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Coldest: Jumla: 17.4°c Hottest: Nepalgunj: 38.0°c

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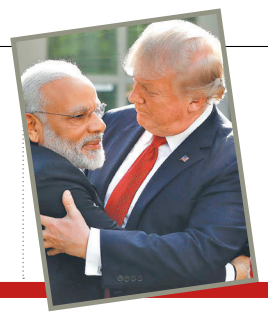
NEPAL'S LARGEST SELLING ENGLISH DAILY
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2017 (14-03-2074)

PAGE 8
LIFE & STYLE
After Kalo Pothi fame, Min Bham's stock continues to rise



PAGE 5
WORLD
Modi's enthusiastic bear hug bests Trump's handshake

PAGE 12
SPORTS
Chile out to stop in-form Ronaldo

money
India's GST to make goods expensive in Nepal

Local elections in Provinces 1, 5, 7 today

PRITHVI MAN SHRESTHA
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Election Commission (EC) has called on all the voters in Provinces 1, 5 and 7 to actively participate in the second phase of polls on Wednesday.

Acknowledging the compulsion to hold the polls in the middle of the monsoon season which spurs rice plantation in the country and keeps farmers busy, Chief Election Commissioner Ayodhee Prasad Yadav urged all to take the elections as a festival and exercise their franchise.

Local elections, being held in the country after a gap of two decades, are a precursor of provincial and federal polls which should be held by January next year as per the constitutional deadline.

The first phase of local polls was held on May 14 in Provinces 3, 4 and 6.

Though the local polls were earlier scheduled for two phases, the second phase had to be postponed twice—and a third phase had to be declared—in a bid to accommodate the dissenting parties which are boycotting Wednesday's voting and have yet to commit to polls to be held in Province 2 on September 18.

A total of 15,038 posts for 334 local units are up for grabs in 35 districts, including parts of Nawalparasi and Rukum, of three provinces where the number of eligible voters is 6,432,765.

A total of 8,364 polling centres have been designated for voting.

The poll body has said its major concern is weather.

The Meteorological Forecasting Division (MDF) has forecast light to moderate rains in some districts on Wednesday.

"Weather is our biggest worry for Wednesday's vote as rains could make it difficult for people to participate in the elections," said Election Commissioner Ila Sharma.

This is the first time that the country is holding elections in the monsoon season, which can have an impact on voter turnout.

In the first phase polls, the voter turnout was estimated to be 74 percent. Voter turnout during the two Constituent Assembly elections in 2008 and 2013 was 59 and 78 percent, respectively.

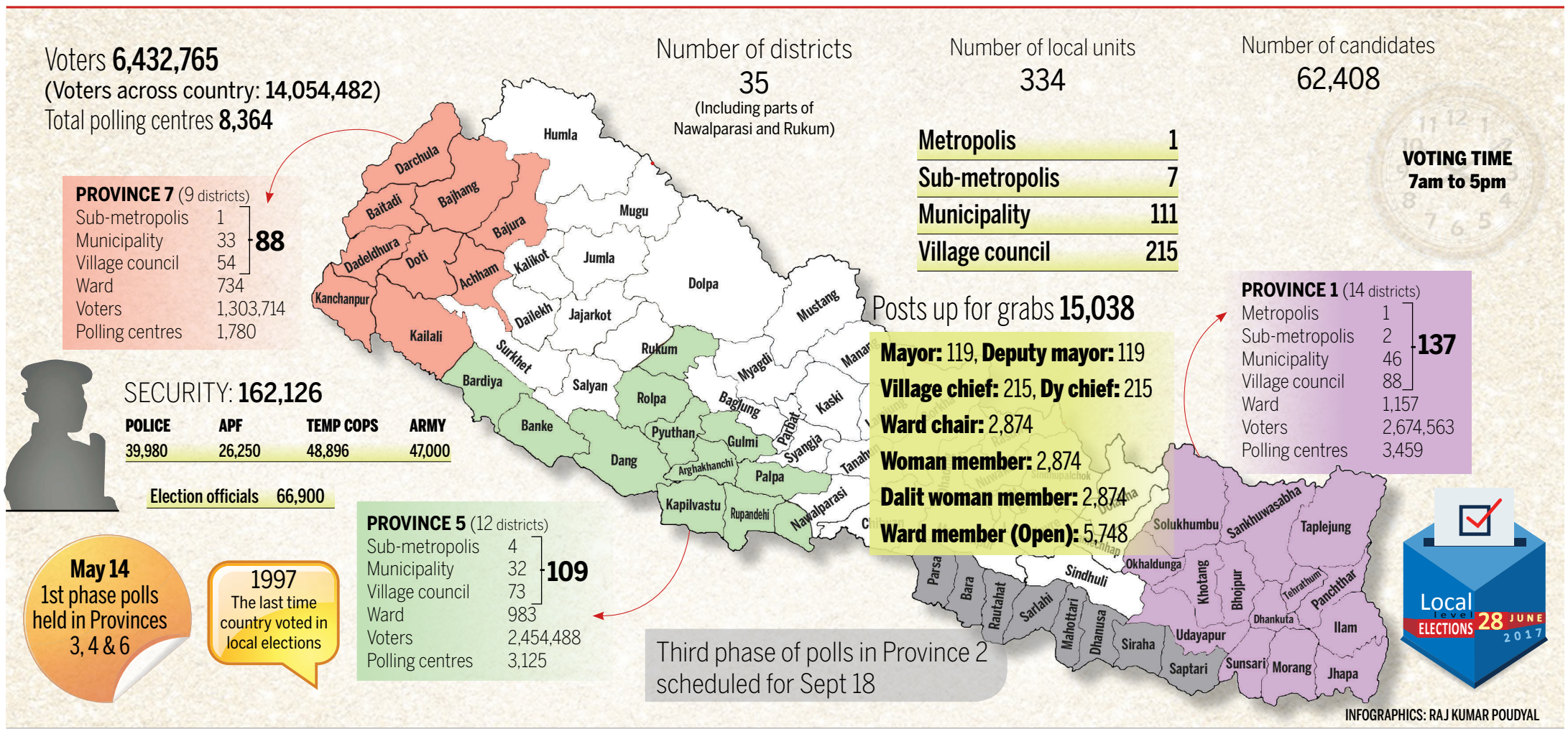
In order to ensure maximum voter turnout, the EC has said voters can cast their ballots by showing voter identity cards issued for 2013 CA elections, citizenship certificate, passport, driving licence, land ownership certificate or any other identity card issued by the government agencies, provided that they have their names on the voter list.

EC officials said extra efforts have been made to educate voters so as to reduce the number of invalid votes. In the first phase of polls, 11 percent of ballots were declared invalid, with Lalitpur topping the list with 17 percent void votes.

In view of recent incidents of blasts and clashes, the government has stepped up security in all the provinces and identified some polling stations as "sensitive".

CEC Yadav said on Tuesday that the poll body is confident that security agencies will fail all the attempts to deprive people of their right to vote.

The poll body has also said that it will put strong measures in place to avoid a repetition of the Bharatpur vote counting fiasco.



■ Chief Election Commissioner Ayodhee Prasad Yadav briefs the media on the second phase of local polls being held on Wednesday, at the Election Commission on Tuesday. RSS

Strong security measures in place: Minister Sharma

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Voting to elect local representatives in Provinces 1, 5 and 7 is set to take place on Wednesday amid heightened security, with clashes and bombs in the run-up to the second phase of local polls raising concerns.

The government has said it is deploying more than 160,000 security personnel, including 47,000 Nepal Army personnel, for the polls.

Incidents of clashes and blasts were reported from various parts of the country in the past few days.

A youth died on Monday night when an explosive he was carrying went off in Dhangadi. One incident of blast was reported in Tehrathum, while improvised explosive devices were found in Kanchanpur, Dang and Jhapa.

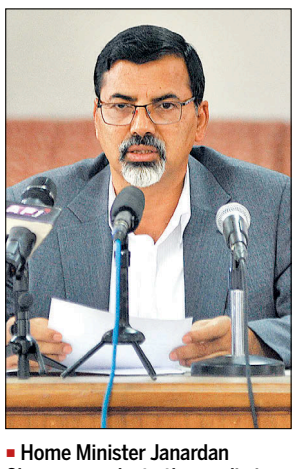
"Strong security measures have been put in place," said Minister for Home Affairs Janardan Sharma. "People can go to vote without any fear."

According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, 39,980 Nepal Police personnel have been deployed in 35 districts for the polls. They will be assisted by 26,250 Armed Police Force personnel and 48,896 temporary cops. The Army will be mobilised in the peripheral areas of polling stations while temporary cops will help in managing queues. Officials from the National Investigation Department will also be present at polling centres. Though the government has decided to hold polls in Province 2 on September 18 after the agitating Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal, a unified force of six Madhes-based parties, warned of disrupting polls, security concerns still remain.

According to sources, Tarai districts of Provinces 1 and 5 have been deemed "sensitive" in view of anti-election activities in the past few days.

At least 20 to 25 personnel will guard the "most sensitive" polling stations while patrol teams will constantly monitor them, according to the ministry.

In Province 1, the government has identified 350 polling centres as "highly sensitive" and 772 as "sensitive". In Province 5, Rupandehi, Kapilvastu and Nawalparasi districts have been marked as "sensitive". Army choppers will patrol the areas deemed sensitive, while other helicopters will be on standby in Kathmandu and Pokhara, said the ministry.



■ Home Minister Janardan Sharma speaks to the media in the Capital on Tuesday. Sharma said the government has put strong security measures in place for Wednesday's polls.
POST PHOTO: NIMESH JANG RAI

RJP-N SAYS WON'T RESORT TO VIOLENCE

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal, which had earlier warned of disrupting the second phase of local elections, has said it will continue its protests but won't resort to violence on Wednesday when voting will take place in Provinces 1, 5 and 7. Our party will hold peaceful protests on the day of voting, said RJP-N Chairman Mahantha Thakur.

The RJP-N had earlier announced strong protests against the second phase polls but it decided to soften its stance after the government postponed polls in Province 2 until September 18.

"Our party will follow the policy of non-violence and non-cooperation," said Thakur.

The agitating party, which has been demanding an amendment to the constitution, had also tried to foil the nominations on June 18. But it could not stop its own leaders and cadres from contesting the elections as independent candidates in some parts of the three provinces.

KMC's bioplant in Teku starts producing fuel

■ Bio-Methanation Plant, being operated under the Integrated Sustainable Solid Waste Management Project, was formally inaugurated on Tuesday at Teku, in Kathmandu. POST PHOTO: SANJOG MANANDHAR

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Following a long test production, the Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) has officially started generating energy from bio-degradable waste.

Under the Integrated Sustainable Solid Waste Management Project that started around four years ago, the KMC aims to produce 14KW of electricity, 300 kg of organic fertilizer and 13,500 litres of water on daily basis from three metric tonnes of organic materials. The project has a joint investment of Rs18.2 million of the KMC and the European Union (EU).

Newly elected KMC Mayor Bidhya Sundar Shakya and EU's Ambassador to Nepal Rensje Teerink jointly inaugurated the plant amid a function in Kathmandu on Tuesday. Speaking on the occasion, Mayor Shakya said many problems in Kathmandu could be resolved once waste of the city is managed properly.

Ambassador Teerink pointed out the need for making Kathmandu as a beautiful and clean city.

Having successfully produced methane gas through its biomethanation plant during a year-long test run, the KMC plans to use methane gas for producing electricity.

"This move would certainly encourage Kathmandu denizens to keep their houses and premises clean" said KMC Spokesperson Gyanendra Karki.

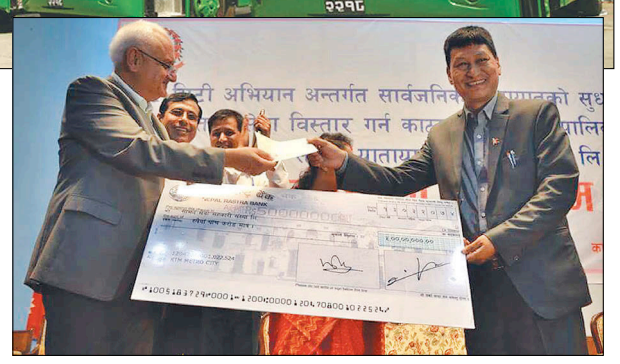
"We have envisioned sustainable development for which this is our first step."

The plant is currently using degradable domestic waste collected from wards 12 and 19 to generate the energy, according to Karki. Ward 12 generates around 19.04 cubic metre of solid daily and Ward 19 churns out 14.53 cubic metre of waste.

"Waste collected from the two wards will not be adequate to produce the desired amount of energy," Karki added.

"We will start collecting degradable waste from other wards as soon as the production process picks up pace."

Sajha receives Rs 50m to purchase 13 buses



■ (Top) A file photo shows buses at Sajha Yatayat station in Pulchowk, Lalitpur. KMC Mayor Bidhya Sundar Shakya (right) hands over a cheque for Rs 50 million to Sajha Yatayat Chairman Kanak Mani Dixit at a programme in the Capital on Tuesday. POST FILE PHOTO/RSS

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Kathmandu Metropolitan City (KMC) handed over Rs50 million to the Sajha Yatayat Co-operative Limited on Tuesday for the purchase of 12 deluxe and one semi-low floor buses. With the latest tranche, the KMC has provided Sajha a total of Rs150 million under a complementary agreement for the expansion of its services in connection with improving the public transport in Kathmandu.

KMC Mayor Bidhya Sundar Shakya handed over a cheque for Rs 50 million to Sajha Yatayat Cooperatives Limited Chairman Kanak Mani Dixit at a programme on Tuesday.

The co-operative had earlier signed an agreement with Ashok Leyland, an Indian automobile manufacturer, on June 16 to buy the buses.

Bringing into operation an environment-friendly public transport is one of the primary infrastructure needed to develop Kathmandu into a smart city that the KMC has envisaged.

Sajha Yatayat also announced free service to the elderly people above 70 and the disabled commuters beginning from Tuesday itself. Free bus service for the elderly and disabled people will be available on all the Sajha routes both inside and out of the Valley. Children under the age of five and citizens with poor identity cards are also entitled to get free rides on Sajha buses.

Sajha Yatayat has been operating the smart card system in 10 of its buses, enabling the commuters to pay their fare through a smart card. It is planning to extend the facility in other buses. The co-operative has 30 buses in its fleet. "Small vehicles with minimum seats have augmented traffic congestion in the Valley. Sajha buses with 40 seats can help the commuters as well as reduce traffic jams" said KMC Spokesperson Gyanendra Karki.

4 hurt in petrol pump fire

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Four people were injured when a fire broke out at Siddhartha Petrol Pump in Lokanthali of Madhyapur Thimi Municipality-1, Bhakapur, on Tuesday evening.

According to Metropolitan Police Circle, Thimi, Sita Tamang, her husband Ram Tamang, Nirajan Upreti and tanker assistant driver Pawan Shrestha were injured in the incident. They are undergoing treatment at the Maharajgunj-based Tribhuvan University Teaching Hospital (TUTH).

The fire was later brought under control with the help of police personnel backed by two fire engines.

Parties used 853 children during Phase I polls: CCWB

poll code violation

RASTRIYA SAMACHAR SAMITI
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Different political parties used as many as 853 children during the first round of local elections held on May 14, according to a report prepared by the Central Child Welfare Board (CCWB).

As per CCWB report, political parties had used children in as many as 37 political events in all three provinces--3, 4 and 6--where elections were held on May 14. Using children in political rallies and events is in violation of the election code of conduct.

The children, according to the CCWB, were found to have been used in different political events including rallies, gatherings and door-to-door campaigns.

Similarly, some children were also used as volunteers on the day of voting as well as in victory rallies, according to the report. Tarak Dhital, executive director of the CCWB, said children do have the right to know about country's political activities and have their views, but political parties cannot use them in political rallies.

The CCWB had immediately written to the concerned parties after it found during the monitoring that children were being used by parties.

The CCWB had also informed the Election Commission (EC) about the issue. The EC, which has often been criticised for failing to act tough against political parties and candidates for violating poll code of conduct, however, has not initiated any action against the offenders.

Krishna Subedi, chairman of National Coalition for Children as Peace of Zone and Child Protection, said government and NGOs working in the field of children should raise voices against the use of children in political events to stop political parties from repeating such acts.

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Polling arrangements made at a centre in Kapilvastu Municipality-2 for Wednesday's local level elections. POST PHOTO: MANOJ POUDEL

3 panels to work on BRI projects

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The government has decided to form three panels to implement the framework deal on the Belt and Road Initiative signed with China by working on project selection, technical assessment and coordination with Beijing.

A recent Cabinet meeting formed the panels headed by the foreign secretary, the finance secretary and secretaries from various ministries who undertake the projects that the Nepali side negotiates with Chinese authorities.

Chief Secretary Somlal Subedi told the Post that the teams will work on the basis of their terms of reference. As proposed by the Foreign Ministry, ministry-wise subcommittees will be formed to move projects under the BRI, a flagship project of Chinese President Xi Jinping.

> Finance secretary will coordinate and facilitate the selection of projects and forward the concept to the foreign secretary, who will do further work

The finance secretary will coordinate and facilitate the selection of projects and forward the concept to the foreign secretary, who will hold meetings with the relevant stakeholders before pitching them with the Chinese authorities.

A subcommittee led by secretaries from several ministries will provide technical support to the foreign and finance secretaries. These thematic and sectoral subcommittees will prepare technical details of the projects, Secretary Subedi said.

Subcommittees will be formed at the ministries of Finance, Physical Infrastructure, Commerce, and Industry, and the National Planning Commission.

These mechanisms will choose projects and negotiate with China and monitor progress. Officials said the developments are aimed at demonstrating that Nepal is seriously working to implement the framework agreement. That was also to clear doubts on the Chinese side.

In a recent visit to Kathmandu and during meetings with top political leaders, a high-level Chinese delegation led by Assistant Minister Kong Xuanyou had expressed concern that implementation of the past accords remains the key challenge in Nepal-China relations.

A meeting of the project selection committee will be convened soon, said officials.

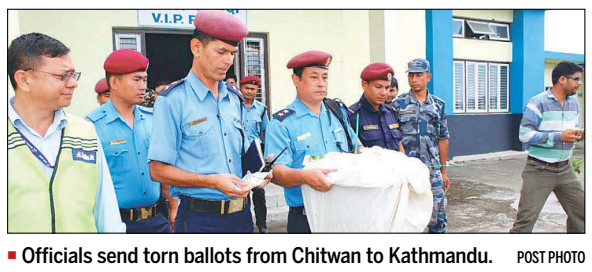
EC submits torn ballots to court

Hearing set for July 7

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Election Commission officials on Tuesday submitted the documents related to the Bharatpur Metropolis vote counting row including the damaged ballot papers to the Supreme Court.

The apex court on June 20 directed the EC to produce the damaged ballot papers within a week. According to SC Spokesperson Mahendra Upadhyay, the poll authority confirmed that the EC handed in necessary documents.



Officials send torn ballots from Chitwan to Kathmandu. POST PHOTO

The hearing on the case has been scheduled for July 7.

A division bench of Acting Chief Justice Gopal Parajuli and Justice Hari Krishna Karki on June 20 ordered the EC to furnish the torn ballot papers. The court had also asked the constitutional body to attach the minutes of its decision to conduct re-polling and the papers related to the case against those involved in tearing up the ballots.

Bharatpur Chief Election Officer Kabi Prasad Neupane said all the documents and ballots demanded by the court were submitted on Monday. Challenging the EC's decision to hold re-polling, Advocate Tulsiram Pandey and UML ward member candidate Gunjaman BK had filed a writ petition on June 4 demanding resumption of vote counting.

On June 3, the EC decided to go for re-polling at Ward 19 of the metropolis. As many as 90 ballot papers were torn allegedly by CPN (Maoist Centre) representatives at around 11:45pm on May 28 when the vote count was ongoing. CPN-UML mayoral candidate Devi Gyawali was ahead of Maoist Centre's Renu Dahal in the mayoral race. The petitioners argue that the commission's conclusion that the counting centre was under siege was erroneous.

DPM to leave for Delhi on Sunday

ANIL GIRI
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Krishna Bahadur Mahara is embarking on a three-day official visit to India on Sunday. Soon after Mahara assumed office, External Affairs Minister of India Sushma Swaraj invited him to visit New Delhi on a convenient date.

Swaraj is hosting a dinner in honour of Mahara on Monday evening where the CPN (Maoist Centre) leader will seek India's support for Nepal's candidacy for the UN Human Rights Council in an election slated for November.

Mahara will also be meeting separately with some five dozen Delhi-based ambassadors accredited for Kathmandu to garner support for Nepal's candidature.

Another key objective of DPM Mahara's visit, according to Foreign Ministry officials, is to convey to the Indian leadership that the Sher Bahadur Deuba government's foreign policy would be a continuation of the Pushpa Kamal Dahal-led administration. The incumbent government believes in maintaining balanced relations with both of Nepal's neighbours—India and China.

Mahara will also prepare the ground for the visit of Prime Minister Deuba to India possibly in July-end. Deuba has agreed to make Delhi his first port of call after taking the PM's seat. During Mahara's visit, both the sides will work on finalising the dates and probable agendas of the prime minister's visit.

> Foreign minister's meetings in the Indian capital will review the political, trade, investment and development cooperation agendas between the two countries

Besides, Mahara's meetings in the Indian capital will review the political, trade, investment and development cooperation agendas between the two neighbours. The status of implementation of the India-funded projects in Nepal and post-earthquake reconstruction are also said to figure in Mahara's bilateral engagements in Delhi.

Krishna Bahadur Mahara

The Nepali Embassy is coordinating with foreign missions in New Delhi for meetings with Mahara, who will lobby for Nepal's UNHRC bid.

Ministry suggests draft laws for local fed units

Local councils can pass them with necessary changes

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

With an aim to facilitate the works of the newly elected people's representatives at the local level, the Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development has forwarded 10 draft laws to the grassroots units on work division and resource mobilisation.

The line ministry last Friday approved the draft laws necessary for the local governments to carry out their tasks smoothly and to clear the confusion among the local representatives elected after a gap of two decades over running the powerful federal councils.

> Draft laws expected to streamline responsibilities of local representatives

The draft laws are expected to streamline the responsibilities of the local representatives besides ensuring uniformity in the works of the local units across the country.

The ministry has also uploaded the drafts dealing with the finances, work division and meeting procedures at the local bodies on its website.

Since the government has already allocated funds for the local level, the Federal Affairs Ministry is preparing to orient the people's representatives on budget preparation.

The ministry is set to conduct training for trainers on Wednesday while orientation for the local representatives would be held at the district headquarters from Thursday.

Local Development Ministry Spokesperson Rudra Singh Tamang said the financial transaction guidelines for the local level were being finalised.

According to Tamang, the drafts were sent out early as the local governments need to endorse their budget from the village and municipal councils by mid-July.

"Once the local units endorse the drafts after specific revisions as required, they will become laws to govern their activities," said Tamang.

However, the constitution authorises each local body to develop its own legislation to meet their specific needs.

Home minister unveils reform scheme

Home Minister Janardan Sharma unveils a roadmap to overhaul the security apparatus, at the Home Ministry in Kathmandu on Tuesday. POST PHOTO: NIMESH JANG RAI

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Minister for Home Affairs Janardan Sharma unveiled a roadmap on Tuesday to reform the home administration, setting out ambitious plans including an overhaul of the security apparatus.

The 84-point document says the government will use force if highways are blocked in any form of protest. Also, the plan aims to control syndication in public transportation.

Minister Sharma said they will fill the vacancies in security agencies within a month. He plans to put an end to factionalism and lobbying within the security forces for promotions and postings.

> The 84-point document says state will use force if highways are blocked in any form of protest

"A system will be developed in the chain of command to address the grievances. The security policy, including one on the security of high-level public officials, politicians and retired officials will be reviewed," said the minister.

Unveiling the roadmap for reforms on Tuesday, Sharma said the government would provide round-the-clock security in tourist areas like Thamel of Kathmandu and Lake Side of Pokhara.

He said preparations were being made to set up a system to enable people to post complaints to police online.

The minister said the government will replace the "encouragement allowance" of traffic police members with other perks. Plans are also afoot to amend the Prison Act and Regulations.

Radio and television programmes would be launched soon to facilitate the home minister's direct communication with people.

NEWS DIGEST

One dead, 30 sick from diarrhoea

SIRAHA: Diarrhoea outbreak at Sitapur of Laxmipur Patari Village Council in Siraha has killed one person and downed at least 30 others. Magen Yadav, 86, died while he was being taken to hospital, a local health official said on Tuesday. Among those sick, ten people are said to be in critical conditions. They are admitted to Ram Kumar Uma Prasad Murarka Hospital, the health official said. A medical team has also been deployed to the diarrhoea-affected areas. **(PR)**

Parliament panel inspects Muglin road stretch

BHARATPUR: The Development Committee of Legislature-Parliament inspected the Muglin-Narayangadh road on Tuesday. The committee's chairman Rabindra Adhikari, its members and the general director of Department of Roads, among others, conducted the inspection of the landslide-prone road sections and the ongoing expansion works along the 36km road stretch. **(PR)**

Policy level intervention sought for urban safety

▪ A Russian rescue team searches for survivors of the 2015 Gorkha earthquake on a collapsed building in Kathmandu. Experts say the country is ill-prepared for events of disaster. POST FILE PHOTO

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

disaster risk reduction

Experts on urban planning and disaster mitigation have stressed on the need for integrating disaster risk reduction (DRR) issues in development policies of the newly defined local units.

Speaking at the programme, Scoping of Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction and Urban Disaster Risk Reduction in New Local Government Structure of Nepal, jointly organised by National Disaster Risk Reduction Centre and ADRA Nepal, in Kathmandu on Tuesday, they suggested prioritising DRR in the policies that local levels will be formulating in the near future.

"This is a good opportunity for including DRR related provisions in the local level policies which they will be designing themselves," said Krishna Bahadur Raut, the head of Disaster Risk Management Division at the Home Ministry.

After the state restructuring the country now has 263 urban areas - four metropolises, 13 sub-metropolitan cities and 243 municipalities - where nearly 54 per cent of the total population resides. Rapid migration of people to urban areas, unregulated construction and environmental degradation have added pressure to urban environment and increased disaster risk. Meanwhile, very little has been done at the disaster preparedness front.

Experts say that a common misconception that only rural areas are prone to disasters has also made urban areas vulnerable.

In reality, urban areas, being the hub for facilities and backbone for economy of the country, deserve more attention when it comes to disaster preparedness and management. According the World Bank report (2011), urban areas generated 62 per cent of the GDP as compared to 28 per cent in 1975.

Urban planner Suman Maher Shrestha said it was high time that policymakers and disaster management experts shifted their focus to urban areas.

He suggested that local and central bodies should focus on implementation of development policies and regulations.

"We have had so many plans and policies, but we have not been successful in implementing them," said Shrestha.

Surya Narayan Shrestha, deputy executive director at National Society of Earthquake Technology-Nepal, said lack of trained manpower is said to be one of the major challenges for implementation of DRR policies.

"We lack trained manpower at the centre, let alone the local level. The number of engineers and urban planners, and their qualification and training should be standardised into policies," he said.

▪ Election officials and security personnel at a voting centre in Tansen Municipality, Palpa. POST PHOTO: MADHAV ARYAL

All-female team to manage poll centre in Panchthar

PANCHTHAR: An all-female team has been mobilised at a voting centre in Panchthar to conduct the local level elections. Even the security personnel deployed to the centre are female. Chief Election Officer Prakash Kumar Shrestha said they have mobilised an all-female team of election officers and security personnel at one of the voting centre in Sumnima Primary School in Phidim Municipality-3.

Voting postponed after candidate's demise

BUTWAL: Voting at Kotahimai Village Council-1 of Rupandehi has been postponed following the demise of a ward member candidate. Murari Malla, the CPN (Maoist Centre) ward member candidate died of cardiac arrest on Sunday night, leading to the postponement of the election due to take place on Wednesday. Chief Election Officer Manoj Gaire said that the elections in the village council will be held on June 30. **(PR)**

3 disabled-friendly voting centres in Kanchanpur

KANCHANPUR: The District Election Office has established three disabled-friendly voting centres in Kanchanpur. District Election Officer Keshav Bhandari said the voting centres at Bhimdatta Municipality and Krishnapur Municipality-1 have three disabled-friendly voting centres where disabled voters can cast their ballots without problem. There are 293 voting centres in Kanchanpur. **(PR)**

Raut's supporters campaign violating silence period

NAWALPARASI: Defying the election silence period, supporters of CK Raut, coordinator of independent Madhes campaign, organised a door-to-door campaign in Ramgram Municipality and Palhinandan, Sarawal and Pratappur village councils in Nawalparasi on Tuesday. Raut's supporters visited the doorsteps of voters and urged them to deliberately cast invalid votes by stamping outside the poll symbol box to symbolise that they reject all candidates. Voters should also have right to reject the candidates, said Raut supporters. **(PR)**

Five injured in clash

RUKUM: Five people were injured in a clash between Nepali Congress-affiliated Nepal Tarun Dal and CPN (Maoist Center)-affiliated Young Communist League at Sisne Village Council-5 in Rukum on Monday evening. Five people were injured in the incident that occurred at the CPN (Maoist Centre)'s liaison office at Rumaltar on Monday evening. The injured were identified as Resham BC, Top Bahadur Shahi, Shree Kumar Budathoki, Gor Bahadur Thapa, and Keshav Thapa. No arrests were made. Police Inspector Hikmat Bahadur Bhandari said no one filed a complaint. **(PR)**

Amendment Invitation for Expression of Interest (EOI)

for

Construction Supervision Consultant for Nepalgunj Sub-Metropolitan City (RUDP/CSC/NEG/2)
Regional Urban Development Project (RUDP)
(Date of Publication: 28 June 2017)

The submission date 28 June 2017 for the Expression of Interest (EOI) published in Kathmandu post daily on 28 May 2017 has been extended below .up to 4 July 2017, 4.00 PM.

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नयाँ बानेश्वर, काठमाडौं

दरभाउपत्र स्वीकृत भएको सूचना

(प्रथम पटक प्रकाशित मिति २०७४/०३/१४)

मिति २०७४/०२/१५ गते The Kathmandu Post मा प्रकाशित यस कार्यालयको सवारी साधन (मोटरसाइकल) खरिद सम्बन्धी दरभाउपत्र आह्वानको सूचना अनुसार दर्ता हुन आएका दरभाउपत्र मध्ये तपशिल बमोजिमका दरभाउपत्र न्यूनतम मूल्याङ्कित तथा सारभूत रुपमा प्रभावग्राही देखिएकाले सार्वजनिक खरिद ऐन, २०६३ को दफा ४० को उपदफा (५) बमोजिम स्वीकृत भएको हुनाले सार्वजनिक खरिद नियमावली, २०६४ को नियम ८४ को उपनियम (१०) को प्रयोजनको लागि यो सूचना प्रकाशित गरिएको छ ।

क्र.सं.	फर्मको नाम	खरिदको विवरण	कबोल रु. (मू.अ.कर बाहेक)
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सूचना

यस **आनन्द बिहारी टुर्स एण्ड ट्राभल्स प्रा.लि.** को मिति २०७४/०२/०७ मा सम्पन्न विशेष साधारण सभाको निर्णय बमोजिम यस कम्पनीको नाममा रहेको सम्पूर्ण चल अचल सम्पति तथा तिर्नु व्यहोर्नु पर्ने ऋण, धन, कर, दायित्व आदि परिवर्तन नामको कम्पनीले सकार्ने व्यहोर्ने गरी **अनिषा टुर्स एण्ड ट्राभल्स प्रा.लि.** कायम गरिएको र उक्त नाम परिवर्तनको निर्णय श्री कम्पनी रजिष्ट्रारको कार्यालयबाट मिति २०७४/०२/२९ गते अभिलेख समेत भै सकेको व्यहोरा सबैको जानकारीको लागि यो सूचना प्रकाशित गरिएको छ ।

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कान्तिपुरको स्वर्णपुर योजना अन्तर्गत

कान्तिपुर
महाबिक्रेता योजना

अब हामीसँग आवद्ध बिक्रेतावर्ग तथा स्टेसनरी सञ्चालकहरूले पनि ग्राहक बनाए बापत महाबिक्रेता बनी जित्न सक्नुहुनेछ विभिन्न आकर्षक उपहारहरू ।

१ किलो चाँदी

एल.इ.डी टि.भी.

म्याक बुक एयर

ल्यापटप

ट्याब्लेट

स्मार्टफोन

गिफ्ट भौचर

वाटर प्युरिफायर

मलेसिया, थाईल्यान्ड वा बाली टुर

* शर्तहरू लागू हुनेछन् ।

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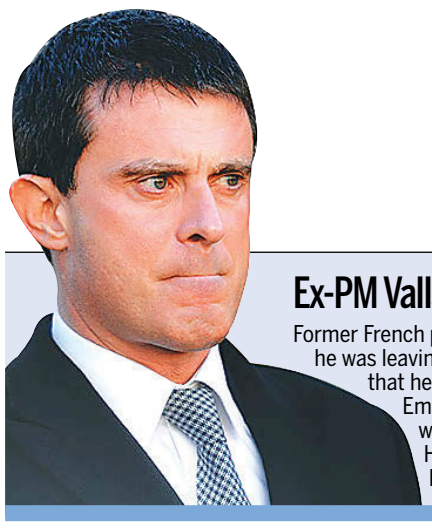


Ex-PM Valls quits French Socialists

Former French prime minister Manuel Valls said Tuesday he was leaving the Socialist Party, with a source adding that he would now be allied to President Emmanuel Macron's centrist group. Valls, who was PM under Socialist president Francois Hollande from 2014 to 2016, was rejected by Socialist voters in the party's primary.

Memorial held for 7 US sailors

Thousands of flag-waving mourners lined the streets of a US naval base in Japan on Tuesday where a memorial service was held for seven sailors killed in a collision with a cargo ship this month. The facility in Yokosuka is the home port of destroyer USS Fitzgerald, which crashed with a cargo ship in a busy shipping channel off Japan's coast.

UK Queen set for massive pay rise

The Queen is to receive an 8 percent increase in income from public funds, after the Crown Estate's profits rose by £24m. The Sovereign Grant, which pays for the salaries of her household, official travel and upkeep of palaces, is to increase by more than £6m in 2018/19. It comes as accounts revealed the Queen's official net expenditure last year increased by £2m, to almost £42m.

NEWS DIGEST

May demands major probe into deadly fire

LONDON: British Prime Minister Theresa May said on Tuesday there must be a "major national investigation" into the use of potentially flammable cladding fitted to high-rise towers across the country, as police formally identified a 5-year-old boy as one of youngest victims of London's Grenfell Tower fire tragedy. May's comments came as tests show that all samples of building materials submitted so far — coming from 95 buildings around England — have failed fire safety standards. The national testing was ordered after flammable cladding was blamed for the rapid spread of the June 14 inferno at west London's Grenfell Tower, which claimed at least 79 lives.

'Yemen cholera outbreak shows signs of slowing'

GENEVA: A cholera outbreak in Yemen, which has claimed 1,400 lives in two months, shows tentative signs of slowing as fatality rates drop by half, the World Health Organization said on Tuesday. Nearly 219,000 suspected cases have been registered since April 27 and more than 1,400 people have died, the UN agency said. The collapse of Yemen's infrastructure after more than two years of war between the Saudi-backed government and Shiite rebels who control the capital has made for a "perfect storm for cholera," the WHO's senior emergency adviser for Yemen, Ahmed Zouiten, said. But fatality rates have dropped from 1.7 percent in early May to 0.6 percent now, he added. He attributed the fall to emergency intervention by health workers. Reported cases of cholera have also dropped in recent days with 39,000 over the past week compared with an average of 41,000 in previous weeks. But Zouiten cautioned that the decline in numbers might be due to underreporting over the Muslim Eid al-Fitr holiday. He said the total number of cases could still double before the outbreak ends.

Ukraine military spy killed in Kiev car blast

KIEV: A suspected car bombing in Kiev on Tuesday killed a Ukrainian military intelligence officer in an incident classified as a "terrorist act" by police, officials said. Police said the explosion tore through a Mercedes car several kilometres from the heart of the Ukrainian capital at around 0800 GMT (0500 GMT), killing the driver and leaving charred remains of the vehicle. The blast is the latest deadly incident to rock the city, as crisis-hit Ukraine battles a bloody Russian-backed insurgency in its eastern regions. Ukraine's defence ministry named the victim as Colonel Maksym Shapoval and said he was an employee of the military's "main intelligence directorate." Interior ministry spokesman Artem Shevchenko said that judging by initial indications it appeared "obvious" that the blast was caused by an explosive device, adding that investigators were probing it as terrorism. **(AGENCIES)**

DIPLOMATIC TOOL OF CHOICE

Modi's enthusiastic bear hug bests Trump's handshake

BBC
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has responded to the infamous "Trump handshake" with his own diplomatic tool of choice—the bear hug.

A series of awkward greetings and handshakes between Mr Trump and other world leaders has left many wondering who could "beat" his approach.

French President Emmanuel Macron was deemed a winner when he gripped and refused to let go of Trump's hand.

But for many observers, Modi--an experienced hugger--has outdone that.

The Indian prime minister's propensity to hug global leaders goes back a long way--this BBC blog called him "the most physically demonstrative Indian leader in years".

It is also a true diplomatic masterstroke--Macron may have "beaten" the Trump handshake last month, but it was a tense encounter with both men's knuckles turning white. But who could possibly object to a hug?

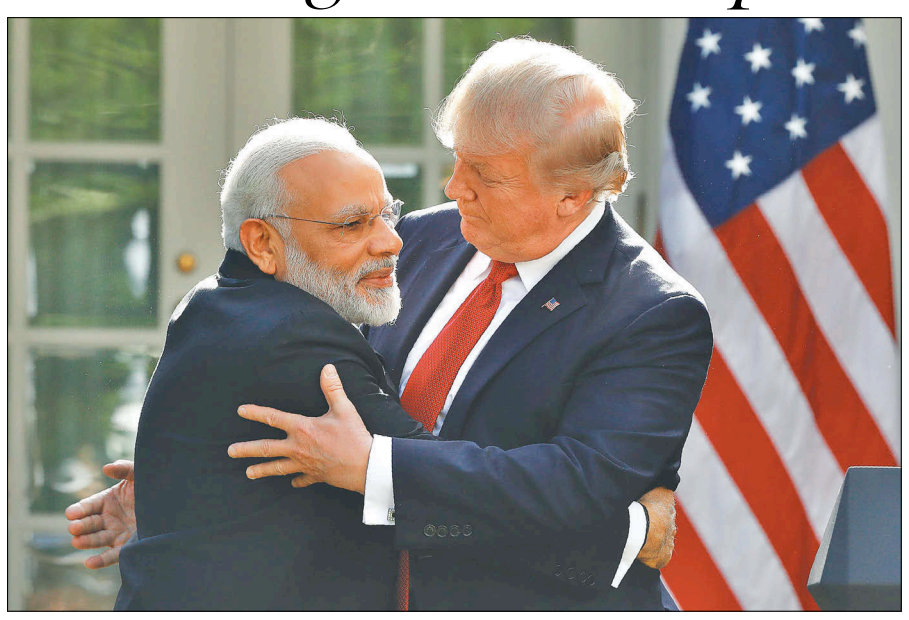
The success of the Modi bear hug is in no small part down to its athletic choreography--that disarmed Trump before he could respond.

The initial approach was slow with arms outstretched and there was no hint of the embrace to come, though if Mr Trump's advisers had done their homework they would have seen how Modi has clung to other world leaders.

He slowly reels President Trump in with first one hand then the other and there is little of the trademark Trump awkwardness in his slow but sure progress towards the Indian leader.

He finally barrels at the US president, avoiding all eye contact and presses his head on his chest in a gesture at once disarming and confident.

Trump draws away slightly but not without looking down at Modi with what could even be affection, although their eyes do not meet. And as they draw away Modi keeps hold of the US president's hand and lingers in a firm double hand-lock.



India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi hugs US President Donald Trump as they give joint statements in the Rose Garden of the White House in Washington, US, on Monday. REUTERS

They retreat to their podiums and carry on as if nothing has happened.

For many observers the hug was both natural and commanding and left neither of the leaders at a loss - in stark contrast to numerous other Trump greetings with world leaders.

And many on social media marvelled at what they called Modi's "craftsmanship".

Of course both sides are likely to have prepared for the meeting. Like football coaches before international matches, their political aides and advisers may well have studied the techniques of either leader and there could well have been briefings on how to handle that first contact. How likely is that really to have happened?

KC Singh, a former secretary in India's external affairs ministry, told the BBC that "given Modi's hugging record, it would have been a very ill-informed US team that would not have known Modi was going to go for Donald Trump".

Mr Singh added that the gesture seemed to be done more for viral value than anything else, noting that even in India "no one hugs each other randomly".

Going by social media, Modi's mastery was largely expected in India. There was quite a lot of humour about it, as well as some pride. But quite a few found this effusive display a bit embarrassing as well. Others had seen it coming.

It looks as though world leaders have become more tactical about responding to the Trump handshake after both Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and British Prime Minister Theresa May were seen as faring poorly against it.

South Korean president Moon Jae-in is due to meet Trump next.

It remains to be seen if he can best the hug.

BRAZIL'S PREZ TEMER CHARGED WITH TAKING BRIBES

Michel Temer

REUTERS
BRASILIA, JUNE 27

Brazil's top federal prosecutor has charged President Michel Temer with taking multimillion-dollar bribes in a stinging blow to the unpopular leader and to political stability in Latin America's largest country.

Rodrigo Janot on Monday submitted the charge in a document presented to the Supreme Court, saying "he fooled Brazilian citizens" and owed the nation millions in compensation for accepting bribes.

Under Brazilian law, the lower house of Congress must now vote on whether to allow the top tribunal to try the conservative leader, who replaced impeached leftist President Dilma Rousseff just over a year ago.

Lawmakers within Temer's coalition are confident they have the votes to block the two-third majority required to proceed with a trial. But they warn that support may wane if congressmen are forced to vote several times to protect Temer—whose popularity is languishing in the single-digits—from trial.

Temer's office and his attorney, Antonio Mariz, declined to comment on the charges. Temer has repeatedly said he is innocent of any wrongdoing. Investigators have uncovered stunning levels of corruption in recent years engulfing Brazil's political class and business elites. Much of it centers on companies paying billions of dollars in bribes to politicians and executives at state-run enterprises in return for lucrative contracts.

Temer and one-third of his cabinet, as well as four former presidents and dozens of lawmakers are under investigation or already charged in the schemes. Over 90 people have been convicted.

Political analysts had warned, long before Monday, that the scandals reduced the chances Temer could push through reforms crucial for Latin America's biggest economy to rebound from its worst recession on record.

Temer was charged in connection with a graft scheme involving the world's largest meatpacker, JBS SA. Executives said in plea-bargain testimony the president took bribes for resolving tax matters, freeing up loans from state-run banks and other matters. Monday's charging document alleges Temer arranged to eventually receive a total of 38 million reais ($11.5 million) from JBS in the next nine months.

US warns Assad over chemical attack plan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON, JUNE 27

Syrian President Bashar al-Assad may be preparing another chemical weapons attack, one that would result in the "mass murder" of civilians, the White House said on Monday, warning the regime would pay a "heavy price" if it went ahead with such an assault.

The White House said the preparations were similar to those undertaken by the Assad regime ahead of an apparent chemical attack on a rebel-held town in April.

Washington launched a retaliatory cruise missile strike days later against a Syrian airbase from where it said the chemical weapons attack was launched.

That assault with 59 Tomahawk missiles marked the first direct US attack on the Syrian regime and Trump's most dramatic military action since he took power in January.

It also led to a quick downward spiral in ties between Washington and Moscow, which accused the US of breaking international law.

Russia has supported the Syrian regime since 2015 with air strikes against what it says are Islamist extremists.

"The United States has identified potential preparations for another chemical weapons attack by the Assad regime that would likely result in the mass murder of civilians, including innocent children," spokesman Sean Spicer said in a statement Monday night.

The two-paragraph communique did not offer any evidence justifying the sternly worded warning.

"The activities are similar to preparations the regime made before its April 4, 2017 chemical weapons attack."

The suspected attack in April in the rebel held town of Khan Sheikhun killed at least 87 people, including many children, and images of the dead and of suffering victims provoked global outrage. The US State Department said it amounted to a war crime.

State Department officials who would normally be involved in a big announcement such as Monday's warning to Syria said they were caught by surprise, the Los Angeles Times reported.

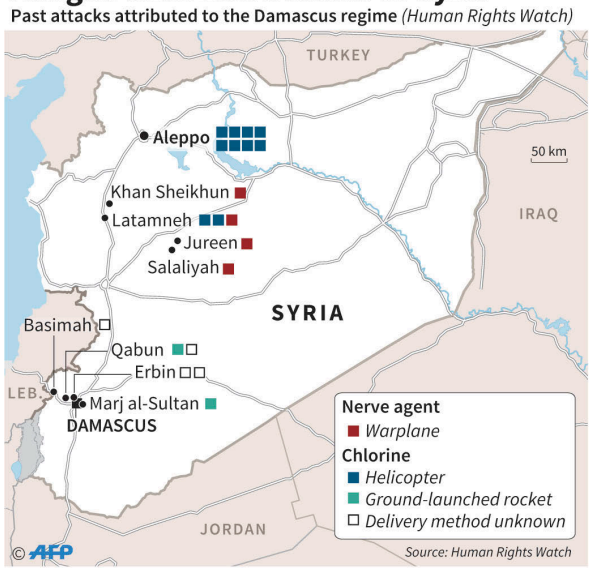
Assad, backed by Russia, has strongly denied the allegation that his forces used chemical weapons against the town in April, describing it as a "100 percent fabrication".

He has said repeatedly that his forces turned over all chemical weapons stockpiles in 2013, under a deal brokered by Russia to avoid threatened US military action.

The agreement was later enshrined in a United Nations Security Council resolution.

But US Defense Secretary Jim Mattis previously warned that there was "no doubt" that Syria had in fact retained some chemical weapons. An Israeli military assessment also found that Assad's regime was still in possession of "a few tonnes" of chemical weapons.

Alleged chemical attacks in Syria
Past attacks attributed to the Damascus regime *(Human Rights Watch)*



Kremlin slams 'threats' against Syrian regime

MOSCOW: Russia on Tuesday denounced US "threats" against the Syrian regime after the White House said leader Bashar al-Assad may be preparing another chemical attack and would face a "heavy price".

"We consider such threats against the Syrian leadership to be unacceptable," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists. Moscow has consistently rejected accusations that Damascus was behind a deadly chemical weapons attack in Syria in April.

China protests alleged Indian border incursion

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING, JUNE 27

China has made a formal protest after accusing Indian border guards of crossing from Sikkim state into its Tibetan territory, China's foreign ministry said on Tuesday.

India and China have long been embroiled in a bitter border dispute at both ends of the Himalayas, with the two countries accusing soldiers of crossing over into the other's territory.

"Our position to uphold our territorial sovereignty is unwavering," spokesman Lu Kang told a regular briefing, adding China has lodged "solemn representations" with India.

"We hope that the Indian side can work with China in the same direction and take actions to withdraw the personnel who have overstepped and trespassed into Chinese borders."

A statement posted on the Chinese defence ministry's social media account offered few details about the alleged incident, but said it had "seriously endangered peace and tranquility in the border areas". The Indian military has "unilaterally stirred up trouble" by obstructing road building activities on the Chinese side of the border separating Sikkim and the Tibetan region, it said.

In apparent retaliation, China has blocked Indian pilgrims from crossing the border in the mountainous area "out of security concerns", the Chinese foreign ministry said.

"For the upcoming actions we have to depend on what the Indian side will do. They have to take actions to improve the security situation," the foreign ministry's Lu said.

Indian media said China had turned back 50 pilgrims trying to cross into Tibet to visit a mountain revered as the home of the Hindu god Shiva. Authorities there normally allow the annual pilgrimage to go ahead.

India's foreign ministry spokesman said last week the pilgrims had experienced "some difficulties" in movement and these were under discussion with Beijing.

In an earlier statement, China's foreign ministry called on India to "immediately withdraw their border troops that have crossed the boundary, conduct a thorough investigation into this and safeguard peace and tranquility of the Sikkim section".

Tensions along the frontier rose in 2014 when Chinese soldiers moved into territory claimed by India, sparking a two-week military stand-off.

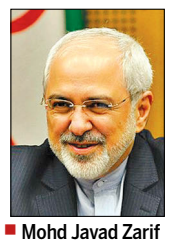
Hundreds of Indian and Chinese troops faced off on the de facto border known as the Line of Actual Control, which runs along the remote mountainous region of Ladakh in northwest India, overshadowing a visit by China's President Xi Jinping.

Iran: US partially reinstating travel ban regrettable

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BERLIN, JUNE 27

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif condemned on Tuesday the US Supreme Court's decision to partially reinstate President Donald Trump's controversial travel ban targeting citizens from six predominantly Muslim countries.

"It's regrettable that the citizens of the countries on the list have never participated in any act of terrorism against the US and yet they are being punished for acts of terrorism by citizens of other countries which are not on the list," said Zarif. The travel ban "doesn't help, it doesn't increase anybody's security," added the minister, speaking to journalists after a meeting with German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel in Berlin.



Mohd Javad Zarif

"The problem is, for some, terrorism and support for terrorism is measured by the amount of money they spend buying arms from the US and not by actually being involved in terrorism," charged Zarif, in what appeared to be a reference to Saudi Arabia.

Several of the September 11 attackers were Saudi nationals. Trump, on his first foreign trip, visited the kingdom and sealed arms deals worth almost $110 billion.

The US Supreme Court on Monday partially reinstated the travel ban restricting citizens of Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen.

Nevertheless, the court said the ban could not be implemented against people who have personal links to the US, citing the examples of foreign nationals wishing to visit family or students accepted to attend university.

Meet the new last word in English: Zyzzyva

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
LONDON, JUNE 27

Eating a tasty meal with chana dal or doenjang washed down with a gin daisy could well foster a nice feeling of hygge. Just hope you don't find any zyzzyva on your plate.

If you need to look up any of those words, the unofficial custodian of the English language now has the answers.

In its latest update, the Oxford English Dictionary identified more than 600 words, phrases and senses that have entered common parlance.

They include "zyzzyva", a genus of tropical weevils native to South America. The word replaces zythum—an ancient Egyptian malt beer—as the OED's final entry. The name was apparently coined by the US entomologist Thomas Lincoln Casey, who described it in a 1922 work, the OED said. "In any case, zyzzyva owes much of its currency in English to its notoriety as the last entry in various dictionaries, the ranks of which now include the OED," it said.

Try pronouncing that one! Zyzzyva is a genus of weevils found in South American palm trees.

The quarterly update includes "post-truth", previously announced by the OED as its word of the year for 2016 following Britain's Brexit referendum and Donald Trump's presidential victory. "Brexit" itself also made into the dictionary last year, meeting the OED's criterion that a new word, phrase or sense of a word must have featured in a variety of printed sources over several years.

Other new senses this time include "thing", as in "a genuine or established phenomenon or practice", often used when you're incredulous about something.

The OED said the earliest citation of this new sense was from a 2000 episode of the US TV drama "The West Wing": "Did you know that 'leaf peeping' was a thing?""

Just in time for this year's Wimbledon tournament are 50 new terms relating to tennis, such as "forced error", "chip and charge" and "career slam".

Nepal's National Newspaper
The Kathmandu Post
Since 1993

EDITORIAL

Risky road

The sorry state of Muglin-Narayangadh highway has added to the woes of the common traveller

That people are taking time out of their busy schedule to take part in today's local elections is encouraging news. The number of vehicles leaving Kathmandu in the last few days has increased, as people have travelled to their ancestral homes or permanent residences to cast their vote. According to the Metropolitan Traffic Police Division, an average of around 83,000 passengers left Kathmandu daily in the last few days—much higher than on other days.

The number of people leaving the city on their private vehicles and by flights has also gone up. A senior executive at a well-known airline company said flights were operating at full capacity to all destinations where polling is taking place today.

Still, for a large majority of Nepalis, public buses are the primary, if not the only, means of long-distance travel. Unfortunately, they are far from safe. In fact, road accidents are quite common in Nepal, where an average of around six people die daily in such disasters. Many others are seriously injured.

It is precisely because of such risks that a significant number of people have also cancelled their travel plans for the elections. What this essentially means is that they have had to forgo their democratic right to vote because road travel in Nepal is not safe enough. It is unfortunate indeed that the country's weak infrastructure has prevented many Nepalis from electing their local representatives in an opportunity they got after two long decades.

Nepal's roads become especially precarious during the monsoon, when the risk of landslides increases significantly. Because of landslides, the Muglin-Narayangadh road section, a major route connecting Kathmandu with the Tarai, has already been blocked a couple of times this season. There have been a few fatalities too. Two Nepal Police personnel were killed last week after a police van was swept away by a landslide at Kalikhola along the road section.

The 36-km Muglin-Narayangadh highway, which witnesses a movement of around 8,000 vehicles daily, is one of the country's busiest. It is also highly susceptible to landslides. According to experts, geological structure, frequent movements of vehicles and vibrations from equipment used for road construction have added to the area's vulnerability. The project to widen the highway, which started in April 2015, was expected to be completed in two years, but the deadline has been extended to December-end. It's still doubtful if the new deadline will be met. This points to the larger problems in the country's infrastructure development planning.

Such a dire and risky state of the country's major road artery has widespread consequences. It not only affects the movement of people, in the form of cancelled or lengthy trips, but also the delivery of essential items like foodstuffs, fuel and medicine. As such, the government should push the contractors to complete the road expansion work at the earliest. It should also expedite the construction of other routes, such as the Kathmandu-Nijgadh Fast Track, that connect the Capital to the Tarai.

WORLDVIEW

Progress in Serbia, with a catch

Ms. Brnabic must be allowed to exercise the rightful power of her office

The New York Times

Serbia hardly has a progressive track record on gay rights. So when President Aleksandar Vucic announced this month that he was nominating Ana Brnabic, a 41-year-old, openly lesbian, woman as prime minister, he stunned Serbians and outside observers. There is every reason to suspect that the choice of Ms. Brnabic is a decoy move. Mr. Vucic may be trying to calm European concerns as Serbia moves toward membership in the European Union, while he continues to cozy up to Russia and beef up Serbia's military.

The nomination will have the backing of 100 members of Parliament, but 26 more votes are needed to secure a majority. Opposition lawmakers, in a country where about half of the people believe homosexuality is an illness, are balking at approving a lesbian. A vote scheduled for this week has now been delayed.

If Ms. Brnabic were allowed to exercise the rightful powers of her office and run Serbia's government, it would send a powerful signal that it is time for Serbia—and the rest of the world—to move beyond old prejudices. But that goal will be sadly compromised if Ms. Brnabic is approved only to become the tool of an autocrat, or discarded to further Mr. Vucic's sweeping political ambitions.

A case for Gorkhaland

A separate Gorkhaland state will be instrumental in harnessing economic opportunities unleashed by India's Act East policy

MAHENDRA P LAMA

The demand to establish Gorkhaland as a state separate from West Bengal has surfaced once again as a national issue in India. This demand was first put to the British India government in 1907. This region has a political history and socio-cultural background that is different from the complexities of Bengal's politico-economic structures. This 110 year old demand has seen three phases of intense agitation and violent eruptions during 1970-81, 1985-88 and 2008-2012. It was preceded by the fierce Naxalite movement in 1960s and 1970s originating at the very core of Darjeeling's foothills. The people of the Darjeeling district and the adjoining Dooars are of the view that their region has very little to do with the state of West Bengal in terms of geographical features, natural resources, socio-cultural patterns and livelihood systems.

The Bengal government may have established the Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council in 1988 and the Gorkhaland Territorial Administration in 2012, but the people are coming to realise that the government is neither inclined to make substantive development interventions nor correct historical injustices.

Once celebrated as the "Queen of the Hills", this region today is in a state of ruin. The forest resources, cinchona plantation, tea industry, opulent biodiversity, water resources, rich human resources and traditional institutions have been systematically plundered. The world famous 150 years old Cinchona (quinine) Plantation exported quinine to the tune of IRs71.72 lakh in 1966-67 alone and did so for several decades. Bengal exploited this commodity but left the industry in the lurch when production started decreasing. This smacks of internal colonialism practised from the Writers' Building in Calcutta.

Five grounds

People and communities regardless of caste, creed, language and religion have suffered from well-planned manipulation and alienation by successive regimes in Bengal. The hunger deaths in tea gardens of the Dooars and massive demographic change in the Darjeeling district is only the tip of the iceberg. The separation of Gorkhaland from West Bengal is viable on five significant grounds.

Firstly, this new state will be the only state in the country to have four international borders with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Nepal. Simply undertaking cross-border trade including through land customs at Phulbari, Jaigaon, Jelep la and Pani Tanki/Pashupati on a regulated framework could trigger huge development multipliers. As the regional and global trade scenario becomes more liberal and cross-border connectivity improves, these trade routes are likely to become robust and vibrant in the very near future, thus leading to newer varieties of sub-regional cooperation and integration. These borders will be the core part of cross-border energy exchanges under the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) Initiative.

Secondly, this will be the only state where there are two topographical variations, resulting in varying agricultural and social systems. The tea, cinchona, floriculture and horticulture produced in this region can be directly transported to different markets through ports in Bangladesh and the Sittway port in Myanmar. This region constitutes 20 percent of the total land under tea cultivation in India and contributes almost 7 percent of the total world tea production. Historically, this region has been a key source of revenue for India's foreign exchange basket. The auction centre and tea companies are now located in Kolkata, but it would be more feasible if Siliguri were to be the venue for auction centres instead. Tea from the region, from Assam, and from neighbouring Nepal, could be exported through ports in Bangladesh. India has already reached an agreement with Bangladesh on this.

Thirdly, this entire region has been declared one of the 25 biodiversity hotspots in the world. It is home to Singalila and Mahananda national parks and Sinchel, Neora Valley, Gorumara and Jaldapara water and game sanctuaries. With wildlife corridors, fabulous mountain ranges, bio-diversity and scenic beauty, this region could be a hotspot for eco-tourism. The Sidrapong power house was the first hydropower project in Asia and was built in 1897, and the tea industry has been functioning since the 1860s. If these were to be declared world heritage items, Darjeeling will be the only district with three sites listed in the Unesco's World Heritage list within such a small geographical location. One site already listed is the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway built in 1881.

If a central university and institutions related to technology, management, industry and information, and resource management are set up, this region could be a major education hub in North East and East India. Schools and colleges in this region have traditionally attracted both national and international patrons for almost 150 years now. Global market linkages between folk medicine produced through cultural practices and utilisation of biodiversity resources could lead to massive revenue and income mobilisations. Ethnic groups within this region have practitioners such as Jhankris, Phedangmas, Dhamis, Bonbos, Pows, Nejums and Bumthings who can produce folk medicine. If their intellectual property is used properly, it could bring in a huge number of licenses and patents. That these practices are steadily vanishing and surreptitiously making their way into Chinese, European and American laboratories and global markets is a great loss.

Fourthly, this is a state where hydropower resources have not been commercially harnessed. There are a number of rivers that flow through this region. The power generated by these rivers could be sold to both Indian and cross-border grids.

And finally, this new state and the Siliguri Corridor will be a gateway into India's North East. It will also be an instrument to harness the opportunities unleashed by India's Act East Policy. This route could be used by Bangladesh, Bhutan and Nepal to attract investments and access markets in South East and East Asian countries. India's Act East policy geographically originates from this region.

Security issues

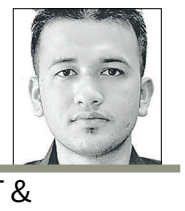
This separate state will complete the pragmatic definition and geographical configuration of the North East region. If Assam and Sikkim are part of the North East region, then why not this intimately contiguous region? Gorkhaland is the only mountainous area which is not a constituent state of India in the entire Himalayan region that stretches from Arunachal Pradesh to Jammu and Kashmir.

The people have lost faith on the commitment and capability of the West Bengal government to run the affairs of the proposed Gorkhaland. They are perturbed by the vengeance with which the Bengal administration is creating a rift between the people in the hills and the plains. Being a highly strategic geo-political location, this does not augur well for India's national security complexities and vulnerabilities. A separate statehood is also needed for the security of the Gorkhas, Bengalis, Biharis, Marwaris and tribes such as the Adivashis, Bhutias, Lepchas and Rajbongshis that live in this region.

Lama, the founding vice-chancellor of Central University of Sikkim, served in the steering committee that prepared the North East Region: Vision 2020 for the Indian government

Funding from friends

What this year's budget says about Nepal's changing bilateral and multilateral ties



BINAYAK BASNYAT & KAMAL BISTA

Foreign funds make up 22.37 percent of the projected revenue inflow in Nepal's $12.79 billion budget for the fiscal year 2017-18. Of the total foreign funds, foreign grants account for 5.64 percent and foreign loans 16.72 percent. Besides highlighting what can be very intriguing international fund governance discussions, and an analysis of the growing opportunities in the global economy, a budget data segregation also illustrates why Nepal perceives its foreign relations with India and China in the way that it does.

Keeping track

A key principle of fund governance in global financial studies is to ensure that fund operations uphold the interests of the fund and its investors. Roles defined by a fiduciary, both legal and ethical, influences its cycle. In Nepal, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) divides foreign funds into multi-lateral funds, bilateral funds; and mutual funds. This year, 36.71 percent of foreign funds is projected to come through multilateral partners, 59.45 percent through bilateral partners and 3.84 percent through mutual funds.

Nepal will receive multilateral funds from eight sources. The World Bank, Asian Development Bank and Social Sector Development Plan are the highest contributors. Bilateral funders include 12 countries. India, Japan and China are projected to be the largest contributors. With regard to mutual funds, development-donor agencies are the focal players among the six major contributors.

Now, depending on the goal of the funds, its investors and contractual understandings, foreign investments are expected to benefit key sectors of the economy. But without proper fund governance, these resources will go off the radar and will not be able to acquire anticipated outcomes. For example, even though millions of dollars in foreign aid has been coming into Nepal annually since the 1950s, the country remains one of the poorest in South Asia.

So, it is important that algorithms which track fund governance are used to ensure that funds are purposeful and meet the desired results. The then finance minister, speaking during the budget announcement last May, said that inter-agency coordination would be increased and administrative procedures related to foreign funds would be reinforced to establish and promote employment generating and export oriented industries. For this to happen, it is important that regulatory companies collaborate with the concerned authorities to track funds and accomplish the desired results.

Proper utilisation

Nepal is set to receive foreign funds through a total of 26 multilateral, bilateral and mutual fund sources this year. This is the lowest recorded number of foreign funders in the past five years. There's no question that the global financial system is more diverse and webbed than before. To make a mark and challenge the potentials, a strong foreign front equipped with the right strategies is required. And it is crucial to tap into the various global sources who govern funds to tackle socio-economic and political problems the world over. Here, joint programmes with regional and global sources such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (Saarc) development goal funds and the UN Sustainable Development Goals funds should be utilised. A more specialised foreign front at home and a virtuous internal financial system will help.

Among the 12 major contributors in bilateral foreign funds, India accounts for a whopping 61.8 percent, which is more than all the other bilateral partners combined. China contributes only 3.19 percent in foreign grants. Similarly, India surpasses China by 55.91 percent in loans. India contributes 63.29 percent of the total foreign loans. However, the dynamics of India and China's role in Nepal is truly elaborated only when we look at the foreign direct investment (FDI) coming from these two countries.

China is the largest contributor in terms of FDI. China pledged direct investments worth $8.3 billion during the Nepal Investment Summit last March. India will be investing $317 million, which places it behind Bangladesh, Japan, the UK and Sri Lanka. China accounts for 68 percent of the total $13.52 billion pledged during the summit. China's FDI is equivalent to an astounding 64.89 percent of Nepal's entire annual budget for this fiscal year. Therefore, though India is 10.5 times ahead of China as a foreign funder in Nepal's annual budget, China is ahead of India 26 times in terms of FDI.

First, progressive and professional fund governance requires procedures that track funds into proper development pipelines. It is important to use foreign funds to establish and promote employment generating and export-oriented industries. This can be done through full-bodied regulatory companies. Second, inter-agency coordination needs to be improved to acquire the benefits of a robust global financial system. Doing so will help tackle development challenges in Nepal and the region, and help meet the common goals of these possible financial networks. Finally, the yearly budget reflects the dynamic power play of China and India in Nepal. While India is the largest bilateral contributor in foreign funds, China's FDI pledges amount to about two-thirds of Nepal's annual budget.

Basnyat holds a Master's in diplomacy and international studies; Bista holds an Association of Chartered Certified Accountant degree

postplatform

Who wants a PhD?

NARAYAN PRASAD GHIMIRE

A renowned columnist who is also a distant relative once said, "I want to do a PhD. For that, I need a peaceful place. So, I will most likely move to a village." Hardly a year passed before he changed his mind and said, "I'm already an established writer. How much more popularity will I gain after I earn a PhD? So, I gave up the idea." Now, a decade after that, I am finding my own friends changing their stand on a PhD title. One holds an MA in English literature and has worked for more than a decade in the media while another has worked for the development sector for a similar period after getting a university degree. Although both of them had originally decided to get a PhD, they have now changed their views on whether the degree will bring them more respect.

These friends are good in their respective sectors. Both have remarkable talents. Writing stories is one friend's forte while engaging national and international development practitioners and persuading them to pursue certain projects is the other's skill. They used to believe that a PhD was so desirable that when they saw the title 'Dr' in a by-line in a newspaper article, they used to think that the writer must be very brilliant. The level of knowledge of such title holders, they thought, was really high.

So why did they change their minds? I asked this question during a tea talk we had during a rainy afternoon recently in the Capital. One of them told a very appalling story. According to him, a social activist in his circle had earned a PhD and boastfully began publishing articles putting the title before his name. He was astonished and wanted to ask the person how he got the degree because he had never said anything about it earlier. When my friend found out what had happened, he instantly lost interest in getting a PhD. This social activist had 'bought' the title as some do to get a job and promotion. And what about his articles? He would buy them from a ghost writer and put his by-line with the title 'Dr'. Since then, my friends began abhorring the title.

As the story shows, how condemnable is the craving of some people to have a PhD title when they lack the knowledge they must have? Listening to all these things, I had nothing more to tell my friends. But not everybody is the same. There are many PhD holders who really hold weight and possess formidable knowledge in their sectors. I also asked them, "Why do you pursue a PhD? To learn, to earn or to deceive?" Our tea talk ended on this note, and by that time, the rain too had stopped.

SOCIAL HOUSING

Landlords must be held to account

The need for amendments to housing regulations is, tragically, clearer than ever

KAREN BUCK

Today the friends and families of the victims of the Grenfell Tower disaster remain in mourning and a community remains in shock. As a neighbouring MP—and previously a representative for that part of north Kensington where the devastated tower stands—I am deeply aware of how widely and intensely that shock is felt.

Meanwhile, a local council is still reeling as its failures have been exposed, and thousands of high-rise residents across the country are waiting anxiously for confirmation that the safety of their homes is not in doubt. That a north London council felt it necessary to evacuate residents late on Friday, and at least 60 high-rise buildings across the country have been deemed unsafe, only illustrates the potential scale of what is turning into a national emergency. Our early priorities are clear: to give relief and comfort to those suffering; reassurance and urgent action to deal with concerns affecting high-rises across the country; and of course a swift and rigorous inquiry into what went wrong.

The call from the Grenfell survivors is for accountability, and that is what they must have. The public inquiry will establish the cause of the fire and why it spread so quickly and with so deadly an impact, when most fires in tower blocks do not. Recommendations must be acted upon with an urgency that has not applied to all the lessons of the Lakanal House fire in Southwark in 2009. Yet it is not too early to start looking at wider lessons—whether of safety or of housing policy—and to act on them.

We already know that councils with substantial numbers of high-rise blocks need financial support to complete all necessary safety checks and remedial works. Yet local government has borne the brunt of central government spending cuts. Kensington, dependent on grant for almost three-quarters of its spending in 2009/10, has seen its budget shrink by 38% from £253m to £156m. Westminster's has been cut by 48%, Manchester's by 37%, Hackney's 35%, and Birmingham's by 34% (Surrey's, which has fallen by 6%, is another story): the list goes on. So councils need to know that the new costs imposed on them will be underwritten by Whitehall. And then the government needs to look at the impact of spending cuts on, among other things, environmental health inspectors, who are the front line of defence against many hazards in rented housing.

Police officers at Dorney Tower in Camden, London, after the building was evacuated due to fire safety concerns, June 2017.

Up to a third of residents in council tower blocks own their own flats or are privately renting from someone who does, or from a company that is legally subletting. Regulations have not caught up with that reality. As a result, requirements, such as those affecting fire doors, can vary. Enforcement powers do not always exist. Major refurbishments, including those relating to fire safety, can be subject to severe delays. These issues could be tackled by updating the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order to allow a tower-block freeholder access to individual flats, whatever the tenure, to make safety improvements.

Meanwhile, tenants can lack effective powers to hold landlords to account. The government needs to strengthen accountability in several ways. It could allow victims of breaches of building regulations to sue for damages. It could introduce a statutory consultation process for tenants where major building works are planned (one already exists for leaseholders). It could support a revised version of the homes (fitness for human habitation) bill—which I introduced as a private member's bill in 2015 (and the opposition then put forward, unsuccessfully, as an amendment to the Housing and Planning Act 2016). This would give tenants the right to take legal action when their accommodation is substandard, rather than having to rely, as they do now, on a cash-starved local authority to do so on their behalf.

The tragedy of Grenfell Tower exposes the over-stretched state of social housing, especially in London. Survivors must have priority for decent, affordable local homes. But that shouldn't be at the expense of others who are homeless or in desperate housing need, although I fear it will. Homelessness is already rising fast. Since 2010 it has increased by 17% and the number of families in temporary accommodation has risen by a staggering 61% in England and Wales—due to both a shortage of social housing and welfare cuts. Yet the number of homes for social renting "started" has fallen from 39,492 in 2009-10 to just 944 in 2016-17. The situation is grim and getting grimmer.

Nothing can now undo the horrors of Grenfell Tower. The survivors rightly want justice. But it is also time for a fundamental change in our national approach to meeting housing need, to one that recognises social housing as part of the solution, not the problem—and that puts decency, safety and a recognition of the importance of community at its heart.

REFUGEES

This squat represents best and worst of humanity

MOLLY CRABAPPLE

On 26 April 2016, the same month the EU-Turkey deal trapped 60,000 refugees in Greece, migrant solidarity activists broke the locks on City Plaza, a shuttered hotel in Athens' anarchist Exarchia neighborhood, and gave 400 stranded people a home. Over the next year, City Plaza grew into the best known of over a dozen squats that house refugees in Greece's crisis ravaged capital. It has been covered by Time, Al Jazeera and the New York Times. Volunteers pass through from all over Europe.

City Plaza boasts a clinic, a delicious cafeteria, language classes, a café. Families live in private rooms. Some have jobs. Their kids attend Greek schools. Most of the work to maintain City Plaza is done, and decisions made, by its residents, who hail from a dozen countries and abide by a behavior code that has zero tolerance for sexism, racism or abuse.

When I visited City Plaza last November, its rooms sang with activity—activists painted a protest banner, a Spanish hippie taught a kid chess, women held a group therapy session, a young man from Aleppo prepared traditional Arab coffee behind the bar. "Life is very beautiful [there]," Mahmoud, a 21-year-old photographer from Baghdad who has been living at City Plaza for three months, told me over Whatsapp recently. Around 4,000 refugees are waiting for places in the squat.

But despite everything it has accomplished, City Plaza is under threat. Though the hotel had been closed since 2010, its owner, heiress Aliki Papachela, spent the last year attempting to evict the refugees—even going so far as to sue the Greek Chief of Police for "dereliction of duty" because he had not shut down the squat.

Her efforts finally has delivered results. On 17 May, the Athens prosecutor's office ordered three refugee squats evicted—City Plaza among them. The squats only learned about the orders weeks later, when articles ran in the Greek press.

These are no idle threats. Right-wing Greek press and politicians have long demonized squatters, and in March, police raided two other squats. A Syrian woman who experienced one of these raids told me about police who kicked in the door at 4am, detained her for 11 hours, and left her and a hundred other refugees homeless. They were not even allowed to collect their clothes. "The threat [of eviction] endangers the lives of many people, including women and children, who have no place to sleep," Mahmoud said. Refugee squats are fighting back. Since the threat, they have launched petitions and called for a citywide demonstration on 23 June. Solidarity protests sprung up around Europe—many involving refugees who once called City Plaza home.

Refugee and volunteer-run squats provide a stark alternative to Greece's government run camps, most of which are squalid, dangerous and degrading. In camps that I visited last November, refugees slept on concrete, sheltered only by cheap nylon tents. They queued for hours for food that might be infested with maggots, and had little access to education, work, or respite from the endless, pointless wait to continue their lives.

Squats like City Plaza accomplish their work without a cent of government or NGO funding. In contrast, despite the $803m euros that since 2015 have flowed to the Greek government and NGOs to help them deal with the refugee crisis, refugees froze to death in camps last winter. Desperate, several more have tried to burn themselves alive. Even the best camps isolate refugees from cities, keeping them quarantined like carriers of a disease.

Perhaps the squats' real crime is breaking this barrier, and bringing refugees from the urban periphery to its heart. City Plaza is just one prominent member of a network of squats, festivals, social centers, bars, solidarity kitchens and community assemblies that form the multi-ethnic, politically radical fabric of several Athens neighborhoods. Walk through the streets of Exarchia and you'll see walls scrawled with the vocabulary of Anti-Authoritarianism, in Arabic and English, Pashto and Greek.

You'll find ads for queer Syrian dance parties, Dari protest flyers, Arabic newspapers filled with Mahmoud Darwish poetry and skepticism towards the nation-state. Step into a bar and you will meet people speaking 15 languages, many of them poor, many of them undocumented, many of them in trauma, but still living together, in one vision of a post-borders future.

In a world that is ever more interconnected, ever more vulnerable to climate change, war and economic rupture, 2015's mass refugee migration is a warning of things to come. More people will take to the road, and we must find ways to live together, whatever passports we may hold. Squats like City Plaza show one direction we might take.

"As long as they try to evict the squats, as long as they build camps and detention centers, as long as there are borders - we will also be there to fight back and fight for a better world!" the Coordination of Refugee Squats wrote in a post on City Plaza's Facebook. "We will show them again what we already proved, we live together, we struggle and we resist together—to defend the dignity of each individual, to defend our principles of solidarity."

CONSERVATIVES

Can the Tories cling on?

It's been two weeks since the country voted, yet how the minority Conservatives are going to govern is still unclear

ANNE PERKINS

Theresa May did her best to sound as if she had no intention of going anywhere on Wednesday, as she defended the slender programme laid out in her first—and probably her last—Queen's speech. She tried to sound as if she had a purpose in holding on to power. But the vivid contrast between her beleaguered performance and the confidence and energy of a reinvigorated Jeremy Corbyn showed just where momentum in this new parliament actually lies.

But it's one thing to sound upbeat, and to believe that victory is close at hand, and another to make it happen. So how could Labour force an election?

The classic route is to defeat the government on a vote. Technically it needs to be a vote of confidence, but a handful of other votes would do as well. The first opportunity to try to do that comes as early as next Thursday, at the end of the debate on the Queen's speech. If Labour could defeat the government then—and if there is still no deal with the DUP, then that is theoretically possible—this would be the end not just for May but for her government.

Tory MPs are hoping that May can stagger on until at least 20 July when they can head off for their summer holidays until late September. There is speculation that there may be a hasty transfer of power and a coronation at the party conference in October. But that would mean the new prime minister had neither a majority (like the old one) nor the slim personal mandate that comes from winning the most votes and the most seats. That means there would be more pressure for another general election.

In theory the Fixed-term Parliament Act makes it hard to call a snap election until the full five years are up. But that was plainly not the case in April, when May suddenly announced that after repeated denials, she did after all need to go to the country. After the result on 8 June—just two weeks ago, remember—Labour is itching for another go at winning a majority. It will be even less likely to oppose a demand for an early election than it was last time, when there was a good reason, and a constitutional case, for blocking it.

It won't be easy to bring down the government, even though it is nine seats short of an overall majority. First, the DUP's 10 MPs will be very reluctant to trigger another election that Corbyn's Labour could win. Even if it can't agree terms with the Tories, its most likely course is to adopt a strategy of policy by policy bargaining, with the threat of abstention held in reserve. That would make life hard but not impossible for the Tory whips. Only if the 10 DUP MPs voted with Labour, and Labour got all the opposition parties to vote with them, could the Tories lose. Not impossible, but very unlikely.

On the other hand, government business will be very very difficult, especially given the shifting alliances on Brexit. The so-called great repeal bill, the only big commitment in the government's programme, is likely to be extremely vague. It will repatriate all the laws and regulations that have been made in Europe in the past 40 years into UK law, but there will be little detail. That will depend on the detail that emerges in negotiation. The government would like the Commons to give it a blank cheque by allowing the detail to be settled in so-called secondary legislation which MPs have little chance to scrutinise.

Labour would rightly see that as a dereliction of duty: it would open the prospect of the kind of bonfire of regulations that the Tory right dreams of. It looks as if the country will be blighted by the Tory catastrophe for a few months yet.

Anti-government demonstrators gather outside Downing Street to protest against Theresa May.

WRESTLING

Here we GLOW: spandex and subversion

HEATHER BANDENBURG

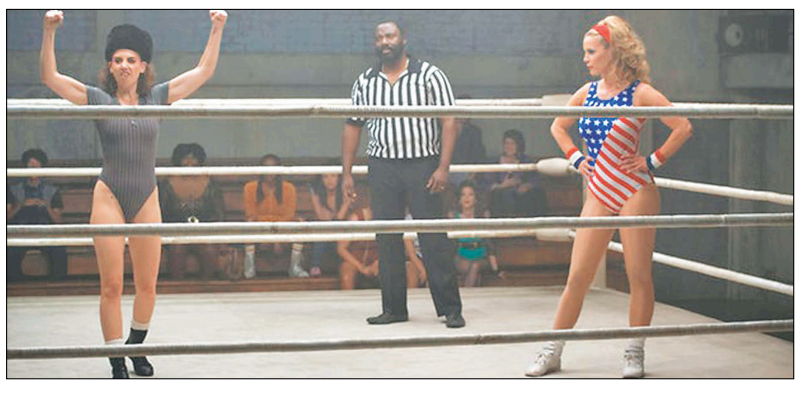
GLOW—a series about women's wrestling by the creators of Orange is the New Black—launched at the weekend to huge excitement. As a wrestler myself, I've written previously about the strong female role models showcased by wrestling. But now, as the sport crosses over to a new audience, there has never been such an exciting time to be part of the industry.

Wrestling, has always had a large cult following despite its damaging stereotypes, "fake" violence and hyper-masculinity. As an antithesis, GLOW follows the true story of a women-only promotion in the US that enjoyed huge popularity in the 80s. The stars are unlikely newcomers to the sport, forming rivalries and friendships through complex and strong characters. I identified with the story, as I came to wrestling through comedy, knowing nothing about it other than it would be more fun than the gym.

I'm glad to say that despite the 80s nostalgia, GLOW doesn't sugar-coat the wrestling industry. Two episodes in, we've already hit on miscarriage, routine body-shaming and drugs. I find the lack of training montages pleasing, adding a realism to the story by showing that it really is a long road to success. As the series progresses, it shows that wrestling creates the opportunity to sculpt a character, an alter-ego to help deal with everyday life—it provides a space to be strong, fearless, dangerous and inspirational. This subversion is what many wrestlers celebrate today in the sport, like the luchador Cassandro El Exotico—an openly gay wrestler in a traditionally repressive sport.

While reality seems to drive many of us to anxiety and anger, being able to channel these feelings into a performance is emancipating. Audiences boo and cheer characters as if in a violent panto, telling a story through live stunts that suspend disbelief. GLOW beautifully illustrates how women, just by being present in a male-dominated environment such as wrestling, defy prejudices about female weakness.

Ultimately, GLOW tells the story of forgotten wrestlers, and there are hundreds, who will never gain the prestige of their male counterparts; sharing their story allows them to be remembered as icons rather than freaks.



A ring scene from GLOW: Alison Brie, Bashir Salahuddin, Betty Gilpin.

If you love the costumes, strength and determination that the characters of GLOW portray, then I welcome you into our weird world. And our world is, thankfully, becoming less abusive (if only marginally). In London alone there are three proudly feminist promotions—EVE, Burning Hearts and the mixed-gender Lucha Britannia—all with women topping the bill and doing it for themselves rather than the male gaze.

Their names are a joy to roll of the tongue—La Diablesa Rosa, Emi Sakura, Asuka, Charlotte Flair, Niya Jaxx, Rhea O'Reilly, Viper. You can even train to be a wrestler at the Burning Hearts all-female school, or at a mixed school such as the London School of Lucha Libre. And coming to screens soon: the Mae Young Classic, the first ever World Wrestling Entertainment tournament, and the belt isn't even pink.

The unifying mission of female wrestlers is to defy expectations and use anger as an energy—for escapism, creativity and change. As GLOW's co-creator Carly Mensch explains: "There is something very different when you are one woman in a leotard surrounded by men, than when you are 14 women in a female-forward environment wrestling in leotards."

One thing about GLOW is that it rarely shows a full-length bout. So if you want to broaden your understanding, I urge you to watch some contemporary women's wrestling. I guarantee by the end of your first show you will be desperate to shout and wear spandex. And with the current state of the world, that's a good feeling.

Flickering Tubelight

Salman Khan, who is known for lighting up the box office during the festival of Eid, got a flickering start with his new film Tubelight. The Kabir Khan directorial only managed to rake in INRs 64.77 crore, making it the actor's lowest opening weekend release in the past few years.

BORN TODAY

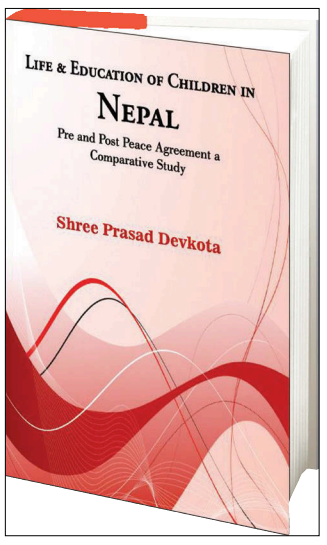
American entrepreneur **Elon Musk** is 46
Belgian footballer **Kevin De Bruyne** is 26
American actor **John Cusack** is 51
Korean singer **Joo-hyun Seo** is 26
American filmmaker **Mel Brooks** is 91

Lorde of the charts

New Zealand pop singer Lorde landed her first chart-topping album as her latest record debuted at the top of the weekly Billboard 200 chart. Melodrama is Lorde's second album. The singer is the third consecutive female solo artist to top the Billboard 200 chart after Katy Perry and Halsey.

ON SHELVES

BOOK ON THE EDUCATION OF WAR-STRICKEN CHILDREN HITS STANDS



KATHMANDU: Author Shree Prasad Devkota's book on the children affected by the ten-year-long Maoist insurgency, Life and Education of Children in Nepal (Pre and Post Peace Agreement), has hits the stands.

The book narrates the stories of school-going children afflicted by the civil war, on the basis of a case study the author carried out in Gorkha district, one of the worst-affected districts during the insurgency.

The book incorporates the findings of the case study, which found out that the major reason behind the poor livelihood and education of the children was their parents' involvement in the conflict, and threats from both the parties, among others.

The book also details the children's condition after the peace accord, and how they suffered from manifold traumas and mental crises. The book also offers a way out for the children through vocational education and career counsellings which would better prepare them to adjust in the society.

AFTER KALO POTHI FAME, MIN BHAM'S STOCK CONTINUES TO RISE

The director's second feature film, A Year of Cold, has been shortlisted by the Asian Cinema Fund for a grant worth $10,000

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

After winning numerous awards and accolades for his debut feature film Kalo Pothi (Black Hen), filmmaker Min Bahadur Bham's upcoming film, A Year of Cold, has been shortlisted for a grant by the Asian Cinema Fund; it was announced on Monday night. A Year of Cold has been shortlisted under the ACF 2017 Script Development Fund, along with four other projects from countries around Asia.

Asian Cinema Fund (ACF), which was announced during the 12th edition of South Korea-based Busan Film Festival in 2007, is an "initiative to discover creative, talented Asian filmmakers and support their projects," and announces funding for Asian films under different categories every year. Altogether, ACF has selected 23 projects under different categories.

As part of the Fund, director Bham's upcoming project will receive up to $10,000. This is the first time a project from Nepal is being awarded with the prestigious fund. A Year of Cold, to be filmed under the banner of Shooney Films, will be Min Bahadur Bham's second feature directorial.

Bham rose to fame with 2015's acclaimed Kalo Pothi, which tells the story of two adolescent boys' search for a missing hen in the war-stricken Karnali.

The film went on to win several accolades internationally, including the Best Film award at Venice International Film Festival, Critics Week, 2015. The movie also proved to be a moderate Box Office success upon its release around the country, raking in a respectable Rs 30,000,000. Before Kalo Pothi, Bham had one short film—Bansulli (2012)—to his credit.

According to director Bham, A Year of Cold tells the story of an innocent, pregnant young girl forcefully married to two brother at once (the film is shot in Nepal's northern Himalayas where polygamy is still in practice), and the journey she take along with her second husband to find the missing one. The journey teaches her lessons about love and loss and ultimately strengthens her, making her independent and self-reliant. The film, the producers have said, will be about the connection the characters make between the 'samsaric' world and the spiritual one, and finding the meaning of love, compassion and sacrifice.

The filming of A Year of Cold will start on 2019.

THEATRICS

THRILLER BY FRENCH PM TO BE FILMED

PARIS: A scathing political thriller co-written by France's new Prime Minister Edouard Philippe is to be made into a film, his publisher said Monday. In the Shadows, which is set during the final days of a neck-and-neck French presidential election, is being adapted for the screen by one of the country's best-loved actors, Guillaume Gallienne, according to reports.

"It has been optioned to be adapted and the project has been launched," Philippe's publishers JC Lattes told AFP.

But they refused to divulge any other details of the screen version of the 2011 potboiler.

The book, which Philippe wrote with fellow right-wing political insider Gilles Boyer, caused a minor stir because of the sexism of its principal character, a cold, jaded political advisor known only at the Apparatchik.

Male chauvinism in the French political establishment has become a hot-button issue after incidents in which female MPs claimed to have been groped, whistled at or subjected to sexist comments in parliament.

Critics also wondered if the character's lusting after his party's spin doctor, its narrator calls "Marilyn", because of her attractiveness might be indicative of the prime minister's own sublimated desires.

"Everyone was wondering who the first member of parliament would be to get the trophy," the Apparatchik says of the all-male team's attempts to sleep with her.

Boyer, who wrote another thriller The Hour of Truth with Philippe in 2007, is set to join the prime minister's office as an advisor next month. **(AFP)**

Music for mental well-being

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Together For Mental Health—Inside City Tour, a music campaign spearheaded by the pop-rock band Mental Radio, is slated to kick off this Friday. The tour will start with a show at Old School Bar & Pub, in Dhobighat, and will then travel to major music venues around Kathmandu and Pokhara such as Moksh, Reggae bar, Sports Hive, the Attic, and Krazy Gecko Bar and Rest Nepal, in Pokhara, among others.

The three-month long tour, according to the organisers, focuses on raising awareness on the issues of Mental Health and puts forward the band's involvement and activities in this sector.

Mental Radio is a cover band established in the year 2010. The band's first album in Nepali was released in August last year. Although they call themselves a pop-rock band, Mental Radio's music spans across a variety of genres.

Although their chief meeting point is music, the band has been working in the field of public health, especially towards mental health awareness. "It is the band's belief that mental health issues have not received the platform, or the visibility, it requires due to the social stigma attached to it," informed Prabin Maharjan, the band's manager.

"People are having difficulty coping and getting on with their lives resulting in stress, fear, anxiety and depression. Mental Radio believes the only way to counter the stigma of mental illness is to make more people talk about their mental problems and acknowledge it."

The Mental Health ensemble comprises of Garima Gurung (on vocals), Iman Bikram Shah (guitars and backing vocals), Sanjog Pradhan (percussion), Ashim 'Funky' Tamang (on bass and backing vocals), and Niraj Baraili (on guitars).

Previously, the band carried out a music and movement therapy sessions in three schools in Kathmandu. As part of the programme, the band, in coordination with psychiatrists and volunteers, helped the ninth-graders learn about mental well-being through a variety of musical games and activities.

The upcoming three-month long musical tour will draw to a close with a gig featuring a host of other bands and artists at Lainchaur Ground on October 10.

Salvador Dali's body to be exhumed

BBC
MADRID, JUNE 27

A judge in Madrid has ordered the exhumation of the body of Spanish artist Salvador Dalí to get samples for a paternity suit.

A Spanish woman, born in 1956, said her mother, a maid, had a clandestine affair with the painter in 1955.

The judge said there were no biological remains or personal objects of the artist to be used in the test. He died in Spain in 1989 at the age of 85.

The Dalí Foundation, which manages the artist's estate, says it will appeal.

The surrealist painter was buried in the theatre and museum he designed himself, in his home town of Figueres in the north-eastern Catalonia region.

Maria Pilar Abel Martínez, a tarot card reader who was born in Girona, made the paternity claim for the first time in 2015.

Martínez claimed that her mother told her several times that Dalí was her father, on many occasions in front of others.

"The only thing I'm missing is a moustache," she once said, according to newspaper El Mundo (in Spanish).

At the time of the alleged affair, Dalí was married to his muse Gala, born Elena Ivanovna Diakonova. The couple had no children.

If she is confirmed to be the artist's daughter, she could use his surname and be entitled to part of his estate—but Spanish media say she would have to legally request it.

Martínez's lawyer said there was no date for the exhumation, but that it could happen as soon as July.

BOX OFFICE

TRANSFORMERS OPENS TO A FRANCHISE LOW

CALIFORNIA: It seems the Transformers franchise is rusty. As of Sunday morning Transformers: The Last Knight the fifth installment directed by Michael Bay, looks to bring in $69.1 million from 4,069 domestic locations during its five-day opening weekend. That's a franchise low for the sequel from Paramount and Hasbro, behind the first in the modern series, which earned $70.5 million in 2007. The Last Knight carries an estimated $217 million production budget.

This makes Transformers: The Last Knight the latest summer blockbuster to bank on overseas ticket sales to have a shot at turning a profit. In China, the big-budget action sequel made $41 million in its opening day alone. The projected international come through Sunday is $196.2 million, powered by $123.4 million in China.

The Last Knight comes at a time when Paramount could have used an all-around hit, following recent misses Baywatch and Ghost in the Shell. While the latest Transformers has been advertised as "the final chapter" and Bay's last go-around, the franchise will continue—Paramount has at least two more movies slated, including a spinoff. The franchise has historically been massively profitable and seen solid multiples for the studio. Together, the first four earned over $1.3 billion domestically and well over $3.5 billion worldwide. **(Reuters)**

Potter fans congregate AT PLATFORM 9-3/4

REUTERS
LONDON, JUNE 27

Twenty years to the day after the first book in the Harry Potter series was published, fans gathered online and in the real world to express their enduring love for JK Rowling's magical creation.

Since Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone came out in 1997, with a first print run of just 500 copies, the series of seven novels has sold 450 million copies worldwide in 79 languages and spawned a blockbuster movie franchise.

On Monday, some fans took the day off work to celebrate the anniversary, heading to significant locations such as King's Cross train station in London, which in the stories is one of the gateways into the world of witches and wizards.

The real-life station features a mock-up of Platform 9-3/4, the departure point for trains to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The mock-up is a bustling spot where tourists and fans queue to pose for photos wearing Potter-themed scarves or costumes.

"Harry Potter I think still means so much to so many people even though it's 20 years now," said Clara Carson, whose job at the nearby souvenir shop involves taking photos of the fans and holding up the scarves to achieve a windswept effect.

"I'm a fan myself so it's really nice to come in and be with people that are all into the same things that you're into," she said. "Whether they're kids or my age or even adults, they're always just so excited."

Childhood friends Charlotte Keyworth and Joanne Wylie, both 26, had come down to London from northern and eastern England for the occasion. They were part of the first generation of Potter fans, having read the first volume as young girls and then endured the agonising wait for each new episode as they were published over a period of 10 years.

"We've grown up with it, with Harry Potter," said Keyworth, who was sporting a Hogwarts t-shirt. "We're planning on going to the studio tour this afternoon and celebrating in our own little way," she said, referring to the studios where the Potter movies were shot.

Wylie, who has a permanent tattoo on her forearm of the Deathly Hallows symbol, an important element in the story, said the Potter stories still bring her joy and comfort.

"It was always something that just sort of boosted your spirits and made you realise you could get past the dark points," she said.

Her sentiments were widely echoed on social media, with legions of fans posting their favorite quotes or video clips, or just thanking Rowling for the happy memories.

"After all these years... Always!" wrote Twitter user Anu—a reference to a moving moment in the story when it is revealed that Harry's nemesis Severus Snape had always loved Harry's dead mother Lily.

Rowling, who has 10.8 million followers on Twitter, also took to the medium to mark the anniversary.

"20 years ago today a world that I had lived in alone was suddenly open to others. It's been wonderful. Thank you," she wrote.

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the kathmandu post
the collegian
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bookworm babbles

Parts that make a whole

Ujir Magar recently released his first book, Ansha. Magar who currently serves as the chief secretary of Nepal Journalist Federation writes about various aspects of the Maoist insurgency and its effect on current political scenario in his new book. In this conversation with the Post's **Samikshya Bhattarai,** Magar talks about his new book and his take on journalism. Excerpts:

Tell us about your new book, Ansha?

Ansha is a book based on the Maoist insurgency. As I was working as a journalist during that period, I got a firsthand experience of the conflict and was even able to travel to some of the places worst-affected by it. I heard lots of stories and met people from various walks of life and learnt how the conflict had affected them. So, I decided to collect all these stories into a book. Ansha is in a way a brief summary of the Maoist insurgency from a point of view of a journalist.

In the last decade, we have seen many books about the insurgency written by people who fought on either side, by public intellectuals and analysts, and even by journalists. How does your book add to the existing discourse?

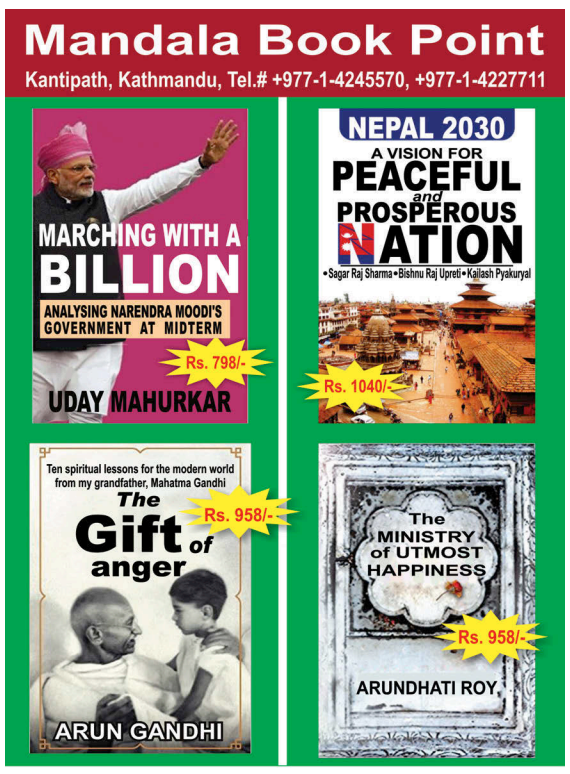
Yes, there are quite few books about the conflict but my book does not base itself on a certain ideological and political aspect of the conflict but on how the lives of individuals, regardless of who they were, were affected by the war. I have more than 200 characters in my book that range from high-ranking government officials and Maoist cadres to commoners. I have tried to show how everyone, right from the grassroots to the corridors of power, was a part of the conflict that has in so many ways shaped what we know as Nepal today.

You have written numerous articles on media platforms on the subject in the past; tell us how different it was compiling it all in a book.

As my book is a non-fiction based on my work as a journalist, writing it was not very difficult. However, there is a difference between reporting and writing a book. While reporting, one focuses on a single story and the aspects that surround it. You go to the field, and produce a write-up immediately, under a short timeline. While writing a book however, one needs to focus on not just one but multiple characters, multiple stories and multiple aspects that surround each of these characters and stories. It is not very straightforward, the process can get tricky and stories sometimes get entangled. Book-writing definitely demands more time and energy. In this case, I wrote the book almost after a decade of the conflict. I had to fill a lot of gap by just recalling. The compilation was a strenuous process.

What are three books about Maoist insurgency that you think everyone should read?

The first book is Prayogshala by Sudheer Sharma as it gives you a remarkable account of the insurgency and everything you want to know about the period. Another book would be Das Barsiya Janayuddha by Dipak Sapkota. And the third book would be Divorce by Netra Pandey. Even though the book is based primarily on the parting of Puspakamal Dahal 'Prachanda' and Baburam Bhattarai, it delves into the internal conflict inside Maoist party as well as various other aspects of Nepali politics.



FINDING THE ONE

Love takes time, and it takes time to love. Always remember, the people with the highest walls have the deepest love

UPAMA PANT

Isn't it funny how we tend to pour our heart out as children but now, as grownups, we just bottle up. We try defying the very social nature of our species. I sometimes wonder when it was that my heart turned into a stone. Was it when that kid from grade four stole my favourite Ben 10 watch or was it high school when the other one broke my heart?

As a child I was always taught to respect people, stand up for elders, and love the younger ones—yes, all the regular, typical teachings that define good character. Vowing I would touch a little softer, be a little kinder and speak a little better and of all I would create wildfire with the love I carried.

As a child I was also curious, and I grew up questioning a lot of things that appeared normal or regular to the grownups. For example, while running around the streets of my neighbourhood, I would wonder what lay beyond those huge metal gates. I would wonder why the signs read 'Beware' instead of 'Welcome'. I would hop around unraveling the story of every person that passed by. I would like to think, we've all been there and done that—we have all been human.

Then something changed in the interval between the age seven and 17. I became colder and rigid. The little girl who was outraged by the demons in fairytales finally realised that they were there in the real life too. Only, they didn't scare me with pointy horns, sharp canines, wicked eyes or hide under your bed and haunt me. Infact, they came dressed as the protagonist, like the knight in shining armour, with all the charm and everything I ever wished for.

With our hearts having endured so much pain and so much heartbreak we think twice before we trust someone. How do we preserve the little ray of sanity we still hold? How do we go back to believing in ourselves, how do we go back to placing faith in love and the power it beholds?

We shut ourselves. We contemplate about the how people walked over us so easily, and assume our battle is the toughest. But we are never alone are we? Everyone has been through hell and back learning how to walk on fire and still remain sane by digging the way back to earth. We've all gotten a few arrows on our back, gun shots right through the soul.

And yet we never really speak about it because everyone wants to know 'what' the other person is doing, nobody really asks 'how' they are doing.

I guess, at the end of the day, the only thing we aspire is to find is that one person who proves us wrong. Someone who dares us to travel roads not taken by anyone and teaches us to make flowers blossom with just kisses. Someone who will see right through and break the walls we've built with the slightest touch of evening wind and softest ray of the sunlight. Someone, whose embrace will place back all our broken pieces together.

Or, perhaps we need to find someone we can love gently and steadily. Someone with whom we can live an adventure. Someone that makes us want to save them from the craziness and insanity, to taste their laughter in our mouth. Someone who can see our scars and yet help them heal.

But, it's not easy finding someone like this, mostly because even if you decide to open up to someone, they won't open up to you. They are as scarred and they are equally scared. And it might take you forever to find the person, because they are never in the plain sight.

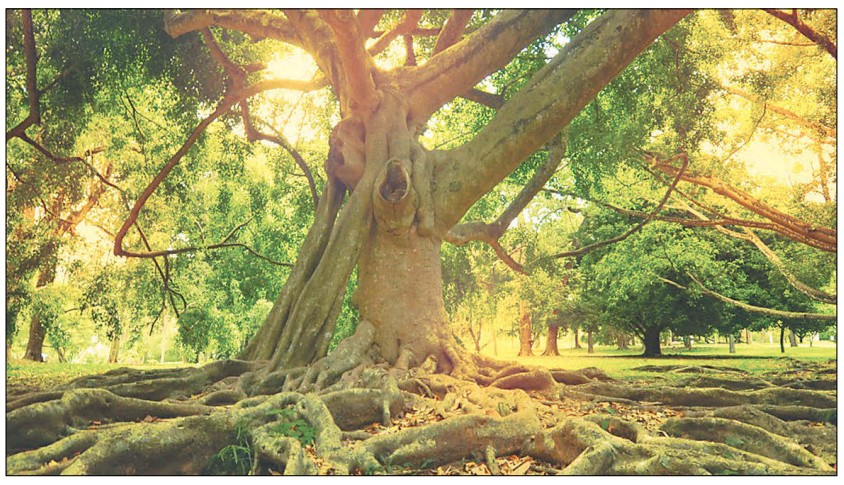
But don't give up. Not yet.

Love takes time, and it takes time to love. Always remember, the people with the highest walls have the deepest love.

Pant is a recent IBDP graduate from Ullens School

A PLACE WHERE MY ROOTS LIE

SHIVA BHUSAL



In the summer of 2010, I walked into the Pulchowk Campus for the first time. The institution—to me—was a love at first sight. Like most of the students who stood in the long line of entrance exam attendants that year, I desperately wanted to study here—an acclaimed engineering college. However, it was not the reputation, but the environment and the vibe of the place that fascinated me. Until the summer of 2010, I had never been to an institution that was as spacious and as vibrant.

I was prepared for the worst—strict professors, stirring lectures, and fierce and competitive environment. I knew that walking out with a degree from the college would be as tough as getting into it was.

Unlike my expectation, the college was liberal in all these aspects. Nobody forced me to do or not to do anything. Within a year, I began to enjoy all sorts of freedom. When I didn't feel like going to the classes I would sit outside in the sun or stay back at hostel reading a good book or sometimes just go play cricket. The only thing that was tough and strict was the exam.

Making friends was always easy. From what I know, friendship was treasured here. People from different backgrounds who beheld different stories came together to form strong kinship.

From outside, the campus was about people who were passionate about just mathematics, programming or some other engineering practices; from the inside, it was also about the people who are guitarists, writers, singers, musicians and even actors.

The best days were the days at hostel—particularly when our exams that ran for a whole month got over. For a month, all of us studied as much as we could. The whole phenomenon was so strange and unusual but I thoroughly enjoyed the overall process of it. It never felt like a burden. During the examination, I wished on it all to just come to an end. I thought I would be the happiest person on earth. Once the exam got over, we just went wild.

During my final year, I used to live on the top floor of the C-block. The hostel used to be adorned by a lot of pigeons. If you ever happened to leave your windows open, pigeons would enter your room and build home inside your cupboard, sometimes even ruining your clothes. But, was I fond of those birds.

I lived in the campus for four years. It was home. But now, the place suddenly looks alien and forgotten. Every time I go there, I feel like I am meeting an old beloved who has been forgotten and betrayed and who is always silent and rigid with her emotions. I no longer can enter into this place with same authority and freedom. I have to ask somebody else for the permit. Even that permit won't allow me to stay for a long period of time. This place now belongs to a newer generation. Yet, this is where my roots lie.

Bhusal is currently pursuing his Master's degree in computer science at Bowling Green State University in the US

FLYING AWAY

AASHISH DHAKAL

To the land of my heart
Are the birds of my dreams?
Don't know where they will go next
Wings have taken flight
And now says my sight
You've finally awoken
What narrow your mind is left behind
You've moment far ahead in time
Life is floating on a breeze
Life is telling you and me
Now whatever will be, will be
A touch from someone and
I've been wandering without a thought
Somewhere it doesn't speak any words
And since I've been lost
Something made the heart melt
In a blink, I was someone else
A light shore down
Now there's a beauty being showered out the streets
I found all happiness
Now, there's a zest being showered upon me
Now I finally know who I was meant to be
Do you remember the moment yesterday?
The one with the magic force
I turned into something new
I wonder which moment it was
The heart says just blindly go to
Any place that desire takes you
Now whatever will be, will be
Just flying, flying away.

Dhakal is a +2 student at Kathmandu Model College

LIFE WITHOUT WING

SACHIN POKHAREL

Eyes are closed
Mind is vigorous
To imagine and move round
The situation that are out of this world.

Lonely heart
Reason to see me alive.
No wings to glide
But eagerness to accelerate.
The more steps I move
The less option I have.

Wish to fulfil my goal
That exist in this world.
Will go through a plan to get everything
Though I live a life without wing.

Pokharel is pursuing his Bachelor's degree at Kantipur Engineering College

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TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19)
****
With so many positive signs coming your way, you may be a bit impatient with those who try to waste your time with their tales of woe. Even if their problems seem a little silly or neurotic, show some compassion and understanding.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)
**
A feeling of being hemmed in and constrained by circumstances could cause you to look for a way to break free of the ties that bind. Investing a large sum in a can't-miss opportunity however, could leave you holding an empty bag.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)
***
You have something to settle with your partner, and you may as well get on with it. Starting the dialogue with a preachy attempt to influence future behaviour is likely to have exactly the opposite effect you desire.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)
***
Words aren't enough today. You may have everything you want to say worked out perfectly in your head, but as soon as you open your mouth it's as if some trickster has grabbed your words and twisted them into unrecognizable knots.

LEO (July 23-August 22)
****
Wanderlust has grabbed your fancy and won't let go. Maybe your nose is pressed hard to the grindstone at the moment and you can't whisk yourself away on an impromptu adventure, but you can liven up the day-to-day routine with some creative thinking.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22)
***
The vision is tantalising, but you are having trouble. Something is preventing you from reaching out. Are you magnifying real restrictions into insurmountable obstacles? Perhaps you're creating artificial constraints to help insulate you from failure.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22)
***
Don't try to sugarcoat your message today. Say what you mean and mean what you say without dancing around the issue. That's not to imply you should blurt out the first thing that comes to mind.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)
****
Peer pressure and the pack mentality are hard to resist. But the fact that you prize your individuality and wave it like a banner will give you more than enough strength to resist any urge to fall in line.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)
*****
You have a good handle on what you need to do and the focus to get on with it. You may even finish the necessary tasks so early you have loads of extra time to devote to a favorite hobby or relax in a comfy chair with a good book.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)
****
Contending with wild mood swings, either yours or other people's could consume most of your energy, leaving you with little to show at the end of the day. Although stops and starts normally wouldn't bother you, you feel an intense urgency right now.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)
*****
You just love being the center of attention and you are definitely in the mood for performing today. Whether telling stories to coworkers in the break room, charming a sales clerk or flirting with a server in a restaurant, you leave them all wreathed in smiles.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)
**
Trying to impose your agenda on others could backfire today, so think twice before getting up on your soapbox. Despite your conviction that you really know what's best for everyone, the people around you might not be quite ready to buy into your beliefs.

LAUGH OUT LOUD

Q: Why did Cinderella get kicked off the soccer team?
A: Because she ran away from the ball.

Q: If you were forced to go through one of the following doors, which door do you go through with 100 percent certainty you'd stay alive: a door with a man with a gun behind it, a door with a tiger who hasn't eaten in seven years behind it, or a door with an electrical chair behind it?
A: The one with the tiger behind it, because if it hasn't eaten in seven years it's dead.

KANTIPUR TV

5:00	Shuvarambha/ Bhaktisur	11:00	Headline News	16:30	New Entry
		11:05	Suman Sanga	17:00	Headline News
5:30	Radhe Radhe	11:30	Music Summit	17:05	Call Kantipur
6:00	Jeevan Bigyan	12:00	Kantipur Samachar	18:00	Kantipur News
6:30	Jyotish Manthan	12:30	VMAG	18:30	Cinema Fest
6:40	Sky Shop	13:00	Headline News	19:00	Kantipur Samachar
7:00	Kantipur Samachar	13:05	Baliyo Gha	19:30	Market Watch
8:00	Kantipur News	13:30	Ukali Orali	20:00	Kantipur Samachar
8:30	Rise and Shine	14:00	Kantipur Samachar	21:00	Harke Haldar
9:00	Headline News	14:30	Rise N Shine	21:30	Tough Talk
9:05	Sarokar	15:00	Headline News	22:30	Kantipur News
10:00	Kantipur Samachar	15:05	Sarokar	23:00	Kantipur Samachar
10:30	Market Watch	16:00	Kantipur Samachar	23:30	Market Watch

KANTIPUR FM

00:00	Non Stop Nepali Adhunik Songs	07:30	Voice of Nepal	16:00	Happy Hour
		08:05	Mid Week Morning	17:05	Education Talk
01:00	Non Stop Nepali pop songs	09:00	Kantipur Diary	18:00	Adha Aakash
		09:10	Traffic Updates	18:30	Kantipur Diary
02:00	Non Stop Hindi Songs	09:15	Radio Talk	19:00	Close-up Connect
		10:05	Bi-Scope	20:05	I love it I hate it
04:00	Non Stop Bhajan Songs	11:05	Taste-Bud	21:00	Kantipur Diary
		12:00	Kantipur Diary	21.30	Indreni
05:00	BHAKTI ANUSTHAN/Achyut	12:10	Music Box	22:00	Sanchai Hunuhunchha
		13:05	Ke cha Nepal		
06:30	Kantipur Diary	15:00	Kantipur Diary	23:00	Aaja Dekhi Arko Aajha Samma
07:00	The Headliners	15:15	Sangitometry		

CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Winter Palace resident
5 Fray
10 Stole, perhaps
14 Cronyn of "Cocoon"
15 Split to join
16 Paperless exam
17 Lotion additive
18 Type of parking
19 Grind, maybe
20 Gem which doesn't sparkle
22 Kayak cousin
23 Website
24 Zippy's word
25 First-aid devices
29 Office computer
33 Pens
34 Twelve, maybe
36 It can hide a bed
37 Elev.
38 — out (culls)
39 P.O. service
40 Spy — Hari
42 Lifesaver
43 Late bloomer
45 More arrogant
47 Genuine
49 Large cask
50 Compass pt.
51 Border state
54 Strongly motivate
60 Average (hyph.)
61 Turkey neighbor
62 Cat's-paw
63 Cracked
64 More than asked
65 Jedi ally
66 The Keystone —
67 Legendary pioneer
68 Pond makers

DOWN
1 — does it!
2 Kirk's helmsman
3 Roman love god
4 Supply new gear
5 Coup
6 Jai —
7 Encyc. sections
8 Dueler's weapon
9 — on (pretend)
10 Punk hairdos
11 Tailor's need
12 Metric prefix
13 Swiss painter Paul —
21 Earns homophone
22 IBM and GE
24 Has a hankering
25 Rascal
26 Type of bear
27 State-run game
28 Deride
29 Extinct birds
30 Nut cake
31 Bid
32 Tijuana dad
35 Donne's "done"
38 Timely question
41 Royalty receivers
43 Governess in Siam
44 Fragrant
46 Half a double date
48 Attack
51 Baroness Karen
52 Karate studio
53 Right now!
54 Pita treat
55 Medea sailed on her
56 Claim on property
57 Where Keokuk is
58 Kind of lens
59 Wapitis
61 Long sandwich

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

R	A	P	P	E	D		E	P	A		I	S	L	A
T	I	R	A	D	E		M	L	B		V	I	A	L
E	M	E	R	G	E		C	E	E		A	N	T	I
			C	A	R	T	E	B	L	A	N	C	H	E
A	M	B	E	R		W	E	E		S	H	E	E	N
D	I	L	L		B	A	D		F	L	O			
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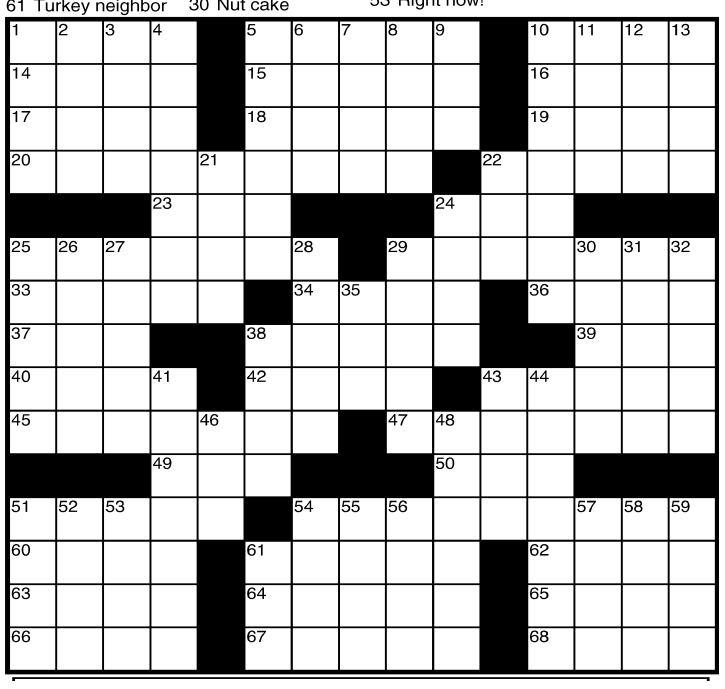

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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★☆☆☆☆

No.SC3141 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

2	8	1	9	6	7	4	5	3
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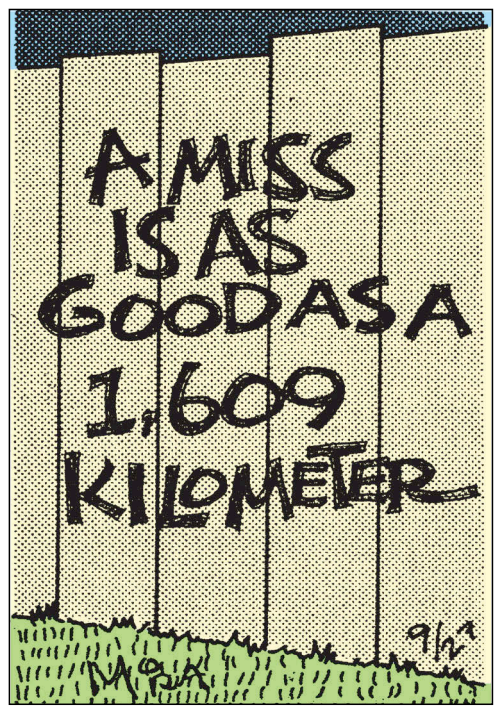
GRAFFITI



WORD GAME

TODAY'S WORD -- FUNEREAL

(FUNEREAL: fyoo-NEER-ee-ul: Appropriate for or suggestive of a funeral.)

Average mark 27 words
Time limit 45 minutes

Can you find 48 or more words in FUNEREAL?
The list will be published Monday.

YESTERDAY'S WORD -- XENOLITH

exit	lent	loth	tine	hint
extol	lien	ilex	toil	hole
neolith	line	inlet	toile	hone
next	lint	into	tole	hotel
noel	lion	then	tone	hotline
noil	lithe	thin	toxin	
note	litho	thine	helix	
oxen	loin	thole	helot	
leno	lone	tile	hilt	

To purchase the Word Game book, visit **WordGameBooks.com**. Order it now for just $5 while supplies last!

RULES OF THE GAME: 1. Words must be of four or more letters. 2. Words that acquire four letters by the addition of "s," such as "bats" or "dies," are not allowed. 3. Additional words made by adding a "d" or an "s" may not be used. 4. Proper nouns, slang words, or vulgar or sexually explicit words are not allowed. To contact Word Game creator Kathleen Saxe, write to Word Game, Kathleen Saxe, Andrews McMeel Syndication, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, MO 64106, or kzsaxe@gmail.com.

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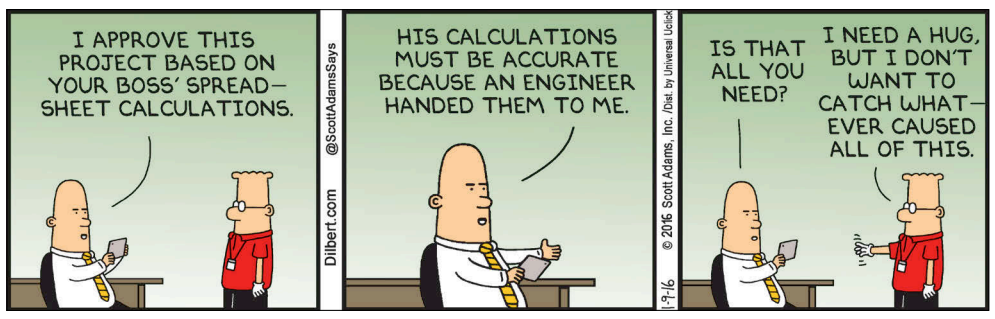
STRIPS

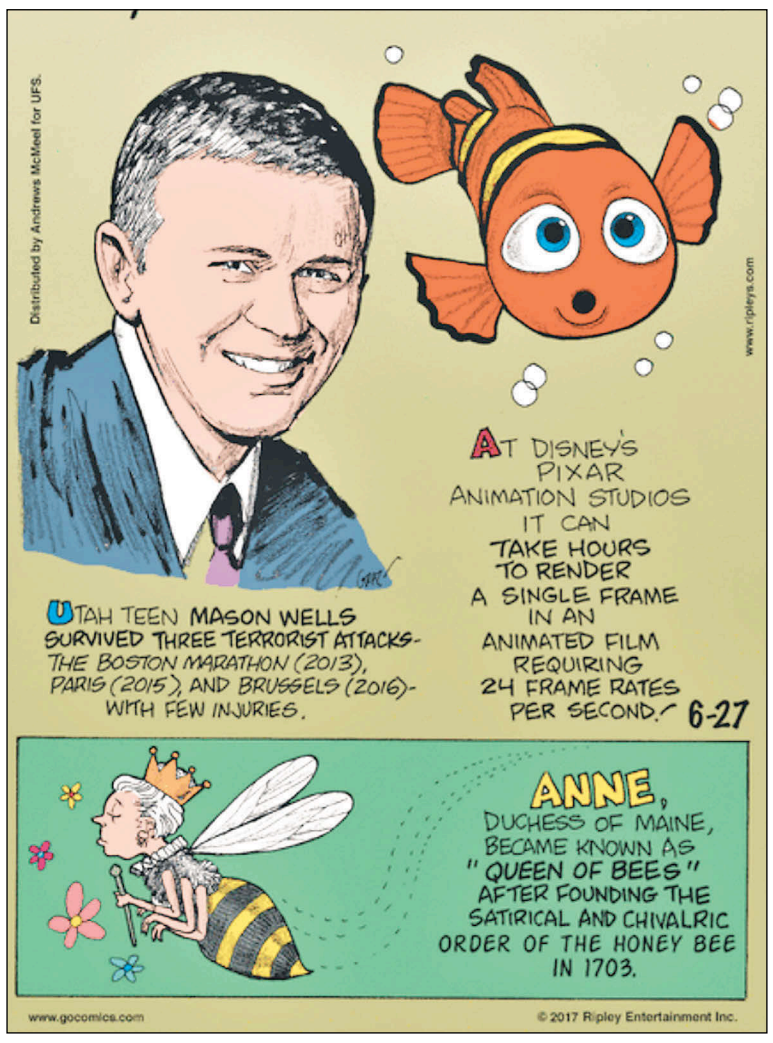
DILBERT



PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

GARFIELD

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT



FILMS

TUBELIGHT
QFX Civil Mall: 9:00/11:45/12:15/12:45/14:45/15:30/16:00/17:45/18:45/19:15
QFX LABIM Mall: 8:45/9:30/11:00/12:30/14:45/15:30/16:15/18:30/19:15
QFX Kumari: 9:15/12:00/12:30/15:15/15:45/18:30/19:00
QFX Jai Nepal: 11:30/14:45/18:00
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CARS 3 3D
QFX LABIM Mall: 14:00
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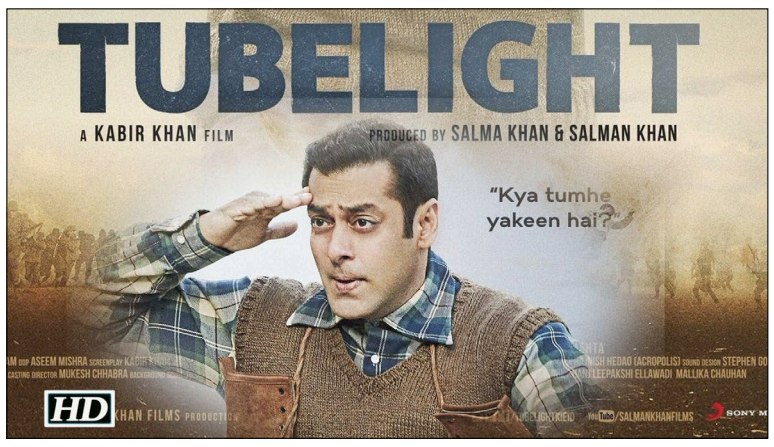
WONDER WOMAN 3D
QFX LABIM Mall: 11:45/18:00



EVENTOGRAPH

FOOD & DRINKS

Savour the cardamom and saffron spice, slow-cooked kebabs and kormas at **Indian restaurant serving Awadhi cuisine**. contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

Dining Park Restaurant & Lounge bar with a Coffee and Bakery Hub and Bar and Fine Dining. Boasting facilities including Private VIP Lounges, a conference hall and a terrace garden. Open 6am-10 pm. Mid-Baneshor.

Weekends brunch @ Hyatt Regency—treat yourself with a lavish buffet lunch, splash by the swimming pool or laze around outdoor, Jacuzzi, all for just Rs 2300 plus taxes per person. Contact: 4491234

Sandwich and Crepes: Taste the sandwiches and crepes at The Lounge from 11 am to 6 pm everyday. For further details call Hyatt Regency at 4491234.

Krishnarpan—a specialty Nepali Restaurant at **Dwarika's**, 6 courses to 22 courses Nepali meal served. Opening Time: 6 pm-11 pm. Prior reservations required, c**ontact: 4479448**

China Garden offers delectable dishes from across Asia, including Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese. **Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs, contact: 427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza**

Relax and Unwind this summer at Waterfront Resort, Sedi Height, Pokhara @ Rs. 6000 Nett per night on Bed & Breakfast basis. Contact: 9801133378 / 9849143552

We serve nothing but the finest **Arabica coffees** at great value prices **at Barista Lavazza Coffee Restaurant,** Lazimpat, **Contact: 4005123/4005124**

Rosemary Kitchen and Coffee shop, Thamel, opening hours: 7:00 am to 10:00 pm offers an International cuisine in reasonable prices. Contact 01-4267554

The Italian restaurant serves authentic Italian cuisines in an elegant ambience for both lunch and dinner. **Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs, Contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza**

Garden Terrace offers an authentic world cuisine, providing diners with the unique experience of observing their selected dishes being prepared by chefs. **Contact: 427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza**

Mako's offers traditional **Japanese food** served. Don't miss out on Mako's special Tempuras, and green tea ice cream, Time: 11: 30-14:30 & 19:00-22:00, contact: 4479448

Bourbon Room, Lal Durbar Marg is open for lunch from 12 noon. Enjoy affordable and delicious meals starting from Rs 99! We are currently offering Indian & chinese combos along with momos. **Call: 4441703**

Out-of-Africa Lunch amid rural splendor: Sat & Sun from 1130 to 1630 hours at **The** Watering Hole, Indrawati River Valley. For prior reservation contact: indrawatiresort@gmail.com

Every Friday evening enjoy **Starry Night BBQ** from 7 pm onwards at **Shambala Garden Café at Hotel Shangri La** with live musical performance by Ciney Gurung. Contact: 4412999

Kaiser Cafe Restaurant & Bar at The Garden of Dreams, opening time: 9 am till 9 pm, offers an international cafe menu serving breakfast, lunch, dinner, specialty tea's, coffees and pastries, **contact: 4425341**

Manny's Eatery and bar introduces a special lunch package that is affordable, tasty, nutritious and quick enough to fit your lunch break**, Jawalakhel, Shaligram complex, 5536919**

Enjoy a Barbecue Buffet at the Radisson Hotel, wide selection of mixed fresh grills and vegetables together with a choice of salads and a delicious dessert buffet at a rate of Rs. 1,350 plus taxes per person. Contact: 4411818

Make your weekend more exciting with family and friends with sumptuous Satey, Dimsums, Mangolian Barbecue and Pasta at The Cafe from 12:30 noon to 4:00 pm. Call: Hyatt Regency, at 4491234

Hotel Narayani Complex, Pulchowk, Lalitpur presents Shabnam & Cannabiz Band every Wednesday and Rashmi & Kitcha Band every Friday, 7:30 PM onwards @ Absolute bar P Ltd; **Contact: 5521408**

Enjoy **Bubbly Brunch** every Saturday from 11 am to 3 pm at **Shambala Gardena and Club Sundhara**. Contact: 4412999

Embers Bar, Pulchowk, in all its sophistication and glory is happy to announce Happy Hours every 6-7pm. It will be hosting a Barbeque night every Friday from 6:30-9:30pm

The Toran, an ideal location for all day lounging and informal dining offers multi-cuisines. **Contact: Dwarika's Hotel, 4479488**

Latin—Gypsy Jazz at The Corner Bar, Radisson Hotel, Kathmandu with Hari Maharjan feat Monsif Mzibiri, 7 pm onwards, Wednesdays & Fridays. **Contact: 4411818**

The most delightfully awesome chicken momos & yummy rich chocolate cake on this part of the planet @ **Just Baked Bakery & Cafe, Battisputali**, offering much more specialties at affordable price.

Starry Night BBQ—every Friday Evening from 7:00 pm **at Shambala Garden Café, Hotel, Shangri-La only @ Rs 1799 net per person and live performance by Ciney Gurung. Contact: 4412999**

MUSIC

Enjoy live DJ nights, on every Sunday chill out/ ambient, Wednesday tech/ funk house & Friday psy/ proggy/ full on from 6:00 pm to 10 pm at garden and 7:00 pm onwards at club at **Funky Buddha Resturant & Bar,** contact: 4700091

Enjoy snacks and drinks from 4:00 pm to 11:00 pm every day and **nightly live music from "The Corner Band"** except Tuesday and Saturday from 7 pm to 11:00 pm **at Corner Bar, Radisson Hotel. Contact: 4411818**

Set within the historic Garden of Dreams, the **Kaiser Cafe Restaurant and Bar, Thamel,** offers a continental menu and serves as an atmospheric venue for anything from a quiet coffee or intimate meal. **Contact: 442534**

Every Friday BBQ from 7:00 pm at Fusion Bar & Pool side at Dwarika's Hotel with live band "Dinesh Rai and Sound of Mind". Price Rs 1600/ includes BBQ dinner and a can of beer or a soft drink. Contact: **4479448**

Trisara offers food and drinks along with good music and great times. Sunday- Live Music by Barbeque Night, Monday, Wednesday- by Positive vibes, Tuesday, Saturday-By Jyovan Bhuju, Friday-Live Music by Dexterous

MIND & BODY

Tranquility Spa at Hotel Radisson, now offering Body Scrubs for Rs 3,000 (50 percent discoun for members). Opening hour 8.00 am-8.00 pm. Contact Number: 01-4423888, 01-6200086

Jasmine Fitness Club and Spa, Fully equipped gym and spa; Zumba, aerobics and cardio classes; therapeutic massage; beauty parlour and men's salon. Tripureshwor; Contact: **4117120**

OTHERS

Ayurveda Health Home has been providing **ayurvedic treatments/ massages, sirodhara & counseling** for stress, detox & rehabilitation. Dhapasi, Kathmandu: 01-4358761, Lakeside Pokhara 061-463205

Revolution Cafe, AmritMarg, Thamel, away from busy crowed street, offers great music, fast wi-fi and wide menu with reasonable prices. Operation hours: 7 am to 10 pm, contact: 4433630

Learn cardio, gym, aerobics, zumba, spa, boxing, kick-boxing, b-boying, bollywood dance at **Oyster Spa and Fitness Club,** Sinamangal. Time: Sunday to Friday from 5 am to 8 pm. Contact: 4110554

GETAWAY

Experience **The Last Resort**, the perfect place for family fun adventure and relaxation. Special packages for residents. **Contact: 4700525/ 4701247 or mail us at info@thelastresort.com.np**

Asia World Travel Pvt Ltd presents fascinating luxury escapades to amazing destinations: Prague, Ladakh, Bangkok, Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Mount Kailash and Panchpokhari in North East Nepal. **Contact: 6222604**

Jungle Safari Lodge, Sauraha Chitwan offers 2 Nights 3 Days package only for Rs 6500 per person. **Suman 9851008399**

Much needed getaway—1 night/2 day package @ Hyatt Regency. **Enjoy luxury stay** of a five star hotel for a couple with breakfast and access to spa facilities for just Rs 9999 plus taxes per person only. Contact: 4491234

Experience the **Gyakok @ Shambala Garden, Hotel Shangri-la** only @ Nrs.1700 Nett per person and Nrs.3000 Nett for couple. For more details and reservation: 4412999

Enjoy Gourmet Saturday Brunch with your family and friends at the Sunrise Restaurant , Hotel Yak & Yeti from 12-7 pm every Saturday. Contact: 4248999

Escape, relax and get in shape @ Hyatt Regency. Embark on a personal well-being at Club Oasis. Remember us for Tennis, sauna, Jacuzzi, swimming, fitness centre and Beauty Salon. Contact: 4491234

the kathmandu post
sports
PG 11 WEDNESDAY, JUNE 28, 2017 kathmandupost.ekantipur.com

Lyon sign Traore from Chelsea

Olympique Lyonnais have signed Chelsea's Burkina Faso forward Bertrand Traore on a five-year contract for 10 million euros, the French club said in a statement on Monday. The 21-year-old was on loan last season at Ajax Amsterdam, who finished runners-up in the Dutch top flight, scoring nine goals in 24 league games.

Real's Llorente joins Sociedad

Defender Diego Llorente has left Real Madrid to join Real Sociedad on a five-year contract. The 23-year-old Real youth product had been on loan at Vallecano and Malaga in the past two seasons after making just substitute appearances since 2012. Llorente said making a permanent move would allow him to settle down, adding he believed Sociedad was the ideal destination.

Germain makes Marseille switch

French forward Valere Germain has joined Olympique de Marseille on a four-year contract from Monaco, OM said in a statement on Monday. The 27-year-old Germain, whose father Bruno played for Marseille, scored 10 goals in Ligue 1 last season, helping Monaco win the French title.

SPORTS DIGEST

Man City eyeing Douglas

RIO DE JANEIRO: English football club Manchester City are preparing a proposal to sign Vasco da Gama's Brazil Under-20 midfielder Douglas, according to media reports. The English Premier League (EPL) club sent a scout to watch the 19-year-old in Vasco's 1-0 victory over Atletico Goianiense in Brazil's Serie A championship on Sunday, according the Lance news portal. Douglas is tied to the Rio de Janeiro club until 2021 and has a $30 million release clause in his contract, the report added. He has made 38 appearances for Vasco since being promoted from the club' s youth academy last year. The teenager has also been capped five times for Brazil Under-20 team. **(AGENCIES)**

Mounie joins EPL new boys Huddersfield

PARIS: Ligue 1 side Montpellier on Monday announced that their striker Steve Mounie was set to join promoted Premier League team Huddersfield Town. Mounie led Montpellier's league scoring account with 14 goals. He was reported to leave for England with a transfer fee of 13 million euros, setting a club high by bettering previous record of 12 million. Huddersfield have secured a Premier League spot next season through the promotion playoffs, their first appearance in English top-flight league for the past 45 years. **(XINHUA)**

Sherpa set for US experience

■ A file photo of Nepali amateur golfer Pratima Sherpa in Kathmandu. AFP/RSS

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Teen-aged golfer Pratima Sherpa is all set to travel to the United States of America on July 2 with the view to hone her golfing skills and participate at some of the local tournaments.

The 18-year-old golfer will spend five weeks in training and compete in at least three local events during her US stay. Sherpa, one of the leading female golfers of the country, will travel along coach Sachin Bhattarai, informed Nepal Golf Association (NGA) which initiated for the programme. "NGA is proud to promote talented golfers like Sherpa," said Deepak Acharya, the development director of NGA on Tuesday.

Qatar Airways has sponsored the return tickets for Sherpa and Bhattarai. Besides the Airways, various organisations and individuals have also supported in the NGA initiative, informed Acharya. "I hope the training and tournament in US will definitely help me to achieve my dreams of becoming the first professional female golfer of the country," said the 12th Grader, who took up golf at the age of 11 and competed in first ever tournament a year later. "My ambition is to play Ladies Professional Golf Tour (LPGA). The training and tournaments will help me to learn more about golf and play better in future," boasted Sherpa. According to NGA, Sherpa will undergo four-week training at the Golf

golf initiative

Academy of Olivas Links Golf Course, Ventura in California. She will undergo one-week fitness training at the Titliest Performance Institute in California. Titliest is a renowned institute for fitness training which trains golfers according to their physical built-up and abilities.

The fifth handicap amateur golfer will compete in the Titliest Match Play Championship (July 18-21), Founders Cup (July 31) and Taylormade Tour Championship (July 5 and 6) in the US. "I was awaiting such exposure and these tournaments will be crucial in my golfing career," Sherpa added.

Sherpa, who lives at a small hut inside the Royal Nepal Golf Club premises with her parents, is among the bright prospects of Nepali golf. Her family earns bread and butter working as garderners in the golf course. The teenager has won 32 amateur titles in the last six years, including Faldo Series in 2014 and 2016 in Kathmandu, the Qualifiers for Faldo Grand Asia Finale in China. Unfortunately, she was deprived of competing in China because she did not have passport. But she obtained citizenship two weeks ago which eventually paved way for her to get the passport.

NGA General Secretary CB Bhandari said Sherpa was a product of an ambitious Youth Project they started in 2010 and the association was committed in development of budding golfers. Jay Prakash Nair, the country director of Qatar Airways, handed over the return tickets to Sherpa amidst a function at the RNGC on Tuesday.

Unemployment looms for Australia's cricketers: ACA

REUTERS
MELBOURNE, JUNE 27

> Cricket Australia offered a revised deal on Friday but the union quickly rejected it

More than 200 of Australia's top cricketers face unemployment within days, with a bitter pay dispute "extremely" unlikely to be resolved by a deadline on Friday, players' union boss Greg Dyer said.

Australian face being locked out unless a new memorandum of understanding is struck between Cricket Australia (CA) and the Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA), with the current agreement set to expire on June 30. ACA president Dyer said players and Cricket Australia remained "a long way apart" on basic issues and the union was preparing its members for unemployment.

"It is extremely likely that as of July 1 we'll be jumping over the cliff together," Dyer told local media on Tuesday. "The fundamentals of the deal are nowhere near to being resolved. Over 200 of Australia's most senior cricketers are unemployed as of the 1st of July. We will be assisting in whatever way we possibly can in that but they're unemployed."

At the heart of the dispute is a long-standing agreement that gives the players a fixed percentage of the revenue of the game, a deal which CA says prevents them from sufficiently investing in the grassroots. CA offered a revised deal on Friday but the union quickly rejected it. Unless the impasse ends, the upcoming Australia A tour of South Africa, a two-Test series in Bangladesh and a limited-overs tour of India are under threat, with the Ashes also looming at the end of the year.

CA has declined to comment on the negotiations but said in announcing its revised offer last week that it was "100 percent committed" to resolving the MoU by the deadline. Former Australia Test opener Ed Cowan, who is contracted for New South Wales state, said players remained unified and resolute in their demands, and cast doubt on Steve Smith's Test side boarding the plane for Bangladesh for the Test series starting August 27.

"The next line in the sand is probably the tour of Bangladesh, do the players go on that late August? My gut feeling is probably hit and miss for security reasons (and) MoU reasons." The ACA has already made moves to prepare for a lockout, setting up a business to manage and market players' intellectual property.

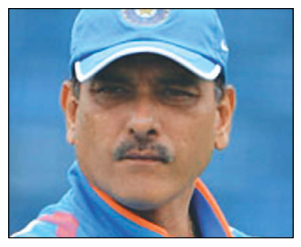
Shastri poised to apply for India job: Reports

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

Ravi Shastri, former Indian captain reportedly has decided to throw his hat into the ring as the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) search for the head coach after Anil Kumble left the job.

Shastri had previously worked as India team director between 2014 and 2016 and guided the team to the semi-finals of the World Cup in 2015 and the ICC World T20 the following year. Considered close to skipper Virat Kohli, the former allrounder was replaced by Kumble, who was handed a one-year tenure till the recently concluded 2017 ICC Champions Trophy.

But soon after taking India to the final of the Champions Trophy in London, Kumble



■ Ravi Shastri

decided against extending his tenure, stating that the "partnership" with Kohli was "untenable". While the rift between Kohli and Kumble was out in the open after the former leg-spinner's post on Twitter about his decision to walk away, the BCCI had dropped enough hints by advertising the post of head coach right before the start of the Champions Trophy.

While the BCCI has the likes of Virender Sehwag, Dodda Ganesh, Richard Pybus, Lalchand Rajput and Tom Moody on its shortlist, the Indian cricket board has extended the deadline to receive applications for the head coach to July 9.

Shastri's return though will not be as easy as it appears, especially after his showdown with former India skipper Sourav Ganguly, one of the members of the BCCI's Cricket Advisory Committee (CAC) last year.

Shastri's candidature was rejected last time, with Ganguly reasoning that the applicant for an important job like the India team coach must be present in person during the interview. Sachin Tendulkar and VVS Laxman are the other members of the Cricket Advisory Committee.

NATIONAL OPEN BADMINTON FROM JULY 28

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Nepal Sports Federation is organising the sixth Pushpa Lal Memorial Open National Badminton Championship from July 28.

The tournament, which was previously played only between the shuttlers with rankings, is held as an open tournament after non-ranking players requested to include them.

The four-day event includes men's and women's singles and doubles, U-17 and U-15 boys' and girls' singles along with veterans (above-45 years) categories. Top three finishers in the men's and women's singles will get Rs 50,000, Rs 25,000 and Rs 10,000. Except for the veterans' top three finishers in rest of the categories will get Rs 10,000, Rs 7,000 and Rs 5,000 respectively.

SHANGHAI WARN FANS OVER OSCAR PROTEST

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SHANGHAI, JUNE 27

Shanghai SIPG told fans to "be free of arrogance and rashness" after angry supporters of the Chinese Super League club lashed out at an eight-game ban slapped on star player Oscar.

The Brazilian international was hit with the ban last week for triggering a brawl in a CSL clash at Guangzhou R&F, while three others were also handed lesser suspensions. Oscar has made no public comment on his lengthy ban, but he was pictured on social media before his suspension wearing a white T-shirt with the words "Nothing To Do, Nothing To Say".

During last weekend's 4-1 home thumping of Henan Jianye, the first game of Oscar's ban, fellow Brazilian Hulk wore a T-shirt with the same phrase and fans displayed a banner saying the same thing. But on Tuesday the Shanghai club, currently second in the CSL under manager Andre Villas-Boas, published an open letter on social media urging fans to move on.

"The club very much thanks all the SIPG fans' love to us and we are deeply moved by the fans' passion," the club said, referring to the large banner echoing the new Oscar catchphrase. "However, we have to say, this type of irrational behaviour will inevitably cause a bad social impact."

Government of Nepal
Ministry of Finance
OFFICE OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE NEPAL (OMCN)
(A Joint Initiative of the Government of Nepal and the Millennium Challenge Corporation, USA)

GENERAL PROCUREMENT NOTICE II

The Government of Nepal (GON) is eligible for grant financing from the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) of the United States Government, and in the event grant funding is awarded, it intends to apply parts of the proceeds of the funds to pay for contracts for Goods, Works and Services.

This is an update of the General Procurement Notice (GPN) published on February 21, 2017.

The procurement program for the next 12 months will include the following:

Procurements for July 2017 to June 2018
Procurement of Consultant Services: technical assistance for road maintenance and for power sector, transmission line and substations consulting, technical assistance for monitoring and evaluation consulting, Procurement Agent; Fiscal Agent; and for the procurement of a Recruitment Firm. In addition, one procurement will be issued in the electricity sector for a firm to conduct a combined preliminary design and environmental and social assessment services contract. It will include preparation of technical specifications that will feed into construction tender documents, full Environment and Social Impact Assessment, and preparation and implementation of resettlement action plan. Individual consultants will be hired for conducting technical evaluations on all of the above contracts.

Contracts for Goods, Works and Services financed under the program will be implemented according to the principles, rules and procedures set out in the MCC Program Procurement Guidelines (PPG) which can be accessed on www.mcc.gov/ppg. The Procurement will be open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the MCC PPG.

Specific procurement notices for above contracts to be tendered under the competitive bidding procedures and for consultant contracts will be announced, as they become available, on United Nations Development Business (UNDB: ***http://www.devbusiness.com/)***, Development Gateway Market (dgMarket: ***http://www.dgmarket.com/)***, in local newspapers, and other media outlets as appropriate.

Interested eligible bidders and consultants may contact the following:

Office of the Millennium Challenge Nepal (OMCN)
ICC Complex, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal

Phone Number: +977-1-4115844/55, E-mail: mcn.procurement@mca-1.org

SPORTS DIGEST

Malinga to face inquiry

MUMBAI: Fast bowler Lasith Malinga will face a disciplinary inquiry by Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) for comments he made to the media in breach of his contract, the board announced on Tuesday. A three-member panel would conduct the inquiry after Malinga twice broke rules by making statements to the media, SLC said in a statement. **(REUTERS)**

Williams hits back at McEnroe

NEW YORK: Serena Williams, a 23-time Grand Slam singles champion, fired back Monday at John McEnroe's remark that she would only rank about 700th on the men's tennis circuit. McEnroe, a seven-time Grand Slam singles winner, called Williams "best female player ever—no question," in comments to National Public Radio on Sunday. But asked why she should not be considered the best of all time, McEnroe added: "If she had to just play the circuit—the men's circuit—that would be an entirely different story." On Monday, Williams responded in two Twitter postings. "Dear John, I adore and respect you but please please keep me out of your statements that are not factually based," she wrote... "Respect me and my privacy as I'm trying to have a baby. Good day sir." **(AFP)**

Ben Haim joins Sparta Prague

PRAGUE: Israeli international striker Tal Ben Haim has signed for four seasons with Sparta Prague from Maccabi Tel Aviv, the Czech club announced on Tuesday. Ben Haim arrives on a deal reported to be worth 3.2 million, making him the most expensive transfer in the history of the Czech league. The 27-year-old has 24 caps for Israel and has scored five international goals, and has played over 300 matches in the Israeli championship, also with Maccabi Petah Tikva and Hapoel Tel Aviv. **(AFP)**

Seire A outfits Fiorentina on sale

FLORENCE: The owners of two-time Serie A champion Fiorentina have announced they are putting the club up for sale due to fan protests. A club statement says the ownership is accepting "serious offers only from those who really mean well for the Viola shirt." Shoe and leather entrepreneurs Diego and Andrea Della Valle have controlled Fiorentina since 2002, having restarted the club after the previous ownership ended in bankruptcy. The Della Valles guided the club up from the fourth division back to the top flight but were never fully embraced by the squad's fans. After four straight years of finishing in the top five of Serie A, an eighth-place result last month was difficult to accept by the supporters. **(AP)**

Chile out to stop in-form Ronaldo

■ Members of the Portugal football team during a training session at the Rubin Kazan training ground in Kazan, Russia, on Tuesday ahead of their Confederations Cup semi-final match against Chile. REUTERS

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
KAZAN, JUNE 27

Copa America champions Chile will try to curb Portugal's superstar Cristiano Ronaldo in Wednesday's Confederations Cup semi-final with the goal-ace in rich form despite the tax storm brewing in Spain.

The 32-year-old converted a penalty in Saturday's 4-0 thrashing of New Zealand to claim his 75th international goal. The Real Madrid forward has now scored 16 times in his last 10 games for club and country. Portugal's captain will face tax evasion charges in a Madrid court next month, but has dazzled on the pitch in Russia, claiming man-of-the-match awards in all three games, netting two goals and providing an assist.

After steering Portugal to the Euro 2016 title in Paris a year ago, Ronaldo will want to claim a second international title in Sunday's Confed Cup final in St Petersburg, against Mexico or Germany who meet in the other semi-final. Ronaldo is closing in on the legendary Ferenc Puskas' European record of 84 international goals, despite the off-field turmoil and speculation about his future, having threatened to quit Real.

"We all know he's an amazing player, he's very dangerous and can decide a game alone," said Chile midfielder Marcelo Diaz, who has often faced Ronaldo with his club Celta Vigo. "He has had an amazing season in Spain, he's playing here with the same strength, which is why Portugal are in the semi-final. The main thing is trying to stop him getting the ball and scoring."

Chile, who won the Copa America in both 2015 and 2016, will present Portugal with their toughest test so far in Russia, yet the South Americans have yet to beat Portugal in three attempts with two defeats and a draw. Fatigue could well be an issue in Portugal's ranks. Head coach Fernando Santos opted to rest none of his forward line and it has been a long season for the likes of Ronaldo, Joao Moutinho, Andre Gomes and Bernardo Silva. Defender Pepe sits out the game after picking up his second yellow card of the tournament in the big win over the Kiwis. Left-back Raphael Guerreiro is struggling with a bruised foot from the win over Russia.

Chile coach Juan Antonio Pizzi has all 23 players fit and midfielder Charles Aranguiz has recovered from a knock in Sunday's 1-1 draw against Australia. Despite doubts about Alexis Sanchez's Arsenal future, the Chile camp says their star striker is in high spirits. They hope his good performances will showcase his skills to potential future employers. With a year left on his Gunners' contract, Sanchez is stalling on signing an extension amid rumours of a switch to Germany giants Bayern Munich.

"He's giving his best here and I think most players would like to be in a similar situation, because the best squads in the world want to have him, even if he is already at a good club," said Pizzi. "He's a responsible person, he knows what he has to do and he's fully focused on Chile."

confederations cup

VAR technology needs improvement, says Fifa

ST PETERSBURG: The video assistant referee (VAR) technology being tested at the Confederations Cup in Russia should be refined, the head of refereeing at world football governing body Fifa said on Monday.

"In general we have really good results but for sure... many aspects should be improved," Massimo Busacca said. VAR involves two video assistant referees who monitor the action on screens and draw the match referee's attention to officiating mistakes. Fifa has already said it would like to use video assistant referees at the 2018 World Cup, and football's law-making body IFAB is expected to decide next March whether to allow them to become part of the game on a permanent basis.

But their use has caused confusion at the Confederations Cup, especially during Sunday's match between Germany and Cameroon when on-field official Wilmar Roldan needed two reviews of an incident to send off the correct Cameroon player. Cameroon coach Hugo Broos complained that he did not understand what was going on. "I have to agree, it was too long... but in the end the right player was sent off," said Busacca. But the main criticisms are the time taken to make decisions and the referees' criteria in deciding when to use the system, with some close calls being made without consulting the VARs.

> VAR involves two video assistant referees who monitor the action on screens and draw the match referee's attention to officiating mistakes

Busacca accepted that reviews could take the gloss off goal celebrations. In 12 group stage matches at the Confederations Cup, video review helped correct six "game-changing decisions," Busacca said. Match officials ruled correctly on another 29 "major incidents" with the help of the technology, he added. "It's important to mention that clear mistakes were not missed," he said.

Busacca noted that if used correctly, the system could reduce many mistakes but not eliminate them completely. Fifa was keen on convincing member federations to use video review. Despite the controversy, Fifa President Gianni Infantino said this month he was extremely happy with its use. **(REUTERS)**

Liverpool unlikely to face FA action over Van Dijk approach

REUTERS
LONDON, JUNE 27

Liverpool are unlikely to face disciplinary proceedings from the Premier League after being accused by Southampton of making an illegal approach to sign their defensive lynchpin Virgil van Dijk.

Liverpool ended their interest in the Dutch centre-back and publicly apologised to Southampton earlier this month after British media reported that the south coast club had complained to the Premier League about their attempt to sign him. Both the Times and the Daily Telegraph reported on Tuesday that the league had conducted a preliminary investigation into the dispute and concluded there was not enough evidence to launch formal disciplinary proceedings.

The Premier League declined to comment on the matter, but a source said that the situation was unlikely to change given that no new information has come to light. Strict rules govern transfers, with clubs able to negotiate terms with players only if they are out of contract or once a fee has been agreed with the seller. The laws also govern indirect approaches via an intermediary.

■ Virgil van Dijk

Southampton have consistently said they do not intend to sell Van Dijk, who joined from Celtic for £13 million ($16.57 million) in September 2015 and signed a new six-year contract in 2016. The south coast club's complaint was made after British media reported that the player had told Liverpool manager Juergen Klopp's side he wanted to join his team.

Liverpool have regularly plundered Southampton over recent seasons with former Saints players Adam Lallana, Dejan Lovren, Sadio Mane and Nathaniel Clyne all currently playing at Anfield. The Merseyside club have already fallen foul of transfer rules this year and were banned in April from signing Academy players from other English clubs for two years after an illegal approach for a 12-year-old attached to Stoke City.

'Woods faces tough road back'

■ Tiger Woods

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
WASHINGTON, JUNE 27

Jack Nicklaus says Tiger Woods will have a very difficult time making a comeback to competitive golf as he deals with physical injury issues and undergoes treatment for managing medications.

Speaking on Monday at a charity tournament in Virginia, the winner of a record 18 major titles was not optimistic in the wake of Woods's arrest last month for driving while impaired and back surgery Woods revealed in April he has undergone. "He'll have a very hard time. I don't know whether Tiger will play much golf anymore," Nicklaus said. "He might come back and play—I think it would be pretty tough for him, after getting (his spine) fused and as many problems as he has had recently. His are more life problems than they are golf problems right now."

Woods will not appear at this week's PGA National tournament in suburban Washington because he continues to undergo treatment for managing medications for back pain and a sleeping disorder, issues Woods revealed last week. Last month, Woods was arrested and charged with impaired driving near his Florida home. A breathalyzer showed no alcohol in his system and he later said he was unaware he would have such a strong reaction to several prescription medications he was taking simultaneously.

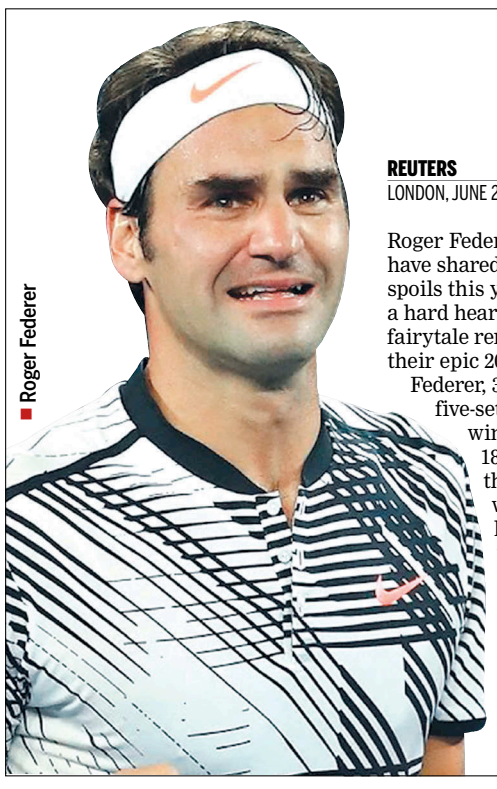
Woods ranks second in major titles with 14 and in PGA career titles with 79, three shy of Sam Snead's record total. But Nicklaus said Woods will not have his legacy defined merely by golf titles. "Whether he plays golf or not, I think he has got an awful lot to offer the youth of the country and the game itself," Nicklaus said.

Woods began his most recent comeback attempt in December in the Bahamas, but missed the cut at Torrey Pines in January and withdrew from an event in Dubai in February. In April, he announced his fourth back surgery and said he would not play again this season. Woods sends at-risk youth to college with money raised through his charity foundation.

"Tiger is a good kid. He cares about people. And we'll just see what happens," Nicklaus told the newspaper. "I hope he gets his life straightened out with the problems he has had and be able to lead a normal life, but also use what he has done and his legacy to help a lot of kids and a lot of other people."

WIMBLEDON

Federer, Nadal primed for dream final repeat



■ Roger Federer

REUTERS
LONDON, JUNE 27

Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal have shared the Grand Slam spoils this year and it would take a hard heart not to hope for a fairytale rematch next month of their epic 2008 Wimbledon final.

Federer, 35, prevailed in their five-set battle in Australia to win a record-extending 18th Slam, but sat out the claycourt season in which Nadal, 31, made his own history by winning a 10th French Open title—'La Decima'—and 15th Slam. In 2008, Nadal was just 22. He survived two rain breaks and an enthralling Federer fightback to end the Swiss's five-year reign as Wimbledon champion to finally triumph 6-4, 6-4, 6-7(5), 6-7(8), 9-7 after defeats in the 2006 and 2007 finals.

The match, at four hours and 48 minutes, is still the longest final in Wimbledon history. It was hailed by pundits, players and fans alike, with seven-time Grand Slam champion John McEnroe describing it as the greatest match he'd ever seen. The Wimbledon seedings, to be confirmed on Wednesday, and Friday's draw will determine whether the titans could meet on Centre Court in the final of the tournament, which runs from July 3 to 16, for the first time since that tussle.

But for those who believe in omens, Nadal, then all pirate swagger with his long shorts, long hair and sleeveless shirts, won the 2008 Wimbledon title after annexing the French Open without dropping a set. "He'll go to Wimbledon with so much confidence. For me, he's favourite with Federer but Federer won't have the confidence of coming in as French Open champion," Mats Wilander, three-times French Open champion, said.

Nadal, the world No 2, pulled out of the traditional grasscourt warm-up tournament, the Aegon Championships at London's Queen's Club, to rest up for his challenge for a third Wimbledon title while preparing in his native Mallorca. He missed Wimbledon last year with a wrist injury and since he lost to Novak Djokovic in the 2011 final, Nadal has had an underwhelming run, with each of his four subsequent visits ending in defeat to a player ranked 100 or lower. Yet Nadal gave notice of his intent after winning in Paris. "I'm motivated. Grass is not my speciality," he said. For his part, Federer, whose 2016 season came to an abrupt end after he lost in the Wimbledon semi-finals to runner-up Milos Raonic, made a sensational start to the year. He prevailed in the 35th chapter of his rivalry with Nadal in January to clinch the Australian Open—his first Grand Slam title since Wimbledon in 2012—before again trumping the Spaniard en route to claiming the Indian Wells and Miami titles.

That run defied logic as Federer had spent the last six months of 2016 on the sidelines recuperating from a knee injury that had required surgery earlier in the season. He then gave the unforgiving Roland Garros courts a miss to focus on Wimbledon and the hardcourt swing. While the grasscourt comeback for the seven-times Wimbledon champion faltered in the first round at Stuttgart, losing to German veteran Tommy Haas, Federer was imperious on Sunday as he won a ninth Halle title without dropping a set all week.

"I was doubting myself a little bit, I must admit, because losing (in the opening) round for the first time in 15 years on grass was always going to shake me a little bit and it did," Federer told.

And if Federer also needs a talisman from the statistics books as he heads to London, how about the fact that in the years that he won his first four finals—2004, 2005 and 2012—he also went on to win Wimbledon? Could the great man now do the same in 2017?

■ Rafael Nadal

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CROSS CURRENCY

	USD	EUR	JPY	GBP	CHF	CAD	AUD	INR	NR
NR	103.4400	116.3700	0.9270	131.9200	107.0200	78.2200	78.7400	1.6015	
INR	64.4800	72.5850	0.5757	82.1930	66.6980	48.6081	49.0620		0.6244
GBP	0.7846	0.8828	0.0070		0.8114	0.5931	0.5978	0.0122	0.0076
JPY	111.6300	125.7400		142.8571	115.5600	84.4400	84.9800	1.7371	1.0787
EUR	0.8883		0.0080	1.1328	0.9185	0.6742	0.6758	0.0138	0.0086
USD		1.1257	0.0090	1.2745	1.0347	0.7560	0.7608	0.0155	0.0097

HOW TO READ THE TABLE
The chart shows the rates of nine world currencies. Move across the table to find rates of exchange between any two currencies. One unit of the currency mentioned horizontally is worth that amount in the currency mentioned vertically.

FOREX

US Dollar	103.44
Euro	116.37
Pound Sterling	131.92
Japanese Yen	0.93
Chinese Yuan	15.18
Qatari Riyal	27.44
Australian Dollar	78.74
Malaysian Ringit	24.12
Saudi Arab Riyal	27.58

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

Italy's move to rescue bank splits Europe **Page II** Italy's multi-billion-euro closure of two lenders drew sharp criticism on Monday for hurting a project devised to underpin confidence in the euro zone during the financial crash.

INSIDE

US to become net exporter of energy soon
With US exports of oil and natural gas surging, President Donald Trump says the US is on the brink of becoming a net exporter of oil, gas and other resources. The White House is launching its "energy week" with a series of events focused on jobs and boosting US global influence. The events follow similar policy-themed weeks on infrastructure and jobs. The previous weeks were largely overshadowed by ongoing probes into whether Russia influenced the 2016 election. **Pg: II**

Bankrupt Takata faces angry shareholders
Takata executives faced angry investors on Tuesday after the company at the centre of the world's biggest auto safety recall filed for bankruptcy and said it was being bought by a US company. The filing all but destroys any value left in the shares of the Japanese airbag maker, which will be yanked from the Tokyo stock exchange next month. **Pg: II**

Indian Railways hikes demurrage on wagons
Indian Railways has hiked demurrage on wagons by up to sixfold, making life hard for Nepali importers, traders said. Railway wagons have to be unloaded within nine hours after arrival, and shipments have to be removed from the warehouse within 12 hours. Demurrage will be charged at the rate of IRs150 per container per hour if the free time is exceeded. **Pg: III**

Google fined $2.7 billion by EU
The EU hit Google with a record 2.4-billion-euro anti-trust fine on Tuesday for favouring its own shopping service, in a fresh assault on a US tech giant that risks the wrath of President Donald Trump. Hard-charging European Commission competition chief Margrethe Vestager said Google had "abused its market dominance" as the world's most popular search engine to give illegal advantage to its Google Shopping service. **Pg: III**

Earthmover sales soar on rising demand
An ongoing construction boom and increased development activities in the country have led to a significant rise in demand for heavy equipment and machinery. Nepal imported 9,751 excavators, dozers, cranes and trucks in the first eight months of the current fiscal year 2016-17, according to the statistics of the Department of Transport. The figure represents a steep jump from the 8,328 units imported during the whole offiscal 2015-16. **Pg: IV**

Corrigendum
The foreign exchange rates that appeared on Money I (Tuesday, June 27) were incorrect. The mistake occurred due to a technical snag. The error is regretted. — **Ed.**

LTO determines Rs60.71b as capital gains tax

SANJEEV GIRI
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

The Large Taxpayers' Office (LTO) on Tuesday concluded that the government needs to recover Rs60.71 billion in capital gains tax from the Ncell buyout deal. Amid pressure from several stakeholders, the tax authority has finally set an amount, giving clarity to the government over the tax issue that had been protracted ever since Swedish company Telia sold stakes in Ncell to Malaysian company Axiata.

Also on Tuesday, the tax authority served a notice on Telia—second time in a month—to clear its tax liability emanating from the profit generated from the sale of Ncell. While the letter dispatched in the first week of June had asked Telia to clear the due tax amount based on its own assessment, the fresh notice has quoted Rs60.71 billion to be settled out of the mega deal.

According to an LTO source, the notice was dispatched to Telia via email on Tuesday evening. A copy of the notice will be formally dispatched through international courier service provider DHL on Wednesday. "Sweden-based Telia, last time, had told us that they would forward our message to Telia Norway. However, we have corresponded Telia Sweden that the parent company is liable to settle the tax issue in Nepal," the source said.

Telia Company is trying to rope in its Norway-based company, as Nepal has signed Avoidance of Double Taxation (DTA). Authorities in Nepal, however, have stated that the capital gains tax is supposed to be paid in Nepal, as profit was gained from sales of the company established in Nepal.

ncell buyout deal

In a record deal struck in April 2015, Malaysia's Axiata bought Reynolds Holding, which held a majority stake in Ncell, from the Swedish-Finnish company Telia at an enterprise value of $1.03 billion (approx Rs103 billion). Reynolds Holding was Telia's wholly-owned subsidiary, registered at Saint Kitts and Nevis—a tax haven. The tax authority has estimated that Telia is liable to pay Rs35.91 billion in capital gains tax in Nepal, referring to the law has made it clear that 25 percent of the profit made from the buyout deal must be deposited in the form of capital gains tax.

Since Telia failed to deposit the tax amount at the time of sales of the asset, the taxman here holds the right to impose a fine equivalent to 50 percent of the tax amount. On top of this, the taxman can also levy 15 percent interest on the due tax amount. Based on this, Telia will have to pay Rs18.06 billion in fine and around Rs6.73 billion in interest.

With Ncell already paying 15 percent of the tax on behalf of Telia, the company may not have to bear entire financial burden. Ncell has so far deposited Rs23.6 billion of which Rs9.97 billion was deposited in May 2016 and the remaining Rs13.6 billion on the first week of June, days after the Commission for Investigation of Abuse of Authority arrested Inland Revenue Department Director General (IRD) Chudamani Sharma on the charge of misappropriating revenues and settling taxes in a questionable manner. Of this amount, Rs2.1 billion covered the fine imposed by the tax office on the company for late payment of tax due.

Now, Telia will have to justify its position to the LTO within 15 days from the day it obtains a copy of the LTO decision. If not, the tax authority will start charging fine on the basis of additional delay. Likewise, Telia holds the right of appealing to the IRD director general for reassessment of tax. The company then can appeal for a revenue tribunal before moving to the Supreme Court for a final verdict. According to a source at the LTO, a Supreme Court decision will be considered to be final as Nepal's tax law remains mum on international arbitration.

Tax authorities have stated that Ncell has a reserve of around Rs57 billion in Nepal as of fiscal year 2015-16, and escrow account worth $160 million (Rs16 billion) has been maintained overseas and that the authority may recover tax if Telia fails to comply with the government directive.

vitamin packed

■ Workers offload papayas imported from Madras, India at Kuleshwor wholesale market in Kathmandu, on Monday. The fruit market in Nepal depends on fruits imported from India. POST PHOTO: KESHAV THAPA

India's GST to make goods expensive in Nepal

KAMAL DEV BHATTARAI
NEW DELHI, JUNE 27

Third-country goods imported by Nepal via India are likely to become expensive following the implementation of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in the southern neighbour from Saturday.

India is all set to roll out GST from July 1. The impact of the indirect tax would be immediately seen in goods that Nepal imports from third countries, as transit service fees will go up once the new tax regime comes to force, according to officials.

As per the bilateral Trade and Transit Treaty, 'traffic in transit shall be exempt from customs duty and from all transit duties or other charges imposed in respect of transit'. However, the treaty also says 'there shall be reasonable charges for transportation and other services rendered for the supervision of such transit'.

As GST is applicable in both goods and services, hike in taxes for railways, roads and waterways services would increase financial burden on traders bringing in third-country goods via India. If the issue is not urgently discussed with the Indian government, it will directly affect Nepali traders, according to officials.

Once the GST is implemented, India will start levying new tax rates on various kinds of services. This happened four months ago, when India imposed 4.5 service tax on goods brought from third countries. Later, India removed it upon Nepal's request as it was against the provision of trade and transit treaty.

Officials at the Nepal Embassy in the Indian capital of New Delhi said these issues have been reported to the Indian side. In response, India has sought a detailed report on GST's impact in Nepal.

"Our main concern is related to transit. We have told the Indian side not to increase railway, roads and waterways service charges on goods bound for Nepal," said Hari Odari, Spokesperson at the Nepali Embassy in Delhi. Nepal, according to Odari, is of the view that GST should not undermine the spirit of the Trade and Transit Treaty.

Along with the transit sector, GST is also likely to affect both imports and exports of goods and services, officials said. However, studies have not been conducted to confirm this.

The Nepali Embassy in India wrote letters to the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry Foreign Affairs over two weeks ago requesting a study into impact of GST in Nepal. However, nothing has been done till date, sources told the Post.

> If the issue is not urgently discussed with the Indian government, it will directly affect Nepali traders

"Concerned agencies are expected to act only after July 1, when GST's impacts will be fully seen," said another official of the Nepali Embassy on condition of anonymity.

Officials say GST could affect Nepal's exports of agro-based and textile products to India. "Once the GST is implemented, food grains and other items will be cheaper in India. This will erode competitiveness of Nepali goods sold in India," said officials.

For example, sugar price will fall in India once GST is implemented. This is the same in the case of tea, onion and other agro products, as essential goods are kept at the lower end of the tax slab of 5 percent.

"However, we cannot resolve these issues through diplomatic channels. We have to align our policies accordingly or provide incentives to deal with these issues," said a senior government official.

NO SUPPLY

Gas stations in Kathmandu run out of fuel

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Most of the private petrol pumps operating in the valley bore a deserted look on Tuesday as most of the gasoline stations were closed, hanging the information board of 'No Petrol'. Although Nepal Oil Corporation (NOC) claimed to be supplying adequate quantity of the petroleum products, motorists are once again struggling to receive fuel.

According to the petroleum dealers, they were compelled to close their outlets as NOC has cut the quantity that it used to supply on normal days. "On the pretext of various reasons, the state-owned enterprise has reduced the supply," said Lilendra Prasad Pradhan, president of Nepal Petroleum Dealers' Association.

On purview of the second phase local election, the government has sealed the Nepal-India borders for three days starting from Monday. The second phase election is being held in three Tarai based provinces. NOC on the other hand claimed that there was no disruption in petroleum supply. NOC's Spokesperson Sitaram Pokharel said the abrupt rise in demand and the public holiday that fell on weekend and Monday had created the problem in managing the supply. As per NOC, people were panicked by a group of petroleum dealers' call for protest that they had planned to launch from July 4. Petroleum dealers from the Kathmandu Valley, Nuwakot, Dhading and Kavrepalanchok on Saturday warned NOC that they would stop purchasing petroleum from NOC products if the enterprise did not address the problem of shrinkage loss on time.

Likewise, the state-owned oil monopoly did not sell fuel on Saturday and Monday due to public holidays. With the short supply, motorists' queue had started to appear in the refilling centres since Sunday.

Pokharel said they had sold 850 kl of petrol alone on Sunday citing the surge in demand. According to him, the enterprise also sold 900 kl of petrol on Tuesday too. "The quantity is almost double compared to the daily demand of 450 kl for petrol in the Kathmandu Valley."

> NOC did not sell fuel on Saturday and Monday due to public holidays

The association's president Pradhan claimed that NOC sold only 750 kl of petrol on Tuesday. According to him, NOC has been selling low quantity of fuel which highlights the cause of disruption in supply due to landslide at Mugling-Narayanghat segment of Tribhuvan Highway. The highway is the main route for supplying fuel in the valley.

NOC, on the other hand, suspected the escalating fuel shortage to a number of petroleum dealers being involved in black-marketing of the products. Netra Kafle, chief of NOC's Thankot Depot, said there was no disruption in fuel supply due to landslide or local election. "The shortage could be the result of consumers' over-stocking the fuel or the petroleum dealers hoarding the products based on the soaring demand," said Kafle adding that they had supplied 2,600 kl of petrol since Friday.

The consumers' right activists suspected the alliance of NOC and the dealers for black-marketing of the fuel. "It is not mere coincidence that there is massive shortage just due to NOC failing to supply fuel on single public holiday," said Jyoti Baniya, president of Consumers' Welfare Protection Forum.

NEWS DIGEST

Myanmar-Thai border trade up

YANGON: The border trade between Myanmar and Thailand increased by over $9 million in two and a half months since April, the start of the 2017-2018 fiscal year, official media reported on Tuesday. As of June 16, the Myanmar-Thai border trade value amounted to over $250 million in the current fiscal year. Myanmar trades most with Thailand through border points of Myawady with border trade value of $161 million, followed by Myeik, Kawthoung and Tachilek, according to the Ministry of Commerce. The country is also conducting border trade with neighboring China through Muse, Lweje, Kanpikete, Chinshwehaw and Kengtung, with Bangladesh through Sittwe and Maungtaw and with India through Tamu and Reed border gates. Myanmar's total border trade with its neighbors as of June 16 this fiscal year valued nearly $1.5 billion with an increase of $50 million year-on-year. **(XINHUA)**

Vietnam FDI up 54.8 percent

HANOI: Vietnam lured $19.22 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the first half of 2017, up 54.8 percent against the same period last year. In June alone, foreign investors have poured over $7 billion into Vietnam, the Foreign Investment Agency under the Vietnamese Ministry of Planning and Investment said on Tuesday. In the six-month period, Vietnam's processing and manufacturing sector received the largest FDI capital, with $9.5 billion, accounting for 49.3 percent of the total capital registered, tailed by electricity production and distribution with $5.25 billion. Japan was the largest foreign investor of Vietnam with $5.08 billion, representing 26.5 percent of total capital registered, followed by South Korea (25.8 percent) and Singapore (18.1 percent). As of June 20, capital disbursement reached $7.72 billion, up 6.5 percent year-on-year, said the agency. **(XINHUA)**

Lithuania to purchase LNG supplies from US

VILNIUS: Lithuanian state-owned gas supply and trading company Lietuvos duju tiekimas announced on Monday it has signed an agreement and purchased a liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargo from the US amid efforts to diversify gas supplies. The terms of the agreement and the size of the LNG cargo with US company Cheniere Marketin International haven't been disclosed. Zygimantas Vaiciunas, Lithuania's energy minister, said the contract is a historic moment amid efforts to diversify energy sources and use LNG supplies for commercial purposes. The LNG cargo is to be delivered to Lithuania's LNG terminal in Klaipeda seaport. **(XINUHA)**

US on brink of becoming net exporter of energy: Trump

ASSOCIATED PRESS
WASHINGTON, JUNE 27

With US exports of oil and natural gas surging, President Donald Trump says the US is on the brink of becoming a net exporter of oil, gas and other resources.

The White House is launching its "energy week" with a series of events focused on jobs and boosting US global influence. The events follow similar policy-themed weeks on infrastructure and jobs.

The previous weeks were largely overshadowed by ongoing probes into whether Trump campaign officials colluded with Russia to influence the 2016 election, as well as scrutiny over Trump's firing of James Comey as FBI director.

Drawing fresh attention now is the Republican bid to scuttle President Barack Obama's health care law despite a rebellion within Senate GOP ranks.

Energy Secretary Rick Perry said Monday the Trump administration is confident officials can "pave the path toward US energy dominance" by exporting oil, gas and coal to markets around the world, and promoting nuclear energy and even renewables such as wind and solar power.

"For years, Washington stood in the way of our energy dominance. That changes now," Perry told reporters at the White House. "We are now looking to help, not hinder, energy producers and job creators."

Donald Trump

US oil and gas production have boomed in recent years, primarily because of improved drilling techniques such as fracking that have opened up production in areas previously out of reach of drillers

The focus on energy began at a meeting between Trump and India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, with US natural gas exports part of the discussion. Trump is expected to talk energy Wednesday with governors and tribal leaders, and he will deliver a speech Thursday at the Energy Department.

Trump has long used "dominance" to describe his approach to energy, and Perry and other administration officials have begun echoing the phrase as a short-hand for policies that "unleash" unfettered energy production on US land and waters.

Similarly, during his administration Obama spoke about an "all of the above" energy policy intended to reassure skeptics that he supported a wide range of US energy production.

Trump signed an executive order in April to expand oil drilling in the Arctic and Atlantic oceans, reversing restrictions imposed by Obama. Trump has also pushed to revive US coal production after years of decline. Coal mining rose by 19 percent in the first five months of the year as the price of natural gas edged up, according to Energy Department data.

US oil and gas production have boomed in recent years, primarily because of improved drilling techniques such as fracking that have opened up production in areas previously out of reach of drillers.

Obama signed a law in December 2015 lifting a decades-old ban on most crude oil exports, resulting in millions of barrels of exports every month to China, Italy, the Netherlands and other countries. The US began exporting liquefied natural gas to India, China, Brazil and other countries in February 2016.

Earlier this month, a US tanker sent liquefied natural gas, or LNG, to Poland, the first delivery of US gas to eastern or northern Europe.

Despite Trump's withdrawal from the global Paris climate accord, Perry said the US remains committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to global warming.

"Instead of preaching about clean energy, this administration will act upon it," Perry said, calling nuclear power a key element to fight climate change.

Perry, a former Texas governor, said he strongly supported wind power in his state, but he hedged when asked whether he supports extension of a production tax credit for wind.

"I don't think the administration is going to be wildly supportive of government subsidies for sectors of the energy industry," he said.

Italy's move to rescue bank splits Europe

REUTERS
FRANKFURT, JUNE 27

Italy's multi-billion-euro closure of two lenders drew sharp criticism on Monday for hurting a project devised to underpin confidence in the euro zone during the financial crash.

As lawmakers digested details of the rescue, which involves the state rather than investors bearing most of the cost, many criticised Rome for breaking with the spirit of a framework known as banking union—and the European Commission in Brussels for allowing it do so.

Under a deal sealed over the weekend, Italy will pay more than 5 billion euros to Intesa Sanpaolo, its top retail bank, to take the best assets of two failed Veneto banks, with up to 12 billion euros of guarantees to shield Intesa from losses.

That broke a principle agreed by European leaders and enshrined in European Union law that investors, rather than the state, should shoulder the cost of bank failures. "It was all for nothing," said Philippe Lamberts, a Belgian Green party member of the European Parliament who spent months negotiating and writing the law introduced last year.

"This is a bad day for Europe. It's another hit to European integration," he said, describing it as a "major blow" to the euro currency itself and damaging for the image of the European Central Bank, which supervises Europe's biggest lenders. Sven Giegold, an EU parliamentarian who also helped write the law, demanded a parliamentary enquiry into the flouting of the rules, attacking the Commission, the EU's executive. It had the final say in approving the scheme.

Investors breathed a sigh of relief following the decision, with shares rallying, while Italy sought to portray the move in a positive light.

It removes one of the chief financial headaches facing the country. One Bank of Italy official even said that the state could eventually make a profit from the deal.

But European lawmakers struck a more sombre tone.

Markus Ferber, a German lawmaker in the European parliament, said Italy had not respected the new rules and predicted that Germany would be reluctant to pursue closer ties in the 19-member euro zone as a result.

Germany, worried that it would have to shoulder the bill for failed banks in countries such as Greece or Spain, had been central in writing the rules to force losses on the bondholders and large depositors of failing banks.

Italy's subsequent move to sidestep the EU regime now raises a question mark over the entire framework and whether it can ever be used instead of taxpayer bailouts.

Bankrupt Takata faces angry shareholders

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO, JUNE 27

Takata executives faced angry investors on Tuesday after the company at the centre of the world's biggest auto safety recall filed for bankruptcy and said it was being bought by a US company.

The filing all but destroys any value left in the shares of the Japanese airbag maker, which will be yanked from the Tokyo stock exchange next month.

Many who attended the shareholders' meeting on Tuesday—Takata's last as a listed company—expressed outrage at how the auto parts giant handled the crisis over a defect in its airbags which has been blamed for at least 16 deaths and scores of injuries.

"Why couldn't they have addressed these issues faster, when the recalls first emerged back in 2008 and 2009?" said one 48-year-old investor outside the meeting, which was closed to media.

On Monday Takata announced it had filed for bankruptcy protection and would be bought by US auto parts maker Key Safety Systems, which is owned by China's Ningbo Joyson Electronic, for $1.58 billion.

The company's board and several other executives were reappointed at Tuesday's meeting ahead of the ownership transfer.

Takata's chief executive Shigehisa Takada, whose grandfather started the company in 1933 as a textile maker, has said he will resign once the transition is completed.

"I want to ask (Takada) how he feels about his responsibility" for the crisis, said 66-year-old investor Minoru Matsuo before going into the meeting.

Millions of airbags produced for some of the world's biggest automakers, including Toyota and General Motors, are being recalled because of the risk that they could improperly inflate and rupture, potentially firing deadly shrapnel at the occupants.

Nearly 100 million cars, including about 70 million in the United States, were subject to the recall. Takata, which is facing lawsuits and huge recall costs, has been accused of hiding the problem with its airbags for years.

"It was my mistake to have invested in this kind of company," said shareholder Hiroshige Kono.

"I worked for a food company and if a problem hits my firm, we would have immediately apologised, recalled our products and taken necessary measures" to prevent a repeat.

"They (Takata) were just trying to get away with it, which made the problem even more serious."

The 75-year-old retiree added that Tuesday's meeting was a vigil and Takata's July 27 delisting "will be the funeral". "I paid a lot of condolence money," Kono said.

Takata's volatile shares went untraded for most of Tuesday's session as sell orders swamped buy orders. They ended the day down 31 percent at 110 yen. The exchange on Wednesday will remove a daily loss limit on the shares, which will likely see them become effectively worthless.

"I put quite a lot of money into this company," said 36-year-old Takata shareholder Kenichi Asahi. "Now the shares are nothing more than trash."

A staff member holds a placard guiding shareholders to the venue of the annual shareholders' meeting of Takata in Tokyo on Tuesday, a day after the company filed for bankruptcy protection. AFP/RSS

self-sufficient

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti takes pictures during a tour of the newly completed 16.4-megawatt AC Westmont Solar Rooftop project in Los Angeles, the most powerful solar rooftop installation in the world, on Tuesday. The 2 million-square-foot rooftop solar array will produce enough clean energy to power 5,000 Los Angeles homes. XINHUA

Newfound confidence in EU: Draghi

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SINTRA, JUNE 27

The European Union is experiencing a newfound confidence that could unlock demand and investment, ECB president Mario Draghi said on Tuesday, while insisting on "prudence" in any monetary adjustments.

Speaking at a central bank forum in the Portuguese resort town of Sintra, Draghi said that for years uncertainty over whether the eurozone would seriously reform labour markets had acted as a brake on investments and confidence. Britain's decision to quit the EU also shook the bloc, which came under assault from anti-European sentiment.

"Today, things have changed. Political winds are becoming tailwinds. There is newfound confidence in the reform process, and newfound support for European cohesion, which could help unleash pent-up demand and investment," he told the annual forum organised by the ECB. Despite the optimism, Draghi cautioned against a change in the eurozone's expansionary monetary policy stance.

While the risk of deflation has disappeared, "inflation dynamics are not yet durable and self-sustaining. So our monetary policy needs to be persistent," he said.

Mario Draghi

SHRINKING ASSETS

The mysterious (and continuing) fall in Saudi foreign reserves

REUTERS
RIYADH, JUNE 27

Net foreign assets at Saudi Arabia's central bank, a measure of its ability to support its currency, look set to fall sharply this year as oil prices slump and Riyadh expands its sovereign wealth fund to invest abroad.

They shrank from a record high of $737 billion in August 2014 to $529 billion at the end of 2016 as the government liquidated some assets to cover the huge budget deficit caused by the fall in oil prices.

This year, an austerity drive and a partial rebound in oil prices have helped Riyadh make progress in cutting the deficit—which narrowed 71 percent from a year ago to 26 billion riyals ($6.9 billion) in the first quarter.

But net foreign assets have continued to shrink at about the same rate, by $36 billion in the first four months of 2017—a mystery to economists and diplomats monitoring Saudi Arabia, and a potential blow to markets' confidence in Riyadh.

"This suggests that there remains a significant deficit in the balance of payments of Saudi Arabia, which is not due to declining oil export revenues," said Khatija Haque, head of regional research at Emirates NBD, Dubai's biggest bank.

Saudi officials have not commented in detail on the reasons for the reserves drop, though some have suggested it is due to private sector activity, not government spending.

Some analysts have speculated the fall is due to spending on

Saudi Arabia's military intervention in Yemen.

This is unlikely; a top Saudi official indicated in late 2015 that the intervention—largely a limited air campaign, not a major ground war—was costing about $7 billion annually, in line with estimates by foreign military experts.

Others speculate capital flight from Saudi Arabia may be sapping the reserves. But data from the central bank—the Saudi Arabian Monetary Authority (SAMA)—on foreign exchange transactions by commercial banks does not support this theory either.

"Capital flight has diminished as an issue. Outflows in 2016 were pretty small beer compared with 2015, when there were significant outflows," said an economist at a Saudi bank.

An international banker in touch with Saudi authorities said much of the decline in foreign assets appeared due to the transfer of money to state funds investing abroad—particularly the main sovereign wealth fund, the Public Investment Fund (PIF).

Riyadh plans to invest big amounts overseas to win access to technology and boost returns on its capital. The PIF has said it will invest up to $45 billion over five years in a technology fund created by Japan's Softbank, and $20 billion in an infrastructure fund planned by US firm Blackstone.

Transfers to the PIF would not represent any reduction in the government's total wealth, but they would mean a cut in the liquid assets which the central bank has available to defend the riyal if needed. The PIF declined to comment.

A fresh slump in oil prices also looks likely to pressure foreign assets. Brent oil averaged $54.57 in the first quarter of this year; it has since plunged to around $46, just $1 above its average price last year.

This, combined with a minor relaxation of austerity in recent weeks to head off a recession, may mean Riyadh's budget deficit for all of 2017 comes close to its original projection of 198 billion riyals ($52.79 billion), or possibly a little higher.

"Going forward, the decline is likely to continue given the projected budget deficit for the whole year, which would probably require withdrawals from foreign reserves to finance it," said Said al-Sheikh, group chief economist at National Commercial Bank, the largest Saudi bank.

Riyadh's heavy foreign borrowing—it issued $9 billion of sukuk abroad in April—gives it financial flexibility but does not increase its net foreign assets, since the debt is recorded as a liability, Sheikh said.

The government has said it plans to resume domestic bond issues later this year after a gap of more than half a year.

NEWS DIGEST

L'Oreal set to sell The Body Shop for $1.1 billion

PARIS: French beauty products giant L'Oreal said on Tuesday it has a signed a contract to sell The Body Shop, which it has owned for over a decade, to Brazil's Natura Cosmeticos for one billion euros ($1.1 billion). L'Oreal said in a statement that it signed the contract after getting the nod of approval from its works council. Nevertheless, "the proposed sale is subject to clearance by anti-trust authorities notably in Brazil and in the United States, and expected to close during 2017," the statement added. The two sides had announced on June 9 that they were entering into exclusive negotiations regarding the sale of British-based The Body Shop, founded in 1976 and specialising in natural beauty products. L'Oreal bought the brand for around 940 million euros in 2006 when it was at the height of its success. **(AFP)**

Chinese state firms' profits grow faster

BEIJING: Profit growth at China's state-owned enterprises (SOE) quickened in the first five months of the year as the national economy continued to improve, official data showed. Combined profits of SOEs totaled 1.04 trillion yuan ($152.14 billion) for January-May, up 25.5 percent year on year, according to figures released Monday by the Ministry of Finance. This compares very favorably with an increase of 24.8 percent registered in the first four months of the year and 1.7 percent for the whole of 2016. Combined revenue rose 17.4 percent from a year earlier to 19.8 trillion yuan, while total assets climbed 11.2 percent to 139 trillion yuan at the end of May. Oil, petrochemicals and transportation enjoyed relatively large profit growth, while the power generation sector suffered significant declines. **(XINHUA)**

General strike at VW Slovakia ends

BRATISLAVA: A six-day general strike at Volkswagen Slovakia (VW SK) has ended Sunday after the trade union and the company management agreed on a deal after negotiations, VW SK spokesperson Lucia Kovarovic Makayova confirmed on Monday. The spokesperson said the agreement features an increase to workers' salaries by 4.7 percent as of this month, by another 4.7 percent as of January 2018 and by another 4.1 percent between November 1, 2018- August 31, 2019. The trade union and the management also agreed that all workers will receive a one-off payment worth 500 euros ($558) this month, a salary compensation worth 40 percent of the average salary for the first three days of work incapacity and higher contributions if participating in a voluntary blood donor programme. **(XINHUA)**

A general view of Sirsiya dry port in Birgunj. POST FILE PHOTO

Indian Railways hikes demurrage on wagons

BHUSHAN YADAV
BIRGUNJ, JUNE 27

Indian Railways has hiked demurrage on wagons by up to sixfold, making life hard for Nepali importers, traders said.

Railway wagons have to be unloaded within nine hours after arrival, and shipments have to be removed from the warehouse within 12 hours. Demurrage will be charged at the rate of IRs150 per container per hour if the free time is exceeded.

Om Prakash Sharma, president of the Birgunj Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the higher demurrage would hit consumers the hardest.

"We have appealed to the concerned authorities, but they are not prepared to listen to us," Sharma said.

Large quantities of imported clinker, gypsum, slag and coal have been piling up at Raxaul railway station across Nepal's southern border. Indian authorities have said that a nominal penalty will be charged for delays of up to two hours.

But railway authorities have been levying demurrage amounting to double the normal rate for delays lasting up to four hours.

If the free time is exceeded by six hours, demurrage is four times the normal rate; and if the delay is longer than that, demurrage is six times the normal rate.

On an average, an importer has to pay an extra charge of IRs900 per wagon per hour.

According to an importer, it takes around a week to remove shipments from the warehouse at Raxaul. "Incessant rain during the last few days has made it difficult to transport goods over the bad road connecting the warehouse," said the importer.

Indian Railways had hiked demurrage during the April 25 earthquake and Indian blockade too when importers had a hard time removing their shipments from the station.

Recently, shipments have been piling up at the railway warehouse as Tarai-based political parties have called a five-day shutdown along the Nepal-India border.

They announced the shutdown to protest against the government's move to hold the second phase of local elections without amending the constitution first as they have been demanding.

As per traders, Indian authorities have raised detention charges in a bid to rush importers.

According to them, 46,000 tonnes of raw materials are piled up at the Raxaul warehouse and other locations on the way to Nepal.

"Due to the pressure at Raxaul, authorities in Hajipur, India have restricted movement of Nepal-bound railway racks," an importer said.

A rack can hold 3,800 tonnes of raw materials. Previously, Nepali importers faced hardships due to the small number of racks provided to them by Indian Railways.

NRB signs pact with Bank of Korea

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

Nepal Rastra Bank (NRB) has joined hands with the Bank of Korea (BoK) to upgrade the economic tools it has been using to forecast the performance of macroeconomic variables.

The two central banks signed an agreement on Tuesday amid a programme in Kathmandu. The BoK will be providing support in association with Yonsei University of Seoul, South Korea.

South Korea has been helping Nepal in various sectors such as the construction of roads and hydropower projects, among others. Jong Suk Won, deputy director general at the BoK, said the collaboration in research would help exchange ideas between the partnering countries. According to him, they have been working for joint research work with four other countries including Vietnam.

According to NRB, the central bank has been using macroeconomic models like Nepal

> The collaboration is expected to help improve NRB's capacity in policy simulation and forecasting system through the customisation of macroeconomic models

The customisation of macroeconomic models is expected to help improve NRB's capacity in policy simulation and forecasting system.

Nar Bahadur Thapa, executive director at NRB's Research Department, said they had gone for bilateral collaboration to modernise the policy making system.

"The collaboration will mainly help in capacity strengthening of the concerned officials, development of models and forecasting system, payment and settlement system and regulation and supervision of the banking sector," said Thapa speaking at the programme.

Following the establishment of diplomatic relations, Macro-Econometric, Dynamic Stochastic and Sectoral Model in forecasting macroeconomic variables. Thapa said the joint effort aimed to prepare a research paper by August this year.

Prakash Shrestha, director of NRB's International Relations Department, said the apex monetary authority had been adopting traditional tools such as the Keynesian Macroeconomic Model and DHT Model, among others, to forecast macroeconomic variables including inflation and economic growth.

"The central bank has targeted modernising the forecasting system by upgrading the current macroeconomic tools," Shrestha said.

'Financial risks under control'

ASSOCIATED PRESS
BEIJING, JUNE 27

China's top economic official tried to quell fears surging debt might threaten growth, saying on Tuesday financial risks are "generally under control" and Beijing can achieve this year's development targets.

Speaking at a meeting of the World Economic Forum in the northeastern city of Dalian, Premier Li Keqiang also gave a ringing endorsement of free trade and said China will stick to its commitments to fight climate change.

Li sought to dispel concern about the rapid rise in Chinese debt since the 2008 crisis, which private sector analysts cite as the biggest potential risk to the world's second-largest economy. The Moody's rating agency cut Beijing's credit rating May 25 and the International Monetary Fund urged Beijing on June 14 to take faster action to get debt under control.

"In the financial sector there are some risks, but we have the ability to uphold the bottom line of no systemic financial risks," said Li to an audience of Chinese and foreign businesspeople.

China has relied on infusions of credit to prop up economic growth since 2008, causing total nongovernment debt to rise from the equivalent of 170 percent of annual economic output in 2007 to an estimated 260 percent last year.

That unusually high level for a developing country has prompted warnings it could cause a financial crisis or drag on economic growth.

Regulators have cited reducing risk in China's financial system as a priority this year. Banks have been told to look closely at borrowers, especially those trying to make acquisitions abroad, to ensure they can manage their debts.

"We have identified the risks in some sectors," the premier said. "The risks are generally under control. We are taking effective measures to address these risks in a timely manner."

Li said China is "fully capable" of hitting its economic development targets.

The IMF is forecasting the Chinese economy will expand by 6.7 percent this year, down from last year's 6.9 percent and less than half of 2007's record 14.2 percent rate.

Li promised to "release greater drivers of dynamism" by opening more of the state-dominated economy to entrepreneurs.

He said Chinese and foreign companies will be treated equally, though he announced no new initiatives and made no mention of foreign complaints that Beijing is reducing access to its markets for computer security technology, farm-related biotech and other fields.

While some indicators "will inevitably fluctuate," sound economic growth "will not change," he said.

Google fined $2.7 billion by EU

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BRUSSELS, JUNE 27

The EU hit Google with a record 2.4-billion-euro antitrust fine on Tuesday for favouring its own shopping service, in a fresh assault on a US tech giant that risks the wrath of President Donald Trump.

Hard-charging European Commission competition chief Margrethe Vestager said Google had "abused its market dominance" as the world's most popular search engine to give illegal advantage to its Google Shopping service.

"What Google has done is illegal under EU antitrust rules. It denied other companies the chance to compete on the merits and to innovate," Denmark's Vestager told a news conference.

"And most importantly, it denied European consumers a genuine choice of services and the full benefits of innovation."

Google now has 90 days to "end this conduct" or face further penalty payments, Vestager said.

The fine broke the previous EU record for a monopoly case against US chipmaker Intel of 1.06 billion euros in 2009.

Google said that it "respectfully" disagreed with the EU decision, which followed a seven-year investigation, and was considering an appeal.

"We respectfully disagree with the conclusions announced today. We will review the Commission's decision in detail as we consider an appeal, and we look forward to continuing to make our case," Kent Walker, the company's senior vice president and general counsel, said in a statement.

wet farming

Farmers harvest the lotus root in a pond at Dongsheng Village of Donglin Township in Huzhou City, east China's Zhejiang Province, on Tuesday. In recent years, the ecological agriculture in the village has shifted the traditional way of farming. Business such as lotus growing has improved the income for local farmers. XINHUA

OIL PRICES UP ON WEAKER DOLLAR, SUPPLY GLUT CAPS GAIN

REUTERS
LONDON, JUNE 27

Oil prices rose for a fourth consecutive session on Tuesday boosted by a weaker dollar and investors covering short positions, but worries over persistent oversupply capped gains.

Brent crude futures, the international benchmark for oil prices, had gained 25 cents to $46.08 per barrel.

US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude futures were up 23 cents at $43.61 per barrel.

The gains mean the market is up slightly so far this week, after spending much of the last month in negative territory. The dollar fell 0.1 percent against a basket of six major currencies, propping up oil, ahead of a speech by US Federal Reserve Chair Janet Yellen.

The Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries and its partners have been trying to reduce a global crude glut with production cuts.

Despite the cuts, which started in January, markets remain well supplied due to rising output elsewhere. Adding to the bearish supply outlook is an apparent glut in US East Coast product supplies.

Meanwhile, US shale oil output has risen about 10 percent since last year to 9.4 million bpd, with the number of US oil rigs in operation at the highest in more than three years.

ENERGY ADAPTATION

Wind power's big bet: Turbines taller than skyscrapers

REUTERS
COPENHAGEN/FRANKFURT, JUNE 27

Wind farm operators are betting on a new generation of colossal turbines, which will dwarf many skyscrapers, as they seek to remain profitable after European countries phase out subsidies that have defined the green industry since the 1990s.

The world's three leading offshore wind operators—DONG Energy, EnBW and Vattenfall—all told Reuters they were looking to these megaturbines to help adapt to the upcoming reality with dwindling government handouts.

According to interviews with turbine makers and engineers, at least one manufacturer—Siemens Gamesa—will have built a prototype megaturbine by next year and the first farms could be up and running in the first half of the next decade.

These massive machines will each stand 300 metres tall—almost as high as London's Shard, western Europe's tallest building—with 200-metre rotor spans that will stretch the length of two football fields.

The wind power sector is at a critical juncture as the subsidies that have cradled it since its inception in the early 1990s, and underpinned its business model, disappear as politicians enact a long-planned push to make the industry more commercially viable and able to compete with other energy sources.

The countries that form the hub of the European offshore wind industry—Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands and Britain—are looking to gradually phase out the handouts over the next decade. This will end a crucial source of revenue for operators; in tenders concluded as recently as 2014, subsidies still accounted for around half of European wind projects' income.

Wind turbines are seen in a wind park off the coast of Netherlands. REUTERS

With the writing on the wall, DONG and EnBW submitted bids with no subsidies factored in at a tender in April for a German project planned for 2024. The auction represented an industry milestone, the first with zero-subsidy bids, but raised the burning question of how operators will be able to make money and survive while offering a commercially attractive alternative to coal and nuclear.

The answer, according to the companies, are the megaturbines, which would sweep a far bigger area and harness more wind, cutting costs per megawatt. They will each generate between 10 and 15 megawatts (MW) of power—a considerable leap from the largest turbines currently in operation, made by MHI Vestas, which are 195 metres tall and generate 8 MW.

The megaturbines are no sure bet for the companies' bottom lines, however.

There are challenges on the technical front to create monumentally tall towers and light, slender blades that can withstand the strain of gale-force winds.

Economically, there are also doubts among some industry experts about whether zero-subsidy wind projects can make money, even with the increased efficiency delivered by megaturbines.

They say deeper savings must be made by operators across their businesses and electricity prices must also rise significantly to bring profitability.

Michael Guldbrandtsen, offshore wind consultant at MAKE, said there were financial and technical risks associated with megaturbines, but that operators had little choice but to invest in a technology needed to make zero-subsidy projects viable.

"Without a significant increase in the size of turbines it would not be possible to ensure a reasonable return," he added.

Operators are nonetheless banking on the new technology.

Michael Simmelsgaard, head of offshore business at Swedish utility Vattenfall, said the industry would cross the 10 MW turbine threshold "faster than many expect now", without being more specific. A 10 W turbine could power about 9,000 homes.

"We will definitely see these big turbines," he added.

DONG Energy's wind business, Samuel Leupold, laid out more ambitious plans: "We believe we can utilise (turbines) in the range of 13 to 15 megawatts," he said on the sidelines of an offshore wind conference in London this month—the first time an industry executive has given such a high figure. Previously, companies have only spoken about turbines in the region of 10W.

SHARES

Nepse 1,565.09 pts -0.17%

HIGHEST LOSERS					
WMBF -9.67%	SKDBL -4.63%	RLFL -4.38%	UFL -3.84%	ARUN -3.5%	JBNL -3.33%
MODERATE LOSERS					
JBBL -3.22%	KADBL -3.19%	HAMRO -3.18%	NCCB -3.18%	SADBL -3%	CBL -2.83%
MODERATE GAINERS					
ALICL 1.43%	SHINE 1.47%	LVF1 1.6%	SHPC 1.73%	NGPL 1.78%	HDL 1.94%
HIGHEST GAINERS					
SINDU 1.95%	EDBL 3.10%	NMFBS 4.94%	LGIL 5.69%	FOWAD 6.02%	RBCLPO 6.08%

Nepal Stock Exchange

Singhadurbar Plaza, Kathmandu
June 27, 2017

TRADING INFORMATION		TRADING PRICE			
SN	COMPANY	MAX	MIN	CLOSING	NO SHARES
1	Agriculture Development Bank Ltd	425	420	422	11352
2	Api Power Company Ltd	558	545	552	1429
3	Arun Finance Ltd	196	193	193	700
4	Arun Kabeli Power Ltd	439	427	429	2938
5	Arun Valley Hydropower Development Co. Ltd	268	262	268	4715
6	Asian Life Insurance Co. Ltd	1489	1460	1487	2186
7	Bank of Kathmandu Ltd	465	453	455	14092
8	Barun Hydropower Co. Ltd	265	260	261	280
9	Bhargav Bikash Bank Ltd	304	303	303	2525
10	Bottlers Nepal (Terai) Ltd	6200	6198	6199	110
11	Butwal Power Company Ltd	633	630	630	2350
12	Central Finance Co. Ltd	175	175	175	276
13	Century Commercial Bank Ltd	371	365	366	6600
14	Chhimek Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	1555	1536	1541	1869
15	Chilime Hydropower Company Ltd	835	810	815	2249
16	Citizen Bank International Ltd	385	380	382	10485
17	Citizen Investment Trust	4110	4035	4070	1981
18	Civil Bank Ltd	247	240	240	19696
19	Civil Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1308	1273	1308	273
20	Deprosc Development Bank Ltd	1310	1280	1285	3145
21	Deva Bikas Bank Ltd	275	270	275	7497
22	Dibyashwori Hydropower Ltd	223	215	215	141
23	Everest Bank Ltd	1426	1400	1400	17064
24	Everest Bank Ltd Con. Pref.	918	883	900	613
25	Excel Development Bank Ltd	630	620	630	1112
26	First Micro Finance Development Bank Ltd	1028	1010	1020	4283
27	Forward Community Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1724	1658	1724	30
28	Garima Bikas Bank Ltd	296	294	296	2972
29	Global IME Bank Ltd	382	377	377	14329
30	Green Development Bank Ltd	640	631	635	340
31	Guheshowori Merchant Bank & Finance Co. Ltd	269	259	260	850
32	Gurans Life Insurance Company Ltd	1055	1022	1025	2897
33	Gurkhas Finance Ltd	192	186	186	1025
34	Hamro Bikas Bank Ltd	246	243	243	350
35	Hamro Bikas Bank Ltd Promoter Share	140	140	140	5700
36	Himalayan Bank Ltd	895	885	886	2930
37	Himalayan Distillery Ltd	788	785	788	250
38	Himalayan General Insurance Co. Ltd	1730	1670	1680	30582
39	ICFC Finance Ltd	282	278	278	4010
40	Jalabidyut Lagani tatha Bikas Co. Ltd	199	195	197	7643
41	Janaki Finance Ltd	261	258	258	99
42	Janata Bank Nepal Ltd	273	261	261	34328
43	Janautthan Samudayic Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	3130	3055	3130	127
44	Jebils Finance Ltd	257	252	257	310
45	Jyoti Bikas Bank Ltd	217	210	210	3803
46	Kabeli Bikas Bank Ltd	545	545	545	200
47	Kailash Bikas Bank Ltd	329	323	325	3020
48	Kalika Microcredit Development Bank Ltd	1700	1700	1700	360
49	Kanchan Development Bank Ltd	315	303	303	960
50	Kankai Bikas Bank Ltd	564	544	554	9289
51	Karnali Development Bank Ltd	306	300	300	436
52	Khanikhola Hydropower Co. Ltd	220	207	208	496
53	Kisan Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2840	2805	2840	100
54	Kumari Bank Ltd	328	320	324	17754
55	Lalitpur Finance Ltd	175	175	175	55
56	Laxmi Bank Ltd	392	389	392	6597
57	Laxmi Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1885	1860	1867	2076
58	Laxmi Value Fund-1	12.70	12.40	12.70	47716
59	Life Insurance Co. Nepal	2020	2011	2020	359
60	Lumbini General Insurance Co. Ltd	1020	948	983	46803
61	Machhapuchhre Bank Ltd	362	353	360	33478
62	Mahila Sahayatra Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1230	1210	1220	459
63	Manjushree Finance Ltd	162	154	154	3325
64	Mero Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2330	2270	2277	1125
65	Mirmire Microfinance Development Bank Ltd	2260	2205	2249	875
66	Miteri Development Bank Ltd	533	524	524	2610
67	Mithila LaghuBitta Bikas Bank Ltd	1308	1300	1300	145
68	Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd	955	935	940	5648
69	Muktinath Bikas Bank Ltd Promoter Share	490	490	490	560
70	Nabil Bank Ltd	1499	1485	1491	3543
71	NABIL Bank Ltd Promotor Share	1105	1087	1089	11480
72	Nabil Equity Fund	9.94	9.80	9.94	19664
73	NagBeli LaghuBitta Bikas Bank Ltd	3250	3235	3235	90
74	National Life Insurance Co. Ltd	2270	2235	2246	1431
75	National Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1294	1294	1294	10
76	Naya Nepal Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	2350	2300	2300	704
77	NB Insurance Co. Ltd	1015	1000	1000	1438
78	Neco Insurance Co. Ltd	1000	970	980	11577
79	Nepal Bangladesh Bank Ltd	400	392	395	12961
80	Nepal Bank Ltd	342	335	339	100117
81	Nepal Credit And Commercial Bank Ltd	372	358	365	30038
82	Nepal Doorsanchar Comapany Ltd	663	650	663	11890
83	Nepal Grameen Bikas Bank Ltd	755	746	750	1610
84	Nepal Insurance Co. Ltd	1465	1440	1449	3959
85	Nepal Investment Bank Ltd	754	735	745	19157
86	Nepal Investment Bank Ltd Promoter Share	639	630	630	16390
87	Nepal Life Insurance Co. Ltd	2075	2040	2075	7437
88	Nepal Life Insurance Co. Ltd Promoter	1390	1390	1390	4000
89	Nepal SBI Bank Ltd	940	927	930	6916
90	Nerude Laghubita Bikas Bank Ltd	1289	1270	1270	1937
91	Ngadi Group Power Ltd	285	277	285	484
92	NIBL Pragati Fund	9.80	9.70	9.70	7575
93	NIBL Samriddhi Fund 1	11.95	11.95	11.95	5000
94	NIC Asia Bank Ltd	444	435	442	11037
95	Nirdhan Utthan Bank Ltd	1975	1960	1975	527
96	NLG Insurance Company Ltd	1460	1452	1455	1479
97	NMB Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2750	2690	2730	1898
98	NMB Bank Ltd	547	540	544	9724
99	NMB Hybrid Fund L-1	9.85	9.73	9.80	7847
100	Oriental Hotels Ltd	672	672	672	10
101	Pokhara Finance Ltd	241	236	240	2800
102	Prabhu Bank Ltd	402	395	400	21352
103	Prabhu Bank Ltd Promoter Share	187	187	187	35084
104	Prabhu Insurance Ltd	1038	1030	1030	808
105	Premier Insurance Co. Ltd	1650	1640	1641	2141
106	Prime Commercial Bank Ltd	409	405	408	11403
107	Prime Life Insurance Company Ltd	2584	2550	2550	3968
108	ProgressiveFinance Ltd	231	231	231	40
109	Prudential Insurance Co. Ltd	1420	1415	1420	530
110	Purnima Bikas Bank Ltd	304	299	299	105
111	Rastriya Beema Company Ltd	13480	13200	13200	80
112	Rastriya Beema Company Ltd Promoter Share	11883	11425	11883	30
113	Reliable Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2730	2690	2705	1693
114	Reliance Finance Ltd	225	214	218	750
115	Ridi Hydropower Development Company Ltd	205	201	202	1069
116	RSDC Laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2990	2900	2900	1136
117	Rural Microfinance Development Centre Ltd	787	780	781	2869
118	Sagarmatha Insurance Co. Ltd	1403	1400	1400	1700
119	Sahayogi Bikas Bank Ltd	360	360	360	239
120	Sana Kisan Bikas Bank Ltd	1550	1522	1530	2910
121	Sanima Bank Ltd	430	424	424	37139
122	Sanima Mai Hydropower Ltd	1173	1150	1170	16915
123	Saptakoshi Development Bank Ltd	365	350	350	13142
124	Shangrila Development Bank Ltd	400	388	388	4702
125	Shikhar Insurance Co. Ltd	1870	1850	1870	2167
126	Shine Resunga Development Bank Ltd	412	406	412	1396
127	Shree Investment Finance Co. Ltd	380	364	374	3614
128	Shrijana Finance (Bittaya Sanstha)	450	450	450	50
129	Siddhartha Bank Ltd	488	479	482	19414
130	Siddhartha Bank Ltd Promoter Share	350	350	350	3566
131	Siddhartha Equity Orineted Scheme	12	11.81	11.81	15400
132	Siddhartha Insurance Ltd	1460	1440	1460	5531
133	Sindhu Bikash Bank Ltd	365	365	365	10
134	Soaltee Hotel Ltd	361	351	357	12754
135	Standard Chartered Bank Ltd	2315	2290	2295	17304
136	Summit Micro Finance Development Bank Ltd	2980	2965	2965	395
137	Sunrise Bank Ltd	380	370	377	28029
138	Surya Life Insurance Co. Ltd Promoter Share	549	549	549	2285
139	Surya Life Insurance Company Ltd	1079	1060	1060	2534
140	Swabalamban Bikas Bank Ltd	1819	1780	1790	1236
141	Swarojgar Laghu Bitta Bikas Bank Ltd	1714	1665	1700	285
142	Synergy Finance Ltd	158	155	158	1300
143	Synergy Power Development Ltd	260	249	255	2025
144	Taragaon Regency Hotel Ltd	260	260	260	310
145	Tinau Development Bank Ltd	310	305	305	150
146	United Finance Ltd	256	250	250	526
147	United Insurance Co. (Nepal) Ltd	1465	1445	1465	3460
148	United Modi Hydropower Ltd	367	360	360	3500
149	Vijaya laghubitta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	1411	1405	1409	551
150	Womi Microfinance Bittiya Sanstha Ltd	2000	1977	1991	183
151	World Merchant Banking & Finance Ltd	155	140	140	9258

Total Amount Rs.	619,134,639
Total Quantity	1,028,750
Total No of Transactions	5,993

INDEX	CURRENT	PTS CHANGE	%CHANGE
NEPSE	1,565.09	2.63	0.17
Sensitive	332.26	0.49	0.15
Float	114.75	0.3	0.26

Sub-Indices	Current	Pts Change	%Change
Banking	1,400.47	3.47	0.25
Hotels	2,214.26	3.4	0.15
Dev Bank	1,922.74	0.59	0.03
HydroPower	1,954.40	9.76	0.5
Finance	744.88	6.78	0.9
Insurance	8,185.71	5.42	0.07

Base: 16/07/2006, (Adjusted on 10/04/2007) = 100

Earthmover sales soar on construction boom

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, JUNE 27

An ongoing construction boom and increased development activities in the country have led to a significant rise in demand for heavy equipment and machinery.

Nepal imported 9,751 excavators, dozers, cranes and trucks in the first eight months of the current fiscal year 2016-17, according to the statistics of the Department of Transport.

The figure represents a steep jump from the 8,328 units imported during the whole of fiscal 2015-16.

According to the Federation of Construction Associations Nepal (FCAN), demand for construction equipment has been growing by 25 percent annually.

Excavators, loaders, bulldozers, dump trucks and cranes are the major construction equipment imported into Nepal.

"All heavy equipment dealers have witnessed good business due to reconstruction works. Excavators, backhoe loaders, dozers, dumpers and cranes are being imported in large numbers," said Ram Sharan Deuja, general secretary of the FCAN. The annual turnover of the construction machinery sector in Nepal comes to Rs25-30 billion.

Dealers said that apart from ongoing projects, planned mega infrastructure projects could push up demand for construction equipment in the coming years.

"We have been selling JCB equipment in good numbers annually. Equipment and machinery sales are up 45 percent compared to last year," said Sanjeeb Deuja, sales manager of Morang Auto Works Enterprises, the authorised dealer of JCB machines in Nepal.

According to him, 1,800 heavy duty machines were sold this fiscal year against 1,000 in the last fiscal year. He said that excavators and backhoe loaders were in great demand. Monthly sales of JCB equipment in Nepal total 300-400 units. The peak earthmover selling season starts in September. Monthly sales drop to 120 units in June when the monsoon starts.

Along with an increase in demand, new heavy equipment brands are also being launched. Komatsu, JCB, Caterpillar Heavy Equipment Liberal, Apollo, Bharat Earth Movers, XCMG and New Holland are the new brands that were introduced in Nepal in the last few years.

Nepal imports heavy equipment from India, China, Korea and other countries. According to the FCAN, the construction industry in Nepal accounts for around 10 percent of the GDP and consumes about 35 percent of the government budget. An estimated 1 million jobs are being generated by the construction industry.

virtual environment

▪ Delegates try the augmented reality device at Dalian International Conference Center in Dalian, northeast China's Liaoning Province, on Tuesday. The Annual Meeting of the New Champions convenes the next generation of fast-growing enterprises shaping the future of business and society, and leaders from major multinationals, government, media, academia and civil society. XINHUA

Waymo teams with Avis to keep self-driving cars going

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
SAN FRANCISCO, JUNE 27

▪ The Waymo self-driving car prototype. PHOTO COURTESY: WAYMO

US car rental giant Avis Budget announced on Monday it will team up with Waymo on the self-driving cars being tested on Arizona roads.

The rental company said it would provide support and maintenance for Waymo, a subsidiary of Google-parent Alphabet, to keep the vehicles clean and mechanically ready to go.

The news came the same day as Bloomberg reported that department of motor vehicle documents showed iPhone-maker Apple is renting a small number of Lexus sport-utility vehicles from US car rental service Hertz to test self-driving software and sensors.

Apple got authorisation from the California DMV earlier this year to test self-driving vehicles.

Hertz declined to comment on the report and Apple did not respond requests for comment.

Major US car manufacturers have driverless car development programmes, as does tech giant Apple.

Many automakers already have cars on the road with advanced driver-assist technology, most notably electric car producer Tesla.

Car rental company lots could serve as staging areas for self-driving cars people could summon as desired, providing the new transit technology an opportunity to spread quickly.

News of the alliance with Waymo caused Avis Budget Group shares to jump 14.15 percent to $27.67 by the close of official trading on the Nasdaq exchange in New York. Financial terms of the multi-year agreement were not disclosed.

Meanwhile, shares of Hertz ended the trading day up 13.52 percent to $10.83.

"With members of the public using our growing fleet of self-driving cars, our vehicles need standard maintenance and cleaning so they're ready for our riders at any time of the day or night," Waymo chief executive John Krafcik said in a joint statement.

"With thousands of locations around the world, Avis Budget Group can help us bring our technology to more people, in more places."

The collaboration will support Waymo's self-driving vehicle fleet and a ride-hailing service being tested in Phoenix, Arizona, according to the companies.

"Not only does this partnership enable us to leverage our current capabilities and assets, but it also allows us to accelerate our knowledge and hands-on experience in an emerging area," said Avis Budget chief executive Larry De Shon.

Waymo recently announced plans to increase the number of self-driving Chrysler Pacifica mini-vans in its fleet to 600, and last month, announced it had reached an agreement with ride-share firm Lyft to explore self-driving car technology together.

That alliance teamed Waymo and Lyft against controversy-dented ridesharing giant Uber, which is racing to develop its own self-driving vehicles, and which is locked in a bitter legal dispute with Waymo.

In February, Waymo filed a lawsuit claiming a former manager took technical data when he left to launch a competing venture that was later acquired by Uber.

On-demand ride services promise to be early adopters of self-driving car technology that would enable vehicles to automatically tend to requests.

Most major automakers and several other technology firms have been stepping up efforts on autonomous driving in recent years, contending these systems will eliminate the vast majority of road accidents. Apple is the latest to have obtained a testing permit in California.

German luxury carmaker Daimler and auto parts supplier Bosch announced plans this month to work together to create completely driverless cars in the next few years.

US-based Tesla also is investing in self-driving car capabilities, as are firms in China and other parts of the world.

MARKET WATCH

RETAIL PRICE

Vegetables	Unit	Price (Rs)
Red Potato	kg	Rs35
White Potato	kg	Rs25
Onion (Indian)	kg	Rs35
Tomato Small	kg	Rs45
Carrot	kg	Rs85
Tomato Big	kg	Rs55
Squash	kg	Rs35
Cabbage	kg	Rs25
Brinjal Long	kg	Rs35
Cow Pea	kg	Rs55
Cauliflower	kg	Rs85
Fruits	**Unit**	**Price (Rs)**
Apple	kg	Rs125
Pomegranate	kg	Rs205
Pineapple	kg	Rs105
Cucumber	kg	Rs75
Papaya	kg	Rs65
Banana	Doz	Rs105
Lime	100Pcs	Rs575

DAILY COMMODITIES

Commodities	Unit	Price (Rs)
Pokhreli Rice	kg	Rs75
Jeera Masino Rice	kg	Rs70
Indian Basmati Rice	kg	Rs100
Mansuli Rice	kg	Rs55
Sona Rice	kg	Rs50
Beaten Rice(Taichin)	kg	Rs130
Beaten Rice	kg	Rs60
Big Mas	kg	Rs260
Small Mas	kg	Rs240
Big Mung	kg	Rs180
Musuro(No. 1)	kg	Rs150
Musuro(No. 2)	kg	Rs130
Rahar	kg	Rs200
Chana(Big)	kg	Rs220
Chana(Small)	kg	Rs180
Chilli Powder	kg	Rs350

GASOLINE WATCH

IndianOil SERVO 4T ENGINE OILS
100% PERFORMANCE. EVERYTIME.

Petrol (Per Litre) Rs 100.00/-
Diesel (Per Litre) Rs 76.00/-
Kerosene (Per Litre) Rs 76.00/-
LPG (Per cylinder) Rs 1375/-
Source: Nepal Oil Corporation

BULLION

PRICE PER TOLA

Fine Gold	Rs 54,100
Silver	Rs 740

SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

INT'L MARKET

Energy	Price (US$)	%Change
Brent Crude Futr (Bbl)	46.31	1.05
Gas Oil Fut (Ice) (Mt)	417.5	1.83
Gasoline Rbob Fut (Gal)	145.32	1.01
Natural Gas Futr (Mmbtu)	3.05	0.66
Agriculture	**Price (US$)**	**%Change**
Cocoa Future (Mt)	1,883.00	2.06
Coffee 'C' Future (Lb)	125.1	0.48
Corn Future (Bu)	368.25	0.27
Cotton No.2 Futr (Lb)	67.66	0.64
Rough Rice (Cbot) (Cwt)	11.54	0.65
Soybean Future (Bu)	920.25	0.71
Soybean Meal Futr (T)	299.8	0.60
Soybean Oil Futr (Lb)	32.24	0.78
Sugar #11 (World) (Lb)	12.93	0.62
Wheat Future(Cbt) (Bu)	467.75	0.48
Industrial Metals	**Price (US$)**	**%Change**
Copper Future (Lb)	264.3	0.17
Precious Metals	**Price (US$)**	**%Change**
Gold 100 Oz Futr (T Oz)	1,251.30	0.39
Silver Future (T Oz)	16.69	0.35