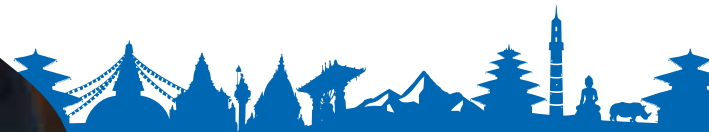




# A Light in the Heart: Faces of Nepal

Celebrating 75 years of the United Nations



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United Nations Development Programme Nepal

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# A Light in the Heart: Faces of Nepal

Celebrating 75 years of the United Nations



## FOREWORD



2020 has been a year of exceptional disruption for the world, compounded by an unprecedented global health crisis and its accompanying economic and social impacts. Besides, in 2020, UNDP joined the United Nations team in Nepal to observe three important events – the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the thirtieth anniversary of the International Day for Older Persons, and the Decade of Healthy Ageing.

Thus, as an acknowledgement of a generation, UNDP organized a virtual exhibition of photographs of seventy-five people born with the United Nations, who are featured in this book. Above and beyond we reached out to Nepali youth to research and adorn the photos with poetic expressions. Together, our aim is to encourage intergenerational solidarity and creative engagement to achieve sustainable human development in Nepal.

These seventy-five people were born into a world ravaged and traumatized by war. This book of photographs shines a light on them, from all walks of life and reflects Nepal's rich diversity. We recognize with appreciation their resilience and positivity. And it is apposite to remind ourselves, of the vulnerabilities they face, as they age, particularly in this time of COVID-19. We treasure the knowledge and experience, the understanding and, often, the wisdom, they have accumulated over the years. And we must hope that these valuable qualities may be carried through to the generations that follow them and that they, in turn, may use them to uphold intergenerational solidarity.

This is for the above reason, -to uphold intergenerational solidarity- that the book also presents several poems by some Nepal's greatest and most famous literary figures, such as Laxmi Prasad Devkota (Mahakavi) and Madhav Prasad Ghimire, with heartfelt tributes to them. To complement, there are beautiful poems by young poets, who are already part way through their respective literary journeys. In this way, the book embraces expressions from three Nepali generations.

And so I express sincere gratitude to those featured on the photography – and through them to their whole generation –, we offer our tribute to their sacrifices and extend our love and care to their families and communities; to the photographers from all provinces, for their passion and dedication in capturing a new wrinkle; to great poets of times gone by and to those weaving their magic now, for their inspiration, their eloquence of expression, and the joy of the emotional response their readers are fortunate to share. And I thank particularly those from today's generation of poets that have contributed to this book, and wish them the power, the insight and ingenuity to keep carrying the flame that others have borne before them.

Big thanks to the entire team who has contributed to make it happen.

**Ayshanie Medagangoda-Labe**  
*UNDP Nepal Resident Representative*



Foreign Secretary

Government of Nepal  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Kathmandu, Nepal



## Foreword

The year 2020 marks the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Over the years, the organization has undergone profound changes, reflecting the momentous transition and development of our era.

As a common endeavor of mankind for peace, justice and development, the United Nations occupies larger than life space through its work and contributions for the benefit of the people across the world. It has rekindled hope in places of conflict and despair. Among others, it catalyzed decolonization, promoted human rights for all, helped shape norms of global governance, and worked to eradicate poverty, hunger and diseases.

Ever since becoming its member in 1955, Nepal's partnership with the United Nations has remained steadfast. We have contributed to and benefited from the work of the organization in all its three pillars. UNDP as a part of the UN system in Nepal has been a valuable partner in development for decades, including most recently in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

I am delighted that UNDP in Nepal is bringing out this commemorative book of photographs in the 75th anniversary of the UN, introducing seventy-five faces from Nepal who were born and shared the timeline with the organization. This innovative, largely representative, and unique endeavor is reflective of the UN system's outreach in Nepal through its work and presence in peoples' lives. I believe this publication will help to promote further understanding about the UN in Nepal.

I would like to commend UNDP Nepal for bringing out this creative work to the larger audience.



(Bharat Raj Paudyal)



Through this amazingly moving and beautiful book, featuring the elderly, giving them a place -THE place they deserve, UNDP is living up to the highest standards of the United Nations and to the Agenda 2030 on the centrality of people. UNDP takes us by the hand to recognize that among us are the “old people” who have lived through many decades and whose eyes have seen more than what we can fathom. UNDP is generously shedding a light on their challenges, for us to reflect on what we must do for them, and to thank them for their contribution. This book is our memory, so that we don’t forget where we come from, to make sure that we don’t lose our path on the way forward. Thank you UNDP Nepal for this kind and generous initiative.



## VALERIE JULLIARD

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Former Resident Coordinator,  
United Nations Nepal





K R I S H N A M U R A R I  
G A U T A M

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Chairperson, Ageing Nepal



The 75-years journey of the United Nations has brought great global achievements in the fields of life expectancy, education, health, technological development and food availability among others. It continues its journey, even more motivated than before, to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals leaving no one behind. For elderly people, who have remained in the shadows in this rapidly changing global landscape, I feel glad that UNDP celebrates them through this book. This is not just a celebration of the 75-years journey of the United Nations, but also the 75+ years of the elderly population who have made this world a better place with their experience, hard work and dedication. In current times, the world is better connected and eager to learn than ever before, and learning has been the core value of Ageing Nepal for which it was awarded “The UNESCO King Sejong Literacy Prize, 2020. Finally, I would like to thank UNDP for this book which shines a light on the diverse faces, diverse languages, diverse experiences and diverse talents that the elderly possess which demands larger attention for a better world.





C H R I S T I A N M A N H A R T

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UNESCO Representative,  
Nepal



On behalf of UNESCO, it is a pleasure to congratulate UNDP Nepal for the present publication of their very sensitive virtual photo exhibition of Nepalese born in the same year as the United Nations. The idea of giving young Nepalese poets an opportunity to write their impressions about the photos, encourages intergenerational links and solidarity. I personally find the beauty of the portrayed seventy-five persons striking, as they show with great honesty the numerous good and bad experiences throughout their long lives. This reminds us that we only can benefit from including the older generations more in our present and benefitting from their accumulated wisdom. We look forward to work with UNDP in support of these intergenerational solidarities in support of sustainable development.



L U B N A B A Q I

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UNFPA Representative,  
Nepal



Congratulations to UNDP for producing this remarkable collection of photographs that celebrate the lives of 75 individuals born in 1945 to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. These photographs are a reminder of the important lifetime contributions of older people to their families, communities and their country; the incredible wealth and value of their experiences and the meaningful contributions they can continue to make in so many ways to help shape the future of Nepal; and the importance of building a society that thrives on intergenerational respect and prosperity, where people of all ages can fulfill their aspirations.







## G I T A N J A L I S I N G H

Deputy Representative and OIC,  
UN Women



An inspiring photo essay showcasing the lived realities of the elderly and the power of poetry from the youth of Nepal. On behalf of UN Women, I congratulate UNDP Nepal for focusing on the elderly – often a group made invisible despite the wisdom they have to offer. We need more of such intergenerational collaborations that enable us to break stereotypes and discriminatory socialization patterns and truly advance substantive equality for all. We look forward to working with UNDP and other partners to advance targeted interventions with this population.



## B E R N A R D O C O C C O

Deputy Resident Representative,  
UNDP Nepal



Amidst a global pandemic never has the importance of caring for our elders been more important than today. The United Nations for 75 years has stood for peace, development, science, equity, and the respect of human rights - and for the care of the young and old alike. At UNDP we're proud to be associated with this project, and the striking images found in this book. We are grateful to Nepal and all of its citizens - young and old - who everyday support our mandate to restore livelihoods, protect the environment, and build systems for resilience.



# PROVINCE 1

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*जहाँ हरिया-हरिया पहाडका  
फरिया अलिक तल सारेर निर्मल, स्वच्छ र  
न्यानो घाममा हिमालले सधैं ढाड सेकेको हुन्छ*

*म जति टाढा भए पनि त्यो मेरो देश सधैं मेरो  
मनले सपनामा पाइला टेकेको हुन्छ ।*

**- मेरो देश, भूपी शेरचन**

The renowned late poet Mr. Bhupi Sherchan describes the beauty of Nepal and his love for the nation.



## PROVINCE 1

*Nepal's remarkable easternmost province is home to the highest point on earth, Mount Everest (8,848 metres), and Nepal's lowest point, Kechana (58 metres).*

It is a place of snow-clad mountains, remote and revered and unimaginably magnificent, and of dreamy tea gardens that stretch for miles on perfectly manicured slopes interspersed with orange and cardamom.

In its lower latitudes, the Koshi and other great rivers carry Himalayan sediment on epic journeys that eventually join the mighty Ganges, adding fertility to the surrounding land as they go. They are home to sadly declining numbers of Ganges river dolphins along with turtles, snakes, lizards and the fearsome mugger crocodile. The plains support an eclectic range of wildlife, from the Asian elephant to the gaur (Indian bison), blue bull (antelope) and the golden jackal. The bird life is impressive here too, with squadrons of brightly-coloured parakeets, eagles, owls and a stunning range of water birds all in regular attendance.

In the plains, close to the Indian border, lies the city of Biratnagar, a centre of industry and commerce.





जब म चढेर भावको ढुंगा  
सयर गर्छ स्मृतिको प्रिय गंगा  
स्वप्न गगनबाट सुशीतल जल  
सुख-स्मृतिको बर्सिन्छ रिमभिम  
मेरो प्यारो ओखलढुंगा

- मेरो प्यारो ओखलढुंगा,  
सिद्धिचरण श्रेष्ठ

'My beloved Okhaldhunga'  
by late poet Siddhi Charan  
Shrestha describes the beauty  
of Okhaldhunga district.

## **GYANIMAYA RAI,** Okhaldhunga

Born and raised in a small farming community, Gyanimaya Rai now lives in Siddhicharan Municipality, where the poet and editor of Nepal's first daily newspaper, Siddhicharan Shrestha, was also born and lived. Gyanimaya still works on her village farm. She cannot read or write, although her family has taught her to write her name, a source of much pride for this lady.



**DESHMAYA LIMBU**, Sankhuwasabha

Deshmaya Limbu is proud to wear the clothes that are an integral part of her heritage. A lifelong housewife, she lives in Sankhuwasabha, in the far north of the country in the shadow of great snowy peaks. She is a Limbu, one of the many ethnic groups in Province 1. She doesn't really know what the United Nations is, although she's heard it mentioned by her brothers and nephew many of whom are British Gurkha soldiers.

## **DHANAMAYA CHAULAGAIN,**

Khotang

Dhanmaya was born in the village of Nirmalidanda, where clouds snake peacefully through the valleys and hills. She's never been employed, but in the spare time from her housekeeping work she makes cotton lamp wicks. She learned about the United Nations during the Maoist insurgency, when a team of human rights workers brought United Nations representatives to her village.



**INDRAMAYA POUDEL,**  
Udayapur

Indramaya Poudel lives alone in a small house. Her only son, a Nepal Army soldier, was killed in a vehicle ambush during the decade-long conflict between the state and the Maoists. But she does have a grandson, who is a police officer. All she knows about the United Nations is its international peacekeeping mission.







**JANAKIDEVI RAJBANSHI,** Morang

Janakidevi learned about the United Nations through its vaccination programmes, when she took her children and grandchildren for inoculation at various mobile health centres.



**KANTHAY DHIMAL**, Jhapa

In her younger days, says Kanthay, she had bags of energy and was always active. These days, with time having taken its toll, she needs a stick to walk. She learned about the United Nations during the Bhutanese refugee crisis in the 1990s. Hundreds of families had fled their homes and settled not far from Kanthay's home. She remembers how the refugees lived a miserable life until the United Nations came to give food and shelter.



**NURBU SHERPA**, Solukhumbu

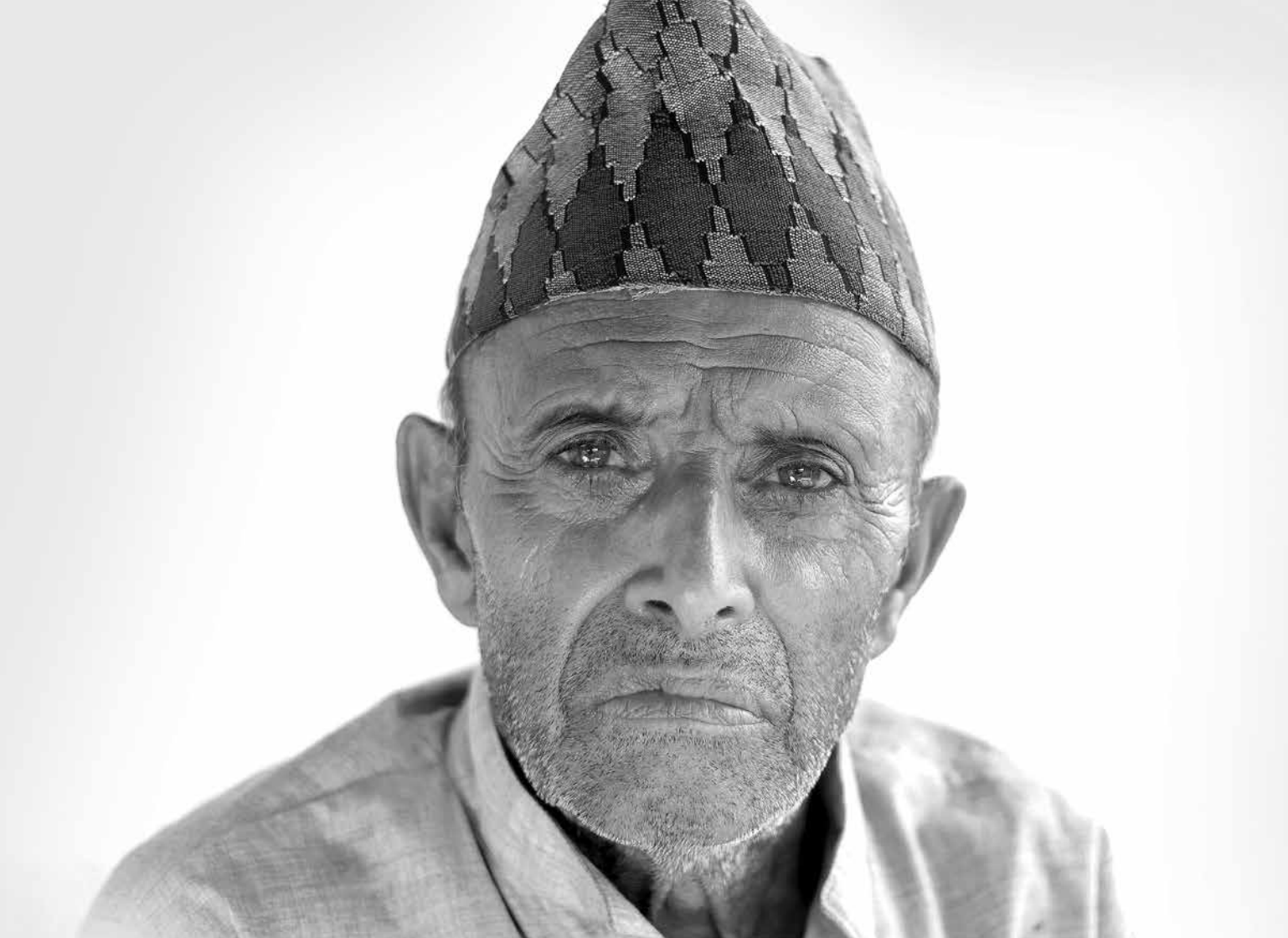
Nurbu Sherpa has been a farmer his whole life and now owns great swathes of land. He farms potatoes, more out of necessity than choice as other crops do not grow well here. He was born and still lives in Bagam village, just a few miles from Mount Everest.

सगरमाथा चढ्न पर्ने मान्छे म  
सानो ढुंगा चढेर हात हल्लाइरहेछु

आरोहणको अब त पश्चिम ढल्के  
को उमेरको साँझ पर्वतसँग  
निहूँ खोज्ने कुरै भएन आफ्नै  
जिन्दगीको पर्वत चढेर कतै कुनै  
साँझमा उभिएको छु ।

- सगरमाथा चढ्ने, डा. विष्णु राई

A renowned poet Dr. Bishnu Rai describes a person who lives in mountain.



**SHIVARAJ PHUYAL**, Khotang

A former school teacher, Shivaraj was born and raised in the small village of Naula Kharka. He has heard about what the United Nations does to educate and otherwise help poor and marginalized people. He also knows about what it does to promote universal human rights and its contributions to peacebuilding.



**TULKU CHAUDHARY,** Morang

Tulku remembers the United Nations during a Madhes movement when its staff visited his village in a white car and interview villagers about the conflict. That was when he learned that the United Nations works to establish peace. These days, Tulku spends most of his time with his sons and grandchildren.

## **TULSI PRASAD DHIMAL,**

Jhapa

Tulsi is a lifelong farmer who comes from farming stock in Damak. He know the United Nations well from the time they set up camps at Beldangi and elsewhere and fed and resettled Bhutanese refugees.





**PADAMKESHAR KARKI,** Bhojpur

Padamkeshar was born to a farming family in the district of Bhojpur, which takes its name from the Himalayan birch, a tree native to the Himalayas and widely used in ancient times as 'paper' for sacred Sanskrit texts. Padamkeshar's childhood was given to helping with household chores and working in the fields, so he could not go to school. Despite his failing health, he remains actively involved in rearing livestock. He first heard about the United Nations when it facilitated peacebuilding between the government and Maoists.

# PROVINCE 2

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*मित्र मधेस  
मेरो राष्ट्रवादमा तिम्रो मधेसको रङ उतिकै छ  
त्यही मधेसको पानी मेरो रगतमा बगिरहेको छ  
हरपल मेरो शरीरबाट मधेसकै माटोको सुवास  
आइरहेको छ निरन्तर ।*

- मधेससँग, प्रोल्लास सिन्धुलीय

The famous poet Prollas Sindhuliya shares about his love for Madhes (Terai).





## PROVINCE 2

*The country's smallest yet second most populated province is perhaps best known for the city of Janakpur, one of Nepal's fastest growing urban centres.*

An important Hindu pilgrimage site, Janakpur's many legends date back to Rig Vedic times. The province is also known as the home of Mithila painting, which typically depicts a range of religious and daily life and is often characterized by its geometric designs.

Province 2 lies in the Terai, Nepal's southern belt of fertile alluvial plains. The Churiya Hills offer a natural northern border. The border town of Birgunj is a major transit point for trade with India and provides the greatest share of Nepal's customs' revenue. Elsewhere agriculture and tourism dominate the province's economy.

Despite its relatively small size and uniform topography, Province 2 is home to a range of ethnicities, including Maithili, Madhesi, Brahman and Chhetri. Maithili is the most widely spoken language.

## **RAJAMATI DEVI,** Parsa

Rajamati lives in Jirabhawanipur, close to the Indian border. A former health volunteer, she remains active in several of her village's sanitation programmes. She recalls the first time she came into contact with the United Nations, when a white car with huge UN letters painted on the side arrived in her village to conduct a health programme. That was when she learned about the various health and sanitation activities the organization was involved in.





## **KAULESHWORI DEVI MALAHIN,** Kalaiya

Since her husband's death twenty years ago, Kauleshwori has lived with her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Bara district. She is grateful that she's still health and can walk to the market alone to buy food and provisions. She has never heard of the United Nations.

*दुःखका विशाल पहाडहरू बोकेर  
पनि म मुस्कुराइ रहेछु ।  
कांडाहरूको माभमा फुल्ने  
गुलाब जसरी  
पहराहरूमा हाँस्ने लालिगुरास  
जसरी ।*

- आकांक्षा झा, युवा कवि

Young poet Ms. Aakanksha Jha describes how beautiful smile Kauleshwori wears despite all nightmares in her life.

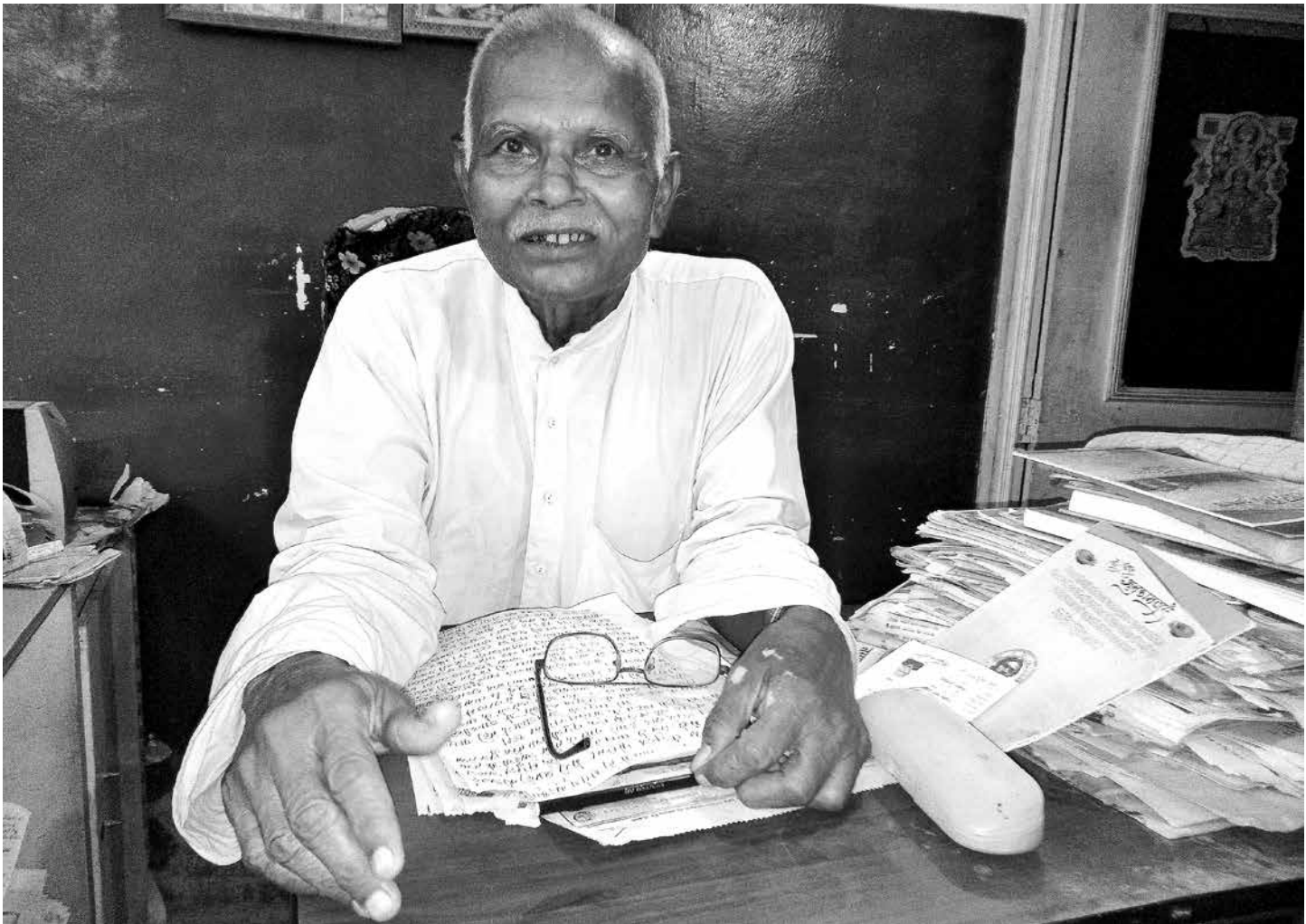


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**RAJIYA KHATUN,**  
Mahottari

Rajiya has spent most of her life working in the fields with her husband. More recently, she has worked as a community health volunteer, which also introduced her to the United Nations.



## **RAJESHWOR NEPALI,**

Mahottari

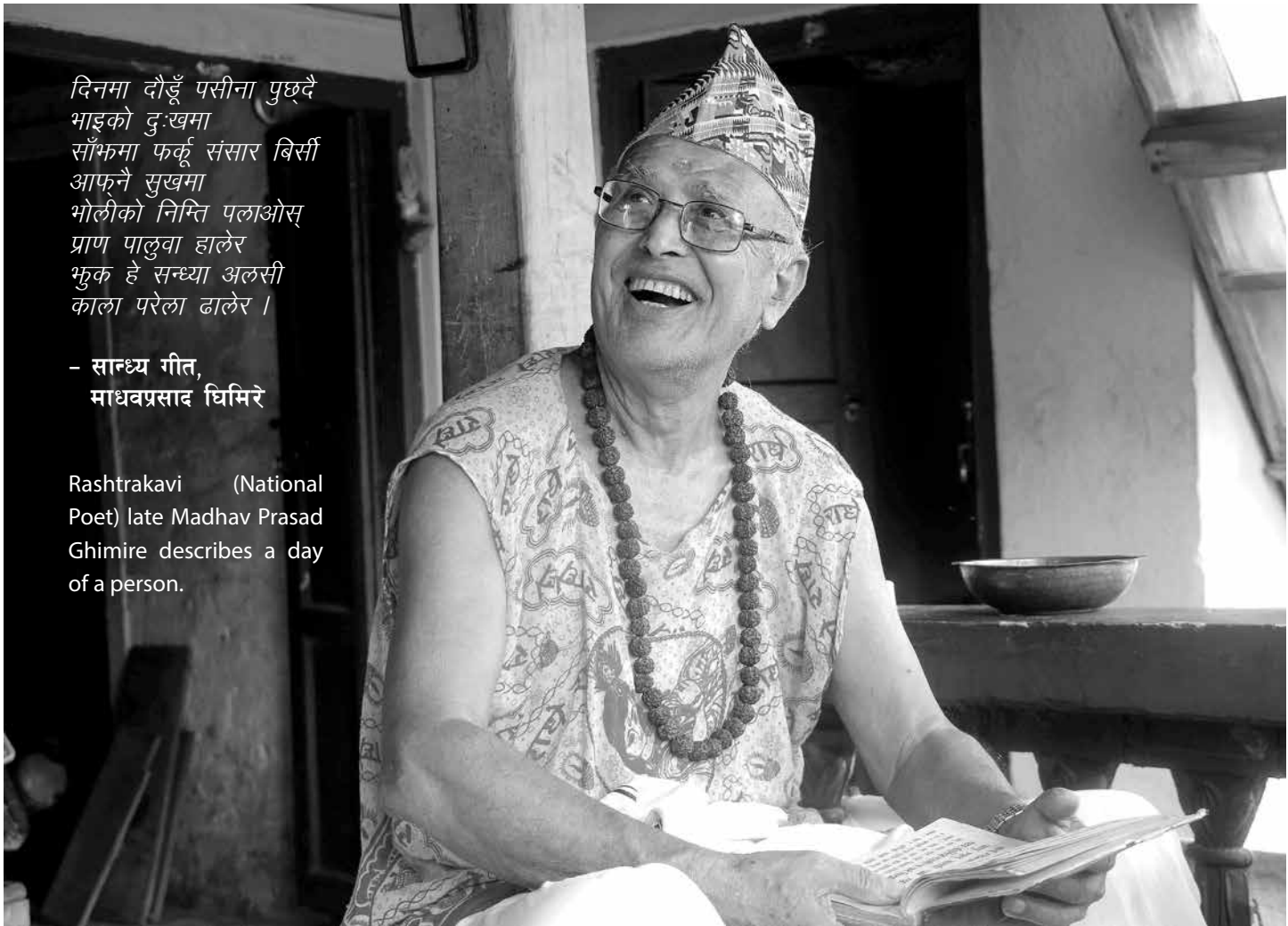
Once a journalist by profession, Nepali continues to write to this day. He knows about the United Nations, particularly its work in human rights and peacebuilding. He thinks the organization played an important role in bringing peace to Nepal and believes that it has a continued role in supporting the transitional justice process.



**PARWATI DEVI MAJHI,**

Parsa

Pawati has worked as a community health volunteer for many years, and still actively contributes to health and sanitation programmes run by various agencies. It was as part of her work that she learned of the United Nations and now recognizes the organization for the way it helps Nepal to improve health and sanitation facilities.



दिनमा दौडूँ पसीना पुछ्दै  
भाइको दुःखमा  
साँभमा फर्कू संसार बिर्सी  
आफ्नै सुखमा  
भोलीको निम्ति पलाओस्  
प्राण पालुवा हालेर  
भुकु हे सन्ध्या अलसी  
काला परेला ढालेर ।

- सान्ध्य गीत,  
माधवप्रसाद घिमिरे

Rashtrakavi (National  
Poet) late Madhav Prasad  
Ghimire describes a day  
of a person.

## **BISHWANATH BHATTARAI**, Sarlahi

Since retiring from a career in the civil service, Bishwanath spends much of his time doing social work. He first came into contact with the United Nations at the District Administration Office, where he worked with representatives of several United Nations agencies. That left a positive impression and he hopes the organization will continue its work in Nepal for years to come.





**PAHAWARI RAUN AHIR,** Bara

Pahawari lives near Kauleshwori and has been a farmer since leaving school after fourth grade. He can still read and write a little and remains active in household and community life. A cyclist once hit his as he was returning from the market, since when he has depended on a stick to help his walk. He is unaware of the United Nations.

# BAGMATI PROVINCE

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*रिस राग कपट् छल छैन जाहाँ,  
तव धर्म कती छ कती छ याहाँ,  
पशुका पति छन् रखबारि गरी,  
शिवकी पुरि कान्तिपुरी नगरी ।*

- कान्तिपुरी नगरी,  
भानुभक्त आचार्य

The first poet of Nepali language, late Bhanubhakta Acharya describes harmony of Kathmandu as naming it 'Kantipuri Nagari'.



## BAGMATI PROVINCE

*The province most visited by foreign tourists, Bagmati is a vertical cross-section of Nepal.*

Bordering the Tibetan Plateau to the north and India to the south, it takes in the high Himalayas and the northern reaches of the Gangetic plains. Between those extremes lie some of the country's finest treasures.

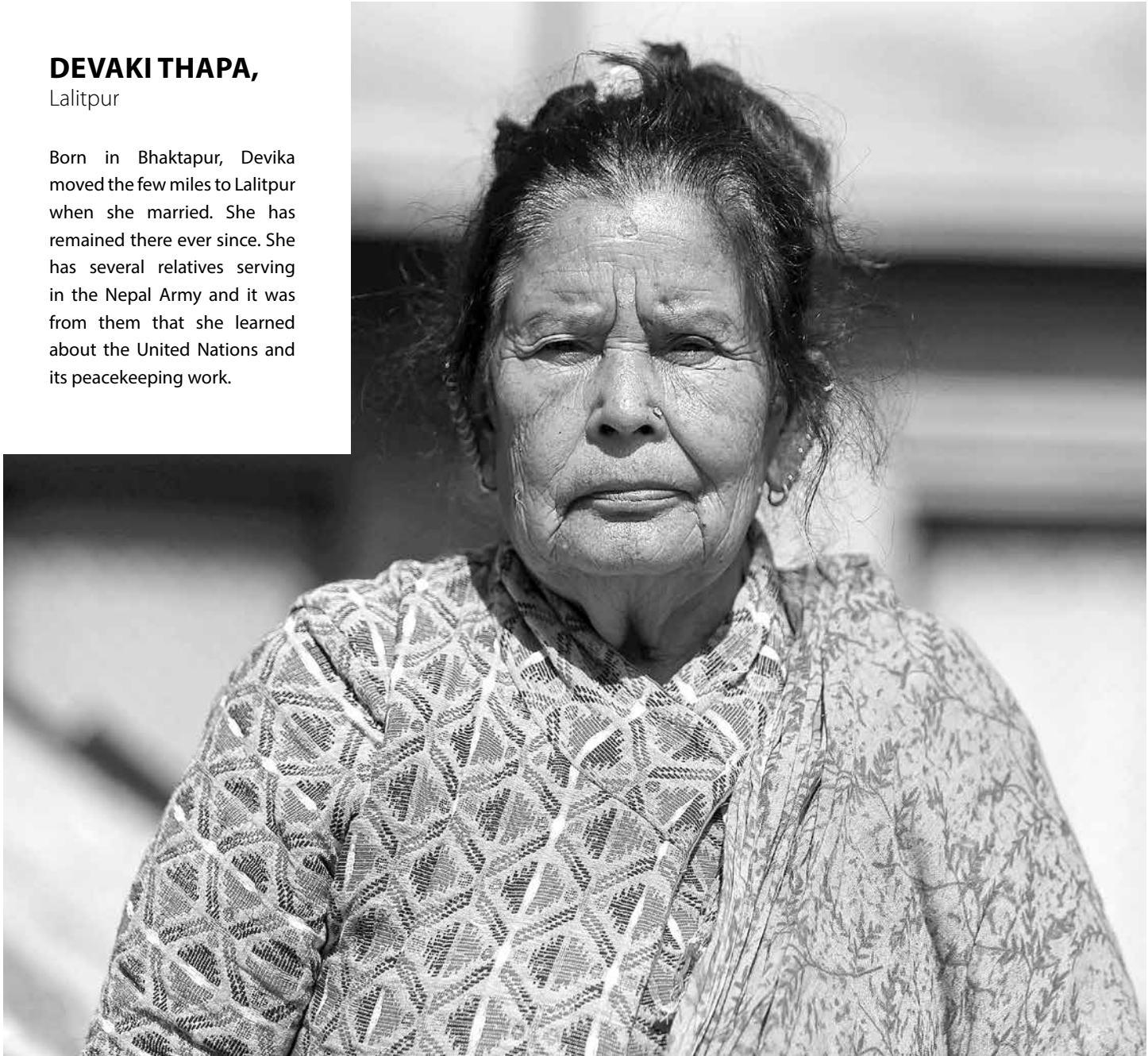
Surrounded by terraced hills and set in breathtaking surroundings, the Kathmandu Valley is the pulsating cultural and political heart of Nepal. Its concentration of Hindu and Buddhist sites is unrivalled anywhere else on earth. Each of its three culturally-rich cities boasts architecture that rarely fails to inspire and impress. Beyond the cities, major stupas, intricate shrines and temples, and a scattering of World Heritage Sites add to the tableau. The middle hills give way to the mountains to the north – there are more than 60 peaks taller than 5,000 metres in this province alone – and to lush forest and agricultural land to the south. The Chitwan National Park, a protected area of dense jungle and glades, and a natural habitat for rhinoceroses, elephants, tigers and more, draws visitors from around the world.

Newar, Tamang, Madhesi and Chepang people are among the province's many ethnic groups, while 88 languages are spoken here.

## **DEVAKI THAPA,**

Lalitpur

Born in Bhaktapur, Devika moved the few miles to Lalitpur when she married. She has remained there ever since. She has several relatives serving in the Nepal Army and it was from them that she learned about the United Nations and its peacekeeping work.





**HARILAL HEKKA,** Bhaktapur

Harilal no longer works on the farm on which he spent all his working life. Over the years he has seen fields give way to concrete around him, which also accounted for the end of his agrarian career. He explains that he has seen many political changes in his lifetime, but he now prefers to keep his distance from current affairs. He found out about the United Nations from his children.



**JAGATSHER MALI**, Kirtipur

Jagatsher's career revolved around his work as a school security guard. It was at that school that he learned about the United Nations and its human rights work. These days, domestic work keeps him fully occupied.



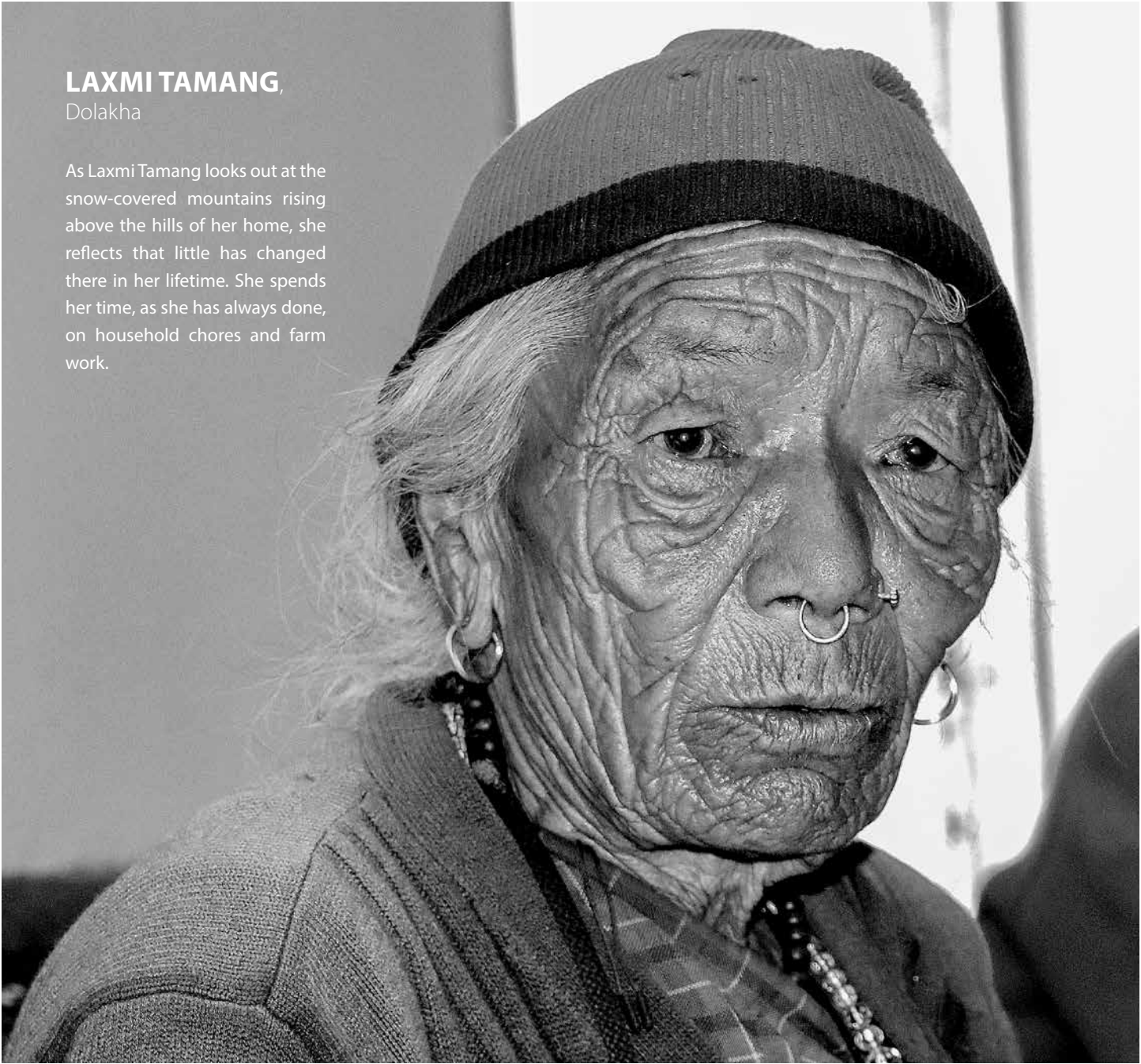
**JAMUNA TAMANG,** Nuwakot

Once a farmer, Jamuna is now a part-time tailor who makes the traditional Tamang dress. It's work that keeps her busy and she divides her time between Bidur and Myagang village.

## LAXMI TAMANG,

Dolakha

As Laxmi Tamang looks out at the snow-covered mountains rising above the hills of her home, she reflects that little has changed there in her lifetime. She spends her time, as she has always done, on household chores and farm work.







**NAKALI MAHARJAN,** Kathmandu

Nakali was born in Kirtipur, a town with an illustrious and, at times, brutal history. She married there and still lives there today. In her younger days, she would help her husband with his farming work, but with age she finds herself more restricted in her abilities. She learned about the United Nations from Nepal Army troops on peacekeeping duty.





## **TEJMAYA DANGOL,**

Kathmandu

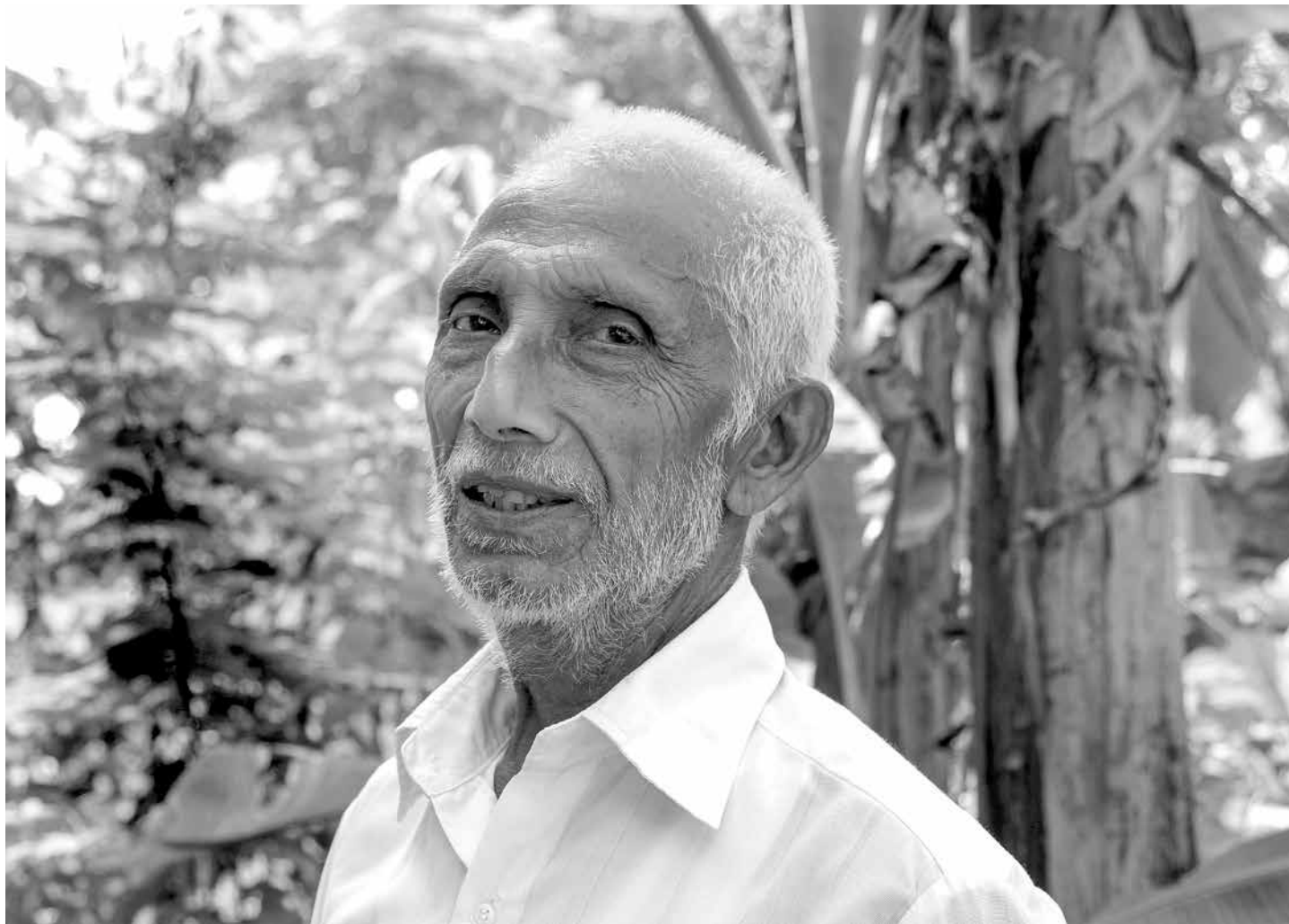
Tejmaya Dangol has rarely ventured outside Kathmandu Valley. Her life, she feels, has passed so quickly, though she is proud to actively manage her household. Domestic life keep her fully occupied, so much so that she has little or no time for other things. She is not aware of the United Nations or its work.

## SHIVA PRASAD PANDEY,

Lalitpur

Shiva, who now lives in Lalitpur, has retired from his position as a technical officer for the government's Agriculture Development Office, a job that required him to travel extensively around the country. His work brought him into contact with the United Nations, and he much admired its work in human rights and education. He also remembers fondly the work of the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), which helped the country in the process of post-conflict disarmament and reintegration.





**PITAMBAR THAPALIYA,** Dhading

Originally from Dhading district, Pitambar worked first as a teacher before turning his efforts to social work. He knows a lot about the United Nations and its work around the world, and would like to see it mediating boundary disputes with neighbouring countries.





हेर्नास न  
यसरी हर रात,  
भोकको ज्याला माग्छन्,  
कसौडीसङ्ग पेटहरू,  
म चुपचाप धैर्यताको  
उत्तर पस्किदिन्छु ।

- कुमुद कोइराला, युवा कवि

Young poet Mr. Kumud Koirala describes how Kanchhimaya fights poverty and hunger.

## **KANCHHIMAYA SUNAR,** Nuwakot

Overall, it's been a quiet life for Kanchhimaya. She used to help her husband with his work, but since he died her life is taken up with household chores.

रामसाइँला विस्फोटको हाँसो  
सुहाउँछ टिट्यौलीमा  
रामसाइँला आगोको बोली  
सुहाउँछ टिट्यौलीमा ।

- रामसाइँला, पारिजात

The renowned Nepalese writer Parijat (Late Bishnu Kumari Waiba) describes the beautiful smile of Ram Saila.



## **RABI GAUTAM,** Bharatpur

Rabi remains full of vigour and vitality in his mid-seventies. He spent his professional life running a bicycle shop. He takes an active role in the life of his Bharatpur community and retains a strong interest in politics and current affairs. This has given him an understanding of the United Nations and its work with underprivileged and disadvantaged groups around the world.





**SANTAMAYA BHOCHHIBHOYA**, Kavre

Santamaya has spent her entire life by the gently wooded slopes of Banepa, near Dhulikhel in the Kathmandu Valley. She spends her days, as she has always done, managing her household.

# GANDAKI PROVINCE

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मेरो पर्यटक मित्र ।

हिमालसुन्दरी माछापुच्छ्रेले तिमीलाई श्रद्धा गर्छिन्  
सम्मान गर्छिन् र अतिथि देवो भवः उनी पनि जान्दछिन्,  
उनी फेरि तिमीलाई भेट्न चाहन्छिन्  
तिमीसितै रमाउन चाहन्छिन्  
फेरिफेरि आऊ भन्छिन् ।

- सराङकोटको माछापुच्छ्रे र मेरो  
पर्यटक मित्र, अरुणा वैद्य

Ms. Aruna Vaidhya invites people to witness the serene beauty of Gandaki province through her poem Machhapuchchhre of Sarangkot and My Tourist Friend.



## GANDAKI PROVINCE

*Named after the eponymous river whose source lies in the high, barren reaches of Mustang and eventually feeds into the Ganges, Gandaki Province extends from the high Himalayas to the sub-tropical plains.*

Its capital, Pokhara, is nestled in a valley in the shadow of the iconic Macchapuchere mountain, part of the Annapurna massif, a home of the fabled snow leopard, and on the shore of the emerald Phewa Lake, home to innumerable tourist facilities. From the snowy peaks and the indigo waters of Tilicho the world's highest lake (4,949 metres), the vegetation grows ever more luxurious with the drop in latitude, passing through one of the largest rhododendron forests on earth to the humid lowlands, where many of Nepal's native plants thrive, including over 100 species of orchids.

The province has a broad range of ethnicities, with Gurung, Chettri, Thakali, Magar and Ghale people forming the largest groups. The languages spoken here are as diverse as everything else in this astounding province.



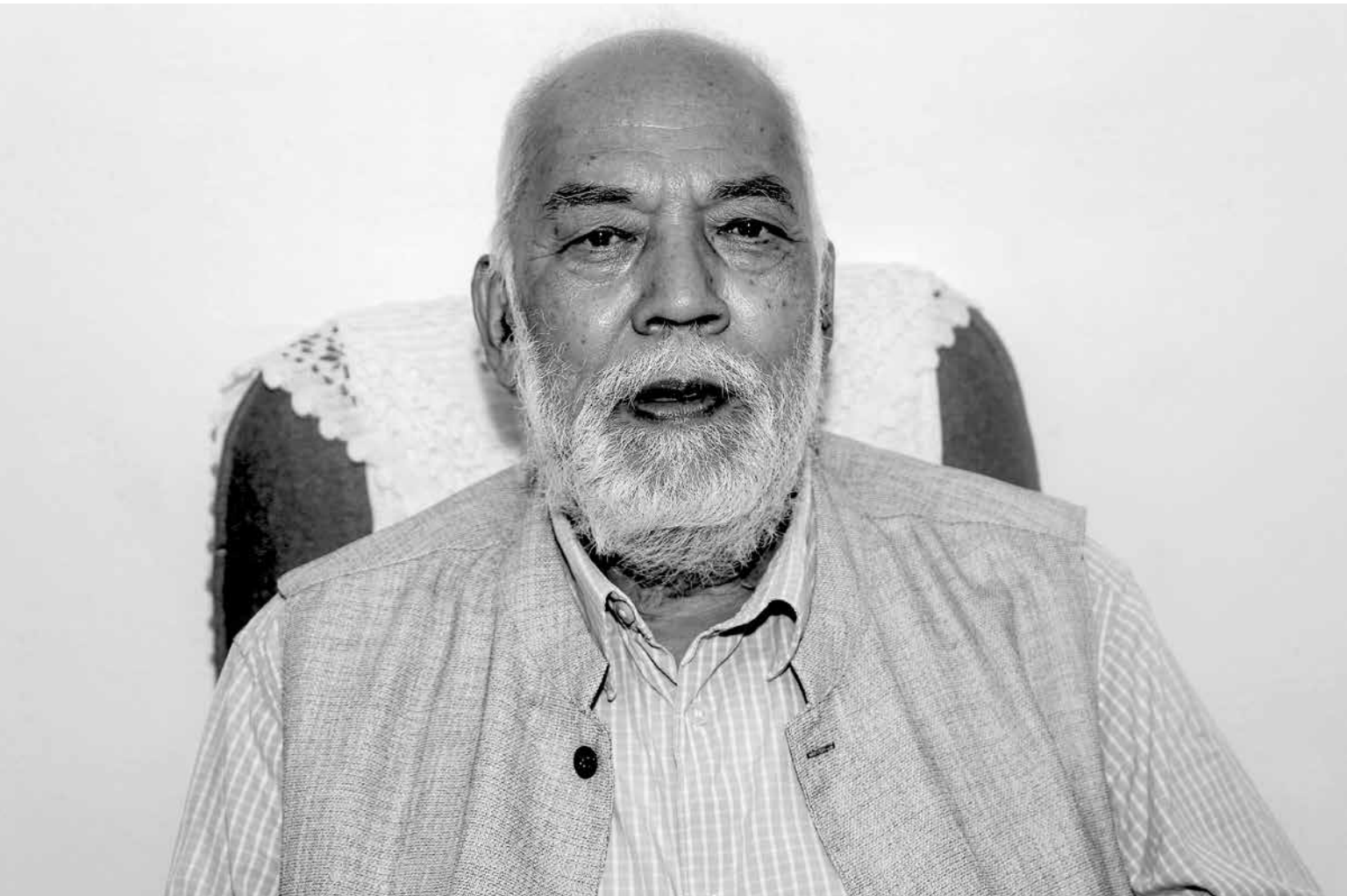
**PARSHURAM GURUNG**, Lamjung

In the distance, Parshuram can see Himalayan peaks over the wooded hills of Dordi, Lamjung, where he lives with his three sons. They are cattle farmers. Unlike many of his friends and relations, he never considered joining the British Army, or even thought of a life outside this village. He likes village life and enjoys tending to his livestock. He has not heard of the United Nations.



**CHAMBA THAKALI**, Mustang

Chamba was born in a remote village in a remote, barren district in Mustang. She has spent her life farming. Until recently, she notes, there was no modern communication in her village and its people were effectively cut off from the rest of the world.



**DEV BAHADUR SHRESTHA,** Baglung

Dev Bahadur spent his working life as a teacher and government official. He has given his retirement to social work and retains a special interest in global affairs, which he follows with great curiosity. He has followed the United Nations since its early years in the aftermath of the Second World War, and has watched as the organization and its agencies grew and developed. He feels indebted to its presence and work in Nepal.

दुखका पात उनेर  
बनाएँ सपनाको टपरी,  
भगवानका प्रसाद अडिने  
यी हरिया टपरिमा  
अट्न सकेनन  
मेरा हरिया खुशीहरू ।

- कुमुद कोइराला, युवा कवि

The poet talks about the Tapari (a leaf plate) made by Nanda Kumari Duwadi and relates it to her happiness.

## **NANDA KUMARI DUWADI,** Tanahu

Nanda recently moved from Dhading district to Damauli, in Tanahu district. She gave birth to fifteen children, all but one of whom died young. Her surviving son does little to keep in touch with her, she sighs. She earns an income selling leaves from the sal tree. She knows nothing about the United Nations.





**NAGARCHHI PANDIT (BHUNTAY DAMAI),** Gorkha

Bhuntay Damai is better known by his moniker Nagarchhi Pandit. Because he used to play the nagara, a musical instrument, at the Gorkha Palace. It was there that he first heard about the United Nations, when guests of the Palace spoke about its peacekeeping efforts. He also has first-hand experience of the organization's work after the 2015 earthquake, which devastated areas of Gorkha. He recalls watching United Nations helicopters as they delivered food and emergency supplies. He is glad that he shares his birth year with the United Nations!





**SUNSARI GURUNG**, Syangja

Sunsari is the widow of an Indian Army soldier and it was while they lived in India that she first heard about the United Nations and was impressed by the education, health and development work it does in Nepal. Now Biruwa Municipality, in Syangja district, is home for her.



مدرسة المجيد الخاصة  
Al-Majed Private School



## **MANAKUMARI ROKA,** Myagdi

Manakumari lives with her five sons and two daughters in Jhakripani district, where she still earns a living from agriculture. She has not heard about the United Nations.



**JAGUPATI SAPKOTA,** Nawalparasi

A lifelong cattle farmer, Jagupati lives in Nawalparasi district. He is a big fan of the radio, which he has listened to every day for decades. It was from the radio that he learned about the work of the United Nations.

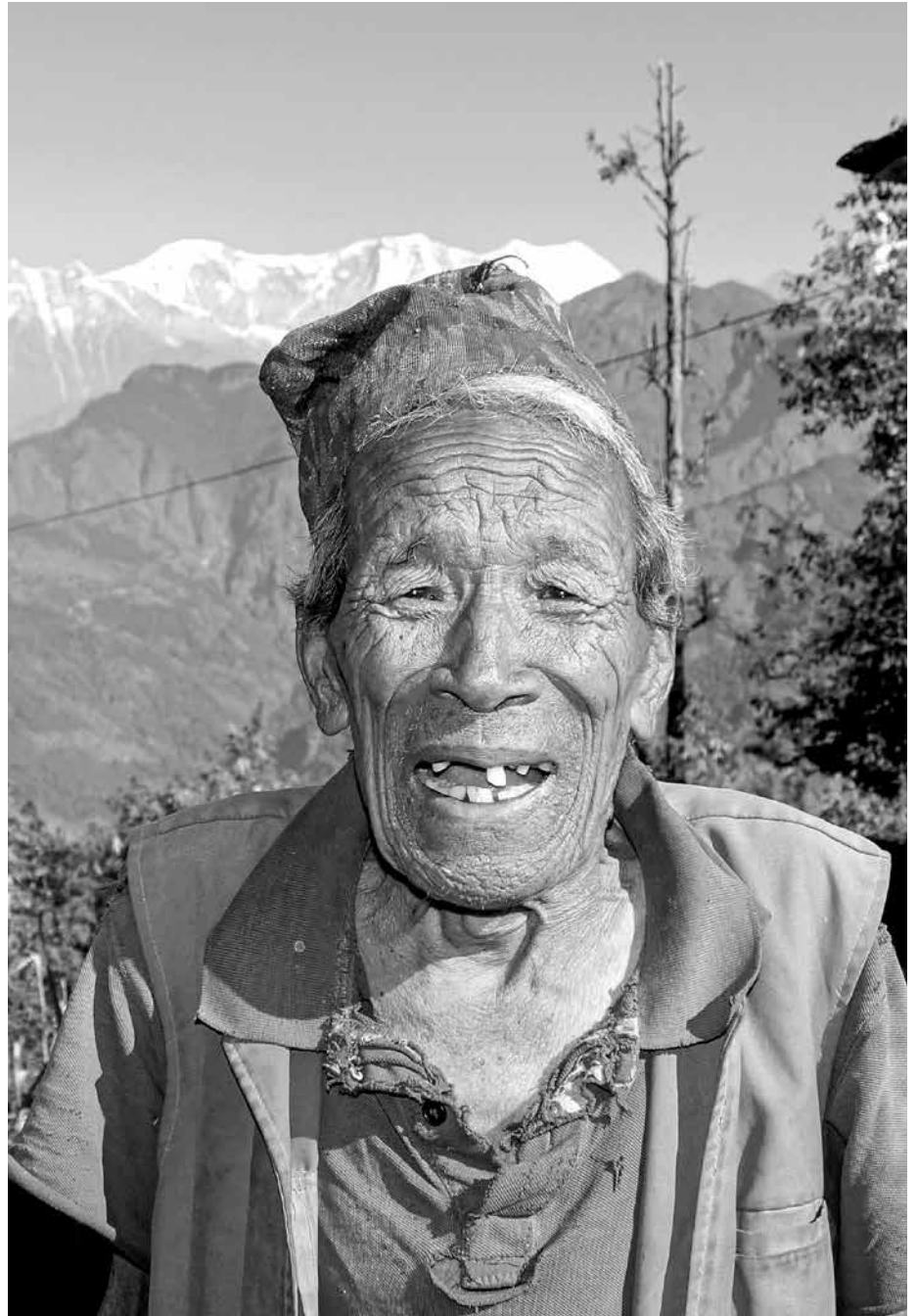
घडीबाट समय उछिट्टिएर  
मेरो औलामा नाचिरहेको छ,  
म आज त्यही समयलाई  
डो-याउँदै डो-याउँदै पुगेको छु  
पृथ्वीको किनारमा जहाँ पुगेर  
समयले बिदाईका हात हल्लाउँदै  
मलाई एकलो छोडेर हिड्न् लागे  
को छ ।

- भेष राज बुढाथोकी, युवा कवि

Young poet Bheshraj Budhathoki describes how time flies at the blink of eyes seeing the wrinkled face of Lal Bahadur Roka.

## **LAL BHADUR ROKA,** Myagdi

Lal Bahadur has spent his working life as a farmer in Myagdi district. He has heard about the United Nations through news and radio programmes, although he's not entirely sure what it does.





## **YANGDUNG GURUNG,** Manang

Yangdung was born in the shadow of the rugged, snowy mountains of Manang. He has made his living by rearing yaks, mountain goats and sheep, a job well-suited to the environment. He is also a community leader and an elected representative. He knows something of the United Nations, but (at the time of interview) was yet to meet someone from the organization.



**BODHLAXMI SHRESTHA,** Gorkha

Born in the village on Chhipito, in Gorkha district, Bodhlaxmi has learned the basics of how to read and write. She has heard about the United Nations, but knows little about its work.

# LUMBINI PROVINCE

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लुम्बिनी  
जहाँ गौतम बुद्धका आँखाहरूले  
न्याय अन्याय नियाल्छन्  
प्रकृतिको काखमा  
शान्तिको ध्वनी गुन्जन्छन्  
र यहाँका मानिसहरूको हृदयमा  
सहिष्णुताले बास गर्छन् ।

- आकांक्षा भ्ना, युवा कवि

Young poet Aakanksha beautifies Lumbini as the land of  
lord Gautam Buddha, nature and generosity.





## LUMBINI PROVINCE

*Best known as the birthplace of Siddhartha Gautama, the Buddha, in the seventh century BC, the province and the town that gives it its name is a major pilgrimage site.*

It was even mentioned by Chinese travellers more than 1,600 years ago, while a prominent park in Bangkok is named in its honour.

The Mayadevi Temple is Lumbini's most important and best-known temple. Named after the Buddha's mother, it attracts pilgrims and visitors from throughout Asia and beyond. As the flat lands start to give way to the hills, the vibrant Bardiya National Park is dominated by forest, with savanna, grassland and riverine ecosystems also present. Elephants roam freely, as do rhinos and tigers, along with deer, monkeys and other mammals. It has a rich bird life, including the magnificent peacock whose shrill, piercing calls regularly punctuate the fresh forest air, and the endangered Bengal bustard.

Tharu, Magar and Chettri people account for much of the province's population, while Tharu, Nepali and Awadhi are the most commonly spoken languages.





एउटा युग बाँचेको मानिस,  
बाँचन भुल्दैन अँध्यारोमा  
हाँस्न भुल्दैन अप्तयारोमा,  
म त जिन्दगिलाई जितेको मान्छे ।

- कुमुद कोइराला, युवा कवि

The poet describes how Mr. Bhola struggled in his life.

## **BHOLA RAIDAS,** Kapilvastu

Born in a small agricultural village in Kapilvastu, farming has been in Bhola's blood from an early age. At seventy-five, he is still active in the fields and is proud to say that he is one of his community's most experienced farmers. He enjoys listening to Awadhi songs while working.



**DIP KUMARI PANTHI,** Arghakhanchi

Dip Kumari lives with her eighty-two year-old husband and their children in Chhatradevi Rural Municipality, in Arghakhanchi. The couple still live an active community life and Dip Kumari is involved with a number of social work initiatives. She knows something of the work of the United Nations in Nepal and around the world, and is particularly grateful for what the organization has done in her homeland.



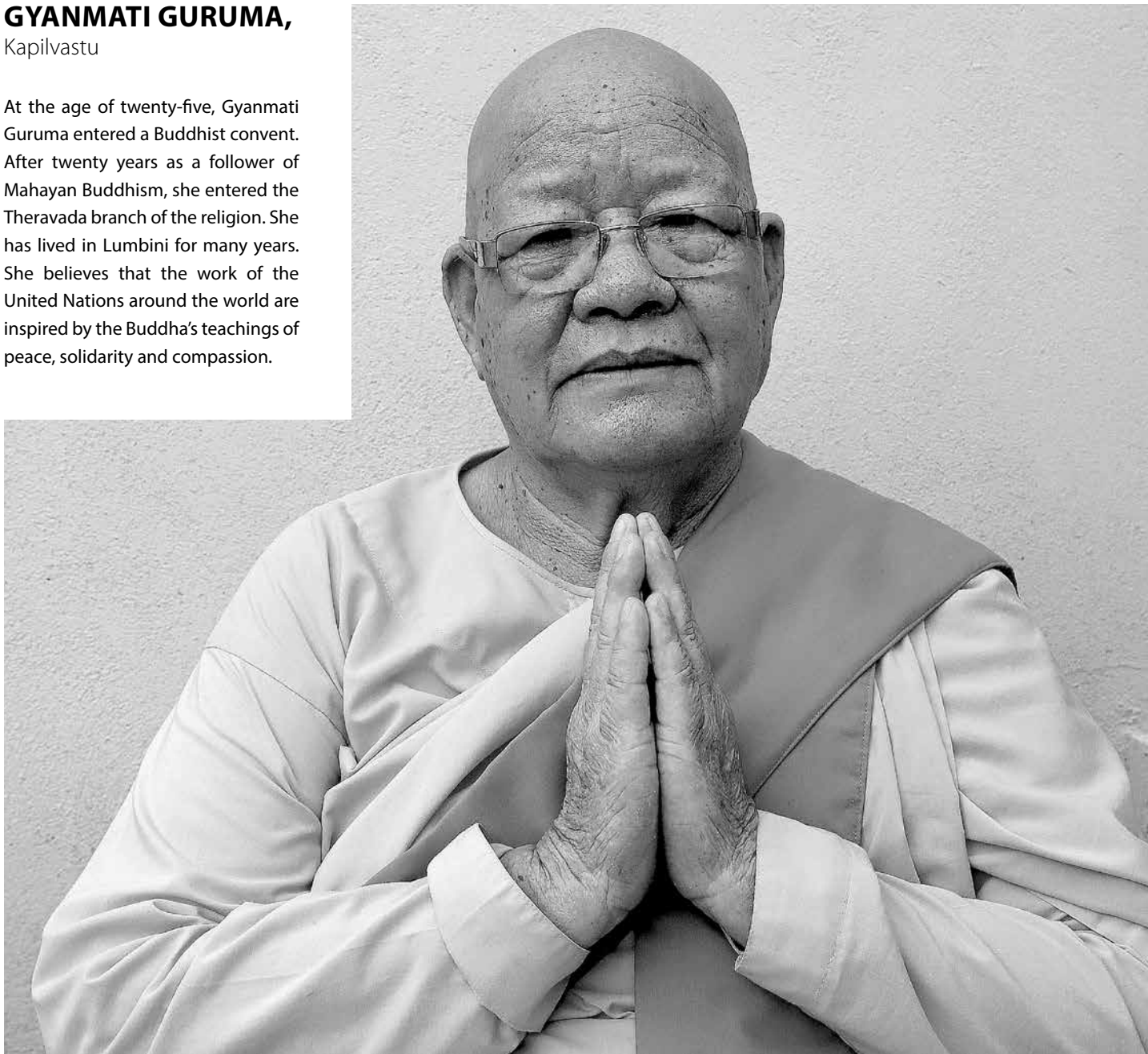
**DAYARAM THARU,** Bardiya

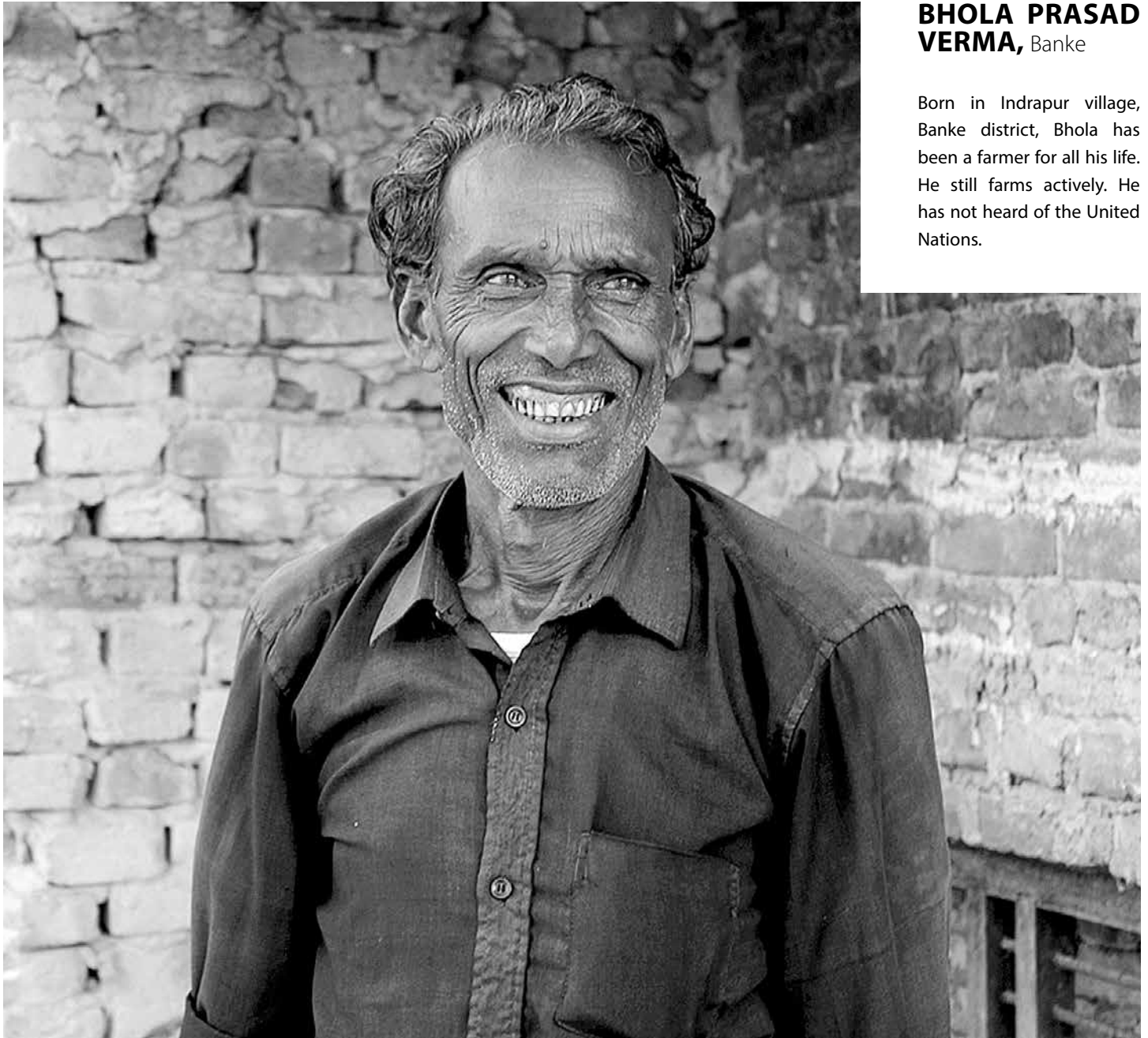
Like many others from his Bardiya locality, Dayaram has been – and remains – a farmer all his life. He heard about the United Nations and how it sends peacekeeping missions around the world from the radio.

## **GYANMATI GURUMA,**

Kapilvastu

At the age of twenty-five, Gyanmati Guruma entered a Buddhist convent. After twenty years as a follower of Mahayan Buddhism, she entered the Theravada branch of the religion. She has lived in Lumbini for many years. She believes that the work of the United Nations around the world are inspired by the Buddha's teachings of peace, solidarity and compassion.





**BHOLA PRASAD  
VERMA,** Banke

Born in Indrapur village, Banke district, Bhola has been a farmer for all his life. He still farms actively. He has not heard of the United Nations.



**SIRAJUL BAGWAN,** Banke

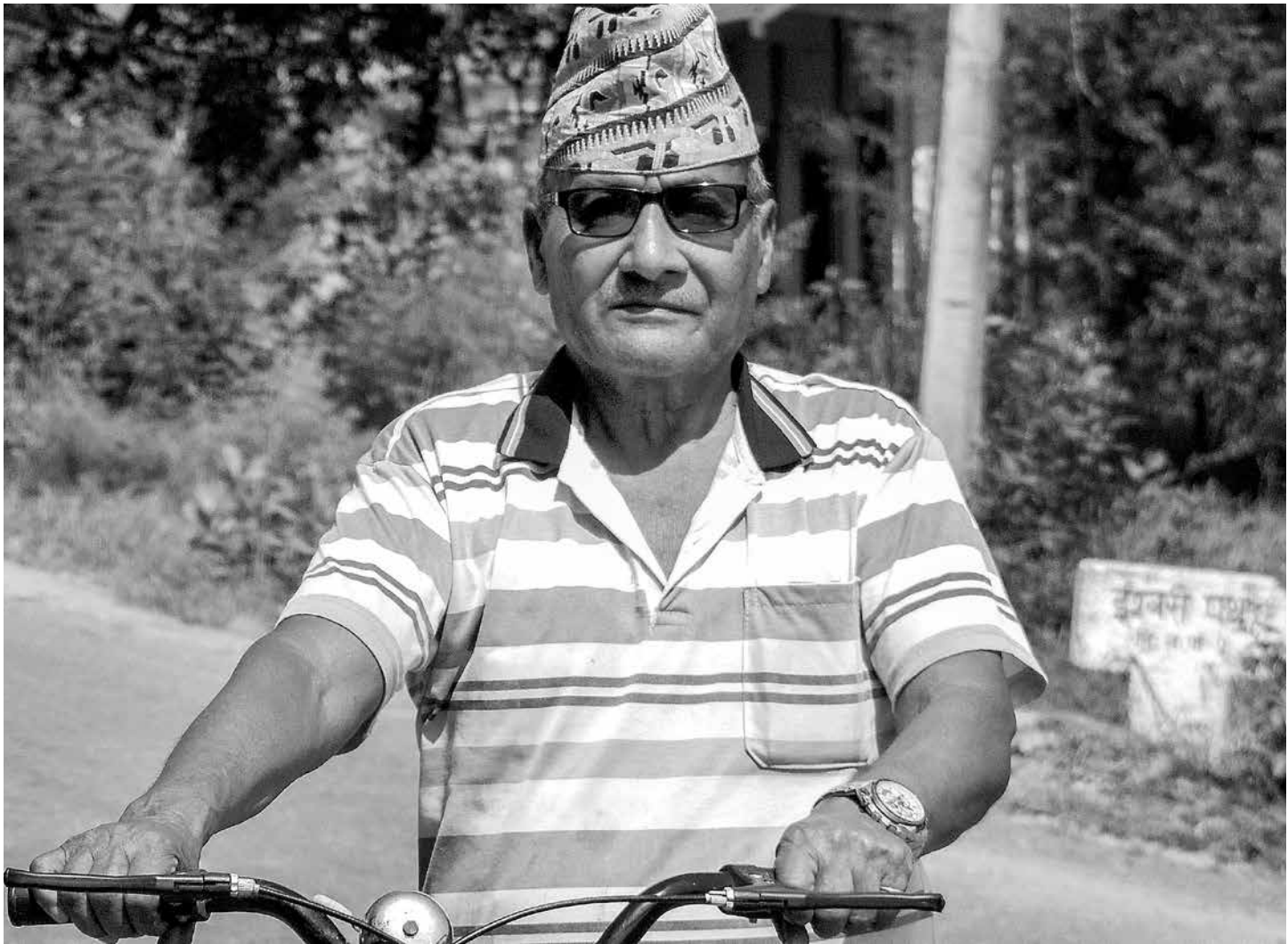
A tailor by profession, Sirajul was born in the city of Nepalgunj, by the busy border with India. He started work at an early age as a way to support his family. These days, he is a master tailor and has no shortage of satisfied customers. He has not yet learned much about the United Nations.





**HIRALAL BISHWOKARMA,** Pyuthan

Hiralal is one of his community's leading farmers. He is also involved in social work, but knows little about the United Nations.



**JIT BAHADUR SHAHI THAKURI,** Ruapandehi

A retired Indian Army soldier, Jit Bahadur first heard about the United Nations during his military service. He is particularly impressed by its work in human rights, health, education and food security, and hopes they continue those efforts in a bid to create a better world.



**BHIMADEVI RANA**  
**MAGAR,** Pyuthan

Bhimadevi's work involves the important aspects of managing her household, although she also helps her family with farm work. Social work interests her. She has heard of the United Nations, but acknowledges that she knows little about what it does.

जिवनको संरचना  
करेसा बारिमा अग्लिरहे  
को होस्, वा बालुवाको  
छातिमाथी भाँसिएको होस्,  
सासको लय र संगीतको  
धुनमा, जिवनको खोला  
सधैँ बगिरहेकै हुन्छ ।

- भेष राज बुढाथोकी,  
युवा कवि

Mr. Bhesh Raj says the life  
goes on no matter what!



## **SHIVA KUMARI THAPA,** Rupandehi

Shiva Kumari's husband died more than ten years ago. He had been a soldier in the Indian Army. These days, she lives in Semari village, Rupandehi district, where she raises goats for a living.



**RABADA CHAMAR**, Kapilvastu

Despite her advancing years, Rabada is still active in managing her household and sometimes also helps out with the family's farming work. She did not get an education, but has learned to write her own name. She knows little about the United Nations.

# KARNALI PROVINCE

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एउटा सभ्यता यसरी बाँचेको छ यहाँ जहाँका  
बस्तीहरूमा गरिबि नभएका होइनन्,  
तर सुन्दरताको समृद्धि अभै उच्च छ । जहाँ रोग र  
भोक नभएका हैनन्, तर त्यसलाई जित्ने आत्मविश्वास  
अभै बलियो छ कर्णाली, दुःखहरूको पहाड बोकेर पनि  
निर्मल हाँसोको सुगन्ध छर्छ ।

- कुमुद कोइराला, युवा कवि

Young poet Mr. Kumud describes how Karnali smiles  
with hunger and poverty.



# KARNALI PROVINCE

*Named after Nepal's longest river, Karnali is also the country's largest province – although it accounts for just six percent of the population.*

The superlatives continue with Nepal's largest lake, Lake Rara, which in turn has a frog named after it – the Rara Lake Frog.

The Karnali Highway – in both senses the nomenclature is correct – carves an often precarious route through the mountains and provides a vital trading link between the plains and Jumla.

Brahmins and Chhetris make up most of the province's population, along with Dalits, Janajatis, Tharus and Madhesis. Almost everyone speaks Nepali, while Magar is also spoken. In September/October each year, the Khaptad Mela attracts several thousand pilgrims for whom the pilgrimage is particularly meritorious. Celebrations include the lighting of ghee lamps at night.



## **JASPURA ROKAYA,**

Humla

Jaspura lives in Simkot, Humla district, a place of snow, rivers, terraced agriculture and even a little airport that serves as a gateway to Mount Kailash, an important pilgrimage destination. Jaspura and her family are subsistence farmers and she hopes the United Nations will continue to support development in remote locations such as Humla.



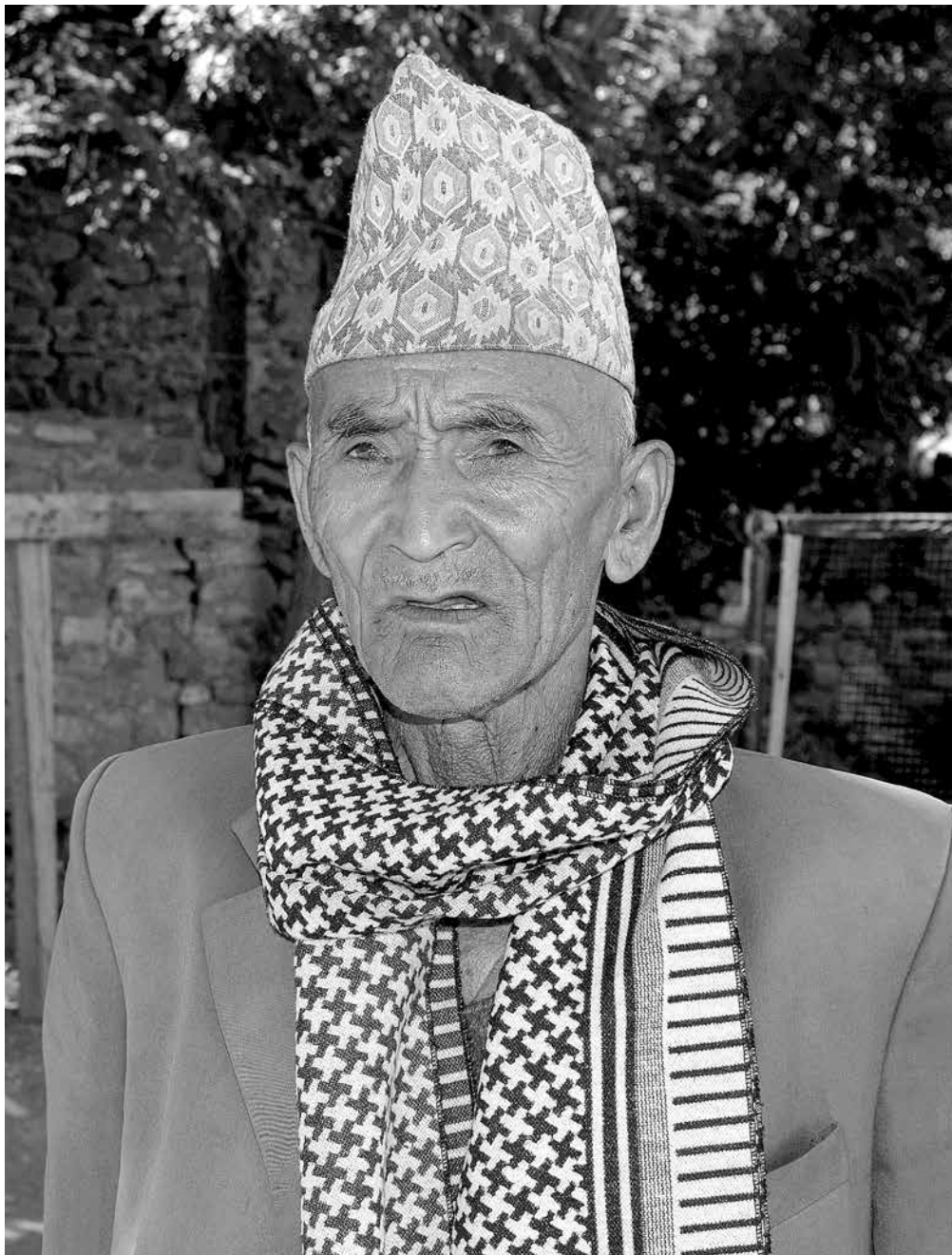


**DHARMA BK,** Achham

Although born in Achham district, Dharma's family migrated to Birendranagar, Surkhet district, some forty years ago. She and they are farmers. She would like to see the United Nations increase its support of Dalit people in Nepal.

## **GANESH BAHADUR SHAHI,** Dolpa

A retired police officer, Ganesh Bahadur lives in Thuli Bheri Municipality, in Dolpa district. He was once Dolpa's acting district police chief. He knows about the United Nations work in Nepal, and in particular that helping to promote food security, human rights and peacebuilding. He hopes the organization will continue its commitment to Nepal.





**DHANRUP ROKAYA,** Humla

Dhanrup is a Karnali man through and through. Raised in a remote village in Humla district, he still lives there and raises sheep and mountain goats for a living. He knows a little about the United Nations from the World Food Programme in Humla, which he hopes can help to end food insecurity in the district.

हामी जाजरकोट  
हाम्रै जीवनसँग अभ्यस्त छौं  
बरू तिम्रा दैनिकीहरूलाई बाधा  
पुग्ला तिमि आफ्नै बारे सोच ।

- जाजरकोट, सुवास खनाल

A renowned poet Mr. Subash  
Khanal describes daily life of  
people of Jajarkot district.



## **KAUSHILA BUDHA,** Jajarkot

Kaushila Budha lives in Chhedagad, in Jajarkot district, where fertile river valleys support agriculture and traditional houses are skilfully built on mountain slopes. She knows of the United Nations through radio programmes.



**JASUDEVİ SUNAR,** Surkhet

Jasudevi used to be a women's health volunteer. She lives with her son and his wife Birendranagar, Surkhet, where she helps with the younger generation's farming. He doesn't know a great deal about the United Nations, but does remember once meeting an official from the World Health Organization.





## **INDIRA THAPA,** Dailekh

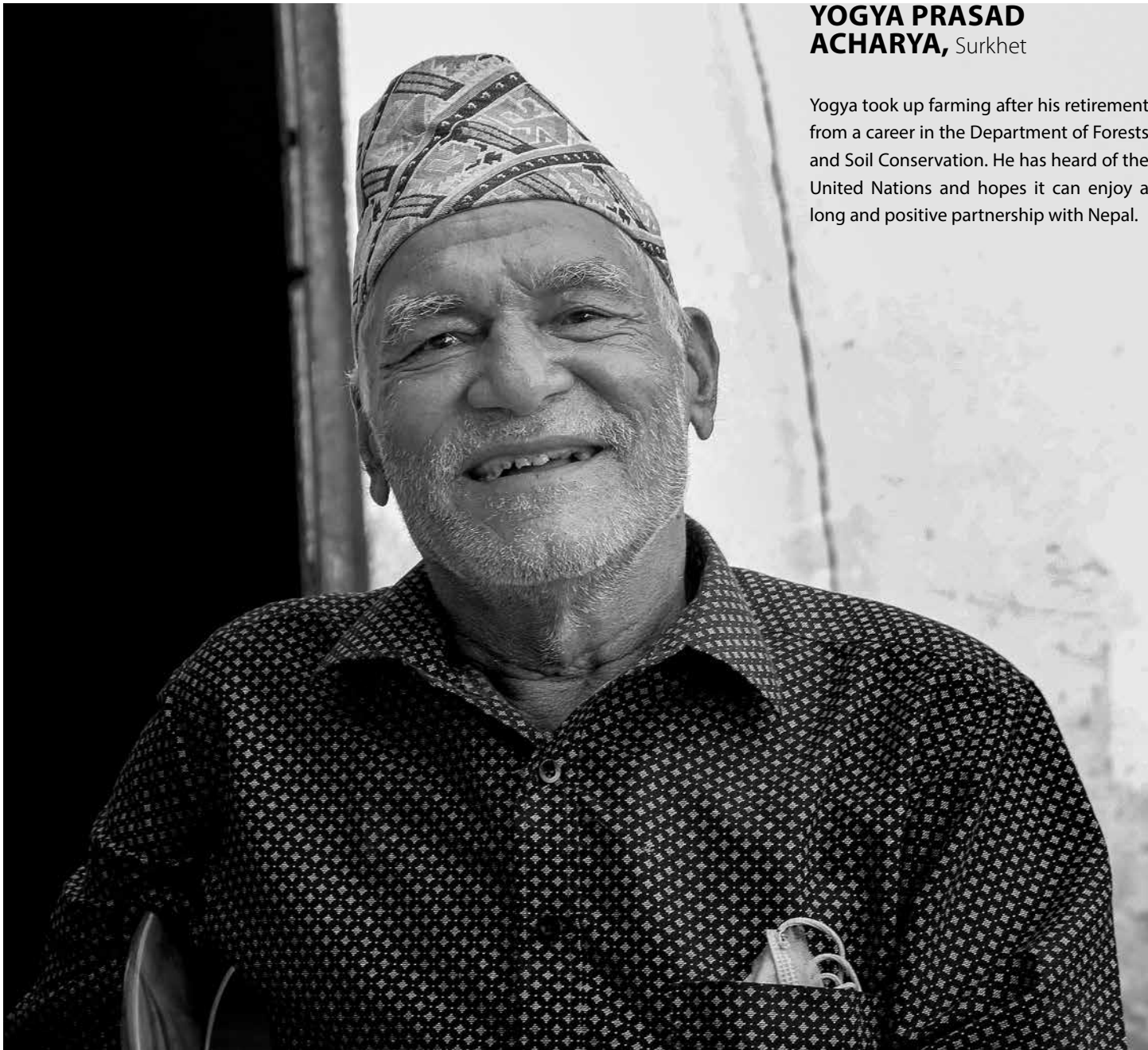
Indira is a social worker and founder of the Dailekh Senior Citizens' Society. He expresses his appreciation of the work the United Nations does to improve public health, strengthen human rights and build peace around the world.



**SHER BAHADUR SHAHI,** Surkhet

Sher Bahadur, who lives in Birendranagar, Surkhet, is another retired soldier of the Indian Army. He knows of the United Nations through its peacebuilding work in many countries and says, with some regret, that he never had the opportunity to join the peacekeeping force.





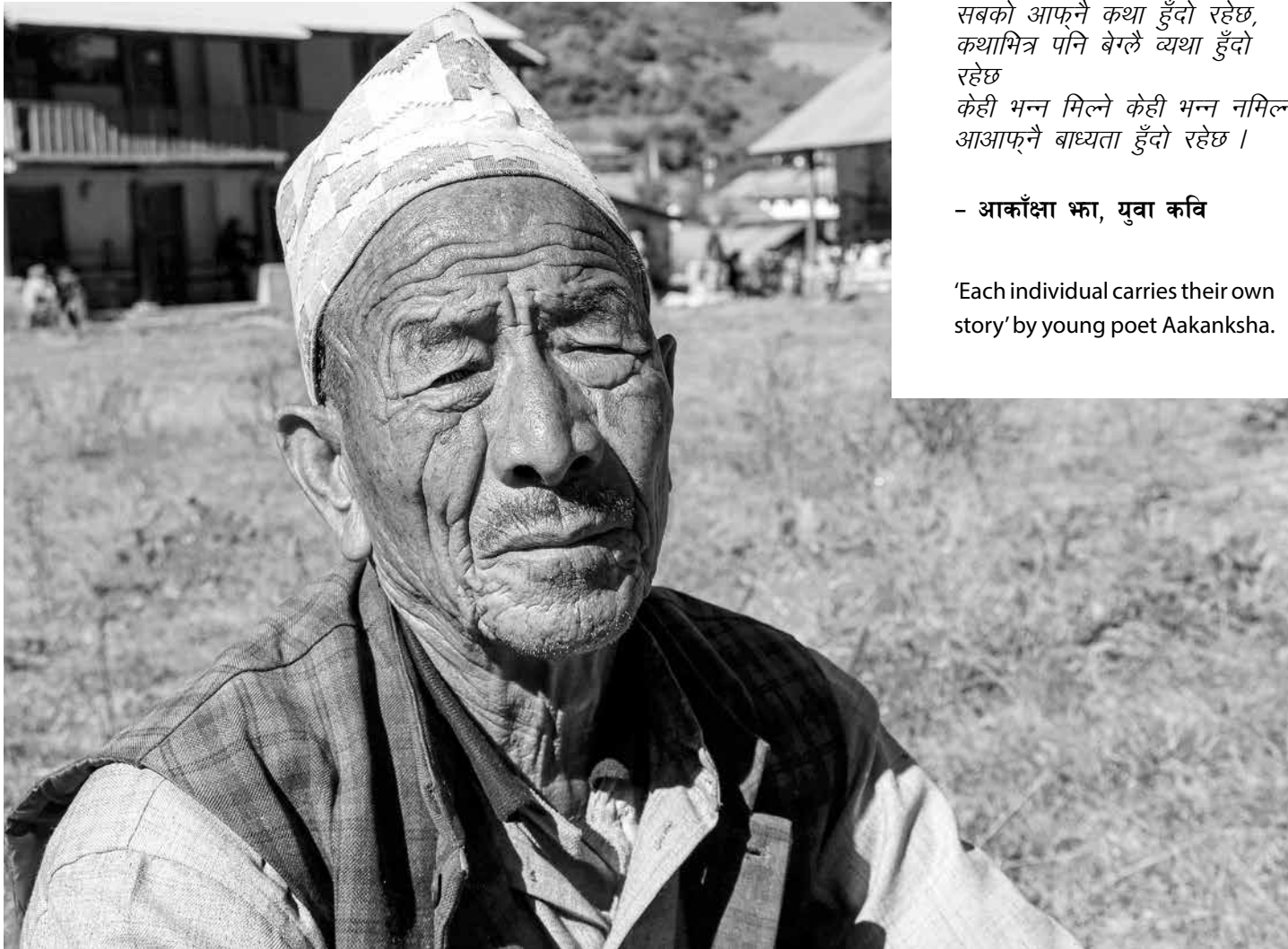
**YOGYA PRASAD  
ACHARYA**, Surkhet

Yogya took up farming after his retirement from a career in the Department of Forests and Soil Conservation. He has heard of the United Nations and hopes it can enjoy a long and positive partnership with Nepal.



**MANDIR BUDHA CHHETRI,** Jajarkot

Mandir Budha followed the family line and spent most of his working life as a farmer and small businessman in Chhehgad Municipality, Jajarkot district. He now spends his retirement at home.



सबको आफ्नै कथा हुँदो रहेछ,  
कथाभित्र पनि बेग्लै व्यथा हुँदो  
रहेछ  
केही भन्न मिल्ने केही भन्न नमिल्ने  
आआफ्नै बाध्यता हुँदो रहेछ ।

- आकाँक्षा भ्ना, युवा कवि

'Each individual carries their own  
story' by young poet Aakanksha.

## **SETE THAKALI,** Jumla

Sete Thakali used to run a small shop in his home village of Manisanghu, in Jumla district, until he was forced to flee to Khalanga by the Maoist insurgency. For years he remained in Khalanga, but was eventually able to return to Manisanghu with the help of the United Nations.

# SUDURPASHCHIM PROVINCE

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सुदुरको अस्तित्वलाई  
तिमीले जति नै नजर अन्दाज गरेपनि हामी हृदयभरी  
माया र अञ्जुलिभरी सत्कार बोकेर,  
सधैं उभिरहेका छौं,  
तिम्रो आगमनलाई स्वागत गर्न  
तिमीलाई आफ्नोपनको आभाष दिलाउन ।

- भेष राज बुढाथोकी, युवा कवि

The poem by Mr. Bheshraj invites you to Sudurpashchim province saying that it is standing with love and hospitality to welcome you.



# SUDURPASHCHIM PROVINCE

*Literally 'Far West', Sudurpashchim is  
Nepal's westernmost province*

Once a hunting reserve, the Shukla Phanta National Park covers over 350 sq km of protected forest and flowering grassland and is a natural habitat for more than 500 species of birds, reptiles and mammals, including what is thought to be the world's largest population of swamp deer. The crystal-clear Ghodaghodi Lake is part of an ecosystem that includes tropical deciduous forest and is part of a wildlife corridor between the Terai and the Siwalik Hills. Tigers, deer, storks, otters, crocodiles and turtles are among the endangered or vulnerable species found here.

Most people in the province are Brahmin and Chettri, with Dalits, Tharus, Janajatis, Madhesis and Muslims also represented. Nepali and Doteli are the most commonly spoken languages in the province, with Tharu also spoken.

**TULASI SUNAR,**  
Kanchanpur

Tulasi lives in Achhami Tol in Mahakali Municipality, Kanchanpur district, where she helps her family with their work in the fields.





**DROPATI BHATTA**, Baitadi

Dropati is not a farmer, but periodically helps her son with his shop in Baitadi.



**BHOJRAJ BHATTA,** Kailali

Bhojraj Bhatta has retired from his career as a medical doctor. He was once able to work on a project supported by the United Nations and so developed an understanding of the organization's work in Nepal, particularly in the health sector.





**BISHNA BHATTA,** Kanchanpur

Bishna lives in a small farming village in Bedkot Municipality, Kanchanpur district. She has dementia, so is only rarely able to leave her house. Her family – all farmers – look after her.



**CHANDRAKALA BHANDARI,** Bajhang

Chandrakala's four daughters and two sons have moved far from her for work. She lives in Mashta Rural Municipality, Bajhang district.



## **TILCHARI CHAUDHARY,** Kailali

Born into a farming family, Tilchari helps out her family as they've taken over the agricultural mantle. Not to mention the obligatory household work.

*म कुरिरहेछु सुरूवात,  
एउटा सुखद अन्त्यको ।*

**- कुमुद कोइराला,  
युवा कवि**

Wish of a happy ending by  
Kumud Koirala



**PARAS SINGH,** Kailali

Paras still farms for a living from his home in Dhangai, Kailali. He is pleased that he remains fit and in good health.



**SUNCHARI CHAUDHARY**, Kanchanpur

Like so many of her peers and neighbours, Sunchari was raised in a farming community and continues to be involved in agriculture by helping her family in their work.

## JAGAT BAM,

Kailali

Jagat has been a farmer for all his life. He lives in Dhangadhi, Kailali district, and continues to help his other family members with their agricultural work.





**DHANILAL CHAUDHARY**, Kailali

Dhanilal Chaudhary was born and raised in Kailali district in western Nepal. He is currently based at Dhangadhi in the district. He is a farmer by trade but these days he cannot work long hours due to his age.

चारैतिर अस्तित्व खोज्दै हिउँ,  
तर अस्तित्व जीवन्त भेटै  
आफ्नै माटोको सुगन्धमा  
आफ्नै जन्मभूमिको अनगिन्ती  
रंगमा आफ्नै हराभरा पहाड  
पर्वतमा ।

- आकांक्षा झा, युवा कवि

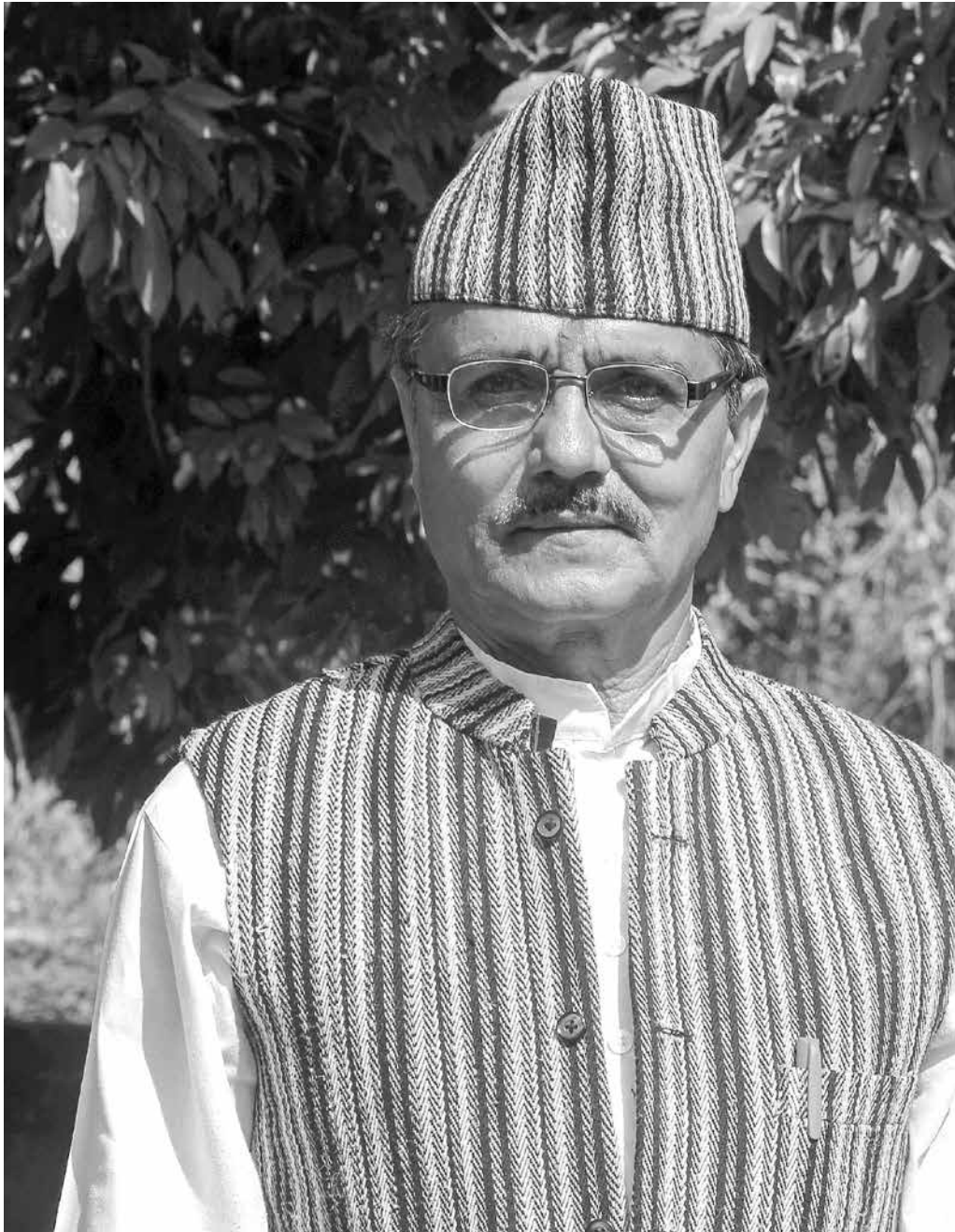
The poem by Aakanksha Jha describes how someone can find the purpose of living on the lap of the nature.



## **DHARMANANDA PANDEY,** Baitadi

Dharmnanda is a retired officer of Nepal Telecom and now lives in Dashrathch Municipality, Baitadi. Every so often he walks the four kilometres to the market to shop. He knows something of the work of the United Nations in Nepal and looks forward to ever stronger bonds between his country and the organization.





**MADANRAJ  
PANDEYA,**  
Kailali

Madanraj is a yoga instructor, a job that has helped him navigate the frequent uncertainties of advancing age. He thinks the United Nations has been doing a great job in developing countries such as Nepal.



2020 was a special year. It was a year the United Nations turned 75. And it was special year for me for a reason: I got the opportunity to work for UNDP with the assignment to come up with a UN75 Photo Profile. For a photographer, who has been capturing the changing society, culture and the faces of Nepal for over a decade, it was an exciting assignment.

It was equally challenging: I had to photograph people who were exactly 75 years in 2020 and the collection had to adequately reflect the complex geographic and ethnic diversity of Nepal. It was not just photography, the stories of faces portrayed in the profile had to be captured too. How they see the face of Nepal changing over time and how do they connect their journey of life with the United Nations.

The assignment had come at a time of global distress caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The project would not have been possible with an individual effort alone. So I had to gather photographers based in all seven provinces and coordinate the project during this unprecedented time.

The project undertaken within short period and amid various constraints posed by the pandemic was not without challenges.

One of the photographers tested positive for COVID-19 on the second day of the assignment. Fortunately, his replacement was promptly found. There was also the challenge of finding the right subject for this photography project. The objective was to photograph people who were 75 years old. But in many cases, particularly in rural parts of the country, elderly citizens did not have their birth dates mentioned on their citizenship certificates while others had wrong birth dates. The photographers had no choice but to take their word for it. Looking back at it all, despite the challenges and constraints, the project was a success. The experience was a frantic one but nevertheless a rewarding one.

I hope this photo book will serve as a historical record of this trying time.

This project would not have been possible without the photographers who worked in this project. To them I am sincerely indebted for their hard work.

I am immensely grateful to UNDP for offering me this opportunity and the experience.

Sincerely,

**Kiran Panday**

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## ABOUT UNDP

UNDP works in some 170 countries and territories, helping to achieve the eradication of poverty, and the reduction of inequalities and exclusion. We help countries to develop policies, leadership skills, partnering abilities, institutional capabilities and build reliance in order to sustain development results.

UNDP Nepal works with the people and Government of Nepal, and other development partners, to pursue equitable and sustainable human development goals through eradication of poverty, increase in livelihood opportunities, improvement in community resilience to conflict, disasters and impacts of climate change, while laying down strong foundations for a society based on rule of law with an inclusive and participatory democracy.