



THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Nepal's largest selling English daily
Printed simultaneously in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj

Vol XXVII No. 332 | 16 pages | Rs.5
Wednesday, January 22, 2020 | 08-10-2076

☀️ 20.7° C -2.2° C
Dang Jomsom



REIMAGINING CONNECTIVITY

'Connectivity' holds multiple perspectives, interpretations and ideals. Connectivity is what highlights our times today. We live in a digitally connected world where the exchange of trade, capital, information and people are no longer bound by geography.

The 2020 Kantipur Conclave is a two-day event that reimagines connectivity from a multifaceted lens, leveraging constructive interactions to identify opportunities on cultivating synergy, convergence, partnerships, collaborations and relationships amid the changing global dynamic.

- 40+ Speakers
- 500+ Delegates
- 12+ Thematic areas
- 10+ Sessions

Associate Partner **NEPAL LIFE**

Learning Partner 

Knowledge Partner 

App Partner 

Hospitality Partner 

DAY
01

February 07, 2020

Opening Keynote Address

This keynote addresses the larger discourse on reimagining connectivity and understanding Nepal's position and potential within the region. Nepal is land linked and connected to China and India, the two giant economies which are poised to become the world's largest economies by 2040. The country also has an immense opportunity in connecting to countries like Bangladesh, which is separated from Nepal by just 27 kilometers.

Speakers



C. Raja Mohan
Director, Institute of South Asian Studies,
National University of Singapore



Bruno Macaes
Senior Fellow (Non-resident),
Hudson Institute



Andy Mok
Senior Research Fellow,
Center for China and Globalization



Lessons from the East

Southeast Asia, after the European Union, is considered as the most connected region in the world. The region, which is booming with economic growth and prosperity, can unfold some valuable lessons for Nepal, which, in terms of consumer behavior, adaptability and outlook, resembles countries in Southeast Asia rather than South Asia. What learnings can Nepal derive from a region that has benefited from substantial connectivity?

Speakers



Gita Wirjawan
Chairman, Ancora Group



Gwen Robinson
Editor-at-Large,
Nikkei Asian Review



Neeta Pokharel
Unit Head, Project Administration,
South Asia Urban and Water Division,
ADB Manila



Valentino S. Bagatsing
President and CEO, ICCP

Moderator



Sujev Shakya
Founder and CEO,
beed management

DAY
02

February 08, 2020

Opening Keynote Address

Speaker



Hussain M Elius
CEO and Co-Founder, Pathao

The Future of Digital World

Technology, social media and communication platforms are connecting the globe like never before. Every day, we wake up to breakthrough innovations in data, machine learning, fintech, cryptocurrencies, artificial intelligence and beyond. Where and how does cyber security, defense capabilities and data privacy fit in this new technological reality? Where is the world headed with this unprecedented digital revolution and what is the role of Nepal amidst this explosion in connectivity?

Speakers



Alberto Gringnolo
General Manager and CEO,
YOOX Net-A-Porter Group



Biswas Dhakal
President,
FISoft Group



Jaspreet Bindra
Founder, Digital Matters



Rajyeshwari Ghosh
Founder,
Quantum Holistic Advisory Services

Moderator




Dipta Shah
Managing Partner,
54i Ventures


Mitigating Climate Change - The Big Connector

If there is one topic that countries will have to think beyond boundaries, it is the threat from climate change. It is that which will shape our collective future and where all our destinies are bound together. When we discuss the future, the issue of climate change forms an integral part. Will the issue of climate change push us to connect with each other in constructive spirits and find ways to adapt to the rapidly changing future? Can Nepal take the leadership in this discourse as one of the biggest custodians of the Himalayas?

Speakers




Arnico Panday
Trustee and Interim CEO,
Ullers Education Foundation



Bindu Bhandari
Climate Change Campaigner
and Policy Analyst




Smriti Basnet
Associate Director,
South Asia Regional Office
of Future Earth



Thinlay Namgyel
Former Chief, Climate Change Division,
National Environment Commission,
Bhutan

Moderator



Sneha Pandey,
Program Officer,
Clean Energy Nepal

Bridging through Literature and Arts

The internet plays a monumental role in the democratization of knowledge and learning with its access to a wide variety of books, events and dialogues. More and more platforms like literary and art festivals are emerging for people to express their feelings, all of which uphold the fabric of connectivity in charming and inexplicable ways. In this context, what role does the world of literature and arts play in the broader discussions around connectivity? Can Kathmandu continue to thrive as the cosmopolitan capital of South Asia attracting artists, writers, musicians and creative folks from around the world?

Speakers



Bhushita Vasistha
Writer



Namita Gokhale
Founder and Co-director,
Jaipur Literature Festival



Raman Shrestha
Owner, Raschra Books

Moderator



Itisha Giri
Poet

Connecting Global Nepalis

In the last three decades, Nepalis have spread to more than 150 countries around the world. They have become successful entrepreneurs, politicians, professionals – no longer just immigrant workers and students. Instead of dwelling upon its brain drain, the time has come for Nepal to expand its influence and connect with its sprawling diaspora. What are the lessons that these influential figures bring to Nepal? How can Nepal leverage the knowledge and skills of this diaspora to achieve its targeted growth and prosperity?

Speakers



Anushka Shrestha
Miss Nepal World 2019



Arpana Rayamajhi
Jewelry Designer



Prajwal Parajuly
Author



Sagar Tamang
Managing Director,
South East Asia,
North Asia & Pacific, GSK

Moderator



Prativa Pandey
Founder/ CEO,
Catalyst Technology
and Herveda Botanicals

नेपालमा 'मी टू' किन अगाडि बढ्न सकेन ?

चौन दुर्यवहार विरुद्ध विश्वव्यापी रुपमा चलेको 'मी टू' अभियानले नेपालमा पनि प्रवेश पायो, तर त्यसले यहाँ किन अपेक्षित प्रभाव पार्न सकेन ? समाजका केही स्थापित व्यक्तिहरुले गरेका यस्ता दुर्यवहार पीडितले साहसका साथ सार्वजनिक गरे, केही समय त्यसबारे चर्चा पनि चल्यो तर बिस्तारै त्यो सेलाउँदै गयो । 'मी टू' मा मुखिधका अधिकताले पूर्ववत्: सामाजिक नैस्यत र जिनमेवारी पाए । यस्तो किन भयो ?

Speakers



Akanchha Karki
Theatre Activist



Durga Karki
Lawyer



Manushi Yami Bhattarai
Political Activist

Moderator



Bhrikuti Rai
Investigative Reporter,
The Kathmandu Post

नेपाल: अगाडि कि पछाडि ?

जनआन्दोलन, शान्तिप्रक्रिया र संविधान निर्माणको सफलतासँगै नेपाल राजनीतिक परिवर्तनका दृष्टिले अगाडि बढेको छ, तर संविधानको कार्यान्वयनसँगै मुलुकलाई उदारवादी मूल्य-मान्यताबाट पछाडि फर्काउन सोजिएको हो? खासगरी वर्तमान सरकारको गठन पछि आएका कतिपय कानून ध्वम् नीति-नियम नियन्त्रणमुखी भएको र प्रहरी-प्रशासनको व्यवहार क्रमशः कठोर बन्दै गएको अवस्थाले के देखाउँछ ? उदारवादलाई थाती राखी संकुचित मनसायले अर्थतन्त्रमा पनि असर गर्नेछ, के हुनसक्छ यसको असर ?

Speakers



Pradeep Gyawali
Foreign Minister



Mohna Ansari
Member,
National Human Rights Commission Nepal



Gagan Thapa
Nepali Congress leader

Moderator



Narayani Devkota
Sociologist

हात्ती, इयागान र तरुल - बदलिदो भू-राजनीतिमा नेपाल

नेपालका दुई छिमेकी-चीन नयाँ विश्वशक्ति र भारत क्षेत्रीय शक्तिका रुपमा अन्तर्राष्ट्रिय रंगमञ्चमा उदाएका छन् । हात्ती र इयागान भनिने यी शक्तिराष्ट्रको बीचमा रहेको नेपालले उनीहरुको पुनरुदयबाट फाइदा लिने कि विगतमा कै 'तरुल' जस्तो बनेर राजनीतिक चेपुवामा पिल्सिरहने ?

Speakers



Chaitanya Mishra
Sociologist



Mahendra P Lama
Senior Professor, School of International Studies,
Jawaharlar Nehru University, India



Mahesh Maskey
Former Ambassador of Nepal to China

Moderator



Malika Shakya
Senior Assistant Professor,
Department of Sociology,
South Asian University

प्रचण्डसँग परिसंवाद

सशस्त्र संघर्षको पृष्ठभूमिबाट शक्तिपूर्ण राजनीतिमा आएका तत्कालीन माओवादीका प्रमुख नेता पुष्पकमल दाहाल 'प्रचण्ड' यसबीचमा दुई पटक प्रधानमन्त्री भइसकेका छन् र हाल सत्तारुढ दलको कार्यकारी अध्यक्षका रुपमा क्रियाशील छन् । उनले आफ्नो विगत, वर्तमान र भविष्यलाई आफैले कसरी हेरेका छन् ? यो परिसंवादमा उनको राजनीतिक र व्याक्तिगत जीवनमाथि रोचक संवाद हुनेछ ।

Speaker



Pushpa Kamal Dahal (Prachanda)
Former Prime Minister of Nepal,
Chairman of the Nepal Communist Party

Moderator



Sudheer Sharma
Editor-in-Chief,
Kantipur Daily



THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

Nepal's largest selling English daily

Printed simultaneously in Kathmandu, Biratnagar, Bharatpur and Nepalgunj

Vol XXVII No. 332 | 16 pages | Rs.5
Wednesday, January 22, 2020 | 08-10-2076



20.7° C -2.2° C
Dang Jomsom



A child plays at a brick factory in Bungamati, Lalitpur. Sight of children playing around brick kilns is common in Kathmandu, as they come along with parents who are seasonal workers.

Congress does not claim Speaker post, showing that there's a larger game afoot

Party insiders say that Sapkota for Speaker is part of a larger deal among Deuba, Dahal and Oli that includes transitional justice and the Constitutional Council.

ANIL GIRI
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

The primary opposition Nepali Congress did not field any candidate for Speaker on Tuesday to challenge the Nepal Communist Party's candidate Agni Sapkota, paving the way for the ruling party leader's election to the post unopposed. The party is also unlikely to file candidacy for the post of deputy Speaker.

Ruling party co-chairs KP Sharma Oli and Pushpa Kamal Dahal had reached a deal on Sunday to put up Sapkota for the Speaker of the House of Representatives after month-long negotiations. That deal came a day after Oli, Dahal and Congress President Sher Bahadur Deuba decided on officials for the two transitional justice commissions that are tasked with investigating conflict-era cases.

Now that the Congress has allowed Sapkota, who faces a murder charge for a conflict-era killing, to get elected unopposed, party insiders say is part of a larger deal between Oli, Dahal and Deuba.

Congress leaders admit that Deuba made a concession in return for a stronger say on the Constitutional Council, where he is a member in his capacity as the leader of the opposition. The Constitutional Council is an

important body that appoints ambassadors and officials to constitutional bodies.

Ram Chandra Poudel, a senior Congress leader, affirmed that a deal had been struck among Deuba, Oli and Dahal regarding the Speaker's post and the transitional justice bodies.

"I had a meeting scheduled with Deuba to discuss ways to make the transitional justice process more credible," Poudel told the Post. "But instead, he asked me if we should file candidacy for Speaker. I told him we should, but he declined, saying we have to make an agreement with the ruling party for various appointments."

Constitutional Council meetings in the past have been deferred several times after Deuba failed to show up. On one occasion, it decided on a few appointments in his absence, prompting the Congress party to boycott a hearing committee meeting.

Apart from a deal on appointments, there are other pressing concerns due to which Deuba is not opposed to the ruling party, say insiders.

When it comes to the transitional justice process, Deuba and Dahal are the major parties—one as leader of the government during the insurgency and the other as supreme commander of the Maoist army.

>> Continued on page 4



CULTURE & ARTS | 08

Metal sculptors have a new enemy—technology



WHEELS | 14

Hyundai Venue is a crossover with value



Hassle-free auto loans for that adventure with your loved ones.

For more details, contact our 24x7 Client Care Centre at +977 1 4781800 or visit our website: sc.com/np

*Terms and conditions apply.

Deadline arrives but sugar mills still owe farmers Rs800 million

Farmers have been duped by sugar mill owners in the past but this time they were betrayed by the government too, they say.

KRISHANA PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

Earlier this month, when the government promised sugarcane farmers from Sarlahi that their dues would be cleared in three weeks, they didn't have much to say—except hope that the authorities would keep their word. But as the weeks passed with only a few payments cleared, their hopes started to fade. On Tuesday, January 21, the day of the deadline, farmers were still owed over Rs800 million, and the government had no answers.

Of the total Rs1 billion owed to farmers by various sugar mill owners, they were paid just Rs150 million. Lekhraj Bhatta, the minister for industry, commerce and supplies, said that his ministry will assess the overall progress made so far on Wednesday and then decide on the course of action.

But farmers had seen this coming ever since the deal was struck, given that this is not the first time sugarcane farmers have been duped by sugar mill owners. Since the government rarely takes puni-

tive action against sugar mills who fail to pay farmers for their crops, farmers, who usually take out bank loans to grow sugarcane, are at the receiving end.

Kapil Muni Mainali, president of Nepal Sugarcane Producers Federation, said that every time the government reaches an agreement, it just raises false hopes among farmers.

"Each time the deadline arrives, officials say sugar mills owners have gone out of contact," Mainali told the Post.

According to ministry officials, Mahalaxmi Sugar Mill, Annapurna Sugar Mill, Shree Ram Sugar Mill and Bagmati Sugar Mill have been the biggest defaulters for years. Some of the 100 farmers who marched to Kathmandu in December demanding their payments have not been paid for three-four years.

Babu Lal Ray from Ramnagar in Sarlahi told the Post last week that he had received a foreclosure notice from his bank for not repaying a loan he had taken three years ago.

>> Continued on page 4

Even as coronavirus cases rise, no mandatory screenings at airport

A large number of Chinese tourists and Nepalis living and working in China arrive at the airport every day, but health screenings remain the passengers' prerogative.



Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu.

ARJUN POUDEL
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

At a time when many Asian countries have stepped up measures at international ports of entry to prevent possible transmission of a new strain of coronavirus, health screening of passengers at the Tribhuvan International Airport, the only international air-

port in the country, remains voluntary.

A health desk at the airport has simply placed a signboard that urges passengers to contact personnel if they have a fever or other health complications.

"We provide a form for those air passengers who contact us about any kind of health complications," Dr Nishant Thakur, who has been

deployed at the Tribhuvan International Airport health desk, told the Post. "No one has contacted us so far."

Since the new strain of coronavirus was first detected in the Chinese city of Wuhan, Singapore, Thailand, Japan and South Korea, among other Asian countries, have introduced mandatory screenings at airports, especially for arrivals from Wuhan and other major Chinese cities. Chinese health authorities are even conducting individual temperature checks on passengers.

The Chinese authorities on Tuesday confirmed that at least six people have died and over 290 had been infected with the deadly virus. Two people were infected through human-to-human transmission.

According to the BBC, the World Health Organisation is calling a rare emergency meeting and is likely to declare an international public health emergency. In the past, the UN health agency had declared a similar international public health emergency over Swine flu and Ebola outbreaks.

>> Continued on page 4



Compete with yourself

Because, to be the best you have to be better than who you were yesterday

In today's fast-paced world, everything becomes obsolete in no time-be it technology, fashion, social media trends or skills. The only way to keep up is by constantly updating and equipping yourself with the latest innovations and skills-sets. The rigorous and updated curriculum at Presidential Business School challenges you to bring the best in you and stay competent with the changing dynamics of the industry.

Admission Open for Spring 2020

MBA

• Finance • Marketing • Entrepreneurship
• Organizational Mgmt. • Finance & Economics

BBA

• Finance • Marketing
• Entrepreneurship

Thapagaun, New Baneshwor, Kathmandu
Tel: 01-5244306, 01-5245006
E-mail: info@presidential.edu.np
Web: www.presidential.edu.np



Presidential
BUSINESS SCHOOL
...a truly American Business School

MBA | BBA
REGIONALLY ACCREDITED BUSINESS DEGREE

MEDLEY

Inside the Post

National

Around 5,000 hectares of agricultural land in Rajapur, Bardiya, is parched this winter. The Karnali River Management Project could not supply water to the area because of a sharp decline in the Geruwa river's water flow.

Opinion

The non-regenerative energy resources possessed by our planet is shrinking every day. The global energy consumption in 1960 was 3.4 Gtoe (Gigatonne of Oil Equivalent), whereas, in 2018, it increased to 13.82 Gtoe, a four-fold increase.

Life & Style

Many dog owners feel that because dogs have a coat of fur, they can tolerate the cold better than humans. But that's a misconception. Here are a few winter care tips you can follow to protect your faithful four-legged family member to keep them cheerful as the mercury drops.

Money

The appointment process of the chief executive officer of the Nepal Tourism Board hangs in the balance with Baluwatar and the Tourism Ministry jockeying to get their man in the coveted position, according to sources privy to the matter.

Sports

Tribhuvan Army Club have opened a three-point lead atop the standings after contenders Machhindra were handed a shock 2-0 defeat by Himalayan Sherpa Club and the defending champions Manang Marshyangdi Club were held at a 2-2 draw by Three Star Club

News Quiz

1. The number of water birds has increased in which artificial lake?

a. Jagdishpur lake
b. Indra Sarovar
c. Ghodaghodi lake
d. Surma Sarovar
2. Which province has opposed the federal government's plan to construct short distance roads?

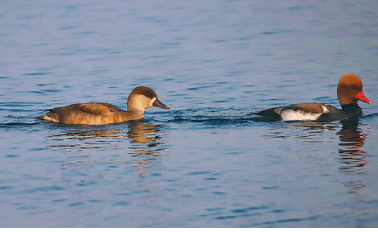
a. Province 5
b. Province 3
c. Province 1
d. Gandaki province
3. Who is the new president of Bharatiya Janata Party?

a. Amit Shah
4. According to Charity Oxfam, the world's billionaires have become richer than the global population by what percentage in the past decade?

a. 30 percent
b. 40 percent
c. 50 percent
d. 60 percent
5. How long did the construction of the Biratnagar Jogbani transit point take?

a. 1 years
b. 3 years
c. 5 years
d. 6 years
6. Which organisation offers hot-line psychosocial support for those having suicidal thoughts?

a. Transcultural Psychosocial Organization
b. Koshish National Mental Health
c. Chhahari Nepal
d. Center for Mental Health



POST FILE PHOTO



A young boy and a girl look at a cellphone at Pashupati, in Kathmandu.

POST PHOTO: ELITE JOSHI

On this day in history

Govt committed to promote journalism

TANSEN — “Journalism has become a begging bowl in Nepal. Journalism, as is ill-facedly encouraged, has given rise to a negative impact to its very existence. Now, with the advent of the CPN-UML government, the ill-practices that are meted out to journalism, will be completely discontinued. The government will seriously analyse newspapers and classify them into grades based on their performance. So much so that, I will disapprove gradings to those newspapers which do not mandatorily abide by the spirit of facts and figures to be maintained in newspapers”.

The aforementioned words were categorically stated by Minister of Information and Communication Pradip Nepal Saturday while addressing a function organised here by Nepal Journalist Association, Palpa branch.

Kathmandu Post
January 22, 1995

Answers to News Quiz: 1 (a), 2 (c), 3 (b), 4 (d), 5 (b), 6 (a)

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19)

A smile will turn out to be more valuable than a big wad of cash today. So, go ahead and use your charm to get what you want. It's a great way to make someone else happy while also making yourself happy. Everybody wins. You have skills and talents that are in high demand. Utilise what you have.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20)

**

Your daily routine won't seem so dull. The universe has a few wrenches to throw into the works, and you'll enjoy every hiccup you encounter. Embrace the chaos. After all, it's stimulating your mind in a new way. If you let yourself become anxious, you'll be putting yourself through distress for no real reason.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21)

As a concept, love may be important to you right now, but you might be having some anti-romance feelings. It would be wise for you to avoid any cooing couples. They're likely to get on your very last nerve. But try not to get too angry. Get away from it all and treat yourself to some luxurious solitude.

CANCER (June 22-July 22)

**

You may be confused when someone close to you espouses two seemingly contradictory ideas. To you, it sounds as though this person is talking out of both sides of their mouth. But don't start poking holes in these notions just yet. It's not always up to you to organise your loved ones' thoughts. Let them do it themselves.

LEO (July 23-August 22)

Your opinions have extra weight right now, so vocalise them loudly and proudly if you really want to make some changes in your world. Get involved, and when someone says something that you don't agree with, speak up. You should not be surprised when others join you in battle. After all, you're right, aren't you?

VIRGO (August 23-September 22)

Getting your ideas across to a room full of people merely by explaining yourself with words is so uncreative. If you want a deep and meaningful exchange, you need to get creative and have the courage to act in an unusual or unexpected manner. You need to get their attention. Sometimes style is as important as substance.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22)

There is absolutely nothing wrong with being more intrigued by the way something looks than by its practicality. Having an eye for beauty is important, and it will help you create your own style. Choose things based on the way their appearance makes you feel. Develop your sense of beauty by consciously moving toward it.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21)

If you're trying to get someone's attention today, you should opt for an illogical approach. Instead of making yourself as noticeable as a neon sign, try to be more elusive. Don't be too easy to get hold of. Don't jump into a conversation with this person. You have better things to do. Make them work a bit.

SAGITTARIUS (November 22-December 21)

There is no denying that several people working together can be a far greater force than individuals working alone. History shows that major change can happen when people unite for a cause. You have to come to grips with that fact and admit that it's time to join forces if you really want to accomplish things.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19)

Today, a friend's invitation could help you learn more about a foreign culture that you've always been curious about. This is a wonderful day for you to go exploring and learn about as many different aspects of this unique culture as possible. Do some research about the place. You're curious. That's great. Keep it up.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18)

In the past, when you saw something you wanted to do, you didn't wait for an engraved invitation before getting involved. Why are you being so shy about embracing a new experience? Today, you must stop hiding away from this adventure. If you focus on failures you'll stop growing, and you'll never reach your full potential.

PISCES (February 19-March 20)

You are certainly not lacking options right now. Your primary task today will be to try to figure out how to choose which one to take advantage of first. The good news is that picking a path is not an exact science. It's an art. Just go with your gut and pick the road that promises you the most fulfilment.

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

1 Cookie quantity
6 Bakery purchase
10 Pigeon talk
14 Mix-up
15 Place of exile
16 Pronto
17 Paper quantities
18 Claw badly
19 Gather leaves
20 Huff and puff
21 Having a gentle voice (hyph.)
23 Tribal healer
25 AWOL school kid
26 Tease
27 Melodramas
29 Mars explorer
32 Table extender
33 Spot
37 — kwon do
38 Left the runway (2 wds.)
41 "The Raven" author
42 Joule fractions
44 Unexplained sightings
45 Over
47 Coffee and steamed milk
49 Yes vote
50 Uphold
53 Changes for the better

56 Formerly
59 Europe-Asia mountain range
61 Remove the peel
62 Small remnant
63 String-quartet member
64 False witness
65 Novelist — Ferber
66 Per — (yearly)
67 Plumbing bends
68 Guy
69 Must-haves

DOWN

1 Ice floe
2 Survey findings
3 Rubbish
4 Liken
5 Box-score fig.
6 Seafood garnish
7 Norwegian monarch
8 Lean against
9 Shakespeare's fat knight
10 Live it up
11 Honshu port
12 Of durable wood
13 Shelled out
21 Give in the middle
22 Snoop
24 Trading center

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

ROB
UNA
SIR
SORBET
INERT
AYLA
BANNED
OMITS
WALE
WASSAIL
INLET
SKIRT
PATSY

SKEET
HEDGE
EPSOM
PORTENT
SALAMI
BRIEF
IDEALS
HIJACK
RADON
AROUSE
ETHOS
ROANS
SOGGY

AMEBA
LURES
ALIAS
TENT
LAMI
TEAL
LANCE
IMSO
SNAIL
LAGGED
PRE
IRS
EAT

27 Black tea
28 Far East land
29 I-90
30 Paddle cousin
31 — out (relax)
32 Garret
34 Resort
35 Taro-root paste
36 Itch
39 Passe
40 Ms. Dunaway
43 Splinters
46 Real
48 Onassis nickname

49 A Little Woman
50 Pome fruit
51 Delicate
52 Untamed
53 Pond scum
54 Bagpipe sound
55 Cantina toast
57 Pakistan's language
58 Transmit
60 Makes a getaway
63 FedEx truck

SUDOKU

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

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

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

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No. SC3938 Distribution: www.kachifeatures.com

●●●●●●●●

●●●●●●●●

●●●●●●●●

●●●●●●●●



A blind person is assisted by his friend as they walk along a muddy road section in Thapathali, Kathmandu.

POST PHOTO: BEEJU MAHAJAN

Murder convict arrested after five years on the run

SHUVAM DHUNGANA
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

The Metropolitan Crime Division, Teku, on Monday arrested a murder convict from Gongabu, Kathmandu, who had been on the run for the last five years.

Acting on a tip-off, a special team from the division arrested Kamal BK 25, of Dhading, who had been found guilty by the court of killing Yurung Tamang on January 14, 2015.

“BK in 2015, had murdered Tamang by hitting him with a stone. He had been on the run since,” Superintendent of Police Mukesh Kumar Singh of the division told the Post. “The Patan High Court on 7 July 2015 had convicted BK with the murder and sentenced him to 10 years in prison.”

BK was sent to Kathmandu District Court on Tuesday for necessary action.

While there has been an increase in the arrests of fugitive criminals across the country, Nepal has also witnessed a steady rise in murder cases over the last five years.

As per data provided by the Nepal Police, 5,172 murder cases were filed in the fiscal year 2014/15, while that number rose to 5,367 in the fiscal year 2015/16. It rose further to 5,904 in the fiscal year 2016/17.

In the fiscal year 2017/18, the number of murder cases in the country reached 6,405. However, the number of murders saw a marginal decline to 6,233 in the fiscal year 2018/19.

Thirteen years on, Madhes movements, despite some momentum, remain incomplete

Institutionalisation of representation, inclusion and federalism continue to be contested, analysts say.

CHANDAN KUMAR MANDAL
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

When a small group of Madhesi activists from a little-known socio-intellectual organisation burned copies of the interim constitution on January 16, 2007, few could have imagined that their actions would set the entire country down a path of deep structural change.

The spark ignited by the Madhesi Janadhikar Forum and its leader Upendra Yadav would spread across the Madhes. On January 19 that year, 17-year-old Ramesh Mahato was killed during the protests in Lahan. This was the first Madhes movement and it

deal with the state while also demanding their rights. Second, they failed to generate inter-community dialogue and gain support from other groups.”

Despite the nation-wide influence of the movement, the returns were not as significant as expected, according to Chandrakishore.

In successive years, Madhes-based parties would rise to power and join several governments, securing lucrative ministries. Riding on the achievements of the Madhes movements, they made claims in the political arena, but were not committed to institutionalising those achievements, even for Madhesi communities. Their popularity slowly faded, and credibility was

say analysts.

“Most people who lost their lives during the Madhes movements came from lower sections of the society, but those enjoying powerful positions are from higher castes and classes,” said Chandrakishore, a journalist who has followed Madhes politics for decades. “Their rights and representation are not seen in the Madhes as well. Calling these groups Madhesi is not enough. Restructuring is required inside the Madhes too.”

Untouchability, dowry and discrimination continue in many districts of the Madhes and even Province 2, the only province that is led by two Madhes-based parties which have 16

achievement of the Madhes movement and needs to be protected at any cost.”

However, institutionalising all the achievements of the Madhes movements requires a larger strategy, said Yadav.

“We cannot always be guided by sentiment. We need a strategy to protect these achievements and regain what has been lost via constitutional amendments,” said Yadav. “This can either be done politically for which we need support from others as well, or through the streets, which is the last resort.”

The two parties that are still demanding constitutional amendments are the Rastriya Janata Party Nepal and Samajbadi Party. Both supported the KP Sharma Oli administration after reaching a two-point deal on constitutional amendments, but the Janata Party withdrew support in March last year after its lawmaker Resham Chaudhary was handed a life sentence by a district court for masterminding Tikapur violence in August 2015. Samajbadi Party, born out of a merger between Upendra Yadav’s Sanghiya Samajbadi Forum and Baburam Bhattarai’s Naya Shakti, quit the government only recently, in December.

The two Madhesi parties have long been talking about building a united force to put pressure for constitutional amendments, but there has been no substantial progress. Earlier, the Janata Party had made Samajbadi Party’s withdrawal from the government a precondition for merger. But in a recent turn of events, Oli’s Nepal Communist Party seems to have cultivated its leaders—first by forging an electoral alliance for the National Assembly and now dangling the bait of deputy speaker.

As far as the Samajbadi Party is concerned, its sudden exit from the government has left it without any future plans.

Analysts say Madhesi parties easily fall for power and position and tend to forget the agenda they were carrying when they were protesting on the streets.

Federalism might be a force for good but even it has been co-opted by local elites and has become a pathway for corruption, says Chandrakishore.

“All the Madhes-based parties’ aspire to become national political parties and have removed the ‘Madhes’ from their names,” he said. “This shows that they are not committed to the cause of the Madhes.”

The Madhes movements gave Madhes-based parties and their leaders the political capital to bargain with the state and other political forces, but personal interests and an ineffective leadership have not only caused the loss of credibility of Madhesi leaders among Madhesi society but have also sidelined them from the central stage of national politics.

“Madhes movements gave the Madhesi parties and their leaders authority and placed them at the forefront,” said Chandrakishore. “But there will be a drop in the coming decade and Madhesi forces will no longer be a decisive force in Nepali politics even though Madhesi issues remain alive.”



POST PHOTO: HEMANTA SHRESTHA

Federalism, one of the major demands of the Madhes movements, has been implemented but the demand for ‘One Madhes, One Province’ has now been reduced to the eight districts of Province 2.

was followed by the second in 2008 and the third in 2015, with each iteration demanding that which Madhesis have long desired—equitable representation for the politics, culture and language of the Madhes. Mahato was later declared a martyr—the first martyr of the Madhes movement—and since January 19 is observed as its anniversary.

“If we retrospect about the Madhes movement, it was waged for identity, representation of Madhesi people in the country’s state apparatus and for autonomy,” said Rajkishor Rajak, a political commentator. “The Madhes movement brought the issues of state restructuring, identity, representation and federalism to the fore of national politics.”

But 13 years on, the Madhes movement remains incomplete, with their agendas for equality, proportional representation, an inclusive state and federalism yet to be fully realised.

“With the Madhes movement, the Madhesi people won but Madhesi leaders lost,” said Chandrakishore, a Madhes-based journalist. “They failed on two fronts. One, Madhesi leaders lacked negotiation skills and could not

lost, even among their constituencies, say analysts.

“Leadership in Madhes politics turned out to be corrupt,” said Rajak. “Political leaders, who were once trained in various other political parties, turned out to be opportunists and traded the movement for their own political goals.”

For Tula Narayan Shah, a political analyst, it was the Constitution of 2015, promulgated when the Madhes was burning and Madhesi forces were not in a position to assert their claims, that diluted the achievements of the Madhes movements.

“But we cannot call the Madhes movements unsuccessful or say that it failed to achieve its major agendas,” said Shah. “The effects of the Madhes movements can be felt across all social and political levels. The movements challenged the established political order.”

But the socio-political agenda of the Madhes remained in the hands of a few upper-caste male leaders, with the issues of women, Dalits and Muslims marginalised once again. Benefits were milked by a handful of leaders, their family members and close aides,

seats each in the federal Parliament, continues to fall behind on development indicators.

“Madhesi communities fought together, but have not evolved as a democratic society. It still is a caste-based society,” said Rajak. “The traditional power structure remains alive in Madhes and that is reflected in its politics as well. The upper castes are leading the political ideology whereas other marginalised communities are merely following suit.”

Federalism, one of the major demands of the movement, has finally been implemented but the Madhes’ demand for ‘One-Madhes, One Province’ has now been reduced to the eight districts of Province 2. The provincial government, the only one not led by the ruling Nepal Communist Party, is often at odds with the federal government.

“Constitutionally, we are a federal democratic state, but if we look at the content, it still looks like we are guided by a centralised mentality,” said Gyanendra Yadav, minister for internal affairs and law for Province 2. “Those against federalism are actively trying to ruin federalism, which is the

Government prioritises compensatory plantation in areas with limited forest

Forest ministry says there is also a policy in place to maintain at least 10 percent forest cover in all local units.

CHANDAN KUMAR MANDAL
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

The government has prioritised plantation in areas with limited forest coverage while planting compensatory trees to offset the deforestation carried out for development projects.

As per the existing laws, developers are asked to plant trees for felling trees while building their projects. However, most of the time, such plantations are done haphazardly in areas where there is already forest coverage.

According to Sindhu Prasad Dhungana, spokesperson for the Ministry of Forest and Environment, such project developers will be asked to plant trees in areas with inadequate forest cover.

“Developers say that they have planted trees in forest areas, which is difficult for us to confirm,” said Dhungana. “In some cases, we have found them planting exotic trees, which could do more harm than good to forests.”

In a random inspection, a team from the Forest Ministry had found that a developer had planted Gum trees in a Sal tree (Shorea robusta) forest.

“Natural forest ecosystem should not be disturbed by planted forest,” said Dhungana. “Felling of trees means there should be a new forest area which has not been happening. Therefore, the developers would be asked to do plantation elsewhere.”

The country boasts a forest cover of 44.74 percent. However, according to the Forest Ministry, 137 local units—106 in Province 2—have zero forest coverage.

The government has come up with a policy to ensure and maintain a minimum of 10 percent forest cover in all local units to address the issue of unequal forest cover distribution.



POST PHOTO: KESHAV THAPA

A old man sits among tree logs that were chopped to make way for a road expansion project in Kathmandu. According to the new Forest Clearance Guidelines, 10 compensatory trees must be planted for every tree felled for development projects.

EDITORIAL

Fast gateways

The launch of the Biratnagar-Jogbani integrated check post is commendable.

Prime Minister KP Oli and his Indian counterpart Narendra Modi jointly inaugurated the Biratnagar-Jogbani integrated check post on Tuesday. The border crossing being the second busiest transit point for Nepal’s trade, it will surely benefit from his facility. That the Customs Department had already started to use this facility in its unfinished form, as far back as October 2018, to ease congestion shows how important the investment in integrated infrastructure is for trade to flourish.

The government should be commended for finally completing this important milestone. Still, much more remains to be done to accelerate commerce and to mitigate congestion at border points. For one, India has already approved the building of at least two more integrated check posts along the border with Nepal. More such border points, spread out geographically, makes economic sense, as they help expedite customs processing.

The integrated check posts are much more than a regular customs point at the border. Such integrated facilities have immigration, customs and border security offices, quarantine facilities, and currency exchange counters, among others, in one place, thereby eliminating the need to run around in bureaucratic circles to facilitate human and cargo movement. There is no need to rush off samples of exports or imports to urban centres for routine or suspect tests as they can be conducted right at the facility. Similarly, having customs, security and immigration offices in one place (and right at the border) is expected to smooth all kinds of movement both ways. The facilities are so helpful, over 60 per cent of all trade via Birgunj goes through the integrated check post there, as opposed to the traditional customs point that remains open.

In South Asia, the idea of integrated check posts first came from India, which began to construct them in 2012, starting with one with Pakistan. This isn’t surprising, as India is the largest trade partner for most countries in the region; such facilities are bound to provide easier access to Indian exports as much as it provides smaller countries easier access to Indian markets. Since 2012, India has constructed over six such posts on the border with four countries—Pakistan, Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal. The integrated check post on Nepal’s side at the Biratnagar-Jogbani transit point was constructed with a Rs2.8 billion grant from India.

Nepal can learn a lot from India’s push for integrated check posts. By investing in such facilities, the southern neighbour has guaranteed better links to connect their products from landlocked, inner states with markets in the four neighbouring countries. Nepal, being landlocked, can similarly benefit with better-integrated links all along its southern border. If more such posts are constructed across the southern belt, products developed and manufactured in faraway provinces need not be routed all the way to the eastern Tarai to link to markets in India.

But to take this forward to benefit Nepal, the country can also propose such integrated posts with China. The 2015 blockade showed how dangerous it was for Nepal to rely on one major market as well as one point of transit for all third-country trade. In the short term though, simply maximising the capacity of the two operational integrated check posts would go a long way in smoothening trade. The upgradation of road links, as well as the promotion of cargo rail, up to the integrated posts from both sides would further expedite customs processing.

We want to hear from you

We regularly publish Letters to the Editor on contemporary issues or direct responses to something the Post has recently published. Please send your letters to tkpoped@kmg.com.np with ‘Letter to the Editor’ in the subject line.

- Please include your address, phone number we can reach you at and your email address.
- How to make sure your letters are published? It’s simple—just follow these basic guidelines:
- Keep it short. Your letters will have a better chance of success if you keep it within 400 words. If you’re writing commentary, pitch an op-ed instead.
- Tell us what we got wrong, but back it up with resources.
- Avoid jargon, use clear words and sentences. Keep in mind you’re communicating with other readers who may not be aware of the subject.
- We welcome witty letters. But please don’t go overboard.
- Avoid abuse and diatribes.

Have something to say?

The Kathmandu Post invites you to submit well-researched, unapologetic opinion pieces. To make sure your articles get our attention, we ask that you keep the following things in mind when inquiring and submitting content to the Post:

All your opinion pieces should be pitched to the Opinion desk—not to the editor-in-chief. Email your piece or idea (accompanied with a high-resolution headshot) to tkpoped@kmg.com.np.

We will only respond to pitches that have original ideas. We suggest that you google your pitch before writing to us. If you’re submitting an article that either the Post or other publications have already covered in the past, tell us in a sentence or two why your story offers something new.

The Post receives dozens of pitches every day from aspiring writers, students, political commentators, entrepreneurs and diplomats. We are not able to respond to every single email, but if we like your idea, we will get back to you soon. Please DO NOT pitch us an idea if you’re already pitching it somewhere else.

We carefully review submissions to ensure that no plagiarism has occurred. If we find any articles that have been plagiarised, such practice will lead to blacklisting.

Finally, please tell us who you are in a sentence or two when you send us your story ideas. We want to know where you have published before or what your expertise is on the topic you’re interested in exploring.

Palanquin bearers of the Supremo

Between humane concerns and jingoism couched as nationalism, the latter always wins.

CK LAL

SOUTH SIDE



Supremo Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli recently gave a gentle rap on the knuckles of Nepali journalists. In an interaction with honchos of the business community, he claimed that Nepali editors lacked the heart and mind to praise good deeds of the government. The Nepali press dutifully reported his grievances.

The achievements of the government that he cited in his outbursts were mostly of a municipal nature. About his tall promises of the past—trans-Himalayan railways and introducing shipping through Nepal’s rivers to the Ganges—he lied that the work had already begun. The biggest achievement of this government is that it has managed to escape all criticism despite doing almost nothing positive for the past two years.

Even when critical of the government or the Nepal Communist Party, the Nepali media treats the Supremo with kid gloves. In the hue and cry over the award and extension of the land-lease to Yeti Holdings, journalists chose to downplay his possible role in the sordid affair.

The most recent example is that of the election of the Speaker. It was clear from the beginning that he was using Deputy Speaker Shiva Maya Tumbahangphe as a pawn on the chessboard to settle some scores with his alter ego Pushpa Kamal Dahal. Once bargains had been made and contested issues settled, the incumbent dutifully resigned at the instruction of a party to which she had ceased to belong by virtue of her non-partisan post.

The Supremo has got so used to being praised by the press that he gets irritated when some journalists decide to do what they are expected to do and begin to doubt his benefits rather than give him the benefit of the doubt as a matter of course. The English media in Nepal played down frustrations of the prime minister as a matter of routine. A few Nepali journalists, however, were mighty miffed. Even an editor friendly towards the regime came out with a scathing criticism terming Premier Sharma Oli’s politics as the road to Stalinism.

Wounded pride

The international image of non-parti-



POST PHOTO: PRAKASH CHANDRA TIMILSENA

sanship notwithstanding, the Nepali Service of the BBC has the same character as that of the local media. It barely hides its ethnonational sympathies behind the patina of the balance trap. It posted what it termed as the responses of some editors to the prime minister’s allegations. The fact that such baseless accusations were considered worthy of seeking reactions says more about the state of the Nepali media than somewhat predictable rejoinders.

The views expressed by illustrious editors were baffling to say the least. The opinion of the government-owned newspaper can be dismissed as inevitably defensive. Other editors lured into the debate for balance didn’t cover themselves with glory.

‘He took a stand against India during the blockade. At that time, there was no media that did not support him,’ claimed Yubraj Ghimire without realising the fallacy of his assumptions. Even when a country is at war, the primary duty of a journalist is to keep asking questions. Ethnonational proclivities of the veteran editor are too well-known in Madhes to need substantiation, but it’s precisely the ‘urge to support when needed’ that makes the government expect it at all times.

It’s been 13 years since I became the editor of Naya Patrika. To this day, I have not seen any prime minister thanking the media while leaving office,’ declared the youthful editor Krishnajwala Devkota. His memory had evidently played tricks on him during the interview. While exiting office in 2016 to evade being ousted with a no-confidence motion, he had profusely thanked the media.

Among all the politicians belonging to the Communist Party of Nepal (United Marxists-Leninists) after

1990, Sharma Oli emerged as the most colourful personality of the decade and managed to keep the press in good humour. When he realised that the media needed somebody from the communist ranks to denounce the Maoists, he presented himself as the harshest critic of the armed insurgency.

Once he lost the elections to the first-ever Constituent Assembly of the country in 2008, he began to oppose everything that the Purple Revolution had promised—republic, federalism, proportionate inclusion and positive discrimination—and managed to establish himself as the protector of the old order. Terrified at the prospect of Madhesis, Janjatis and Dalits asserting themselves, the permanent establishment of Nepal (PEON) made him its hero.

The rest is the story of the unstoppable emergence of Sharma Oli as the ethnonational chieftain of the constitutionally-created Khas-Arya category of the people of Nepal. Along with other losers of the first Constituent Assembly election, such as Sushil Koirala and Krishna Sitaula of the Nepali Congress, Sharma Oli succeeded in getting a majoritarian constitution in 2015 and established himself as the protector of the national interest.

Wobbly litter

The classic palanquin has a comfortable box carried on two bamboo poles by at least four bearers. Its smaller version often has a single pole and the tiny litter can sit two at most. Despite the claims of Hindutva fanatics, pushpak bimans (flowery aircraft) remained in myths and palanquins were the most ubiquitous mode of transport for brides, grooms and the local elite till the middle of the last century in the Ganga plains.

Nepal needs to invest in renewables

Nepal’s demographic dividend can be utilised to turn the country carbon neutral.

GIRISH CHANDRA POKHAREL



The non-regenerative energy resources possessed by our planet is shrinking every day. The global energy consumption in 1960 was 3.4 Gtoe (Gigatonne of Oil Equivalent), whereas, in 2018, energy consumption increased to 13.82 Gtoe, a four-fold increase. Indeed, there is a strong relationship between the people’s living standards and the amount as well as types of energy consumed but only one planet to provide the resources.

The greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to energy use continued to grow in 2018, despite the growing adoption of renewable, clean energy. Governments around the world are setting policies and targets to reduce emissions. Yet, the world is not on track to meet the targets set by the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement.

A sustainable energy system must have minimal or no adverse environmental or social impact, cause no natural resource depletion and be able to supply the demand for current and future generations. The United Nations has set many targets and indicators in the energy sector to achieve sustainable development goals (SDG) and protect air, water and land by 2030. The good news is that more than one-fourth of global electricity generation is coming from renewables already.

Our region is known as the ‘third pole’, and it holds about 15 percent of global snow and ice; this is a vast amount of energy resource. Rampant



SHUTTERSTOCK

use of non-renewable resources, infrastructure development, tourism, and urbanisation are putting pressure on the region’s resources and threatening the Himalayas. Also known as the ‘water tower’ of Asia, the Himalayan region has an estimated hydroelectricity generation potential of more than 500 GW. It can support the development of hydropower in the Himalayan region and along with being a supplemental source to other kinds of renewable sources such as wind and solar energy.

Carbon emitted by dirty fuels and the burning of biomass is recognised as a major concern in the climate-sensitive Himalayas due to which freshwater sources, especially ice caps and glaciers, are retreating. Temperature across the Himalayan region is projected to increase by about 1 to 2 degrees Celsius by 2050. Similarly, mountain temperatures across the

region are projected to increase by beyond 2 degrees Celsius on average. Mountains are already drying out because of the rapid melting of snow. Over 1.65 billion people live in the river basins of the Himalayas. More than 80 percent of the rural population in the Himalayan countries lack a modern energy source for cooking on the one hand; on the other, in specific locations, the use of fossil fuel is increasing. Around 85 percent of the total energy consumption is met by traditional biomass energy, and around 24 percent of households do not have access to electricity.

The Himalayan region remains energy-poor and vulnerable. The issues of energy security, climate change, and energy poverty combined posed a threat to countries in the region. To enhance Nepal’s energy security, access to an adequate amount of energy that is affordable,

non-polluting and sustainable, without unduly affecting the present low carbon status, is required. Massive investment for energy transformation and access to technology is equally important.

The generation of renewables sustainably creates more jobs, economic activities and social amenities. In 2018 about 11 million people around the globe were employed by the renewable energy sector: With investment in renewables, Nepal can contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation, focus on capacity building, transfer, and adopt knowledge and new technologies.

The major sources of renewable energy in Nepal are hydropower, solar, various forms of biomass, and wind. With an increase in renewable sources like biogas, solar, micro-hydro and wind, we can make significant strides towards mitigating environmental degradation and climate change. Solar energy is also a reliable means of energy in the context of Nepal as the country has 300 sunny days in a year, making it rich in solar power potential. Wind energy is also feasible in certain locations.

About 24 percent of people worldwide are already benefiting from small-scale renewable energy technologies. With increasing awareness, and investments in research and development in these areas, it is entirely feasible to massively reduce carbon emissions. Nepal can be made into a carbon-neutral country by 2050 as envisioned by the Nepal Planning Commission.

The country has about 10 million people between the ages of 14 and 40, and the median age is around 22.7 years. The country can achieve sustainable development goals only by utilising this huge young demographic in a green economy. Experts and researchers among youths in these fields should be prioritised and provided with the means to gain more knowledge about the necessary technological developments.

Pokharel is a research assistant at National Academy of Science and Technology.

Boeing seeks to borrow \$10 billion or more amid 737 MAX crisis

The company has estimated the costs of the 737 MAX grounding at more than \$9 billion to date.

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, JAN 21

Boeing Co is in talks with banks about borrowing \$10 billion or more amid rising costs for the US planemaker after two crashes involving its 737 MAX jetliner, a source told Reuters on Monday.

CNBC first reported the news on Monday, citing sources that Boeing has so far secured at least \$6 billion from banks and is talking to other lenders for more contributions.

A source confirmed the talks to Reuters, but it was still not clear how much Boeing would seek to raise and whether it would pursue the selling of new bonds. One key issue for Boeing is flexibility since it is not clear how long the 737 MAX will remain grounded.

Boeing declined to comment.

Reuters reported on Friday that the Federal Aviation Administration is now unlikely to approve the plane's return until March, but that could take until April or longer.

Boeing confirmed on Monday that it temporary halted production of the 737 MAX in Washington State in recent days. The company had said in December it would halt production at some point this month.

"MAX production has now been temporarily suspended inside the 737 factory. The Renton site remains open as our teams focus their work on several quality initiatives," Boeing said, referring to its facility in Renton, Washington.

Boeing does not get paid until it delivers the planes it manufactures.

The company has estimated the costs of the 737 MAX grounding at more than \$9 billion to date, and is expected to disclose significant additional costs during its fourth-quarter



Boeing 737 Max fuselages are seen parked outside the company's production facility in Renton, Washington, US.

earnings release on Jan. 29. Boeing faces rising costs from halting production of the plane this month, compensating airlines for lost flights and assisting its supply chain.

Analysts estimate that Boeing has been losing around \$1 billion a month because of the grounding. It reported an almost \$3 billion negative free cash

flow in the third quarter.

Boeing also reported its worst annual net orders in decades last week, along with its lowest numbers for plane deliveries in 11 years.

On Friday, Boeing said it was addressing a new 737 MAX software issue discovered in Iowa during a technical review of the proposed

update for the plane.

Last week, American Airlines Group Inc and Southwest Airlines Co both said they would extend cancellations of 737 MAX flights until early June. Also this month, the FAA and Boeing said they were reviewing a wiring issue that could potentially cause a short circuit on the 737 MAX.

Bank of Japan lifts growth outlook, keeps easy money policy

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
TOKYO, JAN 21

The Bank of Japan on Tuesday slightly upgraded its growth forecast for the world's third-biggest economy but kept its super easy monetary policy unchanged.

The central bank said after a two-day policy gathering that it now expects a 0.9-percent expansion in the year to March 2021, an upgrade from a previous projection of 0.7 percent.

The brighter assessment came after a stimulus package launched by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe last year to prop up the economy and dampen the effects of an October hike in consumption tax from eight to 10 percent.

The decision also followed a fresh trade deal clinched between the US and China, easing a concern that had long worried global investors.

"It is true that the downside risk surrounding the global economy is slightly lower due to... the US-China trade deal and the problem of Britain leaving the EU," BoJ governor Haruhiko Kuroda told reporters.

"Investors' risk sentiment has improved and stocks and long-term interest rates have risen in many countries," he said.

World markets have returned to relative calm after the turmoil caused by the killing of top Iranian general Qasem Soleimani by the US. The strike resulted in limited retaliation and the region has so far avoided an escalation in violence.

"Japan's economy has been on a moderate expanding trend... although exports, production and business sentiment have shown some weakness, mainly affected by the slowdown in the global economy and natural

disasters," the BoJ said.

Nevertheless, the tax hike and natural disasters were weighing on domestic demand, it added.

But demand "is likely to follow an uptrend... mainly against the background of highly accommodative financial conditions and active government spending", it said.

The decision also followed a fresh trade deal clinched between the US and China.

The central bank also reiterated its pledge to continue its easy monetary programme in a drive to achieve two-percent inflation for "as long as it is necessary".

However, it dropped its inflation forecast to 1.0 percent from an earlier estimate of 1.1 percent.

The bank "will not hesitate to take additional easing measures" if necessary, it added.

Kuroda also said the bank will continue monitoring global risks.

"There are still conflicts between the US and China and I think the path towards the second-stage agreement is unclear. And geopolitical risk surrounding the Middle East is rising," he said.

"I think the downside risk is still large."

On the outbreak of a new SARS-like virus in China, Kuroda said it is "too early to predict" any possible economic impact.

Uber sells Indian Eats business to Zomato in move to cut losses

REUTERS
BENGALURU, JAN 21

Uber has sold its loss-making online food-ordering business in India to local rival Zomato in exchange for a 9.99 percent stake in the startup backed by China's Ant Financial.

Since launching in India in 2017, Uber Eats has struggled to gain market share and is a distant third to Tencent Holdings backed Swiggy and Zomato. All three have spent heavily on deals and discounts to attract customers in a highly competitive market.

Uber Eats' India operations contributed just 3 percent of gross bookings globally.

The deal will allow San Francisco-based Uber to cut its losses and yet keep a stake in a market expected to be worth \$15 billion by 2023.

"For Uber, the deal means redefining competence," independent brand consultant Harish Bijoor said. "It should stick to what its competence is, in terms of being an aggregator of cabs."

Uber Eats' India operations contributed just 3 percent of gross bookings for the business globally, while accounting for a quarter of its adjusted operating losses, Uber said. It did not say how much those losses were or disclose financial details of the deal.

Zomato, valued at around \$3 billion after raising money from Ant this month, reported a loss of \$294 million for the year ended March 2019. Swiggy made a loss of \$330 million.

Uber, which has promised to be profitable at an operational level by the end of 2021, has been trying to sell the India Eats business for a year, three sources familiar with the talks told Reuters.

It earlier held talks with Swiggy for a similar deal but those fell through due to valuation and regulatory issues, two of them said.

Uber and Swiggy did not respond to requests for comment.

Zomato said in a blogpost buying the Eats operations would make it "the undisputed market leaders in the food delivery category in India".

Uber Eats in India will discontinue operations and direct restaurants, delivery partners and users to the Zomato platform from Tuesday.

Zomato's orders per month should go up by 10 million from the 38 million-40 million it was clocking before the deal, a source familiar with the deal said.



Workers fill sacks with wheat flour at a mill in Karachi on Tuesday. Local media reports said that Pakistan's Economic Coordination Committee (PECC) approved a proposal to import 300,000 tons of wheat to overcome a nationwide shortage that had dramatically raised prices of the food staple.

China virus sends shiver through markets as risks mount

REUTERS
LONDON, JAN 21

Global shares took a beating on Tuesday, wiping out all gains made at the start of the week as mounting concerns about a new strain of coronavirus in China sent a ripple of risk aversion through markets.

Authorities in China confirmed that a new virus could be spread through human contact, reporting 15 medical staff had been infected and a fourth person had died.

Safe-haven bonds and the yen gained as investors were reminded of the economic damage done by the SARS virus in 2002-2003, particularly given the threat of contagion as hundreds of millions travel for the Lunar New Year holidays.

"I'm not an expert in the pandemics, but you can look at previous examples like the SARS outbreak which also originated from Asia," said Cristian Maggio, Head of Emerging Markets Strategy at TD Securities in London.

Noting that China had initially downplayed the full extent of the SARS outbreak, he said "I think the market might be fearing something similar."

The mood swing saw MSCI's All-Country World Index slip 0.4 percent,

wiping out gains made at the start of the week on Monday. Asian markets were hit particularly hard.

Hong Kong, which suffered badly during the SARS outbreak, saw its index fall 2.8 percent.

Japan's Nikkei lost 0.9 percent and Shanghai blue chips 1.7 percent, with airlines under pressure. The caution spread to E-Mini futures for the S&P 500 which eased 0.5 percent.

The chill in Asia carried over to European markets, where shares of luxury goods makers—which have large exposure to China—were among the biggest fallers.

Germany's 10-year government bond yield touched one-week lows.

Investors had already been guarded after the International Monetary Fund trimmed its global growth forecasts, mostly due to a surprisingly sharp slowdown in India and other emerging markets.

There had been some relief as US President Donald Trump and French President Emmanuel Macron seemed to have struck a truce over a proposed digital tax.

The two agreed to hold off on a potential tariffs war until the end of the year, a French diplomatic source said.

Trump is due to deliver a speech at the World Economic Forum in Davos



A board shows stock information at a brokerage office in Beijing, China.

later on Tuesday, and trade and tariffs could be on the agenda.

In a tweet late on Monday, Trump said he would be bringing "additional Hundreds of Billions of Dollars back

to the United States of America! We are now NUMBER ONE in the Universe, by FAR!!!"

The Bank of Japan cited lessened trade risks when nudging up forecasts

for economic growth after holding a policy meeting on Tuesday.

As widely expected, the BOJ maintained its short-term interest rate target at -0.1 percent and a pledge to guide 10-year government bond yields around 0 percent, by a 7-2 vote.

Japan's yen picked up a bid on the safe-haven move and the dollar dipped to 109.93 from an early 110.17. It also gained on the euro, leaving the single currency lower to the dollar at \$1.1090.

Against a basket of currencies, the dollar was steady at 97.638, just off a four-week high of 97.729.

The Australian dollar took a knock from the flu worries since it attracts large numbers of Chinese tourists, who tend to be big spenders over the Lunar New Year holidays.

Australia said it would step up screening of some flights from Wuhan.

The outbreak was particularly badly timed as the tourism industry has been mauled already by bushfires sweeping the country.

Spot gold hit a 2-week high of \$1,568.35 per ounce, but traded 0.2 percent lower in early deals in London.

Oil prices slid nearly 1 percent, having earlier gained on the risk of supply disruption in Libya.

Brent crude futures fell 1 percent to \$64.60 a barrel, while US crude fell 0.92 percent to \$58.09 a barrel.

FOREX	
US Dollar	114.23
Euro	126.89
Pound Sterling	149.15
Japanese Yen	10.38
Chinese Yuan	16.55
Qatari Riyal	31.37
Australian Dollar	78.40
Malaysian Ringit	28.05
Saudi Arab Riyal	30.45

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

Shares	
Nepse	1,320.47 <small>pts</small> 0.26%
HIGHEST LOSERS	
GLJCL	9.82%
GRIME	9.74%
PPCL	9.52%
SPARS	5.93%
SLBS	5.90%
KPLC	5.49%
MODERATE LOSERS	
BFC	4.90%
LGIL	4.76%
IGI	4.33%
PLC	4.36%
NHDL	4%
NMFS	3.98%
MODERATE GAINERS	
GIMESI	-3.76%
SAPDL	-3.82%
NIBLPF	-3.86%
GILB	-4.30%
UMHL	-4.50%
UNHPL	-4.91%
HIGHEST GAINERS	
DHPL	-5.08%
UPCL	-5.12%
SPDL	-5.66%
MSLB	-5.94%
IGFC	-6.07%
NIIGF	-6.48%

BULLION		PRICE PER TOLA
 Fine Gold		Rs 75,300
 Silver		Rs 895

SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

GASOLINE WATCH



SERVO 4T
ENGINE OILS
100% PERFORMANCE. EVERYTIME.



Petrol (Per Litre)
Rs 111.00/-

Diesel (Per Litre)
Rs 100.00/-

Kerosene (Per Litre)
Rs 100.00/-

LPG (Per cylinder)
Rs 1350/-

Source: Nepal Oil Corporation

Airbus to build second production line in France for A321 jets

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS, JAN 21

European aircraft maker Airbus said on Tuesday it will build a new production line for its hugely popular A321 single-aisle jet in France, adding to the output of the original plant in Germany.

From 2022, the jets will be built at Airbus's headquarters in Toulouse, southern France, as well as in Hamburg, Germany.

"We are enjoying an unprecedented high demand for our winning A320neo family," in particular the A321 long-range and extra-long-range versions, Airbus chief operating officer Michael Schoellhorn said in a statement.

Production in Toulouse will take place at facilities previously used to build the A380 superjumbo, which Airbus decided to scrap last year after airlines found it too expensive to operate.

The company plans to increase production of planes in the A320 series to 63 a month by 2021 to fulfil back orders of more than 6,000 jets in December.

It had already announced earlier this month plans to increase production of A320 jets at its US factory in Alabama.

The A320 series, introduced in 1987, has garnered more orders than any plane in commercial aviation history, industry experts say, as demand for mid-range flights soars.

The planes are also the main competitors to Boeing's 737 line, which has suffered from the uncertain future for the 737 MAX.

The MAX was grounded by regulators last March after two crashes that killed a total of 346 people—one involving Indonesia's Lion Air and the other an Ethiopian Airlines jet.



An Airbus A321 aircraft of Bamboo Airways taxis at Noi Bai airport in Hanoi, Vietnam.

Appointment process for top job at Tourism Board hangs in the balance

At least half a dozen people in the know told the Post that the appointment had become uncertain.

SANGAM PRASAIN
KATHMANDU, JAN 21

The appointment process of the chief executive officer of the Nepal Tourism Board hangs in the balance with Baluwater and the Tourism Ministry jockeying to get their man in the coveted position, according to sources privy to the matter.

The top spot at the country's tourism promotional body has remained vacant for a month even as the industry is in the midst of the Visit Nepal campaign.

At least half a dozen people in the know told the Post that the appointment had become uncertain following complaints in Baluwater that the selection sub-committee had given higher marks to Dhananjay Regmi, who is not a ruling party 'cadre'.

As shown on a copy of the mark sheet of the top five candidates obtained by the Post, Regmi has scored 34 points, Deepak Bastakoti 26.3, Hikmat Singh Ayer 26.1, Deepak Raj Joshi 25.2 and Kashi Raj Bhandari 24 points.

The marks were given by three members of the CEO selection sub-committee and two members—former tourism secretary Krishna Prasad Devkota and tourism entrepreneur Sagar Pandey—who were appointed as invitee experts. Each member was allowed to award a maximum score of 10 points.

"We have selected the best candidate and sent his name to the board to be appointed to the post," said a board member who asked not to be named as the issue had been politicised. "If the tourism sector suffers, the private sector will suffer. So we have to be wise to



The chief executive officer of the Tourism Board, which has an annual budget of more than Rs 1 billion, is one of the most lucrative posts in the country.

The top spot at the country's tourism promotional body has remained vacant for a month.

select the proper man."

A three-member CEO selection sub-committee led by Biplab Paudel, executive director of Pokhara's Hotel Barahi, who also sits on the board of directors of the Nepal Tourism Board representing the private sector, had been entrusted with the task of recommending the new CEO after the incumbent Joshi's four-year term

ended on December 24.

"The score given to Regmi is a clear indication that the board will not be able to select the second candidate," he said. "And we don't think the board will change our decision."

As the process of appointing the CEO was halted abruptly on Sunday, Krishna Bahadur Mahara, proprietor of the Hotel Devotee in Dhangadhi who also sits on the board and was a member of the CEO selection sub-committee, has accused Tourism Secretary Kedar Bahadur Adhikari of trampling on their intention to choose a 'good man' to lead the country's tourism promotional body.

Mahara posted on his Facebook page that the board meeting had been halted frequently without discussion. "It's my direct challenge that your



Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli (centre) remotely inaugurates the Integrated Check Post located in Biratnagar from the Prime Minister's Office in Kathmandu, on Tuesday.

Facebook targets UK growth with 1,000 hires this year

REUTERS
LONDON, JAN 21

Facebook will hire 1,000 people in London this year in roles such as product development and safety as it continues to grow its biggest engineering centre outside the United States after Britain leaves the European Union.

Over half of the new jobs will be in technology, including software engineering and data science, Facebook's vice president for Europe, the Middle East and Africa Nicola Mendelsohn said in an interview.

Other roles will be in the "community integrity" team, which makes products to detect and remove harmful content from platforms like Facebook, Messenger, Instagram and WhatsApp.

Mendelsohn said London's appeal was not only in its technology ecosystem but also the strength of its creative industries.

She said that while Facebook's enthusiasm for London was undimmed, like other tech companies it wanted certainty about Brexit.

"The Johnson government has been very clear about what that looks like, and so we will continue to invest here in London," she said.

UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson said Facebook's growth was "great news". "We are committed to making

the UK the safest place in the world to be online, alongside being one of the best places for technology companies to be based," he said.

Facebook's chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg will announce the new jobs, which will take its total UK employees to more than 4,000, on Tuesday before travelling to the World Economic Forum in Davos with Mendelsohn, where they will meet global leaders, regulators and other business chiefs.

The company is trying to rebuild trust in its platforms after the Cambridge Analytica scandal in 2018, in which a British political consulting

firm collected data from Facebook for voter profiling and targeting.

Nick Clegg, Facebook's public affairs chief and a former British politician, said on Monday that the company will do a better job of preventing bad actors from manipulating this year's US presidential election than it did four years ago.

Mendelsohn said trust would take time to rebuild.

"We also understand that this is an ongoing important conversation—we want to be part of that conversation," she said. "We want to be working with policymakers in this area to get to thoughtful policy."



Employees have lunch at the canteen at Facebook's new headquarters at Rathbone Place in central London.

[Adhikari] intention will not be fulfilled."

Adhikari did not respond to the Post's repeated calls. A government source said that the issue had become complicated as the four parties—tourism secretary, tourism minister, the board members representing the private sector and Baluwater—were facing four different directions.

"This shows that the appointment process has landed in a state of uncertainty."

On Sunday, a meeting of the board of directors of the Nepal Tourism Board was abruptly cancelled due to 'power play'. The meeting had been called to appoint the chief of the country's tourism promotional body.

The chief executive officer of the tourism board, which has an annual budget of more than Rs1 billion, is one of the most lucrative posts in the country due to the nature of its operations to promote Nepal in overseas markets.

The board meeting was again postponed on Monday.

In the first week of December, the Nepal Tourism Board had extended Joshi's term by three months in an attempt to prevent a setback for tourism on the eve of the much-hyped Visit Nepal 2020 campaign. Joshi, however, did not accept the offer and applied in a bid to serve a second full term.

The vacancy announcement was published by the selection sub-committee on December 4.

The Nepal Tourism Board's 11-member board consists of five representatives each from the the government and the private sector, besides the CEO.

France, US agree to extend digital tax row talks

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
PARIS, JAN 21

Presidents Emmanuel Macron and Donald Trump have agreed to extend negotiations on a dispute over a French tax on digital giants to the end of the year, postponing Washington's threat of sanctions against Paris. French officials said on Tuesday.

French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire, speaking before a Brussels meeting with EU counterparts, said: "Macron and Trump had a very constructive discussion... and they agreed to avoid all escalation between the US and France on this digital tax issue."

A French diplomatic source said the French and US leaders, who spoke by telephone on Sunday, agreed to give negotiations a chance to "find a solution in an international framework" and avoid "a trade war that will benefit no one".

Macron tweeted Monday that he had had a "great discussion" with Trump on the issue. "We will work together on a good agreement to avoid tariff escalation," he said.

"Excellent!" replied Trump on Twitter.

The White House said the two men spoke and "agreed it is important to complete successful negotiations on the digital services tax, and they also discussed other bilateral issues."

The dispute began last year when Paris approved a levy on up to three percent of revenues earned by technology companies in France, as international efforts dragged on to find a new model for taxing revenues earned via online sales and advertising.

Tech companies often pay little tax in countries in which they are not physically present.

Washington said the tax singled out US companies such as Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Netflix. It threatened retaliatory duties of up to 100 percent of the value of French imports of such emblematic goods as Champagne and Camembert cheese.

The European Union had said it would back France if such tariffs were levied, raising the prospect of a transatlantic trade war.

On January 7, Paris and Washington had given themselves 15 days to reach a deal to avert the US threat of duties on up to \$2.4 billion of French goods.

Le Maire, who has been conducting intensive negotiations for the last several weeks, had been scheduled to hold crunch talks on the issue with US counterpart Steven Mnuchin at the World Economic Forum in Davos on Wednesday. According to another French source, the possibility of France suspending collection of the tax "will be on the negotiating table" when the two meet. After confirming the reprieve, Le Maire told journalists in Brussels that he spoke with Mnuchin by telephone on Sunday and "our technical teams are in contact day and night to work on a solution".

He stressed that "this remains a difficult negotiation.... A certain number of details need to be worked out, but I believe we're going in the right direction." Le Maire declined, however, to say whether France would suspend its digital tax. "I am not going to get into the details of the negotiation. I prefer that that remains between Mnuchin and myself," he said.

The French presidency said on Monday that "France is pursuing its objective of fair taxation on digital companies and finding a compromise within the framework of the OECD."

Subaru sets mid-2030s target to sell only electric vehicles

REUTERS
TOKYO, JAN 21

Japan's Subaru Corp set a target on Monday to sell only electric vehicles worldwide by the first half of the 2030s, in a move toward its long-term goal of a carbon-free society.

The news comes as Subaru has strengthened capital ties with Toyota Motor Corp, in a trend of global automakers joining forces to slash development and manufacturing costs of new technology.

To supplement the mild hybrid and plug-in hybrid cars already in its line-up, Subaru plans to develop a so-called "strong hybrid" vehicle using Toyota technology and intended to debut later in the decade.

It is also developing an all-battery electric car with Toyota for release around the same time. "Although we're using Toyota technology, we want to make hybrids that are distinctly Subaru," Chief Technology Officer Tetsuo Onuki told a briefing.

"It's not only about reducing CO2 emissions. We need to further improve vehicle safety and the performance of our all-wheel drive."

Subaru said that by 2030 at least 40 percent of its cars sold worldwide will comprise battery electric vehicles or hybrids.

The Japanese automaker, which produces the Outback and Forester



The logo of Subaru Corp is pictured at the 45th Tokyo Motor Show in Tokyo.

SUVs, is known for its horizontally placed boxer engines, along with its EyeSight autonomous driver assist and all-wheel-drive technologies.

Car manufacturers worldwide are scrambling to chase scale, manage costs and boost development of the self-driving cars, electric vehicles and new mobility services that are upending the industry.

"Subaru's strong commitment and dedication toward car-manufacturing that we have cultivated throughout our history remain unchanged," President Tomomi Nakamura added.

WHEELS



PHOTO: AUTOLIFE

Hyundai Venue is a crossover with value

The car holds its line with composure and maintains it with relative ease.

Its solid presence,
refreshing driving
experience and
connectivity make
it a good ride.

Hyundai is an automotive manufacturer that has left a huge impact in the Nepali market. They sell very well and hold a good resale value. Even though Hyundai has been a major player in the market they have had a gap in their lineup. The gap was between the i20 Active, which is a crossover hatchback, and the Creta, which is a compact SUV. The missing piece in the puzzle was filled when Hyundai launched the Venue, which is a sub 4 meter crossover. But the question remains. How good is the Venue?

Exterior

On the design front, the Hyundai Venue comes with a split headlight design where the turn indicators are above the projector headlamps and LED daytime running lamps. The cube-shaped headlight houses the projector headlamps which provide a distinct look of the front end.

The front also gets the signature

Hyundai cascade grille with a chrome finish, including the door handles. The Venue sports a boxy design to give it a proper SUV feel. The 16-inch diamond-cut alloy wheels add to the car's overall appearance, giving it an appealing side profile. At the rear, Venue continues its cube design with funky tail lights. The Venue also has silver highlights, both at the front and rear bumper which makes it look like a skid plate.

Interior

The interior is minimum, stylish and comfortable. The top end variant gets a steering wheel wrapped in leather and the seats get leather upholstery too. Techwise, the Venue offers an 8-inch touchscreen infotainment system with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto. A new feature in the car that is quite useful is that you can connect two mobile devices through Bluetooth simultaneously.

The Venue also gets automatic climate control, electric sunroof, wire-

less phone charging, cooled glovebox and cruise control. Talking about the space inside the Venue, the car is pretty decent for a sub 4 meter vehicle, and the boxy design ensures good headspace and decent legroom in the rear seats.

Performance and comfort

The Venue has been equipped with a Kappa 1.0 Turbo GDi petrol engine, 1.2 Petrol engine and 1.4 Diesel engine. We took the new Kappa 1.0 Turbo GDi petrol engine for a spin and boy, it did not disappoint us.

As mentioned earlier the venue has a comfortable seating for the driver and its passengers. The suspension is also spot on. It will give you plenty of cushioning for around-town drives but take it to some twisties and it will behave like a sporty handling vehicle.

The Venue holds its line with composure and maintains it with relative ease. It has ABS (Anti-lock Braking System) with EBD (Electronic Brake force Distribution), Electronic

Stability Control and Vehicle Stability Management to make sure that you don't lose control at all times.

It has a host of other standard safety features throughout the range such as dual front airbags, child safety, seatbelt alerts, rear parking sensors, speed sensing auto door lock and crash sensing auto door unlock. Other safety features include Hill Assist Control, Electronic Stability Control, Vehicle Stability Management, auto headlamps with escort function cornering lamps, rear camera with rear parking sensors and auto power windows.

Verdict

Hyundai launched the Venue as its first fully connected crossover and its solid presence, refreshing driving experience and seamless connectivity make it a good ride.

This review was co-published with AutoLife, a magazine on all things automobile.

