, and rich caramel flavors. Available in 90ml, 180ml, 750ml.

DongFeng in Itahari

Dongfeng Nammi importer MAW Vriddhi has partnered with Shrijana Motors on a new showroom in Itahari in eastern Tarai. The showroom hosted a Test Drive and Exchange program 11-13 November. The Nammi 01, Nammi Vigo and Seres EVs are for sale.



Dailekh gas use

A government task force under the NOC has concluded that natural gas reserves discovered in Dailekh by a Chinese team could be used for power, fertiliser, cooking, and transportation. The drilling in Dailekh went 4,013m deep, and the site is expected to contain 112 million cubic metres of gas. The task force has recommended prioritising the production of urea fertiliser.

UNDERFINANCED

However, the climate finance is getting worse. The United States has exited from the Paris Agreement for the second time under President Trump, and there are cutbacks in foreign aid by European funders.

Even so, the EU has committed to reducing its emissions by 90% in the next 15 years, 85% of which will be domestic emission cuts.

The silver lining in all this is that the leadership in climate action is increasingly being taken by Nepal's neighbours China and India with both investing heavily in renewable energy. China is the world leader in solar panels, wind turbines and electric vehicles, and Nepal has already taken strategic advantage of this.

With expensive hydropower plants increasingly at risk from glacial lake outburst floods, experts say Nepal must diversify its energy mix and invest in solar power which has 10 times more potential than hydropower at 432 gigawatts with over 300 days of sunshine a year. Solar farms can also power pump storage, which are cheaper and quicker to build.

China has drastically reduced the cost of photovoltaic cells, making such schemes more feasible. Nepal just needs to ease up its restrictive domestic energy policies, boost investment and resist geopolitical pressure on electricity generation.

"First, we need to increase the cap on solar energy from 10% to 30%, and next, the bidding process should be made easier, or just have the first past the post system like that for hydropower," says Kushal Gurung.

The disadvantage of solar power is that it generates only daytime energy, but this can be solved with grid-scale battery storage or pump storage. But first, the government needs to fix the rate for solar purchase so that entrepreneurs are incentivised.

"This is not happening because our government officials and engineers are comfortable dealing with hydropower, and are not just updated about the latest advances," says Gurung. "As a result, we have no clear policies when it comes to solar."

Hydropower has become one of the biggest industries in Nepal with an installed capacity of over 3,400MW and the government's target is to produce 28,500MW in the next ten years. But the recent climate disasters have made it clear that relying only on hydropower alone is too risky.

The Nepal-Tibet glacial flood in July destroyed and damaged four hydropower plants and substations along the Bhothe Kosi, and last September's floods slashed the country's total generation by half.

Nepal now needs to build on the widespread adoption of battery-powered vehicles by extending it to electric public transport and for household appliances like stoves, rice cookers and refrigerators. Not only would this reduce Nepal's per capita carbon footprint, but it would also reduce the country's annual Rs300 billion petroleum import bill.

At global platforms like UNFCCC, it is easy even for individual developed countries to get lost without an alliance. Now that Nepal is graduating from LDC status, it needs to have strong partners with a common goal to move forward in international negotiations.

Says Kushal Gurung: "We won't have privilege that came with LDC status anymore, which means climate finance will be even more limited. But there are a few things we can urgently do on our own like regulating the carbon credit market." 🇳🇵



PHOTOS: AYUSHA CHALISE

Hydropower on thin ice

As the COP30 climate summit gets underway in Brazil, Nepal confronts risk to its hydropower plants

Ayusha Chalise in Dolakha

Under the October sun, workers rest on boulders by the banks of the Rolwaling Khola. They are building what they already know may not last: a temporary bridge between the villages of Dongang and Thanding directly downstream from the Tso Rolpa glacial lake.

Tso Rolpa used to be a debris-covered glacier with a few ponds 30 years ago. Since then it has steadily expanded into a lake 3.2km long and 100m deep dammed by a fragile moraine perched precariously above the Tama Kosi valley.

The bridge is just a few long logs lashed together, anchored to giant boulders on both sides of the roaring rapids. Until a more permanent trail bridge is built, the community will have to rely

on these makeshift crossings that are swept away every monsoon and have to be rebuilt.

Janmu Sherpa, a grandmother who ran one of Dongang's only two lodges, was swept away when the Dorji Phungmo glacial lake up the valley burst in June last year. Her body was never found. She had told a Nepali Times reporter in 2020: "No one knows when the lakes will burst, let fate decide."

Tanka Raj Rai is a climbing guide and has watched the lake grow over the years. This year he is leading two French trekkers to Yalung Ri Base Camp and over the Tashi Lapcha Pass to the Khumbu.

"Tso Rolpa has become much bigger than the first time I saw it," Rai tells us. "And the pass will be more dangerous in future because of frequent avalanches and rock falls. The mountains, lakes and rivers will continue to exist, but human beings may not unless we change course."

Tso Rolpa's water level was

reduced by 3m in 2000 by building a sluice gate and spillway, but researchers say that as the lake continues to expand, a further drawdown of 11.5m will be needed to lower the risk of it bursting during a future earthquake, or if an avalanche falls into it. If that happens, it would be catastrophic for the settlements, hydropower plants, highways and airports down the Tama Kosi valley.

Just over the Tashi Lapcha Pass on the other side is Thame village, which has been battered repeatedly since 1985 when the Dig Tso glacial lake burst, destroying a hydropower plant and the trekking trail to Everest Base Camp. Two other lakes burst in August last year and the debris flow swept away half the houses in Thame.

The National Adaptation Plan (2021–2050) warns that in the next five years most districts in Kosi, Madhes, Bagmati, and Gandaki Provinces will face high to very high climate risk. The Tarai will experience more floods and heatwaves, while mountain regions will see extreme weather and glacial lake outburst floods — the risk compounded by earthquakes.

Tso Rolpa, which lies directly below Mt Gauri Shankar (7,181m) in the Rolwaling, is scenic — the lake's surface simmers in the sunlight and snow-capped peaks tower on all sides. This time of year, the moraine overlooking the lake becomes a popular selfie spot for trekkers. Yet, the raw beauty of the mountains distracts from the fact that the lake is a ticking time bomb as the glacier recedes and shrinks. This presents a clear and present danger for hydropower plants downstream in Dolakha and beyond the confluence of the Tama Kosi with the Sun Kosi.

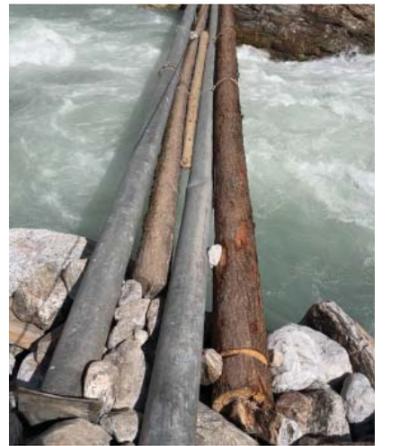
LOOMING THREAT

Nepal generates 3,500MW of hydropower, but the country's energy future is threatened because most of the plants depend on water from melting Himalayan ice. And



RASTRA RAJ BHANDARI

HEIGHTENED RISK: Tso Rolpa in the upper Rolwaling at 4,580m, is one of Nepal's biggest and most dangerous glacial lakes (top). Workers were building a temporary bridge (right) between the villages of Dongang and Thanding directly downstream from the Tso Rolpa rest on boulders by the banks of the Rolwaling Khola. Janmu Sherpa (left) who ran a lodge in Dongang was swept away when the Dorji Phungmo glacial lake up the valley burst in June last year.



as the glaciers are replaced by lakes, they face additional risk of GLOFs.

This looming threat is most real with Tso Rolpa, which feeds the Rolwaling Khola that joins the Tama Kosi just above the power house of the 456MW Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Project that came into operation in 2021 at a cost of \$450 million.

Tso Rolpa is one of Nepal's largest and most unstable glacial lakes, and if it bursts it could obliterate the plant's structures. The power house was destroyed in 2023 by a rockfall that killed four engineers, but is now back in operation after expensive repairs.

Dolakha district has prospered from the construction of over a dozen hydropower plants that could generate up to one-fourth of Nepal's total generation capacity. Even more hydropower schemes are under construction or planned.

Nepal aims to increase generation capacity to 28,500MW in the next ten years to create potential for economic growth, job

creation, and 15,000MW for export. Investments totalling \$46.5 billion will be needed to meet the ambitious target, but factoring in climate risk would make it even more challenging to achieve. The sector has also been plagued by corruption and bureaucratic delays caused by outdated EIAs and local opposition.

For districts like Dolakha, the opportunities come with hazards as demonstrated by almost annual floods and landslides. But these recent disasters could be dwarfed by potential future GLOFs due to climate breakdown.

Here in Dongang, the problem needs a more immediate solution as workers finish hammering together this year's post-monsoon bridge over the Rolwaling Khola. The budget from the provincial government for a permanent suspension bridge is delayed because of the GenZ unrest, says Ward 9 Chair Imgeli Sherpa.

The community is building more than a bridge between two villages — it is suspended between resilience and risk, and the hope that its fragile foundations will hold as the rivers rise and glaciers melt. 🇳🇵



THE BON PO WAY OF LIFE

The faith spreads around the world as its believers migrate, and its reverence for nature has much relevance today

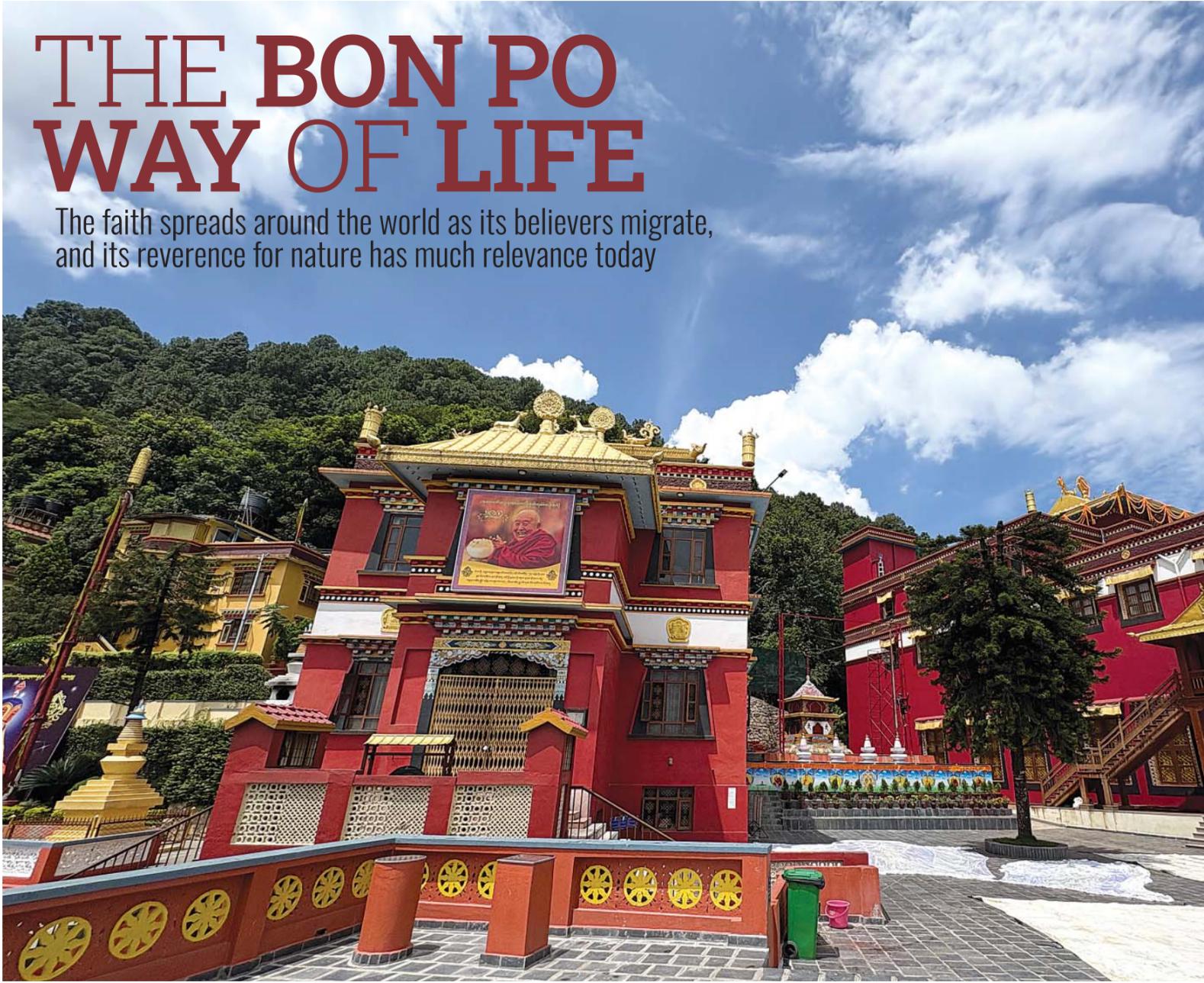
Sudiksha Tuladhar

As people move out of Nepal's trans-Himalayan districts, their faiths migrate with them to the cities and all over the world.

The ancient animist faith of Bon Po predates the advent of Buddhism in Tibet, and its last remaining priests and devotees are found in villages like Lubra in Mustang and Samling in Dolpo (see below). But as those villages empty out, Bon centres can now be found as far afield as Kathmandu, New York and Tokyo.

The first Triten Norbutse Monastery was founded in Tibet in the 14th century by the Bon Master Shen Nyima Gyaltsen. Its monastery in Nepal is below the forested hills of Ichangu on the western outskirts of Kathmandu.

Many are surprised to hear that there is a Bon centre in Kathmandu, and that it is located so close to Swayambhu. This Triten monastery was established by Yongzin Tenzin



The periphery cannot hold

Sonia Awale

The very first frame in *The Lama's Son* starts with a vision of Shangrila and the quest of a mythical utopia in the Himalaya when the rest of the world is crumbling away.

It is also the personal search of filmmaker Kesang Tseten, but what he finds there are adherents of the Bon Po faith clinging to the last remnants of a culture as it erodes away like the sandstone cliffs of Mustang.

"It was while editing the documentary that the story became distilled: how does what we see in the high Himalaya relate to the notion of the Shangrila idyll that especially the West ascribed to them," asked Tseten during a recent trip to Kathmandu from Berne where he now lives.

He continued: "Often and perhaps rightly criticised as an orientalist construct, I wondered if there was any basis at all to the Shangrila notion, and I hung the film on that idea."

Tseten takes us to the vast visas of Mustang and Dolpo, a landscape of his Tibetan ancestors. This is as much an intimate documentation of families on Nepal's Himalayan rimland torn between remoteness and globalness as it is about Tseten's own quest for rootedness.

We start from Lubra, a 3,000m village in Mustang the 15 households of which follow the Bon faith. Lama Tsultrim is from a 900-year-old lineage of the animist faith and an exponent of the tradition that is slowly being subsumed first by Buddhism and now modernism.

For Tseten, the material is familiar, and not at all exotic as it is for non-Nepalis and indeed for many urban Nepalis. Bon, founded in Tibet, predates Buddhism, but over time, the two religions have come to resemble each other.

'Both believe in karma, rebirth, and that humans can become enlightened. Nature and spirits are predominant in Bon, and rituals are what keep them benign and alight,' says Tseten, who rarely narrates in his



documentaries.

"This is not really a personal film as such, but it has a point of view," Tseten said. "I decided to have a voice-over on this one and cast my presence in the film."

Lubra's Lama Tsultrim is called upon to perform rituals from Kagbeni and other villages, but there is no one to continue the tradition after him, which is passed from father to son. Lama Tsultrim's son (hence the title of the film) is a sushi chef in New York and has been gone for 20 years.

"The Lama is like a setting sun, his son should come back and take over his father's responsibilities," says a local youngster

chatting with friends. "If he dies tomorrow, where do we go? We can't just light butter lamps ourselves to the gods."

It is not only the Lama's son who has left. The village is nearly empty, and more are planning to leave. One of them is Chimi, a teacher who will be joining her fiancé who is an Uber driver in New York. Her brother is already in Hong Kong.

In Lo Manthang a local is back home for a three-month vacation after being in New York for 12 years. A shopkeeper was in Japan for several years, and has returned.

"Everything has changed, our language, our tsampa, our religion. We used to work

and live together, now the children live separately," says a middle-aged woman. "There are roads now, and vehicles stop right outside our house, but what's the point? No one stays home."

Like most of Tseten's films, *The Lama's Son* is an honest documentation of a place and people whose lifestyle, culture and heritage cling precariously to the past. In Dri village we come across local women filling their buckets with water.

Tseten asks them why the village is so empty: "Where is everyone?" The women reply that they are "here, there and everywhere". Then it is their turn to ask



PHOTOS: SUDI KSHA TULADHAR

Namdak Rinpoche only 40 years ago to cater to adherents of the faith who lived in the capital.

True to its reverence for nature, the shrine is verdant, with plants and flowers amidst a contrasting backdrop of Kathmandu's ugly urban sprawl below. The monastery practices Bon culture and passes on teachings to students as well, who after completing 15 years of study graduate to become 'Gese'.

It is believed that Bon Po was brought to Nepal from Tibet by Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche. Over the centuries, Bon and Buddhism have become syncretic in Dolpo and Mustang, despite the differences in their belief systems. Followers worship nature and consider the human body, speech and mind as jewels. The human body is said to be composed of five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and the cosmos.

The Bon faith was much more widespread during the reigns of Nyathi Chenpo, the first king of Tibet to Namri Srongchen, the 32nd king. But it was after King Srongchen Gampo that Buddhism started making inroads on the plateau, and spread also in the Himalayan rimlands.

There are also Bon followers in Humla, Jumla, Baglung, Mugu, Kaski and Chitwan, as well as in the United States and 50 other countries, indicating the movement of people within Nepal and outside.

The Bon religion believes in reincarnation and that everything, including positive and negative thoughts are a result of past life karma. Buddhism focuses more on attaining Nirvana, a state of no suffering, where the subject is released from all his/her karmas. Bon has also inducted some

Tantric practices and rituals, some of which are in parts similar, yet still different from Buddhism.

"In Buddhist culture, circumambulation of shrines is clockwise, but in Bon culture, circumambulation is in an anticlockwise direction," explains Chhiring Lama of Triten Norbutse Monastery. "The main Bon mantra is Om Ma Tri Mu Ye Sa Le Du, while followers of Buddhism chant Om Mani Padme Hum. Buddhism emphasises enlightenment by meditation and moral behaviour, while Bon beliefs centre on nature and ancestor worship, and placating the spirits.

In religious texts, it is mentioned that there were 1,008 Buddhas throughout time. Tonpa Shenrab is believed to be the 8th Buddha, and Bon practitioners are guided by his teachings contained in 140 sacred writings known as

Kangyur and 300 more scriptures known as Katen.

"We worship nature and its elements and the prayer flags contain religious texts and when the wind blows through it we consider it a prayer," says Chhiring Lama. "We also worship ponds for the water and consider fire as a sacred element as well. We also consider snakes sacred, therefore worship ponds, considering them as the place of residence."

The interdependence between human beings and nature is clearly depicted through such traditions and practices which carry relevance today as the planet faces the crisis of climate breakdown.

Important gods worshiped include Satrig Ersang, Shenlha Okar, Sangpo Bumtri, and Tonpa Shenrab Miwoche. But what is similar to Buddhism is an offering known as 'torma', a cone shaped ritual offering made from flour dough. Many Bon faithful are vegetarian, or abstain from meat during festivals.

Over time, the rise of Buddhism in Tibet and beyond overshadowed Bon, pushing many of its practices to the margins. Yet, the tradition continues to live on, carried by those who see in it a deep connection to nature, the spirit world, and the roots of Tibetan culture.

In many ways, the endurance of Bon is a reminder that even the quietest faiths hold timeless truths, waiting to be remembered and valued. Followers of Bon today are far fewer, and the knowledge about its traditions is not as widespread.

"As time goes on, people adopt rituals and cultures that are more convenient to their daily lives," says Chhiring Lama. "But that means forgetting or leaving behind one's indigenous and ancestral roots." 🇳🇵

Kesang Tseten's new film documents how Himalayan communities are falling apart



SHUNYATA FILMS

Tseten about where he lives and what he is doing in their village.

Migration is a recurring theme in Tseten's documentaries from *We Corner People*, *In Search of the Riyal*, or *Saving Dolma*. His previous film *Diversity Plaza* documented the lives of Nepali and Tibetan emigrants in Jackson Heights in the borough of Queens in New York.

Diversity Plaza was shown at DOC NYC in 2023, and *The Lama's Son* will be one of only two Asian films shown next week at one of the biggest documentary film festivals in the world.

"*The Lama's Son* is not loud, not attention grabbing but intimate, so I was surprised they chose a quiet film for a big, flashy event," Tseten told us.

In *Lama's Son*, we also see how climate breakdown is impacting Nepal's trans-Himalayan regions. Lama Tzultrim shows us the aftermath of a recent glacial flood that swept away houses and fields. The debris-covered farms are as hard as cement.

The nearby village of Dhey at 3,900m is a high and dry cold desert. Farmers get one crop in a year, but the springs have gone dry

and there is no snow in winter. So they are relocating to New Dhey, closer to the road.

We follow Kesang Tseten to Samling in Dolpo, which at 4,200m is another Bon village. Locals are preparing for the Walchu festival in which Lama Sherrab carries out elaborate rituals to appease spirits that can turn malevolent. But unlike Lama Tzultrim in Lubra, Lama Sherrab has a community of lamas to help him, including two sons, one of whom will eventually take on his role.

We move on to the adjacent village of Bicher and listen in as locals talk about how despite being dirt poor, they thrive in scarcity and are resilient.

"We wear sheepskin, eat stew and yak meat, and drink wine. But we are very poor, we have nothing. Look at how dirty our clothes are. We may be dirty, but we have few illnesses," says one.

But even here in Upper Dolpo, a week's walk from the nearest road, things are changing. There are mobile phones, ready-made clothes and instant noodles.

At the Walchu ritual, Tseten watches men and women with hand-woven blankets

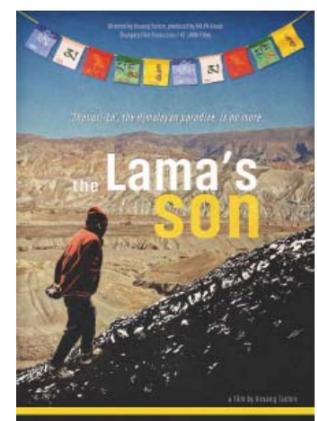
and down jackets sing and dance after the main ceremony. He narrates: "Bon is sustained by a way of life that fosters a fine but fragile balance between nature and people, where humans come before gods. This is what lies at the heart of Shangrila if there is such a thing."

The film then takes us half-way around the world to a Bon centre in New York, but (spoiler alert) the eponymous Lama's son never appears. He did not want to be filmed, but it makes for a more powerful portrayal of the life of emigrants forever trapped between two worlds.

"Bon villages may be in danger, but the Bon has spread widely across the world," narrates Tseten, a director who likes to call his storytelling ethnographic, and avoids coming to an apt conclusion.

Lama Sherrab's words after the Walchu ritual is a perfect segue:

"Whether you say om mani padme hum (in Buddhism) or matri mi yu (in Bon) they are the same. When you go up, it's the same heavenly realm. If you go down, it's still the lord of death who awaits. There isn't a separate heaven and hell for Buddhists and Bon, it has to be the same for both." 🇳🇵



The Lama's Son
by Kesang Tseten, 2025
Shunyata Films
To be screened at DOC NYC 16 November at 2:05PM local time, Online: 17-30 November
Details: <https://www.docnyc.net/film/the-lamas-son/>



Events



Patan by Night

As Patan sleeps, gods awaken, temples and stupas whisper, and history comes alive. Join the Night Walking Tour of the city and walk through these ancient streets. Contact patan.by.night@gmail.com for details. **8pm to midnight, upon request, maximum 10 in a group, +977 9813176191 (WhatsApp)**

Art Exhibition

The upcoming exhibition The Materiality of Art presented by Kathmandu University School of Arts' BFA students explores the fleeting and transformative nature of art in Nepal's contemporary context. **16 November (opening), 8am-5:30pm, Patan Museum**



EUFF 2025

The 14th instalment of the European Union Film Festival brings together European storytellers, emerging Nepali filmmakers and their work in celebration of the shared language of cinema. Features 25 films from across Europe and Nepal. Details on page 10-11. **14-16 November, Kathmandu / 21-23 November, Pokhara**



PhotoKTM6

The sixth edition of Nepal's international photography festival kicks off with an evening of art, conversations, and celebration. Explore the exhibitions, talks, and public programs running across multiple venues in the valley. **14 November, 5:30pm-7:30pm, Bhandarkhal Garden**



Farmers Market

Le Sherpa's farmers market brings people together with the finest produce from across town. Enjoy organic vegetables, artisanal breads and cheeses, and more. **15 November, 7:30am-1pm, Le Sherpa**

Ama Yangri Hike

An overnight hike to the stunning Ama Yangri Peak, known for its panoramic Himalayan views and peaceful trails. The journey passes through Melamchi and Tarkeyghyang, with a night of camping under the stars. **14-15 November, 6:45am-7pm, Rs5,500, Thamel, 9851014616 / 9841178536**



Music

Trigut Musical Night

An evening featuring three of Nepal's most celebrated bands — Sabin Rai & The Pharaoh, Purna Rai & Daju Bhai Haru, and Rockheads. From soulful to energetic, this lineup promises Nepali music at its best. **14 November, 4pm onwards, Rs500-Rs4,000, Belbari, Morang**

Kathmandu Calling Kandara

Experience Kathmandu Calling Kandara performing their most popular hits live on stage. A night of memorable melodies, perfect for fans to sing along to. **14 November, 8pm onwards, Rs999-Rs1,499, XO Club**



Himalayan Highway

Known for blending sounds from the Himalayas and Appalachias, Himalayan Highway brings their unique bluegrass-Nepali folk fusion to Moksh for an evening of live music. **15 November, 7pm onwards, Rs800-1,000, Moksh**

Young Stunners

Pakistan's acclaimed rap duo Talha Anjum and Talhah Yunus bring their explosive energy to Nepal for the first time. With their hits like Afsanay and Gumaan, experience the Young Stunners' energy live. **15 November, 9pm onwards, Rs2,199-Rs3,599, Club Nova**



Kuma Sagar & Khwopa

Kuma Sagar and Khwopa perform live in Kathmandu, offering a mix of soulful vocals and melodic tunes for an enjoyable evening of music. **21 November, 8pm onwards, Rs999 (early bird), XO Club, Thamel**



Getaway



Nirvana Country Club

Forty-five minutes from Biratnagar Airport, this 9-hole course in Dharan was built at a former recruitment and pension base for the British Brigade of Gurkhas in 1962. The course is par-70 over 18 holes. **Ghopa Camp, Dharan (025) 525555**

Bandipur Safari Lodge

The town of Bandipur is famous not only for its cultural assets but for its wild terrain, with animals like elephants, deer and tigers. Bandipur Safari Lodge is the optimal gateway for this jungle experience. You can enjoy activities like Wildlife Safari, Bird Watching and Nature Walk. **Bandipur, info@junglelodges.com**



Green Valley

Just beyond Budhanilkantha, enjoy a cool breeze as you take a stroll around the Tamang Valley. This place is perfect for those who want a taste of home without venturing far away from the city. **Shivapuri National Park (01) 5248091**

Himalaya Hotel Lodge

Located away from the concentration of guesthouses in Ghandruk, Himalaya Hotel Lodge offers accommodations unlike any other. Guests can dine in the presence of scenic views, experience the quaintness of the village life and sit beside the fireplace during these colder months. **Ghandruk (01) 4435686**

Hotel Yukhang

Experience how the Malla kings lived at this charming traditional hotel. With touches of both the old and the new, Hotel Yukhang blends of Bhaktapur's medieval history and architecture with the comfort of modern amenities. **Thamel (01) 5367358**



Dining

The Chocolate Room

Enter a world of chocolate cupcakes, decadent brownies and chocolate of every size and shape. Between the chocolate, try the Peri Peri fries and milk shake. **Jhamsikhel, 9823837885**

Raviyol Restro

This cozy Italian eatery has authentic sandwiches, wood-fired pizza and homemade ravioli. For dessert: tiramisu! **Pulchok, 9803027035**



Winter warmers @ Aloft

Savor the season with comforting winter blends at Aloft Kathmandu Thamel's WXYZ till the end of the year. Call for reservations. **Till 31 December, 11am-11pm Rs599 (mocktails) / Rs999 (cocktails), 9860849912**

Le Mirch By Exotic

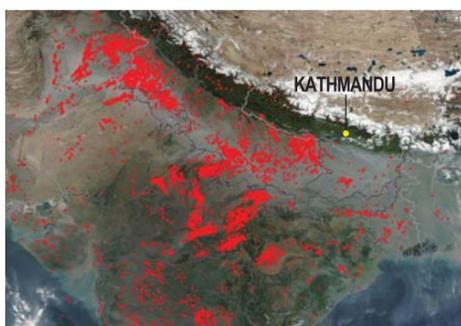
Indulge in Urban Indian delights at Le Mirch. Serving halal food for lunch, dinner, and cocktails, their flavorful kebab platter and tempered momo are must-tries. **The Park, Darbar Marg, 9810120043**



Bungalow Bar and Kitchen

At Bungalow Bar and Kitchen, one can have authentic Thai dishes like Som Tam Essan, Pad Kra Pao and Red Curry, or asian-fusion dishes like the Pork Bamboo Shoot, Buff Lemon Grass and Fried Calamari, all with a side of refreshing cocktails. **Naxal, Bhatbhateni, 980106830**

Weekend Weather



FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
22° 8°	22° 9°	22° 9°	22° 9°	22° 9°

Grazed By the Haze

This NASA FIRMS infrared remote sensing satellite image of the Subcontinent on Thursday at noon shows widespread crop residue burning along the India and Pakistan border. This coupled with emissions have made air quality across the Indus-Ganga plains unbreathable. Although so far this year prevailing winds have kept the smoke away from most of Nepal, it has covered central and eastern Tarai in thick haze. AQI is also worsening in Kathmandu Valley due to winter inversion.



Our Pick

Co-created by acclaimed mystery novelist Harlan Coben, the 2025 thriller miniseries Lazarus follows forensic psychiatrist Joel Lazarus, who returns to his family home after the suicide of his estranged psychiatrist father. Soon after he is back home, Joel starts experiencing disturbing visions. Not believing that his dad would have taken his own life, he begins to look into his father's case files, uncovering cold cases that he discovers might be connected to the unsolved murder of his sister 25 years ago. Stars Sam Claflin, Alexandra Roach, and Bill Nighy.

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 चिड्डा 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

Cinema's shared language

The 14th EUFF in Nepal brings universal stories of identity, belonging, resistance, and transformation

The 14th instalment of the European Union Film Festival brings to Nepali audiences European storytellers, emerging Nepali filmmakers and their work in celebration of the shared language of cinema.

Films will be screened 14-16 November in Kathmandu, followed by Pokhara from 21-23 November.

This year's EUFF features 25 films, including 10 European features, six BAFTA-nominated shorts, and nine Nepali short films that explore universal themes of identity and belonging.

"We didn't set out with a defined 'theme', but as the films

started coming together, a pattern emerged, stories of belonging, migration, resistance, and quiet transformations," says Prasuna Dongol, program director and curator of the festival. "It's interesting to see those reflections across continents, showing that even though we're worlds apart, we're asking the same questions," Dongol adds.

The festival is organised by the EU Delegation to Nepal, in collaboration with embassies and cultural institutions representing EU members in Kathmandu and Delhi, as well as the British Council and UNESCO.

The EU selection will showcase films from Portugal, Austria, Finland, the Netherlands, Ireland, the UK, Lithuania, France, Italy, Romania, Hungary, Poland, and Switzerland.

The films by young Nepalis, rooted in everyday small towns, friendship, or growing up in a country in transition, mirror the motifs of the selected films that tell stories of life across Europe.

Dongol adds: "Our goal was to showcase how young Nepali filmmakers are engaging with ideas of identity, place, and change in ways that feel both personal and globally resonant."

In the lead-up to the festival, conversations were held about Nepal's evolving film industry, and how storytellers navigate filmmaking as both art and business. Organisers plan to introduce interactive side events including networking spaces and informal markets.

A four day workshop brought together 10 emerging Nepali filmmakers to explore how to take their films from idea to market. Participants discussed why film festivals matter, how funding works, and how to build sustainable collaborations without compromising on creativity.

Meanwhile, at the British Council and UNESCO's 'What Next for the Film Industry?' roundtable on 12 November, filmmakers, policymakers, and researchers discussed the findings of the recent UNESCO Baseline Assessment of the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) of the Valley.

"Film festivals like this are not just about watching films; they're about expanding perspective and networking," says Dongol. "If someone discovers a new filmmaker they love or feels inspired to tell their own story differently, that's a success for us." 🇳🇵

WATCHLIST



Happy

An undocumented Indian immigrant in Austria strives for a happy life for his daughter amidst the threat of deportation, revealing the shared quest for happiness in those who seem to have it all.

110 mins | Austria
Director: Sandeep Kumar



Je'vida

Sanna and her aunt Iida, who have never met before, drive to Lapland to empty a house they've both inherited. The house invokes painful memories in Iida, and Sanna learns of her withdrawn and distrusting aunt's ordeal during the forced assimilation into Finnish society.

104 mins | Finland
Katja Gauriloff



Three Kilometres to the End of the World

Adi is spending the summer in his home village in the Danube Delta when he is brutally attacked one night. In the aftermath, his parents no longer look at him as they did, and the seeming tranquility of the village starts to crack.

104 mins | Romania
Director: Emanuel Parvu

Eternal Kinship

A boy's fear of crossing a river becomes a journey toward courage and self-discovery.

11 mins | Nepal
Director: Arvin Rai



The Last Expedition

Wanda Rutkiewicz, the most famous Polish mountaineer, went missing on 13 May 1992 on her way to Kangchenjunga. As past events are confronted with theories of Wanda's disappearance, questions emerge— is it possible that she is still alive?

86 mins | Poland, Switzerland
Director: Eliza Kubarska

Wander to Wonder

Three miniature actors who starred in a children's tv show are left alone in the studio after the show's creator dies, leading them to continue making increasingly strange episodes for their fans.

14 mins | France, Belgium, United Kingdom and the Netherlands
Director: Nina Gantz



Stomach Bug

The life of a fifty-something Chinese father, whose daughter moves out and who feels invisible in British society, unravels as his loneliness manifests physically.

15 mins | United Kingdom
Director: Matty Crawford



The Kathmandu

A young musician's dream city turns into a nightmare when his reflection comes to life, and begins living his life.

6 min | Nepal
Director: Nying Hyolmo



What grows in Thari Maila's Vegetable Garden?

Thari Maila and wife live off of their thriving vegetable garden, but the lush garden hides secrets beneath its surface, as innocence gives way to quiet unease.

14 min | Nepal
Director: Patrika Ghimire



Abyss

Richa and Dhiraj, a couple who have just had a newborn, confront the depths of love and pain as Richa struggles with postpartum depression.

13 mins | Nepal
Director: Akriti Dhungana

The 14th European Union Film Festival Nepal
14 – 16 November, QFX Chhaya Center, Kathmandu
21 – 23 November, QFX Trade Mall, Pokhara
All screenings free

Experience Luxury

SILK Finish





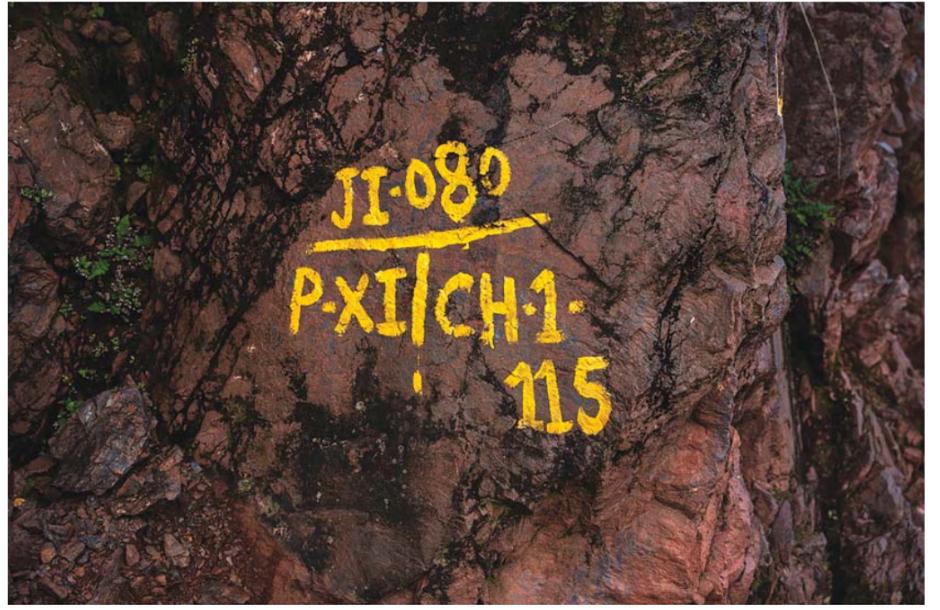


Ji ta Newa Bhyaa Mawa (I don't know Nepal Bhasa) Jyoti Shrestha

Jyoti Shrestha was born to Newar parents in Kathmandu but grew up without learning the mother tongue, Nepal Bhasa. 'My parents, with the best of intentions, taught us English and Nepali—languages of success and survival in a world that had set ours aside...

A Newar without language, I felt alien in the very culture that was meant to be mine,' writes Shrestha in her testimony.

Nepal Bhasa is in UNESCO's 'definitely endangered' list. Shrestha has begun to learn her language with help from her parents, and in doing so, their relationship has shifted for the better. She adds: "No census counts the intimacy of a shared memory, the tenderness of language passed between generations, or the weight of an inherited silence."



The Land Remembers Our Name Rejin Purja

The Department of Mines and Geology has confirmed the presence of iron ore in Jhumlawang in East Rukum. Iron mining has not started yet but a Kathmandu-based private company is said to have won the bid at Rs40.3 million. If the project indeed takes off, most of the families will have to be evacuated.

"Not only will they lose their houses, land, and forests, but their roots, culture,

and autonomy are also at stake. How can this project be considered of national benefit when it forces the very people it should serve to live in fear of their future?," Rejin Purja writes in his testimony.

Economic development exploits the natural resources of native and indigenous communities. Such projects may boost GDP and corporate profits, but they rarely improve the lives of the people whose land is being extracted from. This work reflects the uncertainty felt by the local people about their village's future.

The politics behind photographs

PhotoKTM returns, marking a decade of visual documentation of Nepal

The sixth edition of PhotoKTM will mark a decade of visual storytelling and continue its role as a vital platform for photographers and visual artists to explore the politics of photographs and their role in shaping our histories and futures.

The month-long festival across Kathmandu Valley features 18 exhibitions, slideshows, workshops, artist talks, panel discussions, portfolio reviews, and film screenings. While Nepal Art Council will be the anchor venue, the festival will go on the road in Mangahiti and Chyasal in Patan, Nigu Pukhu in Madhyapur Thimi, Nandi Keshar Bagaincha in Naxal and Tribhuvan University.

The curatorial themes of PhotoKTM 6 Global South Solidarities draws inspiration from the historic 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia, which marks its 70th anniversary this year.

The festival explores the political and cultural legacy of the Third World Project, exploring the history of global resistance and solidarity, and how they have shaped contemporary processes to reclaim sovereignty of regions battered by centuries of colonialism, exploitation, and violence.

The festival spotlights the work and curatorial voices of artists from over 40 artists based in the

Global South, from Santiago to Lubumbashi and Quito to Dakar, alongside Nepali photographers and filmmakers.

"We hope this year's coming together will deepen cultural understanding among artists and cultural communities across the Third World, strengthen reciprocal transnational solidarities through the sharing of our histories, stories, struggles and hopes, and open up pathways for more south-south collaboration and exchange across geographies," says NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati, co-founder and festival director.

Also featured are eight Nepali artists from the 2025 photo.circle fellowship cohort, whose works

explore questions, challenges, and contradictions surrounding the notions of 'development' and 'progress' in contemporary Nepal.

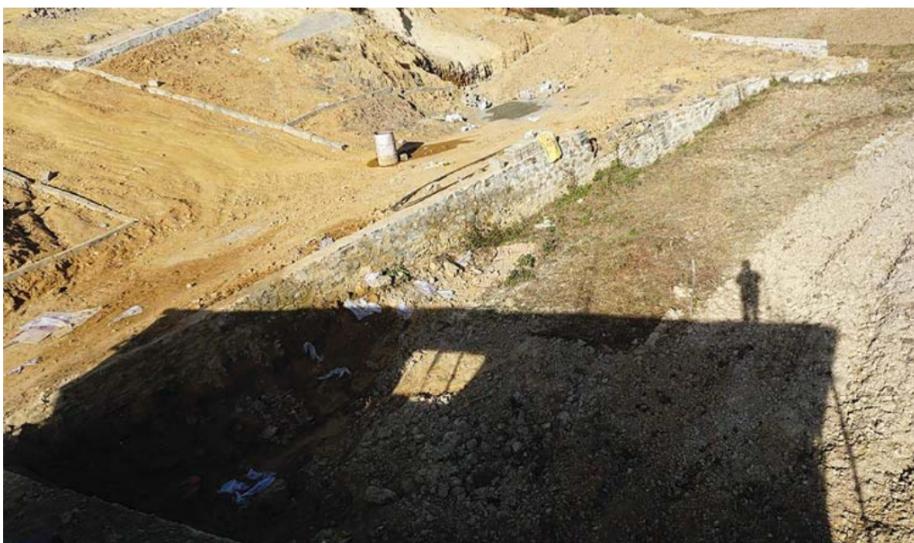
The festival comes two months after the GenZ protests, at a pivotal moment when Nepal is navigating significant political transitions. Says curator Diwas Raja KC: "From anti-colonial struggles to the Bandung Conference, to the non-alignment movement and revolutionary cultural exchanges, these histories continue to shape how countries like Nepal imagine their place in the world."

PhotoKTM6 is supported by the Shikshya Foundation Nepal, the Embassy of Switzerland in Nepal, as well as independent non-

profit organisations FreeMuse and Cultural Workers Solidarity Front.

"I think it is particularly relevant that these spaces are created and maintained because it is only if people meet and continue to do this important work, in which they think collectively, they work collectively, and they hold up certain values, that they will be capable of contributing to what I would call a 'free world'," says yasmine eid-sabbagh, who is the invited interlocutor to this year's festival. 

PHOTOKTM6
14 November-14 December
Kathmandu Valley
All events free and open



Fragmented Land and Me Sujata Khadka

Sujata Khadka's ancestral home in Godavari's Jharuwarasi was destroyed in the 2015 earthquake, after which her family built a new house on a small plot of land nearby. In the decade since the earthquake, rapid land trade has turned the farmland surrounding her home into a housing development.

For the past 10 years, Khadka has been

watching natural and man-made events unfold on the plots from her window on the second floor of her house. The land has been witness to playing children, negotiating brokers, bulldozers, and prowling wildlife. But despite relentless hemming and hawing by buyers and sellers over the past decade, no houses have been built on the land.

"This misshapen land feels like a stage where a cast of characters performs an ongoing act," says Khadka. "Perhaps this land and I are spectators to this drama."



Why doesn't home feel like home? Karma Tshering Gurung

Karma Tshering Gurung was born in Manang to a Manangi family, where he was raised with his siblings. But in recent times, whenever he has visited his family in Manang, he has felt a sense of unease, like the place sees him as an occasional visitor, an outsider who no longer understands the aspirations of his people. As Manang becomes

a tourist spot, Gurung's brother thinks it is a good idea to tear down their ancestral house and build a snooker house in its place. But Gurung thinks the house is their Appa's legacy, and worth preserving. The brothers' ideas of home have diverged.

"With a camera in hand, I am trying to rediscover my relationship with this place, with my past, navigating ideas of home and belonging tied to Manang," he says. "Maybe home for me is no longer just a place, but this search for identity, memory and connection."



Life and Struggle of Garment Workers
Taslima Akhter (Bangladesh)

This project focuses on the millions of workers who leave their villages and move into crowded worker barracks in the cities of Bangladesh, in search of a better life.



Between Us, a Thread
Ahmed Alaqra (Ramallah)

A quiet gesture between photographers, image-makers, and those who hold memory like a fragile light. Palestinian, Arab, scattered — yet orbiting the same wound.

First week schedule (selected)

- Friday, 14 November**
Bhandarkhal Garden, Patan Museum, 5:30 -7:30pm
Festival Opening + Award of Excellence
- Saturday, 15 November**
Yala Maya Kendra, Patan Dhoka
3-4pm
Demounting Louis Agassiz – Artistic Renegotiation of Archive, Memory & Place. Talk by Sasha Huber (moderated by Diwas Raja Khatri)
- 4:30-6pm
Witness or Accomplice: Photography, Human Rights and the Question of Freedom. Talk by Prof. Siona O' Connell (moderated by NayanTara Gurung Kakshapati)
- Sunday, 16 November**
Yala Maya Kendra
July, Unfinished. Jaheen Faruque Amin in conversation with Sabnam Lama, 3- 4pm
- When The World is Blind – Images by Palestinians. Ahmed Alaqra in conversation with yasmine eid-sabbagh, 4- 6pm
- Manga Hiti, 7-8pm
Slideshow – Who Does The River Belong To?
- Monday, 17 November**
Yala Maya Kendra, 3- 4pm
Memory is an Inaccurate Place: Dialogues Across Time, Territories, and Histories. Isadora Romero in conversation with Tanvi Mishra



Possible and Imaginary Lives
yasmine eid-sabbagh / Rozenn Quére

An exhibition, based on family photographs and taped interviews, tells the story of four strong and feisty Palestinian-Lebanese sisters, exiled to the four corners of the globe.



Humo, Semilla, Raíz
Isadora Romero (Ecuador)

An alternate look into environmental issues through the prism of possibility, instead of catastrophic consequence is what this exhibition brings. Romero's visual research engages with how the loss of ancestral memory and Indigenous knowledge resulting from colonisation, forced displacement, and racism is causing seeds to disappear at an alarming rate.



Martyrs, Saints & Sellouts
Siona O'Connell (South Africa)

Comprised of photographs by Benny Gool, Zubeida Vallie and Adil Bradlow, documenting apartheid South Africa, this exhibition presents a vivid narrative of violence, loss and injuries that continue to reverberate under the rhetoric of the post apartheid landscape.

- 4:30-6pm
Third Camera – a Film Series: Ernest Cole: Lost and Found Dir. Raoul Peck
2024 | 1h 46m | English
- Tuesday, 18 November**
Yala Maya Kendra
Sustaining Art Ecosystems That Resist and Nurture – Part 1
Paola Farran in conversation with Jessica Lim, 3- 4pm
- Sustaining Art Ecosystems That Resist and Nurture – Part 2
Chelsea Chua in conversation with Tif Ng, 4:30-6pm
- Khapinchhen, Patan
A Photographer's Fifty-Year Journey in Nepal. A Slideshow and Talk with Kevin Bubriski, 7-7:30pm
- PhotoKTM Bhoé, 7:30-9:30pm
Rs1,800 (early bird), Rs2,000 (door sale)
- Wednesday, 19 November**
Yala Maya Kendra
3- 4pm
Sustaining Art Ecosystems That Resist and Nurture – Part 3
Andrea Thal in conversation with Diwas Raja Khatri
- 4:30-6pm
We must refuse silence! Samir Eskanda, Shahidul Alam, and Tabara Korka Ndiaye in conversation with yasmine eid-sabbagh
- Thursday, 20 November**
Nepal Art Council, 4- 6pm
Walk-thru at NAC with Enuma Rai, Jyoti Shrestha, Karma Tshering Gurung, Manoj Bohara, Manjit Lama, Rejin Purja, Sujata Khadka, Sushila Bishwakarma



Digitising the savant calligrapher

Janakavi Durga Lal Shrestha's handwriting is now a font



SUBURBAN TALES
Pratibha Tuladhar

In 2004, Durga Lal Shrestha asked me to translate 223 little poems from Newa into English. They were each written as sestet—terse in their form but heavy in imagery and sentiment. The novice translator in me struggled to find the best way to convey his poetry in English—but the process became a tour as I discovered my mother tongue anew. The highlight, however, was Shrestha's handwriting.

His calligraphy is immaculate. He had given me photocopies from the notebook he had written the poems in and each page looked as though they were freshly out of the press. The letters bore a consistency, unswayed by the emotions of his poetry.

Someone else had been similarly besotted by his writing. "I met him 25 years ago in the UK when he was the chief guest at a Mha Puja event organised by Pasa Pucha," recalls Ojesh Singh, writer and engineer. "We were roommates. I noticed he couldn't stop writing."

Shrestha, an octogenarian now, was a teacher at Kanya Mandir School for many years, where his writing was admired by colleagues



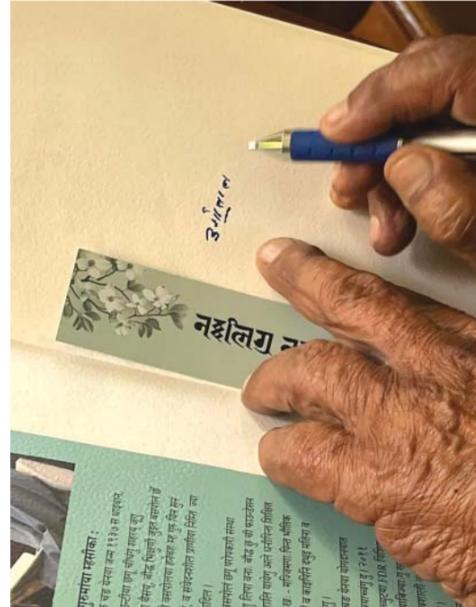
फूलको आँखामा

फूलको आँखामा फूली संसार
कौडाको आँखामा कौडी संसार,
भुक्तिन्छ है छाया बस्तुअन्सार
कौडाको आँखामा कौडी संसार

चित्त बुद्ध होस्, मेरो बोली बुद्ध होस्
मेरो पैतालाले कीरे नमरोस्
राम्रो आँखामा खुदछ राम्रो संसार
कौडाको आँखामा कौडी संसार

टहटह जुन देखु कालो रातीमा
जीवन संगीत सुनु, म सुल्खा पातीमा
सङ्गो मनमा खुदछ है सङ्गो संसार
कौडाको आँखामा कौडी संसार

दुर्गालाल श्रेष्ठ



and students. Known as Janakavi or People's Poet, a title bestowed on him by the Nepal Bhasha Parishad, Shrestha is also the recipient of the Jagadamba Shree Puraskar for his contribution to literature.

"He would write on anything he could lay his hands on. On tissue paper, envelopes, cigarette boxes. It struck me how neat and tidy his writing was," says Singh. "The structure and size were perfectly in sync—and as an aspiring graphic designer then, I fell in love with his writing. Later, whenever I read his books, I thought it would be nice to read them in his writing."

After sitting with the notion of turning Shrestha's writing into a digital font for years, in 2024, he reached out to a small group of people who he thought might be allies.

"It was during Ojesh Ji's book launch that we met and talked about the possibility of turning Durga Lal Shrestha's writing into font," recalls Ananda Kumar Maharjan, who has designed the Durga Lal Shrestha font. Maharjan is affiliated with Callijatra, an organisation promoting Newa calligraphy.

For Singh, the desire to

immortalise the poet's handwriting was also about preserving the writing of a language and literature leader and activist. He also drew into the conversation Shrestha's son Suman, who has been an integral part of the process.

The others involved were journalist Arbindra Man Singh, who had been scanning Shrestha's writing for the book Hastakshar, a collection of poems printed in the author's handwriting. Singh helped in bringing together the scans, based on which Maharjan picked the best letter for each alphabet to create a complete set.

Maharjan then had to find a prototype for each alphabet based on the scans. He traced the letters on Illustrator and copied them to a MAC software called Glyphs where he had to enter each letter, using a traditional Devanagari keyboard instead of Unicode.

"I had to be very careful to keep it accurate. Conjunctions need attention," says Maharjan who has designed this font in three different variations that users can play with. "There are half letters, saint letters, ligatures and open type features to pay attention to, this is more advanced than the fonts I've created in the past."

Handwriting is deeply intimate and in this day and age of tech, becoming lost. I no longer know what the writing of those close to me look like. I no longer know how you press the pen between our fingers or how you tilt it against the paper or how you pause to write periods or how the nib makes a perfect tiny orb before you drag it just so, to turn it into a comma. The familiarity of the nuances of someone's writing is lost on us.

A set of six books by poet Durga Lal Shrestha was launched on 31 October. One of them, entitled, Kawa, is typeset in the Durga Lal Shrestha Font. The font will be made available to the public after the books have been released.

Suburban Tales is a monthly column in Nepali Times based on real people in Pratibha's life.




Tiago.ev 2025

Made to

MOVE YOU



Per Day EMI
Rs. 622

*Daily EMI based on 50% down payment & 7-year financing

T&C apply.

SIPRADI TRADING PVT. LTD.
THAPATHALI - 015350643, 9801013469 | RADHE RADHE - 015914771, 9802345443



Scan for Test Drive

SIPRADI