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NEPAL'S LARGEST SELLING ENGLISH DAILY

Opposition

lawmakers,

rights body

to bill to

officials object

amend Human

Rights Act

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 governciting 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 Malaysiabased 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 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

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 invest-

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 compensa-

tion 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 >> CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



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

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 begin-

ning of a new era in the country. Rallies led by workers and their unions were taken out in various parts the country and promotic and posters were plastered all across

All three parties-workers, government agencies and employers—had cele-

brated 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

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

"The number of employers coming 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 —will be going to the social security

"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 contribstruggling 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

>> CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

जरूरी सूचना

गणतन्त्र स्मारकमा राखिने सन्दर्भ सामाग्रीसम्बन्धी

नेपालको राज्य व्यवस्थाको इतिहासमा विभिन्न कालसण्डमा अनेक उथलपथल, आन्दोलन र परिवर्तनहरू भए । अन्ततः २०६५ जेठ १५ जाते संविधानसभाले राजतन्त्रलाई समाप्त जारी जाणतन्त्रको घोषणा गञ्यो । तत्पश्चात् डा.रामवरण यादव नेपालको पहिलो राष्ट्रपति चुनिएसँगै वैद्यानिक एवं कार्यगत रुपले नेपालमा जाणतन्त्रको स्थापना भयो ।

तर यो गणतन्त्र सजिलोसँग त्यसै प्राप्त भएको होइन । देशमा गणतन्त्र ल्याउनमा समय समयमा जनसंघर्ष, जनआन्दोलन र जनऋनितमा सहभागी भएर कतिले अकालमै प्राण त्यांग गरे. कतिले कालकोठरीमा कष्टमय जीवन बिताए, कतिले सर्बस्व गुमाए, कतिले अङ्गभङ्ग भएर बसे तथा कित त अतोपतो नै थाहा नपाउने जारी बेपता भए तथा हराए पनि ।

आज थिनै राष्ट्रसेवक वीर सपतहरूको सम्भनामा संधीय लोकतान्त्रिक गणतन्त्र नेपाल सरकारले नारायणहिटी दरबारको पूर्वी खण्डको परिसरमा हिमाल, पहाड र मधेश तराई समेट्ने गरी विशाल नेपालको एकस्तरीय उठेको नक्शा (Relief Map) तयार जाराई जमिनमुनि भूईतल्ला (Basement) का माथिल्ला र तल्ला पदर्शनी स्थलका ज्यालेरीहरूमा नेपालका ऋितकारी जनसंघर्ष र आन्दोलनको थालनीदेखि जाणतन्त्रको स्थापनाकालसम्मको जौरवमय इतिहास संरक्षण र प्रदर्शन जर्न ऋन्तिसँज सम्बन्धित विविध सन्दर्भ सामाग्रीहरू राखि गणतन्त्र स्मारक संचालन हुदैंछ । गणतन्त्र स्मारकमा राखिने विभिन्न सामाग्रीहरूमध्ये गणतन्त्र स्थापनासँग सम्बन्धित जनआन्दोलन लगायतका घटना, परिघटना, समेटिएका फोटोग्राफहरू र Art एवं चित्र (Painting) र मर्तिहरूको तथा महत्वपूर्ण प्रेतिहासिक दस्तावेजहरूको संकलन एवं प्रदर्शनीको जिम्मेवारी नेपाल सरकार, मिन्त्रपरिषद्को मिति २०७५/१२/२५ को निर्णयानुसार नेपाल कला परिषद्लाई प्राप्त भएको छ । सोको लाଠा नेपाल सरकार, शहरी विकास मन्त्रालय, शहरी विकास तथा भवन निर्माण विभाग र नेपाल कला परिषद् बीच समकदारी पत्रमा हस्ताक्षर भई कार्य शुरू भएको छ ।

राष्ट्रिय महत्वको यस पूण्य कार्यमा सहयोज र योजदान 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 ठेजाना उल्लेख जारी २०७६ बैशाख ३० जते भित्र तलको ठेजानामा पुजने जारी पठाउनु हुन सादर अनुरोध गरिन्छ । स्वीकृत सामाग्रीहरूका लागि सम्मान, पुरस्कार र स-धन्यवाद प्रमाणपत्र प्रदान ार्ने व्यवस्था पनि छ । प्रदर्शित हुने सामाग्रीहरू स्थायी रुपले 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

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

"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 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

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 Police Mahendra Kumar Shrestha said that the against Ward Chairman Kachankabal 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 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 and employees recommending to the local administration for Bhupal's

Bhupal was found to have exercised his franchise as an Indian national during the recently held Lok Sabha election in Assam. He came to Nepal to acquire citizenship after casting his vote in Assam. Upon noticing an ink mark on his finger, the DAO employees grilled him and he confessed to being an national during Indian 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

into the case," DSP Shrestha

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, Prasad

Shiva Kumar Dahal and 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

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

Ministry demands Rs600m to continue safe motherhood drive

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

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

"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 Programmeunder 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 pro

"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 accord-

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

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 mater-

Indian Army gets ridiculed on social ...



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'The footprints were spotted by porters and our guide 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 credi-

bility 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 David Attenborough had once set their sights on finding the

The elusive ape-like creature had also captured the imagination of Belgian cartoonist Georges Remi alias Herge 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

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

The Yeti has long been part of Nepali folklore, with legends from a number of communities Himalayan 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 gen-

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

KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Health Organisation published an alarming reportthat measles cases across the world rose 300 percent in the first three months of 2019 compared to the same period

"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 diseases 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

vaccinated," said Kunwar.

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

within 2019, but going by the frequent occurrence of cases, 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 Health 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

"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 perannouncement 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 Taxpayers Office Large 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 capimined 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 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

"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—Axita 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 Axita would come under the jurisdiction of ICSID.

"As Axita is basically a Malaysian company and the

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 jurisdiccase," Dahal, who holds an expertise in foreign invest-

ment 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

"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

Social security scheme, after being launched ...

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

"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

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

After making their regular contributions, workers will be entitled to old-age pension, medical treatment, health protection, maternity coverage, accidents, and disability com-

Employers, however, attribute the 'state of confusion' for the slow regis-

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

"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

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

enrolling with the scheme is longterm 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

"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

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.

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Bill to amend Human **Rights Commission Act** raises fierce debate

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

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 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

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,"

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 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 governremains adamant.

Dhakal said that the govern-

ment needs to be appreciated

for initiating the process to

amend the Act as per the

constitution, a task that

should have been done three

Min Bishwokarma, 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. international

Different 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

Dahal's warning to topple Province 2 government draws criticism

Leaders and experts say such remarks are against spirit of federalism

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

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 polit-

ical 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

"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 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 Rastriya 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

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."

66

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- T. Dewitt Talmage







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NEWS DIGEST

supporters held

the Netra Bikram Chand-led Communist party of Nepal were arrested from Amkot in Budhiganga Municipality, Bajura, on Tuesday morning. According to the District Police Office, a team led by DSF Uddhav Singh Bhat arrested 10 cadres including Bhupendra BK, district-in charge of the party. Police said they were arrested with various explosives and documents. They were taken into the custody on the charge of possessing explosives, said

Yarsha picking season starts

gumba picking season has started in Darchula district. Api Nampa Conservation Area (ANCA) has started providing permits to enter the area from the third week of April until June Yarshagumba is the world's most expensive medicinal fungus. The

IED exploded in Rolpa

ROLPA: An improvised explosive device (IED) went off at Madichaur in Rolpa Municipality on Tuesday morning the IED was targeting Pokharel who was in Rolpa to attend a party programme, Chief Pokharel and his team explosion. "The IED ed in order to threaten the CM's team," said MC, adding that they one has taken responsibility for the explosion

Three murder convicts held after 12 years

so far. (PR)

DHADING: The District Police Office in a murder of Dev Bahadur BK of Tipling in 2006. Hem BK and Sarki BK, who were convicted of the murder in 2006, were arrested recently from Rasuwa and sentenced Hem and Bam Bahadur to 20 years in prison, while Sarki was slapped

10 Chand

BAJURA: Ten cadres of police. (PR)

DARCHULA: Yarsha-

herb can fetch as much as \$100 per gram in the Chinese market, making it more expensive than gold, according to reports. (PR)

According to the police, Chief Minister Shankar District Officer Ganja Bahadur MC said that are unharmed by the might have been planthave remained alert after the incident. No

Dhading arrested three people in connection to Kathmandu. The court with a 10 year-term last year. (PR)



A doctor from the Karnali Provincial Hospital examines the residents of Jimana in Tajakot Rural Municipality, Humla.

PHOTO COURTESY: DR KN POUDEL

Mystery illness in Tajakot under control; throat swab samples sent for test

KALENDRA SEJUWAL

The influenza-like illness that claimed nine lives in Tajakot Rural Municipality of Humla has gradually come under control, according to the authorities concerned.

Dr KN Poudel of the Karnali Provincial Hospital, who reached the affected remote village leading a medical team, told the Post on Tuesday that the number of patients significantly

"Twelve of the total 64 people who visited Maila Health Post on Tuesday were found afflicted with the flu-like symptoms. We also went doorto-door and provided treatment in the affected settlements. The number of patients has significantly decreased now," said Poudel.

Four doctors, including Poudel, and several health workers have been providing treatment in the Tajakot area for the past three days. According to Poudel, three doctors are preparing to return while one will stay back in the affected area for a few more days. The medical team had provided treatment to around 200 patients as of

The flu-like disease that was spreading in various wards of Tajakot Rural Municipality for the past three weeks is yet to be identified. The medical team collected throat swab samples of five patients for laboratory test on

"We have kept the samples in a refrigerator. The samples have to be transported to Kathmandu by air. Hopefully they will send a helicopter soon from the city. Although the disease is under control for now, it will be unfortunate if we fail to identify the dis-

ease," said Poudel The situation of health and sanitation, according to the medical team, is quite miserable in Tajakot that has total population of around 8,000. A huge number of children are suffering from malnutrition while respiratory ailments are common among elderly

Tajakot is a remote local unit in Humla. It is about three-day walk away from Simikot, the district headquarters. The people's representatives suggested the government to establish a primary health centre in the area with at least one resident doctor. "The local people of Tajakot will get timely treatment if there is a primary health centre with a doctor We have requested the concerned authorities for the same," said Shyam Acharya, officer at the Provincial

Health Directorate. Social Development Minister of Karnali Province Dal Rawal, who hails from Humla, said that the government will soon make a policy level decision to set up a primary health centre in the remote local bodies in Humla and other districts.

Murder cases over petty issues on the rise in Province 5

AMRITA ANAMOL BUTWAL, APRIL 30

The number of murders has increased in Province-5, as per the data of the Provincial Police Office, Tulsipur, Dang.

According to the Provincial Police Office, in a period of nine months—from mid-July last year to mid-April this fiscal year—the province has witnessed 68 murders. In relation to the murders, police have arrested 114 suspects, while 25 others are still on the

The Tarai districts in the province, especially the districts that border India, have reported more murders than hilly districts. In bordering Banke district alone, 13 people lost their lives in the last 9 months. Most of the murders have been over petty issues, such as dispute between persons, families, friends and neighbours and easy availability of small

Many murders have also taken

place over disputes in economic transactions. The murder of one Triveni Yadav, 70, of Kapilvastu on March 20 this year highlights the case of petty disputes leading to violence. Yadav, a resident of Shivaraj Municipality-6, was sleeping at his home when he was murdered by being hit on the head with a brick. In the murder scene, police recovered a paper on which some economic transaction had been conducted in Abadhi language. Police have not been able to dig into the case deeper or have been nine such similar murders in Kapilvastu in this fiscal so

Murders driven by love affairs and infidelity are also on the rise. Police arrested Saina Khatun of Mainabagar in Butwal for murdering her husband Firoz Khan, 45, on March 26. Police investigation showed Saina had an illicit relationship with her brother-inlaw, a widower, and planned and executed the murder with his help. Rupandehi police Chief SP Hridaya Thapa said, "A moral deviation from social and family values has led to conflicts among acquaintances. This is seen in eight of the 10 murders in Rupandehi."

Other districts in the province have also seen a rise in the number of murders. Nawalparasi (West) witnessed eight while there were five murders each in Pyuthan and Rolpa. Dang, Gulmi and Palpa had four each, Bardiya had three and Rukum (East) had

DIG Pitambar Adhikari, chief of Province 5 Police, said despite police clamping down on organised crime, murder cases are still on the rise due to family and personal reasons. "Mistrust, extravagant lifestyle and social conditioning have led to disputes which unfortunately lead to major crimes like murder," Adhikari said. He suggested that social leaders and influencers rather than the police administration should take the initiative to lessen the number of cases in the com-

Psychologist Radhika Thapa suggests that morality should be a topic that should be focused on in the education system and should be provided to people from all age groups and gender in schools, youth clubs, and the community as a whole. "Only then we can decrease the number of murders caused by personal vendetta,' said Thapa.

cial level security assembly, organised by the Home Ministry on March 10, in which Home Minister Ram Bahadur Thapa and chiefs of all three security bodies participated, district police chiefs claimed that the number of murder and violence had gone down in the province and there were no major threats, except that from the banned Netra Bikram Chand-led Nepal Communist

Abducted boy, 12, rescued from India ABDHESH KUMAR JHA demanded Rs 5 million as ransom to

Police rescued a 12-year-old boy, who was abducted from Saptari district on April 26, from Indian territory on Monday night.

Laxman Kumar Yadav of Rajgadh Rural Municipality-3 was rescued from Shivahar in Sitamarhi district of India, said police. In a press meet on Tuesday, the Saptari police handed over the rescued boy to his family.

Laxman was kidnapped by an unidentified group while attending his maternal uncle's wedding. A police complaint was lodged by Bholendra the missing boy. A preliminary investigation showed that Laxman was kidnapped, after which security personnel operated a search operation along the Nepal-India border.

A security team of 23 plain-clothed police personnel, led by Superintendent of Police (SP) Rajendra Bista, was deployed in the Indian territory in coordination with the Indian authorities. While the police search was underway, an unidentified person telephoned Laxman's uncle Birendra Yadav and

release the abducted boy. The abductors had also called Laxman's father Jageshwor Yadav, who is currently in Mumbai for employment, and demanded ransom amount.

The police team intensified the search from Darbhanga to Sitamarhi area of India by tracking the phone calls of the abductors.

"We coordinated with the Indian police and continued the search. The abductors finally left the boy in a hotel and fled after learning that police had intensified the search and the victim's family was unable to cough up the ransom," said SP

Laxman was found in an unconscious state under the influence of sedatives. He was taken to Rajbiraj on Tuesday morning for a health examination. The boy's health is gradually improving, said police. During the press meet, Laxman said that he was abducted by two persons and taken to India on a motorcycle with his mouth and hands

"We have safely rescued the victim. We are now looking for the suspects involved in the crime," said SP Bista.

Lack of staff in Ramechhap local units hits services

TIKA PRASAD BHATTA RAMECHHAP, APRIL 30

Pasang Lama, a ward secretary Khandadevi Rural Municipality in Ramechhap district, has been solely handling the administrative works of all nine wards for a long time now due to a shortage of

The ward offices are without secretaries, as they have been sent for adjustment as per the Adjustment **Employees** Ordinance. Because of a lack of staff, service seekers are facing problems acquiring attestation of their documents and recommendation

Auxiliary Health Worker Padam Shrestha of Bhirpani Health Facility has been compelled to provide recommencitizenship certificates and other necessary documents for the service seekers whereas the assistant technicians have been working in place of ward secretary in

Makadum. Prem Bahadur Tamang, chairman of the rural municipality, said that he has requested the concerned authority to provide staff for the municipal office, but to no

"Technicians have been asked to look after the administrative works when they have no knowledge of administration. Because of that even the technical works have been hampered," said Tamang.

This problem is not limited to Khandadevi Rural Municipality only. There is only one ward secretary for six wards of Gokulganga Rural Municipality, whereas two ward secretaries are handling seven wards of Tamakoshi Municipality.

People of other local units have also said that they have been facing difficulties to register life events and to get recommendation letters for passports and citizenships due to a lack of staff in the munici-

People's representatives said that they are facing difficulties in running daily affairs and implementing the budget due to a lack of staff.

10 injured as clash breaks out after a cyclist is killed by a truck in Lamki

GANESH CHAUDHARY TIKAPUR. APRIL 30

Ten people were injured when a clash broke out at Lamki Bazaar in Kailali district following the death of a 19-year-old cyclist after being hit by a truck on

Sunita Rawal of Lamkichuha Municipality-1, Kailali, was killed when she was hit by a truck while returning home from college in the morning.

Shortly after her death, the students of Lamki Multiple Campus took to the street of Lamki Bazaar in

They closed the East-West Highway and vandalised the truck (Na 7 Kha 9233) that had struck Rawal. Superintendent of Police Abhusan Timsina said the clash erupted after the protesters started hurling

stones at the security personnel who were mobilised to maintain peace and order. Five Nepal Police officers and four Armed Police Force personnel were among those injured in the clash,

They were taken to Lal Ratna Hospital for treatment. SP Timsina said police fired nine warning shots and as many tear gas shells to disperse the violent mob. Traffic along the East-West Highway resumed only

tration and Rawal's relatives. The local administration has assured to provide compensation to Rawal's family and initiate legal action against the truck driver.

after 4 pm following a talks between the local adminis-

Indrawati residents reel under shortage of drinking water

JYAMIREMANE (SINDHUPALCHOK), APRIL 30

Debamaya Tamang Jyamiremane in Indrawati Municipality-8, Sindhupalchok, has to spend almost an entire day to fetch a vessel of water. She wakes up at 4am to collect water from a water source that is around one-and-a-half hour walk from her house.

"There's always a long queue of people waiting for their turns to collect water. Frustrations run high and people end up in disputes over whose turn it is to get water," said Tamang.

There are only two taps for the villagers in Indrawati-8one at Jyamiremane Chok and another at the bazaar settlement. Various water sources of Indrawati-8 and 9 dried up after the devastating earthquake of April 25, 2015. People have been suffering from an acute shortage of water since then. Kedarnath Acharya, a local of Jyamiredanda, said that a lot of people depend on just one tap for their daily water needs. "We demand the authorities to per-



Women of Jyamiremane in Indrawati Rural Municipality-8, Sindhupalchok, queue up at a water source to fill water in their vessels.

manently solve the problem of drinking water in our village," said Acharya.

Various non-governmental organisations have been working in the area to manage the supply of water, but the locals

Banshalal Tamang, chairperson of Indrawati Rural Municipality, said, "I have taken initiatives to supply water to people's households. We are soon going to launch a

still reel under water shortage.

large-scale drinking water programme from the local level."

Experts said that water sources in Indrawati are drying up due to climate change, population growth and encroachment.

Facebook to fund research on social media impact on elections

WASHINGTON: Facebook announced on Monday its first research grants to academics studying the impact of social media on elections, part of an effort to prevent manipulation of social platforms. The leading social network said some 60 researchers from 30 academic institutions across 11 countries were selected under a review process by the Social Science Research Council and the independent group Social Science One. Facebook began the research initiative last year after revelations of foreign influence campaigns on the 2016 US election and the Brexit vote in Britain. It began soliciting proposals last vear, and on Monday unveiled its first research grants. "To assure the independence of the research and the researchers, Facebook did not play any role in the selection of the individuals or their projects and will have no role in directing the findings or conclusions of the research," said a blog post by Facebook executives Elliot Schrage and Chaya Nayak.

India government asks Gandhi to respond to claims he is British

NEW DELHI: India's government on Tuesday asked opposition leader Rahul Gandhi to respond to claims that he is a British citizen as the country's fiercely contested election battle took a bizarre twist. The home ministry wrote to the Congress party leader and scion of the famed Nehru-Gandhi dynasty after a deputy of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's ruling party accused Gandhi of lying about his nationality. Gandhi was told to provide a "factual" reply on his citizenship. India does not allow dual nationality and only Indian citizens can contest elections. The complaint by Bharatiya Janata Party lawmak er Subramanian Swamy repeats long-standing claims that Gandhi recorded himself as British twice in annual returns filed by a now-defunct British company in which he was a director. The company, Backops Limited, was registered in 2003 and filed for dissolution in 2009. Swamy has been demanding since 2015 that Gandhi be stripped of Indian citizenship as well as his parliamentary seat. Tuesday's notice is the first time the Indian government has taken up the complaint. A Congress spokesman dismissed the allegation against Gandhi as

DR Congo records 26 Ebola deaths in a single day

BUTEMBO (DR Congo): Twenty-six people died of Ebola in a single day in the Democratic Republic of Congo's North Kivu province, the highest daily toll since its outbreak nearly nine months ago, the health ministry said on Tuesday. The current outbreak is the second deadliest on record, after the epidemic that struck West Africa in 2014-2016 and killed more than 11,300 people. The health ministry it had counted 957 deaths in the country, of which 891 were confirmed cases and 66 suspected ones. "There were 26 deaths from confirmed cases" on Sunday, April 28, in the northeastern North Kivu province, the ministry said in a statement. It said of the total deaths of 957, 33 were health workers who had succumbed to the disease. The DR Congo declared a tenth outbreak of Ebola in 40 years last August in North Kivu before the virus spread into the neighbouring Ituri region. The epi centre was first located in the rural area of Mangina, but then switched to the town of Beni. Local organisations say the number of Ebola deaths is rising. Adding to the logistical hitches are a string of assaults on teams fight-

US should pay NKorea hospital bill for student prisoner who died: Ex-envoy

WASHINGTON: The former US diplomat who secured the release from North Korea of American Otto Warmbier said on Monday Washington should honor its pledge to pay Pyongyang \$2 million for the student's hospital care. Joseph Yun, the former US special envoy for North Korea, confirmed to Reuters he had signed an agreement with the North Koreans for the payment of the money before Warmbier was flown out of Pyongyang in a coma on June 13, 2017. He died days after returning home. White House national security adviser John Bolton said in a television interview on Sunday that while the agreement had been signed, no payment had been made to the North Koreans. Yun, who retired from the State Department last year and is now a global affairs analyst for CNN, said on the network he believed the United States should honor its commitment. "My view is, yes. If you've signed, if you promised another government from the U.S. government that you would make the payment, my view certainly is that we should go ahead and meet our end of the commitment,"

Japan's emperor prays for peace in first abdication in 200 years

Akihito was the first monarch to take the Chrysanthemum Throne under a post-war constitution that defines the emperor as a symbol of the people without political power.



Japan's Emperor Akihito, flanked by Empress Michiko, Kyodo via Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako, delivers a speech during a ritual called Taiirei-Seiden-no-gi, a ceremony for the Emperor's abdication, at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo, Japan on Tuesday.

Japanese Emperor Akihito, in his final remarks as his three-decade reign drew to a close on Tuesday, thanked the people for their support and expressed hope for a peaceful

Akihito, 85, the first monarch to abdicate in two centuries, had sought to ease the painful memories of World War Two and bring the monarchy closer to the people, including those marginalised in society

The popular Akihito was the first monarch to take the Chrysanthemum Throne under a post-war constitution that defines the emperor as a symbol of the people without political power.

His father, Hirohito, in whose name Japanese troops fought World War Two, was considered a living deity until after Japan's defeat in 1945, when he renounced his divinity. "To the people who accepted and supported me as a symbol, I express my heartfelt thanks," Akihito, wearing a Western-style morning coat, said at a brief abdication cere-Matsu no ma, or Hall of Pine.

"Together with the empress, I hope from my heart that the new Reiwa era that begins tomorrow will be peaceful and fruitful, and pray for the peace

Biratnagar May 6 Birgunj May 8

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and happiness of our country and the people of the world," said a solemn Akihito, referring to the new imperial era.

Standing on a white dais

flanked by Empress Michiko,

who wore a long white and grey dress, Akihito bowed after he spoke. About 300 people attended the ceremony broadcast live on television. They included

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako, as well as the heads of both houses of parliament and Supreme Court justices. Akihito, together with

Michiko, his wife of 60 years and the first commoner to marry an imperial heir, carved out an active role as a symbol of reconciliation, peace and democracy.

Akihito, who has had treatment for prostate cancer and heart surgery, said in a televised address in 2016 that he feared his age would make it hard for him to carry out his duties fully. At the start of the ceremo-

ny, chamberlains carried the state and privy seals into the hall along with two of Japan's "Three Sacred Treasures" - a together with a mirror are symbols of the throne. They are said to originate in ancient mythology.

"While keeping in our hearts the path that the emper-

Narayanghat May 10

Citizens' Interna

or has walked, we will make is one of encouraging the peoutmost efforts to create a bright future for a proud Japan that is full of peace and hope," Abe said ahead of the emperor's remarks.

At the end of the ceremony, Akihito descended from the dais and took Michiko's hand as she stepped down. Before exiting the room, he paused, turned toward the audience and bowed again. Earlier, Akihito performed

a ritual announcement of his abdication in three palace sanctuaries, including one honouring the sun goddess Amaterasu Omikami, from whom mythology says the imperial line is descended, and two others for departed emperors and Shinto gods.

NHK television showed Akihito, wearing a dark orange traditional robe and black headdress, walking slowly into the first sanctuary with a white-robed courtier holding the train and another carrying a sword. Naruhito conducted a similar

Crowds gathered outside the Palace, a 115-hectare compound in the heart of Tokyo protected by moats and walls, and empress. Security was tight with several thousand police officers on duty in Tokyo, media reports said.

"I think the emperor is loved by the people. His image

ple, such as after disasters, and being close to the people,' said Morio Miyamoto, 48. "I hope the next emperor

will, like the Heisei emperor, be close to the people in the same way," he said. The Heisei imperial era,

which began on Jan. 8, 1989 after Akihito inherited the throne, saw economic stagnation, natural disasters and rapid technological change.

Not everyone was excited by the imperial changeover.

"It's a normal day. That kind of political stuff is irrelevant to us ordinary people," said Masato Saito, a 40-yearold construction worker.

"As long as they make our lives easy to live, that's all I

US President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania offered their "heartfelt appreciation" to the royal pair in a statement.

Naruhito, 59, will inherit the throne in ceremonies on Wednesday. He studied at Oxford and together with his Harvard-educated Masako, will give the monarchy a cosmopolitan flavour.

Akihito officially remains the new Reiwa era, meaning "beautiful harmony", begins. Informal countdown events for the start of the new era were scheduled for Tuesday evening.

Follower of Sri Lanka bomber sought India attack: Police

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

An alleged follower of Sri Lankan bombing mastermind Zahran Hashim was set to appear before an Indian court on Tuesday after admitting he wanted to carry out an attack in India, investigators said.

India has been concerned about Islamist extremists on its soil for some time and the April 21 Sri Lanka bombings that killed 253 people has left authorities alarmed that India might be at risk of a jihadist attack.

The Indian national, identified as Riyas A, alias Riyas Aboobacker, 29, was arrested on Monday by India's National Investigation Agency (NIA), which handles counter-terror-

During interrogation, he "disclosed that he has been following speeches/videos of Zahran Hashim of Sri Lanka for more than a year", an NIA statement said.

"He admitted that he wanted to carry out a suicide attack in Kerala," a southern Indian state, it added.

Hashim was a Sri Lankan Muslim preacher who led the coordinated Easter Sunday suicide attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, in one of the world's deadliest terrorist attacks.

Military sources have said Hashim was not known to have visited Syria or Iraq, but travelled to India's Tamil Nadu state, which borders Kerala, and had been in contact with Islamists there.

Hashim also appeared in a video released by the Islamic State group, showing him

allegiance to IS chief Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi.

IS has claimed responsibility for the Sri Lanka attacks. India had warned Sri Lanka that suicide attacks were possible weeks before.

The NIA said that it arrested Riyas "for conspiring to commit a terrorist act" in connection with a 2016 case against an Indian man wanted, along with others, for leaving India to join IS abroad. Riyas had allegedly been in

online contact with that suspect, Abdul Rashid Abdulla, alias Abu Isa, and followed his online audio posts including one "instigating others to carry out terror attacks in India", NIA said. Aboobacker's arrest comes

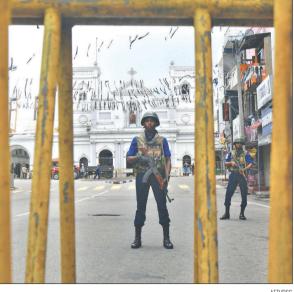
at a time when New Delhi is already anxious about the footprint of IS in the Hindumajority country. Indian authorities have

already arrested several people allegedly inspired by radical Islamist ideology in recent months. In 2016 the NIA launched an

investigation into the disappearance of 15 young Indians thought to have left to join IS in Afghanistan and Syria.

Pockets of southern India have since been on the radar of Indian investigators concerned over growing radicalism. Kabir Taneja, associate fellow with New Delhi-based Observer Research Foundation, said that the danger of attacks may have increased since the collapse of IS's "caliphate" across swathes of Iraq and Syria. "I think some level of nerv-

ousness is expected, and it's good," Taneja told AFP.



Sri Lankan soldiers stand guard outside St. Anthony's Shrine in Colombo.

NKorea warns of 'undesired' outcome if no change in US nuclear stance

SEOUL, APRIL 30

North Korea's vice foreign minister said on Tuesday the United States will face "undesired consequences" if it fails to present a new position in denuclearisation talks by the end of the year, state media reported

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has set a year-end deadline for the United States to show more flexibility after his second summit with US President Donald Trump failed to produce a deal to end Pyongyang's nuclear programme in return for sanctions relief.

But Trump and US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo have brushed aside the deadline, calling for Kim to take action on his pledge to denuclearise after years of pursuing nuclear and rocket programmes in defiance of UN Security Council resolu-

North Korean Vice Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui singled out Pompeo's interview last week with CBS in which he said the United States may have to "change paths" if the negotiations break down. "Changing paths is not a

privilege that only the United States has, but it could be our own choice if we make up our mind," Choe said, according to the official KCNA news agency. "If the United States fails to reestablish its position within the timeline we gave, it will see truly undesired consequences."

She also said North Korea's determination to denuclearise remained unchanged. It would happen "when the come comes", but only if the United States changed its current calculations. "We know the path we will take, but we're just hesitating to choose as we have set the deadline for the United States," Choe said.

ing a deal to ease sanctions in exchange for dismantling some of its nuclear facilities, but Trump called for a "big in which sanctions would be lifted if Pyongyang handed over all its nuclear weapons to the United States.

the North's attack on Trump's point person on the nuclear negotiations, after another foreign ministry official rejected Pompeo as a counterpart, demanding a switch to someone "more careful and mature"

The North had been seek-

Choe's remarks continue



CITY EXPRESS BABA

Yasuda

brand works

The Kathmandu Post

EDITORIAL

Labour pains

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

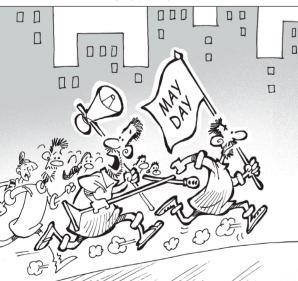
oday is the 130th International Workers' Day, also known as May Day. Nepal has been celebrating May day since 1963, and it was declared a public holiday in 2007. There has been a marked improvement in relations between management and labour compared to the past. Industrial unrest has declined significantly. 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

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.

'Great work



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

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- Articles not published within a month of submission should be considered rejected.
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On and off screen

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



PKHAREL

ome 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

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

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

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

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 (IRs9.9 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

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.



SABIN NINGLEKHU LIMBU

ell 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, highrise 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



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.

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 Coutts-Smith wrote one of the first essays on the subject in 1976, entitled Some General Observations on the Concept

Pause before claiming cultural appropriation

The debate, tied up with racial oppression and exploitation, is a difficult one. Yet not every interloper is a colonialist.

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 colonised oppressed or

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

This month, news broke that Inuit singers were



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

Canada's Indigenous Music Awards over the nomination of a Cree singer who, it is claimed, utilises specifically 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 interchange-

able. 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

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 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 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 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 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

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 iI'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 dis cussing interpersonal dynamics. There's a differ ence 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

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 disappeared. whale Although it sounds like something Douglas Adams could have written, I want to welcome vou 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

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

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

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

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

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

The Blackbook Kathmandupost Commence of the Co



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

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WHY STUDY?

SAMRIDDHI 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 selfspurred and motivated, nothing feels exhausting or difficult. Instead, it feels engaging and 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

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

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-

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 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

Karki i<mark>s a tent</mark>h grade<mark>r at Gram</mark>mar



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 Biding 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

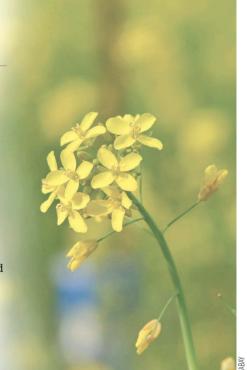
AMRIT POUDEL

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



The beauty of mountains

Their songs aren't polished like the commercial feel the futility of the rat race. The lofty height of the nature. It has been an object of attraction to the peo-

DIPANKAR RAJ UPADHYAY

ountains 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 popuones. 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

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

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

Words fail to describe the romantic beauty of

ple, 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

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.



He repairs roads

ANUP OJHA

n 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

"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

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

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

"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

"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.'



She sweeps streets

SACHITRA GURUNG

antaki 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 broomer machines to clean the roads, they can't reach the narrow alleys of Kathmandu,' says the 39-year-old Deula. "We are incharge of keeping the gallis 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 holi-However, each employee gets an allocated number of sick days.

She works part time during the day after her shift if the pay is od; otnerwise, sne babysits ner 3-year-old grandson while ne 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

"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

uring 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 pro

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 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

"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 When she first applied to become a part of traf-

fic 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 "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



He builds houses

TIMOTHY ARYAL

rom 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 con-

struction site. He sieves the sand on a net that rests on top 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 cre-

porary 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 custom-

ers," 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

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."

He collects garbage

ROSE SINGH

uraj'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 Satdobato

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 Nijgadh, Bara forcibly took away his home, he says. With no means to support himself, he began work-

ing 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

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.



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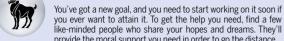
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ARIES (March 21-April 19)



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

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

around you. They want to be in your life



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



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.

Be patient if a certain social invitation isn't being greeted with the enthusiasm you hoped. Working around the needs of other peo-

ple isn't inconvenient for you, and it will be a lovely gesture of how

LEO (July 23-August 22)

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

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21) There's nothing wrong with treating yourself to a splurge every



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

once in a while but watch your expenses. Watch your spending, and challenge yourself to tighten your budget. Reduce your

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 thriftier 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

PISCES (February 19-March 20)



G

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

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 any-

thing and all you can think is "act natural, you're innocent".

11:00

11:30

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."

11:05 Suman Sanga

12:30 VMAG

Headline News

Music Summit

12:00 Kantipur Samachai

14:00 Kantipur Samachar

13:00 Headline News

13:05 Baliyo Gha

13:30 Ukali Orali

14:30 Rise N Shine

15:05 Sarokar

15:00 Headline News

	F:00	Character /
K	5:00	Shuvarambha/
Δ		Bhaktisur
	5:30	Radhe Radhe
N	6:00	Jeevan Bigyan
T	6:30	Jyotish Manthan
	6:40	Sky Shop
P	7:00	Kantipur Samachar
U	8:00	Kantipur News
R	8:30	Rise and Shine
т	9:00	Headline News
v	9:05	Sarokar
	10:00	Kantipur Samachar
RANTIPUR	10:30	Market Watch

05:00 Bhakti Anusthar Kantipur Diary The Headliners Development & **Economics Diary**

06:30 07:00 08:00 08:05 The Good Morning 08:30 Old Is Gold 09:00 Kantinur Diary 09:10 Traffic Updates National Song 09:15 09:20 Radio Talk 10:00 Sports Diary 10:05 Taste Bud Entertainment 11:05 Taste Bud

FOOD

DRÎNKS

16:00 Kantipur Samachar Kantipur Diary 12:10 Aafno Bhaka Aafno Geet District Diary 13:00 13:05 K Chha Nepal

International Diary 14:05 K Chha Nepal Kantipur Diary Kanung Bheja Health & Education 15:15 16:00 Dairy Sangalo

16:05 District Diary 17:05 Education Talk Ica Door Sikchya 18:30 Kantipur Dairy

Yatra Jeevanko 20:00 Security & Crime

Songs 03:00 Non-Stop Hindi Songs 04:00 Non -Stop Bhajans

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across Asia, including Japanese, Korean,

Vietnamese and Chinese. Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs,

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Garden Terrace offers an authentic world

cuisine, providing diners with the unique

experience of observing their selected dish

es being prepared by chefs. Contact:

427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

16:30 New Entry

17:00 Headline News

17:05 Call Kantinur

18:00 Kantipur News

18:30 Cinema Fest

19:00 Kantipur Samacha 19:30 Market Watch

20:00 Kantipur Samacha

21:00 Harke Haldar

22:30 Kantipur News

23:30 Market Watch

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23:00 Kantipur Samachar

Kantipur Diary

22:00 Global Connection

Samma

00:00 Aafno Bhaka Aafno

Geet-Rep.

News Maker Of The

Aai Dekhi Arko Aai

Kanuni Bahas Ra

Paramarsha-Rep.

Non-Stop Nepali

21:30 Tough Talk

Savour the cardamom and saffron spice, **Dining Park Restaurant** & Lounge bar with slow-cooked kebabs and kormas at Indian a Coffee and Bakery Hub and Bar and Fine restaurant serving Awadhi cuisine. contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza Dining. Boasting facilities including Private

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Contact: 5521408

MUSIC

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am to 8 pm. Contact: 4110554

Sundhara, Contact: 4412999

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61 Praver-wheel **ACROSS** 1 Long jacket6 Isn't gentle with10 Zest for life 14 Address the

crowd

15 Large lot 16 Pate de — gra 17 Less exciting 18 Bronco "brake"

19 Give off vapors

22 Brewed tea 24 Contented murmur 25 Like a wedding

20 Iron or sulfur

cake 26 Reveal

30 Flection mo

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there?" 39 Fiesta shouts

40 Shape clay
41 Area of London

42 Chicken wire 43 Cancel 44 "Slither" actor 45 McMahon and

47 Keeps safe 50 Husband-to-be

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Old Norse poem 66 Itch 67 "— bien

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Schlep River in Russia Boxed breakfast

5 Boxea brea 6 Temple of 7 Receive a high

Guard 10 Give off bubbles of gas 11 Jeweler's lens 12 Readied the

Beach bow 3 — -to-know 13 21 Complain 23 Want-ad letters © 2019 UFS, Dist, by Andrews McMeel for UF

Variety

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

29 Draws a sword 33 Not common 54 Horse-drawn 56 Mortgage consideration 57 Wife of Osiris 58 Camper's Smell inhibitor Type of shark Silvery fish Billions of years

quarters 59 Uptight 62 Hr. fraction 40 Burly 46 Forensic science tool
48 Sooner than
49 Least 49 Least 50 Leg bone 51 Lacking se

Lacking sense





WORD GAME

TODAY'S WORD -- HOMOLOGOUS (HOMOLOGOUS: ho-MAHL-uh-gus: Having the same relation, relative

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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98

Can you find 20 or more words in HOMOLOGOUS? The list will be published tomorrow.

SATURDAY'S WORD -- GERMICIDE

eed	eider	rime	cede	dice
erm	emigre	medic	cider	dicer
ird	emir	mere	cire	dicier
reed	reed	merge	creed	dime
rid	regicide	mice	cried	dire
rim	regime	midge	crime	dirge
rime	rice	midi	deem	dreg
dge	ride	mire	deer	
dger	ridge	iced	deice	
dgier	rigid	icier	deicer	

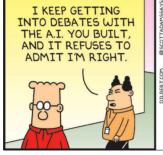
To purchase the Word Game book, visit **WordGameBooks.com**. Order it now for just \$5 while supplies last!

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

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GARFIELD



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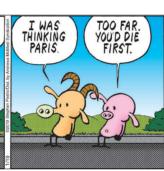
TO THE HOSPITAL, TO PREVENT IT FROM HAPPENING.

HE RETIRED



GRAFFITI







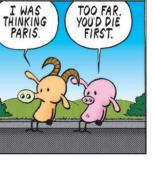


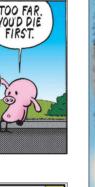


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OFX JAI NEPAL: 15:15/19:15

OEX KLIMARI: 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

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Warner predicts big scores in World Cup



XI Punjab at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad on Monday.

David Warner of Sunrisers Hyderabad plays a shot during their IPL match against Kings

midway into the league despite not being eligi-

ble 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 Warner is keen to build on his IPL success

Australia batsman David Warner on Tuesday

predicted a high-scoring World Cup in the

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

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

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

abilities and being at our best.'

uncertain English conditions.

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

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 LBGT 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."

"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 LGBQTI 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 manof-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

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 foulmouthed 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 Kfouri 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

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

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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 organ ised by the Sher Bahadur Khadka Memorial Academy. The champions received Rs 200,000 and the runners-up got Rs 100,000. The thirdplaced 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. (58)

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 Koteshwor-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 Kapali passed away at Grande 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



POST PHOTO: KESHAV THAPA

Suraj Khadgi (right) of Kirtipur Club dribbles past Nikesh RakhalMagar 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 Golfutaar,
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 Batticoutali

ANFA ropes in CG for national school football

PRAJWAL OLI

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 ssential 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

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 Surkbot on Tuesday.

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

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

tre-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.



POST PHOTO: PARBAT POR

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 cross sailed 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

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

"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

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 Percelone outpleved

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"

Frenkie 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

As for Messi, there may never of 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."

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CROSS CURRENCY

125 16 Euro Japanese Yer Chinese Yuar Australian Dollar Malaysian Ringit

FOREX

Eurozone recession fears fade as growth picks up

Page III 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.

Boeing CEO defends safety record amid 2 deadly crashes

The CEO of Boeing defended the company's safety record and declined to take any more than partial blame for two deadly crashes of its best-selling plane even while saying Monday that the company has nearly finished an update that "will make the airplane even safer." Chairman and CEO Dennis Muilenburg took reporters' questions for the first time since accidents involving the Boeing 737 Max in Indonesia and Ethiopia killed 346 people and plunged Boeing into its deepest crisis in years. Muilenburg said that Boeing followed the same design and certification process it has always used to build safe planes, and he denied that the Max was rushed to market.

Mexico president kicks off new airport project

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Monday symbolically launched work on a new airport for Mexico City to replace the nearly halfbuilt \$13 billion project he cancelled upon taking office. López Obrador promised the new Felipe Ángeles airport northeast of the capital won't exceed its budget and will save the government money even with the cancellation of the partially built airport "It's going to resolve the problem of saturation at the current Mexico City airport, but also be an example of how you can carry out a rational, austere policy based on honesty that needs to establish itself as the way to ern in our country," López Obrador said. Pg: II

US trade negotiators arrive in Beijing for more talks

Top American negotia tors 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.

Demand for automobile accessories spikes

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.

Insurance Board unveils incentives to encourage insurers to merge

RAJESH KHANAL

The Insurance Board unveiled an array of incentives to encourage mergers among insurance companies after several failed attempts to get them to increase their paid-up capital. On Sunday, the board issued an amended directive on merger and acquisition which it said was designed to promote qualitative growth in the insurance business.

The board issued licences to 13 new insurance firms—10 life insurance and three nonlife insurance companiestwo years ago with the expectation that more insurance companies would increase competition and prompt them to spread out. The board changed gears and moved towards market consolidation after the plan did not result in more business

In March 2017, the Insurance Board had asked life insurance companies to raise their paid-up capital to at least Rs2



billion and non-life insurers to raise it to Rs1 billion by mid-July 2018. The board extended the deadline three times after the insurers repeatedly failed to fulfil the requirement. The last deadline expired on January 15, and the board set a new time limit of mid-July.

So far, only two out of the 18 life insurance companies and four out of the 20 non-life insurance companies have fulfilled the capital requirement. National Life Insurance and Nepal Life Insurance have increased their paid-up capital as instructed. Among the nonlife insurance companies, Shikhar Insurance, Himalayan General Insurance, Prabhu Insurance and Neco Insurance have fulfilled the requirement.

Chiranjibi Chapagain, chairman of the board, said the new directive had been issued with an eye on insurance companies that are struggling to raise their paid-up capital. "The new law allows the regulator to force merge them if they fail to come up with a concrete plan to boost

According to the board, most of the insurers submitted plans to increase their paid-up capital by issuing bonus or rights shares. The regulator said life insurers were doing well but non-life companies were struggling to meet their targets. Chapagain said the board had given nonlife insurance companies a target to sell policies worth Rs26 billion in 2018-19. The turnover of life insurance companies is expected to reach

Rs80 billion by the end of this

fiscal year. Chapagain said insurance companies wishing to merge would be provided tax incentives as stated in the Finance Act. In addition, the new directive has announced a number of other benefits to those going for unification. To attract insurers to amalgamate, the new directive said the time limit for fulfilling the capital requirement would be extended if the merged entity still fell short.

Moreover, the directive says the cooling-off rule will not apply to the chief of the merged entity. Current regulations require the CEO of an insurance company to wait for six months before joining another insurance company as its head. A merged entity has also been given greater leeway with regard to office operating costs. Yub Raj Pandey, assistant

manager of Nepal Life Insurance, said the directive could help bring down the number of insurance companies and prevent them from engaging in unhealthy practices that might hamper the qualitative growth of the entire Ramesh Bhattarai, acting CEO of United Insurance Company Nepal, said the policy could benefit insurance companies that are unable to increase their capital within the prescribed deadline. "It will also be effective in preventing cross holding in the insurance business," Bhattarai said.

Upper Trishuli 3A to start producing power by May 15



A general view of the Trishuli-3A project site.

POST REPORT KATHMANDU, APRIL 30

Technicians successfully conducted structural and performance tests on the Upper Trishuli 3A Hydropower Project. According to officials, the 60 MW scheme located 95 km north of Kathmandu in Rasuwa and Nuwakot districts is all set to start producing 30 MW within two weeks.

"Officials ran wet and no-load tests on the equipment in the powerhouse on Monday," said Kulman Ghising, managing director of the Nepal Electricity Authority. While carrying out the tests, water is conveyed from the tunnel to the turbines in the powerhouse through the penstock pipes to test whether or not the generators and control panels are functioning as per the design without evacuating electricity.

The state-owned power utility had planned to begin commercial operation of the hydel plant on May 1 by switching on the first unit. "Testing the headworks, equipment and other structures was time consuming, delaying our plans to start generating power," said Ghising. "We have fully revived a project that had been stymied by mulnow ready to commission it."

The project plans to drain the tunnel to check for spillage and refill it within a week, and perform the remaining tasks simultaneously. "The project will evacuate power from the first unit by May 15," said Ghising.

The construction of a 220 kV Trishuli-Kathmandu double-circuit line to carry electricity from the plant to Matatirtha sub-station in Kathmandu has also been completed. The 45-km transmission line will start evacuating 30 MW in May and another 30 MW in June.

Apart from evacuating the

power produced by the Upper Trishuli 3A project, the Nepal Electricity Authority plans to use the facility at Matatirtha to transmit electricity produced by other hydropow er schemes in the Trishuli corridor.

The Nepal Electricity Authority built the Upper Trishuli 3A project with a concessional loan of \$114.7 million from the Export-Import Bank of China. The foundation stone was laid in November 2011 with the completion deadline set for May

project sank into uncertainty after the contractor, China Gezhouba Group Company, halted work citing heavy damage to the access road and dam during the 2015 earthquake. Work resumed after a two-year hiatus, and the project was expected to come into operation by mid-January. After Upper Trishuli 3A—the largest among the projects launching this year—roars into life, 71 MW will be added to the national grid.

The electricity authority has commissioned six small and medium hydropower projects, including the 22 MW Bagmati Khola Hydropower Project and one solar plant built by independlast nine months.

Officials plan to launch another nine small and medium projects this fiscal year ending mid-July and add 160 MW to the grid, bringing the number of independent power producer-owned projects in operation to 82 from 75 last year, accounting for a combined installed capacity of 554 MW.

In the next fiscal, the electricity authority plans to issue commercial operation dates to 43 hydropower proincluding Upper Tamakoshi (456 Rasuwagadhi (111 MW) and Lower Solu (82 MW).

Working hard



Labourers unload wheat grain from a trailer at a local distribution point on the outskirts of Amritsar on Tuesday, on the eve of the International Labour Day celebrated on May 1.

Why Airbus isn't pouncing on Boeing's 737 MAX turmoil

REUTERS PARIS, APRIL 30

When Boeing launched its 737 MAX jetliner in response to Airbus's record-selling A320neo, a wave of poker-faced satisfaction spread through Airbus headquarters in France.

Its reasons for cheering Boeing's decision to make a similar jet, based on a similar strategy of engine efficiencies, partly explain why Airbus is wary of exploiting Boeing's misery over the global grounding of the MAX today, industry sources say.

Airbus has joined major airlines in expressing confidence that Boeing will emerge soon from a crisis caused by two fatal crashes In the first place, that is because both giants share a stake in preserving public trust and rarely compete on safety.

"This is not good for aviation," new Airbus CEO Guillaume Faury said of the MAX crisis earlier this

But the history of the MAX and its competitor, the Airbus A320neo, also illustrates why the two companies are unlikely to come to blows over the future of the MAX beyond their fierce day-to-day competition, strategists and industry officials say. Airbus and Boeing operate a roughly equal duopoly in the market for single-aisle jets that Airbus values at \$3.5 trillion over 20 years.

Neither can afford to fall too far behind without suffering a big disadvantage on costs, which depend heavily on volumes

If one of them did, it would likely take drastic action—anything from launching a price war to developing a new jet-that could destabilise both, and so market forces tend to keep the two companies' strategies in line, industry insiders say.

In 2011, Airbus was testing that alignment with record sales of its recently launched A320neo, offering more efficient engines. It had launched the upgraded A320 after beginning to lose ground to a new competitor, Canada's Bombardier

By adopting similar engines, Airbus was able to block the CSeries and stimulate massive orders from its existing customer base, while sending a message to an even bigger potential rival, China, that the core of the jetliner market would be defended.

But Airbus was also worried that its strategy would have to be



A file photo shows the Airbus A320neo during its first flight event in Colomiers near Toulouse, southwestern France.

torn up as Boeing considered leapfrogging it with an all-new jet that would take longer to build but give more efficiencies.

Airbus knew it would have to respond to this with a costlier Plan B aircraft, code-named A30X, but was facing multiple calls on its cash, including problems with its A400M military plane.

Airbus decided it needed to force Boeing off the fence and struck in its backyard with a deal to sell 460 jets to American Airlines, several people familiar with the negotiations said

Calculating it would lose too many such deals before its all-new jet was ready, Boeing did a U-turn and announced a re-engined 737 in time to win back almost half the American order.

Engine maker General Electric was also influential in nudging Boeing to a new strategy, and had a draft engine deal in place even before Boeing officially changed position, two people familiar with the talks said. GE had no immediate comment.

Eight years later, both planemakers have sold thousands of their

respective re-engined jets and have seen share prices jump five-fold, lifting the entire commercial aero-

space sector Not only could the duopoly be destabilised if the MAX had to be replaced, but now would not be an ideal time for a technology arms race in this crucial part of the mar-

Led by Boeing, planemakers widened the use of lightweight carbon-composite materials earlier this decade. Then it was the turn of engine makers to produce a quantum leap in performance.

Future game-changers may lie in artificial intelligence and automation in the cockpit, but these are

not yet mature. "The technology for major new steps in materials, engines and piloting are not there right now. It is not the best time for either side to destabilise the market and launch a new single-aisle plane," a senior industry strategist told

Furthermore, Airbus is not as ready as it would like for a parallel race in factory technology needed

Add to this investments already made by suppliers, banks and manufacturers, and their reliance on

preserving resale values of planes already flying, and few are in a hurry to start afresh.

"Industrially and competitively it is logical in a duopoly that you need a reasonably strong competition," said Rob Morris, head consultant at UK-based aerospace advisers Flight Ascend.

In the short term, Airbus has little capacity to push output higher, even though some Boeing customers are already courting it in public-a move partly seen as an effort to negotiate better terms with

But the possibility of radically upsetting the duopoly may have receded under new Airbus sales chief Christian Scherer, a market-share pragmatist who helped launch the A320neo, and Faury, a cautious engineer focusing on industrial improvements.

Faury on Tuesday played down the prospect that the MAX crisis would open up new business for Airbus and said the grounding "does not change the mid-term to long-term picture"

Airbus has already won a larger share of the single-aisle market than expected, leaving the usual 50/50 split with Boeing skewed towards Airbus, now on 60 percent.

NEWS DIGEST

Norsk Hydro says cyber attack cost it around \$50m

OSLO: Global aluminium producer Norsk Hydro on Tuesday put the cost of a cyber attack targeting the Norwegian company in March at around \$50 million. In the night between March 18 and 19, the company became the target of a "massive" cyber attack involving ransom ware, forcing it to disconnect from various sites and factories and switch to manual operations in others. The attack also forced it to postpone the publication of its quarterly earnings, originally scheduled for Tuesday, to June 5. "The cyber attack that hit us on March 19 has affected our entire global organisation," said CEO Svein Richard Brandtzaeg in a statement. (AFP)

China's ZTE Corp swings to Q1 profit

HONG KONG: China's ZTE Corp reported on Monday a first-quarter profit of 862.6 million yuan (\$128.2 million), as expected, up from 276 million yuan in the preceding three months, as it recovered from last year's US sanctions. The world's fourth-largest telecommunications equipment maker by market share also forecast a net profit of 1.2-1.8 billion yuan for the first half of 2019. The quarterly profit was toward the lower end of the company's forecast range of 800 million to 1.2 billion yuan. It reported a net loss of 5.4 billion yuan for the corresponding quarter a year earlier, which booked the impact of a crippling US supplier ban that has now been lifted. Revenue dropped 19.34 percent to 22.2 billion yuan in January-March, from 28.88 billion yuan

Santander Q1 profit drops on **Europe woes**

a year earlier. (REUTERS)

MADRID: Spanish banking giant Banco Santander posted a 10 percent drop in first quarter net profit to 1.84 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) on Tuesday due largely to a "difficult rating environment in Europe. The eurozone's largest bank by market capitalisation said a loss from the sale of residential properties in Spain and restructuring costs in Britain and Poland contributed to the fall, which was in line with analyst expectations. Broadly speaking, the bank blamed its business in Europe, where it makes 48 percent of its profit. In a statement, executive chairwoman Ana Botin said there was "a difficult operating environment, particularly in the UK and Europe." Profit dropped 11 percent in Spain and 36 percent in the United Kingdom, its second and fourth markets respectively. (AFP)

Boeing CEO defends safety record amid 2 deadly crashes

ASSOCIATED PRESS

CHICAGO, APRIL 30

The CEO of Boeing defended the company's safety record and declined to take any more than partial blame for two deadly crashes of its best-selling plane even while saying Monday that the company has nearly finished an update that "will make the airplane even

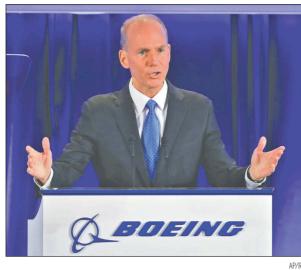
Chairman and CEO Dennis Muilenburg took reporters' questions for the first time since accidents involving the Boeing 737 Max in Indonesia and Ethiopia killed 346 people and plunged Boeing into its deepest crisis in years.

Muilenburg said that Boeing followed the same design and certification process it has always used to build safe planes, and he denied that the Max was rushed to market.

"As in most accidents, there are a chain of events that occurred," he said, referring to the Lion Air crash on Oct. 29 and the March 10 crash of an Ethiopian Airlines Max. "It's not correct to attribute that to any single item.

The CEO said Boeing provided steps that should be taken in response to problems like those encountered by pilots of the planes that crashed. "In some cases those procedures were not completely followed," he said.

The news conference, held after Boeing's annual meeting in Chicago, came as new questions have arisen around the Max, which has been grounded worldwide since mid-



Boeing Chief Executive Dennis Muilenburg speaks during their annual shareholders meeting at the Field Museum in Chicago.

Federal

the Max.

flying in the US

Southwest Airlines said over the weekend that Boeing did not disclose that a feature on the 737—an indicator to warn pilots about the kind of sensor failures that occurred in both accidents—was turned off on the Max. Southwest said it found out only after the first crash of the Lion Air Max. Boeing said the feature only worked if airlines bought a related one that's optional, and in any case the plane could fly safely without it.

published Separately, reports said that federal regulators and congressional investigators are examining safety allegations relating to the Max that were raised by about a dozen purported whis-

The Boeing event occurred on the same day that the

Muilenburg told shareholders that Boeing is close to completing an upgrade to flight software on the Max "that will ensure accidents like these never happen again."

In the brief news conference that followed, Muilenburg took six questions from reporters, including whether he will resign-he has no intention of doing that—and left as reporters persisted, including one who pointed to the deaths of 346 people and urged the CEO to take more questions.

Besides the software update, Boeing will present the FAA with a plan for training pilots on changes to MCAS. The company is pushing for training that can be done on tablet computers and, if airlines want to offer it, additional time in flight simulators when pilots are due for periodic retraining.

A requirement for training in simulators would further delay the return of the Max because of relatively small number of flight simulators.

Aviation

Administration convened a

week-long meeting in Seattle

of aviation regulators from

around the world to review the

FAA's certification of MCAS, a

key flight-control system on

will share its technical knowl-

edge with other regulators,

but their approval is not need-

ed before the plane resumes

both accidents, MCAS was

triggered by faulty readings

from a single sensor and

pushed the planes' noses

down. Pilots were unable to

control the planes although

the Ethiopian Airlines crew

followed some of the steps

that Boeing recommended to

Boeing has conceded that in

A spokesman said the FAA

The union for American Airlines pilots wants mandaadditional training including, at a minimum, video demonstrations showing pilots how to respond to failures of systems on the plane. Dennis Tajer, a 737 pilot and union spokesman, said Boeing and the FAA must require more training rather than leaving the option to air-

every pilot that goes out there and flies is a Boeing test pilot," Tajer said. something happens anywhere in the world, it

affects all of us."

During the one-hour annual meeting, shareholders elected all 13 company-backed board nominees, including newcomer Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor who lobbied for a Boeing plant there, and former US ambassador to the United Nations.

Several shareholder resolutions were defeated, including one to name an independent chairman possible instead of letting the CEO hold both jobs. It got 34% support.

A chairman-CEO "is not always a bad thing, but at times of crisis it's hardly ever a good idea," said Matt Brubaker, CEO of business-strategy consultant FMG Leading, who was not involved in the debate. "The place they are in now, they need the scrutiny of an inwardly focused CEO to drive change.

Muilenburg Monday's meeting with a moment of silence for victims of the two crashes. Later that day, lawyers for two Canadian families who lost relatives in the Ethiopian Airlines crash filed the latest in a growing number of lawsuits against Boeing, claiming the plane maker was negligent about

Hiral Vaidya, whose in-laws and four other family members died in the crash, said there were no remains left to

"We have no closure, we have no peace, we have no answer," she said, fighting back tears.

Mexico president kicks off new airport project



Mexico's President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador speaks during an official event to mark the beginning of the construction of a new international airport, at the Santa Lucia military airbase in Tecamac, near Mexico City, Mexico.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador on Monday symbolically launched work on a new airport for Mexico City to replace the nearly half-built \$13 billion project he cancelled upon

taking office. López Obrador promised the new Felipe Ángeles airport northeast of the capital won't exceed its budget and will save the government money even with the cancellation of the partially built airport. "It's going to resolve the problem of saturation at the current Mexico City airport, but also be an example of how you can carry out a rational, austere policy based on honesty that needs to establish itself as the way to live and the way to govern in our coun-

The new airport—named for a general allied with revolutionary icon Pancho Villais at the Santa Lucia military air base and the army is in charge of getting it built for \$4.1 billion.

try," López Obrador said.

It is supposed to begin operating in mid-2021, though construction has not yet begun.

Two new runways would be added to its existing one and the commercial airport would share the space with the military. Critics have argued that the new airport will have difficulty operating simultaneously with the existing airport, but in a report by the military, consultant Navblue said they could operate simultaneously in terms of air space.

One of the early hitches pointed out in the military's environmental impact statement is a small mountain named "Paula" that sits beside one of the runways. It would be too close for comrunway, so the report says it would be dedicated exclusively to military use.

But the biggest concern raised in the report has to do with water. The airport would consume an estimated 6 million litters (1.6 million gallons) per day from an already severely overtaxed aquifer that the capital depends on, and that's not including consumption from hotels and other businesses that will spring up around it, the report

Three existing wells on the air base should provide enough water, but that is expected to lower the water table in the aquifer, so some wells could go dry.

The report says that could be mitigated by creating recharge zones in the area to put water back into the aquifer. Another possibility would be bringing water from anoth-

On Monday, the Zeferino Ladrillero Human Rights Centre called on the government to consult with the more than 20 communities around

er, less-stressed aquifer.

that the water consumption would directly impact livestock and agriculture, and with it the livelihoods of thousands of families. López Obrador, though,

the airport. The group warned

said consultations had already taken place.

"I can tell you now that the consultation with the communities around Santa Lucia happened and what do you think? The people approved the project," he said. There was no description of when or how those consultations were performed.

When the time the airport it begins to operate in mid-2021, it could handle nearly 20 million passengers.

One of the looming questions is how flights will be divided between the capital's main airport, Benito Juárez International, and the new one at Santa Lucia. The environmental impact statement for the project mentions that initially two airlines will be operating there, but it does not say which.

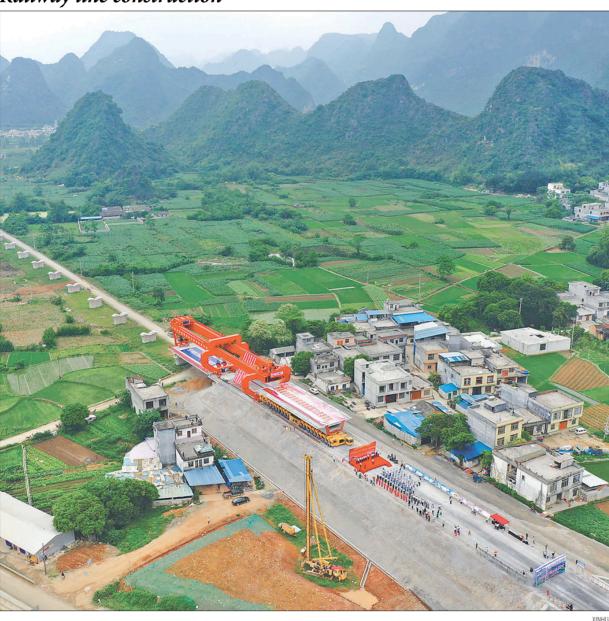
The new airport would connect to the existing one via a 28-mile (46 kilometre) route with dedicated bus lanes to speed passengers to their connecting flights. About 5 miles of that route would actually be along a perimeter road built for the now-cancelled airport at Texcoco.

In October, before López Obrador had taken office, he held an unofficial referendum on cancelling the \$13 billion Texcoco project, which was already nearly half completed. He proposed converting the Santa Lucia air base and making improvements at been targeted for closure. The plan received 70% approval, though critics complained that fewer than 2 percent of Mexico's registered voters took part

López Obrador complained the Texcoco project backed by the previous administration was drenched in corruption and faced environmental problems because it was being built on a former lakebed. Auditors said in February that they had found some \$167 million in questionable costs.

The government says it will build a third terminal at Benito Juarez. That airport, surrounded by residential neighbourhoods and with no possibility of adding an additional runway, is beyond capacity. More and more flights are parked on the tarmac with passengers shuttled to the overcrowded terminals

Railway line construction



An aerial view of the box girder installation site of Chengjiang bridge on the Guiyang-Nanning high-speed railway in Du'an, south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region. With a total length of 512 kilometres, of which 482 kilometres is newly constructed, the railway line will cut travel time from Nanning to Guiyang from over 10 hours to 2 and half hours. With a designed maximum speed of 350 kilometres per hour, the line is expected to go into service in 2023.

Argentina to intervene in exchange rate to curb peso volatility AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Argentina adopted new measure on Monday aimed at stabilising its exchange rate, six months out from presidential elections in which economic worries are having an impact on opinion polls. The central bank now has the power to sell up to \$250 million a day to satisfy market demands.

back of a freeze in the prices of basic goods and public services announced by President Mauricio Macri two weeks The central bank would

only intervene—by buying or selling dollars-if the peso dropped below 51.54 or rose above 39.75 to the dollar. Coming at the end of a

week in which the peso lost 8.16 percent against the dollar, the markets reacted well to the news, with the peso opening at 46.50-compared to its closing price on Friday of 46.80-and had reached 45.81 by lunchtime.

"We support these measures, which are sufficiently calibrated to the challenges facing Argentina," said the IMF, which last year agreed to lend Argentina \$56 billion to help the South American country battle its currency crisis and inflation issues.

Boxed in: \$1 billion of Iranian crude sits at China's Dalian port

SINGAPORE, APRIL 30

Some 20 million barrels of Iranian oil sitting on China's shores in the northeast port of Dalian for the past six months now appears stranded as the United States hardens its stance on importing crude from Tehran

Iran sent the oil to China, its biggest customer, ahead of the reintroduction of US sanctions last November, as it looked for alternative storage for a backlog of crude at home.

The oil is being held in so-called bonded storage tanks at the port, which means it has yet to clear Chinese customs. Despite a sixmonth waiver to the start of May that allowed China to continue some Iranian imports, shipping data shows little of this oil has

Traders and refinery sources

pointed to uncertainty over the terms of the waiver and said independent refiners had been unable to secure payment or insurance channels, while state refiners struggled to find vessels.

The future of the crude, worth well over \$1 billion at current prices, has become even more unclear after Washington last week increased its pressure on Iran, saying it would end all sanction exemptions at the start of May.

"No responsible Chinese compa ny with any international exposure will have anything to do with Iran oil unless they are specifically told by the Chinese government to do so," said Tilak Doshi of oil and gas consultancy Muse, Stancil & Co in Singapore.

Iran previously stored oil in 2014 at Dalian during the last round of sanctions that was later sold to buyers in South Korea and



Oil tankers pass through the Strait of Hormuz.

China last week formally complained to the United States over the unilateral Iran sanctions, but US officials have said Washington is not considering a further short-

term waiver or a wind-down The 20 million barrels is equal

to about a month's worth of

Dan, a supertanker owned by NITC moved 2 million barrels of oil from Dalian more than 1,000 km (620 miles) to the south to the Ningbo Shi Hua crude oil terminal in March, according to

Refinitiv data Ningbo is home to Sinopec's

the past six months, or about two

Iran says it will continue to

A senior official with the

National Iranian Tanker Company

(NITC), who spoke on condition of

anonymity, told Reuters: "We will

deal with anyone with steep dis-

counts as long as they get paid

has moved, according to a ship

tracking analyst at Refinitiv.

"Iran is now desperate and will

Some Iranian oil sent to Dalian

days of the country's total

export oil in defiance of

continue to sell our oil."

somehow," said Doshi.

imports.

US sanctions.

Zhenhai refinery, one of the country's largest oil plants with a capacity of 500,000 barrels a day

and a top processor of Iranian oil.

Sinopec declined to comment. According to Refinitiv analyst Emma Li. The NITC official confirmed the oil was taken by Zhuhai Zhenrong.

Zhenrong was started in the 1990s and brokered the first oil supply deals between Iran and China. At that time, Iran was supplying oil to China to pay for arms supplied by Beijing during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. Zhuhai

Zhenrong still specialises mainly in buying Iranian oil. An official at the general manager's office with Zhuhai Zhenrong's office in Beijing said he could not immediately comment. The company did not reply

to a fax seeking comment. For now, more Iranian oil is heading to China, with the super-

tankers Stream and Dream II due to arrive in eastern China from Iran on May 5 and May 7, respectively, Refinitiv data

showed. Some of this crude may be from Chinese investments into Iranian oilfields, a sanctions

Whether China will keep buying oil from Iran remains unclear, but analysts at Fitch Solutions said in a note "there may be scope for imports via barter or non-com-

pliance from ... China." Muse, Stancil & Co's Doshi said the only way to get the Iranian oil out of Dalian now was by cheating.

"Only rogue parties might try to cheat the system and try to pass the Iranian oil at Dalian as something else via fraudulent docs. But I doubt this is easy or can amount to much in terms of volume.

China's imports from Iran over

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 nearest 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

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-fortat 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.

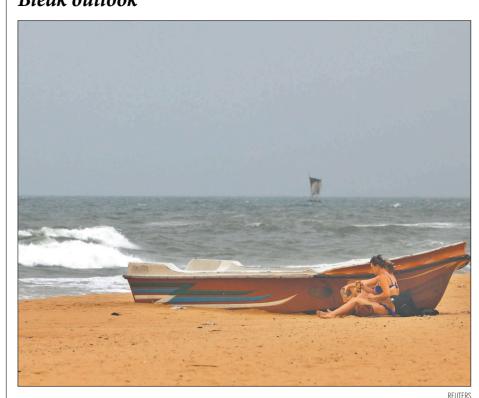
A new foreign investment law guaranteed foreign-invested firms equal access to state aid programmes, he noted.

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,"

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

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 eurozone economy expanded by 0.4% in the first quarter from the previous three-month period.

That's double the rate expe-

rienced in the last quarter of 2018 and suggests that a period of rapid slowdown may

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 policyunder which it has kept interest rates at super-low levelsis continuing to help economic activity, particularly consumer spending.

"Given the continuing weakness in manufacturing, this is a very respectable result," said Christoph Weil, economist Commerzbank. "It shows that domestic demand, fueled by the ECB's ultra-expansive monetary policy, continues to

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%.

support the economy."

The eurozone, like many other parts of the global economy, faltered last year as trade tensions between the United States 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



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





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SHARES 1.298.60_t **Nepse HIGHEST LOSERS** NICI ISI BB -5.89% -4.95% -4.50% -3.81% -3.78% **MODERATE LOSERS** SLBBL PLIC NLIC NLG **NBBL NLICL** -3.63% -3.50% -3.45% -3.41% **MODERATE GAINERS RADHI** SADBL CHCL **PMHPL NIBLPF** HPPL 3.75% 3.92% 4.62% 4.83%

	AKPL	NHPC	RRHP	GAINERS UMHL	AHPC	SHF	
	5.52%	5.79%	6.59%	8.18%	9.70%	9.96	%
				k Exchan aza, Kathmai 0, 2019			
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1 2 3	Agriculture Dev Bar Ankhu Khola Jalvid Api Power Co Ltd.			391 82 145	382 78 133	390 80 139	2750 29 3788
4 5 6				596 194 113	588 172 102	590 191 113	86 1266 9847
7 8	Asha Laghubitta Bi Asian Life Insuranc	ttiya Sanstha Ltd e Co. Ltd		475 466	465 441	471 441	129 1375
9 10 11	Bank of Kathmandi Barun Hydropower Best Fin Co Ltd.			290 96 96	280 93 96	287 93 96	1476 894 74
13	Bhargav Bikash Bar Bishal Bazar Co Ltd Butwal Power Co Lt	i		175 1665 409	169 1640 375	169 1640 395	353
15 16	Central Fin Co. Ltd. Century Commerci	ial Bank Ltd.		111 179	111 173	111 174	261 3543
17 18 19	Chautari Laghubitt Chhimek Laghubitt Chhyangdi Hydropo			500 990 99	491 958 97	498 968 98	3039 10
20 21 22	Chilime Hydropowe Citizen Bank Intern Citizen Investment	er Co Ltd ational Ltd		578 231 2510	546 225 2501	573 228 2503	3931 2343 145
23 24	Citizens Mutual Fur City Express Fin Co	nd -1		9.71 97	9.63 97	9.64 97	1400 5
25 26 27		a Bittiya Sanstha Ltd		158 565 750	155 565 725	155 565 725	2898 338
28 29 30	Deva Bikas Bank Lt Dibyashwori Hydro Everest Bank Ltd			139 81 666	132 80 656	134 80 665	1629 10 123
	Everest Insurance C Excel Dev Bank Ltd.		td	495 315 444	462 312 429	480 315 438	310 309 1568
34 35	Forward Communit Gandaki Bikas Banl	ty MicroFin Bittiya Sanst k Ltd		1600 218	1580 210	1588 210	58 1495
37	Garima Bikas Bank Global IME Bank Lt Global IME Laghubi			223 321 1240	216 311 1195	219 313 1196	4033 4970 132
39 40 41	Goodwill Fin Co. Ltc Grameen Bikas Lag Green Dev Bank Ltc	ghubitta Bittiya Sanstha	Ltd.	119 378 107	119 358 104	119 368 107	262 360
42 43	Guheshowori Merch Gurans Life Insurar	hant Bank & Fin Co. Ltd.		130 592	126 566	130 566	102 501
45	Gurkhas Fin Ltd. Himalayan Bank Lti Himalayan Distiller			112 590 1405	111 580 1405	111 581 1405	525 1627
	Himalayan General Himalayan Power P Hydroelectricity Inv		ı	415 196 151	403 176 140	403 190 145	487 320 2450
50 51	ICFC Fin Ltd IME General Insura	nce Ltd. Promoter Share		163 248	155 248	163 248	326 100
53 54	IME General Insura Janaki Fin Ltd. Janata Bank Nepal	Ltd.		445 176 203	420 175 199	428 175 200	18: 26 7382
55 56 57	Janautthan Samud Jyoti Bikas Bank Lt Kailash Bikas Bank		ank Ltd.	2156 145 234	2100 142 227	2100 145 234	488 541
59	Kalika Laghubitta B Kalika power Co Ltd	1		762 93	742 88	742 93	10 59
61	Kamana Sewa Bika Kanchan Dev Bank Kankai Bikas Bank	Ltd Ltd.		152 175 129	148 175 127	151 175 128	900 6
	Karnali Dev Bank Lt Khanikhola Hydrop Kisan MicroFin Bitti	ower Co. Ltd.		100 76 858	97 73 827	98 76 827	138 74 19
66 67	Kumari Bank Ltd Laxmi Bank Ltd Laxmi Equity Fund	,		232 234 8.45	220 227 8.43	226 228 8.45	16943 3516 820
69 70	Laxmi Laghubitta B Laxmi Value Fund-1			815 10.15	810 10.15	815 10.15	13
72	Life Insurance Co. N Lumbini Bikas Banl Lumbini General In	k Ltd.		1911 200 547	1853 195 515	1875 198 521	79 1068 1336
75	Machhapuchhre Ba Mahalaxmi Bikas B Mahila Sahayatra M		l trl	269 192 525	261 186 515	264 190 525	4903 618
77 78	Mahuli Samudayik Manjushree Fin Ltd	Laghubitta Bittiya Sanst I.		1255 115	1230 114	1230 115	20
79 80 81	Mega Bank Nepal L Mega Bank Nepal L Mero MicroFin Bitti	td. Promoter Share		192 110 685	185 110 670	187 110 670	4668 3945 125
83	Mirmire LaghuBitta Miteri Dev Bank Ltd Mountain Hydro Ne			987 270 90	968 265 87	968 265 89	37 38 44
85 86	Muktinath Bikas Ba Nabil Bank Ltd	nk Ltd.		395 871	386 851	389 856	1180 758
	NABIL Bank Ltd Pro Nabil Equity Fund Nadep Laghubitta E			854 8.97 535	828 8.80 507	834 8.90 522	3302 208
91	NagBeli LaghuBitta National Hydro Pow National Life Insura	ver Co Ltd		626 75 707	615 70 670	615 73 670	6215 1082
93 94	National MicroFin E Naya Nepal Laghub	Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. bitta Bikas Bank Ltd.		1769 477	1700 452	1739 452	74 330
	Neco Insurance Co. Nepal Bangladesh I Nepal Bank Ltd			540 234 324	530 229 315	530 232 318	1964 3556 29426
99	Nepal Community I Nepal Credit And Co Nepal Doorsanchar	ommercial Bank Ltd		138 241 709	138 236 696	138 237 700	4818 170
101 102	Nepal Hydro Develo Nepal Insurance Co	opers Ltd. o. Ltd.		135 415 580	135 399	135 403 568	4216 2007
103 104 105	Nepal Life Insurance	Bank Ltd. Promoter Shar e Co. Ltd.	e	545 1329	567 537 1269	540 1271	258 12407
107	Nepal Life Insuranc Nepal SBI Bank Ltd Nepal Seva Laghub			693 500 496	693 481 485	693 481 485	2402 906
109 110	Nerude Laghubita E Ngadi Group Power NIBL Pragati Fund	Bikas Bank Ltd		517 126 8.02	495 117 7.80	495 122 8.02	140 82 991
112 113	NIBL Samriddhi Fur NIC Asia Bank Ltd.			10.25 500	10.05 492	10.05 495	16760 2336
115	NIC Asia Growth Fu Nirdhan Utthan Lag NLG Insurance Co L	ghubitta Bittiya Sanstha	Ltd	10.04 895 882	9.80 884 848	9.80 884 848	2200 184 71
118	NMB MicroFin Bitti NMB Bank Ltd NMB Hybrid Fund L			1000 390 9.78	996 380 9.59	996 386 9.75	4218 1421
120 121	NMB Sulav Investm Oriental Hotels Ltd	nent Fund-1		11.05 525	11.03 506	11.03 518	2000 1256
123	Panchakanya Mai H Pokhara Fin Ltd. Prabhu Bank Ltd	lydropower Ltd		115 138 294	106 133 286	113 138 288	281 144 6175
126	Prabhu Insurance L Premier Insurance Prime Commercial	Co. Ltd.		440 1120 358	433 1070 353	435 1076 353	829 431 4406
128 129	Prime Life Insurance Prudential Insurance	ce Co Ltd. ce Co. Ltd.		513 735	495 721 155	495 724 166	1202 205
131 132	Radhi Bidyut Co Lto Rairang Hydropowe Rastriya Beema Co	er Dev Co Ltd. Ltd		166 97 10110	91 9457 8600	97 9646	28 78 46 32
134	Reliance Fin Ltd. Ridi Hydropower De	Ltd Promoter Share ev Co Ltd.		8805 123 102	119 94	8610 120 97	624 606
137	RMDC Laghubitta E RSDC Laghubitta B Sagarmatha Insura	íttiya Sanstha Ltd.		663 431 1375	638 402 1370	645 413 1370	477 299 39
139 140	Sahayogi Bikas Ban Samata MicroFin Bi	nk Ltd ittiya Sanstha Ltd.		202 1250	198 1225	198 1249	407 12
142	Samudayık Laghub Sana Kisan Bikas B Sanima Bank Ltd	itta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd ank Ltd		668 1041 365	635 1021 354	643 1023 357	20 266 2997
145	Sanima Equity Func Sanima Mai Hydrop Shangrila Dev Bank	ower Ltd.		9.89 276 159	9.89 247 151	9.89 276 159	1150 1256 625
147 148	Shikhar Insurance (Shine Resunga Dev	Co. Ltd.	re	930 257 130	897 252 130	915 254 130	408 998 2748
150 151	SHIVAM CEMENTS Shree Investment F	LTD in Co. Ltd.		330 158	316 152	328 152	2205 79
153 154	Shrijana Fin (Bittay Siddhartha Bank Lt Siddhartha Equity F	d		223 352 9.94	223 342 9.75	223 346 9.76	100 5557 1300
155 156	Siddhartha Equity (Siddhartha Insuran Soaltee Hotel Ltd	Orineted Scheme		10.60 635 232	10.50 627	10.50 627 230	2150 182 1286
158 159	Standard Chartered Summit Micro Fin D			734 660	700 657	705 660	793 38
160 161	Sunrise Bank Ltd Support MicroFin B Surya Life Insuranc	littiya Sanstha Ltd.		268 520 592	259 516 565	262 519 573	2722 8 805
163 164	Suryodaya Laghubi Swabalamban Lagh	tta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd. nubitta Bittiya Sanstha L ta Bittiya Sanstha Ltd.	td	1030 942 685	990 920 655	1009 920 655	71 200 464
166 167	Swarojgar Laghu Bi Synergy Power Dev	tta Bikas Bank Ltd. Ltd.		525 106	510 104	510 106	126 40
169 170	Taragaon Regency I Uniliver Nepal Ltd United Fin Ltd.			243 20695 190	238 20695 188	240 20695 188	251 1 6
171 172	United Insurance C United Modi Hydrop UNIVERSAL POWER	oower Ltd.		985 119 99	957 108 90	957 119 98	370 182 837
174 175	Unnati MicorFin Bit Upper Tamakoshi H	tiya Sanstha Ltd. Iydropower Ltd		1200 249	1190 233	1200 244	7 15669
Total	World Merchant Ba Traded Amou	nt Rs.:	950,086,936	Sub-Indices	Current	Pts Change	
Total	Traded Share Transactions:	S: :	2,967,358 10,074 GE %CHANGE	Banking Trading Hotels	1,171.04 245.49 1,930.98	9.82 4.82 24.88	0.83 1.92 1.27

Dev Bank

1.573.98

1,236.75

2.73

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0.17 3.82

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 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



Visitors during the NADA Auto Show in Kathmandu

Kuleshwor, a 2km stretched road is expanding as major hub for car accessories in the Valley, has been offering various ranges of automobile accessories.

As a large number of automobiles dealers have opened showrooms in Thapathali-Kuleshwor area, numerous car accessory shops have been sprouting in this location to attract potential buyers, according to traders.

Samir Raj Gautam, owner of New Pioneer Decoration House at Kuleshwor, said the vehicle owners flock to the location as the shops there offer wide varieties of accessories.

According to the traders, a vehicle parts and accessories store in the area makes transaction of Rs3 million to Rs4 million per month on average.

"A single store is earning an average of Rs500,000-Rs1 million per month just from the service charge for installing the accessories," informed one of the leading shop owners at Kuleshwor, on condition of ano-

In addition to safety and luxury, accessories used in decoration of cars are among the best sellers. The traders offer such accessories in the price range between Rs20.000 and Rs250.000 to customise the look of vehicles.

Byanian

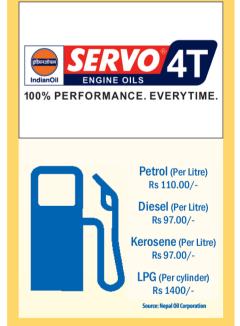
MARKET WATCH

RETAIL PRIC	E	
Vegetables	Unit	Price (Rs)
Red Potato	kg	Rs45
White Potato	kg	Rs33
Onion (Indian)	kg	Rs45
Tomato Small	kg	Rs85
Carrot	kg	Rs35
Tomato Big	kg	Rs85
Squash	kg	Rs45
Cabbage	kg	Rs28
Brinjal Long	kg	Rs85
Cow Pea	kg	Rs75
Fruits	Unit	Price (Rs)
Apple	kg	Rs165
Pomegranate	kg	Rs190
Pineapple	kg	Rs105
Cucumber	kg	Rs75
Papaya	kg	Rs75
Banana		Rs125
Disease.	100D	D 01F

DAILY COMMODITIES

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

GASOLINE WATCH



BULLION	PRICE PER

Fine Gold	Rs 59,700
Silver	Rs 725
	SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

73.05

639.50

1.40

0.62

	MARKET
	WARL

Energy

Brent Crude Futr (Bbl)

Gas Oil Fut (Ice) (Mt)

Precious Metals

Gold 100 Oz Futr (T Oz)

Silver Future (T.Oz)

Gasoline Rbob Fut (Gal)	210.65	1.14
Natural Gas Futr (Mmbtu)	2.61	0.58
Agriculture	Price (US\$)	%Change
Cocoa Future (Mt)	2,391.00	0.34
Coffee 'C' Future (Lb)	94.45	1.94
Corn Future (Bu)	360.75	-0.28
Cotton No.2 Futr (Lb)	77.24	0.38
Rough Rice (Cbot) (Cwt)	10.63	0.00
Soybean Future (Bu)	862.00	0.15
Soybean Meal Futr (T)	300.9	0.00
Soybean Oil Futr (Lb)	28.26	0.25
Sugar #11 (World) (Lb)	12.47	1.14
Wheat Future(Cbt) (Bu)	431.25	-0.92
Industrial Metals	Price (US\$)	%Change
Copper Future (Lb)	291.5	0.62

Price (US\$)

1.288.00

Five months long flower expo



Visitors look at a section displaying various species of Chinese peony inside the International Pavilion at International Horticultural Exhibition 2019 Beijing, in Beijing, China. It will bring together participants from more than 110 countries and international organisations as well as over 120 non-official exhibitors. The exhibitors will present their latest achievements in the 503-hectare expo site. The International Horticultural Exhibition is a five months long event projected to attract more than 16 million visitors.

Samsung Electronics hit with quarterly profit slump

AGECNE FRANCE-PRESSE

SEOUL, APRIL 30

Samsung Electronics, the world's biggest smartphone and memory chip maker, reported a slump in first-quarter net profits on Tuesday, in the face of a weakening chip market and rising com-

The result is the latest bad news for the tech titan, which last week was forced to delay the release of its much-hyped \$2,000 foldable smartphone owing to problems with the screen.

Net profits in the January-March period were 5.04 trillion won (\$4.3 billion) -- the lowest since the third quarter of 2016 and down 56.9 percent year-on-

Operating profit also plunged 60.2 percent to 6.2 trillion won, while sales fell 13.5 percent to 52.4 trillion won.

The firm is the flagship subsidiary of the giant Samsung Group, by far the biggest of the family-controlled conglomerates that dominate business in the world's 11th largest economy, and it is crucial to South Korea's economic health.

It has enjoyed record profits in recent years despite a series of setbacks, including a humiliating product recall and the jailing of its de facto chief.

But now the picture is changing, with chip prices falling as global supply increases while demand weakens.

It also has to contend with increasingly tough competition in the smartphone market from Chinese rivals like Huawei -which in 2017 surpassed Apple to take second place -- offering qual-

ity devices at lower prices. Samsung had warned investors of a 60 percent-plus fall in first-quarter operating profits, citing weak display and chip

"Mobile displays suffered slower demand and intensifying competition with LTPS LCDs,' the company said. "Large displays also took a hit from a continued decline in LCD panel prices amid weak seasonality."

Samsung shares ended down 0.65 percent in Seoul.

"Growing competition in the mature TV and smartphone markets is expected to pose a challenge in the second half (of this year)," Samsung said in a statement. Samsung launched its topend S10 5G smartphone earlier this month, after South Korea won the global race to commercially launch the world's first nationwide 5G network.

But it last week made a high-profile decision to push back the release of its new Galaxy Fold phones after reviewers provided with early devices reported screen problems within days of use.

While Samsung's device was not the first folding handset, the smartphone giant was expected to help spark demand and potentially revive a sector that has been struggling for new innova-

The South Korean firm had spent nearly eight years developing the Galaxy Fold as part of its strategy to propel growth with groundbreaking gadgets.

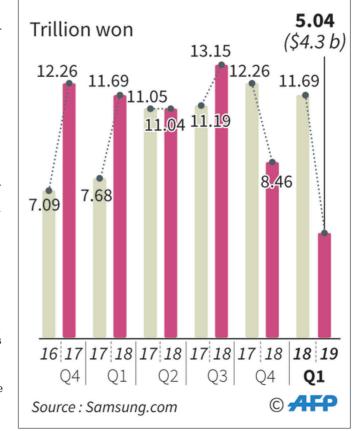
The move comes after Samsung was forced to announce a worldwide recall of its Galaxy Note 7 devices in 2016 over exploding batteries in 2016, dealing a blow to its reputation and

costing it billions of dollars. The quarterly figures come after South Korea's SK Hynix, the world's second-largest memo-

Samsung Electronics

Net profit

Compares quarterly changes, year-on-year



ry chip maker, said operating profits plunged more than twothirds in the first quarter. Greg Roh of HMC Securities &

Investment projected Samsung's operating profits to continue falling in the second quarter of this