

**Media Bias in Nepal:**  
**A Comparative Study of English-Language Daily Newspapers**

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This paper will analyze political biases in two of the major English-language dailies in Kathmandu in May 2010, focusing on the lead-up to the Constituent Assembly term extension. The two newspapers to be examined are *Kathmandu Post*, published by Kantipur Publications Ltd., and *República*, published by Nepal Republic Media Pvt. Ltd. These two newspapers are among the three most prominent English-language dailies in Nepal (the other is *The Himalayan Times*, published by International Media Network Nepal (Pvt) Ltd.).

There are a few major topics that were a focus in this analysis. The main topics discussed by the newspapers are the Maoist general strike, which started at the beginning of the month and lasted nearly a week, the expiration of the CA tenure and the possibility of extension, and various issues related to the peace process and CA extension – PLA integration, resignation of the Prime Minister, and debates over the formation of a national consensus/unity government versus a majority government. The presence of articles on other topics was noted in order to properly analyze front page coverage.

The selection of *Kathmandu Post* and *República* as the papers for analysis stems from several issues. First, the two papers share a common history. The editors and much of the staff of *República* are former staff of *Kathmandu Post*, who broke off in 2008 following a dispute between Kantipur partners.<sup>1</sup> This common history has sparked a desire on behalf of *República* to set itself apart from its ‘predecessor’.<sup>2</sup> Considering these facts, the dynamics between the two newspapers is something worth studying.

Another reason for the selection of these two papers is ownership. Kantipur Publications and Nepal Republic Media are both Nepali media houses, based in Nepal and owned by Nepalis.

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<sup>1</sup>Subel Bhandari (journalist) in discussion with the author, 4 July 2010.

<sup>2</sup>Damakant Jayshi (editor, journalist) in discussion with the author, 29 July 2010.

International Media Network Nepal is Indian-owned. In studying Nepali media bias, it seems illogical to focus on a newspaper whose publisher is foreign, despite the fact that it is created for a Nepali audience. The fact that the publisher is foreign adds an entirely new layer of bias to the paper, on top of anything else that may be present in the text of the paper itself.

In terms of readership, *Kathmandu Post* estimates a circulation between 50,000 to 60,000. Over 50% of that is estimated to be the newspaper's subscription base, as it does not receive many advertisements to produce revenue. Instead, subscriptions serve as the primary source of income.<sup>3</sup> *República*'s circulation is reported to be larger than *Kathmandu Post*, falling behind *The Himalayan Times* in rankings for English-language daily print media. Like *Kathmandu Post*, *República*'s subscription base is substantial as well. The paper has reported that its stand sales are not as good as Kantipur newspapers or *The Himalayan Times*.<sup>4</sup>

### **A Brief History: Media in Nepal**

The history of independent media in Nepal is quite short for such an old country. Under the monarchy, freedom of speech was quite limited, which therefore restricted the topics on which journalists could report. The Constitution of 1990, established after the broad call for democratic reforms across the country that year, offers increased journalistic freedom compared to the previous Panchayat era, yet still places impediments to independent reporting.

Part III, Article 12 of the Constitution of 1990 sets out the people's right to freedom, with the foremost freedom being that of freedom of opinion and expression. However, the

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<sup>3</sup> Akhilesh Upadhyay (editor, journalist) in discussion with the author, 27 July 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Jayshi.

constitution places a sub-clause to these freedoms, stating that these freedoms are granted “providing that” a number of conditions are met. These conditions, or more accurately described as restrictions, state that nothing may “undermine the sovereignty and integrity of the Kingdom of Nepal, or which may jeopardize the harmonious relations subsisting among the peoples of various castes, tribes or communities, or on any act of sedition, defamation, contempt of court or incitement to an offence; or on any act which may be contrary to decent public behavior or morality”.<sup>5</sup> These restrictions were taken to the extreme under the rule of King Gyanendra, who clamped down on the press multiple times during his rule. Michael Hutt, in his analysis of Nepali language media in 2001, cites media analyst Rama Parajuli, who commented on the complexity of the issue surrounding the royal massacre on June 1, 2001. Parajuli states, “If a prime minister had been murdered... no newspaper would have neglected to report on it, but because the incident involved the king and the royal family, the newspapers preferred to remain silent.”<sup>6</sup> While at this point it was still self-censorship, blatant political censorship was soon to come.

As time passed, alternative theories to the massacre (the official version stated that Crown Prince Dipendra massacred his family over their refusal to let him marry his girlfriend) popped up, which prompted a strict crackdown on all forms of media. Baburam Bhattarai, currently number two in CPN (Maoist), published an editorial in *Kantipur* alleging the massacre was conceived by Indian forces looking to dispose of a nationalist Nepali king (Birendra) in favor of one that would “do India’s bidding” (implying Gyanendra). The same day the article

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<sup>5</sup> “The Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal 1990,” *Federation of Nepali Journalists*, <<http://www.fnjnepal.org/index.php?cid=83>>.

<sup>6</sup> Michael Hutt, “Things That Should Not Be Said: Censorship and Self-Censorship in the Nepali Press Media, 2001-02,” *The Journal of Asian Studies* 65, No. 2 (May 2006): 368.

was published, the editor, managing director, and director of Kantipur Publications were arrested and charged with treason, although they were later released.<sup>7</sup>

The year 2005 was another particularly bad year for journalists and freedom of speech in Nepal. King Gyanendra instituted a massive censorship campaign at this time, directly telling editors what could and could not be published. Gyanendra backed this up with force. According to one Nepali journalist, the king sent armed military officers into editorial rooms, making the decision on what should be published.<sup>8</sup> *Nepali Times*, a prominent weekly English-language paper founded by Kunda Dixit, fought the censors by publishing the paper as is, with large blocks of blank space where the censored articles were.<sup>9</sup> This armed force within the newsroom completely undermines journalistic freedom.

The interim constitution of 2007 has provided protections for press freedom and freedom of speech. Similar to the previous 1990 Constitution, the interim constitution also limits speech on anything that would undermine the sovereignty or integrity of Nepal. However, the interim constitution goes on to state, most importantly in a post-Gyanendra era, “No publication and broadcasting or printing of any news items, editorial, article, writings or other readings, audio-visual materials, by any means including electronic publication, broadcasting and press, shall be censored.” Another important section states: “No newspaper, periodical or press shall be closed, seized or be cancelled the registration for printing and publishing any news items, articles, editorial, writings or other reading materials.”<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 370.

<sup>8</sup> Bhandari.

<sup>9</sup> Kunda Dixit, interviewed by Julia Heming, *Columbia Journalism Review*, 30 Sept. 2005 <[http://www.cjr.org/the\\_water\\_cooler/kunda\\_dixit\\_on\\_resisting\\_press.php](http://www.cjr.org/the_water_cooler/kunda_dixit_on_resisting_press.php)>.

<sup>10</sup> “Interim Constitution 2007,” *Federation of Nepali Journalists* <<http://www.fnjnepal.org/index.php?cid=83>>.

Has this been followed? Regarding the government, it has. The state itself has made no restrictions on the press. However, political parties have engaged in imposing various forms of censorship. In August 2007, the All Nepal Communication, Printing and Publications Workers' Union (CPPWU), a Maoist-affiliated trade union, effectively shut down production on *The Himalayan Times* and *Annapurna Post* (*The Himalayan Times*' sister publication) over labor disputes.<sup>11</sup> As a result, *The Himalayan Times* and *Annapurna Post* were not able to release broadsheets between August 12 and August 15. By August 16, the dispute had been resolved and both newspapers were back on newsstands. More recently, in May 2010 Maoists torched a van carrying copies of *República* and *Nagarik*, in response to articles discussing Maoist involvement in the abduction of Dr. Bhakta Man Shrestha.<sup>12</sup> While these actions are not coming from the state per se, they are coming from political parties involved in the state.

### **A Brief History: Nepali Politics and the Constituent Assembly**

In 2008, elections were held for the Constituent Assembly, the constitution-writing body provided for in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed between the government and the rebel Maoists in 2006 that ended the 10-year long Maoist insurgency. The Maoists emerged as the largest party, a surprise to many. The Interim Constitution of 2007 set a provision for the Constituent Assembly to be active for two years after the date of its first meeting, which was held on May 28, 2008. As of the time of writing, the Constituent Assembly's work has not been completed; this necessitated some provision to prevent the disintegration of the government and address the fears of a new outbreak of war, which was on the minds of many. The month of May

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<sup>11</sup> "Maoist unionists halt THT, AP publication," *Kathmandu Post* (Kathmandu, Nepal), 13 August 2007.

<sup>12</sup> "Van burnt with two inside," *República* (Kathmandu, Nepal), 30 May 2010.

2010 was full of discussions on the CA, which effectively held the future of the country in its hands.

## **Methodology**

The articles on front pages were ranked as ‘major’ and ‘minor’ stories. ‘Major’ stories are classified as those with a large headline – typically set apart by bold or italicized font, or all capital letters – and a significant amount of text on the front page, typically using multiple columns. ‘Minor’ stories are those who are inset into larger articles or are short paragraphs, usually along the left or right sidebar. The typical designation is three to four major stories on each front page, with minor stories occupying any remaining space on the page. Also, images (photographs and political cartoons) occupying a large amount of space on the page were treated in a similar manner as full-length articles.

## **Analysis of *Kathmandu Post*: Front Page**

During the month of May 2010, *Kathmandu Post* devoted a significant amount of its front page real estate to the upcoming deadline for the Constituent Assembly’s term and the assorted political issues, events, and debates that occurred in tandem with the term deadline. On most days in the month, at least half of the front page stories were on topics relating to the CA term extension and/or the peace process. Throughout the duration of the Maoist general strike that occurred the first week of May, *Kathmandu Post*’s front page was saturated with coverage of the strike.



Once the strike ended, the paper remained focused on the major political debates occurring at the time. Many of the articles seem to reiterate what has already been said on these topics, providing a great deal of repetition. In that manner, it would be easy for a reader to pick up the paper once and have a general understanding of the political situation as-is, but for daily readers, the repetition only highlights how much things have been stalled in the government and CA.

One of the most prevalent topics discussed is the CA extension, which was focused on in approximately 16 front page articles between May 9, the day strike coverage ended in the papers, and May 31. As the expiration of the CA's tenure was the most pressing issue during that time frame, it is understandable that this would be the most prevalent topic. Also, particularly as time passed and the CA deadline loomed closer, coverage of the extension became increasingly prevalent.

An early article on the possibility of extending the CA came on May 12 in the top story on the page, "Prez urges PM to look sharp, avert crisis". As the title implies, the article discusses how the president and prime minister met to discuss the constitutional process, with the president urging the prime minister to seek consensus between the major parties and start working to amend the interim constitution to allow for a term extension. More directly, the paper stated, "Nepal told Yadav that it is now impossible to promulgate the new constitution within the stipulated time frame, and, as such, the CA tenure needs to be extended."<sup>13</sup> A few days later on May 15, the debate started in the news on how long a potential extension should be, although there was still no agreement of any sort on extension.

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<sup>13</sup> "Prez urges PM to look sharp, avert crisis," *Kathmandu Post*, 12 May 2010.

A May 18 article which also was the main story on the front page, focused on the issue of CA extension. It gives some background on how the CA tenure was structured within the interim constitution, which is the first time in this time frame that this explanation has occurred. Other articles between this date and May 29 (the day the extension was reported in the papers) placed emphasis on extension before the various issues related to it. Only two days within that time frame failed to have a major story discussing the CA extension.

Many of the articles, however, tie multiple topics together. The most common topics included in debates on the CA extension include the issue of consensus, formation of a new unity government and resignation of the prime minister; the status of the peace process and the issue of integrating former PLA combatants into national security forces. The previously mentioned May 15 article, which was the top story of the day entitled “Allies at variance over CA tenure,” discusses not only the debate over the length of the CA term extension, but also the importance of consensus in continuing the constitution-writing process, with Nepali Congress Spokesman Arjun Narsingh KC being quoted as saying, “If there is consensus among parties, we can have a statute within six months. If not, even a six-year extension would be insufficient”<sup>14</sup>. In this manner, *Kathmandu Post* does an excellent job of showing how intertwined these various political issues are.

Even in articles where the CA extension is not the main concern, it still is drawn into the topic under discussion. The second story on May 16 entitled “Congress, UML may yet capitulate: Maoist leader” mostly discusses intra-party debates on integration and the selection of a potential new prime minister, but at the end of the article a Maoist party leader was cited, discussing the possibility of extending the CA’s tenure in response to the other issues mentioned.

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<sup>14</sup> “Allies at variance over CA tenure,” *Kathmandu Post*, 15 May 2010.

The following day, the main article discussed Nepali Congress discussions regarding leadership of the new government, also mentioning at the end the inter-party debate on the length the term extension should be. A secondary article the same day discussed Maoist debates on the political system (consensus versus majority), also citing the Maoist stance on CA extension at the end.

The second most prevalent topic discussed as a main topic in large front page articles is the issue of the peace process and the formation of a unity government. As with the CA extension, this was discussed many times alongside other topics, especially as issues of integration and the resignation of the prime minister are deeply tied into the peace process and formation of a unity government. Coverage of the formation of a unity government started early in the month, especially as it was one of the focal points of the Maoist general strike starting at the beginning of the month. A May 5 article titled “NC, UML tread common turf” discussed how Nepali Congress and UML began to show support for consensus. As this article was published in the midst of the strike, the NC/UML discussion focused on ending the strike by holding talks on the issue of forming a consensus government. The article also reports that the prime minister agreed to quit after his party suggested that there was no alternative. After the CA extension was passed, debates on the resignation of the prime minister began in earnest as that was one of the stipulations of the three-point agreement made when extending the CA term.

The largest debate that appears when discussing the prime minister and the formation of a national consensus/unity government is that opponents of the prime minister insisted that his resignation would pave the way for the unity government. Between May 5 and May 30, there were 8 articles specifically dealing with the issue of consensus, many of them tied to the issue of the prime minister. The bulk of these articles discussed political debates between parties over a) whether the prime minister should resign or not and b) who would become the new prime

minister after Nepal resigns. *Kathmandu Post* provided a wide array of views, discussing every party's position on the two issues over that time period.

Articles covering various declarations, statements, and other public posturing by the Maoists were also prevalent during this time. Excluding the Maoist general strike at the beginning of the month, as it is natural that the party would be discussed in the process of reporting on the strike, *Kathmandu Post* covered various stories on the Maoists between the end of the strike and the end of the month. In the course of its reporting, the paper consistently alternated between stories critical of the Maoists and stories explaining the Maoist defense for certain events, policies, and statements.

In a trend quite unusual for established, respected newspapers, *Kathmandu Post* occasionally places editorial or commentary pieces on the front page. While they are generally labeled as such, it does place a strain on credibility as it may appear as trying to pass opinion off as fact. Over the course of a one-month period, five such stories appeared. Some were labeled, appearing as 'Analysis' or 'Editorial'; however, others were not set apart in any manner.

A May 2 article by Prashant Jha ("Avid ears soak in Red rhetoric") appears at the bottom of the page, documenting the Maoist May Day rally. However, the article reads much more like a narrative than a general news article. At the end, the author poses a question to his readers- "Will we again make the mistake of not believing what the Maoists say?"<sup>15</sup> By raising a question within the article, it ceases to be an unbiased source of news but a vehicle for opinions. The question itself implies that the author believes that the Maoists *should* be listened to. The

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<sup>15</sup> Prashant Jha, "Avid ears soak in Red rhetoric," *Kathmandu Post*, 2 May 2010.

article asserts more than a neutral tone, and generally articles as such should not appear on the front page.

Another similar front page story is “Gobbledygook had all writhing,” which appeared on May 29, after the CA extension passed. The article appeared in the middle page and discussed the extensions and the limited number of CA members actually involved in the deal. Despite the factual aspects of the article, it still reads more like a narrative or op-ed than a straight news piece. The previous day, *Kathmandu Post* ran a pure editorial piece (labeled as such) on the front page, in a prominent position above the fold.<sup>16</sup> While minor, these actions still play a role in affecting the newspaper’s credibility as a neutral, unbiased source of news.

### **Analysis of *República*: Front Page**

In the month of May 2010, *República* gave a large amount of coverage to the CA extension, significantly more than most other topics. The only other topic discussed on the front page in as much detail were Maoist statements, events, and other occurrences. After the end of the Maoist general strike, *República* featured a front page story on the CA term deadline and extension nearly every day, particularly as the deadline came nearer. Stories on the front page focused more on the general terms of the extension, rather than political bickering over what should be done before extension is approved. In general, only the issue of the prime minister’s resignation was discussed at any length in these front page articles. The stories also had a decent share of information regarding Maoist objections to the extension, which mostly tie in with the issue of the prime minister.

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<sup>16</sup> “Don’t put nation on razor’s edge,” *Kathmandu Post*, 28 May 2010.

As mentioned, coverage of the Maoists was quite prevalent on the front page, almost as much as the CA extension. Many headlines focused on statements made by Dahal. Following is a selected list of front page articles over time focusing on Dahal's various statements:

- 'Ball in ruling parties' court: Dahal' (May 9, 2010)
- 'Dahal sorry for hurting Kathmanduites' (May 13, 2010)
- 'CA to be in dormant mode if term not extended: Dahal' (May 21, 2010)

These three stories' headlines explicitly place the focus on Dahal, although they do discuss other people, parties, and viewpoints. In this manner, these may be a sign of an overinflated importance placed on Dahal and the Maoists. Whether this is in a negative or positive way will be discussed later.

There were a few other important topics discussed on the front page, although not nearly at as much length as the CA extension and Maoists. Those topics include intra-party and inter-party talks, the issue of the prime minister (also mentioned in issues regarding the CA extension), the peace process and formation of a unity government, and integration of PLA combatants. These same topics were also discussed in various minor articles sprinkled throughout the front page across the month.

### **Comparative Analysis: Front Page**

One of the most important aspects of the comparison between front page stories in *Kathmandu Post* and *República* is the aspect of political bias present in each paper as seen through the articles. Another important aspect of comparison is the level of detail within articles. Examining the consistency of detail provides a lens through which to view a newspaper's credibility and respectability. A newspaper that simply states the basic facts but does not begin

to scratch the surface on issues fails in portraying a detailed, in-depth analysis of the topics discussed. In that manner, a newspaper or reporter that fails to investigate its claims can be seen as a more untrustworthy source than one that fully researches the topics and provides a great amount of detail to the reader.

In terms of political bias, on a most basic level I have registered the number of times each political party appears in the top three headlines on the front page of each paper, from May 1 to May 31. For *Kathmandu Post*, ‘Maoist’ or ‘Maoists’ appears in the headlines a total of 13 times. References to Dahal specifically occurred 5 times. Also occurring 5 times was ‘NC’, and ‘UML’ appeared 4 times. The numbers are different when looking at *República*. In that newspaper, ‘Maoist’ or ‘Maoists’ appeared a total of 25 times. ‘Dahal’ appeared 6 times, and ‘NC’ and ‘UML’ were each only mentioned twice in the month-long span. In terms of percentage, *Kathmandu Post*’s mention of ‘Maoists’ on the front page was 48% of the total amount of political parties covered, and *República*’s mentions consisted of approximately 71% of the total. Clearly, *República*’s coverage is more disproportionate than that of *Kathmandu Post*.

In terms of actual content of those articles, many of *República*’s articles using ‘Maoist’ or ‘Maoists’ in the headline have taken a negative stance on Maoists. *Kathmandu Post* does this as well, but not to quite the same extent as *República*. This is important because headlines are what initially draw the reader into the article. For a reader looking for news on a specific party, seeing the name in the headline will draw them in. Despite the fact that other front page articles may shed a positive light on a party, the negative story using the party name in the headline will draw more attention.

One example of this is a comparison of two front page articles from May 10. The two articles were both the top headline on their respective papers, discussing a violent clash in which police, media personnel, and Maoists were all injured. However, the title of the headline gives each story a definitive emphasis. The article in *Kathmandu Post* is titled “Red rage rules at Maitighar,” whereas *República*’s article on the topic is titled “Maoists attack mediapersons.” The titles themselves reflect the bias.

“Red rage rules at Maitighar” discusses the clash in Maitighar, discussing Maoist attacks on civilians and journalists. However, it also discusses Maoist claims of provocation by others. “Maoists attack mediapersons” is quite anti-Maoist, not providing any Maoist statements on the attack. One section of the article, describing the attack, says that Maoists “mercilessly attacked a photo-journalist” and “brutally attacked” another. This language displays a clear dislike of Maoists, intent on showing the level of brutality party cadres displayed. Another telling quote appeared early in the article: “A day after Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal spat venom at the media following withdrawal of the general strike, agitators on Sunday followed suit by venting their frustrations against media persons in the capital.”<sup>17</sup> This statement seems to imply that Dahal encouraged them to do this in some way.

Apart from the Maoists, Nepali Congress and UML were also mentioned in headlines. However, the treatment of Nepali Congress and UML are considerably different than the treatment of Maoists. In both papers, treatment of Nepali Congress and UML have been either neutral or positive towards one or both of the parties. *República*’s articles have been neutral, with one article taking a neutral stance on the Maoists as well within (“No govt change sans accord: NC tells Maoists,” 4 May 2010). The articles in *Kathmandu Post* have been either

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<sup>17</sup> “Maoists attack mediapersons,” *República*, 10 May 2010.



neutral, or taking a slightly positive stance on all parties. The ‘positive’ aspect comes out of the positive dialogue expressed by parties that is documented within the articles. For example, a May 5 article in *Kathmandu Post* stated that ‘for the first time’, Nepali Congress and UML expressed their readiness for a consensus government and agreed to resolve the stalemate through a package deal.<sup>18</sup> This article, rather than discussing parties’ sticking points, mentioned forward progress that parties were making.

*República* also makes a great deal of use of political cartoons on its front page. While *Kathmandu Post* has also featured some political cartoons, the two papers show different political thoughts through these cartoons. In the month-long span, *República* featured four political cartoons on the top of the front page. Each of these cartoons featured an image of Dahal, portraying him in a negative or critical light. In contrast, *Kathmandu Post*’s front page cartoons that appeared above the fold on the page either did not cite political parties at all, or portrayed leaders from all three major parties.

One of the most charged cartoons appeared on May 10 in *República*, the same day the media reported on a violent clash in Maitighar, in which journalists were attacked. The accompanying article states, “A day after Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal spat venom at the media following withdrawal of the general strike, agitators on Sunday followed suit by venting their frustrations against media persons in the capital.”<sup>19</sup> This statement, combined with the cartoon, makes it clear that *República*’s take on the situation is that Dahal intentionally incited his cadres to specifically attack journalists.

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<sup>18</sup> “NC, UML tread common turf,” *Kathmandu Post*, 5 May 2010.

<sup>19</sup> Sundar Khanal, “Maoists attack mediapersons,” *República*, 10 May 2010.

Figure 1: May 10 political cartoon in *República*



Other cartoons are equally as critical of Dahal. A May 1 cartoon displays an image of a May Day rally, with everyone holding a ‘May Day’ sign and Dahal in front holding a ‘Me Day’ sign. The implication here is that the purpose of the Maoist-led May Day rally was for Dahal’s own self gratification and self promotion.<sup>20</sup> Another one appeared May 9, the day after the papers reported on the peace rally held in Kathmandu to protest the Maoist general strike. This cartoon portrays a sheepish-looking Dahal offering a small olive branch to an oversized, bandaged, slightly angry-looking dove likewise holding an olive branch. One conclusion from this is that Dahal was wrong for starting the general strike, and that in realizing its failure, he has come crawling back to apologize to the people, who showed up in great numbers to the peace rally the previous day.

<sup>20</sup> For images, please see Appendix II.

As mentioned, political cartoons in *Kathmandu Post* are more politically neutral, although still critical of whatever situation they are depicting. Throughout May, there were only 2 political cartoons appearing above the fold as a large image, both towards the end of the month. The first appeared on May 20, giving a critical take on the process of consensus in the CA.

**Figure 2: May 20 political cartoon in *Kathmandu Post***



In the figure, two bulls representing consensus are going head-to-head, as statute drafting is off to the side, looking helpless. The implication here is that political bickering has negatively affected the constitution drafting process, with it getting completely ignored in the mess. The other political cartoon appearing in *Kathmandu Post* in May was on the 28<sup>th</sup> and shows political leaders looking over a baby (the CA), stating, “Let us continue the dialogue! It’s still alive &

kicking!” A vulture is seen over the scene, intently staring at the baby. It reflects the last-minute dialogue that was necessary to enable the extension of the CA, while giving a less-than-positive portrayal of the figures involved.

A final difference between the two papers in terms of front page coverage is the levels of coverage on national, regional, and international events. In general, *República* gives a great deal more of international coverage on the front page than does *Kathmandu Post*. When *Kathmandu Post* covers international events on the front page, those events are usually regional, involving events occurring in South Asia.

Editors from both newspapers explained the process of selecting stories for the front page of the newspaper. In terms of international coverage, an associate editor of *República* stated that anything that the staff deems important is given priority, even if it is beyond the national borders.<sup>21</sup> *Kathmandu Post*'s editor, Akhilesh Upadhyay, explained the lack of international stories as a result of the editors' contexts. As Nepalis, he said, they are very political, often giving importance to stories of that caliber precedence due to their own interests in the topic. However, he did note that in the last week of July, there were at least four international news stories on the front page.<sup>22</sup> Their coverage of international events does seem to be changing, then.

In general coverage, Upadhyay describes *Kathmandu Post*'s front page content as “spasmodic, event-driven.” In terms of the heavy political coverage, his criticism is, “There’s a view in the newsroom that politics sells, but it doesn’t have to be so event-driven. I often tell them that it should be more proactive than reactive coverage. It’s more a lack of imagination on

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<sup>21</sup> Jayshi.

<sup>22</sup> Upadhyay.

the part of the editors more than anything.”<sup>23</sup> In terms of the readership, Upadhyay states that readers don’t care what news is on the front page, as long as it is good news. The main concern here would be producing quality news to put on the front page, not news on any particular topic.

Damakant Jayshi, Associate Editor of *República*, discussed a different system of selecting front page stories. He stated as most of the team is from *Kathmandu Post*, they decided to change the style of politically-heavy front pages for their newspaper. One instance of that is featuring more stories on the social front. Jayshi cited three series of stories that *República* runs, one of which is ‘Reporting Heroes’. According to him, this focuses on the ‘unsung heroes’ of Nepal, those who have done something good but haven’t been reported yet. *República* also ensures to cover any significant news, like if a deal has been made or broken, or if someone has said something new. The staff also tracks stories online, giving them a picture of what stories readers prefer.<sup>24</sup>

These editors’ perspectives on the front page reflect observations made through examining the month of May. *República* often features human interest pieces, sometimes tying them to political events. Often throughout the course of the strike, pieces covered the effect of the bandh on residents of Kathmandu, as well as those involved in the strike. One notable story appeared on May 14, titled “Hard-hit Bhariyas question their sorry state.”<sup>25</sup> The article focuses on Bhariyas, or porters, and how the bandh negatively affected their way of life. *Kathmandu Post* has also had a much larger portion of the front page dedicated to political stories on a daily basis, which at times led to repetition of the main points in a number of stories.

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<sup>23</sup> Upadhyay.

<sup>24</sup> Jayshi.

<sup>25</sup> Avash Karmacharya, “Hard-hit Bhariyas question their sorry state,” *República*, 14 May 2010.

## **Analysis of *Kathmandu Post*: Editorial**

The editorial analysis was done in two parts. Unsigned editorials were examined as one group, as these are representative of the newspaper's view as an entity. Signed editorials are the opinion of the individual author, yet can also be seen as reflective of the type of opinions the newspaper supports. Typically, each issue of the newspaper features one unsigned editorial, and a number of signed ones. For this analysis, the focus was solely on editorials discussing political issues.

*Kathmandu Post*'s staff (unsigned) editorials showed consistency in its political viewpoints. Many of the editorials urged the parties to find a path forward to extend the CA. In some, the editorial expressed the view that parties should show flexibility towards Maoist demands. During the strike, editorials kept calling for the end of the strike and the return of the Maoists to the negotiating table. One editorial published on May 4 entitled "No time to lose" stated, "Once again, we urge both the sides to realise the gravity of the situation and sit down for talks in a spirit of compromise and settle the outstanding issues at the earliest."<sup>26</sup> This is typical of the staff editorials in *Kathmandu Post*.

One editorial that urged a more sympathetic Maoist stance is "The safest bet," which appeared on May 19. The article states:

The other parties for their part would do well to demonstrate greater flexibility towards the Maoists' demand for a national unity government. Their recent actions seem to demonstrate that they are intent on driving the Maoists into a corner. This could have a serious detrimental impact on the peace process.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> "No time to lose," *Kathmandu Post*, 4 May 2010.

<sup>27</sup> "The safest bet," *Kathmandu Post*, 19 May 2010.

Another article, “Things to do,” is critical of the other major players (Nepali Congress and UML), saying “The current governing coalition was formed with the single objective of keeping the Maoists out of power and attempting to weaken them.”<sup>28</sup> Over the course of the month, these articles show that *Kathmandu Post*’s stance is that the ruling parties must account for the Maoists – especially as they are the largest single party in the CA – and that all parties need to ignore political fighting and work together to complete the peace process.

The signed editorials are also consistent in their viewpoints, considering the variety of writers contributing to these pages. These editorials in general show a mistrust of all political parties, and are critical of them as well. For example, a May 4 editorial by Anil Bhattarai states, “It is no less ironical that while Nepal’s media, political commentators and political party leaders were creating hype about the Maoists’ supposed plan of violent state capture, the student wings of two major ruling coalitions were busy breaking each other’s heads on Kathmandu’s busy thoroughfares.”<sup>29</sup> In short, it is calling out the hypocrisy of the ruling parties for criticizing the Maoists for their violent actions while ignoring the violent actions of their own parties. Another article asks “Why are the Maoists and UML-Congress bent on aborting the peace process...?”<sup>30</sup> Here, the criticism is on all parties; the statement is that each of the three major parties are at fault for the state of the country currently.

There are also a few that are critical of Prime Minister Nepal. One in particular is a May 4 editorial by Aditya Adhikari, which says that “the position Nepal finds himself in now is equivalent to the one he held between 2004 and 2005...” as an instrument of the Indian

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<sup>28</sup> “Things to do,” *Kathmandu Post*, 21 May 2010.

<sup>29</sup> Anil Bhattarai, “The long haul,” *Kathmandu Post*, 4 May 2010.

<sup>30</sup> Pramod Mishra, “Grammar of failure,” *Kathmandu Post*, 5 May 2010.

establishment and traditionalist Nepali forces.<sup>31</sup> Other articles discuss his leadership skills, and many discuss the debate around his resignation in a positive light.

Despite the numerous articles that may appear to be sympathetic to the Maoists, there are some editorials that are outwardly critical of the Maoists as well. One of these is “Mauled by the mob,” which appeared in the May 6 issue. The author, Bipin Adhikari, discusses the Maoists’ quest for ruling power in the government, stating “The Maoists have not been able to garner an absolute majority in parliament and move a no-confidence motion in order to pull the government down. Yet, they want to do it by methods which are not constitutional.”<sup>32</sup> By viewing these editorials, a pattern emerges that shows *Kathmandu Post* providing coverage of all the major political viewpoints in play.

### **Analysis of *República*: Editorial**

*República*’s staff editorials, similar to *Kathmandu Post*, hold a consistent line throughout. Much of the criticism in the editorials is directed towards the Maoists, which is also seen in its news articles on the front page. Many of the opinion pieces discussing the extension of the CA emphasize the editorial stance that there should be no conditions attached to its extension, conditions being a demand of the Maoists. An article appearing early in the month blatantly stated the editorial stance:

That he would not resign unless and until the three parties come to a reasonable consensus on a wide range of contentious issues that are proving as impediments to the constitution-writing process. And rightly so! We have always maintained that the Maoists can either oust a government by registering a no-confidence motion or through a

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<sup>31</sup> Aditya Adhikari, “The lure of power,” *Kathmandu Post*, 4 May 2010.

<sup>32</sup> Bipin Adhikari, “Mauled by the mob,” *Kathmandu Post*, 6 May 2010.



consensus. There is no reason why he should give in to the Maoist dogmatism of trying to remove a government through the streets.<sup>33</sup>

The article is definitely critical of the Maoists, going beyond the usual format of an editorial article by inserting personal exclamations (“And rightly so!”). One good thing the article does is clearly lay out exactly what the editorial stance on this issue is.

The critique of Maoist demands continues throughout the month. In a definitive statement, the last line of a May 3 editorial states, “It is time for the Maoists to be flexible.”<sup>34</sup> The paper responded to continuing Maoist demands on May 18: “The Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and its leaders have proved themselves incapable of rising above petty blackmailing and bullying. Not only has the party come up with a new condition to resolving the political deadlock, some of its leaders, as is their wont have resorted to bullying.”<sup>35</sup> This is fairly critical; yet serious or consistent critiques of Nepali Congress or UML are not seen.

However, a few statements supporting the Maoists have appeared. Significantly, the front page editorial ‘Win-win is still possible’, published on May 9, states their belief that the ruling coalition should reach out to the Maoists with a fresh proposal. It also agrees, “As Maoist Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal told the mass meeting at Tudikhel today, we too believe that the ball is now in the court of the ruling parties.”<sup>36</sup> This was certainly a refreshing take on Maoist coverage, and may be part of the paper’s quest to prove themselves as a neutral, rather than anti-Maoist, newspaper.

Criticism of all political leaders is also a theme running through staff editorials. A May 29 editorial discussing the last-minute CA extension opines that “we can rightfully blame the

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<sup>33</sup> “Strike Deal Urgently,” *Republika*, 2 May 2010.

<sup>34</sup> “Ball in Maoists’ Court,” *Republika*, 3 May 2010.

<sup>35</sup> “Extend CA Tenure First,” *Republika*, 18 May 2010.

<sup>36</sup> “Win-win is still possible,” *Republika*, 9 May 2010.

leaders for where we are today but we must also thank them for salvaging the country from the brink, at least for now.”<sup>37</sup> A previously mentioned May 18 article, “Extend CA Tenure First,” calls upon the other major parties to fulfill their responsibilities: “The other parties, meanwhile, cannot overlook the fact that they too have a huge responsibility and that they have to work in tandem with the Maoists.”<sup>38</sup> This article places emphasis on all parties for cooperation, implying that the ruling coalition has not been making the effort as well.

Likewise, the signed editorials follow the same line as the staff editorials. These pieces are critical of politicians in general, and Maoists in specifics. Generally they avoid clear-cut support of any party; however, some articles have argued that Nepali Congress and UML actions in regards to standing their ground are justified in reaction to Maoist actions.

Many of the critical articles have come in relation to debates on the CA extension. Dr. Alok K Bohara’s May 11 article titled “Moving debates to Parliament” criticizes the current process of political deal-making. Bohara argues for transparency, stating that these deals “should be done by taking the debate from Radisson Hotel or some foreign embassy to the Parliament.”<sup>39</sup> This is critical of all parties, as newspaper reports discuss meetings between heads of all the major parties, and even many of the smaller parties, at various diplomats’ offices or homes of officials, among other locations.

A May 5 editorial by Dipendra Jha blames the Maoists for the failings occurring in the CA, saying that the Maoists have been purposely sabotaging the CA to avoid adopting a hybrid “centrist” constitution that would be in opposition to the party’s interests.<sup>40</sup> This is a strong

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<sup>37</sup> “Midnight deal,” *República*, 29 May 2010.

<sup>38</sup> “Extend CA Tenure First,” *República*, 18 May 2010.

<sup>39</sup> Dr Alok K Bohara, “Moving debates to Parliament,” *República*, 11 May 2010.

<sup>40</sup> Dipendra Jha, “Defending the Constituent Assembly,” *República*, 5 May 2010.

stance to take, and contributes to the perception of *República* as anti-Maoist. Another editorial criticizes Maoist political posturings: “For Maoists, means always justify the end. Their end is absolute power, and they are desperate to have it.”<sup>41</sup> One comment on this is the other side – other parties are also seeking power, which explains much of the political bickering that has been occurring. However, this is not mentioned here.

Despite the general perception of the newspaper as anti-Maoist, there have been some articles that have been sympathetic to the Maoist situation, or at least critical of other parties’ stance on the Maoists. One editorial appearing on May 1 states that to label Maoists as undemocratic would essentially be an invitation to catastrophe, not providing any solution.<sup>42</sup> This is more of a caution to the other parties than anything, yet is an article that refrains from criticism of the party. In terms of the general strike, some editorials have shown sympathy towards those involved in the strike, while also noting the hardships placed upon the residents of Kathmandu especially during this time.

Throughout the month of May, there has been one editorial in *República* that has stood out in particular compared to all other editorials. It was written by CK Lal, published on May 17 under the title “The Coming Anarchy.” This piece discusses at length Maoist successes since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, as well as the failings of Nepali Congress and UML in terms of organizing rallies:

The UCPN (Maoists) does have a command and control system resembling a military organization. Had it not been so, it would have been impossible to keep mammoth crowds that besieged Kathmandu for six days under strict discipline... When UML tried protests of much smaller scale in early nineties, almost all footpath railings were

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<sup>41</sup> Jainendra Jeevan, “In, Around & After The Maoist Protests,” *República*, 13 May 2010.

<sup>42</sup> Sukhdev Shah, “Making *Loktantra* work,” *República*, 1 May 2010.

uprooted, telephone switchboxes were set afire, stone-pelting crowds broke windowpanes and the police became biggest victims of excesses of protestors.<sup>43</sup>

It is fairly unusual in any paper to see an article that is unapologetically defensive of the Maoists. Readers noticed. Two days later, two letters to the editor were quite critical of Lal's piece, one calling him 'confused' and another labeling him as "...the new darling of the Maoists..."<sup>44</sup> This gives an insight as to the political leanings of the readership of the paper. If newspapers have a certain political bias, generally its readers will share the same bias. With readers reacting that strongly to Lal's piece, it implies that like its readers, the paper takes a critical stance on the Maoists as well.

### **Comparative Analysis: Editorial**

There are two editorials, both published on May 24, that provide an interesting contrast to each other. The article in *Kathmandu Post* is a staff editorial titled 'Save the CA'. In contrast, *República's* article is 'Let CA Expire', by Dr. Hari Bansha Dulal. The greatest contrast between these two is in the title. Both articles seem certain that the CA will be extended, despite the fact that the deadline was only days away at the time of writing. However, their take on it is quite contrary. Dulal's article is cynical, stating that "the extension also extends flow of pay and perks," implying that the extension was conducted for that reason above others (such as the continuation of constitution-writing and conclusion of the peace process).<sup>45</sup>

Apart from that, the articles offer two interesting, contrasting statements. *Kathmandu Post's* article states, "To do this [allow CA to expire], however, would be to enter into a

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<sup>43</sup> CK Lal, "The Coming Anarchy," *República*, 17 May 2010.

<sup>44</sup> Letter to the editor, *República*, 19 May 2010.

<sup>45</sup> Dr Hari Bansha Dulal, "Let CA Expire," *República*, 24 May 2010.

dangerous territory, of endless scenarios of extreme instability.”<sup>46</sup> This highlights the urgency in which the newspaper views the necessity of extending the CA. Contrary to this, Dulal states that without coming to a consensus on contentious issues, it doesn’t make any sense to extend the CA. Each argument has a valid point, and provides an interesting take on each viewpoint.

There are contrasts between each paper’s staff editorials and the signed editorials. In terms of staff editorials, *Kathmandu Post* is generally critical of Nepali Congress and UML, and supportive (or at least sympathetic) to the Maoists. In contrast, *República* is critical of politicians in general, and Maoists. The other parties do not face any significant criticism in these editorials from *República*.

Regarding the signed editorials, in *Kathmandu Post* these seem to be critical of everyone, placing blame on all politicians for the failures observed. The editorials featured in *República* are also critical of politicians as a whole, but in terms of parties they are critical of Maoists and defensive of actions taken by Nepali Congress and UML. These are observations on the majority; as seen there are articles that deviate from these themes (see CK Lal’s piece discussed above). Overall, the editorial page of *Kathmandu Post* also appears to take a much more hopeful stance on the political situation than does *República*.

## **Key Findings**

One of the key findings of the research was on the political bias present in each newspaper. Based on an examination of *Kathmandu Post* and *República* for the month of May 2010, *Kathmandu Post* is fairly neutral politically, criticizing all major parties. It also provides a

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<sup>46</sup> “Save the CA,” *Kathmandu Post*, 24 May 2010.

wide spread of coverage on differing viewpoints, which may provide the most accurate depiction of political events as they occur. *República*, in contrast, has a definitive negative take on the Maoists, being more prevalent than any criticism of other parties. Also, its negative coverage on the Maoists is greater than *Kathmandu Post*'s negative coverage of the party.

In contrast to public opinion, however, *República* disputes its image of being an anti-Maoist newspaper. Jayshi, in discussing the newspaper, stated: "We see ourselves as a paper that values democratic norms, rule of law, and of course, respect for human rights. Above all, we feel that all the parties have to abide by constitutional norms and democratic values."<sup>47</sup> In the course of that, he says, their focus on the Maoists is due to the paper's commitment to human rights and ongoing Maoist actions contrary to the values of human rights. Also, *República* since it was launched, has criticized any party it finds violating any norms. He continues to say that those that accuse *República* of being anti-Maoist are giving a "free ride to Maoist atrocities," along with the failure to meet previous commitments, especially the 12 point agreement signed with the Seven Party Alliance in 2005.

Another significant finding is in regards to the business ties of newspapers. In interviews with a number of individuals involved in the field of media, the relations between business and print media were clearly defined. Although it was not a focus of this research, *The Himalayan Times* is generally known to cover stories friendly to India. As its publishers are Indian, naturally they would want to protect their own interests.

The general consensus among those involved in Nepali media is that the structure of the media houses in terms of a business angle affects the reporting. A former journalist from

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<sup>47</sup> Jayshi.

*República* stated in discussions of Kantipur that as a large corporation, it has a corporate interest to protect. In his view, there has not been any instances of intervention in editorial decisions.<sup>48</sup>

Regardless, the corporate interests are still important.

Advertising is another way for external players to influence the political lines of newspapers. Comparing *The Himalayan Times* and *Kathmandu Post*, the former is more full of advertisements than the latter. The Indian Embassy, which has its own role in the politics of Nepal, has reportedly instructed Indian-owned businesses to not have ties with *Kathmandu Post* and Kantipur in general. However, since *Kantipur* is so big, it is unavoidable to advertise in that paper. However, *Kathmandu Post*'s market is small enough where advertisers don't need to advertise in there. *República*, the newest daily, has received ads from India due to its (perceived) anti-Maoist stance. According to Deepak Thapa, director of Social Science Baha in Kathmandu, "The Indian factor is very big, so it pays to adopt an editorial line like that."<sup>49</sup> In a way, however, the lack of ad revenue in *Kathmandu Post* may be what enables it to take such a neutral editorial line. *Kathmandu Post* has commented on its lack of ad revenues, citing its ability to survive on the presence of a stable subscription base.<sup>50</sup>

The importance of strong financials in the media is not lost on those outside of direct relations with the media. In a discussion on the media's portrayal of the PLA, Pasang, the chief of the PLA, stated that the media always gives more space to those who invest large amounts of money, as they want to keep their investors happy. He argues that as the PLA does not pay for publicity in any form, there are very few media outlets that view the PLA in a positive light.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Bhandari.

<sup>49</sup> Deepak Thapa (scholar) in discussion with the author, 26 July 2010.

<sup>50</sup> Upadhyay.

<sup>51</sup> Pasang in discussion with the author, 8 July 2010.

As there are a lack of positive articles on the PLA, his argument sounds more than valid; however, further investigation would be needed to discern a definite correlation.

This has been a criticism of the Nepali media system, both inside and outside the system. Thapa describes publishers as businessmen. He believes that in Nepali media, “we need publishers, not owners.” Direction in the papers is needed, which is what a publisher should provide but doesn’t. Continuing, he says, “Out here we have owners who are named publishers, not quite understanding what a publisher does.”<sup>52</sup> As the history of independent media in Nepal is quite young, however, this may take time to occur.

## **Conclusion**

There are still a number of issues within print media in Nepal. Intimidations, threats, and violence, often from political parties, are still occurring with little reaction outside the media houses themselves. The financial statuses of the newspapers can still be easily manipulated to try to impact the editorial line and political bias of a particular newspaper. However, one thing that must be kept in mind is the young history of independent media in Nepal, which started only after 1990. In 20 years, Nepal’s media has gone leaps and bounds from political-based media, producing solely the party line for distribution.

It is hard for any newspaper to be completely political neutral. Even in well-established media houses in the West, political biases are still apparent, with specific newspapers labeled as ‘left’ or ‘right’. For such young papers (*Kathmandu Post* at 18 years, and *República* at just over a year), they are each doing a considerably good job maintaining a level of neutrality. Editors

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<sup>52</sup> Thapa.



recognize their papers' shortcomings and are working to improve on those. With time, there is an excellent chance that Nepal's media will evolve into the truly independent, neutral outlets that they more than have the potential to be.

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## Appendix I

# JOURNALIST CODE OF CONDUCT 2003 (2060)

### Preamble :

Whereas, it is expedient to revise the existing code of conduct by covering all means of mass media and adjusting timely international practices and norms, with a basic objective of safeguarding the freedoms and rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the Kingdom of Nepal, 2047 (1990) and making the people well-informed, and making the mass media and the journalists more responsive towards the nation and the society, and avoiding misuses of the same, by protecting the freedom of press by means of making the mass media and the journalists responsible and professional for the development of healthy journalism;  
Now, therefore, with the consent of the Nepal Journalist Federation, as well, this Journalist Code of Conduct, 2060 (2003) has been framed and enforced, pursuant to Section 7(b) of the Press Council Act.

### 1. Title, Commencement and Extension:

- (1) This Code of Conduct may be cited as the "Journalist Code of Conduct, 2060 (2003)".
- (2) This Code of Conduct shall commence forthwith.
- (3) This Code of Conduct shall apply to all journalists and communication media working in the Kingdom of Nepal.

### 2. Unless the subject or the context otherwise requires, in this Code of Conduct,-

- (a) "Journalist" means a media worker related with the profession of journalism such as a chief editor, editor, member of editorial board, correspondent, columnist, photo journalist, press cameraman, cartoonist, program producer and runner, costume, scene and language editor associated with activities such as collection, production, edition and transmission of news materials through communication media of any nature like printing, electronic and on-line means.
- (b) "media" includes newspapers, radio and television broadcasts and internet news and thoughtful on-line services operated in the Kingdom of Nepal.
- (c) "Council" means the Press Council-Nepal.

### 3. The journalist and media shall perform the following duties:

- (1) Protection and promotion of press freedom: Being freedom of opinion and expression a basic right of a citizen, to always remain firm, vigilant and alert for its protection and promotion.
- (2) Recognition of human rights and international relations: To enhance protection and promotion of democracy, justice, equality peace and international collaboration and fraternity among friendly nations, while at the same time recognizing rights, interests, principles, norms and practices guaranteed by human rights related international instruments.
- (3) Safeguard and enforcement of the right to information: To always remain active and dedicated to safeguard the right of the people to be well-informed.
- (4) Imparting true and factual information: To impart true, factual, impartial as well as balanced

information in order to achieve the goal of professional journalism.

(5) Editorial freedom: A journalist should have responsibility and accountability for production and impartation of the materials published-broadcast in the media.

(6) Recognition of right to privacy : To recognize personal and professional secrecy except in cases where it causes adverse impact on the public interest.

(7) High professional practice : To exercise high professional practice in order to carry out responsibility, accountability and reliability, being dedicated to the basic norms and principles of journalism.

(8) Decent behaviour: To remain alert for moral, courteous and decent working style and language, while at the same time recognizing social decency in professional practice.

(9) Readiness to rectify errors: Upon information of any error or mistake in publication and broadcast, to rectify such error or mistake as soon as possible, and to give proper place for a refusal or denial or response, accompanied by evidence, and publish-broadcast the same in clear language.

(10) Social responsibility: Social responsibility shall be to render special assistance through flow of information and opinions in the upliftment and development of the disabled, helpless, incapacitated, children, women and backward class, sector, nationalities and minor communities.

(11) Mutual relationship among journalists and media should be professional, healthy, tempered, courteous and harmonious.

4. The journalist and media shall not carry out the following acts:

(1) Not to undermine national integrity: Not to publish and broadcast any news and opinion that may undermine the sovereignty and integrity of the multiethnic, multilingual and multireligious Kingdom of Nepal or jeopardize the harmonious relations subsisting among the peoples of various castes, tribes or communities or contain act of defamation or contempt of court or be contrary to decent public behaviour or morality.

(2) Not to adversely affect social structure : Not to publish and broadcast such deformed and provocative materials as may cause adverse impacts on the social structure and be contrary to professional dignity.

(3) Not to disclose secret source of news: To quote source in presenting any news for the authenticity and reliability of the news; but protecting such secret source being a duty of the journalist, to keep secret the name and identification of such source, except in cases of permission by the source.

(4) Not to use for fulfillment of personal interest: Not to use any information materials, obtained for publication-broadcast of the same, for fulfillment of personal interest.

(5) Not to flow information in a discriminatory manner: Not to flow or impart any news and opinion in such a manner as to discriminate on such grounds as of race, sex, religion, region, language and color.

(6) Not to flow information in a manner to make victim suffer further pain: Not to publish broadcast any news and opinion through the use of language, picture, figure and scene, as well, in such a manner as as to make the victim suffer further pain.

(7) Not to publish name, address and identification of a victim: Not to publish broadcast any news, picture and scene in such a manner as a disclose the name, address and identification of a victim with regard to a sexual crime or social disregard or any hateful event or context.

(8) Not to encourage violence, terrorism and crime: Not to present any news, opinion, picture and scene in a manner to encourage disruption, violence, terrorism and crime and to exaggerate

such activity.

(9) Not to publish and broadcast naked scene and picture in a manner to spread out hatred and provocation: Not to publish any hurt, naked and hatred provoking scene and picture in a manner to spread out nakedness and provocation and not to be contextual.

(10) Not to mention name of the person not related with event: In publishing-broadcasting any news related with any event, not to present such news in a manner to undermine dignity or defame character of a relative or intimate person not related with the event, by attaching the name of such relative or person to such event.

(11) Not to publish unfactual news: Not to distort the fact, confuse for undue benefit, and publish a factless remark as news.

(12) Not to present advertisement as news: Neither to present an advertisement as news nor to refute news by way of advertisement; and a communication media shall not generally refute any news published and broadcast in another media.

(13) Not to use without quoting source: In using any news materials communicated by any news agency or media, not to publish or broadcast the same without quoting such original source.

#### 5. Complaint and complaint procedures:

1) A victim may file a complaint with the council against any journalist and media within the time-limit referred to in sub-section (4), accompanied by factual evidence showing violation of the conducts mentioned in this Code of Conduct. If such a complaint is filed and the Council thinks, upon holding general inquiry, that any act has been done in violation of this Code of Conduct, the Council shall send summons, accompanied by a copy of the complaint, to the accused party, requiring that party to make presence along with evidence, if any, showing innocence, generally within seven days or within such time-limit before seven days as the Council may think fit.

2) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), if any journalist or media publishes and broadcasts any news in a maner to cause negative impacts directly or indirectly on the public interest and concern. The Council may on its own initiate action against such journalist or media, pursuant to this Code of Conduct.

3) Notwithstanding anything contained in sub-section (1), the Council may, after general inquiry as to the complaint and before sending the summons to the accused party, give the concerned journalist or media such necessary direction as to immediately refute the news or beg a pardon or send reasonable reply.

4) If a complaint on publication and broadcast of any news by a journalist and media in violation of this Code of Conduct is not filed within fifteen days of publication and broadcast of such news, such a complain shall not lie. If there is any resonable reason for failing to file a complaint within the time-limit, the Council may entertain a complaint at any time.

5) After a written response has been filed with the Council by the accused party under the above mentioned sub-sections or despite that no response is filed within the specified time-limit, the council shall make decision on that matter within twenty days in general.

6) Prior to making a decision pursuant to sub-section (5), the Council may, if it thinks necessary, summon presence of both the complainant and the accused party and hold discussions between them.

7) If the complainant and the accused party reach a compromise and make a joint request in writing for compromise, the Council may execute compromise and settle the dispute.

## 6. Provision on Decision and Enforcement

If any party is held to have committed a conduct prohibited by clause (b) of Section 3 of this Code of Conduct, the Council shall make decision and take action as follows in a respective manner:-

- 1) The Council shall order the concerned media to publish and broadcast the decision made on the complaint in such form, place and time as may be specified by the Council.
- 2) If the accused party does not carry out the order given under sub-section (1), the Council shall make recommendation to the concerned body to suspend the press pass of such party if that party holds such pass.
- 3) If the accused party does not act under sub-section (1) even after suspension of the press pass pursuant to sub-section (2), the distribution verification committee of the Council shall remove the media of such party from evaluation process.
- 4) If the party does not observe the decision referred to in sub-section (1) even after removing from the evaluation process pursuant to sub-section (3) above, not assistance shall be provided to such party from the welfare fund of the Council.
- 5) If the party does not carry out the act directed under sub-section (1) even after cutting out assistance from the welfare fund pursuant to sub-section (4), the Council shall make recommendation to the concerned body to suspend the facilities to be provided by His Majesty's Government, for a certain period.  
Provided, however, that the Council may, if it thinks necessary, take both actions referred to in sub-sections (4) and (5) at the same time.
- 6) The Council shall express regret over the journalist and media failing to carry out any decision of the Council and publish boardcast this matter publicly.

## 7. Repeal :

The Journalist Code of Conduct, 2055 is hereby repealed.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Federation of Nepali Journalists, "Journalist Code of Conduct 2003 (2060)," *Federation of Nepali Journalists*, 2003 < <http://www.fnjnepal.org/index.php?cid=83>>.

## Appendix II: Political Cartoons

*Kathmandu Post*

May 20



May 28



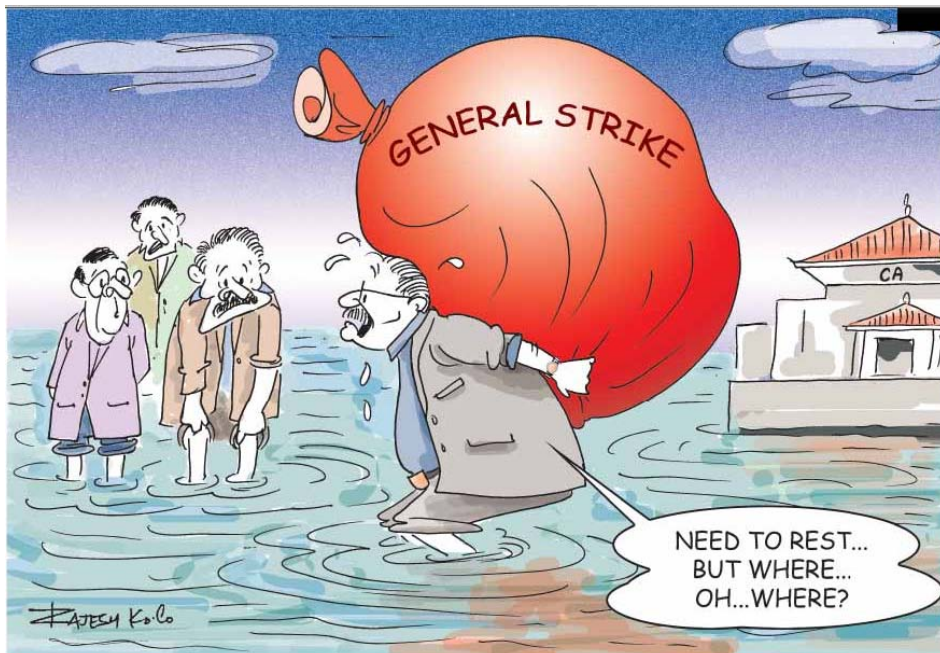


*República*

May 1



May 4





May 9



May 10



May 30



Appendix III: A Front Page Comparison

May 8

**THE KATHMANDU POST**  
**on saturday**  
GET READING, SERIOUSLY

**THE ROAD AHEAD** Pg. 3  
**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?** Pg. 6  
**WHAT THE WORLD SAID ABOUT NEPAL** Pg. 9  
**THE STRONG TOWNSMEN** Pg. 10

### General strike off, peaceful protest to go on

**Byline: BY SUDIP KUMAR**

Thousands of people gathered in the capital to mark the end of a general strike on Saturday, but the peaceful protest to demand the government's resignation continued.

The strike, which began on Friday, was the largest in the country since the 2006-07 Maoist insurgency. It was called by the Maoists and other groups to demand the resignation of Prime Minister Manmohan Adhikari and his cabinet.

The government, led by Prime Minister Adhikari, has been in power since the end of the Maoist insurgency in 2006. It has been accused of corruption and mismanagement.

The Maoists, led by Prachin, have been demanding the resignation of the government since the end of the insurgency. They have been accused of human rights abuses and violence.

The peaceful protest on Saturday was held in the capital, Kathmandu. It was attended by thousands of people, including students, workers, and members of the public.

The protest was peaceful and did not involve any violence. It was a show of support for the government's resignation.

The government has refused to resign. It has said that it is committed to the constitution and the rule of law.

The Maoists have said that they will continue their protest until the government resigns. They have also said that they will not use violence.

The situation in Nepal remains tense. There is a risk of further violence if the government does not resign.

**market** | **business** | **politics** | **sports**

**República**  
IN PURSUIT OF TRUTH

### TRIUMPH OF PEOPLE POWER

#### Maoists withdraw general strike



**Tens of thousands rally for peace**  
Maoists attack peace marchers, dozens injured

**Protests against banda across country; dozens injured**

**Maoists in pickup pose as Nagarik crew**

**ON SATURDAY ESSAY**  
**WAS IT ENOUGH?**



**THE KATHMANDU POST**  
 PUN BOASTS SUCCESS IN ALL INDICATORS  
 ENERGY CAPITAL  
 SOCIAL FALLS VICTOR TO  
 FRENCH OPEN BASKET

**Special Editorial**  
**Don't put nation on razor's edge**

It is a common sight to see a man with a razor on his face, shaving. The razor is held at an angle, and the man is looking into a mirror. The razor is a tool of precision, and the man is using it to shape his face. In the same way, the government is using the Constituent Assembly to shape the future of the nation. The government has a responsibility to ensure that the process is fair and transparent, and that the interests of all citizens are protected. The government should not put the nation on a razor's edge, but should instead work to build a strong and stable foundation for the future.

**Catastrophe if CA bites dust**

A PUN BOASTS SUCCESS IN ALL INDICATORS... (text continues)

**EVERY FRIDAY CORPORATE**

**House in for 'historic pressure'**  
 Consensus could see CA term extended by Friday night

... (text continues)

**Optima**  
 Dependable & Versatile  
 Suitable for Hotels, Restaurants & Classrooms

**For Large Rooms**

- SE702**
  - 200W 60W
  - 20" x 12" x 12"
  - 10000 BTU/hour
  - 10000 BTU/hour
- SW706**
  - 200W 60W
  - 20" x 12" x 12"
  - 10000 BTU/hour
  - 10000 BTU/hour
- SE814**
  - 200W 60W
  - 20" x 12" x 12"
  - 10000 BTU/hour
  - 10000 BTU/hour

**For Home Theater**

- HD55**
  - 100W 30W
  - 10" x 10" x 10"
  - 5000 BTU/hour
  - 5000 BTU/hour
- HD58**
  - 100W 30W
  - 10" x 10" x 10"
  - 5000 BTU/hour
  - 5000 BTU/hour

**Ultra Portable**

- EX330**
  - 100W 30W
  - 10" x 10" x 10"
  - 5000 BTU/hour
  - 5000 BTU/hour
- EX350**
  - 100W 30W
  - 10" x 10" x 10"
  - 5000 BTU/hour
  - 5000 BTU/hour

**República**  
**THE WEEK**

... (text continues)

**Constituent Assembly term extension almost certain**

... (text continues)

**Missing doctor in Maoist captivity**

... (text continues)

**Discovering a new faith**

... (text continues)

**cover feature**

**INSIDE**

**JOHN PLAYERS**  
 Premium men's wear from SURYA NEPAL

... (text continues)

**THE KATHMANDU POST**  
**on saturday**  
GET READING, SERIOUSLY

**DEEP CREATES**  
**WATER SUPPLY**

**MADE TO IT**  
**TAKE THE TEST**

**A CONVERSATION**  
**WITH DEEP**

**A GUIDE TO**  
**THE SEASON**

**YEAR-LONG LICENCE TO LIVE**

**The Holy Grail of consensus**

**Gobbledygook had all writhing**

**ON SATURDAY SPECIAL**  
**THE NEW REPUBLIC**

**Maotists derail India train, 80 dead**

**Pak attack kills 80**

**República**  
IN PURSUIT OF TRUTH

**CA term extended by a year**  
**Prime minister to resign within a week**

**THE DEAL**

**Doc was abducted after surgeries**

**Maotists derail train in India, 100 dead**

**Maoists torch**  
**Nagarik, Republica**

**80 dead as gunmen**  
**attack Pak mosques**