nmandl SATURDAY, JUNE 8, 2019 (25-02-2076) NEPAL'S LARGEST SELLING ENGLISH DAILY Vol XXVII No 110 | 12+4 Pages

YES WE CANN*BIS

Despite a long and storied history of cannabis in Nepali culture, the cultivation and consumption of marijuana remains illegal, punishable by harsh jail terms and steep fines. Some people say it's high time that changed.



ucked between two homes in a corner of Patan is a small but vibrant garden. Its caretaker, 37-year-old Nirakar, is an unlikely gardener in Nepal, tattooed and dreadlocked. But given the kind of herbs he grows, Nirakar is society's ideal.

'When people look at me, they misunderstand me," says the 37-year-old. "It's the same thing with my plants. They are just misunder-

Nirakar grows Cannabis indica, the most abundant marijuana strain in Nepal, which he puts up to dry alongside his mother's garlic and ginger for his own consumption. But unlike his mother's herbs, the kind he grows could cost him his freedom.

If caught, the amount of processed cannabis in his possession could earn him up to three years in prison, with fines of up to Rs 25,000, as per the Narcotics Drug Control Act 1976.

Yet, despite the risks, Nirakar publically broadcasts his love for the plant to the world through several of his social media platforms, including his YouTube channel, which has over 11,000 subscribers, and his Instagram account, 'the.stoned_photographer'.

'Having this might be illegal," says Nirakar, who spoke on condition that we use his first name only because of fears that his involvement in the story would affect his fam-



With countries around the world pursuing marijuana legalisation, many in Nepal are wondering if it too should consider government regulation.

ily. "But marijuana is the reason I was able to recover from my battle with drug addiction. It continues to save my life, so why should I

have to hide it?" In the early 2000s, Nirakar was addicted to hard drugs including heroine, and he credits

marijuana with helping cleave him of his addiction. While many in Nepal continue to see marijuana as a public nuisance and a

'gateway drug', for people like Nirakar, ganja is therapeutic, helping them kick addiction. The latter voices—encouraged by an ongoing global push for progressive research and legislation to consider cannabis' medicinal benefits—are now finding more sympathetic ears

"In drug rehabilitation programmes, a typical route prescribed to recovering addicts is 'total abstinence'," says Rajiv Kafle, another recovering addict. "For addicts diagnosed with HIV—who form a sizeable numberdepression, suicidal thoughts, and a lack of meaning in life are very common. So why not point users to substances that are relatively less harmful in their path to recovery from

Like Nirakar, Kafle has long been vocal about his endorsement of the plant that helped wean him off of harder drugs. But Kafle also lives with HIV, and he says marijuana continues to help him with the side effects of antiretroviral therapy—nausea, lack of appetite, and insomnia. The plant's THC-tetrahydrocannabinol, the chemical responsible for a majority of marijuana's psychological effects-and CBD-cannabidiol, a naturally occurring compound found exclusively in cannabis-have made 'life-changing' interventions in his recovery, Kafle says.

For nearly a decade, 50-year-old Kafle, who lives in Bangkok, has been advocating for a re-evaluation of the plant's social and legal

>> Continued on pages 6&7

Another windstorm hits western Nepal

Meteorologists say windstorms are common in pre-monsoon season

CHANDAN KUMAR MANDAL KATHMANDU. JUNE

Two people were killed and over a hundred injured as a raging windstorm tore through three districts in western Nepal—Kailali, Kanchanpur and Bardiya—on Thursday evening. Bir Bahadur Chaudhary and Lahun Chaudhary of Majgaun in Godavari

Municipality-1 were killed in the disaster. The storm struck at a speed of 95 kilometres per hour and lasted nearly two hours, according to the Meteorological Forecasting Division.

According to the preliminary report issued by the police, 79 people were injured in Kailali and 23 in Kanchanpur. >> Continued on page 2

Competing bid from Germany puts security printing press deal with France in limbo

Even as negotiations with France were ongoing, Germany has placed a competing bid, offering a soft loan of 260 million euros at 2 percent interest

ANIL GIRI

KATHMANDU, JUNE 7

Despite an existing memorandum of understanding with France on setting up a state-of-the-art security printing facility in Nepal, a competing bid from Germany has placed the government in a fix, just as Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli prepares to visit France on Saturday.

Both the proposals will cost Nepal Rs32 billion, but their funding modalities are different. France has proposed a mixed model of a soft loan of 100 million euros along with technology transfer while Germany has offered a complete soft loan of 260 million euros at 2 percent interest

to build the printing facility at an ICT park in Banepa, Kavre.

In May, Nepal and France signed two Memorandums of Understanding-one of which on security printing facility with French aid-in Paris, during the official visit of Information and Communication Minister Gokul Prasad Baskota

The other MoU signed in May regarded the operation and management of Nepal's own satellite in an orbital slot provided by the International Telecommunications Union. The two deals with France were significant because they were supposed to mark the 70th year of diplomatic relations between the two countries

>> Continued on page 2

Former child soldier files petition at UN Human Rights Office demanding justice

Lenin Bista has asked the UN to place pressure on Nepal to address the demands of child soldiers, who have been largely left out of the transitional justice process

BINOD GHIMIRE KATHMANDU, JUNE 7

Lenin Bista, a former Maoist child soldier, has petitioned the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva demanding justice for the thousands of former child soldiers who have been largely left out of the transitional justice process.

The petition, submitted on Thursday, seeks UN support to asking the Nepal government to prioritise justice for former child soldiers, recalling that a serious crime was committed against the thousands of minors forced to fight on behalf of the Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist during



the 10-year armed insurgency. The petition was filed just as Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli embarks on a three-country Europe sojourn that includes a visit to Geneva to mark the centenary of the

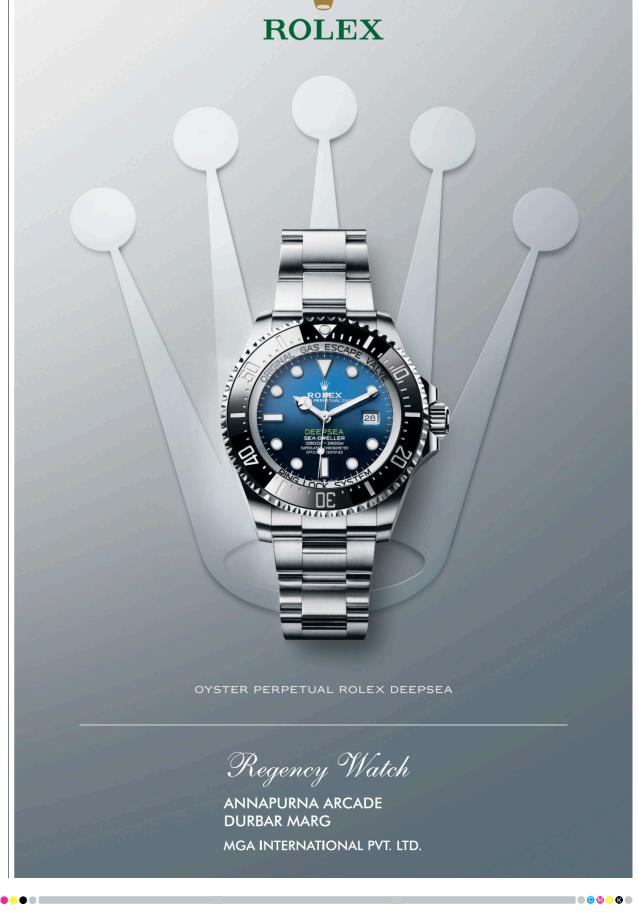
International

Bista has been in Europe for over two months now, meeting with officials from the United Nations and other internahuman organisations, seeking solidarity in his fight for justice

Bista is president of the Peace Envisioners Nepal, formerly known as Discharged People's Liberation Army of Nepal, an organisation working for the rights of Maoist combatants disqualified in the army integration process that saw former Maoist soldiers merged with the Nepal Army.

The application seeks the assistance of special rapporteurs to recommend that the Nepal government provide compensation for discharged combatants like Bista, and a public apology from the United Nations Mission in Nepal (UNMIN), the Nepal government, and Maoist leaders who denied them compensation.

>> Continued on page 2



Parliamentary committee for stalling disputed staff recruitment process

State affairs and good governance committee plans to meet Minister Pandit on Monday

TIKA R PRADHAN KATHMANDU, JUNE

Following widespread criticisms from all sections of the State Affairs and Good Governance Committee is all set to direct the government to Public Service Commission.

"We have already prepared the decision of the state affairs and good governance committee and will release after talk-Administration Pandit on Monday," said Amresh Kumar Singh, a Nepali Congress lawmaker and member of the parliamentary committee

Last month, the Public Service Commission had published a notice to recruit as many as 9,161 staffers in 515 local governments. The issue had caused a furore in differincluding political parties and social groups, who claimed that the move was against the spirit of federalism and sought to control the local



Service Commission in the Capital.

After the issue ran into controversy, the parliamentary committee had held a discussion with the Public Service Commission officials on June 3. The commission officials had told the committee members that it had only followed

the direction of the ministry. The committee has been trying to arrange a meeting Minister Pandit to enquire about the matter, but the latter has not allotted time

citing busy schedule. "We have been seeking time from Minister Pandit for last five days but to no avail,' Shashi Shrestha, chairperson of the parliamentary committee, told the Post.

She added that Pandit did not attend Friday's committee's meeting even after scheduling it.

After the minister failed to appear in the meeting scheduled for 8 am, the committee, at the minister's request, had scheduled another meeting for 5 pm which too he failed to

The Post made multiple attempts to contact Minister Pandit for a comment, but he could not be reached.

On Tuesday, various groups The recruitment plan has of indigenous nationalities,

also come under criticism

from the Nepal Communist

Party (NCP) lawmakers. Most

lawmakers of the ruling party

on the parliamentary commit-

tee have claimed that the

recruitment process is uncon-

to direct the government to

stall the recruitment process

and to take decisions as per

The decision was not

announced after Bijay Subba, one of the NCP lawmakers

attending Friday's meeting,

requested the committee to

wait for the minister's brief-

co-chairman of coalition part-

ner Samajbadi Party Nepal,

told the Friday meeting that

the federal government could

deploy staff until the provin-

cial public service commis-

assemblies have already

endorsed the provincial public

service commission Acts and

they are preparing to establish

the provincial

sions were in place.

Most of

Rajendra Shrestha,

the spirit of the constitution,'

Singh said.

'The committee has decided

Madhesis, Dalits, Muslims, differently-abled women and backward communities had handed over a memorandum of demand, urging chairperson, to stall the recruitment process

"They had demanded that the recruitment process be stalled because it not only flouted the constitutional provision of inclusiveness but also the rights of the provincial governments,"

Lawmakers of the ruling NCP have claimed that they had to speak in the line of the party--federalism-- but the government has been attempting to move against it.

"What we know is that the party is for federalism and we must speak in favour of it, said NCP lawmaker Rekha Sharma, also a former general administration minister.

"I talked with the authorities of a number of local governments and they were not informed about most of the

NCP lawmaker Janardan Sharma termed the plan a "constitutional anarchy".

Another windstorm hits western ...



Windstorm victims sit next to their belongings in Kailali district.

>> Continued from page 1

Severely injured four were taken to hospitals in Nepalgunj and across the border in India. Twenty-eight are undergoing treatment at Seti Zonal Hospital, three of them in critical condition, according to Dr Jagadish Joshi, in-charge of the emergency unit at the hospital.

Trees and electricity poles were uprooted, disrupting power supply in the storm-hit areas. About 3,000 houses incurred damage in Kailali and 200 in Kanchanpur.

"Since the wind came so quick and all of a sudden, I was confused what to do, where to go," Ram Singh Rawal, who is currently undergoing treatment at the Seti Zonal Hospital, said. Eighty-year-old Rawal has incurred injuries in his skull and body. He was rescued buried in the debris of his house. "As the wind intensified, I rushed to the main door, the roof made of zinc plates flew away, and the bricks in the walls started to fall," Rawal

Windstorms have been frequent this pre-monsoon season. In May, another powerful windstorm cut through Bara and Parsa districts in Province 2, leaving at least 28 people dead, over 400 injured, and causing a massive damage of property and structures.

According to Shanti Kadel, a senior meteorologist with the forecast division, sudden and powerful windstorms coupled with heavy rainfall are common during the pre-monsoon season, which generally sees sunny afternoons and rainy evenings.

"However, the country, especially the southern plains, has witnessed unusually powerful Kadel told the Post. "After the Bara and Parsa disaster, there have been windstorms in places like Janakpur and elsewhere in the Tarai"

Kadel said that these extreme events do not appear to be connected as they are the results of local meteorological phenomena. Thursday's wind storm occurred not only because of the local wind. The destructive windstorm was generated after the 'convergence' of local wind, westerly wind and southeasterly wind from the Bay of Bengal that carried moisture. The same windstorm had

started moving towards the eastern part of the country later in the night. Kathmandu Valley witnessed strong winds and heavy rainfall on Friday morning, which was the result of the windstorm in western Nepal reaching the Capital.

According Meteorological Forecasting Division, the windstorm is likely to get weaker as it keeps cast conditions, whereas some places in western hills and a few places in central and east ern districts will receive light to moderate rainfall with

thunderstorm until Sunday. Country's poor early warn ing system was exposed when an approaching powerful storm could not be predicted in May as the country did not have the required technology-the weather radar. The weather office said that relying on its limited resources, it could disseminate warning nearly two hours in advance.

"We did not predict the Bara and Parsa windstorm not because we did not want to but because we could not do so. If only we had weather radar, we could give longer hour updates on weather condition, wind speed and their movement, cloud formation and additional atmospheric information," said Kadel.

The government has allo cated budget for installing weather radars in Udayapur and Palpa, and announced a plan to operate such radar in Surkhet in the upcoming

With inputs from our correspondents in the far west

Suspect held after a man is robbed by two persons pretending

to be cops

Police have arrested a suspect and are searching for a second one after they allegedly robbed a man by pretending to be police officers in the Capital last week

Metropolitan Police Circle, Baneshwor, arrested 20-year-Jadibuti, Kathmandu, on Tuesday, based on a description provided by the victim, whom police identified as Bal

According to police, Luitel and his friend Yohuna Ghale allegedly had snatched Sarki's phone and police officers in Pepsicola.

"Luitel and Magar had reportedly identified themselves as police inspector and sub-inspector to Sarki on the night of the incident. They then went on to perform a body search on Sarki and snatched his mobile phone cash, Superintendent of Police Govinda Raj Kafle, in-charge of the circle, told the Post.

Sarki had filed a police complaint and provided the details of Luitel and Magar at the circle following the

Kafle said police were looking for Magar while also investigating the past criminal record of the suspects

"We are investigating if the duo had a previous criminal history of similar nature," Kafle said.

Police arrest burglars who carried out robberies in four places in the Valley

The Metropolitan Crime Division has arrested six men involved in four different robberies across the Valley. Among the five individuals, the leader Tsering Tamang, aka Kaka, was arrested from Makalbari, Kathmandu, on Friday after getting hit by two bullets on his leg.

When a team went to arrest Tsering, he tried to attack them with sharp weapons. While he was about to flee, we fired two bullets on his leg and arrested him. He is being treated in Bir Hospital,' Senior Superintendent of Police Sahakul According to the Division, the other

arrested individuals have been identified as Yogen Tamang, Nitesh Tamang, aka Dharane; Ajay Tamang, aka Mundre; Rupesh Chaulagain, aka Bahun; and Bhimraj Thing, aka Jigre. They were arrested from Ilam and various other places of Kathmandu in the last couple of

On May 17, the group closed the shutter of a jewellery shop in Jorpati and threatened the owner with a khukuri on broad daylight at around 12:45 pm. Then, they robbed Rs 80,000 from the owner.

robbing Rs 100,000 from Asan Investment Pvt Ltd at Lalitpur on May 16; Rs 350,000 from Pathivara Money Transfer at Gokarneshwor on May 9; and Rs 170,000 from Peoples Money Transfer at Kalanki on September 11 last year. Along with these four places, the group

had also attempted to rob Agrimore Cooperative, at Chabahil, on January 28, but fled without robbing anything. "The group had robbed all the places in

broad daylight. We had their faces captured in many CCTV cameras following which we searched for them, found them and arrested them," said Thapa.

Former child soldier files petition at UN Human ...

"We also ask the leaders of the former Maoist Party for public apology for using under-age children as combatants," reads

Thousands of Maoist fighters like Bista had been disqualified for being minors during the verification process conducted by UNMIN in 2007. Among the 4,008 disqualified combatants, 2,973 were minors while the remaining 1,035 had joined the Maoist People's Liberation Army after the first ceasefire of May 26, 2006—six months before the peace deal was signed. The government had provided between Rs 500,000 and Rs 800,000 for the combatants who chose voluntary retirement. However, those who were disqualified didn't receive any substantial support, except for a few thousand rupees from the United Nations.

Speaking to the Post from Geneva, Bista said he was able to draw the attention of the UN and international human rights organisations regarding former child soldiers who have been neglected by the Nepal government.

"I believe that our issue will be raised together with other victims of the decade-long insurgency," he said over telephone.

Former child soldiers have been demanding special social and economic assistance given that they were robbed of an education by their conscription into the rebel army.

They've also asked for medical treatment psychosocial counselling and special support schemes for injured, mentally ill, and disabled former child soldiers.

tice law has no such provisions, and neither have international human rights organisa tions raised these concerns

Charan Prasai, a human rights activist, said that Bista had taken the right step to mainstream the concerns of former child soldiers. "This is definitely going to build pressure on the Nepal government to act towards providing justice for former minor combatants," Prasai told the Post

Bista, in the second week of April, submitted a similar application to Virginia Gamba, special representative of the UN Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, in Belgium. Among the seven special human rights rapporteurs who received Bista's petition this time around, five had written to the Nepal government in April asking for transparency in the ongoing transitional justice

The Nepal government, on August 24 last year, had stopped Bista from visiting Thailand on the grounds that he would raise the issues of child soldiers in international forums. Bista was scheduled to make a presentation at a workshop on 'Youth in Conflict Areas: Healing and Peace-building through

Competing bid from Germany puts security printing press deal with France ...

had proposed building the security printing facility. Last year, a similar deal with the German firm Bundesdruckerei and its holding company Veridos fell through

"I can confirm that we have received a proposal from Germany," said Bikal Poudel, head of the security printing division at the Ministry of Information Communication Technology.

Every year, Nepal loses nearly Rs 5 billion on security printing, prompting the government to seek the establishment of a domestic printing facility. Nepal and France had agreed to continue to hold negotiations on a funding modality and technical details before Oli's trip to France. But the German proposal has thrown a spanner in the works and the anticipated deal with France is now in limbo, multiple government sources told the Post

laws to set up the printing press as well as procuring related logistics. An expert team had been formed, a detailed project report of the architecture at Banepa's IT park had been prepared, and a Rs 650 million budget allocated to carry out the logistical and other preparations

The French government is expected to extend a soft loan of more than Rs 50 billion to set up the printing facility and to install Nepal's satellite. But there are concerns from some sections that the soft loans offered by both countries overshoot the project and that the interest rate is also high.

"Nepal takes a soft loan at upto one percent or less with major donors like the World and the Development Bank," said a senior official at the Information

Foreign Minister Pradeep

After signing the MoU with Gyawali confirmed to the Post Ministry of Communication

"There have been no significant developments in negotiations with the French," said Gyawali. "The concerned ministry [Ministry of Information and Communication] is working on the terms, delivery time, phase and interest rate."

Government officials are currently weighing both proposals, said officials who have been closely following the developments. Diplomatic sources told the

Post that a team from Groupe Imprimerie nationale, a French government undertaking, was in town last week to hold negotiations with Communication Ministry over the printing facility. A deal, however, wasn't finalised. The French company had offered a deal similar to the one that Germany is proposing. But now that the deal fell through, none

of the representatives from the

part of prime minister's Europe

Prime Minister Oli's a weeklong visit to Europe, which begins on Saturday, was supposed to have finalised the deal with France, where he will go after stopping in Geneva, Switzerland and in Oxford, England.

While negotiations with the French side are ongoing, there has been no agreement on the terms and conditions of the soft loan and it is unlikely that a deal will be reached with France during Oli's Europe sojourn, said officials privy to

the development. The security printing division has estimated that it will require over Rs 32 billion to set up a dedicated printing press to handle the printing of several high-end documents like passports, banknotes, stamps, identity cards, visas, and driving

Classified Display

राहदाना हराया मिति २०७६/१/४ गते टाँडीदेखि

कष्ण मन्दिरसम्म जाँदा मेरो निम्न व्यहोरा भएको राहदानी हराएको हँदा पाउन हुने महानुभावले नजिकको प्रहरी कार्यालय वा फोन नं ९८५५०६३४०७ मा खबर गरिदिन हुन अनुरोध गर्दछ । नामः गोकर्ण धिमिरे राहदानी नं.: ४१०५५२५

ठेगानाः धावा-३, गोरखा

मिति २०७६/०२/११ गते राहि करिब ११:३० बजेतिर आफ्नै घरको आगनबाट प्रदेश ३-०२-००१ प ३४७७ को १५०CC को कालो रंगको पल्सर मोटरसाईकल हराएको हँदा पाउन हने महानभावले फोन नं ९८०३७५८२५४ वा नजिकको प्रहरी कार्यालय मा खबर गरिदिन हन अनरोध गर्दछ।

सवारी धनीः कर्णबहादुर वाईबा यासिस नं : MD2A11CY2JRD-45128 हिन्जन नं.: DHYRJD-20172



Government of Nepal

Ministry of Urban Development Department of Urban Development and Building Construction (DUDBC)

Regional Urban Development Project (RUDP) Regional Project Implementation Unit (R-PIU) Dhangadi, Nepal

ADDENDUM IN BIDDING DOCUMENT

Published Date: 8th June, 2019

Following Addendum has been issued in the following bids published by this office on 25th April, 2019 and 14th May, 2019.

SN	Contract No. and Title	Bidding Document Clause No.	Amendment
1	RUDP/ICB/KL/06-GD/RD/01: Construction and	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 22.1	Date: 30th June, 2019
	Rehabilitation of Road, Drainage, Footpath and Road Furniture of Godawari Municipality.	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 25.1	Date: 30 th June, 2019
2	RUDP/ICB/KL/06-DN/RD/03: Construction and	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 22.1	Date: 30th June, 2019
	Rehabilitation of Road, Drainage, Footpath and Road Furniture in Dhangadi Sub-Metropolitan City (ICB)	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 25.1	Date: 30th June, 2019
3	RUDP/NCB/KC/05-SK/RD/02: Upgradation and	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 22.1	Date: 30th June, 2019
	Rehabilitation of Road, Drainage, Footpath and Road Furniture of Suklaphanta Municipality (NCB)	Section 2, ITB Reference Clause no. 25.1	Date: 30 th June, 2019
			75 1 175

Project Manager

Campaign to replace thatched roofs in Sindhuli

SINDHULI: The Kamalamai Municipality in Sindhuli has started a campaign to replace thatched roofs with galvanised zinc sheets. There are around 220 families living in thatched houses in the municipality. Babindralal Majhi, of the municipal office, said galvanised zinc sheets were being distributed to the impoverished families free of charge. (PR)



Call for RBM & IMPACT Monitoring Consultancy

AWO International works in 17 countries around the world and is working in Nepal since 2009 in the field of Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid. AWO Nepal Office is looking for a long term consultant to improve its RBM and IMPACT Monitoring tools. Tenders should be submitted until 14th June 2019. For further information please visit our website: http://www.awo-southasia.org/



A view of the mountains as seen from Pepsicola in Kathmandu on Friday. The early morning windstorm cleared up the Valley's sky, opening up a crisp, clear vista.

A second type of mosquito responsible for the spread of dengue in Dharan

Previously, female Aedes aegypti were thought to be solely responsible for the spread of dengue in the city

PRADEEP MENYANGBO

The presence of Aedes albopictus, also known as the Asian tiger mosquito, has been confirmed in dengue-affected areas for the first time in Dharan. Earlier reports had suggested that another type of mosquitoes-female Aedes aegyptiwere solely responsible for the spread of dengue in the crisis-hit zones of the Sub Metropolis.

A team of health workers, including doctors and officials of the Sub Metropolis involved in the 'search and destroy' mosquito campaign, found hundreds of eggs, larvae and pupae in open water tanks of a hotel in Bijayapur, Dharan-14.

Dip Kumar Sah, an official of the Vector Borne Disease Research and Training Centre in Hetauda, who is currently in the dengue-affected

area to collect samples, confirmed that Aedes albopictus has also been found in Dharan for the first time. According to him, they had also found the same type of mosquito in Pokhara two months ago.

Aedes albopictus is a small, dark mosquito with a white dorsal stripe and banded legs. Health workers said that they are active throughout the year in tropical and subtropical locations. Meanwhile, Dharan Sub-

metropolitan City has declared Wards 8 and 15 as crisis-hit zones after the Health Directorate of Province 1 announced a dengue emergency in the city. As many as 188 people have been diagnosed with dengue in the two wards so far this year. Most of the patients are from Ward 15. The dengue patients are receiving treatment at tropical ward and emergency unit of BP Koirala Institute of Health Sciences.

Comedian in police custody for a video reviewing the film Bir Bikram 2

Responding to a complaint filed by the film's director, police detained stand-up comedian Pranesh Gautam on Friday

BHRIKUTI RAI KATHMANDU, JUNE 7

More than two weeks after filmmaker Milan Chams filed a police complaint about a video that Meme Nepal, a popular Facebook page, had posted about his recent film—Bir Bikram 2—Pranesh Gautam, the comedian who appears in the video, was detained on Friday.

Superintendent of Police Kedar Dhakal confirmed that Gautam had been detained on Friday afternoon for investigation based on the complaint filed by the Bir Bikram 2 filmmaker.

"An arrest warrant was issued against Gautam and he will be investigated for cyber crime related charges because of the video he made," said Dhakal.

In the video, uploaded on May 22, Gautam calls Bir Bikram 2 unnecessarily loud, and says the story is strikingly similar to the Bollywood hit Sholay. Besides some good actors and plenty of drone shots of a village, it has "nothing new to offer", he says in the video. Yet in the end, Gautam calls the film "entertaining" and says people should watch it or else "these guys will beat me up," almost prescient of how things would unfold for him after the video's release. As of yet, the video has over 125,000 plays on YouTube.

Advocate Rastra Bimochan Timalsina, who represented Meme Nepal during a meeting at the Teku police station two weeks ago, had received a call from police late Sunday evening, informing him that an arrest warrant had been issued against Gautam and that he would have to

appear at the Teku police station on Monday afternoon. Timalsina who is also a YouTuber, told the Post that the police didn't clarify the grounds on which the warrant had been issued.

"The police didn't tell me anything clearly but I think they might have used certain sections of the Electronic Transaction Act to book Pranesh for the video," Timalsina said. "There is a high chance he might be kept in custody.'

Speaking to the Post last Monday, Gautam had said he didn't go to the police station because the authorities hadn't been clear with him or his repre sentatives on why he had been summoned to the police station. Gautam said he hasn't been able to sleep or think properly, which has affected his health.

"I know I am not in the wrong We never intended to hurt anyone with the video, but fear has gripped me so badly, I don't know what to say," he said, " I had no idea I would be this scared." Gautam said that while he is

support, it still doesn't change how he feels about the possibility of facing jail time. "I have already said goodbye to my parents and girlfriend, just in

case I end up in custody," he said

thankful for all the messages of

days before being detained. Filmmaker Milan Chams, who filed the complaint, said he was aware that the police were acting on the complaint, but didn't get into the details of how the case

would move forward. "My brand manager is handling all the legal proceedings, and anyway, these are legal proceedings so I cannot speak about them right now," said Chams.

Chams reiterated the grounds for his complaint, which range from the video using foul language, trying to 'defame' people involved in the movie, and telling people to not watch the film. In addition to these, he also told the Post that Meme Nepal had tried to 'extort' Rs 12,000 from his team to promote a song from the film.

Meme Nepal members said that is the standard rate they charge for promotions for films and other artforms, and that they receive dozens of requests for promotions or queries about promotions

"Nearly four months ago, some one from Bir Bikram 2 had asked us about our promotion rates. We told them and never heard back," said Aadarsh Mishra, a Meme Nepal member. "How can they use the screenshot of that conversation to claim extortion?" Mishra was also called to the Teku Police station this afternoon but no charges have been filed against

"Depending on what we find during the investigation, we may file charges against other members of Meme Nepal as well," said SP Dhakal. Nepali content creators say they are appalled by what happened to Gautam.

This is purely a case of personal vendetta, because the filmmaker didn't like the video about his movie," said Sushant Shrestha, director at Kooky Dunk, which produces videos laced with humour and social commentary "This isn't how democracy or freedom of expression works, you can't just put someone in jail just because you don't like what they

say about you."

Shuklaphanta National Park sees decline in swamp deer population

The number of swamp deer (Cervus duvauceli), locally named Bahrasinga, National Park (SNP) in the last couple of years, according to a recent census conducted by the SNP administration.

As per the record of the SNP, the number of swamp deer stands at 2,246 in 2019; a gradual decline from 2,301 in 2014.

Laxman Prasad Paudyal, the chief conservation officer at the SNP, said that death by natural causes and tiger predation may be the reasons behind the decline in swamp deer population. According to a 2018 tiger census, there are 16 tigers in the park.

The SNP can accommodate 2,000 to 2,500 swamp deer at a time and the average lifespan of the animal is around 18 to

Two years ago, 10 swamp deer from the SNP were relocated to the Bardiya National Park and Chitwan National Park for rehabilitation.

Established as a national park in 1976, Shuklaphanta is the country's second youngest national park, after Parsa National Park, and is the main habitat of



A herd of swamp deer seen in the Shuklaphanta National Park.

swamp deer. Conservationists say that the largest herd of swamp deer in Asia can be seen in the grasslands of Shuklaphanta.

Along with the deer census, the SNP and National Trust for Nature Conservation conducted a blue bull count for the first time in Shuklaphanta. As per a recent blue bull census, there are 82 blue bulls in the park. However, in 2013, a study report estimated that there were more than 90 blue bulls in the park.

The park is also home to tigers, rhinos, reptiles, amphibians, and various

Eight people, including two Indian citizens, arrested on criminal charges

RAUTAHAT, JUNE 7

Police have arrested eight individuals, including two Indian citizens, in connection with a number of cases in Rautahat in the past couple of

individuals were charged with drug trafficking, fake currency exchange, and women trafficking.

Police detained four individuals carrying marijuana on Thursday night. According to DSP Nabin Karki, 22-yearold Bijaya Roy and 24-year-old Amod Sahni were caught 10 kg marijuana Tikuliya in Gaur Municipality-4. The duo was apprehended during a regular security check of their

two-wheeler.



After the arrest of Roy and vendors. In the process, Sahni, police intensified the Ramesh Kumar Sah and search for other marijuana Inarjit Sah were arrested

Police make public four men arrested with marijuana in Rautahat.

Meanwhile, two women were arrested from the revenue office area in Gaur-1 on the allegations of human trafficking. Durga Devi Bohara and Parvati Devi were nabbed while they were taking a teenage girl to India.

According to Karki, police have intensified surveillance along the Nepal-India border in Gaur over the past couple

The police arrested two individuals, Jiyalal Mahato and Bihari Sah, with fake notes amounting to Rs200, 000 Katahariya-5 from Thursday evening.

Authorities have stepped up their surveillance after cases of fake currency notes circulation came to the fore over the



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Astral Reflections



ARIES [March 21-April 19]

Light chores continue this week. Be curious: media. travel will bring "new facts" and can point you to new opportunities. Love lives by discussion. Remain gracious, long-suffering on the home front. You might waste a lot of energy on the start of the week. At the end of the week you might have to choose between home and career. The choice might be forced by a higher-up who does not approve of your domestic situation. Saturday is for love, far travel, legal pursuits.



TAURUS [April 20-May 20]

The accent remains on money, assets, memory, learning what's already known, and physical sensuality. The best times to chase money this week are through work, opportunity or agreement and through friendship, communication, new contacts, hope, optimism, and-well, through other people's money. Your wealth luck now improves, to July 3. You remain assertive in talk and driving/cycling all June. However, the road is twisting-possible deception, financial and man-woman disagreement. So enjoy, without chasing chimeras.



GEMINI [May 21-June 20]

You're still at the top of your game, Gemini. Continue to start things, to visit, see and be seen, to ask favours, to be the leader. Money continues to race to you and through you—be conservative, save. Lots of talk about money, maybe a document. You might not notice it immediately, but you have become more attractive to the opposite sex, will receive many appraising glances. Be near home early in the week. You might not get much done especially if your mind is on a major project at your place of work.



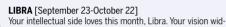
CANCER [June 21-July 22] Remain restful, Cancer, By June 21, your energy will come surging back. Until then, delegate work, deal with workers and pamper your health. Despite your tired state, you're very intense, assertive and determined all June-don't "burn out. And despite your leaning toward quiet contemplation, you're quite talkative. A month of contradictions! But, when all's added up, solitude and quietude bring you peace and affection from those closest. Talk, travel, errands, paperwork and easy chores fill the beginning of the week. Romance, passion, creative surges and gambling urges take over late mid week.



It's still party time, Leo. In fact, the party gets better, affection floats everywhere. Get out, give and accept invitations, apply to join a group that has attracted you, discuss the future, even plan it with people you like, and seek entertainment. Your popularity is high, social delights and optimism buoy your spirits, and flirtations pluck at your heart. Continue to avoid dark alleys and belligerent people, all June. Confidential discussions arise, now to late June. Sunday be careful of a terrible investment. Also, best stance: just plod along with work.



The general emphasis remains on your ambitions, career, prestige relations, and worldly status. Pursue your objectives here, but remember that your main pipeline to good fortune in 2019 is your home, family, real estate, carving out a (new) platform to stand on, a foundation for future growth and suc cess. Bosses and authorities treat you with benevolence now to July 3. Your social life remains active, in fact grows, and shimmers with a hint of secrets, secret connections and financial opportunities. Your energy and charisma shine early in the



SCORPIO [October 23-November 21]

VIRGO [August 23-September 22]

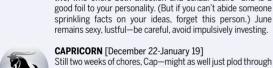
ens, your tolerance grows, and you want to learn, to travel, to absorb ideas and cultures. These, and legal, educational, publishing and philosophical pursuits—all will take place in an affectionate, mildly lucky atmosphere. Love won't be a stranger. If you're single, someone could intrigue you with their mind and ideas, their light, easy way of talking. Bosses and authorities continue to be impatient and temperamental all June. Lie low, withdraw from the hustling crowd this week.



Life's depths continue to draw you. Dig deep, ponder what emotions and desires flow under the surface—yours and another's. It's time to turn any meetings, agreements into commitments, funding. And, if applicable, any recent "open" attractions into something more intimate. (Intimacy cannot exist w/o trust.) Your luck is good in all these, but make sure you don't chase the big deal and forget where your 2019 good fortune lies: in small, daily earnings/



SAGITTARIUS [November 22-December 21] Relationships are the main theme this month, but remember your greatest good fortune will come (in 2019) from independence, self-promotion, adventure, so don't be too quick to settle for "number two." Still, you could meet someone pretty attractive, who offers both affection and sexual desire—and is a good foil to your personality. (But if you can't abide someone



CAPRICORN [December 22-January 19]

Still two weeks of chores, Cap-might as well just plod through them. The workplace atmosphere grows genial, even affectionate, the rest of June. Relationships aren't quite so greatarguments, potentially bond-ending disagreements, and lots of verbal jousting are slated. Be diplomatic, long-suffering, for soon this changes. Remember, in 2019 your greatest good fortune comes from quietude, contemplation, resting, spas, resorts, planning, charity and spiritual awakening. Look at yourself, rather than others.



AQUARIUS [January 20-February 18]

Romance continues. And you know the list: creativity, self-expression, beauty, pleasure, adventure, charming kids, risktaking-all favoured this week. In fact, these (esp. romance) grow even sweeter and more problematic, as events will show. (Most of the obstacles will arise from work demands, or a health difficulty.) A Gemini might seduce you, while you think you're seducing him/her. Work remains intense, hard all month--and more rushed, now to late June.



PISCES [February 19-March 20]

The focus remains on home, residence, family, gardening, security. Mom Nature, cooking, the environment. Your home grows more beautiful--either you just love it more, or you decorate (a fine project for this June). Kids behave, charm you. All June, your physical passion runs hot; now to June's end. especially, it draws you toward a potential mate (or your present one!).







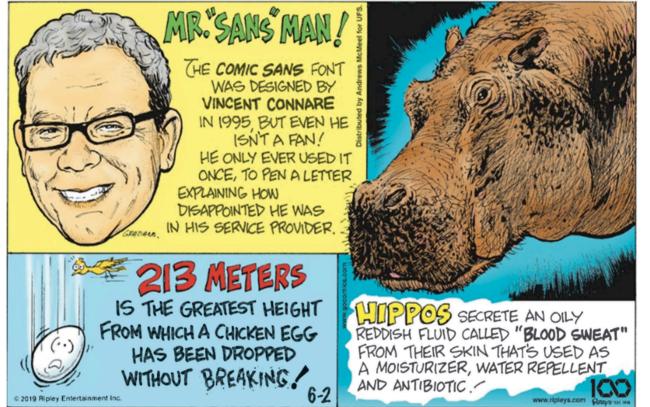








Ripley's Believe It or Not!



5:00 Shuvarambha/ Bhaktisui 5:30 Radhe Radhe 6:00 Jeevan Bigyan

01-2112233

6:30 Jyotish Manthan 6:40 Sky Shop 7:00 Kantipur Samachai 9:05 Surshala Idol Junior

8:00 Kantipur News 9:30 Ukali Orali

9:00 Headline News

10:00 Kantipur

Samachai 10:30 VMAG 11:00 Headline News 11:05 Samkon 12:00 Kantipur Samachar

12:30 Harke Haldar 13:00 Headline News 13:05 Quiz Mania

14:05 Nepali Movie 15:00 Headline News 15:05 Nepali Movie

16:00 Headline News 16:05 Headline News

17:00 Headline News 17:05 Call Kantipur 18:00 Kantipur News 18:30 Nirbachan Sarokar 19:00 Kantipur Samachar 19:30 Info Plus 20:00 Kantipur Samachar 21:00 Ditha Sal 21:30 Pulsar Dareventure 22:30 Kantipur News 23:00 Kantipur Samachar 23:30 Info Plus

05:00 Bhakti Anusthan 06:30 Kantipur Diary 07:00 Bigyan Prabidhi 08:00 Development & **Economics Diary** 08:30 Old Is Gold 09:00 Kantipur Diary 09:10 Traffic Update 09:15 National Songs 09:20 Ghumne Mech

08:05 The Good Morning 10:00 Sports Diary

Diary

Education Dairy 16:05 Quick Fix 10:05 Gajab Chha Baa 11:00 Art & 17:55 Baal Geet Entertainment

17:00 District Diary 17:05 Music Lounge 18:00 Jyotish Darshan 19:00 Kathmandu Beat

12:10 Top Ten

14:05 Kick Start

15:15 Raiwar

16:00 Health &

11:05 Games People Play 20:00 Security & Crime 12:00 Kantipur Diary Diary 20:05 Rock Machine 13:00 District Diary 21:00 Kantipur Diary

13:05 Celebrity Hour 21:25 News Maker Of 14:00 International Diary The Day / Indreni 21:30 Rumpum Hello 15:00 Kantipur Diary Mithila

23:00 Show Time 00:00 Top Ten Nepali Pop 01:00 Recorded Program

02:00 Non-Stop Nepali Songs 03:00 Non-Stop Hindi

Songs 04:00 Non -Stop Bhajans (SOURCE: BILLBOARD)



BHARAT: 8:00 AM, 11:15 AM, 2:30 PM, 3:00 PM, 5:45 PM, 6:15 PM, 8:45 PM, 9:00 PM, 9:30 PM 3D:DARK PHOENIX : 7:30 AM, 10:00 AM, 12:30 PM, 3:15 PM

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MUSIC





2) Aladdin

Rocketman

4) Ma

5) John Wick: Chapter 3 - Parabellum

Avengers: Endgame

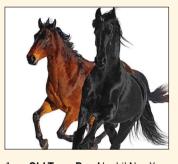
7) Pokémon Detective Pikachu

Booksmart

9) Brightburn

10) The Hustle

(SOURCE: IMDB)



Old Town Road by Lil Nas X Featuring Billy Ray Cyrus

Bad Guy by Billie Eilish

Talk by Khalid

4. I Don't Care by Ed Sheeran & Justin Bieber

Sucker by Jonas Brothers

Sunflower (Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse) by Post

Malone & Swae Lee

Wow. by Post Malone

Dancing With A Stranger by Sam Smith & Normani

Suge by DaBaby

10. Sweet But Psycho by Ava

BHARAT QFX CIML MALL: 07:30/08:00/11:00/14:00/14:30/18:00/20:00/21:30 QFX LABIM MALL: 08:15/08:45/11:45/15:15/18:30/20:00 QFX CHHAYA CENTER: 08:30/09:30/13:00/15:30/16:30/18:45/20:00 QFX KUMARI: 08:45/11:45/15:00/18:30/19:00 QFX JAI NEPAL: 08:30/12:00/15:30/19:00

JATRAI JATRA QFX CIVIL MALL: 11:30/20:4 QFX LABIM MALL: 17:30 QFX KUMARI: 08:15/15:15

3D: ALADDIN OFX LABIM MALL: 14:45 OFX CHHAYA CENTER: 11:45 3D GODZILLA: KING OF THE MONSTERS OFX CIVIL MALL: 17:45 QFX LABIM MALL: 12:00

3D X-MEN: DARK PHOENIX OFX CIVIL MALL: 08:45/11:15/14:45/17:15 OFX LABIM MALL: 08:30/11:30/14:15/17:00/20:45 QFX CHHAYA CENTER: 09:00/12:00/14:45/17:30/20:30

MIND

BODY

FOOD DRÎNKS

Krishnarpan-a specialty Nepali Restaurant

at Dwarika's, 6 courses to 22 courses Nepali

meal served. Opening Time: 6 pm-11 pm. Prior

The Italian restaurant serves authentic

Italian cuisines in an elegant ambience for

both lunch and dinner. Timings: Lunch:

1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs,

Contact: 427399, at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

Every Friday evening enjoy Starry Night

BBQ from 7 pm onwards at Shambala

Garden Café at Hotel Shangri La with live

musical performance by Ciney Gurung.

Eniov Bubbly Brunch every Saturday from 11

am to 3 pm at Shambala Gardena and Club

Sundhara. Contact: 4412999

reservations required, contact: 4479448



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

contact: 427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

Garden Terrace offers an authentic world

cuisine, providing diners with the unique

experience of observing their selected dish-

es being prepared by chefs. Contact:

Kaiser Cafe Restaurant & Bar at The

Garden of Dreams, opening time: 9 am till 9

pm, offers an international cafe menu serv-

ing breakfast lunch dinner specialty tea's

Embers Bar, Pulchowk, in all its sophistica-

tion and glory is happy to announce Happy Hours every 6-7pm. It will be

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coffees and pastries, contact: 4425341

427399 at Soaltee Crowne Plaza

garden. Open 6am-10 pm. Mid-Baneshor. China Garden offers delectable dishes from across Asia, including Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese and Chinese. Timings: Lunch: 1230-1445 hrs, Dinner: 1900-2245 hrs,

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Tempuras, and green tea ice cream, Time: 11:

30-14:30 & 19:00-22:00, contact: 4479448

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The Toran, an ideal location for all day loung-

ing and informal dining offers multi-cuisines.

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person. Contact: 4491234

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Maharian feat Monsif Mzibiri, 7 pm onwards.

Wednesdays & Fridays. Contact: 4411818

plus taxes per person, Contact; 4411818

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Enjoy snacks and drinks from 4:00 pm to

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In Kabul's liberating Cafes, 'Women make the culture here, not men'

Mina Rezaee, who opened the Simple coffee shop in Kabul a year ago, makes sure no one harasses her female customers for wearing trendy clothes or sitting with men

DAVID ZUCCHINO AND FATIMA FAIZI

n some days, life as a young woman in Kabul can feel suffocating for Hadis Lessani Delijam, a 17-year-old high school senior. Once, a man on the street harangued her for her makeup and Western clothes; they are shameful, he bellowed. A middle-aged woman cursed her for strolling and chatting with a young

"She called me things that are so terrible I can't repeat them," Ms. Delijam said.

For solace, Ms. Delijam retreats to an unlikely venue—the humble coffee shop.

"This is the only place where I can relax and feel free, even if it's only for a few hours," Ms. Delijam said recently as she sat at a coffee shop, her hair uncovered, and chatted with two young

Trendy new cafes have sprung up across Kabul in the past three years, evolving into emblems of women's progress.

The cafes are sanctuaries for women in an Islamic culture that still dictates how they should dress, behave in public and interact with men. Those traditions endure 18 years after the toppling of the Taliban, who banned girls' education, confined women to their homes and forced them to wear burgas in public.

These days, conversations at the cafes often turn to the Afghan peace talks in Doha, Qatar, between the United States and the Taliban. Many women worry their rights will be bargained away under pressure from the fundamentalist, all-male Taliban delegation.

'We are so frightened," said Maryam Ghulam Ali, 28, an artist who was sharing chocolate cake with a friend at a coffee shop called Simple. "We ask each other what will happen to women if the Taliban come back.

"When we come to cafes, we feel liberated," she added. "No one forces us to put on our head

Many young women in Kabul's emerging cafe society were infants under Taliban rule. Ms. Delijam had not yet been born. They have come of age during the post-Taliban struggle by many young Afghans to break free of the harsh contours of a patriarchal society. The women have grown up with cellphones,

social media and the right to express themselves freely. They cannot imagine returning to the puritanical dictates of the Taliban, who sometimes stoned women to death on suspicion of adultery—and still do in areas they control. Farahnaz Forotan, 26, a journalist and coffee

shop regular, has created a social media campaign, #myredline, that implores women to stand up for their rights. Her Facebook page is studded with photos of herself inside coffee shops, symbols of her own red line

'Going to a cafe and talking with friends brings me great happiness," Ms. Forotan said as she sat inside a Kabul coffee shop. "I refuse to sacrifice

But those freedoms could disappear if the ment, she said.

"I don't want to be recognized as someone's sister or daughter," she said. "I want to be recognized as a human being.'



Hadis Lessani Delijam, left, meeting with friends at the Jackson coffee shop in Kabul, Afghanistan

Beyond cafe walls, progress is painfully slow. "Even today, we can't walk on the streets without being harassed," Ms. Forotan said. "People

call us prostitutes, Westernized, from the 'democracy generation.'

Afghanistan is consistently ranked the worst, or among the worst, countries for woman.

One Afghan tradition dictates that single women belong to their fathers and married women to their husbands. Arranged marriages are common, often to a cousin or other relative.

In the countryside, young girls are sold as brides to older men. Honor killings—women killed by male relatives for contact with an unapproved male—still occur. Protections provided by the Afghan Constitution and a landmark 2009 women's rights law are not always rigorously enforced.

In 2014, the Taliban launched a series of attacks against cafes and restaurants in Kabul, including a suicide bombing and gunfire that killed 21 customers at the popular Taverna du Liban cafe, where alcohol was served, and Afghan men and women mingled among Westerners.

Afterward, the government forced a host of cafes and guesthouses to shut down for fear they would draw more violence.

For the next two years, much of westernized social life in Kabul moved to private homes. But in 2016, new coffee shops began to open, catering to young women and men eager to mingle in pub-

Still, except for urban outposts like Kabul, Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif, there are few cafes in Afghanistan where women can mingle with men. Most restaurants reserve their main rooms for men and set aside secluded "family" sections for women and children.

That is why the Kabul cafes are so treasured by Afghan women, who seek kindred souls there. "Human instinct is as powerful as religion," said Fereshta Kazemi, an Afghan-American actress and development executive who often fre-

quents Kabul coffee shops. "The need to connect, to share and love, to make eye contact, is instinctual," she said.

After the Taliban fell in 2001, those instincts were nurtured as girls and women in Kabul began attending schools and universities, working beside men in private and government jobs, and living alone or with friends in apartments. The Afghan Constitution reserves 68 out of 250 seats for women, at least two women from each of 34

Protecting those achievements dominates cafe conversation.

Mina Rezaee, 30, who opened the Simple coffee shop in Kabul a year ago, makes sure no one harasses her female customers for wearing trendy clothes or sitting with men.

"Women make the culture here, not men," she

She gestured to a table where several women, their head scarves removed, sat laughing and talking with young men.

"Look at them—I love it," Ms. Rezaee said. "It's the Taliban who needs to change their ideology,

Tahira Mohammadzai, 19, was an infant in the southern city of Kandahar, the Taliban headquarters, when the militants ruled Afghanistan. Her family fled to Iran and returned seven years ago

The women have grown up with cellphones, social media and the right to express themselves freely. They cannot imagine returning to the puritanical dictates of the Taliban

to Kabul, where she is a university student.

"I heard stories from my mother about how different life was then," she said at the Jackson coffee shop, named for Michael Jackson. "It's impossible now to go back to the way things were." Her red line? She said she would rather continue living with the war, now in its 18th year, than face a postwar government that included the Taliban. "If they come back, I'll be the first one to flee Afghanistan," Ms. Mohammadzai said.

Ms. Forotan, the #myredline founder, said she was determined to stay no matter what happens. Relaxing inside the coffee shop, her short dark

"I wish there was a cafe full of male politicians who had one priority—peace," she said.

—© 2019 The New York Time

Drawing the pain: Sketch therapy for war-torn children

The therapy also helps parents understand why a child may be craving attention or behaving aggressively

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

he scratching of crayons on paper fills the air as the children at Lazare camp in war-ravaged Central African Republic draw scenes from daily life. They draw armed men. Armoured vehicles. And they use red. Lots of red. In a makeshift tent, glasses perched on her nose and her feet in the dust, psychologist Mamie Nouria Meniko pores over the creations — an indicator of the children's mental health, and a much-needed outlet.

Their problem is that they suffer daily exposure to violence," she says.

The 43-year-old Congolese runs a Red Cross programme at the displaced people's camp to identify and help kids suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

"Drawing helps children to express what they are feeling. It shows what children cannot say out loud," Nouria Meniko says.

"Sometimes, some of them start crying as soon as they start drawing."

Years of violence

The town of Kaga Bandoro housing the camp is a case study for the instability and violence that plagues the CAR.

Some 330 kilometres (about 200 miles) north of the capital Bangui, the town lies on a strategic junction of routes used by nomadic cattle-herd-

For five relentless years, Kaga Bandoro was in the hands of armed groups-militias who control four-fifths of the troubled country.

Typically claiming to defend specific ethnic groups or religions, the militias fight for resources and carry out extortion and acts of violence.

In a nationwide population of 4.5 million, thousands have lost their lives, nearly 650,000 have fled their homes and another 575,000 have left the country, according to UN figures as of December



A young child watches, through the hole in a tent, his friends with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder drawing at the Lazare camp for internally displaced people (IDP) in Kaga Bandoro on May 23, 2019. In the northern part of the country devastated by the crisis, the International Red Cross has set up a workshop to detect and treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder through drawing.

Many children have seen beatings, rape or murder. Some have seen their homes invaded, their parents humiliated, hurt, abducted or killed.

In Kaga Bandoro, relative calm returned last month with the arrival of the armed forces after the government and 14 warlords signed a peace pact in February—the eighth in a series of

For now at least, the militiamen are confined to their base, although sporadic violence continues on the outskirts of town

Troubled kids

The Red Cross programme has enabled Nouria Meniko to identify 233 children aged five to 15 who bear symptoms of PTSD. Seated on a mat, she asks a group of six children: "Who had a bad dream last night?" Three hands are raised.

Holding her little sister on her lap, 10-year-old Florine confides her nightmare.

"My mother and father came to pick me up but I told them I couldn't come," she says. Her parents were killed in 2013 by the Seleka, a mainly Muslim armed group. To help the children manage their trauma, the psychologist teaches them breathing and relaxation techniques.

"When I feel bad, I do these exercises and I think of a nice meal," says Florine, whose name has been changed to protect her identity.

To her right sits 12-year-old Herve, attending his third therapy session. Herve's drawings always show the same things: pickup trucks with machine guns mounted on the back. A body in a river. A hand in a well. A house on fire, with his dad

"I have to draw to get the images out of my head and be able to sleep," he says. Herve's mother, widowed by the Seleka in 2013, says the sessions have helped the boy and her relationship with him. "Before, he used to cry all night. This week, he's only woken up five times.

The therapy also helps parents understand why a child may be craving attention or behaving aggressively. "Before, when he didn't obey me and did something silly, I used to hit him," Herve's

"I didn't understand. But now I know why he

did that, and we talk to each other."

Vicious circle

Professor Jean-Chrysostome Gody, the head doctor at Bangui's paediatric hospital, says mental problems linked to conflict are widespread in a country that has been gripped by violence since

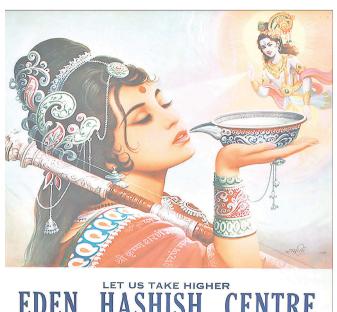
But the issue is also taboo. "It's a real public-health problem," Gody says. "Untreated trauma can cause depression and

even lead to violence—it fuels the vicious circle.' Children such as Florine and Herve who have witnessed extreme violence have a lifelong burden, adds Nouria Meniko.

"We can't wipe out anything out," the psycholo-

gist says with a sigh. "What we try to do is to help them live with the trauma.

Saturday, June 8, 2019



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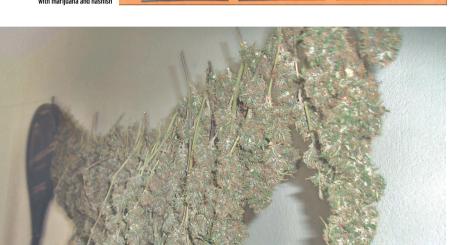
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The Eden Hashish Centre was a popular restaurant that offered snacks made





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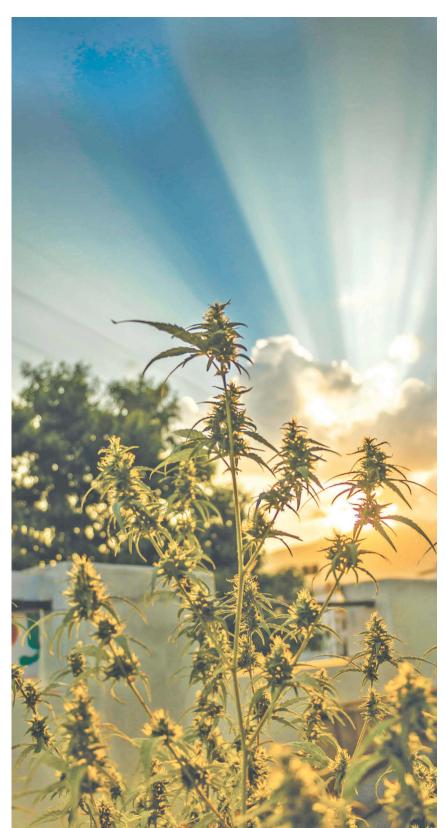


PHOTO COURTESY: THE.STONED_PHOTOGRAPHER

YES WE CANNABIS

>> CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"When I first raised the issue back in 2010, very few people were willing to publicly talk about cannabis legalisation in a serious manner," says Kafle, who primarily campaigns online through his Twitter handle @RajivKaflay and the hashtag #LegalizeNepal. "But living with an HIV diagnosis has built my immunity to stigma."

Focusing on medicinal legalisation, particularly for people living with HIV in Nepal, Kafle has a seemingly lofty goal: legalise cannabis in Nepal by 2020. Despite being met with dismissive laughs, his efforts—from posting informative statuses, reporting about arrests and seizures related to cannabis, and engaging with the government on issues related to legislation through social media—were never blunted. As his self-imposed deadline approaches, people are not laughing anymore, he says.

A thorny question

In the budding cause for legalisation, Kafle has been joined by other Nepalis dispersed around the world who are asking similar questions.

Some have taken to creative outlets to challenge the stigma around the recreational consumption of cannabis. YouTube is rife with examples—Chirag Singh Khadka's (5:55) 'Budi', a lovesong to marijuana that quickly went viral after it was launched in February, is one popular example.

But the movement gained an unexpected supporter earlier this year on February 20, when Birodh Khatiwada, a lawmaker from the ruling Nepal Communist Party, raised the issue of cannabis legislation in the House of Representatives. Pointing to its potential to become a lucrative cash crop and create employment opportunities, especially among rural farmers, Khatiwada's interjection has furthered discussions on legalisation among state officials.

"Nothing has happened on the legislative level yet, but there have been some informal discussion in the upper levels of government," Khatiwada told the Post. "The response from the party was not negative. Some of my fellow parliamentarians wanted to approach the topic

long ago, but did not do so for various reasons."

The renewed debate over whether or not cultivation and consumption of cannabis should be legalised in Nepal comes at a time when a number of countries around the world—from Canada to South Africa to Thailand—have legalised cannabis, either for medicinal or recreational use or both, under a regulatory framework. And with more research into the plant's medicinal values also being conducted, governments around the world are confronting the thorny question of legalisation.

In Nepal, cannabis has long been a part of many medicinal and cultural traditions. But despite this long and storied history, the cultivation and consumption of marijuana remains illegal, punishable by harsh jail terms and steep fines.

For young, connected people like Nirakar—his brother-in-law is an influential politician—the Narcotics Drug Control Act 1976, in many ways, is merely an inconvenience. But for those without his resources and connections, the Act holds entirely different consequences.

Farmers from across rural Nepal and their families, brokers, middlemen, and youth caught within the illicit drug trade have felt the blunt end of the Act.

According to statistics provided by the Narcotics Control Bureau, cannabis is consistently its most-seized substance. In 2018, 4,181 kg

of cannabis, 1,546 kg of hashish, 8 kg of heroin, and 2 kg of cocaine were seized from across Nepal—a slight rise on all accounts from the previous fiscal year. While the Nepal Police said that they do not have official data that identifies how many arrests were related to cannabis, they noted that the number of drug-related arrests in general has risen sharply in recent years—by 83 percent since 2013.

That a culturally significant plant is regulated by a harsh law has led to numerous incongruous examples throughout the Act's four-decadelong history.

During the Maoist insurgency, for example, the ganja market was regulated by cadres in some areas of Nepal. As evidenced by a confidential US cable titled 'Nepal: Mid-Year Status Report on Drug Trafficking' published by WikiLeaks in 2003, Maoist insurgents in the middle hills of Nepal would regularly levy taxes on both the cultivation and transportation of cannabis. The report estimates that the levy was as high as 35 percent of the value of crops.

Across Nepal, from the hills of Rolpa and Rukum—where the Maoist insurgency was born—to the eastern plains, marijuana cultivation, though farmed by locals, is now largely controlled by a cross-border nexus of political figures, armed mafia and drug smugglers.

There is a clear nexus in the market, says Kanchan Jha, founder of Sano Paila, an organisation that runs, among other social interventions, a leadership programme for youth in Birgunj recovering from drug addiction. In Parsa district, the ones who get arrested aren't the people at the top, he says. Farmers and brokers, many of whom are youth, only get one percent of the cut but face a majority of risks.

"There was and still is so much violence in the trade, especially in Parsa, and many youth and farming communities are simply caught in the middle." Jha says.

Parsa's history is entangled with cannabis and poppy cultivation. According to a 2015 article in the Nepali Times, it accounted for 60 percent of its arable land before 2011.

The District Police Office in Parsa told the Post that in the past year, 63 people had been arrested for smuggling marijuana and hashish. As clashes between marijuana smugglers and police often result in armed exchanges, the District Police Office has sought to up the ante on combating drug smuggling.

"The risk of legal persecution depends largely on who you are and where you buy from," says a 20-year-old marijuana dealer in Kathmandu who refused to give his real name and asked to go by Babaji, the name he gives his buyers. Kathmandu is hundreds of kilometres from Parsa and the Indian border, where most of the smuggling takes place.

"There are popular spots and cafes in Basantapur filled with Nepali youth smoking weed," he says. "The police do not care. But if the same place was elsewhere, somewhere outside Kathmandu, things might be different."

Babaji, who estimates he has around a hundred customers, procures his supply from villages surrounding the Valley—including Dhulikhel, Phulchowki, Budhanilkantha and Tarebhir. He makes 'hunting' trips every weekend and claims to make Rs 7,000 a week on average. Others, especially those who rely on cannabis sales as their primary source of income, make much more, he says.

But Babaji's homework—he is currently a master's student in Public Health—causes distractions.

"I face little to no risk doing this job. Many of my friends also go out [cannabis] hunting and sell to make money on the side—but maybe not as much as I do," he admits. "It is really easy. But it really depends on who you are and what kind of connections you have."

For one 43-year-old Pokhara-based dealer originally from a village in Hetauda, things are a little different. Though his family engages in cannabis-farming on the outskirts of their home district, he regularly frequents Pokhara's Lakeside in search of tourists and high-paying customers.

"If I get arrested, my family will not eat," says the Pokhara dealer, who asked to be identified as Vishnu, also a pseudonym, because he feared getting arrested. "But my customers, the ones who ask for large amounts to sell themselves, will not be punished. Someone needs to get punished and at the end of the day, it will be small people like us."

According to Vishnu, legalisation will not dismantle the existing nexus in the transnational marijuana market, especially in Nepal where corruption is rampant.

"The only market I care about is one where those at the top and those at the bottom like me are on the same level," he says. "I don't care about legal or illegal. I want equality, a fair chance, and food for my family."

The discrepancy that Vishnu points to is largely a result of ambiguities and contradictions in the Narcotics Drug Control Act itself, say experts. For example, advocate Subash Acharya argues in a 2016 article that the Act's failure to draw distinctions between casual drug users, hardcore addicts, petty drug peddlers and seasoned traffickers encourages an environment of disproportionate and irregular prosegution.

And the lengthy history behind the Act itself is a controversial one, as some argue that it was shaped by a series of strains that had very little do with Nepal.

A strained history

With eyebrows furrowed, Rabi Raj Thapa, a retired Assistant Inspector General of the Nepal Police, scans through the Narcotics Drug Control Act. As a founding member of the Nepal Police's Narcotic Drug Control Law Enforcement Unit in 1992, Thapa is no stranger to the document

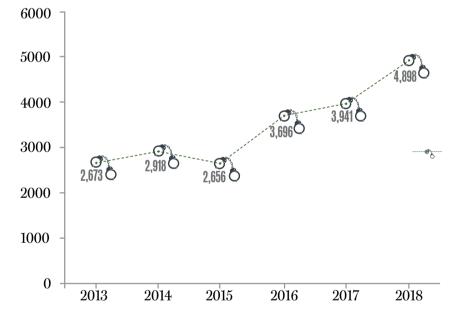
"Everytime I read it, I notice something else that seems unclear. See here," he points at the document and says, "the act puts 'medicinal cannabis' and 'cannabis' in different categories but labels both as a 'narcotic'. What is 'medicinal cannabis'? How is it a narcotic and why isn't it defined?"

According to Thapa, the ambiguous treatment of cannabis by the document largely stems from the fact that the act was not drafted on Nepal's terms.

The criminalisation of marijuana is largely a foreign imposition—from the then Richard Nixon-led United States administration's 'war on drugs', according to Thapa.

"It seemed to come out of nowhere," says Thapa. "Suddenly, a plant that grew abundantly across the country, that was used to treat stomach aches even among young children was placed under the same category as heroin and cocaine."

In the chapter 'Cannabis in Nepal: An Overview', written in 1975, James Fisher discusses the series of pressures exerted on the Nepali government to crackdown on cannabis in the early 70s. According to Fisher, when hip-



DRUGS RELATED ARRESTS UP BY 83%

pies from Western countries flocked to Nepal in the late 60s and 70s as part of the overland hippie trail, they brought with them a market and commercialised demand for the country's marijuana and hashish.

Afraid that Nepal was becoming a major contributor to the transnational drug trade, the United States government saw to it that Nepal's legislation discouraged drug use, or 'public enemy number one', in Nixon's terms, especially among some of its youth who had used Nepal as a haven to escape the draft during the Vietnam War.

With the greater demand for cannabis, the price of *charas* (cannabis concentrate) skyrocketed—from about \$15 per kilogram to \$70. In an attempt to regulate the growing market, the government had already enforced the Intoxicants Act of 1961 and the Intoxicants Rules in 1962, making it mandatory for farmers seeking to cultivate cannabis commercially to obtain licenses.

While there is a lack of concrete historical documentation to undeniably implicate the US government in the plant's criminalisation in Nepal, historians and politicians over the years have pointed to past examples of US-led pressure to encourage Nepal to adopt stricter drug

For example, Bhekh Bahadur Thapa, finance minister at the time of the ban, recently told the *Annapurna Express* that "the US government threatened, if in not so many words, not to recognise Birendra Shah's 'authoritarian rule' in order to force him to ban cannabis."

According to Fisher, the government began regressing from its progressive stance on marijuana on July 16, 1973, when an ordinance was issued to revoke all licenses to "cultivate, ban, and sell marijuana."

The crackdown on the marijuana market in Nepal was supplemented three years later by the Narcotics Drug Control Act 1976, which-at least on paper--criminalised the "sale, cultivation and consumption" of cannabis.







INDIAN Nationals 786





turday the kathmandu post 06&07

CANNABIS

49,690 KG



10,407 KG





QUANTITIES OF DRUGS SEIZED FROM 2013-2018



ALL DATA: NEPAL POLICE







PHOTO COURTESY: US NATIONAL ARCHIVES

25,000 20,000 15,000 10,000 6,645 5,000 4,413 4,181 3,734 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 MARIJUANA SEIZURES (in kgs)

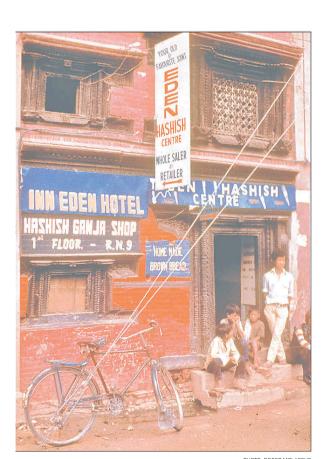


PHOTO: ROGER MCLASSUS

A Freak Street storefront advertises hashish and marijuana in the 70s, at the height of the hippie movement.

INFOGRAPHICS: BHIM LAL PRAJAPATI

But the history is hazy. While licenses were supposedly revoked and marijuana was legally declared a 'narcotic', subject to stringent control, the time period in which the ban was legally enforced among local populations is ambiguous.

Many allege that Nepal's criminalisation of marijuana was prompted by American President Richard Nixon's 'War on Drugs

ambiguous.

"Narratives on marijuana's history in Nepal cannot start with the hippies nor can it end with the Narcotics Control Drug Act," says Abhi Subedi, a historian at Tribhuvan University. "Though the ban was introduced in 1976, consumption continued among locals. The difference was that despite the ban, a transnational illicit trade market for the drug had grown-and it continued to find protection."

it continued to find protection."

The ambiguity also stems from Nepal's delayed accession to the 1961 Single Convention, an international treaty that prohibited the production and supply of narcotics and formally classified cannabis as a Schedule IV drug. Under this category, the plant was now subject to more stringent international control and clubbed together with heroin, cocaine and only in the stringent internation of the stringent internatio

Though Nepal eventually acceded to the Single Convention in 1987—nearly a decade after India and two years after China—it did so with a reservation that included the "right to permit temporarily" the "use of cannabis, cannabis resin, extracts and tinctures of cannabis for non-medical purposes" without a specified end date.

According to Kafle, the omission of an end date was highly strategic and could be seen as an example of early resistance against the criminalisation of marijuana.

"Nepal was the last country to defend marijuana's medicinal values in the international arena," Kafle said. "Because nobody objected to Nepal's reservation, a review by the World Health Organisation should have been held to consider our claims."

The necessary review Kafle refers to was finally concluded on January 24, 2019—three decades after Nepal's reservation and one week before Birodh Khatiwada address in Parliament—when the World Health Organisation's Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) recommended that cannabis be removed from the Single Convention's Schedule IV and be placed under Schedule I, citing recent research that "highlighted its medicinal values."

Forty-three years after the ban was instituted in Nepal, the context has virtually flip-flopped. The very system of governmental regulation

The very system of governmental regulation of cannabis through the issuance of licenses, which Nepal was pressured to abandon, is now being encouraged by the same countries that were once at the forefront of marijuana's criminalisation.

Joint benefits

It is largely due to this storied history that the Narcotics Control Act 1976 is riddled with ambiguities and and contradictions—some of which have made for tangible entry-points to talks on legalisation.

Several activists point to various legal loopholes in the Act that provide space for the usage of cannabis for medicinal purposes. For example, Article 5 (a) stipulates that the "purchase and consumption of narcotic drugs by any person in the recommended dose from any licensed shop on the recommendation of any recognised medical practitioner for the purpose of medical treatment...shall not be deemed to have been prohibited."

While seemingly disjointed from and contra-

Governmental regulation, which Nepal was forced to abandon, is now being embraced around the world

dictory to other sections of the Act, the provision has been used to justify Oral Substitution Therapy programmes under the Home Ministry, wherein minute doses of drugs such as methadone or synthetic opioids are prescribed to those recovering from drug abuse and addiction. But no regulatory mechanisms or directives to carry out this provision for cannabis, which falls under the category of 'narcotic drugs', have been passed or discussed on a legislative level—even though the Act has been amended five times in the past 46 years.

"Studies have shown that for those living with HIV, cancer patients, those with chronic illnesses, and people recovering from a history of drug abuse, cannabis can play a transformative role in treating mental and physical pain," says Kafle. "If our history and the law itself points to the use of cannabis for medicinal purposes, why can't we provide a mechanism to

According to Dr Binod Sah, a production officer at Singha Durbar Vaidyakhana, Nepal's oldest government-run ayurvedic medicine manufacturing company, the legalisation of cannabis could lead to new avenues for profit. Contrary to claims made by Khatiwada in his parliament address, Sah maintains that the Vaidyakhana "neither exports nor imports any cannabis products or essence" but stands to gain much if it is legally able to capitalise on the plant's medicinal values.

"The ban does, to some extent, limit our capacity to maximise profits," he says.

Beyond the ayurvedic industry, others point to legalisation's role in Nepal's economic development. According to Michael Sautman, a leading expert in producing standardised cannabis products on an industrial scale in regulated environments, Nepal could benefit immensely from the legal cannabis industry, which is expected to reach \$146.4 billion by 2025. But time is of the essence.

"With new countries entering the global cannabis industry, the market risks saturation," Sautman told the Post in a Skype interview. "By joining the industry, Nepal will create thousands of employment opportunities."

Sautman adds that Nepal is uniquely situated. While other countries may have to start from zero to cultivate a brand and gain recognition, Nepal is far ahead: a brand exists, thanks to Nepal's global reputation as a hippie haven. The genetics of many Nepali strains are found in hybrids around the world today, Sautman says. The country merely has to cash in.

But for Thapa, the calls for legalisation feel frustratingly familiar.

"We succumbed to international pressure when we rushed to enforce a Narcotics Control Act that wasn't adapted to our country's context—that wasn't on our terms," he says. "There is no rush and we shouldn't jump into the market immediately."

A homegrown way forward According to Chakra Raj Joshi, a superintendent of police at the Narcotics Control Bureau, the government is "currently working to draft a new law regarding legalisation" but said "he could not elaborate any further"

could not elaborate any further."

"Legalisation of marijuana is a sensitive issue and needs much thought before taking any steps," says Joshi. "I have argued that instead of legalising marijuana, there should be additional punishment to the perpetrators. The number of marijuana users has been on the rise, but there hasn't been any significant change in terms of punishment since the 1976 act. So more stringent punishment might discourage the use, farming and business of

marijuana."

He especially pointed to legalisation's impact on further drug consumption among youth, who form a majority of consumers. In 2016, the Narcotics Control Bureau told Republica that 75 percent of drug users are aged between 15 to 30 years, according to admission trends at rehab centres. The primary substance within this group was found to be cannabis and hashish.

Sautman, however, says that research suggests otherwise.

gests otherwise.

"Legalisation and more progressive drug laws could encourage those who are now operating within the illicit drug trade to come under the tent of a regulatory system. This is what we've seen in countries like Colombia," he said. "The theory of marijuana being a 'gateway drug' and thereby encouraging further drug use has received less credence in the marketplace of

A necessary prerequisite to any further talk is a feasibility study that examines the impacts of legalisation in Nepal's context, says Thapa. By answering fundamental questions—such as how the consumption and trade of marijuana has evolved in recent years, how that evolution has impacted the country, and how the larger public feels about the issue—the discourse on legalisation can be supplemented with much-needed research rooted in Nepal.

"Everyone points to 'research' but how many studies have been conducted here?" asks Thapa.

Thapa also points to another concern: the need for a protective apparatus to ensure that the market is not inundated by the interests of large foreign corporations.

Similar concerns were expressed when the Government of Thailand amended its 1979 Narcotic Act, legalising marijuana for "medical use and research" in December 2018. In response to fears that the market would be dominated by large-scale foreign firms—two of which had already sought patents shortly after legalisation—the Thai government decided to revoke all patent requests under the premise that "a plant cannot be patented".

Such actions offer a blueprint for relatively smaller countries like Nepal seeking protection from the growing presence of powerful corporations. But Thapa remains skeptical.

For him, the key to a successful way forward are home-grown solutions and, most importantly, dialogue to hash out remaining concerns in

the legalisation movement.

"At the end of the day, our approach to legislation—when or if we decide to take that step at all—has to be led by Nepal and Nepali concerns," Thapa said. "It doesn't matter who has legalised already or what the international market is doing. What matters most is that we see both sides of the coin. Who stands to gain and who stands to lose?"

Timothy Aryal and Asmita Manandhar contributed reporting.



Frenetic Salman Khan epic throws everything in the mixer

Bollywood strongman's Eid offering, following a boy separated from his family at partition, packs so much in it's hard to care about the unification message

Bharat

Director: Ali Abbas Zafai Actors: Salman Khan, Katrina Kaif Tabu, Jackie Shroff Genre: Action drama



MIKE MCCAHILL

ince 2015's cornily effective Bajrangi Bhaijaan, Bollywood strongman Salman Khan has laid siege to the annual Eid holiday, and has done much to restore both a once-tarnished reputation and his box-office clout. For his latest vehicle, he has recalled writer-director Ali Abbas Zafar (who oversaw 2016's Sultan) to rework the premise of a major east Asian hit: Ode to My Father, from 2014, in which an everyman endured 60 years of Korean history in something like a straight-laced Zelig or Forrest Gump. Star power holds sway in Bollywood, however, and Khan's hefty grocer, roaming memory lane while awaiting a train, feels like a brother to Sultan's wrestler-hero. Once more we're asked to cheer for Salman the survivor, whose bruised, battered, still-staggering bulk is somehow intended to stand for India itself.

This time, alas, we struggle. Bharat's Achilles heel is its desire to pack so much in, at headspinning pace, tossing causality to the wind. Zafar reduces history to one damn thing after another, resulting in a 150-minute fire sale of period costumes and abandoned story beats. Separated from his

father and sister during partition, the Muslim-raised Bharat joins the circus, romances civil servant Katrina Kaif during a spell as a pipeline worker, expresses dreams of becoming a stationmaster that come out of (and go) nowhere, before dancing through a Maltese brothel while on navy shore leave. Even by masala movie norms, it feels absurdly overstuffed.

The better moments come when Zafar calms down and closes in on his leads well-tended chemistry. Kaif is one of the few actors capable of taking her co-star seriously, and the sincerity in her gaze encourages us to look more favourably upon a protagonist who gets yanked through the decades without making a single compelling choice or facing anything like dramatic consequences. The last halfhour neuters the most substantial idea—a TV show reuniting families split by partition—by squashing it between a comical encounter with African pirates and a fight scene intended to sate hardcore Khan devo-

Bharat is certainly spirited, and almost admirable in its determination to cover every conceivable base, but there's a fine line between all-embracing and simply allover-the-shop. Bharat needs rewrites, or at least some kind of breath test.

_@2019 The Guardia

Bharat is certainly spirited, and almost admirable in its determination to cover every conceivable base

New Myanmar filmmakers shoot to rekindle golden years

The Southeast Asian nation used to be a regional cinematic hub before the military junta suppressed creativity

DELPHINE THOUVENOT, RICHARD SARGENT

treasure, car chases and slick fight scenes drive the breakneck narrative of one of Myanmar's latest blockbusters, as a new generation of directors aim to revive the country's golden era of film.

The Southeast Asian nation used to be a regional cinematic hub before the 1962-installed military junta suppressed creativity, imposed censorship and cut the country off from outside influences.

Myanmar's opening up since 2011 has so far done little to propel its movie industry—which is preparing to mark its century next year—onto the international stage.

"The film industry is like the country after 100 years, it's not in good shape,' says Grace SweZinHtaik, 66, who has worked in the business for decades as an actress and consultant.

Foreign distributors remain unmoved neyed formulae with low production costs and over-acting that many find

A handful of young directors, however, are seeking to raise the bar—using skills

and know-how picked up overseas. Director Arkar Win, 29, learned the trade in Singapore before coming back to

His box office 2018 smash hit "The Mystery of Burma" set the protagonist on an action-packed quest to find an ancient ruby buried in a hidden temple, a plot with clear nods to Steven Spielberg's Indiana

Jones and Jon Turteltaub's National Treasure. "We're trying to catch up," he tells AFP in Yangon.

"Indonesian and Cambodian films are selling internationally... but the quality

New vs old generation

Arkar is proud that his movie's stunts, set against cinematography that sweeps across Myanmar's dramatic landscapes, have enticed "new audiences" to the cinemas.

But a duopoly of distributors controlling all of Myanmar's 154 commercial movie theatres means there is little negotiating power for directors or space for

A frenetic filming schedule is the norm in the industry, meaning proper castings and pre-production planning often fall by the wayside, while scripts are commonly written on the set of low-budget films. Around half of the movies made in 2018 ended up going straight to DVD.

"Until last year I had no hope," said director Christina Kyi, who recently broke into Myanmar's movie-making scene after returning from a New York film school 10

"Most actors here can do up to 20 films a year. With me they know they will have

to work for six months," she says. In Myanmar, superhero and zombie

movies reign supreme.

For directors like Arkar and Kyi—who both missed out at this year's Myanmar Academy Awards, stoking mass controversy-gaining acceptance from the mainstream movie industry presents a serious challenge.Kyi's widely-acclaimed "Mudras Calling" sees the US-raised Burmese lead role, played by her real-life husband,

returning to discover his Myanmar roots—and fall in love.

top prizes in the country version of the Oscars, she came away with

Outraged fans organised a boycott on social media of the winning director's

movie, pouring scorn on what they viewed as the elitist awards. Industry veteran Grace calls for more

investment, better technology-and more cooperation from both sides. "I want the old generation to welcome new directors and the new generation to

respect their seniors too.'

'Soft power'

With an arthouse flick at this year's Cannes Festival, Midi Z is perhaps Myanmar's highest-profile director internationally-but he has lived for years in

Plans are afoot for a movie studio in capital Naypyidaw.

But the industry might not see as smooth a transition away from political interference as many would like.

Civilian leader Aung San SuuKyi opened the contentious Academy Awards with a speech urging the film industry to use "soft power" towards a "peaceful, united and developed country".

The military is only too aware of the power of the silver screen in a country riven with ethnic armed conflicts.

A high-budget film is released each year to mark Armed Forces Day, championing the sacrifices made by patriotic soldiers fighting battles against villainous rebels.

Work has been underway for years to produce a biopic of SuuKyi's father and independence hero General Aung San.

The movie even has its own committee under the Ministry for Religious Affairs

and Culture. Foreign filmmakers are eyeing up Myanmar as a shooting location.

An array of exploding cars and daring stunts recently beguiled Yangon residents for the filming of Hong Kong movie "Line Walker 2" and there are rumours Nicolas Cage will soon visit to shoot his upcoming sci-fi flick "JiuJitsu".

These movies are guaranteed to do well in action-mad Myanmar.

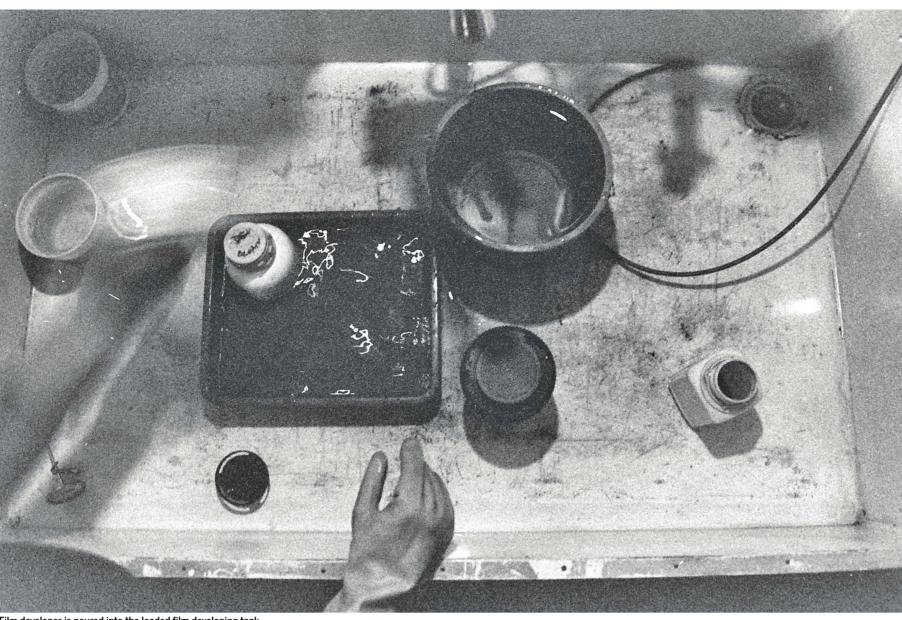
Arkar says it is down to Myanmar filmmakers to produce the goods in a country

with limited nightlife and entertainment. "The audience is there. We just need to

-© Agence France Presse



Director Christina Kyi (right) explaining a scene to actress PaingPhyo Thu while filming their movie in a studio in Yangon



Film developer is poured into the loaded film developing tank.

In focus: Stepping back and learning from the past

PHOTOS & TEXT: SANJOG MANANDHAR

hen I had just begun my career as a photojournalist, a decade ago, my brother had bought a film camera from Japan. That was the first time I had laid my hands on a rollfilm camera, which had been rendered obsolete many years ago. Whenever I had the time, I would work with the camera, but I wanted to learn more about how the film roll functioned and about darkroom techniques.

It was only recently that I was finally able to learn in detail about the rollfilm camera, after I met Jagadish Upadhya , the founder of Film Foundry, a studio located in Jawalakhel. In these last few months that I have met him, I have frequented his studio religiously, which became my haven to learn more about rollfilm photography.

Learning and working with my rollfilm camera has taught me a few things in life. The most important being patience. With rollfilm, as opposed to digital cameras, one has limited rolls at their disposal. Meaning, while working with rollfilm, one must be more focused and more patient-to wait for the perfect moment and lighting conditions to take that perfect shot.

In rollfilm cameras, the process doesn't just end with the click--after exhausting all the film rolls, the images need to be processed in a darkroom. And to see your vision and hard work materialise in film is nothing short of euphoric.

Some people may think that getting into rollfilm photography in this day and age is pointless, given that photography technology has come such a long way. But film photography was already perfect-with its dynamic range of colours, black and white tone and emulsion properties.

Despite having worked with pictures for more than a decade, experiences such as these keep reminding me that I have yet to learn new skills and techniques--sometimes by stepping back and learning from the past.

Working with traditional methods also gives us a glimpse of how modern pho-

tography came into place. For me, it is like carrying a piece of history in my camera bag.

These photographs were taken with Canon EOS Kiss, Yashica FX-3 Super 2000 and



Checking a medium format camera.



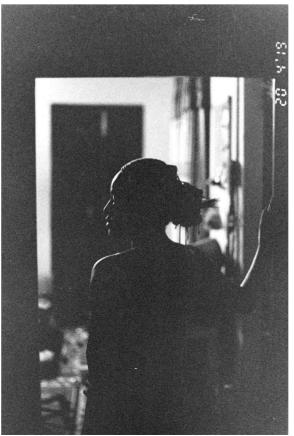
Jagadish
Upadhya poses
for a photo in
his studio's
backyard. He
holds a light
meter in his
hand.



Jagadish Upadhya loads exposed rollfilm into the developing tank inside a film changing darkroom bag.



Prints on photo paper.



The photo taken with Canon EOS Kiss Panorama SLR.



Checking the negative with a loupe magnifier.



Finally the washed print is hung for it to dry.



Upadhya explains the feature of a medium format camera to a film photography enthusiast at Film Foundry.

With love, from Tibet

Old Demons New Deities presents well-rounded narratives of the Tibetan people that go beyond the binary depiction of them as either a religious, peaceful community or slogan-chanting freedom fighters.

TSERING D GURUNG

n the introduction to Old Demons New Deities, the first English-language anthology of short stories by Tibetan writers, the book's editor, Tenzin Dickie, writes about how Tibetans, both living in exile and in Tibet, have grown up as "literary orphans," a term she borrows from American-Haitian writer Edwidge

"As a function of growing up in Tibet-in-India, a young society, we were cut off from our historical past, from our historical literature and culture," Dickie writes. "Of course, for Tibetans growing up on the other side of the mountains, this break from history was imposed by the Chinese state. This separation from our literary past was compounded by the fact that modern Tibetan literature was still in its infancy. Thus, on both sides of the Himalayas, we grew up orphaned from our literature.'

Growing up, as a person with a hyphenated identity, I, too, struggled with finding literature and literary heroes whose work and experiences mirrored my own. Although Tibetan literature has a rich history, much of it is religious. The tradition of fiction writing began much later, and Tibetans writing in English, even more so. For a person like me, whose comprehension of written Tibetan (which is still very formal) is elementary at best, there has only been so much Tibetan fiction to devour.

Old Demons New Deities, which was launched in North America in the winter of 2017, is thus a landmark in the history of contemporary Tibetan fiction. As the book gets ready for its South Asia launch, I re-read it this past week, and realised my feelings toward it haven't changed much. The stories that stayed with me after I read it for the first time nearly two years ago are still the ones I liked the most after my second reading.

Because much of contemporary Tibetan literature has been written after the Chinese occupation of Tibet, politics, communism, freedom, and identity have always fea-

tured heavily in both fiction and non-fiction. Nearly half of the 21 stories in the collection deal with these themes—in varying degreesincluding the opening story, 'Wink' by Pema Bhum.

Set in the fictional county of Ogya in Tibet in the late 1970s, the story centres around a couple, who plan an escape from their village because they worry they are going to be sent to a re-education camp due to an accidental transgression. Bhum, who lived in Tibet until 1988, and has written two memoirs on the Cultural Revolution, uses his deep insight on life in occupied Tibet, and deftly interlaces elements of humour and suspense to weave a deeply engrossing tale about life under the Communist regime.

Beside the aforementioned, two other favourites are 'Tears' by the Beijing-based writer Woeser, perhaps the most well-known of the lot, and 'Letter for Love' by Tsering Wangmo Dhompa, who authored A Home in Tibet, a moving memoir of her trips to the homeland after her mother's passing. (You must read this book if you haven't already.)

While 'Tears' is a poignant tale about a Tibetan man conflicted between his duty as a Chinese government official and his desire to freely embrace his ethnic identity, 'Letter for Love' is about a mother-daughter duo living in a refugee settlement in Nepal who team up to assist a widowed neighbour find a

The two stories couldn't be more different, but they spoke to me in equal measure because they successfully evoked an emotional response. I sighed reading 'Tears', feeling for the character as he dwells upon the question thousands of Tibetans living in Tibet ask themselves regularly: Should I stay or

Woeser, who has been placed under house arrest multiple times by Chinese authorities and whose books are banned in mainland China, sums up the character's dilemma with a searing line. "How can I not return? Our home is there. If we all leave, to whom will Tibet be left?" retorts the main character

when a woman asks him to stay back in Europe after an official trip.

'Letter for Love', which was originally published in The Caravan in 2010, is a beautifully written story about a young Tibetan girl living in Nepal, who, as a consequence of being one of the few literate ones in the community, is regularly asked to pen letters by her neighbours—an experience I am all too familiar with. When a neighbour comes home with a request to help write a letter to an American man, with whom she had a brief interaction, her mother, who particularly enjoys the process and takes pride in her daughter's ability, begins scheming.

While essentially a story about a mother and daughter helping their neighbour write love letters, it beautifully tackles concepts of love, longing, and desire. Dhompa has a knack for writing about the most mundane moments, and packed with cultural peculiarities (not Chinese-Chinese, but Chinese from Taiwan, remarks one character to another), her story presents a portrait of the Tibetan refugee community, perhaps more insightful than any research article. That she is deft with her prose only makes the story more enjoyable.

Here's an example: "Karma imagined her mother studying her face carefully in the mirror the afternoon Pema had flown away. Perhaps for the first time she had looked at the slight swelling under her lower eyelids, at the three lines on her forehead, and had looked into them for signs of options other than the life she lived.

'Ralo', 'The Connection' and 'The Valley of Black Foxes' are other stories that I enjoyed reading.

As is inevitable with any collection, some works shine brighter than others. And not all of them leave an impression. As much as I've admired Jamyang Norbu's intrepid essays on Tibetan politics, his fiction is less impressive.

Norbu pens two of the stories in the collection: 'The Silence' and 'Hunter's Moon', the latter being the superior of the two. In 'The Silence', a story about a mute fiddler's journey to find love, Norbu writes in cliched prose: "And yet there was

another side of his life that was not as sweet and beautiful as his music. He lived his life in silence because he could not speak." I had similar feelings reading Tenzin Dorjee's 'The Fifth Man'.

For many Tibetans and non-Tibetans alike, this book will be their first introduction to the world of Tibetan storytelling and storytellers. While not all the stories hit their mark or can even be characterised as quality writing, they present well-rounded narratives of the Tibetan people that go beyond the binary depiction of them as either a religious, peaceful community or slogan-chanting freedom fighters that we often see in popular culture.

Old Demons New Deities will be launched in Nepal at the end of the For many Tibetans and non-Tibetans alike, this book will be their first introduction to the world of Tibetan storytelling and storytellers





OLD DEMONS NEW DEITIES

Editor: Tenzin Dickie

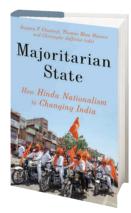
Publisher: OR Books

Pages: 304

KING BIRENDRA—AS I KNEW HIM

Author: Narendra Raj Pandey Publisher: Nalini Panday, Asim Pandey and Anjan Pandey Price: Rs 300

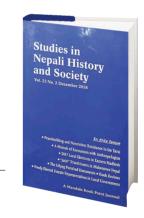
Late Narendra Raj Pandey shares his off the records conversation with Late King Birendra. Pandey had served in the Royal Palace Secretariat and various other positions before retiring as Principal Secretary. The views of understand Nepal and Nepal's issues at the time. The book records King Birendra's off the cuff observation and mentions about Nepal's relation with India, China, Japan, Thailand, France, Britain and Israel.



Majoritarian State traces the ascendancy of Hindu nationalism in contemporary India. Led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the BJP administration has established an ethno-religious and populist style of rule since 2014. The contributors explore how Hindutva ideology has permeated the state apparatus and formal institutions, and how Hindutva activists exert control over civil society via vigilante groups, cultural policing and violence.

MAJORITARINA STATE: HOW HINDU NATIONALISM IS CHANGING INDIA

Editor: Angana P Chatterii. Thomas Blom Hansen, Christophe Jaffrelot Publisher: C Hurst & Co Publishers Ltd Price: Rs 1438



STUDIES IN NEPALI HISTORY AND SOCIETY Vol 23 No.2 December 2018

(Published 2019) Editors: Pratyoush Onta et al Publisher: Mandala Book Point 2019 Price: Rs 500

Studies in Nepali History and Society: Vol 23 is a compilation of research articles about Nepal's history and society contributed by various researchers. The book among several and nonviolent resistance in Nepal's Tarai region; local Elections in Madhes; elected female representatives in Nepali institutions. The book also includes book reviews, commentary and notes from the archive from various



BEST-SELLER LIST HARDCOVER FICTION



THE AGE OF SURVEILLANCE CAPITALISM

SHOSHANA

ZUBOFF

- 1. The Innocence of Memories by Orhan
- My Lovely Wife by Samantha Downing Half the Night is Gone
- by Amitabha Bagchi 18th Abduction by
- James Patterson The Only Story by Julian Barnes

HARDCOVER NONFICTION

1. The Age of Surveillance Capitalism by

- Shoshana Zuboff India Positive by Chetan Bhagat
- 3. The McMahon Line: A Century of Discord by
- Theatre of Nepal and the People who Make it by Carol C Davis
- Women in Nepali **Politics** by Binda Pandey

Words of power: the best books on leadership

Here are the books examining authority from Machiavelli to Daphne du Maurier



ELIANE GLASER

espite our supposedly post-deferential era, we still seem rather wedded to strong leaders. We can only hope that whoever wins the race to be the next British prime minister will know the difference between authoritarianism and authority.

For Max Weber, the key is legitimacy. But how do you define that in an age when leaders bow to 'the will of the peo-

Our discomfort with the notion that a chosen few hold sway makes it easier to find depictions of bad leadership than positive exemplars. Novels, from Joseph Heller's Catch 22 to Herman Melville's Moby-Dick to Miguel de Cervantes's Don Quixote portray leaders as capricious, deranged and, well, quixotic. Likewise, in The Mirror for Magistrates, a Tudor collection of poems, the ghosts of eminent statesmen recount their misdeeds and comeuppances while gazing ruefully at their own reflections. The poems were intended as cautionary tales for others keen to don the mantle of power.

Much scholarly ink has been spilled debating whether Machiavelli's The Prince is a blueprint for pragmatic ruthlessness or a subversive satire. Machiavelli was a staunch republican who was arrested and tortured for his

Our discomfort with the notion that a chosen few hold sway makes it easier to find depictions of bad leadership than positive exemplars

views. Did he dedicate his treatise to Lorenzo de' Medici-the man who had him imprisoned—in a bid to rescue his reputation, or was he thumbing his nose?

Changing attitudes towards authority can lead to long-respected literary characters being summarily knocked off their pedestals. Atticus Finch, the small-town Alabama lawyer who defends a black man in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird, used to be a hero-he was even quoted admiringly by Barack Obama. But the publication of Lee's earlier novel, Go Set a Watchman, revealed him as a more complex character.

Leaders Eat Last, by the organisational consultant and "motivational speaker" Simon Sinek advises leaders to put underlings first in order to maximise their performance—presumably this also helps them forget that their boss is being paid three hundred times more than they are.

A similar strategy leads to disaster for the nameless narrator of Daphne du Maurier's luridly brilliant novel Rebecca. When she moves in to widower Maxim de Winter's imposing family seat, Manderley, she finds it difficult to give the servants their orders. Rather than rewarding her for her liberal attitude, they are horrified by this breaking of protocol. Unpleasant aspects of class are at work here, but the novel also offers a counterintuitive lesson in the importance of rules and norms, of authority appropriately exercised. Our hapless narrator is overpowered by the precedents of her semi-mythical predecessor, Rebecca, and Manderley burns to the ground.

The feminist scholar Jo Freeman published her essay The Tyranny of Structurelessness as a pamphlet in 1972 presumably after sitting through too many meetings dominated by someone insisting that everyone's voice is equally valid. In it she argues that an apparent absence of hierarchy often conceals informal and unaccountable leadership.

Hannah Arendt was a prominent critic of totalitarianism, but she defended authority as the willingness to take responsibility. Whoever replaces Theresa May must at least acknowledge that they are in charge, rejecting the modish populism that paves the way for dictators. Ambition is more dangerous in disguise.

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www.kathmandupost.com England & Wales 2019

England continue title bid against Bangladesh

Tigers also head into the weekend following a defeat after losing out by two wickets in a tense contest with New Zealand



A file photo shows England players celebrating a Pakistani wicket during their World Cup match at the Trent Bridge in Nottingham.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE **CARDIFF. JUNE 7**

England will face the side who kick-started their transformation into a major threat in one-day internationals when the tournament hosts continue their World Cup campaign against Bangladesh in Cardiff on Saturday.

The Tigers condemned Eoin Morgan's men to a first-round exit at the 2015 edition with a 15-run victory in Adelaide. At that point there was

HONGSHI

no longer any way of hiding England's white-ball woes and, with a home World Cup up next, then England and Wales Cricket Board director Andrew Strauss was determined the national side's limited overs form had to improve.

To that end, Peter Moores was sacked as coach, with Strauss bringing in experienced Australian Trevor Bayliss as his replacement. Since that debacle 'Down Under' England have risen to to the top of the one-day international rankings.

But having started their quest to win a first men's World Cup with a 104run thrashing of South Africa at the Oval, they head into this weekend's clash on the back of a surprise 14-run defeat by Pakistan. That match saw England lose their cool, with opening batsman Jason Roy and fast bowler Jofra Archer both fined for lapses in their conduct on

Meanwhile if England were annoyed by some of Pakistan's 'verbals', there were times when the large contingent of fans for the sub-continental side—a common sight even when England are at home—also had an effect. England allrounder Chris Woakes, usually the most mild-mannered of cricketers, put his finger to his lips in a bid to 'silence' Pakistan supporters after taking a catch on the boundary.

It could well be a similar story at Sophia Gardens on Saturday, particularly as several players on both sides who featured in England's ill-tempered 2016 win over

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Bangladesh in Dhaka are likely to be involved again. England fast bowler Liam Plunkett, who could be recalled after missing the Pakistan defeat, said his teammates knew how to maintain their composure.

"Pakistan are pretty good like that, they can get niggly. When they're on top they're good at doing it," said the 34-year-old. "Similarly Bangladesh and India, they're good at doing that, good at appealing quite a lot. It's just the way they play their cricket. But we've played in big competitions, guys have played around the world-at IPL (Indian Premier League) and Big Bash in front of big crowds-it shouldn't be too much for the players.

Bangladesh also head into the weekend following a defeat after losing out by two wickets in a tense contest with New Zealand. But Plunkett said the days when the Tigers were rank outsiders away from the sub-continent had gone. "There's no real shock defeats in this competition," he insisted. "We've already seen Bangladesh beat South Africa and that's not a shock defeat. They're a strong squad. I remember when they beat England way back when (in Bristol, 2010) and it was a shock defeat. I don't think them beating teams like South Africa is like that anymore." Adil Rashid bowled five costly overs against Pakistan and, given the leg-spinner's ongoing shoulder injury, England may decide to leave him out on Saturday.

For Bangladesh, a match at Sophia Gardens sees them back at the scene of one of their greatest triumphs—a 2005 ODI win over Australia, then as now world champions, that is arguably the biggest upset in the history of international cricket. Mashrafe Mortaza, who played in that stunning five-wicket success, is now Bangladesh's captain



POINTS TABLE

Team	M	W	L	NR	Pts	NRR
New Zealand	2	2	0	0	4	2.27
Australia	2	2	0	0	4	1.059
Sri Lanka	3	1	1	1	3	-1.51
Pakistan	3	1	1	1	3	-2.41
West Indies	2	1	1	0	2	2.054
England	2	1	1	0	2	0.90
India	1	1	0	0	2	0.30
Bangladesh	2	1	1	0	2	0.008
South Africa	3	0	3	0	0	-0.95
Afghanistan	2	0	2	0	0	-1.26



4231460 4266652 **Thapathali** Kathmandu

Today's matches

England vs Bangladesh Time: 3:15 PM (Cardiff) **Afghanistan vs New Zealand** Time: 6:15 PM (Taunton)

+**2** (mgmt.)

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HONGSHI शक्तिशाली खेलाडी

Martin Guptill

(New Zealand)

Guptill has been one of the mainstays of New Zealand's batting in white-ball cricket over the years. He might have exited the Test but in the shorter formats, his impact is obvious big. The fantastic century in Australia in late 2016 and the Africa in early 2017 were some of the strokemaker's recent emphatic statements in white-ball cricket.

Gulbadin Naib

(Afghanistan)

An useful allrounder, Naib batted lower down the order and was an useful change bowler-one who could chip in with a few overs of medium pace. Naib struggled to assert himself in the national squad since make international Having had to rein vent himself, Naib's second avatar as a middle-order batsman bore fruit in mid-2016.





शक्तिको प्रतीक

Dhoni told to take badge off gloves

LONDON, JUNE 7

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has asked Mahendra Singh Dhoni to remove an army insignia from his wicketkeeping gloves, forcing New Delhi to weigh in after a nationalistic furore in the country.

INTERNATIONAL QUALITY

Dhoni, one of the game's biggest stars, is an honorary lieutenant colonel in the territorial army and sported its dagger insignia on his gloves during India's opening match against South Africa in the World Cup, hosted by England and Wales. The ICC said its clothing and equipment rules allow only manufacturers' logos on gloves, and that Dhoni or the Indian team had not sought any permission to sport the badge.

Indian Prime Minister



Mahendra Singh Dhoni

Narendra Modi's nationalist government on Friday urged the country's cricket board (BCCI) to sort out the matter. "The government does not interfere in matters of sports bodies, they are autonomous," Sports Minister Kiren Rijiju said on Twitter. "But when the issue is related to the country's sentiments, then the interest of the nation has to be kept in mind. I urge the BCCI to take appropriate steps on

The BCCI said it has already written to the world governing body for cricket seeking permission for Dhoni to sport the insignia. The controversy has prompted passionate responses from both ruling and opposition politicians, Bollywood stars, as well as common citizens. #DhoniKeepTheGlove is the most trending hashtag on Twitter India.

Fawad Chaudhry, a federal minister in Pakistan, said Dhoni was in England to play cricket, not for any war. In an unusually strong display of patriotic fervour in sport, Dhoni and his team members wore army camouflage-style caps in a one-day match against Australia in March to show their solidarity with Indian paramilitary police killed in a militant attack by a Pakistan-based group.

Black Caps prepared to counter Afghanistan spin

Afghanistan have lost their two games in the tournament so far but not without a fight



A file photo shows New Zealand players celebrating a wicket against Sri Lanka in Cardiff on June 1.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

Ross Taylor insists New Zealand are ready for a trial by spin against Afghanistan on Saturday as they look to keep their winning momentum going in

the World Cup. The Kiwis edged out Bangladesh by two wickets on Wednesday, with Taylor hitting 82 in his team's tense chase at the Oval to record their second straight win

in as any matches. New Zealand, who were finalists in the 2015 edition, have relied on their paceman to get favourable results, but Taylor believes tackling spin will be key against the Asian minnows at "I think against Afghanistan, they have a lot of spin there, so something to factor in," said Taylor, who has recorded

three 40 plus scores in his last four ODI

innings. "But two from two, that was

what we wanted to do and we were able

to do it." While Taylor and skipper Kane Williamson got the runs during their 105run partnership in London, it was their pace attack led by Matt Henry that ran through the Bangladesh batting.

Henry claimed four wickets to take his tally to seven in two games. He is well supported by Trent Boult and Lockie Ferguson, who can clock speeds up to 96-mph. Taylor beloves that Ferguson, with his express pace, is the key man for the Black Caps. "Lockie, he just gives you that X-factor. Obviously our fastest bowler. He is going to be a key factor for us if we're going to feature in this tournament," said Taylor. "I think he's creating pressure for the guy at the other end (to ake wickets)," he added.

Ferguson's pace partner Henry said that Afghanistan are a "dangerous side" and New Zealand will treat them with "utmost respect". Afghanistan, who are playing just their second 50-over World Cup, have lost their two games in the

tournament so far but not without a fight. Leg-spinner Rashid Khan leads the charge with Mohammed Nabi, who returned figures of 4-30 with his off spin in their previous loss against Sri

But it's their batting that has let them down as they were dismissed for 152 in their revised chase of 187 in a rain-hit game Cardiff on Tuesday. "We need some improvement in the batting, we need more partnerships," Afghanistan skipper Gulbadin Naib said after the Sri _ Lanka loss.

Afghanistan medium-pace bowler Mirwais Ashraf, who was part of the team's campaign in the previous World Cup, said the senior batsmen need to step up or give way to youngsters.

"We've seen the same things play out in both of the matches so far. There have been too many mistakes and some players aren't batting very responsibly," said

Rain washes out Pakistan, Sri Lanka match

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE BRISTOL, JUNE 7

World Cup match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka was abandoned without a ball being bowled on Friday after persistent rain in Bristol.

The game was scheduled to begin 0930 GMT (3:15 NST) but was eventually called off in the afternoon, with both teams being awarded a point. It is the first match at the World Cup in England and Wales to be abandoned without a result. Both teams now have three points, with one win and a loss apiece.

Pakistan lost to the West Indies by seven wickets at Trent Bridge before beating England by 14 runs at the same venue on Monday. Sri Lanka crashed to a 10-wicket defeat against New Zealand before pulling off a 34-run win against Afghanistan in a rain-affected game. The calloff upset fans who had travelled to watch the game.

"We came from Lahore to watch this match and it proved a damp squib," said Farhan Malik. "We lost a crucial point because we were sure of beating Sri Lanka."



Picture of the day



Ground staff work to clear water off the outfield in Bristol on Friday.

KNP Japan Pvt. Ltd. A SUBSIDIARY OF KANSAI NEROLAC PAINTS

Nadal inflicts Federer worst Grand Slam loss in 11 years

Ashleigh Barty, Marketa Vondrousova set up women's single title showdown

Semi-final results

Federer (SUI x3) 6-3, 6-4, 6-2

Ashleigh Barty (AUS x8) bt

6-7 (4/7), 6-3, 6-3

7-5, 7-6 (7/2)

Amanda Anisimova (USA)

■ Marketa Vondrousova (CZE)

bt Johanna Konta (GBR x26)

Women's Singles



Ashleigh Barty returns to Amanda Anisimova in the French Open semi-final match on Friday.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rafael Nadal made quick work of Roger Federer in their first French Open meeting since 2011, beating his rival 6-3, 6-4, 6-2 Friday in strong wind to

reach his 12th final at Roland Garros Nadal has never lost a semi-final at the clay-court Grand Slam tournament. Never lost a final, either. And

he's never lost to Federer in Paris, improving to 6-0 Overall, Nadal leads their series 24-15 Federer had won their past five meetings, but those were all on hard courts. It's a whole different task to take on Nadal on clay, in general, and at the French Open, in particular, where his one victory away from a 12th championship, which would be more than any man or woman has won at any of the Grand Slam tourna-**Men's Singles** ments. In Sunday's final, the No 2-seeded Nadal ■ Rafael Nadal (ESP x2) bt Roger will take on either No 1 Novak Djokovic or No 4 Dominic Thiem.

This was the first time since 2011 the four top-seeded men were in the semi-finals at Roland Garros. Like so many times before, it was Nadal's topspin-heavy lefty forehand, his relentless ball-chasing and his return game that gave Federer fits.

Frustrated the guy so much that the generally stoic Federer smacked a tennis ball toward the stands after getting broken to trail 2-1 in the third set. It would soon be over. Federer, who

first time since 2015, hadn't lost a set through five victories over the past two weeks. With an aggressive, head-tothe-net style, he had been broken a total of only four times by those Nadal exceeded that in a span of

three sets across less than 21/2 hours, winning 6 of 13 return The 37-year-old Federer, whose 20

Grand Slam titles are a record for a man, was serenaded off the court by spectators' chants of his first name. He raised his right arm for a quick wave as time. He missed the tournament in 2016 with a bad back, then skipped it the next two years to prepare for grass and hard courts. He looked quite good in his return, until running into his old

In the women's semi-finals earlier, Ash Barty came back from a set and a break down to end 17-year-old American Amanda Anisimova's breakthrough run with a top-

> victory. The No 8-seeded Australian who took nearly two years off from tennis to play cricket, will face another unseeded teen for the championship on Saturday: unseeded 19-year-old Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic.

Vondrousova reached her first major title match, eliminating No 26 Johanna Konta of Britain 7-5, 7-6 (2). Vondrousova has not dropped a set in the tournament and can

first teenager win the French Open since Iva Majoli in 1997. Both matches saw massive swings of momentum, particularly Barty vs Anisimova, 51st-ranked American

who hadn't ceded a set through the quarter-finals

The semi-finals were played in difficult conditions, with drizzle that had spectators opening umbrellas, wind that around 60 degrees Fahrenheit. And they were played at unusual courts-scheduling that was criticized by women's tennis tour CEO Steve Simon as "unfair and inappropriate.'

Normally, all French Open singles semi-finals are held in Court Philippe Chatrier, with the women on Thursday and men on Friday. But after a full day of play was washed out by rain Wednesday, tournament officials were forced to shuffle the schedule. The two women's semi-finals were contested simultaneously at the second-and third-biggest courts at Roland Garros instead of the main stadium



Rafael Nadal plays a shot against Roger Federer in the French Open semi-final match on Friday.

Neymar in trouble over intimate pics

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE RIO DE JANEIRO, JUNE 7

Brazil's Neymar went to a on Thursday to give a statement in a probe into whether he broke the law by posting intimate pictures of a woman who accused him of

The football megastar went to the station in an attempt to defend himself, sitting in a wheelchair after spraining his ankle the night before in a pre-Copa America friendly that has ruled him out of the tournament. As he made his way out through a media scrum after giving his statement to police, the star striker expressed gratitude to his fans for their support.

"I felt very loved," he said. The injury to the world's most expensive player is a huge blow to host nation Brazil's preparations for the South American continental championship, which begins on June 14. Neymar hobbled off the field in the 20th minute of Brazil's 2-0 win over Qatar in Brasilia on Wednesday. A large ice pack had been strapped to his

lower right leg. Neymar's club, Paris Saint-Germain, tweeted on Thursday that the player "suffered a severe sprain of the outer lateral ligament of his right ankle,' and will be "reassessed by the club's medical department within the next 72 hours." The injury caps a troubled season on and off the field for Neymar, who faces accusations that he raped the woman, Najila Trindade Mendes de Souza, in a Paris hotel in May.

Neymar denies the claims and in an attempt to defend himself, published intimate WhatsApp messages and images of his encounter with Trindade on social media-without her consent, possibly breaking Brazilian law.

Gorillas enter final as Malla fashions Police victory

Samriddhi Gorillas entered the final of the ui League deieating iSC Kites 54-44 for their fifth consecutive victory in

The match was the resumption of Thursday's game which had to be called off with both teams tied on 39 points with 7:21 left in the final quarter. ISO Kites, who had bolstered their team by inclusion of two Filipinos and one Bhutanese hoopsters, were on top of their game a day earlier but on Friday they failed to offer any chal-

lenge against the table-toppers. While Gorillas added 15 points to their total, ISO Kites failed to convert in their possession netted Waiba sealed the vic-Gorillas with

seconds remaining. Srijana Giri scored 14 points for Gorillas who now lead the standings with 10 points. Allana May Lim of Philippines was the biggest contributor for ISO Kite with 30 in a danger of league stage elimination and require a huge margin victory over Nepal Police Club. In their first leg, NPC had claimed a

NPC, whose only two losses came against Gorillas, defeated Saipal Academy 71-58 with Anusha Malla yet again making an overall impact in the game. Malla scored 20 points, took eight rebounds, made six assists and had four steals as NPC put a foot in the final. They just need to make sure they don't lose to ISO Kites by a big margin. Saipal, winless in five games, are already out of the tournament.

Although the scorelines suggest otherwise, Saipal had shown promise with the way they fared in the first quarter on Friday. NPC only managed to take a slim one-point (15-14) lead in the first quarter. Saipal also managed to take lead in the second quarter at 18-17 but two 3-pointers from Malla and one from Preeti Tulachan helped them race away in the game. Malla scored eight points in the second quar-

ter for NPC who headed into the second half

with a 35-28 lead. Another 21-15 lead in the

third quarter handed a 13-point lead heading into the decider at 56-43. Saipal

gave a tough contest in the final quarter

which ended 15-15. While Malla sunk three 3-pointers, her sister Alisha Malla sunk four 3-pointers to contribute 16 points. Shreya Khadka Tulachan also netted nine points apiece. Shreya also had 10 rebounds in the game. Sushma Gautam scored 15 points for Saipal and Amisha Ghale rolled in 13 points. The women's double league concludes on Saturday with ISO Kite taking on NPC and Gorillas playing Saipal. The top two teams will directly compete in the final slated for

June 22.

POST PHOTO: HEMANTA SHRESTHA NPC player Anusha Malla (right) in action against Saipal Academy during their Nepal Basketball League match in Kathmandu on Friday.

De Jong at the heart as Dutch revival continues with England win

It was a victory that came courtesy of two dreadful errors from England in extra time



Netherlands' Memphis Depay in action against England during their Nations League semi-final match in Guimaraes, Portugal, on Thursday.

REUTERS

GUIMARAES (PORTUGAL), JUNE 7

Ronald Koeman's Netherlands team continued their impressive renaissance on Thursday by earning a place in the inaugural Nations League final with a 3-1 triumph over England after extra time to secure a meeting with hosts

It was a victory that came courtesy of two dreadful errors from England in the extra period and thanks to the intervention of a VAR review that cancelled out what could have been a winner for Gareth Southgate's side in the 83rd minute. But the specifics of the deciding goals-after the game was level at 1-1 in 90 minutes—should not take away from the achievement of Koeman's team in setting up a fascinating clash with Cristiano Ronaldo and company on Sunday in Porto.

A year on from a World Cup the Dutch watched from home having failed to qualify, their young side now have a chance of winning UEFA's new tournament and, whatever status that brings, Koeman cannot be any-

thing but delighted with their progress. To reach the last four in Portugal, the Netherlands had to finish top of a group with 2018 World Cup winners France and four-times world champions Germany-beating both on home soil.

Then the Dutch had to come from behind on Thursday against an England team that reached the semi-finals in the last World Cup in Russia and came into this competition with a real sense that they could win their first major silverware since 1966. While England will rue their defensive errors, the Netherlands certainly showed why they are going to be genuine contenders in next year's European Championship.

Although much of the buzz around the Dutch has focused, rightly, on the young talent in an exciting Ajax Amsterdam team that reached the Champions League semi-finals this season, Koeman has been able to blend them with an experienced core. Champions League winner Virgil van Dijk at the back is a once in a generation quality centre-half, while in midfield his Liverpool team mate Georginio Wijnaldum combines technical skill with a physical presence and football brain. At left back Daley Blind delivered a composed and assured performance that must have left Manchester United fans wondering if their strug-

gling club let him go too soon. But the player who stood out at a rainy Estadio Afonso Henriques, was the 22-year-old central midfielder Frenkie de Jong who will move from Ajax to Barcelona next month. In a game with more than the amount of mistakes expected at this level, De Jong's consistent quality shone through. In the bustle of midfield, his touch was light, his vision sharp and his delivery precise, while everything about his display suggested that this is a player ideally suited to continue the fine tradition of Dutch players at the Nou Camp.

The Netherlands have though brought style and class to the beautiful game since the 1970s and those who have appreciated their football across the decades can only be pleased to see them moving back to the upper eche-

Published and Printed by Kantipur Publications Pvt. Ltd., Central Business Park, Thapathali, Kath mandu, Nepal, P. B. No. 8559, Phone: 5135000, Fax: 977-1-5135057, e-mail: kpost@kmg.com.np, Regd. No. 32/049/050, Chairman & Managing Director : Kailash Sirohiya, Director : Swastika Sirohiya, Editor-in-Chief : Anup Kaphle

CRU		URRE							
	USD	EUR	JPY	GBP	CHF	CAD	AUD	INR	NR
NR	111.4600	125.6000	10.2700	141.6700	112.2100	83.4800	77.7000	1.6015	
INR	69.4650	78.2660	6.4029	88.2900	69.9100	52.0181	48.4100		0.6244
GBP	0.7868	0.8864	0.0073		0.7919	0.5891	0.5483	0.0113	0.0071
JPY	108.4800	122.2200		136.9863	109.1900	81.2300	75.6000	0.1562	0.0974
EUR	0.8873		0.0082	1.1282	0.8931	0.6645	0.6184	0.0128	0.0080
USD		1.1270	0.0092	1.2710	1.0065	0.7488	0.6971	0.0144	0.0090
HOW TO READ THE TABLE The chart shows the rates of nine world currencies. Move across the table to find rates of exchange between any two									

currencies. One unit of the currency mentioned horizontally is worth that amount in the currency mentioned vertically

IIS Dollar 111 46 125.60 Euro Pound Sterling Japanese Yer 10 27 Chinese Yuar Qatari Riyal Australian Dollar 77.70 26.80 Malaysian Ringit Saudi Arab Rival

FOREX

Gas surges globally as green groups cry foul Page II 2018 was a 'golden year' for natural gas with demand surging worldwide, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Friday, prompting concern from environmental groups over the climate impact of the world's new favourite fuel.

Budapest boat crash puts focus on Hungary's tourist boom

A disaster waiting to happen. That's how many in Budapest describe the deadly crash between a small sightseeing boat carrying South Korean tourists and a much larger cruise ship on the Danube River last week. A tourism boom in the Hungarian capital has led to major congestion on the river flowing through the city.

Europe's 5G to cost \$62 billion more if Chinese vendors banned

A ban on buying telecoms equipment from Chinese firms would add about 55 billion euros (\$62 billion) to the cost of 5G networks in Europe and delay the technology by about 18 months, according to an industry analysis seen by Reuters. The United States added Huawei Technologies, the world's biggest telecoms equipment maker. to a trade blacklist in May, prompting global tech giants to cut ties with the Chinese company and putting pressure on European countries to follow suit

Entrepreneurs reluctant to move into Special Economic Zones

RAJESH KHANAL KATHMANDU, JUNE 7

Lack of interest among entrepreneurs to move their operations into the Special Economic Zones created to facilitate industrial development has put at risk the billions the government has poured into them.

government has brought into operation two Special Economic Zones in Bhairahawa and Simara. Even though both places failed to receive an encouraging response from investors, the government has started the groundwork to construct another five Special Economic Zones in a bid to have one in each of the seven provinces.

The government launched the concept of Special Economic Zone in 2000 after acquiring 55 bighas of land in Bhairahawa. More than Rs850 million has been invested in the zone which contains three building blocks and 68 plots marked for factory units. However, only 20 factories have been set up in the zone.

Chandika Prasad Bhatta, executive director of the Special Economic Zone Authority, said most of the factories established in the Bhairahawa Special Economic Zone manufactured mineral-based products and kitchen utensils. According to him, these factories plan to invest Rs7 billion in total and are providing 3,000 jobs.

The authority has recently

completed the construction of Garment Processing Zone within the Special Economic Zone in Simara. On May 2, it called for applications from

prospective industrialists to set up factories in the Garment Processing Zone, but there has been no takers more than a month after the notice was issued, said Bhatta. The government invested Rs2.5 billion to construct the

Garment Processing Zone that occupies 163 bighas out of the 843 bighas allocated for the Special Economic Zone in Simara, Bara. Entrepreneurs can rent plots ranging in area from 5,000 square metres to 12,000 square metres to set up production plants. The zone has sewerage facilities and regular supply of water and electricity. The Garment Processing Zone is larger than the Special Economic Zone in Bhairahawa. "We are building gasoline station in the Garment Processing Zone while the Nepal Electricity Authority has also started the groundwork to install a 132 kV substation there to supply electricity to the factories there," said Bhatta

The Special Economic Zone Authority has slashed the rent, but readymade garment manufacturers are complaining that the rent is still higher than outside the Special Economic Zone.

Chandi Prasad Aryal, president of the Garment Association of Nepal, said entrepreneurs would come to the Special Economic Zone to operate their businesses only if the authority reduced the rent. "Besides, the authority should pay the cost of relocating the machinery from the current site," said Aryal.

Aryal also sought assistance for small enterprises related to embroidery and dyeing to reduce the operating costs of garment factories. He urged the authority to provide one-stop service inside the Special Economic Zone to attract investors. The government established the Garment Processing Zone with the objective of reviving exports of Nepali readymade clothes which plunged in the last one and a half decades following the termination of the multi-fibre agreement by the US.

As per the association, there are around 50 garment factories currently in operation, a sharp fall from the 1,200 factories during the indus-

try's heyday. While the Special Economic Zones Bhairahawa and Simara are having a hard time finding tenants, the government has moved to open similar zones in Jumla, Panchkhal, Gorkha, Dhangadhi and Biratnagar.

According to Bhatta, they have started the construction of Special Economic Zones in Jumla and Panchkhal, completed a detailed engineering study of the Biratnagar Special Economic Zone and conducted feasibility studies for zones in Gorkha and Dhangadhi. Trade analyst and former commerce secretary Purushottam Ojha said the government needed to offer product specific programmes through the Special Economic Zones. "In addition, the government needs to bridge the gap between market access and value chain to attract potential entrepreneurs to set up factories in the Special Economic Zones," said Ojha.

Bimal Wagle, former chairman of the Public Enterprises Board, said the government should assess the possible rate of return on investments in the Special Economic Zones before pouring money into "Issues such as legal them. harmony, relocation costs, coordination among stakeholders and suitable infrastructures should addressed properly to ensure a rewarding result from the government investment in Special Economic Zones," said

Pipe-laying under cross-border fuel delivery project nears completion

SHANKHAR ACHARYA

Pipe-laying under Amlekhgunj-Raxaul-Motihari cross-border pipeline project nearing completion. According to engineer Sharad Prasad Poudyal, the project office in Nepal has expedited pipe-laying work at Parsa National Park.

"Only a few long pipes remain to be connected in the national park area," said Poudyal. "Construction crews are working to fix the 12-metre-long pipes at proper required." According to officials, 9 km of the oil pipeline passes through the national park area. The project office is also

installing and upgrading at Nepal Oil Corporation's Amlekhgunj depot. A large number of valves need to be installed to properly manage and store the gasoline imported from India. Once the pipeline is com-

pleted, fuel will flow from the Indian Oil Corporation depot in Motihari to Amlekhgunj in Bara district, and partially eliminate the need for tanker trucks. It is expected to save Rs2 billion annually in transportation costs

The project will test the pipeline within a few days, and authorities are working to have it fully operational before the monsoon, Poudyal said. According to Nepal Oil

Nepal Oil Corporation has planned to extend the Motihari-Amlekhgunj pipeline to Chitwan.

Corporation, 36 km out of the

pipeline's total length of 78

km lies in Indian territory

and 42 km lies in Nepali terri-

tory. The pipeline was expect-

ed to come into operation in

mid-April this year, but the

completion date was resched-

uled for mid-July. After the

construction work is complet-

ed, training will be provided

to 25 technicians working on

the project, said the state-

March 2018. Oil will be import-

ed from India via the 78-km

pipeline. A large section of

the pipeline in Nepal passes

Pathlaiya highway. The pipe

line is buried at a depth of 2.5

cians is over, the pipeline's

ownership will be handed

over to Nepal and it will come

into operation, according to

Nepal Oil Corporation Deputy

After the training of techni-

Birgunj-

Pipe-laying work began in

owned utility.

alongside the

Officials of the state-owned oil monopoly said tenders would be invited soon to conduct a detailed project report to extend the pipeline to Lothar in Chitwan district.

Director Pushkar Karki

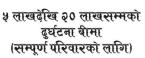
According to officials, the oil corporation is working to determine the distribution modality of the fuel imported via the pipeline and has upgraded three out of its four fuel storage tanks at the Amlekhgunj depot. These tanks can hold 16,000 kilolitres of fuel each.

In the beginning, the enterprise plans to import diesel. The pipeline has a capacity to transport fuel at the rate of 291 kilolitres per hour. The construction of the pipeline was proposed in 1995, but the project gained shape only after the two governments signed an agreement on August 25, 2015.

Nepal has identified the Amlekhgunj-Raxaul-Motihari oil pipeline as a national priority project. The estimated cost of the project is Rs4.4 billion. Of the total outlay, India is spending Rs3.2 billion while Nepal is putting up the rest of the money, mainly to build related infrastructure, as per the terms of the bilateral agreement between the





















BALTRA











/ISUS -

विस्तृत जानकारीका लागिः किशोर बरनेत ५८५१०७६२४१, कुमार न्यौपाने ५८५१०११४३४, धिरेन्द्र शाह ५८४१६३१४७३, रमेश लुइटेल ५८६०५५७७२७

NEWS DIGEST

UK clamps down on banks' high overdraft charges

LONDON: Britain will from next year force the country's banks to slash overdraft charges, helping millions of consumers, in particular the more vulnerable, regulators announced Friday. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA), which oversees matters of consumer protection, said Britain's "dysfunctional overdraft market" will face the biggest shakeup in a generation with the introduction of new rules from April. "Our radical package of rem edies will make overdrafts fairer, simpler and easier to manage,' FCA chief executive Andrew Bailey said in a statement. "Following our changes we expect the typical cost of borrowing £100 (\$127, 113 euros) through an unar ranged overdraft to drop from £5 a day to less than 20 pence a day," he added. (AFP)

US long-term mortgage rates fall

WASHINGTON: US longterm mortgage rates fell for the sixth consecutive week, with the key 30-year loan average running below 4% and at its lowest point since September 2017. The declining rates have been a boon to potential purchasers in the spring home buying season, and the number of homeowners seizing the opportunity to refinance mortgages jumped this week. Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac said Thursday the average rate on the 30-year, fixed-rate mortgage dipped to 3.82% from 3.99% last week By contrast, a year ago the benchmark rate stood at 4.54%. The average rate for 15-year, fixed-rate home loans declined this week to

Brazil court gives go ahead to \$8.6b Petrobras deal

3.28% from 3.46%. (AP)

BRASÍLIA: Brazil's Supreme Court has approved an 8.6 billion dollar deal allowing state oil company Petrobras to sell its TAG pipeline network in a big win for the firm and the ruling party. Any privatisation of a state company must be put to a call for tenders and be approved by a parliamentary vote, the court ruled on Thursday, but it added that this does not apply to subsidiaries of these enterprises. Judge Edson Fachin announced the raising of the suspension of the sale of Petrobras assets, put in place earlier in May while the decision was pending. The Supreme Court rejected an attempt by oil industry unions to appeal against the sale of TAG. The country's far-right president Jair Bolsonaro and **Economy Minister** Paulo Guedes have launched privatisation projects and large scale concessions to reduce public debt since com-

Budapest boat crash puts focus



Sightseeing, restaurant and tour boats are seen on the Danube River in Budapest, Hungary.

ASSOCIATED PRESS BUDAPEST (HUNGARY), JUNE 7

A disaster waiting to happen. That's how many in Budapest describe the deadly crash between a small sightseeing boat carrying South Korean tourists and a much larger

cruise ship on the Danube

River last week. A tourism boom in the Hungarian capital has led to major congestion on the river flowing through the city, with sightseeing boats and floating hotels competing for better positions in front of spectacular neo-Gothic buildings, ornate bridges and churches

lining the Danube. Numerous boats zigzag almost chaotically on the river. One offers classical music dinners, another one put on a pulsing rave party and there's also a floating pub. And an amphibious bus takes tourists on a sightseeing tour through the city and then drives into the river for

The river traffic gets particularly frenzied beneath the city's bridges and at night when the landmark sites are lit up, and that's when the

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

2018 was a "golden year" for

International Energy Agency

(IEA) said on Friday, prompt-

ing concern from environ-

mental groups over the cli-

mate impact of the world's

Demand for gas grew 4.6

percent last year—the fastest

rate since 2010—and gas

accounted for nearly half of

the total increase in world-

wide energy consumption,

according to the IEA's annual

The surge in natural gas,

which while cleaner than coal

remains a fossil fuel that con-

tributes to manmade emis-

sions, was put down to

ballooning production in the

US and an insatiable demand

for alternatives to coal in

a major role in a remarkable

year for energy," the IEA's

"In 2018, natural gas played

new favourite fuel.

report on the fuel.

crash occurred last week.

The small sightseeing boat carrying 33 South Korean tourists and two Hungarian crew members sank in seven seconds amid a rainstorm after a collision with the Viking Sigyn cruise ship under the Margit Bridge, one of the seven landmark bridges in the Hungarian capital. Nineteen people drowned,

nine are still missing and only seven are confirmed survivors.

The cause of the crash is still unknown, but the captain of the cruise ship has been arrested under suspicion of "causing a mass disaster" which carries a sentence of two to eight years in prison.

It was the first of two collisions last week involving a cruise ship in Europe, and the incident October. An out-of-control ocean cruise ship plowed into a docked tourist boat in Venice on Sunday, injuring at least five people as passengers fled the much smaller vessel

The Budapest crash shows that tourist overcrowding in the Hungarian capital—and which has also hit many other

A flame burning natural gas is seen at an oil refinery located on a

branch of the Druzhba oil pipeline in Russia.

"Global energy consump-

tion rose at its fastest pace this

decade, with natural gas

accounting for 45 percent of

the increase, more than any

The IEA, the global authori-

ty on energy, said that gas

had helped play a role in

reducing air pollution and

limiting the rise of green-

But environment and ener-

house gas emissions.

Gas surges globally as

green groups cry foul

but history-rich European When Hungary opened up

to foreign tourists after the fall of communism in the late 1980s, it was known for its casinos and fine dining.

Today it's more about latenight clubbing and cheap beer

Although European Best Destinations website recently named Budapest the best choice for tourists in 2019, last year statistical portal statista.com named Hungarian capital the fifth most tourist-overcrowded city in Europe behind Barcelona, Amsterdam, Venice and Milan.

The number of nights spent by foreign tourists in Budapest hotels rose from 4.9 million in 2010 to 8.1 million in 2018, according to Hungary's Central Statistical Office.

"In the last six months, we have started thinking about phenomenon over-tourism," said Peter Kraft, a former Hungarian government tourist secretary and now CEO of a tourism investment company in Budapest. "We are full of tourists which personally I'm happy about.

popular European resort and

cruise destinations, such as

Dubrovnik—could quickly

The head of Hungary's

water transport federation,

Attila Bencsik, said that dur-

ing the nighttime peak of

river traffic, between 50 and 70

ships move at the same time

on the Budapest section of the

more frequent that these cabin

cruise ships not only arrive,

dock and give the city over to

the passengers, but these

ships carry out sightseeing

dent risks if everyone follows

the rules, but if every night

20-30 of these cruise ships do

sightseeing trips, this increas-

es traffic significantly and in

practice the risks of an acci-

dent are also bigger. This is a

Budapest has enjoyed a

boom in international tourism

in recent years. Long-haul

flights from the United States,

Asia and the Middle East

bring thousands of tourists a

day to the Hungarian

capital, a relatively affordable

gy sector analysts said the

gas boom could have dire

effects on Earth's climate, as

scientific warnings of the

need to slash fossil fuel use

IEA horse has blinkers on and

is heading straight over the

cliff of climate disaster,"

Lorne Stockman, senior

research analyst at Oil Change

International, told AFP.

"When it comes to gas, the

grow ever stronger.

fact," he added.

"This would not mean acci-

tours as well," Bencsik said.

"It has become more and

Barcelona

Venice,

Danube.

lead to tragedy.

"Budapest is an outstanding destination in terms of value for the money," he said, adding that one way to tackle tourist over-crowding could be higher hotel prices and services.

"We should start thinking not about the numbers, but the quality," he said.

Immediately after the crash, authorities significantly shortened river sightseeing cruises to avoid disturbing an ongoing search operation at the site of the crash beneath the Margit Bridge. The collision has turned away many tourists from making those boat trips.

Christine Ratcliffe from England said she decided to take it anyway.

"I felt perfectly safe. For years and years it has been operating. It was one of those unfortunate accidents,'

Plant-based

burger maker

Beyond Meat

beats forecasts

Beyond Meat went beyond

expectations in its first earn-

ings report since its stock

The plant-based meat mak-

er's shares soared after it

beat Wall Street's first quar-

ter earnings and revenue

forecasts. Beyond Meat also

said it expects full-year reve-

nue to hit \$210 million this

year, more than double its

2018 revenue and higher than

the \$205 million analysts had

forecast, according to

FactSet. "We're being very

conservative. I view this as a

floor," President and CEO

jumped 15% to \$114.27 in

after-hours trading. The El

Segundo, California-based

company lost \$6.6 million, or

95 cents per share, in the first

quarter, up slightly from a

98-cent loss in the same peri-

shares

Ethan Brown said.

od a year ago.

Beyond Meat's

market debut last month.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Earning a living



A Vietnamese woman carries lychee and pineapples at a market in Hanoi at dawn on Friday.

No-say Nissan had tech that drove Fiat Chrysler-Renault idea

ASSOCIATED PRESS TOKYO, JUNE 7

Nissan wasn't consulted on the proposed merger between its alliance partner Renault and Fiat Chrysler, but the Japanese automaker's reluctance to go along may have helped bring about the surprise collapse of the talks.

While Nissan Motor Co. had a weaker bargaining position from the start, with its financial performance crumbling after the arrest last year of its star executive Carlos Ghosn, it still had as its crown jewel the technology of electric vehicles and hybrids that Fiat Chrysler wanted.

The board of Renault, meeting Thursday, didn't get as far as voting on the proposal, announced last week, which would have created the world's third biggest automaker, trailing only Volkswagen AG of Germany and Japan's Toyota Motor Corp.

When the French government, Renault's top shareholder with a 15% stake, asked Nissan, Fiat Chrysler John Elkann Chairman abruptly withdrew the offer.

Although analysts say reviving the talks isn't out of the question, they say trust among the players appears to have been broken. "The other companies made

the mistake of underestimating Nissan's determination to say, 'No,' " said Katsuya Takuechi, senior analyst at Mitsubishi UFJ Morgan Stanley Securities in Tokyo. Renault and Fiat Chrylser

highlighted possible synergies that come from sharing parts and research costs as the benefits of the merger. But what Fiat Chrysler

lacks and really wanted was what's called in the industry "electrification technology," Takeuchi said.

With emissions regulations getting stricter around the world, having such tech-



A file photo shows Nissan's Leaf electric vehicle being unveiled during the world premiere in Chiba, near Tokyo.

nology is crucial. Yokohamabased Nissan makes the world's best-selling electric car Leaf.

Its Note, an electric car equipped with a small gas engine to charge its battery, was Japan's No. 1 selling car March, the first time in 50 years that a Nissan model beat Toyota and Honda Motor Co. for that title.

Nissan is also a leader in autonomous-driving technology, another area all the automakers are trying to innovate.

"Although Nissan had no say, its cautionary stance on the merger ended up being very meaningful," Takeuchi said. Nissan has long resisted pressures from Renault for a full merger, and Japanese media reported that Renault had likely hoped its lobbying power would be boosted, if it had merged with Fiat Chrysler.

But the collapse of the talks with Fiat Chrysler might mean Renault would merely focus even more on a merger with Nissan, the Asahi newspaper said Friday.

Nissan Chief Executive Hiroto Saikawa told reporters

late Thursday that he wanted time to find out what the Fiat Chrylser-Renault might mean for Nissan, calling it "moving to the next stage." He reiterated his reservations about a full merger with Renault, stressness around first.

Fiat Chrysler cited "political conditions in France" for withdrawing its offer to Renault.

The French government said it had placed four conditions on the deal, and getting support from Nissan was the

condition that wasn't met. The other conditions were to preserve French jobs and factories, respect the governance balance between Renault and Fiat Chrysler, and ensure participation in an electric battery initiative

with Germany. Michelle Krebs, executive analyst at Autotrader in Detroit, acknowledged the proposed giant alliance had been complex.

"No one ever expected it to be a cake walk to negotiate or execute," she said. "The only surprise is that it ended

Venezuelan cocoa piles up in New York as exporters scramble for cash

REUTERS NEW YORK, JUNE 7

ing to power. (AFP)

US stockpiles of Venezuelan cocoa swelled in May to levels not seen in at least five years, a Reuters analysis showed, as exporters in the crisis-hit country hit by US sanctions scramble to raise cash

however they can. Venezuela is in the midst of a years-long economic and humanitarian crisis that has deepened since the United States imposed sanctions on the country's oil industry in January as part of an effort to oust Socialist President Nicolas Maduro in favor of opposition leader Juan Guaido.

Crude oil accounts for more than 90 percent of Venezuela's export revenues. With that key revenue stream drying up, Venezuelans are looking to get cash any way they can, including exporting cocoa - a niche business in the country, but one that is currently not subject to US sanctions.

director Fatih

Several traders and exporters say a number of new cocoa companies have cropped up in recent years in a sector that was traditionally dominated by a handful

"Many exporters in the last three years have jumped into the cocoa market as it's one of the few commodities left to do business in," said Alejandro Prosperi, the Carupano-based president of the country's cocoa industry group

At the end of May, nearly 47,000 65-kg bags (3,055 tonnes) of cocoa from Venezuela worth an estimated \$7.3 million were sitting in New York-area warehouses certified by commodity exchange ICE, out of 119,000 bags total from all origins.

ered the buyer of last resort for the cocoa market, as producers and exporters generally prefer to The exchange is widely considsell into the much larger and often

more lucrative cash market. Venezuela is a relatively small producer of cocoa, making its physical dominance in US ICE

Workers sieve dried cocoa beans at a warehouse in Barlovento, Venezuela.

warehouses unusual. It only produces about 20,000 tonnes of cocoa annually, while top producer Ivory Coast has an annual output of 2 million tonnes - and just 39,000 bags of Ivorian cocoa at ICE warehouses at the end of May.

Overall global production was about 4.8 million tonnes in 2018-19, according to the International Cocoa Organisation.

The cocoa in ICE warehouses originating from Venezuela was at its highest levels since at least May 2014, according to a Reuters analysis, a ninefold increase from the same month a year ago. Overall volumes fell in early

June following the expiry of the May contract, but Venezuela was still the top country of origin, with nearly 25,000 of the roughly 59,000 bags in ICE warehouses.

Officials in Maduro's govern-\$2,427 per tonne. ment did not respond to requests

for comment. Venezuela's total export revenue was \$35 billion in 2018, according to data from the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, and cocoa's share of that was minimal.

Venezuelan cocoa has historically demanded high price premiums due to its high quality. But now some exporters are willing to forego these premiums in favour of quick cash.

Traders said the quality of Venezuelan beans has deteriorated in recent seasons, reducing its premium appeal.

"Two and a half years ago, I was selling Venezuelan cocoa at \$1,000 over (futures) and now it's selling at \$200 under," said one US trader, citing a figure several other traders verified. On Thursday, New York cocoa futures closed at

Much of this deterioration is

er Chocolates El Rey in Caracas. Traders said some exporters have stopped prioritizing quality while some farmers - fearing confiscation - are rushing their product to market, cutting short the important quality-enhancing practice of fermenting

the result of the new exporters,

tary and exerting their power.

They know nothing about the

is a way to translate cocoa into

foreign exchange," said Jorge

Redmond, president of

"Many of them are in the mili-

business itself but figure that this

Venezuelan chocolate manufactur-

dealers said.

the beans. The new exporters "don't really care about putting the high-quality Venezuelan cocoa beans to the

final clients. Their intention is just to convert it into dollars," said a Venezuela-based trader.

NEWS DIGEST

German trade surplus shrinks as **EU** demand dips

BERLIN: Germany's trade surplus shrank in April to 17 billion euros (\$19 billion) following weaker demand within the European Union, official data showed Friday, adding to production woes in Europe's largest economy. Exports fell 3.7 percent month-on-month, to 109.7 billion euros, while imports shed 1.3 percent to 91.7 billion, federal statistics authority Destatis said in figures adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects. Amid the falling demand from abroad, Europe's biggest export power saw its surplus narrow in April from 20 billion the month before. "Industry had a severe backfire in April, which is also reflected in very weak exports,' said economist Dr Klaus Borger from the KfW banking group. (AFP)

Sanofi poised to appoint Novartis' **Hudson as CEO**

PARIS: Sanofi is poised to appoint Paul Hudson, a top executive with Switzerland's Novartis to become the French drugmaker's next CEO from Sept. 1, a source familiar with the decision told Reuters on Thursday. Current Sanofi SA CEO Olivier Brandicourt will leave the company to retire, said the source, who asked not to be named because of the sensitivity of the matter. "Hudson has been chosen because of his reputation. He is known as a solid manager and has an expertise in digital relating to pharmaceuticals," the source said. A spokes-

India plans to order taxi aggregators like Uber, Ola to go electric

Economy

Country is trying to bring down its oil imports and curb pollution as part of the 2015 Paris climate change treaty



Mahindra's, e2oPlus, operated by Indian ride-hailing company Ola, is seen at an electric vehicle charging station in Nagpur, India.

REUTERS

NEW DELHI, JUNE 7

India plans to order taxi aggregators like Uber and Ola to convert 40% of their fleet of cars to electric by April 2026, according to a source and records of government meetings to discuss new rules for clean mobility.

Uber and Ola, both backed by Softbank Group, would need to start converting their fleet as early as next year to achieve 2.5% electrification by 2021, 5% by 2022, 10% by 2023 before hiking it to 40%, according to the person and the records reviewed by Reuters.

Some taxi players, like Ola, have previously attempted to operate electric cars in the country, but with little success given inadequate infrastructure and high costs.

New Delhi, however, is looking to push the new policy to boost the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) as it tries to bring down its oil imports and curb pollution so it can meet its commitment as part of the 2015 Paris climate change treaty.

Indian think-tank Niti Aayog, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and which plays a crucial role in policymaking, is working with several ministries on the EV The recommendations will

eventually become a formal policy, with or without changs, subject to approval by the government, federal the source said, adding the idea is to "push electrification through public transport."

Neighbouring China, home to the world's top auto market, is already leading the world in electrification by setting tough EV sales targets for car makers and offering incentives to taxi operators to increase their fleet of clean-fuel cars.

EV sales in India grew three-fold to 3,600 in the year ended March but still account for about 0.1% of the 3.3 million diesel and gasoline cars sold in the country over the period, industry data showed. China's electric car sales, meanwhile, rose 62% in 2018 to 1.3 million vehicles.

In a meeting in New Delhi on May 28, Niti Aayog officials and the ministries of road transport, power, renewable energy and steel, as well as the departments of heavy industries and trade, were among those recommending taxi operators in India gradually convert to electric.

They also recommended that all new cars sold for commercial use should only be electric from April 2026, a change that would also apply to Uber and Ola, said the person who has direct knowledge of the matter but spoke on condition of anonymity.

Motorcycles and scooters sold for commercial purposes, like food delivery or for use by e-commerce companies, will also need to be electric from April 2023, the person added. India has seen a boom in

food delivery apps like Zomato and Swiggy, which counts Naspers and Tencent as investors. Sales by e-commerce firms like Amazon.com and Walmart-owned Flipkart are also rising.

The committee has also suggested a plan to gradually introduce electric buses within cities, with 5% of the fleet electric by 2023, rising to 30% by 2026. Thereafter all new city buses would need to be electric.

Companies like Tata Motors and Ashok Leyland manufacture buses for intracity travel in India.

The EV proposal comes weeks after the inter-ministerial committee recommended electrifying most motorbikes and scooters for private use all three-wheeled autorickshaws within the next six to eight years.

While there are several electric scooter manufacturers in the country including Ather Energy, Hero Electric and Okinawa, there are only two car makers that build and sell electric cars — Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors.

Some taxi operators have so far had little success operating electric cars in India. Ola launched a pilot project in the central Indian city of Nagpur in 2017 but a year later drivers, unhappy with long wait times at charging stations and high operating expenses, wanted to return to gasoline cars.

Ola, however, is not giving up yet. Its Ola Electric Mobility unit in March raised 4 billion rupees (\$58 million) from investors including venture capital funds Tiger Global and Matrix Partners.

It also raised \$300 million from Hyundai Motor and Kia Motors and formed a strategic partnership with the South Korean duo to help build India-specific EVs.

Modi's government in 2017 had set an ambitious target to electrify new cars and utility vehicles by 2030 but resistance from the industry forced it to scale back the plan.

Europe's 5G to cost \$62b more if Chinese vendors banned



China Telecom technicians test an equipment at the 5G network base station near Yellow River in Lanzhou, Gansu province, China.

REUTERS PARIS, JUNE 7

A ban on buying telecoms equipment from Chinese firms would add about 55 billion euros (\$62 billion) to the cost of 5G networks in Europe and delay the technology by about 18 months, according to an industry analysis seen by Reuters.

The United States added Huawei Technologies, the world's biggest telecoms equipment maker, to a trade blacklist in May, prompting global tech giants to cut ties with the Chinese company and putting pressure on European countries to follow suit. Washington alleges Huawei's equipment can be used by Beijing for spying, something the company has repeatedly denied.

The move by US President Donald Trump's administration comes as telecoms operators worldwide are gearing up for the arrival of the next generation of mobile technology, or 5G, which promises ultra-fast mobile internet for those able to make the heavy investment needed in networks and equipment.

The estimate is part of a report by telecoms lobby group GSMA, which represents the interests of 750

mobile operators. GSMA has already voiced concerns about the consequences of a full ban on Huawei, whose products are widely purchased and used by operators in Europe. The 55-billion-euro estimate reflects the total additional costs implied by a full ban on purchases from Huawei and Chinese peer ZTE for the roll out of 5G networks in Europe. "Half of this (additional cost) would be due to European operators being impacted by higher input costs following significant loss of competition in the mobile equipment market,' the report said.

"Additionally, operators would need to replace existing infrastructure before implementing 5G upgrades."

The two Chinese vendors have a combined market share in the European Union of more than 40%.

According to the report, a ban would also delay the deployment by 18 months of the technology, which will be used in areas ranging from self-driving cars to health and logistics.

"Such a delay would widen the gap in 5G penetration between the EU and the US by more than 15 percentage points by 2025," according to



woman with Sanofi had

no comment. (REUTERS)

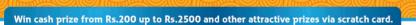


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We Accept **KANTIPUR DAILY** THE KATHMANDU POST

BIZLINE

Azim Premji, India's second-richest man, to retire

MUMBAI: India's second-richest man, Azim Premji, announced Thursday his retirement as chairman of Wipro, the company that he transformed from a small cooking fat firm into a global IT powerhouse. "I wish to thank generations of Wiproites and their families for their contribution towards building our company to what it is today," the 73-year-old said in a statement. "It has been a long and satisfying journey for me. As I look into the future, I plan to devote more time to focus on our philanthropic activities," he said. Premji has headed Wipro since the late 1960s, turning into a behemoth in IT, consulting and business services present in over 50 countries with \$8.5 billion in revenues. Premii will step down as executive chairman on July 30, to be replaced by his son Rishad Premji, but will remain on the board as non-executive director and founder chairman. In March, Premji pledged about 34 percent of Wipro shares controlled by him to philanthropic activities through his foundation, Bloomberg reported. India's \$150-billion IT sector has long been one of the country's flagship industries as companies around the world take advantage of its skilled English-speaking

Richard Branson takes satellite launch business to Japan with airline ANA

TOKYO: Sir Richard Branson's Virgin Orbit said on Thursday it plans to bring its satellite launch system to Japan in partnership with airline operator ANA Holdings Inc, which will provide maintenance and possibly aircraft. Virgin Orbit's LauncherOne system is undergoing testing with the aim of launching rockets bearing small satellites into space from a modified jumbo jet. The company said it will conduct its first orbital test flight later this year. Separately, Branson's space tourism company, Virgin Galactic, overcame years of delays to launch rocket planes to the edge of space in test missions in December and February. The latter flight carried a test passenger - chief astronaut instructor Beth Moses -- for the first time, nudging the company closer to its goal of suborbital flights for space

Fitch downgrades Pemex debt rating to junk, Moody's awards negative outlook

MEXICO CITY: The financial assessment agency Fitch Ratings downgraded Mexico state oil company Mexican Petroleum (Pemex) from BBB- to BB+ Thursday, while Moody's revised its outlook rating from stable to nega tive. BB+ is considered a junk rating because of the struggling company's heightened risk of not paying its debt. In a statement Fitch said, "Fitch Ratings has downgraded Petroleos Mexicanos' (PEMEX) Long-Term Foreign and Local Currency Issuer Default Ratings (IDRs) to 'BB+' from 'BBB-'. The Rating Outlook is Negative" due to Pemex's approximately \$80 billion of unpaid debt. Pemex, which President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador has set out to save as it struggles with ongoing losses, is Mexico's largest public employer. The BB+ rating is given to non-investment grade and speculative bonds known as "junk bonds" -- they have a high risk of default but offer a high profitability to compensate. In a statement Thursday, Pemex called Fitch's new rating "excessively severe." (AFP)

Gucci parent Kering moves to tighten grip on e-commerce

PARIS: Kering, owner of brands including Gucci, will tighten its grip on its e-commerce operations, focusing on its own branded sites to sell its luxury products or ventures where it can control its image and client data. After shifting into online shopping later than more accessible fashion labels, many luxury groups are now investing heavily in e-commerce while working on ways of retaining as much control of distribution and pricing as possible -- two elements that help them maintain their aura of exclusivity. Kering had already said it would wrest back control of web operations for brands such as Balenciaga and Alexander McQueen which had been developed by Yoox Net-A-Porter (YNAP) - an online retailer now fully owned by the group's rival Richemont. That joint venture with YNAP will take now end in the second quarter of next year, Kering's digital officer Gregory Boutte explained on the sidelines of a group investor day on Friday. (REUTERS)

Uber's first helicopter rides set for New York

NEW YORK: Uber said Thursday it is readying its first helicopter rides, which will carry passengers between New York's JFK Airport and lower Manhattan. The news of the Uber Air debut was first reported by the New York Times, and confirmed by Uber chief executive Dara Khosrowshahi, who tweeted the article with the comment: "Point to point multimodal journey planning and booking = no stress transport to and from JFK." The flights -- which last about eight minutes -- would begin July 9 with "dynamic pricing" expected to be around \$200 to \$225, with ground transportation included in the city and airport, Uber said. The news confirms Uber's ambitions to move beyond city streets with its "aerial ridesharing" efforts coordinated through its Uber Elevate team. "Uber Copter offers the first real demonstration of the Elevate experience," said Eric Allison, head of Uber Elevate. The New York service will be offered to members of Uber's loyalty programmes. The flights will help gather data for a wide rollout of Uber air transportation in the coming years, according to Allison. (AFP)

Farmers in Syangja to get cold storage facilities

They currently have no means to store their unsold produce thus incurring heavy financial losses

PRATIKCHYA KAFLE

Authorities in Syangja have initiated the process to build three cold storage facilities to resolve issues faced by local farmers who are unable to store their produces for lack of such infrastructure in the region.

Construction of a cold storage in Jaisidadha in Putalibajaar has already begun. The warehouse is being built at an investment of Rs80 million.

According Cooperative Association Chair Laxmipati Paudel, the infrastructure is being built with financial assistance from Ministry for Land Management, Cooperatives and Poverty Alleviation

The under construction cold storage in Jaisidadha has a capacity of 1000 metric tonnes. The Department of cooperatives has allocated Rs25 million while the Agriculture and Cooperatives Ministry has provided Rs25 million for the cold storage project.



The construction site of the cold storage facility in Syangja

According to Paudel, the remaining portion of the total investment must be managed by the association.

"We have shortlisted all the works and appropriated the budget provided by the federal and provincial ministry to execute the project," said Paudel.

A total of 104 cooperatives and three municipalities—Putali Bajaar, Bhirkot and Galyangwill hold stakes of the cold

Works have also begun to equip Triyasi Agriculture Cooperative in Waling and Janabikas Sana Kisan Cooperative with cold storages for housing vegetables

According to Municipality Spokesperson Kedar Kafle, the municipality has appropriated Rs9.8 million to build the storages. "60 percent of the total investment will be provided by the Department of Cooperatives, he said. "The remaining 40 percent will be injected by the cooperatives where the infrastructure will be built."

Due to lack of proper storage facilities, farmers growing fruits and vegetables in the region regularly face financial troubles as their unsold produce eventually spoil.

The government has incorporated provisions in the recently announced budget allowing the local level and provinces to inject funds in the development and commissioning of infrastructures being built by cooperatives to manage the retail market of agricultural products.



MARKET WATCH

RETAIL PRIC	E	
Vegetables	Unit	Price (Rs)
Red Potato	kg	Rs48
White Potato	kg	Rs35
Onion (Indian)	kg	Rs48
Tomato Small	kg	Rs65
Carrot	kg	Rs55
Tomato Big	kg	Rs95
Squash	kg	Rs55
Cabbage	kg	Rs45
Brinjal Long	kg	Rs55
Cow Pea	kg	Rs65
Fruits	Unit	Price (Rs)
Apple	kg	Rs225
Pomegranate	kg	Rs190
Pineapple	kg	Rs125
Cucumber	kg	Rs75
Papaya	kg	Rs85
Banana	Doz	Rs115
Lime	100Pcs	Rs315

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 TOLA
Fine Gold	Rs 62,300
Silver	Rs 715

62.7

SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

1.67

Entrepreneur spirit



A general view of a buffalo farm at Galyang, in Syangja. The owner of the farm had previously worked in Qatar for nearly a decade before returning to Nepal to

Google cloud gaming service to launch in 14 countries this year

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE NEW YORK, JUNE 7

Google on Thursday released new details about its video game streaming service Stadia, which will be available in 14 countries starting in November.

For the launch, Google will sell its "founders edition bundle" hardware pack for \$129, with a subscription price of \$9.99. In Europe, the price will be 129 euros and 9.99 euros

per month. The new gaming platform aims for a Netflix-style subscription that enables players to access games on any device, powered by the internet cloud.

This could disrupt the huge gaming industry by allowing users to avoid consoles and game software on disc or download.

Subscribers will have access to free games and will be able to purchase some blockbuster titles as well. The first free title will be the shooter game Destiny 2

from developer Bungie.

Users may also purchase hit titles such as Assassin's Creed Odyssey and Ghost Recon Breakpoint from game giant

"Ubisoft is bringing several fantastic gaming worlds to Stadia at launch and we cannot wait to see players experience them on this game-changing cloud technology," said Yves Guillemot, co-founder and chief executive of Ubisoft.

Stadia will launch in the United

States, Britain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden. Announcing the game platform earlier this year, Google chief executive Sundar Pichai said the initiative is "to build a game platform for everyone.'

Google's hope is that Stadia could become for games what Netflix or Spotify are to television or music, by making console-quality play widely available.

Robot baristas are latest front in South Korea automation push

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE

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Customers wait for coffees in front of a robot named 'b;eat' after placing an order at a cafe in Seoul, South Korea.

game platform for everyone." Google's hope is that Stadia could become for games what

sole-quality play widely availa-

ble. Yet it remains unclear how

much Google can grab of the nascent, but potentially massive, industry Netflix or Spotify are to television or music, by making con-

As it produces its own games, Google will also be courting other studios to move to its

cloud-based model

from the internet cloud but stopped short of revealing details on a service to challenge Stadia. It's a welcome trend for some younger people. "Currently, Millennialsthose who were born after

Last month, longtime video

ance to improve their platforms

game console rivals Microsoft

and Sony announced an alli-

for streaming entertainment

1980—are prime consumers. This generation tends to not like meeting other people, so they favour ... technology that to-face interactions with others," said Suh, the business school dean. At a recently opened unmanned jeans store-LAB101—in the trendy Seoul neighbourhood of Hongdae a

enables people to minimise face-

heavy iron door opens automatically when visitors swipe their credit cards in a machine beside the entrance. The 24/7 denim

shop lets customers try on jeans and pay using a self-service digital system without having to deal with sales staff, though sometimes technical glitches can pose a problem.

"I can freely look around and try on jeans as much as I like without being bothered," said Kim Kun Woo, 29.

Back at Dal.komm Coffee, a robot can brew 90 cups an hour and about 300 cups a day on a single charge of beans and sup-

plies. The drinks cost \$2 to \$3. Managers visit once a day on average to inspect and clean the robots. They also monitor them remotely through surveillance cameras and sensors.

While some customers like the convenience and novelty of robot coffee, some don't.

"Personally I prefer human baristas more because the robot can't customise drinks as delicately as humans can.

Brent Crude Futr (Bbl)

Gas Oil Fut (Ice) (Mt)	557.00	2.77
Gasoline Rbob Fut (Gal)	172.9	1.25
Natural Gas Futr (Mmbtu)	2.34	0.82
Agriculture	Price (US\$)	%Change
Cocoa Future (Mt)	2,428.00	-0.16
Coffee 'C' Future (Lb)	100.75	-1.27
Corn Future (Bu)	418	-0.59
Cotton No.2 Futr (Lb)	66.8	0.19
Rough Rice (Cbot) (Cwt)	11.73	-0.09
Soybean Future (Bu)	865.25	-0.40
Soybean Meal Futr (T)	314.3	-0.51
Soybean Oil Futr (Lb)	27.73	-0.11
Sugar #11 (World) (Lb)	12.44	-0.56
Wheat Future(Cbt) (Bu)	504	-1.18
Industrial Metals	Price (US\$)	%Change
Copper Future (Lb)	263.75	-0.49
Precious Metals	Price (US\$)	%Change
Gold 100 Oz Futr (T Oz)	1,339.20	-0.26
Silver Future (T Oz)	14.91	0.00