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VOL 8 • ISSUE 1 • NOVEMBER 2019 • RS 100

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IN TOURISM  
IN 2020**

**DOING  
BUSINESS  
2019  
IS THE  
PROGRESS  
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THE SILVER  
MOUNTAIN**

**SAMIR THAPA**

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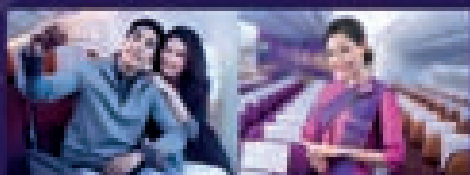




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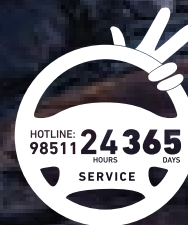
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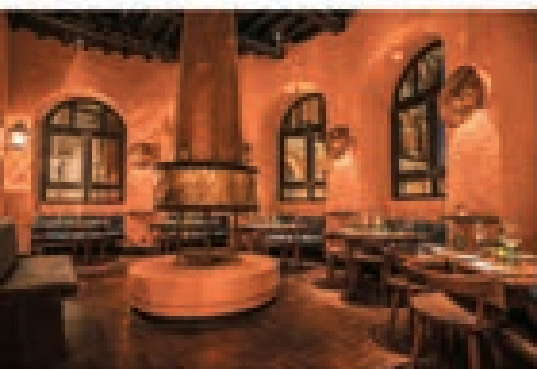
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Is the entrepreneurship dream oversold, I question myself. With colleges introducing degrees in entrepreneurship, government encouraging young entrepreneurship as an answer to unemployment and economic woes, and every other young person sold on the idea of becoming a CEO or his own boss, I really wonder if you can engineer success without the proper understanding of what true entrepreneurship entails.

Every young start up believes that they have an idea that will scale. Every young entrepreneur believes that their idea is a real value creating business. Yet so many of them fail. Almost 80% within the first two years fold up. Frustrated you first blame the system, the environment, the policy and then seek validation that maybe the market was too premature for your idea. And therein begins a vicious cycle of chasing success without real insight into what reaches you there.

I love the optimism. I really do. I also applaud the confidence. But I would also like young people to understand that real entrepreneurs are driven by long term value creation and that there are no quick fixes in the business world. It's as much a science as it is a deep running passion that requires you to rise after every fall, to take risks, to wear your heart on your sleeve, to think on your feet and to dream but with your feet planted firmly on the soil. Entrepreneurship also means people skills first and foremost. It's also a journey of lifelong learning, inspired creativity, ability to adapt, risk taking and failures, and the obsession to succeed... do we all have it, can it be learned, I am not quite certain.

The current glorification of entrepreneurship is unhealthy and unreal. It does not prepare the next generation of entrepreneurs for the realities of their undertaking. It is almost comparable to a young student acquiring a degree that he does not know what he'll do with but knows that he must have one to be considered anybody in this world.

I believe in entrepreneurship and have enormous respect for the people who create and contribute but is this the only route, I don't think so. I think you can be entrepreneurial even when you are working for someone and in fact when you do that, you may be more true to your real talents and create better value for the work world.

Rather than everyone jumping in hoping to have a business idea that will catch the light and make you millions, it may be better to allow young people to understand and value what makes them who they really are and to hone their strengths and use it to pursue endeavours that are closer to their hearts.

This may well mean that the rest of us shift focus on how we perceive success and actually put into practice the true meaning of dignity of labour.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charu Chadha'.

Charu Chadha  
editor

## BIZ INDICATORS

FOREX MARKET	25.10.2019	25.09.2018	Year ago
USD	113.32	113.32	116.75
GBP	146.13	141.27	150.74
Chinese Renminbi (Yuan)	16.02	15.94	16.82
Indian Rupee (INR 100)	160.00	160.00	160.00
Euro	126.11	124.60	133.10
Australian Dollar	-	-	-
TOURISM	2019(Sep)	2018(Sep)	%Change
Tourist arrivals from India	61,256	51,256	19.51%
Tourist arrivals from Other Countries	58,925	49,582	18.84%
<b>Total arrivals (by air only)</b>	<b>63,256</b>	<b>45,256</b>	<b>39.77%</b>
GOVERNMENT SECURITIES	Highest	Lowest	Weighted Avg.
Discount rate of T-bill (Subject to latest issuance as on 2076/02/20)			
Treasury bills (28 days)	-	-	-
Treasury bills (91 days)	4.000	3.940	3.986
Treasury bills (182 days)	4.740	4.150	4.499
Treasury bills (364 days)	4.700	4.320	4.555
PRICE INDICES	Sep19/20(p)	Sep18/19(p)	Sep17/18(p)
National Consumer Price Index (base year 2014/15 = 100)	131.67	124.03	119.41

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**editorial assistant editor**  
ujeena rana  
**writers**  
ankita jain  
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All editorial enquiries should be sent to  
charu@media9.com.np

All advertising enquiries should be sent to  
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## IN THE LEAD

SAMIR THAPA  
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN & FOUNDER PRINCIPAL  
SILVER MOUNTAIN SCHOOL OF HOTEL  
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AS A LEADER YOU SHOULD BE VERY  
CONSCIOUS OF HOW YOU CAN GROW AS  
A PERSON BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T GROW,  
YOU CAN'T INSPIRE GROWTH IN OTHERS.

Santoshi Rana  
Founder, Bihani Social Ventures

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**MAN ON THE  
SILVER MOUNTAIN**

samir thapa  
Executive Chairman & Founder Principal  
Silver Mountain School of Hotel  
Management

**IN THE LEAD**

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**"THE JOBSEEKER'S PROFILE SHOULD  
BE LIKE A BROCHURE OR PACKAGE  
OF ANY PRODUCT WHERE COMPLETE  
INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRODUCT  
IS MENTIONED. HOW YOU EXPRESS  
YOURSELF IS VITAL"**

Shailendra Raj Giri  
Founder and Managing Director of  
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# MAN ON THE SILVER MOUNTAIN

## SAMIR THAPA

Executive Chairman & Founder Principal  
Silver Mountain School of Hotel Management

*Text by Ujeena Rana*

Samir Thapa has his name associated with many firsts: the first to introduce an international fastfood joint – Wimpy - in Nepal; the first entrepreneur in his family; the first to run a private hotel management school in Nepal; the first to do a Masters in Hospitality Management in Nepal; the first Certified Hospitality Educator in Nepal.

### A Room with a Character

Office cabins say a lot about their occupants. Some cabins offer “just moved in” feel even when it has seen many seasons, some are messy with office supplies, phone, files wrestling for space on the table, while there are others which boast a character. Samir Thapa’s cabin falls in the last category.

Ozzy Osbourne’s autobiography ‘*I am Ozzy*’ stares at you from the coffee table typifying Thapa’s love for music; the only organism in the aquarium is a 17-year-old turtle which claims the entire tank as its territory; Chirag Bangdel’s ‘*Geet Gatha*’ paintings exude colour and vibrancy to the room; the multitude of photographs offer testimony to a good life lived; the souvenirs and collectibles are conversation starters, and books attest that their keeper harbours an inquisitive mind.

### Accidental Entrepreneur

Samir Thapa’s autobiography, if he ever decides to write one, should carry the title - The Accidental Entrepreneur. Thapa had plans to become a doctor and ended up becoming a risk-taker, challenge acceptor and opportunity identifier in the hospitality sector.

While in high school in Bangalore, he was at a concert when Thapa came across a guy with a thick medical book in his hand. Amidst hard rock metal echoing through the St. John’s Medical College ground and attendees’ head-banging, the gentleman had a different agenda. “Who on earth attends a concert with Plan B of burying his nose into the pages of a book if he does not like the numbers being played?” Thapa quizzes. But this particular medical student’s mindset troubled Thapa’s impressionable mind and he tossed the idea of becoming a doctor into the winds.

On returning from Bangalore, his attention was drawn to a

different profession. At hotels and restaurants, he found himself pulled by the striking demeanor of hoteliers. He was intrigued. “Only after I had entered the hospitality industry did I learn that all is not glitz and glamour,” he laughs.

His father, Sashi Bahadur Thapa - an engineer and bureaucrat - thought that the hospitality sector would suit his son’s personality best. “Also, tourism can never be an outdated business in a country like ours,” he shares. His father suggested that he attend hospitality school in Switzerland. After studying in one of the best schools in the world in Switzerland previously called Alpina Institute and now part of Hotel Institute Montreux, he went to the United States to further his studies. Meanwhile, he had also gained a handful of work experiences.

On return, he landed a job at Radisson Hotel Kathmandu as the Food and Beverage

head. “We were one of the first employees when the hotel was established in Nepal,” informs Thapa. But like in most industries back in those days, hotels were populated with foreigners in the white collar jobs. This upset him. But the last nail in the coffin came in the form of a sad realisation when during the hiring process for Radisson in 1997, out of 3000 plus applicants for 300 plus vacancies, only 10 were hospitality graduates. This dearth of educated hospitality professionals distressed him and little did he know that the idea of opening a hospitality school had already taken seed in his mind.

Nepal Academy of Tourism and Hotel Management (NATHM), which was then called HMTTC, was only a vocational skills provider at that time. It started its Bachelor’s degree in 1999; while Silver Mountain was established in 2001.

### The Namesake

Ask any writer and they will tell you that interviews start to get interesting when the interviewee spills stories, anecdotes, facts not shared elsewhere. That is their loot for the day!

Samir Thapa has been interviewed multiple times across multiple mediums therefore not much has remained unsaid in the media. However, the story behind naming his management school is a fresh one for many.

It goes without saying that Thapa is a music lover. The walls in Silver Mountain are adorned with the pictures of The Doors, Led Zeplin and Ozzy Osbourne attesting to the fact that beneath the astute businessman rests the soul of a heavy metal and rock music fan. Thapa does not have a new-age artist in his favourite list. He still listens to good old music.

In 1992 when he was studying in Switzerland, he attended a Rainbow concert. Little did he know that the spotlight would fall on him that day. The band's frontman, Ronnie James Dio, asked if anyone in the crowd was from Nepal. "I was drunk and did not hear a thing. But my friends asked me to raise my hand. I did but had no clue why I was even raising my hand. Anyway, he tells the crowd that the next song which they were about to play was written when the band was trekking in the Everest region and therefore, he dedicated the song to me - a Nepali who comes from the land where the song was born. The song was "Man on the Silver Mountain". Years later when Thapa was racking his brain to come up with a suitable name for his management school, he recalled this life event and thus a namesake was born.

### The Beginning

In 1997, Thapa was doing his homework for the hospitality college, when he had a chance to open a Nepali

franchise of Wimpy, a British fast food chain. He considers Wimpy as a milestone in his career as "The networking that I built during that time serves me till date. When I came back to Nepal, I did not know the who's who of Kathmandu. My PR was close to non-existent. Wimpy became the hottest joint in Kathmandu. From commoners to the Crown Prince, everybody used to frequent the place. Everyone desired to see and be seen at Wimpy. The opening gathered a crowd which stood in a half kilometer queue," he reminisces.

Later logistic hassles proved difficult for the young team and the outlet was sold to a meat processing company. Thapa and his team had purchased the license for five years out of which they ran the franchise for a year.

While he was researching for the hospitality college, his professor in the United States connected him with the curriculum from American Hotel and Lodge Association, "which is the largest hospitality association in the world," he informs and adds, "they used to provide curriculum to all top-notch schools in the world. So, I took up the curriculum and set up the school here."

According to Thapa, they had tried to get a curriculum from a local university but "unfortunately our local universities did not offer a curriculum in the hospitality stream except for TU which also gave the affiliation to NATHM and that too only in 1999. So, we looked for a curriculum which was recognised internationally. Also, we opted for an international program. Later, in 2011, we changed the university and went with a British university. Now, Silver Mountain offers a British Bachelor's degree. Presently, we are affiliated with Queen Margaret University."

The reason for the switch from American to British University has to do with economics, he explains. "Our



**Silver Mountain has developed two features inside the campus which you don't find in other schools: one is the coffee cafe and the other is the wine lab.**

market is cost sensitive. We cannot afford huge amounts for international degrees in this country. Moreover, our paying capacity is unimpressive. American Universities have raised fees and charge a hefty amount which our students cannot afford to pay. So, we were bound to change the university," he informs and adds, "However, the present British university that we are associated with is the oldest university that offers a degree program in Nepal." The institution, now named, Queen Margaret University is more than 140 years old and was established as the Edinburgh School of Cookery in 1875. This was the first culinary school established in the UK opened for women. "This university is a member of Privy Council of Queen Elizabeth. There are 21 Universities in the UK which are members of the Privy Council and Queen Margaret University is one of them," he informs.

In 2001, when Silver Mountain was opened, the

country was immersed in political turmoil: the civil war and the Royal Massacre. Thapa narrates, "We stopped admission that year. And in 2002, we started operations with eight students. Now 19 years later, we are one of the largest hospitality schools in the country. We have more than 70 hotel management schools offering bachelor's degree in Nepal out of which six are opened by my faculty members and three by my students."

Silver Mountain is a family-based institution. His wife Rachana Thapa, sister Sandipa Basnet; and cousin Ava Shah are the core team members. All are hotel graduates and have work experience from different hotels in the country.

### Why Silver Mountain

One of the reasons people choose Silver Mountain is the placement offer: two internships during the four year course. The college sends its students to 84 hotels, all 5 stars spread across 17 countries. Recruitment happens right after the graduation where more than 11 properties from nine countries visit every year and perform in-house recruitment. "This year, our placement percentage reached 92. We don't entertain agents, no middlemen," Thapa underlines.

Also, Silver Mountain works closely with the local hotels, "We are part of Hotel Association Nepal (HAN). All the major hotels in the country have our students, some of whom have reached to the position of Directors. We are also the academic partner of Intercontinental Hotels Group (IHG) in the country. IHG has only 150 academic partners in the world and Silver Mountain is one of them. Our students can apply and get offer of employment from all IHG properties," he shares.

Besides, they have short term programs which emphasise on basic skills required in smaller properties like restaurants, bars and one and two star hotels. These







could be for six months, a year and could even be a departmental specialisation.

"We have around 1200 graduates from all the hotel management schools every year. But even then, most of them move abroad. One thing is that they are not getting the opportunities here because of the abysmal turnover. Probably, one hotel takes a maximum of 10 fresh graduates. Secondly, our industry has become heavily politicised that even graduates have to know someone in the union to land a job. Also, the money is less. Our graduates hardly make Rs. 30,000 as the starting salary. If they go abroad, the minimum salary offered is Rs. 80,000," he informs.

#### Spreading its Wings

"After the country has gone into federal structure, we have also begun to decentralise. To fulfill that objective, we have opted for two models: we have gone to Pokhara and Nepalgunj in partnership model since the last two years, and we have started our franchise schools in Dang and Nepalgunj. The plan is to spread our brand to all the provinces because we have noticed that 70% of our students are from outside the valley. If our brand is in their towns, they need not travel to Kathmandu and the living cost, which the out-of-the-valley students have to bear otherwise, will be substantially reduced," he shares. For a four year course, Silver Mountain charges Rs. eight lakhs.

Samir Thapa says, "Silver Mountain has developed two features inside the campus which you don't find in other schools: one is the coffee cafe and the other is the wine lab. Università del Caffè, illy cafe's University of Coffee, is the only coffee university in the world. They have branches in 32 locations in the world, we are the 28th branch opened. We opened that in 2017. We are the first one in the SAARC countries to have it. We are also expanding our coffee training



**Entrepreneurs are so fast; ahead of their time. But ineffective political system and policies act as speed breakers.**

to various parts of Nepal." The other feather in their cap is the addition of the only wine lab in the country which they built in 2013. Thapa argues that no one has got one yet. They bring wine from all over the world for the students to taste. The wine lab can also be utilised by the industry for their staff to be trained in varieties of wine and for them to partake in the wine tasting experience. The same is for the vendors. Even homemakers visit their wine lab to be educated on wine. Additionally, there are individuals who want to learn about wine and coffee as these have become part of our modern lifestyle.

Moreover, bakery, which is garnering all the hype in recent times, is another art that Silver Mountain is focusing on. The kitchens at Silver Mountain are an envy for many studying hospitality elsewhere.

#### Productive Failures

Thapa has experienced a fair share of failures during his entrepreneurial journey. He had opened Dhaba restaurant which

did not do well. He was also part of a chain of hotels called Heritage Group of Hotels. "The idea was ahead of its time. It is tragic that we could not run it for long." Also, he was involved with a flight magazine called "On Time Magazine" which listed flight schedules of domestic and international airlines.

The beauty of making mistakes is the lessons learnt from them. "From my failures, I learnt to not jump into ideas just because they look attractive; sustainability factor needs to be weighed, and an idea needs to be introduced at the right time," he shares.

#### Entrepreneurship

Sixty percent of our population is comprised of youths. By early 30s, one decides their future path. Jobs are hard to find. Migration becomes a necessity. Entrepreneurship may hold the key.

"I always promote the notion of 'Entrepreneurship with innovation'. We need to check for duplication of ideas," he tells. However, he opines that instead of labour drain, the country should worry about intellectual drain.

According to Thapa, unlike labour drain, intellectual drain has no certainty of return. These educated and skilled manpower is saleable everywhere abroad. "That's why we need to have lots of innovation. Whatever accelerator programs happening are not enough. And startups are happening only in the cities. There are loads of ideas but all these do not see the light of the day. Government should introduce multiple programs to provide access to finance to these youths so that they can create industries," he states.

Thapa was one of the founders of the Nepalese Young Entrepreneurs' Forum (NYEF), which was established as the youth wing of FNCCI. NYEF is now a separate entity.

"Entrepreneurs are so fast; ahead of their time. But ineffective political system and policies act as speed breakers. That is the biggest challenge for entrepreneurs. If the policies facilitate initiatives by entrepreneurs, if there is support from the government, these ideas will take the form of industries in a short span of time," believes Thapa.

#### The Years to Follow

Thapa is just 45 years old. It is premature to ask anything even remotely related to retirement to someone who is in his mid-40s, heading a recognised education institute, contributing to the industry and the society from multiple fronts, and making expansion plans and chasing dreams. However, it is not that Thapa had not toyed with the idea till the question was posed to him. Apparently, he has been contemplating on the matter. "I want to retire in my 50s." It did not take him long to answer. "I want to dedicate my time for the conservation of wildlife. Earlier, my family indulged in hunting. Moreover, I want to have an office in a kindergarten school. I don't want to get involved in the daily functioning of the school, but just have my office there so that I can go there sometimes and listen to the toddlers, converse with them, and be amidst purity and innocence."

One needs to retire at the right time since businesses cannot thrive if the same leader and the team head it for decades. Newer ideas need to be introduced and new leadership needs to take charge otherwise the team's pace will slow down. "In 5 to 10 years, the core members should be in the advisory board rather than get involved in the everyday operations of Silver Mountain," he opines. **B**



# DOING BUSINESS 2019 IS THE PROGRESS FOR REAL?

*Text by B360 Correspondent*

**N**epal makes significant progress in Doing Business 2019 as it has been ranked 94th position from 110 last year among 190 economies worldwide. The country moved up by 16 spots in the Doing Business Index of 2020 and succeeded in entering the group of first half of countries with better business environment. The Ease of Doing Business Report has been published every year by the World Bank Group since 2003. This index is taken as a serious reference by the investors before they make investment decisions abroad.

“Improvement in the Doing Business will definitely boost investor confidence but the majority of the indicators out

of ten which represent the whole process of business are poor when compared to the overall ranking,” said Rameshwore Khanal, former Finance Secretary, “Some of the indicators that are critical for attracting investment are not only poor but have even worsened when compared to the previous year such as starting business, property registration and paying taxes.”

The Ease of Doing Business Report is prepared based on the perception survey of the private sector based on ten indicators related to the different processes of the business cycle: starting a business; dealing with construction permits; getting electricity; registering property; getting credit;

protecting minority investors; paying taxes; trading across the borders; enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency (exit).

Nepal has made significant progress in two indicators: getting credit and trading across borders which played a significant role in improving the overall ranking of the country. Credit expansion of the country was improved as the country has developed Credit Information Bureau (CIB) as an effective organisation. The CIB provides information of borrowers to banks and financial institutions or lenders. It has minimised credit risk or loan default rate, multiple financing and misuse of credit. CIB’s effective role has also helped expand access to credit.

All 28 commercial banks are listed with CIB to receive information of borrowers prior to issuing loan. The information includes the borrower’s capacity for loan repayment, credit history, existing loans, etc. Likewise, 11 national-level development banks, 20 regional development bank, 26 finance companies and 88 microfinance institutions are registered with CIB. Under the getting credit index, Nepal is at 37th position among 190 economies.

Similarly, the country ranked 60th under cross border trade facilitation index. Access to credit and trade facilitation are the most competitive indices among the total aforementioned 10 indices. Operation of the Integrated



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Check Post (ICP) in Birgunj has played a critical role to improve score in trade facilitation. The ICP came into operation from April 2018. According to the Ease of Doing Business Report, Nepal has reduced the time and cost of export and import by opening the ICP Birgunj at the Nepal-India border which caters to 60% of Nepal's foreign trade. After operation of ICP, the time to import border compliances was reduced from 58 to 11 hours, while time to export border compliance was cut down from 30 to 11 hours. Along with operation of ICP, the government has also eased construction permit of godowns (warehouses) which has reflected in the slight improvement of another index.

The report, however, has said that the country made starting a business more difficult by introducing an online employee registration with in-person follow-up for social security. Former Secretary Khanal has said that entry or starting business, taxation and property registration are critical for investment where Nepal's performance was observed to be poor in 2019. "When an investor comes to invest in Nepal, it takes years for him to acquire land and get permission to construct the structure for setting up an industry," Khanal also opined.

## Nepal's Global Ranking since last few years

2015- 94
2016- 99
2017- 107
2018- 105
2019- 110
2020- 94

(Source: World Bank)

Out of the ten indicators being used to gauge the performance in the report, Nepal has improved in five, two are stable and three have further worsened. In South Asian economies, Nepal ranked in the third position after India and Bhutan.

To improve Doing Business Index the government needs to address multiple issues, some are regulatory and some are procedural issues, according to Mahesh Bhattarai, Under Secretary at the Office of the Prime Minister and Council of Ministers.

"The government needs to amend Company Act, Secured Transaction Act, Public Procurement Act, Financial Bills and Building Codes to address the issues where we are lagging behind in Ease of Doing Business," Bhattarai said adding, "Commercial Bench in district courts are also been sought to expedite cases related to business." He further shared that duplication of taxation must be resolved. However, former Secretary Khanal

has said that it is not only the issue of double taxation, the government has started customs valuation based on the reference value which has been considered a regressive move from the already practiced GATT valuation system along with customs modernisation. In recent years, the valuation system adopted by the government caused multiple hassles at the customs point in early clearance of goods.

**"Making tax payment systems simplified through the use of digital technology is in the offing. Once we go digital, paper work hassles will be reduced. We want to make most of the government system faceless in the near future. If we are able to do all these things by May 2020, we will further improve our ranking next year"**

**Dr. Yubaraj Khatiwada,**  
Finance Minister



Doing Business Report 2020 ranks Nepal at 94th position that makes Nepal among the first half of the

countries having better business environment. It is a significant progress and we are encouraged to do much better in subsequent times. We have already started improvements in various sectors which largely determine how the environment for doing business will be dictated towards improvement. We are open to suggestions from the private sector and stakeholders in drafting the regulation, developing procedures and enforcement of issues. We know legislation is never enough. Any legislation if not properly followed by regulation and procedures will not work properly. The real test of the pudding is in its eating; the private sector should feel the ease in doing business, otherwise whatever laws and procedures we simplify will not make much sense.

We must admit that when we were discussing the whole gamut of federalism, the first worry was cost of doing business because of tax burden, decision-making processes, regulations and others. In the second year of fiscal federalism, we have achieved a significant score in the Doing Business report. It means we have been successful in making the transition as short as possible so far as fiscal federalisation is concerned. In this regard, we must appreciate the efforts made by our parliamentarians who played encouraging role for the enactment of laws. We were able to bring dozens of laws within one year; it is not a simple thing to achieve. Countries have taken years and years to discuss tax policies, tax enforcement mechanisms, budget release process, resource sharing process, among others. We've done most of these in a year's time. There are still some issues of double taxation and over taxation in some cases, but these are exceptional cases. On average, we have done much better. That is an encouragement to further successfully implement fiscal federalism.

There will not be any problem in taxation and firm

## Comparative Status

Indicators	Overall DB 2020	Score DB 2020	Score DB 2019	Difference (%)
Overall	94	63.2	59.7	3.5
Starting Business	135	81.7	82.1	0.4
Dealing with Construction Permits	107	67.3	57.9	9.4
Getting Electricity	135	60.9	58.3	2.6
Registering Property	97	63.6	64.7	1.1
Getting Credit	37	75	50	25
Protecting Minority investors	79	58	58	-
Paying Taxes	175	47.1	52.7	5.6
Trading Across the Borders	60	85.1	80.4	4.7
Enforcing Contracts	151	46	45.3	0.7
Resolving Insolvency	87	47.2	47.2	-

Source: Doing Business Report 2019 & 2020, World Bank Group



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administration from next year. In some of the cases, property registration and property right issues have held us behind. We are committed to make the processes easier. Similarly, we have to protect the properties that are intangible in nature. We have to enact intellectual property law and amend company act and bring regulation for it. We also have to amend bankruptcy law and simplify the process of exit. The exit of any company must be made as easy as the entry.

Some of the things that are related to the private sector but not necessarily reflected to the Doing Business index is infrastructure. When we do not have the proper infrastructure, it will increase the cost of doing business. We have to improve the quality of roads, end transportation syndication or there will be no competition among service providers. We must look beyond to facilitate the private sector like introducing Integrated Check Posts (ICPs). We have one ICP in Birgunj. We will be having one more in this fiscal in Biratnagar. We are equally concerned about completing the Bhairahawa ICP and Nepalgunj as early as possible to facilitate trade. Similar would be in revenue measures. We want to do away with all the discretionary power in taxation to control corruption. The Fiscal Procedure and Accountability Act endorsed by the parliament

would also apply to several other activities. In the coming years, every person in authority who has got some kind of responsibility and discretionary power must be accountable to the people, legal system and broader development of the community with which we are working. Making tax payment systems simplified through the use of digital technology is in the offing. Once we go digital, paper work hassles will be reduced. We want to make most of the government system faceless in the near future. If we are able to do all these things by May 2020, we will further improve our ranking next year.

**“Contrary to the government’s promise of ‘One Stop Service Centre’, they are introducing additional windows, which increases the cost and time of doing business which erodes efficiency and competitiveness.”**

## Shekhar Golchha

Senior Vice President, FNCCI

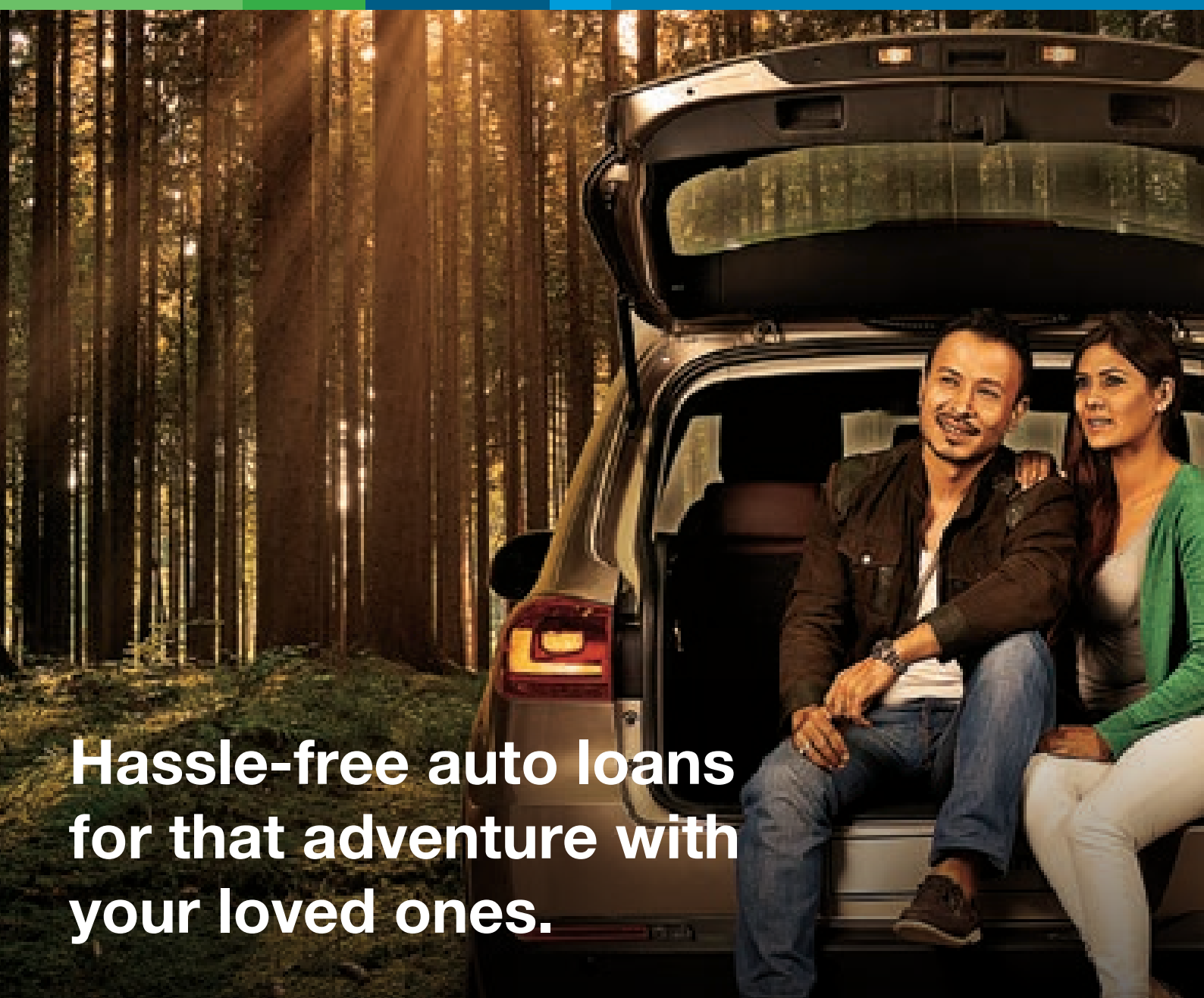


Nepal has achieved significant progress in the Ease of Doing Business report which is good news for the private sector. We hope that the government will gradually resolve other hassles that incur cost of doing business and eroding the competitiveness of the private sector. Though we are excited about the improved business climate and the government’s announcement of country rating – and these are critical to bring in investment – yet the small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have been facing challenges in getting credit from banks and financial institutions (BFIs). The private sector has experienced cordial relations between employer and employee after the enactment of the new labour act. However, the provision of social security scheme introduced recently increases the cost of business. We would like to request the

government to address the practical issues of the social security scheme.

The government should look into the issues raised by the private sector. In tax dispute, the taxpayer is compelled to deposit 50% of the disputed amount as guarantee if the firm wants to file a court case in tax dispute with the tax administration. This provision has been hindering the private sector to file court cases which is legal right guaranteed by the Constitution in tax disputes. The private sector expects clarity in laws and consultation with the private sector while formulating laws and regulations. Similarly, the government should know that the enforcement of the rules and regulation without groundwork and capacity enhancement of the regulatory institutions creates trouble for the business community. For example, business firms were allowed to pay consultancy charges while hiring foreign consultant after taking approval from the Nepal Rastra Bank but the government recently changed the rule and urged businesses to take approval from the Department of Industry without developing the standard operating procedure (SOP) and developing the capacity of the concerned institution. As a result, many applications are pending since long. It is contrary to the government’s promise of ‘One Stop Service Centre’ as they are introducing additional windows, which increases the cost and time that erodes efficiency and competitiveness. **B**





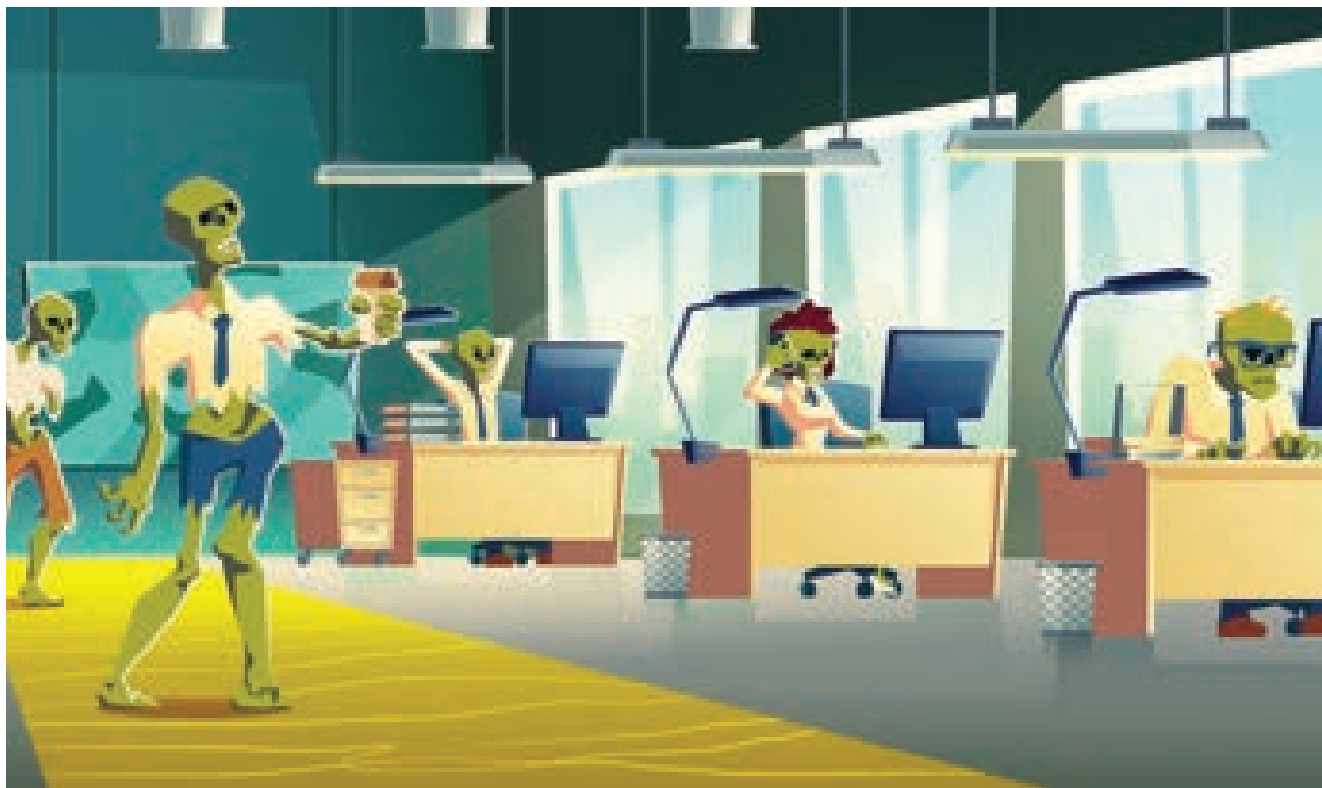
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# 3 WAYS TO AVOID THE ZOMBIE WORKPLACE

Don't let "average" employment turn you into a mindless follower.



**DR. LAURA WILLIAMS** TEACHES COMMUNICATION STRATEGY TO UNDERGRADUATES AND EXECUTIVES. SHE IS A PASSIONATE ADVOCATE FOR CRITICAL THINKING, INDIVIDUAL LIBERTIES, AND THE OXFORD COMMA.

Hollywood created zombies who destroy and devour anything in their path. But did you know that originally, zombies were reincarnated slave-labourers?

West African slaves in Haiti developed a

folklore of zombies to describe their enslavement on sugar plantations. Trapped inside bodies someone else controlled, enslaved Africans faced a lifetime of brutal, mindless drudgery with little hope of escape. Even death, they feared, would not save them from forced labour. They were doomed.

But Haitian slaves also rallied around voodoo magic when they successfully revolted,

overthrew their masters, and freed 50,000 slaves. The rituals of their homeland were adapted to give workers a sense of purpose and unity. Priests invoked African spirits who could lead the enslaved, Moses-style, to liberation.

Today's workplace shares (mercifully) little with those plantations of the past, but employees are still prone to feeling lifeless and trapped. Here are some tips for avoiding the virus.

## Want to Escape Zombie Employment?

The working zombie is easy to spot in modern corporate life. The walking dead trudge into our elevators each morning and populate our meetings. They are uninspired, half-asleep, just going through the motions and waiting for the weekend. Gallup polling indicates just one in three employees is even "somewhat engaged" in their current jobs: the rest are at risk of

**4 The working zombie is easy to spot in modern corporate life. The walking dead trudge into our elevators each morning and populate our meetings. They are uninspired, half-asleep, just going through the motions and waiting for the weekend.**

becoming office zombies.

Terrified by the thought of joining this zombie horde? There's good news: you don't have to. Here are three alternatives:

## Collaborative Companies

The future of work is flexible, customisable, and collaborative. If you want to work for someone else, seek out a company that helps employees find purposeful engagement. Culture matters, and surrounding yourself with high-achievers challenges you to be your best. Opportunities to grow in your role - and to be treated like an individual instead of a cog-set the new generation of workplaces apart.

Zombie organisations - lifeless husks that chew up anonymous workers and discard the bones - will suck out your soul and the meaning of your work. You won't need a shotgun to ward off the horde, just enough awareness to resist becoming one of them.



### Adventurous Entrepreneurship

Like the rugged survivor in the post-zombie-apocalypse tales, entrepreneurs create new realities for themselves and others. They resist conforming and invent new ways to meet those needs. Some hoard scarce resources (think *Mad Max*) but others create unbelievable abundance. Crucially, you won't have to wait to be handed your dream job if you invent it yourself. Data show more members of GenZ are delaying or skipping college to start a business debt-free. Many are taking advantage of online skill development, a new generation of e-learning tools.

Entrepreneurs can learn a lot from the zombie genre: survival is not for the fainthearted, always be on your guard, learn your opponents' weaknesses, and don't try to go it alone. Reinvent yourself through creativity and purpose.

### Heroic Hustles

The digital economy empowers motivated individuals, not mindless slaves, by letting you generate income on your own terms. Set yourself free from 9-to-5 drudgery through freelancing, ride-sharing, peer-to-peer lending, personal services, and other short-term gigs. Pay is less dependable when you are working for yourself, but lifestyle factors can make up for the loss: a flexible schedule and a casual dress code are just the start. In-demand skills command \$80-100 per hour, but the midpoint is closer to \$20 per hour. Read reviews by other gig workers before signing up with any service, and don't forget to keep records for taxes.

While those creeping creatures of conformity wait to have their wage slips stamped, you can write your own ticket. Dodge the walking dead of heavy regulation and decaying monopolies and your own determination can set you free from the daily grind.

**4 Don't let  
"average"  
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Fight for your  
individuality -  
and take your  
own risks - if  
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out alive.**

### Refuse to Give In

The dead-eyed, slack-jawed masses of zombie workers should terrify us more than any horror film. What movies won't tell you is this: each of us is a "carrier" of the zombie contagion. In every movie, there's one character who gets bitten but tries to blend in among the living. There's no suspenseful moment of bite-and-transform. It's subtle, and silent. If you're not careful, zombie-brain can sneak up on you. If you let complacency creep in, stop challenging yourself to excel, the hollowness can overtake you. When you settle for a routine instead of building your skills and planning for what's next, you surrender by default. Adventure over.

Don't let "average" employment turn you into a mindless follower. Fight for your individuality - and take your own risks - if you want to get out alive. **B**

Source: [fee.org /](http://fee.org/)

dekhapadhi.com



# NEW AIRPORTS NEED OF THE HOUR

Text by Ankita Jain

**While the government has various plans in the pipeline for the aviation industry, the ground reality is that 16 already existing domestic airports have remained out of operation for several years turning them into grass fields.**

According to 'Civil Aviation Annual Report' published by the Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal, out of the 49 airports in the country 16 that have been shut down for more than a decade are Baitadi, Langtang, Bajhang, Manang (Humde), Darchula, Meghauli, Dhorpatan, Mahendranagar, Dolpa Masinechaur, Palungtar, Doti, Rolpa, Jiri, Syangboche, Kangel danda and Tikapur airports.

"These airports were constructed without proper research. Many of them were built in places which witness negligible tourist flow. Either the places should have some tourist attractions to serve the purpose or the locals should be rich enough to use air transport," says Ganesh Bahadur Chand, Deputy

Managing Director, Nepal Airlines Corporation.

As per CAAN, most domestic airports have suspended their services due to shortage of passengers. Some of the domestic airports were even closed right after the test flights were conducted with a number of them suspending operations after launching their services for a few months. Among these, four airports: Dang, Sanfebagar, Balewa, and Rajbiraj - resumed services in 2018 after assurance of traffic from the respective local governments. However, two of them - Balewa and Rajbiraj airports - have been shut down again due to lack of passengers.

"Despite these results, CAAN is constructing six new domestic airports at Arghakhanchi, Gulmi, Ilam, Kalikot, Kamal Bazar (Achham)

and Khiji Chandeswori (Okhaldhunga)," informs Chand. Likewise, the budget for the next fiscal year has allocated funds to conduct a feasibility study to construct a domestic airport in Surkhet. Budget has also been allocated to upgrade Biratnagar, Janakpur, Simara, Dang and Dhangadhi airports.

Among the four hub airports — Bhairahawa, Biratnagar, Nepalgunj, and Pokhara — the latter two are being upgraded to regional international airports, while the construction of Gautam Buddha International Airport (GBIA) is in its final phase. The airports are being constructed to minimise air traffic of the only international airport Tribhuvan International Airport (TIA). "Nijgadh airport will take another 10 years before

operation. Lumbini will start operating in 6-8 months and Pokhara will take a minimum of two years. Though Pokhara Airport won't affect Kathmandu airport because of its geographical constraints but after the full-fledged operation of GBIA, I believe 25-30% traffic will diversify from Kathmandu to Lumbini," says Raj Kumar Chhetri, former General Manager of TIA.

On the issue of the registration of TIA as the world's first boutique airport, Chhetri says, "This is a rumour which has spread across the nation. We aren't registering TIA as a boutique airport. Rather the PM will officially inaugurate TIA on January 1, 2020 when the renovation is completed." Defining a boutique airport, he shares, "We want TIA to reflect our culture





“We will be able to run TIA 24 hours by the end of this year. Similarly, we will evaluate the number of airlines which will be operating after midnight to 6am. If even 8-10 flights operate during that hour, we will continue operating 24 hours.”

**Raj Kumar Chhetri**  
Former General Manager,  
TIA

better now in comparison to the earlier days. New tiles have been placed, wood carving is being carried out and the parking space seems less congested now,” says Ayush Shakya, a frequent flyer. However, a lot of the most basic requirements such as clean toilets, adequate lighting and seating areas, proper ventilation, way finding signages, and staff efficiency are yet to be addressed. Understandably, these issues, repeatedly, make it to the social media feed of the disgruntled travellers.

To make TIA aesthetically appealing, the management is also working on making the airport an advertisement-free zone. “There are a few pending due to previous contracts. However, we have successfully removed 80% of the advertisements and the rest will also be removed as early as possible,” Chhetri shares. With no advertisement, the TIA management loses Rs five crores in revenue but Chhetri had introduced a new way to promote brands at the airport during his tenure. “We planned advertisements on digital bill boards which keeps changing after certain seconds,” he shares.



“Only 10 lakh tourists come here yearly despite our capacity to host a larger number. Take a look at Tibet, it serves more than two crore tourists annually.”

**Prakash Sedhain**  
Operational Director,  
Manang Air

The CAAN report has claimed that the country’s aviation sector showed marked improvement in 2018 compared to previous years. “Every year, we forecast a growth of 7%. Though this year we are witnessing a little downfall in the numbers, we are expecting an increase in footfall in the next three months,” Chhetri informs.

“More than 40,000 tourists visit Nepal for Everest expedition. But this year we are yet to witness those numbers. One of the main reasons is the weather conditions because of which Lukla is often shut for weeks,” says Captain Prakash Sedhain, Operational Director, Manang Air. Sedhain has been working in rescue operations for Everest Base Camp, Annapurna Camp and other areas for the past five years with Manang Air. He says global warming has hugely impacted tourist schedules.

As per the report, there are currently 28 paved (blacktop) airports, while the runways of six are being paved, nine are yet unpaved airports in operation. Similarly, a total of seven airports — Tribhuvan International Airport, Biratnagar, Chandragadi, Dhangadhi, GBIA, Nepalgunj, and Simara have night operation facilities. “Before I joined the TIA, the airport



“I have no idea about the boutique concept. Placing a canopy doesn’t signify the boutique experience.”

**Ganesh Bahadur Chand**  
Deputy Managing Director,  
Nepal Airlines Corporation

was functioning 18 hours only. During my tenure, we added three more hours and made it 21 hours,” Chhetri informs. He further shared that there are plans to operate TIA 24 hours from December 31, 2019. “We will be able to run TIA 24 hours by the end of this year. Similarly, we will evaluate the number of airlines which will be operating after midnight to 6am. If even 8-10 flights operate during that hour, we will continue operating 24 hours,” he shares.

Talking about Nepal’s tourism potential and capacity, Sedhain says, “Only 10 lakh tourists come here yearly despite our capacity to host a larger number. Take a look at Tibet, it serves more than two crore tourists annually.”

Chhetri also reveals that the civil aviation generates Rs 700 crores in profit annually out of TIA inclusive of parking charges. “These charges are governed by civil aviation and are quite reasonable in comparison to fuel and ground handling charges,” he says. According to sources, NAC charges USD 3000 per flight for ground handling and generates Rs 300 crore every year only out of ground handling services at TIA. **B**

and identity in the simplest way possible complemented by modern technologies.” Contrarily Chand says, “I have no idea about the boutique concept. Placing a canopy doesn’t signify the boutique experience.”

The TIA project has been divided into different phases for which the government has allocated around Rs 300 million. According to Chhetri, the major work includes installation of canopy which will cost approximately Rs 16 crores; interior revamping at both the international and domestic terminals at an estimated cost of Rs 14 crores; an eight feet Buddha statue installation with base at Rs 70 lakhs; building a garden and more. “Except for the canopy structure, everything will be completed within five months. The canopy installation will be ready by mid-2020,” he informs.

The developments at TIA have not gone unnoticed by travellers. “TIA looks much

## The Trade Imbalance between Nepal and India

Nepal shares a long-standing trade history with India. Diplomatic relations between the two countries was established on 17 June 1947. Since then, Nepal and India have shown unwavering commitment towards helping each other for their economic growth and establishing peaceful co-existence. India surrounds the landlocked country of Nepal from three directions which undoubtedly leads Nepal to lean heavily onto India more than the other way around.

India accounts for more than half of Nepal's total trade making it the country's largest trade partner. Records of the past five fiscal years show that more than 60% of total imports of Nepal is from India and more than 55% of total export is made to India. In regards to trade balance, Nepal has the highest deficiency with India i.e. higher than 62% of the total trade deficit. The major commodities imported from India include petroleum products, transport equipment, M.S. billet, medicines and hot roll sheets; whereas, commodities exported are polyester yarn, jute products (hessian, sacking and twines), cardamom, zinc sheets and textile.

### Top Imported Products from India

(Total eight products of 2018/19)

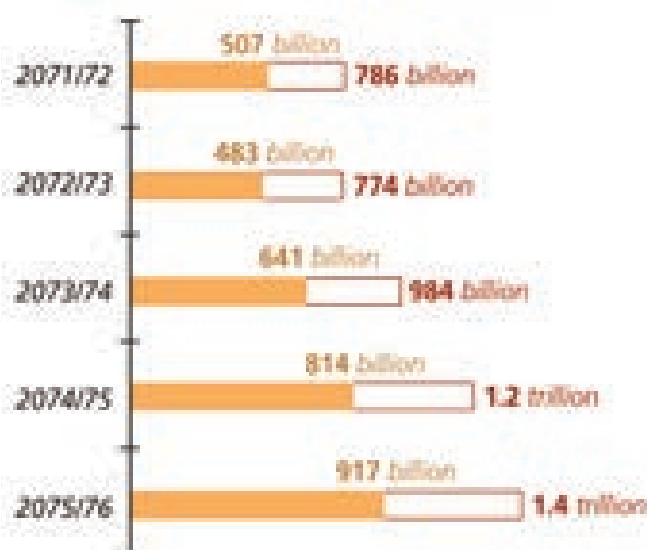
Rs. in billion



Looking at the data of trade with India, trade deficit has escalated over the past five fiscal years. In the FY 2071/72 B.S., imports from India was noted at Rs. 507 billion which reached Rs. 917 billion by FY 2075/76 B.S. On the other hand, export of goods to India did not remain at the same speed of imports. Goods worth Rs. 55 billion was exported in FY 2071/72 B.S., which suddenly fell in the following year to Rs. 39 billion then increased only to Rs. 62 billion in FY 2075/76 B.S. Therefore, trade deficit with India was recorded at Rs. 451 billion in FY 2071/72 B.S., whereas by FY 2075/76 B.S. the amount almost doubled to Rs. 855 million. This shows the increasing dependency of Nepal on India over the years.

### Total Import of Nepal

■ Total Import ■ Import from India



Trade imbalance between these two countries has increased owing to the fact that the amount of Nepal's imports has exceeded the value of its export to India. This indicates that the production within the country cannot suffice the demands of the population. This can also be suggestive of the fact that the purchasing power of the Nepali population has increased making them long for higher quality goods. Although this imbalance can reduce the threat of inflation and raises the standard of living of the people, Nepal cannot ignore its negative impact on the country's economy. Since the import is higher than export, local production might start declining, consequently decreasing opportunities for employment.

Source: Department of Customs, Nepal Rastra Bank

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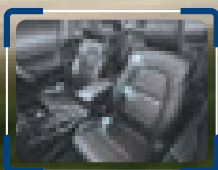
GL MT 2WD Petrol  
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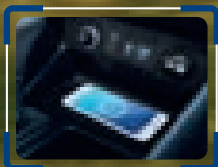
6-Airbag  
System



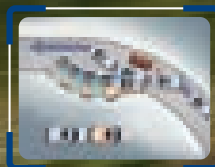
Panoramic  
Sunroof



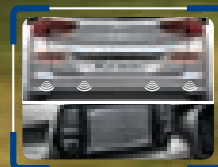
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9857039279, Dang: 082-563634, 9857835935, 9802930134, Dhangadi: 091-524492, 9802540103,  
9802540105, Itahari: 025-587502, 9802736982, 9802736984, Nepalgunj: 081-550427, 9802546482,  
Pokhara: 061-537426, 9801201010, 9801240155

**Be open; don't always follow your own opinions; listen very well to what the market tells you; see what others do; be honest. And when you feel 'we are doing something wrong', don't put that under the carpet. Pride can work against you.**



**Michael Levisson**  
PUM Expert

Michael Levisson is from Amsterdam, Holland and has had an illustrious career in marketing, marketing communications and product development over four decades. He was also affiliated with Media College Amsterdam as a tutor and coach teaching marketing and concept development to students. In the past five years, he has been travelling the world to helping smaller companies in developing countries gain from his professional insight and expertise.

Levisson was in Nepal in September at the invitation of Media 9 as a PUM Expert. PUM Netherlands senior experts is a volunteer organisation committed to the sustainable development of small and medium-size enterprises in developing countries and emerging markets. They offer practical expertise within the most important sectors of the economy, giving primary attention to producers and consumers. PUM works with 2000 senior experts who share their knowledge on a one-on-one basis, either through short-term and repetitive advisory missions at the work floor, or through online coaching activities. PUM strategy involves a programme-based working method in order to realise more impact.

Excerpts of a conversation with Levisson:

**Could you tell us about your affiliation with PUM?**

The foundation is called PUM Netherlands Senior Experts and it was founded 40 years ago by the Dutch Employers' Union when the government decided it is better to send knowledge to



countries instead of money, the two joined forces. So now PUM is partly financed by the government. So people who travel, like me, they don't get paid, but the airfare and all the expenses around it is paid by the foundation.

**Does PUM have a certain profile of senior experts or can anyone enlist?**

They do all kinds of industries like tourism and hospitality, trade, textile, agriculture, technology, electronics, and have a rich inventory of senior experts.

**Why did you enlist with PUM?**

I heard about it just when I was retired. And I thought that it was such a brilliant idea, I thought that it's the right way to share knowledge and help other people develop.

**You have rich experience working in the branding and marketing sector; what do you consider is the importance of branding and marketing in today's world?**

Well what is most important when we talk about marketing is "What you want your brand to be?" and to understand what your brand could be, you have to start thinking very closely about your target group. To understand your target group is the most difficult part because a product or a brand can only become successful when they are relevant and honest to the target group. A brand has to be very clear about the kind of feeling it generates on people, or the kind of satisfaction people get, or the kind of health benefits consumers receive as a result of buying the product. Nothing else but just one thing. But it has to be true. So you have to be able to prove that by product benefits and if you can't do that, then your promise as a brand is wrong.

**Is there such a thing as underselling or overselling when it comes to promotion?**

Overselling is by shouting 'I am very good.' And people and advertisers shout 'We are the best'. Who decides who is the best is not you; that is the consumers. If you are really better, say 'I am better', then you can prove it. Don't say, 'the best' because that is for others

to decide.

And underselling is having too low price or when you sell too cheap. If you are really good, you can ask a price because when you are good but cheap, people don't believe that you are even good. They say 'how can something good can be so cheap?' It's very strange but that is how people act.

**In today's world, is it all about who promotes better or more?**

That is very difficult to say. There are a lot of advertisers who are so rich that they advertise so much that others don't get a chance. But what you see is the newcomers and small companies can be very clever on the internet that with little money they can still become big. While the other big ones, they squash the smaller ones because they have so much money.

**What sells: logic or emotion?**

Emotion is very important. But it depends on what kind of brand you are. If you take, say Nike shoes, that is only emotion. But emotion is very clear. 'We stand for being supportive and active' - that's the feeling. So if I wear Nike, I am looking after myself well. Of course, sometimes they say something about quality but mostly they don't. It's mostly emotion.

Now, about reason, well, you see very often in high profile, expensive things like say you need a new kitchen, then you have to think: What does it have to contain? Can I afford it? Do I need a dishwasher? Before you do that, you think far more than before you buy a pair of shoes.

**You have been in the advertising for more than 40 years, how has the landscape changed over the years?**

The media landscape has changed because there is the internet; especially in Europe you see television losing out to the internet. There is less and less TV advertising. And in the States also, I think. But creating advertising still has the same kind of thinking. Because first, you have to have a good concept, then you have to have very good execution. It's always been like that. Only now, you

don't execute for billboards or something like that but for small films on YouTube. But still, it has to look right. So, creativity is the same, the mediums are different.

**What do you think ads should communicate? Does the modality of communication have to differ or be adapted for different target segments?**

What ads should communicate is different per ad because as an advertiser you set objectives 'what do I want to achieve by the advertising' so you cannot generalise. It has to be different with different target groups. Because people change. So even for a very big, standard brand, every one or two years, you have to sit down and think very carefully 'how does my target group think?' because sometimes their opinions change, so then you have to change your advertising.

**Have you done that with any of the brands you have worked with?**

Yes, I have experienced that for big brands of Unilever that after a while became a bit old-fashioned and needed to be made modern again. And it can be very difficult because good brands have a certain feeling. For instance, I was working for Margarine brand which is a family brand. Mothers buy it because it is good for the kids. And they used the kind of advertising which became a bit outdated so we had to renew that without losing the feeling 'you are a good mother when you buy that'. And what was actually clever on Unilever's part was that they decided not to advertise on television for some years. And they only advertised in magazines in double pages. So we made beautiful photos and did not even use text. The ads featured healthy young kids in a modern way. But after sometime the brand went back to TV.

**Have you ever experienced friction with the advertiser in the course of ad making?**

Oh yes, big fights! That happens sometimes. But then, when you have a good working relationship with the client, you have a strong creative team and

the account director is there for you, things don't normally escalate.

It all depends on how well you can communicate together and if you can solve an issue. But sometimes, the issue does not get solved. For instance, when you work at a big agency, then the other team can poach the client because it does not work out with you.

**What are the factors that help enhance a company's brand value?**

That's a very difficult question. But I would say: Be open; don't always follow your own opinions; listen very well to what the market tells you; see what others do; be honest. And when you feel 'we are doing something wrong', don't put that under the carpet. Pride can work against you.

**Is there a commercial which you created that has stayed with you?**

One that never went on air and which was never produced. That was for Colgate Palmolive, years ago. Palmolive, the shampoo in our part of the world, is high quality for low price. So they don't advertise. And then we were asked to make a TV commercial for Europe. We were thinking 'now what does washing your hair mean?' When you hear people, when they have just washed their hair, they say 'I feel better'. Now what does that mean? And how can you present a general feeling of washing hair. So we thought Palmolive is cheap and good, so we have to give a general feeling and we thought of a commercial in British style with girls in a boarding school. These girls get woken up very early in the morning by a very terrible woman and they are set into the showers and they wash their hair and then they climb off the walls and escape to freedom. And we had a beautiful piece of music made over that with lyrics. And that was the period when Michael Jackson had released 'Billie Jean' and the director of that clip of 'Billie Jean' he was going to film our commercial. But the company said "We are afraid, we are not going to do it". **B**

# WHAT'S NEW IN TOURISM IN 2020



The Great Karnali Quest



Off-Road Nepal



Backstreet Academy



Gokyo Lake

**D**emand for regular tourism packages is long gone; today's travellers want to immerse themselves in the culture and lifestyle of the places they are visiting. Rightly, the Visit Nepal Year 2020 carries the tagline, 'lifetime experiences'. In this edition of B360, we identified a few tourism entrepreneurs and companies working to deliver on this promise.

## The Great Karnali Quest

The Great Karnali Quest is

set to be a world class event for rafting and kayaking enthusiasts and will have the participation of the world's best national teams and world-class athletes. Karnali River is considered to be one of the five best rivers in the world; the most pristine and free-flowing river of Nepal; and the rarest river in terms of geology, bio-diversity, ecology and culture. The event will be held from 25-30 November and will be the longest rafting race in the world covering a distance of 242 kms demonstrating to rafters a lifetime experience

along with discovery about the indigenous culture of the Karnali region.

On November 25, a grand puja will be held on the occasion of Maha Ekasathi at Dailekh and the five-day event will start from Dailekh and finish at Tikapur. At every camp, participants will encounter different cultures of the indigenous tribes of the Karnali region who will showcase their unique culture, food and hospitality. The event has also been included in the top lifetime experiences list for

the Visit Nepal 2020 tourism campaign.

This idea was germinated by Nepal River Conservation Trust. Different rafting organisations like Nepal Association of Rafting Agencies and Himalayan River Guide Association Nepal along with rafting companies and agencies will extend their hands for this event. "We will also be getting support from Karnali province and we want to talk to Sudurpashchim province and Province 5 as well because the Karnali River goes

through these two provinces as well. We want to include all the provinces as well as Government of Nepal, Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation, and Nepal Tourism Board so that we can work together as a team to make this event happen successfully,” Megh Ale, President, Nepal River Conservation Trust states.

#### **Off-Road Nepal**

Established in 2006, Off-Road Nepal, a sister company of Bikers Nepal, has been conducting off-road motorcycle tours based on customer preference for more than a decade. The company focuses on finding and taking their customers on new routes and trails with astounding scenic views and stunning surroundings so that they can feel the essence of Nepal while riding free like a bird on their motorcycles.

Off-Road Nepal offers tours ranging from a single day tour to eleven days, from exploring the outskirts of Kathmandu Valley (Chisapani-Nagarkot) to riding to some of the most challenging off-road trails of Nepal like Manang, Mustang and Upper-Mustang. The company operates these tours to promote adventure sports tourism in Nepal.

All riders are briefed about safety procedures, proper riding gear and techniques about group rides. They are also taught off-road skills to ride in such terrain. “Our tours bond the man and the machine; they

are always fun and priceless memories and strong friendship are formed with fellow bikers,” says Nikhil Thakuri, Business Development Manager, Bikers Nepal.

The tour company hosts both domestic and international tourists and individuals can use their own bike or hire it from Off-Road Nepal.

#### **Backstreet Academy**

Backstreet Academy is an online travel platform established in March 2014 offering handcrafted experiences to travellers. Jamon Mok, one of the three co-founders of the company, came up with the idea when he was learning the basics of wood mask carving from a Thamel based artisan during his visit to Kathmandu. He along with Anil and Akash Gurung started the company with Kathmandu as their first location. Today, the company has its programs spread across the eight South Asian countries and 40 cities including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Indonesia.

In Nepal, Backstreet Academy is working with over 50 hosts in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Popular programs being the secret food tour, wood carving workshop, Thangka painting class, monkey temple tour with a monk and Khukuri making workshop. Participants are actually in the workshop, kitchen or house of the hosts and are made to actively participate and not just observe. This helps to

draw attention to the customs of places, lifestyle of people, knowhow of the traditional values and skills, and connects people of different cultures through these experiences.

#### **Ice Hockey and Skating at Gokyo Lake**

The idea of playing ice hockey and skating at the Gokyo Lake was inspired by how winter sports can be introduced in the country as a tourism product. “We chose Gokyo Lakes because it is in the Everest region and freezes for 4-5 months every year,” says Dawa Sherpa on behalf of the Visit Nepal 2020 Secretariat. He adds, “When things are done for the first time, it needs to catch the attention of people. We thought of doing it in a place which is iconic and recognisable and Everest has had that global brand value.” The Secretariat has invited few lake skating experts in December to conduct feasibility and safety tests. In February 2020, the Secretariat will invite ice hockey players for an exhibition match.

“If this project is a success in one region, it can be replicated in other regions as well like Manang and Mustang,” says Sherpa. “Activities like snowshoeing and cross country skiing can also be promoted in the Western part of Nepal as heavy snow occurs in that region during winter.”

In the initial stages, only a few teams will play against each other because it's purely

a Visit Nepal project, not open for commercial tourism and the Secretariat isn't planning to make this project a global event right from the word go. It wants to ensure that the initial event is properly and safely conducted, find out if the lake is sustainable for organising ice hockey and skating events in the future, and wants to analyse the environmental impacts of such events. Local youths will also be participating and learning from this experience in the initial event. The kits for the local teams will be contributed by the sponsors.

“The idea of this project is that we want to teach the local community about running this sort of programme or events. They will see the commercial benefits from the initial stage and in the near future can run it by themselves,” states Sherpa. To promote this, the Secretariat has contacted a famous American lake skater and is also bringing an influencer from the ice skating world to Nepal who is a cinematographer for these type of events. “We are going very specifically into the ice skating world and are bringing in specialised journalists, v-loggers and influencers who will promote this event in their own sporting community,” highlights Sherpa. Besides this, the project-related Ministries are also heavily involved as is the Department of Wildlife and Forestry. **B**

**WWW.**



<http://www.b360nepal.com/>





# MARWARI SEWA SAMITI:

## Serving the valley for over 66 years

*Text by Ankita Jain*

**W**hat began in a two-room apartment to facilitate free homeopathy medicines, the Marwari Sewa Samiti is now a non-profit organisation with a strong history of 66 years of humanitarian work. "The organisation was initiated by nine Marwari businessmen, the father of Binod Chaudhary being one, in a rented space in Indra Chowk. It started with

serving the city with free homeopathy medicines in 1953," recalls Binod Kumar Sethia, General Secretary of the Marwari Sewa Samiti. After some years, the organisation shifted to Ranjana Galli, New Road. "The founding members collected funds from the Marwari community and built this building brick by brick," says Sethia.

To be self-sustained, the organisation built guestrooms

for lodging. Today, it has a total of 81 rooms (ac and non-ac) and charges between Rs 1100 -1700 per room. "The guest house serves as a major source of income which we channelise for our different initiatives," informs Arun Kumar Dokaniya, Secretary of the organisation. Besides, MSS also has 13 shutters on rental and a restaurant inside the premises. The money generated from these commercial aspects also

add to the fund. "Though we have leased out the restaurant, the board members monitor the quality of food and price. The organisation has invested Rs 30-35 lakhs on kitchen amenities alone," informs Sethia.

Currently, the Marwari Sewa Samiti runs various initiatives which include a homeopathy hospital, physiotherapy centre, bottled drinking water supply, ambulance, hearse, blood



9 लाख रुपये 90 लाख  
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1000

**Abstract**—The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of a 10-week, 1000 kcal energy deficit diet on the body composition and physical fitness of obese women. The study was a randomized, controlled trial. The subjects were 20 obese women who were randomly assigned to either a 1000 kcal energy deficit diet or a control diet. The subjects were monitored for 10 weeks. The results showed that the subjects on the 1000 kcal energy deficit diet lost significantly more weight and body fat than the subjects on the control diet. The subjects on the 1000 kcal energy deficit diet also showed significant improvements in physical fitness, including increased aerobic capacity and decreased body fat percentage. The results of this study suggest that a 1000 kcal energy deficit diet is an effective intervention for weight loss and improvement in physical fitness in obese women.

1

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Figure 1

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THE



2025

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一、**總論**。此篇論及一切事物之理，皆由心而生。心者，人之主宰，能思能慮，能動能靜。心之動靜，皆由外物之誘惑。心之主宰，能思能慮，能動能靜。心之動靜，皆由外物之誘惑。心之主宰，能思能慮，能動能靜。心之動靜，皆由外物之誘惑。

donation camps, cow shelter, basic requirement supply to the prisoners, scholarships and more. "All our services are free of cost. We never charge a penny to anyone," says Prem Kumar Agrawal, Secretary of MSS.

The homeopathy hospital has a team of 14 people and witnesses a footfall of 150 patients a day on average. The recent 10-bed physiotherapy centre was envisioned by Shrawan Kumar Agrawal, President of MSS. "We established the centre two years back and around 35-40 people benefit from this service

daily," shares Prem Agrawal. While the hospital works in two shifts: 7-9 am and 2-6 pm, the physiotherapy centre operates from 9 am-5 pm.

Marwari Sewa Samiti mainly serves the health sector and runs two ambulances with the initiative limited within the valley. Besides, they also own a hearse, a vehicle used for carrying the corpse to the cremation area. "We also perform cremation rituals of unclaimed dead bodies in the capital," Dokaniya elaborates.

Twice a week, MSS organises blood donation camps in Bhugol Park, New

Road. "We have set a record for collecting 5000 units so far," states Dokaniya.

Acknowledging prisoner rights, the organisation donates bedding and medicines at the central jail. "We receive a list of requirements from the jail every four months. The list comprises of mattresses, pillows, blankets, etc. We also supply medicines to the prisoners every month," explains Prem.

In the education sector, MSS provides scholarships to students from Nursery to Class 10. This year they have provided scholarship to 67 students worth Rs 35-40 lakhs. MSS also provides bottled

drinking water to events supporting social causes. Building a happy space for cows, the organisation has built a shelter in Dharke on the outskirts of Kathmandu. "We have bought 60 ropanis of land in Dharke and use the land as a cow shelter," states Dokaniya. MSS is now building a Krishna temple around the shelter.

The membership of the organisation is limited to the Marwari community and costs Rs 5,100 per head for a lifetime membership. "We only welcome people who genuinely want to serve the society," confirms Sethia. **B**



## "Marwari Sewa Samiti generates Rs 1.5 crores from the guest house, shutters and restaurant annually."

Shrawan Kumar Agrawal is the President of Marwari Sewa Samiti. Shrawan was elected in 2010 for three years and reelected for the position in 2016. It is under his leadership that projects like the cow shelter and physiotherapy centre have been launched. The organisation owns a Dharma Shala in Gaushala which provides artificial limbs to the needy. "These limbs are made using the latest technology and have a five-year guarantee," he states.

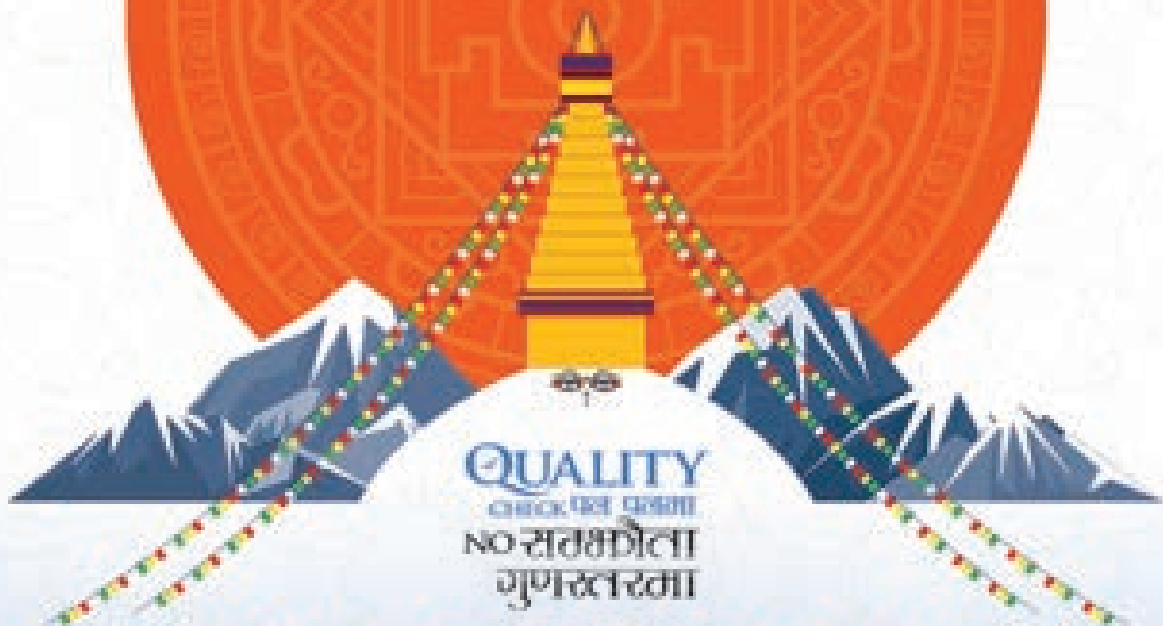
Informing about the total fund received from the organisation's guest house, shutters and restaurant, he says, "We generate Rs 1.5 crores from these rentals annually and if we lack a certain amount for any of the initiatives, we receive a donation from within our community."

MSS is open for donation from anyone, Agrawal clarifies, "Though we accept a donation from anyone, 99% of the funds are received from our community".

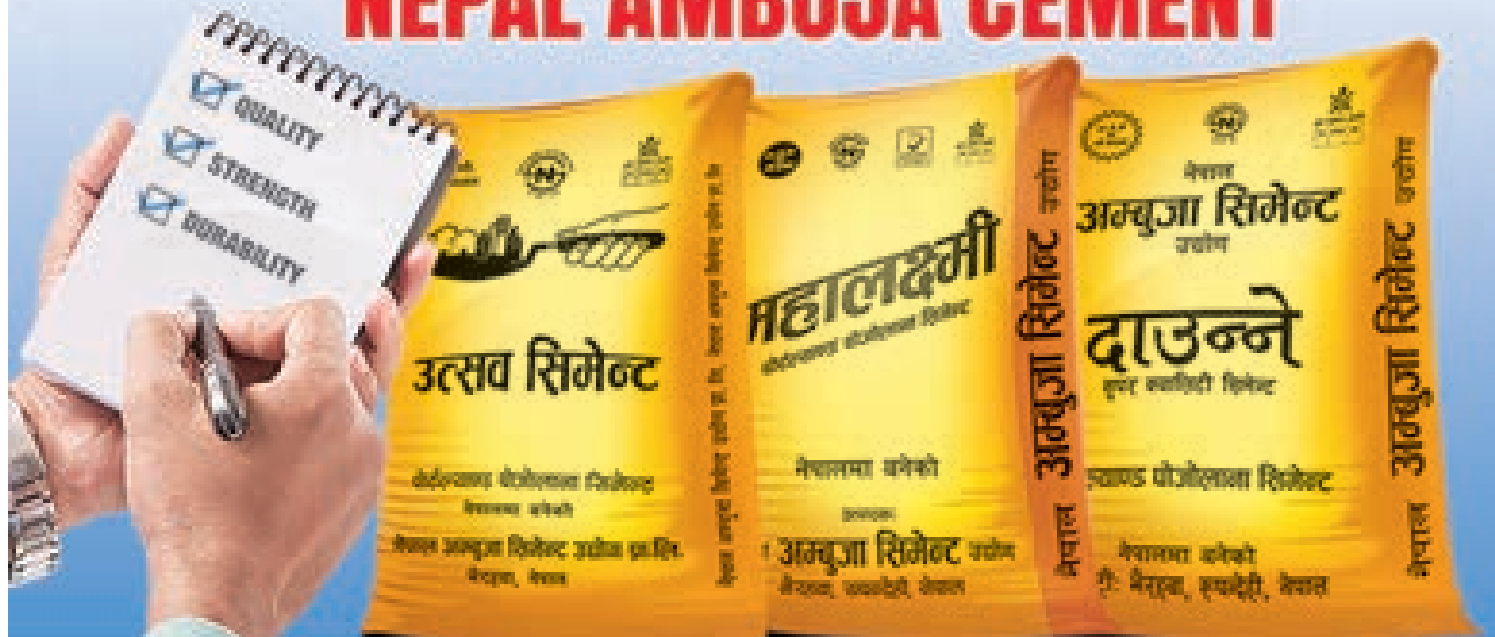
The organisation is currently building a dialysis centre with 30 machines in Gaushala Dharamshala. They have collaborated with the National Kidney Center for project supervision. According to NKC, the cost per patient will be Rs 3,000 out of which the government subsidises Rs 2,500 and the rest will be taken care of by the organisation. Further, MSS is spending Rs five crores only on the machines. "The entire project has been funded by several individuals of the Marwari community," he shares. The dialysis centre will start operating within the next five months. He makes it clear that although the entire executive board members of MSS are businessmen, the activities run by the organisation cannot be counted as Corporate Social Responsibility. "No member can associate the work performed here as a part of their CSR," he asserts.



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**SHAILENDRA RAJ GIRI**  
FOUNDER AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF MEROJOB.  
COM, REAL SOLUTIONS AND ROJGARI SERVICES

**“The jobseeker’s profile should be like a brochure or package of any product where complete information about the product is mentioned. How you express yourself is vital.”**

Shailendra Raj Giri is the Founder and Managing Director of merojob.com, one of Nepal’s most seamless online job portals and a leading career-management service provider. Before merojob.com, he started Real Solutions in 2002 through which the company introduced Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO). Along with these two companies, Giri also initiated Rojgari Services (Rojgari Pasal) in 2013 to link skilled and trained workers to different industries.

**Dibesh Dangol of B360** had a conversation with Giri on topics pertaining to work place nepotism, future of job search and placement processes, and emerging employment sectors. **Excerpts:**

**It’s been more than a decade since merojob.com entered the Nepali market. What has the journey been like?**

I started Real Solutions in a ‘let’s just do it and see what happens’ basis. But when I thought of starting merojob.com, I wanted to make it big and therefore made a five year business plan. My target was to get 5000 job-seekers registered in the first year, 10,000 in the second year and 40,000 within 5 years. I had also made plans regarding organisational structure and number of personnel. The target I had set for the initial year was achieved within a month. The team members were amazed to see such a positive outcome which boosted our confidence. After the second year, I scrapped the

five year plan because the five year target was achieved in a little over two years itself.

In 2018, we made a five year plan and have targeted to register 20 lakh job-seekers and one lakh employers into our system by 2023.

**How has job search landscape changed over the years? What is the future for job search and placement processes?**

Previously, people used to get employed through nepotism or corruption. Many people weren’t even satisfied with their job as they weren’t interested in that particular field and were involved in such jobs due to obligation. Now, the whole landscape is changing and people can apply for jobs that they are interested in or

have skills and knowledge about through offline or online mediums.

merojob.com has been very successful in terms of recruitment breakthrough and we have become a primary platform for jobseekers and employers. Jobseekers who have skills, knowledge and confidence in themselves can apply to various vacancies listed in merojob.com without going to other people to beg for jobs. The process is also very simple and anyone with access to the internet and gadget can easily apply for jobs via merojob.com. The best part is that they don’t have to pay a single penny because we have applied self-service model for jobseekers. They just need to create a jobseeker account and



fill up a form which will be their CV at merojob.com. There is a huge difference in keeping a CV at home and posting it on merojob.com. We give job alerts to suitable jobseekers and provide 24-hour service making it easier for jobseekers to find suitable jobs. You never know when opportunity might knock on your door. Not only Nepalis, but people from other countries have also registered on our website.

The future is that we will track you down wherever you are. At merojob.com, we have already started working on AI enabled job offering process rather than job searching process. We will not just be offering best jobs for jobseekers but we will also be making sure to place people in the right jobs according to their capabilities. Your career will be our responsibility and we will not be charging you!

#### **What changes should be made in the education system to better prepare youth for the job market?**

I wasn't taught how to write a job application letter, prepare a CV, face job interviews and perform in internship programmes. This is the biggest debate that has been going on for a long time now and it's high time that this problem is resolved. I recently attended Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) India Annual Conference. While talking with people from various Indian universities, I found out that Indian universities have begun to educate students about such matters in their courses and extra-curriculum activities so that they can become work-ready according to their specialisation after graduation.

In the case of Nepal, because such activities haven't been conducted by colleges or included in university courses, merojob.com has been holding trainings and activities for students. We provide them theoretical and practical knowledge about facing interviews, making CV, applying

for jobs, first job experience and future employment scenarios. Also, we have been organising Placement Day in association with various colleges.

The main problem is that we have been able to conduct such activities on a small scale only. Colleges need to take ownership of such learning. A practical skill oriented education system should be introduced in Nepal. Right now, the system is totally knowledge oriented as access to the internet was very minimal in Nepal till a decade ago. This can't be an excuse anymore. Previously, the work was totally knowledge based but now if I want to know about anything, I can immediately learn from the internet. As for skills, I can't gain that immediately because it takes time to learn the skills and needs to be inbuilt into the education system which is why the education system needs to be skill embedded.

The future is going to be very vast and different and people have to become critical thinkers. The world is going to be ruled by AI in the future, but who makes and runs AI are people. Your brain should not just be course book oriented; youths have to be futuristic and should be able to adapt to whatever the future holds for us.

#### **What is the most effective way for jobseekers to search for jobs online?**

Register at merojob.com. In the website, freshers are asked about their career objectives whereas people who have been working are asked to fill a career summary. The reason we have included this feature in the website is because if a person knows and writes down what they want in their career, it will create a positive impression on the employer. Where you have studied is not important. It's true that organisations like banks and INGOs see jobseekers' percentage and educational qualifications, but there are also companies who value determination in

a candidate more than these factors.

The jobseeker's profile should be like a brochure or package of any product where complete information about the product is mentioned. How you express yourself is vital. Instead of just saying you have worked in this and that place, if you explain about your achievements, appreciations and promotions, the profile looks good and rich in content. Also, updating your resume on a timely basis is important because every resume gets expired after three months. If within three months nothing new has been updated, then that person is outdated.

#### **What's the recruitment process at merojob.com?**

merojob.com is just a vacancy advertisement platform for employers and vacancy information platform for jobseekers. When a jobseeker applies for a job, his/her application and profile is directly received by the employer. The employer can shortlist the applicants via the short-listing feature we provide to our clients. But if the employer wants us to conduct the whole recruitment process, we do that as well through Real Solutions. Majorly, banks and INGOs give us such responsibility because in such organisations scores of people apply and the applicants need to be shortlisted.

#### **What's the revenue model of merojob.com?**

We are a vacancy advertiser. There are different advertisement rates as per the advertisement section, number of jobs and time period. The information about out advertisement rates are mentioned in our website.

#### **What are the emerging work sectors in Nepal?**

IT is an emerging economical sector not just in Nepal but all over the world. IT sector is forever changing. Many international companies

have also outsourced their IT related operations to Nepal. Education and banking are also emerging sectors in Nepal. In terms of numbers, jobseekers are seen majorly applying for banks whereas jobs for programmers (IT sector) are gradually rising in Nepal.

#### **How do you view the involvement of Nepal Government in terms of developing employment opportunities and entrepreneurship?**

A huge difference can be seen between what the government promised earlier and what it is doing now. They lack implementation. The government should encourage and support young entrepreneurs and provide proper subsidies, support and policies to such entrepreneurs or companies who have a positive effect in the market instead of discouraging them. The relationship and support of countries like USA and China for their entrepreneurs is a major example of how a country can economically grow with the help of young entrepreneurs.

#### **Is merojob.com's operation valley centric or do you have presence in other parts of Nepal as well?**

Eighty percent of the vacancy advertisement is from employers based in Kathmandu valley and 20% is from other places of Nepal. Gradually, the percentage of outside valley employers is rising because local level businesses are flourishing due to the provincial and local government distribution. merojob.com is involved with those local level businesses as well in terms of management and flourishing the business.

Rojgari Pasal is our other company with presence in different provinces via our five branches and deals with blue collar jobs. Rojgari's mission is to bring back the labour force which is migrating to the Middle East. **B**



# MHEECHA: Backpack For Success

Text by Avant Shrestha

Backpack has become a vital accessory. Regardless of who you are, what you do, or where you live, a handbag or a backpack is an undisputed essential. Mheecha is a Nepali brand that designs and manufactures backpacks. The brand has managed to gain popularity in the market, specially among the youth.

The word 'backpack' first originated in the US during the 1910s. The German word 'rucksack' also basically translates as backpack. In Nepal however, Mheecha is a Newari word which basically means a pouch; also described as *thaili* or *thailo* that is predominantly used by women to keep their money. The *thaili* is a traditional design and known for its durability and functionality. Keeping the same principle in mind, Nishan Bajracharya and his partners established Mheecha in 2016.

Mheecha was designed and developed to be functional, durable and fashionable. Just a few years in the business, Mheecha has become synonymous with backpacks.

## Origins

Nishan Bajracharya, Pratik Shakya and Anish Bajracharya founded Mheecha in 2016. The concept came when they viewed the extensive use of backpacks and the demand for cool variations at affordable prices. Nishan, Co-Founder and CEO, recalls, "My cousin brother Pratik Shakya and I came up with the idea after seeing a market opportunity for cool backpacks. We approached a designer friend of ours, Anish Bajracharya, to take the lead on designs. He is currently the Creative Director of the company".



The founders decided to create their own brand with a true local identity for local sales and export.

## Why Mheecha

Mheecha's backpacks are for everyone, but it has gained appreciation mainly from consumers between 18-35 years old. Extra attention is paid to the design. Nishan explains, "We spend a lot of time in the design process. We make sure the product looks cool and appeals to our customers. Then we spend a lot of time thinking about cool ways to present and brand it. I think this is what gives us an edge in the market."

Currently, Mheecha has more than 50 unique, colorful, functional and durable bags in their collection. The Ghost

Pack at Rs. 3450, the Boulder Sack at Rs.2550 and the Relay Backpack at Rs. 3150 are the most popular ones.

## Challenges

According to Nishan, the backpack market in Nepal is dominated by imports. He estimates, "Maybe, 70-80% of the market is covered by imported generic and branded backpacks. The remaining 20-30% would be local brands like us."

The team pays special attention to planning, procedure and marketing. Starting a business is tough in the Nepali entrepreneurial ecosystem but the challenges also mean that there are opportunities. "I believe start-ups should have a better support framework

made available to them by policymakers. Investments, loan subsidies, tax breaks as incentives would help a start-up reach its potential to grow to a level where it can compete nationally or internationally with big businesses," explains Nishan.

## Future

Mheecha has a team of 24 people that includes management and manufacturing teams. Communication is the key to their workplace synergy. Nishan says, "We are just focused on the present. We are trying to build a good brand with good systems in place."

To buy or learn more visit: [www.mheecha.com](http://www.mheecha.com) **B**





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# CRUDE OIL

## Power Rankings & Beyond



**Vivek Risal** is associated with Mercantile Exchange Nepal Limited in the capacity of Manager in Research and Development Department. He can be contacted at [r&d@mexnepal.com](mailto:r&d@mexnepal.com)

Crude Oil is the mother of all commodities for a reason. The factor being that it responds in a definitive form on any driving factors from the major oil economies. We witnessed the rise of oil in the first half of the year due to the barrage of bullish elements. Oil took a beating in May declining in value after opening at \$73.56 per barrel. At the time of writing this article, the energy product is trading at \$55.64 per barrel after inclining to the highest price of \$76.87 per barrel.

Various economies around the world can be included as major drivers of crude oil. However, in March, CME Group formulated a list of the top five economies who matter the most for the price of crude oil. The original list in descending order was as follows:

- USA
- Russia
- Saudi Arabia
- Iran and Iraq (Tie)
- Venezuela

The list changed in late May as CME Group updated the names as per the top 5 economies influencing oil. The updated list was as follows:

- Iran

- Russia
- USA
- Saudi Arabia
- UAE

The current list in the power rankings for oil has a new name in the form of China. The updated power ranking list from CME Group is as below:

### Saudi Arabia

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has two important issues

Arabia retaliates against potential adversaries, it would become the largest contributor to drive the crude oil markets yet.

### Iran

While potential conflict is always on the scorecard, the US sanctions have crippled Iran leading to a greater fear of international sanctions if the global community confirms that

Iranian factor is just a minor proportion for the demand in general. The Chinese economy has been on a slowdown since the escalation of the Trade War with the US and if it continues to slow, their demand for energy will also decline.

### USA

The crude oil production from the US has been bracketed between 12.2 and 12.4 million barrels per day effectively coinciding with a perceived drop in the global demand of the energy product. The largest influence on crude oil prices will involve the type of support the nation will provide to Saudi Arabia in any retaliation against Iran or others. If the Middle East is confronted with a serious conflict and the US is directly involved, the crude oil volatility may spike even higher.

### Russia

The consensus is that the world's second-largest crude producer is considered an Iranian ally. So various questions arise. Will Russia pick a side? Will they make up the Saudi deficits in the market due to sustained and continuous damage? Analysts opine that Russia is a wildcard on the list as they could move up or down in a rapid manner depending on how they answer the aforementioned questions.

Rather than depicting the list quantitatively, the power ranking list is listed in a qualitative manner i.e. which factor could drive crude oil prices in a bullish or bearish trend. The names on the list will get updated in the ensuing days as we have just stepped into the weakest seasonal period for crude oil. **B**



that will inevitably influence the crude oil prices in the not too distant future invariably pushing them to the numero uno spot. Firstly, the country has to figure out how to inject more production back online as soon as possible. Some of the customer orders have already been delayed while few other traders have been asked to accept various grades of crude than originally agreed upon. Secondly, agreement on defense from attacks in the future and whether to retaliate against Iran or other economies who may be involved in the September 13 attack; if Saudi

Iran was behind the attacks on Saudi Arabia. For the Iranian government, managing this will be a significant challenge along with the added fact that the nation's crude oil production has declined to approximately 2.19 million barrels per day according to OPEC. In modern times, a larger proportion of the production ends up in China despite the effects of the sanctions imposed by the US.

### China

China is deemed to be a surprise on this list but they have been included because of their demand prowess. The



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# Samsung Galaxy Note 10+ A GREAT CHOICE

By Samrat Amatya

It has been quite a year for Samsung. The brand has launched various successful smartphone series. But among all the line ups that the Korean tech giant launched, there is one series that stands out. It is the critically acclaimed Galaxy Note series of smartphones. And this year, we got two Note devices including the Note 10+. Compared to its predecessor, this new phablet from Samsung has a lot of things to offer. But with a price tag of a whopping Rs 1,35,000 is the phone the best smartphone that money can buy? Well, let's find out!

## Multi-media Experience

The Samsung Galaxy Note 10+ is a multi-media wizard! It packs a large 6.8 inches Quad HD Dynamic AMOLED display with a 19:9 aspect ratio. The panel is almost bezel-less with a 91% screen-to-body ratio. This provides an excellent viewing experience for those Netflix binging sessions or those casual YouTube streaming. On the image quality front, the display produced some vivid images with exceptional details. No wonder, it is the best display on any smartphone right now.

## Photography Experience

The camera is one of the most important factors while choosing a smartphone. It probably is the only camera that we carry around with us daily. That being the case, a flagship phone should have the most capable set of cameras available in the market. Luckily, the Samsung Galaxy Note 10+ has not just one, not two, but four amazing rear cameras.

The quad set-up is made by an f/1.5-2.4 12MP wide, f/2.1 12MP telephoto, f/2.2

16MP ultra-wide, and a VGA Time of Flight (TOF) sensor. This combo makes for quite a photography experience. The four sensors work in harmony to produce some amazing pictures. Photos taken from the camera are breathtaking with great details, depth, and vibrancy. The low-light photography is also top-notch with details and exposure maintained even under challenging situations. The noise is comparatively low with an acceptable dynamic range.

Talking about the in-built features, the cameras on the Note 10+ has a slew of them including a dedicated Night Mode. The phone also gets the Live Focus and a new Live Focus Video mode. This is all thanks to the TOF sensor and the better-optimised camera software. Besides the better bokeh effects and depth perception, the phone also gets the ability to 3D scan. In theory, this will allow you to scan anything and print the object using a 3D printer.

## Day-to-day Experience

The Samsung Galaxy Note 10+ is a beast of a phone! The onboard Exynos 9825 SoC backed by a whopping 12GB of RAM keeps the phone smooth and lag-free.

Now let's talk about the most defining feature of the Note 10+, the S-Pen. This iteration of the stylus is better than ever. As usual, you can scribble on the phone with it and use it as a remote for your camera. But this time around, the S-Pen comes packed with a few neat tricks. You can now use it as a gesture-based input device. What that means is that you can use the S-Pen



to perform various actions using just gestures. One prime example of this is to slide the stylus left or right, pressing the button, to flip through photos in the gallery app. This trick seems cool but it is not that practical!

One of the strongest suits of the Note 10+ is its astronomical battery life. The onboard 4300mAh battery got me around 6-7 hours of battery life on a single charge. To be honest, this is the most I have got from a smartphone to date. Truly impressed! Casual users will get around two days of battery life out of the device. And the cherry on top is its 45W charging capability. The Note 10+ can completely juice up in about an hour. Sadly, to get this charging speed you have to buy an equivalent charger. That said, the 25W adapter that comes inside the box is no slouch either scaling a similar charge time.

## Software Experience

The Note 10+ runs One UI 1.5 based on Android 9.0 Pie. This iteration of Samsung's custom UI is smooth and lag-free. I also love the iconography and design of the UI. Samsung really has come a long way.

## Verdict

The Samsung Galaxy Note 10+ is one of the best phones money can buy right now. Although a bit pricey, the phone is worth it for the extra feature set it provides. It has one of the best displays, design, performance, cameras, and battery life. It is a productivity workhorse that packs an S-Pen and a lot of useful software tweaks. For anyone looking for a device for both work and play, the Galaxy Note 10+ is a great choice. **B**



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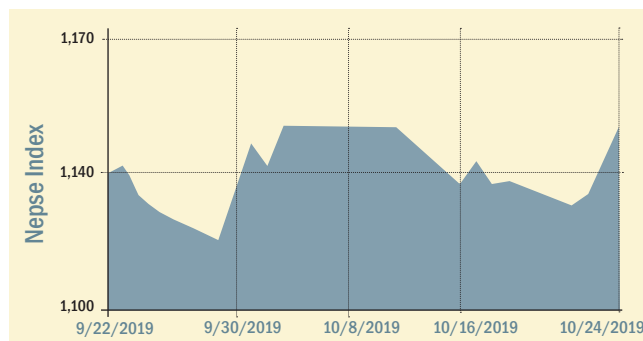
# beed's take on the market

During the review period of September 22 to October 24, 2019, the Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) index went down by 5.96 points (-0.52%) to close at 1149.34 points. Despite the dividend announcement from a number of key blue chip companies, the market experienced a downward spiral. This bearish trend during the review period can also be attributed to the festive-sentiment to some extent as the investors tend to sell shares to manage incremental expenses during the festival. However, the market's behaviour also showed a positive increment after a call from the Finance Minister, Yubaraj Khatiwada, to invest in stock exchange from fundraisers such as Employee Provident Fund (EPF) and Citizen Investment Trust (CIT). Nonetheless, the total market turnover during the period fell by 43.94% and stood at Rs 3.92 billion indicating weak investor confidence.

During the review period, contrary to the previous period, two of the sub-indices landed in the green zone and the rest of the eight sub-indices landed in the red zone. The Others sub-index (+1.67%) was the biggest gainer as share value of Nepal Telecom (+Rs 20) went up. Finance sub-index (+0.58%) was second in line with the increase in the share value of

City Express Finance (+Rs 8) and Best Finance (+Rs 6).

On the losing side, Hotels sub-index (-5.03%) faced the biggest drop as the share value of Oriental Hotels (-Rs 67) and Soaltee Hotel (-Rs 11) went down. Following this, Non-life insurance sub-index (-4.07%) saw a decrease in the share value of Rastriya Beema Company (-Rs 580) and Lumbini General (-Rs 41). Similarly, Manufacturing & Processing sub-index (-3.59%) also fell with the decrease in share value of Shivam Cement (-Rs 79) and Himalayan Distillery (-Rs 22). Microfinance sub-index (-0.89%) also went down with fall in the share value of NMB Microfinance (-Rs 510) and Samata Microfinance (-Rs 64). Likewise, Life insurance sub-index (-0.50%) followed suit with slump in the share value of National Life Insurance (-Rs 35). Hydropower sub-index (-0.46%) also shed value with the significant decrease in the share value of Chilime Hydropower (-NPR 16) and Ridi Hydropower Development (-Rs 10). Besides, Development bank sub-index (-0.26%) also witnessed a plunge in the share value of Kanchan Development Bank (-Rs 16). Commercial bank sub-index (-0.17%) also



Source: Nepal Stock Exchange Ltd.

went down marginally as share value of Sanima Bank (-Rs 37) and Siddhartha Bank (-Rs 33) decreased.

## News and Highlights

The Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE) directed broker companies to operationalise margin trading immediately after consent from Securities Exchange Board of Nepal (SEBON). Through margin trading, a platform will be created that will enable investors to borrow money from their brokers to buy shares. Up until now, 21 out of 50 broker companies have acquired the approval from NEPSE. Additionally, considering the ongoing disappointment among investors regarding commission rates, SEBON has formed a four-member panel to study the rationale of revising commission rates of broker companies. Also, SEBON has formed a committee to draft an act to regulate the funds of the secondary market.

On the public issue front, SEBON has approved Initial Public Offering (IPO) of Shiva Shree Hydropower to the general public worth Rs 335.11 million. SEBON has also added the IPOs of Terhathum Power worth Rs 120 million and CEDB Hydropower worth Rs 251.8 million to its pipeline. For Terhathum Power, NIBL Ace Capital has been appointed as

the issue manager and ICRA Nepal has assigned Grade 4+ rating indicating below-average fundamentals. Likewise, for the latter, Sunrise Capital has been appointed as the issue manager. For the primary issue of Nepal Re-insurance shares, RBB Merchant Banking has been appointed as the issue manager and IPO Grade 2 has been assigned by ICRA Nepal indicating above average fundamentals.

## Outlook

The poor volume in the market reflects the spillover impact of tightening liquidity in the banking sector, also the ongoing festive season has not helped as investors refrained from making new investments. Despite measures such as introduction of margin lending and attractive dividend declarations from listed companies, there has been no improvement in investor confidence level. The market is likely to continue with the current trend unless there is significant improvement in the market volume. **B**

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	Sept 22nd, 2019	Oct 25th, 2019	% Change
<b>NEPSE Index</b>	1,155.30	1,149.34	-0.52%
<b>Sub-Indices</b>			
<b>Commercial Bank</b>	1,058.42	1,056.67	-0.17%
<b>Development Bank</b>	1,567.01	1,562.97	-0.26%
<b>Hydropower</b>	962.19	957.78	-0.46%
<b>Finance</b>	573.00	576.30	0.58%
<b>Non-Life Insurance</b>	4,397.96	4,219.18	-4.07%
<b>Others</b>	638.74	649.40	1.67%
<b>Hotels</b>	1,910.53	1,814.34	-5.03%
<b>Microfinance</b>	1,487.44	1,474.16	-0.89%
<b>Life Insurance</b>	5,118.40	5,093.04	-0.50%
<b>Manufacturing &amp; Processing</b>	2,503.79	2,414.00	-3.59%

Source: Nepal Stock Exchange Ltd.



Nepatop ९

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# HYUNDAI VENUE

Text by Avant Shrestha

Hyundai has established itself in the Nepali auto market in almost every segment. With the launch of the new innovative Hyundai Venue by Laxmi Intercontinental, the sole authorised distributor for Hyundai automobiles in Nepal, the brand has added a strong representative in the compact SUV segment as well.

The Hyundai Venue aims to convey a functional design in a versatile and modern compact SUV. Referring to the daily congestion in the form of the city's traffic and sporadic potholes littered all around the road, Venue is built for the urban lifestyle and exhumes the potential to be a great entry level vehicle for many.

## Exteriors

The design of the Venue reveals small but confident body forms delivering a new interpretation of Hyundai's signature design language. The Hyundai Venue is not conventionally a very tall car but it has good ground clearance which is ideal for Nepal's urban landscape. The Venue measures 3995 mm in length, 1770mm in width and 1590 mm in height, while the wheelbase is 2500 mm.

From the exterior point of view, the closest comparison of the Venue can be its predecessor Hyundai Creta. In fact the latest Hyundai model looks like a tone down version of Creta; large enough to stamp your authority on the road but at the same time nimble enough to offer a smooth and comfortable drive.

In the exterior design, the first thing that strikes you is the front that has bold dark front grille that consists of a huge Hyundai logo separating the



chrome-lined mesh holding the two tier headlamps. The rear has an upright stance standard Hyundai stance but despite its similarities to other Hyundai vehicles, it looks very appealing.

Observing the side profile of the vehicle, the Venue presents a solid and full volume wheel arch and strong character line. This unique character line continues through to the tail lamps. And finally, the Venue cruises with striking 17-inch alloy wheels along with 15-inch standard wheels.

## Interiors

On the inside, the vehicle looks well thought out and neatly designed. The interior welcomes the driver and the passengers in dual-tone colours.

While there is nothing fancy about the looks of the steering wheel, the functionality is something else. The Venue's handling feels good, seamless in the turning and smooth for the occasional surprises in the form of potholes.

Overall, the interior features are comfortable with ample headspace. The back seat however could have done better with more leg-space.

The infotainment system is a standard unit we have

come to expect in modern vehicles. Venue comes with a high-set 8.0-inch touch screen between a pair of air con vents, a string of shortcut keys below it. Unfortunately, the Nepali market will not get the host of brilliant features that the international and the Indian market will have the pleasure of experiencing such as the Hyundai's Blue Link Connectivity Technology among other 33 features that span safety, security, vehicle management, remote access, location-based services, alert services, and AI-based language inputs.

## Engine & Drive

The new Hyundai Venue is available in three different variants. The 1.2L petrol engine Kappa Dual VVT Technology gives off the total displacement of 1197cc with the max power of 83 bhp and 115 Nm of torque. The 1.4L Diesel engine U2 CRDi with 90 bhp and 220 Nm of torque. And lastly, the more powerful 1.0L Turbo Petrol engines Kappa Dual VVT Technology offers max power of 120 bhp and 172 Nm of torque. The total displacement of 1.4L Diesel and 1.0L Turbo Petrol is 1396 and 998cc respectively.

As far as transmissions go, the 1.2 will be mated to a 5-speed manual, the 1.4 diesel will be mated to a 6-speed manual and the 1.0 turbo can be had in a 6-speed manual as well as a 7-speed dual clutch automatic gearbox.

Out on the road, the gearshift is sleek and effortless. The steering of the car is smooth on open roads and turns, and it feels seamless weaving around the traffic. The suspension is very good and the car feels stable on rough corners of the road.

The engine is very good in terms of responsiveness. If one is looking for a sudden burst of power and speed, this car will not make you happy but given the city traffic, it's the practicality and functionality of the Venue that scores. The vehicle gives the driver consistent delivery of power that continues to build up as one drives.

## Verdict

The Venue is priced at an affordable mid 30 lakhs that might increase up to 40 lakhs and decrease based on different variants of the vehicle. The vehicle comes in seven exciting colors such as: Stardust, Polar White, Typhoon Silver, Lava Orange, Denim Blue, Fiery Red and Deep Forest.

With a 45-liter fuel tank, the vehicle is very reliable, comfortable and is convenient with the added bonus of fuel economy. Under the hood, the Venue is made to exceed expectations and on the outside it is crafted to turn heads. **B**

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## Governments worldwide launched 294 reforms over the past year to make Doing Business easier



Governments of 115 economies around the world launched 294 reforms over the past year to make doing business easier for their domestic private sector, paving the way for more jobs, expanded commercial activity, and higher incomes for many, according to the World Bank Group's Doing Business 2020 study.

This latest edition of the study documents reforms implemented in 10 areas of business activity in 190 economies over a 12-month period ending May 1, 2019. Business-friendly environments are associated with lower levels of poverty, and improved regulatory efficiency can stimulate entrepreneurship, startups, innovation, access to credit, and investment. The study is the 17th in an annual series that evaluates regulations enhancing or constraining business activity for small and medium-size enterprises.

"Governments can foster market-oriented development and broad-based growth by creating rules that help businesses launch, hire, and expand," World Bank Group President David Malpass said. "Removing barriers facing entrepreneurs generates better jobs, more tax revenues, and higher incomes, all of which are necessary to reduce poverty and raise living standards."

It is important to note that Doing Business is not meant to be an investment guide, but rather a measurement of indicators of ease of doing business.

The ten economies where business climates improved the most were Saudi

Arabia, Jordan, Togo, Bahrain, Tajikistan, Pakistan, Kuwait, China, India, and Nigeria, the study found. China and Togo appear among the top ten for the second consecutive year, while India makes the list for the third consecutive year, indicating that business regulatory reform is a multi-year process. Bahrain implemented the highest number of reforms, improving in nine out of ten areas measured by the report. China and Saudi Arabia followed with eight reforms each.

The ten economies scoring the highest on the ease of doing business rankings were New Zealand, Singapore, Hong Kong SAR China, Denmark, Republic of Korea, United States, Georgia, United Kingdom, Norway, and Sweden. Top performers typically had online business incorporation processes, electronic tax filing platforms, and online procedures for property transfers.

At the same time, 26 economies took steps that posed new obstacles to business activity. Many of these increased the costs of doing business.

An entrepreneur's experience differs wildly in high- and low-performing economies. For example, it takes nearly six times as long, on average, to start a business in the economies ranked in the bottom 50 than in economies ranked in the top 20. Transferring property in the 20 top economies requires less than two weeks, compared to three months in the bottom 50. Obtaining an electricity connection in an average bottom-50 economy takes twice as long as in an average top-20 economy; the cost of such a connection is 44 times higher when expressed as a percent of income per capita.

The 10 areas measured in the report are: starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity, registering property, getting credit, protecting minority

investors, paying taxes, trading across borders, enforcing contracts, and resolving insolvency. One additional area, employing workers, is also measured but is not included in the rankings.

Starting a business, dealing with construction permits, getting electricity and paying taxes were the most active reform areas over this period. Reforms in dealing with construction permits and getting electricity have jumped in recent years. Many of the 37 economies, that made

construction permitting simpler, streamlined interactions with agencies for pre-approval and inspection. To connect businesses with the power grid more efficiently, 16 economies invested substantially in modernizing electrical infrastructure. One outcome: average global duration of power cuts fell more than 8% between 2017 and 2018.

Since its inception in 2003, more than 3,500 business reforms have been carried out in 186 of the 190 economies Doing Business monitors.

## Ninth NRNA Global Summit



The ninth Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) Global Conference kicked off in the capital on October 15. Inaugurating the three-day event, President Bidhya Devi Bhandari urged NRNs to inject investment into the country and support the government in achieving economic growth and prosperity. "The political transition has been completed and Nepal today is focusing on economic growth and development. In this context, Nepali diaspora should bring in foreign investment and technology into the country and support its development journey," said Bhandari. Similarly, President Bhandari also urged NRNs to invest in mega infrastructure projects and support the upcoming Visit Nepal 2020 tourism campaign of the government. "NRNs have an important role in country's development. They should explore the prospects of raising investment in tourism, infrastructure and agriculture sectors," she added.


Addressing the conference, Finance Minister Yubaraj Khatiwada implored NRNs to whole-heartedly invest in the infrastructure sector citing that business environment in Nepal has improved a lot compared to the past. Informing that the government is also committed to ensure business security to investors, Khatiwada urged NRNs to tap into the potential of infrastructure, mines, education, health, agriculture and hydropower sectors. "Business returns are comparatively higher in Nepal for investors. Similarly, the government is serious about addressing business-related concerns, including the double taxation issue," said Khatiwada. Similarly, he also asked NRNs to invest in the share market, as the government is in the last stage of allowing Nepali diaspora to invest in the secondary market.

The three-day event organised with the theme of 'Me, My NRNA and My Nepal' saw participation of more than 2,500 representatives from 51 countries. However, NRNA's founding president Upendra Mahato boycotted the NRNA conference this year citing increasing politics in the association.

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## Himalayan Capital Limited commences operations



Himalayan Capital Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary of Himalayan Bank, has formally commenced its operations from November 1. At the official program, Manoj Bahadur Shrestha, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Himalayan Bank Limited, inaugurated and formally announced the commencement of business operations. Himalayan Capital Limited has been established with a paid-up capital of Rs 20 crores and strives to provide the best merchant banking and investment banking services to its customers. Himalayan Capital Limited obtained its operating licence from Securities Board of Nepal on August 11. Himalayan Capital Limited will be providing a variety of Merchant Banking Services to its customers namely Issue Management, Share Registrar, Securities Underwriting, Portfolio Management, Corporate Advisory and DEMAT/DP Services.

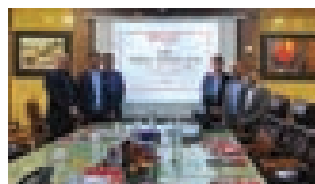
The inauguration ceremony was presided over by the BODs of Himalayan Bank Limited, Ashoke SJB Rana - CEO of Himalayan Bank Limited, BODs of Himalayan Capital Limited, General Managers and Senior Executive Team of Himalayan Bank Limited, officials from Himalayan Capital Limited, representatives from regulatory authorities, various organisations and members of the press.

Speaking at the ceremony, Shrestha applauded the major transformative changes observed in the scope and depth of the Nepali capital markets and ensured that the spirit of the movement would be carried forward by the capital focusing on providing the highest quality services to its valued customers.

Sushiel Joshi, Chairman of the boards of directors of Himalayan Capital Limited and General Manager of Himalayan Bank Limited elaborated on the capital's commitment to provide state of the art merchant banking solutions to its customers and aid in the holistic development of capital markets and the economy. Further, with due approval from Regulatory authorities, the merchant bank also plans to manage various funds including Himalayan Mutual Fund for its parent company, Himalayan Bank Limited. Similarly, Parmeshwar Pant, CEO of Himalayan Capital Limited, reaffirmed the organisation's commitment towards ensuring customer satisfaction and positive contribution towards the capital markets.

## 3rd AGM of NIC ASIA Capital

NIC ASIA Capital



concluded its 3rd AGM on September 25 and has endorsed the board's decision to provide 11% cash dividend that amounts to Rs 2.20 crores to its shareholders along with endorsing other financial highlights of the previous fiscal year. NIC ASIA Capital currently provides services like share registrar, issue manager, share underwriter, portfolio management, depository partner, corporate consultation, investment management and alike.

It has also started the NIC ASIA Express DEMAT

service under which the Capital's employees will now visit customers in their homes and offices to open DEMAT Accounts. To receive this service, one can either call or give a missed call at 9851122994. The service will be available inside the Kathmandu Valley presently.

## Turkish Airlines load factor 82.9% in September 2019



Turkish Airlines has announced its passengers and cargo traffic results for September 2019 on October 10. According to the press statement from the airline company, it recorded 82.9% load factor in September with total number of passengers carried reaching 6.7 million. Additional mentions in the press release were domestic load factor being 86.1% and international load factor being 82.5%, international-to-international transfer passengers (transit passengers) increment by 6.2%, and international passengers excluding the international-to-international transit passengers increased by 5.5% compared to the same period of last year. In September 2019, cargo/mail volume was increased by 9.8%, compared to the same period of 2018. Main contributors to the growth in cargo/mail volume were Africa with 11.8%, North America with 11.5%, Far East with 11.4% and Europe with 10.7% increase.

## General Insurance Company appoints NIBL Ace Capital as issue manager

General Insurance Company is issuing 30 lakh units of Initial Public Offering (IPO) to the general public

and has appointed NIBL Ace Capital as the issue manager of the issuance. The agreement deal was signed by General Manager S. K. Tamot on the behalf of General Insurance Company and Deputy CEO Mekh Bahadur Thapa on behalf of NIBL Ace Capital.

General Insurance Company's current paid-up capital stands at Rs 70 crores which after the IPO will reach Rs 100 crores. The company had started operations from February 7, 2018 and its head office is located at Hattisar, Kathmandu with 37 branch offices and 10 third-party insurance counters.

## Sunrise Bank conducts its 12th AGM

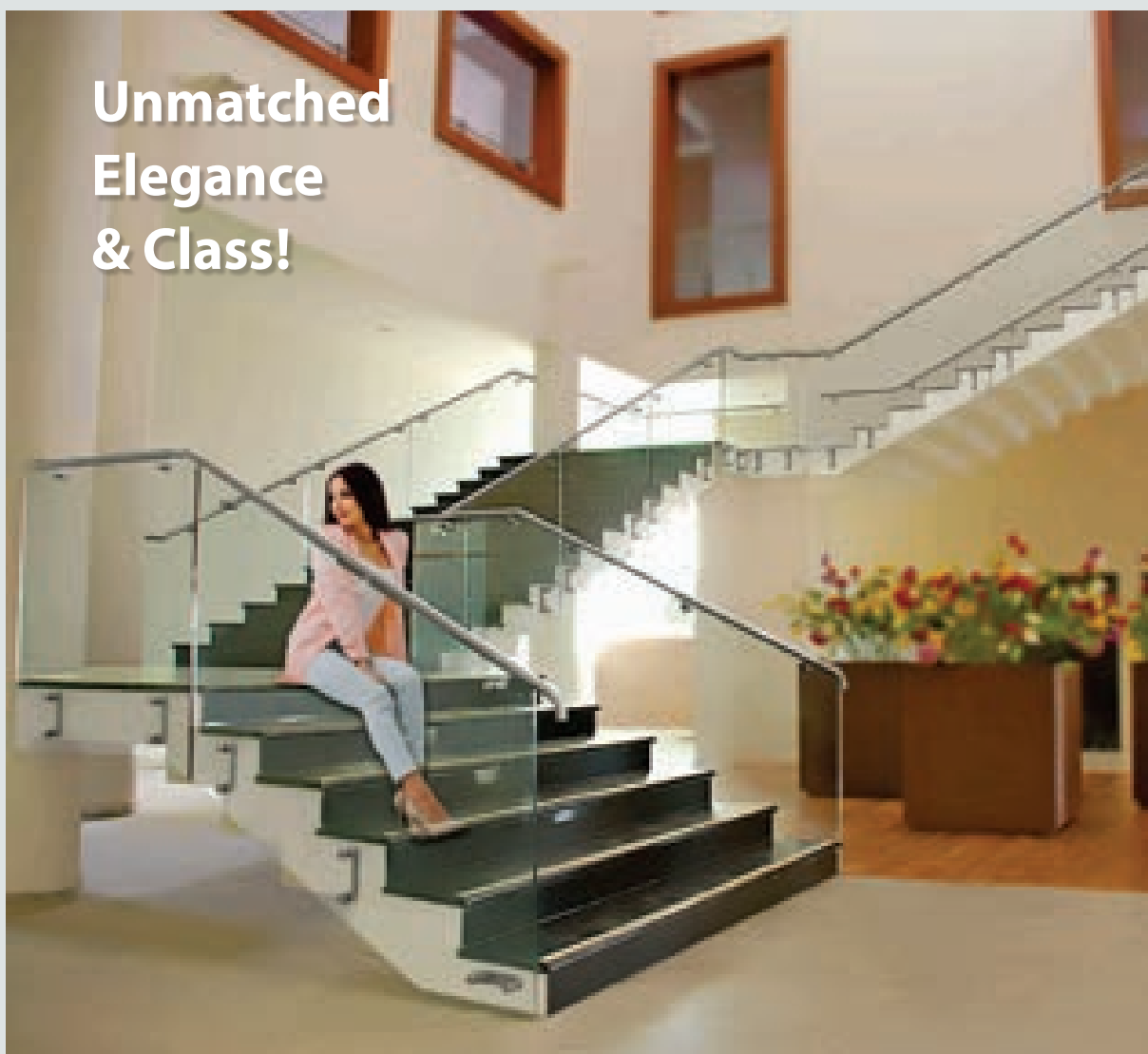


Sunrise Bank conducted its 12th AGM in Kathmandu. The meeting endorsed a proposal of distributing 15.80% dividend including 10% stock and 5.80% cash dividend to its shareholders.

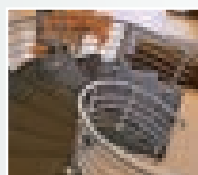
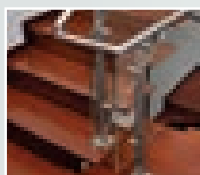
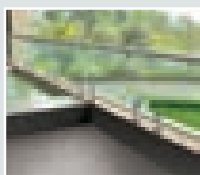
The meeting listed a special agenda of merger and acquisition with potential partners and delegated authority to BOD to forward the process.

In this regard, the bank closed its book on October 18 thus shareholders registered in its book till October 17 were eligible to attend the AGM and obtain the announced dividend. The paid-up capital of the bank reached Rs 8.96 billion after the bonus share distribution.

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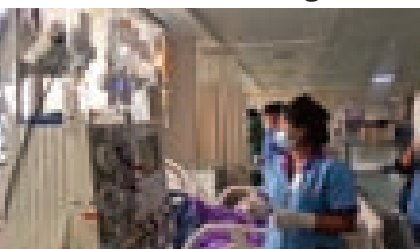
## IMS Group acquires national distributorship for Energizer in Nepal



IMS Group has acquired the sole national distributorship for Energizer power banks in Nepal. Energizer, an American brand, is one of the world's largest manufacturers of primary batteries, portable battery-powered devices, and portable flashlights and lanterns. Energizer is a global leader in the dynamic business of providing power solutions.

Currently, the company has made Energizer products available via SmartDoko, one of Nepal's leading online megastores and will be soon available at mobile phone outlets all over the nation.

## Nepal Medicit introduces Therapeutic Plasma Exchange



Therapeutic Plasma Exchange (TPE) removes large-molecular-weight substances such as harmful antibodies from the plasma. TPE process has become possible following Nepal Medicit Hospital successfully treating a patient aged around 33 who has been afflicted from kidney, heart and lungs complications. Patients suffering from kidney, chest, nerve, lung and sepsis can take benefits from the adoption of modern treatment process to some extent. Chief of Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at the Hospital, Dr Diptesh Aryal, shared that unnecessary blood would be

filtered and taken out from human body by using modern equipment in this method of treatment.

## Everest Bank celebrates silver jubilee



To mark its 25th Foundation Day, Everest Bank conducted various CSR programs at its Head Office located in Lazimpat in coordination with Norvic International Hospital and Nepal Red Cross Society on October 18. The Bank organised blood donation program, free health check-ups and talk program with Dr Yadav Bhatta of Norvic Hospital. The function was attended by Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer and senior officials of the Bank. More than 1,000 people attended the program and around 100 people donated the blood. At the same function, the Bank also felicitated staff members who have served the bank since its inception. Besides, all the province and branch offices of the bank also celebrated the 25th anniversary.

## SEBON grants Sunrise Bank to float Rs 3 billion worth of debenture

Sunrise Bank has received a go-ahead signal from SEBON on October 16 to issue Rs 3 billion worth debenture program that has a maturity period of seven years with 10.25% interest yield and is payable semi-annually. Out of the total 30 lakh unit debentures, 12 lakh units will be floated for general public while 18 lakh units will be issued for the institutional investors. Interested investors can apply for minimum 25 unit and maximum 3 lakh unit debentures, as per the media statement.

## Hero Motocorp launches XPulse 200

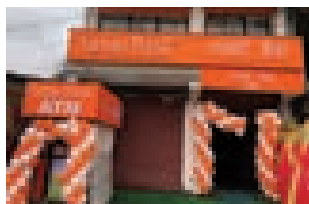


Introducing a new motorcycle in 200cc adventure biking segment, Hero MotoCorp launched its premium motorcycle, XPulse 200, in the Nepali market on October 15. The motorcycle has been priced at Rs 3.85 lakhs. Earlier this month, Hero MotoCorp launched two new premium motorcycles in the country, XPulse 200T and Xtreme 200S and coming close on the heels of these two bikes, the XPulse 200 has been introduced in Nepal within just a few months of its India launch. "This showcases the company's strong commitment to bringing its top-of-the-range products, with modern design and superior technology, for its customers in Nepal," reads the press statement.

With these three new premium motorcycles Hero MotoCorp now aims to aggressively grow its presence in the premium motorcycle category in Nepal. The XPulse200 has been designed and developed at Hero MotoCorp's world-class R&D centre, the 'Centre of Innovation and Technology' (CIT) in the northern Indian city of Jaipur.

Commenting on the launch, Rajat Bhargava, Head of Global Business, Strategy and Performance Transformation at Hero MotoCorp said, "Nepal is an important market in our global growth strategy. With the launch of our new premium motorcycles here, we are confident of appealing to a new customer group. The XPulse 200 is the perfect companion for customers who want to explore more and go beyond the conventional. We are confident of expanding our presence in the market with our diverse and well-rounded product portfolio."

## Laxmi Bank opens new branches



Laxmi Bank inaugurated its 114th and 115th branch in Rangeli, Morang and Kapan, Kathmandu respectively. These new branches offer full range of retail banking services. With the additions, Laxmi Bank

network now includes 115 branches across 48 districts, two extension counters and four hospital service counters, 140 ATMs, 2,500 remittance agents and 64 branchless banking agents spread across the country. The Bank actively promotes digital channels such as internet and mobile banking to complement the growing number of branches as part of the 'bricks and clicks' strategy allowing customers to reach us through a channel of their choice: branches, ATM, internet and mobile phones.



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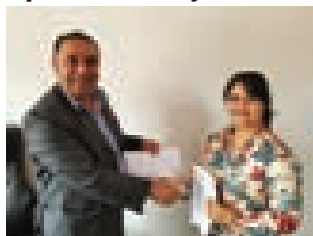
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## Global IME Bank inks agreement with Nepal Open University



Global IME Bank has inked an agreement with Nepal Open University following which students of the university having accounts at the bank can now pay their fees to the university via the bank's mobile and internet banking service without any difficulty. The agreement was signed between Secretary of the University, Kamal Dhakal, and Kirtipur Branch Manager Shova Neupane.

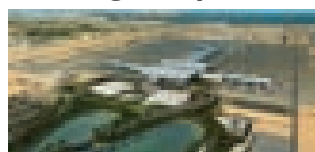
## NIBL Sahabagita Fund opens

Nepal's first open-ended scheme after Mutual Fund Regulation 2067, NIBL Sahabagita Fund, has been opened for transaction from October 10. As per the provision, the scheme has to be opened for transaction after three months from the date of allotment of units. The units can be transacted (repurchase and sell) from the head office of NIBL Ace Capital Limited at Lazimpat and from various branches of NIBL Ace Capital located at Birgunj, Biratnagar, Butwal, Pokhara, Lal Durbar and Lagankhel. The units can also be transacted from various branches of Nepal Investment Bank located at Birtamod, Lalbandhi, Birjung, Sipadol, Narayanghad, Hetauda, Nepalgunj, Tulsipur, Surkhet and Dhangadi.

On the very first day of transaction, a total of 2800 units were sold and 1500 units were repurchased. As per the information provided by the fund manager, investors were enthusiastic to know about the features of Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) and were interested to know about the open-ended scheme in detail.

Nepal Investment Bank is the fund sponsor and the scheme is managed by NIBL Ace Capital.

## Hamad International Airport capacity to soar to more than 60 million passengers annually following its expansion



Hamad International Airport (HIA) revealed plans for its second expansion phase to an international audience of real estate investors at Cityscape Qatar, which took place from October 22 to 24 in Doha. HIA's expansion project will feature a spectacular 10,000 sqm indoor tropical garden in a central concourse as well as a 268 sqm water feature which will be the focal point of the expansion project.

Qatar Airways Group Chief Executive, Akbar Al Baker, said, "The expansion of Hamad International Airport is a vital part of the future success of the Qatar Airways Group, and of course of the country's preparations to host the 2022 World Cup and beyond. It is also a strong sign that Qatar's economy is robust and acts as a further economic stimulus, providing excellent opportunities for local and international contractors. Plans for the phase two expansion focuses on capacity and passenger experience – we want to provide even better airport journeys to more people around the world. The expansion will allow us to do this."

The second phase of HIA's expansion consists of Phase A and B. Phase A of the current expansion will comprise of the central concourse linking concourses D and E. Construction is to commence by early 2020 and will increase the airport's capacity to more than 53 million passengers annually by 2022. Phase B, which will be completed after 2022, will extend concourses

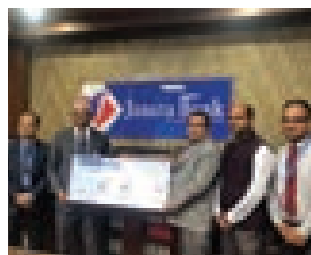
D and E to further enhance the airport's capacity to more than 60 million passengers annually.

The expansion plan also includes 11,720 sqm of landscaped retail and F&B space, which will enhance the multi-dimensional offerings of the five-star airport by integrating world-class art collection and refreshing environment of lush greenery with contemporary retail and dining concepts among other leisure attractions and facilities under one expansive terminal.

HIA will also deliver 9,000 sqm of world-class Al Mourjan lounge located above the retail space with dramatic views looking towards the tropical garden. The lounge will include additional spas, gymnasiums, restaurants and business centres as well as other passenger facilities.

Er Badr Mohammed Al Meer, Chief Operating Officer at HIA, said, "Since we started our operations in 2014, it has been our goal to provide our passengers with a unique travel experience, keeping their needs as our top priority. The expansion will continue to redefine the airport experience, cementing HIA's reputation as a destination gateway and critical international hub."

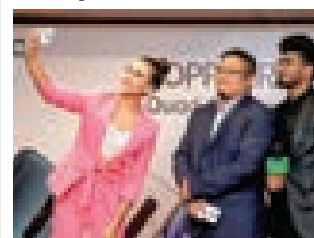
## Janata Bank hands over Rs 10 lakh to Tilathi settlement construction project initiated by News 24 TV



Janata Bank has handed over financial support of Rs 10 lakhs under its CSR initiative to the integrated settlement construction project that have already completed and handed over 52 houses at Tilathi Koiladi of Saptari devastated by 2074 Terai flood. The financial

support of Rs 10 lakhs for the social project was handed over by the CEO of the Bank, Parshuram Kunwar Chhetri to the MD of News 24 TV, Sudhir Rajbhandari at an event on September 26. The national television had undertaken the initiative to construct new houses for the Musahar settlement of the area with the permission of the Ministry of Finance, with support from Janata Bank as well as with financial support of Rs 3 crores from general public.

## OPPO Launches Reno2 F in Nepal



OPPO launched the all new Reno2 F in the Nepali market on October 16. The Reno2 F model is the latest iteration of OPPO's popular Reno series that redraws the boundaries of users' creativity, coming packed with photography-enhancing features. "Inheriting the already rich creative spirit of the Reno Series, this latest iteration presents our users with even more creative possibilities, empowering them to discover new perspectives," said Bobby Zhao, CEO of OPPO Nepal. He added, "Its advanced camera technology performs superbly well in all range of environments and scenarios, from vast landscapes to confined alleyways, or sun-kissed beaches to dim, moonless nights." The phone is priced at Rs 46,990 and is available in two colour variations.

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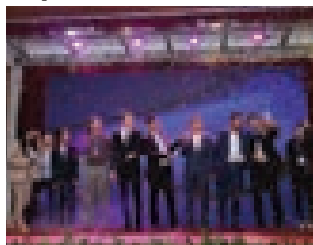
## Pulsar NS 200 now available with ABS



Hansraj Hulaschand and Company, the sole authorised distributor of two wheeler Bajaj motorcycles in Nepal, introduced anti-lock braking system (ABS) in its all new Pulsar NS 200 on October 20. The introductory price of Pulsar NS 200 ABS is Rs 3,34,900 and is available in all authorised showrooms of HH Bajaj across the country.

"Anti-Lock Braking System has become increasingly important to ensure road safety for two-wheelers. The efficacy of ABS systems in preventing locking of wheels and offering greater control to the rider even in wet roads has been proven beyond doubt. A two-wheeler equipped with ABS will always be safer to operate as it reduces braking distance and prevent sliding and skidding of bike not only in treacherous road conditions, or in case of an emergency, but also in everyday riding scenarios. Meanwhile, it lessens chances of injury to the rider and increases the bike stability. Further it reduces the risk of bike crashing," reads the press statement.

## Vivo launches V17Pro in Nepal

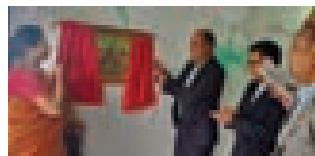


Vivo launched its flagship device V17Pro on October 16 as the newest member to

its existing V-series portfolio. The device sports the world's first dual pop-up front camera along with quad-rear camera setup. The device comes with 8GB RAM + 128GB ROM and is available in two colour variants - Crystal Black and Crystal White. It is priced at Rs 52,490 and started its sale from October 17 on offline channels pan Nepal.

Commenting on the launch of V17Pro, Peng Da, Brand Manager of Vivo Nepal, said, "We are super excited to bring the V17Pro as the latest addition to our existing V-series portfolio. Vivo V-series has always been at the forefront of camera innovation, and the all-new V17Pro will take the camera experience to a whole new level. Thanks to its 32MPDual Pop-up front camera, customers will be able to capture selfies even in low-light without any loss in details. As a global technology company, we love innovating; and shall continue to set benchmarks and create a memorable experience for our customers."

## Mahindra EV Showroom in Butwal



Agni Energy, a subsidiary of the Agni Group and the authorised distributor of Mahindra electric vehicles (EVs), has opened its new showroom of Mahindra electric vehicles (EVs) in Butwal on October 24. This is the first Mahindra EV showroom outside Kathmandu Valley. Till now Mahindra EVs were accessible for consumers of Kathmandu Valley and its surrounding areas. The showroom was inaugurated Constituent Assembly Member of State-5 (Butwal) Sita Devi Baudel along with Cabinet Shrestha, Managing Director of Agni Group and Pramod Bhandari, Senior Executive Manager of Agni Energy.



## Team Nepal competes at International Robot Olympics

International Robot Olympics, held from October 24-28 at Dubai Festival City, is an annual culmination of focused STEM/robotic involvement of exponentially increasing student bodies from all nations in growing collaboration. Representing Team Nepal were the winners of Yantra 7.0 International Robotics Competition; Shishir Subedi, Shrihan Ghimire, Prabin Bahadur Thapa, Sarthak Sen, Aaditya Dhungana and Umanga Regmi, accompanied by team supervisor Er Manoj Lekhak, Secretary of Robotics Association of Nepal (RAN) and team mentor Er Niraj Pradhan, R&D Head of RAN.

Nepal made history by being part for the second time in this Robot Olympics. Robot Olympics also known as First Global Challenge attracted participation from all over the world with 1023 participants from 190 countries.

## NRB and Indian Embassy celebrates Guru Nanak's 550th birthday



On the auspicious occasion of Guru Nanak's 550th birthday, Nepal Rastra Bank's Governor Chiranjibi Nepal and Indian Ambassador to Nepal Manjeev Singh Puri launched coins in denominations of 100, 1000 and 2500 at Aloft Kathmandu on September 27. Along with prominent members of the Sikh community, the book,

"Sikh Heritage of Nepal" was also released on the same day. Guru Nanak is believed to have visited Balaju area on the outskirts of Kathmandu 500 years ago and with this event Nepal honours its deep Sikh connect.

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## Turkish Airlines starts direct flights to Vietnam's Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City



Turkish Airlines has started direct flights to Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, which were operated as connected flights until now. The flights are being operated on Istanbul (IST) – Ho Chi Minh City (SGN) – Istanbul (IST) and Istanbul (IST) – Hanoi (HAN) – Istanbul (IST) routes.

Deciding to operate direct flights with the expectations of the passengers travelling to Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi in mind, Turkish Airlines will have daily flights to Ho Chi Minh and the flag carrier will fly to Hanoi six days a week (except Sunday). The flights to capital Hanoi will increase to seven days a week in April 2020.

Surrounded by Saigon River, Ho Chi Minh City was added to the flag carrier's flight network back in December 2010. Located in Southern Vietnam, the city serves as the financial capital of the country while boasting the biggest population and highest number of visitors. The city is a popular tourism centre with its pristine skyscrapers, ornate temples and pagodas. Similarly, Turkish Airlines first started to fly to Hanoi, one of the oldest capitals of the world, on June 2016. The city offers an unparalleled travel experience with its historical architecture affected by various societies and rich culture. As the trade, cultural and education centre of North Vietnam, Hanoi is also quite close by to Ha Long Bay, a UNESCO World Heritage site.



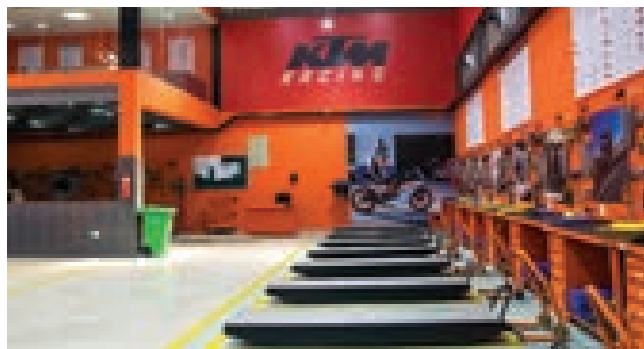
## PM Oli releases Professor KR Khambu's memoir

Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli released the memoir Chaya Ko Laskar by Professor KR Khambu at a special ceremony at the Prime Minister's residence in Baluwatar on September 26. After releasing the book, PM Oli shared his memories with the author during the Jhapa revolution and the political movement during the Panchayat era. The Prime Minister who is also the co-chair of Nepal Communist Party (NCP) said that he had two dreams: seeing the author achieving a PhD degree and utilising his knowledge for the development of the nation. Unfortunately, after completing his PhD degree, KR Khambu lost vision in both eyes, Oli said.

"During those days, I urged him to pursue higher studies and not to indulge in active politics." Praising the author, PM Oli said "KR Khambu was a very loyal, dedicated and patriotic cadre of our party. Despite losing his sight, his work, knowledge and wisdom are inspirational for generations to follow." He also shared memories during their times in Biratnagar and Jhapa. The book unfolds many political events, the left-movement, and Jhapa revolution. "I am extremely happy that my memoir is unveiled by PM Oli," said Professor Khambu and thanked the publication house Nepa~laya for publishing the book. After retiring from an active political career, the author is currently associated with Mechi Campus in Jhapa district.

The book is priced at Rs 545.

## KTM opens service centre at Sano Gaucharan



Hansraj Hulaschand and Company, the sole distributor for KTM motorcycles in Nepal, opened its new exclusive

service center at Sano Gaucharan, Kathmandu on October 17. The inauguration was done by the Executive

Director, Shekhar Golchha.

With the capacity of servicing 20 motorcycles at once, this is the largest KTM service centre in Nepal.

"The new service centre assures to provide KTM owners with premium service experience in Nepal along with highly advanced equipment and highly skilled technicians. The service centre aims at catering to the growing number of racing enthusiasts in Nepal by providing them with an unmatched experience," reads the press statement.

## Dr Suman Thapa performs at Paleti



Dr Suman Thapa performed at Paleti, Nepalaya's micro-series, in the October rendition held for two days on October 25-26 at Nepalaya's 'r'sala, Kalikasthan. An ophthalmologist by profession, Dr Thapa is also a musician associated with a group called Blue Fret where he plays the guitar and sings. He started his musical journey from the 90s band, Baipaas. Dr Thapa, who mostly sings in English, performed all songs in Nepali throughout the whole two-day gig. He was joined by Dinesh Regmi on keyboard, Suraj Pradhan on guitar, Sundar Kumar Maharjan on percussion.





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B360 / NATIONAL



## Radisson Hotel Kathmandu organises fruit soaking event

Radisson Hotel Kathmandu organised a fruit soaking event on September 24 at Terrace Garden. Women professionals, young entrepreneurs and social activists were invited by the hotel to honour the mixing ceremony. Executive Chef Utpal Kumar Mondal started the event with a welcome speech and a brief description about the fruit soaking event. The attendees followed the chef's guidelines and mixed the dry fruits with spices, herbs, wine, rum and whisky that would go into creating the authentic taste and flavour of the Christmas cake.

## Nepa~laya releases Kali Prasad Rijal's 'Kada ma Kaseko Jindagi'



Writer and poet Kali Prasad Rijal's 'Kada ma Kaseko Jindagi' was released during the Paleti concert at Nepa~laya's 'r'sala on September 28. Rijal, who also served as a civil servant for a long time has talked about rural Nepal and his life journey in this book. As many as eight songs written by Kali Prasad Rijal were performed during the Paleti concert. On the occasion, Rijal's literature journey and his struggle were shared with the audience.

The much-awaited event kicked off with the evergreen song, 'Kehi Mitho Baat Gara', written by Kali Prasad Rijal. The

author also shared his musical bond and friendship with late Narayan Gopal and talked about how he wrote 'Aakha Chopina Rohau Bhani' and 'Jhareko Paat Jhai' for Narayan Gopal.

The audience got emotional as the prominent writer shared stories of the Badi community in Western Nepal while serving in a government position. The book unfolds many hidden clues on how struggle makes a man successful. The author launched the new book by handing it over to his granddaughter. Rijal then recited his poem 'Pajero' which tells about the materialistic lifestyle adopted by the political leaders of the country.

The book is priced at Rs 595.



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Sangeeta Thapa is the Founder & Director of Siddhartha Art Gallery and Siddhartha Arts Foundation as well as Kathmandu International Art Festival. Thapa is also the Co-founder and Director of Kathmandu Contemporary Arts Centre. She is a contributing author for the Pakistani art journal, Nukta and is the publisher of three volumes of poetry by Nepali poets.

In her vibrant 32 year career, Thapa has been felicitated and honoured with several awards, and is celebrated by the arts community in Nepal and abroad. She serves as a board member of the Patan Museum Development Committee. She is also a board member of the Saraf Foundation and served briefly as Chair of Himal South Asia. Thapa is planning to establish a museum of contemporary art post Kathmandu Triennale 2020. Moreover, writing a book about modern art in Nepal is in her to-do list.

In this edition of **B360**, she shares with **Ankita Jain** the five pillars in her life that helped her become who she is today.

## SANGEETA THAPA

FOUNDER DIRECTOR, SIDDHARTHA ARTS FOUNDATION  
& GALLERY AND KCAC



## The Friendship of Shashikala Tiwari

Art is something that I have always loved and I always aspired to be an artist. Naturally, I studied art. But when I returned to Nepal in 1983 after living abroad for 22 years, I witnessed the state of the galleries and how art shows were managed. Hence, I decided to be involved in the management of arts. I believed I had very good managerial skills—not that I was trained to be a manager. This realisation led me to seek for an artist to collaborate with.

Shashikala Tiwari is one of the most important people in my life as it was she who introduced me to the art world. Not having lived here, I didn't know anyone. Art galleries are run on trust. When someone who has never lived here suddenly comes and says, "I want to run a gallery. I want your paintings", this is not acceptable. It was the friendship that Tiwari had forged with Nepali artists that made them accept me and understand what I wanted to do.

## Family Support

Not many women pursued a profession in the 80s. The two sides of the family (my parents and in-laws) probably could not fathom my sincerity towards work at that time, they wanted to support me nevertheless. There are many homes where women don't get that kind of freedom.

While I was managing the Kathmandu International Art Festival where over 100 artists participated, I had children at home to be taken care of. Fortunately, my mother-in-law, sister-in-law and the entire family was there to take care of them while I was away chasing my dreams. My family believed in me and that was something really important to me at the early stages of my career.

## Long-distance Marriage

My husband worked for the UN for 26 odd years and because of the nature of his work, he was always in places where there was a disaster. I stayed in Nepal and he worked there and we shuttled back and forth. We often met in a third country. Ours was sort of "not together" life but still "making it together". It was a long-distance marriage. People always questioned, "Don't you feel like you are losing out? Don't you miss your husband?" Well, I did miss him. But I always saw this as the glass that was half full than half empty. Those 26 years I had my own time and I was able to write. I had very clear thoughts, I was able to do my work and there were no other commitments. For the social gatherings, I always had an excuse that I am alone and I can't come. During those years, I focused exclusively on art, literature, music and the things I really loved. Since 2012, my husband is back with the family. We are doing many things as a family and sometimes it is hard to juggle between family and work. But I would say devoting those years to arts probably catapulted me to where I am today.

## Establishment of Siddhartha Art Foundation

Some people get very comfortable doing what they do. I was running a gallery and it was doing well but then it was becoming too much of the same. Art scene in Nepal is a small market. In fact, Kathmandu is the only market. The galleries and the pool of artists are the same. It was high time that things were stirred in the art scene in Nepal. Hence, I started a residency, Kathmandu Contemporary Art Centre in 2010. The Centre sponsors up to four Nepali artists a year on a six-month

scholarship programme. In 2011, we registered Siddhartha Art Foundation. We still have Siddhartha Art Gallery which has a 32-year-old history, over 500 exhibitions. Whatever money is made from the gallery goes into the foundation which is a non-profit organisation and the fund helps to run programs. In 2009, I organised the first Kathmandu International Art Festival which revolved around the socio-political theme "Status of Women". I wanted artists to be a medium for change because no one wants to read a 100-page report on the status of women. The idea was to get artists examine the status of women. This is a country where women are treated as goddesses and it is also the same country where women are kept in Chhaupadi sheds. The art festival invited local and international artists to reflect on the status of women.

In 2012, we picked environment as the festival issue of the 2nd Kathmandu International Art Festival. Both the editions received an overwhelming response. The festival not only involved the artists and the art critics but also engaged a broader audience and got the community involved. I started putting art in community spaces in Nag Bahal and all the Bahals of Patan. For 2012 edition, we had 12 venues and the city became a gallery. And in 2017, there were 19 venues. After the earthquake and blockade, I changed the festival format into a triennale. It was still a three-year event but the name changed from a festival to a triennale. The sole reason being the Triennale Foundation in Italy Publicises all the art biennales and triennales around the world. Kathmandu Triennale puts Nepal on the global art map and brings international artists together. This platform helps artists network, exchange and flourish. And for me, my

interest lies in the development of the artists. It's a robust art scene and art market.

## To Adapt with Change

I believe it is really important to find what is relevant and to adapt with change. I am always looking for new artists and new faces. I am looking at artists as an archeologist digging into their past, finding out about their art. One thing about this country is that it is blessed with ethnic diversity. I think it's time that artists begin to examine identity and its politics. It's important to be involved in the now and understand the need of the hour.

The first 10-15 years of my career, I have devoted to the people whom I consider to be the master artists of the country like the late Tej Bahadur Chitrakar, Amar Chitrakar, Karna Narsingh Rana, Uttam Nepali, Shashi Bikram Shah, Shashikala Tiwari and Birendra Pratap Singh. These are the artists whose company I enjoyed, whose friendship and trust I received. I also attend all the graduation shows of Kathmandu University Department of Fine Arts, Sirjana College of Fine Art, Lalitkala Campus, etc. I am always on the lookout for young people who have a promising future. And if s/he needs financial support, I make sure that they receive a scholarship or a fund to advance their work. It is also important not to treat your artists as just money making machines but to treat them as people who have amazing visions. I focus on how I can facilitate them and bring the story of their vision into the gallery space. And I enjoy this process. **B**

## SAY NO TO EXERCISE HIBERNATION IN THE WINTER



**Sandesh Palungwa Limbu,** Certified professional fitness instructor, founder of RAGE Fitness, and specialises in mixed martial arts.

As the days get shorter and darker and the cold creeps in, most people will try and find excuses not to continue with their exercise routine. Sleeping for an extra hour inside your warm quilt in the morning or cozing up in front of the TV with a hot mug of tea always seem a better option. But those of you who know better understand that keeping up your exercise routine irrespective of the weather is what's really good for you. Staying consistent with your exercise routine in the winter not only helps you maintain your health and fitness but helps keep your mood elevated and your energy high despite the cold.

If going to the gym or the outdoors is something that really is withholding you from your routine, find something that you can do at home. There are numerous ways to stay fit by working out at home with minimal equipment and just the right knowhow. Use your body weight to do simple but efficient exercises like squats, pushups, burpees and spot cardio. Skipping ropes, dynamic yoga and TRX are great too.

Join a winter boot camp or try a new group class. This would fuel your motivation as you target new goals. Martial arts, boxing, dance class, wall



climbing are great options as you learn something new and enjoy it among a set of motivated people. Have a friend or two join you; this would make it a lot more fun and set the tone for accountability and competition.

Avoid the winter weight gain also by eating right. Stay away from the numerous cups of tea and coffee that most people are inclined to have without realizing how much sugar they are putting into their bodies. Eat regular healthy, nutritiously well balanced meals in a quiet environment ensuring portion control. Stay well hydrated.

It's so easy to succumb to being indoors and in front of the heater but this will have adverse effect on your health, energy levels and overall immunity. Instead choose to stay active every opportunity you have. Walk, run, take the stairs, get chores done, keep the blood circulating and heart pumping to feel totally invigorated and alive. Winter

must not be the reason for you to go sedentary. Instead find every reason and answer to stay motivated, active and exercising regularly.

It is said that just by stepping into the gym or initiating your first exercise movement, fifty percent of your workout is done and the rest is all about completing it. Everything about your workout process remains the same despite the change in season but here are few considerations that will help you make your workout more effective.

- Warm up properly. It will take longer to warm up because of the lowered temperature. Warm up also psyches you up and helps you ease into your main workout.
- Avoid taking longer rest periods during your workout. Avoid being distracted with gym socials or other reasons. Active recovery in between sets is the best way to keep your heart rate up and the body warm.
- Layer up your clothing for both indoor and outdoor workouts. It helps you trap body heat and maintain warmth. The first layer should be synthetic fiber such as polypropylene which wicks away moisture unlike cotton which gets soaked and wets your entire workout experience.
- Cold drinks in summer, no drink in winter is how most people go. Stay on top of hydration with adequate intake of H<sub>2</sub>O. Keep drinking periodically even if you don't feel the thirst. Taking small sips during workout and hydrating properly afterwards is good way to go. **B**



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# WOMEN IN CORPORATE & ECONOMIC LEADERSHIP



**Sadhguru.** Named one of 50 most influential people, Sadhguru is a yogi, mystic, a bestselling author & poet. Sadhguru has been conferred the “Padma Vibhushan” by the Government of India in 2017, the highest civilian award of the year, accorded for exceptional and distinguished service.

**Q:** I run a manufacturing company. I wanted to have more women in the manufacturing space but the challenge is difficult. What do you advise?

**Sadhguru:** In terms of manufacturing a human being, nature decided to give much more responsibility to a woman than to a man. So they are obviously good with the manufacturing sector. Women have delivered much more than any man has delivered. I am not just saying this in a lighter sense, I am saying this with genuine respect. Today, we tend to think in terms of assembly lines and manufacturing facilities, but there is a creative part to manufacturing as well, where a woman can play a very strong role.

The assembly line is essentially a very masculine activity, and it needs daily attendance, which may not be possible for a woman. If she attends to her work that way, she may not be able to fulfill family-related and other responsibilities she has in her life. I am not saying a woman cannot work on the assembly line, but they need longer breaks at certain times which

may interfere with that aspect of manufacturing. Rather than putting her on the factory floor, a woman could play a very active role in the more creative aspects of manufacturing like design, development and marketing.

sustainable in the long-term and focused towards human wellbeing. The economic model in the world today has to be re-crafted in such a way that commerce serves humanity rather than humanity being enslaved to commerce.

the feminine naturally becomes very significant.

Masculine and feminine are not about being physically male and female. The feminine can be as alive in a man as it is in a woman. These are two qualities. Only when these two qualities happen in balance, can a human being live a life of fulfillment. To use an analogy, if you call the root the masculine, the flower and the fruit is feminine. The very purpose of the root is to bring the flower and the fruit. If that does not happen, the root will go waste. Survival by itself does not take care of everything.



We are at a stage in the world where economic activity is becoming the major aspect on the planet. Women – who are 50% or more of the human population – should have a just and substantial role in making this significant piece of human activity happen. In the next decade or so, economic leadership will gain a new level of significance. In business or elsewhere, vision is a very important part of being a leader. A leader is someone who can see what others cannot. If you don't see anything new, you will become the subject of ridicule. Generally, a man's day-to-day race with somebody else has kept him so busy that he cannot see anything. But a woman has developed a capability within herself where she can sit back and look at what is happening.

Women can play a very important part in softening economic activity so that it is

Shaping our humanity is not the exclusive privilege of just one sex. In the leadership – both business and political – women must have a role because they are the gentler part of humanity.

For a long time, humanity has given too much significance to the masculine because survival has been the dominant factor. The feminine can come to its proper place only when societies have handled their survival well and reached a certain level of stabilised culture and civilisation. Societies are coming to that phase today, but instead of relaxing our survival instinct, we are just raising the bar for survival to a ridiculous extent. Earlier, survival meant gathering the day's food. Today, survival means a Mercedes or a BMW. If we go this way, there will be no room for the feminine in society. If we relax our survival instincts, you will see,

After survival is taken care of, the subtler aspects of life have to happen to you.

Today, people's idea of success is driven by personal ambition. That is a very foolish way of doing things. There is a way to achieve success without being fired by ambition. If you are concerned about everything around you, you will not hold anything back – you will naturally do your best. This is a woman's way of operating, and this is the best way to operate in the world.

The way of the masculine is to go somewhere without much attention to what is here and now. The feminine is not trying to go anywhere. The feminine is happy where it is. If these two aspects are in balance, we will go somewhere but we will also enjoy where we are right now. That is what needs to happen in the world. **B**

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TOP PICK



# Ashlesha Rana

*Makeup Artiste*

Ashlesha Rana is an independent make-up artiste determined to be her own boss from a very young age. Born in 1993, Rana is deeply passionate about the art of makeup and successfully managed to evolve her passion into a business model. She joined makeup school in 2016 and today runs a sought after business. In this issue of **B360**, Ashlesha Rana shares her list of favourite brands.

**Favourite shopping destination**

New York City is my go-to shopping destination

**Vehicle**

Hyundai Kona as it's time to get electric!



**Gadget**

iPhone XS



**Eating Out**

Koto or Kotetsu for Japanese and Thai cuisine



**I walk on**

I am a sucker for shoes. I have shoes of every kind and all are my favourites.

**On your wrist**

Omega Constellation



**I smell of**

Nectarine Blossom and Honey Cologne by Jo Malone

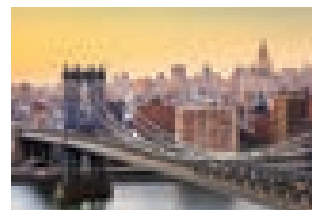


**Shades**

The Round Metal by Ray-Ban

**Travel Destination**

I last travelled to Venice and I loved it. Paris is next on my bucket list



**Song playlist**

"Titanium" and "Mamma Mia"

**Favourite app**

Instagram as my work demands it



**Greatest indulgence**

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AS A LEADER YOU SHOULD BE VERY CONSCIOUS OF HOW YOU CAN GROW AS A PERSON BECAUSE IF YOU DON'T GROW, YOU CAN'T INSPIRE GROWTH IN

OTHERS.



**SANTOSHI RANA**  
FOUNDER, BIHANI SOCIAL VENTURES

Santoshi Rana is the founder of Bihani Social Ventures, a platform provided to citizens above 50 years of age to “Re-engage, Re-explore and Re-live” – the three missions of Bihani. The social venture addresses the problems arising through ageing in Nepal while implementing a business model with a social entrepreneurial mindset. Bihani generates revenue through events, membership signup and home-base services via their services in three areas: social engagement, mental and physical health, and organisational services. While starting Bihani, Rana was sure that it was going to be a for-profit social enterprise and will not be donor dependent. She states, “Usually in the social sector, people tend to think that money making is bad which is not true. We need money to make the change whether it’s through donations, funds or earning ourselves.”

She earned her Master’s degree in Media and Communication Management from Middlesex University, London. Rana’s previous involvements include her associations with organisations like OXFAM and Haemophilia Society beside working as a campaigner, communication intern, media reader and training consultant. She has also worked with ChangeFusion Nepal supporting social ventures and organising Surya Nepal Asha Social Entrepreneurship Award after coming back to Nepal.

**Dibesh Dangol** of **B360** interviewed Rana to get her views on leadership, the biggest differences between current and previous generation entrepreneurs, and the role of a leader to ensure equality amongst its employees.

**Excerpts:**



**How do you define leadership'?**

Our society harbours blaming culture. But when you are a leader, blaming others doesn't help. It is also about grooming your team and walking along with them. In order to be able to lead and be a good leader, I feel that one of the basic requirements that a leader should possess is the ability to accept her weaknesses and understand the strengths of her team. So, leadership according to me is being able to take the team forward by walking along with them.

**Whose leadership skills inspire you?**

I don't have any specific person to name but it could be anyone I see on the streets or meet. Before Bihani, I was inspired by grass-root level social entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs I came across. I was inspired by their grit in the face of adversity even when they didn't have anything.

**Is leadership inborn or acquired?**

It's both. Certain skills can be inherited; while there are also skills that one can learn along the way or which come through experience. Overall, as a leader you should be very conscious of how you can grow as a person because if you don't grow, you can't inspire growth in others.

**What was the biggest challenge you had to encounter while starting Bihani and how did you overcome it?**

One of the biggest challenges in Nepal, not just while starting Bihani but even now, is getting the right human resource. Our culture, society and education system are such that we are not made to think. Everything is spoon-fed and our life is planned and decided. We don't nurture the mental faculty to decide between right and wrong because that is dictated by everyone around us. So, the biggest challenge is to find people who can really think for themselves. Another challenge is self-belief. When people are told that such is right and wrong, at certain times people question their abilities when they are in a higher position or when someone tells them something. So, self-belief and ability to think are some of the biggest challenges I have faced.

To overcome such challenges, I had to groom the team as a leader. Whenever I hire people, I am not concerned about their educational or social backgrounds. I want to know them as individuals. The candidate must feel for the job and should be willing to learn. Such people will make an effort to start thinking on their own and make things happen because they love what they are doing. So, along with ensuring that there is a sense of purpose and self-belief in the team, a leader also should be capable to think about what is it that she can do to make someone's life or job better.

**Do you struggle with work-life balance?**

Initially, I used to but now I don't. When I started Bihani, I was very clear that work-life balance is something I am going to maintain. We have very flexible working hours in Bihani and no one works 9am-5pm here. Many of the team members who work here are also college students who come after finishing their classes. So Bihani is also a platform for youths.

I was very sure about giving holidays on Saturdays and Sundays. Also I made sure that I will not be working or make others work during holidays or days off because people get very irritated and frustrated when they are troubled with work during their holidays and days off. I realised this from my previous professional life.

In terms of maintaining work-life balance, I have tried my best to take away all the things I didn't like when I was working as a team member. The other thing I used to do before was take work home. I realised that work never ends. Now when I leave work, I leave my work behind in the office. This is something I learned from my husband. So, currently I have a good balance between my professional and personal life.

**How should a leader lead through change?**

It should start from the leader. In Nepal, we have lots of people who talk about change and other things but they themselves don't follow it. We are very good with complaining

and looking at what the problem is but we are not good with initiating the change within or by ourselves. As a leader, the change must begin from oneself and only then do we have the right to implement the same on others.

**Do you think gender has anything to do with leadership?**

No. It has to do with the person. At Bihani, though we work in the field of aging, we don't look at people's age. We look at them as individuals. We have no choice but to respect and accept people the way they are born — either they are a male, a female or any other gender. We shouldn't be segregating and bringing these questions forward because by asking or dwelling on these questions we are making gender rules more segregated. There are not many differences between genders. The only thing different is the upbringing and the culture we come from. Though it is scientifically proven that women mature faster than men, we cannot be pointing out and saying that this gender is a better leader and this gender is less of a leader. It depends on people and their determination, objective, focus and vision. So, there are other important factors besides gender to be considered and talked about.

**What difference do you see between the past and the present generation entrepreneurs?**

Actually, there are not many differences. An entrepreneur is an entrepreneur and it doesn't matter whether that person was born a decade back or five. The only thing that matters is what that person did when they started their entrepreneurship journey.

One main difference would be access to technology, innovation and knowledge. Until a few years back, not many people knew about social entrepreneurship. But now with access to resources, technology and global trends, people have started to know what is going on beyond Nepal or in Nepal. More exchange of ideas and knowledge is happening. Social media has also helped in cutting down boundaries. So, the difference is not in terms

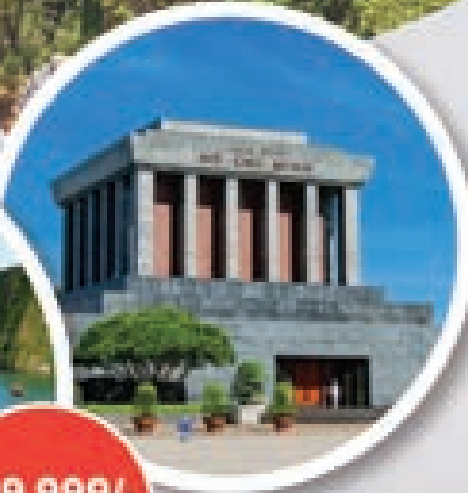
of entrepreneurs but mainly in terms of environment we have right now. It's a very exciting environment.

When a person imbrarks into an entrepreneurial journey, that itself is a big risk. Many of us who have become entrepreneurs have left a stable job and environment to get into entrepreneurship. One of the biggest challenges is that Nepal is a small country due to which we have limits in terms of our market and customer base. In order to survive, an entrepreneur needs to be completely involved in what s/he is doing and understand the market.

**How do you encourage the development of your employees?**

I believe in instilling self-belief in them and making them realise that they can do anything they put their heart and soul into. Secondly, the ability to think. When a person is able to think, they'll be able to do anything. The other thing we believe in at Bihani is the 'magic of choice'. Choice is not something that we get in our culture or society and everyone should have the right to decide what is it that they want to do. If someone is interested in music, that person can go ahead and help elders through music. We have a national taichi player who is an instructor and leads our health and rehabilitation team as a coordinator. Her job is to use tai chi, which is her passion in life, to help and teach the elders. So, it is all about understanding what your team members' interests and likes are so that work becomes more about following one's passion and dreams. If we are telling our elders or people we work with that they should live their lives then it should start from the team as well. Above all, it's also about exposure. It's important to expose team members to different opportunities and environment so that they are also able to see, learn and be able to lead which is why being able to think and being confident is very important. **B**

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## TOUR DETAILS

26 – 31 January 2020

Day 01: Arrive Hanoi – Fly Danang

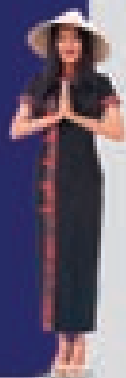
Day 02: Ba Na Hills & Golden Bridge

Day 03: Danang – Hanoi

Day 04: Hanoi – Ha Long Bay

Day 05: Ha Long Bay – Hanoi

Day 06: Hanoi Departure



Visa On Arrival : USD 25

### INCLUSIONS

- 2 Nights in Danang in 3 Star Hotel on BB basis.
- 1 Night on Halong Bay cruise on Full Board.
- AC Coach and English speaking guide.
- Monuments entrance fee.
- ALL government taxes
- Round Trip Flight ticket on Charter Flight .

### Departure Time

Flight duration : 3 hours, 30 minutes  
Nepal, Kathmandu : 10:00 (Nepal Time)  
Vietnam, Hanoi : 14:45 (Vietnam Time)

### Arrival Time

Flight Duration : 4 Hours 30 Minutes  
Hanoi : 15:45 (Vietnam Time)  
Nepal, Kathmandu : 18:30 (Nepal Time)

\* CONDITION APPLY

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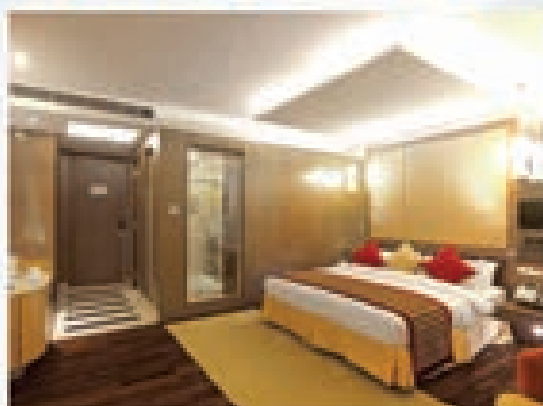
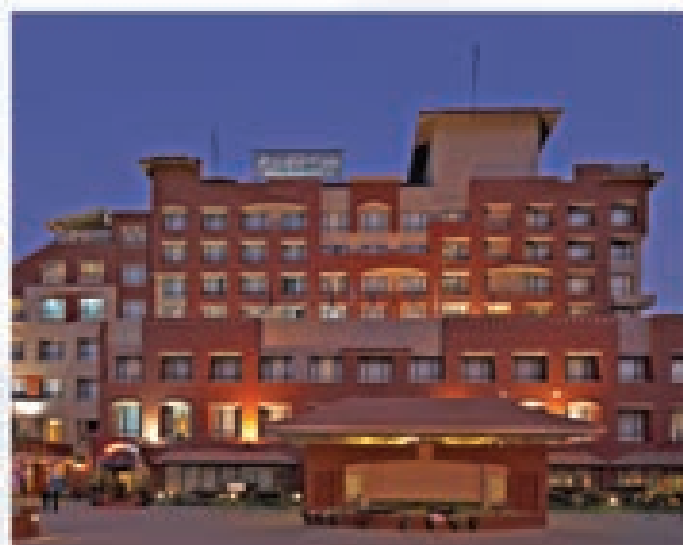
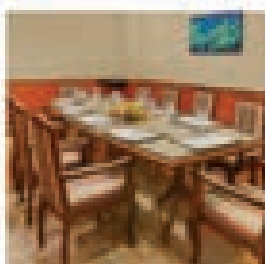
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