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Children wade across Bagmati River at Naya Basti in Jorpati, Kathmandu, instead of using a bridge 200 metres away, on Tuesday.

POST PHOTO: KABIN ADHIKARI

Social security scheme, after being launched with a pomp, receives lukewarm response

The number of firms registered for the plan so far is negligible, officials say

CHANDAN KUMAR MANDAL
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Employers have shown little interest in joining the Contribution Based Social Security Scheme, which was hailed as a landmark scheme for the welfare of private sector workers when it was launched in November last year.

The launching of the scheme had seen massive promotion from the government, which claimed the scheme as the beginning of a new era in the country.

Rallies led by workers and their unions were taken out in various parts of the country and promotional banners and posters were plastered all across the Capital.

All three parties—workers, government agencies and employers—had celebrated the scheme from one stage.

However, the extravagant celebration has failed to reflect in its implementation on the ground, as employers, who had once praised the scheme as a landmark move in protecting the labour's

rights and safety.

Nearly 2,500 private sector have applied for registration in the last five months under the scheme that was introduced amid much fanfare on November 27 last year.

According to Shyam Raj Adhikari, executive director of the Social Security Fund, the main government authority under the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security for implementing the scheme, the interest shown by the employers has been disappointing.

“The number of employers coming forward to enrol under the scheme is not low—it's negligible,” Adhikari told the Post. “It seems there is a perception among employers that it will add additional financial burden on them.”

According to a preliminary report of the National Economic Census 2018, nearly 900,000 private firms, factories, business establishments and service providers are operating in Nepal.

As per the contribution based scheme,

every month, private sector workers and their employers will be contributing to a common fund—Social Security Fund—which will provide financial support to workers.

An amount equivalent to 31 percent of workers' basic monthly salary—11 percent deducted from workers' monthly salary and 20 percent from employers' chest—will be going to the social security fund.

“Big firms, it seems, are concerned that the scheme would mean extra burden for them, whereas small level companies feel whether they will be able to contribute to the scheme when they have been struggling to abide by the minimum wage,” added Adhikari.

Of the 31 percent, 1 percent will be used for medical treatment, health protection and maternity scheme; 1.40 percent for accidents and disability plan; 0.27 percent for dependent family plan; and 28.33 percent for pension or old-age security scheme.

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Opposition lawmakers, rights body officials object to bill to amend Human Rights Act

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Legal experts doubt success of Ncell and Axiata's international arbitration move

They say Nepal-UK investment treaty does not allow international arbitration on taxation

PRITHVI MAN SHRESTHA
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Although Ncell and its parent company, Axiata, have sought international arbitration over the capital gains tax determined by the Nepal government citing Bilateral Investment Treaty between Nepal and the United Kingdom, legal experts doubt success of the mobile company's move, saying that the treaty does not allow international arbitration on the issue of taxation.

On April 26, the Malaysia-based Axiata, the parent company of Ncell, made an announcement in the name of its shareholders that Axiata Investments (UK) Limited and Ncell Private Limited have filed a Request for Arbitration with the International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID) pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of Nepal for the

Promotion and Protection of Investments.

The Bilateral Investment Treaty between Nepal and the United Kingdom has made the provision of referring the dispute over investment to the ICSID, a body under the World Bank Group founded in 1966 based on a multilateral treaty formulated by the executive directors of the World Bank to further its objective of promoting international investment.

The ICSID Convention came into force for Nepal on February 6, 1969.

But, Gandhi Pandit, a senior advocate who has expertise on corporate and commercial laws, told the Post that Article 7 of the treaty gives exception to the issue of taxation and customs from coming under the jurisdiction of this treaty, letting the domestic laws prevail.

“The treaty allows UK companies to seek international arbitration only when Nepal fails to promote and protect UK investment, does not give national treatment and does

not provide equal compensation in the case of damages in the incident of war and armed conflict,” he said. “And if the government seizes the property without proper compensation as per the treaty.”

He questioned the motive of Ncell and Axiata for seeking international arbitration only after the court verdict in Nepal went against them.

“It sought international arbitration only after losing the legal battle in Nepal,” Gandhi told the Post. “If they had the opinion that the issue of taxation should be dealt with as per the Bilateral Investment Agreement, they should have gone to ICSID before the court.”

As per the announcement of Axiata, its subsidiaries Axiata UK and Ncell made the request to ICSID, claiming that Nepal's conduct with regards to the capital gains tax imposed on Axiata and Ncell contravenes international law obligations under the investment treaty between the two countries.

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गणतन्त्र स्मारकमा राखिने सन्दर्भ सामाग्रीसम्बन्धी जरूरी सूचना

नेपालको राज्य व्यवस्थाको इतिहासमा विभिन्न कालखण्डमा अनेक उथलपुथल, आन्दोलन र परिवर्तनहरू भए । अन्ततः २०६५ जेठ १५ गते संविधानसभाले राजतन्त्रलाई समाप्त गरी गणतन्त्रको घोषणा गर्‍यो । तत्पश्चात् डा. रामवरण यादव नेपालको पहिलो राष्ट्रपति चुनिइसँजै वैधानिक एवं कार्यगत रूपले नेपालमा गणतन्त्रको स्थापना भयो ।

तर यो गणतन्त्र सजिलोसँग त्यसै प्राप्त भएको होइन । देशमा गणतन्त्र ल्याउनमा समय समयमा जनसंघर्ष, जनआन्दोलन र जनक्रान्तिमा सहभागी भएर कतिले अकालमै प्राण त्याग गरे, कतिले कालकोठरीमा कष्टमय जीवन बिताए, कतिले सर्वस्व गुमाए, कतिले अङ्गभङ्ग भएर बसे तथा कति त अतोपत्तो नै थाहा नपाउने गरी बेपत्ता भए तथा हराए पनि ।

आज यिनै राष्ट्रसेवक वीर सपुतहरूको सम्मननामा संघीय लोकतान्त्रिक गणतन्त्र नेपाल सरकारले नारायणहिटी दरबारको पूर्वी खण्डको परिसरमा हिमाल, पहाड र मधेश तराई समेट्ने गरी विशाल नेपालको एकस्तरीय उठेको नक्शा (Relief Map) तयार गराई जमिनमुनि भूईतल्ला (Basement) का माथिल्ला र तल्ला प्रदर्शनी स्थलका उजालेरीहरूमा नेपालका क्रान्तिकारी जनसंघर्ष र आन्दोलनको थालनीदेखि गणतन्त्रको स्थापनाकालसम्मको गौरवमय इतिहास संरक्षण र प्रदर्शन गर्न क्रान्तिसँग सम्बन्धित विविध सन्दर्भ सामाग्रीहरू राखि गणतन्त्र स्मारक संचालन हुदैछ । गणतन्त्र स्मारकमा राखिने विभिन्न सामाग्रीहरूमध्ये गणतन्त्र स्थापनासँग सम्बन्धित जनआन्दोलन लगायतका घटना, परिघटना, समेटिएका फोटोग्राफहरू र Art एवं चित्र (Painting) र मूर्तिहरूको तथा महत्वपूर्ण ऐतिहासिक दस्तावेजहरूको संकलन एवं प्रदर्शनीको जिम्मेवारी नेपाल सरकार, मन्त्रिपरिषद्को मिति २०७५/१२/२५ को निर्णयानुसार नेपाल कला परिषदलाई प्राप्त भएको छ । सोको लागि नेपाल सरकार, शहरी विकास मन्त्रालय, शहरी विकास तथा भवन निर्माण विभाग र नेपाल कला परिषद् बीच समझदारी पत्रमा हस्ताक्षर भई कार्य शुरु भएको छ ।

राष्ट्रिय महत्वको यस पूण्य कार्यमा सहयोग र योगदान दिनुहुन इच्छुक सबै फोटोग्राफर, मूर्तिकार, चित्रकार, संकलक महानुभावहरू तथा सम्बन्धित संघ संस्था, प्रेस र प्रतिष्ठानहरूले गणतन्त्र स्मारक संग्राहलयमा संरक्षण र प्रदर्शन गर्न उपयुक्त सामाग्रीहरू (फोटो, चित्र, मूर्ति, पोशाक, किताब, कागजात आदि) प्रदान गर्न सक्नु हुन्छ । पठाइने सामाग्रीहरूको संक्षिप्त विवरणसहित दाताहरू (Donors) को नाम र ठेगाना उल्लेख गरी २०७६ बैशाख ३० गते भित्र तलको ठेगानामा पुग्ने गरी पठाउनु हुन सादर अनुरोध गरिन्छ । स्वीकृत सामाग्रीहरूका लागि सम्मान, पुरस्कार र स-धन्यवाद प्रमाणपत्र प्रदान गर्ने व्यवस्था पनि छ । प्रदर्शित हुने सामाग्रीहरू स्थायी रूपले संग्राहलयमा रहने छन् ।

विशेष जानकारी र सम्पर्कका लागि तथा सामाग्रीहरू पठाउन हुनका लागि

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Indian Army gets ridiculed on social media after claiming it discovered Yeti

In a tweet on Monday, the Indian Army claimed to have found tracks of the Yeti, sending social media into a frenzy of sarcastic hilarity



The Indian Army said it has found footprints of the Yeti.

ARPAN SHRESTHA
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

The Indian Army has finally found footprints of the mythical Yeti, according to a tweet by the Additional Directorate General of Public Information for the Indian Army.

In the tweet, accompanied by a photo of the expedition team and three photos of what appear to be footprints in the snow, the Indian Army on Monday night said it had “sited [sic] Mysterious Footprints of

mythical beast ‘Yeti’ measuring 32X15 inches close to Makalu Base Camp on 09 April 2019”.

The “elusive snowman had only been sighted at Makalu-Barun National Park in the past”, the tweet continued, sending social media into a frenzy of skeptical hilarity.

“This is a late April Fool’s Day joke, right?” tweeted one Shantanu Chikara while another made references to the Night King, a mysterious snow-dwelling being from the HBO show, Game of

Thrones. Yet others drew attention to the fact that the photos appeared to only show footprints from one leg: “Mystery solved... Yeti is using a pogo stick,” said one tweet.

Much of the ridicule was directed towards the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party, with India in the midst of its mammoth election exercise.

“BJP must be working out how to fit this into the rest of the campaign,” tweeted former Jammu and Kashmir chief minister Omar Abdullah.

India’s Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav too took a jibe at the BJP, tweeting: “It seems that ‘Acche Din’ are more elusive than the #Yeti”.

Three more photos—in which expedition members are seen measuring the distance between the footprints using a trekking pole, and using a map to show where the military expedition team discovered the mysterious footprints in the snow—have also surfaced since #Yeti began to trend on Twitter on Tuesday morning.

Mount Makalu, at 8,485m, is the fifth highest mountain in the world and is located on the Nepal-China border, 19km southeast of Mount Everest. The Indian Army claims that the footprints were discovered at Langmale Kharka en route to Makalu. Langmale Kharka lies somewhere between Yangle Kharka (3,600m) and Makalu Base Camp (5,000m).

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Arrest warrants issued against nine people for abetting Indian national’s bid to acquire Nepali citizenship

Ward chairman and ward secretary among those implicated

ARJUN RAJBANSHI
BIRTAMOD (JHAPA), APRIL 30

District Police Office (DPO) in Jhapa has issued arrest warrants against nine persons, including two elected people’s representatives, for their alleged involvement in recommending an Indian national to acquire Nepali citizenship by descent. Police had arrested the Indian national and a Nepali man who posed as his father.

Deputy Superintendent of Police Mahendra Kumar Shrestha said that the warrants were issued against Ward Chairman of Kachankabal Rural Municipality-2 Mekha Bahadur Bhattarai, Secretary Hari Prasad Gautam, ward member Dhan Bahadur Gurung, another employee Khagendra Khatiwada and five others for abetting the Indian national to acquire Nepali citizenship.

Police detained Bhupal Gurung, 36, of Indian state of Assam and Bam Bahadur Gurung, 55, of Kachankabal-2 from the District Administration Office (DAO) on April 23. The DPO claimed that Bhupal attempted to acquire Nepali citizenship, with Bam Bahadur posing as



A crowd gathers outside the District Administration Office in Rupandehi to obtain citizenship on the basis of descent. A recent Supreme Court decision has paved the way for the children of parents who became Nepali citizens by virtue of birth to acquire citizenship by descent.

his father and the people’s representatives grilled him and he confessed to being an Indian national during interrogation.

The security personnel also recovered his Indian voter identity card while frisking his body. Chandra Bahadur Gurung is mentioned as Bhupal’s father in the seized voter identity card. “A detailed investigation is under way

mark on his finger,” DSP Shrestha said.

The Jhapa District Court permitted police to issue arrest warrants against the elected representatives for providing necessary documents to acquire the citizenship certificate. The arrest warrants were also issued against Kabita Gurung, Ganga Prasad Bhattarai, Prem Prasad Timilsina,

Shiva Kumar Dahal and Tulsiram Gurung who testified that Bhupal was the son of Bam Bahadur.

Ward Secretary Gautam had signed the document that states Bhupal as Bam Bahadur’s son, while Ward Chairman Bhattarai signed on Bhupal’s birth registration form and recommendation letter for obtaining the citizenship.

The Indian national almost obtained Nepali citizenship due to sheer negligence of people’s representatives, Chief District Officer Janak Raj Dahal said.

“Legal action will be taken as per the Citizenship Act against the people’s representatives, employees and the local people for forging documents to obtain citizenship.”

Ministry demands Rs600m to continue safe motherhood drive

Lack of fund could jeopardise the positive strides made in reducing maternal mortality rate, officials say

ARJUN POUDEL
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

The Ministry of Health and Population has demanded Rs600 million to continue the Safe Motherhood Programme for the ongoing fiscal year.

The ministry’s move comes after health facilities throughout the country stopped providing cash incentives to new mothers for receiving antenatal check-up and institutional delivery services some months ago.

“We have allocated additional Rs180 million to health facilities and demanded an additional Rs600 million from the Finance Ministry,” Dr Punya Poudel, a focal person for the Safe Motherhood Programme at the Family Welfare Program under the Department of Health services, told the Post. “Thousands of women and their newborn babies will be at risk if we fail to continue the programme,” he added.

The government’s Safe Motherhood Programme—under which mothers and babies are provided with free medical treatments, transportation allowance and cash incentives for antenatal checkups—has been instrumental in bringing women to health centres and hospitals.

But the lack of funds is putting the lives of thousands of women and their newborns

at risk. According to Poudel her office has to send money to all government and private health facilities and medical colleges which runs the programme.

“Apart from providing incentives to new mothers, we also have pay health facilities to ensure they are able to provide the services free of cost,” said Poudel.

The government had announced doubling cash incentives to women seeking institutional delivery services in the budget speech but did not release the money accordingly.

Health facilities, however, provided cash incentives as per the budget speech and ran out of cash within a few months.

The division said that for every 100,000 live births in Nepal, 229 women die during or after childbirth. There has been no reduction in maternal mortality rate despite the availability of free services and allowances.

The division’s data also show that only 57 percent of pregnant women in the country seek institutional delivery, and officials fear that the lack of funds, if not resolved at the earliest, could jeopardise all the positive strides the country has made in terms of international commitments to reduce and limit the maternal mortality rate.

Indian Army gets ridiculed on social ...



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“The footprints were spotted by porters and our guide while we were trekking towards lower base camp [4,600m],” a military source closely following the expedition told the Post. “What look like footprints have been spotted here in the past, according to locals, but there is no credibility to the new claim.”

Sightings and footprints believed to be of the mythical Yeti have been reported for centuries in Nepal. And this is not the first time expeditions have claimed to find Yeti footprints, even famous mountaineers like Sir Edmund Hillary and natural historian Sir David Attenborough had once set their sights on finding the Yeti.

The elusive ape-like creature had also captured the imagination of Belgian cartoonist Georges Remi alias Hergé who created ‘The Adventures of Tintin’. The twentieth volume in the series, ‘Tintin in Tibet’, shows a trail of large footprints on its cover, while the plot follows a Chinese boy who gets lost in the Himalayas and is rescued by the Yeti. The young reporter Tintin, accom-

panied by his friend Captain Haddock and his dog Snowy, go looking for their lost friend.

The scientific community regards the Yeti as a myth, since no credible evidence has been discovered to prove its existence. Samples purporting to be the Yeti’s remains—including one scalp that is on display at a monastery in Khumjung in the Everest region—have been concluded to be parts from Asian black bears, Himalayan brown bears or Tibetan brown bears, and even a dog by a DNA study.

The Yeti has long been part of Nepali folklore, with legends from a number of Himalayan communities claiming the existence of a wild man in the mountains, or a hybrid man-bear creature. The ‘abominable snowman’ is believed to live at high altitudes in the Himalayas and stories have long been passed down from generation to generation.

The creature, however, has remained elusive, appearing only as enlarged footprints or dubious remains. In the tongue of the Sherpa community, it even has a name—S(c)hokpa.

Measles outbreak in Morang, Dang and Kapilvastu raises concern

Over 13,000 children—aged nine months to 15 years—in disease-hit areas are being immunised

ARJUN POUDEL
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Two weeks ago, the World Health Organisation published an alarming report—that measles cases across the world rose 300 percent in the first three months of 2019 compared to the same period last year.

“While this data is provisional and not yet complete, it indicates a clear trend,” said the United Nations health agency. Nepal has made significant strides in vaccination but measles outbreaks in some districts have become a cause for concern.

Measles is a contagious disease which can be entirely prevented with a two-dose vaccine. Multiple officials the Post spoke to said measles outbreaks were reported in Morang, Dang and Kapilvastu districts in April alone.

Sunita Kunwar, an immunisation supervisor in Dang, told the Post over the phone that measles virus has been seen in several children of Ward 4 of Rajpur Rural Municipality in the district.

“We started an immunisation campaign on Monday. It will continue until all the children in the area and nearby

villages in wards 3 and 5 are vaccinated,” said Kunwar.

Gyan Bahadur BC, chief of the Provincial Health Office in Morang, said the disease was seen in Barangha village of Ward 7 of Sunbasti Municipality. He said 11 measles cases were confirmed in laboratory tests within a month, which was sufficient to declare an outbreak.

Health workers declare an outbreak of disease if the number of infections exceeds five in an area.

Phanindra Nath Tiwari, an immunisation supervisor in Kapilvastu, also confirmed measles outbreak in wards 3, 5, 7, 8 and 9 of Krishnanagar Municipality of the district. According to him, 18 measles cases were confirmed.

Measles was endemic in Nepal and an average 90,000 cases were recorded every year from 1994 to 2004. Routine measles vaccination began in the country in 1979 with three districts. The campaign was expanded nationwide after 10 years. The government provides two doses of measles vaccines to children—at nine months and 15 months—free of cost from health facilities across the country.

Nepal had committed to

eliminating measles infection within 2019, but going by the frequent occurrence of cases, officials say the country may miss the deadline.

To declare measles eliminated, the number of its cases should be less than five in every 1,000,000 population or no cases throughout the year.

Measles is transmitted through droplets from nose, mouth or throat of infected persons. Early symptoms, which usually appear 10-12 days after infection, include high fever, a runny nose, bloodshot eyes and white tiny spots inside the mouth.

Several days later, a rash develops in the face, upper neck and other parts of the body. Asked about the outbreak in some districts, Dr Jhalak Sharma, chief of the Child Health and Immunisation Section of the Family Welfare Division under the Department of Health Services, said, “All children aged nine months to 15 years of the disease-hit areas will be immunised with an extra shot of measles vaccine.” “Over 13,000 children in the disease-hit areas will get an additional dose of vaccine during the special campaign,” said Sharma.

Legal experts doubt success of Ncell and Axiata’s international ...

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“The claims relate to Nepal’s conduct in imposing capital gains tax in connection with Axiata UK’s acquisition of 100 percent of the shares of Reynolds Holdings Limited, which owns 80 percent shares of Ncell,” the announcement reads. The company said the Nepal government was also notified about the request.

This is a parallel move made by these companies after they lodged a petition at Nepal’s Supreme Court on April 22, arguing that the Large Taxpayers Office wrongly determined their tax liability at Rs39.06 billion in the name of these companies.

They had, in their petition, also said that their tax liability stood only at Rs14 billion, as they had already paid Rs23.56 billion in 2016 and 2017 the total capital gains tax.

The court has already ordered Nepal’s authorities not to ask Ncell and Axiata to pay the tax for the time being.

After TeliaSonera, which earlier owned Ncell, exited Nepal by selling the telecom company to Axiata on April 11, 2016, as per the acquisition deal—the biggest in Nepal’s corporate sector—signed in December 2015, the capital gains was determined at Rs143.6 billion. And the capi-

tal gains tax was to be determined accordingly.

Ncell officials did not respond to the Post’s repeated phone calls and text messages.

But a senior government official, who said he had read the notification sent by Ncell regarding the arbitration, told the Post the two companies have claimed they were not treated fairly in Nepal as Axiata was asked to pay capital gains tax despite it being the buyer in the Ncell buyout deal.

“Terming it against the spirit of the Bilateral Investment Treaty, the ICSID has been urged to arbitrate on the issue,” the official said.

The Supreme Court on February 6 ordered Ncell and its parent company—Axiata to pay the capital gains tax, ending a long-drawn debate over whether the buyer should pay the tax when the seller does not clear its tax liability.

In its full verdict on April 9, the top court ordered the tax authority to determine the capital gains tax to be paid by Ncell and Axiata within three months and bar them from repatriating dividend and selling the shares of Ncell.

Semanta Dahal, a corporate lawyer, also doubted if the issue of taxation on Ncell and Axiata would come under the jurisdiction of ICSID.

“As Axiata is basically a Malaysian company and the

investment came directly from Raynold Holdings registered in Saint Kitts and Nevis, a tax haven in the Caribbean with which Nepal has not signed bilateral investment treaties, Nepal can raise a question about the jurisdiction of ICSID regarding this case,” Dahal, who holds an expertise in foreign investment laws, told the Post.

“GON [government of Nepal] can raise preliminary objection under Art. 41 of ICSID immediately,” Dahal wrote on Twitter.

Article 41 of the convention states that any objection by a party to the dispute that dispute is not within the jurisdiction of the Centre, or for other reasons is not within the competence of the Tribunal, shall be considered by the Tribunal which shall determine whether to deal with it as a preliminary question or to join it to the merits of the dispute. Officials said that it is the first case Nepal faced in the ICSID.

Tax authorities told the Post that Ncell and Axiata’s notification had not reached them.

“We have not received any formal notice,” said Dhaniram Sharma, chief of the Large Taxpayers Office. “I am not sure whether Nepal-UK bilateral investment treaty is attracted on tax issues.”

Social security scheme, after being launched ...

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Labour right organisations have also said employers have been reluctant to register under the scheme.

“We have been working to effectively implement the minimum wage and the social security scheme which is ‘win-win’ for all the three parties—government, workers and employers,” said Binod Shrestha, president of the General Federation of Nepalese Trade Unions.

“However, employers have shown little interest in implementing the scheme at their workplace. We will launch a whole campaign for its implementation,” he said.

The May Day slogan of labour

rights organisations has also prioritised the enforcement of the scheme.

According to Adhikari, big companies and multinational companies have already registered under the scheme and response has been lukewarm from financial institutions, schools and colleges and tea estate companies, among others.

Private schools have already said the scheme was not feasible for small and mid level schools. A total of 4,000 workers from those firms, having completed registration procedures, have already enrolled under the scheme.

After making their regular contributions, workers will be entitled to

old-age pension, medical treatment, health protection, maternity coverage, accidents, and disability compensation.

Employers, however, attribute the ‘state of confusion’ for the slow registration.

According to Bharat Raj Acharya, vice chairman of the Employer’s Council of the Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI), workers and employers have been seeking some clarity before becoming part of the scheme.

“Workers are rather concerned and hesitant as the scheme is a long-term investment,” Acharya told the Post. “These workers are

concerned how they will sustain when they need money in the meantime. The current model needs a revision so that it either pays interest on their deposits or they can withdraw money when required like the Provident Fund.”

Acharya said an FNCCI task force has already submitted its recommendations so that the scheme can be successfully implemented. They have also expressed their reservations about provisions that make it mandatory for the employers to register their workers, including foreigners, under the scheme.

“Employers hire foreign workers for a short period of time whereas

enrolling with the scheme is long-term investment, adding extra burden on them,” added Acharya.

As per the Social Security Scheme’s operational directives, retirement pension will be provided to workers over 60 years of age who have contributed to the fund for 15 years.

“The Labour Act says an employee will be entitled to pension after 58 years whereas this scheme says over 60. Both should be uniform,” said Acharya.

The nationwide deadline for registration under the scheme expired on April 28, but the government has extended it till July 16—the end of this fiscal year.

Bill to amend Human Rights Commission Act raises fierce debate

The powers of national rights watchdog are being curtailed, say opposition MPs

BINOD GHIMIRE
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

A meeting of the parliamentary Committee on Law, Justice and Human Rights on Tuesday saw a heated exchange of words between opposition lawmakers and Minister for Law and Justice Bhanu Bhakta Dhakal over the bill to amend the National Human Rights Commission Act-2012.

While the opposition lawmakers, along with officials from the commission, demanded revision of the bill, arguing that it curtailed the authority of the national human rights watchdog, Dhakal refused to budge.

The amendment bill, which is being discussed in the House committee, has proposed making it mandatory for the commission to recommend the cases it has investigated to the attorney general with an authority for him/her whether or not to proceed the case. It also authorises the attorney general to request the commission for further investigation if s/he finds the case incomplete. The Act authorises the commission to write directly to the respective person or agency to execute its recommendations based on an investigation.

Commenting on the bill, Nepali Congress Chief Whip Bal Krishna Khand said no attempts to undermine the authority of the constitutional commission are acceptable. “We will make every effort possible to ensure the independence of the commission,” he said, adding that allowing the attorney general to decide on the recommendation of the



constitutional body is against the spirit of the statute. Other opposition leaders said the government must withdraw the bill and revise it incorporating provisions to empower it, rather than undermining its authority.

Anup Raj Sharma, chairperson of the commission, asked the government to respect the Paris Principle, which envisions that human rights institutions should have autonomy. He also said it was unfortunate that the government has come up with the bill aimed at curtailing the authority of the commission while Nepal holds an elected membership of the Human Rights Council. “We urge the government to reconsider it,” he said.

Dhakal however, said the bill was formulated keeping in mind the spirit of the statute. Therefore, there was no point withdrawing it from the House. The bill was registered at the federal parliament two weeks ago after approval from the Cabinet.

“The government won’t

revise the bill,” he said. Hinting at the reservation over the bill from different quarters, he further said that the laws are not made from Maitighar. “Let Parliament discuss and finalise it,” he added. The ruling alliance holds a two-thirds majority in the federal parliament. This means any of its bills can easily get through if the government remains adamant. Dhakal said that the government needs to be appreciated for initiating the process to amend the Act as per the constitution, a task that should have been done three years ago.

Min Bishwokarma, a Congress lawmaker, said he was saddened to see the way Dhakal defended the bill. “We must not forget that the human rights commission has an important place in democracy and it needs to be fully autonomous,” he said. Bishwokarma said that the government was taking one step after another to weaken the institutions of the country. The bill was a continuation of

it. This is not the first time the KP Sharma Oli-led government has attempted to attack the autonomy of the commission. During his first stint as the prime minister, Oli had summoned the commission’s team to his office and censured them for their statement during the Universal Periodic Review in Geneva in March 2016, in which the commission had raised the issues of citizenship, fundamental rights and the use of excessive force by the state.

Different international human rights organisations had expressed serious reservations over the government’s act. Recently, on April 21, a Nepal Police team tried to forcibly enter the regional office of the commission in Nepalgunj. The police were trying to nab a cadre of the Netra Bikram Chand-led Nepal Communist Party, Dan Bahadur Fadera, who was released by the Banke District Court. The commission’s regional office had given refuge to Fadera after he was released by the court on a general date, following suspicion that the police wanted to arrest him yet again.

Officials at the constitutional watchdog say they were told by senior members of the House committee that they would work to revise the bill before it is tabled in the full House for endorsement. “Even ruling party lawmakers have assured us of a revision. “We are left with no option but to wait and see,” said a member of the commission, seeking anonymity because he feared being dragged into a controversy.

Dahal’s warning to topple Province 2 government draws criticism

Leaders and experts say such remarks are against spirit of federalism

TIKA R PRADHAN
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Pushpa Kamal Dahal, co-chairman of the ruling Nepal Communist Party, on Tuesday threatened to topple the Province 2 government, saying that corruption was rampant in the province and that the provincial government had failed to work in the interest of the people of Madhes.

“There is increasing corruption and dishonesty. I am surprised to hear that personal phone numbers are listed in red book,” said Dahal at a function organised to welcome leaders from the Madhes Tarai Forum in his party at his residence. “If this continues, situation might come for the Nepal Communist Party to take the lead of the government some time.”

Such remarks from Dahal, a two-time prime minister, have angered the Province 2 leaders and government officials.

Dipendra Jha, chief attorney of Province 2, objected to Dahal’s statement, saying it does not go with the spirit of federalism.

“It’s unbecoming of Dahal, as someone who fought for federalism, to make such remarks,” Jha said. “As far corruption is concerned, there is a constitutional body in place to deal with the issue. There is no need for a political figure to call out any provincial government. Dahal is not the authority to accuse the provincial government of corruption.”

The new constitution promulgated in 2015 ensured federalism and elections were held accordingly in 2017. The Nepal Communist Party has formed governments in all provinces except in Province 2. The governments in provinces are formed by the respective provincial assemblies.

Dahal’s remarks come at a time when most of the provincial governments are at odds

with the federal government over a host of issues, including devolution of power and lack of umbrella laws.

On top of that, many say Dahal does not hold any official position and that he is currently the co-chairman of a party that is at the helm of the federal government.

While Dahal has time and again said he “always worked for Madhes”, his remarks in recent times targeting Province 2 are not reflective of that.

Earlier on October 23 last year, Dahal had warned Province 2 government “not to overtake the federal government”, saying it could derail federalism. Dahal was referring to Province 2 government’s move to bring Provincial Police Act prior to Federal Police Law. He had also warned the provincial executives not to ignore the federal government, saying it enjoyed a two-thirds majority. Province 2 Chief Minister Lalbabu Raut was also present at that function.

“Such remarks from a political leader of such a stature can create instability,” said Bipin Adhikari, a constitutional expert. “Leaders who are never tired of boasting about political stability should promote stability in provinces as well,” he said.

Dahal for long has been known for making strange statements that generate debate and sometimes have caused ramifications. But majority of such comments from him have been political in nature.

Dahal as a top leader of the ruling party, some say, should not have gone to the extent of threatening to a provincial government, as its formation has its own procedures which are not related to federal Parliament of which Dahal is a member.

“There is a provincial assembly to discuss if there has to be a change of guard,”



Situation might come for the Nepal Communist Party to take the lead of the government.

DAHAL



Dahal has been dreaming about forming government led by his party in Province 2.

RAUT

said Jha. “And the constitutional provision does not allow any political party to bring no-confidence motion before two years of the formation of government.”

Article 188(4) of the constitution states that one-fourth of the total number of then members of the State

Assembly may table in writing a motion of no-confidence against the chief minister but “provided that a motion of no-confidence may not be tabled until the first two years after the appointment of the chief minister and until another one year after the date of failure of the motion of no-confidence once tabled.”

Then why did Dahal make the remarks?

“Dahal is daydreaming,” said Lalbabu Raut, Chief Minister of Province 2. “Since long, Dahal has been dreaming about forming government led by his party. His dream won’t materialise.”

Raut’s party Sanghiya Samajbadi Forum-Nepal and the Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal currently have a coalition government in Province 2.

Asked if Dahal had made the claim of toppling the government in Province 2 and forming one under the Nepal Communist Party, a Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal leader said his party was not aware of any such developments.

“The coalition government in Province 2 has people’s mandate. It’s a movement in itself, it’s more than a power-sharing deal,” said Rajendra Mahato of Rastriya Janata Party-Nepal. “I don’t think Sanghiya Samajbadi Forum-Nepal would halt the ongoing struggle by siding with the Nepal Communist Party.”

Adhikari, the constitutional expert, said federal government is yet to equip provincial governments to ensure their smooth functioning.

“With no necessary legal framework, provincial governments are struggling to function properly,” Adhikari said. “And when it comes to corruption, there is a constitutional body to deal with it. Political leaders talking about corruption of provinces would only disrupt the process of federalisation.”

“

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- T. Dewitt Talmage



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EDITORIAL

Labour pains

Labour laws have guaranteed rights but employment creation will still be key

Today is the 130th International Workers' Day, also known as May Day. Nepal has been celebrating May day since 1963, and it was declared a public holiday in 2007. There has been a marked improvement in relations between management and labour compared to the past. Industrial unrest has declined significantly. Nepali industry has not seen major strikes or lockouts in recent years, although such activities were the trademark of domestic industries some years ago. Both companies and trade unions acknowledge that labour relations have improved owing to trade union maturity. But the government has made efforts on its part, too. Therefore it has been a two-way street.

The Labour Act 2017 for example, which requires employers to ensure a safe working environment for workers' health and safety has been quite instrumental in securing workers' rights. The guarantee of Occupational Safety and Health of workers at workplace in the latest labour legislation is the first ever instance of workers' health and safety being secured by the country's law. Under the Act, employers must be responsible for keeping workers safe from health hazards that might come from the use, storage and operation of any chemical, physical materials and equipment at workplace.

Similarly, in November 2018, the government also launched an ambitious social security scheme to protect and secure employees working in the formal private sector. The mechanism governing the scheme relies on employers contributing 11 percent, employees contributing 20 percent—and, with the result of these contributions—the employee providing social security in the form of healthcare, pensions and other prescribed benefits. The current scheme aims to cover about 3.4 million people—about 12 percent of the population—working in the formal sector. What's more, various legislations and pacts have been signed to ensure Nepali labour migrants are not exploited in various Gulf countries when they go for foreign employment.

All these developments do indicate that the government has been quite serious about improving the labour conditions. However, a large number of people still flee the country in search of better work opportunities. Our economy is still dependent on remittance and while entrepreneurship is flourishing, the government's efforts in creating industries, and as a corollary, increasing employment opportunities at home is yet to receive the kind of attention it deserves. A lot has been done on the legislative front to secure the rights of the workers. This is commendable but the focus now has to shift to creating more job opportunities at home. Also, it is high time the government recognised the contribution of women and the informal sector to the economy despite the fact that their numbers are so large and their contributions so wide-ranging.



P KHAREL

Come Friday, the release of a new Nepali feature film is a normal affair. For that matter, the simultaneous release of two new Nepali movies is a frequent feature. Every now and then, a string of three releases hit the big screen. The cast, craft, narrative and treatment entail many challenges to underscore the content's status as king. Star power in the commercial hour does not necessarily sustain an industry.

By virtue of annually recording more than 80 movies for quite some years—and now having achieved the three-digit mark—Nepal figures in list of the world's 15 most prolific film producing nations. Even if the quantitative progress achieved since the second half of the 1990s has been notable, the quality and gate collections tell a sorry story.

Stripped of boast and laboured pretensions, the so-called star power in the Nepali film box office is virtually non-existent. On the balance sheet, barely 10 percent of the annual churn-out avoids the red. The other week, a daily newspaper in Kathmandu carried a headline 'Heartthrob of a superstar' to describe Anmol KC. But viewers were not quite star struck by the lead cast to take the box office by storm when his latest movie hit the big screen. Trying to reach all the audiences would go for the lowest denominator in terms of tastes and storylines. Viewers in the interior and rural areas should be reached for cultural elevation through various shades of society in theme and treatment.

What went wrong

Producers have the daunting task of walking viewers to the theatres, with multiple entertainment channels and choices all around. Some prove to be better artistes off screen than on screen. Others shed copious tears to attract attention, yet others purr with confected pleasure while a few feign purring with pleasure and swooning after 'oohs and aahs' over what they claim to be overwhelming viewer response to their screen presence. All along, producers find their pockets burnt. Some learn their lessons but most don't, and keep on repeating the same doomed track for other (mis)adventures.

Used and abused genres far too often fail to attract cinephiles to the big screen when there are vastly more entertainment avenues than a generation ago. Producers and directors should learn to avoid the predictable and gear to adapt and adopt ideas, but with the required rigour and vigour. Formula-laden fare is the antithesis of creativity that precludes anything of the classic variety. Lifting sequences from Hindi movies that are often poor imitations

On and off screen

Nepal and China could reach an accord to nudge their film industries to join forces.



SHUTTERSTOCK

of Hollywood and other Western presentations cannot carry a fare far. The outcome becomes pathetically poor presentations, giving short shrift to originality and creativity.

A copy of a copy exhausts story lines while formula fare fatigue kills cine-fans' enthusiasm to flock to the theatres. A cinema with appeal across generations can be categorised as a classic, perhaps also chronicling contemporary climes. Nepal's first movie hit the silver screen in the mid-1960s. In the next 25 years, less than 15 Nepali feature films were released. In contrast, the last three decades recorded about 1,500 films.

Glut and gold

The glut of Nepali movies has not prevented disastrous gate collections. Of the 100 Nepali films released in the past 12 months, barely 10 are believed to have recovered their investments. Which would mean that the entire industry's collections would be less than what a single moderate Hindi hit film fetches. *The Man from Kathmandu*, in Nepali and English, directed by Pema Dhondup, was quoted, "We want to create interest for Nepali movies abroad." Nakim Uddin's production house Tree-City, in collaboration with Los Angeles production companies, produced the film that did not create much stir in Nepal. Its overseas collections, too, were said to be modest.

China allows an annual quota of 34 movies to enter the world's most populous country. This means intense lobbying for the prized berths in the officially approved

list. The prospect profusely wets the lips of the movie world's big and mighty in the often over-rated Hollywood business and indeed in India, especially after *Dangal*'s 2017 runaway hit with \$191 million (INR\$9.9 billion) gate collections, outstripping the revenues of all previous Hindi movies on Chinese screens. This year, another Hindi movie, *Andha Dhun*, collected \$150 million, nearly double of what it made in India.

Steven Spielberg's Amblin Partners collected a strong \$88.2 million as against its collection of \$64 million in North America, the world's No 1 movie market. Sony's *Resident Evil: The Final Chapter* did even better at \$160 million in China against the \$26.8 million it registered in North America. Big banners in Hollywood and Mumbai allocate up to 40 percent of the total budget for publicity on particularly small screens and other channels of mass media.

Commerce and creativity

The Unanico Group, an award-winning independent production company in London and a Shanghai-based company signed a \$51.01-million agreement for the production and distribution of animated feature films. Cloth Cat Animation, another British company, and Chinese company Magic Mall announced collaboration on a 52-episode animation series to be distributed worldwide. Given China's investments in Africa surpassing those of the rest of the world combined, the prospects of cooperation between China and the African continent are high. The US has 38,000 screens

and India only 9,000. China is geared to have more than 80,000 screens by 2021. By comparison, Nepal has about 180 digitalised and 30 high vision screening halls.

The governments of Nepal and China could reach an understanding to nudge their film industries toward undertaking joint ventures. The cast of characters of the two neighbours sharing screen space would be a unique cultural undertaking showcasing what Asian cultural cooperation can produce for world moviedom to watch and study. Producing nearly 1,000 films a year, China—like India, Nigeria and the US—figures in the world's top four most prolific film producing nations. Cinema making is a serious, risk-ridden creative undertaking. Matching quantity with quality is an ambition many dream merchants crave for.

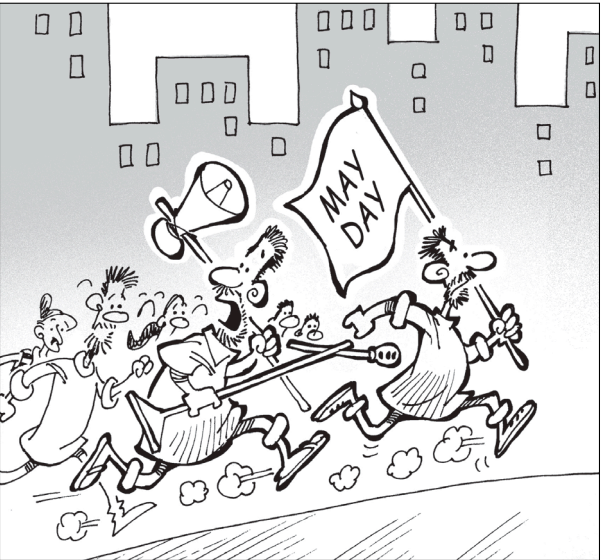
The money a movie might fetch at the box office is uppermost in the minds of movie moguls. Yet, even if the cash registers indicate deep disappointment, the lure and power of the glamour and glitter of the cine world remains too overpowering for many movie makers to tread with caution. A mass audience does not mean indifferent people. Content-driven films are what contribute to both class and commerce. Two large film producing and consuming countries are Nepal's immediate neighbours—India and China. Nepali cinema goers have been addicted to Hindi movies for too long. The movie making mantra stands: Be competitive.

Kharel is a former editor of *The Rising Nepal*.

Where do the children play?

The song could be set in present-day Kathmandu—it would not look out of place.

ABIN
'Great work'



Wait for a bit, please!
We will start the programme as soon as we find an open space!



SABIN NINGLEKHU LIMBU

Well you've cracked the sky, scrapers fill the air
But will you keep on building higher
'Til there's no more room up there?
Will you make us laugh, will you make us cry?
Will you tell us when to live, will you tell us when to die?
I know we've come a long way
We're changing day to day
But tell me, where do the children play?"

Cat Stevens wrote the song in the 1970s, the highpoint of American sub/urbanisation through a rapid structural and architectural transformation in the aftermath of World War II. The rise of private corporations and a consumerist individuated life instigated a 'creative destruction' of public spaces. Stevens wryly laments the absence of the children's right to the city in urban planning sensibilities, leading to the enclosure of public spaces and playgrounds to make way for skyscrapers and big box shopping centres. The song could be set in present-day Kathmandu—it would not look out of place.

As we speak, gated communities, high-rise buildings and shopping complexes are being rapidly designed to put together a particular brand of urban life, one that takes concrete shape on top of public open spaces and playgrounds that are quietly encroached upon and captured through what some might call 'elite informality'—a nexus of politicians, private corporations and wealthy businessmen combining to bid for a sanitised version of 'the good life', albeit illegally, like the Lalita Niwas case. In this version of 'urban society' thus refashioned, 'urban gigantism' holds sway over other matters of everyday life that are



SHUTTERSTOCK

important and necessary, such as the children's right to play without them being reduced to paying customers of everything from the shopping mall to 'futsal'. The streets are what they are—unsafe.

Our urban societies

'Informal settlements', or *sukumbasi* settlements, may be considered an urban society in their own right. They are also referred to as 'slums' that some find derogatory. They informally claim something—the land—that is not legally theirs, as their own. One may argue that this practice of informality is not limited to the slums anymore, given the ongoing investigative reports exposing land-grabs in Kathmandu by the elite. To be fair, over the years, the *sukumbasis* have been documenting the elite capture of land, essentially to make this case: "We are singled out for illegally occupying land when the so-called civil elites of society have been doing it all the time. We are also protecting

public land from being further captured by the elite." There is something else that the slum protects—the children's right to play.

I was recently accompanied by a boy aged a little over five as I was loitering about Bamshighat, an informal settlement by the Bagmati River, a little northwest of the Bagmati bridge. After the walk, we stood still by a shop to chat. I asked him if there was a playground in Bamshighat for kids like him. He replied with an emphatic "Yes!" Excitedly, I quizzed, "Where?!" He took out his index finger to point at the ground, and exclaimed, "Here!"

There are other forms of urban societies in Kathmandu that exude a different kind of urban life, such as 'Newar Urbanism'. In this mode of urbanism, they say the town itself becomes a stage on which the rituals and dramas of Newar everyday life unfolds and reproduces itself—alleyways meander their ways around rest houses, ponds and courtyards to allow for the rituals and prac-

tices of daily life, enhancing the quality of the lived experience. It also enables one to deal with the post-earthquake precarity with a sense of community and camaraderie. While this mode of urbanism may ultimately disappear, in many Newar towns on the outskirts of Patan, one experiences a sense of place in which, among other social activities, children continue to convert open and vacant spaces into playgrounds as and when they so desire. Out in the open, they play with abandon.

Politics of empathy

There is much to copy from Kanhaiya Kumar, Indian firebrand activist-politician currently contesting the Lok Sabha elections in the state of Bihar—his oratory skills, the ability to speak the truth to the powerful, and the affable demeanor with which he presents himself without resorting to ad hominem attacks and toxic vocabularies. There is also something refreshing about the way he addresses his audience: "Bhaiyyon beheno... bacchon." Rarely does one come across someone acknowledging the children present in the audience as equal in the way Kumar does. Such an address comes from a place of empathy; empathy for the infantilised voices—those of the minorities, including children.

If it is true that in making the city, we remake ourselves and our social relations, as some argue, then it is also true that in becoming who we are, we are also creating conditions that will shape the kind of people our children will become. It is only when politics is filled with empathy that it may be possible to reimagine the city that exudes a collective sense of place filled with amenities for women, children and the elderly alike. We do not necessarily have to remake Kathmandu into Singapore to find those amenities. They are here all the time—they are in the Newar towns and in the *sukumbasi* settlements. The 'elsewhere' has always been here.

Limbu is a researcher based in Kathmandu.

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ASH SARKAR

s Gordon Ramsay allowed to cook Chinese food ? Is it OK to dress up as Disney’s Moana? Can Jamie Oliver cook jollof rice despite plainly not knowing what it is? Exactly what is cultural appropriation? To take a glance at Good Morning Britain, the ITV show that never takes its finger off the pulse of Middle England’s clogged arteries, you’d think it’s a question of white people seeking permission to have fun. And in return, new media outlets have guaranteed traffic from anxious millennials by listing things that fall into the category of problematic when white people adopt them (blaccents, bindis and box braids).

Why has cultural appropriation, an imperfect term mobilised in imperfect contexts, become such live ammunition for the socially conscious? And what does it mean especially for people of colour when we turn our fire on each other? It is striking that a phrase intended to sharpen a political analysis of life under postcolonial capitalism seems to have drawn the most blood between people who share overlapping experiences of racism and displacement.

The debate over cultural appropriation has been around for decades. Black writers and artists from the Harlem Renaissance voiced their concerns about the distortion of African cultures in some modernist artworks, and wrote at length about the demeaning caricatures of black identity in minstrel shows. Elvis Presley was said to have exploited “negro” music.

The artist Kenneth Courtts-Smith wrote one of the first essays on the subject in 1976, entitled Some General Observations on the Concept

of Cultural Colonialism. He never actually used the term cultural appropriation, but he was the first to bring together the Marxist idea of “class appropriation” (in which notions of “high culture” are appropriated and defined by the dominant social and economic class) and “cultural colonialism”, which describes the way western cultures take ownership of art forms that originate from racially oppressed or colonised peoples

This is important to bear in mind. Our modern understanding of cultural appropriation is highly individualised. It’s all about what Halloween costume you wear, or who’s cooking biryani. But the way in which the idea was first used was to describe a relationship of dominance and exploitation between a global ruling class and a globally subjugated one. The idea that cultural appropriation is primarily a form of erasure—a kind of emotional violence in which people are rendered invisible—came along later. And this is the sticky point. Is it right to level the same criticism at an act of cultural borrowing that doesn’t have a clear angle of economic or political exploitation as for one that does?

This month, news broke that Inuit singers were



Inuk throat singer Tanya Tagaq is boycotting this year’s Indigenous Music Awards in Canada.

boycotting Canada’s Indigenous Music Awards over the nomination of a Cree singer who, it is claimed, utilises specifically Inuit throat-singing techniques without coming from that culture herself. The Guardian’s own coverage of the story—headlined “Canada: one Indigenous group accuses other of cultural appropriation in award row”—treats the two different cultures as interchangeable.

The point of commonality—both Inuit and Cree being Canadian indigenous people—positions a shared history of dispossession by a white settler colony as erasing cultural and artistic distinctions. The implicit question seems to be: “Why are you lot even fighting? You’re all the same anyway.”

Daniel Heath Justice, a Cherokee professor of indigenous studies at the University of British

Columbia, points out that the row isn’t the result of oversensitivity or prickliness. The throat-singing technique in question was banned by Christian missionaries, and discouraged by colonial governments. In his words: “We’re talking about continuity in spite of traumatic, sustained and systemic multi-generational assaults on every aspect of our beings—including our artistic practice.”

Yet I find it strange that a recognition of the pain caused by colonialism is being projected on to fellow indigenous artists. It’s possible to argue against a colonial viewpoint that homogenises those whom it dominates, without using language that holds responsible people who have also been affected by centuries of dispossession.

It’s worth pointing out that conflicts between

racially oppressed people often result from the fact that colonialism worked on divide and rule. Certain ethnic, religious, racial or indigenous groups were deliberately privileged over others in order to create a sense of investment in upholding the power structure.

Today, arguments rage about non-African Americans participating in (and making money from) hip-hop culture, or whether black people should wear south Asian head ornaments. I get that it’s tempting to see such pop-cultural phenomena as a replication of centuries-old colonial dynamics. But maybe our own frustration at the erasure of difference risks erasing certain crucial differences in itself.

Not all cultural borrowing is a form of social violence: some of it is just cringe. I thought London MC Wiley got it right when he talked about Canadian rapper Drake being a “culture vulture” profiting off the UK music scene. The godfather of grime didn’t need to raid the library of Soas University of London to come up with his critique. A straightforward “Listen, bumbahole” did the trick just fine.

But young, socially conscious people of colour do need to be a bit more honest

with themselves about what’s driving our political interventions when it comes to cultural appropriation on this issue. I’ve felt that anger myself: such as when someone very earnestly told me how henna actually looks better on

pale skin; or when I see Indian food staples marketed by English gentrifiers. There’s a very particular feeling when you know that the identity I wear on my skin is an outfit for someone else—that culture is valued more than the humanity that produced it. But there’s another uncomfortable feeling lurking at the bottom of it.

When you’re a second- or third-generation migrant, your ties to your heritage can feel a little precarious. You’re a foreigner here, you’re a tourist back in your ancestral land, and home is the magpie nest you construct of the bits of culture you’re able to hold close. The appropriation debate peddles a comforting lie that there’s such thing as a stable and authentic connection to culture that can remain if’m not suggesting we stop using the term cultural appropriation altogether: it’s clearly meaningful when talking about systems of exploitation and dominance.

But we do need to become a lot more discerning about how we use the idea in discussing interpersonal dynamics. There’s a difference between understanding how these frustrations have a politicised background, and treating these issues as sites of political contestation in themselves. Not everyone who participates in a misguided attempt at cultural borrowing is a coloniser in disguise. Some people are just sad try-hards. ntact after the seismic interruptions of colonialism and migration.

■ ENVIRONMENT -WILDLIFE

Stop weaponising beluga whales

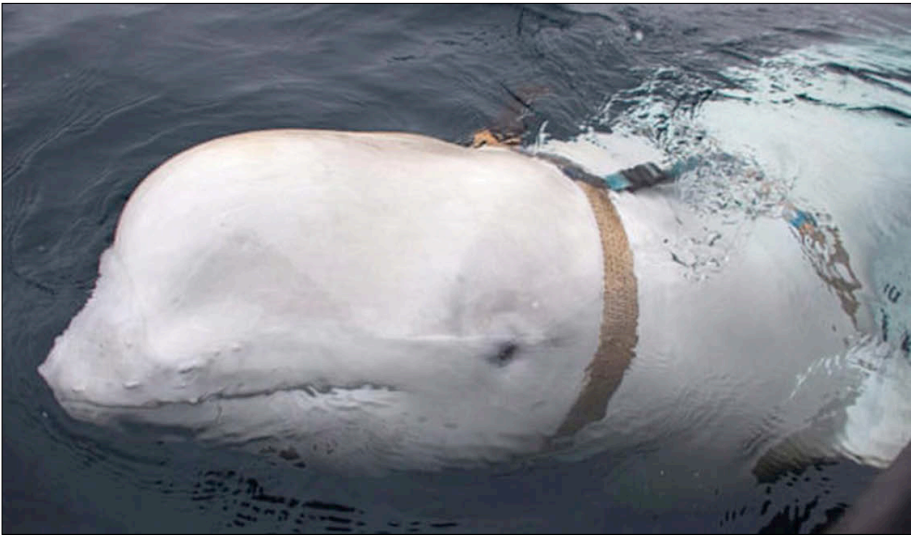
It’s a sad indictment when highly intelligent marine mammals are exploited for military aims.

JULES HOWARD

ast week, a curious scene played out in the small Norwegian fishing village of Inga. Here, a mysterious white beluga whale appeared from out of the water and proceeded to behave very strangely. Upon the body of this whale there was a strap. Upon the fabric of this strap was written a long chain of human hieroglyphs—“Equipment of St Petersburg”, the writing said. And then—almost as if it were all a dream—the whale disappeared. Although it sounds like something Douglas Adams could have written, I want to welcome you to the dizzying age of weaponised whales. Because as well as poisoning oceans, we humans are also capable of poisoning the minds of the animals that live there.

First, some background. If the idea of the Russians using such a beautiful and intelligent organism to further their military aims disgusts you, I should tell you that many countries, particularly the US, have programmes that train dolphins and other species, including sea lions, for military exercises. These marine mammals can be trained to detect mines or assist in object recoveries. They can be trained to do search-and-rescue missions, too. In fact, as of 2007, the US navy was spending \$14m a year on its marine programme, involving 75 mine-sweeping dolphins.

People who justify the existence of such programmes argue that the military sea lions and dolphins are well-trained and cared for and perform the same role as other service animals such as police dogs or horses. This argument is a good one, but it would hold more weight if in real life police officers trained



"You have to possess a dramatically impoverished sense of pathos to look at a whale and completely fail to notice its singular beauty."

wild-caught wolves or rode around on plains zebras. They do not do this. Still, the good news is that the US navy denies ever having used marine mammals to harm or injure or kill humans, which definitely makes the whole endeavour legit. Russia, on the other hand, is a little more secretive about its military marine mammals, hence the worldwide interest in the strange, indoctrinated beluga whale.

As you can probably tell by now, I find there is something deeply unnerving about the whole spectacle of military dolphins and whales. I’d almost say I’m disgusted by it. In fact, yes, it’s disgusting. But there’s something else...I just can’t stop thinking about that Russian strap the beluga whale was wearing. I can’t get it out of my head. And here’s why. You have to possess a dramatically impoverished sense of pathos to look at a dolphin or a whale and completely fail to notice its singular beauty, its powerful mind, complex communication and feats of cultural brilliance. It takes a

certain sort of odious human sensibility to fail to see these attributes and instead wonder at how and where some artificial straps might fit best. “Should they be Velcro?” wonder these faceless military entities in their laboratories. “Maybe a leather kind of harness would work,” they posit, staring at an animal in a tank with one of the biggest brains in nature and, hell, possibly the universe.

I used to think that the most far-fetched theme of the Alien movie franchise was that a grotesquely unscrupulous weapons company would really fly across galaxies to try to collect acid-spitting xenomorphs in order to monetise them as weapons. I was clearly wrong. The films are a fair observation of the human species. If we are happy to capture and indoctrinate whales for military aims, there’s no bar we won’t scrape beneath.

And what were the beluga’s straps for exactly? Commentators have speculated they may have been used to hold a camera. Others have speculated that

it could be used to house a weapon. Even if it’s the former, what a sad indictment of humanity that we are using a whale to spy on our enemies. And what a demeaning thing it must be for a whale to be paid in fish by one set of people for taking photos of other people somewhere else.

And so we humans find ourselves in an unsettling situation akin to that famous Mitchell and Webb sketch. “Wait, are we the baddies?” says Military Veterinarian #1 to Military Veterinarian #2 while testing the strapping on an indoctrinated whale in a glass tank. Veterinarian #2 catches his reflection in the tank and ponders for a moment whether somewhere along the line he really did lose his way.

Let me say this. We all have. We really have lost our way. We really are the baddies. So swim, my indoctrinated beluga. Swim for your life, you beautiful white whale. Escape the horrors of human wars before our blood is on your fins. Or, worse, your blood is on our straps.

■ RAPE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

Not in the favour of the victim

New police guidelines mean that even fewer rape assaults will be reported, making a bad situation worse.

DAWN FOSTER

ast year the number of rape charges in Britain fell by 23 percent, plummeting to the lowest rate in a decade. The director of public prosecutions, Max Hill, claimed when the figures were announced that this was as a result of weaker cases being screened out. As we know, many victims of rape are reluctant to come forward to the police anyway. They already know that evidence can be incredibly difficult to gather. After undergoing the ordeal of reliving and recounting such an experience, the possibility that the allegation may not meet an opaque quality threshold acts as a further disincentive to seeking justice.

So it’s depressing to learn this week that victims of alleged rapes will be told to give up their mobile phone and all attendant data to the police. Not to do so, it is made clear in new digital consent forms, could mean that “it may not be possible for the investigation or prosecution to continue”. The police are also reserving the right to use any data gathered digitally in other criminal prosecutions or investigations. So any messages or data that implicate you or those you have communicated with in separate offences could be pursued and investigated.

This could have disastrous effects for women in vulnerable groups, especially those who have engaged in sex work or who have current or previous addictions, who are much more likely to be the victims of rape and assault.

The data will also be shared with the legal team of the accused if it can help the defence case.

The rationale of all this is to prevent a repeat of the recent high-profile collapse of rape cases, in which evidence withheld from the defence undermined the prosecution. The case of Liam Allan, whose trial for rape was abandoned after police were ordered to hand over phone records relevant to the case, was a very public embarrassment for the Metropolitan police.

But this move uses the wrong tools to tackle the wrong problems. In the case of Allan and others, the police and Crown Prosecution Service already had the relevant phone data, but were criticised for failing to hand over the evidence. The cases fell apart because pertinent material was

wrongly withheld.

This is quite different from making the handing over of one’s digital history a virtual condition of reporting assaults. This makes an intrusive process still more intrusive and will mean fewer people coming forward in an area in which lack of reporting is already a major problem.

The process of reporting rape and assault is notoriously difficult. There is some understanding of this in the interview process for victims; specialist suites are recommended for initial investigations and statements. But those who have experienced attacks still struggle with the implication that many women lie about rape and assault, or bear some of the blame for what has happened to them. The incredibly low conviction rate does nothing to convince women that rape and violence against them are taken seriously.

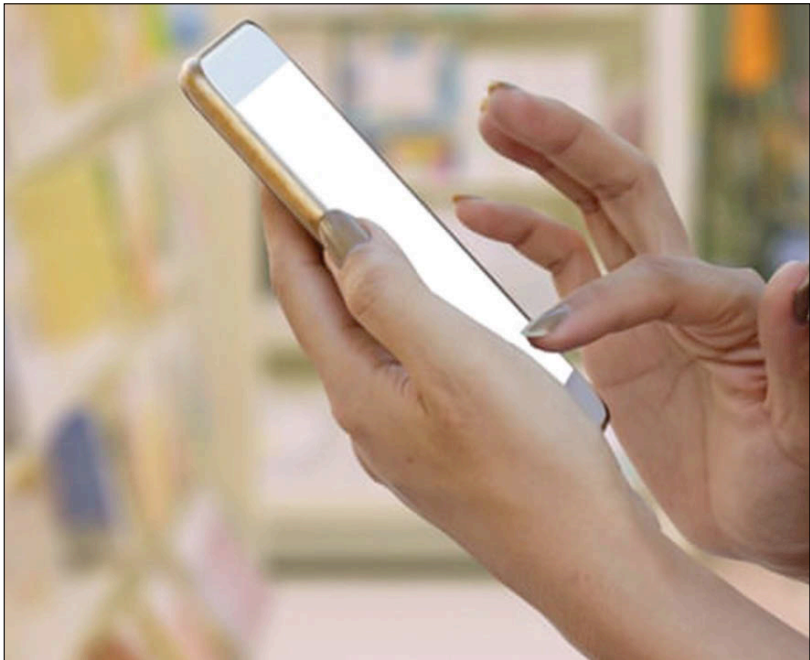
In that context, if victims know they are also likely to have the entire contents of their phone downloaded, that they may be deprived of their device for months, and that the alleged perpetrator and their lawyers may be given access to messages, photographs and social media accounts, many may decide this further invasion is too

much to bear.

The formalisation of the process of accessing digital records—blunt, far-reaching and onerous—will only increase the fear of vulnerability and violation for people reporting these offences.

The average mobile phone is capable of holding enough data to fill 5 million A4 pages. Demanding the right to access all this (along with the threat not to proceed if access is denied) is wildly disproportionate. The police and prosecution service need to acknowledge the fact that rape conviction rates are so low because of the lingering assumptions of a misogynist culture. The move to formalise access to mobile phones will make a bad situation worse.

There is a reason we have passcodes on our phones: not just to secure personal banking, but because they function as an extension of the self, with thoughts and communications we wouldn’t ordinarily make public. This move will only see fewer victims come forward, and even fewer reported rape cases make it to court. Putting the victim under investigation is perverse, and designed only to protect the reputation of the justice system, rather than deliver justice itself.



"The formalisation of the process will only increase the fear of vulnerability and violation for people reporting these offences."



ALEX PASARELLO/UNSPLASH

Mother

BARKHA SAH

Mom, you gave me life
To enjoy this wonderful world
Your love is everything
More than silver and gold

Mom, you taught me things
And the knowledge gave me wings
You are the reason for my happiness
You are the source of my confidence

When I see a smile on your face
I feel as if I can win every race
I want to be a part of you
And reside in your heart

Mom, sorry for my mistakes
Sometimes I misbehave with you
How can I express in words
How much I love you!

Sah is an eighth grader at Swastik Pathshala, Siraha

NOTICE

All students are requested to send their essays, poems, reportage and fiction to tkpfeatures@kmg.com.np with 'blackboard' in the subject line.

WHY STUDY?

SAMRIDDIH KARKI

Studying is an integral part of our life. But a large number of us prefer not to study. Although millions of children around the globe don't have access to education and do not get the opportunity to go to school, many of us who do have the opportunity don't study well. Our parents spend thousands of rupees for our education yet we are still careless about it.

It's very unfortunate that many children don't understand the value of time and money their parents spend on them to ensure that their children have everything required to get a good education.

Studying isn't that difficult, troublesome or exhausting as some may feel. When you are self-spurred and motivated, nothing feels exhausting or difficult. Instead, it feels engaging and appealing. It's just that we are all

studying in the wrong way. By studying, I don't mean just going through textbooks. We can study in a lot of different ways. For instance, you can go through science and mathematics websites online and gain useful information. By doing this, you don't end up wasting all your time online on just trolls and memes. If you don't understand the notes or lectures given by your class teachers, you can simply surf the web and gain clear your confusion. After going through notes and watching videos, you can even play quizzes online. There are many educational websites based on Nepali curriculum. You can be a part of them.

Studying is the most important thing in our life. In school, we must take our studies as our primary focus and then look forward to other extracurricular activities. In the future, regardless of whoever you become, be it an actor or a businessperson, if you

don't complete your studies, you will regret and you might even be looked down upon by people. Some of the major film artists say that they regret not pursuing further studies.

I have seen so many people who can memorise a lengthy song lyrics within a few minutes but can't memorise science theories or math formulas. Nobody in this world likes to do the jobs that are boring or unpleasant. If you don't like studying, you have to be innovative and think of different ways that will enhance your educational experience. You have to be self-aware.

I enjoy studying, and I guess it's all because I am self-motivated. Even if you are interested in dancing or are a talented singer, you have to focus more on studying during school days. It doesn't mean that you should leave practicing or participating in those activities, but you also have to dedicate time and energy on your

studies. Some of my friends have already started choosing their career options that won't require them to study hard. I feel sad for these friends of mine because I don't think what they are doing is good. They shouldn't be limiting their future just because they don't like to study now.

Studying is for the soul; it increases our inner beauty; it helps us distinguish people; it helps us choose between the good and the evil; it enables us to be aware of the world and about the wrongs and the rights. We study to broaden our horizon and deepen our understanding of the world. Studying helps us grow mentally, intellectually and financially. Maturity comes through this. So, let's study for our soul and for ourselves rather than for the sake of our marks.

Karki is a tenth grader at Grammar Public Secondary School



PIABAY

Lost

MANISHA SHRESTHA

Realisation of truth
Hits you harder
Enduring the facts
Makes you wonder
Whether you have seen
Is just layers of masks
Real faces of namesake friends
Lying beneath the dark.

Presence will be felt
For who forgets the captor
Love will be always etched
In the closed chapters
But respect has been lost
And cannot be regained
The one sided friendship
Has been tainted.

Escaping from the vicious cycle
Bidding goodbye to the obstacle
I have finally moved on
I have finally moved on
Or have I moved on?

Shrestha is a medical student at BPKIHS, Dharan

I am oil

AMRIT POUDEL

My parents sowed the seed
Fed me, watered me
I am now mustard
Too early to be eaten
But if you let me grow,
The extraction is not so far
I will be the oil

And once you refine me
You will for sure use me
Or pack me in those bottles
With everyone else
With the tag of some brands

As that of my degree tags
If given a nice brand name,
I will most probably be the first to be sold
The first to see the kitchen
The first to be served on those plates
No matter how painful it will be,
The first to be cooked
The first to be fried.

PouDEL is an undergraduate student at University of Mississippi



PIABAY

The beauty of mountains

DIPANKAR RAJ UPADHYAY

Mountains are closely related to music—it is spontaneous, tinged with rural simplicity and delight. The mountain folks are naturally fond of dancing and singing. They have learnt music from melodious murmuring of cataracts and rivulets as well as carolling of sweet birds. They sing songs from their heart for the sake of self pleasure, not to propagate the art of music and gain popularity or money.

Their songs aren't polished like the commercial ones. They emphasise simple sentiments and inner beauty. They feel delighted when their cattle return home from meadows in the twilight. The rolling pieces of stones also produce a kind of music when obstructed on a heavy rock. The trembling leaves and moving branches also have their own melody.

Mountains enrich our emotional experience. We can get relieved of worldly anxiety and sorrows. It gives us fresh air to breathe. Even a momentary stay can help us release our toxicity and lets us think and

feel the futility of the rat race. The lofty height of the mountains symbolise high aspiration of human life. The snow-clad ranges remind us of the celestial world of gods and goddesses illuminated with divine lustre.

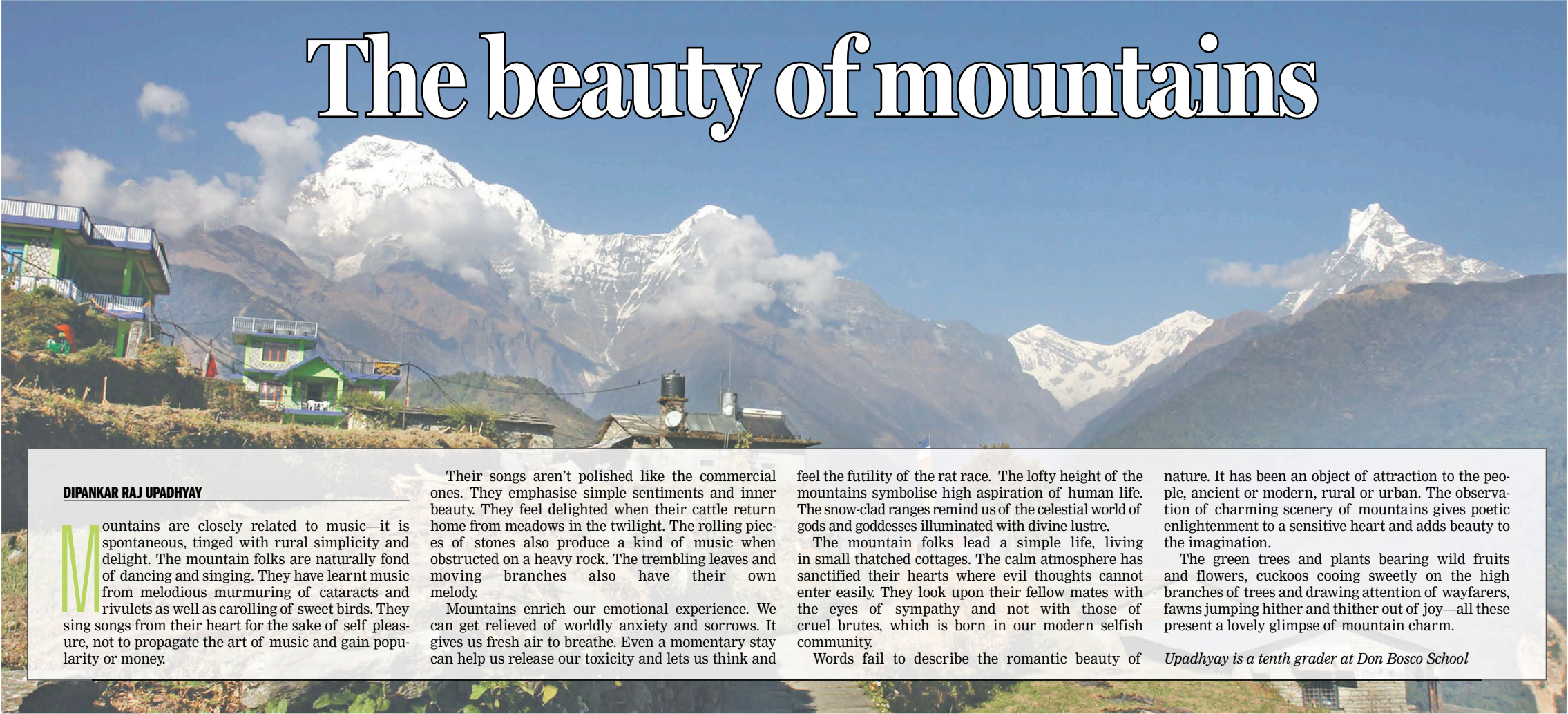
The mountain folks lead a simple life, living in small thatched cottages. The calm atmosphere has sanctified their hearts where evil thoughts cannot enter easily. They look upon their fellow mates with the eyes of sympathy and not with those of cruel brutes, which is born in our modern selfish community.

Words fail to describe the romantic beauty of

nature. It has been an object of attraction to the people, ancient or modern, rural or urban. The observation of charming scenery of mountains gives poetic enlightenment to a sensitive heart and adds beauty to the imagination.

The green trees and plants bearing wild fruits and flowers, cuckoos cooing sweetly on the high branches of trees and drawing attention of wayfarers, fawns jumping hither and thither out of joy—all these present a lovely glimpse of mountain charm.

Upadhyay is a tenth grader at Don Bosco School



PIABAY

Meet the people who keep Kathmandu running

This May Day, here are five workers who work tirelessly to keep this city functioning

Every May 1, Nepal's various communist parties indulge in rallies and parades. The worker as an archetype is feted and paid homage to. But it is all a farce, Ram Rana, a road repairman, says. The only people who celebrate International Workers' Day are those who don't need to work, he says. Workers continue to work, keeping the city functioning. This May Day, the Post profiles five men and women who tirelessly work Kathmandu's streets every day, keeping this city from falling apart.



POST PHOTO: ANISH REGMI

He repairs roads

ANUP OJHA

On a sweltering April Monday, Ram Rana was cracking the tarmac in Balkhu, near the Tribhuvan University. He was drenched in sweat, digging up the road to lay drainage pipes. Rana has been repairing damaged roads and installing drainage pipes for the past year.

"We work where our contractor assigns us," says Rana, who works for the Surmise Company as a labourer. He works nine hours a day, from 8am to 5pm, breaking, digging and laying. Neither the scorching heat, nor pelting rain or unbearable dust and smoke prevents him from working by the roadside, where thousands of vehicles ply every day.

Rana, 26, is the youngest of five brothers. While two of them have left the country to work abroad, Rana came to Kathmandu. Born to a poor family in Hetauda, he came to the capital with four of his friends and quickly found work in roadside construction.

Rana makes Rs 950 per day and up to 25,000 per month, he says. He sends Rs 10,000 to his father and

mother back in village every month.

"We don't have our own lands back in the village. Unlike in Kathmandu, the work we get in Hetauda is not regular. Even if we get work, we are not paid," says Rana. "I came here so I wouldn't be idle."

Rana wants to get married once he earns enough to throw a lavish feast to feed his relatives and neighbours.

"I am thinking of getting married, but I don't have enough money yet," he says. Rana is well aware that May 1 is International Workers' Day, but he also knows that little will change for working-class people like him.

"It's not us workers who celebrate this day," he says. "We need to earn our daily bread. Those who are rich celebrate the day in our name."

Every day, Rana copes with the stink from the open drains, and his palms have numerous wounds and blisters. He is not happy with the work, he says, because society looks down on his profession.

"The work that people like me do keeps the city safe," says Rana. "The only thing I know is that if we don't repair the roads, this filthy city will only become worse."



POST PHOTO: SACHITRA GURUNG

She sweeps streets

SACHITRA GURUNG

Santaki Deula's job begins before most of Kathmandu wakes up. By 4am, Deula and her husband Kancha have already left their home in Kirtipur, where they live with their son. It takes them 25-30 minutes to reach Om Bahal, where their work starts.

Santaki and Kancha are both street sweepers, employed by the Kathmandu Metropolitan City.

"Even though the government has bought broom machines to clean the roads, they can't reach the narrow alleys of Kathmandu," says the 39-year-old Deula. "We are in charge of keeping the *gallis* clean."

Initially, Deula worked two shifts—from 5:00 am to 8:30 am and from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm—but due to the increase in both pollution and traffic, she only works one shift now, from 4:30 am to 10 am.

"The ward chairman is nice to us and he is the one who asked us to work only one shift," says Deula.

Every morning, she readies her broom and cart, and starts sweeping the roads and collecting garbage, alongside five others. Sweepers like Deula work 365 days a year.

"We don't get holidays like others, even if it's Dashain. But the state compensates us with bonuses for working during the holidays," says Deula.

However, each employee gets an allocated number of sick days. She works part time during the day after her shift if the pay is good; otherwise, she babysits her 3-year-old grandson while her daughter and son-in-law are at work. As Deula herself hasn't received any formal education—she can only write her name—she wants her son to pursue higher education, which is what most of her salary goes towards.

Deula wants to work till retirement but there have been rumors of the city's cleaning services being privatised. If this happens, sweepers like Deula might be out of a job, but nothing has happened as of yet, she says. Deula's been working as a sweeper for 24 years now.

"The state reimburses our medical expenses and there's a pension plan after retirement," says Deula. "It isn't the most desirable job but at least it's secure and you get paid on time."

She directs traffic

ABANI MALLA

During peak office hours, Saraswati Karki can be spotted atop a traffic island at one of Kathmandu's busiest intersections—Thapathali Chowk. In the crisp blue uniform of the traffic police, Karki directs vehicles from the island, gesturing to them to stop or go. The sunglasses she wears are not so much a fashion statement as protective gear.

Although responsible for managing traffic from 9 to 11:30 in the morning and 4 to 7 in the evening, Karki's day starts at 5:00 am. After scouting Thapathali and Tripureshwor chowk in the wee hours of the morning, she submits a daily traffic status report to the Traffic Metro Head Office at Baggikhana by 5:30am.

Karki's day ends late, as she stays up till 11 pm checking for drunk drivers. On alternate nights, she is a night duty officer, for which she stays back at the barrack and is responsible for any incidents that can take place until the next morning.

Due to her long shift hours directing traffic in polluted Thapathali, the 26-year-old has had numerous health-related complications. Once, her eyes had swollen due to excessive exposure to the pollution and heat; her mouth is usually dry; and her ears hurt due to constantly whistling at traffic. The dust and scorching heat tires her out within a few hours and she can't breathe well without a mask.

Despite all her complications, Karki actively looks out for the safety of both drivers and pedestrians during her duty hours. Whenever she catches

people breaking the rules, Karki fines drivers and sends them to remedial traffic classes. If the situation gets out of her hands, she is authorised to arrest violators and take them to Singha Durbar for processing.

"Most of the time, people don't understand that we're only doing it for their own good," says Karki, for whom punishing lawbreakers is a way of saving them from the negative consequences of their own actions.

When she first applied to become a part of traffic police, she was mentally prepared to take up the responsibilities and challenges that would come her way, she says. And due to the nature of her job, she cannot complain about her health or personal problems when duty calls.

Even when she has severe period cramps, she still needs to report to the field. Whenever she asks for sick leave during menstruation, she feels that her male colleagues do not understand her predicament.

"Although the work is tough, I feel happy to be able to turn both my father's and my dream into reality," says Karki, who grew up dreaming of becoming a police woman in Sankhuwasabha. "My father lets us make major life decisions, unlike other people in the village. He was the proudest when I got this job."



POST PHOTO: ABANI MALLA

He builds houses

TIMOTHY ARYAL

From a five-storey residential building under construction about a hundred metres southeast of Thapathali chowk, Anoj Kumar Rajbanshi watches the dust and pollution of the city with quiet resignation. Rajbanshi, in a faded pink shirt, blue jeans and slippers, wears his long hair in a man bun and shuffles sand with his hands.

Rajbanshi is filtering fine grains of sand at the construction site. He sieves the sand on a net that rests on top of a drum, using the sole of an old slipper. And as he works the sand, he talks.

This is not something that he particularly enjoys, says Rajbanshi. As a shuttering carpenter, Rajbanshi is tasked with creating temporary

formworks in the concrete pouring process. But with work on the pillar yet to begin, he's filtering the sand to keep himself occupied.

"It wouldn't matter if I took a break for a while," Rajbanshi says. "But since everyone is working, I felt it would be untoward to laze around."

This job pays Rajbanshi around Rs 1,000 a day, for working a 12-hour day, from 6am to 6pm.

"If only higher-up people treated us nicely and there were provisions for a good shelter with facilities, I'd never go abroad again," Rajbanshi says.

It's been three years since the 25-year-old returned from Qatar, where he worked at a hotel as a laundryman. Rajbanshi has fond memories of the Gulf.

"The job wasn't all that hard. My part was to take clothes from one floor to another and serve the customers," says Rajbanshi. "I was treated nicely. Even when miles away from Nepal, I felt at home there. Even rich people would talk to me. But it's not the same here. Here, they do not recognise us."

Rajbanshi left Qatar on a whim. Even after working for two whole years, the employer refused to raise his salary, which was 1000 riyals, roughly Rs 29,000 a month. He'd spent most of his earnings partying with friends from the Philippines who liked feasting, he says.

A year ago, after his return from the Gulf, Rajbanshi left his hometown of Gaurigunj in Jhapa and came to Kathmandu. He didn't plan to work as a construction worker—he wanted to fly to Turkey for work. But he was unable to get a working visa and was forced to take up a job to pay the bills.

Living in Kathmandu is a constant challenge, says Rajbanshi, as even renting a room is difficult.

He's been asked to come back with a family at least a couple of times, he says. But Rajbanshi is not ready for marriage yet and so, he's been living in a small room in the building where he works.

"Any job can be great if you view it through a positive lens," Rajbanshi says. "You have to enjoy what you do. I'm enjoying this job, but what I'm really looking forward to is Turkey."



POST PHOTO: ANISH REGMI

He collects garbage

ROSE SINGH

Suraj's day begins at five in the morning, as he goes door-to-door to every house on the Harisiddhi-Hattiban stretch in Lalitpur, collecting garbage. He does this all day, every day, working without any holidays. His day ends only when the sun goes down.

"I decided to move to Kathmandu in 2015 when I saw no prospects in my village," says Suraj. "When I came here, I quickly realised that garbage collecting was a profitable job." He now works for the Sattobato Ward Office.

The 21-year-old doesn't remember his parents or his hometown very well. He says he doesn't even know his last name. When he was 10-years-old, he lost both his parents and villagers from Nijadh, Bara forcibly took away his home, he says.

With no means to support himself, he began working as a labourer in construction. He didn't even think about going to school. But eventually, he decided to pursue better prospects in Kathmandu.

Here, Suraj is happy with his job and how much he earns. "The income is way more than what I made as a labourer," he says. Suraj makes roughly Rs 40,000 a month.

But even with a decent income, his job is not considered a respectable profession, he says. As he handles all the trash that comes out of residences, he is constantly looked down upon by society, says Suraj.

"I don't want people to respect me everyday, but a kind gesture once in a while would mean a lot," he says. As he's afraid of being ostracised by his friends, he still hasn't told them about his day job.

Collecting garbage is not as easy as it sounds. People do not segregate their garbage at home and many times, Suraj has to handle hazardous pieces of garbage without proper preparation.

"When I first started this job, I would cut myself with a broken piece of glass every other day. But now I'm more careful when I handle any garbage," he says.

Suraj has ambitions—he aspires to work himself up the ladder in the trash business. One day, he wants to have a garbage truck of his very own.



POST PHOTO: ROSE SINGH

TODAY'S HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

You've got a new goal, and you need to start working on it soon if you ever want to attain it. To get the help you need, find a few like-minded people who share your hopes and dreams. They'll provide the moral support you need in order to go the distance.
TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

Get more involved in the activities of the people around you. These folks are looking to you for new ideas. If you need assistance getting something off the ground, just ask the crowd around you. They want to be in your life.
GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

Your convictions are slipping a bit today, but that might not be a bad thing. Right now your mind is open to new ways of thinking; you let an old way of thinking go by the wayside. Changing beliefs is possible.
CANCER (June 22-July 22)

Your sunny, welcoming attitude will be the perfect antidote to the behaviour of someone who's acting way too aloof. It will help them loosen people up. Even an awkward discussion will evolve into a giggle fest when you're involved.
LEO (July 23-August 22)

Be patient if a certain social invitation isn't being greeted with the enthusiasm you hoped. Working around the needs of other people isn't inconvenient for you, and it will be a lovely gesture of how important they are to you.
VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

A close friend's unfulfilled promise is still leaving a bad taste in your mouth, so a social engagement with them could be a little stressful. People are made of good and bad, and this balance is what makes everyone special.
LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

You'll meet someone fun. To create an intellectual connection that blossoms into a chemical reaction, you need to get rid of any self-doubt. You are an amazing catch, and this person might be smart enough to realize that!
SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

There's nothing wrong with treating yourself to a splurge every once in a while but watch your expenses. Watch your spending, and challenge yourself to tighten your budget. Reduce your material desires, and you will reduce your headaches.
SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

Surprising connections will be popping up all around you today. Try socializing a bit. The pace of your life may be slowing down quite dramatically soon. It looks as though some of your future plans may need to be readjusted.
CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

When it comes to your finances, you cannot let your reputation come before your bank account. Being thrifter will help you increase your cash flow so create a tighter budget and ignore what people say about your spending habits.
AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

Speak up when you see brilliance in action. You need to give credit where credit is due. Show them that you are so secure in yourself that you don't need to deny anyone the respect they deserve.
PISCES (February 19-March 20)

Be open to changing your mind. In fact, it's a sign of your intelligence that when new information comes your way, you factor it in and adjust your viewpoint accordingly. Don't deny reality. Put yourself in the crowd.

ACROSS

1 Long jacket
6 Isn't gentle with
10 Zest for life
14 Address the crowd
15 Large lot
16 Pate de — gras
17 Less exciting
18 Bronco "brake"
19 Give off vapors
20 Iron or sulfur
22 Brewed tea
24 Contented murmur
25 Like a wedding cake
26 Reveal
30 Election mo.
31 Norse god
32 Knot
35 "Who — was there?"
39 Fiesta shouts
40 Shape clay
41 Area of London
42 Chicken wire
43 Cancel
44 "Slither" actor
45 McMahon and Sullivan
47 Keeps safe
50 Husband-to-be
53 Iron source
54 Mythical beast
55 Do a script over
60 Asian nanny

DOWN

1 Schlep
2 River in Russia
3 Point the finger at
4 Particular
5 Boxed breakfast
6 Temple of Athena
7 Receive a high score
8 Sleeve part
9 Guard
10 Give off bubbles of gas
11 Jeweler's lens
12 Readied the bow
13 — to-know basis
21 Complain persistently
23 Want-ad letters
26 Ensure failure
27 Groundless
28 Strives to win

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

DAHS ECHO DEBT S
RYAN AREA EMAIL
OLLA SERF VERDI
PATCHED SCORNE
KILOS RUG
VIPERS PLATEFUL
ADORE FRANDOLE
LEI SMEARED ON
VANE ENYA ALTAR
ESTRANGE CLASSY
RNS DELLS
ALMANAC ROYALTY
PIANO AMOS GORE
PIADY SIDE NOON
TRESS AXED ANTS

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29 Draws a sword
33 Not common
34 Smell inhibitor
36 Type of shark
37 Silvery fish
38 Billions of years
40 Burly
46 Forensic science tool
48 Sooner than
49 Least
50 Leg bone
51 Lacking sense
52 Computer command

54 Horse-drawn vehicle
56 Mortgage consideration
57 Wife of Osiris
58 Camper's quarters
59 Upright
62 Hr. fraction

CROSSWORD

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13
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SUDOKU

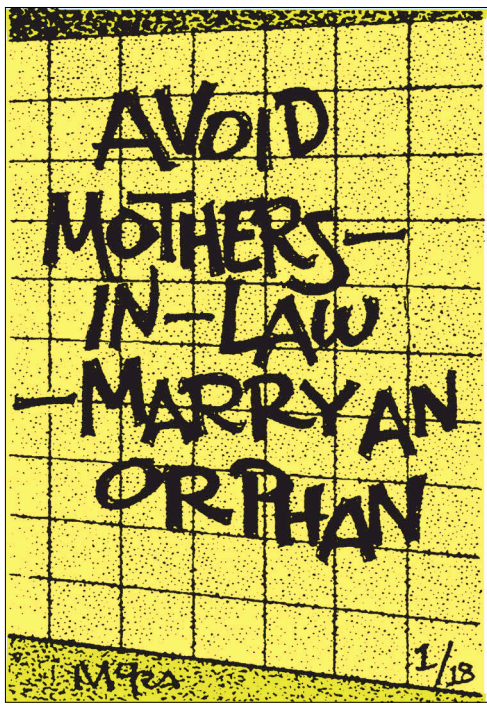
6 8 3 6 2 1
7 5 8 4
3 1 8
5 6 4 3 7
8 3 7
4 9 2

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

5 1 2 3 7 4 6 8 9
8 4 7 1 9 6 2 3 5
6 3 9 8 5 2 4 7 1
3 8 5 2 4 7 1 9 6
4 9 6 5 8 1 7 2 3
7 2 1 9 6 3 5 4 8
9 6 8 4 2 5 3 1 7
1 7 4 6 3 9 8 5 2
2 5 3 7 1 8 9 6 4

GRAFFITI



WORD GAME

TODAY'S WORD -- HOMOLOGOUS

(HOMOLOGOUS: ho-MAHL-uh-gus: Having the same relation, relative position or structure.)
Average mark 15 words
Time limit 30 minutes
Can you find 20 or more words in HOMOLOGOUS?
The list will be published tomorrow.

SATURDAY'S WORD -- GERMICIDE

geed eider rime cede dice
germ emigre medic cide dicer
gird emir mere cire dicier
gird emir mere cire dicier
grid greed merge cried dire
grim regime midge crime dirge
grime rice midi crime deem
edge ridge mire deer deice
edgier rigid icier icier deicer

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.
Contact Word Game creator Kathleen Saxe at ksaxe@gmail.com.

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LAUGHTER

I had my credit card stolen the other day but I didn't bother to report it because the thief spends less than my wife.
...
That awkward moment when you leave a store without buying anything and all you can think is "act natural, you're innocent".
...
A little boy asked his father, "Daddy, how much does it cost to get married?" Father replied, "I don't know son, I'm still paying."

DILBERT

I KEEP GETTING INTO DEBATES WITH THE A.I. YOU BUILT, AND IT REFUSES TO ADMIT I'M RIGHT.

IT KEEPS SENDING ME LINKS TO ARTICLES ON THE WRONG TOPIC AND CLAIMING IT "OWNED ME."

PLEASE DON'T ASK ME TO TAKE SIDES.

I NEED YOU TO BACK ME ON THIS.

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO BEFORE YOU DIE?

TO THE HOSPITAL TO PREVENT IT FROM HAPPENING.

I WAS THINKING PARIS.

TOO FAR. YOU'D DIE FIRST.

GARFIELD

MY UNCLE CLARENCE WAS A CIRCUS CLOWN

HE RETIRED LAST YEAR

THIRTY OF HIS BUDDIES CAME TO HIS RETIREMENT PARTY IN ONE CAR

ONCE A CLOWN, ALWAYS A CLOWN

RIPLEY'S BELIEVE IT OR NOT

DAGMAR ROTHMAN, "THE GREAT WALDO" COULD SWALLOW LIVE NICE AND REBURGATE THEM COMPLETELY UNHARMED.

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Submitted By Richard Pison, Lafayette, LA.

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5:00	Shuvaramba/ Bhaktisur	11:00	Headline News	16:30	New Entry
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

05:00	Bhakti Anusthan	12:00	Kantipur Diary	Diary
06:30	Kantipur Diary	12:10	Aafno Bhaka Aafno Geet	21:00
07:00	The Headliners	12:15	News Maker Of The Day	21:25
08:00	Development & Economics Diary	13:00	District Diary	21:30
08:05	The Good Morning Show	14:00	International Diary	22:00
08:30	Old Is Gold	14:05	K Chha Nepal	23:00
09:00	Kantipur Diary	15:00	Kantipur Diary	00:00
09:10	Traffic Updates	15:15	Kanung Bheja	00:00
09:15	National Song	16:00	Health & Education	00:01
09:20	Radio Talk	16:05	Sangalo	00:01
10:00	Sports Diary	17:00	District Diary	02:00
10:05	Taste Bud	17:05	Education Talk	02:00
11:00	Art & Entertainment Diary	18:00	Ica Door Sikchya	03:00
11:05	Taste Bud	19:00	Kantipur Diary	03:00
		20:00	Yatra Jeevank	04:00
			Security & Crime	04:00

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AVENGERS ENDGAME: 7:30 AM, 11:00 AM, 2:30 PM, 6:00 PM, 9:30 PM

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AVENGERS: ENDGAME (2D)

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ATMOS 2

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10:30 AM

2:00 PM

5:30 PM

9:00 PM

7:30 PM

11:00 AM

2:30 PM

6:00 PM

9:30 PM

X-SUPER DAYS

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

ALL DAY LONG

190

A MERO HAJUR 3

QFX CIVIL MALL: 12:00/15:15

QFX JAI NEPAL: 11:45

AVENGERS: ENDGAME

QFX LABIM MALL: 15:15/19:00

QFX CHHAYA CENTER: 11:45/19:00

QFX JAI NEPAL: 15:15/19:15

QFX KUMARI: 11:30/15:30/19:30

3D AVENGERS: ENDGAME

QFX CIVIL MALL: 08:00/8:30/11:15/12:30/15:30/16:30/18:45/19:30/20:30

QFX LABIM MALL: 07:45/08:15/11:45/12:15/15:45/16:15/19:45/20:15

QFX CHHAYA CENTER: 09:15/12:00/13:00/15:45/16:45/19:30/20:30

QFX KUMARI: 08:00/12:00/16:00/20:00

KALANK

QFX CHHAYA CENTER: 15:30

QFX LABIM MALL: 11:30

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

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, contact: 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**

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**

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 Gurgung. Contact: 4412999

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

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**

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.

Waterfront Resort presents 'The Amazing Motor Rally 2019' The sixth edition of this annual event takes place on February 1. For further details: 9801166313/9801166330

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

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

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**

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

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

We serve nothing but the finest **Arabic 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

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: indrawatieresort@gmail.com

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

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

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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

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

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**

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 Gurgung. **Contact: 4412999**

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 Restaurant & Bar**, contact: 4700091

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**

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 Bhujia, Friday-Live Music by Dexterous

Tranquility Spa at Hotel Radisson, now offering Body Scrubs for Rs 3,000. (50 percent discount for members). Opening hour, 8:00 am-8:00 pm. Contact Number: 01-4423888, 01-6200086

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

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

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

Warner predicts big scores in World Cup



David Warner of Sunrisers Hyderabad plays a shot during their IPL match against Kings XI Punjab at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad on Monday.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
HYDERABAD, APRIL 30

Australia batsman David Warner on Tuesday predicted a high-scoring World Cup in the uncertain English conditions.

Warner headed off to the Australian camp after ending his Indian Premier League with a 56-ball 81 to help Sunrisers Hyderabad thrash Kings XI Punjab by 45 runs on Monday. His knock, laced with seven fours and two sixes, capped off a successful return to top-level competitive cricket from a ball-tampering scandal.

The 32-year-old left IPL on top of the batting rankings with 692 runs from 12 innings, including eight fifties and a century. Warner predicted the World Cup, where Australia are defending champions, will be more IPL style high-octane cricket. "This World Cup, you'll see some high scores," Warner said. "For the batter, hopefully the ball isn't swinging too much. We are playing in England, they are a fantastic team. We are the reigning champions and for us it is going out there backing our abilities and being at our best."

Warner and former Australian captain Steve Smith served 12-month bans for cheating in a Cape Town Test in March last year along with teammate Cameron Bancroft, who missed nine months. Warner and Smith both performed well in the IPL to boost their confidence ahead of joining Australia's World Cup training camp in Brisbane on Thursday.

Smith was made Rajasthan Royals captain midway into the league despite not being eligible to lead the national side. Warner said the break away from cricket had given him time to reflect on his game. "I have had time off to work harder at my game. I put the bat down for 16-18 weeks and tried to be the best man I can be, the best husband I can be and that's worked for me."

Warner is keen to build on his IPL success when Australia start the World Cup against Afghanistan on June 1 in Bristol. He said his job as opening batsman was to "put runs on the board." "I am looking forward to that and this (IPL) is a great stepping stone," he added. Warner's Hyderabad team meanwhile, led by New Zealander Kane Williamson, is still fighting to make the playoffs as the T20 tournament reaches its climax.

Cricketer Faulkner clarifies after 'boyfriend' post causes confusion

REUTERS
MELBOURNE, APRIL 30

Australian cricketer James Faulkner caused confusion about his sexuality on social media on Tuesday after posting a picture of himself having dinner with "the boyfriend" before later clarifying he was "not gay".

Allrounder Faulkner, who turned 29 on Monday, shared a picture of himself at a restaurant with his mother and a male friend with his 339,000 followers on Instagram and wrote: "Birthday dinner with the boyfriend". He added the hashtag "#togetherfor5years". The post drew over 20,000 "likes" and supportive comments from fellow international cricketers.

Australia allrounder Glenn Maxwell wrote: "Happy birthday mate! Great courage." Former Australia fast bowler Shaun Tait echoed the sentiment, posting: "Great courage mate, bet you feel better happy



James Faulkner

birthday." Global media, including Britain's Daily Mail and The Guardian, reported that Faulkner had become the first Australian cricketer to "come out".

Cricket Australia (CA) poured cold water on the reports, however, with a spokesperson saying Faulkner had made a "joke" that was "taken out of context". Both CA and Faulkner later issued statements clarifying that the "boyfriend" was actually a long-time house mate and

good friend of the cricketer.

"There seems to be a misunderstanding about my post from last night, I am not gay, however it has been fantastic to see the support from and for the LGBT community," Faulkner wrote in a follow-up post on Instagram. "Let's never forget love is love, however @robjubbsta is just a great friend. Last night marked five years of being house mates! Good on everyone for being so supportive."

CA apologised on

Faulkner's behalf for any "unintended offence" while taking a shot at the media that reported he had come out. "His comment was made as a genuine reflection of his relationship with his business partner, best friend and house mate of five years," CA spokeswoman Karina Keisler said. "He was not contacted for clarification before some outlets reported his Instagram post as an announcement of a homosexual relationship. James and CA are supportive of the LGBTIQ community and recognises coming out can be an incredibly emotional time. The post was not in any way meant to make light of this and, though the support from the community was overwhelming and positive."

Faulkner was named man-of-the-match at the World Cup final in Melbourne four years ago but has not played an international since a one-day game away to India in October 2017.

Media slams Neymar for striking fan

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
RIO DE JANEIRO, APRIL 30

Neymar was branded a "coward" and "adolescent" by Brazilian media on Monday after the superstar struck a fan who had insulted Paris Saint-Germain players following their French Cup final defeat.

PSG lost 6-5 on penalties after a dramatic game finished 2-2 at the end of extra time on Saturday at the Stade de France. Numerous cell phones caught the moment that Neymar, the world's most expensive footballer, hit a fan in the face after he had taunted some of the players as they went to receive their medals.

The incident came days after Neymar was suspended for three Champions

League matches by UEFA for a foul-mouthed tirade at match officials following PSG's shock exit from this season's tournament to Manchester United. Neymar later admitted he had made a mistake hitting the fan, writing on Instagram: "Did I act badly? Yes. But no one can stay indifferent."

Brazilian sports commentators disagreed. "As if his endless failures, his lack of education, antipathy and superficiality were not enough, Neymar has now shown himself to be a coward," Juca Kfourri wrote in the influential daily Folha of Sao Paulo.

"For all his talent, Neymar will never be equal to Lionel Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo. If he is happy that way, let him enjoy it."

Another columnist for the same newspaper, Mathias Alencastro, said Neymar had turned into a "rebellious adolescent." Neymar "appears incapable of dealing with criticism, of dealing with frustrations," wrote Marcelo Tieppo for the news site Terra.

"It might be comfortable for the Brazilian to continue in this fantasy world, but it would be better if the striker started to live in reality."

The victim of the blow, named only as Edouard, a 28-year-old delivery driver from Nantes, denied he had insulted Neymar. "I told him that they had been useless," Edouard told French sports daily L'Equipe. "When the players passed Verratti, Buffon, I mocked them: 'You are worthless. Allez Rennes!'"

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SPORTS DIGEST

APF clinch women's volleyball championship

KATHMANDU: Nepal Armed Police Force Club clinched the fifth KNP National Women's Volleyball Championship title with a 25-14, 25-9, 25-15 win over Tribhuvan Army Club on Tuesday. New Diamond Academy won the third-place playoff with a 25-22, 25-18, 25-22 victory over Nepal Police Club in the tournament organised by the Sher Bahadur Khadka Memorial Academy. The champions received Rs 200,000 and the runners-up got Rs 100,000. The third-placed New Diamond got Rs 50,000. Prativa Mali of New Diamond won the beset spiker award while Hira KC of APF claimed the best blocker honour. Manisha Tamang of APF was named the best defender and Sofia Pun of Army the best server. **(SB)**

Women's Twenty20 League postponed, again

KATHMANDU: NCL Sports Pvt Ltd on Tuesday announced new dates for the Women's Twenty20 League pushing the tournament after it coincided with the PM Cup One-Day National Cricket. The women's city-based franchise tournament was scheduled for May 20-27 but will be held now on June 7-14, informed the organisers. Prime Minister Cup is an annual programme of the National Sports Council which is also overtaking the responsibilities of handing over the TU Stadium to tournament organisers in absence of Cricket Association of Nepal. The Women's T20 League is participated in by Bhairahawa Queens, Dhangadhi Wonder Women, Kathmandu Super Champions and Biratnagar Roaring Lioness. **(SB)**

Karnali Sports Club gets financial support

KATHMANDU: Labels Store Private Limited, the sole authorised distributors of Adidas in Nepal, handed Rs 250,000 to Karnali Sports Club run by veteran athlete Hari Bahadur Rokaya in Kathmandu on Tuesday. According to Labels, Rs 100,000 will be used in running the club while the rest will be utilised to conduct Ultra Race which the club has been holding annually. The club in Jumla has been instrumental in producing some of the best athletes in the country including Bishwo Rupa Budha, Rajpura Pachai and Durga Budha. **(SB)**

Saraswoti secure last four berth

KATHMANDU: Saraswoti Youth Club defeated hosts Deepshikha Yuva Samuha 2-0 to enter the semi-finals of Chandragiri Gold Cup football tournament in Naikap, Kathmandu, on Tuesday. Sujit Budathoki and Sanjiv Lama were on targets for the Koteswhor-based team. Budathoki opened scoring in the 36th minute before Lama doubled their advantage in the 77th. Budathoki was declared man-of-the-match and won Rs 5,000. Chyasal Youth Club will take on Birgunj Club on Wednesday. **(SB)**

Turkish Airlines golf kicks off on May 11

KATHMANDU: Turkish Airlines is organising the qualifying event for Turkish Airlines World Golf Cup at the Gokarna Golf Club on May 11. Around 100 golfers including will participate in the amateur tournament to be played over 18 holes. The winner will qualify for the finals to be held on November 1 in Antalya, Turkey. Abdullah Tuncer Kecici, the general manager of the Airlines in Kathmandu, said the Airlines has been organising such tournaments in more than 100 destinations. **(SB)**

Football coach Kapali passes away

KATHMANDU: Former coach of Ranipokhari Corner Team Baijunath Hospital Kathmandu on Tuesday. Kapali, 68, was admitted to the hospital on April 22 after suffering from a brain haemorrhage. He had been RCT coach for about four decades. He led the team to 'B' Division title last season. But the team did not earn promotion as there was no such provision. Kapali is survived by a son, two daughters and wife. His final rites were performed on Tuesday. **(SB)**

Golden Gate back to winning ways in Basketball League



Suraj Khadgi (right) of Kirtipur Club dribbles past Nikesh Rakhall of Royal Basketball Club during their Nepal Basketball league match in Kirtipur on Tuesday.

ADARSHA DHAKAL
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Defending champions Golden Gate International Club bounced back from their opening day defeat at the hands of Tribhuvan Army Club to open their account in the Nepal Basketball League on Tuesday.

Playing away to Budhanilkantha Municipality Basketball Club, a solid offensive game in the last four minutes of the third quarter lifted Golden Gate to an 85-70 victory. Golden Gate are almost unchanged this season with a strong squad including former and current national players but were shocked in their title defence losing 104-69 to the last year's runners-up on Saturday.

At one stage in their second match in Goltuara, Golden Gate looked like heading toward another upset, this time even bigger, but they converted almost all their shots in the last four minutes in the third quarter to gain an upper hand in the game. Golden Gate with a 24-17 lead in the first quarter and built an eight-point lead with 18-17 cushion in the second period.

Budhanilkantha continued to impress at their home court and reduced the deficit to six points giving themselves a chance at 57-43 with four minutes remaining in the third quarter. National team member Rajiv Shrestha and former Nepal international Karma Gurung sunk a three each with Binod Shrestha converting two twos handing Golden Gate a 67-51 lead with 28 seconds left.

Sugat Deep Singh's two-pointer made 67-53 at the end of the third quarter but Budhanilkantha hardly managed to fight their way back into the game. Budhanilkantha led the final quarter 19-18. Gurung scored 20 points, had eight rebounds and made four assists to walk away with the most valuable player award. Shrestha also contributed 15 points and took nine rebounds.

Earlier in the morning match, Royal Basketball Club registered their second consecutive victory defeating Kirtipur Basketball Team 72-61 in their away game. On their way to winning second away game in a row, Kunkhen Jit Theeng scored 13 for Royal to remain the third unbeaten team in the league after leaders Times International Club and Tribhuvan Army Club.

A strong performance in the first two quarters laid the victory foundation for Royal who began with 20-15 lead. The lead stretched to 13 points after Royal added another 18 in the second quarter with Kirtipur managing just 10. The hosts managed to reduced the deficit to eight points taking the third quarter 20-15 but Royal sealed the victory leading the final 10 minutes 19-16. Theeng was adjudged the most valuable player.

On Wednesday Army will host Kirtipur in Bhadrakali and another title contenders Times will be up against Golden Gate for an away game in Battisputali.

ANFA ropes in CG for national school football

PRAJWAL OLI
LALITPUR, APRIL 30

All Nepal Football Association on Tuesday roped in Chaudhary Group as its sponsor for annual nationwide inter-school football tournament to begin next month in Satdobato, Lalitpur.

The tournament will be played across 52 districts including 48 districts affiliated with the football governing body in the initial stage. The second stage of the tournament will see provincial-level competition before the tournament enters final round in Kathmandu. Altogether 16 teams will be picked up for the finals. The event will have participation of at least 1,500 schools, informed ANFA.

ANFA President Karma Tsering Sherpa and CG Group Vice President GP Sah signed the memorandum of understanding. The agreement will be valid for five years with CG providing ANFA Rs 5.5 million annually. The amount will increase by Rs 500,000 each year reaching Rs 8 million at the end of the fifth year. The tournament will be branded as Kwiks Cup Inter School National Football Tournament. The tournament will be a replacement for the Coca-Cola Cup Inter School tournament.

CG Group Managing Director Nirvana Chaudhary thanked ANFA for providing the opportunity for tying up with football. Recalling that the Group was involved in promotion and development of cricket in the country for more than a decade, Chaudhary said: "Like cricket, we want to help football regain its lost glory. Our number one priority for next five years period will be football," he said.

Terming the agreement as historic, ANFA President



Karma Tsering Sherpa

Sherpa said that the agreement had turned football governing body's dream of youth football into reality. "It is essential to end malpractices in the tournament, most notably deceiving the real age and changing the identity to play the game," said Sherpa adding that ANFA would start online registration system of the players in an attempt to discourage such ill practices. Only players upto 16 years of age will be eligible to compete in the tournament.

According to the ANFA President, the detail modality of the tournament will be finalised once the process of drafting tournament regulation will be finalised. The expected cost of the tournament is Rs 15 million. ANFA will get Rs 3 million for the government of Nepal while the football governing body bear rest of the costs from the development funds provided by FIFA and Asian Football Confederation.

The eventual champions will receive Rs 500,000 and the runners-up will get Rs 300,000. The third place finishers will walk away with Rs 200,000.

Army in semi-finals of Karnali Premier League

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Tribhuvan Army Club joined Karnali XI in the semi-finals of the Karnali Premier League Twenty20 cricket tournament with a 107-run drubbing of Midwestern Cricket Club at the Kalinchowk Cricket Grounds in Surkhet on Tuesday.

Army rode on half centuries from Hari Bahadur Chauhan and Rajesh Pulami Magar to compile 178-7 in 20 overs before dismissing Midwestern Club for 71 runs in 16.4 overs in the Group 'A' match. Army lost opener Raju Rijal for a golden duck but Chauhan and Magar played whirlwind knocks to help their team post a daunting total.

Magar slammed 57 and Chauhan scored 53. Man-of-the-match Magar hit five boundaries and three sixes in his 35-ball knock while Chauhan clobbered seven boundaries and a six in his 37-ball innings. Binod Bhandari also chipped in 22 off 20 balls and Rohit Kumar Poudel 19 off 15 balls. Amit Tamang and Ajay Sahani claimed two wickets each for Midwestern Club.

Midwestern meekly surrendered chasing the big total as Pranit Thapa Magar top scored for them with 19 off 18 deliveries. Kushal Malla snared four wickets, while Sahab Alam and Susan Bhari claimed two wicket apiece for the

Army team.

In the day's first match, a scintillating knock from Nishcal Chaudhary steered New Horizon to a five-wicket win over Himalayan Cricket Academy. Batting first, Himalayan Academy were bowled out for 92 runs in 18.2 overs and New Horizon chased down the total in 14 overs losing five wickets in the process. The result meant New Horizon and APF are tied on four points from three matches in Group 'B'. Mahendranagar Cricket Academy have two points. Wednesday's match between Mahendranagar and APF will decide the semi-finalists from the pool.

Himalayan Academy lost openers Shakti Bhandari (5) and Padam KC (0) cheaply before batting contributions from Dipendra Airee, Sharad Khadka and Birat Bhandari helped them pose a reasonable score on the board. Airee top-scored with 24-ball 25 with three hits to the fence, while Khadka chipped in 15 and Bhandari 13. Arjun Rayamajhi took three while Shakti Gauchan and Govinda Khatri claimed two wickets each for New Horizon.

New Horizon were in a dire straits at 32-5 before a whirlwind knock from Chaudhary rescued the team. Chaudhary hit four sixes and three fours in 29 balls. Pawan Karki claimed three and Hemanta Dhami took two wickets for Himalayan Academy.

Three Star earn hard-fought win

PARBAT PORTEL
KAKARVITTA, APRIL 30

A late goal from defender Ananta Tamang guided Three Star Club to a hard fought 1-0 victory over Mai Valley Club of Ilam as they entered the semi-finals of the fourth Mechinagar Gold Cup football tournament in Kakarvitta on Tuesday.

Nepali international centre-back Tamang scored the all-important goal four minutes from time to send Three Star into semi-finals. The Lalitpur-based team will meet Tribhuvan Army Club in the semi-finals on Thursday after Nepal Police Club take on Sankata Club in the other semi-final match on Wednesday.

Mai Valley dominated the early exchange and kept Three Star under intense pressure until the interval. In the 17th minute Rajiv Lopchan ended up firing inches above bar for Mai Valley. Three Star's foreign recruit Ellon Maxwell ended up firing off target in Sunil Bal's cross. Lopchan wasted scoring chances in the 30th and 34th as he failed to find target in the first attempt and later could not connect a Sushil Yadav cross.



Rupesh KC (right) of Three Star Club in action against Mai Valley Club during their Mechinagar Gold Cup football tournament match in Kakarvitta, Jhapa, on Tuesday.

Three Star bounced back in the second half and created scoring chance in the 46th minute only to see Maxwell go off target. In the 53rd minute, Manasa Webhagui smashed above the bar before Sushil Rai's header in Rupesh KC crossed sealed above bar in the 74th minute. Three Star's Tamang finally broke the

deadlock in the 86th minute as he capitalised on a Rai cross to stun goalie Sojit Gurung. The ball entered the net after taking a slight deflection off the woodwork. Rai was declared man-of-the-match and won Rs 11,000.

Mai Valley coach Pasang Sherpa said his team lost the match due to lack of proper

understanding between Nepali and foreign players. "We wasted a lot of scoring opportunities and the luck also did not favour us," he said. Three Star coach Meghraj KC said his side played well below its potential. "The team failed to play as per the expectations," he said.

Another chance for Barca's old guard to leave heavier stamp on Europe

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BARCELONA, APRIL 30

It was ten years ago Alex Ferguson dubbed them the best team he had ever faced but those left from Barcelona's iconic generation still have work to do.

Three remain and when Lionel Messi, Sergio Busquets and Gerard Pique line up against Liverpool on Wednesday, they may wonder if this could be their best chance of another, and perhaps final, Champions League triumph. Pep Guardiola's mesmeric side had just danced around and dizzied Manchester United in 2009, their 2-0 victory completing an historic treble, when Ferguson conceded: "Nobody has given us a hiding like that."

But not long after the final whistle at Wembley, Ferguson expressed doubts too, about the longevity of

that Barca group and then, whether they could ever be replaced. "Great teams go in cycles and the cycle they're in at the moment is the best in Europe," he said. "How long it lasts and whether they can replace that team...they have the philosophy but it's difficult to say if you can find players like Xavi, (Andres) Iniesta and Messi all the time. Probably not."

Xavi and Iniesta have gone, succeeded by the all-encompassing Ivan Rakitic and, more recently, Arthur Melo, who could mature into the kind of player his predecessors would admire. Messi, who turns 32 in June, Busquets, who will be 31 in July, and Pique, already 32, have hung on, driving the club through fresh cycles of success.

But in some ways perhaps, Ferguson was right. They could never sustain the Guardiola



A file photo of Barcelona star Lionel Messi at the Camp Nou Stadium.

method in full, in part because pressing began to neutralise possession but mainly because that group of players was unique. In the Champions League, glory came again quickly in 2011,

United again the victims, but from 2012 to 2018, it followed only once more, after beating Juventus in 2015.

When Barcelona outplayed United in 2009, they had already

won La Liga, the first of eight league titles in 11 years, the last of those confirmed by victory over Levante on Saturday, when Messi scored the winner. "Our objective now is the treble," said president Josep Bartomeu. He knows domestic dominance has been tarnished by underachievement in Europe and, regardless of whether they win another double this term, this team's season will be defined by them beating Liverpool, and then either Tottenham or Ajax on June 1.

Messi, Busquets and Pique have played in 34 Champions League semi-finals matches between them and while the likelihood is there will be more to come, nothing is guaranteed. If the next takes as long to arrive as this one, Messi will be almost 36. When Ernesto Valverde took charge at the start of last season, Barcelona were

wounded by consecutive Super Cup defeats to Real Madrid. "For the first time I feel inferior to them," said Pique.

Now they sit 18 points ahead of them in the league, having finished 17 clear of them last season. But inferiority in Europe still rankles. It is Real's name on the cup next to four of the last five years. And for the remnants of one of Barcelona's most symbolic eras, time is running out to put it right.

There are green shoots emerging, a new cycle—Arthur, Ousmane Dembele, Clement Lenglet and Carles Alena—coming through. "I hope I can be part of the new wave," Lenglet told AFP Sport in February. "There is a regeneration of the squad that is preparing for the future and I hope to be a part of that."

Freddie de Jong could face Barcelona in the final in Madrid,

in what would be his last Ajax appearance before joining the Catalans in July. He may not replace Busquets but the 21-year-old will, at the very least, challenge him. Pique has been one of his team's standout players in central defence but there are plans there too. The 19-year-old Jean-Clair Todibo arrived from Toulouse in January and Matthijs de Ligt could follow De Jong from Ajax in the summer.

As for Messi, there may never be a successor but four Champions League titles, one fewer than Cristiano Ronaldo, means there is a sense hanging over the club of a record unfinished. In that way, Liverpool could encounter the same problem Manchester United did a decade ago. "We never got control of Messi," Ferguson said. "But a lot of people will end up saying that."

NEWS DIGEST

BP quarterly profits leap by a fifth

LONDON: British energy giant BP said on Tuesday that first-quarter net profits jumped by almost a fifth, as rising production and lower costs eclipsed the impact of weaker oil and gas prices. Profit after tax rallied 19 percent to \$2.9 billion (2.6 billion euros) in the three months to the end of March, BP said in a results statement. That compared with \$2.5 billion during the same period last year. Energy production rose about 2.4 percent to 3.8 million barrels of oil equivalent per day. Output was lifted by last year's vast purchase of US shale oil and gas operations from mining titan BHP, as well as new projects in Egypt, Trinidad and Tobago and the Gulf of Mexico. However, underlying replacement cost profit slid eight percent to \$2.4 billion, although slightly above analysts' forecasts. **(AFP)**

Spotify hits 100 million subscribers, revenue jump

CALIFORNIA: Spotify Technology SA, the world's leading streaming platform, said on Monday it had hit 100 million paid subscribers as it reported a better-than-expected rise in first-quarter revenue. The global leader in the sector, with double the number of subscribers of near-rival Apple Music, Spotify has launched in places like India, the Middle East and North Africa in recent months, seeking to fuel the next stage of its development as it continues to price aggressively in the developed world. **(REUTERS)**

US trade negotiators arrive in Beijing for more talks

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
BEIJING, APRIL 30

Top American negotiators arrived in Beijing on Tuesday hoping for progress in a new round of talks with Chinese counterparts as they home in on a deal to end a months-long trade war.

The US side indicated before their trip that China's massive industrial subsidies would be a top issue as the world's two leading economies seek to resolve a dispute that has included bruising tit-for-tat tariffs on \$360 billion worth of goods.

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin and Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer are leading the US side for this week's 10th round of high-level negotiations, with Vice Premier Liu He representing Beijing.

Liu is then expected to travel to Washington on May 8 to continue the negotiations.

"We hope to make substantial progress in these two meetings," Mnuchin told reporters at his hotel in Beijing ahead of the talks.

Mnuchin declined to say what would be discussed but he told the New York Times that the talks would continue to focus on China's practise of subsidising industries.

Last week President Xi



US Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin arrives at a hotel in Beijing on Tuesday. Mnuchin arrived for the latest round of trade talks aimed at ending a trade war between the US and China.

Jinping vowed to abolish unreasonable subsidies to Chinese firms, addressing the key US demand head on.

"We will overhaul and abolish unjustified regulations, subsidies and practises that impede fair competition and distort the market," Xi told world leaders at a summit in Beijing on his signature Belt and Road global infrastructure project.

Xi's decision to raise the contentious issue in front of an international audience was significant, according to observers. "It being mentioned in that forum at that level may foreshadow reforms

resulting from US-China trade talks, allowing Beijing to frame such outcomes as steps forward for the Chinese economy rather than concessions to Washington," said Jacob Parker, vice president of the US-China Business Council.

Beijing's state subsidies are part and parcel of its industrial policy and experts say policymakers are unlikely to give up their goals of developing commercial aircraft and semi-conductor industries, or other strategic areas seen as key to China's future.

China's State Council, its cabinet, has in recent months returned repeatedly to the

idea of competitive neutrality, meaning equal treatment for private and state-owned businesses, and domestic and multinational firms.

"Some subsidies have been stopped, and I believe the principle of competitive neutrality will be implemented in all aspects in the future," said economist Cui Fan of the University of International Business and Economics.

A new foreign investment law guaranteed foreign-invested firms equal access to state aid programmes, he noted.

The United States and the European Union have long complained that China has created an uneven playing field by heavily subsidising Chinese firms, while erecting hurdles for foreign companies seeking to tap the Asian power's vast market.

China's subsidies are highly opaque, with the local and central governments and a variety of different agencies all doling out grants to support firms in favoured industries.

The US's main goal "would be to list out all subsidies that are received domestically within China today," Parker said. "Transparency, equal access for foreign companies, and enforcement of that transparency is probably the key," he said.

Bleak outlook



Foreign tourists sit on an otherwise deserted beach in Negombo, Sri Lanka, on Tuesday. Tourist arrivals in Colombo will fall by 50 percent over the next two months following the Easter Sunday bombings that killed more than 250 people, Sri Lanka's Tourism Bureau Chairman Kishu Gomes predicted on Monday.

Eurozone recession fears fade as growth picks up

ASSOCIATED PRESS
LONDON, APRIL 30

The recent slowdown in the eurozone economy, which had stoked fears that another recession was around the corner, appears to have come to an end.

Official figures released on Tuesday show that the 19-country single currency bloc saw economic growth double in the first quarter of the year and that has helped unemployment fall to its lowest level since the global financial crisis.

Eurostat, the European Union's statistics agency, said the eurozone economy expanded by 0.4% in the first quarter from the previous three-month period.

That's double the rate experienced

in the last quarter of 2018 and suggests that a period of rapid slowdown may be over.

Eurostat did not provide details though some eurozone countries have released national figures.

Spain did particularly well in the first quarter of 2019 with quarterly growth of 0.7% and Italy nudged out of recession with 0.2% expansion. But France underwhelmed with a rate of only 0.3%.

The prevailing view is that the European Central Bank's cheap monetary policy—under which it has kept interest rates at super-low levels—is continuing to help economic activity, particularly consumer spending.

"Given the continuing weakness in manufacturing,

this is a very respectable result," said Christoph Weil, an economist at Commerzbank. "It shows that domestic demand, fueled by the ECB's ultra-expansive monetary policy, continues to support the economy."

Despite the quarterly increase, the eurozone is far short of the sort of growth it was posting before the slowdown began in the middle of last year. On an annual basis, growth remains tepid at 1.2%.

The eurozone, like many other parts of the global economy, faltered last year as trade tensions between the United States and China became more acute, oil prices rose and uncertainty over Britain's departure from the EU weighed on business confidence.

Toyota to build Lexus in Canada: Trudeau

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
CAMBRIDGE (CANADA), APRIL 30

Japanese automaker Toyota will assemble two models of its Lexus in Canada starting in 2022, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced Monday.

It will be the first time that the Lexus NX and NX hybrid sport utility vehicles are produced outside of Japan, Trudeau said.

He told a news conference the Cambridge, Ontario assembly plant 50 miles (80 kilometres) west of Toronto

would supply the Canadian and US markets. Toyota announced last year it would invest Can\$1.4 billion (\$1 billion) in its two Ontario facilities, in Cambridge and in nearby Woodstock, which assembles its RAV4 vehicles.

It plans to concentrate its North American production of hybrid vehicles in the province. Ottawa also pitched in Can\$110 million.

The two assembly lines can build over 500,000 vehicles annually, making Toyota the largest automotive manufacturer in Canada.



The new Lexus NX luxury SUV is unveiled at the Toyota Cambridge plant in Ontario

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HIGHEST LOSERS

RBCL	ALICL	JSLBB	NICL	GILB	KMFL
-5.89%	-4.95%	-4.50%	-3.81%	-3.78%	-3.72%

MODERATE LOSERS

NLG	NBBL	SLBBL	PLIC	NLICL	NLIC
-3.63%	-3.60%	-3.59%	-3.50%	-3.45%	-3.41%

MODERATE GAINERS

RADHI	SADBL	CHCL	PMHPL	NIBLPF	HPPL
3.75%	3.92%	4.37%	4.62%	4.83%	4.97%

HIGHEST GAINERS

AKPL	NHPC	RRHP	UMHL	AHPC	SHPC
5.52%	5.79%	6.59%	8.18%	9.70%	9.96%

Nepal Stock Exchange					
Singhadurbar Plaza, Kathmandu					
April 30, 2019					
TRADING INFORMATION			TRADING PRICE		
SN	COMPANY	MAX	MIN	CLOSING	NO. SHARES
1	Agriculture Dev Bank Ltd	391	382	390	27651
2	Ankhu Khola Jalavidyut Co Ltd	82	78	80	290
3	Api Power Co Ltd	145	133	139	37885
4	Arambha Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	596	588	590	865
5	Atom Power Ltd	184	172	181	12666
6	Atom Valley Hydropower Dev Co Ltd	113	102	113	98472
7	Asha Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	475	465	471	1290
8	Asian Life Insurance Co Ltd	446	441	441	12750
9	Bank of Kathmandu Ltd	290	280	287	14760
10	Baran Hydropower Co Ltd	96	93	93	8940
11	Best Fin Co Ltd	96	96	96	740
12	Bharat Bhasa Bank Ltd	175	169	169	2381
13	Bhatu Bazar Co Ltd	1665	1640	1640	70
14	Budhad Power Ltd	489	375	395	35326
15	Central Fin Co Ltd	111	111	111	2610
16	Century Commercial Bank Ltd	179	173	174	35433
17	Chaudari Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	500	491	498	840
18	Chitwan Laghubitta Bhitthya Bank Ltd	990	988	989	30398
19	Chitragiri Hydropower Ltd	99	97	98	104
20	Chilime Hydropower Co Ltd	578	546	573	33381
21	Citizen Bank International Ltd	231	225	228	23438
22	Citizens Investment Trust	2501	2510	2503	1456
23	Citizens Mutual Fund - I	971	973	954	14000
24	City Express Fin Co Ltd	97	97	97	50
25	Civil Bank Ltd	158	155	155	28980
26	Civil Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	565	565	565	10
27	Devi Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	750	725	725	3357
28	Deva Bikas Bank Ltd	139	132	134	16291
29	Dibayashori Hydropower Ltd	81	80	80	106
30	Direkt Bank Ltd	666	656	665	12311
31	Direkt Insurance Co Ltd	495	482	489	3019
32	Excel Dev Bank Ltd	315	312	315	3093
33	First Micro Fin Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	444	429	438	15680
34	Forward Community Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1600	1580	1588	587
35	Gandaki Bikas Bank Ltd	228	210	210	14919
36	Ganesh Bikas Bank Ltd	223	216	219	40334
37	Ghahat MIE Bank Ltd	321	311	313	49107
38	Ghahat MIE Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1240	1195	1196	1329
39	Goodwin Fin Co Ltd	119	119	119	30
40	Green Bank Nepal Ltd	378	368	368	3620
41	Green Dev Bank Ltd	107	104	107	36019
42	Gulshewari Merchant Bank & Fin Co Ltd	130	126	130	1020
43	Garara Life Insurance Co Ltd	592	566	566	5016
44	Gaurakshi Co Ltd	112	112	111	5250
45	Himalayan Bank Ltd	590	580	581	16277
46	Himalayan Distillery Ltd	1405	1405	1405	45
47	Himalayan General Insurance Co Ltd	425	403	403	4874
48	Himalayan Power Partner Ltd	196	176	190	3206
49	Hydroelectricity Investment and Dev Co Ltd	151	140	145	24038
50	ICFC Fin Ltd	163	155	163	2057
51	IME General Insurance Ltd. Promoter Share	248	248	248	1000
52	IME General Insurance Ltd.	445	420	428	1815
53	Janki Fin Ltd	176	175	175	257
54	Jarauta Bank Nepal Ltd	203	199	200	73825
55	Janaartha Samudayic Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	2256	2100	2100	40
56	Jyoti Bikas Bank Ltd	145	142	145	4889
57	Kailash Bikas Bank Ltd	234	227	234	5410
58	Kalka Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	762	742	742	104
59	Kalka power Co Ltd	93	88	93	590
60	Kamana Sewa Bikas Bank Ltd	152	148	151	9005
61	Kanchan Dev Bank Ltd	175	175	175	80
62	Karnali Bikas Bank Ltd	129	127	128	847
63	Karnali Dev Bank Ltd	100	97	98	1380
64	Kharikhola Hydropower Co Ltd	76	73	76	741
65	Kisan Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	858	827	827	198
66	Kurman Bank Ltd	232	223	226	168434
67	Laxmi Bank Ltd	234	227	228	33165
68	Laxmi Equity Fund	845	843	845	8200
69	Laxmi Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	815	810	815	136
70	Laxmi Value Fund-I	10.15	10.15	10.15	1000
71	Life Insurance Co. Nepal	1931	1853	1875	791
72	Lumbini Bikas Bank Ltd	200	195	198	10694
73	Lumbini General Insurance Co. Ltd	547	515	521	13367
74	Machhapuchhre Bank Ltd	269	261	264	49038
75	Maharaja Bikas Bank Ltd	192	186	190	6181
76	Mahila Sahayogic Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	615	515	525	33
77	Mahuli Samudayic Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1255	1230	1230	205
78	Manjushree Fin Ltd	115	114	115	2116
79	Mega Bank Nepal Ltd	192	185	187	46389
80	Mega Bank Nepal Ltd. Promoter Share	110	110	110	39450
81	Mero Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	685	670	670	1257
82	Mimire Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	987	968	968	370
83	Miten Dev Bank Ltd	170	265	265	388
84	Mittra Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	90	87	90	490
85	Muktimath Bikas Bank Ltd	395	386	389	13900
86	NABL Bank Ltd	871	851	856	7584
87	NABL Bank Ltd Promoter Share	854	828	834	5698
88	Nadi Equity Fund	8.97	8.80	8.90	33029
89	Nadi Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	335	307	322	10000
90	Nagbhel Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	626	615	615	203
91	National Hydro Power Co Ltd	75	70	73	62154
92	National Life Insurance Co. Ltd.	707	670	670	10825
93	National Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1769	1710	1719	745
94	Nepa Nepal Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	477	452	452	3361
95	Neco Insurance Co. Ltd.	540	530	530	15643
96	Nepal Bangladesh Bank Ltd	234	229	232	35568
97	Nepal Bank Ltd	312	315	318	29457
98	Nepal Community Dev Bank Ltd	138	138	138	12010
99	Nepal Credit And Commercial Bank Ltd	241	236	237	46188
100	Nepal Doorsanchar Company Ltd	709	696	700	1703
101	Nepal Hydro Developp Ltd	135	135	135	10
102	Nepal Insurance Co. Ltd.	415	399	403	42863
103	Nepal Investment Bank Ltd	580	567	568	20076
104	Nepal Investment Bank Ltd. Promoter Share	545	537	540	2583
105	Nepal Life Insurance Co. Ltd.	1209	1269	1271	124075
106	Nepal Life Insurance Co. Ltd. Promoter	693	693	693	24024
107	Nepal SBI Bank Ltd	500	481	481	9163
108	Nepal Sewa Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	496	485	485	70
109	Neruda Laghubitta Bikas Bank Ltd	517	495	495	1406
110	Nepal Group Power Ltd	125	117	122	824
111	NBL Fugali Fund	8.02	7.89	8.02	6910
112	NBL Samridhi Fund I	10.25	10.05	10.05	167607
113	NIC Asia Bank Ltd	500	492	495	23369
114	NIC Asia Growth Fund	10.04	9.80	9.80	22000
115	Nirman Uthhan Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	895	884	884	1842
116	NLG Insurance Co. Ltd.	882	848	848	773
117	NMB Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1000	996	996	200
118	NMB Bank Ltd	390	380	386	42185
119	NMB Hybrid Fund-I	9.78	9.59	9.75	1427
120	NMB Value Investment Fund-I	11.05	11.03	11.03	20000
121	Oriental Hotels Ltd	525	506	518	12567
122	Panchakanya Mai Hydropower Ltd	115	106	113	2880
123	Pokhara Fin Ltd	138	133	138	1447
124	Prabhu Bank Ltd	294	286	288	61759
125	Prabhu Insurance Ltd.	440	433	435	8299
126	Premier Insurance Co. Ltd.	1120	1070	1076	4310
127	Prime Commercial Bank Ltd.	358	353	353	44054
128	Prime Life Insurance Co. Ltd.	513	495	495	12028
129	Prudential Insurance Co. Ltd.	725	721	724	2053
130	Radii Biddyt Co Ltd	166	155	166	286
131	Rairang Hydropower Dev Co Ltd	97	91	97	780
132	Rastriya Beema Co Ltd	10110	9457	9646	460
133	Rastriya Beema Co Ltd Promoter Share	8805	8800	8800	320
134	Reliance Fin Ltd	123	119	120	6247
135	Ridi Hydropower Dev Co Ltd	102	94	97	6063
136	RMDCL Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	663	638	645	4775
137	RSCCL Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	431	402	413	2919
138	Sagarimati Insurance Co. Ltd.	1375	1370	1370	365
139	Sahayogi Bikas Bank Ltd	202	198	198	4074
140	Samatha Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1250	1225	1249	124
141	Samudayic Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	668	635	643	200
142	Sara Kisan Bikas Bank Ltd	3041	3021	3023	2669
143	Sarima Bank Ltd	365	354	357	29972
144	Sarima Equity Fund	9.89	9.89	9.89	15000
145	Sarima Mai Hydropower Ltd	276	247	276	125611
146	Shangha Dev Bank Ltd	159	151	159	6257
147	Shikhar Insurance Co. Ltd.	930	897	915	4037
148	Shine Resurg Dev Bank Ltd	257	252	254	9988
149	Shine Resurg Dev Bank Ltd. Promoter Share	130	130	130	27488
150	SHWAM CEMENTS LTD	330	316	328	22599
151	Shree Investment Fin Co Ltd	188	182	182	788
152	Shrigana Fin (Bhitthya Sanstha)	223	223	223	1000
153	Siddhartha Bank Ltd	352	342	346	55578
154	Siddhartha Equity Fund	9.94	9.75	9.76	13000
155	Siddhartha Equity Oriented Scheme	10.10	10.10	10.10	23500
156	Siddhartha Insurance Ltd.	635	627	627	1825
157	Soaltee Hotel Ltd	232	226	230	12860
158	Standard Chartered Bank Ltd	734	700	705	7935
159	Sunam Micro Fin Dev Bank Ltd	660	657	660	136
160	Surya Bank Ltd	288	288	288	27222
161	Support Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	520	516	519	80
162	Surya Life Insurance Co Ltd	592	565	573	8055
163	Suryodaya Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1030	990	1009	712
164	Swadhamani Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	942	920	920	2005
165	Swadesh Laghubitta Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	685	655	655	4648
166	Swargor Laghu Bitta Bikas Bank Ltd	525	510	510	1264
167	Synergy Power Dev Ltd	106	104	106	401
168	Taranga Agency Hotel Ltd	243	238	240	2300
169	Unilever Nepal Ltd	20655	20655	20655	10
170	United Fin Ltd	190	188	188	60
171	United Insurance Co. (Nepal) Ltd	985	957	957	3702
172	United Mod Hydropower Ltd	119	108	119	3626
173	UNIVERSAL POWER LTD	99	90	98	6710
174	Unnati Microfin Bhitthya Sanstha Ltd	1200	1190	1200	76
175	Upper Tamakoshi Hydropower Ltd	249	233	244	156692
176	World Merchant Banking & Fin Ltd	81	81	81	20
Total Traded Amount Rs.:		950,086,936	Sub-Indices	Current	Pts Change %Change
Total Traded Shares:		2,967,358	Banking	1,171.04	9.82 0.83
Total Transactions:		10,074	Trading	245.49	4.82 1.92
INDEX			Hotels	1,930.98	24.88 1.27
NEPSE		1,298.60	Dev Bank	1,573.98	2.73 0.17
Sensitive		2.74	HydroPower	1,236.75	45.49 3.82
Float		95.78	Finance	628.28	1.03 0.16
Base: 16/07/2006, (Adjusted on 10/04/2007) = 100					

Demand for automobile accessories spikes in Nepal

KRISHANA PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

The demand for automobile accessories has surged with the country importing parts and accessories of motor vehicle worth Rs3.18 billion in first seven months which had stood at Rs2.55 billion during the review period last year. Many vehicle owners opt for accessories to give their ride a new look, from car covers, roof racks, seat covers, chrome fittings and more while others opt to improve the safety of their vehicles, said traders. Other popular accessories include reverse parking camera, first aid kits, child seats, vacuum cleaner and LED auxiliary lamps. The statistics of Trade and Export Promotion Centre show that the import of car accessories has increased by 24.38 percent during mid-July to mid-February in the current fiscal year compared to the same time period of last year. The country imports automobile accessories mainly from India and China. “The demand for automobile accessories has been increasing with the rising number of vehicles users,” said, Raju Pradhan, proprietor of Beatles Decor at



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