

Life Goes on in Kathmandu...

Some staff members speak of how they coped living in 'extraordinary' times.

Recently Nepal was in the headlines around the world as the country lay in the grip of strikes and curfews prior to local government elections. Media coverage painted a rather grim impression; the reality for most people may have been different. In general for many life went on. This does not mean it was easy for all; many daily wage labourers suffered, and there was and continues to be an underlying fear. Here's how some ICIMOD employees coped during those times.



Ram Humagai

Narendra Bajracharya

“It is not so bad. There are problems of transport, children not going to school, and shops are closed. So I have collected vegetables, rice, and dahl. I had to work a little more to cope with these things, otherwise we're alright.”

- **Uma Partap**

Pollination Specialist, Beekeeping, ARID

“This is not a long-term situation. Somehow life is still normal; I get my daily supply of vegetables and other needs for my family. A bandh of one to two weeks will have no effect. People in KTM do not want violence, they are peace loving and prefer to close shop and honour the bandh rather than risk violence.”

- **Narendra Bajracharya**

Equipment and Maintenance

“I look at things differently. While there is some unease, on the other hand it has given me a more relaxed time. I bike to work and live a more environmentally-friendly lifestyle. I am also able to think and focus more on my work. I do a lot of writing from home.”

- **Xu Jianchu**, Programme Manager, WHEM

“I am a little disturbed because my family is worried and I have to call to reassure them (Sani is from the Republic of Niger), I just work and work - the home-office-home routine. On a positive note, in my area I am able to walk freely and play basketball, the air is less polluted so in some ways it is good for the health...”

- **Sani Malam Karami**

Information Services, Mountain Forum

“There is some kind of fear, but we are facing whatever is happening. We take precautions, avoiding crowds and evening outings and public gatherings. As long as the shuttle comes we come to work, we have to work!”

- **Neetu Ghale**, Administrative Assistant, NRM

“Except for one time when we were stopped along the main road and had to walk the rest of the way, thank God we're okay. As long as the shuttle comes we go to work. Although of course, it's a little scary.”

- **Angeli Shrestha**

Senior Administrative Assistant, Directorate

“It's okay, life goes on. We've stocked up on food. It can be a little irritating, but what to do? It's part of life.”

- **Joy Dasgupta**, Associate Coordinator, CEGG

“Where we live - right along the Ring Road - activities are banned on Bandh and curfew days. It's been a way for me to explore the backstreets and observe daily life in KTM. I've stumbled upon some interesting discoveries: cheap fruit and vegetable stalls, a dress repair shop, small corner stores - handy to know when you run out of goods or need something repaired and the major stores are closed. People are friendly and curious and mainly striving to eke out a living regardless of the political weather. It's business as usual in KTM's inner streets. There life goes on.”

- **Joyce M. Mendez**, Publications Editor, IKM



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