

# *fading* memories



from the survivors of the people's war





# *Fading* **memories**

from the survivors of the people's war



**dedicated to those who left us and those who survived**

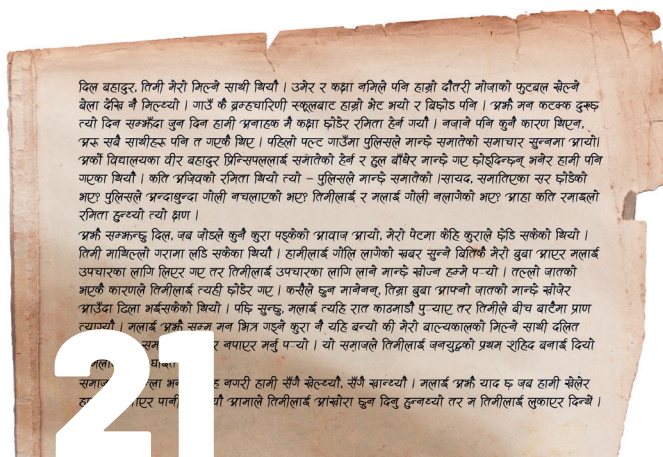


**10 years long people's war**



**Memories remain**

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## Letters from the survivors

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- + Dudhraj Adhikari
- + Krishna Ghising
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## In retrospect

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# 10 years long people's war

These images are a reflection of the 10-year-long People's War and the human destruction it left in its wake.

They also showcase Nepal's ongoing struggle — the losses suffered by the country, the need for remembrance, as well as the search for truth and most of all, the demand for justice.



*In 1998, Nepal Army took Guru Prasad Kathariya of Rajapur, Bardiya district from his home at 2.30am. Next day, his family found a pair of slippers a few miles away from his home, but no body till date.*

*His widow Ramkali Devi Tharu, 52, has the rusted sickle as a memento of her husband.*





A joint command force picked three Tharu youth from the rice field of Baisahi village, Bardiya district, where they were killing rats for food. Dhaniram, 66, Hariram, 71, Surjan, 72, hold the photos of their sons Kaliya Ram, 19, Shiva Prasad, 20, and Prem Kumar, 20.

They were last seen in Guleriya district police office.

The Commission of Investigation on Enforced Disappeared received over 3,000 complaints of enforced disappearances. Of them, the Commission is said to have been investigating 2,300 complaints so far.



*"Who can I trust to tell my story? How can I get justice?"*



*Sangita Tharu, 35, of Rajapur, Bardiya, was six-month pregnant when Nepal Army soldiers picked her up from her home and charged her of feeding the rebel Maoist cadres in 2002. She was tortured and rape in custody. Nepal has not reviewed laws to look into incidents of rapes and torture committed during the conflict period.*

*The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has received over 300 complaints of conflict related sexual violence.*





*Bhawani Tharu's son Tej Bahadur, a daily wage laborer, came home to celebrate Dasain with the family. On Tika, Dasain's main day to receive blessing from elders in Hindu culture, Maoists took him from home.*

*After two days, villagers found his body - head and torso separate - floating in a canal some three kilometer away from his home. His wife was pregnant with his first child. Bhawani shows photo of her youngest child Tej Bahadur.*

*Around 11,000 murder cases have been filed in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to date.*



Nepal Army sentries stationed at Rajakot tower shot dead 12 Dalit youths from a Dalit settlement of Kauwaghari village, Sarki Tole, Dang district in 2002. The youth had gone to the jungle to collect firewood. Soldiers lined them up and shot them. This 72-year-old father wants to know why his son was killed.

There have been cases of mass extra judicial killings throughout the people's war. In Dang district alone, there were five separate incidents of mass killings targeting Dalits and Tharus.



*Maoists tortured Ram Ratan Tharu, 50, when he refused to give a 'donation' to their party. They battered his leg with his plough until he collapsed on the ground unconsciousness. The 50-year-old survived and now uses prosthetic leg.*

*More than 16,000 complaints at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are related to torture during the conflict period.*







*Lila Gurung, 77, still runs a fruit shop in Mahendrapul, Pokhara, where she was injured in a bomb explosion planted by then rebel Maoists. She was in the shop when the bomb went off injuring 13 innocent people in 2006.*

*Shrapnel could not be removed from her right leg for seven years.*

*(On right) Brother of Lila, Mahendra Gurung, holding her medical boot.*





*There is no data available on the exact numbers of civilians who were made disabled during the people's war.*



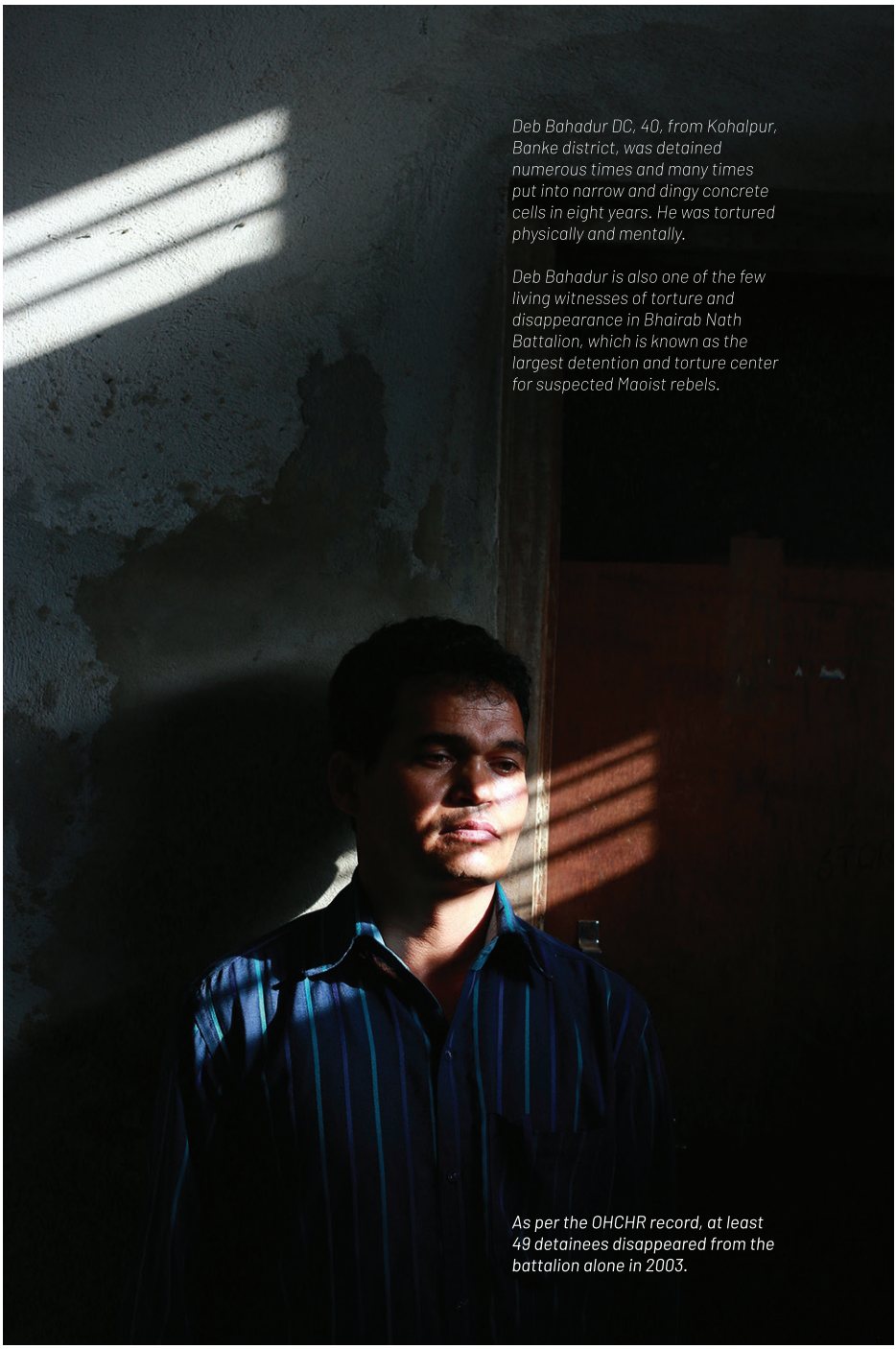
*Bhawikala Purja, 22, of Myagdi district, is one of ex-soldiers who accepted the voluntary retirement package offered by the government during the integration process of the rebel Maoists. She was wounded in battlefield and is now a housewife.*

*Only 1,463 Maoist soldiers qualified for integration into national army, while the rest of 19,000 strong former Maoist army opted for voluntary discharge and retirement.*

*Saraswati Rai, of Nuwakot district, is a female child soldiers. She served as a Maoist infantry until the UN verification process identified her as minor. Subsequently, she was labelled as a 'disqualified soldier' and discharged from the cantonment in 2010.*

*In 2007, the UN Mission in Nepal had verified 4,008 guerrillas of the then rebel CPN (Maoist) as minors and late recruits, and thus disqualified to be integrated into the national army.*



A photograph of a man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a dark blue and black vertically striped button-down shirt. He is standing in a dimly lit room, possibly a prison cell, with a weathered, grey wall behind him. Bright light from a window on the left casts strong, horizontal shadows across the wall and onto his face and shirt. The background is mostly in deep shadow, with a dark wooden door visible on the right.

*Deb Bahadur DC, 40, from Kohalpur, Banke district, was detained numerous times and many times put into narrow and dingy concrete cells in eight years. He was tortured physically and mentally.*

*Deb Bahadur is also one of the few living witnesses of torture and disappearance in Bhairab Nath Battalion, which is known as the largest detention and torture center for suspected Maoist rebels.*

*As per the OHCHR record, at least 49 detainees disappeared from the battalion alone in 2003.*



# **Letters from the survivors**

These letters tell the stories of the innocent people who have been made disabled during the conflict.





I was at home doing the usual stuff when I saw a group of army in my house. "Where are the Maoists?" they asked me. They kept questioning but I did not know. 'Who will know if you do not know' they asked slapping me hard. The Nepal army gave me a lot of trouble.

One day, I was cycling back home from Rajapur after selling rice in the market. A group of men stopped me right in front of my home. They started beating me up before I could ask why. They knocked me down on the canal and kept beating me until I fell unconscious. I pleaded them for life but they would not stop. I faintly remember the last smash with a heavy wooden object on my hand. They left shouting 'Long live Maoists'.

I could not stand on my own feet. Villagers came to my rescue. Nepal Army, who came late, took me to Nepalgunj for treatment. After a few check-ups, I was referred to a hospital in Kathmandu. Initially, I was admitted to TU Teaching Hospital. Since it was costly, they moved me to Bir Hospital. My hand began to decay as it was getting late for treatment. There was no alternative but to amputate of my hand. I had to take a loan for my treatment. I have not been able to pay off the debt till today. Not to have your hand is to lose half of your body. It was very difficult to get used to working with one hand. It certainly is not like having your both hands. I get disappointed with my life. I feel weak and helpless.

I have not been able find the answer to my question: Why I was targeted? What did I do wrong? Or is it that the Maoists hate every independent person? All those whoever caused so me much pain are in power today. They are the ones in the place to manage the pain inflicted on so many people. I have a question for them: Why was I beaten up and rendered disabled on 1 January 2003? In their words, I was one of the wealthy people in the Tharu community.

Is it wrong for a Tharu to have wealth?

Hemraj Tharu  
Bardiya





The road was clogged with vehicles when I was returning home from work. One bus was relatively empty so I got on it. I found out that there was a clash between the Maoist insurgents and police in a police post. Some passengers were talking about how lucky they were that they didn't get caught in a crossfire. However, our bus was stopped after a few minutes. Maoist cadres showed up and forced us to evacuate the bus. Passengers started running chaotically as we were all scared. I also started running. Hardly had I run few meters when I collapsed.

My stomach burst open and almost half a kilo of my intestine spilled out. I put it back in with my own hands. My mouth started drying up. I asked for water, but nobody helped. Some people who were in the few houses around closed their doors instead. I was wriggling on the ground in pain. A number of other passengers were also wounded. Eventually all the wounded were rescued except me. They said that I was a Maoist. You will be alright in 20 min, they said to me and left me there. I thought I would not survive. I begged people around to help me. I am a worker of a furniture factory. You can check my card, I pleaded to them, but nobody seemed interested. I did not lose consciousness. I saw a man from my village. I called him. He took me to hospital and I survived. He was God to me.

Lying in the hospital bed, I would often wonder if my children had food or were hungry. After that incident, I was not able to look after my family. My daughter was taken care by my wife's family. I spent nine months in the hospital. I had to work extra to pay back the loan taken for my treatment. I used to paint with my one hand. It was really hard to make ends meet.

The conflict victimized ordinary and innocent people. I do not see the presence of the state anywhere. They deliberately ignore us. We are still struggling to survive, but the government turns a blind eye to our plight. It is the responsibility of the government to support us and to give justice to the victims of the conflict. We should not have to explain this to our government.

The incident took place in October 2003. Our family has been struggling to survive ever since. My plight victimized my wife and children. I am a disappointment to my family.

Dudhraj Lalitkari

Kaski



I get scared by certain music till today. There was music playing when I gained consciousness after 19 days in a coma. It was a radio jingle which played during intervals of news bulletins of Radio Nepal.

I had gone to my village to make my passport with a dream of going to Korea and make a lot of money. On the way back to Kathmandu, our bus was moving slowly removing obstructions on the way caused by protesters. Suddenly, we heard an explosion. There was a commotion in the bus. Some passengers died on the spot, while some were taken to hospital for treatment.

Although I survived the explosion, only half of my body came to life. Half of my lower body became immovable because of spinal cord injury. All my dreams were shattered. I left the hospital in a wheel chair after nine months. It was a difficult time for me. When I was in the ambulance, I felt like I was carrying my own corpse. It is said that people take drugs to forget the pain but I having been living with the pain, drinking it, having fun with it and befriending it.

I wanted make my son a famous person one day. The conflict made me incapable of looking after myself, who can not move without help of others. One day, my son sang a song for me

When did I ever laugh  
When you cried in front of me

I was stunned. I just felt like crying. The song gave me courage to move forward in life, revitalize my desire to live. It was an assurance that I could trust my son as my support in life.

Perhaps, it would not have been so much pain if I was born disabled. But we were made disabled. It is the duty of the state to take care of the disabled but instead the state humiliates us. It feels like they bargain a price for our body. The allowance they give us has been determined depending on the severity of the damage caused to the body. It largely depends on your access to the state. The state has given no attention to the people with disabilities due to the conflict. We can not move without the help of an assistant. It is useless to live such a life. I don't know how my life will end, but through it all I keep thinking of ways to help my family.

It has been 15 years since I've been wheelchair bound. On 14 November 2002, my first life came to an end. I do not know how long I will live in my second life.

Krishna Ghising  
Dolakha







Dear Dil Bahadur! My best buddy. Although we were not of the same age and grade in school, we used to play football, a dummy ball made out of socks, in the village. We first met in Bramhacharini School and parted thereafter. My heart still aches to recall the day when we bunked class to see the police arresting someone in our village. All of our friends were going there. They said that this was the first time that police arrested someone from our village. Bir Bahadur, the Principal of another school, got arrested that day. We were told that he would be released if the villagers show up to demand his release. Arrest of a man! What a spectacle it was! If only the arrested teacher had been released, if only police had not opened fire indiscriminately, if only you and I did not get shot! How much fun it would have been!

Dil, I vividly remember the time when we heard an explosion. I suddenly realized something penetrated my belly. You had fallen down on the ground. As the news of shooting spread, my father rushed to the site and took me for treatment, but there was no one to take care of you. As you belong to a lower caste, nobody came forward to your rescue. People were hesitant to even touch you. By the time your father came with the people of your community, it was too late. I found out about it later. I was taken to a hospital in Kathmandu on the same night but you passed away on the way to the hospital. I still feel it deeply that my childhood mate could not get treated on time because he was Dalit. You became the first martyr of the People's War. Me, the first to be wounded.

We used to play together without caring about what society would think of us. I remember how my mother would not let you touch our amkhora (bronze jar) for you to drink water from, but I used to give it to you behind my mother's back.

Dil, my body has not recovered. I don't think that it will get cured. I have been taking medicine regularly. I sometime think that I wouldn't have to suffer had I died along with you. When puss used to ooze out of my wound, our school mates used to make fun of me, saying 'Now Rame will die'.

Our society still mocks me, calling me a living martyr. I feel that I have become the laughing stock because I did not get proper treatment and have to live with my wounds.

Why is there no honor in your name for the sacrifice you made for the existing changes? Why is your house the same as it used to be around 1996, when the people's war started? Why is old Sete uncle still seen ploughing his field? Why does Sarimaya aunty still have to hike hours to fetch drinking water? When I still see this around me, I feel like society is mocking you.

In 10 years' thousands of families suffered the same plight as us. Thousands of people like you died, and thousands of poor like me were injured. Thousands of parents whose children were killed have been waiting for an answer as to why their children were killed. How long should they wait? It is uncertain. But no matter what, I will keep on fighting for the honor and justice that you deserve.

I remember your hopeful face, which also keeps my hope alive.

More in my next letter,

Ram Bhatta

Gorkha



I have a question for them: Why did they break my legs? What was my fault?

Recalling this day still sends chills down my spine. I was sitting on a bed, chatting with my friends after dinner. I heard someone calling my name. Suddenly, a group of people surrounded me. They started thrashing me brutally. I begged for mercy. I told them I was ready to donate any amount they demanded. But they would not stop and continued to beat me up. My mouth dried out, I lost my voice and lay motionless like a dead body. One of them came over to check if I was dead or alive, and murmured "he is gone". Then, another person smashed my leg with a huge wooden beam. They fired their guns up in the air, chanted 'Long Live Maoists' and left the place.

There was an eerie silence in the village. I thought I would die. My family members took me to a local doctor for first aid before taking me to Kathmandu for treatment. After 18 months in the hospital, I returned home. During the time, my mother died from stress. I could not attend her last rites. I was in the hospital bed and asked family members to do as they wished.

They started hunting for me when they found out that I was alive. They went to my home hoping that I would be there for funeral process of my mother. When they did not find me there, all my family members were tied together with a rope and beaten to a pulp. The villagers did not dare untie them out of fear. The police untied them later in the day. After that incident, my entire family members were forced to leave the village. My father also died from mental torture and stress before they could return home.

I was tortured and beaten for no reason. My family was destroyed. Luckily I escaped death, but I am helpless. I can not move around without support. Initially, the government covered my medical bill, but it was not enough. I lost my job too. I cannot work now. It has been now almost impossible to take care of my family and buy medicine for me. Sometimes, I feel useless.

This happened in February 2001. The state has not done anything for victims like us. We are looked down upon. With time, my body is getting weaker. I get perturbed thinking about the remainder of my life. Where can I go to search for justice in a country where justice is dead? I want to ask questions like these.

Ram Ratan Chaudhari  
Banke







# Memories remain

A collection of objects from the  
victims and victim families.



*He started to work for a pharmacy to manage the household expenses after his father died. This wall clock is the first thing he bought from his salary.*

*I keep looking at this watch, waiting for the time to pass till my son returns home.*

*Mohan Maya Mali  
Mother of disappeared Rajendra Mali  
Godawari Municipality-12  
Thecho, Lalitpur*









*I was taken to Bhairabnath Battalion on Dec 12, 2004.*

*I was wearing this sweater when the army freed me and dropped me off at Banasthali Chowk on February 17, 2005.*

*Swatantra Chaulagain of Bhote Chaur, Sindhupalchok, had given me this sweater while we were in the army camp together. "Please register my name at Amnesty. Don't quit the party if you return safely," he had told me.*

*Swatantra Chaulagain is still missing.*

*Ujjwal Acharya (name changed)  
Kovre*





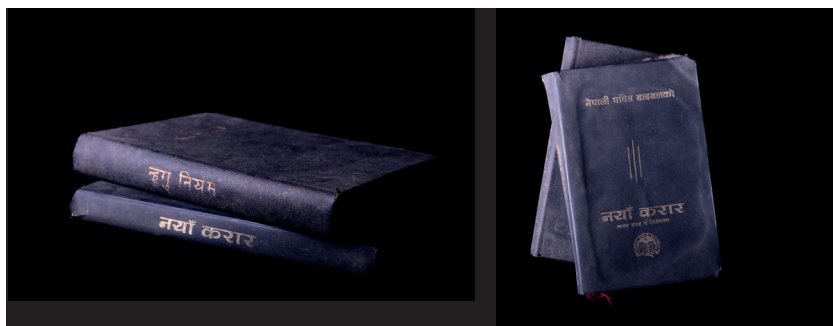


*My husband used to carry it all the time whenever he would go to rice field.*

*It lay idle when he was disappeared and got rusted. I have been keeping it safely as his last memento.*

*Ramkali Devi Tharu  
Wife of Guru Prasad Kathariya  
Rajapur, Bardiya*







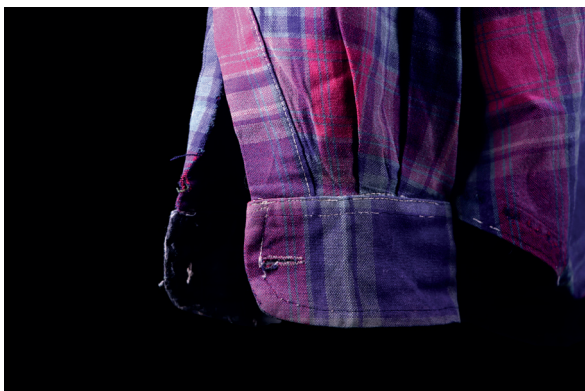
*My son used to recite this Bible at the church while going together with me. I have safely kept this Bible thinking he will return some day. When that happens I will hand it over to him.*

*Ratna Kumari Mali  
Mother of disappeared Baburaja Mali  
Godawari Municipality-12  
Thecho, Lalitpur*



*When my brother, Ajay Shahi, earned his first salary he bought this shirt. My brother was disappeared by the Army on July 19, 2004. I have safely kept my brothers' shirt in a separate box.*

*Bijaya Shahi  
Brother of disappeared Ajaya Shahi  
Kirtipur*







*My father used to make Buddha's idols.  
Why is the army still keeping a man who  
likes making sculptures as hostage?*

*Will this bring the peace to the country?*

*Nagma Mali  
Daughter of disappeared Nanda Gopal Mali  
Thecho, Lalitpur*







*Me and my son used the same  
plough whenever we went to the  
forest to work together.*

*Today we only have the plough,  
neither I can use it nor does my son  
come back to use it.*

*Surjan Tharu  
Bardiya*





When I was young both my parent  
went to war. They wrote down  
stories from the torturous days they  
must have spent. They also wrote  
when they missed me.

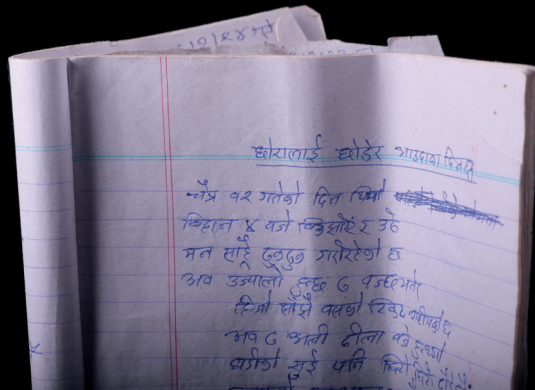
My grandmother cried a lot when  
she read the diary. So until today  
I haven't had the courage to open  
this diary and read it. I have kept  
it unread hoping that when I get  
enough knowledge and strength to  
take forward my parents dreams  
this diary will be a source of my  
inspiration.

Sandip Pun

Father Surya Prakash Pun

Mother Parampara Gautam

Chunbang, Rukum





*Last year the commission took my statement. They still haven't given me any relief materials. They say that we won't give us any reparations since too much time has passed.*

*Didn't too much time pass when the bomb exploded?*

*Lila Gurung  
Chipledunga Bomb Explosion Survivor  
Pokhara*





*This shawl reminds me of faded  
memories of my mother's face. I  
often try to imagine mother wearing  
this shawl.*

*Mother had consulted me before she  
joined my father in the Peoples' War.  
I consented.*

*Perhaps, she wouldn't have died at  
the army torture camp if I had not  
given my consent to her.*

*Pratik Karki  
Killed mother Indira Karki, father  
Dilkaji Karki  
Khotang*









*During his 14-month-long jail time,  
my brother used to send us letters  
by hiding them inside biscuits and  
noodle packets.*

*That's how we received this letter  
too. Butter Cracker and WaiWai  
noodles still reminds me of him.*

*Even today, whenever I see biscuit  
and noodles, I anxiously think there  
might be a letter in it from him.*

*He was in touch with our family until  
November 22, 2003. The last letter  
that we received was written from  
Sundhara jail (Central Jail)*

*Sapana Suwarnakar  
Disappeared Ashok Akela's oldest sister  
Borlang-5, Gorkha*



# In retrospect

These photo stories are a result of a participatory photography workshop with female Ex - People's Liberation Army members.

VOW Media spent 3 sessions with female Ex-PLA members where they learnt basic photography and visual storytelling.

This is a collection of stories they individually wished to share.

- + *Women, Liberated*
- + *Comrade in arms*
- + *4008 Humiliated Soldiers*
- + *Wind of Change*
- + *Injured Commander*
- + *Nightmare*





# Women, Liberated

---

*Photos: Rita Ghimire Archive, Bikkil Sthapit*

Lalumaya Moktan, also known as Lila, died in the attack of Jhurjhure of Makawanpur.

She was Rita's colleague, a platoon vice commander of Bethan Smriti Battalion.





Rita Basnet, who now runs a small retail shop in Koteswor, Kathmandu, used to be Section Commander in Bethan Smriti Brigade during the conflict period. A dedicated Maoist fighter, whose nom de guerre was Comrade Rashmi, she still wants people to know her role in the political change.











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लाई अत्याधिक  
मतले विजयी  
गराऔ।



नगर उ  
रितादेवी



Rita Ghimire, also known as Ramila, ran for the post of Deputy Mayor in Manthali Municipality during the local election 2017.

Comrade Ramila was platoon commander of Third Division of Anish Kalyan Smriti Brigade.







Onsari Gharti Magar, also known as Usha,  
was commissar in 13th Battalion of  
Bethan Smriti Brigade.

She became the House Speaker of the  
Second Constituent Assembly.





# ***Comrade in arms***

---

**Photos:** *Dolma Gale Archive*

In ten years old people's war, comrade Lalita spent almost eight years in jail at different times. She earned a reputation of an accountant and logistic officer in prison. She never went to battle field but her contribution to the people's war was invaluable. She always helped her fellow comrades in prison with their budget and logistics.

She was a platoon commander of 14th Battalion B Company. She was nominated as a parliamentary member under proportional representation.















# **4008 Humiliated Soldiers**

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*Photos: Shova Rayamajhi Archive, Bikkil Sthapit*

Shova Rayamajhi was given a gun to fight the cause that she did not know then. She was just 11 years old when she took up the gun. She was discharged well before she became an adult. The UN Mission to Nepal (UNMIN) verified a total of 4,008 minors and discharged them empty handed.

She realized that it was injustice to those who fought along with senior political leaders during the conflict. She missed her school education. She has been fighting for the rights of those whose childhood was robbed and they were rendered jobless. Although the government had earmarked Rs 200,000 per 'disqualified' child soldier to facilitate their return to the society, a writ petition was filed against the decision. The Court stayed the writ petition.



















# ***Wind of Change***

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**Photos:** Bhawikala Purja Archive, Bikkil Sthapit



**2005**

I was 19 years old when I got shot in both legs in a crossfire during the attack in Khandaha, Arghakhanchi. I took shelter in villages for almost two months before being taken to India for treatment. This picture was taken when I was taking rest in a house of a Magar family in Pyuthan. I kept changing shelter house every two weeks for the fear of being spotted by public as well as 'our enemy'. Having spent 10 days in an Indian hospital for treatment, I rested almost 10 months under the supervision of party comrades in the People's Liberation Army's office. In November 2006, I was sent to a cantonment set up for Maoist army after the signing of the peace accord. The party leadership then deputed me to Myagdi, my home district, as a cadre of party's youth wing— Young Communist League.



**2018**

Currently, I live in Myagdi Chowk of Gongabu, Kathmandu. I have my family now. My daughter is 8 years old and my son turned 6. My husband was a battalion commander. He was also wounded in the war and disabled. Since he has a family to look after, he had no option other than working abroad like many youths of our country. We have been living with whatever money he sends us. I still walk around with difficulty. The nightmare of war still haunts me.





# ***Injured Commander***

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**Photos:** Sushila Gautam Archive, Bikkil Sthapit



Sushila with AK 47 assault rifle,  
she can not recall the place.



Sushila Gautam (first row on  
the left), in a group photo taken  
after completing training in  
Shaktikhor Cantonment,  
Chitwan in 2007.



Sushila was wounded during an assault in Katari, Udaypur. She miraculously survived despite having wounded by eight shrapnel, some of which had to be left in her body.



Sushila holds her CT Scan report of her head. A shrapnel that had pierced her right skull could not be removed, which is still there.





Sushila takes a heavy dose of medicine everyday—for neuron, heart, thyroid problems.







Sushila sits on the chair with much difficulty because of her past wounds.



Sushila works as a secretary  
of Women Academy of former  
People's Liberation Army of the  
Maoists.

Established in 2012,  
the Academy works for women  
soldiers in Maoist army.





# ***Nightmare***

---

*Photos: Bikkil Sthapit*



Palsang is one of the many hundreds of torture victims. The Nepal Army tortured her so much that she still gets nightmares of the war. She still gets scared when he sees salt and pepper, bamboo stick, heater, electric wire - items that were used to torture her.

























# Background

*The 10-year long conflict in Nepal (1996-2006) brought tragedy for many families; thousands of people were killed during the conflict, and over 1300 have disappeared; their families still have no information on the whereabouts of their loved ones. Human rights violation and abuses by both government security forces and by the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoists) were widespread throughout the conflict.*

*In 1996, the CPN (Maoists) launched the "People's War" in few districts with several attacks on police posts, local administrative offices, wealthy land-owners and members of various political parties. The Maoists started the war to overthrow and replace the corrupt and inadequate ruling classes. They believed they can do so only through a revolutionary armed struggle. Most of the people in Nepal are poverty stricken. There is caste discrimination, gender discrimination, oppression to minority groups, lack of education, lack of political representation etc. The Maoists spoke to these flaws in our social system and due to these and many other problems in Nepalese society, the Maoists quickly gained massive support, specially in the rural areas.*



# Transitional Justice in Nepal

*Human rights is the starting point for Transitional Justice. Human right is the front face of transitional justice primarily because it is the violation of human rights that always necessitates transitional justice efforts. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), formally ended Nepal's 10 year long armed conflict and included provisions of Transitional Justice. So far, many victims, their families and civil societies in general have been frustrated by the state's lack of substantive progress in delivering truth, justice, reparation and institutional reform. The most obvious expectations victims of Nepal have is that the transitional justice measures – truth, justice, reparations, and guarantees of non-recurrence are implemented. Another major expectation is to receive economic support to ensure livelihood, and the addressing of other immediate need such as psychological and health concerns.*

*The Nepalese judicial system remains passive and the perpetrators enjoy almost complete impunity. Apart from the atrocities, torture and extrajudicial executions are common, and yet the government hasn't done anything to identify the culprits. In general, what matters most to conflict victims is that justice to them means living with dignity and seeing their daily needs fulfilled.*



***“There was a lot of hope  
after the Comprehensive  
Peace Agreement in 2006,  
and we families of victims  
expected that the new  
elected government would  
work for truth and justice.”***

Ram Bhandari, who 15 years  
later still doesn't know what  
happened to his father.

***"Nobody asked about  
my everyday needs and  
family problems. The major  
challenge is to continue  
individual, family and social  
life.***

***I have a little trust that  
these commission process-  
es will address my needs  
and sufferings."***

Victims' leader, Kavre

***"If he has been killed, tell us so.  
If he is alive, show us where he is."***

Sita Devi Ghatri, whose husband has been  
disappeared since last 17 years.

# Enforced Disappearance

*Enforced disappearances are among the most widespread human rights violations committed during the decade long Nepal's armed conflict. Unlike the Maoists, who often publicly executed those they captured, the state commonly abducted victims and then failed to provide information regarding their fate. Thousands of people in Nepal were disappeared during the armed conflict. Families and friends are still waiting in hope to know what has happened to them.*

# Conflict-related Sexual Violence (CRSV)

*Sexual violence during Nepal's 10 year conflict between Maoists and government forces has remained largely undisclosed. Female bodies became a focus and a tool of war in violent power struggles. Soldiers on both sides raped and sexually victimized thousands of women during high intensity periods of armed conflict in pure exploitation.*

*During the conflict, women were killed, wounded, tortured, experience sexualized violence including rape, forced prostitution, were imprisoned, separated from their families, internally displaced or driven into exile and face significant psychological impacts. Large numbers of survivors of CRSV in Nepal continue to suffer from medical problems resulting from their assaults, including chronic pain and infertility. Survivors also all but uniformly face ongoing threats of social stigmatization and ostracism due to their assaults, and survivors who mention their assaults to others risk being rejected by their communities, potential partners, and even close family members.*



# Torture

*According to Nepal's leading human rights organizations, including the NHRC, both parties, allegedly routinely tortured the civilians during interrogation and as a punishment of perceived wrongs.*

*By far the most common method of inflicting pain was manual, simply by kicking, hitting, slapping, or punching the victim. Knives were employed as instruments of torture, which was used for stabbing, cutting or disfiguring victims. Other implements employed in inflicting torture were handsaws, nails, hammers, cigarettes, candles etc.*

# Ethnic Minorities & Low-Caste Group (Mass Killings)

*Low-caste groups in Nepal suffered terrible atrocities in the course of the People's war. Rural groups suffered more in the war than urban populations. The Tharus and Dalits in Dang and Bardiya were often targeted by the state and were killed or disappeared in groups.*

## People with Disabilities

*The number of casualties and the extent of damage caused in any conflict can be difficult to determine. It takes time to collect information and to verify it with new numbers and statistics continuing to come in. At least, 4,305 people including civilians and combatants emerged from Nepal's conflict disabled, due in large part to the use of torture, severe beatings, and other cruel inhumane treatment.*

***"Either give me justice,  
or kill me."***

Gaya Prasad Tharu, 40

# Struggles of the Ex-PLA

*Among the verified 23,610 Maoist combatants, 4,008 were discharged in 2010. Among them, 3,846 were women. However, the exact numbers of female combatants remain unknown. In the decade since Nepal's decade long Maoist insurgency ended, veterans of the now demobilized Maoist forces, the People's Liberation Army (PLA), have been largely abandoned by the authorities and the Party they fought for – which now leads the government. What happened to the veterans of a conflict that scarred the nation, particularly since many of those veterans – often recruited as young teenagers – were now unemployed, stigmatized and unprepared for a world that valued the education they had missed over their years carrying a gun?*

***“Not a single woman was included in the negotiating teams at the political level. Neither were any women included in the PLA and Nepali Army teams negotiating the integration process.”***

Former PLA Brigade Vice-Commander Lila Sharma ‘Asmita’ explains how women PLA ex-fighters have fared even worse than their male counterparts in the post-war transition.



# About Memory, Truth, & Justice

*“Often, our stories are simply lost to the passage of time, to the inevitable loss of those who lived through events that make our communities what they are.”*

*MEMORY, TRUTH & JUSTICE is a project to document, archive and share personal stories of survivors and families of the victims of the armed conflict in Nepal from 1996 - 2006. A multimedia project using art, audio, video and photo medium, the project seeks to preserve and dignify their memories by recording testimonies from survivors and families of the victims, and by sharing them with a purpose of education and remembrance.*

*MEMORY, TRUTH & JUSTICE uses audio, video and photography as a medium to record the memory to survivors and families of the victims and to share them with the community at large with a purpose of education and remembrance. It will also work to raise the public profile of the issue and mobilize other actors to dedicate resources and advocate for a more victim-centric approach.*

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voices  
of women  
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**Conflict Victim Common Platform**

**National Network of Families of Disappeared and Missing Nepal**

**Discharged Ex-PLA Soldiers**

**Ex- Women PLA Academy**

**Rina Rasaili Memorial Foundation**

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| <b>Bimala Devi Pun</b>           | <b>Gaya Prasad Tharu</b>     |
| <b>Bimala Sthapit</b>            | <b>Gayatri Devi Karn</b>     |

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| <b>Jeet Narayan Yadav</b>       | <b>Nagma Mali</b>                |
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| <b>Lavkant Chaudhary</b>        | <b>Prabal Thapa</b>              |
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| <b>Mahesh Tharu</b>             | <b>Ram Babu Dhakal</b>           |
| <b>Malati Nepali</b>            | <b>Ram kali Tharu</b>            |
| <b>Mamata Dhakal</b>            | <b>Ram Kumar Bhandari</b>        |

Ram Prasad Bhatta  
Ram Prasad Chaudhary  
Ram Ratan Chaudhary  
Ram Ratan Yadav  
Ramesh Babu Thapa Magar  
Ramkali Tharu  
Ratikalamati Chaudhary  
Ratna Kumari Mali  
Rita Ghimire  
Rita Tharu  
Rita Tharu  
Roshan Dhahal  
Ruban Kumar Shrestha  
Ruku Chaulagai  
Sabi Baniya  
Sabitra Dura 'Astha'  
Samundri Gaandhari  
Sandip Pun  
Sanjeev Maharjan  
Sapana Suwarnakar  
Sapti Tharu  
Saraswoti Lama  
Saraswoti Rai  
Sari Maya Ramtel  
Sarika Rai  
Setey Ramtel  
Shanta Neupane  
Sharmila Chaudhary  
Sheelasha Rajbhandari  
Shiva Prasad Tharu

Shova Bhatta  
Shova Gharti Chaudhary  
Shova Rayamajhi  
Shradha Rayamajhi  
Shree Narayan Mandal  
Sita Basnet  
Sita Sarki  
Sital Tharu  
Sitali Devi Gharti  
Sitaram Chaudhary  
Siwa Tharu  
Sonawoli Mandal  
Sonchiriya Tharu  
Subhas Tamang  
Sudan Nakarmi  
Sundar Lal Chaudhary  
Sunita Chaudhary  
Sunita Khadka  
Sunita Kumari Gautam  
Suntali Rasaili  
Surjan Tharu  
Sushila Chaudhary  
Sushma Gautam  
Takiya Tharu  
Tej Ram Tharu  
Thagu Lal Chaudhary  
Tika Bastola  
Tulsa Kumari Chaudhary  
Usha Dahal  
Usha Ghimire









Memory  
Truth &  
Justice