



THE KATHMANDU POST

WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOUR

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30.2° C -0.5° C
Janakpur Jumla

TODAY

NATIONAL

Even though the temporary police contracts are short as the assignment is only until the federal and provincial election results are out, the recruitments are seen as a precursor to future jobs abroad. **Pg 2**

Some political leaders admitted they had to promise voting rights for Nepalis living abroad as millions of their relatives back home are voting in the November 20 federal and provincial elections. **Pg 4**

MONEY

Many Nepali migrant workers have been facing contract breaches, wage theft and discrimination in Qatar, including forced labour in unsafe working conditions, according to human rights watchdogs. **Pg 5**

Twitter's new owner on Thursday raised the possibility of the platform going bankrupt, capping a chaotic day that included a warning from a US privacy regulator and the exit of the company's trust and safety leader. **Pg 5**



WORLD

The risk of death, hospitalisation and serious health issues from Covid-19 jumps significantly with reinfection compared with a first bout with the virus, regardless of vaccination status, a new study suggests. **Pg 6**

Southeast Asian leaders did little to ramp up pressure on Myanmar to comply with their plan for peace, agreeing on Friday to a course of action that largely kicks the matter down the road. **Pg 6**

SPORTS

Cricket Association of Nepal has named Rohit Paudel as the captain of the Nepal national cricket team. Paudel will be the second youngest ODI captain after Rashid Khan of Afghanistan. **Pg 7**



CULTURE

An emerging visual artist, Amrit Karki, talks about exploring rather unconventional mediums for his art in Nepal's already niche art market. 'Breathing Through the Stillness' is his fifth performance art. **Pg 8**

No time for elections in upper Mustang

With most villages empty as the local population has migrated to warmer climes, authorities should have rethought poll timing, villagers say.

LAL PRASAD SHARMA
POKHARA, NOV 11

Tsering Gurung left his village in upper Mustang for Syangja a month ago. He makes this journey every year when the winter sets in. The next four months are crucial for Tsering who sells winter clothes on the streets of Syangja. The 32-year-old is currently in a fix, he says, and has been debating with himself for the past few days whether to return to his village to cast his vote in the upcoming general and provincial elections.

"This is the only time I can expect to do maximum business selling winter clothes. I will lose the only opportunity to make money this year if I leave now," said Tsering, a resident of Samjung village in Lomanthang Rural Municipality Ward No 2. "I want to cast my vote but I will lose time if I go home now. I get customers only till February. No one will buy winter clothes after that."

Like Tsering, his brother, sister and sister-in-law have left for Pokhara to earn some money by selling knick-knacks in the city.

"We have five registered voters in the family. My mother and my wife are at home but they may not go to cast their votes as it's getting colder by the day in the village," said Tsering.

Most residents of high-altitude villages in the Gandaki province leave home around October every year to avoid the biting cold in the mountains and to simultaneously earn some money through small business ventures such as selling clothes, herbs from the mountains, and household and daily essential items in the lower-altitude cities until the weather turns and they can return home.

Yangzin Gurung of Chosher village in Ward No 1 of the rural municipality is currently in Chitwan in Bagmati province selling daily household goods and mountain herbs. She left for Chitwan on October 18. The 36-year-



POST PHOTO

It is customary for people in upper reaches of the mountain district to descend to lower elevations when winter sets in.

old says she will not be going home to cast her vote as she feels that the political parties and leaders are out-of-touch with reality.

"Life in the mountains is hard. We have to hustle to keep our family warm and fed. This is not the first time an election is being held. Nothing has changed for us," said Yangzin. "However, if we are important to the

political leaders and if our votes can change the country's political landscape, they should have considered the mountain population before deciding to hold an 'important' election in winter, when most of us migrate to warmer places."

Yangzin is in a rush to make some money before she leaves for her village in February. "If I don't hustle for

the next three to four months here in Chitwan, I will not have any money to take home and we will have to struggle to make ends meet for the rest of the year," she said. "The authorities should have held the elections in March when the locals of the mountainous villages start returning."

With the winter setting in, temperature has been dipping steadily in the

mountain villages like Ghami, Charang, Lomanthang, Chosher, Chonhup and Muktinath in upper Mustang. The villages have descended to warmer climes to cities in Tarai, Kathmandu, Pokhara and some to India. More than 500 Mustang locals have gone to India for employment just like in the previous winter seasons, according to a local teacher Taming Gurung.

There are only one or two people in a house currently, says Tashi Narbu Gurung, chairman of Lomanthang Rural Municipality. "About 75 percent of the local population is not in the villages. Only the elderly, children and shepherds have stayed back," said Tashi. "It is customary for people to leave the villages once the winter sets in. They go elsewhere looking for opportunities to earn some money. The harsh winter days do not allow for any businesses or agricultural activities in the mountainous region."

Tashi says for maximum voter participation the authorities should have deliberated on the election's timing. "Like most people here, I also think the schedule of the election has robbed the local population of their voting rights. The locals leave the villages for four months every year and the villages become empty. This is the time for the locals to earn money by doing itinerant trade, menial labour, etc, in other parts of the country. The government should have thought this through before deciding the election date," said Tashi.

There are five rural municipalities in upper Mustang with 1,533 voters in Lo-Ghekar Damodarkunda Rural Municipality, 2,285 in Varagung Mukti Chhetra Rural Municipality, 2,817 in Thasang Rural Municipality, 2,314 in Gharapjhong Rural Municipality and 2008 voters in Lomanthang Rural Municipality, according to Samir Thapa, information officer of Mustang Election Office.

>> Continued on page 2

Internal poll projections offer hints of top three, dark horses

Up to 20 of its leaders caught up in close fights, projection by the ruling parties gives Nepali Congress 60 FPTP seats.

ANIL GIRI
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

With the date for the federal and provincial elections drawing closer, political parties are busy calculating the possible outcome of the polls.

As per the election code of conduct, exit polls or pre-election projections cannot be carried out by any organisation or media under any pretext.

Sources said besides the political parties' internal assessments, the security agencies also regularly update themselves on elections. As matters stand, several election projections and related data are currently circulating in the power corridors of Kathmandu.

CPN-UML, the largest party in the outgoing parliament, claims it will win 150 seats in the upcoming elections, after combining the seats of first-past-the-post (FPTP) and proportional representation (PR) categories.

>> Continued on page 2

Nepal win women's SAFF U-15

This is the first international silverware clinched by Nepali women's football team at any level—senior or age group.

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Nepal clinched the SAFF U-15 Women's Championship on Friday, remaining unbeaten in the tournament after a 1-1 draw with hosts Bangladesh in their last group match at the BSSS Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

Nepal's 1-0 win over Bangladesh in their first leg match on November 3 gave them the edge over hosts in the double-round robin format tournament that also featured Bhutan. Nepal had defeated Bhutan 7-0 and 1-0 in group rounds.

Sushila KC gave an early 14th minute lead to Nepal in their last group match before the hosts levelled scores nine minutes into the second half. Goalkeeper Sujata Tamang rescued Nepal in the 89th after she denied a penalty taken by Joynob Bibi Rita. Tamang was declared the best goalkeeper of the tournament.

The outcome over Bangladesh meant Nepal finished on top of the table with 10 points—winning three and drawing one match—while Bangladesh with two wins and a draw secured second position on seven



PHOTO COURTESY: NSJF

Goalkeeper Sujata Tamang saved an 89th minute penalty to ensure Nepal's win in Dhaka on Friday. Tamang was adjudged the best goalkeeper of the tournament.

points. Bhutan finished pointless losing all four matches.

It is the first international silverware won by Nepali women's football team at any level—senior or age group. The Nepali team are scheduled to return home on Saturday.

Seasoning chamber

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Election 2079

8 DAYS TO GO

मंसिर ४ ओली सरकार

NATIONAL

DISTRICT DIGEST

Boy dies after being hit by school bus in Jumla

JUMLA: An 11-year-old boy hit by a school bus in Jumla on Thursday died during the course of treatment at Karnali Institute of Health and Sciences. According to the police, the bus of Kanika Nisha Boarding School heading west towards Khalanga from Aireni, hit the boy who was walking on the roadside at Chandannath Municipality-9. "The incident occurred at 5:35pm. The victim's family and locals obstructed vehicular movement along the road causing disruption in traffic," said Deputy Superintendent Narendra Chand of the District Police Office, Jumla. "The family has demanded compensation for the tragedy and a penalty for the driver as per the law. Police have detained the driver and confiscated the bus," he added.

Staff deployed to polling stations

PARBAT: The District Election Office on Thursday deployed officials to 148 polling stations for the federal and provincial assembly elections scheduled for November 20. The final list of employees was also published, assigning eight to each centre. According to District Election Officer Lakshu Sharma, his office had to mobilise more personnel this time compared to the local-level elections held in May since the first-past-the-post and proportional voting of the House of Representatives and provincial assemblies has to be done in four ballots. The polling officer has the authority to appoint volunteers as needed. "Around 592 more volunteers are appointed locally in 148 polling stations and 1,776 employees will be mobilised within the district," Sharma said. "Also 35 polling stations in the district have been listed as highly sensitive, 31 polling stations as mild sensitive and eight as little."

Vote-rigging is a major concern of Bajura officials

BAJURA: Bajura has 70 polling stations and 112 polling centres for 83,567 voters. Ordinary voters and authorities are worried that just like in the past elections, ballot stuffing and proxy voting will be repeated in Bajura in the upcoming elections also. According to Dhakaram Paudel, the chief election officer, the dominant party traditionally controls the polling booths and engages in ballot stuffing. On the day of election, there are often clashes, voters are driven away and ballot boxes are stolen. As a result ordinary voters are unable to cast their votes peacefully. "In the previous elections, Bajura recorded 80 percent voting in the House and provincial elections and 99 percent in the local elections. However, the high voter turnout here is still a debatable issue. Parties wrested control of polling booths and stuffed ballot boxes. Efforts are being made to not let that happen again," said Paudel.

Uniform gives confidence, say women temporary police

84,296 men and 30,642 women have taken up jobs as temporary police across the country.



Temporary police recruits during their regular callisthenics at the Area Police Office in Hariwan in Sarlahi on Friday.

NISHAN KHATIWADA
BARDIBAS (MAHOTTARI), NOV 11

On a sunny Friday afternoon, a contingent of temporary police personnel, many of whom were young women, was marching on the side of the road in Chandranigahapur.

Smartly turned out in their police uniform, the women constables appeared to be brimming with confidence as many of them have just started on in life.

Even though their assignments are temporary since the job is only until the federal and provincial election results are out, they are seen as a precursor to future jobs abroad, mainly in security and local jobs in the army and police.

Ashmita Rai, 20, from Bagmati, Rautahat is now posted in Chandranigahapur and lives in her maternal uncle's house there. Rai's mother works in Dubai (UAE). Her father does not care about his family and helps economically. "He does not care about us," she said. She has a younger sister aged 15 and Ashmita is her sole guardian.

"I don't want to study further. I completed the SEE during the lockdown. Now I want to help my sister pursue her studies," she said. They have a house that was built by the government after they were displaced by Bagmati floods, but they don't have land to grow crops.

The police uniform gives her confidence, she said. "Now, I am learning to handle difficult situations." On learning about her joining the temporary police, her mother said, "Now you will know what real struggle is."

Around 115,000 temporary police personnel have been selected for the elections to the House of

Representatives (HoR) and provincial polls slated for November 20.

Physically and mentally fit Nepalis aged between 18 and 54 years were selected on the basis of different training criteria from respective district police offices.

One of them, Sushila Parajuli, 30, from Jungle Saiya, Rautahat could not study beyond the eighth grade. She is married and has a son. She is habituated to doing daily-wage labor as she and her siblings had helped their family earning Rs100 a day working in a farm until she reached class 8.

Parajuli also served as temporary police in the local elections in May—the money she received was spent in repaying loans which her husband took to buy Tata magic, a small passenger vehicle. On returning home from Malaysia after developing a backache, he started driving the vehicle. "I always wished to serve my country in a police uniform," she said. "Now, even if it is a short-term job, I feel proud."

She, however, is curious and a little anxious about where she will be deployed during the elections and what if the area witnesses violence, or whether she will have communication problems due to the language spoken by locals.

Although some share concerns like that of Parajuli, others are confident and optimistic that they will overcome all the obstacles.

When the team reached the Area Police Office in Hariwan in Sarlahi, the women temporary police were ready for their daily drill. Their voices were loud and crystal clear while performing the drill.

Laxmi Kumari Danuwar, 21, from Danuwar-9, Sarlahi has a family of six and is now posted in Hariwan. She

has passed grade 12 but has no plans to study further. "We don't have our own land for agriculture. So I need to help my family," she said. Her younger brother goes to school.

Her experience working as a temporary police in May's local polls has boosted her confidence. "I gave my entire salary to my mother to support the family. My father is a farm hand and gets paid only when there is work," she added. "I was a bit afraid during the local elections, because the job was new, but not anymore."

Laxmi wants to join the Nepal Army, but her relatives advised that she should first gain experience as temporary police.

Menuka Kumari Shah from Sugar Factory, Hariwan is 19 and a bachelor's student at Chaturbhushwar Janata Multiple Campus. She took the police job so that she could pay her college fee—Rs20,000—and also help the family. "I will continue my studies."

Shah is not worried about where she will be posted on election duty. "We need to perform our duty honestly wherever we are deployed."

There are 84,296 men and 30,642 women deployed as temporary police personnel across the country.

Madhesh province has the highest number of temporary police—23,771—while Karnali province has the lowest. Of the total 66,884 applicants in the Madhesh province, 11,827 were women.

The temporary police personnel will get Rs 34,760 for a 40-day election duty. They will also receive Rs7,200 as food allowance, Rs6,000 for uniform (those deployed in mountain districts will get additional Rs1,000), Rs1,000 for transport and a snack allowance of Rs300 per day for four days.

Congress, UML projected to win most seats

>> Continued from page 1

UML Chairman KP Sharma Oli has been claiming that the party will win majority seats and form the government either single-handedly or with the support of the Janata Samajbadi Party and the Rastriya Prajatantra Party.

Bishnu Rimal, deputy general secretary of the party, echoed Oli's tall claims. "In total, we will get around 150 seats," Rimal told the Post on Friday, reiterating his earlier position.

But different projections that the Post received from the various political parties and security agencies tell a different story.

A recent projection carried out by one security agency gives 38 seats to the UML under the FPTP and 40 seats under the PR category.

In local elections, we got 34 percent of the popular vote, said Rimal. "Our aim is to add six more percentage-points in the coming elections, to reach 40 percent of popular votes, which means we will win around 150 seats."

"As per our projection, we are doing better than the ruling alliance. Our situation is strengthening. Also, some independent candidates or parties established in the name of independent candidates are likely to gain some seats," said Rimal.

One UML leader told the Post that their party is expected to get a good number of seats in Province 1, Madhesh Province, Gandaki and even Sudurpashchim.

Another poll projection of the ruling alliance with the support of various independent researchers gives 44 seats to the UML. The party is contesting 141 of the first-past-the-post 165. There are 110 seats for proportional representation in the federal parliament. But a UML leader said that real internal projection is of around 30-36 seats in direct elections and around 40 seats under proportional representation.

Similarly, Nepali Congress which ended up a distant-second in the 2017 elections, is projected to be the largest party. Party leaders and some surveys conducted by political parties and state agencies have indicated that Congress will emerge as the single largest party in Parliament. It is only contesting 91 seats in federal elections.

"According to our estimates, the party is likely to win 70 seats under direct elections and around 40 under the proportional representation," Jeevan Pariyar, joint general secretary of the party, told the Post.

A poll projection carried out by the ruling parties with the support of state agencies gives only 60 FPTP seats to the party since as many as 20 party leaders are caught up in tight races against other candidates. Out of those 20 seats, if the Congress candidates win half, it would come up with a total of 70 seats, the report said. Another report exclusively prepared by the security agencies gives the party 65 seats under the direct elections, and 36 under proportional representation.

"When the two communist parties jointly contested the last elections, we had secured 40 seats under the proportional representation, so we will win no less than 40 seats this time as well," said Pariyar. "As we are only contesting 91 seats, we hope to get enough votes under the proportional representation, particularly in places where our candidates are not contesting." The Congress had won the highest number of seats in the last local elections. Though the party is contesting elections jointly with four other parties, its core votes are unlikely to be transferred to other parties.

Different kinds of polls projections have given the ruling alliance a sure-shot majority in pre-elections surveys.

Another ruling party, CPN (Maoist Centre), which is contesting in 47 seats, is aspiring to win no less than 30 seats in direct elections.

"We have not calculated how many seats we will secure under the proportional representation, but under direct elections, we will win at least 30," said Haribol Gajurel, the party's deputy general secretary.

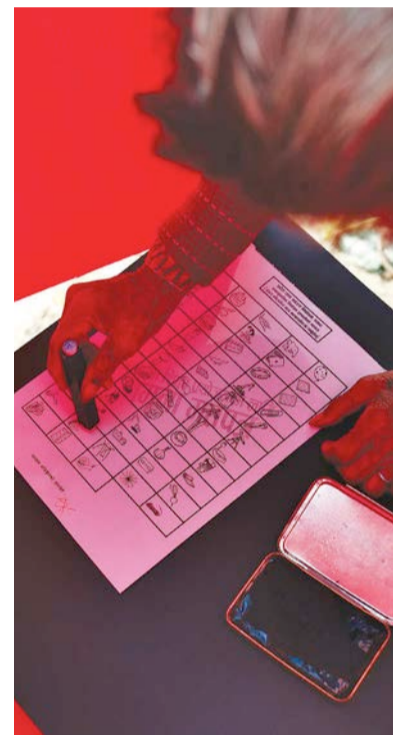
Congress is likely to win 70 seats, UML around 35 and CPN (Unified Socialist) around 12 seats, said Gajurel. One projection exclusively

carried out by security agencies has predicted 35 and 16 seats to the Maoist Centre under direct and proportional representation categories respectively. Yet another projection by the ruling parties with the support of state agencies projected the Maoist Centre to win just 26 PR seats.

The election forecast of security agencies has CPN (Unified Socialist) winning 15 seats: 10 in direct and five under the proportional representation category. Another report from a mix of agencies projected that Unified Socialist will win 11 seats under the direct elections.

Pramesh Hamal, vice chairman of the Unified Socialist, said that the party will win 16 seats under the direct elections and at least 13 seats under proportional representation. The party is only contesting 20 seats under the first-past-the-post election system.

A report by a security agency says UML could win 38 FPTP and 40 PR seats.



A woman takes part in mock vote at Kuslechaur in Godavari of Lalitpur earlier this week.

The projection by the ruling parties with the support of state agencies gives seven seats to Janata Samajbadi Party, five seats to Loktantrik Samajbadi Party and Rastriya Prajatantra Party, two seats to independent candidates and one each to Nepal Majdoor Kisan Party, Nepal Pragatisheel Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party, Rastriya Swatantra Party and Rastriya Janamorchha.

Both ruling party leaders as well as UML leaders said two political parties—Rastriya Swatantra Party (led by Rabi Lamichanne) and Hamro Nepali Party (Ananta Raj Ghimire)—are shaking up the election landscape in Kathmandu, Chitwan and some urban constituencies.

The report of the security agency projected the Janata Samajbadi Party to win 11 seats (seven FPTP and four PR), while Loktantrik Samajbadi Party would win seven seats in total (four and three). Seven seats is the projection for Rastriya Prajatantra Party under both categories while the remaining six seats will be won by Majdoor Kisan Party, Janata Pragatisheel Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party, Rastriya Swatantra Party and Rastriya Janamorchha.

The projection by the ruling parties with the support of state agencies estimated that the ruling alliance will win 105 seats under the first-past-the-post, while the UML alliance of four parties will win 57 seats. Three seats are projected to go to Majdoor Kisan Party, Nagarik Unmukti Party and Rastriya Swatantra Party. Two independent candidates, who are projected as winners, have been added to the ruling alliance's number.

Manisha says BP wanted to work with King Mahendra

Granddaughter of the first elected prime minister, she has now stood in favour of pro-monarchy Rastriya Prajatantra Party.

POST REPORT
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Actress Manisha Koirala has commented that her grandfather BP Koirala realised that Nepal could progress only when the monarchy and political parties joined hands. But it was too late when he realised it, she said.

Manisha, a renowned Bollywood actress, said there was cordial relationship between her grandfather and King Mahendra and they respected each other.

Granddaughter of Nepal's first elected prime minister BP Koirala, she has now stood in favour of the pro-monarchy force Rastriya Prajatantra Party. Addressing an election rally organised by the party at Basantapur in Kathmandu on Friday, she requested the public to vote for the



Bollywood actress Manisha Koirala canvassing for the Rastriya Prajatantra Party on Friday.

royalist force.

"Long ago BP Ba [grandfather] and Mahendra sarkar [king] used to respect each other. But they never got the opportunity to work together and they lost such a great chance for the country," Koirala said at the election campaign. "Now we have got such an opportunity which we must not lose."

Koirala clarified that she was standing for the RPP because she was impressed by the personality and speeches of the party's chairman Rajendra Lingden. "I'm standing here today seeing Rajendra Lingden and listening to his speeches. He said corruption is like drinking mother's blood. Listening to his speech I felt that Nepal has now got a true leader," she said. "That's why I'm here now. Lingden has not forgotten BP and his policy of reconciliation."

Elections in winter means many in mountain districts won't be able to vote

>> Continued from page 1

But in Lomanthang, hardly 800 votes will be cast, says Tashi.

In Lo-Ghekar Damodar Kunda Rural Municipality, voter participation will be lower than 40 percent, says Tsering Lhamo Gurung, deputy chair-

man of the rural municipality. "The villages are empty. If I didn't have official responsibilities, I would also have left. The scheduled election date is unsuitable for the mountain population," he said.

Locals believe that as the mountain region is sparsely populated, voter participation is not a priority of either the political leadership or the government.

The majority of villages in Varagung Muktiichhetra Rural Municipality are empty too, according to said Rinzin Namgyal Gurung, chairman of the rural municipality. "Some candidates are going door to door to ask for votes but there is no one to answer the door in most houses," said Rinzin. "Prem Prasad Tulachan, a candidate in the upcoming polls, visited the empty villages, got disappointed and left."

Tulachan is the CPN-UML candidate in Mustang for the House of

Representatives. After canvassing in empty villages, he says that the mountain populations have been deprived of their right to vote this time.

"We can ask the villagers to return home to cast their votes but it is a difficult ask. Their livelihood depends on the money they make in these four months," said Tulachan. "It is disheartening to see that they cannot exercise their franchise."

Similarly, Bikal Sherchan, Congress candidate for the provincial assembly (2), said that the disregard for voter participation of the mountain population in important elections is indicative of the government's attitude to what they deem an insignificant vote bank.

"Many are being deprived of their right to vote because of the government's negligence towards the mountain people. The Election Commission should have thought this through. If they couldn't find an election date

suitable for everybody, they should have at least made arrangements for the local people of the mountain villages to return home to exercise their franchise," said Bikal. "There is no point in holding an election where people can't vote."

According to Tamding, the local teacher in Chosher, Ward No 1 of Lomanthang Rural Municipality, even the schools have moved base from upper Mustang for the winter months. "All the schools in upper Mustang villages have been shifted to Pokhara. We do this every year. As most students and teachers go to Pokhara during winter, schools run mobile classes and home tutoring to avoid disrupting the academic session," said Tamding who teaches at Divyadip Secondary School. "Most will not return to the villages to cast their votes by jeopardising the students' academic performance. Winter in the mountain areas is difficult physically, emotionally and most

importantly, financially. Conducting elections in this season is pointless but the government remains unbothered."

According to Thapa, the information officer of the Election Office in Mustang, there are 10,957 registered voters in Mustang. "While conducting a voter education event on Sunday, there were only a bunch of people attending in Lomanthang and Lo-Ghekar Damodar Kunda rural municipalities," he said. "There are a total 34 voters in Ward No 5 of Varagung Muktiichhetra Rural Municipality. This village is 40 km from the headquarters Jomsom and 33 km from the ward office. By November third week, it may start snowing so we may not receive a single vote."

Deputy Superintendent of Police in Mustang, Rabindranath Paudel, said most voters have complained about the election schedule stating that the government has failed to take their

voting rights into consideration.

According to Netra Prasad Sharma, the chief district officer, in case of snowfall, more than 17 polling stations including seven in Lomanthang, nine in Lo-Ghekar Damodar Kunda, and one in Varagung Muktiichhetra will be deeply affected. "It will be next to impossible to bring voters to polling booths if it snows," he said.

Agyal Gurung, a local of Chonhup in Lomanthang Ward No 3, said, "The locals of upper Mustang start leaving their houses by mid-September to sit out the winter and to earn some money while they are gone," said Agyal.

"It is difficult for most people to return to the villages to cast their votes. The narrow foot trails are risky. Even if they do come, what will they do after the elections? There is no work or food in the villages," said Agyal, who is among the few who have stayed back in the village this winter.



DAVID DOUBILET, MARINE PHOTOGRAPHER



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■ BRIEFING

Former teacher of British School Kathmandu pleads guilty to child exploitation

KATHMANDU: A senior teacher at Thomas's Battersea, a preparatory school in London, UK, has pleaded guilty to child exploitation offenses, reported Daily Mail, a British tabloid, on Wednesday. According to the newspaper, Matthew Smith, 34, appeared in Westminster Magistrates Court on Wednesday on charges of sexual abuse relating to the making and distribution of indecent images of children. Prior to his role at Thomas's Battersea, Smith was assistant head teacher at the British School in Kathmandu for five years, the newspaper reported. The charges do not relate to children at the prestigious school, which costs upwards of £20,000 per year, the tabloid said. Thomas's Battersea, previously attended by two of three children of British Crown Prince Williams, has terminated Smith's contract that had started this September. (PR)

Ruling alliance's rally in Chitwan today

KATHMANDU: The ruling alliance is scheduled to hold a joint rally in Chitwan on Saturday, targeting the November 20 federal and provincial assembly polls. Top leaders including Nepali Congress President and Prime Minister Sher Bahadur Deuba, CPN (Maoist Centre) Chairman Pushpa Kamal Dahal and CPN (Unified Socialist) Chairman Madhav Kumar Nepal are scheduled to address the mass meeting. Rajeshwar Khanal, president of the Congress Chitwan chapter, said the rally will be organised in Bharatpur targeting all three constituencies of the district. The alliance including Rastriya Janamorcha has fielded Bishwo Nath Poudel from the Congress in Chitwan-1, NC's Umesh Shrestha in Chitwan-2 and Bhoj Raj Adhikari of the Maoist Centre in Chitwan-3. UML's Surendra Pandey is in the race from Chitwan-1 and Krishna Bhakta Pokharel from Chitwan-2. The race in Chitwan-2 is being closely watched as television personality Rabi Lamichhane of Rastriya Swatantra Party is contesting the elections against well-known political figures.

Student wing wants college results within a week

KATHMANDU: The All Nepal National Independent Students' Union (Revolutionary) has drawn the attention of the Office of the Tribhuvan University exams controller over the delay in publishing the results of several faculties. The CPN (Maoist Centre) student wing on Thursday submitted a memorandum to Exam Controller Pushparaj Joshi demanding the publication of the undergraduate results within a week. Pawan Karki, coordinator of the union, warned officials of protests if their demands were not addressed on time. "The reason behind the delay in publication of results should be clarified and the results published within a week," read the memorandum.

TU colleges to be closed for five days

KATHMANDU: All the colleges and offices of the Tribhuvan University will be shut for five days starting November 17 for the House of Representatives and provincial assembly polls scheduled for November 20. Issuing a notice on Friday, TU's Information and Public Relations Division said a meeting of the Executive Council had decided to close the institutions on November 17, 18 and 21. November 19 and November 20 are public holidays. The university said most of the campuses have been designated polling centres, while TU employees will be deployed for the elections.

Parties' pledge of voting rights for Nepalis abroad remains an unfulfilled promise

Political parties feel Nepalis living abroad hold a sway over their relatives here and can help influence elections by being a swing factor.

TIKA R PRADHAN
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Major political parties of the country have promised to ensure voting rights for Nepalis living abroad in the elections to be held after five years in the hope they would persuade their family members and relatives in Nepal into supporting certain parties or candidates.

Political parties feel Nepalis living abroad hold a sway over their family and friends living here and they can help influence elections by being a swing factor.

But election commissioners and even the party leaders are not sure whether they could arrange for such a mechanism given the complexity of ensuring voting by Nepali expatriates spread across the world.

"It's not possible unless all the political parties exhibit strong commitment, work hard and draft necessary laws," said Bhojraj Pokharel, a former chief election commissioner. "There must be a foolproof system to ensure that the votes reach their intended destinations and all the parties must have trust in it."

Some leaders of major political parties admitted that they have had to make these promises because millions of Nepalis living abroad have their kin back in Nepal and they could convince them to vote for their candidates. "Many of our voters are influenced by their kin and relatives living abroad," said Risha Shrestha, a candidate of Lalitpur 2 (A) representing Nepali Congress and supported by the ruling coalition. "So, it's important for us to reach out to Nepalis abroad to ensure we get their family's votes."

On June 21, both the general secretaries of the Nepali Congress had urged the Election Commission to ensure that Nepalis living abroad get an opportunity to exercise their adult franchise in the November 20 polls.

Congress general secretaries Gagan Thapa and Bishwa Prakash Sharma visited Chief Election Commissioner Dinesh Thapaliya and asked him to make necessary arrangements to ensure the voting rights of Nepalis living abroad. They also asked the commission to respect the Supreme Court's order in this regard.

However, by the time the two Congress leaders drew the commission's attention, it was too late. Therefore, the commission had no option other than to turn down their 'wishful' proposal, said an official.

In 2018, the Supreme Court had issued a



FILE PHOTO: AFP

4 million
Estimated number of Nepali citizens living in various countries for work or study

directive to the government, parliament and the commission to make necessary arrangements to ensure voting rights for all the Nepali citizens living abroad.

A division bench of justices Sapana Malla Pradhan and Purushottam Bhandari had issued the order.

The bench ordered the government to guarantee voting rights to non-resident Nepalis either through representatives, postal services or by means of electronic voting on the premises of Nepali missions—whichever that could ensure secret voting in a free, fair and cost-effective way.

Political leaders argue that the government must acknowledge the role of the citizens working abroad, whose contribution has become a lifeline mainly for the country's economy, by making it possible for them to vote.

By current estimates, nearly four million Nepali citizens are believed to be living in various countries, either for work or study.

In its manifesto ahead of the 2017 polls, Nepali Congress had promised to ensure voting rights to Nepalis living abroad within the next 10 years. However, the then left alliance of the CPN-UML and the Maoist Centre had not spoken anything

about arranging for the voting rights of Nepalis living abroad.

This time major parties including the Nepali Congress and the Maoist Centre have promised to ensure voting rights to non-resident Nepalis. Also other fringe parties, including the Rastriya Prajatantra Party and the Rastriya Swatantra Party have made that pledge.

The ruling coalition leader Nepali Congress has promised to make decisive efforts to ensure voting rights for Nepali citizens abroad within five years, through an electronic system.

The Maoist Centre has stated that it would ensure voting rights for Nepalis abroad by the next local polls.

However, the CPN-UML has not said anything in its manifesto about the voting rights of Nepalis living abroad. Its leaders have said that parties are taking up this matter only for some 'cheap publicity,' because it's extremely difficult to make such arrangements in terms of resources, and security.

"It's good for the parties to make a promise for cheap publicity, but its implementation aspect seems extremely complicated," said Gagan Bista, secretary at the Publicity Department of the CPN-UML.

Former chief election commissioner Pokharel also had a similar opinion. He, however, added that nothing is impossible, if all the political parties have a strong commitment towards it.

Pokharel said three important issues were crucial in ensuring the voting rights of Nepalis abroad—political commitment

of the parties, drafting necessary laws and arranging necessary resources.

"Political leaders must show commitment to implement such promises in the true sense for which they must pave the way by endorsing necessary laws within the first year after the polls," said Pokharel.

"Government must also ensure there are sufficient resources for this. But, the parties have not yet even assessed the possible costs."

The parties seemed not much committed to the same in the previous years as they had not taken Nepalis working and studying abroad as one of the factors influencing votes back in their home constituencies. Earlier, politicians took NRNs lightly as some non-serious groups making irresponsible comments on social media. But now, even the leaders from major parties have sensed a "threat from the constituency outside the country."

They realised that mainly after the surprising victory of independent candidates in the recent local polls such as Balen Shah in Kathmandu Metropolitan City and Harka Sangpang in Dharan Municipality.

Directly connected digitally with their family, friends and other familiar people, the Nepali youths working or studying abroad have started to actively engage ahead of the elections and in other social campaigns as well. Therefore, the candidates have now started to get connected with Nepali citizens living abroad.

"If the parties could manage all necessary arrangements, five years is sufficient to make preparations for this," said Pokharel of the plan to have Nepalis living abroad getting their chance to vote. "But, it would need extensive training and educating people involved in the voting process."

Another former chief election commissioner, Neil Kantha Uprety, also said that voting could be made possible through the internet but that needs a strong commitment from all the stakeholders—the Election Commission as well as all political parties. "It seems that the political parties are not ready to allow voting rights for the Nepalis living abroad," said Uprety.

"If they were truly committed, the country could have prepared some mechanism for their voting by now."

He said first of all there must be a law and then the Election Commission can publish the voters' list, collecting data of passports from the Foreign Ministry and along with that, the work permission granted by the Labour Ministry.

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US Dollar	129.58
Euro	133.14
Pound Sterling	152.40
Japanese Yen (10)	9.27
Chinese Yuan	18.17
Qatari Riyal	35.43
Australian Dollar	86.43
Malaysian Ringgit	28.00
Saudi Arab Riyal	34.47

Exchange rates fixed by Nepal Rastra Bank

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 Fine Gold	Rs 96,700
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SOURCE: FENEGOSIDA

GASOLINE WATCH



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Source: Nepal Oil Corporation

BRIEFING

UN, Russia hold talks on grain, fertiliser exports

GENEVA: United Nations chiefs were holding talks with Russian officials on Friday on the Black Sea agreements on exporting grain and fertilisers, eight days before one of the deals is set to expire. UN humanitarian chief Martin Griffiths and Rebecca Grynspan, head of UN trade and development agency UNCTAD, were meeting a high-level delegation from Moscow, led by Russian deputy foreign minister Sergei Vershinin. UN spokeswoman Alessandra Vellucci confirmed the talks were under way at the UN Palais des Nations headquarters in Geneva. "They will continue ongoing consultations in support of the efforts by (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on the full implementation of the two agreements signed on July 22 in Istanbul," she said. "It is hoped that the discussions will advance progress made in facilitating the unimpeded export of food and fertilisers originating from the Russian Federation to the global markets." (AFP)

Taiwan electric scooter firm delaying China expansion

TAIPEI: Taiwanese electric scooter maker Gogoro Inc is delaying its expansion plans in China due to geopolitical and economic uncertainty there and putting more focus on India and Indonesia, its chief financial officer told Reuters on Friday. As well as making its own vehicles, Gogoro has electric battery and other partnerships with vehicle makers including India's Hero MotoCorp and China's Dachangjiang Group and Yadea Group Holdings. Gogoro, known for its green-hued battery swap distribution network for riders, has ambitious plans, seeing potential to replace vast fleets of heavily-polluting, gasoline-powered scooters with electric two-wheelers as Asia's metropolises bid to improve air quality. Gogoro's CFO Bruce Aitken said that while almost all their revenue was currently generated in Taiwan, they are looking to diversify internationally, with the biggest market for two-wheelers being China, India and Indonesia. (REUTERS)

US revokes Russia's market economy status

WASHINGTON: The United States will no longer treat Russia as a market economy country, the Commerce Department said on Thursday, revoking the status granted two decades ago that limited the calculation of anti-dumping duties on Russian goods. The Commerce Department said its analysis found "extensive" government involvement in the Russian economy had led to distorted prices and costs, which it said did not accurately reflect whether Russian companies were fairly pricing imports into the United States. "This decision gives the United States the ability to apply the full force of the US anti-dumping law to address the market distortions caused by increasing interference from the Russian government in their economy," the Commerce Department said in a statement. Washington granted Russia market economy status in 2002, an essential step for Russia's admission to the World Trade Organisation in 2012. (REUTERS)

World Cup behind the scenes: Workers get raw deal

Many Nepali migrant workers have been facing contract breaches, wage theft and discrimination, according to human rights watchdogs.

PAWAN PANDEY
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Anish Adhikari remembers playing football on the paddy fields after the harvest as a child in his village in Khotang district in Nepal's eastern hills.

Now a 27-year-old migrant worker and avid fan of Argentinean football star Lionel Messi, Adhikari took part in building Lusail Stadium in Qatar where the FIFA World Cup final will be played on December 18.

Adhikari spent 33 months toiling in the heat at the construction site, but there's no chance he will get to see his hero Messi on the field live when Argentina play Saudi Arabia in this same stadium on November 22. His Qatari employers sent him home last year.

"I was abruptly fired and my employer Hamad Bin Khalid Engineering Services ordered me to return home," Adhikari told the Post. "The company did not renew my identity card for four months after finding out I was trying to switch jobs."

He also claims the company paid him 1,200 Qatari riyals (Rs42,165) less than promised when he was deported.

This was Adhikari's second visit to World Cup host Qatar. In 2018, he got a job at a metro station construction site in Doha. He was not paid for three months during the four months he spent there.

"They not only didn't pay me, they fired me and did not allow me to stay in the camp." So he had to stay at a friend's house. "My family helped me return to Nepal," he said.

Adhikari said he went to Qatar again thinking that the companies building the stadiums for the World Cup would pay better.

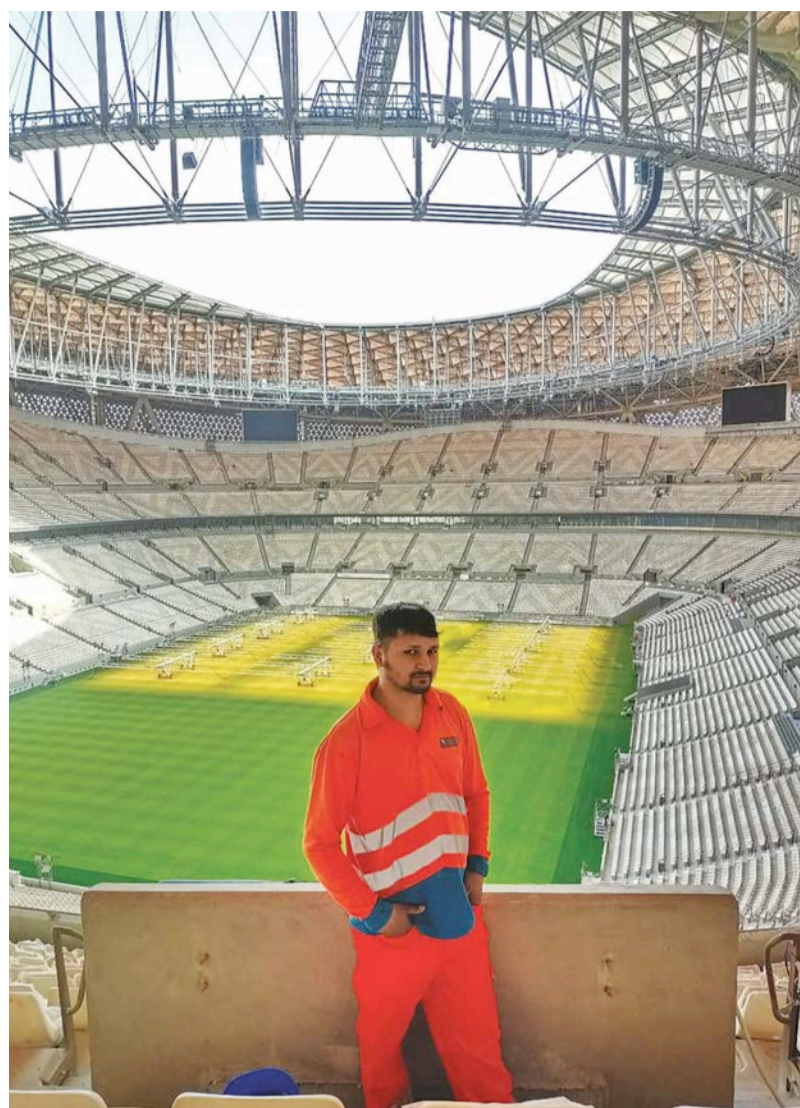
"I had a dream to watch the World Cup live at the stadium, including my favourite player. That prompted me to return to Qatar."

Another migrant worker Narayan Sigdel from Nawalparasi East, who worked as a driver for more than three years in Qatar, said he was also cheated.

"I was not given a bonus at the end of my employment. They did not pay me 6,500 riyals (Rs228,398)," he said.

"Besides being paid less, workers have to endure verbal abuse at the workplace," he said. "There is no respect for migrant workers."

Sigdel paid a Rs65,000 fee to secure a



Anish Adhikari was involved in the construction of Lusail Stadium—which will also host the final match of the FIFA World Cup 2022, on December 18, the national day of Qatar.

job in Qatar in 2016. Adhikari borrowed Rs110,000 so he could pay the fee to get a job at Lusail Stadium.

"I borrowed Rs80,000 at 60 percent interest from a local money lender. The interest on the rest of the loan is 36 percent," said Adhikari.

Adhikari was told he would be working as an electrician's helper and would earn 900 riyals monthly before he flew to the Gulf country in March 2019.

The agent had assured him that the recruitment fee he had paid would be

refunded after he started working. He was also assured that he would not have to pay for his meals and accommodation. But it did not happen that way.

Many Nepali migrant workers have been facing contract breaches, wage theft and discrimination, including forced labour in unsafe working conditions, according to human rights watchdogs.

"None of the promises was fulfilled," said Adhikari during the launch of If we complained, we are

fired: Discrimination and Exploitation of Migrant Construction Workers on FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022 Stadium Sites, an investigative report made public on Thursday. The report was produced by Equidem, a human rights and labour rights charity.

"I was made to work as an AC line helper, and my salary was reduced to 750 riyals." However, Adhikari received only 600 riyals a month. "They said 150 riyals had been deducted for room and board."

Whenever he filed a complaint with his superiors, they threatened to fire him. "I got a chance to talk to FIFA officials twice or thrice, but that too did not produce any outcome."

According to Adhikari, the employers prevented workers from meeting, interacting or lodging complaints with the officials from the Supreme Committee for Delivery and Legacy, the local body established in 2011 by the state of Qatar.

The body was responsible for the delivery of the World Cup.

"During inspection visits by FIFA officials, we were sent to camps," he said. "They used to turn on the fire alarm to make the workers stop working and assemble on the site, then we would be taken out of sight of the officials."

According to the report, the employers deceived the inspection team every time they visited the construction sites.

Workers were made to move to alternate locations during inspections. According to the report, sites were prepared to meet inspection standards, and workers were employed on sites that were not audited.

Workers were penalised for making complaints, the report said. And companies falsely represented worker salaries in the company books, the report says. The workers were made to work in 40 to 50-degree Celsius heat without sufficient water or rest.

Adhikari tried to get another job but was unsuccessful.

"On my return, they deducted 1,200 riyals from the amount I was supposed to get," he said. "They did not give any reason."

Adhikari is one of the 60 migrant workers from Asia and Africa whom Equidem interviewed during their investigation from September 2020 to October 2022.

Workers engaged in the construction of the stadiums from 2014 to 2022

were interviewed during the investigation. Qatar employed more than 30,000 migrant workers to build the stadiums for the World Cup. Qatar and FIFA have spent \$229 billion on preparations for the World Cup.

The report said Qatar conducted a severe human rights violation.

The workers Equidem interviewed share stories of illegal recruitment forced labour, nationality-based discrimination, wage theft, overwork, workplace violence, and health and safety risks.

The Gulf country has rejected the demand of international human rights and migrant rights organisations to set up a compensation fund, equivalent to the World Cup's prize money of \$440 million, for the workers who died and sustained injuries working in World Cup-related projects.

Last week, Qatar Labour Minister Ali bin Samikh Al Marri told Agence France-Presse, a Paris-based international news agency, that the demand was a "publicity stunt."

Marri said Qatar already had a fund to deal with worker deaths and injuries.

"This call for a duplicative FIFA-led compensation campaign is a publicity stunt," Marri told the AFP. "Our door is open. We have dealt with and resolved a lot of cases."

"Despite the evidence of labour rights abuse in World Cup-related projects, Qatar's efforts to ignore this issue is disheartening," said Rameshwar Nepal, executive director of Equidem Research Nepal.

"Organising the World Cup could have been an opportunity for the country to bring extensive reforms in its labour sector. However, the country has so far missed this chance," said Nepal.

"Though FIFA seems to have tried to keep an eye on the condition of labourers to some extent, their monitoring has not been effective. It could have done much more in the decade after Qatar was declared the host for World Cup 2022."

Adhikari still hopes to get his money back even though he will have to watch his favourite football player on television.

"I wish star players like Messi, Ronaldo, Neymar, Mbappe and Benzema would speak up for the rights of migrant workers," said Adhikari. "Their voices, obviously, would make our cause stronger."

Musk warns of Twitter bankruptcy as more senior executives quit

Company faces interest payments totalling close to \$1.2 billion in the next 12 months.



The Twitter app is seen on a smartphone in this illustration.

REUTERS
CALIFORNIA, NOV 11

Twitter Inc's new owner Elon Musk on Thursday raised the possibility of the social media platform going bankrupt, capping a chaotic day that included a warning from a US privacy regulator and the exit of the company's trust and safety leader.

The billionaire on his first mass call with employees said that he could not rule out bankruptcy, Bloomberg News reported, two weeks after buying it for \$44 billion—a deal that credit experts say has left Twitter's finances in a precarious position.

Earlier in the day, in his first company-wide email, Musk warned that Twitter would not be able to "survive the upcoming economic downturn" if it fails to boost subscription revenue to offset falling advertising income, three people who have seen the message told Reuters.

Yoel Roth, who has overseen Twitter's response to combat hate speech, misinformation and spam on the service, resigned on Thursday, two people familiar with the matter told Reuters.

In his Twitter profile on Thursday, Roth described himself as "Former Head of Trust & Safety" at the company. Roth did not respond to requests for comment. Bloomberg and tech site Platformer reported his exit first.

Earlier on Thursday, Twitter's Chief Information Security Officer Lea Kissner tweeted that she had quit.

Chief Privacy Officer Damien Kieran and Chief Compliance Officer Marianne Fogarty also resigned, according to an internal message posted to Twitter's Slack messaging system on Thursday by an attorney on its privacy team and seen by Reuters.

Robin Wheeler, the company's top ad sales executive, told employees in a memo that she was staying at the company, a person who had seen the message said, diverging from earlier media reports that she too would be leaving.

"I'm still here," Wheeler tweeted late on Thursday.

The US Federal Trade Commission said it was watching Twitter with "deep concern" after the three privacy and compliance officers quit. These resignations potentially put Twitter at risk of violating regulatory orders.

Musk attorney Alex Spiro told some employees in an email late on Thursday that Twitter would remain in compliance.

"We spoke to the FTC today about our continuing obligations and have a constructive ongoing dialogue," Spiro wrote.

He stated that only Twitter, not individual employees, could be held liable against the orders.

"I understand that there have been employees at Twitter who do not even work on the FTC matter commenting that they could [go] to jail if we were not in compliance—that is simply not how this works," he wrote.

In his first meeting with many employees at Twitter on Thursday afternoon, Musk warned that the company may lose billions of dollars next year, the Information reported.

Musk added in the email to workers that remote work would no longer be allowed and that they would be expected in the office for at least 40 hours per week. Musk ruthlessly moved to clean house after taking over on October 27 and has said the company was losing more than \$4 million a day, largely because advertisers started fleeing once he took over.

Twitter has \$13 billion in debt after the deal and faces interest payments totalling close to \$1.2 billion in the next 12 months. The payments exceed Twitter's most recently disclosed cash flow, which amounted to \$1.1 billion as of the end of June.

WORLD

BRIEFING

Biden and Xi to meet at G20 summit in Bali

BEIJING: Xi Jinping and Joe Biden will hold talks at next week's G20 summit in Bali, their first face-to-face meeting since the US president took office and just weeks after the Chinese leader secured a landmark third term. The leaders of the world's two biggest economies have spoken by phone multiple times since Biden became president in January 2021. But the Covid-19 pandemic and Xi's subsequent aversion to foreign travel have prevented them from meeting in person. Beijing's foreign ministry said on Friday that China would always "firmly defend" its interests in talks with the United States, while working to "manage differences, promote mutually beneficial cooperation and avoid miscalculation".

US sending Ukraine \$400 million more in military aid

WASHINGTON: The US will send \$400 million more in military aid to Ukraine, US officials announced on Thursday, amid concerns that financial assistance for the war against Russia could decline if Republicans take control of Congress. The aid comes as the vote counting from Tuesday's election continues, with Republicans inching closer to a narrow House majority and with control of the Senate hinging on tight races in Arizona, Nevada and Georgia. According to the Pentagon, the aid package will contain large amounts of ammunition and, for the first time, four highly mobile Avenger air defense systems. Include is ammunition for the High Mobility Artillery Rocket Systems, known as HIMARS, which Ukraine has been successfully using in its counteroffensive against Russia.

South Korea police official found dead amid scrutiny over Halloween crush

SEOUL: A South Korean police official being investigated over the deadly Halloween crush was found dead at his home in Seoul on Friday, the Yonhap news agency reported. The October 29 crush killed 156 people and injured another 198, mostly in their twenties and thirties, when revellers flooded narrow alleyways in the popular nightlife district of Itaewon to celebrate the first Covid mask-free Halloween festivities in three years. The official, who was only identified by his surname Jeong and in charge of intelligence affairs at the Yongsan Police Station covering Itaewon, was found dead at his Seoul home by a family member at around 12:45 pm (0345 GMT), Yonhap said, citing unnamed police officials.

Russia claims all troops gone from Kherson in Ukraine

The Kremlin remains defiant, insisting the development in no way represented an embarrassment for Russian President Vladimir Putin.



Evacuees from Kherson walk from a bus upon their arrival to Dzhankoi, Crimea on Thursday.

ASSOCIATED PRESS
MYKOLAIV, NOV 11

The Russian Defence Ministry said on Friday that it finished pulling out its troops from the western bank of the river that divide's Ukraine's southern Kherson region, including the only provincial capital that Moscow had captured since invading the neighbouring country.

In a statement carried by Russian state news agencies, the ministry said the withdrawal was completed at 5 am on Friday, and not a single unit of military equipment was left behind. The retreat nonetheless marks another huge setback for Russia in its 8 1/2-month war in Ukraine.

The Kremlin remained defiant on Friday, insisting the development in no way represented an embarrassment for Russian President Vladimir Putin. Moscow continues to view the entire Kherson region as part of Russia, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters.

He added that the Kremlin doesn't regret holding festivities just over a month ago to celebrate the illegal annexation of Kherson and three other occupied or partially occupied regions of Ukraine.

Shortly before the Russian

announcement, the office of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy described the situation in the Kherson region as "difficult." It reported Russian shelling of some of the villages and towns Ukrainian forces reclaimed in recent weeks during their counteroffensive in the Kherson region.

Ukrainian officials were wary of the Russian pullback announced this week, fearing their soldiers could get drawn into an ambush in Kherson city, which had a prewar population of 280,000. Military analysts also had predicted it would take Russia's military at least a week to complete the troop withdrawal.

Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak said Thursday that the retreating Russian troops laid mines throughout Kherson to turn it into a "city of death." He also predicted they would shell the city after relocating across the Dnieper River.

Having previously warned that the Russian retreat might be a trap, some quarters of the Ukrainian government barely disguised their glee at the pace of the withdrawal.

"The Russian army leaves the battlefields in a triathlon mode: steeplechase, broad jumping, swimming," Andriy Yermak, a senior presidential

adviser, tweeted. Social media videos apparently filmed by soldiers on routes toward Kherson showed villagers hugging the Ukrainian troops.

Recapturing the city could provide Ukraine a strong position from which to expand its southern counteroffensive to other Russian-occupied areas, potentially including Crimea, which Moscow seized in 2014.

From its forces new positions on the eastern bank, however, the Kremlin could try to escalate the war, which U.S. assessments showed may already have killed or wounded tens of thousands of civilians and hundreds of thousands of soldiers.

A Russian S-300 missile strike overnight killed six people in Mykolaiv, a city about 68 kilometres from Kherson's regional capital, Zelenskyy's office said on Friday morning. Rescue crews sifted through the rubble of a five-story residential building in search of survivors.

Standing in front of what used to be his family's apartment, Roman Mamontov, 16, awaited news about his missing mother.

Mamontov said he found "nothing there" when he opened an apartment door to look for his mother after the missile struck. Friday was her 34th birthday, the teenager said.

SE Asian leaders do little to raise pressure on Myanmar

In another decision, the leaders agree 'in principle' to admit East Timor as the association's 11th member.

ASSOCIATED PRESS
PHNOM PENH, NOV 11

Southeast Asian leaders did little to ramp up pressure on Myanmar to comply with their plan for peace, agreeing on Friday to a course of action that largely kicks the matter down the road.

With violence in Myanmar spiralling out of control since the military seized power in 2021, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has been trying to implement a five-point plan for peace, so far with little effect.

Already, the group has banned leaders of Myanmar, also known as Burma, from participating in its top-level events, such as the ongoing summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

A faction led by Indonesian President Joko Widodo, whose country assumes ASEAN's rotating chair after Cambodia, had been pushing for that ban to be broadened to exclude Myanmar from other events—something urged by human rights groups. But in their "review and decision on the implementation of the five-point consensus" released on Friday, the leaders decided to task ASEAN's coordinating council "to further review Myanmar's representation at ASEAN meetings, if the situation requires."

Thailand, backed by Cambodia and Laos, opposed the Indonesian proposal, arguing that extending the ban on

representation would amount to a de facto suspension, according to a diplomat with access to the discussions who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the closed-door meetings.

The leaders also dismissed the idea of a full suspension of Myanmar from the group, reaffirming in their decision that the country "remains an integral part of ASEAN."

The group did stress the need for "an implementation plan that outlines concrete, practical and measurable indicators with [a] specific timeline"—but did not agree on one, tasking their foreign ministers to develop it.

They also said they would call upon the UN "and our external partners" to support ASEAN's efforts to implement the five-point consensus, but gave no further details.

The ASEAN plan calls for the immediate cessation of violence, a dialogue among all parties, mediation by an ASEAN special envoy, provision of humanitarian aid and a visit to Myanmar by the special envoy to meet all sides. Myanmar's government initially agreed to the plan but has made little effort to implement it.

Ahead of the final deliberations, Widodo stressed the importance of coming to an agreement, saying that the situation in the country was worsening and that Indonesia was "deeply disappointed."



Cambodian dancers perform during the opening ceremony of the 40th and 41st ASEAN Summits in Phnom Penh, Cambodia on Friday.

Migrant rescue ship docks in French port after Italy refuses passage

ASSOCIATED PRESS
TOULON, NOV 11

A maritime rescue ship docked in a southern French port on Friday carrying 230 migrants whose fates sparked a diplomatic row between France and Italy, as well as fury from far-right rivals of the French government.

The Ocean Viking disembarked its passengers at the Toulon port, where they were expected to undergo health and security checks at a military base, Var region prefect Evence Richard told reporters.

The passengers from Eritrea, Egypt, Syria, Bangladesh, Pakistan and other nations include 57 children, the youngest of whom is 3 years old, and more than 40 are unaccompanied minors,

according to European rescue group SOS Mediterranee, which operates the ship.

Some of the people on the ship were rescued in the Mediterranean Sea three weeks ago, the group said. The French coast guard boarded the Ocean Viking Thursday to help four passengers who needed urgent medical attention ashore.

The ship became the cause of a rift between France and Italy after Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni granted three other private maritime rescue ships permission to dock in Italy but refused the Ocean Viking, claiming that France would take it although the French government had not said that publicly.

France agreed to offer a safe port to

the Ocean Viking ship on Thursday. French Interior Minister Gerald Darmanin said the passengers would ultimately be divided among France and other European Union countries in line with a "solidarity" mechanism approved in June to reduce the pressure on front-line countries such as Greece, Italy and Spain.

Calling Italy's response "unacceptable" and "incomprehensible," Darmanin also announced France's withdrawal from the voluntary initiative for sharing asylum-seekers because of the Italian government's behaviour.

He said France would soon impose border checks with Italy as the diplomatic dispute between otherwise two friendly neighbours deepens.

Repeat Covid is riskier than first infection, study finds

The higher risks were most pronounced in the first month after reinfection.

REUTERS
WASHINGTON, NOV 11

The risk of death, hospitalisation and serious health issues from Covid-19 jumps significantly with reinfection compared with a first bout with the virus, regardless of vaccination status, a study published on Thursday suggests.

"Reinfection with Covid-19 increases the risk of both acute outcomes and long Covid," said Dr. Ziyad Al-Aly of Washington University School of Medicine in St Louis. "This was evident in unvaccinated, vaccinated and boosted people."

The findings were drawn from US Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) data collected from March 1, 2020 through April 6, 2022 on 443,588 patients with one SARS-CoV-2 infection, 40,947 with two or more infections, and 5.3 million noninfected individuals. Most of the study subjects were male.

Reinfected patients had a more than doubled risk of death and a more than tripled risk of hospitalisation compared with those who were infected with Covid just once. They also had elevated risks for problems with lungs, heart, blood, kidneys, diabetes, mental health, bones and muscles, and

neurological disorders, according to a report published in Nature Medicine. "Even if one had prior infection and was vaccinated—meaning they had double immunity from prior infection plus vaccines—they are still susceptible to adverse outcomes upon reinfection," Al-Aly, the study leader, said.

People in the study with repeat infections were more than three times more likely to develop lung problems, three times more likely to suffer heart conditions and 60 percent more likely to experience neurological disorders than patients who had been infected only once.

Politics of Israel and Iran ensnare 1st World Cup in Mideast

ASSOCIATED PRESS
JERUSALEM, NOV 11

Qatar may hope soccer fans ignore politics at the first World Cup in the Middle East. But Israel and Iran, foes locked in conflicts across the region, are bringing sensitive flashpoints to the tournament's doorstep.

Israel is not competing, but it sees the massive spectacle as a way to further integrate into the Middle East after establishing ties with two of Qatar's Gulf Arab neighbours. Thousands of Israeli tourists, long shunned, are expected to fly to the Qatari capital of Doha on unprecedented direct flights.

Iran, convulsed by protests that erupted over the September 16 death of a 22-year-old woman, Mahsa Amini, in the custody of the country's morality police, has much at stake. The pitch could provide Iranian activists a vast audience for a protest. Or it could deliver Iran a victory on the world stage in a first-round match against its rival, the United States.

The tournament's location in the Persian Gulf emirate, just a short flight away from Israel and Iran, adds another layer of tension. Iranian and Israeli fans have rubbed shoulders at



A file photo shows the official FIFA World Cup Countdown Clock on Doha's corniche, overlooking the skyline of Doha, Qatar.

World Cups before, but never at such an event in their own backyard.

"It's always possible for Israeli and Iranian tensions to play out," said Mehrzad Boroujerdi, an Iran expert and college dean at Missouri

University of Science and Technology. "One can expect hard-liners to try and make a statement."

For Israel, sporting tournaments have been pivotal in its quest for acceptance despite the unresolved

conflict with the Palestinians.

In 2018, two years before the United Arab Emirates formalised relations with Israel, the Israeli national anthem played and the country's flag flew at a judo competition in Abu Dhabi. The scene of an Israeli Cabinet minister weeping as she sang "HaTikva" in the UAE capital induced whiplash after years of Arab and Iranian players refusing handshakes with Israelis and pulling out of matches. The so-called Abraham Accords that Israel struck in 2020 with Bahrain, Morocco and the UAE marked a decisive turn in the region. The prospect of Israeli normalisation with Qatar, which helps bankroll the Gaza Strip's militant Hamas rulers, may appear far-fetched after Doha shuttered an Israeli trade office there in 2008.

But the unprecedented influx of thousands of Israeli fans into the conservative Muslim country could advance Israel's ambitions to become just another country in the region, experts say.

In a breakthrough agreement announced on Thursday, Qatar promised to allow soccer fans from Israel and the Palestinian territories to fly directly to Doha. That includes residents of the occupied West Bank and

the blockaded Gaza Strip, who ordinarily wouldn't be able to travel out of Tel Aviv.

"The sign that Qatar is letting Israelis travel there for the World Cup is an indication that they're willing to soften their stance on Israel," said Emmanuel Navon, a senior fellow at the Jerusalem Institute for Strategic Studies.

In another first, Israel will set up a temporary consular service for citizens at the tournament even though the countries have no diplomatic relations. To avoid any backlash from the Palestinians, Qatar stressed "its stance on normalisation [with Israel] has not changed."

Many Israelis are seizing on the tournament as a rare opportunity to see an emirate otherwise off-limits.

"There's only this one time that we can go," said Gil Zilber, a fan from the Tel Aviv suburb of Ramat Gan with World Cup tickets. "I hear they [Qatar] support Hamas but I'm not afraid."

Iran—and its soccer showdown with the US on November 29—has also thrust the World Cup into combustible politics.

The protests sweeping Iran have morphed into one of the boldest challenges to the ruling clerics since the

1979 Islamic Revolution. Security forces have sought to quash dissent, killing over 270 people, according to rights groups. Iranian activists have demanded that FIFA, world soccer's global governing body, eject Iran from the World Cup, citing the country's violent crackdown and restrictions on female fans in soccer stadiums. Ukraine's top soccer club also made the request over Iran's military support for Russia in its war on Ukraine. Iran is still competing, however.

What will happen on the field—whether team members wear armbands in solidarity with the protests as they did during the 2009 Green Movement or shake hands with their American rivals as they did in 1998—is a fraught question. Already, dissidents abroad have called for protests during the matches.

Some Iranian players have spoken out in support of the protest movement. In an Instagram post later deleted, Iran's international striker Sardar Azmoun said he would sacrifice his place in the tournament for "one hair on the heads of Iranian women." In an act of defiance, he did not celebrate when he scored at a match in Vienna in late September.

England and Pakistan meet in final today

The winners at the Melbourne Cricket Ground will join the West Indies as the only two-time champions since inception of the T20 World Cup in 2007.

AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE
MELBOURNE, NOV 11

Skipper Jos Buttler believes an "incredibly dangerous" England will be hard to beat in Sunday's Twenty20 World Cup final, but Pakistan say they have "all bases covered"—and then there's the threat of rain.

After 44 matches spanning nearly a month, the Melbourne Cricket Ground will host the deciding game to determine who join the West Indies as the only two-time winners since the tournament's inception in 2007.

Pakistan tasted victory in 2009 when they beat Sri Lanka by eight wickets in the final, while England won it a year later with a seven-wicket win over Australia.

England will be favourites against a Pakistan side who have roared back from losing their first two matches of the tournament.

Rain could though spoil the party with a 100 percent chance of showers forecast and even severe thunderstorms. A reserve day has been set aside on Monday but the weather is again expected to be bleak, raising the prospect of a washout and the unthinkable—the trophy being shared.

A minimum of 10 overs per side is needed to constitute a game, compared to five during the group stages. If the match starts on Sunday but isn't finished, it will resume on Monday from where it was halted.

Organisers on Friday tweaked the rules to give two hours' extra play on Monday should it be needed to complete the match.

Three games at the MCG in the Super 12 stage fell victim to rain.

Notwithstanding the elements, Buttler is confident England can finish the job after routing India by 10 wickets in the semi-finals. Resurgent Pakistan beat New Zealand by seven wickets to earn the right to meet them.

"I think we're a good team, I think that's probably where the performance comes from," Buttler said. "Some brilliant players in the team.

WORLD T20 FINAL FACTFILE

ENGLAND

T20 World Cup Title- 1 (2010)
Top Scorer At 2022 T20 World Cup
Alex Hales - 211 runs
Top wicket-taker: Sam Curran - 10

PAKISTAN

T20 World Cup title - 1 (2009)
Top Scorer At 2022 T20 World Cup
Mohammad Rizwan - 160 runs
Top wicket-taker: Shaheen Shah Afridi and Shadab Khan - 10

T20S HEAD-TO-HEAD

England lead 18-9.
One match ended without a result

FIRST T20I MEETING

August 29, 2006, Bristol - Pakistan won by five wickets with 13 balls remaining.

LAST T20I MEETING

October 3, 2022, Lahore - England won by 67 runs to seal the series 4-3.

When they play their best, we're a tough team to beat. Incredibly dangerous side, huge confidence in the group."

England have selection decisions to make with batsman Dawid Malan and fast bowler Mark Wood missing the semi-final injured. They were replaced by Phil Salt, who was not

required to bat, and Chris Jordan, who took 3-43.

"We will see how they pull up and hopefully progress to be available for selection come the final," said Buttler of Malan and Wood.

Buttler's brilliant 80 and Alex Hales's blistering 86 did the damage against India, with the South Asian giant's esteemed bowling attack having no answers.

Who will handle the pressure?

Pakistan pace spearheads Mohammad Nawaz and Shaheen Shah Afridi will be tasked with blunting the in-form openers on Sunday.

Pakistan team mentor Matthew Hayden said that was key to the final.

"It's obvious really, isn't it—quality fast bowling against quality batting, it's why you watch the game," said the former Australian great, who was Pakistan's batting coach at the 2021 World Cup, when they made the semi-finals, and was recruited again this year.

"But we've got four quicks that really make an impact and can create some sustainable damage inside 20 overs."

"One of the things I think India was really missing last night in the bowling department was a leg-spinning option—really a sixth bowling option," he said on Friday. "Our side has six genuine options and a seventh as well should it be required. So I think the bases are covered."



AP/RSS
Babar Azam



AP/RSS
Jos Buttler

Paudel named national cricket team captain

The 20-year-old batter will be the second youngest ODI captain after Rashid Khan of Afghanistan.

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Cricket Association of Nepal (CAN) named vice-captain Rohit Paudel as the captain of the Nepal national cricket team on Friday.

The 20-year-old batter will replace former captain Sandeep Lamichhane who was suspended by the country's cricket governing body on September 7, two weeks after a minor filed a rape case against the leg spinner.

Lamichhane is currently in judicial custody. He has been charged under Section 219 of the Criminal Code (2074). If the charge stands, he will be imprisoned for 10 to 12 years.

Paudel will lead Nepal in a three-

match One-Day International (ODI) bilateral series against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) scheduled for November 14, 16 and 18 at the TU ground in Kirtipur.

Paudel, who marked debut for the national side in February 2018 against Namibia in the ICC World Cricket League Division 2, will be the second youngest ODI captain after Rashid Khan of Afghanistan.

Khan achieved the similar feat at the age of 19 years and 165 days when he led the team against Scotland. Paudel will be 20 years 73 days old on the day he leads Nepal against UAE in the first ODI. Meanwhile, CAN has announced a 16-member squad on Friday for the bilateral series.

Army pull off a sensational win over Police

Set a 305-run target, Army scores 309-8 off the penultimate delivery of the last over to set up a title clash against APF.

SPORTS BUREAU
KATHMANDU, NOV 11

Tribhuvan Army Club registered a sensational two-wicket victory on the penultimate ball over Nepal Police Club on Friday, chasing the biggest target of the Prime Minister Cup One-Day National Cricket Tournament. The win sets up a showdown with Nepal Armed Police Force (APF) Club at the TU cricket ground in Kirtipur on Saturday.

Army scored 309-8 in 49.5 overs in their run chase after Police, who were sent in to bat first, amassed a challenging total of 304-4 on the back of a century by captain Dipendra Singh Airee in the second semi-final.

Army will meet APF in the final in a rematch of the opening game which saw the latter register a 56-run victory. A match winning innings from middle-order batter Pulami Magar who

contributed a 37-ball 43 set up Army's win.

While Army seemingly looked close to victory and required 11 runs off the last two overs, pacer Karan KC dismissed Bikram Sob and Sushan Bhari in the 49th over, conceding just three runs, to leave the match hanging in the balance.

But Pulami alone scored 11 runs in the last over, hitting a boundary off Airee off the second ball and hitting the winning six off the penultimate ball. The man-of-the-match Pulami hit three fours and two sixes in his fine knock.

Army's Rohit Paudel and opener Hari Chauhan also played crucial roles in the victory, sharing a 135-run partnership for the third wicket, before the latter was dismissed. Paudel hit 89 off 87 balls, the highest of the innings, with nine hits to the fence. He was caught by Karan KC off

BRIEF SCORES

Nepal Police Club 304-4

Dipendra Airee 140 (125), Aarif Sheikh 91 not out (109)
Nepal Police Club 3-66 (10)

Tribhuvan Army Club 309-8

Rohit Paudel 89 (87), Hari Chauhan 75 (92), Rajesh Pulami 43 not out (37)
Karan KC 6-52 (10)

Army win by 2 wickets.

Player of the match: Rajesh Pulami

the bowling of Rashid Khan.

Chauhan scored a 92-ball 75 that included eight boundaries and a six before he was clean bowled by Lalit Rajbanshi. Captain Binod Bhandari contributed 32 off 30 balls,

which comprised three boundaries and two sixes. He was trapped leg before by pacer KC.

Bikram Sob was another remarkable contributor scoring a quickfire 18-ball 30 before Sunil Dhamala caught him off KC. He hit three boundaries and two sixes.

Police pacer KC was the pick of the bowling, claiming six wickets alone in his 10-over spell, conceding 52 runs.

Police captain Dipendra Singh Airee's 140 runs off 125 balls, his second century of the tournament, went in vain. He struck 11 boundaries and five sixes before he was caught by Bhim Sharki off Bikram Sob.

Airee also shared a 212-run partnership for the fourth wicket with Aarif Sheikh who remained unbeaten on 91 runs off 109 balls. Sheikh hit eight boundaries and two sixes.

Army bowler Bikram Sob took three wickets.

HOROSCOPE

ARIES (March 21-April 19) ***

You'll have a keen ability to see what others are trying to hide today. This celestial exchange can also help you feel more comfortable being vulnerable with others, especially when it comes to your most intimate relationships.

CANCER (June 22-July 22) ***

Give yourself plenty of space to dream today, though you'll find working with your spirituality to be significantly fulfilling as well. You may want to set boundaries, but make sure you nurture your important relationships.

LIBRA (September 23-October 22) ***

You may want to do a little bit of budgeting this morning. Remember to leave some space for fun and luxury, as these vibes also encourage leaning into the finer side of life. Give yourself a break from work.

CAPRICORN (December 22-January 19) ****

Remember not to trust everyone, as people will be in the mood to embellish their stories. New opportunities for love could manifest this evening. So, try to be vulnerable enough to make deeper connections with your mates.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20) ***

Look for ways to relax and bond with your friends today, especially if you're still recharging from the workweek. Flashes of insight may find you this evening. A spiritual element to your love life may manifest tonight.

LEO (July 23-August 22) ****

The stars will ask you to organize your space today. Ridding yourself of objects that were once sentimental but have since turned sour will be therapeutic. You'll begin to feel renewed by your freshly organized space this evening.

SCORPIO (October 23-November 21) ****

You'll be tempted to talk about your talents and successes today. It's okay if you want recognition for your abilities as long as you make space for others to do the same. You may have harmonious talks with that special someone.

AQUARIUS (January 20-February 18) ***

Give yourself permission to escape from professional concerns today. These vibes will also give you the cosmic green light to spoil yourself a bit, especially if you've been placing high demands on yourself recently.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21) ****

The universe will ask you to get serious about your wellness goals today. Take a moment to ground and acknowledge your deepest feelings this evening. Your ability to manifest transformation will be strengthened.

VIRGO (August 23-September 22) ****

This cosmic climate will elevate your flirtation game. Though love will certainly be in the air, consider investing some time in your extended friendship circle. Important networking bonds may be forged this evening.

Astrology.com

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Band instruments
- 6 Soy product
- 10 Uptight
- 14 Not moving
- 15 Big oil supplier
- 16 Contemptible
- 17 "Same here!"
- 18 Roloids target
- 19 Part of the range
- 20 Annoy greatly
- 22 Peggy and Spike
- 23 Soup ingredients
- 24 Gun the engine
- 26 Solutions
- 30 Side by side
- 34 Delighted in
- 35 Guzzle
- 36 — Jones Industrial Average
- 37 Line of rotation
- 38 Wielded a lasso
- 40 Emu relative
- 41 Unburdened
- 42 Unctuous
- 43 Convo
- 44 Phone playback
- 46 Speaks softly
- 48 Extreme degree
- 49 Hartman or Bonet
- 50 Salad choice
- 53 Printed copy
- 59 On the summit
- 60 Bona —
- 61 Caruso was one
- 62 Sleep in a tent
- 63 Internet fan
- 64 Sprain site
- 65 He and she
- 66 Camera's eye
- 67 Forfeits

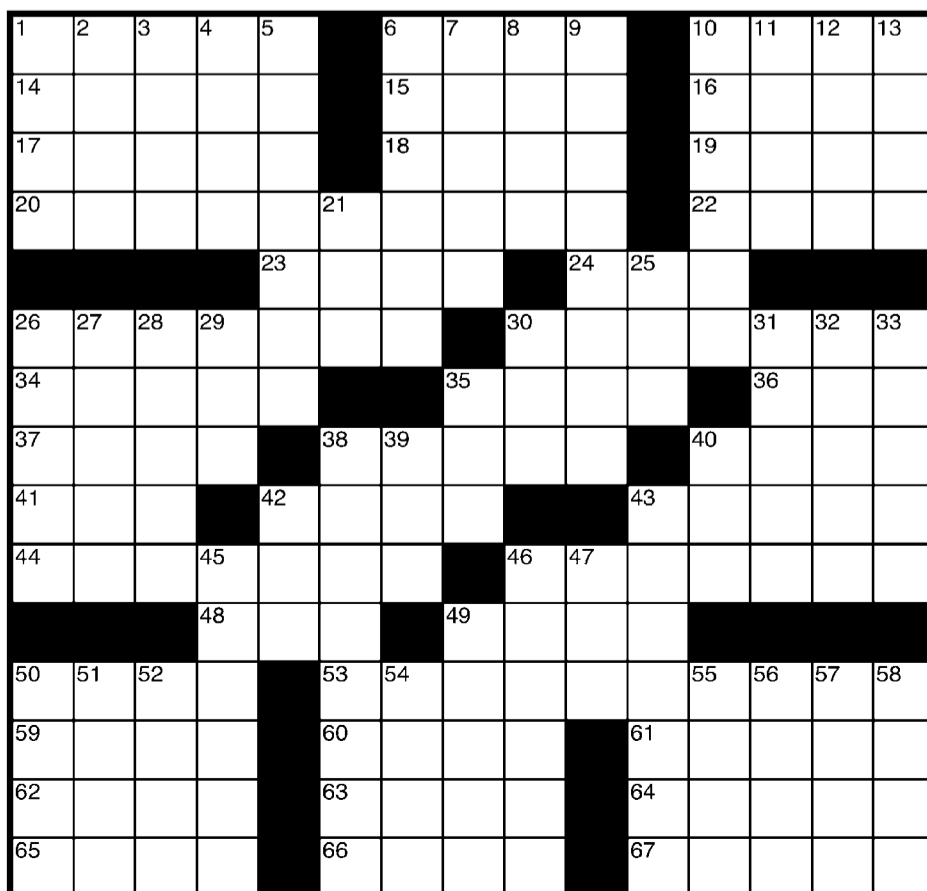
DOWN

- 1 Ebb or neap
- 2 DOS alternative
- 3 Letter before gamma
- 4 Muses' domain
- 5 Pulled over
- 6 Diadems
- 7 Ocean predators
- 8 — accompli
- 9 Bridge auction error
- 10 Develop
- 11 Cheap nightclub
- 12 Winner's feeling
- 13 Desires
- 14 Always, to
- 15 Whitman
- 25 Joule fraction
- 26 Make frightened
- 27 Undeliverable mail
- 28 Pallets
- 29 "Scream" director —
- 30 Fill with wonder
- 31 Farewell
- 32 Farmer, at times
- 33 Teases
- 35 Watch secretly
- 38 True
- 39 Bullring shout
- 40 Dutch carrier
- 42 Breakfast grain
- 43 Geometric pattern
- 45 Brisk
- 46 Gold diggers?
- 47 — Nimitz
- 49 Weighed down
- 50 Savoir-faire
- 51 Where Bryce Canyon is
- 52 1899 gold rush town
- 54 Hill
- 55 Gamblers' mecca
- 56 Calligraphy fluids
- 57 Barbershop sign
- 58 Three, in Madrid

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED



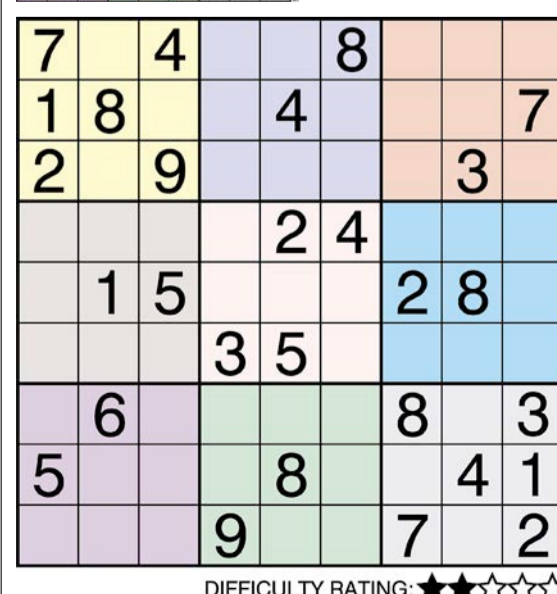
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SUDOKU



YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION



DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★☆☆☆

Personal yet universal

Amrit Karki, an emerging visual artist, talks about exploring rather unconventional mediums for his art in Nepal's already niche art market.

PINKI SRIS RANA
LALITPUR

If you walk towards Kirtipur from Tribhuvan University campus, your first view of the historical town is most like going to be of a hill of densely packed houses. If you look hard enough at those houses, you might even notice a faded red rectangular mural painted on the stacked buildings.

Amrit Karki made this gigantic mural as part of the Kathmandu Triennale 2017. This idea to treat the Kirtipur as a canvas turned heads back in 2017. And in October 2022, the visual artist returned to Kirtipur for his yet another exhibition, 'Breathing Through the Stillness'.



SPOTLIGHT

But unlike his 2017 mural, 'Breathing Through the Stillness' is a performance art. As part of the performance, Karki, in front of a live audience, stood still as masons constructed a wall and integrated him into it. The performance lasted for four hours and 30 minutes and ended with the walls falling behind Karki.

"Many who had come to see the performance felt uneasy, stifled, and suffocated. Unable to watch the whole performance, many left midway," remembers Karki, who stood still for three hours and 30 minutes.

Karki, who has used his body as an artistic medium since 2014, says that he didn't find the performance physically challenging. 'Breathing Through the Stillness' was Karki's fifth performance art. In the last eight years, he has explored many mediums, performance arts being just one of them. As a conceptual artist, Karki has also used visual mediums like paintings, photographs, installation arts, and mixed media to portray his concepts.

There's a popular saying that goes 'jack of all trades, master of none'. But which-



Amrit Karki in the midst of his performance art 'Breathing Through the Stillness'.

PHOTO COURTESY: SAMEER TAMRAKAR

ever medium Karki touches, he seems to make it his own.

Exploring various mediums over the years also means that Karki has yet to specialise in one medium, but he says this doesn't bother him.

"The only thing I want to master is to portray my thoughts in the right way. Depending on my concepts, I choose the mediums that I feel will best help me

express my ideas. That is why I cannot limit myself to one medium only," says 32-year-old Karki, who was born and raised in Pokhara.

A quick look at Karki's archive of artworks, one cannot help but get the feeling that his works are personal yet universal in what they address.

Once Karki finishes an artwork and puts it out for exhibition, he likes to let the

audience interpret it in whatever way they feel.

"A singer sings a song, people resonate with the song with their own personal reasons and memories. I also try to do the same with my artworks," says Karki. "I like to ask the audience what they felt seeing my artworks, and then I go ahead and explain my idea and motifs."

The unconventional mediums Karki

uses have helped attract people's attention, but he has to bear the consequences of doing so. Many of the artworks he has done required a lot of funds to execute.

The idea for 'Breathing Through the Stillness' first came to Karki in 2015. But it took Karki seven years to execute the concept, and one of the main reasons behind the delay was finances.

"I knew this project was going to require a big budget. Although it was performance art, a lot of work went into it before and while executing the exhibition. I had to consult with engineers while designing the performance. I needed seven construc-

'Breathing Through the Stillness' was Karki's fifth performance art.

tion workers on the exhibition day, a doctor on standby, a videographer for documentation and, of course, an art gallery. And I had to pay for each of them. So, it took a while to put together the funds to make this happen finally," says Karki.

Another challenge that Karki says he has to deal with is finding buyers. In the international art market, if somebody wants to buy performance arts or other mixed media artwork, they buy the documentation and get the letter of authenticity, says Karki. "One of my mixed media artworks, 'Oil Barrel and Balloon', was sold in Pakistan while I was pursuing a Master's Degree there in Pakistan. It's more of buying the idea. But this isn't a common practise here in Nepal," says Karki.

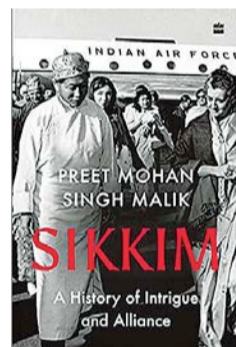
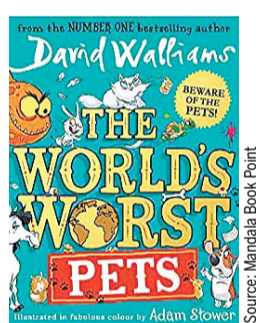
Karki understands that painting is the safest medium for artists to get into if they are to sustain themselves financially in the country. And every once in a while, Karki also makes paintings.

"The artistic concepts I come up with and the mediums I choose to execute them often mean dealing with many challenges. It's definitely not easy," says Karki. "But I am in no mood to stop doing what I do."

BEST-SELLERS | NEW RELEASES

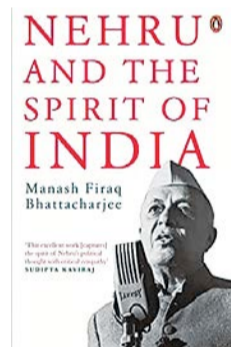
Fiction

1. The World's Worst Pets by David Walliams
2. Daisy Jones & the Six by Taylor Jenkins Reid
3. Carrie Soto is Back by Taylor Jenkins Reid
4. When we were Orphans by Kazuo Ishiguro
5. The Stationery Shop of Tehran Marjan Kamali



Sikkim: A History of Intrigue and Alliance
Author: Preet Mohan Singh Malik
Publication: HarperCollins India
Price: Rs1118

From Sikkim's royal kingdom's history to the intriguing story of how it merged with India, this book explores more on the region and its original inhabitants, the Lepchas, and the Bhutias (people of Tibetan origin). Sikkim, being a significant place, given its proximity to the border with Tibet, now China, and the presence of the vital Siliguri Corridor that connects India's northeast with the rest of the country, is worth the discussion.



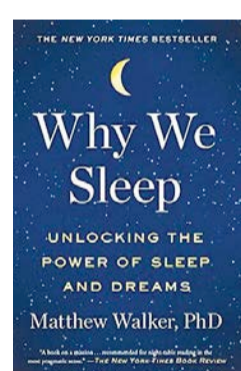
Nehru and the Spirit of India
Author: Manash Firaq Bhattacharjee
Publication: Penguin Random House India
Price: Rs958

'Nehru and the Spirit of India' is a critical and in-depth look into his intellectual and political legacy. Bhattacharjee reinforces Nehru's view that India is enriched by the encounter of cultures and that the nation must not discard the past, but engage with it. Breaking ideological and disciplinary protocols, he compels us to view the issue from the perspective of poets and thinkers.



Believe Me
Author: Tahereh Mafi
Publication: HarperCollins
Price: Rs720

The devastatingly romantic fifth novella of the bestselling Shatter Me series, is the story of Juliette and Warner. Warner has his sights set on more than just politics. Since he proposed to Juliette two weeks ago, he's been eager to finally marry her. Warner and Juliette's future together is within reach, but the world continues to try to pull them apart. Will they finally be able to be happily, officially, together?



Non-Fiction

1. Ek Baagi by Ujjwal Prasai
2. Why We Sleep: The New Science of Sleep and Dreams by Matthew Walker
3. Principles for Dealing With the Changing World Order: Why Nations Succeed and Fail by Ray Dalio
4. Engaging China: Fifty Years of Sino-American Relations Edt Anne F Thurston
5. China's Civilian Army: The Making of Wolf Warrior Diplomacy by Peter Martin

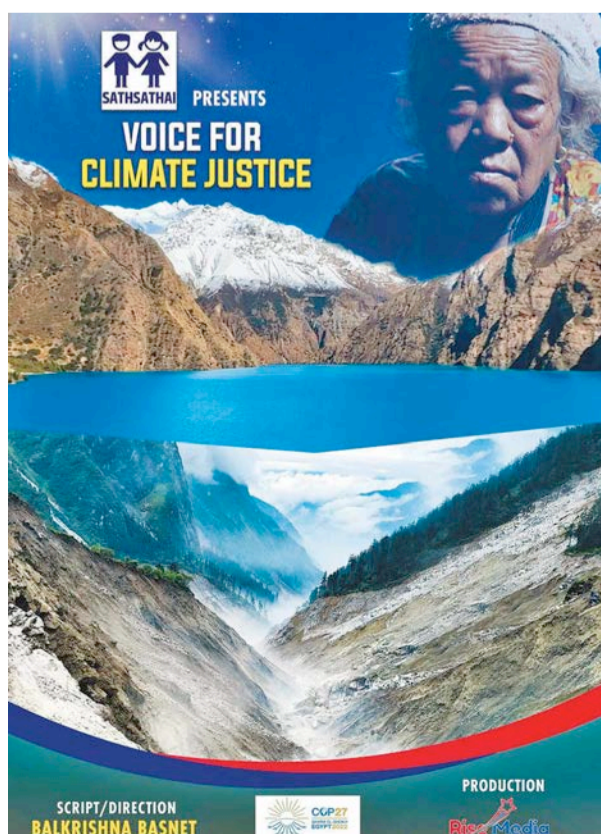
Documentary on climate change's impact in Nepal shown at COP 27

POST REPORT

A documentary on climate change's devastating impact in Nepal was screened at the 27th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27), which is currently underway in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. COP 27 began on November 6 and will end on November 18. The Nepal delegation to COP 27 is led by the Minister of Women, Children and Senior Citizens, Uma Regmi. The delegation also includes environmental and forest experts.

Titled 'Voice for Climate Justice', the documentary covers the extensive damage caused by climate change in Nepal's high Himalayas, central mountains and hills and Terai, and it primarily focuses on the impact of climate change on women and children in the Himalayan region. The documentary also extensively covers the damage and dangers posed by melting glaciers and snow in the mountains, including Mt Everest. It also highlights the damage caused by unseasonal rains. The documentary especially talks about the impact of climate change on women and children in the Himalayan region.

The documentary was written and directed by senior journalist Balkrishna Basnet.



Titled 'Voice for Climate Justice', the documentary highlights the damage caused by climate change.

Japanese art meets Nepali art market

Gallery Mcube hosts two solo exhibitions by Japanese artists.

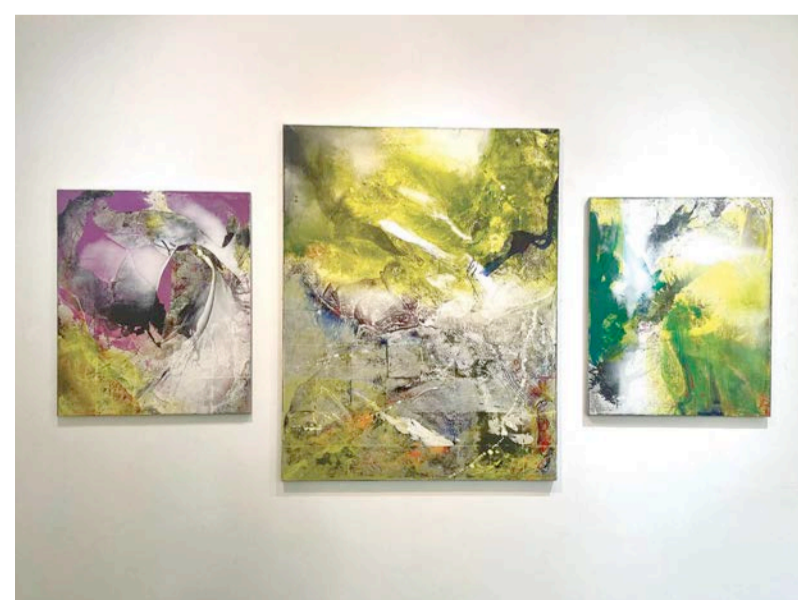
POST REPORT

Lalitpur's Gallery Mcube is hosting solo exhibitions of two Japanese artists, Izumi Tanabae and Hideo Iida. The exhibitions are jointly titled 'Crossing Nepal-Japan', and the gallery hopes that it will help introduce Japanese arts and techniques to the Nepali art world.

"Both of the artists are abstract expressionists. And because we, as an alternate space, have always been interested in showcasing unconventional forms of arts, this is an opportunity for us to introduce Japanese artworks here in Nepal," says Manish Lal Shrestha, curator of Gallery Mcube.

Izumi Tanabae's solo exhibition is named 'Hanabi', meaning fireworks, and it is exhibited on the first floor of Gallery Mcube. The exhibition features 17 paintings, exploring Tanabae's memories of her village, greenery, and womanhood. Tanabae specialises in painting and printmaking, and the exhibition display both styles of art.

On the ground floor of the gallery lies the artworks of Hideo Iida. His solo exhibition, 'In My Art World', is a collection of 19 paintings, among which 12 of them explore Nepal's images, temples, and landscapes. Iida, who has visited Nepal thrice, has



Out of the 19 paintings that are part of Hideo Iida's exhibitions, 12 explore Nepal's images, temples, and landscapes.

included paintings titled 'Fewa Lake', 'Machhapuchhre', and 'View from Swayumbhunath'. The majority of Iida's artworks are made using the silver leaf technique, an ancient Japanese technique.

Unlike Tanabae, Iida has already exhibited his works twice in Nepal. Both artists explore their relationship

with space, and the exhibition aims to broaden people's understanding of art.

What: 'Hanabi' and 'In My Art World'
When: November 4 to 13, 11am to 8pm
Where: Gallery Mcube, Chakupat
Contact: 9851170110