



**NEWS BULLETIN 305
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Menstrual Banishment in Nepal Claims Another Victim



***Chhaupadi* is widely practiced in Gutu village, Surkhet. Photo by the Advocacy Project.**

The shocking cultural practice known as *chhaupadi*, which banishes menstruating Nepali women to a cowshed like the one seen in this photo, has claimed the life of Gauri Kumari Bayak, 22. According to a front-page article in [today's New York Times](#), Ms Bayak was asphyxiated after building a fire to keep warm in the shed.

This terrible news comes less than 3 months after The Advocacy Project (AP) [exposed the practice of chhaupadi in a report from the villages of Surkhet](#) - one of 21 districts in Nepal where

chhaupadi is practiced. Samita Pradhan, director of the Centre for AgroEcology and Development (CAED), an AP partner that campaigns against *chhaupadi*, estimates that women can spend up to 8 years of their life in a shed.

A new law will make *chhaupadi* illegal in August and proscribes three months in jail for offenders. The sentence is ridiculously light, but even this will be hard to implement given that many of those responsible are elderly women - grandmothers and mothers in law.

So is there hope for Nepali village women? We think so. As we reported, a younger generation of Nepali women, like Champa and her mother Dura, seen below, are rebelling against *chhaupadi* and challenging older family members. A battle is looming between generations and CAED will be in the thick of the campaign, with support from AP. We will send a Peace Fellow to work with CAED in Surkhet this summer.

In the meantime, AP will continue to publish news about partners that comes direct from the front lines, anticipates the mainstream media, and digs deep to provide an angle you won't read elsewhere.

We wish you an active and fulfilled New Year. Thanks for your interest!



Saying no in Nepal: Champa, 14, and her mother Dura have rejected *chhaupadi*

Feedback? Contact us at dcoffice@advocacy.net. This bulletin was drafted by Iain Guest iain@advocacy.net.

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